

# KEY PENINSULA

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## School District **Explores Options** for KGHP-FM

The value of a community radio station depends upon whom you ask.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Kris Hagel, executive director of digital learning for Peninsula School District, commissioned an appraisal and educational assessment in July of KGHP-FM to consider its options as a school district and a radio station owner.

"Peninsula High School no longer offers classes in radio broadcasting due to a lack of student interest," according to an email from Aimee Gordon, director of communications at PSD, sent to KP News.

"The study will tell us what's needed to support the station if student interest increases," Gordon wrote. "It will also help us determine the current value of the assets we have in the station. As a public agency responsible to the local taxpayers, we want to explore all of our options with KGHP."

It is not the first time KGHP General Manager Spencer Abersold has been informed by the district that the local community radio station was at risk.

"I'm speaking out for the people who have put time, money, commitment and effort, thoughts and prayers — everything that has gone into making this radio station happen," Abersold told KP News.

According to Abersold, KGHP was created when community members Keith Stiles, Don Hoffman, Max Bice and Bill Boyd decided the community needed a radio station and went to the district, which



Abersold on the air. Lisa Bryan, KP News

THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA



Rendering RGA Gig Harbor

### More Than a Food Bank, GH FISH Breaks Ground on New Digs

The Gig Harbor Peninsula FISH Food Bank & Community Services center will have its own home in fall 2022.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

After decades of cramming food and clothing into rented spaces splitting at the seams, the secular FISH, Friends In Service Helping, broke ground on its own new facility at a private ceremony July 13.

The 11,595 square foot building will be located at 4304 Burnham Drive, 100 yards from the current rented facility at the Eagles Club in Gig Harbor.

The new building will house extensive warehouse spaces for both food and nonfood items, and will include walk-in coolers and freezers, much larger display and distribution areas, and dedicated office space for interviewing clients.

FISH assisted 4,210 families last year, including 1,501 on the Key Peninsula, with household items and clothing and over 210,000 meals. FISH also gave away \$300,000 in rent and utility assistance and another \$8,000 in student aid.

"The idea for our own building started in 2014 when we expanded into another large room at the Eagles and even that was taxing for us trying to manage all the donations," said Jan Coen, the Gig Harbor FISH founder and food bank coordinator. "We started looking for places all over to buy, but it was too expensive or

After researching the possibility of building their own place, a local property owner offered to give FISH a 99-year lease on a buildable lot for \$1 a year.

"It was incredible," Coen said. "People just began jumping on board, backing us, being willing to help, just all kinds of people with incredible skills." The staff of approximately 100 are all volunteers except for the part-time facilities manager and the capital campaign manager.

FISH began its capital fundraising campaign in August 2020 and has already collected \$5.3 million of its \$8 million goal, including over \$2 million from the state Legislature with the help of Rep. Michelle Caldier (R-Port Orchard) and Sen. Emily Randall (D-Bremerton).

"We have a team that has been getting some grants for us and we've had a lot of leadership gifts, and the state has been very helpful," said Amy Gartlan, FISH fundraising coordinator.

The new facility, designed by Ratcliffe Gagliano Architecture and to be built by Washington Patriot Construction, both of Gig Harbor, is estimated to cost \$2.9 million. Permits, site work, furniture and other incidentals should cost \$1.8 million, with another \$1.8 million budgeted for city fees, traffic impact and taxes. An additional \$500,000 will go to an endowment to help fund FISH services in perpetuity. The balance is budgeted for contingencies.

"A lot of folks didn't realize all of the things that FISH does, so it's been more of a community outreach project," Gartlan said. "We are much more than a food bank, and just connecting with the public has been significant."

"We look to the needs of the community and do what we can," said FISH spokesperson Lynne Demichele.

"We try to get as much fresh food, fresh vegetables and fresh meats as we can," she said. "We have a wonderful relationship with backyard farmers who like to grow vegetables and they bring them in." But it has been tricky to find adequate storage. FISH also receives nonperishable food from 10 local outlets.

"Most of the financial contributions go toward buying things to fill in the gaps." Laundry soap, toilet paper, tampons and diapers are especially needed.

"We have a significant elderly clientele, but during Covid we've had an awful lot of families who've been laid off or just let go," Demichele said. "When you can't get anything going and you've got some hungry kids, you come here."

FISH also distributes household goods like frying pans, clothing and toys, as well as financial aid for family and student expenses such as AP test fees, summer school classes, and even shoes for a high school wrestler. Sometimes it's as simple as getting someone a CPAP mask or diabetic supplies, or arranging transportation for a Covid vaccination. There's also a closetful of birthday presents from Legos to Barbie dolls ready to go.

"We don't require people to produce an income statement or anything like that. If someone comes in and says 'I'm in need **CONTINUED PAGE 3** 

# KEY PENINSULA NEWS

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ABOUT THAT AD

## Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

"I wouldn't think a nonprofit newspaper could print something like this."

It is a brand-new day when an advertisement appearing in the Key Peninsula News draws so much attention on social media that it's picked up by another newspaper as a news story, but there you have it. We are in new territory.

Last month KP News printed a halfpage advertisement on page 30 that inspired many complaints and comments,

including the quote above. (See Letters to the Editor in this edition.)

The advertisement was a paid political spot purchased by three candidates running for Position No. 2 on the Peninsula School Board, and fully disclosed in the ad as

required by the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission.

The ad casually mixed some claims about the evils of Critical Race Theory, which PSD does not teach, with opinions about the dangers of sex education, which PSD teaches using state-mandated curriculum.

How could we print something like that?

According to the PDC:

- Statements about candidates in political advertisements must be truthful.
- It is illegal to sponsor a political ad, with actual malice, that contains a statement constituting libel or defamation, or that makes a false statement about a candidate unless a candidate is making a false statement about him or herself.
- Political advertising does not include letters to the editor, news or feature articles, editorial comment or replies to editorials in a regularly published periodical.

In other words, truth in advertising laws do not generally apply to political ads, depending on the format, because they are protected speech under the First Amendment.

Under the equal-time rule, broadcast networks are obligated to offer ad time to all candidates and cannot deny or change them no matter how offensive or dishonest. Cable outlets don't have the same restrictions and social media have none, creating our current pandemic of misinformation, disinformation and straight-up propaganda.

The KP News neither endorses nor opposes political candidates or issues brought to the voters by the Pierce County Auditor. We also do not censor or alter the language of the political ads we print, short of anything defamatory or libelous, or those using hate speech,

calling for violence, or that may otherwise cause physical harm.

And we've had to reject some of those in the recent past.

Our news articles, features and Peninsula Views are factchecked as rigorously as possible. Errors occur but are less

numerous than the occasional criticism we get about the content of some opinion columns. To be useful, those complaints are best expressed as a letter to the editor we will gladly publish as space permits.

There is a bipartisan bill that has been slowly making its way through Congress since 2019 called the Honest Ad Act that would require fact-checking in political advertising, among other things, particularly online.

Washington state has already covered this ground. In 1998 the state Supreme Court struck down a 1984 statute prohibiting political ads that "the person knows, or should reasonably be expected to know, to be false," as a violation of the First Amendment. Judge Phil Talmadge, a former Democratic legislator, wrote in his dissent that the decision made ours "the first court in the history of the Republic to declare First Amendment protection for calculated lies."

The Legislature repeatedly revised the statute so that by 2011 it included detailed definitions of defamation and libel, and protections for candidates against false ads "with actual malice."

The public platform of newspapers, which cannot target ads the way social media does or cable news can, is a place where ordinary readers may read and

judge the unfiltered words of politicians and campaigns promoting themselves knowing — as required by law — that their words, true or false, come straight from the horse's mouth.

What could be more revealing?

Being honest, without bias or favor, upholding the journalistic standards and ethics demanded of the profession are the most essential elements to the continued success of this newspaper. As long as we continue upholding those values, we will continue to be the independent, reader-supported community newspaper readers like you trust, value and in your words — love.



Speaking of love, we'd like to call out the work of staff photographer Tina McKail whose photos appear above and in the upper left corner of the front page.

These beautiful violet green swallow nestlings were the only surviving swallows she saw after the record-breaking heat in June. "The nest was on the east side of the barn, which most likely saved them," she said. An avid birder, Tina, who lives in Vaughn, is obsessed with photography and is always on the lookout for wonder all around us. We look forward to telling you more about her and all the extraordinary people who make KP News enjoyable with their contributions of time, talent and energy.

### KGHP FROM PAGE 1

agreed to be a partner in the endeavor in 1988. The community fund-raised to pay for all the equipment and the licensing, and gave it to the district.

"It began as a community station," Abersold said. "I stand on the shoulders of giants and I want to ensure the kids growing up in this community have the same opportunities in life that I did."

KGHP provides live-action radio coverage of home football games for both Peninsula and Gig Harbor high schools. They cover boys and girls varsity basketball at home games whenever possible and sometimes remotely at Gig Harbor High. They also cover high school baseball games occasionally at special events at Cheney Stadium in Tacoma. KGHP produces live broadcasts of Key Peninsula candidate forums, informs the public during outages, emergencies and disaster situations, and plays a wide variety of music.

Abersold said the station takes in around \$40,000 a year in local sponsorships.

"This year we got a check from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department for \$25,000 in addition to sponsorships from Pen Met Parks, the City of Gig Harbor, Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One, the YMCA and many others."

In the early days of Covid, KGHP went into action. A hospital needed gloves and masks to be donated, information about meal deliveries and schedules had to go out, and other resources were made available.

For the first six months of the pandemic, the only people allowed in the school building were the principal, Abersold, and a custodian or two.

"It was kind of creepy. There were moments it was absolutely surreal." Abersold said.

Before the pandemic, he said he thought of emergencies as fires, earthquakes, and natural disasters. The emergence of Covid delivered the message that disaster can strike in many forms at any time. He believes that radio remains the best communication tool to reach everyone in an emergency.

"KGHP gives students an opportunity to learn and grow in a field they are passionate about. Maybe they aren't a football star or a math genius ... but they like to talk about things and can be entertaining," Abersold said.

David Takehara, a junior at PHS, began broadcasting his own show, "The After School Drop," as a freshman in a radio broadcasting class with Leland Smith, who retired last school year. His show counts down the top 30 songs in the U.S. each week, takes requests, and interacts on air with listeners who call the station.

"Right now, I'm one of the only student

DJs," Takehara said. His time in the studio in 2020 was cut short by Covid, but he was back on the air in late March and into July, hoping to return this fall.

Takehara thought of pursuing journalism for a while but found himself more interested in the technical aspects of broadcasting.

"That's why I like KGHP, because not only do we get to produce our own shows but we also get to do everything behind the scenes," he said. "It's not just flipping switches and pressing some buttons. It's learning how to use different programs and the best ways to transition this audio into that audio, figuring out how different audio files work together."

There is no question Takehara wants to continue. He said Smith was "hip to the podcasting craze," and students each produced a podcast as part of the class.

"I think there's some crossover," he said, "but I still like radio more because of the live aspect of it and being able to interact on the air with people."

KGHP-FM broadcasts at 89.3, 89.9 and 105.7 with online streaming available on Tuneln.

### FISH FROM PAGE 1

and this is why,' then the only thing we have to know is that they're in our service area so that we're not overlapping another service agency," Demichele said.

They have access to basics like Sterno, for example, sleeping bags, and tents when we can get them."

