

# THE WESTERN FRONT

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## People experiencing homelessness outnumber available shelter



**Brian Davis, 56, is a veteran, college graduate, former social worker and now, homeless. "I'm still standing. My adage is: if you can look up, you can get up," he said. // Photo by Mathew Roland**

*People experiencing homelessness tell their own stories, page 10*

**Roisin Cowan-Kuist**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The lowest temperature reached this winter in Bellingham was 19 degrees.

As weather worsened, local homeless shelters faced overcrowding, leaving many of Bellingham's residents experiencing homelessness to face the cold and risk death due to exposure.

There are around 742 homeless individuals living in Whatcom County, according to a 2017 report from the Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness.

This number may not include all people experiencing homelessness in the city, the report says, and it continues to rise as the population grows and rental prices heighten.

A report by the King

County Medical Examiner's Office found that four percent of homeless deaths between 2012-17 were due to exposure. A similar analysis for Whatcom County has not yet been conducted.

There were no recorded deaths due to exposure for people experiencing homelessness in Whatcom County for 2016 and 2017, according to a Whatcom County Health Department spokesperson.

However, the department said its data is limited, as whether someone is homeless is not included on death certificates and there is no code for death due to exposure put on death certificates.

"I can't say with any certainty how accurately death records capture the actual number of deaths in Whatcom

County of individuals who were homeless," Melissa Morin, health department communications specialist, said.

In January, a man was found dead on a Bellingham beach, after spending the night exposed to the elements, his friends and advocates said.

Also in January, the Bellingham City Council passed an emergency ordinance that would establish a set of guidelines for construction of temporary tent encampments on local church properties, bypassing the standard procedure for city ordinances, which can often take months to establish.

The council repealed and replaced regulations on tent encampments in February, opening up the ordinance to include

*see HOMES, page 4*

## Is Western prepared for an earthquake?

**Hailey Jostmeyer**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The dangers of an earthquake might seem like a far off problem, but experts warn that the big one could hit any day.

A 2010 Hazard Identification Vulnerability Analysis states Whatcom County is in moderate to critical risk of an earthquake due to its proximity to the Cascadia subduction zone.

Western is required by legislature to establish safety plans and procedures. The legislature also specified that schools are in a position to serve the community in the event of a disaster.

Jackie Caplan-Auerbach is an associate dean of the College of Science and Engineering and associate geology professor. She said the biggest challenge

for Western and the entire state is keeping buildings up to code with the most recent scientific findings of where and what the dangers are surrounding fault lines.

"From an underground perspective, different rocks shake to different degrees," she said. "We see a lot of shaking from under-rock made of sediments like sandstone. The most concerning geological locations will be anywhere with unconsolidated sediment that is water saturated."

According to the United States Geological Survey, the soil in Western Washington is made of poor to moderate unconsolidated sediments like sandstone, siltstone and claystone. Western is on this type of soil.

Caplan-Auerbach said the reason these  
*see QUAKE, page 3*

## Melvin Brewing facing backlash over 'bro-culture,' sexual assault accusation

**Katy Cossette**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

*Content warning: This story contains references to sexual assault*

Melvin Brewing is facing backlash after a report of sexual assault against co-founder Kirk McHale and a contact page making light of molestation came to light.

Until March 6, the contact page on Melvin's website featured the header "Show us on the doll where Melvin touched you."

This phrase is in reference to an exercise used to help children discuss sexual assault they have experienced through having them point on a doll.

Eric Henderson, a Melvin spokesperson, said the header was never brought to his attention until March 6. He said this is because

Melvin has little traffic on its contact page.

A screenshot of the page was widely shared on social media and received responses from women saying Melvin's leadership condones sexual harassment and assault.

Some women commented about a report of sexual assault by a co-founder of Melvin.

A Menace Brewing employee reported on November 20, 2017 that she had been groped by McHale, who is listed on Melvin's website as being a co-founder and "head donkey." This was shared to Melvin employees in an email from management on

*see MELVIN, page 5*



**Melvin Brewing's storefront in the Fountain District of Bellingham // Photo by Katy Cossette**

### News

Vendors row makes the long-awaited move  
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### Features

Bellingham man donates blood for the 800th time  
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More support, resources needed for people experiencing homelessness  
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### Sports

Western students breezes back from Olympics  
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**Check online next week to see what survivors think Western can do better to address sexual assault**

*While this is the last paper of the quarter, the Front will continue to post on social media and online at westernfrontonline.com*

## Writing for change



**Serenna Duncan, 24, hangs a card with a hand-written letter about campus safety concerns in a tree near Old Main, on Monday, March 12. The letters drifted in the breeze with teal ribbon to bring awareness to sexual violence. Students proposed possible solutions to increase safety including brighter lights on campus and an increased presence of campus security and Green Coats. // Photo by Mathew Roland**

### AS Board election filing begins

This spring quarter, the Associated Students will be holding student elections for seven Board of Director positions.

The AS Board of Directors is made of up seven Western students who are elected each year. Positions include AS President, VP for Business and Operations, VP for Academic Affairs, VP for Activities, VP for Diversity, VP for Governmental Affairs

and VP for Student Life. Positions are paid.

The filing period opened Monday, March 12th. Students can pick up a candidate filing packet in the Viking Union 504 by the filing deadline Monday April 9th.

*If you have any questions contact AS Elections Coordinator Francesca Cruz at [as.elections@wwu.edu](mailto:as.elections@wwu.edu).*

### Service and Activities Fee Committee to hold open hearings April 10 and 24

The S&A Fee Committee at Western will hold an open hearing April 10 to discuss the budget requests of the S&A fee constituent areas for 2018-19.

An additional hearing will be held on April 24 to discuss the proposed S&A fee level and distribution of funds for 2018-19. Both hearings will take

place at 8 a.m. in Viking Union Room 462A on April 10 and April 24, respectively.



Brent Mallinckrodt // Photo from Western Today

## Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to step down at end of year

THE WESTERN FRONT

The dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Brent Mallinckrodt, will be stepping down at the end of this year, according to Western Today.

Provost Brent Carbajal will be appointing an in-

terim dean with the goal of having them appointed before the end of the year, according to Western Today.

Mallinckrodt will become a psychology faculty member at Western, according to Western Today.

No reason has yet been given for this change.

In July, the Front reported that the history department passed a resolution of no confidence in the dean's ability to fulfill his role. The vote stemmed from concerns including a perceived lack of support for diversity in the college, among others.

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Have story ideas?  
Email us at

[westernfrontonline@gmail.com](mailto:westernfrontonline@gmail.com)

to send them our way or discuss sharing information confidentially.

### Corrections

In last week's issue, the Front said Huxley organized a forum in December to discuss students' concerns after a professor was reported for sexual harassment. However, this was student-run, not organized by the college.

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## HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE QUAKE

### Build your own kit using FEMA recommendations:

- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Battery powered radio
- Dust mask
- Three day to two week supply of non-perishable foods
- One gallon of water per person
- Local maps
- Wrench/pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener
- Whistle to signal for help

### Consider these additional items:

- Prescription medication
- Extra food and water for any pets
- Glasses and contact lens solution
- Identification and other important papers saved electronically or waterproof case
- Feminine supplies
- Sleeping bag or warm blankets
- Matches in a waterproof container

Recommended to have some or all of these supplies in at your house, car and work.



Photo from California Department of Public Health



**Western library circulation manager, Michelle Becker, shows off the emergency kit behind the circulation desk. In the event of an emergency such as an earthquake, an employee will grab the vests and walkie talkie and begin evacuating students from the library into safe zones. // Photo by October Yates**

## QUAKE

continued from page 1

types of areas can be dangerous is because the shaking is greater and underlying rock can become like soup.

Paul Cocke, director of communications and marketing for Western, said since the 1990s, the university incorporated seismic upgrades during major renovation work on campus to keep buildings up to code. He said a recent example of this is the renovation that was done on Carver gym.

He did not comment on if other buildings on campus are not up to code.

The geology department has been concerned with the risk of developing on the waterfront, especially with what could happen in the case of an earthquake, The Western Front reported. The waterfront area being developed is mostly made up of unconsolidated sediment and artificial fill. Western is still hoping to build on the waterfront.

The university's 2017 Emergency Food Service Plan states at any point in time Western dining services has about a five day supply of food to sustain the 4,000 students on meal plans during the academic year. If Aramark were to ration the food to 2,800 calories per student a day, they could feed the same amount of students for seven days. The plan

said timing of deliveries and an emergency event could impact the amount of food available.

Depending on the overall damage on campus after an earthquake, Cocke said Western will work with Aramark dining services to provide necessary food for students in residence halls and personnel responding to the crisis.

Cocke said the university is listed as a Federal Emergency Management Agency Point of Distribution, meaning Western could be a location for the city and county to get emergency supplies and food from FEMA.

"FEMA recommends 72 hours or a three-day supply of emergency supplies," Cocke said. "The Washington State Division of Emergency Management encourages people to be two weeks ready for anything. So Western is in the middle."

Organizations such as the Washington State Division of Emergency Management recommend having a two week supply, as it may take a while for help to come.

In the case that no potable water is available, University residences will be responsible for coordinating bottled water delivery from their vendor Walton Beverage.

However, damage to infrastructure could leave residents on their own until emergency responders and

others can reach them.

John Gargett, the deputy director of Whatcom County's Division of Emergency Management, said landslides caused by earthquakes can block off major highways like I-5, making it harder to get help into the city quickly.

He said there will be an unknown amount of time before emergency responders can reach residents and individuals should plan on being self-resilient.

"There's no simple answer for how to be prepared for an earthquake," Gargett said. "Stop what you're doing, let it happen and take cover if you need to. There's nothing you can do to stop it from happening."

