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THE VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

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\$100,000 Grant for Vaughn Library Hall Restoration

A major grant from the state will support the restoration of the last historic hall of its kind on the peninsula.

JOSEPH PENTHEROUDAKIS, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula Historical Society received a substantial boost for the restoration of the 1893 Vaughn Library Hall with the award of a \$100,000 grant included in the state's 2022-23 budget. The grant is one of more than 200 awards for local and community capital projects statewide, totaling an appropriation of \$160,910,000. The bill was signed into law by Gov. Inslee May 18.

Restoration of the historic hall began in 2016, soon after the building was acquired by the historical society. After extensive cleanup by a large group of volunteers from the community, the focus shifted to stabilizing the structure and beginning to make it weatherproof and secure. This grant will be used to complete as much of the weatherproofing as possible by adding new siding that matches the original appearance as well as related upgrades, according to society president Cathy Williams and project manager Bart Wolfe.

The society has spent about \$150,000 on the project to date. In addition to the \$100,000 state grant, it also received grants from Pierce County, The Angel Guild and The National Society of Colonial Dames as well as private donations, raising a total of \$133,000 so far. Wolfe estimates that an additional \$200,000 will be needed

CONTINUED PAGE 3

Vaughn Library *Barton Wolfe*



Evergreen School Nears Completion

On time and on budget, the new building will open to students in the fall.

SARA THOMPSON KP NEWS

Evergreen Elementary School Principal Hugh Maxwell can hardly contain his excitement. This fall, thanks to the passage of the 2019 capital bond, a state-of-the-art Evergreen will open its doors to students.

"He's so excited. It's hard to get Hugh back out when he comes to tour," said Project Manager Jeff Greene of Greene-Gasaway Architects.

"As it (the building) becomes more completed it becomes more real and the excitement continues to grow," Maxwell said. "There are cars lined up along the highway, but now you don't see many people outside — they are all indoors and you know there is a lot going on."

Maxwell focused on some of the transformational aspects of the plan. There will be a community room — how exactly it will be used is in the visioning stages — that will have its own entrance.

There is a Science Technology Engineering Art Math interspace classroom — a room that is set up for project-based learning with sinks, tables and stools. "Space is so tight now, to do projects is a real challenge. Being able to expand STEAM work will be such a gift," he said. Amy Barber, Evergreen's integration support specialist, is ready to make the most of the expanded opportunities.

"We are super excited about the Commons — as you enter the building it is such an open beautiful space with high ceilings and beams showing. It was hard to envision how big and light it would be by just looking at the plans," Maxwell said. "Students will eat there, and we want to use it all day long. Tables will be there for kids to meet and work on projects. And once we can invite volunteers and parents back, it will be a place to share learning and build relationships, to amplify the strengths of our school."

The old gym will remain and will be used for community-based programs, though details are still being worked out according to Peninsula School District Capital Projects Coordinator Vicki Smith.

The bond funded replacement of Ever-



A trio of happiness as Aryana Olafssen, Cody Burton and Jane Oliveira get ready to graduate with PHS Class of 2021. *Tina McKail, KP News*

green and Artondale elementary schools and construction of Swift Water and Pioneer. Cost-saving steps and additional state funding also allowed for modernization and additional classrooms at Key Peninsula and Kopachuck Middle schools.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the project is on time and on budget according to PSD Director of Facilities Patrick Gillespie. In fact, he said, the original bond promise was to have schools open in 2022 and 2023.

Greene said that the pandemic had some impact on the project. Construction shut down for a few days until the work was deemed essential. Having school closed to most students and staff made the work at Artondale Elementary School a little easier because the site space is tight. There were some supply chain issues. The main impact, he said, was that commute times were better for the workers. The entire capital project employed between 400 and 450 people with 75-80 at the Evergreen site.

"So much of the world truly shut down, and we didn't. For the most part we had some things to work through, but we kept on going," Smith said.

"We were about as normal as we could have been going through the year, which

was good for us," Gillespie said. "It kept people working, and it was really nice to have something fairly normal during that time."

The final work on Evergreen's interior and exterior is being completed, with site concrete work and landscaping in June, modification of the well in July and demolition of the old school expected in August

and September. Maxwell hopes the school will be ready for the official start of the school year. "But"

he said, "we know that just one small thing can go wrong and it can put us back a week. We are hoping for the best and planning for the worst. We will adapt. We learned to be flexible this last year."

Maxwell hopes that when the doors open it will be to in-person classes five days a week for all students. The district is still working on health protocols, but the U.S. Centers for Disease Control change in recommended physical distancing for students from 6 feet to 3 will make a big difference.

"It means we could have three or four kids at a table to do early literacy learning. Those early interactions are where kids start to learn about community," Maxwell said. "We are so thankful to the community and for all who worked on the bond. Even with the uncertainty, it's hard to be grumpy." ■

"IT WAS HARD TO ENVISION HOW BIG AND LIGHT IT WOULD BE BY JUST LOOKING AT THE PLANS."

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NATURALLY LOCAL

Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

It's daylight and the towhees are here again. For the last six weeks the pair has shown up every morning outside our bedroom window to perch on the deck railing and sing for breakfast. Mr. and Mrs. make a most handsome couple, but are terrible singers. We start the coffee first before grabbing a handful of shelled sunflower seeds to leave on the deck railing for our neighbors. If we forget, they throw themselves into the windows, presumably to get our attention. We are well trained.

I moved my desk a few months ago from one end of the house to the other, and opened the window to a new world. From this perch I can see directly into the middle and upper tree canopy. Cedar, Douglas fir, big leaf maple, alder and hazelnut grow from the depths of the gully where a spring-fed stream meanders below.

The gully is flanked by fields and open space where raptors soar in search of prey and dive to grab lunch.

The neighborhood is bustling. Summer guests began arriving weeks ago. A flock of cedar waxwings, typically only seen through binoculars, flew in and frolicked before my own eyes. My head spun in another direction when I spotted a bright yellow body framed by black wings and tail feathers, but it was his brilliant scarlet hood that gave him away. A male western tanager had arrived, perhaps the most colorful and beautiful songbird to breed in these parts. (There's one on the cover.)

The quiet of an unusually warm afternoon suddenly erupts into a flying circus with dozens of swallows riding currents of moist air filled with bugs.

A chickadee flies in through an open door, a few feet from where I sit typing, and lands on the corner of my desk mere inches away from my keyboard. It was as if the little bird snuck in to escape the crazy commotion of the swallows feasting outside. Neither of us moves; if I grab my phone for a picture he'll be gone. And in the second it took to have that thought, the chickadee did a little pirouette and flew out the same direction from whence he came.

The trees, the water, the birds, were always here.

A year and half of Covid has changed me. I slowly began to see things differently, not all of it pleasant. But I found strength in this community as it struggled to adapt to unforeseen changes to practically every aspect of our lives. We didn't have to be sick with Covid to be affected. We persevered together.

While seasonal changes became a simple focus to ground myself in time, it is the newspaper I go back to in order to remember what transpired and how we felt about it all as it happened.

Local journalism is in serious trouble nationwide and that spells trouble for democracy. Within the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association, of which Key Peninsula News is a member, 13 local newspapers closed for good over the last year. For an industry already struggling with a loss of advertising revenue due to the internet and social media, Covid was the final blow.

But what exactly does "local journalism" mean? Pierce County is big and within it are many cities, each with its own unique flavor. In bygone days, perhaps a single robust newspaper could cover it all, but I don't believe that model works today. The fact that so many newspapers across the country faced bankruptcy and are now owned by hedge funds is not a good sign for independent journalism.

Local news helps provide a mirror in which we hope the community can see itself, advocate for its needs, and celebrate the place and the people who make this home. Over the last year, you proved just how much it matters.

While I once felt confined by the idea that Key Peninsula News focused solely on the Key Peninsula, in the last few years I have come to appreciate that strong focus is in fact a big part of its strength.

We are extraordinarily fortunate to have the support of advertisers and donors who live and work in this community and who believe in the power of

delivering local news to reach everyone – without requiring a paid subscription to get it. You won't run into a paywall

at keypennews.org either. Unlike others, we believe local news empowers our community to do great things.

We're proud to announce that the Key Peninsula News team is 100% vaccinated. By the time you have this paper in hand, we will have enjoyed our first in-person staff

meeting in 15 months. As things begin to reopen you can count on your very own local news team being right alongside you. ■



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VAUGHN LIBRARY FROM PAGE 1

in the next year or two, assuming recent inflation in construction costs returns to normal from its current highs.

The board worked closely with Sen. Emily Randall (D-26, Bremerton) and Rep. Michelle Caldier (R-26, Port Orchard), who sponsored the project. Randall and Caldier visited the historic hall and later met with Williams, Wolfe and other board members to ensure a successful grant application.

"I was very happy to help with this important project; I remember noticing an old ballot box when I visited, a reminder that the hall was a place where people went to fulfill their civic duty," Randall said. "I'm excited to visit later this summer to see how work is coming."

Caldier said the historic building "will cultivate our community with the dedication of the Key Peninsula Historical Society."

"We've received a number of other grants as well as numerous donations but nothing on this scale; we are truly grateful for all Senator Randall and Representative Caldier have done on our behalf," Williams said.

"We still have a long way to go but this grant will really help," Wolfe added.

The Vaughn hall, the last remaining of many such structures that once dotted the Key Peninsula, began as a dance floor built by early Vaughn settlers to celebrate the Fourth of July in 1889, a few months before Washington became a state. The Vaughn Bay Public Library Association was formed in 1892 to encourage the education of early settlers; in 1893, walls and a roof were added to the dance floor to create a meeting hall with a library in one corner. Over time the library outgrew its small corner, and in 1926 an addition was built alongside the meeting hall for a larger library and eventually for a kitchen and storage. The hall continued to be used regularly until the 1950s when it was sold and converted to a residence. (See "Vaughn Library Hall Restoration Underway," KP News, July 2019).

Once the restoration is complete, the society intends to open the building for both public and private events. "Besides holding our own events we will make the hall available for private parties, weddings, reunions and other activities," Williams said. "We have found enough of the original finishes, lighting fixtures, etc. to know how to match each, so we are confident that, when complete, we will be able to share the history of the hall and allow people to experience it just as the early settlers did."

For more information, go to www.keypeninsulamuseum.org. ■



KEY PENINSULA 2021 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Joaquin Alfaro
Rachel Aspee
Haley Barnesson
Alexander Bateman
Jamie Baxter
Kayla Carris
Mia Chaney
Aurora Christensen
Hazen Christensen
Jack Coberly
James Dubois
Joshua Elder
Alyssa Hall
Omari Heidelberg
Trinity Holden
Kaitlyn Holt
Kendra Hunsaker
Jason Jenkins
Adriana Johnson
Nathaniel Jones
Emily Lamanna
Natalie Langhalm
Nolan Littleton
Savannah Lucero
Alivia Lystad
Shaun Madlinger
Athena Miller
Gracie Murray
Emily Muterspaugh
Aryana Olafssen
Lydia Oliver
Finn Padberg
Mason Palagy
Dominic Peterson
Maren Peterson
Elizabeth Pierson
Elizabeth Price
Isabella Quinn
Madison Rose
Riley Schuller
Emma Swainston
Lauren Trivette
Alexander Wiklund
Daniel Yago

Peninsula Hawk Scholarship Fund Rewards 44 Key Peninsula Seniors

Founded by a group of parents in 1984, the fund is now one of the largest in the state.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

One hundred and fifty-two graduating seniors received over \$320,000 in scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$11,000 at the virtual Peninsula Hawk Scholarship Fund award ceremony May 19. Forty-four winners were from the Key Peninsula.

