

Good afternoon and thanks for tuning in to 91.9 KPTZ FM. I'm Simon Jaynes in Port Townsend, Washington bringing you the local news for Thursday, May 19, 2022.

This upcoming weekend marks the return of Rhody Festival in Port Townsend, after a 2 year hiatus. Events have already gotten underway with the trike races yesterday in downtown. The beloved Pet Parade is today at 4:30pm in Uptown Port Townsend. You can find a full schedule of events that stretch from now until Sunday evening and other information about the festival at <http://www.rhodyfestival.org/>.

If you've never experienced a full blown Rhody Fest, you'll want to be aware that over the course of the next four days there will be significant chunks of roadways blockaded in Uptown and Downtown to make space for things like the Bed Races, The Kiddie Parade, The Grand Parade on Saturday and the full seven mile course of the Rhody Run on Sunday.

Seeing as it is now Thursday, we can begin speculating on what the weather will bring for the weekend's outdoor festivities. And by all accounts it looks to be pretty good news. Our onshore flow continues with west or northwest winds over the waters today, maintaining a push through the Straits and building a high pressure system that will maintain warmer drier conditions through the weekend. In other words, mostly sunny skies, with highs in the upper 50s Friday and Saturday and the low 60s on Sunday.

Last Saturday, protesters lined Sims Way to raise alarm bells about the U.S. Supreme Court's recent discussions casting doubt on the future of Roe v. Wade and legal abortion in this country. It was a day where marches were held all across the nation. Yesterday, families of students in the Port Townsend school district received a notification that a number of middle and high school students are planning to participate in the school walkout today at 10:40am to show support for the pro-choice movement. At the time of this broadcast, KPTZ does not have any info regarding the number of participants or the outcome of the planned event this morning. But in a statement from District Superintendent Dr. Linda Rosenbury she made clear that, "While any walk out or staged demonstration would not be a district sponsored activity, we want to be available to provide the guidance needed to ensure student safety."

She encouraged families to talk with their children about possible walkouts and their participation. Saying, "If your student plans to attend an upcoming event, please follow the school's guidelines for acceptable attendance procedures and the excusing of absences. Students who arrive late or miss class will be marked tardy or unexcused absent. However, our schools will not be punishing or suspending students who choose to participate in such events."

The Governor of Washington's Salmon Recovery Office launched a new website on Tuesday to track recovery efforts for the endangered Southern Resident Orca Whales. Southern Resident Orcas are one of the four unique classifications of Orca. They are the only endangered population of killer whales in the United States and are found only along the coasts of central California to southeast Alaska – and nowhere else in the world. During the fall and summer, they spend most of their time around the Salish Sea and southwest British Columbia.

According to Governor Jay Inslee "It is important that we save Southern Resident Orcas. They hold significant cultural value to native tribes and all Washingtonians. If they go extinct, we would suffer an unacceptable loss

to our environment and culture. These animals have been sacred to countless generations of people residing here. I don't want to imagine a state without our beloved orcas."

The new website contains information on the progress implementing each of the 49 recommendations from the Governor's Southern Resident Killer Whale Task Force, as well as general information about orcas. "The new website is beautiful and chock full of information," said Tara Galuska, the Governor's orca recovery coordinator. "The website is an easy way for people to see what's being done to save the orcas and learn about our unique population here in Washington." You can visit this new online destination for local whale updates at <https://www.orca.wa.gov/>.

Ferry service from Port Townsend to Coupeville resumed as normal today after a number of cancellations this week due to tidal conditions and crew shortages. Reservations are already full for Saturday morning and afternoon boats this weekend – vehicle tickets will be sold on a stand-by basis.

In other transportation news, the 4 weekend closures of the Hood Canal Bridge planned for this summer and fall have been pushed back to 2023. No closures are therefore planned for 2022. The pushback is due to supply chain issues.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 38 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday, bringing our total case count since the beginning of the pandemic to 3,836 . There are currently 210 cases in active isolation and the case rate is 774/100,00. Jefferson County is in the high risk category for transmission of the virus. Local residents and visitors alike are asked to avoid large indoor gatherings and to please wear a mask whenever possible.

That's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday, and at 5pm Monday through Friday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Simon Jaynes, thanks for listening and have a great day.