He said residents should create emergency plans with neighbors and work with their community so that emergency responders can help those who are in more severe situations.

"If you can take care of yourself, you're an asset to the community," Gargett said.

While The Western Front did not receive the full emergency plan updated in 2017 from Western, an earlier plan from 2015 mentioned gathering tents from different departments and the Outdoor Center, using the Wade King Recreation Center pool as a water source and having residents sign up for security shifts in the dorms to prevent

looting.

The Great Washington ShakeOut is a statewide event created to get individuals prepared for a large earthquake in the Pacific Northwest.

University Police Chief and Director of Public Safety Darin Rasmussen said Western didn't participate in last year's drill because it was scheduled the same day of an active shooter drill and the emergency preparedness team didn't want to confuse students.

He said the university will have an emphasis on earthquake preparedness in April with the city of Bellingham.

Western's Emergency Response Guide gives instructions for individuals who are on campus during and after a disaster.



**Crack in foundation of campus building. // Photo by Mathew Roland**

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**HOMES**

*continued from page 1*

nonprofit groups as well as religious organizations.

However, no local churches took on the responsibility, Timothy Whiteman, a pastor at St. Brendan's Anglican Church, said.

The Western Front was not able to reach any other representatives from local churches before publication.

Whiteman said finding a place for encampments comes with an array of guidelines and requirements.

"It needs to be close to bus lines, close to the population base. It needs to be serviceable for sanitation, laundry, cooking, all of that kind of stuff," Whiteman said.

Communities of homeless individuals who are not able to stay in local sanctuaries have resorted to constructing makeshift camps on public lands, which are often cleared by law enforcement due to violations of city ordinances, said Amy Glasser, an affiliate of Homes-Now! Not Later, a local group working to build tiny homes for unsheltered community members.

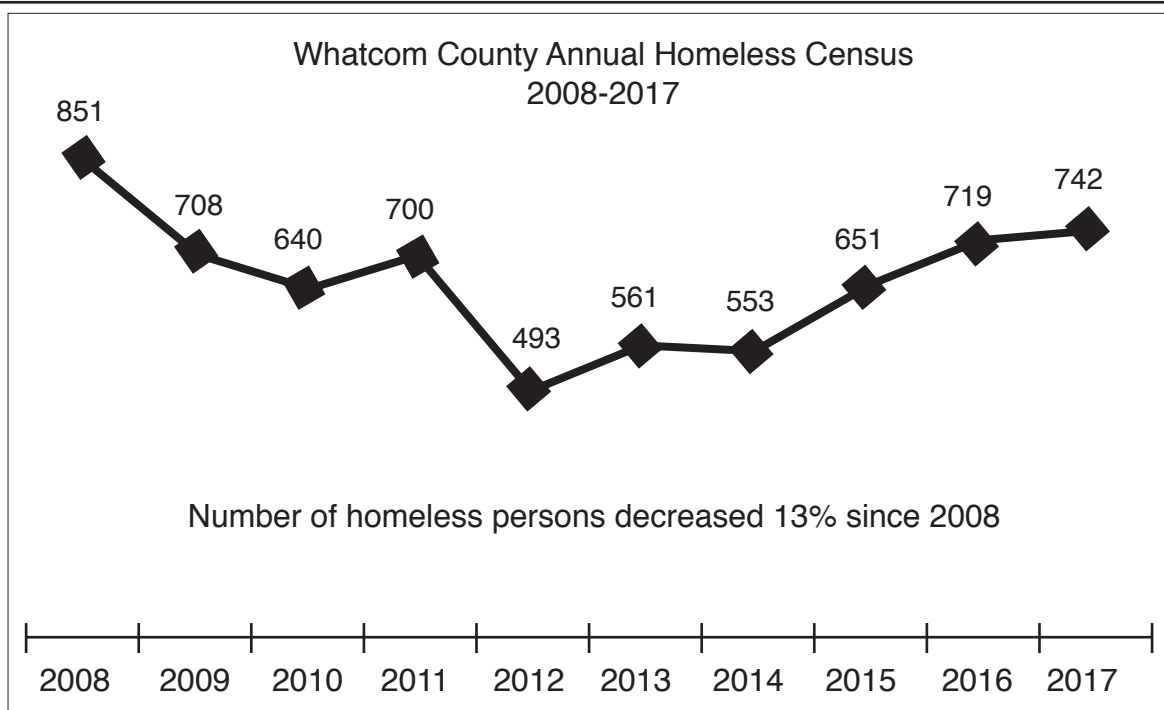
Glasser explained the difficulty in navigating Bellingham's public camping restrictions.

"The city has an ordinance that you can't camp on city grounds," Glasser said. "Which means anyone who has no home or who doesn't want to go to a shelter or was kicked out of the shelter has no choice but to camp illegally or die."

Glasser said she thinks the money the city spends clearing homeless camps would be better spent funding organizations like HomesNow! that provide immediate housing solutions.

"The city just wants them to disappear, and they just keep wasting this money moving people from place to place. And they just end up somewhere else," Glasser said.

When asked about the clearing of homeless encampments, Mayor Kelli Linville said rapid population growth



Data from 2017 Whatcom County Annual Report on Homelessness

and lack of services for homeless individuals has contributed to heightened intervention by law-enforcement.

"We tried for a while not cleaning the camps up, letting them go. And that's when we got the neighborhood complaints about them and the environmental complaints," Linville said.

After the city's proposed location for a low-barrier shelter was purchased by the Port of Bellingham in May of last year, debates over where to build the shelter prolonged construction of any such facility.

The proposed shelter, which would have provided services for up to 200 homeless individuals, was a partnership between Lighthouse Mission and Mayor Kelli Linville.

"The challenge is finding a place to site this particular shelter," Hans Erchinger-Davis, the executive director of Lighthouse Mission, said.

Erchinger-Davis said shelters should not be too close to residential or storefront areas because of perceived impact on businesses and neighborhoods.

Advocates in the community have taken to social media to urge city officials to provide regulated campsites in the meantime, as well as basic sanitation and waste services.

"The advocates would like

us to build tiny homes, and we are open to allowing that to happen," Linville said.

Linville also addressed concerns surrounding sanitation and hygiene services were those sites to be built.

"We will supply dumpsters and porta potties," Linville said. "But right now nobody is willing to let any organization that can't manage it to build tiny facilities on their property."

Other community officials maintain that homeless encampments do not provide a sustainable solution to the homelessness crisis.

"In my opinion, a tent city is one of the worst ideas you can pull together," Erchinger-Davis said. "The only time a tent city is ever good is if there's no capacity for a shelter."

Mike Parker, director of the Whatcom Homeless Services Center, said homelessness disproportionately affects those who are physically or mentally disabled, veterans, survivors of domestic abuse and those who are economically disadvantaged, among other marginalized groups.

"We hear a lot of not understanding of the nature of disabilities. And a lot of the folks who are actually experiencing homelessness have some pretty severe care needs," Parker said.

"Nobody has to be homeless," Pastor Timothy Whiteman said. "Between the drop-in center and the other churches, they were never full. They always had beds available. The people who were on the streets chose to be there because they wouldn't go with the low-barrier requirements."

Francis Place partners with the Opportunity Council and the Homeless Service Center, providing 42 units of permanent housing and operating on a referral-based system to determine who is given permanent residence.

"Francis Place gets the referrals from the Homeless Service Center that are the most complex health needs," Coyote said. "It's really the people who are definitely chronically homeless, which is a definition that includes the length of time somebody is staying outside or in emergency shelters, and also includes disability."

While providing affordable housing options can be an effective long-term solution, some advocates feel that focusing on such projects distracts from the need for immediate shelter solutions for those people living on the streets.

"The bottom line is that lives are on the line and hang in the balance between life and death on a daily basis," Christine Mansfield said.

Mansfield went on to criticize the city's response to a protest staged on the lawn of city hall in December.

The protest, led by many of Bellingham's homeless residents, was a call to local government to allow temporary homeless encampments in light of dropping winter temperatures.

"The mayor made no formal declaration of emergency to enlist outside intervention, to maximize city resources, or to offset what is a known human crisis," Mansfield said.

When asked how she would respond to criticisms from those who feel the city isn't providing effective solutions to the homelessness crisis, Mayor Linville said the process toward finding solutions is often complex and lengthy.

"Just because we can't solve the problem immediately, doesn't mean we don't care about it or that we aren't trying to find a solution," Linville said.

"I would like us to be in the mindset of always being ready to be audited, period," Hansen said.

Hansen explained the Lighthouse Mission is working to improve their drop-in center's safety by remodeling the entry to have more checkpoints and security doors.

"We face the same problem that other communities in the Puget Sound face, which is just a real scarcity of affordable housing," Parker said. "And the people that experience it the worst are the people on the streets. It's a lot harder for them in the rental market."

Recent community housing projects such as 22 North and Francis Place provide relief to some of Bellingham's most vulnerable residents experiencing homelessness, Teal Coyote, housing services supervisor of Francis Place, said.

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**MELVIN**

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Jan. 11, 2018, which was obtained by the Front and confirmed by an employee.

Menace is across the street from Melvin. McHale was visiting from the Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Melvin location.

Ariana Dorshkind, a Menace Brewing employee, is friends with the woman who reported being groped. "Jeremy Tofte, owner of Melvin Brewing, was sitting right beside McHale when it happened. The two came in with their own Melvin beer, cracked it open, which is incredibly illegal, and McHale proceeded to grab my friend," Dorshkind said.

Dorshkind said her friend took the proper steps to report the assault, including contacting Melvin's human resources department.

In the email to employees, co-founder Jeremy Tofte and financial manager William Morrow said a Menace employee reported that McHale put his

hand around her waist and touched her rear and upper thigh area.

