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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

August 2019 Vol. 46 No. 8



Lakebay Post Office Break-in Under Investigation

In the early hours of June 24, thieves forced entry into the Lakebay Post Office, stealing mail and packages and leaving security-minded post office box holders wondering what comes next.

ALICE KINERK, KP NEWS

The Lakebay Post Office located on the corner of KP Highway North and Herron Road NW was burglarized June 24. Access to post office boxes was temporarily restricted to business hours, frustrating some customers accustomed to retrieving their mail after hours.

“Someone broke through the interior door of the Lakebay post office and gained access to the mail in the back and made off with an undetermined number of parcels and letters,” USPS Regional Spokesperson Ernie Swanson said by phone from Seattle.

“The U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the Pierce County Sheriff’s Office are conducting an investigation to determine who did it and take appropriate action, he said. “Some of the mail was found in the parking lot and the assumption is that he, she or they must have been frightened or startled or something, took off and left some of the mail behind.”

“We really don’t have an estimate of how many pieces were involved,” Swanson said. The Lakebay postmaster, according to Swanson, said determining the amount of mail involved is hampered by the fact that some people rent boxes but only check

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Rocky Bay Algae Bloom Suspected in Clam Die-Off

The Case Inlet toxic bloom is one of several tracked around the Key Peninsula.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

In mid-July Norm McLoughlin, who lives on Rocky Bay along northern Case Inlet, went to the beach to check his boat. The stench of dead clams nearly knocked him over, he said.

The beach was covered with open shells and rotting flesh. The algae spotted offshore earlier this summer had developed into a full-blown bloom, and it appeared to have taken its toll.

Teri King, a specialist with Washington Sea Grant and program manager for the SoundToxins program, a partnership with WSG, the NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center and Puget Sound Partners, said that a bloom started to form on June 6 in North Bay in Allyn. When King received calls about dead clams in Rocky Bay, close to North Bay, she examined water and shellfish samples sent to her from that location.

Barbara Ann Smolko, Pierce County Surface Water Management, said that similar events were reported in nearby Vaughn Bay.

The organism in both bays was *Protoceratium reticulatum*, a dinoflagellate phytoplankton that is one of several followed by the monitoring program. “Most of South Sound is being inundated with *P. reticulatum* based on the calls I have been fielding and the samples SoundToxins monitors have been viewing,” King said. “The levels are increasing from week to week, as are reported shellfish mortalities and clams surfacing.”

Based on the water sample she received July 16 from Rocky Bay, King said, “I would say the bay is in full bloom and with the cysts. I would say it could last a while.”

Kent Kingman, owner of Minterbrook Oyster Co. near Wauna, also owns approximately 75 acres of tidelands on Rocky Bay that he leases to the Taylor Shellfish Co. for cultivation of clams and oysters.

Bill Dewey, a spokesman for Taylor,

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Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News

Blue-Green Algae Impact Water Safety

Unightly and unhealthy, fresh water algae blooms are becoming more common.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

On July 8, Don Thomson found himself posting signs warning residents on Lake Minterwood that the lake was closed. He had just received notification from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept. that recent tests indicated the microcystin level, a toxin produced by blue-green algae, was 40 times higher than what is considered safe.

Thomson, who oversees the lake for the homeowners association, had asked the county to test the water when residents noticed an algae bloom and were concerned. The county will test weekly until the levels fall to a safe range. Thomson said that the homeowners would meet to decide about treating with algaecides.

Much of the water monitoring on the Key Peninsula is focused on the water quality on beaches where shellfish are

THE CYANOTOXINS THEY PRODUCE ARE A HEALTH RISK TO PEOPLE AND PETS.

harvested and with an emphasis on fecal bacterial counts. Blue-green algae can be a health concern in lakes, and the Pierce County Surface Water Management Dept. just received a grant to study climate change impacts on shellfish, which will include looking at the effects of blue-green algae in Mayo Cove that may be affected by blooms in Bay Lake, which drains into the cove.

Blue-green algae are a type of bacteria called cyanobacteria. Blooms can be unsightly and can be a hazard to boaters or swimmers if they decrease water clarity, but it is the cyanotoxins they produce that are a health risk to people and pets if they are ingested. Although some species produce no toxins, some produce microcystins and others produce anatoxin-a. Microcystins are the most common and affect the liver. They are slow to break down in the water. Anatoxin-a is faster to break down in the water and affects the nervous system. It has been blamed on the deaths of several dogs in the past.

The state established the Washington State Toxic Algae Freshwater Monitoring Program over 10 years ago, according to Lizbeth Seebacher, a wetland and aquatic biologist with the Washington State Department of Ecology Water Quality Program.

Samples are taken from the thickest part of a bloom, so measured toxin levels will represent the highest level present in a body of water. The program provides toxin data for lakes, ponds and streams in the state.

King and Snohomish counties are active participants in the program; counties with lower budgets, according to Seebacher,

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Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula is a community where being different turns out to be a very good thing.

When the Key Peninsula News joined the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association in 2018, we knew we were a little different from other member newspapers. For starters we are a monthly publication, while others publish daily or weekly. What we didn't know, until we attended the convention in October, was that KP News is the only (intentionally) nonprofit newspaper member in the WNPA.

The recognition of our unique mission and business model led us to deeper thinking about how we can position ourselves to benefit from our strengths and create a reliably sustainable newspaper for the future.

We deliver the print edition of KP News free of charge to every mailbox holder on the Key Peninsula south of the bridge at Purdy. Unheard of in traditional newspaper business models, KP News makes quality local journalism available to everyone in the community for free.

Our focus remains providing high quality in-depth local news affecting the Key Peninsula and the waters surrounding it, bringing you the well-researched illuminating history of the area, coupled with fascinating personal stories about the individual people, businesses and organizations who make this far-flung unincorporated rural community so livable.

Thanks in part to assistance from Executive Directors Ben and Susan Paganelli of the KP Partnership for a Healthy a Community, KP News Publishing Board Member John Nichols was able to access and research possible funders interested in independent

local news, a search that led us to the Institute for Nonprofit News.

Key Peninsula News is honored to be accepted as one of the newest members of INN, a foundation for collaboration among a new and growing collective of over 200 nonprofit media newsrooms nationwide dedicated to serving the public interest.

You've read these words here before and they still hold true: Journalism is fundamental to the functioning of democracy, to inform communities, hold the powerful accountable and keep our democracy free.

We are proud to be your community newspaper and we believe that local news is vital to the life we enjoy on the KP.

For now, the lazy days of August are here and with them a yearning to retreat and savor an uncomplicated life with

simple pleasures without the weight of the world on our shoulders. Indulge that thought. It's time to cultivate some compassion and kindness for yourself and tap into what it feels like to be a human again.

In the middle of a blueberry patch with sun at our backs, we began picking blueberries along the tidy rows as three little girls ages three, four and six begin talking all at once—"Look, look! See how big this one is?"—as each berry drops into their half-gallon pails. Their smiling eyes sparkled in the sun as they popped the occasional blueberry directly into their mouths, giggling.

Someone spotted a bee. Together we concluded it was a honey bee, not a bumble bee. The girls already knew there are many different kinds of bees that live in different ways, do their jobs differently and occupy

important niches in our ecosystem. Every one is important.

The girls laughed and played while their mothers shared stories and a world of ideas while berry picking alongside one another. Before it was all over, the girls cooled off in the sprinkler before we piled into the car. We proceeded to sing songs and share giggles all the way home.

Other summer days we will gather to play on the beach, which rarely fails to deliver recollections of my own carefree childhood

summers. As children we transformed into young naturalist beach-combers exploring tide pools delighting in colorful purple starfish of every size. We loved the thrill of watching the small crabs scurry as we turned over big rocks, mortally afraid they might pinch us.

We may have loved the hermit crabs most of all, watching them struggle to move while carrying their house at the same time. We loved the idea of moving into a new, bigger and better house whenever as the hermits grew too large to fit inside.

My memories are deeply rooted along the shores of Puget Sound and Washington's coastal beaches. We dug clams, raked clams, and collected oysters. We fished for salmon with rod and reel, most often setting out with our dad from the old Steilacoom marina at Saltar's Point—decades before it was destroyed by fire in 2009.

Times may have changed but our shores and beaches are still the magical places they've always been, but desperately need our help to stay that way.



[A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY]

Subscribing to the KP News is still only thirty dollars. That pays for 12 issues of Who, What, When, Where and How, not to mention our community calendar, not-always-flattering head shots, surprising stories and sometimes-wild opinions.

Your subscription to Key Peninsula News means more than first-class mail delivery. It says Yes! to the staff and volunteers who give their time and talent to produce an award-winning community paper.

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The KP News invites community information, concerns or complaints at editor@keypennews.org or 253-884-4699. You're also invited to post public meetings or events on our online calendar at keypennews.org. Entries received by the 15th of the month will be printed in the next edition.



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After exposure to the algae, thousands of clams surfaced and died near Rocky Bay, seen here in two views at low tide. *Left photo: David Zeigler, KP News Right photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News*

ROCKY BAY DIE-OFF FROM PAGE 1

said they had seen a similar problem in Discovery Bay. “We’ve experienced significant summer mortality over the years.” Last year they had unusually high mortality and he said this could be a trend, but that it is too early to judge.

Taylor will “let nature take its course” with the dead shellfish. Dewey said natural predators should clean the beach fairly quickly. Clams take about three years to mature, and Taylor has not yet decided when to reseed the beach.

“Whether or not the *P. reticulatum* is the cause of the mortality in Rocky Bay and other bays within Puget Sound this year and in past years is a point of active research by the SoundToxins team, which submitted a request to NOAA earlier this year to study them,” King said. “We can say that the mortalities and *P. reticulatum* are co-occurring and warrant an active investigation.”

P. reticulatum is found in all oceans and can produce yessotoxins, which can be toxic for clams and oysters. Yessotoxins are regulated in the European Union based on concerns for human health, though the degree of harm to humans is unclear.

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE FROM PAGE 1

are less active. Steve Metcalf, communications specialist at TPCHD, said the Pierce County toxic algae program, which is typically implemented in summer months, is subject to funding. There was no program last year but in June 2019 the Pierce County Council approved \$77,000 to fund the lake monitoring program for the rest of the year. Funding will also allow the department to increase community outreach about the importance of surface water quality, including at its office in Key Center.

“We chose a system that saves time and money while protecting people and pets,” Metcalf said. “We check lakes and collect samples weekly for species identification. We can do this analysis at the health department. This tells us if the type of algae we find in samples might be harmful. As an added layer of protection, we sample for toxins every other week, which requires we send samples to a lab.”

TPCHD monitors selected lakes in unincorporated Pierce County based on their history of toxic algae blooms. Palmer Lake, Lake Minterwood and Bay Lake are all monitored.

Treating a lake for cyanobacteria requires a state permit and must be done by a licensed provider. Doug Dorling, head

aquatic biologist for Northwest Aquatic Eco-Systems, has contracted with both Lake Minterwood and Palmer Lake homeowners associations for treatment. He said that a state permit requires about a 90-day application process and costs \$675 annually.

