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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

VOL. 4 NO. 1

INSIDE & ONLINE

JANUARY 2014

Online



KGHP-FM

- Mardi Gras celebration
- Pioneer stock
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PSD readies bus fleet for winter driving

By Scott Turner, KP News

It's "safety first" in Peninsula School District's transportation department.

That's true all year through, but in winter, when the roads can be treacherous, getting students to and from school takes even more attention to detail, district officials said.

"We start getting ready for winter driving in November," said Annie Bell, PSD director of transportation. "We start checking our snow routes and double checking all the mechanics and making sure that things like the sanders and deicers on all the buses are full and operating properly."

New windshield wipers are installed as needed and the new "Onspot" chains are tested.

The Onspot chains are part of a drop-down system that's much easier to use

(See Buses, Page 4)



Peninsula School District mechanic Joni Gupille inspects one of the many school bus Onspot automatic snow chain systems.

Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

Angel Guild celebrates 35 years of service

By Karen Lovell, KP News

Ten years ago, Angel Guild donated a bench to Key Peninsula Parks in celebration of the guild's 25th anniversary. A bench was installed at Volunteer Park in Lakeway in honor of the organization's founding members.

Treasurer Ann Larson was sitting on the bench at the Home Park in 2003 watching her granddaughter play and thought it would be a good idea to donate another bench for the 35th anniversary.

She discussed it with current president Dee Van Vleck, and together with other members, they decided it was a good idea. They wanted to let the park district choose the best location.

Van Vleck and Larson contacted Key Pen Parks Executive Director Scott Gallacher and discussed the proposal.

The park district selected a site at 360 Trails for the placement of the new bench. It is located about a half mile up the trail from the parking area in Wauna. The dedication ceremony took place Dec. 18.

The start

Back in the '70s, when nurse practitioner Jean Brodsack, from Home, examined George Rickert in Longbranch, she realized the need for medical services on the Key Peninsula, where residents had to go off the peninsula to see a doctor. She and retired military nurses Nat Knox and Judy Wilson began coming to the social hall of the Longbranch Church to take blood pressure and provide other basic medical services. Rickert brought his wife, Minnie, to the free clinic.

Marge (Rickert) Radomich remembers the nurses asking her father, George, about his wife. He told them he was married to an angel. Marge and her sister, Shirley (Rickert) Olson, formed Angel Guild in honor of their mother to support the free health clinic. Nurses provided care until Dr. William Roes volunteered and later purchased the practice, eventually moving it to Key Center.

Shirley Olson became the first president of Angel Guild assisted by Radomich, who took over the helm some years later.

(See Guild, Page 2)

(From **Guild**, Page 1)

"My mother, Shirley, managed Angel Guild, for at least 15 years," Claudia Loy said.

Vickie Henschel became the youngest member in 1978 following the death of her husband. She played an active role in running the organization and became the second president. She is still a member, but no longer has time to volunteer.

Continued growth

The focus of Angel Guild turned to other areas of need in the community. They worked to help the homeless and the poor. "Hippies lived all around the KP in the '70s," Radonich said. "And they paid 25 cents for a bath and people started donating clothes for them."

Olson located a shed in Parkland. The little unpainted building was moved to the Olson farm where Sunycrest Nursery stands now. In 1983, the sorting shed was relocated across the Key Peninsula Highway to its present site on land leased from Doug

Favre.

The first thrift store was up front in the KC Cornal in the space now occupied by Goin' Postal. When the physical therapy business moved out, Angel Guild moved to fill the space where it still operates, Olson said.

Last year, the guild celebrated 35 years of service.

Organizers say that funds not used for operational expenses are given away, often up to \$10,000 a month. Qualified groups must be on the Key Peninsula and are required to submit a grant application. Political and religious organizations are not considered.

Schools in Fire District 16, scholarships for kids, Kiwanis Club, Peninsula Light, Camp Easter Seal, seniors, library, food bank and transportation are among the recipients.

Only two employees receive a salary, and the guild relies heavily on volunteers.

Of the 60 members, about 40 are still actively volunteering.

The Angel Guild is seeking more volunteers. For information, call (253) 884-9333.



Photo by Eld Johnson, KP News

The Angel Guild's Ann Larson and Dee Van Vleck join Jessica Smeall, Key Pen Parks recreational coordinator, right, in a ribbon cutting ceremony last month at 360 Trails park. The guild donated funds to the park district for a bench at the popular park near Wauna.

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

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

OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE KEY PENINSULA NEWS!

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



Key Pen Parks

The key to your next adventure!

JANUARY 2014

Key Pen Parks PROGRAM GUIDE

Recreation Coordinator: Jessica Smeall, jessica@keypenparks.com 253-884-9240 x22

REGISTER ONLINE: www.keypenparks.com

Winter Break

Grades K-7 **CAMPS**

Eco Adventures & LEGO Camps!

ECO ADVENTURE: SALMON & SQUID

Hands-on learning with the Camp Seymour Naturalists. Explore in the Big Canoe too! (weather permitting) Lunch included.

Day: Thur. Jan 2

Time: 10:00am-3:00pm

Fee: \$30

Location: YMCA Camp Seymour



LEGO: WINTER MACHINES

Build a snowmobile, sleigh & snowplow!

Day: Fri. Jan 3

Time: 9:30am-12:30pm

Fee: \$25

Location: Volunteer Park



STAY FOR LUNCH & HAVE FREE BRICK PLAY!

Bring your lunch, no extra fee

LEGO: WINTER SPORTS

Build a luge, ice hockey rink, and a Lego skier.

Day: Fri. Jan 3

Time: 1:30-4:30pm

Fee: \$25

Location: Volunteer Park



KPFD ELVES: Anne Nesbit, Ray Lamoureaux, Bill and Claudia Jones, Frank Grubaugh, DeeDee Kerkes, Sheila Niven, Carrie and Leah Duram, Dave Vezzani, Kit Frymier, Mike Fay, Cheryl Mirenta
Parks' Head Elves: Marilyn Hartley, Reuben and Zechariah Lamphere, Albert Schwoch, Eric Aubart
Park PALS Elves: Abbey Beck, Aarrow Cruz, Alexandra Emens, Amanda Critchfield, Amanda Willette, Andrea Daly, Ashlee Jones, Caileigh Gainey, Carly Cashman-DiBiase, Destiny Verble, Dylan Vanderbank, Eddy Frederick, Ella Cashman-DiBiase, Genevive Schwesinger, Jeatonn Abbott, Joanna Roberts, Johnathon Beal, Kadynce Soucie, Kaitlin Hall, Kobe Frederick, Leyla Vanderbank, Mariah Sheek, Meko Reeves, Molly Clark, Natalie Pierson, Nature Cuevas, Raleigh Aubart, Ruby Heisley, Sage Lamphere, Sierra Ehler, Sierra Jackson, Sophia Cashman-DiBiase, Stephanie Vanderbank, Tyana Strait

Park PALS in bold also volunteered at Easter Seals Camp Stand by Me!

PeeWee Indoor Soccer

Instructor: Kidz Love Soccer

Day: Mondays Dates: Jan 27 – Mar 24

Classes: 8 Fee: \$68

Location: Camp Stand By Me (REC CENTER)

Class	Times	Ages
Tot Soccer	4:00-4:30pm	3-5-4 yrs
Pre Soccer	4:30-5:05pm	4-5 yrs
Soccer 1	5:05-5:50pm	5-6 yrs
Mommy/Daddy & Me Soccer	6:00-6:30pm	2-3.5 yrs

KIDZ LOVE SOCCER



PeeWee Basketball

Days: Sat. mornings
 Dates: 2/15-3/22 (6 total)
 Time: 45 minute classes, times by ages
 Fee: \$51
 Location: Civic Center Gym

ages 4-8

Adult Art Classes

LEATHER CUFF BRACELET with JUNE MOON BEADS Sat Feb 8 2014

STAR PHOTO ALBUM with FINEART GRAY Sat Mar 8 2014

For adults 16 & up \$25

FITNESS CAMP

WINTER 1 SESSION
 Instructor: Shannon Reichl
 Location: Volunteer Park (inside & outside!)
 Day: Tues & Thurs Time: 6-7pm
 Dates: Jan 7 – Feb 13
 Fee: \$30 for 1 class/week, \$60 for 2
 Join mid-session and we will prorate the fee!
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UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES:
 • Mon. Jan 13th Park Board Mtg 7:30pm • Mon. Jan 27th Public Mtg: comments on new 6 year comprehensive plan for Key Pen Parks 7:30pm

Key Pen Parks GRANT PROGRAM

This program was established to help community groups improve park and recreation opportunities. For 2014, there is a maximum of \$5,000 available for capital improvement projects, park maintenance, or recreation programs. Community groups must match the grant contribution with volunteer time, in-kind donations of goods and services, and/or financial contributions.

- Applications available on Jan. 2
- Deadline for application submission: Feb. 5 by 2pm
- Grants will be awarded at Park Board Meeting on 3/10/13

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(From Buses, Page 1)

than the old-fashioned chains that have to be installed manually, Bell said.

"You push a button while the bus is moving, and the chains drop down and go underneath the wheels," she explained.

The Onspot system is connected to the axle of the bus, and it drops down as the bus is moving and the bus just runs over the chain. It's not connected to the tire," she added.

"On the main highways that have been plowed, you don't need them, so you just push the button and they go back up. You can push the button again and the chains are engaged," Bell said.

Demaris Hendrix, who has been a PSD school bus driver for 21 years, likes the new system.

"Before, we had to drag the big chains out of the bus and install them. With the new chains, we can just drop the chains down and they go on real easy. There's a lot of hills on the Peninsula — a lot of changes from sea level up to 500 feet and there can be a lot of snow on the hill-tops," Hendrix said.

Drivers have to be moving when they put the chains down, said Joni Dupille, a bus mechanic.

When there's snow, or a threat of snow, Bell and several PSD officials go out at 3 a.m., checking the roads throughout the district.

"We make the decision by 5 a.m., if we're going to go on snow routes, or go two hours late or close or whatever," Bell said. "We have to make sure that all our families and our employees are in-

formed."

The district has 88 buses, 70 of which are on the road every day, Bell said.

