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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

December 2018 Vol. 45 No. 12

'We Are Incredibly Out of Space'; Peninsula School Board Returns to Voters with New Bond Proposal

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

The Peninsula School Board voted unanimously Nov. 8 to place a \$198,550,000 bond measure on the Feb. 12, 2019, special election ballot. The approval of the plan followed nearly a month of consideration by board members of a capital project proposal presented to them Oct. 11 by Interim Superintendent Arthur O. Jarvis.

The Nov. 8 meeting agenda called for comments from student representatives and the community prior to board discussion of the capital proposal.

Comments also came from school district personnel as members of the Public School Employees of Washington including clerical, para-educators, bus drivers, maintenance and custodial staff regarding livable wages. In total over an hour of statements were delivered to the school board and an audience numbering in the hundreds at Goodman Middle School.

WHAT DID PEOPLE HAVE TO SAY TO PSD BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

Bryce Wilson of Gig Harbor, the spouse of a teacher in a portable at Harbor Heights Elementary School and the parent of a child at Artondale Elementary, urged the board to place a capital facilities measure on the ballot as soon as possible.

"This is a facility crisis. There is no

"THIS IS A FACILITY CRISIS. THERE IS NO BETTER WAY. THE BOARD MUST GO FORWARD."

better way. This board must go forward," Wilson said.

Ken Manning of Gig Harbor said, "We are disappointed to say the least. This is basically the same bond proposal that failed earlier this year."

Manning is the treasurer for the political action committee Responsible Taxation of Citizens (RTC), a group whose members have opposed all PSD funding proposals for over a decade.

Manning said the RTC agrees facilities are suffering and that the group supports a proposal that does not send up to one-third of local school tax dollars "to bond holders on Wall Street" and gives voters accountability using short term levies.

"This board could have used that McCleary (decision) \$21 million settlement money to repair worn-out facilities and address some of the worst needs, but instead \$7.3 million went to teachers' salaries," Manning said. "So far we don't know where the rest of the money is going. We could look at the McCleary fund as sort of a miniature bond that passed. Will the board walk their talk? Will any of these dollars make it to the facilities?"

Jacy Griffin, a STEAM teacher at Discovery Elementary and a parent with her youngest at Harbor Ridge and two oldest at Peninsula High, said, "It was absolutely problematic that the portables were not done by the start of our school year. It was absolutely problematic that our play area was significantly reduced due to the portables being there. It's problematic to try and teach computer science and not have a set space."

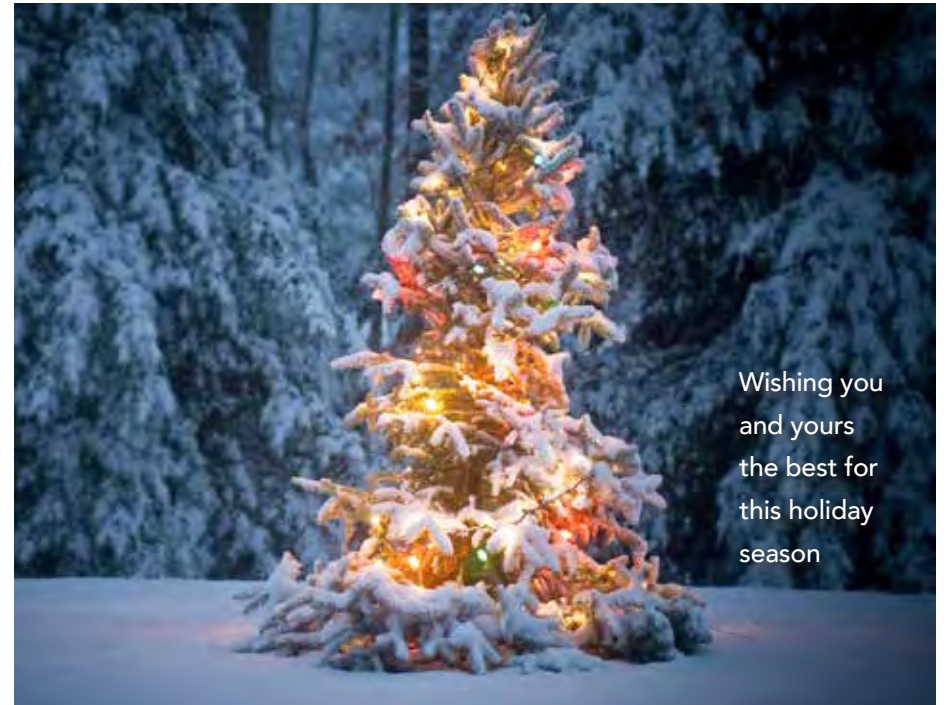
Griffin takes a "science cart" into classrooms where the technology is not uniform and frequently doesn't work, she said. "And I'm supposed to be teaching them cutting-edge curriculum?"

WHAT IS THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSAL?

PSD Board President Marcia Harris thanked the public for their comments and proceeded to the first new item of business: Capital Projects Proposal for review, approval and consent. Jarvis provided a brief overview of the proposal.

"Incoming enrollment projections for fall 2019 translated to needing an additional 10 classrooms in the fall," he said. "Even with a passage of the measure, we are incredibly out of space and there is

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Wishing you
and yours
the best for
this holiday
season

KP Community Services Executive Director to Retire

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

After more than a decade as executive director of Key Peninsula Community Services in Home, Penny Gazabat is retiring at the end of December.

Her trajectory, from volunteering with the local PTA to advocacy work for victims of domestic violence to leadership at KPCS, was a natural progression.

KPCS board member Marcia Harris said, "Penny took the organization to the next level. Behind the scenes, in her low-key way, she has developed so many relationships. I have seen her build bridges in the community, reach out and make a difference."

Gazabat grew up in Tacoma and left soon after high school. She moved to the Key Peninsula and first worked as a hostess at Pearls by the Sea in Purdy (where Massimo's is now located). She met her first husband, Fred Gazabat, and they married and had three boys.

She helped run her husband's contracting business but spent most of those early years at home and volunteering in KP schools, serving as PTA president at both Vaughn Elementary and Key Peninsula Middle Schools. In the early 1990s, she helped bring Communities in Schools of Penin-

sula to Vaughn. She later returned to school herself and incorporated her CISP work with a work-study project. "I never ended up with a degree, but I did end up with a great education in human services and criminal justice," she said. "Back then you had to choose one study area, but now they offer degrees geared to more than one discipline."

CISP Executive Director Colleen Speer said, "Penny will be truly missed in the nonprofit community of the KP. Her service delivery model at Key Peninsula Community Services over the years has been invaluable to the clients she serves. Penny is a true leader with a 'stick to it' attitude."

Gazabat also worked on domestic violence issues, representing the local community at the Pierce County Commission Against Violence. "There is a kid factor in domestic violence, so that work also had an effect on the CISP work, with presentations for parents and teachers at KPMS along with in-service training for Peninsula School District personnel. Those were busy years. I co-chaired two domestic violence conferences with the city of Gig Harbor's police department and court administrator

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Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN, EDITOR, KP NEWS

As a child, my longing for Christmas began in earnest with the last bite of Thanksgiving pumpkin pie. Every December, without fail, our parents returned to their ancestral roots. Dad indulged his merrymaking Irish self, while mom called upon her Scandinavian traditions to rejoice in the winter darkness itself by filling our house with warmth and light. Together they filled the entire month with pure magical delight.

The shuttered windows of our advent calendars began opening the first day of December. Each morning revealed a tiny image of a wreath, a candy cane, a star, a snowflake—we knew each object and more would soon appear as our house transformed into Christmas. Holiday music was strictly forbidden before Dec. 1. But on that day my little sister and I rushed home from school to break out the collection of holiday vinyl: Bing Crosby, Christmas with Conniff, Andy Williams and much later Barbara Streisand. We knew every word by heart as we sang and danced circles around the big coffee table in the living room for hours.

It was a different time. Two incomes weren't mandatory. Our mother stayed home full-time and our father worked in sales. The world ran at a slower pace.

My father loved the holiday season more than anyone I've ever known. Kind-hearted and gregarious, he was filled with unexpected surprises—like the year he brought home a lonesome hitchhiker, U.S. Army Private Joe Klee, only 19 years old and on his first holiday away from his Arkansas home. It was as if our house was the set of a 1940s holiday classic movie where a sentimental tune was just around the

corner. Anything could happen.

The Key Peninsula is a lot like that too: where things happen serendipitously at just the right moment. There are heartwarming stories to be discovered, all-around us, just beneath the surface. We hear about them from you and witness these unsung gestures of kindness ourselves time and again.

An older man is paying for his groceries in cash, but finds himself short a couple of bucks. He checks his pockets for more, then begins surveying what items to return to the shelf, when the young man standing in line behind him reaches to touch the old man's arm. "Hey gramps, I got it. You keep your money." Seeing the quizzical looks on the faces of the old man and the checker, the young man says, "Karma. I'm just paying it forward. Glad to be able to do it."

There are more spontaneous, unsolicited, random acts of kindness surrounding us than our busy list-driven minds allow us to see. When focused in the moment to what is actually happening in real time around you, you'll begin to notice far more of these courteous gestures than you think. Whether it's helping an older person carry groceries to their car, or being mentally present enough to notice the person behind you in line with nothing but a head of garlic and a frantic look. Suggesting they go ahead of you, with your full shopping cart, is a small act of courtesy that not only adds up but also multiplies.

Some of us, myself included, have lived through years when a dark melancholy

sets in that makes the holiday season feel shallow and empty. Even holding on to sweet memories of Christmas past, the fun and color seem absent. But like most feelings, good or bad, they come and they go. You will feel better again.

These darkest days of winter are a time for slowing down, to focus on the inner light of the people you love the most. May your holidays be filled with wonder, and an enduring awareness that the most satisfying gift of all is the time we spend enjoying each other.



My dad has been gone many years now, but I can almost hear his voice in the back of my mind suggesting we all be on the lookout for "a weary traveler who longs to be home for the holidays too."

In my unofficial holiday handbook, the most wise of all are those who understand that life can change in an instant; we will remember and cherish the times we spent playing together far more than the mountain of gifts we can no longer recall.

Demonstrating that good things really do come to those who wait, we are bubbling over with gratitude that Ted Olinger returns to the Key Peninsula News as Associate Editor. Ted exponentially raised the bar for KP News with his work as Executive Editor and his addition to our team in this new role is the best gift ever. Our thanks go to the readers who strongly supported community journalism to make this dream a reality.

