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Free clinic offering youth sports physicals

By Scott Turner, KP News

For the past two years, Key Peninsula residents have been able to get free medical attention twice a week at the Key Free Clinic next door to the Key Center Library.

According to Jessica Schlicher, one of the clinic's doctors and a board member, the clinic was started in 2012 by a group of residents that included doctors Bill Roes, Jim Patterson, Susan Bouterse and others.

"We offer full spectrum walk-in primary care," Schlicher said. "We do sports physicals and we try to handle anything that comes in. If someone has an emergency like a heart attack or stroke and needs to be hospitalized, we usually send them to St. Anthony Hospital because it's closest."

Typically, clinic physicians see and treat conditions such as emphysema and asthma, and people with weight loss who might have some underlying condition such as undetected cancer, high blood



Carley Craig goes through the eye exam portion of her sports physical during a recent visit to the Key Free Clinic, in Key Center.

Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

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Scouting offered to Evergreen Elementary School boys

By Scott Turner, KP News

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) has launched a new program called ScoutReach at Evergreen Elementary that makes it possible for young boys to become Cub Scouts. The program is free.

"This is a brand new program that just started last month," said Justin Kinker, who works with the ScoutReach program.

"We're working with our local Cub Scout Pack 222. It's sort of a feeder program for Pack 222. We're bringing Scouting to the kids after school, rather than them having to go someplace else," he said.

After each weekly meeting, the kids are bused home.

The program mimics regular Cub Scout programs and even includes campouts. "We open our meetings with the Pledge

of Allegiance and the Cub Scout motto and Scout Law and all the other requirements that kids need to advance in the ranks," Kinker said.

"We're trying to instill the value of being part of a community and help them realize their own potential and how they can fit into their community and give back to their community," he said.

Once they've been in the ScoutReach program, the boys have enough scouting experience to join an official troop like Pack 222, he added.

"Being free can make a big difference to low income Peninsula families," Kinker said.

Rob Haworth of Longbranch is the assistant Cub Master for Pack 222, the KP Cub Scout group that meets monthly at Way-

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pressure, diabetes and back pain.

"It's really the full spectrum of primary care," Schlicher said. "The clinic treats patients of all ages, but mostly adults, since most children are covered by Medicaid."

And it's all free.

"There's no cost whatsoever and we don't collect any personal information," Schlicher said.

"It's all confidential," said Maureen Barta, a registered nurse who volunteers at the clinic. "We don't care what their history is or what their background is. There's no requirement for a pay stub and patients don't have to give information about their employer."

"We're here for people for whatever issue they have. We can help them get whatever they need," Barta said.

That includes help getting insurance, help getting special tests, X-rays or any other resources patients need, she added.

Doctors want to be in a position of helping the people who really need it, Schlicher said.

"It's really fulfilling to be able to work here and I think we've helped a lot of people. We have a lot of people who, if their medical conditions were controlled, they'd still be working — and it's pretty devastating to those people."

"We have people who have very simple conditions and some who have problems that haven't been treated for years and years. A lot of that is because many people out here are pretty independent

Nutrition, lifestyle coaching available

The Key Free Clinic is now offering nutritional and lifestyle coaching by nurse practitioner Regina Puratich.

According to Dr. Jessica Schlicher, any community member can choose a series of four one-one-one classes to set and meet lifestyle goals. The coaching is done during regular clinic hours.

"This could be around illness prevention, nutrition, exercise, weight-loss or other goals that the patient may have," Schlicher said. "There is no income requirement or guidelines and is open to all citizens."

and pretty self-sufficient and I really admire that," she said.

Like Schlicher and Barta, all the clinic's doctors and nurses are volunteers.

"We have an amazing group of doctors here and they all donate their time," Barta said. "We have some of the best doctors in Gig Harbor. Some of them are retired but they've been in the area for 20 or 30 years. And a lot of them are still practicing. And they're all here because they want to be here. Nobody's paying them."

Schlicher's husband, Dr. Nathan Schlicher, also volunteers at the clinic. "He's an ER doc and I'm in family practice so we sometimes have different perspectives on things, but we're a good team," Jessica Schlicher said.

This past summer the clinic had an outreach program of free sports physicals for kids who want to play sports.

"Sports physicals are really easy for us to do," Schlicher said. "We look for inherited heart problems that might not have been detected, that might put

young people at risk for sudden death."

That was the reason that sports physicals were required in the first place, she said.

Another focus of the sports physicals outreach was concussions.

Key Free Clinic physicians discuss what a concussion is and why it's so dangerous.

"If they hit their head really hard, even if they don't pass out, they might have had a concussion," Schlicher explained.

"They really need to be out of sports for seven days and be completely symptom-free before they go back. If they go right back into play after they've gotten a hard hit to their head, they can get what's called 'second hit syndrome' which can cause death or even irreversible brain damage in young people," she said in-between patients.

Nicole Brook, a new arrival to the Peninsula, took advantage of the clinic's free physicals for her son. "I think it's a great service," she said. "We just moved here. I'm a student and we haven't estab-

lished a doctor yet and we're waiting on health insurance and this was just right for us so our son can play sports."

The clinic staff also emphasizes basic safety issues to their young patients — things like the importance of wearing a seatbelt, or a helmet when they're riding a bicycle or skateboard.

No appointment is necessary to be treated at the clinic. It's all done on a first-come-first-seen basis, Barta said.

To Edwin Lopez, a two-time clinic user, the free clinic is a wonderful thing.

"There's no need for anyone to be running around for assistance when they can come here and get all the help they need," Lopez said. "Don't be bashful, just come in and they'll help you. They're friendly and they're very, very experienced," he said.

"We have a lot of homeless people out here who walk, and it's a wonderful thing that they can come in here and get their medicine or whatever they need twice a month," Schlicher said.

All are welcome, Schlicher emphasized. "I like to remind people that when I was in medical school I didn't have coverage and I went to clinics just like this."

During November and December, the Key Free Clinic is open the second and third Thursdays (usually second and fourth Thursdays) of each month from 5:30-8 p.m. It's located in the Key Professional Building next door to the Key Center Library and fire station.

For information, call (253) 313-5539 or (253) 509-8881.

To subscribe, please write,
call or fax:

Key Peninsula News
17010 S. Vaughn Road
P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394
Phone: (253) 884-4699
Fax: (253) 884-4053
Email: news@keypennews.com

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Photo of Mount Rainier in the masthead was taken from the dock in Longbranch by Thomas Morgan, a KP News reader and Key Peninsula resident.

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November 2014

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December 3rd 6:30pm-8:30pm

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(From **Scouting**, Page 1)

Point Church.

Haworth explained that the ScoutReach organization looked at the local schools with the highest numbers of reduced lunch recipients and that Evergreen was “at the top of the list. So this is to help families that have boys who want to do Scouting, but don’t have the financial means to do it,” he said.

Currently, ScoutReach is just for kids at Evergreen. “It’s just a pilot program, but if this takes off we hope to do this all through the area,” Haworth said.

According to Michelle Smith, Texas director for the Pacific Harbors Council of BSA, the basic concept for ScoutReach is to provide scouting programs in an after-school setting. It’s open to all boys in first through fifth grades regardless of their background or ability to pay.

Smith has been involved with the program since January of this year.

During the summer, she made contact with the Peninsula Community Foundation that runs the Backpacks4Kids program at the Key Peninsula Civic Center.

“They told me about the work they do out here on the Peninsula and the extreme poverty of many families in the area. There are a lot of homeless kids out here and I decided we’d run the ScoutReach program during their hot lunch program through the summer. We just really wanted to be a part of helping these kids,” Smith said.

The ScoutReach program moved to Evergreen Elementary when school started. The program is funded through grants and individual donations. “It’s a very expensive program to run,” Smith said. “It costs a lot of money to do camping and all the other Scout programs.

“But I feel very strongly that these kids



Scout leader Justin Kinker talks to a group of new Cub Scouts. Kinker is part of the ScoutReach program that just started up at Evergreen Elementary School.

Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

Want to go?

Evergreen Elementary’s ScoutReach program will host a wine and chocolate fundraiser Nov. 8 at the Gig Harbor History Museum. The museum is located at 4121 Harborview Drive. For information visit pacificharbors.org and look for “Events.”

deserve every opportunity that Scouting has to offer and we should not let the cost get in the way.”

By the second ScoutReach meeting in early October, 14 boys had already joined the program and were earning points to-

ward their own Cub Scout uniforms and badges.

Joaquin Antoine, age 7, and Dylan Yeisley, 9, enjoyed a game of Frisbee during one after-school ScoutReach meeting.

“It’s fun and it’s really easy to get points. You just have to do good things and when you get 50 points you get your shirt, and for a bunch of points you can get the whole uniform,” Yeisley said. “And your friends can join too and then you can really have fun.”

Smith said she knows there are “people out there who believe that the kids out here deserve to have these Scouting experiences.”

So she has scheduled a “Wine and Chocolate” event Nov. 8 at the Gig Harbor History Museum.

Jan Rogers is in charge of the event. “We’re calling it ScoutReach with Heart Wine and Chocolate Evening,” she said. “It’s to raise funds for this ScoutReach program at Evergreen.”

In addition to “good chocolate and good wine,” there will also be a silent auction and a short program featuring a couple of speakers, she said.

“This is such an important program. It’s for boys whose parents simply can’t afford to be in Scouts. Their parents don’t have enough money or their parents aren’t involved with them. Sometimes these kids don’t even have enough to eat. They really deserve all the good things that Scouting can provide,” Rogers said.

For information visit pacificharbors.org and look for “Events.”

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Key Peninsula Community Council represents KP citizens

By Sara Thompson, KP News

The Key Peninsula Community Council's role is to provide a voice for the Key Peninsula's nearly 19,000 citizens.

The 14 council members are elected from four census tracts, with four members from areas 1 and 2, and three members each from areas 3 and 4 (based on population density). The areas are north to south, with area 1 the most northerly.

In September, eight members were elected to two-year terms:

- Area 1: Ruth Bramhall and Phyllis Henry (both incumbents)
- Area 2: Danna Burnett and Irene Torres (both incumbents)
- Area 3: Tim Kezele and Don Swensen (both new to the council)
- Area 4: Marcia Harris (incumbent) and Carol Opalinski (new)

They join six members whose terms end next year: Tim Boardman and Cindy Worden from area 1, Audra Garcia and Danna Webster from area 2, Chuck West from area 3 and Ron Tisino from area 4.

