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Ramp meters get the green light

By William C. Dietz
KP News

Effective sometime this March, all five of the on-ramps to eastbound State Route 16 will be metered. That includes the (Purdy) State Route 302, Burnham Drive, Wollochet Drive, Olympic Drive, and the 36th street on-ramps. There won't be any meters westbound.

Ramp meters, if you aren't familiar with them, are stop-and-go signals located on entrance ramps to a freeway. They look a lot like traffic lights. The purpose of the meters, according to Claudia Cornish, communications manager for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project, "is to keep traffic flowing during the morning eastbound commute."

"They do that by regulating the rate by which cars enter traffic," she said. According to information supplied by the Washington State Department of Transportation, "A ramp meter



Photo by Rodika Tollefson

On a recent December weekend, eastbound traffic was backed up almost to Purdy after an accident in one of the lanes.

consists of two components: a traffic signal and a 'loop detector' or traffic sensor." The loop detector senses when a vehicle passes over it, and sends that data to the state's Traffic Management Center in Tacoma, where

(See **SR-16**, Page 25)

Addition of Peninsula deputies has benefits, some drawbacks

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Following nearly a year of planning and discussions, the Pierce County Peninsula Detachment added three new deputies to its staff in November. The detachment, which serves the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula areas, now has 24-hour police patrol, eliminating a

complaint residents have had for years about lack of continuous coverage. In addition, a new lieutenant assigned to the detachment will take over the operations, allowing Sgt. Ross Herberholtz to spend more time in the field instead of the office.

But the change has drawbacks. The

(See **POLICE**, Page 20)

Camp Seymour gears up for centennial celebrations

By Colleen Slater
KP News

A few years before Boy Scouts were organized in the United States, William W. Seymour of Tacoma invited some boys to camp on his Glen Cove property one summer.

Seymour, an early Tacoma YMCA board member and later president of the Board of Park Commissioners in Tacoma, owned some utilities in Washington and sold land and timber. He was Tacoma's mayor for several years from 1911.

Seymour apparently loaned the property to the YMCA as an outing center at first.

As early as 1903, a few boys may have camped on the land, but 1905 was selected as the beginning date of the camp because records state that YMCA Physical Director Harry Booth and some boys erected the first tent for a camp that year. The following summer, 16 boys

(See **SEYMOUR**, Page 22)



Photo courtesy of YMCA Camp Seymour
Unidentified boys on their way to camp.

Wauna restoration meeting set for January

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Commissioners of the KP Metropolitan Park District are holding a public hearing in January to hear both pro and con sides on the issue of restoring the historic Wauna post office. The commissioners will not give any opinions or make decisions at the meeting, but will do so at its next regular session in February, Chair Paula DeMoss said.

Although the district currently does not have jurisdiction over the Purdy Spit and the building, the county is expected to start discussions about transferring any of its park properties or potential acquisition negotiations on the Key Peninsula to the newly created metro parks board—so ultimately, the fate of the building could be left in the district's hands.

"We'll be listening so we can respond to what the public truly wants," DeMoss said.

The decision regarding taking over the sand spit—once the county starts the discussion—would be separate from the decision involving the building, she said.

In the meantime, the KPMPD was expected to finish at the end of December all asset transfers from the soon-to-be-dissolved KPPRD. The purchase agreement for Volunteer Park was signed Dec. 17, and DeMoss expected the transfer of the lease agreement for Rocky Creek Conservation Area to be signed with the county before Jan. 1.

The \$20,000 the MPD paid to acquire Volunteer Park, also known as the Key Peninsula Sports Center and Fairgrounds, will cover all of KPPRD's remaining debts and legal expenses for dissolution, which must be done through the court system, DeMoss said.



Left to right, Gail Latteri of First American Title and Escrow, KP Parks and Recreation District Chair Mike Salatino, KP Metro Park District Chair Paula DeMoss and Joyce Tovey of Windermere Realty Key Center (in the back) are completing paperwork for the transfer of Volunteer Park to the MPD. Tovey and Latteri volunteered their services for the two park districts.

Photo by Rodika Tollefson

The park needs residents' help with various committees, including land acquisition, employment, park use and activities, and DeMoss encouraged anyone interested in parks to become involved.

The hearing on the Wauna post office is scheduled for Jan. 17, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at Peninsula Light Co. on Goodnough Drive. For information on the meeting or any other KPMPD activities, call 884-9240.

KP watershed work completes first phase

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Since 1988, Pierce County has been collecting surface-water management fees from property owners, currently \$26 per year per parcel for Key Pen. The money, dedicated for flood hazard reduction, water quality improvement and habitat preservation, must be spent where collected — which means fees collected on the Key Peninsula must be spent on local projects.

A few years ago the county set in motion a strategy for comprehensive work on the Key Peninsula Islands Watershed, including surveying the watershed's

health and eventually creating an action list for specific projects. The basin includes the Key Peninsula and five islands— Fox, Raft, Ketron, Anderson, and Herron.

"The idea is to support fish and wildlife, shellfish health (for human consumption) and recreational swimming," said the project's manager, Barbara Ann Smolko with the county's Water Programs. "The project will result in a 'to do' list for Water Programs."

The first phase of the plan ended in November, and included stream surveys, water quality evaluation and mapping. URS Corp. was contracted by the county to work on the project, and the company's biologists walked 17 streams, evaluated

culverts and collected samples. They found that the larger streams overall had healthier conditions. Rocky Creek, for example, was found in excellent health, but it also showed bank erosion and landslides. A beaver pond was spotted, a positive sign. The plan does not include lake evaluation.

The second phase will include computer modeling to determine which areas may have flood hazards in case of a major storm, with the focus on which roads and homes would be impacted.

The project will then come up with specific action items broken down into categories such as capital improvements, stream restoration, flood plain acquisition, and new programs.

The basin plan is not intended to create more regulations, nor will it require residents to do specific things for their properties, Smolko said.

"People are afraid of being overregulated and it's not the program's purpose," Smolko said.

"We are definitely not in the business of condemning property," she said, adding that in other basins most owners have been cooperative, and in the few cases where people objected to certain work involving their property, the project's scope was slightly changed to account for that.

After public comments, environmental and other reviews, the final plan will require the approval of the county council and executive.

For more information, contact Pierce County Water Programs at 253-798-2725.

Peninsula KEY NEWS

To subscribe, please write,
call or fax:
Key Peninsula News
17010 S. Vaughn Rd.
P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394
Phone (253) 884-4699
Fax: (253) 884-4053
Email news@keypennews.com

Executive editor: Rodika Tollefson
Assistant editor: Danna Webster
Ad sales: Karen Hale
Staff writers and contributors:
William C. Dietz, Karen Hale,
Connie Harris, Hugh McMillan,
Colleen Slater, Frank Slater, Irene
Torres, Cristi Watson

Distribution: Phil Bauer
Production: September Hyde
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KP planning board shares progress

Photo and story by Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Members of the Key Peninsula Planning Board, who started work on a KP comprehensive plan last year, shared their progress at an open house in December, while inviting community members to become involved in creating a vision for the area.

Comprised of interests ranging from builders to social service representatives and environmentalists, the board has been meeting for the last few months to work on a vision statement and goals that will lead its work for the next two years. The work will result in the adoption of a compre-



Pierce County staff provided a variety of maps and materials at the open house, which was well attended.

hensive plan specific to the Key Peninsula, the implementations of specific rules, as well as the creation of a community advisory board that will make sure future land use meets the rules.

Beginning in January, the board will break up the discussions into categories, with the natural environment element to be considered during the first three months.

"The subcommittee will receive information regarding environmental issues specific to the Key Peninsula, and make policy recommendations," said county planner Mike Kruger, who is overseeing the process. A land-use subcommittee will in turn meet for three months beginning in April, with three other subcommittees to convene thereafter for three months each.

"The (community) participation has been great. We're getting a lot of feedback," Kruger said.

The next meetings for the Key Peninsula Pierce County Community Planning Board - Natural Environment Committee are scheduled for Jan. 5 and 18 at 7 p.m. in the Key Peninsula Middle School Library. The Natural Environment Committee will work on policy development for the Key Peninsula Community Plan. Members of the general public are encouraged to attend the committee meeting. For more information, see www.piercecountywa.org/landuse or call Mike Kruger at 798-2700.

Community Council seeks public input

The Key Peninsula Community Council will start the new year with the development of a strategic plan and identifying priority issues for its directors. The process, which is estimated to take about two or three months, will help the council outline its focus for the next two years, board President Jeff Harris said.

Although the council may take on some specific projects, Harris said the main strategy would be to partner with other local organizations to support existing needs and be a key support agency rather than a lead one. The nonprofit group doesn't have money for action projects, but grants and other funding could be pursued. The council, however, has raised enough funds for operating expenses including insurance and office rental for 2005.

The strategic plan will be based on many factors including public input, and Harris said the public is invited to participate by coming to the meetings, sending in comments, or becoming involved with one of the many committees.

"We want to represent the views of the community and integrate them into the council (discussions). Residents have the opportunity to influence the council by participating in a committee," he said. "Depending on what people tell us, the council will identify what the priorities are."

The council meets every second Wednesday of the month, and may be reached by phone at 884-0557 or by mail at 8903 Key Peninsula Highway, Lakebay, WA 98349. The monthly meetings are held at the Key Peninsula Middle School library from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and each meeting includes a public comment period.

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Editorial

A toast for the Key Pen

Families reunited after soldiers returned home from Iraq. Families broken by accusations of child molestation. Some fought wars of words in public on controversial projects that didn't seem to their liking; others fought wars of desperation in private as their lives were ravaged by fires or accidents.

2004 has brought a mixed bag to the lives of Key Peninsula residents. Not everyone's story made it to print, not every person or event worthy of attention was discovered. But the staff of Key Peninsula News is committed to continue those discoveries in 2005, and grow along with the Key Pen. Do you know someone who should be praised? Someone with a fun hobby or an interesting story to tell? Do you have an issue you think needs addressed? Let us know!

So here is a toast for 2005: May the New Year make our community stronger, safer, cleaner, more inviting to visitors and more repulsive to drug junkies. And may we all help a little, even if it does not seem important. Even if all we do is question the status quo, cut an elderly neighbor's grass, or sing in the local choir.

Little League goals for the 2005 season and beyond

By Rich Henry, President
Special to KP News

A wise person once said that preparation is the key to success. In an all-volunteer league like the Key Peninsula Little League, that is an understatement. A successful league must have goals and a plan to achieve them. KPLL's board members would like to state its goals for the 2005 season, and solicit your help in achieving them.

The board has agreed that the success of KPLL players on the field is a direct result of the instructors' knowledge. Therefore, the board proposes holding coaching clinics to instruct its coaches on proper mechanics, practice techniques, and game preparation. In addition, the 2005 goals include holding instructional clinics for the players. In these clinics, all players have the opportunity to learn all aspects of the game. Equipment such as batting cages, pop ups, and swing-aways need to be available to all teams for practices. These steps, along with practice and game critiques, will vastly

The goal is to reduce expenses in field usage and preparation in addition to increasing revenues.

improve the players' abilities.

The area in need of the most improvement is umpiring. The only way to improve it is to get more volunteers trained and willing to perform this task. This is going to be a major area of emphasis for the 2005 season. This goal consists of having one umpire assigned to every T-Ball and Minor-Prep game, and two for every Minor, Major, Junior, Senior, and Big League game. Achieving this goal will require everyone working together.

As most coaches, players, and parents already know, KPLL's equipment and uniforms are evaluated for serviceability and condition each year. During the 2005 process, a larger than normal expense is anticipated, and it will be necessary to purchase replacements for equipment and uniforms

that don't meet the grade.

Expenses for the coaching and player clinics, new uniforms and equipment, and improvements in the umpiring program are going to require outside donations. In addition to past successful fund-raisers like the picture day breakfast and end of season dinner, the board is planning to host three tournament fund-raisers. As with these other successful fund-raisers, the tournaments will require volunteer help to ensure their success. The goal is to reduce expenses in field usage and preparation in addition to increasing revenues. Additional fund-raising ideas are welcome and much appreciated.

