



STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Group details campaign allegations



Parents call out school board president for endorsing a candidate who has withdrawn

By PEGGY WENDEL
 AND EVAN CALDWELL
 Staff Reporter

About 50 parents and concerned residents raised complaints to the Stanwood-Camano School Board during a special meeting the morn-

ing of Oct. 30. Seven people spoke in the 25-minute public comment period about their displeasure that board President Al Schreiber endorsed candidates via email for the four open School Board positions. This included an endorsement for Keith

Pappas, who withdrew from the race after ballots were being printed. "The School Board is tainted by what has happened here," said George Zeigen, a retired Stanwood Middle School counselor and School Board candidate. "What Al has done is unethical." Melissa O'Neil spoke about larger trust issues with the superintendent and a group of parents who saw this election as a chance for change and were furious with this latest situation.

Lindsey Spoor said that the special meeting was held at a time that teachers, bus drivers and many parents wouldn't be able to attend. Ellen Hiatt asked the board to read the packet she had given them, including a timeline of actions taken by board members and administration that she said would intimidate a board candidate and efforts by several to influence the election.

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 School Board member Chad Lewis resigns
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VETERANS DAY

Keeping his story alive

Fred Pilkington's WWII experience inspires widow to share his lust for life

By PEGGY WENDEL
 Staff Reporter

Fred Pilkington wouldn't talk about World War II — not to his wife or family. Like many of the soldiers from the Greatest Generation, he didn't talk about his war experiences even though that short time affected everything he did afterward, said Mary Pilkington, his second wife.

But one day in 1997, a professor doing research on the Battle of the Bulge tracked Fred down and asked for his story about the 422nd Infantry, which was surrounded by the enemy in a critical battle that turned back the tide of Nazis in December 1944.

The dam broke. Fred, at age 75, shut himself in a room and poured out his story page by handwritten page of his time fighting and then being held as a prisoner of war by German forces.

Mary watched Fred's story unfold as she typed the pages.

Once he had written his story, he didn't mind telling it.

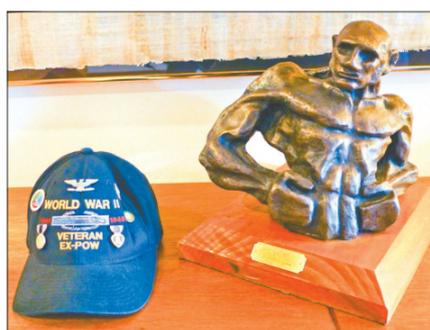
Fred and Mary gave talks to veterans and civic groups, toting storyboards with photos showing soldiers on maneuvers in snowy terrain in Germany during the coldest winter in 100 years. Just before Fred died in 2014, he asked Mary to tell his story if anyone asked. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with the highest honors the Army bestows.

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PHOTOS BY PEGGY WENDEL | STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

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Above, Mary Pilkington holds a picture of Fred Pilkington in her Camano Island home. At far left, storyboards help Mary tell Fred's tale. At left, Fred's hat and artwork on display in Mary's home.

Astronaut to touch down in Stanwood for free event

Soyeon Yi will share her inspirational story, draw awareness of STEM education

By MARY JENNINGS
 For the SC News

Start the countdown — an astronaut will land in Stanwood later this month.

South Korea's only astronaut, Dr. Soyeon Yi, will share her inspirational story of space travel during a free event Saturday, Nov. 23 at Stanwood High's Performing Arts Center.

The event, presented by the Community Resource Center of Stanwood Camano, aims to draw awareness to STEM education — particularly to encourage girls and women to pursue aerospace

and engineering careers.

Tickets are required for the event and are available at Community Resource Center of Stanwood Camano, Stanwood Library, Camano Island Library, Arlington Library and Lakewood/Smokey Point Library. Tickets have also been distributed to local schools for teachers to award to select students.

Yi, who holds several science-related degrees, was selected out of 36,000 contestants to become South Korea's first and only astronaut. In 2008, she accomplished an 11-day mission on the International Space Station.

