

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with with local news and commentary for Thursday, April 1, 2021.

It is April Fools' Day, traditionally when people pull harmless pranks that seek to confuse those around them. In the past, a news broadcaster might take this opportunity to report fake items that would tweak the listener's sense of humor and stretch their disbelief. That's not happening here. There is nothing funny these days, and even the broadest joke runs the risk of offending someone. The most absurd satirical item could be taken seriously and cause a public panic. It used to be fun to fool people for a minute, these days you don't want to say anything that could cause them to take hostages. So today's report is real, unfortunately for those who were expecting something clever.

Our biggest dose of recent reality originates with COVID-19. Jefferson County added one more case this week, bringing the total to 345. Two cases are in isolation, and 31 people are awaiting test results. For the most up to date information, visit the public health department's website (<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/DataDashboard>).

The big news is vaccination. The hospital continues its program, although with lower supplies anticipated to allow other counties to catch up. The county-sponsored weekend clinic at Chimacum High School is taking the next two weeks off, and will administer second doses to those already vaccinated on April 17 and April 24. When the clinic resumes, the goal will be to administer 600 doses a week at the facility, according to county health officer Dr. Tom Locke.

Due partially to our county's high median age and the initial vaccination of the more senior of us, Jefferson County has the highest vaccination rate in the state. As of Monday county residents had received 20,000 doses: 45.19% with one dose, while 28.72% are fully vaccinated. And 1,000 more have received shots since those statistics were reported a week ago.

President Joe Biden promised that all Americans will have access to the vaccine by May 1. Washington is ahead of the curve in this respect, as Governor Jay Inslee announced this week that all adult Washingtonians will have access to the vaccine by April 15, two weeks from today.

And Phase Finder is phased out. Beginning yesterday, two new tiers were opened for vaccine appointments. All residents in 1B tier 3 & 4 and above can now make an appointment. Vaccination organizations are no longer requiring proof of eligibility for these added tiers through WAPhaseFinder, but they are still adhering to this hierarchy until further notice. All sites for appointments are listed on the website for Jefferson County Public Health (<https://vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov/>).

If you don't have online access, volunteers are available from 9am to 4pm weekdays at the Department of Emergency Management Covid-19 Vaccine Phone Line. Call 360-344-9791. That's 344-9791. Meanwhile, please keep masking up, washing up, and staying six feet away from people outside of your household. To schedule an appointment with Jefferson Healthcare Hospital go to to <https://jeffersonhealthcare.org/> and click on the top yellow banner. For information about the DEM clinic or help for people who do not have a computer call 360-344-9791. Additionally, people seeking vaccinations from local pharmacies and those in Clallam County are reportedly having better luck getting appointments than in the past.

One year after establishing the COVID Response & Recovery Fund, Jefferson Community Foundation has announced the second phase of its pandemic response fund. Since its establishment one year ago it has awarded over \$700,000 to organizations on the frontline of pandemic response. The Foundation now begins Phase II. Phase II broadens focus and increases the COVID Fund impacts to include efforts that can help restart the physical operations of local nonprofits and get folks back to work, group gathering and recreation. Funding for Phase II has been bolstered by \$100,000 in matching funds received by JCF through the All in WA program. The number and size of grants awarded through Phase II are dependent on available funding. The foundation invites proposals from local nonprofits and community-serving government agencies working on recovery efforts related to COVID-19. Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis, grants reviewed monthly. Proposals submitted by the first Thursday of the month will be considered on the second Friday of the month. To apply visit JCFgives.org.

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.