

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Ann Katzenbach with local news and commentary for today, June 10, 2022.

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The state Attorney General's office has filed a bar complaint against Virginia Shogren, a Sequim lawyer. She is accused of making a baseless claim of wide-spread voter fraud in Washington. Shogren represented the Washington Election Integrity Coalition United. Their complaint claimed that 50,000 noncitizens registered to vote in the state. They did not provide any basis or methodology for those assertions. An investigation by the Solicitor General's office found the claim "not reliable" and State Supreme Court deemed the lawsuit "frivolous." Solicitor General, Noah Purcell wrote in his finding that "Unfounded and baseless allegations, like those made by Ms. Shogren have the predictable effect of undermining the public's faith in our democratic institutions." Shogren and her coalition were ordered to pay \$28,000 in legal penalties.

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The Seattle *Times* reports that the real estate market in Seattle is showing signs of slowing down. I asked ex-mayor Michelle Sandoval who has been a realtor here for many years if there was any sign of a similar slowdown here. She said there is a bit more inventory and not so much of the frantic bidding that has gone on, but she doesn't see demand letting up much. She said the rush began when Covid brought families who wanted more room for their kids and their work. They were moving from cities like Denver, Salt Lake, San Francisco, and Seattle. These people are still coming and looking, but some homes that were priced optimistically high are lingering on the market. She said that now climate change is driving the influx and adds that new construction is the only way to accommodate all the people who want two-car garages and one-story homes near town. "Prices won't come down," she predicted, adding that she hopes the city will prioritize inclusionary zoning in their future planning.

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Two hires have been announced in this week's *Leader*. Emma Bolin has been hired as Port Townsend's new Director of Planning and Permitting. Previously she was the Community Development Manager for Port Angeles. she will play an important role in advancing the city's priority around housing.

And the school district has hired Darrell Thomas to head up its newly formed position of Wellness Director. This multi-faceted job deals with student mental health, discipline, mediation, and support.

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After a 2-year time out for COVID-19, the Race to Alaska (R2AK) from Port Townsend to Ketchikan starts at 5am on Monday morning. There are 36 contenders in this no-engine race this year, and for the first time, qualified racers have the option of going up the Pacific Ocean side of Vancouver Island. For those taking the inside passage, it's no longer required to go through Seymour Narrows, a notorious tidal funnel. Racers can bypass it, but all alternatives offer challenges. For R2AK you need a sound boat and excellent navigation skills as well as perseverance, strength, luck, and really good foul-weather gear. There will be a big send-off party at Pope Marine Park on Sunday from noon to 8pm.

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Jefferson County has recently added 129 new cases of COVID-19, bringing its total from 4,082 to 4,211 cases. Health officials believe that vaccinations have kept Jefferson County from the higher numbers of hospitalized

cases reported across the state because of its high rate of vaccination. If you do test positive for COVID-19, the health department would like to know. Please report it at their web site or call 360-344-3094.

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Rallies demanding policy changes to curb gun violence are planned in Port Townsend and Sequim on Saturday. The Sequim march will be at 11am at the Sequim Avenue and Washington Street intersection. The Port Townsend march will be from noon to 2pm on Water Street in downtown Port Townsend. The rallies join some 300 others nationwide.

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