2-2009

Island Times, Feb-Mar 2009

Kevin Attra
INAGURATION STORIES

BY KEVIN ATTARA

The Peaks Island Council met Wednesday night, Dec. 10, at the Inn to inaugurate the newly-elected counselors Rob Tiffany and Mike Richards, who were sworn in by City Clerk Linda Cohen and former mayor Ed Susslik, state Rep. Peter Stucker, and six Russian officials from the City of Archangel, participating in a cultural exchange program with its sister-city, Portland, that has lasted 20 years.

Richards was unanimously elected Chair, and said, "If I can do as good a job as Langella, I'll be happy." Betty Soult and Tom Bohan were re-elected to their positions of Vice-Chair and Treasurer respectively.

In response to the problems encountered during Dave Adams' emergency, the PIC began addressing emergency response procedures on the island.

It was alleged that, on Dec. 13, when a 911 call was placed for Dave Adams, only one police officer was on duty, and that through a series of apparent miscommunications to one officer, he was unable to assist. As a result, the officer had to call for help of two untrained emergency medical technicians who happened to be there at the time.

As a result, members of the Public Safety Committee of the PIC met with Police Chief Loughlin and Fire Chief LaMontagne in mid-January to establish goals for improving coordination of emergency services on the island. According to committee members Bob Hurley and Mike Langella, at issue is a lack of adequate coverage in winter when there is often only one police officer on duty during the first shift, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., because there is no requirement that any of the secondary volunteer staff be available in case of an emergency.

As a stop-gap measure, the police have agreed to find out who will be on the island during their shift and notify the 911 dispatch office with that information. Officer Daniel Rose stated on Jan. 25 that it was already being done.

Mike Langella prepares to hand the PIC gavel to Mike Richards who said, "If I can do as good a job, I'll be happy.

Voices from a war zone

Councilor Hurley said the long term goal is to have more trained EMTs on duty, still and Chief LaMontagne has offered to pay the costs to train any three volunteers interested in being an EMT.

In other business the PIC authorized funding of student summer boat passes from the $50,000 discretionary fund and will notify parents this month. The program is expected to cost around $3,000.

Members of the PIC's Transportation Committee continue to study the feasibility of creating an island taxi service, possibly using the contingency money to purchase a vehicle and set up a corporation, but support for the initiative appears to wax and wane.

In light of the severe economic downturn, funding for capital improvements to the island—especially road improvements appears to be stalled, although it is still in the budget, according to Councillor Lynne Richard, who said the funding picture is confusing. Public Works Supervisor J.J. Alves put it on the request last spring. Though slow in coming, it would be done. She added that funding for sewer work was doubtful.

Councilor Langella said he was surprised to learn that the City Council has no input on capital improvements in town and suggested that the PIC be vigilant and insist about getting funding from the City.

"We need to advocate every single year for things for the island," he said, "It's been left off for 15 years."

A bomb dropped Israeli home in the town of Sderot, part of the continuing destruction of the conflict with Hamas in the Gaza region. Peaks Island residents Marsha and Ed Cohen have been involved with international education, including working for Seeds of Peace at the international peace camp here in Maine, in the Middle East and in South Asia. They are currently in the midst of a joint Seeds of Peace/U.S.A.I.D. project in Israel that includes both Jewish and Arab Israeli educators. Full story page 19.

Above: Peaks Island resident Jim Lausier was on hand to snap this picture just as President and Mrs. Obama stepped out of their limousine and began walking down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House during the inaugural parade. Below: This image on a T-shirt worn by OB O'Brien in Washington during the inaugural ceremony apparently was considered by many people to be such an accurate representation of what Obama means to them that they had to stop him to have their picture taken with it (photo by Annie O'Brien). Full stories on the back page.
The Grebe was built in France in 1919. She was one of the last Colin Archer pilot cutters built during Archer's lifetime, and was once owned by Britain's famous yachtsman, Harry Etheridge, who named her the Grebe.


"It's a wonderful sea boat," says the 68-year-old, Brooklyn-born owner, Jeff Aumuller, who bought the boat in 1973 and restored it to its original design as a pilothouse, "Etheridge made more of a recreational boat. It's a wonderful sea boat." He said the storm was what some people call a "wintercane." It has the intensity of a hurricane, but occurs late in the season.

When asked how he got through it, he said, "I didn't really get through it. The boat got through it. It's a lifeboat anyway, so we made it through." Aumuller completely rebuilt the Grebe in 1985, a project so expensive he had to sell his house in Kennebunkport to do it. Sold my property, put the whole thing into the boat, he said. "I had a big crew, five carpenters. Six months, non-stop, eight hours a day, five days a week, we replaced 50 percent of the deck, 20 percent of the cabin."

"And now it needs another one, but I've owned the boat 35 years now. Same boat."

Although he has a degree in psychology he ended up instead, as he tell you, "with a banjo on my knee, pickin' and grinnin'." He is a serious and accomplished musician, with a new recording, and a string of performances from the Bahamas to the Casco Bay Isles. You can see him regularly in Portland at Andy's from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. most Wednesdays, and at Portland Coffee Roasters from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. Both venues are roughly across the street from each other on Commercial Street. He also fronts a local bluegrass band, the Potato Pickers, who work the Flat Bread, Dogfish, Brian Boru, and North Star circuit.

Jeff Aumuller
makes a difference
Peaks Islanders renew discussions on independence

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Russ Edwards and 10 other Peaks Island residents, many of them members of the Island Independence Committee, got together on Sunday, Jan. 18 at the MacVane Community Center to discuss the possibility of renewing negotiations with the legislature to secede from the City of Portland.

"Starting now we should call it independence," said Mary Lavendier. "Let's throw out the S-word." Edwards had called the meeting based on a perception, commonly held among many of those present, that a favorable political climate exists in Augusta. "I really feel the political atmosphere is the best we've ever seen up there for this," he said in an interview later. "Last time, it was incredible the amount of effort the Speaker put into stopping us. I mean he's gone up and started his propaganda lob by the heads of committee, talk with our new representatives up there," he explained, "and do it very quickly before Portland gets up and starts their propaganda lobby again.

"We would make no decision until [the delegation] came back on whether or not to go ahead, but based on their report then we would have a lot more information, and we could either just forget the whole thing or we could proceed." During the 1-hour discussion, some members of the group expressed concern that they would be perceived as representatives of the Island Independence Committee, to which Edwards responded, "I think at this point we can go as a group of concerned citizens, many of us of which are members of the IIC. But... this is not an IIC meeting as such."

Island Councilor Mike Langella, who attended the meeting but did not attend, agreed. "The meeting was not conducted by the IIC, but was organized by Russ Edwards and did not include all the members."

One issue of concern at the meeting was the status of a letter from the PIC addressed by Mike Langella to the former State and Local Government Committee Chair, Elizabeth Schneider, explaining the difficulties the PIC was having with the City. Many at the meeting were not sure if it had been sent, and worried that, if it had, it would reach a new and possibly unsympathetic leadership. "It actually went to [Sen. Debra] Simpson and [Rep. Stephen] Beaudette," said Langella.

Some people at the meeting said they were concerned that the actions of the group would undermine the Peaks Island Council, a sentiment reinforced in some measure by a letter addressed to those at the meeting by PIC Chair Mike Richards, who wrote, "I understand that you and others view the legislature as being more amenable to our plight, and view the PIC as being insufficient to the task," a line Edwards read twice, and said he didn't agree with.

The letter also stated, "I think the legislature will tell you to wait a couple of years to see if the PIC and the City can do better, and then start from scratch." Said one member of the group, "As far as the PIC, they did spend a good part of last year on the process. They could have been more forceful, but it's who they're dealing with. I thought they tried; the results weren't there, and that's a good enough reason to seek independence."

ABOVE: (left to right) Jane Adams, Russ Edwards, Dan Doane, Frank Peretti, Sue Elise Roberts and Mary Lavendier discuss Peaks Island independence at a meeting in the MacVane Community Center Jan. 18. Not shown are M.J. Burnette, Peggy Peretti, and Stan and Judy Piawlock

PEAT implements creative recycling, explores alternate energy

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Peaks Island Environmental Action Team received seven recycling bins in late January, a large, heavy duty container and six smaller barrels that will be used to collect bottles and cans on the island for recycling. The large container will be located permanently at the ferry landing (it may already be in place at the time of this publication). The light weight barrels will be used seasonally, placed around the island in the spring and stored away in the fall.

Six island artists have been selected to decorate the barrels, and will begin work this month. The barrels are planned to be displayed at an Earth Day celebration, April 22.

The project was initiated by PEAT member Mary Ann Mitchell who, with her son Isaiah Oliver, spent much of last year securing community involvement and planning how it would work.

In August, the Peaks Island Fund granted PEAT $5,000 to purchase the recycling containers as part of a larger plan that includes further grants for a...
Dear Islanders,

Hello again! How has everything been during the last 3 months? How cold is it there? Any big snow storms yet? We had a big snow fall one night, but it was all gone by the next morning. That's one thing I've really missed.

