11-2011

Island Times, Nov 2011

Kevin Attra

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In the News

CBITD Directors Come Under Fire
Many residents attend the monthly board meeting to vent frustration over policy changes and conditions at the terminal.

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Recipes & Ramblings
A new series by Sheila Reiser on food and cooking. This month: making your own pesto.

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A Special Memorial
In honor of Peaks Islander Joe Burman, who passed away in September. We’ve reprinted an article published in the publication, Harbor Opinion, about his experience aboard the U.S.S. Bulwark, which collided with the carrier U.S.S. Kennedy 26 years ago this month.

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In the Arts

Sacred & Profane
Art editor Jamie Hogan covers the annual arts exhibition and performance at the Battery Steele.

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Election Edition ABOVE: Voter registration begins on Peaks Island... no, wait! That’s Halloween at the Nash’s. “All it takes is a little signature,” instructed the sharp dressed man at the desk. “Don’t worry about the fine print.” According to Mr. B. Elbee Bub (gesturing by the winged devil in back) the sharp dressed man is a deal-closer. “You’re in acquisitions,” he added. Election day is Tuesday, Nov. 8. Polls open at 7:00 a.m. in Portland. Thanksgiving Day is Thursday, Nov. 24. Hopefully, neither event gives you hell.

Candidates court votes
Peaks Island Council candidates hold a meet & greet at the MacVane Center

BY KEVIN ATTRA
In late August the Peaks Island Council faced possible extinction when only one person had registered to be a candidate for the five open positions on the council. However, within a month four more candidates committed themselves as write-ins.

On Wednesday, Oct 26 the PICA held a meeting so the public could meet with the only designated candidate on the ballot, Mary Anne Mitchell, and write-in candidates Robert Mehart, Richard Machin, Michael Bell and Scott Kelley. As Chair Rory Foster wrote in his invitation to the community, it was held in the Community Peace & Justice Room & Friendship Meeting Center (formerly known as the MacVane Center). Even City Councilor Kevin Donovan came. Mitchell “looked pretty full, maybe 40 people.”

Given the tongue-in-cheek nature of communication from the particular Island Council it has been a pleasant surprise to see how seriously the members actually take the job.

In their first year they managed to acquire $39,000 from the city - $10,000 more than last year - which provided meaningful assistance to community and children for travel between the mainland and the islands.

They also channeled financial aid to the Children’s Workshop and the Island taxi service, and advocated for the community on issues of public safety and education.

Mehart and Kelley, who were appointed to the council last year, are the only standing council members up for election this year. Mitchell, Machin and Sylvestre will be new to the council.

It all is elected, as Foster put it, “Our Battle Station will finally be fully operational and we will become More Powerful Than You Could Ever Imagine.”

In other relevant elections, three representatives on the Casco Bay Island Transit District board of directors will be chosen. Incumbent Scott Johnson is running unopposed as a write-in candidate for the Little Diamond seat; however, the other two positions are contested.

Current board president Patrick Flynn is competing with write-in candidate Clark to represent Peaks Island, and Kathleen Hoffner is running against Roger Robinson for the Great Diamond seat. See you at the polls.

Peaks Island Fuel’s zoning permit upheld

BY KEVIN ATTRA
An appeal opposing a permit granted to Keith Ivers, owner of Peaks Island Fuel, to park his vehicles on property adjacent to his home on Peaks Island was denied at a public hearing by the Portland Board of Appeals in City Council chambers on Thursday, Oct. 13.

For Mr. Ivers the event was a short-lived victory in an ordeal that may not be over.

The appeal was filed by attorney David Laurie against the fuel company’s zoning permit, which allows Ivers to park seven commercial vehicles on a modified portion of property he is purchasing on Island Avenue near the TEIA clubhouse.

About 80 people came to the meeting, filling all the seats in the chamber as well as the gallery on the second floor. The opponents of the permit tended to sit on the left side of the room, the proponents on the right. It was open season in the gallery.

Owner Keith Ivers and his family stood near the doorway throughout the four-hour barrage of legal argument and hair-splitting interpretation of the zoning ordinances.

The zoning permit was originally granted because the property is in a commercial zone, designated I-B, and Ivers’ plan conforms to all the requirements of the zoning ordinance as well as environmental and safety requirements.

However, when property owners in the neighborhood were informed of his plans by the city in July as part of the routine permitting process, Ivers began receiving e-mails threatening to ruin him financially with legal appeals and law suits.

Some members of the TEIA publicly denounced Mr. Ivers and his right to build his terminal,” said club president John Culliver.

“We and our neighbors have expressed concern over proposed changes to the area,” she wrote in an e-mail to the community on July 27. She added that, “we are not in any way in opposition to Peaks Island Fuel, in fact many of us are satisfied customers.”

Peaks Island Fuel owner Keith Ivers, at the appeal hearing, after being asked if he plans to wash his trucks at the site said, “If somebody wants to wash my truck, go for it,” he said. “I don’t do it.”

On the other hand, some members of the club came to the hearing in support of Mr. Ivers.

I’m here to show that Peaks Island and the TEIA support Keith and his right to build his terminal,” said club member Ross Coles.

The appeal, as argued by please see FUEL page 2
Art Goelman, a lobsterman on Peaks, has quietly endured what he's said is continued harassment from other fishermen on the island since at least the early 1990s. The harassment from other fishermen has happened on the water - a Nazi swastika was once put in one of his traps, and someone scratched the word "Jew" into the side of his truck. "I want to turn the other cheek, but enough is enough," he said.

However, he has called the police and spoken with Peaks Patrol Officer Cindy Taylor. He also talked with ministers and other leading figures in the community. "This kind of vandalism is an unmitigated act of cowardice," wrote Cmdd. Barry Harris of the American Legion in a letter to the paper (see Letters, page 6).

Officer Taylor has set up a phone line for anyone with information to call: 874-8479.

Art Goelman said he could abide the feud as long as it was at sea, but, "I'm very disappointed, obviously. I think there's a good chance of appeal. It's dead wrong to rely on policies of different times." He said he was momentarily relieved. "It's a good start, but I don't think they've done anything," he said.

Art Goelman spent summers here as a child and moved into his family cottage permanently in 2003. His grandparents and great-grandparents have owned property on the island since at least the early 1900s. The harassment from other fishermen has happened on the water - a Nazi swastika was once put in one of his traps, and someone scratched the word "Jew" into the side of his truck. "I want to turn the other cheek, but enough is enough," he said.

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At Casco Bay Lines

Contentious monthly board meeting over policy changes and conditions at the terminal

BY KEVIN ATTRA

CBITD board members present: Pat Flynn - president, Sue Moreau, Matt Hoffner, Alan O'Meara, Ray MacKenzie, Dennis, Frank Peretti, Dave Crowley, Charles Barr, Scott Johnson and Erno Benebaker. Ms. Peretti and Hank Berg also attending. Chairwoman Karen Demoghe arrived around 45 minutes into the meeting, and mayoral candidate Mike Brennan also sat.

The mood of the CBITD board meeting on Thursday, Oct. 27 was contentious. The room was crowded with spectators from Peaks Island and other residents who were frustrated over several issues concerning the Bay Lines operation.

Even before the meeting began, the minutes from the previous meeting – usually a rubber stamp affair – were contested by Frank Peretti who complained that the minutes of the annual meeting held in July aboard the Bay Mist had not been produced.

According to General Manager Hank Berg, the usual practice has been to not publish minutes of that meeting, since no action is taken by the board.

However, other board members agreed with Peretti that a record of public comments at the meeting should be available, especially since specific complaints had been made concerning issues such as cleanliness of the restrooms at the terminal.

The meeting had been recorded by Administrative Assistant Kristen Higham, so the board asked her to type up minutes from that meeting. It also resolved to publish minutes for all meetings in the future.

During public comment at the October board meeting, several Peaks Islanders complained that neither Operations Manager Nicholas Mavodones, Jr., nor Mr. Berg had heard of an incident when a forklift carried a parked vehicle aboard the Machigonne II, which required one person in the car to be hospitalized.

It was reported that the forklift operator had been reckless, but there didn’t appear to have been any disciplinary action taken against him. The residents wanted to know what precautions were being taken to prevent such an accident in the future.

Residents were also up in arms over an issue related to the proposed terminal expansion project, which includes redesigning the bathrooms, changes to the roof and repairs to some of the doors on the pier.

The project had lingered on the drawing board for several years until it was revived last spring when Mr. Berg received funding through a federal grant.

Peaks resident Peggy Peretti was furious over lack of access to the terminal for handicapped persons. “It’s been 10 years pursuing this issue,” she said. “Maybe it doesn’t bother you that people can’t get into the terminal.”

