

ERIK PETERSON/The Western Front

The Factory was closed Tuesday while friends celebrated the life of owner Reece Degolier, who was found dead at the popular hangout Saturday evening.

Friends honor late bar owner

By ERIK PETERSON
The Western Front

At the 3B Tavern Tuesday night, teary eyes, warm embraces and an outpouring of support displayed the celebration of Reece Degolier's life.

Degolier, 30, owned The Factory, a popular Bellingham bar and music venue. An employee found his body at the bar Saturday evening when he opened The Factory. Bellingham Police Lt. Craig Ambrose said the cause of death was undetermined until the medical examiner's office releases a toxicology report, which

could take weeks. Degolier is survived by his mother, Carla Brigmantas, and a sister, Tanya Degolier, both residents of Whatcom County.

Close friends, co-workers and acquaintances gathered at the 3B in an effort to raise funds for Degolier's funeral.

Two of Degolier's favorite bands, The All Nighters and The No-Fi Soul Rebellion, played for the memorial. Degolier booked both bands regularly at The Factory.

Logan McQuaig and Joe Myrene, both close friends of Degolier, paid fond tribute

to their friend. Myrene, The Factory's booking agent, quoted a passage from a letter Degolier's mother gave to him. She was unable to attend.

"I can't believe there are still people in this world who care about each other so much," she wrote.

Before the live music, standing shoulder to shoulder in a packed 3B, the crowd celebrated Degolier's life. The tavern's door-man, Rich Wilson, said Degolier was the type of person who was always having

see MEMORIAL, page 4

Programs help military families

Editors Note: This is the second story in a series about the effects of the war in Iraq on Bellingham and Whatcom County.

By STEFANI HARREY
The Western Front

Groups such as the American Red Cross and Western's Veterans Outreach Center are helping families and friends of soldiers in battle deal with the pain they might feel that goes along with having a loved one leave for service.

Cecilia Stevens, Armed Forces Emergency Services coordinator for the American Red Cross, said learning how to deal with all the issues that can arise when a loved one leaves for military service is vital for a soldier's friends and family.

Since this is likely the first war many students at Western have had to experience, the effects are widespread, Stevens said.

"Many young people now have not had any kind of exposure to war like this before," Stevens said. "Learning the effects and ways to adjust are really important."

The support group run by the American Red Cross meets from 10 a.m. to noon Monday mornings at the Mount Baker chapter of the Red Cross on King Street in Bellingham. Stevens oversees the meetings and organizes speakers, counselors and other activities for the sessions.

Stevens said if she received enough feedback from Western students, she would like to run a support group on campus as well. She said she has been communicating with the outreach center on campus

see WAR, page 4

County Council halts building on Lake Whatcom

By MICHELLE ACOSTA
The Western Front

The Whatcom County Council voted 6-1 to pass an ordinance to stop issuing any new building permits or subdivision applications in the Lake Whatcom watershed Wednesday.

The moratorium goes into effect 10 days after County Executive Pete Kremen signs it. The moratorium will leave development at a standstill in the Lake Whatcom watershed and will affect many property owners and builders who planned to construct homes. Councilman Dan McShane said he wants to support quick action to improve the water quality of the lake.

"We need to move forward with this quickly because things aren't looking too good for the lake," McShane said.

McShane proposed an emergency moratorium two

weeks ago to allow the council more time to find solutions to the pollution in Lake Whatcom.

Citizens present at the meeting stood divided, arguing their positions on the moratorium. Councilwomen Laurie Caskey-Schreiber said the list of people scheduled to speak during the meeting was eight pages long.

McShane said the moratorium will not affect currently submitted building applications or people who already scheduled appointments to turn one in. Landowners with five or more acres also are exempt. He said the moratorium is set to last until May 1, but it can be renewed by the council.

During the public hearing, several citizens opposing the moratorium wanted other solutions to fix pollution in the lake, but were unable to present any suggestions.

Councilman Sam Crawford was the only council member to vote

against the moratorium.

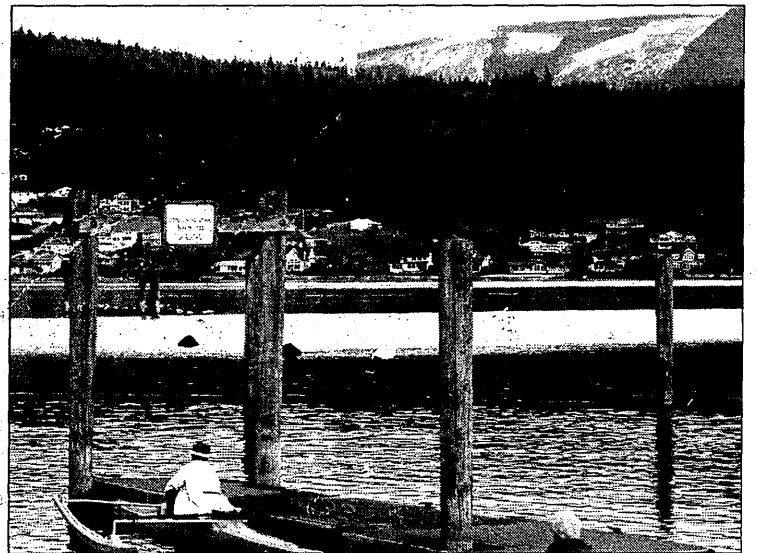
McShane and councilwoman Barbara Brenner openly expressed that the public mistrusted the council's motives.

"Our trust seems to be tested as council members," McShane said. "But every member has talked about doing things to protect the lake for quite some time."

Khalid Galant, public information officer of the Washington State Department of Ecology, said the department is responsible for maintaining the water quality of Lake Whatcom.

"The water is polluted and needs to be cleaned," Galant said. "That's our biggest concern, and it's up to the county on how they want to take care of the issue."

Galant said the Department of Ecology conducted a scientific water quality study in November 2004. The study found a high consumption of phosphorous in the lake, causing algae to grow and



AMANDA WOOLLEY/The Western Front

A couple launches a boat on Lake Whatcom on Thursday. Owners of property in the watershed cannot develop their land until at least May 1.

break down oxygen and nutrients in the water. He said the algae takes oxygen and nutrients out of the water, decreasing the oxygen level that fish need to grow.

"The phosphorous disturbs the balance of fish and plant life, but it doesn't poison them," Galant

see LAKE, page 4

ELECTRONIC VALENTINES

U.S.E. will rock out at Valentine's Day show.

ACCENT, PAGE 5



DARK DIAMONDS

Engraved dog tags are a more ethical Valentine's Day gift.

OPINIONS, PAGE 10

THE BIG GAME

The Viking men prepare to take on Seattle Pacific.

SPORTS, PAGE 8



COPS BOX

University Police

Feb. 9, 1 a.m.: UP received a call regarding suspicious activity in the Miller Hall basement computer labs. The caller said people were drinking in the lab.

Feb. 9, 12:32 a.m.: UP responded to a call for medical aid in Ridgeway Sigma. Officers received a report that a woman fell down the stairs and was unconscious, but they found no one in the area.

Feb. 8, 10:40 a.m.: UP received a noise complaint about loud disturbances in Red Square. Participants were engaging several activities with unauthorized sound. Those involved agreed to get proper approval for further activities.

Bellingham Police

Feb. 10, 3:59 p.m.: Officers responded to a report of electronic equipment stolen from a car on the 3100 block of Adams Avenue.

Feb. 9, 3:33 p.m.: Officers discovered a 14-year-old girl stumbling down the road on the 500 block of East Magnolia Street. They found that the girl was intoxicated, and a breathalyzer measured her blood alcohol level at .29. The girl was transported home and released to her mother. Officers recommended she be taken to the hospital.

Feb. 9, 12:26 p.m.: Officers received a report that a child was abused on the 2100 block of Humboldt Street. A joint investigation between Child Protection Services and the police department is taking place.

Feb. 9, 11:30 a.m.: Officers responded to the 4400 block of Meridian Street when an unknown woman tried to use a credit card after a fraud alert was placed on it.

Compiled by Courtney Walker

Viking
Voices

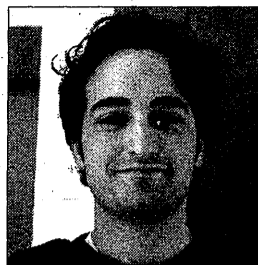
What are you doing for Valentine's Day?

Compiled by Amanda Raphael



Jessica Michelman
Sophomore, communication

I typically like to ignore Valentine's Day. There has always been a tragedy on Valentine's Day, so if I ignore it, nothing bad can happen.



Eric Nightingale
Senior, psychology

I'm pining for my girlfriend, who is out of town. But I sent her tulips.



Laura Hoagland
Freshman, special education

I'm having a 'Sex and the City' marathon.

AP Wire

news briefs

STATE NEWS

'Three strikes' sentences could shorten to 15 years

Washington lawmakers are considering a bill that would reduce the life terms for some "three strikes" offenders.

Some prisoners could ask for release after 15 years. Sponsors said older inmates are no longer a serious risk, and the state cannot afford the prison costs.

If the legislation passes, the first six prisoners would be eligible for release in 2010.

Man fatally struck by car near Sumner; driver turns himself in

A Bonney Lake mother persuaded her 21-year-old son to turn himself in Wednesday after a hit-and-run accident killed a Sumner man earlier this week.

Pierce County Sheriff's Deputy Ed Troyer said 68-year-old Edward

Wegman was hit at approximately 11:30 p.m. Monday.

Wegman died at Tacoma General Hospital approximately two hours later.

After the mother noticed damage to her son's truck, she confronted him and he admitted to it, Troyer said. The man was booked into the Pierce County Jail on suspicion of leaving the scene of a fatal accident.

NATIONAL NEWS

U.S. military may reduce troops to pre-election levels

Though it's still far from safe for U.S. troops in Iraqi cities, the deputy commander of U.S. Central Command said those troops seem to be the target of insurgent attacks less often.

