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Calling all folksong enthusiasts. If you enjoy singing and playing, come join the fun. Third Tuesday every month, 3 to 5 pm



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## Join the Fun!

There's a lot happening at  
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# Voters Approve 6-Year Fire Levy Lid Lift

**The Key Peninsula voted yes for Fire District 16, allowing it to upgrade equipment and expand staff while considering a new headquarters in Key Center.**

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

A six-year Key Peninsula fire levy lid lift was approved in the Aug. 3 primary election vote by 62% to 38%, or 2,696 yes to 1,631 no votes in a typical 22% off-year summer voter turnout. The vote replaced the lid lift approved in 2015.

"We are beyond grateful for the continued support, for all of it, this community has just been phenomenal for us," said KP Fire Chief Dustin Morrow. "And while we don't sometimes always see things exactly the same, it is amazing that in 28 months this community has stepped forward three times to say we're with you fire district, and it feels great."

The lid lift will allow the KP fire department to collect the full amount of a previously approved fire levy rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, which had fallen to about \$1.23 per \$1,000 as assessed values rose, according to Morrow.

Levy revenue falls as values rise because annual increases in levy revenue are restricted by a state property tax limit. The result is that most taxing district levy rates fall below the authorized level over time. A levy limit can be increased only by a lid lift.

Morrow said lifting the lid would generate about \$1 million a year for the department.

"We get the one-time opportunity to reset the rate at \$1.50 for the first year, and that's new money for us," he said. "Then as assessed value starts to go up, our rate declines (over the next five years)."

The average assessed value of a KP home in 2020 was approximately \$400,000, according to the Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's Office. The lid lift increased taxes by approximately \$108 a year for a hypothetical \$400,000 home, restoring the original levy to \$600, or \$50 a month.

A few days before the election, campaign signs urging a "no" vote appeared on the KP along with posts on local social media complaining about rising taxes, including a claim that the department was trying to raise property taxes by 36% over six years.

The language in the ballot measure also included the phrase "(and) set the limit factor

at six percent (6%) for each of the succeeding five (5) years ..."

"I understand the concern," Morrow said.

"The 6% is not related to the 1.5% rate; it refers to the amount that has been collected that can be spent. It gives us authority to have the opportunity to raise the following year's budget 6% above the previous year's

budget, and that's how people are putting together those two figures."

One KP resident who observed the KPFD town hall

meetings promoting the lid lift said, "I was struggling with the business aspects of it." The resident, who declined to be identified, expressed a frustration with a lack of specifics.

"If you have a six-year plan, what do you think you're going to raise the budget by each year, what are you going to purchase and when? And when you do purchase it, when is it going to be implemented? I couldn't find that."

The board of fire commissioners has adopted a pay-as-you-go strategy, according to Morrow, to replace fire apparatus, for some facilities repair, and personnel expenses. The department has also been able to afford staffing the Wauna, Home and Longbranch stations for a year now, he said.

"Hopefully, this budget cycle, I know we won't be able to get another station staffed but we will be able to get an additional unit staffed for a portion of time and it's likely going to go up north to join the medic up there (in Wauna) because that's where most of the service demands are."

That would mean hiring more personnel.

"I think we're going to go after six immediately," Morrow said. "That will allow us to staff up to 11 per shift, which will be a big deal for us. We'd have two staffed engines,



Fire Commissioners Stan Moffett and Frank Grubaugh meet with the Chief.  
Lisa Bryan, KP News

two staffed medics, a staffed battalion chief, and a duty chief at Station 46 (Key Center)."

The department is also studying the possibility of a new headquarters in Key Center to replace its current facility built in 1972 and has signed conditional purchase and sale agreements for three parcels in Key Center. Two parcels near Sunnycrest Nursery were secured with an offer of \$1.2 million and a third parcel including the former Reed's restaurant was secured for an offer of \$975,000.

The department has 180 days after the seller signs to perform its due diligence and decide whether to buy a parcel. No parcel has been purchased to date and no money, including earnest money, will change hands until the department makes a decision, according to Morrow.

Stan Moffett, chair of the KP fire commission, confirmed that the department has signed a promissory note for a low-interest loan to cover a purchase but that note can be returned without penalty. If a new building is feasible, that could mean a capital bond or other financing in coming years to pay for it, he said.

### THE DEPARTMENT HAS SIGNED CONDITIONAL PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENTS FOR THREE PARCELS IN KEY CENTER.

