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Midwinter Edition - ABOVE: In winter, any guy whose yard looks like this is considered well-endowed. This is our double issue. We will be closed through Friday, Feb. 10. Have a HAPPY NEW YEAR!

PIC addresses environmental issues on Peaks

Councilors discuss abandoned cars and road clearing on the back shore

BY KEVIN ATTRA

The Peaks Island Council boldly held its regular meeting on the night of the winter solstice, Thursday, Dec. 22, when several very important parties were happening on the island to celebrate the event.

As a result, the meeting didn't last long—officially, there was nothing on the agenda—and only four people came to watch.

Nevertheless, the council focused on two environmental issues impacting the island, and of great concern to Mary Ann Mitchell, abandoned cars and road clearing work on the back shore.

Mitchell is the only member who actively pursues a seat on the council and was officially on the November ballot. She has said previously that she ran for office specifically to address these issues.

She is also a member of the Peaks Environmental Action Team, and in both capacities has raised her concerns with city staff in the Public Services and Police departments.

Her complaint about abandoned vehicles is that they are an obstruction to travel, especially for snowplows in the winter, and an environmental hazard because they tend to leak fluids which soak into the ground or get washed into the bay when it rains.

Last month, after Peaks Senior Lead Officer Rob Lauterbach told her the police routinely patrol for abandoned vehicles and have them removed, the road around the island on her bike making a list of all the abandoned cars she found and gave it to Lauterbach.

After researching the vehicles, he later told her that all the cars she had listed were legal.

The issue of derelict vehicles abandoned off the street on private property was also raised. Most councilors thought those vehicles were untouched, but according to Councilor Rich Machin that's not the case.

"It is illegal. It has always been illegal," he said, explaining that the previous owner of his house had cited for having an abandoned vehicle on his property.

The council also discussed the difficulty of towing cars on the island. According to several members of the police department, towing abandoned vehicles off the island is generally not feasible.

For instance, cars can't be towed off the island during a snowstorm because the ban usually goes into effect after the last boot has left. By the time ferry service resumes in the morning the ban is over and the car is no longer in violation.

This has led to several discussions about establishing a tow lot near the transfer station, but no steps have yet been taken toward this.

According to Paul Bridges, who operates 24/7 service on the island, Cal Paul, he actually pays people a small fee to tow their junk cars off the island, depending on the price of steel.

He usually pays more in the winter when the steel price is highest, but if nothing else he said he will cost the owners nothing.

Mitchell plans to launch a public awareness campaign about the environmental impact of derelict vehicles and the ease of getting rid of them through Cal Paul or similar services.

Regardless of the issue of curbing abandoned vehicles on the back shore Mitchell said that city arborist Jeff Tarling approved the work Al Avise' crew is doing, and added that some people like the cutting.

"The more they cut the more people are happy," said Mitchell. "The area will be flattened!"

According to Tarling, the goal is to clean vegetation from four to six feet in from the road.

He said Public Services is trying to be consistent rather than reactive to opinions on one side or the other. "There's always controversy when doing things on the shore about what the intent is. It's not to destroy vegetation, it's to clear the roadway. We're also removing invasive species like bittersweet that are tangled in the bushes.

The council also discussed the impact the road clearing had on the commercial harvesting of rose hips on the back shore. Greg Rusty Foster said the roses need to be cut to grow, "It can be cut pretty severely. The back shore will recover."

Mitchell responded, "Yeah, but I think a lot of plants are gone. I think it's very severe."

According to Tarling, the roses are doing well, especially in the area of Spar Cove. He noted that some homeowner do their own cutting, and reminded people the back shore is city property with an easement to PPL. "It's a good fit," he added.

"I'm always willing to walk the back shore with anyone, any time," he said. "I know the management that both groups face."
New faces at the Children's Workshop

Scott Kelley is temporarily serving as administrator of the Peaks Island Children's Workshop, and could be more cheerful. You can hear relief in his voice when he talks about the sweeping reforms that have occurred at the childcare center over the past few months.

The Workshop shrank from a large preschool facility to a small daycare center seemingly overnight. The number of staff has been cut in half and are all new to the facility. Celeste Bridgford, who started working at the center in the fall, will serve as both director and teacher.

On Wednesday Dec. 21, Kelley publicly announced the hiring of Jen McLoud and Leah Day to replace Jon and Angie Keiko, whose last day was officially Dec. 30. The couple had been with the Workshop for over 30 years.

However, during those years the facility accommodated a much larger population of children than currently live on the island (the declining number of families is another story altogether) so that by the mid-2000s the Workshop was in a financial crisis.

The PICW board of directors waged a four-year campaign to save the program, but by the end of the decade public funding had disappeared and Island Way, its most essential source of revenue, was poised to pull the plug.

The Workshop is now accredited as a 12-child daycare facility in Maine through the Department of Human Services and also through the National Accreditation of Family Childcare Centers. United Way is in full support of the change.

It is also structured to handle newborns. Our room in the building has been converted into a nursery and two infants will be starting in the program this month, which uses volunteers to cuddle and feed the babies.

The changes have made all the difference to stability of the Workshop, and you can hear it in Kelley's voice. "Right now we are at 70 percent [capacity]. We used to be at 30 percent. A couple of days, we're pretty tight in there. There's a lot of kids!"

If you are interested in being a CUDDLER, email Celeste Bridgford at info@picwinc.org or call 626 2854.

