

# **Salish Current**

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

**Dear Reader:** Today, we ask you to donate during our [NewsMatch Campaign](#) so we can continue to provide independently written local news that's free to read and free of advertising. Your donation will be **matched dollar-for-dollar** and pays our freelance reporters for their news articles. Our [editors, board members and community advisors](#) are volunteers.

It's easy: find out how to [donate online or via check here](#).

Since February 2020, we've published more than 170 stories on topics of local importance and interest, and factual, provocative personal essays in our Community Voices section. We email a weekly newsletter that highlights our week's original articles and a curated compilation of area news. We do this work because we believe our community needs fact-based news to discuss in deciding its issues and its future. We do this as a nonprofit, free from corporate or special interest influence.

Your donation now helps ensure that we will move forward into 2022 not only reporting local news but also taking the next step forward to establishing a sustainable news operation with paid staff, a more robust community partnership presence and more coverage of San Juan and Skagit County news.

**Please make a one-time suggested donation of \$120 or more — or a monthly donation of an amount you can afford.**

Many, many thanks for your support of the *Salish Current* and nonprofit, fact-based news.

— **Amy Nelson, Publisher**

P.S.: We're also very excited that I've been invited to participate in an "interview-style" panel discussion presented by the **Bellingham City Club**. Questions will explore the news landscape in Whatcom County, the stories that need to be told and the ways that the news media enhance our community's understanding of important issues. [Register in advance](#) to tune on Wednesday, Nov. 17, at 12:10 p.m.

**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 Nov. 5, 2021

### [Southwest Airlines lands at BLI as Canadians return to the U.S.](#)



*Arrivals at Bellingham International Airport will soon include Southwest Airlines flights — days before the U.S.-Canada border is set to reopen, facilitating a flow of additional potential passengers.*

*By Ralph Schwartz* — Southwest Airlines, one of North America's four major airlines, will begin offering flights to Oakland and Las Vegas from Bellingham's airport next month, a major move in the view of the Port of Bellingham. ([Read more.](#))

### [Gardenview Village tiny homes open avenues of hope](#)



*Cost-effective tiny house villages have a high success rate as a means of helping to move unhoused people into permanent housing, experts say.*

*By Lauren Gallup* — Gardenview Village, a new community of tiny homes located off Lakeway Drive in Bellingham, will include 35 houses to serve unhoused members of the community when complete. The site already is providing homes to almost half that number since opening in mid-October. ([Read more.](#))

### [Community Voices / Electric vehicles and the Tesla experience](#)



*With Washington state's relatively low electricity costs and high gasoline prices, electric vehicles seem to be a good fit ... and they're fun to drive.*

*By William Dietrich* — With the state legislature and some local governments contemplating a future without fossil fuel-powered vehicles, Northwest Washington car buyers are beginning to ponder what it's like to drive an electric vehicle — a computer on wheels — and some already are behind the wheel. ([Read more.](#))

### [Community Voices / The loudest jets in the quietest park](#)



*Boeing EA-18G Growler on approach at Naval Outlying Field Coupeville during FCLP touch-and-go carrier landing practice (Joe A Kunzler, [CC BY-SA 3.0](#))*

*By Karen Sullivan* — It's good to take a rational look at how we came to have an electronic warfare training range for the loudest jets on the planet over the quietest national park in the lower 48, writes a Community Voices commentator. ([Read more.](#))

## Health and Safety

Point Roberts is expecting an influx of Canadians who own property in the U.S. exclave and is taking steps to help them meet the requirement for a COVID-19 test before they return to Canada. ([Vancouver Sun](#))

The Blaine school board fired cheer coach Christie Peetoom at its October 25 regular meeting after she didn't meet school exemption accommodations for the vaccine mandate. ([The Northern Light](#))

Whatcom County 11/5//21 [COVID ActNow](#) Very High risk; 28.9/100K; 70.5% vaccinated

San Juan County 11/5/21 [COVID ActNow](#) Medium risk; 1.6/100K; 78.7% vaccinated

Skagit County 11/5/21 [COVID ActNow](#) Very High risk; 47.1/100K; 65.7% vaccinated

## Government

### San Juan County

The San Juan County Council will hold a public hearing on its [preliminary 2022-2023 budget](#) on Nov. 9, 9:15 a.m.

The San Juan County Council will hold a public hearing on the 2022 Capital Improvement Plan and the 2022-2027 Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan on Nov. 30 at 9:15 a.m.

The San Juan County Council will hold a public hearing on setting the property tax levy for land conservation futures, county roads and current expenses on Nov. 30 at 9:15 a.m.

The council will meet in regular session on Nov. 8 and Nov. 9.

### Skagit County

Skagit County commissioners will hold a work session on Nov. 8 at 10:30 a.m. to receive an update from the county's Planning and Development Services on the proposal to update the county's comprehensive plan to allow fully contained communities (FCC) in the county. The session is informational only; no decision will be made, no public comment taken. Watch via [Zoom](#) or watch via TV21.

