Early spring edition: Gale winds and heavy rain rolled through the area on Feb. 25, washing out roads, downing trees and leaving 33 communities without power for two days. Effects of the storm continued the next day, though the skies were clear, with a huge surf that rolled in from the Atlantic (above). More coverage on page 4.

PUC to continue hearings on Bay Lines rate hike

BY KEVIN ATTRA

According to State Representative Herb Adams, a member of the PUC, the committee that oversees the Public Utilities Commission, the PUC will continue hearing evidence on the rate increase of May 2009 by the Casco Bay Lines on Thursday, March 11.

The investigation began last May in response to a $282,000 payment to four Peaks Island residents and submitted to the committee in April 2009. It culminated in a technical hearing on Sept. 2 to determine if a full investigation should be conducted, which, after being reviewed by PUC staff, was not advised.

Staff member Benjamin Smith wrote to the commissioners on Dec. 30 recommending that no further action be taken, but on Jan. 13 Rep. Adams wrote to them as well, urging them to continue the investigation.

He pointed out that he always sided with the board in the past but that in this case he saw merit in the allegations and called on the PUC as an impartial third party to look into the complaints.

"When a sincere petition is raised by Casco Bay Islanders about a ferry service they own themselves, I believe in merit consideration by the third party to which it is addressed — that is, the PUC," he wrote.

"Being heard is the first step in being appreciated," he said in an interview later. "That's what I felt the situation needed. Apparently it worked. At a deliberative session held Jan. 25 at the PUC headquarters in Hallowell, the commissioners said they believe "some issues require additional consideration" and elected to hear further evidence before making a final decision.

"We hope that they will investigate," said Peaks Islander Jane Gerard. "After we investigate we will live with whatever decision they make, but we feel there has to be accountability."

Not everyone in the bay agrees with the allegations of the petition, and some feel it isn't in the interest of all the islands served by the Bay Lines.

"I think it's a Peaks-Island doesn't want-to-pay-more-money thing," said Long Island's Coleman Clarke. A common perception among Casco Bay residents is that Peaks Islanders complain without prices, down-the-bay islanders complain about service.

"Casco Bay Lines has to make money to operate. I don't think it would be done unfairly," said Coleman. "It's very expensive, but we have to work around it. What if Casco Bay Lines wasn't there?"

Declining revenues and skyrocketing fuel costs motivated the District to attempt several cost-cutting measures in late 2008 and early 2009, including seemingly trivial ones like discontinuing water service onboard the boats.

After residents rejected a proposed scheduling change that would have ostensibly saved the ferry line $36,000, the CBITD board of directors felt they had no alternative but to raise ticket prices.

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Maine Responder

BY KEVIN ATTRA

The $12 million Maine Responder, privately owned by the Marine Spill Response Corporation (http://www.msrc.org) and stationed permanently in Portland Harbor at Union Wharf, is one of the largest and most sophisticated oil cleanup vessels in the world.

She is over 208 feet long, 44 feet wide at the beam and draws 15 feet of water. She cruises at 12 knots, but she’s not a Cadillac. “Are you religious?” asked 1st Mate Jim Griffin. “Wrong, you will be after you get in a storm with this thing.”

She is one of a fleet of 22 operated by M SRC, stationed around the coast of the continental U.S. and Hawaii. M SRC is an independent, non-profit, national spill response company founded in 1990 to handle catastrophic oil spills, but now responds to oil spills of any size, as well as non-spill emergencies such as hurricanes, floods, fires, and other disasters.

“We have designated sites,” explained Tom Gallant, response supervisor at the Portland station. The Portland office is the northern-most station along the east coast, responsible for spills along the Atlantic from Nova Scotia to Cape Cod.

“The next site with equipment and a ship would be Edenton, New Jersey,” Tom said. “Then it goes to Chesapeake City, Maryland. From there, stations dot the Gulf of Mexico and the west coast, with two in San Francisco, four in southern California and one in Puget Sound. We’ve also taken over sites in Puerto Rico and St. Croix as well.”

“We’ve got to talk about getting me transferred down there,” said Jim, a Cliff Island native.

According to Tom, the ship is stationed in Portland because of the Portland-Montreal Pipe Line company, which brings in the majority of fuel tankers. “If not, we probably be in Boston,” he said.

Tom has been with MSRC over 18 years. As the response supervisor he coordinates the crew and auxiliary equipment during a spill clean-up. Dave Ward is captain of the Maine Responder. Both are graduates of the Maine Maritime Academy.

First Mate Griffin serves as captain of the Maine Responder when Capt. Ward is unavailable. Jim comes from a long line of fishermen.

“I started on my father’s boat when I was about 10 years old, lobstering. That was mysummer job as a kid growing up, all the way through high school. And then from there I went to Maine Maritime Academy, and went to sea for several years after that. I got married, came home, fished again for a few years and then I’ve been here for almost three.”

In addition to these men, there are usually two engineers and two deckhands aboard the vessel. During a spill emergency, the crew can swell to 16, including specialists who are subcontracted to operate certain equipment or auxiliary vessels like the barges and tugs. Many are ex-Coast Guard personnel.

The ship has accommodations for up to 8 people.

Most of their time is spent in training and on maintaining the ship, barges and other equipment, and the crew holds a training exercise once a week.

“Our typical day is also an 8-hour day,” said Capt. Ward. “But when we’re off the vessel we’re on call. Should an oil spill occur, he said the crew has to be back on board and get the ship underway in under three hours.

“Back in 2003 there was a spill down in Buzzards Bay,” he said. “It was a Sunday afternoon when we were called out, and we were back on board, and actually had the vessel underway, headed toward Buzzards Bay, within two hours.

That was one of only two major incidents in which the Portland M SRC station has been activated in the 18 years since Tom joined the team. “The one previous to that was the Jule-L spill which was in October of 1996,” he believes,” said the captain. “That was an oil spill.”

Jim Griffin: “That’s when the tanker hit the bridge,” agreed the captain.

“We have pictures down in the lounge. October 1996.”

Tom: “It was September 27th.”

Captain Dave Ward (center) talks with Tom Gallant the bridge of the Maine Responder while 1st Mate Jim Griffin looks on from the port side control station.
Islanders' "revision" of the future of Peaks Island School

BY KEVIN ATTRA

About 60 people - all parents, teachers and Portland school staff - worked through a two-and-a-half hour planning session Thursday, Jan. 21, imagining ideas to improve the curriculum and viability of the Peaks Island School.

The meeting was structured into group discussions about the school as it is now and how it should be in the future, which were held to strict time limits by moderator Susan Steele, coordinator of Portland School District's Safe and Drugfree Schools program since 2001.

With several of the school's staff and administrators on hand who needed to catch the 8:40 boat, including Superintendent James Morse, she ended the meeting promptly at 8:00 p.m.

The brainstorming session launched a community movement to recruit new students to the school in order to provide some assurance that it won't be closed some time in the future due to lack of enrollment.

Superintendent Morse reminded people of the upheaval in the community created when he announced that two teachers would be cut from the school's staff last summer, and explained that class size had been at the root of that decision.

"How do we make a Peaks Island School that's sustainable? The issue is having something to attract kids to the island," he said.

The disparity between the swelling student population in Portland and the small class sizes on the islands has put pressure on the district administrator to restructure staff and normalize the schools. "To make it equitable we need 20 [more] kids," said Dr. Morse. "We need comparability with the mainland."

A "lush fund" should be allowed.

According to Treasurer Bill Overlock, the lush fund, added to the budget through the May 2009 rate increase, was created so the company could accelerate repayment of outstanding debt; however, board member Matt Hoffman described it as a contingency fund against unexpected expenses.

"If the commissioner(s) say everything's done correctly, we'll live with the rate hike," said Jane Gerard. "Even if we get accurate records, accurate accounting, it will be a whole lot better than it is now."

The fear is of getting to the size of "Cliff," he said, which he called "scary." Currently Cliff Island School has three students. An ideal class size in the K through second grade he said is from 15 to 18 students.

The main result of the meeting was the creation of the Revisioning Committee, a community task force that will come up with recommendations for the school district. It is being coordinated by Peaks Island School Principals' Timothy Devoney and his staff.

Dr. Morse suggested that the committee act fast and get its recommendations to the School Committee before March if possible, but he later extended this deadline in light of the committee's progress.

Revisioning Committee member Jess Burton said, "We're still in the process of setting up the process, I think. The committee has met twice and is looking at long- and short-range tasks."

One thing it has done is to get Mark McCarthy of King Middle School to speak about expeditionary learning on March 19 at the Peaks Island School. It was one of the factors in Dr. Morse's decision to extend the deadline.

"Everybody's committed," said Jess. "It's an interesting process in that there is no predetermined outcome except that we all want to have a really good school."

No doubt the focus will be on expeditionary learning as an educational model utilizing the island itself as part of the classroom. This idea was universally suggested by every group at the January visioning session.

Another popular idea was to improve the quality of food using fresh, local produce, which many parents thought could be incorporated into the classroom for children to learn how to grow their own food.

