

SPECIAL REPORT:

Sunshine Week

Looking into public records

Western Front reporters investigate how easily public records are available on Western's campus

Andy Campbell
Kelly Lemons
THE WESTERN FRONT

Want to read Western President Karen Morse's e-mail? On Feb. 23, The Western Front reporters requested all of Morse's e-mail correspondence regarding the new campus construction. Liz Sipes, administrative assistant to the president, sent reporters to the public records office in Wilson Library.

Washington state law allows the administration five business days to respond, and a letter came in the mail on day five responding to the request:

"I have forwarded your request and have asked to determine if the records you're requesting are disclosable."

On March 14, Connie Mallison, administrative assistant to the library public records officer, said she would hand over Morse's e-mail once they had a chance to be redacted by the assistant attorney general on campus, Wendy Bohlke.

The Project

According to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), the public can contact any government institution and request any document — electronic or paper — maintained by or received by any agency of the state that has to do with public affairs — Western included.

Venturing to see how forthcoming Western is with its public records, four reporters from the Front requested more than 17 documents from multiple departments and agencies within the university.

Among the documents requested were Morse's e-mail, University Police records, chemistry lab injuries and WWU Foundation/Alumni activity. There was also a request for the marketing contract between the university and the TalkingRain

Beverage company.

The project began officially on Feb. 22, and some information has yet to be received.

The Method

All requests were made using forms pursuant of the state Open Records Act of 1972. Although the average citizen would need only to verbally request a document, the Front reporters used a formal letterhead to provide consistency among the request, as well as proof that the request was made.

More often than not, reporters were referred to Connie Mallison, administrative assistant to the university's Public Records Officer Bela Foltin in the Wilson Library, to request public documentation.

The Results

Even when reporters took steps to make the requests easier for the receiver, such as making a formal, standardized request form, the result is not assured to be accurate information.

When Front reporters requested any contracts between the university and TalkingRain, Jennifer Hansen, contract administrator for purchasing at Western,

said these contracts didn't exist. An interview between TalkingRain CEO Doug MacLean and a Front reporter implies otherwise. TalkingRain sells its water on campus in the form of "VikingRain," which is also sold throughout Whatcom County.

TalkingRain has a licensing agreement with the WWU Foundation that Mallison's office does not have legal access to, said Mark Bagley, senior director of university advancement.

"If you asked us what the TalkingRain gift level is, that is a private number," said Stephanie Bowers, vice president for university advancement. "[Only] the donor can make sure that the donation is being used the way the donor intended."

In general, the administration responded within the five business days required by the WAC section on public records.

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WA Legislative Declaration:
"The people of this state do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them..."

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Sports columnists football team dedicates year-round

WEATHER

Friday 52°/41°

Saturday 54°/39°

Sunday 53°/41°

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AS hires new chairperson to replace student who resigned

Jeff Backman
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western sophomore Seth Hersch will take over as the new Associated Students (AS) Senate chairperson spring quarter.

The position has been vacant since Christian Opfer resigned as chairperson at the Jan. 23 senate meeting. Vice-Chairperson Brandon Adams has filled the roll as acting chairperson for almost three months while the AS Senate reviewed chairperson applications.

Normally applications would go to a hiring committee, which would hire the new chair. Due to the special circumstances in this case, the AS Board of Directors changed the process at the request of the senate. The applications were sent to the hiring committee, which then sent three of the applicants on to the senate. The senate then voted on the candidates to select its chair.

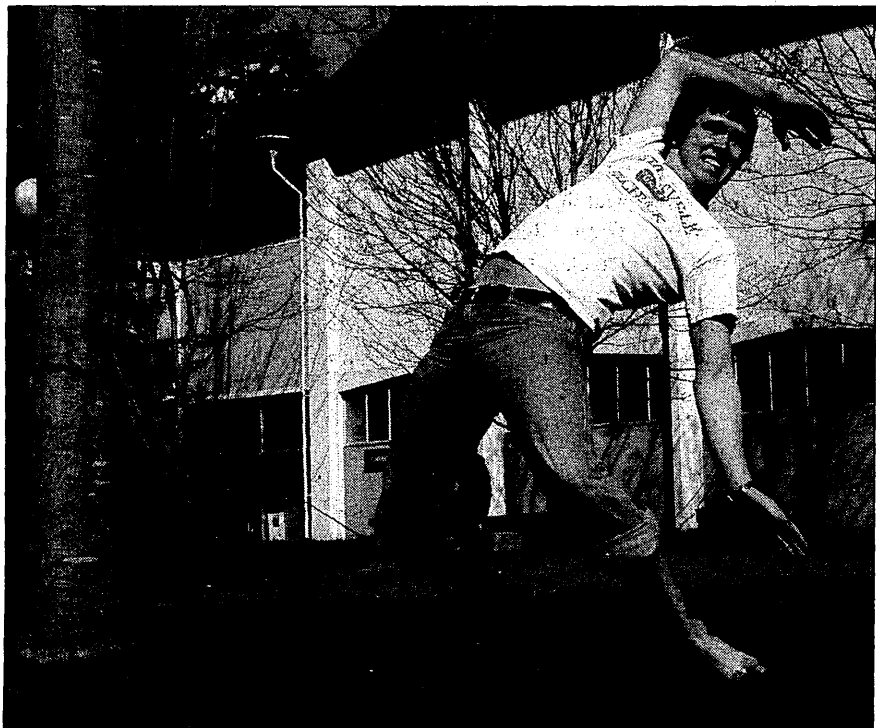
According to senate bylaws, the chairperson is responsible for running senate meetings, serving as the senate

spokesperson, managing senate affairs, reporting senate activities to the AS Board of Directors, signing contracts and holding office hours at least five hours a week.

Sen. Annie Jensen said the hiring process worked well considering the unusual circumstances of the situation. She said she thinks the senate picked the right person for the job.

"I think he has a lot of prior experience

see **SENATE** page 6 ►



photos by Mark Malijan THE WESTERN FRONT

Kyle Rogers (left) and Elle Chatman participate in slacklining in front of the Science, Mathematics and Technology Education building on March 14. Slacklining is a balancing activity done on nylon webbing between two anchor points.

>>News Briefs<<

Western professor delivers commencement speech

Elementary Education professor Marsha Riddle Buly will present "From One Graduate to Another" at the Winter Commencement ceremony at 10 a.m. March 24 in Carver Gymnasium.

This quarter's commencement includes nearly 575 undergraduates and 50 master's candidates. Buly, a 1982 Western alumna, was the recipient of Western's 2005-2006 Excellence in Teaching Award at last spring's commencement.

Admission to the ceremony will

require a ticket, but the ceremony will be shown for free in Science, Mathematics and Technology Education building room 150.

Department to host robot competition

The Computer Science Department is hosting a robot competition at 10:30 a.m. March 16 at the Communications Facility first floor lobby. Robot kits will be awarded to the two winners of the competition.

Robots must be made using safe materials and must operate autonomously. Points will be awarded for good programming, creativity, engineering and the complexity of the robot's task.

Indian musician performs at Western

The Performing Arts Center Series will present a concert by Anoushka Shankar at 7:30 p.m. April 6 in the Performing Arts Center Mainstage Theatre.

Tickets for the show range between \$16 and \$25.

Learn how to land a job

The Career Service Center and a career fair recruiter, will host a workshop designed to help students make the most out of the April 26 Career Fair at 4 p.m. on April 19 in Viking Union room 462.

Compiled by The Western Front Staff

Cops Box

Campus Police

March 9, 5:25 p.m.: Police responded to a report of a suspicious male sleeping in Wilson Library. Upon arrival, police found the subject was a student and notified him of the policies on sleeping in public libraries.

March 10, 12:42 a.m.: Police responded to a report of a large fight on the north campus exterior. Upon arrival, police arrested an 18-year-old male and a 19-year-old male on suspicion of obstructing a law enforcement officer.

March 10, 1:34 a.m.: Police arrested a 19-year-old male on suspicion of minor in possession at the Ridgeway Kappa dormitories.

March 11, 3:10 a.m.: Police arrested a 36-year-old male on suspicion of having an outstanding warrant at Wilson Library.

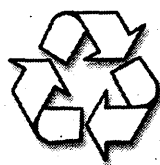
Bellingham Police

March 13, 12:10 a.m.: Police responded to reports of a loud party on the 1700 block of Humboldt Street and arrested a 19-year-old man on suspicion of minor in possession.

March 13, 9:58 a.m.: Police arrested a 25-year-old woman on suspicion of possession of marijuana on the 2000 block of Fraser Street.

March 13, 5:28 p.m.: Police responded to a report of a male threatening to rob a person retrieving money from an ATM.

Compiled by Aaron Weinberg



Recycle!

THE WESTERN FRONT

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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, unless otherwise noted. Announcements should be printed in all caps and be typed (on a legibly printed document) or typed on a computer. Announcements should be sent to FAST@wwu.edu in the subject line include a news item and clearly note that the item is for Official Announcements. Items also may be sent to "Official Announcements" (X/3164) faxed to X/4343, or brought to Community 111, DO NOT SEND ANNOUNCEMENTS DIRECTLY TO THE WESTERN FRONT. Printed announcements will not be accepted.

TESTING SCHEDULES for winter quarter may be viewed at www.ac.wwu.edu/~assess/tc.htm.

THE MATH PLACEMENT TEST will be given in OM 120 at 3 p.m. on Monday, March 19. Registration is not required. Students must bring picture identification, their student number, Social Security number, and a No. 2 pencil. A fee of \$15 is payable in the exact amount at time of testing. Allow 90 minutes.

THE MILLER ANALOGIES TEST is offered by appointment only. Make an appointment in person in OM 120 or by calling X/3080. A \$60 fee is payable at time of test. Test takes approximately 1½ hours. Preliminary scores will be available immediately. Official results will be mailed within 15 days.

ACADEMIC STUDENT ADVISERS ARE NEEDED for Summerstart and fall advising. For a full job description and application, go to www.wwu.edu/advising/Forms/asa-application.pdf or Old Main 380. For more information, call X/6145.

FACULTY ARE REMINDED THAT RESERVED PARKING SPACES are available for their use after hours and weekends with a valid parking permit or bus pass, as posted in lots 10G, 17G and Parks Hall.

WEST-B TEST. Anyone applying for admission to state-approved teacher education programs are required to meet the minimum passing score on the basic skills assessment by the application deadline. Visit www.west.nesinc.com for registration information and a study guide with sample test questions. Remaining test dates for the current academic year are May 12 and July 14. Registration deadlines are several weeks in advance.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR CAMPUS COMPACT CONFERENCE. Friday, March 30, is the online deadline to register for the Western Region Campus Compact Consortium continuums of service conference, "Catching Waves: Using Engagement to Address Critical Issues." The conference will be April 12-14 in San Jose, Calif. To register, visit www.acadweb.wwu.edu/campcomp/onlinereg.html.

DEPOSITS ARE DUE BEFORE APRIL 1 FOR PRIORITY CONSIDERATION for "Rainforest Immersion and Conservation Action" in Costa Rica June 26-Aug. 3. Participants can earn 10 credits. Cost is \$4,000 plus airfare, with a \$100 nonrefundable deposit (\$200 for nonresident students). For financial aid options and eligibility, call X/3470.

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

FOR GROUP OFFERINGS AND WORKSHOPS AT THE COUNSELING CENTER this quarter, visit www.wwu.edu/chw/counseling. For more information call X/3164.

On-campus recruiting

For complete, updated information, see www.careers.wwu.edu or stop by Old Main 280.

AS election changes aimed at stimulating student-voter turnout

Matt Jarrell
THE WESTERN FRONT

New strategies will be executed in the 2007-2008 Associated Students Board of Directors election in hopes of more candidates, more voters and a fair election, said election coordinator Molly Ayre-Svingen.

According to official ballot numbers from previous polls, the average voter turnout for AS Elections in the last five years is 16.14 percent of the student body.

