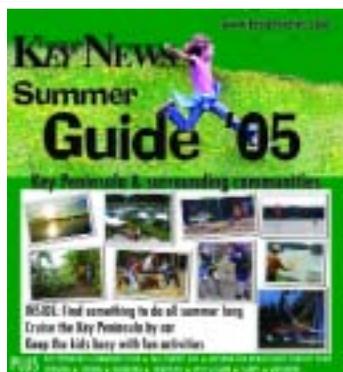




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Summer Guide, Inside

Transportation package includes SR-302 funding

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Key Peninsula residents who have tried for years to attract attention to the safety problems of State Route 302 may consider the funding for the highway in the newly adopted transportation budget long-overdue. But the apparent good news is far outweighed by concerns regarding how the transportation package is funded — and the small return local residents

would receive from the new taxes.

The \$8.5 billion transportation package signed by Gov. Christine Gregoire in May includes \$5 million for establishing a new 302 corridor, a project estimated to cost \$143 million.

“Those are design dollars, for the state Department of Transportation staff to research and design a new corridor, and not much more,” said Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee. “The good news is that improvements to

302 are finally on the radar screen, and they haven't been (before).”

The package includes an additional \$5 million toward widening 302 from Purdy to Creviston.

The last time 302 got major attention was in 1992, when lawmakers appropriated funds to study the corridor. One of the report's recommendations included constructing, in the long term, an alterna-

(See **SR-302**, Page 18)

Capitalism lights up newest 'shop'

By William C. Dietz
KP News

It takes 46 seconds to drive through Key Center at the legal limit of 35 mph. During that period the motorists will pass a smoke shop, a liquor store, a restaurant that sells alcohol, a saloon that sells food, and a restaurant with an upscale cocktail lounge. They will also whiz by a trading post, a real estate office, a combination hardware store and lumber yard, a combination nursery and florist, a medium-sized market, an espresso stand, a charitable organization, a computer repair shop, bank, Safe Streets office, furniture store, dog grooming business, a library, a fire station, three different hair salons/barber shops, plus a variety of medical services including a doctor, dentist, chiropractor, physical therapist,



Photo by Mindi LaRose

Key Center is one of only two Rural Area Centers on the Key Pen (the other being Lake Kathryn). The KP has an additional five Rural Neighborhood Centers.

and a holistic healing practitioner.

And why are those particular businesses where they are? Is it because someone planned it that way? Nope. Like so many small unincorporated Rural Activity Centers (RACs), Key Center was built by successive generations of entrepreneurs all acting in what they believed to be their own best interests. Key Center's newest

business, the KP Smoke Shop, is an excellent example.

Over the years, the building located at the intersection of Olson Road and the Key Pen Highway housed a gas station, a garage, and an auto parts store. So, why turn the structure into a smoke shop?

(See **KEY CENTER**, Page 25)

Skateboards may roll in Key Peninsula parks

By Danna Webster
KP News

Kids who live on the Key Peninsula need something they can drop in and do, something that is not organized. A skate park is good for kids of all ages. That is the belief of Chuck West. Building a skate park for KP kids is his dream.

Back in the early '90s, the West family took a vacation and, while traveling through Idaho, stopped at skate parks. West's 12 year-old-son, Zech, loved doing maneuvers with his skateboard. He noticed the kids in Idaho were real good skaters, thanks to all their practice at the parks. Zech wanted to know why the peninsula didn't have anything like that.

When the family returned, West contacted the park board and the board offered half of the tennis-court area for skating. Some fund-raising efforts brought in \$25,000, which was used to build a small, wooden half-pipe for the skaters.

(See **SKATE PARK**, Page 23)

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page 8

Key Pen Community House has new director

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Key Peninsula Community Services/Food Bank Executive Director Cristi Watson passed her torch to Luke Snyder. Snyder was hired in May, after Watson announced she was leaving the state to be closer to her family.

Snyder, who plans to move to the Key Peninsula, is not a complete stranger to the area. He has visited the Key Pen on several occasions as a volunteer dental hygienist with the Northwest Medical Teams' dental van, which provides free services to local residents in need.

"I really started to know the patients and their way of life. It seemed like an awesome place," he said.

Snyder has been volunteering with the dental van for about a year, traveling to different areas. He says he saw greater needs on the Key Peninsula compared to other places.

On his third trip or so, Snyder started

"I really started to know the patients and their way of life. It seemed like an awesome place."

-Luke Snyder

thinking that this wouldn't be a bad place to live. Attracted by the people, the history and the sense of community, he said the job of the director was "an amazing opportunity."

Snyder has networked with various social services organizations around the region and plans to draw on his experience to bring more services to KPCS, and help seniors and others "use their talents."

He has to give up the trips on the dental van — but looks forward to working on the other side of the chair, organizing the visits instead. When asked how he liked the busy environment of the Community House, he said: "I am used to the pace, after working 16 hours in the (dental) van."



Photo by Mindi LaRose

New KP Community Services Director Luke Snyder, left, and board member Ty Hardin look at a multitude of donations brought after a U.S. Post Office food drive.

Arbor Day celebration features Key Pen residents

Kathleen Moffitt, poster contest first-place winner, Nancy Lind, "Good Steward" honoree.



Story and photo by Danna Webster
KP News

The Gig Harbor/ Key Peninsula Arbor Day Foundation celebrated its fifth anniversary April 23 with a program titled "Planting Hope and Trees."

Gig Harbor Mayor Gretchen Wilbert invited guests on an afternoon nature walk through "one of the greatest urban forests," Grandview Forest Park next to the Gig Harbor Civic Center.

The program presented awards to Peninsula School District students for winning poetry, photo and poster contests and honored Key Peninsula resident

Nancy Lind with the Arbor Day Good Stewardship Award. Lind's award recognized her many contributions: being the first person in Pierce County to put her 80 acres of land in a conservation easement, being the key person in creating Home Park, and for her leadership and success in saving the Rocky Creek Conservation Area.

"We admire and appreciate such vision, dedication and leadership in our community," said Holly D'Annunzio, foundation president. Lind's plaque read, "He Who Plants a Tree Plants a Hope."

Minter Creek Elementary students received poster contest awards. The \$50 first-place winner was Kathleen Moffitt, 9;

second place (\$25), Schuyler Hale, 9; and two winners tied for third place (\$15): Ramona Mikelson, and Aaron Klumker, both age 10. Honorable mention went to Lucas Kovatch. Lucas' poster was selected as the cover for the event's poetry book.

According to D'Annunzio, Arbor Day originated in Nebraska 133 years ago. She was inspired to create an Arbor Day Foundation in Gig Harbor five years ago because she observed that trees were being lost. "Trees give people hope: the poor, hungry, and hurt. When they go out in nature, it helps them heal," she said.

The foundation has a powerful movie microscope available for loan to area schools. Information about the microscope, the poetry book, and next year's contests is available by calling 761-7800.

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SR-302 plagued by accidents in May

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

As the statewide transportation package, which includes some funding for State Route 302, was being criticized after legislative approval, the point of safety on SR-302 was underscored in May by a rash of accidents. At least seven accidents were recorded on 302 between May 1 and 19, and several more farther south on Key Peninsula Highway.

According to Washington State Patrol officials, there were no fatalities or life-threatening injuries on the state highway although several people received injuries of various degrees.

The string of crashes started at the end of April, with a five-car collision on April 26 near Moreland and Sons auto repair shop on Key Pen Highway. Witness reports said a vehicle waiting to turn into the shop was rear-ended by another, then side-swiped a third one in the oncoming lane. Two of the hit cars were parked at the shop. Fire District 16 paramedics said five people were trans-

ported to hospitals.

The following day, a 60-year-old Gig Harbor resident who failed to stop at a stop sign struck a vehicle with a woman and a child inside on SR-302 near Lake of the Woods. The driver was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving.

On May 1, a head-on crash near Lake Minterwood on KP Highway was caused by a female driver who crossed the center line. The second vehicle had three children in addition to a male driver. Paramedics had to use the "jaws of life" to extricate the woman; the highway was closed for five hours.

Three separate collisions occurred the next day on SR-302 near 118th Avenue within a two-hour period. The following day, May 4, a motorcyclist was critically hurt on SR-302 near "The Farm" after being rear-ended and caught between two vehicles.

On May 7, a three-vehicle collision occurred in the same general area of the May 3 accident, on SR-302 near 118th. Two other crashes were reported on SR-302 on May 17 and 18.

"When the weather gets nicer and the



Photo by Hugh McMillan

Rescuers had to use the so-called "jaws of life" to extricate the driver after this flip on KP Highway near Lake Minterwood on May 1.

roads dry out, people tend to drive quicker," says FD-16 Division Chief Paul Bosch. "State Route 302 and section of

Key Peninsula Highway definitely have areas that pull higher danger than others."



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Editorial

'Promises' to keep

Miscellaneous "unfinished business" appeared to keep KP Parks and Recreation District commissioners from voting in early May on a resolution to dissolve. At the following meeting, the commissioners voted to repay the KP Metropolitan Park District an "overpayment" for its transfer of assets. The new Metro board had paid KPPRD for Home and Volunteer parks, with the money to be used to make KPPRD solvent so it can go out of business.

KPPRD is now solvent, and has no assets or business left. Recently, discussions have been held regarding keeping the lame duck district on the books for the benefit of other local organizations. That is not what the voters are expecting. Despite the argument over the technical meaning of the word "promise," many voters and metro creation committee members believed that KPPRD would disappear if the Metro Parks District were formed. Although the word "promise" was never used, as one or two of the KPPRD commissioners argued, it was, in fact, an implied promise. Even the Municipal Service and Research Center of Washington (MSRC), a clearinghouse of local government information, states KPPRD "will be dissolved and assets transferred to new Metropolitan Park District."

The repayment in May was one of the biggest steps in the right direction, helping KPPRD tie remaining loose ends. The public should encourage the commissioners to continue on this path in an efficient manner, so that everyone's efforts could then be focused on supporting the Metro Parks district. The MPD has big work ahead, as it looks at a comprehensive plan for Volunteer Park and has looming acquisitions of a 350-acre park and other potential properties. There is no need to have two park districts on the Key Peninsula.

If KPPRD is allowed to remain in business, it will foster public distrust, putting in jeopardy any future support from voters, contributors and volunteers.

Do you know a KP resident who has recently returned from Iraq or is currently serving on active duty anywhere around the country or the world? We'd like to feature them in a special tribute to soldiers. Please email news@keypennews.com or leave your name and number at 884-4699 by June 13.

Ramp meters mean faster, safer travel

By Linea Laird
WSDOT

The Washington State Department of Transportation chose to install ramp meters on five eastbound State Route 16 on-ramps in response to public requests to reduce congestion during bridge construction. We anticipated questions about ramp meters in general, and about the Purdy ramp meter specifically. After all, SR-16 congestion does not reach that far west.

WSDOT addresses highway congestion with two primary tools 1) increasing highway capacity (thus increasing supply); or 2) managing the number of cars on the highway (thus managing demand). In the case of SR-16, WSDOT is doing both - increasing supply by building HOV lanes and the new bridge; and managing demand by regulating traffic with ramp meters. By managing demand, WSDOT can

reduce the time the highway is congested, and increase safely by reducing accidents at merge points.

