

Meet the Most Accident-prone Stretches of SR 302 and the KP Highway

Speed is a factor in a majority of accidents on Key Peninsula roadways.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Everyone has experienced it. Aggressive drivers. Tailgaters. Swervers. Shoulder and solid-line passers.

Defensive driving is an essential skill on the Key Peninsula. It encourages drivers to expect the unexpected when driving along the dark and congested major roadways to prevent accidents before they happen.

But they do happen.

Pierce County Planning and Public Works, the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Key Peninsula Fire Department may not always be in sync on why these accidents happen, but there is one thing all three agree on: Speed is the main culprit.

"SPEEDS ARE FASTER THAN THEY'VE EVER BEEN. PEOPLE ARE USING THE TURNING LANE AS A PASSING LANE AND THAT'S SO DANGEROUS."

They aren't necessarily the most dangerous stretches of roadway, but the Key Peninsula News identified the following as the most accident-prone areas on the two main KP roadways from 2015-2022, according to data from WSDOT and South Sound 911.

State Route 302

No. 3 – 118th Avenue NW to 131st Avenue NW

This twisty three-quarter mile stretch of road has seen 64 accidents in the past eight years. According to WSDOT,

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In 1939, the Works Progress Administration built an A-frame gymnasium next to the 1924 schoolhouse on land donated by the LIC, which bought it back in 1956 after the school closed. *Tina McKail, KP News*

Longbranch Improvement Club Plans to Raise a Roof and Keep a Lid on Cost

The \$3 million project will save energy and make the historic building usable year-round for club activities and rentals.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Marsha Kremen thought she had fulfilled her major commitments. After more than five years in leadership at the Longbranch Improvement Club, first as vice-president, then president, and finally as trustee-at-large, she had earned her retirement from retirement. And then along came a project she could not turn down.

The LIC needs a roof. Not just any roof. A big roof. On a 1939-vintage building that has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1987. A building that also has obsolete wiring and inad-

"HAVING A BUILDING THAT IS WARM ENOUGH IN THE WINTER AND COOL ENOUGH IN THE SUMMER WILL HELP MAKE THAT HAPPEN."

quate insulation, heating and ventilation. "We found old paperwork and over the past 30 years there have been two other attempts to get a new roof," Kremen said. "We can't kick this can down the road or it just won't get done and the building will disintegrate."

"The club completed a five-year plan in 2022 and it included doing more community-based outreach," she said. "Having

a building that is warm enough in the winter and cool enough in the summer will help make that happen."

The five-year plan, said LIC Board President Kelly Guenther, included optimal use of the gathering spaces — the forest and trails around the building, the community garden, the field, the clubhouse and the marina — and making people feel safe and connected.

"The roof aligns perfectly with our five-year plan," Guenther said. "The kudos really go to Marsha for taking this big project on We would not be nearly where

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THE LONG OVERDUE SPRING OF THE SOUL.

Here's What I Think About That

LISA BRYAN,
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Over the last month, I've heard from many people questioning whether the Key Peninsula is still the same friendly community it was prior to 2020. It does not feel that way to them.

It's a big question. If you're anything like me, you may say, "yes" one day and "absolutely not" another. The truth is: I don't know. My own perceptions are often colored by my mood.

In the before times, I blamed societal change on partisan politics and campaigns on steroids, unleashed by the U.S. Supreme Court 2010 ruling in the Citizens United case that gave corporations and labor unions protections equal to actual living people under the First Amendment. The resulting increase in campaign spending has skyrocketed. Money talks.

For the last three years, I blamed Covid, social media and mind-numbing graphic violence portrayed solely for entertainment. I blame the players in the pharmaceutical industry for unleashing an epidemic of drug addiction. I blame the soul-grinding force that is poverty.

But most of all I believe what disturbs so many of us is a side effect of polarization. I avoid using the words "extremism" or "radicalization" here, despite both prevailing in the politics of today because the words only serve to fuel more of the same.

During the worst of the pandemic we saw the politics of anger and frustration affect the entire medical system. While it may have started with Covid, the effects of an overburdened health care system on understaffed, overworked and stressed-out care providers at practically every level have driven health care professionals — including doctors and nurses — to leave the profession entirely. It only worsens the problems.

The same is true in public education, where the battle rages on. And who suffers the most? An entire generation of children, the very human beings we want to protect and defend.

The situation is poised to worsen in school districts across Washington State, where overall enrollment has declined from 2019 levels, followed

by state funding.

Peninsula School District states its projected enrollment for the 2023-24 school year to be down roughly 500 students out of 9,000 from pre-pandemic levels.

During the Covid emergency, Washington state continued to fund public schools per student based on pre-pandemic enrollment levels. Now that the declared Covid emergency has passed, funding levels will return to current enrollment numbers.

The PSD board of directors approved a resolution to reduce educational programs and staffing for the 2023-24 school year at its regular business meeting March 23.

"School districts across our state are funded primarily based on enrollment and are also having to make similar adjustments to their budget," said Board President Natalie Wimberley, according to a statement from the district. "Increasing costs such as transportation and recent legislative changes have further impacted education funding."

Yet for all the problems, when I speak to people across the political spectrum we are not as different, divided or demented as the politicians make us out to be.

I still believe with all my heart in the people who live here, on the KP; people who work and volunteer to make life better for all of us. Our community cares deeply. When it comes to hunger, for example, personal politics become irrelevant. Nobody cares about politics when it comes to seeing that families have food to eat and medical care.

Just walk into Key Peninsula Community Services and talk to Willow Eaton or Kyong Bertsch. Talk to Zaida Woodworth and Michelle Johnson at Food Backpacks 4 Kids (see page 13). Visit Communities In Schools of Peninsula, The Mustard Seed Project, The Red Barn Youth Center.

The long winter has passed, and the days ahead are where our community really shines. We go outside, we garden, we play, and we laugh. The petty grievances fall away whenever we engage with one another. ■



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End of a Dream: Wauna Man Stops Second Solo Journey

After becoming the first person to row from mainland North America to Asia, Erden Eruç ended his journey around the world for lack of a visa.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Wauna resident Erden Eruç ("AIR-den AIR-rooch"), 61, ended his quest to complete his second human-powered solo circumnavigation March 15 in the Philippines after being repeatedly denied a visa to traverse China, which was essential to his trip.

Last year, Eruç became the first person to row from North America to Asia on what was to be the first leg of another record-setting journey.

He launched from Crescent City, Calif., June 22, 2021, bound for Hong Kong. After diverting to Oahu for repairs and then Guam due to weather, he made landfall at Legazpi City on the island of Luzon in the Philippines March 24, 2022, where he was forced to temporarily suspend his expedition to wait out typhoon season.

He rowed approximately 7,800 miles over 239 days, or about 33 miles a day.

Eruç resumed his journey on a borrowed bicycle Jan. 18 from the waterfront in Legazpi, on the east coast of Luzon, pedaling 604 miles over two weeks, mostly in the rain, to Currimao on the northwest coast. There he rejoined his boat and prepared to row approximately 710 nautical miles west across the South China Sea, a busy and dangerous stretch of water dotted with Chinese military bases, to Danang, Vietnam. He would then pedal another borrowed bicycle to China or Myanmar, depending on which country would grant him entry.

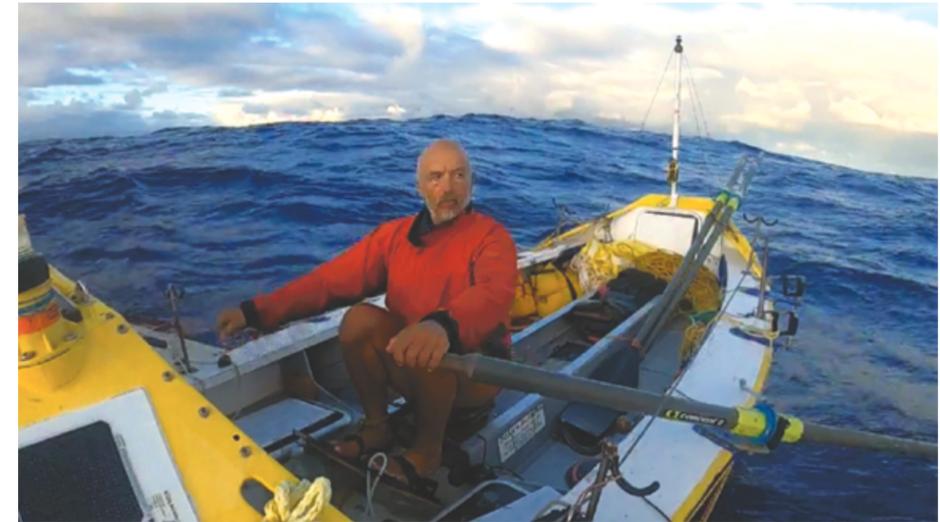
His original plan after reaching Hong Kong was to bicycle to Tibet and climb Mount Everest, then continue by bike across western China to Central Asia and the Caucasus Mountain range between Russia and Georgia, where he would summit Mount Elbrus, the tallest in Europe, before continuing to Portugal and the Americas for more of the same.

Both China and Myanmar refused him a visa.

"Myanmar turned down our visa request on account of security concerns," Eruç wrote in his blog. He had tried, thinking he could reroute across India and Asia Minor, since China had been denying him entry since March 2021 because of its pandemic restrictions.

"It did not make a difference that I would arrive by rowboat after having spent months in self-isolation," Eruç wrote. "I could have met all of their quarantine requirements while waiting at anchor. 'No exceptions!' was their answer."

Eruç appealed to the Chinese embassy in

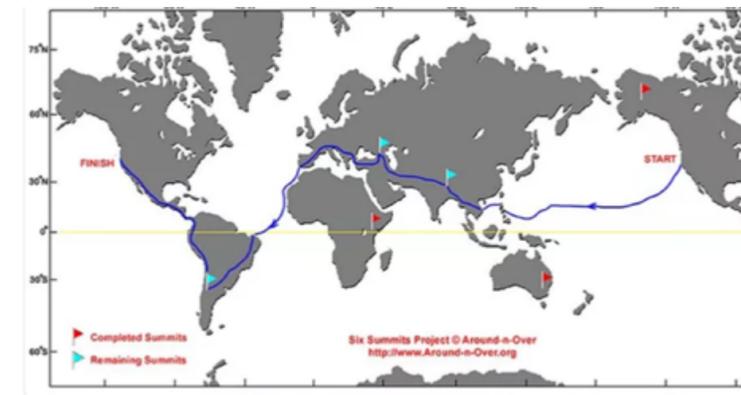


Left: Erden Eruç at the oars, crossing the Pacific alone for the second time.

Erden Eruç

Below: Eruç's planned route around the world, across China to Europe and back to the Americas.

Around-n-Over



Manila, saying he could apply again if necessary in person at the Hanoi embassy after making the crossing. "I also asked them to notify their coast guard and navy about my intentions to gain their understanding. Their response on March 12 was short and to the point: 'Tourist visa is still suspended as of the moment. And the Embassy will NOT contact Chinese Coast Guard and Chinese Navy for you.'"

Eruç's journey was to be a continuation of his first solo human-powered circumnavigation, which he completed in 2012 after five years and 41,196 miles by rowboat, sea kayak, foot, and bicycle. He climbed three of the six highest peaks on three different continents and set 18 world records along the way.

This time he wanted to climb the remaining three peaks on three more continents after reaching them under his own power, what he called his Six Summits Project to honor Göran Kropp, a famous climber who inspired Eruç and who died while they were on a

climb together.

Eruç also livestreamed or visited classrooms and civic clubs along the way to discuss plastic pollution in the oceans and sustainable environmental practices through his work with the nonprofit Ocean Recovery Alliance and his own nonprofit, Around-n-Over.

"When I talk to children, my message is to acknowledge our dreams," Eruç told KP News in 2021. "Often, we become the worst enemy of our own dreams. We find excuses, we find ways that this will not be possible because, like our family, we know our own weaknesses and we fall victim to the same. But it is possible to grow, it is possible to change."

"When I had the idea of circumnavigation by human power it was such a big journey that I had to become the person who could establish world records and historic firsts. When I started, I had no such ambition. What, who, me? When we set ourselves such big goals, the steps that we take have to be commensurate. They have to be giant leaps

and bounds. And each one of those steps becomes a journey in its own right.

"And at each junction when I take the next step the naysayers don't show up. The only ones who matter are those who are standing by me and supporting me, and new people will appear because they coalesce around the dream. It's not necessarily me — I am just the face, the engine, for the dream itself. What attracts them is the dream. As the dream moves, so do people."

China lifted its pandemic visa restrictions March 15, three days after denying Eruç entry. Conditions in the South China Sea had also deteriorated too much by then to risk a crossing. Instead of re-launching, Eruç arranged to ship his rowboat home in a cargo container.

"This also concludes my attempt to complete the Six Summits Project in memory of Göran Kropp, which I struggled to keep going since 2003," Eruç wrote in his final blog entry. "I no longer have the resources to push this proverbial boulder uphill, a Sisyphean task that it has become."

After covering almost 50,000 miles by paddle, pedal and foot and nearly one-and-a-half times around the globe over 20 years, while summiting three of its tallest peaks, his last entry drew hundreds of comments. One from another climber, Priscilla Moore, read "A dear mentor taught me that the decision to turn back is often the hardest and most heroic. Erden, your courage, strength and great mental stamina are without peer, and a shining beacon for a world running short of such gifts."

For more information, go to www.erdeneruc.com. ■

ACCIDENTS FROM PAGE 1

traffic has increased 25% over the last decade. Many accidents along this stretch happened at the intersection of SR 302 and 118th Avenue NW before WSDOT added left-turn lanes onto 118th. Though collisions with wildlife are rare on the Key Peninsula, this is one of the sections of SR 302 where that's likelier to happen.

In an email to KP News, WSDOT Communications and Outreach Supervisor April Leigh wrote "Our traffic engineering team is looking at the 118th Avenue intersection for a potential roundabout in the future but whether that happens depends on availability out of the right-of-way, environmental feasibility, etc. (because roundabouts are a great solution, but they have a big footprint)."

No. 2 – 94th Avenue NW to Creviston Drive NW

The fender-bender capital of the Key Peninsula. There have been 79 accidents in this nearly half-mile stretch starting at the first (or last) stop light on the peninsula.

"This has always been a problem area," said KP Fire District 16 Public Information Officer Anne Nesbit. "And in this area, accidents lead to congestion." Getting around accidents there is difficult and time-consuming. WSDOT doesn't consider this particular stretch of the highway as a priority, but the No. 1 spot sure is getting some attention.

No. 1 – Goodrich Drive NW to 94th Avenue NW a.k.a. The Wauna Curves

There have been 203 accidents on this stretch since 2015. Combining that with No. 2 above equates to one accident every 10 days.