"To increase voter turn out and awareness there will be a polling station in Red Square during the election," Ayre-Svingen said. "There will be wireless laptops available for students to vote right then and there as they are passing by."

Another change in the election is the deadline for each candidate's financial statement. In the financial statement, each candidate records how he or she spent their campaign money, ensuring they did not go over the \$150 limit.

Candidates interested in participating in the 2007-2008 AS Board of Directors election can turn a completed filing packet by 5 p.m. on April 5 to Viking Union room 504.

The candidacy filing packet includes valuable paperwork for candidates including a timeline, checklist and a candidate statement that will be published in the AS Review, The Western Front and the online ballot.

After registering for the election, each candidate must get 150 student signatures on a petition. Receiving a student's signature on a

petition is confirms their support for that specific candidate.

"Filling the petition has given me the opportunity to get to know different people and really put my name out there," said Western sophomore and candidate for vice president of academic affairs, Annie Jansen.

After completing the petition, each candidate must attend a mandatory meeting at 5:30 p.m. on April 6 in Viking Union room 462. Campaigning begins the following morning at 10 a.m.

Campaigning is stressful, but the end result is worth it, said AS Vice President for activities Nate Panelo.

"A good candidate is someone who is passionate, has a sense of personality, and knows this campus well," Panelo said. "You can tell who puts their all into it, and it will reflect in a successful year if elected."

Erik Lowe, Western sophomore and candidate for Vice President of legislative affairs, said he has always been interested in politics after his work with the Western Democrats and the Legislative Affairs Council.

"All students are members of the AS," Lowe said. "Running for a position on the board of directors is the best way to give back to the school, having the opportunity to completely change the Western experience for the better."

The 2007-2008 AS Board of Directors election will take place April 25-26. Voting will be available to all students on their MyWestern account.

No suspects in Sunday's Sehome Arboretum fire

Casey Gainor
THE WESTERN FRONT

A fire atop the Sehome Hill Arboretum's lookout tower, located behind the Fairhaven Complex and Communications Facility, on March 11, warranted responses from Bellingham's Fire and Police Departments, but Lt. Flo Simon of the Bellingham Police Department said little could be done about it.

"The case has not been assigned," Simon said. "We have no suspects and so there isn't much we can do unless we find someone."

Tom Slack, supervisor of Maintenance of Buildings and Structures for the Bellingham Parks Department, said the fire took place on the stair landing just below the top level of the lookout tower. The fire was approximately 3 feet by 2 feet.

Simon said the damage isn't extensive aside from some broken rails and burn damage to a few of the floorboards, and the floorboards will have to be replaced before the tower can reopen.

"It looked like somebody had kicked the rails around,"

Simon said. "They were probably broken off to start the fire and then someone else used them to put it out."

Simon said the call came in at 2:21 p.m. after passersby reported the fire to Western authorities. University Police turned the matter over to the Bellingham Police because the arboretum is within city limits and under the city's jurisdiction.


The 180-acre arboretum is a natural forest habitat and is cooperatively managed by Western and the City of Bellingham. The lookout tower sits at its top.

Slack said the parks department typically deals with a lot of vandalism, but not generally at the arboretum because there aren't many structures. But he said unless the police apprehend a suspect, the next step is to move on.

"We're just trying to find out from the police at this point if we can do repairs," he said.

The parks department will not have an opportunity to repair the damage until given an OK from police, which is dependent upon any further investigation.

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SPECIAL REPORT:



Reporters find accessing public records a challenge

► **PUBLIC RECORDS** from 1

The Legislative Declaration under Washington state law, why Washington state has open records laws:

"The people of this state do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created."

But the individual responses demonstrated that each department handles requests differently.

Some requests came back with timely answers granting access to public records. Hansen was quick to hand over the contract for the new Academic Instructional Center on campus, as well as more than 1,000 other contracts between the university and private businesses. Also, Karen Morse's e-mail correspondence, after some redaction, has been sent by mail to the Front.

Two requests came back with complete denials. Western's financial aid office stated that a list of students who lost their financial aid due to drug-related crimes was not a public record. The TalkingRain contract was not released because Hansen said it didn't exist.

The vast majority, however, resulted in a waiting game. Officials, by publication deadline, said they are still making efforts to find the requested information.

A formal request to inspect the budget of the WWU Foundation's annual "Fun in the Sun Weekend" meet-and-greet event for alumni in Arizona is still pending. On Feb. 18, Susan Bakse, director of special campaigns for the foundation, said she would respond in a few days when she found out if she could get the information the Front was looking for.

It was the last time the Front reporters heard from her by publication deadline.

The Foundation and the University

The WWU Foundation has made it clear that its first priority is to shield the privacy of its donors from public records requests. Angela Vandenhaak, director of Development of Annual Giving, said the foundation does not want to compromise its ability to raise funds, implying that donors will become scarce if information regarding their donations becomes available to the public.

Wendy Bohlke, Western's Assistant Attorney General, said the university created the foundation in 1966 to help address the rising cost of education to students. Even though the university pays all Western employees, as well as for supplies, office space and all university equipment, the only real separation between the university and the foundation is stated in Article V of the agreement between the two entities:

"The parties agree and acknowledge that foundation books, accounts and records, are not public records."

Bohlke said the foundation has one real purpose.

The Western Board of Trustees section in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 28B.35.120, subsection 10) gives the trustees the power to establish a foundation.

"A foundation is really a legal fiction," Bohlke said. "[It is] a construct of law to allow for people to make gifts and have them held for students."

Bohlke said all universities have a foundation similar to Western's. She said foundations usually differ when it comes to how close their ties are with

see **PUBLIC RECORDS** page 5 ►

'How to' guide on public records

Ashley Veintimilla
THE WESTERN FRONT

The process for obtaining public records can be easily utilized by Western students as well as any other person.

Public records are defined by Washington state law RCW 42.56 as any writing that contains information relating to the conduct of government or the performance of any governmental function.

Public records are anything that is recorded in relation to governmental conduct, such as written documents, maps, photos, tapes, e-mail or databases. Freedom of information laws in Washington state dictate that the public has a legal right to view and copy any of this information.

Mike Hiestand, attorney for the Student Press Law Center, which helps defend First Amendment rights of student journalists. The national organization, which operates from Washington D.C., encourages students to utilize open record laws.

"People think using open records law is a lot more complicated than it actually is," Hiestand said. "It's really a piece of cake. It's a shame students and regular citizens don't use it more often."

The process for obtaining a public record includes the following steps:

- **Contact the agency possessing the record and request to see it or make a copy.**

Simply contact the agency and politely request it, Hiestand said. A formal request is not always necessary,

he said. Western has numerous different agencies that operate to fulfill student needs, such as the University Police, Student Health Center, Wade King Student Recreation Center and financial aid offices.

For example, a student could view records from the Recreation Center relating to how many students go there on a daily basis or find out from Campus Services records of how many parking tickets are issued a day on campus. Records also provide information relating to safety issues, such as how many break-ins occur around campus or how many sex offenders are registered living on campus.

- **Submit a formal request to the agency's public records office.**

Printable forms for records requests at Western are available online at the Western library Web site. To request a paper form, contact the library administration office. Western, like many large institutions, has an official office, located in Haggard Hall 231, to coordinate these requests.

Public records officer Bela Foltin asks that all forms be submitted to their office and not directly to the university's different agencies. Public records office employees determine whether the requested information is allowed to be released legally and if so, what department will handle it.

"We ourselves don't interpret any request," Foltin said. "If we have any questions we check with the university's legal counsel about whether or not something can be legally released."

- **Wait five business days.**

Within five days of receiving a records request, an agency is legally required to respond by providing either the record itself, an estimate of how long the agency will take to provide the information or a denial of the request with a specific reference to Washington state law explaining why the information cannot be released.

"A response from the public records office has to be postmarked within five business days," Foltin said. "It doesn't actually have to be in the requester's hands within five days."

Some records are not legally accessible to the public, such as financial information, medical records and other personal information, Hiestand said. If a request is denied, an agency must always justify the denial with a direct reference to the law, he said.

- **If denied, file an appeals letter.**

If a public records request is denied, an appeal can be submitted to have the request reviewed and reconsidered.

Agencies are also not required to create records that don't exist, said administrative assistant to the librarian Connie Mallison. This means the agencies aren't required to compile information or do new research to fulfill a request.

"People need to understand no one is obligated to create a record in order to meet a request," Mallison said.

Public records provide students with access to information that affects their lives on a daily basis. Through requesting public records, students can gain insight on how their university functions financially and academically.

Sunshine Week

► PUBLIC RECORDS from 4

their university.

"It is a big gray area," Bohlke said. "It seems odd that [we] would have a private non-profit; [it is] offensive to our notions of openness and transparency, but the fact is that are reasons for them to exist. If you want to engage [donors], to raise funds you need to have these foundations."

When the foundation receives donations from companies that have business contracts with the college or when, according to a 2003 Western tax file, four out of five properties sold by the

"Overall, Western's system for allowing access to public documents produced varied results."

- Western Front reporters
Andy Cambell and Kelly Lemons

foundation were sold for a loss, the public has no access to these transactions.

Bohlke's so-called "gray area" has proven to be counterproductive in the past.

Former Western cashier supervisor Debra Potes embezzled scholarship checks suspected to amount to \$117,727 between Dec. 6, 2001 and June 24, 2005 according a 2006 Washington state audit report. The embezzlement did not involve procedures of the foundation, Vice President for University Advancement Stephanie Bowers said. The university did not discover the theft, however, until two scholarship donors notified the college that students hadn't received their money.

Not even the Washington State Auditor's Office has authority to verify records released by the foundation unless misappropriation of college funds can be demonstrated, spokesperson for the auditor's office Mindy Chambers said.

Even Bohlke said she couldn't get her hands on the foundation's budget.

The only person outside the foundation who has access to its annual financial report is George Pierce, vice president of Financial and Business Affairs on campus. Other than that, the university auditor's office does not have the authority to examine any of the foundation's records, said director of Western's internal audits Kim Herrenkohl.

The Exceptions

Exclusions to open records laws generally include personal records, educational records and medical records.

Mallison, after denying the financial aid information request, said there was a student senate meeting on Feb. 27 about this specific case, and said Front reporters could access the minutes of that meeting if they wanted. This would require another open records request.

"During this presentation, [Clara Capron, director of financial aid] told the student senate that no student lost their existing financial aid, during the time period you specified, due to drug-related crimes," Mallison said in her response letter.

There was no further documentation of the meeting enclosed.

Overall, Western's system for allowing access to public documents produced varied results. The law, technically, only requires the administration to respond to these requests within five business days and attempt to retrieve the specified information.

When the record is deemed public by Bohlke, the law says the administration must provide the specified information. If the administration needs more time to gather the information, they must provide a time they expect the record to be available.

When the answer is no, a petition to Western's president is available.

The law doesn't elaborate further.

Western lawyers represent all sides of university

Austin Mackenzie
Andy Campbell
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western's Assistant Attorney Generals Wendy Bohlke and Lisa Wochos' jobs are double-edged swords.

Both legally represent the WWU Foundation and the university, which is comprised of all affiliated students, departments and agencies. They give the last word on public records requests and aid in responses.

What happens when the students and the administration take legal action against each other? This presents a conflict of interest.

A conflict of interest occurs when a party involved in a case could be considered biased because of its relationship to another party involved.

For example, in 1995, Bellingham police subpoenaed a video tape from The Western Front containing footage of a Miller Hall break-in. Bohlke said she advised them to hand it over since it had already been aired on the news.

"If we're part of an institution or agency that has a conflict, they have a screening process where different people are assigned to [represent]."

- Wendy Bohlke,

Western assistant attorney general

Floyd McKay, retired Western journalism professor and the Front adviser at the time of the subpoena, said Bohlke represents the university, not necessarily the Front, which is an independent organization of the university.

"She felt it was in the university's best interest to give up the tape," McKay said.

