

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Simon Jaynes with local news for October 7, 2021.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 6 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 1,032. Jefferson County has held steady at a rate of 275 cases per 100,000 over the past two weeks, and Clallam County's rate fell slightly to 570 per 100,00. Health officials see this as a plateauing effect in the region and according to County Health Officer Dr. Allison Berry, "This is still a very high plateau." While she said she is "very happy to have seen case numbers decrease to the point that our health care system is not overrun...at this level of transmission, it's still quite possible to see dangerous surges in infection... and more outbreaks that can shut down businesses and affect schools."

Families of students within the Port Townsend School District received email notification this week of two positive cases – one at Blue Heron Middle School and one at Salish Coast Elementary. The school district followed up with parents yesterday with a confirmation that "The testing of the 3rd grade class affected this week has been completed. All testing results were negative. There was no in-school transmission." According to the district website, there have been 6 total Covid -19 cases in Port Townsend Schools this year. District Superintendent Dr. Linda Rosenbury said in a statement to KPTZ yesterday, "We have assembled and trained covid teams at every school, who respond quickly to positive cases with contact tracing and rapid testing. Our staff has worked hard to move all meal times outdoors and keep students masked and three feet apart. So far, we have had zero cases of in-school transmission and we hope to keep it that way."

Port Townsend and Chimacum High School Sports teams have been on a hot streak over the past week. The East Jefferson Rivals Girls Soccer team has won 3 of its last 4 games, blanking Life Christian 2-0 on Monday. The Rivals varsity football team won their second in a row on Friday night, holding Vashon Island scoreless and prevailing in the contest 19-0. And the East Jefferson Girls Volleyball team won its Second straight with a Monday shutout of Vashon Island as well.

The Recyclery, Port Townsend's non-profit bike shop is having its big ride and fundraiser, The Tour De Forts, this Saturday October 9. The mixed-terrain ride totaling 100 km on the Olympic Peninsula commences at 8am from the Discovery Bay Brewery. It will include scenic turns through Forts Worden, Townsend and Flagler. All proceeds from the event go to support the Recyclery, which is currently fundraising for major infrastructure upgrades such as sewer and electrical systems. The deadline for online pre-registration is 5pm today. Day-of registrants will need to pay with credit or debit cards only. Cyclists should plan to gather at 8am on race day at Discovery Bay Brewery, located at 948 N. Park Ave with waivers and forms signed at that time. You can find more information about this event at <https://www.ptrecyclery.org/>.

Today marks the beginning of the commercial dungeness crab fishing season in the Puget Sound, the home to two fleets of commercial vessels, Tribal and State. The State commercial crab fleet possesses about 248 licenses, many of whom were out setting gear this morning from Port Townsend Bay to the San Juan Islands. With the commercial season underway and local seafood wholesalers bracing for an onslaught of demand, one market promising to gobble up a large share of the early catch will be the Crab and Seafood Festival this

weekend in Port Angeles. Crab Fest is back, after being canceled like many festival events last year due to COVID-19. This year the festivities will run Friday October 8 through Sunday the 10th at the Port Angeles City Pier and The Gateway Center. Admission to the festival is free, but tickets are needed for crab dinners and cooked crabs.

In the past, Crab Fest has drawn over 20,000 attendees, but this year, due to COVID-19 concerns Executive Director Scott Nagel expects attendance to be down 40% from that number. He says that in accordance with local health leaders, they have made changes to reduce the scale of the festival. There will be plenty of outdoor seating, but the capacity of the main tent has been reduced by 50%. He says that masks will be required based on the governor's mandate, but vaccinations are not required due to it being an outdoor event. Over 70 vendors are expected to serve the event this year. And the festival will be offering curbside pickup of the iconic cooked crab available for online purchase.

And that's it for today's local news. 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. I'm Simon Jaynes. Stay safe out there, thanks for listening, and have a great day.