Dr. Morse said the Peaks Island School is one of the best facilities in the district and he is committed to keeping it open. "If I get 20 kids, we're safe," he said. "We can get 20 students, easy."

Parents, teachers and school staff collaborate on ideas for the future of the Peaks Island School in the school's gymnasium.
Images from the Feb. 25 storm

On Cliff Island

REPORTED BY BOB HOWARD

Above: Central Maine Power is bringing 10 new poles to repair the lines on the northwest side of the island. With an average of 10 inches to 15 inches of dirt over most of Cliff Island, trees had a hard time hanging on. There are several roads that look like webs, or worse. Helga! Helga! Helga! Helga! I'm a big story.

Trees were blown down everywhere, exacerbated by gaping holes in the forest covered over from the 2007 Patriot's Day storm which angered up to 78 mph, with sustained wind speeds of up to 47 mph. On Cliff Island, Bob Howard said his father recorded gusts of 77 mph.

Wind speeds of up to 47 mph. On Cliff Island, Natasha Stanfield's father heard 77 mph. In most cases, pretty much everything weakened or exposed after the Patriot's Day storm got blown down. "Any place where there were spruces," said Long Island's Nancy Jordan. Central Maine Power crews worked diligently to restore power through the weekend, and by Monday the islands were essentially back in business. Much clearing still has to be done.

On Great Diamond Island, a piling tore away from the ferry landing and the dock attached to it was blown onto the beach. By Saturday, it had been secured to the remaining dock.

Cliff and Long islands apparently received the worst damage. The southeast shore on Long Island, known as the East End Forest (also called the Dark Forest before this event), was reported to be "devastated". Both islands lost entire sections of road that simply disappeared under the mass of fallen trees.

Mark Greene said, "It was interesting. Everything from the top of the ridge to the ocean in the East End forest is flattened." Stepping Stone Lane and Wreck Cove were reportedly hit hard as well. Power was restored and most of debris was cleared by Sunday, Feb. 29.

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On Peaks Island, select areas down front and along Brachett Avenue as well as the back shore lost electricity until Saturday afternoon around 3 p.m.

On Long Island

REPORTED BY MARK GREENE

Hard to show the scale of it in pictures. Much of the open areas shown were forest earlier in the week. The views to the water (left) did not exist in many cases. These scenes are from the East End Forest from Stepping Stones to the East End Point on the south side of the hill. Many trees were snapped, not merely toppled (below).

I thought the glass was going to break out of my windows about 1:00 a.m. Unlike the Patriot's Day storm, it took place during the day, it was more unsettling because you could not see what was crashing around outside.

Baby seal rescued on Peaks

BY FAITH YORK

WITH NANCY NASH

We had a little excitement on the back shore. Larry and I were driving around the island to check out the storm damage on Saturday, Feb. 25. In the vicinity of Spur Cove we came upon Scott and Nancy Nash, Gunnel Lardotter and something in the road.

It seems a little seal pup had washed up on the rocks. He was about 3 feet long, a pretty fat little dude with a heavy white, yellow and gray coat, dazed and pretty badly banged up - he was lying in a mess of debris about 30 feet from the water.

Gunnel called a seal rescue service, but it was too late for service. Then she called Animal Refuge in Westbrook who referred her to a number that was of no use. She then tried June O'Neill who is licensed to handle seals, but she was not home. She finally called the Peaks Island police who said that someone else had already reported the seal and they were on it.

Using a couple of canvast slings from Gunnel's house we tried to lift him by slipping one behind him - it was the first time we touched him at all - he immediately sat up lifted his tail off the ground. We brought the other one to his front and he lifted his head and crawled onto it (above). We removed the one from behind and put it in front, and in that way he sort of dropped slowly towards the water.

The canvas appeared to protect him from the debris. Perhaps it felt better on his skin, or perhaps he was simply trying to get away from us. I don't know. But it worked.

At the edge of the road he hopped up on the rocks and took off wiggling down the beach to the water. At that point he was clearly on a mission to go home. We cheered. It was very cute.

Scott said to Larty, "We're just like Jacques Cousteau!" Then he said, "I want to believe that's a happy ending," and so we did.

In an email to the paper Nancy added, "I wished we'd had better information on where to call for assistance. We were especially concerned about his proximity to the road.

Now that the local seal rescue has been closed, it would be great if the police had a number we could call for rescued or injured animals.
Funeral honors available to veterans

FROM THE MAINE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

AUGUSTA - Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve or Merchant Marine Servicemembers who received an honorable discharge are entitled to a Military Funeral Honors ceremony at no cost to the family.

"The rendering of Military Funeral Honors is a tribute and a way to show our Nation's deep gratitude to Veterans and their families who are entitled", said Frank Norwood, Maine Military Funeral Honors coordinator.

Section 578 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2000 requires the Department of Defense to provide, upon request, Military Funeral Honors for eligible Veterans. The Maine Military Funeral Honors Program began performing ceremonies for Maine's Veterans in 2004. Since its inception, they have performed nearly 5000 ceremonies from Fort Kent to Kittery and eastern Canada.

According to Maine Veteran's Administration statistics, Maine is losing nearly 4000 Veterans a year. This rate is expected to continue with very slow reductions through the year 2030.

Before the law passed many Veterans did not have access to a Military Funeral Honors Ceremony.

The Maine Military Funeral Honor Team provides Military honors to any honorably discharged Veteran who was not honored at the time of death. Funeral Directors or family members can call and request this service. Currently members of the Maine Military Funeral Honors Team are full time Servicemembers and are trained to the highest possible standards.

Norwood said, "The Servicemembers selected to perform these ceremonies for Maine's Veterans are extremely proud of what they are doing. They have the utmost respect and admiration for those who served before them."

There are nine Military Funeral Honor trainers on the team who have attended a two week course and been certified as instructors by the National Guard Bureau.

"Veterans of Maine will receive a Military Funeral Honors ceremony performed to the same high standards as those ceremonies being performed at Arlington National Cemetery," said Norwood.

"I strongly encourage all Veterans residing in Maine to allow these dedicated members of the United States Military to perform this ceremony and to simply express our appreciation for their dedicated service to our country," said Norwood.

For more information about the Maine Military Funeral Honors Program or Military Funeral Honors, families and Veterans can visit www.funeralhonor.org or call the State coordinator in Augusta at 800-938-9667.
From Congresswoman Chellie Pingree

If we want to find a perfect example of why we need comprehensive health-care reform, we need look no further than our own state and the insurance company that dominates its market, Anthem.

Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VA) Togus in Augusta serves thousands of Maine veterans every year. At this facility, men and women who have made great sacrifices for their country and community get the medical care they deserve. But for Anthem this has become an opportunity to cut costs.

Veterans covered by the Anthem Federal Employee Plan go to Togus for medical treatment. The hospital had a year to file claims to the insurance company for payment. That is, until last summer, when officials at Togus were told that a half-million dollars in claims would not be paid. They had not been submitted by the deadline—Anthem's new deadline of 120 days.

How did the insurance company communicate this important policy change? With a short blurb buried in the company newsletter, which, by the way, the hospital has no record of receiving. There were no letters, no calls, and no emails until the hospital had raked up a half-million in claims the company had no intention of paying.

When my office was told of the situation we looked into it and decided to send a letter to Anthem president Daniel (Corky) Corcoran urging him to reconsider the new policy. Not only did the unexpected and uncommunicated change result in a huge shortfall for a facility that already struggles to cover all the needs of our veterans, but the short deadline presented an unreasonable burden going forward.

We were pleased to hear in January that the company had decided to pay those claims and restore the former filing deadline. However, it is concerning to us how the company arrived at this unfair and insconsiderate policy in the first place. Combined with other recent company decisions I consider questionable, it seems to be part of a course.

We are all dealing with the results of the economic downturn. For Maine families, it has meant working harder, cutting back and making sacrifices. But for insurance companies, the copayment strategy has been cutting coverage, denying claims, and asking customers to pay skyrocketing deductibles.

The strategy has certainly proved effective for the companies. Wolfpoint—Anthem's parent company and the largest insurer in the nation—posted a $4.7 billion profit in 2009 (not to mention $2 billion in 2008 and $3 billion in 2007). The company expects to have larger returns in 2010.

What does this mean for you? The company says it's suffering from the bad economy because customers are canceling policies which have become unaffordable.

To make up for the loss of income, the company has dramatically increased the rates on its remaining customers. In California, Anthem is asking for a 39 percent increase on individual policies, sparking an investigation by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, chaired by Henry Waxman.

Maine is also being asked to absorb Anthem's dramatic rate increases. This year it's 22 percent, which will force many customers to drop their policies. The proposal comes as the company tells the State of Maine to overturn its denial of last year's 18 percent increase request.

Along with leaders in the Maine Legislature, I've written a letter to Chairman Waxman asking to expand the committee's investigation into Anthem's skyrocketing rates to include the company's practices in Maine.

