

## Forum cancelled

The Key Peninsula News, in conjunction with Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee, has decided to cancel its May 11 forum for the Metropolitan Park District candidates. The KP News has been discussing organizing the forum since February, with the idea of providing a neutral ground for all candidates to share their views with the voters. However, upon learning that several other similar forums were being conducted in the area, we decided duplicating the efforts of others would not be a good use of our limited resources.

We would like to thank Councilman Lee for his support and willingness to sponsor such an important public event.

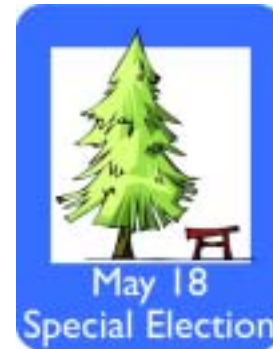
## METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT ELECTIONS MAY 18

The special MPD election May 18 will have two separate questions on the ballot. The first question will ask whether a Key Peninsula Metropolitan Park District should be created and the second will contain the candidates' names.

Voter pamphlets will be mailed out by the first week of May and posted online on the Pierce County's Web site. Absentee ballots must be postmarked by May 18 and will also be accepted at any of the polling locations.

A simple majority of "yes" votes (more than 50 percent of those who vote) is needed to pass the MPD. For each of the five contested positions, only the candidates with the highest votes will be elected. Of the five newly elected commissioners, the two with the most votes will receive five-year terms, the next two with the most votes will receive three-year terms and the person with the least votes will receive a one-year term.

For more information, call the county auditor at 798-7427 or visit the county Web site at [www.co.pierce.wa.us](http://www.co.pierce.wa.us). According to elections staff, the results of the vote will be posted online as ballots are counted, and will be officially certified about a week after the election. **See page 12 for candidates' information.**



## May 8 fair has the best of Key Pen

By Rodika Tollefson  
KP News

More than three years ago, a group of Civic Center volunteers, spearheaded by then-board member Tim Kezele, had an idea. Since the Civic Center is the hub for many local nonprofits and community events, why not have a little show-and-tell for the Key Peninsula groups, to show all the things they do to make this a better place?

Now in its third year, the show-and-tell has the official name of the Key Peninsula Livable Community Fair—and is organized by the Civic Center together with Safe Streets. Last year, the event's attendance grew strong.

"Originally the idea was to be an informational event so people can find out what their community is doing. Last year we envisioned the music being in the background but it ended up being the highlight of the day," said organizer Dennis Taylor of Safe Streets. "Since the entertainment was such a hit, we decided to expand it."

Who can forget the magnificent cloggers practically putting all other motion on hold while strutting and clicking on stage? Their performance caused the entire crowd to conglomerate near the stage. They will be back this year, adding to a lineup that includes the Key Peninsula Middle School Jazz Band, the Evergreen Elementary Blues Kids, Peninsula High School's Razzmatazz and Quartet Musette with Lorraine Hart.

If you want to know who is who, what is happening around the community, what resources are available to you, how you can help—this is the place for your "one-stop shopping." With entertainment and activities inside and outside through the day, and the plant sale by the Lakebay Fuchsia Society outside – you might as well make a day of it.

Arts, crime prevention, safety, health, sustainable living, and fun activities—these are just some of the aspects to be featured. Radio station KGHP is expected to air live.

"This is a celebration, a showcasing of the best" Key Peninsula has to offer, Taylor

(See **LIVABLE**, Page 18)

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A workman from Alexander Electric pulls wire for Cedarland Northwest's latest construction project in Palmer Lake.

Photo by  
Irene Torres

## New development under way in Palmer Lake

By Irene Torres  
KP News

Starting with one fixer-upper at Lake Holiday five years ago, Cedarland Northwest has embarked on an ambitious new housing development in Palmer Lake. Under the tutelage of John Carlson of Lakebay Woodworkers, Ben Cedarland and his brother, Joe, sold

their first remodeled home in 1999. The next year, they built and sold two new houses. The following year they finished five.

Their fledgling company grew to complete 16 homes the third year, 50 the fourth. Now, they employ three full-time superintendents, a customer

(See **HOMES**, Page 18)

# Residents want to see action on SR-302 fixes

By Danna Webster  
KP News

There was no screeching of tires or crashing of bumpers at the April "SR-302 Meeting." There was a calm serious resolve among the neighbors to find a means to get the message out that State Route 302 and its "Wauna curves" is a serious hazard. Over two dozen concerned neighbors joined community leaders to seek answers for the troubles of SR-302.

SR-302's problematic history was provided by Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee and State Rep. Lois McMahan. Lee presented a 10-year overview of the transportation improvement efforts directed toward the Key Peninsula, summarizing that the only results so far include more traffic, more congestion and some deaths. He reported on the effort begun about a year ago known as RTID (Regional Transportation Investment District), a coalition of Pierce, King and Snohomish counties that has developed a regional plan to fund local projects for each of the counties.

(Details about RTID and the history of proposals for SR-302 have been covered in detail in the March and April issues of KP News.)

Lois McMahan discussed her commitment for completing the Burley-Olalla interchange, saying she wants it done before the opening of the new bridge across the Tacoma Narrows in 2008. She outlined the political work and efforts made to date for the interchange and credited the Olalla neighbors for making the interchange a Department of Transportation priority. The neighbors filled up their school gymnasium with concerned citizens and kept the interchange on the political front burner. She said that DOT has never forgotten that night at the gymnasium and that they are getting tired of hearing about the problem. This has led to the pending action.

Wauna residents added their observations and concerns for the record. Speed, increased traffic volume and congestion, kids jumping in and out of their cars parked along the Purdy Sandspit, potholes at the boat launch,

lack of a comprehensive plan, dangerous passing patterns, and stopping for pedestrians resulting in rear-end accidents were discussed.

From the audience, Jeff Harris, interim president of the Key Peninsula Community Council, explained how the council could become the "citizens' voice" necessary to make SR-302 improvements. The Community Council is conducting a needs assessment survey, and will seek input at the Livable Community Fair on May 8 at the Vaughn Civic Center. The results from the survey will determine the actions for the council. McMahan and Lee were supportive of the community council as a viable means to get the attention of elected officials and the Department of Transportation about the dangers of the highway.

To keep the momentum building and gain the awareness of more elected officials, Nancy Lind, a former parks commissioner who arranged the April meeting, volunteered to organize another one with more officials in a few months.

## Residents invited to public safety town hall meeting

Community safety, child abuse and neglect, and property losses are among the topics to be discussed at a "public safety" town hall meeting Thursday, May 20, hosted by Rep. Lois McMahan.

"We've received much attention about the increased rate of sexual abuse and exploitation against children in our local community. People are also concerned about crime and their general safety as well as problems related to property loss and theft," said McMahan, R-Olalla.

Numerous officials and agencies will discuss crime prevention and safety issues and will include representatives from the Washington State Patrol, Safe Streets, Citizens Against Crime, therapeutic foster care and counseling, and community corrections officers. Topics will include homeland security, child abuse and neglect, the sex offender Website and supervision, domestic violence, theft, drugs, probation, the Amber Alert, identity theft, senior safety, McMahan's House Bill 2400, The Child Protection Act of 2004, and more.

The meeting will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the KP Civic Center in Vaughn.

# Comprehensive planning takes second stage

By Rodika Tollefson  
KP News

With last year's approval by Pierce County Council to create a Key Peninsula Comprehensive Plan and a KP Advisory Commission, the county planners have been collecting information and doing some groundwork. But the full-fledged

effort to involve residents in the planning is taking a back seat for now, said Councilman Terry Lee, who was behind the idea of the plan.

The reason, he said, is because he doesn't want to interfere with the creation of the Key Peninsula Community Council, which is within two months of elections. Since the comprehensive planning group and the advisory commission would complement the work of the community council and address some of the same issues, Lee says he would wait a few more months before delving into public discussions. Besides, many of those leaders busy launching the community council would likely be involved with the county's

comprehensive planning, and Lee said he doesn't want them to divert their attention from the Key Peninsula Community Council (which is separate from the county's efforts).

"The most seamless way to do it is wait on the community council organizing group to finish their business," Lee said. "Then we'll roll it out into the community."

The comprehensive plan would help Key Peninsula manage growth before it becomes rapid, and Lee feels it needs to be done before the second Tacoma Narrows Bridge is completed because improved traffic would make this area more attractive.

"You can wait like South Hill until

growth gets here," he said, or do as Gig Harbor did with its plan in 1975. "Gig Harbor is continuously held up as a poster child of good land development, and South Hill is an example of bad land development."

The Key Peninsula Advisory Commission, when created, would have six to nine members who would deal with land-use issues and make recommendations to the county's hearing examiner, much like the Peninsula Advisory Commission does in Gig Harbor. The KPAC's focus would be to make sure new development meets the guidelines of the Key Peninsula Comprehensive Plan once it's implemented.

## Peninsula KEY NEWS

To subscribe, please write,  
call or fax:  
Key Peninsula News  
17010 S. Vaughn Rd.  
P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394  
Phone (253) 884-4699  
Fax: (253) 884-4053  
Email news@keypennews.com

Executive editor: Rodika Tollefson  
Ad sales: Karen Hale  
Staff writers and contributors:  
William C. Dietz, Hugh McMillan,  
Colleen Slater, Irene Torres,  
Karen Hale, Danna Webster,  
Danielle V. Klenak  
Distribution: Phil Bauer

Production: September Hyde  
Publishing Committee chairman:  
Bill Trandum  
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# Memorial pays tribute to centenarian leader

By Rodika Tollefson  
KP News

Elsie Olson waited to reach a special mark few people do before "graduating," as her friends explained at her April 9 memorial celebration, to "death triumphant." She reached that special mark —becoming a centenarian in January—as she lived her life, with joy, selflessness, and much wisdom.



ELSIE OLSON

So some of the 200-plus friends and family members shared the secret to her long life: generosity and care for others. A local pioneer who started deep roots on the Key Peninsula, as evident by various children, grand-children, and nieces still living here, Elsie Olson was a symbol of civic commitment.

Olson, married for 63 years to late Elmer, was described to have lived her "dash" in life with pride, love, various volunteer commitments and a generosity



Photo by Rodika Tollefson

Katie Malik sings the Lord's Prayer at the memorial service, following her great-grandmother Elsie Olson's request.

that sometimes meant opening her home to others, hiring grandchildren "and always paying more than they deserved," and quietly inspiring others, by example, to do good works. Sometimes she volunteered at local events, other times she volunteered her girls for them instead.

A charter member of several local groups, she was the first Peninsula High School PTA president and the first—and only—mayor of Key Center, a title

bestowed on her in 1932.

Olson was a woman of many sophisticated tastes. Sometimes that meant holding tea parties, and other times it meant watching Mariners games. It always meant going to Bible studies, a habit she continued until the week of her passing.

