



# KEY PENINSULA NEWS



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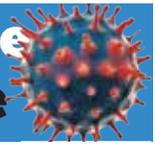
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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

May 2020 Vol. 47 No. 5

## Stay Home Stay Alive



### COVID-19 UPDATE: Social Distance to Become the "New Normal"

As people struggle to make ends meet in a shattered economy, leaders and researchers look for a way out.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

At a press briefing April 14, state Secretary of Health John Wiesman told Washingtonians to prepare for living in a "new normal" of social distancing "for many, many months" to continue slowing the spread of the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Wiesman said the disease won't be stopped until treatments and a vaccine are developed, which are still a year away. More than 140 experimental drugs and vaccines are being developed around the world, he said.

Until then, people will likely need to continue social distancing and he recommended wearing masks in public, though he said there could be "partial easing" of the current restrictions that were put in place to prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed.

Wiesman made his announcement the same day President Donald Trump said the federal government was preparing guidelines for the states to reopen closed businesses and return people to work, adding that he had "absolute authority" to compel state governments to obey.

Trump later said he would be "authorizing" states to reopen as soon as May 1, before the federal recommendation on closures and distancing end. He eventually offered a three-step plan that states could follow, saying governors would be the ones to decide and "would be held accountable."

Gov. Jay Inslee and the DOH have been more cautious, concerned that lifting restrictions prematurely could trigger a resurgence of infections, exacerbating damage to the economy that may exceed the Great Depression. Inslee has already closed schools and

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### YOUR STORIES: The KP Takes on Coronavirus

As the Key Peninsula copes with self-isolation, social distancing and lost income, the KP News reached out to see how you're doing.

**T**he biggest strain on me was not being able to say goodbye to the kids at school or come up with any type of plan before the kids left, leaving us all feeling lost and unfinished. Trying to work from home without face-to-face contact with my coworkers has been hard. The resources I rely on from the building are now not available, but I am at home trying to produce the same amount of work. It has made me realize how much we are made for community and how much it affects us when we are alone. I don't think I will ever take going to work for granted again.

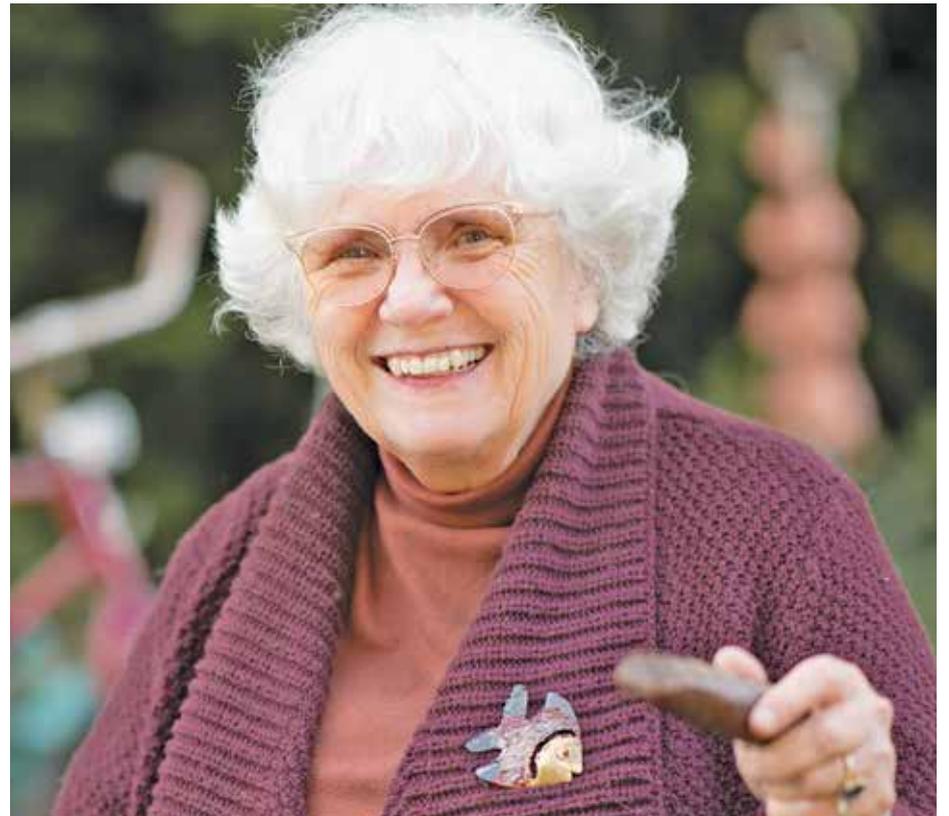


Alisha Beesinger

**A** customer brought in eggs today. Free eggs for other customers. Customers have given me homemade masks. Masks they're sending to health care workers who can't get them. Yesterday a customer handed \$20 to an elderly lady who was waiting patiently for her turn when she said, "Oh no, I left my purse in the car." After she finished she went out to her car and came back in and handed the giver her \$20 back. The giver handed it to me. "Use it for the next person who needs it." A guy walked in later with a box loosely taped. I said it might not hold. "OK, let me buy some tape. Can you keep this tape under the counter for other pals like me?" Nah, let me get the tape with this



DeeDee Emmett



**T**here's a point when listening to the news is more upsetting than it's worth, so I'm listening to music and taking long nature walks with my camera — Kathleen Best. Photo: Richard Miller, KP News

\$20 from earlier today and I'll keep the tape under the counter for the next pal.

**S**anitize, put on gloves, take my temperature — it's all become so routine now as I enter the quiet school building. I watch as the ladies in our kitchen hustle to make breakfast and lunch for 150 kids. I greet families as they drive up to get the food, waving at the kids, checking in with the parents. Then it's Zoom meetings, emails and messages where teachers ask if I've heard from this family or that one. We have families helping families, sharing ideas as they navigate this new way of life. We have staff working across all grade levels to meet not only the needs of their students, but the needs of their families as well. Although our doors are closed, our school is still very much open.



Tricia Endsley

**M**y first virtual dinner party was this week with my sister. Had a virtual cocktail hour with great friends. I have connected with family and friends more times this week than I have in a month in the past. Although we are all socially distancing ourselves, I see people getting closer, supporting each other and small businesses, and business supporting communities. I know times are tough, and things seem really hard at the moment, but I think we are beginning to pay attention to the little things, the things I used to hear my grandparents talk about after living through the Great Depression. The really important things — each other.



Jeff Frederick

**I**t seems I have nothing but time. Time to dust off my pasta maker, time to take apart and scrub my stove

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# Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The Key Peninsula has something to cheer about in the middle of this nightmare. We survived the first wave of a global pandemic while navigating the uncertainties of a new world.

The "stay home, stay healthy" order signed by Gov. Jay Inslee went into effect midnight March 25 and is set to expire May 4. In communities statewide most of us complied with recommended public health guidelines to reduce the rapid spread of COVID-19.

The great news is that we were remarkably effective.

We each experience the impact of the coronavirus from a unique perspective. But no matter who we are, regardless of our physical or financial circumstances, the desire to return to some semblance of normal is universal.

While the pandemic delivered a huge blow to the global economy, for Americans it also exposed how close to the financial edge a huge portion of small businesses and citizens were already.

Most of us retreated into home and family life, comforted by rediscovering the joys of spending quality time together. Many questioned the wisdom of their once busy schedules. Overwhelmed by endless news cycles, we abandoned our screens in self-preservation by taking solace in nature instead.

We began working remotely from home, some for the first time. Others never stopped working the front lines. First responders, health care workers, grocery store employees, pharmacy clerks and many others at essential businesses showed up ready and willing to develop new habits to keep the doors open to take care of us.

Nonprofit social service organizations adapted to assure seamless services to people in need of support. Food for children, seniors and anyone suffering food insecurity continues without disruption. All of our food banks are open.

The Key Peninsula News is alive and well thanks to a dedicated staff and many volunteers who donate their time to produce and distribute it, even now. None of it would be possible without the local advertisers, underwriting support and generous financial contributions from readers like you who stand by us as we try to stand by you.

Meanwhile, employees in industries and businesses abruptly shuttered by the pandemic found themselves scrambling

to remain above water in this time without income.

Parents with children at home are beginning to adjust to life without school, often learning from and with their children, adapting to online education.

The coronavirus changed all the rules of the game.

The last month has proven we are better together by staying apart, until it's safe to do otherwise.

The need to begin reopening businesses and get people back to work is the subject of great national and local debate. Washington unemployment claims are expected to surpass the one million mark, with roughly 15 percent unemployment in the state, before May begins.

The decision to shut down their state economies was a difficult choice for governors across the country. Governors now face the gut-wrenching dilemma of how to reopen their respective states for business without reigniting infection rates.

Absent the level of widespread testing and contact tracing needed to monitor the spread of COVID-19 effectively, reopening has been likened to flying an airplane without an instrument panel.

Without any treatment for COVID-19, what we've experienced so far was our big wake-up call — a drill for challenges that lie ahead, as public health experts warn the coronavirus outbreak may worsen with the arrival of fall.

The stay home, stay healthy order was viewed by some as an affront to civil liberty, an assault on faith, even an attempt to weaken Second Amendment rights. But a new Crosscut/Elway Research poll of 405 registered Washington voters, conducted April 18 to 20, found "76 percent of voters believe the pandemic restrictions are working, and 61 percent are concerned about lifting them too soon."

The long-term health consequences for survivors of COVID-19 remain unknown. Experts warn that the coronavirus is nothing like seasonal influenza. Doctors are seeing evidence that COVID-19 attacks not only a patient's lungs, but the heart, kidneys and brain. The World Health Organization warns there is insufficient evidence at this time that

antibodies produced by survivors provide immunity.

When we view the pandemic through the clouded lens of political ideology and polarized partisan politics, we put each other at risk.

This plague, this scourge known as COVID-19, is our common enemy and it's going to take all of us working together to defeat it.

Keep the faith, feel the love that surrounds you, call out when you need

help. We proved in classic KP fashion that we can do this better together, even while circumstances keep us apart.



[A NOTE FROM THE MANAGEMENT]

## WHAT'S OPEN

### Shop local, now more than ever.

See what's open at our new feature at [www.keypennews.org](http://www.keypennews.org). It's a free service to the local businesses and organizations who depend on your patronage to survive.

And while you're at the website, be sure to check out **COVID-19**

**Resources** to see what our tireless nonprofit service organizations are providing.

When the community works together, we're able to do great things.

Join us in supporting our local community. And give a mighty cheer to the front-line workers who are keeping things going.

**NEW NORMAL** FROM PAGE 1

the stay-at-home order and partial business closures should end May 4, but he has also said the order may be extended. “We will make decisions at that time based on the data and science, and how much progress we’re making,” Inslee said April 10.

The U.S. lagged behind other countries testing its population for COVID-19, initially refusing to use tests from the World Health Organization and then issuing faulty tests from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. By April 18, the U.S. was testing 150,000 people a day, about the same as South Korea, which saw a decline in infections and began to lift some of its restrictions.

However, South Korea tested on a much larger scale than the U.S. — finding one confirmed COVID-19 case for every 52.4 people tested — producing a more comprehensive picture of the virus spread and retreat than the U.S. has so far achieved, having found one case for every 5.3 tests.

“Anyone can get tested,” according to the DOH website. “However, healthcare providers are focusing on people with symptoms of COVID-19. While testing supplies are still limited, they are also prioritizing certain groups of people at this time.”

The result has been that only the sickest people get tested while the remainder recover at home, perhaps never reporting their symptoms, which could lead to a drastic under-counting of cases and cause a slowdown in delivery of resources for medical personnel, according to the CDC.

Washington state is also conducting a random serum survey with the CDC to determine who may have antibodies to COVID-19, according to Dr. Kathy Lofy, the state health officer and chief science officer.

“It gives us information on how many people may be immune in Washington,” she said. “Once we know that information, that will help us better understand how many people have been infected and help us understand how much longer we have to go to

continue these social distancing measures.”

But it is not known at this time whether antibodies result in meaningful immunity that can lead to herd immunity, where enough people have been exposed and recovered to protect those who haven’t. Herd immunity is usually achieved through vaccination rather than exposure.

In mid-March, the United Kingdom was still open for business and encouraging only the sick and vulnerable to self-isolate. Social distancing and closures came only after a study by the Imperial College indicated there might be as many as 250,000 deaths in the UK before herd immunity was achieved.

By mid-April, the COVID-19 death rate in the UK was 12.7 percent; in the U.S. it was 4.1 percent. The global rate was 6 percent.

**“WE WILL MAKE DECISIONS AT THAT TIME BASED ON THE DATA AND SCIENCE.”**

According to a recent report in Scientific American, immunity functions

on a continuum. People who get chicken pox almost always develop long-lasting resistance. In contrast, people with HIV often have large amounts of antibodies that do nothing to prevent or clear the disease.

Immunity to seasonal coronaviruses that cause the common cold start to wear off about two weeks after someone is sick. They can get the same cold again within a year.

The novel coronavirus resembles those that caused SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) in 2002 and MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome) in 2012. Studies of SARS showed that immunity peaks at around four months and offers protection for two or three years after infection. There have been no known cases since 2004. Though widespread at the time, researchers believe it was unable to gain a lasting foothold in the population because it was quickly contained.

A CDC study of MERS survivors found that their antibodies lasted about six months after infection. Individual cases and outbreak clusters continue. With a mortality rate of nearly 40 percent, it is closely monitored. There is no vaccination or treatment for SARS or MERS.



**ABOUT THAT COVID-19 STIMULUS CHECK:  
It's a Bonus**

**It's not taxable, it's not a loan, and it's not an advance on a future refund. And if your income drops this year, you might get more next year.**

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The \$2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law March 27 to stem some of the economic damage done to businesses and people by the coronavirus pandemic.

The largest of its kind in U.S. history — to date — the act authorizes an “economic impact payment,” or so-called stimulus check, to nearly everyone in the country, according to the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Every U.S. resident who is not a dependent of another taxpayer and who filed tax returns for either 2019 or 2018 will be eligible to receive up to \$1,200 individually or up to \$2,400 for joint filers, depending

**SOME LANGUAGE IN THE CARES ACT CAUSED CONFUSION ABOUT WHAT THE PAYMENT ACTUALLY IS.**

on gross income. Immigrants with green cards or H-1B and H-2A work visas are also eligible. Non-resident aliens, temporary or undocumented workers are not.

Those who qualify for a stimulus payment will also be eligible to receive \$500 for each qualifying dependent under 17 years old.

People on Social Security will also get paid. “Social Security recipients who are not typically required to file a tax return do not need to take any action, and will receive their payment directly to their bank account,” Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement.

Anyone who doesn’t usually file a tax return, such as individuals earning less than \$12,200 annually or joint filers earning less than \$24,400, can apply for the payment

from the IRS online. Non-filers can also get the extra \$500 per dependent under 17.

The IRS planned to begin distributing payments electronically in mid-April and by check for anyone without direct deposit in the following weeks, according to its website. It will also launch a “Get My Payment” online tracking tool.

