



Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year

Purpose:

It is recognized that citizens who call Marrowstone Island 'home' are unique in experience and diverse in background and interests. Among them, certain individuals reach beyond the ordinary, and in so doing have made a lasting or significant difference to the greater community through their volunteerism, activism, and leadership.

To acknowledge those endeavors, the Marrowstone Island Community Association, (formerly the Nordland Community Club) established a 'Citizen of the Year' Award" in 1973 and presented the first award to Ed Richey for his work in bringing the 911 red fire signs to the Island.



Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year Recipients

2025 - Mark and Linda Secord

2024 - Barcy Fisher, Patti Buckland

2023 - Barry and Ellen Lerich

2022 - Bud Ayres

2021 - Ken and Judith Collins

2020 - John and Carol Gonnella

2019 - Bruce and Andrea Carlson

2018 - Vigo Anderson

2017 - Nicole and Wayne Chimenti

2016 - Paula and (Greg) Lalish

2015 - Mike Zimmerman

2014 - Ray and Carolyn Lowrie

2013 - (Carl Johnson)

2012 - Bob and Sandy Barrett

2011 - Mary TennBrink and Ray Harker

2010 - Pete Hubbard

2009 - Ralph Rush

2008 - Phil Flynn

2007 - Joan & Bill Anliker

2006 - (Joe) and Lillian Lovato

2005 - Jeanette and Bruce Travis

2004 - Gladys and (Dave) Heinzinger

2003 - Chuck and Karen Russell

2002 - (Nan) and Owen Mulkey

2001 - Bob and Marybelle Brown

2000 - John and Billie Fitch

1999 - Paul and Mary Lou Heinzinger

1998 - Tom & Sue Rose

1997 - (Carl Swanson)

1996 - Hank Hazen

1995 - Gwen Moore and Pat Britt

1994 - John Matthiesen and Rita Kepner



- 1993- Pal and (Bud) Burns
- 1992 - Betty Werschull
- 1991 Ruth and Jim Humphrey
- 1990- Laurie Tillman
- 1989 - Bob and (Marty) VanEtten
- 1988- Mike Fleming
- 1987 Kay and (Bill) Goodhue
- 1986- John Illman
- 1985- (Patsy Cadero)
- 1984- (Nancy Butts)
- 1983 - (Alma Taylor)
- 1982 - (Jeanne Clendenon) & Lisa Painter
- 1981 - Clara and (Stan) Lybeck
- 1980 - (Mary Kidd)
- 1979 - (Oscar Erickson)
- 1978 - (Lloyd Chandler)
- 1977 - (Jeanne Bean)
- 1976 - (John Taylor)
- 1975 - (Ralph Johnson)
- 1974 - (Bill Jansen)
- 1973 - (Ed Richey)



Recipients from Present to 2022

2025 - Mark and Linda Secord

Congratulations to Mark and Linda Secord on being named Marrowstone Island's Citizens of the Year for 2025. This well-deserved recognition reflects their extraordinary dedication to the island community and the lasting impact of their volunteer leadership. The community is deeply grateful for the countless hours, energy, and vision they have contributed to strengthening organizations and preserving important island resources.

Linda's leadership was especially vital during the COVID-19 pandemic, when, as vice president and president of MICA, she organized a full schedule of Zoom meetings that kept the organization connected and relevant during a challenging time. She also played a key role as a founding member of the group that restored the Nordland General Store and continues to serve on its board of directors. Mark has served as president of Friends of Fort Flagler State Park for the past six years, guiding numerous successful projects, including a new picnic shelter at Mystery Bay State Park, expanded natural history programs, trail improvements, and the restoration of Fort Flagler's WWII theater. Together, Mark and Linda have made remarkable contributions to Marrowstone Island, and the community extends its heartfelt thanks and congratulations for their outstanding service.



