



## KPFD Approves 2023 Budget Amid Questions on Property Purchases, Spending

The fire district wants to pay for updating equipment and training while cutting back on overtime.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula board of fire commissioners voted 4-0 to approve its 2023 budget for Fire District 16 at its November 22 meeting. The fifth commissioner had an excused absence.

The budget estimates \$9,677,612 in spending during 2023, an increase of 2.8% over 2022. About 75% of that will go to paying for employee salaries, benefits and insurance, according to Fire Chief Nick Swinhart.

It was the first KPFD budget for Swinhart, who joined the department in May 2022 facing a budget shortfall and a public skeptical of the department's spending \$2.125 million on Key Center real estate at the end of 2021 for a possible new facility. (See accompanying article on page 12.)

"The biggest increases (in the 2023 budget) came from equipment purchases, like firefighter protective gear," Swinhart said. "A lot of the training (expense) has been pushed off in the last couple of years and we're trying to catch up on that. And there's vehicle and facility maintenance we want to get on top of."

The commissioners regularly fielded questions over the last year about the wisdom of the real estate deal and other spending, the necessity of a new facility, and whether "that kind of money," as one resident put it, could have been put toward "saving lives."

"We had a lot of discussions on this budget, probably more than we've had in a number of years," Commission Chair Stan Moffett told KP News. "I think we prudently took a look at not spending

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Welcome sign at Key Peninsula Middle School, home of the Cougars. Tina McKail, KP News

## Allegations of Unchecked Bullying at Key Peninsula Middle School Made by Parents

Parents are angry with what they see as a lack of response from the KPMS principal and the district.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Parents of current and former Key Peninsula Middle School students are demanding change, claiming bullying is an ongoing issue unchecked by school administration, notably Principal Jeri Goebel.

Though the outcry stems from a recent post on the Key Peninsula, Washington Facebook page that drew nearly 250 comments, some parents said they've reported bullying at the school for the last 16 years with little or no response at times.

Heidi Michaelson, whose son is a sixth grader at KPMS, wrote the original post: "When will KPMS finally do anything about the bullying problem they have?" She said her son was seriously assaulted in a hallway at KPMS in November.

Others posted similar experiences, some claiming their kids see violence and hear verbal abuse on school grounds regularly.

Two parents told KP News their children searched online for suicide methods after being bullied.

Between the start of the school year and press time in mid-December, Peninsula School District received seven written reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying at KPMS — far beyond any other in the district (see sidebar). It's the only PSD school that has suspended students for this type of behavior.

Leslie Livingston told KP News she had a daughter who went through KPMS and has another there now. Both experienced bullying at the school and she's worried about her younger daughter getting into trouble. "I don't want her getting so mad that she'll hurt (her aggressor)," she said. "She may feel better at the moment, but that will likely haunt her."

Some parents said that when the bullied students stand up for themselves they are

the ones who get in trouble, not the bullies.

"My son got punched in the cafeteria and he responded physically," said Valerie Brown. "He got lunch detention and the boy who punched him was at school the next day." Brown said she tried to meet with Goebel multiple times to discuss the incident, but the meetings "went nowhere."

Doreen, a KPMS parent who asked to be identified only by her first name, said "(My son got bullied) and felt he needed to stay home from school, and the school knows who did it and (the bullies) are still at school."

"Some of these bullied students will be double-victimized. First by the aggressor and then if they feel they need to miss school," said Dr. Sameer Hinduja, a professor of criminology at Florida Atlantic University and co-director of the Cyber-

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“NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS FROM WAUNA TO LONGBRANCH”

## Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of Key Peninsula News.

Of course, we might not really be 50. Could be 48; maybe 51? We're celebrating anyway.

The front page of this edition has January 2023 as Volume 50, Number 1. But while indexing our nearly complete online archive editions, dedicated volunteers discovered some peculiar discrepancies in the timekeeping of KP News editors past.

The earliest edition we have is October 1975, which refers to even earlier editions within its pages, but has no volume or issue numbers on its front page. The first numbered edition we have is dated February 1977, which is labeled Volume 3, Issue 2 and is notably the first edition that included a masthead.

That suggests the Key Peninsula Civic Center Newsletter, as it was originally called, launched in 1974. Perhaps as it grew in popularity (and size) someone decided to start keeping track and added the numbers.

It all worked fine until 1981 when partway through the year what should have been Volume 7 became Volume 8. Likewise, the year 1984 began as Volume 11 (when it was really 10) but somehow ended as Volume 12. The numbering errors continued, invariably followed by overcorrections that further confused the record instead of setting it straight again.

Reading the archives is something of a folksy delight. Whatever the paper may have lacked in journalistic standards, it informed the greater community of local news and items of common civic interest, groups and activities, local history. Even newcomers will recognize some familiar names that grace many roads on the peninsula. It gave residents the opportunity to read about others who lived and worked on the KP, to learn more about local schools, the fire department and the parks and recreation district. There are handwritten and hand-drawn advertisements, square dancing news, meeting

dates, club bulletins, history and recipes, all written by hard-working local volunteers strengthening community bonds through engagement and participation.

It left a record of the time, helped improve the local economy, and spread the word long before anyone ever heard the term email.

Like most publications, there were good years and bad. The newsletter struggled, was losing money and by August 2002 the KP Civic Center Association decided it was time to suspend publication and the presses stopped.

But if there's one thing I know for certain, it's that Key Penners are stubborn and refuse to let go of a great idea for long.

A Reconstitution Committee was formed by the KP Civic Center Association after the August shutdown and went to work resurrecting the publication financially and editorially. They created new publishing policies to focus on supporting and

building community by reporting on important local issues. An editor was hired part-time, and a host of people worked behind the scenes to make things happen.

The newspaper you hold in your hands today would not be here without the people who made the relaunch of Key Peninsula News possible in February 2003, an edition indexed as Vol. 30, Number 1. Special thanks to those essential committee members: Committee Chair Bill Trandum; KPCCA executive board members Loyd Miller, Tim Kezele, Dale

Loy and Sylvia Haase; past KPCCA presidents Betty Kelly and Dave Stratford; KPCCA board members Phil Bauer and Richard Brudvik-Lindner; Dave Brasfield, Ken Bushnell, Marjorie Dietz, William Dietz, Marty Marcus, Vicky McClung, Hugh McMillan, Simon Priest, Colleen Slater,

Bob Stackhouse, Ann Taylor, Ed Taylor, Rodika Tollefson, Irene Torres, Alice Tramil. Special thanks as well to the Angel Guild for their generous support for the 2003 reformation, support that continues today.

It was there, buried inside an early edition that our enquiring team found the key to answering the question of our founding, sufficient to celebrate 50 years in print.

The October 1975 edition mentions that a Larry Nichols was “the person responsible for getting this paper started.” Further searching found another

reference to him in our September 1977 edition:

“In this issue we would like to spotlight Larry Nichols of Longbranch for his contributions to our community,” we reported. Nichols was elected president of the KP Civic Center Association in 1972. “At that time, he was interested in tying the community together through a newsletter, the forerunner of the present Key Peninsula Newsletter. He carried it on during his second term in 1973, and it became an established project.”

Which makes us 51 in 2023, on our 50th anniversary?

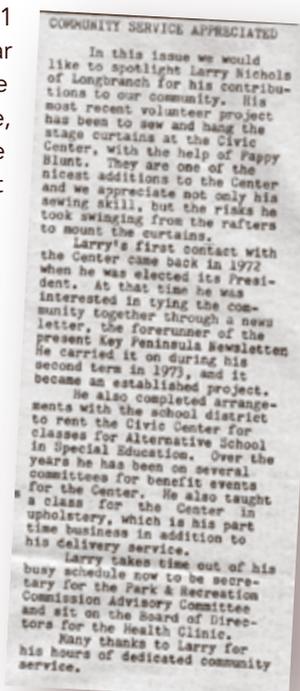
We decided to ask a responsible adult for guidance.

“You would not believe how many small and even bigger publications have this problem,” said Ilona Perry, library associate at the Tacoma Public Library's Northwest Room, who kindly received our 44-year collection of KP News editions for preservation into perpetuity.

“It has us grinding our teeth trying to figure dates, volume and issue numbers. There is no set protocol, and what you are suggesting — staying with the current volume count and acknowledging the discrepancy — is the best solution. And most importantly: Stay consistent from now on. Congratulations on your upcoming anniversary!”

That sounds like a yes.

Happy 50th Anniversary to Key Peninsula News with many thanks to the many hundreds of people who put their shoulder to the wheel of this work over five decades, and to the many thousands of donors who made it possible. ■





## BUDGET FROM PAGE 1

everything that we had available to us and putting money into reserves ... We really want to make sure that we have a good financial standing and make sure that we are taking care of our fiduciary responsibilities to the community.”

KPFD hired 12 career firefighters and paramedics over the last two years, adding eight new positions. That and other expenses required drawing down department reserves to a projected deficit of \$200,000, said then-Executive Assistant Christina Bosch at the time, who left her job with the district in August.

Swinhart inherited that projected deficit in the 2022 budget, also attributed to increased overtime costs from Covid-related and other staff absences, including two career staff members put on paid administrative leave for over six and three months, respectively. Both were cleared of any wrongdoing by outside investigators and returned to duty in the spring of 2022.

But instead of a deficit, the department was on track to end the year about \$185,000 in the black by press time, according to Swinhart.

“One major way we worked on closing that gap was working out an agreement with labor to change how and when we hire people back (after leave or injury) and overtime, which basically required lowering minimum staffing from seven to five,” he said.

The minimum number of personnel on shift was lowered to five in August and will remain there at least until January.

“It’s what we call a hard five; we don’t force overtime unless we drop below five, but we try to maintain seven,” Swinhart said. “Right now, we’ve got four vacancies; two long-term injuries and two people in paramedic school, so that definitely creates challenges day-to-day with staffing.”

Stations in Wauna, Home and Longbranch are all staffed 24/7, he said, and volunteers might staff Station 45, at the corner of State Route 302 and Wright-Bliss Road, early this year. Volunteers do not staff but currently respond out of Station 46 in Key Center.

Expanding services is a fixed cost, Swinhart said.

For example, staffing one station with one medic unit 24/7 can cost \$1 million a year.