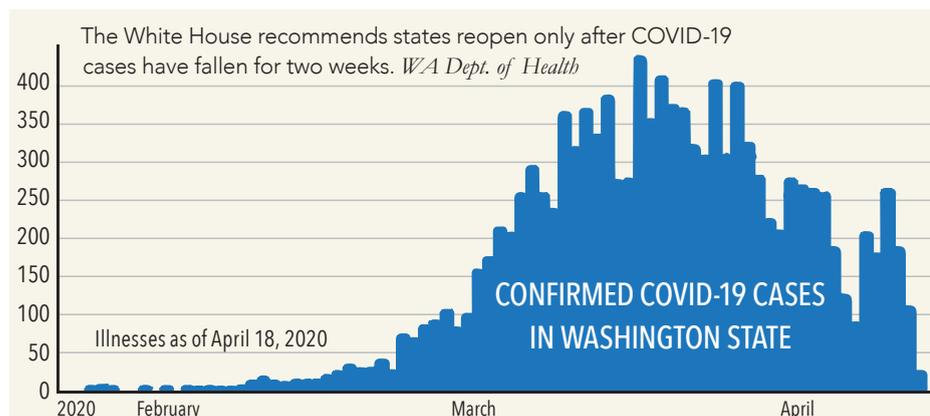
Some language in the CARES act caused confusion in the public and press about what the payment actually is. Under IRS rules, it is considered a tax credit from a 2020 tax return and therefore taxable income. But the CARES act also requires that recipients be credited by the IRS as if they had paid the government back for the credit. This means the payment is non-taxable and will not reduce any future tax refund.

Section 6428 (f) of the CARES Act, entitled “2020 Recovery Rebates For Individuals” (pages 146 to 147), states:

“Subject to paragraph 5, each individual who was an eligible individual for such individual’s first taxable year beginning in 2019 shall be treated as having made a payment against the tax imposed by chapter 1 for such taxable year in an amount equal to the advance refund amount for such taxable year.”

Taxpayers will also be eligible for additional stimulus credit in their 2020 refunds if their income falls compared to 2018 or ’19. At the same time, if their income rises in 2020, they will still not have to repay anything or have their refund reduced.

For more information, go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).





The normally active spring campus of Peninsula High School stands idle for the first time in its 73-year history. *Top photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News Right photo: Ted Olinger, KP News*

## PHS Seniors, Athletes and Performers Confront School Closure

**Kids are grieving the loss of opportunities while staff work to support them.**

DANIEL SHURR, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

Despite starting on the other side of the world, the novel coronavirus and the disease it causes, COVID-19, reached Washington state and the city of Gig Harbor. Those in the Puget Sound region have seen businesses close and restaurants switch to takeout to enforce state-mandated social distancing. Facilities such as the Tom Taylor YMCA and Key Peninsula Civic Center have shut down until further notice to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. But the most impactful local change may be the closure of Peninsula School District facilities.

Gov. Jay Inslee ordered all schools in the state of Washington closed from March 17 to April 24 — a target that was pushed back further to May 4 before the governor announced April 6 that school facilities would not reopen at all this term.

“We didn’t think it (coronavirus) was going to impact our season,” said senior PHS baseball player Reid Sturn. “We were

prepared for our first two games to be shut down, but not all of them.”

High school baseball is a spring sport, usually running from mid-March until late May with a postseason appearance, but it looks like training camp and tryouts might have been all for nothing.

“Our team got news that if school got shut down, the season would be too,” Sturn said. “It’s not just about winning a state ring, but it was about playing with the boys around you that you have been playing with since you were 8 years old.” Sturn is committed to Linfield College next year, where he will become a Division III athlete.

Soccer season has been hit hard too. The PHS boys soccer team was geared for a run to state this year, led by senior captains (and brothers) Grayson and Evan Janson. It was looking like there would be



a new championship banner hanging in the PHS gym until coronavirus dictated a change of plans.

“I just want to play so bad,” Grayson said.

**IT WAS LOOKING LIKE THERE WOULD BE A NEW CHAMPIONSHIP BANNER HANGING IN THE PHS GYM UNTIL CORONAVIRUS DICTATED A CHANGE OF PLANS.**

“I don’t want to think about the season being over, it’s my senior year. I’m very excited about this team.”

It’s not just athletes taking the brunt of the cancellations. The PHS band was preparing for state competitions at the Tacoma Dome. Senior tuba player Zach Wedel qualified. “The shutdown caused by the virus forced all of my concerts, festivals and even state competitions to be canceled.” This was his “first and last opportunity” to experience state competitions, he said.

The award-winning theater arts department at PHS was gearing up to put on another huge musical this year, “The Hunchback of Notre Dame.” The outbreak

has “set us back,” said theater student Claralynn Hammel, but the teachers and actors are “so in love with the musical that there is actually a condensed version we can do, so there isn’t as much to choreograph.” The department had the condensed version ready if they got a chance to perform.

Since gatherings of large groups are prohibited and schools are closed, the district resorted to online learning. Most students at PHS have been using the website Schoology since they were freshmen. It can be thought of as Facebook for schoolwork.

Schoology has been praised by teachers and students alike, and is the only touch of familiarity both parties have had since schools closed. PSD has also started using Zoom calls for the first time. Zoom is an online forum that can create a virtual classroom. A student can see teachers and classmates on his or her screen, while the live feed of their own camera displays their face on the other end.

Educators are doing everything in their power to make students feel like they are not isolated and to ease into the new learning process. But from some students’ perspectives, it still isn’t enough.

“I still have no idea what’s going on,” said PHS freshman David Takahara. Like many others, Takahara is still adjusting to online learning.

Peninsula Junior Kira Lenzi agreed. “Zoom doesn’t work with online school. I only see the teacher’s paper for a few seconds. I’m learning nothing,” she said.

But as the only remaining piece of normal school that students are used to, Schoology is also where staff update students and check in on their well-being.

Assisting seniors with graduation is a top priority for Joseph Potts, Ph.D., still in his first year as PHS principal. “We have been in (almost) daily communication with the central office and teaching and learning staff members to consider ways to enable seniors to graduate,” he said.

In an attempt to prevent the class of 2020 from becoming the class of 2021, Potts stressed that “we need our seniors to continue to move forward and finish their semester with the learning designed for them.” And there will be a graduation ceremony for seniors. “The seniors deserve a celebration and recognition, and we are determined to provide our students the very best ceremony possible,” he said.

*Daniel Shurr is a Peninsula High School senior committed to Washington State University in Pullman where he plans to study broadcast journalism. He lives near Vaughn. Read more of his work at [pbsoutlook.com](http://pbsoutlook.com).*

## Message to PSD Staff from Interim Superintendent Art Jarvis

(Excerpt from April 7 message)

As you have all heard, by order of Gov. Jay Inslee our schools will remain physically closed for the balance of the 2019-2020 school year. Members of our senior class will have lost virtually all of their senior activities and celebrations. Students throughout the system are wondering if they will need to repeat their school year and others wonder if they will have lost required learning that will damage their education in the future.

The truth of the moment is that we have very few minutes to mourn the loss. The obligation is now on our shoulders to do something about the challenge we have been given. The Governor and the State Superintendent (Chris Reykdal) speak openly about the extraordinary challenge to meet the needs of children equitably — even when everything we do seems to work against the equity. A newspaper article about the weak internet signal strength on the Key Peninsula points to the complexity of “just putting it online.”

**“WE NEED OUR SENIORS TO CONTINUE TO MOVE FORWARD AND FINISH THEIR SEMESTER WITH THE LEARNING DESIGNED FOR THEM.”**

We must now help our seniors in every way we can imagine. We will be determining final credits, grades, transcripts, recommendations, and whatever it takes to help these young people get what they need at the moment to be able to move on. We will find avenues to celebrate the achievements of their “almost” 13 years.

Simultaneously, another 8,000 children and students are now waiting to hear that they, too, will be OK. As never before, they and their parents await word from their teachers, principals and staff about what they might be able to do next. Fifteen days in March began the journey for them and for all of us. Now we have no more time to look for places to start; we have to deliver.

Issues of grades, credits, and hours become less significant than the interactions between students and staff. Now, in a way that none could have foreseen, we are free of the restrictions and free to innovate — because we can, and because we need to.



## Peninsula School District Adapts to Closure

Teachers and staff keeping students connected, fed and learning in a changed world.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Sheri Ahlheim was teaching her sixth period math class at Peninsula High School March 12 when some of her students shouted out the news coming in on their cell phones. Gov. Jay Inslee had just announced schools would close for six weeks. Three weeks later, as the crisis continued to unfold, Inslee decided that schools would remain closed for the rest of the term.

Following guidance from the Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), PSD spent the next few days ensuring students had food and setting up communication protocols.

From March 19 to April 10, PSD focused on providing meals with the Grab and Go program, providing childcare for first responders and medical professionals, and surveying families to assess their needs, including internet access. Teachers were asked to engage and connect with students and provide educational opportunities.

April 20 marked a shift to the Continuous Learning Opportunities Program, where staff started teaching essential new learning. The goal is to prepare students to enter the next grade in the fall. OSPI provided guidelines, including how much time each student should spend in learning activities each day — from 45 minutes in kindergarten to three hours in high school. Teachers will keep office hours, six hours

per week, when students and parents can reach them.

Hugh Maxwell, principal at Evergreen Elementary School, said they have worked hard to keep connected. Bette McCord, the office manager, has been at the school for more than 15 years and her deep knowledge of all the families was invaluable, he said. Dean of Students Christy Dalby worked with Tricia Endsley, the Communities in Schools of Peninsula site coordinator, to prepare take-home packets and other supplies for students.

Marci Cummings-Cohoe teaches second grade at Vaughn Elementary, where she also serves as the technology lead. Several of her students are English language learners and do not have good internet service. “Within the building you can create that sense of equity. But on the KP with poor internet infrastructure inequity is so apparent,” she said. She was able to connect with the students and their families through an interpreter.

Teri Hammon, who teaches music at Evergreen, has had class meetings via Zoom, but internet connectivity is a problem, especially if there are multiple students in a household. One parent asked if she could reschedule the class because her other two students needed the connection at the same time.

Hammon was not alone when she

described her experience as “building an airplane while trying to fly it.”

Teachers are wary of overloading parents with communications. Lori Maxwell, who teaches third grade at Purdy Elementary, said “It can be a challenge not to bombard parents. They get communications from the district, the school, the team, individual teachers.” She said that some parents are thankful for what schools have offered and others want more assignments.

Ahlheim said the first few weeks involved a lot of sitting at her computer attending Zoom meetings — with the whole faculty, team members, students, and also for her work with the union. She sent students several worksheets each week so they wouldn’t lose skills. Now that the focus is on new learning, she is collaborating with her team. “We have an amazing department and team and have been sharing the tasks,” she said.

Schoology, the district’s learning management system, is used regularly at the high school and at Key Peninsula Middle School. It offers a single platform where students can access lessons and resources. “It is open-ended so it offers lots of flexibility for teachers to make it work for their style,” Ahlheim said.

“We’re not turning into an online school. We’re not equipped to do that, and we are in the middle of a pandemic,” said Assistant Superintendent John Hellwich, who has led the district’s planning for distance learning. “Families are stressed, their lives are upended. But we need to be sure (students) don’t miss the important pieces of each subject that they would learn during the springtime session.”

Hellwich said the district continues to work on how to assess learning. For K-8, grading will be on a pass-fail basis, but how to assess high school students, where grade point averages are important, is still under discussion.

“Lots of grace needs to be built into this,” Ahlheim said. “If we can get some kids to move on, they will be the seeds to help the whole class move forward next year.” For parents, she said, “We are all realistic. It is OK to do what you can do. It’s not worth fighting over. The lessons will stay up on Schoology and when the student is ready, they will be there. Mental health and wellbeing are most important. Do what you have to do to stay sane.”

**“WE ARE BUILDING AN AIRPLANE WHILE TRYING TO FLY IT.”**

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Dean of Students

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distance learning. “Families are stressed,

their lives are upended. But we need to

be sure (students) don’t miss the important

pieces of each subject that they would

learn during the springtime session.”

Hellwich said the district continues to

work on how to assess learning. For K-8,

grading will be on a pass-fail basis, but

how to assess high school students, where

grade point averages are important, is

still under discussion.

“Lots of grace

needs to be built into this,” Ahlheim said.

“If we can get some kids to move on,

they will be the seeds to help the whole

class move forward next year.” For

parents, she said, “We are all realistic.

It is OK to do what you can do. It’s

not worth fighting over. The lessons

will stay up on Schoology and when

the student is ready, they will be

there. Mental health and wellbeing

are most important. Do what you have

to do to stay sane.”



## Ted Olinger

ANOTHER LAST WORD



### Journal of the Plague Year

In August 1984, I was in the summer term of my junior year at college in New York City, working part-time and starting chemotherapy for lymphoma. That went on for 11 months, including three months of radiation every day at 8 a.m., which all told saved my life at the cost of the efficacy of my spine and some internal organs I'd grown accustomed to.

Not complaining. That's just what happened.

I was a prolific if not very good writer at 20 and I started a daily journal to document the course of the disease and the treatment.

That lasted maybe a week. Deep in the first cycle of an unforgiving regimen, I was too exhausted to pursue any non-essential activity.

But I also made a decision not to remember what I was feeling.

In the morning I'd take the bus to the hospital, then walk over to class, then take the subway to work, then get a cab back to my shared apartment. I tried to eat out. That didn't work. Tried to see friends. Awkward. Tried to take walks. Couldn't go very far without having to rest on a stranger's stoop. Or, one time, on a stranger.

Couldn't even sleep much — it was the steroids in the chemo — and when I did sleep, I didn't dream. For a year.

Keeping up with the journal would have been useful. Things happened that other people needed to know about later, and it would've been so much easier to hand them a notebook instead of remembering it for them and swallowing the frustration when they didn't seem to get it.

The advent of this novel coronavirus pandemic and the disease it causes, COVID-19, while unprecedented in our lifetimes, is familiar to me in a way I can't put my finger on. But the reality of its impact personally, financially, socially — the fear and denial of contagion — is a landscape I know well.

So, I am going to start my journal again. I haven't been exposed to the virus yet, as far as I know, but it's already here on the Key Peninsula as I begin.

And here is my first entry:

The day starts with two northern flickers drumming away in the giant woodpecker house I nailed to the side of our home 15

years ago. It's the same thing every spring. We gave them their own house to keep them from pecking at ours, and it worked. The sound they make inside that chamber must send them into a wild rapture. We hear their ecstatic cries through the wall.

I go to the post office to buy stamps and mail newspapers, and I'm catching up with the Postmaster. An older man barges into the lobby, past the social distancing barrier and warning signs to stand closer behind me than is wise or even polite.

The Postmaster says, "Excuse me, but would you please wait outside the lobby until I'm finished with this customer?"

"No! This is nonsense! You're just talking!"

"Yes, while he pays for his transaction."

"Well, then pay for mine too then!" He shoves a package at her over the counter and walks off, then bellows from the lobby, "Where's your hand sanitizer?"

My son tells me his foreign exchange student friend has been recalled to her home country. They cannot meet in person to say goodbye. "We'll never see each other again," he says. I remind him he wasn't raised to think that way. He smiles and winks and I wonder if I know what that means.

