Island Times, Dec 2009

Kevin Attra

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Fifth Maine Museum curator Kim MacIsaac explores four vanished homes. Page 16

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Art Roamings

Rock, paper, clay. Art Editor Jamey Hogan reviews three different artists, one who rocks, one who write is, and one who makes puppets with clayface. Page 14

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Local artist Janice George discusses the influence of refinement and desire in making art. Page 15

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Holiday Concert

Sunday, Dec. 13 at the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church on Peaks Island, with two shows at 2:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. Above: Director Faith York (far right) rehearses the Peaks Island Chorale before last year's show. Story page 9.

Fire boat unlikely to be stationed on Peaks

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Peaks Island Council members met with the Public Safety Committee of the City Council at its regular public meeting Tuesday, Nov. 10 to request that a comprehensive study of emergency services on the island be conducted to determine, among other things, if the fire boat should be stationed on Peaks Island. Additionally, the PIC asked that two, full-time EMT personnel be stationed on the island at all times.

The Public Safety Committee began studying emergency service personnel on the island in February. Peaks Island resident Chris Hoppin, who attended the meeting, specifically asked that the fire boat be stationed on the island. "More than half the calls are to Peaks," he said. "Let's make the service more responsive."

However Portland Fire Chief Fred Langella, who attended the meeting in an advisory capacity, said it was impractical. "You have to place your resources where you have the most calls. If 50 percent are to Peaks, 50 percent are elsewhere. I would argue that the fire boat serves all of Casco Bay."

He said by state law the number of firefighters assigned to the fire boat is not enough to attack a fire on land if they have to disembark. They would have to return to the mainland first to collect additional personnel, he said, and concluded that the boat was best stationed in Portland.

Portland Police Commander Michael Sauchuck, also present at the meeting to answer questions about additional police coverage on the island, said the department had been given a grant to purchase a patrol boat and thought it might be feasible to station it on the island.

A police boat on the island would kill two birds with one stone by providing full police coverage around the clock and emergency medical transportation to the mainland.

Peaks Island Councilor Mike Langella told the committee that a thorough study of fire and safety systems on the island should be conducted. Page 3

Workshop's new interim director sees quality child care as key to future success

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Lori Freid Moses took over as interim director of the Peaks Island Children's Workshop this September after learning about the job through the grapevine. Having been in Maine's child care field for 20 years, she's gotten to know the Workshop staff and previous directors. Her previous job, teaching classes in early childhood education at the University of Southern Maine, "became a victim of the economy," she said. She's very passionate about early childhood care and believes it plays a critical role in a person's development. Quality child care has been shown to mitigate the effects of poverty on learning and future success.

Child care standards changed in 2006 requiring higher certification standards, and the Children's Workshop was first in the state to become accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Ms. Moses said the Workshop is familiar to educators throughout the state because of its accreditation. "We wanted to see how it did. It's been our guinea pig," she said. She has essentially been an administrator during her career, but has often plunged into the classroom whenever she's needed.

The PICW receives funds from the United Way and community development block grants from Portland, as well as other state and federal funds, in order to underwrite some of the costs to families. "If you run a quality program," she said, "parents can't possibly pay what it takes to run it."

The school was lucky to get any grant money from the city last year thanks to the kindness of Joe Gray, who authorized it from his discretionary fund. "I don't know what will happen next year," she said.

As of Oct. 1 the PICW also lost a contract with the state which gave it authority to approve families for federal assistance money through a child care development block grant administered by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.

"Loss of the contract represents $4,000 to $5,000 that will be lost for every new family we aren't able to subsidize because they're on a waiting list," she said. Rather than receive the money through the Workshop, families must now apply to the state and go on a waiting list.

Children's Workshop interim director Lori Freid Moses at her desk. (staff photo)

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IN THE NEWS

Schools May Cut $3.4 million

Anticipating reductions in state educational aid, Portland Schools Superintendent Jamie Morse compiled a list of detail budget cuts affecting every school in the district. Page 3

A Gift in the Garden

Kathy Hanley explains the virtues of seaweed as a compost in organic gardening. Page 20

IN THE NEWS

Schools May Cut $3.4 million

Anticipating reductions in state educational aid, Portland Schools Superintendent Jamie Morse compiled a list of detail budget cuts affecting every school in the district. Page 3

January 2009

A community newspaper covering the islands of Casco Bay

FREE
On the cover:

Bagheera

Due to the need for extra news space this issue, we preempted our cover ship story and will bring you a new featured ship next issue. Owing to her sheer beauty and majesty we've put the 72-foot wooden schooner, Bagheera, owned by Peaks Island charter captain Scott Reichmuth, on the cover this month. Her story is familiar to regular readers of the paper and has been described before in this section.

Senator Libby Mitchell starts her bid for governor

BY KEVIN ATTRA

State Senator Libby Mitchell spoke to a small crowd at the home of Ellen Mahoney and Ed Daranyi on Peaks Island Wednesday evening, Nov. 11.

She was raising money for her campaign for governor in next year's election, with a total goal of $40,000, but as a "clean elections" candidate she was only accepting private donations of $100 or less, "so as not to be beholden to large corporations."

Around 20 islanders attended the event, which reportedly generated $400 towards her campaign.

Ms. Mitchell has been a Maine resident since 1971 and currently lives in Vassalboro. She has two grandchildren living on the island and knew many people at the meeting.

"I certainly have a special place in my heart for Peaks and all the kids," she said, and praised the Peaks Island School as one of the best in Maine due to the quality of staff and level of parent involvement.

She spoke about her role in state legislation, describing herself as the only woman in the country who has served as Speaker of the House and President of the Senate, and gave a behind-the-scenes look at the struggle in Augusta over creation of the gay marriage rights bill.

She said legislators wrestled with personal convictions and concern about religious reprisals — she said many were Catholic. "People showed real courage," she said "As governor, I will sign that bill again."

Her vision as governor will be to focus on alternative energy, she said, especially wind power using off-shore systems in the Gulf of Maine which she called a bright spot in Maine's future. "We've got to stop talking about it and start doing it. We're racing with the Midwest."

She also sees Maine as a potential center for financial services and said the state needs to attract young families. "We love it in Maine or we wouldn't be here," she said. "We need a governor who can sell Maine."

She disagreed with a perception that Maine is the "Charlie Brown of health care" with the least affordable insurance premiums and highest costs of treatment in the country. She said Maine is one of the most progressive states in the country, but problems stem from having a scattered population and many special needs patients, such as the elderly. "We need help from the federal government. We can't afford it."

She said the state also cannot afford higher subsidies for education "without raising taxes". In the next two years, she said, "there will not be more money for education, there will be less. There will not be more money for social services, there will be less.

"Democracy's messy. We get it right most of the time."
POLICE LOG November 2009

Provided by Lisa Perrotta Planning & Reward Coordinator, PPD

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A Special Announcement
Peaks Island's new elementary school principal, Tim Devaney, became a father on Saturday, Nov. 14. His new daughter is Mary Clare, and he said her mom is doing fine.

A view from the balcony in the City Council chambers of members of the Peaks Island Council at the start of the Public Safety Committee meeting Tuesday, Nov. 10. In second row from the top, PIC member Mike Langella (left) converses with Chair Mike Richards while Rob Tiffany and Lynne Richards watch the proceedings in the row behind them, to their right.

staff photo
Lines from Casco Bay Lines

BY CHRIS HOPPIN

How do “soothe cruises” on the Bay Mist and Island Romance ferries affect our ticket prices? More positively than you might think, and they could be even better.

As the Casco Bay Island Transit District, which operates Casco Bay Lines, sails into the winter season, it might be a good time to look at its efforts to capture more revenue using these reserve vessels, and how that impacts our operating costs.

Most of us realize passenger tickets and revenue from freight and vehicles pay for the operation of the ferries, along with grants from federal, state, and local governments. But we may not know of the efforts to capture more revenue using the Bay Mist and Island Romance.