Why do insurance companies think they can get away with charging excessive profits over the very lives and livelihoods of their customers? Well, because right now they can. A handful of large corporations dominate the country's market. In Maine, Anthem's market share is nearly 80 percent. With little or no competition in the market, customers have only two choices: take the hit from an insurance company or go without.

That just isn't acceptable. We need to institute measures that give power back to consumers by holding insurance companies accountable and creating real competition. Insurance companies should not be able to deny coverage and cherry-pick the healthy. Consumers should have measures that protect them from being bankrupted by high out-of-pocket costs, and seniors should have lower prescription drug costs.

And consumers should have choices. Not between going without and an overpriced, under-covering policy, but between a number of options that all offer quality, affordable care.

I think the best way to get there is passing comprehensive health-care reform with a public option—voluntary, publicly accountable insurance plan. This would expand and improve coverage for millions by insuring some Americans and bringing down costs for others by growing competition in the market.

Think what insurance companies would do if consumers could hold them accountable. They would probably think twice before proposing skyrocketing rates and denying payment owed for veterans. This power—the choice of the consumer—is central to the health-care reform we need.

Congresswoman Chellie Pingree represents Maine's First District in Congress. You can contact her office in Portland at 207-774-0199 or online atpongree.house.gov.

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**Lines from Casco Bay Lines**

*BY CHRIS HOPPIN*

Recent news reports of ticket price increases being proposed for the Maine State Ferry System have the local community concerned. Our predecessor decided to run it more like a business than a government agency. Although this allowed control over the line on frequently scheduled trips, it has led to some interesting challenges in passing fuel tax increases.

Government subsidies have always been minimal—around 20 percent of the District’s $5 million budget—and the District has had to rely on ticket sales for passengers, fuel, and vehicles to cover most of its annual operating expenses. Our group will produce an engineering report, and we expect the Planning Board to also consider the proposal. Additional funding will help to offset costs.

The privately-owned Casco Bay Transportation Company operates the ferry between Chebeague Island and the Isle of Shoals. It only carries passengers and does not operate heavy goods. To expedite travel, we are currently exploring the possibility of adding a second daily roundtrip service.

Visit to Chebeague pays $20 per day for parking and $30 per week for the open lot on Casco Island. CBTID has $2,150 for parking for the open lot on Casco Island.

Because the CTC doesn’t receive federal or state funds, it has more than one source of revenue. Our Government Relations Committee will begin exploring how Casco Bay can attract more and alternative funding, particularly from the Federal Transit Administration, the State Legislature, and local subsidies from Portland, Chebeague, and Long Island.

CBTID is also revising the question of mainland parking, a topic of much discussion in the recent past. The committee will explore a proposed intermodal Transit Facility since other transit services like the CTC use revenues from parking to offset costs.

Some of us are interested in integrating the ferry terminal with the bus system, and others are interested in making transportation and parking subsidies. We hope the project gets underway soon, and we’ll continue to consider this information as we learn more.

**View from the Chair**

*BY MIKE RICHARDS, PIC CHAIR*

In December, the PIC welcomed new councilors Marjorie Phyllis, Suellen Roberts and returning Councilor Tom Bohan. Because Betty Hellyer withdrew her candidacy due to a move off-island, the PIC exercised its plenary authority and selected Judy Flum to replace Betty on an interim basis, until June’s regularly scheduled election.

When the city attorney advised that its ordinance did not expressly allow us to do that, we proposed an amendment, which the city council promptly approved on Jan. 4. Whoever wants to run for the single PIC seat in June should contact the city council for details and instructions soon.

Several recent events on Peaks Island demonstrated a gap in our island safety services, so the PIC asked the City Council to (1) immediately provide two EMT-trained officers on Peaks 24/7/365, and (2) do a comprehensive study of our safety needs. To expedite the study, the PIC sponsored a series of facilitated community dialogues over the last two months, with the last meeting to occur on March 3. The group will produce a report by the end of March and present it to the city (and to the public via our bulletin board and our website: peakslandscb.org).

HomeStart plans to develop its Luster Street property for more affordable housing on Peaks, but requires a conditional rezoning to do that. Its request is pending now before the Portland Planning Board, and HomeStart has recently echoed the PIC’s request that the Planning Board hold a mandatory public hearing on Peaks Island, rather than in town, so islanders can better attend and comment on the project.

The PIC (x-y)’s goal is to support HomeStart’s application for a conditional rezoning of that property, in order to allow the existing ferry system to go forward, but the PIC expressly reserved its right to comment further, once more details were known. We have received letters from islanders, both pro and con, and we’ll continue to consider this information as we learn more.

The seawater expansion on Peaks is back in progress. Woodard & Curran is updating its 2004 engineering report, and we expect the city will ask Portland Water District to look into it in the next year to evaluate improvement measures. We hope the project gets underway soon, to reduce the pollution currently making its way into the island waters.

A few weeks ago, after a request by the city and much thought and discussion, by the PIC, we submitted a list of budget requests to the city Finance Committee, including funds for emergency response staffing, transportation and parking subsidies, and public service improvements. Our initial budget request to the city’s budget manager was for $360,000, and a contingent of PIC members continued to work on Feb. 23. We went over the budget requests in some detail, prioritizing our requests, getting feedback from the city’s engineering department, and providing the city with the background information it needs to make its decision. We hope to contact city staff members as needed to give our proposals the best chance of success.

The PIC met on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, with public dialogue sessions on the third Thursday. All meetings occur at the District’s E. Madeleine McCauliffe Community Center on Peaks Island, and we welcome you to attend and to offer your ideas on how we can better serve our island community.

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**Eighth Maine Regiment Living Museum and Lodge**

**Come for a great stay or tour. A short ferry ride from Portland.**

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Around the corner from the Fifth Maine www.8thmaine.org tel 207-766-5086

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On the National Register of historic places.

**From the HomeStart board of directors**

HOMESTART has been working toward the creation of three affordable home ownership opportunities on island, beginning with the application for a conditional rezoning on Luster Street to build two new, energy efficient homes.

On Jan. 12, the City’s Planning Board held a public workshop to discuss the proposed development. A subsequent neighborhood meeting on Peaks Island on Jan. 30 drew approximately 100 islanders, including Islander Bill Walsh, a civil engineer with Walsh Associates who provided a summary and later voted in favor of rezoning from the Planning Board.

Bill Flynn, President of the Camden County Loan Program, also gave an overview of affordable housing programs. The islanders and shared the successes on Islesboro and Mount Desert. The plans for the two new homes were presented at a public workshop and are available on the HomeStart web page, http://peakslandscb.org/resources. The application package for prospective buyers is available at the library, Island churches, and the islanders’ Children’s Workshop as well as at the HomeStart web page, http://peakslandscb.org/resources.

A fully independent housing selection committee is in place to select qualified applicants and applicants selected. All qualified applicants will be notified once the HomeStart board and committee.

The application process for prospective buyers is available at the library, Island churches, and the Peals Island Children’s Workshop to go forward. The goal is to sell the homes, including $15,000 in energy and safety improvements, by the end of the year, at a market rate to a qualified buyer.

The application process for prospective buyers is available at the library, Island churches, and the Peals Island Children’s Workshop to go forward. The goal is to sell the homes, including $15,000 in energy and safety improvements, by the end of the year, at a market rate to a qualified buyer.

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For the love of Peaks!

Jan Smith

As Told to Fran Houston

You came to Peaks in 1951, and you were born in 1917, which makes you 91. Tell me a little bit about your relationship with, your affection, for Peaks.

Well you know they had a strike one time with all the people that worked on the boat. All I can tell you is, it had to do with coming to the island. I don’t know how they arranged it, but you had to go to House Island and you got off on Houses and then I guess there was some person - on the island probably - that brought you over here. I can’t tell you what date it was, but it was something I remember. I don’t think it lasted too long, maybe a week or two as a rough guess.

One of the women who ran the little store wanted to have a Miss Peaks contest. Jan got it one year and my younger daughter got it the next year. The judges were from away and they didn’t know they were sisters. It must have been 1963, the year she graduated from high school, and then Kate was a sophomore, so they were probably 16 and 18. Two consecutive years, so that must have been about 1963. They had it at the Fifth Maine.

Were you here during the fire, the 1957 fire?

Yes, Honestly, my husband and I just took brooms. Every man that could walk was trying to fight that and help put it out. He went over there, and I went over there, too, to see what I could do. I never did anything, because by the time I got there they had it pretty well under control. Because they were so frightened of it - they’d had a bad fire back there (once before) - every man that could walk was there, and they did get it out. It was the back shore area; it was the government reservation at that time. You could see the first fire and it was so bad it took the whole front, it started right down here. I don’t know what the person was doing, burning trash or something, down on the point here. And it got away from them; it was a very windy day, most of the time you’d get a wind. Everybody heard about it, I imagine. The fire whistle and everything, and the fire boat was here, too. I don’t know what it did! Probably went around that way, I don’t know just where it did go.

