

May 2013

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## WOODS HOLE THEATER

NF Members - would you like to attend the Woods Hole Theater presentation, "Nana's Naughty Knickers" on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>? One of our volunteers is offering to drive three or four NF members for an evening of entertainment. Please call the office as soon as possible if you'd like to attend.



## VOLUNTEER MEETING

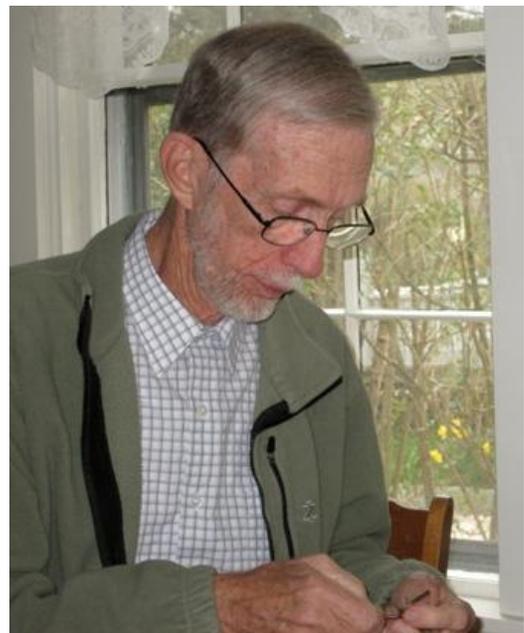
Reminder: Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. at John Wesley United Methodist Church. Please join your fellow volunteers for a social and working gathering to share refreshments, conversation, questions, suggestions and laughs! Please bring a friend. We hope to see you there.

## SENIORS SEMINAR

The next Seminar for Seniors has been scheduled by the NF Program Committee for Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00. The lecture is open to the public and will be in Fellowship Hall at the First Congregational Church on the Green. Mark Luschini, Chief Investment Strategist for Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC, will present information and answer questions regarding *Reliable Income Alternatives in a Near Zero Interest Rate World*. Refreshments will be served. Admission is free.

## FALMOUTH SENIOR CENTER EVENT

Friends of the Falmouth Senior Center will present *The Choraliers*, a female vocal ensemble, on Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. at Lawrence School. A \$5.00 donation is suggested. All proceeds will benefit the Falmouth Senior Center.



## Ken Peal, Volunteer

by Pamela Nelson

Do you ever say to yourself, "Now, here is a person I would not mind being trapped with in an elevator?" Maybe you don't, but I do. And for me, Neighborhood Falmouth volunteer Ken Peal is just such a person. Not only would conversation likely meander along interesting and unexpected paths until we were rescued, but Ken just might have a penlight and a small screwdriver in his pocket....

Ken and his two sisters were born in Canada, growing up and attending school in Hamilton,

Ontario, a steel town and home of the Tiger-Cats football team. The son of two teachers, Ken went on to get his degree in engineering from McMaster University. After working for a time in Ottawa, he went to the University of British Columbia, where he earned a master's degree in electrical engineering. He then took a job in a government research lab on the Great Lakes, at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters, during the International Field Year for the Great Lakes. However, frustrated that he was steered more into administrative tasks than into creative design work, he began to look around for other opportunities.

After meeting some people from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution who seemed to be happily doing design work in electronics, he, too, got himself a job at WHOI. At first, he did maintenance and repair for one of the early computer labs whose goal was to improve the reliability of computers so that they could be taken to sea on research voyages. Before long, he was pleased to move into more personally gratifying work designing electronics.

When he and his British-born wife, Rosemary, arrived in Falmouth in 1971 with their toddlers Richard and Jennifer, they purchased a house in West Falmouth, where Ken still lives. They were the second owners of this quaint, storybook home that was built in 1859 by the grandfather of its previous owner. Ken speaks appreciatively of his house, describing it as being very well built. Over the years he has done a lot of the maintenance work himself. While their son and daughter attended Falmouth schools, Rosemary, a trained radiology technologist, found satisfying work in this area. The couple sang in the Falmouth Interfaith Choir, now the Falmouth Chorale, and Ken was also a member for a time of the Greater Falmouth Mostly All-Male Men's Chorus. Unfortunately, Rosemary died of Alzheimer's disease in 2007.

For a few years the family owned an old Beetlecat, a wooden sailboat whose hull had been fiberglassed. They joined the Champoquoit Yacht Club and even raced their boat, although, says Ken wryly, "I always came in dead last." All the same, Richard and Jennifer enjoyed sailing lessons and growing up in West Falmouth.