"She was proud of the way she spent her dash," friend Joe Dervaes said in a poem he read. "Will you be proud of what they say about the way you live your dash?"

Even in her death, Elsie Olson remains a guiding lighthouse, an inspiration for a life worth living.

## Featured Property of the Month

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## Editorial

### Ponderings on leadership

By Rodika Tollefson

Our newspaper staff and reporters were criticized recently for poor leadership, making news rather than reporting, having an anti-community agenda —well, you can read some of it for yourself in the letters on this page. But what really raised my eyebrows was the comment that our publishing committee chair, Bill Trandum, doesn't recognize effective leadership.

Let's consider this for a moment. When the paper was shut down more than a year ago, it was Bill Trandum who stepped up

to the plate and said, "Gee whiz, the paper is really important to the community, and someone ought to find a way to bring it back." And so he did, with a group of other like-minded leaders, many of whom are still involved with the paper behind the scenes. (By the way, despite rumors, Bill Trandum has only resigned from the Civic Center board but continues as the publishing committee chairman).

It took some number crunching and a lot of hard work, but the result has been worth it. Not only did the newspaper pay for itself last year, but many readers say it's the best ever. Many letters specifically praise the leadership of the staff. We don't publish them all, but we share them at staff meetings because they validate our work.

Do you know we operate on a frugal budget, own little equipment, and thrive

mostly because of the generous volunteer time spent by our staff? Even the three part-time paid employees, including myself, volunteer a tremendous number of hours every month. Additionally, we mostly use our own equipment and supplies.

Do you know it was the vision of two people, Bill Trandum and me, that started the newspaper in the new direction 14 months ago? We lead a small team of other great visionaries who challenge us to improve the newspaper and continuously offer more to the readers. If it weren't for this group, in which every single person is a leader, you would not be receiving this paper every month.

Our commitment to tell it like it is and to provide all the information the Key Pen citizens require to make informed decisions apparently troubles some

residents. Anyone can say that we are biased if we don't share their specific opinion.

We have the responsibility to our community to not look the other way when some people pressure us. We must focus on the facts, give them to our readers, and let them decide what to do next.

Why do we do this? We live here too. We use the local grocery stores and gas stations. We have children at local schools. We bank at the local credit union and we get our perennials at the local nursery. The last thing we want is to shovel dirt over pretty flowers. But what sort of leaders would any of us be, if at the individual level we pretended all is always well in paradise?

*Rodika Tollefson is the Key Peninsula News executive editor.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Civic Center thanks garden club members

Just in two days' time, Nancy Howard and Kristen Bottiger of the Vaughn Bay Garden Club transformed the garden on the south side of the Civic Center from an overgrown, weedy conglomeration into a very attractive garden. Nancy has arranged for a friend, Bud Moore, to install a drip water system with a timer to ensure the garden receives adequate and regular watering that has always been a problem in the past.

I wish to thank these ladies for their heroic effort and the grand result they achieved. I believe I speak for everyone on the Civic Center Board, Children's Home Society, users and visitors to the center when I say how much their effort is appreciated. Thanks, Nancy and Kristen.

*Loyd Miller  
KPCCA*

### Daycare clarifies names

I, like many residents, am tickled to see so many businesses and services coming to our area. It was great to see the article about the new private school, Learning Key Campus, opening in September. It will be another much needed educational option for our families. But there may be some name confusion.

I have been a childcare provider for 23 years. Six years ago when we moved here, I was disappointed that our address would say Gig Harbor. Let's face it – we're not even close to living in Gig Harbor and I love Key Center! In my interviews with my

parents, I have always told them that these were my key things that I would focus on with their children: to help them become kind, caring human beings, to learn to communicate and to listen and respect others — and to learn to be responsible for themselves and the things they use, to learn to love books! Then the search for a name for my childcare here just fell into place — Key to Learning Childcare.

The people forming the new school were not aware that there was a childcare in the area with that name. Their name is very similar — and that's OK with me. Great minds think alike!

I've spoken with them and we will gladly give people the right phone number if mix-ups occur. So if you want Key to Learning Childcare, my phone number is 884-1184. If you want Learning Key Campus, the phone number is 884-9558.

I wish the school great success.

*Helen Macumber  
Key Center*

## METRO PARKS

### Commissioner responds to parks article

After reading the KP News for the seventh time I must let you know that I feel offended with the very personal affront that the KP News placed on me and new commissioners of the KP Park and Recreation Board. Mike Salatino is the one and only holdover member of our board.

Editorial criticisms, be they pro or con belong in the editorial section, not mixed with facts and statements as you have done. Facts are that the current board members have committed themselves to

not take any compensation as they legally could do so as in years past and at the present time. Fact, baseball is not the only user fee generated by our park. Etc, Etc...

You spent more readership time regards the raising of the new or additional levies and possible taxes which cast negative thoughts on the whole issue of keeping our parks solvent and functioning. Your reporting might improve if your staff came to every board meeting instead of now and then attendance. And then only listening to another outsider who is also an occasional visitor.

Voting to become a Metro Park District is our best option that does not raise our taxes but recaptures sales taxes that we have already paid is our best option at this time. Or does the staff of the KP News have another option not yet reported?

*Ross Bischoff  
KPPRD Commissioner*

### Commissioner doesn't like newspaper coverage

With the recent article in the KP News, I feel I must write and address the topic of per diem pay for commissioners of the Metro Park District. The reporters put forth the idea that all the commissioners will be jumping at the chance to draw pay and thus, squander away the projected tax revenue of \$100,000.

The present park district has the authority to draw per diem pay, but, for all these years, has chosen not to do it because of the constant budget constraints. Tentative candidates for the metro district positions have stated that they do not intend to seek per diem pay either. Had the reporters bothered to ask, they would have been told that as it was

discussed at the last park district meeting. Our meetings are open to the public and the reporters could have attended.

Apparently the KP News prefers to make news rather than reporting it. Is this what Bill Trandum calls hard-hitting news? It's ironic that Mr. Trandum writes about effective leadership, a quality he seems not to recognize.

*Mike Salatino  
KPPRD Chair*

### Former commissioner disputes letters

On May 18 the Key Peninsula will vote for a Metropolitan Park District. It's an important vote. Recently the Peninsula Gateway asked the question, "Will you vote in favor of the KP Metro Park District on May 18?" There were three responses but two KPPRD commissioners used this valuable space to rank on the KP News (*Editor's note: The same letters were submitted to the Key Peninsula News and are published here*). The third was from a PPRD (Gig Harbor) commissioner and he answered the question with "yes."

One letter said the KP News article is supposed to have put forth the "idea" that "all the commissioners will jump at the chance to draw pay and thus squander the projected \$100,000." Read the articles (*KP News, April*), no such thing was implied (see under "Commissioners are key").

The articles in the KP News were what the community needed in order to make an informed vote. It's what the MPD forming committee could have done had they chosen to do so. The material was thoughtfully done, accurate, indicative of

(See **LETTERS**, Page 5)

# Parks expert shares views

By Simon Priest

As someone who has worked with both the past and current KPPRD boards for the last few years, I have avoided commenting on the present situation until now. Recent articles in this paper and others have encouraged me to speak out.

My basic premise is this: by all means vote for the conversion to a Metro Parks system, but do not re-elect the present board members to run it. Yes, the new taxing opportunities would inject much needed cash into all three of the park properties and perhaps improve their recreation programming. However, a more balanced and impartial future for parks and recreation can only be achieved by selecting commissioners who have vision, direction, and leadership; and who are willing to seek funding alternatives rather than simply raising our taxes. I am concerned that the current commissioners lack these important criteria and, under undue influence, appear all too eager to seek short-term financial solutions to the

longterm problems plaguing them. If you know people who are running, take the time to ask them for their future vision.

Several years ago, a group of hard-working past commissioners led by Nancy Lind and Fred Ramsdell had the foresight to see the need for a comprehensive plan for leisure, parks and recreation. They realized the local plan was outdated and focused more on the Gig Peninsula than the Key Peninsula. Furthermore, they understood that the new Pierce County plan poorly represented our area in favor of more heavily populated regions. In 2001, they asked me, as a past professor of parks and recreation, to prepare a plan for them. They wanted an up-to-date plan that was user-friendly and representative of the people who live here.

I volunteered over 1,000 hours of my time and spent over \$1,000 of my money to develop a comprehensive plan for leisure, parks and recreation on the Key Peninsula. We had more than a dozen monthly public input meetings in 2002 and 2003. The plan underwent several reviews and an open

period of commenting in 2003. Outcomes of these meetings and the emerging comprehensive plan were summarized twice in this paper.

A year ago, I presented the finished plan for consideration by the current KPPRD board and the plan has yet to be adopted under the new chair. To date, no one from the current board has discussed this matter with me and I feel they are ignoring the hard work of numerous citizens who contributed to creating an overall vision of the people. Furthermore, how can KPPRD continue to operate without a public plan or perhaps based on a plan that is almost a decade old?

As someone who has trained hundreds of students for leadership roles in parks and recreation, I am not surprised by the lack of leadership on the current board. I see quotes in this paper such as this from the present KPPRD chair: "In the event metro...doesn't pass and we...are still here, all contracts are off and we're going to have to raise fees."

I wonder why other alternative funding sources, commonly accessed by other parks and recreation districts, such as grants, sponsorships, and donations are not being considered. I also wonder why

the current chair already appears to have made a decision that normally requires a majority vote to pass. I am amazed at how much financial and other critical data appear to be hidden from public view. According to your publisher's editorial in this paper: "the present commissioners voted to shelve the old Wauna post office issue so it wouldn't negatively affect the outcome of the MPD vote....was an ill-conceived effort to sway an election by withholding information from the public."

Lastly, I echo the recommendation from your paper and from countless community members who say "elect a well-rounded, well-qualified board that is committed to represent all interests and groups" and "we need commissioners who are honest, straightforward and accommodating to the public."

By all means, vote for Metro, but choose new commissioners who do not seek to fulfill personal agendas and who have experience, education, vision, leadership, and who are solution oriented, rather than problematic. Otherwise, in a few more years, we will find ourselves back in this very same predicament.

*Simon Priest, PhD, is a local resident and CEO of an international company.*

# Voters given opportunity to form metro park district

By Terry Lee

The Key Peninsula Park and Recreation District has struggled to finance park maintenance since it was first formed. Previous votes for maintenance and operation taxes have been approved by more than 50 percent; however, the measures didn't attract the supermajority of 60 percent needed for such a tax increase.

In 2002, the state Legislature authorized the formation of metropolitan park districts in unincorporated areas. Voter approval is required for formation, but once established, a new district would offer several advantages over the park district currently in place. The existing park district has no basic funding and must repeatedly seek voter approval for an operating budget; a metro park district would automatically receive Zoo/Trek funds—no vote required.