During peak morning hours, the Purdy ramp delivers between 800 and 1,100 vehicles each hour onto SR-16, more than any other ramp west of the bridge. Because of those volumes, metering at Purdy is key to managing demand. We are not metering at Purdy to relieve highway congestion at Purdy. No congestion exists there. We are metering at Purdy to manage demand on the overall corridor.

Metering is a balance between drivers on the highway and drivers at ramps. We are aware of potential backups at the Purdy on-ramp. The new traffic cameras will give WSDOT a real-time view of traffic, allowing adjustments to ramp meter rates as necessary.

Traffic modeling shows the morning commute from the Purdy ramp to the bridge will be 14 percent faster with

meters than without. The timesavings include the wait at the ramp.

Meters will not eliminate congestion. Traffic volumes are too high to see relief until we complete the SR-16 projects. Our goal in metering is to soften the edges of morning eastbound congestion. Even that small benefit to drivers is worthwhile.

Ramp meters may not be popular, but they are effective. We know through years of experience metering in King and Snohomish counties that a small inconvenience for drivers at the beginning of their trip leads to a faster and safer overall trip.

Linea Laird is WSDOT's Tacoma Narrows Bridge Project Manager. She brings experience in project management and project engineering, maintenance operations and other WSDOT specialties. As a resident of Silverdale and a daily SR-16 commuter, she is very familiar with the highway's traffic patterns.

A 'No' vote for the transportation proposal

By Derek Kilmer
Special to KP News

I voted against the transportation budget that would invest over \$9 billion in transportation projects and wanted to tell you why.

I share the concerns of many of you about our high gas prices. I cannot stomach any gas tax increase unless the proposal provides a fair deal for the area I represent (which includes Gig Harbor, the Key Peninsula, and South Kitsap).

Unfortunately, despite improvements in the final budget, both Pierce and Kitsap counties will pay substantially more in new gas taxes than they get back in the form of new transportation investments.

The starkest example of inequity, though, is that our area has the only "mega-project" in the state - the Narrows Bridge - that will be funded almost entirely by tolls. It's just not right that we will pay for the Narrows Bridge and will also be asked to pay additional taxes to pay for megaprojects in other areas.

Many Peninsula residents think we should get more state funds to reduce the need for tolls on the bridge. I agree 100 percent, and have been working closely with Rep. Pat Lantz, Sen. Bob Oke, and

others in support of this goal.

I offered an amendment requiring state funding for the bridge - demanding equity. When that amendment didn't pass, I couldn't support the budget.

The battle for equitable funding is difficult. An independent commission has identified over \$50 billion in unfunded transportation projects across the state. Because most Narrows Bridge construction bonds have been sold and the bridge is more than half constructed, most folks in the Legislature perceive the project as already funded. I am working hard to change this perception, and I will continue to fight for equitable funding; however, it is a steep hill to climb.

I am also advocating for the equitable use of tolls.

At nearly every transportation hearing, I asked that tolls be used on other projects - not just on SR 16. I offered an amendment to require the use of tolls on the 520 Bridge, the Alaskan Way Viaduct, and I-405. I'm pleased the final budget assumed tolls on these projects as well as a study of tolling equity.

I don't begrudge the need to fix the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the 520 bridge. Both are an earthquake away from collapse. Should either structure fail,

there would be dramatic repercussions for the economy of our entire state.

However, while the Narrows Bridge is almost entirely toll-funded, tolls will likely cover less than one-third of the cost of the 520 Bridge and even less of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. I couldn't support that.

While Rep. Lantz and I opposed the proposal, we succeeded in getting funding for some local priorities. The budget includes funding for improvements on Highway 16 as well as design dollars for a new corridor off Highway 302 to promote safer transportation on the Key Peninsula.

Additionally, I've been working to pass a bill to exempt the Narrows Bridge project from the sales tax on construction, saving future bridge users nearly \$50 million in tolls. The bill passed the House with strong bipartisan support. Hopefully next year, the Senate will pass it, too.

These are steps in the right direction but are only a small piece of the larger pie I believe our region deserves. It's not right for folks who will already be paying tolls to have to pay increased gas taxes to pay for other people's projects.

Derek Kilmer is state Representative for 26th Legislative District.

County studies traffic on the Key Peninsula

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Drivers have likely noticed what look like black, rubber hoses stretched across the road around the Key Pen this spring. The "hoses" are traffic counters that Pierce County routinely places, on a rotating basis, on its roads.

"The primary purpose is to be able to monitor changes in the operation of the roads," said Traffic Engineer Jim Ellison with Pierce County Public Works. Traffic volume changes are collected over time, and the studies are shared with other interested parties such as developers.

The counter is an electronic device that operates off a pneumatic air hose. When a vehicle travels over it, a pulse of air is sent to the counter. In some instances, two hoses are used side by side for more detail data, such as vehicle type and speed.

At least 48 hours of data collection is

done per location. Ellison said the key locations are studied every year, and the roads with less volume every two to three years. On the Key Pen, about half-dozen locations are studied yearly, and 68 every other year; a permanent count station, embedded into the highway south of Key Center, does counts every day.

"We canvass the entire county arterial system," Ellison said. About 800 to 1,000 locations are done per year.

The Traffic Volume Report, for example, shows that in 1996, 8,075 vehicles per day traveled through the intersection of Key Pen Highway and State Route 302; by 2004, that number grew to 9,075. Another heavily used area, Wright-Bliss Road south of SR-302, had 2,050 vehicles in '96 and 2,200 in '04. The report was presented in May to the Key Peninsula Community Planning Board, which is looking at various KP statistics and other elements as it plans for a 20-year growth.

Arson suspected in 2 fires

Residents asked to be vigilant as fire season approaches

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Key Peninsula Fire District 16 responded to two suspicious fires on May 8, following other recent suspicious incidents. Although no one was injured, fire officials said that with the approaching fire season, residents should be on alert.

The first fire involved a large travel trailer near Rocky Creek area, on the same property where a boat trailer was previously stolen and a vehicle was vandalized. Later in the evening, firefighters were called to the second blaze, at a vacant mobile home in Home. Neighbors said the home had been vacant for about a year, following a methamphetamine lab bust. Arson was suspected at both structures.

A garbage can, mailbox, and garden shed were involved in suspicious fires earlier, and are being investigated independently. "The size of the fires getting bigger is a concern," said FD-16 Division

Chief Paul Bosch. "We encourage people to remain vigilant and pay attention to what's going on in their community. ... If it had been August, it could have been a lot worse."

The lack of rains this winter has created prime drought conditions, and Bosch said last year the fire district "got off easy" during the fire period, but this year a difficult season was anticipated.

Residents can do several things to minimize the danger to their homes:

- Secure the property so it doesn't give potential criminals a chance to access it.
- Provide a defense perimeter around the house of 30 feet to allow firefighters to defend the home if necessary, as well as help minimize the spread of the blaze. Dead plants, trees and shrubs should be removed from the entire site, along with excess leaves and other dry materials.
- Choose fire-resistant trees and shrubs, such as hedging roses, currant, maple, cherry and poplar. Keep plants green during the fire season, watering regularly and trimming grass.
- Store flammable materials and stacked wood 30 or more feet away from the home.

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LIC marks boating season opening

Story and photo by Hugh McMillan

The first Saturday in May, happy boating enthusiasts Maudie Lucas, Carol Ptak, John Glennon, and Peg Bingham enjoyed the annual Opening Day of Boating breakfast at the Longbranch Improvement Club's dock on Filucy Bay. It was also the occasion for the "Any Direction Race," in which sailboat competitors exercise "skipper's choice" to circumnavigate either Eagle Island or Anderson Island before returning to the marina for trophies, awarded to the first three of five winners. The first place winner's name goes on the Perpetual Trophy plaque.

Mark Jones, LIC marina dock master, reported that Derek Heib aboard "Flash Friday" took first place, Dylan Lippert was second in "V-21," and Pat Thompson took third in "Lavender Bleu." Jones laughed that no one finished the race.

"They were fighting the tides throughout the day, and there was no wind," he said. The 11-foot tide was moving them all toward Olympia - and that's definitely not where the finish line was located.

"When the racers finally returned to the dock, they were greeted with the terrific



Cheyenne Hampton, 7, came to the event with her grandma to watch grandpa Sandy Black aboard his sailboat, "Helicity."

music of Mark Runyans' band, Jazz Musette," Jones said.

"We had 20 boats registered, the largest number ever despite the fact that several sailors went to Seattle for opening day there. All in all, it was a great day."

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Prisoners on their own land? 'Landlocked' residents want answers

Editor's note:

The Key Peninsula News first reported in October 2003 about residents on so-called 144th Street who are not able to use their properties in any way that requires permits. Since then, they've continued to search for answers on how they can end the situation, and they feel their elected officials have turned their backs on them while they pay taxes on properties with greatly diminished values. The Key Peninsula News is looking for answers as well, and will present the three sides — the residents', the county's and Tacoma Power's — in a series of articles starting with this June issue.

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

Lance and Tina Lott moved to the Key Peninsula in 2003 from Minnesota. Attracted by the same features that brings newcomers here — proximity to the water, quiet lifestyle, birds roaming — they settled on more than an acre of land. The home was even Tina's favorite color: yellow.

"We fell in love with the Key Peninsula," she said. "It gives you a sense of being away."

Just a few weeks after their move, they had the first sign of what would later become a fight for their property rights. As they eventually found out, some of their neighbors have held the same fight for years.

The Lotts live off a gravel right-of-way that on many maps is called 144th Street and is nicknamed Pole Line Road, a utility road used by Tacoma Power to service its power line that stretches from Tacoma to the Cushman Dam. For years, the residents used the road to access their homes, develop their property and get their mail. Many of them say they had no idea that,

according to Tacoma Power, they were using the road "illegally."

"We saw an article in the Key Peninsula News (October 2003) and we thought that was weird," Tina said. The article described a landlocked situation their neighbors found themselves in, and the Lotts asked their realtor to look into it.

"We didn't think anything of it and went about our married life, and one day came home and there is a gate," Tina Lott said.

The gate, installed off 118th Street, is one of several on the right-of-way. Tacoma Power spokesperson Chris Gleason said at a neighborhood meeting that the utility needed to protect the area but that it would provide residents and emergency services with access.

It costs the utility between \$30,000 and \$50,000 to clean up junk cars and other garbage along the road, she said, and "it's really not reasonable to send crews to clean up the property."

For many residents, however, the gates are the least of their worries. For several years, Pierce County stopped issuing permits to all property owners who cannot show alternative access to their plats.

Joe Geier learned about the problem nearly two years ago, when he tried to help his son build a home on a portion of his 15 acres. What he found, he said, was a dilemma going back 80 years, after a lawsuit that condemned portions of the properties on 144th for the utility road. Geier believes the lawsuit never took the residents' right of using the road. He questioned why the county issued permits two or three decades ago and not now. There is no exact count on the number of properties affected, but residents estimate between 50 and 80.

"We've asked the county not to issue any

more permits because we are liable for the right-of-way," Gleason told the residents.