Good business practices suggest that we maximize use to increase revenue from these standby ferries. That revenue is now approaching $700,000 this year, a significant contribution to the District’s $5 million annual budget. Furthermore, the Maine Public Utilities Commission, which regulates Casco Bay Lines, encourages their use for tours, charters and cruises, a contribution that could be even more significant in the future.

While they stand by for use as backup when needed, both the Island Romance, with its outdoor party tent, and the Bay Mist, with its built-in kitchen and dining facilities, are designed with this in mind. Since the Bay Mist is better equipped for parties, it is used more frequently.

The CBITD Sales and Marketing Committee includes several volunteer islanders and staff members, headed by Marketing Director Cathie Goldie. The committee works on a number of programs to attract more walk-up or day-trip ticket buyers as well as more group sales for tours, charters and cruises.

These include year round trips on the 3-hour mail boat run, the 2 1/2-hour “Sunrise on the Bay” run and the 2-hour sunset cruise. Seasonal trips range from the 1 3/4-hour Diamond Pass run and moonlight cruise to the Bay Isle Island moonrise cruise, also an hour and 45 minutes. The longest summer trip is the Bay Isle Island day cruise, a pleasant ride around Casco Bay of almost 6 hours.

Each of these trips generates regular income to offset the prices islanders pay for tickets, freight and vehicles. They also present an opportunity for the District to generate more revenue to offset those prices paid by islanders each day.

For example, islanders should know that many organizations from the local area and away use our ferries for off-site meetings, receptions and dinners. Casco Bay Lines offers a full range of services, from simply transporting dinner to the Peaks Island Yacht Club for one of their famous lobster bakes to soups-to-nuts banquets for corporate meetings and wedding celebrations.

Music cruises with and without refreshments are also very popular. Several area high schools hire the Bay Mist for substance-free outings to celebrate their graduations each spring while other, older groups make arrangements that include a wide selection of adult beverages. Although most of the trips take place in the summer season, spring and fall trips have become more common, too.

One winter event that attracts islanders is the annual Inter-island Cruise. It includes stops at each island, music, refreshments and a delicious dinner prepared by the Cookeyed Gull on Peaks. It’s a great opportunity for islanders to enjoy themselves.

Watch the District’s bulletin boards and website (www.CascoBayLines.org) for more details about this year’s cruise, which usually occurs on a weekend around Ground Hog Day.

Elected members of the board of directors of the CBITD voluntarily work with our outstanding Casco Bay Lines staff to maintain a terrific and reliable ferry service. We are always looking for new ways to generate more revenue so we don’t have to raise ticket, freight or vehicle prices or reduce that service.

Tours, charters and cruises offer a means to produce more revenue for the District. Let’s encourage all islanders to suggest more of these trips to their families, friends and associates.

By Chris Hoppin

Friends of Casco Bay awarded $34,000

Friends of Casco Bay was recently awarded $34,000 for outreach and education from The Gulf of Maine Environmental Compliance and Protection Fund, managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The organization was one of 14 coastal and marine conservation organizations to receive nearly $2 million in settlement funds resulting from criminal penalties imposed on a shipping company for illegally discharging oil close to the Maine coast. Prosecution of the case was made possible through the combined efforts of the U.S. Coast Guard and the United States Attorney for Maine.

Casco Baykeeper Joseph F. Payne, a resident of Westbrook, was recently awarded the Maine Public Relations Council’s Lightship Award, presented to an individual outside of the public relations industry for outstanding community engagement. Previous honorees include Olympic athlete Joan Benoit Samuelson, Governor Angus King, Dr. Dora Anne Mills, and TV Anchorperson Kim Block. For the past 19 years, Payne has been “the voice of Casco Bay” with the environmental organization Friends of Casco Bay.

BY MARY CERULLO, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Friends of Casco Bay

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By Mary Cerullo, Associate Director

Friends of Casco Bay awarded $34,000
December 2009

Island non-profits get a projector

Gail Kelly (standing) looks at an image projected screen while Sam Saltonstall (seated, center) brings up a file on a laptop computer for demonstration.

BY KEVIN ATTRA

After scrambling around twice to find a projector for two wind energy presentations last year, Sam Saltonstall decided the community should have one of its own. He enlisted the support of Peaks Island Tax Assistance and the island fund, which contributed $500, and with added money raised during PeaksFest he and Gail Kelly went out and bought one.

“Now we have this great thing to share,” said Ms. Kelly at a training session at the Children’s Workshop on Thursday, Nov. 12. Five representatives of nonprofit organizations on the island were there to learn how to operate the machine.

It will be kept at the Workshop, where staff will review a reservation schedule. The projector is available to any nonprofit organization on the island whose members have been shown how to use it.

Representatives of the Community Garden, the Senior Center, the Fifth Maine, the Children’s Enrichment program, the Island Institute and the Children’s Workshop were trained during the 1-hour meeting.

One of the main reasons for the training, according to Ms. Kelly, is that the lamp used in the projector is extremely delicate. The machine has to be turned on and shut down in a specific way or the bulb can be damaged, which costs $350 to replace.

“There’s no budget left,” said Ms. Saltonstall. “When it breaks, it’s broken.” According to the manufacturer the lamp is rated for 2,000 hours, which Ms. Kelly said should last about two years. The group decided to charge $5 for each use in order to fund a replacement bulb.

“Ninety percent of the brain develops before age 5. You can’t go back. The brain’s being hardwired,” she added that the difference between mediocre day care and good day care is enormous. Accreditation is designed to raise the quality of early child care to a national standard.

The Workshop’s accreditation by Washington, D.C.-based NAEYC is highly respected among educators and reportedly certifies the finest of accredited child care centers in the country.

The PICW must meet 432 standards as outlined in 10 volumes of requirements for everything from the physical environment to nutrition, from staff to curriculum and even its relationship with families and the community.

“It’s a ton of work,” said Ms. Moses, “very expensive.” She added that the state encourages accreditation with financial incentives such as tax credits and tuition rebates.

In addition to directing the Children’s Workshop three days a week, Ms. Moses is the state’s lone field director for “Every Child Matters”, and also provides professional development training to child care workers through the “Maine Roads to Quality” program at USM’s Muskie School.

Ms. Moses in consultation with administrative assistant/bookkeeper/teacher Jen Hale Nowers who has been with the school for five years.

Island non-profits get a projector

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Community Letters

To the Editor

We are happy to share the news that a digital projector, screen and speakers have been acquired which will be shared by all Peaks Island non-profits who wish to loan the equipment out. This state-of-the-art projection system was purchased with a $700 grant from the Peaks Island Fund and a $506 contribution from PeakFest.

Through the helpful cooperation of PITA as our fiscal sponsor, we were able to apply for the PIF grant last summer, and purchase the equipment without having to pay sales tax. We would like to thank all three of these wonderful organizations for their generosity and cooperation.

Participating groups must sign up in advance for the equipment, must have received training in its use, and must provide a computer for use with the projector. If your island non-profit is interested in borrowing the equipment and you have not yet had the orientation, please contact either of us.

Gail Kelley
gkbo@hotmail.com
Sam Saltonstall
saltonstallsam@yahoo.com

Dear Mr. Tierney,

In your October crossword puzzle, #5 down (capital of Guam) you say it is "Agani" to coincide with #23 across, "Ziti," but in actual fact it is "Agana". I had forgotten that Sr Edmund's conclusion (in their climb up Mr. Everett) spelt his name with a Z. Which really had me bemused.

I enjoy doing your crossword puzzle each month and look forward to it.

Semper,
Bill Hoadley
Matinicus

Dear Mr. Hoadley,

Thank you for calling attention to the error in my October crossword puzzle. The capital of Guam is of course not Agani but Agana (or it was until 1998, when they changed it back to Hagatna). I wish I could say that "ziti" is the singular of "ziti," but it isn't. "Ziti" means "fancy," but the way this form of pasta is traditionally prepared for weddings, I am sending you a package of ziti to say thanks for your sharp eyes, and because it may not be readily available on Matinicus.