Things must have also been really crazy with the election. Even here in France it was about the only thing everyone talked about, since no one in France could vote. I know my extended host family was surprised to hear about the results.

I was a little bummed to miss Thanksgiving, since no one in France could vote. I know my other host sister who turned 18 last summer. There were over 100 guests at that party, all related. I had the best time, as we got to try all kinds of traditional dessert from their family. So really it celebrates it, our myself and the other three American exchange students who had our own little celebration.

On Christmas day, we got up at 9 a.m. and opened presents. Christmas presents are big in France. My host family is not rich, and yet the collective gifts that were given consisted of a cat, a TV, a greenhouse, a puppy, and plane tickets. All of them we never kept secret until opened.

After the gifts, we all helped prepare for lunch, which was another French specialty of seafood and fish. Thirty family members came over and it was a lot of fun. It wasn't so fun when my host cousin put a shrimp in my tea and I drank it, but still, it was a Christmas I will never forget.

New Year's was celebrated pretty much the same as every year. You stay up till midnight, you countdown, you cheer! I went to bed at 12:30 a.m. Because I was so tired, but the other eight people at the party danced until 4:00 in the morning. Parties in France are typically like that, but since I'm not used to it, I'm always the first to fall asleep.

I've been doing a jazz band where I play piano. It's been a challenge, since it requires a lot of improv, which I've never done before, but I've gotten a lot better. After February break I start singing too, which I'm really excited about. I really miss singing. I had a voice lesson one time in the beginning of September, but I didn't like the teacher, and it was too expensive to continue, so I had to quit. However, I'm really looking forward to justing it up a bit.

I'm also in a cheer troop here, and we mostly do just improv exercises, but at the end of the year we're putting on a show, so that'll be really cool. It's going to be hard, since all my lines were in French, but I'm looking forward to that too.

I hope everything's going well on Peaks Island, and that everyone had a happy holiday season. I know I did. Happy New Year, and the best for 2009!

A Benson!

From left to right, Clément, Marie, Guillaume, Laurent, Alex, me, Pierre, Anne Charlotte, Aude, Emille, Paul, Lucie, and Marie Astrid.

Eileen Hanley at the Eiffel Tower. photo by Kasey Augustine
fuel prices dropped below that rate. At its peak, ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel had been $4.40 per gallon. The District was able to lock in significantly lower rates for the period from September 2009 through August 2010 for the ferries ($2.13/gal) and for heating fuel ($2.07/gal).

The 20 cent fuel surcharge applied to ticket costs last May helped offset fuel prices; however, it was not enough to balance the fact that fewer passenger tickets were sold. Fuel costs will exceed surcharge revenue received by about $67,000 through the end of this fiscal year, March 30. CBITD expects to roll back the fuel surcharge by May 1, when other fare changes would be implemented to meet the needs of the new budget for FY 2010.

In response to customer questions about changes in freight rates, both the Operations Committee and the Rate Structure Committee sought input from the island business community. After a series of initial meetings, volunteers convened three more times to review and amplify freight rates. The Rate Structure Committee will forward the entire series of meetings addressed concerns expressed by crew members and islanders, primarily from down the bay, about overloaded and unsafe personal carts. A fee considerably public input, the board adopted a new cart policy on Jan. 1, effective Jan. 7, which can be reviewed on the website.

To help CBITD find new revenue sources to help keep slander rates at reasonable levels in the future, they are exploring the possibility of adding parking space for islanders and visitors in a Multi-Modal Transit Terminal. These efforts would involve special grants and are likely to take a long time for review by government agencies.

Another hopeful project under discussion is a combined Metro-Casco Bay Line 1D card that would allow commuters and taxpayers to travel for a discount on METRO buses and CBITD Ferries. The card would be similar to those used in cities like Boston and San Francisco. A new electronic ticketing system may be acquired this spring that may serve other useful fare collection purposes.

The U-Haul truck rental company has established a car share service in Portland, U Car Share, for rentals on an hourly or daily basis. It offers convenient access to two cars right outside the terminal on Commercial Street. For a limited time, U Car Share’s $50 registration fee is waived for those customers who agree to operate them online at www.ushares.com and use the coupon code, MAINECBLINES2009.

Upcoming Rate Structure Committee meetings will be held on Thursday, Feb. 12 at 8:15 a.m., on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 3 p.m., and on Wednesday, March 4 at 4 p.m. Budget discussions for the 2010 fiscal year will take place at Finance/Budget Committee meetings on Wednesday, Feb. 11 at 7:45 a.m., on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 3 p.m., and on Wednesday, March 4 at 4 p.m. All meetings are open to the public and are held in the Ferry Terminal. The CBITD adopted its current rates in 2006 with a 15 percent overall price increase.

The 12-member CBITD board of directors consists of ten elected members from the islands plus two appointees: Dr. Walter Morgan from the Maine Department of Transportation, and Portland City Councilor Kevin Donoghue (City Councilor Kevin Donoghue). A new electronic approach was towards supplying power to all the islands,” he said. “We’re not concerned that it’s not the only way to go.”

In order to know for certain, he would like to collect wind speed data for at least a year, and in late January, entered negotiations with an organization - he did not wish to give the name - that he said may be able to provide testing equipment for little or no money. He said the agreement would not be a viable option, but he said he thought it was a very good idea to test wind speed availability on the island.

“I think there are still ways to get green energy started in the region.”

CBITD approves cart policy, proposes down-the-bay schedule change

By Kevin Attra

The CBITD Operations Committee held a public hearing on Thursday, Dec. 15, to introduce a proposed fee for the use of hand carts on the boats. Owing to the surprise and outrage expressed by many island residents when word of the measure was known it was anticipated that the hearing would draw a large and vociferous crowd, but was in fact a polite discussion with the six island residents who were able to attend the 4 p.m. meeting.

On Jan. 16 the committee finalized the new policy regarding cart-charge on the ferry. The fee will be 25 cents for the type and size of loaded hand carts, dollys and other cart equipment to certain dimensions amounting to just under 12 cubic feet of storage space. Large four-wheeled hand carts must now be shipped as freight.

Among the kind of equipment allowed under the new regulation, two-wheeled hand trucks and baby carriages were considered to be unacceptable to members of the board, but were permitted due to overwhelming public pressure. The committee saw a way to watch people from carrying children in their arms in order to use their baby carriage for freight, but operations manager Nick Mavodones said the captains are not happy about it.

Once on board the vessel, carry-on items must be placed in a way that does not block the aisles, other passenger space, deckhand work areas or safety equipment. CBITD staff have the ability to remove or penalize the allowances, or that they deem is otherwise unsafe.

The measure was passed unanimously. Chair Jim Philps said, “Does anyone disagree?”

After seven years we finally got this on the board,” exclaimed committee member Bill Debo.

In other business, Catherin Debo introduced two changes to the boat schedule for down the bay runs that would save the District an estimated $36,000 if adopted. Under the proposed changes, the 10 a.m. Portland departure would be shifted to 10:15 a.m., and the seasonal 6:15 p.m. departures, which usually starts in mid-April, would not be reinstated until Memorial Day.

“A slight change of 15 minutes would save a ton of money,” said Debo in reference to the 10 a.m. departure shift. It would allow one crew to make all three morning runs (including the 5:05 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. departures) instead of having to use a second crew and boat to cover the 7:45 a.m. The delayed departure would impact mail delivery times down the bay, but the change would save district staff about $36,000 next year. A public hearing on the proposed schedule changes has been tentatively set for Thursday, Feb. 5, at 4 p.m.

Carpenter for Hire

30 Years in the Trade
Community Letters

From City Councilor Kevin Donoghue

Transit Planning, the Eastern Waterfront, and the Portland Islands

When the Peninsula Transit Study began, with a public forum at the Ocean Gateway Terminal in February of 2008, the Casco Bay area was the focal point of the terminal. As chair of the study committee, I chose this location in part because of the potential to address our island transportation needs. As an islander myself, the concept of a shared parking garage at the main terminal in Casco Bay is an idea whose time has come.

Casco Bay Lines has expressed an interest in building the garage, and the Casco Bay Gateway Terminal is an example of the types of projects that we need to foster. The committee's recommendations for the Casco Bay Gateway Terminal include the following:

- The garage should be designed to accommodate large vehicles, such as buses and boats.
- The garage should include passenger amenities, such as restrooms and waiting areas.
- The garage should be accessible to all islanders.
- The garage should be designed to accommodate future growth.

As District 1 Councilor and Chair of the Transportation Committee, I support these ideas for our islands. I believe that the Casco Bay Gateway Terminal could be a model for future transportation projects.

To Kevin Donoghue:

I want to offer my opinion again about the Maine State Pier. If the pier is ever developed as it was previously proposed, I strongly feel that future years will see citizens being shucked, and the pier is in disuse. Perhaps we need to consider a new idea for the pier.

As a member of the Maine State Pier Committee, I believe that the pier could be used to provide a new public space for islanders. It could be a place for people to gather, relax, and enjoy the waterfront. The pier could also be used to host events, such as concerts, festivals, and other community gatherings.

