

Special Occasions Guide, Inside



KEY PENINSULA NEWS

The voice of the Key Peninsula



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Vol. 36 Issue 3 • Circulation 9,000

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March 2008



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Longbranch farm receives award

By Chris Fitzgerald, KP News

When Shane McWilliams was notified in late 2007 that his Longbranch farm had been chosen to receive the Pierce Conservation District "Wildlife Steward Farm of the Year" award, his first reaction was skeptical. In an interview with the KP News, he said, "It caught me entirely by surprise. I thought it was a joke." He thought someone at Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS) was having fun at his expense because "half the people at PALS think

I'm a pain in the neck." (McWilliams brings unsound or potentially illegal environmental practices to their attention).

PCD farm planner Erin Ewald, whose office is in Key Center, said the stewardship recognition had not been given for the four previous years. "The award is merit-driven ... given only to recipients persevering above and beyond regular (environmental) obligations," she said.

According to Ewald and McWilliams,

(See FARM, Page 28)



Photo by Chris Fitzgerald

Shane McWilliams with his dog, Dixie, at his farm.

Big, lively crowds at caucus

Key Peninsula Middle School and Purdy Elementary were overflowing with hundreds of people on Feb. 9, when the Democratic and Republican parties used the two locations, respectively, for their presidential caucuses.

The turnout from Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor residents in both locations surprised even the leaders who set them up. For example the Democrats' Precinct 213 had 150 people vs. 37 at the last caucus.

Democrat Barack Obama received overwhelming support, getting 48 votes from the 78 precinct delegates who were elected to represent the candidates.

On the Republican side, John McCain was the front-runner, with Ron Paul showing a good following as well.

While some precincts had little discussions, in others a real caucus ensued, with those present able to speak for or against issues and candidates.



Photos by Karina Whitmarsh and Hugh McMillan

Top, Democratic caucus-goers.

Above, Republican caucus-goers.

The Key Peninsula Community Council:

An organization in search of issues, a budget, and an active constituency

By William C. Dietz, KP News

According to the mission statement posted on its Website, "The Key Peninsula Community Council is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to address, respond to and meet the needs of the community residents by developing partnerships, sponsorships and programs in order to maintain and improve the quality of life on the Key Peninsula."

Lacking a better way to evaluate the council's success, KP News asked council directors to comment on what they considered to be the group's most significant accomplishment during 2007. Of the 12 people interviewed, nine mentioned the geoduck forum, which was co-sponsored by the council (with the KP News as the primary sponsor), as

(See COUNCIL, Page 18)

'Feast or Famine' event raises hunger awareness

By Colleen Slater, KP News

Nearly \$4,000 was collected for the Key Peninsula Food Bank at the recent Feast or Famine benefit at the Longbranch Improvement Club. Lu Smith and Wally Johnson were chefs for the evening, during which 81 people were served.

Colorful soup bowls by F.I.N.E. Mudhens Karen Craven and Ginger Kryger were offered for sale, as well as generous packages of dried soup mixes donated by Ruth Circle of Longbranch Community Church. A silent auction of the "Blue Nose," a scale ship model donated by David and Paula Wickland of Sail Classics Inc., contributed to the proceeds, too.

Tickets were sold in advance, without purchasers knowing what food they would be served. They opened their envelopes together, and 10 percent made their way to the head table, 20 percent sat at the central tables for an "adequate" meal, and the rest filled the tables along each side for their simple rice meal. This allocation represents the world population's food supply.

The extravagant three-course dinner at the head table included Caesar salad, Black Angus boneless rib roast an inch thick and about 40 square inches in size, baked potato with sour cream, asparagus with Hollandaise sauce, herb/cheese biscuits, cheesecake with cherries, ice water, and both white and rosé sparkling cider. Good china, glassware, and cloth napkins in napkin rings set off this table as special.

The "adequate" meal consisted of a generous portion of commercial macaroni and cheese, with green beans. These folks had water and later, coffee. They ate with regular plates and cutlery.

The "Rice is Nice" tables received a large container of rice cooked in chicken



Photo courtesy Vicki Biggs

Claudia Loy, at a table with Andrea Jerabek, shows off a piece of steak the head table shared with their "rice is nice" table. See more photos at www.keypennews.com.

EFN information

For more information about Pierce County Emergency Food Network, including food bank locations and hot meal sites, visit at www.efoodnet.org.

broth, with water that sat out for several hours prior to the meal. Their placemats were a half-page of newspaper and the utensils were plastic.

The head table soon had a strip of barrier tape to represent a wall setting them apart. People at that table said they were uncomfortable, embarrassed, even confused with the amount of food served to them.

Jud Morris, who said he'd warned the organizers about seating him at a rice

table, "led a revolt" of rice eaters, who studied the plates at the head table, and called out, "While you eat, we starve," "Aren't you ashamed?" "Remember the starving people!" and "Without equality, there can be no liberty," a theme Morris, who works with families in need, often touts.

Some of the beef eaters cut their huge slice of roast and shared it with the rice tables. Morris noted later that this happened because of the close community that exists on the Key Peninsula, and the people who participated in the event. In a large city, for example, the same event would not likely bring such results.

He says this was a great event to sensitize people to the reality of our world, and a fun way to make opinions stick with

Community contributors

Envelopes with coupons from local merchants, who contributed to pay for posters and some of the food, were given to each participant at the event. Contributors included Homeport Restaurant, KP Fire Department, KP Ministerial Association, Lake Kathryn Village, Nilsen Woodworks, Peninsula Market, Ravensara, Safe Streets, Sunnycrest Nursery, Sound Credit Union, Tote It Around, Travel House Inc., Danna Webster, and several anonymous donors.

The coupon from Fire District 16 read, "...good for fire, rescue, & emergency medical service anywhere/any time on Key Peninsula – offer good until... you move off the Peninsula."

the participants. It was a safe environment to "protest," share, and to understand we should not be satisfied until the hungry masses are fed.

David Ottey from Pierce County Emergency Food Network (EFN) presented at the event. He said the local food bank is one of the sites they serve. More than 60,000 pounds of fruits, vegetables, staples, canned and frozen foods were provided by EFN last year. About 90 percent is donated by corporations, including returned but useable food.

Penny Gazabat, KPCS director, is thankful for LIC, the KP Family Resource Center and Longbranch Church for approaching her about this successful project.

Co-chair Carolyn Wiley hopes this will become an annual event, but in a revised format. "Before the guests began to arrive, Vicki (Biggs) and I were already making plans for next year," she said.



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2. The objective of Key Peninsula News is to support and create community by reporting news and features and providing a forum for local information. News and editorial coverage focuses on the Key Peninsula and immediately adjacent areas within Fire District 16.

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The opinions expressed herein are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers or staff. All letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number for verification. No anonymous letters will be published. Submissions are used on a space available basis and may be edited if used. THE KEY PENINSULA NEWS reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and content. Mail letters to: P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394, or email to news@keypennews.com

Bramhall, Hunt new fire commissioners

By Chris Fitzgerald, KP News

Two women were elected in February to fill the newly created commissioner spots in Fire District 16. Ruth Bramhall, a former FD-16 commissioner, and Sheila Hunt were appointed after a vote of 2-0, with Commissioner Al Yanity voting against each one of them.

Commissioner Jim Bosch, who became chairman of FD-16 Board of Commissioners in January, told the KP News he "thinks it is wonderful that voters approved an increase in the board from three to five members." He said every one of the commissioners brings something special to the organization. Bosch indicated having five members would mean the workload could be spread out. He appreciates the fact that now two commissioners can meet over coffee or have a conversation without violating the Open Public Meetings Act.

Bosch indicated the board would be considering a resolution to change meeting time to 3 p.m. instead of the current 9 a.m., and also to move the venue to Station 3 in Home. Station 3 can



Sheila Hunt and Ruth Bramhall (left to right) after being sworn in as commissioners at a special meeting on Feb. 5.

Photo by
Hugh McMillan

accommodate up to 49 occupants, and has a separate meeting room, whereas the Key Center station meeting area often has staff coming and going, and is limited to a 29-person occupancy. He anticipates the new meeting time and location will begin in mid-March or early April.

Ruth Bramhall is one of two new Fire District 16 commissioners, selected at a special Feb. 5 meeting of the then three-commissioner board. Bramhall, who served one term six years ago, had been

consistently attending district meetings. Asked by the KP News why she chose to run for the position again, she said, "I felt with my experience, and the trouble they've been having, that it wouldn't take long for me to (be of use)."

She sees the greatest benefit of the new five-member board being that any two commissioners can now have "off the record" conversations about district business without creating an instant quorum. "I hope I can be productive," she said, adding her intention that the organiza-

tion be "a calm, functioning board instead of all the upsets that have occurred."

Sheila Hunt, a seven-year fire district volunteer, first responder, and emergency medical technician, is the second commissioner selected to serve on the board. Hunt says she brings to the position an analytical mind, and management experience with 14 years as a registered nurse with emergency medical services. She has a background in union negotiations, and assisted with employment interview evaluations for new potential hires for the district. Hunt provides immunizations for FD-16 personnel, a duty she will continue.

She said the greatest benefit in increasing the fire commissioner board from three to five members is "a great potential to expand the voice of the community, (combined with) hopefully more stability, and brainpower." She is pleased with the results of her first meetings, one of which finalized the 2008 district budget. "I have a lot to learn," she told the KP News. "But I'm getting there."



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EDITORIAL

Time to 'grow up'

Last month, Key Peninsula fire district's board of commissioners changed to a five-member board. It has also gained some diversity, with the two new commissioners being women. We hope this is the beginning of a turnaround for the board, which has been mired by controversy and internal squabbling.

Even at the special meeting that appointed the two new commissioners, Ruth Bramhall and Sheila Hunt, the discord was evident — as Commissioner Allen Yanity walked out of the executive session discussing candidates, and declared the session was illegal (FD-16 counsel John Quinn later told the audience the executive session was conducted according to the law).

The move to a larger board means a better representation of the community; it will also help ensure that motions do not pass or fail simply because one commissioner votes against a rival. Will this mean a return to civilized meetings? That remains to be seen. However, we hope it helps the board regain the respect of the community, and a better reputation among other fire districts.

A letter to the Key Peninsula community

By Russ Humberd
 KP Community Council President

I am writing in response to the article published in the February edition of the KP News concerning the Key Peninsula Community Council. The article was published in the Editorial section of the paper and therefore expresses the opinion of the guest writer.

Sixteen of our community members worked diligently for two years organizing the council. This included writing the bylaws and articles of incorporation; this was by no means a one-man effort.

The Key Peninsula Community Council was created to address issues of our community, no single entity or person. Although we use membership to elect our directors each year, they are only a small part of our community. The 14 directors, who represent four geographical areas of the Key Peninsula, have a wide range of community involvement and strive to work on issues that affect us all. In 2004, the council took a survey of residents' interests and continues to get annual input from the



Visit www.keycouncil.org for more information on the geographical areas, committees and becoming involved with the KP Community Council.

community and members alike. The council uses this information to identify areas of focus for the coming year. Four directors spent nearly three years working on the KP Community Planning Board with Pierce County. The Community Plan will go into effect this April, and help manage growth and development on the Key Peninsula.

In 2005, the council's Human Services Committee organized the Youth Council. This group of 18 Peninsula High and Key Peninsula Middle School students are actively working on the issues that affect the youth of our community. They have surveyed their fellow students and have a working list of projects. They generously support other organizations by providing extra hands at many events occurring throughout the year.

The real work of the council doesn't happen on the second Wednesday of each month during the board meetings.

It happens in the committees. Attendance has not been the greatest over the years, but a lot of good things have happened. We have hosted informational forums on vicious dog regulations, geoduck farming, logging and emergency preparedness. We have hosted several candidate forums in collaboration with the KP Civic Center. We are sponsors of the KP/2020 initiative supported by Rep. Larry Seaquist, bringing the ideas in the KP Community Plan to realization. We are even working with the new Farm Tour Board, helping them get started.

We receive partial expense reimbursement from Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee and Pierce County for operating costs. This is evidence of their belief in our work and service to the community. The bottom line, it takes money to run any organization, and we would love to have more funding and donations so we can do more.

I invite each of you to join us. Become a voting member, or make a donation as a "Friend of the Council." Become a positive influence in your community, work for its betterment, join us in working to improve and maintain the quality of life on the Key Peninsula.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Housing affordability on Legislature's table

This session, the Legislature is showing an interest in housing affordability. With the prospect of owning a home becoming merely a distant dream to many young families in our state, I'd say it's about time! Unfortunately, many legislators are missing the forest for the trees. Some elected officials in Olympia are going out of their way to add to the cost of building and buying a home. For example, Sen. Brian Weinstein, a self-professed enemy of the building industry, has renewed his efforts to target builders this session with SB 6385. This legislation, which he wrongfully calls a "consumer protection" bill, would simply add another cause of action for which builders could be sued. As a trial attorney, Sen. Weinstein surely loves the prospect of

making it easier to sue builders for negligence. But for consumers, who already have multiple options when a contractor builds a substandard product, the only thing this legislation will do is make home ownership more expensive. Liability insurance, which is required by law, will undoubtedly become more expensive, and frivolous lawsuits will be easier to file against anyone involved in the construction of a home.

