

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, May 6, 2025.

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During a routine closure for a marine vessel at 1:02pm yesterday, the Hood Canal Bridge experienced a mechanical malfunction and was stuck open and closed to traffic. Washington State Department of Transportation maintenance crews and bridge engineers worked several hours to close the draw span and reopen the bridge for vehicle traffic, and a tug was called to assist with the work. Drivers were directed to use Highways 3 and 101, but it was a three-hour detour and traffic was heavily congested. The bridge finally opened again at 9:26 last evening.

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As announced earlier on KPTZ, this is filing week for those who wish to declare candidacy for office in Jefferson County. Filing opened yesterday morning at 8am and will close on Friday at 5pm; the last chance for candidates to withdraw from the race is next Monday at 5pm. According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, as of yesterday evening, no one had yet filed for the open seats on Port Townsend City Council, and to date only three offices – two for Jefferson Hospital Commissioners and one for the East Jefferson Fire District Commissioner – are contested. Eleven offices had one candidate each at the close of the day yesterday.

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That new roundabout on State Route 104 at Paradise Bay and Shine Road is scheduled to open tomorrow evening, depending on the weather. Moving travelers onto the new roundabout is part of the last major phase of construction for this project, but crews will be continuing to work in the area into the summer, dealing with the concrete islands and traffic meter installation.

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A motorcycle rider died Sunday evening on U.S. Highway 101 just north of Brinnon after a truck in front of him pulled over to the right shoulder and re-entered the northbound lane while attempting a U-turn, according to State Patrol. The truck driver, Russell Mikeal, 59, of Brinnon was driving a 1985 GMC truck northbound on Highway 101 at about 7pm Sunday. The motorcyclist, Kevin Lewis, 49, of Quilcene, was traveling at a high rate of speed behind the GMC on a 1998 Honda motorcycle and was unable to stop.

The motorcycle struck the front driver's side tire of the GMC, and the two vehicles became attached as they continued across the roadway. Both vehicles caught on fire and became fully engulfed when they came to rest in the southbound ditch. Lewis was ejected over the GMC, came to rest in the southbound ditch and was pronounced dead at the scene. Mikeal was taken into custody by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office on investigation of DUI and vehicular homicide. Both vehicles were totally destroyed.

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Starting today through Friday, the section of San Juan Avenue between F Street and 19th Street will be closed off. The City of Port Townsend will be chip sealing San Juan Avenue at both intersections. Some sections of cracking pavement will need to be torn out before recovering and there will be a temporary road closure to allow the pavement to set. Signage at both intersections will direct traffic to a detour route. For those concerned that San Juan Avenue is in significantly worse shape between F Street and 49th, according to Council Member

Libby Wenstrom, that section is too heavily damaged to be repaired by chip sealing and is on the list for a full rebuild; they're just trying to put together funding.

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U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member of the Senate Committee which oversees national public broadcasting policy, has publicly objected to the Trump Administration's attacks on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Over the last week, the Trump Administration has terminated CPB board members, issued an Executive Order cutting all funding to NPR and PBS, and proposed defunding the CPB. "These illegal actions threaten the viability of local public broadcasting stations across the country, which will deprive communities of the local journalism, quality children's programming, and emergency alerts they depend on," Sen. Cantwell said. "The Trump Administration is unilaterally bypassing Congress's role in funding and staffing the non-partisan, non-profit Corporation for Public Broadcasting."

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KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.