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Longbranch Marina Plans Marine Pump-out Station

Puget Sound became a no-discharge zone in 2018 to prevent the spread of fecal contamination from recreational vessels, increasing the demand for sewage pump-out stations.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Longbranch Marina received a grant Oct. 15 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to begin the planning and permitting process for a boat sewage pump-out station.

“There aren’t many pump-out stations in the South Sound that are relatively easy to get to,” said Marsha Kremen, president of the Longbranch Improvement Club. “There’s a need and we’ve been talking about it for some time, and then the county actually approached us and asked us to consider it and offered to help.”

The LIC owns the marina but leases the

state-owned aquatic lands beneath it from the Dept. of Natural Resources. Pierce County has granted an easement to use what is technically a road as its parking lot. Operating since 1959, it is the only public marina on the KP and is required to provide public access to Puget Sound and act as a steward of the environment under the terms of its agreements with the DNR and county.

Kremen said there is some concern in the community that a pump-out station would increase vessel traffic in Filucy Bay, but pointed out the marina is already at capacity most summer weekends and that providing a pump-out station would mitigate that impact.

“We’re just starting with preapplication and figuring out our ultimate design,” said Brett Allen, an LIC member who volunteered to manage the project. “Then we’ll go in for shoreline permits. This phase is probably six months.”

There will be a vacuum pump and underground holding tank in the parking area, he said. If all goes according to plan, the project would be completed by 2023.

The planning and permitting is funded by the NFWF grant of \$82,500, representing about 25 percent of the anticipated total cost of the project and allowing the LIC to apply for a 75 percent matching grant from Washington State Parks to pay for construction, and perhaps another ongoing

matching grant for operation and maintenance.

Home resident Sheryl Low, a retired professor with 20 years at California State University, Northridge, and also an LIC member who moors her boat at the marina, volunteered to help with the grants. She said she spent most of the eight years as chair of her department writing grant proposals.

“I really think that the LIC through leveraging their relationships and friendships was able to have organizations approach us and suggest we apply,” Low said.

The Clean Vessel Act of 1992 provides federal funds for states to reduce pollution from recreational vessel

sewage discharges, she said. In Washington, that money is funneled through the state parks to make grants to boating facility operators for the construction and maintenance of pump-out stations.

The Washington State Department of Ecology established a “no-discharge zone” for Puget Sound in May 2018, making it illegal for recreational vessels to discharge sewage from a holding tank. Up until then, vessels were allowed to dump treated sewage three miles offshore.

In 2002, Pierce County created the Filucy Bay Watershed Protection District to counter declining water quality. The northern portion of the bay was closed to commercial shell fishing and the county became the lead agency on water quality in Filucy Bay.

The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department monitors the water for fecal coliform counts and other factors affecting marine health. The bay is vulnerable to contamination because of limited circulation and freshwater runoff. Eight creeks drain into the bay. Currently the water quality in Filucy Bay gets a B.

A pump-out station at Longbranch Marina would be roughly equal distance between the existing stations at Penrose State Park on Mayo Cove and Zittel’s Marina on the far side of Nisqually Reach from the south end of the KP. Longbranch would be the only South Sound marina that could accommodate vessels over 50 feet.

CURRENTLY THE WATER QUALITY IN FILUCY BAY GETS A B.



Colorful Greta Thunberg greets visitors to Sunnycrest Nursery. Photo: David Zeigler, KP News

Scarecrow Invasion Charms Downtown Key Center

The annual public art installation is a blend of popular nostalgia and artistic ingenuity.

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

In late September, scarecrows invaded Key Center, sparking nostalgia among locals who have enjoyed the annual Key Center Scarecrow Contest for years.

“I love seeing them all and seeing all the community spirit,” said Vaughn Postmaster DeeDee Emmett.

The Key Peninsula community’s sense of humor and creativity came through in this year’s entries, which included scarecrows inspired by Bob Ross, Willie Nelson, Salvador Dali and Greta Thunberg. Outside Blend Wine Shop, “An Older Miss Muffet sat on her tuffet, drinking a

glass of wine,” welcomed visitors to the 2019 Farm Tour.

“My favorite is the Gnosh truck one,” Emmett said, “but I love them all.”

Smiling in jeans and boots, biking home with her food truck lunch, Gnosh’s long-haired, jack-o-lantern-headed tricycle rider included signage for points of interest, including “Devils Head — 13 miles.”

“We were trying to do ‘recycle’ as our theme,” said Gnosh food truck owner Stephanie Brooks, explaining how she and her team, Jennifer Wherry and Heidi Michaelson, worked together, bringing clothing, cornstalks, flowers and veggies

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Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

For the moment, let's forget everything happening in Washington, D.C. An endless stream of breaking news alerts, notifications, dings, beeps and tweets commanding all attention at all hours. Please, take a refreshing breath and enjoy your community through your local independent nonprofit newspaper. The other big news of the day will still be there, ad nauseam.

When I began reporting for Key Peninsula News, I often pitched story ideas about national issues. My wise editor patiently told me, repeatedly, the focus of KP News is local. "But these are big issues that ultimately affect all of us," I whined. "How is this not local?"

Today, I get it. The value of award-winning local journalism and the essential role it plays in creating and sustaining a healthy community is incalculable.

Our staff is deeply engaged in the community with ears well-tuned for stories. We have plenty to keep us reporting and writing about our far-flung community without a single incorporated town in it, despite the confounding Gig Harbor addresses on this side of the Purdy Spit.

The American ideals I grew up believing upheld opportunity for all and taught us that grassroots dreaming begins at home, taking shape at ground level in small communities. It began at churches, cooperatives and farm councils, expanding into business associations, union halls, fraternal organizations and social clubs, homeowner associations, preschool co-ops and the local PTAs. From here the inspiration grew to serve on advisory boards and to run as candidates for school and park district and fire commis-

sioner boards to lead the community into an unknown future.

The directors and commissioners we elect to these nonpartisan positions will oversee arguably the largest budgets in our community. The leaders we choose directly impact the future of our schools, the nature of our parks and public spaces, and choices that effect the resources necessary to ensure delivery of critical life and death emergency response.

There was a full house Oct. 8 at the 2019

Key Peninsula Candidates Forum, hosted by the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association and sponsored by the KP Community Council, the KP Business Association and yours truly, KP News. The forum was broadcast live by KGHP-FM radio station's "The Walrus," Spencer Abersold.

The moderator for the evening, Gina Cabbidu, program manager of the KP Family Resource Center, Children's Home Society of Washington, read questions submitted by the audience to the candidates. An official timekeeper armed with warning bells gave all candidates equal time to respond.

The pace was brisk as the candidates, most of whom have delivered numerous stump speeches over the last few months, were articulate and on point.

In the race to lead Key Pen Parks, two newcomer candidates, Bruce Cook and Linda Weeks, are running for Commissioner Position No. 1.

The race for Key Pen Parks Commissioner Position No. 3 is interesting in that challenger Mark Michel, who has served multiple

terms on the park commission in Position No. 1 and currently serves as board president, intentionally chose to run a campaign against the seated incumbent for Position No. 3, John Pat Kelly.

There are three seats to fill in the races for the Peninsula School District board of directors.

Two Key Peninsula candidates face off in District No. 1 where Claudia (Sami) Jensen takes on Chuck West to represent the KP on the school board. Jensen is married

to current Key Pen Parks Commissioner Shawn Jensen, who also serves as a fire commissioner in KP Fire District 16.

PSD incumbent Director, Lori Glover, in District No. 3 is uncontested.

Incumbent Leslie Harbaugh is defending

her seat as PSD Director in District No. 4 against challenger Natalie Wimberley.

Port of Tacoma Commissioner Position No. 3 is a contest between Frank Boykin of University Place and Deanna Keller of Gig Harbor.

Port Commissioner Position No. 5 is a choice between Kristin Ang of Gig Harbor and Dave Bryant, who lives in Lake Tapps.

The KP Fire District No. 16 commissioner race is uncontested, with Frank Grubaugh running for reelection.

The audience was attentive and respectful. KPCCA President Tim Kezele said afterward, "Everything went really well. Gina was like a breath of fresh air and did a great job as moderator."

Many newspapers statewide have

stopped sponsoring candidate forums because the events are so poorly attended. And yet all the candidates for port commissioner stumping in towns and communities countywide sat smiling and nodding in unison before a full house in Vaughn as candidate Bryant said:

"Gig Harbor and the Key Peninsula, this area in the 26th legislative district, you have more events for campaigns — for bringing the candidates out to be exposed to voters — than anywhere else in the county," adding that other scheduled events often canceled at the last minute following a lack of response. To the KP crowd assembled that night Bryant said, "You are doing the right thing and frankly it gives you far more effect than your population out here."

Kristin Ang agreed, telling KP News she was impressed by the audience. "Pierce County voters have some of the lowest voter turnouts in the state, but civic engagement and voter turnout is high — west of the Tacoma Narrows bridge."

Key Peninsula News isn't here to tell you how to vote, but we encourage you to postmark or drop off your ballot by 8 p.m. Election Day, Nov. 5. You don't even need postage.

The polarization of political ideology delivers something uniquely destructive to our national psyche. It promotes the fear that fosters intolerance. It limits our creativity and stifles the growth of our ideas.

But our community is strengthened by the power of our collective engagement in it.

Key Peninsula News does not endorse candidates. We published profiles in summer, written by KP News staff reporters, on each of the candidates for park commissioner positions and school board directors in every contested race. Enter the name of the candidate in the search bar to read about each candidate and access previous articles and published letters at our website keypennews.org.



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SCARECROWS FROM PAGE 1

from home. “I painted the signs. We bought the wig from Angel Guild.

“One dollar and 50 cents. That’s all we spent,” Michaelson said.

The scarecrows stayed up through October and 192 votes for the contest were cast at the Key Center Food Market ballot box.

The winner was “Bob Ross — Colors of the KP,” which beat “Gnosh Scarecrow” by only one vote. The Yankee Clipper Barber Shop received \$175 for first prize. Gnosh received a \$75 second-place prize.

“Captain Cake” came in third, winning \$50 for the Angel Guild. Made by local artist Julianne Kohn of Sound Shores Studio, “Captain Cake” is a giant “Stash Bot” with a hidden compartment in his hat made from a cake pan.

Preschooler Mia Cabrini Martinez, age 4, of Lakebay enjoyed playing the “I spy” game with the 16 scarecrows, 13 of which were included in the contest. Mia would chant, “I spy with my little eye,” again and again as she counted each scarecrow, trying to find them all each time she visited Key Center.

“They’re funny!” she said.

Two Waters Arts Alliance submitted the Addams Family-inspired scarecrow, “Cousin Itt’s Self Portrait,” made by Sharla Schuller and her daughter Riley, a junior at Peninsula High School.

“For many years our whole family has loved seeing the scarecrows pop up in Key

Center. We were really excited to be able to participate this year,” Schuller said. “My husband, Chris, came up with the great idea for using a bucket filled with concrete with a steel pole to make him not topple over. We then used a tomato cage, some chicken wire and weed fabric to give him the basic shape and plastic grass table skirts wrapped around for his hair. It was a fun project for the three of us to do.”

The Key Center Scarecrow Contest was started in 2012 by local artist Beverly Pedersen. This year’s contest was organized by four-time contest winner Kathy Lyons of Lakebay, who encouraged local businesses, organizations, individuals and families to participate.

“I enjoy making them every year,” said Lyons. “It’s an adventure, really a fun thing to do.”

The first scarecrow Lyons made for the contest was “Hay Bale Square Pants” in 2014. “Sponge Bob was everybody’s favorite at the time,” Lyons said of her first contest winner, made from a full bale of straw that “went back into the chicken pen.”

