



Chief Leshi School's "Spirit of the Wolf" canoe arriving Jackson Beach, David Correy Photo

PORT REPORT - Newsletter from the Port of Friday Harbor

Issue 3 | Summer 2023

In this, our third Port Report newsletter, we'll touch on a few completed construction projects, introduce you to a staff member who makes us proud of our parks and gardens, tell you the tale of Oystertale an enticing new waterfront restaurant, share a bit about the Native Canoe Journey, give you a glimpse of an intriguing new Island lodging option at the airport, tell you how we are addressing sea level rise and so much more...

Gathering of the Eagles Canoe Journey

The Port of Friday Harbor was honored to have the San Juan Island landing of the 3rd Annual Esqalphetse Kwelengsen 'Gathering of the Eagles' at Jackson Beach. Phreddie Lane of the Lummi Nation describes the event as "a mini-canoe journey, potlatch and strategy session with the Alliance of Earth, Sky & Water Protectors." The landing, May 22 -23, included three canoes and participants from several First Nations—with paddlers coming from as far away as Maui.

The Port hopes this is the first in a long tradition of landings here. Thanks to the canoe families, paddlers, local volunteers and sponsors—the Salish Sea Voyaging Society, Matt Wickey, Stephanie Buffum, and Friends of the San Juans—it was a lovely event.



*Faun Sharp, Quinault, President American Indian Congress
Photo Courtesy Gathering of Eagles 2023*

Staff Spotlight: Winter's Gardens

An Interview with Port Landscaper Winter Zigzagger



The Port's colorful parks and gardens showcase Winter's passion for his work and make a vibrant first impression to Island visitors. You'll often see Winter dressed in his signature black work clothes filling a port wheelbarrow, watering a thirsty

garden, or driving the Port's small yellow and white electric truck.

Over 300 plants, with an emphasis on native and drought-resistant species, are grown by Winter each year. Many go into the over 60 hearty hanging baskets he assembles.

Q: How did you get started in landscaping?

As long as I can remember, I've enjoyed plants—from family gardens to the natural island landscapes that surround us on the Island.

Q: Where did you grow up?

Friday Harbor, my island roots run deep. I am from a multi-generational island family. Fun Fact: my grandparents, Arvel and Helga Settles and family, lived in one of the two lighthouse keeper's houses at Lime Kiln. He tended the lighthouse 1935-1942.

Q: What do you like best about island living?

I really appreciate the isolation the island provides. Most challenging about Island living? July—August

Q: Best part of working at the Port?

Meeting the occasional Dachshund.

Most challenging?

Picking up dog poo. Seriously, we have Mutt Mitt dispensers and trash cans everywhere so there is no excuse for port staff to play dog valet.

Q: What accomplishment are most proud of?

Ivy eradication! At one point, Fairweather Waterfront Park was referred to as "The Park of Darkness." Now, with the ivy gone, it is a more open, inviting space. I'm also pleased with the way the water feature I rebuilt turned out and the hellebore garden—a special shade garden dedicated to those who tough it out year-round in the islands—these individuals are rewarded with the hellebore's mid-winter flowers.

Q: What made you want to work at the Port?

I liked the idea of landscaping in the public realm. My aim is to bring nature closer to the human world to balance the constant development and changes brought on by people.

The entire Port team appreciates Winter's work ethic and ability to make their environment a more relaxing and inspiring place to work.



Winter at work in the Port's new 1,500 square foot commercial greenhouse, located on Shelter Drive at the airport. A temperature-activated cooling fan system keeps it from overheating. Plants and flowers cultivated here go into hanging baskets and gardens throughout the Port. The Port hopes to provide hanging baskets to the Town of Friday Harbor and others in the future.

From the Executive Director Can We Rise with the Tide?

New King Tide Record

Todd Nicholson



This past winter, on December 27, 2022, the Port experienced the highest tide level since record-keeping began in 1934. This event gave us a preview of the impacts we will continue to see with rising sea levels.

Rising temperatures are contributing to sea-level rise more rapidly than scientists had predicted—by more than 3 inches in the last 20 years and levels are expected to rise by about a foot along the U.S. coast by 2050.

Rising sea levels mean increased maintenance, flood repair and insurance costs in addition to significant facility upgrades such as flexible floating dock systems at marine facilities throughout the Salish Sea.

