

David W. Peterson



Dave Peterson was the fourth consecutive County Clerk chosen by the Commissioners. Peterson was 58 years old when he was appointed, the very age Freudenstein was upon retirement. Peterson won re-election four more times and dealt with massive county cutbacks during the recession, which started in December of 2007. During the county cutbacks the Clerk's office lost five full-time positions, but never had to hand anyone a pink slip. At the beginning of this decade, Peterson's idea of hiring staff to save money went against the grain of traditional thinking. He created a Public Defender's Office and brought lawyers onto the county payroll rather than contracting the work out to private attorneys, which saved the county close to a quarter million dollars each year. That office spawned a Superior Court Judge with Bill Houser in 2013 and the County Prosecuting Attorney, Tina Robinson in 2014.

Peterson spearheaded many money-making services that helped make the Clerk's Office more self-sufficient: offering passport application and photo services to the public without need for an appointment; taking over collecting legal financial obligation collections from the Department of Corrections, increasing the monies collected by over 50% (which was returned to the state and county and victims of crime); and providing electronic access by subscription to the Clerk's court records for attorneys and the news media. Additionally, Peterson worked hand in hand with the Superior Court to lead Kitsap County's offices into Freudenstein's dream of a paperless Superior Court.

Biography

David Warren Peterson, born February 24, 1943, in the small town of Alta, Iowa, was the second of four children. He moved with his family to Kitsap County in 1958. A 1961 honor graduate of South Kitsap High School in Port Orchard, Dave worked his way through college as a farm worker, cannery worker, truck driver, cabinetmaker's helper, and a storekeeper at Boeing in Seattle. He received a BA in political science from the University of Washington in 1965. After graduation he moved to Garden Grove, California to teach seventh grade English and social studies—and to race motorcycles at Ascot Speedway in Gardena, California.

Dave spent four years in California as a public school teacher and part-time motorcycle mechanic during which time he earned a Masters Degree from Whittier College. Dave returned to Kitsap County in 1969 to teach high school in the Central Kitsap School District where he has lived ever since.

While in the CK School District for 29 years, Peterson earned certification as a librarian and school administrator. He taught government, U.S. History, and anthropology at CK High School. He was also a librarian at CK High School and served as President of the Central Kitsap Education Association and was on both the state and national education associations' boards of directors. For his last 24 years in the CK School District, Dave performed supervisory and administrative duties as Coordinator of Instructional Materials (supervisor of centralized library processing and coordination of the district library program) and Director of the Department of Information Services (district administrator for technology, student information services, and library services). Dave retired from the CK School District in June 1998 after 33 years of public education service. After 18 months of retirement, Dave went to work in February 2000 as an Elections Deputy in the Elections Department for the Kitsap County Auditor. On October 1, 2001, the Board of County Commissioners appointed Dave Peterson to replace Dean Logan as Kitsap County Clerk.

Dave Peterson served as past president and charter member of the Kiwanis Club of Central Kitsap. Dave was a long-time board member of United Way of Kitsap County, Kitsap County Historical Society, Kitsap Regional Library Foundation, Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) of

Kitsap County, Kitsap Legal Services (KLS), Special Assault Investigation and Victim's Services (S.A.I.V.S), Lone Rock Community Club, Central Kitsap Citizens for Quality Education, member of numerous Central Kitsap School District technology, budget, levy, and bond committees, Silverdale Chamber of Commerce, and nine-year member of the Central Kitsap Community Council—the first two years as its initial President where his leadership and organizational skills were instrumental in helping establish the Council.

Dave served as a Precinct Committee Officer, Executive Board member, and State Committeeman for the Kitsap County Democratic Party. He was the second male to be a member of the Kitsap County Democratic Women's Club. An avid reader, sports fan, movie buff, coin collector, too infrequent trout fisherman, street rod enthusiast (a 1933 Ford Victoria), antique Winchester firearms collector, and community and political activist, Dave lives in downtown Bremerton with his wife Carolyn, a retired second grade teacher.

