

Salish Current

Independent, fact-based news for Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit counties

Dear Readers —

This week's story by **Ella Banken** about social justice organizing brings summer to a close as we turn our attention to news stories we'll be reporting in the next four months. We'll be following the Delta variant, masks and vaccines. The November local elections. Hiring Bellingham's next police chief. Amending the San Juan County charter. Harcourt Development and Bellingham's waterfront future. Broadband's "last mile" to rural residents. Police reform and life on the streets. Affordable housing and the homeless. Work and wealth. News literacy. Nooksack River water. Local climate plans and adapting to climate change. And more — all which you and others can access freely, without advertising, reported independently, reported without fear or favor. Local news reported by professional journalist is how *Salish Current* serves its community. To grow and continue not-for-profit news reporting, we also need your financial support. To support independent, fact-based reporting for Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit counties, please use the [DONATE](#) button below. Thank you for reading and thank you for your [support](#).

— Amy Nelson, Publisher, and Mike Sato, Managing Editor

**Salish Current affirms its commitment to work for truth, justice, equality and healing for all people.
#SayTheirNames #BlackLivesMatter #NoJusticeNoPeace**

News from the Salish Current, week of Aug. 27, 2021



[Summer of rallies, marches sparks multiple approaches toward social justice in Whatcom](#)

Members of the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force — one of the oldest social justice groups in the area — see their role as fierce advocates for people of color, the LGBTQ community and religious minorities, organizers say. Longtime board member Julie Mauermann is among group members who have organized the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Human Rights

Conference for most of the past 20 years, among other activities.

By Ella Banken — Calls from the streets of Whatcom County last year for social justice have inspired new groups to form and older ones to revitalize, as each takes its own approach to creating a more equitable community. ([Read more.](#))

News from around the region

Health and Safety

As schools open with in-person classes, the Delta variant of COVID will put K-12 students who are a large share of the unvaccinated on the front line. ([Post Alley](#)) See also: Whatcom council axes young adult social media COVID campaign despite vaccination success ([Salish Current](#))

The U.S. ban on nonessential travel to Canada will remain in effect at least for another month to slow the spread of COVID-19 despite increasing pressure to lift the restriction. ([Associated Press](#))

Starting Sept. 13, residents of British Columbia must show “B.C. vaccine cards,” if they want to attend a movie or indoor activity, work out at a fitness center, eat indoors or on the patio of a restaurant, live in student housing, go to dance or the symphony, or gamble away Loonies at a casino. ([Post Alley](#))

In response to Gov. Jay Inslee’s COVID-19 vaccine mandate for state, school, health care and child care employees. [SB 5144](#), a vaccination-rights bill introduced nine months ago by Sen. Doug Ericksen, R-Ferndale, has become a focal point for protest. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))

Whatcom County 8/20/21 [COVID ActNow](#) Very High risk; 35.1/100K; 72.8% vaccinated
San Juan County 8/20/21 [COVID ActNow](#) Very High risk; 8.9 /100K; 76.2% vaccinated
Skagit County 8/20/21 [COVID ActNow](#) Very High risk; 39.7/100K; 62.4% vaccinated

Government

San Juan County

The San Juan County Council at its Aug. 24 meeting voted unanimously to require all county employees and volunteers to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 31, with exceptions for medical reasons and religious beliefs.

City of Bellingham

The Bellingham City Council and its committees will meet on Aug. 30. [Agenda items](#) include:

Public Works and Natural Resources Committee:

[\[23085\]](#) Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Bellingham and Western Washington University for Lake Whatcom Monitoring

[\[22889\]](#) Update on the City of Bellingham Urban Forestry Management Plan

Committee Of The Whole:

Update on City YouTube Channels, discussion of [in-person city meetings](#) and opportunities for public engagement with the City Council

[\[23044\]](#) An Ordinance Adding a New Chapter 6.53 to the Bellingham Municipal Code to Regulate Third Party Food Delivery Platforms

[22599] Renewal and Extension of an [Emergency Ordinance](#) Imposing a Moratorium on the Processing of Applications for Detached Single-Family Development in Multi-Family Zones

[23059] [Ordinance](#) renewing the Cascade Natural Gas Franchise

The City Council will meet again on Sept. 13.

Whatcom County

The County Council will meet again on Sept. 14.

Port of Bellingham

The commission will meet again on Sept. 7.

Nature

An Asian giant hornet nest with nearly 1,500 hornets was eradicated in east Blaine 1/4-mile south of the U.S.-Canada border. ([Whatcom News](#))

Skagit County on Aug. 24 sued the city of Seattle for financial records in a fight over the lack of fish passage at Seattle City Light dams on the Skagit River. ([Seattle Times](#))

Business

Point Roberts depends on cross-border business to operate and its Fire Chief Christopher Carleton says that the downtown is looking desolate after two seasons of lost tourist traffic. ([KNKX](#))

Washington State Ferries scheduled sailings have been thrown into disarray due to staff infections of COVID-19 and face additional uncertainty as staff resist state vaccine mandate. ([San Juan Journal](#))

Community

With heavy hearts, the board of the South Fork Valley Community Association has cancelled this year's SummerFest due to COVID-19. ([South Fork Valley Community Association](#))

Jump in!

Participate in [Whatcom Water Week events](#) Sept. 11-19 and celebrate our marine and fresh water resources and the role water plays in our lives.

Make your thoughts known on master planning for Chuckanut Community Forest, commonly known as Hundred Acre Wood, and the surrounding trails, open space, and conservation areas in southern Bellingham. (EngageBellingham.Org)

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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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