Yes, it's curvy, hence the name, but it's driving way too fast that causes the most issues.

"This is a priority area for us, but it's a hard area to tackle," said Sarah Ott, traffic engineer for WSDOT's Olympic region. "We're in the process to see what the right thing to do is."

The likely solution, according to Ott, is a roundabout at Goodrich Drive NW. Other than the Purdy boat launch ramp, it's probably the only space along the stretch that could be engineered.

"Roundabouts are great because it can reduce speeds from about 45 miles per hour down to 15," Ott said. "People make better decisions, and it really reduces the likeliness of error heading into or out of (the Wauna Curves)."

Other additions WSDOT has made



Frequency of accidents on KP roadways from 2017-2022. KP News

recently to curb accidents along the curves include emergency pullout locations throughout the area, reflective panels on the guardrails to make them more visible at night and widening center lines to slow down traffic organically. They've also added crosswalk

signs and beacons to make it safer for pedestrians to cross near the boat ramp. (Dis)Honorable Mention – Wright Bliss Road NW and SR 302 intersection

Despite local lore, this intersection doesn't have a lot of accidents. But

when they do happen, they're doozies. "We're talking high-speed T-bones," said Nesbit about cars trying to cross SR 302 from either side of Wright Bliss. "What we see is a co-occurring trend of driver-error," Ott mentioned. "Most are things we have control over, but we need to slow down."

Purdy Spit

The beauty of the surrounding area makes this a dangerous stretch. Drivers may see a whale, sea lions, or a bald eagle, but when they do that means they're likely not seeing the car in front of them coming to a screeching halt.

Key Peninsula Highway

Tied No. 3 – Lake Minterwood (101st Street NW to 140th Avenue CT NW) and Home (A Street to McEwan Road NW)

Where SR 302 is plagued with twists and turns, the issues with the KP Highway are straightaways where drivers pick up speed. The Lake Minterwood area is tree-lined on one side with a five-foot-high embankment on the other, leaving little room for error. There have been 21 accidents in this short stretch since 2015, including a preponderance of single-vehicle accidents.

Perhaps the most surprising area on this list, at least for those who don't live there, is Home. The speed limit drops down to 35 MPH going through Home, but the 21 accidents that have happened there suggest that's more of a guideline than a rule. Nesbit said she regularly sees cars going above 50 as they travel through the town.

No. 2 – Key Center (84th Street NW to 92nd Street NW)

Driving south through Key Center speeds quickly transition from 45 MPH, to 35 and then to 30.

"We evaluated the speeds in Key Center about 15 years ago," said Scott Moeller, Pierce County's associate traffic engineer. "The 30 MPH speed limit seemed to fit what people were doing around that time."

Nesbit said it's a little different today from 15 years ago. "Speeds are faster than they've ever been. People are using the turning lane as a passing lane and that's so dangerous."

There have been 22 accidents in Key Center, with many happening near the fire station.

Nesbit said flashing speed signs that visually show drivers how fast they're going could have helped. Each of those signs almost cost more than the cars

they track. Ott said it can cost \$20,000-\$30,000 to install and they're difficult to maintain.

No. 1 – 64th Street NW to 167th Avenue CT NW

The most accident-prone stretch of the Key Peninsula Highway is also where children are most present: Key Peninsula Middle School and Volunteer Park. This 1.4-mile stretch has seen 34 accidents in the last eight years, including six in 2022. For most schools in the Peninsula School District, speeds drop to 20 MPH during school hours to protect the students and staff, and those bringing or picking up the kids from school. Not for KPMS. The highway remains 45 MPH throughout the day.

According to Pierce County Traffic Engineer Sarah Grice, in order for that

to change, the school and district need to ask the county to do a study. Grice said she believes there isn't a speed reduction because there isn't high

(Dis)Honorable Mention – KP Highway/Jackson Lake Road NW/Lackey Road NW

pedestrian use by the school or park. Evergreen Elementary School, which also has its entrance along the Key Peninsula Highway, has a speed-reduction zone. Grice said speed limits are set by the Pierce County Council, based on recommendations from her team. But Moeller was quick to note that a "reduced speed limit doesn't necessarily mean drivers reduce their speed."

THERE HAVE BEEN 79 ACCIDENTS IN THIS NEARLY HALF-MILE STRETCH.

Another Attempt to Address Transportation on the Key Peninsula Emerges

The demise of School Bus Connects brings new effort to finding transportation solutions, but depends on community input and buy-in.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

KP School Bus Connects, the only regularly scheduled transportation program available to the community, will come to an end June 30. The demise of the program has led to a new push to meet the challenges of public transportation needs on the Key Peninsula.

Established by The Mustard Seed Project in 2011, School Bus Connects utilized school buses during off-hours to make scheduled stops on the KP a few days a week. Routes in the mornings started at either Vaughn or Evergreen Elementary schools and ended at the Purdy Park and Ride. In the afternoons the buses reversed routes. A grant from the Puget Sound Educational District using funds from the Washington State Department of Transportation covered the costs.

In 2013, TMSD transferred the program and grant administration to the Key Peninsula Community Council under the guidance of then board member Marcia Harris. Two years ago, Edale Clark took Harris' place.

Over the years the schedules varied and buses were used for special events, such as the annual KP Farm Tour. Clark said the pandemic, staffing changes at the school district and perhaps changes in community needs adversely affected the program. Ridership fell and staff at

PSED decided not to request a grant renewal for the first time since it took over the program 10 years ago.

"There were a number of challenges, and it was never a long-term solution," said Daeveene May, a transportation specialist in the Pierce County Human Services Department. "We never moved forward to work on the long-term solution."

May runs the Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition and is leading the effort to fill the Key Peninsula transportation gap. In its 2019 strategic plan, the coalition identified the KP as one of two geographic areas with significant transportation needs.

"By my assessment a lot of the issues on the Key Peninsula are infrastructure," he said. "There is no good place for a bus to pull over safely to provide good service. There is hardly any lighting to keep riders and the bus safe."

But the first step in closing the gap was to identify a local advocate. "This can't just come from the county," he said.

Susan Paganelli, co-director of the KP Partnership for a Healthy Community, stepped up to serve in that role. The partnership was established in 2015 under the umbrella of the Key Peninsula Commu-

but is high enough on Pierce County's radar to make a change. Letticia Neal, the Pierce County transportation improvement manager, said a roundabout could be on its way, but don't expect it soon. The county already has \$275,000 budgeted this year for a roundabout design, but they don't yet have funding for the construction. She doesn't know if the roundabout will be the solution to any issues in this area, but the Key Peninsula public chose this solution among four others in 2022.

Side Streets

"People have a love-hate relationship with roundabouts," Neal said. "A lot of people who don't like them end up liking them and vice versa." The Key Peninsula averaged just less than three fatality crashes per year since 2015. Of those, 12 happened on SR 302 and the Key Peninsula Highway,

"BUT I NEED DATA TO DRIVE THE TRAIN. WE NEED TO REACH EVERY CITIZEN ON THE KEY PENINSULA TO BE SURE WE HAVE FULL REPRESENTATION."

nity Council and became an independent 501(c)(3) in 2021. (See "KP Partnership for a Healthy Community Goes Independent," KP News, November 2021).

The partnership has focused on hunger, transportation and health care on the Key Peninsula. After re-evaluating their work on transportation, it decided to get involved at a policy level, which led to working with the transportation coalition.

The next step, May said, is to collect meaningful data. The coalition conducted a transportation survey for all of Pierce County in 2021. It had nearly 2,000 responses, but just 150 from the Key Peninsula. May would like to have more.

"I have all kinds of ideas, but I need data to drive the train," May said. "We need to reach every citizen on the Key Peninsula to be sure we have full representation."

May expects a \$50,000 grant from WSDOT this spring to administer and analyze a survey specific to the Key Peninsula and will be working with the partnership to complete the task. The survey should drill down to details about exactly how and why people would use new transportation and what the barriers are.

but 10 have happened on side streets. Speed, again, is the big issue.

"Hitting a bump or a pothole on a side street is a lot different at 45 MPH than it is going 75," Nesbit said. "Going that fast, a slight dip can make people lose control."

Recommendations

Slow down. According to WSDOT, fatal and serious traffic injury rates are up despite less driving since more people are working from home.

"If we all drove more responsibly, accidents and fatalities would be a different story," Nesbit said. "Drive the speed limit and drive appropriately for the road conditions."

Ott agreed. "Pay attention. In some years almost 80% of crashes are related to drivers not paying attention. It's going to take all of us working together to make a change." ■

"We will be going full-out for this in the next few months," Paganelli said. "The plan is to do a robust survey outreach through the end of April, then hold forums in May and June. We expect to engage the county, local nonprofits, the school district, Pierce Transit and community members. We will work with stakeholders to create ideas and potential implementation options by July 31."

"Transportation is a hard nut to crack," May said. "It may be clear after the survey is analyzed that a spine route isn't feasible or needed and we need to focus on a demand route. It might be that we expand existing programs. We might get a memorandum of understanding with community partners from Kitsap or Mason counties."

Newly elected Pierce County Councilmember Robyn Denson (D-7th, Gig Harbor) said that transportation came up frequently when she campaigned. Closing the gap, she said, is part of the county's bigger vision of equity. "The (solutions) won't be gold star," she said, "but we can start filling needs, get feedback, tweak and build." She anticipates that using smaller vehicles will offer more flexibility.

"We want to use the assets we have to the fullest effect," Paganelli said. "It may be an out-of-the-box mix of things. I am sure there are lots of options. We just need to figure out how to use them in effective and regular ways." ■

Grace Nesbit
FINDING GRACE

Is 'Everyone' the Problem?

All over the world and throughout all time, I'm betting, society has been creating a certain profile or image of who the perfect people are. No matter who you are or where you come from, everybody was born into this caste system. Unfortunately in this world looks do matter, and it shows. It does not matter what anyone might say, looks are the first thing they notice, and you will be judged based on that.

I'm in high school, so I know.

Personally, I say "Whatever." Look however you want, just be yourself. Unfortunately, that philosophy — live and let live, I think they call it? — is less popular than it used to be, and is even becoming illegal in some states. The way society was built and behaves has trained people to judge others while their own behavior gets a pass.

If we look back in history, there are many examples of how this works, sometimes causing the deaths of many, many innocents. In the United States, people of African descent were seen as property at worst or naturally inferior at best for centuries due to the color of their skin. About 70 years after slavery ended in the U.S., we had the Holocaust and World War II. Jewish people were the prime target in this mass genocide, once again stemming from a racist stereotype. Propaganda about cultural differences and promoting stereotypes — appearances over action — were tools in Hitler's mission to "... cleanse Germany of those with 'dirty blood.'"

More recently, the events of 9/11 brought terrorism home, literally, and whole communities and even countries of people resembling the terrorists who attacked us were suddenly under suspicion. However, diving deeper, according to our government the greatest terrorist threat we face here at home comes from within — domestic terrorists who are often white supremacists because, I guess, the U.S. doesn't look white enough to them.

Didn't I just study this in my World War II class?

Self-expression, I'm told in psych class, is the singular basis of representation and identity development. For the majority of Generation Z, rather than

physical appearance, the way we dress represents so much of who we are.

(OK Boomers, Generation Z — also known as Zoomers (but not to themselves) — is the demographic cohort succeeding Millennials and preceding Generation Alpha with the mid-1990s to the 2010s as birth years, at least according to the internet, so we know it's true. Most members of Generation Z are children of Generation X, while Generation Y begets Alphas. How's that for appearances?)

Going more in depth into my original theme of our looks being essential in our society, and cutting to the chase, our society seems based on prejudice — and any number of them, so you should take your pick. Which unfortunately decides how one should look and act. I have already presented examples of people being outcasted or even killed due to appearance, and I'm afraid it affects more of us every day.

The scary part is how so many people react to stay safe: They accept society pressures to be cookie cutter robots. No, "robot" is not the right word because robots can't make decisions for themselves.

What is the right word for someone who decides not to be themselves because they are afraid of what might happen to them if they are?

I know a few of them at school. I call them "friends."

Being in high school and living that life every day does cause problems for many of us. Specifically for girls, eating disorders are unfortunately common. Society says that you have to be tall, preferably blonde, and definitely skinny to be pretty. These expectations are still all around us even in our terribly overly correct reactions to culture. I recently read an article about a fashion week with "inclusive models" and in the written parameters were all of those considered to be "plus sized," meaning just how "plus sized" was acceptable.

I myself struggle with my appearance. Trying not to compare myself to those around me while resisting pressures to look a certain way are definitely present. For instance, I dread going to the store for new clothes because I can never find anything that will fit me right. Even just walking through the halls at school provides opportunities to find new insecurities. All because I don't look the way society tells me I should.

To finalize my thoughts, I have observed many people being treated differently based only on how they

look. And to this I would like to say, you shouldn't have to be like anyone else. People are like snowflakes; not everyone should be alike.

Grace Nesbit is a senior at Peninsula High School. She lives in Lakebay.

Carolyn Wiley
DEVIL'S HEAD DIARY

It's Déjà Vu All Over Again

Election season is creeping up on us and, unsurprisingly, tribal power games are becoming more inflammatory. Hair-on-fire-reporting fills the airwaves, and my hair is getting singed.

For distraction, I watch old Westerns. You know the formula. The territory is "governed" by a greedy, iron-handed autocrat. The townsmen, saloon owners, settlers, gold miners and the like, cower in fear of financial ruin enforced by the threat of violence. A gun-slinging hero rides into town armed with his own brand of brutality. After multiple whiskeys, multiple shoot-outs and multiple cold-blooded murders, "Voilà!" a new type of justice prevails. Might makes right!

Strange to say, but it seems like those Wild West themes are being revived as "values."

Turn back the clock to the good old days when men were men and women were window dressing, racism was "natural" and white male rule was guaranteed. I cringe every time a politician natters on about restoring the original intent of the Founding Fathers.

"History repeats itself. So, you might wanna pay attention." — Quavo

It took 144 years for women to get the vote. It took another 43 for women to garner enough power to move the equity needle.

When working my way through college in the late 1950s, I could expect to pocket 60 cents, while a guy doing the same job would get a whole dollar. With the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963, half the country cheered the end of gender discrimination in the workplace. Sixty years later, women average 82 cents to the male dollar. Wow! That is almost a gain of 4 cents a decade! At this rate it should only take another 30 years for my granddaughters to see the equal pay promise fulfilled!

It is a dismal fact that the male to

female wage gap is even greater if you happen to be subject to racial bias as well.

But there are causes for rejoicing. For the last 45 years, pregnancy was no longer a legitimate justification for firing an employee, and for just the last 13 years, charging women more for personal health care insurance has been illegal. Of course, this perk may provide minimal benefit in states where women and children have lost full access to health care options.