Thankfully, some legislators have the courage to stand up to those kinds of ideas. For example, Sen. Derek Kilmer has offered up legislation to examine how to offset the high liability insurance rates for residential and nonprofit builders. SB 6724 proposes to work collaboratively with low-income housing advocates, for-profit builders, liability insurers and others to try to make state-mandated insurance more available and more affordable. He should be applauded for his approach to improving housing affordability, and for having the courage to stand up to reckless and irresponsible legislation aimed at

garnering headlines and enriching trial attorneys. The public, and certainly his constituents, are better served by his judicious and prudent efforts.

Lary Coppola, Port Orchard

Efforts to name bridge are insulting

The controversy surrounding the Tacoma Narrows Bridge does not fade away so easily that I don't recall the role of my elected representative, Bob Oke, as he failed to accept the mandate of his constituents in order to act on behalf of someone other than we who voted for him. It appears Oke did not foresee the domino effect he was setting in motion by making specific geographic districts responsible for the payment of the bridge (the 520 bridge and Alaskan Way Viaduct).

It might look good from Olympia but to call an elected official a hero for ramrodding the costs of an unpopular project down the throats of his constituents is ludicrous and insulting to

the majority of us who felt there were other possibilities to be explored.

The opinion of Sen. Ken Jacobsen is that we should pay for the bridge and he should decide whom we name it after. What's it costing him and why should he have any say?

It will never be anything other than "the new bridge."

John Heitman, Longbranch

Column writer wrong

As a founding member of the Key Peninsula Community Council and a participant in writing the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws, I feel it necessary to address some of the issues raised by Rick Sorrels in the February issue. First, the disclaimer: I am on the council's Board of Directors (as I have been since the beginning), but I am not speaking for the council; only expressing my opinion.

(See **LETTERS**, Page 5)

Caucus, shmacus... What was that about?

Lately I've been feeling like an ignorant moron when it comes to how United States elections work. It's like everything these days. You need a degree in finance to make investments without losing gobs of money or supporting corporate crime. You need a degree in electronics to operate a cell phone or camera or maybe even a remote control. And now, apparently, you need a degree in political science to understand clearly how your vote impacts huge national problems that certainly have no trouble impacting you.

Like, caucus. What the heck is that? I kept hearing about the caucus over and over in the news. Then people started asking, "Are you going to the caucus? Oh, you have to go the caucus!" I've been voting since 1988, but I'd never heard of a caucus. Last month, I decided to try it out. I didn't know what to expect. I'm used to voting in primaries and general elections, where you go to some school somewhere, nod politely to several volunteers who are

KEVIN REED
HERE'S SOMETHING



handing out ballots, step into a dime-sized booth with a bad shower curtain, and vote by whatever method the place has. Bam, you're done.

The caucus, however, sounded very interactive. Like I'd have to read first, and analyze what my candidate was all about, then justify my position to hostile, screaming strangers with garden tools and torches. Or maybe it would be like Wall Street, with people yelling and shouting for their candidates, circled around tables with an elected "delegate" standing in the middle who occasionally pointed to this person or that for input, all with a lot of yelling and dialogue from pseudo-political-intellectuals. Then people would try to steal you from "your" side to "their" side to support their candi-

date. Was the caucus to be dueling wits of locals debating key issues facing the United States of America? What if they couldn't agree? Coin tosses? Cage fights?

We got there and the place was full. I'd made up my mind candidate-wise and had to leave early, so I just walked up to my precinct table, wrote down my name and vote in pencil, and stepped back. After a second, my wife and I looked at each other. Pencil? Did we just vote in pencil? Do we vote again, like in a few minutes, with a ballpoint pen or a magic marker? Is there a machine someplace? And nobody asked me for any identification either. Strangers voting in pencil. Any Anti-My-Party operative could just erase my vote, swish! change my vote to the wrong person, and then jot down a fake name and vote again for the wrong person. Or something... I don't know...anything could happen...it's just pencil!

Then we had the primary, and Washington is the only state to have both

a caucus and a primary, and only the Republican Party uses information from each; 19 delegates from the primary and 18 from the caucus. The Democratic Party "ignores" the primary in favor of caucus results. So why do we need both then? Washington Dems have 80 delegates and 17 "superdelegates," whatever that means. Is that the best name they can come up with?

"Say, we need people bigger than just delegates, any ideas?"

"Hey, what about superdelegates!"

"I love it! Let's run with it!"

Holy mackerel. To top it off, the "superdelegates" can vote however they want when they get to the Democratic convention, ignoring the caucus and the primary. Too much control by too few.

Hey, I have an idea! Let's just hold an election where you mail in a ballot or go into a booth on a Tuesday and vote for whomever you want, and each vote counts toward a democratic outcome! What a crazy concept.

(From **LETTERS**, Page 4)

Mr. Sorrels was not the only person involved in producing the bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation. The organizing committee approved the articles before they were filed. The bylaws were produced by a committee (including Mr. Sorrels, several others and me). It was a collaborative effort involving many people and lots of revision.

While the bylaws do provide for input from the membership, they also allow the board to take any action it determines appropriate in fulfilling the purpose of the council. That purpose is to maintain and improve the quality of life on the Key Peninsula. What I think is important to

realize is that input from the members (anyone 18 years or older who lives or owns property on the KP is considered a member) does not always come in the form of comments at the annual membership meeting or at a monthly board meeting. Members are encouraged to call the Council office (884-0557). Individual directors may hear comments from their neighbors, co-workers, organizations they belong to etc., about an issue and may bring it to the attention of the board.

Mr. Sorrels believes the council should only act after obtaining a "clear consensus" from its members. What is a clear consensus? Does that mean that the council can only act after "X"

number of people agree on a plan of action? I believe the board must take the action it believes appropriate after hearing from those people who want to express an opinion and weighing the evidence presented. If no one expresses an opinion, then the directors can only do what they think best.

I could continue to disagree with Mr. Sorrels on several other points in his column. This exchange of ideas has at least brought to the attention of KP readers that there is a Community Council in the area and that is a good thing. Come to our next Board of Directors' meeting and get involved.

Arlene R. Williams, Lakebay

Congrats on that!

Congratulations to the KP News on its five-year anniversary and to our marvelous community for supporting the paper.

Each issue of the paper shows the diversity and energy of the people on the Key Peninsula. Friends just over the Kitsap County line ask me to bring them the paper because it contains announcements of so many activities each month.

I also like the informative and educational articles and columns. Your paper helps me know and appreciate my community more. Thanks!

Marsha Williams, Key Peninsula

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And the winner is...

I know who has won the Lions Club's Annual Citizen of the Year Award. Cover your eyes. Don't read any further if you don't want to know who has won. You've been warned! The real winner is... our Key Peninsula community.

I know this might be seen as Part Two of my January column, maybe it is, and why not?

To paraphrase Tip O'Neill, "All volunteerism is local." The Key Peninsula is so fortunate to have so many "ordinary" people doing extraordinary things. This year and over the previous years, many very deserving nominees have been recognized with the Lions Club's Citizen of the Year. These nominees have included teachers, parents, retired persons, community activists, community groups, children, community organizations, and families. "Just" people making a difference in their community. Helping people in their community with their families, their education, their lives, and their futures. All nominees have their own stories on how they are contributing and helping make the Key Peninsula community a better place to live. "Just"

JUD MORRIS
FROM THE WATER'S EDGE



people making a real difference in their community.

With great respect, it is true that the Key Peninsula community is unique, and truly the people living here have much to be thankful for when it comes to all the volunteers, and what the volunteers do to help people living on the Key Peninsula. We can always use more dedicated and committed volunteers. Volunteers are the best recruiters for new volunteers. Volunteers bring their knowledge, experiences, and enthusiasm. They get in return challenges, fun, and the great satisfaction of making a real positive difference in people's lives. In fact, people who volunteer usually do it for many projects and programs (volunteerism is highly infectious and contagious). Volunteerism is about when you don't have to do it, but you do it because you want to do it (some volunteers would

say you need or must do it). Many Key Peninsula organizations would not exist without volunteers. Volunteers are special people. We all have skills to help others. We all can be volunteers. We all should be volunteers, some time, some place, for some thing. Whichever volunteer wins this year, he or she really represents all volunteers and what they do for their Key Peninsula community.

Yes, as I said earlier, "The real winner of the Lions Club's Annual Citizen of the Year Award is our very own Key Peninsula community." It is now safe; you can open your eyes.

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Two Waters

ARTS ALLIANCE

Event Calendar

6th Annual Spring Fling - A gala event celebrating the arts of the Key Peninsula. Members \$10. Non-members \$15.

**Mar 15th - 7-10 PM
KPCC**

2nd Annual Beyond Borders - An afternoon of international food and music

**Aug 2nd
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Spring Fling

Mark your calendars! Our 6th annual signature Spring Fling event is just 2 weeks away on March 15th starting 7 PM at the KP Civic Center.

Come spend an evening enjoying wine and delectable hors d'oeuvres while basking in glorious art and bluesy music of Jazz Musette. Be sure to rub elbows with many local TWAA artists!

This year's Spring Fling poster and invitations will showcase Beverly Pedersen's "Spring Floral" tulip painting on silk. Be sure to enter our event drawing to WIN a framed and ready to hang piece of Beverly Pedersen's "Spring Floral" painting (\$100 value). Drawing tickets available for purchase at the event.

Volunteer Opportunities

We are always looking for a few good volunteers! Want to donate a few hours and be part of the community? Give us a call.

We are currently recruiting for event set up crews, Membership Coordinator(s), Volunteer Coordinator(s) and events committee members. Interested? Give Denise a call 884-9498.

BRIEFS

news

Peninsula Spay/Neuter receives \$35,000 grant

Peninsula Spay/Neuter Project (PSNP) has received a \$35,000 grant from PetSmart Charities to establish a new spay-neuter clinic for cats and dogs. This clinic is expected to complete a minimum of 6,000 sterilizations for companion animals in the first year, and began taking appoint-

ments on Feb. 17 at the Tacoma location.

"Our goal is to start a clinic at the lowest cost possible to serve the largest number of animals, therefore making an immediate impact on shelter intakes and euthanasia," said Patty Rusnak, PSNP vice president. Call 627-SPAY or visit www.coalitionhumane.org.

Fire boat goes to Kingston

On Feb. 13, the Key Peninsula fire boat left the Longbranch Marina for the last time. The 44-foot Coast Guard Motor Life Boat is owned by the U.S. Forest Service and assigned to the state Department of Natural Resources for fire fighting service. Budget limitations following the failed suppression lid lift levy in 2007 forced FD 16 to make budget-balancing decisions. One casualty of that process is the loss of the boat, which has been in service for two years. The vessel was acquired as a resource from DNR after Anderson Island purchased a new boat for its fire district.

The boat remains in service as a fire-fighting vessel, serving the Kingston area. The Key Peninsula water rescue team actively aids people in distress; water-based firefighting and other boat service calls will now require vessel assist or mutual aid from other departments with fire boats.



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KP photos wanted for book publication

The Key Peninsula News plans to publish a coffee-table-style book celebrating the Key Peninsula's beauty and people. The book will be a fundraiser for the nonprofit newspaper. Community contributions are welcome of high-quality, high-resolution photographs. There is no payment for published photos but all contributors will receive publication credit. For details about the themes and submission requirements, visit www.keypennews.com/book.html.

Vaughn Community Church renamed

Members of the Vaughn Community Church have just changed their church name to WayPoint Church.

Pastor Tim Stobbe said, "We are embracing the freshness that God is leading us into with a new location and renewed vision and purpose. We want a name that reflects this significant change." The church meets at 10 a.m. Sundays at Vaughn Elementary School. The church office may be contacted at 884-2269 or office@vaughnchurch.org.



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What is Really Happening in OUR Market?
Pierce County continues to buck the national trend and posts a 4.58% increase in the average home price in 2007, according to NWMLS reports. Inventory is up over 13% from '06 and the Fed continues to lower interest rates. Still many Buyers remain reluctant due to the National media coverage. Numbers don't deceive. Now is a great time to consider selling or buying a home or investment property. Feel free to call me with questions or additional market information. I'd be happy to help.