Anyway, it brought people down, firefighters, to help out. I was here in the house and everybody was talking about it and I think it was the time of the year when you would have the windows open and you’d know that something was going on. That was a scary time.

How many years did you play accordion?

Gee, I don’t know. I started to play in 1936, professionally. I had an accordion teacher as well, a musician in Portland, Alister Grant. I just thought, gee, what can I do to make a living and that’s the only thing I could do.

He got me my first job in the Falmouth Hotel, and then I moved from there to the Eastland Hotel and the Lafayette Hotel. Just played for, usually for banquets, and I’d just stroll around and that kind of thing. Sometimes at the Lafayette I played every 15 minutes or so in the cocktail lounge, and probably my pay was a meal. I got dinner [laugh]! So that was kind of nice.

In fact, I said to the waiter that was waiting on me to get my dinner, I said, “I don’t suppose they’d want to order lobster thermador for me?” and he said, “I don’t think so.”

Have you lived on Peaks for a long time?

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Tell me of other memories that stand out in your mind of Peaks in particular?

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YOGAFORLIFE

A yogic perspective on health and simple living

BY REBECCA JOHANNA STEPHANS

Rebecca Johanna Stephens teaches weekly yoga classes and private yoga lessons on Phuke Island and in Portland. You may direct your comments, inquiries, or column ideas to 766-3017 or rjyoga@gwi.net.

By the time you read this column, you will already have celebrated, ignored or endured February Day - the "ides of February" for some. However, as I write this column, I am planning my annual February partner yoga class, preparing to officiate a wedding, looking forward to Ronda and Kevin's Valentine gig and the overnight plastering of big red hearts all over town, and listening to a stirring version of "Get Where Love Goes". Love is in the air - an auspicious time to write about partner yoga.

A few years into my career teaching yoga, I signed up for a workshop called 'Contact Yoga'. That weekend transformed my work and my life. Contact yoga (I usually call it partner yoga) brings all of the lessons of a solo yoga practice into the dance of relationship. Partner yoga grabbed my attention thoroughly because it is a beautiful synthesis of three of my passions: massage, yoga and communication.

Even without speaking, we are always communicating, with gesture and facial expression, body language and non-verbal utterances. We can attempt to conceal the truth with our words, but the rest of our being will be blaring the underlying message.

Healthy communication is a mindful process of listening and responding, and learning to contain habitual reactions that are unskillful and ineffective. Using the physical body as a mirror for relationship dynamics offers an immediate feedback loop that is clear, precise, and profound.

Covering a wide range of practices, partner yoga may be as simple as placing your hands on your friend's back and feeling her breathe in and out, or may develop into a complex acrobatic posture flow that requires strength, agility, and trust. Sacred and silly, challenging and sweet, rigorous and relaxing, practicing yoga in partnership with another never fails to burst my heartwide open.

Partner yoga is just like life, sometimes, having the support of a partner means you receive a much more satisfying stretch and enjoy poesures you could never do alone. Sometimes, working with a partner requires letting go of something you could do alone as you accommodate your partner's limitations. Always, in order to move into your full expression of a posture together and avoid injury, you must slow down and check in regularly with your partner.

Off the mat, these partnering skills - slowing down, paying attention, receiving support, and letting go - will radically improve the quality of your day and the experiences of those you encounter at all levels of relationship. Think of the frenetic wake you leave in the cafe when you dash in late for the boat, or the pain in your child's eyes when you are too rushed to listen. Bringing the lessons of partner yoga into your relationships can transform struggles and obstacles into joy and ease.

When I sing the praises of partner yoga, one of the most frequent objections I hear is, "But, I don't have a partner."

You may participate in this practice with anyone willing human being - friend, sister, son, fellow yoga student. For example, some of my most memorable experiences occurred with a variety of yoga partners: a very tall yoga student with a broken arm, my father's 87-year-old cousin and her daughter, my friend Ronda (pictured below), a Jesuit monk, a man with Down's Syndrome, an obese student and a friend's 3 year-old daughter.

One of my students expressed his wonder and gratitude in this way, "How is it possible that I have visited the most stunning cathedrals in Europe, but I feel more connected to God when I am sitting back-to-back with you?" That is yoga-union.

If you are feeling adventurous, use the photos below to get started and then find a book or DVD on partner yoga and dive in. If you prefer some assistance at first, I have a partner yoga workshop scheduled for March 20 in Portland. I also offer private lessons and have taught partner yoga to groups of friends, co-workers in team building sessions, women in spiritual retreats, and several wedding parties.

Even if you choose not to practice partner yoga, please find a way to bring affection, acceptance, mindfulness and compassionate communication into your relationships. When you are feeling anxious, weary, or lonely, please remember the healing power of simply sitting back-to-back and breathing with someone you love.

Intention: Begin your practice with a moment of stillness in which you affirm your intention to practice with compassion and mindfulness.

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Heart Opening Warrior Pose

Surrendering Runner Stretch

Balancing Tree - Lean on Me!

Gaze into your partner's eyes or heart; if you teeter, let go of your partner's feet!

Soaring!

Yummy back stretch for both

Balancing Boat - lift your heart

Integrating twist

Pause and breathe

Rebecca Johanna Stephens, Kripalu Certified Yoga Teacher since 1994, has 22 years experience in the healing arts.
Shain and Tori Mouillacros the Street with her parents Mark and Karen. They are fearless, territorial, stubborn, bred on Scotland's Isle of Skye to be ferret out vermin and then kill them.

Lily was a beautiful dog, very friendly but willful. "Mayhem was her middle name. She was total chaos," he said. She was a well-loved mess, though. Coleman said he received over 50 cards and letters of condolence after Lily died.

Last spring the department got Gracie, who the chief has nicknamed Miss Congeniality. She has some tail boots to fill, but because she's not a pure Dalmatian she'll probably live longer than her predecessors.

However, she's still more puppy than anything right now. "She's kind of a meathead," said Coleman, "Chews everything!"

In 2002 when my husband Paul and I purchased a piece of land on Peaks Island, our real estate broker, Kirk Goodhue, failed to mention that one of our neighbors was a nosy bitch.

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The legendary "down front cat" passed away quietly, on his last owner's couch in the warm sun on Dec. 16, 2009. "He'd been sick several times in recent years," said Kristen Chalmers, his bereft owner. Apparently he had the habit of getting into some unknown substance (road salt, ash from a basement or something), cleaning himself, ingesting it and then approaching death's door, but not quite going through it.

He was very old - perhaps 21 years according to one islandsider who cared for him long ago. Leo (then Kris Kringle) actually became a presence on the island; recognized, petted, and fed by thousands of residents and visitors alike.

He had quite a racket. For years he set himself up in front of Fenney's, later Hannigan's, an all-white cat (sometimes rather dirty) doing his best to look forlorn, bedraggled and homeless - which he did rather well.

That's how I first met him, many years ago when I was a simple-minded tourist. I had the reaction that countless visitors, and maybe even islanders, had to his lingering there, eyes half-closed by the grocery door. "Oh, look at the nice/poor/sad cat. Maybe he's hungry." Whereupon I went into Fenney's and bought a snap-open can of cat food and gave it to him. HA! Who knows how many fell for that one.

In his earlier years posing as a street cat he was somewhat testy, especially with small children, who poked at him delightedly. But, undeterred by kids, dogs, bikes and strollers Leo stayed put. He got mellow by age and seemed to like people's attention more, not just for treats. He was a wonderful companion to Kristen.

For the last years of his long life, she adopted and doted on him. And since her house is also the GEM Gallery, he found a new, rewarding hang-out, especially at art openings. Attendees were impressed by his fearlessness in crowds, loitering near the refreshments, where he was treated to bits of cheese, smoked salmon and possibly, chips, crackers and bread. He wasn't picky.

At the Inn, he found another, more upscale eatery where he could solicit lobster from outdoor diners.

Though he worried his admirers greatly, weaving his way through summer traffic, he always survived and grew rounder, and we thought he always would forever. Kristen saw him through several operations, and several self-poisonings - he always recovered and returned to his routine.

This last time, though, he did walk through that darkened door, tail high, and we hope there are good treats where he goes. I'll miss Leo. "The" Island Cat, and expect many of us will. His painted portrait remains down front, his constant haunt, on the mailbox of his last home, 62 Island Avenue.

Lily Mayhem, 2007 - 2010

By Kevin Attra

Emily, 1995 - 2009

By Courtenay Auger

Lily (left) and Gracie.

photo by Coleman Clarke

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Talking with Electricity

BY JERRY GARMAN

EMERGENCY 911 system being added by Congress in 1967. In 1989 the pocket cellular phone started a communication revolution and a steady decrease in fixed land lines.

With the telephone came the need for a directory. The first Bell Telephone Directory in 1878 contained only 50 names. It was followed by the "Yellow Pages" in 1886. A Portland directory two years later claimed 1,245 subscribers, and a 1923 "Casco Bay Directory" listed only one island number: the Peaks Island Garage, tel. 109.