Little League is a special time for the children of our community. Its growth and continued success requires the support of the entire community. Whether it is coaching, umpiring, field preparation, fund-raising, donations, or performing administrative tasks, your time is needed.

Should you have questions, ideas, or concerns, please contact us at askkpll@hotmail.com.

Letters to the Editor

Invitation to attend meeting on Wauna building

In January 2003, the Key Peninsula Historical Society received a call from the Pierce County Landmarks Commission about the Old Wauna Post Office on the Purdy Sand Spit and a collaborative effort was started with the KP Park District. In December 2003, several neighbors came to the board opposing restoration. In January 2004, the board requested that all discussion be suspended until after the new KP Metro Park District was voted on by the public in May. I resigned from the board after the request in January and several of us have continued working toward the restoration. The results of this work will be presented to the board on Monday, Jan. 17 at 6:30 p.m. at Peninsula Light.

Many are in favor of restoration, many are opposed to restoration. Many neighbors are adamant that the building be removed. Many neighbors believe that it's a historic landmark and should always be there. How are the commu-

nity's needs/wants and the needs/wants of the neighbors to be balanced? Will the Key Peninsula benefit from restoration of the Old Wauna Post Office? Will the neighborhood be badly served if there is a responsible presence in that building?

Some years ago neighbors near the former Haley Site State Park and another year neighbors near the Home Boat Launch parking site protested the projects. Both of these efforts were stopped and the community has been less served.

I urge you to attend the Jan. 17 public meeting, sponsored by the KP Metro Park District. It is vital that we have public input from the entire community.

*Nancy Lind
Home*

Center thanks community, elected representatives

We at the Key Peninsula Family Resource Center have great news to share with the community. Imagine our joy when, in the midst of our very large, very complex Holiday program, we received

word that our contract with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department has been renewed, with funding restored to its previous level. This is the funding we have been so concerned about since last summer, when we heard it was to be cut, threatening the continued existence of our Family Center.

We want to thank Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee for his dynamic leadership and strong advocacy in this matter, as well as his fellow County Council members, especially Shawn Bunney. We also want to thank Cristi Watson, of Key Peninsula Community Services, who sits on our Advisory Committee, and State Rep. Pat Lantz, who helped to lead the effort. And most of all we want to thank the many members of this wonderful community who came forward to show their support for our center and the work we do. All together we have achieved a very important goal. We are extremely grateful to everyone concerned.

We also send our most sincere thanks to the community for the extraordinary generosity demonstrated during our Holiday program, which is just wrapping up as this paper goes to press. We have

served several hundred children this holiday season, with gifts provided by dozens of generous and caring sponsors and donors. We especially want to thank Key Peninsula Lutheran Church for the use of their beautiful new community facility for our free Holiday shop, and the numerous volunteers who so graciously assisted us in our work. We could not have done it without them.

Thanks to everyone! What a wonderful community we live in! Happy New Year!

*Edie Morgan
Program Manager, Key Peninsula Family Resource Center/
Children's Home Society of Washington, on behalf of the entire staff*

Santa makes correction

The Santa Route ad in last month's Key Peninsula News left off one of the very important members of the Key Peninsula Business Association. This was no fault of the Key Peninsula News, but of Santa having a senior moment.

We apologize to Marvin and Myrtle Keizur of Myr-Mar Accounting Services, Inc.

*Fred Ramsdell
Key Pen*

Commercial fishermen volunteers help save the chum

Story and photo by Hugh McMillan
KP News

A dozen fishermen, clad in waterproof boots, sou'westers, pants, and head protection, spent some time recently at the Minter Creek hatchery collecting eggs from female chum salmon gathered from the creek during their return from the sea to spawn in the place of their birth. They gathered the secretion from male salmon and flushed it onto the eggs to make them fertilized.

"All of these salmon (now dead, beheaded, or dying) are being sent to Bellingham where they will be used in cat food," said one participant, Randy Babich, a commercial fisherman voluntarily working at the Washington state fish hatchery to save the chum salmon from virtual extinction.

Babich, who has lived in Longbranch for 20 years, has been involved in the commercial

salmon industry for 40 years. "My wife and I have been salmon and roe processors in Puget Sound for 14 years," he said.

He explained that in 2002, upon hearing that the chum salmon program was going to be

"Along with our volunteer effort, we will send a check to the state for approximately \$8,000 to subsidize the total cost of the program."

-Randy Babich, fisherman

cut because of a large state budget deficit, a couple of fishermen had an idea on how to sustain the program.

"In conjunction with some members of Puget Sound Seiners Association, I opened a dialogue with the Department of Fish and

Wildlife to cover the funding deficit of the chum program with volunteer work and cash," Babich said. "The chum salmon is a very viable and lucrative fishery for Puget Sound fishermen and we did not want to see this very successful chum hatchery program disappear."

This is the second year many volunteers from the Gig Harbor Commercial Civic Fishermen's Club and citizens at large have put in many hours gathering chum salmon eggs and caring for them at the Minter Creek Hatchery.

"Along with our volunteer effort, we will send a check to the state for approximately \$8,000 to subsidize the total cost of the program," Babich said. "Some money has been donated by Purse Seine Vessels' Owners of Seattle, some by the Puyallup Indian Tribe, and the rest by individual fishermen and fish processors."



Steffan Fritz, Herron Island resident and one of the volunteer commercial fishermen assisting in the chum salmon hatching process at the state fish hatchery on Minter Creek in December, said, "We've planted 1.3 million eggs today." Fritz is placing the eggs in the hatching trays. The weighing basket is in the foreground with a load of fresh salmon roe.

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Looking back, looking ahead

A view of where Key Pen has been in '04 and where it's heading in '05

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

The Key Peninsula was busy in 2004. While some people think nothing happens around this “quiet” neck of the woods, there was plenty happening here, and much more is coming in the new year.

In a substitution of the customary “New Year’s resolutions” theme, the Key Peninsula News decided to take a look at last year’s top events, along with a sneak peak at 2005.

Looking back

Parks, community development, schools, law enforcement and the arts — just about all aspects of local life made the news last year.

Following a bit of controversy over the creation of a metropolitan park district, local residents voted in May to create the new park entity, which came along with more than \$100,000 in funding from zoo/trek money already paid through sales tax. By the end of the year, the district established itself as independent of the cash-strapped KP Parks and Recreation District, which is due to be dissolved.

After months of planning and hard work, the Key Pen Community Council became official and elected 14 directors equally representing all parts of the peninsula, and by the end of the year this new entity was mapping out its work.

As if these two new boards didn’t bring plenty of work for local volunteers, a Key Pen Community Planning Board was created. Funded by Pierce County and established with the help of Councilman Terry Lee, this body over the next two years will tackle the important task of creating a vision for the peninsula through a community development plan.

A crime and safety task force was yet another effort that brought together several interests and groups from around

the peninsula, with the focus on crime prevention and meth.

Word of good work happening on the Key Pen traveled around, as the KP Middle School was the very first and only school in the state to be selected for a three-year partnership with NASA—bringing an incredible opportunity to area students. The kudos continued later in the year, as the local arts group, Two Waters Arts Alliance, received a prestigious countywide award recognizing it for contributions to local arts.

Several longtime dreams came true last year, including the opening of a new fire station and the purchase of new fire engines; the introduction of 24-hour police coverage; an additional physician joining the local clinic, effectively doubling health care services; and news that a much-needed hospital will proceed with its building plans after receiving state approval.

What an incredible year!

But some dreams didn’t come true. The Key Peninsula Community Services and Food Bank got turned down for funding for a new, larger complex. In a string of negative news, the two or three military units that volunteered to remodel the current quarters were called to fight the war, and the project was postponed.

Looking ahead

The good thing about dreams is that there is always something to look forward to — and the folks at the KPCS do not give up, as they never have, not even when the organization was so low on money years ago that paid staff volunteered time. Director Cristi Watson said several groups, including KPCS, Children’s Home Society and Communities in School of Peninsula, are banding their efforts of serving residents.

“The goal is to combine resources and communicate. This group has the desire to bring human services to a combined effort,” she said.

Other important issues coming up in 2005:

Crime and safety: Following the addition of more deputies to Peninsula Detachment and 24-hour patrol,



Construction of Burger King at Lake Kathryn was in full swing in December, ahead of the fast-food joint’s anticipated March opening.

Photo by
Rodika Tollefson

“The overall approach is so that people involved in illegal activities, every time they turn around, will know they’re being watched by the public.”

-Dennis Taylor, Safe Streets

Councilman Terry Lee said his next goal would be to create a dispatch by the end of 2005 on this side of the Purdy Bridge, which would help make the deputies more visible and accessible.

Continuing its work on crime prevention, Safe Streets and the KP crime task force will coordinate the creation of a Teen Empowered Against Meth chapter at Peninsula High School, planning to hold its first meeting by February. Other upcoming developments include, with the help of Citizens Against Crime, piloting a land-access closure project that will help get rid of illegal activities on vacant land.

“The overall approach is so that people involved in illegal activities, every time they turn around, will know they’re being watched by the public,” Dennis Taylor of Safe Streets said. “We want the Key Peninsula to be the most uninviting place for meth.”

Roads: State Route 302 is unlikely to get much relief in 2005, after the Regional Transportation Improvement District last year decided against placing a tri-county road proposal on the ballot because it didn’t think taxpayers would have supported the tax package. SR-302 was one of the Pierce County projects that could have been funded, but Lee said the RTID may downsize its proposal. That means SR-302 may become a victim of the delete button.

“If they pare (the list) down, there’s a chance 302 will fall off it,” Lee said. “It’s barely hanging in there.”

Some relief will come later, however,

with the planned traffic light at Goodnough Drive (the road that crosses the SR-302’s Purdy on/off exit. Lee said a traffic study was finished and cost estimates were being done, and by the end of 2005 a construction schedule could be set.

Parks: The issue of parks will stay at the forefront during the entire year, as several acquisitions are being discussed, including nearly 100 acres at Devil’s Head, about 360 acres near Horseshoe Lake for a regional active park, and potentially another 60 acres across from Volunteer Park. The Purdy Sand Spit and the historic Wauna Post Office will likely remain a controversial subject for entire 2005.

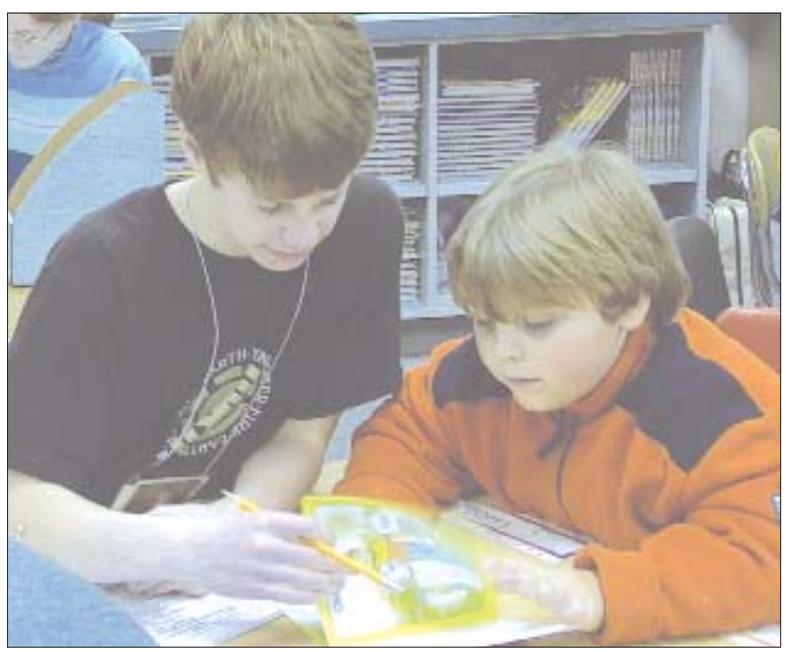
New funding may come into the hands of the metro parks district if Lee is successful in proposing an amendment that will send all park impact fees collected locally from new development to the MPD. “This would be a little more predictable money for them” than the variable zoo/trek funding, he said.

