

This is 91.9 FM KPTZ Port Townsend. I'm Diane Urbani de la Paz with news and commentary for Thursday, January 19, 2023.

A local man, a Jefferson County resident in his 70s, who had not received a flu shot, has died of influenza, according to Dr. Allison Berry's report to the county commissioners this week. "This is a painful reminder of the flu's grip on us," Dr. Berry acknowledged. She emphasized that it's not too late to get your flu shot. Taking other precautions, such as wearing a high quality, well-fitting mask in crowded indoor settings, also makes a difference. At the same time, Dr. Berry reports that overall, we are starting to see a decrease in flu and RSV. Getting vaccinated, masking, and staying home when you feel unwell are all ways to keep the downward trend going.

The Jefferson County Board of Commissioners is giving its last call for unallocated ARPA funds from the federal government. ARPA stands for American Rescue Plan Act and millions of dollars have already been distributed from this source. Jefferson County has \$835,000 left to allocate locally, so the commissioners are urging nonprofit and public sector organizations to submit proposals. Organizations are asked to submit a one-page letter of interest, including project details and a budget, by January 31. The county commissioners seek requests ranging from \$20,000 to \$100,000. Priority will be given to projects that move the needle on housing, economic development, and public benefit around the county. The deadline for final proposals is February 10. The Jefferson County website has more information (<https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/civicalerts.aspx?aid=1077>).

The Port Townsend City Council has voted unanimously to go ahead with construction of a roundabout at Sims Way and Kearney Street. That's in front of the Food Co-op. In their January 3 business meeting, the council members heard a report from Public Works Director Steve King. King explained that the roundabout will be oval in shape and include a bike path and a rain garden. The state Department of Transportation (DOT) will work on it with the city since Sims Way is part of state Highway 20. The DOT is seeking bids in February, and construction of the oval roundabout could start spring.

Quilts of Valor, an organization that makes quilts for Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard veterans, has a program called Under Our Wings. It's for young people who want to learn how to quilt and be part of this work to honor local service members and vets. Now Jefferson County 4-H is partnering with Quilts of Valor to offer a two-day youth quilting clinic. This is for students age 14 to 18. The first session is this Saturday from 10am to 2pm. The location is the WSU Jefferson County Extension classroom in Port Hadlock. The second session will be on Saturday, February 4 in Port Townsend. Teens don't need any sewing experience and all supplies are provided. Signup information is found at the WSU Jefferson County Extension website. (<https://extension.wsu.edu/jefferson/>).

The Washington State Park system is looking to hire 305 park aides to work from April through September. These workers do jobs such as registering campers, trail maintenance, campground cleaning, and helping with educational programs. According to the Washington State Parks press release, the position of park aide is ideal

for people of varying ages, from high school and college graduates on up to retired people, veterans, and mid-career folks. Working as a park aide mixes outdoor activity with public interaction and physical labor. Customer Service Manager Ariel Ryon, who started out as a park aide, said “No two days are alike.” The details about pay and qualifications are at the Washington State Parks website (<https://www.parks.wa.gov/1063/Park-Aide-Info>).

KPTZ brings you local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday, and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. This is Diane Urbani de la Paz. Thanks for listening.