

INSIDE&ONLINE

DECEMBER 2013

Online



Santa run

- Comet to make a near pass
- Co-op elects board of directors
- Fire District 16 fire reports

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Inside

Rusty Roots
making music
-- Page 24



News

News 1-5, 8-11

Sections

Op-Ed Views 6-7
Community Pages 12-13
Business 14-15
Community 16-17, 19
Features 18
Schools 20-21
Obituary Notice 22
Out & About 24

Home away from North Pole is Minter

By Scott Turner, KP News

There's a twinkle in his blue eyes and a gentleness in his voice that belies his 85 years. But those very qualities make Sanford "Sandy" Elken the perfect Santa Claus. Elken, who has lived in Minter since 1998, has been playing the jolly old elf for nearly six decades.

It all began back in the early 1950s when he was assigned to be a photographer during his stint in the Army.

That led to a civilian job as a professional photographer taking photos of kids as they visited Santa at big department stores.

"The company I worked for had me being the official photographer for Frederick & Nelson in Seattle," Elken said. "Then they sent me to Spokane to do the same thing."

As it happened, the photography studio always furnished the beards and wigs for

(See Santa, Page 4)



Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

Santa Claus (aka Sandy Elken) made a special trip to the Yankee Clipper in Key Center last month to get a pre-Christmas trim by shop owner Nita Garnier.

Park levy fails to get needed votes to pass

By Rick Sorrels, KP News

The Key Pen Parks levy received 53 percent of the votes cast, but fell short of the 60 percent required to pass.

When the park commissioners voted in June to place the park property tax levy on the November general election ballot, the income forecast was dismal. Sales tax receipts and property tax receipts were still falling, and higher priority municipal governments were taking all the taxes collected, with a forecast that Key Pen Parks would stop receiving any tax revenues by sometime in 2014.

The economy has started to recover. Home values have increased a bit in all areas of Pierce County except the Key Peninsula, which still dropped 1.5 percent in 2013. Sales tax receipts and property tax receipts have finally stopped falling and have actually increased some, according to Scott Gallacher, the Key Pen Parks director.

Pierce County just released its 2014 budget.

"The numbers now show that KP Parks can survive 2014, and keep our parks open and clean without the help from the recent levy that failed," Gallacher said. "The pinch will not hit us now until 2015. By then, we hope the economy will recover further, to provide even more relief."

The district just approved its budget for 2014. "There is no money for any construction, but there is \$75,000 for planning the intersection project for the entrance to Gateway Park along SR-302," Gallacher said. "Capital improvement cost for this project will take \$750,000 in 2015, and another \$250,000 in 2016."

He said the Gateway Park is the district's highest priority for developing the parks they care for.

"We cannot develop it until after we construct access from SR-302 that meets the required standards. The \$1 million cost is non-negotiable. That's what it costs today," he said.

(See Levy, Page 4)

Voters don't support Peninsula School District levy

By Rick Sorrels, KP News

"It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children within its borders." (Washington State Constitution, Article IX, Section 1.)

In 2012, the Washington state Supreme Court, in its McCleary decision, found that the Washington state Legislature was failing in its "paramount duty."

In McCleary, the Supreme Court stated that the state has the responsibility to provide all funding for basic education. Levies should only be for things beyond basic education, like sports programs and "special" courses of study.

Three years ago, Peninsula School District had more than \$2 million in a reserve fund. Since then the state Legislature has balanced the state budget's multibillion-

dollar deficits every year by cutting even more from school funding.

Peninsula School District no longer has a reserve fund.

Faced with 1,000 housing units under construction in Gig Harbor North, the elementary schools at or over capacity and significant deficiencies at one of those schools, the School Board saw no choice but to go to the voters, as its only other source of funding.

Of the 10,615 registered voters on the Key Peninsula, 56 percent cast a ballot. For the Gig Harbor Peninsula, it was 63 percent of its 31,724 registered voters. The levy failed 48.7 percent to 51.3 percent.

"We are disappointed that it (the levy) did not pass," said PSD Superintendent Chuck Cuzzetto. "The needs are still there."

He said the problems are not going away and that the district will start to see the increase in student load by the start of school next September. About 200 of those 1,000 new housing units are nearing completion now, with more to follow, he said.

According to Cuzzetto, the school board will have feedback sessions starting in early December from every source possible.

He said a strategic plan needs to be determined quickly so that any construction, repair, portable classrooms, et cetera, can be accomplished during the summer months to avoid interference with education programs.

"At this point we have no idea what that strategic plan will be," Cuzzetto said. "It could be another levy on the ballot, or re-allocating for changing budget priorities.

But one thing is fairly certain, we cannot expect the Legislature to come through with additional funding.

Cuzzetto pointed out that there is no immediate overcrowding threat to the high schools or the middle schools. The concern is with all the elementary schools on both peninsulas, because "re-districting" is likely.

Re-districting is where school boundaries are redrawn to balance school populations with capacity, resulting in significant busing and changing which school a child will attend, he said.

The committee that opposed the levy has already announced that they are preparing a package for input to the December School Board meeting. Public comments are welcome. The meeting will be at 6 p.m., on Dec. 5 at the Henderson Bay High School commons.

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Email: news@keypennews.com

**KEY PENINSULA
NEWS**

www.keypennews.com

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Photo of Mount Rainier in the masthead was taken from the dock in Longbranch
by Thomas Morgan, a KP News reader and Key Peninsula resident.

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1. THE KEY PENINSULA NEWS is a community newspaper, owned and published by the KEY PENINSULA CIVIC CENTER ASSOCIATION, a nonprofit, 501-C3 corporation with main offices in Vaughn, Washington. The name, goodwill and any copyright assets that may exist pertaining to the NEWS are among the financial assets of

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2. The objective of Key Peninsula News is to support and create community by reporting news and features and providing a forum for local information. News and editorial coverage focuses on the Key Peninsula and immediately adjacent areas within Fire District 16.

OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE KEY PENINSULA NEWS!

The opinions expressed herein are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers or staff. All letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number for verification. No anonymous letters will be published. Submissions are used on a space available basis and may be edited if used. THE KEY PENINSULA NEWS reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and content. Mail letters to: P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394, or e-mail to news@keypennews.com.



Key Pen Parks

The key to your next adventure!

December 2013

Key Pen Parks PROGRAM GUIDE

Recreation Coordinator: Jessica Smeall, jessica@keypenparks.com 253-884-9240 x22

REGISTER ONLINE: www.keypenparks.com

Winter Break CAMPS

Eco Adventures & LEGO Camps!



ECO ADVENTURE: SALMON & SQUID

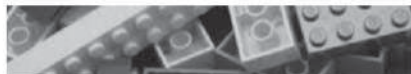
Hands-on learning with the Camp Seymour Naturalists. Explore in the Big Canoe too! (weather permitting)

Day: Thur. Jan 2

Time: 10:00am-3:00pm

Fee: \$30

Location: YMCA Camp Seymour



LEGO: WINTER MACHINES

Build a snowmobile, sleigh & snowplow!

Day: Fri. Jan 3

Time: 9:30am-12:30pm

Fee: \$25

Location: Volunteer Park



STAY FOR LUNCH & HAVE FREE BRICK PLAY!

(No extra fee)

LEGO: WINTER SPORTS

Build a luge, ice hockey rink, and a Lego skier.

Day: Fri. Jan 3

Time: 1:30-4:30pm

Fee: \$25

Location: Volunteer Park



Grades K-7

Breakfast with Santa!



Location: Key Peninsula Fire Department, Key Center Station

Date: Saturday, December 7

Time: 9:00-11:00am (register by time: choose 9:00, 9:45, or 10:30)

Fee: Pre-Register: \$5.00 per person / day of: \$8.00 per person

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Sat Mar 8 2014

PeeWee Basketball

Days: Sat. mornings

Dates: 2/15-3/22 (6 total)

Time: 45 minute classes,
times by ages

Fee: \$51

Location: Civic Center Gym



Do you want to make a difference?

Park PALS is the program for you!

PALS is a group of middle school volunteers who help at special events for Key Pen Parks. Next event is Breakfast with Santa, where the PALS are Santa's elves. Call or email Jess for more info: 884-9240 x22 or jessica@keypenparks.com.

Upcoming important dates & info:

- Park Board Meeting: 12/9 at 7:30pm, Volunteer Park
- Swearing in of Park Commissioners Mark Michel & John Kelly

**FITNESS CAMP
WINTER 1 & 2 SESSION**

Instructor: Shannon Reichl

Location: Volunteer Park (inside & outside!)

Day: Tues & Thurs Time: 6-7pm

Dates: Nov 19 – Dec 26, Jan 7 – Feb 13

Fee: \$30 for 1 class/week, \$60 for 2

Join mid-session and we will prorate the fee!

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Creating a Vibrant Community

Holly Hendrick, Marketing & Facilities Coordinator, Key Peninsula Civic Center

As this year draws to a close, we reflect on the many wonderful partnerships fostered here at the Key Peninsula Civic Center (KPCC).

At the beginning of 2013, the KPCC was able to provide space for the Pierce County Library Book Mobile, providing access to our local library and a computer lab while the Key Center location was remodeled.

Thanks to our relationship with Boy Scout Troop #220, the Civic Center grounds have become a more inviting space with the addition of new picnic tables and a patio area near the museum.