According to Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee, the county has never done title reports to guarantee access for issuing a permit, and the parcels are flagged "only when someone complains" and "it comes on the radar screen." However, a July 2003 letter to Joseph J. Geier written by county Executive John Ladenburg and signed on his behalf by Chief of Staff Lyle Quasim states: "Section 503 of the Uniform Building Code and Chapter 12.03 of the Pierce County Code require that appropriate access be provided in order to obtain a building permit."

Back in 1971, Pierce County Public Works Director WM. R. Thornton described the situation in a letter to the Board of Commissioners: "Residents were able to purchase land in the area and therefore were able to obtain building permits from the County. There is no way that we know of whereby the County can refuse a building permit to any resident even though, to the best of our knowledge, there is no access to the property" except "via this City Light road."

When Max and Joann Aikins moved to the area nearly 40 years ago, they said they were told by county officials that 144th was an undeveloped county road, and that it would be developed once more residents populated the area. The Aikins even purchased an additional 5-acre parcel in 1988 in order to have legal access to their home — via 144th. On their "Declaration of Boundary Line Revision," a map shows their access from the right-of-way, called C.D. Rowley Road, running along Tacoma's transmission line. The map has the stamp of approval of the boundary revision by the county Planning

Department. It is one of several documents and maps that make reference to the road.

"It is a transmission right-of-way, it's not a road, it will never be a road," Tacoma Power Superintendent Steve Kline said. "I don't refute somebody illegally calls it a road...It is our property, I don't care what the maps say."

Two to three decades ago, there were discussions between the county and the utility about making the right-of-way a county road. Today, both the county and the utility say that doesn't appear to be an option, and each side says they've tried to cooperate with the other but the other doesn't.

"The county has washed their hands of it. We don't see it as Tacoma Power's responsibility to maintain the right-of-way," Gleason said at the neighborhood meeting. "We've been trying for years to cooperate with the county and they're just not with it."

Lee said at a different neighborhood meeting the following month: "It doesn't look like Tacoma Power is interested in playing ball."

In the meantime, the two jurisdictions have agreed to share the cost of installing electronic gates, answering the residents' concerns about safety with manual gates. The jurisdictions also appear to agree on one thing: Residents must find an alternative access, via easements and other ways. The residents are racing against the clock: According to one neighbor, Tacoma Power will only allow them to use the road for access for two years while residents find another way.

Next month: A look through the years at the discussions between the three involved parties, and the impact of the situation on the owners today.

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Civic Center staff would like to hear from everyone who attended the Friday Night Skating this year, or those who didn't attend but would have liked to.

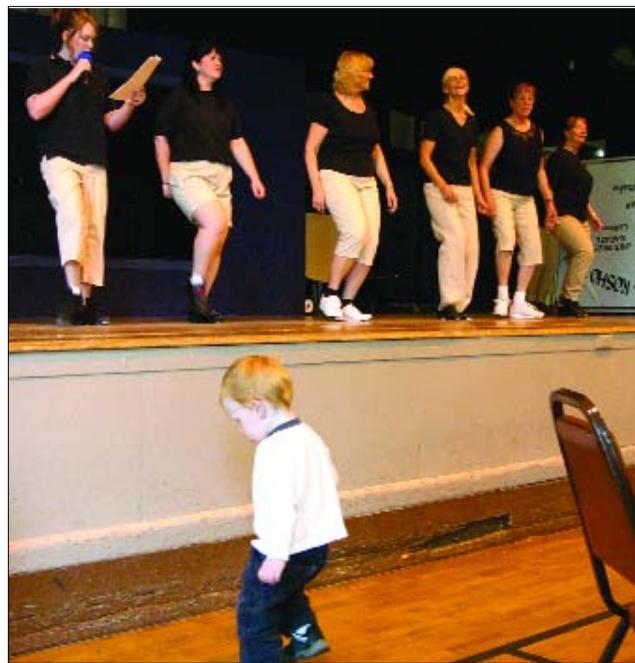
Staff want to be sure it is the best program it can be. Please fill out this survey, and return to the Civic Center office or to the box marked "survey" during Skate Night. Call 884-3456 with any questions.

1. Did you participate in Skate Night this year? About how often? If not, why not?
2. What did you like about Skate Night?
3. What would make Skate Night a better experience for you?
4. Would you participate in a Family Skate Night on Sunday afternoon if it were offered?
5. Any other comments, suggestions, ideas, questions?

Optional: Please add your name and contact number (phone, email) for follow-up, if you wish.

Fair spotlights livable community

The Key Peninsula Civic Center was abuzz with activity on May 8, when several dozen organizations were featured at the annual Livable Community Fair, organized by Safe Streets and the Civic Center. More than \$1,000 was raised for the Civic Center through the event.



Photos by Hugh McMillan

Above, Minter Elementary students entertained fair-goers with various musical acts. Left, A would-be clogger tries to keep up off-stage to the beat of the magnificent Rhythm-n-Shoes Cloggers.

Right, Nancy Morrison with the county's Solid Waste division talks to Michele Hill about the new recycling bins, which happened to arrive in many Key Pen neighborhoods the same morning. Kiki, 5, and Kyle, 7, listen in.



Four-year-old Lilly West spends some time at the "live display" presented by the 4H.

Photo by Rodika Tollefson

Below right, Judie Holley with Pierce County Neighborhood Action Team Program and Lt. Larry Bauer of the Peninsula Detachment visit with Jeannine Lutge.



Photos by Hugh McMillan

Featured Home of the Month!



Beautiful, private, & lush: Nestled on 1.06 park-like acres this Daylight Rambler could be the perfect house if you need 4 bedrooms plus a den, 2.75 baths, formal dining room, large living room, large family room and lots of storage! This home is set above the crowd with vaulted ceilings, skylights, gas fireplace, RV parking, and expansive deck w/hot tub, dog run, tool shed & much more. Meticulously landscaped with wooded trails, rocky terraces, lots of color, and a sprinkler system this home is sure to delight the pickiest of buyers! Call Bruce or Jana for your private showing. Visit DirectNeighborhood.com to view photos of this home. \$379,950.

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"I've had a love for radio ever since I was 10." -Keith Stiles

Local resident follows **love** of radio at KGHP

During a community function nearly 20 years ago, Key Peninsula resident Keith Stiles was discussing with the PSD superintendent the need to make local news more immediately available to the public.

Two years later in 1988, after an effort by a group of community members including Stiles, Milt Boyd and Max Bice, the answer came in the form of KGHP radio station.

Owned by the school district and funded largely by grants, KGHP is operated in big part by volunteers. Stiles, a former broadcaster, has filled many of his retirement hours since then as a DJ, engineer, production assistant, and an all-around supporter.

"I've had a love for radio ever since I was 10," says Stiles, who was licensed at 11 and was a radio operator in the military. Working in the radio industry to pay for his college physics degree, Stiles has maintained his ties with the industry through the years, and after retirement even bought a station in Oregon.



Keith Stiles in the KGHP main live broadcasting studio, where he spends every Saturday morning as a DJ.

"I like the music and the fact that we're talking about current issues, things that are important to people in Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula," he says of his work at KGHP, where he DJs a Saturday morning show called 'Musical Memories,' treating listeners to a little nostalgia of the 1920s through early 1960s.

Stiles, credited by many as being one of the radio station's integral movers and shakers, places the credit back on other people, from station staff members who do the work behind the scenes, to underwriters and contributors like Peninsula Light Co.

Weekly KGHP shows

(89.3, 89.9, 104.5)

LIVE

- Classic Rock Connections, Monday 5-7 p.m.
- Blues with Simon, Wednesday 5-7 p.m.
- Kelly's Heroes, Wednesday 7-9 p.m.
- BD's Book and Friends, Thursday 5-7 p.m.
- Jazz with Marc Alan, Thursday 7-9 p.m.
- Musical Memories, Saturday 8-10 a.m.
- Kaleidoscope, Saturday noon-3 p.m.
- Saturday Rock Hot Mix, Saturday 3-6 p.m.
- Live from Lincoln Center, Sunday 4:00 p.m.

Summer School

High School Classes begin on July 5, 2005. High School classes are designed for students who will be in the 9th grade or beyond during the 2005-2006 school year. Jump Start classes begin on August 1, 2005. Jump Start classes are designed for students who will be in grades 1 through 8 during the 2005-2006 school year. For more information: www.ss.peninsula.wednet.edu or Ron Witter, Summer School Administrator 858-5629 or by email at witter@peninsula.wednet.edu



Left, Evergreen Elementary AFTER 'OURS' students display the project they made in one hour with the help of visiting new home builder Ron Hendrickson of University Place-based Hendrickson Construction Co.

Right, students as well as professional artists demonstrated their work at the annual Starry Night arts event at Peninsula High School in April. Photo courtesy of Hugh McMillan.

June events

- 2 - Peninsula High early dismissal - Senior Projects
- 7 - Key Peninsula Middle School jazz band concert, 7:30 p.m.
- 9 - School Board Regular Meeting at Kopachuck Middle School 6:30 p.m.
- 10-11 - Peninsula High Relay for Life - 6:00 p.m.-Noon
- 16 - Last day for seniors
- 22 - Last day of school
- 23 - School Board Study Session at District Office 5:30 p.m.

Photos of the month



Did you know

The General Fund Budget is over \$71,500,000 in expenditures for the district's annual operations.

At a glance

Through community levy support, the Peninsula School District provides students and teachers with quality instructional materials that support the district curriculum and the state Essential Learnings.

Kindergarten Registration

Eligible kindergarteners are boys and girls, living in the Peninsula School District, who are 5 years old by August 31, 2005. Registration continues during regularly scheduled school days, up to the last day of school (6/22/05) from 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Evergreen students learn the art of home building



Story and photos by Rodika Tollefson
KP News

On a recent Thursday in May, Evergreen Elementary students had their chance to mix concrete, hammer nails and build a scaled-down version of a house wall. As

they moved from discussing the process with builder Ron Hendrickson to building a frame and looking at tools, they used concepts they learned in school, including math and fractions.

Hendrickson's visit to Evergreen was part of a six-week program sponsored by



the Master Builders Association of Pierce County. Hendrickson, of Hendrickson Construction Co. from University Place, was one of six industry professionals who visited the school for one hour each week as part of the after-school program AFTER 'OURS. An architect, a supplier, a

remodeler, a real estate agent and a lawyer also visit with the students as part of the program, discussing how their work fits within the home building process, and how things the kids learn in school — like math and creative writing — would apply.

Students cash in for cause



Photo by Hugh McMillan

Students from Kelly Reynolds' and Susan Brummit's classes at Evergreen Elementary stand proudly before the sign "Coins For Cancer" proclaiming that they'd raised \$643.63 in the week ending May 13 to support efforts to find a cure for the dreaded disease. On learning that one of their favorite teachers had been diagnosed with cancer, they decided to do something about it — and did. Some emptied their piggy banks, others gave up allowances, some contributed their lunch money, and they all successfully encouraged their classmates to support the effort.

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Right, Ariana Smith shares her Sumi painting with the students.
Above: Artwork by Joel Fandel.



KPMS class shows off artistic works

Photos and story by Jerry Libstaff
Special to KP News

On May 11, more than 50 students from Key Peninsula Middle School read poetry and described Sumi paintings they created. Teachers Connie Nelson and Cindy Knisely combined their classes to allow the students to share their art projects.

