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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

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Population Grows on the Key Peninsula

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Is the Key Peninsula population growing? Ask anyone driving on the Purdy Spit during the morning or evening rush hour, and the answer is an unequivocal yes.

Home sales are also booming as prices are rising. "If it doesn't sell, it's priced wrong or there are problems with the building or the site," said Windermere Realtor Donna Dilger.

She and fellow Realtor Penny Jones said home-sale patterns in rural areas tend to lag behind urban areas by several years. When housing prices and availability are prohibitive in more central locations, buyers begin to look farther afield. They said that lower prices on the Key Peninsula have attracted both retirees and younger first-time buyers, though commute distances for workers are still a consideration.

In 2012, the number of homes sold on the KP was 163. That more than doubled in 2017, with 346 sales. The average sales price rose from \$200,000 to \$295,000 in the same period, an increase of 50 percent. Price per square foot showed similar growth, from \$126 in 2012 to \$203 in 2017.

Jones said these are signs of a seller's market, with fewer than half as many listings per month than five years ago—38 to 80 listings per month in 2016 compared to 116 to 158 per month in 2017.

Data on land sales are harder to compare, but of 104 active listings, three-quarters of the properties listed have either sold or are in contract—a high proportion of sold listings, according to Jones.

Prices of undeveloped lots have risen as well, although the prices are highly variable, depending on size, location, the presence of timber, and water and septic availability. The number of small parcels sold in 2012 and 2017 was similar, but prices rose significantly. In 2012, 10 1-acre parcels sold for well under \$20,000. Last

year, eight 1-acre parcels sold for between \$32,000 and \$65,000.

The number of larger parcels (2 to 6 acres) sold nearly quadrupled in the last five years. In 2012, 16 parcels of 2 to 6 acres sold and the most expensive one, with water and septic, was priced at \$85,000. Last year, 60 parcels of that size sold. The most expensive one on the north end of the peninsula sold for \$153,700, and at the south end, the best price was \$110,000.

Jones said that building lots in Gig Harbor are rare, relatively small compared to Key Peninsula lots and can cost as much as \$160,000.

Sean Gaffney, planning manager for Pierce County Planning and Public Works, said the number of building permits approved for new single-family homes on the Key Peninsula between 2010 and 2012 remained constant at about 25, then grew to about 40 a year until 2016. Sixty-one permits were approved in 2016 and 75 in 2017.

The Pierce County population, according to U.S. census data, grew from 795,000 in 2010 to 834,000 in 2016. The estimated population by the end of 2017 was 877,000.

Data for 2017 was not available for the Key Peninsula, but the population in 2010 and 2016 held steady at about 17,350. School enrollment in the last five years has not grown significantly. Evergreen Elementary School enrollment has increased from 220 to 265 and Minter Creek Elementary expanded from 353 to 387, but Vaughn Elementary, Key Peninsula Middle School and Peninsula High were unchanged.

The Food Market in Key Center has seen an increase in business, though owner Don Stoltz was reluctant to credit those changes simply to growth on the KP. The Food Market remodel, completed in November 2012, was part of a business plan to grow. "That plan has stayed on track," he said.

KP News graphic



Somehow, the old signs never confused anyone who lives here. Photo: Ted Olinger, KP News

KP Address Changes Yield Confusion, Solution, Defiance

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

"I'm completely ignoring it and continuing on with KPN," said Kelly Gamble of Lakebay.

That was just one of dozens of messages sent to the Key Peninsula News about the address changes to the KP and Fox and Anderson islands that took effect April 1. Or that were supposed to take effect.

The Pierce County Planning and Public Works office prepared for the sweeping changes for more than a year with news articles, Facebook posts and community meetings. The directionals attached to many street addresses—KPN, KPS, FI and AI—were to be replaced with NW or SW, while some addresses were to be changed entirely, in order to conform to federal postal address standards to take advantage of an updated 911 system. A letter explaining that and how to make the change was sent to every address on the KP, local government agencies and some utilities.

Not everyone got the message.

A KP News reporter was unable to update the address on her driver's license, as required by law, at a Department of Licensing office in April. "It's not in the

database," she was told. The reporter showed the clerk the letter from the county and additional documentation from the county assessor's office with her new address. "It's not in the database," the clerk said.

The KP News received many similar reports.

"Most of the problems people have experienced begin with the Department of Licensing database," said Pierce County Councilman Derek Young (D-Gig Harbor). "Unfortunately, they didn't tell us that they had a third-party vendor that we needed to go through."

Funneling the updated address information through DOL's vendor delayed the transition at least until the end of May, Young said. Washington Department of Licensing requires all drivers and licensees to update their address with DOL within 10 days following any change in address. The Pierce County Sheriff's Department advised all law enforcement agencies in Washington not to ticket residents for not changing the address on their driver's license before June 1.

"There are a lot of systems that verify name and address based on DOL," Young

CONTINUED PAGE 3

Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN, EDITOR, KP NEWS

It might appear gratuitous to be celebrating this graduation season; I don't personally know anyone in Peninsula High School Class of 2018, but since I've been reading 'The Outlook', the school's student newspaper, I'm feeling a vested interest.

It doesn't take long to comprehend the intensity of today's high school experience. Topping the list is stress.

Honestly, some of the Outlook articles made my heart ache while others had me cheering. I was struck by the many places I discovered a sense of resilience, tenacity, brilliance and hope in the graduates we're sending out into the world from the Key Peninsula.

Some memorable events took place this year at Peninsula High School, which stands proudly upon a hill overlooking Henderson Bay and Burley Lagoon.

The air was cold with a biting wind the morning of March 14 despite late winter sun. School administrators wisely called for extra security measures on campus for the event allowing students to exercise the rights guaranteed them under the U.S. Constitution with our First Amendment right to free speech.

Roughly 350 PHS students took part in the walkout. Nearly 1,000 students remained in class during the scheduled 17 minutes of silence observed by students across the nation to honor the lives of 17 people fatally gunned down at Margery Douglas Stoneman Middle School in Florida the month before. Regardless of the decision made by each student, whether to remain in class or participate in the demonstration, everyone's wishes and civil rights were honored and respected by the school district and Peninsula High School staff.

It was a beautiful civics lesson on parade.

The ultimate takeaway? We need to talk. And listen. We can't communicate very well if we're always stuck in the extremes. If we can't stop ourselves from shouting over other points of view, and embrace the act of listening instead, we aren't likely to make much progress. That is a very frightening prospect.

Unlike the video clips I watched later of student walkouts across the country, the demonstration at PHS seemed much less a protest per se, but rather expressed a statement of solidarity with students and families across our country still mourning these senseless tragedies and demanding real answers over sympathy. School shootings have changed the way both students and teachers feel about coming to school.

The simplicity of that peaceful protest at PHS coupled with the sincerity of the student walkout moved me to tears. There was an absence of provocative signs; instead there was a simple and deeply pragmatic message, "We deserve to feel safe."

PHS students rose above the oppositional political tactics of a nation deeply divided over ideological extremes that destroy the possibility of consideration, much less collaboration, needed to effect change. How did they do it? They stripped away divisive language and boiled it down to essentials, "We deserve to feel safe." It bears repeating.

Outlook columnists and students Joseph Blanchard and Kendra Hunsaker took up this subject in their May 4 opinion piece,

"Gun Violence in Schools: How Does Peninsula Feel?" Together they wrote, "There is not one solution to this problem, rather many different steps that can be taken to ensure the safety of all students... Without real communication, no real effective change can be implemented to protect us." The pair of writers concluded, "... the most effective way to keep us safe is to talk about it."

Our students want solutions and have learned the best course of action might be to reframe the question altogether. There



may be many actions acting in concert that together form some kind of safety net. And that is where hope lies.

To our graduates of 2018: Congratulations for reaching this important milestone and for illuminating the path to the future. Celebrate your accomplishments but

don't slow the momentum and determination you used to get this far. Keep going, keep learning, reach out for help when you need it, but don't sit life out on the couch. Do good work and be safe out there. A whole community stands behind you.

Send your entries for **Best of KP Summer** to editor@keypennews.com before June 8.

Haven't started yet? It only takes a few minutes to share what you love about summer in the 884. Get writing now—we want to hear from you.

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**ADDRESS
CHANGE**
FROM PAGE 1

said, so residents should start to see some changes appearing in their mail soon.

Vaughn Postmaster DeeDee Emmett advised patience. "USPS has a federal database that is constantly being updated as customers change or correct their

addresses," she said. "Large companies, like CenturyLink, periodically sweep in all that info to correct their own databases."

Meanwhile, Emmett said, "If mail is coming with the old address for the next year, the only difference is that it won't be correctly presorted for our carriers. It's more work for us, but we're doing it and customers will continue to get their mail."

KP Fire Chief Guy Allen has fielded about a dozen calls questioning the necessity of a residential address change, mostly from senior citizens concerned about being found if they need help. Allen made house calls to problematic addresses to ensure the department knows the location and to advise the homeowners on how to update their information or appeal it to the county if it seems to be inconsistent with the surrounding area.

"The majority were addresses that needed to be corrected," he said. "I tell people, if you have been required to overexplain to anyone, including UPS or family and friends, how to get to your house, then there's probably an issue with your address."

Jerry Daschofsky, a regular UPS driver on the KP, was unfazed by the changes. "Almost every change I've seen is spot on, putting addresses correctly on the grid," he said. "It's tough for me, since I'm used to addresses as they are now, but I have yet to not be able to figure out a new address."

For some residents, the problems are more complex.

"I went from Hoff Road KP N to 169th Avenue NW," said Koko Pipkin of Lakebay. "We did not like the street name, so we petitioned for a new one, which after a denial was accepted and it is now Joe's Bay Road NW." Additionally, she lost a digit from her house address in the bargain.

"I run an Airbnb out of my house and with the road names changed, they (guests) can't find me and I have to give the old address because the new one doesn't work,"



Even private roads have new names. Photo: Ted Olinger, KP News

she said.

"We want Google to do a mass update," said Councilman Young. "Amazon and various other places that aren't using the post office database or DOL database are using Google. We're literally working through legislators and members of Congress, including colleagues in California, to get to Google; we're trying to pull every lever. It's frustrating because it's not like this has never been done before."