Dave Peterson named County Clerk to replace Logan

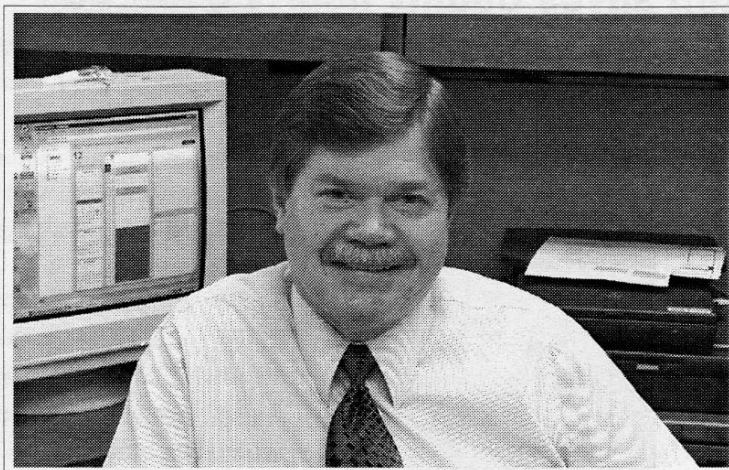
Dave Peterson is the new County Clerk, having been appointed by the Board of Commissioners to replace Dean Logan, who left to become Director of Elections in the Secretary of State's Office.

Peterson was chosen from a list of three persons recommended by the Kitsap County Democratic Central Committee. He will serve the remainder of Logan's term, which goes through 2002.

Peterson had been working at the Givens Center as an Elections Deputy since February 2000, after retiring from a career in education.

After graduating from SK High in 1961, Peterson obtained his bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Washington in 1965, along with a teaching credential.

He moved to Garden



Grove, Calif., to pursue his teaching career as well as his passion for dirt track motorcycle racing. After teaching there four years, he returned here in 1969 to teach at CK High.

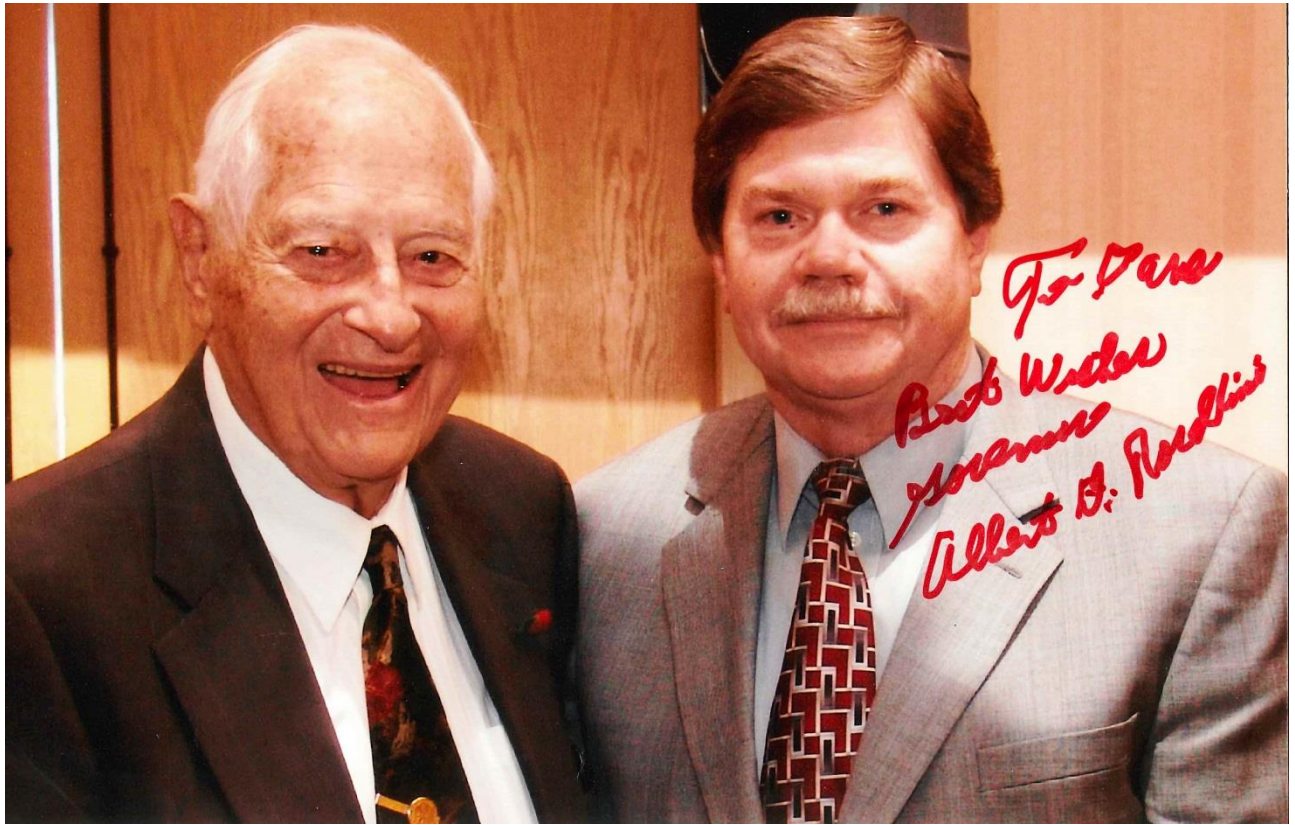
In addition to teaching, Peterson was the school librarian and coordinator of instructional materials. In the 1980's he was put in charge of technology and oversaw putting 4,000 computers into

