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THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE KEY PENINSULA

October 2023 Vol. 50 No. 10

Election Candidates Answer KP Questions at Forum

The off-year election attracted only eight of the 13 candidates on the ballot, where just five races are contested.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula Civic Center hosted candidates Sept. 12 for what has become a perennial KP election season tradition. Eight contenders participated in a 90-minute Q&A and reception to explain their positions in a community forum co-sponsored by the Key Peninsula Community Council, The Mustard Seed Project, the Key Peninsula News and the KPCCA.

The off-year election attracted only eight of the 13 candidates on the ballot — where just five races are contested — and an audience of about 40.

Moderator Lisa Bryan, executive editor of the KP News, introduced the candidates and asked questions submitted in advance by audience members.

Three local races have a direct impact on the KP: Fire District 16 commissioner open position 5 between John Pat Kelly and Cambria Queen; Peninsula School District board position 1 between incumbent Chuck West and challenger Jack Mende; and Key Pen Metro Park District commissioner position 5 between incumbent Kip Clinton and challenger Kenneth Y. Lee.

Two spots for Port of Tacoma commissioner are also in contention: position 3 between incumbent Deanna Keller and challenger Jeannette Twitty, and position 5 between incumbent Kristin Ang and challenger Dave Bryant.

Challengers Mende, Lee and Twitty did not attend. Unopposed incumbents who appeared were Natalie Wimberley, PSD director position No. 4, and Deanna Keller,

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Connor Burton, No. 3, leads the Seahawk charge onto the field. *Tina McKail, KP News*

Gig Harbor Wins 45th Annual Fish Bowl 21-20 After Seven-Year Drought

The Tides overcame a 14-0 halftime deficit to win the Fish Bowl for the first time since 2015.



PHS senior Henry Ganison starts the lineup for the national anthem. *Tina McKail, KP News*

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Gig Harbor quarterback Benji Parks threw for 208 yards and two touchdowns — and ran for another — all in the second half as the Gig Harbor Tides came back from a 14-0 deficit to beat the Peninsula Seahawks 21-20 in the 45th annual Fish Bowl at Roy Anderson Field Sept. 15.

It was the first Fish Bowl win for the Tides in eight years and the first South Sound Conference game for both teams. The Gig Harbor student body was left standing after the bleachers they were on started to buckle under their weight. School officials removed the temporary bleachers more than an hour before kick-off.

The last time the Tides took home

the trophy was Sept. 14, 2015, after a 40-14 win. That year was also the last time the Seahawks had a losing record (4-6 overall). The last three Fish Bowls have been competitive and exciting, but the six before that were lopsided wins for Peninsula.

Parks, who normally plays tight end for the Tides, replaced sophomore Koi Calhoun (who replaced Tyler Stowers in their game last week against Bonney Lake) and went 8-10 passing. Calhoun was seriously injured after throwing an interception to Seahawk safety Thomas Erickson with 1:05 left in the first half. As Erickson was returning the interception, Calhoun got tied up with Seahawk defensive back Cameron Miller.

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KP Fire Department Volunteer Marks 50 Years

Jerry Marsh has served longer than any career or volunteer in the district, and is one of the longest-serving in the U.S.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

The Key Peninsula Volunteer Firefighters Association and Fire District 16 honored its longest-serving member at the Sept. 12 commission meeting, commending Jerry Marsh for 50 years of service.

Marsh, 78, signed on in September 1973 and never stopped.

"Anyone that has had the privilege to work with Jerry knows that service and perfectionism is what drives him," said Volunteer Battalion Chief Anne Nesbit at the ceremony. "Jerry has set the bar higher than anyone, career or volunteer, in the history of this department. There is no higher compliment one can receive than a positive nod of approval from Jerry."

The department awarded Marsh its first-ever challenge coin in a salute to his career and contributions.

"I wanted to serve this community when I first showed up out here," Marsh said.

That was when he came to the Key Peninsula to visit his parents' new house in 1970. He was in the Navy at the time but liked the place and eventually built his own home in 1973 when he got married.

"I had some skills that I could offer to the department," Marsh said. He was an electronics technician in the Navy and went to work for the civil service selling and repairing a variety of radio and related equipment. "So, communications is my bag," he said.

Marsh still "works on the wiring," as he put it, but was also an EMT, responded to fires, and now drives the district's largest water tender, at 2,500 gallons, to replenish fire engines out on calls.

"It was an all-volunteer department, and we were doing our own dispatching," he said of his early days. "There was no 911; you called a telephone number, people would pick up, and then we'd have a



KPFV Volunteer Jerry Marsh on the scene. *Anne Nesbit*

dispatcher get on the radio. You'd figure out who's gonna go get the ambulance, who's gonna get the fire trucks, who's gonna go through this, and so on."

There were about 60 volunteers at the time Marsh said, or about 10 per station plus Herron Island. "We didn't know who they all were. We didn't drill all at once."

Judy Marsh said they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary the first week of September. "It was a surprise the first time when he got called," she said. "We were getting ready to go somewhere and then, nope, gotta go do this. It was the gas station in Home and that was a rippin' fire. But since then we got used to it."

Judy was on the radios during emer-

gencies, relaying information to different volunteers. "I didn't mind doing that; I was a telephone operator," she said.

Both of their sons also became KPFV volunteers.

Jerry said he has no plans to retire from the department. He still weighs in on communication issues — among many other things — even inspecting the wiring in the rigs himself.

"The fire department is great," he said. "My wife has gone through three heart attacks, and they brought her back. The doctor said she shouldn't be here, but because of the fire department paramedics, she's still here. What I do not like is when we train them and they go somewhere else, you know, like the kids leaving home.

"There's always room for improvement," he said. "And that's why I'm still here." ■

"THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT, AND THAT'S WHY I'M STILL HERE."

CORRECTION: The September edition article "KP Historical Society Receives Major Grant for Restoration" inaccurately attributed a quote to Jerry Wolniewicz, the last resident of the Vaughn Library Hall — who died in 2012 — instead of Joe Dervaes, the KP Historical Society treasurer, who is very much alive. We regret the error. Wolniewicz's sister, Donna Docken, donated the hall to the KPHS in 2016. ■

PHS Swim Coach Athena Petterson after warm-up discussion. *Tina McKail, KP News*

New PHS Swim Coach Finding the Right Recipe for Success

Whether it's coaching the butterfly stroke or cooking butterfly shrimp, Athena Petterson is bringing her best to the table.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

When you are as busy as new Peninsula High School girls and boys swim coach Athena Petterson, your day job and night job start to blur together.

When her team isn't winning meets, she's cooking meats. She goes from teaching breaststroke to grilling chicken breasts. One minute she's watching a dive, the next she's chopping endive. She moves from the starting block to the butcher block.

Franklin moonlights as a personal chef, leaving the pool to exchange her whistle for a whisk.

"With both jobs, there's a lot of taking charge and a lot of pressure," said Franklin, whose specialty in the kitchen is small, intimate dinners with multiple courses. "Seeing these athletes excel in the pool and seeing my clients enjoy my dishes — it's the best of both worlds."

Her approach to coaching mirrors her approach to cooking: a blend of tradition and innovation.

She joined the PHS team as an assistant before last season and quickly connected

with fellow assistant coach Craig Brown. Brown, Petterson's coach when she swam for the school from 2013 to 2016, took Petterson under his wing. She credits him for helping her "fall back in love with the sport," which led to her applying for the head gig when Coach Tim Messersmith stepped aside.

"Learning from (Brown) last season was so valuable. If anyone knew how to put together a winning team it was him so I hope I absorbed that."

Although Petterson is diving into the world of head coaching, she never participated in or coached diving. She relies heavily on long-time dive coach Troy Olson for that end of the pool.

A 2017 PHS graduate now in her mid-20s, Petterson said she knows she's a young coach, but she thinks that is an advantage. A state-qualifying swimmer herself while at PHS, she feels her age and experience

help her better connect with the team, and the team better connect with each other.

The girls season is already halfway over. The team had three meets in September and have another three in October before districts and the state swimming and diving championships take place in November. The only chance left to see the PHS girls team locally is Thursday, Oct. 19 for a dual meet at Gig Harbor High School.

A STATE-QUALIFYING SWIMMER HERSELF WHILE AT PHS, PETTERSON FEELS HER AGE AND EXPERIENCE HELP HER BETTER CONNECT WITH THE TEAM, AND THE TEAM BETTER CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER.

Petterson called senior diver Makenna Post as the one to watch this season. Post had a fourth-place finish at last year's state swimming and diving championship and a ninth-place spot the year before. Petterson thinks she can climb higher up the charts this season.

Petterson is also looking forward to seeing how junior Kate Henkel performs this season individually and on the relay teams with juniors Annan Ball and Reis Every and freshman Lee Gjertson. The new coach is

very excited about the fact that Gjertson has another three years with the program following this season. "She's a very strong sprinter and is a big asset for our relay teams."

Petterson will quickly switch gears to the boys swimming and diving season in November. The boys participated in six state events last season, and senior Thomas Cardinal is back after placing 10th last year in diving.

She said she has "one of the most motivated groups of team captains I've ever seen" this season with all four — senior Ethan Berard and a trio of juniors: Jonah Bergerson, Aidan Miller and Tyler Givot — having great experience in the high school and club pools.

Bergerson, Miller and Givot all were part of the 12th-place medley relay team last season at the state swimming and diving championships. Bergerson earned the Iron Seahawk award last season by qualifying for the district swim meet in every swimming event.

"(The boys) have a lot of depth and have some hefty goals this year," Petterson said. "I'm hoping to see it through with them." ■



Derek Grannes and Alex Donahou might look scarier than most ghosts. *Tina McKail, KP News*

Local Ghost Hunters Document Paranormal Experiences on YouTube

The Ghost Riders travel the area to find the most haunted places around Puget Sound.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Derek Grannes and Alex Donahou were tossing back a few drinks at The Floatation Device Pub & Grill near the Purdy Spit last December. Nothing strange about friends of nearly 20 years getting

**"I NEED TO SEE (A GHOST).
I NEED PHYSICAL PROOF
AND THEN I'D BE 100% IN."**

together for some beer and tequila to celebrate the holidays.

But then from out of nowhere, Donahou asked Grannes a pretty strange question: "Have you ever wanted to go ghost hunting?"

Even stranger: Grannes was about to ask him the same thing.

Earlier that month Grannes had a vivid dream about his dad playing with Grannes' three kids. Grannes, who had a contentious relationship with his dad, hadn't talked to him for five years.

"He told me (in the dream), 'I just want to apologize to you for everything I've done, and I want

you to know that I love you,' " Grannes said. "I just felt so relieved." His wife, Brittani, woke him up soon after to tell him that she got a phone call that his dad just passed away.

"That was very powerful to me, so I asked God for a path," said Grannes.

That path, along with Donahou's lifelong belief in the paranormal, led to The Ghost Riders — a YouTube channel (@The_Ghost_Riders) featuring two heavily tattooed, Harley-Davidson-riding paranormal investigators traveling around to some of Puget Sound's most haunted locales. Grannes rides his 2007 Heritage Softail Classic, while Donahou takes his 2011 Fat Boy Lo.

The Ghost Riders is a family affair, of sorts. Donahou says he and Grannes are like brothers, and Grannes recruited his brother-in-law Brandon Miller to shoot and edit the video.

The premise is simple: go to some of the scar-

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The Key Peninsula is Thriving With the Paranormal

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Rachel Ostoyich knows where she is going when she dies.

She's been there already. Because she died already.

It was 2008. Ostoyich, then 19, was at Allenmore Hospital in Tacoma. She had experienced mysterious pain and illness for months. After going through an exploratory surgery with many complications, she got a blood infection that caused her body temperature to spike above 105 degrees. A priest read her the last rights.

When she died, she was shown a glimpse of what she called heaven.

"I saw what I saw. It was my own truth," Ostoyich said. "I was shown something as simple as green grass and was told to go back and create what I felt: peace, forgiveness, love and pleasure. Then I was sent back down (to live)."



Rachel Ostoyich at home with her kids (from left to right) Ayden, Ella and Wyatt. *Tina McKail, KP News*

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Getting Advice From Your Mostly Friendly Local Spirit Guides

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

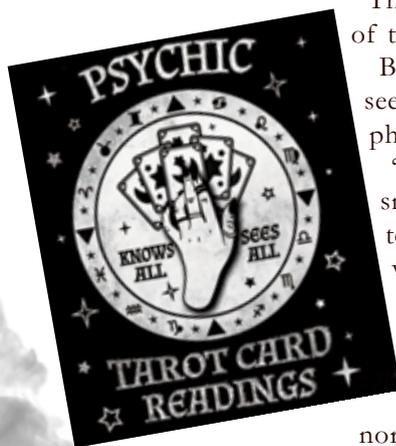
Water rippling on a windshield.

That's how Alex Burley describes the look of the spirits she speaks with.

Burley, an empathic psychic medium, can't see spirits in their human form, unlike her physical medium counterparts.

"I can talk to them, hear them, feel them, smell them," she said. "When I tune in to all that energy I can get a pretty good vision of what they look like."

