

# Port of Newport

# Harbor News

## Launching into a non-motorized adventure on Yaquina Bay

Exploring Yaquina Bay by kayak or other non-motorized vessel is a unique experience that starts right from the point of launch. Did you know that the Port of Newport offers options to kayakers that are both easy and free?

The primary spot is located at the South Beach Marina, between the Rogue brewery and a Port restroom with fish cleaning station nearby. Formerly a boat launch, this site was converted to non-motorized access when the Port constructed the current boat launch many years ago. Although on busy fishing weekends some wish it were once again a motorized launch, the Port committed to using it for public access to the bay as part of a mitigation requirement for creating the marina's current boat launch.

"Mitigation projects come in a lot of different forms, sometimes environmental and sometimes related to public access," explained Aaron Bretz, Port director of operations. "Usually, the requirement comes from the

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*Peggy O'Callaghan, Vice Commodore of the Yaquina Bay Yacht Club, is an avid kayaker.*



## A message from the Port General Manager

By Paula Miranda

It's been a busy year at the Port, especially at our South Beach marina. This summer and fall were busy beyond normal and the marina was a real magnet for anglers thanks to a good halibut, salmon, and tuna season, great weather, all mixed with the confinement of a pandemic. The congestion at the launch led some people to ask why we don't re-open an old boat ramp.

Besides some environmental aspects as mentioned in this newsletter, the ramp access isn't the only factor that creates

a busy marina. Even if more boats could be launched, the Port has a defined amount of space and no current opportunity to expand parking. An additional ramp may attract more boats and, with nowhere to park them, we would have even more congestion.

Although back-ups are frustrating, the instances of major marina congestion are limited to six or so weekends per year. While we are thankful for the marina's popularity, we will continue to explore ways to manage congestion during those peak times. Meanwhile we ask for patience from those users.

In the meantime, we also continue to make headway on several infrastructure projects, as listed in this newsletter, while trying to find funding opportunities. One project underway is the grading of 9 acres at the International Terminal to make more room, as we continue our efforts to attract new users.

We thank the community for your vote of faith while we try to make this a Port you can be proud of.

**Sign up for email updates about Port activities at [portofnewport.com](http://portofnewport.com)**

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POSTAL CUSTOMER

# PEOPLE OF THE PORT: Two staff members take on leadership roles

The summer months brought new leadership to Port facilities on both sides of Yaquina Bay. On July 1, Erica Breece was named RV Park Supervisor when Bill Hewitt retired. One month later, Aja Burke became Commercial Marina Harbormaster in preparation for the fall retirement of Kent Gibson. Both are sure to bring new energy to managing major Port facilities.

Breece has worked at the RV Park for four years and had a deep understanding of both customer needs and the operational procedures of the highly successful campground.

“When the job was posted, I felt like I should go for it because I’ve been here, and it would be a good step up for me. I thought I could find ways to make things run even more smoothly and effectively and create a good experience for our customers,” she said.

Even though the job title focuses on the RV park, Breece’s office also manages the moor-

age for customers at the South Beach Marina.

“We are pretty much the first line of contact for marina customers, approving moorage, managing documents and payments, and all of that,” she explained.

Breece is joined in her office by a two-person staff. “Jennifer and Hannah are awesome,” she said, adding that they are essential to successful operations.

With a steady clientele of repeat customers at the RV Park and Marina, Breece said she had a warm reception by those who returned to find her in a new role.

“People were so sweet. Everyone was so happy and supportive,” she said.

Those same customers are the people who will inspire the small improvements Breece will make around the South Beach campus.

“You hear a lot of customer feedback that says if we changed this small thing or that small thing, it would make so many people

happier with their stay. I’m definitely trying to make small improvements while also making sure we are transparent with all of our policies,” she explained.

Making customers happy is equally at the heart of Burke’s commitment to her new job as Commercial Marina Harbormaster – a role she has dreamed of for years.

“I’m truly passionate about the commercial fishing fleet,” she explains. “Being able to maintain their workspace, their home base, is a big deal to me. Deep down I want to make sure they have the amenities they need and that their home base is a nice, safe place to come home to.”