Before moving to Gig Harbor, Demichele volunteered at a food bank in Indiana. "I always felt so sorry for the clients because when they came in they almost automatically hung their heads, and you don't ever see that here because there's a premium on treating clients with respect, not assuming anything, not asking a bunch of prying questions. Very often our clients start donating once they get back on their feet. In fact, the gal that trained me was a former client — a single mother who came back to volunteer."

Jan Coen founded Gig Harbor FISH food bank in 1976. Her grandparents homesteaded the property that is now Peninsula High School. Her dad built and operated the gas station at Purdy. She and her husband Ron, the president of the FISH board of directors, live in Minter, where Ron grew up.

"The whole idea of FISH originated in "We also have a homeless population. England in 1967," Ron said. "The whole concept was neighbors helping neighbors and that each group was designed for its particular neighborhood. We are an independent volunteer organization and the way we operate is designed to fit the needs, mindset and ethics of the neighborhood we're a part of. I think that's one of the reasons we've got the kind of support we have, because we fit the community and the way it thinks about itself and its neighbors."

"After we got started, a child called and asked us if someone would go with him to talk to his parents about his bad report card," Jan said. "It seemed unimportant but it was important, because it was that kind of simple request you get when someone doesn't have a friend or neighbor to help. And it's just grown. The more you do the more you learn we have to help each other out."

Groceries bagged by volunteers ready for curbside delivery. Ted Olinger, KP News



"WE CONTINUE TO BE AMAZED

BY THIS COMMUNITY AND HOW

PEOPLE SUPPORT EACH OTHER."

# How Covid Relief Money Helped KP Residents

Federal, state and county grants supported KP community organizations. And so did the neighbors.

TED OLINGER AND SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

COVID-19 affected the Key Peninsula in many ways: residents lost jobs and coped with isolation, illness and death. Some organizations had to close their doors. Others worked in new ways to meet increased demands as government, private foundations and individual donors stepped forward to provide financial assistance.

The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation and United Way of Pierce County teamed up to form Pierce County Connected early in 2020. GTCF provided \$750,000 in seed money and added a \$1 million challenge to ultimately raise \$7.8 million.

Pierce County Connected sent \$280,000 to the KP, including Children's Home Society of Washington to provide childcare for first responders, the Key Peninsula Violence Prevention Coalition, the Gig Harbor & Key Peninsula Suicide Prevention Coalition for behavioral health and technology support, Key Pen Parks for Wi-Fi access and the Key Peninsula Partnership for a Healthy Community to provide vaccine access.

KP Partnership Director Susan Paganelli said that organizations with existing connections to funders were generally more successful in getting money. The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department asked the partnership to apply for a \$100,000 grant to address vaccination rates on the Key Peninsula. "We see this to be around

vaccinations and vaccine resistance, and about strengthening communication pathways within a community. There is always a disconnect between agencies and communities. This is about getting more accurate communication in both directions," she said.

The partnership's initial goal of funding local vaccine clinics has since evolved into providing outreach and education in the face of declining vaccination rates, including training local organizations.

At the other end of the scale, the Longbranch Improvement Club did not apply for any financial assistance, relying on rental income from the marina, but solicited donations to the community through its nonprofit Longbranch Foundation. The foundation repurposed its website to allow donors to select local organizations for assistance or to make donations to them directly. The foundation funneled \$9,200

starting in March 2020, far above the typical \$2,000 to \$5,000. Beneficiaries included

Food Backpacks 4 Kids, the Bischoff Food Bank, the Key Peninsula office of Children's Home Society of Washington, and Communities In Schools of Peninsula.

CISP received two Payroll Protection Program loans to retain employees and bring back those whose hours were cut, and an Economic Injury Disaster Loan for \$10,000, all of which were forgiven since the monies were spent for the intended purposes. There were many donations in-kind, which helped CISP reduce its overall expenses in a school year that saw far more work than usual.

"We helped families figure out what Schoology is (an online learning portal), where homework is posted, how you do remote learning," said Executive Director Colleen Speer. "We did many more home visits than usual for academic assistance, even if it was just to sit outside and talk. There was much more food delivery, and masks, sanitizer." CISP also distributed donated gas and grocery cards. "We still have some of those, just call the office," she said.

KP Community Manager Gina Cabiddu of CHSW said that the increased need was exponential. "We worked with families we have never seen before. Outreach has increased and there is a constant chal-

> lenge of change." CHSW received PPP loans and funding from the county through the

> > "WE WORKED WITH FAMILIES

WE HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

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AND THERE IS A CONSTANT

CHALLENGE OF CHANGE."

\$2.2 trillion federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, also known as CARES, to pay for rental assistance, in addition to a Pierce County Connected grant for general program support.

The Red Barn Youth Center did not apply for any Covid relief funds but was able to rely on donations. Red Barn worked with CISP and CHSW to provide a remote

learning site for students without internet access and for students not engaging with the online school model. School

Bus Connects and the Peninsula School District provided transportation as much as possible under the restrictions of the pandemic.

Willow Eaton, executive director of Key Peninsula Community Services, said that its food bank demand quadrupled. The National Guard replaced the usual volunteers, most of whom were high-risk seniors, to distribute food. The on-site lunch program morphed into one of pick-up or delivered meals. CARES funding of approximately \$100,000 flowed through the county to pay for supplies, including personal protective equipment, hiring an additional kitchen assistant, freezer repair, new refrigerators and overdue site upgrades. "The need is still great, the demand continues, and we

want to serve the community. The KP has been amazing," Eaton said.

Food Backpacks 4 Kids received funding from both CARES and Pierce County Connected to pay for food storage racks, commercial refrigerators, freezers and a new trailer to haul food.

The Mustard Seed Project received two PPP loans and additional CARES funding to support its work with community elders. The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan, known as ARP, provided funding via Pierce County for a \$1 million grant in July toward construction of its assisted living project.

"In the last six months we've doubled the number of instances of service compared to the same time period last year," said Development Director Marion Sharp. "We continue to be amazed by this community and how people support each other."

The Key Peninsula Fire Department received CARES funding through FEMA, the Washington State Military Department and the Department of Health and Human Services. The funds paid for personal protective equipment and increased staffing costs related to Covid response incidents.

Key Medical Center received funding for personal protective equipment, to cover medical insurance for furloughed workers, additional computers and servers needed to shift from in-person to virtual medical care, and software to improve telemedicine security. The center also purchased a medical trailer to provide

> healthcare services to people experiencing homelessness and plans to use it on the KP for future health-related events,

including school sports physicals and dental screening.

The Angel Guild was forced to close its doors during the pandemic. CARES Act funding provided a PPP grant and rental assistance. The store was able to reopen in June and has resumed its program to offer grants to the community.

The Key Peninsula Civic Center Association received both CARES and ARP funding totaling \$62,500 to partially reimburse staff and cover the loss of income while the building was closed to event rental.

The Key Peninsula News operates under the nonprofit umbrella of the KPCCA but is financially and editorially independent. KP News did not receive any Covid relief funding.



### High Temperatures and Low Tide Take a Toll

Marine animals died as natural tidal patterns and effects of climate change combined.

"EVERYTHING WAS FLAYED OPEN BY

THE 26TH — IT WAS A CLAMBAKE."

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Record high temperatures and minus tides spelled disaster for shellfish and other intertidal sea life in Puget Sound in June.

Teri King, aquaculture and marine water quality specialist with Washington Sea Grant, began getting calls about unusual shellfish behavior up and down the coast beginning as early as June 22. Temperatures then were in the 80s, 15 degrees warmer than average. The lowest tide of the year would be two days later, and the highest temperatures ever recorded for the region would not occur for another five days.

King said that the first shore life to show effects were the varnish clams, sand dollars and cockles. The clams surfaced, seeking

cooler temperatures. Oyster, barnacle and mussel deaths followed. "Moon

snails actually evicted themselves from their shells," King said. "Everything was flayed open by the 26th — it was a clambake."

Key Peninsula residents could smell the results along both Case and Carr inlets. Norm McLoughlin, who reported the massive algae-related clam die-off at Rocky Bay in 2019, said the smell was not as bad as it was then. The mortality rate for that event was estimated to be about 50%, and birds and crabs, the usual scavengers of dead shellfish, would not touch them. That was not the case in the heat-related deaths, according to King.

Kent Kingman, owner of the Minterbrook Oyster Co., said that he lost about 25-30% of his shellfish, but that the death rate depended on location.

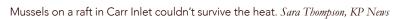
"I did some calculations and some of my oysters were exposed to the heat for over 10 hours, including seven hours when the temperature was over 100," he said. Oysters on rocks and higher on the beach were much more susceptible than those on beaches that were sandy and wet from local surface or groundwater. Nearly all the cockles died, 50% of the varnish clams, 20-30% of the manilas — which are lower down on the beach — and 20% of the oysters overall.

Kingman keeps careful records of his beds and knows now which ones are more resistant to extreme heat. "Those are the ones I will plant first," he said. The trip-

> loids, sterile oysters that were developed in part to avoid the mushy texture of

the oyster during the summer spawning season, are usually not as hardy as the diploids. But Kingman said they fared as well as the diploids during the heat. Adults, ready for harvest, suffered a higher mortality rate than the seedlings. But, he said, "it could have been worse."

The last two years have been difficult for the industry, Kingman said. The pandemic decimated the market, regulations are changing, and climate change has taken a toll. "I feel most for the mom-and-pop growers. They are small family businesses that have been around for 40 years and have found a niche. They are an important part of the industry and may not weather the storm."







Algal toxins were responsible for summer shellfish catastrophe. David Zeigler, KP News

### Cause of 2019 Rocky Bay Clam Die-Off Identified

Community science and historical data identified the cause of shellfish mortality.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

The cause of the Rocky Bay clam die-off in July 2019 has been identified. Beaches across Puget Sound were affected by similar events in both 2018 and 2019. Yessotoxins, produced by the algae species Protoceratium reticulatum, are the culprit.

Teri King, aquaculture and marine water quality specialist with Washington Sea Grant, was lead author of the paper describing the findings. She recalled sinking to her waist on the Rocky Bay beach when it suddenly liquefied as the tide came in when she collected oyster specimens there in the 1980s.

"Mother nature caused me a bunch of grief in that bay and in 2018-2019 she gave it all back by eliminating all the other conditions that could have caused the die-off."

King suspected phytoplankton but algae had never been identified as the cause of shellfish mortality in Washington. When the toxin levels returned, the researchers had an explanation.

They also delved into data collected as far back as the 1930s by NOAA's Fisheries Science Center and the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science and coupled it with recent observations from the Sound-Toxins (sic) phytoplankton monitoring program, which includes state shellfish managers, environmental learning centers, tribes, residents, and commercial fish and shellfish farmers.

They discovered that two phytoplankton species had historically been associated with shellfish mortality events: the yessotoxin-producing P. reticulatum and a second species, Akashiwo sanguinea, which produces a surfactant and has been associated with mortality in hatcheries and in locations other than Rocky Bay.

"Yessotoxins were only identified in 1986 but since they aren't a toxin of human health concern they have usually been overlooked," King said. In the last two years researchers were able to gather samples and study real-time mortality events. "We successfully isolated cysts of P. reticulatum out of the shellfish digestive tract."

The information, together with a review of historical observations, brought a more complete picture of plankton-induced shell-fish summer mortality in focus. King said the final sample analysis was made possible through collaboration with the Northwest Indian College just as the pandemic was shutting things down in 2020.

Vera Trainer, research oceanographer at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center in Seattle, founded SoundToxins 15 years ago.

"I call it a neighborhood block watch for the seas," Trainer said. "This is one of the good news stories. The science is moving out of the glass towers and into the community. It is an example of a community-based science program, working together and having these eyes on Puget Sound. These questions are difficult, and we need more people working together."