Also, new taxes, while optional, may be unnecessary; the Zoo/Trek allocation would provide approximately \$100,000 for parks in the Key Peninsula annually—easily adequate to pay for maintenance of

local parks that could become the responsibility of the metro park district. Because commissioners of metropolitan park districts have the discretionary ability to raise property taxes, voters may want to press the candidates for park commissioner for commitments as to raising taxes.

This May 18 ballot issue represents an exciting opportunity to put park funding on the Key Peninsula on solid footing. For over a decade, our local park district has tried to create parks in the area through volunteer efforts and modest bond levies. Now it's up to the voters to reward these efforts with a long-term funding package that will provide for local control, ensure funding of long-term park programs, and apply Zoo/Trek revenues toward maintenance costs.

I hope voters will see the value of the park programs on the Key Peninsula. Voter support for programs like these will ensure our quality of life in the future.

*Terry Lee represents University Place, Fircrest, and the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsulas on the Pierce County Council.*

(From **LETTERS**, Page 4)

probing reporters, and I was impressed with the amount of work. A major shift in the nature of our park system is about to take place and helping form that park district with good information should have had more community input. Committee Chair Ben Thompson was quoted as saying, "The information is available to anyone who wants to research it, I certainly don't advocate withholding information." Well, the KP News staff researched it, didn't withhold it, got it right and the community is the better for it. It's too bad if people don't like it. It's the way democracy works.

I was a commissioner for six years, Citizen of the Year recipient, involved in many park projects and eager to get a good park board elected that will be thoughtful, honest, considerate, democratic, work well together and above all make the district proud.

*Nancy Lind  
Home*

## Commissioner addresses Wauna post office issue

Regarding Bill Trandum's April editorial: The current Key Peninsula Park and Recreation District board tabled the issue of the Wauna Post Office for a

number of reasons:

KPPRD was running out of funds due to the 2003 levy failure and it needed to concentrate upon core responsibilities. These are the three facilities we currently manage (with the help of numerous volunteers). This reality rendered the Wauna Post Office issue moot.

The proposal to table the Wauna Post Office came in an open KPPRD meeting and was acted upon by all commissioners present at that time. I attended that meeting as a member of the public but was not a commissioner then.

The group supporting the W.P.O. project has never brought a business plan to the park board. They had no idea of restoration costs, how to raise funds, what maintenance costs would be or the use of the building after restoration. Without this information KPPRD would be remiss in its duty to the public to act on this issue.

KPPRD as a public body is obligated to hear all persons concerned about this issue. Currently KPPRD has such a limited budget that publishing dates for special hearing on the Wauna Post Office is beyond our means.

Is it truly the responsibility of a PRD to rehabilitate a dilapidated building which cannot be reasonably converted to a park or recreation use?

*Kip Clinton  
KPPRD Commissioner*



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## New path proposed between Home and Key Center

By Simon Priest & Jimmy Livengood, KPTC  
Special to KP News

Walking or riding along the Key Peninsula Highway (KPH) shoulder is extremely dangerous these days. Increased high-speed traffic has had numerous close calls with pedestrians and cyclists. Citizens have repeatedly asked Pierce County for a KPH sidewalk, but the funds are just not available.

A simple path is needed to avoid accidents, permit children to ride safely to and from their middle school, and allow people to exercise away from noise and fumes when walking to and from the Sports Center & Fairgrounds. A new path would also connect existing parks at Home, Maple Hollow, Volunteer Field, and Key Center.

The Key Peninsula Trails Committee proposes building a pathway along the west side of the KPH. This path would be entirely within existing road right-of-ways and doesn't intend to cross adjacent landowner properties. The gravel path would be separated from the paved highway by existing ditches and utility poles.

Since this is a volunteer effort, members of the community are encouraged to get involved. Come to the informational meeting (Key Peninsula Lutheran Church, 7 p.m., May 10) and share your concerns,

offer your assistance, or make a donation of goods, services, or financial support.

If you have any questions, please contact Jimmy Livengood at 857-6484 or email jimmylivengood@hotmail.com.

### KPTC

Formed in 2001, the Key Peninsula Trails Committee is a grass-roots effort of local citizens who are showcasing existing trails and developing new ones. To date, KPTC has completed two major trails, each with 100-page guidebooks.

The History Trail is a 50-mile automobile drive connecting 120 points of historical interest. The guidebook contains 12 maps, detailed descriptions of buildings, and 80 period photographs.

The Kayak Trail is a 40-mile kayaking route connecting 15 parks and other landings. The kayaking guidebook contains 30 maps, detailed directions, compass bearings, G.P.S. coordinates, and 15 photographs (see related story on page 25).

Future trails include bicycling, pedestrian, equestrian, and others (wheelchair, Braille, fitness, nature, scuba, and sailing) as requested by the community. All work is voluntary and funding is by donations.



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# Deadline approaches for KP Community Council nominations

By KP News staff

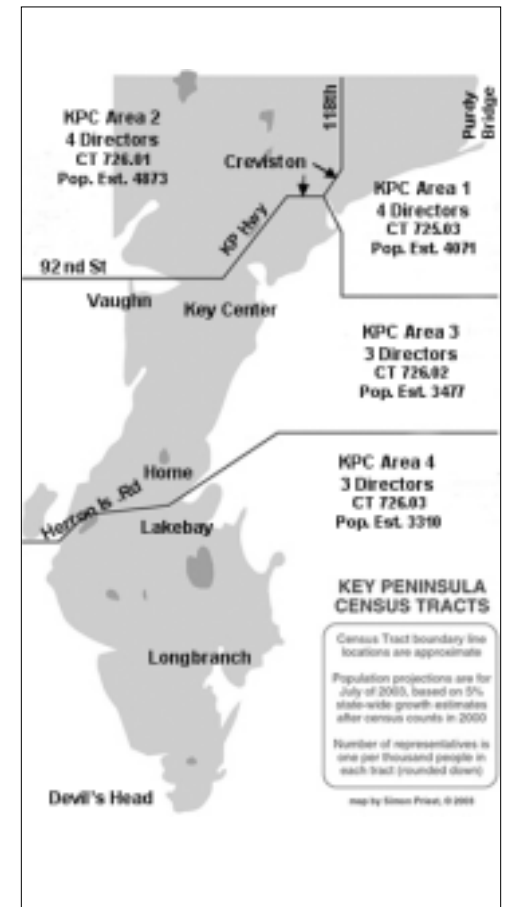
With elections for the new Key Peninsula Community Council set for June 26, interested residents have until May 31 to nominate themselves for one of the 14 council seats. Each census tract area will select one director per 1,000 residents, and all residents will vote on all candidates. The top vote-getters will become directors.

The Community Council interim board is asking candidates to also submit a biographical note and answers to the following questions: 1. Why they want to run; 2. What community work and organizations they have been involved in.

To vote, you don't need to be registered with Pierce County Auditor's office but you must be registered with the Community Council, an independent, nongovernmental body that is seeking 501(c)3 nonprofit status. To register, complete the form on this page or pick one up at the library, Key Peninsula Health Center, at the Livable Communities Fair May 8 and other locations.

Election procedures will be announced in the June issue of the Key Peninsula News; mail-in and walk-in ballots will be available.

For information or to learn more about nominations, call the KPC hotline at 884-0557.



## Key Peninsula Community Council Voting Member Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: (Mail and Physical) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone/e-mail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

By completing, signing and returning this form, you are entitled to vote for Directors of the Key Peninsula Community Council and/or run for a Council Director position and receive information concerning KPC activities.

**Your Name, Address and other information will not be shared with any other individual or organization.**

Please Mail or Return This Form in an Envelope or Drop At Any Fire Station or the Key Center Library.

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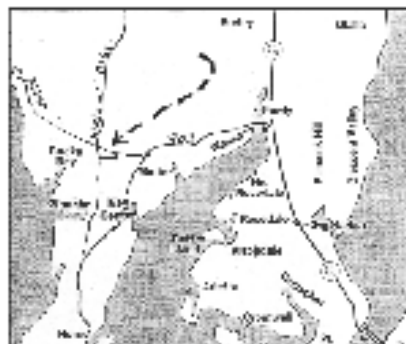
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# Show & Tell



*Photo by Hugh McMillan*

April's first Saturday played host to what lots of kids have long awaited, the opening day of Little League's season, 2004. The event took place at KP's Sports Center & Fairgrounds and was attended by 27 Little League teams each individually introduced and paraded onto the field at the instance of the League's president, Paula DeMoss, accompanied by Pierce County Councilman Terry Lee and assorted coaches, sponsors, and managers. Lots and lots of very happy, very excited, and very determined young Babe Ruth wannabes.



Every year at Minter Creek Elementary, rope jumpers from the fifth grade classes put on a jumping demonstration assembly in the gymnasium for the rest of the school's students, the latter of whom are mesmerized by the show. "It's certainly healthy," says Principal Steve Leitz, "but the main purpose is to let the fifth graders show their stuff to the younger kids and encourage them to want to do the same."

*Photo by Hugh McMillan*

## Water Quality



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*-Jim Cook*

*Superintendent, Peninsula School District*

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Above: Boy Scouts Troop No. 220 are preparing the eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt held at the Civic Center.

*Photo by Irene Torres*



Left: Going through the motions of ersatz "Sumo" wrestlers are, left to right, sixth graders Cassi Fawcett and Allison Snell at the all-Peninsula School District middle schools' fun night at KPMS in April. The evening featured dancing to a DJ in the school's commons, karaoke singing in the gym, free-lance basketball, and "Sumo" wrestling. *Photo by Hugh McMillan*





# Key Peninsula Livable Community Fair

*"Showcasing people, agencies and organizations  
making the Key Peninsula more livable"*

**Saturday May 8, 2004  
10:00 – 3:00pm  
Key Peninsula Civic Center  
17010 South Vaughn Rd**

## Entertainment

10:15am Razzmatazz (PHS Vocal Ensemble)  
11:15am Key Peninsula Middle School Jazz Band  
12:15pm Rhythm-n-Shoes Cloggers  
1:15pm Quartet Musette with Lorraine Hart  
2:15pm Evergreen Elementary Blues Kids

## Special Attractions

11am - Noon Rhubarb the Reindeer (Tacoma Rainier's Mascot)  
11:00am DOC Canine Demonstrations  
Noon WOOF-D2 Flying Disc Dogs Demonstration  
1:00pm Sheriff Canine Demonstrations  
2:00pm WOOF-D2 Flying Disc Dogs Demonstration

## Booth Participants

Anderson Associates  
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Angel Guild Thrift Shop  
Children's Home Society—KP Family Resource Center  
Citizens Against Crime  
Communities In Schools of Peninsula  
Dr. Penrose Orthopedic Guild  
Friends of Faire/ Washington Renaissance Fantasy Faire GH  
Friends of Pierce County  
Great Peninsula Conservancy  
IMPact Key Peninsula  
KGHP FM Radio  
Key Peninsula Baptist Church  
Key Peninsula Business Association  
Key Peninsula Community Council  
Key Peninsula Community Services  
Key Peninsula Fair

Key Peninsula Fire Department  
Key Peninsula Fire Fighters/Volunteer Association  
Key Peninsula Lions Club  
Key Peninsula Little League  
Key Peninsula Metropolitan Park District  
Key Peninsula News  
Key Peninsula Parks & Recreation District  
Key Peninsula Trail Systems  
Key Singers  
KGI Watershed Council  
Learning Key Campus  
Longbranch Improvement Club  
Management By Design  
Minter Creek Quilt Studio  
Northwest Solar Group  
Pacific NW Herpetological Society  
Peninsula Gateway  
Peninsula Light  
Peninsula Neighborhood Association

Peninsula School District & After School Programs  
Peninsula Spay & Neuter Project  
Pierce County Communication & Outreach  
Pierce County Neighborhood Emergency Teams  
Pierce County Planning and Land Service  
Pierce County Public Works, Road Operations Division  
Pierce County Sheriff Department and Peninsula Detachment  
Pierce County Solid Waste  
Pierce Transit  
Promise To Youth  
Safe Streets Campaign  
St. Joseph Medical Center  
Tacoma Community College/Gig Harbor  
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department  
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# Schools stomp on bad habit

By Hugh McMillan  
KP News

"It's the truth! Every year, thousands of people find an easy way to quit smoking. They die. It's an outrage."