Burke has worked at the commercial marina for two years and has an extensive history in the maritime world. Prior to taking the Port of Newport job, she worked at Englund Marine and, before that, she worked as the operations manager at the Port of Toledo boatyard. In her career, Burke also worked for a San Francisco-based tugboat company, as a Florida Fish and Wildlife game warden, and has a third mate unlimited U.S. Coast Guard license.

The graduate of the California State University Maritime Academy has been driving boats since she was 18 and loving every minute of it.

Burke has spent recent months learning from Gibson and his 30-plus years of experience at the Port.

“Kent is wonderful,” she said. “He’s been a wonderful boss and I’ve been trying to absorb his knowledge and experience. I’m just really happy to have this opportunity.”



Erica Breece



Aja Burke

## Kayaking

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state that we need to give access somewhere else. This ramp gave waterfront access to people with non-motorized vessels.”

The location is both scenic, providing paddlers a route through the marina, and

also easily utilized. Visitors are allowed brief curbside parking for unloading near the short trail that leads kayakers and others down to the gravel shoreline. The marina also has restrooms nearby.

Other access points are also found around the Port, although none quite as convenient. One is found near the entryway to the fishing pier, where a trail goes down to the water’s edge. There is another located on the other side of the marina, not far from the fuel dock, but it is tide dependent and not as easily accessed as the main launch point.

The Oregon Boating Foundation offers classes on kayaking and guided tours of Yaquina Bay in the summer months. You can find details on their Facebook page.



## Happy Retirement, Kent!



Please join us in wishing Kent Gibson, North Commercial Harbormaster, a happy retirement. His career here officially ended on Oct. 29, 2021. After 32 years with the Port of Newport, we know that Kent is ready to spend his days with family and fossils – his two great loves. Enjoy every minute, Kent!

# 5 FAST FACTS ABOUT... a new Port Administration Building

The Port of Newport is in the process of soliciting bids for the construction of a new administrative building. If the bids come in at or below budget, it is expected to move forward. Here are 5 Fast Facts about the project.



## 1. Constructing a new administration building is a **cost-effective** choice.

- The current temporary trailer demands more and more maintenance after 9 years in use. Port management has evaluated other options, like renting elsewhere, and concluded construction is the best option.
- The new facility will include 800 square feet of rental space for tenants, as well as community meeting space, that would yield higher rental fees than existing options.
- The Port is currently in a good financial position and has secured a low-interest, 20-year loan from Business Oregon. That means we can preserve capital for other projects.

## 2. The need for **additional space** is one of the driving factors for a new building.

- The current temporary structure has inadequate space, a problem that has intensified during COVID-19 pandemic, when additional space is a matter of safety.
- Eight employees utilize the temporary office on a regular basis, which is two more than when our use of the trailer began. These space limitations have created barriers to employing additional staff, utilizing interns or providing work space for outside consultants, like auditors.

## 3. The **timing** is right for the admin building project.

- The Port of Newport is in a good place financially to pursue the project and would not need to touch reserve funds.
- Interest rates are at historic lows. The Port's ability to repay a loan is good now and will get even better in the coming years, especially when the NOAA bond is paid off in 9 years. This makes the timing advantageous.

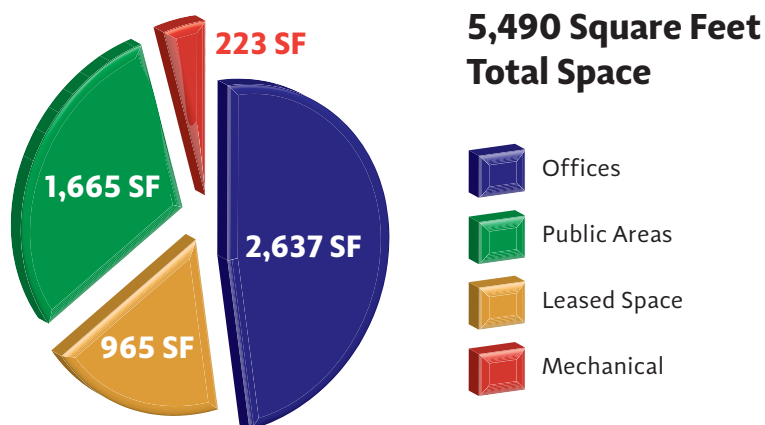
## 4. The Port has made considerable **progress on other improvements** in recent years.