"The intention right now is to make sure that we are in a planning cycle, that we secure our future, hence the conver-

sations about property that are occurring," Morrow said. The department hired an architecture firm to determine whether and how a new facility — perhaps serving multiple community purposes — could be built and what is needed to maintain or upgrade existing stations.

"We are at the earliest a year or more away from understanding that landscape," Morrow said. "I think the earliest this community could see a conversation about a bond is probably 2023, and even that might be optimistic." ■

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WHEN THE WRITER DRIVES RIGHT INTO THE BLACK NIGHT OF UNREALITY

# Ray Bradbury's 'Something Wicked This Way Comes'

A harrowing classic from one of the masters — just in time for Halloween.

JOSEPH PENTHEROUDAKIS

The bait is hard to resist but if you bite, you'll be trapped in a sinister nightmare you hadn't bargained for and from which you may never wake.

It's a bait dangled by Cooger and Dark's Pandemonium Shadow Show, the mysterious carnival in Ray Bradbury's "Something Wicked This Way Comes" that Stephen King called a "darkly poetic tale." The show rolls in and sets up its ominous tents in a meadow outside Green Town, Illinois, in the dead of night a week before Halloween, arriving on a dark and silent train, a calliope playing mournful tunes that can be heard in town.

Which was where Will Halloway and Jim Nightshade, who would be turning 14 a day apart before and after Halloween, heard the train arriving, its ancient engine chuffing, the calliope sighing in the night. A carnival arriving in the middle of the night in a rare season for such entertainment is no ordinary show, the two boys would soon learn.

A Mirror Maze whose endless glass walls reflect your image distorted in time, showing you the way you were but also the way you would be as an adult — or as a 100-year-old; a carousel that can stretch time in any direction like so much taffy and toss you off at a point of its choosing, returning you to a past or hurtling you into a future you while leaving you in the present. Then there are all the shadows, the cast of characters in the carnival's Main Freak Tent: the Dust Witch, her lids sewn shut, her lips stitched together, who can cast a spell to do the same to you; and Mr. Dark, the Illustrated Man who collects souls for his show, their images drawn in pulsating tattoos on his body, a gruesome ledger of his work going back to a time nobody can remember.

Welcome to a tale of fantasy and terror, its title borrowed from the witches' cauldron scene in Act 4 of "Macbeth" foretelling Macbeth's entrance: "By the pricking of my thumbs / Something wicked this way comes." Bradbury was a prolific writer of short stories, publishing more than 600 in his lifetime. "Something Wicked" was his only novel-length work; it gave him the space to explore multiple themes by creating a world and populating it with more characters with more relationships and connections than shorter works allowed.

It's a tale of the familiar battle between good and evil, but with side trips into the tropes of the end of boyhood and coming of age, of a son getting to know and understand his father, of the wisdom and knowledge tucked away in histories and books. Charles Halloway, Will's father, a janitor at the local library and a man in love with books, eventually saves the day when the boys get in serious trouble, as they inevitably would. A confrontation, powerful and almost cinematic in the telling, unfolds at the library, where Halloway has spent hours researching the carnival's dark past in old tomes and yellowed newspapers. Evil has a long lineage, as he discovers.

There are several more themes woven into the story. One is greed — not for material possessions necessarily but greed for time, greed that speaks of dissatisfaction with one's now and a selfish desire for the past or the future. But then you discover that sneaking back and forth across time is not the answer, that you may get what you were looking for but are forever trapped in the carnival's Freak Tent. You'll never get back to the sweetness of the present you left behind.

It's also the fear of dying, the fear that fills you when you see yourself in the Mirror Maze, shrunken and old, the fear of the carousel of time catapulting you into that future before you could get to it on your own.

But then there's a way out, there's a way to exorcise the demon that is Mr. Dark's carnival and restore order to the world. It comes suddenly to Charles Halloway during the confrontation at the library, and it works. Improbable though it seems, the answer is laughter, the joy of the now, peals and hoots of laughter that plant you squarely in the moment, laughter that you can share with those you love. You and your friends can laugh at the carnival's freak show together and watch the tents, the dark carousel and the calliope playing in the night disintegrate before your eyes.

Maybe that's the way to exorcise the fear of dying too.