Sincerely,
Anna Tierney

A Letter from HomeStart

HOMEStart is pleased to announce the creation of an independent housing selection committee to process applications for affordable housing. The committee will refer qualified applicants to the board for placement in appropriate homes as they become available.

Recognizing that the application asks for personal income information and references, the selection committee is dedicated to confidentiality. No one outside the committee, including HOMEStart board members, has access to this information.

Applications may be picked up after Dec. 15 at the library, the island churches, the school and the Peaks Island Children's Workshop, as well as at HOMEStart house meetings and on our webpage at peaksislandhomestart.org. As both ownership and rental property become available, announcements will appear in the Island Times and the Star.

Much of the requested information is the same as that required to obtain a mortgage. Three personal references are required, with at least one from a previous landlord and one from a current community member.

To be eligible as a housing recipient, an applicant must demonstrate income eligibility and residency, be able to provide references, and be available to interview with the selection committee. Interviews allow the applicant to ask questions and the committee the opportunity to clarify information.

Income eligibility requirements, determined using area median income adjusted for family size as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, are as follows:

- Individuals: $75,250 to $106,840
- Two person households: $28,950 to $60,480
- Three persons: $32,650 to $78,240
- Four persons: $36,300 to $87,120
- Five persons: $39,100 to $93,840

Total housing debt, including mortgage, taxes, home insurance, heat and electricity should not exceed 35 percent of an applicant's gross income.

Other restrictions also apply. Residents of Peaks Island will receive preference. Secondary preference will go to those with deep ties to the community through family, work, or previous residency.

In other areas, HOMEStart has been working with Bill Floyd of Genesis Community Loan Foundation and Bill Walsh of Waldo Engineering Associates to complete a conditional rezoning application to build two additional affordable homes at 18 Luster Street, which will be submitted to the City of Portland within the next month. Once received, the city will initiate a public meeting and comment process to review and discuss the plan.

The application will specify that the homes remain permanently affordable using deed restrictions, and every effort is being made to use green methods in their construction, maintenance and operation.

HOMEStart continues to work toward matching a $25,000 Islands Challenge Fund Grant. Thank you to all who have donated and supported the work.

Board of directors meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the Fay Garman House Community Room.

Jane Banquer, President
Mary Terry, Casco Bay Island Fellow

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Letter from Ethiopia

Hello Peaks, Well, I've been at Gimbi Adventist Hospital for three weeks now. I miss the island and all you islanders something wicked. I want to thank everyone again for your support and interest in my quest to help care in Africa as best I may.

The trip was smooth. I brought five overstuffed, rolling duffels and one wheelchair by truck, bus, air and a Land-cruiser through 12 hours of bush driving (with the suitcases roped to the roof rack). Of all the medical supplies collected for Gimbi (and one bag of dishes rolled in surgical scrub and packed in dressing), only one dinner plate broke and it is still usable. I think it broke just to emphasize the absurdity of the homeport.

The Gimbi Adventist Hospital is an odd combination of attached buildings with inadequate water, electricity, sanitation, facilities, equipment and technology, but plenty of indigent patients and their families.

Yet, Gimbi runs. Although we have a good idea of health care in third world countries, (many of P.I.ers have done their share and more of volunteering) one still cannot help feeling shocked and appalled at the average patients only available healthcare. Even though we bemoan the United States' current healthcare debacle - soon to improve - (woohoo, President Obama!) I hope we understand how incredibly lucky even the most disadvantaged U.S. citizens are.

Culture shock covers so many aspects of my care-giving here. Death is looking over everyone's shoulder, and the staff and citizens of Gimbi share an interesting combination of grief and resignation after each loss. The very young and the very old die so easily.

Yet, Gimbi works. I am well, busy, tired, sad, joyful, angry, philosophical, silly, bemused, homesick and glad to be here-sometimes all at once.

Joyce Perren,
Peaks Islander in Ethiopia.

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| Publisher: Kevin Attra |
| Member of the Society of Professional Journalists |
| Arts Editor - Jamie Hogan |
| Comm. Notes - Rhonda Berg |
| Research - Irene Schensted |
| Proof Reader - R. Wingfield |

Feature Writers:

Jerry Garman
Mike Richards
Fria Houston
Rebecca Stephens
Kimberly Machnaa

Special Contributors:

Justin Palser
Bill Zimmerman
Nicole Evans
Alison Schneller
Mary Terry

Production Assistance:

Craig Davis
Mark Shaw

The Island Times is a community newspaper covering the islands in Casco Bay. We welcome birth, engagement and wedding announcements; obituaries; notices of community events; and letters to the editor. Please try to keep letters to 300 words or less. We reserve the right to edit all letters. The newspaper is available by mail for $25 a year. Address checks to Island Times. Our mailing address is 126 Brackett Ave., Peaks Island, Maine 04128. To reach Kevin Attra, call (207) 660-1016 or e-mail kattr@ islandtimes.org. For ad rates visit our website at www.islandtimes.org.

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YOGA FOR LIFE

A yogic perspective on health and simple living

BY REBECCA JOHANNA STEPHANS

Rebecca Johanna Stephens teaches weekly yoga classes and private yoga lessons on Peaks Island and in Portland. You may direct your comments, inquiries, or column ideas to 766-5017 or rjyoga@pen.net.

The Yoga Sutras are ancient, poetic writings of the teachings of yoga which have been interpreted over the years by many Sanskrit scholars. My favorite translation is by Mukunda Stiles. In the sutras, yoga is defined as a practice that clears the mind and body of patterns that generate suffering, thus freeing us for translation.

The meditation technique offered below uses a series of hand positions, called mudras in Sanskrit, in conjunction with the chakras, a system of energy centers located along the mid-line of the torso. There is a wealth of information written about the chakras, so do some research if you are intrigued by this meditation. My favorite book on the chakras is “The Sevenfold Journey” by Anodea Judith and Selene Vega.

In the directions for the hand positions shown in the photos, I will include the Sanskrit and English names of each chakra, the color and energy associated with the chakra, and a very brief description of how we feel when the chakra is in balance. When the energy of one or more chakras becomes excessive or deficient, we respond with overcompensation or avoidance and lose our equilibrium and equanimity. Ideally, each chakra is balanced, energy flows freely through the whole system, and we feel both grounded and inspired. The mid-point of the chakra system is at the heart.

Before meditation, I recommend that you begin with at least 10 or 15 minutes of movement. The breathing exercises in the October issue of Island Times or a brisk walk plus a few hip and leg stretches would be a great preparation for sitting. You may sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor if sitting on the floor is uncomfortable for you.

As you hold each of these mudras, focus on the shape of your hands, the flow of your breath, and/or the energy associated with each chakra and whether that energy is in balance or out of balance in your life. You may enhance the meditation by slowly repeating the Sanskrit name or visualizing the color associated with each chakra. If you find one of the mudras particularly compelling, stay with it as long as you like.

For a 20-minute meditation, hold each mudra for a couple of minutes (12 to 15 breaths) until the last one, which you may hold a little longer. If you dedicate time for practice on a regular basis, I feel confident that you will be quite pleased with the “after” photo that you create.

I predict that your friends and family will be very grateful as well. May you be peaceful, warm and content in this season of long nights and festivities.

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

Muladhara (Root) Chakra
Red; Earth element. Grounded, steady; essential needs are met, feeling safe. Mudra: Tuck your thumbs into the palm of your hands, and wrap your fingers around your thumbs making a firm fist. Stretch your arms out over your knees; fingers facing down. Feel your contact with the earth.

Svadhisthana (Sacral) Chakra
Orange, water element. Adaptable, fluidity of movement, sensual pleasure, available to feel and express emotions. Mudra: Cup your hands a bit, and rest your right hand on top of your left, palms facing up. Hold your cupped hands in front of your abdomen below your naval, or gently rest your hands against your belly.

