



## Local Healthcare Systems Hit by Ransomware Attack

**A cybersecurity incident shut down electronic health records for two weeks in October, with some fallout lasting longer.**

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Two months ago, operations in several local hospitals, emergency rooms and outpatient clinics in the Virginia Mason Franciscan Health network hit a wall. The electronic health record system was not working. The shutdown would last for nearly two weeks.

The network is a subsidiary of CommonSpirit Health, the nation's second largest nonprofit health system. Ultimately, CommonSpirit revealed that the cause was a ransomware attack.

According to Health IT, an online healthcare media publication, a security breach led CommonSpirit to take its electronic health records offline. Facilities across the country were affected, including sites in Nebraska, Iowa, Texas, Michigan and Tennessee. The nature of the breach has not been made public.

Key Peninsula News interviewed several healthcare providers who work at affected hospitals, most of whom requested anonymity. CommonSpirit did not respond to a request for information by KP News, but has posted updates on its website.

When the shutdown at the St. Anthony Hospital emergency room began October 4, the staff was told that EPIC, the electronic health record system, would be taken offline for an unknown duration. Staff immediately shifted to the protocol used for routine downtimes, reverting to paper to record care plans, place orders and track patients. They relied on faxes to send and receive information. Younger staff had not used paper and required on-the-job training.

After four or five days, the systems in the

CONTINUED PAGE 11



Edie Morgan, left, Frank Garratt, Sara Thompson and Marion Sharp at the ribbon cutting. *Tina McKail, KP News*

## After 16 Years of Work, Assisted Living for Elders Comes to the Key Peninsula

**Thanks to an audacious vision, and hundreds of community volunteers and donors, elders have a home on the KP.**

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Mustard Seed Project celebrated its opening of the first assisted living residence for elders on the Key Peninsula November 12 after one year of construction and 16 of dreaming, planning, working and fundraising.

"A year ago, this ground around us was covered in Scotch broom and blackberry brambles," said Eric Blegen, executive director, in his opening remarks. "Now is when the real work begins. Soon, this building will be a village: The Mustard Seed Village."



The Mustard Seed Village at Key Center. *Tina McKail, KP News*

CONTINUED PAGE 14





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## HEARING THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

# Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Time and again I've heard that "all politics is local," but I'm beginning to wonder how true that is.

We already know the outcomes of the November 8 election, but before we declare 2022 a wrap, here's a look at how it played out from a Key Peninsula perspective.

Back in 2020 we reported that if the presidential election were up to KP voters to decide, Donald Trump would have been re-elected and political newcomer Loren Culp, a small-town police chief from Republic, would be our governor.

The last two years have changed few minds.

While the anticipated "red wave" failed to materialize nationally or in Washington state, it was far more than a red ripple on the KP.

Incumbent U.S. Sen. Patty Murray won reelection with 57% of the vote statewide, including 53% from Pierce County. But on the KP it was a different story. Murray would have lost to candidate Tiffany Smiley by a 4% margin, and the third most powerful Democrat in Congress would have been sent packing.

Incumbent Rep. Derek Kilmer, Democrat from the 6th Congressional District, was in a class all his own by rising above the KP red wave to become the only Democrat re-elected to office with a majority of Key Peninsula voters behind him, barely.

Kilmer, who has served in the U.S. House of Representatives since 2013, will return to Washington, D.C. after garnering 64% of votes from Pierce County and 60% districtwide.

His margin of victory on the KP was a mere two percentage points.

When it came to electing Washington's secretary of state, 59% of KP voters turned out for the familiar face of Pierce County Auditor Julie Anderson, who received 54% in Pierce County but lost the statewide vote by 4%.

Termed out in Pierce County, Anderson ran as an independent against the Gov. Inslee-appointed Democrat Steve Hobbs — who filled the remaining term vacated by Kim Wyman, a Republican who resigned in November 2021 to safeguard elections at the Department of Homeland Security.

How people would vote in our local 26th legislative district clearly mattered

to partisans in this election. Deep-pocketed political action committees funneled millions of dollars into the 26th to influence what was widely considered to be one of the most important and competitive races in Washington state — the senate seat of incumbent Sen. Emily Randall (D-Bremerton), who ultimately beat her challenger, Rep. Jesse Young (R-Gig Harbor).

A report issued November 9 from the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission said overall spending on state legislative races is approaching record levels. "Most notably candidates vying for the 26th district senate seat reported spending \$1.6 million, placing it in line to become at least the third costliest legislative race in state history."

The final tab on that senate race, according to the commission's report, is not due until December 12, noting that the Randall and Young campaigns "have reported more than \$1.7 million in contributions so far and could report additional receipts in the coming days. If they spend all the money on hand, their campaigns could top" the previous record of \$1.8 million in 2020.

The race between the two was extremely tight. Only five of 17 KP precincts went to Randall, where Young received 52% of the vote. The same did not hold true elsewhere; Randall received 50.24% and 50.8% throughout the 26th.

In another tight race for state representative position 1, Spencer Hutchins (R-Gig Harbor) eked out a win over Adison Richards (D-Gig Harbor) of just 50.46% to 49.48%. Richards fared better in Kitsap County, receiving 50.64%, but voters in Pierce County pushed Hutchins over the top. KP precincts gave Hutchins 52.5% of the vote.

Incumbent Rep. Michelle Caldier (R-Port Orchard), position 2, was the clear favorite of KP voters, winning all of the 17 voting precincts in a clean sweep with 59% of that vote, 57% in Pierce County, and besting her challenger, Matt Macklin (D-Gig Harbor),

with 56% to 44% of votes districtwide.

In the campaign for Pierce County Council, Robyn Denson (D-Gig Harbor) enjoyed a big win over her opponent, Paula Lonergan (R-Tacoma), 58% to 42% in District 7. Denson was frequently seen participating in public events on the KP, listening to its residents and courting its voters, while Lonergan plainly said at the KP Candidate Forum that she had never been to the KP before



and didn't really know anything about us. Regardless, KP voters would have elected Lonergan by 52%.

Last, Linda Farmer won her race to become the next Pierce County Auditor against Deryl McCarty in a nonpartisan election where KP voters were closer to the rest of Pierce County, electing Farmer with 59% of the votes.

I attended numerous events during the campaign season, overhearing or straining to eavesdrop as people approached hand-shaking candidates with their questions and concerns. Most stemmed from national issues most candidates would have no power to affect if elected and seemed more about branding and identity, dividing rather than governing our democratic republic.

The swamp of information, real or imagined, that is cable news and social media "floods the zone," as has been said, pushing people onto familiar, safe islands of like-minded people. In other words, separating us from each other, and reinforcing that separation with every tide.

But the KP is its own island, and we are on it together.

The Key Peninsula News exists to give voice to its people, to its experiences, tragedies and dreams. For some, that means hearing about local politics, traffic or crime. For others, it's a new perspective, a neighbor's letter, the call of an unfamiliar bird. But they are all important to hear, however they may be received, because they tell our story.

Help us keep the story going.

Merry Christmas. Happy Holidays. And Happy New Year. ■



# Local Tree Farmers Beat the Summer Heat to Save Christmas

The Wreath Works, Bayview Christmas Tree Farm and Longbranch Tree Farm have plenty of healthy trees despite record damage due to high summer temperatures.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Walking into The Wreath Works gift shop in Port Orchard, the fragrant smell of freshly cut fir boughs is overwhelming.

“I bet it smells nice,” said longtime owner Phil Hunter. “I haven’t been able to smell it for years.”

A Christmas tree farmer who tends to 16,000 trees on a 20-acre property and makes nearly 1,500 wreaths every year is probably immune to the smell. The farm, located on the Kitsap side of the Kitsap-Pierce county line, has been in his family since the 1930s when it was a turkey farm.

Hunter and his wife Fran planted their first Christmas trees in 1986, but it takes anywhere between 6 to 12 years, depending on the species, for a tree to be Christmas-ready, so they didn’t start selling them until 1993. His sister Judy Austin and her husband Kenny have been helping ever since. They sell upwards of 3,000 trees each holiday season, including the cost-friendly Douglas firs and grand firs, but Hunter is quick to point out they have multiple true firs.

Looking for that Christmassy smell? Go with a balsam or grand fir.

The Wreath Works name started as an homage to Hunter’s sister, Ruth, who was battling a brain tumor. The family made a bunch of wreaths to sell as a fundraiser. They shipped a good amount of them to his sister Kerry down in California, who was able to quickly sell them. Kerry sent the money back to Hunter with a note letting him know “the wreaths work.” That encouraged Hunter and his wife to start increasing their crop from 2,000 trees to what it is today. Ruth eventually passed away from her disease, but her memory lives on in the business name.

Christmas tree farms need to be a little versatile, especially after the last two summers of record heat. Hunter said it’s not necessarily the temperature that’s destructive as much as it is the timing. The late June 2021 heatwave sent soil temperatures soaring to 154 degrees, according to Hunter, right during bud-break. He said they had to remove 1,000 trees that were severely damaged, and go through the remaining trees with hand clippers to clean up those that could be saved.

For a farm with 16,000 trees, losing 6% of the crop isn’t entirely catastrophic, but a smaller operation like Bayview Christmas Tree Farm, located just northwest of Vaughn, had to start their crop all over.

Owners Nick and Liz Johnson took over



Wandering through a stand of noble fir, like these at McDonald’s Longbranch Tree Farm, searching for just the right tree is a time-honored holiday tradition. *Tina McKail, KP News*



The holiday scene at Bayview Christmas Tree Farm, northwest of Vaughn, only wants for a little snow. *Tina McKail, KP News*

the family farm in 2018 and lost about 90% of their new plantings since then due to the heat. That’s so much that they will temporarily have to adjust their business model from a “u-cut” tree farm to bringing in pre-cut trees from a farm in Tahuya until they can grow enough mature trees.

Even with the hardship, Bayview is still in the Christmas spirit. Nick’s mom, Karen, is still hand-tying bows to put on their noble fir wreaths, and Bayview is still selling trees and other gifts from inside the converted 1930s barn built by Nick’s grandpa and great-grandpa. The family is working on the farm every weekend to get the trees ready for future holiday celebrations.

David McDonald, owner of the Longbranch Tree Farm on Rouse Road, thinks less about the long-term effect on his business and more on how it will impact his customers’ holiday season.

For the 80-year-old McDonald, his tree farm is a “hobby that gets me out of the house.” He lost 500 trees to heat the past two summers, and on a 7-acre property, that’s a good chunk of his inventory. He also generally loses 50 trees a year during rutting season when the deer rub their antlers against them. It only causes aesthetic issues, but that means McDonald can’t sell those trees until they bounce back in a year or two.

“When you’re in this business, you take

the risk of what Mother Nature gives you,” he said.

The smallest of the u-cut farms around the Key Peninsula, McDonald just appreciates the 80 or so customers who come visit him every season. He invests way more into the trees each year than he earns selling them. And for McDonald, there’s a bright side to having fewer customers compared to The Wreath Works and Bayview Christmas Tree Farm.

“If no one buys the trees, then I guess they will just grow to be beautiful trees.”

The Wreath Works is going through another significant adjustment this year. Fran Hunter passed away last February, and this will be the first Christmas season without her familiar face in the gift shop.

“She was 50% of the business,” said Austin. “It will be a hard year for all of us.”

But all three tree farms want to make it very clear, whether it’s u-cut or pre-cut, the trees available are ready to be decorated. In fact, even with the long stretch of heat this year, it was a good growing season. But that’s not to say a few trees won’t come with some imperfections.

“There’s no such thing as a bad tree,” said Hunter. “There’s always someone who’ll fall in love with it. Somebody will think it’s perfect.” ■



## Phyllis Henry COAST TO COAST



### I've Got Wheels

I can't walk anymore, so I move around in a power wheelchair. One young friend was surprised to learn that the chair must be plugged in at night to recharge. Because she had never seen me move without the wheelchair, I think she presumed that somehow, robot-like, the chair was integrated into my body.

As I rode from the living room to the bedroom recently, I left behind a trail of shredded white paper. Something was wedged under the chair, but all I could do was drive aimlessly around hoping that whatever was under there would come out. After a few minutes the carpet was white with this freshly laid snow, but didn't look like a place to make snow angels.

It was a roll of toilet paper. As I drove from room-to-room, tiny shreds of paper rubbed off the roll. What to do? Google wasn't likely to have an answer to "How do I get toilet paper out from under my electric wheelchair?" Suddenly the paper roll surrendered and popped out, and the only problem I had left was who was going to vacuum up all that paper snow.

I've never run over any people or little dogs with my wheelchair, but recently I snagged the edge of a plastic bag filled with garbage that I only noticed after I left a trail of refuse, including yogurt cups, used Kleenex, advertising brochures and orange peels. My neighbor pulled the shredded plastic out of the wheel that was dragging it, but I had to take the wheelchair to the repair shop so they could pick the pieces of plastic out of the wheel and then take the wheel off to get at the plastic wound around the axle.

