MAPLETON *from page 1A*

Alsea and make sure conditions were safe for Mapleton's student-athletes.

"We will play in a safe environment," said Moyer. "As long as I am principal, if I feel a situation is unsafe for our athletes, we will load the bus and head home."

She acknowledged that Mapleton students, at school and at home sporting events, have stuck to wearing masks when appropriate. However, there was one incident where a grandparent of a player from a visiting team was confrontational about Mapleton staff enforcing the mask rules. Other than that, she said things have gone well.

The Sailors Volleyball team was able to play Oct. 21, but did not progress to the playoffs.

In her report, Moyer said the week of Oct. 25 to 29 is Spirit Week and features dress up days for students and other festivities.

Next, Director Mary Ellen Mansfield gave the Superintendent's Report on behalf of Jodi O'Mara. This included that elementary school conferences were held early this year.

"The elementary staff felt it was important to meet with each family earlier in the year to help develop positive relationships and help support student learning," Mansfield said.

O'Mara's report mentioned that, as of Oct. 18, six Mapleton School District employees had been granted vaccine mandate exceptions and those employees are following additional safety protocols. In the district, 29 staff members are fully vaccinated and one staff member is on unpaid leave for the remainder of the school year due to noncompliance with the vaccine mandate.

According to Mansfield, the Mapleton School Board will continue to have weekly Wednesday work sessions to receive updates about COVID-19.

The next item on the meeting's agenda was a presentation called "First and Second Grade Showcase," which showed a newsletter Mrs. Tina Johnson sends home each month to keep parents updated on homework, upcoming events and ways to support their children. Students' projects are also featured in the newsletter.

Next, Director Michelle Holman discussed state testing, an issue the school board discussed towards the end of the 2020-21 school year.

"The update is that we are gathering more board members who feel similarly to those of us who think that the state testing is the wrong direction to go," said Holman. "Here (in Mapleton) we are out of state compliance because the district left it up to the parents to opt in. Do you know how many parents of how many kids opted in? Three. There's an indication right there that the state is out of step with the electorate, so I don't know where this takes us."

After that, she inquired if Mapleton students had worked with KXCR, a community radio station in Florence. None of the board members remembered any association with local radio stations, but agreed that this is something that should be pursued at some point in the future.

Next, Moyer talked about possibly making changes in the honor program. She didn't mention what sort of changes were being considered. She also brought up reinstating a policy where a student receives school credit for a D. Mapleton currently only gives credit for students receiving a grade of 70 percent or a C.

Moyer explained what she was asking the board.

"Kids need 24 credits to graduate from high school at Mapleton," Moyer explained "If they are in the D range (69 percent or below) they get a zero. It's just the same as an F. They don't get anything towards their 24 credits. I'm requesting that we look at removing the higher standard around that policy, allowing a D to count towards graduation. Is it fair to have such a higher standard than what other schools have in Oregon?"

The board decided they would vote on the matter at the November meeting.

An executive session followed.

A video of the meeting can be found at https://youtu.be/BDyiBwMrClU.

The Mapleton School Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month, with the next meeting planned for Nov. 17. For more information, visit Mapleton.k12.or.us.

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CARDS *from page 1A*

"There are so many reasons we do this — for the many wonderful individuals that receive the cards and because there is so much fun in the creativity and sharing that creativity with someone else," Ball said. "I get the simple joy on these cards. I really enjoy it," Ball continued. "I look forward to it every single Tuesday. We all hope that more people will join us in the future."

The CARE group members said the creation of cards is only part of the process; the willingness of management at Spruce Point and Regency assisted living facilities to facilitate the distribution of the finished cards is the second part of the equation.

"Kellie Daugherty at Spruce and Rachel Saindon at Regency have become out of doing something with other artists. They're all so diverse in their techniques and styles, and we're creating a card for somebody that enjoys it."

The weekly meetings also allow her time to meet up with other artists.

"We chitchat, laugh and share stories while we work great partners. They have really appreciated the approximately 1,700 cards we have donated so far," Santiago said. "I have received thank you notes back from some residents. When allowed, we receive pictures of the residents holding the cards. Some send them on to others and some keep them in their rooms."

Another important element of the Art CARE program is the inclusion and participation of seniors in the design and making of cards for family members and friends.

For Saindon, the activities coordinator at Regency, her clients enjoy both receiving cards and making them.

"They do love getting the cards, everyone likes to get mail and they look forward every month to the drop off of their supplies," she said.

In addition, FRAA received a grant for card-making materials for the seniors. The Oregon Cultural Trust, in conjunction with the Lane County Cultural Coalition, awarded the FRAA Art CARE program $2,500.

"The funds will be used to make art accessible to the aging population in facilities to increase health, emotional well-being and morale; prolong independence; and decrease feelings of isolation. Funds will be used to engage three assisted living care facilities in creating art, writing and listening to music," FRAA announced in January.

At Regency, participants watch a tutorial and then sit through a card workshop.

"FRAA brings all the supplies and they supply the video. The residents really love making whatever the project for the month is," Saindon said.

The Art CARE program provides a much-needed connection with the outside world for the seniors.

Santiago hopes others will join her group and share their creative ideas with seniors and the artists.

"Our goal was to bring joy to the lives of the residents. During COVID, this was especially poignant since they could not have visitors," she said. "We wanted to help people feel special and show they are still cared for by the outside community."

FRAA's Art CARE program meets every Tuesday from noon to 3 p.m. All materials are included and COVID-19 safety guidelines are followed.

For more information on the Art CARE program, email Santiago at chris94134@icloud.com.

GARDEN *from page 1A*

"In January 2011, I made the big move to start the very large project of building Mowbray Gardens Three," he said.

The location is three-fourths of an acre — "a blank slate to work with" for Trautmann. To start, there was one wax myrtle and one large camellia.

"Now, after 11 years, MG3 is wall-to wall-plant material," he said. "Right now, I have over 250 rhody seedlings that are going to bloom for the first time this coming spring, and the thought of their potential beauty is always with me. Out of these 250, I will probably keep 25-30 for future breeding, and the rest will be sold in late spring."

One of the aspects of growing unusual plants is the opportunity to share these creations with others. Trautmann has customers from around the world which purchase his unique trees and shrubs, but he really enjoys meeting local gardeners and others interested in his regionally suited varieties.

"I always have plants for sale that I love," he said. "I hope to continue breeding rhodies for many years and I always welcome folks who love new, and beautiful plant material."

Mowbray Gardens is open for visitation by appointment only, mostly because Trautmann oversees another rare plant arboretum in Dunes City, Flavell Gardens West, a three-acre arboretum of rhododendron species and hybrids.

For more information on Mowbray Gardens, contact Trautmann at 541-999-5425 or rhodomeister@charter.net.

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