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**Kevin McMullen**  
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## SHELTER from page 1A

"It was just a nice, pleasant evening. Quiet, but it was good for the number of people who came in. It was fun for everyone."

The following night, the crowds tripled as word got out about the shelter being opened.

"I don't know if it's the holidays, but it was festive," Gilmer said. "People just enjoyed each other's time and we had a wonderful meal."

The Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter opens up when temperatures reach 32 degrees or below, though sometimes opens at higher temperatures when there is inclement weather.

Traditionally, the last few weeks of December marks the opening season for the shelter. However, this year has already seen days open in October, November and December, including the week of Thanksgiving. 2019 marks



**The Florence Emergency Cold Weather Shelter puts up flags bearing this logo on days when the shelter is open. Look for flags on Highway 101 and near Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth St.**

the first time the shelter was open for both Christmas and Thanksgiving.

"Usually we're only open three or four nights in December, that's been the history over the past few years," Wood said. "Last year we were open on New Year's Eve, but it looks like we're warming back up for the next week. It changes

daily, but this may be the last time this year we're open."

Historically, January sees a smaller number of open nights, while February has the most number of freezing temperatures.

Despite the early openings in 2019, Wood stated the shelter is doing well financially, with "some good

support coming in."

Last week, Oregon Public Bank rose awareness, and funds, for the shelter.

"They had a Santa day where kids came in and took pictures with Santa Claus," Gilmer said. "They raised over \$300."

Still, the 501(c)3 shelter is always looking for donations, which are tax deductible, as well as volunteers.

"If anyone is interested in volunteer night shifts, or helping out in the morning from 6 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. to get things squared away, just email me," Gilmer said.

To volunteer time, contact Gilmer at brenndagilmer@gmail.com. Meals are also welcomed donations, and can be made by contacting the shelter's food coordinator, Meris Robison, at mmrobison@icloud.com.

The shelter is located at the Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw, located at 3996 Highway 101.

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# the spotlight

**A weekly roundup of shopping, savings and doings around town.**

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## INITIATIVE from page 1A

Data from 2017 showed that Oregonians recycled 27.1 percent of their waste and composted 9.5 percent, a drop of nearly 5 percent since 2014. Meanwhile, 5 percent more waste was generated in the short span between 2017 and 2016.

The Sustainable Shopping Initiative is intended

to incentivize less plastic use as consumers who do not bring reusable bags may be expected to pay an extra fee at the register. Across the state, the price which may vary by store, city and county. The fee is kept by the businesses, which is meant to offset the cost of purchasing more sustainable bags.

The house bill requires a charge of at least five cents for "fee-required" bags, but leaves it to local governments to decide whether higher fees will be levied.

While retail stores are not required to charge a fee if reusable fabric bags are offered as a promotion (limited to 12 days a year), a charge must apply to all

other recycled and reusable bags at the register.

For restaurants, recycled paper bags may be offered at no extra charge, though a fee is required for reusable plastic bags.

As a Class D violation, stores in violation of the house bill provisions are subject to a maximum fine of \$250. Each day the retailer commits the violation is considered a new offense. Enforcement of the law is left to local authorities.

Stores must also provide the DEQ with information on bag fees and customers' usage of recycled and reusable bags by Sept. 15, 2024, which the DEQ will report to the state legislature the following year.



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*Pictured: Co-owner Kathy Jones-McCann planting a tree with the youngest members of her family; Ava (5), Parker (8), and Jake (6).*

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