After buying a medic unit, which is between \$200,000 to \$300,000, “you always have to have at least two people on duty,” Swinhart said. “So, you’ve got two people per shift over three shifts; that



KPFD Chief Swinhart looks to the screen as he presents his report to fire commissioners at the December 13 meeting. *Lisa Bryan, KP News*



Commissioner Shawn Jensen (left) and outgoing Fire Commissioner Keith Davies follow along during the Chief’s presentation. *Lisa Bryan, KP News*

is a minimum of six people that would be needed to staff that ambulance at that station. If you’re talking entry level, salary and benefits is over \$100,000 per person. And you need at least eight people to make six per shift.”

That fixed cost only goes up with fuel, supplies, maintenance and repairs for the vehicle and the facility.

“What I’ve been trying to get across to the folks who’ve been asking about this recently at the meetings, if we want to staff a medic unit at Station 45, for instance, we’d have to hire those additional people or we’d have to pull them

from somewhere else.”

KPFD receives insurance reimbursement for some ambulance rides, and netted about \$560,000 from 1,039 transports in 2022 by November 30.

KPFD employs 36 line personnel including three administrative chiefs, and support and maintenance staff, serving a population of 18,000 spread out over 65 square miles. In 2021, the department responded to 2,524 calls, about 80% medical, which is typical across the fire service. That works out to an average of seven calls per day, or 2.33 per station. The average response time was 10 minutes. ■

#### KPFD Personnel Changes

- Fire Commissioner Keith Davies announced his resignation from the board at the December 13 commissioners meeting, citing personal reasons, effective Jan. 1, 2023. “It has been a true honor to serve the citizens of this community as well as the outstanding members of this fire district,” he said.

Davies was appointed to the board in February 2011 to fill an unexpired term and was subsequently elected to two six-year terms. He has lived on the Key Peninsula since 1997 and began work in the fire service with Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One as a volunteer firefighter in 1979. He was later hired on, specializing in technical rescue, and retired from the service in 2015.

The fire department will accept letters of interest and resumes from KP residents interested in filling the balance of Davies’ term, which ends in January 2024.

- Assistant Chief Hal Wolverton will retire April 1 after 30 years in the fire service, all of it at KPFD. The district is advertising to fill the position and will consider applications from within.
- The district has been notified that up to four line staff may leave for one or more neighboring departments in the coming months and has advertised for possible so-called “lateral transfers” of firefighter/paramedics to create a list of potential replacements.

# Nationally Renowned Motorcycle Expert on Life and History in Lakebay

Ed Gilkison has lived in Lakebay most of his life and has worked on Velocette motorcycles nearly as long.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Ed Gilkison is a creature of habit.

The 67-year-old has lived in the same Lakebay area since 1966. He starts every morning with a cup of percolated Folgers coffee. He regularly digs through shoe boxes full of vintage pictures of the area that would make any historical society jealous. He takes late-afternoon walks down to the post office to check the mail, often taking photos of the old boat barn over the water on Joe's Bay. He even takes time almost daily to reminisce on his Facebook page about the history of Home, Lakebay and Longbranch.

But in between the parts of his day that move "like clockwork," you could say Gilkison is more a creature of hobby.

Count 'em: Cook, baker, string and woodwind instrument collector, typewriter enthusiast, photographer, machinist, amateur historian. But perhaps the two hobbies-turned-moneymakers he and the Gilkison family are best known for are building fishing boats, and restoring and repairing antique Velocette motorcycles.

Born in Enumclaw in 1955, the youngest Gilkison spent his first 11 years living in Buckley before he, his father Larry, mother Katy and brother John moved to Home. The waterfront house at the corner of A Street and 6th Avenue NW on Von Geldern Cove gave Larry much-needed space to build boats, something he was learning to do at Bates Vocational School.

"(Larry) built his first boat inside our living room in Buckley," remembered Gilkison. "He had to take out the wall of our house to get it out." As odd as that may sound, it was planned, and Larry ended up replacing the wall with a large sandstone fireplace.

"Our family has always been that way," Gilkison said. "Hobbies come first."

The Home house was previously owned by Leila Edmonds, daughter of George and Sylvia Allen, who helped found the Home Colony. They upgraded from a living room to an outdoor plastic-covered structure to build the boats. Even today the house is still missing an eave on one side after Larry removed it in the late 1960s to make it easier to move the newly built boats. They put up a separate shed, for the boys to tinker on their motorcycles, where Ed developed his passion for Velocette motorcycles.

Velocette wasn't a household name in the United States, and wasn't even much of a player in the motorcycle industry in its nearly 70 years in business. The British company maybe averaged building 20 to



Ed Gilkison is always on the job. *Tina McKail, KP News*

25 motorcycles a month. The company closed in 1971 and around that same time the then 15-year-old Ed bought his first Velocette — a 1947 model that came to him in pieces. That was the first of about 30 Velocette motorcycles Ed has fully restored in his life. He's done major repairs to another 30.

Ed's a 1973 Peninsula High School graduate and credits his two years of metal shop and one year of auto shop at the school as the catalyst for his fabrication skills.

"Classes like those can have such a positive impact on the lives of young people."

He said the road between the high school and the bus barn that now leads to Purdy Elementary School was used back then as a drag strip for the auto shop students to test their projects.

"We'd roar down that road while our teacher watched, and when we came back, he'd tell us if we needed to adjust the carburetor or make other changes," he said. "Can you imagine that today? That teacher would be thrown out of school."

Besides those few high school classes, Ed is pretty much self-taught.

In 1976 the Gilkison family moved less than a mile away to the 11-acre property in Lakebay where he continues to live today with John, giving up water views in favor of space. The family officially started the Gilkison Boat Co. a year earlier and built fiberglass hull commercial fishing boats. Larry, John and Ed spent the summer of 1979 building an 80-foot long by 48-foot wide boat shed that stands almost 30-feet tall at the highest point. It was large enough



Velocette detail. *Tina McKail, KP News*

to manufacture sometimes up to three boats a season, but most of the time they focused on one a year.

While Larry ran the shop and did the design and lofting work, Ed did most of the mechanics, including hooking up the engine systems, and all three did the fiberglass work. Katy even helped at times with the interior upholstery. The structure housed the family business until they closed it down in 1998, and today it's still one of the largest of its kind on the Key Peninsula. Most of the Gilkison Boat Co. fishing boats are still out there, including a 36-foot North Sea-style boat fishing halibut in Puget Sound.

At the same time the family was building boats, Ed also spent time on his motorcycle business. The property used to be a holly orchard and the 1920s shed where Gilkison currently works on the Velocettes was where the farmers cut and packaged holly to send across the country for holiday wreaths.

Gilkison is very meticulous, but you have to be to work on a Velocette. All Velocette motorcycles are handmade, meaning everything is hand-fitted. So even though two

bikes may look the same, it doesn't mean the same parts of one will fit on the other. Because of that, if you want your Velocette worked on by Gilkison, you better have some patience.

"Some of the motorcycles are here for years," said Gilkison, who has been working on one Velocette for 20 years. "To make them the way I do, they will look and run like they're brand new."

He's currently working on 15 motorcycles, four of them owned by a well-known Hollywood actor. Even rush jobs on something as small as an engine repair can take months because of his perfectionism. Taking too long? Gilkison gives customers two choices: "Take it or leave it."

"I'm the only one in the U.S. who does this type of work," he said. "A lot of people complain how long it takes, but not one person has ever complained about the results."

If you can stand to wait, Ed's work comes surprisingly cheap for being the leading expert in the country. He estimates he makes about \$40 an hour for labor.

"I don't know if I've ever made a profit on the business," Gilkison said. "It's more of an expensive hobby."

Gilkison has always been good with his hands, and pretty much could take apart and reassemble anything mechanical. He's so good that about two years ago while at a doctor's appointment at St. Anthony Hospital, he was able to troubleshoot and fix the machine used to take a biopsy that diagnosed him with prostate cancer. He's still recovering, but the prognosis looks good.

The diagnosis made him think a lot about life, work, friends and family. He never had kids, but has been spending more time teaching his nieces and nephews how to ride motorcycles. Now that he's feeling better, he wants to spend more time in his shop where he's still taking on orders. He invited his 87-year-old friend, Geoff Blanthorn, who he met 52 years ago in the Velocette Motorcycle Club, to live with him and John. He started bringing baked goods to the staff at the Lakebay Post Office. He posts more on Facebook so his younger family can learn more about him and his parents. He just wants to remind people that "we live in a pretty area" and there's a lot of history right "in our own backyard."

"Everything has something interesting about it, and everyone has an interesting story to tell about their lives," he said. "Even if it's about some crazy uncle, like me." ■

## Meredith Browand

KEY ISSUES



### 10 Years On

Dec. 14, 2012 dawned like any other mid-winter day. School was winding down before the holidays, Christmas was on the horizon, and families were anticipating the start of the coming new year. But it ended with the shattering realization of an incomprehensible tragedy as six teachers and 20 first-grade students were murdered at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

It seemed impossible that I was shopping for Christmas Legos for my two sons while moms and dads on the other side of the country were learning that their children were gunned down in their classrooms with a semi-automatic rifle, a weapon designed for war. Soon after the Sandy Hook shooting, I joined with parents and concerned citizens across the country to change gun laws and do anything we could to stem the tide of violence.

Where are we, as a state and a nation, 10 years later? As of this past November there were 706 identified mass shootings nationwide in 2022 and 11 in the state of Washington. These shootings include 21 killed and 17 wounded at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, seven killed and dozens injured at a Fourth of July parade in Highland Park, Illinois, and one killed and six wounded in a shooting in Vancouver, Washington.

The reality of the ongoing gun violence is devastating — families and communities torn apart by easy access to weapons and the failure of a government to protect its people. But there have been bright spots since the Sandy Hook shooting that lead to the hope we can change the violent reality we're currently living in.

In Washington we've seen meaningful changes enacted both at the ballot box and in the legislature. In 2014 voters approved I-594, mandating universal background checks for all firearms. In 2016 I-1491 passed on election day with 69% of statewide voters approving extreme risk protection orders. In 2018 Washingtonians overwhelmingly approved I-1639, which included enhanced waiting periods and training requirements for semi-automatic rifles. The Washington Legislature has also worked to make our state safer by regulating firearm possession by anyone subject to a protective order (2014 and 2019), limiting magazine capacity (2022) and regulating ghost guns (2022).

The progress at the federal level has been much slower than in Washington but in June 2022 President Biden signed the first major gun safety legislation passed by Congress in

nearly 30 years. This legislation is just a start, but it includes incentives for states to pass red flag laws, extends restrictions on firearm ownership for people convicted of domestic abuse and expands firearm background checks on people aged 18 to 21 seeking to purchase. Proponents of this legislation had hoped for more safety provisions to be included but the compromise bill still moved the needle on gun safety in the United States.

