

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. This is Casey Dolan with local news and commentary for Thursday, June 6, 2024.

I'm sure that many local residents of Port Townsend and Port Hadlock have noticed the rust-colored hearts appearing recently as graffiti on signs and buildings. The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Facebook page informs us that these were created by a suspect known as the "Broken Heart tagger". This past Monday, Sgt. Brandon Przygocki conducted an investigation that successfully identified a Port Townsend resident, unnamed as yet, as the perpetrator. Paint appearing to match that of the tagging incidents was found within the suspect's vehicle. The suspect was arrested and admitted to the vandalism, citing a recent breakup as the reason behind their actions. The suspect has been booked into Jefferson County jail for malicious mischief in the 3rd degree.

The *Washington State Standard* offers a summary of new laws affecting Washington that recently passed the legislature and to take effect today. Three began as citizen initiatives:

1. Regarding police pursuits, law enforcement officers can now pursue "suspected" criminals, removing restrictions that were put in place in 2021. Officers can pursue someone if they have reasonable suspicion a person has violated any law, regardless of specificity.
2. A parental "bill of rights" will also go into effect today, giving parents of K-12 students the ability to easily review school materials and medical records and opt their children out of assignments involving questions about their sexual experiences or their family's religious beliefs.
3. The last of the three citizen initiatives will prohibit Washington and its local governments from imposing taxes on personal income. The proposal will not change any laws as Washington does not have an income tax and there are no plans to impose one.

Other laws include a prohibition on hog-tying (police will no longer be allowed to hog-tie people they're placing under arrest), a banning of child marriage (any marriage where either person is under 18 years old is void), and a lifting on restrictions for "co-living" housing (small, independently rented residential units with shared kitchens and common spaces will be legal again).

Get ready for another show of the northern lights late Friday and early Saturday! Categorized as a "G2" solar storm in strength, it will be much weaker than the "extreme" G5 storms observed earlier in May, according to multiple news outlets. If you're looking to spot them, gaze northward and possibly use your phone camera as they can be more sensitive to light than our eyes, capturing the aurora even when we can't physically see it.

Aurora activity has been more common lately as the sun gets closer to solar maximum, when the sun is freckled with sunspots and the magnetic poles reverse. Coronal mass ejections (CMEs) form from those sunspots. CMEs are essentially explosions of plasma and magnetic material shooting out of the sun. When they hit our magnetic field, currents send particles flowing to poles, and that's what causes the aurora, or northern lights, to appear in our skies.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has said in a press release that landowners interested in selling or donating portions of their property to help protect threatened or endangered species are encouraged to apply for the Rivers and Habitat Open Space Program ahead of the June 30, 2024 deadline for the 2025-2027 funding period. Administered by the DNR, this voluntary program allows DNR to purchase or accept donation for

permanent conservation easements from any private forest landowner. There are two applications available now through June 30. One is for forest land that contains critical habitat for state-listed threatened or endangered species. The other application is for forest land within a channel migration zone.

DNR prioritizes applications based on ecological value to salmon or other state-listed threatened or endangered species, as well as potential benefits to water quality or connectivity to protected lands. Interested landowners can get more information and apply for the program on the DNR Rivers and Habitat Open Space Program website (<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/programs-and-services/forest-practices/small-forest-landowners/rivers-and-habitat-open-space>) or via mail (Washington Department of Natural Resources Forest Practices Division, Rivers and Habitat Open Space Program MS 47012, Olympia, WA 98504-7012).

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Casey Dolan and I thank you for listening.