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March 2020 Vol. 47 No. 3

Both PHS Boys and Girls Basketball Battle to Playoffs

It was a tough year, but both teams kept the faith and made it to post-season.

DANIEL SHURR, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

The students at Peninsula High School are no strangers to seeing their teams in the playoffs.

The 2019 football team ran over opponents on their way to a quarter-finals appearance. Volleyball dominated on the court en route to their first ever state playoff berth. But for the basketball teams, it has been a dramatic season that ended with both the boys and girls varsity teams earning a chance to represent their school in the 3A basketball regional playoffs.

The girls varsity Seahawks (9-5 in conference, 11-10 overall) have always been a team to watch in the South

Sound Conference. Having won their only state title in 1979 when PHS was still a 2A school, the girls are hungry for another banner to hang in the gym.

Last year, senior Belle Frazier (now a Portland State University freshman) led her Seahawks to the Tacoma Dome where state tournaments are held. Peninsula

dominated on the court, but learned that no matter how tough you are, someone else might be tougher. The Seahawks fell in the final minutes in the semifinals of the tournament, ruining their chance at another title.

PHS senior Roman Bockhorn hits the gas against Central Kitsap Feb. 13.
Photo: Ed Johnson, KP News



This year, junior Linsey Lovrovich stepped up to the plate to lead the Seahawks to the fourth seed in the SSC. It's almost impossible to stop Lovrovich once she gets loose — if the ball is in her hands and the hoop in her sight, be prepared to go back on offense. Lovrovich led the team in scoring, putting up 305 points in the regular season, making her the third-best shooter in the conference.

Not to be overshadowed by her teammate, junior Piper Bauer was automatic from the three, draining 53 three-pointers this season and aiding

"WE ARE MORE MOTIVATED THIS YEAR BECAUSE WE KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO NOT MAKE THE PLAYOFFS."

the offensive brigade with 271 points of her own. Renee Doss had trouble starting in games this season, battling a leg injury

early on, but the 5-foot-4-inch powerhouse senior found herself still putting up just south of 200 points herself.

With three players scoring over 100 points, it's no surprise the Seahawks found themselves in the playoffs once more. The lowest score the Seahawks

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The Robinsons, with Lucy and Jax, on the greenhouse steps. *Photo: Richard Miller, KP News*

Time to Celebrate as Cottage in Home Turns 100

After seven years of remodeling, the Robinsons can finally enjoy their historic house.

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

As their 1,600-square-foot beach cottage in Home celebrates its 100th birthday, owners Kim and Jeff Robinson are living the dream.

"I'm happiest at home, in my garden and anywhere there's water," Kim said. "I just love everything here."

Kim and Jeff were living in Gig Harbor when they purchased the

cottage just over seven years ago. Their neighbor Bill Lloyd, an ordained minister, married them on the deck.

"I'll never move," said Jeff. "This is it."

The Robinsons have spent the past seven years renovating their dream home. They built a deck, put up and tore down walls, added a master bathroom, and took the kitchen down to the studs. They put on a new metal roof, installed all new plumbing

and electrical and added insulation.

"It was very cold in this house when we first moved in," Jeff said.

They added ceiling beams, crown molding, vintage windows, shiplap walls and hardwood floors.

"We really wanted a house with character," Kim said. "We just love the history of it all. Everywhere you look, there's a story."

"Sylvia and George Allen were one of the three founding families in Home," she said. "I believe their daughter built this house with her husband."

A subsequent owner used to build wooden boats in a shop behind the cottage.

"Somebody told us the boat builder rented the room upstairs to people passing by back in the '60s," Jeff said.

Another former owner was local artist

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"EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, THERE'S A STORY."

KEY PENINSULA NEWS

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Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

My alarm went off early enough to witness daybreak. The fields, still white with frost, begin to shimmer under the warm glow of first light. Unmistakable birdsong rises clearly above it all and floats along on rivers of air. A regular chorus of other hopefuls will join them soon enough. Until then, who could help but smile in sweet relief at winter's end?

This year the spring equinox arrives a little early, March 19 at 8:50 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time to be precise. By that time our local birds will be fast asleep but eager gardeners are known to lie awake all night in planning. Celestial navigators refer to the vernal equinox as "The First Point of Aries," and from all accounts around the Key Peninsula, boaters are every bit as apt as gardeners to dream big.

In the meantime, envelopes from Pierce County Elections containing Washington State's presidential primary ballots have arrived. All registered voters should have received a ballot before now.

While Washington state has conducted presidential primary elections since 1992, only Republicans have chosen delegates this way. For the first time this year, both parties will be using primary results for delegate allocation at their national conventions this summer.

Frustrating to independently minded voters is the requirement that in order to participate in either the Republican or the Democrat primary election, would-be primary voters must declare their party preference as either Democrat or Republican and further declare they will not participate in the nomination of any other party for the 2020 presidential election.

Self-declared Democrats cannot vote Republican, and those who declare themselves Republicans cannot vote Democrat. Ballots without a checkmark in either box will not be counted. The Secretary of State, the Pierce County Auditor and others lobbied for another option, but the Legislature and the political parties instituted rules that prohibit undeclared or unaffiliated voters from voting.

Checking party preference on the ballot envelope allows party participation to be counted without revealing an individual voter's choice of nominee. (Some Democratic candidates on the ballot

have dropped out, and only President Trump appears on the Republican side of the ballot, but voters may still write-in a candidate.) Your party declaration — not your vote — will remain a public record for 60 days and available to party officials, according to the Secretary of State's office.

Election Day is March 10 and ballots must be dropped in ballot boxes by 8 p.m. or postmarked by Election Day. But your primary vote does not restrict your choice in any future election. Washington state will still have a Top 2 primary Aug. 4, 2020, to determine who will be in the presidential election Nov. 4.

Some voters have wondered on social media and elsewhere about crossing party lines for the day to throw an opponent's campaign into disarray.

The Washington State Republican Party Chairman Caleb Heimlich said to do so would be dishonest, unethical and illegal,

but also counterproductive. If a Republican wants to make her vote count, she should vote for the President, according to Heimlich, to give him momentum and to encourage him to come to Washington for a rally.

Another variable is Super Tuesday, March 3, when 14 states hold primary elections and caucuses and more delegates to the presidential nominating conventions will be won than on any other single day. Surely some voters will want to see those results before making a choice, even if it's just for the record. Five Democratic candidates have already dropped out of the race since the ballots were printed: Bennet, Booker, Delaney, Patrick and Yang.

Living comfortably within this highly polarized political landscape isn't easy. It can be awkward. In what has become something of a daily meditation, I try to remind myself that we are all human beings and that underneath all, what we share in common is far greater than what divides us, while our differences make us unique.

For a chance to see this in action, I suggest walking away from your screen of choice and going out into the life we share on the Key Peninsula. We have a growing

and thriving community that demonstrates its devotion to work together to accomplish the greater good and make life more livable for everyone. The evidence of compassion, tenacity and genuine strength is all here. Hope surrounds us, but it helps to be on the lookout for it.

My oldest friend takes the long view at 96 years old. She is concerned about the current state of our democracy but still maintains an optimistic outlook.

"Oh, I still have lots of hope," she said. "I really believe in our young people. They see where we are stuck. I just know they'll figure things out."



HOPE SURROUNDS US,
BUT IT HELPS TO BE ON
THE LOOKOUT FOR IT.



[A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY]

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PHS BASKETBALL FROM PAGE 1

saw was the loss at home against Gig Harbor, when Peninsula struggled to put up a mere 33 points to Gig Harbor's 55. That may seem low, but for 3A high school basketball — where most teams may put up 20 points — this just goes to show why Peninsula is a well-respected team.

On the flip side, the PHS boys failed to make the playoffs last year, watching crosstown rival Gig Harbor take the SSC as the first seed instead. Feeling the need for redemption, longtime head coach Matt Robles was eager to get back on the court for the 2020 season with some familiar faces leading the charge for the green and white.

Standing at 6 foot 9 inches, senior forward Kaleb Lichau led his team on the court this season well enough to receive an offer to play at the D-1 Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs next season. Roman Bockhorn also helped lead the team as a senior this year, posting an average of 10 points and six rebounds per game.

The Seahawk boys (6-8, 8-13) fought hard this year and clinched the fourth seed in the SSC before hitting the gas to win their first playoff game 54-52 over Central Kitsap Feb. 13. "We are more motivated this year because we know what it feels like to not make the playoffs," Lichau said.

While the seniors always play well, the team had a new face to look up to as well. Luke Browne became the first freshman in over three years to start consistently for the Seahawks varsity. Just like Bauer on the girls team, Browne delivers for the boys. He was on fire this season from the three-point line and beyond, adding another weapon to the Swiss Army knife that is the Peninsula Seahawks.

While it may not be the best season on record for Peninsula basketball, it was a season to remember for the class of 2020. First impressions are important, and to first-year varsity players a playoff appearance is a confidence booster that can set the tone for the rest of their careers on the Seahawk team. But as the fourth seed in the playoffs, both the boys and girls teams will have to assume the role of road warriors to stay in the hunt for state.

At the end of the season, no matter how far Peninsula makes it, the leadership shown by the senior class of both teams will be missed by everyone supporting the green and white. It's about time that Peninsula brings home another state banner, and it seems like both the boys and girls are prepared to take on that task.

Daniel Shurr is a Peninsula High School senior and PHS Outlook sports writer. He lives near Vaughn. Read more of his work at www.phsoutlook.com.



KPF D medics respond to a wide variety of medical emergencies. Photo: Anne Nesbit

New Law Would Allow KPF D 16 to Offer More Care

After successfully lobbying for a change in state law, KPF D 16 is exploring options to expand healthcare and save money.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The state Legislature is on track to approve Senate Bill 6058, a Key Peninsula Fire District 16-inspired measure to provide basic care and preventive medicine to anyone in the community.

State Sen. Emily Randall (D-26th, Bremerton) agreed to sponsor the bill and found four other co-sponsors.

SB 6058 provides authority to KPF D to operate its own health clinic, in whatever form that might take, funded by reimbursements from Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance. Only two other fire districts in the state are authorized to run their own clinics — South Kitsap and Point Roberts — and do so for similar reasons: issues of access to health care, difficulty attracting providers, and overlap between emergency medical services and hospitals.

"This simple expansion of health care access will meet our neighbors' health care needs in a more efficient and affordable way," Randall said. "I'm deeply grateful to Chief Morrow and KPF D for their willingness to go the extra mile — in providing care, rather than in emergency room trips — for our community."

"If you look at our patient base, they are the same patients that the hospitals are working with to reduce their readmittance," Morrow said. "They're chronically ill, they need services beyond what they can provide directly and sometimes beyond what we can provide directly as an EMS provider. But they are the same people and they're getting kind of lost in the system and it's a terrible waste of the collective resources."

KPF D responded to 2,407 incidents in 2019; of those, 1,472 were medical calls, Morrow said. "Within that number there's somewhere between 28 and 40 percent that

I know we could provide a slightly different level of service that would change their outcome, our expense, and the health care system expense at large."