Sensible and reasonable gun safety regulations can save lives and make our communities both safer and stronger. Responsible gun ownership can coexist with laws designed to protect. This doesn't have to be an either/or conversation. Gun owners angry about increasing regulations often claim that the government is "coming for their guns" when in reality measures like these simply seek to protect and promote safety.

The children killed at Sandy Hook, and the thousands murdered since, deserved to grow up. They deserved to go to middle and high school, look forward to their future, and find happiness as they enjoyed full and prosperous lives. They did not deserve to die by bullets tearing apart their small bodies in their first-grade classrooms. The very least we can do to honor these children is to step up and speak out in the hopes other families won't have to suffer.

*Meredith Browand is a mother and activist who lives in Purdy.*

## Mark Michel

RIDE ON



### The Sandbox

Quite a while ago I had an opportunity to host a group who shared unique recreational interests. We were discussing future development of some vacant property and quickly got into a brain-storming session talking about opportunities. As might be expected, all the ideas focused on the specific interests of the group. They envisioned different activities in different sections of the vacant property, but all were exclusive to their passion.

The discussion gained momentum as they agreed, "This area will be great for 'X,' and that area will be great for 'Y,' allocating the entire space." That momentum came to an unpleasant stop when I mentioned an area that a different group thought would be great for their interests. "Aww, they already have enough space. This should be for us." To a large extent, they were right.

What surprised me was how jarring it was to have to consider others and their opinions and desires.

I think of that meeting when I hear or

watch school board meetings. Whether the discussion is books, masks, vaccinations or equal treatment of others, we all have beliefs and opinions. Many of us want the local school board to act on them.

Some activists who gained their "knowledge" through the internet or social media push for "parent-guided" curriculum. Does anybody really want "parent-guided," or do they simply want "me" guided? There's a strong probability there are parents on the other side of our pet issues. Would we be OK allowing "them" to guide what and how our kids are taught? If not, why are we OK pushing professional educators and administrators to succumb to our cause of the day?

It's understandable, even admirable, to want to advocate for our passions. Unfortunately, it seems to be increasingly less likely we're going to try to respect, consider and learn from those who may have different passions or beliefs. Every topic, every issue, every belief becomes a zero sum game where we push to get our way 100% without leaving a scrap for our "adversary," who may be our neighbor or friend. If we don't achieve that goal, even if there's a mutually beneficial compromise, we feel cheated, wronged or victimized.

We then feel compelled to lash out on social media (or a school board meeting) about how unfairly we've been treated and demand change. We may find sympathetic ears in the echo chamber of those who share our opinions, right or wrong. We hope to be artificially deputized as experts on issues we may know very little about, at times contradicting those who are the experts and all those who feel differently on the subject.

At some point we became so locked into our beliefs that we don't even consider others. I may not have been paying enough attention in the past, but it sure feels like a fairly recent phenomenon. I fear we've abandoned practicing cooperation in favor of vilifying or alienating those who don't fully agree with us. Again, these "others" may be our neighbors, friends, or even family.

Much like available land, time for teaching our children is precious. As a society we could choose to make it inclusive or try to lock out input that challenges or improves our opinions. We can close our minds to the ideas and needs of others, but I'm not sure any of us will find more joy in that compromised, isolated experience.

I'm pretty sure kids don't like to play alone, have limits put on their toys, or be told how to play. I'll continue to hope we can relearn how to play nice in the sandbox. I believe our lives and the lives of our children would be better.

*Mark Michel is a recently retired commercial airline pilot and Key Pen Parks commissioner. He lives in Lakebay.*

## Anne Nesbit

LET'S TALK



### Suicidal Thoughts? Call 988

We have to talk about it. Asking someone if they are having suicidal thoughts will not give them the idea of ending their life. Instead, it creates an environment where they will feel safe asking for help to save it.

Suicide touches all of us. Most of us know of at least one person who has taken their life or who lost a friend or family member to suicide. It is the 12th leading cause of death in the United States. But it is the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10-14 and 25-34, overwhelmingly boys and men (80%). While girls and women more often have suicidal thoughts, males die by suicide more frequently, half of them by firearm.

In 2020, 1.2 million people in the U.S. attempted suicide; 45,279 died, well below totals for heart disease, cancer and COVID-19. But the difference is that unlike those diseases, most of us are uncomfortable talking about suicide or thoughts of self-harm in hopes of preventing it.

Many of us grew up believing that people who died by suicide were crazy or selfish. Research has proven this is not true. A person in crisis can become so set on stopping their pain that their normal thinking and decision-making skills go out the window. A suicidal person can't see any escape from their pain, other than death. It is very important to remember, however, that they are deeply conflicted about the act of suicide.

Most who die by suicide have had sudden mood changes, or may have begun to behave differently. They may also have in some fashion talked about ending their lives, because most people who are suicidal want to talk about it. When you ask someone if they are having suicidal thoughts, you are giving them permission to share their story. What is important here is that often people don't share or ask for help because they are afraid and embarrassed by the stigma that surrounds suicide.

It is imperative that we get past that. The words we use matter. For example, we should not use the word "commit," which is often associated with committing a crime. Suicide is not a crime. We need to be direct, without judging, sensationalizing or unintentionally glorifying it. This is harder than it sounds.

When you ask someone about suicide, listen to the answer. The suicidal person needs to share their story, and remember they are not in a position to hear logic or all the reasons why they should choose life. They need to be heard.

If you feel that suicide is imminent, call 911. If not, call the suicide hotline at 988. Often just talking about their suicidal thoughts creates the time needed to get the individual through a moment of crisis. Then the individual can create a safety plan working with a professional.

Remember, most people who are suicidal are ambivalent; they do not want to die. Instead, we can offer them time while they are in crisis in an effort to get them to move in a different direction.

You may have noticed that I have used words such as most, some and may. That is because there is no easy formula to share that can absolutely save a life. However, we know that talking about suicide instead of ignoring it can save lives because it reduces a stigma that exists in our society, and it is this stigma that keeps people from asking for help.

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

*If you have questions or would like more information regarding signs, or how to talk and ask about suicide, Nesbit will be holding a "Talk Saves Lives" presentation at the Key Peninsula Fire Department headquarters in Key Center January 26 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.*



## Be That Kind Stranger

It was a sunny fall day, so I went for a run at Gateway Park. When I run, I like to give folks a half smile and a little wave when I pass them. I get something similar in return or the opposite, a diversion of eyes with no engagement.

On this crisp day, I received the biggest smile from a woman who was walking towards me

with her friend. It was one of those smiles you give a friend you haven't seen in a while. It was filled with so much warmth and openness I couldn't help but grin back as I ran past. That silly, happy grin stayed with me for the rest of my run. Since then, it has me reflecting on how two seconds from a stranger can change the trajectory of a day or a mood.

We are more technologically connected than we have ever been, and yet the most disconnected personally. We are so busy worrying about our next destination or our next task or checking our social media over and over again that we miss the opportunity to slow down and be present.

Our world feels so divided right now that genuine connection seems like a lost art. In fact, we use our connection tools as a way to avoid connection. I know I am not the only one guilty of being absorbed in my phone or so distracted that I avoid talking with people.

As humans, we crave connection, and yet many of us have a fear of making those new connections. Why is this? Are we just out of practice?

For a social connection, there needs to be a level of vulnerability, trust and openness; it takes courage. Talking to a stranger at a party requires stepping out of your comfort zone, jumping in headfirst without knowing the outcome.

Personal avoidance might be rooted in shyness, fear or insecurities. And personal relationships can be messy. So, an extension of that, saying "hi" to a stranger can be interpreted internally as messy as well. Are they going to want to talk to you? You've opened the door a crack, are they going to put their foot in the door to keep it open?

Our thoughts might jump to what if this person doesn't like me, or are annoyed by me, or will I embarrass myself? Your mind is telling you these things because it thinks it is keeping you safe.

Or maybe we think, this is a stranger, I don't

know them and won't see them again, so why would I even care to smile or say "hi."

If you have some type of insecurity, the first thing you can do is take off the expectation that is holding you back. Reframe your inner voice. Instead of fear, tell yourself that you are taking this action from a place of kindness and love.

But, if you hold the belief, what's the point? I don't know them; they have no bearing on my life. Why should I waste my energy? Then you might be missing out on the small treasures that add up to a rich and full life experience.

Take small steps with a smile a day to a stranger and add more as your comfort level grows.

Think of your happiness level fueled with smiles and kind words. Like Santa's sleigh in the movie "Elf," the sleigh won't fly if the spirit meter is empty. You need to believe.

With your simple act of kindness, you are also raising the other person's happiness meter. It's a two for one. Kindness is infectious.

At the end of that same run, I was walking down the hill and an older man I had passed and given a smile to earlier was walking beside me. He made a comment and I had to pull out my earbud to hear him. When he asked me if I had a good run, I made the decision to put my headphones away instead of back in my ears. I slowed down my pace so I could have a conversation with him as we walked down the hill. In those five minutes, we found multiple connection points and both of us parted grinning. I didn't get his name and I haven't seen him since but that doesn't take away from the moment of presence we shared with one another.

I give credit to the joyous lady I encountered earlier. Her smile gave me courage and reminded me of the power of connection. As we begin 2023, I invite you to keep the spirit of giving going.

*Arissan Nicole is a certified life coach and speaker specializing in women's empowerment. She lives in Lakebay.*

## Letters to the Editor

### KEY PENINSULA NEWS BIAS

I am writing to help Taylor Bay resident Dale Lyman improve his letter to the editor from December's issue.

First, avoid stereotypes, such as the slow driver with the liberal bumper stickers, as they are a hallmark of the lazy writer. Cite examples like what the bumper sticker said, and an evocative description of the driver. If you saw an editor of the KP News holding up traffic, sporting an Emily Randall sticker, share that with the readers.

More clarity is needed on your charge of pandering for advertisers. Are ads for realtors and Drive Thru Feed part of this conspiracy? As an advertiser with the KP News, I can attest that I never got a price break on an election campaign ad, and my opponent got the same price as me.

When you use terms like "amateur" to describe KP News writers, you are exposing your total lack of research preparing your letter. Do your due diligence and then reconsider your choice of words. Go ahead, it's easy — they got this thing now called Google.

The KP News contributors that I have met do not seem to have any allegiance to a political party or ideals. What they do have is a commitment to our community and a love of journalism.

