

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Ann Katzenbach with local news for March 25, 2022.

The two-week COVID-19 case rate in Jefferson County is still registering LOW. At this level it's advised that those at higher risk of severe illness or those with household members at higher risk wear a mask while in public, indoor spaces. Currently in the county, there are 8 new cases bringing the total of cases 3,159. One person is hospitalized.

The Jefferson Health Care Express Clinic offers COVID-19 vaccinations at their offices on 7th Street from 9am-4:30pm seven days a week. Most local pharmacies in Sequim, Port Hadlock and Port Townsend also offer vaccinations. Check first to see if they have the type that you want.

As I mentioned last week, the state is offering home tests to people in this area. Two test kits with five tests each will be delivered promptly to your door via Amazon. And they will honor that order twice. Go online to <https://sayyescovidhometest.org/>. It's fast and easy and you will have tests on hand if the need arises.

The Northwest Maritime Center (NMC) has received two generous grants of late. First Fed Bank is giving them a million dollars to be spread over 10 years. The need for a skilled and educated workforce continues to grow and there is not an adequate pool of trained people. Our ferry system is an example of this shortage. Lack of crew will likely keep Port Townsend on a one-ferry schedule for some time to come. The First Fed grant is to help support the Maritime Center's educational capabilities that honor diversity and offer training, not only for maritime careers, but also in environmental and marine science. Maritime Executive Director Jake Beattie said in a phone interview that he is "delighted," adding that First Federal was one of the first corporate supporters of the center ten years ago and that their support for the next phase of growth and development is "gratifying."

The most recent bequest to NMC comes from the Murdock Charitable Trust. This is a \$500,000 gift to help the non-profit expand its campus, citing the purchase of the 13-room Swan Hotel across the street. Beattie says that the hotel will bring in needed revenue and will be convenient housing for people who come to NMC programs. There's also a bordering vacant lot that they have procured that will provide space for future classrooms.

In other non-profit news, the Port Townsend Marine Science Center has a new executive director. Her name is Bee Redfield and she has over a decade of experience leading a non-profit organization at the director level. She will replace Janine Boire who announced her departure last fall following an 8-year stint that included raising funds to purchase the Flagship Landing Building. Boire and Board President Ellen Hargis will host an introductory session with the new director via Zoom today, Friday at 2pm. The session is open to the public; a sign-up link can be found on their website (<https://ptmsc.org/calendar>).

In addition, Redfield will meet many of the Center's supporters at the organization's annual fundraiser on April 16 at the Fort Worden Commons. "You, Me & The Salish Sea" will feature both a live and silent auction and a 40th anniversary celebration. Online registration is available at the auction link at their website, <https://ptmsc.org/>.

In ferry news, as I reported last week, the Coupeville/Port Townsend run is second-to-last on the Department of Transportation's list of getting ferries back to pre-covid schedules. County Commissioner Kate Dean and Port Townsend mayor David Faber have written to Washington State Ferries asking them to reconsider, citing the dramatic economic toll it will take on the region if there is only one ferry running this summer. Their figure of approximate lost revenue from this ferry slowdown is \$57 million dollars! No reply as yet. Stay tuned.

And that's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. I'm Ann Katzenbach. Thanks for listening. Have a great weekend!