A KP fire department clinic could hire its own physician and nurses to work in its own facility or partner with an existing service to expand its reach, or even make house calls.

"Right now our only option is to take people to the hospital and that's where the money just goes like crazy," Morrow said. "But we could take those services into peoples' homes, we could broaden our ability to provide additional transportation services to other medical facilities that might be more appropriate than an emergency room."

Preventive medicine would be a big component of any outreach.

"Part of our job in the fire service is to prevent an emergency before it happens," Morrow said. "This is the same concept in health care. If we can minimize slips that lead to falls, that lead to broken bones, head injuries, or make sure people aren't missing or mixing up their meds, that makes sense for us. We can do post-discharge follow up; what's the overall status — are there social issues, housing issues, medication issues, mental health issues — the total package."

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which reimburses providers for their work when applicable, is encouraging fire districts like the Key Peninsula to provide direct care to their populations.

"CMS has said they will reimburse us at a higher rate than what we currently get taking people to the ER," Morrow said. "The problem is it's a great plan, but we don't have the authority. SB 6058 provides the authority for us to go do some of those things and honestly change the system for the better."

The clinic idea is a byproduct of work Morrow performed in his former job as

a deputy chief at Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue in Oregon. "We did a lot of work with care organizations to try to deliver the services the hospital needed in our community. We found that we saved the hospital thousands and thousands of dollars, and they shared a portion of that savings with us," he said. Their early intervention also freed up personnel and ambulances to respond to bona fide emergencies.

"What we have to be careful about is not utilizing the existing resources that are allocated to the fire district's core services to fund a clinic in any fashion," Morrow said. "There are several dividers in our concept that would allow us to share the resources but keep the revenue and expense streams separate, clear and transparent for the community."

With the expected change in state law, the next thing on the list would be stakeholder engagement with the fire commissioners reaching out to the community to determine how to proceed without duplicating services, and identifying partners to expand existing services.

"I just know from personal experience and servicing the people here there's a need we're not filling," Morrow said. "When I was thinking about coming to work here, everybody told me about this crazy wall at the Purdy Spit. I didn't believe it, but unfortunately as I've been working here now for a year trying to get other services out to the Key Peninsula, the fact is that wall is alive, well and thick. I can't get the services to come out here. So I just took what we were working on in Oregon and said, 'We are the solution.'"

"If we get the authority," he said. The bill was approved by the state Senate Feb. 19. It still needs to be approved by the House and signed by Governor Jay Inslee. The end of the session is March 12.

The Key: Island Living Without a Ferry.

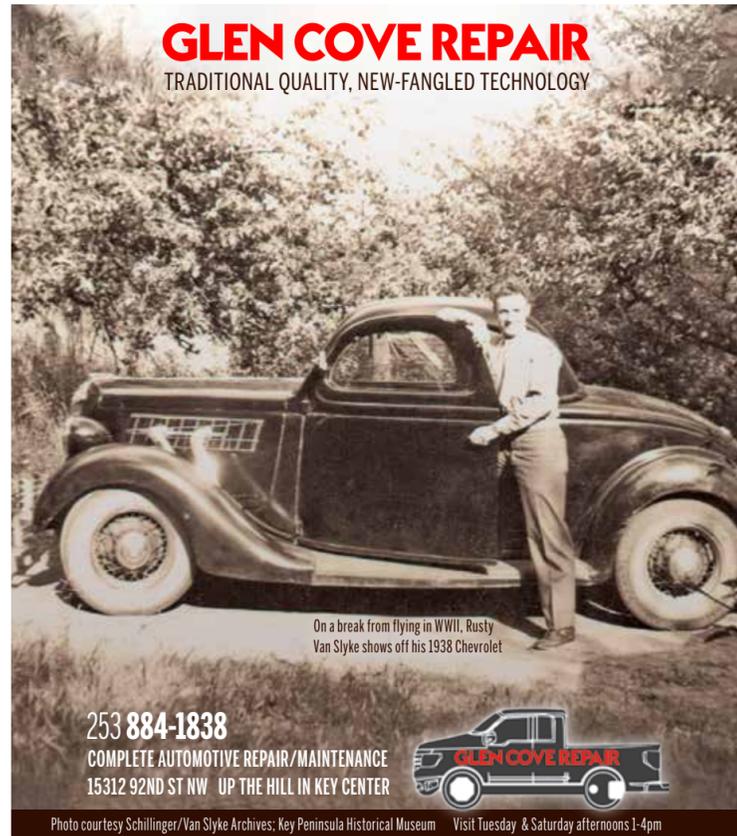


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Pumping out a holding tank is a costly option. Photo: AdobeStock

Wastewater Treatment Limits Business Growth in Key Center

Introducing centralized wastewater treatment in rural communities is expensive and difficult.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Key Center is feeling some growing pains. As new businesses open and current businesses expand, owners are bumping up against the limits of their infrastructure. In some cases, they're learning the size of their septic system doesn't match their needs. "If you don't have the right septic system for your property, it can be an absolute mess both for you and for the environment," said Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department environmental health specialist Bob Suggs.

At least three Key Center businesses recently learned their existing septic systems didn't fit their plans. Don Swensen was not able to install an espresso machine at Blend. Emily and Micah Dahl, who own 3 Clouds Bakery, wanted to lease a space in Key Center but could not use it for baking. Sarah and Bryant Anderson must install a 3,500-gallon septic tank — which will need to be pumped out — in order to open their cafe.

"We fully understand that upgrading your septic system can be frustrating and expensive, so we do everything we can to help you find the least expensive option possible," Suggs said. "But at the same time, we want to make sure we're doing everything we can to keep the groundwater clean."

Key Center, designated a rural activity center, has about two dozen parcels with buildings. Nearly all the parcels have their own septic systems, though a few share a system with an adjacent building. Most, according to records available through the county, are built to accommodate a few employees with no public access to bathroom facilities. They include 1,000-gallon tanks and drain fields of about 450 square feet with a daily maximum capacity of 100 to 400 gallons. Such systems will not support businesses that prepare and serve food. Some buildings, including El Sombrero, Food Market and KP Medical Center, have larger

systems and greater maximum capacity.

Suggs said that septic system design has begun to focus beyond disposal of wastewater and the fecal coliform bacteria to include reduction of nitrogen that flows from the septic tanks into the ground water and then to Puget Sound or neighboring lakes, causing problems including algae blooms.

Some landowners have brought up the possibility of building a sewer system to serve Key Center, noting that drain fields take up a significant amount of otherwise buildable space, and raising the concern that if there is drain field failure there is no good back-up plan.

Pierce County Councilman Derek Young and Suggs said that a sewer system with water treatment in Key Center is not feasible.

Larry Altose, communications manager for the Washington state Department of Ecology, echoed the words of the county.

"Generally speaking, introducing centralized wastewater treatment in rural communities is very expensive and almost never easy," Altose said. "Sometimes new sewer systems are infeasible because of Growth Management Act zoning or water supply constraints. The facilities themselves are expensive to build and maintain and they require employing a certified operator to manage them properly on an ongoing basis. These costs can fall particularly hard on rural communities because of the small number of rate payers."

One solution for Key Center, suggested by both Suggs and Altose, is a large on-site sewer system (LOSS) administered by the Washington State Department of Health.

A LOSS is designed to allow for a flow of 3,500 to 100,000 gallons per day and to serve from 10 to 370 homes or equivalent flows from other clusters of buildings. Flow from all buildings would be piped to a common receiving tank and then sent to a single drain field. Key Peninsula Middle School and Penrose State Park are each served by a LOSS.

Leigh McIntire, on-site sewage and well permitting program manager for the health department, said that environmental health specialists can partner with businesses to find the best approach to their septic needs. He cited Graham as an example. "They have multiple commercial systems out there that work together to serve the businesses there. Depending on the specific circumstance, that can be much more cost effective than installing a LOSS."

There is currently a sewer and wastewater treatment plant near the southwestern tip of Key Peninsula. Taylor Bay Estates, a community with 155 lots, 110 homes and 250 residents, installed its system 50 years ago. The system is aging, has needed a number of repairs, and now requires a certified operator to be on site at least five days a week, according to Don Tjossem, a member of the Taylor Bay sewer committee.

Although the flow from the system into Taylor Bay has met basic state requirements, it does not meet the requirements of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program and the geoduck beds cannot be opened unless the situation is remedied.

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources funded a feasibility study to look at alternatives to upgrade or replace the system. The 2019 report recommended some short-term repairs and noted that although the system was probably adequate for several more years, it would need to be replaced.

DNR did not recommend upgrading a system that would continue to send effluent into Taylor Bay, as the costs could be prohibitive to construct a new ocean outfall without incurring a natural resource damage assessment.

Tjossem said that Taylor Bay Estates will complete repairs recommended by the study for the short term. The cost of replacement is significant.

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Ted Olinger ANOTHER LAST WORD



Last Call at Lulu's

I don't remember what time it was, if I ever knew, but I do remember sitting at the bar holding up a guy I'd never seen before who'd draped his arm over my shoulders to reminisce about our Army days together in places I'd never been while another stranger, a small, elderly woman with big glasses leaned against me on my other side, serenely smoking a cigar.

It was the night we closed Lulu's for the last time.

Smoking anything in a public accommodation, of course, is a practice both vile and illegal but it was the end of the world that night as so many of us knew it, and the courtesies and laws of simpler times seemed quaint and obsolete.

You could see it in our faces. We jammed the place for a last chance to eat something brazenly unhealthy or drink the last bargain cocktail in the last of its kind lounge on the south end of the Key Peninsula, ordering all kinds of impossible things in a futile effort to force the restaurant to stay open past its time of reckoning. We waited hours for extravagant burgers that would never come, sipping from the very cup of trembling as more and more of the doomed arrived while someone dimmed the lights lower and lower and the juke box got louder and louder.

Lulu's looked like a simple diner near the end of the road at the end of a peninsula that has somehow stepped out of the flow of time. I used to bring my 3-year-old there for what he called "Godzilla pancakes." At 18 he could order the same thing in the same way from an unfamiliar server and get the same dish. Once I had somehow forgotten my wallet, and that server waved me away and said, "Fine."

Over a span of nearly three decades, Lulu's became an oasis for anyone wanting gravy with their steak, eggs or coffee, or for anyone who just wanted a warm place to sit among warm people. Lulu's radiated acceptance like some eccentric aunt you assume will always be around. You might suspect that below the eastern horizon is a future where you exist without her, somehow, but you cannot picture it and you don't want to.

It was that kind of night.

I think it was the Eagles who were blaring from the juke box when the elderly woman with the glasses and cigar pulled me to my feet. "Let us dance," she said, "as if it were for the last time."

She put her head on my shoulder and shouted, "What will we do Johnny, what will we do?" Before I could ask about Johnny, other patrons grabbed each other like they were the last life jackets on a sinking ship, and we all swayed back and forth together as the ship went down beneath us.