Any Peninsula High School senior planning to attend any type of accredited educational institution, vocational or academic, is eligible for a Hawk Scholarship. Students apply by submitting portfolios including their academic records, community service resumes, personal statements, and recommendations. Every student who successfully applies receives a scholarship.

"Many donors were impacted financially by the pandemic and not able to give this year," said PHSF Donor Chair Hayley Nichols. "It was apparent that it broke their hearts to not be able to be part of the giving this year. However, we were astounded by the donors who were able to step in and contribute more, filling in the gaps and then some."

The Seahawks Academic and Vocational Education (SAVE) Thrift Store, located at 1401 Purdy Drive, also made a significant contribution in spite of pandemic-related restrictions, Nichols said. The store manager, Kendra Zartman, got creative.

"She ran online sales with pickup, navigated the rules and regulations like a pro and kept the store running with a

**"ONE THING WE NEED IS MORE
VOLUNTEERS. YOU DON'T
HAVE TO HAVE A STUDENT AT
PENINSULA TO JOIN US."**

fraction of the volunteers needed to operate on a daily basis," Nichols said. "Our community was generous with their donations to the store, so much so that we had to cap the days and times people could donate."

The scholarship fund was founded in 1984 by a group of PHS parents who wanted to provide more recognition to seniors at a time when the school was losing students to then recently opened Gig Harbor High.

"There were a bunch of us mothers who had kids in Peninsula for years; I remember there was quite a contingent from the Key Peninsula," said Gretchen Jordal of Gig Harbor, the first scholarship committee president. "We wanted to do something that would give some recognition to these kids, not a great amount of money."

"There were about seven of us at first," said Sandra Newhouse of the KP. "Joan Ryan, Dorcas Colito, Edie Harlow, Jane Hoffecker, Ann Larson, Chris Carol; Marsha Williams was a counselor."

The Hawk fund awarded \$5,000 to graduating

seniors in its first year, doubling the amount PHS had been giving.

"We were ecstatic, and now of course you're up to over \$300,000. Isn't that something?" Jordal said.

PHSF is now one of the largest high school scholarship programs in the state, according to the Peninsula School District. Ideas to fund it came from a number of sources.

"Ellen Griffin was a counselor at PHS, and she was up in Port Angeles and found this program they were doing where students would make a notebook with their GPA and their interests and recommendations and so on to get a scholarship," Newhouse said. "She brought the idea back and we just jumped on it. We also had a lady on the committee, Avon Gay, who absolutely insisted that we give vocational school scholarships also."

"Avon Gay was instrumental," Jordal said. "She had read some place that there were scholarship programs around the country that had thrift stores." Gay received permission from the school district to set up a donation station and thrift store in an unused portable classroom on campus.

"Avon went to the superintendent and said 'You're not using this portable; we want to use it for a thrift store,' and he said 'OK.' She was very pushy about it, and she would not mind my

saying that," Newhouse said. The first SAVE thrift store workers included Becky Howson, Pat Mielbrecht and Gay, who has since died.

The portable was destroyed by fire the next year ("Arson Fire Destroys SAVE Building at PHS," KP News, Sept. 1987). Gay then negotiated the use of a former fire station owned by PSD on Purdy Drive, where the current thrift store is located.

"I got involved when my son was a freshman in high school and my daughter is graduating this year, so we are going on eight years now," said Nichols, the donor chair. "This is the most rewarding volunteer organization I have had the privilege to serve. It is truly an honor to help facilitate the distribution of hundreds of thousands of dollars every year to deserving students so that they can pursue their career goals. Not to mention the message it sends that their community believes in them."

"One thing we need is more volunteers. You don't have to have a student at Peninsula to join us," she said. ■



State Capitol on first day of session. *Roger Harnack, Cheney Free Press*

Legislature Concludes a Session of Reform, Recovery

MATTHEW DEAN, KP NEWS

The Washington State Legislature's 2021 regular session concluded on April 25 after passing 340 bills, 257 of which had been signed in whole or in part by Gov Jay Inslee by press time.

The Legislature also finalized and passed the \$59 billion 2021-23 budget.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were felt throughout the session. Legislative officials were masked and separated by plexiglass panes, and many opted to telework. HB 1368 appropriated \$2.2 billion in federal funding for pandemic response, with most of the funding going to schools, public health, businesses and housing assistance. Unemployment coverage was extended, and the minimum benefit amount was increased by one-third. Several other bills ramped up benefits for COVID-affected organizations and offered tax deferrals for struggling businesses.

A number of bills addressed the indirect effects of COVID-19 and made provisions to ease challenges from social distancing and telework. Schools were granted the option to waive graduation requirements during a state or local emergency, and the waivers were retroactively extended to the class of 2020. Several bills revised regulations to allow them to function in an environment of remote communication and telework. SB 5077, for example, allowed mortgage brokers to work from home without their brokerage, "licensing the residence as a branch office of the company."

Other events of the past year also made their presence felt, including the large-scale protests against racial injustice and police brutality. A major bill delivered to the governor's desk would establish new use-of-force standards for police officers.

A companion bill would ban chokeholds, prohibit no-knock warrants and institute new restrictions on the use of tear gas. A new arbitration process was authorized for grievances against law enforcement, and another bill funded outreach grants to increase the diversity of law enforcement candidates.

Efforts at justice reform didn't stop with police. HB 1078 would provide the automatic restoration of voter rights for felons at the end of their incarceration, and EHB 1090 banned the state from operating or contracting with private prisons. Other bills instituted mandatory equity training in teaching certificate renewal and public medical schools. SHB 1356 banned the use of Native American names and images as school mascots, with some exceptions if authorized by the represented tribe.

One of the Legislature's most significant financial moves was instituting a 7% state capital gains tax (ESSB 5096), which affects profit made on the sale of stocks, bonds and mutual funds. The tax will go into effect Jan. 1, 2022. Real estate, retirement accounts and work-related assets such as livestock and lumber are exempted under the state's implementation. The revenue from the tax will be added to the state's education funding pool.

The state also responded to public concerns over cybersecurity and election fraud, setting up new safety requirements and increasing the penalties for unauthorized disclosure of sensitive information.

Legislators for district 26 had their own accomplishments. Sen. Emily Randall (D, Bremerton) sponsored multiple bills relating to equity in the health and education fields. The signed bills specifically deal with inclusion and diversity training for educators and medical professionals. A Randall-sponsored

bill to create a Washington State Universal Healthcare Commission reached the governor's desk but had not been signed by press time.

Rep. Jesse Young (R, Gig Harbor) sponsored two bills that were signed into law this session. HB 1314 states that involuntarily committed individuals must be checked for veteran benefit eligibility and referred to the VA care system if they prefer. HB 1296 allows health organizations to deduct any state mental health funding they have received from their business and operations tax.

Rep. Michelle Caldier (R, Port Orchard) was the primary sponsor of six bills, all of which were referred to committee. Caldier also inserted Section 13 into SB 5160, a bill designed to address landlord-tenant relations in the pandemic. Section 13 was vetoed by the governor, whose veto message stated it was "largely duplicative" of a bill signed earlier in the year, and would cause administrative problems. A statement issued by Caldier claimed that the language in Section 13 was provided by the state Department of Commerce, and that its passage would have helped "fix the damage the governor caused" by his eviction moratorium.

Several major bills on climate change, justice reform and education passed by the Legislature had not been signed by the governor at press time. ■

District Appoints New Fire Commissioner

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Longtime Wauna resident Randy Takehara was officially sworn in as a Key Peninsula Fire District 16 commissioner by the board of commissioners during its regularly scheduled meeting May 11 via Zoom. He succeeded outgoing Commissioner Sheila Nivens.

Originally appointed commissioner herself in 2008, Nivens went on to be elected by voters three times. She informed the board earlier this year of her intent to move outside the district boundaries, disqualifying her from serving the remaining six months of her term.

With Nivens' departure the board lost its most senior board member in a position where, according to Board Chair Commissioner Stan Moffett, "experience matters."

Moffett said having good, qualified candidates willing to step up and volunteer their time is essential, "and it takes longer than six months to get to know this position. It takes a good three or four years to really understand everything that goes on."

"We had three strong candidates and any one of them would have been very good," he said. "It was a difficult choice."

Takehara moved to the KP with his family when he was 3 years old. They lived near Danforth in Wauna. He attended Purdy Elementary School, Key Peninsula Middle School, and graduated from Peninsula High School in 1992. He joined the U.S. Air Force and spent four years as a military firefighter stationed in Texas before he coming home.

He joined the Air Force Reserves and lived in Lakewood for a time. In 2000, Takehara hired on as a firefighter at Fort Lewis (now Joint Base Lewis McChord) and worked his way up to battalion chief, a position he's held for nearly 13 years. He retired from the Air Force Reserves in 2015 as an Assistant Fire Chief. He is a member of both the IAFF Local F283 JBLM Professional Fire Fighters Union and the Washington State Council of Firefighters.

"I've got a lot of fire experience outside the peninsula area, and I want to have a say in how that service goes," Takehara said.

He knew he wanted to explore the differences between federal and county fire districts, so he joined the KPFD Citizen Advisory Panel in 2016 and served until his fire commissioner appointment.

"It's really nice as citizens we're able to do that, to participate as citizen advisors," he said. "I can tell you that coming from the federal side, all that is closed door and secret; there are no opportunities like that."

Takehara said it was both a fun and revealing experience with CAP, learning how different some things are but how similar too.

"Fire is fire. We run a lot of medical aid calls on JBLM just like everywhere else," he said. He suspects the calls for aid are likely different given the younger

Lisa Bryan, KP News



population and activity on military bases as compared to typical civilian communities. JBLM firefighters respond to emergencies off-base as well, providing cooperative assistance to neighboring county fire districts as needed.

“Procurement is different, administration is different, budgets are different — the funding mechanisms are entirely different,” he said. “We don’t have to deal with that stuff at the federal level the same way. To be sliding in right now as a commissioner with an ask for a lid-lift on our levy in the near future? It’s going to be interesting.”

Randy and his wife, Jessica Takehara, who teaches English at Harbor Ridge in Gig Harbor, have two kids and live in the Wind and Tides community. “We live just down the road about five minutes from my dad, and that’s awesome,” Randy said.

Takehara got involved with KP Little League and served on its board when his eldest son and namesake started playing baseball at Volunteer Park. Hit fast forward: That son just turned 16 years old and is finishing his sophomore year at PHS, and the elder Takehara is currently president of Peninsula Baseball Boosters.

Takehara, who has not run for an elected office before, filed as a candidate for the Fire District 16 Commission with Pierce County Elections for the upcoming election in August.