JANUARY HOME SALES
Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula

	Sold Jan 2007	Sold Jan 2008	For Sale as of 02/2008
	40 Homes	32 Homes	786 for Sale
Highest	\$1,225,000	\$1,900,000	\$4,800,000
Lowest	\$100,000	\$69,950	\$25,000
Median	\$382,975	\$383,421	\$499,960

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Funds available for septic repair

By Chris Fitzgerald, KP News

Pierce County Public Works and Utilities Water Programs Division, in partnership with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and the Community Development Corp., recently signed an agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology to offer low-interest loans and grants to property owners to assist with septic system repairs.

"This is really a big deal," said Barbara Ann Smolko with Pierce County Water Programs. "We want rural homeowners to know we have funds available if they need assistance." She said the county wants to make information available, particularly to communities that include shorelines.

According to information from Public Works, failing septic systems can cause serious problems if they directly discharge untreated sewage to local beaches. The bacteria from these failures can pose a health risk to swimmers and to people who eat shellfish collected from these beaches. The onsite grant and loan program is designed to fix failing septic systems on marine shore-

lines and also near streams and rivers.

"It is all part of our program to protect Puget Sound and water quality," said Dan Wrye, watershed services section manager for Pierce County Water Programs. "It grew out of the Shellfish Partners initiative to ensure clean water." (Shellfish Partners is a collaborative group comprised of Pierce County Water Programs, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Pierce Conservation District, and the Key Peninsula-Gig Harbor-Islands Watershed Council with the mission to protect and promote good water quality on the shorelines of Pierce County.)

At least one family has already benefited from the new program, which provided a needed septic-system repair. Working with the county, the homeowner obtained a loan with a 2.6 percent interest for half of the new \$28,000 system. The other half was covered by a grant through the program.

Smolko said property owners who might benefit from this assistance should contact Nedda Turner at the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department at 798-6462 or nturner@tpchd.org.

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Census counts Key Pen's homeless population

By Sharon Hicks, KP News

In January, Key Peninsula was part of a countywide annual census of homeless people. The census, coordinated by the Pierce County Coalition for the Homeless, has been taking place for 12 years to find out just where the majority of homeless are. This year's homeless count had stations set up in Home, Puyallup, Eatonville and downtown Tacoma, maintaining a 24-hour count on Jan. 24 and 25. Lakebay Community Church in Home was the only station set up on the west side of the Tacoma Narrows.

The coalition, comprised of different cities and government organizations, provides services needed for the homeless. The goal of the census is to obtain the number of homeless for housing and urban development in order to plan future housing and services.

This year, 15 people showed up at Lakebay Community Church for the census, which also included a giveaway of food and supplies. Diane and Howard Johnson of the M & M Ministries (mingle and minister), who provided food items



Billy, one of the people who came to the census, has lived in a tent on the Key Pen for several years. See more photos at www.keypennews.com

Photo by Karina Whitmarsh

to those who came, have been volunteering nearly four years at the Lakebay Church to provide weekly food and personal items for people in need. Fundraisers by the Festival of Hope volunteers of Chapel Hill in Gig Harbor come up with clothing, blankets, socks, mittens and other items. Leftover vegetables are donated by Harbor Greens, some food from the FISH food bank and day-old bread from Panera Bakery, all located in Gig Harbor. Many vegetables come from the local community and much

from the Gig Harbor Church of Later Day Saints.

Rae Anne Giron of the Pierce County Community and Housing Programs said her agency tries to work with the sheriff's department to find out where these homeless are on the rural Key Pen. She acknowledges it is like looking for a needle in a haystack. The agency also recruits volunteers for the count by word of mouth and newspaper ads.

Many of the homeless people around the county are housed in shelters when

room is available, while others are on their own. According to Giron, most homeless live that way by choice, while others do not have the capacity to make a choice or may have just become victims of a disaster.

The Key Peninsula's homeless choose that lifestyle for various reasons and come from different walks of life. One of those who came to the census, a 60-year-old man, told the KP News he has been homeless for three to four years, is a master carpenter but has no vehicle or license. He came in on a sloop a year ago and now lives in the woods in a homemade tent with a friend. He chose the peninsula because he has friends and needed a place for his boat, which he was later forced to sell. He has been jobless four months now and continues to seek food and companionship on Thursdays through the M & M volunteers at the Lakebay Community Church.

Final numbers of this year's count were not available at press time. Last year's countywide count was 1,596 for both the shelters and those living on the streets. This year's number is expected to far exceed that number.

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KP couple own and operate Gig Harbor mom & pop café

By Kristen Pierce, KP News

Who says dreams can't come true? Key Peninsula residents Gene and Teresa Baker happily dispute that statement. Teresa Baker comes from a long line of entrepreneurial family members. "My family has always owned restaurants, small stores, or gas stations," she says. She has dreamed of owning her own small restaurant or coffee shop for a long time — but fulfilling that dream did not come easy. It took many years for the right situation, timing, location, and restaurant to finally come together.



Both Gene and Teresa are Washington natives and have degrees in electronic engineering. Gene was originally from Vancouver and Teresa from Beacon Hill. While attending college, the couple met in Bellingham. They married in Seattle in 1994 and were working together at the Hyatt Hotel in catering, room service,



Gene and Teresa Baker with their sons, Reece and Dustin at Kelly's Café.

Photo by Karina Whitmarsh

and as night auditors. An opportunity arose for a job transfer to the Grand Hyatt in Hawaii and without hesitation, the couple relocated. Eventually, they agreed to transfer with Hyatt to Beaver Creek, Colo., to be closer to their parents. After becoming a mother of two, Teresa starting phasing out her work at the Hyatt to spend more time at home with the boys. Eventually, Gene had the opportunity to accept a job for CenturyTel, complete with a transfer to Washington. The Bakers jumped at the

idea to finally return to their home state and planted their roots on the Key Peninsula.

Teresa worked with her brother at his restaurant in Seattle and commuted three times a week, still dreaming of opening up her own coffee shop or small restaurant. She had looked at many possibilities in Hawaii and Colorado but never found the "right fit." Out of the blue, a friend casually mentioned a restaurant in downtown Gig Harbor was up for sale — and the couple immedi-

ately started the ball rolling to become the new owners of Kelly's Café and Espresso on Pioneer Way. "We saw our vision from the first day we walked through the doors. I knew this would be the family restaurant we had been dreaming of all these years," Teresa says.

"At this point, we've decided to keep the original name," Gene says, "although a new sign will be displayed this spring." Besides a new sign and remodeled interior, the restaurant will have new hours (including extended spring and summer hours), and the menu will include a few changes, leaning toward the healthier side. Teresa only orders locally, including the micro-brews and Washington wines. All produce, meat and fish must be local and fresh. Teresa explains, "We simply have a fresh philosophy: no more frozen foods... I consciously choose to use all local companies, even the coffee. I am particular about the way things taste."

Teresa and Gene Baker are looking forward to watching their dream blossom.

"Our mission statement is to be the best family restaurant in Gig Harbor where everyone is respected, from ages 0 to 100," Teresa says.

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Mercantile going, going, gone...

By Chris Fitzgerald, KP News

Demolition of the Longbranch Mercantile began the week of Feb. 18 by Phil Johnson, owner of Johnson's Bulldozing. (Johnson said he had mixed emotions about the job; he recalled going to the Mercantile as a child for banana splits.)

Permits for both the demolition and the new replacement building are tied together. According to owners Denise and Mike Hays, the building first had to be taken off the Pierce County Home Historical Registry, where it has been recorded since the 1980s. To accomplish this, the Hayses worked with the little-known archaeological department of Pierce County Planning and Land Services. "Most of the houses in Home are on the registry," Mike Hays said. "If a Home resident wants to do something like this (anything similar to what they are doing), most likely they will encounter the constraints posed by the registry."

A permit was granted, with the provision that reusable vintage materials be saved and reused. Fine with the owners;

Down memory lane...

The Mercantile holds some colorful memories for one Key Pen resident. David Mikelsen, whose parents once owned and operated the store, recalls the days when the store boomed until midnight during busy summer. Read his story on page 23.

they will be constructing a rustic structure on the site, and those materials will blend in just right. For his company's part in the process, Johnson and his crew are working meticulously, separating out metals, insulation, wood. Anything that can be recycled will be; Purdy Topsoil will take the scrap lumber, grind it up and mix it with mulch. Experts will drain Freon from the refrigeration units and those that are still operational will go right back into the new building. "It's not the fastest way to do demolition," said Johnson, prying up flooring while his excavator sat idle nearby. "But it's the most ecological, and safest for the environment."

Hays said county shorelines personnel were on the site a few days prior to demo-



Left, Phil Johnson, of Johnson Brothers Bulldozing, carefully sorts the materials of the Longbranch Mercantile. All materials from the site will be recycled.

Photo by Frank Slater

Below, an undated photo of the Longbranch Mercantile.

Photo courtesy KP Historical Society



lition, and were pleased with what they found. The couple, who also own the waterfront strip on the bay side of the road, installed silt filter barriers in front of the building and over two drains on the property that run beneath the highway and empty into Filucy Bay. "The water is crystal clean," Hays said. "The (removal/demolition) is going even better than I thought."

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Business comings and goings

By Danna Webster, KP News

It is springtime and businesses are blooming on the Key Peninsula. Here is an update of new business activity, from Purdy to Home.

In Purdy, Jake's Pizza and Hot Subs is a new establishment, located in the former home of Jane Dough's Pizza across from the Westwynd Motel. It is owned by the George Iuliano's family, who also own Bayside Cutters at the front of the store. Cheryl Iuliano and her son, Jake, are managing the restaurant, which features hand-tossed pizzas with names like Flying Hawaiian and Happy Camper. Also in Purdy, Wings-Pizza-N-Things is slated to open in March in the former Beach House location. Co-owner Natasha Jones said they were waiting on equipment arrival and the health inspection. "We are not like a typical franchise. We are adding a dinner menu to attract people to come and have dinners like seafood and steak, good old fashion hamburgers and pizza... We use ground Black Angus beef and make the patties from scratch," she says.

The old Wauna Fire Station building,

where Seabeck Pizza is located, is a new home for Green Acres Realty, which is sharing one part of the building with Ellis Accounting. Owner Larry Bentley says it has been a "good" move for his real estate company. Key Pen resident Nick Reynolds, Seabeck Pizza co-owner owns the property and has remodeled the lower level for office space. "It's just an old building we painted and put a pizza oven into," he jokes and adds his recommendation for upscale dining at another of his eating facilities, Brix 25, in downtown Gig Harbor.

Along the KP Highway, a new carpet and tile business opened next door to SuperSmoke on the 134th Avenue. A to Z Flooring is owned by Dave Fritcher, a Key Peninsula resident. Fritcher decided to go into business for himself when he became a single father and needed to keep his own hours. He has a long history of experience in this business — working as a partner with his mother before she passed away; and his father owns Valley Floor in Kent and Cle Elum. His employees are licensed and bonded installers.

West on SR-302, at the Vaughn turnoff, Mike and Andrea Pope have opened a new

drive-through smoke shop. The building in front of M&A Pizza kitchen was originally intended as an espresso stand. Andrea Pope says that over the course of two years of negotiating with county and working with the KP Community Plan, standards for espresso stands changed and put that idea out of reach. The M&A Smoke Stop is a drive-thru with full-service tobacco products, herbal tobacco alternatives, candles, bakery items and ready to go food.

The Landing in Key Center has experienced some topsy-turvy changes. Owner Ira Specter says recently one new business moved in and two businesses moved out. Mulberry Street Market Intelligence and SturdiProducts, producers of pet carriers and housing, outgrew their spaces at The Landing. Those businesses "exploded right after they moved in," Specter says. SturdiProducts moved up the hill, into the Sausage Haus building. Customer Service Manager Don Starkweather says, "We are outgrowing the new one already. We just keep growing."

When Mulberry Street moved to Gig Harbor, Storage Technologies moved into the vacated suites. According to

Specter, they are storing less hard copy and more digital so they didn't need as much space as they had in their building on the KP Highway. Only one suite is available in The Landing.

The Key Center Roadhouse Family Dining and Spirits will open this spring at the former Blondie's location. The menu will feature homestyle comfort food, according to co-owner Mike Cuzzetto. The restaurant will feature "quality food, a great price point, and giant portions," Cuzzetto says. "I'd rather make a quarter three times than 50 cents once," he says, adding he plans to "create raving fans on the Peninsula by exceeding their expectations." Cuzzetto has been in the food service for 45 years. He and his wife, Linda (a gourmet cook working currently as a hair stylist at the Serenity Salon), will "ramrod the kitchen." The Cuzzettos are partners with Keith and Norma Thomas, owners of the Sit and Sip Tavern in Wauna.

The HomePort Restaurant and Lounge is keeping its name but is under new license as The Port LLC, with Wally Johnson and Lu Smith as co-managers. Smith says she is not going anywhere. The HomePort is expanding its menu and catering has been added as a new service. "We have a fiesta theme. We want to have fun around here," Johnson says.

