

THE WESTERN FRONT

Volume 182, Issue 2

westernfrontonline.com

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018

Western pledges to be carbon-free by 2035 *New Sustainability Action Plan sets lofty goals for campus*



Steve Hollenhorst, dean of Huxley College of the Environment, in the Environmental Studies building. Hollenhorst has been dean since 2012 and is also co-chair of the Sustainability Advisory Committee. // Photo by Mathew Roland

Isa Kaufma-Gabelle
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western unveiled its new Sustainability Action Plan this past December, joining 60 other U.S. universities in a 20-year commitment to improve current systems of sustainability across campus.

The plan, which took two years to develop, is comprised of 10 different chapters dedicated to departments such as academics, campus engagement, transportation, operations and waste.

In 2014, former Western President Bruce Shepard tasked the Sustainability Advisory Committee to construct a new plan from 1,800 comments and suggestions given by students and faculty.

John Furman, director

of facilities and co-chair of the Sustainability Advisory Committee, noted that this plan is meant to increase opportunity for students to be involved in the projects put forth by the various departments.

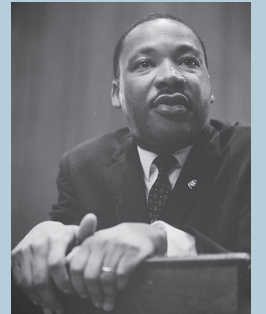
"This is a plan that anybody can find something that matters to them," Furman said. "Doesn't matter who you are or where you come from, there's something you can latch onto as a component of your personal sustainability."

Seth Vidana, manager at the Office of Sustainability, is optimistic about achieving these sustainability goals but said he has overseen the plan long enough to know it's going to take more work and funding from the university to achieve them.

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City opens discussion on detached ADUs

Support for ADUs

Meredith Karbowski
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Bellingham City Council is opening up discussion on accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to improve housing availability for residents of Bellingham.

ADUs are living spaces on a property that one can live in completely independent from the main house. An ADU has its own bathroom and kitchen, and a detached ADU can be a shed or a detached garage, City Planner Chris Koch said.

Changes proposed will allow detached ADUs in single family zoning citywide and lessen other require-

ments for ADUs. Currently only 20 ADUs are allowed in each single family zoned neighborhood and detached ADUs are not allowed in single-family zones.

Current code mandates the Council to review the ADU ordinance, as the 20-unit limit has been reached by neighborhoods such as South Hill.

"I see this as being a solution," Koch said. "We have a housing crisis right now, and we need as many tools as possible to help address it, and this is one of the tools."

Many Bellingham residents have written letters to the City Council this year

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This detached accessory dwelling unit is in the Lettered Streets neighborhood, a single-family residential zone. It was built onto an existing workshop the early 2000s, and was previously occupied by a tenant. The homeowners now use it as a guest house. // Photo by Mathew Roland

Read the Western Front Editorial Board's opinion on ADUs on page 9

Opposition to ADUs

Sarah Porter
THE WESTERN FRONT

The City of Bellingham is considering changing regulations related to accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

One of the major changes being considered would allow detached ADUs, also known as mother-in-law apartments or granny flats.

The Bellingham Neighborhood Coalition, a community group who opposes these changes, invited Seattle activist Marty Kaplan to speak to Bellingham residents on Thursday about his experience fighting similar ordinance

changes in Seattle.

Kaplan has been an architect for 40 years, contributed to Seattle's urban planning for about 15 years and is the current chair of the Land Use Committee for the Queen Anne Community Council.

Kaplan appealed an ordinance that proposed loosening restrictions on the production of ADUs and detached ADUs, according to case documents in June 2016.

However, Kaplan said he is not anti-ADU. He helped draft Seattle's current legislation as a member of the Seattle Planning Commission which went city-wide in June

see *KAPLAN*, page 4



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HAPPY LITTLE PLANTS



Nestled between the boulders in front of the Biology Building are dozens of small succulent plants. Low maintenance, succulent plants make easy decorations in the home or study space. A 2006 Kansas State University study found that hospital rooms filled with plants caused patients to be more relaxed, less negative and have faster recovery times. // Photo by Mathew Roland

PLAN

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"This is something that's not intended to sit on a shelf, it has to be a living breathing document that is acutely engaged and involved in decision making," Vidana said. "The easy part is done, the more challenging part is going to be implementing the plan in the midst of so many resources and time requirements."

Senior Gwen Larned, the zero-waste coordinator at the Office of Sustainability, has been leading the waste chapter within the Sustainable Action Plan since it started.

Sustainable Action Plan coordinator Susan Hamilton approached Larned as a sophomore to be involved. She helped bridge communication between various waste teams and instilled a zero-waste approach to focus in on how

the university can reduce landfill usage.

Now that the plan has been signed, Larned said she can already see the initiatives that she drafted long ago in action.

Larned said there has

already been progress in transitioning the Viking Union and residence halls to composting. She said this reduced waste originally sent to landfills by 20 to 30 percent.

The plan also includes



Looking up toward the skylight inside the Environmental Studies building on Monday. // Photo by Mathew Roland

a university commitment to becoming a carbon-free university by the year 2035.

Steve Hollenhorst, dean of Huxley College of the Environment and co-chair of the Sustainability Advisory Committee, said Western has already made progress toward that carbon-free benchmark.

