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THE AWARD-WINNING VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

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Assistant Fire Chief Wolverton Exonerated, Returned to Duty

The 29-year veteran resumed his post while KPPFD continued its search for a new chief.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Assistant Fire Chief Hal Wolverton was returned to duty by the Key Peninsula board of fire commissioners 14 weeks after it placed him on paid administrative leave during a third-party investigation into allegations of discriminatory behavior against a department employee.

The board reported at its biweekly meeting March 22 that the investigation, conducted by an outside attorney hired by the district, found no grounds to discipline Wolverton and voted to return him to duty immediately, though under something of a cloud.

“The report concluded that none of the allegations made could be sustained to have violated the law or department policy,” said commission Chair Stan Moffett at the meeting.

Commissioner Sean Jensen seconded a board motion to return Wolverton to duty but said, “I do have reservations about the culture and ramifications of this whole situation, and I really hope this department can come together to rally around each other after all this has taken place.”

Wolverton was put on leave Dec. 14 after the board received complaints about possible misconduct. The board had already appointed him interim fire chief by unanimous vote at its meeting Nov. 23 to fill the gap left by Fire Chief Dustin Morrow, who left the district Dec. 1 to take over the top job at Central Pierce Fire & Rescue in Lakewood.

Wolverton, a 29-year KPPFD veteran, has been assistant chief for five years and served as interim fire chief once before during the time between the retirement of Fire Chief Guy Allen in 2018 and hiring Morrow in April 2019.

Most of the accusations leveled against Wolverton were made years earlier, but the previous fire chiefs apparently did not think they warranted further action, according to

a person familiar with the investigation who was not authorized to speak about it publicly. It’s also unclear why an investigation was launched soon after Morrow’s departure.

At the meeting, Commissioner Keith Davies said, “With what the allegations were and what the investigation (put) the department through ... I think it is a time to bring somebody in to refresh all of the harassment trainings, also review district policy on harassment and reporting. This is a good opportunity for us (to) get 100%

“THE REPORT CONCLUDED THAT NONE OF THE ALLEGATIONS MADE COULD BE SUSTAINED ... ”

of our organization up to speed and we set a new baseline.”

After the meeting, Public

Information Officer Anne Nesbit told KP News, “Chief Wolverton was cleared of any wrongdoing, the investigation found that he did nothing wrong, that’s why he could return to duty immediately.”

The board meanwhile is continuing its search for a new fire chief to replace Morrow. Six candidates were chosen by press time and scheduled to meet the public at a reception March 30 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Vaughn Elementary School, with an eye toward hiring one of them by June. ■

Assistant Fire Chief Hal Wolverton returned to duty March 23. *Key Peninsula Fire Department*



Costly removal of a sinking derelict vessel from Lakebay Marina Jan. 28. *Lisa Bryan, KP News*

Legislature Funds Increased Derelict Boat Removal on Puget Sound

Whether buying, selling, giving or receiving, fixer-upper boats may come with unanticipated and costly consequences.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Removing derelict or abandoned boats from the waters of Puget Sound is a high priority for the Department of Natural Resources. The department’s underfunded Derelict Vessel Removal Program got a big boost from legislators with the passage of HB 1700 in March. Twenty-five percent of the money generated from watercraft excise taxes, roughly \$7.5 million, will go toward funding the program each biennium.

“UNFORTUNATELY, THEIR GREAT BIG DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS DON’T COME WITH INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO DO THAT WITH THESE VESSELS.”

Troy Woods, manager of the program, said the final invoices aren’t in for the two boats removed from Lakebay Marina in January, but estimates the cost, along with removing the boathouse that collapsed on one of them, will be about \$30,000.

The marina was sold Dec. 28 by owner Mark Scott, who struggled with upkeep, for \$1.6 million to the Recreational Boating Association of Washington and DNR. (See

“Lakebay Marina Sold; New Owners to Restore and Partner with State,” KP News, January 2022.)

The custody process is underway for the 12 remaining vessels at Lakebay Marina. Woods expects DNR will have custody April 8. The owners will have another 30 days to appeal through the Pollution Control Hearing Board. Woods anticipates removal will begin around May 9. He said it will be a lot more expensive to remove those remaining 12 boats — probably

between \$90,000 to \$100,000. “We are required by statute to try and do cost recovery from the owners of the vessels whenever we remove them,” Woods said. “But it’s not always easy because a lot of the owners are indigent. They don’t have the funds and we’re left holding the bag.”

Part of the problem is trying to find owners for these vessels because many

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RESILIENCE

Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The season of resilience and spirited hope has returned.

Blankets of green moss adorn the trunks of maples, with big leaves unfurled. Early blossoming fruit trees beckon mason bees to wake before it's too late. An all-male amphibian chorus rises from the pond below as each frog does its best to entice females into a quick underwater dip. A big flock of American robins, and the two or three northern flickers that often tag alongside, appreciate the edible delights hiding under leaves unraked from fall.

The most downright joyous time I've had in years came on a photography assignment inside a transitional kindergarten classroom at Evergreen Elementary School last month. Having visited the new school at a ribbon-cutting open house last fall, I'd already been wowed by the building, but this was the first time I'd been inside during class. Most of the students, not all, were unmasked. The kids didn't care one way or the other. They were all happily learning together.

The biggest challenge of being a photographer at school is to avoid becoming a distraction, but that was no problem in this setting. These eager young children were completely engaged — no fussing, no fidgeting, no wandering or vacant eyes. Students gave their undivided attention to their teacher, Amanda Kennard. They absorbed her instruction and followed the routines she had already established.

What I learned in class that day is that children are resilient. I can't help but think that cultivating that awareness in them means we should tell them so more often.

The last two years have changed me. At times I felt so miserable I was forced to step away from the rancor to refocus on being present in the moment.

After all the disruption, frustration and suffering the pandemic unleashed, my thoughts return to how fortunate we are that everyone in our extended

family, a very politically divided lot, chose to be vaccinated and none of us became ill. Meanwhile, the family and friends of nearly a million dead Americans grieve their losses.

And now over the last five weeks we have watched in horror Vladimir Putin's war against the sovereign nation of Ukraine.

My Russian friends tell me they don't

want this war any more than the return of the authoritarian Soviet Union. The disinformation, isolation, propaganda and terror are well remembered by all who braved those times.

Fact-based, independent local journalism is the best guard against alternate realities.

Relentless bombing, and the shameless intentional targeting of Ukrainian families gathered in improvised bomb shelters, has made even the most dovish amongst us cry out for our country to do more to save Ukraine from devastation. Yet the threatened use of nuclear weapons must give pause to passion. Our proximity to the Bangor submarine base, JBLM, and nuclear waste stored at Hanford brings the risks into greater focus.

The world is largely united behind Ukraine.

An ornately framed antique mirror hangs in a hallway at the center of our home. Grand in its prime, the silvered mirror is heavily etched by the passage of time. That it survived all these years and countless moves is a testimony to sentiment over function.

I caught my own reflection in it the other day and stopped in my tracks. I ran my fingers over its edges, remembering its origin story.

The mirror once belonged to a doctor and his wife, members of a church in Chicago that helped new immigrants. They befriended my Estonian grand-

parents and my mother who was still a young child. They fled their homeland in 1944 to escape the Russian annexation of Estonia. They were the lucky ones. They spent four years in Swedish refugee camps, praying all the while for someone to sponsor them to come to the United States.

"We want you to have this mirror for your new home. Whenever you see yourself in it, we want you to remember

how brave and strong you are and all the great things you will do with your new lives in America."

For the first time in two years, there is a small community calendar in this print edition of Key Peninsula News, and we look forward to watching it grow. In-person events are being scheduled and planned with a greater hope than ever that frequent cancellations may become a thing of the past.

One of the best attended and most loved events in these parts is scheduled for Saturday, May 7: the Key Peninsula Livable Community Fair at the KP civic center. For new people and old-timers, this beloved event is where you can meet your neighbors and discover groups and organizations that do indeed make life so much better here.

If we remember nothing else, in the middle of a pandemic that magnified divisions between us, we still build big things together. ■



DERELICT VESSELS FROM PAGE 1

"IF THAT BOAT BECOMES ABANDONED OR DERELICT IN THE FUTURE AND THE OWNER CAN'T PAY FOR RECOVERY, WE WILL COME AFTER YOU FOR IT."

are sold informally. Ownership history is not preserved when sellers don't register vessels or file a report of sale.

"Usually when we find the owners of these abandoned or derelict vessels a lot of them are people down on their luck, people trying to do the best they can with what they have," Woods said. "Unfortunately, their great big dreams and aspirations don't come with instructions on how to do that with these vessels."

There is a secondary liability law when a boat is over 40 years old and more than 35 feet long requiring an inspection be done and sent to Wood's office before a sale.

"It has to be seaworthy," Woods said. "If it's not seaworthy, then the seller retains secondary liability, meaning that if the boat becomes abandoned or derelict in the future and the owner can't pay for recovery, we will come after you for it."

Currently that secondary liability law applies only to larger vessels because there are simply too many smaller vessels out there.

Since the Derelict Vessel Removal Program began in 2002, it has removed nearly 1,000 vessels littering Puget Sound waterways.

Boat owners may apply to the Vessel Turn-In Program for potentially free disposal. Prior to last year, the turn-in program was capped at \$200,000 per biennium, but that cap was removed in 2021. Before HB 1700, there was still not enough money budgeted to get ahead of the abandoned boat problem.

"It's part of our prevention program. It costs us a lot less to take a vessel off an owner's hands and destroy it than for us to go out with a big barge and crane to lift it out of the water and take it for destruction," Wood said. "There is really no reason for people to dump these vessels in the water anywhere."

Commissioner of Public Lands Hillary Franz commented on the passage of HB 1700 in a statement that read, "Both the declining kelp forests and eelgrass meadows, as well as the steady stream of derelict and abandoned vessels, are increasingly putting aquatic habitats at risk, and the Legislature is providing the critical support we need to keep up with the pace of these fast-moving threats to our waters." ■



Refugee center in Przemysł, Poland. *Sil Wong-Underwood*

Local Relief Worker Back From Ukraine

Impact Northwest sends volunteers to disaster zones all over the world.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Lakebay resident Siu-May "Sil" Wong-Underwood, 44, returned home March 12 from an 11-day mission to the Polish border with Ukraine to assess needs and provide resources for the nearly 135,000 refugees pouring into Poland each day since Russia invaded Ukraine Feb. 24.

Wong-Underwood is a volunteer logistics team leader for Impact Northwest, a Kingston-based nonprofit that provides rescue, support and training to disaster zones around the world.

"We do urban search and rescue, but we also do medical work," she said. "We were working in the reception centers, where the refugees come once they get through the border into Poland."

Wong-Underwood was based near Przemysł, the easternmost rail station in Poland. "When they come through the border, they get bused to these reception centers. When you have 8,000 people in a reception center, that's huge. There's always a need for medical work, for passing things out, and just helping with the chaos."

At press time, the United Nations refugee agency said more than 3.5 million people, including more than 1 million children, had left Ukraine in the largest exodus in Europe since World War II.

"It's not just images you see on TV; these are real lives," Wong-Underwood said. "I was talking to this elderly couple. They had their little dog with them. You'll see

everyone with their pets. He and his wife were sent to Poland by his son and daughter-in-law. Their daughter-in-law was going to go stay at their farm (to care for the animals) between Lviv and Kyiv while their son goes and fights."

"These are people I can relate to," she said. "They have a farm; we have a farm. He said they didn't know if they were ever going home, or if they were ever going to see their son again, their family again, but his son and daughter-in-law insisted that they come."

Almost all the people fleeing Ukraine are elderly or are the women and children of separated families, Wong-Underwood said. "Most of the time it's leaving husbands, fathers, sons. But there are plenty of women who are staying as well, like that elderly couple's daughter-in-law."

