12-2011

Island Times, Dec 2011

Kevin Attra

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Boat Capacities Drop as Average Weight Increases

A Pre-election Interview with the
New Mayor
Peaks Islander Risa Kissin spoke with Michael Berumen in October about his desire to run for mayor. Now that he is in office will he keep his word?

Off the Grid

It's a Living

This month Susan Hanley profiles Maine Historical Society registrar Holly Hurtforth.

REGULAR FEATURES

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In the News

HOLIDAY EDITION

Once upon a time there was a season called winter, with temperatures so cold that rain fell in crystals called "snow." ABOVE: Christmas ornaments hung in the window at Coffee by Design on India Street in Portland, back when there was snow.

PEAKS ISLAND COUNCIL FULLY ELECTED

New councilors negotiate their first meeting at the MacVane Center

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Chair Rusty Foster welcomed the new councilors to their first meeting, saying he was excited to see full attendance.

Eric Eaton agreed, "It's great that we can pass meaningful legislation."

According to MacVlin, the Nov. 8 election was a "celebration of democracy." The council members were sworn in on Saturday, Nov. 19 at the Inn on Peaks Island. All but Mitchell were write-in candidates. MacVlin, Scott Kelley, Rob Mecham and Michael Sylvester were sworn in on Saturday, Nov. 19 at the Inn on Peaks Island. All but Mitchell were write-in candidates.

Further complicating the PIC vote was the fact that the write-ins were running for different terms, so the names were often entered in the wrong category. There was also some confusion about whether the candidate's address had to be included since all write-ins had to be registered with the city clerk before the election.

MacVlin proposed that all terms should be reduced from three years to two, which the council unanimously approved.

The council elected officers. Foster remains as chairman, Scott Kelley vice-chair, Mike Sylvester treasurer and Eric Eaton secretary - and filled seats on four of five advisory committees with the city including the City Manager's office, the Portland Police Department and the Portland Jetport Noise Abatement Committee.

Foster said that airport director Paul Bradbury was very anxious to have representation from Peaks Island on the committee, as a proposed new flight path will cross the north end of Peaks Island.

Reputedly, Bradbury said jet noise would not be as loud on the island as it is on the mainland, but, "The planes are at a higher altitude over the island." Resident Cheryl Foster, who attended the council meeting, volunteered for the committee.

The PIC will need a volunteer for the Neighborhood Advisory Committee which meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the City Manager's office.

According to councilor Scott Kelley, fire or six people have complained that firefighters assigned to the island are often off the island for extended periods of time, leaving the one police officer alone to handle any emergencies that may arise.

Kelley said he spoke with Deputy Fire Chief David Pendleton who said that "it is absolutely not true." According to Kelley the firefighters only leave twice a month for scheduled maintenance work on equipment on islands down the bay, as well as Gatling.

Kelley has also been investigating the lack of information being posted on the Peaks Island Police blog, which has not been updated since August. The Facebook blog was created in April in order to improve communication with the community about police activity.

Foster said that Facebook is not the platform because many people don't use it, and the format is too casual to be used for official business. In addition, both he and Kelley felt the ability for the public to make comments, which sometimes have been inappropriate, has cooled the Department's interest in the site.

Both Foster and MacVlin agreed to pursue the issue with the PIC.

In other news, the PIC will begin preparing the budget for next year, and plans to fund the same programs it did last year, especially the discounted annual and monthly boat passes. The $35,000 allocated for those passes has not yet been used.

The PIC discussed a proposal for a Fellowship grant last year which kept six children in the preschool program, but will probably not require as much this year under its new operating model as a pre-K facility.

The Island Institute held a meeting last month to get community ideas for a project that can be implemented by an Island Fellow (see story, page 2). The PIC discussed what the role is should have in the process, which requires that an organization act as representative for the community in applying for a Fellowship.

Island Fellows facilitate specific community-based improvement projects in Maine's coastal islands, and are placed according to the requirements of the project.

At this point there is no clear project emerging on Peaks Island, and Foster didn't feel the council should take a leadership role having itself no need for an Island Fellow. However, Mary Ann Mitchell, who also attended the Institute meeting as a representative of the Peaks Island Environmental Action Team, said there are a number of environmental issues on the island that could be addressed, including investigation of contaminated sites on the island.

She said that she is aware of two Central Maine Power Company properties on the island that are contaminated, and wondered how many more exist.

"Why don't we clean them up?"

The proposed flight path into Portland Jetport crosses Peaks near Evergreen.

The proposed flight path into Portland Jetport crosses Peaks near Evergreen.

ISLAND TIMES
A community newspaper covering the islands of Casco Bay
Planning for Island Institute Fellow begins on Peaks

BY KEVIN ATTIRA

Around 25 Peaks Island residents attended a meeting with Chris Wolff, the community service director for the Island Institute, Tuesday, Nov. 15 at the Brackett Memorial Church to begin planning the role of the next Island Fellow.

The Island Fellows Program, currently in its 13th year, has placed over 90 interns along the Maine coast, who serve a two-year term working with island communities to meet a variety of needs, ranging from economic development to health care, historical preservation, community planning, technology, education, zoning, and more.

Peaks Island has hosted six in that period; Mary Terry & Brooks Brewer for HomeStart; Sarah (Hennessey) Curran & Michele Trans for PILP; Nate Gray for PIN; and James Essex for the Peaks Information Exchange.

According to Wolff, the community should think of an Island Fellow as a two-year resource for a specific goal, whether it be grant writing, training community volunteers, completing a community project, or helping to create a job position.

Many of Peaks Island’s nonprofit organizations were represented at the meeting, including the Health Center, the Children’s Workshop, the Information Exchange, the Peaks Island Fund, PILP, the Fifth Maine Regiment, HomeStart, Energy & Tax Assistance, the Peaks Island Council, Peaks Island Environmental Action Team, the Lions Club and Friends of Peaks Island Library.

A topic that received considerable discussion was development of a community service center. As suggested by Ellen Mahoney, it would be “a real hub for community services”, providing office space and equipment for small businesses, a commercial kitchen, art and performance space, and even a swimming pool—“That wasn’t my idea, but it’s been talked about for years,” said Mahoney.

The Central Maine Power Company building on Island Avenue was suggested as a location, although many concerns were raised about that.

“I’ve been on the island a long time, and I’ve heard that same idea go round and round,” said Mary Anne Mitchel. “The site is too contaminated.”

The meeting concluded that the most traction was to develop a new neighborhood plan with a survey of the needs in the community.

“Many of these project ideas need to be fleshed out further,” Wolff concluded. She stressed the need for an organization and individual to take the lead on an Island Fellow application.

Chris Wolff of the Island Institute at a community meeting to discuss an Island Fellow placement on Peaks Island.

“It is hoped that multiple organizations can come together on a greater project idea, and that multiple needs can be met with an Island Fellow placement,” she wrote in a summary letter to the community after the meeting.

“It will be important to work through project ideas, prioritize, create a two-year work plan, and have a clear idea of goals and expectations.”

The Institute will begin accepting proposals from the islands in January, with a deadline of early April, which should provide enough time for the community to develop a plan, designate which organizations will host the Island Fellow and ensure that there is broad support for the project.

Host organizations must contribute $8,000 in matching funds for an Island Fellow placement. The Peaks Island Fund may be able to help some with this match.

Wolff is planning to return to the Islands on Thursday, Dec. 6 to meet with the group again in order to identify what organization and individual will assume responsibility for the Fellow site application.

“Therefore, sometime before Dec. 6 the Peaks Island community should work together to identify the potential host organization/group, and the potential Fellows Adviser who will help with the project and work with other organizations while helping to manage the Fellow’s project and time,” she wrote.

The community should also try to identify ways to raise the $8,000 matching fund requirement and establish a year-round housing for the Island Fellow.

The meeting on Dec. 6 is planned from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Location to be determined. For further questions or to share ideas, please contact Chris Wolff at cwoolf@landinstitute.org or call (207) 712-8531.

Fort Gorges, oil on canvas by Joanne O’Toole Hayman, on view at the Richard Boyd Gallery on Peaks Island through Dec. 31.

photo by Pamela Williamson
At Casco Bay Lines
National obesity crisis will affect operations

BY KEVIN ATTRA

Apparently, the national obesity crisis will have an impact on the operating expenses of the Casco Bay Lines. According to General Manager Hank Berg, the U.S. Coast Guard has asked them to adjust its method of calculating vessel capacity due to an increased average weight of passengers from 145 lbs to 180 lbs. As a result, the Bay Lines is facing an unexpected expense this year in order to adjust its method of calculating vessel weight.

In studies of the cause of the accident, investigators realized that the average weight of the passengers had increased enough to affect the stability of the vessel.

The Machigonne and Accooscoo won't be affected by the new regulation as they have capacities figured based on 185 lbs, which was also used in designing the new Wabanaki, now planned to be delivered in 2013.

Operations Manager Nicholas Mavodones Jr. said it will become an issue on the Romance and Maquoit next summer, but that in the meantime it will have no effect on service.

In other news, newly elected board member John Kiely was appointed as treasurer, Dan Donoe as clerk and Eric Burt, assistant clerk. In his treasures report, Overlock noted that there was a roughly $11,000 shortfall for the month, which he attributed to less vehicle transportation than anticipated for Peaks Island.