The Lakebay medium has lived in the area for two years, after spending her life in California and Connecticut, and has come across all sorts of paranormal situations. She believes the area south of Evergreen Elementary School and



Alex Burley pulling tarot cards for a client.

Tina McKail, KP News

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Ted Olinger

ANOTHER LAST WORD



Heart Like a Wheel

It was 1979 or '80. My dad informed me I would accompany him to a business dinner. I put on my three-piece suit, like his, and he drove us in his 1968 Volvo P1800 bone-white coupe with red leather interior to a pre-war L.A. apartment building overlooking the Hollywood Bowl. The hostess served us martinis, yes including me at 16 or 17, in a classic California courtyard adorned with massive birds of paradise and lilies of the Nile, but the dominant scent was Chinese wisteria hanging from the terracotta roof tiles, with a hint of buttery baked garlic from her kitchen.

She served us a six course dinner while pitching a deal she wanted my dad's input on. He was a distinguished tax attorney with a specialty in funding energy projects and she had some idea about solar, like that was going to be a thing.

I could describe the whole evening, from vichyssoise to frog legs to tax shelters, but the epiphany that night was sweetbreads. I'd never had, heard of, or imagined such a thing. Served in light cream with baby turnips and new potatoes. She knew it was one of my dad's favorites, but he remained poker-faced.

It wasn't until dessert, a spoon bread soufflé, that he cracked. "I am in your power," he said, offering his expertise while silently glancing back across the lonely decades to his Kansas farm childhood in the '30s, and the corn slush he so often ate. He described this feeling to me on the way home as we unwound our way through the Hollywood Hills late that night in the Volvo, but, of course, I couldn't understand it until many lonely decades later.

In 1991 I was working at a boatyard in Ventura after having given up a short-lived career in publishing in New York City and trying to write my way around the world. It was a rest stop of sorts after those failures. I was 28 and without any prospects, staying at my parents' house for a few months while they traveled, and I didn't.

When they got home, Dad gave me the Volvo.

We didn't have the best relationship, so this was quite startling. It took me years

to understand that he spoke through action.

I took the Volvo and drove to Seattle, moved in with a friend who needed a roommate, and found a good job right away downtown.

Four days later, I was stopped at an intersection when a 19-year-old uninsured driver rear-ended me at 50 miles an hour, shoving me into cross traffic.

Every person in that accident was injured, except me. The Volvo was a solid steel capsule — totaled, of course — but I was the only person to walk away after firefighters pried my door open.

One can imagine how my parents felt, even parents who didn't talk about things.

Now, of course, they are long gone, and so is that elegant woman who served me a martini and sweetbreads in the Hollywood Hills. Her deal worked out well for her and was just one of many she conjured and invited us to join. I became an understudy at her table when there was a cancellation, and was grateful for the invitations. She told me so many secrets. Not about business or people but about life.

Out of nowhere a young associate who'd seen a photo in my office of Dad's car recently brought to my attention something she thought I might like: A 1972 P1800 Volvo, ivory white, red vinyl interior, at a price I could manage.

I confess that even at 60 the overpowering desire of youth drove me to make a call for which I was wholly unprepared. The voice on the other end, however, was entirely prepared for me. The car's owner knew my terrain well, for he had dwelled there himself. We talked for a long time.

Listening to him describe his car, which had been his father's, and all the work he had done to it reminded me of all my dad had done to keep his car going for so long before he gave it to me out of nowhere. It was so terrible telling Dad what happened just a few days later. But if he cared, he never showed it. And then we had a similar conversation when he was diagnosed with bilateral lung cancer in 2003. He was dead three months later.

I couldn't buy the guy's car.

Almost all of me wanted to, except the part which told me you can't fix a broken heart. I didn't think I knew that, but I remembered a secret the elegant woman told me, 20 years ago now. We shared a bottle of bourbon the night after my dad died, not in that apart-

ment courtyard but on the terrace of her mansion perched on a cliff above the Pacific. Grief isn't like some wild animal at the edge of the firelight you think you can scare away, she said. Let it in, sweetheart, because it's not going anywhere.

Ted Olinger lives in Vaughn.

Mark Michel

RIDE ON



EV Power to the People

In his June column, Richard Gelinas talked about energy production ("No Nukes: Carbon-free Electricity.") He touched briefly on the benefits of solar power. He also mentioned his desire to get an electric car. I'd like to share my personal experience with both of those subjects.

We had solar panels put on our house in September 2018. Coincidentally, we also bought an electric car that same month.

Each of them had easily accessible data on their energy production and usage. Here are some of the things I've learned over the past five years.

The app for our solar panels reports interesting data, including CO2 saved and equivalent trees planted (eye-roll), but the most significant is energy production, which now stands at 48-megawatt hours. Our car has used just under 16MWhs. So, since owning both, our car has burned about one-third of the energy our panels have generated.

We've driven that car over 60,000 miles. To make the math easy, if we assume the car averaged 30 MPG, I'd have burned 2,000 gallons of gas. At an average of \$3.50/gallon, that's \$7,000. If I extend oil changes to 10,000 miles, that's roughly 30 quarts of oil (plus the service costs if I didn't do it myself).

While I've been incredibly happy with my decision, electric vehicles may not be for everyone. "Range anxiety" is real. Fortunately, I haven't been stranded — yet.

A few years ago we left home for a drive to northern Nevada. We started a little later than planned and had hoped to get to my mom's house before it was too late at night. We stopped in Klamath Falls, Oregon, to charge. We'd read there was a charging station in Susanville, California, where we planned to add a few

miles before our final leg to Reno, so we left Oregon without a "full tank."

The "station" in Susanville wasn't what we'd been led to believe. After a short struggle trying to find it, we plugged in. The charging rate was incredibly slow. Hoping to make it to Mom's before her bedtime, we unplugged and left Susanville with a few more miles of range than Google said it was to her house.

Feeling the pressure of running late, I drove relatively fast. Soon we watched the mapped distance approach the car's remaining range. The car warned me to slow down if I wanted to make our destination. I did.

With 70 miles left to drive, the car said the batteries would provide power for only those 70. With 50 left, I was down to only 47 of range. I've driven to Reno many times and knew the last several miles were downhill, which would help.

I was feverishly watching the range available and the miles remaining, cross-checking the math on a minute-by-minute basis, going through scenarios to resolve an EV stuck on the side of the road, powerless. With 40 miles left

to drive, we had 35 miles of range. I felt doomed to failure and started to sweat.

With 30 miles left to drive, not far from aptly named Hallelujah Junction, the road pitched down ever-so-slightly. I had remembered correctly. Our remaining miles and range started to close. With sweat still on my forehead, we coasted to a charging cable in a downtown casino parking lot, our range a comfortable 2 miles remaining.

It was then I learned how a "thirsty battery" drinks very fast if the juice is available. We had previously seen charging rates of 450 miles per hour. That night we started charging over 800 miles per hour. Within minutes we had plenty to make it to Mom's. A few more minutes gave us enough for the rest of the visit.

On a previous visit to Reno, I had gone for a long bike ride. It was a typical hot, cloudless day. As I was finishing my ride I thought about how punishingly hot it would be inside the car. Then it hit me: I could turn on the air conditioning with my phone. Within seconds, the cabin of the car went from triple digits to 70 degrees. I was comfortable without having to run an engine and burn gas just to control the cabin temperature. I thought of all the moving parts and emissions required to heat — or cool —

I FELT DOOMED TO FAILURE
AND STARTED TO SWEAT.

a conventional car. Our EV even has a “dog mode,” so Gus can be comfortable in the car unattended while I run errands.

I’m not sure if there is active resistance to change from legacy carmakers to EVs but I know there’s blind, inexplicable animosity.

Three ways the resentment toward electric vehicles has manifested itself: rolling coal, “ICE-ing,” and vandalism. To “roll coal,” the driver modifies their engine to pump excess diesel into the combustion process. It causes a big, thick, black cloud of exhaust. Frequently it’s directed at bicyclists, hybrid or electric cars. “ICE” stands for Internal Combustion Engine. “ICE-ing” is when multiple misguided drivers use their conventional cars and trucks to block charging stations so the EV drivers can’t refuel.

Sadly, I witnessed anti-EV vandalism first-hand recently. Driving home from visiting our daughter, we stopped in Vancouver, Washington, to charge. Each of the 11 charging cables had been cut and were lying on the ground. It was clear it had nothing to do with wire theft. It was just to lash out at those who drive electric cars. Senseless. It helps nobody.

I’m not sure what their end game is, or if they’ve even thought of the consequences of their actions. I’m unaware of any downside to reduced emissions. If the goal is to discourage EV use, more people will continue to drive internal combustion cars, and that means gas prices will rise for everybody. Not something to be proud of. But if this car and our solar panels represent the future, I’m all in — as long as I respect the current limitations on the range).

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



April Godwin
TECH TALK

My AI Is Smarter Than Your AI

I recently attended a high-profile tech conference where artificial intelligence was the talk of the week. After listening to the hype and the promises, and the long-term visions from heavily funded and deeply invested big tech companies, my takeaway is that AIs still aren’t very smart. And yes, there are already many AI engines out there, and many more are on the horizon.

It’s true that AI has reached several significant milestones, and the technology continues to grow and develop exponentially, but instead of being self-aware super geniuses, in many cases, the AIs are more like confused toddlers.

Humans who want to use AI to work faster, produce better results, and innovate at high speed, not only have to be good at their job, but they also have to be skilled in the art of AI prompt creation. A prompt is the text or other input you use to ask an AI for a response. If you don’t know how to write a great prompt that includes examples, gives direction, advises on formatting, and builds on previous prompts, you’re not really doing it right, and that could cause the AI to hallucinate.

What’s an AI hallucination, you ask? It’s the wrong answer. It’s false information. It’s a plausible lie. AI hallucinations can be silly, nonsensical or dangerous, particularly when you don’t realize that it’s happening. Just ask the attorney Steven A. Schwartz, who was sanctioned recently

for submitting a legal brief to a federal district court that contained references to more than half a dozen non-existent court decisions that ChatGPT made up to support the prompt he entered.

Hallucinations can be great if you’re using AI to be creative; for example, they can lead to inventive storytelling, creative poems and unique images. But fact-finding and decision-making are risky when left up to a delusional AI engine.

Hallucinations happen because AIs don’t understand the real context that language describes. They use statistical patterns to generate language that is grammatically and semantically correct

... IN MANY CASES, THE AIS ARE MORE LIKE CONFUSED TODDLERS.

within the context of the prompt. Hallucinations can range from a minor inconsistency to a flat-out lie. They can happen for any number of reasons including poor source data, built-in biases, skewed training and unclear prompts.

But have no fear, there are already guides, classes and certificate programs ready to teach you how to become a “prompt engineer,” so you can learn how to coax better answers from AI. In other words, you can spend your time and money learning how to write questions and instructions in a way that makes it easier for the AI engine to understand and process, so you can — hopefully — get the results you’re looking for. For me, this defeats the entire reason for using AI in the first place. It should make my job easier, not harder.

If you’re like me, and you don’t want to spend a lot of time and money learning how to get better at prompting AI, here are a few tips to help you get the most out of your experience:

Be specific and provide as much detail

as possible. Include small details, such as styles (pencil drawing, pirate voice, the 1980s) and points of view (expert, student, beginner). Use the right AI model for what you’re trying to accomplish. Some models are dedicated to creating images, answering questions about specific topics and generating software code. Check your settings to find out what mode you’re in, for example, because most AIs offer some version of creative, precise or balanced. Be aware that most AI answers are built from previous prompts. To start over, you may need to do a reset. And finally,

fact-check, fact-check, fact-check.

When it comes to

AI, fact-checking is always critical. Careful prompting is also important, but that can be nuanced and error-prone, leading to hallucinations. Not to mention, prompt writing is more of an art than a science. This might change over time, but until AI gets a lot smarter, we need to be very careful about how much faith we put into its answers.

April Godwin is an IT specialist. She lives in Lakebay.



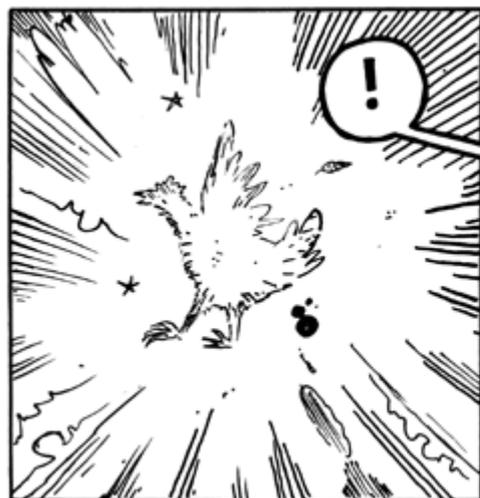
Joseph Pentheroudakis
ON THE WING

The Osprey of Herron Island

On May 10, 2016, then Herron Island ferry captain John Farris posted a photo on the islanders’ group on Facebook with a laconic caption, as was his style, even though the announcement could easily be considered breaking news.