King said the next step will be to survey bivalves throughout Puget Sound to quantify yessotoxin concentrations in a variety of native shellfish over the summer months in collaboration with the Northwest Indian College. Washington Sea Grant will also work with shellfish farmers and toxicologists from the University of Washington to develop dose response curves as they relate to phytoplankton abundances. This should allow them to establish a real-time mapping system to alert managers and growers and possibly allow them to harvest before the bivalves are impacted rather than waiting it out and hoping for survival.

### PENINSULA VIEWS



### **Muddling Through**

Sometimes I feel like that is how I live my life; just muddling through until I finally get somewhere. Some people seem to have a clear objective and a straightforward path that they do not veer from until they reach their goals. They move from point A to point B to point C without being deterred, sidelined or distracted. I admire that.

That has not been my experience. Often when I have a destination in mind the path is winding, full of potholes and missing street signs. There are detours and delays. It's like Google maps has sent me down the wrong street. It takes a while to recover my sense of direction. Sometimes I decide to go with the flow of traffic and see where it takes me.

For example, some home improvement projects that I estimate to be fairly simple turn into something much more complicated. Changing out a screen door can turn into many trips to the hardware store. I measure, I look, I shop, I watch YouTube videos and still the project is a poster child for muddling through until it finally comes together.

Muddling through is an exercise in persistence. Sometimes, as a single woman, juggling a career and homeownership, an extra amount of determination is needed to get the simplest of tasks done. One person cannot be in two or three places at the same time. Striving for self-sufficiency is a lofty goal, as it turns out. Decisions have to be made along the way. What things can I let go of for now? What is necessary? What will I definitely need help with? These are the questions I ask myself as I muddle along. What if I make a mistake? What if my neighbors cross the road to ask me what the heck am I doing?

The writing process is a classic example of muddling through; I am fairly certain that other writers will agree. You begin with an idea, work it through to words on paper. Maybe you use an outline, or perhaps you start right in the middle. Maybe you write purely by inspiration. Rarely does the writing appear in perfect form at the first sitting. Revisions and rewrites are the norm. You muddle along, as disciplined as it is possible to be, until the mission is accomplished and the end is reached.

Just a few moments of reflection easily reveal periods of time where muddling through was the only thing keeping me afloat. Experiencing the loss of a spouse is undoubtedly a time of muddling. There is no way to predict the ebb and flow of those strong emotional tides. All the preparation you can muster will not accurately predict the paths you will tread following the death of a loved one. You muddle along until you feel better, and chart a new course.

Today I will go to work in a new environment, where there is more work and not enough workers. Four of my social worker colleagues have left our staff in recent months. This is a recent phenomenon, part of our pandemic crisis. We have more responsibility and less power, even over our own lives. We are collectively muddling through changing societal norms. Decisions will be made about vaccinations, masks, travel, career choices and changes, and a myriad of other things. It is not clear how we will come through this period in our history.

I recently read a quote by the journalist Anna Quindlen that I identified with. "Life is not so much about beginnings and endings as it is about going on and on and on. It is about muddling through the middle."

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



# Earth's Energy Balance

You have probably noticed it is getting hotter, as if the weather is out of balance. Earth's energy flow is always in balance, but the planet-wide thermostat is now set to keep more heat. The energy retained on Earth's surface has doubled between 2005 and 2019, thus the planet heats up. You can blame the sun, if that makes you feel better, but in fact human activity is the culprit.

Energy comes to Earth in the form of sunlight. Earth is storing more of this energy in the form of warmer land and especially warmer ocean water. This simply continues a warming trend that started with the industrial revolution in the late 19th century. Sadly, because of changes to the mix of gases in our atmosphere, the planet can't get rid of the energy that comes naturally from the sun fast enough. There is a lot of water on Earth, so it's getting warmer everywhere.

It's simple, really. The oceans are warming because there are fewer clouds and less sea ice that would otherwise reflect the sunlight away. More significantly, the levels of heat-trapping gases, especially methane and carbon dioxide, are rising because of human activity. Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has almost doubled since the time

of Shakespeare. Water vapor in the air also contributes to the greenhouse effect, but its level is not changing much. Increasing levels of methane and carbon dioxide are thus the biggest drivers of the recent natural anomalous events such as record-shattering high temperatures in the American West and episodes of heavy rainfall, droughts, floods and extended hurricane seasons everywhere else.

How can gas way up in the air worsen weather down on the surface?

Carbon dioxide due to its molecular structure is naturally able to absorb sunlight, especially heat radiation. When heat radiation comes back into the air from Earth's land or oceans, it is absorbed by the carbon dioxide and re-emitted. Sometimes the re-emitted heat goes off into space, but increasingly the heat is returned to Earth's surface. That's the problem: We are now at the point where there is so much carbon dioxide in the air that it's hard for heat energy to escape back into space and our planet heats up.

It could be worse. Neighboring Venus has an atmosphere that's mostly carbon dioxide. Venus enjoys a surface temperature of about 800 degrees C. This is hot enough to melt metals like lead, magnesium or aluminum. No wonder our favorite space cadets Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson have announced no plans to visit our nearest planetary neighbor.

So why did temperatures in Portland hit 116 and 121 F in British Columbia recently? It was a heat dome — the fancy name for a huge thick blanket of hot air that formed and didn't budge for days. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says a heat dome forms when strong high-pressure circulation in the atmosphere traps rising warm air from large areas of the ocean, especially from the periodic influences from La Niña. The main trigger for heat domes is a strong gradient in ocean temperatures from west to east in the tropical Pacific during the preceding winter.

NOAA explains: "The western Pacific's temperatures have risen over the past few decades as compared to the eastern Pacific, creating a strong temperature gradient ... that drive(s) wind, across the entire ocean in winter. In a process known as convection, the gradient causes more warm air, heated by the ocean surface, to rise over the western Pacific and decreases convection over the central and eastern Pacific. As prevailing winds move the hot air east, the northern shifts of the jet stream trap the air and move it toward land, where it sinks, resulting in heat waves."

Here are some personal actions you can take, or at least ponder, as we all talk

about the weather: take fewer trips on jet planes; plant trees and support reforestation; support companies that capture carbon dioxide before it gets into the air. You can also urge lawmakers to switch subsidies and tax credits from nonrenewable energy sources like fossil fuels to renewables; make all public transit free; mandate that all new construction must have solar panels; and implement a carbon tax.

Richard Gelinas, Ph.D., whose early work earned a Nobel Prize, is a senior research scientist at the Institute for Systems Biology. He lives in Lakebay. Suggestions for further reading are at keypennews.org.



### **Do Your Homework**

I have been researching and writing about the history of our area for a few years now. The lives and adventures, the successes and low points of the people who managed to find their way to this remote part of Puget Sound interest me, especially people whose stories have barely been told, if at all.

Unlike the stories of well-known pioneers, who left a rich paper trail, the lives of less-known settlers and early residents can be hard to reconstruct. To stitch together those narratives, I spend countless hours searching through museum and library collections, poring over maps, examining physical and digitized archives, leafing through yellowed ledgers, and reading newspapers of the time. Bit by rewarding bit, the stories emerge; it's a lot like working on an archeological dig, reconstructing a ceramic pot from shards scattered at the site. There will be pieces missing, but sometimes it's possible to extrapolate from what you have and fill in the gaps.

The work is immensely satisfying and off-the-charts fun. I become a sleuth, pondering evidence, triangulating my material and my sources to confirm it. Sometimes the trail leads me to new discoveries, which may upend existing narratives. If the evidence leads to a rewrite of accepted oral histories or recollections, I may risk running into some resistance on the part of those whose past I'm excavating. I remember interviewing a local family for a story once, sharing my independent research on their place and their own distant history; they were as gracious as can be, but as they would later confess that while I may have uncovered and documented events that were probably accurate, I had robbed their history of its swashbuckling romance.

That gave me pause, but thankfully other than my hurt ego and the awkward realization that I had trampled all over that family's history, there were no other repercussions. I am still friends with them, and I honored their story as the gateway to my own findings. No one lost face; both stories ended up with a seat at the table. Romance and fact managed to coexist peacefully.

There are larger, more important narratives, however, which may diverge and cannot be reconciled, where there is just not much of a middle ground where differing views could meet. The present moment in our history is a good example. There are issues like climate change or the pandemic and the responses to them where opposing sides advance arguments that can be debated, at least in theory. But there are also demonstrably false narratives spread for purely political gain. Misinformation can be remedied with honest debate and a review of the data; disinformation needs to be rejected and those who advance it rebuked.

But how can you tell? How do you know which side to believe, whose side to take? How do we tell the story that most closely matches reality?

You don't, unless you do your homework. As a student of language and a writer of history, I can tell you it's not fun being corrected for errors or admitting that I might have fallen for a piece of nonsense. When that happens, it means I haven't done that homework. I may have missed a source, or perhaps I misinterpreted the data. I'll never forget my mortification when someone pointed out an inconsistency in a paper I presented at a linguistics conference years ago, back when I was a little too sensitive about my own findings. That was a lesson for the ages for me, especially in my current work. I am acutely aware of the responsibility that comes with writing about forgotten people and events from 100 or 150 years ago. My story may well be the only account of their lives available, at least until I or a future historian revise

That is why I always cite my sources, to give others the chance to check on my work and correct any errors or omissions. Because this is no longer about me or my ego; it's about getting the story right. I've come a long way since that painful conference.

it based on new evidence.

So, if you're going to challenge a narrative in the marketplace of ideas, do your homework. It's not about you; it's about falling in love with the truth. And as you will discover, that's off-the-charts fun.

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





# Promises, Salted and Pure

Promises are not written in stone, or even wet cement. They are soft and squishy and easily manipulated into shapes that only slightly resemble the original. When I Googled "promise," the definition was "make a promise or commitment." That's like saying the color blue is "the color blue." Is that cerulean, robin's egg blue, navy, cobalt, seafoam, sky blue? Actually, it's whatever I mean when I use the word "blue" and no one else can be sure until I define it further.

I know a young girl named Alice. When Alice was 12 years old her father promised that he would take her to "The Nutcracker" ballet the week before Christmas. Since her parents were divorced, Alice didn't see her dad very often, and he rarely phoned her. She bragged to her friends about this "date" with her father. They were going to a grand theater for the event, and she was very excited.

Alice chose a dark green velvet dress, had her mother buy off-white leggings, and planned to wear her black patent shoes. Her school coat was too sensible for such an evening, so she convinced her mother that her green and gold wool stole would be warm enough. A green and gold ribbon cascade held her curly, blonde ponytail in place. Her mother refused to lend her gold earrings, but Alice was lovely when her father came to take her to the musical.

By the time she came home, the promise of a glorious night with the full attention of her father vanished. At the performance her father sat with the woman he was dating and Alice was forced to sit in an entirely different part of the theater with Lucy, the dowdy 15-year-old daughter of her father's date. Lucy didn't want to sit with Alice; Alice definitely didn't want to sit with Lucy.

When Alice was dropped off at home after the performance, she tried very hard to enthusiastically talk about the great event. She loved the mouse in "The Nutcracker" and the costumes were beyond anything she might have imagined, even though she had read about the performance before she left home. In the middle of her description of the performance the tears started, even though she tried very hard to not let them be seen.

Her father had "promised" to take her to the theater. He never told her that others would be going with them. He didn't tell her she would not be proudly sitting beside him. He didn't break his promise; he broke her heart.