The first wave to cross the border were mostly people with means or who left Ukraine right away, she said. "But now we're starting to see refugees directly from the war zones, where their towns and homes are being bombed. We're starting to see more of the injured and everyone is anticipating that will be only more so in the days, weeks, months to come."

The U.N. has worked very hard with the Polish government to make it a smoother process, she said. "Every day we had briefings with the border guards about how the crossings were going and so that we could do our own operations, go back and forth

across the border providing aid and medical services to the towns on the Ukraine side. They were fantastic to work with."

Another Impact team went to the region in mid-March, and Wong-Underwood said she would likely return every month, rotating with other leaders of the organization for at least six months.

Back at home, Wong-Underwood works as a flight attendant for Alaska Airlines and is married to a Key Peninsula firefighter. They have a 10-year-old son who attends Evergreen Elementary School.

"I get a lot of support from my supervisors; they are as helpful as they can be, but it's really my amazing co-workers who are very gracious to pick-up my flights so that I'm able to go," she said.

Her family supports her too, but also misses her.

"Explaining to my son why I'm going, I say that there are boys and girls out there and I've seen them, I've talked to them, I've handed out candy to them; that they are having to say goodbye to their dads and may not see them again; they're having to say goodbye to their homes and might not ever get the chance to go home. I say by him allowing me to go, it's him helping them. We talk about how our family are good people-helpers and we make sure that all of us are able to give in one way or another."

For more information, go to empactnorthwest.org. ■



Tina McKail, KP News

Longbranch Cemetery Poised to Expand

A dedicated group has kept a historic resource open for six decades.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

A walk through the gate of the Longbranch Cemetery reveals a place that invites reflection. Past and present intermingle. Some stones are covered with moss while others reflect sunlight from polished granite surfaces. There are family plots with scores of members, many of whom were early Key Peninsula settlers, while others are solitary, commemorating both long lives and those cut short.

The cemetery was founded in 1902 when Nicoline Olsen donated the original acre near the present-day corner of KP Highway and 46th Street SW. The first recorded burial was two years later. A second acre to the west was added in the 1940s, providing space for just over 1,000 5-by-10 foot plots.

The Longbranch Cemetery Association

has kept it operating for the last 60 years. The Longbranch Community Church lies across the road just south of the cemetery; however, aside from being neighbors, the two are completely unrelated.

Ten years ago, the association purchased three acres along the northern boundary and is preparing to expand.

“We only have five plots available now in the original cemetery,” said LCA Board President Donna Daily. “The cemetery is a place of remembrance, a place with

history. We want to serve the community long into the future so that we can still be a community resource.”

“I like the cemetery because it has a country feel. It isn’t a big business, and it is operated in the same way,” said LCA Secretary Carolyn Dahl. “You can walk around and you see people you have known. It’s like home.”

Before the association can finalize a plot map for the new addition, it must build a road to comply with county code requirements for

emergency access. Instead of a turnaround, board members envision

installing two road culverts to create a one-way horseshoe-shaped through road with room to drive a hearse up the hill, around and down.

“Fire isn’t probably going to be a problem,” Daily said. “But think about the people attending a funeral or visiting the cemetery. There is a lot of white hair, and if there is an emergency, we’ll need access for an emergency vehicle.”

A five-member board keeps the cemetery records, makes sure the place is maintained, and organizes an annual clean-up and potluck on the Saturday before Memorial Day. Each spring Daily and Dahl send a letter to about 70 people, filling them in

on news about the cemetery and inviting them to the clean-up, potluck and annual meeting. About 40 or 50 people come to trim bushes and trees, remove blackberries, and pay their respects. Those who can’t come usually send a donation.

“It is pretty neat, like a reunion,” said Pam Murray. She grew up in Longbranch, remembers picking wild strawberries in the cemetery as a child, and is a regular participant in the clean-up. “We see descendants come to take care of the graves of family. I take care of my folks and Pearl Huff, my second-grade teacher,” she said.

Marge Radonich, who died in 2015, asked Murray to help update the plot map decades ago. Radonich kept the records and told her there was a single 100-year-old copy written in pen on linen, and she was afraid something might happen to it every time she took it out.

Murray drafted a new version on Mylar to use as a blueprint, and the LCA now has paper copies in triplicate. Murray also updated the website and plans to incorporate a searchable database so people can see where gravesites are located. She would love to work with volunteers to include pictures of gravestones and inscriptions, she said.

Daily and Dahl also gave credit for the association’s success to its long-time board secretary Betty Watkinson, who has stepped back from those duties but remains on the board. “She and her husband Norman did everything,” Daily said. Watkinson recruited her to the board in 1995 and she became president the following year. “Betty was a great mentor.”

“When we lost our granddaughter in 2015, we spent a lot of time at the cemetery,” Dahl said. “Betty twisted my arm pretty hard to join the board. She knew

“THE CEMETERY IS AN IMPORTANT THING FOR THE COMMUNITY. I WON’T QUIT UNTIL I’M DONE.”

everybody and who they were related to. She is amazing. The cemetery was like her baby.”

In addition to keeping the books, the board Treasurer Sam Akin marks the plot when a burial is scheduled and keeps the new parcel from getting overgrown. He also drafted the plot map for the new parcel.

Akin moved to Longbranch in 1976. “I was brought here by divorce, bought a house to fix and sell, and it became my home. I’m still working on it,” he said. “The cemetery is an important thing for the community. I won’t quit until I’m done.”

Plots are available for those who live or have family south of the Home Bridge. For more information, go to longbranchcemeteryassociation.com. ■



Left: Conrad Pennington and Keira Lawson. Above: Macy Higginson. *Lisa Bryan, KP News*

New Transitional Kindergarten Program at Evergreen Elementary

Training students for kindergarten can turn them into classroom leaders later.

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

Peninsula School District is midway through a new pre-kindergarten, early learning program called Transitional Kindergarten that launched in January. TK is a state-funded, full-day, full-week, six-month program for children who have not had the opportunity to attend preschool. The program focuses on essential academics, social-emotional skills and learning habits with the goal of reducing opportunity gaps and easing transition into kindergarten.

Serving students from across the district, TK currently operates at Evergreen, Discovery and Harbor Heights Elementary schools and is open to students turning 5 years old between September 1 and August 31 who live within PSD boundaries and demonstrate financial, academic and or social-emotional needs.

“This is a proactive approach,” PSD Director of Special Programs Lisa Reaugh said. “We take the students who have the most academic or social need and offer it to them first.”

“Transitional Kindergarten is a great opportunity to provide kids preparation

for success in kindergarten,” Evergreen Elementary School Principal Hugh Maxwell said. “The chance for them to experience and build all the social skills that are the foundation of academic success later in their school careers is invaluable.”

For the past eight years, PSD has offered a program called Jumpstart every August for incoming kindergartners. The free, week-long program gives students the opportunity to get to

know their teachers, explore the school and make new friends.

“(TK) is really what we consider a six-month Jumpstart,” Reaugh said. “It looks a little bit more like a kindergarten classroom with some of those principles of preschool.”

“Sometimes what we find from the preschool world is that they don’t transition to any other adult in the building or they don’t have to do lunch on their own. Some of those things are the hardest parts,” said Reaugh, who taught kindergarten for many years. “It’s a big transition for them to walk into this world and be all alone and do it all.”

“How to solve problems, how to take care of their own materials, how to engage

with a friend, how to share — all of those things that set a student up for success come kindergarten, that’s exactly what we’ve set our priorities around,” she said.

With access to specialist classes such as PE, STEM and music, TK students learn to move between classrooms and navigate the expectations of multiple teachers. They also have recess, eat lunch at school and qualify for transportation.

“They have access to math and science and literacy activities all throughout the day. It’s very much an integrated, project-based approach,” Reaugh said. “Evergreen particularly is really looking to do more things outside and have more access to play outside as well, to have lots of STEM and outdoor experiences embedded in their day.”

“I have seen so much growth in our TK’ers,” Maxwell said. “Their ability to focus, work with classmates and transition between activities are skills that are hard to develop at home with just parents and siblings. The dynamics of the transitional kindergarten classroom with 12 to 15 students gives them the opportunity to grow and nurture those skills before moving into kindergarten where teachers begin to add in the academic rigor needed for early literacy and numeracy development.”

Courtney Thigpen, whose daughter

Eulila is a transitional kindergartner at Evergreen, said she could not be happier with their experience. Eulila is thriving and adores her TK teacher, Amanda Kennard, and her other teachers.

“She will be more than ready to enter kindergarten,” Thigpen said. “We are so grateful.”

Reaugh said her department’s goal is to have an early learning program at every school. PSD also runs multiple preschool programs in its schools with varying qualifying criteria and hopes to expand the new TK program to more sites.

The current cohort will attend TK through June 21. Evergreen’s TK students will then spread out across Key Peninsula’s three elementary schools to attend kindergarten, based on where they live.

“Having a couple good models and a couple strong leaders in your class can really help shape the rest of your class,” Reaugh said. “We’re looking for those incoming kindergartners to have some good models, some kids who know exactly what to do when they get to school.”

The 2022-2023 school year TK program will begin mid-winter, with screening of eligible applicants in the fall.

For more information, go to www.psd401.net. ■

Dan Whitmarsh

WRITING BY FAITH



Difficult Spaces

Spring is upon us and summer is fast approaching. The glowing faces of daffodils greet me on these longer days, while our pond is alive with the cacophony of a family of geese who have made a new home there. However, in the midst of this new life and energy, a friend is dying.

It's a long, hard death, with no hope of recovery. Those who love him watch with trepidation as his health dwindles away. His body is slowly shutting down, and it won't be long until he steps into eternity.

To be human is to know a perpetual mixture of joy and tragedy, hope and despair, laughter and tears. We all carry within ourselves memories of good times past and hopeful expectations for the future. We also carry trauma and scars from excruciating pain we have known, and the knowledge that the future is uncertain except for the fact that, in the end, we all die.

We have experienced much pain in these last years. COVID-19 has killed over one million fellow Americans, and millions more worldwide. Economic hardship is wreaking havoc on families. Crime rates are rising at home, and now we watch in horror as Ukrainian civilians are crushed under Russian bombs. Sometimes it seems the world is out of control. The trauma we feel is real.

What do we do with hard times? How do we process all the suffering to which we bear witness? What do we make of the pain and division in our families, our nation and our world?

Psychologist Nancy McWilliams observed that most Americans view the world through the lens of a problem to be solved. Faced with a challenge or difficulty, we set out in search of a quick fix that will resolve our problems, allowing everybody to live happily ever after. Too often this leaves us unable and unwilling to properly manage our grief and loss when faced with real tragedy, death or disappointment.

As we come into April, Christians are looking ahead to the services and celebrations of Holy Week. Beginning with the pageantry of Palm Sunday, it carries through the passion of Good Friday and resolves in the celebratory hope of Easter when we cry out, "He is Risen."

Right before Easter, however, is Holy Saturday, a day that is often overlooked in our Easter preparations. Holy Saturday is the day we remember that Jesus, brutally executed by the State, lay dead inside his

tomb. It is a day that feels like a disaster, a day of crushed hopes, dreams and ideals. Resurrection was unheard of; all hope seemed lost.

I suspect many of us are living in that space, whether we admit it or not. We don't want to lose hope, we don't want to give ourselves to grief, but life has been so hard lately. The space of Holy Saturday can be crushing as we find ourselves between doubt and wonder. Yes, we know the promises, and we'd like to still walk in hope, but life is tough and sometimes it seems like hope is lost.

There is another way of looking at the difficulties of life. Many cultures view these moments not as problems to be solved, but opportunities to find resilience, practice patience, and grow in our understanding of the deeper mysteries of life and faith. It's easy to forget that, while the world is ready to jump ahead to Easter, for Jesus, the important work was being done in darkness on Holy Saturday.

