

# Home

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could from the house before it was red-tagged. Among the things they saved: Beth's piano, Jasmin's vanity and the rocking chair from when John's girls were babies.

## The race to rebuild

The Muellers have nothing but praise for their insurance company (Allstate), which sent a "catastrophe team" to assess their loss and quickly cut a check for reconstruction. Some of their neighbors have struggled with getting settlements and at least one has yet to move back in, according to the Muellers.

Their coverage for a temporary rental was for one year, so the rebuild needed to move quickly.

The first roadblock: their foundation was cracked. The whole house would have to go.

Demolition was Jan. 29. John Mueller still has the video on his phone of when the two-story machine began clawing at the house, crunching an upstairs window.

"Absolutely surreal," he said "This was kind of a hard day ... when we had to say goodbye to the old red house."

The Muellers were their own contractors and have learned a ton about permitting and local building codes. They went with Coval, a local construction company. The split level is gone, the layout is flipped, the garage now on the left. But they've replaced their four-bedroom and increased their square footage from 1,822 to 1,910.

John Mueller documented their construction progress on Facebook. They hit another snag in September, when there was a delay in the electrical hookup on which other steps of the rebuild depended. Coval found a workaroud, and interior work continued. John applied pressure to Puget Sound Energy,



John Mueller shows off the artwork that features the old house in the background being carried away by the tornado. In the foreground is the new house, study and bright, with a yellow brick road out front. The woodworking piece hangs next to the family's front door of their new home on Tiburon Court in Port Orchard. MEEGAN M. REID / KITSAP SUN

and the hookup took place near the end of September.

Exterior painting was done by early October. The interior was painted and appliances installed in mid-October.

There was a recent scramble to spread topsoil and hydroseed before the inspection, but they pulled it off.

Beth says the rebuild was "super-stressful." She jokes since their marriage has survived this, it can survive anything. She can't wait to cook Thanksgiving dinner for the whole family back in her own home.

John, walking with his wife through

empty rooms two days before move-in, displayed his ever-ready optimism.

"This has been a long road, but it's been a good road, hasn't it?" he said. "What's the biggest thing? Always keep a smile. You know what? This house, it was just stuff. Everybody was OK. I knew we'd be OK. With faith, all things are possible."

## Over the rainbow

Beth got a tattoo on her right leg. It shows a tornado, ruby slippers and a rainbow.

"God's promise, right?" she said.

John commissioned from a woodworker in Bonney Lake a plaque that hangs outside their front door. It shows the old house in the background being carried away by the tornado. In the foreground is the new house, study and bright, with a yellow brick road out front.

"Let me just say, home ... there's no place like home," John said. "We have our old house that's going away. It's in the past. This is new. This is us. Everything ... everything leads home."

# Music

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within city limits. It also includes a section on "public disturbances," which include a broad range of noises from repetitive car horn honking to loud sound systems in vehicles. Noises that "emanate frequently, or repetitively or continuously from any building, structure or property which unreasonably disturbs the peace, comfort and repose of others" are also illegal under city code.

The initiative would exempt live music and concerts from the "public disturbances," part of the code, which Broughton argues is overly subjective and makes business owners like Rinke vulner-

able to targeting from residents.

"If you're seeking attention or you're wanting to cause trouble, all you have to do is call 911 and the cops will show up. I mean it's tremendous empowerment situation for the callers," Broughton said.

The initiative is one part of a larger discussion surrounding Bremerton's noise ordinance. A judge will hear testimony and arguments on Dec. 5 and decide whether Rinke's citations should be dropped. The noise ordinance has been on the city council's list of goals to discuss since the beginning of the year, but no decisions have been made yet, according to council president Eric



Gordon Rinke owner of Brother Don's on Kitsap Way in Bremerton visits with customers in the bar of the establishment. PHOTOS BY LARRY STEAGALL / KITSAP SUN

Younger.