Lt. Gen. Lance Smith said the number of attacks has now dropped to the levels seen weeks before Iraq's elections. Because of that,

Smith said it is likely the number of U.S. troops in the country will drop back down to pre-election levels — 135,000 — this spring.

Woman surrenders to arrest warrant for scalping

A member of a punk clique surrendered Wednesday for scalping another woman, apparently as punishment for her disrespectful behavior toward women.

Marianne Dahle, 26, surrendered at the Ada County Jail on a felony arrest warrant for aggravated battery. If convicted, she could be sentenced to 14 years in prison.

The attack occurred Jan. 18 in the central Idaho town of Kirkham Hot Springs. The victim survived and was hospitalized for two weeks afterward and is recovering at home after undergoing surgery.

In a television interview, the victim said she thought the woman was going to cut her hair.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Militants kill Iraqi journalist working for Arab television

An Iraqi journalist working for an American-backed Arab television channel is one of the latest victims of rebel violence.

Insurgents gunned down the reporter, Abdul Hussein al-Basri, and his son as they left their home in the southern city of Basra. He was a correspondent for Al-Hurra, which the United States launched a year ago as an addition to other Arab channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.

The International Federation of Journalists said 49 reporters have been killed in Iraq the past year.

The U.S. military announced Wednesday the deaths of two more Americans.

Compiled by Greta Smoke
AP Wire courtesy KUGS 89.3-FM



YEEE HAWWW!!! Saddle up with The Western Front.
The Western Front Online
www.westernfrontonline.com

The Western Front is published twice weekly in fall, winter and spring; once a week in summer session. Address: The Western Front, Western Washington University, CF 251, Bellingham, WA 98225. The Western Front is the official newspaper of Western Washington University, published by the Student Publications Council, and is mainly supported by advertising.

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Advertising inquiries should be directed to the business office in CF 230, or by phone to (360) 650-3161.

Members of the Western community are entitled to a single free copy of each issue of The Western Front.

WWU Official Announcements – PLEASE POST

Deadline for announcements in this space is noon Friday for the Tuesday edition and noon Wednesday for the Friday edition, except when otherwise noted. Announcements should be limited to 50 words and be typewritten or legibly printed. Announcements may be sent to FAST@wwu.edu — in the subject line include a one-word topic and clearly note that the item is for Official Announcements. Items also may be sent to "Official Announcements," MS-9117, faxed to X-4343, or brought to Commissary 1131. DO NOT SEND ANNOUNCEMENTS DIRECTLY TO THE WESTERN FRONT. Phoned announcements will not be accepted.

MATH PLACEMENT TEST. The Math Placement Test will be given in OM 120 at 3 p.m. Mondays on Feb. 14, 28; March 7 and 14, and at 9 a.m. Thursdays on Feb. 17, 24; March 3, 10, and 17. Registration is not required. Students must bring picture identification, student number, Social Security number, and a No. 2 pencil. A \$15 fee is payable in exact amount at test time.

THE WINTER CAREER FAIR will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, in the VU Multipurpose Room. Those attending are invited to bring résumés and to dress for success. For more information and a complete listing of participating employers, see "Special Events" at www.careers.wwu.edu or call X/3240.

LOT RESERVATIONS. • Lots 11G and 14G will be reserved at 5 p.m. Feb. 11 for those attending the Paul Roberts piano recital. A shuttle will run from lot 12A. • Lots 11G & 14G will be reserved at 7 a.m. Feb. 12 for those attending the Encounter Youth Conference and at 5 p.m. Feb. 12 for those attending the Black History Month Dinner. • Lot 17G will be reserved at 5 p.m. Feb. 12 for Viking Permit holders attending the basketball game. A shuttle will run from lot 12A. • Lots 11G and 14G will be reserved at 1 p.m. Feb. 13 for those attending the North Sound Youth Symphony concert.

SUMMER QUARTER DEGREE APPLICANTS: All students expecting to graduate at the close of summer quarter must have a degree application on file in the Registrar's Office by Friday, March 11. Applications and instructions are available in OM 230.

THE COMPUTER-BASED MILLER ANALOGIES TEST (MAT) is available by appointment only. Make an appointment in person in OM 120 or by calling X/3080. A \$42 fee is payable at test time. Test takes approximately 1½ hours. Preliminary scores are available immediately; official results are mailed within 15 days.

WEST-E PRAXIS. Washington requires individuals seeking teacher certification and teachers seeking additional endorsements to pass a subject knowledge assessment in the chosen endorsement area beginning Sept. 1. The state has chosen specific Praxis II series tests to meet this requirement. See www.ets.org/praxis/prxwa.html for a description and online registration information. Registration bulletins are also available in MH 216.

REMAINING WEST-E PRAXIS TEST DATES for the academic year are March 5, April 16, and June 11 (June 11 test not available at Western; see the Praxis Web site for location).

WEST-B TEST. Applicants for admission to state-approved educator preparation programs and those from other states applying for a Washington residency teaching certificate must have a minimum passing score on the basic skills assessment test. Residency teaching certificate applicants who have completed an educator preparation program outside Washington and have not passed WEST-B may be granted additional time. See www.west.nesinc.com to register. Test dates: March 12, May 14, July 9.

LOT RESERVATIONS. • Lots 11G and 14G will be reserved at 5 p.m. Feb. 11 for those attending the Paul Roberts piano recital. A shuttle will run from lot 12A. • Lots 11G and 14G will be reserved at 7 a.m. Feb. 12 for those attending the Encounter Youth Conference and at 5 p.m. Feb. 12 for those attending the Black History Month dinner. • Lot 17G will be reserved at 5 p.m. Feb. 12 for Viking Permit Holders attending the basketball game. A shuttle will run from lot 12A. • Lots 11G and 14G will be reserved at 1 p.m. Feb. 13 for those attending the North Sound Youth Symphony concert.

Employers on campus

For complete and updated information, including locations and deadlines, visit www.career.wwu.edu or stop by OM 280.

• **Camp Starlight**, summer camp positions, Feb. 22; • **Camp Vega**, counselors, Web designer, March 10; • **Campaign to Save the Environment**, canvas directors, March 7-10; • **Disney College Program**, various hospitality and entertainment positions, March 8; • **Lutherwood Camp**, summer positions, Feb. 23; • **Newell-Rubbermaid**, sales and marketing representative, Feb. 14.

Morning-after pill available at health center

FDA is deciding whether to make emergency contraception available without prescription

By MOLLY JENSEN
The Western Front

As the Food and Drug Administration continues to debate whether the morning-after pill should be available over the counter, Western students can obtain emergency contraception from the Student Health Center.

The health center offers Plan B — a form of emergency contraception — to students, said Dr. Emily Gibson, the director of the Student Health Center. Plan B is a contraceptive that contains high levels of the hormone progestin and is most effective if taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse, she said.

"We have recently switched to Plan B as other emergency contraception options that contain both estrogen and progestin have become less available and have more side effects," Gibson said.

Cynthia Harris, a health-care consultant at the Washington State Department of Health, said Washington and California are the only states where pharmacists and health-care providers can dispense emergency contraception without a prescription. She said several states, including New York, are attempting to implement similar policies.

Christine Parker, a spokesman for the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, said the application is still pending. She refused to comment further on the issue.

According to the FDA's Web site, Plan B was initially rejected for over-the-counter access because not enough evidence existed on its effect on females younger than 16. The FDA is now considering a proposal to make the pill available to women older than 16 without a prescription.

Harris said that if the FDA rejects Plan B for over-the-counter access, it would not affect Washington's policy. If the FDA approves the medication, emergency contraception could be dispensed without a patient evaluation and would be as readily available as aspirin, she said.

Gibson said the FDA is under considerable pressure to make Plan B an over-the-counter medication. This would make the medication available without any of the screening or counseling pharmacists require before dispensing the pill.

"Over-the-counter availability is not necessary if there is an accessible, safe way to obtain the medication through a medical screening done by a knowledgeable pharmacist or health care provider," Gibson said.

Harris said Washington's policy requires pharmacists to fill out a brief patient history form before dispensing the pill. Without access to the pill through pharmacies and health-care centers such as the Student Health Center, women are in danger of not being able to obtain the pill in a timely manner, she said.

Carol Thomas, the executive director of the Whatcom County Pregnancy Center, said some women have negative reactions to emergency contraception because of the high dose of hormones found in the pills.

"Many people have reactions to birth control pills, and if people are using this over and over again as a failsafe method, it becomes a problem," Thomas said.

Joanna Johnston, an administrator at Planned Parenthood on James Street, said the clinic dispenses emergency contraception on a walk-in basis. She said patients rarely abuse emergency contraception by using it as a regular form of birth control, such as diaphragms and condoms.

Johnston said the inconvenience of obtaining emergency contraception and the high cost of the pill make women more likely to use a regular method of birth control rather than emergency contraception.

The cost of one dose of the morning-after pill is more than one month's cost of regular birth control, she said.

Thomas said more studies on the effects of emergency contraception — especially on young women — are necessary before the FDA can make it easily accessible.

"I absolutely feel that it should not be available over the counter because we are dealing with young women whose reproductive parts are still developing," Thomas said. "If we don't know all the information about its effects, I'd hate to think that we'd be giving them something that could affect their reproductive abilities later in life."