"We've already made one big step that has probably the biggest single thing we could have done to reduce our carbon footprint," Hollenhorst said.

Western recently became a subscriber of Puget Sound Energy's wind farm along with institutions such as Starbucks, REI, Sound Transit and King County. While Western buys regular energy from Puget Sound Energy, becoming a subscriber of the wind farm will make it so the university will not have to rely on any coal refinery.

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The Western Front is published once weekly in the fall, winter, spring and summer quarters. The Western Front is the official newspaper of Western Washington University and is published by the Student Publications Council. It is mainly supported by advertising. Opinions and stories in the newspaper have no connection to advertising. News content is determined by student editors. Staff reporters are involved in a course in the department of journalism, but any student enrolled at Western may offer stories to the editors.

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ICE begins deportation proceedings against community organizer Maru Mora-Villalpando

Western Front Staff
THE WESTERN FRONT

Immigration activist Maru Mora-Villalpando has received a Notice to Appear, which initiates deportation proceedings, from the Seattle Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office, according to a press release.

Mora-Villalpando is the leader of Northwest Detention Center Resistance, an organization that fights deportations at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, and founder

of Latino Advocacy, which provides consulting for nonprofits on racial justice and immigrant rights. She has also been active in the Bellingham community and is the policy advocate and media coordinator for Community to Community Development, a local advocacy group.

Supporters see ICE's action as part of systematic silencing of undocumented organizers, Tania Unzueta, Mijente policy director, said in the press release.

At a press conference in Seattle Tuesday morning, sup-

porters said they suspected ICE was targeting Mora-Villalpando, and that they see this as a national trend of retaliation against activists.

"ICE only knows about me because of my political work," Mora-Villalpando wrote in the press release. "I have spoken out to defend immigrants in detention and shared my story as an undocumented mother. I have sat in meetings with immigration officials and challenged their practices. They are an agency whose actions have already been devastating to my

community. But with the letter they delivered to my house, they are showing themselves to be an agency that silences any opposition to their practices."

ICE has not yet responded to specific questions, but ICE public affairs officer and spokesperson Yasmeen Pitts O'Keefe issued a statement confirming that Mora-Villalpando is being charged with unlawful presence and her case is under legal review.

"All those in violation of the immigration laws may be subject to enforcement proceed-

ings, up to and including removal from the United States," Pitts O'Keefe said in an email.

Mora-Villalpando has lived in the U.S. for over 25 years, according to the press release. She is the mother of Western student Josefina Mora.

Northwest Detention Center Resistance and Mijente have organized a petition asking that Mora-Villalpando's notice to appear be withdrawn.

This story will be updated online as more information becomes available.

Timothy Ballew II appointed to County Council
Homelessness also discussed during public comment at the meeting

Rachel Sandal
THE WESTERN FRONT

Timothy Ballew II was appointed as the new member of the Whatcom County Council on Jan. 16, filling a spot recently left absent due to district realignment. Ballew previously served as Tribal Chairman for Lummi Nation for five years.

Ballew will fill the role until the November election results have been certified.

Ballew said he believes his experience will help him excel as a councilmember.

"I think the biggest thing that I have learned and taken away from my experience is that, in public office, it is less about the personal agendas that someone brings to the table, but to take on the issues of the day

that are on the table when we arrive," Ballew said. "I learned that very quickly and I think that is very important for public servants to take that to heart."

Seven nominees, including Ballew, were given time to speak at the council meeting. Some of the topics discussed among almost all the candidates were water protection and distribution, incarceration, prison expansion and homelessness.

After all of the candidates spoke, the councilmembers wrote down one or two nominees they believed best fit the open Council position. The Council's clerk tallied up the votes and Ballew was the majority vote with four councilmembers listing his name first.

Councilmember

"I think the biggest thing that I have learned and taken away from my experience is that, in public office, it is less about the personal agendas that someone brings to the table, but to take on the issues of the day that are on the table when we arrive. I learned that very quickly and I think that is very important for public servants to take that to heart."

-Timothy Ballew II,
County Councilmember

Tyler Byrd was the only one who voted against Ballew. Once the discussions surrounding the new councilmember were finished, the council called for the public to speak. Twelve of these 14 individuals spoke about the homelessness crisis in Bellingham and the surrounding communities in the county.

Several members from HomesNOW!, an organization that strives to build tiny homes for people experiencing homelessness, spoke to the councilmembers.

Several homeless individuals, some of whom have been recipients of the organization's services, spoke at the meeting as well.

"I think most of you feel the same way, but homelessness is not OK," said volunteer Paula

Smith. "Too many of us don't say anything. We don't step forward and say, 'This is not OK.'"

Other community members voiced their concerns about homelessness as well. Several suggested using abandoned buildings or vacant motels to house people experiencing homelessness.

Social worker Amy Glasser, who previously ran for a position on the county council last fall, spoke out about the homeless crisis as well.

"It is the Council's job to take care of the people that will die this winter," said Glasser. "It is your job to take care of the people who can't take care of themselves."

The next County Council Meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 30 in the Council Chambers.

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ADU
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voicing their opinion on the ordinance banning detached ADUs.

Proponents of detached ADUs say they can increase homes available for renting, which can help to balance the competitive market and lower rental costs.

Galen Herz, a recent Western graduate and co-founder of the Bellingham Tenants Union, said the main issue he has seen in his role with the union is housing availability.