The Front editors chose to disregard Bohlke's advice, acting independently from the university. Using a Bellingham Herald-appointed attorney, they won the case, and did not have to turn over the tape.

Bohlke said she attends monthly meetings with other education lawyers in Bellingham and conflicts of interest is one of the issues on the agenda.

She said if the university decides a conflict of interest exists in a case, another attorney is appointed from the State Attorney General's Office to represent Western.

"If we're part of an institution or agency that has a conflict, they have a screening process where different people are assigned to [represent]," Bohlke said.

Lyle Harris, retired Western journalism professor, said a conflict between the university and the state functions just like any other state dispute, where both sides are represented by state employees.

Bohlke is one of more than 450 attorneys who make up the Attorney General's Office, where a screening process takes place to determine who would best represent each side of a conflict of interest case.

Even though both attorneys would come from the state, Bohlke said it would not constitute a conflict of interest because the screening process ensures each appointed attorney would impartially represent the included parties.

Since Wochos and Bohlke's jobs include representing the university, they determine when conflict of interest cases arise.

Steps to obtaining



1 Contact the agency possessing the record and request to see it or make a copy.

2 Submit a formal request to the agency's public records office.

3 Wait five business days.

4 If denied, file an appeals letter to the public information officer. Cite a relevant law and explain why you are legally allowed to have the information.

IF DENIED

Where to look for help:

~ The Washington state Web site for all laws: www.access.wa.gov

~ The Society of Professional Journalists Access Guide: available online at www.spjwash.org/access

~ Student Press Law Center: www.splc.org

Plans for waterfront develop

Western colleges present strategies at open forum

Sarah Mason
THE WESTERN FRONT

Plans for developing Bellingham Bay's shoreline for an extension of numerous Western colleges were discussed in an open forum on March 13.

The plans have been part of a long, multi-decade process, said Doug Graham, a consultant for STRATUS, a consulting service during a presentation at the forum.

Western chemistry professor Mark Bussell said he is excited about housing a new Consortium for the Technological Innovation and Development center (CTID) in the waterfront facilities.

"The idea is to create a truly integrated part of the community."

- Doug Graham, STRATUS consultant

The CTID center would provide offices for new businesses to operate in while they seek scientific or technological product development help from students and faculty.

"We're providing an applied project for both students and faculty to work on," Bussell said. "The outcome of which is progress in research and development is going back to these small companies."

Bussell said these spaces would allow companies to establish roots in Bellingham, working like a magnet for start-up companies and eventually turn the region into a hub for high-tech employers.

Bussell said working with companies in the CTID center would not only benefit community job-seekers, but would also help students attain real-world experience.

"We can provide very rich internships for students working on applied scientific and technological projects," Bussell said.

Graham said plans have also been made to move Western's Small Business Development Center, which is now located in the Bellingham Towers on Commercial Street, to the waterfront facilities.

He said this move would allow the center to work with the CTID center to form a strong support system for any new business in the area, as well as giving business or technology students a chance to interact in a professional environment.

Bradley Smith, Dean of Huxley College of the Environment, said the new facilities would give Huxley students the opportunity to apply their skills in a real-world setting with new lab spaces and alongside agencies, such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Coastguard.

Such opportunities would not be possible in the current buildings that house Huxley College — Arntzen Hall and the Environmental

Science building, Smith said. These spaces don't provide enough room for the growing number of environmental science students, Smith said.

"Currently we are a full college and we do no external marketing and still the demand is increasing," Smith said. "I think everyone in the college would agree with me that our space is pretty crowded."

Victor Nolet, associate professor at Woodring College of Education, said lack of space also presents a problem for the current Woodring facility in Miller Hall.

The waterfront facilities would allow more space for Woodring students, as well as provide room for a program that would train educators in the area, Nolet said.

"For the 21st century we need to have a very different learning and teaching space," Nolet said. "We think that would really happen here [at the waterfront facilities]."

Developing this extension of Western is part of a larger waterfront development project, Graham said. Between 4 and 9 million square feet of waterfront property is planned to be developed, he said.

Western has been working with the City of Bellingham and the Port of Bellingham, who have started planning for housing developments and a new business sector to be built near Western's waterfront facilities, Graham said.

"The idea is to create a truly integrated part of the community," Graham said. "It is not all park, it is not all city, it is not all Western — it is in a sense, a development which has all aspects of those."

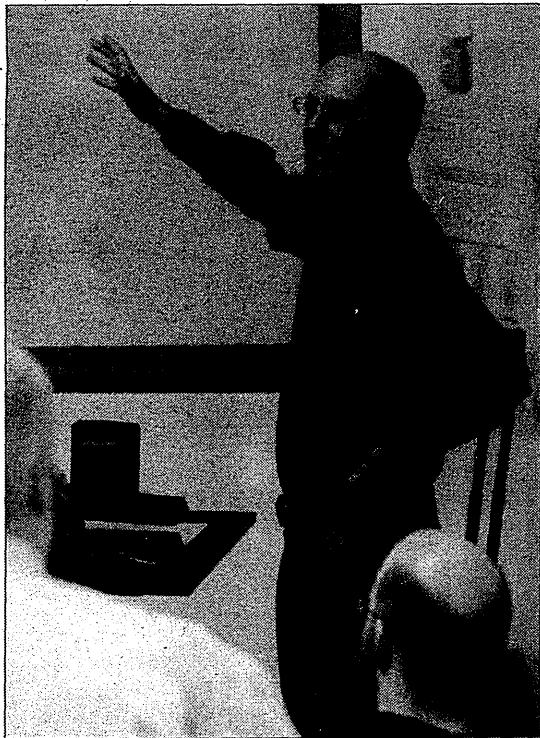


photo by Mark Malijan THE WESTERN FRONT

Doug Graham, a consultant STRATUS talks about the waterfront development project in a public forum on March 13 at Western.

Senators vote 12-1 for new chairperson

► SENATE from 1

and seems confident and motivated," Jansen said. "I think he will do a great job."

Adams, one of the three final applicants, withdrew his application after the hiring committee decided who to recommend to the senate, leaving the senate only two applicants to choose from at its Jan. 23 meeting: Hersch and Kamille Go. Adams said he decided to rescind his application because of other commitments.

The two were allowed to make opening statements at the meeting, then were asked a series of questions prepared by the senators. The senate deliberated behind closed doors before inviting the applicants back in for the vote.

The senate voted by secret ballot 12-1 to hire Hersch for the position.

Hersch, an undeclared music composition major, grew up in Snohomish and graduated from Snohomish High School, where he was active in the student government. He transferred to Western at the beginning of winter quarter from Cascadia Community College where he spent the two previous quarters. Prior to that, he spent one semester at Indiana University studying business and jazz composition.

After only one quarter at Western, Hersch said he is ready to start taking a more active role at the school.

"I like to hit the ground running," Hersch said.

Hersch said he hopes to improve communication between the AS and the student body, but said there is only so much that he can do.

"Certainly AS could always do that extra one thing to improve communication,"

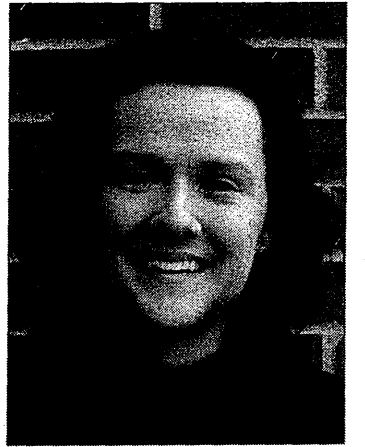


photo by Jeff Backman THE WESTERN FRONT

Western Sophomore Seth Hersch was elected as the new AS Senate chairperson on March 13.

Hersch said. "As it stands, the ball is really in the students' court. There are only a handful of things that you can do, in a leadership position, to prompt them to read the information."

Hersch said he has no specific issues on his agenda because he has only been at Western for one quarter. He plans to listen to students who have been at Western longer to determine what the issues are that students here face.

Adams said Hersch will take over the duties of chairperson officially at the start of spring quarter. Adams will continue to serve as the acting senate chairperson until then, although the senate will not hold any meetings during that time.

Acting senate vice-Chairperson Kelly Hansen said she had reservations going into the meeting because neither of the applicants had experience with the senate, but she was pleased with the result.

"I was really impressed with Hersch," Hansen said. "I am more than comfortable that he will meet or exceed his requirements as senate chairperson."

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Associate Professor, University of Washington
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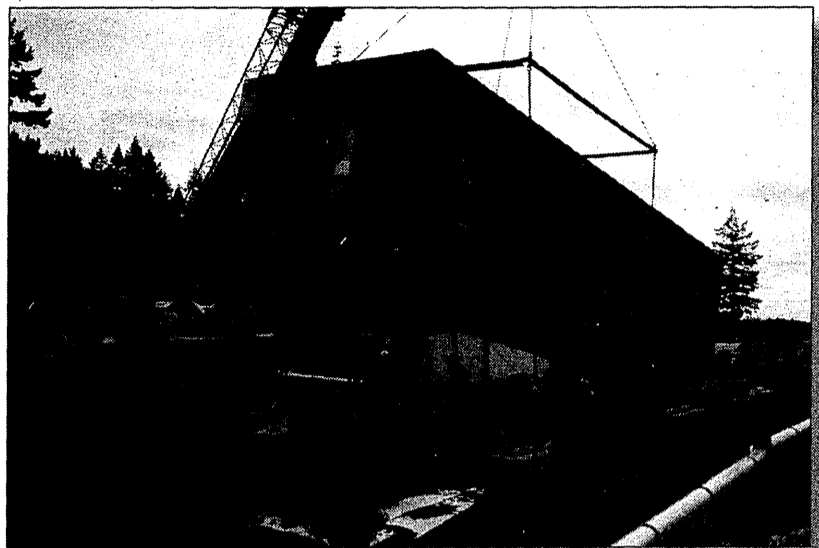
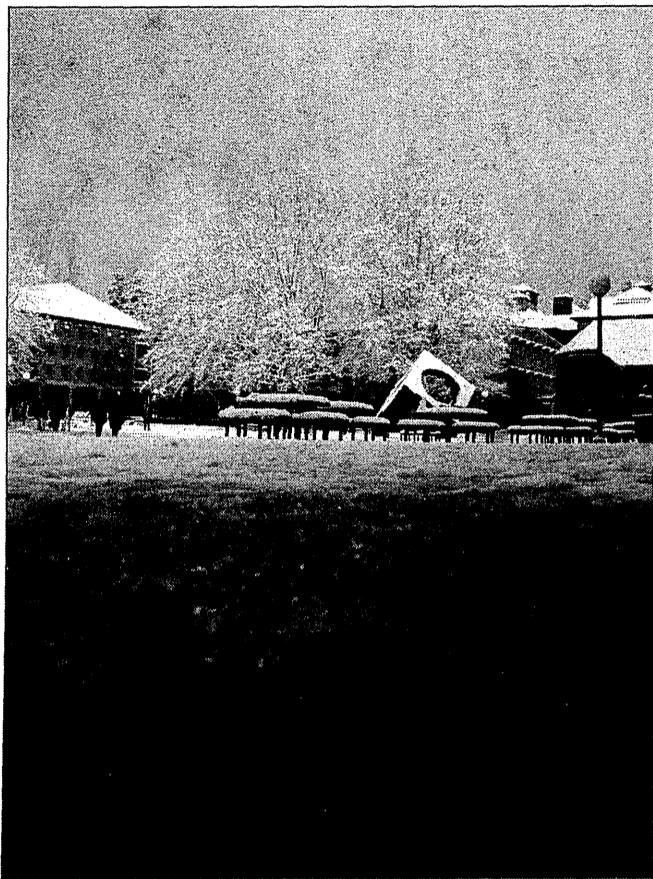
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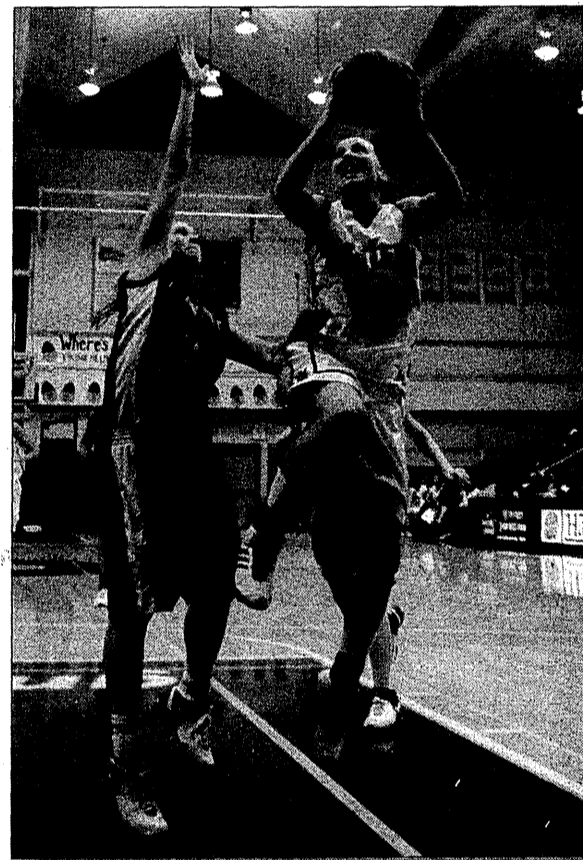
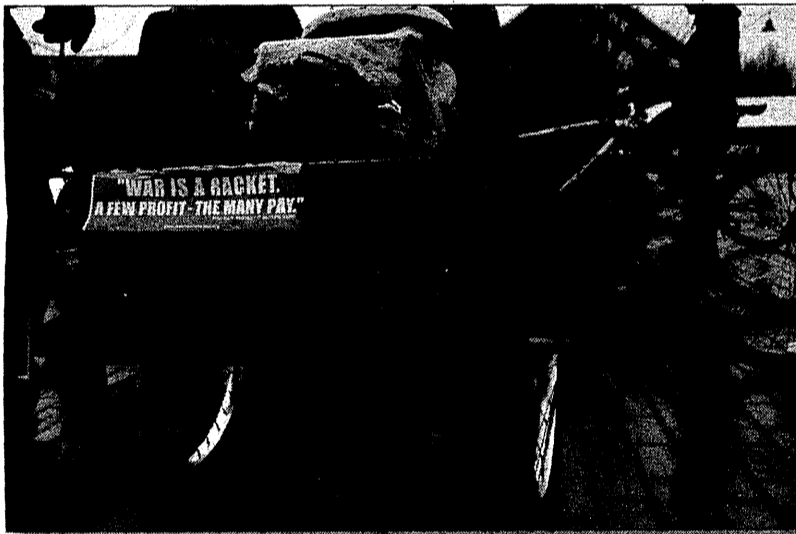