A neighbor wants to borrow some books. I leave a stack on our porch. He leaves a mason jar of apple moonshine and a note: "You can make sanitizer out of it." I decide to start by sanitizing my taste buds, sitting outside in the dark to look at Venus hanging low and bright in the west. I hear barred owls discussing their business, or perhaps their mutual admiration — one close, one far — before their cries move off, together. Coyotes start up from another direction, down near the shoreline a mile away, answered by a lone sea lion barking back at them in the night.

On my way to bed I notice that our enormous grandfather clock, a 100-year-old heirloom from my wife's family, has stopped.

*Ted Olinger lives in Vaughn.*

## Phyllis Henry

COAST TO COAST



### Reality Check

I'm 89 years old. I'm doing fine. My apartment is pleasant and my balcony has a nice view. Three meals a day and snacks are delivered to my door. Packages appear magically. Every day I get some sort of brain stimulation — puzzles, coloring supplies, other stuff — which I discard. Instead I

read, talk on the phone, write letters to people I haven't spoken with for years, and watch gory TV crime shows.

I like cop shows. One plot appears on a regular basis where the bad guys (recognizable because they have a facial scar or limp discernible even when they wear \$5,000 suits) have perfected a virus capable of wiping out an entire city — maybe New York or Chicago or Seattle; it doesn't matter which city. Then the good guys — usually three or four guys and one gal who is especially smart get involved. A doctor who happens to be hanging around is an expert on viruses, and she knows that this particular virus is a really bad one.

For an hour I watch gun fights where one of the good guys or gal gets shot, but it's only a flesh wound. Then for some reason there is a high-speed car chase ending in a burning crash, often resulting in a giant explosion which knocks the good guys to the ground, which covers them with smoke and dust, but no debilitating injuries. But a bunch of lower-level bad guys, who could've told the good guys what they needed to know, get killed.

Then a child genius expert on computers finds out that the virus is on a yacht, so the good guys row out to the yacht, climb aboard, and another fight happens. The bad guy in charge holds the vial of virus (the virus is always contained in a small brown bottle with a screw-on lid). There is a scuffle, and the really smart gal gets thrown overboard and she is left to fight for her life in shark-infested waters bleeding from that flesh wound when she got shot earlier.

One of the good guys reaches for the bottle of virus and it goes flying (in slow motion) out over the ocean. Luckily, the gal while swimming away from the sharks is able to reach up and catch the vial before it hits the water. Dramatic, but not necessary. It turns out the virus loses its potency when it is immersed in water.

New York City or Chicago or Seattle or wherever is saved. Switch channels and watch "Golden Girls" reruns.

We are Americans. Virus plots have to be foiled. Yet today we are living in a reality show where the virus is actually killing thousands of people. What happened? Why didn't the plot writers take over? Where are the heroes to save us?

These heroes don't carry guns and chase bad guys. The heroes are doctors and nurses, postal service personnel, grocery clerks, janitors and delivery people, and all the other brave souls who go out into the world every day so I can cower in my apartment.

We are all living in a reality show, and I feel I must play my part. It's like when I was a little kid, and in the days before Christmas I tried to be really good because Santa was watching — filling in for God, who spied on me the rest of the time.

Occasionally I discuss our plight with my elderly neighbors. The consensus is that we have all lived a long time and dying is not a big deal, something we are expecting anyhow, but have assumed that the death would be occasioned by a heart attack or stroke or kidney disease or something equally droll.

We don't want to die in a hospital bed with staff trying to save us, while younger people die because there is no empty bed for them. We don't want to pass on the disease to our neighbors and families or to the medical staff that tries to save us.

Enough of this. I want to find my TV remote so I can flip channels and find an old "I Love Lucy" rerun.

*Award-winning columnist Phyllis Henry lives in Gig Harbor.*

## Joseph Pentheroudakis

ON THE WING



### Language in the Time of Plague

"Stay safe," the cashier at the checkout said as I was putting my groceries back in the cart and getting ready to head out.

It was a couple of weeks after Gov. Inslee had issued his stay-at-home order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I hadn't been to the store — or anywhere, for that matter — since the day of the proclamation. Amazingly I had managed to keep my refrigerator stocked to the gills for a while, but after two weeks my supplies were dwindling and I could no longer delay a trip to the store.

I had recently begun to notice that "Stay safe" and "Stay healthy" were becoming the preferred ways to end emails between friends, but that moment at the store was the first time I had heard that spoken in real life. Along with keeping the required distance from the customer in line ahead of me, it was a clear acknowledgment of these perilous times.

My mind was still on pre-coronavirus autopilot though. In that version of the interaction the cashier would have said "Have a nice day" or something similar. It took me a couple of seconds to recalibrate and respond. The world was different now,

there were new versions of the essential scripts we live by. Quick, get the updates.

“Thanks — you too!” I replied, my timing a few milliseconds off, adding my usual “See ya!” as I pushed my cart towards the exit. I smiled; this may be a different world, but we still live for our connections with others.

The scripts we all share — the blueprints that guide our interactions — exist to make sure that those connections don’t get frayed. Those blueprints are the subject of conversation analysis, a branch of linguistics and other social sciences that study human behavior. Whether it’s sharing jokes with friends, showing someone how to operate a piece of machinery, or engaging in the brief back-and-forth with the cashier at the grocery store, our verbal interactions are governed by an intricately timed choreography that all of us as members of the same community have internalized.

Stock expressions serve as road signs as we negotiate each interaction. In a setting like the grocery checkout an important marker is “Have a nice day,” a phrase spoken at the conclusion of the interaction, typically by the cashier. The timing of that phrase is very precise: it comes after the transaction is complete, your groceries are back in the cart and you’ve already taken the first steps away from the checkout area. It will feel too soon if the cashier says that if you’re still in the middle of paying, and too late if you’re already 20 feet away from the checkout.

My own response to that phrase in those cases is often a quick “You too — see ya!” Whether or not I will go on to have a nice day is immaterial; in a situation where the participants in the interaction are at best casual acquaintances and have business to transact, “Have a nice day” is nothing more than a cheerful equivalent of “Bye” or “See you later.” Nothing more, nothing less.

That does not mean that a cashier, for example, is required to close the conversation with that phrase. It does mean that if they do, the exchange will most likely follow the pattern set in the conversation’s blueprint.

So now let’s circle back to what the cashier said as I was leaving that day.

“Stay safe” was a departure from the script as I knew it. It wasn’t entirely a rewrite of that script, however; the phrase was spoken at the exact point in the interaction where the default “Have a nice day” would have been, so clearly it had replaced it, at least at that moment.

Such defaults are not changed lightly if our interactions are to continue running like well-oiled machines. There has to be a good reason if they’re overridden. That day the cashier chose to conclude the interaction

not with the conventional stock expression but with a phrase whose meaning hasn’t faded yet. These are dangerous times, that choice said; be careful.

An article I read recently pointed out that our need for comfort these days is real, and it’s strong. I would add that the need for comfort is reciprocal; we need to be comforted, but we also need to comfort others, even if it’s just by altering a short phrase in a well-practiced script spoken to a customer at the grocery store checkout.

Maybe the linguist in me is reading too much into this. Maybe, but my gratitude for that moment of shared concern was very real.

Stay safe out there.

*Joseph Pentheroudakis has a doctorate in linguistics. He writes from Herron Island.*



**Meredith Browand**  
KEY ISSUES

## Redefining Normal

I am typically an undeniable news junkie. I love to watch the news, I read all types of news outlets throughout the day, and I can identify my favorite cable news pundits by the sound of their voices. But the last 30 days of self-isolating and lock down have seen my news habits drastically change.

I no longer start my day by reading the headlines on my phone, I don’t have cable news on in the background as I do dishes, and I’ve watched more Food Network in the last month than I’ve watched in the last decade.

It’s not that I’m avoiding the news; I’m avoiding an oversaturation of the news. I’m looking for reliable sources that provide accurate information, especially as it pertains to the coronavirus pandemic. I want to hear from doctors, scientists, public health experts, and those in government who are taking their advice.

As I mindlessly flipped through apps on my phone the other day, an article caught my attention where John Wiesman, Washington State Secretary of Health, predicted what our “new normal” may look like. “We’re not going to be able to return to that sort of daily activity, living the way people knew it,” he said. “It’s going to be a new normal, one that is much more aware of safety and the biosecurity of each of us.”

It got me thinking. What will my new normal look like?

Less than two months ago my family was on a dream vacation in London. Without a second thought we boarded a transcontinental flight, crammed ourselves into

the Tube every day, stood with the masses outside Buckingham Palace, and navigated a bustling international city. Will my new normal allow for similar experiences in the future?

Right now, I can’t imagine taking that trip again with my family and I envision our future travel will look much different. I’ll be more aware of where we congregate in the airport and how we’ll ensure our seating area on the plane is disinfected. I’ll evaluate transportation options and become much more vigilant about navigating through large groups of people. Will we eliminate travel from our lives? No. Will it look different? Yes.

Our two older sons love to play baseball and our family has invested plenty of time and resources into the sport. It is honestly one of the things I miss most during this springtime lock down. I can’t wait until they’re on the diamond again and I’m eager to watch our beloved Seattle Mariners once more in person. But right now, thousands of fans streaming into T-Mobile Park brings me more anxiety than anticipation. How will I be able to take my family to the ballpark in the future without worrying that the fan next to us may be contagious? Or that one of us is asymptomatic and spreading the virus?

I’m sure we’ll find ways for the boys to return to the field safely and a means to enjoy MLB, but I never imagined I’d be this insistent that there’s “no high-fiving and don’t touch anyone else’s equipment.”

I work and worship at one of Gig Harbor’s local churches and being unable to gather during this time of self-isolation has been hard. Our church leadership has done a fantastic job taking worship online and we’ve found new and creative ways to stay connected. But a “new normal” once the stay at home order is lifted could prove exceptionally challenging to a church. Part of our purpose is to be near each other in the pews, share meals, and spend time together. How will we remain connected if we have to stay 6 feet apart? Knowing that people over the age of 65 are the most vulnerable to the coronavirus also presents a challenge to the church. My family will be in the pews as soon as we’re able to worship together again but my heart aches for others who may not feel safe enough to return.

And I’m hoping that my new normal includes watching the news again. I’m sure the cable news pundits miss me and it’s about time the news apps on my phone get more use than Angry Birds.

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

**Richard Gelinas**  
EMPIRICALLY YOURS



## Letter From a Scientist to SARS-CoV-2

Well, you’ve done it. You’ve spread beyond China to every state in the U.S. and most countries on Earth. You’re a celebrity!

As a virus you’re not alive. You are nothing but a small set of mutable genes wrapped up in a protein envelope. But you’ve demonstrated how rapidly you can spread through a population of susceptible hosts. Us.

You are a non-living example of evolution in action. Some people are upset and threatened by that word but you and I know it is quite real. It’s your thing, your strategy, your modus operandi, and wow does it work.

Your success should teach deniers a lesson. With a few random changes to a couple of genes, such as your coat protein called “the spike,” and a playground like the live animal markets in Wuhan, it’s easy for you to hop from one species to another. In that market you hopped from one host (maybe a bat) to people. Presto!

You’ve got it all — a large number of people infected; your infectivity from person to person is extremely high; and your geographic range is now the entire planet! By these measures, you are a successful, professional-grade virus, right up there with Ebola.

I think it likely you will become entrenched on this planet, just like influenza, measles, polio and a few other viruses, given the near impossibility of vaccinating all 6 billion of us. Vaccination can only slow you down in countries with good health care systems and where people take you seriously.

Did you know that some of the first vaccines against you are already being tested in a clinical trial right here in Washington? Yep, Kaiser Permanente Washington Research in Seattle, which has a long history in developing vaccines, opened a clinical trial to the general public in March.

OK, be honest now: Aren’t you a little surprised at how quickly we started on a vaccine against you? Want to know how we did it? Well, this is 2020 and “there’s an app for that.” We don’t use whole virus or even a complete virus protein, like they did in the past. Nowadays, all we need is a bit of information (your SARS-CoV-2 DNA sequence), and we got that last December from China. We learned from your ancestors SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV what region of your spike protein provokes the strongest immune response. So, since we already

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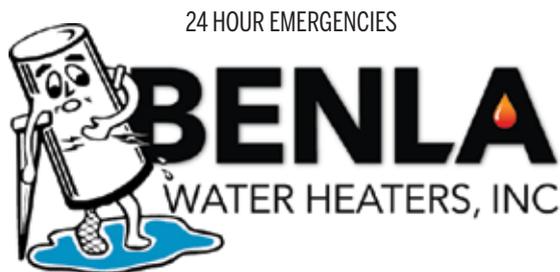
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**GELINAS FROM PAGE 7**

had your complete sequence, plus we knew that your spike protein was the best target, it was a cinch to make a new-style vaccine.

If this vaccine works as well as others of this type, it will quickly stimulate a recipient's immune system to make antibodies that adhere tenaciously to your spike proteins. That corona (crown) you're so proud of then becomes a beacon to the immune system and you are irreversibly marked for obliteration by the immune cells of the vaccinated person. I don't know for sure, but I'd predict that there may be some results from this safety test by the end of the second or third quarter of 2020.

Sadly, we knew that we had to go through this process because the existing vaccines for 2003 SARS and MERS are useless against you. Another lesson here is we will have to begin a surveillance system to look for you and your cousins each year as you change, just as we do now for influenza viruses. Other clinical trials this year and next will confirm and extend the results from the trial I described, which is why this or any other vaccine found to be safe and effective and scaled up will take a year total to roll out.

Spoiler alert, SARS-CoV-2. Even while vaccine tests are in progress, so are drug therapies. Gilead's drug Remdesivir may block your ability to copy your genome and early studies have shown it is largely free of side effects. It's being tested right now in China on patients with COVID-19. The World Health Organization is planning a large trial of different promising drugs against you, including one for Remdesivir.

Does it flatter you to hear that hundreds of clinical trials emerging around the world are fighting for participants? If even one of these drugs can be combined with a vaccination, you don't stand a chance. The brightest scientists are pursuing a vigorous campaign against you.

I've got to say you've revealed some embarrassing failures in our leaders and ourselves. A lot of us just didn't want to believe the danger was real; that you are 10 to 20 times as lethal as influenza; that people without symptoms of COVID-19 can spread the virus; that people who recover from the disease can also spread the disease; that community spread is real and continues; and that sluggish action at the federal level early on made the situation worse.

As a professional-grade virus, I know you don't care, but you had help killing us.

*Richard Gelinas, Ph.D., whose early work earned a Nobel prize, is a senior research scientist at the Institute for Systems Biology. He lives in Lakebay.*

## Letters to the Editor

### HOPE RECOVERY CENTER SHOULD MOVE ON

I write not on behalf of any organization, but as a concerned resident of the Key Peninsula. The Pierce County Planning and Public Works Department has issued a use determination letter to the hearing examiner that does not favor Hope Recovery Center.

Given that, as a fellow believer, I call on Jeremiah Saucier, Pastor Dan Whitmarsh and Lakebay Community Church to prayerfully consider withdrawing their HRC application. I encourage them, in the spirit of Matthew 5:25, to "Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way."

