

Local News – October 13, 2020: Recovery effort in progress; Great Shakeout coming up.

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with local news and commentary for Tuesday, October 13, 2020.

Grab a pencil, as there will be an important number at the end of this report.

Two Marrowstone Island men are still missing this morning, with little hope of their survival.

The two, Sean Pickering and Walter Mead, left the family property at approximately 6:30 pm on Friday, setting out in a skiff to check crab pots. The skiff was found at Fort Flagler State park capsized Saturday morning by Joe Inciong, Pickering's brother in law.

Since that time family members have been walking the beaches at low tide and feel very helpless, according to a Facebook post. They have also searched the waters by boat, and are hoping that people with a boat and any free time will join the search.

The Coast Guard conducted and then discontinued an extensive air and water search on Saturday.

Inciong said it is most likely that the men did not survive, and this search is more of a recovery than a rescue operation. He said the families are waiting for the harsh truth. Not knowing the truth is painful for family members and the community.

To volunteer in the search call Inciong at 360-301-2998. If you spot the men in the water call 911.

The Great Emergency Shakeout, a test of our preparedness for an earthquake or tsunami, takes place at 10:15 a.m. this Thursday, October 15.

This is only a drill, so don't call 911 when you hear the sirens. The drill strives to raise awareness of how to respond in an actual earthquake. The recommended reaction is known as Drop, Cover, and Hold. It goes something like this: First Drop where you are, onto hands and knees – this will help keep you low and avoid flying objects. Then Cover your head and neck with one arm and hand; if a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter. Finally, Hold on to something sturdy and be prepared for everything to be moving. The old instructions about standing in door frames or running outside is not advised by current emergency professionals.

KPTZ will participate in the drill. In an actual earthquake, or any emergency, remember to tune into KPTZ 91.9 for updates. Radio volunteers are training and have set schedules to work with the station and the EOC to help bring the most current information to KPTZ listeners. Remember to pre-set your radios at home and in your car to 91.9 so you can easily find the station in case of an emergency.

Most neighborhood have active emergency planning so talk to your neighbors about how you can best be prepared for an earthquake or other emergency.

After nearly a month of no new COVID 19 occurrences, Jefferson County reported eight new cases in the last two week. This brings us up to 79 cases, with 108 people awaiting test results. Of the new cases both apparently resulted from an out of county exposure.

In his weekly briefing to the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners, Health Officer Dr. Thomas Locke said that Jefferson County still has the lowest number of COVID-19 cases on the Olympic Peninsula. He reported no news about moving forward to Phase 3 Safe Start opening although there could be some modifications to aspects of program like libraries, movie theaters, wedding receptions, bars and restaurants.

Locke said that a negative test does not rule out Covid-19 infection. He said Locke said anyone who is exposed needs to be in quarantine for 14 days and that means not going to any public places, a guideline ignored by certain public figures. Currently it is taking 24 to 48 hours to get results from a COVID-19 test, which is better than most other Washingtonians but not as swift as those running the Federal Government.

Additionally, Jefferson Healthcare's South County Quilcene Clinic is accepting appointments for COVID-19 sample collection.

It is now 21 days, or three weeks, until Election Day. This week we can do a bit more than cross off days on the calendar, as ballots will be mailed to almost 30,000 Jefferson County voters tomorrow. They should arrive in a day or two. If you have not received a ballot in a week contact the auditor to trace the process or straighten out any registration anomalies.

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 at kptz.org.

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.