As the unwed mother visits her OB/GYN after two missed periods, she ruefully recalls her lover's whisper in the middle of the seduction, "I promise I'll use protection."

At a meeting where there are no minutes to approve, everyone recalls when the secretary agreed, "I promise I'll have the minutes typed within a week."

When the car chugs over to the side of the highway, the words of the spouse echo, "I promise I'll fill the gas tank before we leave."

When a marriage culminates with a meeting of divorce lawyers, the promises of the bride and groom to "love and obey" floated hopelessly, locked out of the room.

"I promise we'll go to the zoo next weekend." "I promise to iron that shirt before you leave tomorrow morning." "I promise to use deodorant if that bothers you so much." "I promise to call my mom every Sunday afternoon." "I promise to stock the shelves before the store opens." "I promise to teach the dog not to chew your underwear."

Many promises are kept. Many are not. A second Google definition is "promise to undertake or give: I promise you my best effort." We need a different word for that definition. A "perhaps-promise." A "promise with variable parameters." A "promise but don't get your hopes up." A "promise that isn't as good as it sounds?"

Probably most people who makes promises expect to keep them — at least in the way they have defined it in their own minds. I've heard it said, "I'll take that promise with a grain of salt." I checked with Google on that phrase too. "Etymologist Christine Ammer traces it to Pompey's discovery, recorded by Pliny in 77 A.D., of an antidote to poison which had to be taken with a small amount of salt to be effective."

My advice is to liberally sprinkle any promise with a bit of salt.

Award-winning columnist Phyllis Henry lives in Gig Harbor.

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### Letters to the Editor

### PLAYING THE FEAR CARD

The Aug. 3 primary election for PSD board director is critically important for the future of our school district. The results may have a lasting impact for many years. Three candidates (Johnson, Ader and Weinberg) have made statements about Critical Race Theory (CRT) and other education related issues that are simply untrue. These candidates are playing the "fear card" trying to scare voters into supporting their agenda.

PSD has absolutely no plans to implement a CRT curriculum, nor does one even exist. It is a theoretical model that has been used in graduate-level academia for 40+ years, not an instructional curriculum. Their so-called "Common Sense Curriculum" seeks to restrict education by turning it into a mythology that supports their view of the world, but that has little to do with reality or historical facts.

In the Pierce County Voter's Pamphlet, Ader disingenuously cites Martin Luther King Jr., twisting his words to support her cause. Teaching a made-up feel-good version of history does not help children become critical thinkers. Johnson suggests that teaching the truth will "teach them to divide people by class, race and creed," and then cites "the American way," whatever that is. It seems these candidates want to perpetuate the misunderstanding and hate that is so rampant around race and sexual identity.

Please go to the ballot box and put the brakes on this effort to hijack our schools. Our kids deserve better than what these candidates offer.

Ken Wassum, Vaughn

### **CRITICAL THINKING**

Sometimes it is so frustrating listening to the news and or reading it online. So much divisiveness, anger and ugliness. A blessing for me has been reading the Key Peninsula News. It has become one of my favorite reads because of the quality of the writing and the array of articles.

However, in the July edition, I was so disturbed by a political advertisement that is so misleading and full of manufactured ignorance it made my stomach turn.

"Save Peninsula Schools" was the headline for this ad. As a public school educator, retired after 35 years, I believe critical thinking is perhaps the most important goal of education. An informed electorate is the foundation of all democracy.

My hat is off to the tremendous job our local educators are doing. Don't let the self-serving GOP lead you to believe they CONTINUED PAGE 8



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### Letters to the Editor

### **LETTERS** FROM PAGE 7

are about critical thinking. Read between the lines of this ad and see the divisiveness and power grab for what it is.

Phil DiGirolamo, Longbranch Editor's note: DiGirolamo is married to a KP News board member. The board has no control over editorial content.

### SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP

In 2019, 66.5% of the voters approved a bond measure to build four new elementary schools, including Evergreen Elementary on Key Peninsula, which will alleviate drastic overcrowding and improve access and safety for our kids. More than just about anyone else, Jennifer Butler's hard work helped get these new facilities built. Jennifer has worked tirelessly to improve our school district by helping ensure adequate funding for important priorities like advanced placement, special education, activities, and school security. She has volunteered both in and out of the school district to help improve educational outcomes and provide opportunities for graduates.

We are fortunate to have a school board candidate who has dedicated herself to our students and school district rather than focusing on political rhetoric and manufactured controversy. Rather than articulate a positive vision for our schools, Jennifer's opponents have resorted to smears and falsehoods. We tell our kids that telling the truth is important and lying is wrong. What kind of example would we set for them by electing to our school board people who in their campaign do exactly what we tell our kids not to do?

It's often said that a person's true character is shown when no one is looking. When no one was looking, Jennifer was doing everything she could to make our school district a better place for kids. That's the kind of leadership we need on the Peninsula School District board, and I hope others join me in supporting Jennifer Butler.

Bryce Nelson, Gig Harbor

### **PROFESSOR EMERITUS**

As a professor of education for 30 years, I was both saddened and alarmed by an ad placed in last month's Key Peninsula News by candidates running for our school board.

The ad begins with a cry to "Save Peninsula Schools."

How are we to "save" them? Is it by insisting that students learn critical thinking skills, improve their media literacy, receive first-rate civic coursework, or come to understand the importance of scientific evidence?

No, none of those things.

According to the ad, the way to save our schools is by "pushing back on the indoctrination of our children" in Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE). This is no more than an attempt to spread misinformation and intolerance.

But it is a good straw man argument for extremists, though.

The ad falsely claims CRT teaches "children to judge people based on skin color, not the content of their character." What a dishonorable way to invoke Martin Luther King Jr. CRT does not suggest that people be judged by skin color. It does, however, explore the concept that racism is a structure that has existed for centuries in the United States and continues to affect us today in ways we might not recognize. To turn our backs on the actual history and current conditions in the U.S. can only more deeply entrench divisions and violence in

The ad goes on to claim that CSE teaches "children to be confused as to whether they are a girl or a boy." The assertion appears to be an attack on the inclusion of gender issues, such as those related to LGBTQ students, in the sex education curriculum.

Diversity of sexual orientation is a fact of life. About 5.6% of adults in the U.S., or over 11 million folks, identify as LGBTQ, and 8% of American high school students, about 1.3 million, are LGBTQ. Nearly 18% of them report being raped at some point in their lives, they are twice as likely to be bullied than straight students and 30% attempt suicide, rates that are substantially higher than for straight kids.

As the numbers suggest, there is a huge role schools can play in easing the experiences of non-normative youth. To me, it seems clear that lessons about sexual orientation and gender identity belong in any curriculum that claims to address sex education.

Support schools by rejecting attempts to radicalize our school board and our community. If you want to clear up confusion, educate.

Felix Billingsley, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus College of Education, University of Washington, Captain, USAF, 1966-1970

### **SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE**

COVID-19 has impacted our children's education and I see this with my child who's in the Peninsula School District. Add to that all the political distractions and mask mandates, returning to pre-Covid standards becomes even more difficult.

We don't need to "re-imagine learning,"

we need to focus on "regaining learning" after a year of closed schools. Remember that the United States is lagging behind many other countries. We must prepare our kids for what comes after graduation, which is best accomplished with in-person teaching of a standard curriculum without any distractions. Surveys show an over- KC Corral whelming majority want traditional American values taught in schools, so let's teach kids how to think, not what to think.

Many fear data will show remote classes were not as effective as we hoped. Our new superintendent will need community input and support. The school board must quickly react to negative news concerning last school year's learning outcomes and work with the community to affect solutions, not "re-imagine." We know what works.

We're proud of our new schools but it's the community whose generosity and hardearned tax dollars deserve thanks. New and upgraded schools were desperately needed, but the focus must be inside the classrooms and we must continue efforts to improve broadband internet on the Key Peninsula in case the need for remote learning returns.

Our schools can again be the shining light in our community, but we must keep our focus 100% on the recovery of learning as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

David Weinberg, Gig Harbor, Candidate, PSD School Board Pos. 2

### **KP'S GROWING HOMELESS PROBLEM**

As a business owner in the Key Center Corral, I have had several very unpleasant encounters with homeless people. Some will argue that they are kind and sweet people and for the most part they are. However, when their demons take over and they need a fix, they become belligerent and downright dangerous. One actually picked up an 80-pound bench and was trying to throw it through my front window when the deputy sheriff arrived.

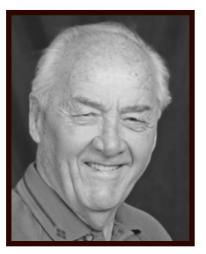
The Pierce County Sheriff's Department said they have exhausted all resources for these people, including putting them up free in motels (where they are soon thrown out because of causing a disturbance), free rehab (that they quickly leave to return to life on the street and drugs), and free rides to the edge of town only to have them make their way back a few days later.

They clutter the KC Corral with shopping carts overflowing with sleeping bags, blankets, food and water, leaving behind empty cans, bottles and plastic wrappers for the business owners to pick up. They think nothing of shooting heroin into their arms and legs right in front of the shop benches reserved for customers.

Looking at Seattle and now Tacoma, anyone can deduce that turning a blind eye is not the way to solve the problem. I would think that this would concern not only the business owners in Key Center, but the entire community.

Nita Garnier. Yankee Clipper Barber Shop,

## **OBITUARY**



Harold Matthews

Harold Leslie Matthews died June 17, surrounded by loved ones. He was born Dec. 10, 1923 in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada to William and Bessie Matthews.

Harold was a born entrepreneur. At the age of 7, he began selling Liberty magazine to the neighborhood for 5 cents each. A newspaper carrier by age 12, he realized the need for a bicycle, which he bought on credit, making payments of \$1 per week. While he worked at other jobs, he always returned to his love of the newspaper business. Setting his own terms, he worked as an independent contractor for the Regina Leader Post, Vancouver News-Herald, Portland Oregonian and Seattle Times.

He discovered his love for and ability in athletics early in life. Living on the prairies, he and his friends played baseball and football to stay in shape for the real season hockey. He worked hard but always arranged his hours so that he had time for sports.

While sports were important, when his nation needed him, he volunteered to join the Navy. He proudly served on the H.M.C.S. Outarde, patrolling the waters of Alaska and British Columbia during the Japanese invasion of the Aleutian Islands.

He was always all about family. Harold moved the family to the United States in 1961 for more promising opportunities. He became a proud citizen Aug. 8, 1968. windows and then crashing, passed out on He made time for his children and grand-

CONTINUED PAGE 10-

### Two Local Teens Die in **Separate Accidents**

STAFF REPORT

Two teenagers died on the Key Peninsula June 28 just a few hours and a few miles apart in unrelated accidents.

Will Huck of Port Orchard, 17, drowned in Horseshoe Lake at approximately 3:15 p.m.

Caleb Wanaka of Vaughn, 17, died in a one-car accident on Bliss-Cochrane Road at approximately 9:15 p.m. Three other teens were injured.

South Kitsap paramedics responding to the lake found that bystanders had pulled Will from the water and were attempting to resuscitate him. He was taken to a Tacoma hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Horseshoe Lake is a 39-acre park on the north end of the Key Peninsula managed by Kitsap County Parks. There are no lifeguards.

Will had just graduated from Vashon Island High School. He received several scholarships and planned to attend the University of New Hampshire to study sports journalism.

More than 400 people attended a vigil June 30 at Whisky Gulch CoffeePub, the Port Orchard restaurant owned by Will's father, Chuck, where Will was a server.

Mourners released 17 orange lanterns onto Sinclair Inlet during the vigil. Will died two weeks short of his 18th birthday.