Two local artists, Reni Moriarty and Debra McElroy, completed residencies in the classes, working with the teachers to provide a "different educational experience" for the students through the Artists in Schools program sponsored by the Two Waters Arts Alliance (see related article on page 24).

Student Rebecca Sarr said she had "never really drawn before" but "it was fun, a good experience."

The work created by the students, along with art projects from six other Key Peninsula classes, will be featured at the Key Peninsula Library on June 7.

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Legislative issues and bills addressed in '05

By Rodika Tollefson
KP News

When the Democratic-led Legislature adjourned at the end of April, lawmakers went home after passing a two-year, \$26 billion operating budget relying heavily on new "sin tax" (on tobacco and hard alcohol) and a \$8.5 billion transportation package that will be funded by a 9.5-cent tax increase over four years (see related story on cover).

The KP News takes a look at a few bills. (Note: Sen. Bob Oke was unavailable for an interview due to starting his treatment for cancer; Rep. Pat Lantz did not return KP News phone calls.)

House Bill 2266, signed by Gov. Christine Gregoire, was called a major step toward fighting methamphetamine. The legislation will require cold and allergy medicines that contain meth production precursor drugs to be kept behind the counter at pharmacies or locked. Those who purchase the medicines must be at least 18 years old, show a photo I.D., and have a limit of two packages per 24 hours (one package for some dosages). Their names will be recorded in a log.

"If you look at the impact meth has on our community, it's important that we fight this issue," said Rep. Derek Kilmer, adding that after a similar bill in Oklahoma, meth lab production was reduced by 70 percent. Asked about privacy issues regarding this bill, he said compared to the taxes citizens pay for prisons and related services, signing the log "is a minor inconvenience." The bill was co-sponsored by Lantz.

Senate Bill 5048, sponsored by Oke, would have made it illegal to give away tobacco products at public events — where teens report being offered the samples even though they can't legally buy it. "We are going to save lives with this bill," Oke wrote to his constituents in a session review. "Cigarettes kill people. There is no good reason why handing out free samples of a deadly product should be allowed to go on in this state." The bill died in the House after passing two committees.

HB 1864, introduced by Kilmer and co-sponsored by Lantz, creates a citizen advisory committee comprised of residents affected by the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. Previously the advisory board's members would have been from Western

Want to contact your legislators?

Rep. Pat Lantz (D): (360) 786-7964
Rep. Derek Kilmer (D): (360) 786-7802

Sen. Bob Oke (R): (360) 786-7650
Kilmer will report on the legislative session on June 22, 7 p.m., at the Pierce County Library in Key Center.

Do you have a legislative bill or issue question you'd like Key Pen News to cover? Call us at 884-4699 or email news@keypennews.com (please leave your name).

Washington, Kilmer said. The group will advise on future toll collections and consider feasibility of discounts to seniors, students and frequent users. The bill had overwhelming support; it was signed into law by Gregoire.

HB 1865, co-sponsored by Kilmer and Lantz, would exempt the bridge construction from sales taxes, reducing tolls. It died in Senate and Kilmer said he will continue to pursue it. "We're going to pay a toll to pay sales tax that goes back to the

state, when the state isn't paying much toward the project," he said. Oke wrote in his update that Gregoire told him she would sign the bill if the provision that exempts projects from tax that are funded by a minimum of "80 percent" by tolls would be changed to "90 percent."

SB 5139, sponsored by Oke, would allow the use of traps for moles. Initiative 713 did not exempt moles from the prohibition against body-gripping traps. "Right now honest people are breaking the law to protect their property," Oke wrote. "We have athletic fields that can't be used because of damage by moles. We have unsafe conditions in our parks and at airports because of how the initiative has tied our hands." The bill died in a House committee.

Gov. Gregoire signed in May the \$3.3 billion capital budget, which includes funding for a 350-acre park on the Key Peninsula (see KP News, May issue). The bill also increases the amount of matching funds schools will receive for construction projects. "It's the first time in decades that the school construction funding has increased," Kilmer said.

North Bay has a new water park

By Danna Webster
KP News

The North Bay Kayak Park is located on the water side of State Route 3, just past Allyn, before Sherwood Creek Bridge. This area was a swimming hole many years ago. It recently received an extreme makeover and cleanup, and now offers a sandy beach, a kayak launch, an ADA-approved path, and has an ADA accessible restroom. The park, which celebrated its grand opening in May, will be open most of the year.

"[It's] kind of great to bring it back, full circle, to the public again," said Bonnie Knight, executive director of the Port of Allyn.

Allyn resident Sara Germaine walked to the park with her 19-month-old daughter, Ruby, in a stroller.

"(I'm) really glad that this park is here," Germaine told Knight. "I'll bring my kids down to build sand castles...I can't thank you enough."



Photo by Danna Webster

L-R: Port of Allyn Commissioners Judy Scott, Ben Meservey, and Linda Blackwell took part in the ribbon cutting ceremony for the North Bay Kayak Park grand opening on May 6. The park is part of the Cascadia Marine Trail, which is a National Recreational Trail with over 50 sites along Puget Sound shorelines.

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Bicycle race comes to Longbranch

By Hugh McMillan
KP News

More than 300 racers, competing on bicycles comparable to those used by Lance Armstrong and his teammates in the Tour de France, competed in May in Longbranch.

The Washington State Bicycle Road Race Championship, hosted by members of Gig Harbor's Old Town Bicycle Road Racing Team, included events in the juniors and masters levels (men's and women's).

Juniors are youth who are just beginning the sport of competitive bicycle racing. Masters, many of whom have extensive experience in competitive cycling, are all over 30 years of age. Steven P. Breaux, volunteer coordinator for the Old Town Bicycle Racing Team and one of the event organizers, said, "The annual race, which attracts hundreds of competitive cyclists from around the state, and some from out of state, is a major event on the Washington State Bicycle Association road racing calendar."



Photo by Hugh McMillan

Masters, all over 30 years of age, complete the exhausting race in front of the Longbranch Improvement Club.

The race started at the Longbranch Improvement Club, followed Key Peninsula Highway north, where it made a sharp left turn onto Whiteman Road, followed Whiteman Road, including a challenging mile-long climb, until it

curved onto 76th Street, then turned left back onto the KP Highway passing the Filucy Bay Marina before returning to the LIC start/finish area.

The race was broken into a series of events in which riders of similar ability

competed with one another on the challenging 10-mile circuit. The event was officiated by the U.S. Cycling Federation, which ensures that numerous rules and safety measures are enforced. Race volunteers acted as corner marshals, temporarily halting traffic as groups of racers passed intersections, and also drove lead and follow cars with flashing lights to protect each group of racers within a "rolling enclosure."

"We're really glad that the Washington State Bicycle Association once again gave us the honor of hosting the state championships," Breaux said. "It's become a real tradition among the state's top-level cyclists to come to the Key Peninsula every spring for this event. It has also become a tradition for the people of the Key Peninsula. We couldn't do it without their support — especially that of the LIC."

The Old Town Bicycle Racing Team has members throughout South Puget Sound and is sponsored by Old Town Bicycle with shops in Gig Harbor and Tacoma.

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Planning board meetings

The next meetings for the Key Peninsula Community Planning Board are scheduled for Wednesday, June 1 and Tuesday, June 21. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. in the Key Peninsula Middle School Library.

The Community Planning Board is working on policy development for the Key Peninsula Community Plan regarding the Economic Development and Land Use. Members of the general public are encouraged to attend the meetings. For more information, see www.piercecountywa.org/landuse.

News from TOPS#WA1325, Lakebay

Encouragement and discussions about sensible eating are a winning combination in the Morning Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) group. We meet at McColley Hall in the Key Peninsula Lutheran Church (on the corner of Lackey Rd. and Key Peninsula Hwy.), every Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. Congratulations to our new board members Gloria Bowman, Leader; Jonda Smith, Co-Leader; Dolores Argabright, Secretary; Daniel Boone, Treasurer; Betty

Mayer, and Patty Lahoe, Weight Recorders; Lena Bradford, Chapter Joy.

During a private weigh-in, the rest of the members socialize and greet guest until the meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. Those with losses are recognized; games and contests come next, followed by a program on subject of interest and encouragement to all. Men and Women both take active part in the meetings ages 7 to infinity are welcome. Cost to join TOPS is \$20 a year and dues are \$5 a month. After the meeting, some members of the group go for a walk down Jackson Lake Road and everyone is invited to go on the walk. Come and join us. For more information on a great support group call Gloria 884-2554 or Jonda 884-1335.

Angel Guild elects officers

Angel Guild has a new slate of officers and board of directors. Pat Kunzl is our new president. The new officers were installed at a beautiful luncheon presented by a very capable group of ladies. We are most appreciative of their talents.

There are many talented people in our group. Evidence of this was shown at the Livable Community Fair. We value their dedication.

Summer is coming and if you need

shorts, jeans, sandals, swimsuits or anything else connected with summer, shop Angel Guild Thrift Store first. Our prices are the lowest in the area. Our selection is the best. This is due to donations our community gives to us, and in turn enables us to give to the community. Isn't it a good feeling to help someone? We all gain by it.

—By Betty Barkubein

Vaughn author talks about publishing

Friends of the Library present Renee Riva on Thursday, June 9 at 7 p.m. in the Brones Room. Riva will hold a discussion on getting written work published. Her recently published children's books, "Guido's Gondola" and "Izzy the Lizzy" went on sale May 17. Riva is holding a book signing at the KP Civic Center on Saturday, June 4 from noon to 2 p.m.

The Bloodmobile will be in Purdy in June

The Bloodmobile will visit the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor in June. The Key Peninsula visit is sponsored by the PHS Senior Project at Peninsula High School, on June 10 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m.,

14105 Purdy Dr. NW off 144th Street. If you're interested in donating blood and would like to find out about other locations, call Cascade Regional Blood Services at 383-2553 or see www.cascade-bloodcenters.org.

Civic Center Earth Day event rescheduled

The Earth Day work party date for the Civic Center was rained out. The KPCCA board is now inviting residents to come on Saturday, June 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., to help with cleanup and beautification of the buildings and grounds at the Civic Center in Vaughn. Call 884-3456 for information.

TOPS in Vaughn invites new members

Hey Friends, it's not too late to think about shedding those extra pounds for summer. Come join us at TOPS (that's Take Off Pounds Sensibly)! We are working on losing our extra weight and you can too, the sensible way! We offer no fads, gimmicks or crazy stuff. Losing weight is hard work, we all know that, but it can be fun the TOPS way! We will be there to support, encourage and lend a

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helping hand as you succeed in your weight loss goals. Don't be shy, come visit us on Tuesday nights at the Key Peninsula Civic Center, VFW Room, 7:00 p.m. We're anxious to meet you. For further information, call Jena at KPCC 884-3456.

—By Jo Wickline

Victor holds annual flea market

The annual flea market at the Victor Improvement Club, behind the fire station off State Route 302, will be held on June 18 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Meet the neighbors and hunt for treasures!

