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In one month, total Vashon hospitalizations nearly double

As cases decline, island is still at very high risk

By VASHONBePREPARED

Editor's Note: Read COVID updates by VashonBePrepared in Spanish and English at tinyurl.com/yan39zeh.

The COVID new case rate for Vashon continues to inch back down from the major spike of disease shown on tracking graphs for the last month.

As reported in the last edition, Vashon's all-ages community transmission rate peaked at 13 times the CDC high-risk classification of 100 cases per 100,000

people per week. The community transmission rate has eased off but remains at a dangerous level — still about five times the CDC high-risk benchmark.

The rate of new cases remains well above any of our community's previous COVID spikes over the last 23 months, despite the encouraging decline from the record peak

earlier in January.

Hospitalizations/Death Increase

There have been six new hospitalizations since the first of the year. That nearly doubles the number of Vashon resident hospitalizations in just one month, bringing the total

to 14 hospitalizations since the pandemic began on Vashon 23 months ago.

That's in addition to the new death reported in last week's edition, bringing the total to five deaths tabulated since the pandemic began, according to

See **COVID**, Page 12

Schools, Park District may dissolve Commons Agreement

By JENNA DENNISON

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The Vashon Island School District (VISD) may soon move to terminate their partnership with the Vashon Park District (VPD) in managing Vashon Commons, an agreement that has been in place for more than three decades.

First established in 1987, the agreement allows VPD to facilitate community use of VISD properties, including fields and buildings, during non-school hours.

VISD Superintendent Slade McSheehy said, during the Thursday, Jan. 27 school board meeting, that the school district and the park district first met during the fall of last year, and discussed the "unusual" nature of the park district managing school district property.

According to the signed Interlocal Agreement between VPD and VISD, the Vashon Commons includes "... all athletic facilities owned or operated by the Parties, as well as indoor meeting spaces appropriate for public use like classrooms, libraries and multi-purpose rooms."

The agreement between the two entities also automatically extends for another five-year period unless either VISD or VPD votes to terminate the agreement 90 days prior to its expiration on June 30, 2022.

The 90-day notice for termination

See **SCHOOL**, Page 3



ELIZABETH SHEPHERD PHOTO

Masterful music pops up at arts center

Gallery-goers at Vashon Center for the Arts on Sunday afternoon were treated to a pop-up concert, performed by bassist Bruce Phares and pianist Jeremy Bacon.

The duo, who are both well-known jazz masters in the Seattle scene and beyond, will open the upcoming concert, "An Evening

With Diane Schuur," at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 19, at VCA. (See page 8.)

Phares moved from Seattle to Vashon in March of 2020 and played one of the first concerts offered when VCA opened up after pandemic restrictions. He said he was now excited to bring

live jazz to the atrium of the arts center and hopes to make other intimate acoustic music experiences a regular Sunday afternoon occurrence in the vaulted, airy space.

He's also helped bring music to First Friday gallery openings at the center, recently recruiting

local piano wunderkind, 17-year-old Zander Knodt, to play on those occasions. The atrium, he said, provides an environment perfect for showcasing the musicianship of special guest artists, local legends and rising stars on the island scene.

— Elizabeth Shepherd

Author to share stories of resistance on Day of Remembrance

By LESLIE BROWN

For The Beachcomber

Frank Abe was in college when he began to realize that the tens of thousands of Japanese Americans who were sent to "relocation camps" with nice-sounding names — Heart Mountain, Tule Lake, Topaz — had been held in what he now calls "America's first concentration camps."

As he dug deeper, he made another discovery: that the story of their passive resignation to widespread wartime incarceration was also a myth. In fact, as he eventually learned, thousands were part of an orchestrated resistance to

this captivity. Others refused to sign confusing and ill-conceived loyalty oaths because of how they were being treated. People were beaten, tortured, imprisoned.

Abe, angry that he had been misled and fascinated by this new narrative, made it his mission to tell the fuller story of the Japanese American response to their wartime incarceration.

And on Feb. 19 — the 80th anniversary of the executive order that forced the removal and incarceration of 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent during World War II — he'll bring that story to Vashon.

In an event hosted by Mukai Farm & Garden, Abe and Tamiko

Nimura will discuss their new graphic novel, "We Hereby Refuse: Japanese American Resistance to Incarceration," a powerful, historically accurate look at three individuals who, in different ways, stood up to their captors.

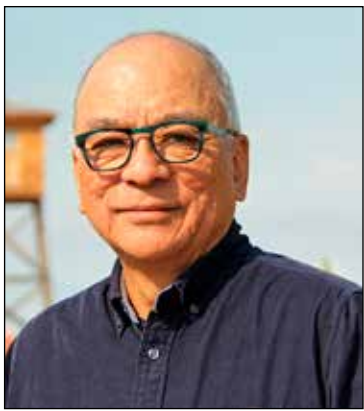
The history is deeply relevant to Vashon Island. In 1942, 111 people were given two days' notice to show up at Ober Park, where they were herded onto trucks and sent to an assembly center in California. Many ended up in one of the camps at the heart of the graphic novel — Tule Lake, in north-central California — infamous because it was reclassified in 1943 as a high-security "segregation center" used

to punish thousands of people who resisted incarceration.

And of course, Abe points out, the story is relevant to anyone who cares about race relations today. The 120,000 people forced into these camps were targeted solely because of their race, "and race is still dividing us today," Abe said. The book opens with the FBI "knocking on the door to arrest our grandparents," he said. "It ends with ICE agents breaking down the door to deport unwanted immigrants. The take-away is that some things haven't changed."

Tina Shattuck, executive director

See **ABE**, Page 5



EUGENE TAGAWA PHOTO

Frank Abe helped to produce the first-ever "Day of Remembrance" in 1978 — a gathering of thousands of people at the former Sick's Stadium, in Seattle, to begin the campaign to redress Japanese Americans for their incarceration.

Subscriber mailing label below this line

HAPPENINGS

Vashon Villages Launches

The Vashon Villages program will launch at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at The Senior Center, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, brief remarks and locally-made treats. Funding for this community-centered, aging-in-place program is provided by the King County Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy. (See page 6.)

Racial Equity Training

Islanders and activists Janie Starr and Ty Cunningham will join a panel addressing the "how" of activism through a racial equity lens. The workshop, "Exploring Partnerships in Collaboration and Coalition Building," will be presented by Washington Indivisible Network (WIN) and Indivisible National Training Manager, Kimberly Tucker. The workshop will take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 15, on Zoom. Register at tinyurl.com/ycx3p527.

Health Insurance and More

Miguel Urquiza, from King County Public Health, will help islanders sign up for health insurance, food stamps, and Orca Lift

cards from 1 to 3 p.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 16, March 16, and April 20, inside the Vashon Library. Urquiza can also assist islanders remotely, in Spanish or English. Call or email him at 206-477-6965 or 206-491-3761, or miguel.urquiza@kingcounty.gov.

Talk on the Rock with Emily Pinckney

Emily Pinckney, executive director of 500 Women Scientists, and a commissioner of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission, will speak about environmental justice and equity in this talk presented in partnership with Vashon Nature Center and Vashon Center for the Arts. Pinckney's experience as an under-represented scientist led her to advocate for environmental justice and educate underserved communities on how to navigate around systemic barriers. The event takes place at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 23 at VCA. Get tickets at vashoncenterforthearts.org.

King County Survey on Composting

The county, with the support of Zero Waste Vashon, is considering building a facility on Vashon to process local food and yard waste into high-quality compost. Give feedback on this idea by taking a survey at vashonsurvey.com or by scanning the QR code on postcards recently sent to islanders about the survey.

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KIM KISH

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School

From Page 1

now puts the decision on a fast timetable.

The VISD Board has scheduled the first reading of a motion to terminate the Commons Agreement at its Feb. 10 board meeting, which will also be attended by members of the Park District board. Representatives of Facilitron, a California-based scheduling platform that has been proposed as an alternative to the Commons, will also attend the meeting. Subsequently, the VISD board will further discuss the matter at their March 10 meeting, when they may take action to terminate the Commons Agreement and sign up as a client of the third-party vendor.

However, some key stakeholders in the decision — leaders of youth sports leagues and Drama Dock, both told The Beachcomber that they have only learned in recent weeks and days about the proposal to end the Vashon Commons agreement. (See “Letters,” page 6.)

According to VPD Executive Director Elaine Ott-Rocheford, a community representative, Darragh Keenan, the former president of the youth soccer club, was in attendance at three previous meetings held to discuss the possible termination of the Commons agreement.

Wider public participation, she said, was not sought in part due to sensitivity around the fact that four part-time employees at VPD could lose their jobs if the Commons Agreement was terminated.

According to Ott-Rocheford, the VPD and VISD Commons Committee representatives met for their annual meeting on Nov. 12, 2021. One of the topics of concern was the \$75,000 fee the Park District pays to VISD in order to offset incremental maintenance costs incurred for community recreational use of the facilities.

“VISD suggested we consider an alternative model that honors the spirit



Local thespians during their rehearsals of Drama Dock’s “Noises Off,” in the Vashon High School Theater, in 2018. For years, Drama Dock has used school facilities, under the Vashon Commons agreement, as a low-cost place to perform and rehearse.

of the interlocal agreement in that the community use of VISD facilities would still be made available, but it would be facilitated by VISD,” said Ott-Rocheford in an email to The Beachcomber. “They would collect the fees for their community facility use.”

Ott-Rocheford also stated that at the same November meeting, VISD Superintendent Slade McSheehy suggested that VPD and VISD explore Facilitron, a vendor he told the group had been successfully used by his prior school district.

Under the current Commons Agreement, VPD collects around \$20,000 to \$25,000 in user fees annually, said Ott-Rocheford. The fees set by VPD are not based on cost recovery and are intentionally kept low.

In a phone call with The Beachcomber, Ott-Rocheford said that VPD has had difficulty filling some of those positions in recent months, but said that in general, the Commons agreement had worked well for Vashon. Additionally, she described the discussions about terminating the agreement as still being in an “exploratory phase” and said the Park District board was “nowhere near” making a decision on the matter.

