



Senior finds passion in pageants

FEATURES, PG. 6-7

Jeffrey Parker becomes Western's all-time scorer

SPORTS, PG. 12



THE WESTERN FRONT

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TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Vikings win GNAC title in nail-biter



Western men's basketball take conference and regular season titles into NCAA Division II Tournament. The third seeded Vikings will face Chico State in the West Regional Quarterfinals at noon Friday, March 10. // Photo by Hailey Palmer

Student fee may increase with minimum wage initiative

Haley Ausburn
THE WESTERN FRONT

Washington state's minimum wage increase was meant to be positive news for those making less than \$11 an hour, but the increase is causing tension in student jobs and possibly a hike in university services and activity fees.

"At this point, it looks like an increase is inevitable unless we cut out from major areas," Mary Moeller said, Associated Students vice president for business and operations.

Moeller is a member of the services and activities fee committee and thinks students should expect an increase greater than last year's \$8 increase. When the wage in-

crease went into effect in January, all the wage categories below \$11 were bumped up to a flat \$11, Moeller said.

"That means now hourly employees, assistant coordinators and maybe coordinators are all being paid the same wage," Moeller said. "Which, as you can imagine, is causing some tension in the organization," Moeller said.

How much the fee could increase for students depends on a bill currently in the Washington state Legislature, Moeller said in an email. Currently, student fees are linked to tuition costs and one cannot increase without a rise in the other.

see WAGES, page 5

Western rental properties fail multiple city inspections

City of Bellingham finds mold and other recurring issues during repeated inspections of rental properties

Dante Koplowitz-Fleming
Laura Place

for
THE WESTERN FRONT

Five of Western's seven off-campus rental units inspected under Bellingham's new rental inspection program failed the first round of city inspections, according to city inspection data. Some

of these properties failed multiple times due to unresolved damages.

Western owns a string of rental units along Indian Terrace, less than 50 yards from campus. Although they are open to all renters, most of these units are occupied by students.

Previous to this year of rental inspections, the properties were

maintained by annual internal inspections by a third-party company, Windermere Residential Management.

"The university does conduct external visual inspections annually of each property to ensure they are maintained and not an 'eyesore' for the neighborhood," Paul Cocke, university director of communications and marketing,

said of the properties.

Ethan Kleekamp has been renting a unit on Indian Terrace with his fiancé since July 2016. He said he has contact with their landlord about once a month, in order to "maintain rapport."

"The house was drafty and cold, and there was moss and mold, but these are things we expected,"

Kleekamp said. "The issues that have arisen, they've been good about."

The city inspection data shows the unit failed inspections twice. Inspector Rob Barker noted the landlord needed to "seal ceiling penetrations between [the] garage and dwelling."

Another Indian Terrace unit owned by

Western failed due to standing water within the residence, which was a result of a "plumbing leak in [the] mechanical room."

Cocke clarified "depending on the situation," responses to issues generally fall to Windermere, but "any damages or other issues occurring after ownership ultimately fall to the University."



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Look for a series on Bellingham rental housing online Thursday, March 9

THE COFFEE CUP CHALLENGE KICKS OFF AT WESTERN



Western sustainability club members display hundreds of paper coffee cups as part of the Zero Waste Western Campaign, Monday, March 6. The coffee cup challenge gives out free coffee to people who bring travel mugs to their table. // Photo by Rachel Postlewait

Cops Box



EVENTS

Feb. 28, 9:24 a.m.

Police investigated a collision on the 500 block of Potter Street, between a bus and parked vehicle.

Feb. 28, 6:43 p.m.

Caller reported someone harassing her by phone on the 2800 block of West Maplewood Avenue.

March 1, 5:55 p.m.

Officers responded to a call of someone brandishing a weapon on the 2400 block of McKenzie Avenue.

March 3, 6:44 p.m.

Someone tried to buy a controlled substance on the 300 block of East Sunset Drive, using a forged prescription.

Feb. 28, 4:09 p.m.

Discarded bicycle parts were found boxed up on the side of the road on the 400 block of East Ivy Street.

Feb. 28, 8:03 p.m.

Someone reported a counterfeit bill on the 4500 block of Meridian Street.

March 1, 8:51 p.m.

Someone reported that an unknown suspect smeared mayonnaise on the door of his apartment on the 1000 block of 24th Street.

March 6, 8:19 a.m.

Parent requested assistance getting her 12-year-old out of bed to go to school on the 3400 block of Consolidation Avenue.

What: AYA! Animation Club first meeting.
Where: Communications Facility 120
When: Tuesday, March 7, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Western's Anime Club starts its new lineup for the year.

What: Viking Union Gallery Exhibit: Beyond Borders
Where: Viking Union Gallery
When: Thursday, March 10, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

An exhibition of works from the U.S. and Canada designed to encourage discussion across national and social borders.

What: Western Orchestra Festival
Where: Performing Arts Center
When: Thursday, March 10, 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m., Friday, March 11, 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

The Washington State Chapter of the American String Teachers Association will hold orchestra performances for middle school groups on the March 10 and high schools on March 11.

The Western Front

The Western Front
Western Washington University
Communications Facility 222
Bellingham, WA 98225
Newsroom number:
360-650-3162
Email address:
westernfrontonline@gmail.com

Editor-in-Chief

Alyssa Evans

Managing Editor

Robert Johnson

News Editors

Alex Halverson
Alec Regimbal

Features Editors

Natalie Breymer
Kaitlin Eslinger

Sports Editor

Ben Olson

Photo Editor

Alex Powell

Opinion Editor

Anna Edlund

Daily Editor

Ben Johnson

Online Editor

Chelsea Andrews

Public Relations Manager

Madi Krueger

Online Producer

Brie Cleveland

Copy Editors

Jordan Carlson
Jackson Main
Jillian Powers

Photographers

Harrison Amelang
Rachel Postlewait

Illustrator/ Cartoonist

Darby Womack

Web Developer

Zellie Macabata

Letters to the editor:

westernfront.opinion@gmail.com

Press releases:

wfpress.release@gmail.com

Faculty Adviser

Jack Keith

Advertising Department

360-650-3160

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Correction

The print version of the Tuesday, Feb. 28 issue of The Western Front included a caption in the story "From the desert to the mountains" saying Najla Mohamed-Lamin held the Algerian flag. It was the Western Sahara flag.