According to Overlock, talks began in 2006 over the definition of "net revenue," which is what the fund is based on, and said it looks like the city owes the Bay Lines money from previous years. The actual amount is still being negotiated but it is expected to be over six figures.

As promised at the October board meeting, a power-operated entry door was key in the petition against the 40 cent fare increase implemented in October without further action from the CRITD, which will save the District nearly $10,000 in legal fees, according to Overlock.

Currently, the Bay Lines and City have been in negotiations concerning a portion of a maintenance fund for the garage that the city has collected as part of its ownership of the terminal.

According to Overlock, talks began in 2006 over the definition of "net revenue," which is what the fund is based on, and said it looks like the city owes the Bay Lines money from previous years. The actual amount is still being negotiated but it is expected to be over six figures.

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Running water for Community Garden
The Peaks Island Community Garden team is looking to install a seasonal water line to the garden in Trout- Littlejohn Park to replace the 600-gallon water tank it currently uses to irrigate the 20 plots under cultivation.

In early October jubilant Kessler and Sam Salomon submitted a letter to the city asking city manager of environmental programs and open space for Portland Public Services, explaining that the water tank had low water pressure making irrigation of the gardens a long, slow process.

In addition, the tank is refilled at a rate of 5,000 gallons per hour, according to Kessler. The CRITD board is looking for volunteers to sit on the various committees, which includes developing rate structure and operations of the ferry service. If you are interested, contact John Kiely at peaks@portlandmaine.gov.

Kessler wrote to the Community. According to Kessler, Moon said he would include the letter in the budget discussions for fiscal year 2012. Kessler also investigated excavation costs and Portland Water District connection and metering fees for the project, which he said amounted to roughly $5,000.

"Hopefully the City will pay for the bulk of the work," he wrote in an e-mail to the Community Garden team. "The City did say they would pay for yearly meter fees (e.g. the monthly usage bill) and the meter installation fee.

The group will continue to have use of the tank for irrigation, and the island fire department will keep refilling as needed.

In late November Kessler ran into the CityArborist JeffTenting, who had been at Trout-Littlejohn Park photographing trees to plan maintenance work there. " Jeff said they're still working on the budget and are definitely considering our request," Kessler wrote to the Community Garden group. "That we work hard on our community garden is evident to him, and to others in the city government. So... a pat on the back for all of us."
### POLICE LOG

#### October 2011

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Check Well Being</td>
<td>Island Av</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:47</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>911 Hang Up Calls</td>
<td>Seeling St</td>
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<tr>
<td>22:54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>911 Hang Up Calls</td>
<td>Welch St</td>
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<td>New Island Av</td>
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<td>Welch St</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>Adams St</td>
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<td>16:35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Follow Up</td>
<td>Central Av</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Open Door/Window</td>
<td>Pleasant Av</td>
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<td>20:47</td>
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<td>Luther St</td>
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<td>09:06</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Assist Fire Dept</td>
<td>New Island Av</td>
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<td>11:13</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>Oak Lawn Av</td>
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<td>City Point Rd</td>
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<td>Lurther St</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Serving Paperwork</td>
<td>Central Av</td>
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#### November 2011

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## An interview with Mayor-elect Michael Brennan

Peaks Island resident Rita Kissern spoke with Mr. Brennan about his intentions as a mayoral candidate prior to his victory in November. In the interest of fair reporting, we did not print this last month since he was the only candidate of the 15 in the race who was interviewed for the paper.

### INTERVIEWED BY RITA KISSEN

Kissern: I'd like to start off by asking you how you think Peaks Island will benefit from having an elected mayor.

Brennan: An elected mayor is going to have to be responsive to all parts of Portland and the islands. If I were an elected mayor I would respond personally to questions from people on Peaks Island. It might not be all the answers everybody wants but there would be an expectation that you get a response. And I would make every effort to be out on Peaks Island as well as the other islands on a regular basis.

One of the issues we talk about a lot is the high level of inefficient management of the ferry. The city subsidizes the city buses, and the ferry is our bus. I'd like to figure out a way to have the state be more accountable in terms of its support for the ferry within Casco Bay. It would seem fair to me that we would treat the ferry in the same way that we treat buses because it is your mode of transportation.

### Keepin’ the Wheels Rollin’

**BY RAND GEE**

Currently the mission of the Peaks Island Taxi (PITaxi) is to provide professional, safe, courteous and reliable transportation for residents of the island regardless of their needs. PITaxi has paid particular attention to the needs of seniors, the handicapped and those without transportation or those on fixed incomes who cannot afford other means of transportation. Our “Pay-What-You-Can” policy is still in place even though the recommended $5 fare is desperately needed.

We have an operating budget of about $14,800 and a revenue of around $8,000. In particular our fuel costs are $870 a month, and maintenance and insurance costs continue to rise which keeps us in a fund-raising mode. All of you have been very generous.

As we begin 2012 we want to determine how to best grow the business. We would like to have your opinions and insight to enhance our planning, and we have created a brief survey for that purpose. Please take a few minutes to give us your ideas at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/peaksatx. Your feedback is strictly confidential. The board will review the results in late January and then contact you in March with a plan.
The Spirit of Christmas Past

BY JERRY GARMAN

Marty Braun’s Christmas card created the best picture of a gift-bedecked, scarf-flying, pants-tucked-into-his-sock, ever-cycling Albert Ventres. Except for a tour in World War II as a pilot, he spent most of his 84 years on the island until his untimely death in 2004.

Gene Willard said, "Albert was a kind, gentle guy and the Steel Collector people, but he didn’t have the means to choose it. No one really knew Albert, you simply knew about him. He marched to his own drummer. A lbert can best be described to a completely rebuilt blue wheelbarrow, can be seen each spring in his garden.

As the Collector: I offered Albert 40 gallons of kerosene, suggesting that he needed to bring some containers. He returned in his old white pickup truck, aluminum, steel, glass, porcelain, plastic and paper. After methodically decanting the oil he slowly drove this load of bulging, clinking, slurping, clanking, gurgling, containers toward his Prince Avenue home. It would be his fuel for the winter.

As the Provider: Albert always stopped and watched my annual repair of his Prince Avenue bike tire. As a child, my late wife, Fay, was given the choice of three new steel rimmed wooden-spoked wheels. Albert’s wheel, now attached to a completely rebuilt blue wheelbarrow, can be seen each spring in his garden.

As the Athlete: Albert has walked and pedaled his bike more miles than any other islander. In good weather he would bike to and from Gorham. On bad days he would ask me for a ride to Westbrook. Our walk to Dimillo’s parking lot started at a very steady pace. Each day we took larger steps and continued at an accelerated pace. Finally, after two months he asked me why I walked so fast. I replied that I was trying to keep up with him. We both laughed but never changed our pace.

As the Collector: 1 offered Albert 40 gallons of kerosene, suggesting that he needed to bring some containers. He returned in his old white pickup truck with over 50 assorted containers: lead, tin, aluminum, steel, glass, porcelain, plastic and paper. After methodically decanting the oil he slowly drove this load of bulging, clinking, slurping, clanking, gurgling, containers toward his Prince Avenue home. It would be his fuel for the winter.

As the Provider: Albert always stopped and watched my annual repair of his Prince Avenue bike tire. As a child, my late wife, Fay, was given the choice of three new steel rimmed wooden-spoked wheels. Albert’s wheel, now attached to a completely rebuilt blue wheelbarrow, can be seen each spring in his garden.

As the Athlete: Albert has walked and pedaled his bike more miles than any other islander. In good weather he would bike to and from Gorham. On bad days he would ask me for a ride to Westbrook. Our walk to Dimillo’s parking lot started at a very steady pace. Each day we took larger steps and continued at an accelerated pace. Finally, after two months he asked me why I walked so fast. I replied that I was trying to keep up with him. We both laughed but never changed our pace.

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creation warmed passers-by to the concept of getting involved in the Occupy Movement. Support local chefs in their soups and other foods to occupy your belly for the holidays.

Susan Hester Webster
Peaks Island

Peaks Island Tax & Energy Assistance

When a group of islanders got together to form Peaks Island Tax Assistance in May of 2005 in response to the large increase in property taxes, we thought our tenure would be short-lived. Our first article noted our purpose: "Our mission is to assist island residents to remain in their homes despite extraordinary tax increases."

As we enter this season of peace and goodwill, we are reminded that now and then some of our neighbors and friends still need a little assistance with their property taxes or energy bills. The islanders have left the problem, while others have found that the slow economic recovery has made it difficult to pay their full property taxes or to pay for energy. The partial tax payments and $300 energy assistance contributions that we offer do make a difference.

Applications for assistance, which is administered by the island clergy, are on the bulletin board of the library. The clergy are very responsive to your needs and will help you. The directions for applying are included and all information is confidential. Please notify the clergy as soon as you receive the fuel so that our payment can be made as soon as possible, and since the fuel providers are asking for cash, they also need to be notified that you are receiving funds from us.

For CMP assistance, please send along a copy of your bill, name deleted, so that we can pay the bill through your account number. If the need arises, you may apply again through your clergy. Please use the same clergy for all applications.