The potential for the pier is significant, and I urge the City Council to consider all options before making a final decision.
Rebecca Johanna Stephens teaches weekly yoga classes and private yoga lessons on Peaks Island. You may direct your comments, inquiries, or column ideas to 766-3017 or rjstephens@gmail.com.

Many years ago, I received a simple but life-changing lesson from one of my teachers. The lesson contained a fact and a question. Fact: there is only one person with whom you will spend 24 hours a day, 7 days each day, every week of every year for the rest of your life. That person, of course, is you. Question: would you prefer to spend that time with someone who loves you, or with someone who constantly undermines you? If you have never been plagued by a lineage of negative, distorted, anxious, despairing thoughts, you may proceed directly to the postures offered below! For the rest of us, please think about what fosters trust and intimacy in your closest relationships - nagging and withholding affection, or appreciation and encouragement? Sometimes I think of time spent on the yoga mat as couples counseling, between you and your own self. On the yoga mat, we practice mindfulness and learn how to move from negative, fearful reactions to creative, loving responsiveness in our interactions with ourselves. Bringing awareness to how we speak to and motivate ourselves shines a light on how we have been treated and how we often unintentionally hurt the ones we love the most.

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are the first written teachings of yoga. Originally recorded in Sanskrit (a poetic, sacred Hindu dialect), there have been many interpretations and translations into English. The second sutra defines yoga as detaching from and disciplining our vacillating waves of thoughts. The third sutra describes the result of cultivating a clear, quiet mind. This is our true nature, which is pure awareness - creative, expansive, intuitive and unifying. How refreshing indeed that our newly inaugurated president speaks the language that appeals to our steady, true nature, rather than the rhetoric that preys on our fearful, mutable minds.

Hug yourself up for what you now see will only make you feel terrible. You will be much more joyfully productive if you adopt a spacious attitude of welcoming, and the avid curiosity of an archelogist studying the lifestyle of a fascinating tribe of ancestors. Simply regard each thought with objective equanimity. If you chastise yourself for every thought you bring into awareness, you will not want to continue this process, and only with consistent practice will you come to know the grace of a loving mind.

The third step is acceptance. Beating yourself up for what you now see will only make you feel terrible. You will be much more joyfully productive if you adopt a spacious attitude of welcoming, and the avid curiosity of an archelogist studying the lifestyle of a fascinating tribe of ancestors. Simply regard each thought with objective equanimity. If you chastise yourself for every thought you bring into awareness, you will not want to continue this process, and only with consistent practice will you come to know the grace of a loving mind.

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For the love of Peaks!

BY FRAN HOUSTON

My first months on Peaks Island were during the summer and fall of 1980, before leaving for Nairobi, Kenya for nearly two years. Early in 1980, I recall being on my bed in the YWCA in Nairobi, thinking “As I am exploring the world, I need an anchor... And Peaks Island would be an excellent anchor!” And I did return to Peaks Island in 1983 and purchased my home in 1984. The Island has been a good place to pursue my search for the ideal - the ideal world, the ideal community, and the ideal life for myself. I have been away in the Peace Corps twice, for a total of six years, to Honduras and Jamaica, and each time I have looked forward to returning to my home anchor - Peaks Island.

The island community is full of interesting, multi-talented people, many of whom I have enjoyed working with. Working and volunteering at the school and the Children’s Workshop helped me meet many of the Island's families and children. Other Islanders and I have worked at improving the life and the environment on Peaks through groups like FINA (Peaks Island Neighborhood Association), CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), PEAT (Peaks Environment Action Team), and The Fifth Maine. My life-long desire to explore and understand the world is also possible here, on Peaks Island, as much as anywhere else in the world.

I grew up chiefly in New York City, graduating from Smith College in 1950. Then I was married, lived on the eastern end of Long Island, NY, and had two children. I lived in Maine for 5 years and then moved to Cambridge to earn a Master's degree in Education, and to work at the Children's Museum in Boston under the direction of Dr. Benjamin Spock's son, Michael. In the 1970's I became an Assistant Professor at Lesley Graduate School in Cambridge. As my children grew up and moved to different parts of the country, I was able to follow my long-standing interest in exploring the world and understanding what makes it work. I studied new educational models in Mexico and England and explored India for four months.

In 1976, I bought land in southern Maine, built a small cabin, and later took a job in Saco, Maine. A colleague introduced me to Peaks Island where I studied my future options - and decided to go to Kenya - not yet knowing that the Island would be my anchor.

Have you lived on Peaks for a long time? Do you have a Peaks Island story to tell of memories from childhood or that illustrates why you love living here? Please email or call Fran Houston. She has already heard some great stories and she wants to hear yours. - Fran Houston @hotmail.com, or call 766.2186.

Cynthia Cole

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Peaks Island Experiences

(P. I. E. S)

A Bright Shining STAR

The newspaper has always been an important part of my life. My mother would place a newspaper in the bottom of the canary cage, and also use the newspaper to dispose of garbage (before plastic bags). Wax-annealed sweet potatoes were wrapped in newspaper for winter storage. Even my father's summer Boy Scout camp.

The STAR crew, LEFT: Suzy Kane
BOTTOM: Kay Taylor, Al Bondi.

BY JERRY GARMAN

The newspaper has always been an important part of my life. My mother would place a newspaper in the bottom of the canary cage, and also use the newspaper to dispose of garbage (before plastic bags). Wax-annealed sweet potatoes were wrapped in newspaper for winter storage. Almost all families had a scrapbook of newspapers, used to create printing plates for the community newspaper, records, film and books to almost complete the analog change over. I say almost because there is one exception: the Peaks Island Star.

Recently I invested fourteen hours reading past copies of the Star that chronicled 28 years of Peaks Island happenings. December 2008, Issue 28, Volume 28 marked 336 continuous monthly publications of this essential, and popular newsletter newsletter. You can track the constant transformation of our wonderful island community through these many pages.

In the early years of the Peaks Island Library, Mariana Rowe, Lorraine Caprizzo and I (all librarians) found that with the demise of the Island Breeze there was a need for better year-round communication between all the organizations on the island. They created the Peaks Island Star and used as their symbol the five-legged star fish (created by Sam McLean's daughter, Leslie). Each leg represented a specific island service: health center, library, senior citizens center and public safety. Early issues were commercially printed, paid for through donated funds and created by volunteers.

The Star has survived through the years by continual change and adaptation without advertising, and now flourishes under the personal attention of librarian Priscilla Webster. It has evolved from two pages of reports on about five island activities into pages with 26 activities reported. During the summer months as many as 36 island events are listed. Visitors always get a strange look when they ask, "What does one do on an island?" If the Star were to change the logo it would have to be a hydra or perhaps a centipede. It is hard to remain an analog person in today's world.

Footnote 1: Several back copies are still missing. If you have any old copies please contact the library.

Footnote 2: Had this article been created in India, my 912 words would have generated $6.84 in wages, but Publisher Kevin Aten also believes in a FREE PRESS.

The Star is not only an island essential, supported by donations and volunteers, but clearly presents a new definition of a FREE PRESS. A special thanks to all those past and present whose volunteer energy continues this bright shining tradition.

The Christian Science Monitor
The Tribune Company media conglomerate has filed for bankruptcy. The Christian Science Monitor now publishes only on weekends, complemented by a daily web site. The Pasadena Star News has writers in India creating feature articles for $7.50 per 1,000 words. The Harvard Square newsletter may close Out of town. The Cayuga Bay Islands has disappeared, and even our own Portland Press Herald faces an uncertain future.

I must confess that, while still a newspaper columnist, I daily view over five newspapers on the internet. In about 20 minutes I can scan the headlines and feature articles, read my favorite columnist, laugh at the cartoons, and enjoy the Letters to the Editor. All of this is not only free but requires no costly recycling. Shortly I'll join the digitized world of newspapers, records, film and books to almost complete the analog change over. I say almost because there is one exception: the Peaks Island Star.

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Brioz by Palmer

mankind comes to an abrupt halt.
The Great White North and “The City”

BY NINA SCHMIR

The Brooklyn Bridge in winter.

The City... meaning, of course, New York City. This is where I live year round, but for the last four or five years I've been escaping the concrete jungle during the holiday season for the tranquility of Peaks Island. What better way to spend the New Year’s holiday than jamming with island friends and toasting the new year with cups of champagne held in gloved hands while huddled on the black Shore? The thought of exclaiming to an even colder climate than NYC’s may seem an odd habit, but Peaks Island is the perfect winter get-away as far as I’m concerned.

Don’t get me wrong. New York City in winter is full of charms, especially at Christmas. No where compares to the Big Apple at Christmas time! The energy in the air is electric - the tourists converge in hordes at Rockefeller Center to admire the Christmas Tree. A short stroll down Fifth Avenue opens up a world of glittering, storytelling holiday displays that adorn the windows of Saks Fifth Ave, Lord & Taylor, and Bergdorf Goodman. While some people gaze around in dreamlike states, throngs of others push past them in the rush for last minute gifts. Music is in the air in Manhattan at Christmas time; carolers sing on church steps and the sound of Salvation Army bells evokes a nostalgia particular to New York.

