

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant with news and commentary for Tuesday, October 29, 2024.

First Security Bank in Port Townsend donated half of the proceeds from its newly established paid parking lot to the Humane Society of Jefferson County. This is just the beginning, as the bank plans to donate half of its parking fees to a local nonprofit each quarter. The \$6,000 contribution reflects revenue from July, when the paid component was installed, through September. Branch Manager Candice Cotterill told KPTZ that money collected in the next quarter could be less, as fewer cars are in town over the winter months. The lot, on the corner of Quincy Street and Washington Street, has always restricted parking to bank customers and staff during business hours. Locals were known to sneak in during those times, with no real enforcement. And it was open to all after hours.

This summer the bank needed to repave the lot and saw this as an opportunity to convert to enforced paid parking. Cotterill said this was necessary because staff and customers were often forced to park several blocks away. This provided a health issue for employees and a security problem for customers carrying large amounts of cash. Cotterill said the bank contributes to the community in many ways, but this parking lot benevolence gives it the opportunity to give back more and support those who they don't normally reach. She said it's part of the bank's mission to give back. Cotterill said the bank has already assembled a list of local nonprofits, and will decide as a team who will be next. They are open to suggestions and nominations should be sent directly to candice.cotterill@fsbwa.com.

It is now one week until the November 5 General Election. Registered voters in Jefferson County should have received their mail in ballot by now; if not they should contact the Auditor's office for a replacement. Those who are not registered can do so at the auditor's office anytime before 8pm on Election Day. Jefferson County drew 90% voter participation in the 2020 presidential election. We are on the way to a repeat with 47% of votes already submitted – 13,730 ballots returned out of 28,355 mailed.

This is the highest percentage in the region. We edge Clallam County's 41% and are well ahead of Kitsap County's 34%. We can expect a deluge of ballots over the next week, as many people wait until the last minute to cast their votes.

We are past the deadline for online or email registration. All ballots need to be in the auditor's office by 8pm on Election Day or postmarked by November 5. Due to post office uncertainties, it is safest to take your ballot to one of eleven drop boxes throughout the county; at the courthouse, libraries, and the Nordland Fire Station. For a complete list of dropbox locations go to the Auditor's web site, <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1266/Elections>. You can also contact the elections department directly at 360-385-9117.

And this from the idea file: Those walking up Ranier Street where there is a clear-cut area to accommodate a new housing development can see the city's water facility: a giant, gray cylinder emerging from the landscape. This offers a tremendous creative opportunity. The city could commission local artists to create an appropriate mural that reflects the region and the spirit of Port Townsend. This will undoubtedly lead to a heated discussion about what is appropriate. Nevertheless, it will give us something to take our minds off of the next election. If you like this idea contact the Port Townsend Arts Commission at artscomm@cityofpt.us.

KPTZ broadcasts local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through at news@kptz.org. I'm Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.