Islanders had a chance to vote for their entry in the Caterpillar truck contest and we did. Lionel Plant Associates won, which means that $2,100 will be used to help Energy Assistance. We are grateful for their continued support.

Once again the Lions Club gave a $500 grant for Tax Assistance and one for Energy Assistance. It is the hard work of all the members at their lobster bakes that enables them to do this, and it is through them so much for their help for us and for the other island groups they help as well. The Lions are exceedingly generous.

Every personal or matching fund donation, every fund raising dollar, and all of the Market America money is used for assistance.

Cynthia Polkkin
Peaks Island

from Congresswoman Chellie Pingree
Honor Our Veterans

As we celebrate the veterans who have given such incredible and important service to our country this month, I wanted to pass along a story that represents why I think Maine veterans are so honorable.

I’ve known 93-year-old Thomas resident Ben Harding for about 20 years now. I met him when he introduced me at my first speaking event as a State Senator representing Knox County. Since then I’ve bumped into him numerous times and each time would catch up on news about his church, where he’s sat in the same pew for 90 years, the cemetary plant he worked at years before, or the latest goings on in Thomaston.

But what he didn’t say much about was his time in World War II. He served as an officer in the Naval Armored Guard aboard Liberty Ships—the type of cargo ships made in South Portland. He participated in the D-Day invasion off Utah Beach, loaded with troops for a possible invasion of Japan that wasn’t until recently that Ben mentioned to me that he’d never received medals for his service. It was an honor to be able to help him recover the four medals he was owed and awarded them to him at the Thomaston American Legion Post in October as family and friends looked on (photo below).

A question stuck in my mind, however. How could Ben give 60 years without trying to get proper recognition for his bravery, sacrifice, and service? You would think he would have spoken up after all this time? But then I remembered my conversations with other WWII veterans to whom I’ve had the privilege of awarding medals. Sometimes being recognized for playing a part in history was secondary to their primary sentiment: "I just did a job.

This incredible humility is one of the reasons I have such a respect for Maine veterans. We come from a state where so many have served that if you meet anyone here in Maine — would be a hardware store clerk or your child’s baseball coach — the chances are good that he or she is a veteran. But you may never know it. You may never know that he or she is a hero. You may never know that he or she sacrificed. You may never know that the months spent away from their families, the friends they’ve lost, because they didn’t serve for the medals or the recognition. To them, they were just doing a job.

Well, to the veterans out there, I say you’re more than just people who did a job. You’re heroes in every sense of the word. You’re symbols of selflessness, bravery, and patriotism. You’re due all the medals and all the honors you’ve earned, and I hope that you deserve our extreme gratitude and appreciation for your service. On Veterans Day, we say thank you.

And for goodness sake, if someone received your medals, please accept our apologies. It would be a privilege to do my job of serving you. If you have any questions or issues with veteran’s benefits, please call my office at (207) 774-5019.

Congresswoman Chellie Pingree represents Maine’s 1st District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Contact her at (207) 774-3054 or at www.pingree.house.gov/contact.

Letters

Regarding an anti-Semitic incident on Peaks:

It is brave for Chris Callow to admit his wrongdoing and to start to take responsibility for his actions. I do not know him personally, but I hope his actions do not stop there. He needs help and needs to learn how to manage his anger and to learn it is not OK to slander a whole race. Why is it that his anger and unhappiness about something, apparently unrelated to the victim, should result in yet another anti-Semitic incident? Why is it that an angry person can lash out against the Jewish population? Because when one anti-Semitic remark is made, even in an isolated moment or even if directed towards just one person, it hurts the whole Jewish community.

Why isn’t it acceptable to make that to someone in an angry moment, or in a drunken rage (e.g., Mel Gibson), it can feel natural to let loose with anti-Semitic remarks? And maybe an apology comes later.

But how can some people even have these hateful words on their tongue, at the ready to be spilled out in an unguarded moment? How can some people hold those hateful feelings in their heart, and then rip them out for others to hear? Where does this come from?

It saddens and angers me every time I hear of another racist slur, another unprovoked, unprovoked attack, another act of hatred against any race or culture. It saddens and frightens me even more when it’s in my own back yard. Many of us living on Peaks feel we are safer here, more protected, and share with our neighbors a sense of community and togetherness, no matter our religious or cultural background, no matter our sexual preference. But it is an incident like this that hits me like a cold bucket of water in my face.

To the person who supposedly threatened vandalism against the person you thought was responsible before Callow stepped forward, shame on you. Would that you had helped? Would that you had educated the person? Would that you had helped him to understand and sympathize? What would you have been gaining? Let’s be better than that.

Elizabeth Buchsbaum
Peaks Island

Even though we reside in Philadelphia during the “teaching months,” we knew of this incident, and appreciate the very thoughtful explanation of how it evolved.

Michael Moore

Kevin

Thank you for publishing Jamie Hogan’s photo of the “Occupy Welch St” event in the November issue of the Island Times. However, I would like to correct an unintended error in the caption. The soup was proudly made that Saturday by Roxanne at Hingham’s and not by the Peaks Cafe. One whiff of the Creamed Squash

I ISLAND TIMES

December 2011

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The Casco Bay Island Times is a community newspaper covering the islands in Casco Bay. We welcome births, 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 material. The newspaper is available by mail for $25 a year. Address checks to Island Times. Our mailing address is 120 Brackett Ave., Peaks Island, Maine 04108. To reach Kevin Attra, call (207) 650-3016 or e-mail harrimanislandtimes.org. For ad rates visit our website at www.islandtimes.org.

Printed by the Times Record, Brunswick.
YOGA FOR LIFE
A yogic perspective on health and simple living
by Rebecca Johanna Stephens

Rebecca Johanna Stephens teaches yoga on Peaks Island and in Portland. You may direct your comments, inquiries, or collate questions to 207-776-5347 or rebecca.stephens@gmail.com.

This is my last column in the Island Times for now. I instead write a yoga article every month towards an ambitious project. By the end of this year I hope to have a book on-line, so look for that in January. And I have a correction from last month’s column: Dr. Regia Nupur is a chautauqua, not an anthropologist.

As the daylight hours decrease, the temperature drops, and holiday stress comes calling, how will you sustain balance and keep a calm heart? If you welcome winter and enjoy the holidays — lucky you! — perhaps there are other situations beyond your control that cause your heart to clench in fear or bring you to your knees with dread. My favorite antonyms to dread and fear are acceptance and love.

I write and teach primarily from the perspective of yoga wisdom, but my spiritual journey has been quite eclectic and I have teachers from many traditions. One of those teachers, Dean Larson, the minister at Brackett Church on Peaks Island, Rev. Larson introduced me to the phrase, “being a means of grace,” and offered her understanding of the concept of blocking grace.

Through these explorations of grace, we discovered one of many similarities between the core teachings of yoga and Christianity. The commandment that occurs most frequently in the Christian bible is, “Fear not!” Fear is understood to be one of the conditions that blocks grace. The Yogi Sutras name fear as one of the four root causes of suffering, and a major obstacle to liberation and vitality.

Entire books have been written on grace and, even so, attempts to define grace often seem flat compared to the wonder they are trying to portray. For our purposes here, please consider grace as an energy source available to every living being, and that receiving grace means you get to experience sweetness, free flowing energy, and an abiding love and trust of life.

Imagine that you have decided to reflect rainwater to use for your gardening and washing, so you rig up a gutter system that feeds into a rain barrel. Your protection and use of the rain does not deplete anyone else of water, and you will receive just as much rain as your whole region. This is a perfect metaphor, because rain can be scarce at times and grace is an unlimited, renewable resource, but please bear with me.

Yoga while your system works flawlessly, and your rain barrel fills to the point that you begin to share water with your neighbors. But then, in a place where there is a tricky roof angle, a section of gutter becomes misaligned in a storm and some of the water is lost. With less water flowing down, debris builds up more quickly and soon there is a blockage that only allows a bit of murky water to flow into the barrel. As the pool of water grows filled with debris, you can curse your bad luck, or get up on a ladder, fix the misalignment, and clear the debris.

When we trust that more rain will come we share the water, even if the barrel is not overflowing. That trust and sharing is how I understand being a means of grace. When we are afraid we enter a primal, reactive state that by its very nature blocks the energy flow just like debris in a gutter. That blockage feeds the fear, and we respond by carefully guarding whatever resources we have.

Yoga practice involves a balance of willfulness and surrender. On the yoga mat, we engage in willful yoga postures, and then pause and soften to let the energy flow through. Willfulness is like the work of constructing and maintaining the system that collects the rain. Surrender is the process of receiving and using the water. One step is incomplete without the other, and combining the two leads to transformation.

Winter and the holidays are on their way. In the physical body, the energy pattern of fear stimulates a strong contraction, which in turn leads to decreases in breath, circulation and mobility. But guess what — makes you colder! In the energy body, the feeling of dread creates a barrier that prevents the flow of emotion, love, and joy.

It is not easy to trust in abundance when you are afraid. It is necessary to share your rainwater when your barrel is almost empty. It is hard to get out the ladder and climb up to fix the gutter when you are flat out exhausted. And yet, that is exactly what yoga and Christianity ask of us. The very moment when we are most afraid and most depleted is exactly when we are called to soften, open, receive, and give.