“I had some very good competition in being appointed,” he said, “and I may well have some again soon.” ■

Cooperative Preschool to Relocate as District Program Expands

KRISA BRUEMMER, KP NEWS

The Peninsula School District plans to expand its half-day Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Pre-K classes to a full-day schedule for the 2021-22 school year. The expanded ECEAP program, funded by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families will utilize all preschool classroom space at Vaughn and Evergreen Elementary schools, currently shared with the Key Peninsula Cooperative Preschool (KPCP), whose classes will relocate to Grace Church in Home.

“Not only are they getting a preschool program, but they’re getting this larger wraparound service to help them prepare and be ready for school. In that sense, the idea that we are going to be able to expand

that resource and have more time with them is a huge win,” said PSD Director of Special Programs Lisa Reaugh, who oversees federal and state programming for early learning and additional support programs. “There’s family support, food services, transportation, all these extra resources that come along with the ECEAP program.”

ECEAP currently serves 10 to 11 preschool students at each school site, plus five students who selected a remote option for 2020-21. Prior to Covid, there were 16 to 18 ECEAP students in each class. Reaugh hopes to see full enrollment again as restrictions ease in the future.

KPCP’s enrollment numbers have also been down over the past year and the ability of parents to volunteer in class has been limited. The co-op program, which has been operating on the KP since 1975, is affiliated with Bates Technical College in Tacoma and designed for both parent and child participation, with caregivers and young children learning and playing together in the classroom.

“The KP co-op is enriched and successful because of the parent involvement. Family members add such a wonderful component to their preschool education — it’s a family program, not just a kid program,” said Kolby Asbra, who taught preschool for KPCP at Grace Church from 2018 until the March 2020 school closures, and had previously taught for ECEAP and KCPC at Vaughn (See “Kolby Asbra —Ultimate Kid Whisperer,” KP News, Oct. 2020).

“My hope for the co-op next year is to have a type of rebirth,” she said. “The co-op has struggled the past couple of years, and I would love to see a beautiful new opportunity for the co-op and everyone involved in this lovely program to thrive.”

Operating all KPCP classes at Grace in 2021-22 will allow more flexibility for parents to assist in the classroom. KPCP plans to offer two-day, three-day and four-day preschool at Grace in the fall, with up to 14 students per class with three adults in the classroom each day — one teacher and two parent helpers.

“This matches the total number of classes we have held in the past using all three of our sites,” said KPCP Acting President and Membership Chair Jessica Wyman. “Our goal is for our quality, family-oriented preschool program to continue as part of this community and we are expanding our program at Grace to accommodate as many of our families as possible. We have enjoyed our relationship with Grace in the past and are grateful we can

“OUR GOAL IS FOR OUR QUALITY, FAMILY-ORIENTED PRESCHOOL PROGRAM TO CONTINUE AS PART OF THIS COMMUNITY.”

continue this relationship.”



Preschool students enjoy a dance party in February 2020, before “social distancing” came along. *Krisa Bruemmer, KP News*

continue this relationship.”

“We’re hoping to go back to normal but trying to be flexible and see what the guidelines are as we go through the summer. We know things change fast,” said KPCP’s Bates Technical College Representative, Child Studies Instructor Karen Ford, who works with a variety of co-op programs in the region. “The church has been so gracious about our request to expand our program. Some of our co-ops did outdoor preschool, some did hybrid or even just remote, and some didn’t meet all year, so we had quite a variety in what co-ops did this year.”

Grace Church was added as a third KPCP site in 2018 but preschool has not been held there since March 2020. ECEAP and

KPCP students returned to Vaughn and Evergreen in October 2020.

“I’ve missed having the kids and parents around. It gets far too quiet here during the day,” said Pastor Ed Longabaugh of Grace Church. “We’re definitely looking forward to having the preschool back this fall. Having all three groups meet here will be a challenge, but we’re eager for the restart.”

“We’ll definitely miss the co-op and I wish we had extra space,” Reaugh said. “Hopefully there will be opportunities down the road to continue our relationship. They’ve been really phenomenal to work with and so supportive and understanding of the change.”

Both KPCP and ECEAP are currently hiring preschool teachers for the 2021-22 school year.

For more information, go to keypeninsulapreschool.org or psd401.net. ■

Rob Vajko KEYTHOUGHTS



On Reading

“We read to know that we are not alone” is a quote by C. S. Lewis, the author of many books including the Narnia series.

He’s right.

I grew up, like many in my generation, reading. Books had and still have a power over me. Growing up in France we didn’t have ready access to English books. Every summer, however, my parents would take us on vacation in England. We didn’t realize it at the time but my parents would secretly purchase a stack of books for each of us four kids and present them to us at Christmas. I probably couldn’t name more than two or three presents that I got for Christmas growing up but I still have fond memories of the Christmas stack of books we got each year.

Strange as it may seem, I still incorporate children’s books into the list of books that I read each year. Do yourself a favor and reread (because I’m certain that you’ve already read them, right?) the Narnia series, any or all of the Wizard of Oz books (did you know there are 14?), “The Wind in the Willows,” “A Wrinkle in Time,” “The Little Prince” or “The Borrowers.” Search for the best classic children’s books and work your way down the list. I promise you’ll thank me.

At the age of 12, while I was sick in bed, my mother went to the local library and found a copy of “The Martian Chronicles” by Ray Bradbury. It was life changing and I devoured everything I could find by Bradbury. I would later, quite by accident, end up living for several years in his hometown of Waukegan, Ill.

There are books that will change your life. Authors like Charles Dickens, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, Victor Hugo, Graham Greene (read “The End of the Affair” if you haven’t read it yet), Dostoevsky and many others have written classics that are classics for a reason — namely that we connect with them on a deep level. They tell us something real about ourselves and about the world around us. Read or reread “The Great Gatsby,” “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy, “To Kill a Mockingbird,” “Ivanhoe” or “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.”

It saddens me to see so few younger adults or children reading anymore. Books fuel the imagination and give us connection and community like nothing else. They develop in us emotional intelligence and empathy,

something that is dearly needed more and more in the world today.

A recent Yale University study found that book readers live almost two years longer than non-book readers. Other studies have linked reading to a reduction in dementia risk, most likely because you’re exercising your brain.

“Fahrenheit 451,” by Bradbury, another life-changing book for me, told of a future where, instead of putting fires out, firemen start them by burning books. Burning or banning books doesn’t destroy them; on the contrary, it gives them more power, it gives them new life. When the Nazis burned books, people started hiding them and reading in secret. After the war, these books resurfaced stronger than ever. But it still goes on: A Florida school district tried to ban “Fahrenheit 451” as recently as 2018. A couple of years earlier, parents in Texas also tried, objecting to the book’s description of burning the Bible, rather missing the point.

Many are the books that are read by teenagers specifically because their parents forbade them (“The Catcher in the Rye”). Similarly many parishioners over the years have secretly purchased and read books specifically because the priest preached against the evils therein (“Valley of the Dolls”). Many books that are really not good literature only find a life because of the controversy surrounding them.

My fear isn’t that books will lose their power because they are burned or banned; my fear is that they will lose their power because we will lose interest and quit reading them. Then we really will be alone.

Rob Vajko lives near Wauna.

Richard Gelinas EMPIRICALLY YOURS



A Pandemic Silver Lining: RNA Drugs

As vaccination rates against COVID-19 plateau in the U.S. or fall short of the number needed for herd immunity, it’s worth reminding ourselves how significant a breakthrough these vaccines are and the other benefits to our health that can flow from them.

Unlike vaccines from the last century that contained weakened whole virus or purified bits of virus, the vaccines many of us have taken from Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech contain only RNA and a simple solvent or vehicle. These messenger RNA vaccines that give us immunity to the SARS-CoV-2

virus work by giving the immune system a preview of the virus, so the body can develop an effective defense. The RNA has instructions enabling the body to make a key viral protein — a snippet of the virus — guiding our cells to make a diverse, potent set of antibodies against it.

It is like an email to the immune system: easy to create, easy to send, and promptly acted on by the email recipients.

So, where is the silver lining in a pandemic that has killed over 600,000 Americans to date?

Well, why not send RNA emails to treat other diseases?

First, the RNA vaccine used against the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein can be modified quickly as variants emerge, like the variants that are aggravating the pandemic in the U.K., South Africa and Brazil. Moderna already prepared and tested a vaccine that specifically targets these variants earlier this year. So, in the future (well, forever) as novel variants of SARS-CoV-2 inevitably emerge, modified vaccines can be made quickly.

This is a good thing because viruses with mutations occur continuously and naturally whenever the virus infects a person. As the virus grows, maybe in the lung or nose, mutations result from an error-prone or sloppy replicase, or copying enzyme. From the standpoint of the virus, not only do mistakes not matter, they are the raw material for evolution. If a variant emerges with better transmission or survival or a different host range (say, another species of animal), it will spread rapidly — as we’ve seen over the past year.

This approach could also be applied to the production of the annual influenza vaccine we are all advised to receive. I suspect that a combination vaccine against flu and SARS-CoV-2 could become routine: One shot once a year against both viruses.

The pandemic has intensified research on more traditional antiviral drugs as well. Several companies are now testing drugs (not vaccines) that block the SARS-CoV-2 genome copying enzyme (the replicase) or the protein cutting enzyme that helps the virus mature (the protease). Early reports show that these drugs quickly clear the virus from an infected person, so they can be used therapeutically. Whether they can be used to prevent infection is unclear. But a combination of these drugs is akin to how HIV is successfully treated with Truvada, a combination drug.

Likewise, engineered antibodies specific for SARS-CoV-2 have been approved by the FDA. They can be delivered by injection

and delivery by inhalation is being studied. Still under development is sustained expression of anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in the lining of the nose. (Anti-antibodies? Yes, an antibody that binds to and neutralizes another antibody.) This would be based on delivery of the antibody RNA or a gene. If these new strategies prove to be safe and effective, they might be appreciated by healthcare workers, people with weak immune systems or people who can’t or won’t be vaccinated.

Second, why not send an email to treat an autoimmune disease, or even cancer? BioNTech is already testing an RNA drug to treat multiple sclerosis. The intent is to stop the production of antibodies that attack the brain cells that insulate nerves (glial cells). This opens the door to treat other autoimmune disorders, especially when the target is known. Also in the research stage is the ability to improve the body’s own T cells to recognize liquid cancers like leukemia or solid tumors.

Treatments for inherited diseases are also in progress. For example, Moderna is working with Seattle Children’s Hospital to treat an inherited disease, hemophilia, with a drug that delivers the RNA for the missing clotting factor. If the benefits of one infusion of the drug fade after say six months or six years, the drug could simply be given again.

Third, there has been an increased focus on the chronic aspects of disease. Remember in early 2020 when we were told that COVID-19 was thought to be a simple respiratory illness with a two-week course? Of course, by late spring 2020 doctors and their patients realized that COVID-19 was far more dangerous than the flu; for unknown reasons, many patients were not recovering.