I am more familiar with the ways of the wild animal that is grief than I will ordinarily admit. I know from my own exile in its territory that grief has a certain way of stalking you, for years, reanimating a long-gone event you somehow managed to survive as if it occurred only a moment ago. Like all predators, grief does not forget you.

It strode among us that night, stirring distant memories utterly unrelated to the closing of Lulu's, reigniting the smoldering pain of old losses into new fires.

And there is only one answer in the face of such an enemy.

"This is not our last dance," I said. "It is the next of many more to come, my dear."

She let her head roll back and she laughed like she had never heard anything so absurd in all her long life. "Oh, Johnny," she said. "You always know just what to say."

Ted Olinger is an award-winning journalist. He lives in Vaughn.

Anne Nesbit SIREN'S SONG



A Lifetime of Friends

One never knows when life will give you a gift. Mine arrived at work one day in a chance encounter while doing a blood pressure check. This gift came in the form of a new friend. She is 83 and we became instant family.

I visit her three to four times a week. And the best part? We talk. Or I listen. I listen to stories of her youth, adventures, family, relationships and kids. There have been stories of happiness and stories of loss. We have laughed and we have cried, and we have hugged. We hug all the time. They are real hugs, hugs that come from the heart. You can feel her spunk, tenacity, humor and her love of life in them. She calls me her angel. What she doesn't realize is that she is mine.

According to a new study, as we get older our friends begin to have a bigger impact on our health and well-being, even more so than family.

Researchers led by William Chopik, an assistant professor of psychology at Michigan State University, reviewed two surveys of approximately 280,000 people who answered questions about relationships, happiness and health.

In the first study of 271,053 adults,

valuing friendships was related to better functioning, particularly among older adults, whereas valuing familial relationships "exerted a static influence on health and well-being across the lifespan." In the second study of 7,481 older adults, only strain from friendships predicted more chronic illnesses over a six year period.

Chopik said the power of friendship on physical and mental health is often ignored when researching older people, because familial relationships are frequently deemed more important for this age group. But family members typically become caregivers for the elderly, and that role can create a sense of obligation. While those relationships are still vital, Chopik says, they may not provide as much joy in an elderly person's life as long-term friends.

Another factor that we must consider as we grow older is the passing of our significant others, families and peers. In their absence there is a void that can be filled only by loving human relationships. When there is love, we experience fulfillment. This fulfillment is reciprocal, and is not bounded by age.

There are life lessons to be learned from older friends. By the same token, there is an elixir released by those who are younger. Life has no limits. Living vicariously does have its place and it too has no boundaries. Friendships with older and younger people broaden perspective, which in turn invites compassion and empathy. Age should not be a predictor of friendship quality.

I have benefited from my dear friend's life experience. She is not afraid of the opinions of others and says exactly what she thinks. Her view often throws something unexpected into the mix. Most often it is a gentle reminder to appreciate "the moments" and the chance encounters that life throws at you. Appreciation of people, different experiences, and enjoying the lost art of chatting and storytelling. It's a wonderful way to spend an afternoon.

As we pursue our interests over a lifetime, the people who share them become increasingly important. Interest-based groups, like clubs and teams often become the source of our social outlets. What if our interest based group was humanity? We want our elder communities to be able to age gracefully in place. Well, what then? We have many who are aging gracefully in place who are forgotten.

The same can be said of younger generations working hard, paying bills and raising families. The pleasure of conversation has been reduced to a quick text message. I suggest you take a step into a generation when people rather than technology was the focus. Reconnect with what makes

humans special — our ability to connect and to love.

There is so much life in my friend. Her eyes are alive with it. Perhaps this is my reminder that life must be embraced each day.

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

Jeff Minch FROM THE MINCH



Tucson's Navajo Mountain Adventure

It's near 7 in the morning on Navajo Mountain and the blue light of the sunrise washes over the high desert from Monument Valley. The Naatsis'áán chapter president of the Navajo Nation drums and blesses 45 of us with a prayer before sending us off on a 32-mile trail race that will take us among wild horses and burros to the San Juan River, through what I am told is some of the most beautiful county I will ever see.

As the prayer comes to an end, the sunlight starts to illuminate the trees on Navajo Mountain. They are such a deep, dark green the mountain almost appears to be black. It hits me in the gut.

The night before the race we were all treated to a home-cooked meal in the Navajo Mountain High School lunch room while we were given the rundown on the race. As we ate and talked, the big question was: "How did you come to find this race?" Many of us that were there for the first time shared a common reason. I can even relate it to the many responses I get from people who find themselves here on the Key Peninsula.

We found it by accident. We didn't intend to be here, but we're sure glad we made it. Navajo Mountain (Naatsis'áán), much like the Key Peninsula, is not a place you just drive through. It's a village in Utah with an Arizona zip code and one road in that's 40 miles long and was only paved four years ago. The people are friendly and are happy to share their home with visitors, especially during Ultra Time, better known as the Naatsis'áán 50k and 10k.

The blessing concludes with drumbeats fading away softly. At the stroke of 7 we're on our way.

The first three miles are a 1,200-foot climb from 5,000 to 6,200 feet. This is where racers like me take it slow and talk with each other along the way. One racer from Tucson and I spent the first four miles together. Tucson tells me about all the running he does playing soccer, the

handful of 5ks, the relay race he did with a group of friends, and that this is his first 50k. He's nervous because he didn't train and six miles is the furthest he has ever run in his life. He asks me what to expect out there. I don't expect he'll make it past the 15-mile mark. I tell him to enjoy himself and take his time.

After mile five I took a pit stop at the high school before starting the heart of the race. Tucson kept going and I eventually caught back up to him a few miles later at the first aid station, where he was sitting on the tailgate of a truck with his shoes off, rubbing his feet. He said he was fine, so off I went thinking how much I enjoyed his company and hoping to see him out there again.

At mile 13, I was returning from an out and back that took me to Hawkeye Arch and was excited to see Tucson making his way in. We checked in with each other as we passed and I wished we were still hanging together, but I reminded myself to race my race and keep moving forward.

Somewhere around mile 23 I reached an aid station ready to ask for some ramen noodles and broth, only to find the lady tending the station taking care of some housekeeping items. Not wanting to be rude, I decided to wait until she could come back to the table to fix up the noodles rather than interrupt her. I waited a whole two or three minutes, then made the great decision to pass on the noodles and push forward.

At mile 26 I was laying in the back of an ATV being transported to an ambulance, where I got an IV full of saline. I ended up crossing the finish line in the ambulance with a DNF for the race. This was a hard thing for me to swallow as I stepped out of the ambulance embarrassed and humiliated. All I wanted to do was take a shower and go home.

But after a cold shower at the high school I came out just in time to see Tucson cross the finish line. Even though I didn't complete the race, I had the amazing opportunity to meet this man and witness him pull off a feat that I know changed his life. When we set off to tackle a race like this we step out of our comfort zones, compete with ourselves and enjoy the adventure.

Hence, lesson learned. I lost sight of enjoying the adventure, got caught up in how fast I could get the race completed, and ran myself into the dirt. Not to mention underestimating what someone else can accomplish.

I will be going back Oct. 31 to complete the adventure.

Jeff Minch lives near Minter Creek.

Richard Gelinas EMPIRICALLY YOURS



Canada Geese Discuss the Horizon

GOOSE 1: Nice view up here this morning, especially toward the horizon.

GOOSE 2: Just reading my Goose-mail, Homo sapiens (H sap) says there's a "tragedy of the horizon" out there. The head of the Bank of England said this at a meeting of European bank and insurance company H saps.

GOOSE 3: What do they mean by tragedy? What do they mean by horizon? The horizon I see looks fine.

GOOSE 2: The message said that climate change poses a threat to global financial security, and not dealing with it could at least lead to a decline in the economy, and at worst to a financial crisis. The threat is so great that it's not within the normal view of most businesses and many governments and their politicians. The concern is that people who control the banks, insurance companies, and companies that rely on fossil fuels don't get the big picture.

GOOSE 3: So what are the central bankers doing?

GOOSE 2: The G-mail says that at least in Europe, they're talking with big companies to test their resilience to climate-related risks. Examples would be banks that give mortgages for homes built on flood-prone land or companies that rely on fossil fuels but want to sell bonds. They will get a lecture from the central bank on climate-related risks.

GOOSE 3: So even some bankers are pointing out that due to the world's current path of carbon emissions, the risk of financial disaster increases as the planet gets hotter.

GOOSE 2: True. Even the Chinese central bank is now offering incentives to banks that give out green loans and requiring obligatory climate-related stress tests in key industries.

GOOSE 3: So, H sap is finally beginning to talk about the economic risks of the changing climate on sea levels, droughts, powerful storms and land degradation.

GOOSE 4: Yes, I heard that a recent drought in Europe was so severe that a portion of the Rhine river dried up, blocking shipping traffic.

GOOSE 5: Who cares about Europe? This spring, here in North America unprecedented amounts of rain fell throughout the upper Midwest and it caused the Mississippi to flood neigh-

boring towns and farms for hundreds of miles. Some farms located near the river never put in crops this year. In Louisiana, some oyster beds died because there was too much fresh water heading to the Gulf of Mexico. No oysters — now that's serious.

GOOSE 4: And Panama! Did you hear the drought in Panama means the lake in the middle of the canal system is so low the heaviest ships can't use the canal at all.

GOOSE 5: Didn't these events along with the fires in California and Australia, and all the hurricanes over the past few years cause politicians to take notice? How could they be so ignorant?

GOOSE 2: Well, they're not ignorant of these events, they're simply ignoring them. Ignoring the obvious and inconvenient takes actual work, and this is leading to the tragedy of the horizon.

GOOSE 4: OK, so these European bankers are learning about their blind spot. How about the head banker of the U.S., Jerome Powell? Doesn't he agree that the demonstrable effects of global climate chaos on the U.S. economy poses a genuine risk for U.S. financial institutions?

GOOSE 2: Apparently his view is that climate change risks are a "longer-run issue" and therefore outside the scope of the Federal Reserve.

GOOSE 3: Well, if that's his view he can't see the horizon. I know a nice beach house with a goose-friendly marsh behind located in North Miami I'd like to sell him.

GOOSE 4: It seems to me that if H sap ignores destructive wildfires, sea level rise, hurricanes, flooding rivers and droughts, these events will destroy the nesting sites H sap uses. They won't have safe places to give to their heirs.

GOOSE 11: What are heirs?

GOOSE 2: Heirs for H sap are like goslings, except that they never learn to fly.

GOOSE 11: Oh. So sad.

Richard Gelinas, Ph.D., whose early work earned a Nobel prize, is a senior research scientist at the Institute for Systems Biology. He lives in Lakebay.

The opinions expressed by writers are not necessarily those of the KP News. We neither endorse nor oppose issues or proposals discussed on these pages and present these views for public information. Letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number. No anonymous letters will be published. Letters are used on a space-available basis and will be edited for length and clarity. Mail letters to: P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394, or email to editor@keypennews.org.