"On the Key Pen, we have 11 buses at KPMS, four at Evergreen, five or six at Vaughn and four or five at Minter. And then we have 22 buses at the high school and about 11 of those are Key Pen buses," she said.

All of the big 78-passenger, rear engine Bluebird buses have the Onspot chain system, she said. "The smaller busses all have to be manually chained. They also have sanders so you can dump sand as you drive along. We have a chain class every year that all our drivers have to attend."

PSD buses also receive two Washington State Patrol inspections yearly, according to Joel Schroeder, the district's shop foreman. One is in the summer, the other is a surprise inspection in the winter.

"They do about 25 percent of the buses during the winter inspection and in the summer they do every single vehicle," Schroeder said. "They go through every bus from top to bottom."

If the inspectors find even one minor defect — even so much as a tiny dent or "ding" — the bus is put out of service.

School buses are one of the safest forms of transportation — and also the most scrutinized vehicle on the road, he added.

"The bottom line is that the students are safer, the buses are going to be on the road longer so we're saving wear and tear on the equipment and saving the taxpayers money," Schroeder said. "We take a lot of pride in how well we do."

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Comet may have survived close encounter with Sun

KP News staff report

ISON, a "virgin" comet on its first plunge from the Oort Cloud, may have survived its Dec. 1 swing around the backside of the sun at a minuscule (in astronomical terms) distance of 1 million miles.

ISON consists primarily of ice, which enhances its brightness but makes it more fragile. Astronomers had predicted a chance that ISON might break up due to the gravitational forces from its close encounter with the sun.

ISON did not reappear on telescopes searching for it, so on Dec. 12, the Eu-

ropean Space Agency declared ISON's death.

On Dec. 13, that death decree was retracted as "something" was then seen leaving a tail behind it heading toward Earth from the sun. At press time, whether ISON survived intact or is merely a portion of its former self remains to be seen.

Watch the eastern skies, near the horizon, and you may yet see what was originally forecast to be the most spectacular celestial show during mankind's existence.

For the back story, visit keypennews.com and search ISON.



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PSD bus fleet no longer oldest in state

For the past few years, Peninsula School District has maintained a regular schedule for replacing its aging buses and currently has a fully up-to-date fleet. The entire fleet — 63 large buses and 26 small ones — is being paid for with state funds, without requiring a PSD contribution from the general fund.

This is considerable improvement from 20 years ago, when the district had no funds for the replacement of aging buses.

"We had what was known as the oldest bus fleet in the state," says PSD Chief Financial Officer Karen Andersen.

The state of Washington pays school districts for buses on a depreciation schedule, but once those buses are off that schedule, the funds are no longer available. In the early 2000s, as levies passed, the district made a commitment to buy new buses and create a depreciation schedule in order to receive state money.

"Over time, we've been able to replace buses and place them all on a depreciation schedule," Andersen says.

The reimbursement money from the state goes into a dedicated fund. PSD replaces three large and two small buses each year, using only state depreciated revenues within this fund.

"When the state makes

changes to the program, we've been able to work around them because we've had enough reserves," Andersen says. "It's very nice to have a current fleet that we can sustain within the state depreciated funds we receive annually."

The current fleet helps the district save money from the general fund as well. Transportation Director Annie Bell says having the same model of Bluebird buses adds continuity for repairs and maintenance.

"With a newer fleet, maintenance costs are less due to having minor repairs, rather than maintaining an older fleet and having to replace engines," she says. "The mechanics can focus on preventive maintenance to keep costs down."



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The Bully Project

Gig Harbor High School is promoting awareness about bullying, intimidation and harassment. Please take a moment to view two videos that students put together. It would also be a great opportunity to talk to your student about this important topic. The videos are posted to the GHHS website frontpage: www.ghhs.psd401.net

The PHS Theater Department

The PHS Theatre Department will be presenting what has been called the finest American play ever written: Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. This show runs ONE WEEKEND ONLY, Jan. 16-18 at 7 p.m. and two matinee performances Jan. 18-19 at 3 p.m.

Adopt-A-Road Program

The Leadership class at Henderson Bay High School partners with the City of Gig Harbor and participates in the Adopt-A-Road program every three months. They put on their orange vests and walk all along Skansie Avenue, from the Purdy Corrections Center to the CenturyLink building. HBHS staff and students believe that it is very important to keep the community we live and work in clean and litter-free. Leadership students also regularly maintain recycling bins throughout the school.

SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Special board meetings will be held with the community on the following dates to discuss potential capital financing measures and to get public input. Action will not be taken at these meetings.

- 14 Key Center Library at 6:30 p.m., 8905 Key Peninsula Highway N., Lakebay, WA 98349
- 15 Boys & Girls Club at 6:30 p.m., 8502 Skansie Avenue, Gig Harbor, WA 98332
- 16 Goodman Middle School at 6:30 p.m., 3701 38th Avenue NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Peninsula Views

January a traditional month filled with promises to keep

A new year is upon us.

Besides the usual feasting and football, many people will be making resolutions. Usually these are recipes for becoming a better person.

The New Year's Day holiday and some of its traditions originated with the Babylonians, who celebrated it in March.

It was moved to January by the Romans. The month got its name from the Roman god, Janus. He was perhaps the first god of politicians, as he had two faces, which allowed him to look back to the past and forward to the future.

Meanwhile the Christians, quite possibly in bad taste, celebrated the feast of circumcision. Later, the puritans adopted the practice of New Year's resolutions as a way to improve themselves and to help them avoid habitual sin and the "temptations of Eve."

I recently surveyed some local residents, and here is a lighthearted look at their resolutions for the coming year:

Claudia Loy: "I resolve to be retired by age 65. Know anybody who wants to buy a nursery?"

William Lightfoot: "Since no one else is doing it, I resolve to eat more gluten."

Tim Kezele: "I promise never to move off the peninsula — ever, ever again."

Marilyn Perks: "I vow this year to stop my damn swearing."

Fire Commissioner Claudia Jones: After a recruit's minor incident, she ad-

Steve Whitford
Words of Whit



monishes all firefighters to resolve not to lose their hoses.

Greg Hessler, manager of Figaro's Pizza: "Next year, I resolve to make more dough."

Yvone Conniff: "I resolve to gamble less this year, and to win more."

Ron Woszczak, renowned connoisseur: "This year, I will abstain from eating whale blubber."

Brett Skahan, self-proclaimed mayor of Lyle: "I resolve to live a year longer than my mom. She's 95 and still kicking it."

Dentist John D. Olsson: Vows to spend less time looking down in the mouth.

So there you have it — or at least most of it.

I did send requests for "newsable" resolutions to many of our elected officials, such as Jan Angel, Derek Kiltner, Patty Murray, Gov. Jay Inslee and even President Obama.

The only official who deemed to give us a reply was our own Mayor Skahan. We can only assume that the rest were too busy doing whatever it is they do, or perhaps they are just a little smarter than the rest of us and try not to make promises they can't keep.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR Hunger in the community doesn't follow a calendar

Another Christmas has passed and a New Year is before us.

The holidays hopefully were a time of hope and happiness.

For families struggling with hunger, it continues to be a time of need because hunger hurts year-round.

Sometimes it is hard for us to see this need in our community when we are not experiencing it ourselves, but hunger can happen to anyone.

It's the child that sits next to your child at school. It's the family down the street, where both parents are working, but pay so much for health insurance and child care that it's hard to make ends meet. It's the senior citizen in line with you at the store who worked hard and saved for retirement, but is now facing a depleted retirement account and outrageous prescription costs.

The effect of hunger affects us all, even if we ourselves have enough to eat. The cost to our community and its overall health is impacted by hunger. Below are some of the outcomes of food insecurities:

- Undernourished pregnant women tend to have low birth weight babies. Low birth weight babies suffer from more physical illnesses, as well as impaired growth and development. Undernourished infants are at greater risk of dying within their first year of life.

- Chronic hunger in adults weakens bones and muscles, increases the risk of illness, worsens existing health problems, and contributes to depression and lack of energy. Hunger in adults also produces nervousness, irritability and difficulty in concentration.

- Children who are hungry may be less

attentive, independent and curious. Many hungry children have difficulty concentrating; therefore their reading ability and verbal and motor skills can suffer. Children who are hungry also often experience headaches, fatigue, frequent colds and other illnesses that may cause them to be less physically active.

- Hunger can have a devastating emotional impact; it may diminish self-confidence and self-esteem. In a culture that encourages self-reliance, individuals who need food assistance may hesitate to seek help. They may experience feelings of shame or embarrassment due to circumstances that are out of their control.

Our goal at Key Peninsula Community Services is helping our citizens to eat and live healthy.

We ask those of you who maybe have experienced food insecurities at some point in your life, or even if you haven't, to help us help those in need this year.

We want to thank those community members and businesses that have already contributed. We only have eleven months until the next holiday, but that also means that we have 11 more months to feed those who can't make ends meet.

Our community can make the difference. Please help if you can.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy New Year.

For information or to donate, contact KPCCS at 884-4440 or via mail at P.O. Box 392, Lakebay, WA 98349.

*Penny Gazdov, director
Key Peninsula Community Services*

Letters Policy

The opinions expressed herein are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers or staff. All letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number for verification. No anonymous letters will be published. Submissions are used on a space available basis and may be edited if

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Where are all the Tsunami evacuation signs for the KP?

An undersea earthquake is the most common cause for a tsunami or tidal wave. Do we need to worry about it? According to Seattle author Sandi Doughton, in her book "Rip 9.0 The Next Great Pacific Northwest Earthquake," it not only could happen here, it will. We just don't know when.

To give you an idea of the mechanics, consider this example from her book. Imagine holding a single playing card in one hand. Your fingers hold one edge, your thumb the other. It is bent into the shape of an upside down "U" and is kind of springy.

The card is the North American tectonic plate. It reaches 700 miles from Cape Mendocino in California to Vancouver Island. It is anchored inland by mountain ranges and the fruited plain.

Its other edge is deep under the Pacific Ocean, about 70 miles offshore. It is held by the undersea Juan de Fuca plate that is stuck, but keeps trying to creep its way under the North American plate.

Now imagine the Juan de Fuca plate lets go, fails to hold the bottom edge of the card, causing it to spring upwards. Imagine the volume of ocean water that would be displaced by that action.