That was a handout at Peninsula High School provided by its TATU (Teens Against Tobacco Use) kids during the Peninsula School District's smoke-out exercise in April.

Among other things, Debbi Reed, a TATU representative from Henderson Bay High School, visited Key Peninsula Middle School with a stop-smoking program featuring Aaron Henderson as "Mr. Butt," and prizes for KPMS students who rounded up the most signatures of people pledging to stop smoking for that day. First prize, a CD player donated by Best Buy of Silverdale, went to Becky Stacy for 1,158 pledges gathered wherever her spirit moved her. A \$20 gift certificate from Gig Harbor's Target store went to HaleeAnn Sullivan with 874 pledges, and Tim Best's 782 pledges got him the third prize of a basket of



Photo by Hugh McMillan

"Mr. Butt," otherwise known as Aaron Henderson, during his visit with KPMS students, who were challenged to get pledges from people to stop smoking for the smoke-out day.

Target candies.

The next day at HBHS, the lunchtime crowd of students was entertained by "Mr. Butt," who encouraged students to pledge to give up nicotine for at least

that one day, and Gig Harbor High School's entryway was festooned with overhead banners proclaiming "Every 12 Seconds Someone Dies" from tobacco-induced diseases.

# PHS holds awards assembly

Peninsula High School's annual scholarship awards assembly will be held Wednesday, May 19, at 6.30 p.m. in the school gymnasium. All community members are invited to attend this celebration of support for continuing education. Student recipients may use their scholarships for any type of post-high school education, whether vocational or academic.

The program is coordinated by the Peninsula Hawks Scholarship Fund Committee to distribute money from community donors to over 160 graduating seniors. Numerous individuals, families, businesses, alumni groups and organizations in the Key Peninsula/Gig Harbor area will present awards. Scholarships raised through the operation of the SAVE Thrift Store will also be announced.

Students apply for all awards by compiling personal portfolios that are reviewed by donors. The notebooks showcase the students' achievements in many areas including academic, school activities and athletics, community organizations, and public service.

The Hawks Scholarship Fund was established by Peninsula High parents nearly 20 years ago. The program is now affiliated with the national Dollars for Scholars program. As a result of that affiliation, money given through the PHS program may be matched by the student's college if it is enrolled as a program partner, effectively doubling the value of the local donor's contributions.

For more information on any aspect of the scholarship program, call committee president Marsha Williams as 857-7557.

**MAY 18**  
**METRO PARK COMMISSIONERS**

**VOTE FOR**

**CARIL RIDLEY**  
**PAULA DEMOSS**  
**JERRY SCHICK**  
**RUSS HUMBERD**  
**(and NANCY LIND, write-in  
for Position 2)**

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## News briefs

### 'Vital Signs' cost increase

The cost of the Vital Signs sold by the Fire District 16 will increase beginning June 1 to \$15 from \$12.50 to cover the cost of materials. The reflective address signs are assembled and installed by local firefighters. If you'd like to order a sign before the cost goes up, call FD 16 before June 1 at 884-2222.

### Drunken-driving victim sign dedication ceremony

A sign dedication ceremony will be held on Tuesday, May 4, in remembrance of David Doolittle, killed on May 4, 2000 by a drunken driver. Doolittle, 39, was a Vaughn resident.

The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. at Mile Post 11 off State Route 302, near Minter Creek and the public is invited to attend.

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**Evergreen Elementary Presents The Fifth Annual Benefit Dinner Dance**

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Proceeds go to the Evergreen Elementary Reading Program

**Longbranch Improvement Club**  
Key Peninsula Highway in Longbranch  
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**6:00-8:30 pm**  
**Adults-810**  
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# Metropolitan Park District board candidates in the May 18 election

The Key Peninsula News has asked the candidates for the MPD commissioner positions to submit a biographical note along with the answer to the question: What are your top three priorities as commissioner? Below are their replies.

## POSITION 1

### Caril Ridley

I have a bachelor's in environmental planning with minors in psychology and outdoor education. I have a masters degree in cultural anthropology with a thesis in environmental adaptation. As a Pierce County business owner and mental health professional for 25 years, I have worked with an array of community resources providing rehabilitative community programs for vulnerable citizens.

I am a practiced facilitator who has lectured on the importance of recreation for growing communities. As an environmentalist, I have instructed responsible stewardship and long-term planning. I have been involved in numerous professional and civic groups such as Key Peninsula News, Key Peninsula Trails, Key Peninsula Comprehensive Planning, Key Peninsula Outdoor Club, Mountaineers, Sierra Club and the U.S. Olympic Team.

I grew up platting residential communities with my father, but more importantly I am the mother of two boys and see our community on the cusp of change.

With the vision and experience gained mentoring under parks legend Willie Unsoeld and endorsed by both parks advocate Nancy Lind and professor of parks and recreation Dr. Simon Priest, I hope to develop recreational infrastructures into a diverse and growing parks community. I believe that existing land-use options and alternative funding would relieve the burden now placed on young families and is committed to finding and developing these resources.

I have been networking with local counties, regional groups and state organizations to develop resources and strategies to grow.

I have been working with KPPRD building trails and parks. I feel that working with land-use planning lies at the heart of growing a vibrant and healthy community for all people.



RIDLEY

### Mike Salatino

I am running for the position as park commissioner to offer the voters a competent, informed, reliable candidate. I have been actively involved in the community in many ways for years. I have served as a park commissioner previously, so that experience will come with me. I am one of the longest serving members of the Key Peninsula Civic Center where I served as vice-president and then as president. I am one of the founding three organizers of the Key Peninsula Fair.

I've lived in this community since 1968 so I am acutely aware of the wants and needs of the citizens here. In years past, I have owned and operated several businesses and am now semi-retired. I own and operate "The Farm" which is a "you pick" vegetable place at Wauna.

The next two years are going to be the most difficult and important years since the inception of the Key Peninsula Parks & Recreation District. With the formation of the Key Peninsula Metro Park District, it will take all the knowledge of the new commissioners as well as all the cooperation of the old commissioners to comply with the intent of Washington state law and the complicated procedure of the transfer. At the same time, all programs must be maintained. The long range planning that comes with underlying funding requirements must be coordinated and thoughtfully planned so that the future district isn't buried in a quagmire like that from which the present district just emerged.

It is very important that the voters are fully aware of the transition process in the selection of the new commissioners.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

## POSITION 2

### Ross Bischoff

My parents had friends on the Key Peninsula and many times when I was a small boy my family would board the boat at Tacoma to picnic with friends at Home



SALATINO

and also Longbranch, as this was the main way to travel. When my wife, Joyce, and I were married we camped on the Key. And so it was we found our present home site and purchased it in 1961.

We raised our four children and then our nine grandchildren on our farm on Hoff Road. I had graduated from University of Puget Sound with degrees in economics and business administration and also education and studies in agriculture, horticulture, and vocational fisheries at Washington State University. I taught for many years at Peninsula High School and currently farm an apple orchard to make apple cider and also rhubarb, berries and veggies.

The most important priorities for our Key Pen Volunteer Parks will be to promote a broad workable vision that must be financially sound. I see the need to also provide and promote equal recreational opportunities for all our people living on our Key Peninsula. This also means to work for year round usage for the benefit of all of us be we the very young, middle or of senior age.

### Nancy Lind (write-in)

Education: University of Puget Sound, B.S. in occupational therapy; occupation: retired teacher aide (14 yrs.), Peninsula School District. I filled an unexpired term for park commissioner for two years in 1993, was elected commissioner in 1999 and again in 2003. Member of the PARCS Council for 12 years.



LIND

I have been married to Robert Lind for 53 years, lived in Home for 47 years and we have three sons. We put our 80 acres in a Land Trust for habitat and watershed and possible park one day. I facilitated acquiring and cleaning of Rocky Creek Conservation Area and Home Park, helped with two comprehensive park plans, helped form the Key Peninsula Trail Committee, have been a member of various civic organizations and was selected Citizen of the Year in 2003.

Three top priorities: The Key Peninsula is very unique in its location, open space, shoreline and ruralness and



BISCHOFF

is in dire need of good park management for the future. Whatever the goals and desires are for the needs of each resident on the KP, vote for the candidate who best represents those goals. The three top priorities are for me: 1. Use the comprehensive park and recreation plan that is a result of hours of community involvement, done last year, to determine needs assessment; 2. Get professional planners (hopefully donated) to draw up specific plans for the three parks so they aren't done willy-nilly; 3. Tackle the major serious upgrading issues at Volunteer Park and get that upper field taken care of.

## POSITION 3

### Paula DeMoss

I received my A.A.S. in 1999 from Olympic Community College, my B.A. in arts from the University of Washington in 2001 and my teaching certification at Central Washington University in 2002. I am an elementary music teacher in the Peninsula School District. Prior to my job placement in September 2003, I was a substitute in all the Key Peninsula schools.

I have been the president of Key Peninsula Little League for the past three years and I have a degree in teaching. My husband and I are enjoying three sons. I spend my time volunteering for organizations trying to better our community for the future. I am a teacher and an advocate for the children of our community. I have been involved in building "community" through teaching and organizing sporting groups over the past eight years.

As our community continues to grow, I see our parks as being one of our greatest benefits. We may use the parks to further community growth and encourage positive life choices. This may be established through the versatile growth of the Key Peninsula Metro Parks in an attempt to meet many of the communities needs. The top three priorities to acquire this status will be: 1. Cooperative organization within the board; 2. Upgrade the current establishment (water, septic, fields, buildings...); 3. Establish overall plan to

(See CANDIDATES, Page 13)



(From **CANDIDATES**, Page 12)

address all possible recreational needs.