the district. He became head of the Department of Information Services in 1989.

Peterson has been involved locally with the Democratic Party since the early 1970's, serving as party chairman from 1981-85.

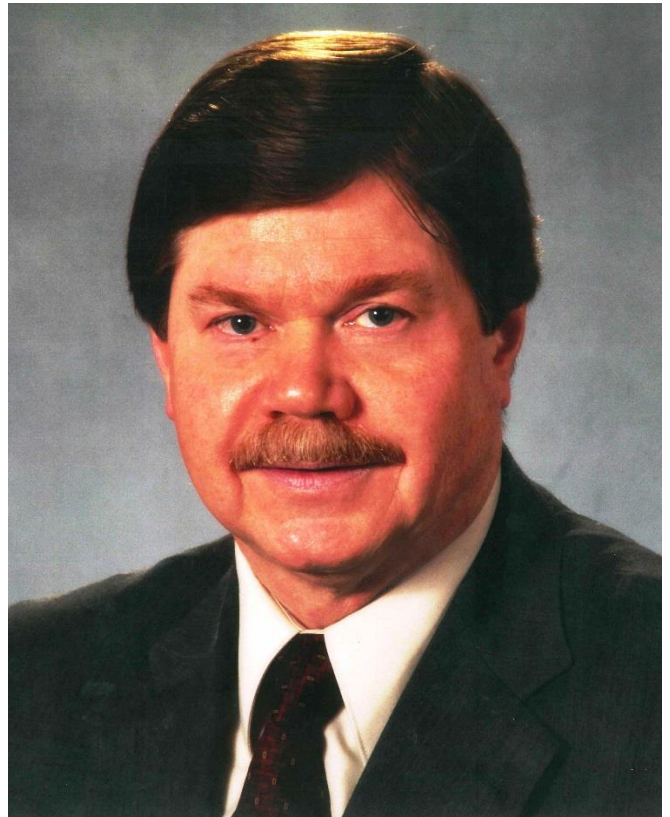
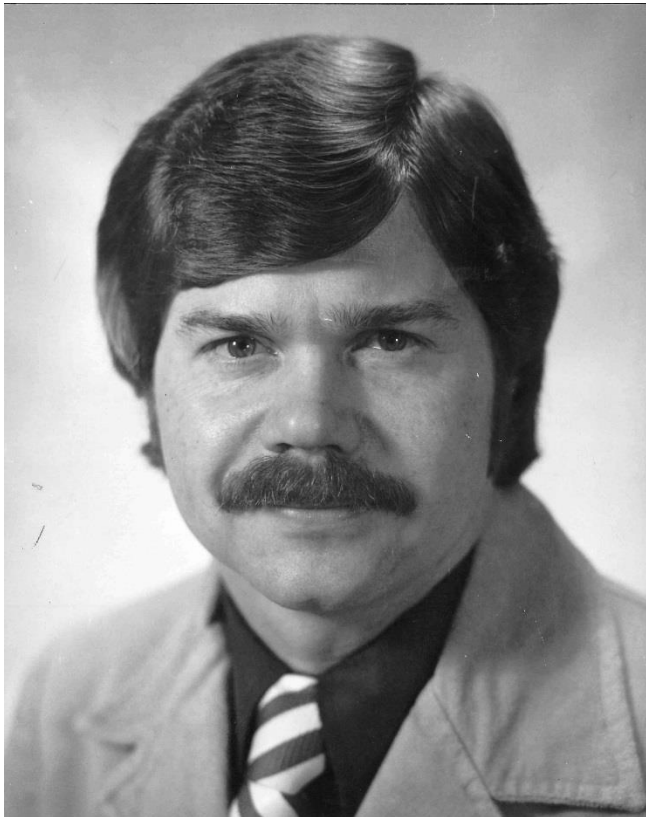
Peterson is married to Carolyn, also a teacher who retired last year after 34 years as a 2nd grade teacher, mostly in Central Kitsap.

