

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with with local news and commentary for Thursday, May 6, 2021.

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Jefferson County is only one case away from logging 400 cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic began last spring. Forty-one people are now awaiting test results, while vaccinations continue at several locations across the county. At this point, anyone over the age of 16 qualifies for inoculation, essentially for free. Uninsured people just need to fill out a form and roll up their sleeve. And with the Johnson & Johnson version unpaused, there is plenty of available vaccine. To schedule an appointment at the hospital, go to [JeffersonHealthcare.org](https://jeffersonhealthcare.org) and click on the top yellow banner (<https://jeffersonhealthcare.org/covid-19-vaccine/>). For other options call 360-344-9791.

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Washington State Ferries has pushed the addition of a second vessel on the run between Jefferson County and Whidbey Island back for a second time, according to a report in the Port Townsend *Leader*. A second vessel has historically been added to the Port Townsend-Coupeville route for the “peak season” of summer travel. This year, two-boat service was expected to start May 9, but WSF announced in April the arrival of the second ferry would wait until June 6. Now, two-boat service won't start before June 27, according to the ferry system. The MV/Kennewick is currently handling the route all on its own, with departure times from 6:30am to 9:10pm. The only other two vessels able to navigate the route are the Salish and the Chetzemoka. Both currently allocated to other routes.

It could be worse. We could have no ferry service at all. This isn't likely to happen, but local citizenry has to periodically defend the route's importance. We have legislators on our side, but it gets a bit tiresome to have to beg for this necessity every few years. On the other hand, suspending ferry service could solve the downtown parking problem. For up to date information or reservations visit the WSF web page, [wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](https://wsdot.wa.gov/ferries) (<https://wsdot.wa.gov/ferries>).

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Spring is in full bloom, when some people's thoughts turn to.....freshening up safety painting on local streets. Port Townsend City crews will be on location in various spots around the city, freshening up stop lines, crosswalks, parking stripes, and other key areas. Residents are encouraged to leave the house three minutes earlier than usual to compensate for any traffic slowdown. According to the city's monthly newsletter, centerline and fog line striping will not take place this year, due to budget considerations.

Any proposed traffic change is going to raise hell with somebody – witness the fuss already generated about the possibility of new roundabouts. Accordingly, there is a mini-controversy surrounding the two mini-roundabouts on Washington Street. According to the newsletter, the city is finessing the design for these so-called “street calming islands.” The city is examining ways to install these options available for any neighborhoods disrupted by excessive speed. For more information or questions go to the Engage PT Website, [cityofpt.us/engagept](https://cityofpt.us/engagept) and select the infrastructure tab (<https://cityofpt.us/engagept/page/infrastructure>).

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Derek Kilmer, who represents Jefferson County in the United States House of Representatives, is a strong support of the America Rescue Plan. The bill, which passed Congress and was signed into law earlier this year, provides critical support to local, independent restaurants and the workers they employ through a new program

called the Restaurant Revitalization Fund. Currently, restaurants and other eligible businesses can apply to the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, which will supply restaurants with funding equal to their pandemic-related revenue loss up to \$10 million per business. The relief does not have to be repaid, provided that the funds are put toward eligible uses by March 11, 2023. In a statement, Kilmer said that Local restaurants contribute to the vitality of our communities, and the federal government needs to help continue to provide good jobs for folks in every corner of our region. For more information visit [sba.gov/restaurants \(https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/covid-19-relief-options/restaurant-revitalization-fund\)](https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/covid-19-relief-options/restaurant-revitalization-fund).

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We've rattled off a lot of websites in today's broadcast, and some of you are driving. As always, any link mentioned is listed in full as part of the daily local news transcript at [kptz.org](http://kptz.org). You can remember that much, even while driving.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org).

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.