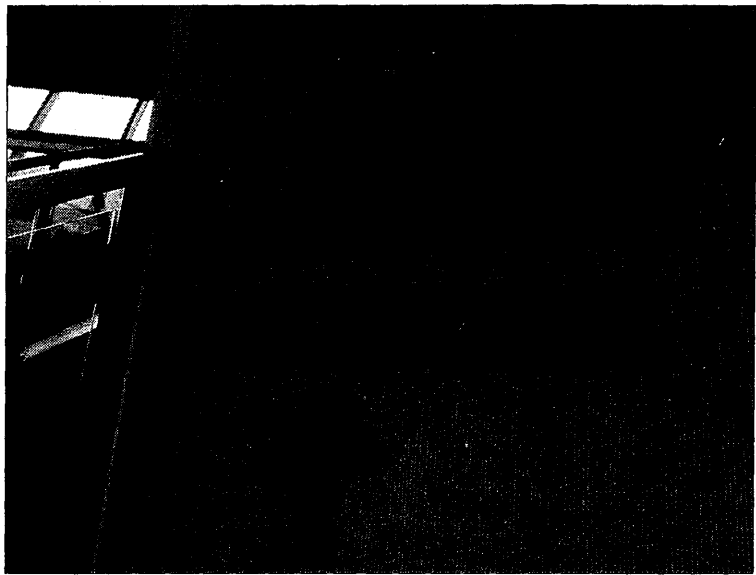
Gibson said the fact that emergency contraception carries high doses is not without problems, and the health center reviews a patient's risks before dispensing the medication.

Gibson said the center offers many types of birth control and has been offering emergency contraception for the past 15 years.

Emergency contraception works by interfering with ovulation, disrupting the transport of sperm in the fallopian tubes and changing the lining of the uterus so fertilized eggs are less likely to implant, she said.

The health center charges \$15 for the pill and screens for whether a woman is already pregnant, Gibson said. Students need to have a consultation with a nurse in the clinic and sign a consent form before receiving the medication.

"Part of the counseling that is done at the time of the prescribing of Plan B is to make sure that a reliable form of contraception is available to the student and her partner," Gibson said.



CHRIS HUBER/The Western Front
Western students can pick up the morning-after pill at the Student Health Center in the Campus Services Building.

The Student Health Center tracks the number of times medication is dispensed to individual students, Gibson said, and some students do visit repeatedly for emergency contraception.

"Anyone who has needed Plan B more than two times is referred to the women's health care providers for a consultation before further dispensing," Gibson said.

Ibti Boulos, a pharmacist at Fred Meyer Pharmacy, said training to dispense emergency contraception consists of a three-hour continuing education session, including a test and a discussion group. In order to distribute emergency contraception, a pharmacy must have a protocol through the Department of Health, she said.

Boulos said a 15-minute counseling session, including a discussion of the risks associated with emergency contraception and how to properly administer the pill, is required before pharmacists can issue the birth control. The cost to obtain the pill through a pharmacy is \$45, she said.

Gibson said timely access to the morning-after pill is important, but the lack of screening and advice when purchasing over-the-counter medication makes the risks of problems higher. The ability to obtain the pill from a licensed pharmacist provides the recipient with counseling.

"We support the current system of pharmacist-dispensing of the medication with appropriate screening so a woman has options when her health-care provider is unavailable," Gibson said.

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War: Groups help families and friends understand and communicate with soldiers after combat

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to coordinate the group.

Students wanting another support option can go through the Veterans Outreach Center on campus, Western junior and outreach center coordinator Kevin Stupfel said. He said that through the outreach center, students can get a little bit of counseling straight from soldiers, and if a student needs more help coping with the situation he or she can visit Dr. James Orr, counseling and clinical psychologist at the Counseling Center on campus.

Among those whom Stevens said she plans to have speak at the meetings are counselors who specialize in post-traumatic stress disorder, parents of soldiers who have already been to war, and others who would be of interest to families in the support group.

Stevens said the support group has access to materials such as workbooks and pamphlets, that would be helpful for both psychological and emotional needs. Also, the American Red Cross has technology to connect loved ones using on-base military support for units out of the area, she said.

While most often those affected by a loved one leaving are immediate family members or close friends, Stevens said the extended friend-and-family network should not be overlooked. Occasionally a student will have friends or distant relatives

involved in the war and not feel that close connection, but often those students can benefit from support groups, Stevens said.

Students who want to be in a support group have many options, Stevens said. The American Red Cross group is open to all people — whether they are based in this area or not — but mostly supports the greater Skagit area, and Whatcom County.

Stupfel said most of the students who come into the outreach center are friends or family members of soldiers who have just been activated and are getting prepared to ship out. He talks with them about how to support their loved ones while they get ready for the next step.

"Most of the people who come in are boyfriends, husbands, sisters and girlfriends of soldiers who are in the process of being mobilized," Stupfel said. "We talk to them about their soldier, from a soldier."

Stupfel is a member of the Army reserve, but has yet to be mobilized. He said the best thing a person can do is support their loved ones while they are preparing to leave and while they are away.

"Getting time to hear a few words from loved ones is more meaningful than anything you can imagine," Stupfel said.

Rob Toyer, a Western junior and member of the Marine reserves,

agreed. Toyer, who also works at the outreach center, said he left school in February 2003 for Kuwait before the start of the war.

While he was there, he said it was important for him to communicate with his family, and receiving mail from his mom was something he looked forward to.

"The little conversations about their daily lives we take for granted," Toyer said. "But when you are gone, you don't have much contact with the outside world."

Stevens said the groups often teach a soldier's loved ones how to communicate with him or her.

"The family at home has a hard time adjusting," Stevens said. "They are dealing with a different person."

When a soldier returns home from deployment, he or she can be changed in many ways, Stevens said. One thing the support group does is give family members and friends an idea of what to expect once that happens, she said.

Occasionally, Stevens said, a "homecoming letdown" occurs as the family expects its loved one to have remained the same emotionally while he or she were away. Often this is not the case.

Orr said he would like to have a military family and friends support group on campus and attempts every quarter to begin one, but only one or two people come forward.

He said many of the students who would benefit from the group do not know it exists, and that may be why they do not come forward.

The support groups in this area focus on all branches of the military and assist families with soldiers who are not yet mobilized, in another country, or just returning from the war, Stevens said.

"Everyone's experiences can be quite different — some have e-mail access, and others can only communicate back to the states a few times a month," Orr said.

Stevens said that when families of soldiers support one another and use support groups it could greatly impact the ease with which

the soldier adjusts back to his or her old life.

"It was hard to relate to some of your friends who weren't over there and couldn't understand what you had been through," Toyer said.

If nothing else, Stevens said, friends and family members of soldiers should attend a group meeting to learn how to listen to their loved ones. Many times the soldier will just want someone to listen to them, Toyer said.

"The best thing is to have supportive friends and family," Toyer said. "Someone who will just sit there and listen with an open mind."



AMANDA WOOLLEY/The Western Front
Kevin Stupfel works in his office in the Veterans Outreach Center in the Viking Union.

Lake: Moratorium gives county more time to research

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said. "The fish just have to compete with the limited supply needed to survive."

The study allows the Department of Ecology to research what the current pollution status is for Lake Whatcom, Galant said.

"Our job at the Department of Ecology is to make sure the pollution doesn't exceed its maximum capacity," he said.

Galant said land clearing has contributed to the pollution of the watershed. When land is cleared, the surface erodes and the soil becomes unstable. As a result, water washes sediments into the lake and makes it shallower, Galant said.

"The shallower the lake, the warmer the temperature is," he said. "Fish need cold temperatures to survive and flourish, and the warm water is just causing them to struggle."

He said the Department of Ecology required the County Council to come up with a strategy to clean the Lake Whatcom watershed.

"The moratorium is a way for the council to have some breathing room as far as how to address the problem," Galant said. "The council has to ensure that the water quality will improve and pollution will decrease."

With the moratorium, the County Council will be able to project the growth of the pollution and get data from the study on its acceptable minimum and maximum loads of pollutants, Galant said.

Andrew Lohrer, 52, an electrician, said he opposed the moratorium because he believes building practices actually is not a major contributor to the degradation of Lake Whatcom.

"We should be allowed to build and still use good building practices," Lohrer said. "Builders know how to control storm water, fix sewer and septic tanks as

well as regulate fertilizers."

Jim Griffin, 33, an independent builder, said he disagreed with the moratorium and sees it only as a way to prevent industrial growth. He said many people who don't want development are trying to stop it from happening.

"The moratorium has nothing to do with the water quality," Griffin said. "Only the environmentalists are arguing that."

Griffin also agreed that pollution did not come from building houses but more so from the rainwater. He said those in favor of the moratorium assume builders do not drain the runoff water from the rain, but builders have to because the Whatcom County Building Services Division inspects the building procedures.

Larry Williams, 62, who is in favor of the moratorium and owned a home in Sudden Valley, said he sold it more than a year ago because of problems in sewer systems and roads supposedly caused by developments in the watershed.

"The idea of trying to protect our watershed has gone on for 20 years," Williams said. "But the government is failing to protect the citizen's health, which is why a moratorium is necessary."

Marian Beddill, 67, also supported the moratorium and said the role of the government is not to protect land buyers and builders but instead those who use the lake as drinking water.

"We can't afford to be wrong about our drinking water," Beddill said. "Our health is at risk because of the pollution."

Caskey-Schreiber said evidence shows that the lake has been deteriorating for the past 10 years.

"I think we have serious work to do," she said. "Our water doesn't taste as good as it used to, and that's just a plain fact."

Memorial: More than \$9,000 raised in memory of owner of The Factory

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a good time and making sure everyone around him was too.

"Reece was a guy that could make anybody feel good about themselves — and he did," Wilson said. "I don't think he had any idea how many lives he touched."

Myrene organized the memorial. He said his friend and employer was an enthusiastic and non-judgmental person who gave everyone a chance.

"So many bands in this town got their foot in the door at The Factory," Myrene said. "He always had a smile on his face and a good

time."

Jessica Tackett, a Factory bartender and close friend of Degolier, said he was a caring and fun person who always thought of others.

"Everything was always an adventure with him," Tackett said. "He was giving and completely selfless, always considering others first."

Tuesday night's event raised more than \$9,000. Those wishing to help support the fund-raising effort can visit any Key Bank and make a contribution to the Reece Degolier Donation Fund.

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Valentine's Day with

U.S.E.



