

Wednesday Walks with Walter Have Woodsy Feel

By Irene Torres, KP News

Not many people have a forest named for them. Most who do died long before receiving such a tribute. The Walter R. Briggs Old Growth Forest near Arlington, Washington, is an exception, for Briggs is very much alive. There is “no greater honor” than having a forest bear his name, he said.

Briggs was in charge of the Legacy Resource Management Program, the Department of Defense’s largest conservation project, where he supervised commercial-grade timberland and promoted stewardship of trees on wilderness lands adjacent to Navy installations. He educated commanding officers, school children, civic groups and visiting dignitaries on the structural diversity of the forest and the integration of airfield safety, access, security and fire watch principles. He did “tons of PR” while managing “15,000 acres of U.S. Navy-owned forest properties in 11 states from Alaska to Arizona” before retiring from the civil service in 2013, he said.

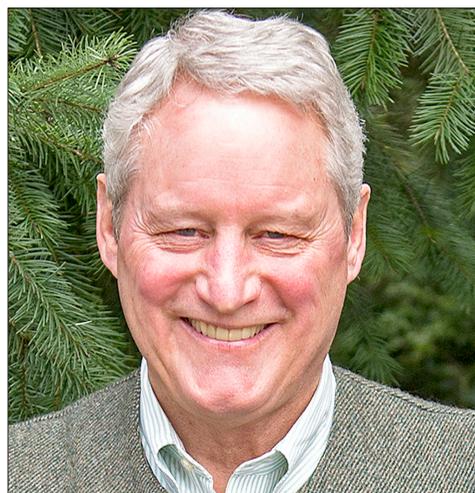


Photo by Ed Johnson, KP News

Key Peninsula Parks will host narrative walks with forester Walter Briggs this summer.

Briggs will bring his knowledge to the Key Peninsula this summer in a series of “narrative walks” through local parks. He will share facts about the plants, trees and animals that live in the area and answer questions about the structure, composition and ecology of trees. He wants people to

be curious, to look at the forest and think analytically about it, in terms of future generations.

His eyes get misty when he speaks of this, his life passion. “I don’t want to make foresters out of them. I want to introduce them so they will feel as though they know something about the forest,” said Briggs.

Key Pen Parks Marketing Coordinator Christina Hallock said, “One of my goals as the recreation person here at Key Peninsula Parks is to introduce more people to our parks and get them into our parks and enjoying them. Walter is used to speaking to audiences of all ages.”

The Key Peninsula Parks narrative walks begin at 6:30 p.m. at the trailhead of each location:

June 15: Rocky Creek Conservation Area

July 13: 360 Trails

Aug. 17: Maple Hollow Park

During the walks, Briggs will lead discussions on sustainable forestry practices, managing old-growth forests and hand-crafting and building with wood. He may talk about the use of draft horses for selective thinning of trees or describe how he built his log home in Olalla using the ancient mortise-and-tenon jointing technique.

No preregistration is required for this free, family-friendly activity. No strollers of any kind are advised. Park staff recommends that no valuables be left in vehicles while on these walks.

For more information, call the Key Peninsula Metropolitan Parks office at 884-9240 or go online to: Keypenparks.com/Wednesday-walks-with-walter.



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