According to early organizers Jeff Harris and Dennis Taylor, the KPC was established in 2004, following a two-year planning process, in response to frustration with lack of attention from Pierce County and a desire to encourage civic involvement. The primary roles of the council are to:

- Facilitate interactions between agencies, residents, businesses and nonprofit groups in an effort to develop solutions to resident concerns;
- Act as a resource for Key Peninsula residents, businesses and nonprofit organizations;
- Serve as a liaison to county, state and federal government;
- Assist in fundraising and volunteer recruitment efforts on behalf of other community agencies and groups.

"To accomplish its work, the KPC has four standing committees and in addition establishes action committees at its annual retreat each year," said KPC President Danna Webster. "The standing committees are KP School

Bus Connects, KPC Farm Council, KPC Youth Council and the executive board. The Safe SR-302 Action Committee worked with WSDOT for two years, resulting in the recent SR-302 safety improvements."

KPC helps organize civic events such as candidates forums and youth council meetings with legislators in Olympia, as well as scheduling informational presentations at its monthly board meetings. Presenters have included the Pierce County executive, the county sheriff, state legislators and representatives from Peninsula School District board, county council and department of transportation.

Board members are elected each September to two-year terms, with half of the board up for election each year. There are no term limits. All Key Peninsula residents age 18 and older are eligible to vote, with ballots available in the KP News or at the voting booth in the Key Center Food Market. The KPC is an entirely volunteer organization, but there are some operating expenses, and the annual budget of about \$2,500 is funded by donations and grants.

The Angel Guild has been a significant donor. Standing committees have separate budgets.

"In this first decade, the KPC has worked to be recognized off the Key and worked to earn the respect of our community on the Key. Our population is without a township or any recognized governmental authenticity. As long as residents request our assistance, attend our forums and presentations, and provide representatives to serve on the KPC Board of Directors, we know we are meeting our obligation to maintain and improve the quality of life on the Key Peninsula," Webster said.

Open meetings of the board are at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the Key Center Fire Station.

On Nov. 12 the KPC will host a meeting focused on McNeil Island's current status and planning for the future.

For information about the council, visit kpcouncil.org.



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Peninsula Views

Grow your own food indoors year round

Fresh veggies from the garden are one of the best things about summer. Summer may be over, but we can still grow fresh food to enjoy throughout the winter. Growing indoors allows you to grow your own food year round. You can grow any plant indoors as long as you have the proper environment.

Entire books are written on the subject of indoor gardening; however, there are a few basics you should be aware of before getting started. You need to consider your growing space, lighting, temperature, humidity, ventilation and whether to grow in soil or a hydroponics system.

Your growing space can be as simple as your kitchen counter, or as elaborate as a full bedroom. You could also use a closet, greenhouse or even an indoor grow tent. Grow tents are a nice option because they are a fully contained environment that you can put anywhere in your home. They come in a variety of sizes, ranging from 2 by 4 to 10 by 10 feet.

The lighting you choose will depend on the plants you grow. Flowering plants, such as tomatoes, will need more intense light. For them, you will need metal halide or high-pressure sodium bulbs. Nonflowering plants, such as lettuce, will need less light. You can grow your greens with something as simple as T5 fluorescent grow bulbs. LEDs are an energy-efficient option for any type of plant, although they are the most expensive type of lighting.

The temperature and humidity in your environment will also depend on the types of plants you grow. You need to research each plant to determine what it needs. Use air conditioners,

Monica Rakowski
Living Close to Nature



heaters and dehumidifiers to control these levels. Your ventilation will also play a large role in controlling your temperature and humidity.

Outdoors, Mother Nature blows a gentle breeze that provides adequate air flow and just enough stress on the plants for their stalks to grow strong. You need to replicate this by regularly bringing in fresh air with an inline fan, and dumping the stale air with an exhaust fan. You will need to circulate your fresh air with oscillating fans.

Once your environment is set up, you need to decide whether to grow in soil or a hydroponics system. Both work well indoors. There are many ways to set up both soil and hydro, so you'll need to do your homework to decide which method will work best for you.

Hydroponics has many benefits. It is less labor intensive and saves water. You can leave your system alone for longer periods of time, since you'll only need to change out your reservoir every one to two weeks. You will have fewer issues with pests and your plants will grow faster.

You don't need to stop gardening now that summer is over. You can continue to enjoy delicious home-grown food year round by starting an indoor garden. Start small and simple. A tent full of lettuce and tomatoes will be enough to satisfy your green thumb during the darkest days of winter.

Monica Rakowski owns KP Indoor Garden Store in Key Center. You can contact her at naturegirl1je@gmail.com.

Special tips for holiday treats

It's that time again. Soon some of us will be called upon to regale relatives with culinary masterpieces.

It's not well known outside of "Whitfordville," but I do most of the cooking around here and like most

cooks, I've stolen, modified and improved recipes from sources too numerous to mention — until now.

Here's a few tips I've borrowed that may help make your meals special.

I use a 1968 edition of the "Settlement Cookbook" for some of my stuff.

Did you know that broth is derived by boiling the feet, scalded, skinned and the nails removed. If you can stomach stewed type, "Harry Potter's Unofficial Cookbook," recommends the honeycomb variety taken from the second stomach of beef, goat or sheep.

If that's not spellbinding enough for you Dr. Seuss' "Green Eggs and Ham Cookbook" reveals the secret of the Whos' roast beast, which turns out to be a chicken with sliced mushrooms shoved underneath the skin.

Christmas feasting is not the same without Glennie Nell's roast Christmas possum recipe, which can be found in the "Treasury of White Trash Cooking" 2002 edition.

Christmas possum is different from all other possum. It's got to be caught, not killed, two weeks to a month before the cooking, because they got to be penned up so you can clean them out. Feeding them nothing but corbread and milk. That will fix them up

and get rid of all them no good flavors. This makes possum as good as Pa's corn-fed pig.

For local flavor, I met with our own "Mayor of Lyle," Brett Skahan, who brought me up to date on the town's goings on and offered up one of his own recipes as well.

Skahan has recently acquired two roosters and if you haven't been properly introduced to them, you don't know Diddly or Squat. With the bright lights at night due to the present road construction, Diddly and Squat have no idea what time it is and crow all the time.

Skahan came up with a special recipe that we'll call appeasement turkey and here's how it came to be.

A few years ago Skahan got a call from his then in-laws on the day before Thanksgiving. According to him, they invited themselves over for the feast. This put Skahan into a bit of a dilemma as he was looking at his thawing turkey when they called and he knew his mother-in-law preferred ham. On the day of the feast Skahan produced a wonderfully prepared turkey, which he set on the table, much to the disparagement of his guests. He then deftly reached his hand into the bird's derriere and pulled out a perfectly cooked ham.

(See Whitford, Page 7)

Steve Whitford
Words of Whit



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Ballot candidates face record crowd at KP Civic Center

The meeting room at the Key Peninsula Civic Center was jam-packed on Oct. 7 with 97 citizens questioning 10 candidates facing election in November.

Every year, the candidates comment that some of the forums across the county only draw a handful of people in the audience. The civic center always draws the record crowds, insightful questions and the best formatted program.

Candidates attending were:

Derek Kilmer and Marty McClendon for U.S. representative.
Jan Angel and Judy Arbogast for state senate.

Jesse Young and Nathan Schlicher for state representative.

Larry Seaquist and Michelle Caldier for state representative.

Stan Flemming and Derek Young for county council.

Surprisingly, or non surprisingly, there was little difference in what the candidates supported. All of the candidates supported more

Rick Sorrels
The Pragmatic Sophist



money for education, as mandated by the state Supreme Court McCleary decision, but there was no real indication from where the billions of dollars could be generated.

The candidates all agreed that the next legislative session will concentrate on the state's biennial budget.

Every candidate opposed a state income tax. An issue that will surely be hotly debated this coming budget year in the state Legislature.

All of the candidates support the Second Amendment (right to bear arms), with Seaquist perhaps the most adamant supporter, declaring himself somewhat of an expert, having commanded a battleship during his Navy career, with possibly the biggest guns in the world. Schlicher, an emergency room doctor, and Arbogast, a school teacher, both

qualified their response with a need for some more controls to protect victims of violence and school-age children. The candidates oppose Initiative I-594, with almost no comment on Initiative I-591.

The atmosphere was one of civility, with the only heat rising when Flemming accused Derek Young of some responsibility for the elimination of bus service on the KP while Young was on the Pierce Transit Board. Young responded that he was not on the board yet, and in fact, that was actually the reason that compelled him to take a seat on the transit board. Young did not like the county council's actions that had helped eliminate bus service on the KP.

For the five elected offices represented, there are five incumbents and five challengers on the ballot.

Historically, an incumbent has a great advantage. They are rarely removed from office.

All of these candidates may well make good office holders, but the incumbents have developed a record of accomplishments in the very same office for which they are campaigning, while their challengers do not have a similar record. Derek Young has a long re-

cord as a councilmember for the city of Gig Harbor, and Schlicher has a short record during his prior appointment to the state Senate seat vacated by Derek Kilmer.

The primary election results showed the incumbents with a fair lead, except for Flemming and Derek Young, in a virtual tie. Young actually had a 50-vote lead.

The election is not over yet; at least one other position may see an upset. We may see a rewrite of the historical statistics. A lot of money was raised. Expect an assault in advertising in the closing days.

Be sure to vote.

(From Whitford, Page 6)

Finally a tip from yours truly. If your relatives insist on the traditional green bean casserole, here's a way to make it special. Crispify a few strips of bacon, crumble them up and add to the casserole. The real secret here is to add a tablespoon or so of the bacon drippings. Remember when it's in the pan, it's sauce. When you throw it away it becomes grease.

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Hearings, appeals follow permit request for geoduck farm

By Sara Thompson, KP News

The issue of geoduck aquaculture is back front and center on the Key Peninsula.