This is the last step toward fully implementing the enhanced 911 system, which should be ready to roll out before the end of the year, he said.

"Believe me, I would have loved to have left the addresses the same, but this is a requirement of the next-generation 911 system. It's going to be a huge improvement over the old system and frankly the people who really emphasized the importance of this were our first responders. Our fire chiefs, police chiefs, the sheriff—they made clear they need this," Young said.

"It's also clear to me that people liked that unique signifier of the Key Peninsula directional," he said. "I completely get that. It was unifying for the peninsula; whether you're Lakebay or Longbranch, the directional was a signifier of where you were from."

"This has been my third address change and I have lived here for 23 years at the same location," read one of the messages to the KP News. "I just do nothing and wait a year. If there is a problem with getting money, companies usually will expedite their updates. Other than that, if they don't care, I don't care. I like my privacy." The sender preferred to remain anonymous.

For more information about the address changes, call 253-798-8575 or go to www.co.pierce.wa.us/5715/911-Addressing-Frequently-Asked-Question.

School Bond Fails: KP Votes 'No'

CAROLYN WILEY, KP NEWS

The voter turnout for the April Peninsula School District bond election was high for a special election at 48.86 percent, but the positive vote fell 1.1 percent short of the 60 percent supermajority required for passage of school bonds, according to the Pierce County Auditor's office.

While KP voters accounted for only 21 percent of the total votes cast, analysis of district voting patterns revealed they had a large impact on the result. Only two of 10 KP precincts approved the measure by more than 58 percent. Overall, the approval rate on the Key was 49 percent.

Marcia Harris, president of the PSD board of directors, said on behalf of the board, "We were all terribly disappointed. We truly expected the bond to pass. We felt there was a lot of positive energy throughout the campaign. Now we will need to regroup and figure out the path forward."

The turnout requirement for 40 percent of the total votes cast at the previous general election is usually difficult following a presidential election, according to the auditor's office.

The supermajority and voter turnout requirements were applied to passage of school bonds and school levies in 1943 by an amendment to the Washington State Constitution. In 2008, the constitution was amended again to eliminate the requirement for local school levies that raise local operating funds, but a supermajority is still needed to pass school construction bonds.

"I am excited that almost 59 percent of the community saw the benefit (of the bond) for students, staff, parents and community," said PSD Superintendent Rob Manahan. "I am sure there will be a capital measure in the future, but we need to define the parameters before presenting a new proposal to the community."

Manahan said the board held a workshop May 16 to begin the planning process and that input from the community would be important. The first community meeting was May 17 and notices of future opportunities for citizens to participate will be posted on the school district website.

Board member Leslie Harbaugh attended the monthly Key Peninsula Business Association meeting May 18 and used her time at the microphone to encourage members to share their thoughts and encourage others to attend upcoming listening sessions, including one on the KP May 30.

"We want to hear from the KP," she said. "We want to hear if you have other solutions."

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Roady Rich reading to Brody. Photo courtesy: Communities in Schools Peninsula

A Reader's Best Friend

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Jeff Essayan and his 3-year-old golden retriever, Brody, are the first pet reading tutors in the newly established Tutors with Tails, a pilot reading program that connects certified therapy dogs with students struggling with literacy. "Both staff and students are excited about its potential," said Harmony Armendariz, Site Coordinator at Minter Creek Elementary School for Communities in Schools of Peninsula.

Launched in partnership between the Peninsula School District and CISP, the growing awareness of the deep impacts animals can have on humans is increasing the use of therapy animals in a variety of therapeutic settings.

Across the country, certified therapy dogs like Brody are headed to school with their handlers as volunteer tutors.

"Brody knows we're coming here as soon as we cross the bridge at Purdy," Essayan said. "He gets really excited for this." The two travel to Minter Wednesday afternoons to hear stories read aloud by students practicing their reading skills.

"We looked at students at the school who are below the reading standards and need extra help with reading," Armendariz said. "We also considered the social-emotional component, so not only are we improving reading skills but we're enhancing students social-emotional skills and well-being."

It's a one-hour session for two students in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere. One student reads for 30 minutes with a CISP reading mentor while the other reads aloud to Brody.

When a student spends time with the reading mentor, the experience is more interactive, with the opportunity for comprehension checks. The mentor gives

feedback and encouragement.

Reading with Brody is different. Each student gets the time to read to the dog without feedback. There is a pad and blanket on the floor for both student and Brody, along with a squishy beanbag to get comfortable and ready for reading. It's a free space, without judgment, to read as they will.

It doesn't take long before the student is engaged, holding the book in one hand, while unconsciously reaching out toward the dog with the other for a pet or simple touch. Brody also settles into relaxation mode with an occasional upward gaze to Essayan for approval. If the student asks for help with a word, Essayan looks at the book, quietly answers, and the student goes straight back to reading without skipping a beat.

"It's truly remarkable to watch," Armendariz said. "We're hoping that next year we can expand the program and offer this to other children. The therapeutic energy that pets provide—the love—I think that little moment really brightens a lot of days."

Essayan and Brody completed rigorous training to become certified by Pet Partners, a Bellevue-based nonprofit that has trained animal handlers for over 40 years to share an animal safely with others.

Brody also regularly visits people in hospitals and nursing homes. Essayan said his dog has a fan base of his own. A student recognized the dog in a hospital setting recently and came running up to him, saying, "Brody! I'm so glad to see you!"

For Essayan, volunteering with Brody is uniquely fulfilling. "Seeing the powerful bond children make with Brody and how quickly their reading confidence skyrockets is so rewarding," he said. "It feels good to be able to make such a difference in a child's life."

County Update on Road Improvements

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Pierce County engineer Brian Stacy addressed the May 9 Key Peninsula Community Council meeting to provide updates on KP transportation projects underway by the Department of Planning and Public Works.

New Signs for the Times

Stacy began with an update on replacing road signs to comply with required address changes on the KP and neighboring islands to transition to the next generation of 911 calling, involving nearly 1,000 road signs.

The department sought creative solutions to avoid costly total sign replacement and settled on applying stickers designed to wrap over the end of each sign, replacing KPN and KPS with NW or SW. Confident the stickers demonstrated exceptional durability and visibility, county staff applied the cost-effective treatment to 455 road signs, reducing the estimated \$140,000 price tag to just over \$20,000.

“The vast majority of your signs are already done,” Stacy said. The larger signs on overhead signals will be replaced over the summer. “We tried a few different things, but just couldn’t get the same adhesion and reflectivity needed using the same materials,” he said. “Overhead signs will require full replacement.”

Key Peninsula Highway and 134th Avenue NW Intersection

The county completed a traffic study of this sharp-angled intersection in 2017 and came up with several alternatives to improve safety there, Stacy said. Reconfiguring the intersection to 90 degrees would require relocation of at least one building. A roundabout solution would work well from a traffic flow standpoint but would have a big footprint. Preliminary estimates ranged between \$2 million to \$4 million, more than the county had hoped for realignment.

“The least expensive option would be to try and skew the intersection the best we can and provide turn lane movements there. That could provide some value but doesn’t fix the alignment problem,” Stacy said. “Staff will continue studying the options.”



Key Pen Highway intersections (circled) under consideration. Imagery © 2018 Google, map data ©2018 Google

Key Peninsula Highway - Lackey Road - Jackson Lake Road Intersection

“There has been a fair amount of traffic incidents at this site, supported by data, so this year we put money into further analysis to determine the best solution,” Stacy said.

The county acquired a triangular parcel adjacent to the intersection last year. Stacy said he thinks this project will compete for grant funding and that may ramp up the progress. “I think this is a project that is going to find itself going up the list.”

Alternate Route for Lower KP

Stacy said there is a missing link between Jackson Lake Road NW and 186th NW, presenting a safety issue for residents going to or from the southern end of the KP in the event the KP Highway is blocked near Home.

“At first I looked at the maps and thought there must be a right of way issue—maybe a lake, a canyon or a floodplain—preventing the road from going through, but that is not the case,” he said. “The idea of connecting the two makes perfect sense. We’re waiting for a legal opinion right now from the prosecutor’s office regarding right of way, which we believe we already have. We’re not looking to build capacity in this area, but this project is about connectivity and safety.”

“All the aerial topography and critical areas I looked at—it looks like a no-brainer. If everything checks out this will go on the transportation improvement project list.”

Founder and Director Edie Morgan Leaves The Mustard Seed Project

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

After months of discussion with its board and staff, Edie Morgan stepped down as executive director of The Mustard Seed Project and went into retirement effective May 14.

“When an organization’s founder leaves, it’s gut-wrenching,” said board member Norm McLoughlin.

“This (announcement) is earlier than we had initially anticipated but the staff is ready to step in and will continue to coordinate our services and programs,” said TMSP Board President Sara Thompson in a written statement to Key Peninsula News.

Thompson also serves as president of the KP News publishing board and is a regular volunteer contributor to the paper.

According to Thompson’s statement, the board discussed succession planning for nearly a year following the announcement by Morgan of her intention to retire to enjoy more free time with her husband, Tom. The board hired Linda Hanson, a management consultant sourced through the nonprofit 501 Commons that provides services for nonprofits, to assist with the transition.

Hanson met with the board and staff and later facilitated the annual retreat in March, which focused on succession planning, Thompson said. An integral part of that plan was staff reorganization—something the staff and the board had identified as important.

Hanson was then hired in April for two months to update job descriptions, evaluate and improve office procedures and to make recommendations for the staffing structure.

In the meantime, “Linda Hanson has agreed to stay as acting executive director while we search for a new leader,” Thompson said.

The TMSP board, staff and volunteers met at the Crandall Center May 18 to discuss the news. Volunteers reportedly questioned what appeared to be an abrupt retirement, and not everyone left feeling fully satisfied with the answers they were given, according to multiple participants who spoke to the KP News afterward.

“I’m upset, but I am going to continue as a volunteer driver for Mustard Seed,” said Bill Lloyd, of Home. “We serve the community. No matter how I feel about

the board it’s the community we serve.”

Lloyd said he enjoys seeing the happiness on the faces of people who might not get out often and aren’t driving anymore. “I see the reaction too on the faces of the friends waiting to greet them; big smiles all around. Who doesn’t want to be around that?”