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Western holds its first Femme Fest

Jade Thurston
THE WESTERN FRONT

To highlight womxn's talent and resources, the Associated Students wanted to do something more than a show.

Jonah Falk, senior and AS pop music coordinator and Bri Broadwater, AS music and entertainment marketing coordinator, collaborated on the idea of Femme Fest.

'Womxn' is spelled with an 'x' at the request of the organizers to be inclusive of all identities.

"We were trying to figure out how to put on something that was going to promote womxn in music, but also hit on womxn's health," Falk said. "We had a lot of different iterations of the idea and [Femme Fest] is what stuck."

Femme Fest, a free celebration of femme identity, womxn's talent and womxn's rights, showcased female acts and informational health booths. AS Productions, The Womxn's Center and KUGS FM held the event in the Viking Union Multi-Purpose Room Friday, March 3.

Falk, also a musician, has experience with booking shows in downtown Bellingham and



ParisAlexa performing at Femme Fest on Friday, March 3. ParisAlexa spoke on teenage angst. // Photo by Harrison Amelang

Seattle. Falk said he either knew or had seen the performers featured at Femme Fest.

"When looking back at a lot of the lineups pop music coordinators in the past have curated, it's been very male-centric," Falk said. "This year I wanted to make it a goal to make sure that wasn't going to happen again."

Performers during the night were all female. Roughly 70 people gathered around to watch KREEA, Falon Sierra, Guayaba and ParisAlexa.

While each performance brought style to the stage, headliner ParisAlexa, 18, interacted

with the crowd by emphasizing teenage angst.

"There's just a lot of inner turmoil that's building up," ParisAlexa said. "My only way to express that is through songwriting and performance, so that's how I get it out."

As a vocal loop artist, ParisAlexa's music mixes melodies and lyrics with organic and electronic sounds. Her next album is about embracing individuality.

"I think society so often tells us who we have to be but we don't have to be anything other than ourselves," ParisAlexa said. "As an artist, oftentimes

people try to put me in a box, but I have all these other styles and so much more to say."

In between performances, the audience could walk around and check out the 11 different booths which featured topics such as mental and reproductive health. The Womxn's Center, The Womxn's Council, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services, Bellingham Girls Rock Camp and Free the Toiletry Club were among the featured tables.

AS Womxn's Center Coordinator Nova Clark reached out to all the organizations, seeing if they would want a table

at Femme Fest. Since becoming an official club fall quarter, Free the Toiletry was glad to have a booth set up.

Free the Toiletry is working to make menstruation products free in all campus bathrooms. As of now, the club is still in the early stages of asking for input on their ideas. Students passing by discussed the club's goals.

The club asked for written thoughts and comments on the issue of free toiletries. Danielle Freyer, a business management senior, is one of the club's leaders.

"We are really happy we [tabled at Femme Fest] because we got so many people interested," Freyer said. "Before we couldn't gauge the interest because no one was showing up to our meetings."

Broadwater and Falk hope to make Femme Fest an annual tradition at Western, but since they are seniors, it will depend on the decision of next year's new staff.

"[Femme Fest] gives us an opportunity to shine a light on things that we also care about," Broadwater said. "I really do hope that they chose to continue it [and] I'll come back up here if they do."

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WTA to change central routes for students

Students will return to changed bus routes following spring break, including 14, 107 and 109

Katie Meier

THE WESTERN FRONT

Riding the bus is about to change.

Whatcom Transportation Authority is changing routes, route numbers and route names on Sunday, March 19, in an effort to make the system easier to understand.

Passengers headed between downtown Bellingham, Western and Bill McDonald Parkway can catch the Blue Line, which includes routes 107, 108 and 109.

The route that runs from Lincoln Street, Lincoln Creek Park and Ride and Western is now going to be serviced by the 190.

Service to 32nd street will be reduced, but the route from there to Western will now be served by route 11. Passengers can also catch route 5, which will eventually transfer to the Blue Line at Bill McDonald and Samish Way.

The York neighborhood will still be served by the 108 on Ellis Street and passengers may also ride the 107 home. They can catch the Blue Line at Billy Frank Jr. and Holly streets.

For students who live south of Bill McDonald, the route will not be changing. The easiest trip will still be route 14, which goes from Fairhaven to downtown.

Students who are traveling to Western from anywhere else can catch a bus to the downtown bus station and then hop on the Blue Line and go straight to the school. They may also park at the Lincoln Creek Park and Ride, then hop on the 5 and the 533.

The 43 and 44, which runs to Yew Street, will no longer be running. Instead, that area will be served by the 5 and the 533.

These are only a few of the changes that are being made. To find out more information, visit WTA's website or call (360) 676-RIDE.

Last budget cycle, fees and tuitions costs were decoupled with a last-minute budget provision. If tuition and fees are not decoupled by this year's bill, tuition will either increase slightly or stay the same, as will the student activity fee.

If the bill, House Bill 1433, goes into effect, then students might pay more in fees to support the mandatory wage increase, Moeller said. If the bill doesn't make it, the services and activities fee committee might have to cut funding from jobs, programs and other



Students getting on the 190 bus Monday, March, 7. // Photo by Harrison Amelang



Students at the bus stop in front of Buchanan Towers enter a bus Monday, March 7. The WTA plans to change some popular routes over spring break. // Photo by Harrison Amelang

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Minimum wage increase affects student wages

continued from page 1

This policy was put in place to keep fees from spiraling out of control, but in practice it keeps students from having autonomy over their fees," Moeller said in an email.

Paul Cocke, director of university communications, has not heard of any current move to increase the services and activities fee to accommodate any budget changes.

Senior Maggie Carr, the KUGS FM news and public affairs director, understands the university's need for frugality, but believes structural changes about responsibilities could make AS employees happier about the change.

"Because we have one of the largest Associated Students for a college of this size,

of course there's going to be bureaucracy," Carr said. "It's just frustrating to be someone who is inside of it."

