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- Photo by Mindy Glickman

Short-term rental limits eyed on Peaks

By Scott Dolan
Peaks Island News

New regulations proposed by the Peaks Island Council would impose a cap of 40 short-term rental licenses available on Peaks Island for any year-round homes that are not used as the owner’s primary residence.

The proposal, supported by the council in a 5-2 vote at its May meeting, would be the first time that the number of short-term rentals on Peaks was regulated.

“What we are putting forward is purely hypothetical as recommendations,” said Peter McLaughlin, chairman of the Peaks Island Council.

The Portland City Council has the final authority on whether to adopt any amendments to the current building regulations.

The proposal comes as the island’s scarce housing suitable for year-round living is increasingly being bought up by out-of-staters who rent to summer vacationers through online markets like Airbnb.com and VRBO.com.

At the time of the council’s May vote, only 88 short-term rental licenses had been issued for Peaks residences, 39 of which were year-round residences that were not owner occupied.

In effect, what the new proposed regulation

See COUNCIL, page 18

Islander honored for volunteerism

Linda Holtslander of Peaks Island was named last month a 2024 Myra Kraft Community MVP Award winner in recognition for her years of volunteer work for Preble Street, a Portland-based nonprofit that helps the city’s neediest with meals, crisis intervention, clean clothes, healthcare and shelter. The award came with a \$10,000 donation from the New England Patriots Foundation to Preble Street. *Read the full story on Page 7.*

Derelict boat towed after complaint of needles on dock

By Scott Dolan
Peaks Island News

When Reed Kraft’s young children went to go fishing off Peaks Island’s army dock last month and had to step over used hypodermic needles discarded by the occupants of a derelict boat, his wife, Devon, said that was the last straw.

Devon Kraft recalled that her husband, who is currently away at sea for work as a marine engineer, immediately began making calls in early June to local authorities to try to have the derelict boat and its occupants removed.

“The real issue for Reed was that you can’t be an idiot out on the water chucking needles over the side of the boat,” Devon Kraft said. “It’s not okay.”

Devon Kraft said that she and her husband love living on Peaks year-round and raising their three children here, especially because it is such a safe community.

“Living out here is so special,” she said. “But if I lose that safety for my

children, what am I doing out here?”

The assistant Portland harbor master came out to Peaks after getting those calls from Reed Kraft and others and spoke directly to the owner of the derelict boat, called the Egret II. The harbor master’s office declined to identify the owner.

The difficulty, both state and local officials said, is that the authorities are mostly powerless to do anything when a boat is floating and tied up to public property, unless they can certify that the boat is inoperable and no longer meets the legal definition of a boat.

In this case, however, the owner of the Egret II acquiesced to pressure, and arranged to have his boat towed away by another person’s boat during the early morning of June 10 and relocated to the waters by the Thomas Knight Park in South Portland at the base of the Casco Bay

Bridge, according to the harbor master’s office.

The Egret II, which is a 1984 Carver 3207 Aft Cabin, is listed in the U.S. Coast Guard’s Information Exchange database as last having had certification documents that expired in 2002.

In Maine, most of the land that is covered by water is publicly owned under law dating back to colonial times, when everyone had a right to use them for “fishing, fowling (hunting), and navigation,” according to the Bureau of Parks and Lands website. Docks and other structures located on submerged lands may be privately owned, but the land and water beneath them are public.

John Noll, the state director of the Submerged Land division of the Bureau of Parks and Lands, said that so long as a vessel can still be considered

“If I lose that safety for my children, what am I doing out here?”

- Devon Kraft



Used hypodermic needles found discarded on the army dock in June
- Photo by John Kamp

See DERELICT, page 17

Finish line fun



The 27th annual Peaks Island Clamshell Relay Race was held on July 4. Left: A young runner finishes the first leg of the relay. Above: Spectators watch the clamshell handoff. Right: Kate Crothers and her son Frank, 5, cross the finish line together.
- Photos by Cara Dolan



TEIA building receives national designation

By Joanne MacIssac

For Trefethen-Evergreen Improvement Assoc.

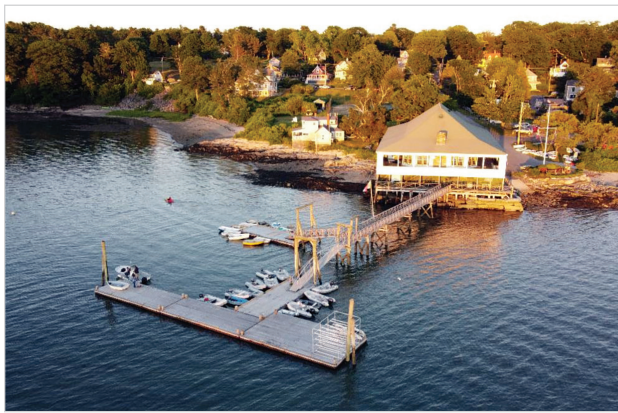
The Trefethen-Evergreen Improvement Association building and grounds on the northwest side of Peaks Island have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. TEIA joins four other historic Peaks Island sites with the designation: Battery Steele, Greenwood Gardens, The Fifth Maine Regiment and the Eighth Maine Regiment. This recognition signifies that a building or site has deep significance and relevance to the development of the community and that it is important to preserve it for future generations.

The TEIA clubhouse was originally built in 1914-15 as the Dayburn Casino by two Boston businessmen, Frank J. Burns and James A. Day. In the early 20th century, recreational buildings called “casinos” were a notable building type in Maine, common along the coast and islands. Built on a prominent waterfront site overlooking Diamond Passage in Casco Bay, the Dayburn Casino was primarily intended to be a dance hall. The timing wasn’t good with the advent of World War I, and the venture failed after a few years.

In 1912, sisters Mary and Mabel Davies summoned a group of Peaks Island friends and neighbors to their cottage. The result was the formation of the TEIA with the following mission:

“The object of this Association shall be for the improvement of Peaks Island, the preservation of its natural beauties, the development of its resources, the promotion of its health, cleanliness, and attractiveness, and the advancement of its religious, intellectual, and social life, and the connection there with the maintenance of a clubhouse for the promotion of social intercourse among its members.”

Some of TEIA’s early initiatives included lobbying for a submerged water pipe connection from Portland to bring Sebago Lake drinking water to Peaks; the conversion of carbide gas streetlights to electricity; repairing and oiling streets; the construction of a boardwalk connecting the Trefethen and Evergreen neighborhoods on the Island’s north end; working to add new sewers and better fire protection; and aiding



- Photo by Noah Reischmann, via TEIA

residents in need.

The members met at various homes until they were able to rent the second floor of Webber’s store, at that time located at the corner of Trefethen and Island Avenues. This location soon became too small as membership grew from 19 original members in 1912 to over 400 members by 1925. Various sites for constructing a new clubhouse were under consideration when the Dayburn Casino became available. With its waterfront location, it became the clear choice for TEIA’s new home.

The original architect is unknown. However, the renovations commissioned by TEIA are documented as the work of John Calvin Stevens, Maine’s best-known architect of that period. The most notable renovation was the creation of the wraparound porch by moving the exterior window walls 11 feet inward.

In addition to its civic

endeavors, TEIA is renowned for embodying and preserving island traditions. The first summer fair was held outdoors in 1913, an annual tradition that continues 111 years later. Photos taken from the second and third fairs show booths and throngs of people milling around what was then the Trefethen apple orchard and is now occupied by the tennis courts. Many generations of island children have learned to sail, swim and play tennis at TEIA. The association’s campership program has provided island children the opportunity to be engaged in a summer full of learning opportunities regardless of the ability to pay.

There have been minor changes to both the interior and exterior, but the building retains much of the character and integrity of the original historic architecture and setting. It has also maintained its intended mission as an organization for educational, civic, recreational and social pursuits. As TEIA looks forward, its board of governors is committed to preserving the property’s architectural and civic legacy.

TEIA

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Bidding on the Silent Auction is open during the Fair, and then re-opens from 5:30-6:30, prior to the Dinner. The always entertaining Live Auction takes place after Dinner!



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Navy veteran named CBL general manager

By Ross Sneyd
Peaks Island News

A veteran of the U.S. Navy and a former Mainer has been appointed general manager of Casco Bay Lines.

John Warnock will take over a position on July 22 that was vacated by the retirement of Hank Berg last year.

"John has our confidence and the enthusiasm of the entire board in taking the helm at CBL," board president Dave Crowley said in announcing the appointment.

As general manager, Warnock essentially will be the chief executive officer of Bay Lines, which employs more than 40 people year-round and about 90 during the summer.

"I am thrilled to return to Maine and get to work leading Casco Bay Lines," Warnock said in a statement released by CBL. "I look forward to starting out

by riding the boats to meet captains and crew and Casco Bay Islanders. My focus will be on safety first, on excellent service to islanders, good employee relations, and sound fiscal management."

Warnock spent 29 years with the Navy, including heading a department at the Navy Operational Support Center in Norfolk, Virginia, in charge of Navy Reserve units.

His career continued in private industry. He most recently was strategic communications analyst with Worldwide Counter Threat Solutions LLC in Virginia, where he spent time helping other companies analyze and interpret federal and military codes, laws and other technical material. Prior to that he was with NGROUP Performance Partners, which does workforce management.

Warnock has family in the Harpswell area where he continues to have a home.



New Casco Bay Lines General Manager John Warnock.
- Photo courtesy of Casco Bay Lines

Marge Powers steps down from health center board

By Kira Salter-Gurau
Peaks Island News

Marge Powers has spent a lifetime caring for others through her career in nursing, a passion that she brought with her to Peaks Island and her volunteer work with the Peaks Island Health Association.

After 16 years as president of the organization that manages the Peaks Island Health Center, Powers has stepped down, and will be honored next month with an open house to thank her for her service.

Powers dreamt of two things growing up in Boston — becoming a nurse and living in Maine, where she spent

happy times as a youngster. "I learned to walk on Peaks Island," she said, holding out a sepia picture of her as a toddler sitting on the rocky beach at Hadlock Cove in the late 1940s.

After completing a master's degree in health care administration at Salve Regina College in Rhode Island, working full-time at the Boston Medical Center, raising two children, having a second job and maintaining a loving marriage, Powers knows the importance of each role on a team.

At different points in her life, she has played the role of nurse manager, bedside nurse, pediatric nurse, ambulatory caregiver, medical surgery nurse

and even served as president of the Massachusetts Organization of Nurse Executives.

"I wanted to be the kind of person who mentored people and encouraged them," said Powers. When the opportunity arose to work in York, Maine, Powers moved from Massachusetts to Peaks, and commuted daily. After retiring in 2007, a neighbor encouraged Powers to attend the island health center's board meeting. Powers felt she belonged.

Soon after her arrival on the board, Powers faced a challenge. The advanced nurse practitioner at the time, Nancy Wright, was leaving the clinic. In a panic, the board and Powers put out the word, searching for providers for Peaks. Eventually, Maine Health, the parent organization of Maine Medical Center, saw the importance of bringing care to the people of Peaks. From then on, the clinic would be considered a branch of Maine Med. Powers felt relief for the islanders who could now receive care close to home.

Powers raved about the PIHA board and the team it assembled. The mix of backgrounds, such as physicians, educators, artists, nurses and business people, has inspired Powers, especially under the direction of new president Geoff Phillips McEnany. "I feel I was successful because of the board," she said.

A proud moment for Powers was bringing COVID-19 vaccines to Peaks so quickly after they became available. On Valentine's Day 2021, Brackett Church was set up as a COVID vacci-

nation clinic for the immunocompromised and elderly. Powers' retirement plans include continuing to volunteer at future vaccination clinics and perhaps taking a river cruise.

Sitting in the corner of her living room, the blue and green of Cushing Island out the window behind her, Powers praised the people she's been lucky enough to work with throughout her career as a nurse. She said she sees change is common and the people you surround yourself with are what's most important. "My surfboard is ready," Powers said, referring to change as waves in the ocean.

Powers has always brought warmth and education to those around her. While working in York in the early 2000s, she took a visiting group of young Israeli nurses and showed them the Boston medical scene. Touring them around Maine before sending them back home, Powers took the medical students to the Christmas Tree Shop as a way of saying goodbye and hoping they would come back soon. Kindness and hospitality are key markers of Powers' professional career.



Marge Powers

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Editorial: Our definition of community expands this time of year

Nerves can fray and tempers can flare when the crowds of day-trippers, wedding guests and others build at the ferry docks this time of year.