Treatments cost \$100 to \$400 per acre, depending on the treatment required. Algaecides are considered safe, but each lake sets its rules about when they will open for use after a treatment. Palmer Lake, which has had treatments in the past, allows swimming 48 hours after treatment, although if there have been elevated toxin levels, that is a separate consideration.

Seebacher said that climate, sunlight and nutrients all affect cyanobacterial growth. “When we have these drier warmer springs, the blooms tend to start earlier and we’re going to have a bad season. When it gets really sunny, blue-green algae get really happy,” she said. Shallow lakes are affected more by both sunlight and temperature than deep ones.

“Toxic algae blooms appear to be increasing worldwide,” said Metcalf. “Experts are working to determine the causes. Many people suspect climate change is at least partly responsible because of the increase in water temperatures and changes in rainfall.”

Nutrients, especially phosphorus, also contribute to blooms. Those nutrients come from fertilizer, pesticides, and human and animal waste. Seebacher said there is anecdotal evidence that stocking fish may increase blooms due to their waste.

Dorling said that if blooms are not treated, they may last for a few days or for months, depending on the cause. If the cyanobacteria consume all the nutrients, they will die off, but then as the dead organisms sink and decompose, they can release another set of nutrients. “It can be a vicious cycle,” he said.

TPCHD and Ecology recommend the following preventive measures, all geared to decreasing the nutrients flowing into lakes and streams: Reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides, maintain septic systems, pick up after pets, wash vehicles away from the lake, don’t feed waterfowl, keep livestock away from the water, and plant native plants between yard and water to reduce runoff and prevent erosion.

Pierce County has a Toxic Algae Watch Volunteer Program. Contact Lindsay Tuttle, ltuttle@tpchd.org to learn more.

For more information, go to the Washington State Toxic Algae Freshwater Monitoring Program website at nwtoxicalgae.org.



Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News

Sallie Shawl on Social Justice, Peace and 'Best Possible Motives'

The Lakebay resident is an award-winning activist who has been advocating for peace in the region and beyond for nearly 60 years.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Sallie Shawl, 73, of Lakebay, went to her first protest in San Francisco before she graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1964.

"What got me involved in civil rights in many ways, I could say, was *Life* magazine," she said. "The photos of fire hoses on people and dogs being sicced on people. I'm Jewish and was raised with a heightened awareness of discrimination and scapegoating, though my family's been here a while—since the 1840s on my mother's side and at least the 1860s on my dad's."

After studying communications and public policy at U.C. Berkeley, but changing focus and graduating with a degree in the literature of the theater, Shawl moved to New York City in her mid-twenties and got a job at the National Council of Churches. "That began my work with Christian ecumenical organizations that

I discovered were doing really wonderful things."

Shawl returned to the West Coast after two years, found property in Lakebay, and started to build in 1976. She went to work at Associated Ministries in Tacoma and later for the YWCA abused women's shelter and the Martin Luther King Center, providing housing and services to the homeless.

"There was a period where I was intentionally doing a lot of part-time stuff because I had discovered Ground Zero Center for

"A SNOWFLAKE WEIGHS NOTHING BUT ENOUGH OF THEM CAN BRING DOWN A TREE."

Nonviolent Action, resisting the Trident submarine homeport in Bangor," she said.

"For many years that was the total focus of my life; trying to bring people in Kitsap County, especially people in the Navy, to the realization that if we can risk nuclear war, we can risk disarmament."

Every Thursday for 17 or 18 years Shawl went to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton at six in the morning to pass

out flyers to people going to work. The flyers might be about the moral dilemma of the defense worker, the environment, or "about how a snowflake weighs nothing but enough of them can bring down a tree," she said. Not all of the workers were receptive, "but I ended up marrying one of them. It was the epitome of 'we're all in this together; we have to talk to each other.'"

They started dating in 1985. "Richard wanted to get married, I didn't want to get married, I had never been married, there was no need to get married," she said. "But when he got sick, I figured the most radical way I could tell him I loved him was to say 'yes.'"

Shawl's husband died of cancer in 1998. Ground Zero also practiced civil disobedience, including trespassing on the Navy base or stopping traffic.

"When we got a trial by jury, we got quite a few 'not guilty' verdicts from local people, but not always," Shawl said. "I ended up in jail a few times and then went to federal prison for six months."

Shawl and a few others sat down on railroad tracks to block a train. "That was the 'white train,' carrying warheads into Bangor," she said.

"There were three of us who went in together. The other two were nuns, so it was assumed by a lot of people that I was also a nun, and I would get mail to Sister Sallie Shawl."

Six weeks after her release in May 1990, Shawl returned to Associated Ministries of Tacoma as director of a program called Paint Tacoma/Pierce Beautiful, and stayed for 21 years.

Shawl raised money for the program, recruited volunteers and created the homeowner selection process. "It was a logistical nightmare full of details, and for some reason I loved it," she said. "The first year we did 29 houses, the next summer we did 36, the next summer was 57; one summer we painted 126 houses."

In 2005, Shawl was also at work on the Key Peninsula where she helped create and run the Puget Sound Interfaith Youth Camp, a weeklong program conducted at the YMCA's Camp Seymour.

"The camp was born out of the Islamophobia after 9/11," she said. "We had Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i, Unitarian, Buddhist, a few kids with various earth-based beliefs who were really sweet, and humanists—we had them all."

The annual program lasted five years. "We had 45 seventh and eighth graders the first year," Shawl said. "We maxed out at 60 and went up to ninth grade after

that first year because the eighth graders begged us, begged us, begged us to let them come back."

The program consisted of asking questions about different beliefs and learning to listen to the answers, and was entirely kid-driven, she said.

"The first year, one of our faith leaders—we had adults from each faith tradition there to answer questions if the

kids were stumped—had gold star stickers, and if you wanted you could write the initials BPM on the sticker and wear it. If you did that, you promised to attribute the 'best possible motive' to the person asking the question and not put them down or get offended. Everybody wanted one."

In 2013, Shawl received the Greater Tacoma Peace Prize, which included a trip to Oslo for the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony that year when the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was the prize winner.

Shawl said that recognition for The Interfaith Camp "was a big part of the award," though her prize citation also listed her work leading or working with Tacoma Arabs, Jews and Others (TAJOS); Palestinian-Israeli Peace Endeavors (PIPES); Ground Zero Center; People for Peace, Justice, and Healing; United for Peace of Pierce County; the South Sound Peace and Justice Center formed to stop the Iraq war; and founding the local chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace.

Shawl retired in 2010, but her work continues.

"I'm involved with the southern border now," she said.

"We're making people stay in Tijuana where they can be robbed or kidnapped and trafficked. I was in Tijuana; it's dangerous. There were people who don't speak Spanish or English and had an extremely difficult time navigating the red tape—minorities from Russia seeking asylum because of religious persecution, people from Iran seeking asylum because they converted to Christianity.

"I found a group giving people as much information as possible about the process of coming into the U.S. If they can make it from Guatemala or El Salvador, they can make the right decisions for themselves—they're survivors."

Shawl plans to return to the border in the fall. "If somebody speaks Spanish, if somebody is a pediatrician, if somebody can spend a week down there, lawyers are needed and you don't have to speak Spanish. I don't speak Spanish, but I'm going to learn."



The split hull of the Skittigate, one of four boats that sank at the marina dock last winter, requires removal by July 25 according to the Dept. of Ecology. *Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News*

Lakebay Marina Cafe Reopens—For Now

The latest sign of progress for Lakebay Marina owner Mark Scott appears to slow anticipated enforcement actions underway by Pierce County and multiple Washington state agencies.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Lakebay Marina Cafe returned to business as usual July 20 to the delight of local fans and visiting boaters awaiting their return to the iconic scene of summer memories made in South Puget Sound.

Pierce County Building Official Jeffrey Rowe confirmed his department removed the restricted placard on the marina building July 16.

The Tacoma Pierce County Health Department issued a food service permit July 17 following an on-site inspection and signing off on all previously noted violations at the seasonal cafe.

“They satisfied the life safety issues on the first floor, the cafe,” Rowe wrote in an email to KP News, noting that the bar and stage areas have been removed as required. “We will be issuing a certificate of occupancy that will identify the limitations for occupancy to 49 for the cafe area including employees, and 79 people total for the dock area with no automobiles allowed, no living quarters above the cafe area and alcohol sales limited to beer and wine.”

“They have ‘safe to the touch’ power restored on the first floor,” Rowe wrote. “Currently the fuel station and shore power are secured.”

Electrical service at Lakebay Marina consists of three main parts: power to the shore, power to the cafe building, and power to the floating docks, including the fuel dock and moorage slips. All three had

been ordered shut off by the Washington State Labor & Industries Dept. April 11.

L&I Electrical Inspection Compliance Field Supervisor Jeffrey Ault confirmed that marina owner Mark Scott hired an electrical contractor to perform necessary repairs to get one of the three services inspected and approved.

“The service supplies power to the restaurant and well only,” Ault wrote in an email to KP News. “There is NO power to the float docks, boat slips for the liveboards or the fuel dock. There are MANY electrical corrections that will need to be completed before full power could ever be restored.”

Ault added that Scott’s contractor is on a timeline to complete his repairs or “else the electrical service will again be immediately disconnected if the deadlines are not met. At the time of my last inspection, the electrical contractor had removed all of the ‘touch hazards’ accessible to the public that could have resulted in electrical shock, electrocution or fire in the restaurant.”

Ault added that “any tampering, alterations or additional work done by Mr. Scott or one of his under-the-table ‘employees’ will also result in immediate disconnection and citations that will include civil penalties.”

Compliance with county codes, state regulations and federal statutes have been challenging for Scott, who remains in default on portions of his aquatic lease with the Department of Natural Resources (See “Legal Troubles Continue for Lakebay Marina Owner,” KP News, July 2019.)

Bobbi Cussins, deputy communications director for the Office of the Commissioner of Public Lands at the DNR, wrote in an email to KP News: “All I can say on behalf of the DNR is that we are engaged with the legal process.”

A number of other outstanding code violations with Pierce County remain regarding repeated and continuing prohibited land uses, charges that Scott appealed to the county hearing examiner and lost. Those county code violations were referred to the prosecuting attorney’s office for possible filing of criminal charges.

The Washington Co-op Egg and Poultry Association-Lakebay Station was added to the Washington Heritage Register of Historic Places June 28. This was the name Lakebay Marina used to apply for historic designation based on its past historical use. The application was written and shepherded by Cathy Williams, president of the Key Peninsula Historical Society.

In a letter to KP News, Director Allyson Brooks of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation wrote that being listed in the State Register is an honor. “Listing in the register does not impose any federal or state restrictive covenants or easements, neither will it result in a taking. However, the listing does assure protective review of a property should a federal or state action have a potential adverse effect on the property’s historic value.”

LAKEBAY BREAK-IN FROM PAGE 1

them periodically.

Some local residents affected by mail theft on the Key Peninsula are fed up.

For Koko Pipkin, having mail stolen from the Lakebay Post Office, including a new debit card, was frustrating and time-consuming. “It was not what I needed,” she said.

The fact that it happened while she was laid up in bed after surgery was tough. To add insult to injury, Pipkin had begun sending and receiving mail through the post office after having been the victim of mail theft from her street box. She still doesn’t know if anything other than her debit card was stolen.