I know that many who oppose the HRC do so with mixed feelings, myself included. We know that help is needed for those afflicted by addiction, but believe that the proposed site is not appropriate. HRC could put whatever attorneys' fees it is paying to better use. Personally, I would redirect whatever amount I would donate to No on HRC to the Hope Recovery Center proponents if they withdrew and committed to purchasing appropriately zoned property. And I don't believe that I would be alone.

*Kim Quon, Lakebay*

### KP NEWS BIAS DRIVEN BY URBAN VALUES

Thanks for the KP News. I love it. However, it seems to have a Democratic lean. That is seen in Ted Olinger's reporting in the last issue where he projected that Democrats were higher in number on the KP than Republicans by 3,504 to 2,247 ("It's a Horse Race: Presidential Primary Results on the KP," March 2020).

I applaud Executive Editor Lisa Bryan's consistent belief that we have more shared values than we have splitting differences. If this were 1950, 1960, 1970 or 1980 I would agree. However, since the 1980s we on the KP have been flooded with new urbanites who bring with them their urban values, wants, needs and beliefs. Most of those I am opposed to, and there seems to be less and less ability to come together. Topics like roads, development, logging and land use regulations are very important here on the KP and not issues we can compromise on or we will look just like Gig Harbor in another 10 years.

When I began this letter I thought I would wait until after our coronavirus pandemic, with the attitude of we're all in this together. Then came the Democratic attempts at the national level to inflict the CARES Act with non-coronavirus-related costs. Now, I see the King County Democrats proposing more socialistic agenda items in a new big-business

tax under the guise of easing our common pain from the coronavirus.

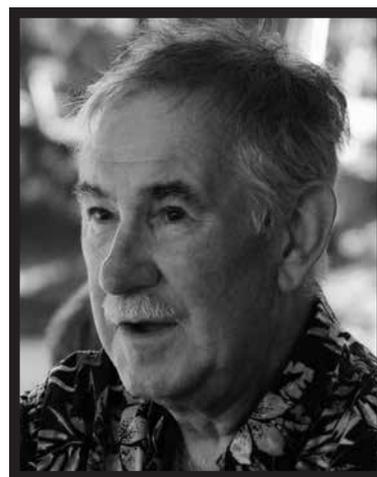
I am not a Republican. I am a bipartisan that grew up here, believing in what is best for all. However, I have come to learn that what is best for urbanites is very different from what is best for ruralites. We on the KP are ruralites. Therefore, we should be very different from Gig Harbor and Tacoma, but they are creeping in and bringing their values with them.

*Ron Schillinger, Vaughn*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The article referenced above did not project "that Democrats were higher in number on the KP than Republicans." The article stated accurately that more Democrats voted in the primary than Republicans: "More than twice as many Democrats voted in the primary than Republicans (147,338 compared to 78,091 at press time). Assuming the same ratio for the KP, President Trump loses the KP in its entirety when counting total votes for the top five Democrats — 3,504 to 2,427 — but not by the same 2-to-1 margin of voters.

"As in past elections, it is certain that many more members of all parties will turn out for the general presidential election in November."

## OBITUARIES



**Harvey Maxson**

Robert Harvey Maxson was born Feb. 1, 1947 in Greenwich, Connecticut. He died March 16 in Tacoma. He was 73 years old.

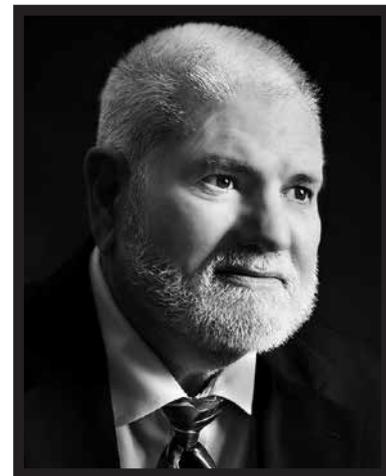
Harvey had a long career as a chef on the East Coast where he served Presidents Nixon and Carter. Serving cube steak and pole beans to Elvis was a favorite memory. He served in the U.S. Medical Corps.

He relocated to Seattle in the 1980s to live aboard a sailboat and explore the Pacific Northwest. He and his life partner, Leslie Englund, moved to Lakebay in 2000. They enjoyed the outdoors and a quiet life together.

Harvey is survived by his partner Leslie Englund; his nieces Stacy Tarantino and

Robin Parelli; and nephews Donald and Mark Miles. He was preceded in death by his parents Robert Phillips and Mary Lucille Maxson, sister Carolyn "Sue" Maxson Rozmus, and nephew Richard Miles.

Friends will remember Harvey for his hearty laugh and happy attitude. There will be no services.



**Marvin Rowland**

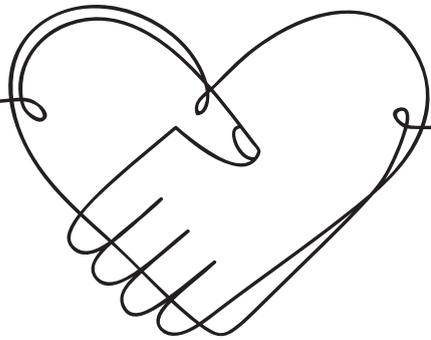
Marvin Warren Rowland was born January 22, 1944, to Emmitt Rowland and Verdna Mae Bryant in Macon, Georgia. He died April 3 at St. Anthony Hospital in Gig Harbor. He was 76 years old.

Marvin graduated in the class of 1962 from Bessemer City High School in North Carolina. He made his way across the country and spent some time working as a ranch hand on the Lone Rock Ranch in Lone Rock, Oregon, during the Christmas flood of 1964. He settled in Petersburg, Alaska, where he worked as a driller for the road construction company South Coast Forest Products in 1963. He was an active member of the Moose Lodge. Marvin met his bride-to-be, Barbara Adel Talbot, in 1970 and married her in Escondido, California on June 26, 1971.

Marvin moved his family to a small farm just outside of Lebanon, Oregon in 1976 where he worked for Champion International as a green chain puller and then a veneer grader. He enjoyed farming and raising five children, and was always active in school activities: 4-H, Boy Scouts, and Master Mason's International Rainbow Girls.

In retirement Marvin and Barbara relocated to a small farm in Lakebay. He loved the land and the livestock that kept him busy. He was a member of the Key Peninsula Sportsmen's Club for nearly 17 years.

Marvin is survived by his wife, Barbara Rowland; his five children, Andrew Rowland, Amy Jo Bailey, Katharine Godshall, Daniel Rowland and Molly Rowland; and siblings Bennie Rowland, Genell Hawkins, Curtis Rowland and Nancy Hampton.



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## Virtual Town Hall Informs the Community on COVID-19 Plans

70 attend via Zoom and phone to hear updates from county and local leaders.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

At least 70 people attended a virtual COVID-19 Key Peninsula Town Hall meeting April 2 to hear from representatives from Pierce County, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, and the KP Fire Department. The meeting, initially suggested by County Councilman Derek Young, was organized and publicized by the Key Peninsula Partnership for a Healthy Community and moderated by Anne Nesbit, KP Fire Department prevention and public information officer.

Don Swensen, speaking in his role as KP Community Council president, said the council is interested in a healthy and connected Key Peninsula and thanked all the presenters.

TPCHD Director Dr. Anthony Chen reviewed the testing, infections and deaths to date as well as

**"WE NEED TO HANG TOGETHER,  
WATCH OUT FOR EACH OTHER,  
TREAT EACH OTHER WITH  
PATIENCE AND GRACE."**

plans to improve testing capacity. He said the virus was already present throughout the county and that hospital capacity was currently adequate. The department is also in the process of identifying sites for temporary care centers for those with infections who could not safely self-isolate at home. There will be one each in eastern, central and western Pierce County.

KP Fire Department Chief Dustin Morrow thanked the community for complying with state and county recommendations. The department is working to ensure its messaging is in sync with the county, and that it has an additional one or two aid units available at all times to handle calls. "We are developing layer upon layer of contingency plans," he said, to assure they have the personal protective equipment they need.

Responding to a question about how the food banks are faring, Pierce County Director of Human Services Heather Moss said the county gave \$250,000 to Nourish Pierce County. The National Guard has

**"WE HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED  
SOMETHING LIKE THIS  
FOR GENERATIONS."**

been called in to help with distribution. Young said, "The struggle is not just the increased need and decreased supply. Food banks have had to change the way they do business, needing to prepackage food rather than allow people to shop the aisles as they have in the past. For those who are financially secure the best way to support

the food banks is with a cash donation."

Moss said that the county has set up a rent relief program for low-income residents. Acknowledging the psychological strain from the pandemic, she also said that mobile crisis intervention teams and mobile outreach program and homeless outreach teams remain active.

Pierce County Director of Economic Development Betty Capestany addressed the financial impact of COVID-19. Noting that there are 5,100 small businesses in unincorporated Pierce County, she said that the county has set up a 12-month no-interest microloan program for businesses with fewer than 10 employees and a 25 percent revenue loss due to COVID-19. The program is designed to help as

businesses apply for grants and loans from the Small Business Administration.

Dr. Bill Roes, who has had a primary care practice in Key Center for more than three decades, said he hoped to serve as an additional resource during this time. He plans to coordinate with the fire department to offer appropriate testing for the virus and provide urgent non-COVID-19 related care for people who are not his clinic patients. "I could help limit emergency room visits for things like urinary tract infections or sprained ankles," he said. "I wouldn't become someone's medical home, probably, but could be their medical motel during this time."

Young closed the meeting by saying, "I'd like to look at the broader picture. I think it's important to understand the scale of what is about to happen. It's not just the COVID emergency itself. We are going to have a lot of people get sick, and some unfortunately are not going to make it. But on top of that, the cure to this will be deeply traumatic to our economy. We will enter deep recession. It will take time to recover.

We haven't experienced something like this for generations. The mobilization of resources at a national level will be similar to what happened in World War II. We need to hang together, watch out for each other, give each other patience and grace. The county will face some challenges with decreased revenue and increased need. But I am confident we are going to get through this."

# Stay Home Stay Alive



## FROM THE FIRE DEPT. Stay Connected and Up to Date

ANNE NESBIT, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

The one thing about the fire service that is a constant is that you never know from day to day what will present. The COVID-19 outbreak has proved that point. The KP Fire District has seen all facets of the current situation, but more good than bad.

Despite the additional confirmed COVID-19 cases in the county or the possibility of being overloaded with information, and the anxiety that might be present, people in our community are still coming together to support one another.

People are lending a hand through individual acts and large-scale efforts. The community is feeding children who depend on the schools to eat, teachers are building unity in virtual classrooms, and individuals are supporting the remaining open businesses in any way they can. Some people are using music to bridge the distance the outbreak has imposed. Anything to bring happiness, smiles, and to make connections is essential during this time.

As the district public information officer, it's exciting for me to see our community rally around being prepared and taking care of one another. The district has participated right alongside you. As such, I want to update the community with some information from the district.

### COVID-19 TESTING

Testing continues to be a challenge for many, including our first responders. The district is working daily to secure testing capabilities for our personnel to minimize any impact on our staffing configurations, and to prevent the potential spread to their families. We are also working with the Tacoma-Pierce County Public Health Department to assist with community testing here on the Key Peninsula. We take our health and safety as seriously as we take yours, and are committed to finding the appropriate testing solution.

As of mid-April, the rate of testing in Pierce County continues to climb while positive test results appear to be leveling off. The number of infected people on the Key Peninsula remains in the single digits for now, including a single fatality.

That individual tested negative for the virus when admitted to a Tacoma facility on an unrelated health matter and was somehow exposed at that facility, according to TPCHD, before succumbing to the disease there.

### TEMPORARY CONTINUED CARE CENTERS

A temporary care center for people who have tested positive or been exposed to COVID-19 and are unable to quarantine at home opened April 8 in Tacoma at the Holiday Inn on South 84th and Hosmer streets.

The district has learned that one of the sites considered for a care center on the Key Peninsula was not viable and is no longer being planned. We understand that TPCHD is looking at Gig Harbor for an additional location if needed.

### DELAYED TAX COLLECTIONS

The district has planned and continues to prepare for what the impacts will be from deferred revenue. Staff will continue to work on collecting the data needed to analyze the situation and then

work with the KP fire commissioners on any adjustments that may be required in the current budget.

It goes without saying that our new status quo feels a bit uncertain. Almost every part of our daily routine here at the district is disrupted. Nonetheless, our community remains strong, your fire district remains prepared to serve, and it is times like these that remind me that every day we share moments where we can all be part of something incredible.

Anne Nesbit is the Key Peninsula Fire Prevention and Public Information Officer at KPFD 16, and a volunteer battalion chief. She can be reached at 253-884-2222.

THE DEPARTMENT IS WORKING DAILY TO SECURE TESTING CAPABILITIES.

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean often with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Stay at least six feet away from others. Coughs and sneezes can travel that distance and their droplets may contain a virus.
- People who are sick or who have been exposed to someone who is should **STAY HOME**. People without symptoms can spread the virus.



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Ed Gabrielson's 1925 Model T in front of Lyman Freeborn's Vaughn store. Photo courtesy Key Peninsula Historical Museum

## Why should I stay home?



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### What can I still do?



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Learn more and stay updated at [tpchd.org/coronavirus](http://tpchd.org/coronavirus).

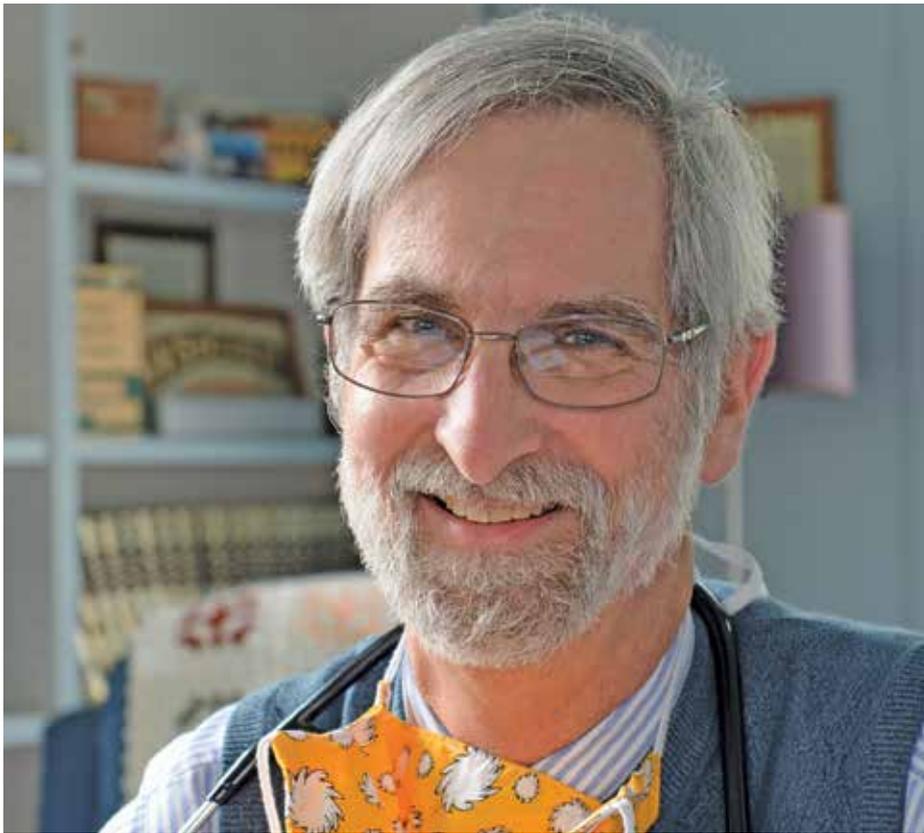


Photo: Lisa Bryan, KP News

## Doctor Roes Responds to Pandemic with Prompt Care in Key Center

STAFF REPORT

Dr. William Roes, who has provided primary care services at his clinic in Key Center for more than three decades, was asked if he could work at St. Anthony Hospital in the emergency room during the pandemic. After consideration, he said he thought he could do a better job caring for people on the Key Peninsula and relieving pressure on the ER by opening his office to people needing urgent care, he said.