Jingle Bell Fair keeps Brackett going

Each Holiday Season the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church holds its Jingle Bell fair to raise money for operating expenses (below). This year's fair, held Saturday, Dec. 10, generated about $5,500, according to church member Cathy Shaw, who coordinates fundraising events for the church. "It's one of the things we depend on to keep it going," she said.

The fair takes advantage of the pre-Christmas season to sell handmade crafts by around 20 island artisans, as well as goods and services sold through the silent auction, which ran through the second performance of the Holiday Concert on Sunday, Dec. 11.

The auction featured 43 items ranging in value from a $10 ceramic cheese platter to a set of seven-piece Bavarian china place settings assessed at $1,200 (it went for $80). Among the items getting the most bids were a vintage wooden lobster buoy, a pink flamingo stand and a 1942 "Hunting, Fishing & Camping" book from LL Bean. "Almost everything sold," said Shaw.

peaksislandpatrol.blogspot.com back online

At the regular meeting of the Peaks Island Council on Thursday, Dec. 22 Councilor Richard Machlin was happy to report that the Peaks Patrol's blog page was back in operation after a four-month period of inactivity.

The blog was created last spring in response to complaints from island residents about communication between the police and the public. The Portland Police Department established it on Facebook for the Peaks Patrol officers to maintain contact with the community on the island.

It went online in April and was immediately embraced by many people in the community, who actively posted comments about the police reports as they came in. Some of the comments were supportive of the officers, some were critical of their actions, and some were abusive.

"As a result, postings from the department became less frequent until activity finally dribbled to a halt in August. Peaks Island Councilor Rusty Foster met with acting Police Chief Michael J. Sauschuck in November to see if the blog could be rekindled. According to Foster, Sauschuck agreed that it should be maintained, but felt it needed to be done differently without allowing public comment which he said discouraged the officers.

"It was a slow start, but it's picking up speed," said Machlin. "They're logging reports daily."

To view the logs visit peaksislandpatrol.blogspot.com. The banner section is very large, so you will probably have to scroll down to see the reports. They are listed chronologically from the most recent on down.

Arts Editor Jamie Hogan steps down

Jamie Hogan is stepping down as arts editor for the paper. She has been a dedicated contributor, conscientious about her work and diligently on time. She will be sorely missed.

In a statement to our office, she said she felt there were more artful happenings than she could cover in her Art Roamings series, which gave her the chance to shine a little light on some of the outstanding talent on the island.

"I'm no art critic, just a fellow cohort in the journey to create an artful life, I'm unable to contribute regularly, but I trust that curious writers with keen eye for the magical will cover this territory in my stead. Many thanks to the Island Times for the privilege of sharing my wonder. You're a great team!"

We are currently looking for someone to replace her. If you're interested please email hogan@islandtimes.org. please see BRIEFS next page
Celebrating Peaks Island's Longest Scarf

Casco Bay Island Transit District board Treasurer Bill Overlock attended the monthly directors meeting Thursday, Dec. 22 via telephone, which was somewhat awkward as he had several issues to discuss and dominated the first half of the meeting.

An issue of increasing concern among the board members as well as staff is the amount of money being spent on fuel, which exceeded the budget this month by 18 percent, according to Overlock's financial report.

The report also indicates that total fuel costs are 40 percent higher than last year at this time. Overlock attributed some of the increase to a higher fuel price, which went from $2.45 per gallon to $3.23 in July.

According to General Manager Hank Berg that increase was not supposed to go into effect until October, and he has spent several months negotiating with the fuel company to correct the error.

He said the company has finally agreed to repay $27,000 in overcharges. "It has taken a while," he said. Instead of a cash payment, the fuel company will charge the lower rate until the rebate is used up.

Berg speculated that increased spending on fuel is the result of several factors, including the higher fuel price, but it is clear that significantly more fuel is being burned this year than last year. "We track how many gallons are put in each vessel," he said. "We've seen an increase there."

Operations Manager Nicholas Mavodones Jr. said the staff is trying to get consumption back in line. However, according to Berg there was no way to know how much of the cost overrun is due to consumption and how much is fuel price because the Bay Lines doesn't track that information.

"The added $415 run maybe contributed a little," he said, "but without any data to back it up, we can't say."

He also acknowledged that a voluntary policy the captains implemented two years ago to run the boats at slower speeds has eroded and apparently the boats are now often run at full throttle. "At high speed the boats' fuel efficiency drops significantly.

The company was also $15,400 over budget on payroll, which was due to having a five-week month, and $20,300 on vessel expenses due to the fuel overcharge and unexpected repairs on two boats, leading Overlock to conclude, "While we're over budget, everything can be explained."

In other news, Operation Committee Chair Dan Doane said his group is studying how to address the issue of unscheduled stops down-the-bay for people who commute between the islands. The captains have been allowed to use their discretion in making these "whistle stops" in the past, but complaints from other passengers about delays led the Bay Lines to formally stop the practice last fall.

As a result, several commutes affected by the change complained at the October board meeting that the new policy had created a hardship for them. In one case it meant waiting six hours after leaving work until getting home.

Dock hand Pat Bowen, who also serves as a captain in the summer, suggested that the unscheduled stops may be a factor in the fuel consumption problem because it puts pressure on the captains to run the boats faster to make up for lost time.

Doane said the boats are slowing down on down-the-bay runs and his committee is reviewing the whistle stop policy. "It's a difficult thing to rectify, at best."

The committee will also address a recent issue over the size of hand-carried luggage. Doane thought they might develop a size chart similar to what was done for the carts.

After Overlock gave his financial report via the speakerphone in the conference room, he said there was a problem attending meetings that way.

