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"Black Friday" Sales Soar At Pullman Sales Best Last Year's at Inspired; Chico's Just Getting Started



The Six Retailers (So Far) At Pullman Square

Images: Seaton

By **Tony Seaton**
Huntington News Network

Despite the gloomy forecasts that led some national retailers to create a new shopping day on Thanksgiving to complement Black Friday, ("Gray Thursday,") some stores opening as early as 3 a.m. Friday, and predictions of much slower sales this holiday season, downtown Huntington's fledgling retail center bucked that alleged trend Friday without even opening at the crack of dawn or before.

Pullman Square, which has double the number of retail stores it did this time last year, reported record business, with at least one of the stores that has sales from last year with which to compare, besting last year.



The six retailers now at Pullman are **Inspired** and **Empire Books**, both open more than a year, plus **Runway Couture**, **Heels**, and **Chico's**, which opened this year, and the former EB Games, **Game Stop**.

"We've been busy today, we did very good business," said Denene Chafin, owner of three of the six retail outlets in Pullman and one with last year's records. "I expect a lot from Pullman, but this was better than I expected, she said." (Chafin has told HNN that her Pullman Inspired store "doubles the business" of her Charleston Town Center store.)

"Inspired beat its goal for the year, and did better than last year, and **Runway Couture**, and Heels outsold Inspired," she said. And that wasn't the final word of the day for Chafin and her three stores, "it's still going on down here," she said at 9 p.m., "and we'll be open until 11." Chafin's stores opened at 8 a.m.

"We had a lot of customers in, did a lot of sales, we did really well," said Julia, the assistant store manager at Chico's, the women's clothing store that is Pullman's first national retail chain. "It was a really crazy day," she said, with a lot of people coming in to check out Chico's for the first time. "The square was really busy all day, a lot of people going to the movies and the restaurants, and with a lot of people home, (off work,) today, I think that really helped." Julia said Chico's sold a lot of turtlenecks Friday due to the chilly weather, but, as with other national clothing retailers, they didn't have any one "must have" item she could point to.



Bill Dargusch, owner of Empire Books, and Metropolitan Partners Pullman Square liaison, was out shopping and didn't have his store's numbers yet, but several shoppers reported large crowds at Empire Books Friday.

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