“Edie Morgan is an icon in this community; TMSP would not exist without her,” Thompson said. “Hundreds of seniors are in their own homes now because of the networks she has created.”

“I have been deeply involved in the housing project, along with our skilled and committed consultants, and I will do my utmost to realize Edie’s vision of creating the innovative kind of living experience



Tom and Edie Morgan earlier this year. Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

that we would all like to have when or if we can’t stay in our own homes.”

Morgan provided this statement to the KP News: “Those who know me realize that this was not at all the smooth transition I

had hoped we would experience. However, I have to say it feels as if a huge burden of responsibility has suddenly been lifted off my shoulders, and I’m quite sure retirement will be as wonderful as I’d hoped. I’ll always be incredibly grateful to everyone in this community and beyond who supported the mission and vision of The Mustard Seed Project through their generous gifts of time, labor, talent and financial support. Many hundreds of elders and family members have been served directly and indirectly over the past 12 years by a collective group of well over 100 volunteers, and a small, highly dedicated staff. Together we have built an elder-friendly Key Peninsula, as a community, in the very best sense of that word. I’m honored to have been a part of such good work. I hope it continues to flourish into the future.”

Just prior to press time, TMSP Board of Directors issued the following statement: “Our organization’s vision and mission have not changed, nor has its dependence on the work of its many volunteers. The continued health and growth of TMSP is the greatest affirmation of Edie Morgan’s legacy. The Mustard Seed Project board will continue to devote its full energy toward that end.”

Derek Young COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE



School Bond

In the wake of the school bond vote narrowly failing to reach the required supermajority, a question I get asked quite a bit is, “What’s next?”

A couple of weeks ago, I met with Stand Up for Peninsula Schools, our local education advocacy group. It’s clear the desire to try again is as strong as the need. The main question is when and what work needs to be accomplished first. Those are difficult questions the school board must wrestle with in coming months and I would encourage everyone to reach out with their thoughts.

There is an unquestionable need for a capital measure. Even the “No” campaign concedes that our facilities do not live up to our community’s values. The question is how best to add new capacity and fix existing deficiencies.

While it’s clear the bond measure was very popular in some neighborhoods, in others, including parts of the Key Peninsula, it didn’t have as much support. Reaching out to those areas is important to understand voters’ concerns and how to address them. We also need to make sure the projects in their area are well known. I occasionally hear from folks on the Key Peninsula that those schools were not getting improvements. That’s not the case but the confusion may be because of a previous measure from several years ago.

Over the longer term, we need a constitutional amendment. The supermajority requirement for school bonds is an anachronism designed for the unique concerns of a state emerging from the Depression and still fighting World War II. The belief at the time was that after the rapid growth of Washington during the war, there would be a population bust, leaving property owners holding the bag. Conditions have changed.

More importantly, it’s antidemocratic. If a candidate received 59 percent of the vote, we’d call it a landslide and talk about the candidate’s overwhelming mandate. Legislators should put a constitutional amendment on the ballot for voters to consider, just as they did for school levies several years ago.

Legislative Session: I have the privilege of co-chairing legislative efforts for the Washington State Association of Counties. Constitutionally, counties are agents of the state, charged with delivering services on its behalf at the local level. We are happy to implement the legislature’s wishes, but for many years, the Legislators haven’t been willing to pay the bill to make it happen.

Because 75-plus percent of county general funds already go to public safety and justice services and most of the remainder to other requirements like elections, recording and assessment, we don’t have many options when new unfunded mandates are added.

With \$1.2 billion in unexpected state revenue announced early in the session, we believed this would be the time to make some progress on restoring our budgets, allowing counties to bolster public safety services. Instead, we find ourselves with \$15.5 million in new unfunded mandates. That means fewer deputies on the street or prosecutors and judges to hold criminals accountable.

Last month, our county board and legislative strategy committee approved a new advocacy and litigation strategy aimed at reversing this trend, either through legislative action in the next year or by the courts.

Tolls: In happier news, our work last year on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Refinance Work Group has paid off. Although it’s not everything we hoped for, tolls will remain capped for another couple of years and are ultimately capped to a 25-cent increase. As always, we depended on the advocacy of the 26th District delegation (thank you, Sen. Angel and Reps. Calder and Young), but recently those efforts have garnered new allies on the other side of the Narrows, a critical component to success. We’ll need to keep building alliances to solve the problem, but for the first time, we have a ceiling on toll rates written into law.

Derek Young represents the 7th District, including the Key Peninsula, on the Pierce County Council.

Polly Robinson TRUE NORTH



The Three Hardest Words

I believe, when it comes down to it, the three most difficult words in the English language are not, as one might believe, “I love you,” but instead, “I need help.” Too often, we conflate those with “I have failed” or “I was wrong,” two statements we try to avoid at all costs. While needing help may indicate those other two statements, they are not necessarily the equivalent.

One of the basic milestones of entering adulthood is one’s ability to take construc-

tive ownership of one’s own errors, to admit a mistake in judgment, learn from the mistake and strive to do better. Often, this is far easier said than done. Especially when moving into a new community. You want to fit in, to be a part of things and not a drain on resources. You don’t want to be the cause of the dreaded “eye-roll,” the “Oh, here she is again...” sentiment when someone sees you coming. So you do things on your own.

Sometimes it goes well. Sometimes, not so much.

In my case, recently, my mistake was a pretty good one. We have our new home in Home, a property on a hillside with a relatively solid downward slope toward the water of Van Geldern Cove. There’s another house between us and the water—a fact that has made me feel better from time to time, but especially a few weeks back.

As a part of my reacquaintance with my Pacific Northwest (and Piscean) roots, I was eager to purchase a small runabout to take out for afternoon runs on the water, especially on those days when I wanted something other than my arms to power my watercraft. I searched, researched, talked to people and found what I wanted. And, on a very rainy afternoon, brought home my new (to me) toy.

I had a plan. I’d ease down our drive, slip into the large backyard through the gate I’d especially designed to accommodate such things and park the boat in the yard so as not to clutter up our driveway.

At this point, I should remind you that our yard is, in fact, a downhill slope. As water follows the general laws of gravity, in that downward corner is not only where our gate is, but also the water—hidden by the grass I had not yet mowed. I am betting you know what happened next. In my attempts to “straighten her out,” I promptly got not only my 4Runner stuck, but also my new boat. And stuck good. My further efforts to get me unstuck resulted in...more stuck.

What to do? Calling AAA seemed silly. Nobody I knew owned a truck large enough to pull me out. I was facing three or more days of rain. I had a frustrated partner and two very stuck, very large vehicles. I needed help.

There are at least two Facebook communities for the Key Peninsula. I’m a member of the “moderated” (family-friendly) one and, up to this point, had been merely a lurker. It was time, however, to jump in. I

did so, with a very simple post: “Well. I did a stupid thing and need a bit of help...” I offered to pay for time and gas if anyone was able to help out. I was hoping for a referral to a reputable tow company or some guidance. Instead, within just a few minutes, I had five offers of help, from the volunteer battalion chief of the KPPFD on down to friendly folks with big trucks. Even people who didn’t have trucks referred me to people who did! Mere hours after my initial plea, I was able to post grateful thanks to Anthony for pulling both truck and boat out of the mud and up onto stable land (and by extension, me out of the dog house). The man would take nothing in payment, barely even a can of Coke.

That is community. We’re not perfect, we’re not flawless, but we’re community. The Irish call it comhar (pronounced “core”). It literally means “in partnership” or “in community.” You cannot have community without being a community. Without being willing to pitch in when you can and, perhaps even more importantly, reach out when you must. It comes down to being willing to say, without fear of repercussion or judgment, those three little words that can mean, and bring, so much. Do not be afraid to say, “I need help.”

Polly Robinson teaches communication studies at TCC. She lives in Home.

Carolyn Wiley DEVIL’S HEAD DIARY



Singing in the Spring

Shaking off the winter garb, I step into spring and my garden ritual begins. Just being in the garden brings back memories of our first Longbranch neighbor. I like the digging part, and when I am all alone, I like to sing. Few people like to listen. Even my mom said that I had Van Gogh’s ear for music. So, I am an unreliable vocal critic.

When moving into a new neighborhood, one should pay attention to early conversational exchanges with the residents.

After the exchange of pleasantries, my new and ever-so friendly neighbor said, “I hope I don’t bother you.”

My response, “I doubt that you will. What do you do?”

She answered, "I sing."

I'm thinking, big, full voice that carries well, probably soprano—I like opera and appreciate soaring high notes, but some people find such a voice annoying.

So, I ask, "Opera?"

She declared, "Oh, no, show tunes mostly."

Things you need to consider if you are ever engaged in a similar conversation:

If someone says, "I hope I don't bother you," it is a bankable fact that somebody has been bothered by that activity in the past.

If the annoying activity is singing, you should anticipate that the singer might not be one with those qualities that make the human voice a magnificent musical instrument.

Lastly (and I was right on this one), the voice will be big. And it will carry.

That is the background.

It was one of those glorious days in early spring. David, my husband, had the chainsaw and come-along and was clearing out a fallen tree by the pond just west of the house. I was on the east side of the property, on the downhill side, digging up a new planting area. All was at peace in my world.

I was then jolted out of my idyllic reverie by a blood-curdling wail, "O-o-o-h!" I dropped the shovel and took off running up the hill toward the swamp where I last saw David, yelling at the top of my lungs, "David, are you OK?"

Rounding the south side of the house, I was fully expecting to find David's crushed and mangled body when it dawned on me that the initial inhuman scream that had set me off in terror-filled panic had modulated into, "kla-hom-a, where the wind comes sweeping down the plain...!"

Once my heart stopped racing, I had a better appreciation of that initial conversation. On our next encounter, my new, ever-so friendly neighbor was less so.

Suffice it to say, she seemed to take my initial reaction to the first note of that show-tune favorite as criticism.

And there was a penalty to pay—any time I dared invite guests for luncheon on the deck or set out a wine bottle and some glasses, it only took a moment after guests were seated before the serenade would begin.

Think Ethel Merman without the artistry, talent, good taste, manners and assorted other nuanced subtleties.

At those times, I always imagined that people in Argentina were not crying for her.

Carolyn Wiley lives quietly, for the most part, in Longbranch.

