

This is KPTZ 91.9FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Nigel O'Shea bringing you news and commentary from the Jefferson County *Beacon* for Wednesday, April 29, 2026.

On a rainy New Year's Day a decade ago, Stephanie Moran did something most people wouldn't dream of. While others nursed their hangovers indoors, she grabbed a pair of gloves and started cleaning up downtown streets and beaches after the celebrations. Three friends joined her. Together, they hauled away three truckloads of trash.

That impulsive act of care became the Jefferson County Trash Task Force – a volunteer army that has since pulled over 29,500 pounds of litter from local roadsides, dumpsites, and abandoned campsites. And on February 16, 2026, the group received the Public Health Hero Award from the Jefferson County Health Department.

The Trash Task Force has grown from a handful of friends into a structured operation with 182 volunteers on its roster, 75 of whom became active in 2025 alone. That year, they logged 883 volunteer hours, not including planning, transportation, or approvals, and removed 422 bags of trash from 73 miles of roads. They have also tackled 16 dumpsites and five abandoned campsites, plus countless free piles gone wrong and unsecured loads that spill across roadways.

The Trash Task Force recently became a nonprofit under the fiscal sponsorship of Discover Your Northwest, allowing it to accept donations. Waste Connections sponsors a 30-yard dumpster inside city limits for their use, and Moran hopes to add a second in the southern part of the county. Washington State Department of Transportation supplies bags. The city and county provide vests and support. The Jefferson County court system now directs community service hours to the Task Force.

Moran is seeking a few key additions to the team, including sub-region organizers and monitors who can track illegal dumping. The group also needs more vests and graspers, as these supplies wear out quickly, and they hope to obtain two new signs. To accommodate students and others who cannot participate on Sundays, Moran is launching Saturday cleanups starting in May of 2026. To find out more, email trashtaskforce20@gmail.com.

The JC MASH Free Clinic, run under the umbrella of Bayside Housing & Services, is quietly revolutionizing how low-income and unhoused residents of Jefferson County receive medical care. The clinic is celebrating over 30 years of service and has never been more stable or vital, thanks in part to its partnership with Bayside, which is now in its fourth year.

Most free clinics stop at basic triage; JC MASH goes further. Because the clinic operates in partnership with Jefferson Healthcare, patients can receive vouchers for essential tests that are often unaffordable. This includes lab work, blood draws, X-rays, and mammograms at the local hospital.

For a patient without insurance or one facing a hefty deductible, a mammogram voucher isn't just helpful: it's life-saving. The clinic's success hinges on trust, not just medicine. Clinic Director Qianna Franklin conducts proactive outreach at Bayside's various housing locations. She helps residents fill out Social Security Disability Insurance papers, build resumes on Indeed (<https://www.indeed.com/>), and apply for jobs. Franklin says, "It's the relationships. People now trust me, so they're coming in and seeking counseling or medical [treatment]. It's a really feel-good job."

Mental health is a primary focus. The clinic currently provides counseling on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with plans to expand to three days a week. JC MASH isn't anchored to a single address. Every Tuesday evening, the clinic travels to the emergency homeless shelter under the American Legion in Port Townsend.

Located at 175 Chimacum Road in Port Hadlock, the JC MASH Clinic operates on a walk-in basis, no appointment required for medical care, though mental health appointment slots fill fast. Medical hours are typically on Monday evenings, with mental health available mid-week. The clinic serves uninsured, underinsured, and low-income residents of Jefferson County. Key Services include Primary care, mental health counseling, hospital vouchers for things like labs, x-rays and mammograms, prescription assistance, and transportation to essential services.

For those inspired to help, the clinic urgently needs more volunteers, particularly for its expanding mental health schedule. For more information go to <https://www.baysidehousing.org/jcmash>.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five Tuesday through Thursday partnering on Wednesday to bring you stories from the Jefferson County *Beacon*. This is Nigel O'Shea, thanks for listening.