His practice has been too full to accept new patients, but during the pandemic he said they will be able to accommodate visits for those in the community who do not have ready access to their usual providers with a service he is calling Key Peninsula Prompt Care.

Anyone seeking care should call the office first to ensure they can provide the right service. The call will include questions about COVID-19 to assess any need for testing. The clinic has a testing kiosk and can get results in three days. If the visit is not related to COVID-19 and the clinic can meet their needs, they will be scheduled for a visit that day if possible.

For those with insurance, the clinic will bill the insurance company. For those without insurance or with high deductibles the clinic will charge a sliding scale fee, which is a significant reduction from the clinic's usual charges. The fee, \$40 paid at the time of the visit, should cover most

services. The receptionist can let the patient know of exceptions.

"We will do our best to take care of your urgent need on the day you contact us, but being seen as a KP Prompt Care patient does not mean the Key Medical Center is now your medical home," Roes said. "We view this more as a medical motel where you can get help close to home."

The clinic phone number is 253-884-9221.

## Local Business Owners Face Challenges

Many remain open but essential businesses are wondering when it will end.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Business has slowed for Purdy Cost Less Pharmacy at Lake Kathryn Village, according to owner Don Zimmerman.

"Before this thing started, we were filling 942 prescriptions a day; yesterday we had our lowest volume in five or six years," Zimmerman said. "We're probably down 15 percent on number of prescriptions but selling more medications at the same time. This could be the new low standard, but we're trying hard to keep everyone employed."

Zimmerman said he understands concerns about safety and limiting exposure by reducing trips to stores. Plexi-

glas panels shield pharmacy staff from customers. Cashiers wear gloves. The pharmacy is wiped down hourly with disinfectant.

"We have masks available for employees, however each of them decides what makes them feel comfortable," he said.

Other retail businesses at Lake Kathryn Village are feeling the pain of stay-at-home or mandatory closure of nonessential businesses ordered by Gov. Jay Inslee to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The statewide order to close salons and barber shops left the new owners of Salon 302 without earning potential just after Barbara Bingham and daughter Shannon leased their space from Zimmerman. He said he will forgo rent collection until the state allows reopening salons and is working with other businesses at Lake Kathryn Village to help them during the crisis.

"This is tough for everybody, but it's just really about bucking up to the situation because this could last for an extended period of time here," Zimmerman said.

Even the steady business of routine health care is negatively impacted by the coronavirus as patients at heightened risk for complications from COVID-19 postpone nonessential doctor visits. The busy practice at Key Center Family Medical Center experienced a rapid decline in appointments, according to Dr. Bill Roes. Similar stories were heard from other health care businesses providing dental, chiropractic, naturopathic medicine and counseling services operating on a limited or emergency basis.

For Glen Cove Repair, independent business owner Eric Moreland said his business has been affected dramatically. With so much conflicting information from various sources, he said a lot of people don't realize they are open. Auto repair qualifies as an essential business and Moreland is following all the guidelines to remain open.

"Our business is built around interacting with our customers one-on-one, and we're dealing with the vehicles some people spend hours driving each day," he said.

Moreland said customers voiced uncertainty about bringing their cars for servicing: Are they bringing in a contaminated car or could one of the employees be infected and in the process of test driving their car pass the coronavirus to them?

"We maintain the 6-foot buffer, we wipe down the steering wheels, door handles and controls that we touch inside the car," he said. "I ordered cases of gloves last month in anticipation and we're easily going through two boxes a day keeping our crew and our customers safe."

Moreland said employee furloughs were unavoidable. Half his crew was impacted by the abrupt downturn, marking his first-ever layoffs for lack of business since he opened in 1999. He is more accustomed to seeing 10 to 15 percent growth annually.

"My hopes are that this rebounds as quickly as it slid," he said. "I'm looking at it that way and managing my business accordingly."

Most area food establishments are still operating on a take-out basis, but business is way down.

"Like everyone else, our business went down hard," said Pablo De La Cruz, owner of El Sombrero in Key Center.

He said each day brings more worry and wondering how long they can last without the restaurant fully open. Half of his staff sit at home waiting to return to work. De La Cruz said he feels for his workers with mortgages and bills to pay too.

"Not everyone suffers equally, so we offer a \$5 taco plate to-go, and for people who can afford it, we ask them to maybe leave \$5 to pay for someone else who doesn't have any money," he said.

"If someone needs to eat, we will feed them. We must care for each other to get through this until the state says it is safe to open up all the way. For now, we bide our time and hope that day comes soon."

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## Building an Elder-Friendly Key Peninsula

### Stay In and Help Out

While how we live and do our work has changed, one thing remains the same: people here care about each other - a lot.

**And, as we all stay in, we are asking for *your* help.**

You've probably heard about ways to support local organizations on special giving days, GivingTuesdayNow and GiveBIG on May 5 and 6.

You can help our vulnerable elders today by making a gift to the Mustard Seed. All donations received between now and May 31 will be matched (up to a total of \$10,000), so with your help, we can raise \$20,000 to help our elders now.

Please go to [themustardseedproject.org](http://themustardseedproject.org) and click on **Donate**. *Your* gift tells our seniors that we care and that we stand together with them.

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## Peninsula School District Signs New WAN Provider

PSD is one of several potential partners with the county to install fiber optic cable throughout the district.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Peninsula School District recently signed a new contract with a new service to provide fiber optic internet service to all its buildings.

Kris Hagel, executive director of digital learning for the district, said the state has its K-20 Educational Network connected to the main district office. K-20 is a high-speed, high-capacity network that connects colleges, universities, K-12 school districts and libraries across Washington. From there, the district leases fiber optic service to its campuses. Half of the funding for that service comes from the federal government and periodically the district is required to review the lease agreement.

The current lease, with CenturyLink, expires in June. When the district sought bids as a part of the review process, the bid included options to expand future connectivity from the current 1Gbps to 10, 40 and 100 Gbps. The district reviewed four bids. CenturyLink did not submit one.

The 10-year contract went to WANRack, a Kansas-based firm that specializes in

custom-built private fiber wide area networks (WANs) for K-12 schools across the nation. “It was the most effective of the bids, calculated over a 20-year time frame,” Hagel said. “We will start at our current speed of 1Gbps but there is no additional cost to increase to 10, 40 or 100Gbps if we need to do that.”

The work cannot begin immediately since the federal government must approve the contract. Hagel said that can take between three and 18 months. The installation should take about six months to complete.

The district hopes to contract month-by-month with CenturyLink until the new cable is installed.

Hagel reached out to Pierce County Councilman Derek Young to ask if the cable might be a part of the county’s broadband infrastructure plan.

Young said that the COVID-19 crisis has made it clear that adequate internet access is not just about economic equity or convenience. “It is about life and death. Broadband is an essential utility. The county will look at partnering with any entity that



makes sense — the school district, local utilities such as Peninsula Light and even a PUD from another county such as Kitsap.”

Young said that CBG Communication is currently reviewing policies and codes to assure that they are not barriers to providing broadband services. A contract

has just been signed with CTC Technology and Energy and they will be tasked with planning, identifying funding and then implementing installation of the broadband infrastructure backbone in the county.

“I hope to see fiber laid by early next year,” Young said.

May 2020

www.keypenparks.com  
253 884-9240



Outdoor spaces, exercise and recreation are critical to the mental and physical health of our community, now more than ever as we work together to slow the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Please use the open trails, do not congregate and follow public health guidance on social distancing and sanitary practices.

Property	Trails	Play-grounds	Restrooms	Shelters	Skate Park	Fields
Gateway Park	OPEN	CLOSED	OPEN	CLOSED		OPEN
360 Trails	OPEN	360 Trails mountain biking jump trails CLOSED				
Volunteer Park	OPEN	CLOSED	OPEN	CLOSED	OPEN	OPEN
Home Park		CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED		
Key Central Forest	OPEN					
Rocky Creek Conserv. Area	OPEN					
Maple Hollow Park	OPEN	Gate is closed. Please park outside and walk in for OPEN trails and water access. Restrooms are CLOSED.				
Taylor Bay		Water access is OPEN				

**OPEN facilities subject to social distancing. Don't stand in groups. Keep 6 feet between people who are not from your household.**

Effective April 15, 2020: This chart will be updated on our Facebook page and at www.keypenparks.com

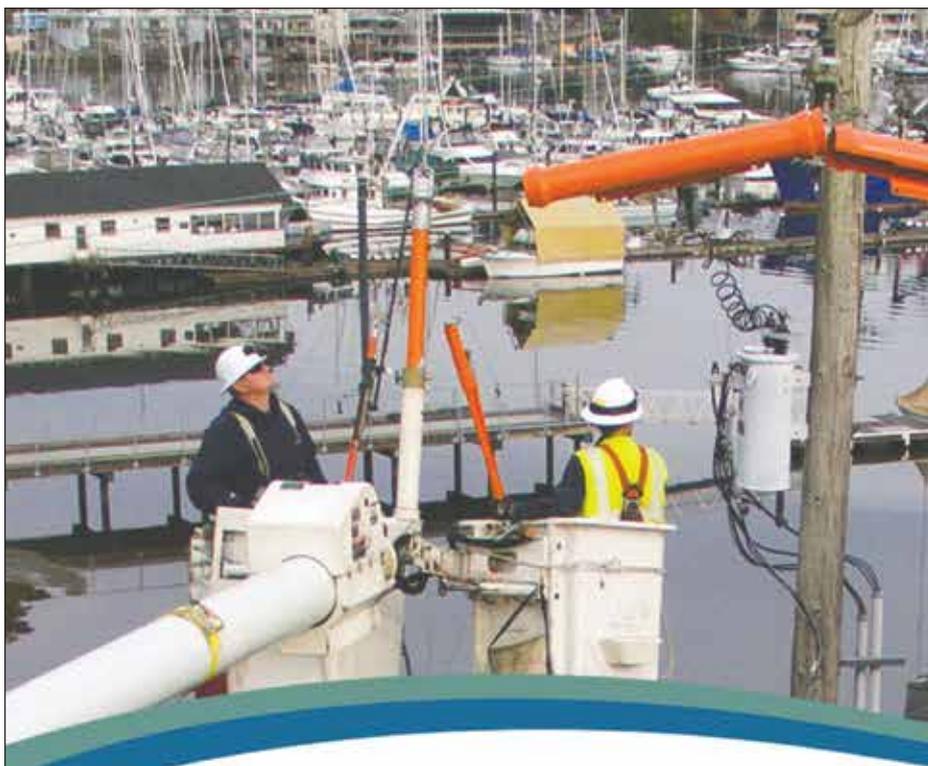
As the COVID-19 situation evolves, we are monitoring directions from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department for best-practice recommendations for parks and recreation response.

We'll keep our www.keypenparks.com website and Facebook page current with park or office closures, event cancellations or postponements, and other park-related notices as they occur. We are not taking shelter reservations at this time.

### No Internet service or poor coverage?

Now Volunteer Park has free Wi-Fi access. You can connect personal Wi-Fi-capable devices and stay informed, check your email or work online. Best access is from the parking lot closest to the buildings at Volunteer Park, 5514 Key Peninsula Highway N., Lakebay 98349. The Wi-Fi (KeyPenn Parks Guest) needs no password and is available for public use from 6 am to 10 pm daily.

For the latest news see [www.keypenparks.com](http://www.keypenparks.com) or Facebook page



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*Photo: Chris Konieczny, KP News*

## Key Pen Parks Restricts Access

**The public continues to enjoy its parks, sometimes too much.**

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

Key Pen Parks has taken measures to keep community spaces safe and sanitary.

Playgrounds and shelters have been closed at all Key Pen Parks facilities. Home Park has been shut down entirely for the duration of quarantine measures. Paths and walking areas remain open at Gateway Park, 360 Trails, Volunteer Park, Key Central Forest, Rocky Creek Conservation Area and Maple Hollow. While large gatherings are discouraged, individuals and family groups are welcome to make use of the park spaces that remain available.

Restrooms have been closed at Maple Hollow and Home Park but remain open at Volunteer Park and Gateway under a more intense cleaning schedule.

“We recognize that on the KP, there’s not a lot of places to use the bathroom that are open right now,” Key Pen Parks Executive Director Scott Gallacher said.

The timeline of the splash pad at Gateway Park has also been affected. Construction has continued through the quarantine under social distancing measures, but due to reduced staffing the target date for opening is postponed indefinitely.

Most Key Pen Parks employees are now working from home, using park signage and social media to communicate guidelines to park-goers.

Many KP residents are finding ways to enjoy the sunny skies in accordance with restrictions. “There might be a fair number of cars in the parking lot, but when people are on the trails, they dissipate quite well. Hopefully they can get that mental health break that they need,” Gallacher said, adding that the open spaces of Key Pen Parks are providing a much-needed outlet for KP residents cooped up at home. Park usage is not being strictly regulated, but park-goers are encouraged to practice social distancing and use their best judgment.

“Key Pen Parks is not an enforcement agency,” Gallacher said. “The public has to understand that they’re the ones who have to help us with regards to flattening this curve out. They’re the ones who have to be responsible for their actions.”

Maintenance activities have also continued, addressing the actions of community members who have chosen less productive ways to spend their free time.

“We’ve had some vandalism happen during this time. That’s what is frustrating, is that there’s still bad things happening from bad people: graffiti, destruction of property, garbage, that kind of thing,” Gallacher said.

Although Key Pen Parks will not feel the direct impact of the virus that many organizations will, canceled rentals and reservations have made a dent in their immediate finances. More concerning, however, is the long-term economic impact. As an organization that relies on property and sales taxes, Key Pen Parks could be feeling the effects of the pandemic well into the future.

“When there was the Great Recession, that impacted us not in 2008, but in 2011, 2012 and 2013. It lagged,” Gallacher said. He is already reworking parks finances where he can. “I’m looking at our 2020 budget and revising it to decrease our expenses and decrease our revenue, because this will have an impact,” he said.

