



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

News of the week: Aug. 19, 2022

Dear Reader —

Editors and writers every once in a while read a piece of writing that stuns with its forthright courage and honesty.

Jodi Borrelli's "Community Voices" essay featured below and on our website this week is one of those pieces.

I encourage you to read it and see if you, too, are moved as I was.

It's hard not to feel that our communities, our nation, our world are suffering through dark times defined in large part by the gap that exists between those who have and those who don't have — education, housing, medical care, employment, a basic income.

Jodi's essay captures not only hope in dark times but also challenges us to do what is needed and right to heal our communities, our nation and our world. It's done by helping others, and by supporting the organizations that can reach out with the expertise and insights to help change lives for the better.

Let me know what you think. Thanks for reading and [supporting](#) *Salish Current*.

—Mike Sato, Managing Editor

Wait! There's more — Salish Sea News Week in Review

8/19/22: Orangutan Friday, British Columbia glass sponge, defamation lawsuit, steelhead meddling, Big Rock salmon, Skeena sockeye, green biz boost, British Columbia marine noise

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

News from the *Salish Current*

[Court rules: San Juan County to vote on charter amendments](#)



*San Juan County Council
Members voted unanimously
not to advance four charter
amendments proposed by the
charter review commission;*

the decision has been overruled in Superior Court.

By Nancy DeVaux: San Juan County will vote on ranked choice voting and other proposals forwarded by its charter review commission, after a court ruling overturned a county council decision. [Read more ...](#)

[Islanders grapple with concerns over a finite resource: water](#)



*Bubbling up, pumped up or
piped in, drinking water is a
finite resource. Planners and
residents on the islands of the
Salish Sea are looking at ways
to assess water resources, to
ensure supply as climate
changes and population
grows.*

By Clifford Heberden: Aquifers around the Salish Sea are at risk from seawater intrusion, exhaustion and the concern that replenishment could become more and more difficult with the changing climate. [Read more ...](#)

Community Voices: [From surviving to thriving — with help](#)



'Wrap-around support' and hope were important in the treatment for a recovering heroin addict who is now helping others recover.

By Jodi Borrelli: A transformation from homeless heroin addict to

thriving college graduate and co-occurring disorder specialist was made with help along the way. [Read more ...](#)

News from around the Salish Sea

(The links found here may have limited access for those who don't subscribe to the source publication. Sorry for any inconvenience!)

Health and Safety

Anaplasmosis. Washington State Department of Health reports that the first locally acquired human case of the tick-borne disease anaplasmosis was discovered in a Washington resident on Aug. 8. A Whatcom County man in his 80s was hospitalized with severe disease, and is now in recovery, after working in the brush in Mason County where he was likely bitten by a Western black-legged tick, *Ixodes pacificus*. ([WA DOH](#))

COVID-19 Community Health Levels:

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

Education

Schools. The seven Skagit County public school districts will have passed budgets before the school year begins in September and most are anticipating having to spend

out of reserves to cover costs. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

WWU pay. Check out the [2021 salaries](#) for all state level employees, including Western Washington University staff. ([CDN/paywall](#))

Government

San Juan County

The council will meet on Aug. 23. [Agenda items include:](#)

- Marine Program Update
- Sustainable Tourism Management Plan Update
- Overview of Current Use and Designated Forest Land Special Tax Programs
- Comprehensive Plan Update

City of Bellingham

The council will meet on Aug. 29.

Whatcom County

The council will meet on Sept. 13.

Port of Bellingham

The commission will meet on Sept. 6.

Elections

42nd Legislative District. More than 48% of voters in the 42nd District, encompassing all of Whatcom County except the southwest corner and south Bellingham, had cast their ballots as of Monday, compared to 41% statewide. ... This year finalists Sharon Shewmake and Simon Sefzik and outside Political Action Committees spent about \$464,000 in the primary election, compared to \$18,000 spent in 2018's primary campaign by Doug Ericksen and Pinky Vargas. ([CDN/paywall](#))

Forum. City Club Candidate Forum for 42nd District Senator and PUD Commissioner, Aug. 24, Noon, virtual. [Register here.](#)

Nature

Bloom. The waters around Discovery Bay near Port Townsend earlier this month turned turquoise from a massive plankton bloom visible from space.

[\(Rainshadow Journal\)](#)

Nooksack. A local Whatcom County effort called Floodplain Integrated Planning is attempting to restore the Nooksack River basin by bringing together the needs of tribes, farms, communities and fish.