"History repeats itself because nobody listens the first time" — Erik Qualman

Face it: Young people are expensive. Ensuring that even the poorest children have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is an enormous burden. Imagine the savings if benefits for food, shelter and medical care were withheld. Survival-of-the-fittest policies may lead to shortages in drudge job workers, but there is always the option of importing labor. It worked well for the Founding Fathers until the practice led to a messy civil war. But kids don't need to know about that.

And some other brilliant plans are afoot to save tons of money by trimming, if not eliminating, old age benefits. Although my generation paid into the system, due to unfortunate medical advances we tend to hang around a lot longer than we were supposed to.

But in another blast from the past, we've revived an old method of ridding ourselves of the very young, old and otherwise unlucky. Since the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban expired in 2004, mass shootings in the U.S. have increased by 184%. And that doesn't count all the other shootings — the highest in three decades — where three or fewer people were murdered.

Sadly, just offering thoughts and prayers without legislative action is not cost-effective. Assault weapons inflict incomprehensible bodily and emotional wounds at an onerous cost. Although Washington state is on the verge of limiting access to such weapons (House Bill 1240), I do not want to deprive anyone of gun ownership. I actually agree with the Founding Fathers, people should be able to have all the flintlock pistols and muzzleloaders they want. Just like the good old days.

"Each time history repeats itself, the price goes up" — Ronald Wright

Award-winning columnist Carolyn Wiley lives quietly, for the most part, in Longbranch.

Mark Michel
RIDE ON

Side Effects

Given the opportunity, wouldn't we all choose to be shiny, happy people? Advertisers know the vast majority do.

But when I watch sports on television with my young daughter, uncomfortable questions may arise after certain commercials having to do with, for example, enhancing male performance.

I am old enough to remember when pharmaceutical companies were prohibited from advertising on television, along with tobacco and liquor companies, and even doctors and lawyers. But with the promise of big profits and the reality of massive lobbying, that changed — most significantly in 1997 with the advent of cable TV, when new laws were adopted and others dropped.

Now every commercial break is filled with a promise of financial security and pharmaceutical ads, at least on what I watch. Every 12 minutes or so we're told how one or another pill will solve problems we may not even have but that will guide us to a blissful life like those happy souls in the commercial.

Distracted by their playful interactions on the screen, we may not hear the narrator riff through the long list of possible side-effects, which may be catastrophic. I'm sure it's a universal joke, but my dad took pride in improvising possible side effects: "Side effects may include your left ear falling off, or untreatable death," or other outcomes worse than the affliction allegedly treated

by the drug. We cracked ourselves up.

But what if many of those ailments could be addressed without the possibility of our left ear falling off? What if there were something we could do that didn't have unintended complications, which would then need a different drug to treat?

In his great column, "Kryptonite" (KP News, October 2022), Joseph Pentheroudakis identified what works for him. In it he described how going for a bike ride helps him focus his mind and quiet the voices of self-doubt. Exercise produces a similar effect for me. I have sometimes found myself nearly overwhelmed by different, miniature conflicts in my life. On a daily basis few things stay "on script." All of the responsibilities we put on ourselves pile up in a cascade of things screaming for our attention with none being resolved smoothly.

It's times like those I go for a ride, a jog, or a walk. It doesn't matter what I do, I just have to move. For me, focusing on moving changes my mind's landscape. I'm no doctor, but it feels like giving my conscious brain something to do keeps it from getting in the way of my subconscious, where all the heavy lifting to process and prioritize takes place. Without exception, I feel better and am more productive when I get back.

This should come as no surprise. Study after study cites the emotional, mental and physical benefits of exercise. Many of these studies also show it doesn't require extreme or even aggressive exercise, just relatively consistent movement. I'm painfully aware of how hard it can be to get up and go out to exercise. But the rewards are massive and the consequences of failing can be catastrophic over time.

I sure wish some of the big bike and shoe manufacturers would get together and launch an aggressive ad campaign resembling the big pharma ads.

They'd start with someone looking sad or dejected, trying to hide their affliction. Then, with the help of this "wonder drug," they would become happy people exercising. A similar narrator could then riff: "Side effects may include living a longer, more productive life," or "Side effects may include a dramatically improved social life," or "Side effects may include improved cognition and increased happiness." According to numerous medical studies, it isn't "may." Increased activity is statistically likely to lead to all those beneficial side effects, but it takes effort.

While it may be easier to succumb to a regimen of pills or shots, I'll take a longer, healthier, happier life any day. And I'd definitely rather talk to my young daughter about that than "enhancing male performance."

Mark Michel is a recently retired commercial airline pilot and Key Pen Parks commissioner. He lives in Lakebay.

Rion Tisno
ALL FOR ONE

Melting Pot Meets Mosaic

I have been living on the Key Peninsula since Oct. 25, 2007. I moved here to increase the diversity and to be as close as I can to the water. I also thought that because I made it out of the trap that some of us Black men grow up in, that people out here would respect me and say, "Hey, he made it." But that was not true.

I was on the KP Community Council for at least 10 years. During that time, I met a lot of people. Some I had challenges with and some I learned from, which contributed to my success. Each knows who they are. The KPCC gave me an avenue to venture out and engage with people from other committees and parts of our community. Some are still here, and some are not, but they are still in my heart. I know those spirits have given me a pass to live here and continue to do my work independently.

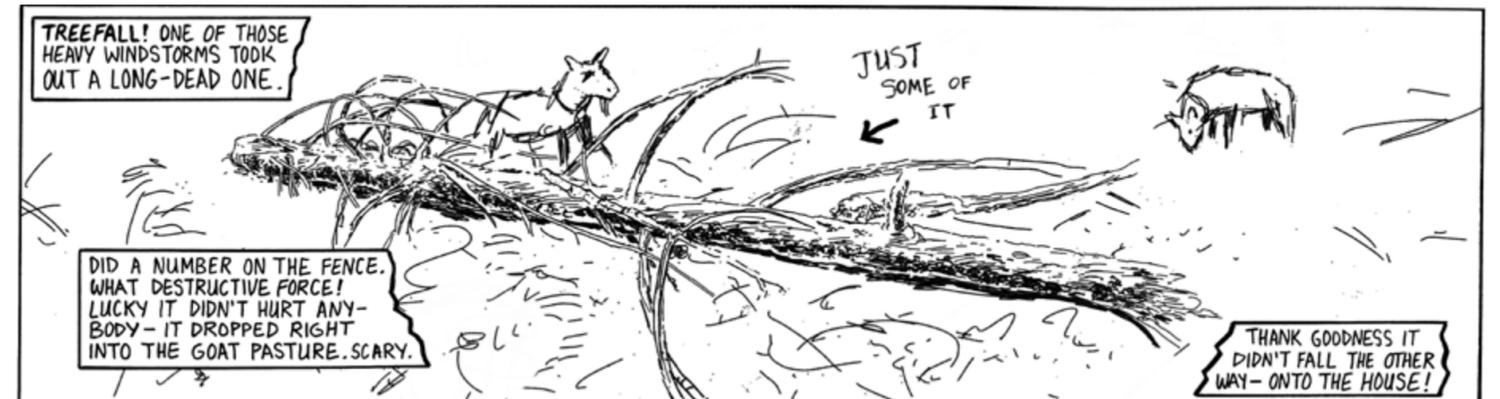
But I sure miss Ruth Bramhall calling me every month to let me know not to forget our meetings are on the second Wednesday, "because your presence is needed." I still remember every time I went anywhere in the community and seeing Hugh McMillian, who always said, "Hey, when are you going to join the Lions Club?" He always had an application and a pen in his pocket, so you couldn't make an excuse.

As I read books about the Key Peninsula, I found there wasn't much diversity around here. Looking at the historic photos of School No. 32 on Filucy Bay a century ago made me think of what life might have been like then for someone like me, what life for my ancestors would have looked like here. Some merchants or mill owners did go to the Purdy Spit and traded items with the Native people in the area, but for the most part they lived somewhere else because they didn't belong anymore.

Kind of still feels that way, when I see and hear the things I do around here, or when people who don't know me treat me a certain way. But instead of trying to work with people that have nothing to

CONTINUED PAGE 8

José Alaniz WE LIVE HERE: TREEFALL



The opinions expressed by columnists and letter writers are not necessarily those of the KP News. We neither endorse nor oppose issues or proposals discussed on these pages and present these views for public information. Letters to the editor must be signed and include a daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters are printed on a space-available basis as a community service. All submissions will be edited. Email to editor@keypennews.org.

do with who I am and what I'm destined to be, I just work with the communities by myself.

When kids call each other derogatory names, we need to realize it comes from their environment. People are not born racist; it stems from their ecological perspective — their environment. Times are changing and our society is going to be more and more diverse and more and more challenged. We used to call it a melting pot, but now it's more of a mosaic, or a tapestry. Whether we like it or not, we are going to have to learn to accommodate each other.

It is up to us parents to help our kids. One example is to make sure they are in a school where they are going to thrive. How would my son be able to thrive if he sees no one in class that looks like him? How will he be able to retain his Caribbean-speaking heritage if he is not surrounded by children that are also diverse or who are learning to look at life from an international perspective, and not on a micro level?

It is my job to prevent him from experiencing fourth-grade failure syndrome. It is my job to have pictures of people who look like him on my walls, and toys that he can identify with so that he won't suffer from schizoid play. That means preventing his imitative play from accidentally laying any type of foundation for feelings of inferiority, self-hatred or rejection of himself. He needs more time with someone like Black Panther than Superman, or Disney's new Black mermaid that has somehow upset so many people.

I finally realized some people don't want change when I saw that shadow from an allegoric perspective. Accepting something different means they have to become different. Because ignorance starts in the home, it could take a generation or two to change course in one's ecological perspective.

When I see a child in trouble in my practice, or anywhere, I talk to them about it in terms they can understand. Maybe their parents are being mean because of their own unmitigated trauma, or their transference of feelings on them. Maybe the child needs to ask hard questions, needs to be seen and heard for who they are. That is something I've felt, and something I can do. Ruth and Hugh may not be around to remind me anymore, but I remain focused on the role my ancestors paved for me.

Rion Tisino is a longtime social worker. He lives in Longbranch.

Dan Whitmarsh
WRITING BY FAITH



Remembering Easter Traditions

Those Easter mornings, my mother made hot cross buns. I remember them well, their butter-basted crowns glistening in the light with cross-shaped frosting dripping down the sides. I can smell their warm, sweet aroma filling the house. I can taste them, their yeast-leavened dough punctuated by tart raisins and sweet candied fruit hidden inside.

There were other Easter traditions. We dressed up in our fancy clothes and rode to church in Dad's old Pontiac. We shouted, "He is risen!" to our friends and sang, "Up from the Grave He Arose" with the choir. Afterwards was dinner at Grandma's house with roast beef, green beans and ham and then, since spring was coming, a walk down to Magnuson Park along the shores of Lake Washington.

I had no idea at the time that we were participating in a tradition dating back 2,000 years. I did not know that we were joining in rituals practiced by millions around the world that very day. I just knew I enjoyed the hot cross buns, the ladies in their fancy hats, and the promise of spring.

Now I know better. Now I know that we are part of a procession stretching back two millennia, a long line of believers who gather every spring to retell and rejoice over the news of an empty tomb in a garden in Jerusalem. I know that ours was a small part in a much grander narrative, a vast community of men and women, young and old, who have celebrated this day through the ages.

On these Easter mornings, as our ragtag group huddles for warmth around a beachside bonfire at Camp Woodworth, I am mindful of other congregations out there in the cold with us, gathered at the Purdy Spit, Herron Island, and private yards and homes around the Key Peninsula. My thoughts drift further to saints around the world, some in cathedrals, some in forests, some in caves. Our songs and prayers rise over the Salish Sea to join with a community of celebrants across oceans and across time.

This is the way of tradition, locals rehearsing the universal while the universal derives from a collective of localities. One family, one community

enacts familiar rituals, passing them from generation to generation in home or sanctuary, and so stories, beliefs and customs carry us along as part of something much larger. Those stories, beliefs and customs bring cohesion and help make sense of our often chaotic and uncertain lives.

Since those Easter mornings I have learned of the many traditions and customs beyond my own experience. While Christians celebrate Holy Week and Easter, our Jewish neighbors are commemorating Pesach, or Passover. Others are marking rites of spring, delineating the changing seasons as Earth continues its orbit around the sun. There are the secular rituals of tuning lawn mowers, organizing camping gear, and preparing gardens in anticipation of the coming of summer. We all have our traditions in the spring.

Traditions connect us to the past, they help us organize our understanding of the world, they remind us of ancestors, and they bind us to a community larger than ourselves. Traditions remind us of what is important. Traditions build memories that carry us through difficult moments and help us know the place from which we've come and the people to whom we belong.

Of course, not all traditions are healthy, nor must they all be permanent. Sometimes we carry on traditions long past their expiration date. Tradition can and often has been weaponized in the name of power and control. Plenty of traditions carry prejudicial undertones best consigned to history.

Even then, in the questioning, we learn about ourselves, our history and our culture. Traditions are meant to bring life and purpose, and at their best never demand mindless allegiance. The very act of challenging tradition can lead to new life. Traditions serve us whether we embrace them or deconstruct them.

In the coming days, we will be gathering to remember the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus. There will be music and beachside bonfires and declarations of life and hope. I assume there will be Easter egg hunts. Our friends will celebrate Passover. My neighbors will be pulling out their gardening tools. The traditions of spring are upon us as the world awakes from its winter slumber.

As for me, I'm still looking for that hot cross bun recipe. If you have a good one, let me know.

Award-winning columnist Dan Whitmarsh is pastor at Lakebay Community Church.

Letters to the Editor

LAKE KATHRYN MARIJUANA STORE AND MORE

I have always been proud of my community in the Wauna-Gig Harbor area of the Key Peninsula. But after reading the March edition of Key Peninsula News about the proposed plan to open The Gallery, one in a chain of recreational marijuana stores — I am aghast and disillusioned.

I see this as a detrimental, dangerous and unsafe plan for the Lake Kathryn Shopping Village and most definitely not in the best interest of the community at large.

I love the Purdy Cost Less Pharmacy and the wonderful Wauna post office. The Dollar Tree store was a great addition, as well as Domino's Pizza. The Burger King, the lovely salon and awesome Minter Veterinarian Hospital are all pluses for the shopping center. The elimination of a decent, convenient grocery store would be a terrible loss and should be an essential part of the shopping center as well. The Ace Hardware Store would be awesome too but definitely not at the exclusion of a full Food Market store or similar.