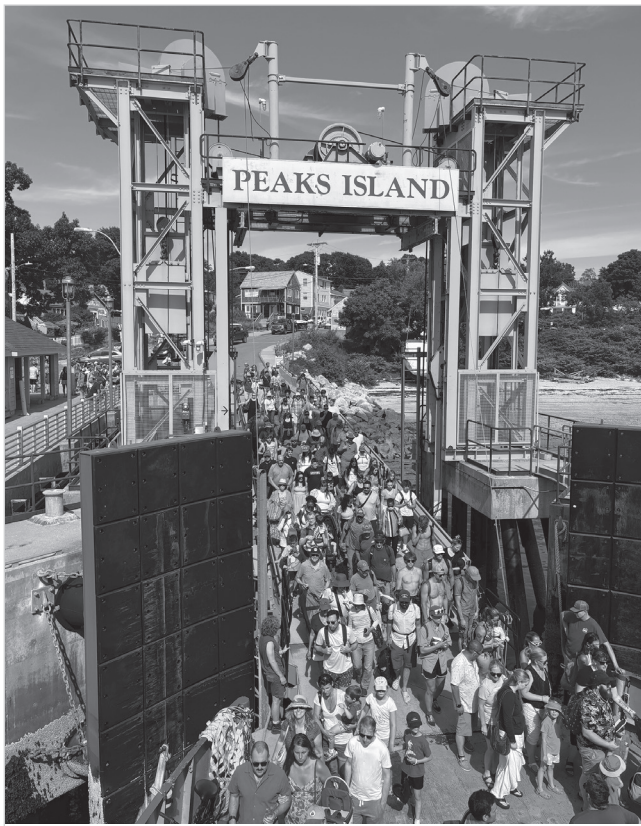
As we all know, sometimes you just want to find a quiet spot on the boat for a trip to town or back to the island. That's not so easy when you're being jostled and crowded with your cart full of groceries.

But it's certainly a part of life in popular tourist destinations between July 4th and Labor Day. Crowds will always descend and visitors won't always remember that they're simply visiting a beautiful place where people actually live.

The annual influx requires us to rethink our definition of community, which is the glue that binds us as seasonal and year-round residents to this rock.

Community events and gathering spots grow ever more important as summer wears on and frustration occasionally mounts.

Despite the crowds and the throngs of sometimes



- Photo by Cecilia Bohan

clueless tourists, there are places to visit and things to do that are more focused on us as residents. The library always offers a place of respite and reflection. Burger Nights at the Lions Club are an opportunity to catch up with neighbors and enjoy a few tunes. Lectures at the Trefethen Evergreen Improvement Association give us new insights into the pursuits of various islanders.

Starting this list is dangerous, because it doesn't even scratch the surface of the way our community evolves and expands this time of the year. There are so many ways to connect and commune with one another.

So, let's all try to take a deep breath the next time we feel a bit overwhelmed by some of the

crowds. They're actually a vital part of our community, too, and a good many of these folks sense the special magic that drew us here to begin with. And, of course, they help to support a lot of livelihoods here on The Rock. Let's share some of the Peaks spirit with them.

Peaks Island News

This newspaper is a nonprofit organization *Created By Our Community For Our Community.* All members of the Peaks Island community are encouraged to have a voice in this paper, to contribute their ideas, writing, photography, illustrations and energy.

Our Mission

We aim to create a true community newspaper, delivering news about Peaks Island people, schools, businesses, government, organizations, current events, arts, history and island culture, while being supported by the people who live here and advertisers that connect businesses with locals and visitors alike.

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Cecilia Bohan
Stacey Kors
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Page Layout – Cara Dolan
Photo Editor – Cecilia Bohan
Photographer – Cara Dolan

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Peaks Island News is distributed for free in multiple locations on the island and mainland. Advertisers reach readers and other businesses through their advertisements, which are not tax deductible. For rates and details, visit peaksislandnews.org/advertise.

Advertising Representative – Rhonda Berg

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Contact us

Your comments, letters to the editor and corrections are welcome.

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P.O. Box 26 • Peaks Island, Maine 04108
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Letter: It's your turn. Get involved

We are grateful for the Peaks Island Assessment done by Mohr & Seredin and talented scientists at FB Environmental. It has provided an inventory of assets that we need to treasure and protect if we hope to sustain our island community.

On July 27 between 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., there will be an open house of ideas at the Peaks Island Elementary School. Organizers will be present to record ideas from any resident, year-round and summer, to get a sense of what issues are community priorities, and to begin crafting a long-range plan in conjunction with the Peaks Island Council, the city, island charities and you.

We sense that there is no shortage of opinions about anything related to our island, so this is your chance to stir the pot, join conversations and lead projects to fix what is broken and protect what is not. Topics will include climate change, flooding, wildfires, affordable housing, City ReCode, infrastructure, paper streets, recreation, education, conservation, plant and insect invasives, water quality, tourists, bathrooms, parking, economic development and whatever else is on your mind.

Come gather with the community to plan for the future of Peaks at what is shaping up to be a 2024 version of a Peaks Island Town Meeting. Food, door prizes and child care will be provided.

- Bill & Patty Zimmerman

Newspaper team to speak at TEIA

Peaks Island News' editor, Ross Sneyd, and board president, Scott Dolan, will speak at the TEIA on Tuesday, July 23, at 7 p.m. as part of the Club's lecture series.

Members of the public are invited to attend the lecture, called "Covering Our Community: Peaks Island News," which will be held in the TEIA clubhouse at 10 Trefethen Ave.

Peaks Island News has been publishing stories about our island community since January 2024. But many may not know how this newspaper got started, who is behind the effort, and what the goals are for the newspaper's future. Come hear a presentation about how the newspaper was conceived and launched, and bring your ideas for the paper's future.



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Correction

A photo caption in the May edition incorrectly attributed artwork to school children. The artwork was created by Laura Glendening.

Clarification

A story in the May edition describing a series of email exchanges Willow Street resident Bob Harville had with city officials regarding a zoning issue on a neighboring property requires additional context. Harville says the exchanges were requests for information about zoning compliance and not complaints.

Corrections policy: Peaks Island News is committed to providing readers with the most accurate and factual news possible. We know mistakes happen, and we do our best to correct them as quickly as possible. If you spot a factual error, please let us know at news@peaksislandnews.org and we will run a correction in the next print edition.

Connecting our sense of wonder to each other



**PEAKS ISLAND
PERSPECTIVE**
**BY
WILL
GREEN**

I used to live in a neighborhood where all of the squirrels were white. It was simply a matter of genetics, but in this roughly half-square-mile area all of the squirrels had pure white fur. They were just Eastern gray squirrels, but these gray squirrels were white. It was very interesting to observe them for about two minutes. At that point you realized these were just squirrels...that are white. That's it.

Unless they're at your bird feeder, most of the time people don't pay much attention to squirrels, no matter their color. This was a residential area with lots of commuters, so most of the cars driving through were not too interested in looking at wildlife. I'm sure most people were unaware of the rather rare phenomenon all around them. But those who did know were really into it.

Every now and then a car would slowly roll down the street with a passenger holding binoculars to their eyes like they were on a stakeout. Clearly, they knew the secret. One Halloween, a neighborhood kid made the rounds in an excellently designed

white-squirrel costume. I think everyone on our street asked to take his picture when he came to our doors. But these were the exceptions. For the most part people were surprisingly oblivious to the white squirrels. And this included people who attended the church and lived more than a mile away.

People react strongly to seeing white squirrels, and they react even more strongly if they see a white squirrel at a church. There were several occasions when a parishioner entered my office with a stunned look on their face. Eyes wide open in disbelief, they carried themselves with a shell-shocked stiffness as they tried to disclose the miracle they had just witnessed in the parking lot.

"Pastor, I just saw something and...I can't believe it."

"Did you see a white squirrel?"

"Yes! I did! I've never seen anything like it!"

"Hmmm. Sounds like a powerful experience. Tell me, what do you think the white squirrel means?"

Those squirrels prompted some truly wonderful conversations. It turns out that one way to get hard-edged New Englanders to open up and talk freely about their feelings is to briefly show them a leucistic rodent. These are the things they don't teach you in seminary.

The unexpected can do this to us. When we're caught off guard by something beautiful or rare, our rigid



The young piebald deer of Peaks Island. - Photo by Peter McLaughlin.

cynicism can fall away so easily. Maybe we haven't seen it all. Maybe there's more going on than we realize. Maybe we should pay more attention to what we normally overlook.

As I'm sure you know, we currently have a young piebald deer living on the island. I still haven't seen it for myself, but I've talked about it in three different Sunday morning children's sermons. And there are many more lessons that this neighbor has to teach us.

Is this piebald a one-time mutation, or will the characteristic establish itself in the population? All I know is that I guarantee it has already prompted some feelings in people that they were not expecting.

Recently I was at a friend's house here on the island. It's a beautiful home with gardens of gorgeous flowers, a steady stream of birds at the feeders and a view of the ocean that makes me think of Winslow Homer. All year it's an amazing place, but in the early summer it's simply a masterpiece.

During this visit, in the middle of

conversation, my friend perked up, looked out the window in excitement and said, "Oh look, this is our favorite!"

I looked, too, and couldn't tell which part of the breathtaking spectacle she was referring to. I looked in every direction, and it was all equally amazing. She truly could have been referring to anything and everything I could see.

She must have noticed I was looking all over because she said, "No, look right in front of you. I'm talking about the person right there stopping to take a picture with their camera. I wonder if they've ever seen a view like this before. It makes you so thankful. Isn't it wonderful to be reminded of how special it is here? There's so much to be amazed by everyday."

I agree. As significant as it is to see something unexpected for yourself, it is even more special when that sense of wonder connects you with others.

Editor's note: Yes, leucistic is a word. If you haven't already looked it up, it means "irregularly colored."

Catching up: Joseph Mack turns 100

In the category of "Where Are They Now?", here's an update on Joseph Mack, who lived on Peaks Island for more than 20 years.

Mack and his partner, Phyllis Weintraub, resided at 835 Seashore Ave., the last house on the left as you go down the hill toward Spar Cove.

Phyllis died two years ago at the summer home they shared in Treas-

ure Island, Florida.

Mack moved to live with his son Dan and his wife Rosemary in Laconia, New Hampshire, where he enjoys views of their beautiful gardens and visits from old friends from Maine.

On one of those recent visits, Peaks Islanders Jeff and Roxanne Marks joined Mack for lunch and this photo opportunity.

This month, his family from New Hampshire and Massachusetts will gather for a celebration of Mack's 100th birthday

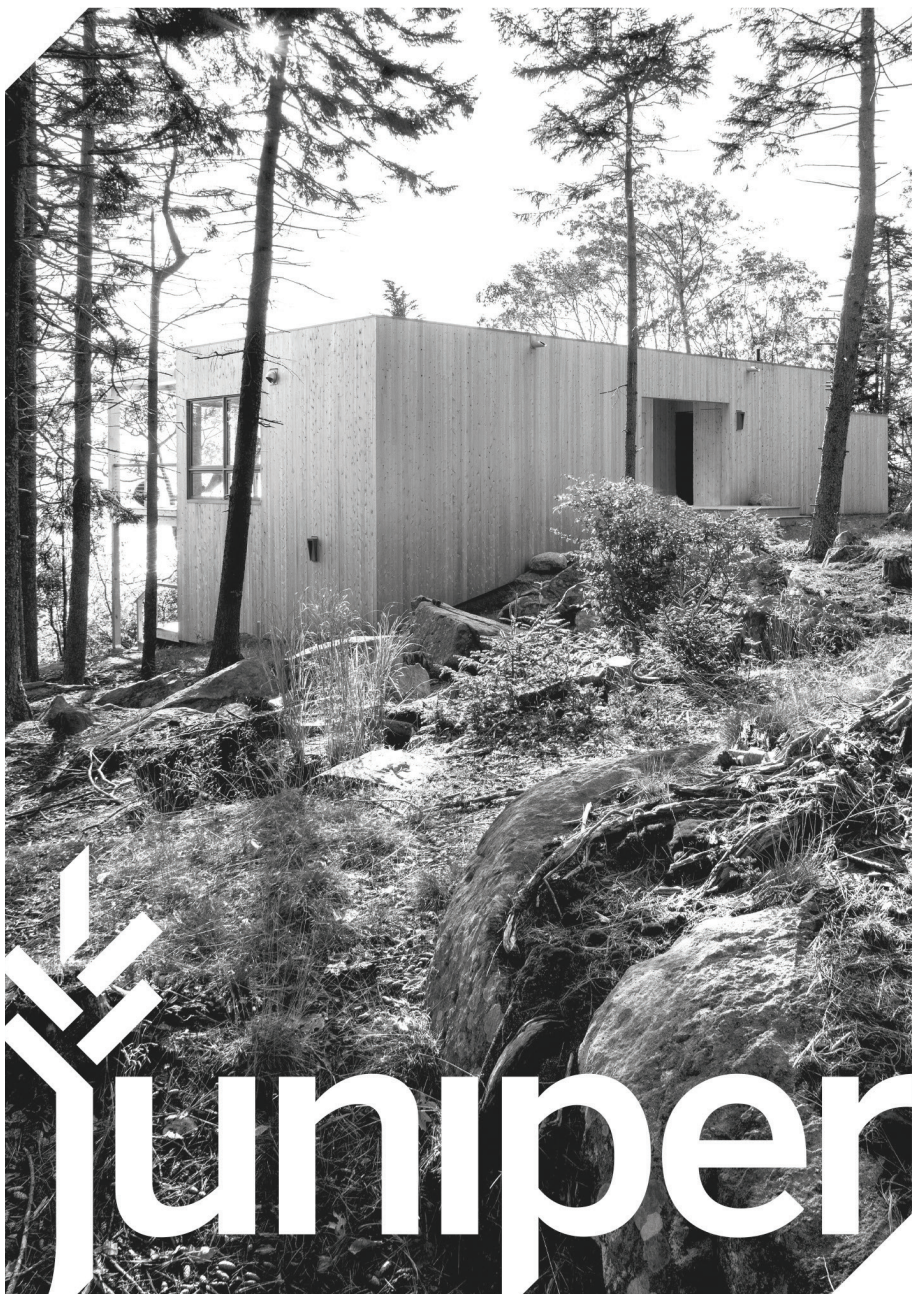
Mack grew up and spent most of his life in Springfield, Massachusetts. He worked as a physical therapist, and today still gives a strong handshake and firm embrace.

