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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

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A bird's eye view of Whiteman Cove. Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News

Neighbors Concerned Over Whiteman Cove Salmon Restoration

Restoration of the cove on the west of the Key Peninsula would provide salmon access to a 29-acre pocket estuary with 1.5 miles of shoreline and 1 mile of freshwater spawning and rearing habitat. Not everyone is happy about it.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

If Washington state gets its way, the placid waters of Whiteman Cove will someday disappear with the tide.

Neighbors and property owners along Whiteman Cove received an invitation to meet with representatives of the Department of Natural Resources March 19 in the Brones Room at the Key Center Library.

The gathering was part of DNR's early outreach to stakeholders to begin discussion of Whiteman Cove habitat restoration and focused on a fish passage barrier identified for removal under a 2013 U.S. District Court order.

Whiteman Cove is located on the west side of the Key Peninsula, sandwiched between Joemma Beach State Park to the north and YMCA Camp Colman to the south. Single family homes surround the cove and overlook a peaceful saltwater lagoon, or lake, as the DNR calls it.

"We spent most of the meeting with the community discussing concerns and soliciting recommendations for the restoration

work design," said Joanna Eide, legislative director for DNR, in a memo apprising state legislators from the 26th District.

"Generally, the issues expressed by the meeting attendees included the conversion of the lake to a tidally influenced estuary, effects on property values, boat access to Case Inlet, and access to Camp Colman," she wrote.

"The first step is for DNR to solicit bids to contract for the development of architectural and engineering designs for the project," according to Eide. "DNR estimates the time to complete the restoration will take between two to four years."

John Lester, president of the Whiteman Cove Homeowners Association, said "DNR showed us five different plans, two of which would include keeping the water in here and doing fish ladder-type things; a 40-foot wide opening; a 60-foot wide opening; (and) going all the way back to natural with a 200-foot long bridge going to the camp," Lester said. "One way or another Camp Colman would need a bridge or a new road to access the property."

A private road, owned and maintained by the Whiteman Cove Homeowners Association, leads to the back of the camp.

Lester said he has a number of concerns about the DNR proposal, coupled with pressure from YMCA to allow Camp Colman to use the association's private road. He and his wife have lived on the cove for 20 years.

"The relationship between the HOA and the camp has seen ups and downs," he said. "In November 2018, the association installed a locked gate, with a fire lock for emergencies, to prevent YMCA Camp Colman from using the privately maintained road without express permission."

In a letter dated April 29 addressed to Whiteman Cove homeowners, Senior Executive Director of Camping for the Greater Seattle YMCA Meredith Cambre wrote:

"The YMCA intends to mount a vigorous challenge to the DNR plan, with the goal of identifying alternatives that would benefit salmon without destroying the lagoon... thus far the YMCA has engaged attorneys and is in the process of selecting experts

who can assist in this effort.

"As part of developing a united front, we would also like to resolve any differences with the association over use of the road leading to the back entrance of Camp Colman," she wrote.

In 1962, the Washington State Department of Fisheries converted the 29-acre Whiteman Cove estuary into a lagoon for rearing young salmon as part of its hatchery program. The conversion included closing the natural tidal entrance to the lagoon with fill and installing two large culverts with structures to control the flow of tidal water to maintain water levels.

Fisheries stopped using Whiteman Cove as a salmon-rearing facility after 1970 but left the culverts and tide gates in place. A roadway over the filled entrance provides the only open access to Camp Colman.

Whiteman Cove was identified as a high priority project for nearshore restoration by the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement group, a local voice for regional salmon recovery that sponsored the initial scope of restoration and feasibility studies.

"First and foremost, we want to keep the water," Lester said. "This is just the beginning stages, nothing has been decided yet, but whatever happens—we're all going to know well in advance."

A RECAP OF THE CULVERT ISSUE

Twenty-one Washington tribes, joined by the United States, asked the U.S. District Court in January 2001 to compel the state to repair or replace culverts that impede salmon migration.

In 2007, the district court sided with the tribes' contention that building and maintaining culverts diminished the size of salmon runs, violating the state's treaty obligations.

In 2013, the U.S. District Court ordered the state to increase the rate of removal of state-owned culverts and replacement of culverts that adversely impact salmon habitat by 2030.

The state appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which delivered a unanimous decision allowing the U.S. District order to stand.

Attorney General Bob Ferguson appealed that decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court rendered a split decision June 11, 2018—a tie vote that was a win for the tribes and ended the 17-year-long legal battle.

Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR, KP NEWS

It began with a chorus of frogs heralding the arrival of spring, a profusion of hardy flowering bulbs, followed by blossoming fruit trees – thick with pollen – awaiting bees to do their part. Silence is broken by the sweet sound of hungry hatchlings as one or the other parent lands at the nest with more food. Within a month, fully feathered youngsters emerge—not always eager to leave after looking over the edge. One by one, they're off and flying solo.

It's often hard to watch as we wince at the near misses, false starts and narrow escapes from dangers they never saw coming.

With Memorial Day traditions behind us, we look ahead to the commencement ceremony for seniors graduating from Peninsula High School Class of 2019. It's a great time to pause and reflect.

As a community we have much to be proud of whenever we come together for common good. These graduates are a reflection of a whole community and Peninsula schools are graduating students worthy of distinction and celebration.

Numerous local organizations – clubs, guilds, foundations, businesses, scholarship trusts and individuals – altogether awarded nearly \$250,000 in scholarships to graduating PHS seniors through the successful coordination of the Peninsula Hawks Scholarship Fund that helps students connect with local organizations with scholarship money to award. Whether a student's path to success is by attending university, community college, a service academy, trade or vocational school—the community supports students' futures with scholarships.

Countless local volunteers make the commitment to show up, on-time weekly, as

reading and math mentors to support young students. Others volunteer to serve on PTA committees, as coaches, scout masters, chaperones or team parents. Whole communities turn out to organize and support kid-oriented events throughout the years, from art classes to trout pond fishing derbies, craft nights, parades, petting zoos, puppet shows, ice cream socials, mud races; it's a dizzying list of experiences which enrich the lives of growing children from pre-school and beyond high school graduation.

Organizations entirely devoted to children's health and well-being ensure access to resources and enrichment through the power of community, like Communities in Schools of Peninsula, Children's Home Society of Washington, Food Backpacks 4 Kids and the Red Barn Youth Center.

Especially rewarding is seeing these students make their way in the world, returning home to the life they love here, to continue this cycle by enriching and strengthening our community with their acquired knowledge and passion to give back. One of many such success stories appears in this issue.

To our high school graduates, parents and educators, congratulations to all. Your community encourages you to do great things.

When community leaders envisioned the future of Key Pen Parks they focused on desired outcomes. What do we want for our children and grandchildren? How can we preserve and maintain places accessible to everyone in the community? How can we enhance those spaces to ensure a wide

variety of outdoor enjoyment for people of all ages? How do we preserve and protect access to rich woodlands, meandering trails through maple hollows, classic Puget Sound beaches, ball fields, playgrounds, picnic spots? How can we create access to open spaces while enhancing them to meet the specific needs of hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders?

The recent Key Pen Parks Appreciation Day saw volunteers of all ages – individuals, families and groups, all friends of the parks – showed up with gloves, shovels, rakes and pruners to demonstrate their personal commitment and pride in our park system.

Dreamers, planners, builders, organizers, teachers, artists, makers and the hands of many doers, intent

on achieving a common goal, deliver energy and a commitment to make things better. We are rich with interesting talents, expertise and a willingness to share. To help meet those goals for quality spaces to learn and play, it's taken the time and energy of countless volunteers working together for many years. Building is part of the equation but nurturing and maintaining is just as vital.

Contributing to the resilience and enjoyment of our community is something that happens with every nod, wave and smile. We see familiar faces as we go about our days, it takes such a small amount of effort, but the rewards of acknowledging each other at the post office, the library or simply out and about goes a long way. Be proud of who you are and what you contribute to making life good here.



[A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY]

Subscribing to the KP News is still only thirty dollars. That pays for 12 issues of Who, What, When, Where and How, not to mention our community calendar, not-always-flattering head shots, surprising stories and sometimes-wild opinions.

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The KP News invites community information, concerns or complaints at editor@keypennews.org or 253-884-4699. You're also invited to post public meetings or events on our online calendar at keypennews.org. Entries received by the 15th of the month will be printed in the next edition.



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PSD Will Open New School Next Fall; Three More Planned

The former Boys and Girls Club will open for students from Discovery Elementary even as the campus expands and plans are made to attract students from the entire district.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Elementary school No. 10 will be the first themed magnet school in the Peninsula School District after the PSD board of directors unanimously approved the recommendation of Superintendent Art Jarvis at its board meeting March 28.

The board voted to adopt an interim plan to ease overcrowding felt most urgently in elementary schools located in Gig Harbor North, while two new schools are constructed and two others are rebuilt.

“Beginning with the 2019-20 school year this fall, students in four fifth-grade classrooms from nearby Discovery Elementary will be housed on the campus of school No. 10 while the remainder of the new school is under construction,” Jarvis said.

Construction of additional classrooms will complete the campus of school No. 10, capable

of housing 500-plus K-5 students and intended to open in fall 2020 as a themed magnet school.

The district narrowed the choice of theme to three: science-technology-engineering-art-math (STEAM), a school of the arts or a community school that focuses on learning through stewardship and volunteering.

“The goal of the magnet school is not to find a model that will outperform our neighborhood schools on standardized tests. Research on magnet schools show mixed results on improving student performance; they don’t seem to conclusively improve or negatively impact achievement results,” wrote Superintendent of Elementary programs John Hellwich in a statement on the PSD website. “Magnet schools are popular nationwide in public school systems because they offer parents options and choice.”

Located only a quarter mile from Discovery Elementary School, Hellwich noted an advantage in creating a magnet school at No. 10 “is the ability to draw students from all over the district, which in turn limits the impact on families had a big chunk of our boundaries needed to be redrawn.”

“To ensure equity of student access to the magnet school, PSD will use a lottery

system if there are more students applying to attend the new school than slots allocated,” Hellwich wrote. “A well-publicized lottery entry window system would open and each student’s name would be drawn, so even if they are not selected initially, they will be placed on a ranked waiting list and names will come from the top as openings occur. Students will be drawn proportionally from each school as a percentage of their population.”

Stephanie Strader, the principal of Harbor Heights Elementary, was appointed the new principal of school No. 10. The PSD board approved Strader’s appointment and voted in favor of the magnet school concept at its April 25 board meeting.

“I’m humbled, honored and excited to dream,” Strader said. A product herself of PSD schools, she grew up attending Vaughn Elementary

and Key Peninsula Middle School and still lives on the KP. “Partly what draws me to this idea is to provide kids with opportunities.”

“We’re going through the process right now of determining the theme of the new school,” she said. “Community input is important, what parents want is important, but I have a desire to hear from students what they would value.” A final recommendation to the school board on theme is anticipated by early summer.

David Brooks, the principal of Discovery Elementary since 2008, will be the principal of school No. 9, to be constructed in North Gig Harbor.

Strader and Brooks will both begin showing up to work at their new offices in the former Boys and Girls Club this summer, each in their new capacity as planning principals for their own new schools. Initially both principals will help provide support for students attending No. 10 in the fall of 2019, plan for their respective new schools, and be available to support Artondale and Evergreen Elementary School principals as they plan their own school rebuilds.

“I could not think of a better way when you all voiced your concerns that our kids feel cared for and not just out in an annex, than to allow their principal to move with



Above: The name of new elementary school No. 10 will be decided at the Peninsula School District board meeting June 27 at 6 p.m. Below: Site map shows layout of campus in concept #3b, revision 1 from May 25. Courtesy Greene Gasaway Architects



them,” Jarvis said. “To be able to involve the planning principals at this stage of the building when it’s still being developed, when it’s being designed and when lines can still be moved on paper...it’s huge.”

Brooks will also be involved in the reboundary process, so that people can know as soon as possible what neighborhoods will be with him at school No. 9.

“The reaction to the magnet school from parents has been positive,” PSD Board President Deborah Krishnadasan said. “People have come to realize that the magnet school will attract students from schools across the whole district, relieving overcrowding at all eight elementary schools.”



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2019 Fire Season for the Key Peninsula

DAN MARTEN, KP NEWS

Summer is approaching and that means time to be outdoors and active. Picnics, camping, boating, hiking and bicycling are excellent summer activities on the Key Peninsula. The danger of fire is very real. In 2018, 67 people died in fires in Washington and there were more than 24,900 fire incidents.

"Our area is showing little sign of drought improvement," said KP Fire District 16 Chief Dustin Morrow. Until a fire safety burn ban is issued, outdoor fires are allowed, but may require a permit. Outdoor burning for hand-stacked piles less than 4 feet in diameter does not require a permit. Such fires must be 100 feet away from any occupied structure and must be attended with water and shovel available. All other outdoor burning requires a permit from the KP Fire Dept.

"Never burn garbage, construction debris, tires or any related material, (they) are prohibited and can cause a fire to get out of control quickly," Morrow said. "Also, never use any flammable liquid to start your fire."

The Pierce County Fire Marshal issues the fire safety burn bans for the county, using current weather, weather forecasts, information from the Department of Natural Resources on fuel conditions and availability of staff to fight fires in making a decision about fire safety burn bans.

At times Pierce County loans firefighters to Washington, Oregon and California to fight wildfires in those locations.

There are additional concerns regarding fireworks on the Key Peninsula. Fireworks are not legal in county or state parks or on any school property. In unincorporated portions of the county like the KP, fireworks can only be used from July 1 to 3 between 10 a.m. and 11 p.m., until midnight on July 4.

Open flame and smoking materials are also a significant cause of fires. The majority of deaths occur in residential locations and many of those are either not equipped with smoke alarms or the devices were not working. The KPFD recommends testing smoke detectors at least annually and replacing batteries if they are not working, especially near bedrooms. The department can also provide smoke detectors to those who cannot afford them.

In its publication, "How to Prepare for a Wildfire," the DNR recommends creating defensible space around homes, including clearing away debris and flammable materials as well as using fire-resistant materials for landscaping and construction. It also suggests reviewing insurance coverage and being prepared for early evacuation if necessary, encouraging residents to be aware of evacuation routes and consider alternatives in case a primary route is closed.

KPFD will present "Guarding Against Wildland Fire" July 2 on prevention techniques to protect people and property 7 p.m. at the Key Center station.

For information on burn bans go to keypeninsulafire.org or call 253-798-7278.

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Comedy Night Sells Out

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

Back by popular demand, another sold-out crowd packed the Key Peninsula Civic Center for its comedy night fundraiser, billed as “4/20 Funny,” Saturday April 20.

Guests entertained themselves before the show by sampling the bar, playing cards and snacking on items including the “Blazing Burgers” and the “No-Buzz Brownies.”

According to Stephanie Brooks, Key Peninsula Civic Center Association board member and event co-chair, “People out here don’t have a lot to go do. We want to make it as cool as possible.”

The three comedians were Mike Parker, Josh Firestine and headliner Phillip Kopczynski. Although each acknowledged the informal holiday, their material covered a wide range of topics. Some jokes covered familiar territory such as family life and fitness, while one memorable segment from Kopczynski delved into the love life of the North American porcupine.

Many of the jokes took full advantage of the event’s 18-and-up age restriction, earning occasional wincing from the crowd. Any shocked gasps, however, were mostly followed by laughter.

“It’s more of an adult-type of event. That’s what our focus has been, to get stuff out here for people 21 and up,” Brooks said.

The emphasis on a boundary-pushing show was communicated to the comedians early in the planning process, although it did briefly leave come-

dian Josh Firestine wondering where to draw the line. “(The organizers) said it was supposed to be a dirty show, so I was wondering, it’s a small town, how dirty do they mean?” Firestine’s set was warmly received by the crowd. “They were a bunch of perverts. It was great.”

The event wrapped up at 9:30 p.m., although several groups stayed on for another hour enjoying the party. “I think it was wonderful,” said attendee Jolene Duncan. The fun wasn’t limited to the crowd, either; the three performers appreciated the crowd’s responsiveness and the event’s community feel.

“It really felt like the whole town came out,” Firestine said. Total attendance numbered around 200, not including volunteers.

The sense of community was reinforced by the raffle drawing at the end of the night. The winning ticket was held by Vaughn Postmaster DeeDee Emmett, who was immediately recognized and applauded by the crowd.



DeeDee Emmett shows off raffle winnings.
Photo: Tracy Geiss

Brooks sees KPCCA events as a chance for people to build connections. Although fundraising is important, Brooks feels the event is “more about the involvement in the community, just getting different people in the door, trying to reach different demographics.” According to Brooks, events can draw in a surprising number of KP residents who are unaware of the civic center and its resources.

“A lot of people don’t even know about the KPCCA, and there’s so many things that the civic center offers to the community,” Brooks said. “If they can know about the services we provide, maybe that can help them in some way.”

The “4/20 Funny” was planned following a successful comedy night earlier in the year. The two events have earned the KPCCA over \$10,000 dollars in admissions, food sales and raffle tickets. The KPCCA will continue to host fundraisers throughout the year, although Brooks’s next big project is planning a revival of the civic center’s New Year’s Eve Party.

The event was co-chaired by Brooks and Tracy Geiss of the KPCCA board of directors, with the assistance of fellow board member Rachel Newhouse. The event’s kitchen staff, servers, bartenders and cleanup crew were all volunteers.

“Every volunteer that helped at the first comedy show that we did in January came back to help,” Brooks said. “(Volunteers) are the heroes of everything at the civic center.”

Editor’s note: The Key Peninsula News is published by the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association. The KP News retains editorial and financial independence from its parent organization.

“THEY WERE A BUNCH OF PERVERTS. IT WAS GREAT.”



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Phyllis Henry COAST TO COAST



Dollar Dancing

On a hot Saturday night in July our family ate supper a bit early and then Dad washed the dishes while Mom got the rest of us ready to celebrate the marriage of my cousin at the wedding dance in town. Dad was already dressed in dark pants, white shirt, striped tie, happily ready to go to celebrate. My two little brothers wore miniature versions of my dad's clothes, except their ties were clip-on bow ties. My pale pink dress with red flowers was perfectly ironed, my Mary Janes were polished, and Mom had tortured my hair into short Shirley Temple curls, using the curling iron she heated on our kitchen stove.

While Mom put on her nylons and pretty dress, and her makeup, and her amethyst engagement ring, Dad's job was to keep the three kids clean and un-mussed. He marched around the dining room table, his hands locked behind his back, kicking up his heels as he bellowed his Pied Piper song: "My hat it has three corners, three corners has my hat." My brothers and I marched single file behind him as he sang "My hat" — kick back left heel — "it has three" — kick back right heel — "corners" — kick back left heel. "Three corners" — right heel — "has my hat" — left heel. "And had it not" — right heel — "three corners" — left — "it would" — right — "not be" — left — "my hat." Over and over we sang the song, trailing Dad around the dining room table, as we marched, shouting the words to the song and kicking our heels up until they sometimes punched our behinds.

When Mom appeared, we were all clean and ready to get into our car after being instructed by Mom, "Now, sit still. Phyllis, don't crush your dress. Sit straight." I sat on the edge of the back seat of the car with my skirt spread out around me and warned my brothers not touch me as we drove the three miles to the dance hall.

When we walked into the hall the polka band was playing, blue and white crepe paper streamers hung over the doorways, and the punch and cake table was guarded by Aunt Lilly and Aunt Rose who could be depended upon to deter anyone who was threatening to have fun. To my adoring eyes, the bride was movie-star-beautiful, as her lacy white dress swayed and whirled while she and her groom danced. When the guests were invited to join the bridal couple my dad leaned forward, took my mom's hand, and asked her to dance, and then Dad, tall and strong, and Mom, a bit

chubby but gloriously happy, were polkaing around the dance floor.

When the male guests were invited to dance with the bride, Dad was first. As he wiped his hand on his pants to make certain sweat wouldn't stain the white satin, a bridesmaid handed him a safety pin. Awkwardly, in spite of the jokes and laughter, he pinned a dollar bill to the skirt of the bride's gown. After a few dance steps he made a show of reluctance as he handed the bride to the next male, who then pinned a dollar bill to her dress. Soon the green bills covered much of her gown.

As I watched the ritual repeated, my concern over the holes they were making in the white satin competed with the awesome sight of a dress almost entirely covered with more dollar bills than I knew to exist in the world.

When the real dancing began Dad came to me where I was sitting, held out his hand, and grinned as he asked, "May I have this dance, pretty lady?"

Self-conscious and proud, I stood up, and after carefully placing my Mary Janes on the polished toes of his Sunday-best shoes, we twirled around the dance floor, my short skirt billowing around me, my curls bouncing, and I knew at that moment I was as beautiful as the bride, and I had something that the bride's dollar bills could not buy. I had my dad and he loved me.

Phyllis Henry writes from her perch overlooking a retaining pond in Gig Harbor.

Frank Slater A VIEW FROM HERE



Civil Civics

A front-page article in The New York Times April 7, 2019, entitled "A More Perfect Civics Lesson?" raised the issue of "whether the United States is a unified entity of citizens or a conglomeration of groups divided by race, class, language and other identities."

The article quoted Becky Debowski, an eighth-grade social studies teacher in Michigan, who said, "I'm really proud of my students. They can really handle complexity." So, she was angry last year when she learned of a proposed revision to the Michigan state standards to drop the word "democratic" from "core democratic values," and that the word "democracy" would be replaced with "republic" to describe American government.

According to the article, "That the two sides in that tussle tend to fall along party lines, each preferring the term that resembles their party name, plays no small part

in the debate."

State legislators behind this and other changes sought to "remove partisanship from the classroom" and provide a more "politically neutral" view of historical issues, in their words.

Ms. Debowski said she could explain the difference between party names and political concepts to her students, and that they were capable of understanding them. "It belittles my subject," she said.

While our nation's founders were indeed skeptical of direct democracy, mainstream historians, political scientists and legal scholars say that the United States is both a representative democracy and a republic—despite the appearance of a contradiction, absent historical context.

UCLA law professor Eugene Volokh provided that context in a Washington Post editorial on the subject. James Wilson, he wrote, one of the main drafters of the Constitution and one of the first Supreme Court justices, defended the Constitution in 1787 by saying that in a democracy sovereign power is "inherent in the people, and is either exercised by themselves or by their representatives."