As a bicycle commuter to Freelport for the past six months, I shared the road with thousands of drivers of vehicles. Early on, I noticed that in my fear of the harm they could cause me, I was developing an adversarial relationship with those drivers. My bicycle seat became the equivalent of a yoga mat. I put my same body on my same bicycle and traveled the exact same route day after day. I knew of the possibility of an awakening.

I came to realize that I was judging the drivers for their haste, criticizing their driving techniques, and despising at their excessive use of fossil fuels. I love bicycling, but I was missing the ride by focusing on my resentment of my fellow travelers. At that point I had a choice. I could narrow my prejudice, that blocking grace, or get up on the professional ladder and clean out the gutter.

Being who I am, I chose the ladder. I developed a mantra that I repeated over and over, mile after mile: “I am your sister, my joy is your joy; your suffering is my suffering.”

The World Has Changed
by Alice Walker

The world has changed: Wake up & smell the possibility. The world has changed: It didn’t change without your prayers without your faith without your determination in liberation & kindness; without maintaining through this year that had no beat.

The world has changed: It did not change: without your numbers your fierce love mind & cosmos.

The world has changed: Don’t let yourself remain deep to it.

The world has changed: Rogue Yes & shrill! Resist the skin call of disabled.

The world has changed: This does not mean you were never hurt.

The world has changed: Does not mean change without your strength.

The world has changed: Wake up! Give yourself the gift of now okay.

The world has changed: You know the possible.

Change never comes easily and I am not the one to reassure you. You will not always feel better even when you do. Even when you do experience even one moment of grace, you will know what is possible.

I am one of the many happy people who lives in perfect harmony with all that is. I suspect that even the most deplorable, beloved teachers have cycles of forgetfulness and remembering. That’s what practice is for: not obtaining the moon, but creating a reliable means of returning to center and opening to grace.
ACROSS
1. __________ a Rainbow (1967)
5. Ship or bicycle part
9. Tornado diche
14. Swiss river
15. Skin
16. Perfume brand
17. First Lady of drag racing
20. Palm of sorts
21. Cheers!
25. License to drill
28. Suppor b i~ycle part
31. Lake in the clouds
32. "Casablanca" actor
33. Tornado diche
35. Perfume brand
36. First Lady of drag racing
40. Palm of sorts
41. Skirt
45. License to drill
46. Swiss river
49. Perfume brand
51. Skin
53. First Lady of drag racing
55. License to drill
57. Skin

DOWN
1. Coeur
2. See 30 Down
3. See 45 Down
4. Protestants, once
5. Preceded Hendrix at Woodstock
6. Crutch
7. College address
8. Fondue
9. English Antarctic hero
10. MLB-Atlantic store chain
11. Massachussetts cape
12. Kind of hold
13. Informal greeting
14. Stone
15. Tingo in Paris
16. First Lady of drag racing
17. "Casablanca" actor
18. First Lady of drag racing
19. First Lady of drag racing
20. Palm of sorts
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SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE

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G R A Y D A L T O N
T H A T E R M A C H I N E
E A S T E R G H O S T L Y
S C A R I E S T N O N E L L E
S U N D U R E R
A L E L D A W N O P A L E
E R B O T H P A L E
D O R I M E P A L E
O P I N I O N S T R E A M
S T I F T M E S T Y
P E T R E C H A R K U M
E R S E L D E S T K I N E
O T T E A R D E N

WINNING CAPTION for November (See page 15 for this month's cartoon) Send caption ideas to katrina@islandtimes.org

"Yes, I'm pretty sure that's where you light it - Ronda Dale, Peaks Island"
Star Gazing

December 2011 Sky

BY MIKE RICHARDS

December meant "Tenth Month" to the ancients, but it means maximum darkness to us on Earth's northern hemisphere. The North Pole now dips 23.5° directly away from the sun, which sets low in the sky even at noon and gives us just a side glance for a few hours each day. Around 5,000 years ago, Dracontis and the Pleiades were building a circle to identity and glorify the day the "sun stopped" going south and headed back north again. The Earth has now reached its maximum orbital velocity around the sun.

STARS

The winter constellations rise at sunset now and set at dawn. In the early evening, Orion and Gemini lie prone on the eastern horizon. Above them is the V-shaped Hyades asterism outlining Taurus' head, with red-giant star Aldebaran serving as its angry eye, defending the Pleiades "Seven Sisters" star cluster above. Further north is yellow Capella in the cap of Auriga the Charioteer. Almost overhead in the Great Square of Pegasus, the legs and neck now overarch the night sky. Just setting in the west are the Northern Cross in Cygnus the Swan, with its side kick Vega, sparkling-blue-white star in Lyra to the northwest. The Big Dipper is resting low on the northern horizon, and white Formicarius in Pegasus* peaks above the southern horizon. At zenith, straight overhead, floats the Andromeda Galaxy.

PLANETS

This month the planets put on a show for free. Just before dawn, speedy Mercury pops up just above the eastern horizon in Scorpius, but you may need binoculars to see it. Above and right of Mercury, golden Saturn is in Virgo and it's now angling its magical rings nicely for us, but Earth will get closer to it over the next few months and views will improve greatly. Ruddy Mars is high in the South in Leo, growing brighter over time, though even now telescopes show dark patches on the Martian surface and a white polar cap on top. NASA just blasted off another Mariner land rover which will land in Mars' Gale Crater next August. Prior rovers were small as lawnmowers and were solar-powered. This one, the size of a Jeep and is nuclear powered. It's too big for the old airbag landing system, so instead it will (they hope) glide through the thin Martian atmosphere inside a flying saucer, which will pop a chute, drop a lander firing retro-rockets, use cables to lower the rover the last few feet, and then fly off to the side and crash. Just after sunset, brilliant Venus is low in the southwest, rising higher each night, and mighty Jupiter is high in the southeast (getting off the 4:15 hour to Peaks, look up above Welch Street). Uranus is in Pisces and Neptune is in Aquarius, still readily available for viewing, if you have a chart.

ALMANAC

Dec. 2 - First-quarter moon is high at sunset, signaling the best week for telescopic or binocular exploration of the moon's craters, montains and rills. Look right along the "terminator line" separating light from dark, where shadows are long and contrast is high. It creeps slowly across the lunar surface, illuminating new features each night.

Dec. 6 - Tonight the waxing gibbous moon sets over the city at 7:02 a.m., just as it ducks into the moon's penumbra (outer shadow). Over the next few hours, the folks way out west can watch a total lunar eclipse. Full moon rises again behind the bay at 4:15 p.m.

Dec. 13 - Geminal Meteor Shower peaks tonight, but the waxing gibbous moon is also in Gemini, so its light will wash out all but the brightest meteors.

Dec. 14 - Tycho Brahe was born this day in 1546. For his love of motion, observatory, Tycho meticulously plotted the planets' positions in the sky, but he needed German viz. Johannes Kepler to do the math.

Dec. 17 - Last-quarter moon is high at sunrise. Wright Brothers' first powered flight was this day in 1903.

Dec. 20 - A waning crescent moon hangs below Saturn in the southeast before dawn.

Dec. 22 - Winter Solstice at 12:30 a.m., and the moon's at perigee (closest to Earth). This is the longest night of the year, just over 15 hours, leaving us fewer than 9 hours of sunlight. If you're on the pre-dawn boat to town this morning, look back over Peaks and see a long, thin crescent moon with Mercury to the left. Tides will build over the next few days, with 12.8' feet of water separating high from low.

Dec. 24 - New moon means dark skies at night, time to hunt for other galaxies hidden behind the stars in our own. Andromeda Galaxy is easiest to find: use Cassiopeia's deep V as your north, the arow head pointing you toward Pegasus' hind knees. It will be easier to find in the future, as it's headed toward the Milky Way toward an eventual collision.

Dec. 25 - Radical Rabbi Jesus of Nazareth's birthday is celebrated today, happily joined to the ancient pagan solstice celebration, Saturnalia, by Roman Emperor Constantine in 336 AD, with all its feasting, drinking, visiting, gifting, evergreens, lights and music. Isaac Newton was born this day in 1642, famous for his laws of motion, for the calculus he invented to predict them, and for his then-heretical theory of the mysterious "invisible power" of gravitational attraction.

Dec. 26 - On the 4:30 p.m. boat home tonight! Take a look at the sunrise, as a thin waxing crescent moon points to Venus.

Dec. 27 - Johannes Kepler was born this day in 1571. After reviewing Tycho's notebook, he calculated that planets' orbits aren't round but are elliptical; they revolve not around the center of the ellipse, but around a point on the ellipse's short side; and their orbital speeds aren't constant, but are variable, increasing along the short end of the ellipse and decreasing on the long end.

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Dec. 26 - On the 4:30 p.m. boat home tonight! Take a look at the sunrise, as a thin waxing crescent moon points to Venus.