Mack served in the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II.

Joe and Phyllis remained active into their 90s, traveling to Spain and attending plays and concerts until shortly before her death.



Joseph Mack with Roxanne and Jeff Marks at his home in New Hampshire. - Photo courtesy of Roxanne and Jeff Marks



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Buyer beware: Real estate scams target island properties

By Ross Sneyd
Peaks Island News

Sue and Richard Berry have a lovely home on Upper A Street with a big, comfortable yard that is actually composed of a second lot.

They have no intention of selling that open property that, for all intents and purposes, appears to be part of their house lot — despite what you might see on Realtor.com.

Twice in the past year, like a growing number of people across Maine, they were the victims of an attempted real estate scam: The lot they own next door has appeared on the Realtors Multiple Listing Service for sale, even though they have no plans to put it on the market and had nothing to do with listing it.

“We were shocked, and we felt very lucky that we found out about it, but also very surprised that there’s no system to prevent things like this from happening,” Richard said.

But neighbors saw the listing go live and alerted the Berrys, who were able to contact the real estate agent who had posted it and have it taken down.

These kinds of scams have popped up all over the country, including now in Maine and here on Peaks Island. The Maine Association of Realtors has put out several alerts to its members warning of the problem and offering tips to combat it.

Claire Berger, communications manager at the association, said agents have had to become more vigilant when taking listings because fraudsters have honed their game in a bid to cash in before anyone catches on.

“Most cases we have dealt with have been vacant land and some vacant property,” Berger said. “So Peaks Island does match up, it would seem, with a large amount of seasonal homes that are not regularly occupied. There was a bunch in York County, and now it seems to be happening across the state. In chats with colleagues from other states, this is a problem not unique to Maine.”

One of the agents who mistakenly listed the Berrys’ property for sale was Jason Singer, a broker with Keller Williams. He was traveling with family in April when he got a call from a man with a Louisiana number who identified himself as Richard Berry.

“It was a man saying he owned a lot on Upper A Street that he was looking to sell, him and his wife, Susan,” Singer said.

The agent did some research and everything he was being told checked out, including addresses and names on the deed. There was one oddity, though.

“It had actually come on the market once before, in March, but only for a day then was withdrawn,” Singer said. “So I asked them about it. He said he put it up for sale without Susan’s permission.” Eventually they agreed to sell the land and so contacted Singer, he was told.

Singer happened to be in a movie theater when the listing went live. By the time the credits rolled and he checked his phone, he had 11 messages. “There was maybe one person interested in buying the lot and the rest were from my office and the actual owner,” he said.

Despite repeated attempts to identify the original caller who wanted to

list the property, the person disappeared and never responded to calls.

The Berrys reported both incidents to the Maine attorney general’s office, the FBI’s cyber crimes unit and the Maine Association of Realtors. “I think they probably weren’t interested because no money had actually changed hands,” Sue said.

They were told if money had changed hands and the deed transferred, they would have had to go to court to reverse it and the purchasers likely would have lost whatever they paid if the fraudster couldn’t be found.

The Berrys aren’t alone, and neither is Singer. Rhonda Berg, a broker with Harborview Properties, was contacted by text about listing a property on Pleasant Avenue. She had some back and forth with the person interested in selling and took photos of the property, also a vacant lot.

“Before my agency had time to list it on MLS, I put the sign on,” Berg said. “No sooner than I did that an islander called me and said, ‘Are you sure that this is right because that was a bogus listing the last time.’”

Sure enough, this one was bogus as well. When Berg called the person who had asked her to list the property, he had a foreign accent. She was not able to track him down to learn his true identity.

Realtors are now advised to meet potential clients in person whenever possible, verify their identity with IDs and try to make sure to introduce them to a colleague.

Editor’s note: Rhonda Berg is a member of the board of Peaks Island News.

Poetry: Liz Davis and the Oak Tree



POETRY
LANDING
BY
JESSICA
GEORGE

This month we are featuring Liz Davis, a woman I first became aware of gracing our island’s shores while acting with her in the summer community theater produced by Liz Rollins at Trefethen Evergreen Improvement Association.

You might recall her as a sugar-mama-snow-white costumed character in Chris Durang’s “Vanya, Sonya, Masha and Spike.” Last summer, she was a part of the cast of “The Book of Will,” playing a seductive lady-of-the-night-type counterpart to Will Shakespeare’s altruistic best friend after Will’s death.

In both roles, she was typecast as a haughty, desirable older woman with a business sense and love of adoration. I believe her husband since university days, Keith, and their large family of 12 — three daughters, three sons-in-law, four grandchildren, and five dogs — will be fans of this poem, as you may be, too.

Oak Tree

Once, while walking in a quiet wood,
I came to where a gentle oak tree stood.
My body tired, my mind at ease,
I asked the tree, “If you please,
“May I climb upon your limb?
“To rest my body, slight and slim.”

Surprised I was to hear,
A gentle whisper in my ear.
The voice was not of humankind,
Yet its sound — so strangely mine!
“Too young to rest but for a while,
“The road ahead will bring a smile!”

I pondered what the old tree knew,
What lay ahead? Excitement grew!
No recollection of why I’d asked,
The journey ahead, no more a task.
So eagerly I went — on my way,
The miles of life before me lay.

Many oceans, a desert breeze,
Soon rolling hills, and cedar trees.
The old tree so wise — so many places!
The old tree so wise — so many faces.
But it was yours I caught in the crowd,
Now, in our family tree, we rest so proud.

- By Liz Davis

Jessica George is an artist and mother who made the move to Peaks Island in 2007. Her recent publication, “Trailing Arbutus,” is a collection of nonfiction poetry and prose that can be found at www.trueblueisland.com. Your submissions for Poetry Landing are welcome at dreamstreampoeetry@gmail.com.

Your summer live music guide is here



RHYTHM OF
THE ROCK
BY
CHRIS
MAROT

July

July 18, 6 p.m.
Chris Broadhurst/The TooZies at the Legion

July 24, 6 p.m.
Don Campbell at the Lions Club Burger Night

July 24, 8-9 p.m.
Casco Bay Tumblers Concert at the Fifth Maine

July 25, 6 p.m.
Jeff Cusack and Mike Richards at the Legion

July 26, 6 p.m.
Jeff Cusack at Island Lobster Company

Sundays at 3:45 p.m.
Acoustic Music Circle at the Legion

August

August 1, 6 p.m.
Jack Barrett and Cynde Putney at the Legion

August 7, 8 p.m.
Peaks Island Music Association, Classical Violin, Piano, and Voice at the Fifth Maine

August 8, 6 p.m.
Open Mic Night at the Legion

August 10
Hoot Night with Chris Broadhurst at TEIA

August 13, 6 p.m.
The Hedgehogs at Island Lobster Company

August 15, 6 p.m.
Keith Stockless and Jack Sherman at the Legion

August 18, 5 p.m.
PICW Fundraiser featuring The Hedgehogs at TEIA

August 21, 6 p.m.
The Elmores at the Lions Club Burger Night

August 21, 8 p.m.
PI Chorale at the Fifth Maine

August 22, 7 p.m.
Reverie Road with Winifred Horan, John Williams, Katie Grennan and Utsav Lal at the Fifth Maine

August 30, 6 p.m.
Jimmy Buffett Day with Jeff Cusack at the Island Lobster Company

Holtslander honored for Preble Street work

By Scott Dolan
Peaks Island News

A Peaks Island resident who has tirelessly devoted her retirement years to volunteering to help Portland’s neediest and homeless was honored last month with a prestigious award.

Linda Holtslander, 81, who has volunteered three to five days per week for the past seven years at Preble Street, a Portland-based nonprofit, was named a 2024 Myra Kraft Community MVP Award Winner.

Preble Street received a \$10,000 donation as part of Holtslander’s award, which was given by the New England Patriots Foundation in the name of the late wife of Robert Kraft, the chairman and CEO of the Patriots.

When Holtslander moved to Peaks Island seven years ago, she had accomplished enough in her career that most people in her shoes would have retired with satisfaction. She had been a library administrator in Berkeley, California; an adjunct professor at University of California Berkeley in its master’s in library science program; received a Fulbright Scholarship to Helsinki, Finland; and finished her career as a division manager for development, programs and public relations for the public libraries in Loudoun County, Virginia, outside Washington, D.C.

Instead of slowing down, Holtslander came here and immediately poured herself into volunteering for Preble Street, which helps the city’s neediest with meals, crisis intervention, clean clothes, healthcare and shelter.

“I’m really blessed with the energy that I have,” she said in a recent ferry-ride interview on her commute home after preparing meals all day for those in need. “It’s hard for me to sit down and do nothing.” “After seven years of volunteering, fellow passengers on the morning boat from Peaks Island to Portland often will ask me, ‘off to Preble Street?’ After all this time, it is my identity. It is part of who I am.”

Holtslander was nominated for the award by Preble Street Volunteer Program Manager Elisa Fleig, who was trained on the job by Holtslander when Fleig started at Preble Street several years ago as administrative assistant.



Patriots pro football Hall of Famer Andre Tippett, left, and Gillette’s vice president of communications and community affairs Kara Buckley, right, congratulate Linda Holtslander for being selected as a 2024 Myra Kraft Community MVP Award recipient. - Photo courtesy of Eric J. Adler / New England Patriots

“Linda’s volunteer journey with Preble Street is a testament to her extraordinary dedication to, and compassion for, her local community” Fleig wrote in her nomination papers. “Volunteering three to five days a week, she even comes in on days when Maine winter weather makes for turbulent ferry rides from her home on Peaks Island. Over the last seven years, she has become an indispensable member of many programs at Preble Street.”

Holtslander often volunteers at Preble Street’s Food Security Hub facility in South Portland, where she helps prepare more than 2,000 meals a day. She does whatever work is needed most during her shift, whether washing dirty dishes, chopping onions or portioning out meals into containers.

Preble Street opened the Food Security Hub in

late 2021 in response to a substantial growth in hunger in Maine since the pandemic, allowing it to dramatically increase the number of hot meals and grocery meals it provides.

Beyond the kitchen, Holtslander also sometimes takes the role of administrative assistant at the front desk of Preble Street’s center in downtown Portland.

“When filling in for the position, she is the first point of contact for anyone calling Preble Street, from clients in crisis who are looking for resources, to donors, media representatives, and other volunteers,” Fleig wrote. “Whether it’s directing calls or providing essential information, Linda’s warmth and professionalism leave a lasting impression on everyone she interacts with.”

Affordable housing project set to move forward

By Ross Sneyd
Peaks Island News

An affordable housing project planned for Central Avenue that hit snags over the past year is soon set for construction now that ownership of the property has been transferred to Home Start, an island organization.

Plans call for three units to be built at 18 Central Avenue, a brick building across from St. Christopher’s Catholic Church that was once the church’s parish hall.

The building will be demolished and a modular building is being shipped to the island in units for assembly on site, and will be erected on top of the foundation. Additional construction and finishing will be required before the apartments can be occupied, which may take until early next year, according to Home Start.