On the lighter side, the Key Peninsulans will have a whopping three new places to dine this year, following the opening last year of the Brookside Restaurant and — finally — Blondie’s, and the upcoming opening of Burger King, for those more into fast food. Several groups promised to keep up the heat on entertainment, and between Longbranch Improvement Club’s planned theater sets and other parties, the Civic Center’s dances, the TWAA’s art classes, and other groups’ get-togethers, everyone should have enough outlets to get out and relax after all those heavy-duty activities that the multitude of boards, task forces and committees will require.

Some things will not change in 2005: A great number of residents will continue to give their time and efforts for the betterment of their community. We could not ask more for the new year!

Show & Tell

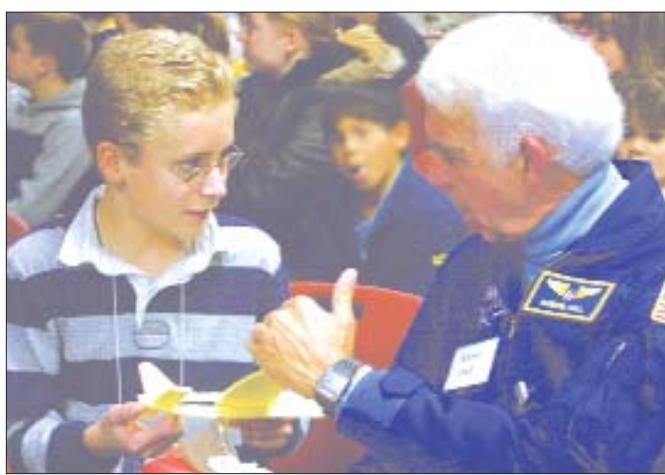
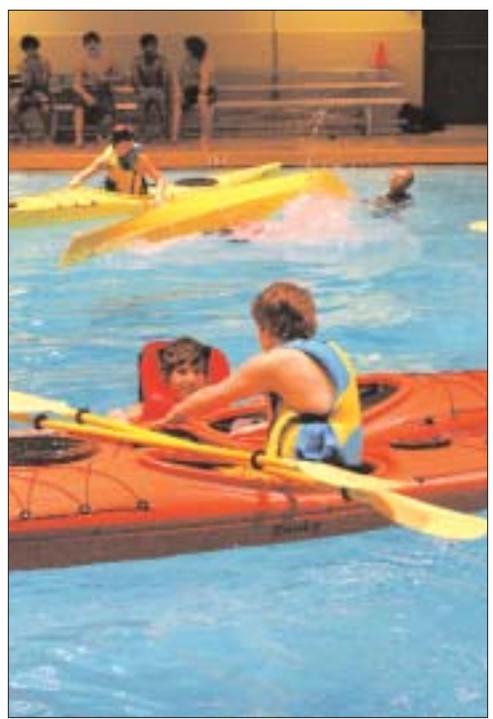
Peninsula High School ninth-grader Josh Edwards reads to second grader Logan Beal during the after school reading program at Vaughn Elementary. Sponsored by Communities in Schools of Peninsula, the program pairs up one of more than 20 students with an adult—or in this case a teen—volunteer mentor. An additional group volunteers at Evergreen. *Photo by Rodika Tollefson*



Left, Nadine Pasine was among 41 Minter Creek Elementary students who got to use the "Money Machine," also know as the "Bubble Machine," an inflated, 10-foot-high fan-folded balloon in which dollar bills fly swirling around its interior. Students had 15 seconds for reaching into the bubble through arm openings and grabbing as many flying dollar bills as possible. They earned this thrill by selling at least 20 different items during the school's fall fund-raiser.

Below, KPMS eighth-grader Chris Miller shows NASA astronaut and author Warren Hall his entry in the KPMS NASA Explorer School model glider competitions at the school's first NASA Family Night in early December. Hall is assistant director for aviation and a research pilot at the Ames Research Center in California.

Far left, In the foreground, ninth-grader Matt Smith assists classmate Tyler McKinney to re-board the kayak from which he had been dumped a training exercise on water safety at Peninsula High's pool. Mik Mikitik of the Gig Harbor Kayak Center can be seen in the background at the bows of two kayaks simulating rough water, as student Alex Putz gets dumped while his buddy Woody Shaufler reaches for his boat. *Photos by Hugh McMillan*





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Wrestlers place at competition

By Hugh McMillan
KP News

The second Saturday of December, all four Peninsula School District middle schools engaged in their annual wrestling tournament, this time at Goodman Middle School. Key Peninsula Middle School wrestling coach Jason McWhirter explained that the match is not between the schools, it is between individual wrestlers, and it is not uncommon to see two competitors from the same middle school square off against each other in their weight categories.

McWhirter provided



Photo by Hugh McMillan

KPMS' Micah Allen vs. Kopachuck's Austin Harshman. Allen took second place in the unlimited weights.

the following results of the competitions insofar as KPMS wrestlers are concerned: Leonard Lowry, 3rd place, 100 pounds; Chase Oswalt, 1st place, 105 pounds; Evan Mitchel, 3rd place, 110 pounds; Daniel McPherson, 3rd place, 115 pounds; Kasey Chakos, 3rd place, 125 pounds; JD Devega, 1st place, 130 pounds; Zach Moore, 2nd place, 137 pounds; Christian Doucett, 3rd place, 137 pounds; Jesse Erickson, 1st place, 145 pounds; Lorren Herrera, 3rd place, 145 pounds; Al Rasmussen, 1st place, 154 pounds; Gakob Davies, 3rd place, 164 pounds; Micah Allen, 2nd place, Unlimited; and Tyler Erickson, 3rd place, Unlimited.

PHS senior organizes 'Peninsula Idol'

Peninsula High School's Carl Reneman was looking for a way to help people in need. For his senior project, Reneman decided to organize a "Peninsula Idol" contest to benefit the Children's Home Society in Vaughn.

The musical performance will feature all Disney songs as a way to keep the event family-friendly, Reneman said. About 26 PHS students will display their talents, and will receive various prizes for their participation. Reneman is no stranger to the Children's Home Society—he raised money for the organization previously by organizing a talent show for his scouts Eagle Scout project.

It's a big project for Reneman, who is producing and managing the show, considering he struggles with ADD, Tourette and Robin's syndrome. He's been working at it since September, and by mid-December rehearsals were well under way.

The show is Friday, Jan. 7, at 7 p.m., at PHS Milton Boyd auditorium. Admission is \$3 per person or \$10 per family, and PHS license plates will be available for sale to raise additional funds.



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Real Estate in the New Year

The Year 2004 has been a record breaking one for the real estate industry across the country and The National Association of Realtors (NAR) is expecting 2005 to be only slightly less than 2004 – record breaking in the number of homes sold as well as the price of homes. Here in Washington State the price of an average home has increased by 11.75% this past year. On the Key Peninsula our average 3 bedroom home price has risen from \$185,000 to \$218,600 during the past year – an increase of 16%!

These record breaking numbers have, of course, been fueled by the low interest rates (still below 6% for a 30 year fixed rate mortgage) and better than expected employment growth. While interest rates are expected to rise slightly during 2005, they still should be at a very affordable rate – especially during the first half of the year.

All this adds up to an excellent time to either buy or sell your Key Peninsula properties. Vacant land is also selling very well, so if you are interested in buying or selling land or a home – this is definitely a good time to do it.

Sold recently on the Key Peninsula:

7913 Yeazell Rd -
Longbranch waterfront farm - \$800,000

15509 131 Ave Ct. KPN -
4 BR. home on 5 acres - \$297,000

13619 Sandy Point KPN -
3 BR. Lake Holiday home - \$175,000

We would like to welcome Chris Fitzgerald to our office. Chris is a former Windermere agent from West Seattle who has now relocated to the Key Peninsula.



DOLL-HOUSE CHARM! \$125,000

This 3 bedroom, 2 full bath home is beautifully decorated and lovingly maintained. Bright and sunny kitchen has a breakfast nook with lots of windows, to enjoy your morning coffee. Easy care laminate woodfloors add a touch of country. Spacious 1.38 acres offers lots of play space; landscaped green lawn, rock terraces, patio, picnic area and garden shed. MLS #24162263



VIEW OF GLEN COVE \$25,000

Comfortable newer home with a serene view of Glen Cove. Features four bedrooms, den, family room, deck w/hot tub, sport court and attached 2-car garage. This 4.31 acre property includes small cabin w/separate driveway, barn w/hay storage, and 3 separate fenced pastures. High potential here! MLS 24154263



WINTER SUNSET VIEW \$228,000

Home features large deck, full view from living room, dining area and kitchen. You will enjoy the open airy feeling with vaulted ceilings, skylights & large bedrooms. Home has been very well taken care of and is in almost new condition. Property includes a RV garage, shop, extra parking, and community beach rights with a boat ramp and nice cabana/picnic area. MLS 24152111.



ROCKY CREEK \$225,000

Secluded cottage nestled upon this rare & beautiful 10+ acres. Additional big site ready for your main home: water, power, phone & septic installed. Private well, two 2-bdrm septic. MLS 24145415



CHARMING VICTORIAN! \$410,000

Quality custom built Victorian home located on Glen Cove. Enjoy the beautiful gardens as you wander down the cobblestone path to view the unique waterfall meandering down to the fishpond. Relax on the covered wrap around porch, which provides a wonderful view of Glen Cove, as do the many rooms in this beautiful home. MLS 24078777



NO BANK WATERFRONT HOME! \$629,000

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Setting up priorities An interview with Rep. Derek Kilmer

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Last year's legislative election took a while to figure out, as the District 26 races took some time to finally produce winners.

As the Legislature geared up for a new session, the Key Peninsula News sat down with newly elected Rep. Derek Kilmer to ask him about his campaign experi-

ence, plans and hopes for the new job. The election didn't seem to take any energy out of Kilmer, who chose to meet at a place he came to know very well during the campaign — a local Starbucks where he would come to warm up and rest almost every day after sessions of sign waving.

Kilmer was getting ready to take a leave of absence from his job with the Tacoma-Pierce County Economic Development Board and waiting to hear about his committee assignments. His top choices for committee assignments were Economic Development, Agriculture and Trade; Transportation; and Technology, Energy and Communications.

Key Peninsula News: What was the toughest part of your campaign?

Derek Kilmer: My answer may surprise you. I knocked on 15,000 doors — that in itself is challenging because it takes time away from your family. I met a lot of people who had many problems, and they stick with you. I met a senior who said, "I choose between food and medicine every day." They cut their pills in half. You feel obligated to fight for people like her. I knocked at the door of

a single mom who has had a hard time getting a job and was going to school. It really stuck with me. Two things I talked about most were jobs and improving the economy. To put faces to those issues was challenging.

KPN: Did that help you understand your potential future constituents better?

DK: The campaign was one of the hardest job interviews I've had; it reminded me how much work needs to be done.

KPN: What do you see as your priority issues in 2005?

DK: I campaigned on a handful of issues that are important to me. The No. 1 issue is jobs. The issues that go on in Olympia are cumulative: Transportation, affordability of health care, higher education all factor into jobs and the economy. You have to focus on economic development in a comprehensive way. It's like a business selling a product — we're selling our community and our state. You have to have a good product and sell it well. The first step is to make sure we're competitive, and the top challenge is finding good skilled workers. We're underfunding high-demand jobs; we'll see that in our neck of the woods with the new hospital. Employers are literally importing nurses from the Philippines. We need to make sure people like the woman on the Key Peninsula get the training they need and get a good job.

Health care is another issue. Businesses are having a hard time finding affordable health care, and workers have increased costs too. We should encourage businesses to pool their buying powers. Training is another issue. We need a job skills program for businesses to improve the skills of their work force with state-matched funding. It would pay for itself: If the business closes and people are out of jobs, it will cost more to pay for unemployment. The best social service is a job.

KPN: How will these kinds of ideas help Key Peninsula jobs?