But as long as the lights and bells of Broadway, New York has a particular loneliness in winter. The bare trees often lack the snow and the ice that adorn New England trees, and when snow falls in the city it quickly turns to gray slush. The heat emanating from the subways and through building foundations keeps all but the heaviest snowfall from sticking around for more than a few hours.

When one of those heavy storms actually hits the city stops in its tracks and for a stellar instant everyone’s breathing slows and nothing moves. It’s incomparable, for only then does true quiet and reflection descend upon this urban jungle of never-ending bustle and motion. Yet with all the beauty of New York during this season, there’s a pull that the winter chill of the state of Maine - the Great White North to those of us farther south than New Haven - has that’s inexplicable. The pull of huddling close to a wood stove, trampling through the snow and ice, wondering if the car will start. But mostly, it’s the quiet. The blessed quiet of a Peaks Island winter, where only the hardiest of tourists will brave the 20 minute crossing on the Casco Bay ferry. When I am especially happy to be back, I force myself to stand on deck on the most frigid evening, and watch the carriages rumble along the Casco Bay ferry. When I am especially happy to be back, I force myself to stand on deck on the most frigid evening, and watch the carriages rumble along the Casco Bay ferry.
Nina Schmir demonstrates how a jogger can figure-skate on the “No Parking” pond on Peaks Island last year.

in intelligence, as it usually results in the temporary loss of feeling in my fingers, and toes.

On Peaks Island caroling takes on a whole different meaning, as one can bravely meander through the silent streets, singing loudly to whomever feels like listening, without competing with either car horns or other carolers. (I’ve never encountered any other than my own group of singers).

Peaks Island may not be adorned with Norwegian spruces, but there are any number of naturally occurring Christmas trees to walk among and admire. When their branches sway under the weight of piles of snow, or tingle in icy captivity, I can’t turn my eyes away. I’ll likely freeze to my spot due to my unwillingness to leave.

But I must move because the little frozen-over pond on the Back Shore beckons, the perfect place to skate in one’s shoes, slipping and sliding and praying the ice doesn’t break.

Still, though, the best reason to spend a winter’s day - or week, or month - on Peaks Island is the color of the ocean off the Back Shore. The patient, indefatigable waves, which break against the rocks to affirm their power in all seasons, seem to me especially mighty on a winter’s day. The deep azure blue, crowned by a frothy white as water meets rock before climbing steadily upward towards an inevitable crash, is mesmerizing and worth the trip alone. The city can’t bring you this close to nature, nor to the realization of how small we are compared to it. A New York City winter is glorious, filled with lights, action, empty trees and moving feet. A Peaks Island winter is humbling and peaceful. I feel lucky that I can experience both of them.

NEW YEAR’S DAY ON PEAKS ISLAND

With winds from the northwest at around 25 knots and the air temp hovering at a balmy 8 degrees, Noah Chalfant, Jon Chalfant, Craig Davis, Jeannette Gretzick, John Holdridge, Marina Penalver, Jak Soley and Luna Soley take the plunge Thursday, Jan. 1 at Sandy Beach. Please check listings next year for time and location as we encourage all to participate in this annual event!

photo by Laura Glendening
THE ORIGIN OF THE PUZZLE- by Anna Tierney

ACROSS
1. Senator from 48 Across’ state
5. Latin prayer
9. Secret or double?
14. Subject of Second Commandment
15. Press
16. Opposite of zenith
17. Choice
19. E
20. Renowned 19th century ship
21. The king in Zaragoza
22. Jarring noise
23. Father and son writers
24. Sat. antecedent
25. “... neighbor and weight”
26. Lineage
30. Poltroon
33. Not stern
34. It’s in Bethesda, abbr.
35. Black or 18
36. Face
37. What Paris did
39. Current, briefly
40. Twisted
41. Born Feb. 12, 200 years ago
42. Tyre
45. Apple or pear
46. Object
47. Stanley Gardner
48. Southern college
51. Four make a pint
59. Current, briefly
60. Caroline’s grandmother
61. Decree
62. Where photos come from
63. a porter (off the rack, in Paris)

DOWN
1. -washy
2. Swelling
3. Purse in Barcelona
4. Blister
5. A, B, C, D, or E
6. Where the axes cross
7. Chisels
8. Virgin Mary’s mother
9. Engraves
10. Bulbous plant of lily family
11. River in Germany
12. City in France
13. Paris came from here
18. Stops
24. “We precious”
25. Henry V
26. Fifth or Island, abbr.
27. Chow, for example
29. Not now
30. First name of 41 Across
31. Boisterous play
32. Mountain in France
33. What bulls do
34. Dalloway or Calabash
37. Arose
38. Charlemagne’s domain, in short
40. Join
41. China has lots of them
46. Pierce, for example
47. Preamble
48. Dodge
49. They have a season
50. Sidebar
51. Gin, for one
52. Land of Barn and Qun
53. 2,800-mile Russian River
54. , Schiele, German expressionist
55. Occasional Fenway equipment

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH’S PUZZLE

aisle to isle

Tuesdays- shop for groceries before 11:30am and they will be delivered by Casco Bay Lines to Peaks Island that afternoon!

For more information inquire at Forest Ave. Hannaford or call 761-5965. Normal extra fee applies.

Thanks to the following people who volunteered their time and talent to produce this issue: Mike Richards, Jamie Hogan, Chris Hoppin, Fran Houston, Art Astarita, Rebecca Stephens, Justin Palmer, Jerry Garman, Cynthia Molhus, Mark Shain, Craig Davis, Irene Schensted and R.D. Wingfield. Special thanks go to Jack Shallow for production software.

The Island Times is on-line, thanks mostly to the work of Pat Kelly. Please check us out at www.islandtimes.org.
**Star Gazing**

**February 2009 Sky**

February was named for the ancient Roman festival February performed mid-month to purge of evil spirits. Young men would run naked through the streets, dodging the women who tried to slow them down, hoping to get hit by the threat of goat skin the men swung around, which they thought would increase their fertility and ease the pain of childbirth.

I know we want to keep the schools full, but I hope nobody tries this on the islands.

Instead, let’s try to the other explanation for February’s name: Latin *febris* means fever and the purging of sweat, so get the baubles going instead.

**THE PLANETS**

This month brilliant Venus dominates the southwestern sky over the mainland for several hours after sunset. She’s the second planet from the Sun (Earth is third) and the only planet named after a goddess rather than a god.

Because Venus is closer to the Sun than Earth, she orbits faster, and she’s now getting closer to Earth each day, so her illuminated part is changing from a half-moon shape into a crescent, worth a look in binoculars and telescopes.

As she approaches us, she grows even brighter because the illuminated portion covers more of the sky and the angle of reflected light on the Sun’s gossamer-shallow, allowing the sunbeams to skip off her cloud-tops on the way to Earth.

Venus was named for her beauty, but she has a nasty disposition. Her atmosphere is carbon dioxide and her clouds and rain are sulfuric acid (that’s what’s in your car battery and will eat holes in your clothes if you spill it).

Her clouds are 50 miles thick and create a surface pressure 90 times that of Earth’s, like being 3000 feet below the ocean’s surface, way too far even for modern submarines.

Her surface temperature at the equator is about 866°F hot enough to melt lead (that’s also in your car battery, which is why it’s so heavy) and even hotter than Mercury, which is closer to the Sun.

Although she’s nearly the size of Earth, she rotates too slowly to develop a magnetic field, and she rotates clockwise, the opposite of the Sun and all the other planets. Her rotation period and orbital period have become synchronized, so she always shows Earth the same face (if you could see it behind the clouds).

Summer rises a few hours after sunset and is getting into good telescopic-viewing position, though Mars rings are still barely edge-on, reducing its brightness considerably.

Ceres is the largest asteroid orbiting the Sun, so we call it a “dwarf planet,” and it reaches an unusually close approach to Earth later this month.

In the morning before dawn, Jupiter will dance with Mercury and Mars out over Cape Bay, and will warrant packing binoculars as you head out the door.

**THE STARS**

Orion, the best-known constellation, is in its prime this month and next, the three stars in his belt lining up to give him away. Note the color contrast between the stars, red Betelgeuse in his left shoulder and white Rigel in his right foot. With binoculars or telescope, check out the shimmering curtains of light that form the Great Nebula in this sword.

To his left, you’ll notice Sirius, the brightest star in our sky (because it’s only 8 light years away) and the eye of the Big Dog, Canis Major.

Further to the left is Gemma the Twins, with their heads to the left and feet to the right.

Above Orion is the Y-shaped head of Taurus the Bull. And above that is Pleiades, a young, rogue star-cluster moving as a unit through our galaxy. A full Moon will pass in front of the cluster early this month, winking out one star at a time.

**THE CALENDAR**

Feb. 2 - First-quarter Moon rises late morning and is high at sunset.

Feb. 3 - The Moon’s dark limb will begin to occult the top stars in Pleiades a little after 9 p.m. tonight.

