

**News and feature articles:**

All articles submitted to Key Peninsula News must have editor's prior approval in order to avoid duplicated or inappropriate stories. Content is limited to Key Peninsula issues unless area-wide events affect the local community—in which case the connection must be clear in the article. Submissions must follow standard newspaper style and must be spell-checked and contain correct grammar. All submissions are subject to editing for content, clarity, Associated Press style, and length as necessary. Refer to *Writing Tips* addendum for suggestions on writing story leads, headlines etc.

Stories should not contain any unverified or biased information—if you'd like to share your opinion, write an editorial or a column! If the opinion belongs to the person you interviewed for the story, attribute that opinion in form of a quote. Sources should be quoted as needed, and at least two sources should be used for stories that may be controversial or need to show both sides. Refer to the tips section on how to quote sources. (Stories submitted by experts in their fields or on behalf of an organization do not require quoted sources—refer to the "Sources" section in the Writing Tips addendum for details).

Most stories should be no longer than 500 words, although longer stories may be submitted with approval. Use headlines and photo captions but don't worry about finding the perfect headline as it may be changed. Story acceptance is not guarantee of publication—although the editor will make every effort to use all the approved submissions. Use sidebars to show information such as event contact information, times, etc.

***What we are looking for:*** Local news, personality profiles, business news and features, "behind-the-scenes" stories, local lifestyles, arts and artists, interesting events/people/places/groups, outdoor and recreation spots around the peninsula—and any other stories of interest to the local community, including legislative and government issues that affect local residents.

**Columns and editorials:**

Key Peninsula News will occasionally use guest editorials and will accept opinion pieces. Contact the editor for more information. Submissions must have a local angle; editorials not connected with the Key Peninsula will rarely be published. Column space is limited and columns are usually pre-assigned to cover specific topics (such as entertainment, recreation, religion etc). We are always open to new ideas, however! Advice columns will be rotated throughout the year; submissions are welcome but must have the editor's approval. Submissions are not guaranteed to be published. Length: 300 words or less.

**Community section:** Organizations supported by the Key Peninsula Civic Center Association and other nonprofit groups are welcome to submit monthly contributions to the Community section, reserved for organizations' news and events. Submissions do not need to follow news/feature styles and the content is at the discretion of each organization; submissions are subject to be edited to grammar and length as needed. Suggested topics are organizational news, upcoming meetings, public awareness information or any other topics appropriate for community reading. Each submission should include the organization's name, contributor's name, if desired, and a contact phone number for anyone who would like more information about the program. A community calendar of events will also be featured—submit your listing by deadline. Submissions that solely advertise an upcoming Civic Center event are considered "house ads" (refer to KP News Publishing Policy) and are subject to 10 percent newspaper space limit; non-Civic Center event advertisements are subject to regular ad rates.

### **Story submission:**

Please submit your story or column either on disk or via e-mail to [keypennews@yahoo.com](mailto:keypennews@yahoo.com). Microsoft Word format is preferred, if not use simple text format (for e-mail, you may also cut and paste into the body message). Each submission should contain the writer's byline (name), photographer's name if story has photo captions, and suggested headline. Stories submitted after deadline may not appear until the following issue (or not appear at all if they have a time element)—please ask the editor if not sure when your deadline is. Submitting the story a few days before deadline is best, so that you have time to correct any missing or unclear information. If you are not able to submit electronic copies, please call in advance and submit typed or legibly printed copy.

### **Letters to the editor:**

Letters to the editor are welcome but should not contain any inflammatory information or personal attacks. Include a valid phone number so that your submission may be verified. Electronic submissions are preferred; otherwise please type or legibly print your letter. Submissions may be edited for grammar, clarity and length. The editor reserves the right to reject any submission and publication is not guaranteed. Length: 100 words or less.

### **Photographs:**

The old cliché that the picture is worth a thousand words is true. Writers are expected to make photo suggestions for their stories, and are welcome to submit photographs. Try to identify the people in the photos (everyone loves to see their name!) as much as possible, and try to take photos from many angles as well as vertical and horizontal. Standalone photos are also welcome—sometimes a photo with a long caption is all that's needed. Submit either prints or developed negatives. If you are writing an article and need photos, please call the editor and a photographer will be assigned to you.