Terrorism brochure



To Dave
Bob Welch
Governor
Albert B. Rosellini

(with Gov. Rosellini)



County clerk more than a paper pusher

By [CHARLIE BERMANT](#)

North Kitsap Herald Port Orchard reporter

JUNE 10, 2008



There are two things that really bother Dave Peterson - bottled water and cell phones.

We spend \$6 billion a year on bottled water, he said, pulling that particular statistic out of thin air and acknowledging it may not be true. Imagine what we could buy with \$6 billion. I carry a cell phone, but I only use it once or twice a day. It's amazing to see people who do nothing but talk into their cell phones. What did we do before?

Before cell phones, Peterson worked as a teacher and administrator in the Central Kitsap School District for 30 years. Following his retirement, he was appointed as Kitsap County Clerk, an office to which he has subsequently been elected twice.

In this role, Peterson serves as the administrative and financial officer of the Kitsap County Superior Court, managing the fines and penalties administered by the justice system. Even as he said he has never read a file kept by the Clerk's Office, he seeks to move its myriad processes along and add a human element to these dry, statistical chores.

We perform a public service by helping people deal with various legal issues, he said. A lot of them need to be guided through domestic violence issues, protection orders and things of that type. And we help people who don't have the resources to get an attorney to understand the

mystery of the courts, and make sure their paperwork is completed correctly. If the paperwork is not complete, Peterson said, the judge will throw it out without comment. The person must then do everything over and go to the end of the line, which can add a level of frustration to an already difficult process.

Peterson, 65, stresses that the legal system hardly resembles its television counterpart due to the volume of paperwork, but he uses a comparison that more than half of his 44 employees would certainly miss: Filing papers is a big part of the process, he said. But you don't see people doing a lot of paperwork on Perry Mason.

Peterson, who has an encyclopedic knowledge of parliamentary procedure, is the one who guides county meetings toward the proper process. And he often comes up with questions that no one else thinks of or has the guts to ask. During discussions about the proposed Kitsap County NASCAR track, he did the math and determined that 80,000 visitors would need a lot more porta-potties than track sponsors had estimated.

Peterson graduated from South Kitsap High School and attended the University of Washington before moving to Southern California to teach seventh grade and race motorcycles on weekends. After living in California during times of student unrest and political upheaval, he returned to Kitsap in 1969. He worked for the school district during times of change, guiding the introduction of computers and technology to the district.

In contrast to one prevailing opinion, he does not feel the education system has declined in quality. Teachers are required to do so much these days, he said. But in order for education to succeed, there must be an equal commitment between students, teachers and parents. If everyone isn't on board, it won't work.

But things have changed, Peterson said. When I went to school and a teacher was mad at you, your parents would immediately take their side. Today, if a teacher says a student is doing something wrong, the parent disagrees, saying the kid would never do such a thing.

Peterson, a Democrat, was involved in party politics long before he sought elected office. He worked with the party for several years before mounting an unsuccessful effort for the state Legislature. In 1998, he ran unsuccessfully for Central Kitsap Commissioner but was defeated in the primary by Tim Botkin.

In the meantime, his ability to run a meeting efficiently and fill empty conversational spaces with appropriate wisecracks earned him a position as toastmaster general for local events.