Recipients from 2021 to 1973

2021 - Ken and Judith Collins

2021 Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year. The Citizen of the Year selection committee is always impressed to learn about the many ways the people nominated have risen up to make significant and lasting contributions to the Marrowstone Island community. Seldom seeking recognition, they sometimes work so quietly that we may not even be aware of their efforts, but always giving considerable time, expertise, and deep caring for the greater good of us all. For 2021 it is another couple who have been selected as Citizens of the Year. Sometimes they have worked together, other times individually, and often with other islanders. In addition to their talents, they have evinced strong commitment to causes that they believe are of crucial importance in our society. Causes you will recognize as passionate convictions they have held for many years and are committed to continuing to support until true change is realized. It is our privilege to announce Kenneth and Judith Glass Collins as 2021 Marrowstone Island Citizens of the Year. Kenneth and Judith are known for:

Establishment of Marrowstone Vineyards – developing wines to be proud of, providing opportunities for employment, a venue for local artists to share and sell their creations, and a source of pro-bono support for many organizations for fundraisers and mixers. They have donated proceeds to organizations such as Jefferson County Humane Society. They have given generous support for Jefferson Land Trust, Paradise Theater Company, Key City Public Theater, Nordland Garden Club, Port Townsend Chamber of Commerce and more. And in their “spare time” are participants in the Master Gardener Program.

Judith has given many unique and varied gifts of herself:

Volunteer in Community Theater with KCPT, as an actress, producer and avid spokesperson promoting the arts. Advocate for organizations benefitting women including Dove House, American Association of University Women and 'Dress for Success'. Teaching for the Centrum Writer's Conference. Service as Board Member of Jefferson County Humane Society. Member of FOFF Board of Directors.

Kenneth:

Local leadership of MICA and MIF Boards. Lobbying EJFR for improved fire and EMS services to the island. Elected Commissioner and serving as Leader of the PUD Board. Taking a proactive stance towards energy and water conservation. Expansion of high-speed broad band internet service to the island and Jefferson County. Testifying at State hearings lobbying for rural broadband funding. Continuously seeking to protect vulnerable citizens from abrupt service terminations and costly reconnection fees.

Judith and Kenneth do not sit still. They continuously strive for causes that matter to the greater community and certainly to all of us who live on Marrowstone Island. We are fortunate to have Ken and Judith call Marrowstone Island home. They are richly deserving of recognition as 2021 Citizens of the Year. Congratulations Judith and Ken.

2020 - John and Carol Gonnella

Article

2019 - Bruce and Andrea Carlson

Leader article

2018 - Vigo Anderson

PDN article Leader article

2017 - Nicole and Wayne Chimenti

PDN article Leader article 4/17/2018 PDN https://nextdoor.com/news_feed/?post=82944290

2016 - Paula and (Greg) Lalish

Paula Lalish and her husband Greg were two trained volunteers who helped provide

Daughter Signe Rose Lalish said "I know their volunteer contributions saved lives. I remember hearing the beeper go off late at night and one of them getting dressed and leaving. Then the next morning, I remember them telling us a little about the call, if there was anything allowed to tell." There were so many such mornings. Now Greg and Paula are grandparents, but still serving their community with kindness, grace, and creativity.

Greg continues to mentor younger builders sharing his skills teaching hands-on activities such as Cob building construction. Paula spent years, transporting her large musical harp around the area to support Hospice, providing private and community concerts to comfort the dying and their families. "Paula came into our home to play for my mother and I watched Mom's face soften with inner peace in a way so obvious that it brought me and Paula to tears" relayed Rita Kepner, Marrowstone resident.

Marrowstone Island Citizens of the Year are selected by prior citizens of the year who review nominations submitted by a current island residents. The criteria are that the selectee(s) must have made important/significant

volunteer contributions to life on Marrowstone Island and/or Jefferson County. The purpose of the award is to recognize that citizens who call Marrowstone Island 'home' are unique in experience and diverse in background and interests. Among them, certain individuals reach beyond the ordinary, and in so doing have made a lasting or significant difference to the greater community through their volunteerism, activism, and leadership. Paula and Greg Lalish are exemplars of "beyond the ordinary".