Carr has one employee in her office who was already being paid over \$11 so their pay didn't increase. Carr doesn't think that their closer pay has changed the way they interact at work.

Still, not changing the pay scale and bumping up some people to \$11 an hour is a short term solution and inequitable, Carr said.

"The only way it can make sense short term is by rationalizing that students don't deserve to make money for the work they do, which I think is completely false," Carr said.

On Monday, March 6, the university released a new wage schedule to accommo-

date for the minimum wage increase, which was created by a task force and improved by the council of presidents, according to the update. The updated wage schedule now puts student jobs into three wage classifications instead of five, putting more student jobs within the same pay level.

"Additional wage increases are not planned at this time due to budget constraints," Cocke said in an email.

Current employees' wages will not be changed either up or down to reflect the new wage schedule. According to the update, the problem will ultimately resolve itself as students move to new jobs or graduate.

The AS budget committee made a plan shortly after the minimum wage increase

to adjust the wage tables, but they were told to wait to move the wage tables until the university made a decision, Moeller said.

"Frankly, we aren't being allowed to do our jobs," Moeller said. "Which is, we aren't being allowed to pay people what we want."

The Student Employment Center will soon have a frequently asked questions section on their webpage with more information on the new pay classifications and when they will go into effect, according to the university update.

Moeller wants students to have input in the process as it's happening, she said. Students are allowed to attend meetings of boards like the services and activities fee committee to comment on this.

been productive in committees. He responded to an audience member who claimed he had missed the most votes of all senators in Washington.

"To date in Olympia, I have missed 10 votes on the Senate floor," Ericksen said. Ericksen then named three of the four state senators who have missed more votes than him.

Ericksen said he received legal counsel before accepting the position in the EPA and that he is not violating any state or federal laws.

Elizabeth Hartsoch, a research analyst in the Office of Survey Research at Western, was one constituent who believed Ericksen should still have to choose one position.

"Every day when I show up for my job, I think about all of you who are paying my salary. I try to honor that investment in my time and really value that I need to do a good job," Elizabeth Hartsoch said. "My question for you, Senator Ericksen, is: when are you going to resign one of your jobs so that you can do justice to your constituents?"

Herz, who is co-president for Students for Renewable Energy, was also concerned with Ericksen's stance on climate change.

State senator faces criticism over EPA role

Asia Fields

THE WESTERN FRONT

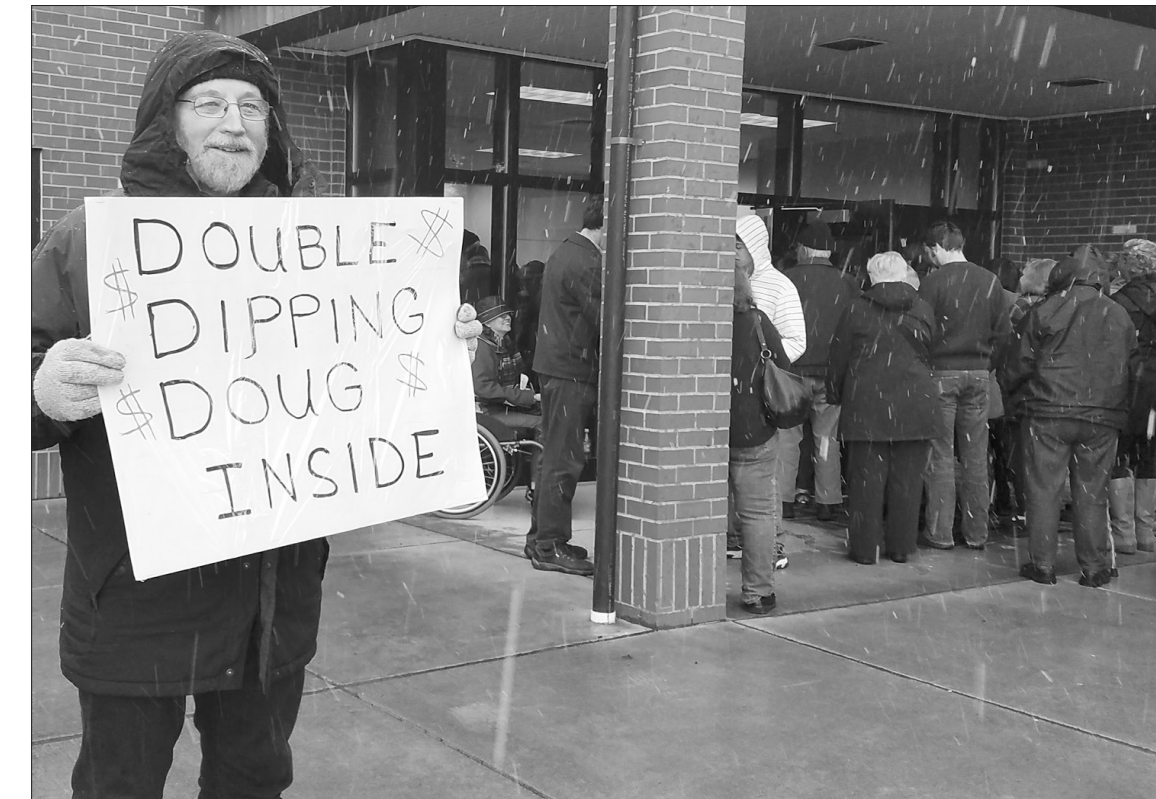
Sen. Doug Ericksen faced a divided room at his town hall meeting as a mix of roughly 700 supportive and angry constituents filled the auditorium at Meridian High School to maximum capacity.

Ericksen, who was an early supporter of Donald J. Trump, is a state senator representing Washington's 42nd district, which includes north Bellingham. He was appointed as the temporary communication director of the EPA in January, a job he holds in tandem with his position as senator.

Michael Shepard was one of the organizers of the effort to recall Ericksen from his senate position. He feels Ericksen has been unengaged with local issues because of his role in the EPA.

"I'm one of many constituents in the 42nd district who have been really frustrated with the lack of attention, attendance and prioritization that our senator has had for issues of our county, our district and our state," Shepard said.