He emceed the retirement celebrations for North Kitsap Commissioner Chris Endresen and Auditor Karen Flynn when they left their jobs, and is the first one called when an event needs

an amusing yet generally non-offensive personality to manage a program. And it's good to know that Peterson's filters are working. After Flynn's event, he divulged the joke that he did not tell: This guy goes into a doctor's office and says I think I'm a moth. The doctor said that he is a general practitioner, and that the guy should see a psychiatrist. So the guy said he was on his way to see a psychiatrist but I saw your light.

In Era of Cutbacks, Kitsap Public Defense Office Growing

Published in the Kitsap Sun on September 21, 2010

Undoubtedly an anomaly among county government offices, the Kitsap County Public Defender's Office has both added jobs and will come in under budget this year by "several hundreds of thousands of dollars," according to Kitsap County Clerk David W. Peterson.

Aided by a steady stream of state grant money, the office is slowly hiring more lawyers to handle cases in house, which is cheaper than contracting them to private firms, said Clarke Tibbits, head of the office.

"The more we grow, the more we save," Tibbits said.

An in-house public defender can take on up to 150 cases a year on a salary of just less than \$90,000. Contracting out the same number of cases at \$1,135 per felony — the set rate the county pays contractors — would cost the county \$170,000.

As a result, the office expects to spend substantially less than its \$3 million budget this year, at a time when other county departments are being asked to make budget cuts of up to nine percent for 2011.

In 2007, the state began providing about \$200,000 a year in grant money to enhance public defense. A consultant recommended that the county improve its public-defense system by bringing lawyers onto the county payroll, so Peterson went looking for someone to head up the operation.

Tibbits was hired in 2008, and since then the public defender's office has grown to include three more attorneys. The latest hire was Steven Lewis, formerly of Crawford, McGilliard, Peterson and Yelish.

Going public means less is going private. In July, the Crawford firm — which handled the largest load of indigent defense cases in Kitsap for three decades — removed itself from the list of firms that handle such cases.

The Crawford firm once employed eight attorneys solely to handle public defense. But partner Mark Yelish said the caseload dried up this year as the county took on more felonies in-house.

“It’s pretty difficult to pay attorneys when you don’t have the caseload,” Yelish said.

The firm has been stripped down to its partners: John McGilliard, Richard Peterson, Mark Yelish and Michelle Adams. Bill Crawford retired in 2009.

They’re still getting plenty of work in family law, estate planning, personal injury and private defense cases, Peterson said.

“Things change. The county went a different way,” Yelish said. “We had to look at the economic reality for how the county set this up.”

Sole practitioners and smaller law firms appear to be maintaining a public caseload. In some circumstances, they also have helped the county lower expenses, Tibbits said.

Jacob Murphy, a lawyer once employed at Crawford, joined Cross and LaCross, another firm. Murphy handles drug court defendants and was doing so for Crawford under a contract for \$5,000 a month. The public defender’s office took over that contract, and now Murphy gets paid only \$2,500 a month for the same service, Tibbits said.

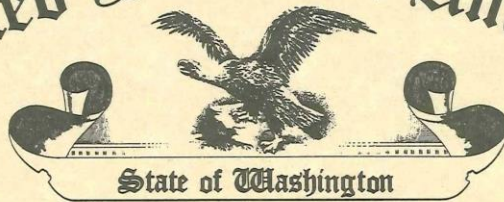
There will always be a need for private attorneys, Tibbits said. At a minimum, such attorneys will be needed when conflicts of interest arise in cases for the county’s public defenders.

“But there’s just certain things you can do in-house more cheaply,” he said.



(Clerk’s Logan, Peterson and Fruedenstein)

United States of America



County of Kitsap

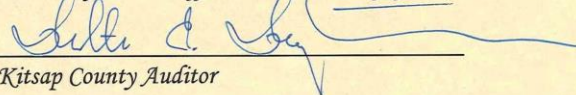
To Dave Peterson, Greetings:

This is to Certify: That at the Election held in Kitsap County on the 2nd day of November 2010, you received a majority of votes cast for the office of:

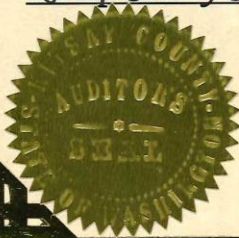
Kitsap County Clerk

In and for said County and were therefore duly elected to said office, as appears from the official election returns and canvass on file in my office.