Another time I ran over a fuzzy sock, and my friend laid on the floor cutting away at the fabric until the wheel was released. Was that a time to laugh? To cry? Or to pretend that everyone has problems like mine?

The moment one realizes that a wheelchair is vital is the moment when all dignity is lost. From then on, we fall into the category of "not too smart children." Doctors ask my driver how I slept the night before and if I'm taking my meds. Too often I am forced to insist, "I am the patient."

Whenever I leave home, I'm forced to leave my power chair behind and use a

transfer wheelchair — one I can't control and demands that someone push it. At a restaurant after I'd eaten lunch with a friend, I wanted to use the restroom. Because the main restroom was being remodeled, I was pushed to a secondary emergency restroom. The door to the stalls for women was too narrow for my chair, so we chose to use the restroom designed for men. The commode was very low to the floor with no handrails, so after using it I could not stand up. My friend, who is strong, lifted me off the commode and wrestled me into my wheelchair. The men sitting at the nearby bar pretended they couldn't see me, but I can still imagine their jokes about the old woman who couldn't get off the toilet in the men's restroom.

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act has made traveling in a wheelchair a bit easier and safer, but there are still hurdles. Even doorways that do not have actual steps often have a small riser that is difficult to navigate. One local bank has large, heavy glass doors with no automatic opener, so whenever I go there, I have to sit outside until someone comes along and opens the door for me.

Arthritis in my arms and shoulders prevents the use of my arms to navigate a normal wheelchair. Without my power wheelchair I would be almost totally isolated, dependent on people to push my wheelchair or visit me in my apartment. With the power wheelchair I can go anywhere I would normally walk, even to nearby businesses.

When you see a wheelchair-using person you can assume that he or she has a handicap of some sort, but often not one more serious than eyes that need glasses or ears that need hearing aids. As individuals grow older and older, more and more people will be wheeling around. We're part of the landscape now. Enjoy the view.

*Award-winning columnist Phyllis Henry lives in Gig Harbor.*

## Grace Nesbit FINDING GRACE



### The Disease That Is High School

Senioritis.

The urban dictionary defines it as "A crippling disease that strikes high school seniors. Symptoms include laziness, an excessive wearing of track pants, old athletic shirts, athletic shorts and sweat-

shirts. Also features a lack of studying, repeated absences and a generally dismissive attitude. The only known cure is a phenomenon known as graduation."

Commonly, senioritis strikes halfway through the first semester of one's final year of high school, while waiting for winter break to begin. In most cases, it will continue through the spring.

In my experience, senioritis isn't due to school itself, but the surrounding environment. Teachers of seniors either are super laid back with "easy classes" or they will do all they can to make your last year a living hell.

But senioritis is ultimately caused by seniors being done with all of the BS that is high school. This includes both underclassmen seeming more irritable than previous years and teachers creating hostility in classrooms.

Or is it?

Outside the classroom one of the biggest questions I get is where will I be going after high school.

Honestly, I have no idea.

The pressure of deciding where to go to college is unreal. I have to choose one place that can easily set the course for the rest of my life. I know that it might be an easy decision for some, but I am completely drawing a blank in what I want to do. I don't think I could say what I want to major in. It might be music, or it could be writing. But will one decision completely alter the world around me? I don't know and that might be what I am scared of.

Senioritis has definitely slapped me right in the face. Many of my friends have noticed I don't care as much about what I look like as I did in the past. At this point, if I am at school and engaged in class, everyone should be grateful.

However, some things are never enough.

I might show up one day in sweatpants and a hoodie and everyone around me assumes I must be sad because I'm not all put together. But the fact is, honestly, I am done with high school. I absolutely love the people around me and I have always enjoyed learning. But school feels more like a prison now, somewhere I have to be when I would rather be doing anything else.

I have always been very passionate about music but always struggled to see myself as a good musician. I am thinking of majoring in music education and possibly minoring in some sort of writing (My editor says, "For the love of all that is sacred, save yourself

and don't do it!"). And recently I have visited the University of Montana and Washington State University, both for music. After working with professors who specialize in my instrument, sitting in on classes and working with world famous composers, the spark for music was reignited.

Despite senioritis and everything that is high school trying to hold me back, I imagine, I am very excited for what lies ahead. Graduation is like Christmas; the countdown begins, and I can't wait for it to happen. But I do think senioritis itself is more of wanting to be on to the next step beyond high school, and getting tired of being expected to act like an adult but treated like a child. Senioritis is about wanting graduation to happen so we can continue our journeys and truly discover who we are.

Of course, it's also about leaving. Maybe leaving something we love. A place, a time, a memory; even some part of ourselves. Maybe if we can feel irritated at it, put out, so done, maybe it's easier to leave behind.

I don't think they taught us about that in high school. That's at least one class I would've wanted to take in my senior year.

*Grace Nesbit is a senior at Peninsula High School. She lives in Lakebay.*

## Dan Whitmarsh WRITING BY FAITH



### A Warm Christmas Memory

I woke early on those cold winter mornings, the jangling alarm clock wrestling me from blissful Christmas dreams. As the rest of the family slept, I pulled on my wool socks and long underwear, topped off with snow pants and thick blue coat, and quickly left the warmth of our house into the chill of morning, a lonely paperboy making my early-morning rounds.

On the particular morning of my memory, snow had fallen overnight, a marshmallow blanket covering the ground, undisturbed but for the soft footprints of a cat on her nightly rounds. The glow and sparkle of streetlights and Christmas lights reflected off the snow, but the sky overhead was dark.

In the distance brave early risers were attempting the drive toward work, their engines gunning and tires slipping on ice-covered hills. Otherwise, the crunch,



crunch, crunch of my boots breaking through the crust of snow was all I could hear. It was a silent night; it was a holy night.

At the end of our street, I turned a corner by the cemetery, my breath visible in the frigid air, my fingers growing numb. Digging into my pocket, I pulled out the Walkman knockoff I had recently purchased with paper route earnings. The foam headphones fit snugly over my head and music filled my ears.

This was the year of “Do They Know It’s Christmas?” This was the latter stage of the Cold War. As a Seattle Post-Intelligencer paperboy, I would soon be delivering the important headlines and holiday advertisements to doorsteps around the neighborhood. People just now waking up and turning on their coffee pots were waiting for me, so I walked on through the snow, cutting a trail across the virgin wonderland.

Still, my mind was elsewhere. Snow meant snow days. I tuned my radio to a news station where announcements were being made about school closures. School by school, the news anchor named the places that were delayed or closed due to treacherous roads. In the dark I darted across Bothell Way, avoiding what little traffic there was, ready to start my route but intently listening, waiting to hear.

Our school was near the end of the alphabet. I threw my first paper onto an apartment porch, expertly landing it on the welcome mat. Still waiting to hear. Morning light began to cross the horizon as I continued down the street, tossing paper after paper, careful to place them in a dry spot. It was the Christmas season, the season of tips, further motivation to keep customers happy.

One time through the list, and no mention of our school. Down the street, my delivery sack growing lighter with each house. Before long, the last paper was handed to a customer waiting at his door, and with a “Merry Christmas!” I turned toward home. The radio announcer was making his way through the list a third time.

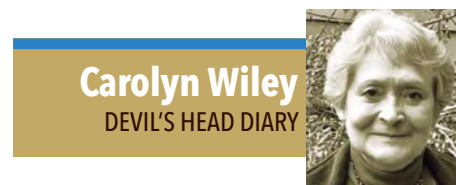
Snow started to fall again. The sky was growing lighter. The new day was dawning. Then, the announcement came. School was cancelled. The joy and excitement felt like the lightness of the empty delivery sack thrown over my shoulder. It was almost Christmas, snow was falling, and school was cancelled. There could be no better news for a

teenage boy on a cold Seattle morning.

That day would later include sledding, hot chocolate, snowball fights, and too much television, but for the moment I walked toward home, reversing my early-morning reverie. Entering our house, I found the lights of our Christmas tree aglow and my father reading his Bible over breakfast, preparing to go to work. Cold weather meant bursting pipes, which was good for his pool business. I wished him a happy day and headed back to my room, changed back into my pajamas, and slipped into bed for a long, warm, winter nap.

On behalf of the churches on the Key Peninsula, I wish you all a joyous Christmas, whether or not it snows. May happy memories warm your heart and the light of life illuminate your path. If you are looking for company, consider yourself invited to join us on Christmas Eve or throughout the season. Wherever and however this season finds you, may you have a Merry Christmas and a blessed new year.

*Award-winning columnist Dan Whitmarsh is pastor at Lakebay Community Church.*



**Carolyn Wiley**  
DEVIL'S HEAD DIARY

## Unexpected Gifts

I always try to follow the family credo, “do what you can with what you got” and “show appreciation for gifts — especially unexpected gifts.”

My better half and I used to spend weekends panning for gold. The primary attraction was wading in mountain streams. Curiously, people look askance at waders, but it is socially acceptable if you carry a fishing pole or a gold-panning pan. Unfortunately, gold-panning pans are regarded as an invitation to chat, so we frequently took buckets of black sand home where we could pan in peace.

One time, David and some buddies were invited to try their luck at a claim on the upper Skagit River. He brought home a bucket of black sand for me. It was a surprisingly rich haul. I had found several large gold flakes in the swirling sand before I noticed a strange, clear circle in the bottom of the pan. When I reached in to retrieve it, it felt like a diamond and looked like a rather large solitaire. I put it in my pocket and continued to keep up the rhythmic swirl and slosh,

only pausing to collect gold flakes and reload the pan because I was focused on panning for gold, not diamonds.

My overactive imagination kicked in as I pondered the sadness of losing such a treasure. I had questions: How did a diamond end up in that particular stretch of the Skagit? How could the stone be returned to its rightful owner?

A few minutes later, another clear spot appeared in the sand and sure enough it was another cut stone. Now this was a different kettle of fish. How did two diamonds end up in the same bucket?

Obviously, a crime was committed, but the only proof was two diamonds in a bucket of black sand. New problem: How to report this crime?

Imagine calling the sheriff and saying, “Well, probably it was a heist, probably the culprits buried the loot along the Skagit, probably the robbery happened years ago, probably the river bank eroded and collapsed, probably the purloined treasure tumbled in the rapids, smashed against boulders and scattered loose gems for miles up and down the river.”

That evening I told David the sad, romantic story about the lost diamond and then went into the more elaborate tale of the heist. His only comment was, “You mean that you just found two diamonds, squirreled them away, and didn’t even tell me? Were you going to keep them a secret?”

My only excuse was, “It didn’t occur to me, I wasn’t panning for diamonds. I was panning for gold.”

I took the two stones to a friend who was a gemologist and several days later she had a verdict. She reported that I should treat them like they were real diamonds because they were such high quality no one would ever guess they were zircon.

Relieved of the anxiety about reporting a crime and returning stolen diamonds, I could hardly wait to share the good news with David. His reaction was unexpected. He laughed so hard he could hardly stand, much less talk. After he recovered, he confessed. One of the guys asked why he was carting off a bucket of sand. David told him that his wife liked to pan. The guy said, “Let’s give her a thrill,” and tossed the stones in the bucket as he explained that he had bought a box of industrial diamonds at an airport auction.

The joke was on me, but such a good one, I had no other choice but to have them set in real gold to memorialize his trickery and honor my Mama’s teaching. I did what I could with what I had and

made a lasting symbol that demonstrates my appreciation for the unexpected gift.

The drop really is one of my favorite pieces of jewelry — wearing it never fails to bring a smile, or maybe it’s a smirk.

*Award-winning columnist Carolyn Wiley lives quietly, for the most part, in Longbranch.*



**Ted Olinger**  
ANOTHER LAST WORD

## A New Season

The signs were unmistakable, but also unexpected.

There was the change of leaves and the return of rain-soaked school buses, of course, and the annual appearance of the local bear on her hind legs grappling with our Asian pear tree for the last of its unripened stones.

But the first real sign was the revival of a lost ritual: the biannual Key Peninsula Civic Center fundraiser gala, in hiatus since the advent of COVID-19.

I had been refusing invitations for so long I didn’t quite know how to accept this one. But I told myself it was a good excuse to air out the mid-century tuxedo I inherited from my dad and to relearn how uncomfortable patent leather dress shoes could be.

A woman with a large glass of champagne accosted me the moment I walked through the doors. I hastily turned down the volume on my hearing aids as she thrust the drink into my hands and launched into an oration regarding the twin influences of Wagner and Stravinsky on the European consciousness before World War I.

As I cut down the feedback in my ears, she reminded me this was a continuation of a conversation spurred by something I had written in Key Peninsula News the last time we saw each other, on New Year’s Eve 2019, at the last formal gala held at the civic center before the pandemic arrived and rewrote our fortunes.

Standing in line at the bar, I met the young mother of a fifth grader at Vaughn Elementary. She was on her own, new to the peninsula, and with nothing better to do thought she’d take advantage of an opportunity to dress up, get out, and meet new people, like most of the capacity crowd.