According to a FAQ sheet sent to The Beachcomber by McSheehy, the termination of the agreement is being discussed for multiple reasons. For instance,

the current agreement is described as “anomalous” and “not necessary to provide access to island users.” The Commons Agreement is also, according to the document, inadequate in its responses to annual changes in fees related to usage rates, or other circumstances that impact usage, such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“Lastly, the scheduling and operating process should be updated and moved to an automated system that would increase efficiency of use, management, maintenance, and operations,” stated the document.

If the Commons agreement is terminated, the VISD board will consider rate adjustments in upcoming board meetings, and seek public input on the new arrangement through a community forum and Q & A later in the spring.

For user groups on the island, the news of the potential dissolution of the Commons Agreement could mean big changes to the way their groups operate.

Gaye Detzer, President of the Drama Dock board, said that Drama Dock has long used school spaces like the McMurray band room, gym, VHS band room, and theater for rehearsals and performances.

Because those locations are under the Commons agreement, and nonprofit

island groups like Drama Dock get a reduced rental rate, “losing those perks would have a significant financial effect on our budget,” Detzer said.

“For comparison, VHS is \$1,500—approximately \$100 per day—for two weeks of rehearsal time plus performances,” said Detzer in an email to The Beachcomber. “VCA could be as much as three times that.”

Scott Thorpe, Vashon Island Soccer Club President, hosted and moderated a public Zoom meeting on Monday evening, Feb. 7, to find out more about the plan. VPD and VISD administrators and board members, leadership from youth lacrosse, basketball and baseball, and Drama Dock’s artistic director, Lisa Peretti, were all in attendance.

“What specifically isn’t working with the Commons Agreement that it needs to be jettisoned?” asked Brian McWatters, Board President of Vashon Lacrosse.

Other leaders of user groups criticized the lack of notice they and others have received about the potential termination of the Commons Agreement received. Peter Walker, League President of Vashon Baseball, found out around Jan. 26 about the potential dissolution of the agreement, but later learned

meetings had been held months earlier.

“Why all the secrecy?” said Walker.

Robin Magonegil, who is the president of Vashon Basketball, said that Darragh Kennan, who was the sole representative of Vashon Commons at the earlier meetings, was not currently in a leadership position in any club, and that another representative should have been chosen.

Kennan, who also attended the Zoom meeting, apologized for his lack of communication with other youth sports leaders, saying that he spoke about the potential termination of the Commons Agreement as soon as he thought “he was allowed” to do so.

McSheehy and VPD Board Secretary Hans Van Dusen also apologized during the meeting if the proposal to terminate the Commons Agreement had seemed “clandestine,” and Ott-Rocheford stressed that no decisions have been made on the matter yet.

“Why should it end when it does so many good things for the community?” said Nick Keenan, vice president of the Vashon Island Soccer Club.

— Elizabeth Shepherd contributed reporting to this article.

Two car thefts, prowling event occur on island

By JENNA DENNISON
jdennison@vashonbeachcomber.com

Two different car thefts and a late-night prowling event occurred last week on the island, all happening within days of each other. In both cases of car thefts, the vehicles were found on Vashon and returned to their owners.

John Coghlan, who lives on the north end of the island, had his 2017 Chevrolet Colorado pickup truck stolen from his driveway on Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Coghlan said he received an outpouring of sympathy from fellow islanders concerning the theft of his vehicle, which he reported to the King County Sheriff’s Office. However, Coghlan also felt that more should be done for those who have experienced thefts.

“[We] should have more resources and attention toward protecting private property,” Coghlan said.

The vehicle was later recovered, and was found in the parking lot of Vashon

See **CRIME**, Page 12

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Intern program nurtures Spanish-speaking elementary students

By **PETER WOODBROOK**
For Vashon Island School District

Angie Pinto Bolanos is a long way from her hometown of Bogota, Colombia. She is enjoying living on Vashon Island with her

host family, working with first grade and kindergarten students as part of the Spanish Intern Program at Chautauqua Elementary School (CES).
“The intern program has been an amazing part of the Chautauqua experience.

Having interns enables us to learn about other cultures and brings diverse teachers to our school, which directly supports our racial equity goals,” said CES Principal Rebecca Goertzel.
Interns in the program, Goertzel explained, are

teachers in their home countries, and offer direct support to CES students by working individually with those who need native language support, helping students in math, and teaching topics relevant to their own cultures.

Pinto Bolanos, who graduated from the Universidad Libre de Colombia with a Bachelor’s Degree in Education, said that she is excited to increase her expertise as a new teacher.

“This is a great opportunity for me to learn new styles about education and gain more teaching experience,” said Pinto Bolanos. “I also want to improve my English.”

The intern program is designed to give CES students exposure to Spanish language and culture and to spark interest in continuing in world languages.

In addition, the program supports English Language Learner (ELL) students by providing primary language support for students and families, increasing cultural awareness and acceptance through adult heritage speakers, and providing

Spanish literacy support for native Spanish speakers.

Pinto Bolanos sees the program benefiting her equally as much as the first-graders she works with. The students are exposed to someone from a different culture, and in turn, she is able to learn American culture from the students. Her reach extends far beyond first grade. She will also join Spanish classes and teach all students about Colombia, help in supporting math students, and give essential support to some kindergarten students with limited knowledge of English.

“I think you can always learn new things in life,” said Pinto Bolanos. “Each day when I come in, the students give me that kind of lesson, and I appreciate it.”

Pinto Bolanos is enjoying the quiet island life of Vashon, noting that it is a big departure in terms of the people, noise, and the hustle of the huge city of Bogota. She loves the community and the opportunity to immerse herself into a different area of the world but is still coming to terms with the food.

“In Colombia, we eat a lot

of meat, chicken, and fish, and here, it is much more vegetables,” she laughed. “It has been difficult for me to adapt to the food, but I am trying.”

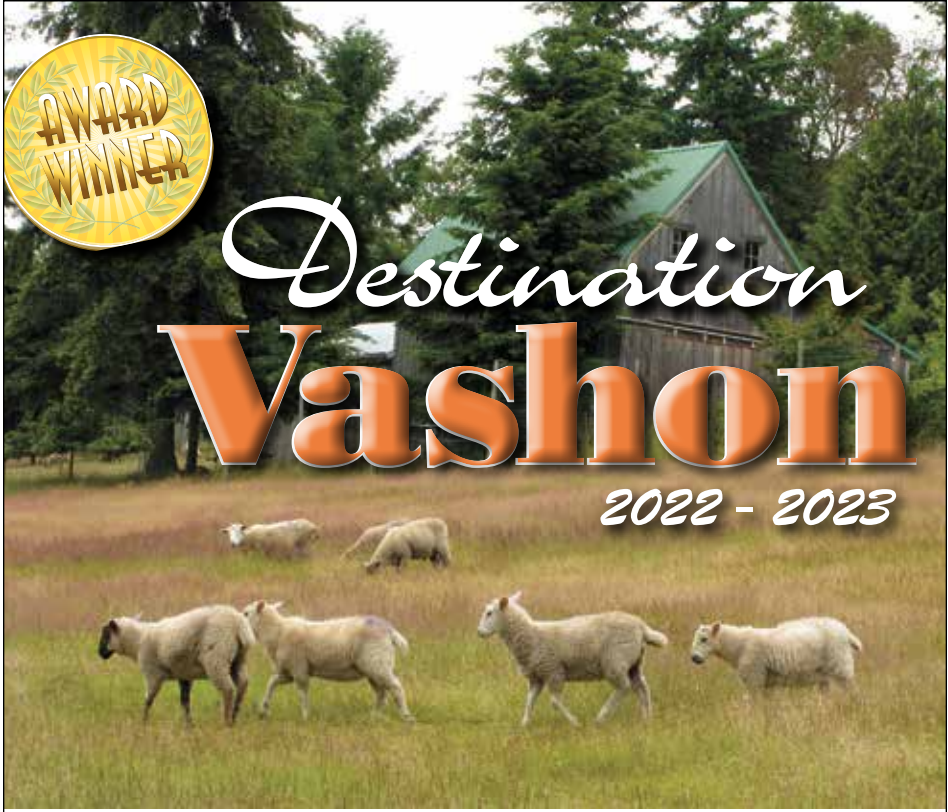
The district relies on the Vashon Schools Foundation to support the intern program, and on local families to offer housing.

“We are always looking for potential host families and they don’t need to have students in the district to host,” said Goertzel.

For each of the past seven years, Chautauqua has welcomed two to four interns. This year, due to the pandemic, there is only one. Next year, Goertzel said, CES hopes to have three interns again.

The Spanish Intern Program is made possible by the Amity Institute, a non-profit organization and U.S. State Department designated exchange visitor program for exchange teachers and educational interns. Amity’s programs have operated for the past 60 years.

Islanders who are interested in housing an intern in the future should contact rgoertzel@vashonsd.org.



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PETER WOODBROOK PHOTO

Angie Pinto Bolanos, from Bogota, Colombia, works with one of her first-grade students at Chautauqua Elementary School.



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*The price is the last list price unless followed by * which indicates that sold price was higher than list price.*



Abe

From Page 1

of Mukai Farm & Garden, said the organization invited Abe and Nimura to speak in part because of the book's far-reaching meaning — the way people have been “othered” for centuries. “We want to acknowledge and recognize the anniversary of this very important day. It's also an opportunity to ... make sure it never happens again.”

Abe, 70, is a third-generation Japanese American whose father was incarcerated at Heart Mountain in Wyoming. But his father was a boy during that time; a quiet man, he never spoke of it. Like so many members of his community, Abe said, his parents (his mother, also a U.S. citizen, was in Japan during the war) wanted to put this chapter behind them and reclaim their lives as Americans.

But as a young man, Abe began to wonder why they didn't resist what was clearly a wholesale deprivation of their civil liberties, and he began to hear from his parents' friends — women in his mother's singing group, gardeners who worked with his father — that many did fight their imprisonment.