Reflections of winter quarter 2007



(Right) Red Square appeared white twice winter quarter, as snow fell on Bellingham in January, and at the beginning of March.

(Above) Construction for the Academic Instructional Center began on south campus on Feb. 22. To prepare for construction, the mobile buildings that once stood between the Wade King Recreation Center and the Communications Facility were removed on Nov. 17, 2006.



(Left) Western senior forward Liz McCarrell shoots against Northwest Nazarene University on Jan. 18. The Viking women went on to play in the West Regional of the NCAA Division II National Tournament. The team lost its first game of the competition, 78-45 to the University of California San Diego, who went on to win the West Region Championship. Western finished the season 18-10 overall.

Western students, including the Associated Students club Students for a Democratic Society, rallied on Feb. 24 in protest of military recruitment strategies and the Iraq war. The event began with a bike ride, sponsored by Critical Mass, an organization that promotes pollution-free transportation, to the Armed Forces Career Center on Telegraph Road, the site of the protest.

photos by Mark Malijan THE WESTERN FRONT

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Stand-up guy

*NBC first stop for
Western senior
pursuing his dreams
of stand-up comedy*

Annie Reinke
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western senior Jimmy Sorrentino may have his own stand-up comedy show if he wins the title of "The Last Comic Standing," on the NBC reality show competition in which he will compete. On March 30, Sorrentino will fly to San Antonio, Calif. to begin filming the new season of the NBC show that will air this summer.

Two years ago Sorrentino started Western's Jesters Club, the first and only stand-up comedy club on campus.

"We don't bring acts," Sorrentino said. "We are the acts."

His club hosted a night of stand-up comedy March 8 in Highland Hall Lounge, where six club members performed their routines.

"I've just always loved making people laugh," Sorrentino said. "Every joke that I have is based on something real — there's some sliver of truth in everything I say, but of course, a lot of it's exaggerated."

Sorrentino has performed at Harvey's Underground Club in Portland, Ore. the Comedy Underground in Seattle and Tacoma, Late Night at the Viking Union and at Open Mic Night at Western's Underground Coffeehouse.

Sorrentino will spend the next year in California, where he grew up, trying to break into the comedy business. His friend and fellow club member Kenny Davis, a Western graduate, will also move to California with him and also try to become a professional stand-up.

"No matter how far I get in the competition, just to have gotten so far is a real confidence-booster," Sorrentino said.

He said many contestants on "The Last Comic Standing" end up getting their own television specials, even if they don't win. Sorrentino said he hopes to book comedy tours and get an agent as a result of the exposure he'll get from participating on the show.



photo courtesy of Jimmy Sorrentino

Western senior Jimmy Sorrentino rehearsing for his March 9 performance with Western's Jesters Club in the Highland Hall Lounge. Sorrentino will be a contestant on NBC's reality show competition, "Last Comic Standing," which begins filming in Los Angeles on March 30.

"It's a huge step in any comedian's career to be able to be in a show like that," said Western freshman Collin Ray, who is a Sorrentino's suitemate and fellow Jesters Club member. "He's taking the initiative to go down there and I'm really excited for him. I respect him for chasing his dreams."

Sorrentino said he wanted to be on the show since he started watching it four years ago, and he checked online periodically for audition places and times. In January, NBC asked for potential contestants to send in tapes. Sorrentino sent his tape and received a call to attend open casting calls, because the show airs audition footage of contestants.

"He's a lot better than 95 percent of the comics that I've seen at [an amateur] level," Davis said. "It's because, for one, his writing is insanely clever. The second thing is, he's not mean-spirited, which most stand-up comedians are now."

In seventh grade Sorrentino's teacher wrote in his yearbook "I expect to see you doing stand-up comedy one day."

"That was the first time I thought it would be cool to do stand-up for a living," Sorrentino said.

"...his writing is insanely clever. The second thing is, he's not mean spirited, which most stand-up comedians are now."

- Kenny Davis, Western alum, stand-up comedian, and friend of Jimmy Sorrentino

Davis said "The Last Comic Standing" is a great set-up for Sorrentino's particular brand of comedy because of his rapid-fire punch lines.

"In a two-minute set, he can get in like

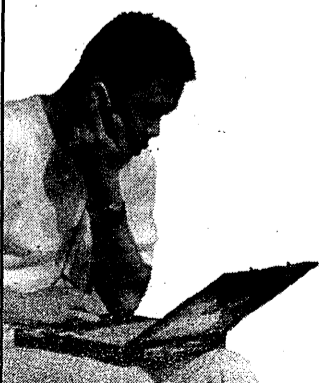
eight to 10 punch lines," Davis said. Sorrentino said he attributes his sense of humor to growing up in Hollywood and going to an urban high school where his dad worked as a police officer. To ease the tension his father's career sometimes caused among his peers, Sorrentino would make jokes about it.

"All the weird things that I saw growing up in Southern California really influenced my eclectic style of comedy, where I just make fun of everything," Sorrentino said.

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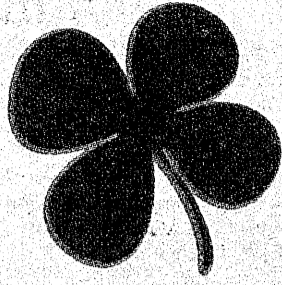


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St. Paddy's Day

Boundary Bay celebrates Irish holiday with

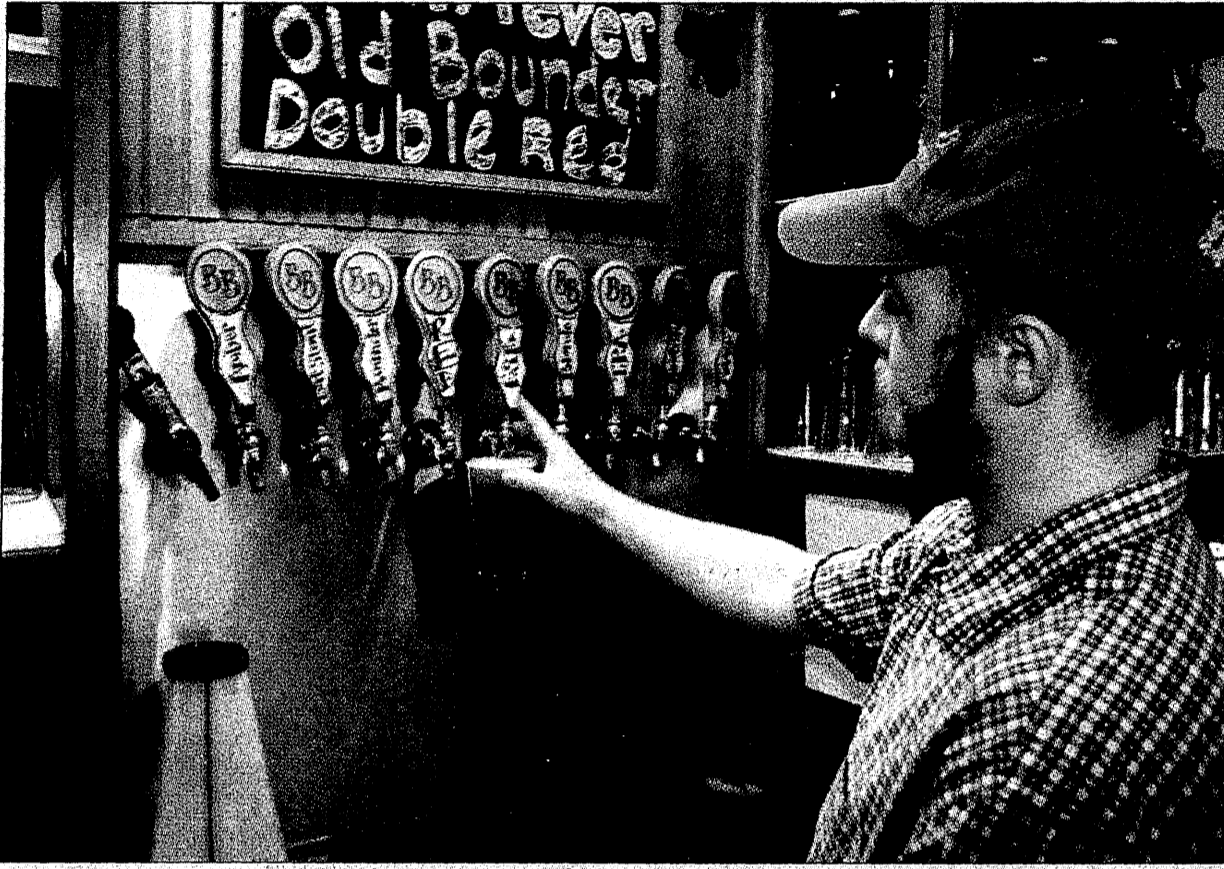


photo by Justin Steyer THE WESTERN FRONT

Boundary Bay bartender Evan Croton, pours a pint for a patron on March 13. Boundary Bay's annual St. Patrick's Day event features live music, authentic Irish food and Dry Irish Stout on tap.