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Two Waters Arts Alliance changes focus

By Jerry Libstaff

The Two Waters Arts Alliance (TWAA) celebrates the launch of its eighth year this month with the spotlight shining in a new direction.

TWAA was founded by three Key Peninsula artists who wanted to improve the lives of at-risk youngsters. They offered activities for young people designed to enhance self-esteem and develop creativity.

The organization quickly gained recognition and over time, grew to offer enrichment for the entire community. TWAA is now an integral part of Key Peninsula's social scene and continues to grow and fulfill area needs. The nonprofit organization provides art classes for all ages, entertainment programs throughout the Peninsula and support for the local artist community.



The Genuine
ARTicle



Photo by Jerry Libstaff

Yopancha and Deanna English are enjoying the artwork display at last year's Spring Fling.

In 2004, the Pierce County Arts Commission awarded the prestigious Margaret K. Williams Arts Award for Support of the Arts to TWAA. A defining reason for the honor was Artists in School. The program places local artists in school classrooms to teach art in conjunction with local teachers. The

idea, promoted and managed by retired school teacher Paddy Gilson, is entirely funded by TWAA.

Community enthusiasm for TWAA events continues to grow each year. Programs such as Spring Fling, music events, family entertainment and art shows have become a mainstay. At the same time, however, the demand for community art classes has diminished.

A year ago, under the guidance of President Magill Lang, TWAA reorganized its committee structure to better reflect current needs of the community.

Frank Garratt, current president, says, "One program that remains a primary focus is Artists in Schools. We consistently received outstanding reviews from teachers, schools and most importantly, the students. We hope to interview teachers and principals and determine how we might improve our processes. At the same time we plan to study similar programs, define their successes and incorporate those."

Last fall, TWAA partnered with the Key Peninsula Civic Center to present Flavor of Fall. In January, the organization

Spring Fling

This month, TWAA kicks off its 2008 season with Spring Fling. The event takes place at 7 p.m. on March 15 at the Key Peninsula Civic Center. TWAA will present live music by Jazz Musette and an art sale featuring works by some of Peninsula's finest artists. Admission is \$15 for nonmembers, \$10 for members (at the door).

For more information about TWAA, Spring Fling and other events, contact President Frank Garratt at 884-3869.

presented the second annual Tears of Joy puppet show for children and adults. August will bring another Beyond Borders, a music and arts festival co-sponsored with Longbranch Improvement Club.

"We will continue to provide full support to the arts and the artists of the Key Peninsula," Garratt says.

There are a significant number of extremely talented and nationally renowned artists living here, enough to promote the area as an artist community.



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Dancing for joy

Key Pen dancer shares passion with kids, adults

By Jeanette Brown
Special to the KP News

Performing artist Anna Hansen is passionate about dance. Two years ago, she began teaching a children's creative ballet class at the Civic Center in Vaughn. In due course, the popular class split into a pre-ballet class and an additional beginning ballet class. Now Hansen is busy preparing for more growth, and her vision for the new year is to provide Key Peninsula residents with even more dance options. She is determined in her goal to offer more classes for teens and adults.

When her daughter, Zinnia was 2, Hansen started bringing her to class. She was delighted when at age 4, Zinnia decided to get in on the fun; she now attends the pre-ballet class for 3- to 4-year olds taught by her mother.

"Zinnia is an independent 4-year-old and I am ready to take on some more

responsibilities," Hansen said. "I would love to teach adult ballet, modern dance and funky aerobics in addition to developing a fun and quality ballet program for kids."

Hansen moved to Glencove from Orcas Island with her husband, Lief, about three years ago. The family resides in a historic home that once housed Glencove School but has been restored and remodeled as a residence.

A native of Edison, Wash., which she describes as "a perfect little town to grow up in," Hansen started dancing in earnest when she was about 9 years old. "My parents were very supportive of my dancing, but they never pushed me," she said. "I danced in the children's company associated with my studio, went to dance camps, and drooled over the TV show Fame, hoping someday to have that same dance-all-day-and-night experience."

At 13, Hansen made the decision to stay home with her family instead of making the move to Seattle to pursue a professional ballet career. She had decided to become a modern dancer and commuted to Bellingham every day



Photo by Karina Whitmarsh

Anna Hansen during a recent dance lesson.

during high school to take classes at Western Washington University.

Upon graduation from high school, she attended Cornish College of the Arts on a scholarship, graduating in 1991 with a bachelor of fine arts in dance and the honor of being awarded the most outstanding dance graduate. Then, after a brief trip to the Big Apple (it took her two weeks to decide New York would be a difficult place for her to live), she came back to Seattle and danced for three years with Shirley Jenkins' company, Strong Wind, Wild Horses.

"I had the opportunity to work with many local and national choreographers and the company mostly performed in Seattle, but we did get to tour Hawaii," she said. She met her future husband one day as he was singing on University Way in Seattle, and introduced herself on the spot. The couple has been married for 13 years.

They moved to Vashon Island, where Hansen taught ballet and modern dance at the Blue Heron Arts Center. They then decided to attend Regent College in Vancouver, B.C., where they collectively pursued their degrees in theology. They both graduated three years later, and moved to Orcas Island.

The Hansens' mutual goal was to eventually start an arts retreat/community and they both worked with Orcas Island youth at a place called the Fun House, in addition to teaching various workshops and classes. "While we loved Orcas... we realized that if we were going to fulfill our dream of building an arts retreat/community, we needed some more practical experience, and moved to the Key Peninsula, where Lief began a job as a weekend retreat and family camp director at Camp Seymour."

Hansen believes "movement can bring joy and freedom to people," but body image gets in the way of the enjoyment. "I believe we need to enjoy our bodies now, as they are, not trying to become something different," she said. "To me, dance is about enjoying ourselves — literally — who we are as people, our entire beings expressing ourselves. There are not many places to dance in our society." She firmly believes in that idea, saying, "We need more room to move."

Fortunately, there is plenty of room at the Civic Center, where Hansen also plans to offer a funkier and free dance exercise class taking inspiration from African, modern, folk, and dance improv.

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March 3, Ongoing Bloodmobile

The Bloodmobile will be at Albertson's (11330 51st Ave NW) in Gig Harbor from 12:30-7 p.m. on the following Mondays: March 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31. It will also be in the second floor meeting room of Peninsula Light Co. on Tuesday, March 11, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

March 6 – Fuchsia Club meeting

The next meeting of the Lakebay Fuchsia Society will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday at the Key Center Library. Call Myvanwy, 884-2283.

Ongoing – Mustard Seed meetings

The following meetings will be held at the Key Center Library.

Key Senior Information Center Volunteer Meeting - Friday, March 7, 10 a.m.

Transportation and Mobility for Elders Community Task Group — Friday, March 14, 10 a.m. Please call the Key Senior Information Center at 884-9814 if you are a low-income senior or disabled adult in need of transportation. Several screened, trained volunteer drivers are waiting to provide rides to medical appointments and grocery shopping.

Elder Health and Wellness Services Community Task Group — Thursday, March 20, 10 a.m.

Housing Options for Aging in Place Community Task Group – Friday, March 28, 10 a.m.

Edie, 884-9814 or ediemorgan@themustardseedproject.org

March 8 – Game On!

The library invites youngsters ages 6-11 for an afternoon of Play Dance Revolution and other video and tabletop games. Snacks provided.

Saturday, March 8, 1-2 p.m. Key Center Library; 884-2242

March 12 – Playground meeting

Key Pen Metro Parks will hold a second

meeting to discuss future playground equipment at Home Park. Interested individuals should contact the Key Pen Parks office at 884-9240. Wednesday, March 12, 7-8 p.m., Home Fire Station

March 13- Lakebay Writers Group

The Lakebay Writers Group will meet on Thursdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Key Center Library. www.sleepyhollowwreatreat.com, or Carl, 884-9671

March 13 – Adefua Company at library

The Friends of the Library presents the Adefua Music and Dance Company, which will perform rhythms of Africa in an interactive, upbeat performance from its roots in native village and European court dances. Adefua sends the message that all people are equal.

Thursday, March 13, 7 p.m. Key Center Library, free; 884-2242

March 14 – Peacemakers host ACLU speaker

The Key Peacemakers will host Dr. Nancy Bristow, who will speak on "The ACLU: Civil Liberties in the 21st Century." Dr. Bristow is a professor of history at UPS and a board member of the ACLU. She will address some of the most important issues and cases the ACLU is working on nationally and in Washington state. Bristow will also discuss how the work of the ACLU has shifted over the last 90 years, and pressures on the organization since Sept. 11, 2001. Friday, March 14, 7 p.m. Key Center Library; Dory, 884-9299

March 15 – Life Line screenings

Preventive health care noninvasive, ultrasound screenings of the neck carotid artery, arteries in the legs, aortic vessel in the abdomen and bone density will be offered at the Civic Center. These screenings can provide early detection for heart disease, strokes, aneurysms and osteoporosis and are recommended for ages 40 and older. The tests cost \$35-\$45 each or all four cost \$129. Pre-registration is

required and space is limited.

Saturday, March 15, Key Pen Civic Center, 17010 S Vaughn Rd; pre-registration required. 1-800-324-1851

March 15 – Artists at the library

The Friends of the Library invite the community to meet the artists who are currently featured in the Key Center Library. Local artists Donna Trent, Myrna Binion, Mimi VanBallenberghe, Arlene Towne, and Anne and Bob Knapp will share their art and insights during a reception. Their art, including work of their Tuscany trip, will show for the months of March and April. Refreshments provided.

Saturday, March 15, 2-3 p.m. Key Center Library, free; Ed, 853-6550

March 15 – Orchestra presents concert

The Gig Harbor Peninsula Civic Orchestra will continue its season of dance music with a free concert that will include Dvorak Slavonic Dances, Brahms Hungarian Dances, Strauss Emperor Waltz, Saint-Saen Danse Macabre, and Offenbach's Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld (the CanCan), among others.

Saturday, March 15, 7 p.m. Peninsula High School, 14105 Purdy Dr NW, free; www.ghpcorchestra.com

March 22 – Spring flowers and edible plants

See the spring flowers and wild edible plants in the woods at Penrose Point State Park and notice what is flowering, identify the plants, and look at (and maybe eat) some of the wild edible plants from the area. Notice other signs of spring. The first 15 people who call to register will be participants.

Saturday, March 22, 1-2 p.m. Penrose Point State Park, free; register with Dan, 884-2514

March 22 – Easter egg hunt

Boy Scout Troop 220 will host its annual Easter Egg Hunt, sponsored by the Key Peninsula Civic Center, rain or

shine. Key Peninsula children, toddlers to age 12, are invited to participate in this fun, traditional event, including a visit by the Easter Bunny herself. The Boy Scouts are looking to replace many of the egg shells used for the hunt this year; if you have any plastic Easter egg shells, baskets, candy, or a monetary donation for this event, please contact Scoutmaster John O'Dell.

Saturday, March 22, noon, KP Civic Center; John, 265-6205

March 25 – Young readers at the library

The Key Center Library is launching a Wee Readers program, geared toward children from 0 to 36 months, starting on Tuesday, March 25 at 10:30 a.m. Wee Readers contains playing, finger games and other activities to nurture reading skills.

The traditional family story time for all preschoolers will begin on Wednesday, March 26 at 11 a.m. Both programs are free. Sign-up will begin March 1. Drop-ins are welcome.

April 4 – Co-ed softball registrations due

Key Pen Parks is now accepting team registrations for Tuesday night co-ed softball league. Teams will play an 8-game season plus a single elimination end-of-the season tournament. Games will start April 15. Individuals without a team may contact Key Pen Parks and request to be put on a player availability list. Cost of the league and tournament is \$ 475. Team registrations and rosters are due by April 4. 884-9240

Now-Through April – Pierce County READS

What if everybody in Pierce County read the same book at the same time? Find out during the first Pierce County READS February-April. Sponsored by the Pierce County Library and many other community partners, this event invites people throughout the county to read copies of the same book, participate in free programs, and join with

(See **EVENTS**, Page 17)

(From **EVENTS**, Page 16)

groups to discuss the book.

This year's Pierce County READS book is the best-selling "The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency" by international, award-winning author Alexander McCall Smith. Meet McCall Smith and get books signed at a free event at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma

on April 26 at 7 p.m.

"The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency" is an eight-book series. The best-selling series has been translated into 39 languages and has sold more than 14 million copies worldwide. The series is situated in Botswana, Africa and tells the story of the leading and only female detective agency in Botswana. More information at www.piercecountylibrary.org

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Mary and Jarvis Krumbein

Former residents of Long Island, N.Y., Mary and Jarvis Krumbein are familiar faces on the Key Peninsula. In 1994, they moved here to be close to family and to return to familiar and beloved places on the KP — and have lived here since. They have three grown children and five grandchildren currently attending school.

Their talents for helping and lending their time benefit the Angel Guild, the Mustard Seed Project, and several other organizations. Even at the Friends of the Library and Key Peninsula Historical Society their presence is felt.