Anna Downen had sent out both checks and packages through the Lakebay Post Office hours before the break-in. She panicked when she heard the news, but soon received confirmation that all of her outgoing mail had arrived at its destination.

Wauna resident Christie Donaldson is tired of being a victim of mail theft. “We

“WE HAVE YET TO FIND A SOLUTION THAT WORKS FOR US.”

have had lots of stolen mail issues over the past few years. After finding discarded envelopes and empty birthday cards along our driveway we purchased a locking mailbox, as did our neighbors,” Donaldson said. But even a locking mailbox wasn’t enough. “The thieves used a screwdriver to pry open the door and steal our mail, also breaking our new ‘security’ mailbox,” she said. “We have yet to find a solution that works for us.”

Some details of the case are similar to a recent burglary at the Olalla Post Office on April 18, 2019. In that case, someone broke in through a secured window and stole parcels. Within days U.S. Postal Inspection Service offered a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of responsible parties.

U.S. Postal Inspector Anna Weller said she reassures post office patrons that despite the two recent local burglaries, their mail is safe in the post office and thefts are rare. According to the USPS, in 2018 postal inspectors reported a 78 percent conviction rate with 5,969 arrests and 4,648 convictions related to postal crimes, primarily those involving mail theft, mail fraud and prohibited mailings.

Anyone with information about the burglary of the Lakebay Post Office, or reporting mail theft, is asked to contact the USPS at 1-877-876-2455.

Ted Ralston

A TED TALKS



An Ode to Volunteering

Volunteering for civic organizations on the Key Peninsula is often associated with rearranging furniture, separating the recyclables, and raising enormous amounts of money from the community just to give it back to them in a new and improved format. There are many unknown joys and unsuspected challenges in this noble pursuit.

I recently encountered a variety of each when I volunteered to sell fireworks at the Key Peninsula Civic Center stand in Key Center in July. Running the stand was the easy part; guarding it overnight was not.

Having buttoned up the fireworks stand for the night, I was just pouring a slosh of fine single malt scotch into my crystal glass and preparing a Cohiba for a leisurely smoke when suddenly four roaring pickup trucks materialized. Each disgorged demonic occupants usually associated with All-Hallows Eve, i.e., trick-or-treaters; in this case, middle-aged pranksters pretending to be “civic-minded volunteers” who were there to help me “protect” Key Center through the long watches of the night.

Their first demand was to find them seating. But this turned out to be no problem, since some had thoughtfully arrived with their own ice chests full of beer that we arranged around a brimstone-laced firepit with built-in cupholders. Next, they wanted their own crystal glasses. I provided plastic travel mugs out of my camper, though I was also compelled to produce another four cigars.

With the refreshments taken care of, we turned to the real business behind their rather sudden manifestation. The five of us proceeded to enjoy a late-night to early-morning confab, which (it turned out) was the only objective of these so-called volunteers, sitting in solidarity to guard Key Center from whatever might come.

As it was my first year as a firework seller, I was unaware that the fireworks stand doubled overnight as a venue for erudite literary and artistic criticism, along the lines of Dorothy Parker’s Algonquin Hotel “Vicious Circle” round table.

Ergo, the first discussion challenge: “What’s your favorite opening scene from the movies?” posed by one with a noted affinity for obscure and esoteric cinema. The gauntlet having been thrown, a battle of increasingly more tendentious and nebulous analysis raged as to the fundamental overarching thematic content of various

extraordinary films—most of which most of us had never seen.

As the single malt gave way to a fine bourbon, gradually the subject switched to the more ethereal and cosmological, such as “Is that a bat or an owl?” and “Why are those planets moving so fast?” and “How come the scotch is gone?” A significant amount of time was spent looking at constellation maps on our smart phones in a vain attempt to work out why Saturn and Jupiter seemed to be so obviously in the wrong positions, and whether Mars was actually red. However, none of us could see our phone screens clearly by this point, so we agreed that Jupiter and Saturn were indeed planets in the sky, and left the complexion of Mars to a future debate.

The final challenge of the night was to lower our voices, as the patrons of the nearby eateries could neither hear nor appreciate the deterioration of overnight traffic behavior in Key Center as more and more gigantic diesel pickup trucks and tiny foreign two-doors barreled through at high speed with each passing hour. We pondered the utility of speed bumps (with and without spikes), roundabouts, engine-destroying EMP emitters, and a permanent detachment of Washington State Patrol cruisers, but came to no conclusion.

Whatever lawless activity may or may not ordinarily menace Key Center after hours, the only crimes committed that night were those of judgment perpetrated by me and my fellow volunteers, but of course it was all and only for the benefit of the community.

The next day was the Fourth of July and we sold the rest of the fireworks.

Ted Ralston is a civic-minded volunteer who lives in Vaughn. His opinions, wide and varied, are not necessarily those of the KPCCA.

Nancyrose Houston

NATURE OVERLOOKED



Anemones Are Not Your Enemies

If you’re lucky enough to live on the Key Peninsula, you probably have the chance to visit Puget Sound beaches more often than the average person. Walking the beach at camp as a kid, I always wondered about the strange squishy round things with a hole in the middle that I saw in the sand. I remember thinking that they were clam siphons because they gushed out water when poked, but I was wrong.

Those squishy round things do not look like much when the tide is low. But when the tide comes in and they are submerged, they open up into something flower-like: the

notoriously hard-to-pronounce anemone (not “an enemy”). I usually describe them to kids who are seeing them for the first time as “Nemo’s house,” and they immediately make the association with the “Finding Nemo” movies. The most common species found on local beaches are called Anthopleura elegantissima, also known as elegant or pink-tipped green anemones.

While they may be elegant, anemones—like their jellyfish relatives—are also hungry carnivores. Anemones, jellyfish and corals all belong to the phylum Cnidaria (the “C” is silent) which are characterized by cells called nematocysts that are used for capturing prey through stinging.

I am cautious about kids getting stung by jellies, but I encourage campers to touch the tentacles of anemones because their sting is so weak that to a human’s thick skin it feels like stickiness rather than pain. The sting does pack a punch for the anemones’ prey, however, paralyzing small crabs, mussels and fish that it swallows intact. The hole in the center of the anemone plays multiple roles; food goes in there and indigestible waste comes back out. If you look closely, you may find an anemone with an empty crab or mussel shell in its “mouth.”

Anemones are either male and female, and the “mouth” is also where sperm and eggs are released into the water in the hope that they will join and settle on a suitable surface—rocks, pilings and even shells or sand dollars. However, *A. elegantissima* is also known as the aggregating anemone for its ability to reproduce asexually, or clone itself. This is done through binary fission, in which the anemone will pull itself apart over the course of a few days in a process that looks a lot like cell division. Next time you’re walking down the beach, look for anemones that are oval-shaped, or even starting to look like a figure-eight. These may be in the process of cloning themselves.

A. elegantissima will use this fast reproductive technique to form colonies of genetically identical clones. I’ve seen hundreds in dense clusters in certain areas of the beach, often all attached to the same large rock. However, when one cluster comes into contact with another genetically distinct clone colony, anemones act to defend their territory. Anemones on the front lines use specialized tentacles called acrorhagi to clobber and sting each other until one side retreats. This fighting is only done when the anemones are underwater, since they need water to swell their acrorhagi in preparation for battle. It is difficult for the casual beachgoer to witness these “clone wars,” but we can observe the aftermath: an anemone-free no-man’s land that forms between the two colonies.

Anemones, like all aquatic non-mammals, breathe dissolved oxygen from the water, not the air. This is complicated when the tide is out and anemones are left high and dry. To survive, anemones curl their tentacles inwards into their less attractive form, trapping some water to continue breathing until the tide covers them again. I recommend gently touching the anemones’ tentacles to watch the water squirt out.

Next time you walk the Key Peninsula beaches and see those nondescript circles in the sand, you’ll know that there is a lot more there than meets the eye: a dramatic struggle to survive, reproduce and win the “clone wars.”

Nancyrose Houston is the Outdoor Environmental Education Director at Sound View Camp.

Joseph Pentheroudakis

ON THE WING



Soundscapes

First to break the morning stillness is the drumming and wik-wik-wik of a flicker, muffled somewhat by a thick clump of alder and cedars. A band-tailed pigeon at the top of the tall birch, its regular spot for years now, joins in, softly cooing its two-note song.

Somewhere up in the honey locust a Pacific slope flycatcher comes in next with its high-pitched but nearly inaudible *suh-weet-tsik*. Then, seemingly out of nowhere, I hear the fast, whirring wingbeats of an Anna’s hummingbird. First it checks me out, circling me, stopping and *tsk-ing* every couple of seconds, then dives into the bright red *crocosmias*.

In the distance a robin tries to break into his cheerily-cheerup song but suddenly switches to a whinny in alarm, perhaps after sighting a marauding cat. Nothing says danger like a robin’s panicked whinny.

The soundscape continues to fill up. Straight ahead, up in the firs, a crow checks in, a harsh rising-falling caw repeated three times. I can almost picture it, its head bobbing with every caw. And I can hear a red-breasted sapsucker pecking at the bark of the tall birch, looking for a breakfast of insects. The birch and the walnut in the yard are its favorite trees; the holes it makes can damage the thin-barked birch, but the tree has been around for at least 30 years and it’s still going strong. Or so I tell myself.

All of that in the first 10 minutes after walking outside early on an overcast July morning, coffee in hand, for my daily dose of early hour magic. Morning people really have all the fun.

It was nothing like the legendary dawn chorus in the spring, of course—that time when male songbirds belt out their best to claim and defend their territory and attract mates, or as animal behavior expert Tim Birkhead describes it in “Bird Sense,” to send out a long-distance signal that says “keep out” to other males and “come in” to females. On the other hand, it was a perfect time for paying attention to the many other sounds birds make.

Songs are at the top of the list of the rich repertoire of bird vocalizations. Heard generally only during breeding, they vary in complexity and are normally repeated, usually in the same form. The song of the band-tailed pigeon, for example, is a gentle cooing phrase that starts out with an introductory note and is followed by several nearly identical two-note segments, a high note and a slightly longer lower note. The band-taileds around my house sing those two-note segments no more than five times each, then pause for about 10 to 15 seconds before they start the whole phrase over again.

The diminutive and active wrens occupy the other extreme. Bewick’s wrens, year-round residents in our area, have several songs, all of which at first sound like a random jumble of harsh buzzes and flute-like trills and whistles. If you listen carefully, however, you will notice that the buzzes, trills and whistles are arranged in the same sequence in each phrase. The phrases are sung loudly at a fast tempo and are repeated endlessly with very short breaks in between. That behavior can help distinguish Bewick’s wrens from song sparrows, whose song can sound similar.

Woodpeckers use drumming the same way songbirds use songs, to claim and defend territory and to attract mates. Just like songs, drumming phrases are repeated. Each woodpecker’s drumming is different; they vary in speed, loudness and overall pattern. The northern flicker’s drumming is more rapid and is often interspersed with a series of loud wik-wik-wik notes. That of the pileated woodpecker is a little slower and can echo in the woods. The drumming of the red-breasted sapsucker is hard to miss: it starts at a fast tempo and then slows down to a stop. All three species are common in our area.