Articles: [PT Leader](#) | [PDN](#)

11/23/2018 - Greg passed away earlier this morning from lymphoma. [MI ND post](#)

2015 - Mike Zimmerman

Our 'Citizen' of the year for 2015 and his family have been residents of the Island for nearly 20 years. He has worked both professionally and personally to improve our island community. He has been both Vice President and President of the Marrowstone Island Community Association (MICA). While president, he helped develop the 'Hello Pages', a booklet created to inform residents and newcomers of the businesses and services that are offered on this island.

Our 'Citizen' has had a clear vision of the historical importance of Fort Flagler State Park, and spent countless hours developing strategies and completing projects for care of the Park.

2015 - Mike Zimmerman continued..

His passion and dedication helped lead the way to the creation of the 'Friends of Fort Flagler' which was established as the first 'Friends of Parks' in the state. That group has since become a dedicated and invaluable group in restoring, maintaining, protecting and enhancing the park.

As a result of their work on the historical hospital building, in 2012, the Park was presented with the Mary P. Johnson Award from the Jefferson County Historical Society. Under his guidance, the work done there as well as in the entire Park, has increased usage and enjoyment of the area by both visitors and Island residents.

Some of the Park projects which have been begun or are completed include:

1. improvement of Officers' housing, making it available for rent; including use by islanders as a 'guest overflow' accommodation
2. improvement of the trails and signage throughout the Park
3. hospital update and creation of the museum and gift shop
4. improvement of the barracks, so that they are now being rented by various groups needing a pleasurable place to hold their conferences
5. improvement of the water treatment facility, for the benefit of local residents and visitors
6. improvements to gun emplacements and batteries for increased access by the public and their greater understanding and appreciation of the Fort's historic value.

In addition to physical improvements in the Park, several special events have been initiated for the enjoyment of islanders, campers, and other county residents:

Mike Zimmerman continued..

1. The Halloween carnival for children (and adults) from all over the greater Port Townsend area
2. Summer concerts at the park, where people can bring picnics to enjoy music and pleasant summer evenings with family and friends
3. The Paragliding program, providing training and access for this sport
4. The annual Shellfish Seminar, helping to educate the public on the local varieties of shellfish

Largely because of his leadership as Head Ranger, Fort Flagler has become one of the top-performing and most desirable destination parks in the Washington State Parks system. For proof of this, just try to make a summer reservation at the park – you will find that reservations must be made a LONG way in advance!

All of this work has resulted in a lasting benefit to Fort Flagler, the State Park system, island residents, the county, and in fact, the entire state. So, as you all know by now, I am pleased to announce that Mike Zimmerman is the Island's 2015 Citizen of the Year.

Articles: [PT Leader](#) | PDN

2014 - Ray and Carolyn Lowrie

Ray and Carolyn Lowrie are the Marrowstone Island Citizens of the year for 2014. They are long-term residents of Marrowstone Island and have done volunteer work 'behind the scenes' on numerous community projects, and are especially associated with the Chimacum schools.

They moved to the Island in 1957, and knew many of the early 'homesteaders' and residents. Carolyn became the 'Island barber', trading her work for other needed items

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She also became known as the 'face of Chimacum', when she was the Chimacum Elementary School Secretary. She went far beyond her job description, soothing panicked teachers, drying children's tears, and just 'being there' for so many people needing assistance of any sort.

She has been a volunteer worker at the Church of the Redeemer for 30 years; working in all of the various jobs that needed doing. In addition, to raising four children, Carolyn supported her husband in his military life and then his many volunteer projects in the area.

Ray was a Biology teacher at Chimacum high school, from 1960 to 1992, and had a strong sense of environmental care. He taught his students to respect the water and conserve fishing resources. He worked to get a grant to build a 'hatchery' on Chimacum Creek, where the students actually raised salmon. As a result of this training, some of his students were able to work at the

2014 - Ray and Carolyn Lowrie continued..