Manipura (Solar Plexus) Chakra
Yellow, fire element. Powerful, effective, confident, able to take action. Mudra: Make loose fists (lay fingers flat against heel of hand, rather than curling them into your palm) and rest your fists against each other with thumbs on top and knuckles rest. Rest your fists against your solar plexus at the base of your rib cage, and engage a gentle somatic press.

Anahata (Heart) Chakra
Green, air element or breath. Compassionate, empathic, open to relationship, giving and receiving love. Mudra: Rest your left hand on your upper chest near your right shoulder. As you bring your right hand up, link your thumbs. Spread your fingers out wide, giving your heart wings and receive the warmth and comfort of your touch.

Vishuddha (Throat) Chakra
Sky Blue, sound. Communication, singing, resonant tone of voice, knowing and speaking your truth. Mudra: Bring the heels of your hands together and spread your fingers out wide making a bowl shape. Optionally connect your thumb tips and pinky fingers. Rest the tips of your thumbs at the base of your throat.

Ajna (Third Eye) Chakra
Indigo Blue, thought. Intuitive, imaginative, insightful, seeing clearly. Mudra: Bring the palms of your hands together and rest the sides of your thumbs against the center of your forehead. If your shoulders fatigue, rest for a moment and return.

Sahasra (Crown) Chakra
Purple or White, pure consciousness. Expansive, awakened, wise, connected to spiritual realm. Mudra: Bring your fingertips together into a pyramid shape and rest your hands on or just above the top of your head. If your shoulders fatigue, rest for a moment and return.

Integartion

Bring the tips of your index fingers and thumbs together while stretching the other three fingers away. Rest your hands palms up on your legs. Breathe and feel.
For the love of Peaks!

Philip Munn

Part 2

AS TOLD TO FRAN HOUSTON

After my career as a fighter pilot in the Air Force, I spent 20 wonderful years in East Hartford, Connecticut where I became the Chief of Experimental Construction. I then got transferred back over to the manufacturing department. It broke my heart and I had to go to work for three damned fags.

And they nearly killed me, it got so terrible, working for those three people. After the VP blew his stack, screamed at me to pick one of my people apart in front of everybody else, he said, "After this meeting is over, you and I get to work." Cody Green lived at what is now the parsonage of the Brackett Memorial Church. Cody, from the time I first came here until the time I left the island at 11 years old, she was like a surrogate mother to me. My mother worked nights. She worked as a telephone operator for 12 hour shifts at night. We hardly ever saw her because she'd come home and sleep and have something to eat and go back to work.

My grandmother raised my sister and myself, and Cody and she were out there a lot. Sometimes we didn't even wash our hands to take all that ice cream off. He'd give us a wooden spoon maybe. It was the most wonderful thing and he was a great guy.

One of my adventures was going out blueberrying with my tiny tot, a cousin five years younger than I was. So, if I was 10 he was 5. There used to be a lot of blueberries behind the church. We're blueberrying up there and all of a sudden I heard screaming. And they were low bush and I couldn't figure what was wrong. So I put down my basket and I went over and he was covered with yellow jackets, poor kid. I beat all these things off and got bitten many times myself, and I brought him home to my grandmother.

She was great at feeding us, begging a fish from Captain Randall whose little sloop would motor right below where the telephone office was, down the hill. Going out for mussels, get them off the rocks: "Don't go where the boat comes in", it's too oily for mussels.

I love mussels. I've never gotten over that, that I was one of the only ones in the family that really loved mussels, and my grandmother used to make all kinds of meals out of mussels. And she knew which berries to get, what roots to get, what time we'd go out and get the new dandelions and that would be salut and it would be served like spinach nowadays. If they were new and fresh they were edible.

She'd always get a nice bone for the dog, I don't know, at Brackett's store or Jessen's store, and "be sure you leave a little meat on it." She would cook that bone and make soup out of it, and sometimes it got pretty thin and we'd say "Oh no, no, Nanny, please no, not too much again!"

Little things that come back to you. Have you seen the new postcard with the wharf on it? I have one...
Origins of the annual Holiday Concert
An interview with director Nancy 3. Hoffman

BY KEVIN ATTRA

She has saved a program from every Holiday Concert since its inception (missing only one) which she keeps in a notebook. She referred to the very first program - a handmade job made in the cut-and-paste method - to remind herself of the program when we spoke at her home in late November.

"I made this on an old typewriter. I had this little old, turquoise-colored, really cool typewriter. I think Sherry Warner made the poster, I'm pretty sure. And we had a little orchestra," which she explained was composed of all the musicians living on the island at the time. "We called it the 'New' Peaks Island Orchestra in case there was an old one we didn't know about."

The Peaks Island Chorale was started that year, by Susanna Adams who now lives on the mainland but still comes out frequently to perform in the concerts. "This was the first time that Kleenex music was played by the Casco Bay Tumblers in public," she added.

As she scanned the 1987 concert program, she remembered that the ballad Christmas in the Trenches made her cry. "It's an incredible song about World War I and these, I think they were Scottish and German battalions [who] laid down their arms and played scepter on Christmas Eve, and then went back and started shooting at each other again. I get chills just thinking about it."

She brightened up when she saw the Happy Trio listed as well. "This was the origin of the Mando Commandos. The Happy Trio was Tom Faux, O.B. O'Brien and Tom Morse. And they were called the Happy Trio because they were totally deadpan. There was no smile allowed.

"They evolved. The next year they were called Berry Mando Low. That was the second year, then the next year they were the Mando Commandos. So they were known as the Mando Commandos, but they always had a pseudonym. Each year they had, like, an also-known-as.

"The first year we had two sing-alongs - the schmaltz" section - you know, trying to get people up and involved. And we started the Hallelujah Chorus sing-along that very year. The minister was Delena Gilman at the time."

What inspired you to do that?

"I think it was actually one of the summer residents. I'm pretty sure it was Starr DeMitre. I think it was Starr, who is a founding mother of the Peaks Island Music Association. She said to us, during the summer she said, 'So why don't you people that stay here all winter do a concert or two', and that gave us the idea."

So it wasn't just your brainchild?

"No, I don't think it was. I'm the director and the Music Association is the producer."

What was it like putting it together for the first time? Was it easy?

"Probably it was pretty easy, because it was a new thing. You know, I knew a bunch of musicians on the island already. People got enthused about putting the groups together. It was kind of an exciting way to give back to our community."

How much work is it?

"[laughs] It depends on the year a little bit. It depends on how easy or difficult it is to get people scheduled. I think the first one was relatively easy. I mean, it was more work because I had the orchestra, so I was rehearsing more, like once a week. We played, like, seven songs, so..."

"Now we just play for the Hallelujah Chorus. I mean, I ask instrumentalists to come up and play."

So, we don't really have a Peaks Island Orchestra anymore; just one or odd?

"No. [laughs] The Defunct Peaks Island Orchestra. So, that's a good question because I hate to start getting that together."

"When we started it there was only one afternoon concert, but we get so many people coming that a number of years ago - 10 years ago, maybe more - we decided it was better to do two concerts, and we were willing to do it.

"We try to be ecumenical in our approach. It is called the Holiday Concert. It's not the Christmas Concert particularly because, being Jewish, I wanted the Chanukah tradition to be included. Then we started including Kwanzaa when we had someone who could present something.

"We've also tried to focus on traditions in other countries. We've had a Lithuanian presentation. Oskar Mokene did an African presentation. We had the Sanka Lucia from Sweden that Gunnell Larsdotter organized."

"Larry Walden brought his harpsichord one year to the space and shared it with us. We try to have humor as well as serious material."

"It's an incredibly rewarding thing to do. I love doing it, and I think the people who perform love doing it for our community. We appreciate that the Brackett Church, that they've been really gracious about having the concert there."