Herz said allowing detached ADUs and building more on single-family homes will help the housing availability crisis.

“Every new home that gets built helps out the situation,” Herz said.

Herz said he has heard different landlords say as many as 40 people will apply on the first day of a new rental listing.

“When there is a low vacancy rate, it forces [potential] tenants to compete

against each other, which raises the price of housing,” Herz said. “That’s what has really enabled these large rent increases that we have seen in the last few years.”

“Bellingham is a premium market, and a lot of people want to cash in on those people coming into town.”

—April Hinkle-Johnson, Bellingham resident

According to Census data and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Bellingham’s vacancy rate decreased from 3.4 percent in 2000 to 1.79 percent in 2016.

Herz said allowing detached ADUs on single-family properties can open up neighborhoods to become more inclusive and economically diverse, and also provide better housing availability for students.

In a study done by the State of Oregon Department of Environmental

Quality on detached ADUs, 98 percent of ADUs in Portland, Oregon in 2014 were reportedly rented out at a mean price similar to an average apartment or cheaper.

April Hinkle-Johnson is a Bellingham resident who lives in a detached ADU. A friend of Hinkle-Johnson had a backyard cottage on their property that she moved into when she graduated college in 2012, she said.

After returning from a year-long trip in December, Hinkle-Johnson moved back into the cottage. Instead of paying rent, she lives there on a work-trade — she does work around the house for the family, and in return, lives in the cottage rent-free.

Hinkle-Johnson said this was the best option for her after coming back from her trip, as she did not have the funds to find an apartment or home and start paying rent.

Hinkle-Johnson is in support of legalizing detached ADUs, but stated that she is weary of landlords taking advantage of renters.

“Bellingham is a premium market, and a lot of people want to cash in on those people coming into town,” Hinkle-Johnson said. “People could rent out anything, and it could be places really not fit for human habitation, and could be exploiting young renters who don’t know how to advocate for themselves.”

If made legal, detached ADUs must adhere to the same rental requirements as other housing types.

Opponents of detached ADUs feel that they would become a problem if a tenant was being loud or otherwise disruptive to the

neighborhood, as they are separate from the main house and less likely to disturb the property owner, Koch said.

Koch also said that residents were concerned that putting more buildings on a property for rental purposes would minimize the natural habitat, which would potentially become an environmental problem.

Despite concerns voiced by residents, Koch thinks that changes to the ordinance are a step in the right direction toward making housing availability more achievable.

A public hearing to discuss changes to this ordinance and the Bellingham municipal code will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Jan. 25, in the City Council chambers.

Bellingham residents are encouraged to provide public comment at the meeting or email written comments to planning-commission@cob.org.

Advocates protest city's MLK Day celebration

Protesters dissatisfied with city's response to homelessness, undocumented citizens, other critical issues

Max Brunt
THE WESTERN FRONT

Local advocacy groups protested the City of Bellingham’s annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration on Monday, claiming the city was celebrating King’s life without upholding his teachings.

Members of local advocacy groups including Community to Community Development, Familias Unidas por la Justicia, Latino Advocacy, the Racial Justice Coalition and Red Line Salish Sea attended the protest, which was officially organized by Keep Bellingham Families Working.

A few dozen protesters gathered outside the Mount Baker Theatre while the city’s scheduled events took place inside. They claimed the progressive spirit of Bellingham’s celebration contradicted the city’s policies toward marginalized communities. A main point of contention was the city’s refusal to pass a sweeping sanctuary city ordinance in February of last year.

“Dr. King, I think he would be outside with us as opposed to inside,” said Seth Mangold, an activist with Keep Bellingham Families Working. “He was all about the action, as opposed to just nice words and ‘kumbaya’ good feelings.”

Protesters expressed the belief that King’s legacy is not something that can be co-opted by policymakers.

Bellingham City Councilmember Terry Bornemann said he understands Community to Community Development is unhappy with the lack of official sanctuary city status in Bellingham.

However, Bornemann said he disagrees that the city’s refusal to officially label Bellingham a sanctuary city reflects the city not committing

to a progressive position.

Bornemann interpreted the protest as a disagreement about the city’s choice of official language around the ordinance.

Bornemann said Community to Community Development had given him the impression the official sanctuary city status wasn’t essential as long as all other provisions of the ordinance were met.

“If she had said then that the label was important, I would have continued fighting for it,” Bornemann said.

Brenda Bentley, visual coordinator for Community to Community Development, said her group’s dissatisfaction with the ordinance extends beyond the lack of official sanctuary status. Other key points that were proposed but not realized in the final ordinance were a civilian oversight commission for police and the formal end to all cooperation between Bellingham police and federal immigration control.

“The City Council is not protecting our community. Walk the talk. If you are together against hate then lets show that. Put it in law. Put it in ordinance. Make it real, because just saying you are protecting people when it is not actually a law does not make those people feel safe,” Bentley said.

Whatcom County resident Peter Holcomb came out for this particular event despite not being formally involved in any advocacy groups.

“I’ve been bothered for quite a few years about the domestication of Martin Luther King,” Holcomb said. He had constructed a sign that morning which read, “Do not tame the people’s wild prophet.”

This is the third year that various advocacy groups have attempted to “expose



Protesters gathered outside Mt. Baker Theatre on Monday in response to the MLK celebration being held at the venue. Many expressed frustration with the city for not taking enough action to address homelessness. // Photo by October Yates

the city’s misuse of Dr. King’s birthday and messaging for their own benefit,” according to a flyer for the event.