Ms. Peretti came with Marge Powers, president of the Peaks Island Health Center board of directors, to testify about this issue. They both stated the entryways into the terminal were extremely difficult to negotiate by persons whose mobility is impaired.

Ms. Peretti demanded that at least one entry be immediately converted to power-operated, and strongly recommended that it be the double door system nearest the garage exit as it was most convenient for passengers arriving at the terminal.

Board member Charles Barr said, “I see no justification why people should wait any longer.”

Mavodones said that he had obtained estimates from two companies. “We’re not in violation of any [Americans with Disabilities Act] regulation. We thought we’d use architects to help, because we don’t know the implications of this. If we do one door, do we have to do all the doors, employee doors, entryways?”

The board resolved to consult an architect and get bids in time to make a decision at the Executive Committee meeting Nov. 5. Frank Peretti said, “If it’s $5,000, we should get it done. If it’s $25,000, I’ll fight with my wife.”

Condition of the restrooms at the terminal was also brought up. Peaks resident Rand Goe made a formal presentation to ask that the restrooms be reestablished as open to the public, and argued that a public service was being paid for by islanders, a small fraction of the population.

He said that “efforts to better manage restroom conditions would require more janitorial service and increase costs,” which should be paid through public funds.

At the Oct. 27 board meeting General Manager Hank Berg recommended, at the suggestion of CBITD attorney John C. Lighthome, that the board approve a "whistle stop" for anyone on the Cottage side of the island wishing to depart at the State Pier, so that "the PUC have no further basis for the complaint."

The PUC allowed the rate hike to be implemented in October while it investigated the allegations in the petition. According to Berg, it is pending on the 4:15 in the first two weeks averaged 30 persons. By Friday, Oct. 28 it had increased to 51, with most travelling to Long Island. He said the original estimate was six.

PUC investigation continues into rate increase on Long and Great Diamond islands

BY KEVIN ATTRA

According to Tony Savastano, who has acted as spokesperson for the petitioners on Great Diamond, residents on the south end of the island have to pay a 40-cent rate increase for a service they will not receive.

The increase covers the cost of operating an additional 4:15 p.m. boat to Diamond Cove from Great Diamond, which doesn’t stop at the State Pier which services the south end of Great Diamond Island (referred to by Mr. Savastano as the Cottage Community).

In a cover letter that accompanied the petition to the Public Utility Commission in September, he also asserted that the Cottage Bay Island Transit District did not adequately notify residents.

"All subsidies, fare, changes, meetings and discussions were held during the shoulder and winter months (October 2010 through February 2011) when most riders, asked to bear the financial burden, are not present nor available for discussion, comment or decision making meetings," he stated.

"We have to continue working in the winter to get ready for the summer," said CBITD board member Matt Hoffner, who said public meetings were held in January and February, and surveys conducted with summer people constituting 40 percent of the people responding.

"Residents were invited to come. We arranged for a web cast of the meetings for those who couldn’t attend. I don’t know what else you can do,"

The argument was withdrawn in mid-October after the Bay Lines challenged the validity of the letter on the grounds that only Savastano had signed it, which leaves only the bare issue itself in question at this point.

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Board President Patrick Flynn said that the board would respond to his request by the next meeting at the end of this month.

An issue concerning inter-island travel was raised by Marianne Tracy of Cliff Island, who had written a letter to the board on Oct. 17 to ask that captains be allowed to make discretionary stops on some routes for people who commute between island for work.

Ms. Tracy works at Island Commons, an assisted living facility for the elderly on Chebeague Island. Last year the board approved a scheduling change on weekends in order to accommodate workers and family members travelling to the facility, which had been a hardship without the change.

Recently, the captains were asked to halt the practice of making "whistle stops" of Tracy and others on down-the-bay runs, which has become a hardship for Tracy.

She explained at the meeting that now she has a six-hour layover on Chebeague and can only get three hours of sleep before going back to work. In addition, it cuts into time she wants to spend with her children.

Mr. Berg said the issue was discussed at an Operations Committee meeting. Staff looked at the need and felt it should be addressed with global schedule changes, which will be addressed starting in December.

Write-in

ROBIN Clark

Write-in Candidate
For Peaks Island
For Casco Bay Lines

30-Year resident
Small business owner
Raised 2 children on Peaks

WE NEED:

- Fiscal accountability
- Improved customer relations
- Streamlined financial reports
- Business insight to Board
- Keep costs down

To make your vote count you MUST
On the blank Line under Peaks
1. Fill in oval
2. Write complete name & Address

Clark, Robin 2 Welch St. Peaks Island

I hope you'll consider voting for me.
News Briefs

PEAKS ISLAND LAND PRESERVE has wrapped up the final phase of its fire abatement efforts and is constructing the last of five new trail bridges. This October, Battery Steele was lost to the Sacred and Profane, another successful community art happening. Moving into the winter, PILP is looking for an islander for a paid position to help digitize the organization’s archives. Please contact Curtis Rindlaub at 766-2337 or pilp@mainecountyguides.com. Also, please visit us and post your photos of enjoying PILP lands, at our Facebook page.

Guinness World Records recognizes new category

BY KEVIN ATTINA

Each year since 2008 Nancy 3. Hoffman, curator and director of the Umbrella Cover Museum on Peaks Island which she hopes houses the world’s largest collection of umbrella covers, has been asked to be recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records for holding the record in that category. Each year her request has been denied, ostensibly because the Guinness officials felt the category was trivial (compared to important ones like “most body piercings in one session” and “largest wine flute”). But her persistence paid off. Guinness World Records approved the category last month, and the museum has been given permission to do an official count, to take place next summer.

Camper’s from Camp Fernwood discover the museum in 2011.

photo by Nancy 3. Hoffman

Tests show insufficient wind on Peaks for electric power

BY SAM SALTONSTALL

FOR THE PEAT WIND GROUP

The Peaks Environmental Action Team Wind Group has recently received a University of Maine report on the 12 month wind testing measurement effort we conducted at Trott-Littlejohn Park from August 23, 2010 until August 27, 2011. The report summarized the last quarter of data collected and offered some insight into the local wind resource and its potential to generate electricity.

In short, the report concludes that Peaks Island does not have an economic wind resource (this is probably why we enjoy being here, as a trustful wind site is typically not a pleasant place to live). A

few points:

• A typical community scale wind energy site needs more than 3.5 m/s, and to have real impact would need more than 6.5 m/s.

• It is important to know that wind power is a cubic function of wind speed, so a small difference in wind speed has a huge impact on energy output.

• The island does have a good wind shear, meaning the higher the tower, the higher the wind speed (common sense), but we have aesthetic limits on how high we would want a tower, and the cost of a higher tower could be problematic.

The wind group has discussed the results with Dr. Mick Womerly of Unity College, who early on had been helpful to our effort, and with islander, Lawrence Mott, who works in the wind industry and is very familiar with the kind of testing that was done here.

Our goal was to determine whether a community wind project on Peaks could be a viable undertaking. After a thorough data collection period of over 365 days and analysis of that data from three knowledgeable sources, it is clear that a wind project would be difficult if not impossible to finance and build. A better focus might be to work on the challenge of making our island homes and businesses lighter and more energy efficient.

There are many locations in Maine where the wind resource offers low cost and sustainable electric generation. Peaks does not appear to be one of them. Installing a wind turbine here would be expensive due to island logistics challenges, limited power transmission wires and limited land. Once complete the wind turbine would then be operating at low capacity due to lower wind speeds, and therefore a poor investment.

The wind group thanks the many islanders who supported the testing effort. If anyone is interested in looking over the University of Maine’s final report, it can be found on the PEAT website, go to peatpeaks.org.
Faith Rawding, who also commutes between islands from Cliff, asked the board to authorize out-of-schedule stops as needed until the global changes can go into effect, but the board wouldn't do that.

A board member later offered that the practice had been stopped due to complaints from other passengers about delays. "They're not buying tickets for these stops," he added.

In other news, ticket scanning will begin on rides down the bay, but passengers won't be aware of it for a while. The crew will collect tickets as usual and then scan them while the boat is underway in order to test the system and work out any problems that might arise without causing delays at the gate. CB ITD plans to hire a design firm to upgrade its website in order to adapt it for handheld devices like smartphones which are now the prevalent web tool-of-choice among riders of the system.

"It's time and money," said project leader Scott Johnson.

Construction of the new boat, Wabanaki, has been delayed due to changes in the design required by the U.S. Coast Guard. The new start date is April 2012.