The 23rd annual Holiday Concert runs in two shows this month at 2:15 p.m. and at 7 p.m. It takes place on Sunday, Dec. 13. Requested donations $5/website $1/children. Proceeds will benefit island nonprofits and the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church.
Seaweed: A Gift for the Garden

BY KATHY HANLEY

Late fall is the time when most gardeners are cleaning their gardens and "putting them to bed" for the winter. It can be a nostalgic time for some, reflecting on what plants thrived and wondering why some things didn't fare so well. For many island and coastal gardeners, it can also be a time to take advantage of the great quantities of seaweed that arrive on our shores.

"If you live in an area where seaweed is available consider yourself blessed," wrote Compost Info Guide.com.

Seaweed has been used for centuries by coastal farmers and gardeners. Peaks Island nursery owner Jim Lausier is enthusiastic about seaweed's many virtues. "It's a great free resource, full of nitrogen and loaded with growth hormones that will leach into the soil," he said, "and thus the fall is a wonderful time to bed seaweed. Seaweed can contain about 60 trace elements and lots of plant growth hormones," writes professional gardener W.H. Cureton II, known familiarly as Captain Compost, in an article for Village Garden Web (www.villagegardenweb.com).

Researcher Frank Shields with Soil Control Lab in Watsonville, California said, "The biggest problem is salt water. You've got to wash it in fresh water to get the salt off as soon as possible. Otherwise, you get so much sodium and chloride that the garden is ruined." Almost all sites recommend using fresh seaweed, most readily harvested immediately after a storm. As it decays the concentration of nutrients decreases while salts increase. "If it smells clean and fresh use it," writes "Angie", a British master gardener and blogger for Vermont Permaculture. "If it pong, walk away."

"Only collect loose seaweed, do not pull it off of rocks. By doing so you will be making numerous sea creatures homeless and damaging the ecosystem," she adds.

According to Cureton, "Seaweed is a beneficial fungal food source for soil microbes." Researchers in Venezuela found that seaweed extract made from composted seaweed as well as it did in two commercial products made for the purpose: "The seaweed extract is simple to obtain and inexpensive."

Cureton writes, "Liquifying the seaweed makes it dissolve even faster. Besides making instant compost, soaking seaweed in water extracts the nutrients, forming a liquid concentrate that can also enrich the garden."

Both he and Angie offer homemade extract recipes. Angie fills a 10-gallon container half-full with seaweed, adds water and lets it sit three months. Cureton mixes a shovel full in five gallons of water and waits a week. Both suggest diluting the extract with water so the plants won't burn.

Shields, of Soil Control Lab, said the best measure of a compost's value is its pH level, the ratio of nutrients to salts. He said values over 5 are fine, under 5 and the salt content is too high.

By Jerry Garmian

Since its formation in 1775 the U.S. Postal Service has transitioned through the Pony Express, Air Mail, V-Mail (microfilm) and E-COM (electronic mail), while our island still receives mail by ferry (Sea-Mail).

Starting in 1979, mail connecting us to the mainland was distributed at our first PO located in the Union House Hotel. First-class mail (FCM) cost 2 cents. The office was moved in 1909 to the site of the Laundromat. FCM cost 3 cents.

Mail was delivered on foot, twice per day, seven days per week, with two mailmen in the summer. Five collection boxes (including a pole box) assisted postal workers. Webber's store on the north end and Philpott's store on the south end also acted as postal sites.

Note: TEIA members petitioned the Postmaster General in a successful effort to keep postal service at the Webber store during the summer months.

By 1950 delivery had been officially reduced to once per day, six days per week and a postal truck was introduced (a stand-up Studebaker). Before the 5-digit zip code was adopted in 1963, Pea$k Island mail was simply marked with the number 8.

Sometime in the mid 1950's the post office was moved to the site of what is now the ice cream shop. FCM cost 4 cents. A final move to its present site took place in 1982. FCM cost 20 cents.

With the current FCM price at 44 cents, we request free delivery of the following very special letter (below):

Left: Webber's store circa 1902. Above: Plante's building, where the laundromat was housed, as it appeared around 1910. Wrote curator Kim Macisaac, "The stone bathtub shows in the photo of the laundromat building. I remember it being at the post office on the corner, however briefly it was there. I believe it's still on the island but I don't know where."

Photos from the 1980 Maine collection

Below: The Peaks Island post office today. Photo by Jerry Garmian
Star Gazing

December 2009

BY MIKE RICHARDS

December is the month of the winter solstice ("Dawn-wings"), in which the sun ends its migration south, steps directly over the Tropic of Capricorn (running through South America, southern Africa and Australia), and heads back north again. Although the solstice marks the middle of the period when the North Pole tips directly away from the sun, we call it the beginning of winter.

Earth's oceans cover nearly 3/4 of the planet (most of them in the Southern Hemisphere), and water retains heat so well it takes time for the oceans to cool, but when they do, the snow falls and covers the upper half of the large northern land masses. The sun rises south of east and sets south of west, leaving us only nine hours of sunlight after 15 hours of darkness, giving rise to a tradition of lights, a gift-giving, and gift-giving, which (because of its popularity) our religious leaders combined with Chanukah and Christmas to help bring joy to the world.

This month hosts a "blue moon" based on the modern definition of the term, as December contains two of them on the 2nd and the 31st of the month. The 1937 Maine Farmers' Almanac, citing centuries-old folklore, is the source of the original definition - the third of four full moons occurring in one season - but a Sky & Telescope author mistook it in 1946, and the mistake has been carried forward ever since. No doubt because it's easier to remember.

As traditionally defined, a blue moon will occur once every 2.7 years, hence the term "once in a blue moon." Modern ones happen about as often, except every 20 years we have two of them only two months apart.

Why blue? Because the other moons have names linking them to the seasons and to religious events (e.g., Lent), and our religious leaders preferred that we simply ignore the extra one. It's tough on them because the heavens have not proven to be as regular, nor as round as they'd like to think.

PLANETS

No are the heavens as unchanging. The planets wander from constellation to constellation along the ecliptic, that band of sky near the celestial equator through which the sun and moon also travel. This month, golden Saturn is high in the dawn sky in Virgo. Venus is in Scorpius and is the brightest planet we see, but it's low in the dawn sky now and tough to see.

By contrast, mighty Jupiter (89,000 miles across) is high in the southeast in Capricornus and hard to miss, and distant Neptune is just to Jupiter's upper right. Tiny Mercury pops up in Sagittarius just after sunset, low on the western horizon.

This month's newcomer is ruddy Mars, which rises before midnight in Leo, its steady glare peaking over the treecrop to the east. On the solstice, Mars goes retrograde, seeming to moving backward as Earth speeds past Mars.

This motion gave ancient astronomers fits and gave rise to Ptolemy's convention of "epicycles," small circles within the planets' larger orbits. This theory lasted 2,000 years, until Kepler discovered that planets' orbits are elliptical, not circular, and irregular as they speed up and slow down depending on where they are in space. Earth is now spinning in its orbit because it's actually closer to the sun in winter, reaching perihelion next month.

STARS

December also heralds the return of the winter constellations, which are more recognizable than their summer counterparts, in part because the early sunsets give us a better chance to see them. In the early evening, the great square of Pegasus, the horse, is nearly overhead (although upside-down), and we can use the deep V in Cassiopeia, the queen ("the big W"), to point to our sister galaxy Andromeda hiding behind the hind legs of the winged horse.

Following Pegasus is Perseus, the king, with his slaying variable star Algol that noticeably is brightness every 69 hours, as its dimmer twin passes in front. It was imagined to be the winking eye of the demon whose head Perseus is holding. Behind that is Auriga the Charioteer, with its yellow star Capella first catching our eye.

Plutideas, the Seven Sisters, is a fascinating star cluster, a stellar nursery zooming through space as a group and always worth checking out in binoculars. Behind them is the big V that forms the head of Taurus the Bull, protecting Pleiades from the advance of Orion, the hunter in the east. Further north are the Gemini twins, and directly south is the Big Dipper, so low on the horizon it's hard to see.