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Nominations are requested by January 15, 2019. For more information contact committee chair Hugh McMillan at 253 255-0657 or hughmcm26@gmail.com

SCHOOL BOND FROM PAGE 1

not more space to place more portables.”

“The proposal does two things,” he said. “It builds two new elementary schools to provide us with the number of classrooms to prepare us for the onslaught that is already underway (and) it takes two of our oldest schools, Evergreen and Artondale, and replaces them.”

“Why a bond issue and not a levy?” Jarvis asked. “I’ve had a long career doing capital projects and I’ve used capital levies multiple times. To use a capital levy to address the same amount of work would place a staggering tax burden on current taxpayers to try to do that work in a four or six year levy.”

“The answer is to use the mechanism that school districts use throughout the state of Washington and that is the bonding mechanism,” he said. “It allows us to do the work now without increasing the costs to do it. A capital levy would delay the work that needs to be done because of the cash flow.”

“Two people who came to me have recommended a maximum of \$50 million capital levies instead. We, as a community, are simply too far behind to take that kind of approach,” Jarvis said.

“The tax rate is estimated to be 79 cents (per thousand), which is less than even the capital levy people proposed at \$1.13 per thousand,” he said.

Board member David Olson said the proposal presents a dire situation. “It’s unfortunate that certain members of this audience sort of accused this board of allowing our school district to be in this current state, considering it’s been in the process (of happening) over 20 years. I think this board has shown clearly that we care about this district and want to provide it with school facilities.”

“Regarding the funding mechanism, we received a written proposal from the Responsible Taxation of Citizens with a levy proposal of \$102 million,” Board member Deborah Krishnadasan said. “This same group, ironically, fought back in 2013 on a levy; they said ‘no, shame on you board, for using a levy.’ Now that we are moving forward with a responsible bond, like they asked us to, now they’re saying, ‘no, do a levy.’”

“A levy is asking all of us to pay for a school today that the community will use 30 and 50 years down the road. By spreading the cost with a bond, people moving to our community will share in that cost,” Krishnadasan said. “We should not foot the bill for the people who aren’t here yet.”



Penny Gazabat reflects, “I am proud of what we’ve accomplished here.” Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

KPCS DIRECTOR RETIRES FROM PAGE 1

and gave presentations at conferences in Chicago and New York.”

Gazabat ran a safehouse on the KP for victims of domestic violence and sheltered women and their children—providing shelter, food and clothing for up to three months until the women could get back on their feet. “It was complicated, but so worthwhile. We brought awareness of the issue to both the Tacoma and Key Peninsula communities.”

The KP Community Services job opened up in 2007. The Geneva Foundation, which provided funding for the safehouse and also for the voucher program at the KPCS food bank, told her about the job and also told the KPCS board to take a look at her if she applied for the position.

When Gazabat took over, the senior lunch program, van shopping trips and food bank were already operating. She described a hard start as, in her words, the previous director had not left much of a paper trail. Over the years, sometimes because the staff and volunteers recognized needs, sometimes because others approached her, KPCS added programs and services to its core activities.

Edie Morgan, founder of The Mustard Seed Project, recollected those early days. “I remember the evening Penny asked me

if I thought she should apply for that job. I told her to go for it, knowing she was just the person that organization needed at that time. She led KPCS to a high level of professionalism that was seriously needed, while retaining and honoring its grassroots Key Peninsula heritage.”

LONGTIME LEADER PENNY GAZABAT IS READY FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER

Gazabat was widowed after 31 years of marriage. A few years ago, she reconnected with a friend from her Tacoma school days, Cory Bission. Several Lincoln High School friends were working through Facebook interactions to cheer him up after the death of his wife of 43 years, who had been one of Gazabat’s best friends. The group then started to have small reunions, getting together in Tacoma. Gradually romance blossomed: Gazabat and Bission were married Sept. 15.

The two will travel to Arizona in January to investigate the possibility of a future as snowbirds and then return home. “We still have to decide on a permanent landing spot, but we plan to stay on the peninsula for four or five years. I have a dog who is 8, and I can’t imagine her living in a city—she’s a country girl,” said Gazabat. Bission, she added, has embraced country living. “Give him a John Deere riding mower and he’s in seventh heaven. We split and stacked three cords of wood last weekend.”



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Frank Slater A VIEW FROM HERE



America Divided

Some time ago, I submitted a column for this newspaper that contained the word “snowflake” in its political context. The column was accepted, but without that word.

I objected and had a conversation with the editorial staff about the use and impact of certain terms that have the effect of stopping communication rather than enhancing it.

It is amazing how new, salient information in regards to the issue under consideration can give you a broader perspective and often lead to a change of mind.

Winston Churchill explained it this way: “Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.”

An article in the Nov. 3 edition of *The Economist* opens with, “As America prepares to go to the polls Nov. 6, the country is more divided and angry than it has been in decades.”

The voting is done. As of this writing, it appears that the Republicans have held the Senate and the Democrats have won the House.

We seem to be right where we were before the election—in for two more years of partisan politics and ballooning Federal deficits.

The *Economist* is published in London, and reading an outsider’s point of view helps me bridge the gap between the liberal and conservative media in our own country. If you get most of your information about this country from domestic mass media, it is reasonable to conclude that we are a nation divided.

I think that is not the case. I believe that as a people we have tolerated a situation thinking that they, our elected representatives, will come up with a satisfactory solution we can all agree to.

That is backward.

Our representatives seem likely to go on as they have unless we—the electorate—set a higher standard of discourse, behavior and ingenuity. That means familiarizing ourselves with issues rather than agendas, and that begins here at home.

For example, school overcrowding and disrepair at the local level; the addiction crisis at the county level; increased traffic

on the Purdy Bridge and State Route 302 and adapting to the new pressures of a growing population at the state level.

If we expect improvement, we must inform our elected representatives of our concerns and our ideas on how to address them. The local media can play a major role in helping local communities identify issues that need attention and develop a consensus on how best to solve them. Sowing division and attacking enemies—or creating them for that purpose—do not get us closer to solutions and only encourage our legislators to bicker defensively instead of legislating.

We can show them a better way by setting a better example, even if that means doing things differently, like changing one’s mind.

Churchill also once said: “If you’re going through hell, keep going.”

Frank Slater, retired math teacher and Korean War veteran, lives in Vaughn.

Carolyn Wiley DEVIL’S HEAD DIARY



Longbranch Christmas: Something Different

Way back when the grandkids were embarking on their individual treks through the school system, our son-in-law, Matt, had a fantastic idea.

We were seated around the table in the usual Thanksgiving stupor amid the residual devastation left behind by the marauding horde that is our family. Surveying the tabletop destruction, Matt suggested

that we celebrate Christmas by choosing a different country each year to learn about and follow their Christmas traditions—foods, decorations, stories and games. Each family would do some research and share the information when we reconvened in December.

In spite of the tryptophan-induced state of the assembly, the idea was adopted with enthusiasm. One of the children was dispatched to cut strips of paper and collect pencils. Each person wrote the name of a country on their ballot and deposited it in a big bowl. We let the youngest child draw one slip of paper. And that’s how our foray into international Christmas celebrations began.

...AND THAT’S HOW OUR FORAY
INTO INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATIONS BEGAN

China was the first country chosen. Christmas is not widely celebrated in China, but we persevered. One family opted for food planning, another signed up for games and the rest of us took on tasks as they were identified.

The Christmas dinner was a feast for the eyes and the palate. For the most part, the elder contingent dove in with relish. As epicurean critics, the most frequent review was, “That’s interesting.” However, the younger ones exhibited a reluctance to try some of the unidentifiable edibles. Several of them lamented about the weird selections placed before them and opted for plain rice.

One of the married-ins grew up in a family that counted ketchup as vegetable—so latent parental influences may have had an effect upon the receptivity of the kid contingent. The only extra helpings requested by the kids were the result of “double dog dares” to try another bite of mapo doufu (tofu in a red chili sauce that set mouth and hair on fire).

Perhaps we overhyped the weird and overdid the spices, because there were ample leftovers of fried eel, bhendi (okra), baozi (steamed dumplings) and of course oyster soup.

With no turkey in our systems, we were unphased by tryptophan as we left the table to learn more about Christmas traditions in China. John, another son-in-law, had discovered an online article written by Sascha Matuszak documenting a unique Christmas celebration in Chengdu, China. Although it was a recent tradition, the citizens of Chengdu had avidly embraced

it and thousands gathered in the central square on Christmas evening for the celebration.

At that point in his narration, John abruptly excused himself and disappeared, leaving us to speculate about what sort of thing was planned. He returned with a large bag from Archie McPhee’s, the famous Seattle novelty store, and continued his explanation of the only Chinese Christmas celebratory tradition he could find.

He said that on the given signal—“It’s on!”—the citizenry of Chengdu engage in a wild melee, randomly bopping each other with inflatable bats. We were all very amused.

Imagine our delight when John opened the bag and distributed inflatable bats to one and all. He explained that we were to

refrain from bopping one another until he gave the traditional signal, “It’s on!”

The children could hardly wait to get started. Neither could the adults. It was on! We battled back and forth throughout the house. Amazingly, nothing got broken except our perception of family traditions.

The following Thanksgiving we went through the ritual of selecting a different country. One of the moms had put “The Deep South” in the pot. The children objected because “The Deep South” was not a country, to which she replied, “You say that because you haven’t been there. Believe me, it is a whole different country.” The drawing commenced and the country selected was Mexico.

The pinata was a hit. A few rounds of La Pirinola (beggar’s dice) redistributed pinata candy. Ball and cup toys had been tucked in each stocking, so we ended with competitive rounds of El Balero.

The next year when the subject was broached, the kids had organized a voting bloc that was solidly in favor of a repeat of the Mexican celebration.

And that marked the end of our international run. It has been tacos on Christmas ever since.

On the bright side, one of the grands recently found a stash of inflatable bats. I suspect that there will be a Chinese flair to our traditional Mexican celebration. I’m sure it will be a hit.

Award-winning columnist Carolyn Wiley lives quietly, for the most part, in Longbranch.

Phyllis Henry COAST TO COAST



Pony Power

Today as well-meaning people argue the merits of seat belts in school buses, I remember a time when the term “seat belt” was not in anyone’s vocabulary.