“The apartments will all be handicapped accessible because they’re all ground-level,” said Betsey Remage-Healey, Home Start president. “They’ll

all have at least one-and-a-half bathrooms. They will all have solar collectors because the building faces south, so they will not have heat and electricity costs. How can you not love those things?”

It has not been an easy process. The Catholic diocese sold the building many years ago to a family that used it seasonally. It became available when the previous owners, a group of siblings, were unable to pay taxes.

The building is in rough shape. Cement was poured down the drains of one of the bathrooms, destroying it. Old furniture and household items are strewn about the building, along with appliances that haven’t been used in years, and even a couple of pool tables.

The city worked with Home Start to create much-needed affordable rental housing on the island. But the debate about whether the former parish hall should be rehabbed or demolished and rebuilt split the Home Start board.

The decision to rebuild resulted in some board members resigning. Eventually, with a full board, an agreement was struck to purchase the building from the city for \$37,000.

But just days before the closing was expected late last year, Home Start

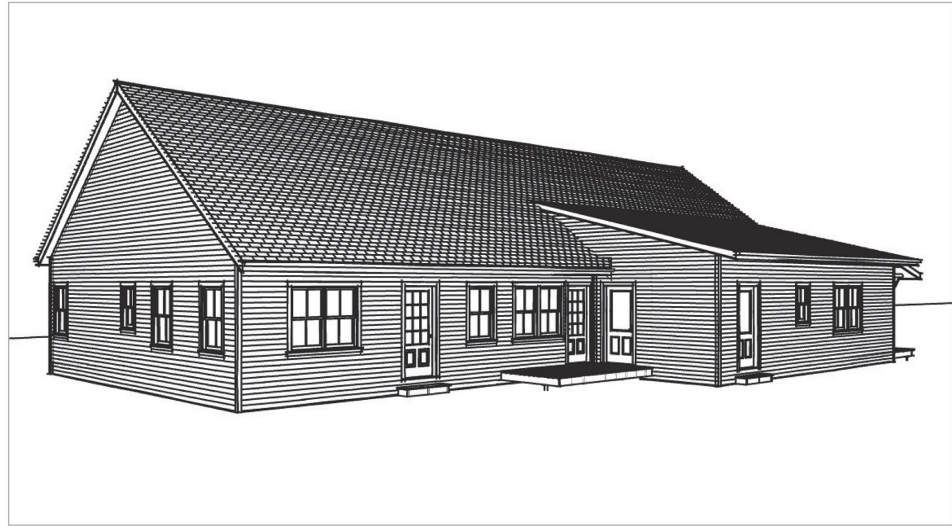
learned that under a U.S. Supreme Court ruling the city would have to give the former owners an opportunity to sell the property on the open market to recoup the cost of the back taxes and any other proceeds.

So 18 Central Avenue went on the market earlier this year with a listing price of \$300,000. “That was devastating, because we were planning on spending \$37,000 to get it,” Remage-Healey said.

Home Start ultimately bid \$50,000 “to cover the costs incurred by the city,” and finally was able to purchase the property late this spring.

Home Start won a loan from Maine-Housing for reconstruction that will be forgiven if the apartments remain affordable for 45 years. An “angel benefactor,” who wished to remain anonymous, also stepped forward to help move the project along, with other donations Home Start has collected in recent years.

The three units will comprise two two-bedroom apartments and one three-bedroom. They will be managed by Volunteers of America, which also runs the Fay Garman House. Two of the units will be rented for 80 percent of the median income for the Portland area and the third for 60 percent of median income.



This rendering shows the building planned to to be constructed at 18 Central Ave., providing three new affordable housing units to the island. - Graphic courtesy of Home Start

Where is Peaks' Boston Post Cane?

By Kim MacIsaac
Peaks Island Historical Society

In 1909, Boston Post owner Edwin A. Grozier came up with a unique marketing idea for his struggling newspaper.

He ordered several hundred ornate, gold-tipped canes, and offered to donate one cane to each of some 700 towns in New England (no large cities were included). The canes were crafted of black ebony imported from the Belgian Congo and topped with a 14-carat gold head inscribed "Presented by the Boston Post to the oldest citizen of [name of town] To Be Transmitted." So the canes belonged to the town, not to individual recipients.

The cane was to be presented to the oldest male resident of each town as a way to honor his longevity. It wasn't until 1930 that women were considered eligible. Naturally, the cane's inscription, "Boston Post," was a not-so-subtle way to remind people who provided the cane and, hopefully, motivate them to purchase the newspaper.

A process was developed for determining who the oldest resident was. Basically, he or she had to be at least 90 years old and a resident of



Above left: Detail of the gold head of the missing Boston Post Cane for Peaks Island. Above right: Tom Quigg and Jimm Brown present the cane to Edwin Haeger in 1992.
- Photos courtesy of Peaks Island Historical Society



the town for a certain period of time. But each town used a variety of ways to search for the oldest resident. The lucky recipient was honored with a public ceremony and presented with the cane and a birthday cake. When the honoree died or moved out of town, the cane was presented to the next-oldest resident. This became known as the Boston Post cane tradition.

Peaks Island had its own Boston Post cane. The name of the first

fortunate islander to receive the cane is lost to history, as are the names of most of the cane recipients. The last known recipients were Ed Haeger and a Mrs. Watson. Both died more than 20 years ago. As the keeper of island traditions, the Peaks Island Historical Society would love to revive this old-fashioned, yet lovely, tradition — if only someone could locate the cane.

In its day, the Boston Post was considered one of the leading news-

papers in the country. Upon Mr. Grozier's death in 1924, ownership of the newspaper passed to his son Richard, who was not as successful and eventually died in a psychiatric hospital. Competition caused the Post's circulation to decline and it ceased publication in 1956.

Anyone with information about Peaks Island's Boston Post cane or the islanders who held it are urged to contact the Society at peakshistory@gmail.com.

Crossword Challenge: An American patriot

By John Whitman

ACROSS

- 1. Bilbao's province
- 7. UK bathrooms
- 10. "Dragon Tattoo" actor Rooney
- 14. Not out
- 15. Bowler or boater
- 16. Latin field
- 17. Sports official

- 18. Mexican diminutive
- 19. " _ Petite," Jackie Wilson song
- 20. (Follows 53 Across)
- 23. Rubber, in England
- 24. Vertical pipe
- 25. Encourage
- 28. (Follows 43 Across)
- 30. Living on sea floor

- 33. Clairvoyance
- 34. Word coined by Bram Stoker
- 35. Kisses, sometimes
- 40. Constellation
- 42. Citizen of Sarajevo
- 43. (Follows 20 Across)
- 48. Oh, to be in Paris!
- 49. Make amends
- 50. E.g., Edouard et Andre Michelin
- 53. Famous Last Words (followed by 20, 43, and 28 Across)
- 58. Creedence Clearwater song
- 59. Man's name meaning "watchful"
- 60. Opposite of life?
- 61. X CEO
- 62. Boston feature
- 63. Epic traveler
- 64. Man's name meaning "re-born"
- 65. Sullivan, Sheehan, and Special
- 66. Turn on oven

- 11. Discriminatory against seniors
- 12. Weed
- 13. Maine Turnpike, e.g.
- 21. Org. since 1775
- 22. Bursts forth
- 25. Dhabi
- 26. Man's name meaning "son"
- 27. Tight or dead
- 29. buco
- 31. WWII admiral nicknamed "Bull"
- 32. fixe
- 36. 14 pounds
- 37. Inebriated (slang)
- 38. Hammer and anvil location
- 39. Dir. From Bangkok to Vladivostok
- 41. Proposed
- 42. Rabbit
- 43. Private eye?
- 44. Nominated 8 times for Best Actor Oscar (never won)
- 45. M25 surrounds it
- 46. Connected to internet
- 47. Musical instruments
- 51. Synopsis
- 52. Highly flammable liquid
- 54. Overabundant
- 55. Hastens
- 56. Chinese jumbo jet engine manufacturer
- 57. Challenge

DOWN

- 1. Sugarcane wine
- 2. Restless craving
- 3. The Holocaust (Heb.)
- 4. Car named for ship
- 5. Muslim title (var.)
- 6. San Francisco, f/k/a _ Buena
- 7. Bulger
- 8. Ocho + seis
- 9. Many countries end like this
- 10. Game fish

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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See puzzle solution on page 18.



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Comic by Wyatt Hild, grade 5 graduate

A man with a beard, wearing a grey button-down shirt over a green tank top and dark shorts, is helping a young girl learn to ride a teal and purple bicycle. The girl is wearing a bright green helmet, a pink patterned shirt, and colorful leggings. They are on a paved street with yellow lane markings. In the background, a brick building with the sign 'Peaks Island Elementary School' is visible, along with a group of people watching and other cyclists. The scene is outdoors with trees and power lines in the background.

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Stephen Pullan IV
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Peaks Island Elementary School graduating fifth graders will be rising to sixth grade at King Middle School in Portland in the fall. From left: Amelia Collette, Ash Foster, Arlo McCanna, Theo Ptacin-Jackson, Emmett O'Brien, Wyatt Hild, Naomi George - Photo by Susan Hanley

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on Island and Pleasant Aves.

Meet Peaks' 15 high school graduates

Kate Richardson



Katherine "Kate" Richardson graduated from Portland High School. She will be attending the University of Maine in Orono.

John Barnes



John Orion Barnes graduated from Portland High School. He is going to French language school next year in Montpellier, France and plans to continue his studies in France.

Samantha Flynn



Samantha Flynn graduated from Casco Bay High School. She will be attending the University of Southern Maine.

Edlazio Antonio



Edlazio Antonio graduated from Portland High school. He will be attending Southern Maine Community College in the Criminal Justice Program.

Paul Nelson



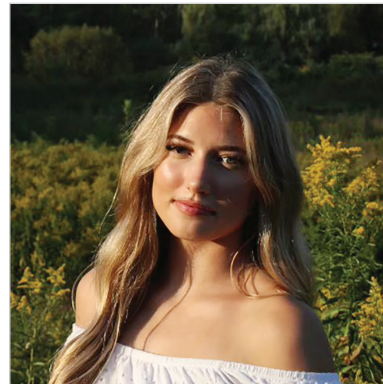
Paul Nelson graduated from Casco Bay High School. He will be attending Southern Maine Community College and is planning to study business.

Chadai Gatembo



Chadai Gatembo graduated from Portland High School. He will be attending Southern Maine Community College in the EMT/Fire Science Program.

Emma Shaw



Emma Shaw graduated from Portland High School. She will be attending Arizona State University, where she plans to study Business Law.

Sid Slifka



Sid Slifka graduated from Casco Bay High School. He will be attending the University of New Hampshire.

Lucien Brahms



Lucien Brahms graduated from Casco Bay High School. After studying abroad in Italy this summer, he will be attending the Gemological Institute of America in New York City.

Annika Asbjornsen



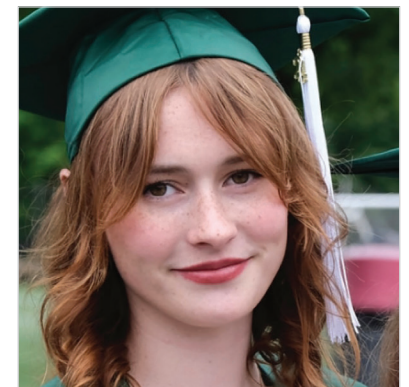
Annika Asbjornsen graduated from Falmouth High School. She will be attending the University of Maine in Orono.

Bobby Bourque



Bobby Bourque graduated from Deering High School. He is currently enrolled at Southern Maine Community College.

Piper Judy



Piper Judy graduated from Waynflete School. She'll be attending George Washington University, where she plans to study Psychology and French.

River Sheehan



River Sheehan graduated from Portland High School. He will travel abroad this coming year and attend university in 2025.

Júlia Marquardt-Luesma



Julia Marquardt-Luesma graduated from Casco Bay High School. She will be attending Southern Maine Community College.

Asa Winter



Asa Winter graduated from Casco Bay High School. He will be attending St. Lawrence University and plans to study environmental science.

Tap dancing has decades of history on Peaks

By **Betsey Remage-Healey**

When Home Start began talking about turning the former hall at 18 Central Ave. into affordable housing, my neighbors on both sides made the same comment: “I remember the tap dancing on the stage there.”

Hmmm. Sounded as if there might be more to that story, a piece of Peaks history in need of investigation.

And what a story. Would you believe that it began in a German POW camp during World War I? That was where British prisoner William Green learned to tap dance. Returning to England after the war, he taught his family to tap dance; they would later become the Green Family Trio. Daughter Doreen danced, her sister played the accordion and her brother strummed the banjo. They performed all over northern England until World War II.

