

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with local news and commentary for Tuesday, August 4, 2020.

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Jefferson County had a mini-spike in COVID-19 numbers over the weekend, adding three new cases for a total of 54.

Two of the three newest cases were exposed on an out-of-state trip. The third case was a local resident exposed when friends from out-of-state came to visit and go fishing.

The three cases consisted of two males and one female. All were in their 60s or 70s. As of Monday, 4,860 local residents have been tested with 4,769 testing negative. Even with the added cases, the ratio of positive tests has held at 1.1%.

Fifty six people are awaiting results. Fourteen of the cases have yet to recover from the virus.

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During the regular Monday briefing before the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, health officer Dr. Thomas Locke acknowledged a state of quarantine fatigue that people will need to live with until the development of a successful vaccine. And the worst lies ahead.

In the meantime, Locke suggested that people work on stress reduction and pace themselves. And not let their guard down to falsely believe that the virus can't happen to them.

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Voters have until 8pm today to turn in their primary ballots. While the ballots will still be counted if you drop them in the mail by deadline, the most efficient way is to deliver them to drop boxes in Port Townsend, Port Hadlock, Quilcene, Brinnon or Nordland.

Results will be posted on the county's website as soon as they are tabulated. Generally this occurs between 8:10 and 8:20pm. All ballots on hand at present will be included in that count, while those collected from drop boxes or arriving by mail will be part of the second count. This usually occurs on the Friday following Election Day unless there is an especially close race.

Unlike pre-pandemic times the county will not allow the public to gather at the courthouse to hear the first election results.

The ballot lists a variety of races, from Governor to precinct committee officer, but the contests are only relevant if more than two people are running for a particular office. After the primary, the two top vote getters will advance to the November 3 general election.

The gubernatorial race has the most candidates, with 35 people filing to run against Jay Inslee in his bid for a third term. Eleven people are seeking the Lieutenant Governorship, left vacant by the retirement of incumbent Cyrus Habib. And three people are challenging incumbent Secretary of State Kim Wyman in her bid for a third term.

In our congressional race, incumbent Derek Kilmer seeks a fifth term, for which he has five opponents.

In the legislature, state representatives Steve Tharinger and Mike Chapman face primary challenges, each with two opponents.

The most consequential county race is for District 2 commissioner, where three candidates – Amanda Rae Funaro, Heidi Eisenhour and Lorna Smith – seek to replace David Sullivan, who is retiring after four terms. District 1 Commissioner Kate Dean drew no opposition and will earn a second term by acclimation. In the past few days a write-in candidate has emerged but we won't mention his name because if he were serious about public service he would have planned ahead.

While there now exists a nationwide controversy over vote by mail, it's a big yawn for us here in Washington where it has been in effect since 2005. Here, we are waiting for the rest of the county to wake up, catch up, and just vote.

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A survey designed to accurately identify and map low or no high-speed internet service areas is now under way, sponsored by the State Broadband Office. The agency, part of the Department of Commerce, is asking people to participate in the one-minute online mapping survey.

Survey participants enter their address and the online tool does the rest, measuring the speed for download, upload, and properties known as “ping” and “jitter.” According to the county, the results will yield information needed to apply for grants and other special funding to improve broadband access.

To access the survey search for Washington State Broadband survey (<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/washington-statewide-broadband-act/speedtestsurvey/>).

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

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.