I rode the mile and a quarter from my home to the rural one-room schoolhouse balanced on a wooden box squeezed into the space behind the two-person seat on our pony-powered black buggy with red wheels and shafts. For safety measures, my dad told me to keep my legs inside the buggy so I wouldn’t fall out and get banged up on the gravel road between home and school.

Trixie, our Shetland pony, was a vital part of our family of animals. Each morning my seventh-grade sister, Inez, arranged

the leather harness on Trixie's back and then hooked her to the buggy. My dad had made arrangements with our neighbor for his daughter, Edna, to ride to school with us, so she got the prized seat next to my sister and I got the box in the back.

TRIXIE, OUR SHETLAND PONY, WAS A VITAL PART OF OUR FAMILY...

When we arrived before school started in the morning, my sister parked the buggy under the trees on the edge of the school property, unhooked Trixie and tied her to one of the many trees in the small grove by a long rope clipped to her halter. When the school day ended, Trixie was harnessed, backed between the shafts of the buggy, and the three of us rode home.

That's what regularly happened until the day we left the schoolhouse at the end of the day to find the buggy parked under the trees, but no pony. Trixie had learned how to open the snap that locked her to the tree. Then came our dilemma. Should we walk home, knowing that the following morning only one of us would have a ride on Trixie's back and the other two, probably including me, would walk to school?

For a half hour all the kids in school and the teacher stood around sharing opinions, until the final decision was made. We would pull the buggy home so we could all ride in it the next day. My sister got between the shafts and Edna and I pushed the buggy down the road. In retrospect we could have left the buggy under the trees and asked my dad to somehow bring it home, maybe pulling it attached to his car, but I don't think any of us even considered that; solving our problems was a personal endeavor.

Pulling and pushing the buggy on a rough gravel road was difficult, and several times we stopped and the three of us sat in the long grass in the ditch catching our breath and wondering how Trixie had gotten free.

When we got home, tired and sweaty from our efforts, we found Trixie standing near the barn waiting for someone to let her through the gate so she could get to her food and water.

The following morning everything went as usual. Trixie was harnessed to the buggy, the three of us went to school and Trixie was tied to a tree. But at the end of the school day again there was a rope tied around a tree with no Trixie at the end of it. Again we dragged the buggy by kid power all the way home and again Trixie was waiting for us near the barn.

After three days of this my dad went to the hardware store and bought a snap that had to be twisted to secure it. It baffled Trixie but was also impossible for any of the

kids to open, so each morning and evening, in sunshine or rain, our teacher was forced to add tying and untying a pony to her daily duties, but for the rest of my rural school days our buggy was pony-powered.

Even over the space and time between those grassy fields of Iowa and our paved cities of today, it still seems to me that mostly left to their own devices, most kids will take care of themselves and each other.

Phyllis Henry writes from Gig Harbor.

Dan Whitmarsh WRITING BY FAITH



Remembering the Year Gone By

As winter draws upon us, another year closes out. On these dark nights we gather with family and friends to celebrate, to feast, to laugh and rejoice. The holidays fill us with joy and gladness; the moving of the calendar gives us pause to reflect and reminisce.

What was 2018 to you? What memories linger, what challenges were faced, what obstacles did you overcome? As your mind flits over the year that is passed, where do you pause, your memory filled with joy, regret, warmth or sadness?

When the last chapter of my life eventually closes, 2018 will go down as a year to remember. It was a year of great happiness and deep sorrow, of great heights and dark valleys. It was one for the books, as they say.

In 2018 I lost my father to cancer. In 2018 I wed my beautiful bride. In 2018 my daughter graduated from high school and we took a cross-country trip to celebrate. In 2018 I moved from the house I had lived in for 12 years and began to settle into a new community.

From the heights of romance and love, to the depths of unspeakable grief, I felt it all this year. From the pride of a father watching his child succeed in life, to the abiding sorrow of a son losing his own father, I experienced it.

This is life, with its ebbs and flows. Sometimes we stand atop mountains and gaze at the splendor of the world around us, our very breath taken away at the beauty we experience. At other times we trudge through valleys, lost in a claustrophobic fog of pain and doubt. One unexpected lesson I learned in 2018 is that sometimes you can hold both joy and sorrow in your heart at the exact same time.

The Wisdom Literature reminds us there is a season for everything: a time to be

born and a time to die, a time to weep and a time to dance. As a pastor, I regularly walk these paths with people. This year I've held newborn babies and I've laid a child to rest. I've stood with couples joyously pledging their lives together and I've sat with people picking up the pieces of their lives in disaster's aftermath. I've been to the top of the mountain; I've sat in the icy cold grave.

Here is what I've been certain of throughout it all: I never doubted my father's love. I've never doubted the love of my wife and my children. I've never had to doubt that God is good even if life is hard. Over and over again I've watched in amazement as this community that we call the Key Peninsula has risen up in celebration at the good times and shown up to help and support in the hard times.

Life is about the people God puts in our lives to share the journey with us. Jesus said we most clearly see his face when we reach out in love to one another. As Christmas and New Year's Day come, I encourage you to stop, reflect and remember in gratitude the people who have walked beside you. Rejoice for the blessings but give thanks for those who join us in hardship as well.

On behalf of Lakebay Church and the Key Peninsula Ministers, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and offer a prayer that 2019 will shine brightly with hope and laughter. May the light of Christ shine upon all our pathways, and lead us into the way of peace.

Award-winning columnist Dan Whitmarsh is pastor at Lakebay Community Church.

Anne Nesbit SIREN'S SONG



Teen Anxiety and Drug Abuse

While talking about mental health and suicide to a group of 13-year-olds recently I had a student share that they knew "someone" who had gone to an adult because they needed help. In fact, the person had gone to several adults—adults who saw physical signs of abuse and heard their stories about self-destructive behavior, but who did nothing because they didn't understand what they saw and heard.

Identifying anxiety in kids and getting help is important. However, identifying the source of the anxiety sometimes is

harder than it looks.

One-third of all adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18 will experience an anxiety disorder, according to the National Institutes of Health, with the incidence among girls (38 percent) far outpacing that in boys (26.1 percent).

Compare teens of today to teens of just 20 years ago. Our environment is drastically different; both online and outside, it is impersonal, unsafe and even hostile. Today teens must be prepared for a possible attack not only in a chat room but within the walls of their own schools. Movie theaters, concerts, malls, social media; it seems nowhere is safe.

Add to that the pressure of school. The expectation is that an eighth-grader needs to decide "what they want to do with their life," which in turn dictates their next four years and determines their future. Today the pressure to perform seems to outweigh the importance of acknowledging a good and caring person in the community, or one who is in need.

For some this pressure turns into feelings of anxiety and depression.

The result is teens are diagnosing teens: Take Xanax if you're depressed or anxious. For those on a path to wellness through therapeutic support, Xanax is a tool to help them manage. But the word is out: Xanax is now the drug of choice for teenagers in our area and it is easy for them to get because most adults don't realize how dangerous it can be.

Resources at the Pierce County Sheriff's Department report that students advertise Xanax for sale by posting handfals on Instagram. Where are they getting it? Grandma, Mom, Dad, neighbors. What most don't realize is that Xanax is highly addictive and potentially deadly when abused or mixed with alcohol.

Pierce County's Healthy Youth Survey in 2016 showed a rise in adolescent depression since 2006. At that time, 26 percent of surveyed youth said they had feelings of depression. In 2016 that number rose to 30 percent. In 2006 12 percent of adolescents reported considering or attempting suicide. In 2016 that number increased to 16 percent. Only 48 percent of eighth-graders, 47 percent of 10th-graders and 54 percent of 12th-graders said they had an adult to turn to when feeling sad or hopeless.

When a child dies, everyone around them is affected and more fatalities often follow. Since 2007, the rate of suicide has doubled

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TEEN SUICIDE FROM PAGE 7

among children 10 to 14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death between the ages of 10 and 24. The suicide rate among older teenage girls hit a 40-year high in 2015, according to newly released data from the National Center for Health Statistics.

We can do a better job of caring. This may mean canceling personal plans in order to attend a school event or even planning a family night. Getting to know your child's friends and their families is still important. It is through social interactions where we can look into each other's eyes, press the flesh and enjoy the spoken word where we can make a difference. If we are not "checked in" how will we know when someone is "checked out," when there is an important change in behavior?

While I was speaking to another eighth grade class about mental health and identifying signs of suicide, a young man raised his hand and said, "All those things that you talked about, those things that someone could be doing? That was me last year. That was totally me." He went on to say, "I am better now and I am doing good," and even shared some of his coping strategies. I was amazed at his bravery: to admit this in front of his peers was huge. To share that he had asked for help and was in a better place because of it carried a message far more powerful than I think he understood.

Anne Nesbit is the Prevention and Public Information Officer and the Volunteer Battalion Chief for the Key Peninsula Fire Department. She lives in Lakebay.

Signs of Teen Xanax Abuse

The signs of Xanax abuse are similar to the signs of other types of substance abuse. Warning signs include:

- Behavior changes and mood swings
- Increasing the dose or frequency of usage
- Avoiding family functions or social activities in favor of time spent using the drug
- Worrying about how much Xanax they have left
- Thinking obsessively about the next time they can use it
- Continued use despite negative impacts on the body, mental health and/or relationships
- Legal problems as a result of using Xanax
- Teen risk-taking behaviors, such as driving while under the influence of Xanax
- Inability to control how much or how often they use the drug



The first of five new medical centers opens in Gig Harbor Dec. 26. Photo: Kaiser Permanente

New Kaiser Permanente Clinic Comes to Gig Harbor

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Kaiser Permanente will open a new clinic in Gig Harbor Dec. 26 allowing those who receive care through that organization to see a primary care provider closer to home. Currently, the closest Kaiser clinics are in Port Orchard and Tacoma.

The primary care clinic is located at 5216 Point Fosdick Drive NW, near Fred Meyer. Byron Doepker, MD, will be the clinic chief and said he jumped at the chance when plans for the Gig Harbor location were announced. He completed his residency training at Group Health and worked at the Seattle location for several years.

"I was steeped in the culture of Kaiser Permanente and Group Health and wanted to stay with the organization, but I wanted to work in a smaller community and clinic where I could take care of friends and neighbors," Doepker said. "I'm excited to recreate the processes we have at Kaiser

and optimize them for a smaller clinic. The people we are hiring are really committed to working and living in a community they know."