DK: My focus is on local jobs that provide good benefits. I think there are some good opportunities on the Key Peninsula. A lot of these challenges are not unique. I'm talking about small businesses in our neck of the woods; the challenges of finding skilled workers are not unique. If we address these issues, the community will benefit. The community development plan currently in the works will present some opportunities and I'd like to be a partner with that from Olympia.

KPN: What do you think the community plan will bring?

DK: Where I think we want to go — be a great place to live and have a good community and quality of life. There were some themes when I knocked on doors: education, health care, jobs, quality of life, these are all values. The main things I heard were pretty consistent with what I plan to focus my priorities on. I've knocked at the door of at least one person a day who didn't have a job. Jobs and health care came up the most by far.

KPN: What other priority issues do you see facing the Key Peninsula?

DK: Transportation is a big one. Two main issues on State Route 302 are safety and congestion. The tolls on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge are also an issue. We have not gotten our fair share of transportation dollars and we need a voice at the table who will represent the area.

KPN: How can some of these problems be resolved?

DK: For Key Peninsula, I plan to work with county Councilman Terry Lee and the rest of our Olympia delegation to make sure the safety issues are presented. The same is true with the toll: I'd like to see some state funding for the Narrows Bridge project. The argument is on fairness. We're the only area that's singled out. If we can make that argument successfully, the next step would be to get the funding.

KPN: Do you feel that being a freshman lawmaker has disadvantages?

DK: I don't believe there is a hierarchy

of ideas. To me, the valuable thing a new Legislature brings is new ideas. I believe you run for office not to be something but to do something. I'm not going to sit by just because I'm new.

KPN: What do you see as the most challenging part?

DK: I'll probably be able to answer that better after the session. I think just the fact we're facing a revenue shortfall, and the state faces many challenges.

KPN: What challenges do you see regarding the Key Pen?

DK: The Key Peninsula presents unique challenges with safety issues. To me community safety is central. One of the things we value is that this is a great place to live.

KPN: What can be done about that at the legislative level?

DK: We've seen some things done, like meth cleanup funding and implementing best practices.

KPN: What do you see as your role for the local community?

DK: I will have an open ear to the community and their issues that will arise. My job is to fight for it, whether it's at the community level or just issues that only affect one family. I encourage them to call my office.

As the interview wound up, Kilmer wanted to share that one of the most gratifying parts of the campaign was the number of people who volunteered their time — about 300 of them. "It's a team effort when you run for office. You can't do it on your own," he said.

Two weeks later, he called to share the good news: Not only was he assigned to his three committees of choice, but he was also named the vice chair of one of them, Technology, Energy and Communications. "I was thrilled," he said.

Following his swearing in on Jan. 10, Kilmer may be reached by phone at 360-786-7802, email to kilmer_de@leg.wa.gov or by mail at PO Box 40600, Olympia, WA, 98504.



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The Salatino family brings Christmas cheer

By Hugh McMillan
KP News

On Christmas, the parking lot at the Key Peninsula Civic Center was dominated in its handicapped parking slots by three huge Pierce Transit busses — legally parked. The rest of the lot was well filled. Sounds of frivolity and perfumes of food wafted from the center.

It was the annual Christmas dinner sponsored by Mike and Joyce Salatino for any seniors and others wishing to enjoy a sumptuous meal with others who, too, might otherwise dine alone.

The undertaking is huge. It would take many more column inches than we can offer to do it justice. For example, the volunteer crew this year numbered more than 50, and rest assured, they were all very busy and loving it.

"It all started 26 years ago," Joyce Salatino said. "Mike visited an elderly man in a nursing home on Christmas Eve and delivered a fruit basket on

behalf of a lodge of which both were members. The man broke down and sobbed that 'the greatest gift was the company of a fellow lodge member and he didn't need gifts if he could only have some company.'"

The next year, the Salatinos hired a Trailways bus, contacted several homes to invite guests who would otherwise be alone and "drafted Henry and Eleanor Stock (now deceased) to invite KP seniors to be our guests," said Joyce. This year, Pierce Transit donated three busses, each operated by a Pierce Transit volunteer driver and attendant.

The first years had rough edges, said the Salatinos. Some homes sent people unaware of the dinner's location and purpose. So they set some guidelines, with the focus on "people who would otherwise be alone on Christmas Day."

"It was never intended to be a poverty program," Mike said. "Rich or poor, people feel the pain of loneliness, especially during the holidays."

Friends volunteer to help with shopping, food donations and preparation,



Photo by Hugh McMillan

Mario Santori, Erin Ellingson, and event organizer Mike Salatino make sure each guest gets a present before leaving the Christmas dinner.

table setup and cleanup. "Our 'support staff' changes as some are with their own families every other year. Then too, some pass on," the couple said.

Their daughter, Angela, has been an active part of the program all along, involving friends and now her husband and children.

Christmas Eve from noon to 2 p.m., a crew preps the turkeys and makes dressing while others set up tables. One friend delights in making fruit and candy gift sacks for each guest.

"Some years we've had an abundance of helpers, others we're a bit short," said Joyce, "but we're always ready."

Thanks to Fred and Mary Ramsdell, Santa and Mrs. Claus graced the gathering to hand every guest a gift. The gifts were organized with help from

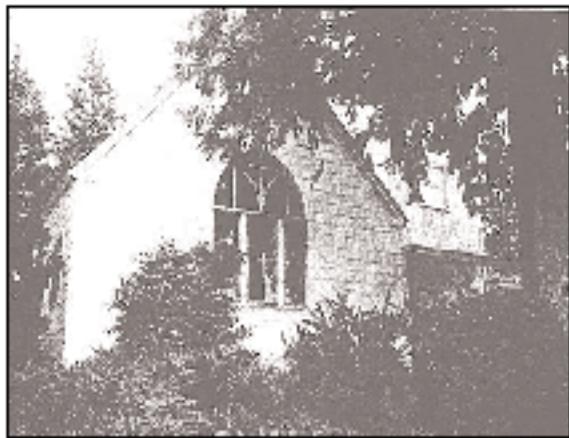
friends by Joyce, who guided the Clauses to correctly pronounce the guests' names.

Although the Salatinos call it a dinner for seniors, some guests, under 60, attend because they have special needs and are often excluded from their biological families for whatever reason.

"They are delighted to attend our party and we want to include every senior in our community," the couple said.

However, they cannot accommodate drop-in guests. To do so would make it impossible to predict necessary food and gift supplies.

"It just takes a phone call as late as Christmas Eve to be included in the party," they said.



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Our church started out on Filroy Bay early in the 1900s. There had to be moved in 1939 to its present location, after it started to slide into the bay. It is now on 46th Street KPS, next to the Longbranch Cemetery. The new church was built in 1940 and dedicated in June of 1948 as The Longbranch Community Church. We're a family oriented inter-denominational church. We welcome you to Sunday worship at 11 am. Our choir always has room for more voices. Happy New Year and May God Bless you with

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Angels from 'The Garage' deliver Christmas to KP family

By Hugh McMillan
KP News

For Karen Schaefer and family, Santa came the day before Christmas. He met them at a Chevrolet dealer in Tacoma's Stadium District.

Since the unexpected death of her husband, Leo, the day before Thanksgiving, Schaefer, now a single parent and sole bread winner, became the focus of "The Garage," a group of 147 individuals from across the United States, Australia, Germany, and France who hold a common passion for BMW cars and a commitment to help those in need.

Schaefer's sons from a previous marriage, Boy Scouts Angus and Logan Carlisle, 13 and 11 respectively, are students at KPMS, where both have been involved in various service projects. One of those projects is an After 'OURS class developed by KPMS psychologist Tim Vanderveen, through which they volunteer to help people with disabilities in Gig Harbor. They have relied on their mom to take them back and forth because transportation cannot be provided by the school district.

But Schaefer's 9-year-old car was sick. She needed it back on the road so she could go to work, but its list of repairs appeared hopeless for a car that age. She also wanted to return a car borrowed from friends Pat and Lory Kelley of Gig Harbor.

Key Peninsula Middle School teacher Connie Nelson's husband, Jan Nelson, is a "Garage" member. He telephoned Duane Collie, founder of "The Garage," at his residence in Alexandria, Va. They decided that Schaefer's "not having a car was not an option."

"Our members responded. In one week, with the help of the good people at Bruce Titus Chevrolet who made it affordable, we had funds for a new car and a little extra to put gifts in the car for the Schaefer's," Collie said.

In a deliciously convoluted collusive operation, the Kelleys readily agreed to invite Schaefer and family to "Christmas Eve lunch" in Tacoma. En route, they stopped at the auto dealer "to pick up a part." Kelley fibbed, "Why don't you come in where it's warm."

Talk about warm! To their utter surprise, Schaefer and her kids received



Top, R-L: Sarah Carlisle leans against her mom, Karen Schaefer, who is looking through a card filled with money. Also in photo are Karen's son Ohran Carlisle, on leave from the U.S. Marine Corps, his fiancée, Veronica Zacharczyk, and Jan Nelson. Right, Angus and Logan Carlisle find presents in the trunk. *Photos by Hugh McMillan*

from the "Garage" angels, whom they'd never heard of, a new Chevrolet Cavalier, a year's insurance, sales tax, license, and along with some \$400 in gift certificates, a trunk load of presents, and \$1,000 in \$100 bills toward re-establishing Schaefer's cleaning business.

"To us, this is the true meaning of Christmas," Collie said. "It's about sharing, giving, reaching out to a family that has always tried to do the right thing. Most of us will never meet the Schaefer family, but hopefully we can help them reach their goals and smooth the road ahead for them."

"For Karen, Angus and Logan, nothing can replace a husband and a father. However, attention from their angels may lift them enough to ease their loss so they can move on with their lives. Lives that are now connected forevermore beyond Key Peninsula."

Connie Nelson said, "The Garage is just incredible. I am so grateful that

Logan and Angus have the opportunity to envision their connection to people throughout the U.S. and other parts of our world. My wish is that this will ignite a burning desire in them to dream about, to believe in, and to reach for their hearts' desires."

Co-workers help injured mom

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Deer on the Key Peninsula roads are a common sight and the creatures are mostly harmless, but one encounter in December has changed a young woman's life forever. Mirahna "Roni" Armhein, swerving to avoid a deer on Whiteman Road, lost control of her car, which rolled over several times. As her seatbelt popped loose, she was ejected from the vehicle.

Roni's two passengers were not seriously hurt, but Roni's injuries left her paralyzed from the waist down, said her Peninsula Market co-worker, Tonie Petredis. Roni, whose son will turn 3 in early January, until the accident was the main caregiver for her diabetic father, who is wheelchair-bound.

Co-workers pulled together to help a little. They started a drive for Christmas gifts for the family, and opened an account at Sound Credit Union across the street.

"Everyone loves her to death. She's so happy and bubbly and makes us laugh," said Tonie, who's been calling Roni at the hospital regularly in December. "We wanted her to have some sort of Christmas." Roni was expecting to be released home for the holidays because she can't undergo physical therapy until her arm heals.

"She's in good spirits and doing well. She's the kind of person who wouldn't give up," Tonie said.

Anyone who would like to help the family may donate to Roni's account at the Key Center branch of Sound Credit Union, or stop by Peninsula Market in Key Center.

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Key Peninsula Writers' Guild winter morning write-in

The Guild members wish to extend an invitation to Peninsula writers and friends to join them for a "Winter Morning Write-in" Jan. 15, Saturday morning, from 10 to noon. They will meet at the Key Center Library in Key Center.

Please come to participate, observe, and meet others interested in the craft. RSVP appreciated. Contact Danna Webster at 253-884-6455 or email dannadu@gigharbor.com.

Walk-ins welcome.

Little League holds registration for 2005

The Key Peninsula Little League will have its 2005 season registration in January.

Registration will be at the Elgin-Clifton fire station as follows:

Jan. 8, 10am-2pm

Jan. 12, 6pm-8:30pm

Jan. 22, 1pm-4pm

Registrations accepted in person only; bring original birth certificates and proof of residency.