"Melvin Brewing is strongly encouraging Kirk to seek appropriate training, counseling, and rehabilitation as necessary to help assure that an incident such as this does not reoccur," the email said. "Until such a time that Kirk has completed this... he will not represent Melvin Brewing in any way."

Some restaurants, bars and bar crawl groups in Bellingham have been pulling their support for Melvin.

In response, Henderson said Melvin is implementing a more comprehensive harassment policy that will soon be distributed to all employees and affiliates. In addition to providing counseling to the Bellingham staff, they have started using the services of an outside training company for employee sexual harassment training, he said.

People have shared screenshots of the previous



Melvin Brewing opened a location in Bellingham in June of 2017. // Photo by Katy Cossette

contact page and posted on Facebook to rally against Melvin in response to the inappropriate behavior and site content, with more than 3,500 people talking about it on Facebook as of Sunday, March 11.

Tara Almond, a Western alumna, made a Facebook post about the contact page, and said she feels strongly about the issue.

"It can be a really painful thing to relive your trauma, so I thought it was in really poor taste," Almond said.

On the site, there were statements like, "touch us, and we'll touch you back, but don't expect a relationship out of this" and "don't get too attached."

In addition to these, one of the hoverable drop-down options for "I'm touching you because" was "I'd like to opt-in for a date with Tofte."

"That's the kind of emotional victimization of women that the bro-culture thinks is so funny," Almond said.

Almond sees this as contributing to larger issues that make it hard for survivors to share their experiences.

"It's so hard to come forth and make a public statement like that. For one, it's a personal story, and it can be very embarrassing," Almond said. "You also run the risk of becoming a target for harassment. So if someone has the guts to put that out there, I'm gonna tend to believe them."

Tofte said the company regrets their decision on the contact page.

"The family at Melvin Brewing in no way supports or tolerates sexual violence, harassment, or sexual predation in any form and we deeply regret our poor judgement made on the website," Tofte said.

Melvin has also received criticism for insensitive and inappropriate marketing. Dorshkind said she was a fan of Melvin at first, but that changed as she became more familiar with the business.

"That excitement quickly crumbled when I saw them constantly displaying cultural appropriation in their marketing and their decoration," Dorshkind said.

Melvin has a restaurant in their hometown of Jack-

son, Wyoming, called "Thai Me Up."

"Additionally, they were using hurtful slurs that poked fun at people with disabilities, like using the term 'glutards' on their menu. Of course, it was the second I heard about the harassment incident back in November that I fully and angrily disapproved of their business," Dorshkind said.

The term has since been taken off their menu.

Dorshkind said Melvin has lost their right to stay alive as a business in the Bellingham community, let alone adding a second location in Fairhaven on May 1.

Dorshkind said she and other women who are close with the woman that McHale groped have made it their personal mission to spread the word to stop supporting Melvin.

"If their business is feeling the hurt of the backlash from the people of the community, then that means we're doing something right," Dorshkind said.

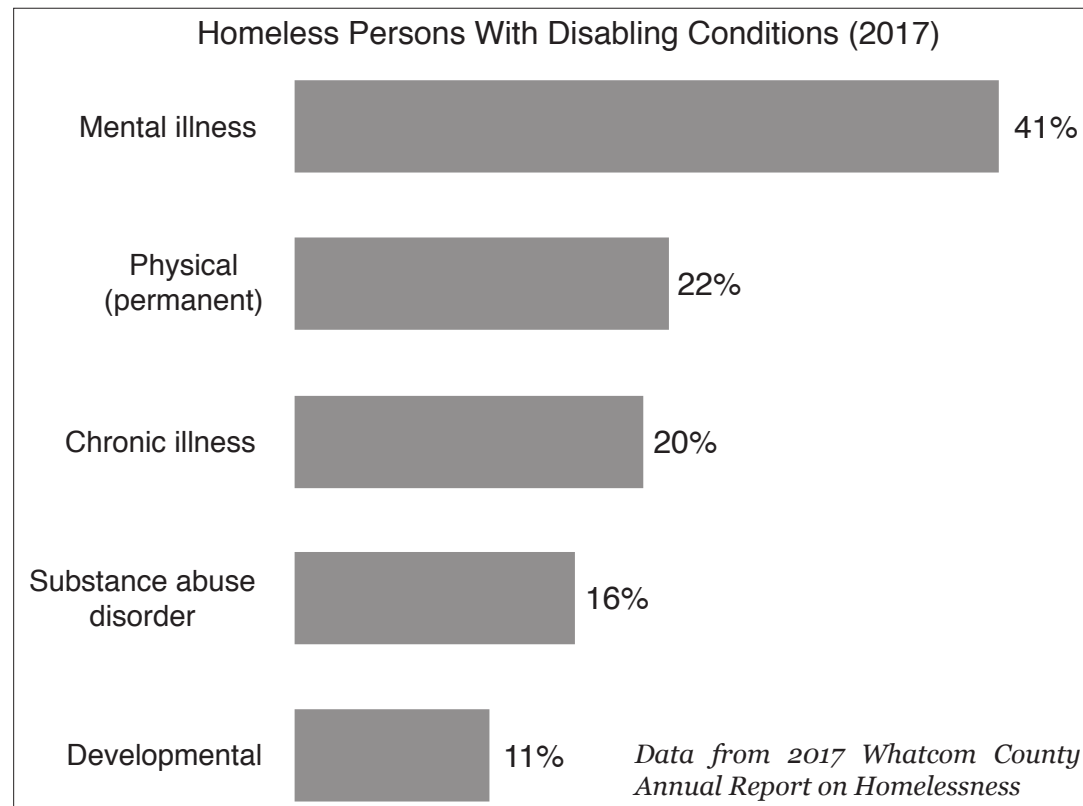


Kirk McHale, co-founder of Melvin Brewing in March 2016. // Screenshot taken from Melvin's Instagram account

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# Western students constructing tiny homes

Zoe Buchli  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Five Western students have started a project that will bring more tiny houses to Bellingham.

Project Zero Net Energy Tiny House (ZeNETH) will be the first tiny house project at Western, and is a student-led venture to create a home with a special feature not many houses have: It will be zero net energy.

ZeNETH has a project manager, policy lead and faculty adviser. There is also a separate design team with three students.

Senior Kellen Lynch is a Fairhaven student and is the project manager of ZeNETH.

"Net-zero houses are homes that produce as much energy over a year's time as they use in regard to electricity," Lynch said.

One of the key components of ZeNETH's zero-net-energy strategy is its use of solar panels, which will be the home's main source of electricity, Lynch said.

While solar panels cost more upfront, they save more

money and are more efficient in the long run, Lynch said.

"The name of the project alludes to sun angles, because a sun's zenith is an important factor when you're designing a house," Lynch said.

Right now, ZeNETH is in its design phase. Construction is scheduled to begin in January 2019, according to the project's timeline.

The house will be 200 square feet with space for one person, Lynch said.

Lynch said it will include a kitchen, lofted bedroom, a separate room for a bathroom and a washer and dryer unit.

Senior Dylan Fischer is a Fairhaven student and is a member of ZeNETH's design team.

"When designing and building a tiny home, there's a lot of details that really need to be touched upon in order to make your experience enjoyable," Fischer said. "This will show people that this is a way to live, and it doesn't suck, and you can have a net-zero home and it can be affordable."

Lynch said the team plans

on building the house at the Technology Development Center at the Port of Bellingham, which Western is a co-owner of, along with Bellingham Technical College.

Senior Noah Lanphear is an industrial design major and ZeNETH design team member.

"It's about thinking holistically," Lanphear said. "Thinking not just about what the exterior and interior are going to look like, but how are those components going to create an experience that's not just habitable, but also interacts with the environment around it."

Lynch said the team is applying for a Sustainable Action Fund grant with hopes to have it fund the project.

The Sustainable Action Fund is intended for projects like ZeNETH, that can help promote sustainability in Western's community, and is a student-funded program that all students pay into quarterly, Lynch said.

"It's not going to be a conventional American house but built smaller. We're designing something that's more ef-

cient and representative of our environment here in the Pacific Northwest," Lynch said.

The end goal for the project is to make sure potential buyers of the house know that this project's design can be manipulated to fit their aesthetic and that this tiny home is meant to be customizable, Lanphear said.

"We would like it just to be a model for people to look at, and know that they can design something like [this] as well," Lynch said. "We want to advance the design of tiny houses, but we also want it to be replicable."

ZeNETH was created fall quarter of 2017, when Lynch was in a design class through the Institute for Energy Studies and was assigned a project of designing a net-zero house.

Environmental Sciences Professor Imran Sheikh is the faculty adviser for the project, and has had experience working with tiny houses from his time at UC Berkeley.

"Students will be more invested in it if they're the ones that are in charge," Sheikh said. "They're going to get a



Design team member Lance Slyman (center) talks with Patrick Shive, the policy lead for the project at the Maker's Market, an event held downtown on Friday, March 2. // Photo by Taylor Nichols

ZeNETH comes at a time when the demand for tiny homes, accessory dwelling units and other new models of homes is increasing.

Bellingham's planning commission voted 4-2 to recommend the city council allow leasing of detached accessory dwelling units in early February.

"Housing one person in a tiny house does little to nothing to solve [the issue of affordable housing]," Lynch said. "The point of this project is to show people that you can design a sustainable house that is also affordable."

Lynch said if the project is something the city likes, they can take the design of ZeNETH and invest in making scalable tiny homes, that could address part of Belling-

ham's big changes for Western, which Vendors Row employees say is exciting.

When walking to the Viking Union, options for route are either through the Performing Arts Center plaza or around the front of the new bookstore location (in the Multi-Purpose Room) and through Vendors Row.

Sherab Li from QQLi's on Vendors Row said she thought a difference in traffic was in effect.