Jessica Araujo
THE WESTERN FRONT

Boundary Bay Brewery and Bistro in downtown Bellingham is calm during the day. The bartender serves a few regulars at the bar and small groups of customers eat lunch in the dining area. This is a typical weekday afternoon at the well-known bar, but general manager Janet E. Lightner said she is expecting a full house for Boundary Bay's St. Patrick's Day event on March 17.

"St. Patrick's Day is one of the biggest days for us," Lightner said. "This event is a tradition and has been hosted by Boundary Bay, at least since I started working in 1999."

Boundary Bay will open at 10:30 a.m. Saturday and Celtic Harp player Kathie Hardy will be the first performer of the day followed by the Penk O'Donnel step dancers, Lightner said.

The Penk O'Donnel dancers are from the School of Irish Dancers in Vancouver, British Columbia.

"The dancers are a popular act," Lightner said. "They have performed for our St. Patrick's Day event in the past and they were a hit."

Other performances for the event include the Bellingham Pipe Band, Seattle Celtic band The Loose Digits, local Irish folk singer James Higgins and The Paddy Whackers. All performances throughout the day are free except The PaddyWhackers, which will perform at 9 p.m. and costs \$4, Lightner said.

"The Paddy Whackers will feature Robert Blake, Chris Glass and Jan Peters, all local musicians," Lightner said. "Robert Blake tours Ireland annually, so he has a great collection of Irish music."

Brains and brew join forces

Western students, alumni and professors compete for cash at Irish pub Uisce's popular Quiz Night

John C. Davies
THE WESTERN FRONT

What is the difference between Vegemite and Marmite? What is Scooter Libby's real first name? What is the difference between Canadian whiskey and American whiskey?

Uisce's Tuesday night Pop Quiz, which takes place weekly at 8 p.m. at the Irish bar on Commercial Street, is not for the meek. Each week, brains and Guinness come together for a rowdy and ever-growing competition for the prize of a pitcher of dollar bills.

"I come because you can feel smart and drink at the same time," said Western senior Gaby Dufault, whose team's best finish was 11th place.

Each week, teams with names such as Gimme Gimme Octupis and the Dum-Dums, gather at the bar. The rules: no more than people six per team, \$1 per person buy-in, no cell phone assistance and winner takes all. It's customary, however, to give the second-place team its dollar back.

Two categories remain the same each week: In the News, and Starts With..., which begins with a different letter each week. At the March 13 quiz, categories varied from Dingo Ate My Baby (Australian trivia), to Oh, Grow Up, which produced answers such as Lake Titicaca, ausfahrt and poop

deck. The emcee tallies and announces results midway through the quiz and at the end. Winning teams usually take home between \$20 and \$30 per team member.

Each week the "trivia master" writes the questions and emcees the event. After passing out an answer sheet, he reads the questions over a microphone.

Uisce's Trivia Night

8 p.m. every Tuesday

Uisce

1319 Commercial Street

\$1 per person

Western senior Seamus Walsh, whose been coming to the event since January, said each week Trivia Night gets bigger and bigger. A doorman often turns people away because the bar has reached capacity. In order to get a table, participants should arrive by 6:30 p.m., Walsh said.

Walsh, who said he is seriously into trivia, used to commute to Olympia for trivia competitions. He and teammate Adam "Viper" Krell also competed in Knowledge Bowl in high school, a Washington state trivia competition. They said they always wanted a trivia night in Bellingham. Their team has won the competition three times.

Walsh and Krell, whose team name changes weekly, along with a team of Western professors and a team of Associated Students employees, are notoriously the teams to beat.

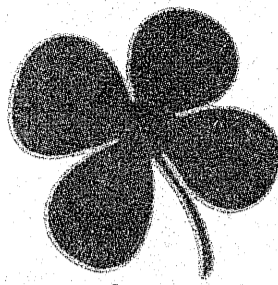
"My team always has other professors on it, so our key is intellectual firepower," said Huxley College of the Environment professor Troy Abel, a four-time Trivia Night winner.

Mark VanderVen, a Huxley College graduate, started the event in October 2006. Abel and his team of professors have been competing ever since. He said at first only four teams played each week, whereas now, more than 30 teams compete.

But while bragging rights and a pocket full of dollar bills provide participants of Trivia Night with incentive to play, the idea that has gained the event so much popularity is testing knowledge of obscure trivia over a good drink.

What is the Gaelic word for whiskey? Uisce.

at the Bay



music, dancing and corn beef

Boundary Bay is changing their beer and food menu for the day.

"We will be serving our Dry Irish Stout and traditional Irish food," Lightner said. "Our most popular item on food menu is corned beef and cabbage. We have ordered about 380 pounds of corned beef for the day."

Lightner said brewers have been creating the Dry Irish Stout for months to prepare for St. Patrick's Day.

"We have it on tap all the time, but it is consumed four or five times as much on St. Patrick's Day," Lightner said. "It's an appropriate beer for the event."

Boundary Bay bartender Evan Croton has been a part of several St. Patrick's Day events.

"Everyone seems to be Irish that day," Croton said. "It gets really hectic that day. The bartenders are pouring pints non-stop."

Pete Davis, Bellingham resident and frequent customer, plans to attend the event.

"I have been coming to Boundary Bay for a long time," Davis said. "The people at Boundary Bay are really special to me, so I plan to come by on St. Patrick's Day to support them."

Boundary Bay will also give out party favors at the event.

"Everyone will get a hat or a green or white lei," Lightner said. "We also have balloons for the children."

The St. Patrick's Day event has been popular and successful at Boundary Bay for a number of years, Lightner said.

"This place is going to be packed with all kind of people from parents to children to college students," Lightner said. "It's going to be crazy."

Boundary Bay's St. Patrick's Day Schedule and Menu

Doors open at 10:30 a.m.

Kathie Hardy, Celtic harp player: 11 a.m.

Penk O' Donnell Dancers, step dancers:

Noon, 4 p.m., 6 p.m., 8 p.m.

James Higgins, Irish folk singer: 1 p.m.

Austin and Dallas Hendrickson, Violin:

2 p.m.

Bellingham Bag Pipe Band: 3 p.m., 5 p.m.

Loose Digits, Celtic band: 7 p.m.

The Paddy Whackers, featuring **Robert**

Blake, Chris Glass & Jan Peters, playing

traditional Irish gigs and shanty's: 9 p.m.

Special menu items include: Soda bread, corned beef and cabbage, chicken pot pie, Irish stew, Shepards pie, Irish dessert and Dry Irish stout on tap

upcoming

Friday, March 16

Robert Blake, I Love You Avalanche
Underground Coffeehouse, 8 p.m.
Free

Shiitake Mushrooms, Forgey, Armonikos,
Young Jesse, Matt Peters Trio
The Old Foundry, 8 p.m.
All ages \$5

No-Fi Soul Rebellion, The Mechanical Dolls,
Silence Dogood
Chiribins, 10 p.m.
21+ \$5

The Contra, Legal Limit, 3 Inch Max
The Rogue Hero, 10 p.m.
21+ \$3

Rob Reiner's "The Princess Bride"
Underground Coffeehouse, 10:30 p.m.
Free

Saturday, March 17

The Braille Tapes, Brunette Sweat, Heroes
Amongst Thieves
Fantasia Espresso, 8 p.m.
All ages \$5

Styff Anyss, Leatherpants, Malarkey
Nightlight Lounge, 8 p.m.
21+ \$10

Pirates R Us, Ladies of the Night, Crossfox
Chiribins, 10 p.m.
21+ \$3

Sunday, March 18

D.B.'s Happy Pals
Wild Buffalo, 7:30 p.m.
21+ \$5

Tuesday, March 20

Saviours, Black Breath, Cicadas
Nightlight Lounge, 8 p.m.
21+ \$7

Karate Kitchen, Drew Danberry,
Aubrey Debauchery
Fantasia Espresso, 8 p.m.
All ages \$3

Wednesday, March 21

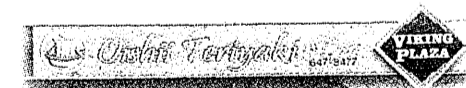
Cicadis, Into the Storm, Mala Sangre
Fantasia Espresso, 8 p.m.
All ages \$4

Feed and Seed
Boundary Bay, 9 p.m.
21+ Free

Thursday, March 22

The Russians, The Mark
Chiribins, 10 p.m.
21+ \$2

ON THE MENU Teriyaki restaurants



1) **Oishi Teriyaki** - Located in Viking Village, Oishi serves teriyaki chicken bowls for \$4.52 from 11:00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m. The restaurant has Japanese décor, fast service and take-out meals. Located at 505 32nd Street Suite 104.

2) **The Teriyaki Bar** - This downtown teriyaki restaurant has dinner-sized portions for lunch prices. Most meals include chicken, curry or beef and entrées come with rice and salad. The restaurant offers vegetarian options and free delivery within a three-mile radius. Located at 119 W. Holly St.

3) **Super Teriyaki** - This Happy Valley restaurant offers a "family party pack" that includes appetizers and entrees to feed four people and four different types of tofu, although teriyaki dishes are the most popular item on their menu. Located at 2019 Harris Ave.

4) **Birch Bay Teriyaki and Chinese** - This restaurant requires a longer drive than the others, but it provides guests with outdoor seating and views of Birch Bay. The menu includes breakfast, lunch and dinner items and not just teriyaki, but American and Chinese style cuisine. Located at 8036 Birch Bay Dr.

Compiled by Jaimie Fife

for weekly trivia



photo by Justin Steyer THE WESTERN FRONT

From left to right: Western alumni Meredith Ritchie, Eri Higashi, Dee Allen, Brooke Weber, Eric Bender and Jeff Stamey compete for a pitcher of dollar bills at Uisce's weekly Trivia Night on March 13.



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Atomic closets rest beneath Bond Hall

Folk legends, whether true or not, become a part of a culture over the years. Western has its own legends and myths, some meta-physical paranormal trappings and some vulgar misinterpretations that define campus culture.

Colin Simpson
THE WESTERN FRONT

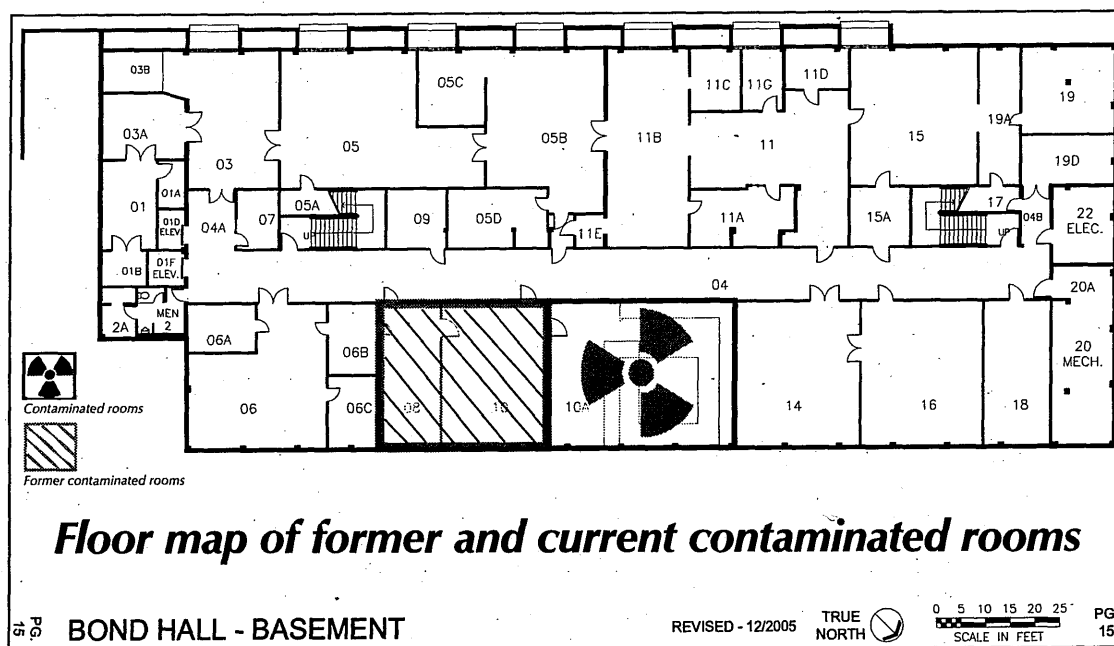
The basement of Bond Hall appears the same as any other subterranean study areas on campus — its low lighting and intricate system of pipes and ducts overhead give it the claustrophobic feel of Miller Hall or Wilson Library.