There is already a licensed recreational marijuana shop, Sweet Jane, located less than a mile from Lake Kathryn Village. Personally, I am uncomfortable in that area because of robberies caused by the fact marijuana stores conduct their business on a cash-only basis.

I see this proposed plan as a disastrous downfall for the community. This is not an upgrade but rather a seriously sad downgrade for the Key Peninsula at large. There are other locations in the area far better suited than Lake Kathryn Village.

If there is a genuine concern for the drug and alcohol problems on the Key Peninsula, I most emphatically find this plan to be a very odd and sad choice indeed.

Jane Allen, Wauna

LETTER FROM UKRAINE

Just when you get used to having electricity, water and peaceful sleep, the Russians launch a barrage of missile attacks all over Ukraine (March 9). They're currently shelling Kherson. I counted 14 strikes early in the morning. The only Ukrainians killed were civilians. This is the way Russians wage war. Indiscriminate attacks against civilians. Executing captured Ukrainian soldiers. Using

Russian criminal prisoners as cannon fodder. The prison soldiers are reportedly heavily drugged with narcotics. Why else would they throw themselves into a barrage of bullets?

Since my last letter from Ukraine (February 2023), I have been to Bakhmut four times and Avdiivka twice, traveling through villages in the Donetsk Oblast destroyed by the Russian occupation. Take humanitarian and animal aid in, evacuation of animals out. One trip into Bakhmut was in an armored vehicle donated by the Canadian government. That is how the war will be won and Ukraine survives. Donations.

The humanitarian organization I volunteer for, K9 Rescue International, is one

of the few still in Ukraine providing the support needed in the conflict zones. Our name does not completely describe what we do. We distribute supplies to hospitals, food banks and frontline medics, including nonlethal military equipment and animal supplies, sometimes under enemy shelling. Our vehicles are abused by the conditions and the copious amount of diesel we use. We are running very low on funds and are reaching out to the public for help.

Tom Bates, Lakebay

For more information, go to k9rescue.international

GROCERY AT LAKE KATHRYN

I am both shocked and frustrated reading

that the Lake Kathryn Food Market is to be turned into an Ace Hardware. This has been a main reliable source of groceries for thousands of people in the local community, many of them elderly, for many years. Losing this market will have a huge impact on the people who rely on the convenience of a small local grocery near a pharmacy and post office. I personally have shopped there almost weekly since it opened and prefer it to a megastore.

I do like Ace Hardware and shop at the store in Gig Harbor when I need paint or nails or a shovel, but I more frequently require bananas, bacon and bread to sustain me. I do hope the owner will reconsider this withdrawal of a vital service for the local community and others who appre-

ciate and depend on the service provided to us by the Food Market at Lake Kathryn.

Jenny Balman, Wauna

GROCER AT LAKE KATHRYN VILLAGE

We'll miss the Lake Kathryn Food Market. The store always has customers from the post office there and Cost Less Drugs. Such a great neighborhood and the workers are friendly. You don't have to bother with traffic on Burnham Drive in Gig Harbor.

When I moved here 17 years ago there was a hardware store next to Cost Less. Once Home Depot came, it didn't do well. I say, keep the Food Market. I hope the public voices their opinions.

Yvonne Rose, Wauna

OBITUARIES



Randy C. Squance

With heavy hearts, we announce the death of Randy C. Squance, 69, of Gig Harbor, who passed away March 12 at a family member's home.

Randy was born March 14, 1953, in Tacoma.

He was predeceased by his parents, Albert and Elizabeth, and his daughter Shanon.

He loved his dog, Cooper, and reuniting with classmates, family, friends and complete strangers he would meet in

his adventures. He loved hopping into his hot rod on a sunny day to unwind, relax, and feel the wind in his face.

Randy always had a positive attitude and a profound sense of humor. His friends could always count on him to lend a helping hand. Randy was proud of his Native American heritage and was an active member of the Kwikwetlem First Nation of British Columbia. He believed strongly in protecting the sovereign rights of all Native people.

Randy loved work, which included commercial fishing in Alaska, working in many departments at the Tacoma Smelter, and work at Simpson Tacoma Craft as an industrial electrician. He found joy and brotherhood with his co-workers, which resulted in stories and laughter that carried him through some difficult times.

Randy is survived by his three children, Kenneth (Karlee), Kaisha and Kyle; his grandchildren, Henry, Khloe, Landon and Bennett; siblings Francis Pinchbeck, Garry Squance, Alberta Murphy (Charles), Rick Squance (Cindi); and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at the Haven of Rest on Saturday, April

22, 2023, followed by a celebration of life at the Gig Harbor Eagles at 2 p.m.



Deborah Rae Burwell

Deborah Rae Burwell of Gig Harbor passed away peacefully with her loving husband by her side the morning of Feb. 10. She was 69 years old.

Debbie was born the third of six children to Forrest and Dorothy Wheeler in Port Angeles Dec. 13, 1953. Debbie was preceded in death by her parents; sister Margaret Fine; brother Lloyd Wheeler;

and great-nephew Baby Aaron.

Always athletic as a child, from the age of 13 Debbie was an avid deer hunter and loved being in the woods with "her boys." She looked forward to hunting each fall.

At the age of 18, Debbie and Scott began their love story. They were together for 52 years, married for 46.

In addition to her devoted husband, Debbie was the loving mother of and is survived by their five children Rick (Audra) Burwell; Jessica (Michael) Fuller; Tim (Melissa) Burwell; Mariah (Lee) Miller; and Ian Burwell; as well as 15 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews that she loved as if they were her own. She also leaves behind three adoring sisters: Hazel Coburn, Lorna Fowler and Marshia Crook.

Debbie was a kind soul who loved fiercely and made friends everywhere she went. Her passing is a huge loss and is already felt greatly by those who knew and loved her.

She was buried at Vaughn Bay Cemetery Feb. 16 followed by a celebration of life held at the Longbranch Improvement Club.

Your independent community newspaper is made possible by you and your generous and supportive neighbors.

Count on your nonprofit Key Peninsula News for reliable, timely news and views from people who live here.

‘An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States’

If you thought Critical Race Theory was a challenge, prepare for the strong medicine of looking at your country through the eyes of its first people.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS



One of the greatest summers of my life was spent in New York City in 1986. I had worked my way through a prestigious university with honors, survived a year of lymphoma, and landed my dream job working for a big time publisher. And then there was this girl, of course.

She was a grad student who sang opera for a living, but in her heart she was an anthropologist and eventually got her Ph.D. I was accustomed to following her from one performance to another all over town, but one day she dragged me to the extreme upper west side of Manhattan and a once beautiful but long-neglected building that then housed the National Museum of the American Indian.

We seemed to be the only visitors, perhaps ever.

One of the galleries, so-called, was lined with waist-high glass display cases that looked to have been salvaged from a condemned Woolworths. In one of those cases was the war club taken from Crazy Horse.

Crazy Horse was a Lakota leader of the Oglala Sioux betrayed and arrested by the U.S. Army officers negotiating his surrender in 1877 after his many victories, including the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1870 (known to the Lakota as the Battle of the Greasy Grass). He died in custody when he was bayoneted in his cell, trying to escape, according to Army records. His parents buried him at an unknown location near a creek called Wounded Knee in South Dakota. He was thought to be 35 years old.

Even in the glow of that beautiful summer, I will never forget the inexplicable shame I felt when I saw his war club in that neglected case. Hats and gloves worn by U.S. presidents are displayed at the Smithsonian Institution in the nation’s capital, and here was a tangible icon of history virtually forgotten.

It was a more powerful metaphor than I realized.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz is an academic and activist whom many call a revisionist historian, though she calls it “re-visioning” history — making the descriptive adjective an active verb in her book (Beacon Press, 2015).

Most Americans, I imagine, have

a vague notion of the exploration of North America as the United States pushed its borders west, encountering stone age nomads wandering empty land. This book is a strident and unapologetic thesis arguing that development of the U.S. depended on the deliberate and organized destruction of a vast population of Native American people and complex societies that had thrived for millennia.

“To say that the United States is a colonialist settler-state is not to make an accusation but rather to face historical reality, without which consideration not much in U.S. history makes sense, unless Indigenous peoples are erased,” she writes.

If that sounds extreme, consider the words of former U.S. senator and one-time presidential candidate Rick Santorum when he addressed the Young America political conference April 23, 2021:

“We birthed a nation from nothing. I mean, there was nothing here. I mean, yes, we have Native Americans but candidly there isn’t much Native American culture in American culture.”

That is the myth Dunbar-Ortiz confronts head on, page after page, example after example, in this passionate, polemic and extraordinarily well-cited work.

She begins with an anthropological tour of the Western Hemisphere, revisiting the achievements of the Inca, Aztec and Mayan empires, including architectural and agricultural technology that helped shape North America. The Mayans developed the concept of the number zero about 36 BCE (zero did not reach Europe from Arabia until 1200 CE). They also domesticated corn, a wild grass that now cannot survive without human intervention. Akin to the importance of salmon in the Pacific Northwest and bison of the plains, widespread cultivation of corn, squash and beans led to the growth of sophisticated Indigenous American cultures and large agrarian societies — including the Sioux — a far cry from their popular image as rambling hunter-gatherers.

“In the 12th century, the Mississippi Valley region was marked by one enormous city state, Cahokia, and several large ones built of earthen, stepped pyramids, much like those in Mexico,” Dunbar-Ortiz

writes. “Cahokia supported a population of tens of thousands, larger than that of London during the same period.”

These are “the mound builders,” so-called by European settlers. “The people of the civilization had dispersed before the European invasion, but their influence had spread throughout the eastern half of the North American continent through cultural influence and trade.” The Mississippian culture, as it’s now called, flourished from about 800 to 1450 CE, with trade and cultural links stretching from the Gulf Coast of Florida to the Great Lakes, and from the Rockies to the Virginia coast.

And then there were the great nations further west to the continent’s edge, among them the Navajo, the Piute, the Shoshone, and the Salish speaking peoples of Puget Sound country, who traded up and down the coast and with the interior for centuries.

Dunbar-Ortiz repeatedly stresses — and documents — the U.S. giving itself permission to expand, if not by treaty than by war, and usually both. She also draws a distinction between war and genocide

that is easy to overlook but crucial to understand since the explicit and often recorded purpose of organized settler violence was not just to evict Native Americans from their homes, but to exterminate them.

“We bleed our enemies in such cases, to give them their senses,” said a young Andrew Jackson in 1814, when he commanded a Tennessee militia that betrayed and murdered its own

Muskogee neighbors to confiscate their property, plantations and Black slaves, before evicting the survivors from their

ancestral land.

It was part of a pattern. “Somehow, even ‘genocide’ seems an inadequate description for what happened, yet rather than view it with horror, most Americans have conceived of it as their country’s manifest destiny,” Dunbar-Ortiz writes.

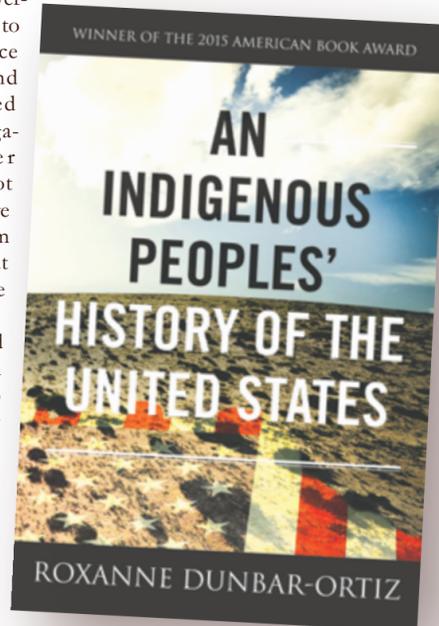
And that’s not by accident. It starts in the literature of the time in works like “The Deerslayer” and “The Last of the Mohicans,” tear-stained favorites of my own childhood that she says worked to turn myth into fact. “(The author, James Fenimore) Cooper has the last of the ‘noble’ and ‘pure’ Natives die off as nature would have it, with the ‘last Mohican’ handing the continent over to Hawkeye, the nativized settler and his adopted son. This convenient fantasy could be seen as quaint at best if it were not for its deadly staying power.”

Such efforts gave rise to the fictional birth of a new American race. “But this idea of the gift-giving Indian helping to establish and enrich the establishment of the United States is a smoke screen meant to obscure the fact that the very existence of the country is the result of the

looting of an entire continent and its resources.”

Resistance is also well documented, from 19th century battles to fights in Congress and the uprising at Wounded Knee in 1873. While large scale appropriation has given way to assimilation, Dunbar-Ortiz maintains the effect is the same and comes from the same place: denial.

“A ‘race to innocence’ is what occurs when individuals assume that they are innocent of complicity in structures of domination and oppres-



sion. ... They cannot be held responsible, they assume, for what occurred in their country’s past. ... Yet, in a settler society that has not come to terms with its past, whatever historical trauma was entailed in settling the land affects the assumptions and behavior of living generations at any given time.”

Here is an answer to the anti-woke hysteria of white guilt that has infected so much of our public discourse, down to the classroom. The crimes of Western Civilization do not blot out its achievements, but neither is the reverse true. Those crimes may be attributed to certain parts of our civilization, but not all. Ignoring inconvenient history leaves the injustice it created unexplained and therefore irreconcilable.

In other words, you don’t have to agree with anything Dunbar-Ortiz says to respect her perspective. But how often do you get to look through someone else’s eyes, or walk a mile in their shoes? Doing so, experiencing empathy (to use another newly fraught term), is the first step to creating solutions.

“The late Native historian Jack Forbes always stressed that while living persons are not responsible for what their ancestors did, they are responsible for the society they live in, which is a product of that past,” Dunbar-Ortiz writes. “Assuming this responsibility provides a means of survival and liberation.”

In 1994, Crazy Horse’s war club was relocated to the new National Museum of the American Indian, now part of the Smithsonian, a magnificent beaux-arts building on the southern tip of Manhattan, overlooking the mouth of the Hudson River and the ocean beyond. ■



Key Peninsula native Lt. Danny Hansen climbed 69 floors in 18 minutes, 10 seconds. Key Peninsula Fire District 16

Key Peninsula Firefighters Climb to Cure Cancer

KP native Lt. Hansen finished in the top sixth of the competitors: 254 out of 1,605.

STAFF REPORT

Key Peninsula Fire District 16 was well-represented at the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society’s 32nd annual firefighter stair climb fundraiser held at the Columbia Tower in Seattle March 12. Over 3,000 firefighters from 30 countries competed.

All climbers compete in full bunker gear in facemask and helmet, breathing air from the tank strapped to their back.

KPFD Lt. Danny Hansen, 35, climbed the 69 floors in 18 minutes and 10 seconds, shaving 12 seconds off his time from last year and finishing 254 out of the 1,605 firefighters who completed the climb.