Doepker will be joined by another family physician, Laura Turgano, and a physician assistant, Darcie Baker.

In August the health care organization, which acquired Group Health Cooperative in 2017, announced its plan to add five new medical centers over 18 months. It is part of a \$400 million commitment on the part of Kaiser to expand throughout the region.

The Gig Harbor location is the first new site to open. The office will offer services including primary care, behavioral health, lab, EKG and diabetic retinal scanning. Services may expand or change depending on what members use and need. There will be no change in hospitals used by Kaiser, which are St. Joseph in Tacoma and Harrison in Bremerton.

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OBITUARY



Marilyn Arnold

Born Feb. 6, 1939, in Gig Harbor, Marilyn Mildred Danforth Arnold died Sept. 5, 2018, in Star Valley, Wyoming, at the age of 79. As well as being an incredibly inspiring mother to son Glenn Arnold and daughter Laurie Arnold, Marilyn lived a life of enthusiastic optimism and creativity. She worked as an aerial photographer, train attendant, dental assistant, florist and as a lifelong consummate artist. Arnold was charter member of the Peninsula Historical Society. Although Arnold resided the majority of her life in Gig Harbor, she also brought her special energy to Anchorage, Alaska; Sedona, Arizona; Ocala, Florida, and eventually Star Valley. She was led to a life of adventure and lived every day by her signature saying, "Don't let anything ever be ordinary!" A private memorial service will be held for family and close friends.

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



Worship at 10:30 am Sunday Kids' Sunday School
 Christmas Community Sing Thing! Sunday Dec. 2 at 3 pm
 Christmas Eve Service Monday Dec. 24 at 3 pm
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GIG HARBOR | KEY PENINSULA SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION

Survivors of Suicide group meets the first Thursday each month at 5:30 pm at the Boys and Girls Club in Gig Harbor. Anyone is welcome to join us. Contact Bob Anderson at (253)753-3013 or bobtanderson@me.com

WAYPOINT north south

WAYPOINT NORTH

meets at 12719 134th Ave NW Sundays @ 9am, 10:45am & 6pm

 Christmas Eve 7pm

WAYPOINT SOUTH

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December Schedule

Dec 7 Skate Night

Dec 14 Skate Night + Dodgeball

Dec 21 & 28 No Skate Night/Winter Break

Skate Night 6 to 9 pm Dodgeball 9-10:30 pm

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A fun family night for elementary and middle school kids

Check out www.facebook.com/KPCC.SkateNight



AmeriCorps team members are encouraged to volunteer in the community on their days off from Soundview Camp Gold 2 worked on newly constructed trails at the Longbranch Improvement Club, spreading trail gravel and wood chips provided by Asplundh. Top: Olivia Ramirez, Hailey Scott, Mary Coyl, Becca Kennedy, Anthony Nguyen, Dylan Doeblin and Ben Stewart. Bottom: Rachel Canning, Jonas Scher, Alex Wilson, and Madi Child. *Photo: Lisa Bryan KP News*

Worth Their Weight in Gold

CAROLYN WILEY, KP NEWS

The 11 members of AmeriCorps team known as Gold 2 arrived at Sound View Camp Nov. 7 and went to work on projects to strengthen the Outdoor Environmental Education (OEE) programs at the facility. Camp Director Kurt Sample explained that the camp, owned and operated by the Presbytery of Olympia, adopted a long-range plan for enhancing the grounds and developing the site as an environmental learning center. Recognizing that Sound View Camp's staff of four could not make inroads into the initial phase without additional help, he applied for support from AmeriCorps.

Nancyrose Houston joined the Sound View staff as OEE director in April 2018. Houston had spent the previous two years coordinating the environmental education program at Parque-Omora, a conservation project in Puerto Williams, Chile. She worked closely with the first AmeriCorps team and was eager to increase community awareness of the camp and to promote the OEE camping options. Houston joined the Key Peninsula Farm Council and through her efforts the facility was opened for public visits during the 2018 farm tour. The farm tour survey recorded positive comments from visitors to the camp about its activities and trail system.

The first AmeriCorps team made significant progress last spring: trails were reclaimed, several cabins were restored, and a small field was cleared for a garden. The second team will be on-site until Dec. 16.

While on the Key Peninsula, the day-to-day work is coordinated by Houston and James Goodman, aka "Goody," the resident site

manager. Houston and Goodman prioritized the short-term projects that will have the greatest impact on the OEE programs.


On day five of the residency, AmeriCorps team member Alexandra Wilson, along with recruiter Mary Coyl, who is also the team's media representative, enumerated the progress made and outlined projects that were planned.

Their work focused on expansion of the garden area, building raised beds and installing deer fencing. The corral, home to several rescue animals, is to be enlarged and fenced. The first stages of the project required extensive brush clearing—particularly blackberry removal. The Gold 2 team hopes there will be time for them to begin construction of a greenhouse before their scheduled departure date.


On the waterfront, the team has worked on improvements to the instructional area for the tidal zone classes. They have emptied out a building used for storage to make room for new drywall and a mural in the revamped instructional space. The Gold 2 team health and wellness coordinator, Madi Child is assigned to painting and mounting signage for the trails "to take advantage of her artistic talent," Coyl said.

Another area of the camp that is getting much needed attention is a proposed natural playground. "The first task was to dismantle and remove an old, unsafe cabin," Coyl said. "Next we are removing the brush to open up the area. The new playground will incorporate elements found in the environment, so that it will fit in with the outdoor education focus of the camp."

Houston said, "The Gold 2 team is worth its weight in gold! We are scrambling to stay ahead of them."



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New Executive Director Takes Reins at The Mustard Seed Project

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Mustard Seed Project, headquartered in the Crandall Center above Key Center, is sporting a new paint job, new hardwood floors and new executive director Eric Blegen.

Blegen, 53, joined TMSP Nov. 1 after 17 years at Harmony Hill, a retreat center in Union for people dealing with cancer.

He was its executive director for the last five years and oversaw a \$5 million expansion, a project with demands for fundraising and logistics similar to the assisted

AFTER NEARLY 20 YEARS IN NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP, ERIC BLEGEN STEPS IN TO GUIDE OPERATIONS, PROGRAMMING AND BUILDING AN ASSISTED LIVING HOME FOR SENIORS IN KEY CENTER

living home TMSP is working to build along 154th Avenue Court NW, opposite the Crandall Center.

“I really enjoyed being project manager for all of that, so that was one of the things that appealed to me about the job here,” Blegen said.

Founded by Edie Morgan in 2006, TMSP provides services and programs ranging from yard work and transportation to assistance navigating Medicare and Social Security benefits for the KP elder community. A long-term goal has been to build homes for assisted living for seniors unable to remain in their own homes but who want to stay on the KP.

Morgan left the post of executive director in March 2017. A search committee consisting of TMSP board members, a staff member, a volunteer and community leaders reviewed 25 applicants before offering Blegen the position to succeed her.

“This place wouldn’t be here without Edie Morgan seeing the need for it, coming up with the idea and putting it together,” Blegen said. “I’ve got some big shoes to fill.”

Blegen also praised TMSP staff and board for their work with consultant Linda Hanson over the past few months reorganizing the operation’s structure and developing new job descriptions to streamline the workload.

“I think the mission is really compelling,” Blegen said. “I had an experience in the ’90s where I became friends with this woman in Union whose husband has passed away a couple of years before. I ended up getting to know her really well; getting her garden back up to speed; getting groceries. She was 92. She made it another four years. I was able to help her

stay in her home, and die in her home. It was a gift to be able to do that for her. I saw the impact it had on her and you can multiply that around here; it’s just something that I am excited about being able to give to folks.”

TMSP has a staff of six and a host of volunteers, including four in the office, 15 drivers and another dozen or more doing everything from writing grants to

stacking firewood, or just visiting with people who can’t get out as much as they’d like.

“We always need drivers,” said Mary Morris, volunteer

coordinator, “and anyone who just wants to help.”

The Crandall Center is often busy with classes like fall prevention and programs that bring in outside speakers.

“Then of course there’s the KSIC desk (Key Senior Information Center), where anyone can drop in and ask questions, get assistance and learn about Medicare and other things,” Blegen said. “We recently helped one woman get her Social Security benefits restored.”

“This building also has a lot of possibilities,” he said. “We’ve got this commercial kitchen almost ready to go; one of the things we’re going to do is have a process in place to rent it.” There are also two large open spaces suitable for meetings or catered events.

Separate from its daily operations and programming is TMSP’s campaign to build its senior housing project. “It’s turned out

“THIS ISN’T REALLY JUST BUILDING SENIOR HOUSING; IT REALLY IS A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT”

to be a little more complicated and a little more expensive than originally envisioned, which is always the case I think with every capital project—ever,” Blegen said. “Right now our goal is to break ground this fall or winter.”

The plan calls for three buildings of 10 units each in a single longhouse concept, according to TMSP Board President Sara Thompson. (Thompson also serves as president of the KP News publishing board and is a frequent contributor.)

“Essentially every person will occupy a private bedroom in a 10-bedroom home with its own entry, and one of the three homes will be for memory care,” she said. “Our feeling is that we should be able to get most people taken care of here until



Eric Blegen started work at The Mustard Seed Project Nov. 1. Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

the end of their lives.”

“The other thing that was really crucial to all of us was to have 30 percent Medicaid beds; our analysts said that should meet the needs of the community out here, but that also increased our fundraising needs,” Thompson said.

“The entire cost of the project is about \$10.5 million, coming from grants and loans. That includes the land, the building and site development, and the cost of getting the program up and running, hiring people, training them and all of that. It’s

not cheap, but it’s not \$10.5 million of bricks and mortar,” she said.

“We will have an operating partner

that will be managing all the staff and making sure everything is in compliance,” Blegen said. “It’s about 25 new jobs altogether, including a dietician to help with meal planning, an RN doing oversight, and staff for things like maintenance.”

“We’re sort of evolving and understanding that this isn’t really just building senior housing; it really is a community development project,” Thompson said.

“We’re working on partnerships to improve what people can get out here to keep them in their own homes. That’s one of the exciting things about this project—I think we’ll get leverage from having housing.”

“The good news is we’ve raised \$1.7 of \$2.7 million that we need from foundations and donors, so we’re more than halfway

there,” Blegen said. “I’m really impressed with the success Mustard Seed has had with grants. I think that must mean they’ve been doing something right.”