“Osprey nesting on the mainland,” read

José Alaniz WE LIVE HERE: SAD PHOENIX



WE WERE HAVING BREAKFAST IN THE FRONT YARD WITH OUR OVERNIGHT GUESTS. SUDDENLY, OUR FOSTER-TURNED-ADOPTEE GAME HEN WILMA APPEARED— LIKE THE PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES! KRISTIN GASPED, CRIED. WILMA HAD GONE MISSING SINCE THE PREVIOUS DAY. WE THOUGHT WE HAD LOST HER TO A PREDATOR. BUT IT TURNED OUT THAT SHE WAS JUST

BRODDY, PROBABLY SITTING ON A CLUTCH OF EGGS SOMEWHERE OUT OF SIGHT. (DANGEROUS!) SHE’D EMERGED NOW JUST FOR A QUICK FOOD AND WATER BREAK—TO OUR SHOCK! QUICKLY WE SECURED HER. BUT WILMA GOT SO FRANTIC, PECKING AT HER COOP’S WALLS, TRYING DESPERATELY TO GET BACK TO HER PRECIOUS EGGS. SOON SHE GOT DEPRESSED.



WE’RE SO SORRY, SWEET GIRL.

the caption.

The photo showed an osprey pair perched on the crossbeams of the gantry, the imposing steel structure supporting the pulleys and cables that raise and lower the ferry ramp below. The large nest was a deceptively precarious-looking arrangement of sticks and twigs partly built around one of the pulleys. Several twigs hung loosely down the side of the gantry's beams.

Some islanders had noticed the nest being built, so the response to the post was quick.

"Several times waiting for the ferry I watched as they were carrying these sticks bigger than they were up there to make the nest. It must be hard work for an expecting mommy," one person commented. "My 5-year-old asked me how those sticks got up there as we were docking last weekend," added another. "I now have a legit answer!"

An island birder noticed osprey activity near her home at the south end of the island a couple of weeks earlier. "I was hoping that was an osprey nest going in," she said. "They were cruising the south end for several days but I haven't heard them in about a week and a half."

Our mainland ferry terminal is no stranger to birds. Crows, gulls and pigeons have been some of the regulars for years; eagles and kingfishers are common overhead; barn swallows build mud nests up against the underside of the concrete dock.

But the osprey family stole the show.

Three chicks arrived a few weeks later, their heads bobbing over the rim of the nest demanding to be fed. We got to recognize the loud high-pitched chirp

of the adults and the frantic-sounding calls of the chicks that seemed to carry for miles across the water.

And I learned very quickly that the osprey parents objected to my red bike helmet when I walked my bike down the ramp to the ferry. Once I took my helmet off, with some trepidation given the size of their talons and the possible damage they could inflict on my exposed noggin, their alarm calls subsided. Quick learners on both sides.

We watched them carry on with their daily routine all summer, their nest out in the open as is their preference, to allow for an unobstructed approach and for protection from land-based predators like raccoons. They fished, fed their young, perched on the gantry, and joined crows in harassing bald eagles, a serious nest predator to both.

Then by early September, they were gone, off to their wintering grounds in California or Central America.

Osprey prefer to return to the previous year's nest site. Males arrive first, including adults and young over a year old; osprey do not migrate north in their first year. They typically show up in our area a week or two after the spring equinox.

Sure enough, they were back in April 2017 and have been there every year since, always arriving on the first of April, according to local birders.

And they steal our hearts all over again. We take photos, and post about them on Facebook; we stop and watch them as we wait in line at the ferry. Word has gotten out on the peninsula, and a couple of photographers I know have

made it a point to come and shoot a few pictures every year.

Our ferry crew has front-row seats to the action. Deckhand Robert Axt has been observing them for a few years and has witnessed their joyful moments but also the inevitable heartbreak, at least from the human perspective. Of the three chicks in the brood last year only two fledged successfully and went on to become self-sufficient and fish on their own. The third did not thrive and was left behind when the rest of the birds flew south. Axt remembers seeing the remaining bird huddled among the

pigeons under the ferry ramp one morning. "And that was the last I saw

of it," he said.

The nest on the gantry interfered with maintenance of the pulley system, so in March 2019, after consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the island built a wooden platform off the north end of the gantry to encourage the birds to stay away from the pulleys. The osprey arrived a month later and proceeded to ignore their new penthouse. The following year we decorated it ahead of time with a few sticks and twigs, and they've occupied it ever since.

This year for the first time a nest appeared on the island-side terminal, once again built over one of the pulleys, perhaps for stability. And once again, that has kept the crew from servicing that pulley.

An island penthouse with a view is almost certainly in their future.

Joseph Pentheroudakis is an artist, historian and avid birder who writes from Heron Island.



Puget Sound harbor seals number in the thousands and are generally healthy.

Sophie McCoy, UNC/NOAA

Bird Flu Found in Puget Sound Harbor Seals for First Time

STAFF REPORT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed that three adult harbor seals in Puget Sound tested positive for the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 strain Sept. 8. The seals stranded on Marrowstone Island, approximately two-miles southeast of Port Townsend, Aug. 18 and 25 in the first appearance of HPAI in marine mammals on the West Coast.

The discovery followed an ongoing HPAI outbreak affecting seabirds on neighboring Rat Island since mid-summer and resulting in the death of approximately 1,700 birds.

An outbreak of HPAI in Maine last year killed approximately 500 harbor and gray seals, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

NOAA advised that people and pets should avoid all contact with sick or dead wildlife. HPAI is a zoonotic disease that can spread between animals and people. "Although the risk of infection to the general public remains low, beachgoers should not touch live or dead seals or allow pets to approach seals. They should maintain a safe distance of 100 yards," according to NOAA.

Sick, injured or dead seals can be reported to the West Coast Region Stranding Hotline at 866-767-6114. Do not attempt to move sick wild animals as this can spread the disease. ■

Letter to the Editor

WRITE-IN CANDIDATE FOR FIRE COMMISSIONER

After squandering hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars, I was disappointed to see Commissioner Shawn Jensen running unopposed for re-election. Jensen, along with Stan Moffett and the rest of the fire department board, hatched the real estate scheme that paid twice the value for Key Center properties in 2021. If that wasn't enough — and it is — poor management under the previous fire chief led to huge overtime expenses, unjustified paid suspensions, and a failed bid in the restaurant business.

I encourage all KP voters to simply write in the name Hal Wolverton for fire commissioner Position 3 against Jensen on their ballots. Hal is a true-to-life hero with over 30 years of honorable service to the district before his recent retirement.

Wolverton displayed his professional, common sense approach for years as assistant chief, and he would bring the same hard work and honesty to the board. Hal Wolverton is a man of integrity who truly cares about our community, so please write in Hal Wolverton for fire commissioner, Position 3.

John Pat Kelly, Wauna

REGARDING ' "A STORY OF SHOCKING FUNCTION" — DEREK KILMER WORKS TO FIX CONGRESS' (AUGUST 2023)

For Dr. Sara Thompson regarding her article: Marvelous. It has stuck with me since I first read it in early August. Paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 were an actual epiphany in the concept of "shocking function."

Such a simple concept, but it works.

The Key Peninsula News is a most excellent local paper. Thank you for all the excellent reporting you do.

Victor Sprague, Lakebay

RIDERS FROM PAGE 4

iest places they can think of and try to communicate with the ghosts that inhabit them.

Miller is the more skeptical team member, although during filming he's heard unexplained scratching noises in the walls at Manresa Castle in Port Townsend, eerie screams at starvation heights cemetery in Olalla and toilets flushing spontaneously at Hotel Andra in Seattle.

"I need to see (a ghost). I need physical proof and then I'd be 100% in," he said.

To help with that proof, the three Peninsula High School graduates have invested thousands of dollars in equipment used to search for the paranormal. They have two REM pods, three electromagnetic field meters and a music box motion sensor to detect the presence of spirits. There's also a Spirit Talker app where spirits can manipulate a vocabu-

lary of words to convey messages and a Spirit Box where spirits scan different radio frequencies to find certain words or form a sentence to communicate. There are also simple tools like cat toys, flashlights, and even keys the spirits could interact with.

"We're here to give you evidence, but whether you believe it or not is up to you," Grannes said.

Miller understands why people can be skeptical of what they do.

"I could easily edit this to make it even more exciting, but we don't fake anything and don't need to fake anything," Miller said. "We've had activity at every location we've been to." All videos are edited down to around 30 minutes long and are filmed mostly at night, usually between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m. That's when The Ghost Riders say the veil between this world and the spiritual world is at its thinnest.

"We're open-minded and we capture raw, real footage," Donahou added. "Some-

times (viewers) catch things we don't even notice."

Grannes and Donahou are faithful Christians and there are some religious undertones in their videos. They say that's more to protect them than to preach to viewers. Off camera, the three pray together before and after they try communicating with spirits.

"We don't have the gifts that mediums have to help spirits move on, but we can help guide them," said Donahou, who occasionally tells spirits in the videos that they will be safe if they accept Jesus as their lord and savior.

Besides an occasional curse word stemming from the excitement of the hunt, the videos are relatively family-friendly, and more intriguing and skeptic-defying than drop-dead scary. While they take their roles as paranormal investigators seriously, they try not to take themselves that way. They add entertainment, history and humor throughout. The running joke

is offering up Miller for the ghosts to harm in amusing ways. They also understand how a couple of burly guys with tattoos and leather vests must look to spirits from the 1800s and early 1900s. "I think they more see our souls, rather than our appearance," Donahou said.

The three amateurs continue to hone their skills while growing their audience. The Ghost Riders plan to keep filming locally, and the more viewers and subscribers they get to their YouTube channel the more they will invest in equipment and going to different locations.

Next month the team will ghost hunt out of state for the first time when they visit the allegedly and notoriously haunted Conjuring House in Rhode Island. The home inspired a 2013 movie called, appropriately, "The Conjuring."

"How cool would it be ... well, not cool, but how terrifying would it be to capture something on camera in a place like that?" Grannes said. ■

SPIRITS FROM PAGE 5

very condensed forests are locales with the most negative energy. "Those places give me the sense that I don't need to be there." Burley also said the intersection near the KP Civic Center where South Vaughn, Wright Bliss and Hall Roads meet with Olson Drive is a dark spot.

"It's really heavy and traumatic. There's some kind of Native American energy there — the type that has caused some people to have mental health issues."

It's Burley's lack of local knowledge that she says gives her credibility. She hasn't researched the Key Peninsula and purposely enters situations with new clients with no historical information. "It gives me the opportunity to be more open-minded, and focus more on my abilities."

Burley has been tagging along with the Kitsap Paranormal Investigators — most recently she was with them at Fort Worden in Port Townsend. Paranormal investigators, also called ghost hunters, have a reputation for trying to prove or disprove the existence of ghosts but don't do anything to help the spirits. That's where Burley steps in.

"I give (the investigators) information they can't get from equipment. I go in and help an entity cross over, and then I cleanse the place."

Based on information she has from those who have crossed over, souls go to one of three places:



Tarot card reading is an ancient method of gaining insight that may help lead to personal transformation. *Tina McKail, KP News*

The Light

Stories about "going toward the light" are true, according to Burley. "This is the place that's heaven-like," she said. It's also the place you go to be reincarnated, so it's a bit of a time loop.

The Cosmos

Some souls are meant to help others on Earth. These souls enter the universe to become energy and are behind-the-scenes, so to speak, guides to the living. "We're never alone. We always have spirit guides," Burley said, giving examples of joy, relationship, protector and even work guides.

The Void

These are planet-bound spirits who

hold on to shame and are afraid of judgment. "This is essentially their hell," she said. Things like ghosts and curses are all a part of the void.

Burley admits she must have looked like a weird kid talking to herself from ages three to 11 years old. "I was actually talking to ghosts." Her mom's side of the family was "very Catholic" and her dad's side was Jewish, so she made a conscious effort to shut down her abilities to stay away from family religious issues. It wasn't until later when she was in an emotionally and physically violent rela-

tionship in her late teenage years that her protector guide got involved and kick-started her intuition.

"He got loud. He said, 'I'm going to make you feel uncomfortable and scared until you get out of this.'"

She eventually did and credits the protector guide for saving her life. Since that time 15 years ago Burley says she hasn't shut off her psychic abilities. "I absolutely love it at this point in my life. I'm in the zone and listening to my body and myself, and I'm ready when my guides want to talk to me."

She now uses that ability to help others in traumatic situations. Burley is a licensed therapist but also attended the Ivy League Psychic Academy in Buffalo, New York, which, appropriately enough, is an old funeral home turned into a school, and did online courses with Bliss Academy to better hone her psychic abilities to provide more spiritual therapy.

Her sessions are like traditional therapy sessions, except she's a lot more engaged.

"I don't just sit there and nod my head. If someone is going through trauma, they want to have a conversation."