Now we know that about 20% of patients sick enough to be hospitalized with COVID-19 develop complex symptoms that persist after the acute illness subsides. We call this long Covid, and the patients long-haulers. Symptoms include breathing difficulties, heart palpitations, chronic headaches, digestive problems, sleep disturbances, exhaustion, anosmia and mental impairment. The symptoms can persist for six months or more, with devastating effects on lives, families and jobs.

What’s happening here? One idea is that either SARS-CoV-2 directly attacks the autonomous nervous system or indirectly provokes the immune system to do so. The autonomous nervous system controls breathing, blood pressure, heart rate, digestive activity and temperature

regulation. Overall, long Covid is revealing how the immune response varies among people. We have to drop the simple idea that all patients will respond exactly the same way to SARS-CoV-2 infection and the related myth that the human immune system is a well-organized and defined mechanism. It looks more like long Covid may be similar to other poorly understood chronic conditions such as Lyme disease or chronic fatigue syndrome.

The pandemic has dramatized the variability and complexity of the human host's response to a pathogen. The emerging hope is that ongoing studies on long Covid will help us understand the chronic problems that can follow infection.

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



Dan Clouse
THE OTHER SIDE

De Gustibus for the Rest of Us

“There’s no accounting for taste” the saying goes. You could annoy someone with the Latin version, “de gustibus non disputandum est” (“In matters of taste, there can be no disputes”), but I won’t.

People just like weird food. I get the gag reflex just imagining the sawdust of coconut flakes on my tongue, while other people crave it on German chocolate cake.

I love kimchi, mild or spicy, but my family doesn’t, to put it mildly.

Kimchi does have a distinctive smell, which is why I am only allowed to have it outdoors. One July afternoon I was under the grape arbor savoring a delicious lunch of “Mother-in-Law’s Kimchi” imported from H-Mart on South Tacoma Way. My brother-in-law Andy walked by and said, “Say, have you had your propane tank checked lately? Smells like you have a leak.”

The Malaysian fruit durian is the ultimate love-hate food odor. One travel writer described it as “a rich custard highly flavored with almonds.” Another wrote that “its odor is best described as pig-excrement, turpentine and onions, garnished with a gym sock.”

The French, who have a cliché for everything, say “à chacun son goût” — everyone has their own taste.

“Gastro Obscura” exists on the internet to shock our provincial food preferences. They clickbait us with off-the-beaten-path combinations like marshmallow

hamburgers, rattlesnake au vin, levantón andino (a Venezuelan cocktail-hangover remedy with bull’s eyes, catfish roe, quail eggs, tree bark and lots of rum), and an exterminator’s job of insect garnishes from around the globe, all of which make a Burns Night Haggis sound like chicken nuggets from McDonald’s.

All South Sound clamdiggers like Manila clams, but some of us discard horse clams that we dig up alongside them. Some people are put off by the geoduck’s priapic appearance and won’t touch it, while other people get sunburns digging them up during the minus tides of July because they love eating them raw.

Every college student in the 1960s had heard about Alice B. Toklas hash brownies, even though those early edibles were really just mom’s brownie recipe with some seeds and stems thrown in. The real hashish fudge recipe by Gertrude Stein’s partner was for a nut loaf made with dried figs, dates, almonds and peanuts, mixed with some hash, granulated sugar, peppercorns, nutmeg, cinnamon and coriander. Some partook and the weirdness came later. For others, the anticipated taste was too weird to give it a try.

Making the hash fudge isn’t complicated. It doesn’t even involve cooking.

Weird foods, though, can employ equally weird cooking preparations.

I’ve always loved this guy Al’s recipe for cedar-planked rooster. Al was a neighbor of my pal Charlie Morgan when he had the flower greenhouse down in Onalaska. Once on a visit to see him, just as I was recovering sensation in my extremities from a polar bear plunge in the icy Newaukum, Al roared up in a clatter and a cloud of dust. He stumbled out of his WWII Army jeep and, as soon as he was steady on his feet, lurched headlong into what was obviously a well-rehearsed skit beginning with, “You know how to cook an old rooster?”

Charlie smiled sideways at us city folk as Al explained all the steps of cleaning the inedible barnyard reject, the part about soaking it in Thunderbird, then smearing it with bear grease, and fastening it with roofing nails spread-eagled to a cedar shake. The tipsy stand-up comic insisted on every detail of the wood fire in a pit and the three days of turning, and roasting.

“And when it’s done, you throw away the rooster and eat the damn shingle!”

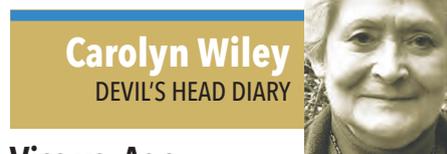
On my next visit, he told the same story again, but because he kind of thought he might remember me from somewhere, switched up the old rooster for a “lice-infested cormorant.”

Alice B. Toklas’ hashish fudge recipe

made the inedible edible. Al’s recipe for roasted birds on the other hand, makes the inedible hilarious.

After all, we have an appetite for laughter, too.

Dan Clouse lives in Lakebay.



Carolyn Wiley
DEVIL’S HEAD DIARY

Vice vs. Age

It seems eons ago that the pool closed, but we were finally back in the water and relearning the water aerobics routine. I was huffing and puffing through the moves when Chris, the lifeguard, indicated that she had a question. I paddled over to the edge willing to impart any needed bits of knowledge in my possession.

Her question: “Carolyn, I heard someone say you are over 90. Is that true?”

I revealed that it wasn’t true. I may be on the far side of 80 but I have a few to go before the big 9-0.

Her reaction made me think that if I really were 90-plus, she would have been wildly impressed with my agility and energy. Admitting to being a decade younger was far less impressive.

This encounter had me giggling for a week, sparked some memories of bygone years, and got me thinking about my future.

One of my grandmother’s favorite quotes was Oliver Herford’s bon mot, “Only the good die young.” The statement took on new meaning as I blew past young. Upon reflection, I figure the brashness of youth and the tendency to push limits was a form of self-preservation. If there is truth in Herford’s words, it would be advisable to get deadly serious about physical preservation and goodness avoidance.

Currently my plan for future fitness includes another decade or so of water aerobics and some tai chi sword play. In addition, I do have genetics on my side since I come from a long line of very old women.

Documentation indicates that they were not just old women, but they also were good women who hung out with good men.

I have a photo of my maternal great-grandmother on her 93rd birthday and she still looked spry enough to go for a few more years. She was married to a Methodist circuit rider who covered the central Texas circuit out of Cuero — an area of small settlements bordering Comanche, Tonkawa and Lipan Apache territory.

Their daughter, Ethel, my grandmother, lived to be 98. She married Mr. Goforth and moved to Comfort, Texas. (There is a joke in that combo — my Uncle Morris

always claimed that he and his best friend, Adolph Stieler, were recruited by a fraternity at the University of Texas because they could be introduced as Goforth and Stieler from Comfort). Gram started the Sunday school in Comfort and after the church was built she was the church pianist for the next half century.

My mother, the youngest of the five Goforth children, lived to be 96. After my dad died, she became a master teacher and community leader who set a good example for all.

On the paternal side, my grandmother was wed in the Missouri Territory and followed her husband, a Presbyterian minister, to Texas. She lived to be 95. Their marriage only lasted about two years. The Rev. W.H. Brown died before my dad was born, but she persisted. She raised two boys, sent them to college, sold encyclopedias, dabbled in real estate and managed her 100-acre farm until shortly before her death.

My dad’s grandmother only lived to be 89. I don’t know much about her, but her husband, Hugh M. Cooper, was a master of understatement as evidenced in the recorded minutes of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, New Mt. Pleasant Congregation in Missouri. A page is left blank between March 10, 1861 to September 17, 1866. The next entry, penned by my great-grandfather, begins:

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

So much for the Civil War.

Hence, based upon the “only-the-good-die-young” hypothesis, and the women who swam upstream from my gene pool, I can only surmise that these good women were snatched away in the prime of life.

I may have skittered along on the risky edge of appropriate as a teenager, but I made a conscious effort to observe the boundaries. Consequently, there are no glaring sins to mar my early goodness record.

Actuarially, that put me at risk, so I have countered it by diligently obtaining right-of-way and paving a six-lane highway to you know where with innumerable sins of omission. So far, the strategy has paid off.

However, when wanting to wimp out on a workout, I remind myself that based on calculations of goodness, the highway that is still under construction and my gene pool, I’m facing another quarter century minimum, and I don’t want to face it sitting or lying down.

In the meantime, if I’m asked my age, I think I’ll add a decade because I much prefer a “Wow, that’s hard to believe!” response to “Meh, ya’ still look pretty good.”

Award-winning columnist Carolyn Wiley



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And the Band Plays On... Or Threatens To.

STAFF REPORT

The notorious Down Home Band directed by Dr. William Roes will throw off the shackles of the pandemic to (safely) begin rehearsals for its 2021 “Back from Behind” season June 24, 7 p.m. at the Community Health Care clinic in Key Center located at 15610 89th Street Court NW. In the long tradition (from 1907) of KP community musical outreach, rehearsals are open to anyone who plays an instrument. Just show up or call 253-884-9221 for more information. The first gig is the undying anarchic love fest that is the Fourth of July Home Parade, traditionally observed on July 4, 10 a.m., on A Street.

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Letter to the Editor

SUPPORT FOR RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

I was so happy to see we had a state bill this year which would bring the option of ranked-choice voting to Washington. Though we will have to wait until next year to see if it passes, the momentum is exciting.

Ranked-choice voting (RCV) allows you to rank the candidates on your ballot. If your first choice can't win, your vote counts for your second choice and so on until one candidate has won 50% of the votes.

Over the years, there have been candidates who really speak to my values and vision. Often, these candidates are not supported by either of the two major parties and so are perceived as "spoilers." In the past, I have felt enormous pressure to compromise. Voters like me are admonished not to throw our votes away on candidates who are not electable.

It sounds so simple, but RCV means that voters like me will no longer feel pressured to vote for the "lesser of two evils." We will be able to vote our hearts and back it up with a safe bet.

In 2008, Pierce County adopted ranked-choice voting as a pilot. It ran into a few problems, some having to do with the technology of the time and some with just bad luck. These mishaps soured many people on RCV and it was repealed.

But so much has changed since then. Election technology is better and there are evidence-based protocols now for RCV implementation. Polls show that voters like RCV and there is bipartisan support for it across the country.

Data gathered from across the nation shows that RCV will improve our elections by making campaigns about issues, increasing the diversity among candidates and improving voter turnout. Please support ranked-choice voting for Washington.

Jomichele Seidl, Gig Harbor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters are used on a space-available basis and will be edited for length and clarity. Mail to P.O. Box 3, Vaughn, WA 98394, or email to editor@keypennews.org.

Obituaries are printed as a service to community members. Limit to 300 words and provide a high-resolution photograph. Submissions will be edited. Send to editor@keypennews.org.

OBITUARY



Gail Ann Bonn

Gail Ann Bonn passed away in her sleep May 4 at Cottesmore of Life in Gig Harbor following a stroke and complications from cancer. She was 79.

Gail grew up and graduated from high school in Downey, Cal. She was an Honored Queen of Job's Daughters, Bethel Post 244. After graduation she attended Los Angeles Beauty College and became a beautician.