"With the new construction, I would definitely say less people have come through here.

# Anacortes to get fiber optic internet

Erica Wilkins  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The city of Anacortes is pioneering the new wave of broadband internet. The city is the first in North America to install a fiber optic network throughout their water pipes.

Various water plants across the far-reaching water system were experiencing communication failure and Public Works Director Fred Buckenmeyer had to solve this citywide problem.

"We have a regional water system, its the largest water system in both Skagit and the Island Counties," Buckenmeyer said. "It's a big water system so how to get a signal from the water plant out to these areas - that was the challenge."

Through research, Buckenmeyer found Craley, an information and technology group from England that has patented the method of putting fiber optics in the water pipe.

"I was sold," Buckenmeyer said. "And they loved me because I was making the big splash in America for them."

Buckenmeyer said the technology seemed to be perfect fix



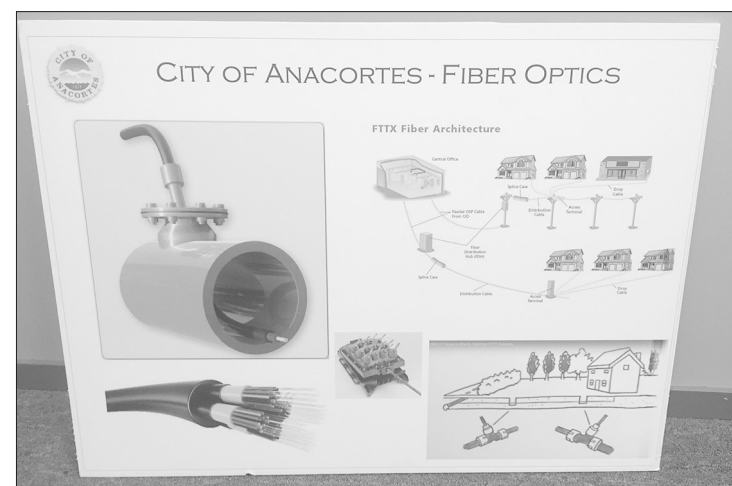
Anacortes Public Works Director Fred Buckenmeyer // Photo by Erica Wilkins

for the city's troubles, so he had a representative from Craley come show the technology.

"I figured that was about the only way I could get fiber optics across the valley," Buckenmeyer said.

After a trip to Spain to get a better look at the operation, Buckenmeyer brought the idea back with him to the city of Anacortes where they have been working on installing the network ever since.

"We didn't really try to be pioneers," Buckenmeyer said. "We're cutting-edge out of necessity."



Plans detailing how new fiber optic internet would be stored in the water pipes. // Photo by Erica Wilkins

# City Council round-up

Carina Andrews  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Ambitious climate goals and expanding Bellingham's cell coverage were the main points of interest at this weeks city council meeting on March 12.

Bellingham City Council discussed plans to implement small cell solutions to expand Bellingham's cellular network.

Small cell solutions are used to expand cell phone coverage without building entirely new cell towers. These small technologies are planned to be placed on existing street signs, telephone and power poles, known as right-of-way infrastructure.

Council-Member Gene Knutson led the recap discussion on small cells. Knutson said small cells will complement and improve the existing coverage in Bellingham and encouraged the council to approve the plan.

Jon Humphrey, a member of the Bellingham publicly owned fiber optic network, an activist group with the goal of implementing more fiber networks, expressed to the council his dissatisfaction with the city's plan to implement small cells without the use of fiber optic technologies.

"Small cells will help make the network more reliable, but they will never be as reliable as fiber," Humphrey said.

Fiber optics are glass or plastic threads that are used to transmit data rather than metal cables. The benefit of fiber is that it expands bandwidth, but it comes with a higher price tag.

The staff for Public Works and Natural Resources will be bringing code changes to the City Council within the next couple of months, Knutson said.

Among other items

discussed was the city's climate action plan update. The resolution aims to reduce the amount of greenhouse emissions produced in the city.

Lynn Murphy, an employee of Puget Sound Energy, voiced her concern that the resolution's goals are unrealistic.

Puget Sound Energy is concerned that the climate action plan's goal to adopt 100 percent renewable energy by the year 2030 is not attainable, Murphy said.

Council members discussed the plan update earlier in the day and, because of lack of clear wording around the goals, have decided to postpone implementing the update until edits have been completed.

Council member Pinky Vargas said the council will be making slight changes to the plan to clarify that these are goals the city aspires to, not that they believe are immediately achievable.

The council also heard from the Bellingham Police Department on its strategic plan. The plan intends to form a compact of expectations and commitments by and between the departments, city leaders and the public, council member Gene Knutson said.

"This plan is organized around six strategic decision-making commitments. First, and it has to be the most important, is safety first, safety of the public and of the officers," Knutson said.

Knutson encouraged Bellingham citizens to read the plan online to understand Bellingham Police Department's commitments to the city.

Knutson also invited the public to hear the police department's second presentation of the plan at the next city council meeting on March 26.

# Vendors Row moves to new home

Jessica Vangel  
THE WESTERN FRONT

I wouldn't say it has affected business too much though," Li said.

Some Brotha Dudes employees on Vendors Row had differing opinions. Alex Moines said he thinks the construction hasn't really impacted the amount of traffic through Vendors Row.

"I think we still get the same amount of business honestly. All of our same regular customers come back every day and I haven't seen much of a noticeable decrease in how many people come through here," Moines said.

The shifting, movement of office spaces and construction is not near over yet, though. Vendors Row is moving to in front of the was-Multi-Purpose

Room, now-bookstore.

ESC expansion director Forest Payne said receiving the final occupancy permit from the city of Bellingham is what kept Vendors Row from moving at the same time the bookstore moved. He said technical issues, like reviewing sprinkler systems, have held them back in terms of acquiring the final permit.

Both Li and Moines said they plan on just following what the directors of the project say is best.

"Our main plan of action for hopefully more business is moving around the corner in front of the bookstore. All of Vendors Row is moving but I really do think it will help," Li said.

Li said she has seen the amount of regular customers dwindle.

"I have seen less people come through and I also have seen people get frustrated with lines getting squished and leave. But I don't think it isn't worth it for the grand scheme," Li said.

Payne expects this issue to end soon with the new location for Vendors Row.

"We expect to receive the final occupancy permit next week. The fencing around and leading into the current Vendors Row was to keep business running in the time that permits are being reviewed until the new location is ready for them," Payne said.

Vendors Row has found a

new permanent home in front of the bookstore.

Moines said he isn't sure if people will still stop by when their location will be in front of the bookstore and not on the way into the VU.

With no option really for moving, students will have to see what the move for Vendors Row holds.

Although all the shifting, moving and chaos is happening, it is all for the cause of the ESC expanding which will provide more opportunity for students. For further context on the ESC project, you can look at some of The Western Front's past coverage.



ZeNETH project manager Kellen Lynch discusses plans for the zero net energy house at a table for the project at the Maker's Market downtown on Friday, March 2. // Photo by Taylor Nichols

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## An Open Letter to Students, Faculty and Administration Concerned About Justice for Farmworkers

Your concern for those who work our farm fields is to be commended. Perhaps you are especially concerned about how guest workers from Mexico are treated. That concern may lead you to join the efforts to protest their alleged mistreatment and even help boycott products coming from farms you have been told are abusing their workers.

Before joining up, we invite you to learn more about justice for farmworkers and especially the H2A or guest worker program

You no doubt agree that farm guest workers should be paid well for the hard work they do, that they should be treated properly, be provided proper housing, be paid what they are owed and be free to express complaints. We agree and here are a few facts:

In Washington state, farmers employed about 18,000 guest workers from Mexico this past harvest season. With about 80% of their earnings sent to support their Mexican families and **with average earnings for the harvest season of about \$20,000 this means their families in Mexico received about \$288 million earned in Washington farm fields in 2017.**

Guest workers are guaranteed by law to earn over the state's minimum wage. Called the "Adverse Wage Rate," for 2017 **the minimum was \$13.38 per hour; for 2018 it will be \$14.12.** Washington's rate is highest in the nation because of our minimum wage. This is the minimum all must be paid, including the domestic workers doing the same work. However, most earn considerably more based on incentive pay. The state reports the **average farm worker pay at about \$18 per hour.** Farmers report typical costs for workers including benefits at \$20 to \$25 per hour.

**Farmers hiring guest workers have many requirements including providing free housing and free transportation from and to their homes. They must also provide a safe, healthy work environment and affordable food.** All these are required by law with numerous federal and state laws applying. In addition to the wages paid, farmers pay about \$1100 to \$1300 in additional benefits and costs for each guest worker. It is an expensive program but used more because of the growing shortage of available farm labor. Some farmers have lost valuable crops because of the severe shortage of farm workers.

**The many regulations involve frequent inspections by regulatory agencies as well as food industry audits.** Farmers not complying with the required living conditions and worker treatment are subject to enforcement and may lose access to markets. The recent \$150,000 fine against a Sumas farm for late work breaks and meal times shows that workers are protected and farmers face severe penalties for failure to comply. The investigation also showed the accusations of farmer abuse relating to the death of the worker in Sumas were absolutely false.

These guest worker jobs are extremely valuable for these workers. Compare the approximately \$20 per hour earned in Washington fields to the Mexican minimum wage of \$11 per day. **It would take six years working full time as a Mexican farmworker to earn what they can earn in a few months in our farm fields.** Hear from the workers yourself at <http://www.farmworkerjusticenow.org/farmworkers-speak-out.html>.