Doughton's research, and that of geologists in North America and Japan, concluded that the last time it happened was on Jan. 28, 1700, when it sent a tidal energy pulse to Japan, traveling faster than a modern jet plane. It developed into a roiling burbling wall of seawater destruction 100 feet high.

It didn't spare the US Pacific coast. The energy pulse radiated in a circle and inevitably found its way through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and into Puget Sound. Today, simulation models show the maximum tidal flood height at around 30 feet on the Pacific coast, arriving 20 minutes after the earthquake.

The wave would surge east through the Strait of Juan de Fuca then spread south toward Seattle, where wave heights would likely be around 16 feet. By the time the pulse traveled through the Narrows, that height would be dispersed even more. The Key Peninsula would likely be affected only by the backwash receding from Nisqually. Whew!

But wait, in 1949 during an earthquake, 11

William I. Trandum Winds, Tides & Weathers



million cubic yards of the hillside just north of Salmon Beach tumbled into the Tacoma Narrows, causing a 7- to 8-foot tsunami in and around the Narrows.

Something close to that could happen again. Geologists warn that most likely a major earthquake could strike along the Seattle fault line, which they say could produce a tsunami in central Puget Sound.

But, the tsunami simulation models consider the Key Peninsula to be so relatively far away, they don't even mention us. Bear in mind that tide levels around our peninsula run from about minus-4 to around plus-16 feet, a span of about 20 feet. So if an event happened at the lowest tide and were "only" 16 to 20 feet we'd be fine. Even so, to the experts, we're so damned remote, even a cataclysmic tidal wave won't bother with us.

And that is why there are no Tsunami Evacuation Route signs on the Key Peninsula.

But just in case there was one, you wouldn't want to exit the Peninsula via the Purdy Spit or via SR-302 alongside Case Inlet to Allyn. Most of the Key Peninsula Highway is more than 100 feet above sea-level. Exceptions are at Longbranch, Home and Purdy. The best high-ground way to get off the Key would be to take the KP Highway to SR-302, head west to Wright-Bliss Road, turn north and head for the Port Orchard Sedgewick Road interchange at Highway 16. From there, you could head south across the Narrows to Tacoma, take I-5 north to the airport, then fly to Denver where you'd be a mile high.

Or you could go to any Key Pen fire station. Every one of them — Longbranch, Key Center, Wicoma and Wright Bliss — is more than 100 feet above sea-level. And there you'd find teams of Fire District 16 first responders with disaster recovery plans.

Bill Trandum is a retired U.S. Navy Captain, a resident of the Key Peninsula, president of the KeyPen Parks Commission, and a student of all things winds, waves, tides and weathers.

Good Times Ahead

Bruce Macdonald, Board Member, Key Peninsula Civic Center Association

It's just about time to settle into the favorite armchair with a hot toddy and begin to consider what your Civic Center calendar is going to look like this coming year. As usual it will be packed with your favorite events, some exciting new parties and probably programs we haven't even thought of, yet.

Not long after we emerge from the holidays, we'll be back to celebrating as Fat Tuesday rolls around. The KP Civic Center is hosting its 1st Annual Mardi Gras Music Festival on Saturday, February 8th.

The evening is sure to please with signature cocktails, a southern barbecue dinner and music featuring Merrilee Rush. The KP is even going to crown our own King & Queen of Mardi Gras, costuming is encouraged!

The following weekend is our annual Crab Feed. This is the event where the Civic Center Board tries to channel Mother Nature and predict what the cost of crab will be. We never get it right and we don't care...it's too much fun and who doesn't like crab and pasta and sauce and salad and... you get the point. We pack the gym... so get your tickets early.

We hope you'll be doing the Twist and Mashed Potato with us when The Beatniks stop by for a fun evening on March 22nd. Details have not been firmed up yet, so keep an eye out on our Facebook page.

Call for Volunteers - the Key Peninsula Needs You!

If there was an emergency, would you volunteer to help? We're working towards becoming a warming/cooling shelter in the event of an emergency. Join us to help our community... help yourself by helping others... get training so you can be prepared. Sign up to volunteer now, so that you're ready to help when we all need each other the most.

What skills do you have to share? Are you a good cook? Do you like paperwork? Can you run a chain saw or backhoe? Maybe you're a good listener, or an organizer, or love animals.

Please call Peggy Ablehouse at 253-884-2987 or the Civic Center at 253-884-3456, or email: kpcivicc@centurytel.net, for the application to be pre-screened as an emergency shelter volunteer. Don't wait until we have an emergency; register today!



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

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

CIVIC CENTER

CORNER

This year's Livable Community Fair and Lakebay Fuchsia Society Plant Sale, set for May 10th, will provide us the opportunity to celebrate and dedicate our new Picnic Pavilion along with all the usual festivities.

The Pavilion was conceived and constructed by our own Key Pen Parks, with funds and in-kind donations from several organizations. Join us in May to recognize these fine donors and organizations and admire our newest outdoor facility.

It is never too early to remind you all this is a Flavor of Fall year. The Flavor of Fall - a dinner and auction - is the biggest fundraiser the Civic Center hosts... so big that we only do it every other year, in early October.

The KPCCA Board chips in, community volunteers join to help plan and promote the event, and donations are accepted from everyone who offers.

If it is not too early to remind you... then it's not too early to ask for your help, either. Please consider how your donation of time, services or merchandise can help your Key Peninsula Civic Center this year. Oui! Oui!

To find out more about the events, classes, clubs, and ideas for creating wonderful events at the Key Peninsula Civic Center, please visit our website, or, just stop by... it's going to be a great year!

KP News editor looks back and into the future

Happy New Year, everyone.

As I reflect on my first year as executive editor with Key Peninsula News, I am flooded with feelings of gratitude and images of wonderment and true community.

That may sound a little cheesy, but please indulge me as I explain.

In my first column last year, I mentioned that I have a long-running journalistic and photojournalistic background and a heart for helping people.

That's still true. I said that "I'm going to stay low-key and get to know the systems and intricacies of being an editor in your community." Make that "executive" editor. I am still coming to grips with what that one tiny word really means.

I'm responsible for a mostly all-volunteer staff (our designer, paginator, accountant and ad representatives get paid).

What you hold in your hands is truly a collaboration of dedicated people bent on getting things correct and sharing the news, views and advertisements geared to promote and inform all the citizens who call the Key

Scott Turner Editor's Desk



Peninsula their home.

As the paper's manager, I have the responsibility of keeping our publication afloat during interesting times.

Although we humbly serve as a nonprofit arm under the Key Peninsula Civic Center, it has been my goal for the publication to be self-supportive in its efforts to serve you.

With the help of our ad representatives, Wendy Kleven and Brett Higgins, and trust from the paper's publishing board, this has been a great year in my quest.

Walking the fine line between editorial and advertising has been a valued learning experience. I do keep them separate, and always will. Deadlines and financial challenges will always be around the next bend, but I must tip my hat to you all.

Words cannot express how thankful I am for your continued support of this paper.

During 2013, our customers and neighbors have stepped up and donated funds in an effort to continue our mission of keeping your town paper coming to mailboxes throughout the Key. Thank you!

Our team of writers and photographers is growing.

Being volunteers in a medium that some say is shrinking is very unique. All the writers have their talents and favorite types of stories they like to cover. So please continue to send me your story ideas and I will do my best to get them into print and online.

The bonus of being a monthly publication means that we have the time to go deeper with your stories. Our online presence is also helping to expand our coverage.

Since I have been here, our Facebook presence (Facebook.com/KeyPenNews) has nearly doubled. We are using our page in unison with our keypennews.com website to give you breaking news, more photos and some stories that don't make it into print.

Want to write?

We are still recruiting for the next round of

guest columnists, whose one-year term will start after we receive enough submissions.

We are looking for fresh, creative voices and topics relevant to our local readership.

Columnists will be selected by a panel and contribute a column every two to three months; the schedule will depend on the number of finalists.

To be considered, please submit a short biography, a proposal of your column including theme and potential topics and two publication-ready columns (each 750 words or less). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Email your materials to irenet2211@gmail.com.

As this year unfolds, I am hopeful to meet more of you and to share your many stories.

Please feel free to contact me directly with your ideas and concerns. I may be the executive editor, but this is your community and your paper.

To reach Scott, email him at editor@keypennews.com. To help us, please send donations to Key Peninsula News, P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98296.

The Mustard Seed Project

Building an Elder-Friendly Key Peninsula

January's Third Thursday Community Forum

• AT LONG LAST ~ WE KICK OFF OUR KP AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING FEASIBILITY STUDY!!

• Meet our Senior Housing Consultant, Terri Sult, of Chi Partners, LLC

• Learn about the process ahead

• Share YOUR thoughts and hopes and needs related to this very important topic



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STREET TALK

Do you have a New Year's resolution, and what would you like to see change next year?



To share joy with one and all in 2014.
Judy Stark



To buy a bigger wheelbarrow to bring my money to the store after inflation erodes its value.
Charlie Davis



To remember my manners as my mother has taught me.
Anna and Lorraine (right) Hart



I want to cut down on my shopping and pay off my bills in 2014.
Anna Lisa Holland



I plan to work two more years then retire to Mexico where the winters are warm.
Craig Moritz



I would like to see a gymnastics program and an ice rink for the youth of the Key Peninsula.
Rebekah Baldwin



I'd like to have an extension of the holiday spirit flow into the next year.
Marilyn Hartley

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9:30am & 11:00am
Nursery, Preschool & Children's Programs
Both Services
Student Ministries Meet
Monday Nights
6:30-8:30pm
go to five17.com for more info on youth events

LISTEN TO
SERMONS ONLINE
www.waypoint-church.org

Download
Pastor Tim's Sermon
"Open Up Peace"

KP SCHOOL BUS CONNECTS
Tuesday & Thursday Trips to Town
AN INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECT

NEW FALL ROUTES
2 Days a Week!
Tuesday & Thursday

FREE COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION FOR ALL AGES
ON OFF-DUTY SCHOOL BUSES

Regular bus service will resume on Tuesday, January 7th

SCHOOL BUSES AREN'T JUST FOR KIDS ANYMORE!
(Youth under 12 need to be accompanied by an adult.)