Through the KPCC's commercial kitchen, we incubated small food businesses, including For the Love of Spice, Olson Boys BBQ, and Steepers Tea.

Together, with Two Waters Arts Alliance, you've been "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" and connected with a diverse, talented artisan network.

Every week, small farmers and food producers from the Key Peninsula, and a little further afield, host a marketplace, with the Fresh Food Revolution Co-op (FFR) to support their livelihoods within the our walls.

The KPCC was able to act as a fiscal sponsor for the FFR, this fall, receiving a grant from The Russell Family Foundation to launch the

FFR's new Kids' Educational Garden located at Key Pen Parks' Gateway Park.

In 2013, the KPCC sponsored fundraisers for the Key Peninsula Preschool Co-op's annual Trike-a-thon, which provides scholarships for local families, and Peninsula High School's Rotary supported Interact Club, allowing students to travel to Peru to install computers in schools.

Every Friday night, during the school year, not only does the KPCC open our doors to create a safe, fun place for kids to be kids, through our part-time staff and wonderful network of "Friends of the Key Peninsula Civic Center," we mentor local teenagers in leadership roles to coordinate and manage the Skate Night program.

Did you stop by the Key Peninsula Historical Society Museum, located in the annex building behind the main Civic Center, this past year? They've been hosting an amazing series of history classes for children.

Yes, community happens here.

To find out more about the programs, events, classes, clubs, and ideas for creating wonderful events at the Key Peninsula Civic Center, please visit our website: www.kpcivccenter.org, or, just stop by!

The KPCC's doors are open 8am – 9pm, 7 days a week. 17010 S. Vaughn Rd KP N, Vaughn, WA 98394. 253-884-3456. kpcivccenter@centurytel.net.

KPCCA Welcomes New Board Officers

The Key Peninsula Civic Center Association (KPCCA) elected new Board Officers on November 14.

Phil Bauer will be the new KPCCA Board President, a position he held 2005-2006. Scott Dervaes and Patricia Medveckus return at 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, respectively. Other officers include: Bruce Macdonald, Treasurer and Secretary, Irene Torres and Tracy Geiss, At-

Large Members, as well as, Peggy Gablehouse, who will remain the Human Resources chairperson.

Eighteen community members make up the current KPCCA board; anyone who lives, owns property, or works on the Key Peninsula is eligible to join.

The KPCCA Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7pm, in the Whitmore Room.



www.kpcivccenter.org
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 253-884-3456

The Key Peninsula Civic Center is a 501(c)(3), private non-profit. We rely on rentals, fundraisers, and donations to keep our doors open, and our rentals affordable for the community. Thank you for your support!

(From Santa, Page 1)

the department store Santas, while the stores provided the suits.

It was in Spokane, at the end of a particularly challenging day of working with a particularly challenging Santa, that Elken acquired a Santa suit of his own.

"I traded a beard and wig for a Santa suit and when I got back home, I started playing Santa for my friends' kids in Seattle," he recalled.

That was in 1954. He's been playing Santa ever since and does it for the pure joy of seeing kids smile.

"I love kids and I never had any of my own so that's why I do this. To this day, when I see a kid, I just want to make them smile," he said, gazing up through his natural bushy brows.

Elken doesn't work for big department stores anymore. Instead, he frequents private events and smaller community stores like Food Market on the Key.

And he never gives a big, boisterous "Ho-Ho-Ho!" because he doesn't ever want to scare the little ones.

"When I have a kid that's scared or crying, the first thing I do is get down on the floor at their level and I tell them, 'Look. Now you're taller than I am,' and they usually calm down right away. And I just talk gentle to them," he said with a grin.

And when a kid doesn't know what to say when Santa asks what he or she wants for Christmas, Elken has a trick for that,

Want to help Santa help little kids?

For information or to donate to the Washington Elk's Therapy Program for Children, call (253) 472-6223 or send monetary donations to P.O. Box 110760 Tacoma, WA 98411. For information, visit waelks.net/therapyprogram.

too: "I just say, 'Oh I bet I know what you want. I'm going to bring you some surprises.' That way they're looking forward to Christmas Eve, no matter what their economic status might be," he said.

Nita Garnier, owner of the Yankee Clipper in Key Center, has known Elken for more than five years.

"I've always thought he'd make the perfect Santa," she said. "He's such a personable, caring man and he has the most beautiful blue eyes. And he always has a joke and likes to make people laugh. And you can tell that the kids just love him."

Elken can be hired for private functions, including family gatherings, right up until 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve. That night he makes an annual visit to the home of a specific family. It's a tradition that's been going on for more than 40 years, he said.

Since his very first Santa appearance, Elken has donated all the money he's made to the Washington State Elks Therapy Program for Children. The money pays for therapy for children who have developmental or medical problems and whose parents can't afford professional care.

"I've personally seen how they help those kids and it's like a miracle," he said.

To hire Santa (aka Sandy Elken) for a personal appearance, contact him at his special North Pole number, (253) 851-0271.

Want to see Santa?

Santa will be at Food Market at Key Center Dec. 14 from 11 to 3 p.m. He'll make an appearance at Food Market at Lake Kathryn Dec. 21, 11 to 3 p.m.

(From Levy, Page 1)

Gallacher said the project is important not only for the park but for future parking and access to 360 Trails park.

The Key Pen Parks budget for 2014 cites total expenses at \$789,142.

Besides the costs of maintaining what they currently have, the only other bud-

get item for any improvements over the next couple of years is a small sum for planning the KP Trails System.

"Key Pen Parks thanks the voters of the Key Peninsula for their support of the levy. Even though the levy did not pass as it needed 60 percent, we are grateful for the 53 percent who voted yes," Gallacher said.



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Peninsula School District targets common core standards implementation

Peninsula School District teachers and administrators are collaborating on implementing the new Common Core State Standards adopted by Washington state for mathematics and English language arts. The standards, which are being used by 44 other states, provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning in order to be prepared for college and career.

"They're very focused, coherent and rigorous standards," says PSD Instructional Facilitator Bridgit Reichel. "The standards help students focus in-depth on what they need to know and they also help them be more competitive at the international level."

The Common Core State Standards place emphasis on reading informational and complex texts, writing to justify thinking and more problem-solving and problem-based learning in math.

PSD has had a language arts program in place for

grades 6-12 that already aligns with the new standards. The district's next focus was on K-8 math, and this school year is the first year of full rollout.

"For elementary and middle school math, the timing was right for a curriculum change. This has allowed us some wonderful opportunities for new materials," says PSD Academic Officer for Learning and Teaching Claudia Thompson.

With the K-8 math curriculum in place, the district is proceeding with aligning the high school program with the new standards. Teachers are focusing on areas and necessary resources to best implement these rigorous standards.

"A major piece is professional development for teachers and administrators for better understanding the common core standards and developing the best instruction for students," Thompson says.

District staff will continue conducting parent meetings about the new math materials, and information will be shared with the community via e-newsletters as well. The next step in the

Purdy Elementary second-graders in Megan Manning's class are reviewing math concepts.



State Funding

As many readers know, the State Legislature added funding for K-12 education during their session last spring. We are thankful for their recognition of the underfunding as documented in the McCleary Decision.

As we looked at the additional funding and compared that to funds we received in 2008-09 (the year the lawsuit was filed), there are a few interesting statistics. If you adjust the 2008-09 funding for inflation, we are actually receiving less today in basic education than in 2008-09. If you factor in the voter approved initiatives, we are short by nearly \$8 million.

As the State Constitution reads, "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children..."

Board Membership Change

Appreciation is extended to Rick Jones for his dedicated service to the students of Peninsula School District. Rick always put students first and worked collaboratively with the Board and District staff. He will be greatly missed. The District welcomes David Olson to the School Board and looks forward to his leadership and contributions over the coming years. Mr. Olson will take the oath of office at the December Board meeting.

DECEMBER EVENTS

- 1 Winterfest Craft Fair 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Peninsula High School
- 5 School Board Regular Meeting 6 p.m. at Henderson Bay High School
- 7-8 Tide Fest Art Show 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Gig Harbor High School
- 14 Middle School District Wrestling Tournament 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Peninsula High School Auditorium
- 18 Key Peninsula Choir performance 6:30 to 7:30 at Longbranch Improvement Club
- 23-31 Winter Break - No school

JANUARY EVENTS

- 1-5 Winter Break - No school

SafeSchools LifeLine - The SafeSchools LifeLine is a completely anonymous, toll-free tip line that staff, students, parents and community members can access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week about any potential incident. It is offered free of charge through the Washington Risk Management Pool. Reports of any unsafe or threatening activity should be made to the ANONYMOUS Tip Line: 1-866-548-3847. Peninsula School District Code: 162. All calls are transcribed to ensure anonymity, then documented and disseminated to the appropriate school authority within minutes.

Nondiscrimination Statement The Peninsula School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the District's Title IX and Compliance Officer, Dan Gregory, at (253) 530-1009, email gregoryd@psd401.net or the Section 504 and ADA Coordinator, Sean Whalen, at (253) 530-1080, email whalens@psd401.net. Mailing address: 14015 62nd Ave. NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332.

Peninsula Views

Living out the incarnation

My favorite moment of the year is our candlelight Christmas Eve service. The highlight of that night comes right at the end when we sing "Silent Night." It's a hushed moment, soft and gentle and hopeful, as the long wait toward Christmas is almost over.