She met the love of her life, Karl, who was in the Navy at the time, at a sports car rally. They married in 1963. Gail enjoyed all her travels to foreign lands, eventually landing in Washington, her husband's final assignment, in 1974.

Gail loved the rain, the clean smell afterwards, along with the shine of the sun on wet leaves. She loved it so much she decided to make a home on the Key Peninsula. She loved Westerns and the TV was on all the time.

Well-known in her community, Gail was a 40-year member of Ashes, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Key Peninsula Fire Department, which provides support to the department and helps families devastated by fire. She spent many years helping organize pancake breakfasts, spaghetti feeds and bake sales to raise funds for the organization.

Gail was also a member of the Key Peninsula Health Center Board, which was instrumental in bringing medical services to the Key Peninsula and a medical clinic to Key Center.

Beloved wife to husband Karl for 58 years, Gail will be dearly missed. She is also survived by her brother, Garry; nephew, Glenn; and niece, Laura.

Services will be held in the chapel at Haven of Rest in Gig Harbor at 1 p.m., Friday, May 28. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Ashes, Key Peninsula Fire Department, 8911 Key Peninsula Highway NW, Lakebay WA 98349. ■



Chris Konieczny

Funding for Lakebay Marina Acquisition Secured

The preservation of the historical landmark is one big step closer with purchase of the marina scheduled to close in September, if not before.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

After ranking No. 1 in the Boating Facilities Program administered by the state Recreation and Conservation Office, the funding needed to complete the Recreational Boaters Association of Washington Marine Park Conservancy purchase of Lakebay Marina from owner Mark Scott is guaranteed.

The \$1.776 million boating facilities grant will go toward the acquisition and planning of the Lakebay Marina project. State legislators allocated nearly \$15 million for the BFP in the final version

of the state capital budget recently signed by Gov. Jay Inslee.

Once the acquisition is complete, RBAW Marine Park Conservancy will deed the property over to the Department of Natural Resources. The conservancy and DNR consider Washington State Parks as the ideal choice for ownership in the future.

"Washington's maritime community is critical to our culture, economy and public health. Through this partnership with the Recreational Boaters Association of Washington and Pierce County, we are ensuring the infrastructure is updated to support and expand our vital boating economy," said Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz. "With its warm, shallow waters, Mayo Cove has long been treasured as a summer spot for recreation and I'm proud to be working to protect that access and local history for our future generations."

Veteran state lobbyist Doug Levy said that in allocating grants through the boating facilities program, the RCO tried to split funds with half of the available funding awarded to boating facilities operated by state agencies and the other half run by

local agencies like cities, counties and ports.

"The Lakebay Marina project was submitted as a state agency project by the Department of Natural Resources with the Recreational Boating Association of Washington's Marine Park Conservancy as a partner in the endeavor," Levy said.

Hanna Blackstock, senior aquatics policy analyst at DNR, and Bob Wise, president of RBAW, made a joint presentation of the project to the boating facilities evaluation committee. The application and presentation process is very specific, tightly structured and timed.

"We put a lot of work into that presentation. We practiced it many times, we worked on the script," Wise said. "But to see it come in as the No. 1 ranked project was a great victory for us of course, but a much greater victory for the entire community — the Key Peninsula, recreational boaters, and just general public access to the water and open space."

Wise said he has come to view this about more than saving the marina.

"It's bigger than that. I see it as a real community gathering place not necessarily related to boating but just people wanting to be able to walk out on the pier and get access to the tidelands. There's the boat ramp and the ability to fish and crab, swim, paddleboard and kayak. And then there's the boaters' side of it too. There is just something about the ambiance of the location that kind of takes you back to an earlier time, away from the hustle and bustle of Seattle and Tacoma, yet still close.

"It feels like a different era out there. The place has a little bit of magic associated with it and I think that's a big part of it."

Mark Scott could not be reached for comment. ■

THE PLACE HAS A LITTLE BIT OF
MAGIC ASSOCIATED WITH IT...

News Briefs



U.S. Postal Inspection Service

Lakebay Post Office Burglary Suspect Arrested, Again

STAFF REPORT

An arrest was made April 28 in connection with the burglary of the Lakebay Post Office April 3 and the break-in at the Belfair Post Office in Mason County April 17. The two cases were earlier reported as being unrelated.

The suspect, Nathan Drew Lindquist, 48, of Bremerton, was arrested and booked into the Mason County Jail. He faces multiple criminal charges for the two post office break-ins but was released the following day.

This is not the first time Lindquist was apprehended and charged with postal theft, with criminal cases in multiple jurisdictions stacking up against him.

U.S. Postal Inspector John Weigand said Lindquist is the same suspect awaiting trial for an earlier string of post office burglaries including the Lakebay Post Office in June 2019, four post offices in Kitsap County and the Allyn Post Office in Mason County. Weigand said the postal inspection service solved those cases in 2020.

WestNet Taskforce agents made the arrest. WestNet is a multi-jurisdictional

task force that includes the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General, Naval Criminal Investigation Service and the Washington State Patrol, in addition to law enforcement from Kitsap, Mason and Pierce counties.

Weigand said WestNet primarily investigates narcotics, but “they do a lot of mail and postal crimes as well, with a postal inspector attached to the task force unit.”

Lindquist is currently on pretrial release for the charges already filed against him. ■



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KP NATURE GUIDE

Ingrid Shumway

Anatomy of a Feeding Frenzy

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

A commotion has been building outside. It has been building for days now. Some sort of forage fish is massing along the shoreline, and it has drawn a feeding frenzy of gulls, mergansers, cormorants, seals and eagles from miles around. Even slow to migrate loons have appeared in their snappy breeding plumage to partake.

The action swells and subsides like the tide as the hours pass. Screaming and diving and splashing give way to drifting and gliding and digesting when the fish vanish into deeper water. Seals let the tide carry them where it will. Then the fish reappear. Caspian terns plunge into the fray from great heights. I thought the sea lions had finally left for the year, but they arrive — and everyone knows it when they do. Late into the night their belligerent barks ring across the Sound.

In the morning the fracas continues. We count at least 15 eagles in the area. Last year when this happened, there were over 60. Far into the forest I can hear the gulls. My fly fisherman neighbor goes down to investigate, and reports that most of the fish are anchovies, with smaller schools of young chum salmon.

For several years now I have been attempting to parse out the anatomy of these feeding frenzies. They happen spontaneously throughout winter and spring and can be as short as 15 minutes or as long as a week.

How do they begin? Who finds the fish? How does word spread? Which species are early arrivers, and which come later? When the fish vanish, how are they rediscovered? When do the feeders decide it is time to disperse?

That's what I mean by the anatomy. I guess I'm trying to study an ecosystem of many parts rather than an individual, except here it's also an event. A party.

And it's anchovies, which reminds me of "Cannery Row" and what John Steinbeck wrote in that wonderfully aimless book's culminating chapter: "The nature of parties has been imperfectly studied. It is, however, generally understood that a party has a pathology, that it is a kind of an individual and that it is likely to be a very perverse individual. And it is also generally understood that a party hardly ever goes the way it is planned or intended."

Steinbeck treated "Cannery Row" like a tidepool rather than a plot, patiently sitting with his characters and letting their stories crawl onto the page rather than forcing the characters to be servants to some final destiny. The party that ends the book is as meandering as the book itself, by turns awkward, energetic, ecstatic, weepy, disorderly, saccharine, sleepy. It's a delight to read. It's like the feeding frenzies.

Sometimes seals drive the action. Sometimes cormorants. Sea lions may start it



Ingrid Shumway

or finish it. Though I want to see more before drawing any firm conclusions, I have yet to find an overarching pattern. I like Steinbeck's use of the word pathology, despite its connotations, and the ease with which he compares individuals to groups to parties. The scientist and the novelist in me want these phenomena to have set

pathways, discernible arcs, while the earthy kid who's now lived decades on this planet knows that everything is contingent upon circumstance — who happens to find the fish, chance encounters thereafter, the half-inches that separate success from failure in hunting.

With patience, we learn the general strategies of the participants. Mergansers cruise the bays in small packs like wolves and are often the first to locate fish. Bald eagles arrive late, when a certain level of hoopla has been achieved, since they prefer to steal fish rather than catch them. Gulls are particularly strange. They seem to exist to stir up the party, to thrive on yelling and fighting and generally creating a moving mob that attracts the attention of everyone around. Why? Wouldn't it make more sense for a bird to be sneaky when it finds food, to avoid the competition?

Maybe they thrive on chaos. Maybe when the party runs loose and half-eaten fish are flying, gulls are happiest. They're generalists, after all, like us. They may not be able to dive underwater or fly upside down, but they sure can react quickly when the scene is complex. They're one of the few birds with eyes that move in their sockets.

For now, as a student of feeding frenzies, I'd do well to learn from the gulls. My scribbled notes are full of discoveries but no grand theory is forthcoming. How could it be? Whenever a new frenzy begins, half-eaten observations start flying and the questions follow in a flurry that is as unpredictable as life itself: What drives the anchovies toward shore? What else is underwater? How far can a cormorant see down there? How do eagles know what's going on from miles away? How do seals? Do these animals intentionally communicate with each other, between species?

I keep my eyes open. I try to get to know the partygoers, but that's a far cry from knowing how the party will go. ■

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Vaughn Girl's Pet is an Alligator Lizard

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

By now, Grace Bennett is an old hand at lizard keeping. She is 5 years old, and her pet for the last year has been a northern alligator lizard named Baraka.

Grace lives on a 5-acre farm near Vaughn, where her family maintains a large garden and runs a variety of animals. She spends much of her time tromping through the woods with her older brother, side by side, catching frogs and snakes and anything else that moves.

"I was just like that as a kid," her father Tyler said. His policy has been catch-and-release: He will let his kids keep their finds in a cage for a day or two, and then he will ask them to let the animals return to their environment. "In my experience," he said, when you try to keep wild creatures as pets, "most things end up dying."

Yet when Grace brought him a tiny lizard from their backyard last summer, he decided to let her keep it. It was not much more than an inch long at the time. Over a year later, Baraka is healthy and eating well. Though it remains much smaller than the average alligator lizard, it has grown to three inches and seems to enjoy its excursions to the yard under Grace's watchful eye. She keeps it in a small cage with sand, rocks, a water container and plastic palm trees.

Tyler told his daughter that if she wanted to keep it she would have to find food for it. When she asked him what it ate, he did not know what to tell her. They tried everything, from wild ants to the store-bought mealworms they feed their pet gecko. The only things Baraka eats? Spiders of any kind, daddy longlegs and small white insect larvae.

Baraka is named after a character from the video game and film series *Mortal Kombat*.

The northern alligator lizard, *Elgaria coerulea*, lives throughout the Pacific Northwest. It is most common in fields, clearings, and rocky areas and can survive in moderately developed landscapes, where it is often found in wood piles or rock walls. It is secretive and seldom strays far from crevices where it can hide, though it is also a good swimmer and is known to jump into water to escape danger. Being cold-blooded, it is inactive throughout the winter and on cold days.