Dan Whitmarsh
WRITING BY FAITH



Graduation

My daughter recently came home with a big box. "Hey, Dad," she said. "Check this out!" She spilled its contents on the table, and I let out a deep sigh.

There were graduation announcements, a robe, a cap and tassel. In short, everything necessary to prove that my daughter is graduating from high school this year.

With countless parents from eons past, I asked, "Where did the time go?" It seems like just last week, she and her classmates were walking into Evergreen Elementary with their little backpacks and lunchboxes, eager to learn and grow and play at recess. Now, high school is over and college looms near.

A lot of emotions are bubbling to the surface for me, but two stand out. The first is gratitude.

Nobody arrives at adulthood completely by their own doing. It takes parents, grandparents, extended family, teachers, coaches, scout leaders, youth pastors and a host of others who have poured their lives into these graduates.

I know I can't take credit for the smart, witty, intelligent young people my daughter and her friends have become. I'm glad so many partnered in teaching them math, science, music and literature; I'm indebted to those who taught them to hunger for knowledge and search for truth. I'm thankful to God that he's surrounded my daughter with so many good, caring, supportive people.

At the same time, I'm filled with hope. These kids are smart, savvy and ready to take on the world. Coming of age in the post-9/11 world, today's graduates carry an understanding of the depth of the problems facing our world and a hunger to bring positive change.

By no fault of their own, they have inherited a world plagued by complex difficulties. They are the generation of school shootings, terrorist bombings, financial disparity, climate change and politics-as-reality-television. We've messed things up for them.

Yet, when I look at my daughter and her classmates, I'm left with hope that they'll find a better way. They are politically active, informed and passionate. Perhaps God is raising up a much-needed generation to talk some sense to the rest of us.

Of course, I'm filled with nostalgia, as well. There are so many memories of camping trips, days exploring the

CONTINUED PAGE 8



CIVIC CENTER

CORNER

Livable Community Fair a Grand Success!

The Key Peninsula Civic Center Association sincerely thanks everyone who made this event possible:

4-H Cat Tales: Alexa, Alicia, Amelia, Emilee, Marianne and Will

Scout Troop 220: Aiden, Alexander, Carson, Cian, Daniel, Gabe, Josh, Luke and Seth

Board & Community volunteers: Phil Bauer, Eddie Clark, Scott Dervaes, Peggy Gablehouse, Norm Gannon, Jena Henak, Sami Jensen, Bill Jones, Claudia Jones, Tim Kezele, Claudia Loy, Bruce Macdonald and Pat Medveckus

BIG THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS:

PLATINUM: Peninsula Light

SILVER: Longbranch Improvement Club & Foundation; KP School Bus

Connects; Serengeti Care IN-KIND SILVER: Key Pen Parks; Key Pen News

BRONZE: Food Markets; Key Peninsula Community Services; Longbranch Tree & Shrub Care.

Special thanks to the KP Fire Fighter's Union for sponsoring the trout pond.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS & MEMBERS:

Grounds: We also appreciate the Key Peninsula Fire Department (fire equipment), The Pierce County Library (Bookmobile & the imagination playground), Boy Scouts (rope bridge) and the Washington State Highway Patrol (patrol car) for enhancing the activities on the grounds. **Whitmore Room:** David Haycock; Jane Oliver & Loa Anderson for their emergency preparedness expertise and lectures; Two Waters Arts Alliance for their wonderful art exhibit of member art and art from Key Peninsula Middle School students.

Entertainment: Thank you to the Bluegrass Minstrels



Fireworks

Support the Civic Center and purchase your fireworks at the stand in Key Center - in the parking lot at Reeds Good Food & Great Spirits. Open June 28 - July 4th.

Appeal Drive

Don't forget to send in the orange envelopes dedicated to our 2018 appeal drive. We are sprucing up the Civic

Center and can use YOUR help. For those who have already donated - we sincerely appreciate your support!

WHITMARSH FROM PAGE 7

Puget Sound shoreline, birthday parties, Christmas mornings, French toast Saturdays, car rides to school and back, tickle fights and snuggles, baseball games and ferry rides. It's hard to let our children grow up.

This, though, is the way of life. We're given babies, children and teenagers for but a short moment in time, and then we get to release them to the world. Hoping, praying and believing we've prepared them as best we can, we now watch with pride as they embark on this thing called adulthood.

To Olivia, Natalie, Genni, Isaac, Zander, Savvy and the rest of the class of 2018, congratulations. Now go out there and make us all proud. And to all who have taught them, molded them, loved them and shaped them, thank you. Our world is a better place for all your efforts.

Dan Whitmarsh is pastor at Lakebay Community Church



Phyllis Henry
COAST TO COAST

Too Little Respect

On my first day of school, along with all the other kids in my rural Iowa school, I saluted the United States flag. Once we had gathered in a circle around the flag pole on the school lawn, two eighth-graders gently carried the flag from its shelf in the schoolhouse to the base of the flagpole, reverently unfolded the triangle, connected the grommets on the canvas edging to the snaps on the rigging, and then flew the flag up the pole high above us.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance. I knew the words, but had no idea what they meant, just as I knew the words to the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer without understanding what I was parroting. "I pledge allegiance to the flag." That's the part that inspired me. "...and to the republic for which it stands" was meaningless.

For me the flag was sacred. We celebrated its rising in the morning and its descent at the end of the school day. Absolutely I knew that the flag must never touch the ground. What dire event might happen if the flag touched the ground didn't even enter my imagination; the flag must never touch the ground.

Also the flag could never fly in the rain or snow. If there was moisture in the air the flag stayed on its shelf, and instead of reciting the Pledge outside around the flagpole, we saluted the much smaller flag

in the corner of our one-room schoolhouse. Why that smaller flag didn't need to be folded and stored overnight I didn't question.

The flag I saluted when I was in kindergarten was the identical flag I saluted in the eighth grade. We took good care of it. If the flag was flying and it started to rain, our teacher would nod to a couple of the older kids and they would rush out to retrieve the flag when it was barely damp. Once inside that flag was carefully hung from the protective railing that surrounded the big green furnace in the room until it was dry and could be properly folded.

Sometimes flags do wear out; they get torn or stained, and then they have to be destroyed. When my brother-in-law was in a nursing home, one day members of the local veterans organization came and set up their big metal container in the parking area. The veterans from the nursing home, as well as townspeople, gathered as the imperfect flags were ceremoniously placed, still in their triangular folds, onto the fire and burned until only ashes remained. Then all recited the Pledge of Allegiance, many with tears staining their aged cheeks. All of the ashes were reverently gathered to be buried in some hallowed spot.

Today, with all the gabble about patriotism, with every politician sporting a metal or plastic flag in his lapel, perhaps made in China and provided by some lobbyist, the flag has become a cheap symbol. Torn flags attached to dirty pickups flutter. Rows of flags serve as an easy bright background during political speeches and press events. After parades and other public events cheap, throw-away flags litter the garbage cans and are trampled by crowds leaving the events. Showing unbearable disrespect, people actually make clothing from flags of the United States.

While flag protocol allows weather-resistant flags to perpetually fly, too often I see light-weight cotton or polyester flags drooping in the rain, flapping through the nights, being displayed as decorations or pretend signs of patriotism.

Our flag has become a cheap logo, showing up on football helmets, in attention-grabbing banners on websites, in ads for plumbers and mascara. Pledging allegiance to a logo is a mindless act. When a United States flag is burned to protest injustice, the public is horrified. Why? That's only one small step beyond fashioning a shirt out of a flag or tossing one into the garbage.

Phyllis Henry lives and writes from a hill overlooking Burley Lagoon.

OBITUARIES**Max Marlow**

Max A. Marlow, 75, a longtime resident of Vaughn, died April 24, 2018. Marlow was a retired electrician of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. He enjoyed gardening and sharing all he produced with friends and family. In the past, Max was an active member of the Key Peninsula community. He served as a Key Peninsula Parks commissioner, a member of the KP Civic Center board and a volunteer for the Key Peninsula fire district for 17 years.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Annette; son Brian and daughter-in-law Amy; daughter Lisa; and three grandchildren.

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

**Kent Andrew McPherson**

Born Jan. 9, 2018, Kent Andrew McPherson died in his mother's arms as she sang "You Are My Sunshine," May 14, 2018, at St. Louis Children's Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. Kent was diagnosed with a very rare congenital heart defect called double inlet left ventricle. He was a very happy baby with a contagious smile.

Kent is survived by his loving parents Capt. Brad McPherson and Brea (Mattingly) McPherson and his brother Parker, all formerly of Gig Harbor and currently stationed at Ford Leonard Wood Army installation near Waynesville, Missouri; paternal grandparents Paul and Shaun McPherson of Arlington, Washington; and his maternal grandparents Andy and Shellee Mattingly of Gig Harbor.

Funeral services took place May 19 at Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church followed by a viewing and later graveside memorial at Haven of Rest Cemetery in Gig Harbor. Donations in honor of Kent can be made to any congenital heart disease research or support organization.

In March, Angel Guild awarded \$5,450 to:

Minter Creek Elementary School.....	\$2,500
Key Peninsula Community Services.....	\$2,000
Rocky Bay Health Care Facility.....	\$1,500
KP Communities in Schools.....	\$1,500



Angel Guild Thrift Shop

Tues-Saturday 10 to 4 Key Center Corral 253 884-9333

KP Civic Center Coordinator Announces Retirement

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Patty Ghiossi, the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association's marketing and facilities coordinator for the last three years, informed the board of directors that she plans to retire Aug. 1.

KPCCA President Tim Kezele and past president Phil Bauer both sang Ghiossi praises. She updated the financial system, redesigned the website and improved Facebook engagement.

"Patty has been a godsend for the center," Bauer said. "She is the most incredible person we have ever had in the office. She puts in beaucoup hours, organizes our whole Livable Community Fair, and even cooks the food."

"The board is so lucky to have her," Kezele said. "She totally turned the place around with her organizational skills, dependability and friendliness. Financially she is incredible. She has our finances in a place they have never been."

Ghiossi recently cut her work schedule back to three days a week which got her thinking about retiring altogether, she said. "And I have a lot of projects. I am a crafter of many things and a master of none. I'd like to learn to weave."

