

Fourfold Flying Begins--Residents React with Anger

The attached comments are unedited excerpts from a late March-May 2019 NextDoor Post initiated to query folks in the greater Coupeville area about whether they are considering moving due to the 4-fold increase in carrier landing practice (FCLP) operations. They were informed that their comments would be forwarded to our political leaders, albeit per NextDoor policy, their names would be redacted, other than my originating post (1st below and concluding comment).

Bob Wilbur, President of Citizens of Ebey's Reserve (COER)

Bob Wilbur, Admiral's Cove Beach Club

How Many OLF Fly Days to Expect

A lot of folks are wondering what to do now that the Navy has decided to basically thumb its nose at your sincere and justified concerns on the draft EIS. One question a lot of you are now asking is how often will the jets fly on any given year? Since 2000, the highest year of OLF use was 2012, when there were 9668, of which 2100 operations were on Path 14 and 7568 on Path 32. Those operations took place on 79 fly days. At the same rate of 79 operations per fly day, it would take 198 fly days (increase by a factor of 2.5) to complete the Navy's current plan of 24,100 operations .

Going forward, that operations per fly day rate will likely be greater and, hence, the number of fly days less than 198. That is, current usage of OLF make these assumptions reasonable: (1) assume a reasonable average of 3.5 jets per session with each jet conducting 20 operations (10 bounces), or 70 total operations per session, and (2) an average of 3 sessions per fly day. Under those assumptions each fly day would produce 210 operations (3 x 70 operations). So the total of 24,100 operations at OLF divided by 210 ops per fly day equals a total of 115 fly days, of which 30% or 35 flydays are planned for Path 14 and 70% or 80 flydays are planned for Path 32.

Although those estimates seem to reflect recent use, it really is hard to know how those assumptions will play out. The Navy has carte blanche, so it could be close to 200 flydays.

Now the following question for those reading this post: If you are thinking you need to move, do please say so on this post, and add explain why if you wish. With your consent, your testimony here may be used in COER's attempt to possibly seek a preliminary injunction and perhaps instigate a class action lawsuit. Also do comment, if inclined, on how many sessions per day does it take to really screw up you day. You can make that a private reply.

Female
Coupeville

Hi Bob: I just wrote a letter to the navy about the jet noise. If you want to use any of this please do. Even though decisions have been made and I am sure no one will take my email

seriously that I am writing. I live in Ebey's Reserve on Whidbey Island, one of the most pristine areas in the Northwest.

My husband and I retired here 11 years ago because of this unparalleled beauty. The jet noise is so intense and so frequent that my life feels fractured. We may well need to move to have any quality of life. That is wrong. As I reflect on the Navy's new plans it is just plain wrong in the most basic sense of right and wrong. There are many isolated spots in this country that could provide perfect training for the pilots. Why aren't they being considered? Jan, Ebey's Reserve resident.

Female

Coupeville·13h ago

We tried to move last year, but at a price that reflected what we paid for our home plus improvements we put in. The entire time it was on the market, April thru September, there were only two showings.

Female

Welcher-Race-Harrington·11h ago

Thank you for this, Bob. I have been looking to move for 2 years, constantly scanning what's available. Why? #1: Increasing jet noise, and #2: Downsizing. The increased jet noise WAY outweighs the downsizing. I most likely would stay right here, the home I have spent 10 years loving, caring for, embracing.

Male

Admiral's Cove Beach Club·10h ago

If the jet flights increase as expected & they fly a lot in the evenings and weekends, we will certainly attempt to move if our home has any value left. We hate being stuck inside our house on hot days and not being able to open doors for ventilation or sit on our deck. I also fear walking my dog in the neighborhood and being blocks from home when the jets suddenly start flying. We have to try to invite off-island visitors on days when we hope the jets might not be flying, but that means we can't be sure more than a week in advance at the most. Finally, I just bought some expensive hearing aids, but they have to come out whenever the jets fly.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

I was under the impression that the airplanes were no longer going to fly so close to moon y deck that all my thousands dollars of glazed planters were fall and shatter and that the fly bys wouldn't last as long. We are definitely moving. Oh yeah, and it is impossible to invite friends over,... so we are hostages; afraid to walk my dog to the beach because the dog is old and it scares him . I can let him hang out on the deck until I hear the planes . But can't invite friends over; a hostage in my beautiful house. I have no choice but to move. It's so sad. I love it here.