ERIC SANFORD/The Western Front

Members of the crowd join U.S.E. on stage for the final song at the band's Oct. 29, 2004, performance at the Viking Union Multipurpose Room.

By LAUREN ALLAIN
The Western Front

Forget the red roses, throw away the cheap chocolates and don't spend money on a romantic dinner because this Valentine's Day United State of Electronica is headlining a formal Valentine's Day Ball.

The ball will mimic a high-school prom, complete with red and pink streamers, cookies and punch, said Jasmine Sheldon, co-coordinator of the Women's Center, which is co-sponsoring the event.

U.S.E. played on Western's campus this past October for a crowd of 700, and Kelly Aiken, co-coordinator of Associated Students Productions Pop Music, said he predicts a similar turnout for the ball.

The punk-rock prom marks the beginning of Vagina Week on Western's campus, which concludes on Feb. 20 with the Vagina Monologues which run Feb. 18 through Feb. 20, Sheldon said.

V-Day is an international event intended to end violence against girls and women by distributing funds to national and international grassroots organizations that work to stop the violence. The 'V' stands for victory, valentine and vagina.

Every U.S.E. show is special, but this one will have even more love than usual to incorporate Valentine's Day, said Noah Star Weaver, vocoder and keyboard player for the band.

U.S.E. has been performing at Western for two years now, beginning with shows in the Highland Hall dorm lounge, Weaver said. The seven-

member ensemble has since performed at Western six times, he said.

He describes U.S.E.'s music as sweaty, dance party / disco pop and said the band is eager to spend Valentine's Day at Western.

"Our shows up at Western are pretty much our craziest shows," he said. "It's definitely one of our favorite places to play."

Weaver said the crowd's enthusiasm at Western is unlike anything the band has ever experienced.

The Trucks, Yr Heart Breaks and the Palisades will open for U.S.E. starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Viking Union Multi-purpose Room, Aiken said.

Yr Heart Breaks is 24-year-old Seattle resident Serene Peterson's solo project. For the ball, Anacortes musician Karl Blau, 30, will accompany Peterson on guitar, keyboard and bass, she said.

Peterson graduated from Western in 2001 and has played numerous times at Western.

"I'm, like, the house band for Western," she said. "It's nice to go back to the town I pretty much call my home."

Olympia resident Elijah Moore, 26, a singer and guitar player for The Trucks, said he also used to call Bellingham home.

Moore said The Trucks' songs also go along with the love theme of the ball.

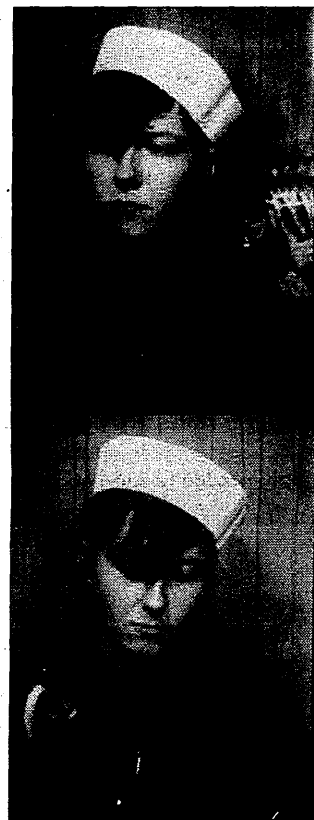
"A lot of our songs address love," he said. "Some of them are about good relationships, and some are about bad relationships."

The Women's Center will be selling V-Week paraphernalia at the concert as well, ranging from V-Day T-shirts to vagina-shaped soap, Sheldon said.

Sheldon said she hopes Western can raise at least \$18,000 from the various events of V-Week. The money will benefit the women of Iraq, the Lummi Victims of Crime shelter and the Women's Alliance, she said.

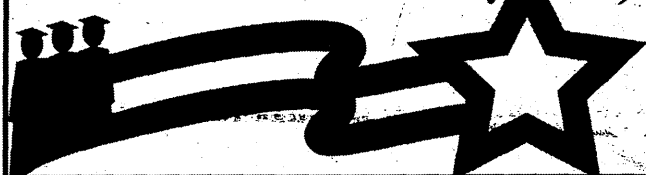
Show details

Who: U.S.E., Yr Heart Breaks, The Trucks, Palisades
When: Doors open at 7 p.m. Show at 7:30 p.m.
Where: Viking Union Multipurpose Room
Cost: \$5 student, \$6 general



Courtesy of Yr Heart Breaks
Yr Heart Breaks, the solo project of Serene Peterson, will open for U.S.E. on Monday.

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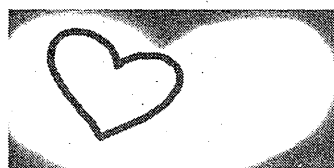


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Passion for the piano



BY KATHRYN BRENIZE
The Western Front

Staying in tune with his passion for piano music is an easy task for British pianist and author Paul Roberts.

As someone who has spent the majority of his life absorbed in the wonders of French piano music, he is known as one of Britain's most renowned interpreters of piano music from the impressionist period, said Jill Clark, media and Performing Arts Center series coordinator.

Roberts' performance is part of the Sanford Piano Series, which brings a well-known pianist to Western each quarter, Clark said.

Jeffrey Gilliam, associate professor of piano at Western, selected Roberts to perform at the PAC because of the success of his past visit.

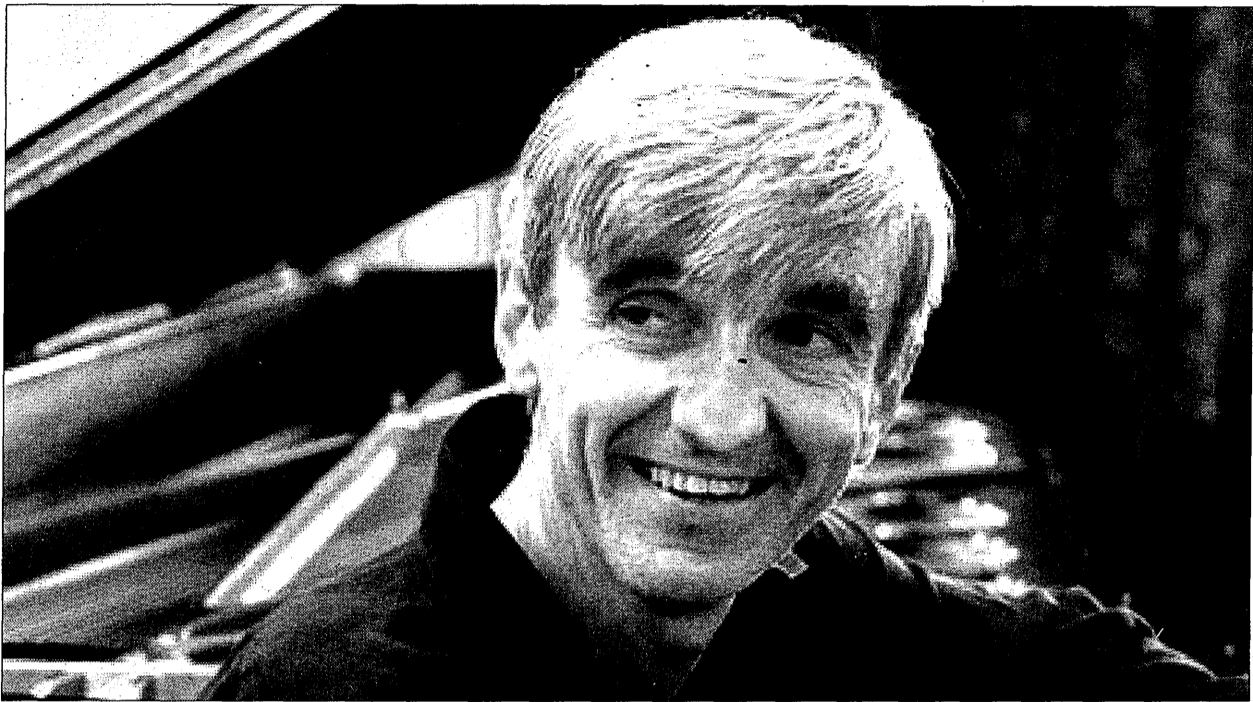
"I learned about him from his reputation throughout the Northwest and from other musicians throughout the state," Gilliam said. "He has been to Western before and was a hit with the community and students."

Roberts, an Englishman, is a frequent visitor to the Northwest and guest performer at Portland State University's Piano Festival, Clark said.

As if his busy schedule were not enough, Roberts also wrote a book in April of '96 on the famous French musician Claude Debussy titled "Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy."

He also has recorded the complete cycle of Debussy's piano works, for which Roberts has received four-star reviews, Clark said.

"He has the love of (French) piano music," Clark said.



Courtesy of the Performing Arts Center

British pianist Paul Roberts will perform at 7:30 p.m. tonight in the PAC concert hall.

"He likes researching the music and composer and how they developed their style and musical and artistic influences."

As an honorary fellow of London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and director of an international piano summer school in France, Roberts is active in many aspects of the music world.

"Not only is Roberts a fine pianist, but he is also scholarly," Gilliam said. "The aesthetics were probably what appealed to him — the painting, the philosophy and the mixing of the senses (from the impressionist period)."

Clark said he is in the process of publishing his second book based on the works of French musician Pierre Revel.

"This companion book on Revel reflects his influences and theory behind his musical style and the depth of

differences, compositions and technical perspective on his music," Gilliam said.

Western senior Hau-Wei Chang, a music major with an interest in piano performance and composition, was selected to perform in a class that Roberts is teaching while he is visiting Western at the end of this week.

"I am mostly familiar with Roberts academically through his reference to French music," said Chang, who is studying French music.

Chang said he will keep an open mind while Roberts is teaching.

"I'm trying not to embarrass myself," Chang said. "I am expecting something new and looking for perspective."

During his tour through the Northwest, Roberts also is performing in Portland, Bellevue and Seattle.