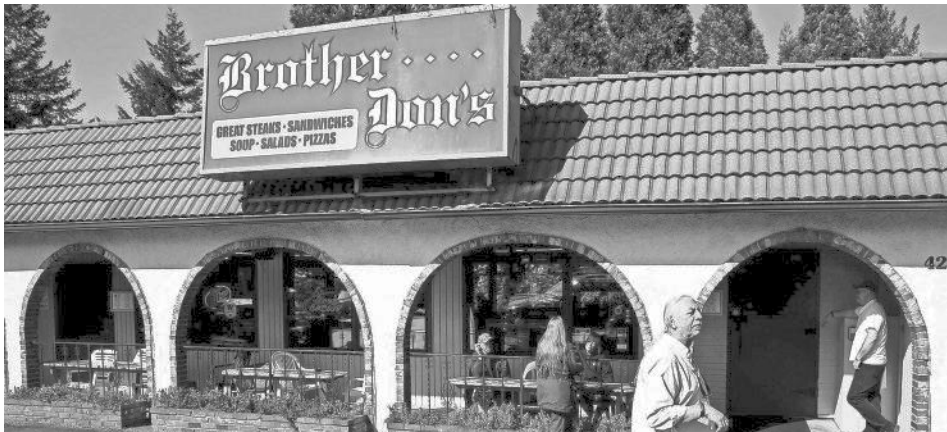
"We want to see what the outcome of the court case is to see if there's any direction we need to take," Younger said.

Part of the reason for the initiative is to "compel a decision" from either the city council or the people, Broughton said. If Rinke's case is denied by a judge, he plans to appeal, which could take several years to resolve.

Bremerton Mayor Greg Wheeler said he didn't want to comment on the initiative until he understands exactly how it would affect residents. Wheeler said he would consider "the residents of our neighborhoods, my ability to enforce the law, and the bars' ability to continue making a living and playing music" before taking a position.

"I would be concerned if they were allowed to exceed our current ordinances," Wheeler said.

The initiative isn't intended to let bands play as loud as they want with no regard for nearby resi-



Gordon Rinke owner of Brother Don's on Kitsap Way in Bremerton has been given noise citations. Some neighbors have complained about the noise from his live music nights.

dents, however. Broughton said businesses could still be cited if they exceeded the decibel levels established in city code.

"We tried to target it, we don't want to bring Black Sabbath in here," Broughton said. "The intent is we still have to meet the decibel readings, it just takes the subjectivity out of it."

Bremerton police don't take decibel readings when they respond to noise complaints, according to Bremerton Police Chief Jim Burchett. Using equipment that measures noise levels isn't required under city code, however, officers can cite a business for noise violation if they can hear the sound 50 feet or more from its source.

In court, Broughton is arguing that the way the city is enforcing its noise ordinance is too vague and relies on the subjec-

tive opinion of officers that respond to Brother Don's since decibel readings aren't taken at the site.

"You have to give people some standard where they understand if they do something they're violating the law," Broughton said.

City attorneys declined to comment specifically on the initiative. In a response brief filed in Bremerton Municipal Court, the city argues that the ordinance makes it clear to residents what conduct is illegal. The brief points out that the ordinance doesn't require police officers to test public disturbances using decibel reading equipment.

"I think that the case law that's cited in there supports the constitutionality of the way our ordinance is written," assistant city attorney My-

chael Raya said.

Rinke said the calls, citations and improvements he's made to dampen noise coming from the bar has hurt his business. Brother Don's hosts a variety of music every night of the week except for Mondays.

The problem didn't start until a few years ago when two neighbors began calling the police and complaining that noise from Brother Don's was a disturbance. In response, Rinke has paid to have insulation installed underneath the bar's cantilevered deck, as well as on the windows and underneath the stage that musicians play on. He's moved up the start times for bands, and no one plays past 10 p.m. now.

Those moves have set Rinke back about \$20,000, he says.

"I'll be glad when it's over," Rinke said.



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