"I often hear people argue (often quite militantly) that the United States is a republic, not a democracy," Volokh wrote. "But that's a false dichotomy. A common definition of 'republic' is, to quote the American Heritage Dictionary, 'A political order in which the supreme power lies in a body of citizens who are entitled to vote for officers and representatives responsible to them'—we are that. A common definition of 'democracy' is, 'Government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives'—we are that, too."

More than 115 subcommittee members reviewed the Michigan standards and prepared a proposed 145-page curriculum for the Board of Education, restoring such vexing subjects of study as climate change, Roe v. Wade, and gay rights. It also added the Flint water crisis and the Supreme Court case *Korematsu v. United States*, which permitted the internment of Japanese-American citizens during World War II.

The list of core values that the standards writers eventually agreed on was "equality; liberty; justice and fairness; unalienable rights (including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness); consent of the governed; truth; common good."

If we are to have a government of the people, by the people and for the people, we must participate in debates like this to identify, explore and resolve the issues we face, like them or not, come what may. We can't do that without listening to each other's opinions as equals and basing our

judgments on verifiable facts instead of indulging in a melange of vilification and invective, driven by prejudice, ignorance or fear.

If we are not united around the idea that the power to rule belongs to the people, with liberty and justice for all, then we had better get used to the idea that the law is what the people in power say it is.

Frank Slater, retired math teacher and Korean War veteran, lives in Vaughn.

Anne Nesbit SIREN'S SONG



Responding to Mental Illness

Most of us would know how to help if we saw someone having a heart attack—we'd start CPR or at the very least call 911. How many of us would know how to respond if we saw someone having a panic attack or if we were concerned that a friend or co-worker might be showing signs of alcoholism?

Several weeks ago, I became a trainer for Mental Health First Aid. This course takes the fear and hesitation out of starting conversations about mental health and substance use problems by teaching people to identify and address them safely and responsibly. When more people are equipped to start a dialogue, more people can get the help they need. Mental Health First Aiders can even save lives.

Approximately one in five adults in the U.S. (46.6 million) experience mental illness in a given year. Approximately one in 25 adults in the U.S. (11.2 million) experience a serious mental illness in a given year that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities.

If mental illness is so prevalent, why are so many people scared to seek the help they need? For centuries, people suffering from mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, were considered insane and locked away in sanitariums or prisons. If you think society is leaps and bounds past that, consider the vocabulary we so commonly use. Terms such as crazy, weird or abnormal to describe behavior does not suggest a nonjudgmental and accepting environment. In fact, this is a big reason why people are so reluctant to seek help. How do we change this? Education, understanding and acceptance.

When it comes to disorders like depression or substance abuse, much of the population still views these as a result of moral weakness instead of complicated diseases of the brain. In turn, those

suffering from treatable illnesses frequently refuse to come forward for fear of exposure and sometimes lack understanding of the subject themselves.

Here are some of the consequences people suffer as a result of the stigma surrounding mental health issues:

- Alienation from friends, family and colleagues
- Physical violence
- Feelings of shame and guilt
- The belief that there is nothing that can help them

People living with untreated mental disorders often experience serious pain. Advances in science have shed light on the fact that these are diseases and should be treated as such, not stigmatized. Physicians can diagnose disorders and prescribe medication or use psychotherapy techniques to bring relief to suffering patients.

While more people than ever before are going to treatment and getting the help they need, there are still far too many who are afraid to seek help. Most are afraid of the label that is placed on people going to therapy. There is shame and a reluctance to talk about their experience. They beg others to keep their secret.

It is this secret-keeping that perpetuates the stigma and ultimately prevents others who may be struggling from seeking help.

Getting help for depression does not mean a person is weak, lazy or worse—crazy. Without proper treatment, some will turn to drugs or alcohol to ease the pain or escape from their problems, creating a co-occurring disorder of substance abuse and mental illness. Distorted thinking at times plays a role, and the fear of treatment or what others will say is blown way out of proportion.

There's no denying that society is more aware of mental illness today than in years past. With high profile people speaking out about their disorders, mental health issues are getting more press. Through social media and local publications, we are also privy to stories of survival and personal struggles from people who are just like us. Although there is still a great deal of fear of the unknown, society is acknowledging that these conditions are treatable and that there is hope.

The Mental Health First Aid course is eight hours over two days. For more information, email info@keypeninsulafire.org.

Anne Nesbit is the prevention and public information officer and volunteer battalion chief for the Key Peninsula Fire Department. She lives in Lakebay.

Dan Whitmarsh

WRITING BY FAITH



Be the One Who Helps

In my previous column (“Five Thoughts on the Opioid Crisis,” KP News, March 2019), I made reference to a story Jesus told, known as “The Parable of the Good Samaritan.”

A man is attacked by robbers and left for dead. Two religious leaders pass by, ignoring him and hurrying on their way. Finally, a foreigner takes pity on the man, bandaging his wounds and taking him for medical care. He even pays for his recovery out of his own pocket.

The point, according to Jesus, is to be like that guy.

The story raises an interesting question: Why do some people ignore the suffering of others, while others give freely of their time, talent and finances to help those in need? In the face of human brokenness and tragedy, why do many ignore the need while few choose to show compassion and mercy?

I have posed the question to many people, and the most common answer I hear is “fear.” We live in a climate of fear: fear of immigrants, fear of addicts, fear of any who don't look or believe like us. Any perceived threat becomes an excuse to close ourselves off to the plight of others, instead of looking for opportunities to help out people in need.

Pride is often a subtle motivator. Some people look down on others who battle illness or poverty, believing they must have done something to deserve it. Conversely, sometimes those with means and privilege feel they deserve their health, their wealth, and their security because they are more worthy than those who struggle.

Greed is another factor, with its sense of “I've got mine, and nobody else gets theirs.” There's a selfishness that causes people to build walls to keep the good life to themselves, believing that sharing it with others will somehow diminish their own joy and pleasure.

Compassion fatigue is a very real thing, as well. In a broken world, it can be exhausting to try to help in every situation. We are inundated with pleas imploring us to donate to countless causes, from worldwide disasters to homeless puppies and friends with cancer here at home. The needs are endless; it's easy to give in to hopelessness.

Why, then, do some decide to help?

People who perceive life as a gift are often the first to jump in when they see a need. People who have experienced humbling pain, yet done the work of healing, seem the most willing to show compassion when confronted by brokenness. Those who recognize their common humanity with all people are usually the ones who dive in to make the world a better place for everybody, and not just themselves.

We all have opportunities to promote healing and wholeness in our community. In the last two days I witnessed a man go out of his way to help a stranger move her trash can and two people rescue a stray puppy running down the highway. It's simple, really. When we see a need, we can choose to forgo our own comfort to help others, or we can turn our back and walk away.

I agree with Jesus. Be the one who helps.

Dan Whitmarsh is pastor at Lakebay Community Church.

Letters to the Editor

PRO HRC

As I drive around Key Peninsula, I see all these signs with “Save the KP, Stop HRC.” Initially I wondered what is Hillary Rodham Clinton doing here? Then I looked into this stop HRC thing. I would advise everyone to do the same. What I found is we have a huge addiction problem on the KP. Addiction is a disease, an illness. Treatment is the only way to cure any illness, no disease goes away unless treated.

After I spoke with Jeremiah Saucier, founder of Hope Recovery Center, I learned many things the opponents of HRC don't want you to know. First HRC is needed on the KP where it is planned. As planned HRC will meet all zoning codes. Treatment for addiction must be available when and where it is needed. An addict will not travel far to seek a safe place to get treatment. It must be available where it is needed.

After I educated myself on the facts, I think a better sign would read “Save the KP, Support HRC.” Please look at the facts and I think you will support HRC where it's planned, where it should be.

Allen A. Yanity, Lakebay

NO ON HRC

As an architect with over 30 years in practice, I can speak with some confidence about zoning codes and use matters.

The Pierce County zoning code works this way: In a particular zone, a specific use is either permitted, not permitted, or condi-

tionally permitted. The No on HRC group contends that the county has mis-categorized the HRC to allow it in a rural residential planning zone (R10). No matter how it is categorized, HRC would not be a permitted use in the R10 zone. At best, it could only be conditionally permitted. So, the use categorization and zoning are in dispute.

The county initially categorized the HRC as a Community and Cultural Services use. This category includes such things as library, museum, art gallery, and homeless shelter uses. As a 50-bed, two story, 33,000 square foot, health services facility with a 65-car parking lot, the proposed use is nothing like the others in the Community and Cultural Services category. Hence, the formal appeal by No on HRC. The HRC conditional use permit application is on hold until the county hearing examiner either denies or approves the formal appeal.

County records note that in a meeting between the county and HRC in December of 2016, “The applicant anticipate(s) the need for a doctor or physician's assistant to be on-site approximately 20 hours per week to administer medication to clients.” Nothing in HRC's subsequent CUP application has altered this. HRC founder Jeremiah Saucier has publicly referred to HRC as a “hub,” which is a reference to the Washington State Hub and Spoke Project that “offers a medication assisted treatment component to all patients seeking services for opioid use disorders.”

HRC must be licensed by the state as a residential treatment facility. The state licenses RTFs to provide “health care services to persons with mental disorders or substance use disorders.” No on HRC rightly says that HRC will be providing health services.

The Pierce County zoning code has a specific use category for such a facility. It is plainly called “Health Services.” Per the code, “Health Services Use Type refers to any health-related facilities,” and that is how HRC should be categorized. In the Key Peninsula Community Plan area, a Health Services use like the HRC would not be permitted anywhere on the Key Peninsula and could only be conditionally permitted in the Rural Activity Center or Rural Neighborhood Center zones.

Alcohol and drug treatment centers are necessary. Nearly everyone's life is somehow touched by substance use disorder. We opposing the HRC are not heartless. Good, reasonable people can disagree. Given its size, scope and use, we simply don't believe the HRC belongs where it's being proposed.

Kim Quon, Lakebay

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Above: Spring growth unfolds in the Thompsons' woodland garden. Inset: Pat Thompson in his garden. *Photos: David Zeigler. KP News*

Pat Thompson: Gardener and Artist

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Pat Thompson's expansive garden is a metaphor for his life.

He describes himself as a self-taught avid rather than master gardener. And though maintaining the garden is really a full-time job, he finds time for other passions. He is a mixed media artist, producing largely abstract work, and is active with the local Art Pharts. He's a member of the Fuchsia Society and the Bayshore Garden Club and serves as a deacon for the Longbranch Community Church.

Thompson spent his early years near Lake Sawyer in Black Diamond but as the son of a Boeing employee he moved with his family and lived all over the country, including Florida and New York. He returned to Washington and graduated from Highline High School in 1962 before attending Automation Institute, a technical vocational school in Seattle. He worked at the University of Washington as a computer operator and then a programmer.

His background had been straight-laced, but this was the '60s and he was drawn to

the culture he experienced at the UW. "I was a hippie, of course!" he said. His wife at the time was not taken with his choice and they went their separate ways.