Burley also knows her limits. There are times when her clients need to see a psychiatrist or need to be treated with medication. "I can help heal the aura and the chakra systems, but I'm not going to heal heart or digestive issues." ■

**"I GO IN AND HELP AN ENTITY
CROSS OVER, AND THEN I
CLEANSE THE PLACE."**

Two Wauna Women Reach a Landmark: 100 Years of Age

Both say they don't have the secret to living long lives, though one did smoke for 40 years.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Within six months of each other two women with deep Wauna connections will reach a rare milestone. Marcelle "Mar" Hoey and Betty Boyd will celebrate their 100th birthdays — Hoey in October and Boyd in March.

The two have other things in common: longstanding family ties to the land, precious early childhood experiences on the Key Peninsula, time away during early adulthood, and a return with their own families to the place that became home for 60 years.

Hoey was born and raised in Tacoma. Her grandparents, aunts and uncles — the Whites and Goldmans — all lived in Wauna. They owned W.E. White Flour Feed and Groceries, the general store in Wauna located where the boat ramp is now. Her grandmother, Mary Frances Goldman White, was the post mistress in 1906 when the U.S. Post Office (not yet known as the postal service) wanted a name change from Springfield to avoid confusion with other towns of that name. She suggested "Wauna," a Native word thought to mean "river," among other things, which was approved though didn't catch on locally until the 1920s.

Her parents both worked, and as soon as she was old enough Hoey spent summers with her relatives.

"I was on the beach or in the water or out in the woods," she said. "It was just heaven. It still is."

After three years in college, first at the College of Puget Sound (now UPS) and then at the University of Washington, she went to work for United Airlines as a stewardess. "When I was a kid occasionally an airplane would fly over and I would think, where are they going?" she said. "I couldn't wait. It was a way to travel, all I ever wanted."

A year after she joined United, she and a friend were recruited to a start-up airline in the Philippines to help train stewardesses. There she met Bob Maguire, a pilot from Portland, and they married. He started working for Alaska Airlines and in 1949 the couple moved to Israel to participate in a humanitarian effort, "On Eagles' Wings," flying converted war surplus aircraft between Aden and Tel Aviv. The mission ultimately brought 49,000 Yemenite Jews to safety. They stayed for a year and a half, and to this day Israel is the place she most wishes she could visit again.

Work took the couple to New York and then Los Angeles. They separated in 1952. "It was hell on Earth," Hoey said of that



Betty Boyd (left) and Mar Hoey seated together at a recent gathering of the Burley Lagoon history group. *Bruce Morse*



Wauna Lodge was built in 1919. The car dates this photo to the mid-1920s.

Courtesy Mar Hoey

time. She had two young children and found work with the Flying Tigers Line, ultimately becoming chief stewardess. It was there that she met her second husband, Bill Hoey, a pilot. Over the next several years they lived in Edmonton, Detroit and San Francisco.

"I traveled. It was good."

She inherited a little over 6 acres in Wauna from her father, part of her grandparents' land. Around 1960 she brought Bill, her California-born husband, to see the property. "He loved it," Mar said.

They built a house there and later purchased the adjoining property, where the original Wauna schoolhouse had been



Betty Lamb Boyd along the shore of Burley Lagoon in 1925. *Courtesy Betty Boyd*

converted into a home. Bill died in 1975. In 1982 her daughter Marty, a Mount Rainier climbing guide considered one of the finest mountaineers of her day, died on a Mount Everest climb. Hoey then decided to sell the family home and move to the old schoolhouse building. "The house was just too big," she said.

But Mar never lost her wanderlust. She continued to travel, including a world cruise and a tour of Angkor Wat in Cambodia, renting her house to law school students to help pay the bills. She house-sat for friends and relatives in Hawaii and the Virgin Islands. "I think I am running away from working," she said. The only continents she has not

visited are South America and Australia.

She always returned to Wauna. “You have to have an anchor,” she said.

Betty Boyd came to visit her grandmother at her cabin on the Burley Lagoon as a young child. Her father purchased 5 acres from his uncle and built a house for his mother.

Her father’s childhood was spent on the road performing with his mother and sister. The siblings were described as the “sweetest, daintiest tots that ever graced a stage.” It was a hard life, Boyd said, and her father left at 15 to live with friends and go to school in Duluth. After serving in the military during World War I, he remained in Europe to work with the YMCA. He had corresponded with a high school friend during that time and when he returned to the U.S. he reconnected with her, they fell in love, and got married.

He built the cabin for his mother before returning to Europe to work in Greece and France. Boyd was born in France and the family returned to the States when she was a year old. They lived in Bellingham for the next five years and she visited her grandmother many times.

The family then moved to Minneapolis. Boyd went to college at Macalester, with a brief interruption when she joined the military during World War II. While working in a military hospital in Iowa as a PT assistant, she met a man named Milton Boyd who was recovering from injuries. They married and raised six children.

Milton worked in theater, including radio and television, and at the local high school. By 1967, they were living in Rock Island, Illinois. “Things weren’t going well,” Betty said. “The town was dying at the time.” Milton enjoyed teaching but it was under a provisional license, and he would have to complete student teaching to get certified. Her grandmother’s house in Wauna was vacant.

“We had talked about retiring there, but why wait?” Betty said. “Here we had a house on Puget Sound. We packed up six children, ages 6 to 19, and a dog, sold everything, and moved to Wauna. People thought we were crazy. The only people who understood were people who knew the area.”

The cabin was small, but it was August and the kids mostly slept outside while they remodeled the basement and added a few rooms. Milton applied for teaching jobs and his experience in Illinois qualified him in Washington. He would go on to teach at Peninsula High School for 23 years and be active in local community theater. He helped design the Milton S. Boyd Performing Arts Center, where PHS productions take place to this day.

Betty taught as well, first as a substitute teacher, which she said was perfect when her children were young. She then taught English



Eager to row from an early age, Betty Boyd on Burley Lagoon in 1926. *Courtesy Betty Boyd*

More celebrations

Bea Johnson turned 100. Read about her on page 15.

as part of a high school program at the Purdy Women’s Prison for seven years and moved to teach at PHS when that program closed.

Milton died in 2002 and Betty continued to live in the house until she moved to Gig Harbor. Her daughter and grandson live in the family home now.

Both women remain fully engaged in the world around them.

Mar and Betty joined the Wauna Club when they returned to the community with their young families. The club was founded in 1913 — both have aunts who were founders — part of a movement of women’s social clubs, and remained active for a century. Members held social events at the clubhouse, supported schools and lobbied the state about transportation and fishing rights. They were among the last members when the group disbanded.

These days Mar’s travel is mostly going out to lunch with friends, and she is often the one doing the driving. A group of former guides from Mount Rainier who worked with her daughter come to visit every few months.

When asked if they have a secret to longevity both women shook their heads.



W.E. White Flour Feed and Grocery in Wauna, circa 1918. *Courtesy Mar Hoey*

“It’s not genetic,” they said. They outlived their parents by many years. Mar admits to smoking for 40 years, though she has been a non-smoker for the last 40. “Maybe it’s attitude,” Betty said. “I just don’t agree with being sick.”

Although Mar has outlived her family, she is surrounded by neighbors who check in on her, and who say that she routinely beats them at Scrabble.

Although she sometimes forgets words,

Betty can still recite the Gettysburg Address and the Shakespeare she memorized when younger. She is an avid reader — anything but science fiction — and especially enjoys reading about politics now.

“I like to get caught up on what the heck has happened in our culture,” she said. “Every time I think I know what is going on something else happens. I think that’s what is keeping me alive — wondering what will happen next.” ■

Food Backpacks 4 Kids Clothing Giveaway Benefits Hundreds of Families

The fourth annual event on the last weekend of August was the biggest yet, but is just one of many successful programs.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Hundreds of families descended on the Key Peninsula Civic Center Aug. 25 to 27 to find clothes for the coming school year. At no cost.

Food Backpacks 4 Kids, the local nonprofit known mostly for its programs to feed families on the Key Peninsula and in Gig Harbor, was the force behind the fourth annual clothing giveaway.

For a month before the event people brought lightly used or new clothing for men, women and kids of all ages at 10 donation sites — three on the KP and the others in Gig Harbor. A core group of about 10 volunteers brought the items to a space loaned by Purdy Cost Less Pharmacy where they were sorted, bagged and stored.

“We brought about 2,000 bags to the civic center the Thursday before the giveaway,” said Zaida Woodworth, executive director of FB4K. It took two trips in a box truck loaned to them by Drive Thru Feed. By Friday morning the civic center floor was filled with clothes, socks and shoes all organized by size and gender, and families were lined up outside well before the scheduled noon start time.

Ashley Florek, a mother of five, was shopping by herself on Friday afternoon. “We do a lot of our school clothes shopping here,” she said. “We came last year as well. There is always so much good stuff here. I donated a bunch of stuff this year. I hold onto things the kids grow out of. It’s great to turn in your old clothes and get new ones.”

“It is great,” said Melanie Trampenau, who was with her son. “We get new-to-us clothes. I still wear the clothes I got last year.”

Some families returned each day to check out newly available clothing as space became available on the tables.

Woodworth said the event arose during the Covid pandemic. Evergreen Elementary School held back-to-school events in the past, and she and Michelle Johnson, director of communications for FB4K, had discussed expanding that to serve the whole community.

Then the pandemic hit. “It became clear that no one could donate any of their things,” Woodward said. “Schools might or might not be reopening, everyone needed



The KP Civic Center was filled to capacity with donated clothing. *Tina McKail, KP News*

resources badly, clothing was something people could not afford, and people were throwing clothes into the garbage because there was nowhere to donate it.”

“And so, like we always do, we said we will find a way,” Johnson said. “And we did.”

The first year, 2020, was small by comparison. People dropped clothes off at their Key Center location. “Still, we were swimming in donations,” Johnson said.

“People are grateful for the sustainability, that we are recycling and reusing,” Woodworth said. “The clothes they have are going to other families. We are the conduit for it but really the entire community works to make it happen and benefits from it.”

The civic center donated the space for the event. About 30 volunteers — including educators, community members and FB4K families — helped with the set-up and then worked throughout the event to restock tables. The Red Barn Youth Center supplied clothing racks. Metropolitan Market of Tacoma, Starbucks on Kimball Drive and the FB4K board supplied volunteers with snacks

BY THE NUMBERS

FB4K runs five separate food programs supported entirely by donations.

- Backpacks filled with child-friendly food are available to any student in the Peninsula district once a week. FB4K distributes an average of 500 backpacks each month to every elementary school in the district and two middle schools.
- All three high schools and five other schools maintain Care Cupboards for students to meet immediate needs or take food home. Every student is encouraged to access snacks or meal items from the Care Cupboards.
- Over the summer, the FB4K Lunch in the Park program fed 200 children twice a week for eight weeks (3,200 total sack lunches).
- The FB4K Family Pantry is available to anyone in need and is open Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 12 to 6 p.m. It is located at 9127 154th Avenue Court NW above Key Center. The pantry has an average of 400 family visits a month (185 individual families served).
- FB4K provides food from its pantry to any Gig Harbor or Key Peninsula family unable to shop for themselves. Over 200 home deliveries are made each month.
- In August, FB4K received and distributed over 31,000 pounds of food. The total in 2022 was 264,694 pounds.
- Since August, FB4K received donations from Gensco (\$27,153), Captain Seahawk and KamHawk (\$4,500), Key IGA (\$3,400), 200 backpacks from The Canterwood Foundation, and shared a \$29,000 check from the Peninsula Logging Show & Festival with KP Little League.

or lunches.

By Sunday at noon, when the event ended, Johnson estimated that about 95% of the donations had been given away. What remained was taken to Evergreen

Elementary, Kids Klostet in Port Orchard and Fish Foodbank in Gig Harbor for distribution.

For more information about FB4K, go to foodbackpacks4kids.org. ■

Darkness and Light — The Life and Death of a Whale

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS

The bones look like driftwood from a distance, half-submerged at the high tide line. Binoculars reveal them to be ancient stone artifacts. Or so it seems. This whale carcass is hard to believe.

A ridge of vertebrae divided into two ranges, surrounded by scattered ribs, leads to a skull with so much mass it seems to

be the last thing still covered in flesh. But it is all bone, long wedges forming the prow of the whale's head.



It is a gray whale.

This 42-foot female spent the final months of its life around Bremerton and Olympia, far from the species' usual migration route. When it died in late June, scientists towed it here. A necropsy revealed "poor blubber condition, lack of internal fat stores, and no food in the GI tract," according to Cascadia Research Collective.

We drift offshore for a while, taking it in. A handful of grays strand in Washington every year. Since 2019, when 34 stranded, they have been dying in higher numbers, part of an "unusual mortality event" with causes still uncertain. This year there have been 13 strandings, most of them on the outer coast. When grays die in Puget Sound they are often towed to secure beaches like this one where they can feed the ecosystem in peace. (It is illegal to possess any part of a whale skeleton.)

It stretches the senses, this whale built of tiny crustaceans scooped from Alaskan seafloors, now eaten by other tiny crustaceans — a feeling only heightened by the fact that we have come here after sunset.