At WHOI, Ken joined a group doing underwater seismology using an ocean-bottom hydrophone. This equipment, which measures pressures, was used in modeling the earth's crust below the seafloor. With his background, Ken was able to convert to digital data gathering and also to help develop an instrument that could measure movement

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### **Meet for Breakfast/Coffee: May 6<sup>th</sup>**

Please join us at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, at Friendly's for a cup of coffee and/or breakfast. It's a great way to begin the week!

### **Meet for Lunch: May 15<sup>th</sup>**

Our next monthly luncheon at Coonamessett Inn will be on Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 11:45 a.m. All members, volunteers, and guests are welcome. We order from the menu and individual checks are provided. Please call the office to reserve a place.

### **NF Board Meeting: May 16<sup>th</sup>**

NF Board of Directors will be meeting at 2:00 on Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at Highfield Hall.

### **NF Book Group: May 23<sup>rd</sup>**

We will be meeting at 2:30 on Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich. We try to select books that Falmouth Library has in audio format. If you like to read, please join us by calling the NF office.

### **Annual Wine Tasting Party: June 28<sup>th</sup>**

Save-the-date postcards went out recently for NF's annual wine tasting fund-raising event to be held this year on June 28 in West Falmouth. Watch for your invitation to arrive in May!

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as well as pressure. Over time, there was a push to use multiple instruments at once in order to get better data. Now the team deploys as many as 130 instruments simultaneously in an array. The instruments can also be reconfigured to look at different parts of the sound spectrum.

Ken was aboard R/V *Knorr* in 1977 when living organisms adjacent to undersea vents and hot smokers were discovered in the Galápagos region. He was navigating ANGUS (Acoustically Navigated Geophysical Underwater System) when transmitted data revealed a brief spike in the water temperature, and he recalls the reactions of amazement and elation as the scientific party examined the data. The scientists suspected that this spike was the result of hot magma coming into contact with cold seawater at the site of a geologic fault. On the same expedition, the minisub *Alvin* was deployed so that investigators could inspect

the site of the temperature anomaly close-up and also verify towed-camera images collected there that showed large white clams and brown mussels at a depth previously thought to be "like a desert."

Twelve years later, in 1989, an expedition to his native Canada particularly excited Ken's interest. He traveled to the High Arctic with an acoustician who was interested in making measurements to study multiyear ice over a period of a year. Their adventure began at the Resolute Bay Research Station where they rented ice huts, organized plans for meals, and arranged for the electronics and generators they would need. Next, accompanied by an Inuit guide who was there "to help fend off polar bears," they set up an ice camp on Melville Island's Sabine Bay. Ken designed the electronics for the measurements made during the three-week expedition. The scientists put instruments down through the ice into the water beneath in order to study ice physics. Vertical arrays of sensors were placed in each hole and left for a season, while the investigators retrieved their ice data via satellite transmissions and, as an added benefit, got useful data about the water just under the ice and about variations in ice thickness.

Ken retired a year and a half ago, but still does a bit of consulting work at WHOI's Ocean Bottom Seismology facility. He makes deliveries for Meals on Wheels and is on the board of Cape Cod Apartments. He bikes in the mornings and continues to sing in the Chorale and at John Wesley Church. Ken met Michele, to whom he is now married, through the church choir. Neither was looking for a new spouse, but their shared musical interests brought them together. Ken also volunteers for Neighborhood Falmouth, as a driver as well as performing occasional household repairs and providing technical assistance.

Leaving his lovely home after our chat, I reflected on our conversation. What stayed with me was a sense of Ken's quiet humility and patience, in addition to his gentle sense of humor. Definitely a person who would be good company on that stuck elevator I mentioned!

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### **VOLUNTEERS: SAVE THE DATE**

Please come to our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 p.m. at the home of NF President, Vicky Cullen. Spouses/significant others are welcome, too! We'd like a chance to thank you for all you do to assist our members.

### **REMINDER: FALMOUTH FUND GRANT**

NF received a grant from the Falmouth Fund of the Cape Cod Foundation to support services to NF members by a knowledgeable Advocate Contractor. He is available to review and evaluate bids for home repairs and to ensure that they represent a comparable scope of work. He is available to do a site visit. Please call the office to take advantage of this service.

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We gratefully acknowledge support from the following merchants and organizations:

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