Stephen King described Bradbury's writing as the rush that comes "when (the writer) puts the pedal to the metal, yanks back on the steering wheel, and drives his jalopy straight up into the black

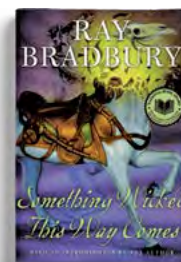
night of unreality." There's a scene where Will tries to bring down a balloon carrying the Dust Witch in its basket, who has been out at night looking for him and Jim: "the blind Witch gabbled, moaned, blistered her lips, shrieked in protest ... as the balloon wailed, whiffled, guzzled, mourned its own gaseous death, as dungeon air raved out, as dragon breath gushed forth and the bag, thus driven, retreated up."

That is the sound of the pedal hitting the metal.

"Something Wicked" is a tale that can make the hair stand up on the back of your neck, but it's also a joyous story. Bradbury dedicated the book to his good friend Gene Kelly, partly because Kelly had tried to interest Hollywood in an earlier version of the story but also in great measure because Gene Kelly's films were about that very joy. ■

### BOOK NOTES

"Something Wicked This Way Comes," Simon & Schuster, 2017, 337 pages. Edition includes criticism and essays on the novel's history and context.



[raybradbury.com](http://raybradbury.com)



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ray Bradbury (1920-2012) authored hundreds of tales that straddle fantasy, horror and science fiction.

Self-taught, Bradbury started to write full-time when he was 12, by his own account inspired by an encounter with a carnival magician named Mr. Electrico; a character by that name appears in "Something Wicked This Way Comes." That novel, first published in 1962, along with "The Martian Chronicles" (1950), "Fahrenheit 451" (1953) and the autobiographical "Dandelion Wine" (1957), have entered the canon of American fiction.



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### Coming soon!

**Santa for Seniors** returns in December. Plan to join this fun holiday event!

### Community Forums

Join our free, informative forums

### Accessing VA Benefits

Roy Harrington overviews services for military veterans. Thursday

**Nov. 4 at 1 pm** in person at The Mustard Seed Project.

### Creating Home on KP

The Green House® Project and Concepts in Community Living, Thursday **Nov. 18 at 1 pm** on Facebook Live.

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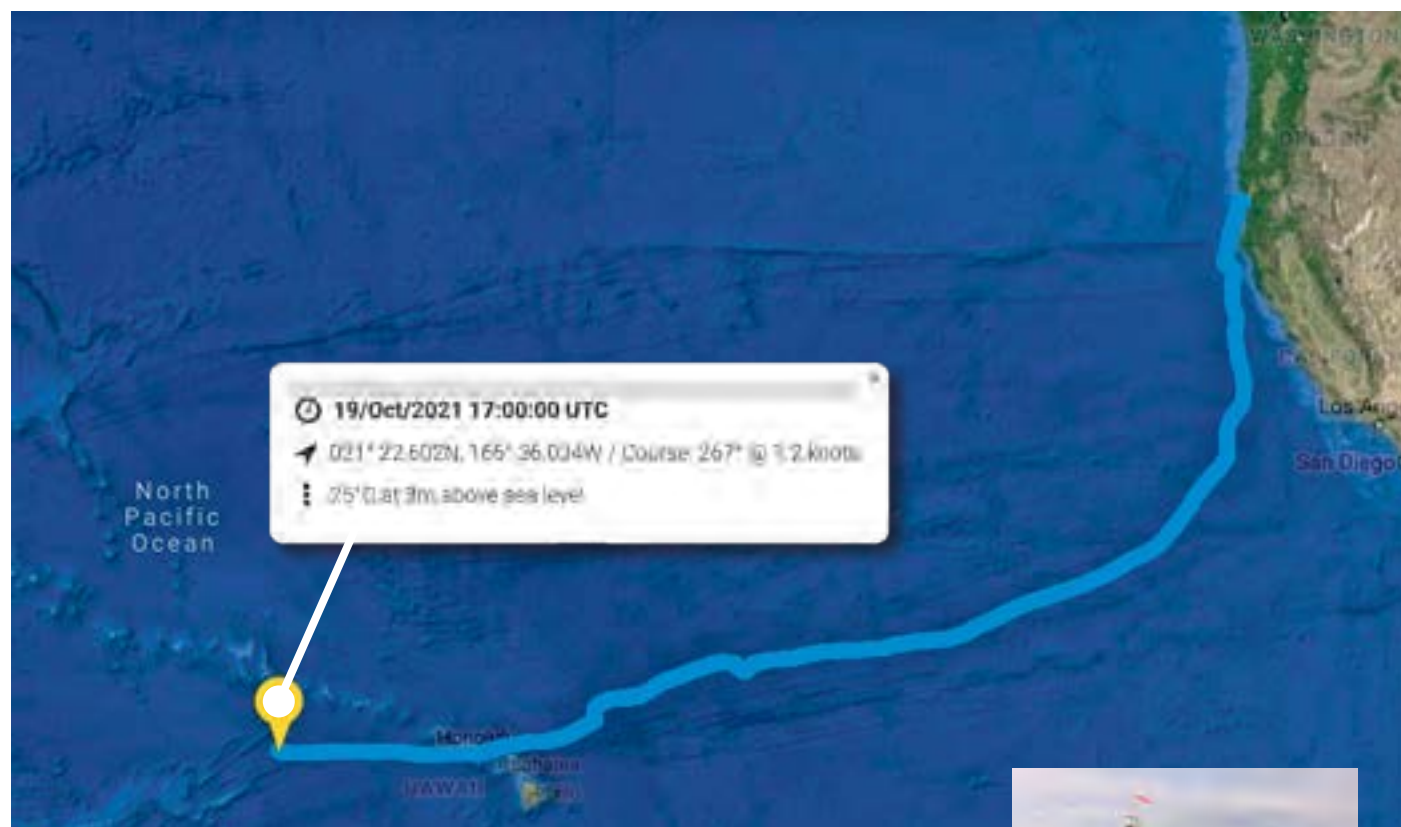
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Erden Eruç was approximately 500 miles west of Waikiki Oct. 19. *Around-n-Over*