In her presentation, titled "To the Moon and Back," Yi will discuss the challenges she faced in space and provide an overview of the rigorous experiments she completed during her mission.

■ SEE ASTRONAUT, A6



KOREAN AEROSPACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Soyeon Yi the day of launch on April 8, 2008, on the Soyuz TMA-12 to the International Space Station.

Allegations

■ FROM A1

"You promoted a candidate that you knew had dropped out of the race in order to appoint your own board member rather than work with the only running candidate for the seat," she said. "Mr. Schreiber, we want you to step down immediately."

The speakers argue Schreiber endorsed Pappas because if Pappas won and chose not to serve, the board could appoint its own pick. Schreiber did not speak at the meeting. His endorsement email was received by at least some teachers and community members.

McGill said that it has been clear for months that Pappas has withdrawn, and the voter pamphlet underscores this.

"Further, members of the public informed you of this last Saturday, and you immediately withdrew your online posts. Unfortunately, you decided the following day to double down on this strategy and send out a broadcast email repeating your ask," McGill said. "To knowingly endorse a candidate who has withdrawn very reasonably appears to be a political maneuver to ensure the board gets to choose the candidate, and the plan only works if the public unwittingly goes along with it, trusting your advice as a leader. This action works against the confidence the public has entrusted you with."

In a phone interview with the Stanwood Camano News, Pappas said Schreiber approached him, saying he was going to endorse Pappas, who attempted to withdraw after his father fell ill.

"I told him no, and I sent a letter to him and the School Board basically saying I

didn't want to be a part of the election," said Pappas, who did not attend the meeting Wednesday. "No one else on the board was involved, just Al."

He said his opponent Charlotte Murry should win Tuesday.

"That should be the end to this story," Pappas said. "It's not illegal for Al to go out and promote somebody, maybe his reasoning was wrong, but people need to realize that the school district is not in disarray."

However, if Pappas does win, he said he will accept the School Board seat and serve the term.

After an hourlong executive session following public comment, board member Julie Dean said that the board doesn't endorse or oppose any candidate and encourages any community member to submit complaints to the Public Disclosure Commission. The board, she said, will support any investigation.

School Superintendent Jean Shumate said the district referred concerns from McGill, O'Neill and Cassandra Burnham about campaign activities to the PDC on Oct. 30. The PDC is the independent agency responsible for investigation of complaints concerning alleged violations of Washington.

"It is clearly the most qualified third neutral party to investigate these complaints," Shumate said.

However, the commission told the district it cannot accept referred complaints and that the concerned individuals need to file their complaint directly.

McGill said the group of concerned parents plan to file complaints with the PDC as well as continue to seek an investigation into if school board policies were broken.

Astronaut

■ FROM A1

"I have collaborated with some amazing women who work in STEM-related fields over the years," said Christine Russell, the Resource Center's events coordinator. "I am passionate about getting more females interested in pursuing careers in science."

Only about 10% of astronauts are women and, overall, men outnumber women in most STEM-related fields, according to NASA. Jobs, such as those in engineering and computer technology, often pay more than jobs

outside of STEM-related fields.

Encouraging more women to enter these fields can be a significant factor in reducing the gender pay gap, according to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

"I really wanted to produce an event for the Stanwood Camano area that would bring pride, unity, awareness and inspiration to this community rich with such amazing artists, resources, and young people," she said. "If just one person could be vastly inspired by Dr. Soyeon Yi's message, then all of this implementation and organization is worth it."

IF YOU GO

What: "To the Moon and Beyond" with Dr. Soyeon Yi

When: Saturday, Nov. 23, 4 p.m. Doors open at 3 p.m. Admission by ticket only. Seating is first come, first served.

Where: Stanwood High School Performing Arts Center, 7400 272nd St. NW, Stanwood

Free Tickets available at: Community Resource Center of Stanwood Camano; Stanwood Library; Camano Island Library; Arlington Library; Lakewood/Smokey Point Library

Story

■ FROM A1

Five years after his death Camano Chapel asked Mary to bring the materials and talk. Stanwood Area Historical Society invited her to speak at a History and Hors d'oeuvres event. She speaks at school assemblies.