Whatcom County Superior Court Judge Raquel Montoya-Lewis ruled the recall petition was based on insufficient grounds Thurs-



Constituents appeared in droves at the Town Hall meeting Saturday, March, 4 to hear Sen. Doug Ericksen. // Photo by Asia Fields

day, March 2. Shepard said constituents would still put pressure on the senator.

He said that over 600 people contacted him calling for the town hall meeting with Ericksen.

The Riveters Collective helped organize the town hall and distributed papers urging constituents to ask Ericksen to choose between his two positions.

Those critical of the senator questioned his ability to fulfill his duties

as state senator. Ericksen has missed 75 percent of scheduled committee meetings this legislative session, while maintaining his full base salary.

Senior Galen Herz submitted written testimony in support of the recall effort. Herz sees the lack of minimum standards for senators in Washington as an issue.

"He seems to have covered his bases legally and there's no legal reason that

he can't do both jobs [but] it's morally wrong," Herz said.

Ericksen spoke to the division in the room, calling for respectful dialogue. Despite rules prohibiting yelling, audience members shouted in support and opposition to the senator's statements. Some yelled that Ericksen was a "double dipper" throughout the meeting.

In response, Ericksen said that while he has missed some meetings and votes, he has

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Kauffman poses in her pageant outfit. // Photo courtesy of Breanna Kauffman

CROWNING CONFIDENCE

Gwen Roley
THE WESTERN FRONT

If at first you don't succeed, try again. That's what senior Breanna Kauffman did in her last year of eligibility for the International Junior Miss Washington pageant. She had been competing in pageants for a decade before finally being crowned Miss Washington 2017.

"Ten years. Ten years of competing to get that one moment onstage and it was far greater than I ever could have imagined," Kauffman said.

The International Junior Miss pageant is a competition for girls and young women ages four to 24. The pageant has chapters all over the U.S. as well as in Australia, the Bahamas, Haiti, South Africa and the United Kingdom. The winners from each chapter go on to a final International Junior Miss pageant, which is held in July.

The Miss Washington competition was held Feb. 10 to 12 in Renton. The pageant is split up into age categories starting with "Junior Princess" for the youngest competitors and ending with "Miss" for the oldest.

At the end of the weekend, 24-year-old Kauffman, a multidisciplinary studies major, was crowned as the pageant's Miss Washington.

Kauffman didn't get her start in pageantry with International Junior Miss. The Stanwood native competed in her first pageant, National American Miss, when she was 15 as a way to boost her self confidence.

"I was very overweight and very self conscious," Kauffman said. "I was scared of public speaking, and I didn't really have many friends, so I thought that this might be a good way to bring me out of my shell."

National American Miss didn't allow make up for girls under 12 and was more about being the girl next door, being a good role model and being comfortable in who you are. Over her teenage years Kauffman continued competing and started to having better self confidence.

"Whether that meant being a doctor or collecting every piece of "Star Wars" memorabilia in the world, whatever that was for you, they wanted you to accept it," Kauffman said.

Debbie Judd, Kauffman's mother said watching her daughter compete in pageants was rewarding because she saw self-acceptance happens gradually over time.

"I was seeing her slowly grow," Judd said. "She had done other things like this before but this was giving her a lot of interpersonal confidence that I hadn't seen before."

After a few years, Kauffman discovered International Junior Miss, a competition that was new to the world of the pageantry.

"I fell in love with it right away. There's always a pageant for someone," Kauffman said.

Nicole Miller is the International Junior Miss regional director for the Pacific Northwest. She said the pageant is unique because it tries to teach girls and young women valuable life skills.

"International Junior Miss isn't a glitz pageant and it's not a beauty pageant either," Miller said. "We're really looking for the well rounded contestant who is comfortable in front of an audience and speaks well."

In 2013, while attending the University of Idaho, Kauffman was crowned as International Junior Miss Idaho, but was the only contestant in her age group. While she was honored, Kauffman said she didn't feel like she had



A headshot of Kauffman. // Photo courtesy of Breanna Kauffman



Kauffman stands outside the Performing Arts Center on Monday, March 7. // Photo by Rachel Postlewait

earned the victory because she was the only one competing and therefore won automatically.

However, being crowned Miss Idaho gave her the opportunity to go to the International Junior Miss final competition.

Kauffman left the University of Idaho to come home to Washington. Kauffman said she took time off school to figure out what she wanted to do. She started to take classes at Everett Community College to make sure school was the path she wanted to go down. Once she had confirmed that she did want to keep studying, she applied to Western.

All the while, she was still competing in pageants. It was around this time she was crowned first runner-up for the Junior Miss Washington 2015 title.

In September 2015, Kauffman started at Western and joined a few clubs, including the figure skating team.

"I took a hard look at my life and said 'I'm doing really good right now.' I had friends. I had self confidence, I loved public speaking, I was great at interviews; all of these skills that I had gotten through pageants," Kauffman said. "But I wasn't healthy. I was very overweight, so I decided I wanted to make a lifestyle change"

In preparation for Junior Miss 2016, she completely changed her diet and started a strict exercise regimen and ended up losing 20 pounds in two months. But Kauffman only made second runner up that year, leaving one more year of eligibility to compete.

"She had worked super, super hard," Judd, said. "She also knew that if she didn't win, she had attained a lot of her own personal goals."

Once the 2016 school year started, Kauffman said it was time for her to buckle down and get serious about her training again. As she continued her studies at Western, she would make an hour and a half drive once a week to train with a fitness coach. In preparation for this latest pageant, Kauffman lost an additional 30 pounds.

"It wasn't just about getting in shape so I looked better onstage in a gown," Kauffman said. "It was really about finding myself again and that started with being comfortable in my own skin."

Kauffman said she rejects the idea that pageants are just judging

"I took a hard look at my life and said 'I'm doing really good right now.' I had friends. I had self confidence, I loved public speaking, I was great at interviews; all of these skills that I had gotten through pageants."

Breanna Kauffman
Pageant contestant



Kauffman poses with her "Miss Washington" sash Monday, March 7. // Photo by Rachel Postlewait

women and giving girls a warped body image to aspire to. Instead, she said pageants, especially those which include a swimsuit portion, showcase the hard work that has gone into achieving a toned body. While International Junior Miss doesn't have a swimsuit portion, but Kauffman said the pageant does encourage a lifestyle that balances health and fitness with the fast pace of modern living.