Dec. 27 - Johannes Kepler was born this day in 1571. After reviewing Tycho's notebook, he calculated that planets' orbits aren't round but are elliptical; they revolve not around the center of the ellipse, but around a point on the ellipse's short side; and their orbital speeds aren't constant, but are variable, increasing along the short end of the ellipse and decreasing on the long end.
LIVING OFF THE GRID  - Perspectives from Peaks Islander Rick Caron

Second article in a series: The shin bone's connected to the ankle bone

by R. Wingfield

Rick Caron, native of Brunswick, Maine and Peaks Island resident since 1969, built a house on his land on Peaks in 1998 and declared at that time to go "off the grid." In other words, he generates all of his own electricity - 97% of it via solar panels - and stores it in banks of 12-volt batteries in his basement.

Rick installed his solar electricity-generating system himself. He is not a Luddite and in fact particularly loves electricity and the benefits it can bring a household. He is not much interested in the politics why he chooses to live off the grid, and on the importance of getting a handle on energy consumption. It also touched on related topics such as lights, bulbs, solar heating and efficient appliances. In this second article we learn the basics of how it Works and details of Rick's system, including ball park costs.

BASICS OF HOW IT WORKS: The sun shines on the solar panel, the solar panel converts the light into electricity, the electricity is transmitted to the battery where it is stored, the battery is connected to an inverter which converts DC to AC, the inverter feeds your regular house panel.

COMPONENTS & BALL PARK COSTS

Rick's main system consists of 12 panels. 250 watts each, totaling 3,000 watts, or 1.5 kilowatts. This means he produces 1.5 kilowatts of electricity for every hour the sun shines. The sun shines on average four hours per day year round, so he produces an average of 6 kilowatts of electricity per day. Six kilowatts is also the amount he consumes per day, totaling about 180 per month. The average household consumes about 25 kilowatts per day, or 800 per month.

Solar Panel $4 per Watt

Switch With a Fuse @ $6 each

Charge Controller $20 - $300 depending on size

Deep Cycle Battery @ $150

Inverter $250

Many-stranded copper wire, of varying gauges (size/thickness), connects all components. $0.25 per foot

Estimated total cost of all copper wiring for Rick's main system: $800

"You can expect to invest from $10,000 - $12,000 to set up a basic off-the-grid system, recoverable if you consume less." - R. Caron

Rick's home on Peaks Island, a wintertime photo showing his solar panels and south facing exposure.

How does the solar panel make electricity from the sun?

The solar panel responds to light, not heat, and that's something that people make a big mistake about. The panels actually work better when they're cold or cool. So even on a cloudy day you're getting some output.

And for whatever reason, the silicon crystals in the photovoltaic cell make electricity.

Then you have a #12 many-stranded copper wire going from your photovoltaic cell, through the wall and running down to the switch, which is also called a DC disconnect.

You can yes call it a disconnect. And everything should be plugged into that.

Another wire then goes from the switch the fuse to the battery.

Well, it does. But if you don't know how to balance the load it's also a good idea to put what's called a 'charge controller' in it. That's what you're using charging of the batteries. If you get one of those you size it to whatever your panel size is. Like they have some for 300-watt systems, and they have some for 1,000-watt systems.

All charge controller is a way to balance the amount you use. You can't put more electricity in than your batteries can take out or you'll 'blow' them, just like you would your stomach if you ate too much at once. You can either charge it by buying a charge controller, or do it by controlling how much you use.

Instead of having a charge controller, you have the excess electricity that you produce into an electric water heater?

Rick stores electricity in six volt batteries harnessed in pairs and resting in a big wooden box in his basement, pictured at right. Under normal use a top fits on the box and the whole enclosure is well-ventilated to the outside.

The Charge Controller prevents overcharging of battery by 'dumping excess electricity.'

Rick does not have a Charge Controller. His setup is such that any excess electricity is dumped into an electric water heater.

This me ans he produces 1,500 watts, or .5 kilowatts.

Another wire then goes from the switch the fuse to the battery.

Dumping excess electricity from the solar panel to the water heater is just one way to 'dump' electricity. You could have an electric water heater. Dumbing excess electricity from the solar panel into a water pre-heater is just one way to 'dump' electricity. You could have an electric water heater. It's just one thing to do in with controlling how much you use.

How do you get the biggest amount of electricity out of your solar panels?

Yes you can call it a solar panel. But the difference is instead of you producing into a solar panel, it hooks directly into the inverter. The inverter hooks directly into the panel. The inverter hooks directly into the panel. The inverter then hooks into the house; it's just like any other house. It has safety features, it has circuit breakers, it is grounded, it is connected into the house. The inverter ends up, in other words, it charges the battery being a stable 12 volts, it equalizes everything. You would kill your appliances if you tried to run them off of that voltage. Remember, a 12-volt battery can't not have a battery unless you find some other way to stabilize the power.

Why is it important to use stranded copper wire for all of these book-nut?

It's about surface area, which would be sort of similar to a highway. If you had a really high-speed highway but only one lane in each direction, it would bog down; because sometimes you're going slow, right? Give me more lanes, let me go through; right? Electrons revolve around atoms and the faster they go, they're like little cars, and so the more lanes - the more strands, the better.

So you get the biggest surface of stranded copper wire you can afford?

There's also the practicality of running it. I have an individual wire for each panel. You couldn't, run, like, big cable. First of all I'd have to sell the house to pay for it; copper is very expensive. And secondly it would just take up too much room.

Okay, we've run wire from the battery to the inverter. Now the inverter makes it go from DC in AC.

Twelve volts DC to 120 AC. You can then power everything that you normally power in your house only doing it from the inverter instead of the power company.

The inverter hooks directly into the panel. The inverter hooks directly into the panel. The inverter hooks directly into the panel. The same place that Central Maine Power would connect to. In other words, if you bought this house tomorrow from me, and you said, 'I hate this solar crap, I don't have time for this,' you could call CMP, they would run a wire, disconnect the inverter and connect theirs in, and in an hour it would be switched over.

Your outlets and everything, they're the same as mine then.

My outlets are normal like anybody's. All of the safety features remain in the house, it's just like any other house. It has circuit breakers, it has ground fault detectors, it has smoke alarms, or detectors. You don't want to build a peculiar house that only runs on solar power. You'd never sell it for one thing. And it's way bigger than a sixes and a #14 is way bigger than a sixes. And it may not even pass code anyway, I'm not sure about that.

So you want to make sure you get the electricity, it just matters that you have it. My inverter ends up being like a whole house they GFCI device. I don't know why it knows what something's wrong and when it isn't. Like if I let me consume all I want, but it won't let me use it. The biggest source of house fires is from arcing connectors. I wish everyone could have such a thing even without
It's a living
Islanders at work on and off the island

"Please in the job puts perfection in the work." - Aristotle

BY SUSAN HANLEY

Americans are an industrious lot, and Peaks Islanders are no exception. Some of us work on the island, some commute. Some of us have one job, some have three. Some of us have part-time professions, some of us have full-time passions. All of us are busy. Busy. Busy. How's everyone else...except for a host of inventive, resourceful ways to earn a living while enjoying island living.

This month:
Holly Hurd-Forsyth
Registrar, Maine Historical Society

CARON, from previous page

Lost mittens? Misplaced cell phones? Dropped notebooks? You think keeping track of your stuff is hard? Most days you'll find Holly Hurd-Forsyth rattling around in the basement of the Maine Historical Society, overseeing the storage and preservation of more than 17,000 rare and valuable objects — the culmination of almost 200 years of collecting — able to retrieve any one of them at any time.

THAT's keeping track of stuff.

But she's not rummaging through piles of dust-covered artifacts — now where did those 18th century gloves go? — and she's definitely not bored. It turns out that there's a lot going on behind the scenes at the Maine Historical Society, in large part because it belongs to a non-profit, non-exempt, non-franchise, part-and-parcel-of-all trades-every day is different. She can speak with surprising expertise about these various systems, from sprinkler systems, insurance riders, Canada's import-export restrictions... and that's just what's on this week's docket.

S.H. What does a museum registrar do?
H.H. At the Maine Historical Society I keep track of the library and museum collections. I accession all incoming materials, I thank the donor, I assign it a unique number, photograph it, create a collections record for it, find a permanent place for it in storage, and keep track of where that object is at all times — if it goes out on loan, if it goes to a conservation lab, if it's an exhibit. I know where it is at all times for research. I have to know what all the objects are at all times.

So the Maine Historical Society collection can be loaned out to other museums.
H.H. That's actually a big part of my job, working with other museums. When they want to borrow things from our collection, there's a whole procedure we follow in order to move the objects to their institutions.

How do other institutions know what you have to offer?
H.H. We use a collections management software program called Part Perfect which is available from our website. There are abbreviated records of our entire collection — so far only that anyone can look at on the internet.

Can you describe the process for loanng something out of the collection?
The other curator or registrar from the other institution contacts the curator or myself at the historical society and submits a request. Then we record the information, check to see if we have the object available to loan. If they're nearby I invite them to come look at the material but often I work with people who are so far away that we do everything by e-mail.

It's a weak link in the chain but there is no choice right now other than to connect to the power company, and in my case they're always on call. In the past I didn't want to connect to the power company; that's kind of why I set the house up in the first place.

Storing electricity — it's almost like storing food. It's very very difficult. And you lose it.

And there are no other ways?

There's none that we know of with a different idea of being renewable, non-polluting, and pav.

It would be remarkable because there have been civilizations before us who have tried and so the idea happens of being like trying to store Texas heat in the summer to bring it to Maine in the winter. It's not impossible. If you figured that out you'd be rich.