The good news is that most Port of Friday Harbor properties have relatively steep waterfront banks. This results in far fewer upland impacts than many of our coastal neighbors will experience. Even with our fortunate topography, the extreme high tide caused big impacts to all three marinas and Jackson Beach.

The primary impacts at the Jensen Boatyard and the Shipyard Cove uplands were the inundation of boat storage, parking, and roadway areas. Currently planned projects at these facilities will lift yard and road surfaces addressing sea level rise concerns for 30 – 50 years.

The impacts on the Port's three marinas were more significant. The problem areas were primarily related to older pilings without enough height and older fixed

piers that are too low in elevation. In the near term, we are adding pile extension caps, modifying gangways to allow dock float to rise above the pier elevations, and anchoring the pier framework to the pilings.

In the longer term, all the older timber piling must be replaced with taller steel piling, and the Shipyard Cove and Jensen Marina piers must be rebuilt at a higher elevation. The Jensen Marina pier, which saw the greatest storm damage, will be rebuilt as part of the Jensen Boatyard environmental cleanup. At the main marina, we will likely not require any special actions beyond designing higher structures as they need replacement due to age.

Jackson Beach is the Port's most at risk-facility in the very long term. Jackson Beach is a low-lying sand spit

and is subject to significant winter storms. There are few good options for protecting this spit against storms on top of future sea level rise.

Responding to the challenge of sea level rise is neither an easy nor inexpensive task. It is, however, an achievable task in the vast majority of Port facilities. The

Port has been proactively incorporating sea level rise planning and mitigations into projects for many years. This planning, along with capable Port crews addressing short-term fixes, will allow us to successfully navigate this sea level rise challenge.

Keeping our communities above water and our waterfronts protected is a growing issue as the effects of global climate change become more challenging. Addressing it will require coordination from all of us—government, industry, property owners, and the general public. We can all do our part today by cutting our own carbon emissions and encouraging local utilities and public entities to do the same.



Water pushed past the driftwood line and inundated Jackson Beach nearly reaching the road.

(Almost) Completed for Summer...

Jackson Beach Restrooms



Jackson Beach receives new solar-powered and corrosion resistant restrooms. By the time this newsletter reaches you, paving of the boat ramp apron, parking areas, and ADA ramp to the restrooms should be completed.

Island Oil Spill Association Building (IOSA) Nears Exterior Completion at Airport



The new Island Oil Spill Association (IOSA) headquarters building can be seen under construction near the South end of the airport. This building will house the IOSA offices, maintenance facility, and training center. Full funding for this important community facility is being provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The acquisition of funding was a cooperative effort between IOSA and Port leadership.

Shipyard Cove Paving Project Complete



Parking has always been at a premium at Shipyard Cove in summer and the access road to the parking lot has been a bit hair-raising to navigate. Both have recently been chip-sealed. In addition to being much nicer for the facility users, the road shoulders were widened for truck traffic, and additional parking was added.

Tiny Suites Make Debut at Airport



Wondering what's happening on Weber Way? Peter Schmidt Construction has moved 4 Tiny Suite vacation rentals (constructed on the Island) to a parcel at the airport, just in time for summer. Reservations will be available in July. Contact: (360) 472-0537

New Business Highlight

On the wall of Oystertale restaurant, see if you can spot the one sardine swimming in the opposite direction from the rest of the school of fish. Owners, Ashley and Robbie Rech tell us, “This has been a lifelong motto: ‘Be yourself and don’t conform to the patterns of society around you. That means being brave enough to find yourself swimming against the current.’”



While many restaurants in Friday Harbor have closed, the Rechs had the vision to open Oystertale a few months ago. It is located in the Port’s Spring Street Landing Building, 10 Front Street, Suite 101.

The Rechs inspiration to create Oystertale was fueled by Ashley growing up in an entrepreneurial family in a small town. “Our family business served as a gathering place for the community. As a child, I observed the joy a business like this could provide.

Fast forward to today, Oystertale was inspired by our location on San Juan Island, in the middle of some of the best oyster farms in the world,” Ashley relates.

Oystertale’s extensive wine list includes the opportunity to pick wines by the glass to make a flight. And, the weekend wine & social club gets you access to great wine at a discount, and 20% off all wine at Oystertale. Beers from San Juan Brewery and Island Hoppin’ Brewery on Orcas, are also served.



Find fun twists on classic cocktails like the Salish Sea Martini with caviar and pickled sea bean garnish or their spin on a Dark ‘n Stormy with Orcas Island’s Girl Meets Dirt Shiro plum bitters.