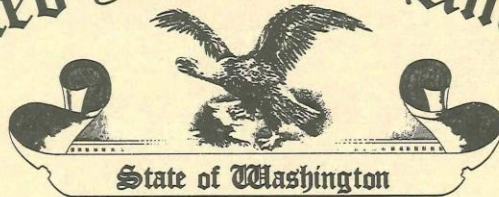
Witness my hand and official seal this 23rd day of November 2010.



Kitsap County Auditor



United States of America



County of Kitsap

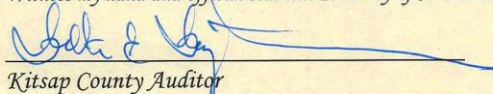
To Dave Peterson, Greetings:

This is to Certify: That at the Election held in Kitsap County on the 4th day of November 2014, you received a majority of votes cast for the office of:

Kitsap County Clerk

In and for said County and were therefore duly elected to said office, as appears from the official election returns and canvass on file in my office.

Witness my hand and official seal this 25th day of November 2014.



Kitsap County Auditor



Kitsap County clerk announces retirement

Andrew Binion, Kitsap 5:14 p.m. PT June 1, 2017



(Photo: Kitsap County)

PORT ORCHARD — David Peterson, a retired educator and Democratic Party activist who held the county clerk's position for nearly 16 years, announced Tuesday he will retire in August.

His replacement will be picked by county commissioners from a list of three candidates, who will be picked by county Democratic precinct committee officers.

Peterson, 74, announced his resignation in a letter to county commissioners, saying it was time to step aside before the office transitions to a new computer system for the office and Superior Court.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my years of public service to the citizens, employees and government of Kitsap County as the elected county clerk," Peterson wrote. "Through many new innovations, programs, office reorganization, efficiencies and hiring a top-notch staff, I have done my best to ensure the office was accessible, helpful, empathetic and courteous to all those who needed assistance. It is an office of which I am very proud."

The Clerk's Office, a part of the executive branch of county government, manages documents for Superior Court, staffs court hearings with clerks to keep an independent record and performs some quasi-judicial duties. It also manages juries for the courthouse.

Peterson was key in establishing the county's Office of Public Defense, which represents defendants in criminal cases who cannot afford their own attorney. The move allowed the county to cut back on contracts with local firms, something Peterson said allowed him to add jobs while at the same time saving tax dollars.

When Peterson was appointed to the position in October 2001, he had been working in the county Auditor's Office as an elections deputy, but that was after retiring from 33 years of working in public schools as a teacher, librarian and administrator. He is the county's 16th clerk.

Among his accomplishments while running the 38-person office, he said maintaining high levels of customer service for residents is first, adding that he is most proud of his staff.

"Their number one priority is to help anyone who comes through that door," Peterson said.

He ran for a seat on the board of county commissions in 1998, but lost in the primary election. He ended up at the top of the list of potential candidates to replace outgoing Clerk Dean Logan, and while he had not worked in a clerk's office, he said he brought with him managerial, budget and interpersonal skills.

"You don't have to know everything, just make sure you hire good people," he said.

He last stood for election in 2014, beating Republican Gary Chaney with nearly 58 percent of the vote.

Peterson is a 1961 graduate of South Kitsap High School and spent 24 years with the Central Kitsap School District.

After graduating from the University of Washington in 1965, he lived in California and worked as a teacher and part-time motorcycle mechanic, and raced motorcycles at Ascot Speedway in Gardena, California, according to his [online biography \(http://www.kitsapgov.com/clerk/dwobio.htm\)](http://www.kitsapgov.com/clerk/dwobio.htm).

Peterson lives in Bremerton with his wife, Carolyn, a retired teacher, and said he plans to travel, fish, and work on projects at home.

Jeff Wiley, chair of the Kitsap County Democratic Central Committee, said Wednesday the party has not received any applications yet but will be reviewing rules on how to recommend the three possible replacements.

Chief Deputy Clerk Alison Sonntag, who has served in the position since November 1993, working under three elected clerks, said she plans to apply for the position.