We float in a Puget Sound that is without a whisper. Dark clouds roof the heavens. Trees like ink sprays rise from nearby bluffs, and now and then the soft manic whistle of duck wings passes overhead. For someone who lives near the Key Peninsula Highway, this kind of silence hits deep. We are about to cross that threshold and join the night stalkers, release our vision, let other sensations take over. Sometimes, I'll admit it, lying in bed I feel a rush of jealousy for the night racers that own the highway in the wee hours. At least they're out there, a part of the night, weaving



The gray whale was spotted in Mayo Cove days before its death. *Tina McKail, KP News*

and chasing.

Coyote is here. It slipped in magically, a sturdy coyote who makes a show of tugging at something above the skeleton, gnawing. When the tide turns and begins to push us away, the coyote follows, hopping up on driftwood logs, sighting down its long nose. I'd give my paddle to know its thoughts.

Whooshes just overhead turn out to be gulls high above, scattered yet aiming for the same unknown haven. Along the dark shoreline, more of the sky's last light is held in the water than in the rocks. At the edge I spy, reflected upside-down, four dark orbs that are invisible among the rocks. Sandpipers. They give a soft shriek and split when we come past.

We begin a crossing of open water. It is absolutely calm. A window has opened in the clouds to the west, casting an ember's glow that is not enough to show me the boundary between air and water; the old biblical separation of water from the sky, from firmament is lost and my strokes are merely trust in the rhythm of movement. When lumps of seaweed and jellyfish pass, they might as well be at eye level. The thought of catching an edge and

dumping into the water feels somehow no different from doing it. Imagination and reality, subconscious and conscious, are compressed, endless.

We enter a bay ringed with homes, all lit, some more than others. We stick to the shadows. This night realm, spirit-like, is always nearby. So is our ability to move through it. Yet we keep it at bay, blocked by the very contrivances we think extend our sight.

Wendell Berry wrote, "To go in the dark with a light is to know the light. To know the dark, go dark."

That whale has known dark, light, death and life, while we stay locked in the grind.

We glide past an anchored dock, silhouetted by lights on shore, that reeks of long-dead crabs hidden in its crevices by otters. A homeowner, hearing our talk, comes onto his porch, turns on a floodlight, and peers out.

Later. "Over here. It's happening," says my friend from a dark seam in the shoreline. I enter the tree-crossed cove. Every movement of our paddles sends blue-white sparks through the water. I dip my hands into the water. Bioluminescence. We play. Splashes send showers of glowing

stars through the water. Running my hand through the water covers it in pinpricks that flash two, three, four times.

The bioluminescence is patchy, fragile. The source is single-celled zooplankton called dinoflagellates. These become common in summer's warm algae-rich water. At night they migrate to the surface to feed. Their bodies contain an enzyme that releases chemical energy in the form of light when they are physically disturbed, a reaction thought to scare off predators, like shining a flashlight in an assailant's eyes.

To witness bioluminescence requires avoiding light. Even the moon is too bright. Not only does ambient light make it hard for your eyes to catch bioluminescence, the dinoflagellates tend to stay in deeper water to avoid it.

Outside the bay, on a dark stretch of coastline, we pass through electric displays. The water remains silent. Dazzling sparks swirl around our kayaks. We begin to hear tiny pops: small fish jumping here and there. My eyes unfocus. A blue streak, faint and fast as a bat in the night sky, ends in a tiny pop. A fish has just swum past and jumped. ■

Peninsula High School Has New Safety Officer On the Beat

Brent Campbell, a former police officer and private investigator, comes to PSD from Monroe School District.

EDDIE MACSALKA, KP NEWS

Peninsula High School's new Safety and Security Officer Brent Campbell knows he will be wearing many hats in his role. But he will only be wearing one thing on his feet: walking shoes.

"I averaged 16,000 steps a day at my last job," said Campbell, who recently left his security specialist role with Monroe School District to join the Peninsula School District.

Campbell will now patrol the hallways of PHS, along with area middle and elementary schools, as an armed officer. He says his duties include everything from being a counselor to being a deterrent to being a role model.

"If done properly, this is a great position to help mentor these students," Campbell said.

Campbell will use his experience as a Redmond Police Officer to help deal with emerging issues, but the opportunity to help the district with longer-term investigations is one of the key reasons Campbell took the job.

Adding Campbell and Michael Janke at Gig Harbor High School is part of a strategic initiative to enhance security across the district.

"We've been waiting a long time to bring on safety and security officers in our district," PSD School Board President Natalie Wimberley said in a statement from the district. "We are in the business of serving children, and their safety, security and well-being are paramount to this board, to our teachers, and our staff."

The addition of Campbell was welcoming news to parents of PHS parents during the first week of the school year.

"With school violence and mental health issues on the rise, more officers around campus should allow the teachers to do their jobs and not have to do security, at the same time," said Melissa Almony, who has three kids at PHS.

Kelly McCarthy's two kids attend the high school and this gives her family "a sense of safety and protection knowing the district and the school are being proactive and taking student safety seriously."

Campbell will work year-round, ensuring student safety during the school year and contributing to emergency management policies and procedures, and other types



It was a busy night during Fish Bowl for Safety and Security Officer Brent Campbell at Roy Anderson Field. *Tina McKail, KP News*

of training during school breaks. Last month he partnered with area middle schools to help teachers identify drug paraphernalia.

"Drug and alcohol use (with school-aged children) is an epidemic in most school districts," he said. "Now with vaping oils, we don't know if it's nicotine or THC."

Almony hopes the additional support may help reduce the "constant drug use" in the PHS bathrooms she's heard about over the years.

Campbell and other school security officers will be enforcing the district's new restricted cell phone policy (see "Peninsula Schools Implement New Restricted Cell Phone Policy," KP News September 2023). Students won't be able

to use their phones and other devices, including smartwatches for most of the day. Campbell is asking parents to help reinforce this at home.

He said the new policy will also reduce cyberbullying while encouraging students

to talk to each other more.

"Social media and staring down at your phone made students lose the art of communicating verbally. You forget how to talk

to people, and because you're not looking someone in the eyes when talking you forget how to respect people."

Access to social media will be blocked on all district networks.

Campbell said he is always in contact with the school's administration and they will share information passed on

from students, parents and staff. Most behavioral issues in the school should be addressed with the administration and he will be pulled in as needed, but he still encourages anyone to come talk to him directly. Parents and students should report bullying or safety issues by filing a Report of Concern on the school's website.

Campbell is excited about the added security to the schools. According to the district, in addition to adding the safety and security officers, new security cameras were installed at Goodman Middle School in Gig Harbor during the summer break. More will be added to other PSD schools once the district starts collecting funds from the Safety, Security and Technology levy in the spring.

"I applaud PSD for their investment toward safety," Campbell said. "Students deserve to learn in a safe and secure environment." ■

"WITH SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES ON THE RISE, MORE OFFICERS AROUND CAMPUS SHOULD ALLOW THE TEACHERS TO DO THEIR JOBS AND NOT HAVE TO DO SECURITY, AT THE SAME TIME."

How to Live to 100 Years Old and Enjoy It All the Way

Don't ask 100-year-old Beaula Johnson. She'll tell you she has no earthly idea how she lived this long.

ED JOHNSON AND
LISA BRYAN, KP NEWS

Happy birthday wishes arrived by letter from President Joe and First Lady Jill Biden, as well as from Gov. Jay Inslee and his wife Trudi, with their congratulations. Generations of family and friends, old and new, gathered Sept. 9 at the Key Peninsula Civic Center for a party honoring a newly minted centenarian.

"To tell you the truth I didn't recognize half the people in the room," Beaula Johnson said.

But she had a wonderful time despite feeling a little shy being the center of so much attention.

Johnson moved from her home in Polson, Montana, to the KP to be near family after the death of her husband

Bob in 2013. The couple raised their four children in south Kitsap County. Her granddaughter Dori and her family built an extension to their Vaughn home with an apartment for "Gram."

It was no secret how Bob and Beaula first met, at least not after her 100th birthday party, where daughter Becky read from her father's 1946 diary:

"Laid around all day. Couldn't decide what to do tonight but finally decided to go to Pearl's (a Bremerton dance hall). Hitchhiked

and got there early. Only had one short drink but had a good time. Met a girl named Beaula, who's a nurse at Roosevelt Hospital (a naval hospital in Bremerton built during WWII). Made a date to meet her next week but suppose I'll get some

damned detail (at work, and he did)."

Two weeks later Bob wrote: "Worked until about 1230 today, cleaned up and left for home. Got to the dance about 2100 and went to the hospital for Beaula and then back to the dance. Went up to Beaula's after the dance and stayed there until about 0600, but we weren't alone, darn it."

Beaula said being a widow wasn't easy but she eventually got used to it. "We had a good time. I wouldn't have wanted anyone else."

For the last 10 years, she's been meeting other seniors for lunch and cards at the civic center on Thursdays at noon. She's a devoted pinochle player. She said she doesn't win often, with a wink, but when she does it's memorable.

"Come join us," she said. "If you don't know how, we'll teach you." ■



Beaula Johnson at home with her pets.
Ed Johnson, KP News

PARANORMAL FROM PAGE 5

Today, Ostoyich is creating just that on the 5-acre Lakebay property her family has owned for 23 years. She's creating it with her husband, Antone, and her three children, twin 11-year-old boys and an 8-year-old daughter. And she's creating it with the many ghosts that roam her property.

It wasn't her death that connected her to the spiritual world. Ostoyich has been talking with ghosts for as long as she can remember. In fact, she feels that connection is both what killed her and ultimately what healed her. It took 15 years of therapy and hypnotherapy, and classes in both quantum and theoretical physics before she started realizing she is a physical medium. While psychic mediums can speak with the dead, physical mediums can see the dead in their spiritual form.

She's also a parapsychologist, a certified hypnotherapist and an ordained minister. She uses that knowledge to help others who experience hauntings, but she also has her own ghosts to deal with.

Ostoyich shares her property with a Native American spirit whom she calls the "man of the land." She communicates with him through vibrations and telepathy. For years the man didn't like Ostoyich. He created evil variations of a half-human half-beast called a "wendigo" to get her to leave. She believes it took

most of her adult life of caring for the property and respecting the land that allowed her to "get in his good graces." But the spirit still holds a grudge against something, even showing Ostoyich the "people he keeps in the mud." He won't let them cross over, no matter how much she pleads with him.

Although she acknowledges she has no historical proof, Ostoyich attributes the stubbornness of this spirit to a Native American land curse that's never been lifted.

The most specific example she gives is the story of what she called The Whistling Man. Often late at night, the Ostoyiches would hear the sound of someone whistling outside. Sometimes the noise woke up the kids and most of the time it annoyed Antone who gets up early for work. Turns out it was a spirit looking for one of his tools on their property. "I kept hearing how he left his saw somewhere," Ostoyich said. Months later Antone was on his tractor clearing out blackberry brambles from the back of their property when he came across a rusted hand saw in the middle of a fir tree. He pried it out and brought it back to their house. "After that (the spirit) just left," she said. "It was so simple. Sometimes the simplest answer is the one that works best." Ostoyich doesn't know exactly why the spirit was attached to the saw but suggests that he used it so much that the saw kept

his energy and that's what the spirit was connected to.

The Key Peninsula, according to Ostoyich, isn't short on ghosts. If you're trying to find them, she said Vaughn Bay Cemetery has peaceful ones. Then there are some creepier spirits at an old pioneer cemetery near Wright Bliss Road and 144th Street NW. Among some of the other ghosts Ostoyich has seen around the KP: A female who continues to stroll along the Joemma Beach trail where she died, a prostitute walking across the Purdy Bridge, a woman on the bridge near Wright Bliss Road and 129th Street Court NW, a hooded figure next to the gravel pit on Cornwall Road NW in Lakebay, and children playing on A Street in Home. Ostoyich shared her concern with three areas: Palmer Lake, Bay Lake, and everything south of Taylor Bay in Longbranch. Palmer Lake, she says, has negative energy from elements in the land and from native land curses. "There's just something grumpy tied to the land and it's going to take more than just sage (to remove it)." She spends a lot of time working with clients in the area to cleanse their homes. Around Bay Lake, Ostoyich mentioned seeing a grungy sloth-like being that "wreaked of depression" that she feels infects the area. Antone says his wife starts crying whenever she's around the lake. "I don't know how to get rid of something like that. It's just sad and

heartbreaking," she said.

But even for someone who is connected to spirits, there are some places she won't go, one being the southern tip of the Key Peninsula. "It gives her the heebie-jeebies," Antone said. She won't even let her kids, who are "very impressionable with their spiritual gifts," down there. She feels it has a similar land curse as the one on her property.

For Ostoyich and other physical mediums, it's not just about engaging with ghosts. It's all things energy. That's where her physics classes come into play. She mentions a vortex near the north end of Home that causes an energy influx responsible for cars breaking down in that area. She's experienced similar vortices around Vaughn Bay and the KP Civic Center. She looks for that type of energy when she's invited to cleanse homes.

She's quick to point out that many so-called hauntings can be solved or debunked with science. Sometimes, in fact, it is just the wind. She also believes in self-generated spiritual activity where people create illusions with their minds.