LIC Marina hosts 'Odyssey Cruise'

Tour South Puget Sound on June 18 on the SSS Odyssey, a 90-foot yawl built in 1938 by Sparkman & Stephens. The cruise is hosted by the LIC Marina and organized by the Boy Scouts. The \$30 ticket per person includes \$5 toward a raffle for a scale replica. Call 884-5137 for details.

For more June events, see the Summer Guide special insert.

Unusual tides in June

Thursday, June 23, will have unusually high tides:

Vaughn Bay: 1:23 p.m., minus 4.1 feet;
9:02 p.m., plus 16.1 feet

Devil's Head: 1:16 p.m., minus 4.3 feet;
8:51 PM, plus 15.9 feet

Henderson Bay: 1:10 p.m., minus 3.9 feet;
8:42 p.m., plus 14.8 feet

Allyn: 1:25 p.m., minus 4.2 feet;
8:59 p.m., plus 16.1 feet.

June 22, will also have unusual tides.
Source: NOAA 2005 tide tables with calculated location offsets per NOAA published formulas.

Calendar is now online!

See www.keypennews.com

Volunteer spotlight: Bob DeLaney

Story and photo by Danna Webster
KP News

Living on the Key Peninsula puts Bob DeLaney and his wife, Anne, close to their grandkids. It also makes them convenient resources for the Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula Chapter of Habitat for Humanity. DeLaney had been involved with Habitat in Southern California before moving here.

It is DeLaney's job to recruit and organize the volunteers for the organization's Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula chapter. He calls himself the nominal chair of a committee team that includes Pat Ellis and Gordon Sund. He has been the Volunteer Committee chairman since the chapter's inception in 2001.

"Every time we need a few extra volunteers, whether for publicity events or for construction, Bob always comes through. His attention to detail is a great example to the rest of us and he is

truly a pleasure to work with," says Warren Hendrickson, GH/KP Chapter chairman and vice president of the Tacoma Habitat for Humanity Affiliate Board.

DeLaney says the chapter has an extraordinary network of volunteers and they try to get everybody out on building site. They got a lot of volunteers from the Habitat sign that was across from the new Burger King and from publicity in papers. Sometimes people see them working and stop to say they are interested in volunteering. "[We have] always had many professionals and well-experienced people volunteer to advise us," he says.

The chapter finds and partners with families who live in substandard housing. They find property to buy, raise the funds to buy the property, recruit the volunteers, and build the houses.

When DeLaney was asked about volunteering his retirement time to the Habitat chapter, his response was, "...Just do it for fun. It's a real pleasure working with the families and other volunteers. (I'm) blessed, being a blessing."



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News briefs

Key Peninsula Community Council seeks new directors

The Key Peninsula Community Council has set the date for its second election since the council's inception in March 2004.

The council was established as a nonpartisan, nonpolitical organization representing the entire peninsula. The 14 council members are becoming active in promoting improved safety, provide input to community planning efforts, expanding more diverse opportunities for youth, and may become involved in activities to improve public health, job opportunities and input to Pierce County.

The council is funded by a variety of sources including donations, memberships and a small grant from Pierce County.

On Sept. 17, the KPCC will elect seven directors. The council has four districts, which correspond to the U.S. Census tracts on the Key Peninsula.

Barbara Schoos and Arlene Williams will coordinate the election. The elections will include candidates from each district.

Council directors say this is an opportunity for residents to help improve the quality of life on the Key Peninsula.

Qualifications to serve as a director include being at least 18 years old and living or owning property on the Key Peninsula. Candidate forms and district maps may be obtained by calling the KPCC at 884-0557 or President Jeff Harris at 884-467.

Applications are due by Aug. 12. The council meets the second Wednesday of each month at the Key Peninsula Middle School from 7 to 8:30 p.m. and the public is encouraged to attend.

Rep. Kilmer to present report at KP library

The public is invited to attend a session focusing on a legislative report by Rep. Derek Kilmer at the Key Peninsula branch of the Pierce County Library in Key Center.

The event, sponsored by the KP Lions Club, is free and starts at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, June 22.

Contributions of nonperishable food for the KP Food Bank, used eye glasses and used hearing aids for recycling under the Lions' Sight and Hearing Conservation programs will be collected.

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From Pioneer Stock Phyllis Anker appreciates her roots

By Colleen Slater
KP News

Phyllis Anker is pleased to recall growing up in the community she still calls home. Her roots go deep.

Her grandfather, Andrew Olson, arrived to homestead in 1886. The Buckell great-grandparents and her Bill grands and great-grands came from Alberta, Canada, in 1908 and 1911 to settle in Vaughn.

Today many think Sunnycrest Farm is in Key Center, but Olson considered it Vaughn. Phyllis, born where sister Joyce Niemann now lives, says her birth certificate reads Vaughn.

Olsons had a chick hatchery when Phyllis was young. Her mother checked eggs for embryos and threw out those that had none. "It was really the only farm work Mother did, because she was busy with five kids, cooking and all the rest," she says. The children were put to bed on bales of hay in the hatchery if necessary.

Phyllis' dad sold his "Sunnycrest Chicks" all over the peninsula. Most people raised chickens, but his was the only chick hatchery around.

Phyllis recalls being fascinated by the visit of the "sexer" who arrived when the chicks were a day old. He divided the roosters from the pullets, and put them in separate bins.

"We always had plenty to eat and work to do," she says of the depression years. "People didn't have much money, but my folks did all right. They bought a new car in 1934, another in '36, and another in '37.

"The barber (Ray Bond) traded haircuts for eggs," Phyllis says. The Schaak family brought soda pop and left with eggs. "Dad had a big bull with a ring in his nose, and many people on the peninsula had family cows. They brought them to Dad to be serviced. He charged \$2," she says.

The kids were excited when someone brought his cow, because it meant they could go to the movies. "We went to a lot of movies," Phyllis remembers. "Port Orchard Theatre was closest. They sent out postcards with the features for the month. On Family Night, you could take the whole family in for \$1. Grandpa Frank used to load his car with kids. Or our folks would."

There was always work on the farm. Phyllis and brother Don packed a case of eggs every day, and to earn money for 4th of July fireworks, hosed potatoes. A dollar each was a lot of spending money then.

The Olson siblings, with their Froelich cousins, went to Glencove School through



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Anker

Phyllis Anker, age 8, with new haircut.

eighth grade. Eight grades with 16 to 20 children, no electricity, no running water, outhouses down the hill. A pump was on the porch for water.

"Everybody played everything — baseball, touch football..." because there were so few students.

"Track Meet Day" each spring was a big event. The whole school participated, and they practiced for weeks ahead. "Running — 50 and 100 yards — ball throw, shot put, pole vaulting — we had it all," she says.

Glencove, Vaughn, Lakebay, and Longbranch grade schools competed, and ribbons were awarded. The top three winners for each event later went to Gig Harbor to compete.

"I think summers were longer and hotter and winters were colder then," Phyllis says. They did a lot of ice skating and sledding in the winter. Summer meant swimming, bonfires, beach parties, picnics, "and ball games on Sunday afternoon," often umpired by Uncle D'Arcy.

Phyllis loved the community dances where children were taken. When the dance floor wax was sprinkled, the children were encouraged to slide around to make it ready for dancing. Young ones went to sleep on benches along the walls.

"Mother insisted we have music lessons," Phyllis says. She took piano for awhile, but it didn't last. In the '30s, Florence Holman had a harmonica band and all the kids loved it.

Phyllis took accordion lessons. Brother Ed played trombone and Don had a trumpet.

"We were never bored," Phyllis says. "We had lots of cousins and friends around. There was always something to do."

Phyllis is glad she's lived where and when she has. "I had roots," she says with a smile. And still does.

*APR is Annual Percentage Rate. Applied to each approval. Some restrictions apply. See us for details. Example: \$20,000 loan at 2.99% APR for 60 months. Monthly payment: \$350.00. Total interest: \$10,000.00. Total amount paid: \$30,000.00. Example: \$40,000 loan at 2.99% APR for 60 months. Monthly payment: \$700.00. Total interest: \$20,000.00. Total amount paid: \$60,000.00. Example: \$60,000 loan at 2.99% APR for 60 months. Monthly payment: \$1,050.00. Total interest: \$30,000.00. Total amount paid: \$90,000.00. Example: \$80,000 loan at 2.99% APR for 60 months. Monthly payment: \$1,400.00. Total interest: \$40,000.00. Total amount paid: \$120,000.00. Example: \$100,000 loan at 2.99% APR for 60 months. Monthly payment: \$1,750.00. Total interest: \$50,000.00. Total amount paid: \$150,000.00. Example: \$120,000 loan at 2.99% APR for 60 months. Monthly payment: \$2,100.00. Total interest: \$60,000.00. Total amount paid: \$180,000.00. 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(From SR 302, Page 1)

tive route. The report said that "as this formerly rural region becomes more suburbanized, pressure on existing transportation facilities will continue to erode the level of service along SR-302."

The transportation package will cost residents 9.5 cents per gallon in new taxes, implemented over four years. Based on the 2000 U.S. Census, about 72 percent of Key Pen residents commute to work 30 or more minutes. About 20 percent commute for 45-59 minutes, and about 26 percent commute more than one hour. For a person driving to work 35 miles in a car, for example, it will cost about \$67 per year just to drive to work and back. That's in addition to the roughly \$36 (for commuting) this person is paying into the "nickel tax" adopted in 2003 for road improvements.

But that's not all. The projects proposed for King, Pierce and Snohomish County, including SR-302 corridor, Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement, 520 floating bridge, and Interstate 405, must receive matching funds from the tri-county Regional Transportation Investment District, or the state funds will be diverted to other areas.

That means voters in those counties must approve additional taxes. A \$13.2 billion RTID proposal dated March 2004 estimated the cost burden for a household with the median income of \$40,000 to \$50,000 (KP's median is \$49,000) at \$271 per year. Add to that \$720 per year in tolls those commuting over the Tacoma Narrows Bridge would be paying (actually \$960 per year by the time the entire 9.5-cent tax is in effect in 2010). Assuming the RTID taxes would kick in by 2010, this KP commuter would pay a total of \$1,063 per year to get to work, and a lot more for going grocery shopping, kids' games etc. Additional costs would incur as businesses pass the tax to consumers.

Kjris Lund, executive director of the RTID, said the board will "reshape the package in light of the legislative approval." The latest RTID proposal included widening part of 302 and building a new corridor from the vicinity of 144th Street NW, with 2015 as the estimated midpoint of construction.

"We are assessing with Department of Transportation staff what exactly did the Legislature fund," she said. "In general, people have been concurring that projects identified on the RTID are priorities, but some projects can emerge as new priorities." The RTID board includes representatives from all the counties. (Lee is an alternate member for Pierce County.)

Of the \$8.5 billion transportation funding, a big portion is dedicated to Seattle-area projects. "There is great concern about fairness when it comes to

our area," said Rep. Derek Kilmer, who along with Rep. Pat Lantz and Sen. Bob Oke voted against the transportation budget. "I don't want our area to pay additionally until we see benefits from it."

The new gas tax would cost rural residents such as those on the Key Pen far more than those in Seattle, says local resident Rich Hildahl, because rural residents have to drive bigger vehicles by necessity and drive much farther. But Seattle residents are the ones benefiting the most.