President of HomesNOW! Not Later, Jim Peterson, protests with Keep Bellingham Families Working every week. HomesNOW! is a local home-

less advocacy group that constructs tiny homes for people experiencing homelessness in Whatcom County.

“I’m pretty cynical when it comes to the city right now, because I’ve been fighting them since June of last year, and basically, I could talk to

this flag pole and get more answers,” Peterson said.

Keep Bellingham Families Working hosts weekly vigils in front of the Bellingham City Hall every Monday.

Laurel Messenger contributed to this story.

KAPLAN
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Seattle activist Marty Kaplan gives speech on impacts of ADUs, Thursday. // Photo by Sarah Porter

2010 and allows detached ADUs with certain restrictions, such as requiring that an owner occupies one of the units.

Seattle had determined that the ordinance would have no environmental impacts according to case documents, but Kaplan argued against this determination. In his appeal statement, he said that the ordinance would have converted a large swathe of area, including all single-family zoned areas in Seattle, into duplex and triplex multi-family zones.

“If you’re going to rezone 43 square miles of zoning, you might think that it would have an impact,” Kaplan said.

He said Seattle was not transparent about the potential environmental impacts of the ordinance, and he was concerned that citizens were not given a voice in the conversation.

“The same thing is going on here,” Kaplan said, referring to Bellingham’s potential policy changes. “City hall is telling themselves they don’t have to study environmental impacts.”

The changes proposed in Bellingham would allow detached ADUs in single-family residential zones. Coalition member Larry Horowitz said that Bellingham has allowed attached ADUs since the 1995 ordinance, and that he believes legalizing detached ADUs in single-family zones would not effectively increase available housing in the city as some proponents argue.

Horowitz said that mixed multi-family and commercial zones, such as Bellingham’s urban village districts, are a more effective way to address the city’s housing shortage. In urban villages, more housing units can be built on one lot,

Bellingham Neighborhood Coalition's letter to the Planning Commission about the

ADU ORDINANCE

6 CONCERNS

- Cookie-Cutter directives that fail to respect neighborhood input
- Breach of social contract between the City and neighborhood’s zoning restrictions
- Permanent potential damage on vitality and character of neighborhoods
- No direct effect on increasing housing inventory
- City failed to meet the Growth Management Act
- Abandons city’s promise to get input from neighborhoods

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Single-family zoned areas
- Conditional use permits in single-family zoned areas
- Require owner-occupancy
- Complete ADU inventory and improve regulations
- Require one off-street parking spot per detached ADU bedroom
- Prohibit use of short term rentals



Infographic by Maney Orm

such as with large apartment complexes.

“Our neighborhoods are going to get ruined with these things.”

—Warren Sheay

Flip Breskin, a long-time Bellingham resident who contributed to the urban village planning in the Fountain District for three years, said she was concerned about

the influx of students renting single family homes. She said that Western’s insufficient housing capacity pits students against residents in the housing market, and she worries that ADUs in single-family neighborhoods would turn into more college housing.

Bellingham resident Warren Sheay expressed similar concerns.

“These [detached ADUs] are going to end up being Airbnb’s and more housing for college students,” Sheay

said. “Our neighborhoods are going to get ruined with these things.”

The Bellingham Neighborhood Coalition has created a Community ADU Letter listing the Coalition’s six concerns and six recommendations regarding the proposed changes with the goal of getting Bellingham residents to sign it and submit it to the City Council.

A public hearing on the ADU ordinance update is scheduled for Jan. 25 at 7 p.m.

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NEVER GO BEERLESS

Bellingham working to make King's dream become a reality

Former Western professor helped organize human rights conference

By Julia Furukawa
THE WESTERN FRONT

Facing a room of audience members, Exquisite Erika addressed the white and white-passing observers. "If I could say anything to white people, it would be: 'Listen,'" she said. "Be brave enough to sit with your discomfort."

Erika is a local activist and leader of the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship's Black Lives Matter Ministry Action Team. She was one of the leaders of a discussion led by womxn of color at the 20th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Conference on Human Rights. The conference was hosted at Whatcom Community College and organized by the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force.

The womxn led the group in a discussion about their experiences with racism, their efforts to create change and the importance of MLK Day. They shared powerful experiences, from surviving sexual assault, to facing implicit and explicit racism, to learning English as a second language.

"The first thing I had to unlearn was that I didn't do anything wrong," one participant shared, mentioning racist and exclusionary actions of her classmates.

The emotionally candid discussion received a standing ovation from the conference attendees.

The event was organized in part by Barbara Rofkar, a former Western professor. She now works

with the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force, organizing educational workshops and events for the Bellingham community.

"Peace is my personal investment," Rofkar said.

She said King's nonviolent activism and advocacy for change through education motivated her to help organize the event and to start the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center.

The center provides counseling and conflict resolution services to Whatcom County residents, particularly teens and young adults, to resolve domestic disputes or low-level criminal offenses, like truancy and petty theft. Rofkar said in her time as a professor at Western, she sometimes found herself frustrated with the lack of diversity on campus. Rofkar said she thinks Western has a reputation for being a socially and politically liberal school, but that isn't always obvious.