*Inset portrait by Chris Bronstad, from Key Peninsula News Mon 2021*

## Wauna Man Resumes Solo Row From U.S. to Asia

**No one has ever rowed across the Pacific mainland-to-mainland, but that's just the beginning.**

TED OLINGER, KP NEWS

Solo circumnavigator Erden Eruç, 60, of Wauna, resumed his second solo row across the Pacific Oct. 7 when he relaunched from Waikiki, Oahu, where he arrived Sept. 10 after an 80-day crossing from Crescent City, Calif.

"I covered a lot of ground with 25 knot gusting winds the first few days," Eruç wrote in his blog. "The seas were cross in the lee of Oahu and Kauai Channel. Driving waves would catch up with my rowboat then slam, splashing me in the process.

When I could, I rinsed and hid in the cabin to read. Time in the sweltering cabin over the last few days had me itching with salt."

Eruç spent his brief time in Hawaii repairing his desalinator, replacing navigational equipment, and reinforcing deck scuppers to prevent his boat from taking on so much water in high seas. He also packed in 150 freeze-dried breakfasts and tried again to get permission to enter China.

He expects to reach Hong Kong in March 2022 but was denied a tourist visa due to

the pandemic. He has a backup plan to land in Da Nang, Vietnam, though that country is also closed to foreigners now.

Once he reaches Asia, Eruç will bicycle to Mount Everest, which he plans to summit in the fall of 2022, then bike west across Asia Minor to Mount Elbrus, the highest mountain in Europe, which he will summit before cycling the rest of the continent to rejoin his boat in Portugal. From there he will row to Brazil, then bike southwest

**ERUÇ COMPLETED THAT CIRCUMNAVIGATION IN 2012 AFTER FIVE YEARS AND 41,153 MILES. ... HE HOLDS 15 GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS.**

across the continent to Argentina and summit Aconcagua, the tallest mountain in South America. He will then bike and kayak north back to Crescent City, completing his second human-powered circumnavigation and having summited the last of the highest peaks on six continents, part of his goal on the first go-round.

Eruç completed that circumnavigation in 2012 after five years and 41,153 miles. He became the first person to row across three oceans; the first to row from Australia to Africa; the first to cross any ocean from the southern to northern hemisphere; and he also rowed the longest distance ever



attempted across the Atlantic. In all, he holds 15 Guinness World Records.

As an ambassador for Ocean Recovery Alliance on this journey, Eruç is raising awareness about plastic pollution in the ocean, he said. He is producing educational content on the environment, climate change and survival at sea that he transmits to classrooms around the world. His nonprofit, Around-n-Over, has already donated over \$100,000 to rural schools in his homeland, Turkey. He is also recording the sounds of beaked whales on this trip for research the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is conducting to track their movements.

This is the second row across the Pacific for Eruç but the first attempt by anyone to go from mainland-to-mainland in a human-powered craft.

"This leg of my Pacific crossing, which I estimate will last well into March, will be even more challenging than the 80 days from Crescent City to Waikiki," he wrote. "Navigating the large eddies and strong currents on my westerly course will take guidance ... Winter storms, which form in the western Pacific, will travel east, passing north of my course, threatening to draw me