Unlike songs, calls can be heard any time. They are shorter sounds birds make in specific situations, for example to alert other birds or to threaten and scold a predator, to stay in contact in flight or while they’re foraging or socializing. But we don’t always

know what calls are used for. You’ve probably heard the harsh, loud calls of crows as they gather each evening before flying to their roosting sites, and you may have picked up the softer, gentler sounds they make at other times in smaller groups. What exactly the sounds mean we don’t know with any certainty.

So next time you get a chance go outside early in the morning, be quiet and listen. Birds have a lot to say, and they say most of it when the day is still young.

Joseph Pentheroudakis is an artist, naturalist and avid birder who writes from Herron Island.



Alice Kinerk
LIVIN' LA VIDA LOCAL

Geographical Wallflowers

Washington State is located in the soggy northwest corner of the continental U.S. The Key Peninsula is the southernmost peninsula of Puget Sound, an inner limb in the messy convergence of land and sea that makes up America’s left shoulder.

Therefore, those who choose to live here are, in my view, geographical wallflowers.

Staking our claim to the top left part of the country, the KP isn’t far from Port Townsend and the forts the U.S. military once built to protect us from a Pacific invasion. Many of us take this “backed into a corner” metaphor a step further, existing quietly at the end of dusty, tucked away, dead-end roads, sometimes behind a tall fence or a barking dog or, like my family, both a fence and a dog.

Unlike the wide-open spaces elsewhere in America, where we live the vegetation grows like fungi in an abandoned petri dish. (A lot of it is fungi.) I moved to Olympia from New England at age 18 and remember strolling forest trails and feeling the magnitude of the universe, as every plant around me was just so big. I went so far as to stick an enormous maple leaf in a manila envelope and mail it to a friend back east. No accompanying note needed.

When I discovered the Key Peninsula, I felt like Alice tumbling into Wonderland. How could I have lived so close to something so amazing and never even known it existed? It didn’t hurt that I arrived in May, when every fruit tree on the peninsula was sporting pink and white blossoms, frilly as Easter dresses, the grass green, the air warm, not hot. Months later the blooms were gone, the grass was Shredded Wheat

and the heat was hitting furnace temps.

But by then I was already in love.

There is our elderly neighbor, who pulls to the side of the road when he sees my daughter making her wobbly first bike ride. When we reach him, he tells us he learned to ride a bike himself in this very spot 70 years ago.

There is Kip Miller, recently retired from Skate Night. Many years from now his name might begin to slip my mind, but like so many I will never forget his voice announcing “Wwwwwinner! Wwww-winner!” during skating games.

There are our fast-food employees, our grocery store and convenience store clerks, who smile tirelessly despite long days on their feet, chatting with friends and neighbors as they pass through.

There is the pastor of my mother-in-law’s church, who still smiles and says hello even though we have yet to stop in for a service.

There is the El Sombrero waiter who recognizes that my husband and I are out for a rare kid-free dinner and congratulates us on getting time alone.

There is the gentle smile of the woman at the transfer station, the close-knit community of KP teachers I’ve grown to rely on, the older couple who walk Cramer Road every morning around 7, giving a wave and nod as I pass.

And there are so many more.

Sometimes life gets the timing just right. The other day I was cruising north on the KP Highway, cresting the hill that overlooks Key Center, when the song Small Town by John Cougar Mellencamp came on the radio. I was listening to a big, commercial station, and knew of course that just as the first familiar chords rang out from my radio, the same song was at the same time starting up in thousands of radios all over the Seattle-Tacoma region.

But I also knew that in a way the song was playing just for me. I don’t think any Lakewood resident, for example, or a person sitting in traffic in Renton, Federal Way or Auburn, could possibly have resonated with the lyrics the way I was just then. Envelop yourself in rural America and you can almost forget our country’s problems.

As Mellencamp sings, “I was born in a small town. And I can breathe in a small town. Gonna die in this small town, and that’s probably where they’ll bury me.”

Yes. Yes. Most likely yes. And yes, when my time comes, bury me right here on the KP.

Alice Kinerk teaches at Minter Creek Elementary School. She lives in Longbranch.

Letter to the Editor

HONOR FLIGHTS

Thank you for another great edition of the KP News in July. I’ve had the honor to pilot a couple of Honor Flights. We treat these as an opportunity to show our respect for the service of these veterans by making the trip as easy and comfortable as possible. (“KP Vietnam Vet Takes Honor Flight to D.C.,” KP News, July 2019.)

What has blown me away the most though are the passengers who are not associated with the flight.

We recently pulled into gate 18 on time at Reagan National Airport in D.C. Due to the unusually high demand for assistance and the Honor Flight’s desire to keep their “crew” together, there’s a very long lag from when deplaning starts until the last passenger disembarks. The boarding area for gate 18 is very small and these flights are historically very full, so there is a mass of anxious passengers ready to board.

As the minutes tick by waiting for the inbound passengers to deplane, tension grows in the boarding area.

It’s a very emotional experience to see the reaction of the outbound passengers when the first veteran enters the gate area through the boarding door. The impatient or worried expressions and frequent checking of the watches fades into a roar of applause, salutes, and cries of “Thank you for your service.”

Mark Michel, Lakebay

OBITUARIES

Ruth Ann Chambers

Longtime Key Peninsula resident Ruth Chambers, 85, died June 25. She was born March 1, 1934, in Yankton, South Dakota, to Roy and Anna Walling. She had three siblings: Madaline, Paul and Jeanie.

Ruth grew up in the home built by her grandfather, and attended school and graduated with honors from Yankton High School. She married her first husband in 1952 and had four children. They moved to Seattle in the late ’50s, then on to Renton.

After divorcing, Ruth worked at several jobs including at the local library, in retail sales and as a bookkeeper for an oil company.

In 1976, Ruth married the love of her life, country singer Ron Chambers. They

CONTINUED PAGE 8

OBITUARIES, FROM PAGE 7

enjoyed many wonderful years together, playing guitars and singing, oil painting, writing stories and gardening. Ron and Ruth moved to the Key Peninsula in 1980. The couple spent their first three years living in Longbranch at the Faraway estate, where they worked as groundskeepers, a time they would both say was one of the happiest in their lives.

In 1983, they purchased property near Key Center and made their home there, living peaceful lives, gardening and entertaining friends from their community and family.

Ron died in 1993 and Ruth remained in her beloved home. She welcomed her four children, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren over the years. She cherished her family and was loved very dearly.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents, sister Madaline, brother Paul, husband Ron, and daughters Cindy and Jannie.

She is survived by her son Kevin (*Liz*), daughter Coralie (*Bob*), grandchildren Vanessa, Sara, Christina and Melissa; great grandchildren Kira, Zach, Elena and Steven; and by her beloved friend and caregiver Carol Garrett and friend Betty.

Memorials may be made to Hospice House in University Place or to The Mustard Seed Project of Key Peninsula. A graveside service will be held at a later date.


Warren Edward Ensor

Known locally as “the jam man,” Warren Edward Ensor died in a car crash near his Lakebay home July 6. He sold homemade jellies, horseradish and bread to benefit Ashes, the volunteer auxiliary KP fire department group, to support fire and accident victims.

Warren was born Oct. 3, 1945 in Peru, Illinois. After graduating from high school, he joined the U.S. Navy and served on a mine sweeper during the Vietnam War. He left the Navy in 1970 and went to work for the railroad in Illinois and then for the Department of Corrections in 1973. He retired as a correction captain from the Sheridan Correction Center in 1999.

In 1982, Warren went on a blind date in Ottawa, Illinois, with Peggy Adams. They were married in 1993 and moved to Lakebay in 2000 to be with Peggy’s mother. Warren called the Key Peninsula “God’s country” and said he would never leave.

Warren worked at KP Community Services from 2001 to 2009, first as a volunteer and later as an employee. He then became involved in Peggy’s volunteer work for Ashes, selling the jams and breads she and her mother made. Peggy was still working full-time then and finally taught Warren how to make his own products to sell, and he loved it.

His blackberry and pepper jellies, horseradish and banana bread, were well known and Warren was recognized near and far, even in a hospital corridor in Seattle where an employee stopped him once to say, “Hey, you’re the jelly man.”

Warren is survived by his wife, Peggy, daughter Shaila, and son Dion; by his brothers, Richard, Michael and Edward; his sisters, Sally and Michaelina; and by eight grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. The KP fire department honored his service at a ceremony in July. A memorial will be held August 23, 1 p.m., at Grace Church in Home. Remembrances may be left in the Ashes drop box at KP fire headquarters in Key Center.

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God’s Blessing to You - Pastor John Day


Kathlene A. (Schmidt) Dalton

Born June 29, 1962, Kathlene A. Dalton died peacefully June 10 at her home in Gig Harbor.

Kathy worked as a respiratory therapist for over 20 years and volunteered for many years at the Key Peninsula Fire Department.

As a woman strong in faith, Kathy spent her free time with family and friends. She will forever be remembered for her smile, laughter, kind words, and her love of crafts.

Kathy is survived by her parents, two siblings, two children and a grandchild.

A memorial service will be held Saturday August 3 at 1 p.m. at the home of James and Maryann McDonald in Longbranch.



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CANDIDATE FOR PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT POSITION 4

Leslie Harbaugh

The incumbent Harbaugh anticipates working with the state legislature to secure stable school funding.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Leslie Harbaugh is running for a second term as a Peninsula School Board director. When she ran for the position in 2015, she cited her experience as an involved parent and volunteer. “This district is my wheelhouse,” she said at the time. That background continues to inform her approach as a board member.

Harbaugh moved to Gig Harbor with her husband and then preschool-aged daughter 16 years ago from Richmon, California., a diverse city not far from San Francisco. Her husband’s work is in Tacoma, but they were drawn to Gig Harbor. To get a sense of the community they visited parks before they decided where to settle. “There were so many kids and parents in the parks in Gig Harbor, and the parks in Tacoma were pretty empty,” she said. Her decision was clinched when she read about the quality of the local schools.

Her daughter attended Artondale Elementary, Kopachuck Middle School and Gig Harbor High School, and is now a sophomore at the University of Washington. Harbaugh was involved with schools from the beginning. Her most

valuable experience, she said, was with the Parent District Council. As a representative she attended monthly meetings with district staff where the members got reports on enrollment, budget and curriculum. Parents then talked about their experiences. “It was so helpful to hear from parents at the middle and high school level,” she said. It expanded her perspective on such issues as curriculum integration across grades.

“I’m passionate about public education,” Harbaugh said. “I could talk about it for hours. It is the greatest equalizer and the best way to ensure a strong citizenry. The schools are at least as important as fire and police departments.”

Harbaugh is proud of where the district is now and for voters passing the first capital bond in the district since 2003 last February. When asked about what challenges the board will face in the coming four years, she said the challenges of the last four years were quite different from what she anticipated when she ran for office in 2015.

That said, she thinks the board will need to deal with legislation at the state level to assure adequate and stable funding for education. More locally, the board will focus on a whole-child approach to education. “We’ve always focused on strong academics,” she said. “But mental health, social-emotional health and the different paths students may take after graduation are all important.” She said that improving the counselor-to-student ratio will help but it will take more than that to best support the students. And, she said, placing equal value on technical and academic paths following graduation will be a priority.