For info & User's Guide, please contact kabusconnects@gmail.com or call: 253-884-8055 (2877)

KP COMMUNITY COUNCIL is the new partner with the PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT.
User's Guides available at: The Mustard Seed Project office, the Library, the KPCS/Food Bank and on-line: www.kpcouncil.org

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PSD officials seek feedback

By Rick Sorrels, KP News

Voters shot down the Peninsula School District's levy during November's general election.

There will currently be no new school to accommodate the influx of additional students resulting from the new home construction underway along the north region of Gig Harbor.

The school board must find some way (within its limited budget) to absorb the new elementary students expected as early as next September.

Officials say middle schools and high schools are not expected to be a problem, as they still have some extra capacity for the increased student load. The issue is with the elementary schools.

The elementary schools on the Gig Harbor Peninsula, where the growth is occurring, are already at or over designed capacity. The schools on the Key Peninsula have some extra capacity, but not enough for the expected increase.

Peninsula School District Superintendent Chuck Cuzzetto believes that "at least some redistricting appears to be unavoidable."

"Redistricting" is where the boundary lines for each school are redrawn and students are shifted from one school to another, resulting in students changing from a school in which they are established to a different school where the kids must make new friends and encounter new teachers, programs, rules and facilities.

"The Key Peninsula will definitely be affected by redistricting," Cuzzetto said. "We need feedback, comments and suggestions

from parents on both peninsulas to find the best way to make this work."

The school board has tasked Cuzzetto to come up with four possible capital financing options and to schedule meetings in the community to gather input about the options.

An open public meeting is set for 6:30 p.m., Jan. 14, at the Key Center Library, where those options will be presented to the public and feedback will be gathered. Subsequent meetings will also be hosted at 6:30 p.m., Jan. 15 at the Gig Harbor Boys & Girls Club, and 6:30 p.m., Jan. 16 at Goodman Middle School.

Cuzzetto also is seeking volunteers to serve on a redistricting committee, which will address the overcrowding of elementary schools and develop proposals on how best to solve the problem.

"We need a well-rounded group of committee members, made up of parents, school staff and other interested persons throughout the district," Cuzzetto said. "We definitely need residents of the Key Peninsula. I do not want to see a situation where the KP schools experience significant changes, with KP residents left out of the process."

The school board will select who serves on the re-districting committee, with the first committee meeting in late January. Committee recommendations will need to be submitted to the school board in April. Evening meetings are expected, but the number and frequency of meetings has not yet been determined.

For information, email the superintendent at cuzzetto@psd401.net.

Jan. 8 meeting to cover community outreach issues

A number of important issues will be covered at an open public meeting 7 p.m., Jan. 8 at the Key Center fire station.

County Council member Stan Fleming will present a State of the County report, detailing Pierce County's past accomplishments, current problems and future plans.

School board members Matt Wilkinson and Wendy Wojtanowicz will discuss Key Peninsula educational issues, and the expected effects of the recent failed school levy.

County Planner Barbara Ann Smolko

will summarize committee work and a report to both Pierce and Kitsap county governments regarding proposed changes affecting water quality for the Minter Creek Watershed. The Minter Creek Watershed extends from Minter Bay north to near Port Orchard, and from Lake Katherine to the Elgin-Clifton "Y."

The presentations are part of a public outreach and information program of the Key Peninsula Community Council, whose monthly board meeting will follow.

For information, contact dwebster-kp@gmail.com or call (253) 884-6455.

KPAC awards local grant money

By Rick Sorrels, KP News

Three local projects were selected by the Key Peninsula Advisory Commission (KPAC) to receive a total of \$7,000 in matching fund grants to benefit the local community.

Key Pen Parks will receive \$5,932 to help build a picnic shelter adjacent to the recently constructed playground located at the Key Peninsula Civic Center in Vaughn.

The Civic Center will receive \$1,068 for two projects. One project will get \$868 to help construct a storage room and radio room to be used as an emergency shelter and volunteer resource center. The second is \$200 for administrative supplies to support that same function.

The money came from Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), to be used specifically on projects that would benefit the greatest number of KP residents.

The KPAC has the responsibility of reviewing applications for Conditional Use Permits and Shoreline Substantial Development Permits, and make recommendations

to the Pierce County Planning Commission regarding approval (or not) and conditions.

At its regular meeting on Nov. 20, in addition to selecting the grant recipients, the KPAC reviewed and approved an application from Cingular Wireless (AT&T) to construct an 180-foot-tall cell tower along SR-302 near the Elgin-Clifton "Y" that is expected to greatly improve cell phone reception on the Key Peninsula. Other cell phone service providers will be able to use this tower. The tower should be operational by fall of 2014.

County Executive Pat McCarthy and PALS want to expand how the KPAC interacts with its local community. This grant process was a trial. If all goes well, this county grant program could expand to all seven of the land use advisory commissions across Pierce County.

The KPAC normally meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., at the Key Center Library. It is seeking one new member to fill a vacancy.

For information, contact Chuck West, KPAC president, at chuck-west@hotmail.com or 884-1366.

Health department incentive program saves money, protects environment

Tacoma Pierce County Health Department's Septic Care Incentive program is available to Key Peninsula residents with pressure distribution or gravity septic systems, until funds run out.

According to a recent press statement, the department said septic maintenance issues typically fall to the bottom of many homeowners' "to-do" list.

The department suggested that residents should get their septic tank inspected and pumped because it helps to protect their investment in their home, the health of their family and the environment.

Anyone who owns a pressure distribution and gravity system should hire a certified septic professional to inspect it every three years. Those who are not sure what type of system they have can call (253) 798-6577 or go online at tpchd.org/asubilt.php to look up their record drawing, the report said.

The health department says proper operation and maintenance of a septic system helps to:

- Extend the life of the system and save money; septic system repairs or replacement

is expensive.

- Protect ground, surface and drinking water from contamination.
- Prevent bacterial pollution from entering Puget Sound directly or through storm water run-off into creeks and streams.
- Keep shellfish harvested from public waters safe to eat.
- Prevent sewage from surfacing.

The report said that while funds are available, homeowners can save up to \$450 toward inspections, pumping and riser installation.

Savings are not valid for home sale (report of system status) inspections.

Grants from Washington State Department of Health and Environmental Protection Agency make the Septic Incentive Program possible.

For information on the incentive program, call (253) 798-4788 or email EHseptic@tpchd.org with "Incentive Program" in the subject line.

Source: Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department



What will you do with the money you save?

Proper septic use and maintenance will help preserve your investment and avoid the cost and hassle of a septic failure. Get your septic system inspected and help protect our water quality.

Good news! If you own a pressure distribution or gravity septic system in the Key Peninsula you could get:

- \$125 off your inspection.
- \$200 off your tank pumping.
- \$125 off your riser installation.

Routine inspections are required for septic systems, so this is a great opportunity!

To take advantage of these savings, email us at EHseptic@tpchd.org with "Incentive Program" in the subject line. Or, give us a call at (253) 798-4788. This program will end when the funds run out, so the first to call will be the first to get a discount! Call us today!



COMMUNITY PAGES

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

NOW

Swimming programs

Water aerobics and lap swimming is offered at Camp Stand By Me Monday through Friday mornings. Evening swim programs include family recreational swimming, first and third Wednesdays of the month and adult lap on Tuesdays. Party rentals also are available and a lifeguarding class is offered in February. For information on all programs or to sign up for the lifeguarding class, call 884-2722.

JAN. 1 and 15

Family swim

Family swim is hosted 5 to 6 p.m., at Camp Stand By Me pool; cost is \$4.25 per person. 884-2722.

JAN. 2-3

Camps offered

Key Pen Parks sponsors winter break camps for K through seventh grade. Eco Adventure: Salmon and Squid, \$30, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., is at Camp Seymour (lunch included) on Jan. 2; Lego: Winter Machines 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; and Lego: Winter Sports, \$25 each session, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., at Volunteer Park. Register at keypenparks.com or 884-9240 extension 22.

JAN. 2 and 16

Senior shopping

The senior van meets at the KP Community Services at 9 a.m., and returns between 3 and 5 p.m., giving seniors an opportunity to go grocery shopping and attend any scheduled Gig Harbor doctor's appointments. Also included is a "Dutch" lunch. 884-4440.

JAN. 3

Lego construction

Children and their families use Legos, straws and connectors, blocks and more to create fabulous contraptions at 11 a.m., at the Key Center Library. 548-3309.

JAN. 6, 10, 20, 27

Bloodmobile dates

The bloodmobile is at Albertson's 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., at the beginning of the month and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Dec. 23 and 30.

JAN. 7, 14, 21, 28

Story time

Baby story time for 0-24 months, accompanied by an adult is at 10:15 a.m., and Preschool Play and Learn for ages 3-6, accompanied by an adult is at 11 a.m. Both events are in the Brones Room of the Key Center Library.

JAN. 8

Garden club meets

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

KP Council

The KP Community Council hosts Councilman Stan Flemming, who will make a "state of the County" presentation, and Peninsula School Board commissioners Matthew Wilkerson and Wendy Wojtanowicz, who will lead an open discussion of PSD. The meeting is at 7 p.m., at the KC fire station. 884-6455.

JAN. 9

Ashes meet

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

JAN. 9 and 23

Free clinic

Non-emergency medical care for KP residents without any medical insurance is provided 5:30 to 8 p.m., at a new location: KP Health and Professional Center in Key Center. 884-2234.

JAN. 10, 17, 24, 31

Family story time

Families with preschool children may enjoy story time 11 to 11:30 a.m., at the Key Center Library. 548-3309.

To submit an event

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

Skate night

Geared for kids ages 5-13, skate night is 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the KP Civic Center. Kids may safely enjoy roller skating, arcade games and concessions. Parents are welcome to attend and visit with others on the observation balcony. Kpciviccenter.org or 884-3456.

JAN. 10 and 24

Teen fun

Club Cosmic, for teens in grades 8 to 12, is 9 p.m. to midnight. Geared exclusively for teens, this twice-a-month event is chock full of DJ battles, dancing, games, including dodge ball (with glow-in-the-dark balls), four square, name that tune and contests: all for \$5. Kpciviccenter.org or 884-3456.

