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**News from the *Salish Current* for the week ending Nov. 13, 2020:**

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## [Possible hospice sale sparks concerns in San Juans about changes in end-of-life care](#)



Hospice of the Northwest has a building in Mount Vernon (above), but staff provide hospice care at patients' homes. Staff previously offered bereavement counseling at the building, but, due to COVID-19, counseling is now done online. Island residents are raising questions about ramifications of a possible sale of the nonprofit to a for-profit firm. (Contributed Photo / Hospice of the Northwest)

By Hayley Day — A possible sale of the regional nonprofit Hospice of the Northwest to a national for-profit has some providers and community members concerned about the potential for changes in services to islanders at a "precious, tender time." [\(Read more here.\)](#)

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## [Much more than a marina: Port of Bellingham drives economic recovery and growth](#)



Construction is underway in earnest for a mixed-use project expected to be completed in 2022 on Port of Bellingham property on the downtown Bellingham waterfront. In the background, the renovated Granary Building seen through the art-covered fence near Waypoint Park, is already occupied by business tenants. (Kimberly Cauvel photo © 2020)

*By Kimberly Cauvel* — When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, Michael Shepard’s routine changed. He began teaching his Western Washington University classes in video conferences and coaching his two young children through their own version of online school. His responsibilities as president of the Port of Bellingham Board of Commissioners changed, too, to focus on keeping local businesses afloat through the economic downturn. ([Read more here.](#))

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## [Nooksack water rights adjudication is an existential threat to farming’s future / Community Voices](#)



The Nooksack River runs through farmland, towns and forests, providing water for many uses along the way. With multiple interests involved, some are calling for water rights adjudication, while others — including a Community Voice commentator — see a better result in resolving the issue outside of the courts. (Photo by [Kevin martinez13](#), [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons)

*By Henry Bierlink* — My friend Eric Hirst expressed his [opinion](#) that a water rights adjudication would be a step forward for our community as it would “resolve” our long-standing squabbles over water rights and set us on a path for improved fish habitat and clear water allocation. His case is far from compelling to those who are most affected by state water law policies. ([Read more here.](#))

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## Letters to the Editor:

- Thoughts on the past, present and future of domestic aluminum production
- Lack of mandated authority hinders water allocation process

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

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## **News from around the region:**

### Election

- Native American Raquel Montoya-Lewis, who was an associate professor at Western Washington University, won her seat on the Washington Supreme Court by 20 percentage points. ([Crosscut](#))
- Whatcom County has a growing Democratic majority but election results from local precincts show that Blaine, Birch Bay and Custer continues to trend red, as it did in 2016. ([The Northern Light](#))
- State senator Doug Ericksen (R-Ferndale) will introduce legislation to require the state to return to in-person voting in order to "restore public trust" in the voting system. ([KGMI](#))
- Local election results Nov. 13 as of 4:30 p.m. showed only the following significant changes:
- Skagit County Commissioner District 1: Mark Lundsten 46.65%, Ron Wessen 53.14%
- Skagit County Superior Court Position 3: Tom Seguire 49.63% Elizabeth Yost Neidzwski 49.99%
- 3,400 ballots remaining to be counted; next count Nov. 16, 5 p.m.

### Health & Safety

- The governors of Washington, Oregon and California today asked travelers to self-quarantine for 14 days after arriving from another state or country on nonessential travel. ([Seattle Times](#))
- The brutal attack on Joel Linares Salgado in Burlington in March and the refusal of Skagit County prosecutor Rich Weyrich to prosecute it as a hate crime has sparked local protests and calls for state action. ([Crosscut](#))

### Education

- Despite community dissent the Bellingham Police Department will assign a district resource officer to the Bellingham School District's 23 campuses. ([Western Front](#))

## **Government**

### **City of Lynden**

- The Lynden City Council will take public comment at its Nov. 16 meeting on a 2021 preliminary budget of \$78.5 million, which includes \$14.4 million to operate city departments. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))

### **City of Bellingham**

- The Bellingham City Council will hold a second public hearing Nov. 23 on the [2021-2022 preliminary budget](#). Special budget meetings can be viewed here [online](#).
- Here are the [proceedings](#) of the Nov. 9 meeting of the council:
- The Council held its first public hearing on its preliminary 2021-2022 budget and took oral comments as well as [written comments](#).
- The Council by a vote of 7-0 adopted an ordinance extending a moratorium for six months on development actions and permits relating to redevelopment of existing mobile home or manufactures home parks. ([22025](#))

### **Whatcom County**

- The Whatcom County Council met on Nov. 10. Here's their [agenda](#) and a link to the [recording](#) of the meeting.
- The council will hold a public hearing on the [county executive's 2021 budget](#) on Nov. 24 at 6 p.m.

### **Port of Bellingham**

- The Port's 2021 Preliminary Strategic Budget is available electronically here. The Port will have presentations and hold public hearings on the budget and the proposed 2021 property tax levy on Nov. 17 at 4 p.m. at Harbor Center Room and via Zoom. Written comments will be accepted through 5 p.m. Nov. 16. The Port is scheduled to formally adopt the budget on Nov. 17 at 4 p.m.

## **Commentary**

- Rich Appel, Whatcom dairy farmer and president of Whatcom Family Farmers, writes that the state should step back and allow partnerships, not courts, resolve Nooksack water issues. ([Bellingham Herald](#))

## **Nature**

- An Asian giant hornet has been found near Langley, B.C., about five kilometres away from where another so-called murder hornet was discovered last week. ([Canadian Press](#))

- Washington Department of Agriculture reported that the murder hornet nest found and destroyed in Whatcom County contained 500 five specimens of which 200 were queens, ([Associated Press](#))
- Washington scientists finished the first full season of European green crab trapping, leaving mid-October after trapping 253 of the invasive crab in Drayton Harbor. ([Northern Light](#))
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has approved a request from the U.S. Navy to continue military exercises in Puget Sound and coastal Washington waters that could potentially harm the endangered Southern Resident orca population. ([Tacoma News Tribune](#))
- The state Department of Natural Resources has identified the Skagit River watershed as an important area in its 2020 Forest Action Plan. ([Skagit Valley Herald/paywall](#))

### **Business**

- Lynden Christian Recycling Center fundraising will close down for good Dec. 1 due to lower prices for cardboard and COVID complications. ([Lynden Tribune/paywall](#))

### **Community**

- Dave Quall of Mount Vernon, longtime 40th legislative district representative, has died at age 84. ([Skagit Valley Herald/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 protect and improve democratic governance by reporting and curating local news with independence and strict journalistic integrity.*

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