ALMANAC

Dec. 1-Sun rises at 6:54 AM and sets at 4:05 PM
Dec. 2-A big, full "Cold" moon sets over the city at 7:28 AM and rises out over the all at 4:31 PM, quite a sight for those on the 7:15 boat to town and 9:30 boat back to Peaks
Dec. 6-The moon's perigee, closest to the Earth this month. It is 10 percent closer than when it's at apogee and will pull tides higher and lower than normal. Today's spring tide highs measure 12.4 feet above low tide, nearly twice what it will measure later this month.
Dec. 6-Algod reaches minimum brightness at 7:41 PM. Compare it to last night and tomorrow night.
Dec. 7-Sunset is at 4:03 PM, the earliest of the year. The latest sunrise is early next month.
Dec. 8-Late-quarter moon is high in the sky at sunrise.
Dec. 13 & 14 - The Geminid meteor shower peaks tonight, and the moon is down, so look eastward and you should see a couple of meteors every minute or so. Most meteors are dusty remnants of passing comets, but the Geminids come from the asteroid Phaethon. Some of the particles are fairly large and when they zoom through space they make the biggest, brightest trails across the sky - the biggest will make an oomoooom sound.
Dec. 16-New moon means no moonlight to spoil the hunting for the Andromeda Galaxy.
Dec. 17-On this date in 1903, Orville Wright flew the first motorized airplane at Kitty Hawk, NC, with Wilbur running alongside holding the wing tip up from the sand. A century later, we have space shuttles carrying astronauts, equipment and supplies to the International Space Station circling the Earth.
Dec. 18-Pack your binoculars this Friday morning. If you're on the 3:15 boat back to Peaks and it's clear out over the city this afternoon, look for Mercury three fingers below and right of a thin crescent Moon.
Dec. 20-The moon's at apogee, it's furthest point from the Earth this time around, so tides are moving only 7 feet between high and low.
Dec. 21-Winter Solstice is at 12:47 PM. If you and the sun are out at noon, look at how long your shadow is. The combination of 43.66 latitude and the Earth's 23.44 tilt lets the sun rise only 1/3 of the way up at its highest point. Today's morning shadow hangs just below the waxing crescent Moon.
Dec. 24-First-quarter moon is high in the sky at sunset.
Dec. 31-Full "blue moon" sets at 7:10 AM and rises again at 11:06 pm. Sunset is at 7:14 AM and is at 4:03 PM, so we're slowly gaining light, but the white snow reflects the sunlight as night draws on. Oh, well - let's put those skis, boards and sleds to use!
Art Roamings

Rock, paper, clay

BY JAMIE HOGAN

Guest Artist Rocks the Gem

The Gem Gallery hosted an exhibit by guest artist Nate Drinkwater on Friday, Nov. 20 for an opening packed with viewers, and Nate was visibly thrilled with the chance to have his first solo show. “I’ve been making art since I was a kid. My dad is an airbrush artist and I learned a lot from him,” he said.

Nate’s paintings range in size, with some hung in groups to form a larger image. He works in acrylic, with bold black outlines and vivid colors. Subjects range from a hummingbird to a seahorse to landscapes to a large portrait of John Lennon. Artist David Gagne played his guitar in the back gallery, in front of the original art that appears on his band’s new CD, East Wave Radio’s Soulful Noise.

On Saturday, Dec. 5 the Gem will open the annual Holiday Shop, with a display of art and handmade gifts. Gallery hours will be extended the last week before Christmas.

City of Belief

On Saturday, Nov. 21 the Friends of the Library hosted a reading at the Doug MacVane Community Center by Peaks Island author Nicole d’Entremont. Her newly released novel, City of Belief, is set in New York’s Lower East Side at a soup kitchen run by the Catholic Workers organization during the 1960s, and is drawn from her personal experiences.

“I couldn’t have written this book in my 20s,” she confessed. It revolves around the memory of a friend, Roger LaPorte, whose self-immolation on Nov. 9, 1965 in protest of the Vietnam War has haunted her ever since. It was overshadowed in the news by a New York City blackout.

Nicole’s book breaks the silence around this complicated era with heartbreaking delicacy. The culture of war resisters, peace workers, and the Bowery are revealed in deftly wrought detail.

“Not that the times were without levity, but I needed to write about the big sacrifices that were made,” said Nicole. “Nothing substantial has really been written about the men who went to jail instead of to war during the Vietnam era. The peace movement never really recovered after that,” she said.

Nicole wrote an article about Roger LaPorte for a Catholic publication two weeks after his death, but received negative criticism and “clammed up” for many years. “Therapy hadn’t happened,” she said.

In City of Belief, she changed the names of characters (LaPorte is named Jonathan LeBlanc) in order to delve more deeply into emotional territory, writing in several first person voices including the real-life character, Dorothy Day, legendary founder of the Catholic Worker movement.

Nicole gave a reading on Nov. 6 at the Catholic Worker center, Maryhouse, on Third Street in New York City, where she saw the familiar face of a real-life character in the book. She stared around and realized, “We’re looking beat up, but we’ve survived.”

Survivors are seeking out Nicole. After reading a review of City of Belief, Marie Brassard, a former teacher of Roger LaPorte, tracked her down via Patricia Erikson’s blog, Peaks Island Press (www.peaksislandpress.com). “I have carried Roger in my heart since that early morning in November 1965,” she wrote, “when a reporter from the United Press called me to get information about Roger.”

John Holdrige, a literacy teacher and Nicole’s neighbor, led a small group in a “sudden memoir” exercise to explore a creative response to her reading and to the dialogue afterwards. He handed out small index cards and pens, and prompted participants to write down single words that came to mind around the lead character, Del, as well as the setting of the story and the Bowery characters.

In about 15 minutes each person read their short phrases. Nicole’s elegiac response: “Where do chants go when they die?”

Welcome to a Special Secret Island

While three large dolls sat shyly nearby, a pink whale named Guinivere and fuzzy peace balls came to life for a delighted audience at the Doug MacVane Community Center.

Continued next page
On Art
REFINEMENTS
Thinking about where you are

BY JESSICA GEORGE

(Show art in the vicinity of Centennial Ban)
Some people desire refined qualities in the things they own. Some people seem to notice, or else they choose to keep up processes of maintaining themselves that only apply to their everyday needs.

I like to think of refinement as more than a new coat for one's porch overlooking the ocean or a gifted Japanese chopping knife. There is more to it than an exchange of money for goods, or old for new.
It is not necessarily found in something to be owned, but rather in something to be developed, something to come about through a course of action. In this way, the development and maintenance of refinements is something to work towards.

Yes, eventually this means it could be something purchased, but sophistication is also found in ingenuity. I find to be most inspired by survival, a desire for life.

This idea of refinement and these questions of ownership and desire are ones that outline the way I move to make something.

In reading Jose Saramago's The Unknown Island, I was struck by the passage, "Liking is probably the best form of ownership, and ownership the worst form of liking." I think about this often as a lover, a writer, an artist, a woman.

Being in a relationship with a man, a landlord, the island landscape, a painting, friends, anything means I am refining my desires constantly.

These relationships are not things I own.

They are things I like and love and choose to engage with because I like doing them. I like moving within the boundaries of each relationship as they grow and change and demand refinement. I think those who strictly maintain imperatives of possessing any of the things I listed (lovers, rerences, paintings, friends, the land, etc.) actually erase their original desire for them, thus producing a less refined, more restrained disposition in all of them.

A painting is made in this spirit of liking. Even the terminology of creating a "likeness" is used in attempting to re-create something one saw. Seeing is enough to create a likeness. One does not need to possess the thing one wishes to liken oneself (or a painting) to.

