

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant with news and commentary for Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

Misinformation has snowballed since last week's announcement about the dissolution of Fort Worden Hospitality. Again, we take a minutes to clarify: The park is not closed and follows the regular dusk to dawn hours. The partners – including Northwest School of Arts, Madrona Mind and Body, and KPTZ – are all still in business. Centrum programs will continue this summer with Centrum taking responsibility for food and lodging only for their guests and faculty. State Parks will be considering what to do about hospitality services in the future, with details yet to be determined.

Several guests seemingly lost their deposits after Hospitality closed. While it declined to supply a number as to how many people have unreturned funds, Hospitality has a lender who will be guiding the next steps with regard to its assets. In the meantime, guests who paid by credit card are encouraged to dispute the charges as the services were not delivered.

The Jefferson County Fairgrounds is preparing for a year intended to add new events as it seeks to restore the facility to its past glory. The Fairgrounds has weathered some rough spots, due to the pandemic and management shakeups. Fair Attendance was in decline before the pandemic, with 9,036 attendees in 2019. The pandemic shut things down for two years in 2020 and 2021 but made a strong return with approximately 13,000 people in 2023. That number increased to 14,000 in 2024, a number that is this year's target.

The 40-acre facility includes several ball fields and about 15 buildings, although only three of them have heat and bathrooms. There are two buildings that house internal bathrooms and showers, although one exclusively serves the campgrounds. And let's not forget that the Fairgrounds offers what is probably the best local option for off-leash dog walking.

New or improved events include an expanded community garage sale on March 15 with a Tack Sale component added for the local equine community. After that, no large events are scheduled until this year's Jefferson County Fair, August 8 through 10, but there are a lot of little things going on. Key City Public Theater is building sets, and the Master Gardners are holding a series of lectures. There's pickleball and glassblowing.

The Fairgrounds is positioned as an event center, where people can rent a number of buildings for weddings, meetings, or memorial services, to name a few. The rentals range from \$400 to \$600 with clean up added, substantially less expensive than other options. The facility is also less glamorous than, say, Fort Worden or the Maritime Center. The less posh settings may discourage people looking for rustic luxury but will in turn attract others who are looking for a more quirky, down-to-earth experience. For more information go to <https://jeffcofairgrounds.org/>.

The Printery, an Uptown institution that has satisfied Port Townsend's printing needs for 50 years is now under new ownership, with an employee purchasing the business from founder Mike Kenna. Nicole Mason, a 1999 graduate of Port Townsend High School, began keeping the books for The Printery in 2018. When the idea of purchasing the business got serious about two years ago, she was promoted to production manager in order to learn all its aspects of the business.

Printed products still thrive, even as the Internet has become the preferred form of communication for many people. These include business cards, wrap cards for the hospital, carbon copy forms for the sheriff's department, and election ballots. The Printery has a full-service bindery in order to print business-oriented products or vanity novels. And this isn't just for the locals. The Printery services statewide, national, and even international clients. Printery Communications is located at 631 Tyler Street in uptown Port Townsend. It is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

KPTZ broadcasts local news Monday through Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.