Following the final verse — "Christ, the savior, is born" — we head outside, where a warm bonfire beckons. Under the stars, we sing again the first verse, remembering a calm scene in which moth-

Dan Whitmarsh
Writing by Faith



er and child sleep in heavenly peace. As our voices fade away, church bells ring, carrying into the starry sky the message that this is the last night of darkness, because tomorrow is Christmas.

(See Whitmarsh, Page 7)

Gun dealers need help, too

Shooting clubs all across America offer hunter safety, defensive shooting, sport shooting and basic gun safety courses.

This is never reported by the media and therefore not common knowledge to the non-gun owner. For the most part, the gun community is a very law abiding bunch, made up of generations of very responsible people. These people are upstanding citizens who want to keep and enjoy the freedoms we cherish and to pass them along to future generations. So instead of treating gun owners like criminals, we need to actually look to them for the solutions to firearms problems.

In addition to all that Federal Firearms Licensees (FFL) do to ensure all procedures are followed for sales of all firearms, we need help when it comes to buying used firearms. What we need is access to stolen firearms databases so we can check guns we are buying or taking in on trade to make sure that they are clean. By clean, I mean not used in a crime or needed as evidence in a court proceeding. FFL dealers are currently not required to do any checks on the fire-

arms we buy from private individuals.

Our elected representatives in Washington, D.C., have been focused with tunnel vision on background checks of people purchasing firearms.

It is understandable that people bristle at this because it is done from the pretense that everyone is guilty until proven innocent. This is not the way to garner the support of the American people.

Having a background check performed by a licensed dealer is understandable and the law. To require private individuals to perform these background checks is both an invasion of privacy and annoying. People need a workable way to help stop illegal sale of firearms without making them feel spied upon, or like a criminal.

(See Beal, Page 7)

Cecil Beal
Gun Sight



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Take the time to notice the effort of Fire District 16

During the past nine months, I have had the pleasure of being involved with the Citizens Advisory Panel for our Pierce County Fire Protection District 16, and over the last several months with the Board of Commissioners in their work on the 2014 fire district budget.

Obviously, these are still difficult economic times, particularly on the Key Peninsula. Assessed property values have not risen, and with little commercial business taxes, it is always a struggle to balance our needs in the community with the amount of taxes collected.

I have been very impressed and pleased to see the work of the responsible persons who make up the Board of Commissioners, district staff, administration and firefighters — all of whom had viable input into the budget process. They are ever cognizant of doing their very best for the community; spending our

hard earned taxes wisely while keeping in mind their stated mission of serving the health, welfare and safety needs of our community.

The most recent budget meetings I observed displayed an earnest and professional desire by everyone to effectively come to agreement and develop a lean, workable budget.

I highly commend our Fire District 16 and believe we are being well-served by these public servants.

I do hope that other citizens will reach out, and if possible, attend a Board of Commissioners meeting or one of the open houses at the fire station in Key Center. Take a greater part in our community to see where and how our tax dollars are being spent, and take the time to say thank you for a job well done.

*Stan Moffett
Lakebay, Key Peninsula*

Call for KP News columnists

The Key Peninsula News is recruiting for the next round of guest columnists, whose one-year term will begin in January. We are looking for fresh, creative voices and topics relevant to our local readership.

Columnists will be selected by a panel and contribute a column every two to three months; the schedule will depend on the number of finalists.

To be considered, please submit a short biography, a proposal of your column including theme and potential topics and two publication-ready columns (each 750 words or less). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Email your materials to irenet211@gmail.com by Dec. 16. Finalists will be announced in the January or February edition.

Letters Policy

The opinions expressed herein are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publishers or staff. All letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number for verification. No anonymous letters will be published. Submissions are used on a space available basis and may be edited if

used. The Ken Peninsula News reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and content. Mail letters to: P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394, or email to news@keypennews.com.

(From Whitmarsh, Page 6)

Central to Christmas is the idea of incarnation, of God coming to Earth. We sing of Emanuel, "God with us." We read the words of John, that "the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us."

We remember that God didn't just sit in heaven, enjoying some popcorn and a show. Instead, God chose to walk on Earth in Jesus, experiencing pain and sorrow, joy and gladness. God experienced what it is to be human — to fear and to doubt, to feel tired, to know abandonment and betrayal, to taste good food and rich wine, to laugh while walking the lake shore and to cry at the death of a friend. This is incarnation — God with us.

Incarnation is not only about God being part of our lives, however. It extends to the ways we are involved in the lives of others. Incarnation is the way we bridge the gaps between us, the way we show friendship and compassion to other people.

It's no wonder, then, that Christmas is a time for sending out cards, a season of parties, of shopping with friends or sharing dessert with a neighbor. It's a time when it seems everybody is reaching out, longing to reconnect and share the holiday

season with others.

Opportunities to incarnate our common humanity abound. We can give a healthy tip to an overworked waitress, or drop a donation in the bucket of a bell-ringing Santa. We can attend concerts, special church services and the tree-lighting in Key Center.

We buy gifts for loved ones and we reach out to the less-fortunate in our midst. Incarnation is felt in a warm fireside chat with loved ones, or the old friends sharing breakfast at the Home Port. It's that piece that says we care about each other, that we wish the best for each other, that we are glad for our friends and family. It's how we live out our desire that God will bless us, every one.

So share some eggnog with a friend. Invite your neighbor over for coffee. Come join us Christmas Eve. Let all our promises of love and friendship come true, incarnate in the relationships we share.

And on behalf of the KP Ministerial Association, I wish you a very Merry Christmas.

Dan Whitmarsh is pastor of Lakebay Community Church. He can be reached at dan@lakebaycovenant.net.

(From Beal, Page 6)

Having access to a national database of stolen firearms is a way to help in the fight against stolen and illegal firearms.

This kind of check needs to be easily accessible so it can be used by anyone. This makes the firearm the focus, instead of the person. It would help people involved in a firearm transaction have the peace of mind knowing that the gun they are buying is legitimate and legal.

The side benefit is getting stolen guns back to the rightful owners and off the streets. I know if I had a gun stolen, I would want to have it returned ASAP. I think this kind of check would be far more appealing to gun owners than a background check on an individual.

All of the gun owners I know feel like they are being singled out just because they own a firearm or are involved in a firearm sport or activity. Just because you own a race car does not mean you are going to drive like a madman on the roadways.

There is such a stigma against gun owners due to unfair media attention that we lose the facts and we lose sight of ever solving

any problems.

At this time there is no way for anyone doing a check on a firearm unless you are a police agency. They are able, within a minute or two, to run specific firearms information through dispatch to find out whether it is stolen, because the federal, state and local police have access to the national stolen firearms database.

If this ability were open to the public, especially gun dealers who buy, sell and trade used guns, it would be invaluable.

When looking for any solutions surrounding guns and gun violence, making the average law abiding citizen feel like: A) They are the problem; and B) They are a criminal, will fail every time. Once the people in Olympia and back in D.C., realize this, maybe we can tackle the problem and come up with better solutions.

I hope we can someday find common ground, because as long as we keep doing things as we are, nothing will ever get resolved.

Cecil Beal has been involved with firearms through business and collecting most of his life. He can be reached at crnabeal@hotmail.com.



Season's Greetings

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884-3937

Numbers high, supplies low at Food Backpacks 4 Kids

By Alice Kinerk, KP News

Every Friday afternoon, 376 students in the Peninsula School District head home with backpacks full of free food.

"Our goal is to get the kids and their families through the weekend," said Margaret Golston, board member for the Food Backpacks 4 Kids program. "Breakfast, lunch and dinner."

The backpacks include nutritious staples such as oatmeal, rice and tuna fish. More recently, they have begun sending home herbs and spices, and a few recipe ideas as well. From time to time non food items are sent home too, Golston said. For example, inmates at the Purdy prison knitted enough caps and scarves to include in each backpack one recent week.

Founded in 2009, the program fills a critical need for Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula families. Rising prices at the grocery store combined with lingering effects of the recession have left many with scarce funds to purchase the food they need.

As program founder Karen Jorgensen points out, those numbers have gone up ev-

ery year since the program began, and are definitely up from last year at this time.

Making tough times even tougher is the \$5 billion reduction in federal funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or food stamps, which went into effect Nov. 1. The cuts are likely to mean the program volunteers will soon have an even greater number of backpacks to fill. "More people are going to need us," Golston said.

The program accepts all students without reviewing the family's financial status. Families do not need to be receiving free or reduced lunch at school to take part in Food Backpacks 4 Kids.

However, this increase in need comes at a time when the number of donations the program receives has significantly dropped. With its shelves looking unusually bare, the program is seeking donations of money or food from area residents.

The program works closely with other area charities such as the Children's Home Society, FISH food bank and local church groups to make sure no donation goes to waste.



Photo by Hugh McMillan, KP News
Volunteers sort and pack Food Backpacks 4 Kids essentials last month at Key Peninsula Middle School.

"Our affiliations with others are nice. If we get some things we can't use, we pass them on," Golston said.

Although they are happy to receive donations of any sort, she mentioned that financial donations are especially appreciated so they can purchase the type of food they need, and spend wisely. "We are smart about buying, and make the money go further," she said. The group's website states that 80

percent of financial donations are used to purchase food, 20 percent goes to administrative costs and overhead.