"We need to channel that liberalism into action," Rofkar said. The free conference also included opening remarks by Chief Tsi'li'xw William (Bill) James of the Lummi Nation, several educational workshops centered around human rights issues and representatives from local nonprofits and activist groups.

One of the workshops offered was "We All Belong: Negotiating Belonging in Academic Spaces that Traditionally Exclude." It was taught by the director of the Whatcom Community College Learning Center, Jason Babcock, along with

Juan Serrano, a student at the college and employee at the school's Intercultural Center.

During the presentation, Babcock said he thought the conference was immensely important, particularly in the Bellingham community, because of its lack of diversity in its higher education institutions.

According demographic data from Western, the University of Washington and Washington State University, Western has the highest portion of undergraduates who identify as "Caucasian" on their applications — 71.7 percent. WSU and UW had 62.2 percent and 40.3 percent, respectively.

Babcock noted that this lack of diversity in some higher education institutions may be one of the reasons behind elevated dropout rates of queer students and students of color. Babcock and Serrano pushed participants to question why trends like these exist and to reflect on their own experiences and observations that might illustrate this phenomenon.

Other workshops available included: a workshop intended to discuss breaking down social barriers between children at a young age, a workshop aimed at unpacking implicit biases and stereotyping and a presentation by Woodring professor Tracey Pyscher entitled "Rethinking Trauma: What Children and Youth With Histories of Trauma Have to Teach Us."

Organizations that were represented at the conference included the Whatcom Peace and Justice Center, the Bellingham Public Library, the ACLU and Veterans for Peace.

Lesley Norman, an employee of the Bellingham Public Library, said she volunteered her time to work at the conference so that she could provide books for readers of all ages about the history of the civil rights movement and the work of activists like King.

"We have to recognize that this is not a day off," Norman said. "We constantly have to keep working."

The womxn who opened the conference emphasized this same idea: that MLK Day should be a day of motivation and action, not relaxation.

The conference was closed with a slam-poetry reading by Western junior, Dayjha MacMillan.

To find out about upcoming events hosted by the Whatcom Human Rights Task Force, go to their website.

"If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, brethren! Be careful, teachers!"

Martin Luther King Jr.

MLK day celebration raises discussions on King's dream and what changes are needed

By Sarah Porter
THE WESTERN FRONT

Sitting between two electric pianos, gospel singer Checo Tohomaso tested his microphone by singing his life story in gospel form. A few early event attendees listened as he sang about his connection to the Obama family and his experience performing gospel with one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s daughters.

"This is how Marvin would do it," Tohomaso said as he played the piano.

Tohomaso is a member of the Motown musical movement who has performed with a variety of musicians such as Marvin Gaye, Lionel Richie, New Kids on the Block, Celine Dion and Reba McEntire. He leads the Vancouver Outreach Community Sweet Soul Choir in Vancouver, B.C. and the Victoria Soul Gospel Choir in Victoria, B.C.

Members of the community joined Tohomaso at the Community Food Co-op's 20th Annual MLK Day event on Jan. 15 to celebrate King's vision for a society based on justice, equal opportunity, love of humanity and racial equality in America. However, attendees recognized that his dream is not yet a reality.

Keynote speakers included a Western political science professor and the Co-op's new racial equity co-chair.

To open the event, Tohomaso instructed everyone to stand and sing along to his performance of the civil rights gospel "This Little Light of Mine" by Harry Dixon Loes. As attendants filed into the room, they joined in, clapping and swaying to the music.

Tohomaso told attendants that he was happy to see so many young people and people of color.

Born in Tallahassee,

Florida, he moved to Hawaii when he was five years old. He was raised in Manoa Valley, Honolulu, which is one of the neighborhoods former president Barack Obama grew up in. Referring to the former president warmly as Barry, he said that he performed at Obama's junior and senior prom in 1978 at Punahou School.

"After he became president, he sent me an autographed picture of him," Tohomaso proudly said.

After his opening performance, he invited keynote speaker and Western political science professor Vernon Johnson to the stage to read an article he wrote entitled "Healing Must Start with Action."

Johnson's speech addressed America's collective racial wounds, and called on the necessity for social surgery in order to uproot racism.

"Let me talk about racial healing tonight," he said.

Johnson is the director of the Ralph Munro Institute for Civic Education and a professor of political science at Western. His primary research interests include the politics of development, African politics, and race and public policy.

He discussed the injustices of the past, such as indigenous genocide, that resulted from the idea of Manifest Destiny. Manifest Destiny was the belief



Keynote speaker and Western political science professor Vernon Johnson giving a speech at the Community Food Co-op on Monday. // Photo by Sarah Porter

Civil rights advocate comes to campus

By Zoe Buchli
THE WESTERN FRONT

Most Americans view racism as an issue born in the South, but it has deep roots in the Pacific Northwest as well, beginning with settlers in Oregon in the 19th century.

Walidah Imarisha, a writer, poet, professor and civil rights advocate, spoke to hundreds of Western students and members of the Bellingham community in the Performing Arts Center on Tuesday.

Imarisha took the audience through a timeline of black history in the Pacific Northwest, specifically Oregon.

"You have to look at history," Imarisha said. "The efforts to eradicate the long memory, the efforts to erase our ability to look to history and learn from that are incredibly real."

"Long memory," a term Imarisha borrowed from folk singer Utah Phillips, is the idea of preserving and remembering important parts of history.