Quilcene Hatchery to earn money during school vacations. He also set up a project where some of his students learned how to build a boat, and learn navigation. By going that 'extra step', he was a mentor to many kids, teaching them about 'real world' projects and instilling in them a life-long love and respect for nature and the environment.

He was a Port Commissioner from 1986 to 1992, and was a Board member of the North Olympic Salmon Coalition from 1993 to 2003. He was also a volunteer fire fighter for the Marrowstone Fire department from 1976 to 1988.

Last October, (2014) Ray was given the Eleanor Stopps Environmental Leadership award. At the presentation, it was said that his contribution to environmental stewardship was extraordinary. He knew if kids understood nature, they would protect it. Upon receiving the award, he said he encourages everyone to remember the benefits of teaching young people about the natural world and transforming them into stewards. His students have become his 'living legacy'.

Therefore, the Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year committee members are pleased to announce that Carolyn and Ray Lowrie have earned the 2014 Marrowstone Citizen of the Year.

http://www.ptleader.com/news/ray-carolyn-lowrie-are-marrowstone-citizens-of-the-year/article_b922abe8-a103-11e4-8765-d7fb3f668e56.html

<http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20150121/news/301219985/marrowstone-island-honors-its-citizens-of-the-year>

2013 - (Carl Johnson)

Carl Johnson is this year's Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year 2013. He has been a Marrowstone resident for all of his 92 years except for his period of enlistment in the U.S. Navy. As a youth he worked for his family at the Nordland Trading Company Store as well as digging clams and delivering seafood to Port Townsend and to Seattle. From Seattle he'd pick up building materials for local residents so they could build their homes. He went to Fort Flagler to work, picking up workers who came across the Portage Canal via "THE NORDLAND" ferry, to work on building the barracks and other buildings, then later on Indian Island hauling concrete to build the batteries. This led to the Carl H. Johnson Trucking and Sons. This pick up in Seattle and delivery to Marrowstone, continued for many years with many families benefiting. Often when items (like a water heater) couldn't be delivered to persons for lack of a business number or when someone needed large items brought to the island, he personally picked up in Seattle and delivered these materials to the island.

Back in the 40's, clams were marketed both locally and to San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf by his business,

Marrowstone Island Clams and Oysters. He and another resident, Dr. Mumby, split an order of oyster seed brought from Raymond, WA., which was spread in Mystery Bay and Kulisut Harbor, benefiting all who enjoy the local oysters to this day. Many families who were out of work would come over to get work digging clams, picking oysters, washing and shipping seafood or truck driving.

After the war, rather than storing the building products on Marrowstone Island, he bought the property at Nesses Corner in Chimacum and established Carl's Building Supply. Since then his 3 sons, Leonard, Lawrence and Jake followed in their dad's footsteps.

There were always jobs for young people as well and these got their superior work ethic from this individual. At a lumber yard in Seattle, many of the young people worked in the late 70's and early 80's, including Carl's daughter Lisa. She was told by the owners that the best workers they'd ever had were kids raised on Marrowstone —and it was because they all grew up working for Carl Johnson.

He has been generous whenever any local non-profit organization has asked for help. Donations of seafood products for cookouts or barbecues are well known. There have been tours of his businesses given for the Historical Society. One year when Marrowstone had 17" of snow, a family got up thinking they were snowed in and were delighted to find their driveway totally plowed by Carl. Many nice things are done without being asked, just to be a good neighbor.

were delighted to find their driveway totally plowed by Carl. Many nice things are done without being asked, just to be a good neighbor.

Only someone who has lived locally with equal longevity can truly appreciate the effects of this individual's life over the last nine decades. This year's Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year is a colorful icon, family patriarch and businessman extraordinaire, CARL JOHNSON.

Carl passed away 12/4/2017. [Click here](#) to view an article about him.



2012 - Bob and Sandy Barrett

Bob and Sandy Barrett were selected as Citizens of the Year 2012 for Marrowstone Island at the January 22, 2013 MICA meeting. no-charge ambulance service to residents of Marrowstone Island from late 1970s until the mid-1990s. Paula Lalish volunteered for the Marrowstone Island Emergency Medical Service (MEMS) as an EMT and caregiver for over 20 years. Greg was a volunteer first responder, ambulance driver and Chimacum fireman for those many years. They retired shortly after Jefferson County Fire and Rescue assumed the ambulance service. Paula is also a musician and poet who continues performing all over Jefferson County. They both have volunteered to help families with loved ones in Hospice.

2012 - Bob and Sandy Barrett continued..

the club's annual sale. He also made new nametags for members of the Island Community Association.

Sandy has been an active member of the Garden Club, serving terms as Vice President, Secretary, Trustee, and is the club Historian. This job entails taking photos at each meeting and special events and creating scrapbooks to record members and their participation in various activities of the club. She has provided the club with 12 years (and counting) of scrapbooks documenting the history and members of the club. (they are on the top shelf of the bookcase).

Sandy, has also worked with the Literacy Council of Jefferson County, serving as treasurer, a tutor and as the one of the initiators of the group's Baskets of Books project, in which children's books are provided in places such as restaurants and doctors' offices. She was also one of the organizers of the recognition dinner for current and former firefighters, EMT's, and aid car drivers for East Jefferson Fire Rescue.

The Barretts have taken American Red Cross training in shelter management, and Sandy has created and maintains an Excel spreadsheet of Red Cross emergency shelter locations in Jefferson County. She is a member of the Red Cross 'canteen team' which provides food for emergency responders to incidents of long duration.

Bob had a 24 year career as a Naval Flight Officer, retiring in 1984 as Captain. During this time, they lived in 15 different places, including a two-year tour in Japan. Upon retirement from the Navy, they moved to Spokane, where Bob owned a computer store and Sandy worked as a computer programmer and analyst.

2012 - Bob and Sandy Barrett continued..

Bob's efforts include 12 years as an aid car driver for East Jefferson Fire Rescue. He also has served as a board member and president of the Marrowstone Island Foundation, a philanthropic organization which manages funds designated for projects to benefit Islanders. He has worked as a docent at the Museum of Flight in Seattle, where he has given private tours to Marrowstone Island residents.

He has assisted with numerous Nordland Garden Club activities, including help with set up for the plant sales, and providing his 'famous onion soup' for the ladies working to make wreaths for for Spokane County.

When Bob sold the store and Sandy retired, they searched for several months for a place to live where they could see the water. They feel extremely fortunate have found this Island and it's marvelous community of friends.

PDN article 1/27/2013 The Leader (picture only) 2/6/2013

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2011 - Mary TennBrink and Ray Harker



The Marrowstone Island Citizen of the Year Committee selected Ray Harker and Mary TennBrink as citizens of the year for 2011. Most islanders know Ray and Mary for their many years of service as volunteer EMTs. Many watched them arrive in full gear to support activities like the Island Polar Bear Dip. Ray and Mary “turned out”, at all hours of the day and night, to help neighbors in need. Committee members commented on how often one or the other of them would check up on patients after transporting to the hospital or back home. One islander noted, “They even once helped resuscitate a calf for me on my farm” Others first met Ray and Mary when they taught disaster preparedness classes, called citizen emergency response training (CERT). Ray and Mary upgraded their training skills to lead “Train the Trainer” classes subsequently passing along their caring and skills on Marrowstone Island and much of E. Jefferson County.

They continue to help many people on the island with repairs at home and assistance with other needs, including driving people to the doctor. Ray has electrical expertise and often helps people solve tricky electrical problems. At Fort Flagler State Park, he assisted the Friends of Fort Flagler (FOFF) in setting up lighting at the park, around the flagpole. Mary has been active in FOFF serving in officer roles including secretary and treasurer. Both have helped with the gun emplacement tours at the park. They were among the group who volunteered time and abilities to help reconstruct the Marrowstone East Beach Park Pavilion. Ray used his construction skills while Mary helped feed volunteers. The pavilion is in a public park and open for everyone.

2011 - Mary TennBrink and Ray Harker continued..