"It's not a bad thing. They're becoming so powerful and aware of their minds that they're creating beautiful chaos. I'm just trying to show them that if they can create chaos so easily, they can just as easily create their own heaven on Earth." ■

FORUM FROM PAGE 1

port commissioner position 3. Unopposed candidates PSD director Lori Glover and fire commissioner Shawn Jensen did not participate.

The fire commission candidates fielded questions about challenges to the department, board meeting access to the public, and how to improve or change its decision-making process.

“It’s pretty obvious that the key issue is our finances,” Kelly said. “We do have reason to be optimistic now. We have a great new fire chief and new assistant fire chief, and I think they’re going to do a great job, but our reserves are very, very low. At the same time, we are having problems with our fire engines, and so that’s going to be our number one priority. The second thing we should do with our very limited cash is to expand and upgrade our volunteer program, and after that, we really need to put the rest of the money into our financial reserves.”

Queen said, “The biggest issue I see facing the fire district currently is the fact that the community has concerns with regard to the purchases of the two lots (in Key Center). We do need to make sure that our men and women that are serving the community have the equipment that they need to get the job done to be able to serve us, but I also think that one of the things that needs to be looked into and actually currently is being considered is the possibility of maybe selling off one of the lots. We need to get the input from the community and that’s another issue — trying to figure out the best way to get that input.”

Later in the forum, the candidates agreed that selling at least one of the lots was necessary and that the public must be better included in planning for large expenditures.

The school board candidates fielded questions ranging from incorporating technology to an educational opportunity gap between Gig Harbor and the KP, to a final question asking each how they could improve their performances.

West said the opportunity gap was closing but that there was more to be done. “I would argue that we have brought that inequity a lot closer. They run a new STEM program at Evergreen, but I’m really working hard to have a dedicated STEM school out here for elementary,” he said.

“There have been some differences in offerings, particularly at our middle schools, and what our students can work toward by way of high school credits,” Wimberley said. “We’re doing a full curriculum audit of all of our programs across the district to make



Candidates seated from left to right: Kip Clinton, John Pat Kelly, Cambria Queen, Chuck West, Natalie Wimberley, Deanna Keller, Kristin Ang and Dave Bryant. *Tina McKail, KP News*

For more information

Voter pamphlets should be in the mail by the beginning of October, according to the Pierce County Auditor. Ballots will be mailed out Oct. 20. Drop boxes will open Oct. 20 and close Nov. 7 at 8 p.m. Mailed ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 7.

Register to vote by Oct. 30 at VoteWA.gov or in person until Nov. 7.

For more information, go to www.pierce-countyelections.org or call 253-798-VOTE (8683).

sure that we’re offering equitable access.”

Wimberley said that the last time she was at a KP candidate forum was in 2019, before the pandemic.

“So, what have we learned?” she said. “That schools provide so much more than education of our students. We provide food, we provide friendship. Counseling. Support. And so when we shut those buildings down, it was devastating not only to our students but to our staff. I’ve also learned that the Peninsula School District really struggled with solid leadership prior to (Superintendent) Krestin (Bahr) coming here, and that really, really speaks to a lot of problems. There are a lot of silos, there’s a lot of people just struggling to make decisions on their own with no central vision, and so that’s one thing that we really focused on establishing over the past four years, a strategic plan to really start to build that common vision.”

West replied, “I think you stole all the thunder. But one of the things I learned

is that we’re a team. I’ve learned so many things on the inside, so many people that have brought things forward. We did the strategic plan, which really helped to set the focus for administration and teachers, something that hadn’t been done for quite a while. But there’s a lot of issues that I’m constantly learning about: dyslexia, our curriculum, things that we are really working through.”

Incumbent parks Commissioner Clinton was asked about details concerning the running of the parks and its meetings, but her first question was why she wanted to continue when she’s already the longest-serving member.

“Because I believe in conservation,” she said. “I believe in the value of public lands in recreation, in recreational tourism, because that’s the best kind of tourism. People come, they leave their money, they go home. I got into supporting the parks some years ago because I believe in public acquisition for land use, as opposed to imposing too much land use constraint upon private entities. I’ve been there since the beginning of this park board and at the end of the old park recreation district. I am considered ‘institutional knowledge.’”

Port commissioner candidates fielded questions about the port’s impact on the KP and increased competition but took repeated questions about different aspects of port efforts to cut down on pollution. Ang mentioned the port has won national awards for cleaning up toxic sites and for better use of the “industrial habitat” shared by neighbors.

“We want to be more proactive and publish a clean air quarterly report to show you

exactly what we’ve been doing to clean up the air and what’s been going on,” she said. “This transition is hard to do: to address climate change, use clean energy, make it affordable to those who are already burdened while ensuring power for our terminals to make sure ships are plugged into our electrical grid and not polluting.”

Keller said: “We have a Northwest Ports Clean Air strategy because it is important to reduce greenhouse emissions. That includes working with trucking partners that we don’t have direct control over. We have been working with state legislators to get low-cost loans for these folks to provide them with different trucks. We have 18 people on our environmental team who are working on this.”

Bryant pointed out “the hard part of all of this is that 3% of emissions are under direct control of the port. The rest of it comes from the ships, trucks and trains that come into the area that do not belong to the port, they just work there. One of the methods we could use is software optimizing how the trains and trucks come in. The port has seen typically two or three times a day where all the entrances are blocked.”

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Register to vote by Oct. 30 at VoteWA.gov or in person until Nov. 7.

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FISH BOWL FROM PAGE 1

It appeared Calhoun and Miller got into a skirmish on the ground and Calhoun suffered a neck injury. Because of the crowd size, it took EMTs extra time to get to the field, as he was tended to cautiously by the training staff of both high schools. After a 30-minute delay, Calhoun was placed in a neck brace, carted off the field, and taken by ambulance to the hospital. Erickson also was injured on the play and came off the field limping after the interception. He returned to the sidelines after halftime using crutches.

“Hats off to (Parks),” said Seahawk head coach Ross Filkins, who helmed his 29th Fish Bowl. “He did a fantastic job coming in and running their offense. We ran out of gas against their passing game and it showed.”

The Seahawks (0-3, 0-1 SSC) got on the board late in the first quarter off a seven-yard run by running back Connor Burton. They made it 14-0 when Seahawk quarterback Mana Smythe found Hayden Bundy from 5 yards in the middle of the endzone. The Seahawk defense forced three turnovers in the first half — picking off Calhoun twice and recov-

ering one of his fumbles.

The second half was a different story. The Seahawks were able to get another touchdown with 5:55 to go in the third off a Landon Watson 1-yard run. Other than that, the Tides (2-1, 1-0 SSC) put too much pressure on Seahawk quarterback Mana Smythe, making him switch up his game plan. Smythe, who had to deal with many snaps that fell below his knees while in shotgun formation, was forced to run on obvious pass plays.

IT WAS THE FIRST FISH BOWL WIN FOR THE TIDES IN EIGHT YEARS.

Seahawk kicker Ellis Anderson missed the extra point attempt after Watson’s touchdown run in the third quarter, which would have put the Seahawks up 21-7. The Seahawk kicker barely missed a 37-yard field goal in their first drive of the second half. It went left by a few feet.

Parks, on the other hand, was nearly unstoppable for the Tides. He tossed a 66-yard touchdown to Ryland Gelderman in the third quarter and led his team on a 65-yard drive that took only 1:01 in the fourth quarter ending with a 27-yard touchdown pass to Liam Green. Parks’ 1-yard run with one minute left in the game helped put his team up for good.

Settle down, Seahawk fans. Peninsula opened the 2013 season losing three straight and ended up going 8-4 overall and 5-0 in the SSC. Although there’s no going undefeated in the conference this time around, a winning season isn’t farfetched.

Peninsula won the accompanying Food Bowl with 22,471 food items donated. Gig Harbor had 17,806 and Henderson

Bay came in with 4,007, bringing a total of 44,284 food items for Food Backpacks 4Kids on

the Key Peninsula.

Peninsula brought home the Food Bowl trophy. PHS senior Liam Donalty, who played football for the Seahawks before suffering a career-ending injury, was proud of his school. “We got a ton of food items in and we had the chance to support those who are less fortunate than ourselves. It didn’t matter who won, it was just great that we all supported our community.”

Another upset this year was the lack of play-by-play commentary on KGHP-FM, the high school radio station, for the first time in decades due to funding cuts by the district. ■

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KPFD Assistant Chief and Family Rent Wright-Bliss Fire Station

Assistant Chief Chris Beswick moved into the station short-term and will respond from there to emergencies after hours as available.

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Key Peninsula Fire District 16 Assistant Chief Chris Beswick moved into Station 45 near the northwest corner of State Route 302 and Wright Bliss Road NW with his wife and daughter Aug. 1. Beswick signed a lease with KPFD July 6 and anticipates staying there until a new home he has under construction is ready at the end of this year or beginning of next.

The monthly rent is \$2,500, which covers a common living area, kitchen and bathroom, an office and a four-bunk dormitory, totaling 1,326 square feet. “That was something that we let our attorney come up with, what he anticipated to be fair rent for the market,” said Fire Chief Nick Swinhart.

By comparison, a 1,500 square-foot house near SR-302 and 146th was available for rent in September at \$2,385 per month; a Vaughn one-bedroom of 720 square feet was \$1,600; and a Port Orchard three-bedroom apartment of 1,181 square feet was \$2,642.

The lease also stipulates a 40% discount in rent, or a reduction to \$1,500 a month, in exchange for Beswick responding to emergency calls when he “is in the station and available to respond.”

That is in addition to his contracted duty officer responsibilities as a chief to respond to emergency calls when needed for backup, a duty he shares with Swinhart.

“These sorts of arrangements are fairly common in our profession, particularly in the smaller rural departments,” Swinhart said. Beswick had been commuting back and forth every weekend from Nehalem, Oregon, and staying with family in Tacoma since he started with KPFD April 10 of this year and searched for a home on or near the KP.

“The Chief had jokingly said early on, ‘Well, hey, you could maybe live out in one of the fire stations and respond on calls,’ and we laughed,” Beswick said. “And after a couple of months of commuting, I was like, ‘Hey, Chief, could you be serious about those living arrangements?’”

“This basically allows us to have a response capacity out of that station, which we’ve never had before outside of the occasional volunteers that might pick up an engine out of there,” Swinhart said.

“I’ve lived in fire stations for 30 years so it’s not a big thrill for me but for my



Station 45 at 12310 Wright Bliss Road NW. Ted Olinger, KP News

family, it’s an adventure,” Beswick said. “You would think it wouldn’t be an issue, but ironically the biggest problem is the lack of storage. There’s nowhere for your clothes and all your stuff.”

He and his family will also be living under district policy for its stations: no alcohol, no smoking, and no firearms on the premises.

Swinhart had been trying to staff Station 45 with live-in volunteers since at least January but came up against a lack of interest and qualified personnel. He was careful to point out that any calls Beswick responds to out of 45 on his own time would be in addition to his contracted duty chief requirements.

“That’s part of his normal responsibilities; he doesn’t get paid extra for being duty chief,” he said. “He’s getting a break on the rent, which is allowed by law.”

KPFD’s attorney, Eric Quinn, said in an email to KP News that:

“Assistant Chief Beswick is providing two different services: Services as an assistant chief and service as a responder

when necessary, out of the otherwise vacant station. In consideration of his agreement to provide responder services in addition to administrative services, his rent is presently discounted from fair market value, which constitutes additional compensation for an additional service that he has agreed to provide. Consequently, the district is not paying Assistant Chief Beswick more than his agreed-upon assistant chief salary.”

Between Jan. 1, 2023, and press time there were 15 calls dispatching a KPFD duty chief. Swinhart responded to five, Beswick to four, according to KPFD. Six were not responded to by a duty chief.

“We might provide some command support, ... whether it’s as a safety officer, division officer, helping manage some portion of the scene for the battalion chief,” Swinhart said. “Sometimes we’ll call the battalion chief and say, ‘Hey, do you need me down there?’ and sometimes the answer is no.”

Beswick is approved to drive KPFD vehicles, such as the water tender at 45,

but is not certified in Washington state to respond as a paramedic or EMT at this time.

“Since as a chief I’m not responding in the field anymore, I didn’t feel that I could remain a competent paramedic,” Beswick said. “I plan on keeping my EMT, but I haven’t completed the necessary paperwork to do that yet. But if the tones go off at the station and it’s something that I can make a difference on by responding, I will.”

The chiefs are typically called for water rescues, structure fires, or mass casualty motor vehicle accidents: “Anything like that where we can just be an extra resource for command,” Beswick said. “The last two I responded on were a brush fire where we had a lot of resources coming in from other agencies, so I showed up to help coordinate that. And the one before that was the fatal house fire (in Palmer Lake). Something like that we’re going to show up on.” (See “One Dead, One Injured After Fire Destroys Home,” August 2023.) ■

An Episode in Local Garden History From the Everlasting Age of Aquarius

DAN CLOUSE

Who said we have no sense of history around here?

I mean, we love to retell the old stories of anarchists, contraception pioneers, free love, and—gasp—nude bathing in Home Colony during its brief turn-of-the-century heyday.

Seventy years later, we Baby Boomers were nodding mellow heads to Canned Heat. “I’m gonna leave the city, got to get away. All this fussin’ and fightin’, man, you know I sure can’t stay.”