Performance details

When: 7:30 p.m. tonight
Where: PAC Concert Hall
Cost: \$8 - \$12

UPCOMING: 'THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS'

BY ERIK PETERSON
The Western Front

The antics of a dysfunctional family will be witnessed in Western's Underground Theatre this weekend. A team of charismatic Western students is performing "The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds," a Broadway show from the 1970s written by children's writer Paul Zindel.

Western sophomore stage manager Emily Harvey said the title of the play refers to a project the youngest character, Tillie, does for a science fair.

"Tillie exposes Marigold seeds to different degrees of radiation in three stages," Harvey said. "One seed dies, one becomes mutated and one becomes more beautiful."

Harvey said other roles in the production include Tillie's older sister Ruth, her mother Beatrice, her nanny and her classmate Janice Vickery.

The play is one of two productions put on each quarter in Western's Student Theatre Productions series. The show, which features an all-female, all-student cast and production team, is intense and dramatic, Harvey said.

Western senior and director Ashley Hollingshead said the play presents the idea that good things can emerge from a bad environment. Set mostly in an unkempt late 1950s living room, the production uses symbolism and metaphors to tell its story, she said.

"Relationships between the daughters and



CHRIS HUBER/The Western Front

Western sophomore Amanda Garberich acts as "Tillie" during rehearsal Feb. 3 with freshman Megan Jackson, left in background, and senior Sarah Mickelson in "The effect of Gamma Rays on Man in the Moon Marigolds."

their mother are parallel with the plants that the youngest daughter grows for the science fair," Hollingshead said.

Beatrice, the mother, takes on a role of being hopeless, alone and ashamed. Her daughter, Tillie, is shy, alone and awkward, yet young and full of hope. Classmate Janice is a neutral character who serves as a point of reference for the audience, Hollingshead said.

"Beatrice is kind of a huge, crazy drunk bitch," Hollingshead said. "Tillie is the one you want to feel sorry for and Janice is the yardstick by which you judge the rest of the

characters."

Western senior Sarah Mickelson, who plays Beatrice, said her character lives vicariously through the youngest daughter, Tillie, because she sees herself in her daughter. Beatrice will keep Tillie home from school in what her character would describe as an effort to shelter her outcast daughter. Mickelson said the 17-year-old daughter Ruth is an attention-starved young woman who tries too hard to befriend everyone because of a dysfunctional home life.

"All the things Beatrice does are motivated by the fact that she's extremely lonely. She

acts like she was denied something, like there was a path that was supposed to be laid out for her," Mickelson said. "Ruth is kind of an attention whore; she lives in this house with a mother who treats her not like a mother should treat a child. Tillie just sits in the corner reading science books."

Mickelson said the last play she was in had approximately 30 people in it. She said it was fun to work with such a small cast in a distinctive role unlike any she has played.

Western freshman Megan Jackson plays the emotionally unstable older sister, Ruth. Both Ruth and Tillie need each other in the play, and although Ruth is the older sister, her character is childlike and dependent on the younger sister, Jackson said.

Preparing for "The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds" has been the most fun Jackson said she has had working on a play, despite its dark premise. She said there seems to be a glimmer of hope in the plot.

"Tillie is kind of the hope for the family," Jackson said. "She realizes the home situation and she finds science a metaphor for her situation when she finds out she is made of atoms and there is a part of the sun in her."

Performance details

When: 7:30 p.m. Tonight through Sunday
Where: Underground Theatre
Cost: \$4

What are you listening to?

Reporter Eric Sanford wandered campus asking people wearing headphones what they were listening to. Below are his findings. Look for more responses in future issues.



Kelcy Laybourn
Junior, art

Nirvana
"Smells Like Teen Spirit"



Hanako Persson
Junior, East Asian studies

Murder City Devils
"I Want a Lot Now"



Charles Noard
Junior, anthropology

Bloodhound Gang
"Great White Dope"



Andrew Joslyn
Senior, English literature

The Streets
"Original Pirate Material"



Roxanne Salandanan
Freshman, undecided

Franz Ferdinand
"This Fire"



John Furtado
Sophomore, industrial technology

Mason Jennings
"California"

CD reviews



... And You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead *Worlds Apart*

The first track on ...And You Will Know Us By the Trail of Dead's latest album, "Worlds Apart," sounds a bit like the score to the battle scene of an epic film. The climactic chanting and moaning, however, happen only after the pianist finishes tuning — or learning how to play — his piano.

The Austin, Texas-based band wastes no time after the prelude to overcome listeners with a lively rocking intro to the repetitive vocals of the second track.

The fourth track, "The Summer of '91," starts as an edgy, emotional ballad and a relatively solid transition to the middle part of the album. It features piano work not necessarily associated with such hard-rock beats.

The lyrics are dark, the vocals are wretched at times, but somehow the band members' efforts raise the bar a notch or two.

Quirky contributions to the heavy rock group, such as children's voices, cellos, violins, a viola and a guest choir, are woven with edgy lyrics and band members cursing at one another.

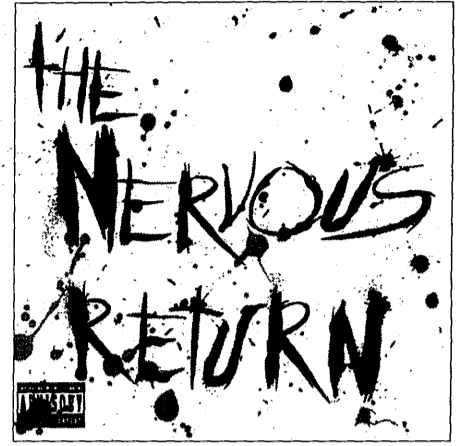
For the most part, the band has a fast and heavy sound. The vocalist's soul is felt through his pipes despite an unmastered range of sound.

The songs pick up. They may start as a dreamy, Ween-like melody or a surfer rock prelude or even a stringy emo intro, but listen long enough, and heavy drumming, electric guitar and soul-filled rock vocals come into play.

One track stood out because of its mood and instrumentation. The ninth track, "To Russia My Homeland," with no vocals, seems awkward on the album. It sounds like an old-fashioned Russian wedding song. At least Trail of Dead enthusiasts can enjoy the band's diversity of talent and eclectic guest performances.

From beginning to end, the album sounds like the soundtrack to a war, with its ups and downs and screams and moans. It builds up and it melts down. It feels surreal, reflective then triumphant.

— Erik Peterson



The Nervous Return *Wake Up Dead*

If the Afghan Whigs and Screaming Weasel got drunk, detuned all their instruments, invited the local junior high over for lyrical input and made an album, it would sound exactly like "Wake Up Dead," the new album by The Nervous Return.

The Nervous Return has an obvious post-punk influence similar to bands such as Good Charlotte and Simple Plan. But this album lacks the hard-hitting power chords and melodic flow that epitomizes post-punk rock.

The lyrics are somewhat juvenile with lines such as "It's a blur when moving fast enough / It's all a blur fading away," found in track five, "Wake up Dead." The lack of thoughtful poetic input ends up making The Nervous Return sound like every other pop-punk band out today.

Sustained high-pitched chords resonate through most of the songs, leaving a subtle reminiscence of early '80s glam rock. The bass is too low and the mid-range too high, resulting in an overall recording quality sounding something similar to a live performance caught on a 1976 mono tape recorder.

With lyrics resembling midnight scribbling from ranting depressed teenagers, The Nervous Return is a band that if forgotten tomorrow, will not be too soon. The "woe is me" lyrics spewed out by the whiny voice of lead vocalist Jason Muller leave the spine tingling like the fingernails-on-a-chalkboard maneuver.

All the instruments seem a little off. The timing is just not there. Trying to tap a foot to the beat looks, to be imagined, something like George W. Bush attempting the "Running Man" dance step of yesteryear. The drums are chaotic at best and the guitar flow is nothing more than flustered howls.

All the songs have the same pseudo-punk influence, like songs from bands such as Blink-182 and Green Day, but without those bands' melody and harmony. With every song sounding similar, this album leaves the listener with a seemingly never-ending auditory violation. Waking up the dead is exactly what's happening.

— Mike Coffman

In the spotlight

Friday, Feb. 11

Vagina Memoirs

Fairhaven College Auditorium; 650-6114; free
Inspired by "The Vagina Monologues," Western's Women's Center presents dialogue of women talking about their bodies. The monologues also will be performed Saturday at the Bellingham Unitarian Church and Sunday at Village Books. The Friday and Saturday performances start at 7 p.m. and the Sunday performance at 5 p.m.

Lecture

Mount Baker Theatre; 734-6080; \$20
Patrick Combs tells his true story called "Man-1, Bank-0," about how he deposited a \$98,093.35 junk-mail check into his ATM, and it cashed. The event starts at 8 p.m.

Comedy show

Old Main Theatre; 650-3876; \$3
Dead Parrot's Society presents an improv comedy show called "Sock Hop Musical" at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 12

Rock and folk concert

Stuart's Coffee House; 752-2024; free
Kasey Anderson and Feed 'N' Seed perform one of Stuart's last concerts. The show starts at 8 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 13

Jazz dance

Bellingham Senior Center; 650-1066; \$30
The Jazz Project and the Bellingham Youth Jazz Band will present a Valentine's salmon dinner and dance, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 14

Rock concert

Wild Buffalo House of Music; 752-0848; \$5
Everybody's Debbie and Wingman perform at 9 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 15

Miss Whatcom County auction

Bellingham Senior Center; 201-8981; \$5 donation
A silent auction and talent review of all 10 contestants will raise money for the pageant. Starts at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 16

Documentary

Fairhaven College Auditorium; 650-2345; free
"The Corporation" explores the repercussions of corporations' increasing pre-eminence. It starts at 6 p.m.