In addition, Mary serves as secretary for two other nonprofits while Jarvis serves as the "guy" fixer at the Angel Guild and as a volunteer driver with the newly founded Mustard Seed Project, whose goal is to help create an "elder-friendly" community. This project is near and dear to their hearts, so they serve as members of the Advisory Council of Elders. Mary and Jarvis have hopes of continuing to live on KP with the benefits of retirement living.

Fourteen years ago, Mary became an "Angel" for the Angel Guild and has continued with that commitment over

time, adding her work as secretary at Key Peninsula's Historical Society and the Vaughn Bay Garden Club.

Jarvis is an amateur astronomer and telescope maker; he also enjoys collecting old cameras. Mary, on the other hand, learned the art of thrifty shopping from her grandmother and continues that tradition by selling and buying on e-Bay when not volunteering her skills to her many organizations.


Mary says, "The Angel Guild is always in need of more Angels to help clerk and to sort the items out for the store." The Angel Guild contact for signing up as a volunteer is Nancy Korsech.

— Donna Smeall



Krumbeins


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March 5 – Welcome Club hosts brunch

The Gig Harbor Welcome Club will host a salad/fruit brunch at Inn at Gig Harbor on March 5. Anthropologist Joan Tenenbaum will discuss some of her travels and will have some of the jewelry she makes available for purchase. Call Marcia, 857-5324, for time.

March 14 – Whiskers Wine & Dine

Peninsula Spay/Neuter Project (PSNP) will host its fourth annual "Whiskers Wine & Dine" fundraiser from 6:30 - 10 p.m. The event is held in recognition of Spay Day USA, a national day of action to promote the spaying and neutering of companion animals.

Whiskers Wine & Dine will feature a vegetarian "spay-ghetti" dinner, wine tasting, dessert and auctions – silent and live. Local artists will display their works and donate a percentage of event sales to PSNP. All are invited to help the fight against pet overpopulation. All proceeds benefit PSNP as well as its new life-saving Coalition: HUMAnE Spay & Neuter Clinic, located in Tacoma.

Peninsula Spay/Neuter Project is one of the top 10 providers of spay/neuter services in the state of Washington. Spaying and neutering is the most effective method of saving pets' lives.

Friday, March 14, 6:30-10 p.m. Slovanion Hall, Tacoma. Reservations are \$45/person in advance, \$55 at the door (on a space available basis). Reservations required; 253-241-9403 or www.psnp.org to download an order form.

March 15- Screening for GH Art Festival

Preparations for Gig Harbor's 24th Summer Art Festival are happening. Artists in the region are invited to have their work screened at St. Nicholas Church, 3510 Rosedale Street, in Gig Harbor. Drop off time is from 9 a.m. to noon and pick up time is from 3-3:45 p.m.

The art festival, sponsored by

Peninsula Art League and KeyBank, takes place on July 19-20. The event offers arts and crafts from over 150 artists, food vendors, music, and entertainment for children. Accompanying the festival, Peninsula Art League presents its Summer Art Show inside KeyBank during the weekend. Carolyn, cfvalstyn@comcast.net

Now through March 16 – 'Barefoot in the Park'

Neil Simon's first Broadway hit, "Barefoot in the Park," a comedy in three acts directed by Liam Sanchez, will be presented on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 5 p.m. at the Western Washington Center for the Arts, 521 Bay Street, Port Orchard. Tickets are \$10 to \$15. Call 360-769-7469

March 20 – NASA at GHHS

Dr. Michelle Thaller of NASA's Spitzer Telescope Program will give a community presentation on Thursday, March 20, from 7 to 8 p.m. at Gig Harbor High School. Amy, 530-4200

March 29 – Strut Buster feast

Tickets are now available for the Narrows Strut Busters Chapter's (National Wild Turkey Federation) 7th Annual Hunting Heritage Banquet to be held at 4 p.m. at Blondie's Restaurant & Lounge in Port Orchard. Come enjoy a great salmon or prime rib dinner, our live and silent auctions, general raffle, and games for guns/bow.

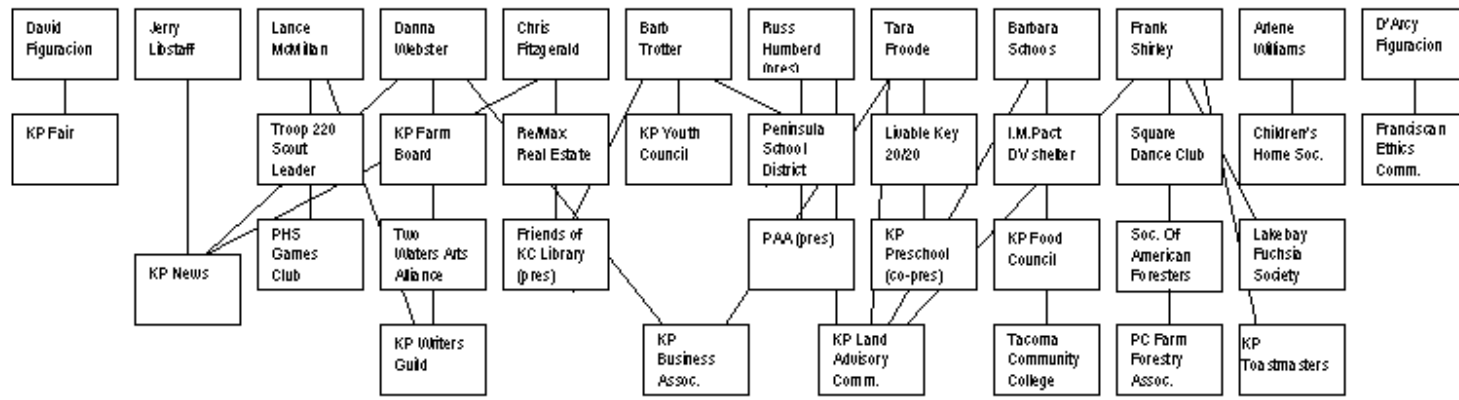
Saturday, March 29, 4 p.m. Blondies in Port Orchard, tickets required; John, 360-871-2709 or johnfeddock@wavecable.com

Ongoing- Alzheimer's meeting

Alzheimer's Association meets the first Saturday of each month from 10-11:30 a.m. at the Gig Harbor United Methodist Church, 7400 Pioneer Way, Gig Harbor. The group facilitator is Whitney Farr-Pilz, 206-229-1540 or www.alzwa.org

(From COUNCIL, Page 1)

Council directors' affiliations



to focus on the need for better communications, which they believe will lead to increased visibility, and a commensurate increase in membership.

David Figuracion, who, along with his wife, D'Arcy, represents District One, put it this way: "The most pressing goal is to get the word out that we're here — and to get out and do some things that people can see we're doing. I think a lot of people don't know we're here."

There's some evidence that Figuracion is correct. When asked how many people show up for the average meeting, Director Arlene Williams replied, "Three or four show up three or four times a year. More if an especially hot issue is up for discussion."

Three directors were of the opinion that the council should sponsor more forums for the purpose of providing information to residents. Some, like McMillan, believe in active lobbying, "in order to get the concerns of people on the Peninsula in front of county officials."

Others, like Director Frank Shirley, have a different view. "I don't see any issue that has come up lately that we would be lobbying for," Shirley said. "The Community Plan was the big one but that's done now."

Two council members advocate increased community involvement, by which they mean working with other organizations, and in the words of D'Arcy Figuracion, being "more actively involved."

Webster said: "A lot of community groups are coming to the council to be recognized and get advice. We can work as a go-between. We're being used as a directory and that's good." Webster mentioned the KP 20/20 group, Safe Streets, and the Key Peninsula Business Association as examples.

Williams, who represents District Three, emphasized the need to get "more input from the people on the Key Peninsula on what they want us to talk

about." Meaning that without input from its constituents, the council can't be certain of which issues or activities to pursue.

While there's a seeming lack of a laser-like focus on what the council should try to accomplish during 2008, there is general agreement that the organization suffers from a general lack of visibility, and directors offered up a variety of strategies to correct that problem. Ideas included the creation of print or email newsletters, council-sponsored seminars on subjects of interest to local residents, tackling issues that are likely to garner more press coverage, being a more visible presence at community events, seeking out ways to network with other organizations, and releasing council agendas earlier, thereby encouraging the public to attend meetings.

Some of the ideas wouldn't cost any money, like being more visible at community events, increased networking, and issuing agendas earlier. But other recommendations, such as producing newsletters, sponsoring seminars, and conducting a public opinion survey, would require funding.

Insufficient funding seems to be at least partially responsible for a lack of a consensus-driven direction. Shirley, who

serves as the treasurer, said: "In order to accomplish some of the things they (the directors) have put into the budget, we need to raise money... Last year we didn't do any fundraising because we didn't have enough money to raise money."

A look at the budget supports that view. With only \$5,798 worth of income during 2007, \$5,000 of which stemmed from a county grant, the council was left with only \$1,855 after basic expenses. That isn't much money to work with, and District Two representative Barbara Trotter feels frustrated. "Our biggest constraint has been in the area of communications," Trotter said. "And so far every idea we have come up with in that area costs money. I think that's been the biggest constraint. Most people don't even know that we exist."

Extended involvement

The question of how much volunteer council directors can reasonably be expected to accomplish in a given year raises issues related to the nearly 30 organizations to which the combined council directors belong. Is it possible

(See COUNCIL, Page 19)

Editor's note

From time-to-time we plan to provide readers with in-depth analysis of organizations primarily focused on the Key Peninsula and its citizens. We begin the series with the Key Peninsula Community Council. We set out to interview every member of the council, and with one exception were able to do so. We feel this approach delivers more texture and nuance than is normally possible. By documenting all the organizations to which each council member belongs, we were able to assemble what amounts to a social map. Not a complete map of everything that happens on the Peninsula, but a fascinating look at how a relatively small number of people have a significant impact on our community.

the group's main accomplishment.

Director Lance McMillan, District Three, said, "The biggest accomplishment was the geoduck forum that we ran. That (topic) was, and currently remains, one of the hot-button issues out here. It was important to bring in an impartial panel that represented both sides so people could make up their own minds."

Russ Humbert, council president and a representative for District One, felt the forum was important, but took it one step further. "Our greatest accomplishment was to get the community's views regarding aquaculture in front of the Pierce County Council," he said.

Danna Webster, who represents District Two, and also serves as an assistant editor for KP News, offered a different perspective. "Several members worked with the county on the Key Pen Comprehensive Plan. So for almost two years that was the focus. And meanwhile the council was getting on its feet and finding ways to serve the Key Peninsula."

Having joined the council only recently, Jerry Libstaff, who represents District Two, and writes the "Genuine Article" column for Key Pen News, declined to offer an opinion. (Director Jonathan Bill could not be reached for an interview.)

Goals for 2008

While there is a fairly good consensus about what went right in 2007, many of the council members seem less sure about what to focus on during the year ahead. Although many of the comments regarding 2008 incorporated shared elements, there were differences as well, especially where emphasis was concerned. Five council members chose

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(From COUNCIL, Page 18)

to serve so many organizations effectively?

When directors were asked if any of their peers were so overcommitted that it was affecting their performance, none of them thought so, and Libstaff even went so far as to make the opposite case. "No, I don't think it's bad," he said. "That's the key to the council. The more we know about the people and what they are cognizant of, the better."

Then there's the issue of why the directors belong to so many organizations. Is it because they feel a need to be part of everything that's going on? Or because no one will step up and do the work? Director Barbara Schoos, District Four, said: "Overcommitted? That's probably true... But I'd rather have a council of overcommitted people than no people! All I can do is hope that more people get involved."

Director Chris Fitzgerald's frustration was obvious. "I went to three meetings this week, and at all three meetings I saw many of the same people, and there are what, 7,000 families out here? And yet it's the same 20 or so people trying



Photo by Mindi LaRose

Chuck West makes a presentation about his efforts to create a township at the February meeting of the council.

to preserve the paradise that we have. It makes no sense. There's a tremendous amount of apathy out here... Let the other guy do it."

D'Arcy Figuracion said, "If certain people have problems with people belonging to multiple organizations, they should get involved. I know it isn't easy, but if you want to see change, then you gotta do what you gotta do."

Multiple memberships raise another potential issue as well — and that's the possibility of conflict of interest situations. When asked to comment on that, McMillan said, "I know one person who writes for the Key Pen News and won't participate in votes when she sees what might be a conflict."

That person is Fitzgerald, District Four, who is a news editor for the newspaper. She says she often feels conflicted. "I struggle with it," she admitted. "At times I consider resigning because of it. It isn't easy to see things going on and not write about them."

As one of the paper's editors, Webster finds herself in a similar situation. When asked about the paper's policy regarding potential conflicts, Webster said, "The present policy is to reveal our memberships."