### City of Bellingham

The city council will meet on Nov. 8. [Agenda items](#) include:

- The Bellingham City Council Public Comment Sessions will be held on Nov. 15, 29 and Dec. 20. [Go here to participate.](#) (Meeting ID: 923 0705 9297 Password: 018602)
- Mayor Fleetwood will formally announce to the city council that Police Chief Flo Simon has extended her date of retirement until June 2022. The city expects to initiate its police chief recruitment process in January and hopes to have a new chief hired before Chief Simon leaves.

#### *Public Works and Natural Resources Committee:*

- **23137** [Work Session](#) to Consider a Resolution and Ordinance Modifying Parking Fees and Regulations in Downtown and Fairhaven

*Community and Economic Development Committee:*

- **23160** Consideration of [an Interlocal Agreement](#) Between the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County and the Port of Bellingham Regarding a Coordinated Approach to Funding Countywide Economic Development
- **23161** Consideration of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee's 2022 Budget [Recommendations](#)

*Committee of the Whole:*

- **23000** [Update](#) on Implementation of Interim Housing Strategies (i.e. Shelter) for those Experiencing Homelessness
- **23164** An [Ordinance](#) Amending the Bellingham Municipal Code to Exempt Qualifying Non-Profit Cinemas from Admissions Tax

The city council will meet again in regular session on Nov. 22.

Whatcom County

The county council will meet on Nov. 9. [Agenda items](#) include:

- **AB2021-653** Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a [three-year interlocal agreement](#) among Whatcom County, the Port of Bellingham and City of Bellingham to provide economic development services and to complete special projects that promote beneficial outcomes for the parties, in the amount of \$2,084,322
- **AB2021-625** [Resolution](#) approving the 2021 Whatcom County [Climate Action Plan](#)

The county council will meet again in regular session on Nov. 23.

Port of Bellingham

The Port of Bellingham's [2022 strategy budget](#) is available; a public hearing will be held on Nov. 16 and public comment taken on the budget and proposed property tax levy until Nov. 16. The budget will be adopted by the Port Commission on Nov. 16 at 4 p.m.

Elections: Selected Results

**San Juan County; Nov. 5, 2:30 p.m. (44.66% voter turnout)**

***Charter Amendments***

Proposition #1: Preamble inclusion of Coast Salish people  
Approved 49.02%; Rejected 50.98%

Proposition #2: Term limits for council members  
Approved 72.9%; Rejected 27.08%

Proposition #3: Climate and environment commission  
Approved 40%; Rejected 60%

Proposition #4: Initiatives and referendum requirements  
Approved 29.42%; Rejected 70.58%

Proposition #5: Nondiscrimination in county duties  
Approved 51.69%; Rejected 48.31%

Proposition #6: Justice, equity and inclusion commission  
Approved 37.1%; Rejected 62.9%

**Whatcom County; Nov. 4, 4:18 p.m. (48.02% voter turnout)**

***Whatcom County Council***

At-large Position A  
Barry Buchanan 54.04%; Kamal Bhachu 45.48%

District 3  
Tyler Byrd 53.27%; Rebecca Lewis 46.45%

District 2  
Todd Donovan 78.11%; Kelley O'Conner 9.08%; Write-In 12.81%

District 1  
Kaylee Galloway 55.89%; Eddy Ury 42.77%

***Bellingham City Council***

Ward 3  
Michael Lilliquist 63.73%; Eve Smason-Marcus 35.41%

At-Large  
Kristina Michele Martens 52.75%; Russ Whidbee 46.59%

Bellingham Initiative #1: Expanding tenant rights  
Approved 49.08%; Rejected 50.92%

Bellingham Initiative #2: Prohibiting facial recognition technology  
Approved 56.76%; Rejected 43.24%

Bellingham Initiative #3: Prohibiting use of city funds to discourage unionizing  
Approved 62.9%; Rejected 37.1%

Bellingham Initiative #4: Hourly wage and gig worker employee rights  
Approved 40.49%; Rejected 59.51%

## ***Port of Bellingham***

### District 1

Michael Shepard 56.42%; John Huntley 43.53%

### District 2

Ken Bell 53.97%; Kelly Krieger 45.07%

## **Nature**

Coho continue to return to the Skagit River watershed in sufficient numbers to allow state Fisheries to keep the recreational fishing season in the Cascade River open through Nov. 30 and the Skagit River open through Dec. 31. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Remains of a dead giant hornet was found on Oct. 22 200 metres away from the Canada-U.S. border, not far from the area in Whatcom County where U.S. officials found and destroyed four nests in late September. ([CBC](#))

A new analysis from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory predicts that, if global warming continues, peak annual snowpack in the Cascade Mountains could decline by nearly a quarter by 2050 and up to nearly three-quarters by the end of the century, leaving the Cascades with little or no snow pack. ([Oregon Public Broadcasting](#))

The Canadian lynx, documented in the North Cascades, will remain listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in a lawsuit settled in U.S. District Court between the U.S. government and seven conservation groups. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