Abe, who later became a reporter for KIRO Radio, began interviewing

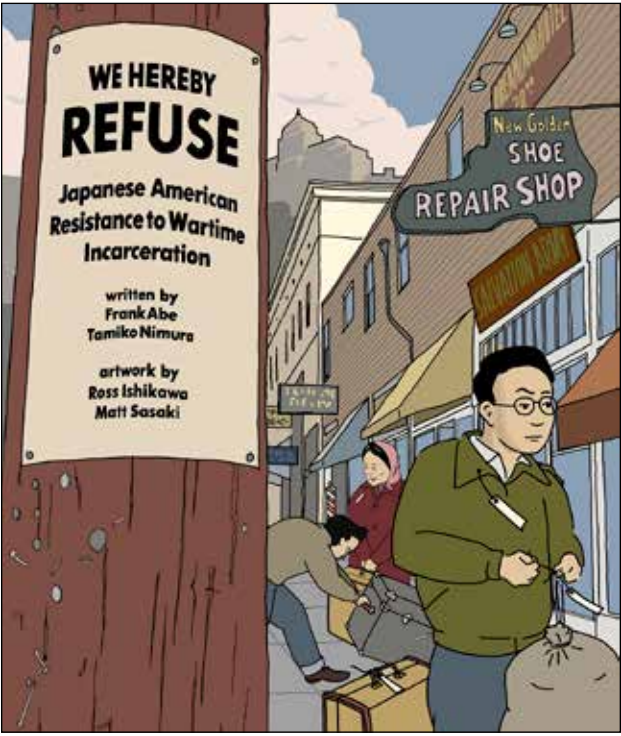
survivors of the camps, writing about what he learned. His investigation, he said, was both illuminating and upsetting. The stories of resistance were not simply ignored but actively suppressed, he said. “My parents' generation embraced the idea of being the good minority, and the idea of ... resistance did not fit that narrative.”

As he spoke, he held up a book, “Nisei: The Quiet Americans,” one of the few popular histories about Japanese Americans in the early 1970s. “It's fair to say I was outraged in reading this. ... It was not any kind of legacy that I, as a third-generation, a Sansei, wanted to have — that of quietly cooperating with the government. ... This book fueled my quest to reframe our history.”

And reframe he did.

Abe helped to produce the first-ever “Day of Remembrance” in 1978 — a gathering of thousands of people at the former Sick's Stadium, in Seattle, to begin the campaign to redress Japanese Americans for their incarceration. The Day of Remembrance is now a nationwide event hosted by the Smithsonian on Feb. 19, the date that President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066.

He wrote and directed a one-hour film, “Conscience and the Constitution,” that



ROSS ISHIKAWA AND MATT SAGAKI ART

In a Feb. 19 event hosted by Mukai Farm & Garden, Frank Abe and Tamiko Nimura will discuss their graphic novel, “We Hereby Refuse: Japanese American Resistance to Incarceration,” a powerful, historically accurate look at three individuals who, in different ways, stood up to their captors.

told the little-known story of organized draft resistance at Heart Mountain — a story of people resisting not because they were anti-war or anti-American but because they could not fight for a government that denied them their rights as citizens. It was distributed nationwide on PBS in 2000.

He edited, with two others, “John Okada: The Life and Rediscovered Work

of the Author of No-No Boy,” a look at the man who wrote a novel about a Japanese American who refused to fight for a country that imprisoned him. Okada's novel — like the No-No boys themselves — was initially rejected and ignored. Abe and his co-authors' meticulous look at his life and works won an American Book Award.

He did all this as he was

Day of Remembrance Talk

Mukai Farm & Garden will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Day of Remembrance with an online discussion with Frank Abe and Tamiko Nimura, authors of “We Hereby Refuse: Japanese American Resistance to Wartime Incarceration,” at 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 19.

Register for the talk at tinyurl.com/bdfd4uvc and find out more at mukaifarmandgarden.org. The event is free, with donations gratefully accepted.

also developing his career as a journalist and communications professional. After 14 years at KIRO, he worked as a communications director for King County Executives Gary Locke and Dow Constantine until his retirement in 2019.

Abe decided to work with Nimura and two artists — Ross Ishikawa and Matt Sasaki — on a graphic novel after the Wing Luke Museum put out a call for such a book and the four teamed up to submit a proposal. “I never planned to be a graphic novelist,” Abe said with a smile. The book was published by Chin Music Press in Seattle last spring. It's now in its third printing.

But as Abe discovered, the format is a powerful and moving way to tell three different stories, woven together as a compelling narrative of resistance.

Jim Akutsu, the inspiration for Okada's novel “No-No Boy,” was one of the young men who refused to be drafted. Labeled a draft

dodger after the war, he experiences a tragedy as a result of his stance. Hiroshi Kashiwagi, imprisoned at Tule Lake, refuses to sign the loyalty oath, renouncing his U.S. citizenship in the process. And Mitsuya Endo is both a reluctant hero and remarkably brave; imprisoned at Topaz, she refuses a chance at freedom so that her history-making civil suit could reach the U.S. Supreme Court and hasten the closure of the camps.

Abe notes that the suppression of uncomfortable truths is hardly new in America. “In our nation today, we're seeing a concerted attack on critical race theory, which in fact is nothing more than an attack on the teaching of history,” he said.

“This history of Japanese American incarceration falls squarely in that realm of American history that has been ignored or suppressed,” he said. “I'm pleased that our book has found its audience.”

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VASHON PHARMACY

EDITORIAL

Vashon Commons has served our community well. Why end it?

Administrators and board members of both Vashon Island School District (VISD) and Vashon Park District (VPD) stumbled last week when they announced they were considering terminating a community-minded agreement called “Vashon Commons,” and replacing it in part, with a website named “Facilitron.”

At a school board meeting, VISD Superintendent Slade McSheehy described three meetings held, beginning last fall, that led to this proposal. Still, the news came as a surprise to some stakeholders in the community for whom Vashon Commons was first created more than 30 years ago.

The interlocal agreement between VPD and VISD, first reached in 1987, has been a good thing, giving the public very low-cost access to public spaces. Almost everyone on Vashon has benefited in some way from it, including sports clubs, local theater groups, musicians, presenters and everyday islanders. The agreement brings the greater public into the facilities they have generously supported with levy dollars. Parks employees have been the main point of contact for users, explaining the rules, opening and closing the facilities and personally troubleshooting the vast array of potential hiccups along the way.

It has been a human-powered, locally-driven collaboration that worked.

But now, VISD proposes to replace it, in part, with Facilitron, a California-based for-profit enterprise that describes itself as a “data-driven facility management platform” that “streamlines facility scheduling and rental requests for schools, colleges, and cities, enabling insight into real-time cost and utilization data. Facilitron school district and municipality partners benefit from a central facility management, scheduling, payment, and maintenance system that improves efficiency and increases transparency.”

That’s a lot of tech jargon, but we recognize that last word — transparency. Because that’s the problem with all this. It is a breach of trust — not to mention a big public relations blunder at the 11th hour of a school levy campaign — for our elected officials and highly paid public servants to even consider terminating the Commons without carefully extensive input from a wide array of community users.

Representatives of Facilitron will attend the next school board meeting, scheduled for Feb. 10. If you care about access to the public buildings on Vashon, you should too — the proposal now seems to be on a fast track, with a “first read” of a motion to terminate the relationship formed by Vashon Commons that could be voted on at the March 10 meeting.

McSheehy, at the Jan. 27 board meeting, touted a “seamless” transition to the new system, which he said would provide a “similar, or even enhanced” user experience.

But how much does he know about that experience, without first holding talks with stakeholders?

At the same meeting, VISD board vice-chair Toby Holmes, who attended some of the meetings that led to the proposal, earnestly described the Vashon Commons agreement as “a document and an agreement that a lot of people in the community worked

See **EDITORIAL**, Page 7

Correction

The article “Social service agencies partner in 2022,” published in the Jan. 27 issue in The Beachcomber listed the incorrect phone number for Oasis. The correct phone number is 207-200-6788. This has been corrected in the online version of the article.

We regret the error.

An invitation to participate and serve in Vashon Villages

Earlier this new year, Senior Center executive director Catherine Swearingen wrote in these pages to thank the Vashon-Maury Island community for its support in 2021 and to call attention to our varied programs.

And what a year it was, especially as a follow-up to 2020! Through it all, we pressed on with our mission to enrich the lives of older adults.

As we head further into 2022, I’ll both echo Catherine’s “we need you” message and reframe it, too: you are needed.

Where are you needed? You are needed at the Senior Center itself,



EVY HORTON

in the charming brick building on Bank Road that buzzes with daily activities. You are needed beyond those walls, too.

And the Vashon Villages program might be just the place —or rather, nonplace — for you. “Nonplace” is an apt word because Vashon Villages is not a location. It is instead a plan for growing older, at home, and with a little help from your neighbors.

Vashon Villages aligns with the national (and international) nonprofit Village movement that supports older adults aging in place, in community. There are more than 280 Villages in the United States alone. Each is

unique, shaped by its members — their needs, life experiences, and individual expertise — and relies on community-based support by a cadre of caring neighbors.

You might agree that existing support systems for older adults leave a gap in care, a gap that we hope will be narrowed by the Vashon Villages. Through practical, affordable, community-based support, along with opportunities for social interaction, older adults may continue to live independently at home, with a little help from their neighbors.

How are you needed? You are needed in two Village-shaping roles — to *participate* and *serve*

See **HORTON**, Page 7

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

■ PARKS AND SCHOOLS

Commons proposal made without input

For more than 30 years, the Vashon Commons has given our community access to school facilities for recreation, youth sports and arts. We generously funded school bonds with the assurance of community use of these same facilities.

But now, after a series of meetings without adequate public input, representatives of the school district and the park district propose to unceremoniously end this long-time island institution.

We can only scratch our heads and ask “why?”

The Commons serves thousands of islanders every year. It is the hub of youth sports. Adults play softball, soccer and walk the track. For our island, the Commons just works.

We ask both the school board and the park board to put this idea on hold in order to allow full public discussion and input. The reasons for ending the commons are unclear. It raises questions that have not yet been answered. For example, how will the end of the Commons affect user fees? Will public access decrease to facilities built with our tax dollars? Why risk messing with the Commons when it has worked well for three decades?

There is no reason to rush toward the end of the Commons. Our elected officials need to step in and require an open community process. Questions need to be answered before making any precipitous decision to end the commons.