"The 9.5-cent tax is only a down payment," he said. "For a rural area like Key Peninsula, it's horrible legislation."

Hildahl said he would support more taxes had the process been more transparent and had the legislators disclosed the truth. As is, much of the funding goes toward "urban renewal" in Seattle and projects that will have almost no impact on local transportation, he says, and taxpayers are asked to pay for projects that don't have defined plans. South Sound residents are essentially being held hostage, said Hildahl, who has worked on development projects for The World Bank with countries including China and Russia. "There have been so many games played with the transportation package" without addressing obvious and fundamental concerns, he said.

An effort that nearly made it through the Legislature may have provided some relief to Gig Harbor/Key Pen residents. A bill to allow counties to exempt areas from the regional transportation tax had strong support but died at the last moment. RTID director Lund said when the board looks at next year's work plan, it could consider the boundary adjustments and make recommendations. When asked whether eliminating an area like the Peninsula from the RTID taxation proposal would also eliminate any Peninsula projects from funding, Lund said it would be up to the board but both possibilities existed.

The 2006 Legislature is slated to bring the RTID bill back, but in the meantime a group of citizens is trying to recall the 9.5-cent gas tax altogether. They must collect 225,014 signatures by July 8 to qualify the initiative for the November ballot. The tax will make Washington top in the nation for gasoline taxes, but will not provide real transportation solutions, the group says.

"We already have the fifth-highest gasoline tax in the country. Obviously, the strategy is to have a little bit for everybody to sell the big subsidy for Seattle. Seattle residents will not have the burden of paying because they don't commute," Hildahl said. "If our legislators have the courage of their convictions, they will sign the petition calling for the rescinding the proposed 9.5-cent tax and start over with a sound and fair plan in the next session."



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By Irene Torres
KP News

If you have family coming to visit this summer and are looking for accommodations, or hope to "escape" yourself for a day but don't want to drive far, here is a roundup of the hospitable bed & breakfast facilities on or near Key Pen.

Westwynd Motel in Purdy: Pets are welcome at the Westwynd Motel, located near the gateway to the Key Peninsula. Owner Ed Taylor says, "I've been operating this motel for about 20 years. In all that time, I've never had a dog or cat steal towels, bedclothes, silverware or pictures off the walls. I've never had to evict a dog in the middle of the night for being drunk and disorderly. And I've never had a cat run out on a hotel bill. Your dog or cat is welcome at my hotel. And, if your pet will vouch for you, you're welcome to stay here, too." Call 857-4047 for information about rates and other details, or go online to

For stories about things to do this summer on the Key Pen, see the Key Peninsula Summer Guide 2005, a special section in this issue.

www.westwyndmotel.com; reservations may be made by calling 800-468-9963.

Aloha Beachside in Wauna: Hawaii is closer than you think, at the Aloha Beachside. Hosts Greg and Lalaine Wong say, "Capture the spirit and experience Hawaiian hospitality at its finest. Whether it's for a romantic getaway, honeymoon, anniversary celebration, or extended business stay, we will recreate those fond memories of our 50th state." Email AlohaBBB@ComCast.net or call 1-888-ALOHA-BB

Bear's Lair in Wauna: A Bear's Lair is "a slice of heaven right here on the Key Peninsula," say its hosts, Giulio and Jen Santori. "Our guests experience the ultimate getaway. From the 5-star accommo-

dations with custom woodworking throughout, or stroll the breathtaking gardens and relax in the island gazebo," they say. Featuring award-winning breakfasts, the Bear's Lair is the most unique estate-style B & B in the Puget Sound, entirely designed and built by the Santoris. Says Jen, "Our guests are always welcomed by Buddy, the Golden Retriever, official Bear's Lair greeter!" Call toll-free 877-855-9768, local 253-857-8877; www.bearslairbb.com

The Olde Glen Cove Hotel in Glen Cove: Hosts Larry and Luciann Nadeau recently said, "We cater to people from all around the globe. We have folks from England staying with us this weekend..." Built as a resort hotel in 1896, it has been a National Historic Place since 1978. Nestled above a quiet cove on Puget Sound, it features weddings and receptions in an elegant and historical setting. The hotel has a rich history. www.glencovehotel.com or call 858-7797.

A Bed on the Bay in Vaughn: A perfect getaway from the city, an elegant 12,000-square-foot facility, with gazebo and guesthouse overlooking Vaughn Bay. A Bed on the Bay is hosted by Rose Saccalan and Michael Nadel. For reserva-

tions, phone 884-9664 or email abedonthebay@msn.com. This property was listed for sale at press time, but will be open for the summer.

Frog Creek Lodge in Lakebay: Innkeeper Suzanne Dircks says, "Frog Creek Lodge is a uniquely decorated large log home with each bedroom having a different theme. The facility is in a tranquil environment, which will bring you to close to nature. The labyrinth and trails through the woods provide a good setting for reflection and relaxation." The lodge rents out the entire building at a time; call 884-3188 or email info@frogcreeklodge.com

The Selah Inn in Belfair: The Selah Inn is featured in three books: "Best Places to Kiss in the Northwest," "Romantic Pacific Northwest," and "Absolutely Every B&B in Washington." From romantic getaways, to family beach parties, to large group events and seminars, its elegant country inn and the adjacent guest houses offer the ultimate of luxurious comfort and relaxation and fully catered meals in the breathtaking setting of pristine Hood Canal, hosted by Bonnie and Pat McCullough, innkeepers. Contact 360-275-0916, toll-free 877-232-7941, email innkeeper@selahinn.com



Longer days and warmer nights. Spring brings in new life and freshness. Spring is also a great time to make the move that you have been pondering. If you have been in your home just a few years, it has appreciated well and it may be the right time to take advantage of the market strength.

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Winery opening soon near you

By Danna Webster
KP News

Every bottle of wine has a story to tell. It is the adventure of grapes through the seasons with characters created by soil and climate. The right time and good seasons make a great wine. It is the task of the winemaker to get the story told. Claude Gahard is a winemaker and a great storyteller. Trillium Creek Winery is where his stories begin, and the setting is the Key Peninsula.

Gahard specializes in a dry, clear, crisp and delicious white wine from Muller Thurgau grapes. These grapes begin their story with the spring, when their leaves come out, and their flower pods blossom. In the summer, the grapes ripen and achieve a higher sugar content than acid. Gahard's wife and partner, Claudia, says, "Grapes are ripe when the seeds turn brown." The fall is the time for harvest, the crushing of grapes, and for fermentation to begin. Over winter the wine must sleep. "You don't want to disturb it," warns Claude.

Making wine became a hobby for the

Gahards early in their marriage. While living near Walla Walla, they stocked their cupboards by gleaning potatoes, plums, and asparagus. When Claudia gleaned grapes in the Tri-Cities, they decided they should try to make wine. One of their first lessons was that the yeast Claudia used for baking bread was the wrong yeast for wine. They made plum, raspberry and concord wines and "started making wine that was pretty decent," Claudia says.

Some of the concord seeds from Walla Walla are growing along the driveway of the winery. Claudia likes to grow things. She is good with "dirt stuff," she says.

The Gahards left Eastern Washington before it became famous as wine country. When asked about their timing, Claude laughs and says, "Well, we started it."

Gahard studied how-to books and claims his wine-making success is "text taught." When the Gahards retired and Claude left his aviation career, they asked themselves what they should do next. The fact that friends at parties were choosing Claude's wines over

Trillium Creek wine will be for sale this summer after the official grand opening of the tasting room, located in Home. Owners Claude and Claudia Gahard invite visitors to watch the progress toward the opening.

commercial wines influenced that decision. Claude's answer was, "We need to do something. How about we get serious about making wine." Claudia replied, "If we make wine, we have to grow grapes." When they moved to the Key Peninsula, they began growing grapes and got serious about winemaking.

Along with his text taught expertise, Claude brings a discriminating palate that he attributes to his birthplace, Paris. He says Paris is the "standard of all good things and the center of all fine foods." He left Paris when he was 10 and remembers fondly seeing the Statue of Liberty on his journey to a new home in Newark, New Jersey. However, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches washed down with milk offended his Parisian tastes.

He says "the grandeur of the Statue of Liberty and what she represents," always stayed with him. Later, as a pilot for Continental Airlines, he often finished flights to Newark with a fly by that statue.

At the winery, Claudia's gardens grow below the vineyard hills. There are paths to stroll, a bridge to cross, and a table where guests may picnic or rest awhile. At the entrance to the winery stands the tasting room and, next to it, the excavation for the barrel cellar.

Gahard says guests are welcome to come and watch the winery progress. It is a story unfolding. The door into the tasting room has been carefully chosen. It is not an ordinary door. It hints there may be story inside. The Gahards invite anyone to open the door and begin an adventure.

His career in aviation gave Gahard colorful story material, like flying pipeline into Alaska and landing on grass strips and cow pastures in the San Juans while delivering the mail. He looks to the winery for new stories to tell.



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Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.... Will Rogers

Bayside Animal Lodge takes care of pets...and owners

By Danna Webster
KP News

The first impression of the Bayside Animal Lodge is of a clean, orderly and attractive establishment. A front porch with country charm invites visitors inside. There, they are greeted warmly and their needs are immediately met in the quiet atmosphere of a small pet-supply store. Gradually, the shoppers become aware of classical music playing in the background. It takes a full tour to appreciate all the details that make the lodge a pleasant experience for animals and their owners. "Tours are available any time, no appointment necessary," says Robert McCrossin, the owner of Bayside.

Many details go into specialty rooms around the lodge. The cat room has double-decker condos with views out of a floor-to-ceiling picture window of the "Shade Garden." The Shade Garden is a manicured landscape along the dog-walk path.

There are clean, well-equipped bathing and grooming rooms that smell of soap. Past these rooms are the housing facilities for the overnight dog guests.

"I walk through here every single day and talk to every animal that's here," says McCrossin as he leads a tour. He points out the runs with their outside patios. They can house up to three large dogs or five to six small ones. Many owners bring more than one dog to stay. He explains the music. Studies have shown that dogs like classical music and the heartbeat sound. McCrossin figures listening to a steady heartbeat all day would drive the staff crazy so he opted for classical music.

In a small, clean kitchen area, McCrossin shows the logs kept on each animal with a record of meds, foods and daily services provided and, of course, the "cookies" at midday. This is all part of the "standard package" for the dogs, which includes taking them out twice a day. Added services may include extra midday walks, grooming, playtime in the play yard, baths, haircuts and professional training opportunities.

McCrossin bought the business in June 2001, leaving his work as a manager of veterinarian hospitals in Seattle. His new business took a nosedive after the Sept. 11 tragedy. He spent the downtime writing letters of introduction to all the veterinarians in the area. Business improved.

"We stay full," he says and is pleased that there is a waiting list for prime dates.



PHS students are kennel staff at Bayside. Freshman Tasso Solandros (back row) and seniors Kayla Shelton (far left) and Rebecca Gillespie pose with owner Robert McCrossin and dog Rosie by the Shade Garden. Rosie moved in with McCrossin after she was abandoned at one of the Seattle veterinary hospitals.