Male

Coupeville

One of the comments here about the Navy thumbing their nose at Coupeville upon the release of the ROC seemed right on target (no pun). Those of us living here on Ebey Reserve are the most vocal in our opposition to how the Navy uses the OLF for FCLP - and for good

reason. One approach that COER or other interested parties might pursue on the legal front could be a suit for "Diminished Value". This area of litigation seems to have its applications and our situation here with respect to the impacts of the Navy deciding to employ the Preferred Alternative (2A) is a clear choice on their part to do something that has a harmful outcome to property values - whether one plans to sell or not. The County will be feeling the effects of this, as well- although they may feel that losses in revenue here on Ebey Reserve would be offset nicely by the development elsewhere, driven my the Navy's increase of personnel stationed at NAS Whidbey. I've lived here in town for nearly fifteen years, knowing fully what the OLF was used for when I purchased a home here. I hope to see the Navy and our community reach a better balanced agreement as to future of the OLF. Thus far, DOD and the Navy have been poor stewards of the environment here in our region. Our elected officials and representatives have not been as effective in changing that, as the combined voices of concerned citizens. I'm grateful to all those folks that have attended Town Meetings and participated in other events to voice our concerns. Bob Wilbur and <female>, you've done a great job here on those forum defining the impact of the Navy's operations at the OLF. Moving forward, I believe this matter will be resolved in Federal Court.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

If we had only known moving here last Spring that our home would be exactly under flight path 32 here in Admirals Cove We swear the house has a giant X on it but it's the three tall trees where the jets bank heading back to the airstrip. "Yes", our realtor said at the open house, " the jets do fly over but you get used to it. You know they fly all over the islands" . We had seen a few up at Ault and it seemed ok; not so loud. The scratchy black and white drawing provided was all we had to go on that weekend. Mind you they didn't fly that weekend or even for weeks before or after. Devastating to move to a beautiful place and to feel so frustrated as I hear the rumblings begin. Moving? Seriously on my mind. Who wants to live somewhere hearing the sounds of war huddled in our homes day and night staring out our windows watching the submarines going back and forth? . It's home for now and each moment of peace is cherished.

Female

Coupeville

I will be forced to sell my house... I am directly under the flight path and work from home full time. I am unable to be in conference calls for my job, the noise overpowers any noise canceling earphones I can find. The only acceptable number of flights would be the same as the prior years. I have lived in this area since 2008, so after 10 years I decided the noise and number of flights were acceptable, so I purchased my home assuming the 10 year pattern would continue. This changes everything, I don't see how anyone could keep their homes... there will be no quality of life. And my livelihood is gone... along with my home value.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

[Commenter x], your story is the same as ours, even down to the new hearing aids. I am so frustrated as last September I decided to train for my first marathon. I have run through rain, snow, wind, power outages, in the dark after work, and have managed to stick to my training

schedule. Now the marathon is just weeks away and I am struggling to keep up with my training due to the jets. I have been caught outside a few times when the flyovers start. It is body jarring and deafening to be outside under the jets. We are all now prisoners in our homes.

Male

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

We are considering moving but we have only been in our house for 1.5 years, love the house, and since we are retired, wanted this to be our last move. Apparently, we bought right before the Navy announced they were considering the increase in jet flights at OLF. The previous flight schedule we thought was tolerable. But now we feel same as others on this site, having to run for the house if outside without ear protection, trapped in the house when I'd rather be outside working in the garden or taking walks, unable to enjoy evening TV watching. We worry about having our 2-year-old granddaughter over here who loves to play outside, and we want to be able to bring her to the pool. Guess that will depend on the jet schedule! Yesterday, while the jets were flying, we drove through neighborhoods a short distance south of Admirals Cove and saw people out in their yards with no issue - the sound there was bearable. The sound in AC feels like we're in a war zone!

Male

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

Boy! You said a mouthful. We've been here for 14 years and it has been (sort of) bearable flying 4-6 days a month. They're flying 5 days a week and 3 times a day, now. That calc's to 3++ hours per day of really annoying sound pollution - if you're a retiree (like most of us). Have you noticed that 4 out of 5 days have been on-final over us? This sucks!

Female

Welcher-Race-Harrington

I have lived in this house since 2009 full time, and yesterday was the first time they flew as low as they did. Until after 10pm. NOW I fully grasp what you guys in AC deal with regularly. Soul sucking.