Growth and overcrowding in the elementary schools will roll up to the middle and high schools and will need to be dealt with. Transportation and infrastructure will be ongoing challenges. She said that Interim Superintendent Art Jarvis has helped the board prioritize based on the needs of the students and to communicate in a way that the community understands.

In addition, the board will be hiring a new superintendent. Art Jarvis was hired as an interim superintendent in 2018 when Rob Manahan left to take another position and has agreed to continue until a search is concluded. Harbaugh is optimistic about a new search. “The board has a good eye for talent,” she said. “Our staff is stellar. They have a heart for what they do, and it shows. I love our district. I love our kids.”

"PUBLIC EDUCATION...IS THE GREATEST EQUALIZER AND THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE A STRONG CITIZENRY."



CANDIDATE FOR PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT POSITION 4

Natalie Wimberley

The challenger wants the district to build a strategic plan with community input.

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

Gig Harbor resident Natalie Wimberley is seeking election to the Peninsula School District Board of Directors, Position 4, an office that represents southwest Gig Harbor, Artondale and Fox Island.

Wimberley grew up in a military family and later married an Air Force pilot, giving her many opportunities for travel inside and outside the United States. After her husband Heath’s retirement, the couple began searching for a place to put down roots, and stumbled on Gig Harbor through the Internet.

“We happened upon a video on YouTube that the Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce had put out,” Wimberley said. “I was drawn to the weather, the water, the trees and all the green here.” After touring the community Wimberley, her husband and her three sons settled down near Kopachuck State Park two years ago.

As her children have moved through Peninsula schools, Wimberley has served in several volunteer roles. She is currently a member of the executive board for the Gig Harbor Tides Scholarship Foundation. Close experience with the district’s successes and setbacks inspired Wimberley to consider running for the

PSD board. “Over the couple of years that we’ve been here we’ve had some fantastic, caring teachers,” said Wimberley, who also praised the district’s diversity of opportunities and its expectations for students. “But on the flipside, I’ve really seen some struggles on a leadership level in communication with the board and the leadership.” Wimberley has also seen the district working through student wellness issues and attempting to find a new superintendent.

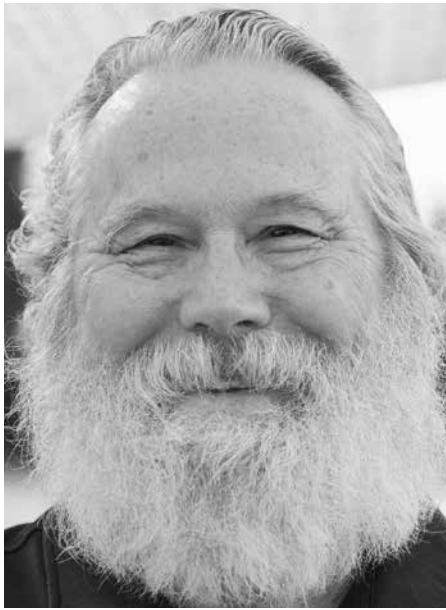
As part of addressing these challenges, Wimberley would like to see the district build a strategic plan with input from community task groups. This plan, along with identifying and hiring a new PSD superintendent to relieve Interim Superintendent Art Jarvis, are Wimberley’s two main priorities for the future.

Once strategic planning and secure leadership have been established, Wimberley said there are specific areas where the district can improve. She would like to see more focus on math for students preparing for advanced study and a greater connection with local businesses for those on a vocational path. For future trades workers, Wimberley suggested building a connection with major industries in the area. “We could build something at a local level here that allows students to enter an aviation mechanic licensure program, for example, and upon graduation...walk across the street to Boeing or Alaska or Horizon.”

A goal with personal significance to Wimberley is the establishment of a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps for the district. “It’s something that I felt was missing when we came here,” said Wimberley, whose family participated in JROTC in New Mexico. “We’ve got a lot of support,” she said, citing enthusiasm from parents, school staff and local legislators. “I haven’t spoken with one person who does not support this program.”

Wimberley said that her diverse history with education makes her a good fit for the PSD board. After living and volunteering in several different locations, Wimberley said that she’s experienced “the good, the bad, the ugly and the beautiful in public education.” Before moving to Gig Harbor, Wimberley was employed as a military community liaison for Alamogordo Public Schools in New Mexico. “During those years I learned a lot about every aspect of public education, and I’m just excited to bring that recent and relevant experience to PSD.”

"I'VE REALLY SEEN SOME STRUGGLES ON A LEADERSHIP LEVEL IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE BOARD AND THE LEADERSHIP."



CANDIDATE FOR KEY PEN PARKS
COMMISSIONER POSITION 1

Bruce Cook

With a background in finance, consulting and education, Cook's priority is helping manage the parks' limited resources.

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

Key Peninsula resident Bruce Cook is seeking election to the Key Pen Parks District Board of Commissioners, Position 1.

Cook has been on the Key Peninsula since 2013, and currently resides in Lakebay. He previously lived in Austin, Texas, where he worked in investment management for the University of Texas. While working for the college, Cook received his doctorate from UT Austin with a dissertation on college fundraising.

Sometime after graduating, Cook received an email of property listings from a Gig Harbor area realtor who had attended one of Cook's financial seminars. One property in particular stood out to Cook and his wife, who had already vacationed in the area, and three months later they moved to the Key Peninsula. Cook continues to operate a consulting service that he has owned since 2000.

In addition to his work in finance, consulting and education, Cook has served on the boards of directors for around 20 nonprofits over the years. These organizations include Serving Our Neighbors, the Indigenous Peoples Foundation, WorkLife and Junior Achievement.

Cook has also published four books on finance and spiritual matters, and is an ordained minister who is active in local and national communities of faith.

A social connection led Cook to attend a Key Pen Parks board meeting, after which he realized his skills could be put to use. "I thought it would be a good fit for my background, my interests," he said. "Here on the Key Peninsula, we have such beautiful natural resources; I'm interested in seeing that preserved and managed well for the benefit of the local citizens."

Cook's vision for the parks includes an increased focus on informing parkgoers about the natural spaces around them. "I'd like to see an educational component added into the mix of what the park is offering to the local residents," he said. He envisions additional interpretive signs and potentially a classroom space or display area dedicated to the local flora and fauna.

If elected, Cook sees his role in Key Pen Parks as helping to manage the department's limited resources. While describing the scope of the park system, Cook said the district has over 1,000 acres of land under management and fewer than a dozen full-time employees and under \$2 million annually to manage it.

"It's not a huge budget, it's not a lot of money to try and manage a parks system here on the Key Peninsula," he said.

Another of Cook's priorities is to keep Key Pen Parks connected with their users to improve their park experience and increase sustainability.

"One of the biggest challenges is to maintain close cordial relationships with the community and community groups," he said, citing volunteers and local donors as essential to ensuring the parks operate within their means.

Cook said serving on the parks board would be a chance for him to put his finance and leadership experience to good local use. "It's a chance to serve and give back, and I think parks are an important part of any community."

While Cook is enthusiastic about bringing his skills to Key Pen Parks, he said the district is doing very well—specifically praising the recent Fourth of July Hot Dog Social at Gateway Park that was attended by almost 1,000 people. "I think the parks are being well utilized and well managed."

"ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IS TO MAINTAIN CLOSE CORDIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY..."



CANDIDATE FOR KEY PEN PARKS
COMMISSIONER POSITION 1

Linda Weeks

The longtime Key Peninsula resident raises horses and wants to preserve the KP environment for generations to come.

DAN MARTEN, KP NEWS

Linda Weeks said she is seeking a position on the Key Pen Parks commission because she wants to preserve land resources for generations to come. Inspired in part by the goals she achieved with the help of the Pierce County Conservation District to manage her 18-acre farm, where she raises, breeds and boards horses professionally, she said she is both conservation oriented and environmentally focused.

"I've worked closely on my farm with the Pierce County Conservation District over the last 22 years," Weeks said. "They've helped me with farm planning, implementing and doing things that preserve water quality—the gist of their reasoning—but I've found it also reduces mud, runoff, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers. All of that has been a real win-win for the farm and hopefully to the environment as well."

Weeks was raised in Baker City, Oregon, and feels most comfortable in a rural setting, such as the KP, where she has lived for 25 years. She's the mother of two daughters who attended Vaughn Elementary, Key Peninsula Middle School and Peninsula High School, and

both went on to graduate from college.

Weeks is running for an elected position for the first time. She served on the KP Fire District Citizen Advisory Panel, which prepared the 2018 Future Planning Report. She and her former husband had a veterinary practice on the peninsula. She earned a master's degree in equine reproduction from Oregon State University and continues to breed horses in Vaughn. "It's really a seven day a week job that keeps me very active," she said.

Weeks said her primary agenda is to increase awareness of the broad range of spaces already available in local parks and assure productive communication between commissioners and the community. She seeks to accommodate bikers, hikers, children and all users; horses would be a small part of her agenda, she said.

She expressed an interest in chairing the Key Pen Parks Recreation Committee in order to provide more educational and workshop opportunities, especially for school-age children. After attending commission meetings over the last several months, she said she has become familiar with the process and has some thoughts on working with other commission members. Weeks said she was pleased with the response to Gateway Park from KP residents.

"I personally want to be more actively engaged in participation instead of just seeing the things that are happening, like global warming and environmental degradation, and feeling

like there isn't much we can do about it," Weeks said. "While I'm not sure the parks commission is the place to address all that, I do believe that helping people to realize that what we have is worth preserving and enjoying is a great beginning."

"I DO BELIEVE THAT HELPING PEOPLE TO REALIZE THAT WHAT WE HAVE IS WORTH PRESERVING AND ENJOYING IS A GREAT BEGINNING."

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CANDIDATE FOR KEY PEN PARKS COMMISSIONER POSITION 3

John Kelly

The incumbent commissioner said he seeks to improve park access for all users.

DAN MARTEN, KP NEWS

John Patrick Kelly was a longtime Tacoma resident drawn to the Key Peninsula through the relationship with his wife. He met her in 2002 while still in Tacoma, and they were married in 2016. He moved to the KP in 2008.

Kelly is a current member of the Key Pen Parks commission and described himself to the KP News as “the voice of the common Key Peninsula resident.” He said he is the only one representing the community as a whole and not just special interest groups, and that he will “stick up for any group that is not included.” He wants another term because there is “lots of work still to do.”

Kelly said he came from a “modest background,” that his father was a Navy sailor and that as a kid he was always outdoors. He expressed a particular interest in parks for those who want to “hike in the woods.”

Kelly described the peninsula as a playground desert when he started on the park commission; Minter Creek Elementary School and Home Park were the only locations with playgrounds then. “As Americans, we are all landowners. Even as renters we have parks,” he said, adding that there is an advantage to participating in the community with education

programs for kids to avoid problems like youth criminality. He said that “some troublemakers are homegrown,” and mentioned that vandalism has been a problem for the parks.

“The more we interact with neighbors, the more we’ll care for our community,” he said, and parks should lead the way.