Letter to the Editor

CALDIER WRONG ON ROAD FEES

Rep. Michelle Caldier lambasted the WSDOT proposed road usage fee (KP News, Feb. 2020). Unfortunately, her editorial is misleading, and is a good example of bad governance. Rep. Jesse Young chose to double down on Caldier's misinformation in his latest legislative update with blatant pandering.

Fuel taxes pay part of the costs of roads with numerous other taxes and fees. Property owners in Pierce County pay 0.1409 percent or \$140.90 per \$100,000 of assessed value for county roads. When Caldier complains the fuel tax is too high in Washington compared to other states she ignores these other fees and taxes. Many states rely on tolls, which add much more cost than higher fuel taxes. Pay a nickel a gallon more or \$5 to cross a bridge.

Caldier misrepresents the usage fee as an addition to the fuel tax. The proposal doesn't add the fuel tax to the usage fee; rather, fuel taxes paid would be applied toward the usage fee.

As to privacy, it's possible to track mileage without tracking location. Traffic and toll cameras already record every car that passes by, which is more intrusive than any of the proposed tracking methods. Caldier and Young should be trying to figure out how to make this work rather than pushing misinformation and ill-conceived bills or constitutional amendments.

Caldier's most harmful falsehood is "this tax is disproportionately unfair to rural citizens." Rural roads are and will be subsidized by urban centers. It is less expensive per vehicle mile travelled to build and maintain heavily used roads than infrequently used rural roads. An urban arterial may serve 15,000 cars per lane per day while a rural road won't see 15,000 cars in a year, but the cost to build and maintain it is more than 1/365th. Since it will be directly tied to the usage it will be no more burdensome to the rural driver than the fuel tax, and less for rural users fueling mowers, tractors or other off-road equipment.

With electric and alternative fueled vehicles not paying fuel taxes, there must be an equitable fee. A truck powered with liquid natural gas doesn't pay any fuel taxes. In a few years there will be many trucks and more electric cars paying no fuel taxes. The revenue from fuel taxes will only decline, forcing the change to the usage fee. We need to plan for it now before it becomes an emergency.

Edward Robison, P.E., S.E., Wanna

LETTERS, CONTINUED PAGE 8

Letter to the Editor

WATCH OUT FOR WRONG SALES TAX

I ran into something the other day I thought might be of interest to others on the Key Peninsula.

I made a purchase on eBay but after the auction the final price came back a bit more than I expected. The sales tax was off. As a business owner I know the sales tax for my area code (98329) is 7.9 percent, but I was getting charged 9.9 percent.

The seller said eBay programs in the sales tax and it is out of their control. It looks like this has been going on for years. After four weeks of my emails to them, they haven't been much help and haven't changed their system.

I also looked at my and my wife's Amazon accounts. We have both been overcharged the last few years. Amazon was a bit more helpful than eBay. After lots of emails they refunded one year's worth of overcharged taxes to us, but they won't go back any further.

The Department of Revenue said if we create a consumer account and file against those companies, the department would go after the overcharged taxes. Anyone ordering from their home should be charged the tax rate for the zip code the product is being delivered to. All I would have to do is find all my invoices for the last few years, copy them to a file and attach it to the form.

It seems wrong to me that a business doesn't do its job correctly and the state and business both benefit but I am the one who has to do all the work to correct it.

I hear our new local Dollar Store in Lake Kathryn is in the same boat and overcharging tax as well.

I would like the state to step up and enforce the proper tax collection and put that burden back on those that overcharged if it's their fault and not the state's for misinforming them.

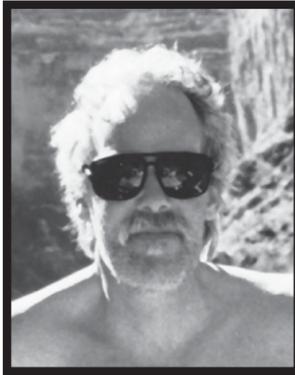
As a business owner I know if I don't collect the right sales tax the state is coming after me to get paid. Seems fair they would do the same for state citizens.

I also talked to the state Attorney General's office and they expressed willingness to pursue my complaint. I asked "What about everybody else out here?" They said you should call too.

Brad Heacock, NW Key Peninsula

Obituaries are printed as a service to community members. Please limit to 300 words and provide high-resolution photographs. All submissions will be edited. Send to editor@keypennews.org.

OBITUARY



Peter Hitt

Peter Hitt, who swept many a chimney on the Key Peninsula for more than 30 years, died Feb. 5 in Gig Harbor from complications of Parkinson's disease. He was 70 years old.

Peter was born in Massachusetts and spent summers in Gig Harbor with grandparents and other close family in the home they'd had on Wollochet Bay since the 1930s. After graduating from Case Western Reserve in the early 1970s, he hitchhiked west and ultimately moved to the family property in Gig Harbor, first into a rustic one-room cabin that had been a bathhouse, then into a small two-story, eclectic hand-crafted cabin that he built.

After a number of years of searching for a way to make a living that fit his extremely independent life style — ranging from cedar hot tub construction to computer maintenance to brick-laying and chimney construction — he discovered sweeping chimneys and found his vocation. Somewhat a hermit at heart, he nonetheless loved conversation and spent much of his time at customers' homes visiting and talking (and talking and talking).

Peter's passions were many, including whitewater rafting, sampling finely crafted beers, solo hiking in the Olympics, wood-working, watching ball games, and taking friends to his favorite places.

Peter is survived by his significant life partner Theresa, cousins Jon (Susi), Daniel (Anne), Bo Bankson and many, many friends.

There will be a celebration of Peter's life Sunday, March 15 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 7 Seas Brewing, 3006 Judson Street in Gig Harbor.

Sales Tax Proposed to Expand Health Services

Pierce County remains the only county in Western Washington without a portion of sales tax allocated to fund treatment for behavioral health problems.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Pierce County Council Members Derek Young and Connie Ladenburg will propose a .01 percent sales tax to fund behavioral health and substance abuse treatment programs to the full council March 10.

"We are a significant outlier compared to every other county on pretty much every measure relating to behavioral health from hospitalizations to suicide rates and obviously interactions with homeless," Young said. "This is a way we can take action. Otherwise we just don't have the funding."

This mechanism to augment state funding — a sales tax of one-thousandth of a cent — was approved by the state Legislature in 2005. Currently 29 of Washington's 34 counties use it. Pierce County is the only urban county in the state and the only county in western Washington that does not. Tacoma has already approved the tax and is not included in the proposed ordinance.

The tax, which could be implemented as soon as July, would cost consumers one cent per ten dollars, an average of \$19.35 per person each year. It is expected to raise \$13.1 million annually. Young said it would take about three months for money to reach county coffers.

Five years ago, the county council hired the Human Services Research Institute, a nonprofit research organization, to evaluate the behavioral health system in Pierce County. Their findings and recommendations were presented in 2016. A sales tax proposal made at the time to fund the recommendations narrowly failed with four of seven county council members supporting the ordinance. A supermajority of five is required for an ordinance of this kind to pass. An update from HSRI in 2018 stated: "The county has made significant improvements in its behavioral health system. Yet some gaps remain unfilled, and some challenges have persisted."

According to the report, the demand for behavioral health services in Pierce County far exceeded current supply. Behavioral health workforce shortages coupled with a lack of affordable housing for people with behavioral health issues continued to pose significant challenges, causing concern about ensuring the complex needs of people with significant behavioral health conditions were met. The report empha-

sized that any plan should include a central coordinating body to oversee efforts and eliminate silos separating services.

"There just isn't another adequate source of revenue to provide these services," Young said. "We don't really have a choice."

The current proposal will create a 16-member Behavioral Health Coordinating Committee. Members will represent nearly all entities interacting with those who need services including staff from the sheriff's department, the court system, the health department, service providers, and representatives from Lakewood, Puyallup and other county regions.

Revenue will go to the newly established Behavioral Health and Therapeutic Courts Fund. Funding would focus on decreasing hospitalizations, adding training and resources for those on the front line dealing with people in crisis, increased support for community-based care and fostering a network of service providers.

Young and Ladenburg said the coordinating committee, which will be under the direct supervision of the county council, would be formed quickly to establish an action plan. They anticipate program implementation could start in early 2021.

"Some of the plan, like expansion of existing services, will be implemented pretty quickly. New programs which will require service providers and contract negotiations may take longer," Young said.

Both Ladenburg and Young emphasized that the plan will include all of Pierce County, and specifically mentioned the Key Peninsula, Graham and Buckley as being underserved.

"One important aspect is that the city of Tacoma has done this already, so services are concentrated in Tacoma," Young said. "One of my priorities is to make sure others in the county, like the KP, have access to services as well. We know from talking to families, providers and patients that access on this side of the bridge is really important."

Young and Ladenburg are hopeful that they have the votes to pass the ordinance. They are currently reaching out to fellow members to be sure they can address any concerns and questions.

The Pierce County Council meeting March 10 is open for testimony and begins at 3 p.m. in the council chambers at the Pierce County Building. Testimony may also be submitted online.



The eclectic style mixes new, vintage and repurposed elements for a feeling of cozy comfort in the 100-year-old house, overlooking Von Geldern Cove. Photos: Kim Robinson



HOME COTTAGE FROM PAGE 1

Marie Brown. The Robinsons found a wooden sign with her name on it that is now hanging in their carport.

"She was very well thought of in the community," Kim said. "She was very artistic and had really great ideas for the house."

Throughout the renovation, the Robinsons have faced a few challenges, such as dealing with tiles containing asbestos and figuring out how to store and organize their belongings.

"I don't believe closet and storage space was valued in the 1920s like it is now," Kim wrote on her blog, Shiplap and Shells: Home and Garden in the PNW.

Their kitchen is too small for a standard-sized island, so Kim built one by adding a butcher block to a vintage dresser.

The cottage's former owners left several projects unfinished, including a door

to nowhere on the second floor.

"It's upstairs in our guest bedroom," Jeff said. "It opens and there's nothing there. You'd fall. I think they were going to put stairs there."

When Kim was 10 years old, her family moved from Southern California to Bellevue. Eighteen years ago she moved to Gig Harbor, where she met Jeff, a United Airlines pilot who grew up in Las Vegas.

"This feels like a June Cleaver "Leave it to Beaver" kind of a community, you know. Everybody knows everybody. I've lived in places where I didn't know my next-door neighbor," Jeff said.

The Robinsons love sitting on their deck with their dogs, Lucy and Jax, talking to the neighbors walking by, and having a barbecue just to be outside.

"The view changes minute by minute," said Jeff. "We've had seals go by. We've had bald eagles knock birds out of the sky and carry them over to the swimmers' platform over there and have lunch."

In the front yard, there is a greenhouse where Kim grows flowers and veggies from seed, and a picket fence garden with raised beds.

"It's a huge fresh cut flower garden in the summer. I love my dahlias. I have hundreds of dahlia bulbs," Kim said.

Now that the cottage feels complete, Kim enjoys sharing photos, stories and ideas. "I'm going to be in a few magazines. We have one coming up for my garden and a couple for the house," she said.