**Robin Magonegil, President, Vashon Basketball
Scott Thorpe, President, Vashon Soccer
Peter Walker, League President, Vashon Baseball
Brian McWatters, President, Vashon Lacrosse**

■ COVID-19

A plea to the schools

There has been a truly frightening surge of COVID cases on Vashon in the past couple of months; a fifth islander has died and at least one other has been very ill despite being “triple vaxxed.” The Senior Center is closed, the Heritage Museum is closed, and I, as an elder, am once again leery of indoor eating and gym exercise. It doesn’t seem the time to take unnecessary chances.

Not long ago NPR and other media reported regional wrestling matches as sources of infection. Vashon students were involved. The Beachcomber outed student onlookers who should have been socially distanced and masked, but weren’t. Now it’s déjà vu. A VashonBePrepared report (e-mail, 2/4/22) states young people under 18 have four times the case rate of adults, not attributable to classroom presence, but to gatherings before and after school and on weekends. The same report stated that two wrestling

coaches have tested positive as the wrestlers continue training practices in preparation for upcoming competitions, relying on daily testing. By the time of a positive test, many others could have been exposed.

I hope in general that students and parents will be a little more thoughtful, but to coaches and student-athletes I’m issuing an urgent plea: have compassion for your fellow Islanders, especially the elderly, and be willing to wait until it’s safer to compete.

Ellen Kritzman

■ BEACH RESTORATION

Return to nature takes time

In response to Joe Yarkin’s recent letter regarding beach restoration: it is true after human constructions are removed from waterfront there will be some silt plumes and erosion afterward. Not all plantings will survive. Some trees, native or not will fall. These are natural events in ecosystem function.

More than 200 feet of a bulkhead were removed at my home. For years there were plumes of silt and erosion. Plantings were lost. More natives were planted. Now there is a more natural shoreline. The surf spawning upper tide zone is expanded. On warm sunny days when the tide is out the temperature below the surface in that area is cooler even though the plantings do not actually shade much of the beach.

All things considered, I did not “lose” part of my property. I gained a much more aesthetically pleasing beach.

Pat Collier

■ PUGET SOUND ENERGY

Reliability woes

I’m appreciative of the PSE workers that venture out in storms to restore our electricity, but at the same time, I ask myself why we have so many outages. Last year I had 7 electricity outages here at my home on Maury Island, not just little blips, outages that lasted for hours and hours. Invariably the outages were due to trees and limbs falling on the electric lines. Rather than armoring lines, which a recent Beachcomber article spoke about, how about PSE doing a better job at cutting back vegetation or better still burying lines?

PSE has filed a three-year plan rate increase request with the UTC, a plan that PSE says will provide safe and reliable energy to its customers. This plan will increase our electricity bills by 12.9% in the first year. I don’t consider 7 outages in a year reliable. If granted this rate increase, PSE should use the additional revenue to address the vulnerability of electrical lines to outages here on Vashon and truly provide reliable energy to us.

Robert Kommer

Dive into Doughnut Economics

Editor’s Note: Steve Bergman’s commentary is the latest in a series of “Green Briefs,” presented in partnership with the Whole Vashon Project. To find out more about the group’s work, visit wholevashonproject.com.

Traditional economics measures success using parameters such as the gross domestic product (GDP), which ignores negative impacts on the environment and health.

In addition, GDP growth is a central tenet despite its conflict with sustainability and finite planetary resources.

We need a new way to measure the quality of life and prosperity.

We inhabit a dynamic, near-spherical planet with complicated and interrelated earth systems. Although Earth has experienced many changes during its amazing 4.5-billion-year history, including developing an oxygen-bearing atmosphere in which photosynthetic cyanobacteria (ancestors of plants) evolved more than 2 billion years ago, its environment has been remarkably stable since the end of the last ice age.

Over the last 10,000-year period of stability, human civilizations have arisen, developed and thrived. However, in the last two centuries, since the rise of the Industrial Revolution, human activity has become the main driver of global environmental change, impacting and harming Earth and her animal and plant life on a global scale.

How can we fairly meet the needs

of Earth’s inhabitants within our finite planetary boundaries? How can we be sure that no one falls short on life’s essentials (from food and housing to healthcare and political voice), while not overshooting our pressure on Earth’s life-supporting systems on which we fundamentally depend? These systems include, for example, essentials such as a stable climate, clean water and air, fertile soils, and a protective ozone layer.

The English economist Kate Raworth offers a solution in her “Doughnut Economics” framework. She argues that 20th-century economic thinking is not able to deal with the 21st-century reality of a planet experiencing a climate crisis. She suggests that instead, we guide our future choices with a model that is like the conventional doughnut shape of a squashed sphere with a central hole as the inner limit.

The outer limit of Raworth’s economic doughnut represents nine planetary boundaries or ecological limits: climate change, change in biosphere integrity (biodiversity loss and species extinction), stratospheric ozone depletion, ocean acidification, biogeochemical flows (phosphorus and nitrogen cycles), land-system change (e.g., deforestation), freshwater use, atmospheric aerosol loading (microscopic particles in the atmosphere that affect climate and living



STEVE BERGMAN

organisms), and introduction of novel entities (e.g. organic pollutants, radioactive materials, nano-materials, and micro-plastics).

Unacceptable environmental degradation and potential tipping points in Earth’s systems are likely if these ecological ceilings are exceeded. In fact, many of these have already been surpassed, and some of them could shift the planet into a new state with potentially disastrous consequences for humans. (People in richer countries are already living above the environmental ceiling.)

The inner limit of Raworth’s model comprises twelve dimensions of internationally agreed-upon minimum social standards (the United Nations’ 2015 Sustainable Development Goals): food, water/sanitation, energy, health, work/income, peace/justice, political voice, social equity, gender equality, housing, and networks. The actual doughnut itself is the environmentally safe and socially-just space in which humanity can thrive and prosper. Outside of the doughnut is to be avoided. (And in general, people in poorer countries are already beyond the safe zone’s inner limit.)

Can we apply the benefits of a Doughnut Economics model here

See **GREEN**, Page 7

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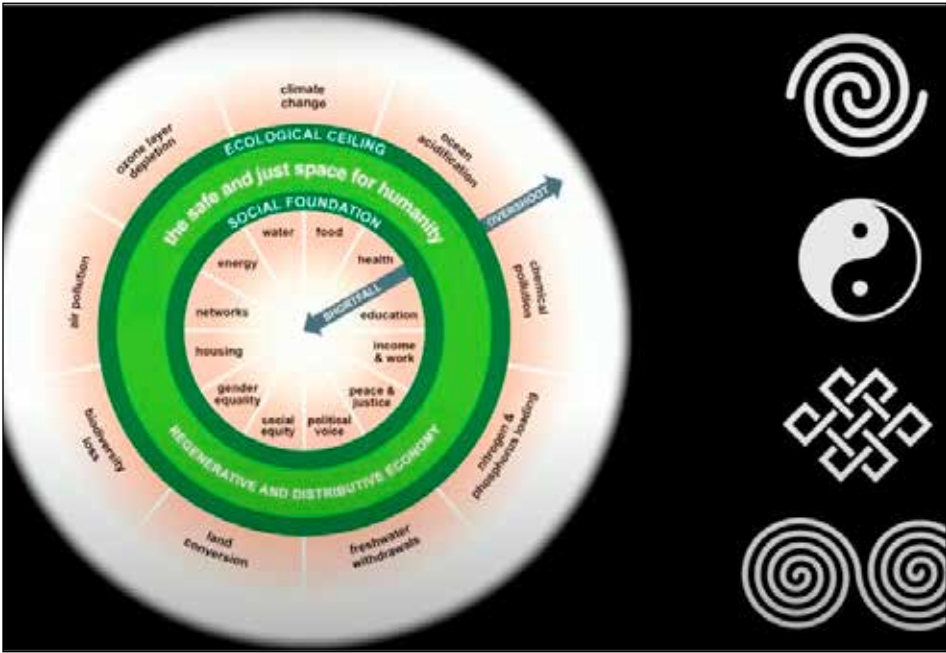
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Doughnut Economics is illustrated as a conventional doughnut shape of a squashed sphere, with a central hole as the inner limit.

Green

From Page 6

on Vashon Island? You bet we can — by delving into the model and learning enough to promote it. Raworth recommends starting with “seven ways to think,” each forming a chapter in her 2017 book:

- 1) Change our economic goals from a rising GDP to the Doughnut model.
- 2) See a bigger picture of an embedded instead of self-contained economy.
- 3) Nurture human nature, by moving from rational/economic to social/adaptable humans.
- 4) Get savvy with Earth’s dynamic systems/forget mechanical equilibrium.

- 5) Design to distribute goods/food with minimal environmental impact.
 - 6) Create to regenerate.
 - 7) Be agnostic about growth.
- We can share her model with relatives, friends and colleagues. We could combine Doughnut Economics with principles of a “circular economy,” which reduces, reuses and recycles materials across consumer goods, building materials and food.
- Many island initiatives, including the Vashon Tool Library, Vashon Care Network and others have already started along this path.
- The bottom line: We can work to get policies enacted that protect the environment and natural

resources, reduce social exclusion, promote social equity and guarantee good living standards for all.

Raworth nicely summarizes her theory by saying, “A healthy economy should be designed to thrive, not grow.” It is time to shed the old economic growth model and replace it with one more sustainable and equitable. Raworth’s model offers just that.

We invite you to visit Doughnut Economics Action Lab, at doughnut-economics.org for much more detail.

Steve Bergman is a geologist, Zero Waste Vashon and Vashon Makerspace board member and Whole Vashon Project advisor.

Horton

From Page 6

— as members and as volunteers.

Participate as a member and enjoy Village social events, trips off-island, walking groups, friendly check-ins. Members will decide what works best for their Village — including things we haven’t even thought of.

Volunteer and serve through everyday gestures — that little bit of help. For example, you might return a member’s library book, have recurring phone chats, change a lightbulb, walk a favorite path — or stake out a new one together.

Your current skill or talent? It is needed! That topic or task you kind of, sort of used to be good at? Maybe haven’t done in a while? Bring that along, cobwebs and all. You are needed, perhaps as both a member and a volunteer — if that suits your life right now, of course.

You don’t need me to tell you that there’s a lot of social capital on Vashon

and Maury: people are willing to help each other. I constantly marvel at the uncanny timing of the (often unsolicited) thoughtfulness and generosity that finds its way to The Senior Center. This support would be beautiful at any time, and it might be doubly wonderful considering how it seems to keep out-persisting this very persistent pandemic.

