

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with local news and commentary for Thursday, March 4, 2021.

Here's a KPTZ exclusive: After a diligent search, Thomas Olson, deputy chief of the University of Washington Police Department, was selected as the new Port Townsend Police Chief and has accepted a conditional offer of employment with the City of Port Townsend. He will start as the new Port Townsend Police Chief by May 3, 2021. For more information, stay tuned here for Brewracracy Now, when City Manager John Mauro will provide all the details.

And big news from the Port Townsend Film Festival. After serving as executive director for over a decade, Janette Force has announced her retirement, effective at the end of this year's festival season. Force told KPTZ that operating the festival in these quarantined times has required a remarkable pivot, forcing them to develop a new concept of how independent films are promoted and appreciated.

Her schedule includes virtual executions of the Women and Film Festival in April and the main festival in September. She said it would take a miracle for the fall festival to have an in person element. The best we could hope for is an outdoor movie presentation on Taylor Street. While the virtual festivals have an element of unexpected success, Force said they short-change the experience. Films are meant to be enjoyed in a dark room, along with other people. In a festival setting, where the filmmakers are often present, they can gauge what works and what doesn't; what jokes elicit laughter and what falls flat.

Force took over the festival in 2010, expanding its scope with the Women & Film festival, the Filmmaker-in-Residence program, the PTFE Road Show, and a First Tuesday Salon at the Rose Theatre. Reacting to the pandemic, she led the transition into the virtual sphere. Today, PTFE brings film to our community year-round. A new monthly online screening event, PTFE Pics, reintroduces films from past programming with support going directly to the filmmakers.

Force also advanced the organization toward greater financial stability and long-term viability with the support of donors and the community during the pandemic, according to a press release. In past years, the festival has brought in special guests like Karen Allen, Chris Cooper, Beau Bridges, Elliot Gould, Bruce Dern, and Danny Glover. Many of these were interviewed virtually by Force about their Port Townsend experience and the importance of independent film for a 15-minute retrospective short that will post on the film festival's website in the next few days. The short film will also be part of a public "Toast to the Future!" virtual fundraiser and happy hour at 6pm on Thursday, March 18 to celebrate Force's success and what the future will bring. Everyone is encouraged to attend and share their PTFE memories. Zoom Event information is available at <http://www.ptfilmfest.com/>.

In line with Governor Jay Inslee's recent decree, Jefferson Healthcare is accepting vaccination registrations for school employees and childcare providers. Jefferson County K-12 school employees and licensed childcare providers are encouraged to register for appointment notification through the "When is it your turn?" link on the Jefferson Healthcare website (<https://jeffersonhealthcare.org/covid-19-vaccine/>). This will allow the hospital to email an appointment-scheduling link once we receive confirmation of vaccine allotment from the state. Additionally, Jefferson County residents 50 years old and older who live in a multi-generational households are also encouraged to register for notification. Eligibility for both these groups is determined through the

Washington State Phase Finder tool

(<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/VaccineInformation/PhaseFinderTool>) and verification will be required at the vaccination appointment. Registration for those 65 and older continues.

According to the hospital's website, it is nearing the completion of providing vaccinations to that age group. As of Tuesday, we provided 9,310 total vaccinations and completed 3,463 two-dose regimens. This represents protection for 14% of the county's population. Next week it expects to administer both first and second dose vaccines in the Drive Thru, doubling the inoculation rate from 1000 to 2000 per week.

And the good news: The Jefferson County Department of Health reported no new COVID-19 cases for the last two days. One year after the first reported case in the county we have logged 336 positive instances of the virus. Forty-six people are now awaiting test results.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org.

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.