"After seven and a half years of building our dream home, now we can enjoy it," she said. "To be able to watch a Fourth of July parade from your deck while having a mimosa or breakfast, it's just amazing."

For more information, go to Kim's blog at www.shiplapandshells.com.



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Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

Free Dental Clinic Comes to the KP

Nonprofits worked together on a new event for anyone needing dental care.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula Lutheran Church hosted the first of its kind KP Free Dental Clinic for all comers when McColley Hall was transformed into a giant dental clinic Jan. 31 and Feb. 7. Teams of dental health professionals provided free screening, cleanings and extensive dental care all under one roof.

“The Pierce County Dental Foundation heard about the two years of success with Medical Teams International dental vans operating on the KP and offered to build onto that program. Today they brought in six dentists and a dozen hygienists,”

according to Ben and Susan Paganelli, the executive directors of the Key Peninsula Partnership for a Healthy Community.

“The KPPHC was designed to connect the great people already committed to strengthening the community...and to do it in a way that is meaningful and will have long term impact,” Ben Paganelli said.

“A lot of the hygienists are students and it’s an opportunity for them to get their hands-on practicum work,” Susan Paganelli said. Students from Pierce College, Bates and Clover Park technical schools participated.

“The project, several years in the making, is intended to find a foothold on the KP to continue providing and expanding free dental health care options,” Ben Paganelli said.

“We have 473 member dentists in the Pierce County Dental Society; it’s kind of like a fraternal society,” said Jen Bunch, who coordinates events for the county dental foundation started by Dr. Rich Coyner in 2002 to serve as the society’s charitable arm.

“As a small foundation, we are very picky about where the money goes,” Coyner said. “A lot of these people end

up in the emergency room and that gets expensive as well, so we’re trying to preclude that from happening.”

“What I’d really like to do is to do this more often,” Coyner said. “If we could get into a groove where we knew that we could have this event every three months, that would be nice. We could cater to it a lot better.”

Nicole Otto of Vaughn, a mother of two, lost a filling recently and said she knew she was well-overdue for some dental hygiene. But without insurance, Otto said, “Just getting in the door can be outrageous.”

Her husband has dental insurance through his employer and their two children, ages 9 and 11 years old, are both covered. But Otto lacks dental coverage for herself. After getting cost estimates to fix her tooth, she realized she “couldn’t pay or afford it —with or without insurance— dental care was out of reach.”

“The truth is, there are a lot of us out here who don’t have dental insurance but don’t meet that very low-income level to qualify for assistance,” Otto said.

Like most dental practices, there was a reception area, patient intake forms to be completed, and a waiting area before screenings, cleanings and exams began. Dozens of patients were scheduled for additional treatment to begin the following week.

Parked alongside the church, a giant red “dental van,” operated by Medical Teams International had a complete dental suite fully equipped with its own dental assistant. The MTI van provides dental care with regularly scheduled visits to Key Peninsula Community Services in Home.

“Everyone really pulled together to make this dental event a huge success,” Susan Paganelli said. “That’s how this community demonstrates its strength.”

“THAT’S HOW THIS COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATES ITS STRENGTH.”

Take a Walk on the Wonky Side: Property Tax at a Glance

You know you don’t like it, but do you know how it works?

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Washington state property tax is one of the most complicated in the nation, according to the Tax Foundation, an independent nonprofit research institute.

Property tax is a real estate ad valorem tax (“according to the value”) that is considered to be regressive. The Washington state average effective tax rate is 1.03 percent of assessed value, slightly below the national average of 1.08 percent.

Pierce County has the highest property taxes in the state at an average effective rate of 1.21 percent.

Taxes on real estate account for about 30 percent of all state and local tax revenues. Property taxes pay for local services like fire protection, public schools and parks, and are calculated by applying the total tax rate for a given property to the assessed value of that property. The tax rate and the assessed value can change from year to year.

Property values rose in Pierce County by 7.5 percent last year, but an increase in property value does not directly correspond with a change in property tax. The state Constitution limits the total of all non-voter approved property tax rates to 1 percent per year on a given property, plus the tax resulting from any new construction on the property.

However, there is no limit on voter-approved ballot levy taxes.

According to Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer Mike Lonergan, “Your tax in 2020 will be the 2019 value multiplied by the combined tax rates of your school district, city, fire district and so forth, added to the state and countywide property taxes that everyone pays. A lot depends on votes by the public and the Legislature.”

Lonergan said most property tax bills in Pierce County went down in 2019. This year’s increase raises them higher than 2018.

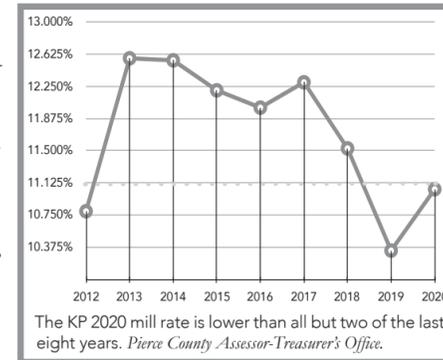
Property taxes are expected to increase by an average of 14 percent in Gig Harbor and 9 percent on the Key Peninsula in 2020.

“While our assessed values continue to rise, that’s not what drives these big increases,” Lonergan said. “Over 58 percent of the taxes I collect go to K-12 school funding, so the voted changes there have made a huge difference.”

This includes the Peninsula School District 20-year, \$198,550,000 school construction bond approved in 2019 that

begins this year, which adds 79 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The education and operations levy approved this year will begin next year, replacing the existing levy at a rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000. The levy is for a fixed dollar amount and PSD cannot collect more money if property values increase.

The effective tax rate is expressed as a percentage of assessed value, but the amount of tax payable is usually expressed as a dollar amount of tax per \$1,000 of assessed value of the property. That is called the mill rate or millage, a word that derives from the Latin word “millesimum” that means “thousandth part” (1/1000). One mill is \$.001.



To convert millage rates to dollar amounts, divide the mill rate by 1,000 and multiply by the property’s taxable value. Mill rates are listed as Tax Code Area rates on individual property listings on the assessor’s website.

For example, a house assessed at \$300,000 on the Key Peninsula has a 2020 mill rate of 11.051297. This is the total of all the government taxes and voter approved levies per \$1,000 of taxable value. Divide the mill rate by 1,000 to get 0.011051297. Multiply that by \$300,000 to get \$3,315.39. Add to that any other fees and subtract any credits on the tax bill, and the result is the annual property tax, in this case an approximate effective tax rate of 1.1 percent.

The same can be done to determine the cost of an individual levy. For example, the cost of the recently approved PSD replacement levy is \$1.50 per \$1,000. For the hypothetical \$300,000 home, that would be 1.5 divided by 1,000 and multiplied by \$300,000, which equals an annual cost of \$450, or \$37.50 per month.

Anyone can appeal their property tax assessment. Seniors earning less than \$45,708 a year and individuals with disabilities may qualify for exemption. For more information, go to www.co.pierce.wa.us.



Thankfully, our volunteers just don’t know how to stop giving.

In 2019, volunteers gave 3,390 hours to the Food Bank, 2,304 to the Senior Center, making our programs possible. This month, we’re thanking them with a 50’s-themed Recognition Dinner. To find your way of helping our community, call 253 884-4440.

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WEEKLYEVENTS

MONDAYS

AL-ANON MUTUAL SUPPORT

Al-Anon is a program for people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. Key Center fire station, 5 p.m. 253-884-2054

MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS

YOGA AT THE CIVIC CENTER

Bring your mat, blanket or towel. Drop-in \$12 or four classes for \$40. Cash or check. KP Civic Center from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. 253-884-3456

MONDAYS, WEDS & FRIDAYS

S.A.I.L. EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 65+

At The Mustard Seed Project. Improve balance and mobility and prevent falls. For any fitness level — you can even participate sitting down. \$5 for drop-in. Preregistration required. Limited scholarships. Mon. 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.; Wed. and Fri. 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. 253-884-9814

S.A.I.L. EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 60+
At KP Community Services. 8 to 9 a.m. and 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. Free; suggested donation \$5 per class. Call 253-884-4440 to register.

TUESDAYS

COUNTY ON SEPTIC

A Tacoma-Pierce County environmental health specialist will answer questions about septic systems or help submit applications for design or repair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the KP Community Council office. sriley@tpchd.org. 253-798-6470 or 253-432-4948

KEY SINGERS REHEARSALS

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

LOVING HEARTS KNIT OR CROCHET

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

SENIOR SHOPPING DAY

Shopping trips March 3 and 17. Sign up with KP Community Services. 253-884-4440

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

First TOPS meeting is free with no obligation. Weigh-in from 8:35 to 9:25 a.m., meeting starts at 9:30 a.m. Key Peninsula Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. marcgrubb1990@yahoo.com

OASIS YOUTH CENTER

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

STORYTIMES

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

REFIT FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE

REFIT is a fitness experience designed to engage the heart as a muscle and soul. Childcare provided. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at WayPoint Church. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

PRESCHOOL & TODDLER PLAYTIME

The Children's Home Society of Washington KP Family Resource Center offers an indoor park program 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the KP Civic Center gym. Caregivers stay with child. Drop-ins welcome. \$1 per child donation suggested. 253-884-5433

SENIOR TAI CHI

KP Community Services, 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. Free; suggested donation is \$5/class. Sign up at 253-884-4440.

TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS

KP HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPEN

Historical Society museum at the KP Civic Center is open 1 to 4 p.m. Free admission. 253-888-3246 or keypeninsulamuseum.org

TUES, THURS & SATURDAYS

S.A.I.L. EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 60+

KP Community Services from 9 to 10 a.m. Free, suggested donation is \$5. Call 253-884-4440 to register.

WEDNESDAYS

BLEND HOOKERS AND TINKERS

Join in at Blend Wine Shop for a rollicking good time. All skill levels and fiber interests welcome; 21 and over, 5:30 to 8 p.m. hannah8ball@gmail.com or 817-929-3943

LAKEBAY WRITERS

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

READY SET GO!

Free early learning program for 3- and 4-year-olds. Limited to 16 with parent or caregiver. Focus on kindergarten readiness and lots of fun. KP Civic Center, VFW room, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. 253-884-5433

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

SENIOR MEALS

Nutritious meals for ages 60+ served at noon at KP Community Services, \$3 suggested donation. Guests under 60 welcome, \$5 suggested donation. 253-884-4440.

THURSDAYS

FREE COMPUTER CLASS FOR SENIORS

Bring questions and learn the basics. Seniors 60+. From 10 to 11 a.m. at KP Community Services. 253-884-4440

SENIORS LUNCH

KP Senior Society meets for potluck, games and fellowship from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center. Potluck lunch starts at noon. Please call Darla Graham at 253-345-0926

TOASTMASTERS

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

REV & FLOW FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE

Free Women's Exercise Class at WayPoint Church from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. REV & FLOW is an easy-on-the-joints workout. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878

FRIDAYS

INTRO TO GENTLE YOGA

In this class for older adults, students will be encouraged to move at their own pace. Please call to register in advance. 8 to 9 a.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. \$12 per drop-in or \$100/10 classes. Call 253-884-9814.