Oystertale menu items are designed to give patrons an authentic island culinary

experience showcasing fresh

local items like spot prawns straight off the dock, local lamb lollies, and fresh oysters, of course. Other creative expressions of oyster bar classics include ‘beet’ tartare for veggie lovers, savoury waffles topped with Dungeness crab, and smoked salmon chowder.



Ashley studied photo/journalism & international relations at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism. And, a chunk of her education was in the Middle East at the University of Jordan, as well as completing a Semester at Sea, where she circumnavigated the globe by ship. Before moving to the Island, she and Robbie founded a natural foods company called Hope Foods, most well known for their Spicy Avocado and Thai Coconut Curry Hummus available at Costco.

Robbie also helped found Peak 7 Adventures to provide opportunities for underserved individuals to experience nature’s ability to heal and rejuvenate.



Ashley tells us, “I’ve always been passionate about the power of story and place. Much like a wine’s terroir, each oyster’s flavor tells a story of where it was nurtured. Hence the name Oystertale—The Tale of an Oyster.”

SUMMER HOURS TUESDAY — SATURDAY 4-10 PM
Reservations Recommended www.Oystertale.com
Email: info@oystertale.com



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Carleton Appointed as Interim Commissioner to Serve Until November

At the June 14th meeting of the Port Commission, Steven Carleton was selected to serve as temporary District 3

Commissioner until the November general election. Carlton has an impressive resumé including extensive board and financial experience. Commission and staff are pleased to welcome him and look forward to benefiting from his experience.

Port Commission Elections

Don't miss the LWV Forum for Port Primary Election Candidates, July 13, 6 PM, the SJI Grange.

Everyone in the Port of Friday Harbor district, which includes the entire island, gets to vote in the upcoming elections (primary and general) regardless of where they live.

The general election for the vacant District 3 position has three candidates running: Randy Cowley, Rich Goodhart and Greg Hertel. There will be a primary election August 1 to determine the two candidates who will go on to run in the general election. Whoever is elected will serve out the remaining four years of the unexpired District 3 term. Commissioner terms are normally six years.

Commissioner Comments

Gib Black, Commissioner District 1



Greetings from the Commissioners table. I wanted to let folks know that important long-term planning is underway for the Jensen/Shipyard Cove area, while at the same time we continue to work towards an environmental cleanup of the historic shipyard. Maintaining a vibrant working waterfront is a recognized priority of your commissioners, and figuring out how to do that while also fulfilling our commitment to execute the remediation is going to be challenging. This is where long-term planning comes into play: if we understand where the Jensen/Shipyard Cove area is headed, we can make better plans and decisions on how to meet our twin commitments. To this end the Port assembled a talented crew of volunteers, called a Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), to help the Staff and Port Commissioners think through the future of the area. The CAC has met several times, its meetings are open to the public and we would appreciate your input. The CAC will make its recommendation to the Port Commission in the fall. Consider taking an evening stroll around the shipyard and docks—it's a favorite place for Jen, Mochi and me to walk—to see firsthand all that goes on there. From boat repair to dock building and a canoe club, there is lots to appreciate. At the very least, see the fantastic job your talented Port staff has done in rebuilding after the Valentine's Day storm.

Doing Business with the Port

How do I:

Pay a bill? Call the Marina Office: (360) 378-2688, pay online or through autopay, or contactus@portfridayharbor.org

Get a vessel hauled out? Call Jensen Shipyard: 360-378-4072

Sign up for permanent boat moorage?

Call the Marina Office: (360) 378-2688, sign up online, or contactus@portfridayharbor.org

Sign up for transient boat moorage? Call the Marina Office: (360) 378-2688

Become a business tenant?

Call Todd Nicholson: (360) 378-2688
toddn@portfridayharbor.org

Attend a meeting in person?

Regular meetings are held the second and fourth Wednesday of most months from noon to 2 p.m. at the San Juan Island Yacht Club, 273 Front Street. Check the website for agendas and supporting materials. Each agenda includes links and information on how to attend live meetings via ZOOM. Meeting recordings are available by request.

Comment on or participate in a discussion of the Port Commission remotely?

Email questions or comments 48 hours in advance of Port Commission meeting to Todd Nicholson: toddn@portfridayharbor.org. You may listen but not comment in on ZOOM. ZOOM links are included with agendas posted on the Port website www.portfridayharbor.org