Fellow firefighters Ami Ship, 41, finished in 25:50, and Adam Morse, 34, in 26:39.

The KPFD team ranked 124 out of 171 teams that completed the climb; 110 did not. The team raised \$3,027 for cancer research at press time, with more to come according to KPFD. ■

ROOF FROM PAGE 1

we are without her putting on the hat and shepherding all of this.”

Kremen has long-term ties to the Key Peninsula. Her mother grew up near Minter Creek and graduated from Vaughn Union High School, now the location of the KP Civic Center. She remembers picnics along Minter Creek as a child. When her parents bought property in Lakebay in 1972, she came to visit often as a young adult. In 2012 she and her wife Jilly Eddy built their retirement home on the property and became full-time residents. They dove into community activities right away.

“Way back in 2014 the club commissioned an historic structures report,” Kremen said. “The report was inches thick and included everything that needed

to be done to upgrade the building and keep it in line with all the historic guidelines. The Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation gave its blessing.”

A number of improvements, which Kremen described as one-off restoration projects, have been completed, largely funded by matching grants through Pierce County. They include replacing doors, restructuring the foyer to its original form, replacing some windows on the back of the building that had lead-based paint, and some work in the kitchen.

The current project began in earnest in 2020 and is more than a roof replacement. “It’s big in many, many ways,” Kremen said. The initial focus has been on planning and design under the eye of project manager

Bart Wolfe. “We got structural timber reports and completed a plan to upgrade the electrical system, remove the interior raceways that hold the wiring, replace the propane heating system with electrical and do a seismic retrofit,” Kremen

“WE CAN’T KICK THIS CAN DOWN THE ROAD OR IT JUST WON’T GET DONE AND THE BUILDING WILL DISINTEGRATE.”

said. “The work should dramatically decrease our carbon footprint.”

Insulation will go over the current roof — removal would damage the underlying structure — and then a new metal roof will be installed. Although the original roof was shingle, the current roof was installed prior to the building being placed on the historic register, which brought a sigh of relief to Kremen. If historic preservation rules had required shakes, the cost would have

been prohibitive.

In February, the club got a grant from Pierce County for \$35,000, which will allow it to complete the permitting process. “We had unanimous approval from the council,” Kremen said.

Washington Patriot Construction has been hired as the project contractor and estimates construction will take about five months.

The cost of the project is nearly \$3 million. Kremen is working with Sheryl Low, president of the Longbranch Foundation, to fundraise. They have submitted an initial request to the state and Sen. Emily Randall (D-26th, Bremerton) and Rep. Michelle Calder (R-26th, Port Orchard) have been supportive. She and Low will seek the remaining funding from foundations and other donors. ■

Chasing the Perfect Toss: Lakebay Residents Advocate for More Disc Golf

Ben Rasmussen and Jesse Routley are looking to both grow interest in the sport and expand the Volunteer Park disc golf course.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Besides the occasional sound of plastic hitting a metal chain, Volunteer Park is quiet on an early Friday afternoon.

“Look, disc golfers are the only ones here when there’s no baseball going on,” said Ben Rasmussen, who joined Jesse Routley for a quick lunchtime round of disc golf, a sport growing in popularity nationwide.

Routley, who owns Routley Engineering, a residential structural engineering firm, started playing disc golf during the pandemic. The sport naturally promotes being outside and social distancing. Rasmussen, a lifelong Key Peninsula resident and KP fire commissioner, has been playing for 10 years, but admits Routley is already as good as he is.

“When you finally throw a disc that ends up doing exactly what you envisioned, that’s when this sport just hooks you,” said Rasmussen said.

That allure is driving these two Lakebay friends to work with Key Pen Parks to possibly expand and redesign the nearly 15-year-old Volunteer Park disc golf course.

The West Sound Disc Golf Associations recently removed its disc golf equipment from Horseshoe Lake Golf Course, leaving Volunteer Park as the only public disc golf course option in the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor areas. Horseshoe Lake was a pay-to-play disc golf course and the association said there were limited times available due to sharing some of the course with traditional golfers. The closest disc golf courses now are in Port Orchard, Shelton and Steilacoom.

Disc golf has rules and format similar to traditional golf — or “ball” golf as Rasmussen and Routley like to call it — so disc and ball golfers are on an equal playing field. Like a traditional golf course, a disc golf course has tree and water hazards, terrain changes and different distances to the baskets, with the object of finishing each “hole” with the fewest number of tosses. Instead of actual holes, there are elevated metal baskets on poles.

Although playing with a common Frisbee is perfectly acceptable, most disc golfers use specialty discs to help shape a shot. Each disc is between \$7 and \$15, and two or three discs can get you started. Seasoned players like Rasmussen and Routley have custom backpacks filled with more than 10 discs, each one for different purposes, like drives, mid-range shots or putts. Rasmussen said it’s one of the few family-friendly sports where kids, parents and grandparents can



Ben Rasmussen and Jesse Routley played a quick round of disc golf at Volunteer Park. *Tina McKail, KP News*

play together equally.

Plus, with no course fees on 90% of disc golf courses across the country, it’s an affordable family activity. To encourage participation, Key Pen Parks staff developed an outreach campaign and survey to gauge public interest on three proposed redesign options. The survey closes April 16.

Option 1 is simple: Make minor improvements with a little more course upkeep. This option would improve the unforgiving Hole 9, which Routley calls unrealistic. He says it’s easy to lose multiple discs because of the terrain and bushes. Even Key Pen Parks calls the hole “unplayable” on their website. “I don’t think the installers knew much about disc golf,” said Routley, who mentioned Hole 5 could also use some reconfiguration.

Option 2 makes the course 18-holes, which is what Rasmussen and Routley are interested in, but it’s basically just a flipped concept, meaning after players finish one hole, they would go back the opposite way. “This would create a lot of crossfire (between groups of players),” said Rasmussen.

Routley added that getting hit by hard-plastic discs “is not fun,” and even though disc golfers are pretty aware of their surroundings, it would be best to avoid those scenarios.

Rasmussen and Routley are advocating for Option 3: redesigning the current course and expanding it to 18 unique holes to utilize more wooded area. Some parts would overlap with the existing walking trail, where walkers have the right-of-way, but Routley said there are ways to keep players and trail-users aware of each other. He also said that type of course could give the park opportunities to host smaller tournaments.

Survey results will be presented to the Key Pen Parks board of commissioners at an upcoming meeting. Executive Director Tracey Perkosky said her team has already started exploring costs for each option but will determine specifics if the board decides to move forward. If approved, work would begin sometime this year.

According to UDisc, an app that tracks disc golf course usage, 87% of disc golfers traveled more than 20 miles to play a round in 2022. Pier Park in Portland has one of the top destination courses in the country, and Rasmussen said the thousands of people who play a course like that would have no problem making the 2½-hour trip to the Key Peninsula. Rasmussen himself is getting ready to go on a “Birdies and Beers” trip with his friends where they plan to “pick a direction and hit every brewery and every

course along the way.”

The two friends acknowledged there are stereotypes about the disc golf community, but said there’s something for every stereotype:

Nerds: As an engineer, Routley falls into this category. “Every disc is different, with different shapes and aerodynamic properties,” he said. “When you cross-section a disc, it’s like the wings of an airplane. Each angle of that wing has different flight characteristics.”

Hippies: “This sport has come a long way since hippies and Birkenstocks,” Rasmussen said. “But it’s still a group of people enjoying the outdoors and escaping into the woods.”

Meatheads: As Routley pointed out, there’s a science to each toss, but, “You can just cock back and see how hard and far you can throw it.”

The point the two are trying to make is this sport is for anyone, at any skill level.

“Really, all we’re doing is chasing that perfect toss and those tiny moments in time when all you think about is making that basket,” said Rasmussen said.

To learn more about the disc golf course project or to take the survey, go to keypenparks.com.

For the online version only: www.keypenparks.com/disc-golf-course-project.html ■

Food Backpacks 4 Kids Receives Largest Donation to Date

Hero of the Deep award to local volunteers leads to a \$32,000 grant to feed hungry families as FB4K has done on the KP since 2009.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Jerri Turner, manager of the Pioneer-Kimball Starbucks, was named a Hero of the Deep at the Seattle Kraken home game March 9. She was honored with a video about her work in the community and a grant for \$32,000 to be awarded to the nonprofit of her choice. A week and a half later, she visited Food Backpacks 4 Kids and presented a check to Executive Director Zaida Woodworth and Development Director Michelle Johnson.

“This is the biggest single donation we have ever received,” Johnson said.

The award is sponsored by the United Kraken Fund, created by Seattle Kraken, One Roof Foundation and Starbucks, and funded by the Kraken ownership. Nominees are individuals working to transform lives across the Pacific Northwest. The grant awards go to nonprofits with missions to advance inclusion, address homelessness, advance hunger relief efforts, empower youth and uplift communities.

“Serving is my heart and who I am,” Turner said. She has spent years working with nonprofits and individuals in need. When she first started working at her current location she set out to identify local nonprofits to support and posted on a Facebook Gig Harbor volunteer page. Johnson responded and a partnership was forged.

“When we heard of the Hero of the Deep Award, Michelle and I knew we needed to nominate Jerri,” Woodworth said. “She and her Starbucks team have been doing food drives, donating funds, and volunteering with us for the last few years. Every time we reach out to Jerri with requests and food drive ideas, she comes through for us.”

FB4K was founded in 2009 when a small group of volunteers sent nine backpacks home with Evergreen Elementary School students to ensure they had food for the weekend.

By early 2020 FB4K was serving nearly 300 students with backpacks available at all elementary schools and food pantries in the middle and high schools in the district. When the pandemic closed schools, it pivoted from providing backpacks to distributing food boxes at its site in Key Center and the amount of food they distributed more than doubled. (“Backpacks for Kids Steps Up in Time of Need,” KP News, January 2021)

In September 2021, FB4K closed its drive-through operation and opened a family food pantry, serving about 700 children at the time. (“New Leadership at Food Backpacks 4 Kids,” KP News, December 2021)



Zaida Woodworth, Jerri Turner, Michelle Johnson and Morgan Sullivan at Food Backpacks 4 Kids headquarters in Key Center.

Lisa Bryan, KP News



Jerri Turner, Seattle Kraken Hero of the Deep, is passionate about serving people in need.

Lisa Bryan, KP News

Families who are signed up can come select from the food that is available in the pantry without restrictions on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday between noon and 6 p.m. For those who cannot get to Key Center, there is a delivery service. “We have families who cannot afford the gas to get here,” Woodworth said.

FB4K now serves over 1,200 children, 500 adults and 250 seniors each month. The number of families with food insecurity has continued to grow, Woodworth said. They

get much of their food from the Emergency Food Network. A recent posting from the Network noted that 2022 was their busiest year and that this year was likely to be no different.

“Emergency increases to SNAP (formerly food stamps) that families began receiving during the pandemic are ending in February. With the current rising cost of food, we anticipate that even more neighbors will need our support to keep their refrigerators and shelves stocked,” it posted.

FB4K recently started a “No Hungry Kids” program at Key Peninsula Middle School. Every morning as students arrive they are offered a snack for anyone who wants one. About 400 are handed out daily, with the goal to address ongoing hunger issues, reduce the stigmas surrounding food, and increase student awareness of their services.

Janice O’Donnell, the Communities In Schools of Peninsula site coordinator at KPMS, is also stocking her office and the program has meant students are more willing to come by to pick up food and accept a backpack to take home if the family is in need. “We are eliminating ‘hangry,’” Woodworth said. “We need more funding to keep purchasing high-quality, nutritious foods for the children we serve,” Woodworth said. “We also need delivery drivers to get groceries to their homes, gardeners to help us grow food, food drives to stock our shelves with the items families need, and advocates in the schools to help us identify and feed hungry children.

“By working together, with aligned principles and mindfulness, we are able to offer the children and families in our community the kind of support that feels like caring. Just as food insecurity negatively impacts the health and well-being of children, this respectful care alleviates some of the hurt poverty and food insecurity cause.” ■

Assistant Fire Chief Hal Wolverton Retires After 33 Years

A veteran firefighter, mentor and leader who came of age on the Key Peninsula.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

After 33 years with Key Peninsula Fire District 16, Assistant Fire Chief Hal Wolverton, 59, will retire March 31.

Reflecting on his decades-long career spent entirely at KPFD, Wolverton said, “I think I’m the most boring person in the world.”

During those 33 years, the “most boring person in the world” advanced from firefighter to battalion chief, and then to assistant chief in 2014. He received the district’s Meritorious Service Award; the Distinguished Conduct award twice; the Top Trainer and Chief’s Awards three times each; the Commissioners’ Award three times; Firefighter of the Year four times; and Officer of the Year five times. “Time flies by,” he said.

A familiar face to both KPFD and the community at large, Wolverton first moved from Gig Harbor to the Key Peninsula in 1973, where he attended Evergreen Elementary School. The family stayed on the KP until 1979, when his dad got a job in Ferndale.

Wolverton attended Lynden High School where he met his future wife, Monica. The couple graduated in 1982 and married in 1985.

Wolverton was working as a petroleum inspector straight out of high school but was laid off after getting married.

He took the next job that came along, which was at a fuel storage plant in Tacoma. He later went to U.S. Oil and Refining as a gasoline blender. “It was an OK job, paid pretty well, it just wasn’t what I wanted to do,” Wolverton said.

But he’d had a taste of firefighting as a volunteer in Bellingham.

“I was in a coffee shop reading that Bellingham Fire was recruiting people,” he said. “I went right to a fire station, no idea about the etiquette at all, and just went up to the back door and knocked, and luckily somebody answered.”

He spent the next hour and a half talking to a firefighter about the fire service, and he signed on.

“It was like a second home, a second family; it was fun, it was giving back to the community, and I was just hooked,” he said.

When the young couple found their way back to the Key Peninsula in 1990, Wolverton volunteered for KPFD and was hired in 1992. “We had 60 volunteers,” he said. “It was a good crowd. I think we had a handful of career personnel, maybe three per shift.”

Call volume was low then. “If we got three calls a day, we were slammed.”

He said his worst call was responding to the explosion of an illegal fireworks manu-



Assistant Fire Chief Hal Wolverton's last day on the job is March 31. *Key Peninsula Fire District 16*

facturer at a trailer in Lake of the Woods.

“I was fresh out of EMT school, and I was working with Mike Riegler, he was a paramedic,” he said. “I remember we rolled up and, man, the end of the trailer was blown to smithereens; there was debris everywhere. There were two victims. Mike says I got this one, you got that one. The poor kid, I think he was just 16 years old. He looked exactly like you’d think after that explosion. I remember that in detail. You think you’re going to save people and he ended up passing away. I took that personally. It took me a long time to realize — and it wasn’t until after the coroner’s report came back — there was nothing that could be done for him. But I took that really hard.”