Geoduck farming elicits strong feelings. Neighbors are concerned about aesthetics, debris and noise. Environmentalists raise concerns about the effects on water, biodiversity and beach structure. Those in the industry note that shellfish farming has been a highly renewable crop that benefits the economy.

Taylor Shellfish has applied for a permit to establish a geoduck farm on the west shoreline of the Key Peninsula and east shoreline of Case Inlet, approximately ¾ mile south of Dutcher's Cove, leasing 11 acres of tideland from the Haley family.

On Aug. 19 Pierce County convened a meeting, coordinating with the Key Peninsula Land Use Advisory Commission (KPAC) to review the Taylor permit. Approximately 15 community members, 26th Legislative District Rep. Larry Seaquist, members of the KPAC and a representative from Taylor attended.

Ty Booth, senior planner for Pierce County, provided extensive materials that summarized the proposal, Washington state environmental codes and the Pierce County Master Shoreline Program as they pertained to the proposal and recommendations by the county staff.

Diane Cooper, representing Taylor Shellfish, noted that her company has won recognition for work in sustainable aquaculture and that it has been in business for 15 years, employing as many as 600 workers.

New technology allows use of mesh tubes rather than the solid plastic tubes used to protect young geoducks from predators for the first 12 to 24 months, she said. These tubes are less likely to be washed free by currents and storms, do not require netting to be banded on top of the tubes and are less visible from the shore. They are removed once the clams dig deep enough to be safe from predators. Cooper described the harvesting by wands as necessarily gentle to assure that the clams are not harmed prior to sale.

The public will not be prohibited from

the beach, according to Cooper. The farm would be accessed from the water.

During public testimony, several citizens expressed concern about the aesthetics of aquaculture and the noise involved in harvesting. Residents from Burley Lagoon, with a longstanding oyster and manila farm, described a loss of diversity on their beach and fewer sea birds.

One resident noted that prior to planting clams, sand dollars were not gently moved to a nearby location but rather raked in a pile to the top of the beach, where they would not survive. Another citizen asked what the tax and financial benefit to the county might be for this type of enterprise, questioning whether it is worth the environmental risk.

Seaquist noted that he has sponsored research related to Puget Sound's capacity for aquaculture and its adaptation in light of the rapidly changing industry. A conference is scheduled in Olympia to assess how to direct the study.

After clarifying questions, the KPAC voted five to two to approve the permit as recommended by the county. One mem-

ber abstained.

"I remain concerned about the environmental impact of planting of 45,000 clams per acre — far more than occur in nature — and the loss of diversity on this currently pristine beach," said Don Swensen, who voted against the approval.

Marcia Harris, who voted yes, said, "I am assured, after reviewing the prepared materials and hearing the testimony, that the plan submitted by Taylor complied with all the parameters outlined in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, the KP Comprehensive Plan, the staff evaluation of the Shoreline Management Plan and the expressed environmental concerns."

In a two-day hearing in September, the Pierce County hearing examiner, who makes the final decision, reviewed both the development permit and the environmental appeals. Taylor Shellfish and the Coalition to Save Puget Sound presented testimony. At press time, a final decision was expected at the end of October.

The final county decision will be sent to the Washington State Department of Ecology for review. An additional appeal can be made regarding the county decision to the state Shorelines Hearings Board (the last two geoduck permits approved by Pierce County were appealed — one was approved and the other was denied, largely because of the presence of eelgrass on the proposed site).

Editor's note: The KP News plans a series of articles about geoduck farming in Puget Sound, covering the history, environmental and economic issues.



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Correction

In last month's LUAC story, it was reported that the LUAC reviewed all permits for building and shoreline use on the Key Peninsula. This is incorrect. The KPAC only reviews and makes recommendations on variance and conditional use permits, and shoreline permits that are then forwarded to the KPAC from Pierce County Planning and Land Services.

The Key Peninsula News strives to provide correct information. Send any corrections or clarifications to editor@keypennews.com.

Herron Island ferry back in operation with regular service

KP News staff report

Every other year, the Herron Island ferry — the Charlie Wells — has an out-of-water inspection, which means that island residents need to make other arrangements for getting to and from the mainland.

The Coast Guard-mandated inspection takes place in even-numbered years. This year the boat was out of service Sept. 15-29, according to Herron Island manager Laudia Ellsworth.

The boat went into a Tacoma shipyard, where workers and ferry crew did minor maintenance and painted the superstructure after it was scraped. At the same time, the Coast Guard inspected the engine and mechanical parts.

While the ferry was out of service, some island residents parked their cars on the mainland and traveled to and fro on small boats.

Others took vacations, “and some of them just stock up on groceries and just stay on the island for the duration,” Ellsworth said.



Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

The Herron Island ferry approaches the mainland dock. It recently came back into service after inspection and new paint.

Last year, the ferry was out of service for three weeks while the engine was replaced. “We thought that would

just take two weeks, but it took three weeks,” she said. “But the new engine is very popular because it’s significant-

ly quieter than the old one and cleaner and more fuel efficient.”

The 65-foot-long ferry carries about 60,000 passengers a year.

“We also average about 33,000 vehicles a year and about 3,600 round trips,” Ellsworth added. “We keep track of the numbers because we have to report them to the Corps of Engineers every year.”

Because the vessel is owned by the residents, the only way you can get to Herron Island is on the ferry — “and the only way you can get on the ferry is if you’re a member of the homeowners association or a guest, or a contractor or law enforcement or fire department people,” she said.

About 120 families live full time on the island, but on summer holidays that number can swell to 1,600, she said.

“It’s a beautiful island, with gravel roads and lots of privacy,” Ellsworth said. “We have our own untreated water supply. We own our water system and also the ferry. People love it especially because it’s so private.”

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Boil-water advisory issued for Lake of the Woods community

KP News staff report

Last month, Lake of the Woods community members were asked to boil their drinking water because potentially harmful E. coli bacteria were detected in their system's water.

The bacteria were detected Friday, Oct. 17 in a water sample collected for routine monthly water-quality monitoring. The residential community's water system serves 324 homes with a population of around 870 people.

The State Department of Health worked closely with the community water system operator to try to find the source of contamination and eliminate it.

According to resident Buddy Wise, on Oct. 18, the Lake of the Woods water

manager posted advisory notices on home doors throughout the private community. Wise said they were advised to boil their water and told that chlorine was added to the water system to kill the bacteria.

"You can tell they added chlorine to the system because you can really smell it while you're in the shower," Wise said.

On Oct. 22, after three "clean tests in a row," information was passed on to residents advising that the water was safe to drink.

"We put up reader boards at all entrances and passed out handouts," said Larry Smalley, Lake of the Woods past president.

At press time, there has not been an E. coli source found.

For information, visit doh.wa.gov.

NEWS BRIEFS

Community

PenLight contractors survey KP for equipment

Are you seeing bright yellow in your neighborhood?

The Davey Group is surveying parts of the Key Peninsula through the end of November to locate Peninsula Light Co. equipment, which may include transformers, poles, wires, fuses and anything in between.

According to Brian McLean, PenLight communications coordinator, the workers are wearing bright-yellow jackets and driving vehicles that have the PenLight logo on them.

They're also carrying hand-held GPS devices and logging information into the company mapping system.

"If you're curious who they are, they can provide picture ID and a laminated letter that explains why they're in your neighborhood," McLean said in a recent Facebook post.

He said the work being done is to get a more accurate look at PenLight's distribution system. "In turn, the data will help the company better pinpoint outage loca-

tions when they occur, and therefore, get power restored to you in a more timely fashion," McLean said.

Key Pen Parks staff wants to hear from you

Key Pen Parks has set its second of three public meetings on the development of a master plan for Gateway Park in December.

According to Scott Gallacher, the executive director, the purpose of the master plan is to gather the community's input for improvements at Gateway Park.

He said that he's looking for input from everyone, kids included.

"We want to know what you want at your park. Do you want water features for the children, playgrounds or open space?" Gallacher said. "Come on out to these meetings and let your voice be heard."

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Dec. 3 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Minter Creek Elementary School, located at 12617 118th Avenue NW.

For information, contact 884-9240 or scottg@keypenparks.com.

NEWS BRIEFS

Community

KP Civic Center fair and chili competition is back

The Key Peninsula Civic Center will jumpstart the holiday shopping season with the seventh annual Winter Warm-Up Artisan Fair and Chili Competition on Saturday, Nov. 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event will feature handmade and one-of-a-kind local crafts and creations for sale, local entertainment and a chili cook-off. The deadline to apply for the fair is Nov.; however, booths are likely to sell out in advance of the deadline.

There is no charge to attend the event and organizers say food served from the kitchen will be reasonably priced.

The seasonal menu includes chili, nachos, hot dogs, chili dogs and cornbread, and hot and cold beverages.

For information, call 884-3456.

Movies coming to help support PSD students

Peninsula Hands On Art is holding its sixth annual Family Movie Day at Galaxy Theatres Uptown, in Gig Harbor, Tuesday, Nov. 11.

The movies featured will be Walt Disney's "Frozen" and "Monsters University."

All seating will be on a first come, first-served basis. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. movies start at 10 a.m.

Donations will be accepted for Peninsula Hands On Art, a local organization that serves some 2,700 Peninsula School District students with art projects throughout the year.

For information, visit peninsulahandsonart.org.

Evergreen Elementary looks for fundraiser help Nov. 5

On Nov. 5, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. a group of Evergreen Elementary School fifth graders are partnering with McDonalds to host a McTakeover at the 5050 Borgen Boulevard location.

The fundraiser event will help fund a trip to Camp Seymour's Environmental Education Camp in February.

According to organizer Ramona Dickson, the camp goals and outcomes have helped Evergreen students for the past 30 years.

Dickson said the lessons foster an awareness and appreciation of the natural world and encourage cooperation, communication and self-confidence among the students.

"The program is aligned with fifth-grade science learning standards and has helped our kids exceed those standards," Dickson said.

The fifth-graders are hopeful the public will attend their restaurant takeover.

For information email ramona.dickson@gmail.com.

Health department launches Ebola information web page

In late October, the Tacoma-Pierce County launched a web page: tpchd.org/ebola to share information about preparedness efforts regarding Ebola.

The web page provides resources for the public and healthcare providers and includes links to the latest information from Centers for Disease Control and Washington State Department of Health.