"I wanted to get back to the land and subsistence living," Thompson said. He and his second wife bought 12 acres in Arlington. They didn't know much about farming, but they dove in and raised and sold produce, rabbits and a few pigs. From Arlington it was off to Texas and 360 acres to try out pig farming on a larger scale. When a back injury made that work untenable, a friend suggested that a great way to live cheaply would be to "go cruising." Thompson had sailed "a little" and "read a lot" to prepare for this next stage of life. They bought a sailboat and spent the next 10 years on the Sea of Cortez.

A family trip in the midst of their cruising life brought the couple back to the North-

west, and Thompson and his wife began to think about their next phase. They thought Gig Harbor would be perfect. Five years later, when they were ready to put down roots, property prices exceeded their budget. A real estate agent suggested Key Peninsula. "No one had heard of the

Key Peninsula 25 years ago," Thompson said. They bought a five-acre undeveloped parcel in Longbranch and began to build a home, starting with a shed in a cleared meadow.

Thompson and his second wife drifted apart and separated amicably. He met his wife Ruth at a KP Civic Center dance

14 years ago. "Little Bill and the Blue Notes was playing," he said. "I was dancing with some of the Key Peninsula elders, including Claudia Loy's mother, when a friend said I needed to meet someone. After we were introduced, we danced every single number for the rest of the night."



Ruth shares his love of gardening and continues to work for others at least three days a week before coming home to their place to work some more.

Their house has expanded from the initial shed and now includes Thompson's Mexican Patio, where friends gather in the summer. The garden, too, has evolved. He started with vegetables but got bored with them, he said. He turned to ornamentals and the now 10-acre property has gardens that flow around the house. They are a wild and wonderful combination of native and exotic plants, rimmed with beach stones. Internal structure comes from the existing large trees, rocks, driftwood, moss-covered logs and stumps, as well as found objects.

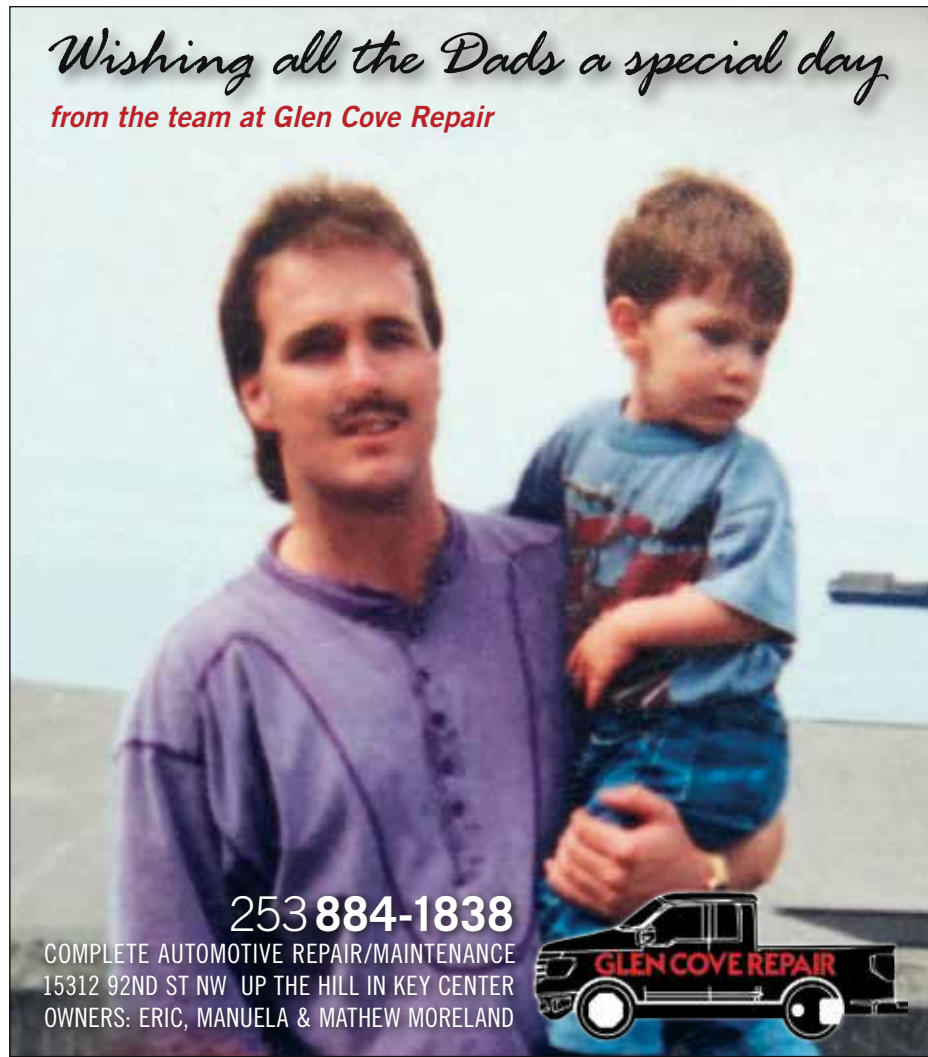
"I'm a landscape designer, but our place is a bit problematic from a design point of view," Thompson said. "Ruth and I are nursery sluts—we can't resist new plants. And so, when we get home, we just have to find a place for our new finds."

The gardens have names and themes. The Gazebo holds new plants and provides a place to sit in the afternoon sun. The Perennial Garden is home to at least 50 kinds of hostas and has a place for miniature evergreens. Then comes Sleepy Hollow, featuring ferns, followed by the Tunnel Garden, then the Lower Garden, the Estate Garden, the Tropical Garden with bamboo and a pond with koi, and the Japanese Garden complete with a dry stream bed, bridge and pagoda. "All together we have over 900 varieties of plants, shrubs and trees," Thompson said.


Clearing to make way for the gardens came through conventional and unconventional means. About three quarters of the work was done through human labor, but the rest was thanks to porcine power. Two pigs—Creighton (named for Michael Creighton, his wife's favorite author) and then Rojo can take credit. Thompson initially bought Creighton and fenced her near the vegetable garden to discourage deer but noticed that her snout was remarkably effective in digging out blackberry roots. He began moving her fenced area around to help clear for future gardens. Rojo arrived as a tiny piglet and lived with the family for 15 years before dying of congestive heart failure. He had a few escapes and gained local celebrity. Thompson was not always sure if visitors came to see him or the pig.

The garden has become a destination for garden clubs, with at least one tour scheduled each year. "It is a challenge to have everything ready at one time." He loves spring, but his favorite seasons are fall and winter. That is when he and Ruth rethink their creation, make new plans and move plants to new locations.

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State Investing in the Key Peninsula

CAROLYN WILEY, KP NEWS

The Washington State Biennial Budget for 2019-21 includes \$3.9 million for environmental/recreational projects on the Key Peninsula in addition to \$1 million allocated for The Mustard Seed Project's assisted living housing for seniors.

Both Sen. Emily Randall (D-Bremerton) and Rep. Michelle Caldier (R-Port Orchard) expressed their concern during the recent legislative sessions that KP residents had historically not received a fair share of state funds. Other areas with higher population benefitted because there was supporting statistical data and better organized lobbying efforts. Both were pleased that there was legislative support for conservation efforts to protect the unique resources of the Key Peninsula, according to their offices.

The largest investment, \$2.3 million, is from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for design and construction of gravity and pumped intakes at the Minter Creek Hatchery. WDFW Reform and Operations Manager Region 6 James Jenkins said the investment will bring the hatchery into compliance with current federal and state criteria for salmon protection.

An additional \$90,000 was allocated to fish barrier removal on Minter Creek.

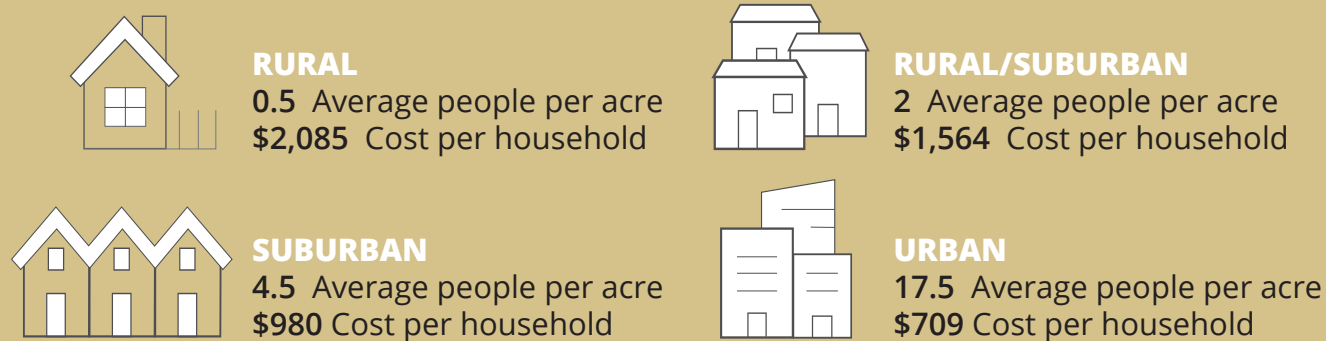
Sarah Myers, legislative assistant to Randall, provided information to the KP News about grant designation. Projects under the Washington Wildlife Recreation Grants focus on land protection and outdoor recreation projects, park acquisition and development, habitat conservation and restoration, farmland and forest preservation, and construction of outdoor recreation facilities including parks, trails, water access and campgrounds.

These grants include \$150,000 for Kaukiki farmland preservation in Longbranch and two parks projects: \$498,000 for a new splash pad at Gateway Park and \$205,000 for land acquisition at Taylor Bay.

Key Pen Parks Director Scott Gallacher said the Gateway project was ranked 10th out of over 90 applications submitted statewide, adding that the KP Parks Foundation was in the process of raising an additional \$50,000 in matching funds. Construction on the splash pad will begin in the fall and be ready for use in May or June 2020.

Gallacher said Taylor Bay Park was purchased in 2018 with support from Pierce County Conservation Futures. The funds in the 2019 budget by the state

PIERCE COUNTY DENSITY AND ANNUAL COST FOR SERVICES (2018)



Graphic adapted from "The Costs of Sprawl: The Potential Impacts of Development in Pierce County, Washington."

The Cost of Growth on the Key Peninsula

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

The population in the Puget Sound region is projected to grow by 1.8 million by 2050, according to the Puget Sound Regional Council. The largest percent of growth already underway is in small cities, such as Gig Harbor.

How might that affect the Key Peninsula?

Pierce County Councilman Derek Young (D-Gig Harbor) thinks that kind of growth is very unlikely on the KP. The Growth Management Act, adopted by the state Legislature in 1990, was designed to discourage urban sprawl and to encourage growth in identified urban growth areas.

Young cited a recent study from Earth Economics in consultation with The Puyallup Watershed Initiative entitled, "The Costs of Sprawl: The Potential Impacts of Development in Pierce County, Washington."

According to that study, Pierce County is one of the most rapidly growing counties in the state and most development is occurring in unincorporated areas. It compared the economic costs of developing in rural and urban areas. The results strongly supported continuing to add population to urban areas and preserving the rural nature of communities like the Key Peninsula, Young said.

Earth Economics estimated the financial cost of losing undeveloped land to housing. Forests, grasslands, wetlands and agricultural lands provide services—they all improve water and air quality, sequester carbon and provide habitat for plants and animals. Some also provide recreational

opportunities. Evergreen forests and agricultural lands provide crops and jobs. According to the report, a monetary value can be ascribed to each of these services.