SPORTS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2005 • WESTERNFRONTONLINE.COM • PAGE 8

Western will battle Seattle Pacific for first place

By BRADLEY THAYER
The Western Front

Just one week after setting the school record for three-point shots made, the Western men's basketball team will face Seattle Pacific University in a crucial battle that could allow Western to join SPU as the first-place team in the conference.

The two teams' records are eerily similar. Western is 16-4 on the season with 8 wins and 3 losses in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference. Seattle Pacific is 17-4 total, including 9 wins and 2 losses in the division.

If Western wins Saturday, each team will have 9 wins and 3 losses in the GNAC. Head coach Brad Jackson said the players are not thinking about the possibility of losing.

"It is not part of our mindset," Jackson said. "We don't need to focus on the outcome of the game as much as we need to focus on doing the things we know we need to in order to be successful. If we do those things, hopefully the scoreboard will reflect that at the end."

If the Vikings were to finish the season having won the GNAC, they would be given an automatic berth in the regional tournament, assistant coach Tony Dominguez

said. The team's goal is to make it to the regional tournament and play well, Western senior forward Craig Roosendaal said. He does realize, however, they must first beat Seattle Pacific.

"Our ultimate goal as a team is to win the GNAC and also do well in the playoffs," Roosendaal said. "But first we are focused on winning the division."

The Vikings are shooting 43.1 percent from three-point range. The roster boasts the second-, third- and fourth- most accurate distance shooters in the league — Roosendaal, Western junior guard/forward Grant Dykstra and Western sophomore center Lukas Henne, respectively. Also, the team has made 10 or more three-pointers in its past eight games.

The Vikings, however, are not limited to three-pointers. They have many great players, Jackson said. More importantly, their team approach to the game has allowed them to succeed.

"We have three things we stress in our program: fundamentals, conditioning and team play. These guys have done a great job with those as well as enjoying the experience," Jackson said.

Dykstra, one of Western's starters, is scoring 17 points a game and is among the league's top 10 players in six different statistical categories.

Western junior guard Ryan Diggs has scored 20 or more points in four of his last six games. Western junior forward Tyler Amaya is averaging a team-high 8.1 rebounds and anchors the post defense with 1.3 blocked shots a game.

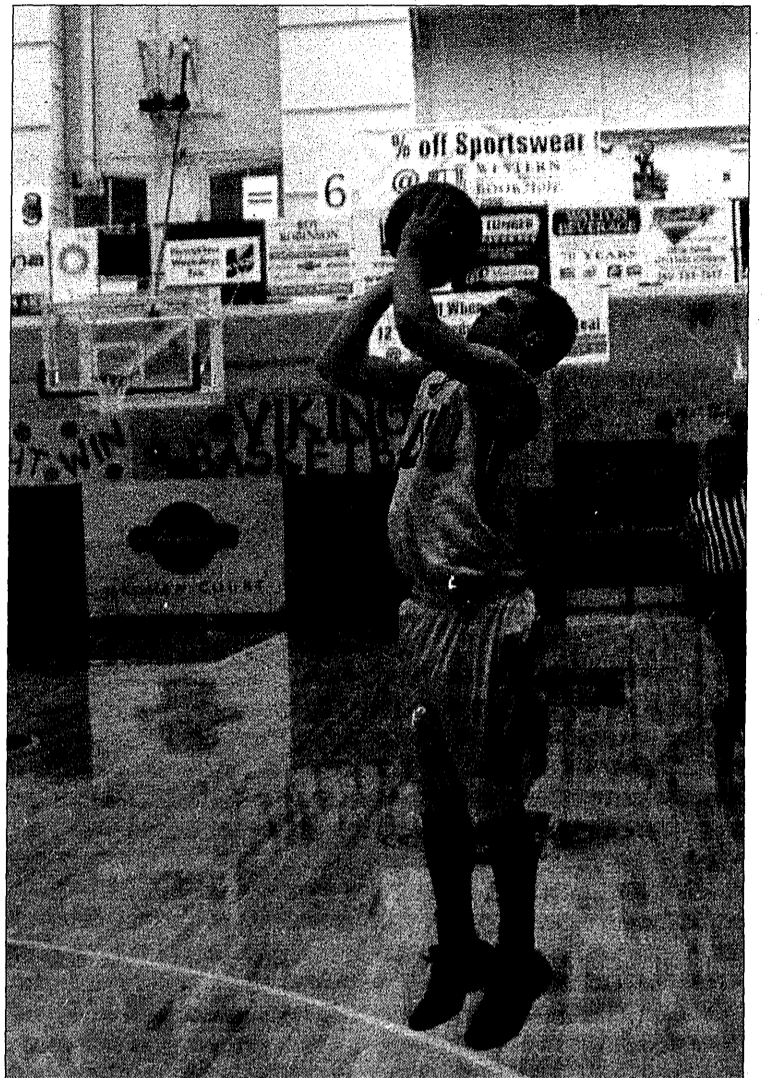
Amaya obtained five double-doubles in the past seven games. Rounding out the starting lineup are Western junior center Tyler MacMullen, who is shooting a team-high 52.3 percent, and Western junior guard Kyle Jackson, owning a team-high 4.5 assist average.

Roosendaal, the team's "sixth-man," has been consistent from beyond the arc, shooting 51.3 percent and hitting 3.1 treys a game. Roosendaal attributes the team's success not only to much of the core players returning from last year, but especially to the addition of big transfers Amaya and MacMullen.

"Crashing the boards and working the post down low," Roosendaal said. "That is what we lacked last year."

With strong players in the post and a plethora of capable shooters, the Vikings, at the very least, should provide an interesting game. The Vikings are undefeated at home and are not ready to compromise that record, Roosendaal said.

"One of our goals is to stay undefeated at home — protect our house," he said.



AMANDA WOOLLEY/The Western Front
Western junior guard Kyle Jackson shoots a jump shot against Central Washington University this past Thursday in Carver Gym.



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Finally, a basketball team worth watching

Chances look good for the Sonics this year in the Western Conference



MATT DEVEAU
WEST COAST OFFENSE

Judging an overachieving NBA team before the All-Star break is a lot like walking up to a baseball pitcher and saying, "Hey, did you know you're pitching a no-hitter?" It's something you just don't do.

Because if you say, "Hey the (insert team here) sure is playing well this year," in December, that team will promptly rattle off a multi-game losing streak and fade from the spotlight.

Well, the All-Star break is here and — hey, the Sonics sure is playing well this year.

I apologize in advance to Seattle sports fans if the Sonics take a dive in the coming weeks, but we've reached the point in the NBA season where it's time to start thinking of the Sonics as a legitimate contender in the Western Conference.

Perhaps, more surprisingly, we've reached a point where I actually can sit down and watch a Sonics game.

Now, I'm not much of a Sonics fan, but that's not the point.

This team is actually watchable — a rarity in today's professional basketball world. They play well together, make hustle plays

and genuinely seem to have a good time.

Oh yeah, and they win a little bit, too.

Actually, they win a lot — their record sits at 34-13, good for a 10 1/2-game lead over the Minnesota Timberwolves in the newly-formed Northwest Division.

Looking at those numbers, it's hard to believe this is the same Sonics team that most pundits expected to finish at the bottom of the NBA.

But it's not so hard when you watch the team play.

You can see that the Sonics players understand their roles.

Here are those roles, in no particular order.

The scorers: Guard Ray Allen and forward Rashard Lewis lead the Sonics in scoring at 24.2 and 20.3 points per game, respectively.

Neither player seems particularly scary as a scorer, and neither seems to generate his own shot. They can, however, shoot from the outside.

So when Seattle's offense is spaced properly, points tend to pile up in bunches.

The rebounders who do the dirty work: Like it or not, a team needs big guys inside who maintain forceful control of the paint, and forwards Reggie Evans and Danny Fortson are two of the best "bangers" in the entire league.

Evans is averaging a team-high 9.3

rebounds per game, and Fortson averages 16.4 boards per 48 minutes.

Fortson also is a frightening player. He shoots with finesse from the free-throw line (87.2 percent), but he also leads the NBA in personal fouls, with 200; technical fouls, with 19; and flagrant fouls, with 3.

His blend of skill and assault is the strangest combination this side of Brigitte Nielson and Flava Flav.

The ballhandlers: Quick, name the best point guards in the league.

If you measure point guards by how efficiently they run an offense, then Antonio Daniels and Luke Ridnour are two of the best — the pair rank first and sixth, respectively, in assist-to-turnover ratio.

While no one is going to mistake either one for Steve Nash or Jason Kidd, the Sonics duo does enough to keep things under control.

The sixth man: Individually, forward Vladimir Radmanovic is by far one of the mid-season favorites for the league's best bench player.

More importantly, he is at the front of one of the NBA's most capable benches.

Along with Radmanovic, Daniels and Fortson are on the court in the fourth quarter and other critical moments in the game — assuming Fortson hasn't fouled

out. You can't underestimate the value of such depth and experience.

The minor role players: Three other players recently have received consistent playing time, and each fills an extremely important role.

Forward Nick Collison provides rebounding and adequate inside scoring in his true rookie year following last season's double shoulder surgery.

Center Jerome James is 7-foot-1 — that's his role.

Finally, guard Ronald "Flip" Murray can provide instant scoring and perhaps is more valuable being used as bait for the rapidly approaching trade deadline.

This team isn't the only one in the league with well-defined roles, but all the Seattle players seem to understand and accept their places on the team.

To call what the Sonics players and coaches are doing "overachieving" isn't necessarily accurate.

All the team is doing is playing well as a group. Every team in the NBA should do this, but few do.

That's why it's time to start believing in the Sonics.

In all likelihood, the team will secure the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference playoffs.

With home-court advantage in the first round, there's no reason why this team can't be playing well into the spring.

Well, unless idiot sportswriters keep saying they will be.

'Now, I'm not much of a Sonics fan, but that's not the point. This team is actually watchable — a rarity in today's professional basketball world.'