Earlier, they were organizers of Conserve Water First. The educational effort, helped many people understand the island aquifer limits. Ray and Mary continue to urge respect for water as a critical resource.

Ray served on the Kurtso advisory committee and he spent uncounted hours researching options for best use of the funds available to the island.

Eventually, the committee accepted construction of the Kurtso Memorial Pavilion at the Nordland Garden Club. In past years, Mary was an active member of the Nordland Garden Club and Ray assisted in various projects including the renovation and remodeling of the Nordland Garden Club building and complete reconstruction of the bathrooms.

Mary coauthored the Marrowstone Island "Hellow Pages" a welcome pamphlet full of information for old-timers and new residents of the island. She also helped scan images for the new Rural version of the Map Your Neighborhood (MYN), an emergency preparedness handout.

Currently, both are involved in healthy food gardening using on-island resources. They are working with other islanders to learn about permaculture and organic techniques. Mary and Ray are encouraging the exchange of information about growing food sustainably, with other island gardeners and small farmers.

Links: [Click here to tell us what you have done since the award](#). [Presentation at MICA meeting](#) Island Net posts - [PTLeader article](#)

2010 - Pete Hubbard

Pete Hubbard is the selection for Marrowstone Island's Citizen of the Year 2010. This was announced at the Monday Jan. 17th meeting of MICA (Marrowstone Island Community Association) with 35+ members attending. Phil Flynn, Citizen of the Year 2008, as chairman of this year's selection committee made the announcement and presented the plaque with his name. Choice is made by a committee of past citizens of the year and MICA board representatives. and his wife Heidi moved to Marrowstone 17 years ago, 1994. As chairman said during the announcement "about the same time I moved here and we started building our homes; the one major difference is—mine is finished!!" When asked about this, Pete said, "That's true, we say the house, the bus, both cats and both Heidi and me; we're all unfinished, but comfortable"

Before retiring to the island Pete was an Advisory Programmer for IBM in many parts of the U.S., latest in San Jose, CA; prior in San Mateo, CA; Austin, Texas; Boca Raton, Florida and New York---all in 6 years. (You know IBM stands for "I've Been Moved"). Pete has one daughter and two grandchildren living on Cape Cod; a stepmother in Florida and three brothers in Florida, Phoenix and North Carolina. Because of the major distance away Pete said they probably won't be attending the dinner in his honor scheduled tentatively for march/April, the exact date give later.

Pete was selected for his several volunteer activities on Marrowstone (All candidates must have performed volunteer activities that have widespread and long lasting effects on Marrowstone, Island and/or Jefferson County) He has worked many hours with Owen Mulkey of the Department of Emergency Management, trying to prepare us on the island for taking care of ourselves in any disaster. Especially in regards to getting information to the community. He has hosted in his home a number of classes giving information on the use of the computer especially for social networking. Identifying public information sites like the fire department, county government, Friends of Fort Flagler---and how to get information on and/ or join the organization.

2010 - Pete Hubbard continued...

He has been two years president of MICA and is currently on the Nominating Committee. He was involved with the "Hellow Pages" which are listings of all the organizations on the island—and created a digital version of this booklet.

He was instrumental last year in organizing and setting up the celebration potluck dinner (attended by some 150 residents at Fort Flagler) for all of the EMT's, first responders, drivers and fire fighters who have served Jefferson County Fire District #1. One unique part of this dinner and program was a memory timeline where all could add memories all the way from the early days in MEMS (Marrowstone Emergency Medical Services) to the latest retirement of the last EMT's on the island.

Probably the most important and long lasting volunteer effort he has contributed to our island community is the setting up of our "Island Net": the Marrowstone web site, egroups communication via the internet for presently 234 households. Information comes thru this about boats that have lost their moorings, lost dogs and cats, cougar and bear sightings, meeting announcements, activities of many kinds all over the island. It is a connection we enjoy that nobody else has; a way of bringing us together as an island community.