BOARD GAMES FOR SENIORS

Social time for seniors at KP Community Services, 1 to 2:30 p.m. 253-884-4440

TRIPLE P PARENTING CLASSES

Sign up for parenting classes and apply for assistance with basic food and health insurance applications. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the KP Community Council office. 253-432-4948 or 253-884-5433

MONTHLYMEETINGS

■ March 2 & 16, 7 to 8 p.m. **KP Veterans** group, KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Veterans, military service members and families with children 16 and older are welcome. 253-884-2626

■ March 3, 11 a.m. **KP Historical Society** board meeting in the museum at KP Civic Center. 253-888-3246

■ March 3, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. **KP Business Association** business meeting at Blend Wine Shop. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com or 253-312-1006

■ March 3 & 17, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. West of the Narrows **Depression and Bipolar Support-** Lakebay Group, KP Lutheran Church, 4213

The Community Calendar is brought to you as a public service by the Angels.



Angel Guild Thrift Shop

Open 10-4
Tuesday to Saturday in the
Key Center Corral 253 884-9333
Donations: Tue-Sat, 9:30 to 3:30
P.O. Box 703, Vaughn WA 98394

Join us! Community Volunteer Network Senior Ride Program | Key Senior Information Center | Assisted Living Project Support Groups, Forums and Classes



Building an Elder-Friendly Key Peninsula

JOIN US FOR OPEN ACTIVITY HOURS

Mingle with old and new friends, read a book while having a cup of tea, practice your art skills in an open studio setting (minimal supplies on hand but please bring your favorites), play a board game from our collection, or use the time as you wish.

Coffee, tea, and treats provided. Suggested Donation \$2

Every Tuesday & Thursday 1 - 3 PM

The Mustard Seed Project
253 884-9814
www.themustardseedproject.org
Follow us on Facebook!

FEATURE YOUR NONPROFIT GROUP EVENT HERE
Click on "Submit an Event" at keypennews.org and fill out the easy form. Email questions or updates to calendar@keypennews.org or call 253-884-4699.

MARCH 5 & 19

COUNTY ON WELLS

A Tacoma-Pierce County environmental health specialist answers questions about drinking water or shared wells 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the KP Community Council office. sriley@tpchd.org. 253-798-6470 or 253-432-4948

MARCH 6

FREE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK

Get your blood pressure checked and enjoy a nutritious meal at KP Community Services. 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 253-884-4440

MARCH 7

SHOREFRONT LANDOWNERS WORKSHOP

Learn what technical and financial assistance may be available for managing property on Puget Sound. Topics include erosion assessment and control, and drainage management. 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the KP Civic Center. Free, registration required at www.piercecd.org/Calendar. Contact maryk@piercecd.org.

MAD SCIENCE FIRE & ICE SHOW

Watch an interactive science show with foggy dry ice storms and gravity-defying beach balls. Family event for ages 3 to 10. 11 a.m. to noon at Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

INTRO TO PUBLIC SPEAKING BASICS

Free mini-workshop presented by Key Peninsula Toastmasters. 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Key Center Library. Register at piercecountylibrary.org/calendar or call 253-548-3309.

MARCH 10

HOOTENANNY

Sing the songs of the fabulous years of folk singing plus traditional songs. Words and chords provided. 2 to 3 p.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. 253-884-9814

MARCH 12

COUNTY ON WASTE

A Tacoma-Pierce County environmental health specialist on household waste management answers questions about

household hazardous waste, garbage haulers and recycling 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the KP Community Council office. sriley@tpchd.org. 253-798-6470 or 253-432-4948

MARCH 14

READ WITH A DAFFODIL PRINCESS

A Daffodil Princess will read stories, talk with children and be available for photos. For this family event, children must be accompanied by an adult. 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

MARCH 23

LIBRARIAN AT RED BARN YOUTH CENTER

Join a youth services librarian at the Red Barn for a fun project from 3 to 4 p.m. For students from sixth grade and up. 253-548-3309

MARCH 26

COUNTY ON WATER

Health Department specialist in surface water will be at the Key Peninsula Community Council office from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to answer questions about shellfish, local lakes, streams and shorelines.

MARCH 28

HEAR MY VOICE:

A STORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Join Living Voices for an event that combines solo performances with archival film and sound. This event is geared towards tweens, teens and adults. 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

MARCH 31

PENINSULA SONGWRITERS

Learn, hone and share the craft of songwriting in a group of enthusiastic tunesmiths at Key Center Library. Info at peninsulasongwriters@gmail.com and on Facebook/Peninsula Songwriters.

OFF THE KEY

MARCH 7

EMPTY BOWLS FUNDRAISER

Empty Bowls fundraiser for local child hunger. Presented by Gig Harbor Altrusa, service organization. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Chapel Hill Church, 7700 Skansie Avenue, Gig Harbor. 253-265-6267

MARCH 14

TERRY HOLDER CONCERT

Award-winning folk artist Terry Holder performs at Olalla Community Club, 12970 Olalla Valley Road SE, Olalla. Potluck 6 p.m. Concert 7 p.m. Suggested donation \$20. olallahouse.org

36th Annual Lions Club Citizen of the Year Award

The award honors anyone who has gone above and beyond to improve life on the Key Peninsula.

SPONSORED CONTENT

The Key Peninsula Lions Club invites the community to attend its 36th annual Key Peninsula Citizen of the Year Award celebration for 2019 at the KP Civic Center, Saturday, March 28 beginning at 6 p.m.

“Anybody who lives on the peninsula, works on the peninsula or even owns property on the peninsula who makes whatever you feel is an outstanding contribution to society is eligible (for the award),” said Hal Wolverton, KP Lions Club president. “It was designed for volunteers, but it’s not limited to volunteers because some people go way above and beyond.”

The recipient is chosen by Lions Club members who vote by secret ballot shortly before the award ceremony. Anyone can send in nominations, which are evaluated by the members before voting for their first, second and third choices. The recipient is known only to the club president until the name is announced at the ceremony.

A number of other citations are often given during the celebration to commend local achievers in addition to the Citizen of the Year, in keeping with the Lions Club motto: “We serve.”

The evening also includes a variety of auctions and raffles and other fund-raising opportunities to donate to the Lions Club. “Whatever we get goes right back into the community,” Wolverton said.

The KP Lions provide eyeglasses and hearing aids to KP residents, awards the KP Lions Memorial Scholarship to high school students, organizes highway cleanups and an annual Volksmarch, volunteers its labor and expertise to maintaining and improving KP parks, distributes free dictionaries each year to every third-grader on the KP and to the Key Peninsula Middle School, and makes grants to local nonprofits, according to Wolverton.

The keynote speaker this year will be Art Jarvis, Ph.D., interim superintendent of the Peninsula School District. Jarvis started at PSD in July 2018 and will continue through June 2021 as the new board searches for a successor. He was instrumental in passing two funding measures for the district: a \$198 million Capital Projects Bond in 2019 and an \$80 million Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy in 2020. Jarvis has served as superintendent of the Tacoma, Enumclaw and South Whidbey School Districts, and as interim superintendent in the Shelton and Renton School Districts. He has twice been named the Washington State Superintendent of the Year.

The event will include dinner and a no-host bar, and there is usually a chance to meet community leaders, local officials and elected representatives. Tickets often sell out in advance and are available at Purdy Cost Less Pharmacy, Sunnycrest Nursery or from any Lions Club member for a donation of \$25.

For more information, go to the KP Lions Club website at e-clubhouse.org/sites/keypeninsulawa.

2019 Citizen of the Year Nominees



Kolby Asbra

Kolby is a fourth-generation Key Peninsula native in her second year teaching at the KP Preschool Co-op at Grace Church, where she is also PTA president. Before that she taught at Vaughn Preschool for both the KP Co-op and the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program Preschool. In between, she got married and had three sons. Kolby teaches children a wide variety of early academic skills, how to effectively communicate, and how to respect others as well as themselves. Her great-grandfather, Art Fenton, homesteaded in the Minter area about 100 years ago and her great-grandmother Hazel was a proud KP Cootiette.



Pat Auguszty

Pat has put her career in accounting and management to good use on the KP since retiring here in 2015. She serves as treasurer on the board of directors for Hope Recovery Center and is helping develop its capital campaign. She also served as secretary of the church council of Lakebay Community Church for three years and is the lead volunteer for the church office. Pat is also the lead volunteer at the church garden on the KP Highway, where organic produce is grown for the Harvest Share food program at the church.



Marilyn Brennan

Marilyn demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the youth in the 4-H community for 31 years. That’s a very long time to be making a huge impact on kids on the Key Peninsula and surrounding areas. Marilyn is always available for support and guidance in leadership, self-confidence and public speaking, which carried over into their adult lives. She has made a positive impact on 4-H members in our area and across the state through many years as a 4-H leader, Washington State Fair Board member and community member.



Stephanie Brooks

Our community is a better place because of Stephanie’s enthusiasm. She has run numerous fundraisers for the KP Civic Center, garnering over \$75,000, and has brought a fresh group of volunteers to the board to promote its mission. That includes hosting a Christmas dinner party for families in need last year, serving free meals to first responders from her food truck, and working with other groups to feed families displaced by a tornado that swept through Port Orchard last year.



Peggy Gablehouse

Peggy has given hundreds of hours of service helping the entire Key Peninsula prepare for disasters. She has made the KP Civic Center capable of offering community support, such as a gathering place for people seeking shelter and relief during crises. Peggy was instrumental in coordinating and obtaining the resources for a backup generator at the civic center. She donates hundreds of hours working as a volunteer with the Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition (PEP-C). Her efforts contributed significantly to PEP-C being honored as a Pierce County Volunteer Group of the Year for 2019.



Diane Gressley and David Starkweather

This husband and wife team both have huge hearts for kids and have been volunteering to help kids on the KP for many years. They are both volunteer reading mentors with Communities In Schools of Peninsula, and give their gifts of time and talent to make sure elementary children at Evergreen Elementary get the literacy support they need to succeed in school and achieve in life. Their dedication to helping at-risk children develop the academic and social-emotional skills they need to be successful is inspiring.



Marcia Harris

Marcia is past president of the Peninsula School District board of directors, founder of the Peninsula Schools Education Foundation, organizer of School Bus Connects free transportation for KP residents, and an active member of the KP Business Association and Gig Harbor Rotary Club. For many years she was treasurer of the Key Peninsula Community Council, where she continues to serve, and is one of the founding developers of Key Peninsula Partnership for a Healthy Community. She also serves on the KP Land Use Advisory Committee and on the board of KP Community Services, bringing needed services to south Key residents.