Looking and listening and discerning what one has a fondness for allows exponential growth in realizing, reinscribing and re-membering. Pictures are strict. Recalling from memory means you have to interpret your thoughts, allowing for a greater difference from the actual experience than what is clearly defined in a photograph.
However, seeing is only the beginning. Through refinement, my desire is that the painted likeness resembles less what it was and more like itself. This is the key to all refined processes: moving through stages, augmenting and eliminating likeable forms to produce something closer to the self.

"Every audience has been wonderful. Performing for kids is so rewarding. We underestimate them and their perceptions. My songs for children are not that different than my songs for adults," Shana said.

One audience member, two boys also watched the performance commented, "I thought her show was just right. I wanted to move to the land of the Fofers. We're low on media exposure for our kids. That the content and simplicity of the animation didn't compete with her singing was good, and she's a great songwriter. It's not itsky sweet."

A young audience member, Imogen Moxhay, said "I really liked how imaginative the stories were. And the songs were calm. They were really soothing."

With intimate and intelligent vocals, Shana sings of the harmonies found in the woods, the meadow, and the ocean. She's a model of island ingenuity, making a spirited world from scratch that appeals to all ages.

Peaks Island Baptist Church
Christmas is Jesus
a musical created by Mike Speck
Presented by Peaks Island Baptist Choir
Saturday, Dec. 12 at 4 p.m.


ART ROAMINGS from page 14

Center on Peaks Island on Saturday, Nov. 14. Each was a handmade character from the lyrical land of Fof, a special secret island off the coast of Maine invented by multimedia artist Shana Barry who wowed her audience with the Fofers Show (www.fofers.com), sponsored by the Peaks Island Library.

Shana's Peaks Island childhood inspired her magical landscape of woods and shore. She said, "I made my first doll at 4, while playing at the island day care center." She loved the outdoors, and the freedom that island children enjoy. She attended Peaks Island Elementary, declaring that she got a "great education" there, with Pat Whitney in grades 1, 2, and 3, and Kristen Ullig for grades 4 and 5.

Shana left Peaks at 14, with travels and pursuits taking her to California, Greece, and Nova Scotia. She returned to Peaks Island in 2001, living in a winter rental on Adams Street with her husband, Crash Barry, a writer. She began making dolls again, with human clay faces in a folk art manner. "The seeds of the Fofers came after seeing Inuit art on a trip to Montreal and Quebec City," said Shana. She and her husband later moved to Eastport where she continued to create Fofers and imagine the world they inhabited.

She took "Fofergaphs" of them lounging on rocks at low tide or sprawled on beds of moss, and wrote songs about them, which she recorded at home. Then she began drawing them directly on the computer, learning to animate scenes with Adobe Flash, a software program.

The animations that accompany her songs have a graphic and iconic simplicity, a quality that makes them dreamy yet accessible. The incarnation of the cast of characters with names like Otamo, Ibo, and Aki was unplanned. "It all came together simultaneously," she said.

"The Fofers come from a special purple blossom that only blooms on the full moon," Shana explained. "They're all buddies." The faces are sculpted with paper mache, covered with air-drying clay and painted. Their serene expressions are framed by bright fake fur, with long, shaggy limbs that end with delicate hands.

Since releasing A Pink Whale and a Very Tall Tree in February, Shana has preformed her multi-media show 25 times across Maine. She'll be taking a break in December and spending the winter working on more dolls and recording news songs and animations for a DVD.

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From the FIFTH MAINE

Lost Houses of Peaks

The MacGowen House.

BY KIM MACISAAC
FIFTH MAINE MUSEUM CURATOR

One of Peaks Island’s most prominent features is its architecture. Look closely and you’ll find Capes, Greek revivals, four-squares, shingles, bungalows, a ranch or two, mansard, carpenter gothic cottages and a variety of contemporary styles. Most are 100 years old or more. Many were built as seasonal cottages and later winterized; others were built as substantial year-round homes. But what of the lost houses of Peaks, those that have disappeared due to neglect or fire or were simply torn down and replaced with newer homes? Let’s take a look at a few.

Oceanside, a three story summer cottage with a two level porch wrapping around three sides of the cottage, sat on the shore of Josiah’s Cove at the end of Reed Avenue. Built about 1900, it was the summer home of a family from Philadelphia named Adams. Members of the same family also built two adjacent cottages—one at the end of Woods Road, until recently owned by Rick Hasson, and another on Reed Avenue where my home is today. Sadly, Oceanside burned in the 1930s. The Elofson home now sits on that site.

In the early decades of the 20th century Kitty and John Grant built a small log cabin on Arbutus Avenue in the area between Central Avenue and Tolman Heights. The 1924 photo taken by the city clearly shows it snuggled in the woods. The Continued next page

HELP PRESERVE WHAT’S SPECIAL ABOUT PEAKS.

Parks, like this, is a truly special place. With its rocky shores, its woodlands and its wetlands. Your membership dues ($35 individual/ $50 family) and your donations are essential in helping us maintain open spaces.

Join today. Help preserve what we love about Peaks.

Continued next page
FIFTH MAINE, from page 16

Grants lived in the house across the street from the Cockeyed Gull. Kitty is best remembered as the author of Rosemary of the Island, a play presented in the Brackett Memorial Church for many years. The log cabin is long gone but the base of the chimney is still visible in the thick woods.

A third lost house is the St. Johnsbury, a summer rooming house built by Franklin Calderwood diagonally across the street from his summer home at Trefethen. Calderwood owned a successful commercial bakery in Portland and, like many hardworking local people, supplemented his income by providing summer visitors to Peaks with lodging. Island men including Ray Herrick, Phil Curran and Richard Erico were hired to help demolish the building in the late 1930s.

Another lost house was located on Reed Avenue close to Seashore Avenue. This large Queen Anne style cottage was the summer home of the Macgowan family. The family was involved in a number of businesses in Portland including the Randall-McAllister Coal Company. The cottage burned some years ago and the site sits empty today, heavily wooded with little evidence of a building having been there.

There are certainly far more lost houses than those accounted for in the archives at the Fifth Maine Regiment Museum. Any information about or photos of them would be a great addition to the archives.


CA$H program seeks volunteers

An opportunity to become certified tax preparer

FROM MARY BELTRANTE
Sr. Vice President with United Way

CA$H Greater Portland, a partnership of community leaders and industry experts managed by United Way of Greater Portland to help families and individuals achieve long-term financial stability is looking for volunteers to assist in its 2010 free tax preparation sites.

From Jan. 23 through March 6, CA$H tax sites will offer free federal and state income tax preparation and filing to qualified individuals whose annual income is $50,000 or less. Clients often learn about tax credits, like the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), that can put thousands of dollars back into their pockets.

Persons looking to build job skills have the opportunity to become a CA$H Coach - an IRS-certified tax preparer who connects clients with programs and services that help them make the most of their money.

Interpreter and Appointment Scheduler.

To volunteer, call 874-1000 ext. 326, or email CA$Htaxpreps@unitedwaygp.org. For more information about CA$H Greater Portland, visit www.cashgp.org.

Since 2004, CA$H Greater Portland has served 2,738 households, saving them $410,733 in tax preparation fees, and has helped them apply for $2,213,160 in federal and state tax refunds and receive $1,279,950 in Earned Income Tax Credits.

In addition to free tax preparation, CA$H Greater Portland provides financial education to the community showing hard-working residents how they can make the most of their money.


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COMMUNITY NOTES

December 2009

Baskett Chapel
Sunday Worship - 10 am, with Sunday School and Childcare
Pease, Ethics, Action, Community, Excellence (P.E.A.C.E.) youth group Sundays during the Sunday School hour. For info contact Antonia Winter, 766-2428.

Children's Workshop
Friday infant-toddler group is from 10:15 a.m. to 11 a.m. while the older preschoolers go to the library for story time. For more information about the program, please visit our website: www.osc.org or call 766-2834.

The Workshop would like to thank its volunteers on the board of directors and various subcommittees, and also those who work weekly with the children: Virginia Howe, our foster grandparent, Sue Ellen Roberts, volunteers who time with the children a morning or two a week, Norm Rossell, our "Brain to Read" volunteer, and volunteers add depth to the program and we love them!