Without "long memory," it is difficult to understand that Oregon and the entirety of the Pacific Northwest region were founded as a racist white utopia, Imarisha said.

Western student Mark Hussian

said this is an issue that seems especially pertinent right now.

Imarisha began by discussing the Oregon Donation Land Act of the 1850s, which she said gave approximately 2.5 million acres of free land to whites to build the racist haven.

She also discussed the Oregon Black Exclusion Law, which criminalized black people living in Oregon.

Imarisha then moved on to discuss the modern day, mentioning sundown towns, which are towns that are purposefully all-white enclaves that still exist today. She spoke about gentrification and redlining, which she referred to as strategic ways people of color are removed from neighborhoods and housing communities.

"Housing and location is a huge way racism persists to this day," Imarisha said. Imarisha ended her talk with examples of how communities of color have organized and mobi-

lized to fight racial injustice, recognizing the leadership of people of color to make all of the advances in this area.

"People of color don't need saviors. They need allies," Imarisha said.

Western organized the event as a celebration of MLK Day.

Western committees work to find diverse events for campus, and this year they wanted to find someone who was from the Northwest, Western student and event MC Josiah Scott said.

"More often than not, people would rather hear perspectives from someone that's closer to home to them," Scott

"People of color don't need saviors. They need allies."

Walidah Imarisha
Writer, poet, professor and civil rights advocate

Western student Molly Reetz heard about the event from the Human Rights Convention at Whatcom Community College.

Learning more about the history of the Pacific Northwest in this timeline format definitely gave it more detail, Reetz said. "The sundown towns were new for me."

and having Co-op employees engage in race-based conversations.

The event then handed the stage to members of the community to share stories, poetry and music related to issues of human rights and diversity.

"I carry this event with me all year long," event attendant Betty Scott said as she introduced a poem she prepared for the event. As a local poet, Scott's work has been featured in many local magazines.

Presentations represented a vari-

ety of cultures, including a Brazilian capoeira group put on a musical performance, an East Indian poem and the story of a Soviet Union refugee. Many shared performances of gospel music, and others shared their own experiences as members of marginalized groups.

To close the event, Tohomaso performed "Love Train" by the O'Jays, smiling and waving goodbye to the crowd.



Gospel singer Checo Tohomaso singing his life story in gospel form at the Community Food Co-op on Monday. // Photo by Sarah Porter



Community members gather at Whatcom Community College for 20th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Conference on Human Rights on Saturday. // Photo by Julia Furukawa

What's happening this weekend?

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Whatcom Museum's Art Auction Gala
Whatcom Museum Lightcatcher building
5:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
\$125 per person, includes dinner
18+

The Whatcom Museum will be holding its annual art auction gala at the Whatcom Museum Lightcatcher building.

Reverend Horton Heat

Wild Buffalo
Doors open at 8 p.m.
\$25
21+

Reverend Horton Heat will be playing a show at the Wild Buffalo with openers Voodoo Glow Skulls and Big Sandy.



Silent Disco

Make.Shift
9 p.m.
\$10 at the door
All ages

Make.Shift will be holding a Silent Disco at their art space with free kombucha and raffles.

Bellingham Winter Market

Downtown Market: 1100 Railroad Ave.
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Free
All Ages

The Bellingham Winter Market will be held in their Downtown Market and will feature over 100 local product vendors.

WWSM Magic Show

Old Main Theater at Western
8 p.m.
Free
All ages

The Western Washington Society of Magicians will be holding a free magic show in Old Main Theater.



Let's Make Cheese!

Vartanyan Estate Winery
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
\$20
21+

Vartanyan Estate Winery will be holding a cheese making class alongside wine, cheese, and honey tasting.

CascadeCon: Cascade Games Convention

Bellingham Cruise Terminal
Jan. 19 - Jan. 21
\$50; early bird special is \$40
Children under 12 are half price
All ages

The Cascade Games Convention will be held this weekend at the Bellingham Cruise Terminal.

BAAY Presents: Xanadu

BAAY Theater: 1059 N State St.
2 p.m.
\$10
All ages

Bellingham Arts Academy for the Youth will be performing Tony-Award nominated musical "Xanadu" at BAAY Theater.



Rabbit Ride

Fairhaven Bike
8 a.m.
Free
All ages

Mount Baker Bicycle Club will be hosting their 32.5-mile Rabbit Ride.

Photos courtesy of respective groups. Compiled by Erica Wilkins.

FRONTLINE

Opinions of the Editorial Board

ADUs can bring some relief to housing crisis

Housing has become a hot commodity in Bellingham, and the market is competitive. Too often, students are trapped within a housing market which pits them against lower-income individuals and families. This only succeeds in creating an environment in which landlords can, and do, profit from the high demand by overlooking tenants' rights.

The local housing crisis has long been a hot topic among Bellingham residents. The upcoming public hearing on the ordinance update for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) has stimulated further discussion about possible solutions to alleviate the housing shortage.

ADUs, though not the only answer to solving the housing crisis, will increase housing and bring at least some relief to Bellingham's hectic housing market.

The Planning Commission's report provides support for ADUs, should legal regulations be adjusted. It supports removing the 20-limit restriction on ADUs in each neighborhood, for example, and encourages the building of more detached ADUs.

"Other cities that have successfully sought to make this form of housing more available generally permit all forms of ADUs in all or most areas," the commission's report states.