The group plans to raise additional funds through a Christmas tree sale on the Key Peninsula Highway in December. They also plan an auction in the spring.

For anyone interested in donating to Food Backpacks 4 Kids, blue barrels for food donations are set up at both Kitsap Credit Union branches in Gig Harbor, next to the movie theater in Uptown, and near Albertson's on Borgen Boulevard. There also is a blue donation barrel at the Key Peninsula Real Estate Office, near the intersection of 134th Avenue and the Key Peninsula Highway. Program volunteers also can drive to a location to pick up larger donations, such as after a food drive.

For monetary donations, there are cash collection cans at the peninsula Food Markets.

Anyone interested in volunteering, donating, or having their child take part in Food Backpacks 4 Kids can contact Margaret Golston at (253) 820-0336 or by email at mlg1@centurytel.net.

Key Peninsula Community Services

17015 9Th St Ct KPN Lakebay, WA. 98349

Senior Center & Food Bank

Helping our citizens to eat and live healthy

PO Box 392 Lakebay WA. 98349 253-884-4440 Fax: 253-884-6196

Our annual pledge drive is still on!

Donations are off to a slow start. Please Help us to Help others You are our greatest resource.

The Key Free Clinic will now be at the KP Health and Professional Center. Please call 253-884-2234 for info

We would like to say a special THANKS to:

**Peninsula School District
Bus Drivers
Boy Scouts Troop 220
Lighthouse Christian School
Key Peninsula Middle School
and
The Fox Island United Church of Christ**



For their support through Food Drives

www.keypeninsulacommunityservices.org and www.facebook.com/KeyPenCS

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 2nd Mile Camp Ground

Santa Claus is coming to town...

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



Santa will fly from 5:30pm to 7:30pm* each night. Please keep in mind that times are approximate and due to temperamental reindeer, Santa will stick to main roadways. Listen for our sleigh bells to signal our arrival!!!

Sat, December 7

3rd Annual Santa Breakfast at
 Key Center Fire Station 9-11am
 Pre-Register with Key Pen Parks
 Lake Milderwood

Sun, December 8

Tree Lighting - Key Center
 Wind and Tides (Dusk)
 Bel Mar
 Emerald Shores

Mon, December 9

Greentree

Fri, December 13

Lakebay Marina - 6:00pm
 Home - 7:30pm

Sat, December 14

Taylor Bay
 Jackson Lake

Sun, December 15

Joemma Beach
 Palmer Lake

Thu, December 19

Horseshoe Lake Estates
 Greyston Heights

Sun, December 20

Skate Night at KP Civic Center
 Vaughn

Sat, December 21

Lake of the Woods
 Bel Ridge

Sun, December 22

Lake Holiday



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Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Makayla Percy leads a group of flag-waving Vaughn Elementary School students in the Star-Spangled Banner during the school's recent Veteran's Day event.

Vaughn Elementary School students support veterans with talent and treasures

By Peter Ruble, KP News

The annual Vaughn Elementary School Veterans Day event showcased the patriotism and musical talent of students. It also coincided with fifth-graders who wrote letters to veterans and started a coin drive to help fly a World War II veteran to Washington, D.C., to see memorials.

During the event, local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts brought out the nation's flag as a rousing rendition of the Star Spangled Banner was sung by Makayla Percy, one of music teacher Lisa Mill's pupils.

"People in the audience said it gave them goose bumps," said Mills. Afterward, musical students played the theme song for each individual military branch. During each ren-

dition, family members of veterans of each military branch stood in admiration.

"When I hear those wonderful little voices belt out those songs with emotion and power, I am speechless," said cultural enrichment teacher Ernest Donehower. "Seeing it all come together after all the practice is the reward for what we do and they did it the other day at the Veterans Day assembly. I could tell the vets in the audience were deeply moved by the kids' efforts."

Donehower, who helped wounded soldiers from the Vietnam War in Honolulu as a Red Cross volunteer, said that the message for students is that the rights and privileges

(See **Veterans**, Page 11)

(From **Veterans**, Page 10)

everyone enjoys as free people in America come from the sacrifices of many who have come before and who continue to serve the country today.

"This is the time to reflect on what it means to be free and to thank and honor those who have helped guarantee that freedom," Donehower said.

"It's an important event to teach kids about patriotism," Mills said.

Mills said she grew up as an Air Force "brat" and stressed the importance for kids to learn respect for the military veterans who did so much to defend the American way of life. "We take so much for granted in society," Mills said. "We need to remember the people that sacrificed so much for us."

Besides honoring service men and women with their voices, Vaughn Elementary School students participated with writing, artwork and a fundraising campaign.

This all started after fifth-grade teacher Marci Cummings-Cohoe was approached by Renee Peavy of a group called Puget Sound Honor Flight in October.

Peavy asked the students to write letters to Western Washington World War II veterans and to watch a film.

The film portrayed some of the last surviving members of "The Greatest Generation" (those who grew up during the Great Depression and went on to fight in World War II) in having a chance to fly to Washington, D.C., to visit World War II memorials. Many of the veterans were reduced to tears by the opportunity.

Cummings-Cohoe said that her students were so moved by the film, that they decided they had to do more than write letters. That's when they decided to start a coin drive. The students built art-decorated collection boxes for each classroom so the whole school could collect donations to send one World War II veteran to Washington, D.C. The boxes are filling with money. "We were looking for school-aged children to get involved and they were tremendous," Peavy said. "They really embraced it and we've received wonderful feedback."

Fifth-grader Riley Schuller said that be-

fore the film, she didn't even know that World War II veterans still existed. "I think we should keep them around as long as possible," Schuller said.

"The film changed me because I didn't know how hard it was for them to go on with their lives," said fifth-grader Haley Taylor. "It was really great that they got to see their memorial."

Puget Sound Honor Flight began in March of 2013. It relies solely on donations and corporate funding. No federal dollars are used. Its goal is to provide "one last mission" for members of "The Greatest Generation."

Although they plan to honor veterans of the Korean and Vietnam wars, they are now placing an emphasis on World War II veterans since 900 of them pass away every day.

For information, to volunteer and to donate to Puget Sound Honor Flight, visit pugetsoundhonorflight.org.



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COMMUNITY PAGES

Submit calendar items to news@keypennews.com • Deadline is the 15th of the month

NOV. 30

Museum offerings

The Key Peninsula Historical Society Museum at the KP Civic Center is open from 1 to 3 p.m. Many books and other gift items are for sale. The museum is closed December and January and reopens Feb. 1.

NOV. 30-DEC. 1

Winterfest

Peninsula High School hosts its annual Winterfest arts and crafts fair. Hundreds of craft vendors are available. Admission is \$3; hours on Saturday are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. phpsd401.net.

DEC. 1-20

Trees of Sharing

The Key Peninsula Veterans set up its annual Trees of Sharing, which carry tags with gift information for veterans at American Lake. Locations will be at the Senior Center in Home, Home Port Restaurant, Food Market in Key Center, Sound Credit Union in Key Center and Cost Less Pharmacy in Wauna. Pick a tag, purchase the inexpensive gift, wrap and attach the tag, then return it to the tree location before Dec. 20.

DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Bloodmobile dates

The bloodmobile is at Albertson's 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., at the beginning of the month and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Dec. 23 and 30.

DEC. 5 and 19

Senior shopping

The senior van meets at the KP Community Services at 9 a.m., and returns between 3 and 5 p.m., giving seniors an opportunity to go grocery shopping and attend any scheduled Gig Harbor doctor appointments. Also included is a "Dutch" lunch. 884-4440.

DEC. 6, 13, 20

Skate night

Geared for kids age 5-13, skate night rolls between 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the KP Civic Center. Kids may safely enjoy roller skating, arcade games and concessions. Parents are

To submit an event

To submit an event for the Community Works calendar, please email news@keypennews.com, or mail to P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394. Briefs must be submitted by the 15th of the month.

welcome to attend and visit with others on the observation balcony. kpciviccenter.org or 884-3456.

DEC. 7

Santa breakfast

Key Pen Parks and Key Peninsula Fire Department sponsor Breakfast with Santa from 9 to 11 a.m., at the Key Center fire station. Pre-registration strongly urged — cost is \$5/person; day of event admission accepted as space is available-cost is \$8 per person. Choose a time: 9 a.m., 9:45 a.m. or 10:30 a.m., and register online at keypen-parks.com or call Jess at (253) 884-9240. Event includes pancake breakfast (pancakes, ham, fruit), holiday crafts and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Donations for local holiday drive encouraged.

Winter concert

Friends of the KC Library host the eclectic string band Rusty Roots at 2 p.m., for its annual free winter concert in the Brones Room at the library in Key Center. (253) 548-3309.

DEC. 7 and JAN. 4

First aid classes

The Key Peninsula Fire Department hosts "Friends & Family CPR" from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Key Center station on Dec. 7. A "Heart-saver First Aid CPR AED" class is 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 4. keypeninsulafire.org.

DEC. 8

Tree lighting

The annual tree lighting at the Key Center Corral begins at 4 p.m. Enjoy singing, snacks and the arrival of Santa and his sleigh at this family event. Santa is visiting neighborhoods; check this paper for the schedule.