There are good days too, where you know you made a difference.

“I remember this call at Penrose (State Park), this guy’s stuck up to his thigh in the mud and the tide’s coming in,” Wolverton said. When he arrived, the victim was a couple hundred yards offshore and the water was above his waist.

“We called in the Anderson Island fire boat and we had one of our swimmers, who happened to be my son (volunteer Saul Wolverton), take our fire hose out to the boat to connect to their pump and then we attached a penetrating nozzle — a long spear

with a sharp point and a nozzle at the end of it. We started it up, shoved this thing down by the guy’s leg, and he popped out like a big giant geoduck.”

“That’s the fun part of the job, when you know you really made a difference to someone’s life,” Wolverton said.

A less fun part of the job overtook him Dec. 14, 2021.

Wolverton had been appointed interim fire chief by the board of fire commissioners Nov. 23 to fill the gap left by departing Fire Chief Dustin Morrow. Wolverton had already served once as interim chief between the retirement of Fire Chief Guy Allen in 2018 and Morrow’s start in April 2019.

But he was put on paid administrative leave Dec. 14 immediately when the board heard allegations of discriminatory behavior.

The board reinstated Wolverton March 22 after an independent investigation vindicated him.

New Assistant Fire Chief Hired

The KPFD board of fire commissioners approved the contract for a new assistant fire chief March 14. Chris Beswick, fire chief of Nehalem Bay Fire and Rescue in Oregon since 2019, will start on the KP on or before May 1. Before Oregon, Beswick spent 18 years as a fire captain/paramedic with Avondale Fire-Rescue in Arizona and has been an instructor at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, since 2011. He is relocating to be closer to family in Gig Harbor, according to KPFD.

cated him.

“The report concluded that none of the allegations made could be sustained to have violated the law or department policy,” said Fire Commission Chair Stan Moffett at the time.

When KP News asked about the details of the investigation and the events leading up to it and after, Wolverton would only say, “During the last year and a half, I lost a lot of friends, but I gained more because I realized who really supported me. People I didn’t even know were reaching out to me. I owe everything I have to the community. They’ve allowed me to spend 30 years doing something I love, buy a house, build a family, and I want to thank everybody for letting me do that. And I don’t think I’m done serving the community in some fashion. I don’t know what that looks like, but I know I’m not done.” ■

NATURALIST’S NOTEBOOK

Where Trees Are Thrown by the Wind

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

If you want to feel like a shrimp in a kelp forest, a good place to start is in a real forest on a windy day, your back on a log, trees flexing like grasses above you, the sky crowded with clouds raking the treetops like the undersides of waves.

My eyes dart from one towering treetop to the next as I watch, wondering which might be the next to hit its breaking point. A thousand flutters turn to contortions.

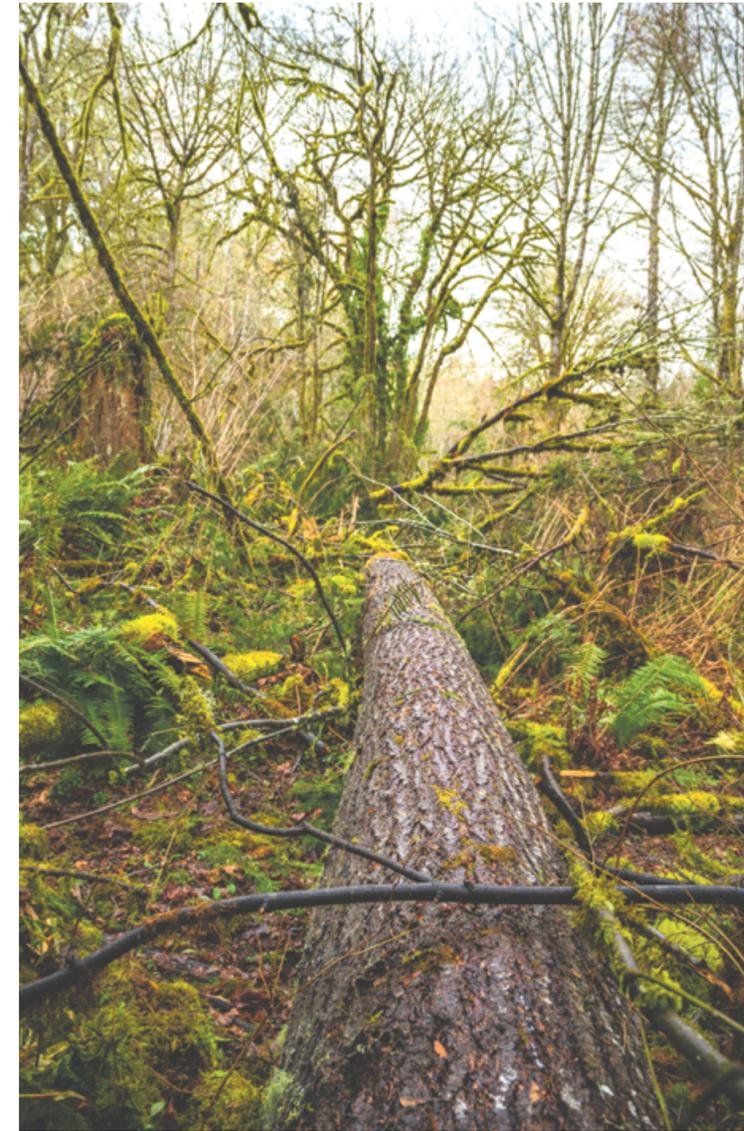
The log on which I lie is the latest casualty, a large fir that has been down a few weeks at most, everything about it fresh and fragrant. I am in a forest that has been kept whole by a conservation easement. A neighboring parcel was clearcut this winter. I am here to see what life is like on the edge of clearcut and forest, where trees that were once sheltered by their neighbors must now bear the full force of wind and sun.

I’ve been in my fair share of dangerous situations in the Key Peninsula’s natural world, and this ranks right up there. What gets me is the sound, as it often does when I know that one slip of the balance means I’ll be crushed by forces far larger than me — the soft tick of dislodged stones when I’m high on an unstable bluff, the whisper of an incoming tide when it reaches the spot I have sunk into tideflat quicksand.

Right now it is rock and roll. Tumult. The man who brought me here is looking pretty rock and roll himself. As we hiked to this place he was going off on how it should be illegal to log right to a property line, how loggers should be held responsible when neighbors’ trees are thrown by the wind. (There are no property line buffers, and few recourses for neighbors who lose timber.)

When his curses ran out, our talk turned to various logging jobs visible on the KP, the cuts we have witnessed, how it’s obvious when it’s done well and when it is not. Some clearcuts are springing back with a diverse mix of young trees, evidence that some care was taken during and following the cut, while others are choked with Scotch broom and brambles. One of the latter is just north of where we are. Eight years old, it also borders

Into the
WILD
EXPLORING WITH THE
KP NATURE GUIDE



“The log on which I lie is the latest casualty.” *Tina McKail, KP News*

the conserved forest. I have peered into it, and crossing it looks impossible. Not a single young fir can be seen.

No matter what you think about the practice of clearcutting, when you see that kind of lost landscape, it’s hard not to come away with the sour feeling that something has been pillaged, that someone got while the getting was good and left without a thought for the future. Along with a forest’s ability to regenerate, logging itself will die if the responsibility to replant and manage continues to be

shirked.

“This was my favorite part of the walk,” says my companion. Finding the large fir across the trail has turned his anger bitter and reflective. “It was so dark in here, just moss everywhere.”

It is a low area, damp, full of salmonberry and sword ferns below tall maples, cedars and hemlocks scattered throughout. The fir was one of four in a loose grove and the largest by far. I walk the length of its trunk, three feet thick at the base, and after passing through terrains of crushed

salmonberry and smashed young maples mixed with fresh fir greenery, I arrive at a tree height north of 175 feet.

The root wad stands 15 feet tall. Two teenaged cedars came with it. The hole behind is only a few feet deep. The fir stood on hardpan.

In the general vicinity I count an alder, two hemlocks, and two maples that have also fallen this winter. They too are uprooted — trees that were used to wind protection. One of the maples fell in huge chunks and narrowly missed the gravestone of an unknown homesteader. It smashed a kiosk next to the trail. A hemlock snag with its first woodpecker holes has toppled. A patch of moss on a log has been bleached like coral. Wind is one thing. The sun will be another.

Back at my companion’s house, his wife nods when he tells her about the fir. “Oh, I told you,” she says. It was evening during the last windstorm, she was in the kitchen, and the whole house shook when it fell. “I knew we lost a big one.”

Later I return alone to lie on the fir again. The wind has intensified. I plan escape routes. Next to me is a small pile of maple helicopters, each split in half, the seed removed. This squirrel must not be into sprouted food because two of the helicopters have green shoots curling hopelessly over the downed tree’s bark.

In lulls I hear a frog call. Then certain gusts rattle like antlers or bones overhead. I am getting chilled, or the chills. Out across the clearcut I notice a different quality of noise where the gusts smack broadside into a wall of tall firs, another property line. It is a single discordant note, a noise in every register that is quite different from the shifting soundscape above, where gusts move in three dimensions through trees of different species. In that wall, the firs strain in unison. They are like a sandstone shoreline being hit by breakers.

When I finally quit the fir, I see one maple leaning on another leaning on another, their crowns shoved together like brooms in a closet. It’s impressive. But one tree holding up two others is not a situation that can last. Trees are like us. To find a shape, a tree needs to stand in its own space, even as it benefits from the support of those around it. Today’s wind tears through the gaps. Not all of the trees here will fall. But there will be more. ■

PHS Unified Basketball Team Wins District 3 Championship

Peninsula High School's Unified sports program provides opportunities for athletes of all abilities.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Jennifer Buys quickly deflected all questions about her.

As her team prepared for a tournament, the Peninsula High School Unified Basketball coach made sure the focus was on her team. Her philosophy is simple: It's not about her and it's not about a single player. It's always about being a part of something greater than yourself.

It's that type of motivation that helped the Peninsula Seahawks Unified Basketball team win the Washington State High School Unified Basketball District 3 championship, 42-36, against Foss High School Feb 11.

Though it's officially called Special Olympics Unified Sports, normalcy is the true name of the game.

The program joins people with and without intellectual disabilities to play together as equals on the same co-ed team. On a unified basketball team, three special-education students called "athletes" are on the court with two general-education students called "partners."

For Buys, that's where the distinction between athletes and partners ends.

Everyone wears the same green Seahawk jerseys. Everyone celebrates when a teammate makes a shot. And when the team wins a district championship, everyone gets the same medal. The program promotes inclusion and friendship, and bridges a social gap between those with and without disabilities.

"It's unbelievable the types of relationships you see built between students of all abilities," Buys said about the athletes and partners.

The partners are there to help the athletes get into the right position on offense and defense. They also make sure they pass the ball equally to their teammates.

Unified sports are mainly for the athletes who don't always have the same opportunities as their schoolmates, but that doesn't mean the partners don't get anything out of it. Buys, who also coaches Unified Soccer in the spring, said she makes it a point to teach her partner players the difference between being a helper and being a teammate.

"(Partners) know they can help the athletes with something; it's great to be a helper," said Buys. "But a teammate understands that everybody has something to learn from each other, no matter their abilities."

It's that "greater than yourself" mentality that Buys used to build the Unified sports program at PHS. She credits 2020 PHS graduate Jonah Derrick for helping bring the idea to the school in 2019. Jonah, his parents



The 2023 Peninsula High School Unified Basketball District Championship team. *Kelli Hodges Photography*

2023 Team Roster

Athletes: Connor Boman, Thomas Burks, Alice Casey, Micah Hester (manager), Jack Hodges, Juanita Mabe, Ian Nelson, Zachary Pearson-Carson and Mark Slocum

Partners: Jacob Bunker, Riley Dykman, Kevin Foreman, Maeden Jackson, Kaden Munkres and Caleb Smith

Coaches: Jennifer Buys and Brandon Williams

John and Amy, and former special education teacher Joelle Rickard did all the legwork with Special Olympics and the Peninsula School District to get it launched.

A special education teacher in the school district for 25 years, Buys now is a success coach at both PHS and Gig Harbor High School. She says in that role she's able to support all kids and "make school right for everyone" — another area where Buys promotes inclusion and equity.

Buys had a successful career in athletics which, combined with her special education background, makes her a unique fit for the Unified sports program. After graduating from PHS she played rugby for Central Washington University before joining the U.S. national team from 1996-98. Buys had two stints as a Peninsula boys and girls soccer coach, from 1998-2003 and again from 2014-19, taking time in between to raise her two



"Everyone should come watch a Unified Sports event. It'll change who you are." *Courtesy Peninsula School District*

sons.

"I've done a lot of cool things in sports, but (coaching Unified) is the thing I'm most proud of," she said. "Every single time we get together something unexpected happens that brings a tear of joy to my eye."

Buys believes the importance of Unified sports goes beyond the court.

"The opportunity for these athletes to be recognized with a medal is life-changing for them," she said. "It means everything that we can give our athletes an opportunity to play for something they can hold onto forever."

But as quick as Buys is to pass any praise about the program to her athletes and partners, they're just as fast sending it back. They know, in many ways, without someone like her a program like this wouldn't exist.

"She's nice and smart, and just a really good person," said athlete Jack Hodges, who also

swims with Special Olympics.

Mark Slocum, who has been a part of a Buys-coached team for four years, says she's the reason he continues to play. "She teaches us how to be good members of a team and lets us have fun together."

First year athlete Alice Casey agreed. "She's a great person to talk to and makes it exciting to play with my team. It gives us a chance to hang out with friends."

It's that type of harmony on the hardwood that epitomizes Buys' "greater than yourself" philosophy. It's not about the coaches, it's not about the athletes and it's not about the partners — it's about the connection they make together.

"Everyone should come watch a Unified sports event. It'll change who you are," Buys said. "Seeing these kids together is the best part of humanity." ■

Making Space for Makers Space at Minter Creek Elementary

Staff and volunteers provide extra space and extra time for extra learning and room for imaginations to get some exercise.

CAROLYN WILEY, KP NEWS

Minter Creek Elementary School Principal Todd Hering is enthusiastically supportive of the Makers Space program launched in January 2023. The program is set up to serve one grade level per session, and the sessions are scheduled Monday through Thursday during midday recess time.

Hering credits Dean of Students Kim Kinney for bringing the idea to Minter Creek and organizing the program.

"Not all kids want to be here, but for some students who feel uncomfortable in unstructured environments like recess, here we give them choices within a slightly structured environment," Kinney said.

Both Hering and Kinney praised the PTA for funding purchases to equip the room with basic art supplies: paint, brushes, markers, glue, tape, scissors, paper and Legos.

