

Hello again! This is Derek Firenze with your local news and commentary for Thursday, June 15, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

On Tuesday, recycling facilities across the county overflowed. On its Instagram account, Jefferson County Solid Waste announced that all recycling drop off facilities in the county were full due to repairs to the trucks Skookum Contract Services provides to maintain them. Alysa Russell, Operation Manager for Skookum, said that while one of their drivers had been on vacation, they took that truck in for regular service. The mechanics, however, got backed up, and while it was in the shop the other truck broke down.

People were asked to keep bringing recycling to the Port Townsend Transfer Station, but by noon the cardboard was overflowing, cans were piled feet above the rim, and every window into the paper container was blocked off with previously shoved-in paper products. The Transfer Station luckily was cleared out Tuesday night, as was Port Hadlock which Russell said was a mess with people having left their recycling on the ground when the bins were too full. Clearing out continued in Port Ludlow on Wednesday with one of Skookum's trucks back on the road, though Quilcene and Kala Point had yet to be serviced.

This debacle brings awareness to an already pressing question. Public Works staff met with the Board of County Commissioners on April 17 to review the financial health of the Solid Waste Enterprise fund and with balances spent down since 2019, solid waste disposal fees may have to increase. Russell noted that there is also a hope to create separate entrances for commercial and self-haul customers to the transfer station, and for solid waste and recycling customers as well. To help figure out what the community's needs are, Jefferson County Solid Waste has put up a survey on their website for feedback from the public. It can be found at <https://jeffersoncountysolidwaste.com/public-survey/>.

When one door – or public facility in this case – closes, another opens. Enough work has been completed on the Hood Canal Bridge that closures for yesterday and today were no longer necessary and have been canceled. Even better, next week's weekday closures scheduled for the 19th through the 22nd have also been canceled. The next closure, however, will be as planned: 10pm Saturday night, June 17 to 10am Sunday, June 18 to perform the reinstallation of the pyramid.

Of course, a more fun way to cross over the water is by boat. Even better yet is to dive right in. Pallin' Around Charters, consisting of Captain Kelley Bronaugh and Dive Guide Katherine O'Leary-Cole, recently partnered with Jade Scuba Adventures to open a dive shop in Brinnon behind the Cove RV Park and Country Store with Summer Ventura where they offer air fills, guided scuba and snorkel tours, rentals, and personalized instruction. Kelley and Katherine spent nearly a year renovating their boat to take folks out on the beautiful waters of the Hood Canal with a focus on sunset dinner cruises. Katherine has more than a decade of experience in the restaurant business and with the magic of Jeremiah Wren from Pleasant Harbor Marina you can expect an outstanding meal on any trip with them. They'll also be running a handful of dive cruises as well as shellfish and kayak tours as demand arises.

If you, however, feel like you've had enough of the water this weekend, all are invited to the mostly DIY art gallery in Port Townsend this Saturday, June 17, from 3 to 5pm. The Art Farm Gallery, built by hand by DJ

Whelan and her mother and aunt, invites the community to a new gallery show featuring the work of Chuck Iffland, Tininha Silva, Carolyn Lewis, Diane Baxter, and Ela Winstanley. Live American Old Time music is set to be performed by Bobbi Nikles and friends. And, to top it off, an incredible culinary spread by Whelan's mother paired with wines by Carolyn Lewis throws it all right over the top. Come enjoy the weather, support the arts, meet your neighbors, and be a part of this little local hidden gem. The Art Farm Gallery is located at 131 West Island View Avenue in Port Townsend.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. This is Derek Firenze. Thanks for listening.