Generally speaking, most of the direc-

tors don't see a problem. Shirley's comment was typical: "You have to identify the conflict, and if that's going to be any sort of a problem, then you just bow out of the decision-making process."

Tara Froode, who represents District Four, agrees. "There's a limited number of people to serve in these positions," Froode pointed out, "and I haven't seen anyone try to profit or pursue their own agendas. If there's a potential conflict, we should excuse ourselves."

However, Froode, like some of the other council directors, also sits on the Key Peninsula Land Use Advisory Commission (KPAC) — an arrangement that one member of the community has raised concerns about. During a recent council meeting, Key Peninsula resident and KP News guest columnist Rick Sorrels told council members that because KPAC reports to the Pierce County Council's Community Development Committee, any KP Community Council director who serves on the KPAC could be in a conflict of interest situation, because, as Sorrels explained it to KP News, "The people doing the lobbying are the same people being lobbied." A situation that Sorrels believes could be in violation of the proposed Pierce County Ethics Policy.

Schoos, who is a member of KPAC as well as the KPCC, said: "We talked about that — and we couldn't figure out how that could be. We're getting training, and it seems obvious that if a matter having to do with a neighbor's land comes up in front of the group, you would need to recuse yourself."

Trotter, who doesn't belong to KPAC, said regarding Sorrels' allegations. "No, I don't agree with him. The Land Use Advisory meetings (are) open to the public. I don't see any evidence that there has been any crossover or problem so far."

President Russ Humberd is a member

of KPAC, and when asked to comment on the possibility of a conflict of interest, said, "We have been assured by the county that there isn't any problem. I can see what he (Sorrels) is saying, but we (KPAC members) don't make a decision on anything. We look at the information that's available and make a recommendation to the (Pierce County) Planning Board. So we don't make the actual decision."

KP News asked for the perspective of Mike Kruger, past senior planner for Pierce County who coordinated the work of the KP Community Planning Board, which resulted in the adoption of the Key Peninsula Comprehensive Plan, and subsequently, the creation of KPAC. Kruger, who is now a legislative analyst for the county council, explained the process this way: A land-use application comes to the county's planning department. Planners perform a detailed analysis of the proposal and issue a staff report that goes to the KPAC. Members of KPAC evaluate the information received, hold a public hearing in order to get additional input from the community, and come up with a recommendation to approve, deny, or approve the proposal with modifications. That recommendation goes to a hearing examiner, who makes the final decision. Meaning that while KPAC can influence the final decision, it does not make the final decision."

Having explained the process, Kruger added, "The only conflict I could think of would be if the Community Council was pursuing a project that required a land-use permit from the county. Then those members on the council who are also members of KPAC might want to abstain from voting on that particular matter. We encourage folks who are involved in their community to be on these committees. The main thing is to have people who are active in the community."

Sean Gaffney, a senior planner with Pierce County, agreed with Kruger, saying, "They (KPAC members) are making recommendations based on adopted policy rather than starting with a blank slate and acting on personal opinions."

So as the Key Peninsula Community Council looks ahead to 2008, the group will need to decide which issues to focus on, find ways to increase their membership, and bring in the money required to get things done. Can they do it? "...2008 is going to be an action year," Webster promised optimistically. "It's going to be a fast ride."

Council accomplishments

The 14-member Key Peninsula Community Council was created in 2002. In accordance with new bylaws, elections will be staggered according to position numbers. At the present time there is a vacancy in District Two but that is expected to be filled soon. See <http://keycouncil.org/index.html> for details on the mission, meetings and more. Accomplishments during 2007 included: Completion of the Key Peninsula Community Plan, Geoduck forum, Candidate forum, Representing the Key Peninsula to the Pierce County Council, Organizational issues including work on new bylaws.

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OBITUARIES

Pat E. Goforth

Pat Goforth, a Home resident since 1978, died Feb. 14. He was a retired Air Force colonel who served during WWII, Korean conflict, and Vietnam. He was a member of the Tacoma Elks.



GOFORTH

Goforth is survived by his wife, Mary Jane, daughters Barbara of Vaughn, and Pamela Ahern (Jack) of Redding, Calif., step-son John Heston of Kent, two grandsons, and two great grandchildren. Services were held at Haven of Rest on Feb. 20, 2008.

Wesley Davidson

Wesley Gale Davidson, born in Tacoma to Robert and Bertha (Gabrielson) Davidson of Vaughn died on his 88th birthday in Shelton.



DAVIDSON

Raised in the house where his father and grandfather spent their lives, he graduated from Vaughn Union High School in 1938, attended College of Puget Sound and University of Washington School of Forestry.

He married Patricia Dow of Lakebay in 1941. In 1943, Davidson joined the Army Corp of Engineers with friend Harm Van Slyke. After the War, he joined his father in Davidson Logging Co. on Key and Kitsap Peninsulas and Hood Canal. In 1954 he moved his family to Southeast Alaska to log for Ketchikan Pulp CO. Davidson was the first logger with his own

airplane to commute to and from camp. He introduced portable steel spar trees to Alaska logging, and received many community and industry awards throughout his 52 years in Ketchikan, later writing "Our Alaska: Logs, Lakes, Lures, and Landings" about his family history and life in Alaska.

Preceded in death by his parents, he is survived by his wife, Patricia, daughter Lynda Adams (Bob), son Rod Davidson (Nancy), sisters Margaret Logan, Dorothy Koger, Kathryn Arnold (Jim), Peggy Dervaes (Joe), sister-in-law Stacia Gregory, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews in Washington, Oregon, and Alabama.

Edyth Imogene Johnson

Edyth Imogene Johnson, 90, of Lakebay, died Jan. 30.

She was born Oct. 14, 1917, to Knut Roy and Edith Strom, graduated from Vaughn High School in 1936 and married Rogner Johnson on Nov. 12, 1938. She accompanied her father on pack trips to the Olympics from the age of 7 until 1947.



JOHNSON

The Johnsons and John Larson owned the Lakebay Construction Co. for many years; Johnson kept the books and was secretary. Sons Phillip and David bought the business after Rogner retired. Johnson Bulldozing Co.'s books were kept by Edyth until 2003.

She was preceded in death by her husband and son, Robert. She is survived by children Esther (Ralph) Shulich, Phillip Johnson, and David (Cheryl) Johnson, 10 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and four great-great-granddaughters.

Memorial services were held Feb. 8 at Lakebay Community Church with interment at the Lakebay Cemetery. The

family wishes to thank all who attended the service and/or sent condolences, which were greatly appreciated.

James R. Meaney

James (Jim) R. Meaney, 61, died Jan. 29. Born in Boston, Mass., he was a resident of Lakebay since 2006. He was a retired maintenance superintendent, an expert carpenter and a superlative fisherman. He served in the U.S. Navy as a member of the construction battalion (C.B.s) during the Vietnam War, enduring three tours of duty and earning two bronze stars.

Meaney is survived by his wife, Sue, sons James of Omaha, Neb., John of Lakebay, Jason of Corpus Christi, Texas, daughter Jennifer Schlotterbeck of Redlands, Calif., and 13 grandchildren.

Natasha L. Pfaff

Natasha L. Pfaff, 19, died Feb. at Seattle Children's Hospital with her parents at her side. Pfaff loved her family, her friends, her dog, Sedgy, shopping, listening to oldies, and talking on the phone. Pfaff was a Key Peninsula resident for the first 16 years of her life, attended Minter Creek Elementary School, where the students provided "Nickels for Natasha" contribution jars in stores all over the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor to help provide family housing during her many surgeries in California.

She also attended Key Peninsula Middle School and was a student briefly at Peninsula High School. She was vibrant, humorous and so easy to love.

Pfaff is survived by her parents, Donald and Maureen Pfaff; brothers Jason and Daniel Bartos; cousin Melissa Brown (Matt and son, Aidan); grandmothers



PFAFF

Gladys Pfaff and Emily Rash; grandfather Donald Pfaff Sr. (Sherry); two aunts and three uncles. She was preceded in death by her grandfather, John Rash.

A graveside service was held Feb. 16 at Haven of Rest in Gig Harbor, followed by a celebration of life at Zion's Gate Church at Lighthouse Christian School. Remembrances may be made to the Natasha L. Pfaff Memorial Fund at Key Bank, with all proceeds after burial costs to go to CCI (Canine Companions for Independence of Santa Rosa, Calif.).

Shirley Sehmel

Shirley Sehmel, 88, of Richland, died Jan. 26. She was born in Vaughn on Aug. 25, 1919, to Charles M. and Gertrude E. Whitfield. She attended Vaughn Union High School and Sunday School and will be remembered for working so hard to fill her hope chest with her fancy work. She married Raymond A. Sehmel of Rosedale in 1938, and they lived in Seabeck and Bremerton.

Sehmel was preceded in death in 1977 by her husband. She is survived by her son, Larry R (Ann) of Richland, sister Audrey J Paul (Stanley) of Horseshoe Lake area, three grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.



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When Longbranch had a Mercantile

By Danna Webster, KP News

Longbranch resident David Mikelsen has fond memories of the Longbranch Mercantile. About one hundred years ago, it served the southern end of the peninsula as a grocery and post office. When Mikelsen's parents, Delmar and Mave, bought the store in 1974, they were the last owners to operate it as a grocery. It was a boom or bust business — boom in the summer, bust in winter. In the summer, with Filucy Bay full of boats, the store could stay busy until midnight, according to Mikelsen. "There were some \$5,000 days," during the summer, he recalls.

Meat products were a specialty of the store: chicken, beef and bacon. "People came out here for the bacon. Mr. Uddenberg delivered cherrywood smoked bacon from Seattle," Mikelsen says. Uddenberg also supplied beef, which he brought out in whole sides and butchered at the store. But chicken was a sore spot with Delmar. He complained that Mave always bought too many. Mikelsen remembers a day when his father complained Mave was going to have a dozen left over. The store was packed with customers, so David jumped up and shouted, "We're gonna have a chicken auction. Who'll give me a dollar for a chicken?" He sold all the chickens, some for as much as \$8 and \$9. Some of the sales credit may go to Mave's popularity with the customers. "People loved her," Mikelsen says. "...Mom had another problem. She'd give stuff away, if people didn't have the money."

Mave Mikelsen, a Vaughn High School graduate, has roots that stretch far back into Longbranch history. Her father, Oscar Larson, was the head of the Jehovah Witness church in Home, which he built with his stepfather, Capt. Taylor of the Mosquito Fleet. Capt. Taylor was the namesake for Taylor Bay.

Mave and Delmar lived in the house next door to the Mercantile and added some colorful memories to the history of the store. One of Mikelsen's favorite stories is about a gasoline purchase. Customers were expected to pump their own gas and come into the store and pay. Delmar had Bud Arledge mount a fisheye mirror on a wall inside the store to watch the pumps. On this particular day, David was admiring a "cute little honey" who jumped out of her car and "runs out about ten bucks, shuts it off, turns it back on to clear and fills it to \$5 right on the money," he says. The customer entered the store and was greeted by Mave. "Mom says, 'Hi, Honey. How you doing?' and the girl answers, 'Fine.' 'How much gas you got?' The girl answers, five. 'You're a lying b... Give me ten more bucks.' And Mom nailed that girl," Mikelsen says. The girl ran from the store with a bloody nose. David told his mother he would pay the \$10 for the additional gas because it was worth the show. But about that moment a "big rough looking hombre" comes in the door "looking right at me," David says. "He wants to know who just hit his girlfriend. Mom says, 'I did'." The hombre walked

over to the counter and slapped down \$10, with some colorful language to Mave, so she smacked him in the mouth with her fist. Those were the days when a call to the police took a few days to get answered, Mikelsen explains. "This was a No Man's Land," he says.

Business at the store died in the winter. Delmar had to work at the shipyard for income. About 1980, Delmar and Mave sold the store for the first time. Mikelsen thinks they sold the store about four times. "They'd sell it — winters would kill them (the new owners) and my parents would get it back," he says. Eventually, as his parents reached their 80s, the business took them into bankruptcy proceedings and they lost the store. Mave survived Delmar and now lives in Purdy.

David Mikelsen lives about a mile from the mercantile. He attended the Bremerton campus of Olympic College, wrote a computer software program called "What was happening the day you were born?" and is currently developing green sustainable properties in Longbranch. He serves on the Site Council for Evergreen PTA, is a member of the newly created Key



Photo by Danna Webster

David Mikelsen with his daughter, Ramona (a Key Peninsula Middle School student).

Peninsula LUAC (Land Use Advisory Committee), and is the proud coach of the Evergreen Eagles, a fourth-grade boys basketball team.

Mikelsen looks forward to the new owners, Mike and Denise Hays, developing the mercantile. "There's no right or wrong. ... I remember how it was. I want to keep it as close to it as possibly can be," he says.