Female

Coupeville

Today we have had off and on flights over our community Kineth Point Woods since this morning. Many of the planes are going right over our home and those of our neighbors one after another! It is like they are going to land on our homes! Our Autistic son is hidden in bedroom with loud head phones on as can't take it. I am feeling like I have PTSD myself because of the loud planes that literally shake the house/windows! They are so close down to the houses of the community that it is like they are landing on the strip! It used to be with the Prowler that the planes only went over our community homes if they went outside their flight pattern in practicing. But now with the Growler we seem to be under the flight pattern! We are at the turn around area to make the approach to the strip as you head toward the water. We have been here in our home since 1990 and have experienced the Prowlers for years which was tolerable, but this is NOT! They are louder, bigger, and with the large increase in number of planes and increased schedule this is absolutely uncalled for the anyone to have to tolerate. We will be deaf and it will effect our mental health as well as our physical health!

Very unnerving! I will be at the Sound Defense Alliance meeting in April if I make it till then!
Does someone know the flight schedule and the # of the route Kineth Point Woods and small communities nearby off Parker Road? Thanks! VENTING!!!!

Male

Coupeville

Good grief, how many planes are flying the circuit right now? They're coming right over over our house on Pleasant Place every 45 seconds or so! This is ridiculous- and untenable.

Female

Coupeville

I'm your neighbor ... Hoping this is not our new normal. My son had to come in from playing in the sunshine:(

Male

Coupeville

I'm relatively new to Coupeville (we live downtown near the library), but I'm eager to help out the people here who have been so negatively impacted by the recent increases. I have a connection to a reporter at The Seattle Globalist (more info on readership here: <https://www.seattleglobalist.com/sponsorship>). They are a small publication that tends to publish stories focusing on underrepresented communities and/or international viewpoints. If there's any interest from my contact or if I come across any other leads, I'll be sure to be in touch. Hang in there neighbors.

Male

Coupeville

Here is a 2 minute decible reading from this afternoon. 118db was the highest. We've always been Pro-Navy but this is getting to be too much.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

Can our potential loss of value be recouped thru legal means? What are the possibilities???

Female

Coupeville

Meanwhile, gather evidence everyone. Pick a day, and take a screen shot of what Zillow says your home is worth every week. My home is down \$12,000 from last week.

Male

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

Thinking of selling due to noise, Keystone.

Male,

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

I can't sell as I just bought a year ago and have done a bunch of remodeling (+\$100k). I am very much underwater and will be even more so due to the increase of jet noise.

Female
Donahey

Have invested way to much money in my house to move but 200 days of consistent jet noise is enough to drive any sane person off the deep end! Even if you buy ear protection and do new window etc. how are we ever going to be able to enjoy the outdoors. Why would anyone want to come visit Coupeville, Greenbank Farm or any part of central Whidbey with daily jet noise!

Male
Admiral's Cove Beach Club

I am beginning to sense an emerging community crisis--the Navy stupid having no idea--believing the Vietnam era of half century ago gives it carte blanche and the nouveau populous confronting incredulous disbelief at what it is doing to Coupeville.

Female
Coupeville

This is absolutely crazy! The planes have flown right over our house in KPW's on some of their turns, as they make the turn to the strip! It is not only extremely bad for our ears, but our mental health as well! Talk about anxiety each time one goes over physically and mentally! Can't visit, teenagers can't study even on line with ear buds in, the house actually rumbles if they are too low, feel the walls with my hand and it vibrates from the planes. The dog is reacting to the noise as well. The Growlers are coming very close together now and looks like they are nearly touching the tree tops and our roof as with any other homes they fly over! Each of us in this family are reacting to these planes so close to us in different ways, emotionally and physically. There is anxiety big time, one is getting migraines, I am physically anxious and covering my ears in the house and it is still loud and can't concentrate on anything and find myself shaking! And the planes are playing games with our minds as it sounds like there are coming through the house! With Summer approaching we won't even be able to enjoy fresh air because of the noise level, we'll have to keep the windows shut. We have listened and watched the Prowlers over our community and house for years, but they were nothing compared with the Growlers! They are bigger, louder, and now with the added planes just recently, several times more than the Prowlers. It is now 10:16 p.m. and they are still flying! Last week it was daytime route, this week night route, don't know which is worse?