Caleb and three friends were riding in the bed of a pick up truck near Vaughn when the driver lost control and struck a tree. The driver was wearing a seat belt; the four others were thrown from the vehicle. Caleb died of his injuries; the three injured teens, all 16 or 17 years old, were transported to area hospitals, one in serious condition.

Speed may have been a factor but there was no sign the driver was impaired, according to the Pierce County Sheriff's Department.

Caleb just finished his junior year at Peninsula High School, where he was a star athlete, playing both basketball and baseball. He was named a first-team infielder on the 4A South Puget Sound League all-league team in the 2021 spring season.

PHS Principal Joe Potts sent an email to school families June 29 that read in part: "The death of a student affects the entire Peninsula School District community, and we send our deepest expressions of sympathy to the student's parents, family and friends." There was also an invitation for any PHS student to contact the school counselors.

A July 9 memorial for Caleb at the PHS baseball field drew more than 800 people.

### **MATTHEWS** FROM PAGE 9

children's activities and could be relied upon to coach or be their loudest cheering section. He loved to share his life stories with all of us, creating learning opportunities, a lifetime of laughter, amazement, and shared memories.

Harold loved the Key Peninsula, moving and retiring here in 1992. He and his wife Ruth joined the Key Peninsula Lutheran Church in 2001, taking an active part in the church. Harold loved his church and they loved him.

Harold is survived by his wife of 71 years, Ruth; children Trish (Eric) Drage, Robert (Lisa) Matthews and Gayle (Michael) Moeller; and many grandchildren, nieces and nephews he loved dearly and was known to tease mercilessly.

A celebration of life is planned for Saturday, Aug. 28 at 1 p.m. at Key Peninsula Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW, Lakebay.

### Phillip A. Johnson

Please join us for a memorial service celebrating the life of Phillip A. Johnson, Sunday, Aug. 29 at the Longbranch Improvement Club any time between 2 to 6 p.m. Read his obituary at keypennews.org.

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CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

### SNAKES EATEN, SNAKES EATING

Recently a friend asked me if there are birds that eat garter snakes. A few, I told him. Red-tailed hawks are known for making off with snakes. It is always an odd sight to see a snake writhing like a strand of kelp in the sky. Crows and ravens eat garter snakes. They eat everything. And, I told him, I have seen a great blue heron wrestle with a garter snake. Beyond that, I said, few birds would be brave enough to try.

Then reader Mira Thompson of Bay Lake told me a story that blew my mind. On a quiet road she came upon a robin flapping on the ground. It gathered itself and took flight with a snake dangling from its beak. From 10 feet up it dropped the snake. It swooped down, paused to watch the snake, then fluttered around to peck at it. The snake reared into a defensive posture and the robin attacked. It pecked, grabbed the snake and dropped it again and again. The fight moved inch by inch across the road. Finally, the snake was weak enough that the robin took it in its beak and flew off.

Garter snakes do some impressive eating of their own. Gardeners love them for their appetite for slugs and snails. They'll eat earthworms, insects, frogs and small fish. They also eat our local celebrity, the roughskinned newt. This is a feat worth investigating. Rough-skinned newts are packed with tetradotoxin, the same neurotoxin that makes Japanese pufferfish so deadly. Studies have shown that every potential predator of rough-skinned newts, from herons to raccoons, will die within minutes

of ingesting them. In fact, newts will climb unharmed from the mouths of dead fish 20 minutes after being swallowed.

The common garter snake, Thamnophis sirtalis, is the lone exception. Research on populations across the Pacific Northwest has suggested that as the snakes acquire more and more resistance to the newt's toxins, the newts become more and more toxic — an evolutionary arms race. But how can the race proceed if the newt dies when a snake tries to eat it, even if the snake dies too? More recent studies have found an answer: snakes will partially swallow newts before deciding whether or not they are too toxic and either spitting them back out or digesting them. The snakes, in other words, test their own resistance against the toxicity of the individual newt.

The cost is high. Within minutes of catching a newt, even if the snake will successfully digest it, the snake cannot hold its head steady. It opens its mouth as wide as it can and rubs it on the ground. In extreme cases, it writhes and bites itself. Its decision to digest or not digest may not be a decision at all; the newt might simply escape if the snake is sufficiently incapacitated. But if the snake manages to keep the newt down, the few hours it spends as a drunken wreck are rewarded with a meal that might last it over a week. And newts are a common prey and easy to catch.

### **HOW THE HIGHEST-EVER TEMPERATURES COOLED**

On the final day of June's recordsmashing heat wave, I braved the oven outside with a laser thermometer. It's wellknown that cleared land can be 10 degrees

hotter than adjacent forests on a hot day, and urban areas another 10 degrees hotter still. But the heat wave made it clear just how important night time temperatures are when a region desperately needs to cool. I measured different surfaces at 2 p.m., when the air temperature was around 100 degrees. Asphalt was 158 degrees in the sun; forest floor was 95 degrees in the shade; pasture was 115 degrees in the sun and 100 degrees in the shade; and, surprisingly, the coolest ground was the asphalt of a driveway under total shade, measuring 87 degrees. I began to wonder about not just maximum temperatures but the rates at which different parts of our landscape cool.

So, over the course of that evening, in its own right an extraordinary event with air temperatures dropping 50 degrees in less than five hours, I returned to my measuring points.

By 5 p.m. the air temperature had reached 105 degrees. Yet all the surfaces measured cooler than before. How could that be if the day had grown hotter? The answer, I eventually realized, is that after the sun leaves its apex, much of the day's heat comes from surfaces rather than the sun. As they slowly release their heat, they keep the air temperature higher than it should be based on the angle of the sun. It's the same reason that July and August are the hottest months when maximum sun exposure is in June.

By 8 p.m., with the air at 90 degrees and shade everywhere, the pastures matched the forest floor around 80 degrees. The road was still over 100 degrees. By 10

### **Mission for Kids:**

### The Best Blackberry Imaginable

Okay kids, you've got a real tough mission this month. You're going to be asked to eat dozens of delicious blackberries. It's tough work being a scientist, but hey, someone's got to do it. I want you to discover why some blackberries taste so much better than others. Go around tasting berries from different brambles. Ask yourself: Does taste have to do with size? Color? Height on the bush? Sun or shade? Nearby plants? Take notes and see if you can find patterns where the best berries are found. Let me know what you decide by emailing naturalist@keypennews.org..

p.m., with the air at a merciful 72 degrees, the pastures and forest floor were in the mid-60s. The road was 86 degrees. The shaded driveway, which was coolest at midday, was now at 72 degrees, ten degrees warmer than the natural areas.

That shaded driveway tells an interesting story. Rock, whether natural or manmade, can hold a lot of heat energy. Because of that capacity, it takes time to bring its temperature up. The sun has plenty of raw power to quickly heat unshaded concrete to absurd temperatures, but when it is shaded it might actually function as a heat sink — for part of the day. As I saw, while natural surfaces cool quickly in the evening, even the shaded concrete with its load of heat energy would be radiating increased temperatures deep into the night. ■





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### **SUMMER TUES/WED/THURSDAY SCHEDULE**

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- 9:28 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:33 Palmer Lake Public Access sunny side
- 9:34 21st St SW @193rd Ave SW shady side
- 9:39 KPCS Senior Center/Food Bank
- 9:43 KP Hwy NW @167th Ave Ct NW
- 9:46 Red Barn @Key Center
- 9:47 Food Market @Key Center
- 9:49 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Hall Road NW
- 9:50 Wright Bliss Rd NW @104th St Ct. NW
- 9:52 SR 302 NW @4 Corners Gas Station
- 10:00 Lake Kathryn Shopping Center
- 10:05 Purdy Park & Ride

- 4:05 Purdy Park & Ride
- 4:15 Lake Kathryn Shopping Center
- 4:23 SR 302 NW@4 Corners Gas Station
- 4:24 Wright Bliss Rd NW @104th St Ct.NW
- 4:25 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Hall Road NW
- 4:27 Food Market @Key Center
- 4:28 Red Barn @Key Center
- 4:31 KP Hwy NW @167th Ave Ct NW
- 4:35 KPCS Senior Center/Food Bank
- 4:40 Palmer Lake Public Access sunny side
- 4:41 21st St SW @193rd Ave SWshady side
- 4:46 Evergreen Elementary School



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**"OUR KIDS KEEP SAYING COME** 

LIVE BY US AND I THINK, WHY?"

## How the Binghams Found Their Way Home

Longtime Longbranch volunteers Peg and Larry Bingham almost left the Key Peninsula soon after arriving.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Peg and Larry Bingham, age 88 and 90 respectively, spent years on the move pursuing various enterprises and adventures, delivering airplanes cross-country, traveling the world, living on a sailboat, cruising to Alaska and California and beyond, before accidentally discovering the KP.

But it nearly didn't happen.

The Binghams once owned a summer cabin on Pickering Passage in the 1960s and were looking for another one there in 1999 for retirement.

"Highway 302 takes you down to where our cabin was past Shelton," Larry said. "We were looking over there and were headed back to Seattle, and we had always seen the signs to Key Center and had never gone down there, so we did."

The result was making a new home in an old cabin on the edge of Filucy Bay in 2000. "After two years we almost left," said Peg,

because they felt isolated.

"On our road here, there was just one other house where people lived full-time," said Peg. "Very nice people but I had never even been inside their gate."

Then Peg met Dick Van Cise on one of her regular long walks. "He was a Longbranch Improvement Club member and he insisted that we needed to join. They ask, 'Would you do this, would you do that,' and if you say yes once, you're nailed."

Peg worked with other volunteers to renovate the LIC kitchen and prepare food for events. "I just sort of started doing it. There are some fantastic cooks in this area." She and those other fantastic cooks would later publish the LIC recipe book, "Savories and Sweets, South Sound Treats." She became famous for her baking and was something of a kitchen fixture herself, even to the extent of getting carted off in an ambulance during one event. Of course, she came right back.

Peg also served as secretary for the LIC board and Larry was president, but he said his most important contribution was working on the trails behind the club house.

"It all started with Rich Hildahl, when he was president," he said. "That whole area behind the building used to be a marshland. Jim Olson had done drawings for Rich of clearings we could create in the woods with picnic tables and all sorts of good things."

Thus began 15 years of trailblazing, bridge building and redirecting water flow in the 7-acre woodland.

"We always had more help than we knew what to do with," Larry said. "We had a

group of volunteers cut ivy every month. We had a scout troop show up. Carolyn Wiley saw an Americorp group doing a project at Camp Sound View and talked them into working for us on their day off — 14 people. Oh, that was fantastic."

It may have been a short drive from SR-302 down to their new home in Longbranch, but it was a long and winding road through life to get there.

Larry was born in Shelton and Peg in Seattle. They met in the spring of 1952 at the University of Washington sophomore carnival. "Her sorority was across from my fraternity, so we joined together to build a stage for the carnival," Larry said. "We were down there trying to do things and this lady walks up and says, 'I know all about carpentry because my dad's a builder.' That's how we met."

"I can't remember if it was a nail gun or a paint gun or a staple gun, but I said 'Oh, I know how to use that,' and promptly jammed it," said Peg.

They started dating in September and were married one year later. Peg dropped out of nursing school since it required her

to live in a nurses' dorm. Larry graduated in 1954 as a distinguished mili-

tary graduate in ROTC with a bachelor's in business administration.

The Army called Larry to active duty the week before Christmas and sent him to the Presidio in San Francisco. Peg joined him soon after when their first son, Larry, was one month old.