The real essence of what we're talking about is that you're safe in it, you can get more, get more, store more; it's "Use less". It's pretty simple.

Part of it also is the independence, part of it is the fun. You know, it's like firewood. You see it out there and you know that no matter what OPEC does with oil you still are going to have heat.

Well I'm pretty sure that the sun's gonna run out or something, or we defined by the day, or by the night, or by the time, unless there's something that I'm not aware of that's going to happen in thirty years, maybe even next month. It's going to be a constant flow of supplies here and there but it's not going to be like storing.

As far as maintenance, the average person can go away and not worry too much about their batteries. It doesn't matter how long they're away.

Not worry about what, their house being robbed or burning? I mean battery charging lights, computers running or running out of electricity if there are many cloudy days in a row, or something like that.

What you're asking me is a funny question because it's like somebody is saying "I need every hour of the energy I don't have or I won't worry anymore." If you win the lottery you won't have to worry about running out of electricity but it doesn't mean you won't have to worry. And you may have all kinds of new worries.

But you did ask a valid question. It's not going away and nobody was living here, but it's all pretty much mail-order. All is the doing solar systems.

I have one of only 26 original Dunlap broadsides of the Declaration of Independence that are known to exist. It was printed on the evening of July 4 to 5, 1776, and as you can imagine, it's very valuable. We also have the Molly Ockett playbill, a rare American 18th century textile, which is currently on loan to the Maine State Museum. This object has been on loan a lot. It's coming back from the Maine State Museum this month so we'll give it a chance to rest.

What if I have something that I want to donate to the Maine Historical Society?
Well, you could either contact me or the curator. First we would check to see if it is in object we need, and don't decide what is already in our collections. Our storage space is limited so we can't keep everything. We'll talk to you about the object's provenance, what you know about it, and how it's relevant to Maine History. Then we'd ask you to come in so we can examine the piece, and go from there.

What if I changed my mind and wanted to get it back?
Once you donate an object to the historical society, you lose control and the paperwork is signed, it's very difficult to reverse the legal process, unless there was some special circumstance, like you weren't the legal owner to begin with.

Why did you become a museum registrar?
When I was a kid, my mom took me to the museum every week. So I studied archeology in college and then, when I understood more about archeology, I realized I was more interested in modern objects. So when I got my Masters in Museum Studies with an emphasis in collections management, it's something I do because I love working with historical objects and discovering the story behind each one of them. It's a lifelong interest of mine. Lucky for me I can get paid to do something I really enjoy.

Susan Hanley has been trying to figure out what to do for work ever since the arrival of her third child put her blossoming career in a spin. She's working for the state now, but that's exactly what it feels like. Incidentally, her mistress in textiles, needlework, writing, history and all things Maine is her current job as a PR consultant. It's living.
Walking by Lincoln Park and the Occupy Maine folks who are preparing to spend the winter there camping out reminded me of the wintertime challenges our troops faced during the Civil War, especially in the upper south and mid-west: no warm barracks, no heat in tents, not enough food to eat, no “comfort castles” that could be hauled away and replaced with clean ones. How did they deal with the cold, lack of food, and boredom?

Most of the fighting during the war took place during the warmer months. The majority of the troops remained in camp during the winter. Some were lucky enough to get a furlough to visit family at home. Others were issued passes to spend a few days in Washington, where Fifth Maine Adjutant George Bicknell walked right into the White House and was warmly greeted by Abraham Lincoln.

Officers usually commandeered an existing home for use as their quarters. Often their wives came to visit. The wives at home established organizations like the Sanitary Commission and Home Camp Association. They put up jams, jellies and vegetables, churned butter, baked cookies and crackers. Oftentimes they were able to procure canned lobster meat, clams and meat. They also sewed pajamas, knit wool socks, wove woolen blankets, and gathered medical supplies. All this in addition to running the family farm of business and tending to their children and elders. Thousands of women traveled south to distribute these necessary supplies in army camps and hospitals.

Boredom during the lull in fighting was a big problem. Soldiers spent hours playing cards, checkers and baseball. Some kept diaries. To the chagrin of the Temperance ladies and Portland's Neil Dow (a.k.a, the Father of Prohibition and Colonel of the 13th Maine Regiment), many soldiers spent a lot of time drinking in saloons set up next to army camps by civilian entrepreneurs eager to relieve soldiers of their meager pay. Too much of the latter sometimes led to fights and petty crime.

So the soldier's life was one of hardship, sacrifice, illness and too often death. Let's hope our contemporaries fare better during this coming winter.

ABOVE: Pieces of U.S. Army Hardtack. This tasteless treat was made of flour and water baked so hard that it had to be soaked in liquid to soften it enough to bite into. A recipe found in an old cookbook states that "the crackers should be hard as bricks and indestructibly unappetizing and might last until the Lord returns."

Courtesy of the Fifth Maine
Hill, foods guru Elizabeth Fraser. A year food was actually cooked. The venue and a half, Liz turned her passion into anticipation. The event: my first-ever dish that comes out of Liz's kitchen is around foods. Again a few days later, apron and Sheila Reiser (columnist) after enjoying in fact, that I returned prior experience with raw. I was delighted.

Gone Raw. She offers cooking classes all over the world shake their heads in delight. Sheila is an adventurer, an artist, a pretty good cook and a haphazard gardener. She has lived downtown on Portland for two years. Contact her with your ideas, comments and questions at our2thecore@hotmail.com or call her cell phone (503) 440-0871. Or you can just knock on her door and introduce yourself.

Recipes & Ramblings

Elizabeth Fraser of Girl Gone Raw (spurring the zebra spoon) and Sheila Reiser (curious columnist) after enjoying a raw foods feast.

By Sheila Reiser

Six of us gathered on a chilly, drizzly November night in Portland, on The Hill, and eyed the kitchen table with anticipation. The event: my first-ever cooking class. The meal: a four-course holiday feast. The catch: none of the food was actually cooked. The venue was the studio and kitchen of local raw foods guru Elizabeth Fraser. A year and a half ago, Liz turned her passion for raw foods into a business, Girl Gone Raw. She offers cooking classes and personal coaching programs to help people eat better. And by better, I don't just mean nutritionally, every dish that comes out of Liz's kitchen is exquisitely delicious. Before coming to class, my only prior experience with raw foods was eating at a restaurant on a trip last spring to visit a friend in Salt Lake City, Utah. Carl chose Omar's Rawtopia because he thought I'd really enjoy it (bulls eye!), but when we got there, he eyed the menu skepticaly. "Pizza" made from flat, sprouted buckwheat, apples and nut/seed cheese? My kudos to Carl for sticking it out, and it turned out we both thought our meals were delicious. So good, in fact, that I returned again a few days later to sample some of the other offerings.

So I had high hopes for Liz's class, and I was not disappointed. The menu included a zesty raw cocktail, sweet carrot soup with cranberry drizzle, pomegranate pear salad with lemon-garlic dressing, "free-range" nut loaf with sun-dried tomato gravy, stuffing, "spattered" kale, cranberry-orange relish, and pumpkin pie with drizzle, pomegranate pear salad with oranges, and cranberry sauce. As we got comfortable in the kitchen, Liz explained that the cornerstone of raw foods "cooking" is that nothing is heated above 117 F. This is the level at which the enzymes that are naturally present in food start to be deactivated. An enzyme is a specialized type of protein produced in cells that acts as a catalyst for chemical changes. Enzymes in our bodies perform all sorts of essential functions, from maintaining our immune systems to neutralizing toxins to helping us form thoughts. Enzymes are especially important in the process of digestion. Our digestive systems produce enzymes that allow us to break down and utilize the nutrients in our foods; the enzymes present in the foods themselves help in the process. So, the theory goes that if all the food you eat is cooked, your body has to work harder to digest it.

Certainly our ancestors' diets, the historical diets of peoples all over the globe, included large amounts of raw foods. I have read that none of these consisted entirely of raw foods, but it does make sense to me that our bodies evolved slowly over thousands of years to eat the foods that were readily available on the landscape. Not surprisingly, raw diets have been proven to have a number of health benefits, from weight loss to increased energy levels, to huge impact on inflammation and related diseases like obesity, diabetes, and others.

So into the classroom and back to the kitchen. Some raw foods extend their diet guidelines to eating raw (unpasteurized) dairy products or certain meats, but Liz sticks to vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds. The tools of the trade arc a bit specialized, but not having to cook anything definitely adds its own simplicity. A food processor grinds and chops; a Vitamix—a special high-speed blender—pures just about anything you put in there; and a dehydrator simply removes the moisture from food by maintaining a constant low heat while a small fan exhausts the moisture. She explained the basics, Liz set to work. A few things were prepared beforehand (the ice cream which had to chill in the freezer, and nut loaf that had to spend five hours in the dehydrator). The rest of the meal was prepared in about an hour—impressive considering this was a four-course meal for eight people! (Grandmothers all over the world shake their heads in disbelief.)

We worked through the menu, doing, tasting, stirring and sampling. The atmosphere was festive and I learned some fun new ingredients, like coconut oil which is sold at room temperature and liquid when warmed slightly. It is important for the texture it adds to the foods, and helped our pumpkin pie to gel! The last item to be made was the stuffing. We heated the water to a precise temperature and immediately blended it in with the other ingredients to be served first while still warm.