I told her my son had gone to Vaughn and that I worked for the KP News. She nodded politely and with no easy escape



instead ordered a double martini.

I cranked up my hearing aids and went on to entertain her, I assumed, with tales from my own first fundraiser at the civic center 18 years earlier, coincidentally for the co-op preschool then at Vaughn. The highlight of that evening came when a teacher's aide climbed into a golf cart donated for auction and drove it straight into the dessert table. This had the surprising effect of instantly increasing the value of the smashed desserts, the newly adorned cart, and the teacher's aide herself, who is now an administrator.

The mother of the fifth grader took a long gulp of her martini as I talked and then smiled and fled when I stopped.

A man approached with his hand extended. He wanted to buy me a drink to thank me for my service. I was wearing a medal, pinned next to my boutonniere. I explained the award was for reporting for the KP News during the pandemic, not my duty to the nation. He pointed at the ribbon and said, "Isn't that 'V' for valor?"

"In my case, it's 'verisimilitude.'"

He smirked but paid for my drink before walking away.

Another awkward conversation ensued as I tried to weave my way through various KP illuminati to the sanctuary of my table when another man stopped me with a generous compliment about an article I had not written and that had not been published in the KP News. He was so touched by how well I — meaning someone else — had captured the bitter-sweet moment of a son growing up and leaving his father's home, looking backward through the pages of their years together, reciting what was written in tears and blood. And here he was, so grateful to meet the writer. I thought it

rude to correct him, so I didn't.

But I did promise him, silently, that I would someday try to write it.

I'd almost made it to my table when a newspaper colleague intercepted me. "What's that thing?" she said, flicking a disrespectful finger at my medal.

"It's the KP News award for our work during Covid."

"Well, that's silly."

"Ralston got the first one, posthumously."

Ted Ralston and his wife, Joanna Gormly, were murdered in their Vaughn home May 17, 2020. His friends paid tribute to them at the time, inviting 50 or 60, or maybe it was 150 or 160 of us to the civic center pavilion, where we stood masked up, six feet apart, and wondering what to do until two stalwarts began pouring expensive whisky, Ted's favorite beverage, into cheap plastic cups for us.

The civic center paid tribute to them again in this year's event program. They were dedicated volunteers and Joanna took pride and pleasure assembling the auction books of fundraisers past.

Ted also wrote for the KP News. We worked together occasionally, which meant me crossing out paragraphs he would then rewrite, while we both drank his expensive whisky. He won a statewide award for his piece on the local historian Mary Mazur. His family received our award that autumn. (See "Mary Mazur, Historian," September 2019.)

My colleague and I reported on their deaths ourselves at the beginning of the pandemic, and together with the rest of our crew wrote about everything else we could fit into these pages about all those other things on this peninsula that marked the lives of her people in the two years throughout, within and despite it.

"Would you like your medal?" I asked.

I produced a presentation box I'd hidden in my tux. The award is a red and black ribbon, representing Covid's toll of injury and death, with a gold "V," sewn to a medallion showing Athena in profile accompanied by a winged Nike and the words "summum bonum."

Her eyes glistened just a bit as she held it. "What is the 'V' for?"

"Valor," I said.

Ted Olinger is associate editor of the Key Peninsula News. He has received 10 state awards for journalism, one obscure national award for his book of short stories about the Key Peninsula, and one medal from the KP News. He lives in Vaughn.

## Letters to the Editor

### LOST DOG

This is a humble note of thanks to the Key Peninsula community. Our family dog ran away from Bayside Animal Lodge November 7. We were out of town but after quick phone calls friends and family launched a search. As it happens, it was the wife of a brother firefighter who saw Charlie running away towards the light at State Route 302 and KP Highway. That day was the beginning of a family nightmare that as I write has not ended. Charlie is still not home.

Out of our darkest moments, however, there is light. The light has been the love and support that has come from every inch of our community. My post on social media has been widely shared. Many people have reached out to me personally saying that they are looking, offering support, checking vets, Humane Society pages, and sending ideas about what to do next. They are posting signs, checking trail cameras and offering

stories of hope. This very tough and emotional experience has wrapped me in a huge hug of KP love that I am drawing strength from, and which astounds me.

I want to thank everyone. Thank you for being the light for us. Thank you for your heart, love and support. Thank you for helping bring Charlie home to his family.

Anne Nesbit, Lakebay

Editor's Note: Charlie is a 2-year-old, 70-pound, fixed male black Labradoodle. Fur is feathery, not short like a Lab. Friendly but skittish.

### TRUE JOURNALISM

Your article about WayPoint South and Pastor Mark ("WayPoint South Finds the Key to Home Through Grace on the Peninsula," November) made me want to go to church there — and I already do, and have since the very beginning. You captured our story and our hearts for Jesus, along with using the best quotes from Mark to show his wisdom and open-handed approach to being a Christ follower.

You are also deserving of high praise in your nonjudgmental approach to describing our whole Covid journey and the dilemmas Pastor Mark faced. That was true journalism, capturing the heart and soul of our pastor and congregation without bias either way. I commend you for that choice with admiration and gratitude.

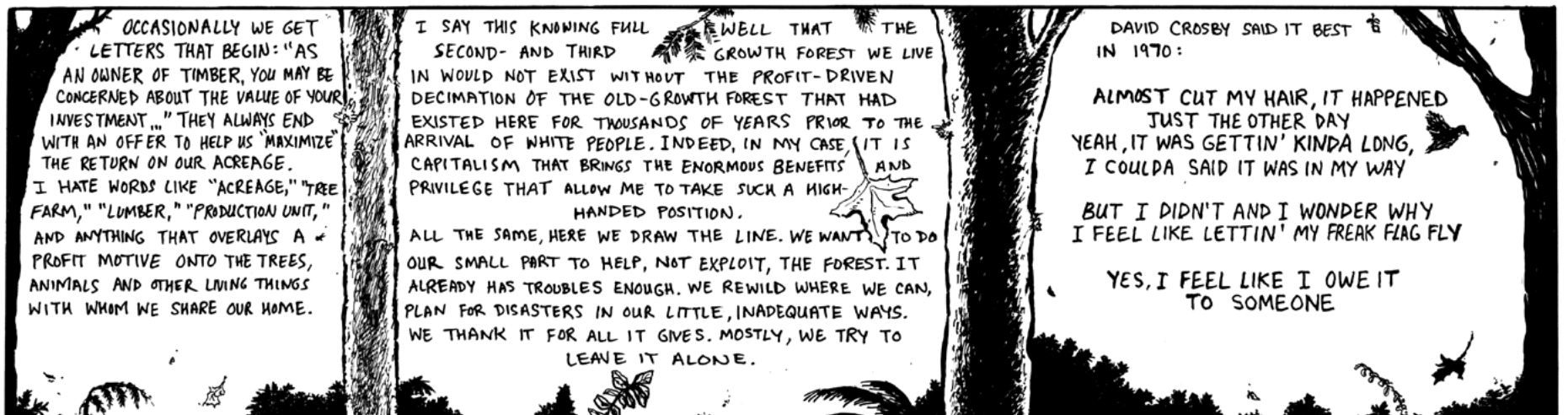
Thank you so much for helping to introduce us so beautifully to the southern end of the Key Peninsula.

Donna Young, Longbranch

### KP NEWS IS BIASED LIBERAL MOUTHPIECE

I respectfully ask you to post this in your biased editorial next to all the amateur writers so bent on constantly

## José Alaniz WE LIVE HERE: ALMOST CUT MY HAIR





voicing their community gripes. Some of those you provide this outlet seem to be making a part-time career out of constantly writing out and sharing their personal thoughts.

Why don't you mix it up a little and provide a different perspective to your audience?

Your webpage is just a mouthpiece for all those passive aggressive hypocrites with leftist ideology that fill the cracks of the KP. The ones with all their liberal bumper stickers that try to force the vehicles behind them to slow down by driving in front of people down the KP Highway at 5 miles under the speed limit.

These liberal do-gooder pretentious folks are not the majority on the KP, regardless of how many keep moving out here and celebrating their new organic lifestyles and wannabe farm/wine life as they leave behind the cities they helped to destroy with their stupid pandering policies. They flee the urban areas they've helped decimate — and are ironically now afraid to raise their children in — to move out to places like the KP with all their crazy backward ideology to start the process all over again.

You are their mouthpiece. They run your news outlet. It's not news; it's pandering gibberish fluff pieces directed towards your preferred target audience. This minority audience of the KP runs your organization and totally taints its integrity. You are pandering for advertisement dollars, a micro effect of what all the major news media corporations do. Sad there is no news left, just biased propaganda.

*Dale Lyman, Taylor Bay*

## OBITUARY

### John D'Addamio

John Nicholas D'Addamio, 76, of Longbranch, passed away October 4. Formerly of Monroe, John and his wife Jan retired to a farm in Longbranch for the past nine years.

Born in Plainfield, New Jersey, John spent most of his early life on the East Coast. He graduated from Rutgers University with a Bachelor of Science in psychology. He was also a Vietnam veteran, serving in the U.S. Army from 1968 to 1970, after which he earned a Master of Science in computer science.

John worked for Western Electric, Lockheed-Martin, Digital Equipment,



Compaq, Boeing and Microsoft. He became knowledgeable in many fields during his professional career, including military air traffic control and computer operating systems.

John married Janice Jackowski in 1972, and they both became involved with the Morgan horse breed. Following the purchase of their first Morgan in 1975, John developed a keen interest and went on to create a computer program for breeders in the American Morgan Horse Association to use in pedigree analysis.

The couple lived in New Jersey for a few years, moved to a farm in southern New Hampshire in 1977, but eventually left for the West Coast in 1988 to a farm in Monroe, Washington. They became interested in the Lipizzan horse breed, and just as he did with the Morgans, John soon became an expert on these rare and wonderful horses.

He attended Lipizzan breeding seminars and horse evaluations, participating in them whenever he could. By coordinating and running riding clinics featuring one of the riders from Vienna's Spanish Riding School, John was instrumental in bringing part of the Lipizzan heritage to Washington state. His interest in dressage and its history grew after working with Dr. H.L.M Van Schaik, who had both practical and theoretical dressage experience. He amassed a large dressage library and rode with many notable dressage riders.

He loved music and was an ardent musician, playing and teaching classical guitar. He was an outstanding cook and became a smoke master in his later years.

John is survived by his wife of 50 years, Janice; his mother Evelyn; his brother George and wife Betsy; his nephew Sean; nieces Danielle and Kate; several cousins; and four much-loved horses.

No one who knew John will ever forget him. With his amazing intelligence and his willingness to share his knowledge to help both horses and humans, he made the world around him a better place.

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# The Bay in the Woods: The Story of Glencove

JOSEPH PENTHEROUDAKIS, KP NEWS

Glen Cove, the sheltered bay up the road from Key Center, is best known today as the site on its northeast shore of YMCA Camp Seymour, where young people have spent summers in the outdoors since 1907. Across the water and a short distance up the hillside stands the historic Glencove Hotel, a three-story Victorian built in the 1890s and restored in the 1970s. The hotel was inducted to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Camp Seymour and the Glencove Hotel are important markers in the history of the secluded cove, but that timeline includes several neglected mileposts along the way to the present.

The first documented visit to the yet-unnamed cove was by a U.S. land office survey crew led by deputy surveyor John J. Lafitte in September 1855. Lafitte was surveying the Willamette Meridian, the all-important north-south reference line that runs through Washington and Oregon and which traverses the Key Peninsula. Lafitte found the land to be “heavily timbered with trees of a very large size,” primarily fir but also cedar, pine, dogwood and maple. Two creeks emptied into the cove at either end of its head, their estuaries forming what he described as an “alder swamp.” The narrow bridge on present-day Cramer Road NW near Camp Seymour crosses the one remaining creek.

Lumber companies were the first private owners of much of that heavily timbered public land. Shoreland logging was straightforward and lucrative: logs were skidded and dumped in the Sound, assembled into rafts and towed to a mill. In 1870 Pope & Talbot, a large company that would end up owning 106,000 acres of timber in Puget Sound by 1892, paid cash for 175 acres south of the entrance to the cove. In 1872 a smaller outfit, Renton & Smith, followed suit, picking up 180 acres on both sides of that entrance.

No pioneering settlers are documented in Glen Cove until the 1880s, a decade that saw an explosive growth in the population of the county and the territory, admitted as a state in 1889. In 1882 William T. Rains of Tacoma purchased 33 acres on the cove’s northeast shore; a year later, in 1883, Joseph W. Reed filed the first homestead claim on 173 acres on its west and north sides that stretched from the waterfront and up the hill to present-day Key Center and the Key Peninsula Highway. There would later be more homestead claims on both sides of the cove, but Reed’s was the only one with access to the bay.

The names of Rains and Reed have been forgotten, but their claims are part of Glen-



Youngsters camping at Camp Seymour out rowing in Glen Cove, August 1931. Photo by Tacoma photographer Chapin Bowen.

*Courtesy Tacoma Public Library.*

cove’s history.