However, new changes being proposed to the Bellingham Municipal Code regarding ADUs are being met



Illustration by Mathew Roland

with vocal opposition. Some Bellingham residents are threatening access to this more affordable form of housing and underscoring an unsettling claim that they are ruining the "character" of the neighborhood.

In a letter addressed to the Bellingham City Council and Bellingham Planning Commission, these community members expressed an aesthetics-based concern about legalizing ADUs in single-family zones.

"[This] represents a step backward that undermines decades of deliberate Neighborhood Planning by replacing neighborhood plans with overreaching, top-down, cookie-cut-

ter directives that fail to respect neighborhood input," the letter said.

They also recommend permanently prohibiting the short-term rental of detached ADUs.

A resident's concern not just for the appearance of their own property, but of the whole neighborhood, indicates a startling trend of overreaching homeowner control in the development of the neighborhood and of the city. And with Bellingham's current vacancy rate at 1.79 percent as of 2016, renters may require short-term housing for any number of reasons, work-related or otherwise.

Perhaps they are seeking security

from an abusive partner, and having a stable living situation independent of their old one is vital. For some, living in an ADU for a few months may even be a temporary living situation — as in the case of a college student seeking housing — before moving into a different space. Putting restrictions on ADUs such as these does nothing to help alleviate the current housing crisis.

Allowing ADUs in single-family zones citywide fosters economic growth and diversity within the neighborhoods of Bellingham. They are also a less expensive housing alternative, and desperately needed by some members of the community. According to public comment submitted to City Council, some residents want to build ADUs to help take care of elderly family members. Other people have simply realized they have the extra space for an ADU and want to build one to help out those in need of housing.

The proposed regulation changes for expanding permitting of ADUs may help to reduce the numbers of those struggling to find secure housing, college student or otherwise. Solving the city's housing crisis is not an easy task, and ADUs are certainly not the sole answer. And as with any housing situation, a strong protection of tenants' rights are absolutely necessary to stop landlords from taking advantage.

The Western Front Editorial Board is composed of Kira Erickson, Asia Fields and Melissa McCarthy.

Viking Voices

What has been your biggest struggle with finding off-campus housing?



Laura Zamudio
Junior, Spanish

"Price and location. I would look into more options before just moving to on-campus housing so you don't get stuck paying a cancellation fee."



Patrick LeClair
Junior, business

"Finding a place that fits my requirements — price, location and separate bills like water and electricity."



Abigail King
Junior, psychology

"My biggest problem was that I tried living on-campus housing first. You have to look earlier, rather than later. Finding roommates was difficult."



Elizabeth Flores
Junior, sociology

"It's hard to find a place that takes pets and is affordable."

Compiled by Erica Wilkins

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Strengthening the team off the track

Freshman-laden women's track team looks to boost team chemistry as indoor season begins

Tyler Urke
THE WESTERN FRONT

With their bellies full of pasta, the women of the Western pole vaulting team were looking forward to having fun after a hard week of practice.

"Let's put pole vaulting videos on the TV, guys!" junior Rachael Roberts said.

They spent the next 30 minutes analyzing every detail – from the uniforms and hairstyles to the sponsorships. Then, the Vikings got down to business, breaking down the techniques they saw and comparing styles.

The women's indoor track and field season is underway, and the Vikings are focused on growing closer as a team and developing a young roster. Western has 49 female athletes on its track team, 21 of whom are freshmen.

Assistant coach Ben Stensland said he's excited about a number of freshmen, but he'll have to wait and see who develops.

"A big part of this season is gaining competitive experience," Stensland said. "I'm excited to see where we're at and see where we can grow from."

Stensland said he has noticed a difference in the team chemistry already, which is important to the coaching staff. The eighth-year coach said it's clear how many of the upperclassmen have taken the underclassmen under their wings and shown them the ropes. It happens every season, but he said it's more evident with this group.



Freshman jumper Heather Faretta performs hurdle drills at a track practice on Tuesday afternoon. // Photo by Taylor Nichols

"I think we have a really unique team chemistry," Stensland said. "You hear a little bit more about team activities and a stronger desire to be a close-knit group."

Part of the commitment to a stronger team chemistry stems from a new Western track and field mission statement. The statement reads: "Our love of the sport drives us to be purposeful, accountable and confident in order to support ourselves and our team. By

reflecting on our successes and failures, excellence will be an outcome on and off the track/field."

The process of building the mission statement began last fall and required multiple meetings. The entire track team sat down in groups and came up with about 150 words and phrases regarding what they felt was important to them and the team.

"It's something people can rally behind," Stensland said. "It makes it so

much more tangible when you know what direction you're going. It's neat to see them go through that process and take ownership of their program."

The Vikings have big shoes to fill this year with the departure of graduates Brittany Grant and three-time All-American Bethany Drake. Both athletes competed in the 2017 NCAA Division II Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

Stensland acknowledged how important Grant and Drake were to the team, but said he's excited to see which athletes step up.

Stensland said one athlete to keep an eye on is senior triple jumper Jasmine McMullin. McMullin is a two-time Great Northwest Athletic Conference indoor and outdoor triple jump champion. She finished 11th at the NCAA Division II Indoor Track and Field Championships in 2016.

McMullin said she hopes her experience at nationals will help her this season. She admitted the large stage was intimidating her first time around.

"It was really cool, but it was kind of overwhelming," McMullin said. "I think this time around I'll be more relaxed if I make it to nationals."