At the end of the hour, we all moved into the dining room where the vibrant colors of the food filled only with those in the paintings on the walls. (Liz is also an artist who paints with oils, and her kitchen is integrated into her studio space.) We all dug in. The unique combination of ingredients (raw squash with coconut oil in the pie, dates, wallnut and sun-dried tomatoes combined in the nut loaf) yielded surprising results. Textures and textures ranged from sweet and creamy to savory and hearty. Every dish was delicious, and, to my surprise, I walked away feeling totally satiated.

If you want the full scoop, you'll have to take a class on your own, but I'm happy to put in a good word for Liz. She offers cooking classes and personal coaching programs to help people eat better. And by better, I don't just mean nutritionally, every dish that comes out of Liz's kitchen is exquisitely delicious.

Liz's Stuffing:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{1 tsp sea salt} \\
\text{2 tsp rosemary} \\
\text{2 tsp thyme} \\
\text{1 tsp parsley} \\
\text{2 medium apples, diced} \\
\text{1 c fresh cranberries, halved} \\
\text{1 tbsp maple syrup, agave, or honey} \\
\text{2-3 tbsp cashews, soaked} \\
\text{2-3 tbsp hemp seeds} \\
\text{2 tsp walnuts, minced} \\
\text{1 c sunflower seeds} \\
\text{1 tbsp pomegranate seeds} \\
\text{1 tbsp raisins} \\
\text{1 c pecans} \\
\text{1 c fresh cranberries, halved} \\
\text{1/4 c raisins} \\
\text{1/4 c pecans} \\
\text{1/4 c sunflower seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c hemp seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c walnuts, soaked} \\
\text{1/4 c pomegranate seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c cashews, soaked} \\
\text{1/4 c pecans} \\
\text{1/4 c sunflower seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c hemp seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c walnuts, soaked} \\
\text{1/4 c pomegranate seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c cashews, soaked} \\
\text{1/4 c pecans} \\
\text{1/4 c sunflower seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c hemp seeds} \\
\text{1/4 c walnuts, soaked} \\
\text{1/4 c pomegranate seeds} \\
\end{align*}
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Mash all the ingredients together until it's smooth and creamy. Serve as-is or warm before serving. Serves eight.

Girl Gone Raw classes range in price from $15 to $25. For more info, you can contact Elizabeth Fraser at 650-3437 or check out GoRuganer.ру. Liz's next project is a raw foods cookbook for kids, which she is co-authoring with Maggie Knowles. For Sheila's next project, tune in next month!
The Gem Gallery  The Gem Gallery, located on Island Avenue in Peaks Island, is an artist/craftsperson cooperative of over 25 individuals in media of painting, drawing, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, photography, printmaking, assemblage, fiber arts and writing. Please call 766-3600 for more information.

Dodwell Gallery HORIZON 3D ADVANCE, show by Nancy Clark of Turner, Maine, on display thru Jan. 1. At the temps chill the soft pastels will warm your wood floor and cast moonscapes keep your eye involved around and throughout the gallery. Artist reception Saturday Dec. 21 from 4pm to 6pm. The Dodwell Gallery is located at the Long Island Learning Center on Peaks Island. Live music by theUuido's. Call the library schedule (766-2510, http://Library.Long Island.Library.me/).Curator Maggie Carle arpгрузит.y.google.com/jpegs/766-2940.

Addison Woolley Gallery VANITIES acts by artist Jane Bangs and Bonnie B. Willmington. Show open Fri., specific, 899 1471. Scripter Study Tues by s. Cland of Turner, Maine, on display thru Jan. 1. Artwork by Jayman and Jayla Brie, Addison Woolley Gallery features works by local artists, clean, contemporary photographs, located at 132 Washington Avenue (at the corner of Fox St.) Portable Studio showing thru Sunday, Dec. 4. Gallery Hours: Wednesday thru Saturday, Noon to 5pm. Curator Susan Pfeifer.

Richard Boyd Gallery GROUP EXHIBIT exhibiting works by gallery artists Jeannie O’Toole Hayman and potters Rick Boyd and Pamela Williamson. Show opens Friday, Dec. 2 and runs thru Dec. 31. The Richard Boyd Art Gallery is located on the corners of Island Avenue and Epps Street. The gallery exhibits unique ceramic art, pottery, blown glass and paintings by established and up and coming artists. As an art studio producing handmade, one-of-a-kind art with a focus on ceramic art and pottery located on the second floor. The gallery’s winter hours are 10am thru 4pm weekends, 8am to 6pm Thursday and weekdays, by appointment. The gallery is closed Dec. 25. For more information please contact Pamela via phone at 707-712-1097, email williamson95@gmail.com, or visit www.addisonwoolleygallery.com.

The Fifth Maine The Fifth Maine is a non-profit museum and cultural center located in the 1889 Fifth Maine Regiment Memorial Hall, dedicated to the preservation of Civil War and local history. Membership is open to the public. There is no charge for admission. For more information please contact Kimberley McAllister at fifthmaine@gmail.com or call 766-3340.

The Eighth Maine The Eighth Maine is a living museum and lodge built in 1889 as a summer retreat for the Civil War veterans. It features 12 rooms for overnight guests and history-filled, guided tours daily from 10am until 4pm during summer season. Visit www.eighthmaine.org for more info or to make reservations.

Brackett Church 118 Church St., Peaks Island. Pastor Rev. Don Larson, 766-5001. www.brackettchurch.org. Sunday Worship 10 am. with Sunday School. Drop-in fellowship. Children's Choir Monday Mondays, 2:45-3:15 pm. Contact Maureen Vanderslice for specifics 889-1177. Scripture Study Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30 am, attendance. All are welcome. Prayer Shawl Ministry Mondays, 13:30-1:30 pm. All are welcome! For more information, contact Emily Sherwood, 766-5545. Open Tuesdays After School Drop-ins Mondays and Thursdays, 3:30-6:00 pm. Grades 6-8. Hang out with friends and play games & do homework. Come for the Free ice cream and snacks. Come for the art + art classes & get a Win Computer access & take trips & visit special guests & watch movies & bake cookies at 3rd grade party! For more information call 766-5545. Open Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 pm. Prayer, chants, and quiet meditation.


St. Christopher's Church Saturday Mass at 4pm. Sunday Mass at 8am followed by brunch in the Parish House. The church is located on Peaks Island at the corners of Island Avenue and Epps Street. The church hosts special events during the month and twice monthly on Saturday mornings at 10am. For more information, contact Ellen Mahonen at 766-2543.

Peaks Island Library Are you E-Ready? The Peaks Island branch is planning an E-Reader workshop for club members who would like some help on how to download free books from the library catalog, or to see how the E-Reader works. The tentative date and time are Saturday, Jan. 14 at 10am at the library. If you are interested, please let us know if this is the time and date will work for you. First Tuesdays Book Discussion 7pm in the MacVane Center: Dec. 5. Ragtime: From session dence, Hana by Crash Barry, with Rob Tiffany as moderator. The group is planning to meet and discuss the book for a while and then Skype with the author. If the technology works, it should be a lot of fun. Everyone is welcome. Jan., Thurses Morn: a novel by Charles Frazier. To reserve a library copy, come in, call or email the library. Give Your Child the Gift of Present and it won’t break your budget. If they are 5 or 5er, you can give them a Library Card and a Weekly Visit to the library to see their friends, use the computers and check out books and movies. A number of children have told us how much they would like to come to the library. Why not give them that gift? Peas and Story Time Fridays at 10:15am. All island children and visitors are welcome. The Peaks Island Branch Library is located in the MacVane Center, 766-5540, email peaks@portland.lib.me. Hours Open: Tuesday 2:30-6:30 P.M., Wednesday 10:00-1:30 P.M., Thursday 10:00-1:30 P.M., and Saturday 10:00-1:30 P.M.

Portland Recreation on Peaks Island Denise Macaronza, Recreation Programmer. Contact: denise.mcaronza@cityofportland.or.gov or leave a message at 766-2970. Denver works just part time on Peaks Island Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. Please note: to reserve space in equipment and programs for the community building, you must contact Denise at least two days in advance. You may view the facility schedule on line (www.portland.go. me/parks/peaks/), and all reservations must be made at least 48 hours in advance. To reach Denise, contact 766-2970. Portland Recreation’s 55+ monthly calendar, please call 784-8780 and leave your name, address and choice number. ON-GOING EXERCISE PROGRAMS for ADULTS at the MACVANE CENTER, Sponsored by Portland Recreation (denise.mcaronza@cityofportland.or.gov or 766-2970). WALK PROGRAM Mondays and Thursdays at 8:30 am (meet at community building). All are welcome; this is not for ‘speed walkers’. LOW-IMPACT PROGRAMS Mondays and Thursdays 9:10-10:30 am (community room); TABLE TENNIS for ADULTS Tuesday afternoons 3:00-4:00 pm; Wednesday afternoons 10:30 am (community room); ADULT BASKETBALL Tuesday evenings 6:00-8:00 pm at the Peaks Island School Gym. Open to those 18 and above, 12 person/4 teams.

