

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Thursday, February 13, 2025.

All the school levies voted on in Tuesday's elections this week have passed. The levy for the Chimacum School District was approved by 68% of the voters, and 78% of Port Townsend voters passed both levies for the Port Townsend schools. Jefferson County voters also joined Clallam County voters in passing both the levy and the bonds for the Sequim School District. The multi-county vote for the Quillayute Valley School District also passed, but by a comparatively slim margin: Jefferson County votes for that levy split evenly at 50/50, but Clallam County votes carried it by 57.9%. Total voter turnout for Jefferson County was 39.1%, with 9,969 ballots returned out of 25,495 mailed.

As immigration worries rise, the *Peninsula Daily News* reports that the sheriffs for Clallam and Jefferson County and the police chiefs for Forks, Port Angeles, and Port Townsend as well as the Washington State Patrol Chief have all agreed publicly that they will abide by the Keep Washington Working Act of 2019, which prohibits state and local law enforcement agencies from assisting federal immigration enforcement. County Acting Sheriff Andy Pernsteiner said, "Quite honestly, we can't enforce immigration. The way our law is now, we would actually be penalized if we decided to do that. We've never asked someone for their immigration status or their card."

Port Townsend Police Chief Thomas Olson released the following statement on the City of Port Townsend's website: "Washington State Sheriffs and Police Chiefs want all Washington residents to know that no one in our state should fear calling 911 for help due to their immigration status. The role of our officers, deputies, troopers and agents is to serve and protect everyone. We will always seek to provide that protection fairly, and without regard to immigration status."

An individual claiming to be the new owner of the Uptown Theatre in Port Townsend has been trespassing from the Chimacum and Port Townsend schools after making contact with two middle-school students. According to the Port Townsend *Leader*, the two students were approached by a man in a gray Ford Ranger after being dropped off at their bus stop, but they declined the conversation and went home safely. The incident was reported to police, who contacted the individual and found "no obvious imminent danger," but the schools have encouraged families to speak with students about staying safe and alert at bus stops and reporting concerning encounters with strangers to a trusted adult immediately.

The Jefferson County Sheriff's office notes that an elderly gentleman suffering from dementia was reported missing from the Cape George area last week and was later located near the Blue Heron School. The Sheriff's office adds that Project Lifesaver can assist in such cases. Project Lifesaver is a free program designed to help locate individuals who suffer from cognitive disabilities and have a tendency to wander. The program is an invaluable resource for families and caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's, Autism, Dementia, and other cognitive conditions equips participants with a specialized wristband that emits a signal which enables the team from the sheriff's office to quickly locate wanderers. To learn more or enroll your loved one in Project Lifesaver, visit the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Facebook page or <https://co.jefferson.wa.us/278/Project-Lifesaver>.

And finally, travelers driving to the Bainbridge ferry terminal over the State Route 305/Agate Pass Bridge should plan extra travel time this month. From next Tuesday, February 18 through Thursday, February 27 the bridge will be reduced to one alternating lane of traffic from 8:45am to 2pm each weekday for annual bridge maintenance work. There will be no lane closures on Saturday and Sunday, February 22 and 23. Travelers can expect delays of 30 minutes or more.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening and I wish you a Happy Valentine's Day.