

# Salish Current

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

News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending April 17, 2020:

## [Kids in the time of COVID: Community Voices](#)



*Schools are closed, playgrounds included, as people of all ages practice social distancing and sheltering in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. Above, while the Lowell Elementary School playground was among those unnaturally quiet on a sunny day, teachers up the block were distributing bags of school supplies to parents in cars in front of the south-side Bellingham school. (Amy Nelson photo © 2020)*

Very few kids would trade being able to see and hang out with friends, participate in football and other sports, go to restaurants now and then, and even go to school every day for being confined at home with their families, all day, every day. But that's where they are for now, as the COVID-19 pandemic

has closed schools around Washington state, pushing lessons online and curtailing many activities to help defeat the virus.

Kids are missing their friends and the normal flow of life, but learning along the way. Here's [what a few have to say](#) about the experience:

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News from around the region...

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Coronavirus news coverage in the [Bellingham Herald](#) can be accessed online without a subscription.

### Health & Safety

#### [B.C. implements new COVID-19 border checkpoints](#)

New, secondary checkpoints have been established on the Canadian side of the northern border in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On April 14, Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau said that Canada-U.S. [border restrictions won't be relaxed in the near term](#). (The Northern Light)

#### [Confirmed case on San Juan brings county total to 14](#)

There are five cases of COVID-19 reported on San Juan; eight on Orcas; and one on Lopez. A total of 459 tests have been performed as of April 16. (San Juan Journal)

#### [Northwest Clean Air Agency Asks for Voluntary Curtailment on Woodstove and Outdoor Burning During COVID-19 Crisis](#) (Whatcom Talk)

#### [Coronavirus flight: As the affluent head to Washington vacation homes, some year-rounders worry](#)

Even if very few own a massive yacht, many more can take refuge in the family vacation home, typically located in a beautiful and less-populated area — and far from the coronavirus hot spots. (Seattle Times)

#### [Dog owners: your help needed for survey](#)

Whatcom County and Whatcom Conservation District ask dog owners to fill out a [survey](#) to help to better understand dog poop pick-up habits. (KGMI)

## Education

### [Western plans for fall quarter return to campus](#)

The plan to open the campus in the fall is based on the assumption that the coronavirus trends will have peaked and people will continue social distancing and follow public health directives. (Western Front)

### [Students and professors work to make online classes comparable to previous lab and field-experience classes](#)

Students and professors attempt to adapt to an online academic world without lab and field-experience classes. (Western Front)

## Government

### [City event permits canceled through August due to COVID-19](#)

Permits were cancelled by the city of Ferndale for the Whatcom County Old Settlers Picnic events, the Ferndale Street Festival and city-organized summer activities, along with all other large gatherings and events and those scheduled at Pioneer Pavilion Community Center. (My Ferndale News)

### [State Ferries further extends winter schedule](#)

State Ferries will remain on its winter sailing schedule through June 20 because of a decrease in demand for service. (Skagit Valley Herald) [Ridership is at 1950s-era lows](#) Washington State Ferries relies heavily on fares to run. (Kitsap Sun)

### [Anacortes council approves \\$11.5M contract for second pipeline, well at water plant](#)

The Anacortes City Council awarded an \$11.5 million contract Monday for construction of a second pipeline between the intake pump station and the water treatment plant on the Skagit River, as well as a second storage tank for treated water. (Anacortes American)

### [Inslee signs bill to strengthen derelict vessel prevention program](#)

A bill sponsored by Sen. Liz Lovelett (D-Anacortes) to increase investments in

the Derelict Vessel Removal Program was signed by Gov. Jay Inslee this week.  
(San Juan Islander)

## Nature

[50 years ago, the global Earth Day movement was born — and so was WWU's Huxley College, both shaping national environmental conversation](#)

Given the looming threat of previously unimagined environmental peril, do five decades of recycling, emissions testing, composting, preserving wetlands and buying local now qualify as deckchair-rearranging of Titanic proportions?  
(Seattle Times)

## [A Dam Success](#)

If all goes to plan, there will be chinook spawning on a stretch of the Nooksack River that has not seen salmon return to spawn in almost 60 years. (The Planet Magazine)

[Do-it-yourself traps will aid in the hunt for bee-killing hornets spotted in Blaine](#)

The Department of Agriculture asks volunteers to build and install traps in Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Clallam counties. (My Ferndale News)

[Expanding Canada's Biggest Port Will Be a Blow to Wildlife](#)

A new environmental assessment raises plenty of concerns about the proposed expansion of Vancouver's Roberts Bank shipping terminal. (Hakai Magazine)

## Business

[Dairy industry seeks COVID disaster relief](#)

Dairy farming has been hard hit by the shutdown of restaurants and schools.  
(Lynden Tribune)

[Lynden, construction industry chafes against Inslee's coronavirus restrictions](#)

Lynden City Administrator Mike Martin released a letter encouraging the building community "to continue its work wherever it can be done prudently and safely." (Bellingham Herald)

[COVID-19 having big impact on Samish Bay shellfish growers](#)

Both Taylor Shellfish — a company that operates a farm in Samish Bay and others in the state — and Skagit County's Blau Oyster Co. are feeling the impact. (Skagit Valley Herald)

[In Mount Vernon, Paccar develops automated trucks that could revolutionize long-haul industry](#)

Trucks now drive themselves. (Seattle Times)

[CBP using new vehicle X-ray machine at Peace Arch border crossing](#)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has been using a vehicle X-ray machine at the Peace Arch border crossing since October. (The Northern Light)

[Whatcom-B.C. border traffic will remain slow with Canadian coronavirus quarantines](#)

During the first two weeks of April, the two Blaine crossings saw just over 2,000 passenger vehicle entries into the U.S.; typically there are 155,000-160,000 passenger vehicles during this same time frame. (Bellingham Herald)

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Mike Sato.*

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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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