Feb. 7 - The Moon’s at perigee, its closest point to Earth this trip around, and it’s near Full Moon, so the Sun and Moon will line up with their gravity to pull the tides higher the next few days.

Feb. 10 - The highest tide this month at 1:19 this morning, the lowest tide this month at 5:57 tonight.

Feb. 9 - Full “Snow” Moon will be setting over the city for those on the early boat to town this “Moon-day” morning, a few hours past for us to see the partial lunar eclipse which will be visible to those a thousand or more miles west of us, and even this will see the Moon darken only slightly as it passes under the penumbra or outer edge of Earth’s shadow.

Feb. 11 - If you happen to notice a pale yellow dot next to the Moon, it’s Saturn.

Feb. 16 - If you’re on the early boat this Monday morning, you can see the binary stars of the Thinnest, crescent Moon cradles Jupiter Mars and Mercury out over the Bay. You can still make the boat, if you want. Tomorrow morning you might see a telescope to separate out the solar systems biggest and smallest planets, they’ll be paired so closely.

Feb. 24 - New Moon means no light to spoil the contrast when we look at the Orion Nebula, the gigantic clouds of gas and dust surrounding a young star, but you can still see the Carina Nebula, Greece’s largest and smallest planets, they’ll be paired so closely.

Feb. 25 - Asteroid Ceres is closer the Earth now than it has been the last century and a half and closer than it will be for the next two millennia.

Feb. 27 - If you are walking home off the 4:30 boat, look back over South Portland, a thin crescent Moon points to Venus above, the Muslim symbol for peace and prosperity, and the spring equinox is only 3 weeks away.

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**THE INN ON PEAKS ISLAND DINING SERIES 2009**

The Inn On Peaks Island and Executive Chef Christian Gordon proudly present the 2009 Island Dining Series.

**Saturday FEB 14, 7pm**

Valentine’s Getaway

Romance, Champagne and a gourmet meal your Valentine be worth a look in binoculars and telescopes.

**Friday MAR 20, 7pm**

**Tapas & Tango**

Learn the forbidden dance with a local Tango instructor and enjoy Chef Gordon’s tapas.

**Friday APR 10, 7pm**

**Brewer’s Best Beer Dinner**

Try an award winning selection of Shipyard beers with Chef Gordon’s gourmet pairings.

Tickets: $45 each  Call for tickets: 207-523-5111

Or find out more at: www.innonpeaks.com
Thinking Pink

BY JAMIE HOGAN

I joined a small cadre of artists at the Gem Gallery Thursday, Jan. 8 to envision another year of exhibiting work collectively. The Holiday Shop was successful despite the lack of specific Christmas items. Discussions revolved around marketing ideas and the need to establish the gallery's profile beyond word of mouth. Members on hand volunteered to pursue various tasks around promotion and expanding display opportunities both on island and elsewhere. Gallery duties, drawn from a hat, are shared by 13 full-time and 12 part-time members.

The first exhibit of 2009 will be the February Benefit for Breast Cancer, "Think Pink Give Love." A portion of proceeds supports the South Portland Cancer Community Center. Along with artworks large and small have been made and given away, Lavender Myers noted, "It's an anthropological movement. It reaffirms religious rituals."

Rebecca Stephens, founder and guiding spirit of the group, wrote in the Island Times Dec./Jan. 2007 that the "Prayer Shawl Ministry was conceived in 1998 by Janet Bristow and Victoria Gable, two graduates of The Hartford Seminary in Hartford, CT. Rebecca learned this serendipitously through a mutual friend while at the Brickett Church parsonage, visiting Rev. Desi Larson.

"I want to do this," she said. Her intuitive ambitions have led to weekly sessions on Thursday afternoons when a dozen or more women knit, yarn is given to anyone in need of comfort or solace, some are given in celebration as well. Rebecca has noticed a "subtle ripple effect" while knitting. "When I'm knitting in public, people come up to talk to me. Men smile. It touches people in some way, bringing a connection to joy or memories of a grandmother," she said. The shawls are infused with the company of others, friendship, love, prayers, and blessings. They are delivered locally by two from the group, or shipped in boxes decorated by hearts.

A knitter for over 50 years, Margaret Bragdon joined the Prayer Shawl Ministry at the very beginning. "Thursday afternoons are sacred. It's so lovely to get together with like-minded folks. It's relaxing, no matter how much or how little," she added. "Prayers are said, and blessings. They're a collection of thank yous from recipients of prayer shawls photo by Jamie Hogan."

I'm a frustrated artist so this brings satisfaction. I can combine my love of colors and textures with a chance to give back to this wonderful community.

I was touched to see Doreen McCann wearing her shawl on the cover of the last Island Times, photographed after voting for the first time. The level of supportive energy on Peaks Island never ceases to amaze me. "Think Pink Give Love" opens Saturday, Jan. 31, with an artist's reception on Friday, Feb. 6. I anticipate not only the passionate art on the walls, but seeing tangible prayer in action with the prayer shawl display.

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Prayer Shawl Ministry knitters Anne Hindere r, Diane Clark, and Marilyn Staples enjoy their form of service. photo by Emily Sherwood.

The Addison-Woolley Gallery

launched a new exhibit of celebrity images by local photographer John Fahnley, all taken on the fly at performances and rock concerts throughout the country. The show, called "It's Only Rock & Roll," opened Friday, Jan. 22, and a tightly knit, spirited band of Fahnley's friends and like-minded pUNK-ROUS-REGGAE-activist band, the Wobbles, stood out on a limb wearing fringed knee boots. "This is a picture of the front man for the freeband, punkroots-reggae-activist band, the Wobbles," he told me later it was him. "You want my life story?" he said, "Music, photography, writing, starring to death. The show continues through March 22. John Fahnley at the art opening Jan. 22. photo by Kevin Attra.

A 1968 image of Bo Diddley, part of John Fahnley's collection of celebrity shots that will be showing through March 22 at the Addison-Woolley Gallery on Market Street. A knitter for over 50 years, Margaret Bragdon joined the Prayer Shawl Ministry at the very beginning. "Thursday afternoons are sacred. It's so lovely to get together with like-minded folks. It's relaxing, no matter how much or how little," she added. "Prayers are said, and blessings. They're a collection of thank yous from recipients of prayer shawls photo by Jamie Hogan."

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The Language of Movement

STORY & PHOTOS BY JAMIE HOGAN

Sharoan Dupont rehearses in the ballet studio on Peaks Island. She majored in literature and dance at Marlboro College in Vermont, immersed in semantics and transforming texts on Renaissance heroes into dance movements. Her teacher, Dana Holby, was a major inspiration for Sharooan’s approach to dance.

“I was trained in New Orleans, but I like the view of the ocean,” said Imogen Monday recently about Sharooan Dupont’s ballet class. Although Imogen has taken ballet classes in Portland, she says “I like the small space near our homes. Sharoon helps us understand things better than in a big class.”

Imogen’s class of five students meets on Monday afternoons. Three classes run on Thursdays by age group: 3 to 5 year-olds, kindergarteners to third graders, and adults. Sharooan is excited to be back in the studio. “How often do you have a space [like this] to move in?” she asked.

She recalled a moment when she was eight years old, watching a performance of Swan Lake. She singled out two dancers in the corps to watch. Although their bodies were a contrast in size and shape, the illusion of grace was the same. She saw then that dance was not about the individual. It had a larger story to tell.

At 10, she studied at the Glasscock Academy of Dance in New Orleans, gaining a strict foundation in the anatomy and history of dance while learning technique. She danced with the New Orleans Youth Ballet among students pursuing a professional career. Although she studied the Graham technique and was chosen to dance with the children in her classes. In addition, she worked privately with some dancers in need of summer work-outs.

In the summer of 2006, she met 14-year-old Julia Cotley, then 11, at a drop-in class in Portland while Julie was visiting from San Francisco. Sharooan had ordered a barré that somehow wound up in Portland, Oregon, “so we made this makeshift barré out of a car rack,” said Julie. “It was pretty cool.

Sharooan’s great dancer and has a cool history,” she said. “I told her she should teach little kids, too.” Julie moved to Peaks Island with her family last January and now dances with the Portland Ballet.

Sharooan later arranged with Brent Stout to use her studio for classes and rehearsal space. “It all came together in that Peaks Island way,” said Sharooan.

As an adult, a mother, and teacher, she believes you can teach structure, discipline, and respect, but “you don’t need to be reprimanded.”

Her classes emphasize the physiology and positions of ballet, but encourage playful movement. In youth classes, the dancers play games. They choose music - either instrumental, jazz, or classical - and one dancer begins to move. When Sharooan says, “Freeze”, the next dancer begins picking up on the shapes and patterns just made.

Sharooan’s adult class is a pretty straight forward adult beginning ballet class, as she describes it, emphasizing alignment, placement and technique. She says it’s relaxing and good for gaining flexibility and balance.

“We have been doing center, an adagio, waltzes

and/or turns, an allegro and end with a reverence.