Born and raised in Northern California, Ghiossi moved to the Pacific Northwest in her 20s. A camping trip in the Olympics brought her here. "It felt like an area where I'd be happy for a long time," she said. "We had redwoods. You had cedars. And both places had foxglove, salal and huckleberries."

In 1982, she bought a lot in Burley with a plan to build a house. Her first job, which she had for three years, was a high-paying, blue-collar position as a steelworker at Reynolds Aluminum in Kent. She started on building her home. When she began landscaping, she made a serendipitous connection with Claudia Loy, who had just opened Sunnycrest Nursery with her husband, Dale.

Once Ghiossi saved enough money to complete building her house and make improvements, she said, "I quit, took a \$12,000-a-year pay cut, and went to work with Harbor Mobile Crew, a nonprofit in Gig Harbor." No longer in existence, the nonprofit was a test site for a program through the University of Oregon, providing services for people with disabilities. "Disability work is in my background, not my education," Ghiossi said. "My grandmother did a lot of groundbreaking work in the field; she fostered a child I



Patty Ghiossi looks forward to more garden time. Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

grew up with, who seemed like a sister, but had significant disabilities."

As part of her job, she presented many workshops and got to know people in the field throughout the country. Lured to New Orleans to work for a year, Ghiossi wouldn't return to Burley for another 25. In that time, she married, had a daughter and got divorced. It was her daughter who kept her in New Orleans. "She was in a wonderful school and volunteer program and I didn't want to take her away from that," Ghiossi said.

Her experience in the field of disability services during that quarter of a century

was wide-ranging. She managed projects for the state of Louisiana and Louisiana State University and worked as a consultant and as program director for several nonprofit organizations serving people with disabilities. Ultimately, funding dwindled. "Funding cuts were so drastic, it felt like people were at risk," she said. "I felt that I just needed to leave the field." With her daughter grown and enrolled at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Ghiossi returned to the KP four years ago.

She considered her next steps. "I didn't need a lot of money and I wanted to do something that would use my skills and would make a contribution to my community," she said. She ran into Loy at Sunnycrest Nursery. The civic center was looking for a new manager and Loy suggested she consider applying.

"My father was the volunteer assistant fire chief in our community and he taught me about community involvement," Ghiossi said. "The board reminded me of the community I had known as a child."

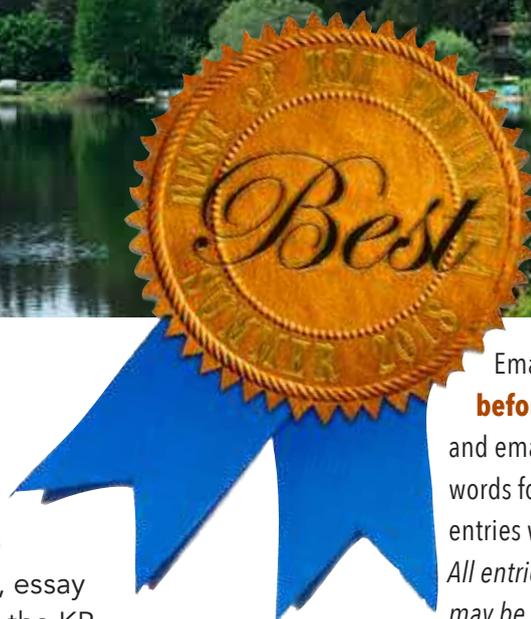
She plans to make sure the transition is smooth. "The civic center board is the most active board I've ever worked with," Ghiossi said. "They are an exceptional group of people who really care about this community; they are why I have been here as long as I have."

LAST CALL TO ENTER WRITING CONTEST FOR "BEST OF KP SUMMER" AUGUST SPECIAL SECTION

Give it your best.

Everyone loves summer on the Key Peninsula: sunny weather, beaches, sunsets, gardens, picnics and parades. Here's your chance to tell the world what you think is the best of summer on the Key Peninsula. But you need to do it *before June 8*.

Everyone's welcome to enter. If you live here (or wish you did) you're qualified to enter with an original "what's best" poem, essay or story. Judges will choose winning entries that best express the KP summer theme, tell a good story and are fun to read.



Email entries to editor@keypennews.com **before June 8**. Include your name, telephone and email. Maximum 150 words for poetry, 300 words for stories, 3 entries per person. Winning entries will be published in the August edition. *All entries become property of Key Peninsula News, may be edited for publication.*

Stansberry Lake photo courtesy Shari Anderson Seibold

*Wishing all the Dads a special day
from the team at Glen Cove Repair*



253 884-1838
COMPLETE AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR/MAINTENANCE
15312 92ND ST NW UP THE HILL IN KEY CENTER
OWNERS: ERIC, MANUELA & MATHEW MORELAND




Abandoned and derelict boats are a growing problem in local waters. *Photos: Ed Johnson, KP News*

Sunken Boat to be Removed from Purdy Spit

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

There is no missing it at low tide while driving across the Purdy Spit. For months, the sight of the upturned hull of a sunken sailboat has generated the same question: Just who is responsible for removing the sunken vessel and what about the other seemingly abandoned boats anchored just offshore?

Parks Specialist Bret Burgess of Pierce County Parks and Recreation is the person responsible for maintenance of the park at the Purdy Sand Spit and is working with the Department of Natural Resources Derelict Vessel Program to resolve the problem.

“The removal of the sunken vessel is now out to bid,” Burgess said in an email to KP News. “Until the bid has been awarded, a firm timeline for removal cannot be set.” Burgess also said he thought the contractor would begin the removal sometime in June.

The Purdy Spit is an unimproved public beach sandwiched between a busy State Route 302 and a half-mile of shoreline along Henderson Bay. The park is an especially popular destination for beachcombers, sun worshipers, waders and windsurfers. With a boat launch conveniently located on the Wauna side of the park, the waters regularly host people on sailboards, water skis and jet skis. During summer it’s fairly common to see a solid line of cars parked alongside SR-302, which sits above the 7.5 acres of beach below.

Purdy resident Sandy Arndt, who lives within sight of the park, said she made her

first calls to report the illegal boat mooring four years ago, long before the sunken sailboat appeared. “I’ve called Olympia and have been passed around from department to department, even hearing, ‘Oh yes, we’ve received a number of complaints about that,’ but so far nothing has changed, nothing has been done about it,” she said.

“We’ve lived here for 26 years and can testify there are more people than ever using that beach,” Arndt said. “It’s hard to grasp that nobody seems to care about the dangers to navigation or the health of our marine environment.”

Part of the problem for concerned citizens is determining which particular government agency is responsible in an area where there is considerable overlap depending on the circumstances.

“It can be a frustrating experience simply trying to do the right thing,” Arndt said.

The Washington State Legislature passed the Derelict Vessel Act in 2002. The act provides certain local and state agencies with the authority to remove and dispose of abandoned vessels that pose a threat to health, safety or navigation. DNR maintains an inventory of derelict and abandoned boats in Washington waters, assigning priority for removal to the most dangerous vessels first.

According to the DNR website, the agency needs everyone’s help to identify and locate derelict vessels. A reporting form is available for download at www.dnr.wa.gov under Puget Sound, Lakes and Rivers.



Meet your friends and taste wine Fridays from 5 to 7



Blend
WINE SHOP & BAR
8914 Key Pen/Hwy in Key Center 253 884-9688

June 2018

www.keypenparks.com
253 884-9240



Key Pen Parks

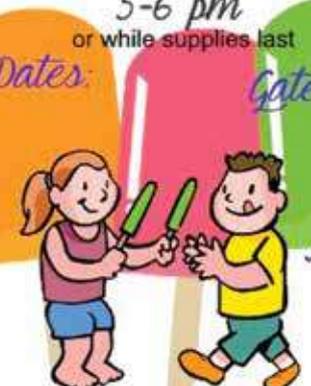
The key to your next adventure!



Popsicles in the Park!
Wednesdays this summer!
5-6 pm
or while supplies last

Home-Park Dates:
June 20
July 25
August 22

Gateway-Park Dates:
June 6
July 11
August 8




Key Pen Parks
FOURTH of JULY
4th annual Community Hot Dog Social

Wednesday, July 4th
11 am to 2 pm at Gateway Park

Games! Fun! Prizes! Bounce Houses!

Free Event!

Want to volunteer or Sponsor? Email Veronica@keypenparks.com
Details on www.keypenparks.com




Key Pen Parks
YOUTH MOUNTAIN BIKING JAMBOREE

June 9, 2018
10 am to 1 pm
FREE EVENT!!

AT GATEWAY PARK
*SHUTTLE TO 360 TRAILS

*Loaner Bikes & Helmet Fittings
FREE PIZZA after event!

RIDE THE PUMP TRACK
Ride the Jump Lines!

RACES & Relays

MORE INFO AT:
WWW.KEYPENPARKS.COM




Key Pen Parks
Woodland Fairy Camp

July 17 - 19
9 am to Noon
at Volunteer Park
5441 Bee Peninsula Dr. B. Junction
Cost: \$75



Guided Bike Tours and Skill Building

Get your ride on at Gateway Park/360 Trails! If you don't have a bike of your own, we will have loaner bikes on site (be early, first-come, first-served). Key Peninsula Fire Department can fit you for a free helmet too! Learn about bike handling, safety and maintenance. Have Fun! *Bikes and helmets are limited quantity.

Free family fun starts at 7:30 pm, movies at dusk

- ☆ Aug. 3 **Coco** @Gateway Park
- ☆ Aug. 10 **Guardians of the Galaxy** @Volunteer Park
- ☆ Aug. 17 **Moana** @Gateway Park
- ☆ Aug. 24 **Jumanji-Welcome to the Jungle** @Volunteer Park
- ☆ Aug. 31 **Labyrinth** @Gateway Park

Bring a blanket or chair. Sponsored in part by Peninsula Light Co. with pre-movie crafts sponsored by Sound Credit Union and Shawn & Claudia (Sami) Jensen



Parks Appreciation Day Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who helped clean up, repair and beautify our parks on April 28, we THANK YOU! **Mom & Me Tea** Thank you to Marilyn Hartley, Sophi Gwynn, Bonnie Plane, Heather Peters, and Susan Ricketts for all the wonderful help and goodies you prepared for our Mom & Me Tea! You ladies are amazing!