25th Annual Holiday Concert Saturday, Dec. 31 from 2:15pm to 7:00pm at the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church. A family-friendly program of music and spoken word directed by Nancy J. Hoffman, bringing the old and new together with praiseworthy poetry by Helen Stewart and music by virtuoso harpist Barbara Johnson, singer-songwriter Dave Gagne, the Peaks Island Choir Directed by Keith Torpe, the Maine Squeeze Accordion Ensemble and Casco Bay Trumpeters Band together for a rolling Christmas dance tune and theUncalled Four in a return guest appearance. Other soloists and special guests round out the program. Cost sponsored by the Peaks Island Music Association and the Brackett Memorial United Methodist Church. Reserved donation for adults, 11 for kids. [Anyone interested in playing in the ‘Hallelujah Chorus’ ensemble, please call Nancy J. Hoffman at 766-9950 or email nhoffman2@comcast.net]

American Legion Auxiliary HOLIDAY BAZAAR to support veterans and student scholarships. The bath will be available at the island tree lighting ceremony Dec. 3 and later, and at the annual bath across the island thru Saturday, Dec. 17 when the drawing will take place at the American Legion at 5pm. Note: Previously announced scholarship winners must submit contact information to Beth Childs at 843-4752. At www.bholidaybazaar.org, you can participate in the holiday drawing by buying tickets.

75th annual Swedish St. Lay Pageant Sunday, Dec. 4, 4pm at the Brackett Church. Boys and girls ages 9 and up are welcome to join the junior Tomte, Grinner and Gingerbread Men and we would welcome additional Saint Lucas Attendants from churches in the region. As a continued tradition at SPS, contact Godslater 871-2076 as soon as possible, or call emailing godslater871@yahoo.com.

Children’s Workshop Pre-school enrollment for children ages 2 to 5½. Part-day and part-week options available. Infant/toddler Play Groups from 10:15 am to 11:00 am to meet other parents and children. FREE.

Community Food Pantry The Peaks Island Food Pantry is now located at Brackett Memorial Church, open Mondays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 6:30pm. Our thanks to the Peaks Island Church who have hosted the food pantry for so many years. If you would like to make a food donation, please call Sean Hanley, 766-7357.

Peaks Island Health Center 87 Central Avenue, Peaks Island. 766-2979/Fax 766-3971. Open Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:15 am to 6:15pm. The clinic will be closed on Monday Dec. 26 and Monday Jan. 2. Staff: Sarah Pelham, F.P.N; Mary Crook, Clinical Assistant. The lab tech is scheduled for Monday, Dec. 12 from 8:30am to 10:30am. Please welcome Sarah Pelham, F.P.N to the Health Center. Sarah has worked at InterMed in the past and most recently has worked at Mercy Express. She has experience with family practice, cosguilte and urgent care. We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation while we work through this period of transition. We wish everyone a Happy, Healthy, Holiday season! Please call the office and leave a message if you have a non urgent issue that is important to us and we will return as soon as possible.Staff: Sarah Pelham, F.P.N, Mary Crook, Clinical Assistant. If you need urgent and cannot wait for a call back, please call your primary care provider.
COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

Friday, Dec 2
OPEN HOUSE: DECORATIONS for the New Year
6PM - 8PM at the Peaks Island Food Pantry. Drop in anytime between 6PM and 8PM to make ornaments for the Island "TreeCam". Preschool and school children welcome. Preschoolers must be accompanied by an adult. There will be plenty of recycled materials to make ornaments for home. Sponsored by Portland Recreation (207-766-2970).

Saturday, Dec 3
LORETTA VOYER FUND CRAFT FAIR 10AM - 3PM at the Portland Yacht Club. Loretta Voyer, a former Portland resident, left an annual fund range, but this year's raffle will benefit the Island Taxi, with donated craft items raffled off by the Island Taxi folk to "keep the wheels rolling." Donations to the Voyer Fund are accepted any time at: The Loretta Voyer Fund, c/o Lydia Pressland, 675 Seashore Avenue, Peaks Island, ME 04108.

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING on Peaks Island downtown at the parking lot at 4PM with caroling followed by hot cocoa and cookies at the Peaks Cafe. Refreshments to be served by Voyer Fund. which provides comfort to families on radio this holiday season. A famous poet himself. However, he died suddenly, but this year's raffle will benefit the Peaks Island School. Parents of preschool children students should sign up their children to assure they receive a gift. Sign up sheets are at the library, the Peaks Cafe and at Hannagan's. Peaks Island School parents do not need to sign up. Any questions, call Ali Blakes at 766-1007.

Thursday, Dec 8
CELEBRATION OF PEAKS ISLAND'S LONGEST SCARF (Pl EM) Drop in anytime between 2:45 and 3:30 at the Peaks Island School. Presented by Peaks Island School. Parents of preschool children students should sign up their children to assure they receive a gift. Sign up sheets are at the library, the Peaks Cafe and at Hannagan's. Peaks Island School parents do not need to sign up. Any questions, call Ali Blakes at 766-1007.

Friday, Dec 9
OPEN HOUSE: "AROUND TUNTS" 11AM - 2PM at the Peaks Island Food Pantry. Drop in between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM for a cup of tea and cookies, bringing a project to work on. Visit the library to see the Christmas decorations made by islanders and their friends. Last chance to bid on the scarves before they are donated to local charities. Light refreshments will be served. Sponsored by Portland Recreation (207-766-2970).

Saturday, Dec 10
POT LUCK PARTY to honor JOHN and Angie 3PM - 6PM at the Peaks Island School. Bring something yummy to eat and drink and stories of John and Angie over the years. We will have a book with blank pages for people to record their memories of John and Angie at the day care center and now. We will also have "photo corners" for people to attach photos of their children or themselves and/or to the book. If you would like to donate money towards a gift, please contact us at 377-7211. If you would like to help with the party please contact us.

Sunday, Dec 11
FIRST MONDAY FUN for PRESCHOOLERS (Peaks Island Com. Rs.) Drop in between 11:00 AM and noon for music, crafts and fun. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by Portland Recreation (207-766-2970).

MAKING PEAKS ISLAND'S LONGEST SCARF 4PM - 6PM at the Peaks Island School. Drop in between 11:00 AM and noon for music, crafts and fun. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by Portland Recreation (207-766-2970).

Thursday, Dec 15
OFF-ISLAND SHOPPING TRIP. Starts at 7:00PM at the Portland Regency Hotel and Spa, 20 Mill Street, with free hot drinks, raffles and music until 9:00 PM. Sponsored by Peaks Island Wine & Spirits, S&S available for purchase. Participating stores remain open until 9:00PM. Shop, eat, and be merry!

Thursday, Dec 29
BINGO FUN FOR ALL AGES (Pl EM) 10:30AM - 11:30AM. Come laugh, have fun and perhaps even win a prize or two! Sponsored by Portland Recreation (207-766-2970).

BOARD GAMES FOR ALL AGES (Pl EM) Drop in between 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM to play such games as Checkers, Chinese Checkers, Parchees and more. Everyone is invited. Sponsored by Portland Recreational (207-766-2970).

Friday, Dec 30
NEW YEAR'S PARTY (Pl EM) 12:00 NOON. See photos of previous activities sponsored by Portland Recreation and help plan programs for 2012. BYO lunch if you'd like - cookies and other desserts will be available. Everyone is invited. Sponsored by Portland Recreation (207-766-2970).

MONTHLY CAUTION: Each month we offer a new BRIO image having to do with food. Use the bottom of this month's cartoon. Send your ideas to kathleen@islandtimes.org and we'll publish the best. See page 8 for last month's winner.

by Pulmer

Peaks Island Food Pantry
The Peaks Island Community Food Pantry is truly a community effort, with donations and support provided by many different individuals and organizations from Peaks Island, including our island churches, the Peaks Island School, and our "food pantry angels." We are now housed in the Brackett Memorial Church Hall and we are open Monday and Thursdays from 3:30PM to 5PM.

We are extremely grateful for any donations of non-perishable food and toiletry items (no out of date food items please). Some of the items we particularly need are: spaghetti sauce, canned peas, tuna fish, canned meats, toilet paper, paper towels and single serve microwaveable meals.

We have a collection box located in the Douglas MacVane Community Center, also the library, or bring donations directly to the food pantry during business hours.

Cash donations are especially helpful as it allows us to provide clients with $10 Hannagan's vouchers for fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy, and meat items. Please call Susan Hanley, 766-7715, for more information or to arrange donation pickup.

For a wonderful fun way to support the food pantry, come to the one-night only production of "Under Milk Wood" written by Dylan Thomas in 1954, intended as a radio play to be performed by the famous poet himself; however, he died suddenly and the work was taken up by Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, and many others. It is a lyrical, funny and insightful look at life in a small village - something islanders will appreciate. The performance will be at the Brackett Memorial Church on Saturday, Dec 9th at 8:00PM. Admission is by donation to the food pantry, bring either food items or cash. Thanks!
Peaks Island Fiber Arts Camp
Thanks for a fun-filled summer season!!!
Join our mailing list today to get the first look at camps next summer.
Contact Susan Hanley at 332-2443 or susan@peaksislandfiberarts.com
www.peaksislandfiberarts.com

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