



News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending April 24, 2020:

[The things we do for COVID: iconic local businesses change their ways](#)



*A curbside pick-up option is one way iconic businesses are adapting under the statewide Stay Home, Stay Healthy order; above Village Books staff member Zadra Nolan brings an order to a bin next to the Mark Twain statue in front of the Fairhaven store.*

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed people to do things they wouldn't usually do, from wearing cloth face masks at the grocery store to joining work video calls and conferences from the couch, with dogs barking in the background.

At several local companies, trying new things has been essential for keeping dollars coming in and meeting their missions of serving the community.

Iconic and well-established as they are, the Pickford Film Center in downtown Bellingham, Village Books and Paper Dreams with locations in Fairhaven and Lynden, and Bellewood Farms in central Whatcom County are among businesses adapting to the circumstances. [Read on...](#)

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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

#### [Canadian Border Restrictions Have Been Extended For Another 30 Days](#)

The United States and Canada have agreed to keep their shared border closed for nonessential travel for another 30 days to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. (NPR)

### Government

#### [Whatcom executive outlines budget cuts caused by coronavirus uncertainty](#)

First cost-saving steps include a selective hiring freeze, postponement of some existing contracts, a 10% reduction of supply purchases, a 5% cut in discretionary spending, and savings on personnel expenses through schedule adjustments. (Bellingham Herald)

#### [City of Blaine prepares for steep drop in tax revenue](#)

The city anticipates a minimum \$700,000 drop in a \$7.1 million general fund budget based solely on the immediate impact of border restrictions and the governor's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order. (Northern Light)

#### [City releases updated construction guidelines – provides for some private development activities](#)

The City of Ferndale released "updated residential and commercial construction guidelines" to help applicants complete projects already in process." (My Ferndale News)

### [Ferndale cancels summer events](#)

The decision came a day after Whatcom Unified Command recommended that all summer activities in the county be called off. Bellingham has also; Lynden is waiting for now. (Lynden Tribune)

### [Return to Full Winter Schedule](#)

The Anacortes/San Juan Islands route is scheduled to be restored to its regular winter season sailing schedule starting Sunday, April 26 with the return of the ferry *Samish*. (San Juan Update)

### [Samish, Swinomish receive funding for COVID-19 response](#)

The Samish Indian Nation, the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community and the other 27 tribal governments in Washington will each receive at least \$100,000 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. (Anacortes American)

### [City of Bellingham Climate Policy Process Agenda Bill 22616](#)

The Bellingham City Council hears from the city's Public Works Department on recommendations for its climate policy process and development of a climate implementation plan. Monday, April 27, 1:00 pm. [Streamed live](#) and on the [City's YouTube channel](#).

## Nature

### [State report: No more Diobsud wolf pack](#)

The state has scratched the Diobsud Creek Pack off of its annual list. (Skagit Valley Herald)

### [Nature Notes – Never Underestimate A Salmon](#)

Nearly five months since the first sighting of spawners, over a hundred coho fry, less than 1.5-inches, emerged at Coho Preserve on April 14. (San Juan Update)

### [The Hatchery Hassle](#)

A look at the role of hatcheries in salmon stock enhancement, the Lummi Nation's Skookum Creek Hatchery in Acme, and a proposed private, nonprofit hatchery on Bellingham Bay. (The Planet Magazine)

## Business

### [Alcoa to close Intalco Works smelter near Ferndale, lays off around 700 employees](#)

Alcoa Corporation announced that it will close its Intalco Works smelter near Ferndale amid declining market conditions, laying off around 700 employees. (Bellingham Herald) See: [Speakers address national security risk of closing Intalco](#) (Lynden Tribune)

### [Bellingham independent music venues seek relief](#)

All tours have been postponed indefinitely, following social distancing measures, and rescheduling isn't as simple as naming new dates. (Western Front)

### [Coronavirus pandemic leads to more delays for Alaska ferry's Bellingham route](#)

The next trip to Bellingham would be on Saturday, June 27, by the vessel *Kennicott*. (Bellingham Herald)

### [Island airports to receive more than \\$2 million from FAA](#)

The Port of Friday Harbor will receive \$1.055 million; Orcas, \$1.041 million; Lopez, \$30,000; and Friday Harbor Sea Plane Base, \$20,000. (San Juan Journal) Also: [Port of Anacortes receives funding for airport, looks ahead](#) The Port of Anacortes received \$30,000 in grant funds to be used by the Anacortes Airport as part of the CARES Act relief package. (Anacortes American)

### [Skagit Transit awarded \\$5.9 million grant](#)

The U.S. Department of Transportation has announced a \$5.9 million grant for the agency as part of the COVID-19 relief package CARES Act. (Skagit Valley Herald)

### [Proposed changes would improve worker safety at refineries](#)

Ten years after the state's deadliest oil industry accident killed seven people at Tesoro refinery in Anacortes, a former union president who had worked for years on safety legislation to prevent such accidents is optimistic new safety standards could be enacted this year. (Anacortes American)

## Community

### [Whatcom Sings Virtual Choir Project on the song "Bright Morning Stars"](#)

Download the sheet music and send in a video of you singing your part of the song. The film will be posted on YouTube in mid-May, where it can be enjoyed by viewers across the county, the nation and the world. (WhatcomTalk)

### [Local advocates worry as Bellingham domestic violence rates stagnate](#)

As shelter-in-place orders are put into effect across the globe, reports of domestic violence are becoming more common. Yet Bellingham has not seen the same trend. (Western Front)

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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 strengthen democratic governance by reporting and curating local news with independence and strict journalistic integrity.*

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