According to Matt Hoffner, the Rhode Island shipyard wanted 18 months to complete the boat, but he said it was negotiated down to 14 months. "In reality, it'll probably take eight or nine months," he said.

If you've thought the boats seem to be bristling with security cameras you're right. New higher-definition cameras have been installed on all the ferries. According to Mavodones, they are there primarily to meet U.S. Coast guard security requirements imposed after 911, which are specific about where the cameras must be. Without them, passengers would have to show identification when boarding and be subject to baggage searches.

The operations manager said captains can use the cameras to monitor activities on the boat, but the video is also recorded and stored for a period of time. "With the older cameras the images were pretty grainy. These are much better," he said.

He said he didn't know the cost of replacing the cameras off the top of his head but thought it was between $30,000 and $40,000, which was funded with a grant.

In a related issue, an All Vehicle Locator system that would allow riders to locate the position of a boat in order to know when to expect it is in the works. It will cost the District around $15,000, and will be shared with the South Portland bus system who will contribute its share as well.

The METRO bus system was going to participate but withdrew last month.

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CBITD from page 3

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Letters

Dear Island Times

I just want to thank those Peaks Island residents whose help made my light-hearted tribute, "Peaks Island Song," the success that it is on Times. By the way, I'm offering a free copy of the CD to anyone who sends me a bag of Tony's Donuts Thank you,

Chin Morgan

On Recent Vandalism

This week a longtime friend made us aware of a problem that is, in our opinion, part of a far bigger and escalating issue that threatens the very fabric of our small community. Anti-Semitic language (eww) was painted on equipment owned by a young man who has lived on Peaks for years and is an integral part of our island. Obviously, it was scrawled anonymously.

While this, in and of itself, is repugnant, it is part of a lack of civility that has become more prevalent and acceptable during any discourse about island problems or situations that have arisen lately.

Most recently when a problem developed with the Health Center, people wrote inflammatory e-mails to Internet anyone of the many letters so angered the board that they have resulted in the withdrawal of all services as of next spring.

Last summer when a small business proposed a conforming use of land, it was met with months of delays, and unnecessary expense. Mr. Ivers, the business owner, also received a number of unsigned attacks. During an island-wide meeting where the problem could have been thoroughly discussed, only proponents of the plan were allowed on the floor, with one exception. Again, the discussion became inflamed by the use of island e-mail.

It is time that we, as a small community with dependencies on each other, take a large step backward. The anonymity of writing and then sending our pronouncements on island-wide sites or to specific people has lowered the values. If you cannot say what is on your mind in a civil and polite manner to a person's face, it doesn't deserve to be and should not be said.

There are many things we all value, our children and their education, the health and welfare of all our citizens, the viability of living on this piece of rock, protecting our own from losing the special essence and diversity of island living, and living without fear. It is time that we recognize that and begin to treat each other with the dignity every person deserves. There are no winners in using modern technology to demean and slander. It lessens us personally and as a whole.

Bel Gerard, Peaks Island

Island Views

from Congressman
Chellie Pingree

On Peaks Island Fuel

To all concerned:

Peaks Island Fuel’s proposal to move its oil and propane trucks and service vehicles to Trefethen Landing is a welcome approval from Portland’s Zoning Board of Appeals. The city’s determination was based on a very narrow reading of the zoning rules for a parcel that was closed business over 100 years ago.

Today the site is in the middle of an established and densely populated neighborhood, and the parcel on which Peaks Island Fuel plans to place its fuel storage facility is an area of high turnover, a holdover of a time when Trefethen Landing was a different place.

We should have to suffer the face of investing their life’s work on their home only to see the character of their quieter neighborhood negatively impacted by an industrial site, especially the smell of diesel fumes, the noise of diesel trucks coming and going all hours or the potential hazard of having several thousand gallons of oil and propane stored in their midst.

We all work hard to make our homes our sanctuaries. They are a large investment and the equity constitutes a significant portion of our security and wealth. According to local residents, these possible changes of usage in a neighborhood will cause the values to depreciate up to 50 percent.

No one should be forced to sustain such damage when alternatives are present and available. Alternatives that are indeed safer for the environment, safer for children and pedestrians, and less detrimental to a neighborhood that has intrinsic beauty and serenity.

Several alternatives exist. The transfer station has been introduced as the most likely candidate for an island wide service/business vehicle storage facility with the equipment to handle an accident if there should be any spillage.

Another possibility is the Treat Little John Park, which has already been designated for such use and could be fenced and protected for island trucks in a safe zone.

Cover Johnson has a property for consideration that could be adapted for commercial use. Also, other possibilities may prove as appropriate as well. All those alternatives available who would a good neighbor seek to push a plan forward that serves only its needs at the expense of all others.

Trefethen Landing residents are professional and pro-Island Peaks Island Fuel. After all, they invite us to their homes as well and benefit from having a second option for fuel on the island.

However, the storage of oil and propane trucks in the Trefethen Landing area or any neighborhood, regardless of the zoning board’s approval, is just plain wrong and we urge Peaks Island Fuel to sit down with members of our community and come up with a plan that will relocate their service vehicles to an appropriate area.

Thank you for listening.

Ted Haykal, Peaks Island

Addressing Domestic Violence

For too many, home is not the sanctuary it should be. Thousands of Mainers — mostly women — are living with violence and intimidation at the hands of their loved ones. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Though we’ve made gains in the last few decades, statistics clearly show that domestic violence remains a troubling problem. While the extreme need for power and control that fuels the phenomenon can cut across socioeconomic, marital, and ethnic lines, it is part of a lack of civility that has become an integral part of our small island.

In fact, one in four American women will be a victim of domestic violence in her lifetime. Each year, we should have to suffer the face of investing their life’s work on their home only to see the character of their quieter neighborhood negatively impacted by an industrial site, especially the smell of diesel fumes, the noise of diesel trucks coming and going all hours or the potential hazard of having several thousand gallons of oil and propane stored in their midst.

Domestic violence takes many forms, including physical and sexual violence, threats of violence, and emotional abuse. The abuser could be a spouse, same sex partner, someone you’re dating in general. What’s clear, however, is that it is a terrible cost for everyone involved. Lost trust. Years spent living in fear. Families torn apart. Children isolated and lonely; physically and emotionally. It is up to us to find those that disrupt our own lives.

Thankfully, there are organizations in Maine that have worked for decades to protect and empower victims, prevent violence from happening. The Department of Justice reports that in 2010, 5260 billion each year, the Department of Justice reports.

By its nature, domestic violence is a complicated issue. It is tough to ask when you’ve been isolated, controlled, and manipulated — and then threatened for daring to leave. It is difficult to ask that someone you love be charged or convicted.

It is hard to weigh the worry of living with someone who fear against the anxiety of looking over your shoulder, answering the phone, financially ruined. It is painful to give up on your hope that, if you just loved him or her enough, things would have been different.

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Thankfully, there are organizations in Maine that have worked for decades to protect and empower victims, prevent violence from happening. The Department of Justice reports.

Many years, key leaders in this state have worked to bring legislation, education, and immediate neighbors to cognitive awareness. We need to tackle this enormous program. At Maine State Farm, we are very happy that Governor LePage, too, has made this a priority issue by placing support for domestic violence laws and programs.

In Congress, I remain a strong supporter of federal programs that help to solve the issues we face as a nation, and non-profit groups do explain the need.

Recently, Maine has received millions of dollars in grants from the Department of Justice through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The money will go to state agencies and non-profit groups for legal services and support for victims. The funding is incredibly important to strengthening their efforts. The Family Violence Project recently received $450,000 in grant funding.

The Care Bay Island Times is a community newspaper covering the islands in Casco Bay. We welcome birth, engagement and wedding announcements, obituaries, notices of community events; letters to the editor, please try to keep your letters 300 words or less. We reserve the right to edit all material. The newspaper is available by mail, for $25 a year. Address checks to Island Times, 606 Casco Bay Blvd., Portland, ME 04108. To reach Kevin Attra, (207) 650-3016, or e-mail kd klikisa times.org. For ad rates visit our website at www.islandtimes.org.

Printed by The Times Record, Brunswick.

Please see PINGREE, page 3.
YOGA FOR LIFE
A yogic perspective on health and simple living
BY REBECCA JOHANNA STEPHANS

Rebecca Johanna Stephens teaches private yoga lessons on Peaks Island and in Portland and9 weekly yoga classes on Peaks Island. You may direct your comments, inquiries, or column ideas to 207-767-5547 or rebecca.stephans@gmail.com.