### **For more information:**

**Call Key Peninsula News at 253-884-6499, or email [news@keypennews.com](mailto:news@keypennews.com)**

### **Writing Tips and Guidelines addendum**

Key Peninsula News stories will inform local residents regarding issues and events that affect their lives and their community. Stories will be accurate and free of bias and will quote relevant sources as needed and appropriate. Stories will follow general newspaper format and avoid clichés and jargon. Not all local stories are appropriate for this publication—ask the editor if not sure, or refer to the Publishing Policy.

### **Style**

The style must be clear. Any terms not common to the general audience must be explained; avoid unnecessary adjectives and adverbs and use active voice and action verbs whenever possible. Key Peninsula News will use Associated Press style as a general guideline for news writing—refer to the end of this addendum for some common style usage. **Double check all the name spellings and company/organization names.**

## Story elements

Each story, news or feature, needs to have a paragraph called a “**nut graph**”—which explains the point of the story or sometimes summarizes it. In news stories, the nut graph is often also the story “**lead**,” or the beginning of the story. Don’t forget the five “W’s” when writing a news lead: when, what, where, why and how: without them the story may be incomplete. Feature stories must also have nut graphs—otherwise the reader may be lost trying to figure out what the story is about. Do not place the nut graph more than five or six paragraphs into the feature: five or six paragraphs should be plenty of room for a descriptive or action lead.

Use the lead to inform and to also pull the reader into the story—make the feature story lead interesting, maybe by using the most compelling information about your story, or the most unusual. Ask yourself what you liked best or what amazed you, or what the reader is likely to be interested in, or what information you would use first to tell the story to a friend.

For example, if you are writing about an event, don’t write “The New Year’s Eve fund-raising party will held at the Civic Center at 8 p.m. on Dec. 31 and will feature live music.” Instead, write, “The Key Peninsula Civic Center will ring in the New Year in style—down to the live music, food and party necessities like noisemakers and no-host champagne.” Likewise, if your story is about an upcoming meeting, don’t begin your story with announcement of the meeting, but find something that will pull the reader in—perhaps an interesting speaker or agenda item or why the reader should be compelled to attend the meeting.

Most stories except for brief items should contain **sources**, or people you interview, either in direct quotes or in attributions such as “according to.” This is to protect the writer as well as to build credibility. For example, if the writer was given the incorrect information, if that information was attributed to a source, the mistake is on the source, not the writer. If you are not sure about the credibility of your source, it doesn’t hurt to verify the information elsewhere. Attribution also solves the burning question in the reader’s mind of “how do you know that” and helps build credibility of the writer and the newspaper. **Stories written by experts on the subject or written by an organization member on behalf of the organization do not need quoted sources as long as the byline identifies the writer’s affiliation.**

**Direct quotes should be used in this format:** “It will rain tomorrow,” John Doe, director of the X firm, said. Or: X firm Director John Doe said, “It will rain tomorrow.” First and last names must be used on first mention, as well as titles and company affiliations, when appropriate. Only use the last name on subsequent references to the same person.

## Common style usage

**Capitalize** title only when used in front of a name and doesn’t have comma in between. For example: “center’s Director Mary Jones” or “center’s director, Mary Jones” or “Mary Jones, the center’s director.”

**Abbreviate** the following months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

Always use **double quotation** marks except for headlines and quotations within quotations.

Always place your periods and commas **inside the quotation marks**; place colons and semi-colons after the quotes.

**Don't use** all caps, bold or italics within the text.

**Spell out** most acronyms on first use (i.e. KCCCA, KPBA etc).

**Use figures** for ages, including months. Example: She was 3 months old; the 9-year-old boy

**Use figures** for any number starting with 10, spell out below 10 (except for ages, weight, dimensions, degrees etc)

**Use proper company names** on first reference and abbreviate company to Co. and incorporated to Inc.  
Example: Peninsula Light Co.

Use the following format for **currency**: \$3, not 3 dollars or \$3 dollars; do not use \$.50 but use 50 cents.

**Capitalization:** only capitalize nouns like board or council or museum when they are part of the full name.  
Example: the Key Peninsula Historical Society and Museum, vs. "the historical society" or "the museum";  
Peninsula School District vs. "the district"; the Key Center Civic Center Association vs. "the association"