"We just wanted the kids to have a creative space, I want the kids to be able to work collaboratively," Kinney said. "We started in January with the 'cardboard challenge.' It cost little to nothing because we used recycled cardboard and the kids had fun figuring out how to build something using just cardboard and electrical tape. It was a hit before it really opened."

Kinney said the isolation of school closures during the pandemic and a dependence upon technology affected some students, because they missed out on developing skills to interact with others. Makers Space is designed to provide opportunities for students to work together.

"I have watched students sit across the table from one another and they will be messaging rather than talking. Tech can be so powerful, but it can also be isolating," she said.

Makers Space works because the school librarian, Adam Sripranaratanakul, known as Mr. S to the students, greets the students, provides brief instruction about using the materials and supervises the session. Kinney invites teachers to contribute ideas, plans the activities, and set up the room and materials for Mr. S, so no Makers time is wasted.

Last month was the Cardboard Challenge. This month is Friendship February.

A fifth-grade activity involved students making fusible bead designs. Students could create their own designs or follow patterns that came with kits donated by the Gig Harbor Sewing Guild.

Another session was for second-graders who were enthusiastic about cutting out



Ali, age 10, makes a rainbow heart. *Tina McKail, KP News*



Nicholas age 10 and Timothy age 11 set to fly their paper airplanes alongside Mr. S. *Tina McKail, KP News*

hearts, choosing stickers and decorating Valentines.

The primary goal of Makers Space is to encourage creativity, problem-solving and collaborative thinking. The appropriate use of available materials is stressed to help students develop a sense of responsibility for the space and the materials.

"I would like for the room to function on its own once the kids develop more skills, including learning to tidy up," Kinney said.

their students.

Kinney said she was pleasantly surprised by community support. The Gig Harbor Sewing Guild arranged for the acquisition of sewing machines to support the idea of a Sewing Club for fifth-graders. The machines had been taken in for repairs, but left at the JoAnn's store in Port Orchard when owners decided to upgrade. JoAnn's repaired the machines and donated them to the school. Parents, members of the Guild, and Sew Hip in Gig Harbor donated sewing notions and fabric.

Three boys signed up for the Sewing Club, which meets in the same room but is not part of the Makers Space program. The stated interest of the boys was utilitarian; they wanted to learn how to sew on buttons and fix rips in jeans. The introductory session involved learning to thread the machines and safely operate them; next installment is to learn about threading and winding bobbins.

Andrea Smith, a mom of a fourth-grader, a parent volunteer and a Minter Creek paraeducator, delivered an armload of fleece to the Sewing Club. "My daughter was really bummed that only fifth-graders were invited, but I told her she will get there eventually," Smith said. ■

"I tell them, 'If you are not cleaning it up, you are not using the space responsibly, you will not be getting an invitation to return.'"

Students seemed to be very cognizant of the need to clean up after themselves.

To keep the midday program manageable, each Makers Space session is limited to 16 students from one grade level. Grade levels get one session per week. There are two classes per grade at Minter Creek, so each teacher can distribute up to eight tickets to



Math students enjoy the end of their lunch break in Mrs. Babbitt's classroom. *Tina McKail, KP News*

Life Under Construction at Key Peninsula Middle School

Extensive remodeling of KPMS began in July 2021 and is expected to be completed by spring 2023, made possible by an aggressive PSD schedule.

LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

It's one thing to have a brand-new school ready and waiting for teachers, staff and students, but quite another to have your school modernized as construction goes on all around you.

Remodeling of Key Peninsula Middle School began in July 2021 and is expected to be completed by spring 2023. Thanks to cost-saving measures, the Peninsula School District could afford to update KPMS using 2019 capital bond funds for building brand new schools. The project adds 11,800 square feet to the 68,500 original square footage and 2,700 square feet of covered exterior areas.

The new entrance and administrative offices that opened for use in mid-January are a small sample of what's in store for the revamped middle school.

Gone are the days of standing outside in cold wind and rain waiting to be buzzed into the building simply to drop something off. Beyond the main door, the new entrance opens into vestibules designed with multiple security layers to access the interior and an all-new paging system, like the added safety features built into Peninsula School District's four new elementary schools.

The middle school administrative offices have natural light with big windows, a new conference room, health room, psychologist's office, as well as two counseling offices



Exterior finish treatments on a portion of the modernized school building provide a glimpse of more to come. *Tina McKail, KP News*

— all previously housed in a windowless storage space.

The finishing touches were added in March to the new gymnasium that, like Kopachuck Middle School in Gig Harbor, now boasts two full basketball courts.

"Everything is updated, new or refreshed," said PSD Facilities Director Patrick Gillespie. "We're trying to get that new building experience while the main building itself is still the original."

In addition to new lighting and bleachers in the gym, a large new LED monitor serves dual purposes beyond a simple scoreboard

and can be connected to a computer for video presentations, band or choir performances and special events, like eighth-grade

graduation ceremonies.

"Even our sound system here is phenomenal," Gillespie said. "It's better than anything we've got at any of the other schools."

"Our students, the teachers, the principals have been great working with. And we know it's been difficult," he said. "The PE classes have been very accommodating; we've been working very closely with dates, otherwise we would have missed some of those deadlines for the kids' (competitive) athletes."

Vice Principal Luke Grunberg said, "Kids pretty much roll, you know, they figure it out."

The choir room and band room both



Seventh grader Makala Barney on the drums. *Tina McKail, KP News*

have work left to do. Gillespie said it takes a while to go "from this to wow." The stage, curtain, sound and lighting systems will all be new.

Richard Miller, who teaches art, showed off what will become the new art room. Pointing at a temporary wall toward the back, he said, "The wall is temporary and there will be a wall of windows behind that. We had the windows before, but the seals were broken and leaky; you couldn't see through them. The kiln and pottery stuff will go over there in the corner. We still have storage space up top. This will be a fabulous space to do art. New sinks, tables — new everything."

Shop class was underway in a renovated room complete with a new dust collection system and lots of new equipment. Students that day were clearly enjoying the shop class that not so long ago the school had no room for.



A new kitchen is underway. *Tina McKail, KP News*

Gillespie said there used to be darkrooms for photography, a thing of the past, so those obsolete areas have been repurposed into functional spaces.

With the gym mostly finished, the new kitchen comes next. Gillespie said they hope to start on one of the classroom additions later in the spring.

Midway through a construction tour, the bell rang and suddenly the halls filled with students chatting and laughing on the way to their next classes.

Miller's voice rose above the din, greeting students individually, "Good morning. Good morning. Game tomorrow. Smile people. Good morning, how are you? Stop — you're both wearing purple — I didn't get the memo."

"During construction, when we had to close off big chunks of the building, it made some areas bottlenecked, so having everything back open has helped a lot," Miller said.

Seventh-grade student Keira Johnson said she feels like they've kept the construction restricted from the rest of the school, but she's enjoyed seeing how they work.

"I wish we had the big cafeteria back; I do miss having that," she said. "And not having to walk outside to get to the gym."

New student lockers are installed, though not quite ready for use. The bright orange, blue, green and yellow lockers are a thing of the past.

Principal Jeri Goebel said, "The original school was built in 1981 but for some reason it really has a lot of '70s colors."

Gillespie said when it comes to color all of the district schools of that vintage used primary colors.

"We're trying to make modern buildings, but are careful not to do trendy things," he said. "When you see these new maple cabinets, they may not always be the coolest thing, but they stand the test of time."

"We're still waiting on some new doors that aren't in yet; long, long lead items. They've had some supply chain issue stuff, and doors are one that are problematic," he said.



By the time all the exterior finishes are up, the middle school will be practically unrecognizable. *Tina McKail, KP News*



Vice Principal Luke Grunberg about to announce the next Cougar Pride winner of the week.

"Winner, winner chicken dinner, the next prize goes to ..." *Tina McKail, KP News*

All four new elementary schools (Artondale, Evergreen, Pioneer and Swift Water) and the two middle school remodels (Key Peninsula and Kopachuck) were designed with flexibility in mind, Gillespie said. The storage spaces are intended to look like offices, so if the need arises to find space for staff or student breakout areas they can be easily converted into whatever kind of room is needed.

"So that's why you see windows in storage spaces," he said. The old home arts (home economics) room was repurposed into two classrooms, as the school no longer offers those classes. Instead, there will be more electrical service for more computers, whether it's a CAD class, 3-D printers, or new things to come.

In the library, Gillespie said they were tasked to "make it professional yet fun." "You can see how dated it is now, with the weird cut-out circles covering vents, the really fun mustard and ketchup-colored countertops." All will be replaced by new cabinetry.

Pointing, he said, "a staff lounge goes

over there, bathrooms and gender-neutral bathroom. Next to the commons there will be café style seating. It's a nice feature with windows that can be used during lunch or breakout areas outside of lunch." If all goes well, by the time students return next fall the contractor will be out of the building and kids can return to a normal environment, he said.

In the meantime, Vice Principal Grunberg works to rally students with Cougar Pride at lunch. Every Friday, Grunberg stands atop a table with a microphone and the scene turns wild. Cafeteria tables become drums for the kids and there's lots of excited foot stomping underneath.

Throughout the school week teachers award Cougar Pride tickets to students for specific positive actions. As lunch begins on Friday, students deposit their tickets for the chance to win prizes at each grade level in the weekly drawing.

Meanwhile, in Mrs. Babbitt's classroom down the hall, there are a bunch of eighth grade students enjoying a special lunch from Subway courtesy of a student who

earned and shared her \$50 in the innovative rewards-based system of Babbitt's creation. She invented her own special currency called Math Bucks, and she'll exchange a student's Cougar Pride tickets for them.

Students quickly learned about calculating probability, with many of them valuing the Math Bucks to earn greater rewards in a smaller pool of potential winners, Babbitt said. "There's all sorts of ways to earn them, but the biggest points come from improving test scores," she said. There's also a math "market" that takes place with bins of items students can purchase with their Math Bucks. She said it didn't take long for kids to begin offering to be the shopkeeper — for a 10% commission on every deal.

"We promised four new elementary schools over six years. We're going to have six schools either branch new or modernized in four years," said Assistant Superintendent Dan Gregory. "To be able to pass a bond and exceed what we wanted to do was helped by a favorable bond market and expedited construction."

Superintendent Krestin Bahr said, "It really is an honor to work with the community. This was an unintended byproduct of passage of the bond. It's wonderful. Fifty percent of the schools on the Key will be new — Evergreen and here."

Gillespie said, "We have one shot to do that with the bond dollars the community was nice enough to pass for us and we want to make sure we give them the best possible product in return."

Gillespie said when looking at Peninsula schools, the new ones "really wow."

"When you look at the older ones, especially at the high school level and you have better systems in your elementary schools than you do at the high school auditoriums, it's kind of a sad thing," he said. "But that's what bonds do." ■

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ALL GREAT RECIPES BEGIN IN SOMEONE’S KITCHEN. WHY NOT YOURS?

Easter in a Dish: The Anatomy of a Recipe You Could Invent

ANN-MARIE UGLES AND
EVIE BOTHWELL

Those of us who cook often find ideas for new recipes in a myriad of ways. Whether it is a classic food combination used in unusual ways, a fusion of two cultures or a mashup of family favorites — you too can create your own delicious new dish.

Lately, I’ve been motivated by Evie, a young lady I share a mentoring relationship with. She is a burgeoning young cook with an adventurous palate. Together, through this recipe, we hope to give you a road map to invent your own recipes from foods you already like.

We started with just a picture of a savory pie. It looked like potato slices between meatballs covered with cheese. Evie was enthusiastic about making this because it looked unique and delicious with lots of cheese. Once lit up with an idea, it was time to roll up our sleeves and wash our hands.

For our first draft, we started with a scalloped potato base and a flavor profile akin to Greek cuisine, which felt like Easter.

Next, we figured out our protein and how it would be cooked. We tried two types of meatballs, one beef and the other lamb.

Yukon Gold potatoes anchored our protein. We sliced potatoes ¼ inch thick. We used three types of cheese: Swiss slices, Brie and Monterey Jack.

We added spinach and dollops of pesto in addition to milk that made a pan sauce.

We liked our first pie, but it needed a few tweaks. The pesto was a bit greasy and the Swiss on the top made a hard crust we didn’t like.

On our second attempt, we used lamb stew meat. We seasoned the lamb then coated it in seasoned flour, seared and put it in an Instant Pot to pressure cook. We put the Swiss cheese in between the bottom potato layers and made a cream sauce to cover the potatoes.

Next, we added a layer of broken up stew meat dolloped with Brie. Then we put another potato layer on top and added grated Monterey Jack cheese to finish.

We liked this lamb pie a lot. The added cream sauce was overkill, so we went back to just milk. But we lost the unique look of the dish, which attracted us in the first place.

We made one more attempt with cubes of lamb loin. We also decided to slice the



A slice of lamb pie like no other. Ann-Marie Ugles

potatoes in two different thicknesses. Here’s our recipe:

- Lamb Pie**
- 8 lamb chops, use just the lean meat, cut into 1 inch cubes. You get about 3 cubes per chop.
 - Season lamb with:
 - 1 tablespoon kosher salt
 - 1 generous tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
 - 2 tablespoons dried oregano
 - 1 teaspoon ground coriander
 - 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 - 1 teaspoon black pepper
 - 1 tablespoon garlic powder
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
 - 10 Yukon Gold potatoes
 - Half an onion
 - 2 tablespoons soft butter
 - Five slices Swiss cheese
 - 3 ounces Brie
 - 6 ounces grated Monterey Jack



bottom of the top layer.

Add the meat along the edge and then do an inner layer, leaving space around the meat. Cut the thicker potato slices in half and put between the meat. Then cut three ounces of Brie into small pieces and place evenly in the gaps between the potatoes and meat. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of minced garlic on top with any leftover onion. Cover the pie with a handful of chopped fresh parsley and then 6 ounces of grated Monterey Jack cheese.

Put the pie on a cookie sheet and into a 350-degree preheated oven for 30 minutes. Cool before slicing.

Savory Lamb Hand Pies

As is often the case when creating a new recipe, your tasters might suffer from some type of digestion fatigue. Really, how much lamb and potato can you eat in a week?

But you don’t want leftovers to go to waste. In our second draft of the lamb pie recipe, we had extra braised lamb, potatoes and Swiss cheese.

A conundrum. How to make these ingredients not taste like leftovers? We all know necessity is a mother and mom (or dad) has to put food on the table.

So, I pulled out a partial bag of Rhodes Frozen Dinner Rolls, an item I always try to keep on hand. I followed the simple instructions to thaw and with a little flour, rolled them into 4-inch disks.