JAN. 14

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile is at the Smalling Family Education Room, St. Anthony Hospital, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

PSD meeting

A special Peninsula School Board Meeting will be hosted with the community at Key Center Library at 6:30 p.m., to discuss potential capital financing measures and get public input.

JAN. 14 and 22

Crochet or knit

The Loving Hearts group knits and crochets for charities including veterans, babies, back packs for kids and chemo patients and meet on Jan. 14 from 1 to 3 p.m., and on Jan. 22 from 7 to 9 p.m., at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Ave. KPN. All are welcome. Yarn donations are always needed. lovingheartsonkp@gmail.com or Virginia, 884-9619.

JAN. 16

Forum hosted

Mustard Seed's third Thursday Community Forum is 10 a.m., at the Key Center fire station. 884-1205.

JAN. 18

Library program

Dining at Downton Abbey is presented at 2 p.m., by James Alan at the KC Library. This free event is sponsored by the Friends of the Key Center Library; donations to the food bank are appreciated. 548-3309.

JAN. 19

Sunday bluegrass jam

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

JAN. 23

Robots

Kids ages 8 to 12 will build and program a robotic vehicle using the Lego Mindstorms Kit from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Registration is not required. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Key Center Library. 548-3309.

JAN. 27

Parks' meeting

Key Pen Parks hosts a special public meeting at 7 p.m., to take comments on the new six-year comprehensive plan.

JAN. 27 to MARCH 24

PeeWee soccer

Kidz Love Soccer is teaching indoor pee-wee soccer classes for kids ages 2 to 6 years (four classes) on Mondays at the recreation center at Camp Stand by Me. The 2 to 3½ years group is a mommy/daddy and me class. Fee is \$68 for nine sessions. Register at keypenparks.com or 884-9240 extension 22.

OFF THE KEY

JAN. 5

Opera preview

Seattle opera expert Norm Hollingshead shares an entertaining and enthusiastic free preview of "Rigoletto" at 2 p.m., at the Gig Harbor Library. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Gig Harbor Library. 548-3305.

JAN. 15-16

PSD meetings

Special Peninsula School Board meetings will be hosted with the community on Jan. 15 at the Boys & Girls Club, 8502 Skansie Ave., at 6:30 p.m., and on Jan. 16 at Goodman Middle School, 3701 38th Ave. NW, at 6:30 p.m., (childcare provided). These meetings are to discuss potential capital financing measures and get public input.

JAN. 16

Book discussion

The Fiction Book Discussion Group meets from 2:30 to 4 p.m., at the Gig

Harbor Peninsula Library. The adult group meets on the third Thursday of the months from January through October. This month, "Into the Forest" by Jean Hegland will be read and discussed. Stop by the library to pick up a copy. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Peninsula Library. 548-3305.

JAN. 11-12

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile is at Adventure of Faith Church, 4705 Jackson Ave. SE, Port Orchard, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., on Jan. 11 and at St. Nicholas Catholic Church, Gig Harbor, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., on Jan. 12.

JAN. 17 to FEB. 1

'Born Yesterday'

Paradise Theatre presents "Born Yesterday" at 7:30 p.m., on Friday and Saturday and 3 p.m., on Sunday. www.paradisetheatre.org or 851-7529.

JAN. 22

Robots

Kids ages 8 to 12 will build and program a robotic vehicle using the Lego

Mindstorms Kit from 3:30 to 5 p.m., at the Gig Harbor Peninsula Library. Registration is required. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Library. 548-3305.

JAN. 23, 25 and 27

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile is at Kiwanis Club of Peninsula-Gig Harbor noon to 7 p.m., on Jan. 23 and at Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 12002 Peacock Hill Ave. NW, Gig Harbor, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Jan. 25. It is at Alliance One, 6565 Kimball Drive, Suite 200, Gig Harbor 1 to 4 p.m., on Jan. 27.

JAN. 26

Winter concert

Peninsula Youth Orchestra presents a free Winter Concert, 3 p.m., at the Milt S. Boyd Auditorium at Peninsula High School 14105 Purdy Drive. Snacks and beverages will be provided following the concert. For information, email to info@harborpyo.org. Mid-season sign-ups for new and experienced stringed instrument musicians is currently ongoing. Email for information.

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS

Community walk

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

Senior exercise class

The S.A.I.L. program, taught by Marilyn Parks, includes aerobics, light weight lifting, stretching and balance techniques at 10 to 11 a.m., at the KP Community Services in Lakebay. Participants must register with Marilyn, 884-4440.

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

Preschool play time

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

Senior tai chi club

Senior tai chi meets 10 to 11 a.m., at the KP Community Services in Lakebay. 884-4440.

WEDNESDAYS

Writers meet

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

Writers' workshop

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

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

Senior meals

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

THURSDAYS

Toastmasters

The Toastmasters meet 8 to 9 a.m., at the KC fire station. Join the fun and improve your speaking ability.

Seniors' lunch

The Key Peninsula Senior Society meets at 1 p.m., for a potluck, fellowship and games in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 884-4981.

Bingo

Free Bingo at the KP Community Services beginning at 7 p.m. 884-4440.

SATURDAYS

Writers meet

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

Lakebay Jam with 302

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

PUBLIC MEETINGS

KP Lions' dinner and program

Jan. 1 and 15, 5:30 p.m., in VFW Room, KP Civic Center; 853-2721.

KP Veterans

Jan. 6, 7 p.m., at McColley Hall/KP Lutheran Church; 884-4407 or 884-9852, kpveterans.net.

Key Peninsula Council

Jan. 9, 7 p.m., at KC fire station; kpcouncil.org.

KP Civic Center Association Board

Jan. 9, 7 p.m., in Whitmore Room; kpciviccenter.org.

Peninsula School District Board

Jan. 9, 6 p.m., at District Office; Jan. 23, 6 p.m., at Goodman Middle School Commons (see Community Pages for public input meetings).

Key Pen Parks

Jan. 15, 7 p.m., at Volunteer Park; keypenparks.com.

Fire District 16

Jan. 14 and 28, 6 p.m., in meeting room, Key Center fire station; keypeninsulafire.org.

LIC

Jan. 15, dessert potluck, 7 p.m., at Longbranch Improvement Club; 884-6022 longbranchimprovementclub.org.

KP Citizens Against Crime

Jan. 24, 7 p.m., at Home fire station; kpcitizensagainstcrime.org.

KP Farm Council

Jan. 27, 6:30 p.m., at Key Center fire station; dwebsterkp@gmail.com.

KP counselor offers many mental health options

By Charlee Glock-Jackson,
for KP News

Melissa Fogarty, owner of SoulSpeak Counseling, has been providing counseling services to the Key Peninsula since 2008.

Fogarty has a bachelor's degree in psychotherapy, a master's degree in health and wellness counseling and is a licensed mental health counselor in Washington. She has 20 years' experience as a counselor.

She moved to the Peninsula in 2005 and currently lives in Minter Beach.

Fogarty offers individual therapy to adults who are dealing with such issues as depression, anxiety, grief, relationship problems or women's hormonal issues.

Through the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, she also provides maternity support services, including home visits for low-income expectant mothers.

For clients whose children need counseling or those who are looking for couples' counseling, she makes referrals to other therapists in the area.

"There are more than 400 different

types of psychotherapies," Fogarty said in a recent interview. "Studies have shown that the relationship an individual has with their therapist is one of the most significant factors in success, regardless of what method is used."

In her practice, Fogarty uses cognitive-behavioral, insight-oriented and mindfulness-based stress-reduction methods.

Cognitive-behavioral therapies are based on the idea that individuals' thoughts have an impact on their moods and, therefore, their behavior.

"It teaches you to identify your negative thoughts and ideas — such as fault-finding or an 'all or nothing' attitude — and you learn to challenge that inner voice and replace the negative thoughts with more positive ones," Fogarty explained.

"It's really just a reminder of what we already know, but have forgotten. If you practice thinking positive thoughts, you can build momentum and build confidence and accept more responsibility for yourself," she said.

Fogarty also talks a lot with her clients about stress management. The holiday



Courtesy photo

Melissa Fogarty, of SoulSpeak Counseling, has been providing counseling service on the Key Peninsula since 2008.

season can be especially stressful, she said. "Things can be fun and happy, but we often take on too many unrealistic burdens and expectations."

"I suggest that my clients do more self-care: Get enough rest. Give yourself permission to say 'no.' Be willing to forgive yourself and others. Do some deep breathing," she said. "When you breathe

really deeply, you send more oxygen to your brain and that helps you think more clearly. That's also part of relaxation therapy."

Insight-oriented therapy focuses on identifying past experiences and events and drawing connections between them and what's currently going on in a person's life, she said.

"You explore how the past influences present feelings and behavior, and you can start to recognize patterns and become aware that you actually have more choices than you might realize."

"The goal is to increase self-awareness and understanding and know that you really do have the freedom to change," she said.

Fogarty's fees are based on a sliding scale, depending on her clients' income. She has flexible hours — including evening appointments — and accepts a variety of insurance.

Her SoulSpeak Counseling office is located in the Key Peninsula Health & Professional Center.

For information, call (253) 514-5422.

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Wauna resident authors music book about unique teaching methods

By Leila Larson, KP News

Local author Mary Alice Saliccia has just released her new book, called "Hello Music," from Blysser Press. It is a do-it-yourself instruction book, introducing students to music.

Saliccia has been a resident of the Key Peninsula since 1983, when she moved from Juneau, Alaska. She has taught music since the late 1970s. She was a visitor to this area for several years, before becoming a permanent resident here.

Saliccia wanted to write about her teaching methods, to share them with a wider audience.

"The real big reason was to help people who can't afford music lessons. It is the perfect starter book. "Hello Music" does not require an instrument to follow the program. One can clap hands, use a spoon on a pot, use their voice or anything to make a sound will do," she said.

Saliccia had a love for music at a young age.

"When I was 8, my father was talking with a priest and I went over to the piano and

started to play it. The priest told my father that I had a gift. From then on came the piano, and then the lessons," she said.

She began touring as a professional entertainer with a band as a teenager. "My parents had to come to the gigs because they were in clubs and I was just 16," she said.