The Vashon Villages program presents an opportunity both to augment this Vashon spirit and to perpetuate it as time passes. Your involvement in the pilot program that is and will be the Vashon Villages is needed so that the program can take root, grow, and thrive in neighborhoods across Vashon and Maury for years to come.

Speaking of things to come: a proclamation, sponsored by Massachusetts Congressman Stephen Lynch, will designate Feb. 15 as National Village Day, and recognize the 20th anniversary of the first intentional aging-in-place village in the modern

Village movement, Beacon Hill Village, in Boston. In what we see as a bit of hopeful symmetry, our Vashon Villages program launches that same day. Please join us at the Senior Center for an outdoor ribbon-cutting featuring brief remarks and locally made treats.

Here are the details: the Vashon Villages Program Launch will take place at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at The Senior Center. Funding for this program is provided by the King County Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy.

There’s a lot to celebrate, including the possibilities that lie ahead. Whether or not it’s possible for you to be with us at the Senior Center on Feb. 15, please remember that you are needed. Let’s grow older together.

Evy Horton is the Senior Center’s Vashon Villages program manager. One of only two Americans with a Master of Science in Physical Activity for Health, Evy advocates for healthier futures for all. She is an anti-ageism activist.

Editorial

From Page 6

very hard to create with a common goal in mind, and there is a lot of personal investment that people have to the success of it.”

If he truly honors that creation, why, then, did he not insist that these all-important stakeholders be more informed and consulted about such a significant change?

Did any concerns about the passage of the schools’ levy factor into the timing of a broader announcement of these plans?

And why does the district even want to take on another program — managing the use of its buildings in off-hours — when it should be laser-focused, now more than ever, on educating its students?

These are questions not only for McSheehy and Holmes, but everyone else involved in this process, to answer before going any further with their plans.



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A freewheeling conversation with jazz legend, Diane Schuur

By **BRUCE PHARES**
For *The Beachcomber*

Editor's Note: Jazz fans, rejoice! Legendary vocalist Diane Schuur will return to the island for a concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 19, at Vashon Center for the Arts. Jazz bassist extraordinaire and recent Vashon arrival, Bruce Phares, in a duo with renowned pianist Jeremy Bacon, will open the show.

Phares recently sat down with Schuur to dish about music, Vashon connections and some of her grooviest gigs. Following are portions of their conversation — a *Beachcomber* exclusive.

She's released more than 25 albums and her jazz repertoire spans essences of Latin, gospel, pop and country music. Her most successful album, "Diane Schuur and the Count Basie Orchestra," remained #1 on the Billboard Jazz charts for 33 weeks.

Her career includes two Grammy Awards for Best Jazz Vocal Performance, and she has scored three additional Grammy nominations for subsequent albums, "Pure Schurr," and "Love Songs," as well as for the individual track, "The Christmas Song." Her album with BB King also reached #1 on the Billboard Jazz charts.

She has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center and The White House and she was Johnny Carson's guest on the tonight show at least 11 times. A respected educator conducting clinics and master classes for students of all ages, she was awarded the Helen Keller Achievement Award by the American Foundation for the Blind.

When you attend a Diane Schuur concert, the first thing you experience is that Deedles (as she is now known) wants to connect with her audience.



Jazz legend Diane Schuur is no stranger to Vashon — she recorded her first album on the island.

She wants the love she has for singing to felt by the audience, and she wants to feel the love back. Her commanding presence is amplified by her total transparency for who she is.

It was my great honor to back Diane in a number of performances in the past with our mentor in common, the legendary Overton Berry. Performing as an accompanist for her amazing musicality, her enthusiasm and just pure love for the music, is exhilarating not just for the audience, but for her fellow musicians as well.

Connecting with

audiences and musicians alike is what Deedles does better than anything else, and after five illustrious decades, she's still doing it on records and in concert.

Well, welcome Deedles, how're you doin' these days?

I'm okay, Brucy. You know, I'm doin' some gigs ... Jazz at Lincoln Center in Dizzy's Club ... a gig in Portland, then I'm coming to Vashon on Feb. 19!

I had a chance to listen to your new album, *Running on Faith*, it was just fantastic! It feels deeply affectionate.

I wanted to bring comfort and hope to myself



Jazz bassist Bruce Phares interviewed his friend Diane Schuur in advance of her upcoming concert at VCA.

and to all of us because of these crazy times. What's crazy, Brucy, is that COVID hadn't even hit yet [when we began recording]. And yet some of the songs are so appropriate. Songs like "The Danger Zone" and "Walking on a Tightrope." It's interesting how it all came about and how it all evolved.

So, now you're back on the road and you're bringing some wonderful musicians with you as well. Bruce Lett on bass, and Kendall Kay on drums. I mean those guys are super tasty.

Yeah, they're great musicians and really cool cats. We've worked together all over the world. They'll be with me on Vashon, as well. And I'm really glad that you and your pianist, Jeremy Bacon, will be able to warm up the seats for us.

Well, it's going to be a delight and an honor after all these years. You've played Vashon before, where you are just simply so loved.

I love coming back. You know, I'll have to do at least one tune that [the late] Overton [Berry] and I did — I call him Bear, Overton Bear — because he sat in with us the last

performance I did on Vashon.

The emotional impact of when Overton and you sat in together and sang and played together ... It left a mark here, Deeds. Just huge.

Oh, well thank you. I appreciate that.

My quartet did a concert when VCA first opened up again, and it was fantastic. The people were so ready to get back out there. Are you experiencing that as well?

They're so hungry. I really could feel that a lot.

You have roots in Auburn, Tacoma, and Seattle — that's where you were before you hit stardom. Did you ever make trips to Vashon when you were younger?

I recorded an album there! [Islander] Bob Krinsky produced it, and the album is "Pilot of my Destiny."

Your first album!

Yeah, that was done on Vashon Island. Ha-ha. I remember getting into a big argument with Bobby about some stupid thing, and I decided to take my skinny ass body — you know, I just ran away from his house and wound up in the brambles! Hahaha... There were thorns, and all that kind of stuff ... And yet, I still managed to record some more! Ha-ha!

I'll say! In your more than 50-year career, you've recorded how many albums?

Oh, about 24 albums. That doesn't include Collections One and Two.

Looking back, who were your most memorable mentors?

Well, of course, you know, Stan Getz brought me to the White House. I hadn't really hit it big until I got with GRP Records [for the album "Deedles" in 1984]. So, in '82 I did an all-star jazz performance with Stan Getz, Chick

Corea, Dizzy Gillespie and a bunch of other people at the White House. That's on the website [dianeschuur.com].

One of the people that I listened to, early on, was Earl Bostic. My mom and dad bought [his record] at Sears Roebuck and Company, and I think the price of the album was \$2.98, and it had a just wonderful... what is that... "Harlem Nocturne"...

Yeah, he did a famous version of "Harlem Nocturne."

My strongest vocal influence, of course, as you probably know, was Dinah Washington.

Your career has crossed a lot of paths. I'll toss a few names your way and you tell me what comes to mind. "Doc" Severinsen:

Oh, he told me I wasn't ready for stardom! And he wasn't wrong [at the time]. But we were on the tonight show 11 times. I guess that's something!

Frank Sinatra:

I went to Palm Spring to work with Frank Sinatra [in 1988]. I replaced Liza Minelli. When we would go down to breakfast [at the Sinatra Compound], every morning, Quincy Jones would come up to me and he'd go "Deeds, are you livin' large?"

BB King:

He introduced me to my first veggie burger!

Hahaha! Well, Deeds, I am so honored I get to open for you on Feb. 19, at VCA. By the way, I'll be playing my solo piece I wrote called "Overton," in honor of our mutual friend.

Oh, I really want to hear your segment; it'll give me even more prerogative to kick ass!

I know you're going to come out swinging. That's for sure!

Get tickets for Diane Schuur's Feb. 19 concert at vashoncenterforthearts.org.

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It's Your History February 10, 2022

Music and Art Study Club, 1923
By Bruce Haulman and Mike Sudduth

This Thursday evening's Museum Talk features Island Poet Laureates Ann Spiers and Sandra Noel discussing the role of poetry on Vashon and the development of the Vashon Poet Laureate. The January 1923 annual open meeting of the Vashon Music and Art Study Club featured a musical introduction by Mrs. Martin L. Tjomsland (at this time newspapers identified women by their husband's name, not their own), and a talk by P. Monroe Smock on "The Finer Arts."

Smock discussed the "different forms of art: form, color, music, and poetry," and concluded with a discussion of American poetry emphasizing "Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier, Holmes, Poe, Riley, Carlton, and others." Smock felt that while "in form, color, and music perhaps Europe leads, but in the fourth of the finer arts – poetry – America is well represented."

The meeting was held "in the beautiful Selvin mansion, which is the home of Mr. and Mrs. W.R. Nichols," and concluded with a piano solo by Miss. Lois Berringer.

You can purchase Bruce Haulman's *A Brief History of Vashon Island* at the Heritage Museum and at the Vashon Bookshop.

This Feature Proudly Sponsored by: Tyler - Vashon Pharmacy
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A play, ‘The Exonerated,’ shines a light on the wrongfully convicted

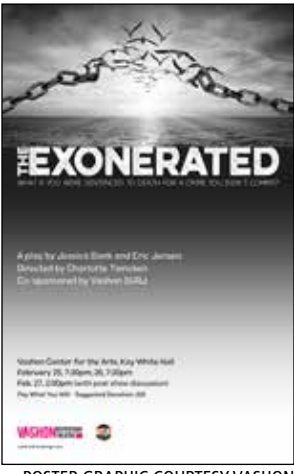
Islander Amanda Knox to speak after Feb. 26 performance

By **SUSAN MCCABE**
For Vashon Repertory Theatre

What if you were sentenced to death for a crime you didn’t commit? It’s surprising how often innocent people are sentenced to death in this country. For those who manage to win in court after years of appeals, the damage done by their time on death row is incalculable.

This month, Vashon Repertory Theatre (VRT) will stage three performances of the play “The Exonerated,” which tells the stories of six people who collectively spent more than 100 years on death row before being exonerated for crimes they did not commit.