While keeping with that healthy living style, Kauffman isn't exclusively interested in it. She is a self-proclaimed nerd who loves Disney, "Star Wars" and "Game of Thrones." Kauffman said accepting the things that make her unique is what makes her happy.

"It's okay to have those differences, it's okay that I'm not a perfect size two, it's okay that I'm 24 years old and still in college," Kauffman said. "Those things, honestly, they make me stronger because I made the choice to come back to school and to get healthier."

Set in his wacky ways

English instructor strives to make his classes one of a kind

Anjali LeGrand
THE WESTERN FRONT

Imagine going to class and having a fellow student show up in a gorilla costume or a class where the professor tweets his entire lecture.

That's only a taste of what students can expect in Tony Prichard's classroom.

"For me, the classroom is ultimately a kind of stage. It has its own ethics. It has its own aesthetics," Prichard said.

Prichard is a senior instructor in the English department at Western and is known for his distinctive teaching methods.

Prichard grew up in a suburb in Alaska before moving to Anchorage for his undergraduate degree at University of Alaska Anchorage. There, he found himself unexcited about the content he was learning for his bachelor's in English.

"I liked what I was learning but I was often wanting more," Prichard said. "I didn't feel like I was being reached."

Even as a student, Prichard found himself drawn toward teaching. Feeling a sense of dissatisfaction with his education, Prichard moved to Bellingham and took a class at Whatcom Community College before moving on to get his master's degree at Western.

While at Whatcom, Prichard worked as a tutor in the writing center and enjoyed the environment. He said the setting was stimulating and made him want to keep teaching.

While working toward his master's, Prichard was nominated for a teaching showcase along with Dawn Dietrich, an associate professor of English at Western and director of Western Reads. Prichard and Dietrich were nominated for their work together when he assisted in the teaching of her English 364 class.

"It was really unusual because it was a student and a faculty member collaborating in the classroom. He was a co-teacher with me," Dietrich said.

After receiving his master's degree, Prichard was presented with a rare chance to move to Switzerland for his doctorate. The experience was a non-traditional and remarkable opportu-



Tony Prichard in his office on Feb. 21. // Photo by Harrison Amelang

nity, Prichard said.

Prichard completed his doctorate in 2013 and moved back to Bellingham where he was hired into the English department at Western.

Emma Levy, a graduate student in the English studies department, said Prichard has impacted his students through his unique lessons and advice. She said Prichard was a mentor of hers.

As an undergraduate student at Western, Levy had only started thinking about applying to grad school. She said Prichard's advice that helped cement her decision.

Levy said Prichard's teaching style is incomparable. Levy remembers a day when Prichard walked into class silently, logged onto Twitter and displayed it on the projector. He typed parts of his lecture until more and more students logged on and began conversing with him on Twitter, Levy said in an email. His method of teaching that day, while unusual, was relevant to the class content, Levy said.

While not every class involves lessons with such unconventional methods, Levy said he always leads the class with conversation rather than presentations.

Prichard said one of the benefits

of being non-tenured track faculty is that he can continually change things, which he often wants to do. This is caused by his love of reading and research which constantly presents him with new ideas, Prichard said.

It's clear to anyone who walks into his office that much of Prichard's free time is filled with reading. With an entire wall covered in books, Prichard's office overlooking Red Square lends itself to a library-esque feel.

"I don't know how he reads so much with his teaching load," Dietrich said. "He's just on top of the new stuff that's coming out and they're really interesting stuff. He reads a lot of reviews and blogs and keeps up on the interesting people who are doing work out there."

Prichard said his favorite books are always the ones he is reading at the time.

"If I were to say a book that's probably the most influential [to] me, it would be Jean-François Lyotard, 'The Differend: Phrases in dispute,'" Prichard said. "He effectively goes after the way in which narrative control takes place particularly with Holocaust deniers."

Senior Jamie Chevalier has been in two of Prichard's classes and found his

course content to be leagues above the readings she saw in other classes. Chevalier described his teaching style as interesting and erratic. The weird and intriguing methods he uses in his classes always have a point, Chevalier said.

"The point is not always entirely clear, and you have to want to participate and understand," Chevalier said. "But if you do, you're not getting the same experience from any other professor."

Chevalier said Prichard's classes have been impactful on her personal philosophy and principles.

"He has a lot to say about identity and how it's not necessarily quite as clear a construct as we might think it is," Chevalier said. "I would say in my time at Western, I have had probably four really good professors and [Prichard] is definitely one of them."

When not reading or teaching, Prichard enjoys playing, writing music and spending time with his family.

In his early teens, Prichard wanted to learn to play the guitar. His parents had already bought one for his older brother, who never learned to play it. When Prichard asked for his own, his parents expected him to show he was committed by learning to read music and guitar chords before buying him the instrument.

To prove himself, Prichard cut a paper towel roll in half, used some cut-up poster board as the fretboard, taped them together and used it to learn the notes on a guitar.

"I had to have seriousness in order to play," Prichard said. "I want my students to demonstrate that [English] is serious to them. That doesn't mean that they can't play at it."

Prichard said he always tries to set up his classes so there is a clear connection to the content and make his class an experience for his students.

"I hope they learn some things, and I hope they unlearn some things," Prichard said. "What those are, will ultimately be up to them because each learner is incredibly unique and different."