## Ben Thompson

Education: B.S., civil engineering, Montana State University; registered professional engineer. Work history: retired city engineer, city of Tacoma. I am currently the chairman of the Formation Committee for the MPD Creation. I am married, with five children and eight grandchildren.



THOMPSON

We have made our home on the Key Peninsula for the last 22 years. It is my belief that a functional and solvent park system is essential to the growth of a healthy and prosperous community. The present park program is handicapped by an unreliable and unpredictable funding system. The proposed Metropolitan Park District will correct many of the present problems and provide an opportunity for our Park System to become a model we can all be proud of.

My goals are: 1. To develop a cooperative working relationship with the County Council, the Pierce County Parks Department, the Peninsula Park District and the Washington State Parks Department; 2. Development of a master plan for our park program; 3. Insure that all recreational activities are given voice in the new District; 4. Create a Citizens Advisory Committee to assist the commissioners in establishing park program priorities and actively pursue opportunities to expand our park system.

## POSITION 4

### Ed Duke

Education: Attended Tacoma Community College, Rillos Engineering, Green River Community College, Lake Washington, Bates and Clover Park Vocation Technical Colleges. Occupation: electrical designer for 24 years, contract engineer currently. Professional qualifications: Grant writer, engineering background, love for community service. I was born and raised in the Tacoma area. Married to Wanda for 20 years, with two boys.

I have served my community for over 14 years through Cub/Boys Scouts, Little League, school district committees, Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce, inclu-

ding grant-writing projects. Parks are important assets to the children and adult lives in our community.

I believe the new Metro Park District holds many advantages. It opens doors to not only existing tax monies but also a plethora of grants and other funds. But I do not believe we should expand the district until we have met our present obligations. I

do not support raising taxes. We also need to decide if Metro employees should be full/part time, and whether or not park commissioners should have a salary. These last issues would be determined by the operating budget. I believe together we can build a strong, healthy Metro Park District.



DUKE

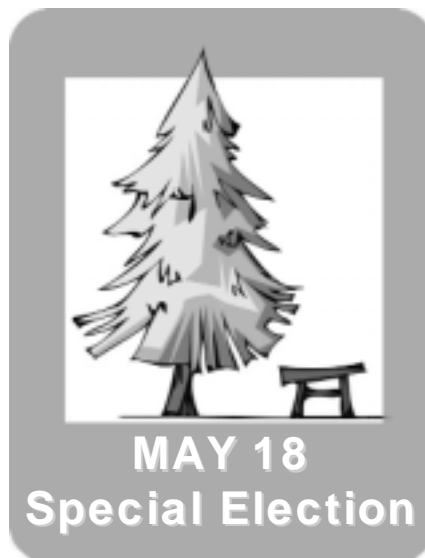
My action plan is: 1. To define/determine the operating budget 2004-2005 without raising taxes; 2. Prioritize critical repairs/maintenance and maintain services of the facilities; 3. Develop service plan meeting the future community needs.

### Jerry Schick

Education: Pierce College - 1987 thru 1991; majoring in math, science and engineering; Green River Community College 1998. Occupation: fiber optics technician. I am currently a Key Peninsula Park & Recreation District commissioner and park manager.

My hobbies include computer system design and integration; audio engineering; acoustics; colorimetry. I participate in a variety of sports and recreational activities including hiking, trekking, mountain biking, off-road motorsports, whitewater rafting, tennis, and softball.

As a Key Peninsula Park & Recreation District commissioner, I have been working to improve our parks with the long-term commitment to increase and expand the number of park and recreation programs. Presently involved in the administration and organization of adult softball on the Key Peninsula. My objectives include working with the community, including businesses and organizations, to develop and promote a



safe, clean, accessible, and efficient park system that will provide a diverse range of recreational activities and programs.

My top three priorities as a commissioner:

1) The metro park district must improve the interaction and exchange of information between the citizens and the park district to help instill a better sense of ownership and pride in our

public parks.

2) I would like to see the variety of park related activities, including sports and recreational opportunities, expand and grow to meet the needs and expectations of an increasingly diverse community.

3) I believe that a new metro park district has an obligation to vigorously pursue alternate sources of revenue to maintain and operate our parks. The metro park district commissioners should immediately begin the process of seeking proposals.

## POSITION 5

### Kip Clinton

My family has had our place near Home for 40-some years. We were summer people until the early 1970s, so I might be considered a newcomer to the Key Peninsula. However, my family has lived in the greater Tacoma area since my great grandfather established our piano store.

I graduated from the University of Washington (bachelor of sciences, zoology) and attended the University of Puget Sound Law School. I worked for the state Department of Ecology in the SEPA/permit review division, helped write an early Mt. Rainier mudflow report, and assisted in the defeat of Northern Tier Pipeline. I now manage Clinton's Music House, Inc., Tacoma.



CLINTON

I have been involved in developing a new Key Peninsula park plan because the county invalidated the old one several years ago. I was appointed to a vacated KPPRD position in February. I enjoy all water sports and horseback riding.

I believe KPMPD's core mission is to create a park system by providing facilities for all recreation interests. This includes active (team sports, ball fields) and passive (hiking, biking, horseback riding, boating, beachcombing) recreation. Existing KPPRD facilities must be improved; Pierce County should be pressured to improve their facilities (boat launches, Purdy Sandspit); new public parklands/beaches/easements should be acquired (grants, joint management). Trails need to link all public lands.

This park system, within bicycling distance from three major cities, would be economically beneficial. The Key Peninsula could truly become the "jewel in the Sound."

## Russell Humberd

I have been a resident of the Key Peninsula community since 1996. I have been married for 17 years, to my best friend Elaine. My son Michael "Smiles" is active in school and community sports, and a freshman at Peninsula High School. I am very active in youth programs throughout the Peninsula and Pierce County.

I am currently involved in the following community programs: chair, Pierce County Youth Violence Allocations Committee; member, Peninsula School District Safety Advisory Board; member, Peninsula High School Truancy Task Force and Prevention Advisory Council; board member and baseball chair, Peninsula Athletics Association (PAA).



HUMBERD

In talking with members of the Key Peninsula community in April, I feel that the most important items would be the re-establishment of the public's trust in the park board. Secondly, we need to improve our parks image. The current conditions of the facilities at Volunteer Park are embarrassing and we invite outside communities there through Little League, softball leagues and the Community Fair, among others.

Lastly, the new KPMPD board must carefully review the current list of projects and needs from the Key Peninsula Parks and Recreation District (KPPRD). They must also invite the public to comment on their vision for the parks. Together this information must be used to develop a comprehensive plan and budget for the future of our parks.





in the lobby. Believe it or not, those inexpensive books bring in lots of money. (So, please donate your old books!)

The monthly evening programs on many different topics that will start up again soon after a year's absence are possible because of the Friends' sponsorship. The library will get a couple of new bookracks in the children's corner, paid for by the Friends. Most of the books in the "green dot" collection, by the new books, are gifts from the Friends.

The group has a potluck meeting every May, including a program, and this year the date is May 12.

How can you become a member of this worthy support group? Simply by telling any of the librarians that you wish to be a Friend and pay the yearly dues, a measly \$5 (or more if you so wish; if you would like to get more involved, tell them that too, and they will give you a name of a person).

There is an official brochure, available at the counter, that states what the Friends of all the different branches of the Pierce County Libraries are doing.

If you want to come to this year's potluck after becoming a Friend, please feel welcome. Check with a librarian to find out what dish you can bring!

—By Britta Brones

## Key Singers ready for country

By Barbara Bence

It has been almost six years since Jo Sturm printed a flyer, found a place to practice and just let it happen. She was sure that this community had enough interested people to form a singing group. About 15 showed up at the Longbranch Community Church—and the Key Singers were born! Some of that core group is still there.

Membership fluctuates from that first 15 to 30-plus. The love of music brings together various people. Can you believe that teen-agers and seniors 80 or older can get along? This group hosts diverse talents: writers, photographers, dancers, artists, teachers, actors, musicians, medics and more.

The Singers perform about

10 to 15 times a year at different functions, including veteran and nursing homes, reunions, libraries, holiday happenings, local fairs, schools, and even at a dinner theater with the Longbranch Players in 2000.

All performances are complimentary except for the annual spring concert. The group does need to acquire new music and it is not cheap! And, of course, the sound equipment needs maintenance and upgrading. The Key Singers also sponsor a music scholarship at Peninsula High School.

The Key Singers are always open to new members, and only require that you smile and carry a tune. Director is Marianne McColley and Jo Sturm is co-director.

The group will have a booth at the



The repertoire covers a wide range of music, from show and pop tunes, gospel, country, patriotic, old time music, church hymns, to somewhat operatic, and some really goofy songs.

Are you ready for country? The Singers' spring concert this year is called Down

Home Sing, on Sunday, May 23 at 3 p.m. at the Peninsula Lutheran Church located at 4213 Lackey Road.

Prices range from \$8 for adults, \$5 teens and seniors and free for those 12 and under. Refreshments will be available and a raffle will be held.

Livable Community Fair at the Civic Center May 8. Concert tickets and the raffle will be on hand. For more, contact Marianne McColley, 884-5615; Shelley Wiggins, 884-9662; or Barbara Bence, 884-2686.



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# Blondie's Bar and Grill, a place where everyone will know your name

**L**ike most small town papers, the Key Pen News has to get by with a limited number of staff. That's why I can lay claim to the titles UFO reporter, etiquette columnist, and food reporter. Or, as we call it out here on the Peninsula, the grub reporter. It's a simple job and one that traditionally involved more eating than writing until eateries began to appear all over the place.



**William Dietz  
For Whatever  
It's Worth**

First came word that the venerable Brookside is being resuscitated, rumors that a new Burger King is on the way, and talk of a new sit-down restaurant at the very heart of my high-cholesterol beat. But wait, how could this be? What about the unwritten law that we who dwell on the Peninsula must survive with only three restaurants (not counting the deli, the pizza place in the woods, and various convenience stores). Never one to put off either a good story, or a good lunch, I set off in search of the truth.

It didn't take long to get there. The building destined to become Blondie's Bar and Grill is yellow, has green trim, and sits perched on the hill east of Key Center. Once it's finished, the restaurant will seat 100 people and serve American cuisine including prime rib, steaks, and burgers. (Oh yeah, and they'll have salads and stuff too, but I'm an Atkins kind of guy.)

None of that was evident as I got out of my car and passed the single workman who was sawing on a section of plastic



*Photo by Rodika Tollefson*

Lisa Marshall and Douglas Fabre are getting ready for restaurant opening—Fabre by taking care of the building details and Marshall by getting the establishment operations in order.

