

Salish Current

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

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

News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending June 12, 2020:

[Government for the people: solidarity rally, Cornwall landfill, Cherry Point occupy local officials](#)



Estimates for attendance at the Peaceful Solidarity Rally in Bellingham on June 6 ranged from 5,000 to 7,000. City of Bellingham officials at the council's June 6 meeting acknowledged the work of organizers and thanked attendees who came to listen, learn and show support. (Amy Nelson photo © 2020)

By Mike Sato

City officials praised organizers and participants of Bellingham's Peaceful Solidarity Rally on June 6 at Maritime Heritage Park. Police chief David Doll told the council that the department is reviewing its use of force policy, civilian oversight, and issues related to armed civilians in downtown. ([Read more](#))

News from around the region:

Health & Safety

Familias Unidas por la Justicia, a state farmworkers union, filed suit against the state to strike down emergency rules on temporary farmworker housing as inadequate and to order the state to provide rules that give workers more protection from COVID-19. ([Tacoma News Tribune](#))

Canada and the U.S. are nearing agreement on extending the border closing to all non-essential traffic beyond June 21. ([CBC](#))

Education

Washington's Superintendent of Public Instruction expects schools to be open for face-to-face sessions in the fall but details are left to individual districts to follow [guidelines](#). ([Seattle Times](#))

Skagit Valley College is looking to trim about \$4.8 million from its budget in the face of expected state revenue shortfalls due to the coronavirus pandemic. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

The Whatcom County Library System begins its safe, phased return by processing the return of 111,630 books and other library materials and distributing 3,886 on-hold items to patrons. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))

Government

The presence of armed members of the 3% militia group upset people in downtown Bellingham and angered city council members who were told by the city's police chief that no laws were broken and the militia group agreed not to display weapons in the future. ([Bellingham Herald](#))

Court-ordered fines and fees have been reduced and outstanding fines and fees can be negotiated depending on an individual's financial status, according to the San Juan County District Court and Superior Court. ([Islands Weekly](#))

Nature

The Whatcom Land Trust and the state Department of Ecology will use a \$915,000 federal grant to help buy and protect 54.7 acres of coastal wetlands near the mouth of California Creek, more than doubling the amount of land currently protected at the south end of Drayton Harbor. ([The Northern Light](#))

The Skagit River sockeye fishery will close next Tuesday until July 15 due to low projected returns. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

An Asian giant hornet was found in Bellingham last weekend, the second confirmed sighting this year. ([My Ferndale News](#))

Commentary

In "It's long past time the two Americas come together." Donnell Tanskley, Blaine chief of police, tells how his encounter as a young black man with white police officers inspired him to become a police officer. ([The Northern Light](#))

Whatcom County Sheriff Bill Elfo speaks out on local law enforcement: "It is hoped that the horrific crime committed by an officer in another state and the apparent criminal acquiescence by others are not attributed to our local officers who do not tolerate brutality or other egregious actions." ([The Northern light](#))

Business

Cascade Mall to close at end of June ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

ReUse Works closed Bellingham-based Appliance Depot which began in 2005 to become a self-sustaining, job-training business that salvages, refurbishes, and sells used appliances. ([Whatcom Talk](#))

Washington State Ferries begin taking vehicle reservations June 12 for travel on the Anacortes/San Juan Islands route between June 21 and September 26. ([San Juan Update](#))

Community

Sunday's Solidarity rally in Bellingham drew between 5,000 and 7,000 protesters against police violence and racial injustice. ([Bellingham Herald](#))

Anacortes protest in support of Black Lives Matter drew several hundred protesters. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

UW Medicine Orcas Island Clinic, one of two current health care providers on Orcas Island, will not respond to a proposal issued by the Orcas Island Health Care District to fund a consolidated clinic that brings all of the Orcas providers together. ([Islands Sounder](#))

Point Roberts resident John Beals has started a petition signed by nearly 2,000 people asking for easing border restrictions to allow essential travel for US residents to travel from Point Roberts to the Peace Arch border and back without stopping. ([Vancouver Sun](#))

Anacortes Public Library head librarian Ruth Barefoot has resigned last week and has been replaced by Jeff Vogel who will serve as interim director. ([Anacortes American/paywall](#))

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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 strengthen democratic governance by reporting and curating local news with independence and strict journalistic integrity.

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