In 1896 Rains sold his land to wealthy Tacoma investor and avid outdoorsman William W. Seymour and his wife Emily, who also loved being out in nature. In 1907, the Seymours offered the Tacoma YMCA use of their bayside property for a summer camp, formally gifting it to the organization in 1920. The camp was officially dedicated in June 1927. The News Tribune reported that it included 18 buildings, among them a large lodge, an administration building, a boathouse, and eight cabins.

Across the bay, Joseph Reed would also eventually sell portions of his homestead, and part of that land is where the Glencove Hotel stands today. The names of Henry (Harry) Winchester and Agnes and Hans Nicholas (Nick) Petersen figure prominently in this part of the story.

Harry Winchester had sailed to British Columbia from his native England in early 1866, a carpenter on the British Navy ship *Clio*. After a few years in British Columbia, Winchester moved south to Kitsap County and after 1884 we find him in Pierce County running a floating logging camp. In 1888 he became co-owner of the steamer *Messenger*,

and he would be known as Capt. Winchester for the rest of his life. He sold the *Messenger* shortly before it was destroyed by fire in Tacoma in 1894.

In Pierce County, Winchester met Nick, a German immigrant, and his wife Agnes, born to German parents in Nebraska. The trio would become lifelong friends and business partners, operating the logging camp and hiring themselves out on logging contracts around the Key Peninsula, with Agnes working as the camp’s cook.

In the late 1880s Winchester and the Petersens took on a contract on the shores of Glen Cove, then known as Balch’s Cove (see sidebar), where a post office would be established in 1891. Winchester came to own 40 acres of Reed’s homestead. In 1892 he partitioned the parcel, selling a roughly 30-acre section to Agnes Petersen for \$2,000 in December of that year. It is on that parcel that Nick and Agnes went on to build their elegant three-story house around 1896, a house they shared with Winchester until his death in 1909.

To supplement their income the Petersens started taking in boarders; in a few years they were running a successful seasonal resort hotel.

## KEEPS MARRIAGE A SECRET

**Friends of Captain Lorenz, of Steamer Typhoon, Just Finding Out That He Is a Benedict.**

The many friends of Captain Ed Lorenz learned yesterday that the genial skipper of the steamer *Typhoon* had stolen a march on them and taken unto himself a wife. The *Typhoon* is in much demand in the summer time for excursion parties and Captain Lorenz has long been noted for his gallantry to the women, though everybody looked upon it as a settled fact that he was a confirmed bachelor.

Sunday, January 7, the *Typhoon* was two hours late leaving Belch’s Cove for Tacoma and the many passengers noted the fact, as the captain of the *Typhoon* prides himself not a little on running on schedule time. He offered no explanation for the delay and it had passed out of the minds of those who were on the boat that day until they learned that the captain was married to Miss Christena Gilbertson on that particular Sunday.

The bride had been teaching school at Glencove and living with her sister, Mrs. E. J. Hermans. The newly married couple are now at home at 1319 North K street and are being congratulated by their many friends as fast as they learn of the wedding, which took place three weeks ago.

Balch’s Cove (misspelled as Belch’s Cove) was still used in reference to the bay for several years after Glencove had become the name of the village. *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, Jan. 28, 1900, accessed at [newspapers.com](http://newspapers.com).





Undated photo of the west shore of Glen Cove with the Petersens' house and onetime hotel on the left. Orchards extended up the hill behind the house. *Courtesy Key Peninsula Historical Society*

Agnes' warm hospitality became legendary, and guests were treated to her unparalleled cooking — her roast chicken and homemade German noodles were much in demand. Meals included fruit and vegetables that Nick grew in their large orchard and garden. Among the hotel's regular visitors were the Seymours, who chartered a boat with friends from Tacoma or took the steamer to Gig Harbor, riding their bikes to Glencove on what Emily Seymour would later describe as "a pleasant ride through the woods."

By the early 1900s Glencove was home to several households, as Floyd Oles describes in his 1986 memoir "Glencove: Scenes From a Puget Sound Boyhood." Oles was 9 years old when the family moved to Glencove in 1905, where they would stay until 1910. In addition to the post office and the store there was now a schoolhouse for the community's children, on the hillside north of the Petersens' property. The original schoolhouse was eventually rebuilt and is still in existence, now used as a private residence. Oles' memoir is rich with snapshots, some sentimental but all informative, of growing up in Glencove, of swimming in the bay, or exploring the woods with his playmates, a group that included the

daughter of an Indian family nearby.

Winchester and the Petersens continued to be the main characters in the story of Glencove, helping the community establish itself. The opening in 1902 of the first road connecting Vaughn and Glencove and the construction in 1906 of Glencove's community hall are two examples of their civic engagement.

The Vaughn-Glencove road was the result of a petition to the county by Nick Petersen, approved by the county surveyor on the grounds that there was "no other road ... of equal utility for the citizens residing in the vicinity of said proposed road." Designated as County Road 624, the road followed 92nd Street NW starting at Lackey County Road, continuing east up and over the hill across Key Center and then down Cramer Road NW, turning right at the bottom of the hill at Glencove Road and terminating at the sandspit where the post office was located, for a total distance of just over two miles. At the time Winchester was serving as Pierce County commissioner, a post to which he had been elected in 1900 and then again in 1902 on a platform promising better roads, so he undoubtedly supported or may even have suggested Petersen's petition.

## FROM BALCH'S COVE TO GLENCOVE — AND GLEN COVE

The earliest name for the bay was Balch's (or Balch) Cove, attested for the first time in an 1884 notice in the Tacoma Daily Ledger and spelled Bolchis Cove. The origin of the name is unclear. It has been suggested that the bay was named for Capt. Lafayette Balch (1825-1862), lumber trader and founder of Steilacoom, but there is no evidence linking him to Balch's Cove.

In 1891 a post office under the name Balch was established in Balch's Cove. In 1896, during postmaster Emery J. Hermans' tenure (1894-1905), that name was changed to Glencove, written as one word, which soon became the name of the community itself, surviving the closure of the Glencove post office in 1924. Hermans is said to have suggested the name change to prevent confusion with another similarly named post office. However, there is no record of such a post office in Washington or anywhere else in the nation at the time, so perhaps the name was changed for no other reason than the locals preferred it to Balch.

The bay itself was known as Balch's Cove until at least the 1920s, by which time the name of the village had also come to refer to the body of water, written in that case as two words. Although individual usage varies to this day, maps and other official documents use Glencove for places on land, reserving Glen Cove for the bay.

that entity came in existence.

Agnes died in 1931, but her granddaughter Agnes (Aggie) Whitmore continued her grandparents' tradition of generosity. By 1957 the building had fallen into disrepair, leading the association to vote to put the property on the market, turn the proceeds over to the newly organized Key Peninsula Civic Center Association, and dissolve the corporation. Eager to help, Aggie, who was also secretary of the association, paid the appraised price of \$600 in October of that year, helping fund the civic center.

The story of Glencove would not be complete without mentioning Larry and Luciann Nadeau of Gig Harbor, who purchased the hotel, which by then was used as a private residence, in 1975 and lovingly restored and operated it as the Olde Glencove Hotel for decades. Larry passed away several years ago; Luciann died in October.

The historic hotel is quiet now but still graces Glencove, much like it did almost 130 years ago. And thanks to the Nadeaus, who helped add it to the National Registry of Historic Places, it is now part of our national heritage.

Agnes and Nick Petersen and their good friend Harry Winchester would be proud. ■

The Glencove community hall was built in 1906 thanks to a successful effort led by Agnes Petersen. As places for entertainment, performances, lectures or just socializing, community halls served an important function in the peninsula's isolated communities. The cost of building the hall was to be covered by contributions of money and/or labor.

The Key Peninsula Historical Society's archive has preserved a large cache of documents relating to the hall, including what appear to be notes from an organizational meeting dated April 4, 1906, with the names of the first subscribers and their contributions. Floyd Oles' father, U. (Ulysses) S. Oles, who paid in \$20 (about \$600 today), tops the list, followed by Agnes who also contributed \$20, but added three days of work.

The hall was located on land owned by the Pomeroy family to the west of the bridge over the creek at the northeast shore. In 1920, as the community was preparing to formally organize the Glencove Community Hall Association as a nonprofit corporation, Agnes bought the part of the land, about a tenth of an acre, where the hall stood, from Christina King Pomeroy for \$15, donating it to the association in 1922 for one dollar when



## The Passing of Key Peninsula Icon ‘Chainsaw Sue’

She felled trees, tended bar, and would challenge anyone who dared to leg wrestle, while raising two children by herself.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Longtime Key Peninsula resident, champion tree-topper, Huckleberry Inn bartender and renowned leg wrestler Sue Taylor died peacefully at her Burley home October 20. She was 67 years old.

“We knew her health was declining, but we thought we had longer than this,” said her daughter, Stephanie Kennell.

Born in Great Falls, Montana, Taylor moved to Artondale when she was 6 years old. “They lived on a farm and my mom used to sit on top of the silo and do her homework, and to get away from the other kids,” Kennell said. “There were five kids; she was the middle child. So, she had to be tough.”

Taylor graduated from Peninsula High School in 1973 and left Gig Harbor to see the world.

“She traveled all around Europe from about age 19 to 24,” Kennell said. “She worked as a bartender on military bases to make money and keep traveling. She lived in Germany for years; she taught herself German and bicycled all over.”

Taylor found her way back to the States and wound up in Missouri, “where she met my dad and where my brother and I were born,” Kennell said.

The couple divorced and Taylor moved to the Key Peninsula with her two children, since she had family nearby, but raised them as single mother.

“She was always a bartender as a fall-back, but she was a logger,” Kennell said. “She used to split firewood and sell it, make us buck it up and load it and stack it, for years. We’d go and cut boughs and collect mushrooms, and she had a place she sold the mushrooms



Sue Taylor died at home October 20.

*Courtesy Stephanie Kennell*

to, and she had a place she sold the boughs to.

“She loved it. I don’t know why. She was so capable. Anytime my brother or I said, ‘I can’t do it,’ she’d say, ‘Yes, you can.’”

Leslie Livingston of Lakebay used

to babysit Kennell.

“I’ve known Sue since I was 17 — met at the Huck,” Livingston said. “My dad introduced me to her. He said, ‘You know she’s a tree-topper. The only woman I know who can do that job. She’s a badass.’”

The legend of Chainsaw Sue was born.

“It’s what all the other loggers on the peninsula called her,” Kennell said. “Anybody who saw her use a chainsaw

was amazed; it was like an extension of her arm. It was so effortless.”

“She bartended at the Huck, so when I was over 21 and I was able to legally go in there we’d talk together,” Livingston said. “She had a smile and a personality that just lit up the whole room. You couldn’t help but be drawn to her.”

And sometimes you had no choice.

“She would bet guys to do leg wrestling,” Livingston said. “She would literally get on the floor and start leg wrestling for drinks, or just because. I never saw her lose.”

“It was magnificent to watch this woman,” Kennell said. “She would leg wrestle literally anybody. She leg-wrestled an entire baseball team in the parking lot of the Huckleberry Inn, twice, because these guys couldn’t believe they got beat by a girl.”

Chainsaw Sue also competed in the annual KP logging shows throughout the 1990s.

“She climbed a 90-foot pole with her chainsaw hanging off her hip — raced up, climbing — and then lopped off the top and raced down,” Kennell said. “She kicked everybody’s butt all

the time.”

Kennell graduated from PHS in 1999 and went to Clover Park Technical College. Sue came with her to Tacoma and then south to Vancouver. “She was taking it a little bit easier,” Kennell said. “She was still always rowdy, bartending in Woodland.”

Sue had both knees replaced at the same time in 2010.

“And for the first time in like, 10 years, she was all, ‘Look, I can run,’ and she was running down the sidewalk and I was like no, no, no, don’t do that,” Kennell said. “But that was her spirit.”

Kennell and Sue returned to the KP area just a few years ago. Kennell was looking for houses in Home when her mom suggested it might be better if they lived closer to a hospital, since her health was deteriorating.

She spent some time in and out of St. Anthony Hospital over the summer, until Chainsaw Sue told her daughter she wanted to go home.

“She knew,” Kennell said. “She kept telling me, ‘I’m fine, I’m fine.’ Her tone was so mellow and reassuring.

“She’s always just wanted to live. And she did.”

When Kennell posted the news on Facebook, many comments from the peninsula poured in.

“A true KP character. My favorite kind of person.”

“I thought (planting a tree) on the KP would be a good tribute for the chainsaw legend, so her legacy can live forever.”

“We will rev our chainsaws extra loud today. RIP.” ■

**“WE WILL REV OUR CHAINSAWS  
EXTRA LOUD TODAY. RIP.”**

## KP News Archive Updated With New Finds Dating Back to the 1970s

STAFF REPORT

Key Peninsula News received two large boxes of past editions after the KP Historical Society did some end of summer cleaning in August. Most of the copies were duplicate editions that had already been scanned and uploaded to the online archive, but there were at least 30 new additions to add to the collection.

