

This is Casey Dolan with your local news for Wednesday, January 4, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

As reported in numerous news outlets, U.S. Senator Patty Murray, a Seattle Democrat, made history yesterday by becoming the first woman in the history of the U.S. Senate to hold the position of president pro tempore by replacing Senator Patrick Leahy. Dianne Feinstein, the Democratic Senator from California is the senior most Democrat in the upper chamber, serving since 1992, but she declined the role of president pro tempore following the November midterm elections. Murray is the next most senior Democrat. The position falls upon the senior-most member of the majority party and is third in line to the presidency. Murray will be authorized to preside over the Senate, sign legislation, and issue the oath of office to new senators. Murray said, "I hope that when young women now see me in this position they see they can accomplish anything they set their mind to. I hope they see that they not only belong in Congress – but that their voices are needed here in Congress."

In a press release last Friday, Jefferson Healthcare announced a federal appropriation of \$2.5 million for the Jefferson Cancer Treatment Project, supported by Senator Maria Cantwell. This is a major step toward the purchase of a linear accelerator that will allow Jefferson Healthcare to provide radiation treatment it previously could not. The oncology department has been able to offer diagnoses, surgery and chemotherapy, but as it stands, residents in the community have to travel into neighboring counties in order to receive radiation treatment. Jefferson Healthcare will begin construction of a new medical office building to replace current outdated structures in the summer of 2023. The new building will provide the home for a Radiation Oncology Clinic and the new linear accelerator.

The *PT Leader* reports that Luis Natanel Reyes, a 25-year-old Fife man, was convicted of smuggling drugs into the Olympic Corrections Center, a minimum security facility located in Jefferson County south of the Hoh River, at the close of a weeklong trial in Jefferson County Superior Court. Reyes was found guilty by the jury of delivery of a controlled substance (heroin, methamphetamine, and Suboxone), second-degree introducing contraband, and conspiracy to deliver a controlled substance (heroin, methamphetamine, and Suboxone). He will be sentenced on the three felony convictions on Jan. 13. Reyes was one of four people charged in the drug-smuggling case. Officials discovered the conspiracy to smuggle drugs into the center in January, 2022. Prosecutors said Luis Reyes faces a potential sentence of five to 10 years, based on his criminal history.

The *Peninsula Daily News* reports that an annual count of the nation's homeless population will take place this year on January 26, and service organizations in Clallam and Jefferson counties are looking for volunteers to help. The survey, known as a Point in Time count, seeks to determine how many people are living in tents, cars, trailers not connected to utilities and other places not meant for habitation. Olympic Community Action Programs (OlyCAP), which manages the count in Jefferson County, is hosting a training session on January 18, according to Senior Housing Manager Allison Arthur. The training will take about 90 minutes, Arthur said, and OlyCAP is asking people to register for the training sessions beforehand. Those interested in volunteering can email Arthur at aarthur@olycap.org with the subject line "PIT Count 2023" or call 360-385-2571, ext. 6349.

Jefferson Public Health is adding 65 new cases of COVID-19 this week. The two-week case rate is 280 cases per 100,000 people. They currently estimate that 1 in 15 COVID-19 cases in Jefferson County were reported to public health last week. 9.8% positive tests in the last two weeks. 1 current case hospitalized. No deaths reported. In the total numbers: 6,642 total cases reported. 6.8% positive for all time. 174 have been hospitalized. And the total deaths are 34. More data can be found on the Jefferson Public Health website's COVID-19 Case Information page, the link to which can be found in the transcript of this broadcast (<https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1466/Case-Information>).

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.