If we pay attention, we find that there is meaning to be found in our difficulties. We all share commonality in our pain. In the hardest times, we learn the real value of friendship. We often discover the realities of evil that need to be resisted — racial injustice, economic inequality, and political gamesmanship, to name a few. We can learn resilience, finding courage and strength to endure.

It was in the darkness of the tomb that Jesus heard the voice of love, gently calling him back to life. My friend is dying, but I have faith that even in the darkness of this journey, he will hear that same gentle voice speaking words of hope and comfort. In our hardest moments, if we pay attention, we may all eventually hear the voice of love calling us to life again. We may not fix everything, but if we do our work, we will be stronger, richer, and more beautiful for taking this journey.

On behalf of the Lakebay Church and the KP Ministers Association, I wish you all a thoughtful, meaningful, life-affirming Easter and beyond.

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

Vicki Husted Biggs

A SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE



Restoration to Sanity

I recently had occasion to read step two from a 12-Step program: "Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." I thought about those

words, "restore us to sanity," grasping them and holding them close for a while.

Some years past, I regularly attended a 12-Step program and I am forever grateful for those meetings. But that is not my focus here. And to be clear, I am not proposing that anyone has a higher power or that anyone else needs a 12-Step meeting. My attention is solely on the words "restore us to sanity."

If you are anything like me — if anyone has anything in common nowadays — you may feel off balance, confused, hopeless, angry, irritable, or a bit frightened. On top of all that, many of us are kind of lonely and missing our regular social connections. Two years of COVID-19 have forever changed our familiar landscape, our national political system is in upheaval, families are torn, traditional supports are strained. As the saying goes, "Normal is only a setting on your dryer."

How are you coping? Tuning out and playing endless games of spider solitaire may not work forever.

What could "restoration" look like for those of us who are feeling not quite right in the head or heart? Is it possible to get back to where we were when we felt our best, or at least better than we do now? It is possible for people of any age to improve their diets, get some exercise and do some things that generally improve physical well-being. What might help us feel better on the inside? Restoring our sense of wellness, adaptability, acceptance, generosity, tolerance, and perhaps happiness and hope, is a goal that could be within our reach.

While talking with a friend this week, we discussed the lengthening days and how much the added minutes of daylight improved her outlook. Others have shared their renewed vigor and the fresh bursts of energy they feel of late. The restorative powers of sunlight cannot be underestimated, just ask the person who was washing all her windows. Turning your face to the sun for a time each day is an easy and natural way towards restoring a better mood.

In researching the subject of restoration, I found that experts had a few suggestions in common. For example, the idea of managing your reactions to people or events by taking a 90-second pause. Practice some deep breathing, and "recenter yourself." In other words, catch yourself before you fly off the handle at someone. One person uses the phrase "I am going to take this opportunity to stop talking right now." She has found it effective in creating a "big U-turn" in a fractious conversation and hostilities are avoided.

Another technique for restoring sanity is to create a break in routine. Changing

location, for even a day, promotes relaxation and renewed energy. I have a few favorite places I enjoy driving to for an afternoon, off the peninsula, and away from my everyday reality. For me, these are places to get in a walk, a change of scene, and perhaps a meal out. I return home feeling invigorated.

Create a rock-solid morning routine. Routines help us focus our energy on the work before us and not on the day-to-day business of finding food or gathering clothing. Routines can help us remain calm and get our busy days off to a good start. Likewise, a calming routine at night encourages a good night's sleep.

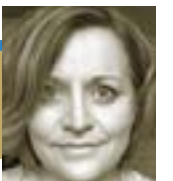
These ideas are not deep therapy. They are common sense reminders that are achievable and helpful. Other suggestions include avoiding a "hangry episode," cultivate happy habits and friendships with happy people, get a houseplant and take a break from your work every 90 minutes. Spend some time every day laughing. Practice gratitude. The restoration of your sanity is purely subjective. Each person will have a personal prescription.

As we navigate our new normal each day, keep in mind that sanity can be restored with thoughtful and sustained attention to mental and emotional health.

Vicki Biggs is a longtime social worker. She lives in Home.

Meredith Broward

KEY ISSUES



Waiting to Vax

My daughter turned 1 just two days after Gov. Jay Inslee issued the first stay-at-home orders of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. We opened birthday presents with family on Facetime and she had her first birthday cake on Facebook live. In the ensuing two years she missed out on playing in the church nursery, countless swim and dance lessons, playdates with other toddlers, library story times, and spending holidays with family.

This is a common refrain for everyone who has lived through the pandemic — opportunities missed, aspirations delayed, and a longing for a return to some type of normal. The difference between my daughter and everyone else aged 5 and over is the opportunity to be vaccinated. My husband and I, as well as our teenage sons, were vaccinated and boosted as soon as we were eligible, for a host of reasons. One of our primary reasons was to help protect our beloved toddler until she, too, could be vaccinated.

As the mandates are lifted and restrictions eased, it is important to remember there is a large group of people who don't yet even have an opportunity to be vaccinated.

To date there is no approved Covid vaccination for children under the age of 5 and preliminary data submitted to the FDA has been retracted multiple times. I appreciate the care that scientists and epidemiologists have put into ensuring the vaccine is safe and effective for this age group, but it does feel like we're being left behind as the world starts getting back to normal.

We will choose to vaccinate our daughter once she is eligible because we believe it is the simplest and most effective way to lessen the risk of severe disease. Choosing to vaccinate our toddler will also decrease the risk of her or others suffering from long Covid and the possibility of facing multi-system inflammatory system disorder. But a vaccination for this age group could do far more good than just improving outcomes for individual toddlers if, by chance, they contract COVID-19.

Making a vaccination for children under age 5 a priority would also substantially shift the burden away from other mitigation efforts, such as masking, testing and quarantining. All these efforts are designed to benefit an unvaccinated population but can add to the isolation of children.

The option to vaccinate will also reduce interruptions to childcare and school for these children. It presents an opportunity to significantly increase the overall health and wellbeing of families across the country.

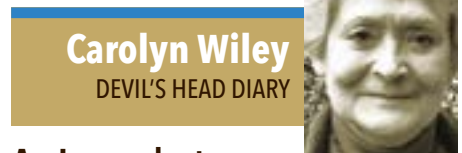
As our local area adapts to life with fewer mandates, increased opportunities to gather and a return to a more "normal" life, please

don't forget about the babies, toddlers and preschoolers who remain at greater risk of infection than the general public.

Many of us are watching as the world enjoys the benefits of the vaccine while hoping our child's turn is coming soon. Prioritizing a vaccine for children under 5 years old will help ensure they don't miss out on any more than they already have.

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

MAKING A VACCINATION FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 A PRIORITY WOULD ALSO SUBSTANTIALLY SHIFT THE BURDEN AWAY FROM OTHER MITIGATION EFFORTS ... DESIGNED TO BENEFIT AN UNVACCINATED POPULATION.



Carolyn Wiley
DEVIL'S HEAD DIARY

An Immodest Proposal

Even before I left Texas, I was pretty much a wild-eyed, tree-hugging, bleeding-heart liberal.

Having spent my teaching career in schools that served singularly needy neighborhoods, my liberal bias is stabilized, starched and ironed in place. I taught children who arrived at school hungry, scared, tired and sometimes bruised. Some followed crops, some arrived after the fall of Saigon. Some were the product of poverty, neglect and parenting that was mentally and emotionally limited.

Most of these children bought into the idea of a better future, unaware of all the cards stacked against it. However, the teachers I worked with were stalwart defenders of the dream and we had successes — "transcenders," we called them — children who persevered and overcame the obstacles inherent in an impoverished

early life.

Since I was part of it, I felt that schools and teachers made that difference. Of course there were also heartbreaking failures, but when you are trying to turn a stampeding herd, you take what you can get.

I suspect there is a lack of this type of experiential understanding in politicians who rail against squandering the nation's wealth on the undeserving — the elderly, the very young, the physically disabled, the mentally ill and, heaven forbid, what Jonathan Swift called "those beggars of the female sex who are inevitably followed by three, four or six unkempt, whining children."

Much of their criticism is directed not at the root of the problem but toward the single parent, but the fact remains that uteruses do not impregnate themselves.

Perhaps the "anti-bleeding-heart" political bloc does have a point; safety nets are costly. Placing greater focus on personal responsibility could result in a reduction of tax-supported expenses.

One favored option under consideration is the huge savings that could be realized by withholding healthcare, childcare, food, shelter, pensions, etc., thus allowing the weak, aged and very young to die off sooner than otherwise, abating the financial demands of an aging population.

Inherent in such a fiscally responsible plan is the threat that some spin doctors would probably label the movement as "retroactive birth control," but the focus in the current political climate is pro-birth, not pro-life. After the amniotic sac is broken, YOYO (You're-On-Your-Own).

Of course, there would be the unseemly side effect of reducing the number of able-bodied working poor. After all, if there is no ready pool of cheap labor, who will clean up after us, groom our golf courses, flip our burgers and care for our beloved children?

But I have an elegant supply-side solution sure to please everyone.

I was inspired by the overwhelmingly white, male state house of Georgia that drafted and passed some of the most extreme anti-choice legislation in the history of our republic. Their success sparked a flurry of similar action as more states jumped on the pro-birth bandwagon.

However, only my home state of Texas found a way to fund its effort by deputizing volunteer vagina vigilantes paid through civil lawsuit bounties, thus eliminating the need for departmental development, education or oversight.

It's a start, but that just doesn't go far enough.

We need a national penis license with mandatory user insurance.

There is a perfect model in the existing massive electronic system set up for driver licensing.

To obtain a driver's license, you must demonstrate that you can operate a motor vehicle safely. But then to actually drive one, you also need insurance to cover any costs incurred by negligent operation resulting in an accident. Your insurance rate is affected by the number of miles driven, your personal driving record and how many accidents you cause.

Due to advances in technology, obtaining the personal record of any particular penis should not be difficult. Microchip tracking devices have proven useful in locating house keys, pets and vehicles. Why not genitals?

If men were chipped, male procreative activity could be conveniently recorded in real time, and society would no longer have to rely upon after-the-fact evidence of negligent operation, like unwanted pregnancies.

Just think of the private sector jobs created in the tech world to design and operate tracking systems with links to DNA databases. Of course, there would

CONTINUED PAGE 8

José Alaniz WE LIVE HERE: OSTARA



VIEWS, FROM PAGE 7

be shrinkage in paternity suit litigation, but extended expansion in the insurance sector.

The required policy would cover costs from conception to maturity — those incidents associated with medical care for both mother and child, and the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, education, and perhaps an optional rider covering lost earning potential for the mother. This would provide vast opportunities for actuaries, accountants and an army of private sector enforcement agents — and just think of the wealth generated through advertising.

The life of the penis, like the art of politics, is often a study in unintended consequences. Too often, in our ever-more transient society, the seed donor wanders off or simply neglects the care, feeding and nurturing required by parenthood. But we are all equal in the eyes of our creator, if not so much under the law. As far as that goes, the invasiveness of having one's vagina perpetually policed by the state far exceeds the one-time inconvenience of microchipping a penis.

Award-winning humorist Carolyn Wiley lives in Longbranch.

Rion Tisino
ALL FOR ONE



Being Community

I want to thank all the teachers, counselors, various council members and pastors in the Gig Harbor-Key Peninsula area who reached out to me after reading my first column (“Being Diversity,” January 2022). Yes, “This is our village!” I knew there was merit to my living on the KP the last 14 years, even if that will soon come to an end.

The community realized I wasn't trying to hold any one ethnicity accountable for the sometimes awkward or worse behavior shown toward me and mine here at home. I understood the reaction of some friends who thought maybe I was exaggerating the racism I influenced or described what transpired by being too much of “an intense Black man” at times.