The production,



POSTER GRAPHIC COURTESY VASHON REPERTORY THEATRE

The playwrights of “The Exonerated,” Erik Jensen and Jessica Blank, based their characters on extensive interviews with real people.

co-sponsored by the Criminal Justice Action Team of the Vashon-Maury chapter of SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) will take place at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Feb. 25 and 26, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb.

27, in the Kay White Hall of Vashon Center for the Arts. Playwrights Erik Jensen and Jessica Blank based their characters on extensive interviews with real people.

The result is a play that illuminates some of the most egregious and urgent flaws in the American justice system while affirming that its frequent undue criminalization of innocent, marginalized people amounts to a state-committed atrocity. The characters in “The Exonerated,” like their real-life counterparts, display the strength of their humanity even under the immense pressure of life on death row, with humor and beauty in some of the most inconceivably bleak situations.

New York Times critic Ken Jaworowski wrote, “There’s a distinct sound made by audience members watching “The

Exonerated.” It’s a sharp exhale, part incredulous, part angry, and delivered with a wince or a shake of the head. That sound is a visceral reaction to stories of people unjustly sentenced to die. It staves off the compulsion to cry out, or maybe just to cry.”

Each performance will be followed by a talkback with the audience.

On Friday night, the cast will discuss their connections with the characters.

On Saturday night, Amanda Knox, exonerated after four years in an Italian prison from a wrongful murder conviction, will discuss her work with “The Innocence Project.”

Following the Sunday matinee, a panel of three experts will participate in an audience discussion about the United States justice system past and present. They are Michele Storms, executive director of ACLU Washington;

David Heppard, executive director of the WA Freedom Project, and Lara Zarowsky, executive and policy director of the Washington State Innocence Project.

Performing in the play are islanders Gary Gauger, Anthony Winkler, Catherine MacNeal, Dedra Whitt and Maria Glanz. Former islanders Meghan Ames, Harris Levinson and Christopher Kehoe are also cast in the show, as are other actors from the mainland: Delbert Tibbs, Robert Earl Hayes

and Rowin Breaux.

To guarantee seating to “The Exonerated,” patrons may purchase tickets in advance at vashoncenter-forthearts.org. Walk-up admission will be pay-what-you-will, with a suggested donation of \$25 while seats remain. Patrons are required to show vaccine certification and wear masks.

An advisory for parents: The material in this play is sometimes dark and is not suitable for children under 13.

Poet laureates share their wisdom in Heritage Museum talk

By **ELIZABETH SHEPHERD**
arts@vashonbeachcomber.com

Two esteemed and accomplished poets, Ann Spiers and Sandra Noel, will share their insights and perspectives on Vashon Island’s embrace of poetry, in a talk that will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, on Zoom.

The conversation, “Vashon Poet Laureates: The Importance of Poetry in the Life of a Small Community,” is free for all, but pre-registration is required.

Spiers was the inaugural Poet Laureate of Vashon Island. She served



L. ZAHAVA PHOTO
Vashon’s current poet laureate, Sandra Noel.

as Vashon Audubon president and as the Land Trust’s staff overseeing volunteer stewards and compiling property baselines. She stewards the

Vashon Poetry Post in the Village Green and writes signage for Vashon’s many conservation parks. For almost 30 years, she’s met with friends at Mondays at Three, to share haiku. Her 2021-22 poetry books include “Rain Violent” (Empty Bowl), “Back Cut” (Black Heron), and “Harpoon” (Ravenna Triple Series). See AnnSpiers.com for more information about her life and works.

Noel works as a freelance illustrator and graphic designer developing environmental education posters, brochures, exhibits and interpretive signs. She is Poet Laureate for Vashon

Island for 2021-23. Her poems have appeared in “Buddhist Poetry Review,” “Elohi Gadugi Journal,” and other journals. Chapbooks include “The Gypsy in my Kitchen” and “Into the Green” (Finishing Line Press), “The River” (Kelsay Press), “Unraveling the Endless Knot” (Middle Creek Publishing & Audio), and a full-length poetry book, “Love, Island” (Goldfish Press). More information about her life and work can be found at www.noeldesigninterp.com.

Register to attend the talk, hosted by Tom Amorose, at tinyurl.com/faprw75.

‘Late in the Game’ is latest in play-reading series

By **SUSAN MCCABE**
For Vashon Repertory Theatre

Northwest playwright Y York can’t stop writing award-winning plays.

She’s been doing that for nearly 40 years, and she’s lending one of her newest works to Vashon Repertory Theatre’s (VRT) Incubator play-reading series, to be performed at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 21, in the lobby at Vashon Center for the Arts (VCA).

“Late in the Game” introduces audiences to the character of Melissa, who is reckless because she’s going to die anyway. Her friend Flo is worried that her husband Tim is going to run off with his young secretary. Tim just wants to lose ten pounds and get a good night’s sleep. Harvey thinks that all women are interchangeable — until he meets the one who isn’t. Dying is no excuse for not living in this New York comedy of middle-aged

love, marriage, and crime.

The reading will star Vashon’s own Mik Kuhlman as Melissa; Tami Brockway Joyce as her friend Flo, with Toby Nichols and Matt Wilson portraying the men in their lives.

Director Samantha Sherman and VRT’s producing artistic director, Charlotte Tiencken, will stay for a talkback session with the audience after the reading. The idea is to collect and pass along valuable audience feedback to the playwright.

VRT’s Incubator Series

will run through May, with VRT presenting staged readings of new scripts by local island and Pacific Northwest playwrights on the third Monday on each month. Island playwright Trista Baldwin curates the series, with the hope that these plays, fully staged, will find their way into a future VRT season.

So far, audiences have been treated to Kat Eggleston’s “Droelin,” based on Irish folklore about the Winter Wren, and “Kichi In The Woods of Present Memory,” by Bryan Willis, about the dramatic

fate of three shipwrecked Japanese sailors who floated from Japan to Neah Bay in the mid-1800s.

The next reading, after “Late in the Game,” will take place at 7 p.m. Monday, March 21. It will be a reading of “Unnamed,” by T.D. Mitchell. All readings take place at Vashon Center for the Arts.

All performances are pay-what-you-will at the door, with a \$10 suggested donation. All patrons must present proof of COVID-19 vaccination, and masks are required during the reading.

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ARTS BRIEFS

Movies at Mukai Farm & Garden

Experience Japanese cinema at Mukai Farm & Garden, when “Inuyashiki” screens at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10. All ages may attend, but those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. There is a limit on the number of attendees and all must provide proof of COVID vaccination. The event is free, with a suggested donation of \$10.

Children’s Film Festival Seattle returns

Children’s Film Festival Seattle, a celebration of

international films for children, returns Feb. 11 to 20, with in-person screenings at Northwest Film Forum, in Seattle, and also an option to view all programs virtually from the comfort of home. Audiences can see the world and feed their minds with films that champion racial equity, diversity, inclusivity, social justice, global awareness, and the best in visual storytelling for young people. Find out more at childrens-filmfestivalseattle.org.

Salish Sea Early Music Festival

Salish Sea Early Music Festival will present



ERNIE SAPIRO PHOTO

‘The Voice’ finalist Zan Fiskum will perform in concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 12 at VCA.

the premiere of a pre-recorded online concert, beginning at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 11, and continuing to be available online for some time. The concert is free, with no tickets or advance

registration required, and will include early 17th-century repertoire for dulcian, or renaissance bassoon (played by Anna Marsh), theorbo and lute (played by John Lenti) and renaissance flute (played by Jeffrey Cohan), with music by composers Buonamente, Merula, Sweelinck, Castello, Cima, Selma y Salaverde and others. Find out more at salishseafestival.org.

‘The Voice’ Finalist Zan Fiskum

Singer and songwriter Zan Fiskum will perform in concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 12 at VCA. Fiskum made her television debut on Season 18 of “The Voice,” becoming

a top nine finalist. She has received praise from Maggie Rogers, of Billboard Magazine and continued to work with her coach, John Legend, as she recorded her debut album, “Sleeping Problems.”

At the age of 12, Fiskum departed from classical music training to experiment with her own songwriting. She soon went on to release her first six singles and achieved more than 2 million streams on Spotify alone. Since appearing on “The Voice,” she has formed her band and written and released her debut album “Sleeping Problems.” She has since found herself performing in iconic Northwest venues such as The Moore



SUSAN HARRIS PHOTO

LeRoy Bell will perform with his band at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 18, at VCA.

Theater, The Triple Door and Sasquatch. Get tickets at vashoncenterforthearts.org.

LeRoy Bell and His Only Friends

LeRoy Bell, an accomplished and well-traveled singer and songwriter, will perform with his band at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 18, at VCA. As part of the duo Bell and James, Bell had a top-15 pop single, “Livin’ It Up (Friday Night),” and composed songs for Teddy Pendergrass, Gladys Knight, and two hit singles for Elton John. In 2020, Bell partnered with G.E. Smith (bandleader at NL ‘85-’95) to release an album as a duo, “Stony Hill,” on BMG.

Get tickets at vashon-centerforthearts.org.

‘Solitude_The Exhibition’ is extended

The run of an immersive multimedia exhibit by Julia Wilkins, on view at Open Space for Arts & Community, has been extended through Feb. 20. In the installation, plaster bodies twist and dance across the exhibit walls while music by Qasim Naqvi echoes through the air. Films of dance and movement, playing on built-in screens, create shifting visuals. To find out more about specific installation hours and times, visit openspacevashon.com.

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Friends of Mukai bring new life to fruit barreling plant

BY JENNA DENNISON
jdennison@
vashonbeachcomber.com

Friends of Mukai, the non-profit group dedicated to the operation of the Mukai Farm & Garden, is looking for prospective tenants to occupy space in its fruit barreling plant as part of its campaign to restore and bring new activity to the plant.

The fruit barreling plant was originally used by the Mukai family to process and pack their strawberry harvest. The building includes 5,200 square feet of internal space, as well as a 1,530 square foot covered veranda. In restoring and bringing new activity to the plant, Friends of Mukai envisions a range of possible uses for the space, such as retail, food/beverage, arts, and non-profit or for-profit businesses.