The shortage of workers and efforts to prevent farms from using the guest worker program is hurting workers, not helping them. The very high cost of labor in Washington puts our farmers at a disadvantage against the much lower cost of labor in countries exporting fruit such as Mexico, Serbia, Peru, China and more. Farmers are mechanizing as quickly as they can, reducing these very valuable work opportunities. This hurts consumers as it eliminates locally grown food and increases food borne illnesses. But it hurts workers even more by taking away these valuable jobs.

There is much more to learn about the guest worker program. But here is the main point: **when you decide to support protests, strikes and boycotts against farmers who use the guest worker program please understand you are part of an effort to take opportunities away from those who very much need them. This hurts farmers and consumers but mostly the workers who need these comparatively high paying jobs.**

Farmworker Justice Now is a project of Save Family Farming. We believe justice for farm workers starts with the opportunity to have a great job and provide for their families. We hope you support our efforts.

Dillon Honcoop Farm Worker Justice Project Coordinator

Juan Baldovinos, Farm Labor Policy Advisor

[www.farmworkerjusticenow.org](http://www.farmworkerjusticenow.org)

# Bellingham resident completes 800th blood donation

*Robert Hungerschafer has been regularly donating blood since the 1970s*

**Carina Andrews**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Most people spend their Saturday mornings sleeping in or watching television, but Robert Hungerschafer spends his Saturdays saving lives.

Donating blood has been a regular routine for Hungerschafer, a Bellingham local. Earlier this month, he completed his 800th donation at Bloodworks Northwest in Bellingham.

Hungerschafer was inspired to start donating blood by a coworker in the 1970s. Hungerschafer hopes to donate 1,500 times in his lifetime and has around 700 more donations to go.

many lives as he can.

Hungerschafer said he continues to donate so often because it became a pattern when he was young. He hopes to get others to fall into this pattern as well.

Hungerschafer has even recruited his dog, Athena, and cat, Kitty, to donate. Athena and Kitty have just set their own world records for most cat and dog blood donations respectively. Athena has donated 36 units of blood and Kitty has donated 46.

People often tell Hungerschafer that they didn't know pet owners could donate their animal's blood.

"People don't think about that until their dog or cat gets hit by a car and needs

gatherschafer passes another 100th milestone, he gets a new nameplate with his current donation count to replace his old one. He said he gives the old nameplates to his children to remember him by when he isn't around anymore.

Valerie Brannen, a blood collection specialist at Bloodworks Northwest, said donors can donate platelets once a week and the average donation takes between 90 to 120 minutes.

However, it does not take everyone two hours to donate platelets.

"One of the girls that works at Bloodworks Northwest has a platelet count around 500 so she donates triples and it only takes her

to be because of the amount of scar tissue from donating so many times, so donations takes longer.

Hungerschafer doesn't mind the longer donation times because it gives him more time to relax and be pampered.

**"A meal is filling, but donating is fulfilling."**

**Robert Hungerschafer**

"They treat you like royalty. While you are laying there, they will bring you drinks and snack food. They talk with you and give you blankets and pillows and heating pads," Hungerschafer said.

Hungerschafer said people donate more when they see a need for it, like a disaster or a family member needing an operation.

"They realize there is a need. Well, there is always a need, it just doesn't hit that close to home every time," Hungerschafer said.

The only time Hungerschafer has seen a line to donate was after the terrorist attack on 9/11. That day, he had an appointment to see if he was a match for someone who needed bone marrow.

"I can stay home and watch television or I can get out and help somebody," Hungerschafer said.

Donating also gives him a chance to meet new people and gain more interesting experiences than sitting around his house.

Apheresis machines are used at Bloodworks North-

west to separate platelets from the blood, and many of the machines sit unused for long periods of time because of a lack of donors.

"We are short on platelets right now, I know that. They want us to recruit people to donate platelets," Brannen said.

Hungerschafer's son, Tyler, said he is proud of what his father has accomplished.

"I can't do it, that's why I like him donating so much to make up for me," Tyler Hungerschafer said.

He has what his father calls vasovagal needle phobia, which causes Tyler Hungerschafer to faint at the sight of needles.

Hungerschafer wants to encourage people to donate blood because it is for a great cause, but also because it is a great experience.

Along with donating his blood, Hungerschafer and his family also donate their time to local charities. The family volunteers at the Bellingham Food Bank every Tuesday night and he volunteers for the Bellingham Family History Center on Wednesday nights. Hungerschafer has also volunteered at the crisis center, The Boys and Girls Club and the Health and Safety Committee for Whatcom County.

Hungerschafer enjoys donating his time and his blood as often as he can and getting as many people as he can to follow in his footsteps.

"Donating blood is like going out for lunch. It takes just as much time," Hungerschafer laughed. "A meal is filling, but donating is fulfilling."



**Robert Hungerschafer completed his 800th blood donation at Bloodworks Northwest in Bellingham. // Photo by Carina Andrews**

He held the world record for most blood or platelet donations in 2003, but has since been beaten by a man in Texas. But for Hungerschafer, it's not a competition or a race. Instead, he keeps his focus on saving as

emergency services," Hungerschafer said.

At Bloodworks Northwest, there is a tree known as the Tree of Life, with nameplates for people who have donated more than 100 times. Every time Hun-

about 30 or 40 minutes, whereas me, I have a lower count, so it takes me a lot longer," Hungerschafer said.

Blood platelets are cells that bind together when they recognize damaged blood vessels that prevent bleeding out. A normal platelet count is between 150,000 and 450,000 platelets per microliter of blood, according to John Hopkins Medicine.

Donors can donate platelets 26 times a year and can donate in increments known as single, double and triple depending on their platelet count according to Hungerschafer.

"My platelet count is around 200 so I can donate a double and it takes me about two hours so I usually watch a movie."

Hungerschafer said his arms aren't what they used



**Hungerschafer and his son Tyler, who has a fear of needles. // Photo by Carina Andrews**



**Hungerschafer's cat, Kitty, also donates blood. // Photo by Carina Andrews**

# Listen.

*People experiencing homelessness in Bellingham tell their own stories*

By Julia Furukawa



**Brian Davis, 56, said that despite earning a college degree in communications, he still can't find a job in Bellingham.** // Photo by Mathew Roland

## Brian Davis

Brian Davis, 56, is a veteran, a college graduate, a former social worker and now, homeless.

Davis said he served in Korea, did two tours in Iraq and worked on Operation Desert Storm.

Davis said he has dedicated his life to service and is proud of the work he's done. He can't seem to understand why he's found himself sleeping at the Lighthouse Mission Drop-in-Center every night.

"I sometimes get the feeling: What did I do wrong?" Davis said.

Davis attributes some of his struggles to his childhood, which he said was far from normal.

He didn't grow up with his biological parents. He said after bouncing around foster homes, he was adopted by a white family after meeting his adoptive father by chance

when he was a teenager.

Now with a stable, consistent family and home, Davis said he was able to focus on school. He said he wasn't sure if he would've made it this far without their generosity.

Despite this stroke of luck, he still struggled. He felt like he couldn't keep up, Davis said.

"When my parents adopted me, I was reading at a fourth grade level, but I was a sophomore in high school," Davis said. He knew he would have to work hard to graduate.

With the support of his parents, Davis graduated. Despite this accomplishment, he said he still felt as if he wasn't truly a part of his family.

Davis sat his father down one day to try and explain this to his father.

"Tears in my eyes I said, 'What am I, separate or equal in this family?' And he

told me, 'Equal,'" Davis said.

"I said, 'I'll never be equal because outside these doors, I'm nothing. You might love me, but I'm nothing,'"

Davis said those lingering doubts in the back of his head followed him to college.

Davis said he graduated from Judson University in Illinois with a bachelor's degree in communications, but put his career on hold in order to serve in the military.

When he returned home from deployment, Davis said he started working with King County helping at-risk youth at high schools in Seattle make it to graduation. He said he wanted to be the one who provided the support that he so desperately craved when he was in high school.

However, after cuts to the King County budget, Davis said he was laid off from his job as a counselor. So he relocated to Sedro-Wooley to fill a similar position.

Then, his life seemed to

repeat itself. The agency he worked for there became financially unstable.

"I was the last to be hired, so I was the first to go," he said.

Davis said that being laid off a second time reignited turmoil in his family, particularly with his father. Davis had been helping his adoptive family pay rent, but now jobless, he couldn't contribute. Shortly after losing his job, Davis said he was run off of the road by another vehicle on his way up

to Bellingham. The car accident left him with permanent damage to his back and left foot.

Not only was Davis already without a job, but with the severe injuries he sustained, he couldn't return to the workforce. Then, when he sought out medical care, he struck out again. He said this was particularly devastating to him because he felt he'd earned the right to decent care after serving his country in the Army.

"The VA (Department of Veteran Affairs) did nothing for me," Davis said.

Jobless and still struggling with medical ailments, Davis now stays at the Drop-in-Center, but he said he feels like his life isn't going anywhere, and that ambiguity is scary to him. He said the Mission doesn't make an effort to help people experiencing homelessness get back on their feet.

"The Mission is just a holding cell for people," Davis said. "It should be a transitional cell. 'Drop-in?' Well, if I drop in, how long am I gonna stay?"

Out of touch with his family, Davis said he has had to learn to invest in the relationships he has with others at the Drop-in-Center.

"Right now, this is my extended family," Davis said, gesturing around. "So, I have to embrace it because it's part of my social network."

Davis' positivity has been tested by his life experiences, but he said those same experiences have helped shape him into someone who perseveres and someone who helps others do the same.

"I'm still standing," Davis said. "My adage is: if you can look up, you can get up."

## Angelina Mak

With a view of Bellingham Bay stretching out before her, Angelina Mak smiled.

"I always dreamt of having a little waterfront studio," she said, laughing. "This isn't exactly what I pictured."

Next to Mak is the Lighthouse Mission Drop-in-Center. She says she spends most of her days and nights at the Mission.