But the biggest failure to effectively communicate your ideas is that you never provide a single example to support your claims. Was there liberal bias in their coverage of local issues? Please specify. Note the offending fake news and name the comrade who wrote it.

Based on the midterm election results, America is rejecting Trump-approved conspiracy theorist candidates, long on

## José Alaniz WE LIVE HERE: THEIR KRAMPIC MAJESTIES REQUEST



bluster but short on substance. It's no longer enough just to dehumanize people with descriptions like "passive aggressive idiots."

I suggest less name-calling and more discussion of your own contribution to the quality of life in our community.

I am happy to further help a neighbor improve his writing skill, so feel free to contact me. I can also give you some advice on filling out your ballot.

But as a former award-winning high school sports editor, if your letter came across my desk, I would mark it: Revise and Re-submit.

*John Kelly, Wauna*

#### WELCOMING THE MUSTARD SEED VILLAGE

That was a wonderful article about the work behind the completion of the Mustard Seed Village, and I'd like to add a few more details regarding this new home for elders on the KP. ("After 16 Years of Work, Assisted Living for Elders Comes to the Key Peninsula," December 2022.)

This is the first new building in Key Center since the post office was built almost 20 years ago, and only the second new building in 30 years — kind of a slow boom. (I'm not counting the conversion of Walt's into the Peninsula Market).

With the opening of the Mustard Seed Village, the population of Key Center will increase by 250% (a much faster boom)! It will be one of the largest employers on the KP, and probably one of the most expensive projects built out here as well.

But we can't stop there.

Where is our optometrist, where is our physical therapist, our bakery? How can we be a boom town without a gas station? (Or maybe go green and put in an EV recharging station!) Where is our sewer system? That would double the usable space in Key Center by getting rid of individual drain fields. That could allow more businesses in the same space, or possibly a park in beautiful downtown Key Center.

But for now, we should take a moment to appreciate what has been done by our community that is needed and unique, and reported on so well by our local newspaper. And that is the most important thing we are doing here — building and nurturing a community.

*Bill Roes, M.D.  
The Mustard Seed Project  
Board President (2006-2012)  
Lakebay*

## OBITUARIES



#### Max Diaz Rosas

Max Diaz Rosas passed away suddenly November 27. He was 17 years old.

Max was an amazing brother to three siblings, his sister Raquel (26), brother David (23) and youngest brother Gabo (8). He was surrounded by love with two sets of parents: David and Staci Diaz Duran of Key Peninsula; and Romana Rosas and Danny Diaz in Mexico. Max also had very close relationships with his grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Ours is a tight family and spending time together was of great importance to Max.

Everyone who knew him will remember Max as vibrant. He was loud — so loud. It's possible that we are partial, but too many have agreed that everything he did would blow you away. He was a talented musician. He could play any instrument he tried but spent most of his time perfecting his performance on the drums and guitar. He played constantly. The house was always filled with sound and warmth.

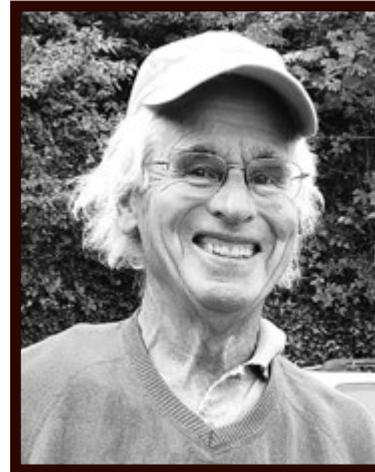
Max was in his senior year at Peninsula High School. During his time in the district, he was active in wrestling, track and band. He was a history nerd and loved learning about war. Photography became something he enjoyed as well. The teachers in Max's life were patient, kind and forgiving — he loved them. He learned many of his funnier life lessons in band, lessons that benefitted others as well.

Max was always smiling, laughing, lifting us all up with his light. His close friends and girlfriend would tell you that he was always there to listen to the problems of others and rarely showed that he had his own. He wanted to infect others with happiness and light. And his beauty and smile were infectious.

We miss you, Max. Every day we wake up and remember that you are not here with us. We miss the noise of the house, hearing you play with your brother, playing

your loud music, or calling out to tell us about your ideas and plans for your future. We love you always and will find you again.

If all our love could have protected you, you would have lived for eternity.



#### Rufus Lund

George "Rufus" Hubble Lund died peacefully at home with his family in Lakebay on the autumnal equinox, Sept. 22, 2022.

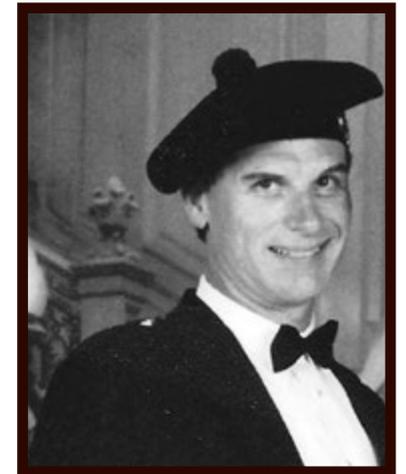
As an avid book collector and archivist, Rufus would make certain the record included all historical markers of his 76 years — from his birth in Tacoma in 1946 to his marriage to Barbara Pernoud Lund in 1980 and the birth of his daughter, Lydia, in 1990. For the sake of completeness, Rufus would also point to his academic records at Holy Cross School, L'institut Stanislas de Cannes, Bellarmine Preparatory, the University of Washington and University of Texas.

Rufus' collected papers reveal a career of enormous capacity for learning and a nearly encyclopedic memory. After earning his undergraduate degree, Rufus joined the Defense Language Institute Support Command at Fort Bliss, Texas, where he went through rigorous language training before shipping off to Vietnam with a small group of comrades who became dear friends. Upon his return to the U.S., he managed a division of his father's die-casting business, Puget Corporation, and then pursued a master's degree in library science from the University of Texas at Austin. As an archivist, he went on to work at the Harry Ransom Center and the Rhode Island Historical Society. In between, his friends welcomed his skills as a greenhouse grower, carpenter and tool designer.

But it is the rich secondary sources that affirm Rufus' history. His life-long love of a good story and genealogical research was honed at the family dinner table of his late mother, Elizabeth "Betty" Greig. He learned the restorative powers of a saltwater swim from his late father, George Andrew Lund. His love for his wife was evident in every

sketch of hers he saved over the years of their life together moving from Austin to Guemes Island to Maui. He cared deeply for his daughter's happiness. He shared his devotion to South Head with his brother, sisters, cousins, nieces and nephews. His friends will tell you what books connected them and that no one baked a more sublime apple pie. Strangers will remember his kind heart.

A memorial service to celebrate Rufus will be held in summer 2023. Contributions in his memory may be made to Key Peninsula Community Services.



#### Michael Campbell

Michael Campbell of Lakebay died and went to be with the Lord December 10. He was 70 years old.

Mike was born and raised in Seattle and graduated from Nathan Hale High School in 1970. He served in the Navy and was stationed on Whidbey Island. He went on to work at Boeing as a machinist and later as the lead machinist in the shop for 38 years.

He retired in 2012 and began having strokes almost the very next day. This led to dementia, from which he suffered nearly nine years, and was ultimately the cause of his death.

A true Scotsman, Mike enjoyed participating in the Highland games.

Mike is survived by his wife of 21 years, Susan; daughter Cassie Mailer, granddaughter Alexis and grandson Drew of Puyallup; daughter Callie Mailer and grandson Corey of Cathlamet; stepdaughter Crystal (Scott) Cantu and grandsons Zack, Jarred, Caleb and Luke; stepdaughter Alicia Vanderhoof and grandchildren Mason and Makenna Shippy; stepson Bryce (Shannon) Clothier and grandchildren Matthias and Trinity Clothier; and his older brother, David Mailer.

At his request, Mike's remains will be cremated and there will be no memorial service.

## Key Pen Cub Scout Pack No. 222 Needs Volunteers

If the pack can't continue, then interested Cub Scouts will have to head to Gig Harbor.

STAFF REPORT

The only Cub Scout Pack on the Key Peninsula is at risk of being disbanded after a lack of volunteers and low funding due to poor popcorn sales, the pack's main fundraiser.

Cub Scout Pack 222 is made up of several "dens" of kindergarten through fifth-grade students. Each den must have a den leader and every pack must have a cubmaster. A pack committee, along with a committee chair, helps support the den leaders throughout the year.

Pack 222 needs all of the above. Cubmaster Mat Kummerfeldt stepped down in December and will be moving out-of-state in the spring. The pack was meeting twice a month at Camp Delano Bay.

"This is a great opportunity for someone who wants to pour back into this generation of youth," said Carrie Standish, Rainier district director for the Pacific Harbors Council with the Boy Scouts of America. "Kids need this now more than ever."

Standish said the membership is growing in the district, but the volunteer count is dropping. If Pack 222 disbands, all Cub Scouts will need to join a different pack in Gig Harbor.

Volunteers don't necessarily need to be parents of the scout, and former Eagle Scouts are encouraged to help. All volunteers need to at least fill out an application and complete Youth Protection Training. Those interested can email [BSAPack222@gmail.com](mailto:BSAPack222@gmail.com). ■

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## Key Pen Park Commissioners Will Seek Community Input to Further Honor Scott Gallacher

The man nicknamed “Park Daddy” left a legacy that will live on for generations. Many locals want to ensure his real name is never forgotten.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

At the Key Pen Park board of commissioners meeting December 14, the board responded to an earlier proposal presented by a group of community leaders.

Locals Phil Bauer, Frank Dibiasse, Frank Garratt, Bruce Macdonald, Jeff Minch, Jud Morris and Todd Rosenbach joined forces in November to deliver an unexpected pitch to park commissioners — to revise the name of Gateway Park or 360 Trails to include the name of Scott

Gallacher, former Key Pen Parks executive director, who died unexpectedly at work April 30, 2020.

Jud Morris, retired manager of Children’s Home Society of Washington Key Peninsula Family Resource Center, cited the growth of Key Pen Parks since his own arrival in 2006. He listed the Home Park and playground, the playground and pavilion at Key Peninsula Civic Center, 360 Trails, Maple Hollow, Gateway Park (and its splash pad), and the paved walkaround at Volunteer Park.

“The tremendous growth was very dynamic and one of the people mainly responsible for this was Scott Gallacher,” Morris said. “He had a vision, he had a focus, he had an energy and a dedication that I think is also reflective of this board.”