For concrete thinkers, white people contributed to the Underground Railroad, the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Civil Rights Movement, just to name a few times when community made the difference. I also learned that just because some are engaged in equity, diversity and inclusion committees in our society does not mean all are there for the right reasons.

But for those of us who believe in that work, we are always building community for the next generation.

I was at the Key Center Public Library

one cold rainy day a month ago. The staff was assisting me at the front desk in their usual professional fashion when an agitated young man came in and wanted to use their phone.

He appeared to be about high school age. You could hear the wet squishing of his sneakers. You could see his windbreaker soaked from the rain. You could see water dripping from his hair onto the carpet. You could feel something off in the way he spoke even as his face was hidden behind a sodden, dirty mask. You could tell that the librarians were slightly alarmed by his presence.

I introduced myself and asked the youth his name. He had walked from Peninsula High School to the library. He said he'd just been suspended because his “friends” were bullying him. He contritely described the behavior that got him suspended, like he was confessing a crime. I asked him to use the bathroom to clean up and dry off as much as he could, then come talk with me while he warmed up out of the rain.

The child returned and talked about how he gets bullied both verbally and physically, “and no one does anything about it.” I asked him if he told the teachers. “They don't care about me,” he said. He talked about troubles with his girlfriend. “One day she breaks up with me and the next day she wants to be with me. I don't get it. I told her to leave me alone if she doesn't want me.” He talked about how his girlfriend's mother always talks to him. He wanted to use the library phone to call her, but I asked him to talk with me as the staff looked on.

He talked about how “everything started when I moved from Gig Harbor.” His parents were having relationship problems too. He talked about how he was on a special education plan at school and that sometimes he was so frustrated he thought about suicide. I asked if he felt like harming himself now and he said no, and he promised that he would tell someone first.

After validating his stressors, I asked him to name a time in life when he was happy. “When I used to play football. I love football,” he said. It was a pleasure to see this youth's smile fill the room, reaching all the way to the staff listening to us. With that strengths-based perspective, he was able to de-escalate himself from this personal crisis.

I gave him my contact information and asked him to call me. I told him that social workers follow a code of ethics, and that I wanted him to talk to his parents about me before we planned to meet again.

The library staff seemed relieved and happy that I was there to assist, but their

mutual, collective acceptance was support that helped this child. He needed more from his school that day, maybe full wrap-around services for a variety of needs, and more from his community — us. But he did get one thing that day he needed: People who will listen.

The child did not call me. But that doesn't mean he's not out there, he and a lot of others just like him, who need someone — who need their community — to listen.

Rion Tisino lives in Longbranch.

Letters to the Editor

KPFD BOONDOGGLE OR HORNSWOGGLE?

Recent actions taken by the KPFD have ignited controversy, irritation and confusion regarding its \$2.1 million commercial real estate acquisition in the heart of Key Center's business district. Of particular concern is the conspicuous purchase of the former O'Callahan's Bar and Restaurant property located on a corner of Key Center's busiest intersection.

For obvious reasons, fire districts are prohibited from engaging in private sector real estate speculation. In a recent regularly scheduled Zoom fire commissioner meeting, the department discussed its anticipation of leasing the property. The length and the term of this lease may reveal the department's true intention — to purchase a valuable commercial property, lease it to pay the loan, and then flip it at a profit down the road.

The department's purchase follows precisely the formula private sector investors utilize as a business model. Coincidence? They could have bought any number of suitable properties at a fraction of the cost. So why these? This is just one of many questions we should all be asking.

If this concerns you, please set aside a couple of hours every other Tuesday evening and monitor the KPFD website for meeting links and announcements. My comments are not meant to diminish the valuable service of our first responders, upon whom we rely. But there is in my opinion the need for more community engagement to address decisions undertaken by leadership.

Carter Edwards, Belfair

Correction: The letter “Immunity vs. Vaccination” (Feb. 2022) identified the writer, Chuck West, as a member of the Key Peninsula Community Council. He wrote to represent only his personal views. We regret the error.

OBITUARY



Douglas Sylvers

Longbranch resident Doug Sylvers died peacefully Feb. 21. He was 85.

Born in 1937 in Minneapolis, Doug graduated in 1959 from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering. He worked at the Minneapolis Gas Co., where he met his future wife, Judy. They married in 1965.

The couple moved to Honolulu, where Doug worked for a gas company. After a few years of island life, he landed a job as an aeronautical engineer with Lockheed Martin in California. He later worked for Northrup Grumman in a position that required a relocation of his family to Switzerland.

Doug's career made for an exciting life of travel from Minnesota to Hawaii to California to Switzerland before retiring in 1999 to live in beautiful Longbranch.

Best friends for 57 years, Doug and Judy's favorite song was “Moon River” and despite staying put in one place, they never stopped thinking of themselves as “two drifters.”

Whether it was clamming on the beach, putting out crab pots and fishing from his boat or casting out from shore, Doug fully embraced life surrounded by Puget Sound.

He adored his children and grandchildren. The family loved playing what they referred to as “shovel ball,” in the backyard, essentially baseball, complete with bases to run around.

He was a perennial volunteer who for many years managed the Longbranch Improvement Club's annual dock breakfast to celebrate opening day of boating season. He and his family volunteered at the Key Peninsula Community Fair.

His full-bodied laughter and infectious smile were unbeatable. He was a dear and valued loyal friend to many.

Doug was a deeply loved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He is survived by his wife Judy; daughter Denice (John); son Patrick (Tori); three granddaughters, three grandsons and two great-grandsons.

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We've designed pages for fast, easy reading. Built-in a powerful search engine. Added an easy-to-read e-Edition of the entire printed paper.

The KP events calendar has colorful images, complete details and filters for children, seniors, online and other special types of events in a variety of views.

As always, local nonprofit events are displayed at no charge. It's easy to add your organization's events yourself or contact Meredith at calendar@keypennews.org for a little help.

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The state capitol in springtime. *Washington State House of Representatives*

Local Highlights from 2022 Legislature

STAFF REPORT

The Washington state legislature adjourned its 60-day session March 10 after approving a large transportation package and some legislation that will affect the Key Peninsula region, raising state spending to about \$64 billion over the next two years — an increase of \$5 billion from the budget approved last April.

The increase will be paid through existing taxes, which state officials predicted will come in higher than previously projected. The Legislature also has more than \$1 billion left in federal COVID-19 relief money that it will spend on schools, housing programs and public health.

There were a few developments of interest to KP dwellers:

SB 5488 sponsored by Sen. Emily Randall (D-Bremerton) will reduce the Tacoma Narrows Bridge toll by 75 cents beginning in September, with the intention it remain until the bridge is fully paid for in 10 years. However, the Transportation Commission, which sets the rate, will retain the final authority. The shortfall is to be paid for by the Legislature transferring money from the general fund; if it stops doing so in the future, the commission is empowered to raise tolls again.

Randall's original bill sought to pay off the \$772 million still owed on the bridge and to eliminate tolls before it was pared back to the 75-cent savings. The \$772 million also would have included the \$57.6 million in deferred sales taxes and \$43 million in state loans used to stabilize tolls. More than \$700 million has already been paid.

SB 5974 is a 16-year, \$16.8 billion "Move Ahead Washington" transportation package with few benefits for the local region. There is \$74.3 million for the Gorst-area widening of State Route 16, \$25 million for the Warren Avenue Bridge in Bremerton, and \$6.5 million for an all-electric ferry for Kitsap Transit's Port Orchard-Bremerton

route. There is also funding of free transit rides for kids 18 and under and removal of fish-blocking culverts.

The Legislature also sought to amend or clarify police reform laws it passed last year.

HB 2037 will allow police to use physical force against people who try to flee when they are stopped for questioning based on reasonable suspicion, which is a lower standard than the probable cause needed to arrest someone. The new law formerly required the higher standard, generally allowing officers to use force only when there is an imminent threat of injury or probable cause to make an arrest.

HB 1735 stated that police can still use physical force to help transport people to mental health treatment.

SB 5919, another reform-related bill, failed to make it out of the Senate for a vote, leaving in place last year's strict limits on when police can engage in high-speed vehicle pursuit.

SB 5078 instituted a ban on selling large-capacity magazines for firearms. Such magazines in circulation will not be criminalized but new sales will be illegal.

HB 1630 bans open carry of firearms at city council meetings, school board meetings and election offices.

In healthcare, HB 1732 delayed the state-wide CARES long-term care payroll tax passed last year until July 2023 while the Legislature revises existing law to address who pays the tax and who will benefit from it.

HB 1851, or the Affirm Washington Abortion Access Act, reaffirms that nurse practitioners and physician assistants can provide abortion care in Washington and protects patients from prosecution. This comes after Idaho and other states recently passed bills resembling a Texas law allowing lawsuits by members of the public against any woman seeking to end her pregnancy after six weeks or for assisting someone who is pregnant from obtaining an abortion. ■

More Growth and Development on the KP

Data from Pierce County shows what is allowed and what the future might hold.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

As the pandemic wanes, real estate development continues its recent rise on the Key Peninsula, seemingly despite planning restrictions limiting population density. But the rural zone designations that govern the peninsula are not as straightforward as they seem.

Over 200 residential building permits were issued each year for the KP in both 2004 and 2005. A significant decline occurred during the recession, followed by an average of about 150 per year over the last five years.

But during the first two months of 2022, 40 residential building permits were already accepted or issued.

The Key Peninsula is 38,605 acres and has seven land use designations outlined in the Key Peninsula Community Plan. Residential 10-acre zones (R10s) account for 64% of the land; 22% are rural sensitive resources (open space corridor, wetlands, stream systems); 6% are park and recreation land; and another 6% are farms. The remaining 2% are designated to agricultural resource, rural activity center and rural neighborhood center.

R10 zoning intends one home per 10 acres but allows up to two if at least half the acreage is designated as open space, according to Sean Gaffney, a long range planning manager at Pierce County Planning and Public Works.

For example, the gated community called Peninsula Meadows located at the intersection of Tiedman and Herron Road NW has offered lots of 2 to 2.5 acres for sale for years, complete with house plans. Several new homes south of Evergreen Elementary School were recently built on parcels of similar size.

Gaffney said that Peninsula Meadows is the result of a more complicated subdivision, which required a public hearing. Half of the original 55-acre parcel was set aside for open space, allowing 11 homes to be built on the remaining land.

A map of parcels on the Key Peninsula shows hundreds of lots that are about a quarter of an acre in communities such as Lake of the Woods, Taylor Bay Estates and Palmer Lake. Those were all established long before the Washington State Growth Management Act was enacted in 1990. The same is true of many existing parcels of less than 10 acres. Some of those, such as near Evergreen Elementary, are now being purchased by builders due to growing demand.

For another example, the duplexes under construction on 5 acres at 13819 Key Peninsula Highway NW are designated as senior housing, an approved use in a rural neighborhood center. (See "Permitting Approved for Senior Housing Duplexes on KP Highway NW," KP News, June 2019).

Exactly how much more development can occur is not entirely clear.

According to Planning and Public Works long range planning manager Angie Silvan, growth may be contained by expense. Costs for driveway or road access, well and septic design and installation would likely be prohibitive in many areas.

The number of approved wells may also be limited, according to Leigh McIntire, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department onsite sewage program manager, "because of water rights, capacity and water quality issues." The main water quality concerns are chloride and arsenic; saltwater intrusion has also been detected in several shoreline locations. McIntire said that septic design can be a challenge due to poor soil quality and surface water.