She continues to carry the torch — and flag — for her husband and keeps his story alive by participating in veterans events. She will show Fred's posters and art at Camano Chapel's Veterans Appreciation Dinner and she'll serve as flag bearer for the Prisoners of War at the Floyd (see breakout).

Battle of the Bulge

Mary said that Fred and his friends all quit college at age 19 to serve in the US Army.

"They were just kids when they went to war," she said.

Fred was a platoon sergeant on the front lines during the Battle of the Bulge. There was a mile-plus gap between his regiment and the next friendly regiment that had to be patrolled daily.

On Dec. 15 during a patrol, he and his men spied on soldiers clad in white camouflage uniforms who appeared to be Germans probing the area. When Fred reported it, staff officers said he was reading too much into it and the unit was "undoubtedly a friendly one." He wrote that he and his men were unconvinced, and "less than 24 hours later, the German breakthrough along the heavily wooded Schnee-Eifel mountains on the German-Belgian border began in all its fury."

Communications were spotty. On Dec. 16, Fred and Lieutenant Krol discussed who would hand deliver information to division headquarters. Krol went, because with his higher rank, he could cadge more extra food and cigarettes from some sympathetic supply sergeant. While they discussed this, an artillery shell hit the barn outside the building they were staying in and destroyed the Jeep. Fred arranged for another Jeep and Krol went on the mission.

Fred was sent out to measure shell holes to

Local Veterans Day events

Veterans Appreciation Dinner: Friday, Nov. 8, 5:30 p.m. Camano Chapel will honor those who served with dinner and traditional military ceremonies. Vietnam veteran Mike Ballard is the guest speaker. Event is free for veterans and one guest each. Veterans are encouraged to wear their hat, uniform, insignia and medals. Reservations are required. Contact Lynda Buering at goldracket@aol.com or 206 550-4409.

Veterans honored through song: Poetry and Songs of War and Peace: 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 9. Camano Marianne McGarry-Bloom presents a collection of poetry and songs to honor veterans at Camano City Schoolhouse, 993 Orchard Road, Camano.

Celebration at the Floyd: Celebrate our veterans and raise awareness of the sacrifice service members and their families make year-round at an event at 11 a.m. Nov. 9 at the Floyd Norgaard Cultural Center at 27130 102nd Ave. NW in Stanwood. This year, the event includes two military working dogs and their handlers from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. There are about 2,500 war dogs in service today, with about 700 serving at any given time overseas. Dogs have fought alongside American forces in every conflict since the Revolutionary War, but only officially since WWII. Until November 2000, military working dogs were euthanized or abandoned after retirement. For more information, call 360-629-6110 or e-mail SAHSrh2@aol.com.

Spaghetti feed: Veterans and their families are invited to a free spaghetti feed from noon-3 p.m. on Veterans Day, Monday, Nov. 11. The meal, featuring spaghetti, garlic bread, Caesar salad and dessert, is at American Legion Post 92 at 26921 88th Ave. NW, Stanwood.

Veterans recognition dinner: Thursday, Nov. 14. Dinner is at 6:30 p.m. at Camano Masonic Lodge, 27205 102nd Ave. NW, Stanwood. Veterans and current serving military will be honored for their service to our country. After dinner the Masonic Sojourners, a patriot group made up of veterans in uniform, will present the history of the American flag. For questions or reservations, call 425-263-6808. Donations accepted.

determine trajectories and position of the enemy. Later he and a squad of eight went on a reconnaissance to observe the enemy in a gap. They found 20-30 Americans huddled in the company of German soldiers who were digging foxholes. Fred's squad tried to rescue the Americans, but only one broke free to join them — a man who had gone with Krol. He said that they tried to avoid a German roadblock by driving the Jeep off the road across a field toward American trucks. They were all captured. Soon they would hear that Krol was killed by friendly fire that night in a confusion of exploding shells.

On Dec. 17, Fred and his men witnessed a seemingly endless stream of German infantry troops descending into and across the valley. The American troops were short on ammunition and preparations were made to

destroy weapons rather than let them fall into enemy hands.