As for the pole vaulting videos and team dinners, those will likely remain a staple for this group.

"I really do feel that our team revolves around food sometimes," Stensland said.

The rebound road to Nampa

A young Western men's track team hopes to capitalize on returning redshirts

Hillary O'Connor
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Western men's indoor track team is looking for a shot at redemption this season after placing seventh out of 10 teams in the 2017 Great Northwest Athletic Conference championships.

The Vikings will compete in seven indoor meets this season before they can return to the GNAC championships on Feb. 16 in Nampa, Idaho.

As the season starts, the young team is making strides to develop as a group, junior long jumper Rudy Mataya said.

"We have a couple of people redshirting and a couple of people that graduated that scored a lot of points, so we will need some of the younger guys to step up," Mataya said. "Every year the goal is to win conference, so doing that this indoor season will be harder than usual, but it's our goal."

Senior thrower Brandon Pless said he's hopeful the team can rebound this season.

"I'm hoping that we will be able to win conference again after being close [in 2016]," Pless said.

Junior pole vaulter J.T. Konrad returns this season after redshirting in 2017. At the 2016 GNAC championships, Konrad took second place in the pole vault.

Konrad said he's working on strength and conditioning to im-



With aspirations of a conference title in 2018, runners for the men's track team sprint laps on Tuesday. // Photo by Taylor Nichols

prove on his success from 2016.

"I'm looking forward to a fresh season after a yearlong break," Konrad said. "I've been working hard in the early season and seeing improvements in the weight room as well as on the track. It's going to be a great

year." "My renewed focus and drive within workouts and competition, along with the support of the team, are going to make this goal achievable. We have a great looking team this year, all hard working people with serious goals."

Junior long-distance runner James Jasperson is also coming off a redshirt season.

"I didn't get the chance to race last season, I only trained alongside the team," Jasperson said. "So I can really only go forward from here."

Jasperson is looking to cut down his mile time this indoor season.

"I would like to place in the conference indoors," Jasperson said. "But that's only to help the team score, and to have a shot at the team title at GNACs in Nampa."

The team competed in their first indoor meet of the 2018 season on Saturday. Both the men and women traveled to the University of Washington Preview at the Dempsey Indoor Center.

Two athletes broke into the Western record books at the preview meet.

Freshman thrower Ben Malquist moved to seventh all-time in Western's history with a shot-put throw of 49 feet 8.5 inches. Junior jumper Tupre Wickliff is now tied for eighth all-time in Western's history with a high jump of 6 feet 4.75 inches.

From the sidelines

Opinions from The Western Front staff on all things sports

Is the Seahawks new offensive coordinator, Brian Schottenheimer, an upgrade over Darrell Bevell?



Aaron Gillis
Reporter

"I don't think Schottenheimer is an upgrade. Bevell did a good job with his time in Seattle, helping them to two Super Bowls. Just because he didn't give the ball to Marshawn doesn't mean he didn't do a great job as offensive coordinator. Bevell set Wilson up for a lot of the success he's had over the past few years, and he should be credited for that. Schottenheimer will do a good job, but with time of the essence, and an aging defense, I think big changes should be held off for a few years."



Tyler Urke
Reporter

"I believe Brian Schottenheimer will do a better job than Darrell Bevell because Schottenheimer is known as a coach who likes to run the ball. It's a label he got from his father, famous NFL head coach Marty Schottenheimer, and it's a label the Seahawks desperately need to embrace if they want to take the burden off Russell Wilson. When your quarterback is your team's leading rusher, you've got some issues running the ball."



Dante Koplowitz-Fleming
News Editor

"I don't believe Schottenheimer will be an upgrade in scheme or playcalling, but I do believe he can improve the offense. The Seahawks' coaching changes have clearly been done to solidify Carroll's offensive philosophy, which they have gotten away from the past few years: Run the ball, protect the ball, run the ball again. Schottenheimer is not nearly as exciting a hire as someone like Eagle's quarterback coach DeFilippo would have been, but he and new offensive line coach, Mike Solari, will allow Seattle to refocus their ground attack."



Eric Trent
Sports editor

"I was one of the biggest supporters of firing Darrell Bevell, but I don't think Schottenheimer will be much better. He had one of the top young quarterbacks in Andrew Luck, plus T.Y. Hilton, who made four-straight Pro Bowls, and still couldn't create an elite offense. Schottenheimer's other offensive ventures were a Rams team that averaged less than seven wins over three seasons; and led a Jets offense that went to two-straight AFC championships, but lost both while averaging only 18 points per game. Not exactly electrifying."

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Shredding the slopes at Baker

Western students competed at the Mount Baker Banked Slalom locals' qualifier on Jan. 13 and 14.



Top left: A snowboarder rips through a run with Mount Baker serving as the backdrop. // Photo courtesy of Brad Andrew

Top right: Western junior Nick Suape, 20, raced in the Older Amateurs Division on Sunday. // Photo courtesy of Grady Haskell

Bottom left: Suape launches out of the gate. // Photo courtesy of Grady Haskell

Bottom right: From left to right, Koal Reyes-Schulze, Jordan Byford, Benjamin Van Veen and Western freshman Colin Woodward. Woodward, 18, captured first place in the Younger Amateurs Division on Monday with a time of :54.75. // Photo courtesy of Colin Woodward.



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