Food Community Pantry
At the Children's Workshop, open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the Workshop's hours. Saturday hours through March. For more information, please contact Susan Hanley at sm phù@osc.org.

Peaks Island Health Center
The Health Center is open Mondays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Phone: 766-2929 for appointment.

Peaks Island Library
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 age, please call (207) 766-5540.

Story Time for Preschoolers: Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

The Peaks Island library is located at 129 Island Ave in the Community Center building. Hours are Tuesday 2 pm to 8 pm, Wednesday 10 am to 4 pm, Friday 10 am to 2 pm and Saturday 8 am to NOON. For more information call 766-5540 or visit www.portland.lib.me.us/peaks.htm.

Furniture & Building Materials Exchange
If you are discarding reusable furniture, cabinetry or building materials, please don't leave them at the transfer station to go into the landfill. Contact one of the two island email lists(Kitchen@osiweb.com and chappy@osiweb.com) and describe what it is and where to get it. If it is in good condition, folks provide a wonderful opportunity to recycle and reuse. If you have smaller items, donate them to the rummage sale held at the Brackett Church on the first Wednesday afternoon of every month from 2 pm to 5 pm. And if all else fails, wait for a sunny day and put things in front of your house with a free sign. Nearly everyone's trash is somebody's treasure!

Friends of TEIA
Friends of TEIA is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization dedicated to the proposition that the arts create whole and they allow a chance to get outside, to see some fun, meet new people, and learn new skills, regardless of the limits of their financial circumstances and being stuck on the island all summer! With your help, the Friends of TEIA will continue to support the TEIA educational programs and activities and give all our island youth a chance to expand their horizons. PLEASE SUPPORT FRIENDS OF TEIA by mailing your tax-deductible check to: Friends of TEIA, P.O. Box 87, Peaks Island, ME04108.

Party's Old Books
20% off all books through the holidays. There is free delivery to Peaks Island residents. Contact by email at paburger@gmail.com or call 233-0177.

Recycling Electronics
To recycle your cell phones or laptop batteries, 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
For Rep. Meredith Strurg Burgers (R-Cumberland) Office you may place residential phone numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry, call toll free (888) 822-1222 or visit www.donottell.gov. If registering by phone, you must call from the number that you wish to add to the list. It's free and doesn't expire. Only residential land lines may be added. The FCC enforces the Do Not Call Registry. To file a complaint, email request@fcc.gov, or phone (888) 257-5322. You can also use the online complaint form at http://complaints.fcc.gov/complaint.htm.

Jennifer Caza: 766-2530. For information about the "Your Turn to Read" program and activities, please contact Jennifer Carle at 766-2530 or call 766-2242.
Tuesday, Dec. 1
Peaks Island Library First Tuesday Book Discussion - at 7 pm at the library, 129 Island Avenue on Man’s Last Dancer by Curtis Li, Cheryl Higgins moderating. Next month’s book is The Genealogy Literary Potato Bell Pot Series by Mary Ann Shaffer, Christina Foster moderating. There is a waiting list, so call (766-5540) or email peaks@portland.lib.me.us to reserve a library copy, and include your library card number. Please contact the library if you have a copy to share.

Friday Dec. 4
Divas in December, Selections from the Great American Songbook, 7 pm in the Bayview Room at the Inn on Peaks Island to benefit the Island Times newspaper. Suggested donation $10, seniors & students $7. Produced by Maine Singer’s Atelier, Director Julie Goell, with accompaniment by Nancy 3. Hoffman and Kevin Artin, Rena Dale, Stephanie Elliot, Julie Goell, Nancy 3. Hoffman, Anne O’Brien will perform selected works by Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, George and Ira Gershwin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Arthur Hamilton, Kurt Weill and others. Kitchen and full bar open for dinner and schmoozing with the Times writers, board and staff. Show starts at 8 pm.


Portland Recreation Department Decoration and Ornament-making, 11:00 am to 3:15 pm in community room. Drop-in anytime as we make seasonal decorations and ornaments. All ages welcome. Supplies provided, all you have to bring is your imagination. Preschoolers must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, Dec. 5
Holiday Craft Fair at The Inn on Peaks Island, 9 am to 2 pm. To support the Loretta Vo’er Fund, which provides island cancer patients with ferry tickets for travel to medical treatments. Please bring your recycled items for the Peaks Food Pantry (collection box at Peaks Cafe).

Sunday, Dec. 6
3rd Annual Santa Lucia Pageant 5 pm at the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church. Come see and hear this year’s Lucia, Eileen Harley, and her attendants, performing the traditional Swedish Christmas songs along with the adorable gingerbread men and tomte/gnomes. Join us afterwards in the parish hall for Swedish non-alcoholic glogg and gingerbreads.

Monday, Dec. 7
Peaks Environmental Action Team meeting 6:30 pm at 25 Crescent Avenue. Adult supervision is on easy ways for islanders to share material goods.

Portland Recreation First Monday Fun: Preschoolers/Adults - Monday, Dec. 7 from 11 am to 12 pm in the community room. Bring your little ones and have some Winter fun. We will sing, dance and do crafts. Fill up a bag of recycled items from Denise’s collection so you can make some “treasures” at home. Drop in any time, no pre-registration.

Tuesday, Dec. 8
Peaks Island Council Swearing-in Ceremony at 6:30 in the Douglas E. MacVane Community Room. Please join us for dessert and coffee to inaugurate new members, celebrate those who serve on and with the PIC, and recognize outstanding volunteers.

Wednesday, Dec. 9
Peaks Island Elementary School Winter Concert at 6:15 pm. The island community is invited in recognizing and appreciating the musical talents and hard work of the students and staff alike.

Thursday, Dec. 10
Evening Taizé Worship 7 pm at the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church. Join us for quiet, low-key worship with candlelight, silence, prayers, gentle music, and ecumenical readings.

Portland Recreation Holiday Bingo Fun from 10:45 am to 11:45 am in the community room. Take a break from the holiday stress to play Bingo and enjoy some laughs. Come away with a seasonal prize or two (but what season?) Please bring an item for the Food Pantry.

Saturday, Dec. 12
Brackett Holiday Fair, 9 am to 2 pm. Homemade soup and bread lunch, silent auction and many gift tables with baked goods, crafts, jewelry and “Santa’s Workshop”. Graftier tables available to rent for $20. For more information please call Cathy Shaw, 766-3394.

Sunday, Dec. 13
Christmas Pageant at Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church during the 10 am service. An adaptation of Godspell music with children of all ages.

Annual Holiday Concert - Seasonal and holiday music performed by island musicians in two shows at 2:15 pm and 7 pm, at the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church. Donation requested $5 adults, $1 for youth. Sponsored by the Peaks Island Music Association.

Friday Dec. 18
Open Mic 7:30 pm at the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church. Bring your stories, music, poetry, maybe dessert to share, and enjoy a fun-filled evening. For more info contact Sam Saltonstall, 809-0922.

Portland Recreation Open House “Around Tuit” Workshop from 11:30 am to 2 pm in the community room. Bring a project to work on or better yet, help Denise get some of her ‘flattie-and-run’ projects done. Enjoy friendship, laughter and a feeling of accomplishment.

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Next Issue
After Two Years

In June 1995 when the Legislature’s State and Local Government Committee shut down the secession movement on Peaks Island for the fourth year in a row, City Attorney Gary Wood said, “If Peaks Island had been allowed to secede, the losers would have been Portland property owners and schoolchildren.”

Without the taxes from the valuable property on Peaks Island, other property owners would have to pay more for city services,” he was quoted as saying in the Portland Press Herald.

A bill to make Peaks Island its own town was rejected by the Legislature again in May 2007, but it led to the creation of the Peaks Island Council as an advocate for the island. Next month we examine the forces behind the secession movement and compare them with the power granted to the PIC by the City Council.
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