"Attendance and board members at the end of the table can't be understood," he said. "In his opinion members are increasingly attending via telephone and asked that the company research better technology. "We ought to become state-of-the-art on this."

Berg said a true conference phone would cost $800 to $1,000, and agreed to buy one.

CBITD board members attending: Al Aho, Erna Bentschak, Frank Peretti - President Chair, Dan Doane, Scott Johnstone, Roger Robinson, Sue Moreau, Kevin Danahugh and Bill Overlock by telephone. Staff attending: Gen. Mgr. Nick Mavodones, Rok! Horn, Barbara Sautelle and Kristen Fijlham.

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At Casco Bay Lines
Fuel costs running over monthly budget

BY KEVIN ATTRA

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**POLICE LOG**

*December 2011*

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**New direction for Long Island's Dodwell Gallery**

**BY KEVIN ATTRA**

After eight years serving as the first curator of the Dodwell Gallery on Long Island, artist Maggie Carle has stepped down to concentrate on her own work. Jayne Watters, another Long Island artist, is taking over as director.

Carle said it was a bittersweet decision because she was very passionate about the gallery as a vehicle for nurturing young artists and expanding people's understanding of art. During her tenure she featured over 100 artists in 47 exhibits (roughly) each year.

The Dodwell Gallery, named after island artists James and Shirley Dodwell, was established in 2004 in the large hall that connects the town's elementary school with its new library, which opened in 2003.

"My number one audience are the school children who walk through every day," said Carle. "They respond to mixed media like no one I know. They know pastel from acrylic from oil. They comprehend it." Her decision to leave came after reflecting on the degree of accomplishment in the work she exhibited. "I asked myself why haven't I got to this place in my own artwork?"

New Curator Jayne Watters has a bachelor's degree in art therapy and a masters in theology, and is an ordained interfaith minister. She is married and has four children, of which one lives on the island as well with her own family.

The Watters moved to Long Island permanently in 2004, but Jayne has spent summers on the island since her childhood. "I just love Long Island, it's really pretty simple," she said. "Long Island took hold of my heart when I was a child."

Her particular craft is to refurbish junk into usable objects. She specially likes to repurpose old chains. In fact, her reputation is such that she will frequently come home to find broken chairs on her front porch, donated by island friends.

"A very good friend took a trip on their boat to get some broken chairs on Diamond as a surprise. It was like Christmas when I saw them in my yard," she said.

Watters plans to exhibit a wide variety of artistic styles and offer educational programs for all ages, public events and support for community artists. Her first exhibit will feature photographs by Long Island children exploring self-expression. It opens Saturday, Jan. 21 with a reception in the gallery at 7:00 p.m.

For more information, contact Watters 766-2450.

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**New Dodwell Gallery Curator Jayne Watters with her husband Joel.**

**Scenes of Christmas on Peaks Island**

**ABOVE:** Now in its fifth year on the island, the traditional Swedish Sankta Lucia Festival, organized by Gunnel Larsdotter, took place at the Brackett Church on Sunday, Dec. 4. **RIGHT:** Anniika Erikson was given the honor of portraying Lucia, which required that she sing in Swedish

**LEFT:** Santa took a ride around the island on Engine 8 to announce his arrival, stopping downtown to hand out candy to children and help with the tree lighting ceremony Saturday, Dec. 3. **RIGHT:** The Casco Bay Tumblers warm up the audience during the 25th annual Holiday Concert at the Brackett Church on Sunday, Dec. 11. Concert director Nancy 3. Hoffman (far right) returns this year, but the Music Association will continue the tradition.

**photo courtesy of Jayne Watters**

**photos by Jamie Hogan**

**photo by Christine Cassidy**

**For more information, contact Watters 766-2450.**
Letters

To Charlie who drives the Peaks Island Taxi,

Thank you so much for going up and down the glare ice Welch Street hill on Wednesday, Dec. 21 picking up riders and making sure everyone in 2011. While our ridership was down a bit from 2010, our revenue was up thanks to the generosity of all the islanders who supported our fundraising efforts. A year-end report summarizing 2011 will be issued early February after the books are closed.

We are also pleased to report that the Maine Community Foundation has generously awarded the Island Transit Service a $2,000 grant towards replacing our current taxi. The Maine Community Foundation is a statewide nonprofit created by and for the people of Maine. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations create charitable funds that help Maine meet the challenges of changing times.

With the Foundation’s support, we have raised a third of the money needed for a new vehicle, which we are gearing up to buy this year. Our focus is on fuel efficiency and low emissions in order to reduce our operating costs and shrink our carbon footprint.

We dream of having a larger ridership and fewer cars on the island. With work we can accomplish our dream. The new vehicle is a step in the right direction.

Denise Macaronas, Recreation Programmer, Portland Rec

Keepin’ the Wheels Rollin’

Thanks to islander generosity and help from the Lions Club, Plants, TELA, the Peaks Island Fund and many individual donors, we broke even in 2011. While our ridership was down a bit from 2010, our revenue was up thanks to the generosity of all the islanders who supported our fundraising efforts. A year-end report summarizing 2011 will be issued early February after the books are closed.

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SPECIAL THANKS to those who made the annual community tree lighting a success. Additional thanks to the islanders (and friends) who helped make Peaks Island’s longest scarf a great year-long project. The total length was over 6,000 inches with 302 individual scarves. Half of the scarves were donated to the Military Family Assistance Center; the other half to Caring Unlimited, a safe haven for victims of domestic violence. Should we try and break our own record in 2012? Let me know at dmacle@portlandmaine.gov or 765-2070.