In the wild, alligator lizards eat a variety of insects as well as snails, worms, small lizards and bird eggs. A typical alligator lizard measures ten inches from the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail. Our local



Tyler Bennett

subspecies, known as the northwestern alligator lizard, is generally smaller than those found farther south.

In summer, female alligator lizards give birth to live young, usually four or five in number. The babies, called neonates, are small yet independent. As in mammals with large litters, reptiles often produce runts, and perhaps Baraka was the smallest of its siblings and destined to be diminutive.

Has Grace learned from the responsibility? "Definitely," said Tyler. "She's doing a pretty good job." From time to time he has to give her reminders, but she continues to catch food for Baraka, change the water and clean the cage. He has been impressed.

It may go against the usual policy of not keeping wild animals, but for now? "It's working." ■

Tyler Bennett



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Counting the days until retirement. Lisa Bryan, KP News

Vaughn Postmaster to Retire

The job is tougher than it looks. Just like the postmaster.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

After 34 years in the postal service, including eight as Vaughn postmaster, DeeDee Emmett will retire June 30 at “a very young 59-and-a-half” years old, she said.

Emmett started at the post office in 1987 after her mother told her what a great job it was.

“I was making \$6 an hour and went up to \$11.87 at the plant in Tacoma on Pine Street,” Emmett said.

“The plant” is the processing center where all mail “this side of Seattle” is sorted, she said.

“When you’re in the plant you’re in one side of the house. Trying to get into customer service was really tough.”

Emmett was promoted to management in 1995 and spent 15 years in labor relations and human resources before coming to Vaughn.

“Ever since I became a supervisor I was trying to figure out how to get my own post office,” she said. The Tacoma postmaster recommended her for the job in Vaughn.

“I said, ‘Where the heck is Vaughn?’”

Emmett had been living on Fox Island since 1993, where she filled in at the post office during holiday seasons. “But after a few months of being here, I couldn’t be happier,” she said.

“I adore the Key Peninsula, not just Vaughn, because I get all the people that live between the Lakebay post office and here, and the people that belong to the Wauna post office that have Gig Harbor

zip codes come here because it’s closer for them,” she said.

“When I first came here there were 745 rented post office boxes and now I have 860. I’d like to think that some of that is because people enjoy coming here. I’m proud of that.”

There are two part-time employees at the Vaughn post office in addition to Emmett. She’s had nine over the last eight years: two got married and left, two got full-time positions elsewhere, two retired and three moved to jobs closer to home.

“It’s been tough,” she said. But that’s not the hardest part of the job.

“You can’t go home and turn it off. I get Facebook messages about packages. What do you want me to do about your package when it’s 8 o’clock at night?”

“I SAID ‘WHERE THE HECK IS VAUGHN?’”

she said. “And the first thing I do when I wake up is look at my phone to see if my clerks have

messaged me about anything.”

Emmett has also learned about the limits of her authority.

“I was probably here less than three months and a customer came in who hadn’t picked up his mail in forever and his rent was overdue. He said he’d been in the hospital after being diagnosed with cancer from exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. I said, ‘OK, do you have anything that shows you were in the hospital, because then I can waive your late fee, which is \$20.’ And he says ‘Yeah, in my mail probably.’ So, he got his mail and there’s a hospital bill that shows that he’s been in there for

months. The guy is dying of cancer and he served our country, so I waive the fee. Then I get a phone call a couple days later from headquarters in Seattle and they say ‘Who is going to pay that late fee?’ I said ‘Not me.’ My boss was also on the call and she said ‘DeeDee has explained herself quite well. Let’s move on.’”

Dealing with the restrictions imposed by the pandemic have made the job harder, Emmett said.

“I’d say 90% of the people that come in are happy we’re still here. But then that 10% have forgotten how to communicate, how to be civil. People are upset about having to wear a mask. People point their phone at me and say, ‘This says my package is here.’ If you don’t have a slip in your box, your package isn’t here. That part has gotten to me.”

Emmett also said that while she is very proud of her work, it has become harder for her to defend the post office after recent cuts and changes in service.

“For 26 years I worked at that plant (in Tacoma) before I came here, I kept thinking if I ever get my own post office, I will make sure that my customers aren’t complaining about their experience. I can’t do anything about your package being lost somewhere, but if I can affect you here in my office, I’m going to do it. It’s a small part of the big ocean of the postal service but I was proud to do it.”

After retirement, Emmett said, “I don’t want to set my alarm unless I’m getting on an airplane. I’ve got \$4,000 in airline credits, and I’ve never been to Europe.” ■

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From Seattle to Olympia via Vaughn: E. G. Edrington's Dream

JOSEPH PENTHEROUKAKIS, KP NEWS

The summer of 1895 was a busy and exciting time for Edmund G. Edrington of Vaughn.

Edrington, who had worked as a salesman for several oil companies in his native Pittsburgh, had moved to Washington with his wife for health reasons a few years earlier, eventually settling in the growing community on Vaughn Bay. That summer all the parts of an idea he and other budding entrepreneurs had been working on for a couple of years seemed to be coming together; it was time to form a company, raise the capital and make it happen.

At the time the most popular means of getting around Puget Sound were the countless privately owned steamers that together were known as the mosquito fleet. Cities, towns and smaller communities on the water were growing fast, and business crisscrossing the sound carrying freight, mail and passengers was brisk. The boats were not particularly fast, however; in 1891 the trip from Seattle to Olympia with a stop in Tacoma took five hours. Travel by rail took as long and was not as convenient or flexible, and arguably not as scenic.

There had to be a better way, Edrington thought, at least for some of the popular routes, so in June of 1895 he announced the formation of the Seattle, Vaughn & Olympia Railway & Navigation Company. The new company planned to build, own and operate a combined rail-steamer line from Seattle to Olympia consisting of a fast steamer between Seattle and Colby in Kitsap County; a rail connection for the 12 or so miles between Colby and Vaughn; and a second fast boat directly from Vaughn to Olympia. Edrington claimed that the trip between Seattle and Olympia would be reduced to as much as one-third of the time it took using the water route and half of that on the rail route.

Edrington was the company's president and general manager, and several Vaughn settlers whose names would become household words served as officers: Henry S. Coblentz was vice-president; George M. Robertson, secretary; R. W. Taynton, treasurer. Chester Van Slyke was listed as master mechanic. Reporting about a public meeting held in Vaughn on June 17, 1895, to launch the new company, the Seattle P-I wrote that "much enthusiasm was displayed. The right-of-way and much labor was (sic) pledged."

The total cost of the railroad equipment

alone was estimated to be \$500,000, or about \$15 million in 2021 dollars. Unnamed investors on the East Coast were interested in purchasing bonds in the company, Edrington said, but first they needed to see that the roadbed was graded and ties laid before they committed their investment dollars. The cost for that initial project was \$30,000, or about \$1 million today, with a projected completion date of January 1896. Edrington hoped that the citizens of the towns along the new line would come up with a large portion of that amount, presumably in the form of stock purchases. Seattle figured prominently on that list, and on July 3 the Seattle P-I reported that Edrington was to address the city's Chamber of Commerce.

Edrington pulled out all the stops: The railroad, he argued, "will open up a rich country, where ultimately electricity may be used as a motive power, and the people are extremely anxious to receive the benefits of the road." He added, "I consider that the building of this (rail)road will be of the greatest benefit to Seattle, as it will bring directly to this city all the business from the country about Olympia, as well as the great logging country about Shelton and back through Mason County." The railroad would not sit idle when it was not used for the Colby-Vaughn runs: Edrington claimed that he had potential contracts in place to haul timber during those hours.

"Those who are interested in our company have been figuring on this enterprise for about three years," Edrington told the Mason County Journal on July 5, "but the hard times prevented us from even attempting to get Eastern capital to take an interest in it." The depression that had swept the country since the stock market crash of 1893 was about over, Edrington believed, so apparently those Eastern people of wealth were now in.

The company incorporated on August 17, 1895, with Edrington, Taynton and Robertson as incorporators, and with a declared capital on paper of \$30,000.

After the announcement of its incorporation, however, the company was never heard from again. No reports in the press of a railroad from Colby to Vaughn or steamers connecting those points to Seattle and Olympia; no further mention of Edrington in the news.

By 1898 the Edringtons had moved back to Pittsburgh where Edmund once again worked as a salesman, according

to that city's directory. Barely a trace of a memory of them remained in Vaughn; in her 1961 book "Parade of the Pioneers," a history of Vaughn's early days, Bertha Davidson wrote about the Edringtons that "they left as quietly as they had come." She makes no mention of the company, even though the project had generated much enthusiasm, if the news coverage of the day is to be believed.

That is all we might have known about Edrington and the fast line from Seattle to Olympia had it not been for a recent serendipitous discovery of copies of Edrington's letters in the archives of the Key Peninsula Historical Society, created using a letter-copying press, an early form of duplication before the widespread use of carbon paper. The set includes some 30 letters about the company, recording his urgent and at times desperate attempts to get bids for railroad equipment and the steamers from various manufacturers nationwide, and to raise the \$30,000 capital needed. They also tell of disputes and disagreements

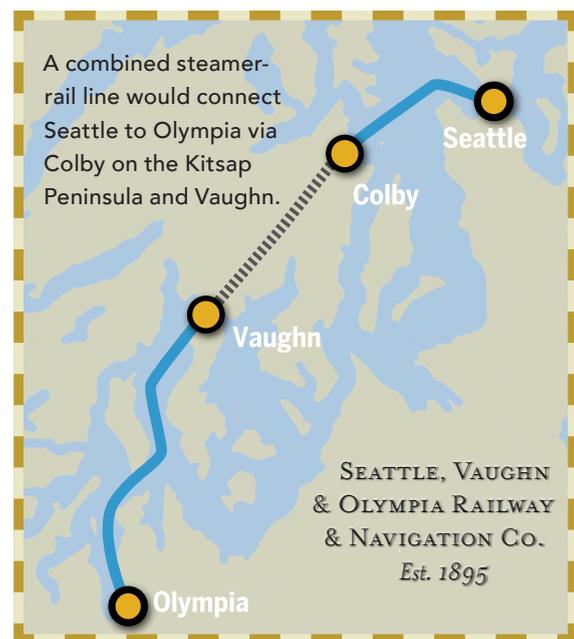
with Taynton and Robertson, the other two incorporators, who apparently delayed filing the corporation papers with the state, unbeknownst to Edrington and much to his consternation.

The roadbed between Colby and Vaughn was never built. In a letter to Washington Secretary of State J. H. Price on Jan. 9, 1896, Edrington lays out the company's difficulties and asks if he was required to file an annual report since, as he explained, "there has not

been a single share of stock sold nor has any work been done for the company" except for his own administrative work.

Finally, on June 30, 1897, two years to the day since the company was first mentioned in the press, Edrington wrote to Taynton and Robertson letting them know that the corporation should be dissolved and asking them to pay their share of the required fees. That never happened; the company stayed on the books and was administratively dissolved in 1923, following the passage of a law that provided for that action for corporations that had not paid their annual license fee for over two years.

