



# KEY PENINSULA NEWS

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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

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## Red Barn Open for Summer Thanks to CHSW

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Plans to close the Red Barn Youth Center for the summer have been suspended since Children's Home Society of Washington has stepped into the breach to keep youth summer programs there open and operational.

Word traveled quickly in June as the KP community learned that leadership of the Red Barn Youth Center decided to close their doors to regular operations over the summer with the intention of reopening in the fall, following the Peninsula School District schedule.

Gina Cabbidu, in her first year as program manager for Children's Home Society of Washington-KP Family Resource Center in Vaughn, said she was surprised by the news and wondered what else was available and accessible for middle and high school age youth during summers on the KP.

A few inquiries delivered the hard truth: not much.

With little time to spare, CHSW stepped up to create a summer youth program to host both drop-in and scheduled activities at the Red Barn in a program they're calling "Key Kidz at the Red Barn."

"We saw the need and jumped into action right away to pull the funding and resources together," Cabbidu said. "By talking to community partners to create a community-led program, accessible and fun for our youth, we found the path forward together."

"Our board came together pretty quickly to approve the plan," Peter Hedin, president of the Red Barn board of directors said. The plan makes CHSW a summer tenant in July and August to deliver the youth programming that RBYC is not staffed to provide over the summer.

This is not the first summer RBYC struggled to remain open. It announced a summer closure in 2018 due to lack of operational funds, but remained open on a limited basis.

"Our experience was that our summer operation wasn't well attended," Hedin said. "We will be doing several RBYC events over the summer, just not on a daily basis."

Beginning July 1 through Aug. 23, the doors of the Red Barn will be open to youth Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

In partnership with KP School Bus Connects, Key Kidz at the Red Barn will have transportation available Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays to and from the Red Barn for youth coming for the CHSW summer activities.

"We're happy to do whatever we can to support youth programming," said Marcia Harris, who coordinates the KP Bus Connects program under the fiscal umbrella of the KP Community Council. "I'm so pleased Gina and I could work together to make this happen quickly. Transportation makes a remarkable difference for youth on the KP."

Kids coming to the Red Barn can enjoy board games, billiards, foosball, basketball, water games, volleyball, art, and more throughout the day, including snacks. But that's only the beginning.

"We're crafting a schedule of fun and dynamic activities with local community members and organizations to be offered on-site," Cabbidu said. Community partners such as Key Peninsula Fire Department, Harbor WildWatch, and others will offer musical interactions, nature lessons, science experiments, health and wellness exercises, and more, she said.

"It's been a huge effort and we are still building the program minute by minute," Cabbidu said. "The youth out here deserve enrichment opportunities, the community can show off their passions and skills, and this incredible space can rise to the potential it was built for."

Former RBYC Executive Director Clint Rosson moved on from his post in mid-June but said he is proud of the accomplishments the organization achieved during his four years at the helm. "We finished the basketball court and finally opened the multipurpose room in time to celebrate Christmas 2018," he said.



Come as you are is the only etiquette for the patriotic pageant. Photo: Richard Miller, KP News

## Homemade Parade Rides Again July 4

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

It is perhaps the most fitting legacy of the 19th century utopian, anarchist, skinny-dipping founders of Home Colony that their successors celebrate the founding of the nation with a Fourth of July parade that no one started, organized or advertised, which has nevertheless attracted a marching band that doesn't march (or play music), lawn-loving patriots on riding mowers, an assortment of decorated bicycles, strollers and livestock, and hundreds of onlookers every year for nearly three decades through nothing more than the ungovernable force of its own poetic momentum through time.

"People dressed up and walked around and waved flags and other people stared at us, that's how it started," said Bette McCord, a Lakebay resident since 1979. McCord is now the conductor of the perennial Peace Train float, a tie-dyed decorated wagon overflowing with tie-dyed children.

"There were also decorative goats," she said.

Leila Luginbill has lived on A Street along the parade route since 2011; her parents bought the house in 1979. "We have front row seats," she said. "Actually, it used to be that everybody was in the parade, so there was no one left to watch it."

Luginbill first marched in the parade sometime in the early 1990s, she said, but according to her mother, local historian Stella Retherford, it had been going on for at least a few years by then.

"Mother wanted to be in it, so we finally went. There were a few lawn tractors and an old car or two, and some ponies."

Luginbill's mother continued to march in the parade until she passed away in 2014. Luginbill has tried to keep up the tradition.

"I was in it a few years ago," she said. "My friend Ginger Lanier from down the way wanted to go dressed as a squid, and so I went as a squid wrangler."

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## HOMEMADE PARADE FROM PAGE 1

Whatever its origins, the parade now traditionally begins at 10 a.m. on the Fourth of July at the intersection of A Street and the KP Highway. It ambles along A Street very slowly, gathering strength as passersby join the array of vintage vehicles and decorative goats escorted by children on bikes with flags taped to the handlebars and lawn tractors trailing red-white-and-blue streamers.

The parade reliably slows down at one spot on the route where The Dr. Roes Down Home Band and guests, often in uniform (though not the same uniform), belt out brass ballads with lots of percussion.

The Key Peninsula Fire Department is also well represented.

"We've got no problem staffing all the rigs with volunteers that day; last year we had five in the parade plus a full shift on duty," said Volunteer Battalion Chief Anne Nesbit. "We always overstaff for the Fourth, though we tend to get more falls than fires."

As the parade moves on, so too does the crowd, all ending up at the corner of A Street and the uphill turn to 10th Avenue, where they confront a formidable display of pancake flipping and sausage grilling, courtesy of Home residents Paul Gruver and brothers Gerald and Garry Schneider.