According to Edie Jeffers, TPCHD communications manager, the health department will continue to update the site with more resources and information. She said community members can also gain information at facebook.com/TacomaPierceCoHD or at twitter.com/TPCHD.

Merci Beaucoup Key Peninsula!

Bruce Macdonald, Key Peninsula Civic Center Association, Treasurer
Macdonald has been a board member at the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association since the early 1990's and was president from 2009-2012.

OK, OK... we know you've heard just about enough of the Flavors of Fall. But, it is what we do at the Civic Center and it is what we need to do to keep our doors open and the services flowing to the Community. Bad news... you're going hear about it one more time and good news... you won't have to hear about it for another year and a half. Even better news... it was a wonderfully planned and executed event - if we do say so ourselves. So, the padlocks stay in the deepest drawers and, of course, we remain open for business.

Organizing and planning starts way back in the spring, and the recruiting of volunteers, sponsors and donors follows throughout spring, summer and fall. Did it occur to the planners that someone would volunteer to construct a "near" life size Moulin Rouge (driving the constructor to lob of his ear in Van Goghian sympathy) or that local artists would willingly paint Louvre quality canvas panels of Parisian street scenes to transform a gymnasium into the Champs Élysées? Could they have imagined someone(s) volunteering to dress as a mime, or a Court Jester and selling 3 times the expected number of

CIVIC CENTER CORNER

raffle tickets? Did they anticipate a full house? Could they have known that 25 guests would donate \$13,000... just because?

Of course, they planned on Sponsors and Donors... but, probably not well over 20 of them. From Key Peninsula organizations and businesses to families and friends... over 150 contributors stepped up to help the Civic Center and our community. They gave time and resource, they baked desserts, donated goods and services, offered excursions on boats or airplane, they washed dishes or hung lights, they made phone calls and did administrative work, prepped and served food, mixed drinks or brewed coffee and, ultimately, when all was said and done, returned our little bit of Paris back into a gymnasium.

Thanks to all of those listed below and there are probably even more than we can list. And, additionally, thanks to all those who supported our efforts by attending the event. Without you, your good will, festive spirit, and your generous participation... the Civic Center would probably not survive.

- Volunteers:**
 Debi Ady & daughter
 James Allyn
 Keith Axelson
 Kathy Bauer
 Phil Bauer
 Jim Borgen
 Scott Dervaes
 Matt Drolette
 Brandy Ellzy
 Lesley England
 Xoe Frederick
 Tracy Geiss
 Joanna Gormly
 Dana Haberman
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 Jeff Harris
 Marcia Harris
 Holly Hendrick
 Emily Holden
 Richard Houle
 Sharon Kaffer
 Steve Kaffer
 Sherri LaGood
 Delores Leigh
 Claudia Loy
 Bruce Macdonald
 Margo Macdonald
 Laura McClintock
- Patricia Medveckus
 June Mercer
 Marcia Michaelson
 Judy Mills
 Laura Mosley
 Mitchell Nelson
 Ben & Susan Paganelli
 Beverly Pedersen
 Marco Pinchot
 Beth Porter
 Shelly Rajkovich
 Ezra Ralston
 Ted Ralston
 Janis Riebow
 Mark Roberts
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 Todd Rosenbach
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 Amy Shaver
 Pam & Lee Smith
 Stacy Stoican
 Vicki Swenning
 Don Swensen
 Molly Swensen
 Christina Tritt
 Jeff Tritt
 Sam Tritt
 Kat Wingers
 and a cadre of KP Youth!

- Sponsors and Pre-event Cash Donators:**
 Taylor Shellfish Farms, Peninsula Light Company, KP Bus Connects, Key Peninsula Business Association, Multiwire, Inc., Keiko Wada, DMD

- Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Goin' Postal, Mallory Paint, Rotary Club of Gig Harbor, Washington Floral Wholesale

- Angel Guild, Ruth Bramhall, Costless Pharmacy, Loyd & Sharon Miller, Don & Judy Mills, Bill & Ruth Roes, Two Waters Arts Alliance

- With special thanks to the following:**
 Taylor Shellfish Farms - for providing the oyster bar

- Claudia Loy - who pulled it off

- Jeff Tritt - the Moulin Rouge was incredible

- Beverly Pedersen - whose works of art set the stage

- Amy Shaver and Carlisle Schulz - for the beautiful centerpieces, and to Carlisle for being Bev's right hand gal

- Richard Houle - wonderful job! The food stations really worked out well. Thanks so much!

- Jim Borgen - our auctioneer - Jim made the evening so much fun. Great job!

The Voice of the Key Peninsula




www.kpciviccenter.org
kpciviccenter@centurytel.net
253-884-3456

The Key Peninsula Civic Center is a 501(c)(3), private non-profit. We rely on rentals, fundraisers, and donations to keep our doors open, and our rentals affordable for the community. Thank you for your support!

Local couple offers a booth of good times, memories

By Irene Torres, KP News

At their home in Joemma Beach Estates, Mindy and David McKeever have a 21st century adaptation of a memory-maker, Viral Booth CRV.

On Sept. 11, the couple purchased the photo booth business where Mindy had worked for three years. They want to make people aware that they can deliver the booth to weddings, anniversary and birthday parties, bar mitzvahs and corporate events.

The booth is 10 by 10 feet and expandable to 10 by 20 for an outdoor venue. It is a soft booth, a metal frame with curtains, or can be used with a backdrop (not enclosed).

Mindy McKeever said the system features a touch screen with a walk-through menu and takes a series of three photographs in seven-second intervals to allow for a change of fun, silly props.

Mindy said a large client recently held a corporate team building event where they got 60 people in one photograph.

According to McKeever, the photos can be automatically uploaded to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SMS and email for sharing.

"The social media aspect is really neat for the younger generation," she said.

The McKeever's recommend delivery and setup one to two hours ahead of events, to make sure the equipment is operational. They need only a couple of days of lead time if the booth hasn't already been booked.

For wedding keepsakes, guests are given a souvenir photo strip with three pictures. Customized logos are available, and there is an option to record a video message, saved to a thumb drive.

"This service enhances any event and makes it memorable," McKeever said.

On Dec. 9, Viral Booth CRV will be at the Key Center fire station for breakfast with Santa.

The McKeever's are donating this service as a fundraiser for the fire department.

On Feb. 21 they will have a display at the Kitsap Wedding Expo. They are in line to be at Key Fest in 2015.

Both of the owners have full-time jobs.

"We work hard and play harder," Mindy McKeever said. "I'm really excited about the business. I am a people person and this is the perfect thing to do. It is a real business."



Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Mindy McKeever shows off some of the prop possibilities she has available with her photo booth company.

We are fully licensed, carry business insurance and we pay taxes. It is not a franchise. We are 100 percent owners. We pay a licensing fee and have technical support for the software," she said.

All photos from any event are stored on

the website viralbooth.com.

Package charges range from \$175 during specials to \$1,400 for six to eight hours. There is no delivery fee. For information, contact viralboothcrv@gmail.com or call (360) 447-8886.

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George Robison at 253-853-2721



Local therapist using new tools, science to help many

By Scott Turner, KP News

Chad Beaver is here to help. Beaver is a licensed marriage and family therapist and owner of Key Peninsula Counseling Center.

He's lived on the peninsula for three years and opened his practice two years ago.

"I really enjoy what I do," Beaver said. "In the past, I've always worked with high-risk people, but with high risk comes high reward. You see people's lives changing for the better and it feels good."

In his local practice, Beaver works primarily with individuals and families, people with dementia and also with children [with] ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

He's a child mental health specialist and is a member of the American Association of Marriage and Health Therapists.

One of his main tools is "a very simple test that compares verbal and nonverbal intelligence, sequencing and other things for ages 10-75," he said.

The test results "give me an objective tool to learn how to help them," he said.

"The problem I see a lot of, especially in kids with ADHD, is that often the diagnosis is made subjectively, but when it comes to the actual disorder there are more solid ways — specific tests — for making a diagnosis," he said. "The test I use also tests for gifted."

Often, kids are diagnosed with ADHD and really they're just bored, he said. "They're actually ahead of the curve, not behind the curve. So this test gives you an idea of where the curve is."

"It's been shown that there's a major misdiagnosis in the rate of ADHD in kids.



Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

Key Peninsula Counseling Center owner Chad Beaver is a local clinician bent on using new therapeutic tools, proven methods to help his patients.

A lot of times it's actually anxiety, stress, environmental issues or family conflict.

"I've found more times than I can even think of counting, it's not a problem with the child. My approach is often 'let's fix the environment, instead of going down the medication route,'" Beaver said.

As far as he knows, only one other therapist in Washington state is using this test because it's so new. He just started using the test recently, but he knows it works.

Among other things, Beaver is a strong advocate of treating people — especially children — without medication.

"Long-term medications can do a lot of damage to a developing brain. We really shouldn't give kids amphetamines because they have long-term effects," he

said. "When you start messing with people's brain chemicals, you can have a lot of long-term and short-term effects."

According to Beaver, there are different options besides drugs and medications.

"There are simpler ways of handling things, but sometimes they're not the easiest ways. I work with families and individuals to change entire systems, not just by taking a bunch of medications," he said.

Beaver has also done extensive research on how diet and nutrition affect memory loss and recently worked with a local group to develop a cookbook for people with Alzheimer's.

"There's been a lot of research on nutrients that can help clear it up and help increase memory, and actually a therapy regime that can help reverse memory loss and Alzheimer's that focuses on exercise, social activities and diet," he said.

Beaver is currently working to develop a "nutrition calculator" app to reverse memory loss.

"We're working with some tools that nobody else has," he said.

For information, call Beaver at (253) 884-3644 or visit keypeninsulacounseling.com.

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Key to Life
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Meeting at the Red Barn - Sundays 10:30AM

COMMUNITY PAGES

Submit calendar items to news@keypennews.com • Deadline is the 15th of the month

NOW through DEC. 23

Swimming

Adult water aerobics/lap swim is available Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., and Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10 to 11 a.m. Cost is \$4.25 per session prepaid monthly at first monthly session. Family Swim is the first and third Wednesdays 5 to 6 p.m.; cost is \$4.25 per swimmer over age 2 or \$15 per family to be prepaid monthly at the first session. All swimming is in the heated pool at the Easter Seals Camp Stand by Me. 884-2722.