The study also calculated the cost of providing infrastructure for services in rural Pierce County compared to that in an urban growth area. Infrastructure in rural settings costs nearly three times more than it does in urban ones, it said.

The study described two scenarios—one of building housing for 100 people (39 households) in an urban growth area and the other in a rural setting. Rural housing is single-family with large

lot requirements; new urban housing is more likely to be multifamily on smaller lots. The study assumed homes for 100 people would require 124 acres in a rural location but only 25 acres in an urban one.

Looking at both the economic losses from building on undeveloped land and the increased cost of infrastructure, the study concluded that development in rural rather than urban communities to house 100 people would lead to about \$7 million in losses over a 30-year period.

How much development can happen in rural, unincorporated areas is determined by community plans and zoning regulations. The Key Peninsula Community Plan was completed in 2007 and is not scheduled for revision until 2027. According to the plan, nearly two-thirds of the land use designation is Rural 10. Rural Neighborhood Centers and Rural Activity Centers account for less than 1 percent. Parks, rural farm agricultural and rural sensitive resource lands make up the remainder.

Of the R10 designated land, the many parcels that are smaller than 10 acres were

legally created prior to the current zoning laws. And the R10 designation doesn't mean that all homes must be on 10-acre lots—there is a maximum density of 0.2 houses per acre.

Steve Metcalf, Pierce County communications specialist, said, "The Pierce County Zoning Code states the Rural 10 zone classification is intended to provide for rural uses at a rural density. In the R10 zone, to get maximum density, 50 percent or more of the property must be designated as open space." For example, if the property qualifies for the maximum density limit, a 10-acre parcel could be subdivided into two lots.

However, on privately owned land, the landowner can develop as he or she sees fit, as allowed by zoning. According to the county Assessor-Treasurer's office, more than 91 percent of the 38,149 acres on the Key Peninsula are privately owned.

Does that mean that parcels currently filled with second-growth trees could potentially become lots for homes?

Young thinks that is unlikely. He said that the growth here is limited compared to Gig Harbor and to other areas in Pierce County. "The Key Peninsula is a long way from urban growth areas," he said. "I know that as people drive and see new buildings, they have concerns, but the capacity for homes on the peninsula is pretty limited. Wetlands and unstable slopes, water availability and septic issues will all limit growth."

He estimates that when Pierce County Planning and Land Services completes its countywide annual buildable lands report only about 100 buildable sites will be identified as available for new homes on the KP.

Read the study at www.earthconomics.org

INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL SETTINGS COSTS NEARLY THREE TIMES MORE THAN IT DOES IN URBAN ONES.

Recreation and Conservation Office will go toward providing water access.

Mark Michel, Key Pen Parks board president, said, “Scott saw the availability of grants and has pursued them. He has brought in an incredible amount of money to benefit the parks system and residents of the Key.”

Two youth camps on the Key—Sound View Camp and YMCA Camp Colman—will also benefit from investment in shoreline preservation.

The \$385,000 for Sound View Camp Conservation was initiated by the Nisqually Land Trust. Joe Kane, the trust executive director, said, “The camp is really an incredibly complex habitat. The shoreline has seven distinct habitats.”

“We are in the process of raising an additional \$400,000 in matching grants to complete the process of establishing a conservation easement that will protect the entire Sound View Camp property,” Kane said.

While “the shoreline is in pretty good shape,” Kane also said this project includes some shoreline restoration and will initiate preventative work on the upper part of the grounds, allowing the camp to continue to function without negative impact on the shoreline.

According to Bria Cartwright, executive director at YMCA Camp Colman, the \$250,000 in state funding the camp receives will go toward building a new marine science center and recreation space at Camp Colman. “The center will be a hub for environmental learning and sustainability programs for the 8,600 young people that visit camp every year. With both science and recreation programming in the center, campers will be able to work in teams to explore Camp Colman’s rich marine habitats through hands-on learning and discovery.”

The total project is expected to cost approximately \$1,000,000. The permitting phase will begin later this year.

Permitting Approved for Senior Housing Duplexes on KP Highway NW

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

A project to build five duplexes designated as senior housing on KP Highway NW is moving forward in the permitting process.

The Key Peninsula Land Use Advisory Commission (KPAC) moved to approve the application at its June 2018 meeting and the Pierce County hearing examiner review was scheduled for late April.

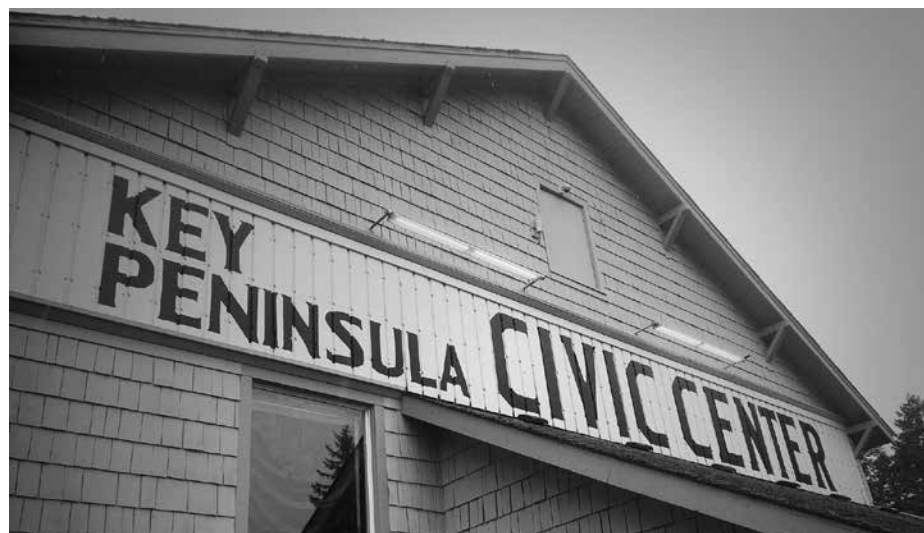
Gig Harbor real estate agent John Holmaas owns the project. He bought the 5-acre parcel, located at 13819 Key Peninsula Highway NW, a Rural Neighborhood Center, about 20 years ago. The parcel is across the highway south of the Shell Gas Station and the Key Center Auto Shop.

Holmaas said he has built similar developments and believes this one would meet a need in the community. Each unit would be on its own lot within the parcel.

At the KPAC meeting, several people who live near the proposed site expressed concern about traffic, the amount of grading and filling required for construction, and the significant increase in population density. Senior housing, where at least one member of the household is 55 or older and no residents are younger than 18, is an approved use in an RNC. KPAC commissioners noted that building homes on the commercially-zoned parcel would have less impact than some other potential uses.

Holmaas said that he had gained approval for four triplex units in 2009 but that project was put on hold by the economic downturn. He also felt that duplexes would be more desirable than triplexes. “People don’t want the center unit,” he said.

Holmaas plans to complete the site work, but he will not move forward immediately to build the duplexes. “I’m 78,” he said. I need to have a partner for the next stage, or to find a buyer to take over from here.”



The mission of the civic center is to foster the civic, social, cultural and general well-being of the Key Peninsula community. Photo: Ted Olinger, KP News

KP Civic Center Now a Warming or Cooling Shelter

The iconic Key Peninsula Civic Center has served the community for over a century as a school, museum, and community and office space, and now as daytime shelter.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

After several upgrades paid for by state grants and donors, the Key Peninsula Civic Center can now offer refuge as a daytime warming or cooling station.

“We are designated as a warming or cooling shelter,” said KPCCA Association board member and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Peggy Gablehouse.

“We started the emergency shelter talk probably a little over four years ago,” she said. “We realized right away there was little we could do until we had a generator to keep the lights on when no one else had lights.” It was also clear the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system would need to be updated.

The HVAC system was replaced in 2016, she said. Several upgrades were made to the infrastructure and electrical system to allow for a generator, which was paid for by a state grant in 2018.

“A warming shelter-cooling shelter basically means our doors will be open, people can come in, there’s going to be water and coffee or tea, games and cards to play, that kind of thing,” Gablehouse said.

The KPCCA board recognizes that the civic center can’t do everything that may be needed in a large-scale emergency, she said, but can serve the community as a clearinghouse for local resources and possibly a communication hub. “Down the road we are looking at possibly being an overnight shelter, but the difference is rather huge and it depends on the commitment of the volunteers because that involves a lot more time and knowledge,” she said.

Gablehouse has also coordinated with Susan Freiler Mendenhall, administrator of the Key Peninsula, Washington Face-

book page, to create a subgroup for distributing emergency preparedness information, including meeting schedules, subjects and tips for the month. “It’s hopefully going to be a go-to spot for people,” Gablehouse said.

James Allyn, the civic center caretaker since 2009, helped secure and administer over \$260,000 in grants to support the generator and upgrades, including a new wheelchair lift to be installed later in 2019 between the entryway level and the gym floor.

“Most people when they think of a shelter think of a place where the entire community can sleep for three weeks,” he said. “But the kinds of things we’re trying to prepare for are a deep freeze or a stupendous heat wave, a crisis that involves the greater KP family, where people have to move suddenly somewhere and need someplace to recover, charge their phones, maybe organize some assistance with transportation or moving fallen trees or what have you, and then go home.”

“In the event of some catastrophic event, the KP will be an island for a while,” he said. “We need to figure out how to get the word out to people that they can come here.”

Meetings on emergency preparedness on the third Thursday of most months are in the Whitmore Room at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Peggy Gablehouse at gablehousep@aol.com or 253-686-7904.

The Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition of Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula meets on the second Wednesday of every month (except August); for more information go to www.pep-c.org or call 253-380-7240.

Editor’s note: The Key Peninsula News is published by the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association. The KP News retains editorial and financial independence from its parent organization.