Kelly said he wants to make parks inclusive and accessible. “Signage has increased usage,” he said, and wants the same kind of signage at Taylor Bay Park and Rocky Creek Conservation Area. He said that Maple Hollow Park has handicap accessibility but that the parking lot is blocked off part of the year, making it inaccessible for handicapped persons.

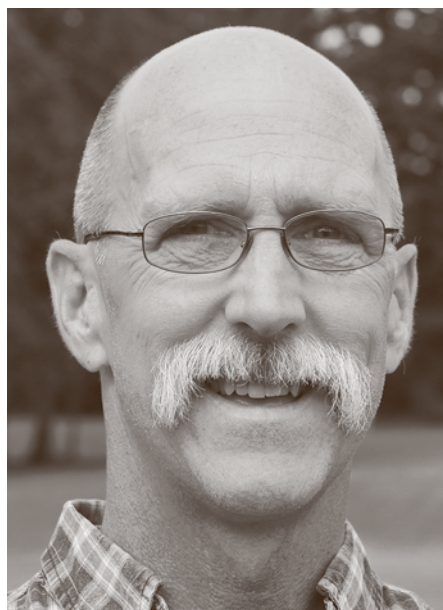
Kelly’s long-term goals include science and environmental education as well as physical fitness, especially at Taylor Bay. He wants to see a community center at Gateway Park and countered criticism of the cost: “It’s never going to get cheaper.” He would also like to see a basketball court at Gateway Park and a paved or concrete path for skateboarders and roller skaters.

Kelly described himself as a fiscal conservative who wants to get the most out of available funds. He said that community volunteers and organizations are a great source of support. As a member of the Lions Club, he said that the club

is offering to fence off a portion of Gateway Park for an off-leash dog park. He opposes a horse corral at

Gateway because the estimated cost of \$300,000 “should be spent on kids and seniors rather than horses.” He is also concerned about bike trails at 360 Trails; he doesn’t want it to become like Banner Forest Park in Kitsap County, which he described as an example of bike trail excess. “I get very passionate about issues.”

“THE MORE WE INTERACT WITH NEIGHBORS, THE MORE WE’LL CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY, AND PARKS SHOULD LEAD THE WAY”



CANDIDATE FOR KEY PEN PARKS COMMISSIONER POSITION 3

Mark Michel

The park commission president wants to get more kids involved with the parks.

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

Mark Michel is running against incumbent John Kelly for Key Pen Parks commissioner position 3 in the November election. Michel currently holds commissioner position 1 and is president of the board of commissioners.

“I have a lot of pride in what the parks have done,” Michel said. “My thing has been mountain biking and the trails, and it’s gone incredibly well.”

Michel was originally encouraged to run for a fire commissioner position, but “felt more of a draw towards the parks, to try to get the kids involved and provide them with a positive outlet.” Michel’s interest in biking was sparked when he was a paper boy in Reno, Nevada, at 8 years old. “I would always ride my bike,” he said. “Then when they came out with the first mountain bikes, just a bike with fat tires, it opened up the whole rest of the world.”

As parks commissioner, Michel has worked to promote racing at 360 Trails. “When I heard there was a student league, I worked to recruit racers here so they could see that this park was a viable venue for races.

“When I got the first promoter to come out and look at the trails, it was December. It was like 34 degrees and

pouring rain with intermittent snow,” Michel said. “I know that those shots, those opportunities, don’t come every day. So, I committed to it. We went on the ride and (Rory Muller) said, ‘These trails are great!’” BuDu Racing has had one of its races every year at 360 Trails since then.

Hundreds of cyclists competed in the state championship mountain bike race at 360 Trails in 2018. In April 2019, the student league hosted 534 racers there for Pedaling the Peninsula. This year a new youth mountain biking team, the Key Peninsula Pirates, was also established.

“It’s been so inspiring to see how well that has worked out,” Michel said. “I’m just insanely grateful for the people who’ve been able to put themselves in positions to help out, whether it’s Courtland Capwell, the trail builder, or any of the trail committee people who’ve stepped up.

“As far as 360 goes, I really love where we’re at right now. The trails are just so incredible, I would say at this point it’s almost just maintenance. We need to make sure they don’t fall into disrepair and get overgrown.”

Looking ahead, Michel would like to see “more people on the trails that aren’t being used, whether that’s Maple Hollow, Taylor Bay or Rocky Creek.” Michel also hopes for “more kids’ programs, more recreation, and more involvement.”

“One of the leading arguments in my mind is, what are we doing for future generations?” Michel said. “I don’t like

when people just want to tear down something but don’t have a good solution for the future. Provide us

something that says, ‘This is a better way, and do it in a respectful way.

“You have to figure out what works and then try to put it together,” he said. “Have the ambition to go fix it.”

Michel moved to the Key Peninsula from Gig Harbor in 2002 and served as Evergreen Elementary PTA president prior to becoming a parks commissioner in 2011. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1987 to 1998 after earning a bachelor’s degree from Willamette University in Oregon. Michel has been a pilot with Alaska Airlines since 1997.

“I won’t feel badly if I don’t win, because I know what I’ve done for the parks district,” Michel said. “I’ll still be involved and I’ll still be able to get stuff done, but I feel like I still have some unfinished business.”

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AUGUST 2**ALEX ZERBE: GRAVITY CATASTROPHE**

11 a.m.–noon. Key Center Library. Alex Zerbe, The Zaniac, uses juggling skills to teach physics. All ages welcome for this family event. 253-548-3309

AUGUST 7**KEY PENINSULA ARTWALK**

5-8 p.m. Key Center. Enjoy local art, artist demonstrations, music, wine tasting and food. Two Waters Arts Alliance, info@twowaters.org

AUGUST 8**CHSW ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

1-3 p.m. Red Barn Youth Center. Hosted by Children's Home Society of Washington to celebrate Key Kidz summer program. Everyone is invited. 253-884-5433

AUGUST 9**BUILDING MADNESS**

11 a.m.–noon. Key Center Library. Use Lego bricks, straws and connectors, blocks and more to construct fabulous contraptions. Creative fun for the whole family. 253-548-3309

AUGUST 11**KPHS "FUN" DRAISER YACHT CRUISE**

10 a.m.-1 p.m. (lunch) or 5-8 p.m. (dinner). KP Historical Society fundraiser. Dock Street, Tacoma. Donation is \$100/person. Reservations must be prepaid. keypeninsulamuseum.org or call Joe Dervaes at 253-884-9303

AUGUST 13**TEEN EVENT: ALTERED ART**

3-4 p.m. Key Center Library. Tweens and teens will paint UFOs, aliens or fandom characters onto thrift store paintings to create an altered work of art. Register at piercescountylibrary.org/calendar or call 253-548-3309.

AUGUST 19**COFFEE & CONVERSATION WITH SEN. RANDALL**

4-6 p.m. Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

OFF THE KEY**AUGUST 10****IN THE SPIRIT**

12-7:30 p.m. Northwest Native Festival at Washington State History Museum, the Museum of Glass, and Tacoma Art Museum. Shop for handmade native art, enjoy song, dance, music, food and more. Free concert 5:30-7 p.m. at the history museum outdoor amphitheater.

AUGUST 21**ENVIRONMENTAL TRIVIA NIGHT**

5:30-7 p.m. Gig Harbor Brewing (Gig Harbor location). Harbor WildWatch's first-ever Environmental Trivia Night. How well do you know your local flora and fauna? How about your marine and environmental ecology? Gather your friends and create a team, or stand your own ground. 253-514-0187

WEEKLYEVENTS**WEEKDAYS****KEY KIDZ AT THE RED BARN**

Red Barn is open this summer for middle school and high school youths. Speakers and activities throughout the summer. Drop in Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. until August 23.

YOGA AT KP CIVIC CENTER

Mondays and Wednesdays 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Bring your mat, blanket or towel. Drop-in \$12.50 or buy four classes for \$40. Cash or check only. 253-884-3456

SAIL EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 65+

Mondays 1:30-2:30 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays 9:30-10:30 a.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. Improve balance and mobility and prevent falls. For any fitness level—you can even participate sitting down. \$70/15-class punch or \$5/Drop-in. Pre-registration required. Limited scholarships. 253-884-9814

SENIOR EXERCISE CLASSES

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10-11 a.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-10 a.m. at KP Community Services in Home. Register with Marilyn Perks at 253-884-4440.

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

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

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? Oasis Youth Center satellite program Tuesdays from 3-6 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. Games, new friends, learning and snacks. oasisyouthcenter.org, oasis@oasisyouthcenter.org or 253-671-2838

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS**REFIT FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE**

Refit is a fitness experience designed to engage the heart as a muscle and a soul. Childcare provided. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and 10-11 a.m. Thursdays at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878

SENIOR TAI CHI

10:15-11:15 a.m. at KP Community Services in Home. Sign up in advance at 253-884-4440.

TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS**FREE SUMMER LUNCHES**

11:30 a.m.-12 p.m. to August 16. Gateway Park and KP Community Services in Home. Food Backpacks 4 Kids will distribute free lunches to children of all ages. 253-857-7401

TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS**KP HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPEN**

Key Peninsula Historical Society museum at the civic center is open 1-4 p.m. Free admission. 253-888-3246 or keypeninsulamuseum.org

WEDNESDAYS**READY SET GO!**

Free early learning program for 3- and 4-year-olds. Limited to 16 children with parent or caregiver. Focus on kindergarten readiness and lots of fun. KP Civic Center, VFW room, 10:30-11:30 a.m. 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 5:30-8 p.m. at Blend Wine Shop for a rollicking good time. Bring projects, show-and-tell, or hang out with a fabulous group of Key Penners. All skill levels and fiber interests welcome; 21+. hannah8ball@gmail.com, 817-929-3943

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS**SENIOR MEALS**

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

THURSDAYS**TOASTMASTERS**

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

REV & FLOW FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE

An easy on the joints workout. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878

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**TRIPLE P PARENTING CLASSES**

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

INTRO TO GENTLE YOGA

8-9 a.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. Older adults will be encouraged to move at their own pace. Yogic philosophy, range of motion, strength and balance, breathing techniques and relaxation. Limited space; call to register. Instructor: Lisa Dunham. \$12/Drop-in or \$100/10 class punch. 253-884-9814

MONTHLY MEETINGS

August 1, 26th Legislative District Democrats, 6 p.m. social, 6:30 p.m. meeting. Public invited. Givens Community Center, 1026 Sidney Road, Port Orchard. 26thdemocrats@gmail.com

August 1, Lakebay Fuchsia Society, 7 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. Myvanwy Shirley 253-884-2283.