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DECEMBER 1**FESTIVE CHRISTMAS REVELRY**

6-8:30 p.m. Lakebay Community Church Hall, 11 Cornwall Road SW. The Bluegrass Minstrels' Annual Christmas concert is free; any donations will go to benefit the Red Barn. Tweed Meyer will be there painting and an auction will be held for her artwork. Free shuttle from the Community Center 5:30-6 p.m. 253-884-2574.

HOBO JIM

Alaska's balladeer returns to the civic center to sing and tell stories. Lasagna dinner 6-7:30 p.m. for ticket holders. Tickets \$30 (adults); \$15 (ages 6-17); 5 years and under, free with adult. Tickets available at Sunnycrest Nursery, KP Civic Center, KP Historical Society museum. kphsmuseum@gmail.com, 253-888-3246

DECEMBER 2**LETTERS TO SANTA**

3-4 p.m. Key Peninsula Fire Station, 8911 Key Peninsula Hwy NW, Key Center. Key Pen Parks and the Key Pen Fire Department host this free event. Kids can decorate cookies and write letters to Santa.

DECEMBER 3**POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSION**

11 a.m.-12 p.m. Are you interested in parenting classes for children ages 2-12 years old? This home-visiting program teaches parents techniques on managing misbehavior and encouraging desirable behavior. Key Center Library. Contact Britney at CHSW to confirm attendance. 253-884-5433.

DECEMBER 4**UGLY SWEATER IMPROV NIGHT**

6-7 p.m. Blend Wine Shop, 8914 Key Pen Hwy. Bring yourself and your jolliest friends for a fun night of improvisation with a holiday-themed twist. Ages 21+ Remember to wear your ugly sweate—the ugliest sweater wins a prize! Hope to see you there. keypeninsulatoastmasters@gmail.com

DECEMBER 6 & 13**PAINTING WITH TWEED MEYER**

1:30-3 p.m. Each student will personally develop their own unique expression of art with Tweed's guidance in this remainder of series. The Mustard Seed Project's Crandall Center, 9016 154th Avenue Court NW in Key Center (former Roadhouse Restaurant). 253-884-9814, themustardseedproject.org

DECEMBER 7, 14 & 21**INTRO TO GENTLE YOGA**

8:30-9:30 a.m. A Gentle Yoga series for older adults. Students will be encouraged to move at their own pace. The Mustard Seed Project, 9016 154th Avenue Court NW, Key Center. Call first: 253-884-9814

DECEMBER 15**COOKIE BAKING/OPEN HOUSE**

10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Come for a free Saturday of fun! Drop in for cookie baking, crafting for kids, caroling, and an open house. Our Americorps NCCC volunteers will give tours of the improvements they've made around Sound View camp. Option to spend the night for a small fee. soundviewcamp.com, 8515 Soundview Dr SW, Longbranch. 253-884-9202

DECEMBER 16**KEY SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

3 p.m. Christmas Concert at McColley Hall. Music includes traditional and more contemporary music, and features several individuals plus the Vaughn Elementary Choir, with a mass number finale. Free admission, with donations for the food bank accepted. KP Lutheran Church; 4213 Lackey Rd. kplclutheran.org; 253-884-3312

DECEMBER 17**RELATIVES RAISING KIDS SUPPORT**

Grandparents and relatives raising children meets at Evergreen Elementary from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Potluck dinner and child care provided. Call Lori at CHSW at 253-884-5433 or 253-391-0144.

DECEMBER 31**NEW YEAR'S EVE FAMILY CAMP**

11 a.m. Dec. 31 - 2 p.m. Jan. 1. Celebrate the New Year with fun and fellowship at Sound View in Longbranch! This one night camp will feature games galore with lunch, dinner, midnight snacks, and brunch included...and an optional polar bear plunge to welcome in the new year! Register at soundviewcamp.com under Family Events. Ages 13 and up \$45; ages 6-12 \$30; 5 and under free. 253-884-9202

OFF THE KEY**THROUGH DECEMBER 12****TOYS FOR TOTS CAMPAIGN**

Help brighten a child's life through our annual toy drive. Drop off new, unwrapped toys at Edward Jones, 3519 56th St NW, Suite 220, Gig Harbor. Monetary donations cannot be accepted. 253-858-5511

THROUGH JAN 19**JACOB LAWRENCE COLLECTION**

Washington State History Museum. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. One of America's most celebrated artists. washingtonhistory.org/visit/wshm/exhibits/

DECEMBER 1**PIER INTO THE NIGHT LIVE DIVE**

6-8 p.m. Stay warm and dry on the dock while Harbor Wild Watch's divers livestream what they encounter below the surface onto a 10ft screen. Staff biologists will narrate and identify the plants and animals. Dress for the weather and bring a chair. Jerisich Public Dock, 3215 Harborview Dr., Gig Harbor. 253-514-0187, lindsey@harborwildwatch.org, www.harborwildwatch.org

DECEMBER 1 & 8**HARBOR WILDWATCH: SALMON TOURS**

10-11 a.m. Austin Estuary Park (meet near the picnic table), 4009 Harborview Dr., Gig Harbor. Fun, engaging tour begins at Austin Estuary and ends at Donkey Creek Park. Learn all about salmon's life cycle and their cultural and ecological significance while viewing spawning salmon. Perfect for all ages. Free; donations welcome.

DECEMBER 6**HISTORY AFTER HOURS: CRAFT & BREW**

7-10 p.m. WA State History Museum, 1911 Pacific Ave., Tacoma. Crafting and beer tasting bonanza, see 180 unusual items in the "Make/Do: A History of Creative Reuse" exhibit. Learn about each style of craft beer along with its historical significance. Make your own gift wrapping paper. \$20 pre-registration, \$25 at the door. www.washingtonhistory.org/events; 253-272-3500

DECEMBER 12**KGI WATERSHED COUNCIL**

The KP-Gig Harbor-Islands (KGI) Watershed Council fosters watershed stewardship, provides educational programs, outreach and workshops, encouraging the collaboration and

involvement of all watershed residents and businesses. Meets second Wednesday every other month from 3-5 p.m. Gig Harbor Fire HQ, 10222 Bujacich Rd NW, Gig Harbor. www.harborwildwatch.org, lindsey@harborwildwatch.org, 253-514-0187

DECEMBER 20**THIRD THURSDAY**

Washington State History Museum 7-10 p.m. Special exhibitions on view: Jacob Lawrence; Two Centuries of Glass; Sleight of Hand: Magic and Spiritualism in the Twentieth Century. Select unique gifts and complete your last-minute holiday shopping at "The Goods" at the Museum. washingtonhistory.org/visit/wshm/eventsprograms/

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

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

MONDAYS & FRIDAYS**PLAY TO LEARN**

10-11:30 a.m. Free program for children (ages 6 and under) and adults to play together! Individual play, fun group activities, songs, and a whole group circle time. Drop-in program, please join us. Michelle 253-530-1097 or harrisonm@psd401.net

TUESDAYS**STORYTIMES**

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

LOVING HEARTS

Join Loving Hearts to knit or crochet for charity. First Tuesday of the month: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; all other Tuesdays 1-3 p.m. WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Ave. NW. Yarn donations are needed and very much appreciated. Virginia at 253-884-9619 or lovingheartsonkp@gmail.com

TOPS

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

OASIS YOUTH CENTER

Are you a queer or questioning youth between the ages of 14 and 24 in the Key Peninsula area? We are bringing Oasis Youth Center to you at our satellite program Tuesdays from 3-6 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. There will be games, new friends, activities, learning and snacks. www.oasisyouthcenter.org, oasis@oasisyouthcenter.org, 253-671-2838

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

PRESCHOOL PLAYTIME

Weekly except during school breaks. No program Dec. 20, 25, 27 or Jan 1. The Children's Home Society of Washington/KP Family Resource Center offers a preschool/toddler indoor-park program 9:30-11:30 a.m. in the KP Civic Center gym. Caregivers stay with child. Drop-ins welcome; stay as long as you wish. A \$1/child donation is suggested. 253-884-5433

SENIOR TAI CHI

Senior tai chi class, 10:15-11:15 a.m. at KP Community Services in Lakebay. Sign up in advance if you're not already in the class. 253-884-4440

WEDNESDAYS

READY SET GO!

Free Early Learning Program for 3- & 4-year-olds. Limited to 16 children with their parent/caregiver. Focus on kindergarten readiness and lots of fun. KP Civic Center VFW room, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Lori Mertens 253-884-5433.

LAKEBAY WRITERS

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

BLEND HOOKERS AND TINKERS

Does your fiber diet include skeins of yarn? Join in from 5:30-8 p.m. at Blend Wine Shop for a rollicking good time. Bring projects to work on, questions, show-and-tell or just hang out with a fabulous group of Key Penners. All skill levels and fiber interests welcome; however, must be 21+ due to location. hannah8ball@gmail.com, 817-929-3943

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

6:30-7:30 p.m. at Key Center Library. Please call or text for specific dates (no meeting Dec. 26). Facilitator: Suzanne Hickel, suhickel@gmail.com, 253-565-1200

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

SENIOR MEALS

Nutritious meals for ages 60+ are served

at noon at KP Community Services; \$2 donation is requested. Guests (ages 50-59) of senior attendees are requested to donate \$2.50. Key Pen Comm. Services, 17015 9th St. Court SW, Home, 253-884-4440

THURSDAYS

TOASTMASTERS

Have fun improving your public speaking ability and leadership skills at Wright-Bliss fire station, 12310 Wright Bliss Rd NW, 8-9 a.m. Guests are welcome to come and observe with no obligation to speak. keypeninsulatoastmasters@gmail.com

SENIORS LUNCH

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

FRIDAYS

SENIOR TAI CHI

Senior tai chi drop-in class, 8:45-9:45 a.m. at KP Community Services in Lakebay. 253-884-4440

TRIPLE P PARENTING CLASSES

Children's Home Society of Washington partners with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to sign up families for Triple P Parenting classes and provide assistance with basic food and health insurance applications. Representative available at Key Peninsula Community Office, Suite D, KC Corral Fridays 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 253-432-4948 or 253-884-5433

KP YOUTH COUNCIL

2:30-5 p.m. at the Key Center fire station. Keypercouncil@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Dec. 1, Writers Guild, 10 a.m., Community Council office, Suite D, at the Key Center Corral. 253-884-6455