TOPS invites you to achieve New Year's health resolution

As the New Year begins, many people will be making resolutions. A great many will resolve to drop a few pounds this year. We welcome with open arms and hearts new members and all their enthusiasm and determination to be become healthier and trimmer. Weight is such a personal battle and one person's struggle is totally different from another's. No matter if you only have a couple of pounds that are bugging you or if your doctor has made an order for you to get off many extra pounds, T.O.P.S. will give you support and endeavor. Obesity has rapidly become one of the major problems of the American population. Men, women, and children all share in the great fat explosion that has crept up on us in the past years.

There are big businesses out there ready to take your hard-earned cash with the idea that if you pay big bucks, you will try harder to take off the pounds. If you or any of your friends and family have experience with the expensive weight loss programs, you know first hand that the money you spend won't guarantee that you will keep the weight off. TOPS does not have a one diet fits all regime. TOPS

Kids and Christmas converge on LIC



Photos and story by Hugh McMillan

The Longbranch Improvement Club sponsored a new event in December at the LIC clubhouse, "Kids and Christmas in Longbranch."

The event was a great success and has organizer Linda LeBlanc enthusiastically making plans for a larger event next year.

LeBlanc said, "We had five Girl Scout troops manning arts and crafts tables so that the children of the peninsula could make presents for their family members. Samantha Wolf, Amanda Melbourne, Ashley Bailey, Alvin Cheney, Kari Cain, and Cali Shirley, all volunteers from Peninsula High School, served as Santa's helpers handing out gifts to each child and helping to wrap handmade treasures."

More than 150 children sat on Santa's lap to divulge their wishes for Christmas morning. They were presented a gift

and a framed photo of the magic moment.

"I had a vision of this great historical building echoing with the sounds of children laughing and being filled with holiday warmth and spirit," LeBlanc said. "I could not have asked for a better outcome for our first time."

The kitchen overflowed with cookies, cupcakes, hot cider, and cocoa. All the coats, hats and blankets collected over the last month were contributed to families who needed them and greatly appreciated. As children left, Rebecca Wolf, a sixth-grade volunteer from Key Peninsula Middle School, presented each one a new book, donated by the LIC.

LeBlanc said, "It would not have been possible without all the hard working volunteers, Toys for Tots, private donations from LIC members and community members, local businesses, and schools. Thank you."



Above, Madison McSorley, 2, awaits her turn to talk to Santa.

Top left, (Left to right) Matthew Wormley, 2, Desiree Barry, 4, Heather Gadsey, 8, and Crystal Gadsey, 6, add a new dimension to the lighted choo-choo train fronting the LIC stage.

gives you guidelines and incentives to succeed in your personal quest for normal, healthy, weight.

T.O.P.S. is low cost at \$20.00 to join plus \$5 monthly dues. There is NO weigh-in fee. We meet in the VFW room at the Civic Center. Weigh-in is from 6-7pm and our meetings are from 7-8pm. We are a support group that encourages you to achieve. During our meetings we have activities, games and success stories to help us all stay on track.

If you are interested or have any questions feel free to stop by or call the Civic Center at 253-884-3456.

—By Jena Henak

Angel Guild needs volunteers

We have done our annual cleaning, painting and improvement of the shop. It

is always nice to see it so fresh and clean. Come in and see all the new merchandise. We have surprise sales, some one day only sales. It is a good idea to check the store out and we are always glad to see you.

We have some new members and are very happy to welcome them to the group. But we can always use more so if you have spare time and are looking for a worthwhile way to fill it contact our coordinator, Bonnie @884-5983 or angelguild9013@hotmail.com.

—By Betty Barkubein

Bayshore Garden Club January meeting

The Bayshore Garden Club will meet at the Longbranch Fire Station at 1 p.m. on Jan. 7.

The hostess is Marguerite Bussard; theme program by Erma Dunn; horticult-

ture by Edith Pinder; and design by Sylvia Retherford.

For information, call Sylvia at 884-2487.

Civic Center offers great event space

Happy New Year! So much to look forward to, and 365 days to improve ourselves! It can present quite the project.

Friday night skate will be starting up again on Jan. 7, from 6:30 – 9:00pm. The cost is \$4.

Staff encourages you to plan ahead and schedule upcoming events now. Rental rates are \$25 per hour for the Whitmore Room or the kitchen, \$50/hour for the gymnasium and \$20/hour for the VFW room, and deposit is required for each rental. Call 884-3456, fax to 884-4053, or email kpcca@keypeninsula.com.

Adventure series invites you to 'explore' the world

Key Peninsula has its share of interesting people, and that rare breed who have traveled the world are some of the most interesting. They are also, as you might expect, the most willing to share their experiences so this winter, sponsored by Key Peninsula Community Services, Caril Ridley will host a forum for local explorers to share their international adventures and present a home-grown world of travel.

The first presentation is offered by Hugh McMillan, who has traveled and lived in countries around the world. He recently returned from traveling in China and will share his experiences and insights. The presentation is Jan. 15 at 7 p.m. at the Key Peninsula Community Services and Food Bank facility just south of Home.

—By Caril Ridley

Toastmasters invites KP residents

Toastmasters invites peninsula residents to attend one of New Year's Kick-off meetings on Jan. 17 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. or Jan. 19 from noon to 1 p.m. Toastmasters

can teach you to speak with clarity and authority, get your point across quickly and concisely, give effective presentations and more. The meetings are at the Olympic Alzheimer's residence at 3025 14th Ave NW in Gig Harbor. For details, call Sarah Taylor 857-2035.

Blondie's features blues and jazz

Maia Santell and House Blend (jazz and blues) will perform live at Blondie's Bar & Grill, 9016 154th Ave. Ct. KPN (Key Center) on Friday, Jan. 7, 9 p.m. to midnight. "Maia Santell and House Blend take the audience on a sensational journey through the finest era of jazz and blues, and pour new life into the sounds of the '50s, '60s and '70s," The Heritage Music Revue remarked.

Called one of Northwest's "most dynamic and refreshingly believable vocalists," Santell has a clear voice that can give equal justice to swing, blues, and novelty songs.

For information on the Jan. 9 performance, call Blondie's at 884-1300.

The KP News welcomes your submissions. The deadline is the 17th of each month.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteer spotlight

Marlene Miles

Marlene Miles has volunteered for Angel Guild for almost three years. She wanted to meet new people while helping others in need, and jumped right in when a friend told her about Angel Guild.

"She puts in a lot of extra hours for Angel Guild not only here but also at home. She always does everything we ask her to do," said Guild President Nancy Korseck.

Marlene takes care of all the dolls and other toys that are donated to the guild's Key Center thrift store, from testing all the battery-operated ones to pricing, and regularly takes her work home. Through its store, the nonprofit Angel Guild has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to other Key Peninsula nonprofit groups, and each month they help several organizations fund various programs and needs.

Marlene has lived on the Key



Peninsula for eight years after visiting her sister here from Hawaii one year and falling in love with the area. Through the Angel Guild, she has achieved both her goals of meeting new people and helping others.

"Everybody is friendly and nice to work with," she said. "Everybody has a say in where our money goes and I've made a lot of friends."

Volunteer opportunities

Children's Home Society

Ongoing need for Clothing Bank volunteers, and for data entry/office tasks. Contact Edie Morgan at 884-5433.

Communities in Schools of Peninsula

Adult mentors are needed for elementary age children for new Math Mentor program at Key Peninsula Middle School. Also need after-school reading mentors at Vaughn and Evergreen Elementary schools. Spend one hour a week helping a student be more successful in school. Contact Colleen Speer at 884-5733.

Key Peninsula Community Services

Volunteer needed for Administrative Assistant position. No pay. Lots of work. Warm fuzzy feeling in your heart to help with your sore feet. Contact Cristi Watson 253-884-4440 at Key Peninsula Community Services.

Key Peninsula Middle School AFTER 'OURS Program

Individuals are needed who are interested in helping as academic tutors in academic classes or offering to teach a class such as automotive care, mechanics, dance, photography, arts, and more. Contact Jan Siburg at 884-4800.

Key Peninsula News

Volunteers needed with various talents including writing, photography, clerical, organizing and others, including for short-term projects. Time commitment can be as little as two hours a month. Call Rodika Tollefson at 884-4699 or email news@keypennews.com

Do you know an extraordinary volunteer who serves on the Key Peninsula? Call 884-4699 or email news@keypennews.com with details and we may feature that special volunteer in an upcoming issue of the Key Peninsula News.

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Photo by Hugh McMillan

The much-awaited opening of Blondie's restaurant in Key Center in December brought rave reviews from diners. Pictured here is the lounge, which will often feature live music.

By Hugh McMillan
KP News

Dec. 17 launched a three-day grand opening of Blondie's, a first class restaurant and jazz lounge in Key Center. The celebration continued through Sunday and the lounge featured a different musical group each evening, the Billy Shew band, Loose Gravel & the Quarry, and Steve Stevanovich.

The kitchen is state of the art and the food is as good as it gets. Chef Glenn Rob'erts, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y., and the Royal Savage Eggs Cookery School, Plattsburg, N.Y., augmented by four additional chefs, promises only the best ingredients and cooking.

It all began in August 2003 when Lisa "Blondie" Marshall watched a new building going up on the hill above her

Lisa's Deli in Key Center and decided, "It's going to be mine! I'm going to build a restaurant and jazz lounge there." She continued to run Lisa's Deli during the day; nights and weekends found her nailing, sawing, and painting with the crews creating her dream establishment.

She was nothing but upbeat throughout the 14 months of construction and creation. She poured praise on the many people who worked on the project, including Kevin Birch of Birch Electric, Doug Wilson of Pierce County, Connie Schick Floors, Sunnycrest Nursery's Dale and Claudia Loy, and others.

"I built Blondie's through the community and for the community. I want a place where our peninsula people can eat a quality meal in a nice place at a reasonable price without having to leave the peninsula," she said.

Tacoma/Pierce County Economic Development Board before starting his new term this January in the state Legislature. Kilmer will talk about economic and business development.

"This is our annual get-together to celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of another," Ruth Bramhall, one of the organizers, said.

Tickets are \$15 per person and you must RSVP by Jan. 10. The money pays for the social's costs. KPBA will send out invitations by the first week of January, but anyone interested to purchase tickets may call Bramhall at 857-5184.

Business brief

Business group extends invitation to annual event

The Key Peninsula Business Association will hold its annual social on Jan. 17 at Camp Seymour, and invites anyone interested in networking or becoming involved with the business community to join in. The event starts at 6 p.m. and includes dinner; installation of officers; and guest speaker Derek Kilmer, who has been working for the

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Gift giving is more than one simple story

By Danna Webster
KP News

The KP News holiday issues were filled with happy stories about donations and gifts. In most cases, there was more to the story than meets the eye. For example, the story of the Fred Meyer donation to the Key Pen Community Services and Food Bank. This story has a great picture of Lisa Humes, the Fred Meyer customer service manager, handing a generous check in the amount of \$2,263.81 to Cristi Watson, the executive director of KPCS, but that picture doesn't tell the whole story. In fact, that portion of the story could read "The End." Lots of little stories went together before that picture was possible. This gift-giving story is a collection of many stories.

It is the story of the Fred Meyer employees' association whose focus is



Photo by Danna Webster

Left to right, Mike Boice, Fred Meyer store manager; Dave Nordberg, KPCS bread van driver; Kelley Palmer, Fred Meyer bread department manager; Steve Webster, associate; Christy Powell, bakery manager; and Brian Strand, associate.

"Hunger and Youth" in their communities. And their customer service manager at the Gig Harbor store who volunteered to work for the employees' association.

It is the story of employees at the Gig Harbor grocery who do more than pledge support to their foundation. Who conscientiously pull the dairy products, select the bakery products and, in the

early morning hours, open the doors for the Key Peninsula Community Services bread van drivers.

It's the story of the volunteer bread van drivers who are the ambassadors of the KPCS food bank. Their friendly manners, their appreciation for the Fred Meyer employees, their representation of the volunteers who serve the food bank brought awareness to the

Fred Meyer's association about the Key Peninsula needs.