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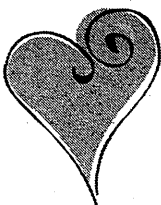
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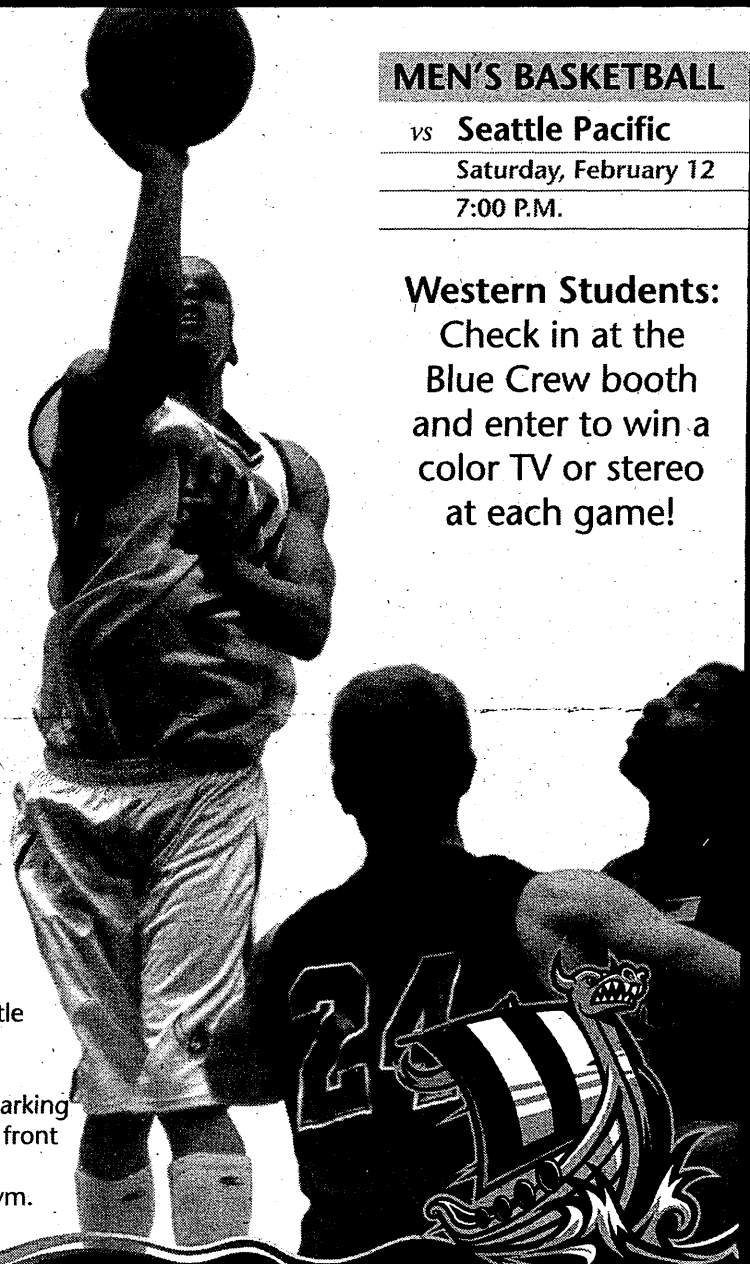
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Frontline

V-Day should be called 'Singles' Awareness Day' instead

Valentine's Day is quite possibly the single most masochistic holiday in the history of humankind.

This holiday only pleases a select few — those in relationships or who are greeting-card company executives — and “singles out” (pun intended) the rest of society, who either by choice or necessity refuse to take part in the archaic institution of coupledness.

It should just be called “Singles' Awareness Day.”

This paltry-pink day derives its name from a saint from the Middle Ages whom no one knows anything about aside from legends, according to the History Channel's online biography of St. Valentine, also known as Saint Valentine. Since no empirical evidence can verify the man's existence, the myth of Saint Valentine should be snuffed out of children's lexicon along with the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus.

Valentine's Day is like the plague. No one is safe — men, women, couples and bachelors/bachelorettes are all threatened by this superfluously sadistic holiday.

For single people, though, it is an official day of face-rubbing loneliness and, like a wallflower, watching of other couples being saccharinely sweet. While a world full of happy couples celebrate how lovely love is, poor single souls are left to binge-eat, wallow in their solitude, and — God forbid — watch “Sex In The City.”

It's even worse for men in relationships. Flowers, chocolates, jewelry, chick flicks. And pink — it's as if a flamingo bloated on Pepto-Bismol exploded. No self-respecting male would ever truly honor and embrace this overtly hackneyed cheese-fest.

The only people who really benefit from this contrived holiday are greeting card companies, florists and jewelers. According to a Feb. 6 Washington Post article, people will spend nearly \$13.2 billion this Valentine's Day, which is creeping up behind Christmas and back-to-school shopping for high spending.

Wall Street should name this day after the patron saint of capitalism and erect a statue in his honor.

Though some may argue that Valentine's Day is a time for couples to come together and celebrate their happy, healthy relationships, this isn't always be the case. Rappers Ice-T and Twista admitted to dumping girls before Valentine's Day to avoid either the emotional or monetary stress associated with the holiday, according to an interview on SOHH.com, a hip-hop Web site.

Valentine's Day has gone from being a celebration of romantic love to being an overblown opportunity for money-making and a slap in the face of those who can't be so lucky.

Frontlines are the opinion of The Western Front editorial board: Matthew Anderson, Lauren Miller, David Wray, Anastasia Tietje, Elana Bean, Amanda Woolley, Caleb Heeringa, Laura McVicker, Aaron Apple, Michael Murray, Krissy Gochnour, Tara Nelson, Nick Schmidt, Kenna Hodgson and Chris Huber.

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Editor's note: The views expressed on The Western Front opinion pages are the views of the authors or cartoonists and are not necessarily the views of The Western Front staff, managers or adviser.

And we quote:

“I'm going to the backseat of my car with the woman I love, and I won't be back for 10 minutes!”

— Homer Simpson, “The Simpsons”



Diamonds are useless, generic



TRAVIS SHERER
LOOKING UP

Next time your girlfriend or wife asks you for a diamond on Valentine's Day, you should respond with a question of your own: “Do you want long sleeves or short sleeves?”

That's what Sierra Leone rebels asked of diamond-mine workers — including children — before they amputated them. Short-sleeve amputation involves cutting off the arm at the elbow, while long-sleeve is merely cutting off a hand just above the wrist.

The rebels did this to fight their government because it had offered other countries discount access to its labor supply and diamond mines in exchange for aid in fighting the rebels.

OK, let's just forget the fact that these Valentine's Day trinkets helped fund a war which raped, maimed or killed nearly 50,000 people in that country, according to The CIA World Factbook.

Instead, let us focus on the fact that these are merely tokens of affection. That is, a diamond is nothing

more than a socially acceptable roofie slipped into a relationship to keep it primed for long-term date rape.

Further, if your relationship needs a lifeless and useless rock to symbolize your commitment, you might as well give up. Diamonds show how generic relationships in this country seem to be becoming. Instead of giving a woman — or a man — something that signifies their relationship, a diamond ring signifies your relationship is no more special than anyone else's.

But, then again, maybe that's what everyone wants — a relationship just like everyone else, one with the survival rate of a coin flip, according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

Or perhaps we buy these chunks of rock for other reasons, including tradition. Diamonds have been loosely associated with marriage for 500 years, but they didn't grow in popularity until the De Beers-led diamond cartel launched its “A Diamond is Forever” campaign in 1939, according to Wikipedia.org.

You've got to admit it, though: Women love diamonds. Many women, however, don't even know why.

Imagine the rate of returns you could generate if you convinced women that hot dogs were a symbol

see STONES, page 12

Committee members pose conflict of interest



MELANIE VALM

A new committee that will oversee logging in the Lake Whatcom watershed has five members — three of whom are loggers or have ties to logging companies.

The Lake Whatcom Advisory Committee will make decisions affecting a watershed that provides drinking water for more than half of Whatcom County. But because these are important decisions, they should not be left to those who have a monetary interest in them.

If the members of the committee have a monetary interest in the outcome of their decisions, they could put the interests of their company before those of the people and cause severe damage to the environment.

The fact that three out of five

members have interests in the outcome should have been enough to disqualify them from the position.

Doug Sutherland, the commissioner of Public Lands, made the appointments on Feb. 3, according to the Department of Natural Resources Web site. By the outcome of his decisions, it seems as though Sutherland did not take enough community members' objections seriously enough. If he had, the committee might represent the community a little more accurately.

The members of the group include Steve Fox, a fish biologist; Curt Veldhuisen, a forest hydrologist; Richard Whitmore, a log manager for a Mount Vernon sawmill; Aubrey Stargell, a forester for Nielsen Brothers Inc. — which owns 900 acres in the watershed — and Tom Westergreen, log manager for Great Western Lumber

Company — the only remaining sawmill in Whatcom County.

The purpose of this group is ostensibly to review activity on more than 15,000 acres of land, according to a Feb. 5 Bellingham Herald article. But a group in which most of the members have ties to the logging industry should not be trusted to make the best decisions for the land and the environment. It is a classic conflict of interest.

The Department of Natural Resources

preferred plan would open more than 8,000 acres of the land for timber harvesting and would build approximately 43 miles of new roads during the next 60 years, according to the department's Web site. The “no action” plan, keeping current standards, would open more than 11,000 acres to timber harvesting and build as much as 62

see LAND, page 12

In Depth: Would a revote be good for Washington state?

Revote would restore public trust



MARK REIMERS

Citizens of this state are under the specter of a tarnished gubernatorial election. Because of this, a revote is the only way to undo the damage inflicted on the election process's credibility.

Throughout the mayhem, Washingtonians had their intelligence insulted as King County officials made a mess of the election process. Democrats have followed this up by making contradictory arguments in their attempts to stop a revote.