This year Lyons made “Willie Nelson,” who held a guitar and welcomed passersby with an “On the road again to Farm Tour” sign.

“We feel like the bar was raised this year. It’d be so fun to have even more,” Lyons said. “Start early. Get your idea. And start collecting things for next year.”



Above: “Gnosh Scarecrow” won second place. Below: “Sew Long Summer” sits in comfort.





The scarecrow exhibit included a wide variety of styles and themes, including the Angel Guild's third-place-winner "Captain Cake" shown above. *All photos: David Zeigler, KP News*



Carolyn Wiley

DEVIL'S HEAD DIARY



The Mysterious William H. Brown

My paternal grandmother was tiny, about 94 pounds fully-clothed and dripping wet. I seriously doubt that anyone ever described her as a handsome woman. Think Granny Clampett — without the looks. She was stubborn, headstrong and as fierce as a banty hen. She did not cotton to socializing, church-going or idleness. Granny Clampett — without the charm.

As a child she had been regarded as sickly and frail, and she was. But she lived independently and managed her farm until her 96th year and only then did she begrudgingly accept assistance.

After her death, I happened upon additional information in an old leather-bound church record. The record runs from 1855 to 1871 and spans an interesting 16-year period in Missouri history.

The first six and a half pages are devoted to Minutes of Session. Seldom is more than one line of the leather-bound volume skipped between recorded notes. However, in 1859, the record becomes sporadic and less detailed. After the March 10, 1861 meeting, a half-page is left blank and the next entry, written by my great-grandfather begins at the top of the next page. It simply states: 1866, September 17.

“Now about this time a National difficulty occurred and the church became somewhat scattered and in a disorganized state.”

The 19 words representing a five and a half year gap are a singular example of understatement and an insight into the way unpleasantness should be handled — unpleasantness doesn't warrant mention. (Unfortunately, dear readers, economy of phraseology and mention of unpleasantness is not a genetic trait.)

As an 8-year-old, I knew as much about my paternal grandfather, William H. Brown, as a casual reader would know about the Civil War from that cryptic entry in the New Mt. Pleasant Church registry.

Needless to say, there was unpleasantness associated with that shadowy character — W. H. Brown — because no one ever, ever, ever talked about him.

This was so ingrained in the family culture that I sensed that displays of overt curiosity might just lead to a fate similar to that of the proverbial cat.

However, little pitchers really do have big ears, and I reconstructed a biography based upon astute observations and a smattering of overheard conversations. The most significant occurred on a Texas-hot summer day. I was diligently minding my own business on the porch swing while my grandmother and a neighbor chatted nearby. My ears pricked up when the conversation veered to: “The day Mr. Brown died...”

The neighbor described a trip into town as a small boy where he had witnessed the very public death of my mysterious ancestor. He described blood on the red granite steps, and the agony of Mr. Brown in his death throes on the steps of the post office.

Since I could read, I knew that chiseled above the post office door were the letters B-A-N-K, and that does not spell “post office” in any language.

I had seen enough cowboy movies to surmise why tales about my dad's dad were taboo.

Intrigued, further little-pitcher-style investigation ensued and the mystery deepened as new facts were revealed.

The marriage had been forbidden and she had been disowned by her doting father.

Shortly after the marriage, her groom left Missouri and headed to Texas alone.

She followed but her journey was interrupted when my uncle was born in Oklahoma Territory.

Within a year after their reunion in Texas, she was pregnant again.

Her husband died before that baby — my daddy — was born.

It was an epic story. Headstrong but naive girl defies parents, flees, has a baby and another on the way when her beloved dies on the steps of the B-A-N-K. Woman faces down gossip and community condemnation, raises two children alone, manages a farm, and when her parents lose everything in a sketchy financial deal she takes them in and supports them in their dotage.

Wow! My fantasy “Woman-Undaunted” script wrote itself in my head. By the time I was 40, all that remained was figuring camera angles and selecting the cast.

Truth was revealed when my brother and I were sorting through the mementos of Grandmother's long life. Imagine my surprise and, yes, chagrin, to have my whole-cloth fabrication ripped asunder.

We learned that the Most Reverend William H. Brown had died when he went to deposit the Sunday collection. The move to Texas was in search of a drier climate, not an escape from the law. He was a victim of tuberculosis, not a shoot-out

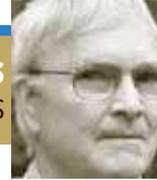
or a vengeful bounty hunter.

My movie was never made and my whole family history had to be edited and re-worked. It was interesting to learn that my brother had constructed a different and slightly racier story about the star-crossed lovers — one that explains the dramatic differences in looks and stature between my Daddy and his older brother — but I remain scandalized for having been raised in a family without a family scandal.

Carolyn Wiley is an award-winning humor columnist who lives in Longbranch.

Richard Gelinas

EMPIRICALLY YOURS



Between Two Trees

Fir: Hey Cedar, have you heard anything lately from your cousins, the white and black spruce trees in Alaska? I'm getting worried that they are dying because of changes in the climate up there.

Cedar: Well they're your cousins too. All I heard is that because of successive years of warm temperatures along with much less rain and snow than usual, the beetle infestations that killed the cousins out on the Kenai Peninsula have now spread to Southcentral Alaska, around Anchorage. The trees are dead or dying on more than 1 million acres — bigger than the state of Rhode Island and nearly the size of Delaware. That's a lot of trees...just gone.

Fir: Sounds like the Alaskan spruce forests are becoming another casualty of a warming climate driven by greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, especially carbon dioxide.

Cedar: I rather like the higher carbon dioxide levels. It helps me grow faster, as I pull it in from the air and turn it into sugars, cellulose, and everything else that's me, using photosynthesis driven by sunlight.

Fir: Yeah, well your bark isn't loaded with beetle larvae yet, chewing their way into your cambium layer like they're doing to our cousins in Alaska. Considering how fast the climate changed and the trees are dying, there isn't time for the emergence of new spruce trees that can tolerate the warmth and lack of water and resist the beetles.

Cedar: Do you reckon that excess carbon dioxide in the air is the culprit?

Fir: Yes, carbon dioxide derived by the fact that Homo sapiens (H sap) continue to burn the bodies of extinct plants and animals for transportation, electricity

generation, and industrial processes such as making steel, cement, even fertilizer. All of this burning dumps tens of billions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year. This means that H sap's excessive use of fossilized carbon-rich material is changing everything.

Cedar: Wait ... they just dump this CO2 into the atmosphere, without recycling it? Without any attempt to remove it? Long-range, this is scary. Given that CO2 in the atmosphere traps heat, global warming is inevitable. It's a simple consequence of the physics of how CO2 interacts with light.

Fir: I wonder why they don't simply use sunlight to make electricity and pull CO2 out of the air, the way we do.

Cedar: There are two H sap companies that have a process to pull CO2 from the air, not by photosynthesis, but by a reversible reaction with strong alkalis like sodium hydroxide. They call this direct air capture. The two companies, one in British Columbia and the other in Switzerland, have demonstrated that it works, quite well in fact. The problem is that there is no market for the huge amounts of CO2 that need to be removed. But if the direct air capture of CO2 is powered by renewable solar or wind electricity and then pumped into disposal wells drilled into rock such as basalt, it is chemically bonded to the rock and it stays there permanently. They call that carbon capture and storage or sequestration. A carbon tax could help pay for direct air capture and permanent burial, but that would take political action, which isn't likely. Some people are aware that climate change is having big effects on trees and animals but other H saps say it's all a hoax. H sap is a very conflicted species, with a tragic inability to anticipate the future realistically or to deal with future changes that have serious consequences.

Fir: Soon though, H sap won't be able to ignore the changes.

Cedar: Why does H sap ignore us? Fixing carbon is what we do all the time, pulling CO2 out of the air by photosynthesis. Why don't they simply plant more of us trees?

Fir: Yes, that could help, but for a meaningful effect, it would have to be done all over the world, and it would take hundreds of years for the new trees to soak up enough CO2 to return the climate to the way it was, say, 50 years ago. I hope that's not too complicated for you.

Cedar: Fine. So, if they want to fix carbon like we do, why don't they grow chloroplasts in their skin and start photosynthesizing, like we've been doing for millions of years?

Fir: That wouldn't work for H sap, since we trees absorb red and yellow light but we don't use the green light. So, the green is transmitted back out and our leaves appear green. If H sap fixed carbon the way we do, their bodies would appear green — and they associate that color with nausea and sickness.

Cedar: Whatever.

Richard Gelinas, Ph.D., whose early work earned a Nobel prize, is a Senior Research Scientist at the Institute of Systems Biology. He lives in Lakebay.

Nancyrose Houston NATURE OVERLOOKED



Don't Lick the Banana Slugs

As the rain returns to accompany us through winter, so do the banana slugs. It's not that they go somewhere else for the summer — can you imagine a banana slug migration at an average speed of four inches per minute? These creatures rely on moisture to stay alive, so during warm or dry spells they secrete extra slime, bury themselves in leaves, and go dormant in a process known as aestivation, the opposite of hibernation.

When not hiding from the sun, banana slugs spend their time sliding through the forest understory of the West Coast, where three different species are found between California and Alaska. In Washington we have only the *Ariolimax columbianus*, or Pacific banana slug. Of the banana slug species, it has the least vibrant yellow color and can look like an overripe banana with its black spots. The Pacific banana slug can also be identified by its unparalleled size. It is the second largest terrestrial slug in the world at 9.8 inches long, after a European species which can reach a foot long.

Banana slugs are known for their sliminess. Besides preventing desiccation, slime provides a surface that is both slippery and adhesive. Slugs use slime to glide easily across even the roughest gravel and to adhere as they make their way up a tree or a glass door. Slugs also use their slime as protection against predators.

Most creatures avoid eating them because of the inconvenience of a mouth filled with goop. Anyone who has held a banana slug knows how difficult it is to remove slug slime from your hands. Wiping it off with a towel is the best way, since washing with water only seems to make it slimier. This is because the slime is made when dry granules called mucins excreted by slugs mix with water. The mucins expand up to 100 times, meaning when mucins meet saliva

in a potential predator's mouth, it ends up with a sticky mess.

Shrews, which are known to occasionally eat slugs, have been observed attempting to clean their mouths for up to an hour afterward. This is not a great use of time for a small creature whose metabolism requires it to eat constantly. Raccoons are known to roll slugs in the dirt to coat them before eating. Chocolate-covered banana, anyone?

Many a school child who attends one of the Key Peninsula's local camps will know the other interesting fact about banana slug slime: It has a numbing quality. I have licked a slug, thanks to an irresistible challenge by my outdoor instructor in fifth grade, and I can attest that the numbing is real. This is also thought to be a defense mechanism, but as yet scientists have not discovered what causes this anesthetic feature. I have since learned it's best not to touch or lick banana slugs for their sake, not ours, as they are not used to human soaps, perfumes or the oils on our skin.

Banana slugs are detritivores, meaning they play an important ecological role by eating decomposing matter and turning it into nutritious soil. They consume mostly fallen leaves, moss, lichen and animal droppings. Their special taste for mushrooms means that they often spread spores while cruising between meals.

Slugs possess two pairs of tentacles, which can retract quickly and even regenerate if bitten off. The top pair detects light intensity, and the bottom pair is used for feel and smell. Stopping to watch a slug munch away is sure to amaze. They possess a special body part unique to mollusks called a radula. This tongue-like ribbon is covered in microscopic teeth that it uses to cut up its food. New teeth are constantly being formed to replace the ones that get worn down.

