

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Ann Katzenbach with local news for today, May 13, 2022.

There have been two more detections of highly pathogenic avian influenza, this time in Clallam County. "Biosecurity," says Dr. Amber Itle, state veterinarian, "has never been more important for bird owners." She is urging flock owners to be hyper-vigilant to ensure there is no farm-to-farm transfer of the virus from infected flocks – and to eliminate exposure of domestic flocks to wild birds as much as possible. The two most recent cases were in non-commercial backyard flocks in Clallam County. Both owners reported that their birds had direct contact with wild waterfowl. Flock owners should continue to prevent contact between their flocks and wild birds by eliminating access to ponds or standing water and keeping different domestic species penned separately. Flock owners should also limit access to their farms, not lend or share farm tools or equipment, and not share or sell eggs from backyard flocks. While eating cooked eggs does not pose a health risk, transferring eggs off-farm could also transfer the virus.

"Avian influenza is here," Dr. Itle says. "Whether it has been confirmed in your county yet or not, you should be taking steps to protect your birds and prevent the spread of this virus which could wipe out your flock." Report unusual, multiple deaths or illness among domestic birds to the Washington State Department of Agriculture's sick bird hotline at 1-800-606-3056. Also, the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife website has an on-line reporting tool (<https://doh.wa.gov/avian-influenza>).

Dr. Itle explains that if flock owners are diligent for a few weeks, waterfowl will have completed their migration north and we should be able to get through the worst of it.

And on the other virus front, Jefferson County continues to have a high COVID-19 infection rate. 34 new cases were added yesterday, but no one is currently hospitalized. Report positive results from home tests to the health department at 360-344-3094, and you are strongly urged to wear a mask in indoor public places.

News reports about Bernard Ross Hansen and Diane Renee Erdmann, who were arrested by the FBI on Tuesday in Port Hadlock, didn't name the hotel where the couple was staying. It was the Hadlock Motel and, thanks to Trish Ulrich, the manager and one of her workers who looked on the FBI most wanted app, the couple was brought to justice. Ulrich said she was suspicious from the start because Hansen wanted to park his van in the back. She said after her call to the FBI, unmarked cars – she assumed were sheriff's deputies – appeared in and around the motel, waiting for the FBI agent to arrive. When law enforcement converged on the motel, the arrest happened very quickly.

"They did a really good job," said Ulrich. She said the officers took away a cardboard box full of money. She worried about the couple's nice Corgy dog, but was told that it would find a good home. And, when she asked about a reward, the agent told her that the couple hadn't been running from the law long enough for a reward to be offered.

Hansen and Erdmann have been found guilty of cheating more than 3,000 investors in a Ponzi scheme tied to gold bullion and other precious metals. Federal prosecutors, in sentencing recommendations submitted to the court before the couple's April sentencing hearing, had recommended that Hansen serve at least 15 years in prison and be ordered to pay \$33 million in restitution. Prosecutors planned to ask the judge to sentence

Erdmann to 7½ years in prison. Thanks to smart thinking at the Hadlock Motel, those prison terms will be served.

And that's it for today's news. KPTZ- 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5pm, Monday through Friday and at noon on Friday and Saturday. You can contact us through news at KPTZ.org. So long and don't let the weather get you down. Sunday might live up to its name.