Then along came U.S. Airman Albert McCann. He met Doreen while stationed in England, and in 1947 brought her home as a war bride to Peaks. Raising seven children and additional foster kids kept Doreen busy, but she never lost her love of tap. And her love was infectious. First she taught five of her own children and her adopted son David to dance as the McCann Family Dancers. By the 1970s, almost every Peaks family — from preschoolers to adults — was tap dancing. Just ask anyone from that era, including all nine Alves kids. Peaks had tap-dancing fever. Regular performances were at the Parish Hall, and, of course, in the annual Lions Club Talent Show (which she continued to help organize into her 80s).

Cruel fate stepped in when Doreen was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at age 50. But she was not daunted. When she could no longer move well, she taught from her wheelchair with help from fellow dancer Joan Briggs. When she lost the ability to speak clearly, Joan interpreted.

Albert was known for his devoted care for Doreen,



but after his death David, known and loved as a tap dancer himself, stepped up to help, despite his own struggles with Down Syndrome.

Continuing to teach tap through the 1990s, Doreen finally had to move off-island to full-time nursing care at the Barron Center. But soon, the Barron Center had a wheelchair tap dance group, organized by you-know-who.

Doreen died in 2014 at age 89, but not before receiving the Lions Club True Grit Award, as well as being honored at the state house.



Above: Doreen McCann with a dance student from River-ton Elementary School. Top left: Doreen’s dance students perform on stage. Bottom left: Doreen with her sons Peter, Terry and Billy in 1963. - **Photos courtesy of Keith Ivers**

“Doreen was a force of nature who lived to dance,” recalls one former student. “It was her passion and she loved to share it,” agreed her daughter, Mary McCann.

Tap classes are coming back to Peaks in 2024. For more information, contact Timmi Sellers, timmi@thesellersplace.com.

Betsey Remage-Healey is president of Home Start, which is redeveloping the former parish hall at 18 Central Ave.

Newly installed bishop visits Peaks Island

The new bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland took the ferry to Peaks on Sunday, June 9, to celebrate weekly Mass at St. Christopher’s Parish.

The Most Reverend James Ruggieri was ordained and installed as the new Bishop of Portland on May 7 and has been traveling to various parishes throughout the state during his first months as bishop getting to know the faithful of Maine.

St. Christopher’s parishioners hosted a gathering following Mass for the bishop and he asked to return soon for Mass and Kim MacIssac’s history tour of the island.



Bishop James Ruggieri celebrates Mass. - **Photo courtesy of Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland**



STRENGTH

Peaks

ISLAND

AND WELLNESS

ON ISLAND

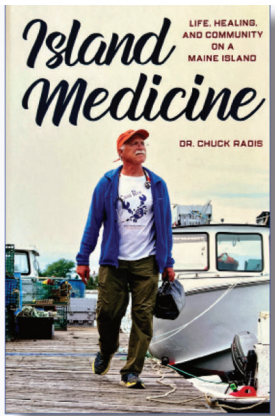
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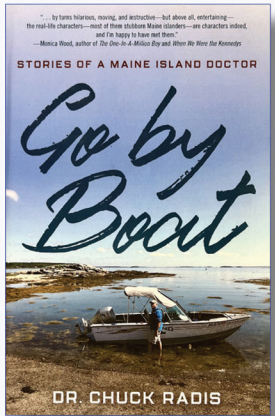
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A music teacher's essay: On the necessity of singing

By **Andrea Kelly Rosenberg**

When I was a child growing up in the 1950s and '60s in the Midwest, we sang all the time. We sang in school and we sang in the Detroit-area Presbyterian church. We sang on the buses and we sang while waiting for buses. We sang in choirs. We sang beautiful songs and really stupid songs. (Anyone remember "Found a Peanut?") At summer camp, after meals, the little song books would be handed out and we sat around the tables while the kitchen crew washed the dishes and we sang and sang and sang, and they sang with us. In parts, in unison, in perfect tune and kind of out, it didn't matter.

In that church, there were five kids' choirs. A child could start singing regularly in church from the third grade, and by the time we were in high school, we sang every single Sunday morning. There was nothing special about these choirs. No one had to audition. There was no such thing as a kid who "couldn't sing." Everyone sang.

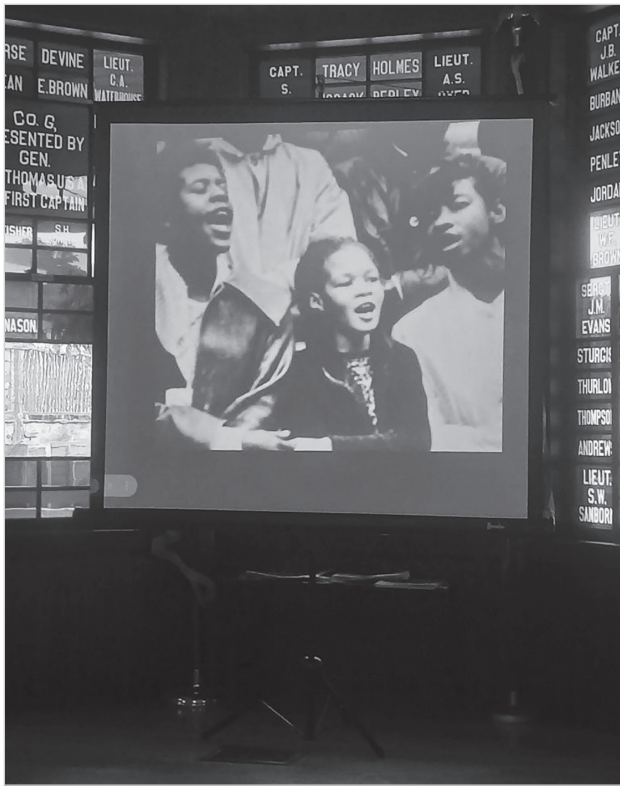
But as an adult, I've noticed that children don't sing much. There has grown a division between "singers" and "non-singers." In the churches of my adulthood, kids' choirs are very thin on the ground. In the beautiful large cathedral where I attend Mass, despite a large Faith Formation program, there is no children's choir.

I run a small piano studio, with 12 students. Twice every year, I invite these students and their friends to sing in small choruses. Because I don't think singing — unauditioned, joyful, robust, unselfconscious children's singing — is a fun add-on. I think it is a necessity.

I want to tell you about my latest kids' choral concert on Peaks Island.

I always choose my music carefully. I want it to be not too hard and not too easy. I want songs that speak to the heart and make kids smile, that they can sing without self-consciousness, songs that will hook them and draw them in and help them forget anything but the joy of singing.

For my littlest ones, the words must be repetitive and easy to teach by rote. Some 6-year-olds can read better than others. My older children — say eight or nine and older — need some challenges to



Nicole d'Entremont includes photos of children singing during civil rights demonstrations in the 1960s in her presentations about the freedom marches of that era.

- Photo by Jessica George

keep them interested. Offering solos can provide this; they're also ready to learn to sing in parts.

I look for catchy and beautiful tunes. I look for classics, songs that have lasted. I look for songs that are suited to my accompanist — my husband, a very good gospel pianist. His music is so jumpy!" exulted one child. Children love to jump.

I had another criterion for this year's project. I had become close to Peaks Island's own Nicole d'Entremont, the poet and novelist and artist who had taken a bus to Selma, Alabama, in 1963 to help the freedom marches there. "The people sang morning, noon and night," she said. "They couldn't have

done it without the singing." I wanted the children to know about this, and to sing some of the songs that kept that remarkable nonviolent movement going.

"Come and go with me to that land," I taught them to sing. "Ain't no sorrow in that land..." Simple, full of gospel spirit, the song met all my criteria. I taught a 12-year-old baritone a counter-melody as a solo.

The big night arrived. Nicole had selected four photos from the movement, all of them including children. One showed a girl of maybe 12, her face calm and joyous, hand in hand with two teens, singing.

Bigotry would have no chance of defeating that joy.

Nicole explained briefly, softly, the purpose of the movement and why it succeeded. She looked away from the photos and addressed the parents. "Keep your kids singing," she said.

And then they sang. "Come and Go With Me to That Land" bounced along. After the young baritone nailed his solo, the audience exploded with cheers and applause. They followed this with "Vine and Fig Tree," in both English and the original Hebrew, with its promise from Micah 4:4 that one day our swords will be turned to plowshares, and no one will be afraid.

And we ended with "Wade in the Water." People escaping slavery were advised to go into the rivers to keep the dogs from detecting their scent. Woven in skillfully by the unknown songwriter is the Moses story—"Who's that standing there in red? Must be the children Moses led." And, finally, the stern, prophetic warning: "God's gonna trouble the water." Injustice will not last.

Singing is a kind of prayer, a kind of nonviolent weapon, and a kind of miracle. Singing for the ordinary person is an endangered species. We need it. Let's keep it from dying out.

Andrea Kelly Rosenberg is a piano teacher and kids' choral director who grew up in Detroit, raised 4 kids in Portland, and moved to Peaks Island with her husband Rob in 2016.



Dying to Know's summer beach reads

where everyone is in a different stage of acceptance. The main character's views on family and death isolate her from her siblings, but by being in that lonely place, she opens herself to something beyond the scope of narrow reality.

"The Resurrection of Fulgencio Ramirez" by Rudy Ruiz

Fulgencio is able to see and communicate with spirits around him, but his life has been one of waiting. When he finally sees the obituary of his nemesis, the man who married the woman he loves, he embarks on a journey to seek answers and hopefully find love again. This is a great book for acknowledging how painful life and truth can be thanks to how we humans complicate things for ourselves, but it is also a story of how it is never too late to find happiness.

"Under the Whispering Door" by T.J. Klune

Can terrible humans have a second chance at redemption after they are dead? This book follows the ghost of Wallace Price, self-admitted horrible human, as he meets feisty Reaper, Mei, and kind Ferryman, Hugo. Charming and often humorous, this book is a cozy read despite the harsh realities of death that continually hem in the characters. This is also a lovely light romance that comes perfectly on the heels of Pride Month.

"The Undertaking of Hart and Mer-

cy" by Megan Bannen

I knew I was going to like this book when I realized the title was a pun on the characters' names and their lines of work. The writing is a tremendous enterprise that combines a Wild West dystopian fantasy with author-created death mythology into a spicy romance. . . . Oh, and it has a side of zombies. While all these plates are spinning, there are some really insightful comments on death tucked between the fun.

"Ain't Burned All the Bright" by Jason Reynolds, with artwork by Jason Griffin

These last few books combine art with storytelling. This particular book will become a go-to historical piece when we reflect back on 2020 and the height of the pandemic. Even if you aren't sure if you are ready to revisit that time, this book does a beautiful job capturing helpless agitation in the face of death and the worst parts of our society. The narrator takes us through the personal, yet universal, war we each experience when we are in the midst of a mix of anticipatory grief and hope. This is the quickest read of all these books, but the poetic language and visual symbolism is haunting, and guaranteed to stay with you.

"A Monster Calls" by Patrick Ness (inspired by Siobhan Dowd), illustrated by Jim Kay.

The story behind this story makes this book even better. Dowd, a writer herself, was dying of cancer and came up with the idea of this book. Unfortunately, it became clear that she wouldn't be able to finish it before she died, so she bequeathed the story to Ness to complete. The book takes the form of a raw fairy tale, with gray and black illustrations spreading through its pages, of Conor, a boy who is visited by an imposing Yew tree spirit. The tree says he will tell Conor three stories and then Conor will have to tell him a fourth, and it must be the truth.

"Death and the Afterlife: A Chronological Journey from Cremation to Quantum Resurrection" by Clifford A. Pickover

Technically, this is a nonfiction overview of death practices, beliefs and lore across the world, but Pickover's book has some beautifully imagined representations of death that we rarely get to see. Each point in death history has its own page and illustration or photograph, so it is a very easy book to pick up and put down. Plenty of interesting thoughts to reflect on when we ourselves are framing our own imaginings of death.

Bridget Joyce has earned proficiency on the National End-of-Life Doula Alliance test and is enthusiastic to explore end-of-life topics in each issue of Peaks Island News.

I have recommended several nonfiction books in previous Dying to Know columns, but in the spirit of summer beach reads, it's high time to acknowledge the wonderful fiction that helps us explore death and grief. When we think about life and death, we often feel more comfortable focusing on the how and not the why. The how feels controllable, whereas the why is a chasm of open-ended questions without answers. Unsurprisingly, many fiction books on death, including the ones listed here, are rooted in fantasy; the genre of ever-created and changing worlds that explore the why of it all. If you are ready to wonder why we are here, consider some of these gems that other people in the same situation have dreamt up for your reflection.