Frontline: More involvement equals gov't accountability

By opinion editor Anna Edlund

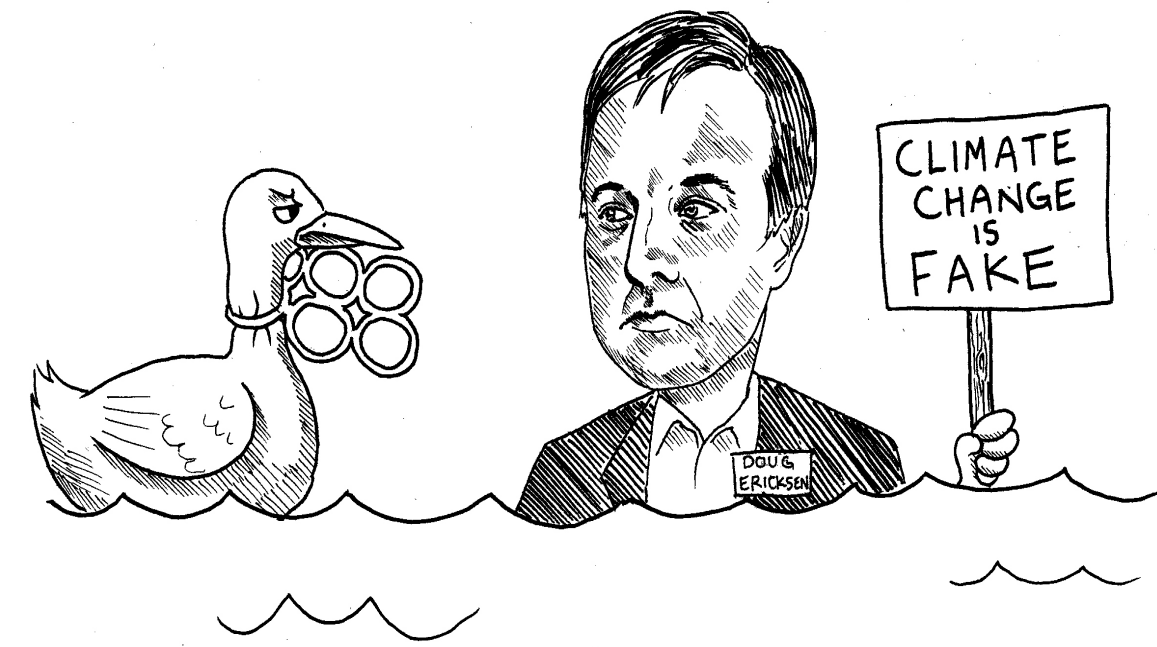


Illustration by Darby Womack

At this point, it seems ridiculous to think climate change deniers still exist. And even worse, that we have one representing us in government.

Doug Ericksen is a Washington state Senator representing the 42nd district, including north Bellingham. A member of Trump's transition team in the Environmental Protection Agency, he has been criticized as a climate change skeptic and for abandoning his constituents.

And rightly so.

Ericksen held a town hall this past weekend to an overflowing and accusatory crowd. His position within the EPA has brought particular ire, as he's missed 75 percent of scheduled committee meetings this legislative session while continuing to hold his Senate position.

And the people didn't let him forget it.

The town hall was past maximum capacity, with roughly 700 people showing up. It was a raucous event, with attendees shouting questions at the senator, demanding answers.

Good.

Accountability is a hard-found concept in today's politics. Letter-writing and endless phone calls to representative's offices are ineffective, and it seems practically futile to send emails to the politicians

who shape our lives.

Public meetings that guarantee face-to-face time with politicians are an absolute goldmine when it comes to making your voice heard. It's a lot harder to ignore someone talking to your face in a room of a hundred than someone sending an angry email. Ericksen spends much of his time in Olympia and Washington D.C., and nowhere near enough actually interacting with his constituents.

So why do city and county council meetings have such low attendance, when we are represented by politicians like Ericksen?

If you've ever attended Bellingham City Council meetings, you'll know the

majority of attendees are yelling-at-the-clouds old men, and various professionals or nonprofit organizers who have a direct stake in whatever the issues of the night are. With a few exceptions, it's not often that student organizers and protestors come to voice their views.

And what a shame that is.

By law, council members are required to listen to you. They have to not only hear you, but give you the time to speak so anyone else attending will hear you. It's a free megaphone pointed directly at the people who can make a difference. And even if the members of city and county council aren't as wildly divisive as someone like Ericksen, they're a step

closer to representatives like him who warrant such outcry.

The sort of fervor and emotion constituents brought to Ericksen's town hall was a perfect example of the difference people can make. Will the senator change his actions accordingly? Maybe not. But in a time when accountability is hard to come by, voices at public events are a powerful motivator.

And this is happening across the country. Politicians and representatives are being questioned at town hall meetings across the country by citizens from every political leaning and walk of life. People are fed up because they aren't being heard.

Western's Blue Group, a group for undocumented students and their supporters, recently petitioned Bellingham City Council for creation of a sanctuary city. A packed hall filled with fired-up students, many holding signs, was a powerful force. And even though the status of sanctuary city wasn't granted, the promise that Bellingham won't enforce immigration law is a win. It was a promising and uplifting sight for young people petitioning for change.

Saturday's town hall was an important example of genuine organization and accountability that we desperately need.

Supporters of Ericksen, opponents and people without affiliation came together to do what democracy needs most: hold their representatives to the standards they were elected to. And call them out when they hold positions as backwards as denying climate change.

Bellingham is home to so many passionate and provocative activists, with a huge variety of beliefs. The more people who utilize the incredible opportunity that public meetings offer, the greater the spread of information and open dialogue. Ericksen's town hall is proof enough.

Viking Voices

What do you think is a serious issue in Bellingham and Whatcom County?

Compiled by Jade Thurston



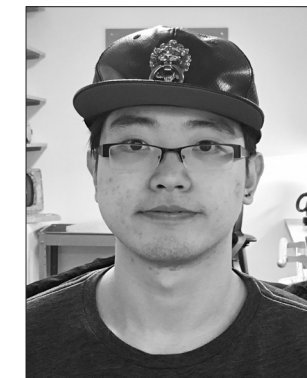
Benjamin Lee
Junior, biology

"For me personally, it would have to be our housing market. We have so many students looking for housing close to campus and realistically you just can't find it because there is no space."



Chelsea Douglas
Sophomore, environmental science

"I think a really serious issue in Whatcom County is farmworker justice. [Some farm workers] are treated very poorly; they don't get compensated for their work [and] they are given housing that is dangerous."



Jason Lu
Senior, molecular biology

"The amount of homeless people in downtown Bellingham really got my attention. I know the homeless issue is a big issue in Seattle but for Bellingham I feel it's also a pretty major issue, too."



Juliet Mammen
Junior, international business and Spanish

"The Washington Education Superintendent wants to cut most language programs in public education. I find it interesting he's trying to limit some high schooler's options. I think the more choices the better."