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“We have been doing center, an adagio, waltzes
Storm Warnings

BY KEVIN ATTIRA

Winter is a hazardous time. Cold temperatures freeze pipes as well as people, and storms knock out electric power with alarming frequency. Police and fire fighters get to see it all.

"We're called in for everything," said Captain Sean Neal of the Portland Fire Department. "Frozen pipes, you name it. We get called for plugged toilets. We asked members of the police and fire departments to explain the most common hazards people run into in winter, and what they can do to protect themselves.

At the top of Capt. Neal's list is the use of unvented heaters that burn combustible fuel like portable kerosene heaters - not for the risk of fire so much as carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide (chemical formula CO) is an odorless and invisible gas that gets taken up by the body in preference to oxygen. When enough of it is around, it will kill you. "You don't even know it's hitting you," said Capt. Neal. "People should be aware, in the house sometimes residual CO from the garage shows up."

He recommends putting a CO detector in the house. "It can be as simple as one you plug in a wall," he said. There are currently no regulations that require CO detectors, but Capt. Neal said legislation is being drafted in Augusta to make them mandatory. "I have kids. I have a CO detector, no question," he said.

Hazard conditions also occur when winter storms knock out power. People are often in the middle of doing something that uses electricity when power goes out, and it, for example, they happen to be cooking, "when the power comes back on, the stove comes back on," said Capt. Neal. In prolonged black-outs people get involved in doing other things and may not be aware when power is restored so it's important to turn the switches to the off position on appliances even though they're already off. The same is true for water supplies, usually in houses on private wells.

On the other side, the police usually face snow removal issues, and Sergeant Gary Hitchinson of the Portland Police Department wanted to remind people that a city-wide parking ban includes the islands, and that cars can be towed.

The PIC has been aware that cars are on the island aren't towed because there's no place to put them. Councilor Lynne Richard spoke with Supervisor A.J. Alves of the Public Works Department in January about the difficulty of plowing some of the streets where summer residents have parked their vehicles for the winter. According to Richard, Alves said that getting cars off the road would help enormously. Richard reported seeing areas down front and elsewhere on Island Avenue are the most difficult ones to plow. Cars left on the road make plowing more costly and cause his crews to work longer hours.

Richard said there are two parking bans on Peaks Island, at the Welch Street lot and at St. Christopher's Church, but cars have to out when the ban ends, usually 7 a.m. the following day. The PIC is also looking at land near the landfill for use as a long term parking lot for seasonal residents, and also as a snow lot.
Clean Housekeeping: Toxic-free Solutions

BY ART ASTARA

You might think that the following information comes from my years of cleaning experience. If so, my wife, Jon Kelso, it grew out of the USDA's information comes from the Natural Resource Council of Maine.

There are plenty of good Yankee remedies for everyday household cleaning, and everyone has their own special secrets. If you share them with me at askpc354@gmail.com, I will post them in a spring article covering insects, yard and garden.

Warning labels on cleaning bottles can be very scary. Just as bad are the quick-talking demonstrators on the side effects of the latest medical drugs. Who really wants to risk such a cure?

However, most of us use store-bought cleaning products that often contain hazardous chemicals. There are three major strategies for dealing with household toxic: 1) follow the safety instructions on the label for use and disposal, 2) use up the product completely or dispose of it properly, and 3) use safe, non-toxic alternatives to minimize exposure and to avoid disposal problems later. It is on that last suggestion that I am going to focus in this article.

There are essentially five basic non-toxic cleaning agents that most of us have at our disposal everyday: baking soda, washing soda, borax, lemon juice, and white vinegar. Borax is a salt derived from boric acid, and has a wide variety of uses. It is a component of many detergents and soaps, and is used as a fire retardant, anti-fungal agent and insecticide. It is not acutely toxic. It is the most harmful of compounds mentioned above, and when ingested in large amounts can cause severe stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Like any compound, it is more toxic to infants and children and should be kept out of their reach.

Baking soda is a non-toxic salt, also known as sodium bicarbonate, and is one of the two salts used to make baking soda. As the name implies, it is used as a detergent, as well as a deodorizer and a first-aid remedy to chemical acid burns.

Lemon juice and white vinegar are both acids, the chemical opposite of salts, and therefore are usually effective where the others are not. Although any type of vinegar will act the same chemically, white vinegar doesn't stain and so it is used for household chores.

Aside from borax, none of these materials are considered poisonous, but they can become toxic in excess. So besides using them chemically, there are often other ways to fix a problem that don't involve using anything hazardous.

The following suggestions are just some of the ways you can take care of your home that are safe for you and good for the environment.

In the Kitchen:

To keep sinks working well pour boiling water down the drain periodically. To open a clogged drain use a plunger or mechanical snake, or pour 1 1/2 cup of baking soda into drain, then add a cup of vinegar. It will start to fizz. Rinse with a mixture of boiling water and salt. The salt will neutralize the reaction. Repeat if necessary.

Kichen cleaner:

Wash surfaces with baking soda and a clean cloth, rinse with water, or mix 1/2 cup of vinegar with 1/2 cup of water in a hard plastic spray bottle. Wash, then rinse with water. If you have special counter top check manufacturer's website for care instructions. Surfaces such as marble and granite do not like these acid-type mixtures.

 Oven Cleaner:

To prevent messes use a tray to catch spills. Clean spills while they're still warm by wiping with table salt, a solution of baking soda and water, or rub gently with steel wool.

Wash utensils or pot in a solution of 1 quart warm water and 3 lbs baking soda, rinse with hot water.

In the Bathroom:

Dishwashers & mold inhibitors can be made directly in a hand-pump spray bottle. Mix 1 cup of vinegar with 2 cups of hot water. Spray onto mild-mold growing areas, and let it sit. Do not rinse because the vinegar will evaporate.

Clean linoleum floors, mop them with a solution of 1 cup vinegar in 2 gallons of water. Clean porcelain fixtures make a paste with baking soda and water; and apply it to the stain. Let it sit until dry, then scrub clean.

To clean the toilet sprinkle with baking soda and pour white vinegar on the little vinegar toilet brush, brush and scrub.

A good tub and tile cleaner can be made inside 1 1/2 cups liquid soap, 1 cup liquid soap, 1/2 cup vinegar. Add the vinegar immediately before you pour (it will react with baking soda). Scrub and rinse.

Reducing Indoor Air Pollution:

Cleaning stains from carpet & upholstery is best done using white vinegar immediately when the stain occurs. To deodorize rugs and carpets, sprinkle cornstarch on them and vacuum, or use a soap-based, non-aerosol rug shampoo.

A good furniture polish can be made by adding 1 tsp of lemon oil to a pint of mineral oil.

Put household laundry, add 1/2 cup of baking soda, borax, lemon juice, white vinegar, or washing soda to help reduce the amount of water.

Window cleaner can be made with a solution of 1 cup white vinegar and 2 cups warm water. Use a hand-pump spray bottle to apply to the glass, and use a scraper to wipe it away.

Some useful website references are

http://www.nrcm.org/151_aroundhouse.asp
http://extension.missouri.edu/um/ bwb.htm.

The community food pantry evolves

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Tucked away in the basement of the Children's Workshop, the Community Food Pantry has been going strong since the 1980s. According to Team Leader Jon Kelso, it grew out of the USDA's surplus food program of the 1970s and 1980s, which delivered cheese, rice, beans, and a host of canned goods to the island for people who qualified for the program. "We were unique," says Jon, "because most other food pantries would take their surplus living in a storage facility but it was a hassle for them to get it back forth from Peaks. So that's how they started doing it." Later, the US Postal Service held food drives for the pantry twice a year, and then the churches occasionally made food donations. "And then the school," he adds. "In the past we had classes that the teachers will do a drive, and they'll make up a box and deliver it to us."

At some point, Bob Hannigan learned that people needed toiletries, shampoo and such, and arranged a special account for them with the Lions Club. "You would just say an account number - back when they had accounts - and the Lions Club would deposit on the food pantry," says Jon. "I think they may have stopped it last year, because we hadn't used it in several years.

Although many food pantries buy bulk foods through buying clubs, the food pantry has relied on community support alone for nearly 30 years. "I think that's an excellent point," says Workshop Director Meg Springer-Holdridge. "This is really just a community supported resource available for the community."

This year the pantry set itself up as a collaborative committee of community members from local organizations including the Children's Workshop, the PEG and the three churches. They meet on the first Saturday of each month to review the inventory and determine if people can seek donates and use the food pantry, and we've actually said it's a separate Peaks Island resources. "And it's done on the honor system," she adds. "If somebody needs something, they can come in and get it; they're more than welcome. You don't even have to ask. Just come and take whatever you need. We don't fill out applications and forms, and we don't need to know your name or who you are." 

Although it seems the island population is becoming more affluent, "well, there's definitely happening out here," says Jon. "There's job lay-offs that are happening; you know, we have the reality happening out here."

"It's also more expensive to live out here, so they'd buy things like canned fruit juice, beans, soup, fruits and vegetables, as well as mugs of saucers, plates, saucers, cutlery, glasses, pasta, cake and muffin mixes, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and lots of bottled water. Recently there have been requests for low-sodium vegetables and desserts (the pantry also stocks personal hygiene items like toothpaste, razors, soap, and shampoo)."