Bazaar

The Bayshore Garden Club hosts a bazaar sale with wreaths, centerpieces, dog treats, a raffle and more at the KC fire station from noon to 6 p.m. (prior to tree lighting.) Tedi, 884-3448.

DEC. 9

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile is at Peninsula High School from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

DEC. 10

Crochet or knit

The Loving Hearts group knits and crochets for charities including veterans, babies, Backpacks 4 Kids and chemo patients and meet from 1 to 3 p.m., at WayPoint Church, 12719-134th Ave KPN. All are welcome. Yarn donations are always needed. lovingheartsonkp@gmail.com or Virginia, 884-9619.

DEC. 11

Garden Club meets

The Bayshore Garden Club meets 1 p.m., at the Longbranch fire station. Francine, (253) 569-1381.

KP Council

The KP Community Council hosts WSDOT update at 7 p.m., at the Key Center fire station. (253) 884-6455.

DEC. 12

Ashes meet

The Ashes support group for FD 16 meets 10:30 a.m., at the Key Center fire station. 884-3771.

Free clinic

Non-emergency medical care for KP residents without any medical insurance is provided 5:30 to 8 p.m., at a new location: KP Health and Professional Center in Key Center. 884-2234.

DEC. 13

Rusty Christmas

Homemade Bluegrass hosts a Rusty Christmas from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus and their sleigh leave the KC fire

station at 6 p.m., headed for Lorenz Road by the marina. Boat owners are encouraged to decorate their boat and stop by the marina and wave hello. facebook.com/shipwreck-cafe.lakebaymarina

DEC. 14

Gingerbread houses

Families will make and decorate their own gingerbread house from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Key Center Library. Online registration (piercescountylibrary.org) is required. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Key Center Library. (253) 548-3309.

DEC. 15

Key Singers' concert

Key Singers presents its annual free Christmas Concert at 3 p.m., in McColley Hall, KP Lutheran Church, junction of KP Highway and Lackey Road. This event includes traditional carols, a Russian song of snow, a humorous rendition about lute-fisk and special numbers by members and guests. Donations of staples or money for the KP Food Bank are encouraged. 884-5615.

Bluegrass jam

Bluegrass Gospel Jam session is hosted at Longbranch Church (16518 46th St. KPS) 6 to 8:30 p.m., for all acoustic instruments, ages and skill levels. Everyone is welcome to play, sing or simply listen. Bring music stand and finger food to share; music and beverages are provided. (253) 492-4177.

DEC. 19

Forum hosted

Mustard Seed's third Thursday Forum is 10 a.m., at the Key Center fire station. 884-1205.

DEC. 20

Teen fun

Club Cosmic, for teens grades 8-12, is 9 p.m. to midnight. Geared exclusively for teens, this twice-a-month event is chock full of DJ battles, dancing, games, including dodge ball (with glow-in-the-dark balls), four square, name that tune and contests: all for \$5. kpciviccenter.org or 884-3456.

OFF THE KEY

DEC. 6-16

'Wizard of Oz'

Paradise Theatre presents "Wizard of Oz" at 7:30 p.m., on Friday and Saturday and 3 p.m., on Sunday. Special Holiday Dinner Theatre on Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. paradisetheatre.org or 851-7529.

DEC. 6, 13, 20, 27

Spanish talk

Join in Spanish conversation with El Grupo from 12:30 to 2 p.m., at the Gig Harbor Library. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Gig Harbor Library. (253) 548-3305

DEC. 7

Holiday concert

Celtic singer Erin McNamee presents traditional Irish music in a family holiday concert at 2 p.m., at the Gig Harbor Library. This event is sponsored by Friends of the

Gig Harbor Library. (253) 548-3305

Tree lighting

The annual lighting of the Gig Harbor tree will take place on Saturday, Dec. 7 at Skansie Brothers Park. The event begins with holiday carols sung by Spectrum Vocal Academy at 5 p.m., and includes a visit from Rhubarb, the Tacoma Rainiers mascot reindeer. gigharborguide.com.

DEC. 7, 14, 21

Farmers Market

An indoor location at 5503 Wollochet Drive (former Peninsula Gardens building) will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Saturdays.

DEC. 10

Soundsations

The choral group Soundsations presents its concert of Christmas music on Tuesday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m., at the Church of the Nazarene, 7721 Pioneer Way, Gig Harbor. The concert is free and refreshments will be

served afterward. galen@centurytel.net.

DEC. 14

Bloodmobile

The bloodmobile will be at the Gig Harbor Safeway 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

DEC. 23

Puppets perform

Colorful marionettes perform an in-the-round family variety show at the Gig Harbor Library. Free tickets are available at 10 a.m., on day of the event. Two times available, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Library. (253) 548-3305.

DEC. 31

Kids celebrate

A New Year's Eve for Little Kids (ages 0-3) begins at 10 a.m., at the Gig Harbor Library followed by a New Year's Eve for Kids (ages 4-8) at 11:15 a.m. Crafts, dancing and snacks will lead to a countdown. Sponsored by Friends of the Gig Harbor Library. (253) 548-3305.

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS

Community walk

Free walking for exercise in the KP Civic Center gym from 9 to 11 a.m. 884-3456.

Senior exercise class

The S.A.I.L. program, taught by Marilyn Perks, includes aerobics, light weight lifting, stretching and balance techniques 10 to 11 a.m., at the KP Community Services in Lakebay. Participants must register with Marilyn, 884-4440.

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS

Preschool play time

The Children's Home Society KP Family Resource Center offers a preschool/toddler indoor park program 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., at the KP Civic Center. Caregivers must stay with child. Drop-ins are welcome; stay for as long as you wish. A \$1/child donation is suggested. Tami, 884-5433.

Senior tai chi club

Senior tai chi meets 10 to 11 a.m., at the KP Community Services in Lakebay.

884-4440.

WEDNESDAYS

Writers meet

The Lakebay Writers meet 1:30 to 4 p.m., at the Key Center Library. 884-3931.

Writers' workshop

The Watermark Writers present a free writer's workshop 5 to 8 p.m., in Vaughn. (253) 778-6559.

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS

Senior meals

Nutritional meals for seniors ages 60 and older are served at noon at the KP Community Services; a \$2 donation is requested. Guests (ages 50-59) of senior attendees are requested to donate \$2.50. 884-4440.

THURSDAYS

Toastmasters

The Toastmasters meet 8 to 9 a.m., at the KC fire station. Join the fun and improve your speaking ability.

Seniors' lunch

The Key Peninsula Senior Society meets at 1 p.m., for a potluck, fellowship and games in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 884-4981.

Bingo

Free Bingo at the KP Community Services beginning at 7 p.m. 884-4440.

SATURDAYS

Writers meet

The Writers' Guild meets 10 a.m. to noon at the KC Library. 884-6455.

Lakebay Jam with 302

Lakebay Jam with 302 is from 6:30 to 9 p.m., weather permitting, at the Lakebay Marina. Call ahead at 884-3350 or facebook.com/shipwreckcafe.lakebaymarina or glorypromo@gmail.com.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

KP Veterans

Dec. 2, 7 p.m., at McColley Hall/KP Lutheran Church; 884-4407 or 884-9852. kpveterans.net.

KP Lions' dinner and program

Dec. 4 and 18, 5:30 p.m., in VFW Room, KP Civic Center; 853-2721.

Peninsula School District Board

Dec. 5, 6 p.m., at Commons, Henderson Bay High School.

Key Pen Parks

Dec. 9, 7 p.m., at Volunteer Park; keypenparks.com.

Fire District 16

Dec. 10 and 24, 6 p.m., in meeting room, Key Center fire station; keypeninsulafire.org.

Key Peninsula Council

Dec. 11, 7 p.m., at KC fire station; kpcouncil.org.

KP Civic Center Association Board

Dec. 12, 7 p.m., in Whitmore Room; kpciviccenter.org.

LIC

Dec. 19, potluck, 6:30 p.m., at Longbranch Improvement Club; 884-6022 longbranchimprovementclub.org.

KP Citizens Against Crime

Dec. 19, 7 p.m., at Home fire station; kpcitizensagainstcrime.org.

KP Farm Council

Dec. 23, 6:30 p.m., at Key Center fire station; dwebsterkp@gmail.com.



Clean water. Happy clams. Great chowder.

They all somehow go together. Yet, many things can negatively affect our shellfish, fish and the recreational waters we all use. Direct contact with polluted water, shellfish or fishing in polluted water will definitely ruin your chowder—and even make you sick.

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Photo by Peter Ruble, KP News

According to Lana Generao, owner of Aha Hui Lanakila, in Lakebay, this crystal grid harnesses energy from group meditation and transfers it into the atmosphere. It was designed by James Atherton, who designed the Sombrero atop El Sombrero restaurant in Key Center.

Living aloha in Lakebay

By Peter Ruble, KP News

Nestled on the corner of Bass Lane Road near Jackson Lake is a sanctuary called Aha Hui Lanakila.

What appears on the surface as an ordinary house in the woods is purported to be an energy vortex where physical and mental ailments can be healed.

The Halau, or school, is always open and students from around the world are able to learn reiki and other aspects of natural healing in person or online.

The Rev. Lana Generao, Ph.D., brought Aha Hui Lanakila to Lakebay two years ago.

The sanctuary was a dream she held since she was 2 years old. During her journey, she met the Dalai Lama, as a 20-year-old who suggested that she start meditation. From this platform, she was able to open up her "third eye." Opening your third eye, she said, involves calming the pituitary gland to allow your brain to secrete serotonin and melatonin.