After touring all over Alaska, then in Texas and California, she returned to Juneau in the late 1970s and began a career as a music teacher.

"It was then that I thought about the ideas in my book. I was teaching music and all of the beginner books were just too hard," she added.

Saliccia has been involved in music all of her life. Teaching music is her first love. She has arranged music and provided accompaniment for three seasons with the Peninsula High School choir.

"I teach my students that music should be a part of your lifestyle. You should be willing to nurture and not just emphasize practice, but emphasize participation," she said.

Saliccia has an alternative method of teaching rhythm.

"I teach rhythm differently, through feel-



Photo by Leila Larson, KP News

Mary Alice Saliccia works in her Wauna music studio. She recently released Hello Music, a book about teaching methods.

ing, as opposed to cerebral counting," she said.

For Saliccia, music is about the language of music and not the song.

With plenty of personal performing experience, she believes that when one plays with confidence, it is beautiful. She said her method of emphasizing participation encourages self-confidence in her students.

"The book is a whole lot cheaper than taking lessons from me, and it works very well with home schooling," she said.

Saliccia plans to publish a series, taking a student from the beginning through intermediate and on to advanced.

"Hello Music" is available at many bookstores and online by emailing mary@expressionmusic.com.

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Camp Stand By Me launches inclusive learning center

By Scott Turner, KP News

For more than 35 years, Easter Seals Camp Stand By Me on Vaughn Bay has served people with special needs.

According to Director Joshua Mayer, the camp serves about 450 campers a year from throughout Washington and beyond.

"The majority of the people we serve are from this area and around the state, but we get campers from all across the U.S. because we're one of the few camps that focus on providing service to people with severe disabilities," Mayer said.

"For example, this is the place where burn victims have been able to come, the place where people with pervasive developmental delays such as no speech, no sight or very low sensory input can come and experience nature," he said.

The natural setting and the dedicated staff provide a unique experience for people with disabilities, he added.

The camp tries to maintain a two-to-one volunteer-to-camper ratio. "So if we have 60 campers, we have about 30 staff counselors," Mayer said.

"Our commitment is to give people with disabilities — often with severe disabilities — a true outdoor experience," he said.

Activities include swimming, horseback riding, games, canoeing, arts and crafts, archery and other pastimes, both indoors and outdoors. "It's a long list," Mayer said.

In December, the camp added yet another option: It opened a new Nature Learning Center in a 500-square-foot yurt.

By next spring, the yurt will be filled with kiosks that include a variety of hands-on, nature-oriented displays.

The yurt "isn't really huge, but it can hold a lot of people," Mayer said.

He and his staff plan to build displays such as an aviary center and an aquatic wildlife center and similar displays that will enable campers to learn more about the flora and fauna they encounter outdoors at Camp Stand By Me.

"We haven't ever had a really focused way to teach our campers about what they're seeing when they're outdoors here at camp," Mayer said.

"They can't always walk out into the for-



Courtesy photo

Last month, Camp Stand By Me hosted a ribbon cutting for a new learning center on its Vaughn Bay Easter Seals Washington property.

est to touch a plant or see a bird up close, so we're going to bring some of those things into the yurt, so they can get up close and personal with them.

"We want to create an indoor space dedicated to exhibits that will bring that environment even closer and give a more sensory focus," he said.

He added that after experiencing the displays in the yurt, when the campers go outside and see something, they'll know what it is.

"For many of them, even when they're in this incredible setting, they can't get close enough to a bird to see what it is. So this will increase their direct experience with the natural environment," he said.

For a camper who's blind and in a wheelchair, touch may be the main sensory mode. "So we want them to be able to feel something, touch something like feathers or stuffed versions of animals," he added.

(See Camp, Page 17)

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Key Pen Parks PALS lend a hand

A hardy group of middle school kids from the Key Peninsula spent a cold December day tidying up the grounds at Camp Stand By Me in preparation for the grand opening of the camp's new yurt.

According to Jessica Smeall, Key Pen Parks recreation director, the youngsters are all part of Park PALS. "That stands for People who All Love to Serve," Smeall said with a smile.

Approximately 60 kids are members of the Park PALS program.

"They can pick and choose what they want to do in terms of service," Smeall said. "We had 13 of them who chose to help rake leaves at the camp."

It turned out to be a record-setting cold day, but the weather didn't chill the kids' spirits.

Jonathan Beal was volunteering for the

first time with the leaf-raking crew. "It's a lot of fun," he said. "We want the place to look nice when all the people come to see the yurt."

Dylan Van der Vank, 13, is an old hand at helping with projects like this. He's been a PALS volunteer for a year.

"I've helped in about seven things like this," he said. "There were a lot of leaves all over the place and we wanted the place to look nice for the opening of their new yurt. It's for people with disabilities and we just like to help out the parks and make our community a better place."

Van der Vank added that other kids can volunteer for Park PALS, too, by contacting Smeall at Key Pen Parks. "It's really fun to do things like this," he said.

For information, email jessica@keypen-parks.com.

(From Camp, Page 16)

Mayer was quick to credit local resident Dick Day with volunteering his time as project manager in building the yurt. "We gave him a lifetime swim pass to the pool as a thank you for the work he did on this project," Mayer said.

The camp staff is in the early stages of designing the exhibits for the new yurt and they welcome community input.

"There are a lot of people in our community who are experts in the environment," Mayer said. "People who are foresters or birders and others who have a perspective they want to share with us and we welcome their help in designing the displays."

Although the camp has seed money for purchasing the new displays, there is always a need for additional funds and also

for camp volunteers.

"We need more individuals and organizations to donate funds and to donate their time," Mayer said.

For information, visit wa.easterseak.com or call (253) 884-2722.

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PeeWee hoops sign ups underway

Registration is now open for Key Pen Parks' PeeWee basketball classes.

The classes will begin Feb. 15 and will run for six consecutive Saturdays, according to Jessica Smeall, Key Pen Parks recreation coordinator.

There will be two divisions, one with class for 4- to 6-year-olds and the other geared to 6- to 8-year-olds, said Smeall, who will be teaching the classes.

"We'll be working on developing skills and confidence in our youngest athletes to give them some of the basics so they'll be ready to join the older basketball leagues that Peninsula Athletic Association sponsors in the community," Smeall said.

The minimum age for basketball leagues is 8, "so this is kind a precursor to joining the league for the little kids," Smeall said.

Basketball, which is now in its eighth season, is one of the park district's longest running programs, she added.

Classes will meet every Saturday at the Key Peninsula Civic Center gym.

The cost will be \$51 for each six-week session, with scholarships available.

"What's really exciting about this session is that we're having some of our Parks PALS kids help teach the classes," she said.

Kobe Frederick, 13, has been with the PALS program for two years.

"When I started, I didn't know anything about playing basketball, but I discovered that teaching it was a really good way to learn how to play," he said. "So Jessica asked me if I'd like to help out with the program. I enjoy being with the little kids and I enjoy playing the game and trying to teach the little kids how to play, too."

Other PALS volunteers will also be helping with the teaching duties, "so we'll be able to do a lot more drills," Frederick added.

He said the focus will be on basic basketball skills such as dribbling, passing, shooting and teamwork. "It's really going to be a lot of fun," Frederick said. "I really support having kids my age volunteer and help with things like this."

For information, visit keypenparks.com or call Jessica Smeall at (253) 884-9240, extension 22.

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At Evergreen Elementary School, 'Reading is FUNdamental'

By Hugh McMillan, KP News

Last month's "Reading is FUNdamental" (RIF) day at Evergreen Elementary School was dubbed "Rope a Good Book."

Every RIF is a daylong event in the Evergreen library where, one at a time, classes file through the door filled with anticipation. They receive a free book of their age-appropriate choice to keep as their own.

Several parents and other volunteers were on hand to handle the logistics of the operation, but most importantly to sit with youngsters and read with them and acquired book treasures.

The library was decorated to exude the aura of the Wild West.

"RIF means lots of decorations and you get a book for free," said first-grader Becky Lynn King. Classmate Nick Bacon said the library looked really good, and Rylee Coggins said RIF means "having fun and picking out books."

New Evergreen Principal Hugh Max-

well, dressed in Western garb, didn't know what to expect from his first RIF day at Evergreen, especially one with a cowboy theme, he said.

"I saw kids, parents, volunteers and staff well into the theme making it a very special day. What impressed me most was the time and hard work parents, volunteers and staff put into making this a great day for the kids. The importance of reading was clear when you saw volunteer readers working with students.

"And how often do you get to be called 'marshal' all day while kids rope books to keep as their own? Yee-haw, partner," Maxwell said with a grin.

What does RIF really stand for?

To kindergarten Eamon Glasslock, "RIF means we got to show cowboy spirit and get a book."

Maddie Charpentier said, "We don't have to bring it back and we got to put our name in it."

Garynne Glasslock said RIF is set up to allow her "to read more often and to learn more about reading."



Photo by Hugh McMillan, KP News

Volunteer Ramona Dickson reads to Christopher Swainston and Austin Frederickson during last month's Reading is FUNdamental day at Evergreen Elementary School.

Bobby Mack Ward feels RIF means reading is fun. "When you get interested in the book, you can think what will happen," he said.

Third graders Ally Frederickson, Emma Lindhartsen and William Allen, respectively, felt RIF meant, "reading is fun, cool and awesome because I love reading."

"It is a privilege for kids who might

not be able to afford new books to get a book and be able to read more at home," said Sierra Burgess, a fourth-grader.

Evergreen's RIF program has long been supported financially, materially, morally and with the warm bodies of reading mentors at each RIF day by members of the Key Peninsula Veterans.

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- ◇ Maureen Hennessy
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Key Peninsula Citizens of the Year nominees sought

Nominations for Key Peninsula Citizens of the Year 2013-14 are being accepted by the sponsoring KP Lions Club.

Organizers say the 30th annual event will take place at the KP Civic Center and will feature dinner and keynote speaker.

Nominations will be accepted until Jan. 17, and may be made via email to hmcmap1000@centurytel.net or mailed to KP Lions, P.O. Box 63, Vaughn, WA 98394.

Anyone who lives, works or owns property on the Key Peninsula is eligible for recognition for volunteer work or contri-

butions benefiting the KP community. Members of the Lions Club are not eligible.

