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“Sadly, we ran out of food at 615 complete meals distributed, but this was almost 150 meals more than we distributed in 2020,” Kuhn said.

People were able to drive through the event and pick up their dinners, pausing to thank Kiwanis and the other volunteers who made the event possible.

This included Kiwanian Steve Olienyk, who was named the Florence First Citizen earlier this year.

Kuhn thanked the sponsors which helped purchase the food needed for the meals and thanked the Elk’s organization for sharing their lodge, kitchen and refrigerators, which were essential to the success of the Thanksgiving event.

For more information, visit www.florencekiwanis.org.



COURTESY PHOTOS



PHOTOS BY MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS



Kiwanians make it a tradition each year to coordinate and volunteer in the Florence Community Thanksgiving Dinner. In return, many community members also volunteer and donate to the event, and even more attend the yearly feast.

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without touching them until they decide to select them.

The Empty Bowls Committee has also worked with the community to provide items for this

year’s silent auction.

“A lot of the businesses get involved with the auction, like Roby’s and The Archives. We’ve got Marilyn Monroe prints again this year,” MacDuffee said. “It’s just a wide variety of items for the auction.”

Auction items include the works by local artists in woodcarving, watercolor painting, sculpture and digital art. There will be a printed catalog of items, along with a dedicated phone line to allow bidders to call in over the course of the event to check on and raise their bid. The catalog will be

available online to allow those not wishing to come to the event in person to call in to bid on an item.

The two-weekend event also means people can come back multiple times to bid on items or find some new bowls.

“We’ve missed this event, and we have right around 1,500 pieces to

include,” MacDuffee said. “The second weekend is going to be all new stuff. We’re going to make sure we don’t put everything out the first weekend.”

The event is one of the significant annual fundraisers for Florence Food Share, and the committee is glad to be able to offer it again.

Empty Bowls began more than 25 years ago, first as a small-scale event held in Gayle Sisson’s original Grape Leaf Wine Bar on Bay Street, a location now housing Nosh Eatery.

“In those days, a couple hundred bowls were sold at most. The event grew to fill the main floor of Frames of Florence and then to the larger floor of On Your Feet (now Stitch and Sole). When the fire

marshal gently informed us that the crush of people on opening day was not really safe, we moved the event to the Florence Events Center,” the committee said.

The larger venue meant that there could be more bowls and a larger amount raised for Florence Food Share.

“I usually buy bowls for neighbors and friends and fill them with candy,” MacDuffee said. “They make great Christmas gifts.”

And the right ingredients mean those bowls won’t be empty for long.

For more information, visit eventcenter.org and www.florencefoodshare.org.

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