

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM, Port Townsend Washington. I'm Ann Katzenbach with local news and commentary for today, December 1, 2022.

Each year the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance Index analyzes data from rural hospitals around the country and Jefferson Health Care was recognized for a fifth year with a Performance Leadership Award. In describing this award, Chartis explains, "Amidst uncertainty, transition, and strain, these top performers are excelling in managing risk, achieving higher quality, securing better outcomes, increasing patient satisfaction, and operating at a lower cost than their peers."

Mike Glenn, CEO of Jefferson Healthcare, said, "The last couple of years have been a strain for all of us and recognition like this is an honor and a wonderful validation of the work we do for our patients and community. Delivering safe, high-quality patient care is Jefferson Healthcare's highest priority and it is very rewarding to be recognized for our work."

And on the health front, rates of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are still on the rise across the country. RSV is a respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms in adults. But RSV can be serious, especially for infants and young children or seniors with chronic health conditions. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can lead to bronchitis and pneumonia. Jefferson Health Care advises that you keep patients hydrated, keep infant noses sucked clean, use a humidifier, and treat fever and discomfort with Tylenol. Contact your local health provider if symptoms worsen.

The Benji Project, a Jefferson County non-profit, is doing its part in helping deal with mental health – in this case, the anxiety and stress of adolescence that, combined with the lock-down of COVID-19, has resulted in a notable increase in teen suicide. According to the CDC, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for teens and young adults, age 10 to 34. There are many factors that lead to suicide in young adults, but there are proven strategies for heading off these tragedies and improving the mental health of teens.

The Benji Project is dedicated to the memory of Benji Kenworthy who lived in Port Townsend and who died at age 15 by suicide in 2015. The non-profit that bears his name helps Jefferson County youth develop lifelong skills for stress management and emotional resilience through school- and community-based programs that stress compassion, self-esteem, coping skills and mindfulness. Their website, <https://www.thebenjiproject.org/>, presents ways that the mental health of teens can be addressed. If you are concerned about someone you know, this is a good place to start finding help.

This life-saving non-profit is holding a fund raiser this Saturday. To find out more, see <https://thebenjiproject.kindful.com/e/sips>.

In recent news, the 17-year-old who allegedly stabbed and killed a member of his family in Port Ludlow on Monday evening has still not been identified. The victim has been identified as Robert E. Carpenter, aged 56. The *Leader's* account of the murder made it sound like the teen was Carpenter's stepson but this has not been verified by law enforcement at this time.

The annual Toys for Tots Drive takes place this Saturday, December 3. There will be two Jefferson Transit buses where you can donate your toys for another “Stuff the Bus” campaign. In Port Townsend you'll find a bus in the Safeway parking lot, and in Port Hadlock at First Security Bank across from QFC. There are also collection boxes in some stores. And this note: You can support the local economy by buying locally.

The Jefferson County Conservation District will begin taking online orders for bare-root native trees and shrubs, starting tomorrow, December 2. If you need help with selection and care of native plants, a workshop next Thursday, December 8 and another on January 11 will be held at the county library from 4 to 5:30pm. Orders for plants will be taken through January 27 and orders can be picked up on February 25. The district website is <https://www.jeffersoncd.org/what/annual-tree-sale/>.

As of this morning, there were currently over 500 customers without power. The PUD estimated that power would be restored this morning.

And that's it for today's news. 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five pm, Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. I'm Ann Katzenbach thanks for listening.