All Key Pen Parks events and gatherings have been canceled through May 4. Several activities could potentially restart afterwards, including KP Little League, which hopes to begin practice May 11, but planning depends on further announcements from state and federal authorities. Facilities may resume operation gradually as guidelines change. “We’re going to refer to the guidelines of the governor, the health department and the CDC on things like the playgrounds,” Gallacher said. “Everything was turned off with a light switch; now things are going to come back up on a dimmer switch.”

## KEY NOTES FROM PAGE 1

until every piece of it shines, time to write handwritten letters to old friends. I miss my friends. I miss school. I miss my older kids. I miss normal. I had huge plans for 2020. I think the whole world had plans, but by March our hubris was replaced with reticence. Going to the store is now an ordeal, and you don't even know if what you need will be on the shelf. Bill Gates predicted back in 2015 that "Not missiles, but microbes would be the biggest risk for a global catastrophe." We were very unprepared for this.



Kelly Gamble

**Grocery store employees are** essential workers. Our mornings begin with sanitizing door handles on our soda coolers, freezers, check-stands, phones. Currency is one of the dirtiest things you can handle so I wear gloves, and to keep from touching my face I use a back scratcher. It seems as soon as you are told not to touch your face it's the first thing you want to do. I am trying to do my part in this, but some of our employees had to opt out due to risks to their families. I ask everyone to help protect us all. Take care, be safe, and virtual hugs and elbow bumps to you all.



Penny Grant

**I find myself under the stairs.** You know the place — dark and dusty, where all the forgotten junk ends up. I didn't expect to find a friend here, but there she sits in the middle of her web. My intention was to clean, organize and discard. I have gone through every drawer and closet in the house and this space was the last holdout. That's what isolation has done for me — made me reach into forgotten spaces. Reconnect with parts of myself I had neglected for too long. I take another glance at my friend and back away. I'll save this one for another day.



Bette McCord

**Living alone for a number of years** may have extinguished any passion I had for cooking but suddenly, magically, I channel my mother as I bend over noodle dough, willing it into submission with my marble rolling pin. Homemade stews and soups find their way into the open arms of the extra freezer and, any day now, I'll be baking bread. I foraged for seeds and soil while others were out hoarding toilet paper. The newly sprung sprouts sunning themselves in my west-facing windows will become the salads and side dishes of tomorrow. Long walks keeping social distance from my friends, a fire in the wood stove on the still chilly nights, and at least one pup curled up beside me as I read and drink my tea — I think we're going to get through this just fine.



Susan Mendenhall

**Being a registered nurse, fire commissioner and KP resident** have given me a unique perspective. I am amazed at the resiliency of the staff at the hospital. We have built isolation anterooms in the emergency department and erected tents, ADA bathrooms and hand-washing stations outside in anticipation of high volumes of patients. Fear of running out of personal protective equipment is a daily concern. My landlord employed her friends to sew masks for us. The KP Fire Department Board of Commissioners continues its work by holding online meetings. The Chief, along with our Medical Director, created protocols for staff and patient treatment that rival the best out there. I haven't seen my family since the stay-at-home mandate. I figure I would be the biggest risk to them.



Sheila Niven

**I have been a first responder chaplain** for the Key Peninsula Fire Department for eight years. I was on a conference call the other day with 100 chaplains around the country. The Rikers Island jail chaplain in New York City has moved up the chain of command because friends above her died. A chaplain in Iowa said "Remember,

people pass of other things as well," and is using FaceTime for families to be with their loved ones in their final hours because they're not allowed into the hospital. A Houston fire chaplain said 200 firefighters are in isolation after testing positive for COVID-19, and one is in ICU. Since no one could visit, the department surrounded the hospital with fire trucks. The man is now improving. Huge reminders we are fortunate here and we have fellow humans who are suffering.



Doug Patterson

**Having been part of Disaster** Planning most of my working life, it's quite different to be in the "at risk" category and removed from that process. This community is really quite amazing and ahead of the government directives. They brought together local and county resources to evaluate community needs, looked for ways to fill the gaps in service to the most vulnerable, and looked for ways to assure local businesses remained viable. They weren't waiting to hear "next steps" but began problem-solving and planning before the real crisis occurred.



Susan Quigley

**I was born and raised in Scotland.** My Irish immigrant grandparents were young people when the Spanish flu roared across the world killing 20 to 50 million people. Oral history is strong in my family and their stories made these times real and immediate. When I was 14, the extremely contagious Hong Kong flu spread rapidly and killed 1 to 4 million people worldwide over two winters. I remember that it hit the young and middle-aged because seniors had been getting vaccinated after a severe influenza in 1957. As a retired microbiologist, I am more conscious of germ spread than most. Some of my family are in the most vulnerable categories and some are on



Maureen Reilly

the front lines. I am calm not because I am indifferent or ignorant. I am calm in the certainty that I am doing all I can do.

**While I'm making the most of** this new but temporary normal, I ask myself how much of this current lifestyle I'd like to keep. Less hustle and running around. More time in the yard, taking in all the beauty that the KP has to offer. Enjoying the moment for what it is, instead of worrying about the next appointment or meeting. These are the things that make up the silver lining that is our fight against this time of uncertainty. My heart breaks for those who have lost their lives, and for those who have lost loved ones. I'm saddened for those who have lost jobs and are trying to make ends meet. My thoughts and continued gratitude remain with our heroes who risk their lives every day for our community and country.



Kim DeCamp Robinson

**I know that we can all survive from** our pantries. Our avenues for entertainment vary also, from tackling projects left for another day, refining those cooking skills, reading an old favorite, dusting off the board games. But one thing I know we do not survive long is isolation. On my daily walks I stop (at a distance) to say hello to my neighbors. When I need to brave my local market I say hello to all, from a distance. Once, driving back through Key Center, I saw two children on a bench waving hello to everyone passing by. It yanked a tear or two from my heart as I waved back. "Hello" says how are you, I care about you, you're not alone. It may even be the universal caress we all need to begin healing.



Debby Short

**I have worked for Peninsula School** District for 30 years, with 25 of those at Key Peninsula Middle School as a para-educator. Many kids are surprised I knew their parents when they were their age. You can't stick around that long without loving what you do. The effect this virus has had

on me is to rob me of the chance to say goodbye to my kids and my career. I have been vocal about my joy at retiring, but I thought I'd have more time to say goodbye. KPMS has been my second family. I am still working remotely, but miss the human contact with my students and peers. This whole experience reminds me of an old Twilight Zone episode. All this time and nowhere to go.



Carla Swainston

are still good, honorable, responsible, caring people in the world. This crisis has made me realize what is most important and to stop worrying about things I cannot control. With that said, I'll be happy when we can all get our lives back on track and spend time with the people we are currently separated from.

**M**y neighbor of the last 30 years turned 100. Of course a large celebration was planned for Jeanne involving friends and family flying in from all over the country. She was a nightclub singer in Seattle during the 1930s, '40s and '50s, and sang at the opening of Sun Valley in 1936 at the age of 16. With a gleam in her eye she asked if I was coming to her party. Of course, the party was canceled, so I was unable to kiss the forehead of my dear Jeanne and hold her frail body and show her I love her for all she has been to me and my family.



Jeffrey Tritt

**I** have been living on the Key Peninsula for over 17 years and working in health care for just over 10. It used to amaze me that the people on the KP come together to support and encourage one another, but it doesn't surprise me that they have done the same now. It is refreshing to know that there



Anaya Thompson

**H**ow do we survive this? How do we protect our loved ones? How do we pay our bills? As a first responder I am putting myself and my family at risk. My wife is a nurse, also increasing our chances of contracting this virus. We are taking our children to a childcare program to avoid passing our germs to friends or loved ones. Our instincts are telling us to be afraid of others, be worried that they may be contagious, that they could spread the virus without knowing it. We were a generation filled with hugs, holding hands, being friendly, and unfortunately this virus has taught us how to fear others.



Scott & Kelsey Wunsch

*KP News thanks these nineteen friends and neighbors who shared their thoughts (and selfies) to make this collection possible.*




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## KP Churches Find New Solutions for Sunday Morning Worship

Church doors may be shut but church services continue.

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

The events of the last two months have shaken up routines at local churches, where weekly worship is finding a new home online.

Sunday morning gatherings that once took place in buildings all over the peninsula are now broadcast live over Facebook, YouTube and Zoom. The shift from in-person services to online content has been difficult for many churches that had to quickly assemble equipment for streaming.

Pastor John Day of Longbranch Community Church praised the work of some of his churchgoers who dedicated time to setting up a recording system.

"I can arrange the preaching, the teaching, the music, that sort of stuff which is my gifting and passion, but it's really helpful to have people that have that kind of know-how and expertise," Day said.

Several pastors said they appreciated how the crisis has allowed people to offer their unique expertise.

"I'm blessed to have a 14-year-old son in the house, so he's helped me with this stuff," said Pastor Dan Whitmarsh of Lakebay Community Church.

Pastor Tim Stobbe of Waypoint Church found, to his surprise, that a change of scenery helped keep things simple and relatable for families stuck in self-isolation.

"After the first week we chose to do everything from our homes, rather than try to communicate from the building," Stobbe said. Subsequent sermons have been broadcast from his living room and backyard. "I wouldn't have expected that, but it definitely felt like communicating from our home was a better option for us."

The lack of an audience, at home or in the church building, has been unsettling for pastors accustomed to delivering sermons to a live audience. "It's really hard to preach to a camera when you're used to preaching to faces," said Pastor Anna Bonaro of Key Peninsula Lutheran Church. "I didn't realize how hard that transition was going to be for me. I asked people to email me pictures of themselves, so I have a few pictures set up so I can look at these people smiling."

While the shift to the internet has been

embraced by KP churchgoers, pastors also pointed out that some could be left behind by such a transition.

"I'm very aware that there's a lot of time and energy that's going into online meetings, and that's good, but I'm also aware that it's missing a lot of people," Whitmarsh said. Churches are seeking alternate solutions to reach congregants who may not have consistent internet access. Pastor Ed Longabaugh of Grace EPC reported mailing out text copies of his sermons to those who couldn't attend online services.

KP pastors praised the willingness of their congregants to check on each other, and to ensure the vulnerable have their needs met. "I've had a few phone calls that I expected to take five minutes and they've gone for over an hour. People are hungry to connect," Whitmarsh said.

"Since we can't get together personally, we're spending a lot more time keeping contact with every one of our congregants over the phone on a regular basis,"



Pastor Dan Whitmarsh shares his Sunday message via Zoom

Longabaugh said. Many churches reported setting up call lists or contact systems to ensure no one was forgotten.

Although most pastors seem eager to get back

to normal as soon as possible, Pastor Bonaro shared her spiritual perspective on the quarantine and the service aspect of following the stay-at-home order. "We're called to care for the sick and, right now, by staying at home you're caring for the sick. You're helping all those people that need you to be home right now. I think that's a powerful thing to think about."

Lakebay Community Church, Longbranch Community Church, Grace Church EPC, KP Lutheran Church, Waypoint Church and Wellspring Fellowship have officially moved services online for the duration of the quarantine, and are either postponing or canceling other events.

Key to Life Church of the Nazarene and Key Peninsula Baptist Fellowship spokespeople were not available for comment. More information on how to access online services and how to stay in contact can be found at each church's website.

# Local Legislators Weigh In on Recent Session and Coronavirus

Although the 2020 regular session just adjourned, a special session to address the damaged state economy may be coming soon.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Washington State Legislature adjourned its 60-day regular session March 12 after passing almost 400 bills and allocating emergency funding to counter the first effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

“One of the biggest pieces of legislation we passed, in an incredibly bipartisan fashion, was a \$200 million coronavirus funding and response policy,” said Sen.

Emily Randall (D-26th, Bremerton). “It allows us to send \$175 million to departments of health locally and \$25 million to the employment security department to help businesses and workers who will be out of work because of the epidemic.”

The bill will also help high school seniors get waivers from some graduation requirements and makes unemployment benefits available to people in quarantine. The Health Benefit Exchange has a special open enrollment period for people

currently uninsured or who lose coverage because of losing a job due to the statewide mandatory stay-at-home order.

“I am incredibly concerned with the balance between protecting public safety with the economy and people’s individual rights,” said Rep. Michelle Caldier (R-26th, Port Orchard). “It is incredibly difficult to find a good balance here and I do not envy the governor making these decisions.

“If you are living with somebody who is a vulnerable person, you should stay at

home,” Caldier said. “If you are part of the essential workforce, you should be taking major precautions when you are out. We should be doing everything we can as a community to slow down this progression.”

“I really try to root my neighbors and constituents in stories of our loved ones, our grandparents, infants, folks with compromised immune systems,” Randall said. “Think of them as we make deci-

sions about going out in the world. I’ve seen more and more folks understand the risk as we progress.”

Randall managed to pass a number of bills she sponsored or cosponsored during the session, including an extension of post-partum Medicaid care from the current 60 days to a year; creating a position for an LGBTQ veteran coordinator at the Department of Veterans Affairs; and amending state law to authorize the



Rep. Michelle Caldier (R-26th, Port Orchard) testifying on the House floor. Courtesy WA State House of Representatives

Key Peninsula Fire District to operate its own health clinic.

“I love the fact that the fire district is ready to step in and meet the needs of our community and getting nearly unanimous passage of that bill was very exciting,” Randall said. “I think this will be huge for the Key Peninsula.”

The new law allows KPFD to deliver basic and preventive health

care, in whatever form that might take, funded by reimbursements from Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance. (See “New Law Would Allow KPFD 16 To Offer More Care,” KP News, March 2020.)

Caldier, in the Republican minority, fought an uphill battle during the session. “I had eight bills that were alive in the House, but unfortunately because I had helped kill some bills, the Speaker (Rep.

Laurie Jenkins, D-27th, Tacoma) granted me the same courtesy and killed some

of mine,” she said.

Caldier successfully argued against a bill to abolish the death penalty in Washington. She also spoke on the floor against a bill reducing the crime of intentionally exposing a sexual partner to HIV from a felony to a misdemeanor.

“I was gavelled twice on the floor by (the Speaker) for comments I made on the HIV penalty bill,” she said. “That was something I was incredibly outspoken on.”

That bill ultimately became law.

Being “gavelled” is a warning to refrain from certain language in an open session. “If you continue to speak, then they can censure you for the rest of the year,” Caldier said. “There’s a lot of decorum that goes with the Legislature because we have to show each other a lot of respect.”

Caldier also spoke against a bill to require that standardized K-12 sex education be taught in public schools.

“That was another one I got gavelled on,” she said. “Even though the Speaker and I are on opposite ends of the political spectrum, I get along with her really well and I knew there would be consequences to fighting some bills, but I’m more concerned about my constituents and the state than I am about my personal policies that I want to put forward.”

Caldier scored one significant victory, however.

“My big bill that did pass was passing rate increases on to behavioral health organizations,” she said.

“I am part of the Children’s Mental Health Work

Group and one of the big problems we’ve found is that when the Legislature gave rate increases to a behavioral health provider, because they are all in managed care for the Medicaid rate you have to give that to an insurance company that is managing the care. They were supposed to pass that on. Instead, the insurance companies kept the money for themselves.”