August 3, Writers Guild, 10 a.m., KP Community Council office, Key Center Corral. 253-884-6455

August 5 & 19, KP Veterans group, 7 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Veterans, military service members and families with children 16 and older are welcome. 253-884-2626

August 6, 11 a.m. KP Historical Society board meeting in the museum at KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 253-888-3246

August 6 & 20, 5:30-6:30 p.m. West of the Narrows Depression and Bipolar Support-Lakebay Group, KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Kimberly 253-753-4270 or dbsalakebay@gmail.com

August 6, 6:30 p.m. KP Business Association business meeting, Blend Wine Shop. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com or 253-312-1006

August 7 & 21, 6-9 p.m. KP Lions Club, Key Center fire station. 253-853-2721

August 8, 10:30 a.m. Ashes support group for Fire District 16, Key Center fire station. 253-884-3771

August 8, 6 p.m. Peninsula School District board, district office in Purdy. 253-530-1000

August 8, 7 p.m. KP Civic Center Assn. board, Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center. kpciviccenter.org, 253-884-3456

August 12, 7:30 p.m. KP Parks Commission, Volunteer Park office. 253-884-9240

August 13 & 27, 5-7 p.m. KP Fire Commission at Key Center fire station. keypeninsulafire.org or 253-884-2222

August 14, 10 a.m. Bayshore Garden Club, Longbranch fire station. Wendy, 253-332-4883

August 14, 7 p.m. KP Community Council, Key Center fire station. 253-432-4948

August 15, 3-4 p.m. Thinking Thursday: Trivial Pursuit & other fun games. The Mustard Seed Project. 253-884-9184

August 15, 7 p.m. KP Citizens Against Crime. Discuss what's happening in our community with Pierce County Sheriff. Key Center fire station. doloresstarr@centurytel.net or 253-884-3105

August 16, 12 p.m. KP Business Association luncheon meeting, El Sombrero. Speakers from 26th district legislators. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com or 253-312-1006

August 16, 1 p.m. Two Waters Arts Alliance board welcomes artists and art lovers to join its meeting, VFW Room, KP Civic Center. twowaters.org 253-884-1163

August 17, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Key Peninsula Caregivers Support Group at The Mustard Seed Project. Please call Debra Jamerson before

attending. 360-621-1110

August 19, 7 p.m. KP Democrats, Home fire station, johnpatkelly@aol.com

August 21, 6:30 p.m. Key Peninsula Advisory Commission, KP Civic Center, reviews applications for proposed developments and makes recommendations to Pierce County. Verify details at piercecountywa.gov/5937/Key-Peninsula-Advisory-Commission


August 22, 11 a.m. Book discussion group at KC Library. Book list available at the library. 253-548-3309

August 26, 6 p.m. KP Farm Council planning meeting, KP Community Council office, KC Corral, Suite D, 253-432-4948 or keycouncil@gmail.com; kpfarmtour.com

August 26, 6-7:30 p.m. Relatives Raising Kids Support. Grandparents and relatives raising children meet at Evergreen Elementary. Potluck dinner and childcare provided. CHSW at 253-884-5433.

Multiple dates, KP Sportsmen's Club board meets first Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; general meeting/potluck second Thursdays at 6 p.m.; bingo \$1/card and potluck 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

Date TBD 6-8 p.m. KP Discussion Group. Discuss issues that affect the KP. Blend Wine Shop. Contact Ted Ralston, tralston1232@gmail.com



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U.S. Rep. Derek Kilmer, center, represented the 26th district in the state House 2005-07 and state Senate 2007-13. *Courtesy Derek Kilmer.*

A Conversation with U.S. Congressman Derek Kilmer

The 6th District Democrat has served in the U.S. House of Representatives since 2013.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Rep. Derek Kilmer took time over the Fourth of July holiday to talk with KP News about his hopes for both this and the other Washington.

Describing himself as a “genetically hopeful person,” he focused on the three areas that keep him hopeful: his position as a member of the Appropriations Committee to help bring meaningful funding to his district, opportunities to collaborate across party lines, and the casework his staff does to directly improve the lives of his constituents.

“Appropriations (is) where decisions are made about where the money gets spent. Serving on that committee puts me in a position to have an impact on stuff that matters to the region,” he said. “I generally look through the lens of what will help create more economic opportunity for more people in more places.

“For example, a big part of our economy and a big part of our environmental value is Puget Sound recovery and recovery of our salmon populations,” Kilmer said. “Unfortunately, the president’s budget proposed very deep cuts to both of those programs. But because I sit on Appropriations, I am in a position to have an impact. In the House bill not only did we eliminate the cuts, but we increased the budget by 18 percent.”

Kilmer also secured funds for expanding broadband services, “which is really about providing economic opportunity and improving educational opportunity specifically focused on rural areas and bridging that digital divide.” The bill also expanded investments in clean energy research that he said would both protect the environment and create jobs.

The Senate has not yet passed its version of the appropriations bill, and once it is passed the two bodies of Congress will negotiate. “Being able to start the conver-

sation, where we start ahead of the game is really, really valuable,” Kilmer said. “My hope is that the outcomes in the House bill will be the same or close to the final product after negotiations.”

As for collaboration, Kilmer called the current Congress a “fixer-upper.”

“Things aren’t working,” he said. “There is far too much partisan bickering and not enough progress. And that has shaped how I approach this job. I now co-chair a group called the Bipartisan Working Group.” The group of 12 Republicans and 12 Democrats meets weekly, he said. The meetings have three parts. First, each member discusses what they are working on and makes a pitch to collaborate. Then they discuss what is going on in Congress that week. “And those can be spicy conversations and people can have sharp elbows. But good government is like a good marriage. You don’t necessarily agree on everything, but you have to be able to talk and listen to each other. Every interaction can’t turn into the Jerry Springer Show,” Kilmer said.

The third part of the meeting focuses on finding common ground on big issues. Some of the bills Kilmer has sponsored have come from that group, including a Veterans Affairs reform bill and the first bipartisan campaign reform bill in more than a decade.

Kilmer has also participated in the Civility Caucus, which provides visits with representatives from disparate districts to get to know each other’s issues firsthand. As an example, Steve Womack, from a conservative district in Arkansas, came to tour the Port of Tacoma and Hurricane Ridge and spoke to people working there. At the end of the visit Womack said, “Seeing those things up close and personal made me understand why these things are important to you—they are important to your community and its economy.”

Kilmer was recently asked to chair a new committee, the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. “Every two to three decades Congress realizes things aren’t working the way they ought to, and they create a committee to try to do something about it,” he said. “The committee is made up of six Republicans and six Democrats and we are charged with making Congress more efficient, more modern and more functional.” They have already passed a set of recommendations to improve transparency, making it easier for people to track legislation and what is going on at federal agencies, and how representatives are voting in Congress and in committees.

“Lost in all the noise on cable news is the fact a lot needs to be done to make people’s lives better,” Kilmer said. “My hope is that even in the midst of election politics there are ripe opportunities.” Prescription drug prices, protections for pre-existing medical conditions, infrastructure including roads and broadband are all issues that President Trump has said are priorities. Kilmer hopes to see forward motion in these areas.

Casework, Kilmer said, is the third part of his job that makes him hopeful. “Half of our office staff in the district does casework.” Anyone who has an issue with a federal agency can contact the office, and the staff goes to work on their behalf. Most often the problems are with the VA, Medicare, Social Security or the IRS.

Kilmer declined to make any predictions about the next two years. “I have learned that I know very little,” he said. But he continues to love his job. “My focus from the beginning has been to make sure the government works for everyone no matter which zip code you live in. My district still has a lot of areas that continue to struggle economically.”

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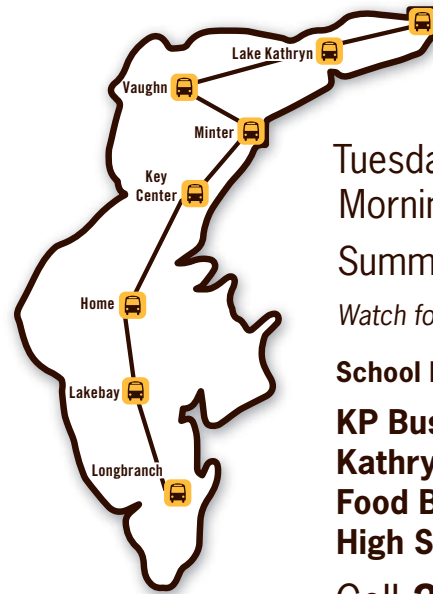
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Skate Night Fridays at the Civic Center is a long-standing tradition for kids on the Key Peninsula. We currently have three job openings for Skate Night. If you enjoy working with kids, having a blast at your job, and need something part time, email your resume and current contact info to office@kpciviccenter.org. Check out www.kpciviccenter.org for more details.




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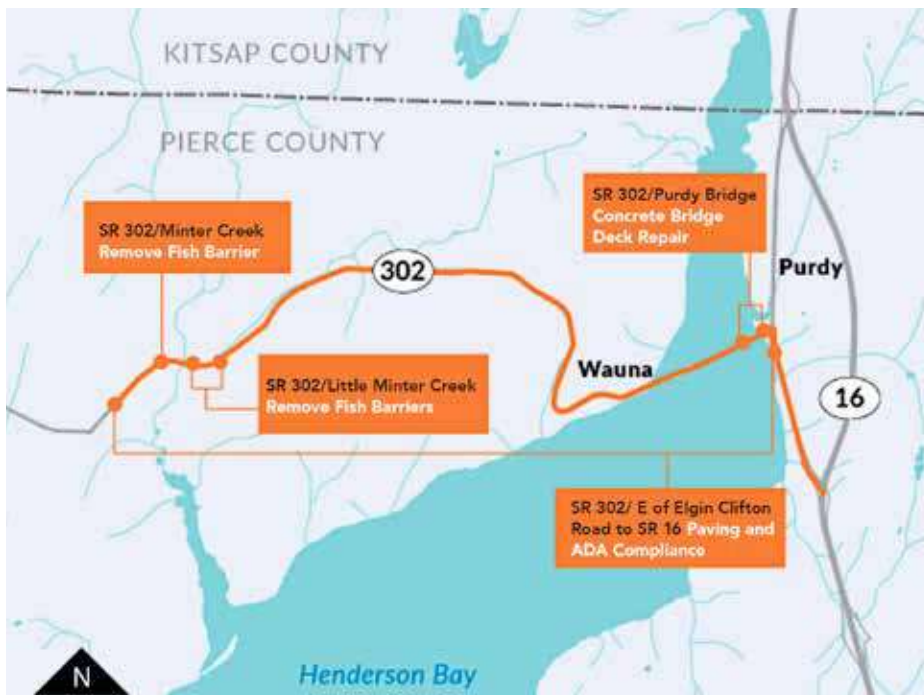
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-  **September 28 - Blues & Brews**
-  **November 9 - Winter Warm-up**
-  **December 31 - New Year's Eve**

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WSDOT plans to work on SR-302 for the better part of a year. *Courtesy WSDOT*

SR-302 Improvements and Purdy Bridge Repairs this Fall

Wauna/Purdy traffic may be getting a whole lot worse before it gets better.

STAFF REPORT

The Washington State Dept. of Transportation is scheduled to begin roadwork at the end of August on State Route 302 from Minter Creek east to Purdy that will include intermittent closures of the Purdy Spit Bridge.

The work will replace three culverts on SR-302 with larger culverts and a bridge creating or improving salmon passage. The potential habitat gain for fish is 25 miles (21.3 miles for Minter Creek and 3.7 miles for Little Minter Creek), according to the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

WSDOT will also repave miles of the highway east from Minter Creek toward Purdy. The work will include improvements at the intersections of SR-302 and 94th Avenue NW and SR-302 and Purdy Drive NW for pedestrians and bicyclists in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

WSDOT said the Purdy Spit Bridge will be closed for deck repairs for as many as three weekends and additionally for as long as a week. The bridge deck work will take place day and night. Drivers will be detoured north around Burley Lagoon.