A woman sits in the shade of a tree by a river, deep in meditation. Her treen is broken by one moment in the river and calling for help. Being a strong swimmer in the 1920s, she jumps in and helps the person to shore. A few minutes later just as she is sitting for min, once again she is interrupted by a practive call for help. This scenario is repeated several times until she finally leaves the shelter of the tree and takes a nap, to find out who is testing all these people into the river.

Sometimes a yoga mat is a place of sanctuary, a safe, welcoming place to unwind from the day's stress, and recover a sense of balance and joy. Sometimes the mat offers a venue for working your core strength, your warrior power and clear, vital energy. Sometimes—especially those times when you are crouching onto your mat that takes great discipline—it is the harsh illumination of our discomfort.

The style of yoga that I practice and teach does not accept the adage, "no pain, no gain," but it does acknowledge that pain arises, and it advises us to pay very close attention to it. My teacher's catchphrase was, "Pain is life's messenger." That is a thought-provoking statement, especially if you pair it with another popular saying, "Don't kill the messenger!"

One of our basic survival techniques is to avoid pain and move towards pleasure. We pull our fingers away from fire, spit our toxins and leap away from rattlesnakes. Whenever possible, we seek creature comforts and enrich our lives with art. Our senses are the doorway to awareness of both danger and nourishment.

How do we temper our instinctual and often wise aversion to pain long enough to understand the message it is sending? On the yoga mat, we practice by abiding in discomfort, which is a bit less insistent than pain. The invitation is to breathe, feel, and relax into the discomfort without moving to avoid it or change it. Learning to tolerate unpleasant sensations builds the strength necessary to respond more intelligently to pain.

Of course, I am not suggesting that you suffer unnecessarily. Sometimes pain can be so great that it must be endured just so that we can continue to function. But killing or ignoring pain without following it to its source causes you to miss a vital piece of information that could vastly improve the quality of your life.

Your pain is trying to tell you something. It can be a powerful source of illumination into something that has thus far eluded you. Your pain can be an enormous gift. It offers a unique opportunity to mindfully choose to alter your course. Before you kill your pain, I invite you to become very still and make space for it, remembering that the pain is not meant to be the object of your focus—it is simply pointing our something of interest.

Imagine that you are in a pitch black room and your pain is a flashlight. If you become singularly focused on the light itself and stare into the bulb you will be blinded. If you cover the light with your hand you will also be unable to see. Of course, simply closing your eyes also yields the same result.

Treating pain as a problem rather than as a message creates a form of blindness. We are blinded to our own imbalances and our body's repeated attempts to alert us to them. After a while, we become so used to a certain message and our rote reaction that the whole cycle doesn't even make it into our conscious mind. At that point, a different kind of interrupt such as massage is required to guide us to awareness.

The therapeutic massage is a powerful healing modality, encouraging everything you have repressed to be revealed to you in vivid detail. When I began the study of massage therapy, 25 years ago I thought I was simply embarking on a new career. However, in the course of the training, as bound energies were freed up I experienced physical pain so severe that I took myself to the emergency room. Those tests revealed nothing, so I sought out Dr. Christiane Northrup, who taught me about following pain to its source.

As my curiosity and explorations deepened, I eventually found Dr. Virginia Shapiro, acupuncturist and healer. She drew from a vast repertoire of ancient and modern healing techniques and taught me about finding and sustaining balance in the present moment and dietary choices. When I entered yoga teacher training seven years later, the process of unwinding old holding patterns continued.

This excavation and illumination of the rejected aspects of ourselves and our life experiences is exactly why I frequently express my deep admiration and respect for folks who find the courage to show up for practice week after week, year after year.

Learning to abide with discomfort has many other benefits. Sometimes pain is simply pain—it has no mystery, no solution and no end in sight. In those situations, having the fortitude and skills to breathe through discomfort allows us to stay present while enduring pain. I have worked with a number of students who live with chronic pain, and they have found yoga practice to be vital in sustaining an acceptable quality of life.

There are other times when there is an end in sight, but meanwhile, what to do with this pain? I was recently reminded of a 16 mile hike I went on last fall wearing brand new boots. I had not yet discovered trekking poles. The last 5 miles or so of that hike was a meditation on pain. I had one huge blister on each foot and an inflamed knee. There was no place to go but forward. However, I was also in the white mountains on a spectacular day in September. So I breathed, made space for the pain and reminded my other senses to stay open.

Therein lies the healing nature of accepting rather than repressing pain. Our systems are not capable of selectively shutting down. Once we start blocking pain, we block joy as well. Yoga practice offers a compassionate, graceful passage through the tempering fires of our pain and into the warmth of genuine happiness.

I was held so sweetly on my mat By someone who doesn't know Me I wanted to stay there forever I guess that's why my teacher's message is so simple Do your yoga! Every day. No excuses.

That's so that the hatred won't sneak up on me reading bogus warning labels Or fake mods and ignoring the messages to avoid the things that will, in fact, destroy me.

Practice Suggestion: Set a timer for 5 minutes (increasing to 20 minutes as you build tolerance), roll out your yoga mat and lie down, using any supports you need to be comfortable. The instruction I often give for this simple (not easy), but profound practice exercise is this:

"Let the earth receive you now. Let go of all expectations and criticisms. Slow down now and deep into your breathing. Slow down and relax, coming home into your body. Slow down and soften into your heart, awakening compassion. Slow down and quiet into your mind, allowing space for curiosity. Breathe, feel, relax and notice whatever arises without attachment or aversion."

Rebecca Johanna Stephens has been a Kripalu-Certified Yoga Teacher since 1994. She has 24 years experience in the healing arts.

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

A Meditation on Pain
By Rebecca Stephens

Yoga mats should come with a warning label like cigarettes and electronic devices.

Practitioner Beware!
Stepping onto this mat with mindfulness may ignite a fire within you.

Symptoms may include rage, grief, or an intense aversion to ever stepping back onto the mat.

No wonder I've been reluctant. No wonder I haven't wanted to be blindsided. No wonder I've been afraid to breathe deep, to open my heart to a sense of balance and joy. Sometimes my breath closes up tight and my throat closes up tight and my stomach is in knot in fear.

This morning, sleep deprived, bored with sleeping in bed. Oh well, I guess I'll do some yoga.

Too vulnerable to resist: WHAM!

Blinded by an awfully truth
I hate myself
I despise who I am.

I have learned to behave in a loving manner which is not the same as loving.

I would rather sleep forever than wake up to another whole day. Scared with me. DUCU!

I kept on breathing because that is my habit.

You may not know that yoga mats do come with angels unlike cigarettes and most electronic devices.

In that moment of deep despair this morning I already knew, I knew by a visceral knowing that it was my path.

My self-hate had already lost some of its power. I trust that tomorrow morning its grip will be less severe.
November means “ninth month,” but it’s actually the eleventh month of the year. In 713 BC, King Numa Pompilius of Rome added January and February but kept the numerical names of the other 10 months. Before that, he ordered his subjects to simply ignore the two winter months, and since then we’ve adapted and now ignore the discrepancy except when I remind you.

Earth’s 23.5° tilt always points its North Pole to Polaris in Ursa Major, but that tilt now points the northern hemisphere away from the sun. This change in the sun’s angle is especially noticeable in the far north and south latitudes. In Maine this month, the sun never gets more than halfway up in the sky before going down again, reducing the amount of sunshine landing here in Vacationland, and allowing our liquid water to turn solid, as snow and slush fills the air and ice creeps over the lakes and streams.

Paradoxically, the Earth is now approaching perihelion, its closest approach to the sun this orbit, but that doesn’t translate into warmth here because of the concomitant reduction in sunshine caused by our tilt and our latitude. In fact, next month Earth will be 4 million miles closer to the sun than it is in summer, which actually moderates both our winters and our summers. Imagine the temperature fluctuations in 13,000 years, when Earth’s precession (our axis rotating slowly clockwise) puts Earth’s perihelion in the summer! Good thing we humans are so adaptable.

Planets

Mercury, the sun’s closest planet, has come out from behind the sun and is slowly climbing up, bold and bright above Venus in the sunset.

Earth is next, to aliens on other planets it’s a busy blue dot in a black sky. Venus is bright and distant today. This month an asteroid zooms past Earth - closer than the moon. Next out is Mars, the red planet, which rises after midnight as November begins and before sunrise at month’s end - not worth scouting out yet, but watch a few months.

Jupiter is next, ridiculously bright, rising before sunset, setting after sunrise and in prime position for evening telescopie viewing. Golden Saturn is next, but it rises just before dawn, so we’ll have to wait until spring to get a good look at it. It will be worth it though, as its rings are now tilted either steeply, showing off the Cassini Division in the ring system cleared out by a tiny moon.