Staff members Ted Olinger and Joseph

Pentheroudakis volunteered hundreds of hours in 2017 and 2018 working to collect, scan and archive every article, photograph, advertisement and edition published in the KP News they could find — 44 years’ worth.

The archive begins with the earliest known copy of what was then called The KP Civic Center Newsletter in October 1975. That edition refers to earlier issues, but none have been located nor is it known how many were printed before

then.

Other than those earliest editions, the online archive contains all but 14 issues of the KP News over its 49 year history. The hardcopies were donated to the Tacoma Public Library for cataloging and preservation.

Published at least once a month (sometimes more) and free to the community, the publication became the Key Peninsula Newsletter in December 1978, and then evolved into the Key Peninsula News in

June 1984 as its circulation increased.

The newspaper was shut down in August 2002 by its owner, the KP Civic Center, due to mismanagement. It was resurrected by board members in February 2003 as financially and editorially independent from the civic center, and has been published as a monthly nonprofit, and award-winning, newspaper ever since.

The archive is available at [keypennews.org/eeditions/](http://keypennews.org/eeditions/) ■



ATTACK FROM PAGE 1

emergency room were pretty well established. “We had reached a plateau and it was just getting it done,” one staff member said.

Those working in the hospital wards described significant disruption. Fax machines could not handle the message load. Procedures were cancelled, delayed or rescheduled. Some patients were transferred to other hospitals. Providers could not review X-rays or results unless they went to the radiology department, where the line extended into the halls. It was nearly impossible to communicate a discharge plan or medication list to a patient’s outpatient doctor.

“Providers from other systems were affected by the cyberattack,” said Jennifer Kriedler-Moss, Peninsula Community Health Services CEO. “They cared for patients who were having problems accessing care and were referred to them from the Franciscan Virginia Mason network. Even though the systems were recovered, it will take some time until all records are entered, and care is again completely re-coordinated. The ramifications will be felt for some time.”

The CommonSpirit event is not unique. According to a 2018 report produced by a task force including staff from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, \$6.2 billion was lost in 2016 due to data breaches in the nation’s healthcare system.

Electronic health records have become integral to healthcare over the last two decades. They are how providers record patient care, order tests, view results, and communicate with one another. Patients can use a portal to send messages to their provider, request prescription refills and look up test results. But the very advantages that an interconnected system offers leads to increased vulnerability to cyberattacks.

In a ransomware attack, hackers gain access to sensitive computer networks and demand substantial money to release their control.

The FBI has warned that ransomware hackers target companies with significant time-sensitive financial events. Samantha Liss, a reporter for the online news service Healthcare Dive, noted that the CommonSpirit incident occurred three years following a large merger, and that it was in the middle of a sizeable debt issuance.

In updates on their website in November, CommonSpirit announced that it had hired Daniel Barchi, an executive with a military background, as its chief information officer. He will lead the ongoing response to the cyberattack. Nationwide, most providers had regained access to their systems and the



St. Anthony Hospital in Gig Harbor was one of the hospitals affected by the cyberattack.

Tina McKail, KP News

patient portal was functioning, CommonSpirit said.

“To further assist and support our team in the investigation and response process, we engaged leading cybersecurity specialists and notified law enforcement,” the organization posted. “We recognize that our stakeholders may have questions about their data, and we continue to conduct a thorough forensics investigation and review of our systems — which, in part, seeks to determine if any data was impacted.”

Exactly what the CommonSpirit breach entailed, how it was resolved, and whether a ransom was paid have not been made public.

Some reporting is required, however. A federal law passed in March 2022 requires all companies in critical infrastructure sectors, including healthcare, to report cyber incidents within 72 hours and ransom payments within 24 hours. At the state level, companies must inform individuals about a data breach within 45 days and must report to the attorney general’s office within 60 days if more than 500 people are involved.

The common security threats to organizations include email phishing attacks, ransomware attacks, loss or theft of equipment or data, insider and accidental or intentional data loss. Mitigation efforts include email protection systems, network management, incident response, medical device security, and cybersecurity policies.

One take-home lesson, said one IT leader, is for all individuals to take precautions themselves. “Don’t use the same password, consider getting a password protection program, and use dual authentication,” he said. ■



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## Christmas Open House

Veterans and their families are invited to a special holiday gathering Monday, **December 19 from 7 to 8 pm** at the KP Lutheran Church, refreshments served.

KP Veterans Group welcomes veterans and families to be part of a special organization that helps local veterans on a regular basis; puts on the largest “Aisle of Honor” west of the Mississippi; supports Food Backpacks for Kids, food banks and KP elementary schools; and gathers Christmas gifts for the Lakewood Veterans Home. We meet 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7-8pm at KP Lutheran. Call Ray Flowers at 253 884 2626.





Ed Johnson, KP News

## Eagles and the Genius of Bird Flight

Into the  
**WILD**  
EXPLORING WITH THE  
KP NATURE GUIDE

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

I'm not sure how I see them. It is the most turbulent day of winter yet. Wind tears through the firs that surround Key Center. I scuttle across the highway and aim for Capitol Lumber, eyes down, hunched against spitting rain.

Nonetheless the eagles catch my attention. There are three working the sky to the east. Among scraps of low clouds, they buck and wheel, twist, rip downwind with awesome speed. I realize they are playing catch with the gusts, wrapping their huge wings around them and hurtling up and down like trapeze artists.

I watch for a few minutes. At one point 100 robins leap from trees to the north and, battling like fish in a current, attempt to cross town. A group of 20 are flipped around and sent flying back the way they came.

When I come out of the lumber store the eagles have been replaced by gulls. On slender wings they arc and flash. Again, I watch. The rain is just as harsh as before but somehow it now feels invigorating. I think of my most miserable days on the coast when the wind is so strong that waves fracture at their crests and saltwater pummels the forest. Even then the gulls are aloft above the waves, electrified, dipping into troughs and getting soaked, letting themselves be carried up and away. Like albatrosses and shearwaters, fellow seabirds that cross hundreds of miles of ocean without flapping once, gulls know that wind charges the sky with possibility.

Eagles might feel the same, I'm thinking.

Normally their flight is labored. Today they cavort.

And these are conditions that would keep a small aircraft grounded. For how much people have looked to birds for inspiration when it comes to designing flying machines, the exact mechanics of bird flight have remained surprisingly elusive, particularly on turbulent days like this. A thousand feet above me, the wind is likely a smooth stream of rushing air. Here, near the surface, where hills and trees fracture the wind into eddies and slipstreams, shearing it at odd angles that conflict and fight, micro-gusts cannot be predicted. They can only be reacted to, and that is the genius of bird flight.

The most obvious parts of a bird's flight system are its feathers and musculoskeletal system. Feathers create a contoured shape to catch and cut through the air. Pectoral muscles attached to a keel of bone along with hollow bones forming wings create the ability to flap and glide. Scientific models have focused on one or the other: aerodynamics or biomechanics.

But it's where the two meet that things get interesting and so complex they prove impossible to track in a living bird, much less recreate in mechanical form.

Three types of muscles connect wing bones to feathers, uniting them in guilds called feather tracts, interconnecting the tracts, and in some cases giving special control over individual feathers. These muscles can be very difficult to find in dissection, as they are often hidden in elastic ligaments. One study calls the whole setup a

"black box." As a bird reacts to small perturbations in the wind, it shifts its feathers and their tracts to alter its wing shape in endless permutations. A bald eagle has over 7,000 feathers.

No wonder we cannot model the "aeroelastic" flight of birds. While our science and aircraft are built upon the control of variables, wild creatures respond to variables, using and dodging them as naturally as we catch our balance when we stumble. Driving home, two ravens blast through the treetops. They're the ultimate storm-bolt of a bird, coming alive in the most adverse conditions, laughing, hitting branches and doing barrel rolls as they go.

But today it's all about the eagles. At a beach near home, I watch as another three appear over a far shoreline. Without flapping or losing altitude they come soaring overhead with feathers constantly adjusting. With a start I realize the wind is at my back. They are soaring upwind, 45 degrees off the headwind, with the magic of sailboats.

Later, over a large beaver pond there are eight eagles in constant motion. Others pass by on the horizon. Washington sees an influx of thousands of eagles each winter. How many are on the Key Peninsula today?

The eagles over the pond swoop up at each other in loose pairs, flapping hard to draw close high in the air, almost courting. I wonder if I am witnessing the reunion of our local mated pairs. Recent GPS tracking of eagles has revealed that many of the eagles that breed in western Washington have an interesting reverse migration. In

late summer, after they have left their newly flying offspring to their fates, they head north and spend several months as vagabonds, poaching fish in rivers and lakes all the way into Alaska and the Yukon. Besides there being more fish farther north, many of the runs are earlier than our own.

And mated pairs, which mate for life and use the same nest year after year, do not necessarily travel together. One of the first pairs to be outfitted with satellite trackers were from the Skagit River. The male followed the coast north until he found rich herring pickings off Prince Rupert, near the Alaska panhandle. The female, however, crossed three mountain ranges to the east and made it all the way to Great Slave Lake in northern Alberta, where she probably hunted Northern pikeminnow.

Eagles such as these return as fall turns to winter, when turbulence fills the sky and freshets flush the creeks. That is when our salmon come, and that is when mated eagles renew their pair bonds with displays like those today, which last well after sunset.

Again and again the eagles turn into the windstorm and let its violence carry them higher, higher. They flap hard to nip at the tails of their mates. They flip on their backs and flash their talons. Though I do not witness it today, sometimes these teases, which blur the line between play and power, turn into the ultimate bald eagle display, when two eagles grasp talons midair and spin around each other in freefall, cartwheeling out of the sky, letting go to glide away mere feet from the ground. ■



## MUSTARD SEED FROM PAGE 1

The residence consists of three homes in a single longhouse situated on 5 acres across the street from TMSP office, called the Crandall Center, overlooking Key Center at 9016 154th Ave. Court NW. Each home will house 10 elders in private apartments with bathrooms and kitchenettes surrounding large common areas and full kitchens, with extensive gardens and trails outside. Nine rooms are reserved for low income elders, and one home will be dedicated to elders requiring memory care.

Edie Morgan founded The Mustard Seed Project in 2006 as a mission to help KP elders remain in their homes as long as possible with whatever volunteer assistance she could coordinate. But even with all of the other work, building a place for elders to live on the KP — Morgan's "audacious vision" — is what unified the project and its people, Blegen said.

"I feel great joy that this beautiful home for elders is about to open, and I am profoundly grateful to the hundreds, hundreds, of people who have made it possible," Morgan said.

"For many years, Key Peninsula elders in need of supportive care have had to leave the community to find it," Blegen said. "Now there will be an option for them to live here to stay connected to their community and their friends."

The first elders will be moving in January 16, he said.

The Village will be managed by Concepts in Community Living according to the Green House Project principles of assisted living, under the supervision of TMSP.

Denise Mecartea is working as executive director of the Village, but her title is "guide."

"I'm still going through school right now, learning the Green House Project theory," she said. "It's learning how to coach the staff in having a good mindset treating people ... doing things like they're in their own homes, instead of in a regimented, traditional way."

Mecartea has worked in assisted living homes for 30 years in Washington state, and taught caregiver classes for the Department of Social and Health Services. She said the Village will have about 22 people on staff and that hiring is underway.

Well over 200 people showed up for the opening, indicating something about its import to the community. Blegen acknowledged the many individuals and organizations who made the Village possible, from representatives in Congress, the Legislature and Pierce County, to the architects, contractor, loan officers and local



Executive Director Eric Blegen and Operations Director Maureen Reilly. See more photos online. *Tina McKail, KP News*



Edie Morgan addresses the crowd. *Tina McKail, KP News*

foundations, like the William A. Looney Family, the Russell Family, the Stanleys, the Tulalip Tribe and half a dozen others — nearly all of whom were present.

Blegen also thanked the board members past and present and smaller donors: "We received almost \$2 million in individual donations. Without that community support, we wouldn't have been able to leverage all the other support for the project; this community was essential for that."

Frank Garratt, chair of the capital campaign committee, said "the experts" told them it would take two years to reach their goal of \$8 million to build the Village.

"What did it really take? Almost eight

years and \$14 million. But we made it," he said, singling out fellow committee members Sara Thompson for her "bulldog" determination and Norm McLaughlin for his expertise in finding government funding.

The committee had to raise just under \$6 million in donations and grants to secure a USDA loan for the balance required to build, which was an additional \$7.8 million.

"If we knew how big the mountain was, we may never have started our journey, and to be honest it was more like a mountain range," said Thompson, who served as TMSP board president as well as on the capital campaign committee. (Thompson is also president of the KP

News publishing board and a frequent contributing writer.)

"I want to especially acknowledge Eric, our executive director, and Marion (Sharp), our development director," she said. "The rest of us worked hard; they lived and breathed this project 24/7."