"This is a calling," said Generao, who walked away from a promising career as an attorney to pursue her path of enlightenment. "The ancestors have called us. We need to come back to a community and get away from things that enslave us," she said.

According to Generao, her Hawaiian philosophy of living, or "living aloha," is better cultivated on the Key Peninsula than in Hawaii, which has fallen victim to a lot of urban sprawl. "The trees have a vibration that's in synch with yours," said Generao. "It blows my mind how many people don't know about the Key Peninsula."

Generao enjoys the approximation to Jackson Lake, which allows her to take her students kayaking.

According to Generao, Aha Hui Lanakila is the only school of its nature that teaches traditional Japanese reiki. She said that other schools teach an Americanized version. With traditional Japanese reiki, she is able to send healing balls of energy to people anywhere in the world. She has used the energy to heal serious physical ailments in people while communicating with them through Skype. She said she has also helped heal methamphetamine addicts on the Key Peninsula.

"Reiki is energy healing," said Generao. "It's the spark that makes the grass grow."

Generao said that reiki involves the channeling of a healing, life force energy. Recent scientific experiments have proven the existence of this energy and its connection to physical and mental well-being. The technique of reiki helps reduce stress and improve the immune system. In Americanized versions, this energy is usually transferred through massage. In the traditional Japanese version, the energy can be transferred through vibrations without and physical touching, she said.

Generao has a long-term vision for her sanctuary that includes providing residence for more people to become part of a communal form of living. "Eventually we'd like to put up a yurt and tiny houses. People could come here and live right next to nature," she said.

Aha Hui Lanakila is always open, and Generao welcomes visitors at any time. "Come on over and leave everything in the driveway," Generao said.

For information, visit spreadaloha.org.

Schwan's home delivery expands to Lakebay area

By Steve Whitford, KP News

In August of this year, Lakebay residents were included in the Schwan's home delivery program. Besides its world-famous ice cream confections, Schwan's offers more than 350 different selections of flash frozen meals and entrees.

The "Schwan's story" began in 1948 when Marvin Schwan set out in his van packed with dry ice and 14 gallons of homemade ice cream from his parents' farm in Marshall, Minn. He sold all of his inventory in one day, and a new home-delivery business was born.

Over the years, the company grew and began offering other foods besides ice cream. In 1970, it bought a frozen pizza plant in Salina, Kan., and began producing the Tony's pizza brand.

Due to the rising cost of fuel, in 1974 the company started converting most of its 4,800 trucks to cleaner-burning propane. In 1976, the Schwan's Consumer Brands Division introduced Red Baron pizza; it became the company's bestselling

brand. By 1979, to help market the pizza, a squadron of World War II biplanes was formed. They flew for 28 years, becoming the longest surviving civilian acrobatic team in the United States and carrying more than 80,000 passengers.

Schwan's acquired Sabatasso Foods, a frozen pizza producer, and the Minh Food Corp., an Asian-style foods producer, in 1986 and would later produce Freschetta pizza. Schwan's became the sponsor for Schwan's USA Cup, the largest youth soccer tournament in the Western Hemisphere. Schwan's, already the leader and producer of frozen desserts, also acquired the Mrs. Smith dessert brand.

James Gochmansky, Schwan's local district manager, was originally from San Diego, Calif., where he had worked for Frito Lay for 22 years when he was recruited by Schwan's.

"I was approaching mid life and I decided I wanted a new life and new experience," he said. He went to work for Schwan's in 2009 and relocated to Puyallup.

Gochmansky and his wife house-hunt-



Photo courtesy David Abbe

Schwan's Key Peninsula representative Jeri Hastings pauses for a recent photo.

ed around the state for a year, but were always drawn back to the peninsula. After a few visits, they knew they had found their new home in Home and moved in 2010.

Gochmansky said he is proud to be part of the Schwan's story.

"The company strives to use U.S. products whenever possible. This includes

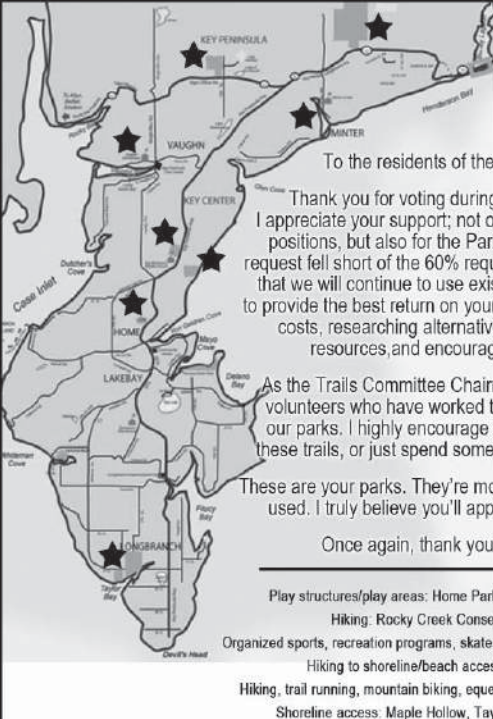
fruits and vegetables from the Northwest which are flash-frozen for optimal flavor and nutrition," he said.

Schwan's employs approximately 5,000 people who cover more than 4,000 routes nationwide. Besides desserts, Schwan's delivers complete frozen meals, a perfect service for shut-ins or those who don't cook. This includes products for people with special diet needs, like low sodium, no sugar and gluten-free.

Schwan's representative salesperson on the peninsula is Jeri Hastings, who will provide delivery to your home, school or place of business. Schwan's also delivers to restaurants.

The Schwan's Co. believes in giving back to the community and is presently introducing "Schwan's Cares," a fundraising network for local teams and groups that provide organizations the opportunity to earn money all year without having to handle money, products or delivery.

For information, visit schwans-cares.com. To order from Schwan's visit Schwans.com.



Thank you!

To the residents of the Key Peninsula:

Thank you for voting during the recent election. I appreciate your support; not only for the commissioner positions, but also for the Park levy. Though the levy request fell short of the 60% required to pass, please know that we will continue to use existing funding responsibly to provide the best return on your investment by minimizing costs, researching alternative funding, maximizing resources, and encouraging volunteerism.

As the Trails Committee Chairman, I want to thank the volunteers who have worked tirelessly to provide trails in our parks. I highly encourage everybody to check out these trails, or just spend some time enjoying the parks.

These are your parks. They're most successful when they're used. I truly believe you'll appreciate the experience.

Once again, thank you. ~ Mark Michel.

Play structures/play areas: Home Park, Vaughn Civic Center.
Hiking: Rocky Creek Conservation Area.
Organized sports, recreation programs, skate park, disk golf: Volunteer Park.
Hiking to shoreline/beach access: Maple Hollow.
Hiking, trail running, mountain biking, equestrian trail riding: 360 Trails.
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New LDS church opens doors for first community event

By Scott Turner, KP News

Wauna resident Tami Morgan has been collecting nativity scenes for more than 25 years. She has dozens of different types — some are one-piece sets, others have as many as 30 pieces. Each one is unique and special to her.

Morgan grew up in a religious family and her mother always decorates the family home for Christmas.

"I just picked up on what my mom does," Morgan said. "I love Christmas and it's such a very important, sacred time. And to me, the nativities sort of symbolize the true meaning of Christmas."

She purchased her first nativity for half price at an after-Christmas sale. Since then she's collected scenes from all over the world, including Sweden, Peru and Niger.

Some are carved from stone; some are wood. "I have one made of coconut that my son brought me from Mexico and one that my daughter brought me from

the Caribbean. I also have a little paper one with Mary and Joseph and a cow that my daughter made for me when she was in preschool," Morgan said with a smile.

She even has a crocheted nativity scene that's different from all the others.

Currently, Morgan has her eye on a nativity from Japan. "It has Japanese people in kimonos. I love that each country or culture has its own version of a nativity."

"What that says to me is that Christ's birth is important all around the world and it doesn't even really matter what religion you are," she added.

Many of her 50-plus nativities are carefully stored in boxes during the year. But she always has three or four on display in her home.

"I want people to know when they come into my home that this is a Christ-filled home," she said.

Several of Morgan's nativities will be on display during the Nativity Festival Dec. 6, 7 and 8 at the new Church of

Want to go?

The Nativity Festival will take place at the new Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) Dec. 6, 7 and 8 from 1 to 9 p.m. Community members are invited to participate in the choirs and orchestras that will perform during the festival.

Anyone who wants to have their personal nativities included in the displays should bring them to the church on Dec. 3. The church is located at 12002 Peacock Hill Road in Gig Harbor. For information, visit christmasnativity.net or call Cheryl Smith at (253) 686-0892.

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Peacock Hill in Gig Harbor. The new facility, called a "stake," is a hub where area wards (congregations) come together for worship, meeting and events.

According to Cheryl Smith, Nativity

Festival coordinator, there will likely be about 500 nativities included in the festival.

The church is inviting people throughout the community to bring their own nativities to be included in the festival.

"We just want to make this a wonderful celebration that brings the whole community together. You don't have to be a church member. Everyone is welcome to participate."

"It's to celebrate the things that we all share during this very special season," Smith said.

The festival will also include live music, an angel gallery and special hands-on art making activities for children.

