

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM. I'm Jim Burke, with local news for Jefferson and Clallam counties for Tuesday, November 22, 2022.

This just in – breaking news! Pupils, teachers and administrators of the Swan School delivered 6 wagons of food to the Port Townsend Food Bank this morning, complete with flags and banners. They walked a half a mile in the drizzle and the wind to get the food to the Food Bank this morning around 10:15am. Emily Gohn, Head of the Swan School, said that when the food is unloaded from the wagons, the little kids will sit in the wagons and the big kids will haul them back to the the Swan School, so that they can resume their normal day's activities. It's great to see kids helping out!

Some rain today and a bit breezy this morning in Port Townsend. Temperatures this week are seasonably mild, lows in the low 40s at night and highs in the upper 40s to low 50s. Across the country the weather promises to be very good just about everywhere else in the lower 48, so flight delays and challenges with air travel are unlikely to be weather related.

WashDOT sent the message last night that tidal currents will cancel four sailings from Port Townsend and Coupeville today. On the Washington DOT website you can see their Tidal Cancellations table for a complete list of affected dates and departures (<https://www.wsdot.com/ferries/schedule/AddCancelBySimpleRoute.aspx?routeid=8>). So, today, November 22, due to tidal currents, the 5:15pm and 6:45pm from Port Townsend and the 6pm and 7:30pm sailings from Coupeville are canceled. Your alternate routes are Edmond/Kingston and/or Mukilteo/Clinton.

Also from WashDOT: Pack your patience if boarding a state ferry in a vehicle for Thanksgiving travel! In addition, all riders should regularly check online sailing schedules, as some timetables are dependent on staffing. Patty Rubstello, head of Washington State Ferries, said, "Please thank our employees working over the long Thanksgiving weekend as they are sacrificing time with their family and friends to make sure thousands of people can get to and from their holiday destinations safely."

Dr. Allison Berry and Willie Bence delivered the now monthly Public Health Briefing to the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners yesterday, and here are some highlights from their remarks. In Jefferson County, the two-week COVID-19 case rate is 181 per 100,000 people. No one is currently hospitalized. 37 new cases were added this week for a total of 6,244 cases. There was one more death this past week bringing the total count of COVID-19-related deaths in Jefferson County to 33. Dr. Berry estimated that 20% of COVID-19 cases in Jefferson County were reported to public health last week. The risk of COVID-19 transmission in public, indoor places is moderate. At this level, it's still recommended everyone wear a well-fitting, high-quality mask in public, indoor settings.

Across the US, the COVID-19 numbers are relatively stable, but still 286 people are dying every day from the virus across America. For comparison, Dr. Berry said a bad flu outbreak in a typical year kills 60 to 80 people each day. Dr. Berry said that pediatric beds and children's hospitals across the country are overrun with cases of

RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) in small children. She said we can all reduce the strain on local hospitals by doing a simple thing: Wearing a mask in indoor spaces. The same things she's been emphasizing for months about COVID-19 also can apply to slowing or stopping the spread of RSV: Wear a mask, increase ventilation. Protect children, the elderly, and the immunocompromised by doing these simple things.

To slow the spread of COVID-19, do all of those things, plus take a rapid test before gathering for holiday gatherings, get a flu shot and the latest bivalent booster shot. Stay home if you are sick, even if it is a common cold. There are rapid tests for flu in emergency rooms and clinics, so if you think you have the flu, and you go to the walk-in clinic, they can test for that and COVID-19. Whether it is one or the other, there are medications to lessen the severity if they are given during the first few days of onset of symptoms.

Willie Bence said the Department of Emergency Management is still assessing the damage and fallout from the catastrophic windstorm two weeks ago in order to apply for assistance from FEMA. He believes they will have that finished in the next month or so, and get a determination from FEMA a short time after that.

Submit your Public Health questions to Dr. Allison Berry and Willie Bence by emailing contactus@kptz.org by Friday December 16 at noon, to be answered the following Monday, December 19. You can still report positive home test results on Jefferson County Public Health website (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1429/COVID-19>). Individual case-level data is also available on the state COVID-19 dashboard (<https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/data-dashboard> - select your County for county-specific numbers), as well as reports on vaccination rates, variant sequencing, and outbreaks. You can still order COVID tests from Washington State until the end of the year at: <https://www.sayyescovidhometest.org>.

One last thing: PT City Manager John Mauro, speaking with co-host Taylor Clark on *Brewocracy Now* this past Thursday, is asking everyone to "pump the brakes," around the issue of Kevin Mason's "Racoon House" uptown. The petition to save it now has over 2500 signatures.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening!