

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM on your dial in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Angela Michelle bringing you news and commentary from the Jefferson County *Beacon* for Wednesday, July 14, 2025.

In Brinnon WA – A brush fire began at approximately 2:10pm Monday afternoon in the area northwest of Brinnon WA. The fire has burned approximately four acres of brush and heavy timber. The fire is predominantly spreading through airborne embers and in the crowns of trees. Brinnon Fire is utilizing mutual aid assistance from Quilcene Fire, East Jefferson Fire Rescue, Mason County, Navy Region Northwest, and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), as well as strike teams from Kitsap County and Mason County. Two helicopters are also in use. A state mobilization has been requested.

A level 3 evacuation order has been issued for the north side of Dosewallips Road from Rocky Brook Road to approximately one mile north. Jefferson County Sheriff's Deputies have been assisting with evacuations. The Brinnon Community Center is open for residents evacuating. It is strongly advised that people stay away from the area to allow crews to operate safely. More information will be provided when available.

For the past eight years, everyone from die-hard classic music fans to the chamber music curious has voyaged to Quilcene to hear internationally famous musicians perform for free at Concerts in the Barn. When volunteer director Leigh Hearon took over running the farm, she decided to make the whole festival free for everyone, ensuring that families with young children and other people who wouldn't normally be exposed to this caliber of performance could attend. She sold the farm in 2023 to the Koch family, who have since turned it into the year-round venue the Quilcene Lantern. One of the stipulations of the sale was that Concerts in the Barn could continue.

This year, concerts will be held on Friday afternoons in addition to their normal weekend programming. Friday, July 18, pianists George Lopez and Gulimina Mahamuti – known as Duo Monde G&G – will dazzle the audience with a program of four-hand piano they're calling "Sounds of Latin America."

On Saturday and Sunday, July 19 and 20, Duo Monde G&G will be joined by five string players and soprano Laura Bohn, who has travelled from Amsterdam, for a spectacular concert that includes Gabriel Fauré, Kurt Weill, and Schubert's "The Trout Quintet."

Although all the July concerts are free to the public, patrons are asked to reserve seating for each performance at <https://www.quilcenelantern.com/>. All concerts begin at 2pm, though attendees are welcome to come at noon to picnic and stroll through the farm. Patrons have the option of sitting inside on comfortable chairs, in the loft, or listening outside on the lawn.

News by Nhatt Nichols

In the only contested race this year for a Port Townsend City Council seat, three people are competing in the primary election on August 5. The three are: Fred Obee, formerly a journalist and general manager for *The Leader* newspaper; Mikki Porter, who has worked for the Washington State Ferry system for 15 years, currently a deckhand; and Dylan Quarles, a writer who has authored books and screenplays.

Housing affordability was voiced as a top priority by all of the candidates. Obee and Quarles would not like to see the city develop housing on any part of the City-owned golf course. Porter supports inclusionary housing and zoning reform. Obee and Quarles believe that the city should not be spearheading the development of housing related projects, but should be supporting the companies and organizations for whom housing development is their business or core mission.

Quarles suggested that the affordability challenges in these times demand that we meet this moment in new ways of thinking. “I think that there is absolutely a large contingent of people and workers who would be happy to occupy a tiny home or mobile home community that is different from how we traditionally think of those types of living arrangements,” Quarles said. “And I think that there is such a great opportunity for a private, hopefully local investor to create such a space.”

Porter voiced displeasure with the lack of activities for children in and around Port Townsend. Porter also said that buy-local efforts and small grants could spur economic development. He believes that Port Townsend needs a long-term plan and clear priorities to tackle the backlog of repairs to roads and sewer infrastructure.

News by Scott France

At Quilcene High School, 200 kids signed a petition asking for a skatepark in their area. After a series of well-attended community meetings with positive community involvement, the plans began to roll. Kai Dakers, Assa Clifford, and Brady McDonald came together as a grassroots community coalition to do something about this big task. McDonald approached the YMCA to lend their eighty years of youth programming experience to fulfill the requirements. With the Cultural Resource review finished, they are waiting on approval from RCO (Washington state Recreation & Conservation Office) for the next steps of county permitting, finalizing the design, and bid documents for general contractors. With all the funds they need from a Washington State grant program called the Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities (COAF), they will have the green light to ‘move dirt’ for their wooded location off of 101 by the Quilcene Community Center. Everyone is shooting for construction to begin in the Fall with a short couple months turnaround.

News by Angela Downs

KPTZ brings you local news Tuesday through Thursday at noon and 5pm. To contact us, write news@kptz.org.