Uranus, a big blue ball of gas, and Neptune, a blue-green gas-giant, are the last two major planets and are still in prime position for viewing (skyandtelescope.com has finder charts).

Pluto is a minor planet and is gathering behind the sun out of view.

Almanac

Nov. 2 - First-quarter moon is high at sunrise, moderating tides.

Nov. 6 - Daylight Saving Time ends, lightening mornings and darkening evenings.

Nov. 8 - The moon’s at apogee tonight, as asteroid 2005 YU55 passes by Earth, only 202,000 miles away. It’s about ¾ mile in diameter and can be seen flying through Pegasus tonight.

Nov. 9 - The moon sits to the left of Jupiter tonight.

Nov. 10 - Full “Beaver” moon sets this morning at 6:19 over the mainland, just right for those taking the early boat to town. It rises again at 4:05 p.m., just right for those headed home on the 4:30 boat. Before dawn, Mars passes over Regulus in Leo the Lion.

Nov. 11 - Tonight in the southwest, Venus, Mercury and red-giant star Antares line up on just above the horizon, and in the east, the Pleiades star cluster hangs over the moon like little bubbles.

Nov. 18 - The Leonid meteor shower peaks early this morning, fueled by the light of the last-quarter moon.

Nov. 22 - This morning, a thin crescent moon hangs to the right of Saturn and Spica.

Nov. 23 - The moon’s at perigee, closest to Earth this month, pulling tides higher.

Nov. 25 - New moon lines up with the sun, also pulling tides higher (13.5 feet between high and low tides). If you haven’t pulled your boat out yet, moons this weekend are ideal.

Nov. 26 - Down front around 4:30 p.m. tonight a thin crescent moon points to Venus, with tiny Mercury hiding below and to the right. Best conjunction this month!

Nov. 30 - Sunrise is at 6:52 a.m. and sunset is at 4:06 p.m., giving us about nine hours of sunlight as we head toward the winter solstice.

Stars

Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 6. That allows us to get up an hour later in the morning, so for those on the 6:15 a.m. boat to town, the sun will be already up and lighting the morning sky. Toward the end of the month, however, we’ll again see the Orion constellation overhead in the morning, with his 3-star belt and his wide-set feet and shoulders. Low and to the left of Orion is Sirius in Canis Major, the brightest star in our sky. It’s bright because it’s quite close to us at only 8 light-years away (each light year being about 6 trillion miles).

The end of DST allows darkness to come an hour earlier, too, showing off the evening stars. Bluish Alberio in Lyra is high in the northwest, next to the great double Alberio in Cygnus. Yellow Capella in Auriga is in the northeast, ruddy Aldebaran in Taurus is in the east, and white Formalhaut in little Pises Austrinus is low in the south. Altair in Aquila is the bright star in the west, and overhead is the Great Square of Pegasus, his head pointing westward toward globular cluster M13, and the Andromeda galaxy - Milky Way’s sister galaxy - hiding below the flying horse. The Big Dipper is so low now it’s hard to see.
Communication on an island is always in transition and can take many forms, especially when you are trying to sell or buy an item or service, promote some island event or meeting, or just inform.

Our founding families could simply rely on word-of-mouth since they saw each other all the time. Painted wooden signs would effectively aid communication with increasing populations. A sign in a window would direct the iceman and a note in an empty milk bottle would guide the milkman.

At the turn of the century the 16 hotels informed their clientele of menus and fellow guests. The 1923 "Casco Bay Directory" offered some advertising, hotel guest lists and even, cottage names, since there were no numbered houses. The telephones not only greatly expanded our ability to communicate but the telephone poles created a handy place to display informative printed posters.

Publications, both from mainland (Portland Evening Express, the Portland Press Herald, Maine Times, Nye's By East, and the Forecaster) and from the island (Island Breeze, Peaks Island Times, The Star and the Island Times) have informed islanders for decades (left). A yearly "Island Phone Directory" now compliments the larger Verizon version.

Our bulletin boards are constantly filled with gems of information. Over 150 square feet of available public posting area, including an informational kiosk, display an ever changing stream of island information. Our institutions and businesses also have fixed bulletin boards announcing current and future events and offerings.

Personal contact in our churches, library, museums, clubs, stores and ferry boats always keep information moving. Island gossip and rumors eventually find their way around the island by word-of-mouth.

Islanders have rapidly moved to digital messaging and are immersed in small, Twitter, Facebook, Kindle, blogs, Skype and texting for instant communication. Most organizations have created informational websites. Daily we receive and respond to emails from our list servers, Chris Hoppin and Carol Eisenberg.

Perhaps our strongest form of communication is the sandwich boards offering another 165 square feet of advertising space. This 19th century device was originally carried by a person extolling the product advertised on the two boards he was sandwiched between.

There have been as many as 15 boards (without people) lined up along Island Avenue like a wooden hedge (above). Usually the street side, blocked by parked cars, is almost unreadable. Recent hurricane, Grace, caused all boards to suddenly disappear like some strange 48 hour blackout (below).

With unemployment so high, 15 people could be employed to carry sandwich boards and rework back to the 18th century communication by "word-of-mouth". Just imagine 15 "towncriers" shouting "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez. Don't forget Thanksgiving Dinner at the Baptist Church, and the Peaks Island Christmas Chorale at the Brackett Church!"
Some of us have part-time professions, some of us have one job, some have three. Some of us have full-time passions.

of your name, fate makes trees part of us work on the island, some commute. The Tree Company had him working side because it is dressed in its annual looks.


You call it, Stan Newell found his life. Call it luck. Newell had him working side with the old school guys. The first week was just about getting accustomed to climbing trees and using the ropes and harnesses. The foreman climbed a tree about 45 or 50 feet high and repelled down. We were allawestruck. I knew then there that it was something I wanted to do. I had never seen anything like that in my life. I never knew tree climbers existed.

When you walk around the island you must look at trees very differently than the rest of us.

When I look at a tree I prune it in my mind. I fix it up. I would do this to it, do that to it. I made it look aesthetically better. If I see a tree that's threatening, I warn the people. Just looking at a tree I can tell if it's going to die. I know the look.

What's the largest tree that you've ever taken down? I've taken down some really monster elm trees and some of the big red oaks out here on the island. When I worked for the tree company I climbed some champion trees. They were the biggest elm trees in the state but they're long gone due to Dutch elm disease. That's how I learned the trade. We worked on giant elm trees all the time. Dutch elm disease pretty much did them in. I started big and worked my way down. I even climbed and pruned Herbie up in Yarmouth.

Do you ever work in town now? How do people from town find you? Occasionally. All my work is referrals and word-of-mouth. A lot of it is Peaks Island-related, somehow they have a connection to Peaks Island. A lot of the people are summer people and I've worked for them on the island and they don't want someone else to work on their trees, so I've gone to their personal residence. I've gone out of state all over the place to work. Once they've got me, they don't want anyone else, which is good.

Do you ever run out of work? It does slow down. Winter time is real sporadic. I don't have the volume of work that I have in the summer time. I do drywall in the winter. Winter is a good time to do tree work but unless you line up the winter work, people just aren't calling in the winter. They should—I'm not as busy.

You must love storms. I love storms. That's why they call them windfalls, I guess. (Laughing). I don't like them when they're disruptive and we lose power for four days and that sort of thing, that's no good. But storms have been good to me.

What do you think is the hardest part of your job? Collecting the money. That's the hardest part of the job.

When do you think you'll retire? I won't really. I say, I'll wake up dead one day and I won't go to work. I'll be a sad day that I can't do it. There's something about that. I know that I won't be doing it for the money. I won't be doing it for the trees. I'll just be doing it for me. I'm passionate about the work. It's unlike any other job, especially the aerial part of it. I love climbing and swinging around the trees. There's an element of danger to it and it keeps you focused and keeps your interest. You see things that you don't see every day. Big trees crashing down while you're swinging around in the air, you get close calls. There's a certain allure to it, you can't get away from it once it gets in your blood. It's a great job. You just don't get that with a desk job.

Susan Hanley has been trying to figure out what to do after work ever since the arrival of her third child. Her blossoming career as a world-famous photoshopping engineer on hold. Inexplicably, her interests in textiles, needlework, writing, history and all things French have evolved into her current job as a PR consultant. It's a living.

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SHALL WE TAKE OUR BIKES?

ISLAND TIMES

SUSAN HANLEY

"Opportunities is missed by most people because it is dressed in trousers and looks like work."—Thomas Edison

Americans are an industrious lot, and Peaks Islanders are no exception. Some of us work on the island, some commute. Some of us have part-time professions, some of us have full-time passions. But all of us are busy. Busy. Busy. Busy.