Citizens of the Year have been selected on Marrowstone every year since 1973 when Ed Richey was the first one chosen.

Links: [What I have done since the award. PDN article](#) - [All Island Net posts about this event](#) [YouTube slide show](#) PTL article [Click on any photo to see the rest of the album](#)

2009 - Ralph Rush

2008 - Phil Flynn

2007 - Joan & Bill Anliker

2006 - (Joe) and Lillian Lovato

2005 - Jeanette and Bruce Travis

2004 - Gladys and (Dave) Heinzinger

2003 - Chuck and Karen Russell

2002 - (Nan) and Owen Mulkey

2001 - Bob and Marybelle Brown

2000 - John and Billie Fitch

1999 - Paul and Mary Lou Heinzinger

1998 - Tom & Sue Rose

1997 - (Carl Swanson)

Carl W. Swanson appointed to fill a vacant Jefferson County Hospital Commissioner position in 1979. He subsequently was elected to 3 six-year terms. He organized and chaired the citizens' advisory committee for budget and finance.

He chaired a series of community and county long-range planning citizens advisory committees. This planning process resulted in the construction of the new hospital addition in 1996. For this service and numerous others, Carl was honored by receiving the Citizens of the Year award from MICA.

1996 - Hank Hazen

1995 - Gwen Moore and Pat Britt

- 1994 - John Matthiesen and Rita Kepner
- 1993 - Pal and (Bud) Burns
- 1992 - Betty Werschull
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- 1973 - (Ed Richey)



The Port Townsend Jefferson County LEADER

Matthiesen, Kepner earn 1994 Marrowstone Citizens award

announcement of John Matthiesen and Rita Kepner as Marrowstone Island's Citizens of the Year was made at the Jan. 16 meeting of the Marrowstone Island Community Association.

Requirements for this distinction require that the recipients must be a resident of Marrowstone Island and should have been involved in performance of a service which has had a lasting and official effect on the island or Jefferson County.

John and Rita purchased their property on Kiliant Harbor in 1981, but did not live there permanently until 1988. Together they became active workers in the No Oil Pipeline Ever campaign, and more recently have been on the committee working to revise the Marrowstone Island Community Plan.

Rita has been a leader in recognizing the limited ground water resources on the island and working to conserve and protect them. She has been co-chair of the Water Fair held at the Tri-Area Center to promote understanding of ground water problems, and obtained a grant from a private foundation to help with expenses of this event. She convinced the State Department of

Ecology to select Marrowstone Island as the location for its pilot study of the problem of sea water intrusion into fresh water aquifers.

She led the process which resulted in the designation of Marrowstone Island as a sole source aquifer by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. She was a participant in the Clean Air Agreement Committee and persuaded that group to recognize the importance of ground water in addition to surface water. She also served a term as president of MICA.

John was president of MICA

for two years and also serves as a first-aiders on the staff of Marrowstone Emergency Medical Services.

Both John and Rita work to support youth — intellectually, with Odyssey of the Mind, and also as Boy Scout and Explorer leaders. Currently they are active with the Jefferson County Search and Rescue team.

John and Rita were selected by a committee of former citizens of the year from recommendations submitted by island residents. A dinner to honor them is planned at the Garden Club Hall on a date to be announced.

County's best

• Marrowstone: Rita and John

Rita Kepner and John Matthiesen of Marrowstone Island took on the task of protecting the island's valuable aquifer over the last several years. Their efforts, combined with an active interest in the well-being of the county's youth, were rewarded this week when they were named Marrowstone's Citizens of the Year for 1994.

It's hard to think of Marrowstone water without thinking of Kepner, who is the primary reason that the island has received some important state and federal protections for its threatened resource.

John has focused on emergency medical services on the island, and on youth programs. Both of them are active in Jefferson County Search and Rescue.

Rita and John: You've made a difference in your neighbors' lives.

—SBW

A black and white photograph of a man and a woman smiling. The man is on the left, wearing a dark jacket, and the woman is on the right, wearing a light-colored top. They are both looking towards the camera.