About that time, the Key Peninsula was becoming a destination for Flower Children getting away from all the heavy fussin’ and fightin’ in the city.

The same natural vibe that brought weirdos to the old utopian communities in Home and Burley attracted another generation of non-conformists. Beautiful people moved out to live in family beach cabins, leaky geodesic domes, tree houses, converted school buses— even sailboats. Old floors in love shacks collapsed under human pretzels in flagrante delicto and the nearly two tons of their waterbeds.

Newcomers brought stereo systems to play Joni Mitchell. “We are stardust. We are golden. And we’ve got to get ourselves back to the garden.”

They also brought a new way of vegetable gardening. And I don’t just mean the marijuana plants.

The gardens of The Age of Aquarius were based on a yin-yang notion: yes to compost and manure; no to pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

Nowadays, there’s nothing unfamiliar about this approach. We call it “organic gardening.”

Of course, old timers on the KP had always practiced a version of organic gardening, but without any of the kooky ideas.

Chemical fertilizers were still uncommon then. They were expensive and marketed to agribusiness, not gardeners. Anyone who wanted to raise enough food to feed a hungry family already used compost piles and spread whatever manure fertilizer was at hand.

It just worked, and gardeners had known this for millennia.

What was new in the organic gardens planted in the ’60s and ’70s was not so much in the soil as in the gardeners’ recently enlightened heads. The anti-establishment attitude that gave us pearls of wisdom like “Don’t trust anyone over 30,” came bundled with skepticism about scientific expertise.

The organic gardening movement’s roots



A KP garden refuge. *Lisa Bryan, KP News*



were deep in the same loam of magical thinking that nourished weeds like Pyramid Power and healing crystals. The esoteric spiritualist Rudolf Steiner and anti-vaxxer J.I. Rodale were two of organic gardening’s most important evangelists, and both spent lifetimes fighting scientists’ scorn for their crackpot ideas about soil health and plant productivity. The fact that they were criticized by USDA experts was a recommendation that elevated them to the status of sages.

One biodynamic gardening manual put it this way: “The average gardener, when he goes into the field in the morning, is not going with a concept of life but with a concept of death. He goes out to get rid of things. The only way he can do it is to try to kill things. Now there is a perfectly good reason why he is this way. It is because science has taught him these things.”

Readers connected the dots. Synthetic nitrogen fertilizer, weed control sprays, and pesticides were developed by chemists in labs at DuPont and Dow Chemical where DDT, Agent Orange and napalm were manufactured. Science is a bummer, man.

The allergic reaction to science and industrial production methods is everywhere in the most influential source for the with-it crowd of the day, “The Whole Earth Catalog.”

The short-lived WEC featured three of Rodale’s books on the topic and its magazine, “Organic Gardening & Farming,” each with glowing recommendations.

Novelist Gurney Norman’s blurb is quintessential.

“In the month that I have had my copy of Rodale’s ‘How to Grow Vegetables and Fruits by the Organic Method,’ I have browsed it and referred to it for so many reasons, out of so many different moods, that I can’t decide if its resting place on the shelf should be among my other how-to books or somewhere between my poetry and books on oriental religion.”

Somewhere between poetry and religion ... now that’s where organic gardening was on the counterculture’s map 55 years ago.

Norman’s old friend from back at the University of Kentucky, the poet Wendell Berry, also contributed to the OEC.

His essay in the 1969 edition, “Think Small,” is a landmark document in the history of the American ecology movement. Young organic gardeners of the Key Peninsula were converts in the choir for this sermon: “A person who undertakes to grow a garden at home, has

set his mind decisively against what is wrong with us. He is helping himself in a way that dignifies him and that is rich in meaning and pleasure.”

Over the years in this KP Gardens feature, local organic gardeners have offered many practical tips, from composting to complimentary plantings.

But these gardens didn’t sprout unplanted.

As we enjoy the fall bounty of our organic gardens this month, we might pause for a moment to smile at the memory of the young hippies and back-to-the-landers who once consulted the I Ching before planting beans, buried dandelion petals in cow horns under the zucchini, and played flutes to the tomatoes. They composted and blended natural fertilizers too, all without adding toxins to the land and water we share.

The “Whole Earth Catalog” is forgotten along with the love beads, dashikis and sandals. You still see a few dreamcatchers, tie-dyed shirts and Birkenstocks.

Joni Mitchell is on a comeback tour, and the Earth still isn’t whole.

But at least we have some tried-and-tested gardening ideas for what to do about it.

Thanks, all you surviving snow-capped hippies. You were stardust and golden. Those organic gardens you got back to were not cultivated in vain. ■

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It's budget time!
We will be discussing our 2024 budget during the October and November Board of Commissioners meetings. Find out more at www.keypenparks.com/governance



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Planning for Key Center Path Gets Health Department Funding

Participatory budgeting gave the community a direct voice in the decision.

SARA THOMPSON, KP NEWS

Preliminary planning is underway for a roadside path to connect Key Center and the Red Barn Youth Center at the corner of the Key Peninsula Highway and 84th Street NW, a distance of about 500 yards.

Thanks to a grant from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, the necessary steps — civil engineering with preliminary drawings and easement approval — to build the path should be completed by the end of the year.

“We’ll have a shovel-ready project and then we will find the funding to pay for it,” said Key Peninsula Community Council director Chuck West, who spearheaded the request.

“One of my pet peeves has been pedestrian safety,” West said. “This is a small bite, but it will let people see what is possible and create a vision for a longer bike and walking path along the KP Highway.” He said the path could also offer safe access between elders at The Mustard Seed Village and kids at the Red Barn for future collaboration.

The \$10,000 grant was part of flexible funding the health department had available this year for projects in each of six Pierce County Communities of Focus. Agencies and nonprofits working on the Key Peninsula learned about it in June. Recipients had to identify a nonprofit or agency to accept funds and spend the money by the end of the year to qualify.

Four organizations pitched their proposals July 27 to a packed room at the Crandall Center in a meeting moderated by Daniel Burdsall, Communities of Focus liaison.

Two proposals came from the KP Community Council — one for preliminary roadside path planning and the other for a community park near the water tower above Key Center, near the Crandall Center on 154th Avenue Court NW. The Longbranch Improvement Club requested funding to improve and expand its community garden. Food Backpacks 4 Kids and the Minter Elementary School PTA pitched a family fun fair with live entertainment to bring Key Peninsula families together. The KP Cooperative Preschool asked for funding — much less than the \$10,000 allowed — to provide childcare and supplies so parents and guardians could meet monthly to share ideas and expertise.

Selecting the winning proposal used participatory budgeting: engaging the

community in the decision. “This is a chance to engage with the community about all the topics that are important,” said Communities of Focus Coordinator Marcy Boulet. “It is a way to get more people involved in the civic process. It increases self-efficacy. Engaged people are healthier.”

Ballots were distributed in August. Voters ranked the proposals from one to five so that an alternative project could be chosen if the first project did not meet the grant requirements.

A total of 490 votes were recorded and the initial results were announced Sept 1.

The Key Center Park proposal received the highest ranking, but Kathy Lyons and Mark Cockerill, who made the proposal, were informed just as the voting closed that the Peninsula Light Co., which owns the ¾ acre site, would not approve public use of the land. Although there was initial enthusiasm, Lyons said, concern about liability led to the board’s final decision.

Pierce County Councilmember Robyn Denson (D-7th) worked closely with the health department during the whole process. “No one has done it this way before,” she said.

Denson said the short timeline for proposals and the need to spend the funds by year-end made this grant process challenging but that she is enthusiastic about participatory budgeting.

“All in all it worked really well and was engaging and fun for the Key Peninsula community,” she said. “One thing we would do differently is to start a lot earlier so there is more opportunity for public engagement and so projects have more time to be executed before an end-of-year deadline. That being said, I’m very proud of the community for getting this done.”

In 2017, TPCHD identified communities of focus based on nine data points: life expectancy, poverty, unemployment, high school graduation, frequency of mental distress, smoking, obesity, diabetes and adverse childhood experiences. It found 14 zip codes with the worst outcomes and fewest opportunities to improve them. The Key Peninsula, along with East Tacoma and Springbrook, partnered with the health department that year. White River, South Tacoma and Parkland joined in 2018.

For more information on Communities in Focus, go to www.tpchd.org/healthy-people/health-equity/communities-of-focus. ■

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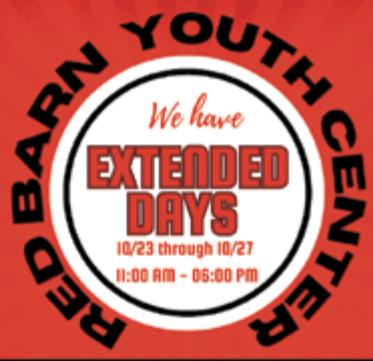
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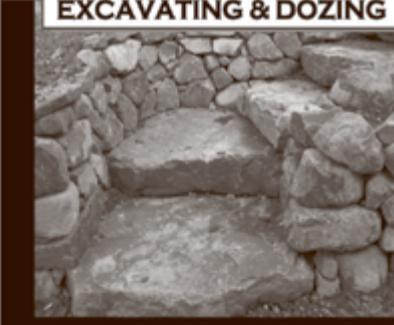
\$2,000 to Fiber Arts
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'An Immense World' by Ed Yong Explores the Hidden Wonders Around Us

CHRIS RURIK, KP NEWS



Dusk, late summer. A deer works the edge of the pasture. A lonely frog, peeping, is answered by a cricket. As the light slips, a bat skitters in and out of the shrinking circle I can see.

Why do I not do this more often, let the night steal my usual senses away, leave me exposed?

It grows dark. The deer fades like a ghost. I am reborn through other senses, alive to the slightest brush of air. I cannot quite see the deer anymore but I can sense its movement. The muffled hoots of a great horned owl roll through the air. A melodic note — what is it? — sounds from the edge of the — there. A robin. It cuts its evening song short with a restless upswing. Night. Almost fall. Full of creatures great and small.

The edges of perception: this is the terrain of science writer Ed Yong's latest journey, a book called "An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us."

Reading it is like running your fingers through a treasure chest of jewels — not that I've had that experience, but it's something I can imagine, just as I can imagine, with Yong's deft help, what it might be like to be a wild animal with its own way of perceiving the world. The book teems. Why does it feel like a rare and precious experience these days to be wowed by Earth's biodiversity, left with a sense of incredible magic?

The backbone of "An Immense World" is the concept of Umwelt, a term coined by Baltic-German zoologist Jakob von Uexküll in 1909. An animal's Umwelt is its perceptual world, or self-world: all the things it can hear, see, taste, feel, smell, or detect thermally or electrically or magnetically (I wrote about this in my first piece for KP News, "A Newt's World" November 2019).

That deer on the edge of the pasture. As my vision faded, its vision came into its own. Though its eyes have fewer cone photoreceptors than mine, giving it poorer daytime color vision, its highly concentrated rods give it excellent low-light vision, and a reflective surface at the back of its eye sends light back across its photoreceptors for double absorption. Thanks to the deer's horizontal pupils, packed with rods, the area of sharpest focus in its field of vision

is not a small central circle like ours but a horizontal band. And because of its bulging eyes, this band extends in a 300-degree arc around its head.

Layer upon layer, the book builds an immense world of overlapping Umwelten. An animal's Umwelt is defined as much by what it lacks as what it includes. "Nothing can sense everything, and nothing needs to," writes Yong. Trichromatic color vision with high resolution — humankind's most notable sense — places massive energy demands on our brains. Most animals have no need to expend that kind of energy. Other perceptions are more important for survival. An animal's Umwelt reveals much about its evolved relationship with life.

A great horned owl's ears are buried in its facial feathers, which, disc-shaped, can be molded to catch sound like a satellite dish. One ear is higher in the skull than the other. While I can pinpoint a sound's source fairly well in the horizontal plane — it arrives in one ear fractionally earlier than the other — I struggle in the vertical plane. A sound above me hits both ears at the same time. The owl's offset ears give it the ability to pinpoint scurrying small mammals in both the horizontal and the vertical planes, important for an animal that hunts from on high.

Crickets have ears on their knees. Insects have evolved ears at least 19 times on mouths, chests, abdomens, antennae. And yet most insects are deaf, perfectly fine without any ears at all. Frogs tune their calls to catch the frequencies best heard by potential mates, which drives the evolution of both frogs and the ears of their predators. Spiders live in a world of vibrations; treehoppers in rumbling music they send and sense as tremors in the plants on which they live. Songbirds experience their songs in a far more nuanced way than we hear them. The tiny hairs in songbird ears change when the season changes, optimizing themselves to hear fast in fall, when urgent messages keep flocks tight and safe, and to hear pitch with precision in spring when song determines who mates.