Stan Newell, Arborist, Stanwood Newell Tree Services

Call it destiny. When 'wood' is part of your name, fate makes trees part of your life. Call it luck. A tiny classified ad just happened to catch his eye. Call it love. I knew from the first day that that's what I wanted to do. Whatever you call it, Stan Newell found his dream job over 40 years ago and has been going to work happy ever since. A Fourth of July party lured Stan out to Peaks Island in 1975 and he kind of fell in love. The early years at Goodall Tree Company had him working side by side with the old school guys—guys who had brought down huge monster elms with nothing but hand saws. After 15 years, word hit the street that Stan Newell knew a thing or two about trees and his occasional tree jobs out on Peaks Island blossomed into his own company. He's been Peaks Island's tree guy ever since.

Stan: How did you get into this business?

Susan: I saw an ad in the paper that said they just hired climbers wanted. In high school I had worked for a landscape guy in Brooklawn cemetery and I thought the tree job might be interesting. So I showed up down in Deering Oaks Park where Goodall Tree Company had a training program for the week, with all the climbing gear. Twenty-five guys showed up the first day—at the end of the week there were four of us left.

The first week was just about getting accustomed to climbing trees and using the ropes and harnesses. The foreman climbed a tree about 45 or 50 feet high and repelled down. We were all awe-struck. I knew then there that it was something I wanted to do. I had never seen anything like that in my life. I never knew tree climbers existed.

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SHALL WE TAKE OUR BIKES?

ISLAND TIMES
Peaks Tunnels Termed A-1 Air Raid Shelters

So read the headline of a story that ran in the Portland Press Herald in October 1954. It was the era of Sen. Joe McCarthy and his hunt for communists anywhere and everywhere in the United States.

Fear of communist infiltration in all aspects of American life was widespread. People were terrified of nuclear attacks on the United States. In an effort to allay those fears government officials took some unusual steps.

At the request of state authorities, Portland's Civil Defense Director Arthur T. Forrestall, accompanied by members of the Portland City Council, toured the unoccupied gun batteries on Peaks and concluded that “Islanders have the finest protection against an atomic or hydrogen bomb in two massive relics of World War II.”

The gun batteries in question were Battery Steele and Battery Craven. Forrestall believed that the tunnels and rooms inside the batteries provided 11,500 square feet of space—more than enough to shelter the entire summer population in the event of an air raid. The population in the 1950s was less than today (about 3,500 in summer).

The walls and roofs of the two batteries are constructed of 18” steel-reinforced concrete, covered by about 10 feet of earth. Grass and shrubs were then planted to give the appearance of a natural hill. Huge steel doors mounted at all entrances could be secured once everyone was inside. It was believed that the concrete and earth covering the batteries would prevent radiation from penetrating, thus sparing those inside from the ill effects of radiation exposure.

At least one island family must have thought that the batteries would not provide enough protection. They built an underground air raid shelter in their yard and provisioned it with enough non-perishable food and water to last for a few months. Other islanders (my mom included) set up mini shelters in the far corners of their cellars. In my mind’s eye I can still see the shelves of canned goods and jugs of water that sat in that dark corner for many years.

Given what we now know about the long-term effects of radiation on health and the environment these types of preparations may seem silly and ill-conceived but, at the dawn of the nuclear age, they were viewed as very realistic deterrents to the devastation caused by atomic bombs.
Nothing comes without a price, so if I can fix an old thing rather than buy something new, all the better. Sometimes it’s the satisfaction that motivates me, the pride that comes from learning something new or practicing a skill I haven’t used in awhile, that little glow I feel when I get to tell someone, “Yep, I made that myself.”

Ok, that sounds like a lot of work, but with all our modern “conveniences,” it seems to me that we are busier than ever, usually doing things that have little to do with the “essentials” of living—the food we eat, the clothes that keep us warm, our families, our homes, our “villages.” I’d be tempted to say that do-it-yourself is all about living independently, but on further reflection I think it’s really about living interdependently. It’s really the spirit of community—you may be baking your own bread, but what do you do when you run out of whole wheat flour at 8:00 pm in the middle of February? Knock on a neighbor’s door.

If I can fix bikes and you can fix cars, and it turns out that my car is broken and your bike doesn’t work, then we have a solution for way less hassle and money than we might otherwise have spent.

One of the main reasons I moved out to Peaks Island from Portland was to live in a place that still has character and identity rooted in community, and I have definitely found both character and community in my “new” island home.

To what your whiskle for yummy things to come, I leave you with this simple recipe for making your own toothpaste.

1 part salt
A few drops of essential oil (I suggest cinnamon, peppermint, or wintergreen)
Water
Mix baking soda and salt. Add water, slowly, to the consistency you want. Add oil and mix until you’re happy. I usually find that 1 tsp per 1 Tbsp baking soda and 1 Tbsp of salt is just about right. (It does rise to the top over time, so you can either mix it every time or just add a little more oil now and then to keep a relatively uniform taste.)

I buy my essential oils at Homegrown Herb and Tea on Munjoy Hill; a small $6 bottle of wintergreen oil, after a year of making toothpaste, is still full.

When I was in high school, my best friend’s father was a dentist, and she was only allowed to brush with paste that was approved by the American Dental Association. Have you ever read the label on your “normal” toothpaste? What are “PVFM/MA copolymer” and “propylene glycol”, and why would I want to put that in my mouth? Well, I’m not sure that my paste would make Jill’s dad happy, but it sure makes me feel good.

I hope brushing with your homemade toothpaste will leave you with a minty-fresh feeling of accomplishment.

Sheila is an adventurer, an artist, a good cook and a haphazard gardener. She has lived downtown on Peaks Island for only allowed to brush with paste that was approved by the American Dental Association. Have you ever read the label on your “normal” toothpaste? What are “PVFM/MA copolymer” and “propylene glycol”, and why would I want to put that in my mouth? Well, I’m not sure that my paste would make Jill’s dad happy, but it sure makes me feel good.

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**Art Roamings**

**STORY & PHOTOS BY JAMIE HOGAN**

Sacred & Profane

Sacred & Profane took place under sunny skies but puddled grounds on Saturday, Oct. 15. This annual art happening is unfunded, unadvertised and unbranded, yet draws a throng in search of magic and mystery within the dark tunnels of Battery Steele.

CLOCKWISE from Above: large photographs by Cole Caswell hung in the entrance to Battery Steele on Peaks Island; candles are lit on a wooden tower installation created by Diane Winkler; Buster the dog; Sacred and Profane brings out the beast in everyone.
ABOVE: Leigh Tillman awaits the beginning of a performance in an installation designed by Amy Jorgensen, and co-produced with Patrick Roche.

LEFT: In a neon installation by Alicia Eggert the word "on" blinked off, and on again, reflecting multiple meanings in shallow waters. This photo is actually upside down and backwards, with the reflected image on top.

ABOVE: Jackman Wood's multi-media installation of large scale block prints flickered with projected animations.
IT was a pretty unpopular time, at the end of the war; Vietnam was winding down, it was a bad time to be in. But I wanted to see the world, liked the idea of being on the water a lot. I volunteered to join the Navy, went to boot camp, to school - navigational systems, shipboard communications systems, weapon alarm systems, and I was assigned a ship out of San Diego. It was the U.S.S. Hancock CV-19, an old aircraft carrier; then we steamed off to the W. Pacific, and along the coast of Vietnam for 6 or 7 months.

At that time, South Vietnam was ready to fall, and it fell to the North in April 1975. They were evacuating a lot of Vietnamese civilians, many came aboard our ship. After the fall of Saigon, we steamed back to the Philippines and Hawaii, and let off the refugees. I kept putting in a request to get transferred to a ship on the East Coast. Finally I got the assignment I wanted; on board the U.S.S. Belknap DLG.26, later reclassified as a CG.26—a cruiser with guided missiles. [Classified information at the time, the U.S.S. Belknap carried nuclear missiles].

It was a week before Thanksgiving in 1975, and we were tied up in Naples Italy. We were going to spend Thanksgiving at sea, then head to Barcelona. We were operating with the U.S.S. Kennedy and a number of other ships in maneuvers. Three bad things happened as we were pulling out from Naples. First, we had fouled anchors with the ship next to us and had to send divers down to untangle them. Then as the USS Sarpsfield—an older WW2 class tin can—pulled away, it snagged a line, and it went like a whip, almost cut a man in half. Everyone had to hit the deck. Then a couple of days before Nov.22, we had drills, all sorts of drills: a man overboard drill, abandon ship drill. It kind of spooked me ‘cause a lot of guys didn’t know where their abandon ship station was.

