

News of the week: May 6, 2022

Dear Reader —

Salish Current Community Voices columns bring important messages to our collective attention, and this week's [essay by Terri Thayer](#) on the observance May 5 of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Day is a prime example. The numbers—and the disproportionate share—of Indigenous people experiencing violence are shocking; good thing our state legislature authorized a new alert system for missing Indigenous people. Read Terri's piece and visit the REDress installation at Whatcom Museum's Lightcatcher Building to learn more about the issue and how to support change.

More food for thought this week:

An eloquent representation of the effects of global warming and climate change is highlighted in Chris O'Neill's article on the ["Precarious Edge" exhibit](#) at the Museum of Northwest Art in La Conner—a compelling multisensory expression of beauty and loss.

Sarah Reeves tells how Washington's public schools and the state's 29 tribes are developing curriculum to educate students on [tribal sovereignty](#) and the meaning of treaty rights; important points to understand in our region. The information is not just for the kids, either, as all the lessons are available online to all.

Thanks to all who so generously donated to Salish Current in this week's GiveBIG campaign. Donations are being accepted through the end of this month on the [GiveBIG platform](#), and as usual on our website; we're happy for your support any time.

Donors make it possible for Salish Current to pay our freelancers to cover the news, and for our articles to be available for all. We're truly grateful.

And, if you'd like more news, here you are:

[Salish Sea News Week in Review 5/6/22](#): Aloha Nurses' Day, railroad blockages, Intalco, Union Bay ship-breaking, Healing Forest, Tina Whitman, orca protection, orca calf, MMIP awareness, humpbacks, British Columbia climate, saving kelp
Thank you.

— Amy Nelson, Publisher

News from the *Salish Current*

[Tribal sovereignty education comes—slowly—to school curriculum](#)



The tribally endorsed, state-mandated curriculum "Since Time Immemorial" on tribal sovereignty and treaty rights is gradually making its way into public school classrooms across the state, as relationships between school districts and tribes continue

to develop. Marking Treaty Day, a [Children of the Setting Sun Productions video](#), provides perspective on the Point Elliott Treaty and its acknowledgment of those rights.

By Sarah Reeves—Public school districts are working with tribes to develop a crucial new curriculum on tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. ([Read more.](#))

[Community Voices / Raising awareness of missing, murdered Indigenous women](#)



The color red raises awareness of the highly disproportionate number of Indigenous women who are sexually assaulted and murdered, and shows support for families enduring such trauma. To that end, the REDress Project will be on

display at the Whatcom Museum May 5 [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Day across the United States] through May 15.

By Terri Thayer—Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day is observed in the United States on May 5, and in an installation at the Lightcatcher Building through May 15. ([Read more.](#))

[‘A Precarious Edge’ evokes climate change truths](#)



Friends for years, La Conner artists Meg Holgate and Steve Klein have collaborated on an exhibit with a clear message about climate change. The show, "A Precarious Edge," features Holgate's paintings and Klein's glass works—

complemented by evocative music by Christophe Chagnard—and runs at the Museum of Northwest Art through May 15.

By Chris O'Neill—Climate change and global warming are front and center in the Museum of Northwest Art's latest installation, "A Precarious Edge." ([Read more.](#))

Letters to the Editor

- Marcia Leister: Parking fees 'an assault on poor and ordinary citizens'

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

News from around the region

Health and Safety

All Whatcom County Library System branches are offering free COVID-19 antigen home tests to patrons while supplies last. ([WCLS](#))

Whatcom and Skagit County Peace Health facilities began limiting the number of visitors permitted inside its doors due to increasing COVID-19 transmission rates. ([WhatomTalk](#)) ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Mandatory masking was no longer required on March 12 but some Bellingham businesses such as Mallard Ice Cream, Phoebe Wahl & Co., Henderson Books and Northwest Yarns are requiring masks to enter. ([The Front](#))

Community Health Levels:

- [Whatcom County Community Level Health Risk:](#)
Low
- [San Juan County Community Level Health Risk:](#)
Medium
- [Skagit County Community Level Health Risk:](#) Low