Morgan added to the sentiment by saying, "My very special and enduring thanks to Eric for picking up the baton in this marathon and running the most challenging part of this long race — four years of managing the millions of details actually required to build this project related to funding, construction and implementation of the precious ideals we had before his arrival. (Blegen succeeded Morgan as TMSP executive director in 2018.)"

"I am so grateful that I didn't have to manage all of that; it's much easier to be the visionary," she said. "And my heartfelt, lifelong thanks to Sara Thompson, who has been the very backbone of this very long and deeply challenging project. Without her ... this beautiful home simply would not have been built. She is the unsung hero of this story."

Morgan closed the ceremony by saying, "We have lived out two parables of the mustard seed. The tiniest of seeds has grown to become a protective shelter with great branches ... and through our shared faith, just the size of a mustard seed, mountains have been moved."

Frank Garratt cut the ribbon, opening the Village to the KP community.

"And we all lived happily ever after," Morgan said. ■



## Two Peninsula School Levies Up for Renewal

STAFF REPORT

The Peninsula School District board of directors voted at its November 9 meeting to put two property tax levy renewals to the voters in an election scheduled for Feb. 14, 2023.

Proposition 1 is a three-year Replacement Educational Programs and Operations Levy to replace the current one, which will expire at the end of 2023. The operations levy makes up approximately 18% of the district's budget for things not fully funded by the state, including school nurses, athletics, arts and preventive maintenance. The estimated tax rate starts at \$1.13 per \$1,000 of property value in 2024, raising about \$27 million in its first year, and decreasing by one cent in each of the following years.

Proposition 2 is a six-year Safety, Security and Technology Levy to pay for building access controls, cameras and communications, cybersecurity and classroom devices. The rate for this levy would be 0.25 cents per \$1,000 of property value, raising \$6 million in its first year.

In 2019, voters approved a \$198.55 million school construction bond, the first in two decades, used to build new schools and refurbish old ones. PSD said the combined rates of both school levies plus the existing bond is estimated to be \$1.82 per \$1,000 in 2024, lower than this year's levy-plus-bond rate of \$2.01 in 2022. ■

## Delayed SR-302-Purdy Culvert Replacement

STAFF REPORT

The Washington State Department of Transportation announced November 15 that a culvert replacement beneath the State Route 302 spur on Purdy Drive, south of 144th Street NW, has been postponed until spring.

WSDOT planned to use a parallel road just east of the spur, Purdy Drive NW, as a detour during the year-long project, but weather delayed necessary paving improvements there to handle the increased vehicle load. Delivery of a temporary traffic signal for the intersection of 144th and Purdy Drive NW was also delayed.

The state plans to replace a series of culverts under SR-302 with a 77-foot long bridge over Purdy Creek that empties into Burley Lagoon to improve fish passage.

Two other culverts that run under SR-16 and other obstacles further upstream are already being replaced. That portion of the project, which involves diverting lanes of both east- and westbound traffic, is expected to take two years. ■

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## Come See How Good Assisted Living Can Be

Maybe you'd like to work at the Village; or you'd like to see if it is a place a relative might want to enjoy an easier way of living.

This month, we are hosting **tours every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon** from 3:30 to 5:30.

Stop in for a tour and refreshments. Come learn about life

at the Village! We're across the street from Mustard Seed Project on the hill above Key Center, 9115 154th Ave. Ct. NW, Lakebay 98349

Need a tour at a different time? Call Denise Mecartea at 253 900-9936 or email her at [guide@mustardseedvillage.org](mailto:guide@mustardseedvillage.org).

[mustardseedvillage.org](http://mustardseedvillage.org)





## Crabbing Not Likely to Return Near KP in Foreseeable Future

Despite five years of closure, the Dungeness crab population in the South Sound has not recovered. Red rock crab numbers are also in decline.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

A Key Peninsula tradition — rowing to a favorite spot to set out a crab pot or wading during low tide with a net or a pitchfork to scoop up a meal's worth of fresh crab — came to a halt in 2018. The near collapse of the Dungeness crab population in South Puget Sound led to prohibition of crabbing in all waters south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, designated Marine Area 13 by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Despite the closure there is little sign of improvement, and barring unexpected evidence of recovery, local crabbing will remain on hold for the foreseeable future.

“When we first closed the season in 2018 there was so much public sentiment that all you have to do is close off the fisheries and they will come back,” said Don Velasquez, shellfish manager for the WDFW. “Now we are moving to the problem of if they don't come back how to deal with people who want to crab.”

The cause of the collapse is probably multifactorial and is still being studied. If overfishing were to blame, populations would have shown signs of recovery by now, Velasquez said.

Recent data from the Pacific Northwest Crab Research Group using light traps showed that the number of larvae in south Puget Sound — the supply side of the equation — is much lower than in the north. Acidification and warming of Puget Sound waters may have an adverse impact on survival in the early stages of development.

Female Dungeness crabs can store sperm after mating for up to two-and-a-half years. Once fertilized eggs are released, the larvae remain suspended in the water for about four months, are carried to their ultimate destination by tides and currents, and then settle to the bottom to mature. It takes about four years for males to reach the legal harvesting size of 6.25 inches. Females cannot be taken.

Although the crab population has declined modestly in the more northern parts of Puget Sound, the devastating loss has been limited to South Puget Sound and the southern end of Hood Canal.

The South Sound has never been open to state commercial crabbing, leaving the harvest to be split between tribal and recreational fishers.

Historically the total catch has been less than 5% of the state total. The Dungeness harvest peaked in Marine Area 13 in



Scenes like this may be a thing of the past in Puget Sound waters south of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. *Caleb Galbreath, KP News archives*

2012 at 285,505 pounds and fell to 9,457 pounds in 2017, a decline of 96.7%. By contrast, the northern fishery harvest peaked at more than 10 million pounds in 2015-16 and was just over 8 million pounds this year.

Washington State has 13 marine areas encompassing the Pacific coast, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound. The Dungeness harvest is recorded each year by marine area, and since 2015 WDFW has evaluated the crab population with preseason test trapping.

Test traps for Marine Area 13 are set in late February. Fifteen traps, with a mesh diameter of 5 inches, are placed in each of eight locations for 24 hours. The number, size and gender of each crab is recorded. In 2015, there were an average of 2.43 crabs per trap. That fell to 0.68 in 2018; there was a modest increase to 1.16 in 2022. Of those, 82% were legal-sized males. Traps in the Whidbey Island region typically have 15 to 20 times the number of crabs and a wider distribution of sizes.

“It is like someone turned off the faucet. The little ones are not coming back into the system,” Velasquez said of Marine Area 13.

There has been pressure on WDFW to



A red rock crab held at arms-length for a good portrait shot. *Tina McKail, KP News*

allow red rock crab fishing, but a number of factors make that unlikely. Enforcement would be difficult and there would be risk of injury to Dungeness crabs trapped and released.

Velasquez said that some areas may open for red rock crab where it is known Dungeness crabs are rare, and if methods other than traps are used. But there are administrative hurdles. By law all crab harvesting

must be shared with the tribes, and at this point there is no process for estimating the red rock population or how many are harvested. These details would all have to be resolved.

In addition, although red rock crabs are faring better than Dungeness, their numbers have also declined. The average total number in each trap peaked in 2016 at 10.3. This year the number fell to 3.6. ■



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## Color Your Holidays: Champion the Vegetables!

CAROLYN BENEPE

Nutrition guidance can seem near-ridiculous, ever-changing and easily dismissed. In mid-life I went back to college to study nutrition, it was years and years of chemistry and not too much about food. Luckily, I had previously worked in all capacities of the food business. My goal was to build a bridge between nutritional science and the culinary world, blending the sensibilities of both disciplines into delicious and nutritious food that fosters good health. I will always think of myself as a cook first, albeit also a registered dietitian/nutritionist, food and nutrition educator, and shameless advocate of fruits and vegetables.

Fill half your plate with vegetables. That's the dietary advice for people with diabetes and we would all do well to follow suit. I'm not saying that half your plate needs to be covered in broccoli unless that's your choice. You could have a serving of coleslaw and butternut squash or a tossed salad and roasted cauliflower, or maybe Waldorf salad and green beans. You get the idea: load up on vegetables, include them in every meal, even two or more varieties.

I can almost hear the collective groan just putting words to this concept. Still, I remain a champion for vegetable consumption. They are great sources of fiber loaded with good nutrition, anti-inflammatory vitamins, and are a significant part of all heart-healthy and diabet-

ic-friendly menus. Vegetables and fruits can be locally grown, and with 1,097 vegetable species cultivated worldwide, and typically about 200 different items in the produce section, there are sure to be a few you can enjoy.

### Hot and Spicy Vegetables

The vegetable choices can be what you most enjoy but for starters I'd suggest carrots, red potatoes and green beans since they take up the marinade nicely, have a variety of colors and shapes, and are good finger-foods. As an appetizer item, you will want to figure on one pound of vegetables for every six people.

Blanching vegetables is no more than steaming or boiling them until just tender and then plunging them into an ice bath to stop the cooking process and set the bright color.

#### Marinade:

2/3 cup light soy sauce  
1/2 cup hot chili oil  
1/3 cup toasted sesame oil  
1/3 cup vegetable oil  
10 cloves garlic, minced

#### Vegetables:

1/2 pound baby carrots  
1/2 pound green beans, ends trimmed  
1 pound red potatoes washed and cut in approximately 1-inch pieces, or small new potatoes

Assemble marinade ingredients in container. Cover and refrigerate.

Boil a large stock pot filled two-thirds with water and set up a large bowl with ice water nearby.

Starting with the potatoes, cook in boiling water until just tender. Using slotted spoon, transfer potatoes to a separate bowl and drizzle with marinade while hot. (Potatoes do not need an ice bath.)

Next, add your carrots to the boiling water and when just tender transfer to the ice bath. Once cool, remove from ice bath to a separate container.

Add green beans to the boiling water and cook until just tender, then transfer to ice bath, cool, and remove from water.

To assemble the veggie tray, divide your serving platter into three rows and fill each with a single kind of vegetable and drizzle marinade over everything.

### Jimtown Yummies

Years ago, we were traveling in California wine country and our host suggested we eat at the Jimtown store. It was there I met "my" sandwich: fig and olive paste, ripe pear, goat cheese and prosciutto with a drizzle of balsamic reduction on great bread. I savored every morsel and once home started replicating it in an appetizer I call Jimtown Yummies.

Fig and Olive tapenade (adapted from epicurious.com)

1 cup quartered dried black mission figs

1½ cups water

2 cups pitted brine-cured Kalamata olives, coarsely chopped



3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
1 tablespoon whole grain mustard  
2 garlic cloves, chopped  
1 tablespoon drained nonpareil capers  
2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary  
1 cup extra virgin olive oil  
Freshly ground pepper  
Kosher salt

In a heavy medium saucepan, combine the figs and water. Set over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Partially cover and cook, stirring once or twice until the figs are very tender, about 30 minutes. Cool slightly, then drain, reserving 1 tablespoon of the liquid. In a food processor combine figs, olives, lemon juice, mustard, garlic, capers, rosemary and reserved fig liquid. Pulse to create a thick paste. With the motor running, gradually add the oil. Transfer to a storage container. Season generously with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate at least 24 hours to develop flavors. Before serving, bring the tapenade to room temperature. Keeps well in refrigerator for several weeks.

### For appetizer:

1 baguette, sliced thinly at an angle  
Fig and olive tapenade  
1 loaf goat cheese  
1 or 2 ripe pears, cored and thinly sliced  
Balsamic glaze/reduction (Nonna Pia's is readily available in the salad dressing section). ■



## Working in Hollywood While Living the Key Peninsula Lifestyle

**Emmy Award-winner Lexy Naut and her husband Nelio have successful animation careers working from home.**

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Late this summer Lexy Naut was in the backyard of her Key Peninsula home raking leaves. The chore isn't as luxurious as her normal pencil-to-paper animation job, but it's a nice break from the stresses of Hollywood.

So, it wasn't unusual when a Los Angeles phone number popped up on her phone in the middle of the workday — but who was calling and the subject of the conversation were.

The 32-year-old TV and film storyboard artist was told by the Television Academy she had just won a Creative Arts Emmy Award in the category of "Outstanding Individual Achievement in Animation for Storyboarding" for her work on an episode of the Prime Video show, "The Boys Presents: Diabolical." Though an animated show, it's set within the superhero universe of the popular live-action show, "The Boys."

There she stood in her backyard, rake in hand, sweat on her forehead and tears in her eyes.

"I thought it was a joke at first," said Lexy, who is the first female to win the award. "It was definitely a unique experience to get off the phone and casually tell your husband you just won an Emmy."

It wasn't a joke, and according to her husband, Nelio, it wasn't casual.

"She came in crying," Nelio, 31, said when she tried to tell him the good news. "It was all confusing at first."

But after all the emotions and excitement, the young couple were able to celebrate the moment for what it was.

"Seeing her receive recognition for her amazing art was a moving and inspiring moment to share with her," said Nelio, who himself is a successful Hollywood 3D artist for an advertising and entertainment company called Psyop.