Morris acknowledged the installation of a memorial bench bearing Gallacher’s name at Volunteer Park as well as a memorial plaque near the splash pad at Gateway Park, but said the group he came with felt there should be greater recognition for what Gallacher brought to the Key Peninsula.

“We’d like to recommend that you pass a motion to change the name from Gateway Park to the Scott Gallacher Gateway Park or Scott Gallacher 360 Park,” he said. “The bottom line is he couldn’t have done it without your support. And I don’t think you could have done it without him.”

Frank Dibiasse said he recalled Home Park being a junkyard when he and his wife came to live here. “Our girls took

advantage of baseball and t-ball out here. The district has grown and adds so much to the quality of life out here.”

Dibiasse praised Gallacher’s ability to represent the need for recreation in his grant proposals to funders.

“It was clear to me that Scott was very much about the community, not just being a park or executive director there for an opportunity to network.”

Todd Rosenbach said, “I think he was the right person for the right time. He

came into this organization with a ton of energy, as you all know, and could even be strident as a bull in a china shop. But it was that dynamism and energy that made him special, and it also made him really a Key Peninsulan.

“I think Scott brought a unique spirit that I think we all have. And it comes out at the best of times for all of us,” Rosenbach said. “I know it’s a tough thing to do — to name a park after one person — but I think it’s a really unique situation we have here.”

Commissioner Ed Robison said that when the naming policy was developed about 10 years ago, it was Gallacher who emphasized he did not want parks named for people but for geographic areas.

“But in our naming policy what we can do is name the facilities for individuals, so maybe the spray park itself,” Robison said. “We should go in the spirit of what Scott wanted.”

Reading the policy aloud, Commissioner Shawn Jensen said it stated that suggestions for names of any park or public facility solicited from the general public, individuals and organizations, from park personnel, or the board of commissioners, shall not be excluded from consideration.

Executive Director Tracey Perkosky told commissioners she thought her office would likely begin to encourage public input in the new year.

Phil Bauer said, “I always envisioned walking up the 360 to start up the hill with a couple of poles and a sign overhead that reads, ‘The 360 Trails in Honor of Scott Gallacher.’” ■



Into the  
**WILD**  
EXPLORING WITH THE  
KP NATURE GUIDE

## Productive Infections and the Creation of Soil

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

A robin pulls a worm from the lawn. A brief tension, released, and with a few tosses of the robin's head the worm is gone.

Dawn on New Year's Day. It's my first bird of the year. Hey, my first act of predation too. Great. Behind the robin the lawn gives way to salal and sword fern. Daylight turns large firs from gray to green.

Despite the air of the primordial, today my sympathy is with the worm. Soil and fertility have consumed my thoughts lately, and not just because every ounce of effort and organic matter I put into my garden soil is repaid threefold. I look out my window and see pastures, replanted forest, fruit trees. It's hard to think of New Year's as a blank slate anymore.

So, it's my first worm of the year. And my first chance as a naturalist to get ridiculously obsessed with a small moment and ask a chain of questions worthy of a 4-year-old: But why? How? Et cetera.

It is well known that earthworms improve soil by eating whatever partially decomposed organic matter is in the soil and pooping it out as humus, a substance that holds water, improves aeration and anchors nutrients so that they don't all dissolve in water and retire to the ocean. It's that last benefit that raises a first simple and strange question: But why, if some nutrients are inevitably lost to water, isn't the landscape slowly depleted?

Plants cannot grow without nutrients. Carbon and nitrogen, two of the most important plant building blocks, come from the atmosphere, which is endless. That

explains how organic matter can accumulate over time. Photosynthesis is wizardry — matter from air. But equally essential nutrients like phosphorus, calcium, potassium and magnesium come from rock, ever so slowly, which seems to make the recycling of such nutrients from previous plants a thing of utmost importance. Yet decomposition and growth cannot fully be digesting each other, no matter how many worms are around. Plants, worms, birds cannot just be taking, taking, taking — predators of nutrients — or we wouldn't be host to some of the greatest forests in the world.

How is it we have soil at all? Think of how our terrain began, with glaciers leaving behind raw rock and gravel and the intensely compressed clay and sand we now call hardpan. How, in a mere 10,000 years, do you get from that lifeless terrain to soil with enough nutrients for mammoth trees?

The answer is that life begets life. Living things work hard to sweeten the pot for other living things.

First of all, bacteria are everywhere, eating everything, creating everything. In untold trillions in every field and forest, they are the primary movers and shakers. But beings we can see are sweetening the pot too. Think of that barren post-glacial landscape. What is the first life to colonize rock? Lichen.

Lichen is not a single organism but a partnership between a fungus and algae. The fungus provides a scaffold for the algae. It also has tendrils that exploit cracks in the rock and chemicals to dissolve it, releasing the rock's stored nutrients. The algae, on the other hand, have the power of photosynthesis, manufacturing sugars. Fungus

and algae share their gains to make a living. Together they create a foothold.

Others soon follow onto the rocks. Living and dying, a layer of soil slowly grows. Even today, soil on average is just 5% organic matter, the rest sand and clay. It is cooperation across species that allows life to build in complex webs.

Plants, for example, send up to a quarter of what they produce into the soil through their roots. That's radical. Why give up hard-earned food? Responding to local conditions, they release ions, sugars, amino acids, and many other compounds to build the soil they want to see and attract bacteria and fungi with helpful skills.

Then there are ectomycorrhizal fungi, which are threadlike fungi that grow only in partnership with plant roots. Put a speck of mineral from the soil under a microscope and you'll likely find it grooved by fungi. A plant provides EM fungi with carbon obtained through photosynthesis while the fungi create a vast soil transit network for nutrients and water. This is the wood-wide web you hear about.

Recent research has revealed that EM fungi also excrete acids that eat rock particles and release nutrients. In fact, it is likely that the very first land plants, which had no roots, only survived on land with the help of EM fungi. Fungi taught plants the value of building a network underground that gives as much as it takes. Hence, roots.

Our local red alders "fix" nitrogen by incorporating pods of bacteria into their roots. The bacteria take atmospheric nitrogen delivered by the tree and convert it into forms that can be used by plants.

It is such a good system that, in autumn, alders have no need to pull nutrients back from their leaves, which is why alder leaves fall green. An excess of nitric acid floods the soil around alders, feeding other plants and, indeed, breaking down rock particles to release other nutrients.

Even earthworms do more than simply recycle plant material. Recent research has found that a special pouch in their digestive tract holds bacteria that are able to digest rock, releasing the nutrient form of silicon in particular. It's just like cows. Mammals have a hard time digesting grass, so cows carry special bacteria in their first stomach to digest it for them. While worms themselves may not need the silicon their bacteria produce, plants need it in continuous supply. Happy plants make a lot of plant material. And plant material feeds worms.

What Ellen Wohl writes about young trees applies to animals as well: "A growing sapling thrives to the degree that it can develop its own, interior ecosystems." Some biologists speak of productive infections. The hallmark of soil is not predation, but collective action based on the sharing of resources.

It would take extreme events to slow life's crescendo in our soil — the complete churning of the soil, say, which would smash fungal networks and send carbon and nutrients into the air through oxidization; or a total overgrazing that does not allow plants to grow or water to penetrate the soil; or perhaps a rain of poisons.

But that would be crazy. It's not hard to nurture the soil underfoot. Just let life get to work and chip in where you can. ■

## KPFD Key Center Property Purchase Update and Possible Outcomes

The department spent over \$2 million on Key Center real estate in 2021, and is still figuring out what to do with it.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula Fire Department had been contemplating replacement of Station 46, its district headquarters, for some years without a specific plan when three real estate parcels in Key Center came on the market in 2021.

KPFD bought the three parcels for \$2.125 million at the end of the year in separate deals negotiated by then Fire Chief Dustin Morrow, who left to run Central Pierce Fire & Rescue Dec. 1, 2021.

The properties were bought to provide options for a possible new headquarters, training facility, community rooms and perhaps a health clinic, according to Fire Commission Chair Stan Moffett.

The existing Key Center headquarters structure was built in 1975 and has undergone numerous renovations. Further work would require extensive seismic and sprinkler upgrades, among other things, according to KPFD Fire Chief Nick Swinhart, who succeeded Morrow in May 2022.

The first two parcels are known as the Olson estate and consist of two lots located almost immediately across KP Highway from Station 46, with a residence and a portion of the pasture behind it totaling 2.8 acres. The third parcel is the Calahan property, site of the former O'Callahan's restaurant (aka Reed's and Buck's) located at the corner of KP Highway and 92nd Street NW.

The Olson parcels were appraised at \$460,000; the department bought them for \$1.2 million on Dec. 15, 2021.

The Calahan property was not appraised or inspected before the purchase, but the Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer tax valuation was \$473,600. KPFD paid \$950,000 Nov. 8, 2021.

At the time of the purchases, Moffett told KP News, "We felt these properties, in our estimation, fit the bill so well to what we feel the district needs, that's why we offered what we did."

The department financed the deals with a private bond for \$2.125 million at 1.82% interest with no prepayment penalty.

Biannual debt service is interest only, and started at \$13,106.53 Dec. 1, 2021 until Dec. 1, 2024, when principal and interest payments starting at \$129,337.50 will become payable every six months until 2040.

The Olson house is rented and a lease for the former O'Callahan's was signed in

April 2022, but the building requires extensive renovation and remains vacant. The department spent \$23,000 on urgent roof and other repairs and estimated that another \$50,000 would be needed to complete them.

Instead of spending more money on the property, the department attempted to negotiate a lease amendment permitting the lessee to make repairs in lieu of rent for a period of time. The property was expected to generate about \$70,000 in annual rent as a steak and seafood restaurant.

After some months of discussion and delay, the lessee indicated he may be willing to agree to an amendment as of December 15.

"We're working out some details," Swinhart said. "Our attorney is working with his attorney and thinks they can get it done."

Despite the difficulties, Moffett said, "I think our feeling right now is that it's best to have that property leased and an operating business in there regardless of whether we're going to re-sell it, and, at least for myself, that's the way I'm leaning at this time."

Multiple ideas were floated over the last year about possible use for the properties, including a new station and training facility, community meeting rooms, and a medical clinic.

"When we decided to purchase that property, we had visions of putting a clinic on that corner," Moffett said. "Going back three years, we had been given authorization to be able to operate a clinic. Since that time, we've taken a closer look at what it would take to run something like that and it's just beyond our capabilities financially. Personally, I don't see us utilizing that corner property at this point."

A capital facilities planning committee formed by the department is reviewing architect proposals and options for new construction or renovation of the properties and existing stations, or some combination.