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9 a.m.-2 p.m. KP Community Services in Home. Call for appointment. 253-884-4440

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6 p.m. June 14 to 11 a.m. June 16. Camp Sound View in Longbranch. A wonderful way for dads, uncles or grandpas and kids to get away for the weekend and learn new things. \$60 for ages 13+, \$45 for ages 6 to 12. www.soundviewcamp.com or 253-884-9202

JUNE 18**DSHS COMMUNITY SERVICES AT KPCCS**

10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. The Department of Social and Health Services Community Services van will be at KP Community Services in Home. Sign up for supplemental food assistance and more. 253-884-4440

JUNE 20**DOWN HOME BAND RIDES AGAIN**

7-8:30 p.m. Key Medical Center, 15610 89th Street Court NW in Key Center. Just in time for the Home Fourth of July Parade, the Down Home Band led by Dr. Roes begins practice. We welcome new band members and encourage middle and high school students to join. 253-884-9221

JUNE 23**HARBOR WINDS MUSIC**

3-5 p.m. KP Civic Center. Harbor Winds features a summer music selection and showcases PSD middle school honor band players and GHHS soloist Nathaniel Gilman. Free hot dogs and ice cream. www.narrowsmusicsociety.org or 773-259-1932

JUNE 29**LONGBRANCH BLUEGRASS & BBQ FESTIVAL**

Longbranch Community Church presents this free festival from noon to 4 p.m. at the Longbranch Improvement Club 4312 KP Hwy SW. Hourly shuttle service from the KP Civic Center, KP Community Services and the Longbranch Marina 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

OFF THE KEY**WEDNESDAYS****YOGA IN THE PARK**

9-10 a.m. Outdoor yoga by donation, June through August. Saturday mornings at the Gig Harbor Civic Center Green, Wednesday mornings at Kenneth Leo Marvin Veterans Memorial Park. www.gigharboryoga.com or 650-937-9642

JUNE 8**SILVER LAKE 66 CONCERT**

6-10 p.m. Amalgamations of classic country, folk and blues. Heartstring-tugging songwriting, impeccable harmonies, ardent guitar. Olalla Community Club, 12970 Olalla Valley Road SE, Olalla. Potluck 6 p.m. Concert 7 p.m. Suggested donation \$20. www.olallahouse.org

JUNE 14**BLUEGRASS MINSTRELS**

6-9 p.m. Olalla Vineyard & Winery, 13176 Olalla Valley Road SE, Olalla. \$5 parking, carpool if you can. www.olallawines.com or 253-851-4949

JUNE 16**BEACH MONITORING**

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Austin Estuary Park, 4009 Harborview Drive, Gig Harbor. Harbor WildWatch collects data to help determine how beaches change and possible human impact. All ages welcome; no experience required. Stay for all or part of the monitoring. www.harborwildwatch.org or 253-514-0187

JUNE 19**COCKTAILS & FISHTALES**

5:30-7 p.m. Gig Harbor Brewing, 3155 Harborview Drive, Gig Harbor. Phillip Dionne, research scientist with Washington Fish and Wildlife, will discuss forage fish—herring, anchovies, smelt and sand lance—all fish that are important prey for marine predators. 21+, \$5 suggested donation; free for Steward Club Members. lindsey@harborwildwatch.org or 253-514-0187

WEEKLYEVENTS**WEEKDAYS****SAIL EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 65+**

Mondays 1:30-2:30 p.m./Wednesdays and Fridays 9:30-10:30 a.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. Help to improve balance and mobility and prevent falls, for any fitness level—you can even participate sitting down. Pre-register at info@themustardseedproject.org or 253-884-9814

SENIOR EXERCISE CLASSES

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10-11 a.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-10 a.m. at KP Community Services in Home. Register with Marilyn Perks at 253-884-4440.

MONDAYS & FRIDAYS**PLAY TO LEARN**

10-11:30 a.m. Free program for children (ages 6 and under) and adults to play together. Individual play, fun group activities, songs and a group circle time. Drop-in program, please join us. Michelle at 253-530-1097 or harrisonm@psd401.net.

TUESDAYS**STORYTIMES**

11 a.m. Preschoolers discover books, learn nursery rhymes, sing songs, play with blocks and do arts and crafts at the Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

LOVING HEARTS

Join Loving Hearts to knit or crochet for charity. First Tuesday of the month: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; all other Tuesdays 1-3 p.m. WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. Yarn donations are needed and very much appreciated. Virginia at 253-884-9619 or lovingheartsonkp@gmail.com

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

Visitors attend their first TOPS meeting free of charge and without obligation. Weigh-in from 8:35-9:25 a.m. at Key Peninsula Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. marcgrubb1990@yahoo.com

OASIS YOUTH CENTER

Are you a queer or questioning youth between the ages of 14 and 24? Oasis Youth Center satellite program Tuesdays from 3-6 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. Games, new friends, learning and snacks. www.oasisyouthcenter.org, oasis@oasisyouthcenter.org or 253-671-2838

KEY SINGERS REHEARSALS

Rehearsals for KP choral group 7-8:30 p.m. at KP Lutheran Church. All singers welcome. Membership \$10 per year. Marianne at 253-884-5615.

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS**PRESCHOOL PLAYTIME**

Weekly except during school breaks. The Children's Home Society of Washington KP Family Resource Center offers a preschool and toddler indoor park program 9:30-11:30 a.m. in the KP Civic Center gym. Caregivers stay with child. Drop-ins welcome; stay as long as you wish. A \$1 per child donation is suggested. 253-884-5433

SENIOR TAI CHI

Senior tai chi class, 10:15-11:15 a.m. at KP Community Services in Home. Sign up in advance at 253-884-4440.

REFIT FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE

REFIT is a fitness experience designed to engage the heart as a muscle and a soul. Childcare provided. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and 10-11 a.m. Thursdays at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878

TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS**FREE SUMMER LUNCHES**

11:30 a.m.-12 p.m. June 25 – August 16. Gateway Park and KP Community Services in Home. Food Backpacks 4 Kids will distribute free lunches to children of all ages. 253-857-7401

TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS**KP HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPEN**

Key Peninsula Historical Society museum at the civic center is open 1-4 p.m. Free admission. 253-888-3246. www.keypeninsulamuseum.org

WEDNESDAYS**READY SET GO!**

Free Early Learning Program for 3- and 4-year-olds. Limited to 16 children with their parent or caregiver. Focus on kindergarten readiness and lots of fun. KP Civic Center, VFW room, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Lori Mertens 253-884-5433

LAKEBAY WRITERS

A writers workshop for people who love stories. Share yours; hear others. 1-4 p.m. at Key Center Library. Loren Aikins, 253-884-2785

KP YOUTH COUNCIL

2:30-5 p.m. at the Key Center fire station. Keypercouncil@gmail.com

BLEND HOOKERS AND TINKERS

Does your fiber diet include skeins of yarn? Join in 5:30-8 p.m. at Blend Wine Shop for a rollicking good time. Bring projects, show-and-tell or hang out with a fabulous group of Key Penners. All skill levels and fiber interests welcome; 21+. hannah8ball@gmail.com, 817-929-3943

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS**SENIOR MEALS**

Nutritious meals for ages 60+ are served at noon at KP Community Services in Home; \$2 donation is requested. Guests (ages 50-59) of senior attendees are requested to donate \$2.50. 253-884-4440

THURSDAYS**TOASTMASTERS**

Have fun improving your public speaking ability and leadership skills in the portable building at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW, 8-9 a.m. Guests are welcome with no obligation to speak. keypeninsulatoastmasters@gmail.com

REV & FLOW FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE

Rev & Flow is an easy on the joints workout. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878

SENIORS LUNCH

The KP Senior Society meets at 11 a.m. for a potluck, games and fellowship in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 253-884-4981

FRIDAYS**TRIPLE P PARENTING CLASSES**

Children's Home Society of Washington partners with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department to sign up families for Triple P Parenting classes and provide assistance with basic food and health insurance applications. KP Community Office, Suite D, KC Corral, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 253-432-4948 or 253-884-5433

MONTHLY MEETINGS

June 1, Writers Guild, 10 a.m., KP Community Council office, Suite D, Key Center Corral. 253-884-6455

June 3 & 17, KP Veterans group, 7 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Veterans, military service members and families with children 16 and older are welcome. 253-884-2626

June 4, KP Historical Society board, 11 a.m., in the museum at KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 253-888-3246

June 4 & 18, West of the Narrows Depression and Bipolar Support Group-Lakebay Group, 5:30-6:30 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Kimberly 253-753-4270 or dbsalakebay@gmail.com

June 4 & 21, Key Peninsula Business Association: June 4 at 6:30 p.m. at Blend Wine Shop; June 21 at noon at El Sombrero. www.kpba.org/about; kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com or 253-312-1006

June 5 & 19, KP Lions Club, 6 p.m., Key Center fire station. 253-853-2721

June 6, 26th Legislative District Democrats, 6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting. Public invited. Givens Community Center, 1026 Sidney Road, Port Orchard. 26thdemocrats@gmail.com

June 6, Lakebay Fuchsia Society, 7 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. Patt Russ will discuss Kokedama. Myvanway Shirley 253-884-2283

June 10, KP Parks Commission, 7:30 p.m.,

Volunteer Park office. 253-884-9240

June 11 & 25, KP Fire Commission, 5-7 p.m., at Key Center fire station. www.keypeninsulafire.org or 253-884-2222

June 12, Bayshore Garden Club, 10 a.m., Long-branch fire station. Wendy, 253-332-4883

June 12, Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition, 10 a.m., Gig Harbor Fire District Headquarters, 10222 Bujacich Road NW, Gig Harbor. www.PEP-C.org, curtscott45@gmail.com, 253-380-7240

June 12, KP Community Council, 7 p.m., Key Center fire station. 253-432-4948

June 13, Ashes support group for Fire District 16, 10:30 a.m., Key Center fire station. 253-884-3771

June 13, Peninsula School District board, 6 p.m., district office in Purdy. 253-530-1000

June 13, KP Civic Center Assn. board, 7 p.m., Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center. www.kpciviccenter.org, 253-884-3456

June 15, Key Peninsula Caregivers Support Group, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. Please call Debra Jamerson before attending. 360-621-1110

June 17, KP Democrats, 7 p.m., Home fire station, johnpatkelly@aol.com

June 19, Key Peninsula Advisory Commission, 6:30 p.m. KP Civic Center, reviews applications for proposed developments and makes recommendations to Pierce County. Verify details at www.piercecountywa.gov/5937/Key-Peninsula-Advisory-Commission

June 20, Key Peninsula Emergency Preparation, 7 p.m. Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center, 253-686-7904 or gablehousep@aol.com (Put E Prep in the subject line)

June 20, KP Citizens Against Crime, 7 p.m. Meet with Pierce County Sheriff to discuss what's happening in our community. Key Center fire station. doloresstarr@centurytel.net or 253-884-3105

June 21, Two Waters Arts Alliance, 1 p.m., board welcomes artists and art lovers to join its meeting, VFW Room, KP Civic Center. www.twowaters.org 253-884-1163

June 24, Relatives Raising Kids Support, 6-7:30 p.m. Grandparents and relatives raising children meet at Evergreen Elementary. Potluck dinner and childcare provided. Call Lori at CHSW 253-884-5433 or 253-391-0144.

June 24, KP Farm Council planning meeting, 6 p.m., KP Community Council office, KC Corral, Suite D, 253-432-4948 or email keycouncil@gmail.com; kpfarmtour.com

June 27, Book discussion group meets the fourth Thursday of the month 11 a.m. at KC Library. Book list available at the library; speak to a librarian for more information. 253-548-3309.

Multiple dates, KP Sportsmen's Club board meets first Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; general meeting/potluck second Thursdays at 6 p.m.; bingo \$1/card and potluck fourth Fridays at 6 p.m.; Ladies Bunco last Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Bring snacks and \$5 to play. Sportsmen's Clubhouse, 5305 Jackson Lake Road NW, 253-884-6764

Oasis Satellite Open House

Join us at the Key Peninsula Civic Center, 17010 S. Vaughn Rd NW in Vaughn. Tuesday, June 25 from 3 to 6 pm.

Oasis Youth Center operates weekly drop-in hours for LGBTQ youth ages 14-24 on Tuesdays.

If you are a parent, ally, educator, or just want to know more about Oasis, stop by our Open House.



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Key Peninsula Civic Center, 17010 S. Vaughn Road 253/884-3456 www.kpciviccenter.org
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360 Trails Inspires KP Pirates Biking Team

Key Pen Parks created the hugely popular biking course and now the KP has a "home team" that's made 360 Trails their own.

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

A successful first season comes to an end in June for the new Key Peninsula Pirates mountain biking team. The group was established in January by head coach, parent and former member of the Coast Guard Coree Collins, who has been mountain biking on trails since 2006.