“We would love to see a range of creative, implementable and sustainable ideas for potential uses of the fruit barreling plant from individuals and organizations who are in a position to make those ideas into a reality,” said Renee Roman, the Friends of Mukai Board member who is spearheading the



PHOTO COURTESY MUKAI FARM & GARDEN
The fruit barreling plant is a historic, 85-year-old building.

restoration effort.

Those interested in operating at the historic barreling plant are invited to obtain a Request for Information (RFI) by writing to info@mukai-farmandgarden.org.

The RFI provides background about the building and seeks information from prospective tenants about their concept and background. After screening all proposed concepts, Mukai will contact a “shortlist” of potential tenants. Friends of Mukai seeks responses only from individuals and organizations who have relevant

experience and financial means to assure a successful, sustainable tenancy.

An open house will be held on Sunday, March 13 to allow prospective tenants to tour the facility and ask additional questions. Responses to the RFI are due by Friday, April 15, and shortlisted tenants will be notified the first week of June. If fundraising for the project is successful, construction will be complete at the end of 2023.

The project costs for the renovation of the Fruit Barreling Plant, an

85-year-old building, will be funded through a combination of government grants as well as philanthropic and community contributions. The restoration of the building is also the third and final major phase of restoration to Mukai Farm & Gardens. Tenants

and developers would be responsible for a negotiated monthly lease and for tenant improvements with the lease rate at or below market value.

“Over the last several years, Mukai has grown as a community asset, offering classes, cultural events, and educational

resources that celebrate community diversity, our immigrant stories and Japanese American history on Vashon Island,” said Roman. “We are excited about the opportunity to enhance our offerings by creating a renewed purpose for the fruit barreling plant.”

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Coach says: Kaitlyn is a force to be reckoned with. She is an extremely hard-worker, an inquisitive question-asker, and a consistent butt-kicker. Kaitlyn has had a successful season so far in leading the girls' team, placing in every tournament that she has competed in. She has single handedly jump-started the VHS girls' program, and Kaitlyn will definitely be missed next year.

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Crime

From Page 3

Cohousing on Tuesday, Feb. 1 — the same night it was taken. A friend notified Coghlan that his truck was in the lot on the afternoon of Thursday, Feb. 3, and they picked it up later that night. There was no damage to the

vehicle.
Another vehicle was also reported stolen from SW Quartermaster Drive on Monday, Jan. 31. According to King County Sheriff’s Office Community Engagement Specialist Manny Apostol Jr., the stolen vehicle was found unoccupied on SW Bachelor Road on Tuesday, Feb. 1. No arrests were made and the vehicle was

released back to its rightful owner.
The Beachcomber contacted the vehicle’s owner, who declined to comment.
On the same day, Tuesday, Feb. 1, islander Dinah Lindberg Helgeson had a prowler come to the front porch of her home on SW Bachelor Road at around 2:15 a.m. The individual,

who was wearing a distinctive fur coat, was seen on Helgeson’s Ring security system. According to Helgeson, this is the second time in several years her home has been prowled. She didn’t know if anything was taken on Feb. 1, but it appeared that the person was “just looking for things,” said Helgeson.
Helgeson also said she

thinks she was able to scare off the individual by yelling through her Ring system. She also called the police, who responded to her home within 15 to 20 minutes. She described the police response as being “fabulous,” and commended the greater community for their response after the event.
“The support from this community has been

unbelievable,” said Helgeson.
However, Helgeson reported that she has spotted the same individual who prowled her home at the Tahlequah ferry dock parking lot. She said she called the King County Sheriff’s non-emergency line, but was told by the police that they could not respond because nothing from her house had been stolen.

COVID

From Page 1

the online data dashboard operated by Public Health — Seattle & King County (PHSKC). Names and other details on patients are private and not released by Public Health.

As a bulletin from Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department pointed out, the Pierce County case rate has been declining and the agency projects that the drop will continue. It’s a regional trend of case rate improvement. However, the Tacoma-Pierce County bulletin put it this way last week: “The worst COVID-19 outcomes tend to lag behind the case peaks, and that’s what we’re seeing now. While we anticipated this good news, we also expected the bad news to follow. We’re reporting 64 deaths from COVID-19 in last week’s statistics.”

Demographics: Vashon’s Young People Most Affected

During January, the COVID case rate among youth ages 5 through 18 was about 1,000 cases per

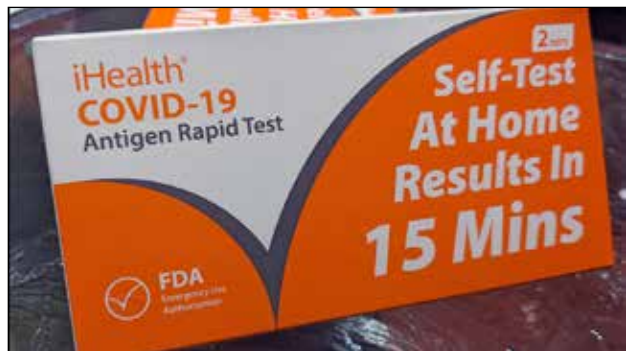
100,000 people. That’s four times the rate for adults.
“We can’t be certain about why Vashon’s young people are catching COVID at such a high rate compared to adults,” said Dr. Zach Miller, the lead infectious disease specialist for Vashon’s volunteer Medical Reserve Corps. “There are probably layers of factors. The School District log of cases shows that the raw number of cases in the school population has thankfully been declining weekly, although two-thirds of all cases in the island’s school-age children occurred just in January, and weekly case counts remain at a high level. It seems likely that COVID was spreading as young people gathered before and after school and on weekends, outside the highly controlled classroom environment.”
MRC contact tracing interviews with families and a large number of youth infections compared to adult infections suggest that young people are one factor contributing to the unprecedented spike of Omicron spread on Vashon during January.
The school district intensified testing for the wrestling teams at Vashon High School and McMurray

Middle School last week. Two coaches tested positive and, as the wrestlers continue training practices in preparation for upcoming competitions, there will be daily testing for a week. In addition to the daily testing with rapid tests, the school district requested a round of PCR testing by the MRC for roughly 10 student wrestlers who have not previously tested positive in the past 90 days.

Millions of Test Kits Now Arriving: Be Strategic

A massive campaign to get test kits into homes has been launched by the federal and Washington state governments.
Use your free tests if you or a member of your household has symptoms of COVID, or if you believe you have been exposed to someone who has COVID. Here’s what to do if you test positive:
• Isolate at home, even if you are vaccinated, following directions from your healthcare provider.
• Do not expose others by going to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation or ridesharing.
• Do your best to protect other household members by keeping to a single room and, if available, using a separate bathroom.
• Especially, stay well away from anyone who

might be at high risk, such as seniors or people undergoing medical treatments that compromise their immune system.
• Call ahead before going to the doctor and request to be evaluated over the phone or in a video call to avoid exposing healthcare staff and other patients.
• Get medical help right away if your symptoms get worse and you have, for example, trouble breathing. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, tell the dispatch staff that you have COVID-19 symptoms.
• Call the Vashon MRC helpline (844-469-4554) to get more detailed advice about keeping yourself and those around you safe.
• Following the MRC guidance, let potential exposures know you have tested positive. MRC can help you make a list. Generally, close contact means you were within six feet of someone for 15 minutes or more in any given 24 hour period.
Here’s how to get free home test kits:
• Request four kits from the federal government at COVIDtests.gov.
• Get five more kits from the state program at SayYesCOVIDhomeTest.org. The state program has run out of kits but does resupply so keep checking back if at first unsuccessful.
• Check with your health insurance provider to find out what prepaid or



RICK WALLACE PHOTO

Boxes like this one have started arriving in Vashon mailboxes. The free kits can be used to screen for COVID infection.

reimbursement options it offers for test kits.

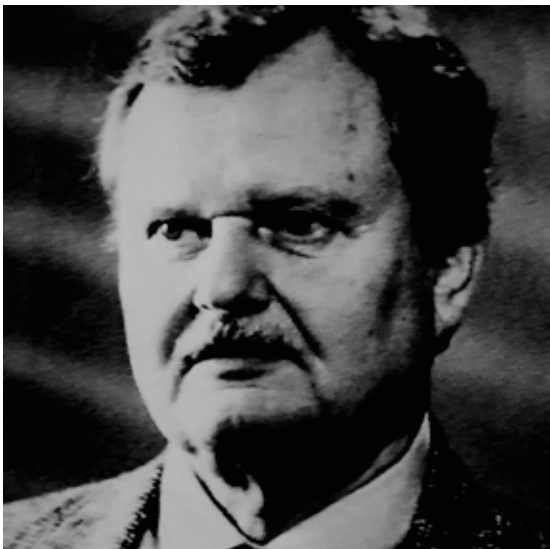
Latest Vashon COVID Statistics

Source: Public Health — Seattle & King County (PHSKC) and Vashon EOC. These statistics are considered to be understated. They do not include all recent Vashon cases, due to the lag in posting of data to the PHSKC COVID-19 dashboard, especially given the current Omicron variant spike. They are also missing some of the home testing data because there is no comprehensive system to collect it. Hospitalizations may include some patients who tested positive for COVID on admission for other reasons.
720 = Total COVID cases for Vashon residents since the pandemic began.
36 = New cases reported since the last weekly report (110 new cases in 14 days).
13 = Patients hospitalized since the pandemic began.

5 = Deaths since the pandemic began.
92.2% = percentage of Vashon residents age 5+ who have been fully vaccinated, compared to 83.5% of the total King County 5+ population.
70.2% = percentage of Vashon residents age 12+ who have their booster doses.
63.2% = percentage of Vashon residents age 5 to 11 with first doses of vaccine (57.6% have completed the series)
For King County, the PHSKC dashboard for the last 30 days says unvaccinated people are 2.1 times more likely to get COVID, 13 times more likely to be hospitalized for COVID 16 times more likely to die of COVID.
For more resources, visit VashonBePrepared.org. Sign up at tinyurl.com/4smk364m to receive updates from the group, and/or visit VashonBePrepared on Facebook.

Hans F.W. Stierle

DECEMBER 9, 1932 - FEBRUARY 5, 2022



Hans Stierle was a resident of Vashon at one time, loving both the island and its residents. While living on Vashon, he was an engaged citizen, including contributing articles to The Beachcomber.