"What the architect is looking at are the cost estimates of doing a new headquarters station on the Olson estate," Moffett said. "At the same time, we're looking at the possibility of tearing down and rebuilding where our current (headquarters) station is, and also taking a look at some of the remodeling that was recommended for some of the other stations."

Those alternatives will be presented at town hall-style meetings for public input to adjust, finalize or veto, according to Moffett, early in 2023. ■

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DO NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, USE SOME EGGS, CHEESE AND VEGGIES



## Torta Rustica – Comfort Food for All Seasons

SARA THOMPSON

I first encountered torta rustica at the Columbia City Bakery, located in my old Seattle neighborhood. In the pre-pandemic days, this was one of the items they offered by the piece. With a crust made from thin-sliced baguette, and a filling of vegetables with or without meat all held together with a rich egg custard, it became a go-to purchase when I wanted comfort food.

One afternoon I gathered the courage to ask for the recipe. The guy behind the counter shook his head, handed me my order, and told me to Google it.

First to pop up in my search was something called pizza rustica, which features a pastry crust filled with deli meats and cheese. I persisted, met with success, and over the years I have made it my own.

This torta rustica is more akin to strata, a savory bread pudding that, according to Wikipedia, dates back to 1902 and was popularized in “The Silver Palate Good Times Cookbook” (1985) by Julee Rosso, Sheila Lukins and Sarah Chase.

Strata has made its way, to my great satisfaction, to many a brunch over the years.

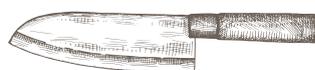
But first, let’s talk eggs and bread.

The egg I came to fully appreciate eggs when my kids were small and starting to feed themselves. What a perfect meal:

One egg, quickly scrambled and placed before them, was inhaled with enthusiasm.

This year, two authors published a review in the scientific journal *Nutrients* that endorsed my maternal instincts. They wrote that egg protein is highly digestible and an excellent source of essential amino acids, with the highest attainable protein digestibility-corrected amino acid score. Egg protein has been shown to decrease malnutrition in underdeveloped countries, possibly increase height in children, and protect against kwashiorkor, a severe form of malnutrition most often seen in children whose diets are low in protein and calories. Egg protein is also important to skeletal muscle health and protective against sarcopenia, an age-related, involuntary loss of skeletal muscle mass and strength. Egg protein also can decrease appetite, resulting in a reduction in the caloric intake from the next meal and weight reduction.

The baguette. I am of the opinion that perhaps humanity can indeed live by bread alone, in the spiritual if not nutritional sense, especially if a little butter is included. My favorite part is the crust, so the long skinny loaf with its high crust to bread ratio is especially appealing. And I am not alone. In November UNESCO, the United Nations heritage agency, added the French baguette to its “intangible cultural



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2 cups half-and-half  
5 eggs  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
½ teaspoon pepper

heritage” list. The baguettes available on the Key Peninsula may not quite live up to the French standard, but I find they work quite well for this recipe.

The torta rustica filling varies each time I make it, depending on whether or not I want to include meat (sausage or bacon are especially good), what cheese suits my fancy, what might be available from my garden and what is in my refrigerator at the time. It’s a remarkably forgiving recipe.

Here is the most recent iteration. Serve with a hearty salad and you have a satisfying dinner.

### Torta Rustica

Serves 4-6

16 baguette slices about 1/4 inch thick, cut on the diagonal

Butter

Olive oil

6-8 ounces Swiss chard, including

stems, chopped

1 medium yam cut into ½-inch pieces

1-2 potatoes (white, red or gold) cut into ½-inch pieces

1 bell pepper (red, yellow or orange), cut into ½-inch pieces

1 small onion, chopped

1 cup Swiss cheese, grated

Butter an 8- or 9-inch baking dish and line with baguette slices. A few gaps are fine, but you can fill them with small pieces of bread if desired. This recipe uses about half a baguette.

Precook the vegetables:

Chop the greens, place in a pan over medium heat and cook until wilted. Drain and set aside.

Sauté the onion and the bell pepper in olive oil or butter until soft.

Place the chopped potatoes and yams on a baking sheet in a single layer, sprinkle with olive oil and a pinch of kosher salt. Roast at 400 degrees for about 15-20 minutes, stirring at least once, until tender.

Combine the vegetables in a bowl, along with about half to two-thirds of the cheese and place in the baking dish. The mixture, about 5 cups altogether, will nearly fill the dish.

Beat together the eggs, half-and-half, salt and pepper. Pour over the filling, top with remaining cheese.

Bake for 50-60 minutes.

Allow to rest for 5-15 minutes, cut and serve. ■



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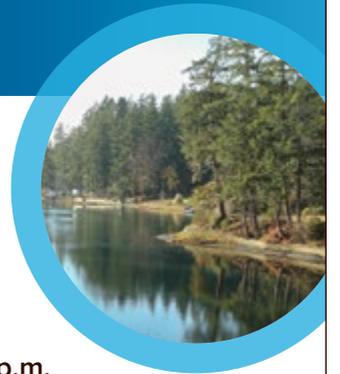
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CLIMATE IS COMPLEX BUT WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT IS NOT

'Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World'

RICHARD GELINAS

In "Saving Us," Katharine Hayhoe suggests that the most important thing any of us can do to fight climate change is to discuss it with others.

She admits it can be hard to have a conversation on this topic with some people, but her commonsense advice is to begin with a topic that you both care about, so you start from a basis of mutual respect and understanding.

Hayhoe spends much of her time speaking, teaching and writing about climate change. She is both an evangelical Christian with advanced degrees in atmospheric science. She has become a sought-after voice for climate activism and a leading advocate for communicating across ideological, political and theological differences. She is a professor of political science at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, and chief scientist of the Nature Conservancy. She has been a contributing author on the periodic reports from the U.N.-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as well as on several editions of the U.S. National Climate Assessment.

In "Saving Us," Hayhoe describes both her successes and failures to communicate with diverse audiences, so she knows what approaches do and don't work. She reminds us that people fall into different groups based on their beliefs about climate change.

Some are alarmed that global warming is a "serious and immediate threat" but may not know what they can do about it.

Others are concerned and accept the science that explains how the Earth is changing but see the threat as more distant.

Still others are disengaged entirely and know little and care less. A minority are doubtful about climate change and don't consider it to be a serious risk.

Finally, there are some who Hayhoe calls "dismissives," who "angrily reject the idea the human-caused climate change is a threat," and who are the most receptive to misinformation and conspiracy theories.

Hayhoe tells us how she learned to have constructive discussions with the first groups. Sadly, she has found that talking with "dismissives" is usually futile. The biggest problem, she says, isn't merely denial but also the combination of tribalism, complacency and

fear in these people.

"Saving Us" provides a simple description of why the Earth is warming.

Climate is complex, but understanding what we are doing to it isn't. Earth is wrapped "in a natural blanket of heat-trapping gases. Most of the Sun's energy goes right through this blanket, as it does through a window, heating the Earth." As the Earth accumulates energy from sunlight, it warms up to the temperatures we are accustomed to. If we didn't have this blanket, "the planet would be a frozen ball of ice."

The problem, which has been worsening since the late 19th century, is that "whenever we dig coal, oil or natural gas out of the ground and burn it, we release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere." This release makes our blanket warmer, so the land and the oceans get warmer.

"Saving Us" recalls and examines the oft-repeated and vaguely plausible alternative explanations to the evidence for human-caused climate change. Deniers say "climate changes all the time; humans have nothing to do with it" or they say "it's the sun" or "it's orbital cycles or volcanoes or cosmic rays" or they will deny that it's even warming.

Hayhoe demonstrates that these objections are contrived rationales that let people avoid confronting real problems. "Climate denial originates in political polarization and identity, fueled by the mistaken belief that its impacts don't matter to us and there's nothing constructive or even tolerable we can do to fix it."

So why aren't the facts of global climate change persuasive? Drawing on cognitive linguistics studies, Hayhoe points out that even though people are given the facts they may not reach the right conclusions.

Citing George Lakoff, a psychologist



and linguist, people think in what he calls "frames" — cognitive structures that determine how we see the world.

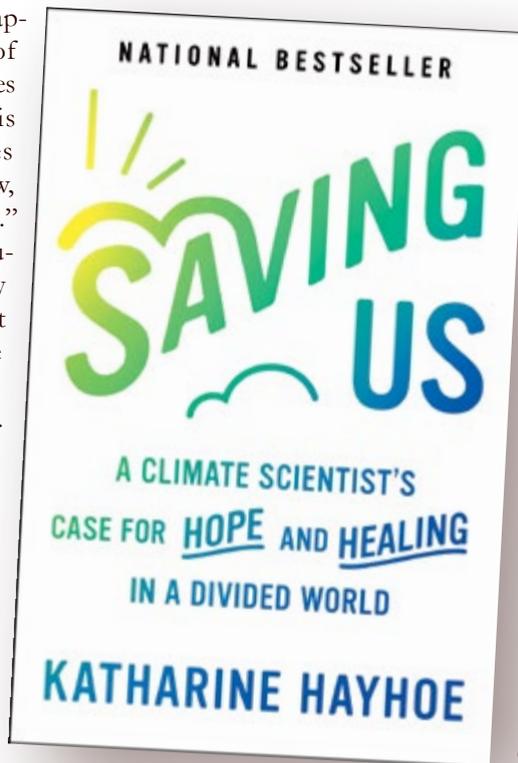
So, when we encounter facts that don't fit our frame, it's the frame that stays while "the facts are either ignored, dismissed or ridiculed." Thus, if someone's frame is complete denial that global warming is human caused, that person will reject the science of climate change.

Fact-based arguments may also fail with others who are troubled by their perceptions of

the profound moral implications of the problem of a warming Earth. Some evangelical Christians worry that responses to change will lead to "sweeping regulations and a one-world government."

Others cherry-pick facts, in particular the fossil fuel industry. In the U.S., and increasingly from Saudi Arabia, that industry has aggressively lobbied the public and Congress to slow the transition towards renewables. A recent example is the intense lobbying against the development of wind farms off the Atlantic coast or to keep coal plants open, as reported by David Gelles in a recent article in The New York Times.