By 1926 a "Telephone Directory - Portland District" had 291 Peaks' listings of two or three digits. The 1949 "Official Telephone Directory for PI" listed 347 five-digit numbers 6-9999 and 61 numbers for the other islands, all which now had to be dialed directly.

Portland phone directories were supplemented with several versions of "the Island Directory," A 1983 edition lists 799 Peaks numbers and 456 numbers from the other islands. In 2002 Peggy Astoria's Astro Publishing first created our current Island Phone Directory. This 96 page booklet contains 4,000 listings, requires almost nine months to produce and is the best source for island phone numbers and services.

Super Bowl Sunday and the global warming massacre

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Something about eating junk food, I think, should make up for the fact that I don't watch sports, so on Super Bowl Sunday instead of watching the game I made potato chips. I sliced up an old potato and fried the pieces in a pan, but I could only do a few at a time because my pan was limited. It took all day.

The "New York Times" had a live internet feed from the game - number 41 in the series - and I got to read a lot of their commentary while the chips were cooking.

A couple of interesting ones:

From Greg Bishop: "The Power of the No. 44 was not lost on two men who were it during their NFL careers. Certainly not on this week, as all of us, when last we tuned into the Hall of Fame."

From Richard Sandomir: "The Super Bowl XLIV" (or 44), in the first term of the 44th president (Barack Obama), with 44 members of the Hall of Fame Committee voting.

I spent $30 making a $1.99 worth of potato chips. It occurred to me that tons of energy and materials - from crop harvesting to processing, packaging and shipping - must go into producing commercial junk food.

In fact, it does. Studies have shown that the amount of energy used to produce packaged food is about seven times more than the food itself contains.

"This means that in eating my 400-calorie breakfast, I will, in effect, have consumed 2,800 calories of fossil fuel energy," wrote Chad Horner in a March 2006 article for the San Francisco Chronicle (http://www.sfchron.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi).

There's more. Studies go back to the mid-1990s, conducted by scientific organizations, special interest groups and government organizations like the EPA. Go online and see for yourself.

Clearly, making potato chips is wrong. I showed that to myself on Super Bowl Sunday. Buying them must be insane, like buying a Hummer to go to the mailbox.

On Sunday the Saints came from behind to beat the Colts, 31-17, but the Earth got its ass kicked. At least I didn't order pizza.

Super Bowl Sunday and the global warming massacre

by Palmer

Talking with Electricity

BY JERRY GARMAN

It has been 140 years since Alexander Graham Bell first "talked with electricity." It started with his command to his assistant: "Mr. Watson - come here - I want to see you," and has transitioned through soft feminine voices like sisters Ellin Gallant and Joyce O'Brien requesting "number please," morphing into a synthesized voice directing numerical key entries for specific inquiries and, most recently, our own voice-activated directions for dialing.

SKYPE now offers video conversations. After all of these changes we seem to have returned to person to person conversations; back to pre-phone days.

While Portland had telephones by 1880, it would not be until 1904 that Peaks Island would have phone service, and then for summer only. Ten years later, service was expanded year-round. All calls were processed through a manual switchboard. Our first calls required us to turn a crank and utilize a two-piece candlestick-shaped phone which became one piece in 1927. An operator would plug in your two-, three- or four-digit number and ring two to three times until answered.

Multi-party lines would receive different combinations of long and short rings designating appropriate parties. It was not unusual for all parties to pick up their phone and listen to the conversation (on an island there are few secrets).

Our personal interface with an operator ended at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 29, 1949, when users could dial a five-digit number directly. This later became seven digits, first as Porter 6-999, and finally just 766-9999.

By 1963 dial phones yielded to touch tone with the
March 2010 Sky

BY MIKE RICHARDS

Star Gazing

March is named for Mars, Roman god of war. March was the first month in the ancient Roman calendar and, in that mild Mediterranean climate, the start of the spring military offensives. Here in Maine, it's the start of mud season, when loggers have to leave the woods until summer heat can dry the forest floor and dirt roads.

Some folks tell me they like my 'astrology column,' and I thank them but advise them that I don't write one— I write about astronomy, which is a science, not a belief system. Galileo and other astronomers were often astrologers by trade (hey, it paid the bills!), but the two systems parted ways during the 17th century's Age of Reason (so coined by Thomas Paine of 'Common Sense' fame!).

Still, some people enjoy the thought that their daily destiny is foretold by the heavens, perhaps because it helps absolve them of responsibility for their own actions, an all too human desire. Your sign is the constellation in which the sun was when you were born—but it's big.

March is the month of the Vernal Equinox, the beginning of spring, when the sun passes north of Earth's equator, and Earth's north pole turns directly sideways to the sun, which rises directly in east and sets directly in west today. Since September, it has risen south of east and set south of west, giving us more light than dark each day. Now until next September it will rise north of east and set north of west, giving us more light than dark.

PLANETS

Last month, ruddy Mars dominated the night sky, but it's fading this month as Earth leaves it behind. Because of Earth's faster orbital speed, Mars' motion has appeared retrograde compared with the background stars, but that ends on the 11th of the month. Venus is now the bright evening star on the western horizon after sunset, where it will remain visible until September. By month's end, speedy Mercury will pop up below and right of Venus. Yellow Saturn rises in the east at sunset, reaching opposition to the sun on the 21st. Through a telescope it never fails to amaze, though its rings are only tilted a few degrees. Still, the best views of Saturn are on the internet at saturn.jpl.nasa.gov. [Ed. Note: But they're not as fun to see that way.]

STARS

Overhead around 9 p.m., are Castor and Pollux, the heads of the Gemini twins, with Mars to the left of them, and the faint Beehive star cluster to its left, all right in a row. Below them is Procyon in Canis Minor ('Little Dog'), and below that is brilliant Sirius in Canis Major ('Big Dog'). Red-giant Betelgeuse and white Rigel are the left shoulder and right foot of Orion the Hunter. Aldebaran is the red eye of Taurus the Bull. North of them is yellow Capella in Auriga the Charioteer. To the east is red-giant Arcturus in Boötes the Herdsman—just follow the arc drawn by the handle of the Big Dipper. Take your binoculars and sweep the sky from Mars to Capella, and you'll bump into several star clusters.

ALMANAC

March 1- Sunrise is at 6:18 a.m. and sunset is at 5:30 p.m. Tonight, Saturn is less than a fist (at arm's length) to the left of the waning gibbous moon. Astronomical high tide is at 11:13 a.m., a full 13 feet higher than low tide at 5:26 p.m.

March 5- On this day in 1999, the first known gamma-ray burst swamped the satellites put in orbit to detect nuclear tests on Earth. The burst was only 0.2 seconds long, but it had as much energy as the sun produces in 1,000 years.

March 7- Last-quarter moon is a high at sunrise, and to its right beats the heart of Scorpius, red-giant star Antares, 'Rival to Mars.'

March 9- Yuri Gagarin, born in far western Russia this day in 1934, was the first man in outer space and first to orbit Earth in a spacecraft. His home town of Gzharsk was renamed for him.

March 12- The moon is at apogee, its furthest away from Earth this cycle, so tides are minimal, just 6.1 feet between high and low.

March 14- Albert Einstein, born in Ulm in southern Germany this day in 1879, was the 'father of modern physics.' Daylight Saving Time starts again today; spring ahead, setting your clocks up an hour and give yourself more light this evening (not good for astronomers).

March 15- New moon means dark skies tonight, best for star-gazing.

March 16- Look low on the horizon over town tonight around 6:15 p.m. as a very thin, day-old crescent moon points toward Venus.

March 17- Sunrise is at 6:50 a.m. and sunset is at 6:30 p.m. The crescent moon is now above Venus.

March 20- Vernal Equinox today at 1:32 p.m. The waxing crescent moon sits just to the left of the star-cluster Pleiades tonight.

March 23- First-quarter moon is high at sunset. The next week is best for lunar exploration with telescope or even binoculars.

March 29- The Moon's at perigee again, more than 27,000 miles closer to Earth than it was a fortnight ago, and Full Moon is tomorrow, so tides are starting to build again to 13' between high and low.

March 30- The nearly full Moon sets behind Portland at 6:13 a.m. for those on the early boat to town.

