



I wake up last weekend to a dry, partly sunny morning. Looking out at Fil Lucy Bay, I noticed that the water was glassy and that the tide was nearly full. So, at 7:15 AM I picked up my paddle board and headed towards the marina. The air was crisp, and the water was beautifully calm, making for an easy paddle.

Growing up I never was on the water, whether in a boat, kayak, rowboat, whatever. Getting out now and seeing life in, and around the water, or back to land is a new perspective. Think about it, being on the water is experiencing an entirely different part of the world – it's not land. You see things differently; you see things you can't see from land. You also experience the water; how it moves under your board or boat. What's the tide doing? The wind? Is it choppy? Will that seal, or river otter come close?

“The air was crisp, and the water was beautifully calm...”

Experiences mean so much in our lives. Hopefully they enrich us, educate us, make us think. We often need to use new judgement, such as “if this chop hits my paddle board, will I fall off? How can I correct for that?” And when you come through challenging or exciting new experiences, your confidence is raised. And that can't be taken away, it only adds.

At The Longbranch Foundation, our goal is to support local Evergreen Elementary and Key Peninsula Middle School students to gain new experiences through projects or outings. One of those very important experiences is for the Evergreen 5th grade students to attend Camp Seymour Environmental and Educational Camp. This camp experience is something the students look forward to and know is available when they get to 5th grade, and the anticipation is exciting! Sleeping away, being outdoors and on the water! For many this is entirely new experience.

“This camp experience is something the students look forward to...”

Last year, I interviewed two 6th grade students about their experiences at Camp Seymour. For these boys, the time spent at camp was so meaningful. They were away from home in a new way, bunking with others and meeting young counselors who were their outdoor educators while in camp. They both talked at length about being on the water in a canoe and learning to navigate through it with a partner. An entirely new experience. It can't be taken away from them. And we, as a community, supported those boys.

At Key Peninsula Middle School, we have recently funded three mini-grant requests. One group will build a drone, one group of students with physical limitations will be able to garden, and one group will have new concert toms. Each of these adds to the students' education, supported by teachers. And we are helping to support them.

“And we are helping to support them.”



This year, we have heard back from four students who are applying for a Recurring Scholarship from the Foundation. In addition to reviewing those requests, our Higher Ed Committee will review new requests for scholarships from PHS seniors who attended Evergreen. March is the month for these reviews, and we are excited to support our local students. They are asking us to help them take this next big step, as they pursue a dream of attending an academic or technical/vocational school. Again, a new experience.

And we are ready to do more. We make an impact. I have seen it and heard it, both from parents and from students I have had the privilege to meet.

“We make an impact.”

The Longbranch Foundation relies on this community to fill positions on our board and to help with committees (e.g. Student Programs and Higher Education). If you are a retired educator, or have an interest in the education of our local students, please contact me and join us, either as a committee member or board member.

And what you may not know is that The Longbranch Foundation supports the Longbranch Improvement Club as well. It is through the Foundation that the LIC applies for grants that have been used to upgrade the marina and will support upgrades to the historic building. These grants cannot be secured directly by the LIC. We need both organizations to be fully supported, board positions to be filled, in order to be healthy and functioning.

Support the Longbranch Community by joining our efforts.

Thank you,

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Food Market

A reminder, please continue to save your Food Market receipts for when we meet again.