Mak, 26, has been homeless on and off for four years. She said she initially became homeless after leaving an abusive relationship with a past partner who got her into drugs.

Mak had moved to Oregon to be with her partner, but after the break, she had no one to turn to there. She was completely alone.

Being a Bellingham native, Mak decided to come back home. But her homecoming wasn't as smooth as she had hoped.

"I was born and raised here," Mak said. "I went to Lowell Elementary, Fairhaven Middle School and Blaine High School."

She had a high school diploma, but after falling out with her boyfriend, she tried to attend college while homeless and found it nearly impossible.

Finding time to study and work, while also sleeping at the shelter took its toll.

So she dropped out.

Mak also attributed some of her difficulties with school to her struggles with mental health. She said lives with bipolar disorder, which makes it hard for her to maintain healthy relationships and jobs, Mak said.

"Honestly, being bipolar and dealing with the medical



**Angelina Mak, 26, reads poetry from her journal. "This life isn't easy, this life isn't free," she said.** // Photo by Nic Ulmer

stuff I have to deal with, is a full-time job in itself," Mak said.

With no job, Mak said she had nowhere else to turn but the streets.

Her struggle with mental health made it harder to stay away from substances, and Mak said she fell into a pattern of using. The high she used to get from drugs mimicked the feeling of her manic episodes, Mak said.

"A lot of people with bipolar love the up of it," she said. "They love the high."

Mak is now making a conscious effort to stay clean and sober, but living at the Mission and the Drop-in-Center makes it difficult. While drugs and alcohol are not allowed at the Light-

house Mission, she said there are always opportunities to use, but when there are, she tries to turn to religion to resist temptation.

"I was in a situation last night where I could've used," Mak said. "For me, my faith is what keeps me going everyday."

Mak taps into her faith in creative ways. She pulled out a yellow notebook covered with doodles. After flipping through the pages for a few seconds, she stopped at a poem she had written about her experience being homeless.

*From a poem written by Angelina Mak:*

*Cold wind stings my face, hands trying to keep warm as sweet words flow through my fold.*

*Memories of love, wondering where he's at now.*

*A life-changing decision. Left without love.*

*Stranded with no one to hold on to.*

For Mak, the experience of "having no one to hold on to" has made it hard for her to make healthy decisions.

She said men from the shelter have tried to pressure her into prostitution. Mak is in debt and said she couldn't deny that the idea hadn't crossed her mind.

"I feel like they look at me and they just see me as a walking target," she said. "Like I'm vulnerable so they can easily take advantage of me."

Her faith, coupled with watching the phenomenon

from the other side working at a motel where prostitution has occurred, kept her from doing it.

Her perspective on the world has changed now that she's the one in the vulnerable position, Mak said.

With that vulnerability

as a homeless person," Mak said, laughing. "It's embarrassing."

With her dampened confidence, Mak said she struggles to stay positive sometimes. She said she even struggles to feel safe, despite being in a city

where she was born and raised. She said detachment makes her feel isolated from a community she feels like she should belong to.

"We're people," she said. "People don't look at us like we're people anymore. It's like we're just bums on the side of the road."

Mak said the frustration of being treated this way has made her determined

to debunk stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness.

"I don't want everything handed to me," Mak said. "I want to get everything on my own, but it takes time. It's not something that can happen overnight."

For now, those nights will be spent at the Mission, but Mak said she's confident that this is temporary. She said that at only 26 years old, she has her whole life ahead of her.

"You can't shave your legs



**There are around 742 homeless individuals living in Whatcom County, according to a 2017 report from the Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness.** // Drone image by Nic Ulmer



**Marvin Broadus, 34, said he feels like now that he's finally getting back on his feet, he can focus on his emotional health and relationship. "The hardest part was learning how to show my feelings," Broadus said.**

// Photo by Mathew Roland

### Marvin Broadus

As 50 Cent blared out of the speaker next to Marvin Broadus, 34, he danced along, smiling. Sitting outside of the Lighthouse Mission Drop-in-Center, Broadus took a drag from his menthol cigarette.

"So you really want to know about my life?" Broadus said, chuckling. "Okay, then. Let's do this."

Marvin Broadus said he never knew his real mother. He grew up in California with an adoptive family until he was about eight years old. Then, he was adopted by his biological aunt. He never knew his real mother.

He thought moving in with blood relatives would make things better, but his family struggled, Broadus said.

"My life was pretty much gangs, drugs, pimps, violence, juvenile prison,

in and out of foster care, group homes," Broadus said.

He watched his aunt physically and verbally abused by her husband.

According to the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, growing up in a home experiencing domestic violence has a strong correlation to homelessness later on in life.

While Broadus was able to make it out of that home, he is still part of this statistic.

Not only did Broadus' family members struggle with drugs, incarceration and domestic abuse, but he said they moved around constantly, making it hard for him to make long-term connections or maintain friendships.

He said he lived in California, Tennessee, Kentucky and Georgia during

his childhood.

This lack of stability led his family to struggle financially. It was hard for his aunt to find a job and Broadus said that in order to stay afloat, he started to tag along with his cousins who dealt drugs.

"I started trappin'," Broadus said. "But then I started smoking what I was dealing."

Broadus fell into addiction and said he turned to crime to support it. He was able to make money by stealing high-end goods from stores and reselling them on the streets.

"I guess you could say my street hustle was boosting," Broadus said. "I was a professional thief."

In the midst of this, Broadus' life was put on hold when there was a reality check for him. Broadus said he was incarcerated for almost two years after

being apprehended for grand theft.

After his 22 months of incarceration, Broadus said he knew that he didn't want to return to his old ways.

"I was burnt with guilt," he said.

Broadus had been incarcerated in Bellevue. He said he was filled with regret about his past life experiences and wanted to start a new chapter somewhere new.

"A friend of mine kept telling me 'Bellingham, Bellingham, that's where you should go,'" Broadus said.

So, he went to the public library in Bellevue and printed out directions to Bellingham. Then, he left without looking back.

However, once he arrived, Broadus said he found it nearly impossible to find a job in Bellingham because of his criminal record. Despite his frustration, Broadus said he was eventually able to find jobs online that didn't discriminate against him because of his history.

With a job, Broadus said his life now has more stability and regularity to it. He said he and his girlfriend have a room at the Rodeway Inn, with clean sheets, a shower and a roof over their heads.

Broadus said now, he's finally able to reflect on his life and decide where he wants to head from here, instead of just merely surviving.

"I am seeking harmony and balance," Broadus said.

While Broadus said he doesn't want to be staying at a motel for the rest of his life, being able to retreat to a warm place with a loving partner is something he thought he might never have.

### Mike Walker

A new job is always exciting. For Mike Walker, that new job is staffing the front desk at the Lighthouse Mission Drop-in-Center.

The center is overcrowded and underfunded, but Walker smoothly navigates the high-stress environment, fielding questions and concerns.

On a cold weekday in February, the center was packed full of people. Luggage, sleeping bags, food and clothes covered the floor.

Walker is homeless. He said he sleeps at the affiliated Lighthouse Mission across the street every night, but comes over to the Drop-in-Center to socialize, work and stay

warm.

Walker has found community and friends in Bellingham, many of whom are also experiencing homelessness. Walker smiled looking around the room.

He said that after his financial situation went south and he found himself without a home, he somehow knew he needed to leave Mount Vernon and head to Bellingham.

That sense of home is important to Walker because he never really felt like he had a place he could consistently call home as a kid.

"Oh we were poor growing up," Walker said. "So, I've lived in Tennessee, Indiana, Alaska, Hawaii, California, Oklahoma, Washington, you name it."

Despite only living in Bellingham full-time for six months now, he knows he wants to stay here, as it feels like home.

However, "here" isn't necessarily the Mission. The Lighthouse Mission is a Christian institution. The staff don't try to actively convert those staying there, but Walker said he feels much more comfortable keeping his religious identity a secret.

He said he understands the important role religion plays in some people's lives, and for him, religion has helped him get through the hardest times in his life.

However, as a Buddhist, he tries to keep his head down, fearing criticism of a part of his life that he holds close to his heart, Walker said.

Despite Walker's religious differences with the Mission, he said that he wouldn't be where he is without their help.

He said the staff helped him enroll in a 90-day work program, which then allowed him to secure a job as a staffer at the front desk at the Drop-in-Center.

"I'm here every day now," Walker said, grinning. "Monday through Friday."

While Walker currently dedicates much of his time to the Mission, he said it isn't his final destination. He recently got hired at a nearby boat yard. It's a great opportunity: a full-time job, he said.

Walker smiled widely at the thought, flashing his brilliantly white, eerily perfect teeth.

"Oh these?" he said, gesturing to his mouth. "They're totally fake. I did a lot of drugs in my younger days so now I've got these."