[\(Investigate West\)](#)

Asbestos. Whatcom County will begin damming Swift Creek to contain naturally occurring asbestos sediment.

[\(CDN/paywall\)](#)

Oil spill. The oil sheen from a sunken fishing boat appears to have dissipated but concerns remain about the impact on marine life around the Haro Strait spill site. [\(Times Colonist\)](#)

Business

Collaboration. A report by former Interior official Ramsey Kropf argues that a collaborative process rather than adjudication would best resolve Nooksack water rights issues and support conservation and infrastructure projects. [\(Whatcom Family Farmers\)](#)

Intalco. The federal healthcare and climate legislation includes tax credits and grant money that would help subsidize the cost of low-carbon aluminum produced in the United States but the reopening of the Intalco Works aluminum smelter in Ferndale remains uncertain due to “clean power” availability. [\(Seattle Times/paywall\)](#) See: “Intalco restart: can ‘green’ aluminum get ‘clean’ power?” [\(Salish Current 7/21/22\)](#)

BP Dock. The final environmental impact statement for the BP Cherry Point Dock begun six years ago by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was issued last week. [\(EPA NEPA\)](#)

EBs. Whatcom Transportation Authority will use an \$8.6 million federal grant to purchase eight electric buses

and charging equipment instead of eight diesel buses. ([CDN/paywall](#))

Oysters. Drayton Harbor Oyster Company proposes to add off-bottom farming in a cleaner area of Drayton Harbor in addition to its current operations on the eastern side of the harbor. ([The Northern Light](#))

Commentary

Super loafs. Karen Sullivan in the "Deranged Gourmet" writes: "We're so excited to bring you these Super Supper Loaf recipes from the 1950s that we've nearly lost our minds! We know they'll help you with not only bringing down food costs, but also appetites. You'll save money twice over!" ([Rainshadow Journal](#))

Community

Wastewater. Updating Bellingham's Post Point wastewater facility, estimated to cost at least \$220 million several years ago, has been estimated to cost approximately \$430.3 million to complete per a July report by environmental consultants Brown and Caldwell. ([CDN/paywall](#))

FEMA woes. Climate change is straining FEMA's capacity to help people after a disaster. Nine months later after November's flood, Whatcom County flood survivors await FEMA aid. ([InvestigateWest](#))

Camping. The Forest Service is proposing a \$20 per night fee charge for selected campgrounds, including Whatcom County's Lower Sandy Campground in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. ([Bellingham Herald/paywall](#))

Arts and Leisure

Patrick Swayze. Pickford Cinema's rooftop series concludes on Aug. 19 with "Road House," at the Downtown Bellingham Parkade, 7–11 p.m. [Information.](#)

Movie. Fairhaven Outdoor Cinema. "The Goonies," Aug. 20, 7 p.m. Next: "The Princess Bride," Aug. 27. [Tickets at the event.](#)

Rena Priest, Washington State poet laureate, presents reading and writing workshops. Reading on Waldron Island, Aug. 21, 3 p.m., The Commons; Mount Vernon, Sept. 3, 7:30 p.m., Lincoln Theater. [Information](#)

Exhibit: "Looking Forward, Facing Back" features the work of Jessica Silver, Lyz Staman, Susan Cohen Raphael and Erin Libby, and will send you on a time-traveling journey through the whimsical and surreal dream worlds of these evocative creators. Exhibit Aug. 5–27, 11 a.m.–4 p.m., [Allied Arts Gallery](#), Bellingham.

Grants of up to \$2,000 from the Skagit Community Foundation are now available for not-for-profit arts organizations in Skagit County through Sept. 20. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Jump in!

Bay Day. 18th annual Fidalgo Bay Day welcomes families to get a closer look at the marine environment and learn about its stewardship. Aug. 20, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Samish Indian Nation's Fidalgo Bay Resort. [Information.](#)

SummerFest! The South Fork Valley Community Association invites the public to join in the celebration at Josh VanderYacht Memorial Park, behind the Van Zandt Community Hall, Aug. 20, 1–6 p.m. Info: matthew@southforkvalley.org or 360-305-6939.

Forum. City Club Candidate Forum for 42nd District Senator and PUD Commissioner, Aug. 24, Noon, virtual. [Register here.](#)

Women's InEquality Day. The League of Women Voters encourages you to celebrate Women's InEquality Day on Aug. 26, which usually marks the day when some women were given the right to vote but in 2022 women have fewer rights than they've had in decades. [Here's how to take action.](#)

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Mike Sato, Managing Editor**

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