"So, I go in and report and the commander says 'I see here you do a lot of boating and sailing.' Yes sir. 'Well, I need somebody to run the Presidio Harbor Craft and Marine Maintenance Division: You're the guy.'"

As a brand-new second lieutenant, Larry was put in charge of four 84-foot landing craft, three 50-foot passenger-freighters, a 50-foot Chris Craft sport fishing boat, and a 63-foot rescue craft propelled by twin aircraft engines.

"I had 75 GIs who were the crew and 75 civilians," he said. "We ran the ferries to Angel Island, where there was a whole battalion at the Nike missile site. We'd take dignitaries and convalescing patients on fishing trips. Did that for two years. What more could you ask for?"

The young family returned to Seattle in 1956. Their second son, Mike, was born the following January.

Larry spent the next 15 years working in the cement business, first as a salesman

and then as the owner of his own company. Their daughter Ann was born in 1960 and Peg stayed home until all three children were in school, when she joined Larry's staff. She also volunteered as a teacher's aide for a school for preschool children with special needs, served on its board of directors, and was president of the Seattle Chil-

dren's Hospital Guild, among other things. "About 1974 I finally decided I'd like to do something I'd really enjoy," Larry said. He sold the cement company and went to

the Piper dealer at Hillsboro Airport, near where they were living at the time. He'd earned his pilot's license in high school. "I generally flew Pipers and Comanches

> and chatted with him and next thing I know I'm their sales manager."

He sold Pipers, the Cheyenne series, Merlin aircraft, and an open cockpit biplane called the Great Lakes, a replica of a Thirties-era barnstormer.

"He sold one to a pilot who lived in Connecticut and Larry and I delivered it to him, flying at 500 feet all the way across the United States," said Peg. "I wouldn't trade those five days for anything."

Larry has flown float planes, single-engines, multi-engines, helicopters and gliders. He and Peg have flown all over Alaska and to Mexico and Florida. He's had a flight instructor's certificate for 42 years. "The best part was I taught my oldest son how to fly."

"But he didn't teach his wife," said Peg. "We did try. I learned in a friend's Cessna Turbo 210 with retractable gear and the whole nine yards, then got my license at Payne Field."

Peg also said she is afraid of heights. "I had a two-story house and I had a hard time washing the windows on the second floor, even from the inside," she said. "And yet I can fly an airplane. I actually went skydiving when I was 59. It was so beautiful."

In 1982 the couple sold their house and bought a 45-foot ketch called Wind Drifter. "Our plan was to outfit it, live on Lake



Union, and when we retired head down the coast and do what's called the Coconut Milk Run across the Pacific," Larry said. "It didn't work out quite the way we planned it. Interest rates went way up and I was in corporate aircraft sales then, and it just killed the whole thing."

They did sail down to San Francisco where Larry got another job selling aircraft. "Something opened up in San Diego and that was on the route we were trying to make work, so we sailed down there and lived in the inner harbor for three months." Another opportunity appeared in Portland, and they lived on the boat in the Columbia River before finally returning to Seattle.

"I loved it," said Peg. "We probably would not have moved off the boat but back in Seattle my mother was not well, and getting her on and off the boat was difficult. And she didn't like it anyway; she thought we were absolutely out of our minds."

In 1991 they moved ashore and sold the boat. They'd lived aboard Wind Drifter for 11 years.

"I wouldn't meet the people who bought it and cried for two days," Peg said.

By this time Larry was selling aircraft parts to Boeing and Peg was working for a Seattle philanthropist, the jobs they would retire from.

They did manage to sail in the South Seas — doing a bareboat charter in Tahiti. They rented a plane and island-hopped by air too.

"We have been so fortunate in our lives," Peg said. They have lived in Longbranch for 21 years, longer than anywhere else.

"Our kids keep saying come live by us and I think, why? We're just very lucky to have lived the life we have lived, and to end up here," she said

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The ad hoc group of artists has been meeting for years. Tina McKail, KP News

# Art Walk in Key Center to Feature Local Plein Air Group A diverse group of painters gathers outdoors to capture the beauty of the KP.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

On a given Friday in recent months a crew of enthusiastic painters gathered at Whiteman Cove, between Joemma State Park and Camp Colman. The number may fluctuate depending on other commitments and the weather, but what drew them together is the feeling that nothing can match the experience of painting outdoors, or in plein air.

The Plein Air Painters group formed three years ago when Chris Bronstad taught a drawing class at The Mustard Seed Project. Ray Steiner was one of the participants. He and Bronstad share a love of painting and hiking, and the decision to start a plein air group flowed from there. "It's informal, come as you are, come as you can," Steiner said.

They have met at many sites over the years: Penrose Point State Park, Longbranch Marina, Lakebay Marina, North Herron Island Road and at a private rose garden. But most recently the Joemma site has been a priority. There is a row of madrona trees marked for removal as plans progress for the Whiteman Cove restoration by the Department of Natural Resources. "We want to memorialize them before they are gone," Bronstad said.

The painters come from a variety of backgrounds. Some paint professionally and have shown and sold their work. Others consider themselves hobbyists. Their media choices range from watercolor to acrylics to oils.

Patti Nebel, who lives near Joemma, trained as a sculptor. She joined the group about a year and a half ago, when she decided to expand her repertoire. "I love trees," she said. "At some point I will be too old to lift 25-pound bags of clay and I want to keep going."

Her husband Jerry joined recently. He has no formal training but has carried a sketch book with him for years. "It's more a therapy than a passion," he said. "With plein air there are hundreds of places to paint

and contemplate. If you wait, you'll see deer, eagles, herons. People stop and visit."

Brian Duncan of Home is new to the group. He has painted on and off since high school and is retired from a career as a draftsman. "I'm starting to remember what I forgot," he said. "When I'm done, I feel so good. But it also takes a lot out of you. It's very therapeutic."

Delia McGinnis of Longbranch describes herself as a hobbyist. "I just love it. It's a way to fortify my soul," she said. McGinnis is also past president of the Two Waters Arts Alliance, the sponsor of the upcoming Art Walk in Key Center.

Jaqueline Hickey of Vaughn has a studio and does commission work. She started in oils and began painting with watercolor in the late 1990s. Of painting in plein air she said, "For the color you have to be there. Painting from a photograph is not the same." Myrna Binion agreed. "The beauty of the area is beyond compare," she said.

Leila Luginbill, from Home, is a water-colorist who has painted since she was a child. She did a lot of drawing as a biology major and teacher and took up painting when she retired 10 years ago. "It is so relaxing. I love sitting out here, and I love the shadows of the early morning and late afternoon," she said.

Bronstad, who paints in oils, described painting as a squall came up, requiring him to hold his canvas on the easel. As the storm grew near, he decided to head home. "But I got a good start," he said. "That's what plein air is all about." He has been known to stay out long beyond the time the others went home. Steiner remembers him remaining to paint a sunset and the dark setting in so that he had to use his headlights when he finally ended his day.

The entire group will be the "featured artist" for the Key Center Art Walk, the Two Waters Arts Alliance event scheduled Aug. 4. Paintings will be on display at Blend Wine Shop in Key Center for the month.





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# Rowing for Smitty: From Vaughn Bay to Canada Ten years ago six men rowed three boats 165 miles to recreate a teenage adventure,

Ten years ago six men rowed three boats 165 miles to recreate a teenage adventure, honoring a lost comrade and raising money to defeat the disease that took him.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

In June of 1970, Rick and Smitty were fresh graduates of Peninsula High School. They had grown up on the Key Peninsula — Rick on the family homestead in Vaughn and Smitty in Minter. They both worked trimming trees, bucking hay, painting barns, picking salal and oysters, and running the gas station in Key Center on Sundays. Now they were both facing the draft for Vietnam, and the National Guard had shot dead four peaceful protesters and wounded nine others at Kent State University that May.

They needed to get away from it all, at least for a while. So they rowed to Canada.

"I think we were looking around for something to do because we knew that

we were headed out and we might not see each other for a while," said Richard Clark — Rick — of

"WE WERE GOING TO MAKE LIKE HUCKLEBERRY FINN, WEAR HICK HATS AND ROW AND SMOKE PIPES."

his trip with his friend Smitty, Mark Smith.

"Of course, the big joke was there were a bunch of people that we knew headed across the border so they wouldn't get drafted," Rick said. "A few guys, a guy a year ahead of us, had already come back to the peninsula in coffins. So, we were kind of joking about going over the border and not coming back, and somehow getting the boat back to Ken."

Rick's neighbor, Ken Brones, offered them his antique double-oarlock rowboat. Rick said he thought their parents, or at least their dads, were all for it, though they didn't ask anyone's permission. "I should say that during high school we were very independent, pretty rebellious. But Dad knew this was kind of a coming of age thing, and I think he was kind of proud of us," Rick said.

"We had no anxieties that I can think of. We had fishing rods and a little shovel for digging clams. We had a whole lot of Carnation instant dry milk, we had instant oats,

potato powder, pipe tobacco and Tang. And we just took off."

The boys did not know it would take 12 days to row the 165 miles to reach White Rock, British Columbia. "We were going to make like Huckleberry Finn, wear hick hats and row and smoke pipes," Rick said.

"We camped on beaches, caught fish, gathered oysters and dug clams. When

couple of big logs and watched the show and slept on the gravel and we were dry. That moment stuck with me."

When they reached White Rock, the boys decided not to row into town because they weren't sure how they would be received. "We pulled in a little bit to the west, got a ride to a town in the other direction and called Smitty's girlfriend, Betty. She came with her family's car, which was the largest station wagon ever built on planet Earth, and we got that boat, 400 pounds probably, up there, and she drove us back. Going over the border, nobody cared."

Rick enlisted in the Navy and Smitty joined the Coast Guard. The last time they saw each other was in 1975.

"My dad sent me a blurb about Smitty's death in 2009," Rick said. "I just started kicking myself because I'd lost touch with him, we'd been such good friends and had really good adventures together."

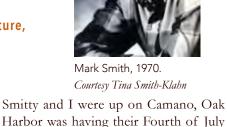
"The irony of it was that one of his last wishes was to see Rick and I had been searching for him online," said Smitty's younger sister, Tina Smith-Klahn.

Smitty was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis — ALS; Lou Gehrig's disease — in 2007.

Mark Smith tried his hand at many things: dairy farmer, cattle farmer, commercial fisherman in Alaska, where he homesteaded, and later in California and Hawaii, where he said a shark once took a bite out of his boat.

"He had settled down and had a home and property and a beautiful yard, then he got sick and sold it all," Smith-Klahn said. "It was devastating to me but he

Vaughn Bay launch, August 2012. Courtesy Richard Clark



fireworks and that night it poured but we

had my dad's big oiled tarp draped over a



didn't care because those things didn't matter anyway. His thing was adventure."

Soon after Smitty's death, Rick told the story about their row to Canada one

"AND ALL OF A SUDDEN THIS GUY

SAID 'YOU SHOULD DO IT AGAIN,'

AND THEN MY FRIEND PETE SAID

'I'LL BE THE OTHER ROWER.' '

day to a group of friends over coffee. "And all of a sudden this guy said 'You should do it again,' and

then my friend Pete Schroeder said 'I'll be the other rower.' "

What seemed like a lunatic idea one moment became very serious the next.

"In other words, Pete was going to take Smitty's place in the boat, in this new adventure," Rick said. "It was very emotional."

Someone suggested they do it as fundraiser for ALS research. "So that was it. First it was just me and Pete, scrounging around for a boat."