Denise Macaronas, Recreation Programmer, Portland Rec

from Congresswoman Chellie Pingree

Thoughts on 2011, Best wishes for 2012

As we head into 2012, I wanted to wish Maine a happy new year and take a moment to update you on the work I’ve done in Maine and Washington over the last year. I spent much of the year fighting against policies that would be bad for Maine and our economy. Voters elected us to Congress with the highest priority of getting our country back to work. While we should have been voting on jobs legislation, I ended up debating anything but. There were bills to deny people access to health care, roll back laws that keep our air clean, and cut programs that help senior citizens make ends meet. We were more than ever to create jobs or invest in our country.

The second most frustrating thing that Congress is not taking job creation seriously. Any serious proposal—like the President’s plan—seems doomed. While some leaders aren’t willing to budge on ending general tax breaks to this country’s wealthiest, while tax cuts for the middle class are currently in jeopardy, millionaires and billionaires have found safe havens. I plan to continue to fight for fair tax rates for those who have prospered the most.

I’m proud to have worked on my own piece of jobs legislation in 2011. Local food is a growing part of Maine’s economy. More and more people are looking to buy organic and local. As a result, we have seen incredible increases in CSA farms shows, farmers markets, and acres in cultivation. But our outdated federal agriculture policy does little to support this bright spot. Instead, it continues to favor big industrial agriculture.

I’ve introduced the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act because it’s long past time for change. This legislation will support local jobs by helping farms grow their operations and increase their customer base. It strengthens regional food infrastructure, gives farmers more security, and adds school resources to buy food locally. It has 60 cosponsors in the House and I look forward to working to make these proposals law.

Another piece of legislation I introduced in 2011 would help service members who are victims of military sexual assault. This has become an alarming problem as thousands of women and men—report being sexually assaulted while serving. Many thousands more don’t even report their assaults for fear of retribution from their attackers, who are often superiors.

We need to address this tragedy. Men and women in uniform take on many risks when serving, but sexual assault should not be one of them. These veterans also need better access to counseling so they can deal with problems like post traumatic stress disorder. My legislation would ease the restrictions they currently face to get benefits for help.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I’ve been able to work on many policies that affect our military personnel. It also means that I’ve kept close watch on our operations overseas. In 2011, we saw some good news on this front. First, we finally found and killed Osama bin Laden. The second came just recently, with the official end to the war in Iraq. I am so glad that the Maimers who have served there will be able to return home. But we can’t forget the nearly 4,500 soldiers we lost in Iraq—24 of them from Maine. My thanks, especially at
ACROSS
1 Sting rays and barracudas, e.g. [Sea Slugs]
5 Powerful columnist of 1960's
10 News bit
14 Italian for "tune"
15 Deceit
16 Santa Maria's sister
17 Rubbernecks
19 Coll. in tvlai ne
20 Infamous middle name
21 Boot
22 Former tribal vow
23 Persian poet
26 Alone in Paris
28 Lapin Agile, et al.
32 Seed s
35 Acid acronym
36 Declaim
38 Chaplin, to O'Neill
39 Goals
41 Onomatopoetic word
43 Bite in Barcelona
44 Kind of gram
46 Criticize harshly
48 World's oldest airline
49 Fishermen of a sort
51 Descriptive of a brook
52 A lone in P a ris
58 Bannister's heir
59 Fishermen of a sort
60 Sadat
61 Descriptive of
64 Vault
65 Forest shrubs
66 9/11 pilot
68 Goose peculiar to Hawaii
70 Major African port
71 Discard
72 Delete
73 Goose peculiar to Hawaii

DOWN
1 Accusative, e.g.
2 Like 4 Down
3 She was Emma Peel
4 Tuareg's home
5 Lou Gehrig disease
6 Golf ball position
7 Descendants
8 Sam, Amory
9 Jerry Lundergaard in "Fargo"
10 Cape town
11 Rouge et Morte
12 Proofer's note
13 Newspaper helper
14 Kind of paper
15 Prouls, for one
16 Clue to phrase in shaded squares
17 Retired
18 Member of Acer genus
19 Sink
20 End of boom?
21 Dictator's necessity
22 Queen Elizabeth has one
23 Painter of "L'Absinthe"
24 Obtain
25 Exclamation of sorrow
26 Entreat
27 Woman's name
28 Tommy Chong's daughter
29 Eponymous sweater
30 Newspaper helper
31 Sandberg, Cubs Hall of
32 Exclamation of sorrow
33 Member of Acer genus
34 Sink
35名词后缀
36 Exclamation of sorrow
37 End of boom?
38 Tommy Chong's daughter
39 Exclamation of sorrow
40 Dictator's necessity
41 Queen Elizabeth has one
42 Exclamation of sorrow
43 French revolutionary
44 Exclamation of sorrow
45 French revolutionary
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47 French revolutionary
48 Exclamation of sorrow
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WINNING CAPTION for December (See page 11 for this month's cartoon) Send caption ideas to kattra@islandtimes.org

"I miss my sense of smell but I love my new pet." - B. Harriman, Brunswick
Star Gazing

January 2012 Sky

BY MIKE RICHARDS

January is named for Janus, Roman god of the doorway, and opens the way to the new year. January is the coldest month in the northern hemisphere, as the north pole points 23.5° - almost directly away from the sun. This month our days grow longer and the sun rises higher in the sky, bringing with it the promise of springtime. From my in-town office I have marked the winter solstice directly over a chimney overlooking the bay, and I can now watch the sun march slowly northward again.