Edrington died in Pittsburgh in 1910 at age 56, still listed as a salesman. It was the dawn of a new century that would see enormous advances in transportation; the line to Seattle to Olympia via Vaughn might not have survived. But for a few weeks in the summer of 1895 Edrington's world was full of possibility; there are probably a myriad of reasons why his vision was doomed to fail, but at least he had dared to dream. ■



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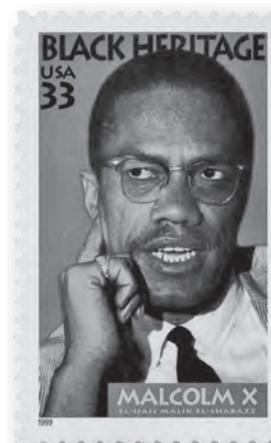
'The Autobiography of Malcolm X'



In 1998, Time magazine ranked Alex Haley's book one of the 10 most influential nonfiction works of the 20th century.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

My son recently left home for college. Afterward, I found it necessary to clean up his room a bit. Among piles of leftover laundry were also stacks of books he'd read for high school classes, including this one. Holding it in his now vacant room, I remembered that it had been part of my high school curriculum too, but I'd never read it.



After a year of Black Lives Matter, I thought maybe I should. His name still evokes fear, anger and admiration five decades after his murder. Alex Haley interviewed Malcolm X more than 50 times from 1962 to '65, and the result was a book alive with the same intensity as their all-night talks about racism, protest and brutality that seem little changed since then.

Malcolm speaks to us directly in the same powerful, raw language that made him a proud militant, describing his upbringing, his crimes, his bigotry and misogyny, and his evolution into a human rights activist. He does not mince words. He does not look away. He does not rationalize his failings. Or our own.

Yet he speaks also with a humility and tenderness at odds with his self-description as "the angriest Negro in America."

"I want to say before I go on that I have never previously told anyone my sordid past in detail," he said, and Haley wrote. "I haven't done it now to sound as though I might be proud of how bad, how evil, I was ... (But) the full story is the best way that I know to have it seen, and understood, that I had sunk to the very bottom of the American white man's society..."

His father was a strident Baptist preacher murdered by a white gang in Lansing, Michigan in 1931 when Malcolm was 6 years old. His mother was institutionalized and the children were scattered to foster homes.

Malcolm did well in school, where he was one of just a handful of Black students. Even when he misbehaved, his white foster family interceded with the state to keep him. Then, when he was class president in eighth grade, his favorite teacher urged Malcolm to give up on becoming a lawyer and instead concentrate on going into the trades, like the rest of his people.

He couldn't articulate it at the time, but Malcolm felt something change inside him.

He was later expelled after refusing to remove his hat in a classroom, and was removed from his foster family and sent to a reform school when he was 14.

A half-sister in Boston took him in afterward. He had never seen so many Black people in his life, and they were happy and successful — within limits. He got a job as a bathroom attendant and shoe shiner at a fancy whites-only ballroom, and soon learned to hustle for his clients: bootleg liquor, marijuana, condoms, whatever. He had his hair straightened, bought a shark-skin zoot suit and scored a white girlfriend, who was married. He was 16.

Malcolm was arrested in 1946 — the only time in his life — for his role in a string of residential burglaries, a crime that should have netted a sentence of 18 to 24 months. His involvement with a married white woman came up at his trial, and he got 10 years in prison. He was 20.

It was during his incarceration that his siblings introduced him to the Nation of Islam, which advocated Black independence from white society.

He studied the slave trade and the Civil War; he read Herodotus and W.E.B. Du Bois; Durant's histories and Gandhi's philosophy. "Book after book showed me how the white man had brought upon the world's Black, brown, red, and yellow peoples every variety of the sufferings of exploitation ... indisputable proof that the collective white man had acted like a devil in virtually every contact he had with the world's collective non-white man."

"THE WHITE MAN CAN LYNCH AND BURN AND BOMB AND BEAT NEGROES — THAT'S ALL RIGHT: 'HAVE PATIENCE!' 'THE CUSTOMS ARE ENTRENCHED!' 'THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER!' "

And that is what Malcolm preached for 12 years as a minister for the Nation, after converting to its unorthodox version of Islam when he left prison in 1952. Like other converts, he dispensed with his surname.

"The Muslim's 'X' symbolized the true African family name that he never could know."

As his popularity grew, so did suspicion. "I'm not for wanton violence, I'm for justice," he answered one reporter, explaining that "The white man can lynch and burn and bomb and beat Negroes — that's all right: 'Have patience!' 'The customs are entrenched!' 'Things are getting better!'"

In 1963, according to The New York Times of the day, Malcolm was the second most in-demand speaker at college campuses and universities after presidential candidate Sen. Barry Goldwater.

The Nation of Islam took notice. "There was jealousy because I had been requested to make these featured appearances," Malcolm said. He also learned the Nation's leader had repeatedly violated their strict moral codes and that three paternity suits were imminent.

A smear campaign drove Malcolm from the Nation. He suspected the version of Islam he had devoted his life to was flawed. In 1964, he decided to make the hajj to Mecca to find out.

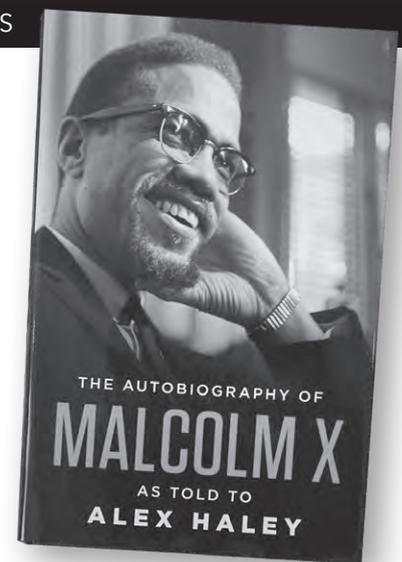
In a life of continual change, the holy pilgrimage again changed Malcolm.

"There were tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all over the world. They were of all colors, from blue-eyed blondes to black-skinned Africans. But we were all participating in the same ritual, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe never could exist between the white and non-white."

After embracing orthodox Sunni Islam, he became El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, but remained Malcolm X at heart.

"Where the really sincere white people have got to do their 'proving' of themselves is not among the Black victims, but out on the battle lines of where America's racism really is — and that's in their own home communities."

Malcolm was shot to death Feb. 21, 1965 by three gunmen as he spoke at his weekly



townhall meeting in Manhattan, before the book was finished. He was 39.

"I know that societies often have killed the people who have helped to change those societies. And if I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the racist cancer that is malignant in the body of America — then, all of the credit is due to Allah. Only the mistakes have been mine," he said. ■

In 1998, Time magazine ranked "The Autobiography" one of the 10 most influential nonfiction works of the 20th century. It was Alex Haley's first book. He would go on to receive more honors, including a Pulitzer Prize for his work tracing his own heritage, "Roots," inspired by his time with Malcolm. Haley died in 1992.

Three men were convicted of murdering Malcolm X. Thomas Hagan, the only one to admit his role in the murder, was paroled in 2010.

"I have deep regrets about my participation in that," he said then. "Malcolm X broke with the Nation of Islam, separated from the Nation of Islam, and in doing so there was controversy as to some of the statements he was making about the leader. History has revealed a lot of what Malcolm X was saying was true."

The two other men convicted always maintained their innocence. Hagan testified at their trials and subsequent parole hearings that both men were innocent, and that others were involved. The two were paroled in the 1980s.

In February 2020, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office announced it would review the case, including newly declassified government and police documents, and pursue any suspects still at-large. A document alleging possible NYPD collusion in the murder surfaced in February 2021.

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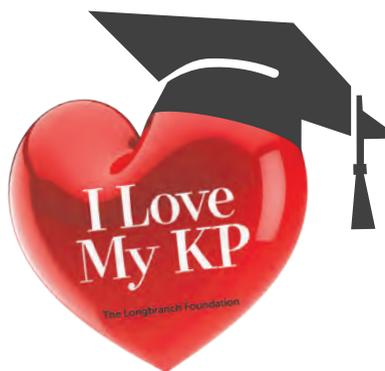
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Berries on the KP

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

It's summertime and berry season is upon us. Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries. The blackberries harvested here tend to be the Himalayan variety, hence no space will be devoted to words on how to encourage that pesky invasive.

The key to success with any of these berries is location, location, location. The quality of the soil and the right amount of sun are critical. Plant in the right place, pay attention to food, water and a bit of maintenance, and you will literally enjoy the fruits of your labor for years to come.

First, sun.

Sun exposure is measured by the hours of direct sun during the summer months, June through August. All the berries do best with at least six hours of sun a day.

Next, soil.

All of these plants need well-drained and moderately rich soil. Experts recommend digging in about 2 inches of manure when preparing beds. Strawberries and raspberries do best with a slightly acidic pH of 6.5. Blueberries need a pH of about 5. Lime can be added to raise the pH, or sulfur will lower it. Testing kits are readily available.

Finally, planting and maintenance.

Strawberries are a ground cover. Laurel Schultz, program director of Communities in Schools of Peninsula, grew up on a strawberry farm on Bainbridge Island. "My claim to fame is that when I was in the seventh grade I picked 2,800 pounds of berries and was able to buy the boots I wanted for school," she said. Strawberries are either June bearing or everbearing. Schultz said that they raised June bearing fruit on the farm; the berries were ready to harvest at one time, were a little bigger, darker red, and have a longer shelf life than the everbearing varieties.

Her practical advice: When considering what variety to plant, decide if you want to harvest berries all at once or spread it out. Get starts with good roots, and when you plant be sure not to cover the crown with dirt. Pinch off the runners so that the main plant will put all its energy into growing berries.

After two or three years the June bearing plants tend to have fewer and smaller berries. Replace them when that happens. Slugs and birds are the main problems for strawberry growers. For slugs, Schultz uses beer traps. "But," she said, "I can't get slugs attracted to anything cheap. They like high hops beer." For birds she thinks the best

THE KEY TO SUCCESS WITH ANY OF THESE BERRIES IS LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION. THE QUALITY OF THE SOIL AND THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SUN ARE CRITICAL.

option is to have a big crop and plan to share. Hoops and netting can protect the fruit from birds if you prefer to keep the crop for yourself.

Raspberries grow from canes. As with strawberries, there are two types — June bearing, with one heavy crop, and everbearing, with two lighter crops — one in early summer and one in late summer or early fall. June bearing varieties grow fruit on two-year old wood, floricanes, branching laterally. Everbearing plants produce fruit early in the season on floricanes from the previous year, and then at the end of the season on new growth primocanes.

Claudia Steen, who coordinates the Yakima Valley Master Gardener Program, said that the first primocanes in the spring should be removed to encourage fruit development on the floricanes from the previous year, then limit the primocanes to the largest ones. Keep the primocanes pruned to a

height of about 5-6 feet and support the canes so they don't fall over. Fertilize in March, and mulch to keep moisture in.

Kip Clinton, who learned about raspberries from her uncle, has both types. She recommends alfalfa, once you are sure there are no seeds, as a mulch. In October, remove the old floricanes, and leave four to five primocanes per crown.

Blueberries are bushes. Jami Pragnell, who owns the Olalla U-Pick Blueberry Farm, said that when selecting plants, you should buy the biggest ones you can

afford. "The root system is everything." She grew up picking berries with her family and started with nine bushes in her own

garden. She decided she needed more when she realized none of the crop made it to her freezer.