Randall also said the new budget would

fund some local projects. That included a matching pledge of \$100,000 toward the proposed purchase of the Lakebay Marina, \$52,000 to the Greater Gig Harbor Community Foundation, \$250,000 to the

Gig Harbor FISH Food Bank, and \$298,000 for improvements at Penrose State Park. “We’re really happy to be able to be directing funds to our community,” Randall said. “I’m also looking forward to talking to community leaders about what budget needs we’ll have in the upcoming session so that we can be ready for those.”

The next regular session is scheduled to convene Jan. 11, 2021, but both Caldier and Randall said a special session before then is likely.

“I feel confident that we are going to go back; the budget forecast that is going to be coming in June will change things,” Caldier said. “This is not a Republican versus Democrat thing. I feel that Republicans have a better sense of business and the economy and what small businesses need, and at the same time I think you need a balance of whatever the employees are dealing with. We’re going to have some serious talks about what’s going to need to be cut, about what programs we’re going to need to keep families and businesses afloat, and what we can do to rebuild our economy.”

The 26th Legislative District’s third legislator, Rep. Jesse Young (R-Gig Harbor), was not available for comment on this article.



Sen. Emily Randall (D-26th, Bremerton) succeeded in passing five of the bills she sponsored in the 2020 Legislative session. Courtesy WA State Legislative Photography Dept.

**“I THINK THIS WILL BE HUGE FOR THE KEY PENINSULA.”**

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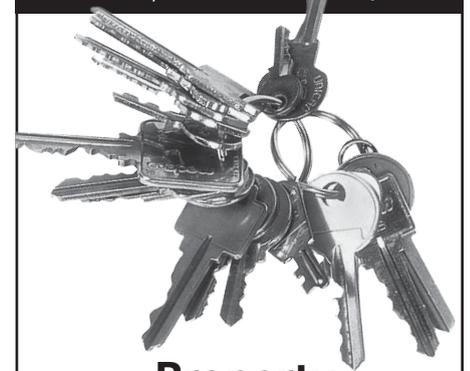
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## DEMOCRATS' ONE-PARTY DOMINATION IN OUR STATE

*THE STATEMENTS BELOW ARE FACT, NOT OPINION.*

**FOR THE LAST 35 YEARS (SINCE 1985), WASHINGTON STATE HAS BEEN CONTROLLED BY DEMOCRATS.**

- ▶ GOVERNOR'S OFFICE: Booth Gardner, Mike Lowry, Gary Locke, Christine Gregoire and Jay Inslee = 100% Control.
- ▶ HOUSE: 31 of the past 35 years = 89% Control.
- ▶ SENATE: 27 of the past 35 years = 80% Control.
- ▶ WASHINGTON STATE SUPREME COURT: 6 out of the 9 Justices are Democrat-leaning non-partisan = 66% Control.

### BUT WAIT, THERE IS MUCH MORE!

- ▶ With complete one-party control, Democrats have created over 190 Departments, Agencies and Commissions to make rules, regulations and laws to govern EVERY part of life in our State.
- ▶ AND appointed every Manager of every department, who in turn, make their own rules & regulations controlling our lives.
- ▶ With total financial control, the Democrats have given many of our tax dollars away to special interest groups, in order to BUY THEIR VOTES.

### CORRUPTION IN WASHINGTON STATE.

**Definition of Corruption:** (noun) Change or being changed for the worse. Evil or wicked behavior. Synonyms: dishonesty, deceit, destroy.

- ▶ Spending has NO LIMITS. Washington State is now in debt \$98 Billion, \$12,761 per person (6th highest in U.S.).
- ▶ From 1985 to 2018, the General Fund Budget increased from \$6.8 Billion to \$44 Billion, a 7-fold increase, while population only doubled (from 2 to 4 million people).

▶ In 2018-19-20, Democrats raided the State Savings of millions, in spite of warnings by the state treasurer that much of the unexpected billions in revenue should go to the Rainy Day Fund.

▶ \$30 Car-Tab Limits have been voted in by the people 3 TIMES: I-695 in 1999 by 56-44%; I-776 in 2002 by 51-49%; and I-976 in 2019 by 53-47%. ALL THREE TIMES they refused to represent the people by voiding the initiative, having the court throw out the results, and now have submitted a lawsuit to overturn the vote.

▶ In 1998, I-200 was passed by the people to ban Affirmative Action. In 2019, Democrats passed I-1000 to put Affirmative Action back in place. In the 2019 election (R-88) was passed by the people 51-49% to BAN I-1000 and its discrimination and preferential treatment. In the 2020 Session, Democrats created "The Office of Equity" to force discrimination by a new name.

▶ In 2019, Jay Inslee caused \$2 Million tax dollars to be spent for his security, to take 6 months from his full-time, high-paid position to jet all over the U.S. to run for President. State law does not allow public work time or public tax dollars to be spent on political campaigns!

▶ In 2016, voters rejected a Carbon Tax (I-732) 58-42%. In 2018, voters rejected a Carbon Emissions Fee (I-1631) 56-44%. Both initiatives were created and supported by Democrats. In 2019/20, Democrats were legislatively working to override the will of the people again.

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## What Preschoolers Think About That

Young children, their parents and teacher work together to adapt to social distancing.

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

During this era of COVID-19, preschoolers and their parents are trying to maintain something resembling normalcy within their socially distanced families.

Kolby Asbra's co-op preschool class, which normally meets at Grace Church in Home, has been meeting virtually via Zoom. The kids' faces display in a grid reminiscent of the opening credits from "The Brady Bunch."

In April, their weekly meetings began with a favorite preschool song, which they would normally sing together while fidgeting on the

colorful circle time carpet in their classroom. "Open, shut them. Open, shut them. Give a little clap, clap," they sang.

The children grinned and giggled, excited to return to a little piece of their familiar preschool routine.

"It was pretty special," Asbra said.

Throughout the Zoom meetings, Asbra's class representative used the mute feature to allow each child an uninterrupted chance to speak, a virtual version of taking turns during morning circle time.

"There are many things that the kids learn by being in a classroom setting," Asbra wrote in a message to parents when Gov. Inslee ordered schools to be closed through the end of the school year. "Many of these are things that you can work on at home, such as having conversations, making eye contact while talking, sitting still, waiting for your turn to talk."

The virtual meetings give the preschoolers an opportunity to work on these skills in a group setting. During her turn, 4-year-old

Tana Niles read an alphabet book while Asbra smiled and nodded from her own box on the screen. Another child raised her hand and introduced her stuffed bunny. Jackson DeMoss showed his friends how his transforming robot toy worked. The kids held up rocks they'd painted. Asbra showed them her painted rock too.

"It was very sweet," she said. "I was on the verge of tears a few times. I really miss these kids." The preschoolers miss her too.

"Amelia has been having me send Kolby (Asbra) photos almost every day," said Meghan Callaway. "She wakes up and asks, 'Is the bug gone? Can I go to school today, Mommy? Please?'"

With activity recommendations from Asbra, parents try to keep up a preschool routine at home.

"I really missed having Nanette do the calendar at preschool and she needs to work on her numbers," said Vanessa Lentricia. "After 14 she seems to jump and skip around, so I ordered her a calendar to cross out the dates and write special events."

"On the chalk wall of her bedroom, we drew 'Under the Sea' with mermaids, fish, jellyfish, manta ray, coral and starfish," Lentricia said. "She knows we can't leave the house and go to school and we have class at home. Half of the dining room table is filled with a ton of stuff for her to do."

During their virtual get-togethers, the preschoolers are as excited to share news as they are to show off their toys and their rooms. From her kitchen table, Amelia announced that she has a baby sister on the way. On the other side of the screen,

Jackson held up a sign that said, "It's a boy!"

While Asbra congratulated Jackson and Amelia on their future siblings, some kids missed the messages, too excited about seeing everyone's faces to pay close attention.

"Can you come over to my house?" Addison Phillips asked, before catching herself and adding matter-of-factly, "Wait. We can't because of coronavirus."

Many children are able to play safely in their own yards on the Key Peninsula, but life without trips to the Key Center Library, the civic center, or Key Pen Parks can be hard.

"As we passed through Key Center, my daughter started crying. She was begging to see the librarians and DeeDee at the post office," said one preschool parent.

"I'm worried how this is going to play out," Lentricia said, "and what kind of impact this is going to have on Nanette emotionally."

"I love my friends," Nanette said through her computer screen. "I love my Teacher Kolby," added another small voice.

"I'm struggling with the abrupt ending of our class," Asbra said. "These kids are lucky to have great parents to distract them from any glimpse of the reality we're in."

After signing off, Amelia, whose dad works for Orkin Pest Control Services, insisted, "Daddy will take care of the bugs at preschool," and begged her mom to take her to school.

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### THE NEIGHBORLY JUNCO

Dark-eyed Junco, *Junco hyemalis*  
**Order:** Songbirds (Passeriformes)  
**Family:** American sparrows (Passerellidae)  
**Identification:** Numerous subspecies in America. All have a pink bill and white outer tail feathers visible in flight. Our local subspecies, the "Oregon" junco, has a dark hood (black in males, charcoal in females), pink-brown sides, brown back and white belly.

**Sound:** Song is a two-second trill, given from a high perch. Calls, often given in flight, are a rapid series of high, sharp chirps.

**Habitat:** Present in a variety of habitats, including coniferous forest, mixed forest, alpine areas, parks and gardens. Forages in flocks in non-breeding season, often flying from the ground into bushes. Seeds are the majority of the junco's diet, supplemented with insects and spiders.

**Names:** In many parts of the U.S. juncos are called "snowbirds" because they migrate south and appear at feeders when snow falls. Others call them "executioner birds" for their dark hoods. "Junco" is Spanish for rush, and "hyemalis" is Latin, meaning of the winter. *Lower photo: Chris Rurik*

## When a Junco Nests in the Garden

CHRIS RURIK, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

Springtime comes to the peninsula. The soil warms and bird songs light up the mornings. In the forest you no longer tramp recklessly through the underbrush, for everywhere grow the nearly translucent shoots of newly emerging plants.

I weed a row of the tiniest mustard greens, thinking I should perhaps have brought tweezers and wondering how these dewdrop-sized leaves will become something to eat, when a junco appears. Like a windup toy it hops through a nearby garden bed with dried grass in its pink beak. It takes a look around and disappears into the bed's end board. A moment later it reappears, its beak empty, and flies to a cedar.

The end board is half-rotten, the bed still full of weeds. Planting stakes lie where they have lain since last fall. It takes a good bit of crouching and peering before I find, in a hollow in the board, the nest within, a perfect flaxen bowl of grass nearly finished.

Looking into a bird's nest has always felt like finding someone's open diary. Its owner might not want you there — the killdeer drags its wing as if broken, the blackbird dives at your head like a kamikaze — yet when it sees that you have no intention of wrecking what it has built, it calms. It watches you looking. There is a fleeting moment of trust.

A nest is pure vulnerability. Soon you know you must pull back. To overstay the intimacy would be callous. I move away and the junco soon returns. Within days

it will lay its clutch of eggs.

We humans love springtime for the new life it brings in abundance. We interpret it as a season of brightness, curiosity and joy. Yet as I squat alongside my mustard greens and the junco, it is hard not to wonder at the fragility of it all. In the forest, plant shoots are the choicest snack for passing deer. One bite kills them. One footstep. The deer itself has babies so vulnerable they survive by stillness and lack of scent. This world is often rough, that we know. How does anything survive when it must first be so defenseless?

Juncos are one of the most familiar birds in America, and one of the most thoroughly studied by naturalists. Much has been learned about how they nest.

Generally monogamous, juncos return to the same territory year after year. Yet each year, they build a new nest, and the female will often start several before finishing the one in which eggs are ultimately laid. Most nests are built in hollows close to the ground: under a rock, in a root wad, under a fallen trunk. One year a junco dug a nest into a pile of sawdust in our barn. And the nests, so situated, often fail. Male and female junco work together to drive off what chipmunks and snakes they can, yet forces much larger often find them and force them to flee. Though we steered clear of the sawdust nest, it collapsed under the weight of the pile.

Despite their vulnerability — in fact, probably because of it — juncos are exceedingly resilient birds. They will re-nest three, four,

even five times over the course

of a summer. They try and try again. And this is no small feat. Each egg weighs about 11 percent of the mass of an adult, and each clutch consists of four eggs.

The eggs are incubated for 12 or 13 days. Upon hatching, the chicks can immediately gape and swallow. In three days, they can prop themselves upright. In seven days, their eyes are open. In about 11 days, they fledge. Two weeks after that, at the seasoned age of 25 days, the young juncos fly as skillfully as their parents. And they scatter into the landscape.

I have a filmmaker friend who has begun to pay attention to the birds around him, and recently he found himself standing still while an Anna's hummingbird flew close. In less than a minute the hummingbird had perched a few feet away.

He told me: "I felt an overwhelming sense of peace. Anxieties fell away. I felt I had a purpose — to see that bird."

The moment was fleeting. But in that moment, as for the junco and me, and as for every tender life that must sit vulnerably in the world, a wholeness shimmers like sunlight on waves, a pureness of trust. You could call it faith. Because of such moments, life is abundant.

My friend asked, "Is there anything more revolutionary than to be in total peace with a fellow living being, however long it lasts?"

If that is true, spring is the most revolutionary season. And perhaps the juncos in our gardens are its greatest humble prophets.



# Local Master Gardener Wants You to Love Gardening

The novel coronavirus is inspiring more people to grow their own fresh veggies this spring. Square foot gardening helps keep your patch manageable.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Dale Skrivanich of Vaughn has gardening in her genes. And as a Pierce County Master Gardener she is passionate about sharing her enthusiasm and knowledge with others.

“Simplify it for yourself,” she said. “You see all these great garden magazines with all these gorgeous photographs. Regular gardening is not neat and tidy. Martha Stewart does not do her own gardening.”

Skrivanich’s maternal great-grandparents owned a nursery in Great Britain during World War II. Her grandfather, who as a younger son would not inherit the business, opted for adventure, became a shipwright, and moved to the Pacific Northwest. He ultimately settled in Seattle to raise a family.

Her father’s side of the family has owned a commercial wheat farm in the Palouse for more than 90 years. “My father was a Cougar and my mother was a Husky,” she said. “My mother wouldn’t live in Eastern Wash- ington and so we managed the farm from Seattle. The people that have worked the farm have been with us for that whole time.”

Her mother was active in the University of Washington Arboretum, one sister was the horticulturist for the Woodland Park Zoo, and the other was the main grower of poinsettias for Smith Gardens in Bellingham. When her father died, Skrivanich became the commodities manager for the farm.

Marriage brought Skrivanich to this area in 1972. Her college roommate was from Gig Harbor and introduced her to her husband, a fisherman with deep roots in the community. “Don was gone fishing a lot, so I spent a lot of time out here,” she said. She taught special education until she left to take care of her mother.

In 2012, after her mother died, she and a friend joined the Pierce County Master Gardener program. “Gardening was natural,” Skrivanich said. “Commercial farming is really gardening on a massive scale.”