NOV. 3, 10, 17, 24

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile is at Albertsons 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

NOV. 4

Election Day

Be sure to turn in your ballot at the Key Center fire station or mail before midnight today.

NOV. 4 and 18

Senior shopping

Seniors have an opportunity to go grocery shopping and attend any scheduled Gig Harbor doctor's appointments with transportation provided; a "Dutch" lunch is included. 884-9265.

NOV. 4, 11, 18, 25

Story times

Story time for babies ages 0-24 months is at 10 a.m., and for toddlers ages 2-3 years is at 11 a.m., at the Key Center Library. All children must be accompanied by an adult. 548-3309.

NOV. 6

Cat-lover meeting

Cat Tales 4-H Club, for children ages 5 to

18, meets 6:30 to 8 p.m., in the VFW of the KP Civic Center. Learn all about cats with some cat-loving friends. There is an informational open house for interested children at this meeting. Dianna, 884-4182 or tales4h@gmail.com.

Fuchsia meeting

The Lakebay Fuchsia Society will meet, for the last time this year, at 7 p.m., at the Key Center Library. Ginnie, 884-9744.

NOV. 7, 14, 21

Family story time

Family story time including stories, art activities, rhymes, singing and finger plays followed by a learning-filled play time for caregivers and children is at 11 a.m., at the Key Center Library.

NOV. 7, 14, 21, 28

Skate night

Skate Night is hosted at the KP Civic Center 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. No skate night on Halloween. 884-2456.

NOV. 8

Crafts and chili

The seventh annual Winter Warm Up Crafts Fair & Chili Competition jump-starts the holiday shopping season from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Key Peninsula Civic Center. Support local artisans, crafters and photographers and give gifts this season that strengthen the community. kpciviccenter.org or 884-3456.

Open house

The Key Peninsula Historical society hosts an open house in conjunction with the KPCC Winter Warmup 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Holiday décor and a children's activity in the museum will emphasize Christmas on the Homesteads. The Bluegrass Minstrels entertain about 12:30. Many books and other gift items are available for sale. 888-3246.

College financials

High school juniors and seniors can learn about federal financial aid programs, how to find scholarships and important deadlines at 11 a.m., at the Key Center Library. No registration required.

KPHS meeting

The Key Peninsula Historical Society quarterly meeting for members and guests will be potluck appetizers 3:30 to 5 p.m., in the VFW Room at the KP Civic Center. Updates, goals and plans for next year will be shared. Annual membership fees of \$10 per person or \$25 per family are due before end of the year and are payable at this meeting. Prospective members are welcome to attend. 888-3246.

NOV. 9

Sunday bluegrass jam

Bluegrass Gospel Jam session is hosted at Longbranch Church, 16518 46th Street KPS, 6 to 8:30 p.m., for all acoustic instruments, ages and skill levels. Everyone is welcome to play, sing or simply listen. Bring music stand and finger food to share; music and beverages are provided. (253) 492-4177.

NOV. 11

Crochet or knit

The Loving Hearts group knits and crochets for charities and meets 1 to 3 p.m., at WayPoint Church. Yarn donations are always needed. Virginia, 884-9619.

NOV. 12

Garden club meets

The Bayshore Garden Club meets 1 p.m., at the fire station in Longbranch. Francine, 569-1381.

NOV. 13

Ashes meet

The Ashes support group for Fire District 16 meets 10:30 a.m., at the fire station in Key Center. 884-3771.

Book adventures

Children ages 5-10 enjoy "Hi Fly Guy" characters through stories, activities and crafts at 4:30 p.m., at the Key Center Library. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Key Center Library. 548-3309.

NOV. 13 and 20

Free clinic

Non-emergency medical care for KP residents without any medical insurance is provided 5:30 to 8 p.m., at Key Peninsula

Health and Professional Center in Key Center. 884-2234.

NOV. 14

Teen fun

Club Cosmic for high school kids is 9 p.m. to midnight at KP Civic Center. 884-3456.

NOV. 17

LEGO building

Ages 8 to 18 build and program a robotic vehicle using LEGO Mindstorms 4 to 5:30 p.m., at the Key Center Library. Registration is required. 548-3309.

NOV. 20

Dementia presentation

The Mustard Seed Project hosts "Dementia: Setting the Record Straight," a presentation by Linda McCone, a Long-term Care Ombudsman 10 a.m., at the Key Center fire station. Learn facts about dementia and available resources, including the Pierce County Family Caregiver Program. The third Thursday community forums are always free, with transportation available by prior arrangement. 884-9814.

Story time

The KP Historical Society presents a program for preschool-aged children that complements the museum's "Forest to Farm" exhibit with a book, an artifact and a make and take project featured 11 to 11:30 a.m. Parents must accompany their child. No reservations required for groups of 6 or more, but a note or call that you plan to attend will allow enough materials to be available. info@keypeninsulamuseum.org or 888-3246.

NOV. 25

4-H meeting

The 4-H Guinea Pig group meets 6:30 to 8 p.m., in the Civic Center library (upstairs). Nanette, (360) 981-5292.

NOV. 29 and 30

Winterfest

The annual Winterfest Arts and Crafts Fair is hosted at Peninsula High School. 530-4400.

To submit an event

To submit an event for the Community Works calendar, please email news@keypennews.com, or mail to P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394. Briefs must be submitted by the 15th of the month.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

KP Veterans

New winter schedule: Nov. 3, 7 p.m., at the KP Lutheran Church. Membership is open for veterans and active duty military service members, their spouses and children ages 16 and older. (253) 509-8656 or keypenveterans@outlook.com.

KP Lions' dinner, program

Nov. 5 and 19, 6 p.m., in VFW Room, KP Civic Center; 853-2721.

Key Pen Parks

Nov. 10 (budget meeting) and 24, 7:30 p.m., at Volunteer Park; keypenparks.com.

KP Fire Department

Nov. 11 and 25, 5 p.m., in meeting room, fire station in Key Center; keypen-insulafire.org.

Key Peninsula Council

Nov. 12, 7 p.m., meeting, at Key Center fire station; kpcouncil.org.

KP Civic Center Association Board

Nov. 12, 7 p.m., in Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center. This annual meeting includes a presentation by Larry Seaquist and state representatives on the issues concerning McNeil Island as a park/destination site. Kpciviccenter.org.

Peninsula School District Board

Nov. 13, 6 p.m., in library at Gig Harbor High School.

KP Land Use Advisory Commission

Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m., at the KC Library; chuck-west@hotmail.com.

LIC

Nov. 19, dessert potluck, 7 p.m., at Longbranch Improvement Club; 884-6022 longbranchimprovementclub.org.

KP Citizens Against Crime

Nov. 20, 6 p.m., at fire station in Key Center; kpcitizensagainstcrime.org.

KP Farm Council

Nov. 24, 6:30 p.m., at fire station in Home; c.wiley@mac.com.

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

Community walk

Free walking for exercise 9 to 11 a.m., in the KP Civic Center gym. 884-3456.

Senior exercise class

The S.A.I.L. program, taught by Marilyn Perks, meets 10 to 11 a.m., at the KP Community Services in Lakebay. Participants must register with Marilyn, 884-4440.

TUESDAYS

Story times

Stories for babies (ages 0-24 months) at 10 a.m., and stories and crafts for toddlers (ages 3-6 years old) at 11 a.m., at the KC Library. 548-3309.

Key Singers rehearse

Key Singers, a local community chorus, rehearse for the Christmas season, 7 p.m., at Key Peninsula Lutheran Church. Open to all who love to sing; annual dues are \$10, which pays for rent, scholarships, music and concert refreshments. 884-5615.

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

Senior tai chi club

Senior tai chi meets 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., at the KP Community Services in Lakebay. 884-4440.

Preschool play time resumes

The Children's Home Society KP Family Resource Center offers a preschool/toddler indoor park program 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., at the KP Civic Center. Caregivers must stay with child. Drop-ins are welcome; stay for as long as you wish. A \$1 per child donation is suggested. Tami, 884-5433.

TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS

KPHS Museum open

The KPHS museum, located at the KP Civic Center in Vaughn, is open Tuesdays and Saturdays, 1 to 4 p.m. "Forest to Farms - The Land, the People, the Legacy" is this year's display. No admission charge, but monetary donations are welcome. Check out their Facebook page at Key Peninsula Historical Society. 888-3246.

WEDNESDAYS

Writers meet

The Lakebay Writers meet 1:30 to 4 p.m., at the Key Center Library. 884-3931.

Writers workshop

The Watermark Writers present a free writers workshop 5 to 8 p.m. in Vaughn. (253) 778-6559.

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

Senior meals

Nutritional meals for ages 60-plus are served at noon at the KP Community Services; a \$2 donation is requested. Guests (ages 50-59) of senior attendees are requested to donate \$2.50. 884-4440.

THURSDAYS

Toastmasters

The Toastmasters meet 8 to 9 a.m., at

the Key Center Library. Join the fun and improve your speaking ability. 858-5761 or (253) 548-3511.

Seniors' lunch

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

Bingo

Free Bingo at the KP Community Services in Home 7 to 9 p.m. 884-4440.

SATURDAYS

Writers' Guild

The Writers' Guild meets the first and third Saturdays 10 a.m. to noon, at the KC Library. 884-6455.

Lakebay Jam with 302

Lakebay Jam with 302 is 6:30 to 9 p.m., weather permitting, at the Lakebay Marina. Call ahead at 884-3350 or glory-promo@gmail.com.

OFF THE KEY

NOV. 1

College financials

High school juniors and seniors learn about federal financial aid programs, how to find scholarships and important deadlines at 10:30 a.m., at the Gig Harbor Library. No registration required. 548-3305.

NOV. 6-9 and 29

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile is at Gig Harbor High School 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Nov. 6 and at Adventure of Faith Church 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Nov. 8. It is at St. Nicholas Church 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Nov. 9 and at HCC Road Trip, 8502 Skansie Ave., 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Nov. 29.