Walker said he's been sober for years. The

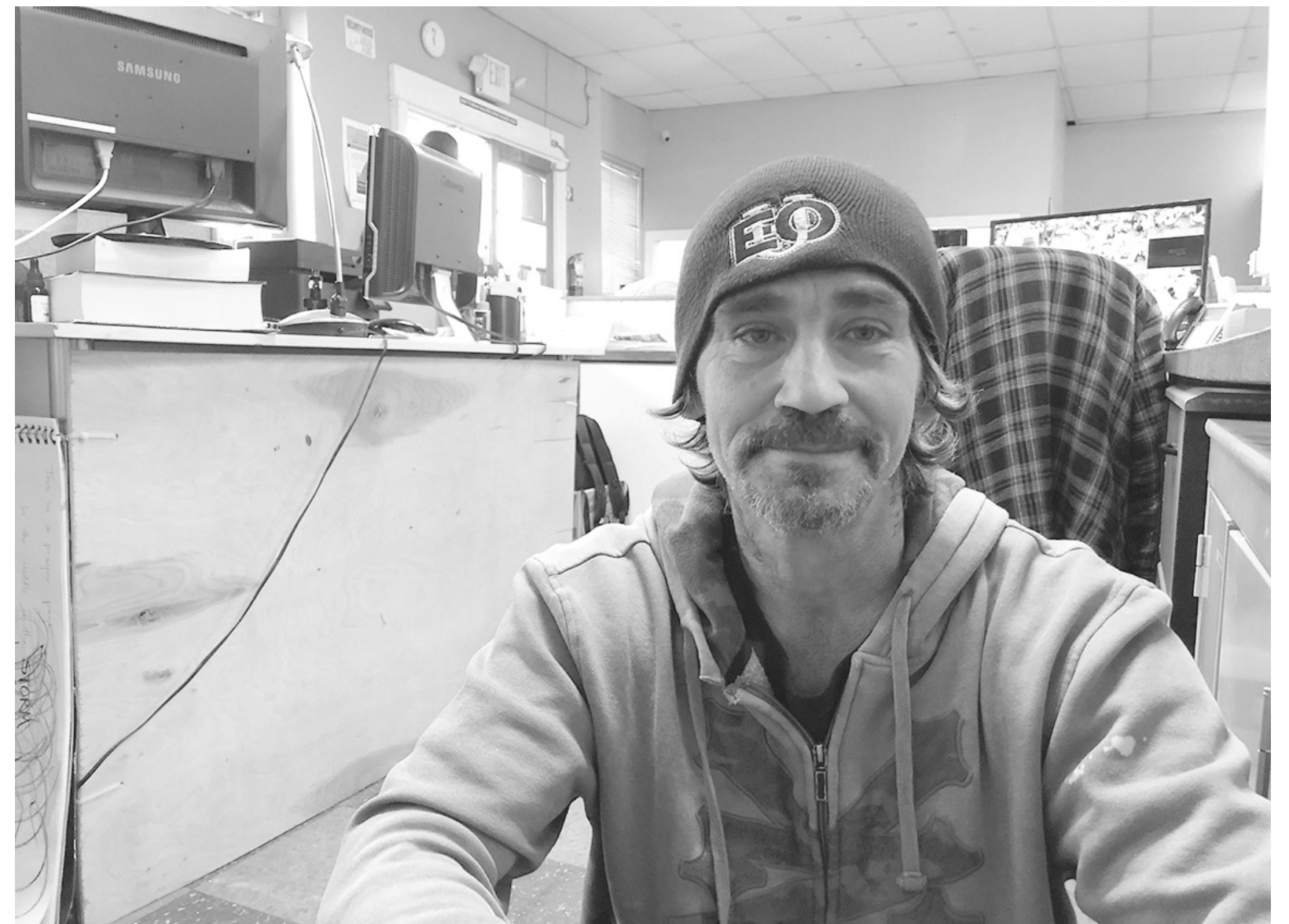
stereotype associating homelessness and drug addiction isn't a fair one, he said.

The Lighthouse Mission has a no-substance policy, but he said this isn't an issue for him at all. He just appreciates having a place to stay.

"I'll probably stay [at the Mission] for a while longer," Walker said. "Until I save up enough to get my own place."

That prospect of independence and stability is a goal for Walker. He said that stability is something he's been after for a long time.

**Mike Walker sits next to the front desk at the Lighthouse Mission Drop-in-Center. After completing a 90-day work program through the Mission, he got a job staffing the desk. // Photo by Julia Furukawa**



**Mike is currently experiencing homelessness and said his biggest struggle has been uncertainty and not being able to find work. "If you can't predict where you're gonna work at, how do you predict where you're gonna live at?" Mike said. // Photo by Mathew Roland**



**Derrick said the biggest misconception is people thinking everybody that is homeless is on drugs or drugs brought people to this situation. He plans on transferring to the Seattle Art Institute from Whatcom Community College to get a bachelor's degree in media animation. // Photo by Nic Ulmer**



**Anton said his ultimate goal is "a job, a beautiful home and a beautiful wife." // Photo by Mathew Roland**



**Sean says he has no problem as long as he survives and he and his dog Allison are warm. "I don't ask for anything," Sean said. "I know there are people who need it more than me," // Photo by Nic Ulmer**

# Why sleep is important for your finals week



**Sandra Rees-Bowen**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

is what it does as we sleep," Dr. Knops said in an email. "So, our alertness goes back up and makes it hard to get back to sleep or even get to sleep in the first place."

This difficulty has caused some students to drop a course, receive a lower grade, or receive an incomplete grade in their class, Michelle Langstraat, a Prevention and Health Services coordinator, wrote in an email.

Lack of sleep can cause students to stress more, and makes it more likely students will get sick, gain weight or have decreased academic performance. It can also have mental effects, such as depression and anxiety, Langstraat said.

While you may be stressing for finals week and thinking about putting sleep off, studies have shown that's not the best idea.

Thirty-one percent of 619 students said they have a hard time falling asleep due to stress related to academic success, according to the 2016 National College Health Assessment survey.

Dr. Gail Knops, a certified family physician at Western's Student Health Center, said being overly stressed can impede the ability to rest.

"When we are worried, active thoughts can surface as our brains try to clean house, which

## 6 tips for a good night's sleep

1. Go to bed only when you are feeling sleepy.
2. Get out of bed if you are not asleep in 15-20 minutes, and move to another room to relax before going back again.
3. If you tend to stress a lot, pick a time and place to write down all your concerns and plans. This will help cleanse your mind of worries.
4. Set your alarm and get up at the same time every morning.
5. Avoid taking naps. If you must nap, take it before 2 p.m. and keep it less than a half an hour long.
6. Practice relaxing techniques twice a day, once during the day and once at bedtime. Concentrate on relaxing your body. Begin with slow and deep breathing, and think of something that makes you happy or feel relaxed. Do this for about 10 minutes. Playing relaxing music is also helpful for this.

## FRONTLINE

Opinions of the Editorial Board

### More services needed for people experiencing homelessness

Homelessness is a complex issue, and it's one that needs to be addressed as a community.

Unaffordable rent, a housing shortage, systemic issues of racism and discrimination and an absence of adequate mental health services contribute to homelessness in Bellingham.

Too much money is spent on clearing out homeless encampments because citizens find them an eyesore, and not enough on actual solutions. Clearing the camps isn't any kind of solution, as displaced people often set up new camps within a few days or weeks. Both time and money are being wasted by the city to destroy the closest thing to a home some people can obtain.

The camps have also been criticized as being environmental blights. Bellingham residents who are passionate about the environment should show also show compassion to people experiencing homelessness. People wouldn't need to camp out in the first place if there were more options and services available to them.

The burden often falls on the Light-house Mission to house those in need of a place to stay for the night. The Mission has a policy in place preventing drug or alcohol use on their property, which prevents some people who struggle with addiction from having a place to stay for the night.

The city has acknowledged this problem and has been searching for a location for a low-barrier homeless shelter. A proposed location on the waterfront was denied by the Port of Bellingham last year, and one former port commis-



Check out *The Western Front's* video at [westernfrontonline.com](http://westernfrontonline.com).

sioner claimed that a homeless shelter doesn't need waterfront property. While a low-barrier shelter wouldn't solve everything, it would give more options to people experiencing homelessness in our community.

The battle to find a location for the shelter also illustrated a larger issue. Neighborhoods and businesses in Bellingham rejected building the shelter near them. Although the progressive community of Bellingham advocates for providing more resources to people experiencing homelessness, their actions did not follow their words. While surveys have shown that homelessness is seen as a top issue in Bellingham among residents, not many people seem committed

to addressing this if it impacts them. The community needs to come together if anything is to be done.

Landlords are also reluctant to rent to people who are transitioning from experiencing homelessness. This kind of discrimination is illegal but still happens. And people who experience homelessness still face issues such as systemic racism and discrimination against LG-BTQ people.

Some people experiencing homelessness have expressed feeling alienated by, or uncomfortable with, the beliefs of the faith-based Lighthouse Mission. In addition, concerns about safety at the Mission, particularly from female-identifying people, need to be addressed.

Within the community, there is a real lack of resources for people with disabilities, those who are addicted to drugs or alcohol, or struggle with their mental health. This can not only create conditions in which people become homeless, but can also make it hard for people to get out of it.

We applaud HomesNow! Not Later's urgency and dedication to pressuring officials to address homelessness now. However, we feel solutions need to go beyond just tiny homes. More needs to be done to look at long-term solutions, including housing availability and affordability, as well as increasing services to both help people transition from homelessness, and prevent people from falling into it.

There are a lot of misconceptions about people experiencing homelessness. As the people interviewed in our video expressed, stereotypical portrayals of people experiencing homelessness fail to acknowledge the diversity and humanity of this group. The people we talked to told us about being laid off, getting out of an abusive relationship, focusing on paying for school with dreams of majoring in animation and just trying to survive.

It's time to take a stand, and elevate the voices of those who are so often rejected by the rest of the community. It's not just the city's responsibility, but also that of the citizens, to work together to find viable short-term and long-term solutions for these community members.

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

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## Letter to the editor

My name is Lisa Nguyen and I am commenting on your recent article "Hmong Student Association Host Tea Party for a Scholarship." First off I would like to say I absolutely love this fundraiser! Coming from a low-income family and being the oldest, college didn't seem realistic to me. Who would pay for my college? My parents were already struggling to put food on the table. I knew I needed to apply to scholarships and work if I wanted to have a college education. I personally can say scholarships have helped me out immensely. It has made it possible for me to achieve higher education. I am the first in my family to attend college and I hope I am not the only one. Scholarships like these reach out to people who didn't think they had a chance. College is expensive, that is no secret. But having scholarships like these can really make a difference since the financial burden of college can be stressful. As noted in the article, Hmong population in college is one of the lowest rates of higher education attainment among Asian population. It is important to acknowledge this because diversity and inclusivity plays a vital role in education. We cannot just exclude a group. If we see someone struggling we reach out and help them. This is why I love the ESC. They are doing great things to positively impact our community by teaching and by giving. I look forward to seeing what else in store for the future!