The program included weekly classes for three months, additional trainings and an intern project — hers was on invasive plants of Pierce County. She is a member of the committee that sets up continuing education, and for the last seven years she and four others have organized an annual

workshop open to the public, “From the Ground and Up,” at Franklin Pierce High School. They have held regular clinics at Ace Hardware and Home Depot and have had booths at the KP Livable Community Fair and Farm Tour, but the outreach programs have been disrupted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Skrivanich thought that, in these stay-at-home times when people are thinking more about self-sufficiency, some advice about square foot gardens might be in order.

The concept of square foot gardens dates to the 1970s when Mel Bartholomew, a recently retired engineer, decided to take up gardening as a hobby. He thought that the standard approach to vegetable gardening was very inefficient. Rather than long rows in large beds he suggested raised beds four feet on a side and eight inches deep. Plantings of each small crop are within defined one-foot squares.

“Square foot gardens are great if you have never been a gardener or if you are downsizing,” Skrivanich said. “You can even have one on a deck or a balcony. They are great for kids, for seniors, and they can even be built to allow people in wheelchairs to garden. You can get great variety without too much work.”

The first step, she said, is site selection. “Look up!” she advised. Know the direction of the sun and beware of tree branches blocking it. Six to eight hours of sun are needed in the summer. The flatter the site the better, even if it means building up one end or digging down. Be sure that there is good drainage and be sure that the water source is nearby.

Next, build the box. Plans and kits are available on the internet, but the basic concept is to have a four by four box, at least eight inches deep. The next step is to define the one-foot squares within the box. That can be done by building a grid with wooden strips or simply placing nails in the frame and stringing twine.

“Soil is to gardening what tires are to a car,” Skrivanich said. “It has to be good.” She said that good all-around soil,



Master Gardener Dale Skrivanich. Photo: Richard Miller, KP News

bagged or delivered, mixed with processed compost works well. She also adds something to help with drainage. Perlite, pumice or chicken grit can help accommodate the inevitable rainfall. The soil should be six to eight inches deep. “Be sure to mound it up,” she said. “It will settle and get compacted even though you won’t be walking on the beds.”

Although the ideal time to plan a garden is in January, Skrivanich said it’s not too late to get a garden started now.

How big a plant will be will determine how many to plant in each square — sixteen radishes, one cauliflower, one tomato plant. Some of the smaller squashes, if the vine is trained to go onto the surrounding ground, can fit. Peas and beans require two squares and a trellis to support them that won’t block the sun.

Look for seeds that are specific to this region, Skrivanich said. “Lots of seeds are designed for the East Coast or the Midwest. Look for the shortest number of days to maturation.”

Seeds are cheaper than starts, but it will be several weeks before the plants are viable and they will need to be thinned once they sprout. “We are lucky that we have great nurseries here and the starts

we get here are mostly grown here. They may be a bit more expensive than seeds, but there will be less loss and using starts will save several weeks.”

Some plants, like peppers, tomatoes or eggplants, can’t be directly sown as seeds in this climate and need to be started in



“Soil is to gardening what tires are to a car. It has to be good.” Photo: AdobeStock

a greenhouse. Some root vegetables, like radishes and carrots, must be sown as seeds.

“Whether you have seeds or starts, you will always have a learning curve. I’d like for a beginner to have real satisfaction. Then you’ll have a gardener. Starting out with 16 square feet is a great way to learn. There can be a lot of variety and you can reach everything.”

**“REGULAR GARDENING IS NOT NEAT AND TIDY. MARTHA STEWART DOES NOT DO HER OWN GARDENING.”**

**“YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE A LEARNING CURVE. I’D LIKE FOR A BEGINNER TO HAVE REAL SATISFACTION. THEN YOU’LL HAVE A GARDENER.”**



Photo: David Zeigler, KP News

## Friendly Flagger Earns KP Celebrity Status

**When was the last time you looked forward to slowing down for road construction? The straight scoop on the powerful phenomenon called smiling.**

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

As bridge construction over Minter Creek continues on State Route 302 to replace aging culverts that interfere with salmon runs, a rising star amongst traffic flaggers has captured the hearts of enough Key Penners to become newsworthy.

The bright eyes, broad smile, friendly waves and affirming thumbs-up from traffic flagger Ricky Brooks have delighted drivers — to the point of slowing traffic.

Brooks is a flagger apprentice in the Laborers' Union Local 252.

"I had a Christian-based upbringing and values that influenced me," Brooks said. He was born and raised in Lacey after his parents relocated to Washington from Cleveland, Ohio, and credits his parents for his outlook on life.

When he started out on SR-302, he tried to remember the feeling of anxious frustration, being on your way somewhere when you're late. He asked himself what he could do to make the frustration easier to take.

"For me, the main thing here is really simple: Treat thy neighbor as you want to be treated. That's something anyone can do. A little good goes a long way."

"Ricky has brought crew morale up. He is upbeat, happy and a real joy to work with. He's doing a good job and getting better all the time," said supervisor Jessie Rost, who works for BC Traffic LLC. She has been in the union for 17 years and said she loves her job and wouldn't do anything else.

Traveling through the construction zone is straightforward at this stage, Rost said, but as the project moves forward, flagging will become much more challenging and



it's crucial that Brooks' fans don't become distracted drivers and cause the problems flaggers are there to prevent.

Rost said Brooks wasn't flagging during the days when SR-302 was down to a single lane and the worst of the traffic delays were occurring.

"Being a flagger during that period was difficult," she said. "When drivers waiting in line became frustrated, they frequently became angry and often sped through the 25 mile-per-hour construction zone speed limits."

But hundreds of people on Facebook continue to post about the good feelings and positive affirmation that says, "I see you and you matter" from the friendly flagger they only know as "Ricky."

"When you put out positivity you don't always get to see the results of how it continues to spread and flow through other people, but here — I've been so fortunate to see it flowing right back to me," he said. "Everybody — whether white, black, Asian or Hispanic — it's a lot easier to hate people that you don't know," he said. "I'm at a loss for words here, but there is a wall of fear that blocks the love. Smiles break all that down. I feel the love surrounding me."

**Stay Home  
Stay Alive**



## Anxiety in Our Times

VICKI BIGGS, SPECIAL TO KP NEWS

It is not unusual for people to experience anxiety or worry at times, maybe even frequently. Humans are predisposed to pay more attention to negative information, as a sort of survival strategy. Worry and anxiety can be thought of as protective devices that a healthy person possesses to help navigate dangerous situations.

Anxiety and worry are like the flashing red lights on the dashboard of your car. When you see that red light, you know you must pay attention, assess the situation, then plan for what must be done to make the light stop blinking. The blinking red lights can save your life.

It is helpful to know there is a difference between worry and anxiety. Worry usually involves a specific thing or event. Worry is experienced "in our heads" and is focused on our thoughts. Worry often results in thinking about solutions. Worry creates a mild sense of emotional distress, and can be controlled.

On the other hand, anxiety is experienced viscerally and diffusely in our bodies. Anxiety includes mental imagery that provokes physical responses, and seldom results in any productive resolution to a perceived problem. Many people experience lingering anxiety that can interfere with personal and professional functioning. An individual's anxiety can rise to the point of being considered a mental disorder that requires treatment.

For people who currently suffer from anxiety disorders, the present state of social distancing and other restrictive measures can be confusing. These people have been struggling daily to decipher between irrational fears and responses, and what others see as "normal." Now, their fears and responses have become the new, if temporary, normal for everyone. It's unsettling, and some people have concerns about regressing. They fear losing the progress they have made in distinguishing between real threats and "false alarms."

Many people admit to experiencing symptoms of anxiety during this time of coronavirus distancing and precautions, some for the first time in their lives. Symptoms of anxiety can include muscle tension, physical weakness, poor memory, constant worry, sweaty hands, inability to relax, shortness of breath, palpitations, upset stomach and poor concentration.

The battle against COVID-19 will continue

in the weeks and months ahead. We are in it for the long haul, and must keep a perspective that looks not only to surviving the moment, but also for the future.

Well-known researcher and speaker Brené Brown has offered this helpful statement:

"Adrenaline has a short shelf life. It cannot fuel us through a crisis that lasts for six weeks. And adrenaline is hard on our bodies. So, I think we're coming to the end of an adrenaline-fueled crisis and we're going to have to find a way to settle into this rhythm. The only way I can think about it is we have to grieve the loss of normal. At the exact same time, we're trying to find our footing in the new normal."

In addition to creating a new perspective for moving forward with our lives, mental health professionals tend to agree on several steps that can be taken to protect our mental and emotional health. The first of these is the need to filter and limit the sources and amount of COVID-19 news each day. Data from past disasters have shown that those who watch coverage several hours a day are at an increased risk for PTSD and new physical health disorders than those who limit viewing.

Other steps include staying connected with friends and family. Isolation and loneliness exacerbate anxiety and depression, and also affect physical health. Call your neighbors, especially those who live alone, and offer a bit of conversation. Using social media and other technologies make it possible to see and connect with much-needed circles of support.

Other stress management recommendations include keeping household routines for sleep, mealtimes and exercise. Routines can help with a sense of normalcy. Self-care is especially important, but avoid self-medicating with alcohol or other substances. Spending some time outdoors can relieve stress, as well as meditation or deep breathing techniques.

Last, one of the best things we can do for ourselves is to help others. This can require a little creativity in the current circumstances. Donations to a food bank or other community organizations are always welcome. Canadians have formed local groups across Canada called "Care-mongers," the opposite of fear mongers, to kindly assist each other with practical needs.

Anxiety and worry will be ongoing as we move through the cycles of this pandemic. Reaching out to friends, family and professionals can help manage symptoms and fears.

Resources such as the Disaster Distress Helpline (1-800-985-5990), Crisis Text Line (text "HOME" to 741741), or National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) are available day or night.

THE AROMA OF FRESH BREAD FILLS YOUR HOUSE AND SOUL WITH JOY



KPCooks

## And Now We Bake

BARBARA VAN BOGART

Flour. Water. Salt. Yeast. These are the basic ingredients of bread dough. (It's also the title of an excellent cookbook). When I was growing up, bread baking was part of my mom's weekly routine. I don't remember the first time I made my own bread dough, transformed it into a loaf, put it into the oven, counting down the minutes until it was done so I could slice off the heel, spread on the fresh butter and let it melt in my mouth. Making bread has been a constant in my home for decades, and it can be in yours as well.

The measuring of ingredients, the mixing, the kneading, the waiting for the rise, the reshaping and final rise before baking is a wonderful and relaxing process at any time, and even more so during uncertain times like these. If you are new to this, YouTube is a great resource for mixing and kneading. If you are a longtime bread baker, add this recipe to your collection. Either way, it's easy and delicious.

This recipe makes two regular loaves. Total elapsed time from start to finish is two to three hours, with most of that time devoted to the two separate rises.

### Ingredients:

5¼ to 5½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour  
¼ cup dry milk powder  
1 tablespoon sugar  
2¼ teaspoons instant yeast  
2 teaspoons salt  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature  
2 cups room temperature water

Mix 5¼ cups of flour, milk powder, sugar, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Cut butter into small pieces and stir into dry ingredients. Pour water into the mixture and stir to blend into a cohesive mass.

Lightly flour your work surface with some of the remaining flour and turn dough out of the bowl. Knead the dough (YouTube has great videos on how to knead flour if you are uncertain about this step). Continue kneading until the dough is smooth and springy, about 5 to 8 minutes, scraping your work surface if the dough sticks and adding small amounts of flour as needed.

Turn kneaded dough back into the

bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let it rise until double in bulk, about an hour. After the dough has doubled, turn out onto a lightly floured surface and pat gently to deflate. Divide the dough into two and shape into loaves. Place shaped loaves into well-greased bread pans and let rise again, about an hour, or until the dough rises just above the top of the pan.

Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven for 30 to 35 minutes until the crust is golden brown. Remove pans from the oven and remove the loaves from the pan, letting them cool on a wire rack. Don't forget to slice off the heel and slather it with unsalted butter!

**Tips:** Since there are no preservatives, once the loaves are completely cool, store in the freezer if you don't consume within a day.

If you are planning on doing a lot of bread baking, buy instant yeast in a block (WinCo or Amazon are good options) and put the yeast in a container you can store in the freezer — it lasts for years this way.

If you are short on time, mix the dough, cover with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator overnight. The next day, bring to room temperature and continue with the recipe instructions.

I don't work for King Arthur Flour, Bob's Red Mill or Stone Buhr, nor do I receive any compensation from them. However, these are my favorite flours as they contain no bleaching agents or other unnecessary additives.

### HOMEMADE YEAST

While some people may be buying up all the flour they can, leaving store shelves empty, baking yeast can be made at home.

Wild yeast lives on the skin of most fruits, vegetables and herbs and can be easily cultivated.

Put fruit, such as apples or grapes, in a quart jar with 2-3 tablespoons of water. Mix until it becomes cloudy.

Add an amount of flour equal to the fruit to make a loose, wet dough. Any kind will do, but white flour works best.

Keep the mix warm. Twelve hours later, there should be bubbles caused by the yeast inside the mix.

The paste should loosen up a day or two later. Take some of this mix and add it to 2-3 tablespoons of water. Add flour and repeat the process. This time the bubbles should appear faster.

If they do, you're ready to go. If not, try again.

We'd love to feature a dish from your KP kitchen that friends and family ask for. Email the details to [editor@keypennews.org](mailto:editor@keypennews.org) with your phone number; we'll be in touch.

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We residents of the beautiful Key Peninsula are faced with an unprecedented health crisis as is the rest our nation, and the world.

The resilient nature of those who live out here shines in a time like this. Keep it up KP! We applaud the way Peninsula residents continue to communicate and support each other in many different, but responsible ways.

Please remember our Key Peninsula nonprofits. Several are continuing their essential services to our neighbors who may be in need, and have even introduced new services to help the community. Those organizations who continue to serve can be found at [keypennews.org](http://keypennews.org) on What's Open and the COVID-19 Resource Page.

Others are closed in accordance with governmental requirements, but are maintaining their organizations through work-at-home arrangements.

If you can, any of these nonprofits would appreciate your financial support during this difficult time.



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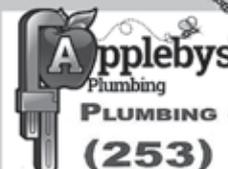
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See who's open when at our new **WHAT'S OPEN** feature at [www.keypennews.org](http://www.keypennews.org). It's a free service to local businesses who depend on your patronage to survive.

And while you're at the website, be sure to check out **COVID-19 Resources** to see what the nonprofit service organizations are providing.

When the community works together, we're able to do great things.

Join us in supporting our local community. And give a mighty cheer to the front-line workers who are keeping things going.



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**TOP LEFT** The Pacific tree frog is still at work. *Photo: Ron Cameron* **MIDDLE TOP** Blast from the past, courtesy KPCC. *Photo: Ted Olinger, KP News* **TOP RIGHT** Travis Collins of Longbranch rides his paint quarter horse "Cotton" along KP Highway, with country music on his cellphone and an antique pistol in his holster. *Photo: Richard Miller, KP News* **MIDDLE** Dutcher Cove view south to Herron Island. *Photo: Jim Bellamy* **LOWER LEFT** MSW Vicki Biggs dressed for work. *Photo: Vicki Biggs* **LOWER RIGHT** Social distancing at sea. *Photo: Joseph Pentheroudakis, KP News*