"The Language of Dying" by Sarah Pinborough

At the perfect beach-read length of 130 pages, this novella imagines five siblings returning to their father's bedside as they pay their last respects. The story has unapologetic views of complicated family dynamics, combined with the reality of what it feels like when death arrives to a family



Essay: A stone for Johnny O'Connor

Decades after a young boy died on Peaks, friends come together to mark his grave

By Ben Smith

In June 1954, three boys were walking down what they then called the old army wharf on Peaks Island, which was full of holes and in rough shape. The boys were on their way to fish off the front of the wharf, but they were distracted by a small boy looking down a hole, who seemed quite upset. The boys went over to the opening and saw another little boy floating in the water, close to the pilings of the wharf. Two of the boys jumped into the water to retrieve him, while the third ran to get help at the island fire department.

The little boy in the water was six-year-old Johnny O'Connor. It was believed that he was trying to catch a jellyfish while playing in the water. At about the same time, the 5:30 p.m. passenger ferry was docking with people getting home from work. The boy's father, Thomas O'Connor, who was a Portland fireman, was one of the passengers disembarking who saw the commotion on the beach near the dock. He made his way down to the scene to help and discovered that it was his son. O'Connor immediately started artificial respiration on his son and kept it up for nearly an hour before he was relieved by other islanders. As Johnny's mother, Eleanor, prayed on the beach, firemen and neighbors tried to revive her son for more than four hours before he was pronounced dead by Dr. Raymond Sweeney.

Six years later, Thomas O'Connor would be killed in a two-fire-engine collision while responding to a still alarm in the West End of Portland on July 12, 1960.

The years went by, and the three island boys grew up, pursued their careers, married and had families. During the course of their lives, from time to time, some of them would connect and talk about growing up on Peaks Island, the wonderful times they had, and the friendships that lasted a lifetime. They did not talk about the sad things that happened on Peaks Island, like the day that Johnny O'Connor died.

As more years passed, they would continue to have reunions and get-togethers and talk about the good old times they had had as youths growing up on the island. At the last gathering they had, one of the friends brought up the subject of Johnny O'Connor



Above: Rev. Seamus Griesbach of St. Christopher Parish gives a reading at the gravesite of Johnny O'Connor.

At top: O'Connor's gravestone was placed by his island neighbors at Calvary Cemetery in South Portland.

- Photos by Charles Williams

and the day he died in 1954. He said that this tragedy had troubled him all his life. Although it happened almost 70 years ago, it never left him. He also said he had learned that Johnny had been buried in Calvary Cemetery in South Portland, but that a stone was never placed to mark his gravesite. He told his friends that he would like to take up a collection to purchase a stone for Johnny's grave. All of the friends present in that room said that Johnny's drowning had bothered them throughout their lives as well, and fully supported the idea of making this gesture to address their long-held grief. Their hearts were devoted, and warmed by the thought of obtaining a stone for Johnny. The group contacted other Peaks Island friends and let them know what they were doing, and it touched even more hearts. Contributions have come from old Peaks Island friends as far away as Washington, Arizona, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

They hope Johnny is looking down and sees a group of elderly Peaks Islanders who never forgot him.

Ben Smith was one of the boys who found Johnny O'Connor's body in 1954.

Mary (Kilmartin) Leccese

Mary Elizabeth (Kilmartin) Leccese, 75, died at home on April 27, surrounded by her loving family, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Mary was born on March 14, 1949, in Portland. She was the cherished daughter of the late Joseph B. Kilmartin and the late Mary E. (Ball) Kilmartin.

Mary was the beloved wife of Thomas R. Leccese of Wilmington, Massachusetts, devoted mother to sons Thomas (and his wife Erica Leccese) of Derry, New Hampshire, David (and his wife Elizabeth Leccese) of Wilmington, Massachusetts, and Matthew (and his wife Diane Leccese) of Framingham, Massachusetts; loving "Nana" (or "Nina") to her seven grandchildren, Hayden, Madison, Angelina, Camryn, David, Jack and Riley; and dear sister to Joseph B. Kilmartin, Jr. of Clearwater, Florida, and Thomas W. Kilmartin of Framingham, Massachusetts. Mary is also survived by many cousins as well as other family and friends.

When Mary was a young girl, her parents settled in Framingham, where she grew up with the fondest of memories. Affectionately referred to as "Sissy," Mary adored her father and her mother, who was her best friend, and she had an

incredibly strong bond with her brothers Joe and Tom. Mary graduated from Framingham North High School in 1967. Following her graduation, she worked for the federal government.

In 1979, she and Tom married and settled in Wilmington, Massachusetts, where Mary became a full-time homemaker and raised their three children. Mary happily resided in Wilmington for the rest of her life.

Every summer, she looked forward to spending time at her "happy place," the family cottages on Peaks Island. It was on Peaks that she made some of her most cherished memories, especially with

her mother, brothers, children, grandchildren and many close cousins and lifelong friends.

Mary was an avid reader and had many family pets that she adored throughout her life. Above all else, she enjoyed spending time with her family. She was always the person who brought everyone together. Her selfless spirit filled a room with light and love. She had a magnetic personality that put people at ease. Mary will be sorely missed and her absence will forever leave a void in the lives of those she left behind.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Mary's memory may be made to the Cancer Center at Tufts Medical Center. giving. tuftsmedicalcenter.org/cancer.



Janet (Hooper) Martin

Janet Susan (Hooper) Martin, 67, of Framingham, Massachusetts, and summer resident of Peaks Island, died on Tuesday, May 21, at home, surrounded by family and friends, after a brief and unexpected

bout with cancer. Janet was born in Boston on March 12, 1957, and not long thereafter moved to Framingham, where she attended school and graduated from Framingham North High. Following high school, she spent a year in college on Cape Cod.

In the following years, she worked as a waitress and bartender at the Sea & Surf, Emersons and John Stone's Inn. Janet was a past president of the VFW Women's Auxiliary in Wayland, Massachusetts. She was also a member of the Hull Yacht Club for over 20 years, where she cherished the time spent on the Two Sons II with her friends and family, and served as the head of the entertainment committee for three years. In her last 25 years, she was the office manager of local fuel companies.

Janet developed a love of her summer cottage and the beautiful seaside community of Peaks Island. She was athletic, and through the years she played tennis and

softball, skied on both snow and water, and was an accomplished "Fisherperson. Janet's wit, humor, smile, laughter and love of people and life will be missed by all.

Janet leaves behind her loving husband, Bill Martin, of Framingham and Peaks Island, and stepson Christopher M. Martin and his wife, Wendie, of Bellingham, Massachusetts. She was the loving Mema of Kylie ("Sweet Pea"), Erin ("Lady Bug"), and Mollie ("Sugar Plop"). Janet was the cherished sister of Robert F. Hooper Jr. and his wife, Candace, of Tucson,

Arizona Richard J. Hooper and his wife, Stephanie, of Marlborough, Massachusetts, and Paul A. Hooper and his wife, Mary Ellen, of Framingham. Janet is also survived by her sister-in-law, Barbara Ann Lynch, of Weymouth, Massachusetts, as well as many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Janet is preceded in death by her son, Evan R. Martin; her parents, Robert and Jane Hooper; in-laws, Bill and Wiggy Martin, and many other missed relatives.

Donations in Janet's memory may be sent to the Friends of TEIA, P.O. Box 87, Peaks Island, Maine 04108.



Obituary policy

Peaks Island News accepts obituary submissions for those with ties to the island.

Please send to news@peaksislandnews.org with 'Obituaries' in the subject line. Submissions should be 350 words or fewer. Peaks Island News may edit obituaries for length, grammar, punctuation and spelling, following Associated Press style.

An Open Book from the Peaks Island Branch Library

By Rose Ann Walsh
For the Peaks Island Library

Summer has arrived at the library. We are happy to see our summer patrons return, meet new ones and continue to welcome our daily visitors. What a great time to stop in and take advantage of everything your library card and library have to offer. There are a variety of passes you may use: The Maine State Park Pass, Portland Museum of Art, Portland Observatory and Southworth Planetarium, to name a few. Come in out of the sun to view our exhibits, read the Portland Press Herald, a magazine, sit quietly or sign up for a library card.

Weekly Friday Storytimes

10:15 a.m.— Rhythm & Rhymes infants to age 2
10:45 a.m. — Preschool Storytime, ages 3–5
On Aug. 23 & 30 there will be no story times.

Writing group for Children in Grades 3, 4 and 5
3:15 on Fridays during July. We will take a break in August and return in September.

Adult writing group

9 a.m. Saturdays. Each group meets for 45 minutes in the library; drop-ins are always welcome.

Knitting Group

4 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month (August 6 and September 3). Bring your current project or a craft you're working on. Join us for conversation and inspiration. All are welcome.

Adult book discussion group

We are taking a break during the summer but will return on Tuesday, September 10 at 7 p.m. to discuss "The Covenant of Water" by Abraham Verghese. Meetings are fun, mind

broadening and all are welcome. Contact the library for a copy of the book. The Friends of the Peaks Island Library sponsors the group.

Collages of Peaks Island and Casco Bay by Elliott Barowitz

A collection of collages capturing scenes from Peaks Island. Each piece is accompanied by a brief description of the vantage point that inspired the work. Elliott's exhibit will be on display from July 2–27.

"Surroundings" by Jackman Wood

Carved wood blocks with paint and ink will be mounted on walls, along with some small pieces in groups and a few bigger pieces. Jackman's exhibit will be on view from August 13–September 21.

Summer Reading 2024: READ, RENEW, REPEAT June 17–August 10

For babies to teens, sign up to read, be read to or listen to eight books in eight weeks. At sign-up you get to choose a new book to keep. Check in with us starting July 9 to share your progress and we will share a special treat with you.

Take and Make Bags

During the summer we will have take and make bags, special programming and pop-up fun at the library, especially on rainy days. Finishers can enter a raffle for a new bike.

Decorate and Stuff a Paper Fish

Wednesday, July 17 from 9:30–10:30 for all ages
We will have a variety of paper fish for you to decorate with crayons and markers. Stuff them with newspaper, attach a string, take them home or hang them in the library during the summer.

Summer Book Sale

The Friends of the Peaks Island Library Book Sale is Saturday, July 20, from 8 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Drop of books you'd like to donate on Friday, July 19, from 10–6 to the community room. It's also the best time to join the Friends or renew your membership.

Friends of the P.I. Library Annual Meeting

Monday, July 29 at 6:15 p.m.
Please join us for an enjoyable evening in the library with light refreshments.

Technology Tutoring

Tuesday, July 30, from 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
This is a time for you to sit down with our technology librarian for free computer assistance. You name the topic, bring your own device or use the library's laptop. Advanced registration is required. Stop in, call or email the library to reserve your 30-minute session.

Button Making

Wednesday, August 7, starting at 9:30 for all ages
Stop by the library to make your own button. We'll have upcycled graphic novels, our button maker, and helpful staff to provide hands-on assistance.

Hopefully, we have a little something for everybody.

Stop in during our open hours: Tuesday 12–6 p.m.; Wednesday 9–12 p.m.; Friday 10–4 p.m.; Saturday 9–12 p.m.

Call 207-766-5540, email peaks@portlib.org or visit us at portlandlibrary.com/locations/peaks-island-branch.



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Derelict: Officials have limited power

DERELICT, continued from page 1

navigable under those historical laws, there is little state authorities or a local harbor master can do to restrict those vessels from using the water.

"If it is an actual boat, there is nothing we can do about it," Noll said. "What would be an issue is if it is more of a floating home."

Noll noted that derelict boats have been a recurring topic at the state's annual harbor masters' conference and at the harbor master school. As housing insecurity increases on land,

some people are turning to living on boats as an alternative.

"It is not only in Maine, but everywhere," he said. "Old boats are a dime a dozen, or free sometimes."

Noll distinguished between people who legitimately lived aboard their registered, insured boats in marinas, for example, from those who simply moved their floating homes from place to place tying up where it is convenient.

"Unless there is a local ordinance that prohibits using submerged lands or waters, it is tough to regulate or do something about it," he said.



Residents look on as the Egret II began to nose under the dock. The boat's owner eventually had the vessel towed to another location after public pressure mounted from locals concerned about used needles found on the dock next to the boat.

- Photo by John Kamp

[illegible]

Defending the coast - Warfare in Casco Bay

Part III: World War II



HISTORICALLY
SPEAKING

BY
HOLLY
HURD-FORSYTH

World War II was the beginning of the end of the country's coastal defense system. It was the largest military presence ever seen in Portland Harbor.