"An Immense World" makes one

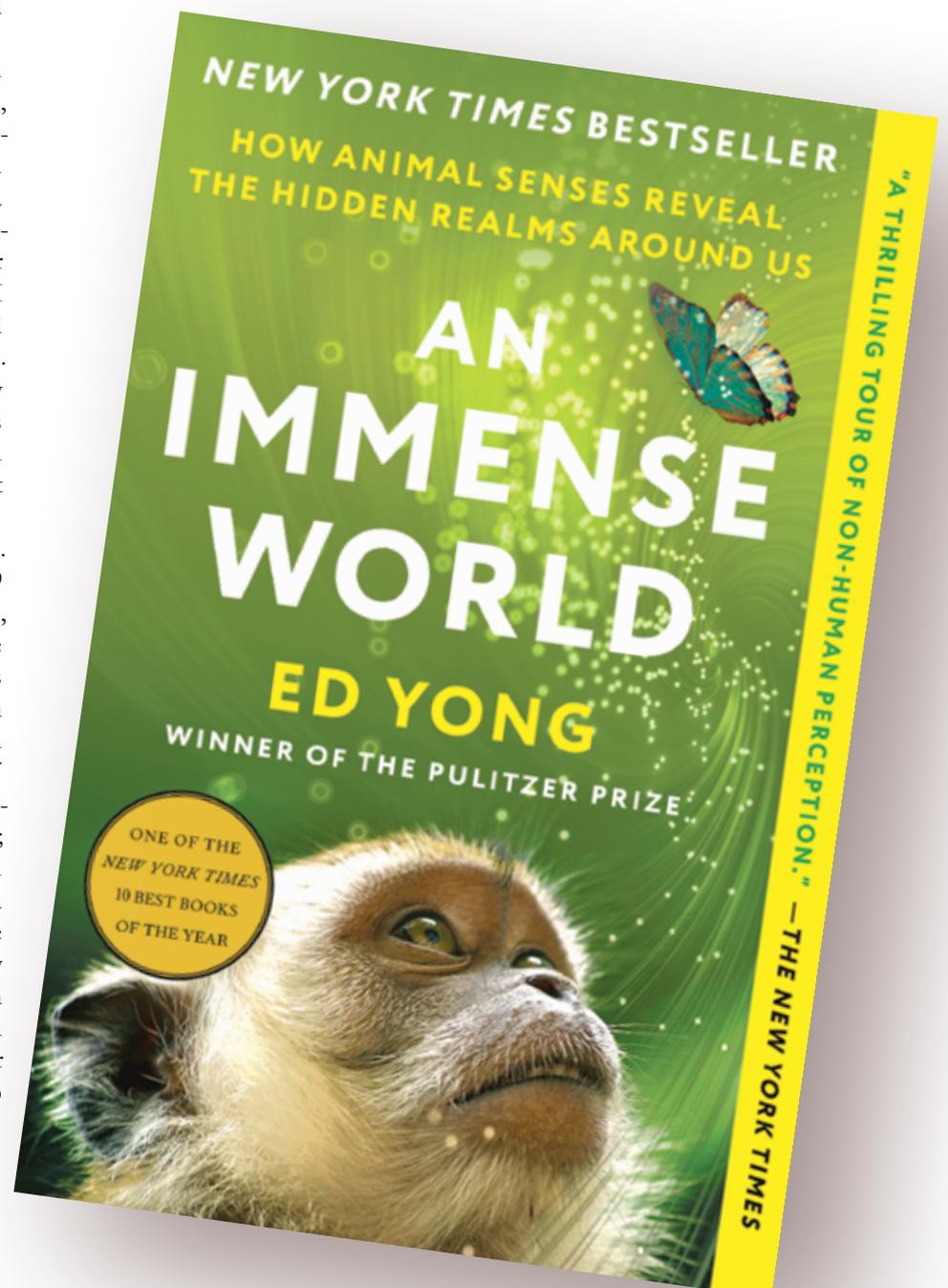
continually ask, Why do we have our senses tuned the way we do? What are we missing? Why? As Yong writes, "The boundaries of the human Umwelt often make the Umwelten of others opaque to us."

At the same time, Umwelten level the playing field of life. Humankind has a long history of putting technologies, such as senses, in a hierarchy, ranking them as inferior or superior. Thinking in terms of Umwelten allows us to see that even the simplest of eyes, such as those on the lips of scallops, are perfectly adapted to the scallop's needs. Instead of hierarchies, Umwelten give us radiant diversity.

"Our intuitions will be our biggest liabilities," Yong suggests, "and our imaginations will be our greatest assets."

"An Immense World" ends with a brief but explosive chapter on the pollution of sensescapes. A corollary to the idea that our sensory bias makes it difficult for us to enter other Umwelten is the fact that sensory pollution does not appear as such to us. Noises, lights, chemical signals, winds, odors, and electrical fields that to us are nuisances may be world-shattering to other creatures, seriously jeopardizing their ability to survive in this world.

It is an immense world, and we only see bits of it, but our sensory pollutions have left few refuges. Yong takes a hopeful stance here. Sources of sensory pollution, he suggests, unlike long-lasting chemicals or atmospheric carbon, can be switched off as soon as we choose. ■





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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Oct 1 Community Litter Drop Off Event 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Drop off locations: Lake Kathryn Village, Longbranch Improvement Club, 64th St and KPH. Tires at 64th St only.

Oct 2 Bingo 1 – 2 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project.

Oct 3 Gig Harbor Literary Society 6 p.m., Harbor History Museum. "Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore" by Matthew Sullivan

Oct 4 Doug Macleod concert 7 – 9 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club. Doors open at 6 p.m., Tickets available online at licweb.org.

Oct 4 Key Pen Book Club: An Hour of Coffee and Conversation 10:30 a.m., Key Center Library. "Furious Hours: Murder, Fraud, the Last Trial of Harper Lee."

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

Oct 6 Washington Old Time Fiddlers Association 3:30 – 6 p.m., Crandall Center. All fiddlers, banjos, mandolins, guitars, string basses are welcome.

Oct 7 Scarecrow Festival 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., Sehmel Homestead Park. Hay rides, petting zoo, pumpkin carving, live music, and food trucks.

Oct 7 Bird Walks 8:30 a.m., rain or shine. Meet nature guide Chris Rurik at Gateway Park pavilion.

Oct 7 Gig Harbor Art Walk 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Downtown Gig Harbor. Celebrating creativity in the Harbor. Ebttide Gallery, Gallery Row and Waters Edge Gallery.

Oct 7 Rhythm & Blues/Brats & Brews 7 – 10 p.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Support the KPCC and pay tribute to Phil Bauer.

Oct 7 Key Center Fire Pancake

Breakfast 8 – 11 a.m., Key Center Fire Station. "Touch a Truck." Live demonstrations. All proceeds benefit Ashes FD 16 Ladies Auxiliary.

Oct 7-8 KP Fall Farm Tour 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Various farms and locations across the Key Peninsula. List and map of farms available at kpfarmtour.com.

Oct 7 Fiber Arts Festival 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club. Fiber artists, vendors, live music, and food available for purchase. Free admission.

Oct 8 Cider Squeeze 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Gateway Park. Apple cider, apple fritters and ice cream available for purchase. All proceeds benefit the KP Farm Tour.

Oct 9 Fall Health Fair 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project. Mammograms, COVID vaccines, exercise classes and nutrition demonstrations. Free and open to the community.

Oct 10 TacomaProBono Legal Aid 1 – 3 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project. Free civil legal help.

Oct 10 Open Mic Cafe 6:30 p.m., Longbranch Improvement Club. Art, music, poetry. Open to the public.

Oct 12 Multicare WIC Program 12 – 4 p.m., Key Center Library. The WIC Clinic helps pregnant people, new and breastfeeding moms, and children under 5.

Oct 13 Letter Writing Program 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m., Key Center Library. A gathering to write handwritten notes to others. Registration encouraged.

Oct 14 Autumn Sip & Stroll 12 – 4 p.m., Gig Harbor Waterfront. Wine tasting event along the waterfront at 20+ businesses serving as "Stroll Stops."

Oct 17 Hootenanny 2 – 4 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project. Folksong sing and play along.

Oct 17 Maker Fun - Drop in Art and Science for Kids 3:30 – 5 p.m., Key Center Library. Drop in art and science for kids.

Oct 18 Cribbage Tournament 1 p.m., Mustard Seed Project. Call 253-884-9814 to reserve a spot.

Oct 18 Cribbage Club 2 – 4 p.m., Mustard Seed Project. Everyone is welcome, no experience required.

Oct 19 KP Book Club 11 a.m., KP Historical Society. "The Ride of Her Life: The True Story of a Woman, Her Horse, and Their Last-Chance Journey Across America" by Elizabeth Letts.

Oct 20 Baby Lounge 12 p.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center. A gathering for connection with other parents.

Oct 25 Youth Night 6:30 p.m., Peninsula Life Church. All youth are welcome.

Oct 26 Tales at the Boatshop 10:30 a.m., Gig Harbor Boatshop. Nautical storytelling for children.

Oct 26 Author Talk: Matthew Sullivan 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Harbor History Museum. "A Nicer Kind of Murder: The Evolution of Crime Fiction"

Oct 28 All Hallows Eve 5 – 8 p.m., Gateway Park. Sponsored by Key Pen Parks. Face painting, costume contest, hayride, food vendors, and more fun!

Oct 28 Ghost Train 2023 5 – 9 p.m., South Kitsap Regional Park. Sponsored by Kitsap Live Steamers. All proceeds benefit the Kitsap Foster Care Association.

Oct 29 Rattle Dem Bones Halloween Bike Ride and Costume Contest 8 a.m. – 1 p.m., Kimball Drive Park and Ride. Group bike ride and a spook-tacular Halloween parade.

Oct 31 Trick or Treat in the Harbor 3 – 6 p.m., Gig Harbor Waterfront businesses.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Monday Al-Anon Keys to Sanity 5 p.m., KP fire station. Family group.

Monday Yoga at the Civic Center 7 - 8 p.m.,

Key Peninsula Civic Center. Schedule classes online at the civic center website.

M-W Yoga at the Civic Center 9:30 - 10:30 a.m., Key Peninsula Civic Center. Schedule classes online at the civic center website.

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

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

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

M-F Tai Ji Quan 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project. Exercise training program for improving balance and preventing falls.

Tuesday Friends of the Key Center Library Book Donations 1 – 3 p.m., Key Center Library.

T-W-Th REFIT/REV+FLOW Workout Tue and Wed 5:30/6:15 p.m., Thu 9:30/10:30 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-TH Tai Chi 9:45 a.m., KP Community Services, 253-884-4440.

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

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

Wednesday Gentle Yoga for Older Adults 11:15 a.m., Mustard Seed Project, 253-884-9814.

Thursday County Council District 7 Constituent Office Hours 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., Councilmember Robyn Denson and her staff. Contact 253-798-6654 for information.

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

Thursday KP Toastmasters 8 a.m., WayPoint Church, 253-514-2836.

Thursday Family Story Time 10:30 – 11 a.m., Key Center Library. For families with young children.

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

Saturday Community Boat Restoration Program 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Gig Harbor Boat Shop. Call 253-857-9344 to register.

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., Meeting locations vary, check 26d.org for monthly updates.

Brunch First Mondays, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., The Mustard Seed Project. Open to the community, \$5 per person.

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

Friends of the Key Center Library Board Meeting Third Fridays, 10:30 a.m., Brones Room of the Key Center Library.

Key Peninsula Advisory Commission Fourth Thursdays, 5:30 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. October meeting location – My Haunted Forest. 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. October's Topic: First Aid Class. 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 Board of Commissioners Meeting, Second Monday, 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 First and third Tuesdays in October, 6 p.m. Swiftwater Elementary School.

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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Key Peninsula Civic Center, 17010 S. Vaughn Road 253/884-3456 www.kpciviccenter.org The Key Peninsula Civic Center Association, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, fosters and promotes the civic, social, cultural and general well-being of the Key Peninsula community.

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November 4 9 to 10 a.m. Madrona Cafe
Coffee with Robyn

Thursdays from 11 to 2: Meet Council Assistant John
Jolibois at the Key Center Corral Office

Or call to make an appointment: 253-798-6654
email robyn.denson@piercecounitywa.gov

Robyn Denson
Council Member - District 7



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We provide free mental health information and resources at Key Peninsula Family Resource Center, 17010 S Vaughn Rd NW. Stop by and pick up our "Navigating a Mental Health Crisis" booklet.

info@namipierce.org
253-677-6629



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TOP LEFT: Roenyn (10), Ava (11) and Zanna (12) loved the "Books in a Bus" book giveaway at the FB4K event Aug. 25 to 27 at the KP Civic Center.

TOP RIGHT: PHS running back Connor Burton pushes through to his first touchdown at Fish Bowl 45.

CENTER: A cow jam stopped traffic in both directions Sept. 2 on Olson Drive NW. *Liz Kelly-Koepfler*

BOTTOM LEFT: PHS cheer senior Bella Bryson and class president Alec Krishnadasan run to the stands with the winning Food Bowl trophy. A total of 44,284 food items were collected for FB4K by all three high schools.

BOTTOM RIGHT: PHS Seahawk fans packed the stadium at Roy Anderson Field for Fish Bowl Sept. 15.

All photographs by Tina McKail, KP News, except where noted.