"We'll have lots of little pieces and materials so kids can make their own little nativities to take home," Smith said.

The Nativity Festival is the first of many community events the church plans to present.

For information on the festival, visit christmasnativity.net or call Cheryl Smith at (253) 686-0892.

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Sixth annual Winter Warm-Up Artisan Fair a KP hit

By Leila Christiansen-Larson, KP News

The sixth annual Winter Warm-Up Artisan Festival and Chili Cook-Off events at the Key Peninsula Civic Center (KPCCA) on Nov. 9 were well-attended. The parking lot was full, the gym floor was alive with merchants and community members, and the kitchen sold out of food.

Holly Hendrick, marketing and facilities coordinator for the KPCCA, said, "The event was created to support local artisans, crafters, farmers, and food sellers."

There were more than 20 vendors selling handcrafted items, many of which were holiday themed. Some people came for one thing and found another. One young local woman said, "I came last year to buy Christmas presents and this year my friend and I have our own booth. We are selling wallets and purses made from duct-tape," and she added that business was good.

There were new vendors as well as

some favorites at the event this year. Returning vendors included Sara Gray (June Moon Beads), Magnus Nielsen (Nielsen Woodworks) and Chanetta Ludwig (The Bee Lady).

Children visiting Two Waters Arts Alliance's craft table painted book covers while local artist Kathleen Gray gave her encouragement.

Hendrick said, "Bergen Brenkenridge, Suds & Verse, has a sweet story. He is 13 and lives in Vaughn, and is making soap using his grandmother's recipe and selling it to save up for his education."

Another first time vendor at the event was Susan Higbe, a Navy wife and mother of three boys. Higbe "crochets the most adorable things, including beards and mug warmers," Hendrick said.

Girl Scout Troop 40956 was raising money for a trip next June to Silverwood by selling lip balm and hand scrubs.

In the Whitmore Room, there was a chili cook-off taking place. Firefighters and commissioners from Pierce County

Fire District 16 volunteered to judge the event.

"There are two separate categories. One is beef chili, the other poultry chili. Each category competes within itself, and then the winner of each category competes for the finalist to be chosen," said James Allyn, co-coordinator for the chili competition.

Chuck West, a battalion chief and chili judge, said the chilis were all good in their own way.

The winner of the chili competition was Penny Grant who took home a \$30 cash prize.

This is the third consecutive year Grant has won the competition. Runner up for second place was Ron Schilling, winning \$20. The third finalist was Gae Gilhousen with a prize of \$15.

Sherri LaGood, the Skate Night cook, headed the kitchen for the event and ran out of chili by 2 p.m.. Profits from the sale of food benefit the KPCCA for operations of the building.

The Minter Creek Choir sang and

played their handmade marimbas under direction of their teacher, Paula DeMoss. These are students at Minter Creek Elementary School who meet for an hour each week after school to practice.

"Six girls from Girl Scout Troop 44080, coordinated by Lisa Bundrick, helped with setup, as well as managed our 'Lunch Runner' program, offering food and beverages from the kitchen to vendors without them having to leave their booths," Hendrick said.

She said that other volunteers for the event included three teens from Skate Night who worked in the kitchen, and a lone Boy Scout from Troop 220, after their full day of collecting food donations, and KPCCA board members Peggy Gablehouse, Tracy Geiss, Scott Dervaes, Phil Bauer and Mark Roberts.

The overall atmosphere of the event was warm and friendly for attendees of all ages.

There were many smiles and lots of fun as the community gathered to begin celebrating the holiday season.



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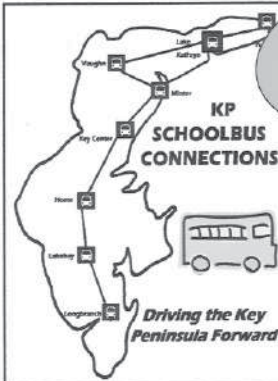
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Cat Tales 4-H Club 'purrfect' match for local youth, feline friends

By Karen Lovett, KP News

The newly founded Cat Tales 4-H club is getting off to a great start thanks to the efforts of leader Dianna Calhoun.

The group held its first meeting Oct. 10. It currently has 10 members ranging in age from 5 to 14. Calhoun's son, Timmie, is the only boy in the club in a hobby dominated by girls.

Calhoun is an experienced 4-H leader. She participated for 16 years in the organization in King County with older daughters, Stephanie and Amanda, now ages 34 and 29. Ten years ago the family moved to Vaughn. At the time, Cat Nip (in Kitsap County) was the nearest 4-H club. Timmie and 12-year-old daughter, Caitlin, were active in the Cat Nip club for three years.

Caitlin won for second best shorthair cat at the 4-H show at the Washington State Fair in Puyallup this year with her red classic tabby, Trevor. She took fifth place out of 32 competitors in intermediate fitting and showing.

Timmie won seventh for best long-hair cat with his lynx point, Merlin. He took first place in oral reasons and third place in the

judging competition for intermediates.

Dianna Calhoun decided to use her prior experience to fill a local niche and start a 4-H club from scratch. Under her guidance, the children take control and run the meeting.

Caitlin has held the positions of vice president and president in Cat Nip, and now she presides over the Cat Tales meetings, fulfilling her latest presidential duties.

Members are taught basic feline care as well as spiffing up their cats for show.

They learn about cleaning ears, eyes and nose; brushing teeth; the proper brush or comb to use for long or short hair; clipping toe nails 1/8 inch from the quick, shining fur with a chamois or nylon stocking. Even the use of safety carriers were discussed and demonstrated.

"Knowledge for proper ownership is most important," said Kim Hunziger, receptionist at All Creatures Veterinary Clinic in Gorst. This is the first 4-H experience for Hunziger and her daughters, Kendra and Kayla.

Vice president Kayla Hunziger enjoys getting to play with her kitty.

"I like getting to learn how to take better



Photo by Karen Lovett, KP News

Cat Tales president, Caitlin Calhoun, demonstrates cat grooming techniques on her red classic tabby, Trevor. Leader Dianna Calhoun stands at left. Alexis Perron and Kayla Hunziger observe.

care of my cats and grooming them," said Alexis Perron, club treasurer.

Following the business meeting, Caitlin Calhoun demonstrated grooming techniques starting out by cleaning her cat's ears. Her willing subject, Trevor, stood calmly under his owner's attentive hands, arched his back and rubbed his face affectionately

against her. She brushed his fur as other members of Cat Tales and their mothers paid close attention.

Other cats peered nervously from inside their carriers. There are no fancy pedigreed cats here. All are common house cats, beloved pets.

A pair of tuxedo-colored black and white shorthair cats lay together in the unfamiliar surroundings. Following the demonstration, each cat was removed from its cage to experience the ins and outs of feline care.

Caitlin and Timmie Calhoun supervised inexperienced cat handlers and showed them the best way to perform each task. Inexperienced cats appeared less than enthusiastic at first, but owners were assured their pets will get used to the attention.

"It's not just about the showing," Dianna Calhoun said. "The youth development program teaches leadership roles and develops self-confidence along with care and physiology of the animals. All these cats are household pets. All cats are welcome," she said.

Club members are looking forward to the coming show season next year, when they will compete in Kitsap County. They are working on designs for a T-shirt for their club.

They need money donations to purchase cages for show. New members ages 5-18 are welcome.

Cat Tales 4-H meets the first and third Thursdays at 7 p.m., in the VFW room at the Key Peninsula Civic Center in Vaughn.

For information, contact Dianna Calhoun at cat.tales4h@gmail.com, or call (253) 884-4182.

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Community News Briefs

GH restaurant helping kids on the Key, beyond

The Lunchbox Laboratory, a new Gig Harbor restaurant in the One Fosdick Plaza, is helping out Communities In Schools of Peninsula (CISP), a local nonprofit that provides one-on-one mentoring to 10 of the 15 schools in the Peninsula School District.

"They wished to give to a nonprofit organization for the holiday season and chose Communities In Schools of Peninsula," said Ann Barrington, CISP volunteer coordinator and fund-development assistant.

Barrington said that on Dec. 16 from 4:30 to 9 p.m., Lunchbox Laboratory is donating a percentage of its proceeds to CISP.

"We're so glad Lunchbox Laboratory approached us with this opportunity. It's wonderful local businesses are interested in helping the kids in our community," she said.

For information about CISP, call (253) 884-5733. For information about the restaurant, visit lunchboxlaboratory.com.

Creative goodwill comes from Facebook to the Key

A social media brainstorm turns into festive giving and collecting shopping opportunity.

The Buy Nothing Holiday Shop is a "gift economy" community experiment and brainchild of the leader of the Buy Nothing Key Peninsula Facebook Group.

The holiday shop will take place on Sunday, Dec. 8 at the Lake Holiday Club House, 13818 Sandy Point East KPN.

There is no buying, no selling and no trading. Donations of clothes, household items, toys, books and anything else is welcome and will be accepted prior to the event from noon to 3 p.m. Priority will be given to those who have donated items to pick some free items before the shop opens to the public between 3 to 5 p.m.

The group also will be collecting food for the Holiday Food Pantry, for those in need.

A fully-decorated artificial Christmas tree will be raffled, at no cost.

For information or to make a donation,

contact Kristie Hilley at Kristiehilley@gmail.com or Leslie Mays at Leslie84wa@gmail.com.