Thousands of troops were stationed around Casco Bay, and new military reservations were created on Chebeague, Jewell, Long and Peaks islands. Casco Bay was chosen as the site of a naval destroyer base, a fuel annex and as the designated anchorage for the North Atlantic Fleet. Portland Harbor was a busy place. By August 1944 an average of 80 vessels were entering and leaving the bay daily. People quipped that you could walk from island to island across the decks of the ships.

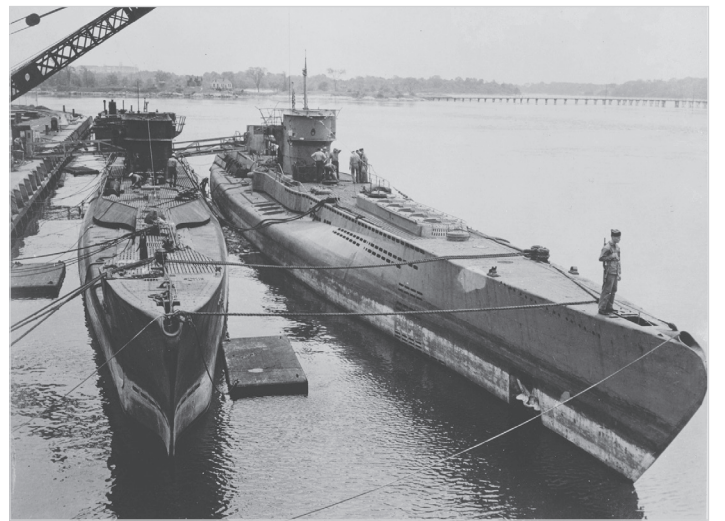
Military Reservation and Eminent Domain

World War II reshaped Peaks Island. The island was selected as the site of one of the most important new defense sites in Casco Bay — the Peaks Island Military Reservation. Before construction could begin, land was needed. One-hundred ninety-eight acres on Peaks were taken by eminent domain, almost 30 percent of the island.

In early 1942, legal notices began to appear in Portland newspapers. These "Petitions of Condemnation" precisely noted which plots of land would be seized from which islanders. Dozens of families were impacted. Many families were devastated



Above left: Charles O. Blackman (1862-1942) and his wife Harriet "Hattie" Blackman (1861-1964) on Peaks Island. Nineteen acres of their farm was seized by eminent domain in 1942. - Photo courtesy of the Fifth Maine Museum. Above right: German U-boats at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1945. Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945. As a result, four U-boats and their crew, now prisoners, were towed to the Portsmouth Navy Yard. - Photo courtesy of the National Archives at Boston



by the loss of their land, despite the realities of fighting a world war. The Blackmans were one such family. They operated a large farm on the island, and that farmland was claimed by the U.S. government. Charles Blackman died soon after his land was taken.

The centerpiece of the PIMR was Battery Steele, which was designed to defend against the largest warships of the time. Two massive guns fired shells 16 inches in diameter and weighing 2,240 pounds. With a range of 26 miles, Battery Steele safeguarded the entirety of Casco Bay, from Kennebunk to Popham Beach. Another smaller battery, Battery Cravens, was located nearby. With two six-inch guns firing shells 15 miles, this battery was designed to defend against smaller destroyers and light cruisers.

Both batteries required a support system of 10 observation towers, two on Peaks, which fed information to a plotting room with a mechanical

computer that tracked the location of enemy vessels in the area. Supplementing these larger batteries were 20 smaller anti-motor torpedo boat (AMTB) batteries scattered around Casco Bay. There were two AMTB batteries on Peaks — one guarding Whitehead Passage and the other Hussey Sound.

Mines and Submarine Nets

Casco Bay was named the anchorage of the U.S. Navy's Atlantic Fleet, and the decision was made to completely enclose the inner harbor with submarine nets and minefields. A Harbor Entrance Control Post was located at Fort Williams in Cape Elizabeth and controlled the arrival and departure of all vessels throughout the war, which made operating fishing boats challenging. A mine control station on Peaks controlled the minefields in Hussey Sound. German submarines, known as U-boats, were a profound threat on the Maine coast. The USS Eagle PE-56 sank

on April 23, 1945, off the coast of Cape Elizabeth, just outside the submarine net area. In 2001 it was determined that the ship was sunk by a U-boat.

Wartime Peaks

Most of the Back Shore was off limits to residents during the war, and soldiers more than doubled the population. Food and fuel were rationed. The ferry boats were painted battleship gray. There were about 800 service members stationed at the PIMR during the war, which contained 58 buildings, including barracks and other structures necessary to house, feed and entertain the men stationed there. Access to the reservation was severely restricted. The PIMR was surrounded by barbed wire, gates and checkpoints manned by armed guards. Suspicious activity was dealt with harshly. One island teenager was escorted home at gunpoint after he was seen observing the submarine nets across Hussey Sound. Island youth, used to having the run of the island, found their movements restricted during the war years.

Peaceful Tourist Attractions

The Second World War came to an end in August 1945. With it came the end of coastal defense strategies that had lasted for centuries. Harbor forts are obsolete not because they were ineffective, but because military technology changed.

Residents and visitors to Casco Bay are surrounded by these now peaceful tourist attractions. Fort Gorges is a popular spot for boaters and kayakers. Visitors to Jewell Island love to climb the observation tower to enjoy the view. Battery Steele is one of the most visited spots on Peaks Island. These coastal defense sites in Casco Bay once provided essential protection, and now enrich our lives in other ways.

For more information, visit the Fifth Maine Museum to see our new exhibit "Defending the Coast: Warfare in Casco Bay."

Holly Hurd-Forsyth is curator of the Fifth Maine Museum.

PORTLAND EVENING EXPRESS

PORTLAND, MAINE, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1948

Saga Of Coast Defense Coming To Close

Peaks Guns Join Discard Ranks Of Arms Dating Back 140 Years



Disarming of Casco Bay forts is front page news in the Portland Evening Express on November 27, 1948.

Reflecting the landscape through photos



The drumbeat of summer is here. Hammers pound on new projects, punctuating birdsong, while island venues open doors for a steady rotation of art shows.

Cole Caswell, a nomadic photographic artist who has called Peaks Island home since 2008, lives for this season. He travels in an '80s VW camper van equipped with a portable darkroom, searching for hidden patterns in the landscape and chance encounters of place, time and processes. He grew up in a family of makers, on a farm near Swan Lake in New Hampshire.

"My dad was always in a darkroom when I was a kid and my mom was a weaver," Caswell said. "My grandpa started a sheet-metal business. As a metal craftsman, he made beautiful things. We would visit him when I was a kid and I had a machine shop of tools and processes of making things. It's part of why I can make all my frames, do all the wet plate, build all the gear for the wet plate. It's a cross-disciplinary approach.

"I used to draw a ton when I was younger," he continued, "weird things like jets and mountains with stick figures climbing up the rocks with ropes, adventure animals and palm trees and lots of mazes. I became a photographer when I had my son Parker, and spent a lot of time thinking about my childhood when I was raising my sons. I started making family portraits for practice, and it's a really nice thing that I'm still doing. Having kids is a really nice part of being an artist."

Caswell studied at the Maine Photo Workshops, now known as Maine Media. He transferred to the Art Institute of Boston on a scholarship with a portfolio of pictures of his son and partner who were still in Maine. It was a challenging commute. "It made for a crunch," he said.

Next came Maine College of Art's low-residency MFA program, which gave him time to see his family regularly. He liked the small cohort and good instructors, including Katarina



Top: From Caswell's series "Rise."
- Photo by Cole Caswell

Above: On display in Caswell's studio.
- Photo by Jamie Hogan

Right: Cole Caswell with his dog, Lux, in his island studio.
- Photo by Jamie Hogan

Weslien, who now lives on Peaks. The program's challenge — How do you go about forming a way to think about the world and then go out into your world and do that? — gave him plenty to explore. Caswell moved to Peaks during his second year of grad school, just for a winter rental. That turned into seven years. He participated for many years at the Gem Gallery, exhibiting his cyanotypes, collodion wet-plate prints and tintypes, all early photography techniques born in the mid 1800s.

Caswell has been an adjunct professor at Southern Maine Community College for 15 years and also teaches an environmental photography course



at Prescott College in Arizona, all remotely. This summer he's making tintype portraits on Block Island, the Hamptons, Providence, the Shaker Village in New Gloucester, North Haven and in Unity at the Common Ground Fair.

Caswell's pigment print over a cyanotype, "Sumac Brambles," is part of FLORA at the Fifth Maine Museum, a group show curated by Heather Waskiewicz and Harvey Johnson. His art joins that of 13 island artists invited to respond to themes of edible, medicinal, poisonous and utilitarian flora and fauna that cover the 700 acres of Peaks. It's a stunning show on view through Oct. 14.

Last year, Caswell served as the visual arts fellow for the state of Maine, a grant fellowship opportunity through the Maine Arts Commission. The outgoing fellows in visual art, performance, media arts, fine craft and literary disciplines met the incoming fellows during a celebration at the Blaine House with Gov. Janet Mills in February.

"The most powerful part of it is just the self-acknowledgement," said Caswell. "I do this work by myself in the middle of nowhere, and it's being appreciated. It was a great honor and opportunity. Part of why I live in Maine is that, like the Maine Arts Commission, it's so supportive. Other states don't have that."

He applies every year for grants, and the questions required inform his practice. "The questions are good, but they're hard. Who is your audience and how do you plan to engage them? The Common Ground Fair is a huge audience and a venue that gets a lot of attention, but it's also a place where you're shopping for carrots, too."

Caswell is currently showing works made without a camera at the Maine Museum of Photographic Art's exhibit "In the Making" through July 27 in Portland. He collected objects along the shore and from a set of lobster traps set around Peaks. His piece "Before the Abyss" was created by exposing expired photographic paper to UV light with the objects on the surface. He scanned the print before it faded and then printed the resulting image with archival inks on photographic paper, revealing liquid forms that emerge from the deep.

Another project, "Rise," focuses on the coastal landscape in Maine that is at risk from sea-level rise. He calls these "a tribute to a landscape that will be consumed by water and the rising ocean. The artifacts and unique marks within the hand-poured negatives intrigue me. As chance-based additions they visually suggest the faltering of our contemporary world. Maybe visions from memory, a dream or a fleeting glimpse of what is at stake as our climate changes the places we hold sacred."

Learn more at <https://colecaswell.com/>.

Jamie Hogan is an illustrator, author and two-time Lupine Award winner.

Climate change books available at Library

The Peaks Island Land Preserve has donated seven new books on climate change and the environment to the Peaks Island Library. The books are full of interesting information, and they also contain much hope for the future. They're easily found with Rose Ann Walsh's expert help or by looking for the PILP sticker on the spine of the books.

- "The Secret Lives of Bats" by Merlin Tuttle
- "No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference" by Greta Thunberg
- "Wilding" by Isabella Tree
- "Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest" by Suzanne Simard
- "The Sixth Extinction" by Elizabeth Kolbert
- "All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis" edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson
- "Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds, & Shape Our Futures" by Merlin Sheldrake

Tips for forest management

The Maine Forest Service (maine.gov/dacf/mfs/forest_protection/firewise/homeowners.html) offers excellent online advice to homeowners. Here's a sample of no-cost or low-cost things you can do:

- Trim tree branches that overhang your house.
- Remove conifer shrubs and dead wood from close to your house, and replace flammable vegetation with fire-resistant native shrubs (listed on the maine.gov site).
- Move your firewood pile a safe distance from your home.
- Attach a hose (at least 100 feet long) to an outside faucet during warm months.
- Attach a visible house number, easily seen from the street.
- For residents in particularly vulnerable locations, consider a Firewise USA assessment of your home. (nfpa.org/downloadable-resources/guides-and-manuals/firewise-usa-recognition-program-community-wild-fire-risk-assessment).

Cate Stevenson: A Passion to Give Back



IT'S A
LIVING
BY
SUSAN
HANLEY

You only need to spend 10 minutes with Cate Stevenson to see that she is a joyful person. Whether she brings her personal joy to her job, or her job brings personal joy to her, is harder to tease out. I think it's both.

Cate describes herself as a people person who has always been eager to work (she was making Subway sandwiches at 14) and who is driven to give back to her community. She started college intending to be an emergency-room doctor, but a summer internship as an EMT at Cape Cod Hospital upended that idea.

"There was so much tragedy. It was so emotional," she said. "And I didn't like all the bodily fluids. It really wasn't for me." Cate switched gears, applying her mathematical acumen to an economics degree. Separately, she fulfilled her desire to help others by launch-

ing a three-year afterschool program for newly arrived Somali children. A lifetime of volunteering outside of work was set in motion. It took Cate almost 20 years to realize that her passion for helping others could be at the center of her career.