"I love mountain biking, so I was hopeful," Collins said. "It's super fun. It's good for mental health and stress management. And getting outdoors is so important."

Key Pen Parks has hosted Washington Student Cycling League races at 360 Trails for six years, but this was the first year the KP has had an active local team with local kids practicing and racing together.

The composite team currently has 11 riders ranging from sixth to 12th grade, girls and boys. "The kids have been very supportive of each other," Collins said. "It's pretty amazing. We're not putting pressure on the kids to race. What we're doing

is building community with the kids.

We're working on the fun and the skills so that if they want to race, or if they want to start getting more competitive, it's their choice. The league's mission is to empower them."

The team competed in four races this

season, with all Pirates choosing to race.

One of the team's youngest riders, Kinzie Coldicott, 11, said she likes how her teammates "all care about each other, not just winning."

"We're giving them an outlet, a sport they can enjoy for a lifetime," Collins said. "Mountain biking is a community and it's a lifestyle, so we're giving them stress reduction and an opportunity to get

outdoors and develop a passion outside of school that teaches them life lessons. We're giving them real-life experience in a team atmosphere."

"OUR TRAIL SYSTEM AT 360 TRAILS HAS GROWN FROM FIVE-ISH TO OVER 15, WITH THE MOUNTAIN BIKE-SPECIFIC TRAILS BEING SO INCREDIBLE THEY BRING RIDERS FROM ALL OVER THE STATE."

For the past six months, the Pirates have met twice weekly at their "lair," 360 Trails.

"This place is special," Collins said. "There are a lot of progressive trails and opportunities to go over tactics. It becomes sort of the veins on the back of your hand. You just know where the trails are."

"Our trail system at 360 Trails has grown from five-ish to over 15, with the mountain bike-specific trails being so incredible they bring riders from all over the state," said Key Pen Parks Commissioner Mark Michel.

"This park is great," said Chayse Ferencik, 16, who began mountain biking as a 3-year-old and is in his third competitive season. "It's a great community place. The people that work here and the volunteers put in a lot of work and effort. They laid down some really nice trails."

Ferencik hopes to earn a scholarship for mountain biking and dreams of riding professionally. He recently competed with junior experts in the Cascadia Dirt Cup, achieving 10th place. Collins describes the Cascadia Series as "a pretty hardcore endurance series, a mixture of downhill and technical climbing: torture fest."

Collins said she appreciates the team's parent volunteers and coaches, including state champion Nick Stroud. Collins hopes all the adults, as well as Ferencik, will become certified as Ride Leaders through the Bike Instructor Certification Program before next season. "Our group spreads out, so that's part of why I want everyone certified," Collins said. "Once we get them all trained, we can really split up and meet the kids' needs based on their level and skill."

"I'm hopeful more local kids will take advantage of these opportunities to participate in an individual sport they can enjoy for the rest of their lives," Michel said. "It'll be my pleasure to help remove or reduce financial roadblocks to participation. I really don't want financial need to prevent anybody from participating."

Collins echoed Michel's hope that the Pirates team will grow.

Collins's daughter Emilee, 13, who was initially reluctant, said of her experience as a novice rider this season, "I got stronger, and then my endurance came up. Now I'm really liking it."

As the KP Pirates approach the end of their inaugural season, "It's all smiles," Collins said. "The kids are really enjoying themselves. Our crew is very special."

To contact the KP Pirates, email KeyPenMTB@gmail.com. Key Pen Parks will host a Youth Mountain Biking Jamboree & Bike Rodeo June 22 at 360 Trails. For more information, go to keypenparks.com.



Top: Chayse Farenick won a rare first place in May competition in Roslyn. "This is a big deal for our team and the league as podium placement is huge and first is very rare," said Coach Coree Collins. Bottom: KP Pirate Team at practice in May. Photos: Chris Konieczny, KP News

Suicide Prevention Signs Installed on Narrows Bridge

SARA THOMPSON
AND TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Following more than a year of steady work, the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula Suicide Prevention Coalition celebrated the installation of 24 suicide prevention signs on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge in March.

Bob Anderson, a member of the coalition and a director on the KP Community Council, spearheaded the effort. His inspiration came from a visit to Portland where similar signs are posted on the Vista Bridge.

“The signs are designed to cause the pause that can save a life,” Anderson said. They have messages such as “Life is worth living. There is help,” and “You are not alone. Make the call.”

Funding for the project came from a grant through Pierce County that also included support for presentations by suicide survivor Kevin Hines last year (“Suicide Prevention Coalition: Making a Difference,” KP News, November 2018).

The coalition is now working on getting state funds to install netting and barriers on the bridge.

Anderson said there are extra signs they hope to post on the KP and that the county may produce signs for use in other areas. Anne Nesbit, a member of the coalition and the KP Fire Department prevention and public information officer, said she is coordinating with the Key Pen Parks to find locations for them.

The coalition was established seven years ago in response to suicide attempts by local students. Although the initial focus was on youth, suicide affects all ages and the coalition expanded its outreach.

“We deliver presentations to groups and also strategize on how to get the word out about suicide education and mental health awareness,” Nesbit said. “We have a lot of social workers, school and hospital personnel, community members, and we’ve had a couple of Gig Harbor High School students come because they have a youth suicide support group there.”

The coalition offers three-hour training sessions to prepare individuals to identify those at risk of suicide and to help them get help. It also offers speakers for a 45-minute “Talk Saves Lives” presentation on suicide prevention.

“And out here on the Key, we now are in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade classes talking about mental health,” Nesbit said. “We talk about how important it is to accept

and appreciate yourself, about self-care and suicide awareness.”

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for teenagers aged 15 to 19 in Washington state, according to the Healthy Youth School Survey conducted in 2018. “That also shows that 61 percent of seniors in our district feel there’s no adult to talk to if they’re down and depressed and 40 percent were so depressed for a two-week period that it made them want to stop doing things,” Nesbit said. “That’s significant because it shows the problem really is here and is holding steady.”

Depression and anxiety are common and treatable conditions marked by persistent feelings of sadness and helplessness, and can lead to substance abuse and thoughts of suicide.

Nesbit said anyone experiencing these feelings or with questions should call the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or text “home” to 741741. Call 1-800-TEENLINK to talk to a caring teenager. “They can also call me,” she said, at 253-884-2222.

“The stigma about mental illness and suicide is still there but I think people are starting to talk more, which is fantastic because the bottom line of the workshops we host is that conversation and human connection is what people with suicide ideation need,” she said. “They need somebody to ask them what’s wrong and listen to them.”

The Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula Suicide Prevention Coalition meets 9 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month at Gig Harbor Fire District Headquarters at 10222 Bujacich Road NW. For more information, visit the coalition Facebook page. Bob Anderson also runs an informal group for those touched by suicide. Contact him at 253-753-3013 or bobtanderson@me.com. For more information on the Healthy Youth Survey, go to www.askhys.net.



Signs like this one may also be posted on the KP. Photo: Marcia Harris



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A MOLECULAR APPROACH TO COOKING MEAT FROM A RENOWNED LOCAL BIOCHEMIST




Brining Meat—Wet or Dry

RICHARD GELINAS

More than once, a dinner guest at our house has said, “That was the best turkey–chicken–pork I’ve ever tasted,” which is wonderful to hear. I think the guests may have noticed the uniform seasoning with salt that is the result of brining in a salt solution or directly salting (dry brining) the meat before cooking.

Wet or dry, brining meat, especially poultry and pork, not only seasons but tenderizes by promoting denaturation of the protein structure, which also leads to retention of water, keeping the meat juicy after cooking.

Feel like chicken? A whole chicken or parts (three to four pounds) can be seasoned in a brine made with ½ cup of table salt dissolved in 2 quarts of water and kept in the fridge for 30 to 60 minutes. For pork, use a slightly weaker brine (¼ cup of table salt in 2 quarts water) for at least an hour.

Chef Thomas Keller makes fried chicken after soaking in a lemony brine. For two whole chickens the brine is made with 1 gallon of water with 1 cup plus 2 teaspoons of kosher salt, ¼ cup of honey, the juice and zest of 2 lemons, and smaller amounts of bay leaf, garlic, black pepper, parsley, rosemary and thyme. Gently heat this more complex brine to get everything dissolved and soak chickens overnight in the fridge.

Alice Waters likes an even more elaborate brine for turkey. For a 12 to 14-pound turkey, she dissolves 1½ cups of sugar, 1 cup of kosher salt, carrots, onions, leeks, celery, bay leaves, peppercorns, coriander seeds, crushed red pepper, fennel seeds, star anise and thyme in 1 gallon of very warm water. When everything is dissolved and aromatic, she adds 2 more gallons of water followed by the turkey, where it sits for three days in the refrigerator.

I followed this recipe once and the guests raved, but it does take careful planning, a very large container, and an even larger refrigerator. Alice also likes to baste her turkey with a long branch of rosemary, but I cannot be responsible if you try this and it

evokes comments from family and friends.

Chef Kenji Lopez-Alt prefers dry brining for turkey, since wet brining means you must give up valuable space in your fridge for a day or more and it can lead to meat that is moist but watery with a bland flavor. He specifically recommends against using broth or any acidic material (vinegar, cider) in a wet brine, which can lead to very dry meat with a desiccated exterior.

His recipe for dry brining is to combine “Half a cup of Diamond Crystal kosher salt (or six tablespoons Morton’s kosher salt) with 2 tablespoons of baking powder (which promotes browning) in a bowl.” Dry the turkey with paper towels and “generously sprinkle the salt mixture on all surfaces.” The salted bird is placed on a rack and set in the fridge uncovered for 12 hours. Then follow your favorite roasting recipe.

Finally, who wouldn’t like a great roast chicken from Samin Nosrat, who once worked for Alice Waters but has emerged as a popular chef, author and TV personality? Here’s a simplified version of her recipe for buttermilk-marinated roast chicken. Sprinkle salt all over (and inside) a 3.5 to 4-pound chicken and let it rest for 30 minutes. Dissolve 2 tablespoons of kosher salt or 4 teaspoons of fine sea salt into 2 cups of buttermilk (or yogurt). Place the chicken in a gallon-size resealable plastic bag and pour in the buttermilk, massaging to spread the buttermilk. Refrigerate overnight, turning the bag occasionally if you wish.

An hour before cooking, remove chicken and scrape off as much buttermilk as you can “without being obsessive.” Roast at 425. After about 20 to 30 minutes, when the chicken starts to brown, reduce the heat to 400 and continue roasting for another 30 minutes or so, until the chicken is brown all over and the juices run clear when you insert a knife down to the bone between the leg and the thigh.

As always, allow the chicken to rest for 10 minutes before carving and serving.

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Pierce County Fire District #16 is like most fire departments. The majority of emergency incidents are EMS related.

The tax rate of the existing EMS levy is tied to the appraised property value at the time of passage in 2010.

Revenue is down since 2010 and the existing levy is due to expire in 2020.

Should the existing levy not be replaced service disruption may occur.

This replacement levy is the same tax rate of \$0.50 per \$1000 of assessed evaluation.

This request is for a permanent EMS levy.

A yes vote will ensure the continuation of the high quality EMS care we receive today.

