



News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending March 20, 2020:

[*Suciasaurus rex*, moss piglet lose bids to represent state — but provide lessons](#)

By Kimberly Cauvel

‘So ugly it’s really cute’: Two creatures — one massive and extinct, one microscopic and thriving — were recently penned into bills with state legislators from the 40th and 42nd districts among the sponsors. [Read more here.](#)

[Plastic bags, clean water: local legislators vote on wide-ranging issues in 2020](#)

By Mike Sato

-- The 60-day session of the state legislature felt like a lifetime, wrote Northwest News Network reporter Austin Jenkins. Here are some of what was accomplished and how our 40th and 42nd District representatives voted. [Read more here.](#)

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News from around the region...

EDITOR'S NOTE: Coronavirus news coverage in the [Bellingham Herald](#) can be accessed online without a subscription.

Health & Safety

[Doctor decries Bellingham hospital's coronavirus response, saying it puts health care workers at risk](#)

Dr. Ming Lin is making a public plea for better preparation and safety precautions at his own hospital, PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center. (Seattle Times)

[Protecting the Vulnerable](#) [Commentary]

In a special session this week, Whatcom County Council met in their capacity as the County Board of Health to hear an update on the novel coronavirus from county health officials. (Cascadia Weekly)

[Cleanups being planned for old Anacortes water plant, landfill](#)

Cleanup plans are being proposed for a former landfill in Anacortes and are being drawn up for the city's former water treatment plant along the Skagit River west of Mount Vernon. (Skagit Valley Herald)

[Recall: Locally produced frozen berries recalled due to Norovirus concern](#)

WinCo is recalling frozen Blackberries in a 16 oz. bag and frozen Berry Medley in 16 oz. and 32 oz. bags that were manufactured by Rader Farms of Lynden. (My Ferndale News)

[First WWU Student tests positive for coronavirus](#)

The administration announced Monday that a 20-year old student was the first to test positive with the disease. Concerned students ask university to be more transparent about testing and data. (Western Front)

[A Lummi Nation doctor is self-quarantined. But the tribe has been preparing for weeks for a coronavirus outbreak.](#)

Dr. Dakotah Lane, health director of the Lummi Nation, quarantined himself in Bellingham while awaiting test results for the novel coronavirus. (Seattle Times)

Education

[Western suspends in-person classes for duration of spring quarter](#)

Classes at Western will be conducted online for the spring quarter. Residences will remain open; logistics of online courses forthcoming. (Western Front)

[School Board votes to delay levy vote](#)

Ferndale will not hold an April Special Election school levy vote. (My Ferndale News)

Government

[County OKs \\$250K budget to address COVID-19](#)

Council members streamline county operations rules, ask everyone to avoid hoarding. (Western Front)

[Thinking the unthinkable: how Canada and the U.S. agreed on border restrictions in a hurry](#)

After two decades of fighting to keep the border as loose as possible, tightening it up took only a day. (CBC)

[City OKs four-story, 41-unit senior facility](#)

The City Council on a 4-2 vote Monday gave a green light to the somewhat scaled-down version of a high-density senior apartments building on Aaron Drive. (Lynden Tribune)

Business

[Birch Bay Budz aims to promote local cannabis producers](#)

A new retail cannabis store, Birch Bay Budz, plans to set itself apart by promoting products sourced from local farmers and growers in Whatcom County. (Northern Light)

[Visitors bureau suggests travelers postpone San Juan Islands trips](#)

The bureau is also suspending advertising campaigns. (San Juan Journal)

[Start of state ferry service to Canada suspended until April 28](#)

International service was originally scheduled to restart March 29. Local service is unaffected. (Islands Sounder)

Community

[Whatcom group dedicated to helping neighbors amid coronavirus becomes 'a place of hope'](#)

Sandi Heinrich created the [Bellingham Covid-19 Community Helpers](#) public group on Facebook. (Bellingham Herald)

[Bellingham seeks to limit recent trend of 'underbuilding' in areas set aside for multi-family housing](#)

Bellingham will ban most single-family homes in areas zoned for duplexes, townhouses and other multi-family units, under a temporary emergency ordinance that passed unanimously last week. (Bellingham Herald)

[All Whatcom Transportation Buses Fare Free Until Further Notice](#)

Fixed Route and Paratransit buses are Fare Free. Wherever possible, keep six feet between yourself and the driver, and between yourself and other passengers. (Whatcom Talks)

[Skagit Transit removes fares during pandemic](#)

Skagit Transit is currently offering travel on all of its fixed routes for free. (Anacortes American)

[Point Roberts an island after COVID-19 forces border closure to non-essential traffic](#)

Planning is underway to ensure the town of Point Roberts receives essential services after the US/Canada border closed. (Bellingham Herald)

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Mike Sato.*

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Salish Current is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, online local news organization serving Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit Counties. Salish Current exists to protect and improve democratic governance by reporting and curating local news with independence and strict journalistic integrity.

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