But when Rick's brother, Geoff Clark, heard about it, he insisted on going along. "So then we were looking for two boats." Rick's nephew, Kilian Olshewsky, still in high school, would accompany Geoff.

"First we tried to find boats," Geoff said. "We looked at a few, and they wanted 7 or 8 grand." The brothers wound up buying stitch-and-glue dory kits from Chesapeake Light Craft for \$750 each, then taking a class in Port Townsend on how to build them for another \$750.

Then Geoff got a call from their halfbrother Dana Clark in California. The three brothers had almost no contact growing up but their dad had died and his estate needed settling. By the time that was over, they needed to build a third

boat for Dana and his son, Richie.

The six rowers launched in August 2012 from Vaughn Bay. They received

some sponsorship support from Chesapeake Light Craft and more from West Marine in the form of paint and accessories, and managed to raise \$8,390 for the Evergreen Chapter of the ALS Association.

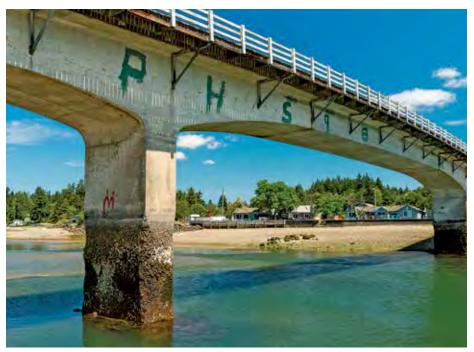
"The way this event expanded and grew just astonished us," Rick said. "So many people wanted to be involved, so many people wanted to give money."

The rowers reached Blaine in 11 days. "We redid the same route, but we didn't camp wherever we thought we could get away with it as with Smitty and I," Rick said. "That's why we had a couple of 20 plus mile days. When we camped on Blake Island, we all collapsed on the grass and couldn't get up."

When the rowers reached Canada, instead of crossing they lined up between buoys marking the border. "We all said something about Smitty," Rick said. "We shouldn't let our good friends slip into the oblivion of our memory. Stay in touch."

He was carrying a small charm containing some of Smitty's ashes, to ensure he was there too.





Built in 1936, the Purdy Bridge is graded as "poor condition" by WSDOT. Concrete pier deterioration seen here at low tide is slated for repair this summer. *Chris Konieczny* 

### **Detours Ahead for Eight-Day Closure of SR-302**

It wouldn't be summer without road construction: Expect delays

STAFF REPORT

Multiple improvements over an 8-mile stretch of State Route 302 stretching from Elgin Clifton Road to Purdy, delayed by Covid restrictions in 2020, are back on track for completion by year's end. Construction delays are expected to slow travel from August into September, with an upcoming eight-day closure of SR-302 to install new culverts at Little Minter Creek just north of the Minter Creek Bridge.

The exact dates of the schedule were not finalized as of press time but the signed detour route, using 118th Ave. NW, Creviston Dr. NW and 134th Ave. NW, is expected to add roughly five minutes to the drive, according to a travel notice from Washington State Department of Transportation Project Engineer Lone Moody.

Heavy trucks and oversized loads will follow a different detour route to bypass the area, using SR-16 and SR-3 through Belfair to avoid the SR-302 closure.

While the new bridge over Minter Creek has been open since last fall, crews returned in July to complete the multi-year WSDOT project designed to improve fish passage for spawning salmon. Crews will remove the old culvert, grade the stream bed and place natural debris into the channel as part of the stream restoration effort. A new guardrail will be installed near the bridge to conclude the project that began in 2019.

Alternating traffic reduced the highway to one lane at times to allow contractors to move equipment in and out of the work area safely, creating long delays at times.

With the Minter Creek Bridge complete,

crews began work to remove and replace two outdated culverts near 118th Ave. NW at Little Minter Creek.

"Field biologists collected and relocated nearly 700 baby salmon and other fish to an area outside the work zone," in a process Moody described as "defishing."

"To do this, biologists set up a net to prevent fish from entering the work area, then start walking down the creek with a weighted net to flush the fish downstream, then another net is set to prevent the fish from swimming back into the work area. Next, they used a device called an Electrofisher to shock any fish that remain in the creek, which they then scoop up, identify and count, and relocate downstream."

In a presentation made at the Key Peninsula Community Council meeting May 12 via Zoom, WSDOT Multimodal Planning Engineer Dennis Engel and Regional Traffic Engineer Sara Ott outlined additional work coming this summer.

"Plans made to resurface the deck of the Purdy Bridge last August were postponed due to Covid related delays on the Minter Creek Bridge construction that missed the window of dry weather needed for the contractor to complete the work," Engel said. The two projects had been bid together in an attempt to save both time and money, a plan thwarted by the pandemic.

Upcoming work is scheduled to begin mid-August to rehabilitate columns and beams on the Purdy Bridge, paving of SR-302 north to 154th NW, and removal of the fish barrier on the SR-302 spur at Purdy Creek; and removal of another barrier to fish passage near Peninsula High School.

# **Prepare for** Wildfire Smoke!

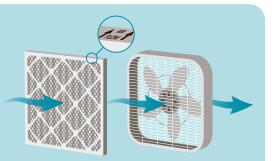


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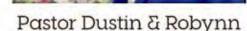
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# Post-Pandemic Recovery: 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' by Gabriel García Márquez

Wherein our baffled correspondent discovers unlikely guidance after self-isolation

I'D BEEN READING IT IN THE

**HOSPITAL FOR TWO DAYS** 

BEFORE I NOTICED THERE WAS

NO WINDOW IN MY ROOM.

THERE'S ALSO A PRIEST WHO

CAN'T DRINK CHOCOLATE

BECAUSE IT MAKES HIM LEVITATE.

### KATRINA HERRINGBOTTOM

We were about a month into this thing last year when I was laid up in the hospital. It wasn't Covid-related but I was imprisoned long enough to learn what that disease was doing to people, to the people who seemed to love them, and to the people who did what it took to care for them.

On my way in I thought I might not be back for a while, so I grabbed a long book

and it happened to be this one. Some smart person gave it to me 40 years ago but I hadn't gotten around to

reading it. I figured if nothing else it would help me sleep.

"Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice." That is the first sentence, off at a gallop that doesn't stop for 400 pages.

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" tells the story of six (maybe seven) generations of the Buendía family in the village of Macondo, founded by José Arcadio Buendía (the colonel's father) while fleeing the ghost of his murder victim when he has a vision of living in a city of mirrors (or is it mirages?). He builds a village on the spot in a jungle on a peninsula somehow surrounded by water. The ghost pursues José but turns out to be just one of many who inhabit these pages and settle down to comfortable afterlives haunting Macondo, our first hint that running from the past means

Over the next century, the Buendía family faces plagues of insomnia,

bringing it with you.

amnesia and butterflies, three dozen civil wars, and a rain that lasts five years. There's also a priest who can't drink chocolate because it makes him levitate.

The book is not as baffling as all that, but I'll admit I'd been reading it in the hospital for two days before I noticed there was no window in my room.

The Buendías endure, as most of us would, by getting drunk, leading revolutions, turning lead into gold, commit-

ting adultery (knowingly) and incest (unknowingly), and in the case of Úrsula — the 200-year-old family matriarch — endlessly adding rooms onto an increasingly unnavigable house.

When the family adopts an anxious orphan, her insomnia spreads to the family and then to the whole village in a plague of sleeplessness that leads to amnesia, which causes people to start labeling things so they won't forget what they are. They write "cow" on cows, "man" on men,

and "love" on lovers. The plague ends only after a Buendía family friend returns to the village with a

new invention — a camera — and the villagers photograph and catalog everything they can to prove it exists, including God.

One is tempted to assign specific meanings to these happenings in an attempt to translate them into our own reality. But our author, Gabriel García Márquez, was a high priest of magical realism, where events, objects and characters remain more evocative than definitive.

For example, an American fruit company comes to Macondo to build a banana plantation, a railroad and housing, which are soon followed by corruption, strikes and a massacre of the workers. The bodies are dumped into the ocean and the sole survivor — a Buendía, of course —is disbelieved and driven away. It then starts to rain for five years, beginning Macondo's slow destruction.

This is a real incident from the history of Colombia, the author's homeland. He

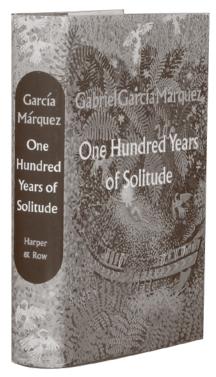
just added the rain.

The writing is straightforward, rich and lyrical, easily mixing the ordinary

with the magical. But every miracle and tragedy, self-inflicted and foretold, reinforces the solitude of the Buendías — a family founded in escape. Generation after generation resist the truth by withdrawing further into Úrsula's ever expanding house, inviting fate to follow them into every room.

I was halfway through the book the second time when I got sprung. I wasn't gone that long, but the world was different.





Everyone but me had forgotten how to drive. Crazy people were all over, masked up or not, socially distancing or not, yelling for no good reason or shunning each other entirely.

I felt like I was coming home to

Macondo. ■

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" published 1967 by Editorial Sudamericana, Buenos Aries; translation from the Spanish by Gregory Rabassa published 1970 by Harper & Row, 424 pages.

Gabriel García Márquez (1927-2014) left law school to pursue journalism in his native Colombia and became one of the most influential authors of the 20th century. He was a vocal political critic, a friend of Fidel Castro who admired Communism in theory but not so much in practice, and once took a Greyhound bus across the South to see the land of his hero, William Faulkner. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982.

In an interview the next year, García Márquez said "I provide a magnifying glass so readers can understand reality better. Let me give you an example. In the Eréndira story, I have the character Ulises make glass change color every time he touches it. Now, that can't be true. But so much has already been said about love that I had to find a new way of saying that this boy is in love. Mine is just another way of saying the same thing that has always been said about love; how it upsets life, how it upsets everything."

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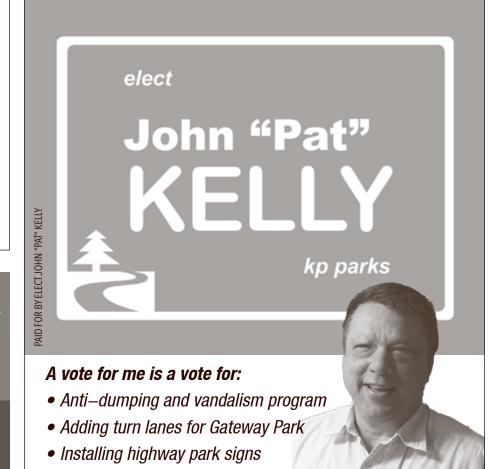
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Citizen review of park programs



# County and Coalition Embrace 'No Wrong Door' Approach to Ending Homelessness

Service providers are joining forces to address the unique challenge of homelessness on the Key Peninsula.

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

An RV and two custom truck trailers set up shop in the parking lot of the Key Peninsula Civic Center June 25. The first trailer held three shower rooms. The second trailer held four commercial washer-dryer units. The self-contained mobile unit was open for business free of charge throughout a hot summer day.

Along with fresh meals and racks of clean clothes, tents and tables were arrayed around the shower and laundry trailers with representatives standing by from healthcare providers, mental health services, local food banks and shelters.

It was the KP's first visit from the New Hope Mobile

Resources Response Team, and one step in a collective effort to bring services to people experiencing homelessness on the peninsula.

The mobile unit is a new phenomenon in Pierce County. It is the brainchild of Paula Anderson, director of the Puyallup-based New Hope Resource Center. At the onset of the pandemic, she asked for a grant to deliver basic services to unincorporated Pierce County. Five days later, the county got her started. Everything in the trailers was donated by businesses.