AUGUST 6, 2019 ELECTION

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Foxglove Farm is Growing

ALICE KINERK, KP NEWS

Foxglove Farm in Longbranch is a new and growing source for produce, eggs and fiber, with owners who prioritize working in harmony with the surrounding ecosystem and building community through farming.

Josh Johnson and Erin Taylor bought their Erickson Road property at foreclosure in autumn 2016. Local old-timers will remember the 15-acre farm as once the home of Shirlie Marietta, beloved character and longtime proprietor of the Liquor Store in Key Center. Marietta died in 2009, but in a 2006 KP News article, she said of her farm, "I used to have cattle, until hay went to 130 bucks a ton; now I have two head of dogs, two head of cats, and about 20 head of moles." (See "Thursdays with Shirlie," KP News, May 2006.)

By 2016, blackberries had taken over the land. Undaunted by long hours with a brush hog, Johnson and Taylor set to work building a chicken coop and greenhouse, planting large varieties of fruits and vegetables and bringing in livestock. Crops planted for the 2019 season include several varieties of

lettuce, garlic, rutabaga, squash, cucumbers, corn and potatoes, not to mention many different kinds of apples, cherries, peaches, plums and berries.

"We probably went overboard on the varieties. But it's part of trying to figure out what's going to sell, what's going to grow," Johnson said. "We wanted to keep it a little bit different."

The farm is also home to honeybees, Pygora goats, chickens and Cayuga ducks, with plans to add llamas or alpacas soon.

Johnson and Taylor met while she was in business school and he was working in IT. Johnson was eager to do something other than sit in front of a screen all day. Taylor, who had fond memories of her grandmother's farm in Purdy, found Johnson's dream of owning a small farm enticing enough to leave school and join him.

"I didn't want to do the heavy labor of produce farming," Taylor said. "I tease Josh that he got the farm just so he could have a tractor, and I got it just so I could have all the critters."

Organic farming was important to them

from the start, both because of personal experiences and beliefs. "Grandma did organic farming before 'organic' was even a word that was bandied around," Taylor said.

"It just doesn't make sense to me to complicate it with chemicals. You don't need them," Johnson said.

Johnson's IT background has found a practical application with the design and installation of 12 remotely-controlled watering zones for produce. His job allows him to work from home and is flexible regarding time for farm chores.

With the property containing a stream that drains a short distance into a Filucy Bay feeder, they planted native species and created buffers to keep animal waste

away from the water. The couple partnered with Pierce Conservation District from the beginning, putting in a heavy use area for the animals, a large buffer between the grazing area and waterways, and replanting native species. In exchange, Pierce Conservation District paid for part of the farm's fencing.

The couple's dedication to sustainability practices so impressed PCD that they were

awarded the Conservation Practice Implementer of the Year award in 2018.

"Erin and Josh are very passionate about managing their land in an environmentally sensitive manner, and have been proactive in working with Pierce Conservation District to install best management practices that protect natural resources on their farm," said Paul Borne, Farm Resource Specialist for Pierce Conservation District.

As a board member for the Farm Tour, Johnson has a goal of helping his Key Peninsula neighbors connect with the farms around them. "We're trying to do some education activities. Hopefully we'll do some out here," Johnson said.

While the pair remains optimistic about their future, they admit not everything about running an organic farm has met their expectations. "Our animals are jerks. I had the naive vision of having our chickens be free-range," Taylor said, laughing. "But they destroyed my flower bed."

Foxglove Farm is located at 16720 Erickson Road SW in Longbranch and on the web at foxglove.farm.



Proud proprietors Josh Johnson and Erin Taylor Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News

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Skaters warm up on the classic wood floor. *Photo: David Zeigler, KP News*

Skate Night Seeks New 'Rinkleader'

The Miller family has run the beloved KP youth activity for two decades.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

After more than 20 years on the job, Kip Miller is resigning his post as manager of Skate Night at the KP Civic Center. His wife, Jennifer, the kitchen manager, and their son, Bryce, a senior at Peninsula High School and the DJ, will be departing as well after the final session before summer break, June 14.

"When our daughter Brianna was a 1-year-old, in 1997, we got invited to volunteer and then eventually took over the program," Miller said. "When we first started it was a boom box on a table on the stage."

Skating came to the civic center in the fall of 1976. Within a few months, it was so popular people had to pay 25 cents just to watch from the balcony (See "Rolling Right Along," Key Peninsula Newsletter, February 1977.)

"We started coming in 1999," said Claudia Jones, a civic center board member. "We brought our kids off Herron Island." She and husband Bill now volunteer and bring their grandson, Andrew, age 5.

Geared for elementary through middle school-aged children, Skate Night happens Friday nights during the school year. It's an evening of music, games and roller skating from 6 to 9 p.m., sometimes followed by dodgeball until 10:30 p.m. The \$5 admission includes skate rental and games. Once children are in the building they cannot leave without a parent or guardian.

"We probably get about 150 or 160 kids on an average Friday night, and sometimes more during dodgeball," Miller said. "Some of the kids don't even like to skate, they just come hang out with their friends, play games, and listen to music."

Evergreen first-grader Ean Fritz is a Skate Night regular. "I don't skate but it's fun to go and watch and be with my friends and eat food," he said.

"The kitchen serves everything from burgers to chili fries and smoothies and they can sit at tables and socialize in the Whitmore Room. It's a good, safe place

to learn how to do that," Jones said. "And I'm always surprised at how many parents stay; some go into a corner and get on their computer and some just get out there and socialize with the other parents."

Ten to 15 high school students volunteer each week to get credit for their community service requirement, helping in the skate room or kitchen, monitoring the kids and assisting with parties. They also keep the evening fun. "There's always several games throughout the night," Miller said. "Alligator Tag is probably the favorite that's been going on the longest."

"Kip created a deep bench of volunteers and brought Skate Night to a new level," said James Allyn, the civic center caretaker. "He raffled off bikes and giant teddy bears and other prizes donated by local businesses and clubs. That didn't cost them much, but getting something like a free bike makes a huge impact on a kid. Just watching that made you want to go."

Miller took a break from Skate Night 10 years ago but was asked by the board to return when the program faltered. But in June, Miller will be taking over the business where he has been employed full-time. "Our kids are grown now, they've moved on, and it's my time to move on," he said.

"Some new Vaughn parents have expressed concern that Skate Night may come to an end without the Millers. I said 'Step up. You guys are all young, you can do this,'" Jones said.

"We want to hire someone ASAP," said board member Peggy Gablehouse, who is responsible for human resources at the civic center. "We would like to find someone who can train with the Millers, so they can see how it's done."

For more information, go to www.kpcivicceneter.org or call 253-884-3456.

Editor's note: The Key Peninsula News is published by the KPCCA. The KP News retains editorial and financial independence from its parent organization.

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Thank You! We would like to thank our wonderful volunteers; Susan Ricketts, Marilyn Hartley and Sophie Gwynn for all of the hard work and support they gave at the Mom & Me Tea on May 11. Thank you to 3 Clouds Bakery for the delicious muffins and cookies, and Sunnycrest Nursery for the beautiful carnations.



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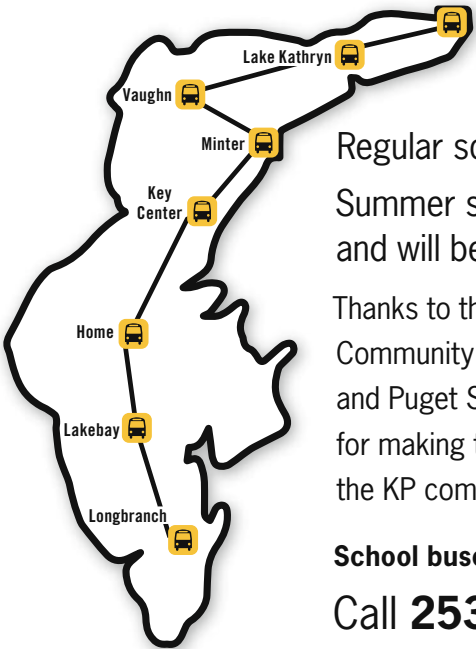
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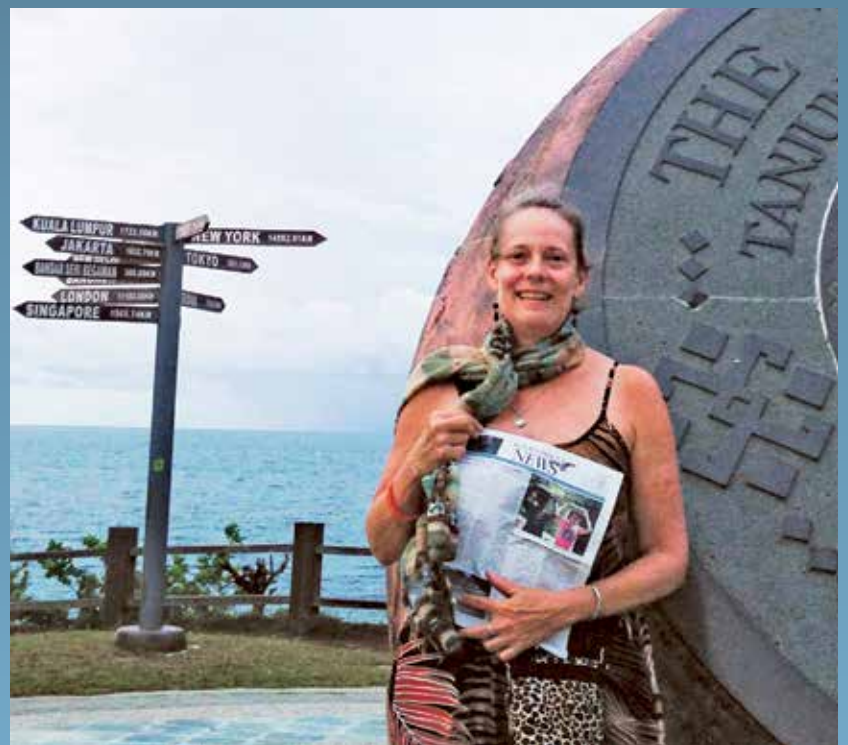


Regular schedule ends June 19.
Summer schedule starts July 9 and will be printed here next month.

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Jenny Balman in Borneo, Malaysia, in October 2018

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LEFT Sailor Tom Tallman takes home the trophy after winning the annual opening day regatta (top) at Longbranch Marina. *Photos: David Ziegler, KP News* **MIDDLE** Seahawks mascot Blitz with Evergreen Elementary first grade teachers Jennifer Martin and Beth Porter during his visit to the school May 20 to celebrate the student body's sumitting "Mount Ever-read" — reading 2,000 books since October. *Photo: Tricia Endsley* **MIDDLE RIGHT** Four visiting Daffodil Princesses take turns reading to aspiring royals at Key Center Library in April. *Photo: Hugh McMillan*

ABOVE Meet the KP frog up close and personal. Also known as the Pacific tree or chorus frog, males ribbit and croak loudly near dusk to attract a mate. *Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News* **LOWER RIGHT** Kate Goodrich, Mommy Hailey Lystad, and daughters Eva, Nora and Charlotte celebrating traditions at the Mommy and Me Tea hosted by Key Pen Parks. *Photo: Veronica Grandt*