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Holiday Gifts



Photo by Dylan Coulter
Bon Marche employee Doni Follman (left) samples some cologne for University senior Brandon Schornstein. Local retailers say they're experiencing an upswing in sales this year.

MALL MADNESS

The Christmas gift-buying season has arrived in Eugene and local retailers are experiencing an upswing in shopping.

While most of that increase is due to the time of year, other reasons also come into play.

Gloria Godfrey, owner of McKenzie Honey Farms in the Eugene Downtown Mall, believes a certain governor of a southern state has more than just a little to do with the spending.

"People have a more upbeat and positive attitude after the election," Godfrey said with a smile, looking out at the newly-opened Olive Street and the potential shoppers passing by.

"I think the election has convinced people that things are changing, things are going to be better," he said.

And while not all retailers may agree with Godfrey on the cause, they certainly agree on the effect.

Jamie Chisum, a sales associate at Great Outdoor Clothing Outfit in the Downtown Mall, believes the opening of Olive Street has contributed to more shopping.

"We've seen a lot more foot traffic since they opened (Olive Street) up," Chisum said. "It just makes the mall more open for casual shoppers."

Yet, while shop-owners are finding more and more shoppers passing through their doors, students are not filing in at a remarkable pace.

"Students are mostly looking for themselves," Godfrey said with a laugh. However, the store owner gestured around the McKenzie Outfitters store, pointing out numerous items she believed students would be interested in.

"We have plenty of things students could buy for gifts, from vests to socks to nightgowns," Godfrey explained. "I guess we have to wait until the last minute with students, though."

Since most students usually opt for University apparel for Mom and Dad, shop owners are cutting prices on sweatshirts, pants, hats and the like.

Duck sweatshirts are available for as little as \$12 at McKenzie Outfitters. Or, if Oregon's berth in the Independence Bowl put you in a more expensive mood, the University Bookstore has more pricey options in its selection.

"Sweaters and shirts sell the very best," said Tammy Berry, owner of Cooking on Broadway and manager of McKenzie Outfitters. "They're usually closely followed by socks and gloves."

For students who have more than \$20 in their wallet, Melange in the Downtown Mall offers fashionable outfits.

"We have lots of unique gifts that are not outrageously priced," said Lauren Harvell, who studies at the University as well as working at Melange. "Most students seem to be interested in accessory items, like purses and belts."

Clerks at stores such as the Bon March and Meier

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