

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, October 27, 2026.

Given that recent changes within the US Postal Service may affect delivery and postmark timelines for ballots returned close to Election Day, more than 700,000 Washington State Voters have already cast their ballots, according to the *Washington State Standard*. It's best to use an official ballot drop box during that final week before Election Day, but voters who need to return their ballot by mail within one week of Election Day are encouraged to visit a local post office in person to request a free, hand-stamped postmark from a postal clerk to ensure their ballot is accepted as "on-time." Ballots must be postmarked by November 3 to be counted.

Now is the time for high school seniors and others in Washington State to apply for financial aid for the 2027-28 academic year. Using either FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), or WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid), all eligible Washington residents, including undocumented students can apply for the Washington College Grant, also called the WA Grant.

One of the most generous and flexible programs in the country, the WA Grant supports low-and middle-income people of all ages pursuing certificates and degrees, as well as apprentices participating in approved registered apprenticeship programs. Through that grant, about half of families in Washington can get free money from the state to help pay for career training or college. Grant amounts vary based on income, family size, and the school or program attended. So apply today – you will never know how much financial aid you qualify for unless you do.

The Port Townsend Food Co-op is now accepting applications for its 2026-27 Farmer Fund grant cycle. The application window will close November 30. This year's fund, which came from co-op shoppers and member-owners who rounded up at the register or donated online between January and September, totals \$88,181. That spare change can enable a struggling local farmer to afford machinery, construction, supplies, infrastructure, services, maintenance or other resources to strengthen their farm or food business.

Last year the co-op awarded almost \$84,000 to 13 local farms and food producers, for projects including a walk-behind tractor, a seed-cleaning machine, an autoclave, and maple syrup harvesting equipment.

Applicants must be a registered Jefferson County business or nonprofit that has operated for at least one year and must grow food or raise livestock in Jefferson County or make their products with food grown in Jefferson County. Vegetable growers, dairies, ranchers, fisheries, and makers of value-added products using local ingredients – including wine, beer and cider – are all eligible. Preference is given to projects that increase product diversity, support historically marginalized farmers and communities, improve environmental sustainability, use regenerative practices, or involve cooperation with other local farms and businesses.

Awards will be decided in January of 2027, with funds available that month.

Many of Washington's most treasured historic resources are found along the shores of our coastal communities. From Main Streets to wharves to private homes, these waterfront buildings are icons of Washington's maritime

landscape. Many of these properties, however, are at risk from coastal flooding, and some are already feeling the impacts.

To help property owners address the need to adapt their historic resources to coastal flooding, the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation offers a new resource guide that combines historic property treatments recommended by the National Park Service with Washington-specific resources on flooding risk assessment and permitting regulations. The guide can serve as a roadmap for historic property owners and stewards who can't afford to hire an architect or engineer but seek information and strategies to adapt their properties to impacts from flooding. For more information, visit <https://preservewa.org/resources/flooding-resource-guide/>.

And finally, this Saturday at 3:45pm, gather up the little ones, throw on a costume, or just come watch the annual Downtown Trick or Treat and Parade. Note that Water Street and adjacent side streets will be completely closed to vehicle traffic during this event with no movement of parked vehicles.

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.