DON'T SEE YOUR EVENT LISTED?

Enter your event or regular meeting schedule on our website calendar at keypennews.com. Click on "Submit an Event" and fill out the form, including contact information for verification. Send questions or updates to editor@keypennews.com or call 253-884-4699.

JUNE 2 & 16**DEPRESSION & BI-POLAR SUPPORT**

The Lakebay Depression and Bi-Polar Support Group meets the first and third Saturdays from 11:15 a.m. to noon at KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Kimberly, 253-753-4270 or DBSALakebay@gmail.com

JUNE 4 & 18**VETERANS MEETING**

The KP Veterans group meets at the KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW, on the first and third Mondays of the month at 7 p.m. All veterans, military service members and families with children 16 and older are welcome. 253-225-5130

JUNE 9**2018 RAISE THE (DEMOCRATS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS) ROOF**

With music from The Fab Three playing favorite Beatles tunes, plus comedy and piano from Kristin Ang. 6:30 p.m. Key Peninsula Civic Center. Taco bar, silent auction, no-host bar. Tickets \$30 per person to benefit 26th Legislative District Democrats; order online at 26d.org. 26th Legislative District Democrats

WILDLIFE AMBASSADORS

Back by popular demand, Westsound Wildlife Shelter brings a turkey vulture, Virginia opossum and a barred owl. Demonstration and presentation on wildlife rescue. From 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Crandall Center, 9016-154th Ave Ct NW in uptown Key Center. Free, sponsored by Key Center Friends of the Library. 253-548-3309

JUNE 12 & 26**CROCHET OR KNIT**

Join Loving Hearts on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 1 to 3 p.m. at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW to knit or crochet for charity. Yarn donations are needed and very much appreciated. Virginia at 253-884-9619 or lovingheartsonkp@gmail.com

JUNE 14**TOWN HALL MEETING WITH DEREK YOUNG**

The Longbranch Improvement Club hosts Pierce County Councilmember Derek Young from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. All KP residents are welcome for 20-minute presentation followed by questions and answers. 4312 Key Peninsula Highway SW. For more information, contact Young's assistant, John Jolibois, at 253-798-6654.

DOWN HOME BAND RIDES AGAIN

Band practice for the summer season will start up Thursday, June 14, at 7 p.m. at the Key Medical Center in Key Center, 15610 89th Street Court NW. Show up with your band instrument and you are in—especially if you play the clarinet! 253-884-9221

JUNE 20**KP LAND USE**

The Key Peninsula Advisory Commission meets the third Wednesday of every month (case dependent) at 6:30 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. KPAC reviews applications for proposed developments in the community requiring a public hearing and makes recommendations to the Pierce County executive, county council, hearing examiner, planning commission and the Planning and Land Services Department. 253-432-4948

JUNE 21**EMERGENCY PREP**

Meetings on various emergency preparation topics take place the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center. Contact Peggy at 253-686-7904 or at gablehouseep@aol.com.

JUNE 23**TAYLOR BAY YARD SALE**

Gates open at 9 a.m. and close at 3 p.m. Follow Key Peninsula Highway SW to 80th Street SW, turn right and follow the signs. Please respect the 10mph speed limit in this gated residential community. 253-778-6008

JUNE 25**RELATIVES RAISING KIDS SUPPORT GROUP**

This new support group for grandparents and relatives raising children meets the fourth Monday each month at Children's Home Society at the KP Civic Center (for the summer months) from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Potluck dinner and child care provided. For more information, call Lori

at Children's Home Society at 253-884-5433 or 253-391-0144.

JUNE 28 TO JULY 4**KP CIVIC CENTER FIREWORKS STAND**

Show your pride in the KP by blowing up a small part of it! Buy your fireworks from the KP Civic Center fireworks stand. All proceeds benefit the KP Civic Center Association. Hours vary but usually 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the Food Market parking lot.

OFF THE KEY**JUNE 2****BURLEY JUNE BUG FLEA MARKET**

Forty vintage and artisan vendors sell their stuff at this fundraiser for local animal rescue groups. Food, ice cream, raffle. Sponsored by Bayside Animal Lodge, Massimo's and others. Free parking and shuttle from Purdy park and ride. Burley Community Hall and fairgrounds, 14853 Burley Avenue SE; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

JUNE 3**YOUTH ORCHESTRA CONCERT**

Come enjoy Peninsula Youth Orchestra's student musicians perform on violin, viola, cello and bass at Peninsula High School auditorium from 3 to 5 p.m. Free admission. www.harborpyo.org.

JUNE 7**DEMOCRATS MEET**

26th Legislative District Democrats meet on the first Thursday of each month; 6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting. Public invited. Givens Community Center, 1026 Sidney Road, Port Orchard. 26thdemocrats@gmail.com

JUNE 13**KGI WATERSHED COUNCIL MEETING**

The Key Peninsula-Gig Harbor-Islands Watershed Council provides educational programs, outreach and workshops for watershed residents and encourages the collaboration and involvement of all watershed residents and businesses. Meets second Wednesdays of alternating months from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., usually at Gig Harbor Fire Headquarters, 10222 Bujacich Road NW, Gig Harbor. lindsey@harborwildwatch.org

JUNE 16**OLALLA CLUB CONCERT**

Terry and Jerry Holder play at the Olalla Community Club. Suggested donation is \$20. Potluck starts at 6 p.m. Concert starts at 7 p.m. Located at 12970 Olalla Valley Road, Olalla. www.olallahouse.org

WEEKLY EVENTS**WEEKDAYS****SENIOR EXERCISE CLASSES**

The S.A.I.L. senior exercise class meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 to 11 a.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 10 a.m. at KP Community Services in Lakebay. Register with Marilyn Perks at 253-884-4440.

MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS**FB4K SUMMER LUNCH AND GAMES**

Food Backpacks 4 Kids will serve free lunches from June 25 to Aug. 15 at 11:30 a.m. at KP Civic Center. Activities follow lunch. All children and parents are welcome. 253-857-7401

TUESDAYS**TOPS**

Take Off Pounds Sensibly is an affordable wellness-education organization. Visitors are welcome to attend their first TOPS meeting free of charge and without obligation. Weigh-in from 8:35 to 9:25 a.m. at Key Peninsula Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. marcgrubb1990@yahoo.com

SENIOR TAI CHI

Senior tai chi meets 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. at KP Community Services in Lakebay. 253-884-4440

STORYTIMES

Discover books, learn nursery rhymes, sing songs, play with blocks and do arts and crafts at the Key Center Library. Music and motion story time (0-2 years old with an adult) at 10 a.m. and preschool story time at 11 a.m. 253-548-3309

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS**PRESCHOOL PLAY TIME**

The Children's Home Society/KP Family Resource Center offers a preschool/toddler indoor park program 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the KP Civic Center gym. Caregivers must stay with child. Drop-ins are welcome; stay as long as you wish. A \$1/child donation is suggested. Last session before summer break June 19. Tami, 253-884-5433

TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS**KP HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPEN**

The Key Peninsula Historical Society museum at the KP Civic Center is open Tuesdays and Saturdays 1 to 4 p.m. The current exhibit is Tales of Logging the Key Peninsula. Free admission. 253-888-3246

WEDNESDAYS

READY, SET, GO FOR PRESCHOOLERS

The Children's Home Society of Washington sponsors free cooperative preschool class for 3- and 4-year-olds at KP Civic Center. Parents or caretakers participate, playing learning games from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Alternate weekly summer schedule starts June 27. 253-884-5433.

LAKEBAY WRITERS

Lakebay Writers is a workshop for people who love stories. Share yours; hear others'. From 1 to 4 p.m. at the Key Center Library. Loren, 253-884-2785

KP YOUTH COUNCIL

Meets every week from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at the Key Center fire station. Keypercouncil@gmail.com

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

SENIOR MEALS

Nutritious meals for ages 60-plus are served at noon at KP Community Services; \$2 donation is requested. Guests (ages 50-59) of senior attendees are requested to donate \$2.50. 253-884-4440

THURSDAYS

TOASTMASTERS

Have fun improving your public speaking ability and leadership skills at the Wright-Bliss fire station from 8 to 9 a.m. 253-858-5761

SENIORS LUNCH

The KP Senior Society meets at 11 a.m. for a potluck, games and fellowship in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 253-884-4981

FRIDAYS

KIDS' SUMMER LUNCHES TO GO

Food Backpacks 4 Kids will distribute free lunches at Gateway Park and Home Park between 11:30 a.m. and noon on Fridays starting June 29 until Aug. 17. Children of all ages are welcome. 253-857-7401

SKATE NIGHT

Skate night at the Key Peninsula Civic Center from 6 to 9 p.m. Admission is \$5. Last session before summer break June 15. 253-884-3456 or kpciviccenter.org/skate

SATURDAYS

WRITERS GUILD

The Writers Guild meets the first and third Saturdays of the month from 10 a.m. to noon in the community council office, Suite D, at the Key Center Corral. 253-884-6455

MONTHLY MEETINGS

June 5, KP Historical Society meets first Tuesdays at 11 a.m. in the museum at KP Civic Center. 253-888-3246

June 6 & 20, KP Lions Club meets first and third Wednesdays at 7 p.m., Key Center fire station. 253-853-2721

June 11, KP Parks Commission meets second Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Volunteer Park office. 253-884-9240

June 12 & 26, KP Fire Commission meets second and fourth Tuesdays, 5 p.m., Key Center fire station. keypeninsulafire.org or 253-884-2222

June 13, Bayshore Garden Club meets second Wednesdays, 10 a.m., fire station in Longbranch. Wendy, 253-332-4883

June 13, KP Community Council meets second Wednesdays at 7 p.m., Key Center fire station. Guest Speaker: Derek Young, Pierce County Councilmember, District 7. 253-432-4948

June 14, Ashes support group for Fire District 16 meets second Thursdays, 10:30 a.m., Key Center fire station. 253-884-3771

June 14, Peninsula School District board meets second Thursdays, 6 p.m., district office in Purdy. 253-530-1000

June 14, KP Civic Center Assn. board meets second Thursdays, 7 p.m., Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center. 253-884-3456

June 16, KP Alzheimer's Association caregiver support group meets third Saturday of each month, 10:30 a.m., Crandall Center, 9016 154th Avenue Court NW, 253-820-2213

June 18, KP Democrats meets third Mondays, 7 p.m., Home fire station, johnpatkelly@aol.com

June 25, KP Farm Council planning meeting for 2018 Farm Tour meets fourth Mondays, KP Community Council office. 253-432-4948 or email keycouncil@gmail.com

Multiple dates, KP Sportsmen's Club board meets first Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; general meeting and potluck on second Thursdays at 6 p.m.; bingo \$1/card and potluck on fourth Fridays at 6 p.m.; Ladies Bunco last Wednesdays at 6 p.m.—bring snacks and \$5 to play. Sportsmen's Clubhouse, 5305 Jackson Lake Road NW, 253-884-6764



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KP Fire Chief Guy Allen to Retire

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Key Peninsula Fire District Fire Chief Guy Allen submitted his notice of retirement to the board of fire commissioners April 24, but he's in no hurry to go.

