

**PORT from page 1A**

Stewart also informed the commission that campground revenue has increased approximately 20 percent from two years ago. Commissioner Rob Ward said he was pleased with the latest financial review and looks forward to the prospect of optimizing the upgraded spaces, particularly in the off-season.

“So with these added campsites, we are grossing about \$19,000 more a month, when we are full,” he said.

He suggested letting people know about Florence in the off months, as well.

“I wonder if we should send out a newsletter sometime around the end of October, saying Florence is great in the winter. Just as a reminder, say, ‘Hey, it’s great here year round,’” Ward said. The commissioner also inquired as to the advertising being done by the

district and wondered whether there was an ongoing campaign to attract visitors to the area.

According to Port Manager David Huntington, “We have quit doing a lot of advertising in places we used to advertise in quite a bit, mostly because our occupancy rates have increased every year.”

Commissioner Bill Meyer also stated his appreciation for the efforts of both Huntington and Stewart during the pandemic.

“What Kelly and Dave just told us about the difference in the occupancy rates on those new full-service campsites is great news. I like the looks of it. I like being full and I like campsites and the revenue they generate,” he



**This week, the dredge Yaquina returned to the Siuslaw River.**

said. “We saw a spread sheet a couple of years ago, when we were doing calculations to figure all that out, and that sure did work out!”

Huntington also updated the commissioners on the modifications being made to one of the port’s boats, currently being completed, which will include a new Port of Siuslaw silicone wrap on the exterior of the skiff and a mechanical upgrade.

There was then a brief discussion which resulted in a

decision to move a large pile of sand from where it is currently located, to allow for future development of the area, which might result in a net gain of 15 more full-service sites.

The process the port went through two years ago to dredge sections of the marina and slips generated much of the waste materials in the pile and commissioners discussed what would be done when the next dredge takes place.

Huntington agreed to explore the options for future places to deposit dredge waste and will update commissioners on the results of his review of the process.

During that discussion, Commission President Terry Duman asked that Huntington also reach out to the City of Florence Planning Department to help to determine if the port property being considered for this project and other uses was allowable and whether a designation of wetlands was appropriate for the relevant property.

The port is also undergoing an addition to its offerings in Historic Old Town Florence as Novelli’s Seafood, located on the wa-

ter near the Port of Siuslaw Boardwalk, will be adding outdoor seating. Brien Mill, the point person for Oregon Marine Construction in the Florence area, said, “I have been working on this floating platform for the last month or so, during my free time, to build an outdoor place for people to come and sit on the river and eat. We are hoping it will be ready to open on Labor Day weekend, but we are waiting on the delivery of the picnic tables and it is taking longer for them to get here than we thought it would.”

The addition of tables on the new floating deck installed will allow more people to access Novelli’s and the beauty of the Siuslaw River. These changes will also compliment the new tables and benches added this summer to the grassy areas by the boardwalk, which have been very well received by the public.

The next Port of Siuslaw Commission meeting is scheduled for Sept. 15. For more information, visit portofsiuslaw.com.

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**MAPLETON from page 1A**

Of the 30 years under his belt in education, 25 of those were spent teaching in the Siuslaw School District.

Sean had retired at the end of last school year, but the chance to teach one of his favorite subjects was too much to resist.

“I’m always excited to teach Western Civilization. That was the selling point that got me out of retirement,” he said. “It’s a college credit class through Lane Community College. Students can earn up to 12 college credits and not a dime charged by LCC.”

To be able to focus more time on fewer students was also big in Sean’s decision.

“Mapleton is a very tight-knit community. There’s more ‘everyone knowing everyone’ than you see in bigger school districts,” he said. “I’m excited for the smaller class size and the ability to build better relationships than you could in a bigger district. I’m also excited about a fresh start with a new school.”

While small class size doesn’t necessarily mean less work for teachers, it could mean a little extra time for hobbies.

“I’m an avid dry fly fisherman. I tend to spend my summers looking for water I can put my flies on. I’m also

a major comic book collector and have a quite a collection,” Sean said.

New K-12 special education and third-grade math teacher Susan Fenton last taught in the San Francisco Bay area, so she, too, will have some adjustment. However, she said the people of Mapleton have made her feel at home.

“Resources can be limited in a small town. If I have a student that needs a specialist, often they will have to travel to a larger town. It is nice to be in a place where people are so welcoming. I’m excited for the fresh start with a new community, especially in a place as beautiful as this,” Fenton said.

She has spent 27 years teaching special education to all ages, 3 years to 21, but not many know about her hidden talent.

“One interesting thing my students probably wouldn’t know about me is that I can ice fish,” she said. “I learned on the Kuskokwim River in western Alaska, near Bethel.”

Next, after substituting in the district last year, Mapleton High graduate Tucker Ford is now the full time K-12 physical education teacher.

Ford graduated from Oregon State University in 2020 with a BA in education and history. Before that, he attended Siuslaw until seventh

grade and then completed high school as a Sailor.

He said he is “proud to claim Mapleton and glad to give back to a community that gave me so much.”

Ford is excited to get in and get to work with the students and doesn’t see a small school like Mapleton as a challenge. In fact, he sees that it is the other way around.

“Class sizes are smaller, interactions are more genuine and the small-town feeling keeps us at ease,” he said.

While they say the fastest way to a person’s heart is through their stomach, Crystal Massie, the new food service coordinator, knows the same applies to children.

Though Massie also recognizes the remoteness of the Mapleton area makes some supplies harder to come by, that hasn’t dampened her resolve to get creative.

“I look forward to feeding the community. I especially look forward to getting the kids to try things they’ve never tried before,” Massie said. “I want to try to go more towards homemade/ from scratch recipes as opposed to precooked foods like the students are used to.”

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Prior to coming to work for the Mapleton School District, Massie worked for the post office and was in retail management before that. She also loves the outdoors.

“My kids and I love hiking, going to the beach and especially camping. I have a 13- and 17-year-old,” she said.

With the Mapleton area’s abundance of trails and water ways, Massie’s family will

have plenty of opportunity to explore.

“I’m excited to get the school year going and get some normalcy in life,” she added.

It’s a sentiment new and old staff in the Mapleton School District seem to agree on.

For more information about the school district, visit [www.mapleton.k12.or.us](http://www.mapleton.k12.or.us).

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**Helping Hands Coalition**

We are in need of volunteers on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays. We need volunteers to serve food, set up for meals and also prepare meals beginning at 11:00 am and finishing at 2:00pm.  
New Location: Community Baptist Church, 4590 Hwy. 101, Florence (Across from Fred Meyer)

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relies heavily on volunteers. There are many opportunities to volunteer and a variety of skills and talents are always in need. Volunteer interest forms may be found online, at the shelter and at our Thrift Shop on Bay Street.  
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BOTH MEETINGS ARE CURRENTLY ON HOLD.  
WATCH SIALAW NEWS FOR RESUMPTION

- Tuesday Evening Group (2nd Tuesday) 5-7 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant
- Urologist Dr. Bryan Mehlfarth attends.
- Tuesday Lunch Group (3rd Tuesday) 12 noon - 1:00 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant
- Urologist Dr. Roger McKimmy attends.

Contact Bob for more information:  
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