The Growth Management Act was passed by the legislature in 1990 to counter the threat of uncoordinated and unplanned growth to the environment, quality of life and sustainable economic development. It called for protecting critical areas and natural resource lands while concentrating development in defined urban growth areas, with a requirement that they be large enough to accommodate expected population growth for the next 20 years. ■

Key Peninsula Proposed Land Use

	Designated Land Use	Acreage	Plan Area
R10	Rural Ten	24,794	64%
RSF	Rural Sensitive Resource	8,398	22%
RF	Rural Farm	2,335	6%
ARL	Agricultural Resource Lands	512	1%
PR	Park and Recreation	2,287	6%
RAC	Rural Activity Center	159	<1%
RNC	Rural Neighborhood Center	130	<1%
TOTAL ACRES KEY PENINSULA		38,605	100%

Pierce County Comprehensive Plan 2015 Table G-4

'Little Food Pantries' Invite KP to Take What You Need, Leave What You Can

Locals can easily get help or provide it at these convenient roadside stops.

CAROLYN WILEY, KP NEWS

Feeding the hungry has become more of an imperative in recent years on the Key Peninsula. Local volunteers and groups have expanded their work by maintaining "Little Food Pantries" on the KP, making food available to anyone at any time.

A Little Food Pantry is a simple cupboard mounted on a roadside pole, in a parking lot, or wherever it is convenient and safe.

The pantries work like Little Free Libraries. People are welcome to take whatever food is available in the pantry or to leave whatever

"LITTLE FOOD PANTRIES OFFER A UNIQUE WAY FOR INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS TO HELP REDUCE HUNGER."

nonperishable food they wish, providing no-barrier, round-the-clock access.

The first pantry was installed on the KP in February 2021 at the northeast corner of KP Highway and 64th Street NW, initiated by local volunteer RoxAnne Simon through Building Beyond the Walls, which provided plans and materials for construction. Simon, her family, Angela Mattison-Lindblom, Chuck West and anonymous donors keep the cupboard filled and organized.

Three other pantries were installed in fall 2021, sponsored by Midday Rotary of Gig Harbor in partnership with Rotary North of Gig Harbor. They are located at Lakebay Community Church, Food Backpacks 4 Kids and WayPoint Church.

Lonna Calas, the primary contact for the Rotary program, said there are two more

Lisa Bryan, KP News



cupboards ready for installation, pending approval of host sites.

"The increased number of people facing food insecurity and homelessness has accelerated over the past two years due to the economic impacts of COVID-19," Calas said. "Little Food Pantries offer a unique way for individuals and groups to help reduce hunger."

The Little Food Pantry movement began in Arkansas with the goal of reducing

food waste and spread across the U.S. and Canada. Locally, Midday Rotary of Gig Harbor, in partnership with Rotary North,

assumed the responsibility for installing and maintaining the pole-mounted cupboards. Rotary received a grant for the materials and the cupboards were assembled by members.

Michelle Johnson, director of communication at Food Backpacks 4 Kids, said that Rotary Club members check the box two to three times a week and a FB4K volunteer checks on Saturdays to assure that it is filled for the weekend.

"Since it was installed, FB4K has supplemented Rotary donations by about 200 pounds," Johnson said. "Most of those donations were no-prep items that could be eaten immediately."

Rotary North member Angela Mattison-Lindbom restocks the pantries at WayPoint and FB4K. Gene Graddon manages the pantry at Lakebay Church.

"I'm glad Rotary set it up; it is very well utilized," Graddon said. "I fill it every day or so."

"Most of the toiletries are donated by Rotary, but most of the food is supplied through the church's food bank ministry along with some donations from members," he said. "Locals frequently stop by and refill the box."

Groups or individuals interested in hosting a Little Food Pantry can contact Lonna Calas at lonnacalas@gmail.com.

For more information, go to www.little-freepantry.org.

KP Little Food Pantry locations:

- Food Backpacks 4 Kids at Key Center 9127 154th Ave. Ct.
- KP Highway and 64th Street NW
- Lakebay Community Church 11 Cornwall Rd. SW
- WayPoint Community Church 12719 134th Ave. NW

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Deep in the Tree Frog's Chorus



Into the
WILD
EXPLORING WITH THE
KP NATURE GUIDE

Tina McKail, KP News

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

At last, I find a frog. It is spread-eagled in the shallow water like a lost toy. Its throat floats before it as round and sheer as a soap bubble, pushing its head up. It looks almost pathetic as it waits for the light to move along. My flashlight. I crouch to take a closer look.

It is just past the hour when the world loses its color: the sudden dusk of early spring. Rain squalls still soak the days, but the sun has been forcing its way onto the stage. I am being reminded that the green we count ourselves lucky to be around all winter can hardly claim the same name as the radiant green of new growth.

In the last two weeks the frogs — these are Pacific tree frogs, also called Pacific chorus frogs — have been building to a crescendo of nighttime noise. Then came four straight nights of hard freeze and silence and a solid half-inch of ice on the marsh every morning.

I was worried that the chorus in my cathedral of muck was strangled. But here on the first night above freezing, the frogs are back to singing.

The Pacific tree frog is our most vocal frog by far and common in any slow-moving or still water, particularly where fish and invasive bullfrogs are absent. They sound so familiar because it is the frog cast in Hollywood for any nighttime scene. They range from British Columbia to Baja, from deserts to grasslands to mountains to rainforests.

And they range widely in color. The one I have spotlighted is richly rust-toned. Green

morphs and brown morphs are typical, some with contrasting blotches on their backs. Then there are rare gray, red, gold, even blueish morphs. Think of a tree frog's habitat. It moves between the fringes of ponds and grasslands — green — to rodent burrows and forest floor retreats — brown — and as spring turns to summer the world's palette of greens turns to yellows and tans and there is no one camouflage that will best serve a small frog. Distinctive color morphs help hedge the survival bets.

One morph, it has been found, can change colors. It takes days or weeks for the change to occur and seems to be triggered not by the hue of its background but by its brightness.

The researchers who set out to use these frogs to demonstrate simple ideas about crypsis — an animal's tendency to camouflage by choosing a background that matches its body — have returned from their observations scratching their heads. Brown frogs are no more likely than green frogs to be found in brown areas. Green frogs do not congregate in green areas. Diversity's roots, it seems, run deeper than camouflage. Even color itself has hidden parameters. It shifts from week to week.

Sloshing, searching, farther up the marsh I find a brown morph. Maneuvering around it, I feel myself getting into deeper water and shine my light at my boots to see how deep. That is when the battery dies.

I'm left bodiless in near darkness. The chorus echoes around me. Faint lights from nearby homes brush the water, just enough for the corners of my eyes to inform me of

phantom movements. I wait. The chorus strengthens. It resounds from up marsh, down marsh, and the flooded cow fields over a rise until it is a pure pulsing blue aurora of noise. My movements must have been quieting frogs for hundreds of feet around. Now, nearby, I hear individual rik-ik, rik-iks belted into the mesh of sound.

When a passing ambulance paints the distant highway red and white, its siren pairs well with the chorus. I can barely hear it.

In a chorus like this, male frogs place themselves at regular intervals. They call to attract mates. It is a taut net. The collective chorus brings females from far and wide. But when the females approach, each male wants to be heard as an individual. He will match the pace of his call but offset its timing from those of his neighbors. That is why, to our ears, the chorus has such a pulsating quality. You feel you're always on the verge of catching individual notes. When you enter the net, I now know, you do.

Males are aggressive toward other males that come too close. There are special warning calls and postures and smack-downs. There are males that roam freely in hopes of chancing across a female. And then there are those that lurk like satellites just outside the awareness of calling males. Remaining silent, they attempt to intercept any female that appears.

The night is chilly and damp. I move slowly, worried that if water overtops my boots I'll turn into a shivering mess — while all around me these small frogs are bathed in cold water with their skin so thin it offers no insulation. How could they have survived

the freezes?

Tree frogs will retreat to shelter — under boards and logs, in rodent burrows — in winter and bad weather. Just a foot underground they are largely protected from cold and wind chill. But they have a more impressive survival skill as well, one fairly common in the world of insects but much rarer in vertebrates with only a few frogs and lizards known to possess it: the ability to survive the formation of ice within their bodies.

Antarctic fish stay alive in 28-degree saltwater by circulating antifreeze proteins in their blood. These frogs, however, can have up to 65% of the water in their bodies frozen and they'll come back right as rain. Their eggs embedded in ice will still hatch. The liver is the key. When ice crystals begin to form in a tree frog's body, its liver releases stores of glucose and glycerol that do not prevent ice but cushion cells and organs from damage.

The Pacific tree frog's range includes alpine lakes and industrial stormwater basins. It is not surprising that it has life skills for many situations. How much more might we learn from it? Studies have been done on it in only a few scattered locations by a handful of observers dedicated enough to mark and track and interact with and assay individual frogs — which tells me that the amazing things we know about the species can only be a glimpse into the full diversity of links it has with the flow of colors and change around it, only a few rik-iks in the net it weaves on dark spring nights like this. ■

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Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m.–12 p.m.



Air Quality	1 st Tuesday
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COVID-19	3 rd Tuesday & 1 st Thursday
General	4 th /5 th Tuesdays & 5 th Thursday
Maternal & Child Health	2 nd Thursday
Water & Wells	3 rd Thursday
Healthy Housing	4 th Thursday

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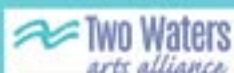
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Road Rage in the Time of COVID-19

Welcome to "Co-rage." New national studies found the pandemic reduced the number of cars on the road but fueled a higher rate of serious or fatal accidents.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Traffic fatalities across the U.S. increased 12% in the first nine months of 2021 compared to the same period in 2020, the largest annual rise since 1975 according to an October 2021 study from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Approximately 38,680 people died in vehicle crashes across the U.S. in 2020, the highest since 2007.

At the same time, overall driving volume was down by at least 20%.

According to the NHTSA report, the proportion of dangerous drivers increased among people who continued to drive during the pandemic, increasing the threat of dangerous behavior.

A separate study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that car crashes in 2020 involving impairment, speeding, running red lights and stop signs, and non-seatbelt use rose to their highest levels in more than a decade.

Dr. David Yang, executive director of the AAA Foundation, said on its website, "Safety-minded individuals drove less, while many who increased their driving tended to engage in riskier behaviors behind the wheel."

The study identified a cohort of 4% of drivers who drove more during the pandemic than before, disproportionately male, with a median age of 39 (compared with 50 for the general driving population). But after accounting for gender, age and miles driven, the more frequent drivers were also found to be those more prone to aggressive or reckless driving.

"We saw this small group of people who were driving more than they did before the pandemic were the same people who were

the highest-risk drivers on the road," said AAA senior researcher Brian Tefft.

But that small group alone may not be to blame, according to a separate AAA report exploring road rage in the time of COVID-19.

Half of all drivers respond to the real or imagined careless acts of other drivers by becoming aggressive themselves. Nearly 80 percent surveyed by the AAA expressed significant anger behind the wheel at least once in the past year. About 50% tailgated, honked at or blocked another driver. Still others pursued drivers to engage in physical and sometimes fatal confrontations.

And while 94% of all accidents are due to human error, over half of fatal accidents can be attributed to road rage, according to the Insurance Information Institute.

"You will see other drivers doing things that are illegal, inconsiderate and even incomprehensible. Don't respond personally," AAA said. "Most drivers are not thinking about their impact on you; they are just rushed, distracted or upset. Remaining calm and courteous behind the wheel lowers your risk of an unpleasant encounter — with another driver and with law enforcement."

The AAA report also speculated that lack of traffic enforcement during the pandemic might have played a part in the rise of dangerous driving conditions.

Many police agencies around the country encouraged officers to make fewer traffic stops for minor offenses, according to the report, to reduce contact with drivers. Tefft said decreased engagement by law enforcement may have emboldened people predisposed to dangerous behavior.

"I think it all probably plays a role," he said. ■

HALF OF ALL DRIVERS RESPOND TO THE REAL OR IMAGINED CARELESS ACTS OF OTHER DRIVERS BY BECOMING AGGRESSIVE THEMSELVES.

2022 SCHEDULE WITH NEW MORNING TIMES

FREE KP BUS CONNECTS

Welcome aboard!