It is the story of one morning, many months ago, when Lisa Humes visited with Dave Nordberg, a KPCS bread van driver, as he routinely purchased a lotto ticket at her customer service desk. His ID tag caught her eye, and because she had recently started working for the foundation, she said, "You guys could probably apply for this," and handed him an application form.

It's the story of the application form landing in mountains of other paperwork at KPCS; of the form hanging around through hectic schedules, receiving donations, packing food baskets for 144 families and still making it to Fred Meyer by the deadline.

It is the story of the luck of the draw. The Fred Meyer committee choosing KPCS from all the other applications. It is the story of how it takes more than luck to win. In this case, a friendly bread van driver who feels lucky one morning, buys a lotto ticket but is given a form to take with him, too. When the winners are drawn, the driver's Food Bank gets the call. A picture is taken to tell the story. From the smile on the driver's face, it looks like he won the jackpot.



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Nursery Care Provided

From Pioneer Stock Fifth generation on centennial farm

By Colleen Slater
KP News

Nicole Carr lives with husband Tony in a new home on land her great-great-grandfather, Andrew Olson, cleared for his homestead. Olson's property, owned by Chuck and Joyce Niemann in 1989, was one of two Pierce County Centennial Farms on the Key Peninsula.

Andrew Olson, born and raised in Sweden, arrived on the Key Peninsula in 1886, after hearing that the government was giving away land in the Puget Sound area. He cleared the required amount of land and built a one-room cabin on what son Elmer later named Sunnycrest Farm. His homestead, consisting of about 120 acres, covered much of what is now Key Center, and over the hill toward Vaughn. He originally claimed more, but some squatters moved in on the east side of the current Key Peninsula Highway, and since they had a gun, Olson decided he had enough land without that bit.

Tony Carr noted they still have two of

the oxen yokes Andrew used for clearing his land.

Andrew went to a church in Tacoma to find himself a wife. Their first five children spent their early years in the cabin until a larger house was built, which still stands. Nicole and Tony Carr lived in "the farmhouse" until their new home was finished.

Olson grew potatoes, raised cows, pigs, sheep and chickens, and planted an orchard of apples, prunes and pears. They grew rye and oats, and threshed the grain for seed.

The children carried five-pound lard buckets for lunch pails when they walked to the one-room school in Glen Cove. A favorite pastime was collecting Indian arrowheads around the Glen Cove beaches.

Elmer Olson's first paid job was plowing for neighbors, which netted \$5 per day. This was contributed to the family coffers, as was money from huckleberry picking.

In 1910, at age 13, Elmer drove A. E. Visell's team of horses to help his father



and brothers build a road across their property, later named Olson Road. The road building was in lieu of property taxes, and Visell's loan of the horses paid his taxes that year.

Elmer earned a teaching certificate from Normal School in Bellingham and planned to teach in Alaska, where brothers Arthur and Louie lived. War came, the brothers were drafted, Andrew became ill, and Elmer was called home by his mother to operate the farm. In 1922, he built his own house and married Elsie Bill. He discontinued the potatoes, and

started a chicken hatchery.

The Carr home is situated on the site of Elmer and Elsie's "Chicken House No. 5" and a small plaque inside identifies it as such.

After the depression, Elmer began a dairy. Later, he and Elsie had seasonal ventures — growing strawberries, buying huckleberries, and selling Christmas trees. "The Huckleberry Inn" was once his huckleberry shed, with a small café added on later.

Joyce Niemann, daughter of Elmer, has lived on the homestead property all but about six years of her life, and except for a short time spent in the house now owned by niece Claudia Loy, she lived those years in her present home — the 1922 home of her parents.

Son Chuck, father of Nicole, lives on some of Andrew's land, as do several other Olson descendants. Others own pieces of the original acreage.

Nicole has lived on the homestead property all her life except for her first six years and time spent at college.

She may have a brand new house, but the tradition of the family on the land is important to her. She is proud to be the fifth generation living on the historic Olson homestead.

Discussion groups to look at 'voluntary simplicity'

On Jan. 28, there will be an introduction to "Voluntary Simplicity" at the Key Center Library at 7 p.m. Judy Olsen, Puget Sound coordinator for the Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI), will provide an overview of NWEI's Voluntary Simplicity discussion course. NWEI currently offers a variety of courses throughout Puget Sound.

"These courses are an opportunity for people to discuss the topics and readings in the books, but perhaps more importantly to get to know other members of their community and feel more connected to their local environment," Olsen said.

The Voluntary Simplicity course allows members to explore the material and psychological distractions that prevent us from caring for the Earth and to consider how life might be enriched through the practice of simplicity. Members look at

what steps can be taken to move toward a life "simple in means, rich in ends." Margie Baran of Gig Harbor, who recently completed the course, feels that "meeting in a group each week you have the incentive to actually make practical changes in the way you live and you get to meet other like-minded people and share ideas." Baran's group has decided to continue meeting once a month to support each other in their learning and also to explore the option of bringing a food co-op to the Gig Harbor/ Peninsula communities.

Since the Northwest Earth Institute was founded in 1993, over 55,000 people have participated in NWEI discussion courses, meeting in hundreds of workplaces, homes and centers of faith in all 50 states. Discussion groups range from 6 to 12 people in size and meet for an hour. An NWEI mentor guides the group through the first and last sessions. The

other sessions are self-facilitated according to provided discussion questions and group process guidelines. Current discussion courses include Voluntary Simplicity, Choices for Sustainable Living, Exploring Deep Ecology, Discovering a Sense of Place and Globalization and its Critics. A sixth course, Healthy Children Healthy Planet, will be available after April.

NWEI co-founder, Dick Roy, is excited about the activity in Puget Sound.

"Programs of the Northwest Earth Institute support the great transition underway to a truly sustainable region — where citizens and organizations reduce their impact on the earth and consider the needs of future generations in making decisions today."

For more information, please join NWEI representatives at the Key Center Library on Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. or contact Judy Olsen at 253-853-7001 or judy@nwei.org.

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The gift of time: A day in the life of a Community House volunteer

A DAY IN THE
LIFE

By Colleen Slater, KP News

Verna Barnesson's volunteer work at Community House doesn't officially begin until 9:30 a.m., but as usual, she's knocking on the door soon after 9.

"I like to be here early," she says, as she sets down her thermal cup of hot chocolate and removes her coat.

"This is my new cup," she says, holding up the tall marbled blue container. "I'm always losing my cup, but I should be able to find this one." She won it at Bingo the previous evening, and shows it off to other volunteers familiar with her ability to "lose" her usual mug.

Verna greets staff and volunteers by name. She has a contagious smile and laugh, which help set a pleasant atmosphere for the area.

Her first job is stuffing shelves with bakery goods in the front office. She swipes each label with a red or orange marker to show that it was a donation.

Monday through Friday, Don, Dave, Gary and Larry collect bread and baked items from FISH, Fred Meyer and QFC in Gig Harbor. Warren and Earle make a Saturday run. The bread, including French bread, sourdough rounds and pita pockets, are available to all visitors, whether food recipients, volunteers, seniors or others, when there is a plentiful supply. They may also select from the bakery shelves.

Verna began volunteering in September, reporting for duty Tuesday through Friday, 9 to 4, and sometimes staying later if needed.

Director Cristi Watson says Verna has put in more hours than any other current volunteer.

"I'm a lifer," Verna says with a grin. "I enjoy it."

Verna, who was helped when she was down on her luck, feels good when people who have been recipients of food baskets can bring in donations. She has been volunteering long enough to see that happen here.



Photo by Colleen Slater

Food bank volunteers Stephenie Pope, Robbie Andrews and Verna Barnesson.

Warren and Debbie are already busy in the kitchen, preparing for the senior lunch. The tables are spread with red and green covers for the Christmas season.

"Homemade chicken noodle soup," says chef Warren. "Everything homemade except the noodles." He's been cooking senior lunches for five years. Debbie has been his assistant for a year and a half.

Linda and Wally LeBlanc arrive to collect blankets, coats, cupcakes, cookies and beverages for the Longbranch Improvement Club Christmas party on Sunday. Verna runs around to open the downstairs door.

Shelves downstairs are full of assorted staple items, and an old chest freezer is stuffed with cookies. Food donations are sorted down here, and when the upstairs shelves get low, volunteers carry up boxes to fill them.

Some bags of donations, including canned goods and staples from the Salvation Army and QFC, are sorted and shelved upstairs. Items like cranberry sauce, pumpkin, evaporated milk and olives are set aside to be taken downstairs for Christmas baskets.

Odd items, such as soy drink mixes, are set out at one end of the counter as "freebies" for whoever wants them. One section of shelves holds staples for baking. Although flour and sugar are included in regular food baskets, cake mixes, spices, etc., are not. Those who like to bake may request these items.

Stephenie and Robbie are busy carrying and stocking while Verna greets clients. This is Robbie's third day, and he plans to be a regular. Stephenie comes on Friday when her daughter can be watched by Grandma.

Today is commodities day, held second and third Fridays. On these days, only a bag of government staples will be given

out rather than the regular food supplies. This is the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program, labeled TEFAP on the calendar on the back wall. Food includes raisins, canned fruit, pasta, rice and pudding. Clients may obtain one food basket and one bag of commodities per month.

Community House serves Pierce County from the Purdy Bridge west. Staff communicates with FISH in Gig Harbor and The Children's Home Society in Vaughn in order to help all local residents in need of food supplies.

Linda Hubbard, food coordinator and office manager for 22 years, asks the volunteers to check the potatoes in a box in the dining room, and to rotate the canned goods as they are restocked.

Seniors begin coming in for lunch, sitting at their regular places at the long tables. Organist Dottie Luedke plays Christmas music in the background.

Wednesdays and Fridays are busier days when the lunch is served. Today the crowd is lighter, as several women, including Robbie's mom, are enjoying a Cootiettes' Christmas party in Vaughn.

The volunteers and several seniors line up to carry plates to the tables. Volunteers will eat when their lunch duty is finished.

Cristi picks a name on the guest list for the first donated door prize item. He selects a number from 1 through 28 for the next person. Tickets to Point Defiance Zoo are included, as are a few cartons of eggs.

Verna and other volunteers carry away plates, cups, and as people finish their meal, the decorations and table coverings are also removed.

The bread van has arrived at the back door. Immediately, a "chain gang" of willing hands, including seniors, transfers the bags and boxes from van, up the steps, and inside. A few are sorting off bakery goods for the front shelves and other items like chocolate milk and juices for whoever would like them.

Back in the front office, Verna sits for a moment with her dessert in front of her and kicks off her shoes. She used to bring her slippers for wearing inside, but took them home for a weekend and forgot to bring them back. She needs to put her shoes back on to carry some food downstairs.

Linda produces a pair of sturdy athletic shoes, which are a good fit for Verna. "Keep these here," Linda tells her. Shoes are required. These will be good "running" shoes as Verna scurries up and down the stairs and ramps during her busy workday.

Verna is a good listener for those clients who need someone to talk to as they sign in, select doughnuts, and collect the commodity bag. She always has pleasant and encouraging words for visitors.

Volunteering for her is giving back to those who have helped her. "It's not the same people, but I can pass it on," she says.

She checks that all refrigerated food is put away, doors are locked and the left-over bread is set out before she heads home with a friend. Verna is giving back generously with her time, energy and joyful spirit.

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'Friends'

help support the library

By Connie Harris
KP News

The Friends of the Key Center Library is a volunteer organization that began in 1985 by Dory Myers, a community branch supervisor who is retiring after 20 years. The function of the organization is to provide assistance to “enhance the overall appearance and functionality to the library,” says Mary Watson, one of the organizers.

Buying books and videos, providing shelves for the children’s book section, and scheduling monthly programs for the adults and children are among their many contributions.

On Wednesday, Dec. 8, the Friends of the Key Center Library hosted a musical evening with the Jazz Musette featuring vocalist Lorraine Hart, one of the many



monthly programs the “Friends” have planned throughout the year.