Crews will also make improvements to the on- and off-ramps from SR-16 to SR-302.

WSDOT will “conduct earthwork, culvert installation, paving, guardrail repairs and installation, stream profile realignment, stream restoration, erosion control and water management,” it said in a statement.

Work is scheduled to begin in “late summer 2019” according to WSDOT and continue for a year. “Drivers should

expect daytime lane and shoulder closures, extended weekend closures, extended on- and off-ramp closures and up to a full, weeklong closure of the Purdy Spit for deck repairs.”

Fatal Accident on Whiteman Road

STAFF REPORT

Key Peninsula Fire Department units responded to a single car rollover accident at the 3400 block of Whiteman Road SW in Lakebay Sunday afternoon July 6. A Lakebay man and woman were trapped inside.

The driver claimed she was uninjured. Fire personnel quickly extricated and transported her to Tacoma General Hospital for evaluation. She was released later that day.

Heavy rescue tools were used to free the second passenger, a male victim in grave condition and unconscious, who was pronounced dead at the scene, according to the KPFDF.

The cause of the accident remains unknown; however, drugs or alcohol were not suspected to be a factor. The car was traveling southbound and according to an eyewitness to the accident, became airborne and landed upside down in the northbound ditch alongside the road.

Neither passengers wore seatbelts and the vehicle had no airbags.

The results of the Washington State Patrol investigation of the fatality were not available at press time. KPFDF response time from South Sound 911 dispatch to arrival at the scene was nine minutes.

August 2019

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Family-fun activities start at 7:30, movies show at dusk. Bring a blanket or chair and non-perishable food donation for food bank. Sponsored in part by Peninsula Light Co. with pre-movie crafts sponsored by Sound Credit Union and Shawn & Sami Jensen

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Youth Mt. Biking Jamboree/Bike Rodeo Thank you to these volunteers for their generous hearts and community spirit! Marilyn & Jerry Hartley, Gary Robertson, Jim Christensen, Steiner Christensen, Greg Tatom, Steve Nixon, Bob Cartwright, Tod Udem, and Dave Haugen. The Key Pen Pirates; Cory Farencik, Chayse Farencik, Steve Coldicott, Alyx Coldicott, Caton Coldicott, Kinzie Coldicott, Emilee Miller, Coree Collins, De Henderson, Chris Oughten, and Thea Oughten. Thank you to our Bike Rodeo partners and hosts Key Peninsula Fire Department and Pierce County Sheriff's Office.

THANK YOU!

4th of July Community Hot Dog Social

Once again, a success with the help of: Susan, Daniel, Ben, and Annamarie Paganelli, Patrick

Mulvaney, Cheryl Prante, Marilyn & Jerry Hartley, Bev Bryant, Chuck West, Linda Weeks, Mike Woodford, Mindy Taylor, Lisa Larson, Chad & Tracy Oliveira, Gina Cabiduu, Renee' Smith, Pastor Tim Stobbe, Ruth Baldwin, Gina Denton, Commissioner Shawn Jensen, Sami Jensen, Isabel Jensen, Commissioner Kip Clinton, Commissioner Mark Michel, Commissioner Ed Robison, Kirsten, Caden, & Hailey Gallacher, Kadynce Soucie, and Celeste Rivas. And sponsors; Food Market of Lake Kathryn and Key Center, Waypoint Church, Peninsula Light Co., Angel Guild Thrift Shop, The Float, KP School Bus Connects, Key Peninsula Business Association, KP Community Council, Rainier Family Medicine, Shawn & Sami Jensen Family, Longbranch Improvement Club, Longbranch Foundation, Costco, Gnosh Food Truck, The Red Barn Youth Center, KP Cares, Tom Taylor YMCA, Lindquist Dental Clinic, and Sensory Digest, LLC. Thank you for your support and love for our community. We couldn't have done it without you!

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

THAI CHILIS SPICE UP A FLAVORFUL STARTER OR ENTREE

KPCooks



Marinated Thai-Style Pork Spareribs

MARSHA KREMEN

While perusing epicurious.com (one of my favorite Internet recipe sites) for a recipe to take to a Memorial Day potluck, I ran across this unique and very flavorful treatment for ribs. The recipe is originally from Lobel's Meat Bible by Stanley, Evan, Mark and David Lobel with Mary Goodbody and David Whiteman. I've modified the recipe slightly and can attest that you can vary some of the proportions a bit without negative impact. This recipe is such a hit that I get asked for it all the time. There are quite a few ingredients here but this dish is well worth the effort. The dipping sauce is a must.

Serves four as a main course, eight as an appetizer. I frequently double the recipe.

Thai-Style Pork Spareribs

1 cup sliced shallots
10 scallions, coarsely chopped
3-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced
8 large cloves garlic, peeled
1 cup coarsely chopped cilantro including thin stems (and roots if possible)—about 1 bunch
6 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons Thai or Vietnamese fish sauce (nam pla or nuoc mam)
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon fresh coarsely ground black pepper
2 tablespoons sugar
4 pounds pork spareribs (see notes)

Place all ingredients except the ribs into a food processor and process to a loose, finely chopped paste.

Place the ribs in a large bowl or heavy resealable plastic bags. Thoroughly coat the ribs with the marinade, massaging the paste into the flesh for a minute or so. Cover and marinate at room temperature for two hours or up to five hours in the refrigerator, tossing once or twice.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread the ribs out, bone-side down, on large parchment-lined baking sheets and bake until ribs are deeply colored and very tender but not yet falling

from the bone, about an hour and a half, occasionally rotating the pans to promote even cooking. Remove from the oven and serve with the Thai Chili-Herb Dipping Sauce.

Thai Chili-Herb Dipping Sauce

Makes about 2/3 cup
1 tablespoon jasmine or another long-grain rice
6-8 dried whole Thai chilis (each about 2 inches long)
1 heaping tablespoon finely chopped scallions
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro leaves
2 teaspoons sugar
3 tablespoons Thai or Vietnamese fish sauce
1/3 cup fresh lime juice

Place the rice in a small skillet over medium heat and cook, shaking the pan until fragrant and lightly toasted, less than 1 minute. Transfer rice to a spice or coffee grinder and let cool. Process cooled rice until almost powered, transfer to a small bowl and reserve.

Place the chilis in the same skillet and cook over medium heat until lightly toasted, 30 to 45 seconds, shaking the skillet to avoid burning. Transfer the chilis to a spice or coffee grinder and let cool. Pulse the grinder until the chilis are coarsely chopped, or mash with a mortar and pestle. Transfer the chilis to the bowl with the rice.

Add the remaining ingredients and stir to dissolve the sugar. Cover and reserve. The sauce can be made a few hours ahead and kept at room temperature. You may also store in a tightly sealed container in the refrigerator for up to a week, however the bright colors will fade.

Cook's notes on the ribs: The recipe calls for pork spare ribs cut across the bone into one- to three-inch "racks," each rack cut between the bones into individual two- to three-inch long riblets. I find that baby back ribs work great cut into one- to three-rib pieces depending on how much meat is on the ribs.

On the chilis: I find that eight chilis make a fairly spicy sauce that I like but you can certainly adjust to your own heat tolerance.

.Photo: Marsha Kremen



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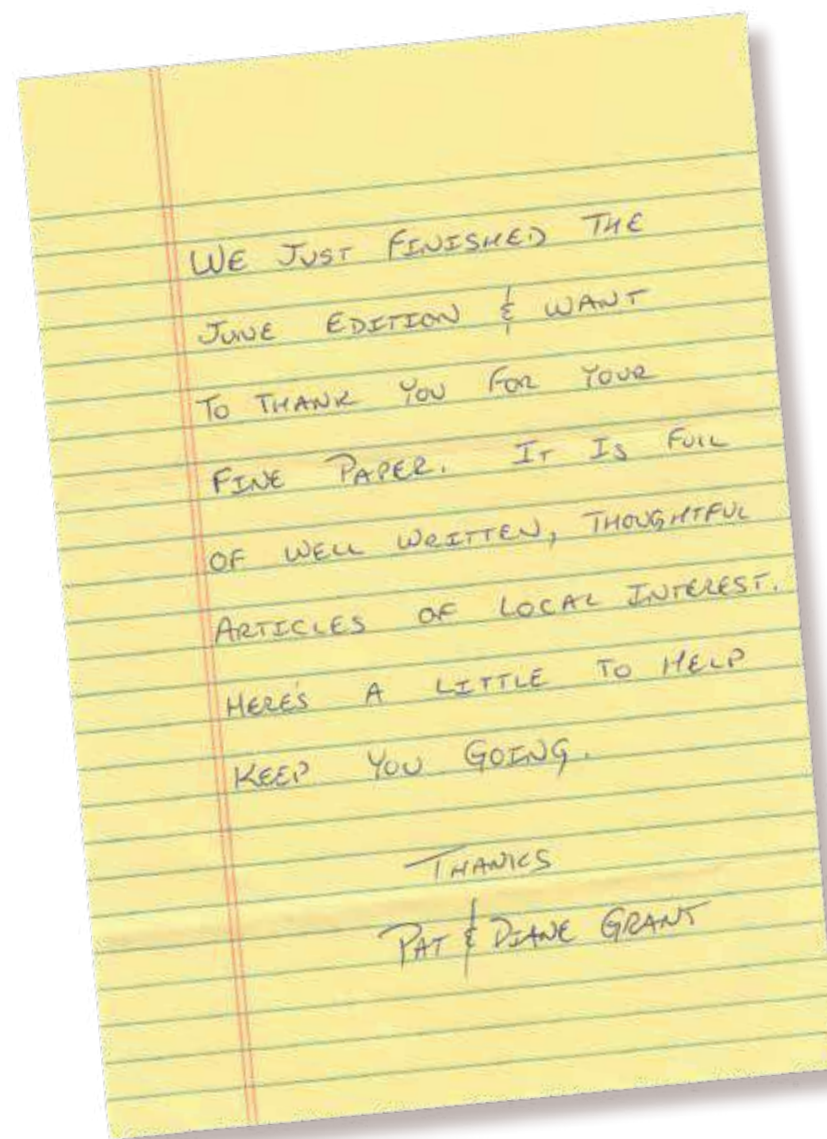
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TOP LEFT The Day Brothers—Daniel, John and David—play the Longbranch Bluegrass Festival June 29. *Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News* **TOP CENTER** Male sea lions take a break on the buoy near Devil’s Head before heading back to California breeding grounds. *Photo: David Zeigler, KP News* **TOP RIGHT** The youngest generation of Soderquists at play during their family reunion in July at Penrose Point State Park. *Photo: David Zeigler, KP News* **CENTER LEFT** Low tide fun at Penrose Park. *Photo: David Zeigler, KP News* **LOWER LEFT** An osprey carries home more eelgrass than prey for lunch. *Photo: Ed Johnson, KP News* **LOWER RIGHT** Late summer sunset overlooking the Olympics from Joemma Beach. *Photo: J. Donovan Malley*