By Dec. 19, the regiment was under heavy fire and cut off by the Germans behind them. Fred decided to take his men and make a break for it while a tank closed in. They crossed the road to a line of trees then hiked up to hopefully escape over the crest. They crawled along, avoiding booby trapped barbed wire fencing, and found Germans over the hill. They changed course, running between bursts of automatic gunfire when Fred stepped on a land mine buried in the steep hillside.

"The next thing I recall was lying on my back afraid to look down at what had happened. The tops of my combat boots had disappeared along with my trouser legs; there was blood and mud but no pain as yet. ... I felt around with great care and great was my relief

when everything seemed to be intact," he wrote.

They were all captured. The men went to prison camp and Fred went to a prison camp hospital. Fred was held prisoner for four months. He survived on bread and thin soup as he was moved from camp to camp. Twice, Fred was given sulfa powder by someone with connections. He sprinkled it in his wounds.

"He swears that's what saved his legs," Mary said. "Many men died from dysentery or from their wounds."

Germans left the prison on April 11, 1945. Tanks arrived April 16 and prisoners were liberated by the British 7th Armored Division and the war came to an end. When Fred came back to the United States he remained in the reserves and retired at age 65, a full colonel.

Life after war

The war had a profound effect on Fred that guided the rest of his life.

"Spending time in a prison camp where you are deprived of all your freedoms, and you do not know if you will ever be released, affects your outlook on life and how you live your life," Mary said. "He had such an insatiable love of life and all that it had to offer and he just 'had to experience it all.'"

Fred went back to college and finished his art degree, having quit abruptly to join the Army's war effort. He married his high school sweetheart and raised a family while working as an art teacher and artist on Long Island, New York. By the time he retired, he was assistant principal. During this time, he worked with Mary Derrington, the head of the math department. After his wife died, he married Mary.

Fred and Mary traveled the country and had adventures around the world; they collected art and made art. After the professor got Fred to talk about the war, Fred and Mary visited all the places he had been during the war.

Mary said she told the professor, "If you hadn't contacted Fred, he would have taken it with him to the grave. He told his story and now I'm telling his story. You have changed our lives for the better."

OBITUARIES



LORRAINE SUTTON
July 30, 1939 -
October 24, 2019

Lorraine Sutton, 80, of Ashton, Idaho, passed away Oct. 24, 2019, at the Ashton Living Center after a long struggle with early onset Alzheimer's Disease.

Lorraine was born July 30, 1939, in Egin, Idaho, to William Earl and Verna Lovisa Davis Hunt. She attended area schools and graduated from South Fremont High School.

She married Jerry Barrett in 1962. They lived and raised their eight children in Washington State. Jerry died in 1986, and Lorraine returned to Idaho. She married Kenneth Sutton in 1989, and they were married until his passing in 2014.

Lorraine is survived by her children, Jeffery Barrett, Alan Barrett, Robynn Barrett-Matteson, Lorri

Barrett, Tracie Barrett-West, Shannon Barrett-Rigby, Brooke Barrett-Lenz, and Jared Barrett; siblings, Glendon Hunt, Lynda Kerbs, and Sharlene Bergeson; 14 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents; husbands; and siblings, David Hunt, John Hunt, Leonard Hunt, and Arlene Miller.

The family extends a special thank you to the caregivers and staff at Ashton Living Center.

Per Lorraine's wishes, a graveside service will be held at 12 p.m., on Saturday, Nov. 2, at the Sutton Cemetery, 900 East 7242 South, Rexburg, Idaho.

The family will receive friends Saturday morning from 10 to 11 a.m. at Baxter Funeral Home, 717 Main St., in Ashton before going to the family graveside services.

Following the services a luncheon will be held for family at The Avenues Event Center, 859 S. Yellowstone Hwy., Ste. 1003, Rexburg, Idaho. Condolences may be sent to the family online at www.baxterfh.com.

Contributions can be made in memory of Lorraine to the Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation at www.alzinfo.org/donate/donation_form/.

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VETERANS DAY 2019

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