Dec 1 & 15, West of the Narrows Depression and Bipolar Support Group - Lakebay Group, 11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Rd. NW, Kimberly 253-753-4270 or dbsalakebay@gmail.com

Dec 2, Lakebay Fuchsia Society, 4-8 p.m. KP Civic Center. Christmas party. Peggy Gablehouse 253-686-7904, gablehousep@aol.com

Dec 3 & 19, KP Veterans group, 7 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Rd NW. Veterans, military service members and families with children 16 and older are welcome. 253-225-5130

Dec. 4, KP Historical Society Board Mtg., 11 a.m. in the museum at KP Civic Center. Members, guests, others interested in museum and local

history are welcome. 253-888-3246

Dec. 5 & 19, KP Lions Club, 6 p.m., Key Center fire station. 253-853-2721

Dec. 6, Survivors of Suicide, 5:30-7 p.m. Boys and Girls Club, Gig Harbor. Bob Anderson at 253-753-3013 or bobtanderson@me.com

Dec. 6, 26th Legislative District Democrats, 6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting. Public invited. Givens Community Center, 1026 Sidney Road, Port Orchard. 26thdemocrats@gmail.com

Dec. 7 KPBA meeting at 7:30 a.m. at Lulu's Homeport; Dec. 21 at noon at El Sombrero (speaker County Councilmember Derek Young), Key Peninsula Business Association, www.kpba.org/about, Jud Morris 253-884-5433

Dec. 10, KP Parks Commission, 7:30 p.m., Volunteer Park office. 253-884-9240

Dec. 11, KP Fire Commission, 5-7 p.m., Key Center fire station. www.keypeninsulafire.org or 253-884-2222

Dec. 12, Bayshore Garden Club, 10 a.m., Longbranch fire station. Wendy, 253-332-4883

Dec. 12, Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition, 10 a.m., Gig Harbor Fire District Headquarters, 10222 Bujacich Road NW, Gig Harbor. www.PEP-C.org, curtesscott45@gmail.com, 253-380-7240

Dec. 12, KP Community Council, 7 p.m., Key Center fire station. 253-432-4948

Dec. 13, Ashes support group for Fire District 16, 10:30 a.m., Key Center fire station. 253-884-3771

Dec. 13, Peninsula School District Board, 6 p.m., district office in Purdy. 253-530-1000

Dec. 13, KP Civic Center Assn. board, 7 p.m., Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center. www.kpciviccenter.org, kpciviccenter@centurytel.net, 253-884-3456

Dec. 15, Key Peninsula Caregivers Support Group, 10:30 a.m.-noon at The Mustard Seed Project, 9016 154th NW, Key Center. Please call Debra Jamerson before attending. 360-621-1110

Dec. 16, Bluegrass Gospel Jam Session, 6-8:30 p.m. For all acoustic instruments, ages and skill levels. Everyone is welcome to play, sing or just listen. Bring music stand and finger food to share, music and beverages are provided. Longbranch Church, 16518 46th St. SW. 253-884-9339

Dec. 17, KP Democrats, no meeting, johnpatkelly@aol.com

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

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



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



Join Us for a Christmas Community "Sing Thing"
Sunday Dec 2 at 3 pm

Christmas Eve Service at 3pm
 Monday Dec 24



10:30 am Worship on Sunday
 2406 McEwan Rd, Lakebay 253-857-7284
 www.epcgrace.org Ed Longabaugh, Pastor



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KP Cub Scouts Target of Local Thieves

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

A trailer containing new camping gear belonging to local Cub Scout Pack 222 was stolen from the Key Peninsula Lutheran Church parking lot at the corner of KP Highway NW and Lackey Road during the night of Oct. 29.

“They cut the lock on the gate and came in here to get the trailer; it had a wheel boot on it and they dragged it away,” said Cubmaster Benjamin Warfield. “They probably thought it was full of tools.”

The damaged trailer was recovered about a half mile south near Jackson Lake Road NW on 38th Street NW, though its contents had been stolen. “It had to make a lot of noise; that’s as far as they could drag it,” Warfield said.

According to Camp Coordinator Arne Sewell, the items stolen included a new 13×13 foot Easy Pop Up tent, a three-burner Kodiak propane stove and two five-gallon propane tanks.

The trailer is a 12-foot Wells Cargo container that was donated to the pack about five years ago.

The lock was cut and the tire and wheel will need to be replaced, according to Sewell.

“It had pretty much all of our scouting supplies,” Warfield said. “Aside from being a nuisance, we just got all of our popcorn sales done and now we’ve got to replace everything we just bought. At least they didn’t destroy the whole trailer.”

“We only used all that stuff one time for our fall camp at the beginning of October at Camp Sound View,” he said.

Pack 222 guided visitors at Camp Sound View during the Farm Tour Oct. 6 as a service project and also cleaned trails and picked up “a truckload” of litter from the beach, Warfield said, and spent the night at the camp.

“Every campout includes a service project and a big camp fire, where we do



Brute-force damage to Scouts’ storage trailer.
 Photo: Arne Sewell

songs and s’mores of course,” Warfield said. “Every den helps with cooking and preparing meals; we take an older den and younger den and work them together to do the meals. Then we had an early morning polar bear swim.”

Pack 222 includes scouts from kindergarten through fifth grade; sixth-graders can move up to Boy Scouts, according to Warfield, who has been part of the pack with his son, Ben, for two and a half years.

“We’ve got 40 to 50 kids, and we do a lot of co-camps with the Girl Scouts,” he said. “I was in Boy Scouts and when I moved out here (to Lake Holiday) there wasn’t anything going on. I felt like if I helped join a pack out here and help foster that there’d be a better one down the line. I gained a lot from scouting.”

Vanessa Fritsch, Pack 222’s secretary, said members of the community have been eager to support the scouts after word of the theft got out. “We already have a PayPal account and we appreciate the public support; we don’t want to take advantage of anyone,” she said. The pack is looking to raise \$500 to replace the stolen items and repair the trailer.

“And next time we’re going to paint ‘Pack 222’ on the side of trailer,” Warfield said, “so they know it’s not tools—it’s Cub Scout stuff.”

For more information, go to the BSA Pack 222 Facebook page.

Drive-thru Turkeys?



Penny Gazabat is no turkey. “We’d cause Thanksgiving style traffic jams if we didn’t stagger the pick-ups,” she said.

Grateful families picked up whole turkeys and holiday food baskets with everything necessary to cook up a classic Thanksgiving meal. The dedicated volunteer team at the Key Peninsula Community Services Food Bank provided 125 families in need Nov. 21, just in time for Thanksgiving.

Donations of food and money are always needed and appreciated, but most especially during the cold weather months.



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Santa Claus is coming to town...

brought to you by the - Key Peninsula Business Association, the Fire Fighters Union, Pierce County Fire District 16 and Key Pen Parks



Santa will fly from 5:30pmish to 7:30pmish* each night. Please keep in mind that times are approximate and due to temperamental reindeer, Santa will stick to main roadways. Listen for our sleigh bells to signal our arrival!!!
*Due to Weather and Reindeer Games, exact times are not possible

Sat, December 1 Lake Minterwood - 6:00pm	Mon, December 3 Greentree - 6pmish	Sun, December 9 Horseshoe Lake - 6pmish Creviston Heights - 7pmish	Sat, December 15 Evergreen School - 6pmish Santa will be there until 6:15pmish Taylor Bay - 6:45pmish
Sun, December 2 Tree Lighting - Key Center (Dusk) Bel Mar Wind and Tides Emerald Shores	Fri, December 7 Jackson Lake - 6pmish Home - 7pmish Joemma Beach Farms 8pm	Fri, December 14 Rocky Bay Health Center - 6:00pmish Vaughn Area - 7:30pmish	Sun, December 16 Bel Ridge - 6pmish Lake of the Woods - 6:45pm
	Sat, December 8 Palmer Lake - 5:45pmish		Fri, December 21 Lake Holiday - 6pmish





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The holidays are special on the Key Peninsula as we prepare to embrace and enjoy—or simply survive—the adventures of the days ahead, our thoughts naturally go to giving both wisely and well.

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The advertisers you see here and throughout the pages of this newspaper every month make our community a better place for all of us. Please let them know you appreciate their support; they make this newspaper possible.

Whatever holidays you celebrate, whatever traditions you honor, we at the Key Peninsula News wish you the very best for the season and a happy New Year.



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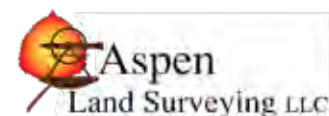


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The Mustard Seed Project
Two Waters Arts Alliance
Uptown Gig Harbor
Van Der Veer Jewelers
Waypoint Church
West Side Mtn Bike Race
Windermere Real Estate
Derek Young



Dec 4 **Menorah Lighting** 6:30pm
join the Chabad Jewish Center of Pierce County for a
traditional celebration for the entire family

Dec 8 & 9 **Polar Express** at Galaxy Theatres at 10am and
6pm (on 9th) \$6 benefits the GH Police Jay Cox Fund

Dec 9 **Ladies Night Party** at the Garden Room 3-7pm

Dec 18 **Sounds of the Season** performed by
Kopachuck Middle School Band 4-5pm

Dec 23 & 24 **Photos with Santa** at Galaxy

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Join us for the holidays

Thank you Linda Hanson for being such a wonderful Interim Executive Director. We wouldn't be where we are today without your guidance.

A warm TMSP welcome to Eric Blegen, our new Executive Director. We are excited about the future.

Santa for Seniors

Please come celebrate Christmas with the Mustard Seed Project Wednesday, December 19 at The Crandall Center.

This year we are honored to be the recipient of Lutheran Community Services Northwest "Santa for Seniors" annual presentation, courtesy of the Looney Foundation.

Lunch will be served 1-3 pm. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be handing out gifts after lunch and there will be *surprises*.

If you know a senior that would love a nice holiday gathering, please let them know of this special occasion, just for them.

Space is limited, reserve a place early by calling 253-884-9814.

Intro to Gentle Yoga

55+ Adults
Fridays 8:30-9:30 am
Dec 7, 14, 21, 28
\$12 drop in with registration

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group

Saturday Dec. 15
10:30 to 12pm
Free with registration

Thinking Thursday Seminar Series

**Grief and Loss:
How do I cope?**
January 17, 10 to 11am
with Susan Carlson
Free and open to the public

Register for classes in advance at 253-884-9814

Every gift to The Mustard Seed Project now until January 1 will be matched—up to \$10,000! Our board members have come together to make this challenge possible, to encourage support for our vital services including transportation, connection to resources, classes, friendly visitors and chore helpers.