This month our daylight increases, at first by about 1 minute per day, but later this month by more than 2 minutes per day. This first week, the sunrise is still a bit later each day because the Earth is just reaching perihelion, its closest point to the sun, so Earth's orbital speed has peaked and each day the Earth must turn more than 360° to again face the sun, creating a delay in the sunrise. The same positional variance also delays the sunset, but that we don't mind so much.

The Quadrantid meteor shower will peak early in the morning on Jan 4. The radiant (apparent origin) is north-northeast, just below the handle of the Big Dipper. It's just above the horizon and you'll need a clear view to the north (Whalebake points east, but you can turn left and see north easily from there). The peak starts around 1:00 a.m. and ends about 4:00 a.m., and you'll have to wait until about 5:00 a.m. for the moon to set, but you should see about two meteors per minute.

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PLANETS

In the morning, speedy Mercury is barely visible just off the eastern horizon before sunrise, but by month's end it ducks behind the sun and out of sight until it pops up again next month at dusk. Further up in the pre-dawn sky is golden Saturn, with its magical rings shone out to either side. Next comes ruddy Mars, high in the south and doubling in brightness over the course of the month. In the early evening, brilliant Venus climbs higher each night in the southwestern sky over South Portland, appearing gibbous in telescopes, like the moon, its angle perfectly suited for reflecting sunlight off its uniquely luminous clouds. Beside Venus are Uranus and Neptune, distant turquoise dots compared to nearby Venus. Mighty Jupiter is still bright and high in the southeast sky at dusk, but as the month progresses it begins to fade a bit. Jupiter rotates its massive gaseous bulk once every 10 hours, so it is quite oblate, right where the two dark equatorial bands encircle it.

STARS

The winter constellations are now in full bloom. Pegasus, with its Great Square marking the flying horse's body, is still visible in the west after sunset, trailed by the Andromeda Galaxy, which (with my glasses on) I think I can see with binoculars. We now have 48 minutes of daylight than we had when the month began.

Further up is Cassiopeia the Queen (the "Big W"), sitting on her throne, the Double Cluster just to her east. Straight overhead is Perseus the King, with its eclipsing variable star Algol changing brightness over the course of three days. Algol is actually a three-star system, so the brightness changes depending on which of the two lesser stars pass in front of it. Nearby is Pleiades, the Seven Sisters, a young, rogue star cluster moving like a gang of girls, setting their own independent course through our Milky Way galaxy.

To their north is the yellow star Capella, leading us to Aries the Charioteer. To the southeast is the Big V of the Hyades, the head of Taurus the Bull, protecting the Seven Sisters from Orion the Hunter, which is rising in the southeast. To the east, the red giant star in the V is Aldebaran, the Bull's angry eye. Orion's three-star belt holds his sword, in which hides a nebula, a gassmater curtain of light, visible with just binoculars. The Gemini twins lie north of Orion, their heads marked by stars Castor and Pollux. On the southeastern horizon in Canis Major is Sirius, our brightest star, in part because it's close (only 8.6 light years away). On the eastern horizon is Procyon, another close, bright star in Canis Minor. Even on the coldest nights, a dash outside with binoculars lets us see Venus, the vanguard of spring, quite a sight for commuters on the early boat to town this morning.

To their north, it's quite chilly, and not too cold for life, as the vast majority of plants are.

STAR GAZING

Jan. 1 - First-quarter moon is high at sunset, moderating tides and signaling the best week for telescopic viewing of the rugged lunar surface.

Jan. 2 - Jupiter hangs below the moon at apogee in Aries tonight.

Jan. 4 - The Quadrantid Meteor Shower peaks early this morning. The radiant is at perihelion, its closest to the sun. Fortunately, Earth's distance from the sun varies only a few degrees from its average, keeping us squarely within our "Goldilocks Zone," neither too hot nor too cold for life, as the vast majority of plants are.

Jan. 9 - Full "Wolf" moon sets at 7:11 a.m. over Portland, quite a sight for commuters on the early boat to town this morning. It rises again out of the bay at 5:08 p.m., greeting those on the 5:55 boat home.

Jan. 16 - Last-quarter moon is high at sunrise.

Jan. 17 - The moon's at perigee, so tides and currents will build a bit over the next few days.

Jan. 19 - The crescent moon points below to Antares in Scorpius.

Jan. 23 - New moon means dark skies all night, the better to see the Andromeda Galaxy over Portland.

Jan. 25 - Tonight after dusk, Venus sits above and left of the crescent moon.

Jan. 30 - The month's second first-quarter moon is at apogee again and sits above the "Goldilocks Zone," neither too hot nor too cold for life, as the vast majority of plants are.

ALMANAC

Jan. 3 - The month's second first-quarter moon is at apogee again and sits above the "Goldilocks Zone," neither too hot nor too cold for life, as the vast majority of plants are.
Bernie in the Morning

BY JERRY GARMAN

Peaks Island awakes around 5:00 a.m. when early commuters start to migrate toward the ferry slip for the 6:15 ferry. Charlie Schull and Bernie Smith arrive around 6:00 a.m. and carefully park their vehicles, one to transport passengers, the other to receive and distribute our daily newspapers.

As the ferry docks, some of the departing passengers arrive and take unassigned positions around Bernie’s car. Steve at the rear with his back to Portland; Stan is usually facing the side of the car with his back facing south; and I am located toward the front facing Portland. We resemble a police stake out waiting for ransom money to show up.