March 31- Sunrise is at 6:25 a.m. and sunset is at 7:05 p.m., and we have another astronomical high tide at 12:16 a.m. and low tide at 6:33 a.m.
Serving Board member, Peggy Harmon worked at stories from our community’s past, the original Feeney’s Market and volunteered for many activities at the school, St. Christopher’s Church and the Casco Bay Island Development Association. But her pet cause was the Fifth Maine. By 1950 the Fifth Maine Regiment Memorial Hall had become so deteriorated that it was in danger of being condemned and torn down. Peggy and a few other islanders, including Verna Hurley, Mary Jaquith, Bill Chapman, John Feeney and Bob Tyler, took action. They looked beyond the falling down porch, leaking roof and broken windows and saw an architectural gem. More importantly, they understood that this dilapidated old building represented much more — it was a direct link to that most pivotal time in our country’s history, the Civil War. For nearly 30 years Peggy gave her all to the Fifth Maine. In good times and bad, her tenacity stirred islanders to give of their money and time to restore this island gem. Peggy herself did whatever needed to be done — painting, minor repairs, fundraising, even preparing the pancake breakfasts and harvest suppers when she was well into her 80s. As our long-time treasurer she knew where every cent came and went. Her knowledge of the organization is legendary. Having grown up in her family home across the street from the Fifth Maine, Peggy had fond memories of some of the veterans and their families. She often spoke of General Aaron Daggett, the last surviving Fifth Maine veteran who died in 1928 at the age of 90. She recalled him shooing away island children on some days, but on others, regaling them with tales of his 40-year army experience, beginning with his enlistment in the Fifth Maine Regiment in 1861 and ending with his act of assisting a rescue western diplomat held prisoner in Peking, China in 1901. Peggy’s vision of what the Fifth Maine could be extended beyond preserving the hall and what it stands for. In the absence of an island historical society, she convinced the board of directors to assume that role. Thus began our local history initiative that is now gaining statewide recognition. In the past few years, Peggy’s failing health prevented her from actively participating, but she continued to offer advice and share her vast knowledge of the Fifth Maine. The board of directors honored Peggy as its only lifetime member. Sadly, she passed away on Feb. 6 at the age of 92, but her legacy will not be forgotten. Her son, Art, and daughter-in-law, Mary Ellen, now serve on the board—an unbroken chain of the Harmon family’s commitment to the Fifth Maine.

From the FIFTH MAINE

A Friend Remembered

BY KIM MACISAAC
FIFTH MAINE MUSEUM CURATOR

While this column usually focuses on stories from our community’s past, we’re making an exception this month to remember the Fifth Maine’s longest serving Board member, Peggy Harmon. As a young widow raising three children, Peggy Harmon worked at the original Feeney’s Market and volunteered for many activities at the school, St. Christopher’s Church and the Casco Bay Island Development

On Art

REFINEMENTS

Thinking about where you are

BY JESSICA GEORGE

(Shot out to the frozen Trout Pond.)

It’s five past ten on a beautifully warm Wednesday morning in February and I am on foot, finishing errands, running errands in town. I have a 15-minute walk to the ferry and find I will miss the 10:15 a.m. boat back home to Peaks Island. Left with a free hour to meander through the city, I think I will search out something I’ve yet to notice in Portland.

HELP PRESERVE WHAT’S SPECIAL ABOUT PEAKS.

Peaks Island is a truly special place, with its rocky shores, its woodland and its walkways. Your membership (only $15 individual/$25 family) and your donations are crucial in helping us maintain open spaces.

PEAKS ISLAND
LAND PRESERVE

A few places to sit in Carlson & Turner’s, and I can attest that antiquated forms of sensual pleasure abide, for now, on Congress Street. I enjoy picking up some beautifully bound and covered, embossed and gilded small books displayed on the counter. (Only after I leave do I find out that they offer bookbinding, conservation, box making, letterpress printing, and typesetting services.) There are a few places to sit in Carlson & Turner’s, and I can attest that antiquated forms of sensual pleasure abide, for now, on Congress Street. I enjoy picking up some beautifully bound and covered, embossed and gilded small books displayed on the counter. (Only after I leave do I find out that they offer bookbinding, conservation, box making, letterpress printing, and typesetting services.) There are a few places to sit in Carlson & Turner’s, and I can attest that antiquated forms of sensual pleasure abide, for now, on Congress Street. I enjoy picking up some beautifully bound and covered, embossed and gilded small books displayed on the counter. (Only after I leave do I find out that they offer bookbinding, conservation, box making, letterpress printing, and typesetting services.) There are a few places to sit in Carlson & Turner’s, and I can attest that antiquated forms of sensual pleasure abide, for now, on Congress Street. I enjoy picking up some beautifully bound and covered, embossed and gilded small books displayed on the counter. (Only after I leave do I find out that they offer bookbinding, conservation, box making, letterpress printing, and typesetting services.) There are a few places to sit
**Fools for love make scenes in public**

Acorn Productions Director Michael Levine. photo by Arthur Fink

**BY KEVIN ATTRA**

On the night before Valentine's Day, Acorn Productions' *Naked Shakespeares* company ran through 10 scenes from various Shakespearean plays in a show called *Fools for Love* at the Inn on Peaks Island. For over two hours they plundered and wooed, lied and co-mingled, their opinions on west coast houses, vineyards and palm trees to remind us that we are not plundered and wooed, lie d co-stard. When a man or woman has studied "The responsibility of writers." Taste usually implies that, who live on the spirit of love as Shakespeare liked them.

The 16-member troupe behaved like people in a restaurant who'd rarely lost their heads, and had at each other among the tables in the crowded Bay View dining room — it was a Saturday and the room was packed.

In typical Shakespearean fashion they yelled a lot and gesticulated wildly, often with swords, speaking the obscure, dead language of Renaissance England.

Despite that, some of the actors were quite adept, morphing into a range of characters without the aid of costume or set change. Paul Haley was especially good. His King Richard II was played with nicely contained rage, while his Malvolio from *Twelfth Night* was an over-the-top blast.

Michael Howard and Stephanie Ross also stood out as skillful performers, but the deftness of the actors ranged wildly, which imbalanced some scenes and made others painfully awkward to watch.

After the show, Director Mike Levine said, "It's hard to manage that many people. Next time we do it, I'll bring out about eight actors, all doing three or four scenes each."

Over and above any rehearsing they might have to do, the company spends every Monday strictly working on the language, to ultimately own it, perhaps to dream in Elizabethan English.

Acorn is a non-profit organization who's mission is to expand the appreciation of live performance. With *Naked Shakespeares* Levine wants to revive young audiences and spark their interest in classic theater. Financially, he said the Valentine's Day show was a wash. "There's no way we can make free Shakespeare pay for itself."

The company has a regular gig at the Wine Bar on Wharf Street on the first Monday of each month, where the players individually perform the intricate, sometimes famous soliloquies of Shakespeare's plays.

Levine said the solos at the Wine Bar are easier to prepare for than scenes like those at the Inn because the actors can generally work by themselves, memorizing and perfecting their monologues, then check in with Mike on occasion to verify their progress.

On the other hand, he said, "We spent a fair amount of rehearsal time on the Valentine's Day scenes. It took three hours with the actors, just on lines, to get real ownership of the language."

**REFINEMENTS, from page 14**

display, "The burden of Christmas", "The responsibility of writers".

There are more - their randomness makes me laugh - however, one essay seriously catches my attention and won't let go, "Does refinement kill individuality?"

"Is it true that cultivation, what we call refinement, kills individuality? Or even worse, that, that one loses his taste by over-cultivation? These persons are interesting, certainly, who have gone so far in culture that they accept conventional standards stippled to be correct, in which they refer everything, and by which they measure everybody. Taste usually implies a sort of selection, the cultivated taste of which we speak is merely a comparison, no longer an individual prejudice of appreciation, but only a reference to the conventional and accepted standard. When a man or woman has reached this stage of propriety we are never curious any more concerning their opinions on any subject. We know that the opinion expressed will not be theirs, evoked out of their own feeling, but that they will be the cut-and-dried results of conventionality."

He goes on to say that this following of rules and mandaliness of social order is maintained for fear of the pain of being an individual, "in subordination to our personality."

He writes warm descriptions of east coast beaches, islands and mountains, west coast hot houses, vineyards and palms to remind us that we are not machines to be brought into perfect uniformity, we are human. Our thoughts and actions are brought into rule at the loss of the art of conversation.

Impulsive talking! Peculiar feelings! Deviant personality! These are what must be refined in order to free ourselves - perhaps painfully for some - from the context of and conformity to what is outside ourselves. Warner warns us that conformity leads to complacency. To this day refinement keeps us from breaking rules, from surprising ourselves, from feeling alive.

If these words do anything today, I hope they remind us that refinement itself is a process of change. Change is always within a larger context.

Glad to have missed the boat and walk similarly, I leave with my spotlight shining on the rest of the winter months ambling through with tea and books, researching and writing, recollections and rejuvenating thoughts from the past that still apply today, and much consideration to the pages of *As If We Were Singing*.

(Ed. Note: As all of us who live on the islands have done at one time or another, Jessica got her boat times mixed up. There is a 10:15 to Peaks. The correct boat was at 10:45 a.m. The subscribers Commotion actually existed and wrote such a journal, but their real names were Gillies and Barry... don't ask.)
Ten years ago, residents of Vinalhaven, Maine’s largest year-round island community, took the first step to address a growing concern. Many elderly neighbors and relatives were obliged to travel to mainland nursing facilities and offer respite living there permanently, away from families and friends.

The residents contacted the Genesis Community Loan Fund (GCLF) to see if there was some way that people who needed nursing services could receive them on the island.

With GCLF legal and grant writing assistance, the islanders established a nonprofit corporation, Vinalhaven Eldercare Services, within a year and had opened the Ivan Calderwood Home, a residential nursing care facility that allows up to 16 islanders to remain in their community as long as they live.