She and her husband planted an acre with 1,000 bushes in 2015 and opened their farm to the public five years ago. They have a number of varieties ripening from early July through August. She advises picking all the blossoms off for the first two years after planting to encourage root development. "It takes about three years before you get a decent crop."

She recommends mounding the soil 6 inches at the base of the plant to protect low-lying branches from frost damage. She fertilizes with an acid-plant product in April, May and June, and uses mulch to retain moisture. Each plant gets a gallon of water per plant per week. After the third or fourth year, once the leaves have dropped, she removes old and spindly canes to allow for new growth. ■

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Father's Day Dinner — The Ultimate Chili Dog

KAMRYN MINCH

Kamryn Minch, KP News

Whenever we ask Dad what he wants for dinner on literally any occasion, the question is usually posed tongue-in-cheek because we know the answer. It's never steak, salmon, or burgers, it's always chili dogs. Dinner for his birthday? Chili dogs. Dinner for Father's Day? Chili dogs. Dinner for when he's in charge of making dinner? Typically, without interference from the rest of us, chili dogs. I can bet most people have maybe two or three chili dogs per year, if that. I've already had five.

Some may call me lucky, and many probably think something is wrong with us (Mom), but like father, like daughter, I'm a connoisseur of the finer things in life and can appreciate the complexities within the flavorful ensemble that is a chili dog.

Canned chili is our typical go-to for chili dog nights, but on special occasions like Father's Day we strive to set the meal apart by making chili from scratch. And we don't just use any ole' chili recipe. No way! From flavor to texture, we've mastered a chili recipe that has been specially crafted for the creation of the ultimate chili dog. Not only is it delicious, but it's super easy too.

Fair warning, in this family we like a bit of spice so this recipe features jalapeños. I use pickled jalapeños here instead of fresh so the heat is a bit milder. While you can opt to omit the jalapeños altogether (or even choose to use fresh if you like to live dangerously), do keep the half cup of jalapeño pickle juice from the jar as it really brings the flavors together.

As far as the rest of the staple ingredients go, we don't have a preference for type

of hot dog or bun so go wherever your family's brand loyalties lie. Toppings, on the other hand, need to be taken seriously. A smothering of chili does not a chili dog make. For the sake of tastebuds and Instagram (because obviously this masterpiece will be a work of art and too good not to share) consider the following:

Toasted bun, ketchup and yellow mustard (yes, I did, don't interrupt), grilled dog — and it must be grilled — two to three ladlefuls of chili, a dusting of cheddar cheese, a scoop of sour cream, and fresh onion or chives. If you really want to party, get some bacon in there; this meal is for Dad after all. You can substitute for ketchup with a relish; utilizing that element of sweet to play off the smokiness of the chili will only enhance the chili dog experience.

And, of course, there may be a critic of the chili dog lurking in your household unit. Luckily the chili is perfectly acceptable on its own, but better with a side of corn bread.

Chili Dog Chili

- 3 15-ounce cans of beans: 2 red bean, 1 black bean
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 white onion, diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon diced chipotle pepper in adobo sauce

- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 can tomato sauce
- 1 cup pickled jalapeños, whole slices or chopped
- ½ cup of pickled jalapeño juice
- 2 cups of beef broth

Drain and rinse the 3 cans of beans and set aside.

In a large pot or Dutch oven, drizzle olive oil and sauté the diced onion and green pepper over medium heat until soft and translucent.

While the onion and pepper cook, premix the cumin, chili powder, smoked paprika, ½ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper in a small bowl.

Add minced garlic to the onion and pepper in the pot and sauté for one minute. Add ground beef along with 2 teaspoons of spice mix. Break up the meat and stir frequently until browned.

When the ground beef is thoroughly cooked, stir in the diced chipotle pepper and tomato paste until the meat and onion mix is completely coated.

Incorporate the jalapeño slices, jalapeño juice, tomato sauce, beef broth and the remainder of the spice mix. Stir until everything is well mixed and then add the beans.

Turn up the heat to high and allow the pot to come to a boil before turning the heat down to low and letting the chili simmer with the lid on for 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally.

While the chili is cooking, fire up the grill and get those dogs hot. ■

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



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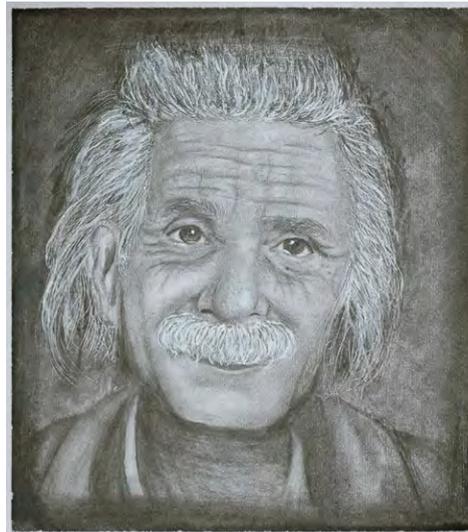
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"Chelsea is an exceptional artist who worked very hard this year learning how to draw realistic portraits," her art teacher, Richard Miller said.

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Kamryn Minch, KP News

Battalion Chief Chuck West Retires

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

After nearly 40 years with the Key Peninsula Fire Department, Battalion Chief Chuck West is retiring. He started as a volunteer in 1982, was hired as a fire fighter in 1986, and now, he said, “It’s time to let the new generation come in and make their mark. When I see that the buildings I helped design need new roofs I realize how long I have been here.”

The oldest of five, West lived with his grandparents in Tacoma’s Hilltop when his parents divorced. When he was 14 his father remarried and the blended family — his stepmother also had five children — moved to 5 acres on Peacock Hill in Gig Harbor. A stepbrother soon joined the Coast Guard, making West the oldest boy left in the house. “I was the human rototiller — meaning I used a shovel. We raised everything, with a vegetable garden and rotating animals,” he said.

He credits his work ethic with the work on the farm and his caretaking position as oldest in the household. “Adversity brings

lessons, and I’ve learned a lot,” he said.

A driver’s license and a budding high school romance with a Key Peninsula girl led him to discover the KP. After graduation in 1976, he moved with a buddy to a rental on Yeazell Road. He worked in restaurants, got on-the-job construction training working for a neighbor, and then worked for a company building log homes. He wanted to see the country, sold everything and drove with a friend to Florida. He worked odd jobs, partied hard, and after two years decided it was time to move back home.

His first job upon return was hauling material for an electrician; he liked West’s work ethic and by the next day he was inside working as an apprentice. “I always felt like no matter what the job is I will be the best at what I do,” West said.

In 1982, during a poker game, friends roped him into joining the Key Peninsula Fire Department as a volunteer. The

educational opportunities, including EMT training, intrigued him. He went on to serve in leadership roles with the volunteer association and took charge of their annual fundraiser — a fireworks show at Home on Joe’s Bay (Von Geldern Cove) to raise money for equipment. “The fireworks display was from a barge, so it was safe,” West said. But the crowds on the shore got too big and so, a victim of its success, the event was discontinued.

In 1986 he was hired as a fire fighter by the department. Over the years he served in many capacities — lieutenant, training officer, technical services chief with some community liaison responsibilities.

He returned to front line work as a battalion chief in 2006. “When I started, we had two people on a shift, with at least one of those being a career person. Only the Key Center station had career staff. The others were staffed by volunteers. We had a BLS (basic life service) ambulance we called the Guppy,” West said. “Salaries weren’t high — the work was all about passion for the community. It was a tight group.”

The department continued to grow. Paramedics became an integral part of the team. Now, he said, there are nine people on a shift with career staff at the Wauna, Home and Longbranch stations. The Key Center station houses administration and the volunteers.

KPFD Assistant Fire Chief Hal Wolverton’s career started almost 30 years ago under the guidance of Chuck West when he was a lieutenant. “I was then, and remain to this day, amazed at the level of dedication Chuck has for his community,” he said. “I try to emulate his level of compassion with each decision made every day.”

Prevention Specialist/Public Information Officer Anne Nesbit was first

recruited as a volunteer by West when they both attended an Evergreen Elementary School open house. “He has been that fire guy, that person for the department that has been that face for the community,” she said. Nesbit had recently divorced, and West was her family’s secret Santa that year. “He knew things were tough,” she said.

“He does that extra mile. He has worked overtime, but it hasn’t been work. One woman shared that when her husband passed Chuck came the next day and just gave her a hug. He has impacted a lot of lives. When people call, they want to know if Chuck is working,” Nesbit said. “His

retirement will be a loss because he has championed love and care of the community. That is great mentorship.”

The shift structure of work at the fire department allowed West to start his own business, Chuck West Construction, which now has four employees and does remodeling and new construction.

One of the first places he worked on was a cabin near Evergreen Elementary School where he lived and raised his two sons with his first wife. His oldest son Zach died in a car accident when he was 21. Alex, now 33, is in the Coast Guard and

lives in Alaska with his family. West’s second marriage ended when his

wife got deeply involved in Scientology. He explored it to see why she was so interested, and he appreciated some of the aspects of self-empowerment. “But in the end, I thought it was all about getting people’s money,” West said. She and their daughter Lilly now live in Great Britain, though West hopes Lilly will return to the area.

West met his wife Marsha when he was involved in community outreach for the fire department and she was editor of the Key Peninsula News. They married in 2013. His stepson Sean graduated from Peninsula High this year.

West has been active as a community volunteer for decades. He joined the Key Peninsula Community Council in its early years, served as president and has resumed that role recently. He wants to be sure that the council maintains an office in Key Center and can continue to offer local space for the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department there. He helped establish the Key Free Clinic and is its board president. He joined the Pierce County Flood Control Advisory Board to assure that the Key Peninsula has representation at the county level.

In 2019 he was elected to the Peninsula School District Board of Directors. “I really want to represent everyone,” West said. “When I go to board meetings every other person in the room went to college. They need the voice of someone who didn’t go to college and has been successful. I want to create productive members of society whether they go to college or become welders.”

West doesn’t plan to slow down following retirement. He will continue his construction business. He owns a piece of property in Key Center he would like to develop. And he will stay involved with his board work. “I’m not going anywhere,” he said. ■

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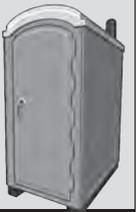
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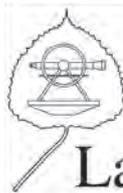
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TOP LEFT An eagle spies fresh supper in Minter Creek. *Ed Johnson, KP News* **TOP RIGHT** Colorful tree swallows nest in the natural cavities of decaying trees. *Tina McKail, KP News* **MID LEFT** The sort of bleeding hearts we can all admire. *Tina McKail, KP News* **MID RIGHT** A pair of seldom-seen wood ducks. *Tina McKail, KP News* **LOWER LEFT** A somewhat mystical pastoral scene. *Scott Shelton* **LOWER MID** Gosling swim lessons. *Tina McKail, KP News* **LOWER RIGHT** Honeybees swarm without their queen before being safely collected by a beekeeper. *Ron Cameron*