

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Ann Katzenbach with local news for April 15, 2022.

Passover begins today. This Jewish festival commemorates the historic exodus of the Jews from Egypt. The Passover Seder is one of the most widely observed rituals in Judaism. It is also Easter weekend, and there are many local events associated with this – from meals to ministries. Check local newspapers for more information.

The current two-week case count in Jefferson County falls in the high transmission range. At this level it is strongly recommended that everyone wear a well-fitting, high-quality mask while in public indoor places. 13 new cases have been added today, bringing the total number of Jefferson County cases to 3,286. According to the *New York Times*, the official tally of coronavirus infections in the United States has always been an underestimate. But as Americans increasingly turn to at-home tests and states shutter mass-testing sites, scientists say case counts are becoming an increasingly unreliable measure of the virus's true toll. To help keep track of current cases here in the county, you are asked to let the department of health know if you have tested positive after taking a home test. Even if you have mild or no symptoms, please report at 360-385-9400. You can also go on-line at <https://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/202/Public-Health>

Since the recent vandalism of the wooden art markers, lots of people have weighed in with opinions and ideas about the art and the graffiti. The paint and messages are still there, and no decision has been made as to the next course of action, other than hope, according to Mari Mullen of Main Street, that there can be a dialogue with the perpetrators. The wish is that future public art can find a peaceful and accepting place in the town.

The latest entry into this tricky field of endeavor came at the last meeting of the Arts Commission, when local sculptor, Rebecca Welti, proposed to gift the city a reinforced fiberglass sculpture for Pope Marine Park. The creation is a hugely enlarged image of a crab plankton that can normally be viewed best under a microscope. The abstract piece would be well secured and safe for children to play on. There would be interpretive information, and Welti said that she would be responsible for repairing any vandalism that might occur. You can see images of the proposed sculpture in this week's issue of the *Leader*. The decision as to whether or not to accept this gift would depend on consideration by several committees and subcommittees, so there won't be a decision anytime soon. And who knows what will happen to the defaced once-white art marker? Stay tuned.

In the Tuesday, April 12 special Board meeting of the Fort Worden Lifelong Learning Center Public Development Authority, resolutions were unanimously approved for 25-year leases between the PDA and Centrum, Northwind Art, and the Port Townsend School of Woodworking. The next step is for those organizations' Boards to consider and tentatively, approve the leases.

These agreements represent years of work and development. Several PDA Board attendees called this a "watershed moment" for the future of the Fort Worden campus. It provides space for the collaborative work for eight organizations at Fort Worden State Park that have come together as a formal "arts and culture corridor." The organizations, under the lead auspices of Centrum, include Copper Canyon Press, Corvidae Press, Madrona

MindBody Institute, Northwind Art, Port Townsend School of Woodworking, Rainshadow Recording, and KPTZ Radio Port Townsend.

And in traffic news: Washington Street, will be closed to through traffic from Pierce Street to Walker Street starting next Tuesday, April 19 at 7am until Friday, April 22 at 3pm.

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!