NOV. 8

Beekeeping

Beekeeper Greg Farley discusses the plight of bees and the world of honey. Adults will learn what is needed to prepare for acquiring bees and the skills to successfully manage their own bee colony sustainably at home, 10 a.m. to noon at Gig Harbor Library. This event

is sponsored by Friends of the Gig Harbor Library. 548-3305.

Environmental health

The League of Women Voters' Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula Unit will discuss Pierce County's environmental health indicators — air, water, solid and hazardous waste, land use. League meetings are open to the public and take place 2 to 4 p.m., the second Saturday of the month at the Harbor History Museum. For information, call Sharon Peace-Doane, 265-0841.

NOV. 21 through DEC. 13

Play presented

Paradise Theatre presents "Annie" at 7:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays and 3 p.m., Sundays. 851-PLAY or info@paradisetheatre.org.

CALENDAR SUBMISSIONS

Send your calendar items to editor@keypennews.com

Key Pen Parks Harvest Party is spooky fun

By Alice Kinerk, KP News

Offering festive fun for area residents, Key Pen Parks hosted another ghoulish good time at this year's Harvest Party, Oct. 18 at Volunteer Park.

Inside the picnic shelter, visitors danced to popular Halloween songs, illuminated by brightly colored strobe lights. A few feet away, a campfire was ringed by youngsters toasting marshmallows on long sticks. A park volunteer made sure all kids — as well as their highly flammable costumes — remained safely behind a spray-painted line. Elsewhere, an old-fashioned tractor decorated with scarecrows and hay bales made a cute backdrop for parents to snap photos.

In front of the park office, kids tested their bravery by sticking their hands inside a spooky-looking set of mystery touch boxes. Cool melon and slimy gel waited inside. Park volunteer Jerry Hartley was sitting at the end of

the table, ready to hand out candy to those brave enough to try.

Hartley, who's retired, has been volunteering in the community for the past six years. "I love volunteering with Key Pen Parks. I really like greeting kids and families," Hartley said.

Every eight or nine minutes, a tractor outfitted with a hay bale trailer rumbled into the parking lot and picked up a group for a dark and bumpy ride down the park trails and across the back field.

Not to be overlooked, of course, was the simple fun of playing on the Volunteer Park playground after dark. In a costume, surrounded by other kids.

The popular annual event drew folks from up and down the peninsula. Those disinclined to romp on the playground or bump across the back field sipped cocoa or apple cider and enjoyed watching the variety of creative costumes on display.

From infants riding in backpacks to grandmas chasing toddlers, most everyone was dressed up.

Costumes ranged from the scary: witches, vampires, zombies; to the funny: a hunter and a deer, a pint-sized Dracula, a Minecraft Creeper with a cube-shaped head that seemed to form a third of her total height.

There were at least a half-dozen classic superheroes, as well as other costumes inspired by popular movies or cartoons. In the costume contest, announced at the end of the night, a pair of identically dressed minions from the movie "Despicable Me" picked up the award for best pair.

The evening's sweet finale occurred after the costume contest prizes had all been announced and the pumpkin carving champions named. The gate to the field was then opened up and kids streamed in to lay claim to the goody bags laid here and there on the grass.

Volunteer Tara Trammel, dressed as an autumn sprite, stood at the gate reminding everyone to take only two goody bags each. Trammel kept a few bags set aside to make sure all kids went home with candy. "If you can't find two, come find me," she counseled the last few children entering the field.

So much fun doesn't come about without the dedicated work of folks at Key Pen Parks, as well as many volunteers. Key Pen Park Executive Director Scott Gallacher said the annual Harvest Party takes a significant amount of resources. "This is all hands on deck for us," said Gallacher, who even recruited his own two children to stuff goody bags.

All the hard work was appreciated by 5-year-old Lucy Watkinson, who checked out everything at the event and declared the hay ride her favorite. "I liked it because it was bumpy," Watkinson said.

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KP church offers Christmas bazaar in November

By Scott Turner, KP News

Key Peninsula's holiday season starts the Saturday before Thanksgiving at Key Peninsula Lutheran Church in Lakebay.

That's the day of the church's seventh annual Christmas bazaar.

The event starts at 9 a.m. with a free breakfast. Doors open for the bazaar at 9:30.

According to Kay Pinter, chair of the event, proceeds support the church's community outreach programs.

The halls will be decked out in holiday finery and there will be five tables laden with handcrafted items and edible goodies.

The Italian Kitchen table will feature pasta, aprons, cutting boards and various pasta-serving accessories.

The Go Team table will be filled with hats, scarves, bears, lap blankets and tailgate gear for the Seahawks and local sports teams.

On the Enchanted Forest table, shoppers will find fairy houses and thrones, dolls, tiny trees and other enchanting ob-

jects.

For lovers of all things vintage, the Vintage table will be piled high with hydrangea wreaths, ornaments, linens and assorted collectables that harken back to bygone days.

"And we'll also have a huge baked goods table," Pinter said. "We call it the Scandia table and it will have all kinds of Scandinavian and German and local Christmas goodies."

"We'll even have homemade lefse," added Deana Hoffer, another volunteer. "The holiday baked goods are always a big draw."

Hoffer is more or less in charge of decorating for the event. "It will be set up like a boutique, with two 7-foot Christmas trees on display and lots of other holiday-type décor," she said.

One of the trees will have a "Stars Were Gleaming, Angels Singing" theme with handcrafted star ornaments and angels crafted from scrap fabric and trim.

The other tree, called "In Wond'ring Awe," depicts a forest scene of native animals that come to gaze at the bright star in

Want to go?

Key Peninsula Lutheran Church's annual Christmas Bazaar takes place Saturday, Nov. 22. There will be a complementary breakfast at 9 a.m. The bazaar runs from 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. The church is located at the corner of KP Highway and Lackey Road. Proceeds support the church's community outreach programs. Admission is free.

the east.

KP resident and church member Jim Davis has donated a handcrafted cedar potting bench, which will be raffled off during the bazaar, said volunteer Julie Johnson.

There are even things for pets.

The volunteers emphasized that all the items for sale at the bazaar will be very affordable.

"Most of the items are under \$30," Hoffer said. "And just about everything is

handmade."

Over the years, the date of the bazaar has changed.

"We originally did it the first Saturday in December," Johnson said. "But it got to be just too much work right after Thanksgiving and that close to Christmas, so we changed it to November because if you want things for your Christmas decorating, you can come here and get special items before you start decorating."

The name of the event also has changed. "We used to call it the 'Holiday' Bazaar," Pinter said. "But this year we're calling it the Christmas Bazaar because, after all, we're a church."

She encouraged shoppers to come early, "because we almost sell out of everything by noon."

Whatever the event's name, the most fun, she said, is "having folks walk around and go 'oohh and ahhh' and say 'Oh, this is just perfect for my husband or my granddaughter.'"

For information call Kay Pinter at (253) 884-3466 or Julie Jonson at (253) 884-3312.

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Visit our Facebook photo album to see which vendors are participating this year.

Farm tour entertained beyond expectations

By Karen Lovett, KP News

This year's Key Peninsula Farm Tour had something for everyone, young and old.

The Gateway Park offered a Master Gardener clinic, among other things.

"Many new people were interested in vegetable gardens, using native plants, or were new to the KP and wanted to know how to work with our glacier-tilled soil," Dale Skrivanich said.

Those lucky enough to make it to Minterbrook Oyster Farm during low tide walked along the beach to view oysters. Children were presented with candy leis by Hawaiian hula dancers. An oyster shucker made opening shells look easy. Millions of minuscule oysters were on display and a microscope was available to view tiny ciliated larva.

"With a survival rate of only 2 percent, a large number of young must be started to ensure adequate numbers for market. We only do single oysters here," co-owner Kent Kingman said, adding

that 10 percent of sales from the day would be donated to the Key Peninsula Farm Tour.

Gabrielle LaRoche brought her champion briard, Nash, from Port Angeles to Packleader Farm, where trainer Barbara Davenport demonstrated herding.

"There aren't many places you can take a dog to herd," LaRoche said. "I love coming here more than any other place. Barb is uniquely skilled working a variety of breeds."

While LaRoche and Nash waited, a border collie obeyed every command Davenport gave as she directed the dog to herd the sheep. Davenport explained various tending and herding skills and the dog breeds used to accomplish them to a crowd of curious onlookers.

Blue Willow Lavender Farm offered education and information on lavender. Children painted rocks and were thrilled by a wall of pumpkins.

"I sold so much lavender, there wasn't enough left to dig your fingers into a bucket of buds," owner Tracy Kettis

said. "We had about 500 people this year."

The Key Center fire station received \$9,300 in donations. More than 250 people came for breakfast and about 75 viewed a firefighting demonstration.

"This was our second year partnered with the farm tour," fire commissioner Frank Grubaugh said. "The best open houses we've ever had have been during the farm tour."

After paying for the cost of breakfast, donations were enough to purchase three high-lift jacks used to extract people from wrecked cars.

A trio of very friendly goats greeted visitors at Cape E Heritage Farm. A variety of freshly picked produce, lotions and honey were available for purchase. Grazing sheep overlooking Von Geldern Cove provided a peaceful setting for a picnic.

In Home, Trillium Creek Winery offered wine for sale and vineyard tours while Key Peninsula Services served soup.

Mooing cattle occasionally joined in chorus with bands playing throughout the day at Creviston Valley Farm. Dana Pedersen answered questions and gave "pony rides" on her Arabian horse, Peyton. Booths selling plants, handmade crafts, honey, salmon and fresh produce lured shoppers who ate barbecue while enjoying the music.

Key Peninsula Farm Council Vice President Chuck Kraft had a horse on hand to demonstrate techniques.

"There's a lot of positive energy," Kraft said. "People contacted us to be part of the farm tour this year. Enthusi-

asm is growing."

Garden sprites enchanted new arrivals at the Longbranch Improvement Club. Inside, an enticing aroma tantalized taste buds as the kitchen hummed with activity. A busy crew baked tray after tray of Peg Bigham's famous apple crisp, which sold out as soon as it came hot from the oven. Fine handmade hats, alpaca scarves and jewelry were just some of the creations for sale at the Fiber Arts Show at LIC.

"This is my first time at the farm tour," Linda Ireland said. "I'm impressed by the number of things covered ... and the creativity on display at the Fiber Arts show. The food is good and there are some very interesting people."