The group already has scheduled



Photo by Connie Harris

Left, The new Friends of Library book bag. Above, The library’s meeting room was packed Dec. 8 when the library hosted an evening with Jazz Musette.

monthly programs through May, including a session on digital photography on Jan. 12 and a program featuring the “Fiddle Tunes of Lewis and Clark Era” on Feb. 9.

The library hosts a discussion group on the third Thursday of each month. The January book is titled “Are You Somebody? The accidental memoir of a Dublin woman” by Nuala O’Faolain.

The 2005 children’s program will begin Feb. 5. Called Mad Science of Tacoma, the event will entertain children with demonstrations of the properties of fire and dry ice.

The “Friends of the Library” encourages patrons to stop by and pick up program schedules and also see the new book bag featuring the octopus, a reproduction of their stained glass window.

(From **POLICE**, Page 1)

officers will be spread thinner.

“There are less deputies on the road than before,” Herberholtz said. “The two shifts earlier allowed for at least three deputies on the road, four sometimes.” The new distribution will have two three-deputy teams per shift, but due to vacation, sick leave and other absences often times only two officers will patrol at a time, one of them on the Key Pen and the other in Gig Harbor.

“Realistically, we need six to eight more officers to really function where the deputies can have backup...but we’ll take what we can get,” he said.

In theory, the response time should have been reduced after more staff was added, but Herberholtz said gauging the impact would take a while. What the detachment has observed, however, is that as of mid-December, a month and a half after coverage was added between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. — which previously had no officers on duty — not a single call was made during that time.

But the hours aren’t really wasted. Officers are able to do more surveillance during down time, patrol local businesses and perform other activities they can’t do during peak call time. They have even made arrests during those hours as a

“Realistically, we need six to eight more officers to really function where the deputies can have backup...but we’ll take what we can get.”

- Sgt. Ross Herberholtz

result of the surveillance, Herberholtz said.

The new staffing was a result of special funding approved by Pierce County Council following city of Lakewood’s move to provide its own police force instead of using the county’s. Councilman Terry Lee had brought up the need for extra police on the west side of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge at last year’s council retreat. When the deputies became available from Lakewood, the county decided to add 24-hour patrols to the areas that didn’t have it. Although the voters turned down a “cop tax” to fund the move, officials found funding—at least for 2005.

That required sacrifices. Funding was reduced for pre-trial services staff and miscellaneous programs, Lee said. The county also will no longer contract with the Humane Society to do animal licensing, and the county auditor’s office will take over the license processing sometimes this year, he said.

Herberholtz said he has pushed for 24-

hour staffing for years, and overall the change is positive. When Lt. Larry Bauer takes the helm of the Peninsula Detachment, the department will see additional benefits with Herberholtz spending all his time in the field as a first-

level supervisor. His main job will be to supervise officers and respond to calls with them, instead of crunching numbers and dealing with personnel and administrative matters. Bauer, a Gig Harbor area resident who was a deputy with the detachment earlier in his career, was expected to start his new duties on Jan. 3.

Lee says he hopes for one more addition by the end of the year: a Key Peninsula dispatch. “I think their presence and visibility will be a deterrent (to crime),” he said.

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Obituary

Keith Vernon Seavy

Keith V. Seavy, born November 20, 1909, died November 16, 2004, at age 94.

He was born in Iowa and grew up in Colorado, attending school in Sterling and graduating from high school in Fort Collins. He worked his way through the University of Colorado at Boulder to receive a B.A. degree in accounting.



SEAVY

He moved to Seattle in 1936 and worked at the Olympic Hotel until he changed to the General Insurance Co. (now Safeco) accounting department in 1940. He worked for them for 33 years; 29 years of that time was in California. He retired to Lakebay in 1975.

On September 25, 1941, he married Virginia Berntson, who survives him. He leaves two sons, Donald Keith and wife Barbara, Gilbert Edward and wife Lynne; three grandsons, Keith Williams, Nathaniel Eldred, Andrew Vernon and wife Nikola; two great-granddaughters, Ritzy and B.B.; and his brother, J. Lawrence.

Keith was active with the young people at his church in Palo Alto, Calif. He taught a Sunday school class and worked with the church-sponsored Boy Scouts (his sons received their Pro Deo badges there). He also coached a community Little League team in California.

After he retired and moved to Lakebay in 1975, he and Virginia enjoyed cruising by ship and also square dancing. He helped build the Sunday School annex at the Lakebay Community Church. He also enjoyed being a greeter at church.

Interment was at the Cromwell Cemetery, where four generations of Virginia's family are buried.

Key Peninsula News welcomes news and article submissions including announcements of events, opinion columns and letters to the editor.

The deadline is the 17th of each month!

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The power to be...

(From SEYMOUR, Page 1)

attended camp for two weeks, and by 1908, more than 60 boys were camping, with 10 tents set up. According to a 1973 Tacoma Review article, a cookhouse and dining pavilion were built near the water.

This year, the camp will celebrate its 100-year anniversary with style, launching a variety of activities and events, including a celebration of its fascinating history. The camp will host several special events throughout 2005.

Back in 1905, the camp had no fresh water source, and campers rowed across the cove to obtain needed water from residents there until their own well was dug in 1919.

C. E. "Pops" Drake, who had founded a YMCA camp in New York state, arrived in 1918, and was an important figure in the camp's direction for the next 20 years, until his death. He apparently encouraged Seymour to deed the property to the YMCA, and within a few years, Camp Seymour consisted of 150 acres.

Drake's title was Boys Work Secretary.

Rich Lodge, the dining hall constructed in 1920, was a gift of Dr. E. A. Rich, grateful for the recovery of his son lost overnight at the end of a hike from Home. The 35-foot fireplace, deemed the



Photo courtesy of YMCA Camps Seymour

The Rich Lodge fireplace, circa 1920, was called the tallest at the time in the state.

tallest in Washington then, was built from 58 tons of white glacial rock ferried in and carried by the campers from ferry to building site. The chimney and building are still a part of the camp.

Boys in 1913 paid \$6.50 each for a 10-day camping experience. They elected "city officials" who supervised various areas. Equipment included "four large

Looking for alums

YMCA Camp Seymour is trying to find as many alumni as possible. They want updated names, addresses and emails, as well as memories and dates of camp attendance. Alumni will be invited to the celebrations, and more rich history can be preserved.

Please spread the word that alumni should complete a new alumni at www.campseymour.org/alumnifriends.htm or write to YMCA Camp Seymour, 9725 Cramer Rd KPN Gig Harbor, WA 98329.

Even if you think you are already on the camp's list, it won't hurt to be redundant, especially if your contact information has recently changed.

safe boats."

By 1920, rustic open cabins with floor and roof replaced the tents used for camping.

Rotary Club sent disadvantaged boys to camp early in its history and has made several donations over the years for general camp improvements and buildings, including the construction of a cabin in 1937.

In preparation for their centennial, a committee of Camp Seymour staff

members have been searching through its archives and collecting tidbits of camp history.

Horse stealing was mentioned in connection to hikes to Hood Canal in 1921 and 1934.

African American boys were Camp Seymour campers as early as the 1920s.

A ballfield was cleared with 40 blasts of dynamite.

The "Dippy Club" was first noted in 1923 camp notes. Members of this group ran, sans clothing, to dive into the cove. The tradition was maintained, but later required swimwear.

In 1940, the threat of polio closed the camp for the summer.

In 1945, after World War II ended, 32 wounded veterans used the camp for therapeutic recreation and helped with repairs and construction.

Horseback riding was provided by carrying campers by truck to Longbranch.

In 1965 a Labor Day weekend Family Camp was held (still a popular tradition with families), and girls were included among campers by 1975.

Camp Seymour has changed over its 100 year history, but it's still a place where boys (and now girls, too) can enjoy some special camping experiences.

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Local couple starts library in Chinese village

By Colleen Slater
KP News

Ron and Louise Talley, Wauna residents, extended a 1998 group tour of China by several weeks, and were introduced to the village of Pi Gang by their guide, Zhang Jing of Beijing.

Jing explained to Talleys the living conditions, including lack of plumbing and telephones, before taking them to the village where relatives of his wife live.

Pi Gang, three hours southwest of Beijing, in a valley surrounded by mountains, had a dirt path for the main "street," used by goats as well as humans. There were no cars, each home had one electric light bulb, and all cooking was done outdoors. The only store consisted of a set of shelves, perhaps 5 feet wide.

Children above the age of 9 travel up to an hour by bicycle each day to a larger community for school.

High school-age children who want to attend college must board in the county seat, 60 kilometers away, and usually return home only for holidays.

Except for paid committee members in the village, most men work in brick factories, at construction sites, or collect recycling items in large cities. They are home only three times a year — Chinese New Year, a few weeks for spring plowing, and harvest time in the fall.

As Talleys strolled through the village, the children, who had never seen non-Asians before, ran from them. However, the next morning, several little girls each brought Louise a flower on their way to school. One of them, Niu Chimin, has become a special friend for Louise.

Although Talleys spent but 24 hours in the village, the people touched their hearts, and Louise asked what they could do.

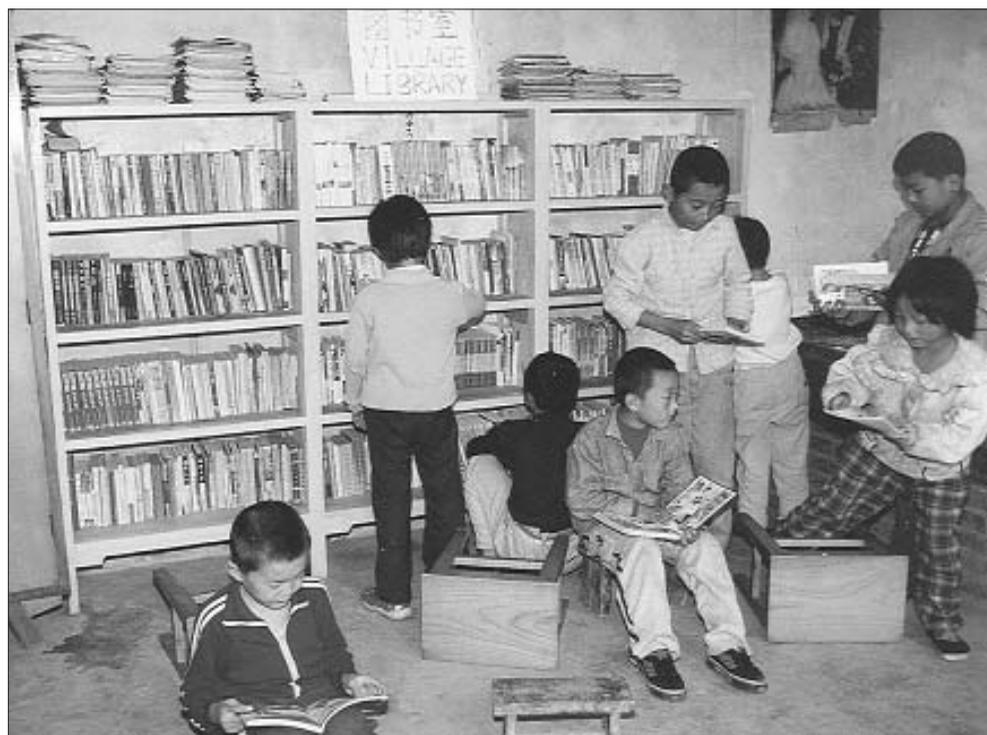


Photo courtesy of Louise Talley

"The Village Library" in Pi Gang, China, is located in the home of a local family, who had to remove some of their furniture to create the extra space.

In 2001, when they visited, Jing asked the villagers how much they could read. The father of Niu Chimin reads everything he can get his hands on. "It would be my dream to have a library in this village," he said.

The words changed the Talleys' lives.

The couple's initial investment of \$350 started their project in the spring of 2002. Jing obtained paper, pencils and pens for the 80 schoolchildren in the old two-room building, lumber for the villagers to build a large bookcase, and 300 used books.