VAUGHN TUE/THUR MORNING

- 9:00 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:03 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:04 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:06 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:09 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:12 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 9:15 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 9:19 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:25 Purdy Park & Ride

VAUGHN WEDNESDAY MORNING

- 10:00 Vaughn Elementary School
- 10:03 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 10:04 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 10:06 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 10:09 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 10:12 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:15 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 10:19 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:25 Purdy Park & Ride

EVERGREEN TUE/THUR MORNING

- 9:00 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:05 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:07 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 9:13 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 9:14 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 9:20 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 9:22 Food Market in Key Center
- 9:25 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 9:33 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:40 Purdy Park & Ride

EVERGREEN WEDNESDAY MORNING

- 10:00 Evergreen Elementary School
- 10:05 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 10:07 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 10:13 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 10:14 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 10:20 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 10:22 Food Market in Key Center
- 10:25 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 10:33 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:40 Purdy Park & Ride



A partnership of KP Community Council, Puget Sound Educational Service District and Peninsula School District.

TUE/WED/THUR AFTERNOON

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



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www.keypenparks.com/mom-and-me-tea.html



Key Pen Parks Appreciation Day

Saturday, April 9, 2022
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SHARING CULTURE AND FAMILY TRADITIONS THROUGH FOOD FORMS A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE ALL ITS OWN.



Ukrainian Comfort Food

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Art is an extraordinary bridge capable of transcending cultural divides. Not everyone is a poet, a sculptor, a dancer or musician. Cooking, however, is a performance art practiced daily around the world. The food of Ukraine is vibrant, rich and colorful — and like its people, worth learning more about.

Borscht is a soup that can be served hot or cold. There are countless recipes that vary from region to region and kitchens throughout Ukraine.

Like most soups, borscht benefits from homemade stock but can be made with boxed or canned for convenience. Many recipes include beef, pork fat, or poultry. The recipe below is meatless. If there was ever a time to learn how to make Ukrainian comfort, this is it.

Ukrainian Borscht

4 medium sized beets
 2 tablespoons butter or oil
 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
 2 carrots, shredded
 2 leeks, sliced thinly into rounds (white part only)
 ¼ cup parsley, chopped
 2 tablespoons tomato paste
 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
 1½ quarts beef, chicken or vegetable stock
 1 quart water
 1 bay leaf
 2 or 3 medium sized potatoes, cubed
 1 teaspoon salt
 ½ teaspoon black pepper or to taste
 sour cream (for a generous tablespoon dollop in each serving)
 fresh or freeze-dried dill to taste

Wash the beets, pierce with a fork and wrap each in aluminum foil. Roast in a 400-degree oven 60 to 75 minutes. Leave

them wrapped until cool enough to handle.

Meanwhile, add two tablespoons of butter or oil to a frying pan on low to medium-low heat. Sauté the onions, leeks and carrots in frying pan until soft. Stir in parsley, tomato paste and vinegar. Remove from heat.

Bring the stock, water, salt and bay leaf to a boil in a 5-quart stock pot. Add diced potatoes, cover and reduce the heat to medium low.

As the potatoes begin to cook, remove foil and peel the beets before shredding using a box-style metal grater. Add the sautéed vegetables and shredded beets to the soup pot, return to a boil, cover and remove from heat for 15 to 20 minutes.

Ladle into bowls, topping each with a generous spoonful of sour cream and sprinkle dill as a garnish to taste.

Pampushky

These delicious, yeasted bread rolls, studded on top with garlic scapes, are the classic Ukrainian companion for dunking into borscht. Just out of the oven, the rolls are brushed with a light sauce of melted butter or sunflower oil, garlic and parsley. The flavor is every bit as fabulous as the rolls are beautiful.

Garlic scapes have a mild garlic taste. They are available seasonally and one of the many benefits of growing garlic in the garden. Scapes are the green stems that shoot up from the garlic bulb below ground to form flowers. Harvest them as the flower bud begins to form and the plant's energy will go into producing bigger garlic cloves instead of flowers. When unavailable, finely chopped garlic and parsley make a fine substitute.

The dough begins with making a sponge. It only takes seven minutes to make but needs refrigeration overnight to slowly ferment. Start the sponge the day before your meal and be rewarded with deepened flavor.

Pampushky can be baked in a round cake pan but turn out best when baked in a heavy cast iron skillet. As yeasted breads go, these rolls are not complicated to make, but need a little extra refrigerator time. It's worth it.

1 cup warm water
 1 teaspoon white sugar
 1 package (2¼ teaspoons) active dry yeast
 2¾ cups all-purpose flour (plus 1 or 2 tablespoons if necessary)
 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
 2 tablespoon sunflower or vegetable oil
 1 egg yolk plus 1 teaspoon light cream
 1½ tablespoons melted butter
 1 green garlic scape or three garlic cloves finely chopped with parsley

Begin by making the sponge. Dissolve the sugar in warm water in a medium sized bowl. Add yeast and stir. Allow five minutes to proof the yeast. Foam and bubbles will form to prove the yeast is fresh.

Add remaining 1½ cups of flour and stir to form a thick paste. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate. By the next day the mixture will have grown in size and have a slightly stringy appearance. If using an upright mixer, secure the dough hook attachment and add the sponge to the mixing bowl.

Add the remaining 1¼ cups flour and kosher salt. Start out on low speed

until the sponge and flour are mixed. (If kneading by hand, mix the flour and salt with a wooden spoon and turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead about five minutes.)

Increase the speed to medium low to knead the dough for about four minutes. The dough is close to ready when it cleans the inside of the metal bowl. The dough should have a slightly tacky but not sticky feel. If the dough is sticky, add another single tablespoon of flour but not more than two tablespoons or the rolls will become tough.

Finish the dough with a little hand kneading if necessary and divide equally into eight pieces. Grease the bottom and sides of the cast iron skillet or cake pan with vegetable or sunflower oil. Form balls from the pieces of dough and place seven pieces at equal distance around the edge of the skillet, placing the last ball in the middle. Brush the rolls generously with oil. Using a piece of plastic wrap large enough to cover the pan, brush one side of the wrap with oil to ensure it won't stick to the dough as it rises. Cover and place in a warm, draft-free spot for about an hour.

Preheat the oven to a baking hot 450. Mix the egg yolk and light cream together, remove the plastic wrap and lightly brush the rolls with the egg wash. Bake until the rolls are golden brown, about 15 minutes. While the pampushky are baking, using a small bowl, mix the melted butter or oil, garlic scapes or chopped garlic and parsley. Brush the rolls with this garlic butter sauce immediately after the rolls come out of the oven. ■



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The Second Mountain by David Brooks

The author and New York Times columnist describes his quest to live a moral life.

MAUREEN REILLY

Many times over the last 18-plus years I have wondered why I feel so much at home and so contented on the Key Peninsula. Certainly, there are many similarities to Scotland but that really doesn't explain it. But after reading David Brooks' book "The Second Mountain" I had my epiphany.

I love living here because the KP is filled with people climbing up or standing on the summit of their second mountain and that creates a feeling of real community where I can belong.

Brooks clearly articulates the feeling of dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment that troubles many traditionally successful people. They achieve everything that society tells them they should want and strive for, but on arrival they feel empty and troubled. There are also people who still

have a lot of energy left after summiting the first mountain and aren't ready to sit out the rest of their lives.

A good proportion of those climbing that first mountain suffer some kind of crisis and are knocked into a dark valley. The lucky and the strong among them get out of the valley, change course and set off up the other slope.

This book is part memoir because David Brooks uses his own life and his own struggles to demonstrate what he has found important in the quest for a moral life. He also tells stories of people he has met who are successful in living this life and the difference they have made in the world, whether it be in their local community or further afield.

Brooks describes four essential components to a life filled with contentment and satisfaction. They are vocation, marriage and relationships, philosophy and faith, and community.

He says the emphasis over the last 60 years on being independent has led to a society of lonely and unconnected people. We have lost trust in the causes and institutions that used to give life meaning and purpose. We seek fleeting happiness instead of the much more durable feeling of joy. As a society we are adrift because we have been taught to always put ourselves first.

Some people find their vocation in

childhood, and some are in middle age before the realization comes to them. The insightful and lucky among us can combine a career with our vocation. As Brooks sees it, being able to spend time and energy on your passion makes for a contented and fulfilled person. People who never take the time to discover why they are on Earth are always discontented.

"The Second Mountain" also explores the idea of the maximal marriage where both partners undertake an evolution to complete commitment. This is not to be confused with abandoning who you are but is a process of allowing yourself to become dependent to achieve something larger. In a successful marriage, the victo-

ries of our partners are at least as important to us as our own.

Brooks talks about his own journey to faith but refrains from espousing any religion. Instead, he offers a doorway into many different thinkers on spirituality and introduces the reader to authors who merit further investigation.

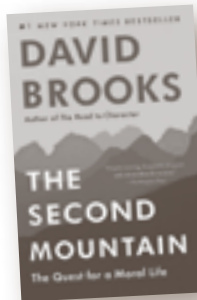
"The Second Mountain" describes a healthy community as "a thick system of relationships" where people care about and look out for each other. In my experience that is what makes the KP such a special place. We know what people in our community need and we work hard to provide as much of it as we possibly can. There are many joyful people on this peninsula deeply involved in our nonprofit organizations.

It is difficult to condense the essence of "The Second Mountain" into a short article. I have now read it carefully twice through and feel sure that I will uncover more nuggets of gold during a third reading.

If I aimed to study all the information on how to lead a moral life and then condense the findings into a single practical book, "The Second Mountain" would be exactly what I would hope to achieve. Each time I have finished the book I have been seized by the desire to be a better person. I want to be more engaged in my community; to be a better friend, a better employee, a better spouse. I may not live long enough to achieve any of that, but "The Second Mountain" has inspired me to try. ■



"The Second Mountain: A Quest for a Moral Life" by David Brooks. Published by Random House; 2019; 384 pages.



David Brooks is a conservative political and cultural commentator for The New York Times. He was a film critic for The Washington Times, a reporter and editor at The Wall Street

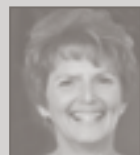
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Tina McKail, KP News

Fishing Under the Bridge

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

While drivers rattle the Purdy bridge in cars and trucks, fly fishers often stand thigh deep in saltwater below at the mouth of the Burley Lagoon, their attention fixed on a far different world.

Who fishes at this crossroads, and why?

According to Blake Merwin, owner of the Harbor Fly Shop in Gig Harbor, the main attraction at Purdy is sea-run cutthroat trout, or “sea-runs” as they are known to fly fishers. Of the 13 subspecies of cutthroat trout scattered across the American West’s watersheds, the local coastal cutthroat is the only subspecies that, like salmon, will leave freshwater to go into the sea. Fishing for them is by catch-and-release only.

Salmon can also be caught at Purdy for at least six months of the year, with king, coho, and chum all possibilities, though they are challenging to find.

At Purdy, “It’s all about the current,” Merwin said. The long sandspit ends at a small channel under the bridge, creating a powerful current when a body of water the size of Burley Lagoon moves through

it twice a day. Not only does the current squeeze bait fish, polychaete worms and krill — a trout’s favorite foods — through a small area, it scours the bottom of the channel, exposing the gravel and rocks that fish prefer.

Merwin said a sea-run looks a lot like a rainbow trout. “Sometimes they are really silvery, like a salmon. Sometimes they get colored up, with dark green backs and red fins with brilliant golden edges.” They often show the namesake red slash marks on either side of their throats.

As apex predators accustomed to eating anything they can fit in their mouths, they move around a lot, providing a challenge for fly fishers. On the line they are aggressive fighters, Merwin said, and one of the most fun fish to catch.