But of all pop-culture-fueled myths there is one science phenomenon that spurs the imagination to bring about giant animals, human superpowers and total destruction — all brought about by the simple yellow and black radiation symbol.

Stuck to the door of Bond Hall room 10A, this scratched-away trefoil represents the radiation contamination behind it, caused from more than a decade of research.

"I think the issue is fear of the unknown," said physics and astronomy department Chairman Brad Johnson. "Most people don't understand the range of phenomena that fall under the term 'radiation.' Walk out into the sunlight and you're bathed in radiation."

Back in the 1980s and 90s, Bond Hall rooms 10A and 10B housed the physics department's two neutron generators, which are small and inexpensive systems



Floor map of former and current contaminated rooms

The above floor map of Bond Hall shows rooms 10A and 10B, which are now closed due to radiation contamination. Rooms 8 and 10 also suffered contamination during the late 1980s and early 1990s, but are now safe from radiation and house a sheet metal shop and computers.

graphic by Jessica Harbert THE WESTERN FRONT

that produce neutrons by fusing isotopes of hydrogen together, using either deuterium or tritium, said Western's radiation safety officer Gayle Shipley.

"Radiation is such a complicated issue," Shipley said. "It's something people think about, and old movies come to mind, with giant spiders and such. This isn't that."

In 1991, however, concerns were raised about tritium contamination from one of the

generators, Shipley said.

The Environmental Protection Agency describes tritium as "a radioactive isotope of the element hydrogen." According to the EPA, when tritium is exposed to oxygen it forms water. As it undergoes radioactive decay, however, it emits low energy beta particles, which are radioactive, according to the EPA.

These particles, in turn, left Bond Hall rooms 8, 10, 10A and

10B contaminated in 1993.

That year, a professional decontamination company removed the neutron generators and subsequently cleaned out the rooms, Shipley said.

Shipley said after removing the generator from rooms 8 and 10, the Washington State Department of Health and the university radiation safety officer monitored the rooms until 1999 when they found the rooms, as well as the hallway outside the

rooms, within allowable levels.

They are still monitoring rooms 10A and 10B, and will continue to do so until the tritium is at an acceptable level, which will be around 2015, Shipley said.

Rooms 8 and 10 were reopened and are now a sheet metal shop and computer storage room.

Rooms 10A and 10B, however, still have low remaining levels of radiation contamination, and contain some old contaminated laboratory equipment, Shipley said.

People outside the sealed rooms are not exposed to radiation, as the particles emitted cannot pass through doors or walls, Shipley said. Inside the rooms, however, the particles still pose health dangers, Shipley said, even though the tritium levels are about 100 times lower than the suggested amount a human can safely be exposed to.

Shipley said the rooms remain locked at all times.

"We want to satisfy people's curiosity without them seeking the room out," Shipley said. "When we read [in The Western Front] about the tunnels and how people repeatedly tried to get in, we were alarmed."

B'H

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APRIL 22ND, 1190 BCE:
Moses tells Pharaoh, "Let my people go!"

MAY 15TH, 1190 BCE:
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Drawing relief from a crayon box

Amanda Howe
THE WESTERN FRONT

Students feeling the pressure of looming finals can color their stress away on the playful, child-like drawings provided by Western's Wellness Outreach Center for its "Color Your Stress Away" campaign from March 13 to the end of finals week.

Students can meet with lifestyle advisors, who provide advice and offer solutions to help students through this traditionally overwhelming period of the quarter.

Western senior Nicole Eiford, who is an advisor at the center, said she and others can help students find short-term and long-term solutions to managing symptoms associated with overloaded schedules, such as shortness of breath, difficulty sleeping, nightmares, frequent headaches and the inability to concentrate.

"It's important for students to recognize the signs and find ways to manage," Eiford said.

Eiford said the center provides a stress team for students to contact for help. The team of student lifestyle advisors received two weeks of training through a program sponsored by the counseling center just before fall quarter began. The team learned stress-reducing exercises, such as the five-finger muscle relaxation,



photo courtesy of Nancy Hamilton

Left to right: Western seniors Zerina Bermudez, Nicole Eiford, Catherine Rasnack and Jenn Crowley display their colorings during the Wellness Outreach Center's "Color your Stress Away" campaign, which helps students unwind during finals and takes place from March 13 to the end of finals week.

using positive visual imagery and how to operate the biofeedback machine.

Biofeedback refers to the process in which scientifically developed machines help students observe the signals their bodies produce when exposed to an external stimuli, such

as stress. Electronic sensors placed on students' fingers measure the amount of perspiration on their skin, which is an indicator of stress or anxiety.

Trained individuals, such as Eiford, teach students how to decipher these signals and introduce them to techniques

that help reduce the physical reactions they experience during stressful situations.

"It's really neat to experience how the machine works," said Western senior Catherine Rasnack, who is an advisor at the center. "We want people to come in because we enjoy helping them understand how harmful stress is and all the things they can do to improve how they feel."

The center also provides students with a variety of free resources to help them unwind, including hot tea, nutrition information, cold and flu aids and therapeutic lights for students with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Stress packs are also available and include instructions for breathing exercises, simple stretches, time management tips, advice for eliminating negative thought patterns, paper to doodle on during recommended breaks and a few pieces of candy for a quick burst of energy.

Western senior Zerina Bermudez said she stopped by to shade in the outline of a bush baby and chat with Rasnack while taking a break from studying.

"Surprisingly, I think I've grown numb to all the stress I've had this quarter," Bermudez said. "But when I come to the center to drink tea and visit with my friends, I definitely notice that I'm feeling a lot calmer."

Amanda Geiger never saw the drunk driver.

Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk.

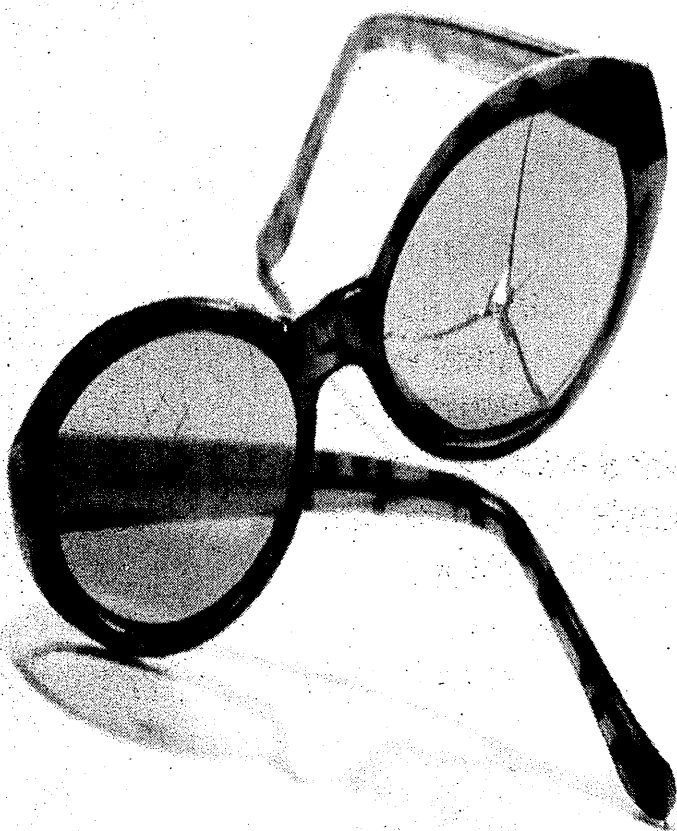
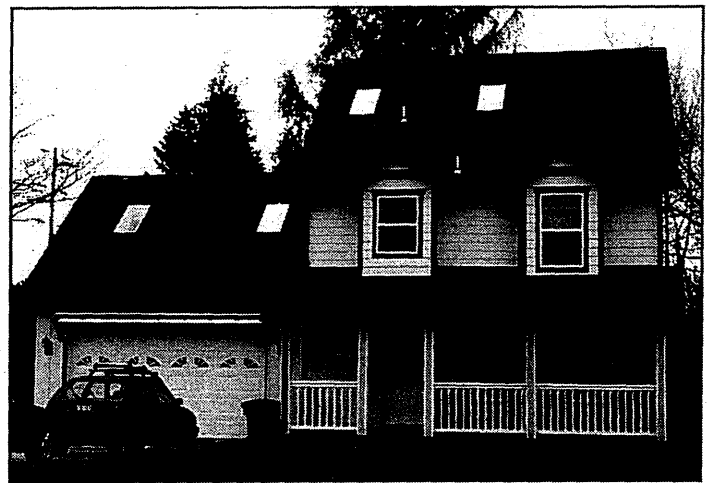


Photo by Michael Mizuno



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Jaimie Fife
THE WESTERN FRONT

KVIK reels in new programming

KVIK, Western's TV station, is working to bring regular television programming and a sketch comedy show to channel 16 for the first time, said Western sophomore and KVIK coordinator Paul Neiland.

Determined to increase the quality of KVIK's programming, which now includes sports, news segments and entertainment shows, Neiland said he kick-started the academic year by pitching a list of productions to volunteers at the station. KVIK will produce two shows that came from his initial list — an untitled sketch comedy show volunteers are working on right now and a sitcom that hasn't been started yet.

KVIK is trying to run the sketch comedy show on channel 16 by mid-spring quarter, said Nick Andrews, Western sophomore and KVIK member.

"The [sketch] comedy show I'm working on is a lot of fun and going to be really entertaining," Andrews said. "We need viewers. If people watch the show, the whole process will work out."

Neiland said members of the program hope to make KVIK as viable in the Western community as KUGS 89.3, Western's student-run radio station, by increasing its volunteer base to match the approximately 100 volunteers affiliated with KUGS.

"I don't think [Neiland] is shooting to out-do KUGS but just get to that level," said Kenny Davis, 2006 Western alumnus and former host of KVIK programs, "Western Live" and "Insert Show Here." "That's the thought process that has been lacking the last couple of years at KVIK."

KVIK started as the Western Student Broadcasting Club in 2002 but changed its name in 2003 after joining the Associated Students. Since its conception, Neiland said the program has provided an opportunity for students to act, film, produce, edit and mix videos to create their own shows.

KVIK co-founder and 2004 Western alumnus Phil Shuylar was the former KVIK coordinator and Davis said he landed his current job at ESPN largely because of his experience working with KVIK.

KVIK has been plagued by obstacles, such as budget

limitations and time constraints, because it's difficult for the program to get adequate funding from the AS and enough volunteers to generate the volume of shows it is capable of airing, Neiland said.

The most devastating blow came in 2005 when Bellingham's government access channel decided to stop airing KVIK's programming partly because of questionable content, such as lewd humor, and restructuring within the station, Neiland said. He said the television station decided KVIK's programming didn't have enough educational value.

Now, Neiland said the biggest hurdle facing KVIK is the struggle to find its niche in the AS.

"KVIK has kinda been floundering for awhile," he said. "Our entertainment programming isn't quite enough because it doesn't service the students enough. So, we are starting to shoot events and do promotional videos on different AS programs and the AS itself."

Neiland said he hopes students will come to him with production ideas so he can combine those ideas with KVIK's resources, allowing students to not only produce shows, but produce ones based on ideas they generate.

