

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I am Casey Dolan with your local news and commentary for Wednesday, February 7, 2024.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources has come out with a new origin story regarding the Seattle fault zone under and around Puget Sound. The study, published in *Tectonics* – a journal for research exploring the evolution, structure, and change of Earth’s crust and upper mantle – suggests that an island chain was pulled towards the larger continent about 55 million years ago, ran into the North American plate and split into two, with part of the chain going over the top of the crust layer, and the rest getting sucked underneath it. The study’s authors say that this split set the stage for the modern Seattle fault. Beyond offering a possible explanation for why the fault zone exists, the study’s results about the geometry of Washington’s more ancient faults and geologic structures provide valuable details about the bedrock under and within the Seattle basin and the new data can help scientists make more accurate models of future ground shaking in the area.

The Clallam County Sheriff’s Office Facebook page reports that a traffic collision occurred last Friday, February 2, in the 300 block of Deer Park Road, southeast of Port Angeles, around 12:30pm. Deputies were notified that a male driver fled the scene of the collision after a 2007 Dodge Caravan he was driving crashed into a parked truck with enough force to rotate the truck 90 degrees in a residential driveway. Two males, ages 2 years old and 1 year old, were found abandoned in the crashed van. Both children were taken to Olympic Medical Center where they were medically evaluated and determined uninjured. The children were released to their mother, 25-year-old Lathina Swagerty of Port Angeles, after she arrived at the hospital a short time later. Swagerty told deputies that the male driving the van was a friend who lives in Tacoma. This statement was later discovered to be false.

The fleeing driver had been seen throwing a handgun into an open dumpster near the scene as he ran towards the woods. Deputies recovered the firearm and eventually determined that the driver was 32-year-old convicted felon Cody Runnion of Port Angeles, based on items found in the van. Runnion was not the individual that Swagerty had previously named as being the driver of the vehicle.

On Saturday, February 3 at 4am deputies tracked Swagerty and Runnion to a motel and Runnion was arrested for hit and run, abandonment of a dependent person, and unlawful possession of a firearm 1st degree. Swagerty was arrested for making false statements to law enforcement and obstructing a law enforcement officer. Both were booked into Clallam County Jail, bond for Runnion set at \$25,000 and Swagerty set at \$40,000.00. The children were later found staying with friends of Swagerty’s in the City of Port Angeles. Both children were taken into protective custody by deputies and released to Child Protective Services.

Navy Region Northwest has announced that its bases are participating in Citadel Shield-Solid Curtain 2025, which started this past Monday and continues through Friday, February 16. The annual “anti-terrorism and force protection exercise,” as described by the Navy, is conducted at all naval installations within the continental United States, including the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station. According to the Navy’s announcement, “Local residents may see or hear smoke, small explosive sounds, loudspeaker announcements, and increased vehicle or vessel activity on or near installations. There may also be increased traffic and delays in base access due to temporary gate closures.”

Despite allergens floating in the atmosphere and mold spores finding their way into our respiratory system, Washington state is a healthy place to live. The World Population Review places Washington State as second in the United States for life expectancy. Only Hawaii offers a longer life. Their website used data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Vital Statistics Report. The data shows the average life expectancy of a Washingtonian is 79.2 years. The average life expectancy of female residents is 81.6 years. For male residents, it's 76.9 years. In contrast, Mississippi residents live the shortest lives at 74.6 years, a difference of 6.9 years with Hawaii at 81.5.

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.