The banana slug is well-known in popular culture, although many new to the West Coast are baffled the first time they see one in person. It was adopted in 1986 as the mascot of UC Santa Cruz, and two years later, a group of young Camp Fire Girls in California started a campaign to have it named the state mollusk. The bill was eventually vetoed by then-governor George Deukmejian, who said that if the state were to select an official mollusk, it should be one "more representative of the international reputation that California enjoys." It sounds to me like the governor didn't do his homework about this incredible creature. Perhaps it's time to show our own love for the slimy banana slug by making it the official state mollusk of Washington.

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

Jeff Minch FROM THE MINCH



Inspired by Immigrants

If you find yourself in a rut and thinking you don't have any opportunities to better your life, take the time to talk to someone who has immigrated to the United States.

This is exactly where I found myself during my early thirties. I was great at what I did, had a great reputation, but I was unhappy. I was caught in a rut and didn't know how to get out of it. As my anxiety and frustration grew, I found myself lost and losing motivation until the day I asked one of my customers how he ended up in Washington from Ukraine. His story made me take another look at myself and opened my eyes to the freedoms and endless opportunities I have available to me as an American citizen.

Since that day I have been asking people to tell me their stories about coming to the U.S. Out of all of these stories one thing is clear. When you remove the country of origin, ethnicity and skin color, the stories are the same. They are escaping war, religious persecution, ethnic persecution, violence, poverty, famine, limited opportunities, and are looking for a better way of life. Some of these people have been shot and left for dead while others had to leave everything behind to escape with their lives. When I turned the tables and took a look at my own family, some of the stories I heard were a carbon copy of how my family ended up in the United States.

There have been many times in my life where I have found myself with no excuses and forced to light a fire under my rear, and this was no exception. Whether these people found jobs or started their own businesses, they knew they came to a place that could afford them a much better life and they were grateful for it. They took pride in what they did and they had choices in their life. With no more excuses and a dose of humility, I became inspired to change my way of thinking and explore the opportunities that I always thought were out of my reach.

As I started this new journey, I reflected back on one particular story from a gentleman who would mix mud and straw together to make and sell bricks when there were no jobs available in his country. At the time he told me this he was in his second year running his own cleaning company, something that he would never have been able to do back in his country. This helped me stay grounded while I started writing

down business ideas and formulating business plans. I went through notebook after notebook until it clicked. Inspired by the stories of immigrants and my community, the business plan for Blend Wine Shop in Key Center was born.

After years of success with the shop, I was able to sell the business and move on to the next stage of my life. The business continues to thrive and serve as a community hub.

Since then the next phase of my life has turned into stages of revisiting past professions to taking on new challenges outside my comfort zone. These new challenges have been made minimal with the knowledge of what so many people are willing to risk for the chance at a better life.

Thank you to the immigrants who shared their stories with me, because these stories not only opened my eyes to the opportunities and the freedoms that I have taken for granted. I reached a new level of compassion for my fellow human beings.

Jeff Minch lives near Minter Creek.

Letters to the Editor

ON GUN CONTROL AND MASS SHOOTINGS

Everyone is horrified by the mass shootings in recent decades, but I am still surprised when a gun owner says "I support banning of assault weapons." It's important we get our facts and perspective straight and ask the right questions. Most groups define a "mass shooting" as four or more shot in a single incident. Over 90 percent of the mass-shootings in the United States have been with a handgun, and have been gang-related in cities like Los Angeles and Chicago.

In 2018, of the roughly 40,000 deaths by firearms, approximately two-thirds, 28,000, were suicides.

In past decades, guns were far more prevalent and far easier to get. Until the 1968 Gun Control Act, anyone could order an AR-15 through the mail, with as many 20-round magazines as you could afford.

Many feel society changed. Many boys are being raised without fathers, kids are on SSRI drugs that didn't exist, nor did so many chemical food additives, preservatives, flavors and fragrances, kids are addicted (it's now officially a disorder) to interactive violent video games. Society has changed a lot, but guns really haven't.

"Assault weapon" remains a poorly defined term. They are not machine guns; they do not "spray" bullets nor have a high rate of fire. They are semi-automatic firearms that fire one bullet with one trigger

CONTINUED PAGE 9

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY SCHEDULE

FREE KP BUS CONNECTS

Welcome aboard!

Yellow buses aren't just for kids anymore

EVERGREEN TUES & THURS AM

- 8:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 8:59 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:00 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
- 9:05 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 9:06 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
- 9:10 67th Ave Ct NW @ KP Hwy N
- 9:14 Food Market in Key Center
- 9:15 KP Hwy N @ Minterwood Dr NW
- 9:21 Lake Kathryn Village SR 302 & 92nd Ave NW
- 9:26 Purdy Park & Ride

EVERGREEN WEDNESDAY AM

- 9:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:54 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:55 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
- 10:00 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 10:01 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
- 10:05 67th Ave Ct NW @ KP Hwy N
- 10:09 Food Market in Key Center
- 10:10 KP Hwy N @ Minterwood Dr NW
- 10:16 Lake Kathryn Village SR 302 & 92nd Ave NW
- 10:21 Purdy Park & Ride

VAUGHN TUES & THURS AM

- 8:50 Vaughn Elementary School
- 8:59 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
- 9:00 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
- 9:05 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
- 9:06 SR 302 @ 150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:10 SR302 @ 140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 9:14 SR 302 @ Charbonneau Construction
- 9:15 SR 302 @ 92nd Ave NW/Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:21 Purdy Park & Ride

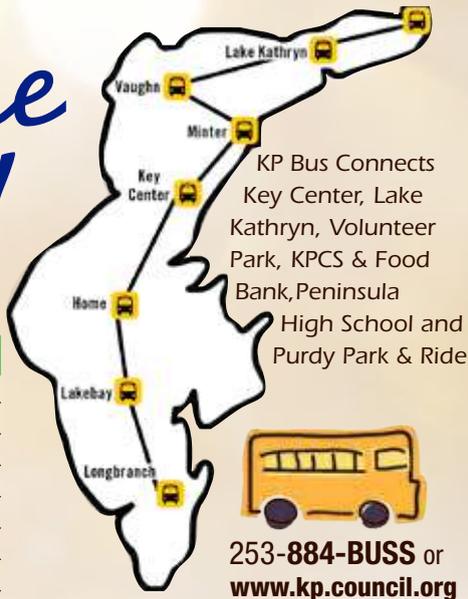
VAUGHN WEDNESDAY AM

- 9:50 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:51 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
- 9:52 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
- 9:54 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
- 9:57 SR 302 @ 150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:59 SR302 @ 140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:01 SR 302 @ Charbonneau Construction
- 10:04 SR 302 @ 92nd Ave NW/Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:09 Purdy Park & Ride

FREE COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION FOR ALL AGES

PLEASE ALLOW ±10 MINUTES YOUTH UNDER 12 MUST BE WITH ADULT NO BIKES

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



TUESDAY & THURSDAY MIDDAY

- 10:33 Peninsula High School
- 10:35 Purdy Park & Ride
- 10:38 Cost Less Pharmacy @ Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:48 SR 302 @ Windermere Realty, near 118th Ave
- 10:50 SR 302 @ 140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:51 SR 302 @ 150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 10:54 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
- 10:56 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
- 10:58 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
- 11:00 Food Market @ Key Center
- 11:06 KP Hwy N @ 167th Ave Ct NW
- 11:09 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
- 11:12 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 11:18 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 11:19 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
- 11:25 Evergreen Elementary School

TUES, WED & THURS PM

- 4:43 Peninsula High School
- 4:45 Purdy Park & Ride
- 4:51 Cost Less Pharmacy @ Lake Kathryn Village
- 4:54 SR 302 @ Windermere Realty, near 118th Ave
- 4:58 SR 302 @ 150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 5:00 Wright Bliss Road @ SR 302/4-Corners
- 5:02 Wright Bliss Road @ 104th St Ct NW
- 5:03 Wright Bliss Road @ Olson Dr NW
- 5:06 Food Market in Key Center
- 5:06 KP Hwy N @ 84th St NW/Red Barn
- 5:10 KP Hwy N @ 167th Ave Ct NW
- 5:14 Home Gas Station @ KP Hwy N
- 5:14 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 5:19 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 5:20 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @ 193rd Ave
- 5:24 KP Hwy N @ 17th St Ct SW
- 5:36 KP Hwy N @ 84th St NW/Red Barn



We need your help, especially at this time of the year.

This month, our year-end appeal is in the mail and we're counting on your generous support to help us help feed the hungry. Please give what you can.

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LETTERS, FROM PAGE 7

pull, just like any semi-auto hunting rifle, and they fire cartridges with the same muzzle velocity as hunting rifles.

The Second Amendment was never about hunting or self-defense, as those rights were considered obvious. It was about a “free state” and a citizenry being able to defend itself against a “tyrannical” government.

Our leaders should understand the miniscule role rifles play in nationwide homicide statistics, and not lazily grab the low hanging fruit by thinking banning “assault” rifles will have a meaningful impact on violent gun deaths. Not when such weapons play such a key role in fulfilling the intent of the Second Amendment and, statistically, harm so few.

Our leaders are not asking the right questions. Why so many mass shootings now?

Why are the shooters typically white, middle-class boys? What do they have in common? What changed? Why now? It isn't the guns.

Barry Bookman, Vaughn

FULL DISCLOSURE

I have been a commissioner for Key Pen Parks District for over eight years. I have been elected twice to Position 1. I've been president of the board four of the last six years. In an effort to make the board better by defeating a divisive and ineffectual commissioner, John Kelly, I chose to switch to Position 3 and run against him myself.

Because this is my third campaign for the board and our positions are not tied to where we live on the Key Peninsula, I assumed I was running to be “re-elected;” however this is the first time I am running for Position 3. I was made aware of my minor error Oct. 7, after I put up campaign signs. I immediately covered every “Re-” I could find on my signs and sent an email to the Public Disclosure Commission alerting them to my mistake. I was relieved when their reply was friendly and said nothing about an investigation.

On Oct. 9, my opponent claimed in a social media post that I “was under investigation by the state,” even though I had been in contact with the PDC and they had not notified me I was being investigated. Late afternoon on Oct. 10, I got an email from PDC saying my opponent, John “Pat” Kelly, had filed a complaint with the PDC, regarding the use of “Re-Elect” on my campaign signs. Again, the PDC has been kind, but because of Kelly's complaint I am now under investigation for the use of “Re-” on my signs.

I apologize for having put “Re-Elect” on my signs and in my ad in the September KP News — it is not technically correct. Since

Mr. Kelly is running as the incumbent for Position 3, I encourage him to promote his accomplishments as a commissioner, stack them up against mine and not quibble over technicalities. This is a unique race where you have the ability to vote on the best commissioner, not just the best candidate. Thank you for making an informed decision. I look forward to seeing you in a park, or on a trail, soon.

Mark Michel, Lakebay

IN SUPPORT OF MARK MICHEL, KEY PEN PARKS COMMISSIONER

We are two past presidents of the Key Peninsula Parks and Recreation Commission, better known now as Key Pen Parks. During our six-plus years of working together, we orchestrated the increase of park and recreational land on our peninsula from 20 acres at Volunteer Park to over 2,000 acres, at very little cost to the taxpayer.

We did it by working hard to cooperate as a board, along with Executive Director Scott Gallacher, without the internal strife and dissension we watched nearly tear apart our fellow municipal corporation, Fire District 16.

We did have a continually dissenting member who seemed to challenge every action and decision we made, but thankfully his term expired and he left. He was replaced by current Board President Mark Michel, who seamlessly joined the other four commissioners and went to work helping shape improvements to Gateway Park, Home Park, Maple Hollow, and particularly 360 Trails.

Mark is running again for a seat on the commission, and we, as dedicated former co-commissioners, strongly support his candidacy and urge the voting public to elect him again to this important post. Key Pen Parks has reached a momentum that Mark played a significant role in achieving. Keep that momentum going. Elect Mark Michel.

Bill Trandum, Tacoma

Bill Anglemeyer, Gig Harbor



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www.longbranchchurch.net

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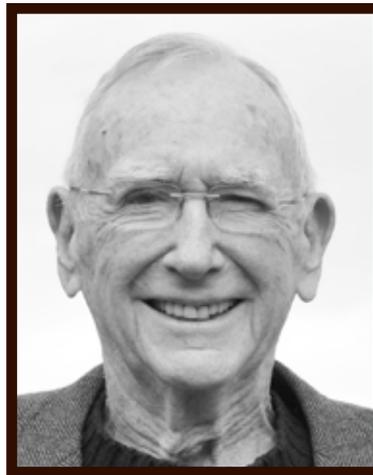
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Adult Bible Study 9:00

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OBITUARIES



Richard A. Dixon

Richard A. “Dick” Dixon died Oct. 3 after a year plus bout with cancer. He was born May 2, 1935, in Natick, Massachusetts, to Arthur and Avis Dixon.

Dick relocated to Washington where he graduated high school, served out an apprenticeship as a machinist and earned a journeyman's level machinist card. While using those skills working for Boeing, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology at the University of Washington.

Upon graduation, Dick was offered a commission with the Army as a 2nd lieutenant, which he accepted and soon became an Airborne Ranger. While training at Fort Benning, Georgia, he met and married Brenda Dell Harvard, who died Sept. 16, 2018, after 55 years of marriage.

After 24 years of life in the Army, including two combat tours in Vietnam, over 300 parachute missions and numerous citations, including a Bronze Star, Dick retired as a lieutenant colonel and began a new life as a medical equipment salesman specializing in low vision equipment.

Dick continued with this profession until his wife's health forced his second retirement. He stayed active with the Gig Harbor chapter of the Lions Club helping with their low vision program. During his final retirement, he turned to writing books. He was an accomplished and nationally recognized author of nine published works. His last book is waiting to be published.

Dick is survived by his sisters Donna Styron and Dorothy Nicholls; daughters, Cindy and Evelyn; son Chris; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Dick is, was, and always will be a soldier, patriot, husband and father.



Elsie L. Vezzani

Elsie Vezzani of Gig Harbor died Sept. 8, after a courageous battle with cancer. She was born Nov. 19, 1933, in Colton, Washington, the youngest daughter of Frank and Teresa Busch.

Elsie graduated from Holy Names Academy in Spokane and attended Seattle University, where she met the love of her life, Robert L. Vezzani. They married in 1953 while he was stationed with the U.S. Army at Camp Roberts, California. In 1956, they moved to Tacoma where Elsie began a busy and happy life helping Bob build his fire protection business while raising their three children.

Throughout her life, Elsie endeared herself with her warm and outgoing personality to everyone she met — making countless new friends, joining a variety of Key Peninsula organizations and causes, and adding energy, warmth and humor to every endeavor.

Elsie was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Bob, son-in-law Barney Harkins, and three of her sisters: Estelle Busch, Francis Coad and Joyce Frei. She is survived by her children Teresa Harkins (Barney), Bob, Jr. (Kathie), David (Barb); grandchildren Conor (Dani), Christine, Mathew (Nora), and Andrew; her sisters Alma Druffel and Lola O'Toole; stepbrother Wayne Busch; and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial and reception celebrated the life of this kind and loving woman October 5 at the Key Peninsula Lutheran Church in Lakebay. In lieu of flowers and because of the wonderful people that took care of her at Hospice House, remembrances can be made in her honor to the Franciscan Foundation, 2901 Bridgeport Way West, University Place 98466; or to a charity of choice. Please share memories at edwards-memorial.com.



Ron Hardy, Cannon Norton and Eagle Scout Alex Hardy set a fence post. *Photo: Ed Johnson, KP News*

Park for Small Dogs Comes to Gateway

Every dog will soon have its day on the Key Peninsula thanks to a young Boy Scout.

ALICE KINERK, KP NEWS

A fully fenced off-leash area designed for dogs up to 35 pounds has been completed at Gateway Park. The project was headed up by Peninsula High School freshman Alex Hardy as he works to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout in Boy Scout Troop 251.

While a large dog park is also in development at Gateway, Alex's small dog park will allow more petite breeds the freedom to play and explore off-leash without the fear of attacks from larger canines.

An owner of a small dog himself, Alex witnessed an attack from a larger dog while using an off-leash area in Gig Harbor several years ago. When Alex spoke to Scott Gallacher, the executive director of Key Pen Parks, about potential projects for his Eagle Scout badge, building a park for small dogs seemed perfect.

"We had planned in the 2019 budget to have a dog park. A dog park was identified as part of the Gateway Park Master Plan that was adopted in 2015. Key Pen Parks' intentions were to have a small dog area and large dog area by the trailhead to 360 Trails," Gallacher said.

While the park is designed for small dogs — the fenced area measures 100 by 140 feet — it's not particularly small. "That is a very big small dog park," Alex said.

Work began in September. Undertaking such an intensive project within weeks of becoming a high school student was a lot to take on, he said.

Alex and volunteer assistants installed 40 to 50 posts as well as 400 feet of wire fabric. Key Pen Parks purchased the fence posts and wire fabric for the project.

While the teen began with a borrowed tractor and auger to dig the holes, he soon found it was getting stuck a few inches

down and wound up doing much of the digging by hand.

"There was tons of rocks. We hit hard clay," he said.

Over the course of several work days in September, many people showed up to help out. This included friends, family and members of the Key Peninsula Church of Latter-Day Saints, where Alex and his family are members.

Local businesses, including Burger King, Albertsons and the KP Food Market donated food for the project volunteers. Home Depot gave \$50 toward materials.

Matt Woodward, maintenance supervisor for Key Pen Parks, shared his expertise. "Matt showed Alex how park staff did the fence around the house and barns at the park as an example of what we wanted to do," Gallacher said.

As a high school freshman, Alex is young to be working toward the Eagle Scout rank. But he was eager to earn the prestigious rank before the end of the year when the LDS church is ending its sponsorship of BSA. The church has been a sponsor of BSA for over a century, allowing scouts to meet in LDS facilities and encouraging all LDS boys to join, but about 18 months ago the church announced it would be cutting ties with BSA in order to better serve its worldwide congregation and create its own global youth program for boys and girls.

Cannon Norton is proud of his friend's hard work. "Alex had a great vision for an amazing dog park that is much needed in this area. Alex is hardworking, persistent, and always looking to do good for those around him. This Eagle project was no easy task, but he was willing to take it on. I'm impressed with the format of the park and the planning behind it. Those countless hours will benefit the community."

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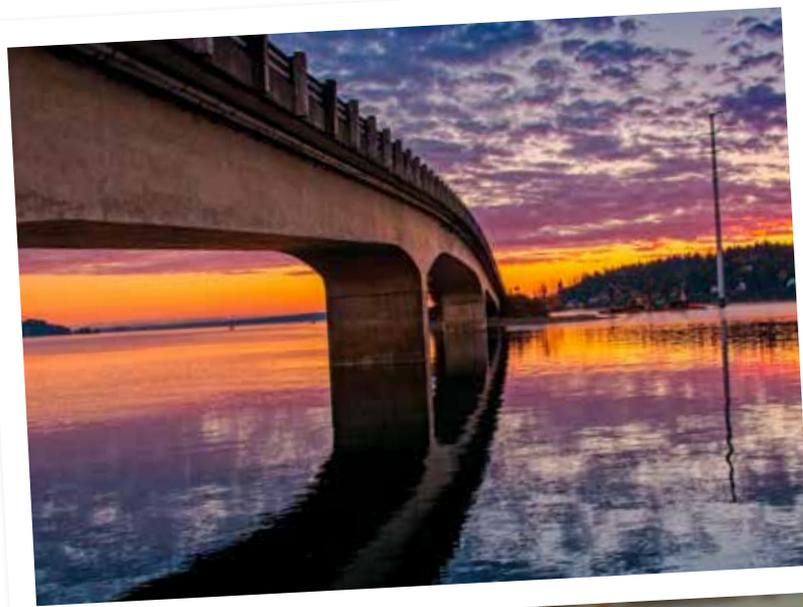
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Saturday Market
"Where Master Makers Gather"

Open through September 28 9am to 3pm
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www.peninsula-marketplace.com



Illustrating a front-page story on the new power towers in Burley Lagoon, this photo by Jim Bellamy won second place in the competition.

Local pharmacist Don Zimmerman's portrait was cited for showing him in the workplace while capturing his personality. Photographer Richard Miller took a first place award for his work.



KP News Wins Eight Awards in Statewide Competition

First place awards went to photography and design, with more honors to news and opinion writing for the second year in a row.

STAFF REPORT

The Key Peninsula News received eight awards for writing, photography and advertising in the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association's 2019 Better Newspaper Contest at its 132nd annual meeting Oct. 11 in Olympia.

The WNPA presents awards in several categories for work published the previous 12 months. For 2018-19, 58 newspapers submitted 1,889 entries judged by panels of out-of-state journalists.

Associate Editor Ted Olinger won second place in the long news story category for "Henderson Bay Drowning" (Feb. 2019) and third place in government reporting for "The McCleary Effect" (March 2019).

Carolyn Wiley was a returning winner this year, taking second place for her ongoing humor column Devil's Head Diary in all four competing divisions, including papers with circulations greater than 12,500. Newcomer Phyllis Henry won third place for her general interest column Coast to Coast.

Richard Miller won first place for his photo of Don Zimmerman in the color feature photography category (August

2018) and Jim Bellamy took second in the same category for his shot of Burley Lagoon at sunset (November 2018).

First place for a color photo essay went to Jim Bellamy, Ed Johnson, Richard Hildahl, Richard Miller, Joseph Pentheroudakis and Production Designer Tim Heitzman for his layout of Out & About (April 2018).

Heitzman also won second place across all four divisions for best design in an ad campaign for KP Community Services.

"We are unique," said Sara Thompson, KP News editorial board president and regular contributor. "None of the other papers are nonprofit, and none depend on volunteer writers and photographers. Our executive editor, Lisa Bryan, is passionate and deeply knowledgeable about the KP and she has been an incredible leader for all the contributors who help make the KP News what it is today."

Founded in 1887, the WNPA represents more than 100 community newspapers across the state dedicated to and advocating for local news and "a high standard of publication quality and community leadership," according to its mission statement.

KP News competed against other newspapers with a circulation of less than 12,500, though Heitzman and Wiley both won awards competing against the largest weeklies and dailies in the WNPA.

"With the incredible support of Tim Heitzman to help run the business and graphic design aspect of the paper, Ted Olinger's continued work as an editor, and Joseph Pentheroudakis as webmaster and Facebook administrator, we have an unbeatable team," Thompson said.

"WE ARE UNIQUE."

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"We opened with 10 products. Now we have more than 50." Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News

Local Marijuana Business Turns 2 Years Old

A new approach has brought solutions to customers and income to the state.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

The signage is modest, and when a customer walks through the door they are greeted by an employee who asks for a photo ID. The store is quiet and the counter is tended by several sales clerks ready to answer questions. An array of products are displayed together with brochures describing them. There are no free samples and customers are not allowed to open a purchase on-site.

Welcome to Sweet Jane, now 2 years old, and the only marijuana dispensary on the Key Peninsula.

Owner Jennifer Strom said the business has grown organically. Although they had a person swinging a sign to advertise when they first opened, the county soon informed them that was not allowed. Strom said the business has largely grown by word of mouth.