More ways to support The Mustard Seed Project during this season: Food Market receipts; Fred Meyer Community Rewards; Amazon Smile.



The Mustard Seed Project
OF KEY PENINSULA

Call **253-884-9814** info@themustardseedproject.org
www.themustardseedproject.org Like us on Facebook for daily updates
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Patty will be your champion

I have been working with Patty Sexton since August 2017. After much reluctance on my part and prodding by my husband I contacted Patty Sexton at Mission Possible. It was very difficult for me to come to the realization and acceptance that I really could no longer work. Pride and the way I was raised made this situation very shameful to me, however, from the very beginning she made me feel at ease.

After discussing my physical limitations with Patty I felt a great deal of relief, like a burden had been lifted from me. She patiently walked me through the process of filing a Social Security Disability claim.

In June 2018 I was finally awarded benefits and Patty phoned to give me the good news. Due to the determination being 18 months later than I had hoped Patty did not get paid for assisting me. This infuriated me but Patty seemed to take it in stride. Patty did not bring this up, I did and I believe she wouldn't have. So, just as I thought early in my working with Patty, she is not in this for the money.

Patty not only has extensive knowledge of the process and real empathy for her clients, she has unwavering integrity. I highly recommend her and her company.

Susan K., Vancouver, WA

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A resident boat from Lakebay Marina keeled over and sank in the shallow waters of Von Geldern Cove on its way home Oct. 14. *Photo: U.S. Coast Guard*

Owner Successfully Recovers Grounded Boat from Von Geldern Cove

STAFF REPORT

A 58-foot recreational powerboat that was left aground in the rocky shallows on the north side of Von Geldern Cove—known locally as Joe’s Bay—Oct. 14 was rescued and refloated by the owner during a minus tide after midnight Nov. 9.

The recovered vessel is back in its berth at the Lakebay Marina. The Key Peninsula News could not contact the vessel owner for comment.

The Key Peninsula Fire Department water rescue crew had responded to a vessel taking on water at approximately 2:21 a.m., Oct. 14, together with rescue vessels from Anderson Island and the U.S. Coast Guard. The tide height was less than 2 feet above the charted depth at the time, though it is unclear whether the vessel ran aground or began leaking first.

Two crew members on the vessel were taken aboard the Pierce County Fire rescue vessel and returned to Lakebay Marina in Mayo Cove, a half mile to the south, where the stricken vessel was reportedly headed and is usually moored.

The state Department of Ecology responded to the scene later the same day and pumped out diesel fuel, plugged the air vents and deployed an oil containment boom surrounding the vessel to absorb oil or fuel residue.

In the following days, multiple residents of Home contacted the Department of Natural Resources to express concern about fuel or other contaminants leaking from the vessel.

Troy Wood, program manager of the DNR Derelict Vessel Removal Program, told the KP News, “The DVRP does not have the funds to remove the vessel despite our willingness to do the removal.

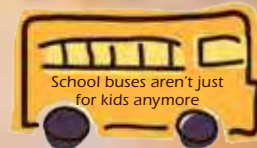
“The DVRP works very hard to protect all state-owned aquatic lands, but the DVRP is out of funds until the next budget is passed next biennium (July 2019),” Wood said. “When a vessel’s situation, priority and threat make it necessary for removal and the DVRP has the funds to accomplish the removal, the DVRP must follow RCW 79.100.040 in gaining custody... It takes 30 days to gain legal custody. The DVRP cannot seize private property without due process and cannot immediately touch a vessel unless it is an imminent threat to human safety and the environment, in accordance with RCW 79.100.040(3).”

Derelict vessels can be reported to the DVRP at 360-902-1574.

The Department of Ecology encourages the public to report any spills or suspected spills of toxic material to 360-407-6300 or 800-258-5990 after 5 p.m. and on weekends.

Happy Holidays!

KP SCHOOL BUS CONNECTS



Holiday Schedule

No service Dec 20 - Jan 1

EVERGREEN TUES & THURS AM

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

EVERGREEN WEDNESDAY AM

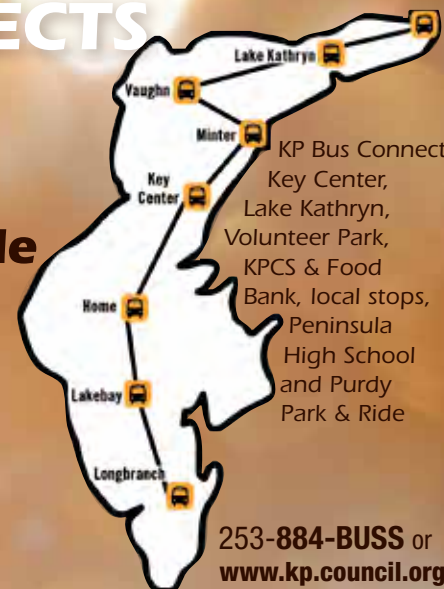
- 9:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:54 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:55 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
- 10:00 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 10:01 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
- 10:05 67th Ave Ct NW @ KP Hwy N
- 10:09 Food Market in Key Center
- 10:10 KP Hwy N @ Minterwood Dr NW
- 10:16 Lake Kathryn Village SR 302 & 92nd Ave NW
- 10:21 Purdy Park & Ride

VAUGHN TUES & THURS AM

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

VAUGHN WEDNESDAY AM

- 9:50 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:51 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
- 9:52 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
- 9:54 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
- 9:57 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:59 SR302 @ 140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:01 SR 302 @ Charbonneau Construction
- 10:04 SR 302 @ 92nd Ave NW/Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:09 Purdy Park & Ride



253-884-BUSS or www.kp.council.org

TUESDAY & THURSDAY MIDDAY

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

TUES, WED & THURS PM

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

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



Washington State leases the lands below the marina to the Longbranch Improvement Club on conditions—including maintaining public access. *Photo: Kelly Guenther*

After Risky Delay, D.C. Delegation Pushes Marina Upgrades

TED OLINGER AND SARA THOMPSON,
KP NEWS

Months after receiving approval for a \$245,000 grant from the state capital budget, the Longbranch Marina was still waiting for permits to begin state-mandated renovations or risk losing that very same funding.

After intervention by Sen. Maria Caldwell and Rep. Derek Kilmer's offices, the process now appears ready to move forward.

"We have been waiting on National Marine Fisheries (part of NOAA) to give us their OK on our permitting application for about five months," said Clark Van Bogart, president of the Longbranch Improvement Club, the marina owner. "We went through nine out of 10 levels of permitting jurisdictions: two county, four state, four Indian tribes, the U.S. Corps of Engineers, and the last hurdle was NOAA. Nine of the 10 were done in March and we've been waiting ever since for NOAA to act."

Van Bogart was thrilled when he got the news about the funding in February 2018, he said. The LIC negotiated its new 15-year aquatic lands lease in 2017, working with the Department of Natural Resources on a 30-year plan to make recommended and affordable environmental and public-safety upgrades.

But the funding would have been at risk if the unexplained delay persisted. "The grant expires if unused by June 30, 2019," Van Bogart said. "As a practical matter, it expires for us when the fish window closes because it won't open again until after June 30."

The so-called fish window is from September to mid-February. "That's the period of time when you can do work that disturbs the bottom, like replacing pilings," Van Bogart said.

The grant will cover most of the cost of upgrading the electrical system, replacing 1,000 square feet of the marina's floating dock with materials that allow light to pass through to improve eelgrass health for

habitat, and removing exposed Styrofoam flotation hazardous to fish. It will also cover the expense of replacing creosote pilings with galvanized steel pilings, rebuilding the now-unusable dinghy dock and building three new finger piers, creating six more slips and more revenue for the marina.

Members of the LIC got involved to figure out why the last permit was being delayed by NOAA.

"The whole marina committee has helped on this thing from the beginning two years ago; there are a lot of people to thank," said Van Bogart. "Herald Ugles does a lot of legislative work in the International Longshore Warehouse Union and he was the one that put me in touch with the right person in Sen. Cantwell's office in D.C."

"We contacted Sen. Cantwell and Rep. Kilmer and, lo and behold, within a couple of days we got a notice saying the (NOAA) marine biologist was issuing a report. It's the last hurdle," he said.

"The calendar days are flipping by rather quickly now and we need to get some work done before the close of the fish window," Van Bogart said. "The contractor needed lead time; we've given them the go-ahead to start ordering and get the project underway."

Longbranch Marina history goes back more than a century. In 1885, a wharf was built to accommodate ferries serving south Puget Sound. The Mosquito Fleet transported families and agricultural products to and from Tacoma, Steilacoom and Olympia. A ferry called Elk served until the late 1930s, when the Tacoma Narrows Bridge rendered the service obsolete.

When Pierce County refused to lease the ferry dock to a private venture, the LIC stepped in. County engineers supplied plans and LIC members provided the lumber, labor and funding to build a floating pier in 1959. About one-third of the floating dock space is dedicated to public guest moorage on a first-come, first-served basis for both day and overnight users. The wharf continues to be owned by the county.

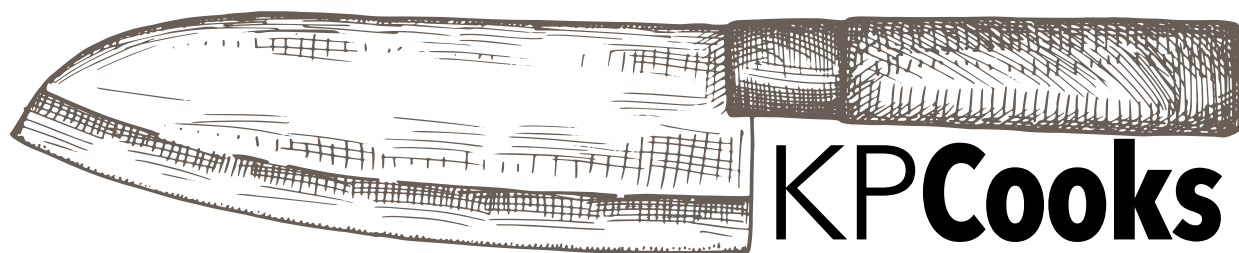
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Some of us (the lucky ones) weave Christmas memories with smells of cookies baking in preparation for the holidays. This month we're revisiting our cook's Minnesota holiday memories. And cookies.