Last month, for example, Democratic attorneys requested that the Chelan County Superior Court dismiss the Republican suit to have the election nullified. Democratic attorney Jenny Durkan argued that the courts have no jurisdiction to hear a gubernatorial election contest, according to a Jan. 24 Seattle Times article.

While Judge John Bridges rejected her argument, the real irony in her attempt is that it puts the Democrats in an inconsistent position.

According to the same article, when Republican legislators tried to delay the inauguration, Democratic legislators said the Legislature was not the proper venue but instead the courts were.

Sensible people may feel like their heads will twist off while trying to follow these circular arguments.

Washington will remember the drama of

the re-counts for a long time to come.

The Seattle Times reflected this in a Dec. 17 article describing King County election workers opening a locked cage in a warehouse and pulling out a cart containing trays of rejected absentee ballots in full view of observers and a mass of television cameras. They found 150 ballots in sealed envelopes in a tray with other rejected ballots.

Republicans now are bringing forth their concerns about the security of those "locked cages" in the Chelan County case through the signed affidavit of King County election observer Timothy Borders.

As the evidence continues to pile up, Washingtonians can only wonder why Gov. Christine Gregoire called this election system a model for the rest of the nation and to the world at large, as said in a Dec. 25 Seattle Post-Intelligencer article.

Many people have argued that Washington couldn't patiently stand another election. But in reality, nothing could be farther from the truth.

In fact, Democratic leaders in Washington have reason to be uneasy. According to a Jan. 26 survey by Strategic Vision, a nationwide public-relations firm, 53 percent of Washingtonians support a revote between the governor and Rossi.

It's time to start over. A new election will give Washingtonians a chance to speak in their own language.

And in the future, Washington state needs to make sure ballots aren't treated like playing cards to be shuffled and bottom dealt until the hand unfairly suits one particular candidate over the other.

'Sensible people may feel like their heads will twist off while trying to follow (the Democrats') circular arguments.'

Lawsuit will not solve larger problem



MARISSA HARSHMAN

The Washington state governor election has been the center of controversy for three months. And if former gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi gets his way, it may continue for many more months to come.

While the state faces a \$1.8 million deficit that needs serious attention, Rossi still is pouting over his loss in the November election.

Gov. Christine Gregoire is trying to get the state back on track by building her administration and preparing budget proposals. Meanwhile, Rossi is continuing to dig bitterly through garbage cans to find votes that may not have been counted.

In court papers filed Jan. 26, the state Republican party is claiming it has found nearly 300 illegal votes and 437 mishandled provisional ballots, according to a Jan. 27 Seattle Times article. 300 illegal votes were cast by felons, in the name of dead people or by people who voted more than once, according to the article.

Because of this, the Republican Party is calling for a statewide revote. This, however, would cost approximately \$4 million, with taxpayers footing the bill, according to the article. And chances are, a revote would provide the state with the same unclear outcome.

Even if the Republican Party has found 737 questionable votes, a revote would not give the state a more legitimate outcome, because

it would not reflect how people felt on Nov. 2, 2004, but rather what people think after these three months of discrepancies and partisan bickering.

According to Secretary of State Sam Reed's Web site, mistakes usually affect both candidates equally and do not significantly change the race. Even if the questionable votes are discounted, this would not guarantee Rossi a victory. It is even possible the votes would again be in Gregoire's favor.

Washington state law explains that election irregularities are not grounds for invalidating an election unless it can be proven the election outcome would be changed, according to a Jan. 27 article in The Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

The Republican Party has so far failed to prove these so-called illegal votes would change the outcome of the election, and it has not released the names of people it claims voted illegally, according to the Times article.

Rossi said he knows citizens of Washington want the election controversy to end soon, according to an article on MSNBC.com. Yet he and the Republican party are putting their interests above what is best for the state.

The election process is not flawless — nobody is perfect, and mistakes will be made by election workers and by the machines that count the ballots. But a legal challenge leading up to a revote likely would take several months.

In addition, it is unlikely that such an event would restore the public's faith in the election process.

It is too late to heal the wounds caused by the election. A revote will not solve the problem of a flawed system. It is time for Rossi to accept defeat and move on.

'While the state is facing a \$1.8 million budget deficit that needs serious attention, Dino Rossi still is pouting about his loss in the November election.'

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VALENTINE'S DAY MESSAGES

MATEO DE mi carazon: estoy tan orgullosa de ti. Te mando todo mi amor en este dia de san valentine. Ceb



BRADLEY, HAPPY Valentine's Day honey! You are so special to me and I want you to know that I love you with my whole heart. —Jessica



TO TIFFANY I love you 4ever



TO MY Little Coffee Pot, It's been 35 days since we last kissed hello, and about two seconds since I last thought about you. The phone doesn't cuddle the way you do; though it is comforting to hear your voice, I miss your arms and I miss your kisses. Please think of me tonight as you lie down to sweet dreams, and know that when I smile for no apparent reason- I'm thinking of you. -Big Guy P.S. you'll always be my girl.

SECRET ADMIRERS: Every one a hopeless, hopeful fool but what can I say? I'm one of them. So here goes: JB, you are the most amazing, beautiful, honest, hilarious girl I've ever known. Maybe we'll be more than friends someday. Love, E.S.

Land: Loggers have no place on committee

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

miles in new roads during the same amount of time, according to the same Web site.

Proponents of the "no action" plan for the watershed, including the general manager of the Great Western Lumber Company, said the logging industry would suffer from a reduction in available harvesting land, according to the department's Web site. Jobs and revenue could be lost and small logging companies severely damaged.

But the issue affects more people than just Bellingham loggers. Some of the areas that would be open to harvesting are on potentially unstable slopes, according to the Web site of the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, a Bellingham environmental advocacy group.

These slopes need trees and vegetation to remain stable and protect the people who live on or below them from mud slides. The department previously has logged unstable areas, resulting in damaged homes, according to the alliance's site.

An increase in timber harvesting in unstable areas also could result in more soil contamination in streams and rivers, affecting more than 80,000 people.

Forester and committee member Aubrey Stargell has been quoted as calling

the preferred plan an "undue burden," according to the alliance's site. Seeing this, it is clear these loggers have something other than conservation on their minds.

Two Whatcom County Council members also spoke out against the committee appointments on the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance Web site: Laurie Caskey-Schreiber and Dan McShane.

Both said they are not sure the committee will remain unbiased and said the majority of the committee does not have expert knowledge in slope stability.

Sutherland should have taken their objections — as well as those of many other community members — more seriously than he did.

Department spokesperson Patty Henson, however, said she did not understand why environmental groups such as the Ecosystem Alliance had a problem with the committee appointments, according to the Herald article.

But it should not be hard to understand why putting three loggers in charge of the environment would be a risky decision.

The department should re-evaluate these appointments and take the job of creating a committee more seriously. The interests of people living in the watershed and around it rely on them.

Stones: Engraved pricetags are more ethical

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

of everlasting love.

I pick on women though, because, with the exception of rap artists, how many guys do you know who care about the size of a diamond?

Which leads me to the status factor. That is, for many women, the carat size of the diamond is an indication of how well off your husband is. But the carat size won't guarantee your marriage will be any stronger, because, if it did, Liz Taylor would be the happiest married woman ever — seven times over.

According to adiamondisforever.com, a Web site sponsored by the Diamond Trading Company, the standard American male would have to spend two months' salary to signify a lifetime of commitment.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Web site, the average American's salary in 2003 was \$36,764. Now, I'm not good with long division so I will estimate that amount would have to be around \$3,000 — and, considering you can buy rohypnol for \$100 a tablet on the internet, that's a lot of horse tranquilizer forgone.

On the other hand, I'm not saying diamond engagement rings lead to divorce. But what happens once half of these marriages end?

Neither former mate can sell the diamonds back for even half the price.

Perhaps the reason is because De Beers, with the help of the South African government, successfully maintained a monopoly on the world's diamond supply.

According to a July 10, 2004, Washington Times article, the U.S. Justice Department charged De Beers with having a monopoly, but the company did not show up to court. After a 10-year ban in the United States, De Beers settled its case for \$10 million and pledged to recognize the U.S. court system.

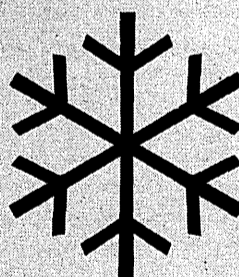
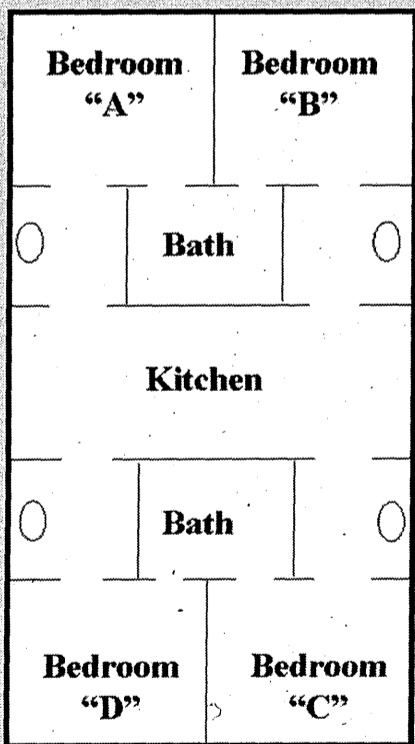
I'm not one to call for a boycott, but, if you do, why not choose a product that has no benefit to society? I mean, let's be honest, ladies, if diamonds were never discovered, would your life be any different — aside from fewer sexual favors, of course.

And men, if you're going to spend nearly \$3,000 on your wife, maybe you should just get her a price tag. Or better yet, give the money to a charity for mine workers with the amount donated engraved on a tag that she can place around her neck.

Ladies, don't get me wrong, I'm not one to price women. But if you're going to do it to yourselves, you could put the money toward a good cause. At the very least, you could sleep at night knowing you did not support a product that cuts off children's limbs.

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