There is the usual banter about which sports team won or lost, or who would get the wet or torn paper, and always some joke, a pointed comment or just an idle chat. The ferry discharged its cars and passengers. There is a short silence for the square, box cars, andognition as they approach as a cart bearing the morning newspapers (ransom) is slowly pulled up to the ferry slip. I often retrieve the papers and get them unbound before he is surrounded by anxious islanders extending their hands for their copy. It resembles a mother robin feeding her hungry brood.

Subscribers arrive from all sides to pick up the morning papers, some walking, others running. A paper is placed in a cart or under the arm of a office-carrying passenger. Occasionally Bernie must run after a customer who takes their newspaper like a baton transfer in a relay race. At the one-minute whistle that remains and struggles running down the hill to meet the boat.

Suddenly it is quiet, the boat leaves the slip. Bernie starts his car and moves to his first stop at Lisa’s Cafe. Each morning Bernie will deliver 120 newspapers to porches and mailboxes. In the summer this number could double. If you choose to take the 7:15 a.m. ferry you might claim your newspaper by intercepting Bernie as he weaves in and out of our island streets.

I have on several occasions laid my paper with a car-to-car transfer on Island Avenue. We have successfully made this transaction at first, but later I had planned an attempt at faster speeds until we noticed a stranger taking our picture. We believe it was Bernie’s car insurance agent.

Bernie reports that while it is difficult to arrive so early and constantly get in and out of his car, the hardest part is trying to remember who picked up their paper at home.

Over a three-hour period Bernie’s car will have registered 18 miles; Bernie on foot another mile. I am not sure how many miles he travels each day. Each morning, I have noticed that he sometimes has pajamas under his clothes.

Dave Nowers delivers the Saturday and Sunday papers so Bernie gets to sleep in. So good night Bernie, the island thanks you and wishes you and Dave a Happy New Year. Hope to see you the same time next Monday.

It’s a Living

BY SUSAN HANLEY

"The service you do for others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."—Mohammad Ali

Americans are an industrious lot, and Peaks Islanders are no exception. Some of us work on the island, some commute. Some of us have one job, some have three. Some of us have part-time professions, some of us have full-time passions. But all of us are busy. Busy. Busy. Busy. Figuring out a host of inventive, resourceful ways to earn a living while enjoying island living.

This month:

Chris Alves
Lieutenant, Portland Fire Department

What are your favorite memories about your job?

I remember when the fire burned down our home and we had to rebuild our house. It's really about location at the fire, being there when it matters most.

Where do you want to be 10 years from now?

I want to be a captain of my own fire crew and be able to make decisions on the job. I also want to be able to work more closely with the community, to make a positive impact on their lives.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The job is never the same two days in a row. Each day brings new challenges and opportunities. I enjoy working with the people in the community, helping them through difficult times.

What are the biggest challenges you face in your job?

One of the biggest challenges is dealing with the unpredictability of fire. You never know when or where the fire will start, or how severe it will be. We have to be ready and prepared at all times.

How do you stay motivated to do your job?

I stay motivated by remembering why I joined the fire service in the first place. I joined the fire service to help people, to make a difference in the community. I love the feeling of knowing that I am making a positive impact on people's lives.

What advice would you give to someone who is considering a career in the fire service?

If you are considering a career in the fire service, I would advise you to do your research. Make sure you understand the demands and challenges of the job. It is a rewarding career, but it is not for everyone.
Recipes & Ramblings

By Sheila Reiser

The worst word to mention at this time of year is "diet." Wait, don't go! At least read the next paragraph....

I find the expression "to be on a diet" quite absurd. The first definition for "diet" that appears in the American Heritage Dictionary is "the usual food and drink of a person or an animal." So, taken in this context, unless I am on a diet, I am technically "on a diet," right?

Heritage Dictionary is: "the usual food and regulated selection of foods, esp. as a means of controlling intake, depending on quantity. That we are talking about limiting intake, food, and healing, which I'd like to share.

From the FIFTH MAINE Operation Ice Cube

BY KIM MACISAAC
FIFTH MAINE MUSEUM CURATOR

Elmer Harmon sunbathing in the snow on New Year's Day, 1948.

These hardy souls who plunge into Casco Bay each New Year's Day are unwittingly carrying on an island tradition begun by Peaks Island's own polar bear, Mr. Elmer Harmon. Back in 1943 he was celebrating on New Year's Eve with some friends who dared him to welcome in the new year by taking a swim in the frigid bay. He did just that the next morning, wearing only his swim trunks. No wet suit or bear grease to protect his skin from the cold water. And he continued his midwinter swim for many years thereafter.

Elmer enjoyed his mid-winter dips so much that, in 1948, he took two swims on Christmas Eve, followed by an annual dip on New Year's Day. He did, however, make one concession. He added a pair of wool socks to his swimming ensemble, causing his co-workers to claim he had "gone soft."

In an interview with the Portland Press Herald he explained that his decision to plunge was due to his experience in 1946 when he decided to swim in the water off the Casco Bay Power Company building on Island Avenue, which was a forbidden Central Maine Power Co. plan. "I slipped around on the icy rocks in my bare feet so much after coming out of the water I got so ill I had to go home."

A veteran swimmer, Harmon swam the four-mile length of Highland Lake as a teenager. He was also a musical man who once led the Medieval Minstrels, a local singing group that included Rudy Valle. During the time that he took his mid-winter dips he worked at Don Grandall's Boat Shop down front.

