

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Ann Katzenbach with local news for April 1, 2022.

It's April Fool's a day. The origin of this day for foolishness is clouded, but it has persisted through centuries. The most famous example of a media-perpetrated hoax took place in 1957 when BBC announced that there was a family in southern Switzerland harvesting pasta from a spaghetti tree. They even showed pictures of limp spaghetti hanging on a tree branch. At the time not many British subjects knew what pasta was, but many were intrigued and called the station to find out how to get a spaghetti tree for themselves.

Here in Port Townsend on this first day of April, Main Street has announced that because of the recent vandalism to its white wooden markers, they will be painted with black chalkboard paint and a jar of chalk will be placed next to each marker, thus giving everyone a chance to express their views. "And clean up will be cinch," said a Main Street spokesperson.

The county has added 6 new cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number to 3,195. COVID-19 rates in Jefferson County are currently rated "moderate." The health department urges people to wear masks in indoor public places. Go to the county (<https://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>) or the state health department web sites to learn about home tests and vaccination sites. Also, the *New York Times* reports that the one-shot Johnson and Johnson vaccine – thought at first to be less effective than Pfizer or Moderna – has proven to be just as good at preventing serious cases. Currently, approximately two-thirds of the eligible Washington population is fully vaccinated and protected.

On Monday, March 28, Governor Jay Inslee signed legislation that makes Pickleball the state's official sport. The signing took place in the backyard of the house on Bainbridge Island where the sport was created in 1965. It was complaints from a then-bored 13-year-old that prompted lieutenant governor Joel Pritchard to create the sport. His son, Richard, who was at the signing on Monday, tells the tale that begins with Joel Pritchard telling his son that when he was young, they invented games, and Richard, the 13-year-old, responded, "Oh really, Why don't you invent a game then?" Pritchard said his father and two friends lowered the badminton net, made some paddles out of plywood, and found an old whiffle ball for the kids to play with. Pickle was the name of the Pritchard's dog.

Fifty seven years later, the state's official sport should be Port Townsend's as well. The local pickleball club, citing a shortage of courts, has asked the city for permission to convert the old basketball court behind Mountainview Commons into three pickleball courts. The city has agreed, along with input from the school district and the YMCA. The club hopes to raise the necessary \$35,000 to make three new pickleball courts. Stay tuned.

Early spring is always a busy time for birds, bees, and human endeavor. With the declining threat of COVID-19, the number of other positive changes coming in a rush through the city and county are worth noting:

- The hospital has hired three new physician assistants.
- Peninsula College is interviewing three women finalists for their presidency.

- The Marine Science Center has a new director, as does EDC (Economic Development Council) Team Jefferson.
- The county has a newly appointed but not new to the job, county administrator.
- Key City Players have a renovated theater and a new play on the way.
- The historical society has reopened with museum-quality exhibits.
- The Rhododendron Festival is back as is the Rhody Run.
- The Victorian Heritage Festival is on the horizon.
- Centrum has a full spring and summer schedule.
- Grey whales are moving up the coast
- Buskers are coming.
- Regattas are happening.
- And pickleball courts are full.

There are spring cleanups scheduled for this and future weekends to come. Volunteers are needed. Happy Spring! Enjoy the longer days and celebrations, but keep COVID-19 on your radar.

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!