The Calderwood Home project raised awareness that Maine’s 14 offshore island communities would need affordable housing and medical care, especially as they aged. The islanders established ElderCare Services, within a year and a half, and opened the Ivan Calderwood Home, a residential nursing care facility that allows up to 16 islanders to remain in their community as long as they live.

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Margaret L. Harmon (Peggy), 91

Margaret (Peggy) L. Harmon of Peaks Island died on Feb. 6 in Portland following a brief illness, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born on April 18, 1918 in Portland, the daughter of Harold M. and Margaret L. (Deejen) Conley. She attended local schools and was a 1936 graduate of Portland High School.

She was a communicant of St. Christopher's Church on Peaks Island where she was a past member of the Catholic Council of Catholic Women. Peggy worked for many years as a cashier at Careen's Market on Peaks Island.

She was instrumental in the revitalization of the 5th Maine Regiment Community Center, where she was treasurer and was honored as the only lifetime board member.

Peggy was also an original member of the Casco Bay Island Development Association.

One of her greatest joys was summers on Peaks Island, where she opened her home to family and friends.

Peggy was predeceased by her husband Arthur T. Harmon in 1960; a brother Harold M. Conley; and two grandsons, James A. Granz in 2009 and Timothy B. Harmon, Jr. in 2011.

She is survived by a daughter, Claudine Granz and her husband Paul N. of Scarborough; sons Arthur Harmon and his wife Mary Ellen of Jacksonville, FL, and James Harmon and his wife Wendy of Falmouth; grandchildren Paul T. Granz of Scarborough, Rebecca L. Harbottle and her husband John of Scarborough, Dawn Jackson and her husband Brad of Jacksonville, FL, Nicole Harmon of Jacksonville, FL, Matthew Harmon and his wife Maghan of Gotham, Christopher Harmon of Portland, and Jeremy Harmon of Falmouth; 12 great-grandchildren; and a granddaughter-in-law Laura A. Granz of Dayton.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Tuesday, Feb. 1 at St. Patrick's Church in Portland. Services were held Thursday, Feb. 10 at St. Patrick's Church, 250 Commercial St., Portland. She is interred at Calvary Cemetery, South Portland. Oblate condolences may be expressed to the family at http://www.ortsvanfjord.com.

James Edward Sullivan, Jr. “Jimbo”, 37

James Edward Sullivan, Jr., “Jimbo”, 37 years of age, former of Braintree, MA and Peaks Island, ME entered Life Eternal at the Gosnell Hospice House in Scarborough, ME on Wednesday Jan. 27 following a battle with cancer.

James was born in Weymouth and raised in Braintree, MA and Braintree where he was a 1990 graduate of Braintree High School. He had attended Quincy College.

Jimbo was a published poet and an avid reader of Irish music and Irish drumming. He played Celtic music at the American Legion Post at Peaks Island where he was a member, having served in the U.S. Army. He belonged to the Maine Irish Heritage Center in Portland and attended meetings of the Braintree Council Knights of Columbus.

He enjoyed whittling and making Indian jewelry, and was fascinated with Native American culture. Jimbo was employed as a painter and carpenter for the firm of Painting and Carpentry by Peter Stackhouse and had been a Peaks Island resident for 10 years before moving to Portland.

He is the beloved husband of Christie (Correy) Sullivan, loving father of Ian Cotter, beloved son of Joan Marie (Cushing) Sullivan of South Weymouth and godfather to Timmy Bell of Amherst, MA. He was predeceased by his father, James Edward Sullivan, former Chairman of the Braintree Board of Selectmen, and his sister, Joan Marie Foley formerly of Braintree.

He is also survived by his loving brother Timothy D. Sullivan married to Joyce A. Sullivan of South Weymouth, sisters Susan E. McBride married to Donald McBride of East Weymouth and Ellen K. Burns married to Kevin Burns of South Weymouth.

Jimbo is also survived by many aunts, uncles and cousins, nieces and nephews and great-grandnieces and great-grandnephews.

Jimbo has many friends, especially on Peaks Island and in Massachusetts.

A gathering was held at the Mortimer N. Peck – Russell Peck Funeral Home 56 Washington St., Braintree, MA, on Monday, Feb. 1 followed by a Memorial Mass at the Church of Saint Thomas. Memorial donations may be sent to Gosnell Memorial Hospice House, 11 Hannon Road, Scarborough, Maine 04074 or to Gary’s House, 97 State Street, Portland, Maine 04011.

Harry Boyle Promoted To Heaven!

Peaks Island native, Harry Boyle passed away on Thursday, Feb. 4 in Naples, Florida. Harry was born on March 2, 1936. His parents were Raymond (better known as Dick) and Olivia Boyle. He was raised in the little grey house, two doors down from Sally Costello’s house on Island Avenue.

During the 1930s, 1940s and early part of the 1950s, where you saw Larry you saw his brothers. The “Boyle Boys” as they were commonly referred to were only 11 months apart in age and did everything together as children.

Their fondest memories together were of their time spent with their grandfather, Bridgeman Trout. “Grampy”, spoiled the boys like any good grandfather would, often treating them to hamburgers and cokes when they were left to his care.

Harry excelled in athletics, especially at baseball. After setting many records at Portland High School, he went on to sign a professional contract as a pitcher with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1954. Due to an injury to his throwing arm, his professional career was short-lived.

After pro ball, Harry enlisted in the United States Air Force and was stationed in Amarillo, Texas where he met his dear wife, Georgia. They were married for over 50 years and had four children together, Scott, Keith, Valerie and Cory.

In 1958, Harry gave his life to Jesus Christ and spent the next 32 years serving his Savior. For 12 years he served in many capacities at Grace Baptist Church in Amarillo, first as junior, then as Sunday school teacher.

Some time during the mid-1960s he took on the responsibility of choir director. Known as Bro. Boyle by this time, under his leadership the Grace Baptist Church Choir became nationally known and recorded their first album.

After receiving his master’s degree he was given the responsibility of starting a Christian Day School. With less than one year to organize, the new school opened its doors with 481 students.

He also served as a chaplain at the Maine State Prison for over 12 years. He served in many capacities at Grace Baptist Church, as well as other churches, with his church still financially supporting.

In the mid-1980s he earned his PhD in Education Administration, and served at Boston Baptist College from 1979 until his death, first as Vice President, then President and finally as its first Chancellor.

A weekend of celebration to remember Harry was held on Feb. 19 and Feb. 20 at Grace Baptist Church in Portland. Over 1,000 people came to pay their last respects to this very ordinary man whom God did extraordinary things through.

In an effort to accommodate all of Pastor Boyle’s friends and colleagues around the world, Saturday’s 10 AM service was broadcast live on the internet.

Harry’s family and friends gathered from around the world gathered to celebrate the life of this faithful servant of God.

Harry is survived by his wife, Georgia, sons, Scott, Keith and Cory, daughter, Valerie, 8 grandchildren, his brothers Ellie and Raymond Jr., and sisters Patelle and Betty Ann.
COMMUNITY NOTES

The Gem UNDONE, a group show with original work based on the theme of "raising your mind", opens Friday, March 12 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and runs weekends through March 21. A percentage of sales will be donated to Alzheimer Research.

The Gem Gallery offers images to raise public awareness of Alzheimer's disease. You may drop off material in Kristen Chaloner's mailbox next to the Gem Gallery. Sharing encourages stories.

The Gem Gallery is an artist/Craftsperson cooperative of over 25 individuals in media of painting, drawing, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, photography, printmaking, assemblage, fiber arts and writing. Solo and group shows of many of our islanders. Show runs thru March. Artist reception Sunday, March 14 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the gallery. The Gem-Gems - a new oil paintings by Serena Wakeling. The Long Island Dogwood Gallery is located at the Long Island Learning Center on Gorham Ave and open according to the library schedule. Please call 766-2530 or visit online at [library website] for more information.

Addison-Woolley at Studio 208A: Places in Our Memory, by photographer Araceli Buckerman, an exploration places on Monypenny Hill in black and white photographs, with works by painter Norm Prouty. Show runs from March 5th to March 17th. Artist's reception Friday March 5th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. During hours are 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. each day, including Saturday and Sunday. Addison-Woolley at Studio 208A, located in the Bickley Building at 65 Water Street, Peabody, MA. Phone 781-8499, website addisonwoolley.com.

The Fifth Maine Teaching & Interpreting the Civil War Saturday May 22: 8:30 am to 3:30 pm at The Fifth Maine Museum, Peaks Island. Workshop for teachers and heritage resource volunteers and professionals interested in enriching their knowledge of the Civil War and Maine's involvement as we approach the Sesquicentennial Commemoration in 2011. Tickets are $75. For more information, visit our website: www.5thma.com or call 766-2854.

Children's Workshop Friday infant-toddler group is from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. while the older preschoolers go to the library for story time. For more information about the program, visit our website: www.peff.org or call 766-2627.