Plunging into the ocean to greet the new year has become a New England tradition with polar bear events springing up all over for fun and to raise money for probably the oldest and certainly the most famous polar bear club is Boston's L Street Brownies. For over 100 years an annual swimming of Brownies jumps into Dorrance Bay for a quick swim. Some do it more than once. Others do it year after year as though it were a rite of passage into adulthood.

So Elmer Harmon played his part in preserving a unique midwinter tradition. Our neighbors and friends who take the plunge on New Year's Day are perpetuating the tradition that Elmer brought to Peaks. Let's make sure there are plenty of warm blankets and hot chocolate on hand for the swimmers when they come up from the water.

A contemporary New Year's Day plunge on Jan. 1, 2009 at Sandy Beach shows that nothing much has changed except the variety of swimmers, which ranges from this photo from a thermal wetsuit to absolutely nothing.

Recipes & Ramblings

Sheila's Kale with Leeks

2 large leeks
Butter or oil
1 large bunch of kale, chopped
Leek (chicken or veg) water

Experiment with proportions, it's hard to mess this up! I like the whole leek, white part and green, with the exception of the very tops, which tend to be tough. I save these in the freezer for use on sautéed leeks or stock.

Leeks halved, rinse, cut into chunks, and sauté over medium low in a large pan until they start to brown.

Add kale, cook until the leeks a little darker than they seem to start to turn a vibrant green. Sprinkle some salt and pepper on the stock. It should thicken and thicken the kale. Stir, and scrape any browned leeks off the bottom of the pan, creating a lovely broth. Season with salt and pepper to your liking. It's ready when the kale has reached your preferred level of doneness; I like mine well cooked but still firm.

Ingredients

- 1 onion, diced
- 4 cups kale, stems removed
- 4 cups leeks, white and green
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. In a large pot, sauté the onion and leeks in oil or butter until softened.
2. Add the kale, stirring to combine.
3. Pour in the vegetable broth, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer.
4. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Cook for 10-15 minutes or until the kale is wilted and tender.

Note: This soup can be made ahead and reheated, or frozen for later use.
Addison Wooley Gallery
MAINE PHOTOGRAPHERS EYES ON ASIA
an exhibition of 45 photographs of China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam, produced in collaboration with several artists. The intent is to present Maine photographers whose work is internationally focused, to get their work noticed, and to add a new perspective on the world. Days: Tuesdays thru Saturdays. Hours: 11am to 5pm. No events. Free.

Richard Bond Gallery open
STUDIO featuring ceramic art and pottery by Rick Bond and Pamela Wilson thru January. The gallery is closed for renovations. Weekends is opening the second floor working studio to the public for first Friday Art Walk, Jan. 6 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm and by appointment during the entire month. The ground floor Art Gallery will reopen in February by appointment, with a grand re-opening slated for March. Richard Bond Art Gallery and studio are located at the corner of Pease Island and the Pease Island building on the first building on the right. The gallery exhibits one of a kind 21st and 20th century art by established and upcoming artists working in the mediums of painting, glass and pottery. In the second floor working studio, handmade ceramics of a kind art is produced, with a focus on ceramic art and pottery. For more information or to schedule an appointment please Pamela at the gallery by calling 706-712-0979, or email williamsxm550@
ou.u, or visit www.richardbondgallery.com

The Fifth Maine
The Fifth Maine is a non-profit museum and cultural center housed at the Fifth Maine Historic Site, dedicated to the preservation of Civil War and local history. Membership is open to the public. The museum is currently closed for the season. More information please contact Kimberly Malmgren at kmalmgren@portland.lib.me.us or call 207-766-3130.

The Gem Gallery
The Gem Gallery, located on Island Avenue in Peaks Island, is an artist-led cooperative of 25 artists of various disciplines. The goal will be to exhibit to the public the work of our artists on a rotating basis. Hours: Tuesdays thru Saturdays. Hours: 11am to 5pm. Events.

Brackett Church
Open Hearts, Open Doors, Open Minds, Welcome a Welcoming, Inclusive, Recurring Congregation; 9 Church Street, Peaks Island, Pastor Rev. Beth Lunem. 706-766-5103, Asst. Mavrovac/Chaplain, www.brackettchurch.org. SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP 10am. with children and followed by informal fellowship gathering in the church hall, TAIZÉ SERVICE Wednesdays from 4:05 pm to 4:35 pm at Brackett Church Jan., 9th and Jan. 16 and St. Christophs'. Church Jan. 11 and Jan 25; SCRIPTURE STUDY Tuesdays from 8:10 am to 10:10 am, in the parish hall, all are welcome; CHILDREN'S CHOIR Tuesday, Jan. 10 10am-10:45pm. (note January dates to be announced), PRAYER SHARING MINISTRY Thursday from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm in the parish hall, all are welcome (contact Emily Sherwood, 766-5545); OPEN TWEENS Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm, free and open to all 4-8 graders (contact Caitlin Bridgland, 766-5978), Twigs Noel are open in February, FOOD PANTRY at Brackett Church Mondays and Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

Baptist Church
Sunday Service: 10:00 am. Bible Study. 11 am. Worship. Wednesday Services: 7 pm. Teen Nights Thursday at Peaks Island School gym 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.

St. Christopher's Church
Sunday Mass is at 10:00 am. followed by Catholic Bridge, 766-5978. Parishioners are invited to attend. The church is located at 736 Washington Ave., 2nd floor. For more information please visit www.christchapelportland.org.

