

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, November 11, 2025.

\*\*\*

Today is Veterans Day. If you happened to be out and about at 11:11 this morning, you heard the ferries: all ferries underway at that time were sounding their whistles in tribute to those who served in the Armed Forces. The ferries will all be flying flags today for military branches, and each vessel will also display the POW/MIA flag for prisoners of war and those missing in action.

\*\*\*

Now that legislation has been advanced to reopen the government and keep it afloat until the end of January, full-year funding for SNAP will be unlocked and those federal workers fired by President Trump at the start of the shutdown may return to work, so air travel may become less fraught with difficulty.

Although the skyrocketing health insurance premiums for those seeking insurance in the Affordable Care Act marketplace have still not been addressed, the Washington State *Standard* reports that Senate Majority Leader John Thune has committed to holding a vote on health insurance subsidies no later than the second week of December.

\*\*\*

Traffic was stalled for several hours on both sides of the Kitsap-Jefferson county line last Thursday after a Bremerton woman driving eastbound across the Hood Canal Bridge in a 2006 Toyota truck attempted a U Turn in the midspan of the bridge. Her truck was then T-boned by a Port Ludlow man in a 2015 Mercedes, and the two cars came to rest, fully blocking the roadway. Both cars were totaled, both drivers were airlifted to Harborview, and a passenger in the truck was killed in the incident.

\*\*\*

The Port Townsend *Leader* reports that budget projections presented at last week's meeting of the Jefferson County Commissioners show general fund expenditures reaching \$32.6 million, but revenues for the year only come to \$27.4 million. Because the county is mandated by state law to have a balanced budget, Jefferson County Finance Director Judy Shepherd has recommended that the county reduce its general fund expenditures by 12% in 2026. Given that 63% of the county's general fund expenditures consist of salaries, wages, and benefits, the most likely solution would be to cut staff.

County Administrator Josh Peters says other possibilities do include volunteer furloughs, voluntary hour reductions, shorter work weeks, or reduced services. But Commissioner Heather Dudley-Nollette warns they will need to take into consideration the costs of bringing services such as parks back online in the future. Budget decisions are expected in the next two weeks, with a public hearing scheduled for December 1.

\*\*\*

Port Townsend Hearing Examiner Phil Olbrechts has ordered the Anacortes-based developers who propose to build a hotel across from the Quimper Mercantile Plaza to implement a mitigation measure to address parking concerns voiced by the owners of the Plaza. According to the *Leader*, Olbrecht's decision requires that the hotel provide shuttle or similar carrier service to bring guests from the Haines Place Park and Ride when the Jefferson Transit Authority shuttle is not available, adding that shuttle service should significantly reduce the incentive to

park in the Plaza Lot. The hotel must also notify guests of the shuttle service and inform them that parking in private lots, such as the Port Townsend Plaza, is illegal without the owners' consent.

\*\*\*

The Washington State Department of Health has sent an advisory notice concerning an outbreak of infant botulism linked to a powdered infant formula under the ByHeart brand. If you have recently purchased a ByHeart Whole Nutrition Infant Formula, do not use it, wash all items and surfaces it may have touched, and seek immediate medical care if your infant has consumed the formula and shows any of the following symptoms: poor feeding, loss of head control, difficulty swallowing, or decreased facial expression.

\*\*\*

And finally, Port Townsend poet Rufina Garay has been named the city's Poet Laureate, with a two-year educational and ceremonial role beginning January 1 of next year. An interdisciplinary poet, artist, and practitioner of Taoist meditative arts, Garay is the founder of "Shattering Glass," an ever-evolving curation of established and emerging poets from the Olympic Peninsula who amplify social and environmental justice issues.

\*\*\*

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.