The food pantry stocks a broad array of non-perishable foods including canned fruit juice, beans, soup, fruits and vegetables, as well as mugs of saucers, plates, saucers, cutlery, glasses, pasta, cake and muffin mixes, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and lots of bottled water. Recently there have been requests for low-sodium vegetables and desserts (the pantry also stocks personal hygiene items like toothpaste, razors, soap, and shampoo). The food pantry is strictly a Peaks Island resource. "We've had calls from people in Portland who wish they could do this," says Jon. "If the food pantry is strictly a Peaks Island resource."

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Demystifying IRAs

BY ALLISON SCHNELLER

It’s that time of year again! Time to start thinking about preparing your tax returns. Are you ready? Have you thought about setting up an Individual Retirement Arrangement? An IRA is a retirement plan that provides some tax advantages for retirement savings. Most banks can set up an IRA for you in either a Money Market Savings Account or a Certificate of Deposit. You have till April 15, 2009, to contribute for the 2008 tax year. If you have not set up an IRA account, it may seem like an overwhelming task. To simplify this process, I’ll explain here some of the different types of IRAs that will help you determine the best type of account for you.

TRADITIONAL IRA

A traditional IRA is a special savings account or certificate of deposit created to encourage people to save for retirement. It is created by a written document for the exclusive benefit of the individual and their named beneficiaries. The document is also known as the “Plan Agreement” and explains the rules that govern the opening, contributing and withdrawing from the account. Earnings in the account are tax deferred.

ROTH IRA

A Roth IRA is also designed to encourage retirement savings. It provides long-term benefits that cannot be matched. The most important tax benefit for the Roth IRA is that distributions will not be taxed at all if certain requirements are met. That means all growth and earnings can be tax free, not just tax deferred as with Traditional IRAs.

SEP IRA

The SEP (Simplified Employee Pension) IRA is an employer-sponsored plan. It is generally employer funded in which deposits are made to the employee’s traditional IRA. The employer is required to adopt a SEP plan. The most common SEP plan uses the IRS form 5305. This guides the employer through establishing the guidelines and eligibility for the participating. Once the form is completed, each eligible employee establishes and traditional IRA for the contributions.

These are just a few of the different IRA plans. Regardless of the plan you have, depending on your age, you can contribute to the account for the 2008 tax year provided you do so before April 15, 2009. For an individual under the age of 50, the maximum contribution for 2008 is $5,000, or 100% of earned income, or $5,000. Individuals who are age 50 and older may contribute the lesser of 100% of earned income, or $6,000. You cannot contribute more than the maximum into multiple IRAs. You are eligible to withdraw for your IRA penalty-free once you reach the age of 59 1/2. There are certain IRS exemptions to this rule. It’s always best to check with your tax adviser to be sure you qualify for an exemption if you need to take an early withdrawal. I hope I’ve helped demystify IRAs. Paying taxes is hard, setting up IRAs is easy!

Looking for something...?
While the U.S. wrestles with the challenges of an under-performing economy, Israeli Jews have, as of this writing, erupted again, decades after the 1973 war.

In my relatively brief time in the region, there are ongoing negotiations for a better peaceful, non-militaristic approach to the conflict, yet they begin to lose hope, and while they believe the military intervention is wrong, they are unsure of a solution. Some Israelis respond with overwhelming force, while the Palestinians have been numbed to the regular, incessant barrage of missiles. But the range of the rockets increases with the passage of time. Cities along the coast of Israel, such as Ashkelon and Ashdod, as one travels northward in the direction of Tel Aviv, increasingly receive incoming rockets that emanate from the rooftops of Gaza.

In the December/January newspaper article, Chris Hoppin reported that from both sides to exchange dialogue and let the citizens of Israel, including my family and friends, are not showing much sympathy to what’s going on there, and support the government in its vigorous and violent journey in Gaza, which, as it looks right now, is not bringing peace and quiet to the south, but quite the opposite. And the voice of the second young woman, also prompted by our e-mail, “Fortunately, my family is all safe and well, so far. As for now, we are out of the missiles’ range, hope we remain so. For the rest of this region, I am truly losing hope. It seems like the people of peace are weakening in this region to a point where they are losing hope entirely.”

I’m still trying to stick to my belief that this militant action was not justified and there are yet other ways and means we have not yet fully explored, but I’m part of a very small minority, and even I am starting to question if I’m not putting all the responsibility to my country and let the people to make small steps, enough off the hook. Hoping things will get better.

As we listen to the news reports, we too have doubts about the peace process. With that said, we will continue our work to allow people from both sides to exchange dialogue and let the citizens of Israel, including my family and friends, have more hope for peace.

Voices from a War Zone

BY MARSHA GREENBERG & STEVE SCHUIT

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In Memory

Don Perry
1941 to 2008

BY CYNTHIA MOLLUS

Peaks Island resident Donald L. Perry passed away very unexpectedly Sunday, Dec. 14. Don and wife Barbara Rockafellow Perry married in 1972, and he came to know and love the island through Barbara. Her grandparents started visiting Peaks in the early 1900s for summer vacations; her parents continued the tradition and ultimately retired here in 1965. Barbara said, "Don loved it here, and we both decided when the time came that we wanted to retire here." They winterized their cottage and moved to Peaks Island full-time in 1996.

A native Mainer from Washington County, Don was the son of Marion J. (Morris) Perry and the late David H. Perry. While attending Brewer High School, he started working for WQIU Radio in Bangor, a gig that led to a lifelong career in broadcasting and communications.

He held positions at several radio stations, including WABI and WBRC, and worked as news director and anchor at TV Channel 7 in Bangor.

He was a teacher at the New England School of Communications at Husson University, and was on the Board of Directors at the New England School of Communications (NESC). One of his students, Paul Dupuis, said that "Don did considerable work for the "Second Act," program on public TV Channel 4. According to William Blood, "the short period of time that I did get to know him at Community TV Network producing the show, "Second Act," I realized what a wonderful kind person Don was. He always had a smile for you, even when things were not going too well during the shows." He also did volunteer work for TEIA over the years.

One of the things many people did not know about Don was that he was a skilled clockmaker, somebody who puts things together and prepares things and cares," said Reverend Don Lassen.

His wife, Jane, on a little blue school bus when they were in the 5th grade. David always kept himself busy with volunteering for different community groups, most notably as a member of the Island Independence Committee, but also devoted a lot of his time to the Peaks Island Council, among others.

A memorial service was held with a small collection of friends and family at the Brackett Church on Saturday, Jan. 14.

According to Russ Edwards, who served on the IC Budget Committee with David, he had a strong regard for local history. David spent a lot of time working with historical records at the Fifth Maine.

Another member of the IC, Howard Pedlikin, described David’s astute political understanding. He said Dave regularly watched the Portland City Council on Monday nights, "one of the few, I’m afraid, on Peaks Island," he added.

"One item that really showed his sense of humor and he took a shine to was the fact that there was a man at the front row at a lot of meetings in 2007 who came to the chamber with a rake. He put it on his head and sat there as a kid does in time— as Dave loved to report— would kind of throw it on the floor. Dave would say, ‘How could there possibly be a rat in the City Council chambers?'"

Mike Richards said, "His was not only a brilliant mind, but the void of understanding the facts and figures, and he was relentless. I have a skilled clockmaker and repairman, which coincided with his precise mind, and several at the memorial mentioned the clocks he’d repaired."

"Right now I know two things,” said Nick Russo, "that [Dave] is probably breathing problems up there which is awesome, and also the fact that I know he’s probably working with Father Time.”

He leaves his loving wife, Jane Parks Adams of Peaks Island, one daughter, Debbie Heckman of Portland and son Nick Russo of Peaks Island and his companion David J. Blackwell of Medway, Mass., two granddaughters, Natalie MacHeckman and Bridget Adams; one sister Nancy Adams of South Yarmouth, Mass., and several cousins.

To honor Don’s memory, donations can be made to the Fifth Maine Regiment Museum, PO Box 41, Peaks Island, ME 04108 or to The Peaks Island Fuel/Tax Assistance Program, PO Box 126 Peaks Island, Maine 04108. Information provided by Jones, Rich & Hutchins Funeral Home & Cremation Service 755-2783.
COMMUNITY NOTES

AT THE GEM GALLERY

THINK PINK GIVE LOVE

Benefit for breast cancer. Saturdays and
by appointment only. May 22 through NOON or 3:00 pm. Opening reception
Fridays, 8:00 to 10:00 pm. Call 207-766-5600 for more information.

The gallery mission is to share and sell fine art and
crafts, which change weekly from June through October.

The gallery has cooperated with 36 artists living and working on
Peaks Island in the varied media of wood, glass, metal, sculpture,
pottery, jewelry, photography, paintings, and prints. Art is made and
written in the gallery. The gallery is open Friday through Sunday.