"We opened with 10 products," she said. "Now we have more than 50." Most customers are local, largely from Longbranch to Gig Harbor North, though Strom notes that summer brings more "travelers."

The dispensary offers products ranging in cost to accommodate customer wishes. They add products based on customer requests and information from industry trade shows. As with many expanding businesses, they start with a small order and if it sells well, they add it to the inventory. Decisions to continue a product are based on such things as price, quality, availability and customer service.

Sweet Jane is medically endorsed, as are 19 of the 29 marijuana dispensaries in Pierce County. Having a medical endorsement was a priority for Strom to meet the needs of the community. Currently there are just a handful of customers with medical marijuana authorization (allowing larger purchases without the 7.9 percent sales tax), but she also noted that a large number of people come to the store asking for advice on the best products to treat such things as sleep, pain, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.

According to a review in the September AARP Bulletin magazine, the fastest growing group of marijuana users in the United States is older Americans. Cannabis use tripled in the age group 50 to 64 and grew tenfold in those over 65.

"The industry has evolved. Packaging labels describe benefits, so it's easier to assist customers with particular requests," Strom said. In addition, all products are highly regulated for quality to assure that the content of each product is accurate, unlike some CBD products available online.

One requirement for medical endorsement is having a medical marijuana consultant available at all times. Consultants must pass a program certified by the Department of Health. Although the other staff is experienced, the consultant adds a level of knowledge available to all customers, according to Strom.

Sales growth at Sweet Jane reflects that of the state. According to the website 502 Data, in 2014, when annual retail sales were first recorded, there was \$31 million in retail sales. By 2017 retail sales grew to \$927 million.

At Sweet Jane sales for their first month was just over \$77,000. In August of this year sales topped \$341,000, paying more than \$126,000 in excise tax. The store has expanded hours to accommodate the growth and Strom plans a remodel to expand the retail space.

According to David Hutchinson, analyst for the Pierce County Sheriff's Department Crime Analysis Unit, a downward trend in marijuana-related offenses started in 2012 and has continued. Home thefts are down 46 percent over the last five years. He noted, however, that in looking at trends both in increases and decreases in crime, "Correlation does not equal causation." But the data does at least show that marijuana legalization has not led to significant increases in crime, he said.

Strom said that they have not had any thefts. The store has a good security system and cameras are on at all times.

In September, Angel Guild awarded \$8,800 to:

KP Farm Council.....	\$2,500
KP News	\$2,000
Evergreen Elementary PTA.....	\$1,800
KP Civic Center Children's Museum	\$2,500



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FEATURE YOUR EVENT HERE

Click on "Submit an Event" at keypennews.org and fill out the form. Send questions or updates to calendar@keypennews.org or call 253-884-4699.

NOV. 1.**POETRY & PROSE: OPEN MIC/RECITAL**

Young and old share words that have touched their heart, mind or spirit. Original work welcome. Free for all ages, 2 to 3 p.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. 253-884-9814

60+ SENIOR FOOT CARE

Foot soaking, trimming and filing of nails for seniors. 8 a.m. to noon at KP Community Services in Home. Sliding fee scale; funded by Catholic Community Services. To request an appointment, call 253-884-4440.

NOV. 1 & 2**FRIENDS OF THE KC LIBRARY BOOK SALE**

Shop for great books at great prices. Proceeds support library events, classes and services. Nov. 1, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Nov. 2, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Key Center Library

NOV. 5**SPAY & NEUTER**

Pasado's Safe Haven's mobile spay and neuter station will be at Key Peninsula Community Services in Home at 6:45 a.m. For more info call KPCS at 253-884-4440.

NOV. 6**ROCKY BAY WATER QUALITY**

South Sound Clean Water Partners meet quarterly to coordinate and discuss their current work. Your input is welcome. 6 to 8 p.m. at the Key Peninsula Community Office. www.tpchd.org/shellfish

TOO SOON TO FORGET: DOCUMENTARY
Screening of "Too Soon to Forget: The Journey of Younger Onset Alzheimer's Disease," the stories of nine families living with dementia. Brief discussion to follow. Adult event. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

NOV. 9**WHAT'S AGE GOT TO DO WITH IT?**

Join Dori Gillam, speaker and community organizer, in a free discussion of how we can begin valuing people of all ages — including our own. 2 to 3:30 p.m. Key Center Library 253-548-3309

COOK TO LEARN: FRUIT KABOBS

Learn easy tips and tricks for cooking with your preschooler. For ages 2 to 6 and families. Snack provided. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Key Center Library. Registration required at piercescountylibrary.org/calendar. 253-548-3309

NOV. 12**VAUGHN BAY WATER QUALITY**

South Sound Clean Water Partners meet quarterly to coordinate and discuss their current work. Your input is welcome. 6 to 8 p.m. at the Key Peninsula Community Office. www.tpchd.org/shellfish

NOV. 14**EXPLORE & CREATE: 3D ART FOR KIDS**

Explore and create: Kids ages 5 to 12 will use recycled bottle caps and cardboard to create their own 3D masterpiece. 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

MEDICARE & MEDICAID

Bill Drenik with Washington Senior Resources LLC will offer an unbiased presentation on insurance options, whether enrolling or changing insurance during open enrollment. Free and open to public. 10 a.m. to noon at The Mustard Seed Project. Call to register: 253-884-9814.

NOV. 15**PLAN YOUR JOB SEARCH**

Learn techniques for finding work, how to create a job-search plan and strategies for contacting employers. Taught by WorkSource employment specialists. Participants earn a UI job search credit for this class. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Key Center Library. Registration required at piercescountylibrary.org/calendar. More info at gethired.pcls.us.

GETTING HIRED

Learn tech and resume writing skills, create a job-search plan and strategies for contacting employers. Taught by WorkSource employment specialists. No UI credits for this class. 2 to 4 p.m. Key Center Library. More info at gethired.pcls.us

NOV. 16**CRAFTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

Learn how to use recycled materials to create a modern and up-cycled look for your holiday. Supplies provided. All ages. Snowflake: noon to 1 p.m.; package bow: 1 to 2 p.m.; collage greeting cards: 2 to 3 p.m. Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

NOV. 18**TEEN EVENT: LIBRARY AT THE RED BARN**

Participate in a fun project for students in 6th to 12th grade. 253-548-3309

NOV. 21**MUSTARD SEED OPEN HOUSE**

See our remodeled space, hear updates on our programs and assisted living project, and enjoy appetizers and drinks. Free and open to the public. 4 to 6 p.m. at The Mustard Seed Project.

NOV. 22**COFFEE WITH A LIBRARIAN**

Learn about your library and what it has to offer, give feedback. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Key Center Library. 253-548-3309

OFF THE KEY**NOV. 2****PIER INTO THE NIGHT LIVE DIVE**

Take an underwater journey of Gig Harbor Bay while you stay warm and dry on the dock. Divers live stream video to 10ft screen where staff biologists identify what they find.. 6 to 7 p.m., Jerisich Dock, 3215 Harborview Drive, Gig Harbor.

NOV. 5**STORM WARNING: HISTORIC WEATHER**

Local broadcaster and historian Feliks Banel explores our region's darkest weather days and most infamous storms. 7 to 8:30 p.m., McMenamins Elks Temple, 565 Broadway, Tacoma. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. 425-219-4370

NOV. 9**DAN "BIG HANDS" COLVIN CONCERT**

Dan "Big Hands" Colvin is a real-life authentic American singer-songwriter, touring the country. Olalla Community Club, 12970 Olalla Valley Road SE, Olalla. Potluck 6 p.m. Concert 7 p.m. Suggested donation \$20. olallahouse.org

NOV. 16**DONKEY CREEK CHUM FESTIVAL**

Celebrate the return of the salmon. Noon to 4 p.m., Harbor History Museum, 4121 Harborview Drive, Gig Harbor.

NOV. 21**FILUCY BAY & BURLEY WATER QUALITY**

Find out what different agencies do to improve water quality in your bay. South Sound Clean Water Partners meet quarterly to discuss their current work. Public welcome. Burley Lagoon 9:30 to 11:30; Filucy Bay noon to 1:30 p.m. Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One, 10222 Bujacich Road NW, Gig Harbor. tpchd.org/shellfish

WEEKLYEVENTS**MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS****YOGA AT THE CIVIC CENTER**

Bring your mat, blanket or towel. Drop-in \$12.00 or four classes for \$40. Cash or check only. KP Civic Center from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. 253-884-3456

MONDAYS, WEDS & FRIDAYS**S.A.I.L. EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 65+**

At The Mustard Seed Project. Improve balance and mobility and prevent falls. For any fitness level — you can even participate sitting down. \$5/drop-in. Preregistration required. Limited scholarships. Mon. 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.; Wed.and Fri. 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. 253-884-9814. No class Nov. 29.

S.A.I.L. EXERCISE CLASSES FOR 60+

At KP Community Services in Home, 8 to 9 a.m. and 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. Free, suggested donation is \$5 per class. Call 253-884-4440 to register. No class Nov. 29.

TUESDAYS**COUNTY ON SEPTIC**

Tacoma-Pierce County Environmental Health Specialist will answer questions about septic systems or help submit applications for design or repair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the KP Community Council office, KC Corral. sriley@tpchd.org, 253-798-6470

ELDER CARE SUPPORT GROUP

Nov. 12 and 26. Caregivers and family members welcome. From 6 to 7:30 p.m. at KP Community Services in Home. 253-884-4440

KEY SINGERS REHEARSALS

Rehearsals for KP choral group. All singers welcome. Membership \$10 per year. From 7 to 8:30 p.m. at KP Lutheran Church. Marianne at 253-884-5615

LOVING HEARTS KNIT OR CROCHET

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

SENIOR SHOPPING DAY

Nov. 5 and 19. Shopping trips for seniors. Sign up with Key Peninsula Community Services. 253-884-4440

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

First TOPS meeting is free with no obligation. Weigh-in from 8:35 to 9:25 a.m. Key Peninsula Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. marcgrubb1990@yahoo.com

OASIS YOUTH CENTER

Are you a queer or questioning youth between the ages of 14 and 24? Games, new friends, learning and snacks. Oasis Youth Center satellite program Tuesdays 3 to 6 p.m. at the KP Civic Center. oasisyouthcenter.org, oasis@oasisyouthcenter.org or 253-671-2838

STORYTIMES

Preschoolers discover books, learn nursery rhymes, sing songs, play with blocks and do arts and crafts at the Key Center Library from 11 a.m. to noon. 253-548-3309

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS**PRESCHOOL PLAYTIME**

The Children's Home Society of Washington KP Family Resource Center offers a preschool and toddler indoor park program 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the KP Civic Center gym. Caregivers stay with child. Drop-ins welcome; stay as long as you wish. A \$1 per child donation is suggested. 253-884-5433. No class Nov. 28.

REFIT FREE WOMEN'S EXERCISE

REFIT is a fitness experience designed to engage the heart as a muscle and a soul. Childcare provided. Tue. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thurs. 10 to 11 a.m. WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. waypoint-church.org or 253-853-7878. No class Nov. 28.

FREE SENIOR TAI CHI

KP Community Services in Home, 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. Sign up at 253-884-4440. No class Nov. 28.

TUES, THURS & SATURDAYS**FREE SENIOR S.A.I.L. EXERCISE CLASSES**

KP Community Services in Home from 9 to 10 a.m. Free, suggested donation is \$5 for seniors 60+. Call 253-884-4440 to register. No class Nov. 28.

TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS**KP HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPEN**

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

WEDNESDAYS**BLEND HOOKERS AND TINKERS**

Join in at Blend Wine Shop for a rollicking good time. All skill levels and fiber interests welcome; 21 and over, 5:30 to 8 p.m. hannah8ball@gmail.com or 817-929-3943. No meeting Nov. 27.