**The woman who got out to greet me was Lisa Marshall, the same Lisa who owns Lisa's Fresh Express Deli in Key Center, and the blonde in what will become Blondie's Bar and Grill.**

downspout. I gave his Sussex Spaniel a pat on the head and entered via the double doors out front. Inside, I saw that while the sheet rock was up, and a brand new American Range sat to one side of what was going to be the kitchen, the rest of the restaurant was empty.

I emerged from the building in time to see a white Jeep appear. The woman who got out to greet me was Lisa Marshall, the same Lisa who owns Lisa's Fresh Express Deli in Key Center, and

the blonde in what will become Blondie's Bar and Grill.

That was when I learned that the workman out front was none other than Douglas R. Fabre, a man who not only repairs his own downspouts, but owns the building in which the new restaurant will be housed, not to mention the apartment houses located to the south of it, and other Key Center properties as well. A reminder that appearances can be deceiving, especially on the

Peninsula, where substance still means more than flash.

When asked about the logic for opening a restaurant in Key Center, especially in light of the fact that there are other eateries in town, it quickly became apparent that Marshall and Fabre share a common vision. Marshall put it this way. "Say you go out to dinner twice a week... How many times do you want to go to the same place? More is better."

"That's right," Fabre agreed enthusiastically. "Besides, people are going too fast. They don't have time to say 'hi' to their neighbors. When they walk into Blondie's, people will know their names. Just like in the TV show."

As for the timing, Marshall and Fabre are in agreement there as well. "Look at the bridge," Fabre says confidently, "a lot of people will be coming here."

"Yeah," Marshall agrees, "there are a lot of homes being built out here."

In addition to the interior seating, Marshall and Fabre plan to add a deck on the west (Key Center) side of the building that will include a 42-inch-tall glass barrier to break the wind. Blondie's is scheduled to open no later than June 1. It will serve lunch and dinner, and the lounge will serve liquor and feature live music. Saturday and Sunday breakfast will be served at first—but might be discontinued if there isn't sufficient traffic.

Once Blondie's opens for business, Lisa's Fresh Express Deli will have shorter hours. Marshall expects to have about 15 employees to start—and resumes can be submitted at the deli.

As for the quality of the food (grub), well, it's too early for me to report on that. However, once Blondie's opens for business, it will clearly be my duty to investigate.

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## THE RESULTS ARE VERY DIFFERENT

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(From HOMES, Page 1)

service representative, three office staff members, and four laborers. In 2004, they hope to complete 120 new homes in Gig Harbor, Port Orchard, and on the Key Peninsula. With financing from West Sound Bank, they purchased 13 lots in Palmer Lake, and are negotiating for others.

Ben Cedarland said, "Housing in Gig Harbor is expensive for the average family, with prices starting at \$200,000 to \$225,000. We wanted to provide nice, affordable homes and improve the community. Our starting price is \$140,000, so families can own a nice home and begin to build equity."

Two basic floor plans are offered, with a clean exterior design. The contractors can be somewhat flexible, adding vaulted ceilings, changed roof-lines, relocated interior walls, and other custom features, to individualize the look of each home and accommodate the buyers' needs. The homes range from 1,200 to 1,600 square feet, all three-bedroom with two bathrooms, and attached garages. Each home has a hardwood entryway, carpeted living area, vinyl kitchen flooring, and laminate counter tops with tile

backsplashes. General Electric appliances are being installed. "We want to offer a quality product," said Cedarland.

They have put together an efficient team of subcontractors, including Alexander Electric from Sumner. The speed of their work was impressive during a recent site visit. Cedarland said, "It took some time to find this team, to get in and out quickly. That's key to keep the price down. It's always a challenge, but the right

**"I expect this development to increase my property value. I'm glad to see it."**

-Palmer Lake neighbor

people help everything to go smoother."

Cedarland NW has encountered only minor problems during this major project. At an early stage, some of their materials were stolen.

"We only lost of couple of hundred bucks of material. It could have been worse," Cedarland said. Since then, they have been more careful not to leave materials on the job site, trying to keep costs down.

"The county is always sensitive about

erosion control. We try to be as proactive as we can, installing silt fences and putting down gravel driveways," he said. Peter Kim is the regular site inspector for the Palmer Lake area. He told the KP News, "The builder has primary responsibility for erosion control. I have been coming to the site several times a week and working with the site supervisor to educate and enforce compliance with county codes."

Cedarland said the completion of the homes is staggered, with the first of them due for completion by June 1, and others during the summer. The last of the homes must be finished by September. Prudential Real Estate's Julia Carns has listed these properties for sale. Two of the homes in the Palmer Lake development have been sold even before they were completed.

A neighbor said, "I expect this development to increase my property value. I'm glad to see it."

"We have been encouraged by the positive response from the neighborhood and the Palmer Lake Homeowners' Association for their cooperation in moving our equipment in and out. To dress up the entry into the community, we want to erect a rock monument with a new 'Welcome to Palmer Lake' sign,' (to say) thank you," Cedarland said.

(From LIVABLE, Page 1)

said.

New this year are canine demonstrations, the Swanee Frisbee Dogs, firefighters showing off their fire trucks, a sheriff's deputy vehicle, reptiles and craft activities. Even Rhubarb the Reindeer, Tacoma Rainiers' mascot, will drop in.

The fair has already had its share of miracles—last year, I.M.Pact, which had an impressive domestic violence visual display at the fair, intrigued a local couple who were then instrumental in getting funding for a new safe house, a shelter for women that has been a dream for several years.

The event has come a long way from its roughly 15-booth setup of its first year when things were organized in a few short weeks. "Usually by third year, it becomes a break-it or make-it event, and it's definitely a make-it year," Kezele said.

For a complete list of Livable Community Fair participants and schedule of events see page 9.

The fair will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For details, call 884-3456.

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## Business briefs

### Nimricks celebrates 1st year

Nimricks Furnishings Old and New will be celebrating its first-year anniversary at its Key Center store on Saturday and Sunday, May 15-16. Store owners wish to thank their customers for their patronage. They will be serving refreshments on both days and are inviting community members to stop by and enjoy the celebration while browsing the store.

### KPBA and chamber host 'neighborhood meeting'

The Key Peninsula Business Association, in collaboration with the Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, invite KP business owners to a neighborhood economic development meeting on May 18, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Civic Center in Vaughn.

June Williams, KPBA president and member of the economic development committee, said the goal of the forum, which is geared specifically for business owners, is to talk about business climate on the Key Peninsula and aspects such as expansion, growth, and challenges.

Williams, who is a branch manager of the Key Bank in Purdy, said: "I see my responsibility as a banker to help businesses grow on the Key Peninsula and in the surrounding area."

That is exactly what the chamber hopes to accomplish through a series of steps including industry sector meetings, neighborhood meetings such as the KP one, and one-on-one business assistance.

The chamber, which represents both Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula, is looking for ways to include both areas in the economic development discussions.

For details, call Williams at 858-9059.

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| \$136,000 | 2410 197 <sup>th</sup> Ave.       | Palmer Lake        |
| \$136,500 | 9604 138 <sup>th</sup> St. Ct.    | Greentree          |
| \$145,950 | 13811 140 <sup>th</sup> Ave.      | Lake of the Woods  |
| \$152,500 | 2014 Lake Dr.                     | Palmer Lake        |
| \$160,000 | 14903 115 <sup>th</sup> St. Ct.   | Lake Minterwood    |
| \$173,000 | 9108 137 <sup>th</sup> St. Ct. NW | Danforth Heights   |
| \$179,900 | 8123 177 <sup>th</sup> Ave. Ct.   | Taylor Bay Estates |
| \$198,500 | 1510 W. Herron Pl.                | Herron Island      |
| \$199,000 | 9418 132 <sup>nd</sup> St. NW     | Wauna Shores       |
| \$232,000 | 18417 Bayview Rd.                 | Vaughn             |
| \$237,950 | 9818 138 <sup>th</sup> Ave.       | Kooley Addition    |
| \$265,900 | 18815 85 St. Vaughn               | Olman Point        |
| \$272,000 | 10828 Minterwood Dr.              | Lake Minterwood    |
| \$272,500 | 12115 138 <sup>th</sup> Ave.      | Huckleberry Ridge  |
| \$320,500 | 12110 118 <sup>th</sup> Ave.      | Minter Creek       |



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### LAKE HOLIDAY - \$132,950

Gated entry with beach rights. One story, 3-bdr home with garage attached. New roof, fresh paint, new kitchen. Home is ready to move in now! ML SH24046247. 253-884-3304.



### ALMOST LAKEFRONT! - \$98,000

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# Out & About



Top: Kids had to be fast to get their share of candy or prizes at the Civic Center's Easter egg hunt organized annually by Boy Scouts Troop 220. *Photo by Rodika Tollefson*

Above: Despite the firefighters' best efforts, this house near Camp Easter Seal was destroyed at the end of April and the cause was under investigation. *Photo by Hugh McMillan*



Top left: A local resident only known as Melissa no doubt had a big smile on her face as she drove by this sign on April 1. Like a good neighbor, the author of the sign promptly removed it at the end of the day. *Photo by Rodika Tollefson*

Top right: Egg hunters at the Camp Colman's Easter celebration search for treasures before they are all gone. *Photo by Hugh McMillan*

Above: Shredding fallen branches for wood chips for use at Camp Seymour's marina as part of the shoreline restoration project on Glen Cove are Andrew Homan of Tacoma, Bob Gracis of Gig Harbor, Kim Bauer and John Natalie of Olympia. *Photo by Hugh McMillan*

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# Gardener creates 'antiques'

By Colleen Slater  
KP News

Kathie Du Priest is a creative gardener. Although she doesn't consider herself an artist, visitors to her interesting garden think otherwise.

She sometimes copies expensive containers and garden art, but with other items, she simply thinks of an idea and checks it out. She has three basic rules for her various garden art projects: "It must be fun, easy, and inexpensive." She notes that sometimes it takes a lot of patience, but none of her faux painting is difficult.

For the past three years or so, imitating large antique urns has been a special interest. The large plastic pots available in nurseries and garden centers cost only a few dollars, and are lightweight. An early venture was to make one look like an old concrete container.

She sprayed on Fleck Stone® for texture, and after drying, sprayed a light layer of copper paint to highlight the stone effect. Acrylic paint was patted on with a scrunched-up plastic bag until she obtained the right color. When that coat

was dry, she used the same technique with black paint.

She likes acrylic paint because if it isn't turning out the way she expects, she washes it off with water and begins again. She now paints the pots first with a latex primer so the paint adheres better.

This year, she is working with a new method she invented herself. On a plastic urn with some raised decoration, she first used black. The craft paint is usually dry to the touch within an hour, and the next process can be done. On a paper plate, she squirted little blobs of white, black and brown paints. Her two-inch brush was dipped into each one consecutively — "no particular order" — and the excess wiped on an old towel. It is called a dry brush technique because there is only a little paint left on the brush.