Ready to pop into the oven. Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

Sweet Memories of Christmas Past

BARBARA VAN BOGART

Walter Steinkraus, Uncle Stoney to my cousins and me, followed in his dad's footsteps by owning a bakery in my hometown of Redwood Falls, Minnesota. It was always such a delight to walk into his little bakery and be at the receiving end of his baked goods. Such a lovely memory of opening that old screen door and heading over to the glass front case, filled with such tasty treats.

Standing behind the counter, dressed in his white baker's clothes, he was always generous, offering up small square white cakes covered with icing and rolled in finely chopped nuts, brownies, elephant ears or a cookie for my friends and me after we worked up an appetite riding our bikes or playing baseball during the summer or skating up and down the frozen river in the winter.

The bakery is long gone, but the sweet memories still linger. At the top of the list of Christmas favorites were his spritz cookies, decorated with red or green sugar sprinkles. I wonder how many dozens of these were baked each Christmas season—more than just a few, I know.

Several years ago, while talking with one of my cousins, I happened to mention those cookies. Lo and behold, she had his easy recipe with ingredients adjusted for home bakers. They have been a Christmas staple ever since.

The word spritz originated in the 20th century with the German "spritzen" meaning "to squirt." A spritz cookie press comes with an assortment of nozzle tips to squirt out a variety of shapes from the soft dough to make these cookies as pretty as they are tasty.

Uncle Stoney's Spritz Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound butter (half butter, half Parkay margarine makes it easier to "spritz")
- 1 cup white sugar
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix together well and use spritz cookie press to place on ungreased baking sheet. Sprinkle with colored sugar if desired. Bake at 350 on middle rack of oven for 10 minutes and top rack for two minutes until lightly browned around the edges. Cool on wire racks. Spritz cookies freeze well.

My father's side of the family came to the United States from Sweden in 1902, bringing cookbooks full of family recipes. Among my favorites is the pepparkakor cookie, a flavorful, thin and crisp spice cookie that takes a little more effort than the spritz to make. You are subsequently rewarded with a cookie ready to be dunked in hot coffee for an especially delicious taste treat that is well worth the effort.

Aunt Signe's Pepparkakor Cookies

This recipe makes several dozen and can be halved. They can be baked ahead of time and frozen.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons fine, dried orange peel
- 1 cup butter, softened to room temperature
- ¼ cup shortening
- 1½ cups white sugar
- 1 cup dark Karo syrup
- 2 small beaten eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon cloves
- ½ teaspoon ginger
- 6 cups all-purpose flour

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat syrup to boiling and add orange peel. Place butter, shortening and sugar in a large bowl and pour heated syrup mixture over. Let cool and add beaten eggs. Mix soda, spices and flour. Blend into butter mixture; dough will be stiff. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. An hour or so before baking, remove dough from refrigerator. Divide into two or three sections, and roll out each section to ⅛-inch thickness on a lightly floured board. Cut out with cookie cutters, place on ungreased baking sheet and bake at 375 for five to seven minutes. While they are cooling, put on a fresh pot of strong coffee and enjoy these tasty cookies, dunked in coffee, like Aunt Sig used to do.



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Veterinarian Lisa Woods-Zabari proves time flies by when you love your work. *Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News*

Brookside Veterinary Hospital Celebrates 25 Years

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Dr. Lisa Woods-Zabari has been practicing veterinary medicine on the Key Peninsula for over 30 years. January 2019 will mark the 25th year since she built Brookside Hospital, where thousands of animals have been treated.

“We believe our business will grow based on our heart,” she said. “We have a job to do, but every single one of our staff has real passion for this work.”

Originally from West Virginia, Woods-Zabari graduated at 24 from Ohio State University with a degree in veterinary medicine. While still in school, she worked summers in western Washington for two Ohio State alumni with a vet practice in Shelton. She liked the temperate climate and knew she wanted to settle in the area. After a brief stint

in Port Angeles, Woods-Zabari moved south where she began working with Gig Harbor vet Dr. David Kirby—a man she considers a great veterinarian with a philosophy similar to her own and from whom she said she learned much.

Woods-Zabari started Brookside from scratch in 1990 when she was 28, renting the building that currently houses the Key Peninsula Liquor Store on State Route 302. In 1994 she built the hospital around the corner on 118th Avenue NW from the ground up.

Her work with larger animals kept her business afloat while she gradually developed her small animal practice. “Back then we treated horses, cattle, sheep, goats, llamas, alpacas, pot-bellied pigs, domestic pigs, ostriches, chicken, turkeys; you name it,” she said.

“At one point in my life, I was the only ostrich vet in a 100-mile radius; ostriches were very popular in the area

taking her young son Tristan with her on farm calls.

“He went everywhere with me. I’d hand him off to my clients, who watched him while I treated their animals,” she said.

As more 24/7 emergency vet clinics opened and another equine vet moved into the area, her practice evolved to focus on small animals.

“I draw the line at reptiles, but we’ve seen just about everything else come through the door,” Woods-Zabari said. While she continues treating goats, it is dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets and pocket pets such as hamsters and the like that she works with now.

She sees an advantage in Brookside being independent—not owned by a corporation with profit-driven quotas with staff pushing more

products and services. Instead, she said, “we get to decide in-house, based on the idea that what works well for one person might not work well for somebody else.”

“For some, an animal is a piece of property that they want to trade-in, like a car

“FOR SOME, AN ANIMAL IS A PIECE OF PROPERTY THAT THEY WANT TO TRADE IN, LIKE A CAR FOR A NEW MODEL, BUT FOR OTHERS—THAT PET FEELS MORE LIKE THEIR CHILD,” WOODS-ZABARI SAID. “WE HAVE TO WORK WITHIN THE WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS BETWEEN THOSE EXTREMES.”

for a time.” Woods-Zabari went from the KP to places like Issaquah to treat the giant birds.

By 1997 Brookside Veterinary Hospital was expanding, but as a single mom with a solo practice, being available 24/7 meant



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Find out more at www.longbranchfoundation.org or visit our Facebook page.

for a new model, but for others—that pet feels more like their child,” Woods-Zabari said. “We have to work within the wide range of options between those extremes.”

“Money can be the biggest challenge in veterinarian medicine,” Woods-Zabari said. “Nobody wants to focus on the money because we’re all trying to do the best that we can with what we have. Still we’re all very aware of it and we try to address costs with everyone so that nobody suffers sticker shock, nobody feels guilty, nobody feels condemned.” She tells clients if they fail to take care of themselves first, they’re not going to be around to take care of their pet.

Much of the income that used to help offset the costs of maintaining equipment and facilities has been lost to competition with an ever expanding pet care industry, over the counter medications and online sales, she said. Grant-funded free spay and neuter programs provide helpful options for some people but also cut into a once reliable income stream for vets and the chance to establish a lifelong relationship with preventive medicine for dogs and cats.

“The same business practices used by big pharmaceutical companies that drive up costs for even basic, inexpensive to produce medications for people apply to small animals,” Woods-Zabari said.

Brookside kept a pen out back that had become something of a petting zoo many years ago. “We had some sheep and goats; there was a Canada goose that flew with our goats—I called it ‘my fl-herd,’” she said. “It was a long time ago, but some vicious dogs got into the pen and killed our sheep and goats. Only one survived, so I worked with the dangerous dogs laws to get some things changed.” (See “Barnyard Pets, a Heroine and 911” KP News, April 2008.)

“This community rallied around us like you wouldn’t believe,” she said. “This place looked like a funeral parlor with so many flowers and cards of condolences to us as a hospital for losing our pets. It’s just amazing to me how much this community rallies around each other.”

Woods-Zabari said, “People have told me ‘If you picked this place up and set it somewhere else, this and this would happen.’ Nope: This is the heart; this is where we choose to be. I wouldn’t want anything else but to provide what we are giving to this area. We feel blessed to be here and honored to be a part of what this community stands for.”



Mr. and Mrs. Claus arrive in their KPFV rig
Photo: Anne Nesbit

Timeless Tradition: A Christmas Tree Lights Up Key Center

COLLEEN SLATER, KP NEWS

Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive at the Key Corral Saturday, Dec. 1, to enjoy the Christmas tree lighting. They’ll have treats for the children and pose for photos with them.

Dr. Roes and his Down Home Band plus the Key Singers start the celebration at 4 p.m. with Christmas carols and wintertime music.

The original idea for the annual celebration came from the volunteers of the Firefighters Association over 40 years ago. They rigged up Santa’s sleigh to be pulled by a fire department pickup.

For three decades Fred and Mary Ramsdell were the featured stars as Santa and his missus until they pulled up roots in 2005 and moved to Hawaii. Many different volunteers have filled the essential roles since.

It was dentist John Olsson in Key Center who added the tree lighting in 1987. Dr. Roes brought his band to play music and the Key Singers soon joined in.

Dr. Roes recalls a year when the band decided to record their performance. Rhys Woods was the master of ceremonies then and what came through was his voice singing Christmas carols loud and clear with the band in the background. He made up words as he went along.

“It was a riot,” said Roes.

Hot drinks, cookies and warm cheer should make waiting for Santa a treat for everyone. Sirens and bright lights announce the arrival of the sleigh and the time for the tree to be lit, as the music rings out.

Holiday Fundraiser



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DECEMBER 23RD
9am, 10:45am, 6pm

CHRISTMAS EVE
7pm

WayPoint South
Evergreen Elementary
DECEMBER 23RD
10am

CHRISTMAS EVE
6pm

Where in the world



Jack and Gail Wooldridge of Longbranch toured Laos in January. Built on a major tributary of the Mekong river, the Nam Ngum dam created a lake reservoir popular with tourists.



Mid-October, local business owners Matt Lester, Donna Lester and Greg Murphy attended a Seahawks game in London, England.



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TOP Jim Bellamy says, "It pays to detour to the end of some road on your way home to let your eyes and mind take it all in. No traffic, no worries, just peaceful reflections." *Photo: Jim Bellamy*

MID LEFT A deer feasts on quince in Longbranch. *Photo: David Montesino Photography*

MID RIGHT The sun's golden glow shines through between bouts of bruising rain over the Lakebay Marina. *Photo: David Montesino Photography*

LEFT Raft, pod or rookery—all names for a gang of sea lions. *Photo: Ed Johnson, KP News*