LAKEBAY WRITERS

A writers workshop for people who love stories. Share yours; hear others. Key Center Library, 1 to 4 p.m. Loren Aikins, 253-884-2785

READY SET GO!

Free early learning program for 3- and 4-year-olds. Limited to 16 children with parent or caregiver. Focus on kindergarten readiness and lots of fun. KP Civic Center, VFW room, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. 253-884-5433

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS**SENIOR MEALS**

Nutritious meals for ages 60+ served at noon at KP Community Services in Home; \$3 suggested donation. Guests of all ages under 60 are welcome to attend; \$5 suggested donation. 253-884-4440. Closed Nov. 29.

THURSDAYS**FREE COMPUTER CLASS FOR SENIORS**

Bring questions and learn the basics. Seniors 60+. From 10 to 11 a.m. at KP Community Services in Home. 253-884-4440. No class Nov. 28.

COUNTY ON WELLS

Nov. 7 and 21 (first and third Thursdays) Tacoma-Pierce County Environmental Health Specialist in drinking water and Group B wells answers questions about drinking water or shared wells from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the KP Community Council office, KC Corral. sriley@tpchd.org or 253-798-6470.

COUNTY ON WASTE

Nov. 14 (second Thursdays) Tacoma-Pierce County Environmental Health Specialist on household waste management answers questions about household hazardous waste, garbage haulers and recycling. KP Community Council office, KC Corral, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. sriley@tpchd.org, 253-798-6470

SENIORS LUNCH

All are welcome when the KP Senior Society meets for a potluck, games and fellowship in the Whitmore Room at the KP Civic Center from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 253-884-4981. No meeting Nov. 28.

TOASTMASTERS

Have fun improving your public speaking ability and leadership skills. Guests are welcome with no obligation to speak. From 8 to 9 a.m. at WayPoint Church, 12719 134th Avenue NW. keypeninsulatoastmasters@gmail.com. No meeting Nov. 28.

FRIDAYS**BOARD GAMES FOR SENIORS**

Games and social time for seniors at KP Community Services in Home from 1 to 2:30 p.m. 253-884-4440 Closed Nov. 29.

INTRO TO GENTLE YOGA

Older adults encouraged to move at their own pace. Yogic philosophy, range of motion, strength and balance, breathing techniques and relaxation. Limited space; call to register. Instructor: Lisa Dunham. \$12/drop-in or \$100/10 class. From 8 to 9 a.m. at The Mustard Seed Project. 253-884-9814. No class Nov. 29.

TRIPLE P PARENTING CLASSES

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

MONTHLY MEETINGS

- Nov. 2, **Writers Guild**, 10 a.m. to noon, KP Community Council office, KC Corral. 253-884-6455
- Nov. 4 & 18, 7 to 8 p.m. **KP Veterans** group, KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Veterans, military service members and families with children 16 and older are welcome. 253-884-2626
- Nov. 5, 11 a.m. **KP Historical Society** board meeting in the museum at KP Civic Center. All are welcome. 253-888-3246
- Nov. 5, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. **KP Business Association** business meeting at Blend Wine Shop. kp-businessassociation@gmail.com or 253-312-1006
- Nov. 5 & 19, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. West of the Narrows **Depression and Bipolar Support**-Lakebay Group, KP Lutheran Church, 4213 Lackey Road NW. Kimberly 253-753-4270 or dbsalakebay@gmail.com
- Nov. 6 & 20, 6 to 9 p.m. **KP Lions Club**, Key Center fire station. 253-853-2721
- Nov. 7, **26th Legislative District Democrats**, 6 p.m. social; 6:30 p.m. meeting. Public invited. Givens Community Center, 1026 Sidney Road, Port Orchard. 26thdemocrats@gmail.com
- Nov. 7 p.m. **Lakebay Fuchsia Society** at KP Civic Center. 253-884-2283
- Nov. 11, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. **KP Parks Commission**, Volunteer Park office. 253-884-9240
- Nov. 12 & 26, 5 to 7 p.m. **KP Fire Commission** at Key Center fire station. keypeninsulafire.org or 253-884-2222
- Nov. 13, 10 to 11:30 a.m. **Bayshore Garden Club**, Longbranch fire station. Wendy, 253-332-4883
- Nov. 13, 10 to 11:30 a.m. **Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition**, Gig Harbor Fire District HQ, 10222 Bujacich Road NW. Pep-c.org, Steve Rees, 6ftwav@gmail.com, 253-720-0662
- Nov. 13, 7 to 9 p.m. **KP Community Council**, Key Center fire station. 253-432-4948
- Nov. 14, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. **Ashes** support group for Fire District 16, Key Center fire station. 253-884-3771
- Nov. 14, 6 to 7:30 p.m. **Peninsula School District** board, district office in Purdy. 253-530-1000
- Nov. 14, 7 to 8:30 p.m. **KP Civic Center Assn.** board, Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center. kpciviccenter.org, 253-884-3456
- Nov. 15, Noon to 1 p.m. **KP Business Association** luncheon meeting, El Sombrero. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com or 253-312-1006
- Nov. 15, 1 to 3 p.m. **Two Waters Arts Alliance** board welcomes artists and art lovers to join its meeting, VFW Room, KP Civic Center. twowaters.org 253-884-1163
- Nov. 16, 10:30 a.m. to noon. **Key Peninsula Caregivers Support Group** at The Mustard Seed Project. For caregivers of those with memory loss. Free and open to the public. Please call Debra Jamerson before attending, 360-621-1110

The Community Calendar is brought to you as a public service by the Angels.



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- Nov. 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m. **KP Democrats**, Home fire station, johnpatkelly@aol.com
- Nov. 20, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. **Key Peninsula Advisory Commission**, KP Civic Center, reviews applications for proposed developments and makes recommendations to Pierce County. Verify meeting details at piercecountywa.gov/5937/Key-Peninsula-Advisory-Commission
- Nov. 21, 7 to 8:30 p.m. **Key Peninsula Emergency Preparation**, Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center, 253-686-7904 or gablehouse@aol.com
- Nov. 21, 7 to 8:30 p.m. **KP Citizens Against Crime**. Discuss what's happening in our community with Pierce County Sheriff. Key Center fire station. dolores-starr@centurytel.net or 253-884-3105
- Nov. 25, 6 to 8 p.m. **KP Farm Council** meeting, KP Community Council office, KC Corral, info@kpfarmtour.com or 253-432-4948, keypenncouncil@gmail.com
- Nov. 25, 6 to 8:30 p.m. **Relatives Raising Kids** support group. Grandparents and relatives raising children meet at Evergreen Elementary. Potluck dinner and childcare provided. 253-884-5433
- Multiple dates, **KP Sportsmen's Club** board meets first Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.; general meeting and potluck second Thursdays at 6 p.m.; bingo \$1/card and potluck fourth Fridays at 6 p.m.; Ladies Bunco last Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Bring snacks and \$5 to play. Sportsmen's Clubhouse, 5305 Jackson Lake Road NW, 253-884-6764



KPAC's Role Diminished as Development Continues on KP

Multiple meeting cancellations and lack of training cause members to wonder about a meaningful role in the future growth and development of their community.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula Land Use Advisory Commission meetings scheduled for June through September were cancelled by Pierce County, leaving its members wondering just how much voice KPAC has in decisions about development in this community.

"I joined KPAC because I want to keep the KP a great place to live. Others join for the same reason. But it feels like the effort is wasted. We prep ourselves and then there is no meeting,"

said Don Swensen, the owner of Blend Wine Shop, who has been on the commission for seven years and serves as chair.

"The county is being less than honest with us and with themselves about the impact of growth out here," he said. "We are growing. My business is up 40 percent in the last year. And it is not that people are drinking more. I'm serving more people."

Domoni Glass was a member of the Key Peninsula Community Council in the early 2000s and has served on KPAC for the last six years. "I think the Key Peninsula needs a venue to provide input on the county's processes such as updates on Growth Management Act planning, the Shoreline Management Plan and the Key Peninsula Community Plan," Glass said.

"I don't think we need to approve small projects or projects like bulkheads that have plenty of oversight by a variety of agencies," she said. "However, I would like to see us involved in projects that have a significant impact on Key Peninsula resources and its citizens."

There have been some changes in what KPAC reviews. Last fall, at a joint meeting

with the Gig Harbor group, they were informed by county planners that they would no longer review permits for shoreline projects.

County Councilman Derek Young said that the elimination of Land Use Advisory Commissions from the shoreline permitting review process was an inadvertent mistake. LUACs generally offer input on all permits that will be reviewed by the hearing examiner, and the updated Shoreline Master

Plan shifted shoreline permitting to administrative approval within Pierce County Planning and Public Works rather than requiring review by the hearing examiner. Young has since been able to reverse that change.

Young said that at the county level conflict can arise when a project has administrative approval for permitting and then, when it goes to a LUAC for review, the group expresses concerns. The developer, having assumed they could move forward, may have additional expenses to address issues relatively late in the process.

Young pointed to the Gig Harbor experience with a designer review board — changing it to one that can look at proposals prior to the application process. Although the first reaction of developers was negative, he said, both the community and developers have come to like it.

Sean Gaffney, planning manager at Pierce County Planning and Public Works, said earlier this year, "LUAC members tend to have good local knowledge and can tie into the local community plan. Their recommendations may improve the request and make it a better fit for the community."

Young said, "There would be a mass uprising if the county moved to elimi-

nate LUACs. Developers would love to get rid of them, but I don't think the County Executive (Bruce Dammeier) would go that far. But there has been a diminishing role, especially in rural areas."

Young also said that LUACs in rural communities don't see as much to review because there is less development going on.

"There are vanishingly small numbers of lots that can be subdivided," he said. "In a very rural community you notice every building, but growth on the Key Peninsula compared to say, Parkland, where the population has increased by 3,000 a year, is still small."

Young said that as part of the GMA the county is unlikely to add significant infrastructure on the Key Peninsula. The county wants to avoid induced demand, that is, infrastructure that might encourage growth in rural communities where the goal is to preserve greenspace, forestland and farmland.

Swensen has communicated several times with the planning department, suggesting that they schedule a training for new KPAC members. Though he said the response seems positive, nothing has been scheduled.

Young concurred with the need for more training and said he thinks that LUACs would be a good place to review not only land use but things like transportation. He has reached out to the office of Pierce County Executive Bruce Dammeier about additional training. As with Swensen, he has not had a response. He said he was not sure whether the problem is that there has been a recent shortage of available staff or that this is simply not a priority for Dammeier.

Dammeier's office did not respond to several requests for comment on this article.

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“In addition to an incredible staff at KP Parks, there are countless volunteers, whom I've had the pleasure of working with to make the KP a better place. They have done the heavy lifting on making the Parks, Trails, and Events successful. We owe them tremendous gratitude.

THANK YOU to the KP Parks Trail Committee Members, Event Support Crews, Trail Building and Maintenance Crews! In addition, I'm proud that the vast majority of these incredibly dedicated people support Linda and me for election to the board.”

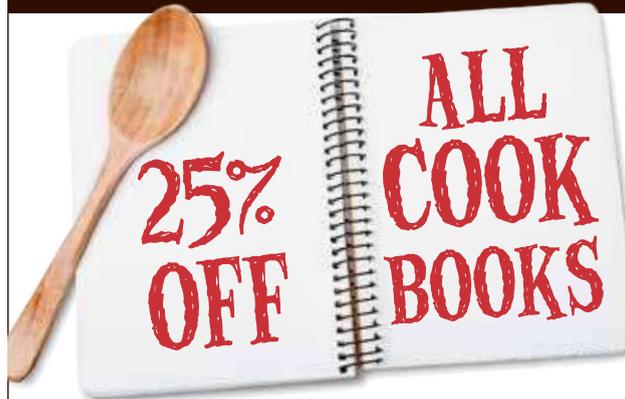


~Mark
Current Key Pen Parks District Board President

Mark Michel, current Key Pen Parks District Board President, has played instrumental roles in acquiring funding, expanding park properties, and improving the parks we all share. Mark has spent countless hours in our parks helping to build and maintain trails, organizing and volunteering at events, inspiring kids to ride bikes, riding with friends or walking with his wife, Traci and their dogs, Ollie and Basil and so much more.