A rolling home built by carpenter Jeremy Thompson and furnished by his wife, Mira, was on display at Lakebay Marina. The Thompsons (see their story on page 24) purchased the 1989 school bus from the Snohomish School District and licensed it as an RV.

The two-year building project features cedar siding with a shake roof. The Thompsons constructed every part of the beautifully furnished mobile home. A steady stream of viewers marveled at the quality workmanship and unique, comfortable interior of the dream travel home.

Diners at the marina enjoyed good food and for those still around later in the evening, the 302 Band provided music.

According to a survey taken at the LIC, people from 40 different zip codes attended the event.

Visit keypennews.com for event photos.



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Local mom thanks, educates community about young strokes

By Scott Turner, KP News

When he was just 6 months old, Jennifer Dickenson's son, Robbie Jackson, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy with left-sided hemiplegia.

"Basically," she explained, "cerebral palsy is a catch-all diagnosis that means there's brain damage somewhere and the other part means weakness on the left side."

Prior to the diagnosis, Dickenson had noticed that little Robbie wasn't using his left side at all.

"He wasn't using his left side to reach for things; he wasn't crawling and we were having a hard time getting him to sit up on his own," she recalled.

The neurologist who made the diagnosis discovered that there was scarring on the right side of Robbie's brain that had probably been caused by a stroke in utero.

"He told me it was no big deal and that he saw that kind of thing all the time and that physical therapy would probably help," Dickenson said.

The doctor also told her that if Robbie didn't have any seizures by age 3, he'd probably never have any at all.

"But he had a grand mal seizure two months before his third birthday, and another on his fifth birthday this past March," she said.

As the seizure activity increased, doctors added epilepsy to Robbie's diagnosis.

He was scheduled to spend several days at Mary Bridge Children's Hospital in September for tests to locate the source of the seizures. And the doctor was discussing the possibility of brain



Courtesy photo

Robbie Jackson rides his new bike that the folks for KP Care and the community help purchase. Robbie's mom, Jennifer Dickenson, is trying to educate the community to young strokes.

surgery to remove the part of his brain that was causing the seizures.

"That would mean he wouldn't have any more seizures but he'd still have a disability and his cognitive reasoning would stay at age 1 or 2," Dickenson said. "That's a lifelong quality of life issue."

Robbie started kindergarten in September, just a few days before he was scheduled for the trip to Mary Bridge.

"He likes to ride the bus and play with his friends and he's good with his peers as long as they play to his age level,"

Dickenson said. "He walks with a walker and cruises furniture and scoots on his butt like a toddler."

He also loves to ride the special bike that the people at KP Cares helped procure for him with funds from a bake sale.

But shortly before the Mary Bridge appointment, Robbie had a major increase in seizure activity. "We had to go into the hospital early and stayed for a day and he was hooked up for an EEG the whole time and then discharged with additional seizure medication," she said.

The night he was discharged, Robbie began having "really aggressive seizure activity including small grand seizures," so Dickenson called 911.

"When we got back to Mary Bridge, he had a five-minute grand mal seizure in the emergency room and it took them almost two full days to stop the seizures," she said.

Robbie spent five days in the hospital, four of which were he was being monitored by an electroencephalogram (EEG) machine. He was discharged on Sept. 12.

Since then, Dickenson said her son's seizures are under control, but their neurologist wants to get more opinions, Dickenson said, "because they really do not know what to do."

In the course of all this, Dickenson is studying for a bachelor's degree in business with an emphasis on healthcare management. And she's looking for a new car because "the engine on mine blew the head gasket among other things on my way home from the hospital."

She's also trying to stay focused on helping Robbie.

"You have to get past the anger and the self pity and feeling sorry for yourself and your child so you can help your child become a physically productive person," she said.

She's grateful to her current husband, Jake Dickenson and to her parents, Debbie and Joe Dilley for their love and support, and to the people of the Key Peninsula community.

"It's just a great community," she said. "And I'm trying to get the word about that strokes in utero happen. I just want people to know about it so they can be aware and maybe help others."

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Who can I contact for more information?

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Key Pen man takes his love for Little League umpiring to the top in Williamsport

By Scott Turner, KP News

This summer, Randy Lee's lifelong dream came true.

Lee, who lives near Minter, was invited to be an umpire at the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Penn.

Lee has been involved in baseball in one way or another ever since he was a kid growing up in North Texas. "We played organized baseball like Little League, and we played sandlot baseball," he said.

"There were times when we didn't even have a baseball so we'd use an old tennis ball and a one by four or whatever we had for a bat," he said.

Lee also played organized baseball all through high school. "There was always somebody there for me and for all of us kids. There were always adults to coach, to umpire, to take care of the administration of the league," he recalled.

During high school, he started umpiring the younger kids.

"It was just kind of something the older kids did," he said with the slow drawl that still says "Texas."

"The need was always there and there was always an adult or a high school kid there behind the plate, umpiring. And if you umpired you'd get a free snow cone," he added with a laugh.

In 1977, Lee got a job at Weyerhaeuser working as a logger and moved to Bonney Lake.

His two kids, both of whom are now grown, played baseball and he coached, and one day he got a call from the local league that they were "really hurting for umpires."

He volunteered to help, and within a few years he became chief umpire for District 10, Washington Little League, which includes Pierce County and South King County. "It's a pretty good-sized district," he said. "It runs about 75 teams — T-ball through 18-year olds, both baseball and softball.

There are hundreds of games."

When Lee and his wife moved to the Key Peninsula about seven years ago, he stuck with his volunteer work on the District 10 staff, rather than switching to District 2 — the local district.

"I had put in 25 years and I'm the umpire in chief for District 10. And my wife and I both work in Tukwila at Boeing and I just go to the District 10 meetings in Auburn or umpire games on my way home," he said.

It's really important, he said, because Little League is based on volunteerism. "There's only about a hundred or so employees in the world and Little League is played in 82 countries. So without volunteers — be it team moms or coaches or umpires — there's no way it could happen," he said.

In January of this year, Lee got a call from Tom Haynes. "He's the umpire in chief for Little League Baseball Worldwide and is one of the few full-time paid employees. He said, 'It's your turn to umpire the World Series.' I was pretty excited because I'd been on that list for 10 years," Lee said.

In May, Lee joined 15 other umpires from all over the world who had also been selected to work the series.

"We had a two-day orientation at Little League headquarters in Williamsport and studied the ground rules for Lamade Stadium and Volunteer Stadium where the Little League World Series is held every year," he said.

According to Lee, a total of 16 teams go to the Little League World Series: eight teams from the United States and eight teams from other countries.

"It was absolutely incredible," he said of the umpiring experience. "The day before the series started, we had a parade that lasted three and a half hours."

And the games themselves were mind-boggling.

"The umpires rotate through the

(See **Umpire**, Page 21)

(From **Umpire**, Page 20)

positions for the first round,” he said. “Everybody does first base, everybody does the plate, everybody does the right field foul line and so forth.

“You spend 31 years umpiring, and you spend all those years watching the games or just hovering around the TV watching the World Series and all of a sudden you’re there. And you’ve got these cool uniforms with all this Little League World Series stuff all over them. It was absolutely incredible.

“And the level of play is amazing; the pitching, the hitting, the whole thing. Because these are the best 12-year-old Little League teams in the world,” he said.

Lee even got to umpire the Pennsylvania Mid-Atlantic game “when a little girl pitched. She pitched a two-hitter shutout. They beat Tennessee four or five to nothing. There were more than 40,000 people in the stands and it was just vibrating. She’s not as strong as the big stud guys on the teams, but she did a great job,” he said.

And she made history.

But the thing that touched Lee’s heart the most was the “Challenger game” — the disabled kids.

“Some of them can’t walk and some can’t hold a bat. Some of the kids are in wheelchairs, but every kid gets to bat.

“And these kids look up and they see their faces and their names on the big screen. And all the kids from all the teams were in the stands yelling, ‘Let’s go, Derek, let’s go!’ — or whatever the kid’s name is. It gives you goose bumps and it really touched my heart,” he added.

Lee wants people to know that there’s always a need for volunteers.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s baseball or football or tiddlywinks. Get your kid involved and don’t just let it be a babysitter.

“Get involved in your kids’ lives and the lives of other kids. It’s bonding and being there and teaching what’s right and fair and teamwork. If you really want kids to succeed — whatever you do, coaching or umpiring or working in the concession stand or whatever — they say it takes a village to raise a child and I really believe that,” Lee said, beaming.



Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

Key Center resident Randy Lee loves umpiring. This summer he earned the right to umpire in the Little League World Series.

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KP woman finds comfort and challenges in comedy

By Irene Torres, KP News

Before Kamryn Minch graduated from Peninsula High School, she expressed interest in joining Watermark Writers Workshop in Vaughn.

The Workshop's founder Jerry Libstaff asked her father, Jeff Minch, if he thought a 17-year-old would be comfortable with a group of older writers who are sometimes graphic.

"He assured me she would be all right. One of the first evenings she was with us, Kamryn read a story about vegetables. Our most vivid 40-something writer, who can be extremely explicit in his work, blushed a bright crimson," Libstaff said.

Now, as Kamryn Minch is approaching the age of 20, she appears on stage weekly as a stand-up comedienne at the Tacoma Comedy Club (TCC).

According to Minch, she first thought about a career in comedy when she was 12, but went on to pursue other creative




Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Key Peninsula resident Kamryn Minch performs at the Tacoma Comedy Club in October.

(See Comedy, Page 23)

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(From **Comedy**, Page 22)

outlets including photography. She said she considered a college degree from Scotland or England, becoming a high school counselor, or a real estate agent. "I wanted to be a chicken farmer. Then stand-up popped back into my life and three years ago, I committed myself to that," she said.

As a graduation present, members of Watermark Writers paid for Minch to attend a comedy class in Seattle.

One of the writers, Linda Whaley, said, "I was with Kamryn when she took her first comedy class. I knew right then she had a long way to go...or was it she would go a long way?"

"Being at the comedy club is a learning experience in itself. To an extent, watching professional comics helps. I pay attention to their rhythm, their stage presence, their timing, their interaction with the crowd — their persona. I get inspired by someone else's really bad set," Minch said. "After you've watched a lot of comedy, you put a certain emphasis on a professional 'stand-up self'"

On Nov. 6, she will mark one year of performing stand-up. She said she has come a long way since she first stepped onto a stage.