I took video on my phone of them during the day the last week and intend to take more. Read on Nextdoor where someone mentioned video recording them, if needed. Don't know what good it will do, but we can only pray that something happens to change this intrusion on our lives in this community. It is a real shame that the Navy is not respecting the people that they are suppose to be protecting. How about finding a couple landing stripes, or building some, in a non populated area such as empty fields without population to damage or the possibility of crashing into a home and killing people! Venting again.

Male
Admiral's Cove Beach Club

Yes, Coupeville neighbors, this is what we experience in Admirals Cove. When they fly directly over our house (can see them in the skylights) we can't watch tv, talk on the phone,

walk or work outside, enjoy our deck, invite friends over or even talk to each other! We've learned to live with it when they only fly one or two days a week but 80 more Growlers will make it impossible to have a good life here on Whidbey.

Female

S. Race Rd

Up until last week the noise usually didn't bother me. Then last week it was ear splitting and frightening right over our roof. I can take one day a week but when it is day after day it starts really grating on the nerves. I always thought I'd live here through my retirement but all of a sudden I found myself thinking. . . "hmmm , maybe we should think about moving to Anacortes. " Our beautiful spot in paradise has turned into a torture center for Hell!

Male

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

Just think over 30 more f-18G soon will be here can't wait to see them flying over the island go navy. [Editorial note: this is the only comment that supported the Navy's FCLPs at the OLF.]

Male

Admiral's Cove Beach

I will be rooting for Army in every future Army-Navy game, just because. And I will be rooting for the courts to come to some sensible conclusions, because **I see no evidence that the Navy can do that on its own without legal assistance.**

Female

Donahey

Feel so sorry for the gentlemen who was afraid to state his option on this sight! And for Atlanta, I love the freedom our armed services afford us, but one community should not have to carry the whole burden of growlers! Freedom should not destroy one community there are ways the Navy can handle the growlers and get our men and women the training the need with out totally destroying a community! That's all most of us want!

Female

S Race Rd

We're not selling just yet, BUT we have stopped any kind of home improvements that we'd planned and we're exploring other communities like Port Townsend.

Female

Rolling Hills

We're not selling yet either but before this I never even considered moving off the island, and now we're looking at options and re-thinking property and home improvements.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

We would consider selling - but who would buy????

Female

Rodena - Holly Berry-

We were considering downsizing anyway, but now the new noise level has given us an extra incentive and we are actively looking elsewhere mostly off island. Selling is a big concern of ours too.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

We are *not* going to stay. We have loved living here because we love our view and love being outdoors. With now feeling like prisoners in our own home, we would like to sell but are not sure we would get any money out. Might turn it into a rental. Figure the personnel connected with those 36 additional growlers will need a place to live. Let them deal with this hell.

Female

Admiral's Cove Beach Club

First, let me say, I am not anti Navy. I worked on a Navy base for many years. I appreciate the sacrifice our service men and women make to protect our country. But this new normal is not something I can live with. I am an outdoor person and I even open windows in my house all year round. But now my lifestyle has had to abruptly change. I feel like a prisoner in my home. I could even accept this easier if the Navy could be a little more specific about when they will be flying so I could snag a window of down time to walk my dogs or know when they are done for the night so I can open my windows and fall asleep. The not knowing is the hardest part. I have been caught outside running, walking, kayaking etc. when they have started flying and it is unbearable for me. I cannot live this way.

Female

Welcher-Race-Harrington

They have given us a reprieve tonight on Morris Rd., east side. Gee, how thoughtful. I bought a house in Greenbank over the weekend, just in the nick of time. At least, that's the way I feel. Last Wednesday and Thursday night caused such a visceral reaction in me. **I felt completely trapped (as we all do) by a force that doesn't care.** Went and saw the house Saturday afternoon and bought it Monday. I feel tremendous relief along with tremendous sadness to leave this beautiful home and setting of 13 years because of forces beyond my control. We are all sharing this together. It does help.

[Bob Wilbur insert here---This site validates this commenter's correct reaction in bold:

<https://disclosuredeception.wordpress.com/noise-annoyance/>]

Female

Kinneth-Long Point

Before buying, I investigated the Growler flights for path 14. I understood then that Captain Nortier in federal court had clearly stated that Growlers could only use path 14 on "rare occasions," like about 5% of the time, which amounted to 5% of 6100 operations. We thought, okay we can live with that.