Nomination letters must include the full name, telephone number and physical address of the nominee(s), and P.O. Box if appropriate, and a brief explanation of why they should be considered.

Volunteer work or contributions may be in the form of a single large contribution of time or resources or for recognition of sustained contributions over a long period.

For information, call (253) 853-2721 or (253) 884-3319.

Key Peninsula, Gig Harbor fire departments work together

By Peter Ruble, KP News

The Key Peninsula Fire Department (District 16) will be partnering with Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One on Jan. 6 to help recruit volunteers into both departments.

This is an effort to bolster the number of recruits to help address the needs of both communities when it comes to firefighting.

New recruits will get a chance to learn from instructors from both the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor fire departments. They will be able to embark on a six-month journey that will culminate with the issuance of a Firefighter 1 certification, which can potentially be used to find employment as a professional firefighter.

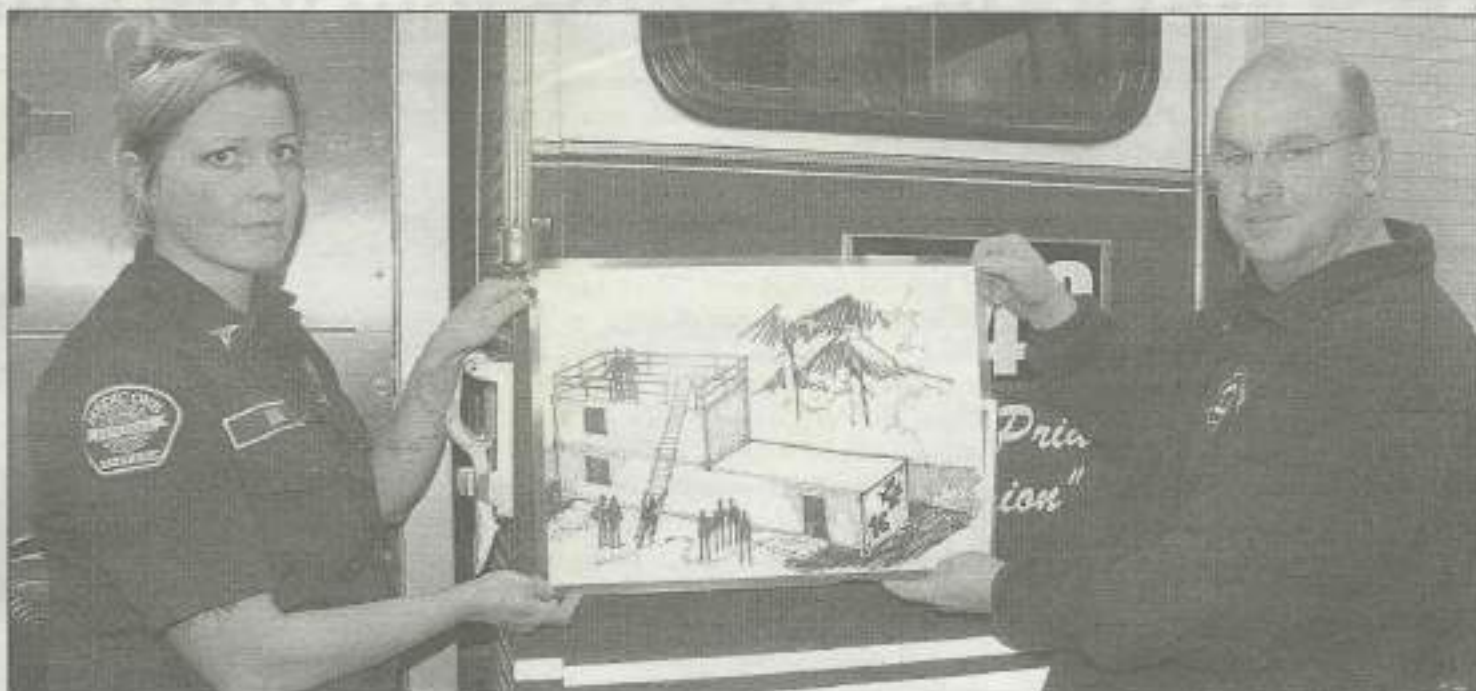
"It's a win-win for everyone," said Key Peninsula Battalion Chief Hal Halverton.

Halverton is the coordinator for the cross-training along with Battalion Chief Tracy Lyon of Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One.

Halverton said the training (which they have done mutually for years) will save both departments money by keeping things local.

"By partnering with Fire District 16, we will keep everything in-house," Lyon said. "We won't have to worry about volunteers receiving different information by going outside of the community to train."

Lyon said that the majority of the training for volunteers on both sides will take place in Gig Harbor. With the partnership, Key Peninsula Fire Department recruits will be able to train at the Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One grounds, where they can practice on an airplane prop and other life-like training props. They also will be able to practice on an actual house at the Tacoma Narrows Airport.



Fire District 16 Lt. Kaci Sun and Battalion Chief Hal Halverton display plans for the district's Conex box training props that will be used to help train volunteer recruits and their career firefighters.

Photo by Peter Ruble, KP News

Key Peninsula Fire administrative secretary and volunteer Battalion Chief Anne Nesbit said the partnership will help the departments fight fires in both regions. Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One is the main source of mutual aid for her district.

"We know each other's equipment and we know each other's personnel, so it's a natural (training) merger," Nesbit said.

For new volunteers, the process starts in the fall with a series of written tests and a background check. This is followed by a physical test, board review, chief's interview and a welcoming meeting. Afterward, there is an orientation session that allows family members to learn how to cope with some of the stresses that a firefighter could incur. They officially become volunteers in Janu-

ary and after graduating June 29, they are put on probation for a year before becoming full-time firefighters. Volunteers can fight live fires after their live fire training in North Bend in April.

According to Halverton, the recruiting process is competitive, rigorous and a far cry from how things were run when he started as a firefighter in the early 1980s, when a recruit would just show up, put on some gear and start training.

Halverton said that about 75 percent of the volunteers go on to become professional firefighters. "It's a great opportunity for people who want a career in the fire department," he said.

He said part of the training will involve practicing on Conex boxes. These boxes,

which are used to transport equipment via railroad, are constructed into miniature houses that the fire department uses as models for house fires.

Halverton said the metal units can be stacked on top of one another to simulate two-story fires. They can also help simulate forced entry and confined-space situations that would arise in an actual fire emergency. Training with ladders also can be achieved with the boxes, he said.

Halverton said the Conex box training is an ever evolving process. Currently, Key Peninsula Fire is in a design phase in which mock windows and chimneys are being fashioned to help represent an actual house.

For information and how to become a volunteer, call (253) 884-2222.

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New Key Peninsula bird watching club is created

By Alice Kinerk, KP News

You're strolling the Key Peninsula shoreline when you spot a little black bird with an orange beak bobbing on the water. Is it a Surf Scoter or a Common Scoter? Or is it a White-Winged Scoter?

Joseph Pentheroudakis could tell you.

He could also clarify the differences between a Common Goldeneye and a Barrow's Goldeneye, clear up confusion about Buffleheaded Mergansers versus Hooded Mergansers, or delineate between Black-Capped Chickadees and their smaller, less common cousin the Chestnut-Backed Chickadee.

An avid birdwatcher since the 1970s, Pentheroudakis is starting a Key Peninsula birdwatching club for like-minded individuals, as well as those folks just getting interested in the hobby. Although the club, as of yet, exists only in virtual form, the 25 or so local folks signed up on his Facebook page are eager to hold their first meeting and start identifying birds.

Pentheroudakis is a Seattle-based artist

who also owns a home on Herron Island.

Originally the island home was only meant to be a weekend respite from the hectic urban life, but after spending a month out here a few summers ago, that changed. Pentheroudakis, who also loves to cycle on the KP, says, "Once I got in the natural quiet rhythm of being on the island, I was hooked." Now he splits his time between homes, making it out to the Key as often as possible to enjoy the natural environment.

What keeps Pentheroudakis interested in birding is the beauty of the birds, as well as their delightful sounds.

He sees birding as a scientific venture as well. Much as canaries once foretold of poor air quality in coal mines, to those in the know, tracking bird populations and migration patterns can provide a lot of clues about the health of our planet, he said.

"Birds are an important component of our natural environment, so observing them is a great way to become aware of the diversity and fragility of that environment," Pentheroudakis said. "Bird

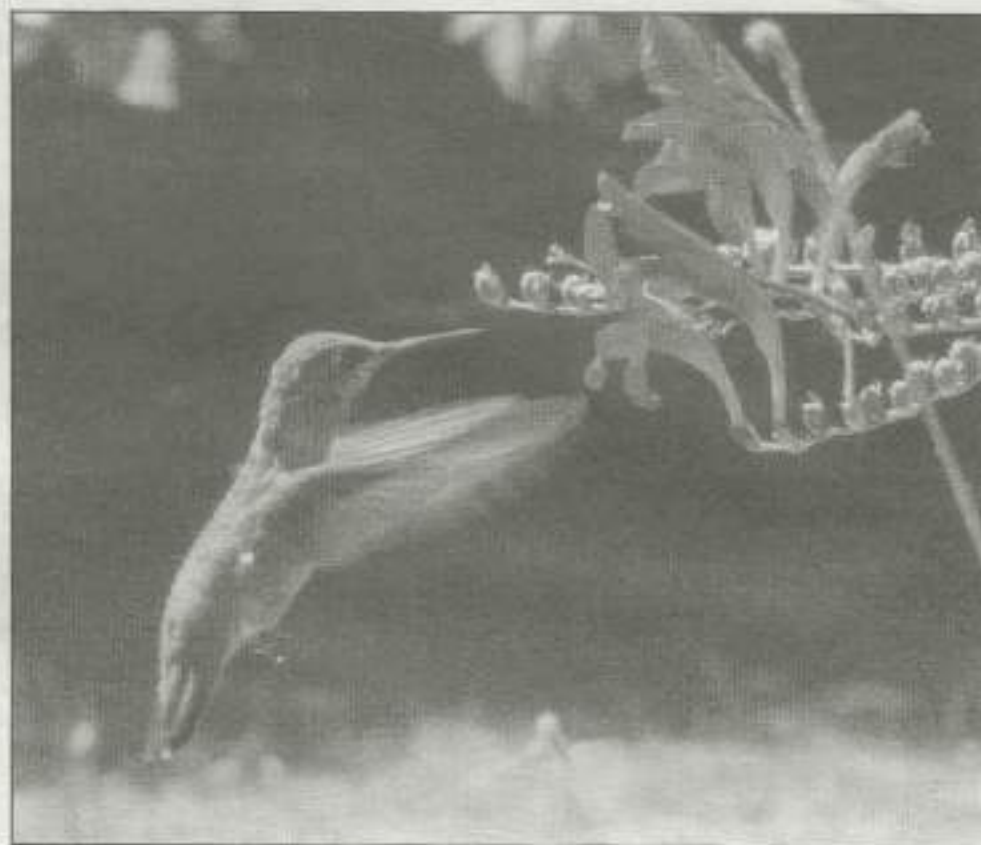


Photo courtesy of Joseph Pentheroudakis

A female Anna's Hummingbird is captured feasting on the red flower of a crocosmia.

movements are clearly related to climate, environment and habitat changes, so bird activity provides indirect evidence for that. For example, crows have moved into cities in huge numbers in recent decades to a great extent because of the loss of rural habitat," he added.