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Outdoor track and field team off to fast start

Casey Gainer
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western sophomore Tony Tomsich said he always enjoys the transition from indoor track and field season to outdoor, but this year he's especially pumped up.

Tomsich finished the indoor season on a high with the rest of his distance medley relay team after placing second at nationals and earning All-America honors in the event.

"It's really exciting to know it's this early in the season and I've already done that," Tomsich said.

The Western relay team of senior Sam Brancheau (1,200 meters), senior Adam Neff (400), senior Erik Bies (800) and Tomsich (1,600) finished the event with

a school record time of 9:55.00, which knocked 3.13 seconds off the record time the team set two weeks earlier.

The team's finish earned the Great North Athletic Conference (GNAC) Male Indoor Track and Field Athlete of the Week honors for March 4-10.

"I'm kind of running on a high right now," Tomsich said. "Now I'm really looking forward to the outdoor season."

Along with the distance medley relay, Western senior Tyler Thornbrue finished 10th in the pole vault at nationals March 9-10 in Boston, Mass.

The track and field team is now focusing its attention on the outdoor season, which head coach Pee Wee Halsell said will be a fairly easy

conversion.

"It's just a matter of adjusting to the elements," Halsell said. "We peaked for indoor and had a good season so now we just make the transition. It looks good for both the men and women."

The Western men's and women's teams are both returning a strong group of athletes, Halsell said. He said the men will be looking to claim the GNAC title after placing second last year and the women will try to improve on their fifth place conference finish.

"It's not an easy thing, but I think we're very capable," Halsell said.

He said both teams are already off to a promising start. Western had two individuals post provisional marks in

field events on March 10 University of Puget Sound Joe Peyton Invitational. The top 16 provisional qualifiers are selected to compete at nationals May 24-25 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Western sophomore Clara Cook qualified in the high jump with her meet record mark of 5-6. Cook took sixth place at nationals last year.

"I'm a bit more scared this season," Cook said. "I feel like there's a lot more pressure on me, but I'm feeling pretty good to have already qualified for a provisional."

Freshman Monika Gruszecki was the other provisional qualifier with her

see **TRACK** page 17 ▶

Year-round dedication

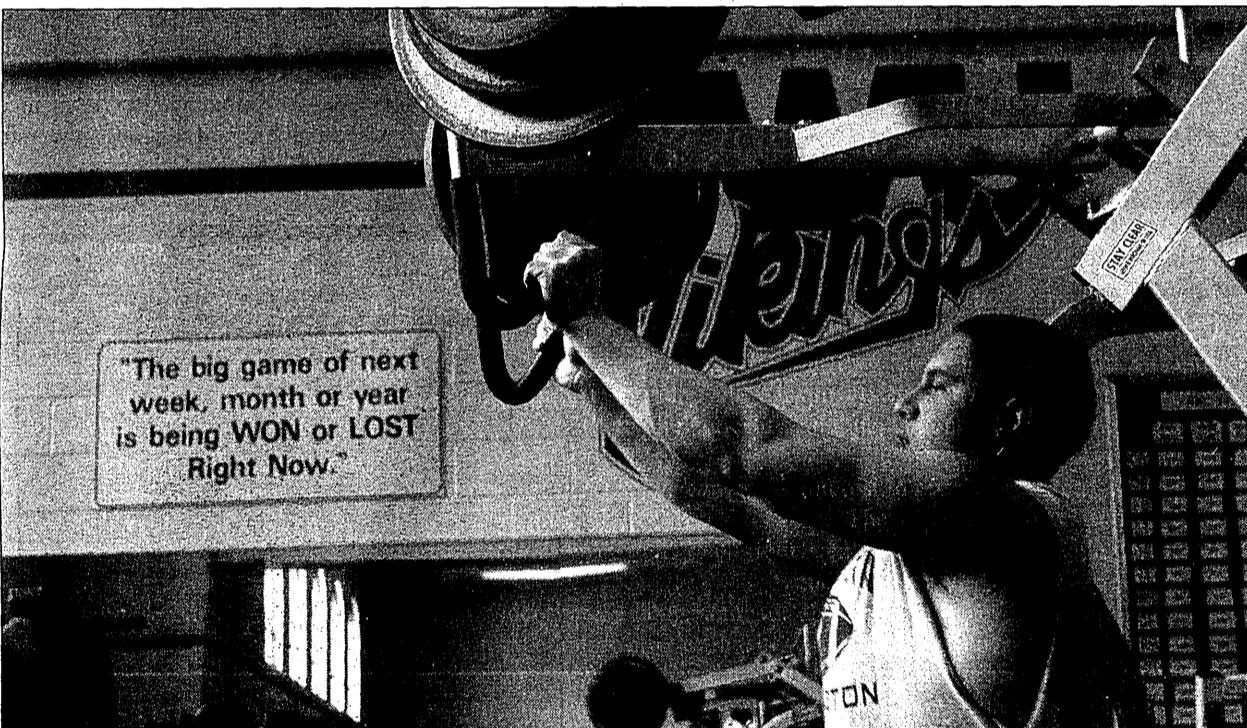
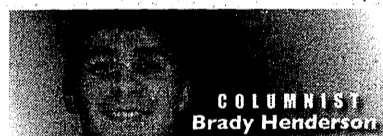


photo by Mark Malijan THE WESTERN FRONT

Western sophomore defensive lineman Justin Mundell lifts weights on March 15 in the Lou Parberry Fitness Center in Carver Gym.

Western football endures rigorous offseason workouts



COLUMNIST
Brady Henderson

A sign above a squat machine in the Lou Parberry Fitness Center in Carver Gym reminds the Western football team the importance of preparation: "The big game of next week, month or year is being WON or LOST Right Now."

Football game may be in the fall, but even during the offseason the work never stops.

The 2006 season came to an end after a 35-21 win against Minnesota State-Mankato Dec. 11. One week later, with the first game of the 2007 season eight months away, the team began its offseason workouts

"Football is a year-round sport," said senior linebacker James Day. "A lot of [people] don't understand what goes into it. It's a long process. It's a grind."

The team is in the latter stages of its winter workouts, a 10-week program which focuses on conditioning and weight-lifting.

"Winter our priorities are [to get] bigger, faster, stronger," head coach Robin Ross said. "So we will lift and/or run five days a week."

Players must attend one weight-lifting session three days a week, held at different times throughout the day to accommodate class schedules.

The team also has conditioning three days a week including a mandatory 6:30 a.m. running

session on the Turf Field on campus every Friday, something Day said is never easy.

"It's usually freezing cold," he said. "It's always windy. It's dark outside — you can barely see. You're really not even totally awake."

Ross said he admires the time management skills it takes to balance academics with such a demanding workout program.

"The great thing about it is the discipline it takes," he said. "Between classes, weight-lifting and running, you've got a full day every day."

The team concludes its winter workout program this week as coaches test individual performances in various lifts as well as in the 40-

"Football is a year-round sport. A lot of [people] don't understand what goes into it."

- Western senior linebacker James Day

see **FOOTBALL** page 18 ▶

Power rankings, highlight videos part of intramural Web site upgrades

Aaron Weinberg
THE WESTERN FRONT

A soccer goalie makes a diving save, a basketball player drives to the hoop to sink a layup and a volleyball player spikes the ball only to have it hit back by another player who dove to her knees — all to the tune of U2's song "Vertigo."

These plays, and the song, can be found on Western's intramural sports Web site, where a video plays highlights from week four of intramurals.

Highlight videos are among some of the new changes to the intramural Web site that have made it more interactive and helpful to students participating in intramural sports.

Intramural and club sport coordinator Jeff Crane said the Web site has been updated to benefit the intramural participants, such as posting game schedules and game outcomes.

"What we've tried to do is keep things more current than they've been in the past," Crane said. "We try to keep things updated every day if we can."

Along with highlight videos and up-to-date records and schedules, the Web site has a power rankings system, which ranks teams based on sportsmanship, win percentage and point differential.

"Basically that's just something fun for the students," Crane said.

The power rankings system was implemented at the beginning of winter quarter and the highlight videos are only a few weeks old, Crane said.

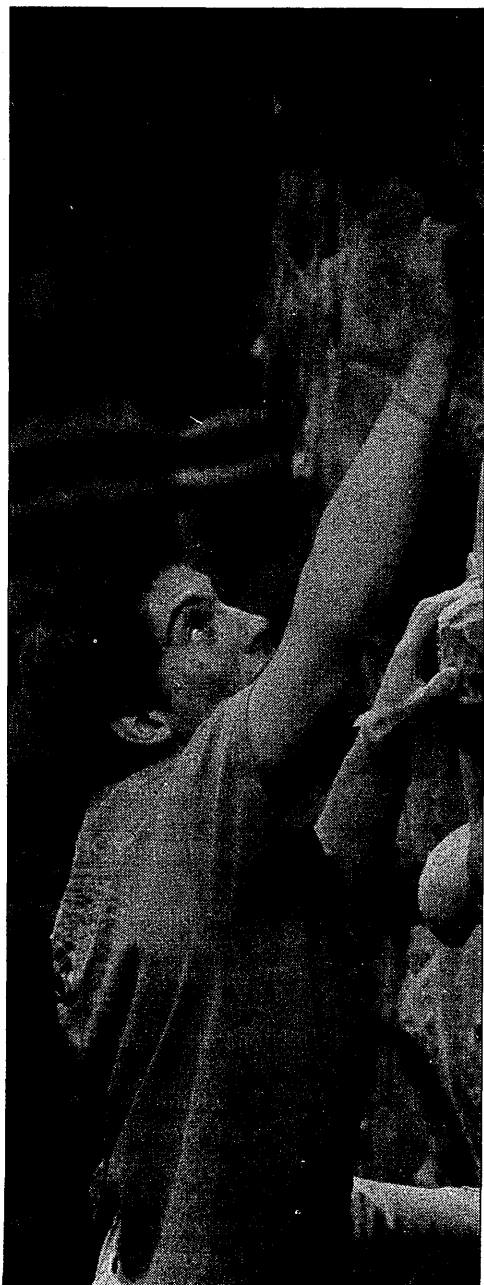
Western junior Jesse Martin videotapes the games for the Web site. He said so far he and Crane haven't been picky when choosing which games to tape.

"We just try to get a diverse amount of teams," Martin said.

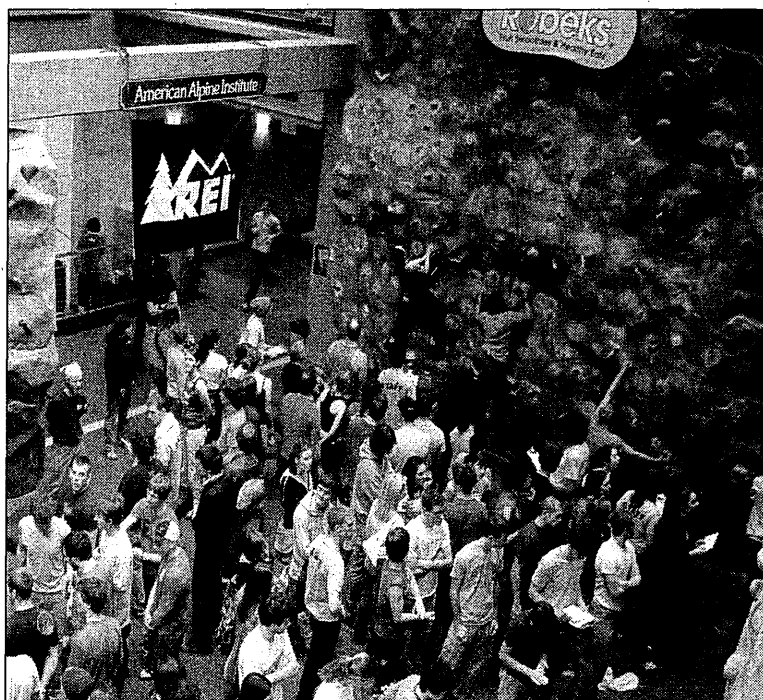
When editing the video, Martin looks for the best plays from each game he tapes and organizes them into a short clip to put on the Web site.