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Track and field star vaults into championships

Jake Gregg
THE WESTERN FRONT

Junior pole vaulter Anna Paradee is the only Western athlete to qualify for the 2017 NCAA Division II Indoor Championship out of Western's 90 track and field team members.

Paradee achieved a new personal record of 3.83 meters at the Great Northwest Athletic Conference Championships held Feb. 18, locking in her spot to the national tournament.

Paradee said she had been consistent at all the meets leading up to the event and knew immediately her jump would likely be enough to qualify for nationals.

Head coach Pee Wee Halsell said Paradee has put a tremendous amount of effort during practice to put herself into this position.

"[Paradee] was determined to get to the national meet," Halsell said. "She works hard. She gets in there and gets it done. She sets goals and has a plan to get to those."

Paradee said coaches Karis Anderson and Ben Stensland helped her reach this point.

Coach Anderson is a Western pole vaulter



Anna Paradee will be competing in the Indoor National Championships for the first time in her career. // Photo by Harrison Amelang.

alumnus. Paradee said Anderson's experience on the team before, makes her a great coach now. She said coach Stensland has assisted her greatly because of his approachability and care for the athletes.

"[Stensland] is very personal, and that one on one effort he puts into all of his athletes really cultivates a

great team environment," Paradee said.

Paradee said her teammates have been just as influential as her coaches on her success, in particular sophomore pole vaulter, Rachael Roberts.

Paradee said Roberts is lively and has a good presence, which in turn keeps Paradee calm during the

ly fantastic," Paradee said. "We're really supportive of each other. It's not competitive against each other."

Although Paradee is traveling to the tournament with only the coaching staff, Roberts said Paradee will be going to the to the tournament knowing she has the support of her entire team.

"I think she'll do amazing, I honestly do. She's been really consistent this year and that gives a good mental state going into a meet like this," Roberts said. "I think she's going to knock it out of the park. And I'm not just saying that because she's my best friend."

With this support group going into the national tournament, Paradee said she feels no pressure, and is going in with one simple goal: to be consistent.

"I don't feel any pressure, just nerves. This is the biggest meet I've ever competed at," Paradee said. "I'm excited. This is a really great opportunity to show what Western athletics is about."

Paradee will be competing alongside 540 athletes, 270 women and 270 men, at the tournament in Birmingham, Alabama from March 9 to 11.

Stafford makes immediate impact

Taylor Stafford earns accolades in first season of eligibility

Max Broburg
THE WESTERN FRONT

Senior Guard Taylor Stafford might've only had one season of eligibility for the Vikings, but that is all the time he needed to be named the Great Northwest Athletic Conference Player and Newcomer of the Year.

After scoring 64 points in two games, Stafford was named Most Valuable Player in the GNAC Tournament.

Stafford's award has been in the making since the summer between his sophomore and junior year of high school, when one of his coaches convinced him not to quit playing basketball.

"I told myself from 10th grade on I would take this game serious, that summer I put so much into it," Stafford said.

Stafford, a transfer from the University of Evansville, is known by his teammates



Taylor Stafford advances the ball against Central Washington. // Photo by Harrison Amelang.

as a player who arrives at the gym before anyone else and is still there after everyone has left.

Stafford's accomplishments come during a season that saw the Vikings go 23-5

and win the GNAC Tournament Saturday, March 4 against Western Oregon University, 71-69.

"He just has a strong desire to be successful. He works extremely hard, both

meets.

"I bring energy to the team," Roberts said. "At meets we have fun and we goof around and we dance."

Paradee said the vibe between her and her teammates is better than it has been in the past, which has created a great atmosphere.

"The whole team in general this year has been real-

late in games to really close games out, he's a really good closer," Dickson said.

In a brief but impactful career in Bellingham, Stafford used his ineligibility in the beginning of his career to contribute when the time came.

"My work started when I first got here. When I sat out my redshirt season, I acted like I was in season," Stafford said. "I was in the mix, redshirts usually sit on the outside looking in."

Stafford missed scoring double digits in only one game for Western. One of Stafford's highlights included a 44-point performance on the road against the University of San Diego on Dec. 12, 2016.

"That was one of the highest moments of the season, not just because I scored 44 [points,] but because my teammates were looking for me," Stafford said. "That showed me this is an unselfish group of guys."

The USD game was one of six in which Stafford scored 30 points or more.

Junior forward, Deandre Dickson, said Stafford is at his best late in games.

"All the shots he makes

late in games to really close games out, he's a really good closer," Dickson said.

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"All the shots he makes

Men's basketball claim crown

Hailey Palmer
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Great Northwest Athletic Conference men's championship game came down to the wire Saturday, March 4, at the Marcus Pavilion in Lacey.

The Western men's basketball team defeated Western Oregon University 71-69 to claim the GNAC tournament title after having already secured the regular season title. With the victory, the Vikings locked up a spot in the NCAA Division II national tournament.

Senior guard and GNAC Player of the Year Taylor Stafford was named tournament MVP after scoring 33 points in the game and 64 total points in Western's two games.

"It's kind of surreal," Stafford said. "Credit [goes] to my teammates and coaching staff. I'm new to the team here, so I appreciate them for accepting my role."

The two teams traded baskets for much of the first half, until the Vikings held Western Oregon scoreless for a seven-minute stretch to end the half, giving them a 36-28 lead.

But Western Oregon closed up the gap in the second half. Stafford sunk a pair of free throws late in the game to put the Vikings up by three with under a minute left.

Western Oregon drove down the court to make a layup before intentionally fouling Stafford, sending him back to the line. Stafford made one of two free throws to put the Vikings up by two.

"I missed the last free throw at the end, but I'll get on myself about that later," Stafford said. "I just want to enjoy this. It feels amazing."

Western Oregon outscored the Vikings in the second half 41-35, but it wasn't enough as the Vikings were able to



Taylor Stafford receives the GNAC Tournament MVP award. // Photo by Hailey Palmer.

hold on in the final minutes as Western Oregon's attempt at a game-winning 3-pointer bounced off the rim.

"Our energy was down," Stafford said. "We just had to stay together. Throughout the game we just finally wanted it, and we got it done."