Then the EIS decided, oh, we can actually do Path 14 thirty percent of the time and bump up operations 4-fold at the OLF from 6,000 to 24,000. I have long, pre-arranged phone sessions for my business clients, which I cannot now schedule because (1) the FCLP schedule changes at a moment's notice with the weather, (2) the Navy cannot tell the public which path will be used until just a few hours prior to practice, and (3) phone conversations with the Growlers overhead are impossible.

So my business is really hit hard. I can either relocate my home office to a rental, retire the business, or move. I am quite sure these thoughtless Navy actions have huge economic and personal consequences that cannot stand. They hit way beyond reasoned justification.

Female
Coupeville

Bob, your original post asked us to reply about feeling the need to move. Here is such a reply. I am currently writing from Langley, our new home, and this message is also a sign off from Nextdoor Coupeville, as I need to fully let go of our home of 20 years. Our home in Crockett Lake, purchased in 1998, was pretty much under the Prowler path. Not horrible except when they started up at midnight. The Growler path was a couple blocks away, but still louder. We saw the writing on the wall with the new EIS and decided in October to move. There were a couple other personal reasons for it, but for me primarily it was the prospect of every single day having to deal with the resentment of the jets destroying my life. Could not work (home-based business), could not be outside, could not hold a conversation, could not think. Permanent hearing loss.

To those who say "you were warned about the noise", I found our disclosure the other day: "the property is in an area adjacent to an airport and there may be noise from aircraft." More accurate would be "you are near a military installation and will be subject to ear-crushing jet noise directly over your head any hour of the day and night." To those who say "I love the sound of jets because they make me feel safe and preserve our way of life", your fears are unfounded and you are willingly GIVING UP your (and my) way of life for the delusion that unceasing jet practice somehow protects our democracy. No one is coming to take our Island away from us. You have given it over to the Navy. That "sound of freedom" is the sound of the military-industrial complex perpetuating itself.

As we were cleaning out the last of our 20-years in what was to be our last home, the new jet pattern started up. I was so grateful we were leaving, because the frequency increased as expected...*[a bit of irrelevant dialog deleted here only for brevity sake]*...I am so grateful we moved. But my heart aches for my former home and neighbors up in Coupeville, especially as I have been reading this thread. The pain you are experiencing is beyond what any citizen should have to endure.

#39 Welcher-Race-Harrington-9 Apr

Despite the form we had to sign, despite all the realities, Whidbey Island is a uniquely beautiful home, not just a base that we move to and leave in 3 years. Or a retirement spot after our 20 years in the Navy. My ears, my entire body, cannot handle this new low altitude flying. So I, along with others, move. You out there who raise the same flag we do, we ask you, what does spitting nails accomplish?

#40 Donahey-6 Apr

My heart goes out to those individuals that live in Admerials cove. Life must be so difficult! What I don't understand us why the Navy cannot see that constant daily flights are not reasonable for anyone to have to live through. But again I think the Navy just does not care!

41 Admiral's Cove Beach Club-26 Apr

To those suggesting we sound proof our homes or get expensive audio equipment, you are missing much of the point. I don't want to be trapped in my home when the jets fly. I would like to take my dog for a walk in the neighborhood and enjoy my deck or even leave the sliding doors open on hot days. Do we put a sound proof dome on our pool this summer? Do we have to give up yard work & gardening? My wife and I do have sound deadening headphones & I take out my hearing aids - then we can't talk to each other unless we shout or get in the other person's face and wave our arms.

#42 Coupeville-28 Apr

We have lived on Parker Road near Kinneth Point since 2001. We were fine with the jet activity up until this year! They are louder, flying lower, and flying a whole lot more. We certainly can not be outside when they are flying. When inside our floor vibrates when they are flying low. My wife has hearing lose and tinnitus and the loud noise activates her tinnitus! We are going to move. This is horrible!

#43 Coupeville-1 May

No one seems to be talking about the real danger other then hearing loss and that is that our water is at higher then risk levels with PFAS. The navy admitting they are the cause is building a new filtration system for the town of Coupeville to be completed in June. The rest of us not in town water are at risk of this cancer producing substance building up in our bodies. Many pets have been effected. Everyone should get their water tested. There is a class action started. The State of Washington has banned this substances found mainly in fire fighting foam. The Navy has refused to comply with the excuse that they are only accountable to the federal level. We are screwed. We are moving ASAP as we do not have time to wait out law suits working their way through the courts.

