

KPTZ FM 91.9 in Port Townsend WA. I'm Charlie Berman, bringing you news and commentary from the Jefferson County *Beacon* on Wednesday, June 5, 2024.

The race to replace Derek Kilmer as Washington's Sixth congressional district representative is heating up, with the *Beacon* publishing interviews with all of the candidates vying for the position. Well, not all, but more about that later.

Declared candidates are Democrats Hilary Franz and Emily Randall, Republicans Drew MacEwen and Janis Clark, and independent J. Graham Ralston are also running. The top two prevailing candidates in the August 6 primary will advance to the November 5 general election.

We can make some predictions. MacEwen, a state senator, will earn one of the slots as the preferred Republican candidate. MacEwan will most likely earn the most votes, as the Democrats will split their votes between Randall and Franz. Presumably the Democrats will support whoever wins the Randall/Franz contest. Keep in mind that no Republican has been elected to the seat since 1962. Randall and Franz share many of the same positions, so for Democrats the choice pivots on who the voters feel can first beat the Republican and then serve as an effective member of congress. MacEwen told the *Beacon* that if the primary were held today Randall would prevail; he feels Randall is more tied to the district and is running a better campaign than Franz. Unfortunately, today's political climate makes us wonder if MacEwen is sincere or is he's just shoring up the opponent that he feels would be easier to defeat.

As for the other candidates, neither Port Angeles Attorney Ralston nor perennial candidate Clark will make much of a difference. Ralston hopes to attract voters who are displeased with the two-party system, or at least attract attention to how that system is broken. He makes some valid points. Clark, on the other hand, is one of those candidates who aggravate reporters and the public by not providing a platform, meeting the public, or even answering a text. Upon digging, we find that she ran for several offices under different names, losing an endorsement from the *Tacoma News Tribune* when the paper uncovered the cocaine conviction that got her thrown out of the army. Presumably that conviction will not prevent her from taking office if she is elected. And to relieve the suspense, Clark is the one candidate the *Beacon* was unable to interview.

A Port Townsend activist has entered into a project to rehabilitate a 90-year-old kid wooden boat that played a part in the 1969 occupation of the Alcatraz prison in San Francisco Bay. Mike Ferguson is rebuilding the *Seaweed*, a 32-foot motorsailer that has resided in the Port Townsend Boat Haven for about a year, as the boat's previous owner was unable to complete the renovation. Rehabilitation costs quickly add up, and *Seaweed* still needs to be surveyed and insured in order to get a bond to keep her in the Boat Haven. Ferguson is seeking an additional \$3,000 during this first leg of fundraising and hopes to raise somewhere between \$15,000 to \$20,000 by winter.

To spark community efforts, Ferguson started contacting people who were on Alcatraz during the occupation, as well as local organizations like the Wooden Boat School, Community Boat Project, and the Maritime Center. For more information write to friendsofseaweed@gmail.com.

Finally, today marks the opening of the recruitment process to replace former Port Townsend City Council member Aislinn Palmer. There is now a link on the city's web site that connects to application materials and

sample questions. Applications are open until July 5, with the finalists to be announced on July 15. Interviews and public meetings will follow. To apply go to www.cityofpt.us/appointment.

KPTZ broadcasts local news at noon and 5 pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday, partnering on Wednesday to bring you stories from the Jefferson County *Beacon*. You can submit ideas to the *Beacon* through info@jeffcobeacon.com. This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.