After the container was covered with this mix of colors, she blotted it all over with a piece of towel until she had "just the right look."

The finished product, with parts showing gray, white and brown, looks like aged concrete.

A second urn, with different colors,



Kathie Du Priest's working greenhouse. Inset: One of the many planters Du Priest has enhanced with creative artistry.

Photo by  
Colleen Slater



doesn't please her as much. Since it's too late to wash it off, she may figure out

something to partially cover it to make it more attractive in her eyes. She recommends the use of the terra cotta sealer on all terra cotta pots, which helps avoid breakage.

Leaf or fruit stencils may be stuck to a pot using stencil adhesive.

Pre-mixed joint compound is applied

with a putty knife. She used a cotton swab to apply some copper paint from a spray can to the dried raised figure. The pot was then set in the sun, and when dry, sprayed with undiluted Clorox® and left in a sunny area. The chemical reaction of the paint, bleach and sun eventually turn the stenciled area green. These "green pots" have lasted several years in her garden and still look good.

Whether traffic cones, cheap planters, or other discarded items, Du Priest's garden is a special delight for her many visitors.



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# Longbranch dock gets major facelift

By Rodika Tollefson  
KP News

Next time you wander by the Longbranch Marina, you may have to check your surroundings to make sure you're in the right place. Just in time for its boating season opening day annual celebration, the Longbranch Improvement Club completed a beautification project at the dock, giving it more than just a fresh coat of paint.

"It was past time to do some things to make the area more attractive," said LIC President Rich Hildahl, who has toiled at the dock with a crew of several people in April.

The club has a list of ambitious projects: planting new flowers, adding a new historic-looking, arched sign, hiding—or at least attempting to hide—the portable bathrooms, landscaping the area including extricating the blackberries, and generally getting rid of other "old junk." The boathouse will also be painted with a picture rendition of



what the wharf looked like in the early days.

"We all recognize the harbor and the view is really spectacular but the place has been an eyesore from the road on," Hildahl said.

Not for long. By the time all these projects are completed, the marina should display the same pride the LIC

has carried with many of its other endeavors.

The dock improvements are only part of other long-term goals the organization has planned for its grounds. At the clubhouse itself, plans are under way for restoration of the creek bed and building of new trails. "We want to get creative ideas from anyone interested," Hildahl



*Photos by Hugh McMillan*

John Heidel, Ken Wilson, Jason Wilson, Jason Sisson and Rich Hildahl, LIC president, get the dock ready—in time for the annual breakfast, scheduled for May 1 this year and featuring a regatta.

said, adding that groups like Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and the Purdy Correctional Center for Women will be involved in the environmental work while University of Washington's Restoration Ecology Network students will help prepare and implement the master plan.

Those interested to help with the project should contact Hildahl at 884-6022.

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## From Pioneer Stock Transplanted island boy

By Colleen Slater  
KP News

When Dick Radonich was born, he was the smallest baby born in Snohomish, at 1 pound, 2 ounces. They kept him in a warm oven, and three doctors said there was one in a million chance he'd survive.

When he was 4, his parents divorced, and he and his mother moved to McNeil Island to live with his grandmother. His grandparents homesteaded 86 acres with 1,800 feet of low-bank waterfront, directly across from Mosquito (Pitt) Island.

Dick lived an idyllic life on the island and enjoyed a lot of water play. He chopped a pointed bow on half a cedar log, and used a broken paddle for oars. An old sheet converted a rowboat into a sailboat. He and friends would sail out to an approaching tugboat, then hang onto the boom to be towed back, or they'd watch for a tug going up the bay, hitch a

ride and sail home with a south wind.

He and a friend rowed to Ketron Island for a camping expedition once, found a campsite with lots of leaves on it, and thought that would be a cozy bed. When the leaves moved under them, they realized they were lying on a nest of rats.

The next morning they caught a baby seal, put it in the boat and headed home. Soon the mother seal came after them, so they quickly dumped the baby overboard and rowed quickly away.

"Bootleggers were my buddies," Dick recalls. The mail boat captain, too. Passengers rode for a quarter. "The Eagle" whistle blew when there was mail for them, and Dick rowed out to collect it.

Dick was given a striped red and green bag with candy when they bought groceries at Carl Soderquist's store on the Longbranch dock. Soderquist also gave him leftover fireworks after July 4.

His mother paid him and a friend to row



*Photo courtesy of Marge Radonich*

Dick's favorite job was being a house-to-house milkman for Price's Dairy at Burley, then Kitsap Dairy out of Bremerton.

over to get Lux soap to wash her silk stockings. Halfway home, he remembered they'd forgotten to buy it in the excitement over spending their nickels on candy.

He claims the prisoners were few in the early days of the federal penitentiary on the island, and they'd sit around with the

wardens in the evening, playing cards. "It was really exciting when a convict escaped" in later years. The Pen boat drifted awhile, then the searchlight swept the water, shore and land, went off, and the boat drifted again. Dick said their boat was the one stolen most often by escapees.

Once a convict holed up for about three weeks under their barn. Dick was accused of not stripping the cows when he milked, and they wondered why the hens weren't laying as well as usual. Broken eggshells were the clue to where the man was hiding when officials searched the area.

When he was 16, the federal government made them move from the homestead, offering to pay \$2,700. A lawyer got them \$3,700, but most of the extra went to pay him. Dick still holds some bitter feelings about the government taking the beautiful island, where they had to run expensive cables across for electricity.

Dick still lives on the waterfront with wife Marge (Rickert). Now in his mid-80s, he proved those doctors wrong.

Next month: Read about wife Marge, also from pioneer stock.

## Camp Seymour has new interactive exhibit

By Marty Marcus  
Special to KP News

Nestled in the woods along the shore of Glen Cove, the YMCA's Camp Seymour has been in operation nearly 100 years, serving some 8,000 campers per year from schools, summer camps, family camps and weekend conferences and retreats.

Walt Burdsall, director of outdoor and environmental education for the camp, suggested adding a new element to its outstanding environmental education program. So, early in 2003, the downstairs classroom with the indoor tidepool organisms opened its doors to some new

residents, a group of friendly reptiles. Funds for heating, lighting and enclosures were provided by grants from the Pacific Northwest Herpetological Society. Several individual members of PNHS donated the animals from their own collections.

Fifth and sixth grade classes from schools all over the Puget Sound area now have a hands-on opportunity to learn more about the roles of these animals in their varied environmental niches. The exhibit contains a Russian tortoise, an Australian bearded dragon, a juvenile California kingsnake, two rosy boas, a juvenile and an adult, from the Mexican state of Baja, Calif., a Sinaloa milksnake

from the state of Sinaloa in Mexico, a black pine snake, a corn snake and a three-toed box turtle from the southeastern United States, and a ball python from Africa. Most of the animals are fairly young, captive born, and with life expectancies of 20 years or more. Food for these animals is also being donated by a PNHS member.

In addition to enriching the environmental education program at the YMCA Camp Seymour, several of the camp's naturalist staff have been doing outreach programs with the animals, most recently at Vaughn Elementary School, for a homeschoolers' group having a



*Photo courtesy of Ann Waldo*

Alex Lindaly of Stanwood Elementary School near Everett during a recent visit with the reptiles and naturalist Tony DeJamatt at Camp Seymour.

science fair at Henderson Bay High School, and at a junior high school in Port Orchard.



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# New KP trails book introduced in April

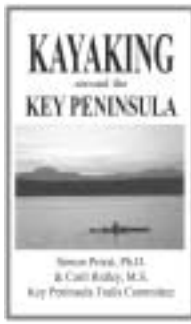
By Danna Webster  
KP News

The debut of the second book in the Key Peninsula tour series was the highlight of the Key Peninsula Trails meeting in April. "Kayaking Around the Key Peninsula," authored by Simon Priest (Lakebay) and Caril Ridley (Longbranch), is a segment-by-segment journey through the South Puget Sound that originates at the Port of Allyn and terminates, after 42.7 miles of water travel, at the Purdy Sandspit.

The authors cover the history and environment of 15 points of interest and include chapters on safety and emergency precautions. In the same way that Dr. Priest's first guidebook, "An Automobile History Through the Key Peninsula," gave an entertaining

and comprehensive history of the skid-roads and byways of the Key Peninsula, this new edition to the 'Trails' guidebooks takes readers around the waterways, docks and ferry landings along the perimeter of the Peninsula.

Documenting and establishing trails on the Key Peninsula is the major work of the Trails Committee. The April meeting hosted Tex Lewis, coordinator of the Clear Creek Trail Task Force in Silverdale. He presented a comprehensive overview of the Silverdale project and offered high praise to the work accomplished by the KPTC.



## For more information

The Key Peninsula Trails address is [www.keypen.org](http://www.keypen.org). For information, email [info@keypen.org](mailto:info@keypen.org).

Information about the Clear Creek Silverdale Trail can be found online at [www.clearcreektrail.org](http://www.clearcreektrail.org) or email [gedlc@silverlink.net](mailto:gedlc@silverlink.net).

"I stand in awe of all you've accomplished," he said before detailing the work of his task force. This work started with the Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, schools, tribes and chamber of commerce and many individuals in Silverdale over a decade ago. Today, the Clear Creek Trail is a 160-acre park, stretching about four miles along Clear Creek.

# Longbranch Players Theater hires director; announces auditions for 'Don't Dress for Dinner'

Special to KP News

The Longbranch Players has chosen the comedy "Don't Dress for Dinner" by Marc Camoletti for its next production and engaged Rick May, well known Seattle-area director and actor, to direct the two-act play for dinner theater slated for early October.

The Players theater group of the Longbranch Improvement Club is enthusiastic about plans being developed. May has been artistic director for both the Renton Civic Theater and Seattle's Civic Light Opera. His long list of directing and acting credits includes

plays throughout the Puget Sound area. The director is particularly interested in community theater and in the lively revival begun last year by the Longbranch Players of the LIC.

The Players' working committee is gathering a production staff and are particularly interested in finding a stage manager, a key position in all theatrical productions. They urge anyone interested in the position or in finding out what the duties are to contact the working group headed by Mary Mazur, production and business manager, and Tricia Thompson, assistant production manager.

Working with Rick May is a unique chance for anyone fascinated with theater to work closely with an experienced director who enjoys bringing people into theater participation and teaching stage managing techniques, the dinner theatre organizers say.

Dates for auditions for the play have been set for late June. The Players are encouraging Peninsula actors, actresses and wannabe actors and actresses to try out.

More information will be available soon on the roles in the play, which is scheduled for six performances at the Longbranch Improvement Club in October with rehearsals beginning in

mid-August.

Longbranch Players is a community theater group on the Key Peninsula sponsored by the Improvement Club, a nonprofit community service club centered in Longbranch since the 1920s.

The Players drew acting and production talent and audiences from Key Peninsula and the broader South Sound area in the 1990s for a number of very successful productions. Now under the leadership of the LIC Theater Working Group, the Players is launching the second year of the revival of this Key Peninsula community theater.

In September 2003, they played to full houses in the historic LIC building four nights.

## Memorial Day Dance at LIC features The BluesCats

Special to KP News

The Longbranch Memorial Day Dance will break with recent tradition and bring "Tim Casey and The BluesCats" to the dance floor Saturday, May 29. Always a favorite holiday dance for people in the South Sound area, the LIC dance is the premier event that opens the season of summer fun.

The BluesCats have been said to be "one of the most swingin' lively and lovely combos who play jump, jive, rock & roll, blues, boogie and swing in the purest tradition." Half of the tunes they play are by the leader, Tim Casey, a guitarist himself.

The enthusiastic jazz musicians on piano, horn, drums and guitar in the big sound band play Rhythm and Blues in the jumping style of the '40s and '50s for dancers and audiences in the Northwest.

The group often plays at Bumbershoot, music festivals in Portland and Winthrop in the Cascades, and nightclubs around the area where they have been awarded Washington Blues Society nomination for "Best Blues Band" in 1999, 2001, and 2002.

Longbranch Improvement Club Events Chair Linda LeBlanc says the doors will open at 8 p.m., with the music starting at 9. Tickets will be \$15 at the door, advance sale \$12 available at the Longbranch Marina and Sunnycrest Nursery in Key Center. There will be a cash bar.

Cooked snacks will be provided by the Key Peninsula Community Services. Van service for dancers from the Marina to the clubhouse will be by courtesy of the Community Services.

## Get involved

The Players welcome the participation of local talent, actors and anyone in the community who would like to help with the production of the play. There are jobs enough for many hands, and the manager position would be an ideal job for someone who is really interested in dramatics and wants to learn. Audition dates are Sunday, June 20, time TBA; Monday, June 21, 7 p.m.; callbacks, June 27.

Anyone interested in stage manager or audition information should call Mary at 884-1061 or Patricia at 884-7830.



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# Spring, summer bloom with artistic possibilities

By L. Brudvik Lindner

Springing into community spirit, TWAA and the Art Barn will be hosting the second annual Artist Swap Meet and Art Exhibit on May 15; from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The Artist Swap Meet is a great opportunity to trade your supplies for supplies that excite your fancy and add to your collection. If you have a



**The Genuine ARTICLE**

large supply to swap, bring your own table for display. Even if you don't have items to trade, drop by and get acquainted with the artists in your community. For directions call Beverly Pedersen at 884-2149.

TWAA is also collaborating with its great neighbors at YMCA Camp Seymour. During the camping week of July 5-9 TWAA artists will be onsite daily offering campers a few hours of artistic energy and instruction. You can find details at Camp Seymour or in the TWAA summer brochure coming out the end of May.

TWAA expressions of gratitude and acknowledgment are in order - thank you

to the anonymous donor who generously made a contribution toward the TWAA Artists in Schools program.

TWAA would like to recognize Virginia Thompson for the three years of hard work she contributed to the organization. Her efforts have made TWAA the healthy organization it is today. She will be missed and we are happy to know we will meet again at the thriving Saturday TWAA Writers Group.

TWAA extends their appreciation to the Spring Fling organizers Janice McIntyre and Margo MacDonald. Thanks to their labors of art love, the Spring Fling was a

successful fund-raising event.

Lastly, a grateful acknowledgement to the TWAA fearless elected and re-elected leaders: President Kathy Bauer, Vice President Jerry Libstaff, Secretary Kristen Bottiger, Treasurer Phil Bauer and Co-Treasurer Ruth Bramhall. With these devoted and hardworking members of our community our local arts alliance keeps the beauty of the Key Peninsula alive.

TWAA exists for the citizens of this community; help us keep our creative heart beating by reserving your space in a class or by purchasing a TWAA membership for yourself or a friend.

Call 884-3407 or visit [www.twowaters.org](http://www.twowaters.org). Scholarships and family discounts are available for most classes.

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# Architect inspired by natural, sustainable design

By Danielle V. Klenak  
KP News

Jim Olson says he always wanted to be an architect or an artist, but his parents told him “architecture would be more practical.” A graduate of the University of Washington, he now runs the Seattle firm Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen, of which he’s the founding partner.

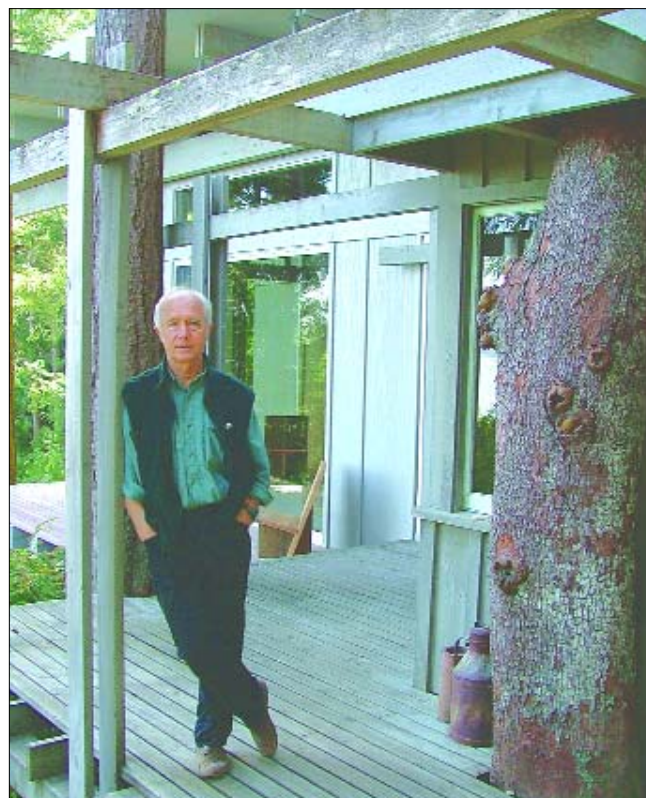
“My first job was designing a garden trellis,” he says.

In 1959, his first year in architecture school, his parents gave him \$500, “which is more like \$5,000 today,” to build himself his own small cabin on the Key Peninsula, no larger than a small studio apartment. From this space, which he has since added onto as his family home-away-from-home, he would sketch out ideas for hours on end. Unlike today’s highly technological world, “no one had even dreamed of CAD [computer-aided design], everything was done with pencil and paper,” he says.

After successfully completing his first job, word of mouth spread about his work until a client by the name of Jim Penfield, a former ambassador, invited him to design his family home on the Key Peninsula.

At the time, Penfield and his family lived in London. Olson sent hand-drawn sketches to them by mail, and they’d send them back with handwritten notes. Olson came up with a design that, by today’s standards, would be considered an example of sustainable architecture. The sod roof not only insulates the house extraordinarily well, it’s like a natural extension of the hill behind it, sweeping toward Mount Rainier across the water.

Basing the design on the notion that a house should be a safe dwelling or refuge,



Jim Olson at his Key Peninsula home that he started building with \$500 from his parents as a college student and later added on to.

*Photo by Danielle V. Klenak*

that in our basic nature humans require a place free from predators, Olson came up with what is now called the “Earth House.” It’s made of cedar, with large “imaginary” windows that make you feel as if you could walk right out into the open. Today, as the environment moves higher and higher on people’s list of priorities, Olson finds more demand from his clients for buildings such as that one; sustainable architecture is no longer categorized as a “hippie” endeavor like it was when he began work on the house in 1969.

At the moment, he says he has at least five different projects requesting sod roof houses. More people want low-energy windows, recycling, natural ventilation

systems rather than air conditioning, even recycled or environmentally sustainable materials, such as certified wood. As he began adding onto his own original space, he made the decision to use only certified wood. Even though it costs much more, it was a choice he and his family decided to make.

Nature has a great influence on Olson’s work. He works with the environment, creating spaces that flow into the natural surroundings. Sometimes this can be literally. At his own home, he has built around large standing trees, incorporating them into the walls. He also believes that art is a key element to our living space.

Although many of his clients come with their own art collections, Olson also commissions muralists or sculptors to create pieces that will give the space presence. To him, an architect is like an artist— even though an architect makes compromises in order to appease the client’s own tastes, an architect has to like his work.

“It’s the only reason you do it,” he says. Perhaps, this is part of the reason he shies away from using such staple programs like CAD himself, leaving that to the younger generation.

“I’ll draw something, and they’ll bring it up on the computer, and I’ll sketch over the top of it,” but the computer still doesn’t manage to communicate the ideas as well as a pen in hand can, he says.

Olson thrives on juggling 10 projects at a time. He is currently working on homes in Hong Kong, Arizona, and Boston; museums in Los Angeles and Chicago; and he just completed homes in Hawaii and Georgia. Locally, he is trying to remodel the Key Peninsula Historical Society, and schematic designs for the Historical Museum in Gig Harbor, which were put on hold after the attacks of Sept. 11 but are now getting back under way.

“I’m on an airplane more than anything,” he says. When he is here, he divides his time between life in Seattle during the workweek, and his private home on the Key Peninsula. His home rests on the same piece of property his grandparents settled on in 1912 and where his parents lived, and likely his children or grandchildren will one day live there. Although he appreciates the back and forth of it all, “being out here really is heaven on earth; it clears your mind,” he says.

## Cruise sails smoothly

By Hugh McMillan  
KP News

A lot of folk learned to their disappointment that all tickets were sold out for last month’s combined Gig Harbor-Key Peninsula Historical Societies’ History Cruise.

Passengers of the fully subscribed Pacific Navigation’s Spirit of Adventure, an Alaska-

based craft for 250 passengers that greeted our history buffs at the dock in Jerisich Park in Gig Harbor, had a wonderful experience wandering the waters of Puget Sound around the construction of the new “third” Narrows Bridge, through Balch Passage between McNeil and Anderson Islands, got an off-shore glimpse of Steilacoom, and were fascinated by other points of interest including Key Pen’s Longbranch and Filucy Bay, Devil’s Head, Taylor Bay, Whiteman Cove, Joemma Beach State Park, Vaughn Bay, Herron Island, and on and on.

They munched box lunches while listening to narration by Simon Priest, KP author of “An Automobile Tour Through

Key Peninsula History,” Tim Kezele, founder and president of the Key Peninsula Historical Society and Museum, and Kent Werle of Tacoma Narrows Constructors whose erudite explanations of the histories of each of the sites made them come alive in viewers’ minds.

The cruise journeyed along the 20th century “Mosquito Fleet” steamboat routes of the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsulas. Linda McCowen, GHPHS board member, said, “We couldn’t be happier with this year’s cruise... This is the third cruise we have sponsored, and we received enough inquiries to fill the boat twice over. Next year, we hope to charter a larger boat so that we can accommodate more guests.”



The ship loads up in Gig Harbor before the cruise.

*Photo by Hugh McMillan*