For all the glitz and glamor the Creative Arts Emmy Awards ceremony had to offer, the road for Lexy to get to that point in her career was anything but that.

She's drawn pretty much her whole life but looked at her art early on as more of a hobby than a career. She envisioned herself being an elementary school teacher or a linguist. But it was during her senior year of high school when she had a very simple "aha" moment: "Academics are a weakness of mine, but drawing isn't."

Lexy graduated from Gig Harbor High School's Running Start Program in 2008 and pursued an animation degree at Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. Storyboarding as a career wasn't even a thought in



Lexy Naut and her husband Nelio value the benefits of working from home, together. See more photos of the couple's work environment, and of Lexy with her Emmy, online at [keypennews.org](http://keypennews.org).

*Tina McKail, KP News*

her mind at that point.

"I just wanted to draw a bunch," she said. "So, I just spent most of my time studying hand-drawn animation."

It was at the college where she really found her love for animation, and also found the love of her life. Lexy and Nelio met during their sophomore years when both were part of the school's swing dance club. The two continue to support each other's careers.

"My ability to draw and his ability to use technology made us a strong team in college," Lexy said. And the duo continue to be a strong team in life after getting married in 2016.

Lexy earned her degree in 2012, but it wasn't until 2017 that she landed a job as a storyboard artist. In between there were times the couple lived somewhat of a "starving artist" lifestyle. The two spent the first year after college jobless, living with Nelio's parents near New York City. Lexy said she thought this meant she wasn't cut out to be an artist. She started taking unpaid production assistant jobs on sets of live-action movies just to get her foot in the film industry door. Her connections there eventually led to a job at an animation studio.

Around the same time, Nelio was hired on in the apprenticeship program at the Walt Disney Animation Studios, and the two moved to Los Angeles in 2013. A few months later he

helped Lexy land a production assistant job at the same studio. It wasn't art work, but at least she was working for the most recognizable animation studio in the world.

In early 2017 an animator took notice of Lexy's drawings, which led to her getting mentored by professional Disney storyboard artists. Even with that experience she wasn't accepted into the Disney apprenticeship program, but she knew she had what it took to do the job.

In 2017 she began working for DreamWorks Animation and was a storyboard artist for the animated musical show, "Trolls: The Beat Goes On," currently available on Netflix, and in 2018 began storyboarding for "Central Park" on Apple TV.

When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down live-action movies in March 2020, animated content was in high demand, and so were Lexy and Nelio. Like many other professions during that time, they discovered they could do their work from anywhere.

Lexy wanted to be around family and Nelio wanted to be somewhere lush with a skyline of fir trees rather than the tall, dull-looking buildings and LCD screens he was used to. They both decided to come to the Key Peninsula area to "live their creative dreams alongside nature."

Lexy storyboarded a variety of musical

animated films the last two years from the comfort of her home, including "Under the Boardwalk" and "Spellbound." Both are expected to be released in 2023. She also did her Emmy Award-winning work remotely.

"I was initially afraid the film industry might forget about us when we moved to Washington," Lexy said. "(Getting an Emmy) made it easier for me to wait for the right job opportunities that I feel fit me best. It also encourages me knowing that the world wants to see stories from female creators, and I hope to encourage more women in that pursuit."

Lexy also hopes her work can shake the stigma that animated movies and TV shows are only for kids.

"Animation is not a genre, it's a medium," she said. "They're not limited to the brightly-colored talking animal films we all know, and I think there's so much more potential for animation as a tool to explore adult concepts."

The natural next step for a storyboard artist in the animation world is directing, and an Emmy should fast track Lexy to that type of role. But no matter the fancy title, Lexy and Nelio will still call themselves what they've always been: artists.

"Don't let anyone tell you being an artist is an invalid career; it absolutely is valid," Lexy said. "Our art is our personal lives, and our personal lives are our art."



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A PROPHETIC VISION OF WAR IN HIS TIME WITH ITS LESSONS FOR OUR OWN

## 'The War of the Worlds' by H.G. Wells

JOSÉ ALANIZ

A strange thing happened last winter when I was teaching H.G. Wells' 1897 sci-fi novel "The War of the Worlds" to a class of college freshmen. All of a sudden, the story became chillingly, tragically real.

The Englishman Wells, who along with the French author Jules Verne essentially invented modern science fiction, at the turn of the 20th century wrote short stories, humor and social commentary for such publications as *The Pall Mall Gazette*. The son of a shopkeeper, trained in biology, he advocated for women's rights, socialism and other progressive causes. Some of his more memorable essays for the *Gazette* had such cheery titles as "The Extinction of Man" (1894).

Wordsmiths of Wells' stripe — like popular science writers today — served as a bridge between the masses and the cutting-edge philosophical and scientific advances of the era. He helped readers grapple with such extremely controversial ideas as the theory of evolution, propounded by naturalist Charles Darwin in his landmark book "The Origin of Species" (1859), which profoundly challenged the Victorian understanding of humanity's place in nature. Many readers reacted with horror.

Crucially, we should remember that discussions of evolution and its distortions, like "Social Darwinism," were taking place at a time when European nations like Great Britain engaged in brutal colonialism, conquering vast parts of the globe and enslaving nonwhite local populations — which were often classified as "inferior" or even subhuman.

Many of the ideas Wells explored in his science writing found their way into his fiction. Flush with the success of his 1895 novel "The Time Machine," he decided to turn the tables on the colonizers.

Right from its famous opening lines, "The War of the Worlds" is filled with dread:

"No one would have believed in the last years of the 19th century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's and yet as mortal as his own ... Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those

of the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this Earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us."

And so it comes to pass that the Martians launch their invasion of Earth by landing here in metal tubes which release towering three-legged machines of war. These mechanical monsters crush everything in their path and burn whole crowds to cinders with their terrifying heat rays. They fumigate London with a poisonous, pesticidal black fog, killing thousands. Humanity, despite its best efforts, can do almost nothing against them. Mass panic grips Britain and the world. The great empire is reduced to a great herd of fleeing cattle — an apt analogy, since those they don't kill the Martians reduce to a sort of livestock, sucking out their life juices.

But for all its innovations and tremendous influence (every sci-fi flick you've ever seen has it in its DNA), "War of the Worlds" is actually just a clever rehashing of what was then called "invasion literature." For example, George Tomkins Chesney's 1871 novella "The Battle of Dorking" had already imagined the invasion of England by a merciless German army; Wells just replaced human invaders with Martians armed with hi-tech weaponry.

Wells is also responding angrily to popular adventure novels like Henry Rider Haggard's "King Solomon's Mines" (1885) — a direct ancestor to the Indiana Jones movies, by the way —

which romanticized European imperialism, often depicting nonwhite races in dehumanizing terms. "War of the Worlds" is a reaction and an overcorrection to the complacent racial superiority of such works' worldview — now it is white Europeans who suffer at the (slimy) hands of cruel outsiders.

This also explains why Wells uses so many real, named locations. He wanted his British readers to experience the



horror of invasion in an immersive, real-life way, with familiar sites destroyed by the Martians. Today you can even find the aliens' path of destruction on Google Maps.

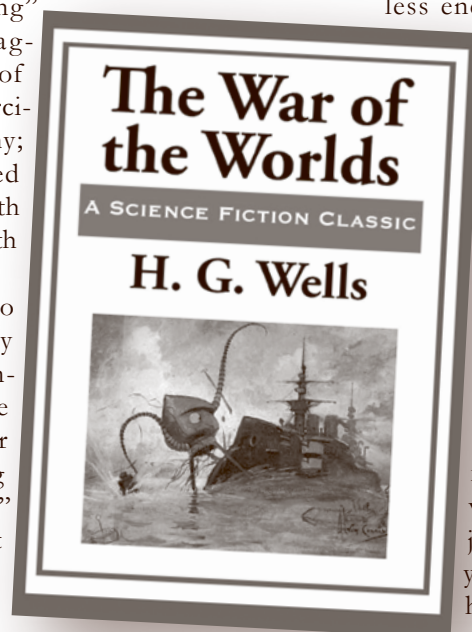
What's more, in seeking to sensitize his readers to the immorality of empire, our intrepid author seemed to have a particular atrocity in mind: in the 18th and 19th centuries, the British among others had committed colonialist genocide against the Aboriginal peoples of Tasmania, the large island off the southeastern coast of Australia. He even mentions this sad episode in the novel, writing, "The Tasmanians ... were entirely swept out of existence."

Now it was the UK's turn. But then, in the middle of discussing all this with my students, Feb. 24, 2022 happened. The Russian military launched an invasion of its neighbor, Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainians fled the country. And there it was: Wells' vision of mass evacuation, terror-struck victims scrambling for safety from a relentless enemy, all brought to

life. The Guardian interviewed an art historian, Tanya Novogorodskaya — one of thousands at a packed Kyiv train station, all trying to get out of the country. "Look at these faces around us," she said. "They are exactly the same as in the photographs from the second world war, and it's just five days. Can you imagine what will happen in a month?"

Watching and reading the coverage, I was haunted by Wells' lines from the novel, about how "trains were being filled ...," about the "boiling stream of people," about the "sad, haggard women ..." trying to escape London, the Martians at their heels. It was "the rout of civilization, the massacre of mankind," Wells wrote.

It was too much, too close to the real world for comfort. But then, that's what Wells had in mind all along. ■





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## Key Peninsula Community Connection

Peninsula School District - December 2022

### Badge systems offer added safety for students and staff

Badge systems are being improved for entry to Peninsula and Gig Harbor High Schools, as part of PSD's ongoing efforts to provide a safe learning environment.



LEFT: A PSD employee uses their district badge to unlock a door at Peninsula High School.



New door security systems were put in place last month at PHS and GHHS. Visitors must now ring a buzz-in entry system at the school's main doors because all the exterior doors are locked during the school day. A staff member in the office then temporarily unlocks the main door to let visitors into the building. Badge security systems like this were already in place at all PSD middle and elementary schools.

Other security upgrades are also in the works. Soon, all PSD students will use badges to purchase lunches, check out library books and ride a school bus.

All PSD buses will have special tablets to scan a student's badge for bus attendance. Once the student boards the bus, they scan their badge and a notification will be sent to the student's school, as well as to parents/guardians. When the student exits the bus, they will scan their badge to notify the school and their family that they arrived at their destination.

"If a bus breaks down, we will know what kids are on that bus and who to contact. We hope to implement this process in early 2023." - Kris Hagel, Executive Director of Digital Learning

The new tablets will also be used as GPS devices for bus drivers, to help navigate the bus route.

### Peninsula School District will place school levies before voters in February 2023

PSD will place a Replacement Educational Programs and Operations Levy and a Safety, Security and Technology Levy on the February 14, 2023 ballot, after the Board of Directors unanimously approved the resolutions at the Nov. 9 meeting.

The 3-year Replacement Educational Programs and Operations Levy replaces the expiring 2020 levy and accounts for about 18 percent of the district's overall budget. This levy continues funding day-to-day school operations not fully funded by the state, such as nurses, counselors, educators, athletics, arts, music, clubs, transportation and preventative maintenance projects.

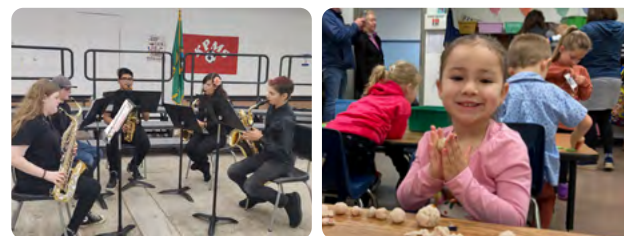
"Renewing the expiring levy that voters overwhelmingly approved in 2020 is critical to maintaining the quality programs at all our local schools." - Superintendent Krestin Bahr

The 6-year Safety, Security and Technology Levy will provide enhanced safety, security systems and technology improvements districtwide. This levy includes secure building access controls, emergency communications systems, security cameras and cyber security services. It also supports student and staff devices and classroom instructional equipment.

"The Safety, Security and Technology Levy will help keep our schools safe and equip students and staff with the technology they need to succeed," Bahr said. "And this levy will be the only funding source for safety and security projects since the state does not currently fund these resources."

The levy rates are estimated to be \$1.13 and \$0.25 per \$1,000 of assessed value, respectively.

The total local school tax rate, including both levies and the existing bond, is estimated to be \$1.82 per \$1,000 of assessed value beginning in 2024. This is lower than the total current rate of \$2.01 in 2022.



TOP LEFT: KPMS Band students and director Sarah Kaal practice for a Veterans Day performance.

TOP RIGHT: A new Transitional Kindergarten Minter Creek student smiles for the camera.

BOTTOM: Purdy Elementary second and third graders enjoyed hearing stories from Superintendent Krestin Bahr and long-time PSD Advocate Hugh McMillan.