"Our first summer here was 2000 and there was a small parade, but at the end there used to be a lady there that handed out Popsicles, just as a way to say, 'Thanks, we're glad to have you.' We thought that was a cool thing," Gruver said.

"But it dawned on me that I really like this Key Peninsula community, this Home community, and I didn't know of any other day of the year where the people of this little community would actually get together, get eyes on each other, and shake hands and tell each other stories and all that kind of stuff," he said. "So, I floated the idea of pancakes and sausage to a couple of friends, and we decided that we would put on our pancake breakfast one year. It started small, 100, maybe 75, and last year we served over 450."

Gruver, a retired Air Force brigadier general, organizes the complimentary breakfast with the two Schneiders: Gerald, a retired Air Force colonel and Garry, a retired Navy captain. They work with ten volunteers.

"I think this is going to be our 12th year," he said.

"We love doing this. Home is just a funky, different place and I think the parade is a fun, funky thing that celebrates our nation's birth but in a Home kind of way, and I think it's just perfect."



Above: William Michael Paul makes a rubbing of his fallen friend. Below: Paul at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall. Photos: Puget Sound Honor Flight

## KP Vietnam Vet Takes Honor Flight to D.C.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

In May, William Michael Paul, 77, a Lake Minterwood resident for 19 years, became the latest KP Vietnam veteran flown by Puget Sound Honor Flight to visit memorials built to commemorate military service by a nation that has not always been as grateful as it might have been.

Paul, a retired engineer and professional actor, said "I've been blessed with movie credits, stage work, acting awards, speaking awards, but this was the most humbling experience of my life."

The Honor Flight Network is a nationwide nonprofit organization created in 2005 to honor America's veterans by transporting them free of charge to visit and reflect at the memorials in Washington, D.C. Over 200,000 vets have been flown to date.

"My husband and I got involved in 2013," said Renee Peavey, until recently a longtime KP resident. After expressing interest in volunteering, Renee and Jim were encouraged to start their own Honor Flight hub in Western Washington, where 250 flight applications were languishing.

"So, we started a nonprofit, which neither one of us had done. We had our first board meeting in late 2013 and our first trip was that October. Since then we've made 24 trips and taken over 1,300 Western Washington veterans back to D.C."

Renee is now co-director of Puget Sound Honor Flight, one of 130 such hubs across the country. It is an all-volunteer organization and the trips are completely free for veterans. "It's all paid for by donations, VFWs, things like that, we get no federal funding," she said. "You have to have worn the uniform of the U.S. military; that qualifies you to be on an honor flight." Priority is given to World War II veterans, followed by Korea and Vietnam veterans.

Renee ran into Paul at a Gig Harbor military ball almost two years ago and invited him to apply for a flight.

"I thought, no, that's for WWII vets, I was just a Vietnam vet," Paul said. "She pointed out that less than 1 percent of the population joins

the military. I had no idea of that; being of a military mind I kind of thought everybody did. My whole family are Marines, Navy, Army—aunts, uncles and brothers—we're all military. I just never gave it a thought.

"So, I did sign up," he said.

Paul flew to D.C. in May on a plane mostly full of veterans and their companions and Honor Flight personnel.

"We make four trips a year and we take 112 people," Renee said. "We have a partnership with Alaska Airlines, which has been very generous to us, so we get 112 of the 168 seats on the plane; it's kind of like a charter. We pay for our tickets, Alaska gives us a discount and they give

us free food, free drinks, they decorate the departure gate and the arrival gate for a surprise homecoming with an honor guard. They're amazing."

It's a three-day trip that includes a ceremony at the WWII memorial, visits to the Korea and Vietnam War memorials and other monuments, and the changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery.

"I went as a blank slate because I didn't know what to expect," Paul said. "There wasn't a soul that didn't cry at some point. Lots of the WWII vets being recognized battled hard to get there, and most of them were in wheelchairs. Their stories really got me."

More Vietnam vets are starting to apply for Honor Flight trips, Renee said, and she encourages them.

"It's a different dynamic," she said. "We're taking some that are half skeptical, and then they have a great experience that helped maybe get a little closure. What's happening is that the Vietnam War was so long ago that people are starting to forget. It's just a new generation and when people, kids and such, see these guys out there in their caps and shirts, it reminds them they were there and they're still here."

"I'm a Marine," Paul said, "so the Iwo Jima Memorial was very emotional for me, because I'm Native American and most Native Americans go into the Marine Corps because of the code talkers and because of Ira Hayes, the Native American who helped raise the flag at Iwo Jima, so that's kind of our tradition."

Paul served four years in the Marine Corps, deploying to Okinawa and Iwakuni, Japan, to provide air support for operations in Vietnam. He returned home in 1968.

In October 2018, Paul underwent surgery for Stage III kidney cancer, with a 50 percent chance of survival. He lost one kidney, then had a life-threatening battle with pneumonia. Renee had told him he had to be able to walk at least half a mile to be part of the Honor Flight trip. He started walking up and down his driveway, and then kept walking farther and farther. Six months later he was cancer free, and flew to D.C.

"I went to the Vietnam memorial, the wall," he said. "I lost a friend and I rubbed his name, my friend John Sherman—we called him Jack—I made a rubbing of his name. Almost everybody there was rubbing a name. The whole spirit there was very, very emotional.

"There were a lot of tears, that's all I can say."

For more information go to [pugetsound-honorflight.org](http://pugetsound-honorflight.org)