"The lights were really bright. I wasn't expecting that. I pulled my 'this is my first time on stage' card, when I had to look at my note card. I pushed myself. After the first few speed bumps, it gets so much easier. Now I can't go a week without being on stage. It's addicting, especially when I do well," Minch said.

Minch has some advice for the up and coming: "We have enough comics already. They're going to have to wait until we die," she said. Then she got serious. "They should write a lot, keep a notebook. When you're antsy, talk to yourself. Work out jokes. Get that itch to want to be on stage."

She said many older comics seem impressed that someone her age is performing.

"I'm glad I got on stage when I did," she said. "But it's difficult for young comics. Most clubs are for 21 and older. TCC is for 18 and up."

She has done open mic spots at Jai Thai on Broadway in Seattle and at the Comedy Room, a female-focused open mic venue. She did a set at Rendezvous, a small, intimate setting, where "the audience is so supportive that makes it hard to move to other venues" with less supportive audi-

ences, she said.

Open mic at TCC features 25 comics every Wednesday night from 8 p.m., for three to five minute sets, followed by a headliner who gets eight minutes of stage time. Minch has hosted there twice. She said it was very stressful and she felt the pressure to warm up the crowd.

As a female, Minch feels that she isn't treated any differently than her male colleagues. "You put in the work, put yourself out there and you get stage time," Minch said.

On Dec. 9, Minch will perform a comedy showcase with Jessica Smeall at B Sharp Coffee House in Tacoma. The event is called "Cold Turkey," a smoking cessation and healthy lifestyle promotion. "When you're a comedian, you take on different roles. I want to do what I can to help the comedy community, to let people know we're here and give comedians more stage time. We want to make you laugh," she said.

In her spare time, Minch listens to a variety of podcasts of other comedians. She said that many of the routines are about mental illness. "Comedy comes from suffering some sort of subconscious trauma that I haven't figured out yet. There are ups and downs, some blue times, but it always gets better," she said.

Minch said she was drawn into comedy and she enjoys being the center of attention.

"I am treating it like a therapy session. There's a subtlety to it. In school, I used to whisper something that made my group table laugh. That was enough," she recalled.

Once a week, Minch takes a day to organize and figure out how her ideas will fit into her set. She says she's still working on her "schtick," that defining part of her routine that makes her unique. She looks to find consistencies in how she performs and what really works. She keeps perfecting and hopes it turns out something worthwhile.

Not long ago, Kamryn's mother, Dayl, watched her perform a five-minute set.

"Mom saw how legitimate comedy is. Now she's full-on supportive. Dad is awesome about it and my brother thinks I'm funny," she said.

Minch would like to start a monthly comedy showcase to get exposure and gain experience producing shows. She's had one paid gig and has another coming up. She said making a living in comedy as a feature or headliner is doable, "but it takes awhile."

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Living the dream with the dream maker home

By Steve Whitford, KP News

Mira Thompson always wanted to live in a small house.

After four years of work, she now has her wish. Thompson married her husband, Jeremy, approximately four years ago and they settled in a house on Bay Lake.

Initially, they purchased a 19-foot school bus and converted it into an R.V. in which they lived and traveled for two years, but even then Thompson had a vision of what she really wanted.

"I've always wanted to live in a small house, but it would have to be comfy and cozy," she said. Fortunately, her husband is a master auto mechanic and an excellent woodworker. In 2011 they purchased a 1989 International school bus. She supplied the ideas, he supplied the skills, and the transformation from bus to home began.

Building a house on a bus frame isn't easy, they said.

"Building it so it will hold together requires knowhow and special reinforcing," Jeremy Thompson said.

The Thompsons spent the next two years creating their dream home and they displayed it to the public on Oct. 4 at the Lakebay Marina.

The home is 37 feet of beauty, craftsmanship and utility. Most of its amenities are recycled and refurbished relics from the 1900s. The walls are cedar shingled on the outside, insulated on the inside. The flooring is made from reclaimed, vertically grained Douglas fir, and the ceiling came from an old house.

The bedroom is "hobbit-like," with a Moroccan arch for its entrance, and it sports a loft above.

There are numerous nooks, drawers and cupboards. A unique feature are the drawers under the bed. They run the full length of the bed and provide huge amounts of room for storage.

The rear wheel wells are well utilized; one side has been converted into a love seat, while the other supports a cast iron stove that can heat the entire home.

There is also a kitchen sink complete with a propane hot-water heater.

"We had to use replica faucets because



Courtesy photo

Mira, Carys and Jeremy Thompson enjoy living the good life in their school bus on Bay Lake.

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the original faucets leached lead into the water," Thompson said.

The home also sports a small table, small stove and a very small refrigerator. The stove is an Amana that was specially ordered for the home; the refrigerator is a classic 1959 Frigidaire, both run on propane. Just past the kitchen is a split bathroom. Past that is the driver's compartment, which is much like it was when the bus was in service.

According to the couple, the majority of things that went into their home were

garage-sale buys and gifts. They said there was no way to put a price tag on their work of art.

Future plans for the Thompsons now include their 1-year-old daughter Carys, whose name in Welsh means love.

They like RVing and enjoy going to the Burning Man celebration in Nevada. Jeremy Thompson said, he wants to build an "art car" for the next celebration that will move and look like a Stingray.

For information, contact the Thompsons at veryhandyjt@gmail.com.



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New program puts responsibilities in the hands, hearts of students

By Scott Turner, KP News

Students at Key Peninsula Middle School are earning points for good behavior under a new system introduced two years ago by Assistant Principal Andrea Bowman.

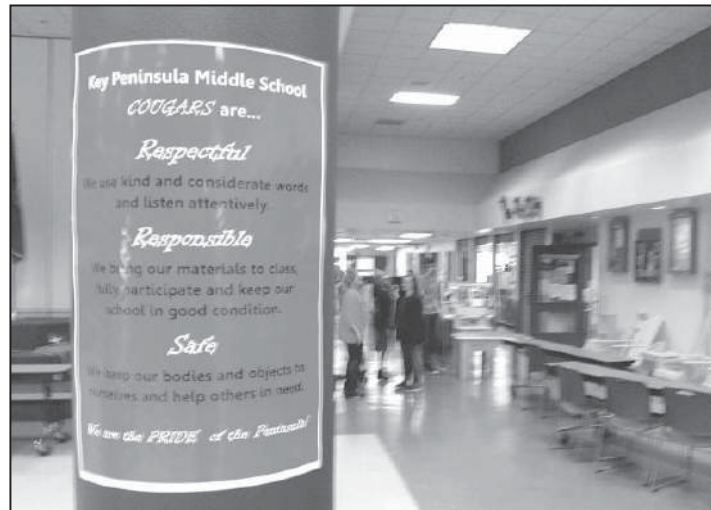
It's called Positive Behavior Intervention Supports — PBIS for short.

As eighth grader Leyla Van Der Bank, 12, explained, "If the teachers see something good happening — like picking up our trash or walking instead of running or listening when we're talking with someone — then we get points that can be saved up and turned in for prizes at the store."

Basically there are three rules for the students to follow, Bowman said.

Kiely Newsom, 13, also in the eighth grade, put it simply: "Our three big school rules are to be respectful, responsible and safe."

"And our school is actually changing because kids are trying to follow the rules, so they're being nicer to each other and more kind to the teachers



Key Peninsula Middle School uses a program to reinforce good behavior and spark friendships on campus.

Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

and they're being willing to help people," she said

As an example, Newsom said she

dropped her books in the hallway, "and a kid actually ran over and helped me pick my stuff up," she said.

The three rules were chosen by the teachers and staff after they participated in a survey that showed what things the school was doing well, and what was missing, Bowman said.

"Rather than making a long list of things the kids can't do, like 'Don't run,' we're saying, 'Please walk,'" she said.

"It's a subtle difference but it's significant because kids can visualize 'Please walk,' but they don't know what to do instead of 'don't run.'

"We're telling them what to do, not what not to do," she said.

Any time a teacher or staff member sees a student doing something respectful, responsible or safe, the child gets a "Cougar Pride" ticket, "based on the specific behavior we're focusing on for that week," Bowman said. "We're selling things in the Cougar Pride store that the kids can buy with their tickets."

Bowman was quick to give a shout-out to the school's PTSA, Franciscan Health System and Angel Guild for financial support.

PBIS also provides actual behavior data that lets the school intervene in cases where kids seem to be having trouble of falling behind in earning rewards tickets.

"We might place a kid who's struggling in a club or a group, or maybe just an after-school sport with a student support team," Bowman explained.

Serious problems call for specific behavior plans.

"Most kids who're having struggles academically are also having behavior problems and vice versa," she said.

There's also less chance a student will be suspended or expelled. "Our old system was a 'kick 'em out' model," Bowman said. "This new PBIS way is focused on creating a safe school where kids feel safe and respected and recognized."

And, according to the students themselves, it seems to be working — and not just because of the rewards.

"I think kids are actually doing it because they're coming from the heart," Newsom said. "Because they actually want to try to be better about themselves. I think it's a success."

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Out & About

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Courtesy photo

At Trillium Creek Winery in Home, the crew of Claude Gahard, Ryan Wiederholt, Sheila Niven and Jerry Escalante were spotted recently crushing, destemming and readying grapes to press Chardonnay wine.

At Peninsula High School's recent Homecoming game, Hunter McKenzie attempts to bring in a pass in the end zone while Michael Halvorson holds his breath. The pass went through McKenzie's hands but Peninsula won the game 42-13.



Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Where in the World...

Molly Swensen, Jilly Eddy, Don Swensen, Marsha Kremen, Dario Castagno, Claudia Loy, Lance and Debbie Englund are shown at Fattoria Tregole in the Chianti region of Tuscany, Italy.

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Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

The bi-annual Flavor of Fall event, "An Evening in Paris," was a successful fundraiser for the Key Peninsula Civic Center. There were 170 tickets available, all sold. The target of \$40,000 profit was met and will be used to support the activities of the center for the next two years.



Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Recent sunset from the Vaughn boat ramp.