The 2020 State of the Sound Report for 10-year ecosystem-recovery goals outlines habitat improvements for some streams, shorelines and wetlands, but also describes ongoing declines among fish and wildlife populations that use those habitats. ([Puget Sound Institute](#))

## **Business**

The San Juan Makers Guild has secured funding to study the need for housing to increase locally produced food in the islands and has issued a Request for Proposals for consultants due Nov. 19. To request a copy of the RFP, email [sjmakersguild@gmail.com](mailto:sjmakersguild@gmail.com)

Environmental Protection Agency [data](#) indicate that there are 54 industrial and business facilities in Whatcom County potentially handling toxic “forever chemicals” (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly referred to as PFAS) that can be harmful to humans and the environment. About half of those facilities are described as “active,” and many have a history of federal environmental violations. ([Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility](#))

HollyFrontier Corp. has completed the sale of the Shell Puget Sound Refinery at March Point, plus its hydrocarbon inventory, for \$350 million. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Tony Andrews stepped down after 40 years as owner of Tony's Just A Bite on October 31. Monte Landucci, a former cook for Black Forest Steakhouse, Peace Arch City Café and Big Al's Diner, will be taking over. ([The Northern Light](#))

## **Commentary**

The track record for — and the potential risk of — maritime shipping of oil is even worse than the oft-dismal records of pipelines and trains. Eric de Place and Zane Gustafson unpack the risks. ([Sightline](#))

Dan Chasen in *Post Alley* writes: "If you're an orca, you may turn your nose up at Chinook salmon produced in hatcheries. ('You call that a fish?') Likewise, if you're the state of Washington, you're ignoring law and science to flood Puget Sound with hatchery salmon in the name of saving orcas." ([Post Alley](#))

## **Community**

Amtrak has announced that service from Seattle to Vancouver, with stops in Bellingham, Mount Vernon and Edmonds, will resume shortly after the border opens Nov. 8. ([KGMI](#))

The Ferndale City Council voted 4-2 to award a \$300,000 design contract for a proposed skate park under a larger budget than the council and the community had first been told to expect. ([Whatcom News](#))

An anonymous donor gave \$500,000 to the Anacortes Skate Park Improvement Project to provide early progress in designing and implementing a brand-new skate park. ([Anacortes American/paywall](#))

Lighthouse Mission Ministries reopened its drop-in location on 1013 W. Holly St. as an overflow shelter in addition to its Base Camp at 1530 Cornwall Ave., but the needs of houseless folk looking for warm shelter has increased rapidly and much earlier than expected beyond the extra 40 beds. ([The Front](#))

Interpretation of HB 1310 and what constitutes imminent harm and requires involuntary treatment have prompting some law enforcement to respond to fewer distress calls, as discussed in an Oct. 13 forum. ([The Front](#))

June and Farrar Burn, newly married in 1919 and searching for adventure and the best place to start their lives together, consulted an atlas and decided that the San Juan Islands in the far Pacific Northwest was where they wanted to begin. They moved to Sentinel Island, the last available homestead in the archipelago, and it was the start of their decades-long love affair with the area. ([HistoryLink](#))

## **Arts and Leisure**

[Up Close & Personal: The Body in Contemporary Art](#). The exhibition examines the human body through the expressive lens of 60 artists. Curated by Amy Chaloupka from the Collection of Driek and Michael Zirinsk, Lightcatcher Building, Whatcom Art Museum, through Feb. 27, 2022.

Western Washington University [Music Department](#) returns with live performances:

- Western Symphony Orchestra Presents: Lee, Finzi, Barber, and Dawson on Nov. 12, 8 p.m.
- Fifth Inversion in Concert: Trip the Light Fantastic on Nov.16, 8 p.m.

Katie Ives, author of *Imaginary Peaks: The Riesenstein Hoax and Other Mountain Dreams*, talks with Ken Wilcox at Village Books in Bellingham on Nov. 11 at 7 p.m. [Reservations required.](#)

### **Jump in!**

The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association celebrates its 30th anniversary via a zoom party on Nov. 9 at 6:30 p.m. [Join in here.](#)

The King Sisters Preserve is an often overlooked little gem in the San Juan Island Trail System. Strategically located in the heart of San Juan Island near the corner of San Juan Valley and Boyce/Wold Roads, this roughly 2-mile round trip walking trail parallels San Juan Valley Road and will one day connect with the Old Military Road Trail (OMRT) in the nearby Zylstra Lake Trail system. [\(Trail Times\)](#)

### **Nonprofit *Salish Current* is Women- and Minority-Led.**

**Like this newsletter? Share it. And it's easy to subscribe by reply mail. Your email address will never be shared and you can unsubscribe at any time. — Mike Sato**

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.

Facebook — Follow and engage: [Salish Current](#) Twitter — Follow and engage: [@currentsalish](#)  
Say something: [SalishCurrent@gmail.com](mailto:SalishCurrent@gmail.com) Check out what's new: [Salish Current](#)