Linda Weeks is dedicated to our community. Living, raising a family, and running successful businesses on the KP for almost 26 years, Linda is an active parks volunteer who frequently uses the parks on walks with friends, family, dogs -Izzy, Bourbon & Guinness and horses- Hooligan & Marseilles. She will bring leadership, increased recreational opportunities, and fiscal responsibility to the Key Peninsula Parks.

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Soil and Plant Scientists (Longbranch, WA) - Candidates must have a Bachelor's degree in Horticulture and at least three years of experience working in the agriculture industry. **Will conduct research in breeding, production, data analysis and management of crops and greenhouses.** Required skills: 1) Experienced in Crop hybridization in both greenhouse and field environments; 2) Experienced in data analysis software including JMP and SAS; 3) Experienced in data management using large data sets; 4) Experienced in molecular biology and genomics in conducting breeding and other experiments, including but not limited to plant DNA extraction, setting up Polymerase Chain Reactions (PCR), running gels of capillary electrophoresis and molecular cloning; 5) Experienced in plant tissue culture including callus culturing and embryo rescue technique. **Send resume to Green Sun Inc, 3421 Creviston Rd. KPS, Longbranch, WA 98351, Attn: Hongbin Yang.**



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Mac takes a break with sidekick Spero. Photo: Richard Miller

Mac Bryant: KP Teen Talks Farm Tour and Farm Life

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

McHardy “Mac” Bryant, 17, might look like a typical teenager, even if he does carry his New Zealand grandmother’s maiden name as his first. He’s in his junior year in high school; he plays baseball and basketball; he likes dirt bikes, fishing and hunting, and wants to try snowmobiling. But he also works seven days a week at his family’s Kaukiki Farm in Longbranch.

“I’m just a hand right now, my parents are the big farmers,” Mac said. “I worked here all summer driving tractors, tedding hay, bucking hay, building some fences. Jack, my brother, helps out on the sheep, dealing with all the breeding. I do all the hard labor.”

Mac also served for years on the KP Farm Tour Council, helping to plan, organize and execute the annual autumn event.

“I was 12 or 13 and my mom said, ‘We need a representative on the farm council and I want you to do it,’ so I went,” Mac said. “I was a little out of my element; everybody else was in their 50s or older. By the second meeting I was the secretary because I was the only one who had a good computer.”

Mac worked as secretary for two years and spent a third year helping plan the Farm Tour before the increasing demands of high school led him to resign.

“I really wanted to keep the agricultural focus of the Farm Tour, really make sure it stayed what it was billed as, which was to expand education to people about farms,” he said.

The Bryant family moved to the 70 acres that would become Kaukiki Farm from their “little 20-acre farm” in Olalla when Mac was 5, he said. Kaukiki expanded to 140 acres a few years later.

Mac’s mother, Janice, grew up on a farm in Iowa and his father, Warwick, was raised on a 7,000-acre sheep station in New Zealand. Kaukiki was the name of the highest hill on the station. The Bryant parents both have full-time jobs in addition to the business of running the farm, which has become a popular destination on the Farm Tour.

“More and more people show up on the tour,” Mac said. “The last time we were in it we had 1,200 people, but generally we get 200 or 300.”

He spent most of this year’s Farm Tour guiding visitors on a walk around the property to admire the cattle herd, horses and sheep, and the grass-covered hills and shining ponds that irrigate them.

The farm raises about 100 sheep and 30 head of cattle, which are mostly sold privately for meat or livestock.

“All the animals here are raised off of our grass their whole lives, they don’t have anything else,” Mac said. “We irrigate

everything from our own ponds; we’re a completely self-sustaining farm, and that’s not as common anymore.” Kaukiki also sells thousands of bales of its hay to KP customers.

Mac said he thinks that’s one of the reasons Kaukiki gets so many visitors.

“Beauty is one reason,” he said. “Everyone brings their kids to see the animals. But I think it’s also to learn how a farm works because there are fewer and fewer farms, and that makes this one more unique and iconic.”

But Mac may not stay on the farm much longer. Though Washington born and bred, after high school he is considering

training to become a mechanical engineer or journeyman electrician.

“I want to go see the rest of the world,” he said. “That’s one of the reasons I’m looking at those careers because I can go and get a job anywhere.”

He and his family have already done a bit of traveling, having visited New Zealand, England, and 30 U.S. states during a four-and-a-half-month long RV trip a few years ago.

“We circumnavigated the U.S.,” Mac said. “We went all across the northern border up to Bar Harbor, Maine, and all the way down to Key West, Florida, and then we cut across to Texas all the way to California, then up through Yosemite and back up to Washington.”

“I loved it. There were a couple of places I want to go back to. I love Montana. It has everything that I’m interested in out there. I’d rather go off and live in a small town than in a big city, and that’s what that would give me.”

But would he miss farm life on the KP?

“It was the best way to grow up. Definitely I’ll miss it, but I hope I can do the same for my kids when I get to that point.”



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Recycling on the Key Peninsula

Why do programs differ from place to place? Where does our recycled material go? Does recycling make environmental sense?

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

In April Pierce County households received Earth Matters, the recycling newsletter mailed twice a year, announcing a change in what could be recycled. This is the second time since 2007, when the program began collecting recyclables in a single bin, that the program has made a change. Shredded paper, refrigerated cartons and plant pots are no longer accepted.

Pierce County contracts with Waste Connections to collect Key Peninsula recycle bins. Pioneer Recycling then processes the materials. Glass, which can be taken to the Key Center transfer station, is shipped to Strategic Recycling in Seattle for processing. Plastic bags can be taken to collection centers, and one is located at the Key Center Food Market. According to a Food Market employee the bags are collected twice a week by its warehouse, but the KP News could not confirm where they are taken from there.

“We are moving from wishful recycling to when in doubt throw it out,” said Steve Frank, president of Pioneer Recycling. “The market is demanding higher quality with no contamination. It is expensive to sort, bale and ship paper, plastic and metal. But it is even more expensive to sort and then send it to the garbage.”

“Recyclers are handling a commodity and they are subject to commodity pricing,” said Joe Casalini, who worked in the recycling business for 35 years and recently received a lifetime achievement award from the Washington Refuse and Recycling

Association. “Those prices can fluctuate and right now we are in an oversupply state. Recycling is also geographical. The closer you are to a market — with access to a port or railway — the more robust your recycling program can be.”

Ryan Dicks, Pierce County Sustainable Resources administrator, agreed with that assessment. “Recycling is local,” he said, and added that the market was strong until four or five years ago and has become progressively tighter in the past three years. Most recycled material was sent to China, which recently closed the market. Materials are now sent to sites in North America.

Despite the limitations, recycling is still more cost effective than sending material to a landfill and it preserves natural resources, according to Dicks. “It’s the right thing to do,” he said.

Frank emphasized that it is critical to know what materials can be recycled locally. Some sorting is initially done manually, getting rid of things that don’t belong. Machines and technology largely take it from there, using a combination of mechanical and optical techniques. Pioneer no longer accepts shredded paper because it falls through the sorter and goes straight to land fill. The county hosts shredding events where it is accepted. Refrigerated cartons are coated or lined with materials in addition to paper and the moisture in the containers can lead to mildew, a contaminant that makes paper worthless. Only number 1, 2 and 5 plastics are recy-

clable; anything else ends up in landfill.

All three men said that the most important action individuals can take to protect the environment is to avoid the need to recycle in the first place — emphasizing the reduce in the three-R mantra of reduce, recycle and reuse.

Frank’s highest priority is to get rid of single-use plastic bags. “There is no market for them,” he said. “Use paper or reusable bags instead.”

“Underneath, it’s all about natural resources,” Casalini said. “How can

we reuse those resources and maintain our environment? We keep producing

products that are in a one-way direction that we can’t reuse.” He added that as long as it is cheap to make products from natural resources it is difficult to find a market that manufactures things from recycled materials.

The costs of recycling and storing trash are continuing to rise. Dicks said that the concept of product stewardship is developing, where producers may need to bear responsibility for some of the cost of recycling.

Contaminated material, including such things as food waste or nonrecyclable refuse is sent to a landfill. The Pierce County landfill, located in Graham, is tightly regulated to assure there is no contamination of the local environment. Both Tacoma Pierce County Health Department and Washington State Department of Ecology monitor the site regularly.

Fiber Arts Festival a Popular Success

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

Thirty-two artists gathered at the Longbranch Improvement Club Oct. 5 to demonstrate, exhibit or sell their unique, high quality fiber artwork for the 12th annual Fiber Arts Festival, “Threads Through Time,” which has been part of the KP Farm Tour since 2007.

Signs welcoming visitors to the show described the array of craftsmanship on display as “artistic to utilitarian, traditional to modern.” Handwoven baskets, quilts, wall hangings, embroidery, hand-tooled leather craft, wearable art and more filled the clubhouse.

The LIC buzzed with conversation, as Farm Tour visitors and fiber arts enthusiasts visited the 15 vendor booths. Folks shopped and discussed techniques. Some artists offered demonstrations, including weaving, spinning and cross-stitch. Large, colorful quilts filled the LIC stage.

Visitors had the rare opportunity to see featured artist Cecilia Blomberg’s tapestries in person. Surrounded by sketches and tapestries, both completed and in progress, Blomberg’s exhibit was bustling with admirers of her work all day.

Vaughn resident Maureen Riley of Knee Walker Fiber Arts showed off intricately woven bags and handcrafted wearable art.

“This is wet-felted alpaca and silk,” Riley said, pointing at a table covered in scarves. “I have seven alpacas. I breed them, raise them, shear them, everything. It keeps me away from the TV.”

The Embroiderers’ Guild of America had the largest group of artists at the festival, with seven women representing their Evergreen Chapter, including former Home resident Barbara Hougaard. Former summertime Allyn resident, Dinny Brones, a nationally certified needlework judge who has been doing embroidery since 1973, added glittery fibers to a piece in progress. Beside her sat Sharon Barrea, a nationally certified needlework teacher and designer with over 30 years of experience. At the end of their table, Carol Buchmiller demonstrated how to use a fringe twister as she put the finishing touches on a scarf she had woven using a rigid heddle loom.

Four-time festival participant Elizabeth Purvis of Gig Harbor has been making soft



Carys Thompson, 5, poses among a birch tree tapestry. *Photo: Krisa Bruemmer, KP News*

sculptures for 25 years. She had cute and creepy items, including clothespin dolls, painted muslin black cats and skulls, and primitive stuffed gingerbread men with whole clove eyes and buttons. Purvis describes her “Tallydoodle Toys” as figurative fiber arts.

“It’s an extension of something I did as a kid. My mom taught me to sew when I was little and I would make up patterns and sew things,” said Purvis. “I like using natural elements when I can. And I like tweaking traditional forms.”

Peggy Ingraham and Pam Murray of “Two Chicks Dyeing” displayed hand-painted and -dyed silk scarves and tie-dyed socks. The sisters have been honing their craft for seven years and often melt wax on silk as part of their dyeing process.

“The silk where the wax is doesn’t get dyed but the rest does,” explained Murray.