Education

The Anacortes School District and former Anacortes High School Principal Daniel Williams reached a settlement agreement this week. The district's insurance will cover the cost of the agreement and the district denies the allegations of racial discrimination

made by Williams. A similar claim made by Jamie Woodards, a teacher at Cap Sante High School and former Anacortes High School assessment and special projects coordinator, has not been settled. ([Anacortes American](#))

Government

San Juan County

The commission met on May 3. [Agenda items](#) included:

- The council unanimously approved an additional \$167,803 for the mental health budget
- contract for San Juan Island School District for the 2021–22 school year.
- The council unanimously approved a code of conduct for appointed boards and commissions.
- Public Hearing: The council will hold a public hearing on May 17 for the removal of planning commissioner Steve Smith. See: "Council sets hearing to remove planning commissioner" ([Orcsonian](#))

City of Bellingham

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

- Town Hall, May 16, 6 p.m.; the council will hold a public meeting on Zoom to hear the public's thoughts on public safety. [Link](#).
- *Parks and Recreation Committee*
 - Bid award for Little Squalicum Estuary Project. [Staff report](#).
 - Stormwater Control- Amendments to Bellingham Municipal Code. [Staff presentation](#).
 - Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program. [Presentation](#).
 - Post Point Resource Recovery Project (Rates). [Presentation](#).
- *Committee of the Whole*
 - Eric Richey, Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney Presentation.
 - Crime statistics 2012–20. [Presentation](#).
 - 2022–23 Consolidated Action Plan for Housing and Services. [Presentation](#).
 - Immigrant Resource Center discussion. [Proposal](#).

- Councilmember absence. [Memo.](#)
- In-Person council meetings discussion.

The council will meet again on May 23.

Whatcom County

The council will meet on May 10. [Agenda items](#) include:

- Public Hearing: Advisory public hearing to gather public comments on proposed amendments to Title 20 (Zoning) to regulate vacation (short-term) rentals. [Staff memo.](#) [See: “County to hold short-term rental public hearing” (*The Northern Light*)]
- Consent Agenda: Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement amendment between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Commerce to provide resources to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic among individuals and families who are homeless or receiving homeless assistance, in the amount of \$1,250,000 for a total amended amount of \$4,294,770. [Staff memo.](#)

The council will meet again on May 24.

Port of Bellingham

The commission met on May 3. [Agenda items](#) included:

Consent Agenda (approved unanimously)

- Approved a [Commercial Lease](#) with Corvus Energy USA, Ltd., Inc. for 57,000-square-foot of property and a 19,000-square-foot building in Fairhaven. Corvus will develop zero-emission products for the maritime industry.
- Authorized Port of Bellingham Executive Director to execute an updated 2022-24 [Interlocal Agreement](#) between the Port of Bellingham (Port) and the Public Utility District of Whatcom County (PUD) for the purpose of joint collaboration in the continued development and implementation of the Whatcom County Rural Broadband Fiber Network.

Presentation: Tiffany DiSimone presented on the Moorage Model Update ([00:19:00](#))

Action Agenda: Unanimously authorized the Executive Director to approve a [policy and fee schedule](#) to allow preferential nonexclusive use for Commercial

Fisherman to access the Fishermen's Pavilion exclusively for commercial net mending Oct. 1 through May 31, and community use June 1 through Sept. 30.

Discussion: The commission discussed the issue of garbage in the waterfront container village and how to handle the increase in amount. ([1:10:57](#))

The commission will meet next on May 17.

Elections

Official candidate filing week opens May 16 and closes May 20. ([Washington Secretary of State](#))

*San Juan County District Court Judge Carolyn Jewett will stand for re-election.

*San Juan County Assessor John Kulseth will stand for re-election.