David Haycock

David Haycock has been a key contributor to and vigorous volunteer for the Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition (PEP-C). As the PEP-C emergency communications team leader, David has spent many, many hours planning for and implementing activation of a viable, survivable emergency communications network to prepare the community to be cut-off from normal services and communication of all kinds. David’s work includes planning emergency networks, training

operators, coordinating exercises and coaching all the participants who take on the roles of emergency radio services operators.



Tim Kezele

Founder and former president of the KP Historical Society, a former board member of KP Parks, performing unending maintenance tasks for local facilities and events, and currently serving as board president of the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association, Tim has been tirelessly involved working for the betterment of the KP community for over 30 years. He received the 2005 Citizen of the Year Award.



Don Lee

Don is the Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition (PEP-C) emergency preparation training team leader, developing training capabilities to prepare Key Peninsula residents to respond to large-scale disasters. Don has spent hundreds of hours planning and working to create viable PC NETs in neighborhoods across the KP. When residents are cutoff from routine services of all kinds for weeks or months because of a massive earthquake, for example, the YOYO (You’re On Your Own) Lessons that Don has taught for decades will help people survive.



Dustin Morrow

KPPD Fire Chief Morrow revamped and refocused the fire department in less than a year on the job. He exemplifies service above self, having in a short time risen through the ranks of KP Toastmasters and as part of many community committees working to bring better services to the peninsula. On his own time he has helped citizens clear property, make home improvements and aided those in need, and his continued presence promises to bring wonderful opportunities to the Key Peninsula in the future.



Jill Peters

Jill and her toy-sized Australian Shepherd, Sasha, volunteer for the Tutors with Tails Reading Program at Vaughn Elementary School. Jill is in her second year as a volunteer math and reading mentor with Communities In Schools of Peninsula and has volunteered at several other schools in this capacity, including Minter Creek and Harbor Heights Elementary schools. The skill, consistency and dedication exhibited by Jill and Sasha is seen in the huge smiles and hugs of the children, and in the success of reaching new goals by kids who might otherwise slip through the cracks.



Victoria Schauer

Ms. Schauer teaches eighth grade English at Key Peninsula Middle School. In her role, she strives daily to bring the love of literature to her students. She is one of the only teachers who teaches about the Holocaust. She is an advocate for children, encouraging students to enter contests in order to share their creativity with the world. Not only is she available for kids at school, she mentors and inspires them even after graduation. She believes in young people.



Lulu Smith

Lulu owned and operated the Homeport Restaurant and Lounge for 30 years until closing its doors in January. She helped the community with annual Christmas present giveaways, Easter egg hunts, sponsorships and fundraisers for schools, and awarded free meals to Evergreen Elementary students. During the ice storm of 1996, much of the KP was without electricity for many weeks but the Homeport had power and the kitchen staff worked around the clock to help feed a cold and hungry community. A piece of Home will become a memory now that Lulu has closed her doors. She received the 1998 Citizen of the Year Award.



Thomas Smith

Thomas organizes and teaches amateur radio operator (HAM) classes to train people how to become FCC licensed HAM radio operators and become part of neighborhood emergency radio communications network within the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) system on the Key Peninsula. He is longtime member of the volunteer Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition (PEP-C) and creating such a network has been Thomas’ focus for many years. His efforts will save lives when the emergency networks he is training operators for swing into action.



Alberta Stave

Alberta has quietly but with incredible dedication volunteered her time and expertise helping the elder community on the KP. She served on the board of The Mustard Seed Project, where her background in nursing and nursing administration was invaluable. She continues her work there as a friendly volunteer visitor for homebound elders. She has also been active in The Angel Guild, including serving as president of the board.



Ed Taylor

Ed has been a stalwart supporter of the KP and its business community for decades. He served on the KP Civic Center board and as editor of the KP News in the 1990s; he has served on boards for the KP Fair, the Key Pen Parks and volunteered for the KP Business Association lending expertise and advice to startups. He provides housing to displaced residents at his Westwynd Motel in Purdy. His ongoing selfless contributions are legendary.



Amy Turk

Amy is a Boy Scout Troop 220 leader who has been instrumental in fundraising for the troop to keep scouting alive and the cost reasonable so that every child has a chance to join. She and the scouts also chop and deliver firewood to raise funds, but will help anyone on the KP unable to afford it. Amy also serves on the board of the Key Peninsula Little League to support a great and beneficial program for KP kids.



Don Zimmerman

Owner of and pharmacist at Cost Less Pharmacy, Don has provided unsung service and support to individuals and organizations on the Key Peninsula for decades. He shies away from recognition, but that is the only shy thing about him. He has brought new businesses and services to our community, creating more jobs. He is the leader of an amazing and supportive staff that has taken his example of personal service and made it their own. Our community would not be what it is without Don and his dedication and years of service to the Key Peninsula.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS

2018 Karen Jorgenson | 2017 Dee Dee Kerkes
2016 Anne Nesbit | 2015 Matthew Mills
2014 Jud Morris | 2013 Danna Webster
2012 Jeff Harris | 2011 Ed Robison | 2010 John Biggs
2009 Mike Salatino | 2008 Edie Morgan
2007 Chuck West | 2006 Phil Bauer | 2005 Tim Kezele
2004 Christi Watson | 2003 Erlene Twidt
2002 Nancy Lind | 2001 Marge Adams | 2000 Tracy Manning | 1999 Louis Aguilar | 1998 Lulu Smith
1997 Irene Zimmer | 1996 Fred and Mary Ramsdell
1995 Angel Guild group: Richard and Barb Hanna; Gerald and June Seich | 1994 Cy and Eileen Young
1993 John Van de Brooke | 1992 Ida Curl
1991 Tracey Manning and Cricket Stephenson
1990 Karla and Dick Crocker | 1989 Ruth Bramhall
1988 Dale and Claudia Loy | 1987 Marguerite Bussard
1986 Vicki Henschell and Laurette Jaggi
1985 Dr. William Roes | 1984 Sally Cornman

March 2020
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Pet Easter Treat Hunt

Saturday, April 4 at Gateway Park Dog Park **FREE EVENT**

10:00 Greetings ➔ 10:05 Egg Hunt ➔ 10:30 Costume Contest

Thanks to our sponsors



Free Event!

SAVE THE DATE **360 Trails Raffle Ride** APRIL 19 *DETAILS TO COME*

2019 SUCCESSES

- ✓ Volunteer Park new asphalt
- ✓ Volunteer Park new playground
- ✓ Key Central Forest trail development
- ✓ 360 Trails trail development
- ✓ 40-acre land acquisition next to 360 Trails with PCCF funds
- ✓ \$500,000 grant received from RCO for splash pad
- ✓ Groundbreaking for the new splash pad

Parks-Awarded Grants

Children's Home Society Supports *Key Kids at the Red Barn*, a free summer day program with drop-in and scheduled activities for middle- and high school-age youth.

Children's Museum of Tacoma Supports *Play To Learn*, a free program held at the KP Civic Center for children six years and younger and the adults who nurture them - to play together.

Contracts-for-Services Key Peninsula Farm Tour
Key Peninsula Historical Society
Red Barn Youth Center

PARTNERSHIPS

2019 By-the-Numbers

Event sponsor businesses - 42
Volunteer hours - 345
Parks event attendees (approximately) - 2,100
Picnic shelter and park reservations - 130

PARKS AT A GLANCE

Acres of active recreation lands - 135
Acres of passive recreation lands - 1,202
Feet of saltwater shoreline - 3,050
Playgrounds - 3
Picnic shelters/pavilions - 3
Trail miles - 25+
Full time employees - 7
Operating and capital budget - \$1,800,000

HELP WANTED ♦ FULL-TIME MAINTENANCE Perform routine maintenance of park buildings, facilities and grounds during a 40-hour work week. Position description and job application on www.keypenparks.com, or pick up an application at the park office during regular business hours. This position will close when filled.

For the latest news see www.keypenparks.com or Facebook page



The lone Purdy spit madrona tree. Photo: AdobeStock

You Say Madrona, I Say Madrone

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

While the Key Peninsula's hillsides collapse under rain that reveals how we're all just sitting on a mass of mud, on certain shorelines and exposed slopes grow trees that stand out no matter how deep the mist and murk become — madronas.

I often visit a particular madrona that spreads prominently in a patch of sky left by logging. Its orange body stretches and turns, solid as a metal stake, and I can see why indigenous communities tell a story about how during the great flood, when every other tree went underwater, the madrona stood strong. The people tied their canoes to it and were saved.

I've been visiting this tree for years and this winter it has new significance, for in November my wife and I named our first child George Madrone.

Madrone, like a madrona tree? we are asked.

Yes, we explain. In California and in most field guides, the tree is known as a Pacific madrone. The "a" at the end is an appendage attached only in the Pacific Northwest. The madrone-madrona divide seems to be somewhere around the Siskiyou Mountains.

We chose Madrone over Madrona for a reason no more fancy than we like the sound of it better for a name. And we did not choose it to tap into any particular trait of the tree; not because it is colorful or evergreen or strong. We simply like being around madronas. We like the curling bark they shed. We like the red berries in fall. We have been around many madronas in many seasons of our lives and still they captivate us.

As George R. Stewart wrote, methods of name-choosing reveal a lot — espe-

cially in a nation where names are used so often as brands of ownership. Part of me squirmed at having to choose a name at all. So many place names here have been erased and replaced in the struggle to assert control.

Still, the methods themselves are fascinating. There are purely descriptive names, as in western redcedar and Rocky Bay. There are honorific names, as in Douglas fir and Filucy Bay. There are twistings and turnings as one language attempts to translate and spell another, as in Wauna. There are sylvan names like Glencove, hopeful names like Home, and — strangely often — names lifted straight from the home of the namer, unchanged.

My great-grandfather named his Key Center farm Silverbow because he was born in Silverbow County, Montana. The madrona was given its name by Spanish explorers who recognized its similarity to a tree called madroño that grows around the Mediterranean.

Reusing names from a known landscape, names that have already been signposts of life and relationship, can be tremendously comforting in the face of the unknown, be it a distant country or the future awaiting a child. Both of my grandfathers are named George.

A good name exists in the same realm as my love for madronas, beyond straight logic, beyond a single intention, able to echo with many meanings over the decades. Language is an imperfect system, and in its imperfections we are given novel ways to relate.

Today the madrona's carrot-colored skin sheds water in translucent sheets. Its leaves shiver. I remember an ice storm in which I found the massive kinked limb of a madrona lying on the forest floor,

THE COLORFUL MADRONA TREE

Pacific Madrone / Madrona
SPECIES: *Arbutus menziesii*

FAMILY: Ericaceae (heath or heather)

IDENTIFICATION: One of our most recognizable trees, with bark peeling in paper-like sheets to reveal bright orange, green and mahogany skin. Thick oval leaves are dark glossy green. Trunks twist and bend toward sunlight. In spring, flowers grow in fragrant white clusters. Old leaves fall in midsummer. Red berries appear in fall.

HABITAT: Dry soil with lots of sun exposure. Range runs from California's chaparral to British Columbia's humid coastal forest. Trees damaged by fire or axe can re-sprout from stump.