Western's head coach Tony Dominguez said the GNAC is a tough league to play in, and to win both the regular season and tournament title is a tremendous accomplishment.

"They deserve all the credit," Dominguez said. "It wasn't our best performance, but they really gritted it out."

The GNAC tournament started in 2011, making this the first conference tournament title the Vikings have earned since its creation.

"This is one of the most special teams I've been around and it's not just talent," Dominguez said. "This

particular group is bound together. They want to see everyone succeed."

Senior forward Jeffery Parker had a quiet night recording four points and one steal after a record setting performance the night before, but said he was glad to get the title and had fun doing so.

"It feels really good," Parker said. "This has been a long road for me. I've never had one of these and it's the first one in Western's history."

The Vikings were selected as the third seed in the NCAA Division II West Regional. They will play sixth seed Chico State at noon Friday, March 10, in San Diego.

"We're excited about whatever comes our way," Dominguez said. "It's great to be in the NCAA tournament and have a chance again."

Seawolves sink women's basketball

Vikings receive at-large NCAA tournament bid

Hailey Palmer
THE WESTERN FRONT

The women's championship in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference proved to be a tough battle, with the Western women's basketball team falling to University of Alaska Anchorage in the second half.

The final score ended at 79-70 Saturday, March 4, at the Marcus Pavilion in Lacey.

The Vikings finished second in both the regular season and GNAC tournament behind Alaska Anchorage in both.

Western held a 33-31 lead going into halftime, but couldn't hang on in the second half as Alaska Anchorage closed the gap and they took the lead.

Senior guard Taylor Peacocke said the game was decided by defense.

"That's a great team," Peacocke said. "It came down to turnovers. We didn't get the stops we needed to."

Senior forward Tia Briggs also emphasized the role defense played in the end score.

"We had a few too many defensive breakdowns which they capitalized on," Briggs said. "They're a good team."

Alaska Anchorage scored 18 points off turnovers while forcing a total of 16.

The Vikings found themselves in two different 10-point deficits throughout the game, and then one of 13 points in the fourth quarter.

Senior forward Kiana Gandy led the team with two blocks on defense, but it wasn't enough to hold off

the Seawolves' attack.

"We gave them too many second chances," Gandy said. "We had a lot of unforced errors and we lost possessions."

Peacocke led the Vikings offense, scoring a team-high 22 points. Gandy contributed 15 points, while Briggs scored 14.

Senior guard Jessica Valley led the team with eight rebounds.

Peacocke's performance proved to be record setting, since she not only broke the GNAC single-season record for points scored, but also put together the first ever 700-point season in GNAC women's basketball history.

"It's pretty exciting," Peacocke said. "I'm definitely proud of what I've done. I've put a lot of work in and my team has done a great job of getting me the ball."

With the GNAC championship loss, the Vikings officially wrapped up their conference play, finishing with a 25-5 overall record.

The Vikings were selected as the third seed in the NCAA Division II West Regional. They will play sixth seed Cal State East Bay at noon Friday, March 10, in Anchorage, Alaska.

"We just have to stay focused and get ready for the next one," Peacocke said.

The postseason doesn't guarantee a next game to any team, which is something the Vikings are aware of.

"We have to go in with the confidence that we're going to win, and the determination we have to win in order to keep going," Briggs said.

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Parker rises to the top

Jeffrey Parker sets all-time scoring record against Saint Martin's

Hailey Palmer
THE WESTERN FRONT

Rewrite the record books, because Western men's basketball senior forward Jeffrey Parker has made history.

Parker broke the Western men's basketball all-time scoring record Friday, March 3, against Saint Martin's University at the Marcus Pavilion in Lacey.

Entering the game, Parker needed 21 points to break the previous record. Scoring 14 points in the first half and following up with nine more in the second half paved the way for Parker to break the record.

A second half layup moved Parker into first place with 1,845 career points. The previous record was 1,844 points held by Grant Dykstra.

JEFFREY PARKER CAREER BY THE NUMBERS

1,851 Career points

274 3-pointers made

15.4 Points per game

129 Assists

120 Games played

"Setting the record just shows that all my hard work paid off," Parker said. "It's been a long journey here at Western. I'm so glad I was able to do it with this group of guys and these coaches."

Parker said an emotional season topped off with an all-time record means the world to him.

"In a season where I hit tragedy early with my mom passing, it's an honor," Parker said. "It always feels good to be first."

Freshman forward Daulton Hommes said Parker is in the gym practicing more than anyone he's ever seen.

"He's just a huge role model," Hommes said. "The time and effort he puts in pays off. We're all just super happy for him. He finally got the record."

Parker said he knows his hard work is going to pay off eventually, so he takes on that mentality to put in all the work he can.

"I believe I'm the hardest working athlete in the world," Parker said. "Sometimes that work doesn't pay off in the way I want it, but in the long run, I know it's going to pay off somehow."

Western's head coach Tony Dominguez knew Parker throughout his entire recruiting process and said it made the record break even more exciting and fun.

"I'm in coaching for the relationships," Dominguez said. "He's the only player I've had that's been with me since I started as head coach."

With a team filled with talent up and down the roster, some players can find themselves lost in the shuffle, a position Parker sometimes found himself in throughout the season.

"[Parker] is a tremendous young man," Dominguez said. "He's not selfish. He's taken the backseat

many times this year and he's just always a team guy. I'm excited for him and his accomplishments because he's earned it."

Records are exciting, but during a fast-paced game, it's easy to lose track of what's happening. Senior guard Taylor Stafford said he didn't know Parker broke the record during the game until after a timeout was called.

"I didn't even notice until our manager said congrats to [Parker]," Stafford said. "That was amazing, he played so hard."

The record might be broken, but there's still basketball left to be played. The win over Saint Martin's advanced Western to the championship game of the tournament. They went on to beat Western Oregon 71-69 Saturday, March 4, to claim the Great Northwest Athletic Conference tournament title.

The season isn't over yet and with an unknown amount of games left to be played, Parker will only add to his now leading record before his career at Western comes to a close.

Jeffrey Parker takes a shot against Central Washington. // Photo by Harrison Amelang.



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