

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Jim Burke, with local news for February 22, 2022.

Dr. Tom Locke substituted for Dr. Allison Berry and gave a COVID-19 update to the County Board of Commissioners and KPTZ listeners this morning. You can listen to his remarks in our streaming archive at KPTZ.ORG. In Jefferson County, the current case rate is 618 per hundred thousand – still falling. Total case count: 2,948 since the pandemic began. 128 cases in isolation; 4 are currently hospitalized. There have been 26 deaths.

On Friday, March 11, Dr. Allison Berry plans to rescind the Clallam and Jefferson County's proof-of-vaccine-card mandate for restaurants and bars in light of the rapidly declining COVID-19 case rates. Dr Berry said the rate of COVID-19 cases should drop enough by then. Governor Jay Inslee, with input from health commissioners across the state, has outlined guidance for the lifting of mask mandates in the state of Washington: Beginning March 21, face masks will no longer be required in most settings, including K-12 schools and childcare facilities. Masks will still be required in health care settings such as hospitals, outpatient and dental offices, long-term care settings, and correctional facilities, and on public transit. In addition, beginning March 1, vaccine verification for large events will no longer be required. There's a link on this story, on the transcript for this newscast (<https://medium.com/wagovernor/covid-19-trends-give-leaders-confidence-to-look-towards-next-phase-of-pandemic-response-a46340dd2997>)

Today, organizers of THING 2022 – STG, and Adam Zacks – will be announcing the dates of the event and the line-up for this year's festival. THING premiered at Fort Worden in August of 2019 and presented musical acts De La Soul, Jeff Tweedy, Calexico, Kurt Vile, The Violent Femmes. and more. You can find out what's happening this year by going to <https://thingnw.org/>.

The Jefferson County Commissioners will hold a public hearing next Monday as they consider regulations to ban fireworks county wide. The ordinance would give local fire districts the ability to declare a fire hazard, which would lead to a ban on manufacture, sale, transportation, discharge, storage, and use of fireworks. The ordinance would also lead to misdemeanor and civil penalties for violators. Last week we passed along some reportage from the PT *Leader* on this matter. If you'd like to share your opinion with the County Commissioners, or just listen in, the proposal hearing will be held virtually at 11:45 am next Monday, February 28th. Written comments are also welcome. Go to <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=876> for more information.

Quilcene voters have narrowly rejected a \$12.3 million bond proposal for a new elementary school. The final ballots for the February 2022 Special Election were counted Friday morning and the election was certified as official by the Jefferson County Canvassing Board shortly after 1pm February 18. In the final vote tally, Quilcene's Proposition 1 received a 59.4% yes vote, with 40.6% voting against the measure. The bond measure required a 60% supermajority for passage.

Jefferson Transit is launching a pilot program of a bus route that connects with the Kingston Fast Ferry to Seattle. You can ride free all the way to Seattle starting today, February 22 until March 31, with a free ride transfer for the ferry! There will be a morning run and an afternoon run Monday through Saturday but the fast ferry runs only Monday through Friday. The Jefferson County stops are Haines Park and Ride, Four Corners Park and Ride, and the Gateway Visitors Center (at the corner of State Route 104 on Beaver Valley Road). Find out more at <https://jeffersontransit.com/14kingstonexpress/>. You can show your support for this pilot by getting on board, literally!

This is my commentary for today: The Center Valley Animal Rescue is a non-profit that has taken in quite a few animals from some hoarding cases back in December, and they have many animals to adopt and are in need of animal feed, so they need money donations for animal feed, and they need volunteers to help with all these animals. Now, if you look at their website, you can adopt a sheep, a bunny, some turtles, dogs, cats...Go to <https://centervalleyanimalrescue.org/> for more info.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five PM Monday through Thursday and at noon on Friday and Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thank you for listening.