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Nominees for 2008 Citizen of the Year

The 24th annual Key Peninsula Citizens of the Year Awards dinner on Saturday, March 22, will recognize some of Key Peninsula's hard-working volunteers. Those nominated for Citizens of the Year are considered for having rendered volunteer service on behalf of the KP community, whether for a single outstanding contribution or for sustained contributions over many years. All are very deserving of recognition and the KP Lions Club, sponsors of the event, encourage everyone to attend and show their appreciation for their contributions that help make the Key Pen a special place to live.

Greg Anglemeyer, a member of the KP Metro Parks board of commissioners, together with his wife, Becky, has long served with Communities in Schools-Peninsula as a mentor to Peninsula School District students who need extra help with math or reading. This one-on-one relationship with students gives them the boost they need to deal with studies and has almost invariably resulted in the students' grades improving.

Miriam and Steve Atchison have supported Key Peninsula activities by hosting youth through the Lions Youth Exchange Program. In 2006, Miriam phoned for information on the program and since then the couple has hosted visitors from Finland, Peru and Australia. The Atchisons are currently hosting a 17-year-old German student, who will be with them for the entire school year. The Lions Youth Exchange Program in this area could not exist without people like the Atchisons.

Cole Becker, 8, is a third-grade student at Purdy Elementary. Cole learned that children involved with chemotherapy treatment lose their hair and that his mom's friend, who lost her hair while being treated for breast cancer, bought a wig made of human hair, which enabled her to appear normal. So he decided that, if a boy lost his hair, he would want a wig made of boy's hair, not a girl's. For over a year, he let his hair grow, enduring taunts of schoolmates that he looked like a girl, until it was the required minimum 10 inches long and donated it to "Locks of Love."

Kyong Bertsch gave literally years of hours in support of the KP Little League. She was always there signing up players, collecting and recording funds, encouraging others to volunteer to make the activity a rewarding experience for the youngsters and advising parents of their responsibilities to the organization and most importantly, to the kids. All four of her children were avid Little Leaguers and she never missed a game to be with and

inspire her own and other youngsters.

Tom and Julie Boardman, on learning the KP Civic Center's Friday Night Skate Program lacked a director, volunteered to keep the project alive until the arrival of a paid director. They continue Skate Night volunteering and fulfill responsibilities as members of the KP Civic Center Association's board. They are members of the KP Business Association. Tom is vice president of the KP Community Fair. Julie and her daughters have a tea luncheon for KP librarians. They donate countless hours to the KP community.

Vicki Biggs has worked with Evergreen Elementary staff and parents through Children's Home Society many years by meeting needs of KP families. She helps break down barriers for students to be successful in school, understands how to raise a child, and has wonderful respect for and from strong families. She and husband, John, help with Longbranch Improvement Club's opening day of the yachting season, social events, dances, and most recently, the "Feast or Famine" dinner held jointly with the KP Community Services/Food Bank.

Marcy Cummings Cohoe is one of many hard-working school teachers at Vaughn Elementary. When attending a PTA meeting, she learned the Vaughn auction committee needed a chair person, so she volunteered, not knowing what she was getting herself into. She became an incredible volunteer leader, organized and spent countless hours on the auction with lots of volunteer helpers. Her goal to raise funds for Vaughn's children was a success.

Claude Gahard served the KP on the Pierce County Comprehensive Planning Committee for KP's Community Plan, is on the Farm Board committee for WSU's Pierce County Extension, the KPBA, the Home Neighborhood Association, the KP Farm Tour Board, and the newly formed Peninsula Food Policy Council. Along with wife Claudia, he developed Trillium Creek Winery into a showcase winery and vine-



ANGLEMEYER



ATCHISONS



BECKER



BERTSCH



BOARDMANS



BIGGS



COHOE



GAHARD

yard featured in major Washington newspapers and magazines as a statewide destination attraction. He is planning a summer cornucopia festival for the Key.

John Glennon Sr., a multitasking talented gent of a volunteer working for Key Peninsula Community Services for years, has gone through four directors so far. This World War II veteran's abilities are endless and his love for his community goes beyond the KPCS doors into his roll as Santa Claus for area schools, the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys for Tots Program, and Mary Bridge Children's Hospital, to mention a few. His donations take enormous amounts of time.

William J. "Bill" Glover's years of service to area youth and community as a member of Gig Harbor Little League found him in 2006 reaching out to Curt Self, president of the Key Peninsula Little League, struggling at the time to field enough teams to play games with each other. He invited KPLL to play against GHLL to help strengthen the KPLL. He has coached many KP kids in basketball, football and baseball for over nine years and most seasons coached two teams. He exemplifies the spirit of Little League, mentoring aspiring coaches and volunteers for the Key Peninsula.

Kelly Jackson's four daughters attend PSD elementary, middle, and high schools, to which she donates countless hours of service. She is PTO president at Minter Creek Elementary, which two of her daughters attend; she is the co-PTO president at KP Middle School, where another daughter attends; at Peninsula High, she is actively involved in the Community Inclusion Program (CIP), the scholarship committee, and volunteers on Wednesdays at the PHS Thrift Store. She has enriched the lives of hundreds of students.

Bill and Claudia Jones were the driving force behind the KP Fire Department's Santa Claus neighborhood runs this year. The Joneses volunteer in everything with KPPD, from responding to calls to setting up a grief counseling group. At this year's KPPD awards luncheon, Claudia was awarded the Jim Blundell Service Award and the KP Firefighters Association's Award. The couple see a need and fulfill it; they are tireless.

Betty Kelly, longtime teacher and LPN in the Inclusives program at KP Middle School, is a key support to this program for kids with disabilities. In line with her

(See CITIZENS, Page 25)

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WILBER

(From **CITIZENS**, Page 24)

long-term interest and membership on the KPCCA board, she did exceptional work on the “Flavor of Fall” fundraising event to support theatrical upgrades to the KPCC. She volunteered her auction expertise to Joseph Lindhartsen’s successful fundraiser and helped make February’s Crab Feed a sold-out success.

Mindi LaRose volunteers as a KP News staff photographer as well as for various projects when help is needed. She is currently volunteering as the photo editor for a book publishing project by the KP News. Her photos are also featured in the current Key Peninsula Business Association directory brochure. She is an involved parent volunteer for KPMS and PHS and has been instrumental to the success of the annual PHS Boosters auction, which she has served as co-chair. With husband Dave, she coached PAA soccer and last year ran a monthly Coffee Talk for PHS girls.

Larry Mayer, vice president of KP Citizens Against Crime/Citizens Patrol, with his wife, Betty, spends numerous hours patrolling KP as eyes and ears for the PC Sheriff’s Department. He has helped hold CAC/CP together, running its meetings and taking care of business. A fall while working on his house caused several months of nursing a broken shoulder and collar bone but, an accomplished chef, he spent endless hours cooking benefit dinners for the VFW, Sons of Italy, Sons of Norway, and CAC/CP’s annual picnic.

Loyd Miller’s quiet diligence and dedication to the betterment of the community are exemplary. A shy fellow, he does not seek limelight, has been a true caretaker of the Civic Center, which has saved thousands of dollars because of all the loving attention he has given this volunteer job. He has headed the fireworks sale, which takes at least a month to organize, put up the display, keep the shelves

stocked and stay overnight in the trailer next door. He was with Citizens Against Crime and is an active participant in the Key Peninsula Community Fair.

Tami Miller volunteers at schools, collects food for the food bank, sorts and stocks clothes for the clothing bank, helps sort and bag items for children, collects food for Boy Scouts to donate to the KPCS/Food Bank, and helps sell wreaths with the Scouts to help raise money to help fund summer camps. If there’s a fire, she’s on the phone seeing what she can do to provide for the family. She is always willing to help, whether it’s feeding a neighbor’s dog, watering someone’s plants, or helping a sick friend.

Edie Morgan is the founder of the Mustard Seed Project to create an elder-friendly peninsula for seniors to age in place and not have to move for services as they age. Her task groups led to creation of the Key Senior Information Center on needed services, assistance programs for utility bills, and caregivers. Other task groups deal with transportation and mobility for seniors, elder health and wellness services, and housing options for aging in place. She clearly tapped into a large, unmet community need.

John Parker usually fields more than one KP Little League baseball team under his Freight Taxi logo. He attends virtually all of their games and, win, lose or draw, closes the game with hot pizza and cold soft drinks for all the kids, including the opponents. Learning that the KP Lions were building retaining wall bleachers at Volunteer Park’s upper field and that materials came to \$1,500 for a 24-foot stretch, he attended a KP Lions meeting and without solicitation wrote and handed over a check for that amount to the Lions to continue their good work.

Ed Robison’s volunteer efforts on KP include work on two Habitat for Humanity houses. A civil and structural engineer, he

assessed free materials and designed a picnic shelter for Home Park using those materials. He helped install a concrete-block retaining wall at Volunteer Park. His family has hosted youth participating in a youth exchange program and will host a student from Austria this summer. He has provided structural engineering services to the KP Metro Park District free. He served six months in Iraq last year as commander with Navy Seabees, Engineer Corps.

Lori Robison has participated in the Lions Youth Exchange Program five times, hosting youth from Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Peru. In addition, her son, Nicholas, traveled to New Zealand in 2006. She has been the adult spirit behind a very competitive team of local horse vaulters who presently use her property on the Key Peninsula to hone their skills.

Mark Runions, a mover and shaker on the musical and arts scene on the KP, was a sparkplug for last year’s “Beyond the Borders” daylong presentations of various musical groups including the popular, internationally known Pearl Jango group. His Jazz Mussette group is a persistent provider of the best of jazz sounds at various KP social and dance events. A devoted member of the Two Waters Arts Alliance, he provides highly professional jazz performances for its annual Spring Fling fundraisers.

Mike Salatino has served this community “forever.” He is the creator of the annual KP Community Fair. He is a former president of the KP Civic Center Association. Together with his wife, Joyce, he annually organizes a Christmas Day turkey dinner for people from all backgrounds who might otherwise dine alone and involves members of the entire KP community, to set up, cook, serve, and clean up this remarkably successful endeavor.

Tina Self was instrumental to the success of the Vaughn Elementary auction, which raised funds in support of

Banquet details

The winner of the award will be announced on Saturday, March 22. The event, which will feature Pierce County Executive John Ladenburg as speaker, starts at 6 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. Tickets are \$25 before March 5 and \$30 thereafter, and are available from any KP Lions Club member or at Sunnycrest Nursery in Key Center. Door prize will be a night at the Maritime Inn in Gig Harbor with continental breakfast plus a dinner certificate at a Gig Harbor restaurant; must be present to win. For information, call 884-6417 or 853-2721.

procurement of materials to build a new playground at the school. After the auction, she helped organize a substantial number of dedicated volunteers, herself included, to help set up the play area on the Vaughn campus to the delight of the kids, parents and staff.

Chuck West, a division chief with the KP Fire Department, has served as a volunteer on a plethora of community programs. He spent countless hours designing and seeking professional help – all at either cost or volunteered – to create the KP Skate Park. He has served on countless committees and task forces for the good of the KP community and is now the chairman of the KP Advisory Commission.

Tracey Wilber, a PHS senior active in the KP Youth Council, is the driving force for several KPYP projects. She chaired KPYP’s first Teddy Bear Drive to collect over 200 new or gently used stuffed animals for Mary Bridge Children’s Hospital. She chaired the holiday basket project that donated holiday baskets to the KP senior program and made all purchases, coordinated basket assemblies, and helped conduct drawings for the baskets. She makes significant positive contributions to her community.



Grace Van Dyke (foreground) teaches hands-on classes to the inmates as a part of the Prison Pet Partnership Program inside the Washington Corrections Center for Women. For more photos, visit www.keypennews.com

Photos by Mindi LaRose

Katrina victim finds new life on KP

By Lori Colbo, KP News

New Key Peninsula resident Grace Van Dyke has made a new start since Hurricane Katrina ripped through her former hometown of New Orleans. She was wise enough to heed the warnings that Katrina was coming and fled to Arkansas the day before it hit. When she returned home two weeks later, the house was still intact, but her city was devastated.

A dog trainer by trade, Van Dyke stayed around New Orleans for a year. But the time came for her to reassess what she wanted to do. After much thought, she decided to enroll in Assistant Dog Institute in Santa Rosa, Calif. "Assistant Dog Institute is the only educational institute devoted to dog research and training in the country," she says.

She went through eight months of classes and obtained an associate of science degree in assistant dog training. Shortly thereafter, she applied for the training dog coordinator position in the Prison Pet Partnership Program at the Washington State Corrections Center for Women in Purdy. Last June, she began her work coordinating the program.

Van Dyke explains that the PPP program has a two-fold purpose. One part is the running of the kennels, which involves 12 inmates. The second part is the training of the dogs. There are only

six or seven dogs training at one time, so there is only the need for a handful of inmates to be working with them at a time. Currently, 35 to 40 inmates are on the waiting list for this program.

