

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Jim Burke, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, October 17, 2023.

A reminder that the great SHAKE OUT!, a statewide earthquake preparedness drill will occur this Thursday, October 19 at 10:19am – 10/19 at 10:19. The small earthquake on Sunday night, October 8 serves as a good reminder that we live in an area with high earthquake risk. All Jefferson county residents are encouraged to fill out the “Did You Feel It?” survey on the USGS website (<https://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/uw61965081/executive>) to help them better understand the impacts of the event. There's also a link (<https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1067/Preparedness-Planning>) on the Jefferson County Department of Emergency Management website where you can learn about how to prepare for the next big jolt.

A press release from the City of Port Townsend said last week, according to an annual report published by the Washington State Library, the City of Port Townsend Public Library has the highest circulation of books per capita in the State of Washington. This is a significant accomplishment for the City's Public Library as the announcement coincides with the Library's 110th Birthday for the original Carnegie building this past week. The Port Townsend Public Library has served the community for 125 years. The Library was established in 1898 by a group of “leading community ladies.”

By 1913, they had acquired the land, secured City funding, and received a grant from the Carnegie Library Foundation to construct a new building in keeping with Carnegie architectural design standards of the period.

Library Director, Melody Sky Weaver said, “The release of the Washington State Library Annual Public Library Statistics shows that we are the top circulating library in the state. This is a wonderful indicator of how well used and beloved our library is. Port Townsend is a community of voracious readers, and our library is proud to offer something for everyone. Local youth warm up to the library with storytimes and by reading to dogs in our Read to Rover program. Adult readers can find books at all levels and can participate in our annual Community Read program along with many other free public programs.”

In their press release, the City expressed special thanks to the Friends of the Port Townsend Public Library who generously support the library's programs and special projects throughout the year. For more information on the Washington Secretary of State's 2022 Public Library Statistical Report, see <https://www2.sos.wa.gov/assets/library/libraries/libdev/2022stats.pdf>. For more information on the Port Townsend Public Library's programs and events, see <https://ptpubliclibrary.org/library>.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) announced the launch of the state's new universal developmental screening system, Strong Start. It's a free online tool where parents, caregivers, and providers can securely store, share, and track children's developmental screening information from birth through age 5. By creating a centralized and secure location for sharing developmental information, Strong Start offers families and health care providers the opportunity to collaborate to best support each child's unique development and make sure they find support if needed. Regular screenings show how children are doing with language, movement, thinking, and interacting with others. The brain develops faster between birth and age 5 than any other stage of life. That's why it's important.

Michele Roberts, Assistant Secretary for Prevention and Community Health, from DOH, said, “Universal developmental screenings play a critical role in ensuring all children have the best possible chance at a healthy future by monitoring important milestones in their speech, play, and motor skills. Strong Start empowers parents and caregivers to take direct action in their child’s health while also ensuring they can find the necessary resources for their children to thrive.”

Parents and caregivers can add Strong Start as a service to their Secure Access Washington accounts. From there, they can easily enter their child’s completed developmental screening results and share them with authorized health care providers of their choosing. Parents and caregivers can also use links to find screening tools within Strong Start if a child has not completed a developmental screening with their health care provider.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) website is your source for a healthy dose of information: <https://doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/infants-and-children/health-and-safety/developmental-screening>. Sign up for the DOH blog, Public Health Connection, at <https://doh.wa.gov/newsroom/department-health-unveils-strong-start-new-statewide-data-system-supports-child-development>.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can reach out to us at news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening.