

News of the week: Sept. 9, 2022

Dear Reader —

You're going about your life when suddenly you witness bullying or harassment; maybe it's racially or sexually directed, maybe it's overtly mean-spirited or even cruel, maybe it's passive-aggressively subtle.

What would you do?

Would-be allies are counseled to address the person being victimized, to help or to show support.

Don't, say the experts, do what impulse might suggest and try to engage the aggressor.

Bellingham's self-described "sex-shop school-board lady" Jenn Mason received a show of support today from the nearly 300 attendees of the YWCA leadership breakfast who heard her story. In the past two years, Mason has been the target of the "outrage machine" broadcasting false information on national television and regurgitating it in social media. The posts haven't left out the hate element; a video compilation of posts Mason — a Jew — has received included plenty of anti-Semitic messages as well.

It's moved into the physical realm: most recently, a band of rock-throwers vandalized her storefront under cover of darkness.

In the moment, Mason said, "it feels so isolating."

People helped and showed her their support.

Admirably, she's moved on and kept going, as have others who have been targeted by stalkers, harassment, death threats and more. Time and energy are finite resources, and she doesn't have any to waste on hate.

Today, she ended her talk with some words from Cornel West: "Justice is what love looks like in public."

Sadly there continue to be opportunities to serve as an ally. Ask yourself now, so you'll know in the moment: what would I do?

Thank you for reading *Salish Current* and for your [support](#). And remember to share this newsletter with others who may be interested!

— Amy Nelson, Publisher

[*Ed.: Ms. Mason's last name was incorrect in the email edition of this newsletter.*]

Want more environmental news? [Salish Sea News and Weather](#) is a weekday curated compilation of news from Salish Sea news sources. Free via email or on the web.

[Salish Sea News Week in Review 9/9/22](#): Teddy bear, bull kelp, Steven Guilbeault, Site C dam wetlands, Alaska green crabs, Intalco SO₂, rising seas, Westcoast Connector

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

**#SayTheirNames #BlackLivesMatter
#NoJusticeNoPeace**

News from the *Salish Current*

[Diesel oil from sunken Aleutian Isle 'nonrecoverable'](#)



An oil boom protects a sensitive area of shoreline along San Juan Island, part of the multi-agency response to the sinking of a fishing vessel last month.

By Zach Kortge: A thin sheen of diesel oil — deemed nonrecoverable — remains on the surface of the water

following the sinking of a fishing vessel last month off San Juan Island. [Read more.](#)

[San Juan Islands National Monument: where's the plan?](#)



Dead Man Island, a well-used haulout for seals and haven for oystercatchers and other birds, is among areas throughout the San Juan archipelago awaiting protection as part of the San Juan Islands National Monument.

By Nancy DeVaux: “Beyond slow” delays in developing a management plan for the San Juan Islands National Monument may resolve soon. [Read more.](#)

[Got something to say about homelessness? Write it down, send it in](#)



Life on the verge, in more ways than one: Tents along Cornwall Avenue provide temporary shelter for some of Bellingham's unhoused residents.

By Salish Current Editors:

Salish Current and the Rotary Club of Bellingham want to hear your thoughts on homelessness — a reality for the well over 1,200 people in our community who lack housing. [Read more.](#)

[Letters to the Editor](#)

- Jackson: Sefzik's “big fat check” was scholarship money

News from around the region

(Some of 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

COVID. Although the authorities know that masking, ventilation, air filtration and isolating when sick can dampen COVID and protect the public health, they have inexplicably abandoned these tools. ([The Tyee](#))

Relaxation. PeaceHealth facilities in Whatcom, Skagit and San Juan counties relaxed COVID-related protocols this week allowing patients to have visitors and people to return to volunteer. Masks remain required in facilities. ([KGMI](#))

Booster. Omicron-variant-targeted bivalent booster vaccine doses will soon be available. The omicron vaccine boosters are made up of Pfizer and Moderna's original vaccine with BA.4 and BA.5 spike protein components, which targets variants that are more transmissible and immune-evading. ([The Northern Light](#))

Emergency over. More than two years after the order took effect, the governor's special authority to combat the pandemic is over — even as the virus remains. ([Crosscut](#))

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

New school. The Blaine school district will begin the search for an elementary school site to serve the Birch Bay community which has grown to 10,115 residents in 2020. ([The Northern Light](#))

Government

San Juan County

The council will meet on Sept. 12. [Agenda item](#) includes:

- Discussion: Comprehensive Plan Briefings - David Williams, Director Community Development; Sophia Cassam, Planner
- Action: Schedule public hearing for Nov. 29.

The council will meet on Sept. 13. [Agenda items](#) include:

- Public hearing: Adopt Emergency and Supplemental Appropriations to the 2022 Budget - Molly Foote, Budget Analyst

City of Bellingham

The council will meet on Sept. 12. [Agenda items](#) include:

- Public hearing: Amendments to Bellingham municipal code to establish manufactured home park overlay and regulations related to change of use, ownership and closure of a park.

Public Works and Natural Resources Committee:

- Post Point Resource Recovery project discussion. [Staff memo.](#)

Parks and Recreation Committee:

- Work session on Hundred Acre Wood master plan. [Staff memo.](#)
- Formal naming of Hundred Acre Wood. [Memo to Park Advisory Board.](#)

Committee of the Whole:

- Library Facilities Master Plan. [Presentation.](#)
- Climate Action Week and Whatcom Water Week events. [Presentation.](#)

The council will meet again on Sept. 26.

Whatcom County

The council will meet on Sept. 13. [Agenda items](#) include:

Consent Agenda:

- Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Health Care Authority to

establish an alternative response team to respond to 911 calls that do not require law enforcement, in the amount of \$2,213,000. [Staff memo.](#)

- Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and the United State Department of Interior, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to jointly fund continued stream gaging stations in the Nooksack River in the amount of \$199,672.00. [Staff memo.](#)

- Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Herrera Environmental Consultants to provide continuing support of the Floodplain Integrated Planning Process (FLIP) in the amount of \$606,500.00 for a total amended contract amount of \$1,199,700.00 [Memo.](#)

The council will meet again on Sept. 27.

Port of Bellingham

The commission will meet on Sept. 20.

For the people

Elections

Forum. The Bellingham City Club virtual forum on Aug. 24 is [available for viewing](#): Sharon Shewmake (D) and Simon Sefzik (R), candidates for state senator, District 42; and Jaime Arnett and Eric Davidson, candidates for Public Utility District No. 1 Commissioner 3.

Forums. Bellingham/Whatcom County League of Women Voter [virtual election forums](#) have been scheduled:

- Sept. 10: Public Utility District No. 1 Commissioner 3 (5 p.m.); Whatcom County District Court Judge (6:15 p.m.)
- Oct. 7: U.S. Congressional District 2 Representative
- Oct. 12: 42nd Legislative District Senator (5 p.m.); 40th Legislative District Representative 2 (6:15 p.m.)
- Oct. 14: 42nd Legislative District Representative 1 (5 p.m.); 42nd Legislative District Representative 2 (6:15 p.m.)

- Oct. 18: Whatcom County Proposition 5, Healthy Children's Fund (6 p.m.)

Share what you want asked of the candidate by using the [online issues and questions form](#).

Nature

Alaskan green crabs. More than 80 live green crabs had been trapped along the shoreline of the Metlakatla Indian Community. ([NBC](#))

Whale watch. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife seeks public feedback through Sept. 30 regarding rules for both recreational and commercial whale watching vessels to encourage recovery efforts of endangered Southern Resident orcas. ([WDFW](#))

Business

Fish disaster. Lummi Nation and other tribes have received more than \$16 million to compensate for recent salmon fishery disasters experienced in the last decade. ([Bellingham Herald/paywall](#))

Mitigation. Skagit County commissioners held hearings on a permanent ordinance prohibiting sale of county land for salmon habitat projects to offset environmental impacts of Skagit dams. Farmers opposed these sales; the Swinomish Tribe supported these sales. (

SO₂. Ferndale's Intalco aluminum smelter continues to exceed safe emission levels of sulfur dioxide and will need to make significant modification to produce permanent and enforceable reductions to SO₂ emissions, according to the Dept. of Ecology. ([CDN/paywall](#))

Farmland. The Skagit Farmland Legacy program has added another 57 acres to permanent protection with purchase for \$110,000 of land between La Conner and Mount Vernon. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

News union. *Everett Herald* newsroom employees voted 19-0 to form a union and to bargain collectively on

wages, benefits and working conditions at the 121-year-old newspaper. ([Everett Herald](#))

Commentary

Democracy's future. Pulitzer Prize winner Hedrick Smith speaks on "What is the outlook for American democracy?" on Sept. 10, 4:30 p.m., Emmanuel Parish Hall, Eastsound. If you can't attend, here's a preview of some of what he'll be talking about: "The media keeps telling us that 70% of Republicans still back the bogus claim that the 2020 election was stolen from Donald Trump. But for this November, keep your eye on the 20 to 30% of Republicans who reject the Big Lie. They're likely to cast the deciding votes in key elections. What makes these Liz Cheney Republicans so pivotal this fall is that 2022 is not a normal midterm election..." [Read more here.](#)

Community

Commons. The city of Mount Vernon will undertake its largest building project to construct a downtown Library Commons which will combine a new library, community center and three-story parking garage in a single modern facility. ([Skaqit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

Airport. The state Transportation Department is analyzing future locations for airports and, among the 10 being studied are one located just east of La Conner and one just south of Bow. ([CDN/paywall](#))

NEXUS. If you re-applied for NEXUS card renewal before your card's expiration date, the grace period for expiration has been extended from two years to five years due to the backlog in processing. ([The Northern Light](#))

Tiny homes. Unity Village, a tiny home settlement housed at Bellingham's Post Point Wastewater Treatment Plant site for the last three years, will have to find another location before plant expansion begins. ([KGMI](#))

Arts and Leisure

Film. "Racing Extinction," director Louie Psihoyos film in the Friday Harbor Film Festival follows undercover activists trying to stave off a man-made mass extinction. Stream the film on demand from Sept. 9–21 for \$1.95 [here](#).

Radio hour. Chuckanut Radio Hour features Kira Jane Buxton, author of "Feral Creatures" on Sept. 14, 7 p.m., The Hotel Leo's Crystal Ballroom. [Tickets](#).

Jump in!

Democracy's future. Pulitzer Prize winner Hedrick Smith speaks on "What is the outlook for American democracy?" on Sept. 10, 4:30 p.m., Emmanuel Parish Hall, Eastound. Indoor seating: Masks required. Free tickets at Monkey Puzzle, Darvill's and Office Cupboard.

Two screenings. Whatcom County Library System presents "Revitalizing Cultural Knowledge and Honoring Sacred Waters: The Documented Oral History of Life on the Nooksack River" with Tli'nuk'dzwidzi/Althea Mason, Lummi tribal member and documentary filmmaker. The screenings are 5–8 p.m. Sept. 10 at the Deming Library, [registration required](#) and 5–8 p.m. Sept. 24 at Pioneer Pavilion in Ferndale, [registration required](#).

Book sale. Friends of the Bellingham Public Library will hold a pop-up book sale outside the main doors of the Central library, Sept. 10, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Climate action. The City of Bellingham celebrates ALL IN for Climate Action Week Sept. 19-25 with a series of fun and informative events, activities and presentations hosted by the Bellingham community. [Jump in here](#).

Public safety. The Downtown Bellingham Partnership will hold a town hall meeting addressing public safety, Sept. 20, Rotunda Room of the Old City Hall (Whatcom Museum). [Information](#).

Read and share. Whatcom County Library System's annual Read and Share program of online author events features from Oct. 8 to Nov. 10 Bellingham author Clyde Ford's memoir, "Think Black." Borrow the book or the

eAudiobook from the library and register for the book discussion and writing workshop events. [WCLS Read & Share.](#)

[Scoop it.](#) Take the City of Bellingham's "Scoop the Poop" [pledge](#) and enter your [pooch's pic](#) for a chance to win first, second and third prizes in two categories. [Information.](#)

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, Managing Editor

Salish Current is a nonprofit online newsroom serving Whatcom, San Juan and Skagit Counties. Founded in 2020, *Salish Current* exists to protect and improve democratic governance by reporting and curating local news — freely accessible to all — with independence and strict journalistic integrity.

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