Rare nowadays, Cate has been with the same company for 20 years. Her second college internship was at Liberty Mutual; when the time came to get a job, the work experience, combined with the Boston location, felt right. She's been there ever since. When I asked where she'll be in 10 years, Cate didn't hesitate. "Living on Peaks Island," she said. "I'll still be working at Liberty. Ten years feels like a long time. But I've learned to enjoy what I'm living and doing now, and I know that'll lead me to something that I will be living and enjoying in 10 years."

Q. What is your title?

A. I am the managing director of the Office of Purpose and DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) at Liberty Mutual Insurance, based in Boston. I work remotely, with some days in the Boston office and some time spent traveling to other offices.

Q. What does your job entail?

A. I have a wonderful team that focuses on creating a more equitable and inclusive Liberty Mutual, so that people of all backgrounds will want to come and work for Liberty Mutual. As a team, we focus on incorporating Liberty Mutual's purpose into everything we do. Our purpose is "to help people live safer and secure lives and confidently pursue tomorrow."

Additionally, we create leadership resources that embed DEI into our talent practices, such as hiring and promotions. Liberty Mutual has seven Employee Resource Groups (ERG) and multiple community groups, such as for our women employees or employees of African descent, that my team and I work with very closely. The ERGs are run by volunteers who focus on bringing in programming that meet the needs of their members and allies to advance their career, to advance the community, to focus on the culture. For example, the women's ERG focuses on how to advance, retain, and elevate women through mentorship and sponsorship, programming and creating robust allyship programming.

Q. Are you a mentor?

A. I am a mentor, but I focus a bit more on being a sponsor. A mentor helps someone directly and gives advice, but leaves the implementation of that advice up to the mentee. A sponsor has shared responsibility for action, particularly action when the person you're sponsoring might not be in the room. For example, I may be in a meeting and hear about something that I think could be an opportunity that uses your skills and advances you and I might go to the person after the meeting and put you forward as someone who is a good fit. The amount of personal growth that I get from investing myself in someone else's growth and development is amazing, and I've built some of my strongest relationships through that.

Q. What is your favorite thing about your job?

A. I like that I get to lead a team of people who are so mission-driven and believe in the work they are doing and



Cate Stevenson

who come back every day, even when it's hard and even when there are setbacks. It's incredible to be a part of a team of people who truly believe Liberty Mutual is a better place when it's more diverse and more inclusive.

Q. What did you do before your current job?

A. I've only been in my current role since February. Before that I had many different careers at Liberty Mutual. I was CFO of one of our Global Retail Markets business groups. But it wasn't that fulfilling, and it was more of a job than I bargained for. Then I took a role in Digital Claims. But I'm really most interested in people, and in having a role that allows people to advance, to see the best versions of themselves, to feel like they're in an environment where they belong, so I moved into a strategy role for the People, Purpose and Brand part of our organization.

Q. What advice would you give to your younger self?

A. Parlay your personal passions into your job sooner. I've always been service minded and community focused, if I think back to the after school tutoring program I started, the ESL tutoring I did, the GED tutoring I did. I did all sorts of things in the community as a volunteer, and it took me a long time to realize that's what made me happy.

Two Peaks Islanders win Maine literary awards

A pair of Peaks Islanders have been presented awards for their works by different groups honoring writers and illustrators.

Avery Olson, who will be a sophomore this fall at Casco Bay High School, won a Maine Literary Award in the Youth Competition in Fiction category. She was recognized for her entry titled "Memories."

The Maine Literary Awards are presented annually by the Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance, which also recognized another Peaks Islander this year.

Illustrator Jamie Hogan was a finalist for "The Lobster Lady", a book by Alexandra S.D. Hinrichs.

Hogan also was the first person to win two Lupine Awards from the Maine Library Association. One was for illustrating "The Lobster Lady" and the other for illustrating "Oh, Chickadee!" by Jennifer Richard Jacobson.



Avery Olson

EYE TO THE SKY



LEO

July 23rd ~ August 22nd

The Sun leaps into the sign of Leo in late July, leaving behind the crustaceous Cancer and entering the open plain where the Lion is king. This is no quiet cat on the prowl; the lion's roar is what allows it to appear as a player on the world's stage. Such a loud and unabashed celebration of self has led creatures lower on the food chain to call Leo a narcissistic attention-seeker. This misunderstands the lion's goal; in the previous phase of the zodiac, Cancer's crab built an impenetrable shell—Leo's purpose is to cast aside that armor and learn to trust the world. The lived performance, and the audience's applause, are Leo's tools for testing that trust. Without any response from the crowd, the lion wonders if it is being heard at all, prompting it to roar louder, frantically demanding attention as people start to turn away. With any luck Leo can learn that to trust the world it must put itself on the line—to roar not as a demand for love, but as a question: "Will you love me?" Under the sign of the lion we are reminded that the fastest way to know if we are loved is to perform in the theater of life, where there is no need to wonder what the audience may think—silence and we wither, applause and our curtains will raise.

The Moon will rise full on the evening of Sunday, July 21st, cresting the southeastern horizon at 9 p.m.—where it can best be seen from the Back Shore. Known as the Buck Moon to the Algonquin tribe, this full moon marks the period when male deer begin to grow their antlers back in preparation for the fights that come with mating season. The moon will reach its apex in the sign of Cancer, making Sunday an ideal night to go for a moon-lit swim, or to spend the evening inside polishing your shell.

The Solstice passed on the 21st of June, marking the longest day of the year and the beginning of the sun's slow return towards the south. The ancient Inca Empire, which ruled over South America's western coast for 500 years, celebrated this solstice as the first day of the Inca calendar and the year's most important festival. The celebration commemorated the day when Inti, the sun deity, sent a golden disk down to earth to mark the middle of the world, the Equator. When the Spanish conquered the Inca Empire in 1572, they used their telescopes and knowledge of the stars to mark their own Equator. Since then, satellite imagery and modern GPS have shown that the Spanish were about 300 yards off the true middle of the world—and that the Inca's original location is exactly on the mark.

Eye To The Sky is brought to you by Bryce Montana Snyder, seasonal island resident and surveyor of the stars.



MEET THE CREATIVES BY STACEY KORS

Lens, Crafter

A black wooden box sits on one end of Heather Wasklewicz's dining table in her house on Highland Avenue. Inside, there's a party going on: stylish guests, bedazzled in sequins, glitter, and extravagant hats, dance and mingle amid baskets of roses and elaborately decorated, multi-tiered cakes.

"I love dioramas," she said, tipping up the box so I can get a better look. "Years ago, I made one for my friend as a gift. That was just paper that I cut around, before I started using a Skilsaw. Now, I make one every year and give them as gifts, usually for someone's 50th birthday."

This diorama, however, was not made for a friend, but for an exhibit at The Crow's Nest. When Danielle Madore invited Wasklewicz, who is known for her photography, to participate in a group show this summer, she was reluctant to contribute another photograph. "I have a photography show there in August, so I wanted to do something different," she said. "I love Edward Gorey, so I thought, 'Wouldn't it be funny if I made a diorama that had an Edward Gorey theme, but instead of his characters being in graveyards, they're happily baking cakes?'"

It's not surprising that Wasklewicz connects with Gorey's eerie,

Edwardian-style pen-and-ink illustrations. Her photographs, primarily black and white or muted in color, have a moody, Gothic feel, suffused with deep shadows and pronounced contrasts.

"People say to me, 'When I see your photographs in my feed, I always know it's you because they're so dark

and broody,'" she said. "Which to me is funny, because 'broody' is a term I associate with chickens! But it's true, I tend towards darker themes. And if it's not a dark theme, I'll filter them in that way. It's just my style."

The Monhegan native got her first camera as a present from her parents for her 16th birthday, but it wasn't until the rise of social media that she had a broad audience for her images, which she initially took with a digital camera and later an iPhone. Then in 2018, Wasklewicz's friend Holly Hurd-Forsyth, curator at the Fifth Maine Museum, told Heather that she was going to start using the dining room as an exhibit space, and offered her a show. She has since exhibited

at the Peaks Library and The Crow's Nest. Laid Bare, Heather's upcoming show at The Crow's Nest, runs from August 16 to 25.

"I haven't quite developed what it will look like," she said, "but an example might be if you're walking through the woods and birch trees are splayed open and they're just exposed and a little grotesque. Something that has a sort of rawness about it."

Photography isn't the only medium through which Wasklewicz explores life's darker subjects. In the blog posts on her website (heatherwasklewiczphotography.com), she writes with surprising candor about her personal losses — including the sudden death of her father when she was a college sophomore.

"He had a massive stroke while transporting a woman on his boat who was going into diabetic coma," she said. "So it became a double rescue. He had been in the Coast Guard and was retired by then, but he died at the wheel of his boat, doing something that came so naturally to him. I always make sure I tell people that, to honor him and what happened."

Living in the tight-knit community of Monhegan made a world of difference for Heather's family, especially her mother, following their devastating loss. "My mom was only 45 when he died," she said, "so still pretty young. When something happens there, people truly come together to support you, and that's just gold. That is the beauty of all small communities, but especially island communities."

It took more than a decade for

Continued on next page



Left: Photographer and crafter Heather Wasklewicz. Right: Wasklewicz's diorama, "Flora & Fauna Found," currently on display in the Fifth Maine's FLORA exhibit. - Photos courtesy of Heather Wasklewicz



Garden planned in memory of church music director

By Ross Sneyd
Peaks Island News

New Brackett Church is raising money to create a garden at the front of the building to honor longtime church music director Jan Thomas.

Steve Mohr and Tanya Seredin, landscape architects who live adjacent to the church, created a design and plan to donate a memorial bench for the project.

It will be created where the handicapped entrance once stood at the front of the building and extend toward the church's front steps. The design also includes new landscaping at the rear of the building where a new handicapped ramp has been created.

The church is hoping to raise \$15,000 to pay for the various work.



Above right: Design outlines the future site of the Jan Thomas Memorial Garden at New Brackett Memorial Church. - Image provided by Steve Mohr and Tanya Seredin
Above left: Jan Thomas, the longtime music director at the church, died in 2023 - Photo courtesy of New Brackett Church



Left: Wasklewicz's 2024 diorama titled "If Edward Gorey Had a Cake Party."

Right: Wasklewicz's 2024 photograph "Through These Trees."

- Photos courtesy of Heather Wasklewicz

Continued from previous page

Wasklewicz to find her next island home. In 2005, she and her husband moved to Portland from New York; she discovered Peaks through regular visits to a college friend living here. "I'd come out to Peaks on Mondays," she said. "I got to know other young moms, and I loved it. I thought, This is the best community. We need to be here."

Wasklewicz and her husband bought a house in 2006, which she now lives in with her partner, Harvey Johnson, and their children from their previous marriages. "We're both introverts and creatives, so this little house tucked in the woods has been perfect for us and our blended family," she said.

When not engaged in artistic pursuits, Heather works at the Portland Public Library as a marketing associate. Harvey, who does custom woodworking,

helps Wasklewicz frame photographs and construct dioramas. This summer, they joined forces for a new creative endeavor: co-curating an exhibit at the Fifth Maine.

"Holly asked if we'd like to curate a show, and said she'd support us with all of the museum-type stuff since we'd never done something like this before. We decided to focus on flora, which everyone can relate to in some way, especially on this beautiful island with so much (Peaks Island Land Preserve)-protected land, and tried to get a mix of artists with different styles."

Wasklewicz's contribution to FLORA, which runs through Oct. 14, is another diorama, to be raffled off to raise money for the museum. In keeping with the exhibit's theme, Flora and Fauna Found features a large map of Peaks along with birds, birch trees, shells and sea life — and even the island's

unusual and elusive piebald deer.

Before leaving Wasklewicz's home, I took another look at the whimsical artwork on her table. She flipped a small switch on top of the box, turning on tiny string lights inside so I could see more clearly. "That was Harvey's idea," she said. I marveled at the detail: the clock on the wall (an amateur watch restorer, Harvey contributed a watch face); the paper parasol that came from Wasklewicz's Mother's Day cocktail at Island Lobster; the miniature handmade flowers, beads and sequins, each individually hot-glued into place.

"They're a lot of work," she said, "but I love doing them. When I finish one I always say to Harvey, 'I'm never doing this again.'"

"And then I do it."

Stacey Kors is a freelance arts writer.

You're invited: Peaks Island Fund Summer Celebration!

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and a toast to the organizations
that keep our community special.



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Please RSVP: info@peaksislandfund.org



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