"I plan to be flexible with the hiring process so I don't leave the district in a lurch," Allen said. "In a perfect world, my last day would be April 30 of next year, which would fulfill my 20th year of service on the Key Peninsula and would be my 39th year in the fire service."

Allen, who turns 55 in June, was hired in August 2014 after Chief Tom Lique was asked to resign by the fire commissioners earlier that year. He will be the first chief to retire from the position in decades. Lique succeeded Eric Livengood Nelson in 2005 after Nelson resigned; Nelson succeeded Gary Franz when he left to take a position as deputy chief in Graham in 2002.

"I really liked Tom, probably more than he knew," Allen said. "He took over and carried us through some really tumultuous times." The department experienced staff, financial and image problems in the early 2000s, including public infighting among board members. Allen faced a budget deficit and the likelihood of ordering layoffs when he accepted the job, he said.

"Stability is hard to come by in the fire service; it's a tough place to be sometimes," said Administrative Manager Christina Bosch, who has been with the department since 2000. "We were all in a state of recovery from a couple of very difficult years. Chief Allen came at the end of that to help us adjust to the new norm that we were getting ready to face." Bosch said with the help of passing levies, the district enjoys a financial stability it hasn't seen since before the recession.

Fire commissioner and board chair Keith Davies was on the board that hired Allen. "I felt we needed to go outside the department when we were looking to replace Tom," he said. "We actually opened up a nationwide search at that time."

The department received 22 applications from the state and across the country. "We'd appointed Chief Allen as the interim chief, but he threw his hat in the ring toward the end of the process," Davies said.

A hiring committee scored all of the applicants and Allen was in the top three. "This showed he was capable of doing the

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Career firefighter Guy Allen looks forward to retirement. *Photo: Richard Miller, KP News*

job, and it showed me that we truly didn't settle for less," Davies said. "He was already in there, he had the respect of the crews, and he has done an outstanding job for our organization."

Allen is leaving the job now for personal reasons. "In May last year, I had a sudden onset of chest pain on a Sunday afternoon and was treated by paramedics for cardiac symptoms. I was laying there in ER for six hours pondering what that might mean. Turned out to be the gall bladder, but I just couldn't shake that mindset of the effects that stress has on long-term health and I decided I'd done enough."

Allen began his career in the fire service in Whatcom County in 1980 as a 17-year-old volunteer. He responded out of the old grange hall station in Birch Bay "across from the water slides," he said. His first paid job was as a maintenance mechanic. He went to the state firefighter academy in 1983 and went to work in Blaine in 1989 for Fire Chief Gary Franz. Franz left to become fire chief on the KP in 1994. Allen later passed his lieutenant's exam and when

there was an opening on the KP in 1999, Franz offered it to him.

"I've seen a lot of bad things happen to people," Allen said. "I've got a lot of good stories to share, but the really horrific ones—I can flash back to those in a moment and the emotions are always right there. That tells me it's time to do something else."

"I've got one granddaughter and another one due anytime now," he said. (By press time, Allen's second granddaughter was born; both mother and daughter are doing well).

The board of commissioners will begin to work on the hiring process in June, Davies said, including consideration of a professional search firm.

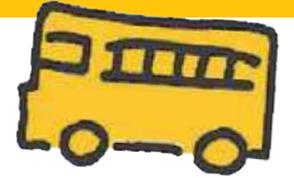
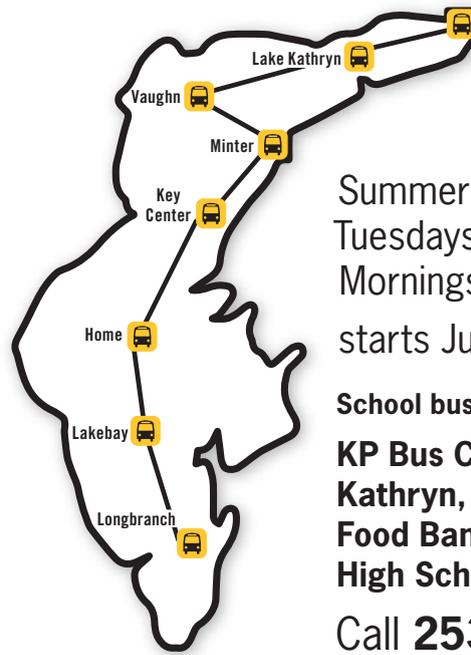
"I am going to be looking for characteristics very similar to what Guy Allen possesses because he does just a tremendous job for us," he said. "I want somebody who has the respect of the crews, who can earn the respect of the citizens, and who can be present in the community and lead us forward."

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- KP School Bus Connects Summer Schedule starts
- Food Backpacks 4 Kids summer feeding program starts

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Fifth-grader Kendall Powers with some of the food donations. Photo: Alice Kinerk, KP News

Greater Gig Harbor Foundation and KP Schools Partner for Spring Food Drive

KENDALL POWERS, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

Public schools throughout Gig Harbor and the Key Peninsula hosted a food drive to help stock the shelves of local food banks during the last week of April. The Greater Gig Harbor Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting residents in the area, organized the drive. Although the group had been doing a similar food drive in honor of National Make A Difference Day each fall, GGHF decided to run a second drive in the spring.

According to Jud Morris, chair of the social capital committee for GGHF, the nonprofit is also involved with recreation, funding local arts, environmental protection and cleanup, as well as Gig Harbor's outdoor-based Curious By Nature preschool.

Each participating school was given a large barrel to fill with donations. Flyers sent home with every student requested canned or other nonperishable items. At Minter Creek Elementary, the barrel was filled to overflowing within 24 hours.

The food drive goals are ambitious, according to the GGHF website. "Annually, the project aims to support the provision of essential ingredients to provide some 2,300 area children and their families a nutritious weekend meal every weekend from Make A Difference Day in late October through the end of the school year—about 12,000 meals! To date, the project has raised foods and funds supporting about 14,500 meals!"

GGHF believes hungry children simply are unable to focus on learning, said Morris,

and there are many children coming to Peninsula schools every day feeling hungry. Teachers at one school started buying breakfasts for students, spending money out of their own pockets. GGHF came up with a unique solution. Food gift cards were issued to these teachers. This way, instead of using their own money, teachers use the gift cards to buy food.

After the food drive, all of the donations were distributed to Food Backpacks 4 Kids and Gig Harbor Fish Food Bank. Morris said these two organizations were chosen because they both provide food to the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula areas.

At the core of the GGHF food drive was the expectation that the donations are a hand up, not a handout. "When people get things," Morris said, "there is this thing in the back of their mind of, 'Well, how can I give back?' It's a human quality of wanting to give back." The desire to give back to the community is important for a person's self-respect, he said.

"Everyone can give, even if they too need food," Morris said. He is philosophical about it, telling food bank recipients, "It's just a loan. When you're back on your feet, you find someone else that needs it and help them out."

The donation barrels were given not only to the schools, but also to the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor libraries, where they remain.

Morris said that although there were some glitches, this year's GGHF drive was a success and compelled organizers to run another drive next year.



Tenor Cathy Williams, circled, performs at Carnegie Hall in New York City. *Photo courtesy DCINY*

From Home to Carnegie Hall

DON TJSSEM, KP NEWS

How often has someone dreamed of singing in Carnegie Hall and accomplished it? Cathy Williams of Home had that dream and made it come true this spring.

After a long interest in singing and music, dating back to her childhood days, Williams performed at Carnegie Hall as part of the South Sound Classical Choir, with 250 other singers from around the world, in "Dreamweaver," conducted by Carnegie Hall's composer-in-residence James Maeders. The composer of this Norwegian medieval folk poem, Ola Gjello, played the piano for the performance as the artist-in-residence.

An audience of over 1,000 people attended the 40-minute performance. The concert was sponsored by Distinguished Concerts International of New York (DCINY). Twenty-two choral groups from all over the world participated in the performance.

When the choir was on stage, Williams said she was able to wave at her husband, Ted, who had come to New York with her. When the concert began, she said she thought to herself, "Oh my gosh! Here I am dead center in front of the front row."

She said one of the most memorable experiences was wandering the lobby display, viewing the portraits and memorabilia of the world's finest classical music performers to appear here since Carnegie Hall was built in 1891. Williams said to herself, "I performed on the same stage as these famous musicians."

Members of the South Sound Classical Choir were invited to return to Carnegie Hall for next year's program, she said.

When Williams joined the choir in 2001, she thought of it as a tribute to her mother's musical talent. Music was always part of her formative years, as her parents, Mary and Ivar Highberg, were on the concert board at the China Lake Naval Weapons Center in California, where she grew up. Musicians would often practice during the day at their home before performing a concert later that evening. When the famous piano duo of Ferrante and Teicher arrived in town for a concert, the Highberg family was able to place two pianos in their home for the practice sessions. When Williams was very young, she got to stay home from school and turn pages for some of the performers.

Williams began singing in her church choir when she was 6 years old. She played the guitar and other instruments as her interest in music grew. She graduated from Whitman College with a major in sociology and a minor in psychology. Most of her extracurricular activities involved music. After graduating, she and a few friends earned extra money over the weekends by busking on the streets of Seattle.

During her professional career at Weyerhaeuser, Williams sang in a group called the Sweat Band that performed folk and fiddle tunes for company picnics and parties. Though she is now retired, she said the Sweat Band still gets together on an informal basis for the enjoyment of the band members.