Sea-runs spawn in several creeks that drain into Burley Lagoon as well as several just outside it. Elsewhere, most sea-runs migrate 2 to 20 miles from their home streams in search of food, but those near Purdy seem to stick around all year. There is plenty of food. Fly fishers pay close attention to a yearly cycle of small sea

creatures. The emergence of chum salmon fry in early spring signals the beginning of trout activity and great spring fishing. Other events include the herring egg hatch, arrival of juvenile anchovies, dispersal of young sculpin, spawn of polychaete worms, and movement of sand lance. Success usually comes with robust “flies” tied to resemble fish or worms.

A handful of regulars fish Purdy religiously. It also draws fly fishers from Olympia to Seattle. It has become a well-known spot in the saltwater fly fishing community, Merwin said, because it is visible and accessible. Unlike in Oregon, where all beaches are publicly owned and freely accessible, beaches in Washington are often privately owned — sometimes to the high tide line, sometimes to mean low tide, sometimes to extreme low tide, sometimes leased to shellfish companies — and it can be challenging to know if you are trespassing.

It is a legal situation inherited from the state’s earliest days when legislators approved the sale of tidelands to stimulate the shellfish and logging industries and to

raise money for schools. While the Public Trust Doctrine guarantees that all navigable waters are public space — in most states, beaches are included — the Washington Supreme Court has never addressed the vagaries where land and water meet. Should the public be able to cross privately owned beaches at low tide if they do no damage? If a fly fisher is standing hip-deep in water on a beach that is private when low tide exposes it, are they trespassing?

Merwin said fly fishing at Purdy hits maximum capacity quickly, as it is a small channel and everything north of the bridge is private property.

Puget Sound’s sea-run cutthroat trout were once known as harvest trout because in larger river systems they return to spawn around the time when pumpkins ripen. In South Puget Sound where big rivers are scarce, sea runs use a myriad of small creeks and spend as little time in them as possible, entering to lay eggs around January and exiting almost immediately. Unlike salmon they can spawn several times in a lifespan.

A single creek might support a breeding population as small as a few dozen fish, making sea-runs particularly vulnerable to overfishing, and 30 years ago they were on their way to extirpation. While conservation attention was lavished on salmon, population after population of trout quietly fell below a sustainable threshold. A task force of fly fishing clubs and Trout Unlimited chapters began to pressure the Department of Fish and Wildlife to change regulations. First the size limit was raised from 8 to 14 inches, then the bag limit decreased from eight to two fish, and finally in 1998 it became illegal to keep any cutthroat caught in saltwater.

Since then, the population has apparently stabilized though numbers remain low. The Coastal Cutthroat Coalition continues to advocate for the species.

Before the catch-and-release regulation, a 15-inch sea-run was something to brag about. Today a big sea-run is 17 to 19 inches and anything over 20 is trophy-sized. Having no end market, they swim below the radar of tribal and sport fishermen.

According to the Coastal Cutthroat Coalition, while the fish may be living longer and getting larger, they remain highly vulnerable. While salmon spend much of their lives in distant ocean waters, sea-runs stay close to shallow beaches within Puget Sound and take the brunt of the oils, pesticides, fertilizers, plastics and sewage that run into its bays. They are particularly impacted by damage to the small creeks where they spawn such as that caused by overdevelopment. ■



Laura Harbaugh with husband Stanton, baby Hendrix and their dog Nuggen on the beach at Olman Point. *Tina McKail, KP News*

KP Businesswoman Makes Her Passion Her Work

Dentures and their creators are more than stereotypes.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Laura Harbaugh always wanted to be an artist.

Her father worked as professional photographer and her mother worked for the county as a conservationist, racing to protect heritage farmland in the fast-growing Puyallup River Valley.

A graduate of Gig Harbor High School, Harbaugh earned her undergraduate degree in fine arts from Western Washington University in 2011. While she was enthralled by sculpture at Western, her professional focus was photography — not long before the industry became saturated by social media and phones with great cameras.

She knew she had to get out and find something else.

Harbaugh joined the Peace Corps and went to a rural village outside Kruger National Park in South Africa. She taught art to the kids, mostly sculpting and painting, and did photography in her spare time. She lived in a hut for two years.

“I was so isolated and lonely. I won’t lie,” she said. “The Peace Corps is hard.” But she had many epiphanies during that time as well. She discovered using her hands was an essential element in her work.

“This is what I love to do,” she said. “I’m not a tech person. I don’t want to be on a computer or spend my time looking at a screen. I like working with people and I like using my hands.”

She began considering career options where she could do both.

Her answer came in dentistry. The need for dental care combined with her research into the work itself pointed to a perfect career fit.

Harbaugh had an uncle in Eugene, Oregon, with a successful career as a dentist. She began showing up at every denture clinic she could find to ask people what it was like to do the work. She liked what she heard.

She applied to Bates Technical College in Tacoma in 2017. Once in the program, she loved it and knew that creating dentures was what she wanted to do.

“You’re constantly using your hands and you’re sculpting,” she said. “It’s so artistic. All the different materials used — like plaster, Hydrocal, wax and acrylic. I’m constantly mixing materials and the texture has to be perfect because if you mess up one step, you’re starting all over. There is no room for error.”

There are only three nationally accredited dentist programs in the United States acceptable for licensure in Washington state. In a field dominated by men, in 2018 Harbaugh found herself the only

woman in her graduating class and the one before it.

She recalled making her first denture. The teacher broke it in half and said, “OK, now fix it.”

“It takes a lot of time to get proficient,” she said. “The schooling is so essential. You have to fail to learn how to succeed.”

Each mouth is so different, she said. “It’s like a snowflake or a fingerprint, each one is unique and requires so much customization.”

Despite negative stereotypes, Harbaugh said that dentures are about getting people back on track to good health. There are all sorts of reasons why people need them, from diabetes to cancer treatment and receding gumlines; even the negative effects of some early orthodonture back in the 1970s is a common problem now for patients in their 50s and 60s. “There is no shame in having a partial or dentures.”

“I feel like a lot of people just don’t know enough about partials and dentures,” she said. “It’s a great alternative to other types of dentistry.

“Imagine you’ve got one bad tooth and it needs to come out,” she said. “An alternative to an implant and crown would be a partial. A lot of people like them because they are comfortable, they have some flex to them and will last about 15 years.”

She said the downside to implants is oftentimes they fail, and they are very expensive. For a lot of people, learning that partials are a great alternative comes as a huge relief.

“Far more people have partials and dentures than you might think,” Harbaugh said. “People just don’t talk about

it much but they look good, they function great, and there is a reason they are still around.”

Harbaugh opened her own clinic, Custom Dentures Direct, in Key Center at the end of 2019.

“Key Center is not without challenges for small business,” she said. “It’s hard to get people to come out this way to see a provider.” While her immediate prospects starting out may have been better in someplace like Belfair, she resisted the idea.

She was prepared to take time to build her practice up, but said that creative problem solving is always necessary to get over hurdles for new small business owners.

The first big hurdle turned out to be COVID-19.

“I was open for three months and was shut down for three months,” she said. She received no breaks on overhead and her business was so new that it didn’t qualify for any relief funding.

Early in the pandemic, Harbaugh said quite a few calls came after hospitals had accidentally thrown people’s dentures away: “We can’t bring the patient to you, but could you come here?”

Eager for the business at that point, Harbaugh found herself driving all over the place.

Making dentures is a four-step process. “If I just had a lab with me, I could knock out three appointments in one, instead of driving back and forth.”

Harbaugh decided to purchase a mobile clinic, custom designed with all new equipment, from a dentist she knew in Lacey who was too busy to launch a mobile business.

“Nobody has attempted something like this even though it makes so much sense,” she said.

Harbaugh and her husband Stanton, who is also self-employed, both love the outdoors and visit the Olympic Peninsula regularly. It took no time to envision how useful the mobile clinic would be to treat patients on the Makah Reservation in Neah Bay and other remote areas. While glad she made the investment for the flexibility the mobile clinic offers, she won’t go completely mobile anytime soon. It was her brick-and-mortar operation that made for a record-breaking start to 2022 for her business.

She’s happy with her office in Key Center.

“I like my community,” she said. “I’m close to my house. I have a baby. I like that it’s beautiful. I can look up from this spot (her office overlooks a pasture) and watch baby cows running around. I like that.” ■



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5:30pm - Root Soup & Communion Service

GRACE EPC
6 pm - Soup & Bread Dinner Service

APRIL 15TH

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES
(Remembering the day Jesus died for our sins)

LAKEBAY COMMUNITY CHURCH
7 pm - Good Friday Tenebrae Service

WAYPOINT CHURCH
7 pm - Good Friday Service

EASTER SERVICES (Remembering the day Jesus rose from the dead)

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PENINSULA SCHOOL DISTRICT Key Peninsula Community Connection

Peninsula School District 401 Newsletter - April 2022



Mapping the Course 2021-2026:
I want to invite the entire PSD community to participate in our strategic planning process. One of the first tasks the school board assigned to me after I started as the new superintendent was to begin the design of the district's new 5-year strategic plan. The purpose of the strategic plan is to set the direction for our district so we can align our strategy for decision making and resource allocation.

To start the work, the board and I held planning meetings last fall to create the vision, mission, values, and goals that will set the foundation of the plan.

The next step in the process is to share the board's work with PSD staff, students, families, and community and ask for input using an engagement tool called ThoughtExchange.

I'll be meeting with staff, students, and hosting community meetings to share information about the Strategic Plan. I invite all of you share your feedback on PSD's new strategic plan and be part of building this plan together.

This feedback will go directly to the board and superintendent for their consideration. The final version of the strategic plan will incorporate this feedback and be shared in June 2022.

Upcoming community meetings:

- Artdale Elementary School - 6 p.m. Wednesday April 20
- Key Peninsula Civic Center - 6 p.m. Thursday, April 21
- Harbor Ridge Middle School - 6 p.m. Wednesday April 27
- Evergreen Elementary School - 9 a.m. Saturday April 30

What is ThoughtExchange?
ThoughtExchange is an online survey tool that allows participants to exchange thoughts freely on a topic and rate others' thoughts on a 1-5 scale. You can participate more than once and review the thoughts for yourself.

Join the Exchange Today!
The ThoughtExchange is open to all community members. All answers are anonymous.

Our question is: "After reviewing our newly created vision, mission, values and goals, what are some important things for us to consider as we create steps to achieve our goals?"
Scan the QR code below with your smartphone or go directly to bit.ly/36biuJP to provide feedback.



Welcome Kindergarteners!
Online Kindergarten registration for the 2022-2023 school year is now open. Registering early allows you to find out about all of the transition activities we have planned in the spring and summer!

- To register, you will need to upload the following documents or turn them in to your child's school:
- Proof of residency, like a utility bill;
 - Student birth certificate; and
 - Student immunization records.

Cheers to Our Amazing Staff!



Eric Morton
CTE Teacher, Peninsula High School

Eric Morton, CTE teacher at Peninsula High School, has worked for PSD the past 8 years.

Students in Eric's Architecture & Design and Manufacturing classes learn design concepts and machine safety, build models, complete woodshop projects, and more.

In the Skilled Trades Pre-Apprenticeship Program, Eric's students have the opportunity to earn up to 12 college credits and industry certifications, plus complete projects in carpentry, electrical, masonry, welding, and plumbing.

Eric's life lesson for PSD students is, "Show up. A lot of times it's the hardest part of the day."

Peace Poles Presented at Evergreen and Swift Water

On Friday, December 10, Evergreen and Swift Water elementary schools both officially unveiled peace poles at small ceremonies held at each school.

A peace pole is a monument that displays the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in the language of the country where it has been placed, and usually includes three to thirteen additional translations. At our schools, the peace poles display the message in English, Norwegian, Croatian, Lushootseed (Puyallup Tribe of Indians), Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Yoruba (West African).

