

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

Jefferson Healthcare has been named one of the nation's top hospitals for obstetric and outpatient care by the Women's Choice Awards. According to the *Port Townsend Leader*, the award recognizes Jefferson Healthcare as among the top 9% of more than 4,600 U.S. hospitals offering obstetric services judged on patient satisfaction as well as federal safety measures such as infection, complication and early elective delivery rates. In addition to earning obstetric honors, Jefferson Healthcare was also recognized for outpatient experience, placing in the top 5% of hospitals nationwide for care provided in clinics and same-day services.

The Port Townsend Marine Science Center (PTMSC) has announced that former intern Jen Kingfisher has joined the organization as Deputy Director/Director of Development and Communications. In this role, Kingfisher will support organizational leadership, fundraising, and communications as PTMSC deepens its connection to the community and broadens access to marine science education across multiple sites. Kingfisher will support organizational leadership, fundraising, and communications as PTMSC deepens its connection to the community and broadens access to marine science education. Kingfisher, who previously served at the Jefferson Community Foundation and has also been a lecturer in the biological sciences in higher education, interned at PTMSC in 1997 while a student at the Evergreen State College, and returned to the center in 2008-2009, to work on the organization's marine plastic pollution program.

Chimacum School District Superintendent Scott Mauk has received the National School Public Relations Association's Superintendents to Watch award, which recognizes district leaders with fewer than five years of experience who emphasize communication as a core part of their work. One of 30 superintendents nationwide to receive the honor, Mauk was recognized for emphasizing clear, consistent communication since becoming superintendent in 2021, tying outreach to Chimacum's strategic goals through face-to-face engagement, newsletters, and short on-site videos that have improved transparency and helped keep families and community members informed about district decisions.

According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, sixty-four local volunteers participated in a Martin Luther King Day of Service at Fort Worden yesterday. Working near the Point Wilson Lighthouse, the volunteers worked to remove non-native beach grasses as part of a beach restoration project, following the work of volunteers with Friends of Fort Worden, who spent last Saturday removing clumps of yellow lupin. The lupin, though beautiful in bloom, is an invasive species that crowds out native plants.

Good news for the folks living down in Coyle, the southernmost tip of Jefferson County: Beginning in February, Jefferson PUD, which purchased the Coyle water system in 2012, will be replacing about 8,800 feet of the system's leaky 40-year-old asbestos-cement water main pipes with new 6-inch PVC lines. Work is expected to be completed by the end of April.

With clear skies and colder weather, the likelihood of black ice, especially for early morning drivers, has increased. The Brinnon Fire Department advises extra caution if you're heading out and adds: slow down and avoid sudden braking or steering; increase your following distance, watch for shaded, low-lying and elevated areas, allow extra travel time, and consider delaying your departure until the day warms up a bit.

And if you're planning to head to the mountains, WSDOT reminds you to carry chains and practice installing them before you leave. They also recommend carrying a winter car kit, with extra warm clothing, ice scraper and brush, jumper cables, and other emergency items.

And, on the subject of cold weather, the Recovery Cafe is collecting blankets and sleeping bags for the homeless. Please place any spare blankets, sleeping bags, or tarps in a clean plastic garbage bag and drop them off at the Just Blankets Box located in front of the Recovery Cafe at the corner of Kearney and San Juan Avenue.

And finally, the Women's March is sponsoring a Free America walkout, with participants gathering at 2:30 this afternoon at Port Townsend's Haller Fountain. Organizers and participants will be discussing how those who object to the recent actions of the federal government can stand together to work for a more tolerant nation.

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.