On November 22, we were on plane-guard station operation with the U.S.S. John F. Kennedy and the rest of the task force. Our job was, to make a long story short, if a plane went in the water, we’d pick them up. We were stationed 100 miles off the coast of Sicily in the Ionian Sea.

The night it happened, I would have had the mid-watch (that meant from 12 till 4 am) in forward missile plot. I was just hanging out with a bunch of guys in my compartment, polishing. Over the ship’s intercom we hear, “Captain to the bridge.”

The next thing we knew, the ship starts shuddering and shaking like nothing we ever heard before. I just remember the guys’ eyes, all starting to get big. Then everybody bailed out of the compartment and at that moment we heard the ship’s collision alarm. We were going up to battle stations.

I saw a friend of mine going down to the engine room—that’s where his general quarters were. He ended up getting killed down there. I was going up to my station.

I headed up the starboard side of the ship, and ran into a Chief Petty Officer crouching down, telling us to go back. A number of us were headed up forward—ordinarily you go up on the starboard side and down on the Port side—we weren’t supposed to go this direction, but we were doing what he said, going back down, running into a bunch of guys coming up, and I just remember looking over my shoulder as a bullet like in slow motion just engulfed everybody in the passageway.

Then there was complete black and I collapsed into a bulkhead. Smoke—hot smoke—was everywhere. I couldn’t see, couldn’t breathe. People were laying on top of each other. I kept saying to myself I’m gonna die, and I didn’t want to die.

Through the smoke and the people, I could just see this battle lantern on—battery operated, they click on when the power goes out—and I got my bearings and realized I had to walk forward. That’s the thing that saved my life.

Simon Ferronieres from Louisiana Cajun country grabbed onto me and I started to get up, one leg broken and one leg sprained—I didn’t know who Simon was at first—I kept walking. To tell the truth I was kind of hoping this guy would just let go and I could get out of there. People were burnt. Three guys from the engine room had been trying to get out; they were lying in the passageway. Two of them were dead already. The third one died later.

I mostly figured this out later, but I was walking on people, everybody was scrambling to get out of there. We were on the mess decks, the battle lanterns were all lit up, and you could kind of get your bearings. What had happened was we had collided with the U.S.S. Kennedy.

Simon was still hanging onto me. I got from the Starboard to Port side, trying to open a hatch. It was so hot I burnt my palms. “We can’t get out this way.” We climbed a ladder, came out by the officer’s wardroom. I remember I looked up, and I could see the sky, because the top of the ship had been sheared off like with a car-opener. This guy I knew who had been in the mess, cooking at the time, he says “Hey Joe, how do I look?” He was burnt from the waist up, I said, “You look fine, let’s go.” We were all burnt, but he was really bad.
We made our way across the wardroom which eventually burnt. Everything was burning all around us. We climbed down, Simon still with me, finally got out on the starboard side which eventually burnt. Everything was burning ship by the anchor chains and laid me on the deck. We just laid there, listening to it burning. I couldn’t move. Three-inch magazines were cooking off, ammunition was flying everywhere. We just laid there, listening to it cook. This guy, Joe Jackson, a big black guy, he came up and said, “Are you alright?” I said I couldn’t walk, couldn’t breathe anymore. I don’t know what happened to Simon, but Joe grabbed me and carried me up to the forward part of the ship by the anchor chains and laid me on the deck.

The ship was engulfed in flames, from the bridge aft to the five-inch gun mount was burning. Everything after the bridge was gone. I could see...guns...all sorts of ammunition taking off, our radar fouling rocket chafe rockets could see ... geez ... all sorts of ammunition taking off and I remember seeing this one guy, Andrew Gallagher, burnt bead to toe. There were lots of casualties.

Looking up, I saw the Captain on the bridge. What the Captain had done when they had announced “Captain to the bridge” - he had come up from his sea cabin. It’s the quarters that are up close to everything that he stayed in when we were underway. At the last minute he had countermanded the Officer-on-deck’s orders, and saved us from being cut in half. The Kennedy was on fire too, because when we collided, we had severed their aviation fuel lines. The fuel had pooled into our stacks to the engine room and all over the hull of the ship, and that was what exploded and ignited all the fires.

The superstructure of the ship was constructed with aluminum which has a magnesium alloy, and as they found out later in the Falklands, it burns. You can’t put magnesium out with water. So the ship just kept on burning. When we were laying up there, we were thinking. And I knew because I used to work around the nuclear house, that the fire was only about twenty feet from the nuclear weapons.

These fires aren’t going to detonate the bombs, but they’ll break down. If they burn, I thought, the radioactivity will kill us.

The fire was getting pretty close. We had no power, no way to fight the fire. The USS Kennedy took off, “cause they were carrying ordnance like you wouldn’t believe, and they were fighting their own fires. They got out of there.

Within a few hours, I was still up there, my arms were burned, my back, one leg broken, one sprained, my lungs were seared they told me later, but adrenaline made me not notice too bad.

A ship, the USS Claude V. Ricketts, DDG 5, came along our starboard side, fighting fires, then they’d have to back off, and go in again. Ammunition was still going off. The Captain of the Ricketts turned it around, so we were Port to Port in swirling seas.

They started to bring people over to help with the casualties. There were a lot of burnt people. When the Ricketts came alongside, and we kept smashing into each other. They’d wait till the waves brought the ships together and jump across. Eventually, they got to me. I had gotten up and started to walk toward the missile launcher. I wanted to do something, but there wasn’t anything I could do. This guy grabbed me and said, “What are you doing?”

“I can’t breathe,” I said. Being burned didn’t bother me; it was not being able to breathe.

They put me on a basket and because we were in swelled seas, they lined up the casualties and tossed it so when the ships came together at a high point, seven and seven, they pushed me over to the Claude V. Ricketts. They took me to the battle dressing station and there were so many casualties, I was halfway sitting and lying down. They started cutting my shoes off and I remember yelling, “Hey those are brand new boondockers! Don’t cut them!” And the medic said, “Sorry man, I’ve got to.” I could see my feet were all swollen.

The whole time we could feel the shuddering of the ships banging together. Andy Gallagher was lying on the table naked and they were just pulling sheets of skin off of him. I’ll never forget, he said he caught a fireball. We stayed while they worked on him. The burns didn’t hurt me too bad. My legs hurt and I couldn’t breathe, but I was okay. They eventually got us propped and ready, put us on a small whale boat, and brought us to the U.S.S. Dale. We were in heavy seas at night. Andy was next to me, and the salt water hit us, soaked our bandages and I could hear him screaming. They got us to the U.S.S. Dale, turned to bring us alongside. Our litter baskets got out of control and they wound up pulling us up side-ways, leaning way over. We could have slid into the sea.

Another battle dressing station, and I ran into this doctor I had known from before. “Hey!” he said, “I know you!” I was fine. They were working on Andy; he was the worse off.

They thought he was going to die right there. By this time it was morning, the sun just coming up. They took us to the flight deck of the USS Dale (DLG). They needed to get the worse injured to hospitals. The choppers are too big to land on deck; they had to hover overhead and let down cables. I was lying there, it was scary looking up from my litter basket at this helicopter. They flew us to the Kennedy, transferred us to Chinoook helicopters. I got really cold and started shivering, and one guy gave me one of those nice warm aviation coats. I suddenly felt sick. I don’t know what happened. I said, “I’m going to throw up.” He gave me this canvas bag, and I just vomited into the bag. I remember he took care of me, and pushed it out the door as we were flying away. [Out of about 300 men on the Kennedy, miraculously, only 7 died that night. 47 were injured. Joe says that many other survivors suffered stress reactions which didn’t show up until years later. According to military reports, casualties show no exposure to radiation.]

They flew us all the way to Sicily. On the runway they had a dressing station, and were getting a list of names. My parents hadn’t heard what happened to me yet. They had me all tagged and said “this guy has to go.” I wound up in a hospital in Naples. You know they put soldiers (einstein) on boxers; you scream in pain, so they were always jammin’ you in the lips with morphine. You know it was easier at the hospital to jam you full of morphine than to have a lot of guys screamin’ in pain. A lot of guys were getting addicted to it. It was a good feeling, the morphine.

Andy wound up in Germany, then in an Army burn center in Texas. A lot of guys went there. My friend in my division died down in the engine room, lost an arm and a lung they say. And Andy Gallagher survived. I ran into him again in Philadelphia months later. He had ho­ siery to cover his wrists while the skin was growing back. He was scared for life. And my leg wasn’t healing right. The doctor—his name was Dr. Boon, but I called him Dr. Bono—finally said, “Joe, we’ve got to put some plates and screws in your ankle.” I was tired of being in hospitals, so they said, “we’ll send you home for ten days convalescence. You can visit with your parents, and when you come back, we’ll operate.”