Photo by Danna Webster

He has over a dozen reservations for Christmas 2005 already. He says most of his customers are referrals from veterinarians and from other customers.

Key to McCrossin's business success is his concern for the staff and employees.

He introduces the kennel manager, Tammy Jacobson, as "the most important person here except for my dog Rosie." Jacobson went to work for McCrossin soon after her move to Key Pen from Alaska, where she bred Siberians and ran a dog team. She recently wrote a note on a card to McCrossin that read, "Thank you for making my dream job a reality." Jacobson enjoys learning more every day about how to "read" the dogs. One job benefit is "when a scared nervous dog comes — to see that dog change and become happy," she says.

McCrossin has an additional five kennel employees that include a groomer, a trainer, and PHS high school students. McCrossin meets with parents before students are hired.

The loyalty and enthusiastic work of the high school students has inspired McCrossin to add an unexpected dimension to the business. He has set up scholarship funds with a \$250 reward for each year they work. Freshman student Tasso Solandros will earn his \$250 reward this year. Senior students Kayla Shelton and Rebecca Gillespie will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship award.

McCrossin says that each of the students has a unique trait about the work. "Kayla always runs with the dog. Becca has overcome her fear of dogs. Tasso came to work with an overabundance of enthusiasm for dogs. He has learned that sometimes you have to put the enthusiasm back and be the leader of the

pack...be the boss," says McCrossin.

Shelton is going to college next year. When asked how working four years at Bayside contributed to her life, she said, "Just the way I've grown... entering the work force, first job. ... I learned so much more [than kennel care]... about working with clients and other employees, how a well functioning

company should be run — as far as how employees are treated. And I love working with the dogs." She is a conscientious worker and a serious student who prepared a scrapbook for the PHS scholarship program and has been offered a scholarship at the University of Montana, McCrossin's alma mater. She plans to major in community health.

In addition to taking care of a business, McCrossin is an avid community supporter. Since many of his customers are from out of the area, he refers them to local restaurants and the parks. He also refers to other kennels when his lodge is full. Last year he sponsored a T-ball team, a co-ed adult softball team and a wrestling team for the Peninsula Youth Wrestling Club.

But the heart of his business is quality care for the animals and the staff. All the work is a team effort, he says, and adds that the dogs leave happy after a stay. His kennel manager agrees. "When owners see how happy their dogs are, then they know they were treated right," says Jacobson.

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9714 Charter Road	Glen Cove	\$400,000
19502 Rocky Bay Point Rd.		\$675,000
13628 107th St. KPN	Kooley Addition	\$289,950
15608 17 4th Ave KPN	Carney Lake area	\$240,000
17115 5th Ave KPN	Town of Home	\$245,000
2506 195th Ave KPS	Palmer Lake	\$159,000
12007 102nd Ave Ct NW	Wind n'Tide	\$1,200,000

Foundation News

Windermere/Key Realty (through the Windermere Foundation) donated \$200.00 to the Evergreen Elementary School reading program. (A portion of every commission earned by a Windermere agent goes to the Windermere Foundation and then is returned to the local community to help where it is needed).

Community Service Day —June 17, 2005

Windermere agents across the state take the day out of their offices to do volunteer work for some local organization. Windermere/Key Realty agents will be working at Volunteer Park on the Key Peninsula painting, landscaping, weeding or whatever Scott Gallacher (Park Director) has available for us to do. A wonderful fun day for us, and a great way to give back to the community!!



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(From SKATE PARK, Page 1)

With the middle school next door, there was lots of interest. But as the kids grew older, and the wooden half-pipe deteriorated, interest faded for most of the kids. But not for Zech. He carried his love for the sport with him as he entered the Navy and he drew crowds in Italy when he rode his board.

Tragedy struck the West family last summer, when Zech and his new bride, Adrienne, were killed in a car accident shortly after their wedding.

Chuck West, a captain with the Key Peninsula Fire District, watched his family and himself go through the phases of grief and tragedy for which he was trained to help others.

"As soon as something bad happens, I start resolving to do something to stabilize things," says West. "I didn't have any anger."

But he was looking for some resolution. Zech's skate park became his focus. It was what he wanted. "After he died, I needed to resurrect that, make that happen — make it permanent," West says.

"I want to do something permanent that will be here for my lifetime and beyond, as a memorial to Zech and Adrienne. And I



Fire District 16's Capt. Chuck West serves Wauna resident Jennifer Wicklund at Harbor Rock Café in Gig Harbor in May. The Gig Harbor and Key Pen firefighters organized a fund-raiser at the restaurant for the skateboard park West hopes to build.

Photo by Mindi LaRose

want to do something for the community, too, and the kids here. I'm tired of seeing kids playing in the parking lots."

West says baseball built Volunteer Park but it is time to add more options for kids. He wants a skate park with a concrete-only skate area, with restrooms, good parking and a small-kid play area — where a family can come with older and younger kids.

Last year, West began the research. He talked with the Gig Harbor city manager and with the mayor about their skating facilities. His was initially directed to a spot at Volunteer Park (KP Sports Center and Fairgrounds). It is a good location, but

with the planned Department of Natural Resources land acquisition on the north side of the peninsula, there are two attractive locations to consider. West says the KP Metropolitan Parks board has to make those decisions. A metro-park survey showed high interest in a skateboard park. West doesn't think anyone on the park board is strongly against it.

The new director for the KPMPD, Scott Gallacher, says the park district has agreed to look at the idea and do research with West. Gallacher says a skate park is a "very complicated project with all the necessary collaboration of many different partners."

If you'd like to help

Chuck West has a rare truck to raffle for the fund, a 1977 Leata, one of three prototypes for the 43 Leatas eventually built in 1978. Leata information is available at www.Leata.com. Sound Credit Union in Key Center has a Zech and Adrienne West Memorial Fund, where donations can be made. The fund-raising committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the fire department in Key Center.

"It'll take some time," he says. "We need to plan... make sure we're looking for not just today and tomorrow but for 15 to 20 years." According to Gallacher, KPMPD wants it to work and the main questions are about location and timeline.

West says it is time to get the community involved. "I need kids who will use it to be involved with the design process. I need the whole community involved to apply for grants... Different groups to help raise money. Once the design is in hand, we can apply for grants," West says.

He hopes that different organizations will be liaisons to the park district and help find resources. "I'd like to see this progress within the year," he says.

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Artists in Schools chalk up another success

By Jerry Libstaff

Local artists have completed another season in area classrooms sharing their talents. An association between Peninsula School District and Two Waters Arts Alliance awarded nine artists in residence to Key Peninsula schools this year. The innovative program pairs professional artists with teachers to enhance art appreciation and education for the students at no cost to the school district. Artist instructors are funded by Two Waters.

Projects in visual arts, theater arts, poetry and writing skills were provided. Fifth graders at Evergreen worked with Rodika Tollefson to design and produce a school newspaper. Lorina Schaufler presented an after-school program teaching mosaics, and Kathy McGilliard from Encore Theater worked with Elva Brandt to teach performance arts through a play.

Reni Moriarity helped sixth, seventh and eighth graders at KP Middle School create Sumi paintings (Japanese brush art), while Debra McElroy worked with sixth graders to develop poetry. Both



**The Genuine
ARTicle**



Artist Connie Nelson during a class.

Photo by Jerry Libstaff

joined with Mrs. Knisely, Mrs. Nelson and Mrs. Buday to teach in their classes.

Paddy Gilson contributed to Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Peterson's Vaughn Elementary kindergarten classes to develop dramatic playing. A total of 325 students benefited from the classes offered by the artists.

Artists in Schools was brought to the peninsula by the founders of Two Waters Arts Alliance. TWAA was established to enhance the arts for the Key Peninsula community, but in the early days, classes didn't reach as many children as organization members had hoped. Kathy Bauer, past president, says Artists In Schools was developed to "have a greater impact on the young people of the Peninsula and support local artists in the process."

Paddy Gilson, a teacher for 30 years, 20

of those on the Peninsula, heard about the project. She was about to retire from the school district but still wanted to be involved with students. Gilson became a member of Two Waters and began working with the group to develop and institute Artists in Schools. "The arts played a big role in my teaching throughout the years," so she thought the position "would be a perfect match," Gilson says.

They first enrolled local artists who were comfortable teaching, then designed procedures, forms and evaluations to support the program. After months of effort the idea was presented to the school district and won approval. The program was piloted in 2004.

The pilot curriculum was extremely well

TWAA June Classes

June 4: Learning to See with Robin Peterson

June 11: Introduction to Watercolor with Carolyn Scott Arnold

June 18: Watercolor-Staying Out of the Mud with Carolyn Scott Arnold
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received. Evaluations from teachers, artists and most importantly the students spoke very highly of the Artists in Schools program. Last year, Two Waters won a prestigious award and financial backing to continue the instruction this year. At the same time, demand from teachers grew and more artists showed a desire to participate.

All indications point to another successful year for Artists in Schools and strong desire for future growth. Gilson says, "Art helps children find their individual capacity to feel and imagine. Art makes discovery possible." That discovery enhances creativity in all aspects of learning.

If you're an artist, interested in working with Artists in Schools or a teacher who would like more information, please contact Two Waters Arts Alliance at 253-884-9200.

Jerry Libstaff, a writer who lives in Vaughn, is president of Two Waters Arts Alliance.

Friday Night Skate energizes kids, adults

By Edie Morgan
Special to KP News

I might be getting old, but I'll tell you one thing: If we could harness the energy generated at the Civic Center Skate Night on Friday evenings, there would be no energy shortage in this country ever again. There is a positive charge of electricity in the air, magnified by the booming music and reflected in the many faces of youth present and interacting. Most are on wheels, some are not, but everyone is moving and talking, and there is more life concentrated in the gymnasium of that old building on Skate Night than anywhere else on the Peninsula, by a long shot. Visualize a perpetual motion machine.

Skate Night is a program of the KP Civic Center. It runs nearly every Friday night during the school year. This year it's scheduled to end June 10 or 17. Children and

youth from kindergarten through eighth grade are welcome, with parental presence required for those under 8. Cost is \$4 per person, with snacks available for purchase. There is a dedicated group of about 15 volunteer high school students and adults, who facilitate the lively and upbeat scene, and four paid staff. Attendance ranges from an average of 90 to a capacity of 150.

The sparkplugs of this energy source are Shawn and Leslie Etheredge, longtime Skate Night managers. Shawn moves about the gym and waiting area like the most congenial host of the most enjoyable party you've ever attended. One moment he's pouring coffee for waiting parents and volunteers, the next he's skating around the gym floor, stopping to chat and trade dance moves with kids and adults, then he's moving around the tables on the upper level area, greeting newcomers and checking in with Leslie. When I visited

skate night a few weeks ago, Leslie was busy in the kitchen, deep-frying pizza rolls, but she graciously took time to answer my questions at length.

Shawn and Leslie have been at this for nine years. Their children have grown up at Skate Night. Now their son, Scott, runs the skate room. In fact, there is a small group of high school students who have grown out of the program, and now come back to help out, just for the fun of it. Shawn says, "They work really hard all night long. We only let kids volunteer who take it seriously."