Hayhoe shares her ultimate optimism. "Science tells us it's too late to avoid all of the impacts of climate change. Some are already here today. Others are inevitable, because of the past choices we've made, and that can make us afraid. Science also tells us that much of what we do is actively contributing to the problem (and) that makes us feel guilt, but the research I do is clear: it is not too late to avoid the most serious and dangerous impacts. Our choices will determine what happens." ■



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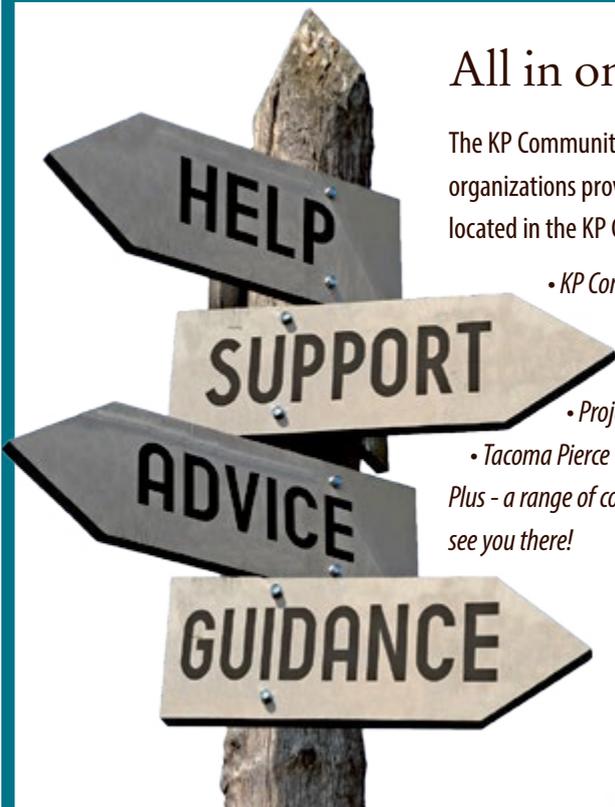
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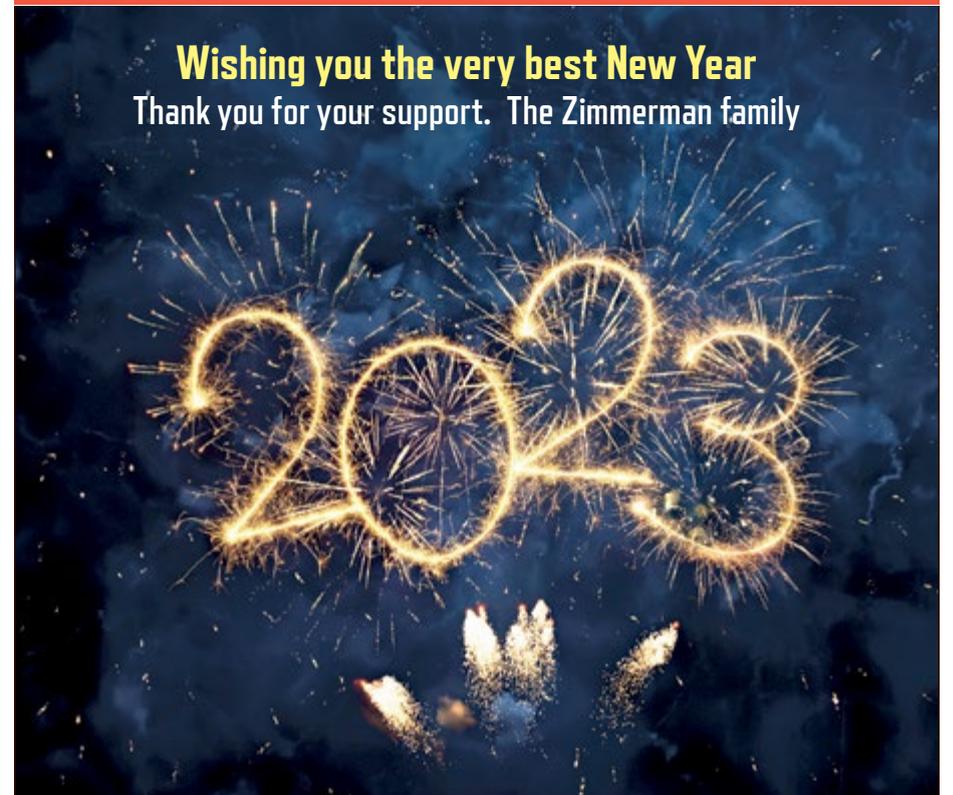
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# Key Peninsula has Opportunities for Families to Connect

**Local playtimes offer respite to families seeking interaction and community.**

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

It's not easy to be a parent. Being a parent in a rural community brings its own set of additional challenges.

"It is a daycare desert," said Madison Johnson, mother of a baby and a 3-year-old, who lives in Lake Holiday and teaches full-time at Shelton High School. She felt lucky to find someone in the neighborhood to care for her children. Her husband, who has a four-day work week, runs "daddy daycare" on Fridays.

Shantell Small, parent of a 3- and 8-year-old, and relatively new to the Key Peninsula, said that isolation due to Covid made it difficult to connect with other families. She is a stay-at-home mom and said that finding good early childhood educational programs was difficult. The programs offered through the Peninsula School District are limited to low-income families or for children with special needs.

Although there are no quick fixes to the childcare situation — parents find themselves networking with friends and via Facebook groups to find caregivers who can come to them or in-home settings that may be more akin to babysitting than educational experiences — there are programs on the Key Peninsula that offer support to families with young children and opportunities for connection.

### Family Connects and Baby Lounge

For those with babies, Family Connects and Baby Lounge, part of the Pierce County Early Childhood Network, help with information and resources. Emily Poncik coordinates both. She recently moved to Port Orchard from Austin, has a toddler herself, and empathizes with the challenges of rural parenthood.

Family Connects launched a pilot in March 2021 after more than two years of planning. Every woman giving birth at Tacoma General or St. Joseph Medical Center who lives in the target zip codes is asked if she would like a visit from a nurse three weeks after delivery. The visit can be via video, phone or in-person, and the nurse addresses physical and social needs and makes referrals and can schedule additional visits if needed. The time between birth and the standard six-week newborn visit can be especially fraught, Poncik said, and there is evidence that this simple intervention has a real benefit. The program recently hired a nurse who will cover the Key Peninsula. Referrals can come from providers or families themselves via the website.

The Baby Lounge, designed for families



Lakebay resident Ida Johnson, 2, prepares to race her mother, Megan Johnson.  
*Lisa Bryan, KP News*

and babies from newborn to one year, started meeting in June 2022. Evelyn Patrick, who recently retired as a public health nurse and has years of experience working with young families, facilitates. Food is provided, Patrick can weigh the babies and then, she said. "We talk about all kinds of things, like understanding cues from the baby and when to introduce solids. It is a fun place for moms, dads and babies to get together to meet and socialize," Patrick said.

The program is open to all and is free of charge. Meetings are monthly on Fridays in the KP Civic Center VFW Room. Preregistration via the website is requested so they can plan for food.

### Toddler Indoor Park

The Toddler Indoor Park at the civic center gym re-opened in November on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. after closing in March 2020 due to the pandemic. It's staffed by the Key Peninsula Family Resource Center, part of Children's Home Society of Washington. Set up with toddlers through pre-K, families are welcome to drop by for a few minutes or stay for the entire two hours. They have toys, slides, tricycles and PlasmaCars for toddlers. Families have just begun returning, and it offers an opportunity for children and families to connect after two years of relative isolation. "My 2-year-old Covid baby can play with other kids," said one grandmother.

### Relatives Raising Kids

Every third Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m., Lori Mertens, a family navigator at Children's Home Society, hosts a support group for families raising kids who are not their parents. Families share a potluck meal and

childcare is provided.

### Key Center Library

Family Story Time meets every Thursday from 10:30 to 11 a.m. Barbie Swayze reads to young children and families. Krisa Brummer, who works at the library and is a contributing writer for the Key Peninsula News, has been coming to story time since her now first-grade daughter was a toddler. "Often there would be just a few families," she said. "Now the room is overflowing, and families linger."

KP Kids Maker Fun at the library is scheduled every fourth Tuesday from 4 to 4:40 p.m. Kids ranging from three to 12 years old come together to craft science-focused projects.

### Key Peninsula Co-op Preschool

The Key Peninsula Cooperative Preschool is a nonprofit affiliated with the Parent Child Preschool Organization, and recently moved to a new location at the Lakebay Community Church. Kimberly Shaw, who has nearly 20 years of experience in early childhood education, is the director and works with one additional staff teacher. Parents also volunteer. They have classes for three age groups. Shaw describes the class for 2-year olds as a "mommy and me" experience. They meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 11 a.m. On Monday, Wednesday and Fridays the 3- to 4-year-olds meet in the morning and the 4- to 5-year-olds meet in the afternoon.

"The teachers are phenomenal," said parent Shantell Small. "The parents are involved. It's a little community." She loves being part of the co-op, but a full-time preschool in the area, she said, would be a great addition. It could help solve the daycare problem and allow her to think about getting into the job market. ■

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- ☑ Athletics, sports teams, after-school clubs, arts and music programs
- ☑ Transportation
- ☑ Early learning and highly capable
- ☑ Preventative maintenance



### SAFETY, SECURITY & TECHNOLOGY LEVY PROPOSITION 2



This levy creates dedicated funding for enhanced safety and security systems, and to better protect, serve and prepare our students. The state provides no funding for safety and security projects, but safety and security are top priorities for our community.

- ☑ Secure building access controls
- ☑ Emergency communications systems
- ☑ Security cameras
- ☑ Student and staff devices
- ☑ Cyber security
- ☑ Equal access to technology



### ATHLETICS ARE 100% LEVY FUNDED

[www.psd401.net/levy](http://www.psd401.net/levy)

Together, our levies provide essential funding for Peninsula School District programs and staff.



#### ESTIMATED LEVY TAX RATES PER \$1,000 OF ASSESSED VALUE (AV)

- ☑ The total local school tax rate, including both levies and the existing bond, is estimated to be \$1.82 per \$1,000 beginning in 2024.
- ☑ This is lower than the total current rate of \$2.01 per \$1,000 based on 2022 AV.