Pentheroudakis keeps records of some of the birds he sees and reports his numbers to centralized organizations during the National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count, as well as the Great Backyard Bird Count every February.

In addition, watching a Kingfisher recently smash its freshly-caught fish dinner against a tree limb made for entertaining outing.

Key Pen Parks Commissioner Bill Trandum is a friend of Pentheroudakis and also a birdwatcher. Trandum is partial to the speed-demon acrobatics of a sandpiper called the Dunlin.

"It's a shoreline wader that breeds in the Arctic during the summer, then winters here. Dunlins fly in close order formation and put on spectacular and intricate air shows, reaching speeds as high as 110 miles per hour," Trandum said.

Trandum believes bird watching is a hobby of interest to all ages.

"My other particular joy is feeding seagulls with my grandkids. When the kids visit, if the tide is high, we take leftover bits of pancakes and waffles to a deck near the water. The kids then try their best to make seagull sounds. Often 30 or 40 gulls answer the call so the kids toss tidbits to the noisy scrambling flock," he said.

According to Pentheroudakis, bird watching is an accessible hobby requiring only an identification guide and a good pair of binoculars. Before shopping, he suggests becoming familiar with the two numbers used to describe binoculars. One number gives their magnification and the other tells the size of the lenses.

A sense of adventure helps too, he says. "We one time counted seven mature Bald Eagles perched in our nearest neighbor's old maple tree. We believe they were feeding on anchovies trapped on the tide flats by a receding tide," he said.

If you are interested in joining the new Key Peninsula Birding club, contact Pentheroudakis at [facebook.com/groups/KeyPeninsulaBirding/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/KeyPeninsulaBirding/).

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Common Core State Standards seek to raise student achievement

By Jessica Takehara, KP News

Even with the best laid plans, change happens. A new job, divorce, military deployment or any number of situations can mean moving to a different house. If there are children involved, this may mean a new school, too.

Key Peninsula schools are no strangers to this as the community changes with an ebb and flow of moving families. Transfer students are not the only ones affected by variances in when educational concepts are taught.

Even within a school or specific grade, what students learn can differ. This leaves a knowledge gap in students' education.

According to Claudia Thompson, academic officer for learning and teaching in the Peninsula School District, Common Core State Standards are geared to alleviate discontinuity through setting "consistent and aligned" objectives.

This is not the only goal, however. Students will be expected to learn a smaller number of vital concepts at a deeper level of understanding, she said. Holt Math (grades 6-12) and enVision Math (K-5) are the curriculums students are using to achieve this goal.

There also is a shift to writing analytical arguments supported by evidence and more nonfiction reading. Making Meaning, SpringBoard and Writers Workshop curriculums are currently used by PSD in English language arts to meet requirements.

The Common Core State Standards were authored by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practice

and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These groups were comprised of teachers, parents and community leaders from across the nation. In 2009, Kentucky was the first state to put Common Core into action. Washington state's adoption of the standards links it to 44 other states.

One of the challenges during implementation has continued to be, according to Thompson, a general "misperception of Common Core." The loss of local control over educational direction tops the list. Even though Common Core outlines what to teach students, PSD retains local autonomy by choosing curriculums to address how to make that happen.

PSD Instructional Facilitator Bridgit Reichel also cites teachers retaining autonomy within the classroom setting by "using the skills they possess as teachers to support students." Professional development plus staff collaboration inside and between schools helps teachers work through the transition as well.

In order to assess Common Core and the curriculums used to meet the requirements, PSD will begin field testing Smarter-Balanced Assessments for grades third through eighth this school year.

This will replace, by 2014/2015, the current standardized testing for all primary and secondary students. The ultimate goal is to "give students the best chance to succeed in the very competitive and more global society," Thompson said.

For information about the Common Core State Standards, visit the PSD website or k12.wa.us/Corestandards/.

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PHS drama teacher brings 'Our Town' to black box stage

By Scott Turner, KP News

There are changes afoot in Peninsula High School's drama department.

Kara Beloate, the new drama teacher, decided to change the way theater classes are taught and school plays are put together.

Now, instead of the majority of actors coming from the after-school Drama Club, they come from the Play Production class.

"Prior to my coming here, it was set up so the Drama Club was the performers and the Play Production class was the tech piece — doing the lights, building the sets and so forth," Beloate said.

Beloate, a Wauna resident for nearly eight years, decided it would be better if the technical work was done after school. And besides, she said, attendance at rehearsals was "a huge problem."

"If you're a performer and you miss a class, it affects everyone," she said. "Tech — you can fill in a little. So I told (Principal) Tim Winter that I thought it would be a better use of time if the tech things could be done after school."

That was the way Beloate, also an English teacher, had run the drama department at North Mason High School for 21 years.

It worked great, "because kids who were athletes could be involved in a play. And now, having drama as a class instead of an after school activity, they can actually be performers too," she said. "I really didn't want for kids to be limited in the opportunity to perform."

Beloate took over the position from long-time drama teacher Jonathan Bill — a tough act to follow.

"Jonathan was so loved by the kids and he does lots of things really well. He's very giving and generous with his time and the kids love him a lot. And that makes this (taking over the department) hard to step into," Beloate said flatly.

But Bill wanted to step away from being in charge of everything in the drama depart-



Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

Peninsula High School drama/English teacher Kara Beloate positions some of her student actors during class in December. The cast will perform Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" Jan. 16-19 in the PHS auditorium.

Want to go?

PHS will present Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" Jan. 16-19 in the school auditorium. Show time is 7 p.m., each day, with additional performances at 3 p.m. on Jan. 18 and 19. Admission is \$10 for adults; \$8 for students and seniors. Advance tickets can be purchased through the PHS bookkeeper or at the school box office. For information, call Kara Beloate at (253) 530-4450.

ment, so Winter offered the position to Beloate.

"I really had to think about it," Beloate recalled. "I came here to teach English. I really didn't want to teach drama after teaching it at North Mason for all those years."

She approached the decision in a typically theatrical way: "I sort of auditioned the kids,"

she said. "I asked myself 'do I like these kids? Are they really motivated? Are they kids I'll like working with?'"

Obviously, her answer was "yes."

Now she and the drama students and club members are thick in rehearsals for "Our Town," Thornton Wilder's iconic story of life in a small town. "This is the 75-year anniversary production of the show," she said.

The play will be done in "black box" — on a very small stage, surrounded by the audience.

"It's very small and intimate," Beloate explained. "The audience will actually be on the stage. Some plays lend themselves better to that intimacy and 'Our Town' is one of those," she said.

Beloate estimates that 90 percent of the student actors in the play live on the Key Peninsula, including senior Jean-Carol (J.C.) Romera, who plays the stage manager.

"The stage manager's job is to connect with the audience and sort of guide them through the play. I set the scene and help them understand," J.C. said.

He thinks having a new drama teacher is beneficial. "She has a whole different style, but I think it's important to be taught by different directors," he said. "And we're able to get a lot more things done in this new system — much more than we could get done after school."

Beloate's daughter, Emily, 17, also is in the play, playing the character Emily Webb.

"This is a simple play, but at the same time it's very complex. It's really an amazing message. It's very poignant and I think people will really be moved," she said.

Working with her mother is fun, she said. "She brings a lot of passion and creativity. She loves what she's doing and she's good at it and she knows how to keep kids interested. And this is her favorite play ever, so she's very passionate about it," Webb said with a smile.

Kara Beloate is looking forward to putting the spotlight on the students performing in the play.

"These kids are extremely talented and they have a lot to offer. They really deserve an audience," she said.

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Out & About

To see more Out & About photos, visit our website at www.keypennews.com and follow the Photo Gallery link. See more of your neighbors out and about, Key Peninsula scenes and happenings.



By Ed Johnson, KP News

The Key Peninsula experienced its first flash mob on Christmas Eve as 25 people burst into song at the Food Market to celebrate the season and entertain the customers.



By Hugh McMillan, KP News

Communities in Schools of Peninsula Executive Director Colleen Speer, center with arms folded, and friends greet supporters of CISP's mentoring and other programs throughout the Peninsula School District at the group's recent open house. "It's our way to say thank you for the many hours our volunteers contribute to encouraging kids within the district to make it to high school graduation on time," Speer said. For information on CISP, call (253) 884-5733.



Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

The fifth-grade students and staff at Vaughn Elementary School received a visit from veteran Ted Gary last month. They also hosted a pizza lunch with him and listened to his answers to their questions about his experiences in World War II as a tail gunner in a B-17 bomber. Pictured during the assembly are (from left) Marci Cummings-Cohoe; Renee, Tanner and Jim Peavey and Ted Gary.

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By Hugh McMillan, KP News

Jim Gould, of Home, adds a finishing touch to the "Welcome Home" sign. "When I found the sign lying on the hillside, I stopped and took a closer look to learn that both of the support posts had rotted out and the sign had fallen over. I decided to take the sign home, clean it up, repair some of the wood, and repaint the lettering," he said.