“The wax keeps the color from going in, and when you steam it, the wax melts away,” Ingraham said. “Depending on how detailed the artwork is, it can take eight hours” to make a scarf.

Sarah Martin from Nancy’s Quilt Shop in Gig Harbor showed off her grandmother

Nancy’s work.

“She sells completed quilts and all the supplies you could possibly need,” Martin said. “She also teaches classes and will longarm the quilt for you.”

Outside the LIC Clubhouse were another 20 community informational and vendor booths. There were antique tractors on display, and yard art, furniture, wood sculptures, ceramic art, local honey and more for sale. Live music filled the air throughout the day.

“We have a great committee to do this event,” said LIC Fiber Arts Committee Chair Nancy Carr, who quilts, makes doll dresses and does machine embroidery. Carr volunteers with Carolyn Wiley, Cheril Allen, and LIC Events Committee Chair Bob Green on fiber arts functions.

“There are about 36 other folks that deserve credit and we could not have pulled this off without them,” Carr said. Additional support for the event was provided by the Longbranch Foundation, the Angel Guild, Bruce Titus Automotive Group, Friends of Pierce County Library and the KP Farm Council.



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Scouts Camp Out to Partner with Sound View for Farm Tour

Local Cub Scouts learn about the beauty of the Key Peninsula and how to preserve it.

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

This October, Sound View Camp and Cub Scout Pack 222 partnered to help tourists and scouts alike experience the natural beauty of the Key Peninsula.

The Cub Scouts and camp staff worked together to welcome over 250 visitors during the Oct. 5 KP Farm Tour. Sound View Camp opened its gates during the event to display its “mini farm” and garden, as well as its forest trails and waterfront. Cub Scouts and parents at the event helped host an assortment of carnival games, direct visitors to parking, and lead tours of the camp facility.

Although KP Scouts are a common sight at many community events, the work with Sound View was originally unplanned. “The scouts have been coming here for years,” said Sound View’s Site Manager James Goodman. “Last year they just kind of ended up here at the same time as the Tour, and they were willing to help out, so it became a partnership.”

This year, the scouts intentionally scheduled their campout on Farm Tour weekend. The collaboration ensures that the camp receives volunteer help at one of their biggest community outreach opportunities. In return, the Cub Scouts get to experience the trails, forest and waterfront of the camp, and scout parents get easy access to showers and heated cabins.

Pack 222 Den Leader Amy Walker said that although Sound View isn’t far from home, it’s still an impressive sight for Cub Scouts taking their first steps into the wilderness. “I feel like long-term KP residents already know how beautiful it is out here, but some families are either new to our area or have never been this far on the Key Peninsula,” she said. “There’s a

lot of new kids in my den who have never been here before, and they’re just blown away by what a beautiful place we have in our own backyard.”

Despite spending the weekend at a facility with a kitchen and cabins, Pack 222 opted to use the weekend to build classic scouting skills. “They’re still doing things in a traditional way, cooking things over the fire, roughing it,” Goodman said. “They’re making it a true Scout weekend.” Outdoor education and wilderness survival make up a large part of Pack 222’s annual campouts, but according to Walker the Scouts also try to leverage the skills of their leaders to explore topics like science and law enforcement.

Current and former Scouts on the KP speak highly of the program’s educational and practical value. KP native and Eagle Scout A.J. Hollaway, who is currently pursuing a career in aviation, credits the Scouts with helping him build essential skills for flight.

“As a pilot now, navigation is a big part of flying,” he said. “Looking back at all I learned about reading maps, using a compass, and just staying directionally aware, it sure helped me when I got started.”

The Key Peninsula has been home to Scouts since the 1940s, although the currently active group held their first event in 1996. Modern-day Boy Scout groups on the Peninsula consists of Pack 222 for students through fifth grade, and Boy Scout Troop 220 for older students. Scouts of both groups regularly serve at community gatherings, food banks, fundraisers and annual events. Evidence of the Scouts’ volunteer commitment can also be seen in the Eagle Scout projects that have enhanced public spaces like the 360 Trails and the Red Barn Youth Center.

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Upper Crust Potatoes

DEEDEE EMMETT

I have been making this dish for family gatherings for so long I can hardly remember a time when we didn't have it, or even where it came from.

It's become a Christmas tradition that has only grown larger with the years, literally. Some relatives will eat only this instead of the main course, and after inspecting the ingredient list it's easy to see why.

This is not an everyday dish but it's simple, hearty and just a bit luxurious. I guess that's why we named it "upper crust."

3 pounds yellow gold potatoes
1½ cups heavy cream
2 tablespoons butter
2 bay leaves
¾ cup cream cheese (8 ounces)

½ cup milk
½ teaspoon paprika
¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan
¼ cup finely chopped shallots
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1½ teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup dried breadcrumbs
chopped parsley

Preheat oven to 375°.
Oil the bottom only of a shallow 2-quart baking dish.
Peel and very thinly slice potatoes. Place slices in a bowl with ¾ cup of the cream and toss to mix.
Melt butter with shallots and garlic.

Sauté over low heat for three or four minutes. Do not brown.

Add bay leaves and rosemary to skillet.

Whisk in cream cheese, milk and remaining cream. Simmer, whisking constantly until smooth, two or three minutes. Add paprika, salt and pepper. Discard bay leaves.

Pour this mixture over potatoes and fold in gently.

Arrange potatoes in baking dish, sprinkle with Parmesan and breadcrumbs.

Bake until potatoes are tender, approximately 1 to 1¼ hours.

Sprinkle with parsley before serving. Enjoy.

DeeDee Emmett is the Vaughn Postmaster.

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In coming articles, we invite you to explore the creatures living all around us. Let us know what you think. Email editor@keypennews.org



Rough-skinned newts found on the Key Peninsula. Photos: Chris Rurik

A Newt's World

CHRIS RURIK, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

It is late fall. Plants have slumped and yellow-brown maple leaves rot where they land like blankets. In homes, lights stay on all day. Warmth takes on a smell: a good, woody, oven-baked smell.

In my ventures into the forest I find that this season is marked by clarity. Cold breaths sharpen perception. I can see farther through the undergrowth than I could have imagined in the profusion of summer.

A movement in the moss catches my attention. In a forest where most animals are flighty, this one displays a fascinating indifference. Its brown skin is naked and moist from its long tail to its shovel head.

It is a rough-skinned newt, *Taricha granulosa*. At first glance it is a likable creature, even charming.

But not for long. The longer I watch, the more alien it appears. Its knobby skin and unblinking yellow-and-black eyes have a look of poison. It pauses mid-step for no apparent reason, not seeming to care where its translucent feet land, not seeming to care about the large creature above it.

What is it after? What instinct makes the peninsula's newts so bold this time of year? I become eager to know their world, to see the terrain through their eyes.

Reading up on the rough-skinned newt's natural history does not help. This adult has already been an egg, a larva that looked like a cross between an eel and a triceratops, and a juvenile that led a "fossorial existence" in subterranean burrows.

The movements of adult newts have been described as breeding migrations, post-metamorphic migrations, seasonal migrations, sporadic movements, and wandering movements — and from California to British Columbia the timing of any of these life events might fall in any quadrant of the calendar. Some populations are largely aquatic. Some become terrestrial in fall, some in spring, some in summer.

Our total knowledge of the newt's world is a haphazard collection of tidbits. My guesses about its behavior slide off it like raindrops. I shuffle closer and determine to watch for myself. I get too close. The newt freezes. Its right rear foot stays where it is, mid-step, in the air. It stays like that for 10 minutes.

Then, for the next 20 minutes, it climbs off the trail and onto an embankment of loose duff and leaves, a distance of maybe three feet. It snaps at nothing. It never moves faster than a slow-motion crawl.

Time moves at about the same pace for me. As I begin to tell myself that I would have to snorkel a pond to see another behavior, the newt enters an inch-high space under a couple of slicked-together leaves. When only its tail is showing, it stops. I wait and watch for another 10 minutes, trying not to blink, trying to imagine what will happen next. It sits there, unmoving. I stare at the tail until it looks like a brown tendril of detritus less alive than the mosses around it.

The newt stays frozen under the leaves long after I have run out of explanations

for its behavior. My patience wanes. My mind wanders.

Philosophers have a word for the world in which an animal moves: *umwelt*. Loosely translated as "self-centered world," an *umwelt* is the collection of signs that holds meaning for an animal. It is the elements in an animal's environment from which the animal might wring some use, the things of which it must be aware in order to survive.

Each species, therefore, has a unique *umwelt*. Consider the newt. It must be able to find standing water in order to lay its eggs, so it must be able to pick up on certain sensory clues that tell of nearby pools, maybe the presence of a particular plant or a change in the air's humidity. Other clues, unknown to me, lead it to food, mates and safe burrows.

If something in an animal's surroundings has no bearing on its ability to survive, it has no meaning, and the animal will largely ignore it.

More than ignore it, the animal may not even perceive it. Perception is as much about filtering out the noise of what is useless as cueing in on what has meaning.

As humans, we assume we see the world as it exists. But as I rise and take in the dripping forest around me, the innumerable passageways of unseen creatures, I feel my limitations. I get a brief incomplete vision of the forest as a vast arena of overlapping *umwelten*, and I feel the powerlessness of my senses to understand more than a small fraction of it.

Chris Rurik is a writer, naturalist and historian who lives in Washington and Alaska. This essay is adapted from his book, "Silverbow: Explorations of a Family Farm."

The Cute But Poisonous Rough-Skinned Newt

The skin of this enchanting amphibian produces tetrodotoxin, the same neurotoxin found in the Japanese puffer fish. It's best not to touch it at all. Because of its toxicity, the newt has no known predators.

The Basics

Rough-skinned newt *Taricha granulosa*
Order: Salamanders *Caudata*
Family: Newts *Salamandridae*
Life span averages 12 years

Identification

6 to 8 inches long
Color is dark reddish brown or black
Newts have dry, granular skin on top with smooth bright golden-orange underbellies

Habitat

Widely distributed along the West Coast from British Columbia to California
Newts are terrestrial but prefer living near quiet slow-moving waters and ponds along grasslands, woodlands and forest.

Diet

Newts are carnivores that feed on worms, slugs, spiders and other invertebrates.

Breeding

The timing of breeding varies greatly, most often December through June. Males and females meet and select mates on land, but save the coupling to take place strictly underwater. Females lay their fertilized eggs under the leaves of aquatic plants where they develop until the larvae hatch. The eggs themselves are suspended in a jelly-like substance containing tetrodotoxin to protect them from predators in this most vulnerable stage.

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Occupation:

- ★ Battalion Chief with Key Peninsula Fire Dept
- ★ Licensed General Contractor

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- ★ Board of Peninsula Schools Education Foundation
- ★ School District Capital Facilities Planning Group
- ★ Pierce County Flood Control Advisory Board
- ★ Chair Key Free Clinic
- ★ Board of Key Peninsula Community Council
- ★ Key Peninsula Land Use Advisory Council
- ★ Key Peninsula Business Association



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Key Peninsula Community Council

Some of the volunteers who put in countless hours to pull it all together!

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- Houston Family
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- Nate & Aimee Nadeau
- Lisa Larson
- Danna Webster
- Carolyn Wiley

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TOP Longbranch road in autumn glory. *Photo: Beth Buffington* **MIDDLE RIGHT** South Beach on Herron Island at sunset *Photo: Joseph Pentboudakis, KP News* **RIGHT** Luminous shaggy mane. *Photo: James Allyn* **LOWER LEFT** Woodpecker menace: eye to eye with a Pileated. *Photo: Ted Ollinger, KP News* **LOWER MIDDLE** Von Geldern cove from Home. *Photo: David Zeigler, KP News*