VOTE BY  
FEBRUARY 14, 2023

PRINT AND ONLINE CALENDARS ARE UNDERWRITTEN BY A GRANT FROM THE ANGEL GUILD

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

To add a listing for your event or find the latest details, visit [keypennews.org/calendar](http://keypennews.org/calendar)

**Jan 3 GH Literary Society** 6 p.m., Gig Harbor History Museum. "End of the Wild" by Jason Taylor.

**Jan 7 Bird Walks** 8:30 a.m., rain or shine. Meet nature guide Chris Rurik at Gateway Park pavilion.

**Jan 7 Music at the Boat Shop** 7 to 9 p.m., Eddon Boat Shop, Gig Harbor.

**Jan 17 Hootenany Folk Music** 2 p.m., Mustard Seed Project.

**Jan 19-21 "Puffs - Two Act for Young Wizards"** Times vary, Peninsula High School Theatre.

**Jan 20 Baby Lounge** 12 p.m. Key Peninsula Civic Center. A gathering for connection with other parents.

**Jan 21 Career and Pathway Expo** 8:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Harbor Ridge Middle School. Open to all PSD sixth- to eighth-grade girls.

**Jan 21 Contra Dance** 2 to 4 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club.

**Jan 21 KP Lions Club Comedy Night** 6 p.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center.

**Jan 21 Teen Masquerade Ball** 7 to 9 p.m., PenMet Parks, Gig Harbor High School Commons.

**Jan 24 KP Kids Maker Fun** 4 p.m., STEAM and science activities. Key Center Library.

**Jan 26 KP Book Club** 11 a.m., KP Historical Society. "Anthill" by E.O. Wilson.

**Jan 28 CHEW Dog Rescue Adoption Event** 12 to 3 p.m., Wilco Gig Harbor Farm Store.

## WEEKLY EVENTS

**Monday Al-Anon Keys to Sanity** 5 p.m., KP Fire Station. Family group.

**Monday Walks with Rusty** 9 a.m., Gateway Dog Park/360 Trails. Dog Walks with Jason.

**M-W-F SAIL** 10 a.m., Stay Active and Independent for Life. Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

**M-W SAIL** 5:30 p.m., flexibility and

balance for those over 60. KP Community Services, 253-884-4440.

**T-W-Th HeartFit** Tue 6 p.m., Wed 5 p.m., Thu 10 a.m., women's free fitness classes. WayPoint Church, heartfitwp@gmail.com

**T-TH Toddler Indoor Park** 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center in the gym.

**T-TH Open Activity Hours** 2 to 4 p.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

**T-TH Tai Chi** 9:45 a.m., KP Community Services, 253-888-4440.

**T-TH-SA SAIL** 8:30 a.m., flexibility and balance for those over 60. KP Community Services, 253-884-4440.

**Wednesday Gentle Yoga for Older Adults** 11:30 a.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

**Thursday Family Story Time** 10:30 a.m., Key Center Library, 253-548-3309.

**Thursday Senior Bingo** 1 p.m., first and third Thursdays, KP Community Services, 253-888-4440.

**Thursday KP Toastmasters** 8 a.m., WayPoint Church, 425-243-2618.

**Friday Skate Night** 6 to 9 p.m., kindergarten to eighth grade, Key Peninsula Civic Center.

**Saturday Eddon Boatyard Tours** 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Gig Harbor Boat Shop.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

**26th Legislative District Democrats** First Thursdays on Zoom, 6:30 p.m. 26thdemocrats@gmail.com

**Caregiver Support Group** Third Mondays, 2 p.m., Mustard Seed Project.

**Key Peninsula Advisory Commission** Third Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. Details at piercecountywa.gov/5937.

**KP Business Association** Business meeting, first Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., DK Property Management. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com

**KP Business Association Luncheon**, third Fridays, noon at El Sombrero. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com

**KP Community Council** Second Wednesdays on Zoom, 7 p.m.

keypencouncil@gmail.com

**KP Citizens Against Crime** Third Thursdays, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Key Center fire station.

**KP Civic Center Association** Board meeting, second Thursdays, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center, 253-884-3456.

**KP Democrats** Third Monday, 7 p.m., Home fire station, johnpatkelly@aol.com, 253-432-4256.

**KP Emergency Prep** Third Thursday, 7 p.m., KP Civic Center, eprep@kpciviccenter.org

**KP Fire Regular Board Meeting** Second and fourth Tuesdays, 5 p.m. in-person and on Zoom, keypeninsulafire.org, 253-884-2222.

**KP Historical Society Tuesday Jan.**, 11 a.m. at museum, kphsmuseum@gmail.com (Normally first Tuesdays)

**KP Lions Club** First and third Wednesdays, 6 p.m., potluck at Key Center fire station, 253-525-0802, keypeninsulalions@outlook.com

**Key Pen Parks Commission** Board meeting, second Mondays, 7 p.m., Home fire station, 253-884-9240.

**KP Veterans** First and third Mondays, 7 to 8 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 253-884-2626.

**Lakebay Fuchsia Society** First Thursdays, 7 p.m. KP Civic Center, Whitmore Room, 253-884-2283.

**Longbranch Improvement Club** Third Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club, 253-200-0308 or licweb.org

**Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition** Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m., check pep-c.org for meeting location.

**Peninsula School District Board Meeting** Fourth Thursdays, 6 to 7:30 p.m., 253-530-1000.

**Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department** Tues and Thurs, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Key Center Corral. Call 253-432-4948 for the schedule; Air Quality, Triple P, COVID-19, General HD, Water/Wells and Healthy Housing advice.

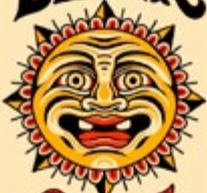
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**WINTER SERVICE RESUMES JANUARY 2**

# FREE KP BUS CONNECTS *Happy Holidays!*

**VAUGHN TUE/THUR MORNING**

- 8:55 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:01 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:02 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:03 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:06 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:08 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 9:10 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 9:13 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:19 Purdy Park & Ride

**VAUGHN WEDNESDAY MORNING**

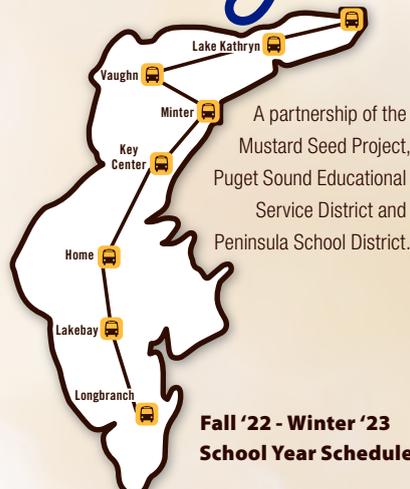
- 9:50 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:51 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:52 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:54 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:57 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:58 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:00 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 10:03 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:09 Purdy Park & Ride

**EVERGREEN TUE/THUR MORNING**

- 8:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 8:59 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:00 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 9:05 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 9:06 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 9:09 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 9:13 Food Market in Key Center
- 9:15 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 9:21 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:30 Purdy Park & Ride

**EVERGREEN WEDNESDAY MORNING**

- 9:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:54 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:55 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 10:00 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 10:01 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 10:04 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 10:08 Food Market in Key Center
- 10:10 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 10:16 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:24 Purdy Park & Ride



**Fall '22 - Winter '23  
School Year Schedule**

**TUE/WED/THUR AFTERNOON**

- 4:42 Purdy Park & Ride
- 4:47 Lake Kathryn Village
- 4:50 SR 302 @Windermere Realty
- 4:52 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 4:53 SR 302 @150th/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 4:55 4 Corners gas station @SR 302
- 4:57 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct
- 4:58 Wright Bliss Road @Olson Dr
- 5:00 Food Market in Key Center
- 5:04 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 5:08 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 5:10 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 5:13 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 5:14 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 5:18 Evergreen Elementary School



**253-884-BUSS** or [keypennews.org/kpbus](http://keypennews.org/kpbus) for interactive map and downloadable schedule

We're on Facebook too!

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## CIVIC CENTER CORNER

# Warming Shelter

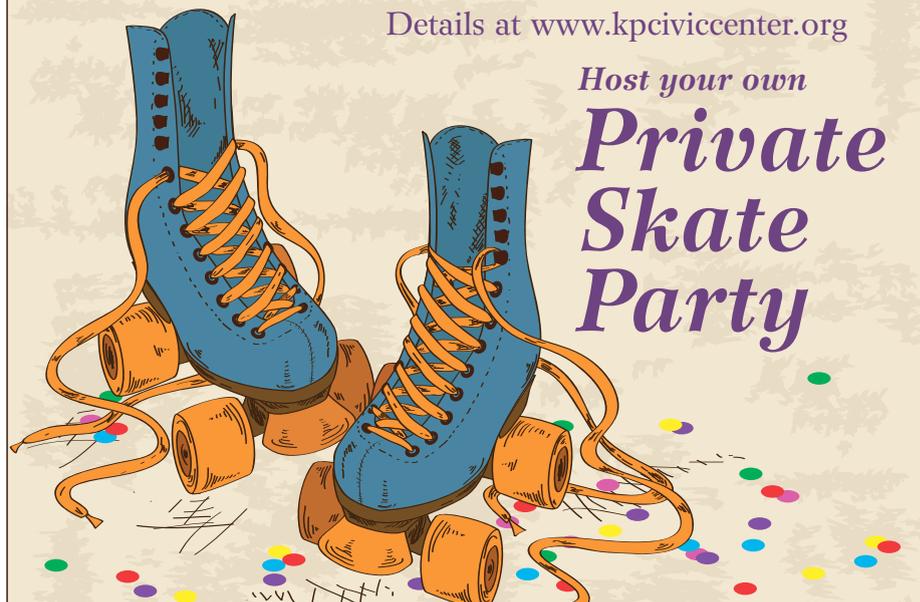
*Civic Center is open when temperature drops below 35° for two days or more. Call 253-884-3456 or email [eprep@kpciviccenter.org](mailto:eprep@kpciviccenter.org)*

*Call to volunteer: helpers needed*



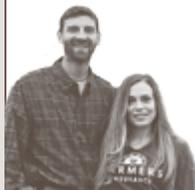
Details at [www.kpciviccenter.org](http://www.kpciviccenter.org)

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Key Peninsula Civic Center, 17010 S. Vaughn Road 253/884-3456 [www.kpciviccenter.org](http://www.kpciviccenter.org) The Key Peninsula Civic Center Association, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, fosters and promotes the civic, social, cultural and general well-being of the Key Peninsula community.

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TOP LEFT: A purple finch stands out.

TOP RIGHT: A dark-eyed junco finds a seed in early snow.

MID LEFT: Best dog in snow.

UPPER MID RIGHT: Huckleberries are ready for this American robin.

LOWER MID RIGHT: A spotted towhee blends in between lichen and huckleberries.

BOTTOM RIGHT: December snow magic. *All above photos Tina McKail, KP News*

BOTTOM LEFT: Winter sunrise at Filucy Bay. *Phil DiGirolamo*