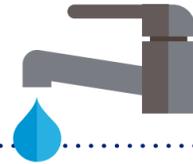
Next, I layered a slice of potato, a quarter slice of cheese, a large tablespoon of lamb and a teaspoon of capers in the center of the dough. Then I pinched the dough together like an envelope.

Egg wash went on the bottom and top of the hand pies. And with a heavy hand, I sprinkled “Everything but the Bagel” seasoning on top and put them in a 350-degree oven for 20 minutes, until a light golden brown. We served them with Chinese ketchup and hot mustard.

When my tasters tore through the whole pile of them and with the stuffed mouthed inquiry of more, I knew I found a keeper. ■

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.

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VAUGHN TUE/THUR MORNING

- 8:55 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:01 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:02 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:03 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:06 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:08 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 9:10 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 9:13 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:19 Purdy Park & Ride

VAUGHN WEDNESDAY MORNING

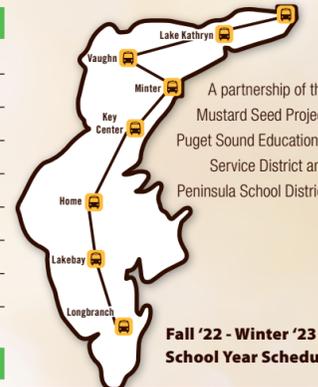
- 9:50 Vaughn Elementary School
- 9:51 Wright Bliss Rd NW @Olson Dr NW
- 9:52 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct NW
- 9:54 Union 76 @SR 302/4 Corners
- 9:57 SR 302 @150th Ave/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 9:58 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 10:00 SR 302 @Charboneau Construction
- 10:03 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:09 Purdy Park & Ride

EVERGREEN TUE/THUR MORNING

- 8:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 8:59 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:00 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 9:05 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 9:06 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 9:09 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 9:13 Food Market in Key Center
- 9:15 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 9:21 Lake Kathryn Village
- 9:30 Purdy Park & Ride

EVERGREEN WEDNESDAY MORNING

- 9:50 Evergreen Elementary School
- 9:54 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 9:55 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 10:00 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 10:01 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 10:04 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 10:08 Food Market in Key Center
- 10:10 KP Hwy N @Minterwood Dr NW
- 10:16 Lake Kathryn Village
- 10:24 Purdy Park & Ride



A partnership of the Mustard Seed Project, Puget Sound Educational Service District and Peninsula School District.

Fall '22 - Winter '23 School Year Schedule

TUE/WED/THUR AFTERNOON

- 4:42 Purdy Park & Ride
- 4:47 Lake Kathryn Village
- 4:50 SR 302 @Windermere Realty
- 4:52 SR 302 @140th Ave/Lake of the Woods
- 4:53 SR 302 @150th/Lake Holiday bus shed
- 4:55 4 Corners gas station @SR 302
- 4:57 Wright Bliss Road @104th St Ct
- 4:58 Wright Bliss Road @Olson Dr
- 5:00 Food Market in Key Center
- 5:04 167th Ave Ct NW @KP Hwy N
- 5:08 Home Gas Station @KP Hwy N
- 5:10 KPCS Senior Center & Food Bank
- 5:13 Palmer Lake public access 24th St SW
- 5:14 Palmer Lake 21st St SW @193rd Ave
- 5:18 Evergreen Elementary School



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10:00am Resurrection Celebration
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12719 134th Ave NW, Gig Harbor
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GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES

APRIL 7TH

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11 Cornwall Rd SW, Lakebay
7:00pm - Good Friday Tenebrae Service

LONGBRANCH COMMUNITY CHURCH
16518 46th Street SW, Longbranch
7:00pm - Good Friday Tenebrae Service

WAYPOINT NORTH
12719 134th Ave NW, Gig Harbor
7:00pm - Good Friday Service

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10:30am Resurrection Celebration
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PRINT AND ONLINE CALENDARS ARE UNDERWRITTEN BY A GRANT FROM THE ANGEL GUILD

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

To add a listing for your event or find the latest details, visit www.keypennews.org/calendar

Apr 1 Key Peninsula Little League Opening Ceremonies 11 a.m., Volunteer Park Ballfields.

Apr 1 Bird Walks 8:30 a.m., rain or shine. Meet nature guide Chris Rurik at Gateway Park pavilion.

Apr 1 COVID Vaccination Clinic 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., KP Community Office, KP Corral.

Apr 2 Egg Decorating Art Class 1 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project, \$15 fee. Call 253-884-9814 to register.

Apr 3 Bingo! 1 – 2 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project.

Apr 4 GH Literary Society 6 p.m., Gig Harbor History Museum. "Love & Saffron" by Kim Fay.

Apr 6 Senior Crafternoon 2 - 4 p.m., Volunteer Vern Pavilion, Sehmel Homestead Park.

Apr 8 YMCA Camp Seymour Service Saturday 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., RSVP online at Camp Seymour website. Breakfast and lunch provided.

Apr 8 Key Pen Parks Easter Egg Hunt 9:30 a.m., Gateway Park. Arrive a few minutes early; this is a "while supplies last" event.

Apr 11 Spring Break KP Kids Maker Fun 1 – 3 p.m., Key Center Library. STEAM and science activities.

Apr 11 Open Mic Cafe 6:30 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club. With Two Waters Arts Alliance and The Mustard Seed Project.

Apr 15 Story Time at WayPoint 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., WayPoint Church. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Apr 17 KP Democrats 7 p.m., Home Fire Station. Guest - Chris Reykdal, WA State Superintendent of Public Schools.

Apr 19 Cribbage Club 2 – 4 p.m., Mustard Seed Project. Everyone is welcome - no experience required.

Apr 20 TacomaProBono Legal Aid Pop-Up 2 – 4 p.m., Key Center Library. Free civil legal help.

Apr 21 Baby Lounge 12 p.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center. A gathering for connection with other parents.

Apr 22 PEP-C Emergency Preparedness Fair 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Gig Harbor High School.

Apr 22 Burley Lagoon History Meeting & Potluck 12 p.m., Burley Hall and Community Center. Potluck, social hour, local history presentation.

Apr 27 KP Book Club 11 a.m., KP Historical Society. "Moo" by Jane Smiley.

Apr 27 Tales at the BoatShop 10:30 a.m., Gig Harbor Boatshop. Nautical storytelling for children.

Apr 29 Read with a Daffodil Princess 11 a.m. – 12 p.m., Key Center Library. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Monday Make Peace with Your Guitar 2 – 4 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project, runs 4/3 to 5/15, \$15 per class or \$75 for the series.

Monday Al-Anon Keys to Sanity 5 p.m., KP Fire Station. Family group.

Monday Walks with Rusty 9 a.m., Gateway Dog Park/360 Trails. Dog Walks with Jason.

M-W-F SAIL 10 a.m., The Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814. Stay Active and Independent for Life.

M-F Rev+Flow Workout Mon 7 p.m., Fri 9:30 a.m., WayPoint South, heartfitwp@gmail.com. Women's free fitness classes.

M-W SAIL 3:30 p.m., KP Community Services, 253-884-4440. Flexibility and balance for those over 60.

T-TH-SA SAIL 8:30 a.m., KP Community Services, 253-884-4440. Flexibility and balance for those over 60.

T-TH Tai Chi 9:45 a.m., KP Community Services, 253-884-4440.

T-W-Th REFIT Cardio Workout Tue/Wed 5:30 p.m., Thu 9:30 a.m., WayPoint North, heartfitwp@gmail.com. Women's free fitness classes.

T-TH Toddler Indoor Park 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center in the gym.

T-SA KP Historical Museum 1 – 4 p.m. Open hours through November.

Wednesday Gentle Yoga for Older Adults 11:30 a.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

Thursday Senior Bingo 1 p.m., first and third Thursdays, KP Community Services, 253-884-4440.

Thursday KP Toastmasters 8 a.m., WayPoint Church, 425-243-2618.

Friday Skate Night 6 – 9 p.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center, kindergarten-eighth grade.

Saturday Eddon Boatyard Tours 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Gig Harbor Boat Shop.

Sunday WayPoint Community Dinners 6 p.m. Free community dinners at WayPoint North and WayPoint South churches.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

26th LD Democrats First Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. March meeting location: Sehmel Homestead Park.

Caregiver Support Group Third Mondays, 2 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project.

Key Peninsula Advisory Commission Third Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. piercecountywa.gov/5937.

KP Business Association Luncheon, third Fridays, noon at El Sombrero. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com.

KP Business Association Business meeting, first Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., All Around Gutters in Key Center. kpbusinessassociation@gmail.com.

KP Community Council Second Wednesdays on Zoom, 6:30 p.m. keypencouncil@gmail.com.

KP Citizens Against Crime Third Thursdays,

7 – 8:30 p.m., Key Center fire station.

KP Civic Center Association Board meeting, second Thursdays, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Whitmore Room, KP Civic Center, 253-884-3456.

KP Democrats Third Monday, 7 p.m., Home fire station, johnpatkelly@aol.com, 253-432-4256.

KP Emergency Prep Third Thursday, 7 p.m., KP Civic Center, eprep@kpciviccenter.org.

KP Fire Regular Board Meeting Second and fourth Tuesdays, 5 p.m. on Zoom, keypeninsulafire.org, 253-884-2222.

KP Historical Society First Tuesdays, 11 a.m. at museum, kphsmuseum@gmail.com.

KP Lions Club First and third Wednesdays, 6 p.m. Potluck at Key Center fire station, 253-525-0802, keypeninsulalions@outlook.com.

Key Pen Parks Commission Board meeting, second Mondays, 7 p.m., Home fire station, 253-884-9240.

KP Veterans First and third Mondays, 7 – 8 p.m., KP Lutheran Church, 253-884-2626.

Lakebay Fuchsia Society First Thursdays, 7 p.m. KP Civic Center, Whitmore Room, 253-884-2283.

Longbranch Improvement Club Third Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club, 253-200-0308 or licweb.org.

Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition Second Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m., check pep-c.org for meeting location.

Peninsula School District Board Meeting Fourth Thursdays, 6 – 7:30 p.m., 253-530-1000.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department Tues & Thurs, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Key Center Corral. Call 253-432-4948 for the schedule; Air Quality, Triple P, COVID-19, General HD, Water/Wells and Healthy Housing advice.

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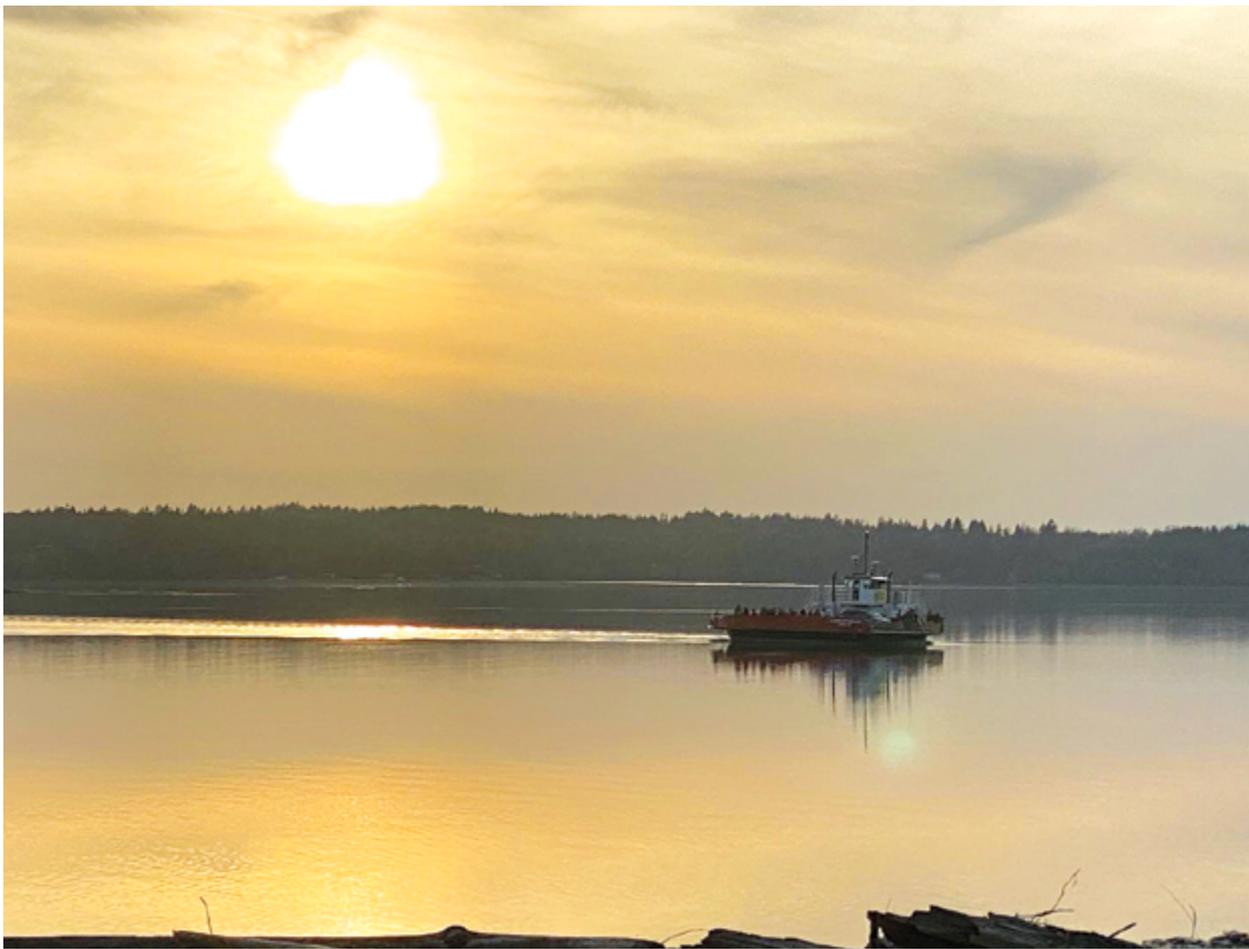
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UPPER LEFT: Roughly 40 people and one car made the ceremonial ferry run to honor the late Herron Island boatman Charlie Folk. *Anne Nesbit*
 UPPER RIGHT: Assorted sweets at the KP Civic Center's annual crab feed. *Tina McKail, KP News*
 CENTER RIGHT: A headstone at the small historic Home Cemetery. *Tina McKail, KP News*
 MID LEFT: Pierce County Councilmember Robyn Denson volunteered at the crab feed March 18. *Tina McKail, KP News*
 MID RIGHT: Tucked in the woods, a dedication plaque in Home. *Tina McKail, KP News*
 LOWER LEFT: Volunteer firefighter Charlie Folk honored by KPFD on a ceremonial run. *Anne Nesbit*
 LOWER RIGHT: It was one big tree. *Tina McKail, KP News*