Ceremonies included students sharing essays and art representing what peace means to them, sharing the phrase "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in the eight languages referenced above as well as remarks from the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Gig Harbor North Rotary, and Gig Harbor Sister Cities board representatives (Norwegian and Croatian connections).

Placing of peace poles began in Japan in 1983, and now there are over 200,000 in about 200 countries. They are commonly installed at public gathering places, such as community parks or near the entrances of churches or schools. Peace poles represent the highest aspirations of peace and goodwill inherent in the human heart.

The Gig Harbor Rotary Club and The Gig Harbor Sister Cities Board has been working with Sister Cities International to

establish partnerships with like-minded cities in both Norway (Bodø) and Croatia (Brač), focusing on cultural/student exchanges, economic development, green industry, and philanthropy. Rotary Club selected Evergreen Elementary and Swift Water Elementary as sites for the peace poles to be dedicated on December 10.

December 10 is Peace Day in Norway, the day the Nobel Peace Prize is celebrated, which is selected by the Norwegian Nobel Committee. This date is also Heritage Day in Gig Harbor.



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Above: Lt. Dave Vezzani ready to climb. Inset: (l to r): Hansen, Morse, Vezzani and Soares at the top of the tower. Key Peninsula Fire Department

Local Firefighters Climb for a Cure

STAFF REPORT

Three KPF D firefighters donned full gear and climbed all 69 floors of the Columbia Center Tower in Seattle March 13 to raise funds for blood cancer research and patient services.

The 31st annual Leukemia & Lymphoma Society fundraiser was for career or volunteer firefighters; a second climb for the public was held March 27.

At 788 feet of vertical elevation, the Columbia tower is the second tallest building west of the Mississippi, with 1,356 steps to the top.

The KPF D crew consisted of career firefighter/EMT Lt. Danny Hansen, 34 (18 minutes, 22 seconds), volunteer Lt. Dave Vezzani, 61 (22 minutes, 59 seconds), and

career firefighter/paramedic Adam Morse, 33 (27 minutes, 9 seconds).

They were supported by former volunteer and now new hire firefighter/EMT Laura Soares, who changed their air bottles halfway up the climb.



“You go in your firefighting gear so everyone can see how hard that is,” said KPF D Public Information Officer Anne Nesbit. “Full bunker, mask on, air on, all your liners in, gloves and boots on, everything. It’s about 75 pounds all told.”

The Seattle climb is the world’s largest on-air contest, with over 2,000 firefighters participating, according to LLS. At press time, the event had raised \$1.8 million of its \$2 million goal. ■



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Visit our online calendar for complete and timely event information.
www.keypennews.org/calendar

Friday, April 1 Coffee and Connection at Tom Taylor YMCA. Join us in building relationships over a cup of coffee and some sweet treats. 11:30 a.m., first Fridays every month

Saturday, April 2 Bird Walks. Join Chris Rurik, the KP Nature Guide, for a walk around Gateway Park's hidden beaver pond and back woods. All skill levels welcome. Expect to walk 1-2 miles on uneven terrain. Bring clothes for the weather and binoculars if you have them. Gateway Park - meet in the Pavilion. Everyone welcome, including kids. Bird Walks first Saturday of every month at 8:30 a.m. - rain or shine

Saturday, April 2 Key Pen Rockin' the 80s! Rat your hair, pull on your spandex and party like it's 1989! Join friends and neighbors for a rockin' good time with dance band The Profits. Tickets at Gnosh, Sunnycrest or the KP Civic Center website. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the band starts at 7 p.m.. Food and drinks available.

Tuesday, April 5 Gig Harbor Literary Society Virtual Book Club. Join us on the first Tuesday of the month to discuss fiction and nonfiction based in and around the Pacific Northwest or written by local authors. April's Book: "The Eagle Tree" by Ned Hayes, eloquently explores what it means to be part of a family, a society, and the natural world that surrounds and connects us. 6 p.m., Virtual Pierce County Library - Virtual Room 1, calendar.piercecountylibrary.org/event/6021516

Tuesday, April 12 Tacomaprobono Housing Help. Talk with staff from Tacomaprobono and Pierce County Human Services, to get answers to basic questions about eviction prevention related to COVID-19, legal protections for tenants, the Eviction Moratorium and Eviction Resolution. Apply for rental/utility assistance on-site and check eligibility for 1:1 assistance through their legal clinics. 10 a.m. at KPCS

Thursday, April 21 Gig Harbor Adult Fiction Book Club: Zoom group discussing "Leave the World Behind" by Rumaan Alam. 2:30 p.m. calendar.piercecountylibrary.org/event/6065550

[piercecountylibrary.org/event/6065550](http://calendar.piercecountylibrary.org/event/6065550)

Thursday, April 28 Key Pen Book Club. "The Ministry for the Future" by Kim Stanley Robinson. Phyllis Henry, a frequent contributor to the KP News, will facilitate the discussion. Read the book and join in the discussion, or just come to hear a spirited exchange of points of view. 11 a.m. at KP Historical Museum. Info? kathryn.schneider2@gmail.com.

Saturday, April 30 Mom & Me Tea. Enjoy a special time with the mom in your life. (not a gender-specific event, no minimum age requirement; however, it is recommended that children be able to drink from a china teacup with relative ease.) Catered by Gallucci's Catering, reservations available until 3 p.m. on April 15. 11:30 a.m. www.keypenparks.com.

Saturday, May 7 Livable Community Fair. Information on all sorts of support and services available to Key Peninsula residents. The outdoor stage will feature performances by KPMS Jazz Band and more! Visit KP Fire Department's Touch-a-Truck activity. Give the gift of life by donating at the Bloodmobile. Grab a copy of the Livable Community Resource Guide, chock full of information to make our lives better on the KP. 10 a.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center

Weekly M W F SAIL (Stay Active and Independent for Life) Classes from 10 -11 a.m.. Specifically designed for people 65 years or older to help improve balance and mobility; reduce the risk of falls and improve quality of life. Classes tailored to fit individual needs and fitness level — you can even participate sitting down! Call Mustard Seed Project office at 253-884-9814 for reservation.

Weekly Wednesday Gentle Yoga for Older Adults. Intro to gentle Yoga class for older adults 11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.. The class focuses on yogic philosophy, range of motion, building strength and balance, breathing techniques, and relaxation. Students will be encouraged to move at their own pace. Interested students need to be able to get down to the floor and back up unassisted. Call Mustard Seed Project office at 253-884-9814 for reservation.



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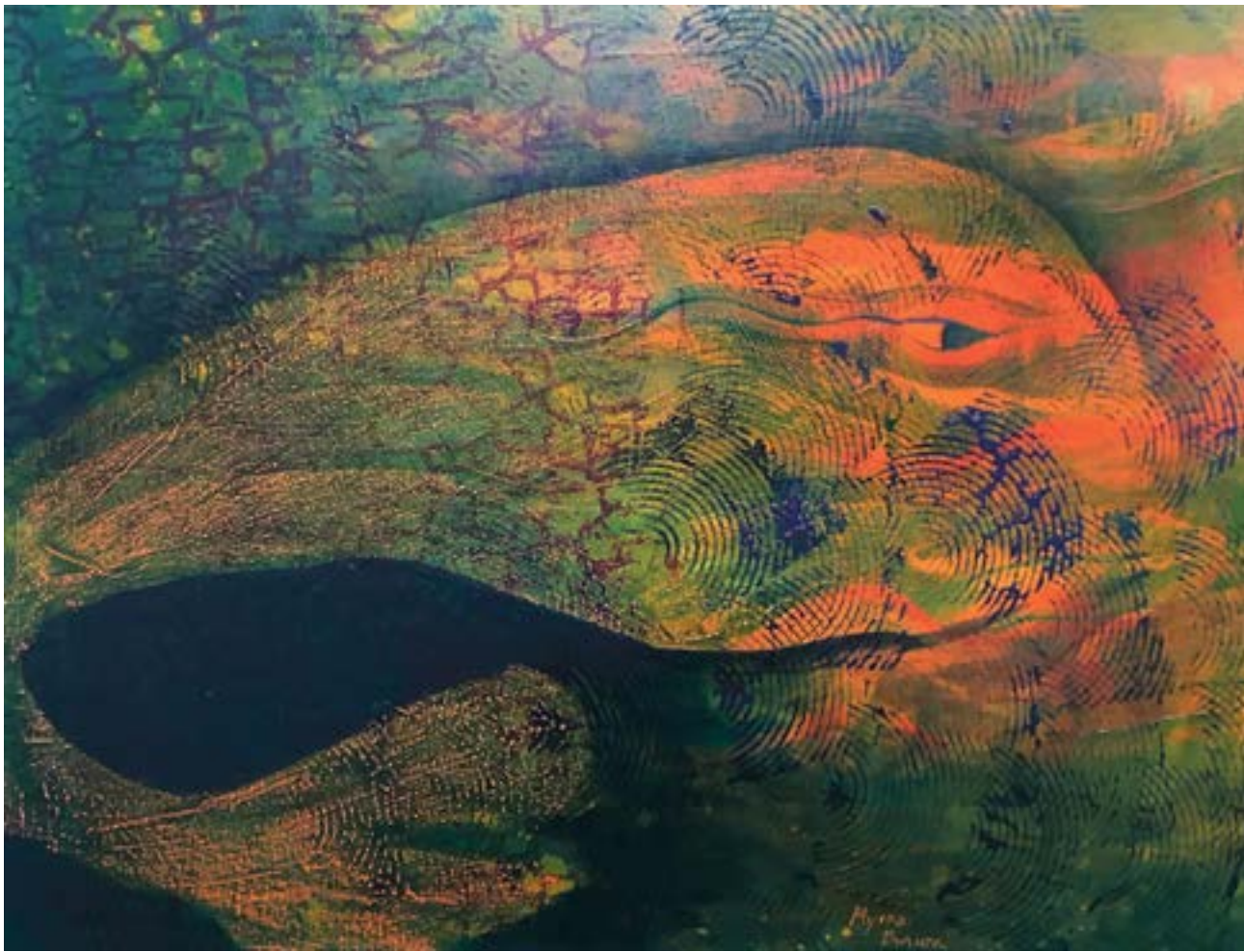
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**UPPER LEFT**First place "Sonar Songs" *Myrna Binion***UPPER RIGHT**Honorable mention "Small Wave" *Margo Macdonald***MID LEFT**Third place "Underground 1" *Lynn Hallowell***LOWER RIGHT**Second place "South Sound Sunset" *Delia McGinnis*

TWAA ART SHOW BACK FROM PANDEMIC: LOCAL ARTISTS PUT THEIR BEST TO THE TEST FOR THE RETURN OF A KP TRADITION.

The annual Two Waters Arts Alliance juried show returned to the Crandall Center at the Mustard Seed Project in Key Center March 1 after a two-year Covid-induced hiatus. The show in 2019 attracted 16 entries; 2022 brought 44 from 19 local artists.

The single juror was TWAA board member Maureen Reilly, who said choosing winners from such a large cohort of high quality artwork was a difficult and personal

process.

"What's amazing to me was that we had 44 pieces from 19 local artists and there wasn't a bad thing among them," she said. "They're all KP artists and to me that's one of the things I love about living here: There are so many talented people. I was privileged and humbled to be selected (as juror). It stretched my mind."

"I like to do sort of abstract acrylics with

acrylic ink; that one was just a fun painting I did of a stylized whale and sonar images coming off of it," said Myrna Binion, the winning artist, who has been painting for well over 20 years. "I started in watercolor and did oils for a little while, and I do a lot of landscape pastels that are more realistic, but I like these very free acrylics that are just very fun, expressionistic paintings," she said.

TWAA is a local nonprofit founded in 2001 by Key Peninsula artists and patrons. In addition to the juried show, TWAA conducts art programs in every school on the KP and sponsors an annual Art Walk in Key Center.

The contest artwork will be on display at the Crandall Center until the end of April.