### Upcoming Dates and Events

Tuesday, 12/6	Monday, 01/02/2023
Paying for College Night	New Years Day Observed
6-8 p.m., GHHS	- No school
12/19 - 12/30	
Winter Break - No school	

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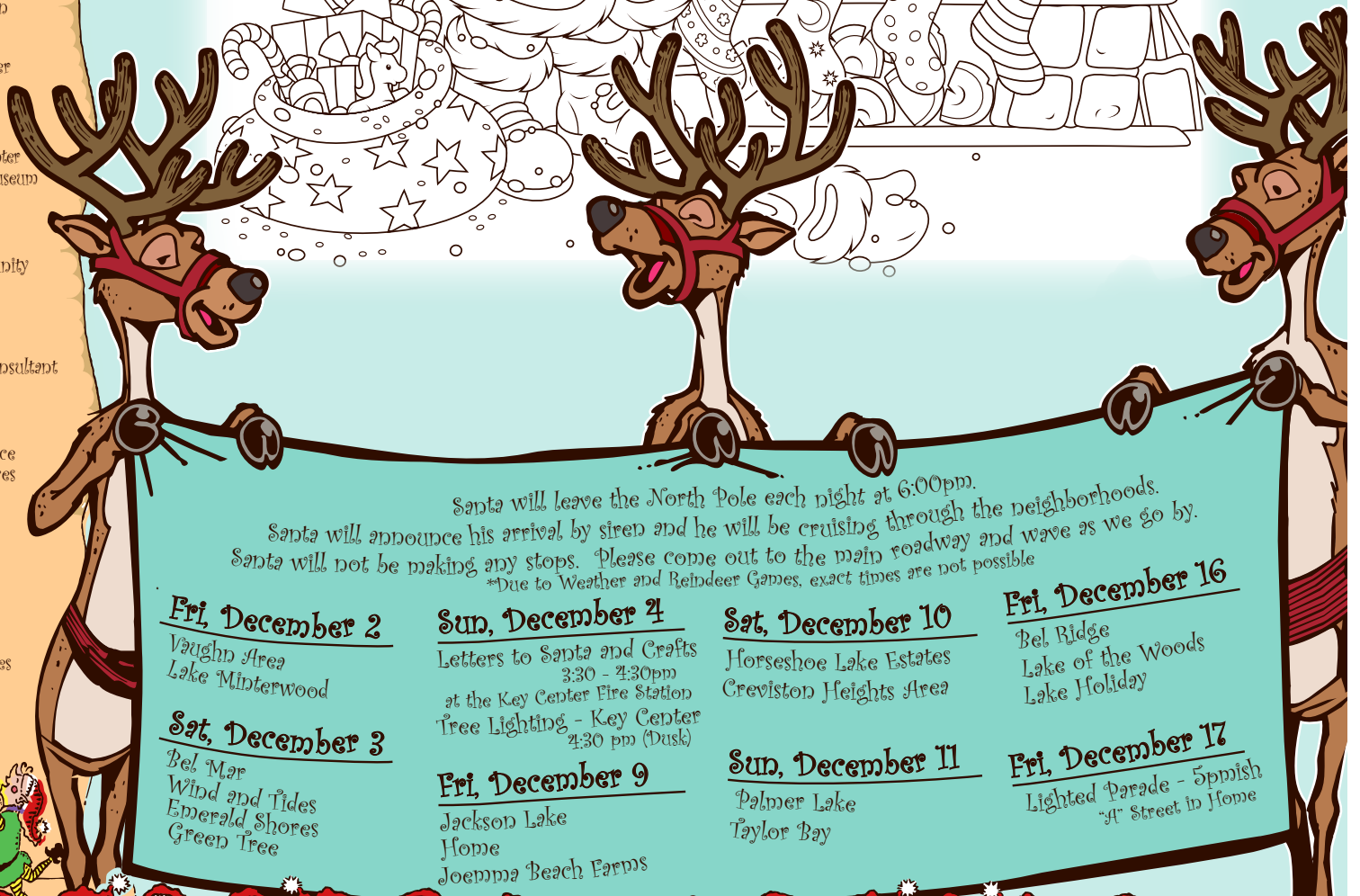


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  - Key Peninsula Community Services
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**Fri, December 2**

Vaughn Area  
 Lake Minterwood

**Sat, December 3**

Bel Mar  
 Wind and Tides  
 Emerald Shores  
 Green Tree

**Sun, December 4**

Letters to Santa and Crafts  
 3:30 - 4:30pm  
 at the Key Center Fire Station  
 Tree Lighting - Key Center  
 4:30 pm (Dusk)

**Fri, December 9**

Jackson Lake  
 Home  
 Joemma Beach Farms

**Sat, December 10**

Horseshoe Lake Estates  
 Creviston Heights Area

**Sun, December 11**

Palmer Lake  
 Taylor Bay

**Fri, December 16**

Bel Ridge  
 Lake of the Woods  
 Lake Holiday

**Fri, December 17**

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

To add a listing for your event or find the latest details, visit [www.keypennews.org/calendar](http://www.keypennews.org/calendar)

**Dec 2 WorkSource Pierce Fair** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., TCC Gig Harbor.

**Dec 3 Bird Walks** 8:30 a.m., rain or shine. Meet nature guide Chris Rurik at Gateway Park pavilion.

**Dec 4 Letters to Santa** 3:30 p.m., Key Peninsula Fire Department HQ, Key Center.

**Dec 6-7 Santa for Seniors** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Mustard Seed Project.

**Dec 7 Mobile Health Clinic** 12:30 - 3 p.m., Key Peninsula Community Services.

**Dec 8 Holiday Art Sale and Reception** 4 to 7 p.m., Mustard Seed Project.

**Dec 15 KP Book Club** 10:30 a.m., KP Historical Society, "Nightfall" by Isaac Asimov.

**Dec 16 Baby Lounge** 12 p.m. Key Peninsula Civic Center. A gathering for connection with other parents.

**Dec 17 Home for the Holidays Light Parade** 6 p.m., Home Bridge.

**Dec 19 KP Veterans Christmas Open House** 7 - 8 p.m., KP Lutheran Church.

**Dec 20 Hootenanny Folk Music** 2 - 4 p.m., Mustard Seed Project.

**Dec 20 KP Kids Maker Fun** 2 p.m., Key Center Library. STEAM and science activities.

**Dec 21 Winter Take and Make** All day, Key Center Library. Pick-up and take home a craft kit for the winter holidays.

**Dec 24 Candles and Carols Christmas Eve Service** 6:30 p.m., Lakebay Community Church.

## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Monday Al-Anon Keys to Sanity** 5 p.m., KP Fire Station, family group.

**Monday Walks with Rusty** 9 a.m., Gateway Dog Park/360 Trails. Dog Walks with Jason.

**M-W-F SAIL** 10 a.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814. Stay Active and Independent for Life.

**M-W SAIL** 5:30 p.m., KP Community

Services, 253-884-4440. Flexibility and balance for those over 60.

**T-W-Th HeartFit** Tue 6 p.m., Wed 5 p.m., Thu 10 a.m., WayPoint Church, heartfitwp@gmail.com, women's free fitness classes.

**T-TH Toddler Indoor Park** 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center in the gym.

**T-TH Open Activity Hours** 2 to 4 p.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

**T-TH Tai Chi** 9:45 a.m., KP Community Services, 253-888-4440.

**T-TH-SA SAIL** 8:30 a.m., KP Community Services, 253-884-4440. Flexibility and balance for those over 60.

**Wednesday Gentle Yoga for Older Adults** 11:30 a.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

**Thursday Family Story Time** 10:30 a.m., Key Center Library, 253-548-3309.

**Thursday Senior Bingo** 1 p.m., first and third Thursdays, KP Community Services, 253-888-4440.

**Thursday KP Toastmasters** 8 a.m., WayPoint Church, 425-243-2618.

**Thursday Fresh Express Mobile Market** 11 a.m. First and third Thursdays, KP Community Services.

**Friday Skate Night** 6 - 9 p.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center, kindergarten-eighth grade.

**Saturday Eddon Boatyard Tours** 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Gig Harbor Boat Shop.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

**26th Legislative District Democrats** First Thursdays on Zoom, 6:30 p.m., 26thdemocrats@gmail.com

**Caregiver Support Group** Third Mondays, 2 p.m., Mustard Seed Project.

**Key Peninsula Advisory Commission** Third Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. Details at piercecountywa.gov/5937.

**KP Business Association** Luncheon, third Fridays, noon at El Sombrero. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com

**KP Business Association** Business meeting, first Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., DK Property Management. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com

**KP Community Council** Second Wednesdays on Zoom, 7 p.m. keypenncouncil@gmail.com

**KP Citizens Against Crime** Third Thursdays, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Key Center fire station.

**KP Civic Center Association** Board meeting, second Thursdays, 7 - 8:30 p.m., Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center, 253-884-3456.

**KP Democrats** Third Monday, 7 p.m., Home Fire Station, johnpatkelly@aol.com, 253-432-4256.

**KP Emergency Prep** Third Thursday, 7 p.m., KP Civic Center, eprep@kpciviccenter.org.

**KP Fire Commission** Second and fourth Tuesdays, 5 p.m. on Zoom, keypeninsulafire.org, 253-884-2222.

**KP Historical Society** First Tuesdays, 11 a.m. at museum, kpsmuseum@gmail.com.

**KP Lions Club** First and third Wednesdays, 6 p.m., potluck at Key Center fire station, 253-525-0802, keypeninsulalions@outlook.com.

**Key Pen Parks Commission** Board meeting, Second Mondays, 7 p.m., Home fire station, 253-884-9240.

**KP Veterans** First and third Mondays, 7 - 8 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 253-884-2626.

**Lakebay Fuchsia Society** First Thursdays, 7 p.m. KP Civic Center, Whitmore Room, 253-884-2283.

**Longbranch Improvement Club** Third Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club, 253-200-0308 or licweb.org.

**Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition** Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m., check pep-c.org for meeting location.

**Peninsula School District Board Meeting** Fourth Thursdays, 6 - 7:30 p.m., 253-530-1000.

**Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department** Tues & Thurs, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Key Center Corral. Call 253-432-4948 for the schedule; Air Quality, Triple P, COVID-19, General HD, Water/Wells and Healthy Housing advice.

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# FREE KP BUS CONNECTS *Happy Holidays!*

## VAUGHN TUE/THUR MORNING

- 8:55 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:01 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:02 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:03 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:06 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:08 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 9:10 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 9:13 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:19 Purdy Park & Ride

## VAUGHN WEDNESDAY MORNING

- 9:50 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:51 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:52 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:54 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:57 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:58 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:00 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 10:03 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:09 Purdy Park & Ride

## EVERGREEN TUE/THUR MORNING

- 8:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 8:59 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:00 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 9:05 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 9:06 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 9:09 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 9:13 Food Market in Key Center
- 9:15 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 9:21 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:30 Purdy Park & Ride

## EVERGREEN WEDNESDAY MORNING

- 9:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:54 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:55 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 10:00 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 10:01 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 10:04 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 10:08 Food Market in Key Center
- 10:10 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 10:16 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:24 Purdy Park & Ride



## TUE/WED/THUR AFTERNOON

- 4:42 Purdy Park & Ride
- 4:47 Lake Kathryn Village
- 4:50 SR 302 @Windermere Realty
- 4:52 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 4:53 SR 302 @150th/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 4:55 4 Corners gas station @SR 302
- 4:57 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct
- 4:58 Wright Bliss Road @Olson Dr
- 5:00 Food Market in Key Center
- 5:04 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 5:08 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 5:10 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 5:13 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 5:14 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 5:18 Evergreen Elementary School



253-884-BUSS or [keypennews.org/kpbuss](http://keypennews.org/kpbuss) for interactive map and downloadable schedule

We're on Facebook too!

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## CIVIC CENTER CORNER

*Thank You*

*After two challenging years, the Key Peninsula Civic Center wishes to extend its sincere gratitude to all the donors, our volunteers and the community for your unbelievable support this year.*

**NEW: Skate 6-7pm for K-3rd graders, 7-9pm for K-8**

**Skate**  
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for K-8, includes skate rental and games



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8:30 am Mondays and Wednesdays

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Key Peninsula Civic Center, 17010 S. Vaughn Road 253/884-3456 [www.kpciviccenter.org](http://www.kpciviccenter.org) The Key Peninsula Civic Center Association, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, fosters and promotes the civic, social, cultural and general well-being of the Key Peninsula community



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TOP LEFT – A wild artist conk, ganoderma applanatum, grows from the decay of a fallen tree. *Dan Clouse*

RIGHT - The barn at Bayview Christmas Tree Farm. This and all other photos *Tina McKail, KP News*

CENTER LEFT - A resident fox sparrow. *Tina McKail, KP News*

RIGHT - A male sea lion near shore on Burley Lagoon. *Tina McKail, KP News*

LOWER LEFT - Fallen leaves along the trail at Key Pen Parks Maple Hollow. *Tina McKail, KP News*

RIGHT - A song sparrow rests its voice for spring 2023. *Tina McKail, KP News*