The Workshop would like to thank its volunteers on the board of directors and especially those who work directly with children: Virginia Horne, our foster grandparent, Sue Ellen Roberts, who volunteers with the children a morning or two, Wendal Rassilus, "Our Born to Read" volunteer. The volunteers add a depth to the program and we love them.

Peak Island Library

The "Bad News" is that the main library at Monument Square is now closed for the whole month of March. All other branches and kiosks are open at their regular hours. MaineCat and Interlibrary Loan services are still available; however, you would be wise to allow more time for your requests.

The "Really Good News" is that the Monument Square branch reopens on Tuesday, April 6, an amazing new facility with beautiful spaces for children and families.

Nursery-Rhyme Time - Wednesdays at 11 a.m. If you are the parent or caregiver of a child 0-3, or if you have visitors that you wish to join you, please call to schedule.

The Peaks Island Library is located at 129 Island Ave in the Community Center building. Hours are Tuesday 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., Wednesday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. to NOON. For more information call 766-3140 or visit www.peff.org/library/locations/peaks.html.

Community Food Pantry

At the Children's Workshop, open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. during the workshop's hours. No Saturday hours through March. For more information, call Susan Hanley at susan@jigcom.com.

Portland Recreation

Walk Program - Monday and Thursday mornings, 8:15 a.m. (over at community building). Indoor stretching when weather doesn't cooperate.


Ping Pong Tuesdays - Tuesday afternoons from 3:00 to 4:00.

Advent Basketball - Tuesday evenings, 6:00 to 7:00 at Peaks Island School gym, 22 per night. No program during school vacations, holidays, school snow days. For more info, contact Denise Macaronos, Recreation Programmer, 766-2790, or e-mail nhartford@maine.rr.com. Additional activities and updates can be found on island bulletin board.

Patty's Old Books Free delivery to Peaks Island residents. Contact by email at pughes@gmail.com or call 211-0317.

Recycling Electronics To recycle your old cell phones or music players, drop them in the collection box by the bulletin board at the library. They will be reconditioned and distributed to those who need them.

Do Not Call Registry to restrict telemarketing calls. To register, call toll free (888) 382-1227 or visit www.donotcall.gov. If registering by phone, you must call from the number that you wish to add to the list. It's free and does not expire. Only residential land lines may be added. The FCC enforces the Do Not Call Registry. To file a complaint, email fccinfo@fcc.gov, or phone (888) 227-5822. You can also use the online complaint form at http://complaint.fcc.gov/complaint.htm.


Dance Classes

For class schedule and information contact Shannon at 766-5066 or email shawnnutrition@gmail.com.

Yoga Classes

In Brackett Fellowship Hall. Please contact Rebecca Stephens for the schedule at 766-1017 or ryoga@verizon.net.

10 Architaxal Lecture Series

Tuesday, March 30, "The Heart of Bridge Design: The Best in Integrating Architecture and Engineering" at USM's Harman Hall in the Abbe Center at 8:00 p.m. For more information, call 780-4205 or rfortier@usm.maine.edu.

Weight Training

Mondays and Thursdays 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Community Room, ankle and hand weight training for strength and to encourage strong bones. Call Rhonda (2883) for more information.

Cooking for Crowds

Kathy strove, MS, RD, University of Maine Cooperative Extension. To be held on Tuesday, March 30 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Walker Memorial Library in Westbrook. Thursday, April 1 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Brown Memorial Library in E. Baldwin. Monday, April 5 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the American Legion Post in Gray, Friday, April 6 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the St. Maximilian Episcopal Church in Scarborough. $10 per person. To register call 780-4150 or 800-287-1471 (toll free in Maine). Please, bring your own lunch.

Beginner Beekeeping

By the University of Maine Cooperative Extension in Cumberland County, starting March 5th to run five consecutive Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8:30 at the Maine Forest Service facility, Gray. A practical, in-depth study of beekeeping and honey making taught by Tony Jelcizak, Maine State Apiarist and Marc Planted, an experienced beekeeper. Field season to be determined. Class limited to 25 registrations. Fee: $75 per person or couple, includes one set of course materials. Course fills fast. For more information, contact Rhonda Hoyt, 780-4205 or chr@maine.rr.com.


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COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, March 1
Portland Recreation First Monday Fun: Preschoolers/Adults from 11 am to 12 pm in the community room (children must be accompanied by an adult). Move to all sorts of music, including Irish and Greek tunes. Drop in anytime, no pre-registration.

Friday, March 5
Open House Celebrating Procrastination Week - Drop in anytime from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm. It's time to get to those projects - bring something to start and/or finish. If you don't have anything to bring, help Denise with one of her projects!

Tuesday, March 6
Peaks Island Library First Tuesday Book Discussion - at 2 pm at the library, 129 Island Avenue, on Peaks Island. On April 6, the book will be Su of Papiers by Ammar Ghosh. To reserve your spot call (766-5340) or email peaks@portland.lib.me.us, and include your library card number. Please contact the library if you have a copy to share.

Saturday, March 13
Thrift Shop, 10 am to 1 pm at the Brackett Memorial Church vestry. For info call the church office 766-5013.

Sunday, March 14
St. Patrick's Day Parade begins at NGON at the Portland Fishe Pier on Commercial Street and proceeds to the Maine State Pier. The Irish American Club (below) will lead off, followed in no particular order by the Maine Irish Heritage Center, the Portland Irish Drinkers, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Dunlap Highland Pipe Band, the Stulson School of Irish Step Dance, First Responders from Police and Fire Fighters from Portland and surrounding districts, as well as the Griffin Club of South Portland.

Tuesday, March 16
What is climate change, and who cares? The first discussion in a series led by Rev. Desi Larson and Sam Saltonstall on global climate change, with helpful information, lively debate and some tasty dessert snacks, at 7 pm in the Brackett Church fellowship hall. Participants need to register in advance. Call Sam at 899-0922. Free.

Friday, March 19
Open Mic Night - 7:30 pm at the Brackett Memorial Church. Stories, music, poetry, maybe dessert to share, and enjoy a fun-filled evening. For more info contact Sam Saltonstall, 899-0922.

Tuesday March 23
If we care, what's to do? The second discussion in a series led by Rev. Desi Larson and Sam Saltonstall on global climate change, with helpful information, lively debate and some tasty dessert snacks, at 7 pm in the Brackett Church fellowship hall. Participants need to register in advance. Call Sam at 899-0922. Free.

Thursday, March 25
Brackett Memorial Church Supper, from 5 pm. 6:07 pm featuring soups, homemade bread, salads and desserts. Free and open to the public to enjoy food, community, and good conversation. Call Wally Fischer, 735-9093. Thrift Shop - 4 pm to 6 pm in the Brackett Memorial fellowship hall. “MARCH INTO MAY” Kick off celebration (check bulletin boards for details) a free 10-week physical activity program designed to help communities, friends and families improve their health through increased physical activity. Join Denise’s team – or better yet, form your own team of classmates, brothers/sisters and even grandparents. We’ll have fun getting into shape together.

Tuesday March 30
What is climate change, and who cares? The second discussion in a series led by Rev. Desi Larson and Sam Saltonstall on global climate change, with helpful information, lively debate and some tasty dessert snacks, at 7 pm in the Brackett Church fellowship hall. Participants need to register in advance. Call Sam at 899-0922. Free.

Special Election Notice
FROM MIKE MURRAY, ISLAND/NEIGHBORHOOD ADMINISTRATOR

The Portland City Council passed the special election order on Feb. 1, for the PIG seat that Judy Panoblock was appointed to. The election will occur on June 8, 2010, in conjunction with the June Primary, to fill the remainder of the term until November 2012.

Nomination papers were made available on Monday February 8, and are due back in the Portland City Clerk’s office no later than April 5, 2010.

Summer Programs
Peaks Island Fiber Arts Camp After-school programs begins March 24, on Wednesday afternoon from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm. thru May 5 (no session April 21). For $90. Please contact Laura Gershing at 766-7775 or by email at kgfish@yahoo.com.

Friends of the TEIA Registration for "Camperships" begins in May for Peaks Island children who want to attend the club’s sailing, tennis and kid’s camp programs. All fees are paid by Friends of the TEIA. Registration forms will be available at the Peaks Island School. Anyone interested in supporting this worthwhile endeavor either by volunteering or contributing financially should call Stephanie Castle at 899-5678 or Barbara Hoppin at hoppin@portland.lib.me.us.

Unclassified
The Fay Garman House will be hosting an attorney from the Southern Maine Agency on Aging who will be discussing Advanced Directives and helping people with Powers of Attorney. This will be a free service and will be scheduled in the spring. If you are interested please call June O’Neill, 831 6039 or 766-2419.

Next Issue
The State of the Union
Part 2

The second in a series examining the history of secession on Peaks Island and the role of the Peaks Island Council. One of the greatest concerns of people on both sides of the issue is the viability of the school, and its impact on the community. In part 2 we look at the role of schools on Peaks and other islands, and how secession succeeded in one place and failed in another.