

ONLINE SALES KEEPING MANY BUSINESSES GOING

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cation in the downtown core will shut down.

"Right now, I'm basically working offsite to pay for my bricks and mortar," she said. "If I knew there was an end (to the pandemic restrictions), I would just hang in there. Unfortunately we have to close up, but we're still sticking around online."

Warden first stopped in-store shopping, art classes and birthday parties when the pandemic began in March, but was able to open her exterior ice cream window in the summer to serve up treats in a COVID-19-safe manner.

She's also been busy migrating Artsy Phartsy's

"A lot of us are basically floating by right now. Christmas is our thing. It's make or break this season for a lot of small-time shops."

- Amanda Warden

business online and is now offering a variety of locally-sourced products and holiday gift boxes for delivery or curbside pickup.

"Everyone has taken really well to our online shopping. It's been pretty great actually," she said.

The local entrepreneur is hoping to start serving up ice cream and coffee again in the spring out of

an actual trailer this time, versus her store side window that was painted to look like one. Its location is to be determined.

In the meantime, she's hoping local residents will throw their support behind small businesses this holiday season — and beyond.

"A lot of us are basically floating by right now," she said. "Christmas is our



Graham Paine/Metroland

Businesses in downtown Georgetown are feeling the devastating impact of COVID-19.

thing. It's make or break this season for a lot of small-time shops."

Frazer said she knows some people are doing their best to shop locally, noting the Acton and Georgetown BIAs are doing a great job bolstering the downtown businesses.

"But the flip side is a lot of people are still very uncertain about even going in a store at this point," she said. "We're trying to encourage stores to develop an ecommerce model for online shopping or ordering, and curbside pickup."

While some people may

gravitate to the online shopping giants like Amazon, or big box stores such as Walmart, Frazer noted they're not the ones that need the extra support right now.

"They do employ a lot of people, so they're very important to our local economy, but they will still be here after this (pandemic)," she said.

"It's those small storefront businesses or the people based out of their homes — those are the businesses that our local community relies on when they're fundraising or want their baseball team sponsored. They're crucial, and if we don't think of them first, they may not be here next year."

STORY BEHIND THE STORY: As pandemic restrictions continue to have widespread impact, we wanted to take a closer look at how local small businesses are faring this holiday season and beyond.

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy and happy holiday season

from

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