WILDLIFE: Many birds eat the berries, including the cedar waxwing, band-tailed pigeon, varied thrush and the American robin. Cavity-nesting birds use the dead branches.

HUMAN USES: Indigenous people made cider from madrona berries and infusions from its leaves and bark for gastrointestinal complaints. The dense, heavy wood often cracks as it dries, making it difficult to use in woodworking. As firewood, it burns long and hot and leaves little ash.

completely encased in ice. Its bright skin was magnified, amplified by the ice. An envelope of ice held every green leaf.

That such a tree, which would look at home on an African savannah, should be our only evergreen broadleaf is impressive. Dark wet winters are not enough to convince it to shut down its circulation and drop its leaves.

In fact, it's impressive how green our entire forest is at this time of year. Other forests at this latitude are brown sticks in styrofoam snow. This January I went walking with a painter friend from Los Angeles, and as she marveled at the forest she told me that green is the most difficult color to paint, for humans have adapted to notice very subtle differences in its tones.

Here among the salal, ferns and young firs that surround this madrona and its foolhardy leaves, I'd be hard-pressed to describe what makes one green different from the next, much less invent names for all the green paints that would be needed to do justice to the forest, even in winter — but I like it. I like all of it, all of the greens beyond words. Words, names and meanings need not be perfect. Intuition can be more accurate than logic, and enjoyment is not something a naturalist must shun as too unscientific. It can be enough to tie our canoes to a tree we find beautiful.

Chris Rurik is a writer, naturalist, historian and new father who lives in Lakebay.

Voters Renew Local School Levy

STAFF REPORT

Voters approved a Peninsula School District Educational Programs and Operations levy Feb. 11 to replace a levy that will expire at the end of 2020.

The final tally was 21,054 votes cast with 61.7 percent in favor, according to the Pierce County Auditor.

"A weight has been lifted," said PSD board member and KP resident Chuck West. "This levy was not about adding anything but just a continuation of programs that we currently offer, so that was quite a relief."

Almost every precinct on the KP and in Gig Harbor voted for approval, sometimes by a large margin though in one case by just a single vote. Only one area rejected it and did so by four votes: precinct 26-314, located in the Lake Holiday - Lake of the Woods area of the KP.

"Property taxes have gone up; property values have gone up. There were a lot of other voter-approved initiatives," West said. "Property taxes are up 8 percent on the KP but we didn't see the dramatic increases a lot of other areas have."

There was little organized opposition to the levy but local social media groups were alive with debates about teacher salaries and complaints about waste.

The replacement levy has an assessment level of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of property value and is expected to raise \$80 million over its three-year lifespan. The levy is for a fixed dollar amount and PSD cannot collect more money if property values increase.

In the wake of the state Supreme Court McCleary Decision of 2012 concerning Washington's inadequate role in school funding, the Legislature changed how local taxes can be levied. Districts now collect the lesser of either \$2.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value or \$2,500 per student. PSD uses \$2,500 per student, which it estimates to be \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The Legislature only funds basic education, which is 82 percent of PSD's budget. The replacement levy will fund the remaining 18 percent, according to PSD, for programs and resources including athletics, music, art, extra-curricular activities, nurses, counselors, safety and security personnel, professional development for staff, special education, AP classes, and maintenance and repairs.

All told, Washington state spends an average of \$11,989 per student, below the national average of \$12,201, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. There are approximately 9,400 students in the district.

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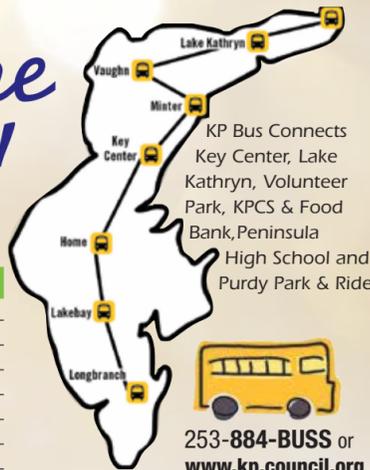
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EVERGREEN TUES & THURS AM

- 8:50 Evergreen Elementary School
8:59 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
9:00 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
9:05 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
9:06 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
9:10 67th Ave Ct NW @ KP Hwy N
9:14 Food Market in Key Center
9:15 KP Hwy N @ Minterwood Dr NW
9:21 Lake Kathryn Village SR 302 & 92nd Ave NW
9:26 Purdy Park & Ride

TUESDAY & THURSDAY MIDDAY

- 10:33 Peninsula High School
10:35 Purdy Park & Ride
10:38 Cost Less Pharmacy @ Lake Kathryn Village
10:48 SR 302 @ Windermere Realty, near 118th Ave
10:50 SR 302 @ 140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
10:51 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
10:54 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
10:56 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
10:58 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
11:00 Food Market @ Key Center
11:06 KP Hwy N @ 167th Ave Ct NW
11:09 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
11:12 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
11:18 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
11:19 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
11:25 Evergreen Elementary School

VAUGHN TUES & THURS AM

- 8:50 Vaughn Elementary School
8:59 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
9:00 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
9:05 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
9:06 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
9:10 SR302 @ 140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
9:14 SR 302 @ Charbonneau Construction
9:15 SR 302 @ 92nd Ave NW/Lake Kathryn Village
9:21 Purdy Park & Ride

TUES, WED & THURS PM

- 4:43 Peninsula High School
4:45 Purdy Park & Ride
4:51 Cost Less Pharmacy @ Lake Kathryn Village
4:54 SR 302 @ Windermere Realty, near 118th Ave
4:58 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
5:00 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
5:02 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
5:03 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
5:06 Food Market in Key Center
5:06 KP Hwy N @ 84th St NW/Red Barn
5:10 KP Hwy N @ 167th Ave Ct NW
5:14 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
5:14 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
5:19 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
5:20 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
5:24 KP Hwy N @ 17th St Ct SW
5:36 KP Hwy N @ 84th St NW/Red Barn

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CRANK UP THE ZYDECO AND BREAK OUT THE SPICES!



Jambalaya: Laissez les Bon Temps Rouler

PATTY GHIOSI

When I first moved to Louisiana I was often asked where I lived. A kind but accurate coworker stated "in her car — but she gets her mail in New Orleans." I was working on a grant project that took me to most every corner of the state, and I learned the food preferences across the region.

If you are a Cajun from the Acadian region, then you prefer a brown jambalaya with its rich, developed flavor. If you are from New Orleans, then perhaps the creole or red jambalaya might be preferable with its bright tomato flavor. I like them both and cook a hybrid.

New Orleans is famous for many things and the Holy Trinity is one of them, perhaps an influence of the French presence in south Louisiana since it's similar to their mirepoix. The Holy Trinity is a mixture of onion, pepper and celery. The locals say get your trinity and then add whatever the recipe calls for.

This is a big recipe, good for a crowd of 10 at least. When I make it, I share the joy with my neighbors. It's far too much for my little household and it's a fun thank-you to my community. So far no one has turned me down on the offer to deliver.

Jambalaya

- 1 pound raw shrimp with shells (medium to large size, not gumbo shrimp, which are too tiny)
2 boneless chicken breasts or thighs
1 pound smoked sausage (andouille preferred)
Cajun seasoning (onion powder, garlic powder, thyme, oregano, paprika, cayenne: details below)
3 cups diced onions
2 cups diced green bell peppers or mix of green, red and yellow

- 2 cups diced celery
6 cloves diced garlic
16-ounce can of whole tomatoes (optional)
3 or 4 bay leaves
7 to 8 cups shrimp or chicken stock
2 cups white rice (or brown if that's preferred, use more stock)
Chopped green onions for garnish

Peel the shrimp and place peels into a small stock pot. Add trimmings from vegetables and enough liquid to get at least 8 cups of stock. Add more veggies if you'd like. Bring to a boil and simmer.

Cut shrimp into bite-size pieces and set aside in the refrigerator. Slice sausage into half rounds and brown, preferably in a cast iron skillet. Remove to large stock pot.

Make the Cajun seasoning: 2 teaspoons each onion powder, garlic powder, smoked paprika, regular paprika, cayenne, dried oregano, plus 3 teaspoons dried thyme. Whisk seasoning mix with about 2/3 cup flour.

Cut chicken into bite-size pieces and dredge in the seasoned flour. Brown chicken with a bit of regular oil in the same pan that was used to brown the sausage. Use only enough oil to saute — try not to use too much. When chicken is browned and nearly done, transfer into stock pot with the sausage.

Using the same pan, saute onions, peppers, celery and garlic until wilted, 6-10 minutes depending on the size of your pan, stirring gently and frequently.

Meanwhile, if you are using tomatoes, drain them and add juice to stock. Break up tomatoes and add to the stock pot with the sausage and chicken.



When vegetables are wilted, place them into the stock pot with the sausage and chicken.

Strain the stock liquid from the shrimp peels into a separate container. Add at least 7 cups of liquid to the stock pot. I like my jambalaya moist, so adjust according to your taste. Simmer for about 15 minutes. Add shrimp and simmer for another 15 minutes. Then add the rice and simmer covered until rice is done. Add liquid as needed and stir gently. Serve with sliced green onions on top.

Notes—Sausage: Andouille is traditionally pork that is smoked first, then made into sausage and smoked again. It's always a good idea to taste the sausage at the front end of the recipe. If it's not smoky enough for your taste you can add a dash of Liquid Smoke to the stock. Likewise, taste for heat. If it's not spicy enough dial up the cayenne — if it's too spicy dial it down. I've used chicken andouille as well as pork. Just taste it to get a feel for the smoke and heat. Shrimp: Unfortunately, it is next to impossible to get head-on shrimp here that is affordable but if you find it add the heads into that stock. I mostly buy white shrimp, which look like my favorite brown shrimp in Louisiana. You can skip making the shrimp stock and use chicken stock instead but the flavor of your jambalaya will suffer, as will your reputation.

We'd love to feature a dish from your KP kitchen that friends and family ask for. Email the details to editor@keypennews.org with your phone number, we'll be in touch.

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With the temporary two-lane bypass complete to relieve traffic impacts on SR-302, the next phase of the \$16 million bridge construction project began to replace three outdated culverts to allow fish passage. Four drilled shafts approximately six feet in diameter and 50 feet deep into the earth were completed Feb. 12. They will provide a solid foundation for the new bridge to be built over Minter Creek *Photo: Jim Bellamy*

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UPPER LEFT Crocuses make an early appearance. *Photo: Joseph Pentheroudakis, KP News* **ABOVE** February blue sky from Penrose Park. *This and all other photos: Richard Miller, KP News* **LEFT** Camellia and hellebores in Home. **CENTER** Hailey, Grayson and Ryan in mouth of slide. **RIGHT TOP** Harvey Miller, age 1, enjoys swing. **RIGHT MIDDLE** Samantha Faulkner watches Lily Mae ride Jimbo. **LEFT LOWER** The Marchant family on wheels. **RIGHT LOWER** Jaxon Miller, age 3 on zip line, all enjoying Gateway Park on a sunny spring day.