The library is in the home of the host couple where Talleys have stayed on all three visits. They had to remove two pieces of furniture in their living space

for the bookshelf that now has 1,000 books and is available to be used by villagers at all hours every day.

Ron and Louise came up with a new project for the villagers for this past summer — bringing symphony music into their village, with the possibility of some youngsters realizing musical talent.

They invited various performers in Beijing who were willing to undertake such an effort. Friends of Talleys raised \$1,000 to pay the performers, provide transportation and food for them for their excursion to Pi Gang.

About 1,200 villagers were expected to attend, but village leaders indicated that 2,000 people from neighboring communities might show up. The concert crowd

totaled 7,000 or more, arriving on foot and in trucks all day long.

The day before the concert, Jing's wife asked her friend, Du chen Yan, a nationally known soprano, if she would sing. She agreed, and tenor Ye Bao also offered to perform when he heard of the event. "Neither asked for a single Yuan," Louise said.

The 30-member choir, eight instrumentalists, and soloists arrived by bus, as the audience filled the space in front of the small stage, sat on walls, roofs, and perched in trees.

Some prosperity has come to Pi Gang, noted Louise. The road is now "paved" with concrete; there is a new school building; many families have cell phones.

The Talleys, delighted with what a small amount of American money can buy for their "adopted" Chinese village, love to share their experiences with all they meet.

They will present a program for all interested people at the Lakebay Community Church on Saturday, Jan. 29, at 7 p.m.

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- New Memberships and renewals available
- Spring classes and workshops will be announced in March.

Brochures with full details and registration info available in March.

Volunteering to the fullest Ruth Bramhall's list of contributions is many pages long

By Danna Webster
KP News

Ruth Bramhall has over 21,000 miles on her 2003 PT Cruiser and nearly every mile has "volunteer" written all over it. She burns the rubber off her tires mostly between Purdy and Taylor Bay.

Making a list of the groups and organizations Bramhall serves would result in a small directory attachment for the phone book. Of all her service, her first passion is to the electoral process. She thinks it started in the small town where she grew up. The main building served for all the important functions of the town, including the schoolhouse where the ballots were counted during elections. Over the years, the right to vote and the act of decision making through the voting process has remained prominent in her life.

During her 28-year nursing career at Mary Bridge Hospital, a voting process



Photo by Danna Webster

Ruth Bramhall.

selected Bramhall as the national president of Operating Room Nurses for 10 years. She needed more than a cruiser

"The number of activities she is involved in simultaneously is just awesome. If I am half as active as she is at her age, I'll be very pleased."

-Dennis Taylor, Safe Streets

to transport her to the headquarters offices, which were located in New York and later moved to Denver. Today, she can cruise to the local Pierce County AORN meetings, where she is asked to act as parliamentarian for their meetings.

Her husband, Jimmy, attended grade school on the Key Peninsula. Bramhall has lived here for 38 years, but says she didn't become well acquainted with it until after her retirement, when she became a caregiver for Jimmy, who was a stroke survivor.

Her activity in recent years has made her very well acquainted. She was part of the creation of the KP Community Council from the very beginning. Dennis Taylor and his wife, Marilyn, have known Ruth over 10 years. Taylor, who is the community mobilization specialist for Safe Streets, was also involved in the community council's organization and has worked closely with Bramhall during that process.

"The number of activities she is involved in simultaneously is just awesome," he said. "If I am half as active as she is at her age, I'll be very pleased."

Bramhall chaired the Outreach Committee for KPCC and figured out how to do the vote count for their election. She also served on the committee for Livable Community Fair; is the co-treasurer of TWAA, a member of the

Jackson Lake Sportsmen Club, and a participant in the KP Business Association; works with the KP Fair as a fund raiser; and remains an active participant on the Fire District 16 board.

During the 1990s, Bramhall turned her full attention to the Key Peninsula fire commission. She worked to influence voters to approve new firehouses, was elected a fire commissioner, served as the chairwoman of the board for two years, and also served as president of the Pierce County fire commissioners.

"I always say that the only reason people want me on their on their board is because I'm honest, I can count and I can collect money," Bramhall claims.

The No. 1 item on her agenda today is the next election for the KP Community Council, which will be held later this year. According to Bramhall, people definitely need to be aware that voting for a KPCC representative is a separate process from the privileges of the state voter registration card. She explains that registration for the Community Council election is only for residents who live "from the spit to the tip," that's the Purdy Bridge to the southern tip of the peninsula.

"Some council members were elected for only one year. There will be a new election soon. We need to be out there now, signing up people, so when there's a ballot, they are signed up, and they can vote," she says.



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(From SR-16, Page 1)

a computer determines the proper interval for that particular ramp. Because television cameras will be installed at each of the five interchanges, engineers will be able to monitor the situation and override the central computer should that be necessary. The meters will come on only as they are needed, so unless traffic happens to be especially congested on a particular weekend, they will be off.

Installation of the meters comes in response to input from surrounding communities, which requested that WSDOT find ways to mitigate congestion resulting from the new Narrows Bridge project.

Cornish explains the increased congestion this way. "Standard capacity for a freeway or a state route is about 2,000 cars per lane, per hour, based on standard widths. The normal lane width is 12 feet—and the normal shoulder width is 8 feet on each side. At the moment those lanes (in the area where construction is taking place) have been reduced to 11-foot-wide lanes and 2-foot shoulders." So, friction increases as both lanes and shoulders narrow, thereby slowing traffic. Or, in the case of an accident, can bring traffic to a complete halt since there isn't enough room to pull off the road.

The cause of the congestion is what Bill Elliott, civil design review manager for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge project, refers to as "common sense." But



Ramp meters such as this one will be placed along State Route 16 this spring.

Photo courtesy of WSDOT

computer modeling confirms the problem, and "of the five entry points between Purdy and the Narrows bridge, the entering volumes are highest from SR-302," he said.

When asked if the meter on the Purdy on-ramp will create backup problems, Elliott acknowledges that there will be a line to get on the freeway, "but by no means will the queue come back so far as to adversely impact the signal in Purdy."

So what's in it for you? Well, that depends on how frequently you travel to the bridge. According to data provided by WSDOT, the average travel time to the west end of the Narrows Bridge for a commuter entering SR-16 via the Purdy/SR-302 on-ramp is 21-minutes and 12-seconds. After the meters have been installed and activated, engineers expect that time to drop to 20 minutes and 24 seconds. A savings of 48 seconds per trip! That doesn't sound like much, but had you commuted to Tacoma on

each working day of December (not counting holidays) the total savings would have added up to a whopping 1,104 seconds! That's more than 18 minutes, which would be nice to get back. And, if you make the trip more often, the savings will be even greater. Of course the real benefit consists of the theoretical 48 seconds multiplied by thousands of commuters. And that, it seems fair to conclude, will amount to a really substantial improvement.

Plus, there's a potential psychological savings as well, since most of us feel less stressed when traffic flows smoothly (if

Things to know about ramp meters

Pull your vehicle up the white line (stop bar) to trigger the ramp meter.

On average drivers wait less than two minutes during peak hours.

By increasing the efficiency of freeway use, ramp meters save money that would otherwise be spent constructing additional lanes.

Past ramp meter activations have reduced rear-end and sideswipe collisions by over 30 percent.

Ramp meters are being used in more than 20 cities and 12 states in the United States.

Information provided by WSDOT.

slowly). And, according to Elliott, all of the ramps between the bridges and Interstate-5 will eventually be metered.

One more thing. For those of you who simply don't have the time to wait in line at the local ramp meter, you can go ahead and blow through, but the Washington State Patrol will charge you \$101 for the privilege.

For more information, go online to www.tacomannarrowsbridge.com.

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New Merchandise Daily

New Year, new art on the 2005 Key Peninsula horizon

By L. Brudvik Lindner

Two Waters Arts Alliance is organizing future art offerings for a colorful 2005. TWAA's 2005 calendars highlight the local talents of the Key Peninsula and may be purchased at Sunnycrest Nursery, Sheer Magic and Close to Home Espresso. Meanwhile, the new spring schedule will be out soon, stay tuned and be ready to enroll!



The Genuine ARTicle

Due to numerous requests, this month the Genuine ARTicle offers art aficionados, fine artists and creative hatchlings a list of art-related resources. Internet access is available to patrons through the Key Pen Branch of the Pierce County Library.

If your inner artist is ready for the competitive edge, www.artdeadlineslist.com offers a monthly newsletter listing 600-900 announcements including art contests, competitions, art scholarships and grants.

Advocating for artists and patrons of the arts since 1976, the Washington State Arts Alliance Website, www.wsartsalliance.com, highlights an advocacy toolkit — what every artist needs to support funding and education of the arts in their community.

Looking for art events, www.artguidenw.com features the most comprehensive online guide to the Pacific Northwest art scene — including the Gig Harbor "First Saturday Art Walk."

If you're fascinated with Northwest artists, view www.museumofnwart.org, then take a scenic drive to the Museum of Northwest Art in La Conner. This small regional museum is devoted to presenting the works of major NW artists, as well as serving as a source of education on NW art.

For 16 years Artist Trust, www.artisttrust.org, has been committed to supporting art at its source — the creative individual. Artist Trust provides information and direct grant support to promising

artists, including musicians and choreographers. The Tacoma Arts Commission at www.cityoftacoma.org features call to artists, grant opportunities, work space information, jobs in the arts and more.

The Tacoma Art Museum invites patrons to "Museum Tuesdays," when for a discounted fee, visitors can enjoy three museums: the Museum of Glass, Tacoma Art Museum and Washington State History Museum, see www.tacomaartmuseum.org. Locally, the Peninsula Art League is sponsoring its third Annual Juried Arts Exhibit, Feb. 26- March 30; for details see www.peninsulaartleague.com.

TWAA may be contacted by email, twawaters@hotmail.com or by calling 884-9172.

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Out & About



Photo by Hugh McMillan

Some 30 members of Citizens Against Crime, its Citizens Patrol, and the Pierce County Sheriff's Department enjoyed their annual holiday season potluck get-together in December. Here, Dennis Taylor of Safe Streets and Pierce County Sheriff's Sgt. Rusty Wilder chat in the background, and CAC's Loyd Miller and Miriam Goad are seen in the foreground.



Above, Dozens of avid fishermen lined up at Minter Creek to catch at least one of the incoming surge of chum salmon returning to lay their eggs upstream. Gene Anderson of Tacoma, in the white hat, is reeling in one that really doesn't want to leave the water. To Anderson's right, his chum (no pun intended), Richard Larson, casts.

Photo by Hugh McMillan

Right, Darcie Pacholl, 3, and her aunt Alex Fennel (Key Pen newcomer from California), came to see Santa and the tree lighting at Key Center with other family members (not pictured: Darcie's mom, Debbie, siblings Marc "George," 2, and Timi Ann, 6, and grandma Maggie), all of Longbranch.

Photo by Rodika Tollefson



Photo by Hugh McMillan

At the Key Center tree lighting, kids waited in line to get a turn with "Santa." Santa and Mrs. Claus could not arrange to be everywhere at once so they sent their local helpers, Fred and Mary Ramsdell.



Cherie Dedera of Wauna and Jackie Daigle of Longbranch received \$100 gift certificates from Peninsula Market Operations Manager Kip Bonds in December after winning a districtwide contest. "We get to splurge a little this Christmas," Daigle said, while Dedera agreed that "this could not have come at a better time." Both ladies said it's the first time they won something.

Photo by Rodika Tollefson



Left, The Longbranch Marina was all lit up during the LIC's annual lighted boat parade in December. *Photo by Hugh McMillan*



Bottom left, Phil and Kathy Bauer, who volunteer their time for groups ranging from the Two Waters Arts Alliance to the Civic Center, welcomed their first grandson on Dec. 2. Here, Grandpa Phil and Grandma Kathy with baby Luke Reed Richardson are enjoying each other's company. Luke's mom, Dana, attended Peninsula High School, and dad John went to South Kitsap High. Both graduated from Central Washington University and teach at Sidney Glen Elementary.

Photo courtesy of Bauer family