Peaks Island Recreational Programs

Portland Recreation on Peaks Island
Denise MacGarrigan, Recreation Programmer, Contact dmacgarrigan@cityofportlandme.gov or leave a message at 766-2670. Denise works just part time on Peaks Island, Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Call 766-2670 for more information. RESTROOMS open 9am to 5pm - no exceptions. STAFF: Sarah Fabian, F.N.P., Mary Gramlich, Clinical Assistant. If you need lab work, Lorre, our lab tech, will be here Monday, Jan. 16 and Monday, Feb. 20 from 8:30am to 10:00am. If you have a foot concern Dr. Mora, our podiatrist, is scheduled for Friday, March 23. Please schedule an appointment with them beforehand. For all urgent care please see spotters with phone or for the office. If you cannot pick up please leave a message. Your call is important to us and will be returned as soon as possible. If you need urgent and cannot call a call back, please call your primary care provider. If you have an emergency, please call 911.

Peaks Island CERT
The island’s Community Emergency Response Team remains all islanders to check winter supplies of food and water in case of emergencies. The Portland Fire Department plans special CERT training programs on Mondays Jan. 16, Feb. 6 and 20, March 5 and April 2-11, and May 7. CERT meetings and training are at 6:30 PM at the Community Center. Please get involved.

Children’s Workshop
Preschool enrollment for children ages 2 to 5. Part-day and part-week options available. Infant-toddler Play Groups: Fridays from 10:15 am to 11:15 am; open to ALL ages. For more information, please call or email Enchildcare@portland.lib.me.us.
COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

Thursday, Jan 5
CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR at PEAKS CAFE - Meet at Cafe at 10:00 am. Please pre-register, sign-up sheet on Denise’s bulletin board at (PI) community building. Start the New Year off with good food, good friends and good conversation. All are welcome. Sponsored by Portland Recreation

COMMUNITY SING ALONG on Peaks at Brackett Church, 7-9 pm, hosted by Ronda Dale with guitar accompanied by Ronda and Kevin Attra. Ronda will have her Rise Up Singing book and lyrics to some songs for all to sing. Come listen, sing along, bring lyric sheets to pass out, bring chords for Kevin if you like some accompaniment; bring your copies of Rise Up Singing; bring your own guitar or other acoustic instrument and play something we can sing along to lead us in an arraignment round, etc. etc. The format will be a simple song circle. with everyone who wants having a chance to pick the song for sing-along.

Tuesday, Jan 17
LIBRARY PAJAMA PARTY 6:30 pm at the Peaks Island branch library. Mrs. Cris-Crissy Rockwell will read bedtime stories. We’ll have milk and cookies. Your children can come in their paj’s and they’ll be ready for bed when you get home.

Saturday, Jan 21
LOAF & LADLE CHILI FEST to benefit Peaks Island Tax and Energy Assistance. The menu includes pots of chili, bread, salad, and desserts. Join us at the Peaks Island Baptist Church from 5-7 pm.

Thursday, Jan 26
BASIC COMPUTER TRAINING WORKSHOP at the Portland Public Library from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. led by Rondita Moore, Library Technical Aid covering topics such as the components of a computer, mouse exercises, how to scroll, and how to navigate the web.

Friday, Jan 27
CELEBRATE HOT TEA AND HOT SOUP MONTH (PI com. rm.) Drop in between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm to taste a variety of herbal teas, but soup will also be available. Bring your favorite soup recipe - simple tool Sponsored by Portland Recreation

Monday, Feb 13
MONTHLY POT LUCK LUNCHEON 12:00 p.m. at the Fay Garman Senior Center, sponsored by Peaks Island Senior Citizens’ Association.

Tuesday, Feb 14
HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAY

Thursday, Feb 23
SCHOOL VACATION WEEK - FUN for ALL (PI com. rm.) Drop in between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm for fun with crafts, board games and Ping-Pong. Open to all ages. Sponsored by Portland Recreation

Peaks Island Tax & Energy Assistance
As we enter 2012 PITEA is geared to fulfill the missions of Tax Assistance for permanent Island residents and Energy Assistance for all Island households. We are a 501c3 charitable organization. Our members have contributed many hours of their time and energy to raise monies. Combine with that their donations of food, paper goods, kitchen supplies, and wonderful financial donations, and we have a formula for success.

Last year we raised about $12,000 for Energy Assistance, which provided $7,000 for 29 families. We allotted $320 for every applicant, but in actuality some were less. The best news is that all eligible applicants received help.

With Susan Thomas’ help we also received $2,400 through Market America, an online buying service which assists charitable organizations. These folks do not live here or even know us yet they help raise funds for Energy Assistance with every order.

Lost your property taxes were raised once again and some families needed a little bit more assistance to meet their tax obligations. Through fundraising and some very generous donors, we raised $10,200 and paid out about $650 to the City of Portland for nine families.

The overall figures are astounding. Our committee membership is smaller but our fundraising efforts are continuing. Once an application is approved by the clergy, the applicant receives immediate assistance. It is a record that gives PITEA a sense of pride.

HELP PRESERVE WHAT’S SPECIAL ABOUT PEAKS.

Peaks Island is a truly special place, with its rocky shores, its woodslands and its harbors. Its membership (311 individual subscription) and your donations are crucial in helping us maintain open spaces.

Join today. Help preserve what we love about Peaks.

MONTHLY CAPTION CONTEST: Each month we offer a new BRIO image having no caption so that you can make one up. Below is this month’s cartoon. Send your ideas to editor@islandtimes.org and we’ll publish the best. See page 7 for last month’s winners.

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director@fifthmainemuseum.org
www.fifthmainemuseum.org

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