The county has adopted a "no wrong door" approach to its coordinated entry system for people experiencing homelessness. At the mobile unit, this means a New Hope staff member is in the RV with a laptop. They are usually someone who has experienced homelessness themselves, so when a freshly showered and clothed person comes in looking for other services, the staff member can talk to them without judgment and put their information directly into the county's

tracking system. In that environment, the person is often ready to think positively about next steps.

"We like to say we're hope and dignity on wheels," Anderson said.

Homelessness on the Key Peninsula can be hard to track. Recent county statistics for everything west of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge put the number of households experiencing homelessness at 148, with a third of them chronically homeless. This includes those who are unsheltered as well as those couch-surfing or living in vehicles. But the

> statistics may be an undercount since they come from the county Home-

lessness Management Information System, which can only accurately track numbers if service providers enter data about the people they see. And many people are never seen.

"You go where you're safe," said Valeri Knight of the Pierce County Human Services Community and Homeless Programs. "In the City of Tacoma, typically that's a lit area, sometimes on specific streets. Whereas on the KP, you're safe in a lot of places, and you can hide in the woods."

"There are no large encampments (on the KP)," said Bob Vollbracht, chair of the Gig

"WE LIKE TO SAY WE'RE HOPE

AND DIGNITY ON WHEELS."

Harbor Key Peninsula Housing-Homeless Coalition. "They are ones, twos, threes, fours in isolated areas all over the place." Connections to the homeless community come through the local food banks and a handful of other nonprofits.

"We are building a safety net," Vollbracht

said. Together with Chandra Hallam of Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church and Key Peninsula Community Manager Gina Cabiddu of Children's Home Society, Vollbracht is a driving force behind a new coalition working to unite efforts to combat homelessness across the Gig Harbor and Key peninsulas.

The new coalition, which over the course of a year has gathered support from over 100 members, seeks to raise awareness and connect resources that are often far apart.

Hallam is one of those resources. She works to connect families with housing they can afford. "A lot of people have lost housing," she said, describing a local family that came to Communities In Schools of Peninsula for help. Although agencies were able to provide the family with enough money for a deposit and first month's rent, the only rental they could find was in Tacoma, uprooting the children from the Peninsula School District. The situation is unstable, Hallam said, because the area lacks rentals that people can afford.

"Everyone has a specific trauma that comes with their homeless experience," Knight said. "Part of what we do, and

what we've learned in the last year, is to really just listen and respond accordingly."

For the county's part, the pandemic offered a chance to reset its approach.

In the past the county attempted to centralize all homeless services. Now it relies on community partners, knowing that people will turn up to ask for help in the places they feel most comfortable, like churches or community centers. The county is investing in relationships with those groups and supporting them with resources. "We're going to open a lot of doors," Knight said.

A new urgency was given to the county's work in May, when the county council passed a resolution requiring an emergency response to homelessness. Using pandemic stimulus funds, by November the county must create sufficient shelter space to accommodate all unsheltered residents. The resolution also requires updates to the county's long-term comprehensive plan, including identifying reasons why people cannot afford housing and offering solutions to prevent homelessness in the first place.

Currently that is a major concern for all of the organizations. "When the rent moratorium does finally go, there's going to be another wave," Anderson said. "We're all dreading that." She said that just telling people about the rental assistance funds already in place through the county for both tenants and landlords will go a long way to keeping people housed.

To Vollbracht and his new coalition, the visit from the mobile unit is a promising step toward a much stronger network of services on the Key Peninsula. By coordinating efforts and educating community providers, he said, those experiencing homelessness will be able to get the wraparound care they need.

"I won't say it's controllable, but it's potentially manageable," Vollbracht said. "We'll build a base that can handle the larger influx of homelessness that we know is coming."

FOR THE COUNTY'S PART, THE PANDEMIC OFFERED A CHANCE TO RESET ITS APPROACH.





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BARBARA VAN BOGART

Picnic: Originally a 17th century French term, "pique-nique," its meaning then as now is a social gathering where each attendee brings a share of food. For most of us, the word evokes memories of summers past, perhaps as a kid with sandwiches and Kool-Aid on a blanket spread out in the backyard under leafy trees and dappled sun, or as an adult sitting at a picnic table with family and friends, an array of potluck summer goodies before you.

Deviled eggs, hot dogs, burgers, potato salad, baked beans and home canned pickles (See "Pickles, From Sour to Sweet," KP News, Aug. 2020) all rank high on my personal list of must haves, along with freshly baked pie. Others might choose Dagwood sandwiches, fried chicken, bratwurst, watermelon, corn on the cob, brownies, cookies or other family favorite recipes, handed down from grandparents to parents and now to you.

Whatever your must-haves might be, the lazy days of August are the perfect time to dust off old recipes, search cookbooks or the internet for new ideas, all with the goal of making time to celebrate summer with a picnic.

No picnic is complete without homemade baked beans. This is a family favorite worthy of any picnic table.

### **Edna's Baked Pork and Beans**

Soak two pounds of small navy beans overnight. In the morning, simmer in water for an hour. Drain well. 6 to 8 cups of water

- 1 medium size bottle ketchup (I use Heinz)
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 medium onions, diced
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 or 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 pound salt pork, diced

Mix ingredients into a bean pot or Dutch oven. Bake at 325 for 4-6 hours, stirring occasionally and adding more water if necessary.

Over the years, I've tried many recipes for potato salad and have settled on this as a favorite. A shout out to my niece Sue for sharing her method of making this savory summer dish.

### **Sue's Potato Salad**

- Approx. 5 lbs. Yukon gold potatoes
- ½ small sweet onion, diced
- 2 teaspoons yellow mustard
- 3 stalks celery, diced
- 1 to 1½ cups mayonnaise
- 6 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and
  - chopped

Boil potatoes uncovered starting with cold water until just tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Rinse, cool, peel and cut into 1-inch chunks. Put mayonnaise and mustard in a bowl, add chopped eggs and mix, mashing egg chunks into mayonnaise. Add onion, celery and salt and pepper to taste. Gently mix in cooked potatoes, being careful not to mash. Top with another hard-boiled egg, sliced thin. Sprinkle with paprika if desired. Chill well and serve.

Finally, a picnic isn't a picnic without desserts. From ubiquitous brownies to homemade pie, the possibilities for the grand finale on an amazing picnic are endless. Here are two long-time favorites.

### Quick and Easy

### **One-Pan Brownies for a Crowd**

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 34 cup cocoa powder
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs at room temperature
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- Pinch of salt 2 cups chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly grease a 9-by-13 inch pan. Melt butter in a large saucepan. Remove from heat. Add cocoa powder and mix thoroughly. Add sugar and mix well. Beat in each egg separately, mixing well after each addition. Add flour and salt, mixing until combined. Stir in chocolate chips. Pour into prepared pan and bake for approximately 20-25 minutes, until the brownies start to pull away from the side of the pan. Don't over bake. Cool and frost if desired.

I prepare pie crust in my ancient Cuisinart but you can also mix by hand.

### Simple Pie Crust

(adapted from Julia Child)

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cake flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 ounces cold, unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

- 4 tablespoons vegetable shortening or leaf lard (I use Crisco)
- ½ cup ice water

If you are using a food processor, add the flour and salt and pulse once to mix. Add the butter chunks, pulsing five or six times to break up the butter. Then add the shortening or lard, pulsing a few times again, until it resembles coarse crumbs. Now add the ice water, pulsing until you have a cohesive dough. It should hold together when you press it with your hand. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and form into two discs. If you are mixing by hand, use a pastry cutter to mix in butter and shortening, adding ice water with a large fork to mix well before forming into discs as above.

Wrap separately in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes before using. Otherwise freeze until needed. Thaw out about an hour before rolling into a pie crust, using your favorite pie filling. Bake according to the recipe you choose. I've found one disc makes enough dough for a 9-inch two crust pie. Be sure to roll out thin for the flakiest crust.

Once you've mastered this recipe, you will never buy pre-made crust again.

Before more of summer disappears, start planning your next "pique-nique" with family and friends, and of course include the food that makes summer special to you.

We'd love to feature a dish from your KP kitchen that friends and family ask for. Email the details to editor@keypennews.org with your phone number; we'll be in touch. PS: There's a printable, shareable pdf with the complete recipe on keypennews.org



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SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Drought is the natural summer state on the Key Peninsula. The Pacific Northwest has a Mediterranean climate, with most rain falling in the winter when plants don't necessarily need it, and dry summers — in fact some of the driest in the country. The recent heat dome and continued widespread drought throughout the West make this a good time to think about drought-tolerant gardens.

Jonathan Hallet is a landscape architect who recently worked with his in-laws to plan drought-tolerant plantings on their parcel in Home. Charlie Davis often visited Home when his parents lived on A Street. When his mother sold the property, Davis and his wife Nancy Stevens kept the parcel just behind the house. They plan to build in the next few years but have already started landscaping.

Hallet said that many garden plans in the northwest have traditionally come from a Japanese or English vernacular — one that is lush and water-dependent. "I'm interested in finding native plants that are more suited to this climate," he said.

The Pierce County Master Gardeners have a demonstration garden in Sehmel Homestead Park that includes a drought-tolerant bed. They recommend grouping plants with similar water requirements.

Some preparation is important prior to planting. Traditional recommendations are that the hole be two to four times bigger than the root ball, with compost measuring a quarter of the backfill mix to allow for better water retention. Each individual rootball should be watered regularly for the first

two growing seasons after planting, ensuring that the entire root zone is wet. It is time to water again when the roots have dried a bit. The watering schedule can taper off once the plants are established. True drought-tolerant plants should tolerate monthly watering or less, but if they begin to look marginal, they may need an extra drink.

Hallet subscribes to a "tough love" approach. "When I plant stuff, I don't dig a much deeper or wider hole than needed. If you do that, it does give you the opportunity to add wood chips for water retention, but you don't want to make it so luxurious that the plant won't extend its roots past the planting hole. It's part of the tough love of wanting the plant to go find water and nutrients," he said.

Hallet selected dozens of plants for the Home property — some for dry sun, others for dry shade, as well as shrubs that will provide screening. Ground covers include Erigeron glaucus, commonly known as seaside daisy, and several types of kinnickinnick. Among the perennial selections are Helichrysum italicum, a daisy known as curry plant; Eriophyllum lanatum, or common woolly sunflower; Erigeron speciosus, or aspen fleabane; and Camassia quamash, the bulb known as small camas. He selected two hellebores, Douglas iris, and Mahonia nervosa or dwarf Oregon grape for the shaded areas. Shrubs include rockrose, lavender, carpet manzanita, boxleaf azara, Phlomis fruticose or Jerusalem sage, rosemary, and Ceanothus, more commonly known as California lilac.

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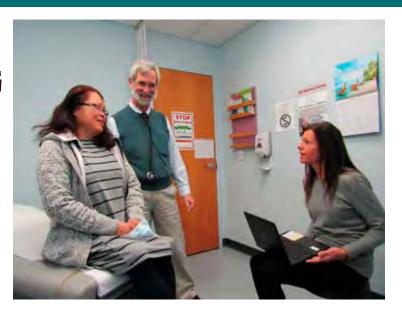


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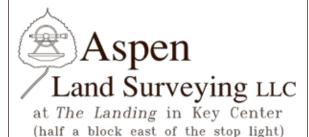
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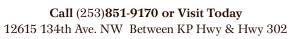
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