The PPP program builds confidence for trainers and caregivers, and teaches a sense of responsibility, according to Van Dyke. She says working with the dogs helps develop parenting, social, and communications skills as well. The inmates also get paid to be a part of the program, and there is a low rate of recidivism among its participants.

The dogs in the PPP program are trained to help people with such things as balance problems, seizure disorders, and various disabilities. However, they do not train them as guide dogs for the blind or hearing impaired. The dogs are taught approximately 105 commands and learn to do tasks such as turning light off and on, and opening doors.

The dogs come from animal shelters. Van Dyke looks for dogs that are mellow, slow to act, and have low initiative. "We don't want a dog that darts," she says. Golden Retrievers and Labs are great dogs for this kind of training, but there are many others that are just right for the program. Van Dyke has learned a lot about the canine species and gives them the credit they deserve. She says: "I am a firm believer that dogs are smarter than we give them credit for."

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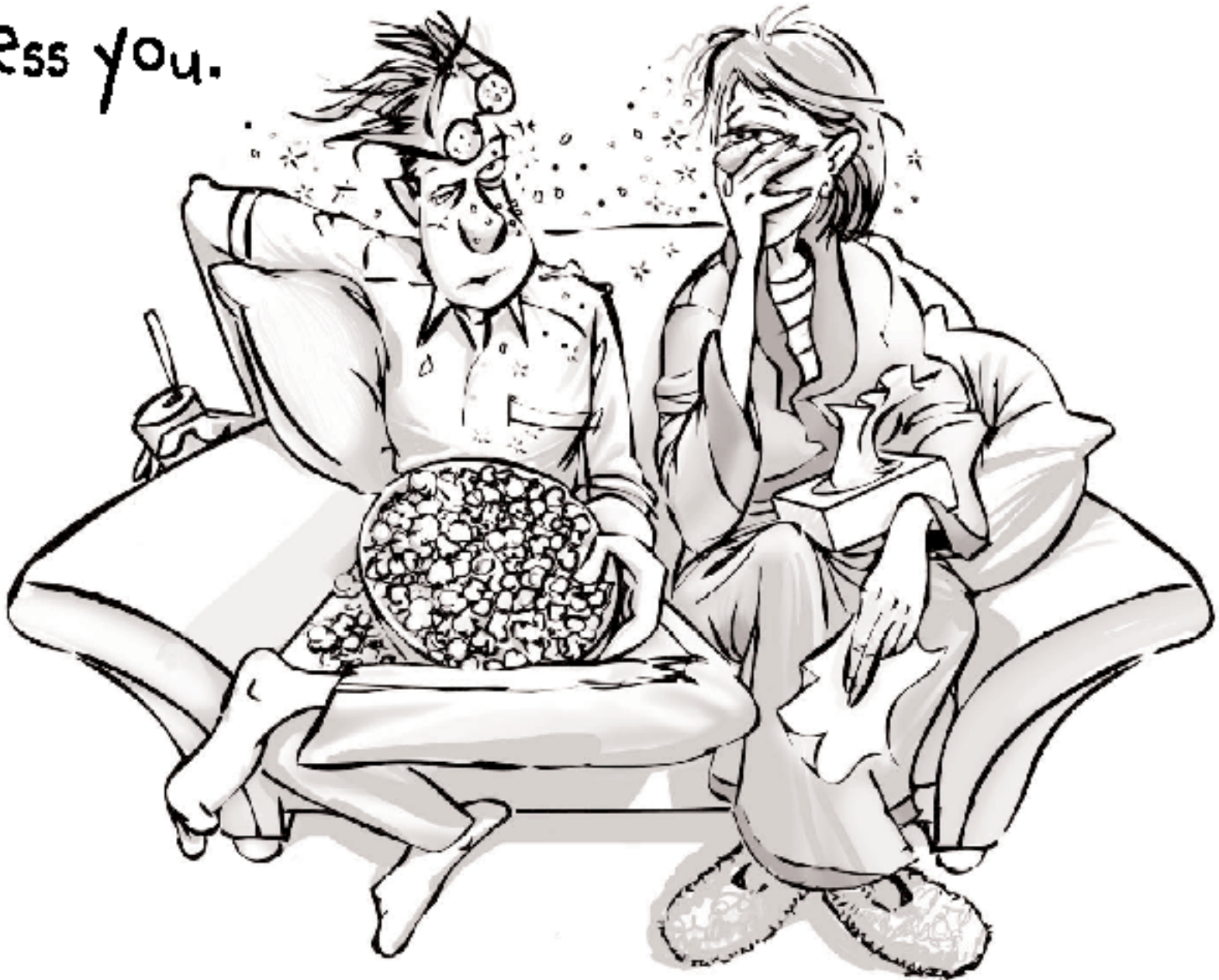
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(From FARM, Page 1)

weeds from his 12 acres of hayfields are hand-picked, the entire farm is cared for organically; nature meets the effort halfway. "Shane knows his property intimately," Ewald said. "He knows the animals and plants that rely on his wetlands. He is willing to not only protect wildlife living on his farm, but to restrict his own animals (to preserve the land). Shane is one in a million; I wish he was my neighbor."

McWilliams simply thinks of his efforts as "being conscientious about what we have." He is passionate about wetlands preservation. "We need to farm by leaving (a wetland) alone and ensuring everything around it isn't destroyed. Water is the building block of all life — we cannot replace it when it's gone," he said. "I got the award for battling to keep the environment chemical-free and preserve the wetlands, the forest for the birds and few animals that still exist."

Recently retired after some 40 years in the aerospace industry, McWilliams said the award provides new energy for continued preservation efforts. "I know now there are people who care about this (environmental work)," he said. He wants to help people find organic alternatives in their treatment of the land. "I wouldn't put chemicals on the land for a million dollars," he said. "We are surrounded by water. Everything we do, every house and septic system impacts the land, plants,

Conservation district

For more information about Pierce Conservation District, visit www.piercecd.org. To contact farm planner Erin Ewald, call 884-9474, email erine@piercecountycd.org or stop by her office located in The Landing in Key Center.

animals, and ultimately the people who live here. We cannot buy the health of the land back once it's destroyed — common sense must prevail."

When asked about provision for his beloved land beyond his lifetime, McWilliams replied, "Well, here's a shocker. I don't own this farm." Sixteen years ago when his family moved to the farm, McWilliams decided to "practice

what I preach," regardless of ownership. He acknowledges some folks think he's "a couple bales short of a ton," and responds philosophically. "What is ours?" he asks, leaving the question hanging.

Mike and Fran Kent, currently residing in Arizona, bought the farm in 1968, raised a family there, and still own it. Kent recalled the house had trees growing through the roof, as well as rotten porches, no heat, and cold water only via a 50-year-old gravity system up in the woods. The house was renewed and other buildings renovated or added. They fenced and raised livestock, their children involved with 4H. The Kents plowed and planted pastures, maintained a 5-acre woodlot and wetlands in their natural state.

"We are appreciative of having such a

great renter," Kent wrote in an email to the KP News. "Shane is an excellent steward of the land. He takes enormous pride in seeing that sound ecological practices are being followed not only on the farm, but on the Key Peninsula. We wholeheartedly support these efforts, which have paid off in a well-deserved award."

Ewald said Pierce Conservation District may have more potential stewardship award candidates. She reports an increase in requests in the area she serves, Pierce County west of the Tacoma Narrows. "People have a real interest in implementing farm plans this year," she said. "More people are willing to give us a chance to come out and help them find workable alternatives, or just take it one step at a time. The PCD is here to help however we can."

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Skills center gives students a head start in careers

Peninsula School District high school students interested in a career in culinary arts, health care, public safety or engineering can start receiving hands-on training long before graduation. PSD's curriculum includes 16 career-track programs offered through West Sound Technical Skills Center in Bremerton.

The programs range from finance and cosmetology to natural resources technology and welding. The goal is to give students technical knowledge and skills that will enable them to receive advanced placement in

technical schools, colleges, or apprenticeships—and even find a job in their desired field.

"This program was a good way to get started," says Peninsula High School junior Shantia Veney, who is enrolled in the food service and culinary arts program, and had a job lined up in

January as a sous-chef at a new diner. "It gets you ready for your career, and you get credit for high school and technical college."

PHS senior Angeleena Sullivan plans to use the WSTSC class as a starting point for an associates degree in culinary arts, with the dream to eventually own her own establishment. As part of her training, she is a sous-chef (second in charge of kitchen operations) at the WSTSC dining room, supervising other students who prepare food for the deli as well as for onsite community banquets. "I like being able to express myself, and secure a future doing



Peninsula High School students Shantia Veney (r) and Angeleena Sullivan display a sample of dessert WSTSC culinary students helped prepare.

something I love," she says.

Mike Palermo, a Gig Harbor High School senior enrolled in the automotive technology program, comes from a family of auto enthusiasts. His brother works in an auto shop, and his father builds muscle cars - Mike has been helping him since he was 12.

He hopes to turn his hobby into a career after high school, and says he enjoys the fun environment of the skills center, where students not only learn about car systems but also work on cars. "This gives me training for a future job," he says.



Gig Harbor High School senior, Mike Palermo, is one of PSD students enrolled in the automotive technology program.

Photo of the week



The Peninsula High School Jazz Band, with soloist Allison Bill, perform at the Jazz Festival 2008 at Peninsula High School. The festival included performances by all the district's middle schools as well as PHS and GHHS. A new music website was recently launched where performances for all schools are listed regularly. To keep up to date, visit www.psd401.net/education/music.asp.

Did you know...

All-Day Kindergarten is standard at all Peninsula School District elementary schools, at no charge. Eligible kindergartners for the 2008-2009 school year are children living within the Peninsula School District who are 5 years old by August 31, 2008. Registration information and frequently asked questions are available online at www.psd401.net/education/kinder.asp or contact Katy Ellis via e-mail: ellisk@psd401.net or telephone 253-530-1009.

MARCH 2008

- 1** **Kindergarten Registration Kick-Off!**
The Peninsula School District's Kick-off for Kindergarten registration is Saturday, March 1st, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. - noon at all Elementary School locations. Kindergarten registration will continue the following week at all Elementary Schools during regular school hours 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- 6-8** Gig Harbor High School Drama Production Damn Yankees at 7 p.m.
- 13-14** Gig Harbor High School Drama Production Damn Yankees at 7 p.m.
- 20** School Board Study Session 4:00 p.m. at the District Office
- 26** Key Peninsula Middle School Spring Choir Concert 7:30 p.m.
Peninsula High School Arts Department Spring Concert 7:30 p.m.
- 27** Key Peninsula Middle School All Band Concert 7:30 p.m.
- 31-4** Spring Break

At a glance...

In 2000, the State Board of Education approved four new statewide graduation requirements to take effect with the graduating Class of 2008. Together, the requirements are designed to ensure that every public high school student graduates with the following fundamental skills:

1. Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings.
2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical and life sciences; civics and history; geography; the arts; and health and fitness.
3. Think analytically, logically and creatively, and integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.
4. Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

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Out & About

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Right, Longtime Cootiette member from Home, Marie Schwenka, gets a hug from national Cootiette president (Supreme Grayback) Sharon Rikansrud of Longbranch at a recent birthday celebration at Manor Care in Gig Harbor.

Photo by Colleen Slater



Below, Peninsula School District music teachers Paula DeMoss (Minter Creek) and Teri Hammon (Evergreen) hand out programs at the district's Jazz Fest hosted at Peninsula High School. The festival included performances from jazz bands from PHS, GHHS and all middle schools, including KPMS (see more photos in our online gallery).

Right, Senior Allison Bill sings accompanied by the PHS Jazz Band. To find out about PSD music events, visit www.psd401.net/education/music.asp.

Photos by Rodika Tollefson



Above, "Zero the Hero" swoops out of one of the kindergarten classrooms at Vaughn Elementary during the celebration of 100th day of school. "He looks like Mr. Smith!" a wise kinder said as Zero was leaving. Mr. Smith's day job is as a fifth-grade teacher at Vaughn.

Photo by Rodika Tollefson

Left, Peninsula High School hosted guest gospel rapper "Seize," seen here in a powerful and high-energy performance during the Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly. *Photo by Mindi LaRose*



Photo by Rodika Tollefson

Peninsula Light Co. crewmen Rick Schroeder and Gus Bordway (not pictured on the ground) are hanging a banner in Key Center advertising a crab feed fundraiser at the Civic Center. PenLight donates its crew as a community service to hang banners whenever a community event needs to be announced.



Youngsters and those young at heart are getting a closer look at the puppets from the "Little One Inch" production of Tears of Joy Theatre, brought to the Key Peninsula Civic Center by Two Waters Arts Alliance. During the performance (insert), the puppeteers themselves were fully covered by dark clothing. *Photos by Hugh McMillan*