March 2000
The Gem Gallery: artistry, half art, half stuff by & from Carol Carter, Laura Glendinning and Diane Wiesner, clothing, accessories, home goods, books & more. Enjoy, early support local artists! Opening Sat. Nov. 5, 6-8 pm, & Sun. Nov. 6, 1-5 pm. Fridays from 4 to 8 pm. Thurs/Fri Oct 18, 11, 11 to 6 pm. Sat/Sun Nov 12 & 13, 11 to 4 pm. The Gem Gallery is located at Peaks Island, is an artist/craftsperson cooperative of over 25 individuals in media of painting, drawing, sculpture, pottery, photography, printmaking, assemblage, fiber arts and writing. Please call 207-766-1509 for information.

Dodwell Gallery: HORIZON AND SPIRALS, a new solo show by Nancy Clark of Turner, ME, on display Nov. 7 thru Jan. 1, 2012. As the temps: chill the local, over 25 midwinter months of painting, drawing, art at the gallery via phone at 207-712-1097, or contact Maggie Carpenter at m Carpenter@my emptied.com or 766-2940.

Addison Woolley Gallery AT WORK & PLAY, wood-block prints featuring the human figures for existing, forming and legging, as well as swimming, skating and jump roping. Exhibition: Every Sunday. 10-1 am. Every Saturday. 9-11 am. Every Friday. 11 am to 4 pm. Every Thursday. 2:30-5 pm. Every Wednesday. 8:30-10:00 am. Every Tuesday. 8:00-9:00 am. Every Monday. 8:00-9:00 am. Every Sunday. 11 am to 6 pm. The gallery is located at 132 Washington Avenue (at the corner of Highland Ave and 17th Street), Portland (207) 420-4999. www.addisonwoolley.com Gallery Hours: Thursday thru Saturday, Noon to 5 pm. Closed Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Richard Boyd Gallery PERSPECTIVE, showing new etchings and water colors by painter Jay Eller, whose work in stones and water colors typifies the human landscape. Show opens Friday, Nov. 4 and runs through Nov. 27. Richard Boyd Art Gallery is located on Peaks Island at the corner of Island Ave and Epps St., first building on the right. The gallery is situated at the site of a one-time basket and pottery by establishments and up and coming artists. An art studio producing one of a kind ceramic art and pottery is located on the second floor. For more information please contact Pam Ellison at the gallery via phone at 207-712-1097, or e-mail at rboyd@eastlink.net.

The Fifth Maine The Fifth Maine is a non-profit museum and cultural center on Peake Island, in the city of Portland, Maine. A memorial, Memorial Hall, dedicated to the preservation of Civil War and local history. Membership is open to the public. After hours, the building is open either on request or by appointment. For more information please contact Karen MacDonald at 207-712-1097, or e-mail at rboyd@eastlink.net.

The Eighth Maine The Eighth Maine is a store that builds and修复 built in 1991 as a summer retreat for the Civil War veterans. It features 12 rooms for overnight guests and history-filled, guided tours daily from 11 am until 4 pm. The building is open for use or to make reservations.

Brackett Church 10 Church Street, Peaks Island. Pastor, Rev. Dan Livers, 766-5013. www.brackettchurch.com Sunday Worship 10 am. with guests, such as: "Growing Children, Growing Church". Children's Choir some Mondays, 7:45-9:oo pm. With the Portland College of Education, Room 807, 207-766-1509. Scripture Study Tuesdays, 8:30-9:00 am. Parishioner. All welcome. Parish Hall for community use. Cell 207-766-1509. Open Weekends only or by appointment. For more information please contact Pam Ellison at the church via phone at 707-712-1097, or e-mail at rboyd@eastlink.net.

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Baptist Church Services Sunday Service: 10 a.m. Bible Study, 11 am on Wednesday. Wednesday Service 7 pm. Tea Night Thursdays at Peaks Island School gym 6 pm to 8 pm.

St. Christopher's Church Saturday Service: 5 pm. Sunday School: 10 am. 11 am. Sunday School: 10 am. Religious education for children meets at Mass. with the Sunday School. Missions on the first Sunday of each month on Sunday mornings at 11:30 am. For more information, contact Ellen Malone at 766-2843.

 Peaks Island Health Center 87 Central Avenue, P.O. Box 13, Peaks Island, 04109, 766-2929, Fax 766-2923, Mary Grimaldi, Clinical Assistant/ Administrator. Many of you have been waiting for an update regarding the schedule for the Health Center. We sincerely appreciate your patience and cooperation while we have been working through the provider shortage. We are pleased to announce that Sarah Friel, FNP, will be joining us starting Dec. 1. Sarah comes with a wealth of knowledge to Family Practice, Urgent Care and Comprehensive. She will be working Mondays and Wednesdays at the Health Center from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and a family practice on Folsom Road on Thursday and Fridays. For the month of November, the Health Center will remain open one day a week. Nov. 2, 12, 19, 26. Phone: 207-766-2929.

Children's Workshop Preschool readiness for children ages 2.5 to 5. Part-day and part-week options available, infant/toddler Play Group: Fridays from 10:15 am to 11:00 am to meet other parents and children. FREE.

Community Food Pantry WE REMEMBER: The Peaks Island Food Pantry is celebrating its 20th year of service and moving to Brackett Memorial Church. We will be open at our new location starting on Monday, Nov. 7. Opening hours will be Mondays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 6:00 pm. Our thanks to the Peaks Island Workshop and their staff, who have hosted the food pantry for many years. If you have any questions about the move or if you would like to increase donations, please call Susan Helsel, 766-2753.

Holiday Concert Mark your calendars: Sunday, Dec. 12 will be the 12th Annual Peaks Island Music Association Holiday Concert, at Brackett Church. This community presentation of all things seasonal and holiday related has two shows at 2:35 pm and 7:00 pm. Anyone interested in singing with the Peaks Island Chorale please contact Faith York at F York502@gmail.com or 766-7263. If you plan on participating, we’d love to have you in the Handelchorus orchestra. Contact Nancy J. Hoffman at NancyJ.Hoffman@gmail.com or text 207-223-4578. A family-friendly show put on by Peaks Islanders.

Master Gardening Training Course by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension beginning Feb. 1, 2012. The 2012 training program will feature fruits and vegetables and take place on 16 consecutive Friday afternoons.
Thursday, Nov 17
BINGO FUN (Pl com. rm.) 10:45 am to 11:45 am. Please bring donations for the PI Food Pantry. Have fun with a chance to win "prizes" to be thankful for! BYO lunch if you’d like to eat after BINGO. Sponsored by Portland Recreation (766-2770 or dir@portlandmaine.gov).

Wednesday, Nov 23
ANNUAL STONE SOUP CELEBRATION at 11:30 at the Peaks Island Children’s Workshop to honor Jon and Angie Kolbs, who have chosen not to continue working at the Workshop as of Jan. 1, 2013. They will work through December to assist the children, families and the new teachers. They have not yet had chance to tell all parents their decision in person. We look forward to having their continued presence at the PICW in the future. The board thanks them for their long-standing professionalism and dedication to the community and the PICW.

Thursday, Nov 24
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Friday, Nov 11
FRAU'S ATTELIER: CABARET STYLE MASTER CLASS in vocal performance with Author director Julie Grehl and jazz pianist Joe Winton at the 387 Main Street, Music School in Yarmouth. The cafe opens at 6:30 and serves chill, cookies and non-alcoholic drinks until 9 pm. The master class is from 7 pm to 9 pm. Class fee $20. To register call 846-9559. This class is for intermediate students of singing who wish to broaden their skills in jazz. The class focuses on performance comfort, audience rapport, interpretation and how it affects phrasing. All levels are welcome at as there is something for everyone.

Tuesday, Nov 15
PEAKS ISLAND FELLOW COMMUNITY DISCUSSION - with Chris Wolff, the Island Institute’s Community Service Director, to find out needs in the community that could be met with an Island Fellow placement for the 2012-2013 period. This event is a nonprofit organization and community members are invited. At the Brackett Church from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Sponsored by the Peaks Island Fund and the Island Institute (see full details in Community News page 8).

EDNA (O’BRIEN) LYDEN’S 80TH BIRTHDAY. She has owned a house on Oak Ave since 1946 and has spent every summer three more. Please wish her a Happy Birthday, Peaks Island’s Oldest Constitution!
ISLAND SERVICE DIRECTORY

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33 Island Avenue, Peaks Island, ME 04108
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PEAKS ISLAND TIMES
November 2011

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