Western has implemented all of these

see **INTRAMURALS** page 16 ▶



State-wide climbing competition rocks recreation center



photos by Mark Malijan THE WESTERN FRONT

(Above) Sixty-one participants took place in the state-wide, all-ages climbing competition in the Wade King Recreation Center on March 10. The event, titled "Grab life by the walls," featured men's and women's divisions and awarded rock climbing-related prizes to the top climbers. Bellingham resident Isaac Howard took first place in the men's division and Western sophomore Holly Faulstich won on the women's side. (Left) Western sophomore Wyatt Brown works his way up the wall.

Information compiled by Jaimie Fife

Men's, women's teams thrive at opening meet

► TRACK from 16

win in the javelin. She threw 146-10 inches.

Freshman Michael Dean was the top Western men's competitor at the event with his meet record time of 22.43 seconds in the 200-meter dash. He also won the 100 in 11.07.

Sophomore Heidi Dimmitt won the women's 100 in a time of 12.78 seconds and led a top three Western sweep in the 400 hurdles with a meet record time of 65.18 seconds.

Other Western top finishers on the women's team included sophomore Christy Miller in the pole vault and senior Kim Bascom in the triple jump.

On the men's side, both freshman Matt O'Connell in the 400 and junior Bryan Lucke in the pole vault took first place.

Cook said she's happy to be in the outdoor season.

"It's a better atmosphere," she said. "You can spread out and watch the competition. I like it a lot better. It's more competitive and exciting than indoor."

Halsell said his team is in good form and will be competitive season.

"It's good to be back in the middle of competition and going with it," he said. "It's going to be a fun, good season."

Western's next competition is the University of Washington Preview meet March 16 and the Pacific Lutheran University Invitational on March 17.



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Grueling workouts build team unity

► **FOOTBALL** from 16

yard dash, a common measurement of a football player's speed.

After spring break, the team will resume its weight-lifting and conditioning regiment for 11 days and begin spring practice March 14.

Before then, each player must complete what is appropriately known as "the grinder" — 75 sit-ups, 100 bag-jumps, a 100-yard bear-crawl and concluding with a one-mile run.

Such grueling workouts are designed to improve the team from a physical standpoint, but senior outside linebacker Taylor Wade said they build team unity as well.

"The other guys in there sweating it out with you — that's the most motivating thing," he said. "You endure things like a family does. You grow up together."

Wade said the offseason workout program is a test of character and perseverance.

"It takes a lot out of you," he said. "A lot of guys can't make it through. A lot of guys quit."

But players like Wade and Day said they realize the never-ending grind is part of college football.

"It's a price you pay for playing a sport you love," Day said. "But in the end it's worth it."

Intramurals' popularity continues to rise

► **INTRAMURALS** from 16



photo by Justin Steyer THE WESTERN FRONT

Western senior Dan Larson (left) reaches for a rebound during an intramural game March 7 in the Wade King Student Recreational Center.

features as the popularity of the intramural sports program steadily rises, Crane said.

Western senior Katie Tasa, who played intramural soccer for three years has noticed the trend.

"I started in the winter 2004 season and since then it's just taken off," Tasa said.

Last year at this time, 2,529 Western students participated in intramural sports.

This year has seen an increase of more than 100 students, at 2,633. Crane said participation has steadily increased since he first got the job four years ago.

Crane said Western focuses on the little things that create a better program, such as refining the way they train officials, improving organization and adding special features to the Web site.

Western senior Pat Zanin, who has been involved with volleyball, basketball and softball intramural sports, said he thinks it's a great way to meet new people and said he welcomes the changes to the programs.

"The highlight video is really cool and I think the weekly power rankings are a great idea," Zanin said.

Teams can sign up for the spring intramural season beginning March 14 through April 9 by printing off an application from the intramural Web site.

Applications are to be turned in to the Wade King Student Recreation Center.

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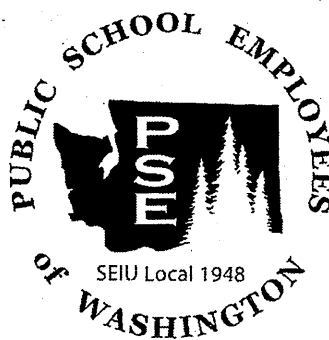
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Ludicrous laws exposed

Guest Column

I am a lawbreaker.
Most of my life, everyone perceived me as a 'good' kid. I obeyed my parents and the law. I've never received a ticket for speeding or for parking in the wrong spot on campus.

But I've broken the law all the same.

My quest of discovery concerning my misdemeanor-filled past started when I found a book perfect for my younger brother: "You Can Get Arrested For That" by Rich Smith.

In the book, two British men travel around the United States breaking "dumb laws," such as peeling an orange in a California hotel room.

The book references a Web site that lists dumb laws by state and country (www.dumblaws.com).

The site claimed walking around with a head cold was illegal in Washington state.

I couldn't believe legislators would waste time on such a stupid law, so I looked it up in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

And sure enough, the law exists.

"Every person who shall willfully expose himself to another, or any animal affected with any contagious or infectious disease, in any public place... shall be guilty of a misdemeanor," according to RCW 70.54.050.



Pihl

"I now had the perfect excuse for missing class when ill. I could tell my professor I didn't want a misdemeanor on my pristine record."

I know I've broken this law. I spent two full weeks during winter quarter alone walking around with a head cold.

I now had the perfect excuse for missing class when ill. I could tell my professor I didn't want a misdemeanor on my pristine record.

After all, committing such a misdemeanor could result in up to 90 days in prison, a

fine of \$1,000 or both, according to RCW 9A.20.010(2).

Some of the laws listed on the site were real. According to RCW 70.98.170, x-rays can't be used to fit shoes on customers. And RCW 70.54.090 makes it illegal to attach a vending machine to a utility pole.

I began to wonder, what if the legislators weren't as out of their mind with the infectious disease law as I thought?

I looked at the date of the law: 1909. In 1909, an outbreak of bubonic plague occurred in San Francisco.

Maybe the law is unnecessary now, but in 1909, I would not want someone with the plague walking around Washington state either.

Still, next time I have a head cold, I will tell my professor I can't come to class because of RCW 70.54.050. It may not work as well as a doctor's note, but I might as well try.

-Kristi Pihl is a Western junior majoring in journalism and French.

Public records report upholds crucial right

The editorial board and The Western Front are proud to present an in-depth look at Sunshine Week (see news pages 1, 4-5).

frontline

Frontline editorials reflect the opinion of the editorial board and not the staff or advertisers of The Western Front.

of a government agency, such as police reports, sex-offender registrations and school performance records.

We feel this is an especially important topic to discuss as students and as citizens. Public access to public documents is important to keep government agencies accountable and provide useful information for various situations.

Since February, a team of Western Front reporters has submitted 17 access requests to Western agencies to obtain information that is available to the public. You might not even realize some of the documents that are available, such as President Karen Morse's e-mails related to construction of the Academic Institutional Center.

Washington state and federal laws require all public agencies to have a person designated to handle public records requests. Public records are anything recorded that relate to the conduct or performance

Why would the average Western student need to request public records?

Perhaps you would like to know the health inspection records of your favorite restaurant.

So you send a Freedom of Information Act request to the public information officer of the Whatcom County Health Department.

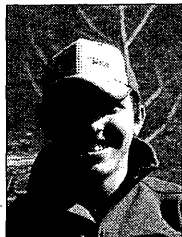
Since health inspection records are public documents, you are handed reports that reveal your favorite restaurant has more than 15 health code violations. Or, your favorite restaurant may have the cleanest record in Whatcom County. The point is — it is your right to know.

It is important for the public to have access these records so

see **SUNSHINE** page 20 ▶

viking voices

What are your plans for spring break?



Chris Stephens
SENIOR

"I'm going on a camping trip to Joshua Tree."



Devin Branson
SOPHOMORE

"I'm going to Los Angeles to be on the Price is Right."



Jake Pederson
SENIOR

"I'm going climbing in Sequoia National Park."



Dana Berg
SENIOR

"I'm going on a camping trip to Eastern Washington."

Compiled by John C. Davies

		Deadlines: Tuesday Paper = previous Friday, 12:30 p.m. Friday Paper = previous Wednesday, 2:00p.m. Order in CF 230 or CALL 650-3160 or ONLINE at www.westernfrontonline.com		
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Buying your way to the top

Pocketbook size shouldn't replace networking skills for internships



Want to land an internship or a job after graduation? Are you tired of scouring endless advertisements, applying for competitive jobs or networking with potential employers for an internship? Do you have nightmares of becoming a Starbucks barista for the rest of your life?

No worries, now you can buy yourself a valuable learning experience.

For the small price of \$1,000, an internship match-maker can beef up your resume, contact hundreds of lucrative employers and circumvent all the hard-work it takes students to find internships. Better yet, for double the price you can land your dream job after you graduate.

According to a March 6 Associated Press article, a number of businesses are popping up to help students hunt for internships.

For a down payment of

between \$500 and \$1,000 a student works with a placement agent who finds a company in their selected field of study. If an internship isn't found there is a money-back guarantee.

Paying for an internship is just as ridiculous as paying a firm to help you write a college-admission winning essay.

Students should rely on their networking skills and not their pocketbooks to find an internship.

I didn't need an internship firm to help me find a job. Instead I relied on old-fashioned skills such as resume building and networking to sell myself to potential employers.

I started networking as early as high school. Tapping into organizations invested in my future, I built a network of mentors who wanted to see me succeed. These mentors informed me of programs and steered into the direction of other internships.

At the end of my senior year of high school I had already completed two internships at a well-known public affairs firm and a local newspaper. I'm now

on my fourth internship and with the knowledge I've gained I feel competent making the transition into the real world.

So why is it important to have an internship? Any student who wants valuable work experience, a stronger professional network, or that first break, needs an internship.

Employers want to hire college graduates who have real-world experience. This means students are given insight into how a workplace operates and hands-on applicable experience.

Some of the benefits of acquiring internships include job offers, a higher starting salary and more frequent promotions.

Students only have to look as far as the Career Services Center in Old Main or Web sites, such as www.internjobs.com, as valuable resources to search for internships without the help of a business.

Networking is a valuable skill to possess but its something you can't buy. When students pay to get an internship, they lose in the long run. Save your money for something worthwhile like a business suit.

Open government accountable to taxpayers

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they can keep public agencies accountable.

Anyone can request access to public information. Whether he or she is a reporter at The Bellingham Herald or biology major at Western, public documents are public documents.

You, the taxpayer, fund the agencies and pay for the resources for open government records. Therefore, it is your right to have access to those documents, e-mails or correspondences. Whatever it is, if it has been deemed public by the courts, it is for your viewing.

There are certain records

that are not made public, but agencies must list the reason why in the response to a request letter.

Police reports on open investigation, personnel records and bank records are closed records, and understandably so.

Sunshine Week is a time to cast light on this issue – it is one that defines who we are as a nation, yet is an issue so easily forgotten or taken for granted. Enjoy the sunshine.

The editorial board is comprised of Editor-in-Chief Nicole Lanphear, Managing Editor Amy Harder, Opinion Editor Ryan White, advertising office representative Kayla Britt and student-at-large senior Zach Frazier.

POLLSTER

What is the most valuable thing about doing an internship?

- A. The real-world experience
- B. Networking with employers
- C. Learning more about my chosen field
- D. Nothing: Internships are a waste of time.

TO VOTE, GO TO
Westernfrontonline.com

Results from last POLLSTER

What are your plans for spring break?

- A. Going to an exotic location- 18%
- B. Road trip with friends- 9%
- C. Catching up with old friends- 18%
- D. Staying home and relaxing- 36%
- E. Nothing yet. Any suggestions?- 18%

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