- The Port Dock 5 pier has been replaced, electrical upgrades have been made at both the South Beach and Commercial marinas, South Beach storm sewer repairs have been made, and the Rogue seawall is being assessed. The US Army Corps of Engineers is currently conducting a dredging feasibility study on the commercial marina with Port participation. Grant requests are also in the works for several other projects, including the necessary designs for renovating Port Dock 7.

## 5. There are two accepted **truths** when it comes to a project like this:

- First, there will always be those who do not want to spend money on the parts of an organization or business that don't yield a direct profit. We understand that. Other projects will always appear to be a higher priority than an office building.
- Second, and most importantly, it is an absolute necessity to invest in an organization so that it can continue to grow and thrive. To put no investment back into the infrastructure of the Port would starve the organization of essentials it needs to secure the future.

## By the Numbers



**\$2.4 Million**  
Budgeted Cost  
including furnishings

**17** Parking  
Spaces

**11** Offices/  
Cubicles

**8** Employees  
in building

**9** Years in  
temporary office

*Assuming construction bids come in at or below budget, the Port of Newport can manage this undertaking thanks to a strong financial picture and a low-interest loan. After extensive consideration, we know the time is right because the growth of our operation shouldn't be constrained by an outdated temporary structure.*

# ENGLUND MARINE and INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY: The right business in the right location

Englund Marine and Industrial Supply lives up to its name and so much more from its location at 880 SE Bay Boulevard in Newport. Although the business has a history in Newport that dates back to the 1950s, the current facility was built in the late 1990s on property leased from the Port of Newport. Located in the heart of the action, it is positioned perfectly for commercial and recreational fishing interests alike.

Commercial fishing vessels can visit the Englund dock and its extended warehouse for

custom rigging, fabrication, splicing and wire rope services. A mechanical spool located next to the sidewalk on Bay Boulevard is used for pulling trawl wire from the vessels for maintenance and remarking – a service that can only be achieved by a dockside location. But commercial fishing crews aren't the only ones welcomed at the dock.

“This location puts us right in the middle of everything and people can access us from the dock, including recreational boats. If you are out fishing or crabbing and you forgot



Nate Holtzinger builds stay wires for commercial vessels

something, or you lost a net, or you want another crab pot – you can pull right up to the dock,” explains manager Dean Fleck.

It takes a team of eight people to provide the customized services needed by commercial boats while also operating a store that features a captivating and varied inventory. Clothing items, including rain gear and boots, crab cookers, fillet knives, tools, electronics, welding supplies, boat parts, binoculars, cordage, safety equipment, and more are found in the facility's 18,500 square feet.

“If you don't come in, you may not realize how varied we are,” Fleck remarks, adding, “but the biggest thing we are known for is our customer service. We pride ourselves on having expertise on nearly everything we do. If we can't help with a problem, we'll send you first to someone in the local area who can.”

The Newport location is one of seven stores owned by the Englund family, a business that was originally established in 1944.



## Fishing Facts

Earlier this year, NOAA Fisheries released a comprehensive report, Fisheries of the United States. Issued in May, the report summarizes key 2019 statistics (the most recent year available).

### PORT OF NEWPORT 2019



#### Nationally Ranked

- 12th for quantity of landings
- 14th in value

**122**  
Million Lbs.  
Landed



**\$58**  
Million



## Port of Newport At-A-Glance

### Port Commission



- Jim Burke, President
- Gil Sylvia, Vice President
- Walter Chuck, Sec/Treasurer
- Jeff Lackey, Commissioner
- Kelley Retherford, Commissioner

### Port Facilities



- North Commercial Marina
- International Terminal
- RV Parks (South Beach)
- Recreational Marina (South Beach)
- NOAA Facilities
- Properties leased to Rogue, OSU, Aquarium

### Management



- Paula Miranda, General Manager
- Aaron Bretz, Director of Operations
- Mark Brown, Director of Finance