He was many things to tens of thousands of people, among them good friends Sigi Schmid, Eric Wynalda Pele and Landon Donovan. Hans and four other individuals created the most successful soccer league in America and it remains strong today. The American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) was launched in 1964., The motto was: “Every child plays regardless of skill level.”

Hans served the AYSO from 1964 to 1976. He designed the current logo and, in 1991, he was named in Soccer America Magazine as one “20 Men of Influence.”

Surviving his passing are his wife, Christel, whom he wed on October 20, 1962, and children, Paul (wife Elizabeth), Kurt, and Heidi (husband Mike), six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Hans enjoyed sharing his marketing expertise with his grandchildren as they would sit beside him in his office and create innocent works of art – an activity which he adored watching.

His children enjoyed viewing together their favorite sport of soccer and the house would rumble with laughter and sometimes screams of disapproval when a ref made a bad call. Regardless, they would sit closely in a small room with a big TV and watch Major League Soccer, Premier League and World Cup games.

Hans was drafted into the Army in 1953 where he soon became the player/coach/manager of the 62nd AAA Battalion soccer team. As a result of this team’s success, they were invited to tryouts for the US Olympic Team.

Hans was inducted into the soccer National Hall of Fame in 1996.

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Sunday services are being held virtually at 11am
The Zoom Link for all Sunday Services:
<https://www.viuf.org/sunday/>
Lewis Hall
(Behind Burton Community Church)
23905 Vashon Hwy SW
Info: **www.VIUF.org**

Bethel Church
14736 Bethel Lane SW
10:00 am Sunday Service
You’re Invited!
www.bethel-efc.org
Office: **(206) 567-4255**

Vashon Friends Worship Group
(Quakers)
2nd & 4th Sundays at the House at Mukai Farm & Garden
18017-107th Ave. SW
During Covid call for online link: (206) 567-5279 or (206) 463-5255

Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit
Now open for worship on Sundays.
First service, Rite 1 is at 8 am.
Second service, Rite 2 is now at 9:30 am.
We are following all the protocols at our services for Covid-19.
Still live streaming Facebook at 9:30 am for congregants who cannot attend.
15420 Vashon Hwy SW

Vashon Island Community Church
9318 SW Cemetery Road
Worship Service 10:00 am
(Children welcome, nursery available)
Midweek groups for adults, youth, women & men
Office Phone **463-3940**
Pastors:
Mike Ivaska and Tyler Winters
For more info: **www.vashonchurch.com**

Vashon Havurah
Serving Vashon’s Jewish community
Torah study is on Zoom: 9:30 am
Saturday mornings. Link on website.
15401 Westside Highway SW
PO Box 89, Vashon 98070
www.vashonhavurah.org

Vashon Lutheran Church
God’s love is inclusive, abundant and to be lived and shared.
YOU ARE WELCOME
Rev. Dr. Joel Kutzke
463-2655
18623 Vashon Hwy. SW
www.vashonluthernchurch.org

Vashon Presbyterian Church
Sunday Worship 10:00 am
17708 Vashon Hwy (center of town)
Pastor Leigh Weber
Church Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
463-2010
www.vashonpreschurch.org

Calvary Full Gospel Church at Lisabeula
13107 SW 220th St.
Worship 10:30 am – Evening Worship TBD
Thursday Bible Study 7:00 pm
Call for location
Saturday Prayer 7:30 pm
Pastor Steve Sears
463-2567

Vashon United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. Mark Wagner
10:00am on Sundays
Tues 10 am Men’s Coffee • Wed 10:30am Bible Study
ZOOM via FB or Contact VUMC
office@vashonmethodist.org
www.vashonmethodist.org
(206) 259-1832

Our Vashon Island Community warmly invites you and your family to worship with them.

DIANA SPALDING



Long time Island resident and community member Diana Spalding passed away on November 7th, 2021, at the age of 86. Diana was born on March 4, 1935, in Los Angeles, California, to Laura and Morris Spalding. Diana is survived by her children Laura and Volney; grandchildren Alyson, Jessie, Katy, Volney Jr. and Brent; and great grandson Aiden.

Diana moved to Vashon with her family in 1961 and quickly made it her home. She was a caring, dedicated and active member of the Island community for more than six decades. As the activities director at the Vashon Island Community Care Center for 26 years she kept community members singing and dancing with her keyboard playing. Diana was a proud deacon and choir member at the Vashon Presbyterian Church, an energetic member of the Vashon Red Hat Society, and diligently led a women's weekly therapy group.

Diana's door was always open, she was a fierce believer that a dinner table could always be longer and a house could always have at least one more animal. She loved music, and could often be heard singing Beatles songs or church hymns. Diana enjoyed cheering on the Seattle Mariners, antiquing and browsing the shelves of the Vashon Island Library.

Please join Diana's family and loved ones in celebrating her rich and compassionate life on March 5th at the Presbyterian Church at 3pm. We ask that all those in attendance wear a mask and follow WA State health and safety guidelines.

Mary Loucinda “Lou” Johnson Shepherd

OCTOBER 19, 1930 - FEBRUARY 1, 2022



Lou Shepherd, a talented educator, contributor to worthy causes, and loving friend to many, died on Feb. 1, at St. Anne's Hospital in Burien, Washington.

She was 91 years old.

Her death was caused by heart problems following surgery to repair a broken hip, after a fall at her daughter's home on Vashon Island, Washington.

Her life's trajectory, spanning the Great Depression into the new millennium, propelled her from her birthplace in rural, northeast Texas, across the Midwest. Her last 24 years were spent in Champaign, Illinois.

Lou was born in 1930, the fifth child of 42-year-old parents, Mary Bledsoe Johnson and Fred McCormick Johnson, of Clarksville, Texas. In their home, she learned all the intricate skills of the farmhouse kitchen, as well as how to knit, embroider and expertly sew her own garments.

Even as a young child, Lou rode her horse nine miles to attend school in town.

At age 16, she was valedictorian of her class at Clarksville High School and enrolled in Northwest Oklahoma State University, in Alva, Oklahoma, as a math and chemistry major. She graduated in 1951 — the same year she married classmate Richard E. (Dick) Shepherd. Their loving partnership lasted for almost four decades, until Dick's death in 1988.

As newlyweds, they taught in Ashland, Kansas, where Lou made math class so fun that she still received fan mail from former students in the months before she died. Their memories brought her great joy. The growing family moved to Satanta, Kingman and then Topeka, Kansas.

After her children were in school, she returned to teaching and tutoring trigonometry and calculus. Her classroom management skills made her a highly sought-after substitute teacher in Topeka, Kansas high schools. As a math tutor, she gave many struggling students the hand up they needed to achieve academic success.

She was the mother of Cindy and Elizabeth Shepherd, born in 1956 and 1958, and a master of mid-century mothering — sewing their clothes, baking bread and providing an example of civic involvement in schools, church, service organizations and politics.

She supported her husband's work for the Kansas National Education Association, hosting gatherings in their home and leading groups on summer “teacher tours” around the world.

After a move to Oklahoma City, she worked as executive assistant to her husband, who then directed a nonprofit organization for older Americans and later formed The Shepherd Company, a consultancy on issues of aging in America. During this period, Dick and Lou attended a reception at the White House for advocates in this area.

Throughout her life, Lou formed enduring friendships. She was a born networker: dynamic, charismatic and gregarious, brightening any social situation.

She was also an expert storyteller, with a sharp, sideways wit.

She had an abiding faith, a practice of daily prayer, and a strong moral code, first formed in the Presbyterian country church of her childhood. She served as one of the first women elders in her denomination, and supported her daughter, Cindy, as she pursued seminary and ordination. She knew the Presbyterian hymns by heart, and rose to sing them with gusto.

She also loved the written word and the arts, especially the theatrical, and inspired her daughter Elizabeth's long career in arts enterprises and journalism.

Her life was framed by luminous generosity. She will forever shine on in the hearts of those who stepped into her bright light here on earth.

Lou is survived by her daughters, Cindy Shepherd, of Champaign, Illinois, and Elizabeth Shepherd, of Vashon, Washington, her sons-in-laws Tim Hartin and Tom Hughes; grandchildren Christian Reed (Lisa Reed), Rachel Reed (Andrew Klein), Caleb Reed, Ellie Hughes and Isaac Hughes; and great-grandchildren, Shepherd Reed and Wesley Reed. She was the honorary grandmama to Sean Hartin and her great-niece, Eryn Dollins. She was predeceased by her parents, brothers, sisters and husband.

A celebration of Lou's life will take place in Champaign, Illinois. Donations in her memory may be made to the Richard E. and Lou J. Shepherd Scholarship of Northwest Oklahoma State University, which is given to aspiring teachers studying math, science and chemistry (ournorthwestern.org).

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VASHON PARK DISTRICT

CONTRACTORS WANTED

Vashon Park District is accepting applications for its Small Works Roster.

All interested contractors should contact Maintenance Director Shawn Gatemán for application packet:

sgateman@vashonparks.org

Vashon Park District Public Notice Date 2/10/22

VASHON PARK DISTRICT

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE LABORER

Vashon Park District is accepting applications for two (2) seasonal maintenance laborers.

This is a temporary position with an hourly wage of \$21.04 DOE.

The position will assist staff with maintenance of parks and athletic fields. Benefits are not included.

The qualified applicant must have a current Washington State Driver's License and pass a drug test. Candidates must be able to physically meet the challenges of the position.

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Heidi Grimsley (206)-660-6871

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I have called Vashon home for over 35 years. My family moved here in the late 60's and I was fortunate enough to have a magical childhood with many days spent playing in the forest, roaming the local beaches and swimming at Jensen Beach. I am thankful to have the opportunity to raise my son in the same, magical place.

As a Realtor®, my focus is assisting my clients reach their personal goals of buying or selling a home to start a new chapter. I take pride in knowing that my Vashon roots help me introduce new people to the island while they are looking for a place to plant their own roots.

When I am not wearing my Realtor hat, I am spending time with my family. We enjoy hiking the trails at Judd Creek, Shinglemill and Frog Holler. Beachcombing at Lisabuela and Fern Cove. Or, fishing for salmon in the summer. Mostly, we spend a lot of time in our garden growing vegetables and flowers, playing with our 4 dogs and being entertained by our flock of chickens.

Heidi



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Marjon McDermott
(206) 817-7437

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