#44 Admiral's Cove Beach Club-2 May

Here are some irrefutable know effects of toxic noise: frustration and tension leading to increase in blood pressure, cardiovascular issues, hearing loss, major risks to unborn fetus, disablement of family and business conversation, denigration of outside activities, exacerbation of PTSD, classroom interference and at-home learning suppression, and socio-economic and overall livability denigration. Those things carry a large burden of both economic and human costs that do not have to be. There really are other, far less damaging locations for FCLPs. Regrettably, the military has become insensitive to that, unless it can be fit into their perceived priority order to make them appear to be a "good neighbor". That seems now an irretrievable image, lost through congressional fear and greed bought by the MIC (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8y06N5BBRtY>), which has turned our military into a \$\$-washed, steroid-induced Incredible Hulk. So, are we to be a community that looks out for each other first and foremost, or are we to be a divided community, one umbilically linked to military indoctrination and blind loyalty? Or do we work together to bring about a real and meaningful check and balance to military power, a community that hears those wise words from General and President Eisenhower and seeks reason over power?

#45 Admiral's Cove Beach Club-2 May

In Boise, they are wrestling with commercial airport expansion and have declared areas similarly exposed, albeit at a lesser noise level, to be "unfit for human habitation." I think that is the best short answer to the question of why so many hate what is happening here. It has made so much of our community unfit for human habitation.

#46 Coupeville-9 May

Living in Coupeville, the noise is distracting and at times it wakes me up at night....then I was near Admirals Cove one day when they started to fly. It was ear splitting! I held my hands over my ears and ran to my car. To open the car door, I had to take one hand off my ear. Then I jumped in my car. My ear rang for several hours. I seriously thought I had ruined my hearing in that one second. To expect anyone to live in those conditions is inhumanly impossible. If I have someone sign a brass disclosure does that mean I can expect them to stand in front of a bullet? I'm as patriotic as anyone here but we have a right to safety within our own communities and that of our neighbors..

#47 Welcher-Race-Harrington-10 May

I move tomorrow, having been crying most of this week and trying to not think about leaving this precious spot I have owned for 13 years. The worst part about this is I have NO control over this situation. I wish I were like some people who can actually deal with this nightmare noise. But I cannot. And I am heartbroken. My friend below me in Harrington Lagoon was told by a Navy personal who actually called her back, that they are 400 ft. over our heads now. 400 ft. And the worst, most egregious part of all of this, they don't care.

#48 Coupeville-12h ago

We have lived in Coupeville over 18 years now. When the Prowlers flew it was fine. For some time now the growlers have been flying and they are very loud, seem to fly lower, and definitely are flying much much more. We want the Navy to be well trained! BUT, when we have to wear noise reducing headphones in our living room at night and have to come inside when gardening, or whatever, it is sad! I have tinnitus and it really aggravates it. We have to move because of all this. And that is really SAD!!!! We, too, signed paperwork when we purchased our home and property, but what is going on now far surpasses what we experienced for so many years. It was tolerable, but it is NOT now.

In addition to the major benefit of flying over unoccupied government-owned property, there are other added benefits. These benefits include the safety factor of longer runways, on-site control towers, crash/fire/rescue facilities and aircraft refueling capabilities.

Bob Wilbur, Admiral's Cove Beach Club

Thank you all for sharing your concerns. I am compiling the most salient of your posts, with names redacted, to forward around to our political ostriches and supporters, so that they may better feel and understand a bit of your pain. If any of you don't want your post to be anonymously included, please let me know.

Your personal anecdotes reflect a tragedy of something gone awry in America. There is a challenge before each of us--that is to make our voices and our stories heard at all levels of the political spectrum of apathy, myopia, and buck-passing. As one jet-crazed vacation renter aptly expressed it to me as they were packing up to leave a day early: "I wouldn't live here if rent was free!"

And witness this: Young woman with young daughter caught riding bikes down Keystone Ave. as the jets began flying. Mother stopped her daughter as a jet approached, they dismounted their bikes, covered their ears with their hands, and once the jet passed peddled off madly for

another 30 seconds before stopping to repeat the coverup as the next jet approached overhead. I wondered, if they were residents, will they remain; if a vacationing family, will they return? As I slowed in my truck and went by, I noticed the little girl was crying....that is not the sound of freedom; it is the "sound of oppression."

No citizen of the United States, from infant to senior, should be asked or expected to give any more than any other citizen of their family and personal time, of their health and well-being, of their home business, or of their lifetime property investment. And no one should have to stand by and watch their community and its unique history be turned into military slaveship and forced abandonment.