Talk of Tacoma Community College coming to the Key

Conversations are taking place to gain input on how Tacoma Community College's (TCC) programs and offerings can better meet the needs of students in the greater Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula areas.

A Nov. 19 meeting at the Key Peninsula Civic Center drew a crowd.


Hosted by Tod Treat, TCC executive vice president for academic and student affairs, the gathering was attended by several key community leaders who discussed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to expanding access to post-secondary educational opportunities in the area.

Future meetings are being scheduled as part of this environmental scan.

For information, contact Asha Bhaga at TCC via email at abhaga@tacomacc.edu or call (253) 566-5003.

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Outlook newspaper goes full digital, online

By Scott Turner, KP News

When Andrew Hosford arrived at Peninsula High School in September, he had a mandate from Principal Tim Winter: take The Outlook, the school's legendary student newspaper, online.

And that's exactly what he's doing. Hosford is Peninsula's new journalism teacher. He had already put together an award-winning online paper at Sequim High School and Winter, who knows Hosford's father, wanted to try the same thing at PHS.

"One of the things we're trying to do is to stay up with the current industry standard," Winter said. "That's not to say that printed newspapers are going to be completely gone. But I think there's value in having our students working online."

But The Outlook has a long, rich history as a printed newspaper.

"I think it's been a printed paper for about 60 years and it has won awards just about every year," Hosford said. "They have this incredible tradition and if you go into the old classroom, you'll see hundreds of awards around the thing."

Hosford thinks it's an advantage that he hasn't been part of that tradition.

"I don't know the history of the whole thing. And going online, we're kind of ripping that whole Band-Aid off and starting anew," he said. "I could come in without feeling intimidated or pressured to do what they'd always done in the past and could do what I had to do to take this online completely."

He acknowledged that change is difficult for many people. "But the cool thing about teenagers is that they really get racing on it once they believe in it. And I think these kids believe in it," he said.

Some of Hosford's current students have siblings who were in the old program, and several are already strong journalists.

"They want to be part of it no matter what — whether it's online or printed or whatever — they just want to keep the tradition going," he said.

Malory Richards, student editor-in-chief of The Outlook, thinks the new online system is a good thing.

"It's a really big transition for us to be almost entirely online," she said. "But I think this change is good. It's pushing us



Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Outlook Editor In Chief Malory Richards works with Sam Brendel, managing editor, and other staff recently during class at Peninsula High School. The popular school paper has transformed into a new digital format.

into the modern world. I think getting the website is going to help us reach our student body a lot faster — which has been a problem for us in the past because we've covered stories that happened three or four weeks ago. And now we'll be able to publish stories that happened a day ago," she said.

Richards, 17, is referring to the fact that The Outlook was printed every six weeks. That meant that some news — sports scores, for instance — was more than a month old when it was published.

Hosford said that it's not so much about what's going away, but it's about all the new opportunities, and that's what the kids are really embracing.

"We're speaking their language and we're using their technology. We're on phones; we're on computers; we're doing social media," he said.

That means the medium can now reach a much broader audience.

"We can have people anywhere in the world reading this thing. If they're connected to PHS, we can stay connected to them because we don't have to mail them a newspaper anymore. They can just

check online and see what we're doing," Hosford added.

The switch from print to online wasn't just about bringing the paper into the 21st century, however. There was also a cost issue. The levy failed and schools' budgets have been cut drastically in the past few years.

According to Hosford, it cost about \$10,000 every year to print The Outlook, compared to the \$1,000 startup cost for the online version. "And every year after this, we can run it for \$100 because it's already set up and ready to go," he said.

And the online paper can be updated daily with sports scores, features on the latest movies and breaking news. There are also videos and info-graphics, and soon the online paper will be selling advertising.

"That's where it's all happening — on our website, on Facebook and Twitter and Instagram and other social media," Hosford said. "The kids have just taken this idea and just run with it. It's awesome. And we're just getting started."

To view the new online version of The Outlook, go to phsoutlook.com.

New elementary school math program in use at PSD

By Jessica Takehara. KP News

Key Peninsula elementary students started the school year with new classes, new teachers and a new math program for the Peninsula School District.

The new enVisionMath curriculum was field-tested last year in several classes as part of alignment with the Common Core State Standards. After positive growth in classroom math skills and on standardized assessments, PSD decided to expand the program to all elementary students.

The structure of enVision is systematic in that previous lessons lay the groundwork for present work and future concepts. It also contains visual learning tools, reteaching aids, enrichment and lots of practice.

Students with a range of ability levels are supported through modeling, differentiated instruction and other resources. Parents have an interactive website to participate in their child's learning or explore topics more deeply. This login informa-

tion is available through the classroom teachers.

Keeping in line with the Common Core State Standards, one of the other key components of this math program is deeper understanding of concepts. Worksheets use visual cues to unlock math comprehension, but they also contain one word with a lot of weight: "explain." Typically at the end of a daily assignment, the word "explain" prompts students to engage in math dialogue using math language.

In fact, the new language presented to the students is also one of the bigger challenges with the program.

Bridgit Reichel, PSD instructional facilitator, commented on this and other concerns during a recent enVision meeting for parents at Vaughn Elementary. "Teachers are working diligently to support students and help them achieve," Reichel said.

Since this is the first year of a major program implementation, there are bound to be some trials and tribulations.

With building upon prior knowledge

a key aspect of enVision, students in the upper elementary grades may encounter some problems. A third-grade student, without using the program in kindergarten to second grade, now needs to quickly acquire three years of concepts and language. There are supports in place from enVision itself, teachers who field-tested the program last year and mentor teachers across grade levels.

The main point PSD staff would like to relay to all families is that the lines of communication are always open.

"The first year will be rocky and rough in some areas," said Susan O'Leary, Vaughn principal. "But we need to trust in each other and the program."

More information about the enVisionMath program is available at any of the Key Peninsula elementary schools or visit psd401.net and select Central Services then Academics and last What's New. Two PDF documents are available to print or save under the Parent enVision Resources heading at the bottom of the page.

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Shirley Ann Jeffries (Frame)

Shirley Ann Jeffries (Frame), 69, of Sequim, died peacefully at home Nov. 1 while surrounded by family and her dog, Lucie Loo.

A memorial service took place Nov. 23 at Calvary Chapel Sequim.

Jeffries was born Dec. 23, 1943 in Sacramento, Calif., to Everette and Doris Holland. She graduated from Westmoor High School in Daly City, Calif., and was very active in the Key Peninsula community from 1980 through 2000.

Jeffries enjoyed holding a membership with the Key Peninsula Business Association, leading the (old) Pioneer Days Parade and serving as a den mother for Cub Scouts and being a troop mom for a local Girl Scout Troop.

She loved to spend time gardening and tending to her roses, working crossword puzzles and reading books.

Jeffries will also be remembered by her



hundreds of handmade afghans, which she quickly and skillfully made and donated to many charities, people in need and for gifts.

She is preceded in death by

both of her parents and her brother, Butch Holland.

Jeffries is survived by her husband, Frank Jeffries, daughters Jenny Jo Frame, Toni Sue Munizich and son, Jacob Daniel Frame. She also has 12 grandchildren.

Public comments sought for WSDOT projects

KP News staff report

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is accepting public comment on the final draft of its 2014-2017 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which includes more than 1,000 projects — four of them on the Key Peninsula.

Improvements to SR-302 (two components), the School Bus Connects program and a volunteer transportation coordinator position for The Mustard Seed Project, are listed for the immediate area.

The STIP includes improvement projects utilizing \$1.8 billion in federal funds.

Projects include pavement overlays, roadway widening, bridge replacement or repair, signal systems, safety enhancements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities

and transit facilities.

In a recent press release, WSDOT said it developed its list of projects in coordination with metropolitan and regional transportation planning organizations to ensure the projects are consistent with local, regional and state plans.

A 30-day public comment period is the final step in the process of adopting the STIP. Comments are being accepted on the plan through Dec. 17, and will be sent to the respective local planning organization for consideration.

Cost totals for the Key Peninsula projects are more than \$3 million.

Comments may be submitted by email to Nancy.Huntley@wsdot.wa.gov or by mail to: Nancy Huntley, P.O. Box 47390, Olympia, WA 98504-7390. Comments can also be submitted by fax at 360-705-6822.

For information, call (360) 705-7378.

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Out & About

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Photo courtesy of John Kirry

As part of the 30th anniversary of the installation of the Key Peninsula Lions Club (in 1983), Past District Governor Chuck Waide of Lions District 19-C, center, paid the club a visit to award to its two remaining active charter members, left, Marvin Keizur and Hugh McMillan, 30-year badge attachments, and to George Robison, a past district governor who transferred to the KP Lions, his 50-year badge attachment. Damon Robison, right, received his 15-year badge attachment.



Photo courtesy Dinah Gemelle

The Rusty Roots Bluegrass band (from left) Bob Breeze, Bill and Lynn Lloyd, Dorene Paterson and Roger Gemelle play for the KP Historical Society open house at the museum last month. More photos of the popular group can be seen at therustyroots.com.

Where in the World...



An edition of the KP News traveled to San Pedro, Belize, with Maureen and Dave Hennessy in September 2013.

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Photo by Scott Turner, KP News

The lone madrona tree is silhouetted during a recent sunset along the Purdy Spit.