Nature

New orca. A calf has been born to mother orca K20, the first baby for the K-Pod family of Southern Resident orcas in 11 years. ([Seattle Times](#))

Tina Whitman. The SeaDoc Society awarded its 2022 Salish Sea Science Prize to Tina Whitman, Science Director at the Friends of the San Juans, for producing science for beach habitat protection and restoration throughout the San Juan Islands. ([San Juan Journal](#))

Urban forest. Public comment is requested between May 9 and June 15 to develop a city of Bellingham Urban Forestry Management Plan that helps maintain a healthy and desirable urban forest. ([City of Bellingham](#))

Business

Internet. Ziplly Fiber will upgrade its existing copper networks to ultrahigh-speed, 100% fiber-optic networks in Blaine and Birch Bay when it upgrades its service in 17 markets across Washington and Oregon later this year. ([The Northern Light](#))

Intalco. Ferndale's Intalco aluminum smelter is no closer to resuming operations despite months of discussions and a \$10 million promise from Gov. Jay Inslee, and its reopening was described as 'highly questionable' by Whatcom Executive Satpal Sidhu at a City Club discussion. ([CDN](#))

Clipper. The San Juan Clipper has canceled all sailings to San Juan Island, as well as full-day whale watching tours, for the 2022 season. ([Seattle Times](#))

Commentary

Dr. Gib Morrow, Kitsap County health officer, addresses what the pandemic taught Kitsap residents, some of which may be instructive to Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit residents. ([Kitsap Sun](#))

Community

Rents. Whatcom County has an 1% apartment vacancy rate and, on average, a 776-square-foot apartment costs \$1,311 a month. ([The Front](#))

Talk. Bellingham City Club's program on April 27 with Bellingham Mayor Seth Fleetwood and Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu can be [viewed online here](#).

REDress Display. Visit the installation on display at the Whatcom Museum courtyard through May 15, recognizing Murdered and Missing Indigenous People Awareness Day (May 5). Presented in partnership by Whatcom Community College and the Whatcom Museum.

Homeless. The HOME Consortium, a partnership of 20 local governments in Skagit, Island and Whatcom counties, proposes to spend \$1 million in federal funding on housing and homeless programs. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Unhoused. Lighthouse Mission and the Opportunity Council plan to increase outreach to the unhoused in Bellingham. ([CDN](#))

Arson. Dwight Henline has been charged with first-degree arson in federal court for his alleged role in the Friday Harbor fire of April 7. ([San Juan Journal](#))

Arts and Leisure

[Salish Sea Early Music Festival](#) presents “Baroque quartets by Marin Marais, Georg Philipp Telemann, Johann Sebastian Bach and others” performed by Greenberg & Cohan & Wright & Napper
May 6, 7 p.m.: St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Bellingham
May 7, 12 noon: Grace Church, Lopez Island
May 7, 7 p.m.: Brickworks, Friday Harbor
May 10, 6 p.m.: Orcas Adventist Fellowship Church/Orcas Christian School Gym
Masks and vaccination required • \$20 or \$25 suggested donation • youth 18 and under always free

Jazz. The Anacortes Public Library, supported by an endowment made in honor of clarinetist and saxophonist Dom Manieri, features a [collection](#) showcasing the American art of jazz and swing music. This month's Second Sunday Jazz program on May 8, 2-3:30 p.m., features the [Kate Olsen Quartet](#) and this month's Jazz Lecture series on May 19, 7-8:30 p.m., features Steven Dolmatz taking us on "[A Country Blues Roadtrip.](#)" ([KNKX](#))

Film. In “[Daughter of a Lost Bird](#)” Kendra Mylnechuk Potter, an adult Indigenous adoptee, as she reconnects with her birth family, discovers her Lummi heritage and confronts issues of her identity (May 14, 6:45 p.m.). The film is part of the [2022 CASCADIA International Women’s Film Festival](#) May 12 through May 15 at the Pickford Theater in downtown Bellingham.

[Friday Harbor Film Festival’s 2022 Director Series](#) continues through Oct. 5 and features films with the themes of Explorers & Adventures, Things to Consider, and Tales from the Heart. [Watch on-demand](#) May 6-18 for \$1.95 "Pandora’s Promise."

Jump in!

Butterfly. Visit sites on San Juan Island where landowners are making new habitat for the Island

Marble Butterfly and learn about the different habitat creation methods being tested and what the butterfly needs to survive May 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. RSVP to Tanja Williamson at 360-370-7655 or tanjaw@sjclandbank.org.

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Mike Sato, Managing Editor**

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