AT THE ADDISON-WOOLLEY GALLERY

Backstage Pass: Rock & Roll Photographs by John Farley. First of a three-part
exhibit. Ends April 22. After a short winter recess, the Addison-Woolley will be
one of only a few galleries participating. Call 766-5600 to see out.

John Farley is a professionally trained
two-dimensional visual journalist. James Richard Washington, a
Washington, D.C.-based Native American, whose images
are projected in slide show format. A reception will be held on a
Thursday evening.

DOCTEN TRAINING

You are invited to join, your fellow islanders in
DOCENT TRAINING AT THE LIBRARY

on Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. For more information, call Susan Porter at

Open House in the community

Sunday, Feb 8 at 6:00 pm. Benefit performance
for PITA Energy Assistance at the Inn on Peaks Island.

The program will be

...!

3rd Annual Valentine's Day Women's Clothing Swap

Saturday, Feb 7, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Bridgeport's residence, 40 Central Ave. Winter Blues? Need some new clothes? Bring three to five gently used garments to take home something fabulous from a fellow islander's closet. And enjoy

THINK PINK GIVE LOVE TO THINK PINK GIVE LOVE

The event was held at the Addison-Woolley Gallery on Feb 7, 2009.

Free School Vacation Activities

School vacation activities are not required. Pre-schoolers should be accompanied by an adult.

FREE SCHOOL VACATION ACTIVITY - FOR ALL: In the community room. Drop in anytime from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

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January 29, 7 p.m. Join us for 0067 is now in service designed for each month. February's chef is Sandy Thursday of each month to enjoy food, community, and good company, with candlelight, silence, and prayers, gentle music, and ecumenical readings.

Community Garden

The Peaks Island Community garden needs your help. To extend your support please vote to Peaked Island Community Garden or leave a message at 252-9959.

PEAKS CHECK-IN LINE

The telephone check-in line at 766-0067 is now in service, designed for those who live alone, for those who have recently had medical issues or surgery, and for those who are housebound for any reason. Every morning between 7 am and 10 am, participants call the answering machine to leave their name and let us know all is well. If you do not hear from us by 11 am then we call to ensure they are all right. For those who cannot call us, we will be happy to call you, if you would like to join, or if you have questions about the program please call Howard and Cynthia Fiskel at 766-0067. The cold windy weather is here and some of us do not get out every day. The line is a way to keep in touch and let us know you are okay.

History of Enrichment

By Susan Hanley

Easy come, easy go. Volunteer organizations have a way of starting with a sprinkle, humming along industriously and then, for a myriad of reasons—mission accomplished, lack of funds, loss of a leader—finally, slowing down to a fizzle and out stop. With so much of an islander's spare time sacrificed on the boat schedule slate, it's amazing how many successful volunteer organizations have been able to thrive.

The Peaks Island School Parent Teacher Organization/Association (PTO/PTA) is perhaps the PTO's most popular of all time, and for good reason. There are a number of reasons why this is, but the most significant is that the PTO has been able to raise money for the school and the children's needs in a way that is both fun and rewarding. In the past five years, the PTO has hosted several events, including a benefit concert, a silent auction, and a bake sale, all of which have been successful.

None of this can happen without money, of course. Fundraising has always been a necessity for the PTO, which has kept the fun in volunteering. A number of events have been organized, including dances, dinners, and carnivals. The upcoming spaghetti dinner and silent auction is one such event. Featuring music by Ronda Dile and Kevin Arora and food by Laura's Cooking, the event will be held on October 25 at 7:00 pm. Tickets are $25 per person.

Next Issue

Explore the hidden side of Peaks Island, as we discover surprising real estate deals like this romantic getaway, with its beautiful view of Casco Bay only 500 feet from the ferry.

You'll discover surprise right in your own back yard. Coming in this April's edition.
The Eighth Maine

A living museum and lodge. Room and hall rentals & tours

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13 Eighth Maine Ave., Peaks Island, ME 04108
(207)766-5000 • www.eighthmaine.com

eighthmainebookshop@fast.net

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2008 Island Phone Directory
Covering 7 Casco Bay Islands

Available online at www.phonebookpublishing.com, and The Roundhouse—Long Island, Harpswell’s Island Market and GEM Gallery/Peaks. PMC or wholesale opportunities call 706-6597.

New Construction

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Carpenter

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Fifth Maine Regiment Museum

45 Smith Street
Peaks Island, ME 04108

A Museum of Civil War & Peaks Island History
Open Memorial Day thru Columbus Day

director@fifthmainemuseum.org
www.fifthmainemuseum.org

207-766-3306

Take a Peak

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Peaks Island Baptist Church

TO OUR ANONYMOUS BENEFACCTOR:
"Of astounding brotherly love I do not need to write, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another."

Thess. 4:9

Sunday School: 10 AM Worship: 11 AM
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 7 PM
766-3067

Peaks Island Baptist Church

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EXPERIENCES OF THE 44th PRESIDENT’S INAUGURATION

A Hopeful Future

By Jim Lauber

What a great day for everyone no matter where you were! When I got out of the Metro that morning with my cousin Bobby and his friend Chuck, there were hundreds of people walking towards the mall and Capitol.

Business was brisk for the many street vendors selling stuff along the way. My favorite buy was a black winter hat with an inch of snow on it. President – Obama in colorful sequins. The best sales pitch I heard: "Please, please, will somebody please buy this." By 8:30 a.m., the national mall was already full and most of the security check points were edited. We found an open one somewhere, but it took almost four hours to move the 50 feet required to get inside.

During that time I was with two families from Delaware and Virginia who said they’d brought their kids with them so they could witness the greatest event of their life. They’d be in line since 4 a.m. When I told them I’d arrived at 8:30 a.m., an older woman from Atlanta and another one from Pensacola held onto my coat and said they were sticking with me because I moved through the line faster than anyone else. I guess all the practices I’ve had getting onto the boat during Reggae Sunday paid off.

Those four hours were very entertaining. We got to hear Aretha Franklin sing and President Obama speak from large speakers set up around the city, and I got to watch the swearing-in of the President on an i-Phone owned by someone next to me.

Once we were through security we were lucky to be at 9th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue where Obama and his wife, Michelle, would eventually get out of their limousine and walk the streets with us. I was wearing a t-shirt my daughter, Yunhee, gave me – a popular image of Superman with Obama’s face on it – and a huge hat attached to his head and coat. He was a very happy salesman as sales were very, very good.

Peaks Island School

At the Peaks Island School a large green computer projector malfunctioned, so the stereo-THANDBILLS were divided into two groups, and watched the images from the Jumbotron. The children watched patiently for three hours, for, after the speeches and prayers, and cheered wildly when Obama became President.

The O.B.S go to DC

By O.B. O’Brien

Sesame Street for grownups. Woodstock without the mind. Nirvana on the Potomac.

These are all apt descriptions of the feeling in Washington, DC during our inaugural weekend trip. The level of excitement, pride, patriotism, and just plain joy was unprecedented. During the five day trip, I heard no swearing, complaints, or crying. It was amazing.

We started on Saturday morning, driving to Philadelphia to see friends from college (parents of my god-daughter, with whom we stayed in DC) joining them at an inauguration party thrown by their neighbors.

The next day we drove to Washington. We were given a reserved campaign position to wait in line, so we found a car, and occasionally someone would pass us and wave, honk their horn, or give us a thumbs up, it felt great to be part of something big as we got closer to DC.

On Sunday afternoon, we made it to the National Mall, and sat next to a couple from Dallas, Keving & Cella, Walker, my new Facebook friends. They never made it to the mall or the parade route. They had to watch everything on a television in one of the DC business buildings along with many others who did not make it through security.

This street vendor had many buttons attached to his head and coat. He was a very happy salesman as sales were very, very good.

Peace Camp. She was with a woman from Lebanon (the country, not the town in York County) who schooled us on where to go for the best Mexican food and margaritas.

Finally the crowds were like in the Metro on Inauguration Day, picture a Reggae Sunday crowd on the boat times three, but sober, cheerful, and dressed to keep from freezing. When the doors opened you couldn’t imagine more people crowding into these subway cars, and yet we managed to do it, all the while joking and being cheerful. You never saw a happier group of souls.

Once dug out from the Metro, we made our way to the gates for our seats. At one of Maine’s four Presidential Electors. We had two tickets for seats in a section of about 5,000 people. There were probably 1,500 people ahead of us in line by 7:30 in the morning.

We took our place in line between the beaches at Virginia Beach and Seattle, Washington. Then we walked from Seattle were properly dressed, but the people in front of us were not really prepared for the weather. We gave them some of our extra toe and hand warmers and shared snacks. People continued to pour into the parade route towards the gates – rank upon rank of 4 a.m.

At last the line moved, and we eventually made our way through the security posts. We managed to keep our new-found friends with us, and the crisply uniformed (and freezing) Marines and Air Force personnel guided us to our seats.

We sat and stood, took pictures and marvelled at our position – dead center in front of the podium, roughly 150 yards away. Though there were Jumbotrons on either side of us, mostly ignored them. I was here. Our next President was going to be there, in front of us. Lastly.

We turned to look at the crowds behind us. Crowds Through the President.

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