Williams's mother taught piano lessons in the family home in the town of Home for many Key Peninsula students, some of whom may remember her to this day.



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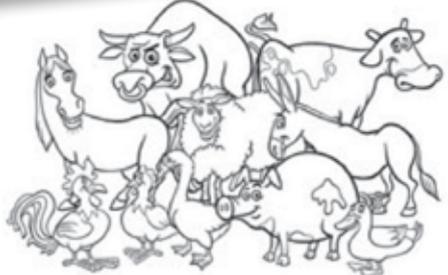
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BEST OF KP SUMMER

WHAT'S YOUR BEST?

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The **Best of KP Summer** will be published in our August edition. Start writing your entry today!

See complete rules on page 23.

Email your entry to editor@keypennews.com **before June 8**. Please include your name, email address and telephone number.



There is a new face at the Lakebay post office as Postmaster Corey Swolgaard took over the top position in late April. It didn't take long for locals to begin filling him in on the history of Lakebay post office located in the unincorporated town of Home. No stranger to being the new guy, Swolgaard's 12 years of postal service had him working in Ollala, Tahuya, Southworth and Port Orchard post offices. He became the supervisor for both Bremerton and Port Orchard post offices, later serving as the Brinnon postmaster before coming to Lakebay. "I strive for good customer service. If anyone has a problem with the mail, call or visit the post office," he said. "We're here to help." A Port Orchard native, Swolgaard lives with his wife and a young Chihuahua/Shitzu puppy on 3 rural acres in Belfair, with his children and grandchildren nearby. *Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News*

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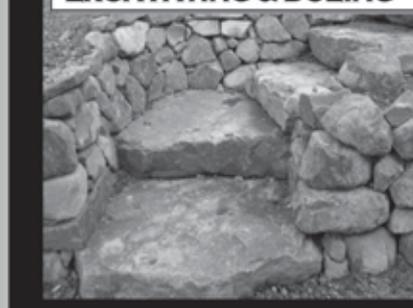
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Fifth-Grade Graduates Reflect and See New Opportunities

ALICE KINERK, KP NEWS

Graduation. For many, the word brings up images of high school or college ceremonies. But hundreds of local students completing middle school, elementary school and sometime even preschool will take part in graduation ceremonies in June as well.

While any graduation is an opportunity to reflect on the past and ponder the future, graduation from elementary school marks a major life change for 11-year-olds. For the first time, they will not learn reading, writing, math and science from one classroom teacher. Instead, there will be different teachers for every subject. Different classrooms too. Different classmates. Different rules and expectations. Lockers. Band. Sports.

High school and college graduations mark the culmination of four years of study, while elementary school graduation only comes after a full six years. Fifth-graders who attended co-op preschools at Vaughn or Evergreen Elementary will have spent the past eight years as proud Huskies or Eagles.

All over the Key Peninsula, soon-to-be-sixth-graders are approaching this milestone with wisdom, foresight and excitement about the future.

“What graduation means to me is growing up—moving to a new part of life,” said Vaughn fifth-grader Daymian Miller. “And last but not least, just experiencing new things.” For his classmate Ena Bailey, elementary school will be something to remember forever. “Hopefully we will all look back at our years at Vaughn and never forget them, because this only happens once in a lifetime.”

Finishing up the elementary years will be an opportunity to try new things for Levi Hook. “I can do band,” he said. “I have always wanted to do band.”

At Evergreen, moving on will give students a chance to appreciate what they have achieved so far and get excited for what comes next.

“It means celebrating how hard we’ve worked in the past years of school,” said Kaisa Chambers.

Mia Hausvik presented a stoic view of the occasion and stated that graduation is a time to “accept that your life is going to change and move on with it.”

For Julian Russum, Evergreen teachers had high standards, but will be missed. His graduation thoughts center on “how hard I have worked for five years and all the caring teachers I’ve known.”

Fifth-graders at Minter Creek also had mixed emotions.

To Addy Johnson, the event equals more responsibilities, but more fun too. “Graduation means you are finally an older kid, you get treated like one, you get more work, and it’s an amazing experience, or so I have heard,” she said.

“It is a time to have a new start at a new school with new friends and new teachers,” said classmate Chelsea Bass, who added that although she may be moving on, she won’t be a stranger to the elementary school she’s known and loved. “I will always be back to help whenever they need it,” she said.



Upper row Vaughn photos Ted Olinger, KP News: Daymian Miller; Ena Bailey; Levi Hook
Middle row Evergreen photos Lisa Bryan, KP News: Kaisa Chambers; Mia Hausvik; Julian Russum
Lower row Minter Creek photos Alice Kinerk, KP News: Addy Johnson; Chelsea Bass; Harley Graves
Bottom right Vaughn photo Ted Olinger, KP News: Kiera Mays

Harley Graves viewed graduation as a worthy accomplishment. “I can feel like I did something amazing. I can feel like I did something very grand that I did very well on, that I succeeded,” Harley said.

As Key Peninsula citizens born between September 2006 and September 2007 move on in their lives, a more important question might be whether the Key Peninsula is prepared for them. As Vaughn Elementary student Kiera Mays said of herself and her peers, “Fifth-grade graduation means that we’re ready for this new stage, and the world better be ready because we’re coming, and we’re coming full speed ahead.”



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Mi'lady lords over her domain on the Grubaugh farm in Longbranch. *Photos: Lisa Bryan, KP News*

A Kid for All Seasons

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Stopping to chat at the market one day Frank Grubaugh says, “Well, we’ve got to run now—we’ve got seven kids at home.”

His wife Linda leans in and whispers, “We have goats.”

The Grubaughs are both retired. They live in Longbranch along with a small herd of Nigerian Dwarf goats and a half-crazy rescue dog named Bruno who thinks he’s a Nigerian Dwarf too.

When the Grubaughs first started talking seriously about goats, the idea was mostly to use them to keep encroaching Himalayan blackberries at bay. Nigerian Dwarf goats? What do you think? Well, wouldn’t that be cool? They are smaller, tamer and easier to handle than other dairy goats breeds. It helps that they usually top out at 75 pounds.

Frank says they started four years ago with two females—one mature red, Martha, and her daughter, Mi'lady. Neither Frank nor Linda had any farm experience but, why not? It'll be fun.

They read everything they could to learn about the breed; how to care for them, feed them, fence, house and breed them to keep everyone in their herd happy, healthy and safe from harm. The Grubaughs enjoy

taking country walks and when they do, the goats trail close behind. Goats are herd animals and Frank says they do really well on walks because they naturally want to stay with the group. No leashes are required, the goats pretty much fall into line behind the leader. Bruno, the crazy dog, races ahead of Frank and Linda. The goats quickly follow Bruno, which seems to make him feel like he’s king of the hill. Bruno begins barking and chasing his tail in circles to show off. Frank says people get a real kick seeing all of them out on the road.

The Grubaughs’ goats had kids in April, seven in all—two females and five males this time. At two weeks old, they are already running, jumping and playing kid games. The more they are handled at this age by humans, the tamer they’ll be as adults. So, since they will need homes for most of these kids, the Grubaughs force themselves to cuddle the goats, one at a time—for the goats’ sake, of course. Like all kids, they grow up fast and in the blink of an eye; the kids are nearly four weeks old. Frank says they are already more fun now. In the summer he and Linda pull up their chairs outside the fenced area and watch the goats play. They run, they jump and nearly fly through the air with ease. The goats are a riot. Martha,

Mi'lady, Boots and Oreo (Frank’s “girls”) love their goat cookies and will happily eat them right out of your hand and come begging for more. Still, as friendly as these goats are with humans, they need to live with other goats in a herd, even if it’s a small one.

“We really love our goats,” Frank says. “And goat milk is delicious—there’s nothing like it.” A natural progression for goat fanciers is making yogurt and farmstead cheese. The Grubaughs were newbies to cheese making, so they hit the books to learn how. Nigerian Dwarfs breed year-round, so it’s possible to stagger breeding for a year-round milk supply.

For people not interested in raising goats for their milk, wethered (neutered) male Nigerian Dwarfs make wonderful pets and are often sought for use as 4H projects. Frank’s word to the wise: “Human kids grow up quickly and move along too. The lifespan of this breed is about 14 years, so be prepared to continue caring for them after your children move on.”

While some folks describe Nigerian Dwarfs as dogs masquerading in colorful goat costumes, don’t be tempted to treat them like dogs. They live outside and need to graze. Remember those Himalayan blackberries they’re supposed to control?





Peninsula freshman Linsey Lovrovich won second place at the 3A state championship track and field meet at Mount Tahoma High School May 26, running the 800 meter in 2:12.30, breaking the PHS record for the fourth time in four consecutive races but missing the state record by one-quarter of a second. She collapsed afterwards and was carried to the podium by Coach Curtiss Hall to receive her medal. After a rest, she took fourth place in the 400 meter. *Photo: Jack Olinger* BELOW: Tacoma Power is upgrading the Potlatch Power lines, towers that carry Peninsula Light Co. power. *Photo: Jim Bellamy*



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Enter before June 8.

Everyone is qualified to enter with a poem, story or essay. Judges will chose winning entries that best express the KP summer theme, tell an evocative story and are fun to read. The contest ends soon so get writing tonight.

What do you love the best?

Best of KP Summer will be published in our August edition. Winners for the best poems and stories will be featured in the special pull-out section, sponsored by local businesses and organizations.

Email your entry to editor@keypennews.com before June 8. Please include your name, email address and phone number.

OFFICIAL RULES: Limit three entries per person; maximum 150 words for poetry; 300 words for prose. Entries must include your name, telephone number and email address. Judges will select winning entries based on originality, theme and storytelling. Winning entries will be published in the August 2018 KP News as space allows. All entries become the property of Key Peninsula News and may be edited for publication.

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In May, the Key Peninsula News again helped sponsor the very popular Livable Community Fair at the Key Peninsula Civic Center. Our photo booth was busy “putting your face in the paper” for visitors. The fair is a great opportunity to meet our readers and people from other local nonprofit organizations—the Livable Community Fair brings together many of the volunteers who make the Key Peninsula such a great place. Below is a sampling of the smiles we encountered during the day. *Photos Lisa Bryan with Tim Heitzman, KP News.*