As Leslie says, "It gets easier through the years. We know the kids, the kids know us, and they know the rules. Generally things go well. Sometimes we have to ask someone to leave, but usually we have more trouble with adults than with any of the kids. We do have boundaries and they are clear. We're firm on the rules."

"It's all about the kids, and making it fun for them. We would really like to praise and thank our volunteers because we couldn't do it without them," adds Shawn.

The truth of the matter is that the entire community owes Shawn and Leslie Etheredge, the Skate Night staff, and the volunteers a huge and heartfelt thank you. Together they perform a tremendous public service by providing a weekly social and recreational opportunity for children and youth in this community — not to mention the creation of an alternative power source for the future, by channeling the unlimited energy of 100 pre-teens on wheels.

Sylvia Haase contributed to this article.

The Civic Center would like to hear from parents and youth who have participated in Skate Night this year, or who have not participated for some reason. Please fill out the survey, on page 7, and leave it in the Civic Center drop box or in the "Survey" box at Skate Night.

(From **KEY CENTER**, Page 1)

Because a pack of Marlboros costs \$3.89 at the smoke shop (before tax) — and the same pack of cigarettes is \$4.89 over at the Peninsula Market (before tax). That's a \$1 per pack competitive advantage!

Is the smoke shop a good addition to Key Center? Smokers, reeling from constantly increasing prices, might very well answer, "Yes!" And it's consumers who ultimately determine which businesses will live and which will die — thereby defining the character of the community.

The new smoke shop belongs to Yong Lim, who, along with his wife, Chang Lim, operates the Shell gas station on Key Peninsula Highway. They chose to live on the peninsula for the same reasons that many relative newcomers do. "I like small community or town," Lim says. "Everybody is friendly. People know each other. That's the way we grew up (in South Korea)."

When asked about his reasons for opening a smoke shop, he says, "If I don't open down there (Key Center), someone else will." He says when the smoke shop at the former space of KP Video on Key Peninsula Highway opened, the gas station started to lose cigarette customers.

"It's their choice. People come in if they want to," says Lim, who quit smoking about five years ago.

That sums up the way Key Center and thousands of similar business communities originally came into being. Entrepreneurs took a chance and their businesses either

Key Center got its name around 1931, when a group of merchants sponsored a contest to create an official name for the peninsula. Ed M. Stone of Lakebay is credited with coming up with "Key Peninsula." The business community liked it, and once the new moniker was adopted, the community located halfway down the peninsula became known as "Key Center." *Source: "Early Days of the Key Peninsula" by R. T. Arledge*

flourished or failed. But, is the traditional all-American free-for-all the right way to go from this point forward?

Dennis Taylor with Safe Streets says, "I don't think it's the kind of business that's good for any community. It's a legitimate business, and if he wants to be there he can, but from a health perspective and what's good for the community, smoke shops are not a good addition. Smoking makes people sick."

But, the notion of viewing business development through the prism of what's healthy or not healthy is a relatively new way to look at things. And, to be fair, other retailers in the Key Center RAC sell cigarettes too, and do so without fear of criticism. Of course they don't sell bongos (pipes that are frequently used to smoke illegal substances) while the KP Smoke Shop does. When asked about that practice, Lim replied, "If we don't have it, people won't come to our store, they go down street. I don't like it, but we are in competition with other businesses."

In other words, a business person's gotta do what a business person's gotta do, to make a profit. That is and has been the American way.

Still, the notion of thinking about what sort of community Key Pen residents want to have in the future is gaining traction. Mike Kruger, a Pierce County planner, and a community planning board comprised of Key Peninsula residents are already hard at work. The process includes five components: The first, which involved looking at issues related to the natural environment, is now complete. Discussions about economic development started in early May. Once that effort is complete the board will turn their attention to land use, community character, and facilities/services.

Later, once the overall plan has been approved by the county council, Kruger says the plan "will guide growth and development on the Key Peninsula for the next 20 years." Meaning that what the Key

Peninsula Community Planning Board recommends, and what the Pierce County Council approves, will have the force of law.

How do people in Key Center feel about the creation of such a plan? Joyce Tovey is a real estate broker, co-owner of Windermere Realty in Key Center, a member of the KP Business Association, and vice president of the KP Community Council. When asked if there should be some sort of plan for Key Center, Tovey replied with an unequivocal, "Yes! I guess to put the longer perspective on it, the planning group is going into the economic development part of their activity now. Whatever comes out of that will help determine what will happen to Key Center... I think when Doug Fabre built the KC Corral (the Key Center business strip), his vision was great... People liked the way it looked. If you go to Leavenworth, or a place like that, they draw because everyone cooperates to establish a common appearance. I think that would be very nice. I don't want to say cute... But something that would draw the eye."

Others seem to agree and would like to see Key Center become something more than a place to get some nails, have their hair done, or buy a pack of smokes.

"If we were looking to the future," Taylor says, "one of the things I would hope to see happen would be for a park where the big parking lot is presently located. If there was a town square, there would be a place where people could gather... Rather than just drive through, people would pause to interact with each other. My role has to do with community safety, but also building a sense of community, which makes a community more livable."

According to county data, Key Center RAC's 94 acres include 43 acres of commercial developments (including 3 acres of apartments), 19 underdeveloped acres and 29 acres of vacant land.

So, do people want to see Key Center

grow? According to a county-sponsored survey that was done in conjunction with the KP community planning process, 50 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that "Key Center should be the focal point for economic development on the Peninsula," while 29 percent were neutral, and 16 percent disagreed.

Under the heading "Land Use," the survey concluded that 67 percent of respondents agreed that "The commercial area at Key Center should be expanded to accommodate new retail uses"; 18 percent were neutral, and 10 percent disagreed.

In the belief that at least some support exists for a revitalized Key Center, the KP Business Association recently formed a committee to provide the planning board with input regarding economic development. (The committee is expected to make a presentation at a board meeting.)

But there are obstacles, not least of which is the fact that outside of its designation as a RAC, Key Center has no legal status, and with no population to speak of, lacks a tax base. Dale Harrison, owner of Harrison Homes and a member of the planning board, points to infrastructure problems as potential barriers to further development.

"We have constraints relative to infrastructure," he says. "Sewer, water, storm drainage are normally associated with economic development." All of which are lacking where Key Center is concerned. (That's why the post office has a big catchment for storm water next to it.)

Real though such problems are, an extreme makeover of Key Center could be carried out without improvements to infrastructure, and, when asked about that possibility, Harrison was supportive. "Absolutely. I think we should have a vision for how Key Center should look, so long as local business owners buy in," he says.

In spite of the problems, Tovey remains hopeful, and urges interested citizens to provide the KP Community Planning Board, the KP Community Council, and the business association with input.

Having started a new business in Key Center, would Lim support an effort to make the RAC all that it can be? "Yes," he says. "I would support it. You help me — I help you."

KP community planning

Next month, read about economic development and land use, in our continuing effort to provide Key Pen residents with information related to the current community planning. We will also archive these stories online in a special section.

For information about the KP Planning Board, including a list of members, the work program, progress to date, agendas, maps, and an opportunity to provide input, see www.piercecoun.ty.wa.org/landuse or call 798-2700. The meetings are twice a month, at 7 p.m. at the KP Middle School library. The June meeting dates are 1 and 21.

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Summer septic system maintenance tips

By Christine Matter-Rinehart
Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

The Health Department's Septic System Operation and Maintenance Program has a new "staff member." Septic Sam encourages you to keep your septic system F.I.T.

this summer by following three simple steps:

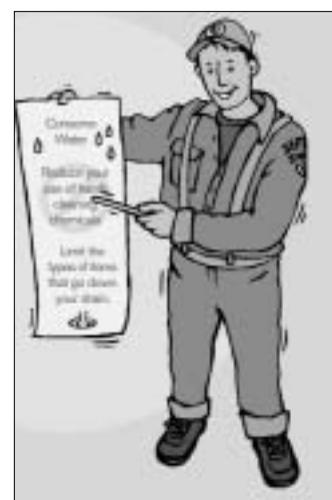
Find it! Know where your septic system is located, so you can maintain and protect it. Contact the Health Department at 798-6577 or visit www.tpchd.org/septic to request a copy of your "as-built," a diagram

showing the location of your system and details about it. A basic system includes a septic tank and a drainfield. Your system might also have a pump or other components necessary to safely handle and treat wastewater.

Inspect it! Periodically inspect your septic system to make sure it's working properly. Check it at least once every three years, and have it pumped as often as necessary. You can hire a certified inspector or check it yourself. See www.tpchd.org/septic or call 798-4788 for a list of certified inspectors or for details on how to inspect your system. Walk your drainfield a few times a year under different weather conditions and make sure there aren't any spongy spots on the ground or odors.

Take care of it! Simple things you can do every day to keep your septic system working properly and extend its working life include conserving water, reducing use of harsh cleaning chemicals, and limiting the types of items that go down your drain.

When you're working in your yard this summer, don't cover the drainfield with landscaping plastic or construct a patio, driveway, or sport court over it. Don't let



Septic Sam gives helpful advice in a brochure available to the public.

Illustration courtesy of the TPCHD

your guests park on your drainfield, as the pipes cannot support heavy loads and may burst under the pressure. Keep your sprinkler system at least 10 feet from the edge of your system, and never drain hot tubs or pools onto the drainfield or into your septic tank. Cut back blackberries, small trees, and other large or deep-rooted vegetation in your drainfield area. Instead, landscape your drainfield with grass and shallow-rooted plants. These plants receive oxygen to break down bacteria, absorb water, and prevent soil erosion.

For more information, contact Environmental Health Specialist Chris Matter-Rinehart, cmatter@tpchd.org or 798-4459.

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Out & About



Photo by Mindi LaRose

Sadika Lively takes a picture of her son, Cha'Tar Green, on their first-ever canoe ride. The two came from Tacoma to YMCA Camp Seymour in May for the camp's "Summer Sampler" event that offered free activities.



Photo by Mindi LaRose

Sunnycrest Nursery was getting ready in May to design a garden including this "beach house" and drought-tolerant plants for the Point Defiance Garden and Flower Show. The show, at Point Defiance Park, is June 3-5. Sunnycrest's "Timeless Beach Retreat" is among several "grand marquee display gardens."

Three Key Peninsula artists were selected to participate in SalmonChanted Harbor, a benefit program for a Gig Harbor arts program and environmental education. Pictured here are Laura McClintock (bottom) with "Copper River Salmon" and Wendy Dudley with "That Was Then" at the unveiling ceremony in late April at the Gig Harbor Civic Center. Not pictured is Beverly Pedersen with "Salmon Spirit." The 14 salmon created for the project are being displayed around downtown Gig Harbor businesses until Oct. 29, and will be auctioned off in November.



Photos by Rodika Tollefson



Photo by Mindi LaRose

Left to right: Pam Cottrell, Debbie Ehrhardt, Vicki Ross, Donna Keast and Vicki Biggs are "Tea Time" ladies working on quilts to donate to Evergreen Elementary's carnival/auction. Tea Time started about three years ago as an add-on to the AFTER 'OURS program at Evergreen to provide social and craft time for women. It meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:45 - 5 p.m.



The Lakebay Fuchsia Society members are beautifying their garden at the Key Pen Civic Center grounds in May.

Photo by Danna Webster