**Lisa Nguyen**  
Business management major

## We hear you.

**Content warning: sexual assault**

Students have asked for increased coverage of sexual assault at Western and the way these cases are handled. We understand the importance of reporting on this issue and we are asking for your help. If you want to share your story with us, we promise you will have full control of your story and what is included, and you can withdraw at any time. We can also offer anonymity to survivors.

The Western Front is striving for responsible coverage that shows the wide impact rape culture and sexual assault has on our community. We also want our reporting to be survivor-centered and solutions-based.

You can fill out an anonymous Google Form linked on our Facebook page. If you would like to share your story, or even just talk about what this would entail, you can also email us at [westernfrontonline@gmail.com](mailto:westernfrontonline@gmail.com) or email our editor-in-chief, Asia Fields, directly at [asiafields.westernfront@gmail.com](mailto:asiafields.westernfront@gmail.com).

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# Weekly Sports Roundup

*Jasmine McMullin places fourth in triple jump at nationals; three Vikings earn GNAC track Athletes of the Week; men's golfer Brady Bonfilio ties for first place*

## There is no halftime for cheerleaders

*Western's cheerleading squad balances schoolwork with stunts and diagonal formations*

**Tanner Fricke**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

A timeout is called at one of Western's basketball games and 20 cheerleaders hit the floor, moving into a pyramid formation. The show is about to begin.

"There is nothing I love more than being on the sidelines during a really close game and getting the crowd stoked for our team to win," cheerleader Rachel McCrady said.

To understand the ins and outs of life as a cheerleader, it's helpful first to know why they cheer in the first place.

"The main goal of the cheer team at Western is to support school athletics," McCrady said. "We want to create a fun gameday experience that allows fans to enjoy attending games and being a part of the atmosphere of Western athletics."

Cheerleaders actively seek to involve the entire crowd throughout each event they attend.

"We are one of the many ambassadors for the university," cheerleader Gianna Hake said. "Our season consists of supporting various sports throughout fall and winter quarter and also other community events. We work closely with the athletic department, helping out wherever we are needed."

Cheerleaders have to be flexible with their time and energy. Preparation for a busy night involves a lot of practice.

An average day of practice includes warming up, working out and practicing new stunts and pyramid



**Western's cheerleaders act as ambassadors for the college, helping to raise fan support.** // Photo by October Yates

formations.

"[We end] practice with what we call 'positives and encouragements' which is basically a time to highlight what we did well at practice and a time to discuss what we need to work on," cheerleader Hannah Schoenbein said.

Cheerleaders use their time practicing stunts and working out often. However, it's important to note the positives and encouragements Schoenbein mentioned. No team

can operate with excellence without strong relationships and motivation from one another.

Balancing academics, social life and athletics can be difficult for many college athletes, cheerleaders included. The heart of the sport keeps them coming back.

"I have put my heart into this and that drives my passion every year that I come back. I truly enjoy every aspect as a student and athlete," Hake said. "One of the driving factors

that keeps me so invested is seeing my team grow. When you look back at the end of the season, it is certainly amazing to see how much the team has accomplished."

Schoenbein said the cheerleading squad has created a camaraderie with not only her teammates, but also other members of Western's athletic department.

"Being a cheerleader is important to me because I think that having an overall great experience in college includes being involved in your school," Schoenbein said. "I love getting to know all of the people in athletics and I've met some of my best friends through the process."

Schoenbein has advice for people thinking about joining the cheer team.

"We have a pre-tryout clinic that can help speculating students get acquainted with the program and meet the people on the team," Schoenbein said. "It has been the most rewarding experience of my life and although I was nervous my first year, the work paid off. I am lucky to be on this team and I wouldn't trade the memories and opportunities I've had for the world."

The team encourages people to come check it out and give it a shot if they are considering it.

"Every time I get with my team I feel like I am with family and I get to do what I love the most, which is cheer for Western Athletics. It's tough at some points, but the work is so worth it." McCrady said.

**Eric Trent**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

### Track and Field

Senior jumper Jasmine McMullin placed fourth in the triple jump at the NCAA Division II Indoor Championships on Saturday, March 10, in Pittsburg, Kansas.

McMullin uncorked a leap of 12.53 meters on her sixth and final attempt to vault past three competitors and move from seventh to fourth place, earning her first-team All-American honors.

McMullin finishes her career at Western as a three-time Great Northwest Athletic Conference champion in the indoor triple jump.

The men's and women's teams both won at the Pacific Lutheran Open on Saturday, March 10. The men's team won with 222.5 points to beat a Central Washington team that scored 194. The women's team compiled 206.5 points to beat out the Central Washington that scored 185.5.

Three Vikings were named GNAC Athletes of the Week on Monday, March 12, following their performances at the Pacific Lutheran Open.

Sophomore Raquel Pellecer was



**Women's golfer Jenn Paul tied for 11th place at the Pioneer Shootout on March 6.** // Photo courtesy of Western Athletics

selected after winning the javelin at the Pacific Lutheran Open.

Freshman Bryant Welch was named after helping the men's 4x100 meter relay win the title, placing second in the 200-meter dash and placing third in the 100-meter dash.

Junior Alex Barry was selected after winning the javelin with a throw of 60.05 meters, the fifth-best throw nationally in Division II.

### Men's Golf

Freshman Brady Bonfilio tied for first place at the Notre Dame de Namur Argonaut Invitational on Tuesday, March 13, to lead the Viking men to a fourth place finish.

Bonfilio, who is the first Western golfer to tie for first place in a tournament since 2014, finished at 1-under-par 215 on the 54-hole tour-

namment and tied for the most birdies with 12.

Junior Michael Butler finished tied for 11th with a score of 8-over-par 224, his fourth top-20 finish on the season.

The Vikings next tournament is the SoCal Intercollegiate on March 26 and 27 at the Carlton Oaks Golf Club in Santee, California.

### Women's Golf

The Viking women had the week off after finishing 12th at the Tim Tierney Pioneer Shootout on March 6, where Jenn Paul tied for 11th place to lead the Vikings.

Western's next tournament is the Mustang Intercollegiate on April 9 and 10 at the Palm Valley Golf Club in Goodyear, Arizona.

### Men's Basketball

Sophomore forward Daulton Hommes was named second-team All-West Region on Monday, March 12. Hommes was the lone All-West Region underclassmen selected. Hommes was the second-leading scorer in the GNAC this season, averaging 18.1 points per game.

## Western's 7-footer uses height to his advantage

*Men's basketball player Logan Schilder utilizes his smarts on the court to complement his size*

**Laurel Messenger**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Soccer, tennis and basketball — Western basketball player Logan Schilder did it all.

Schilder used his height, all seven feet of it, to his advantage. In tennis his wingspan made it hard to get anything past him, and in soccer, his height was good for blocking, his high school tennis coach Steve Chronister said.

While attending Bellingham High School, Schilder's main sport was tennis. He hadn't even played basketball before his freshman year of high school, and only played because his friends were playing, Schilder said.

"I thought he played smarter basketball than you should be able to with as little experience as he had," Chronister said. "He is smart period, but I think he is sports smart."

Over the years, Schilder said he began to like basketball more and more until it became his main sport.

"I was always pretty committed to anything I did, so the only thing that could stop me from doing it was pretty much injuries," Schilder said.

Schilder got this drive from his big brother.

"He was the most motivated person I knew and [I] knew he was going to do something with his life. I knew I couldn't be the little brother that didn't do anything. Because he pushed himself I pushed my-



**Logan Schilder averaged 6.18 rebounds per game.** // Photo courtesy of Western Athletics

self," Schilder said.

After graduation, Schilder attended Whatcom Community College to play on their basketball team.

Western's head basketball coach, Tony Dominguez, knew Schilder when he was in high school.

Dominguez said that due to Schilder's waver- ing excitement of basketball in high school, he was unsure if Schilder would be a good fit to the team.

Dominguez said after Schilder had a successful senior year of high school, he continued that success while playing at Whatcom Community College.

"That is when we kind of got excited about him because it showed that he loved the game and wanted to pursue it," Dominguez said.

After his first year at Whatcom, Schilder was recruited by Western.

David Dunham, who coached Schilder at Whatcom and now at Western as the head assistant coach, has been able to see Schilder's improvement over the years.

"He works harder and harder to be the best basketball player he can be," Dunham said.

Chronister comes to games at Western to watch Schilder play. He gets better everytime he sees him, Chronister said.

"He is very very unusual because he is a big guy that has a lot of skill that is [team-oriented] and I think that is unusual in today's world," Dominguez said. "He is all about the team and he doesn't really challenge coaches as far as our decisions. He goes with it. He is a huge team player and that has been a huge factor in our success."



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# Sailing in the San Juans

Western's sailing team was sunk by three UW teams at a Lopez Island match, but the sailors said it's more about the love of being on the water

Giovanni Roverso  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Lopez Island team regatta between Western and University of Washington on March 3 was sweet, sunny and relatively tranquil compared to 2017. Sailors got brownies instead of capsizes.

Western and UW sailors got a lot of quality time together. Four Western teams and a mixed university alumni team fell to three UW teams during a single extended day of racing.

Teams were able to practice their technical skill and team strategy more since the winds weren't nearly as strong as last year.

"This year it was much more manageable," said Wyatt Kueysor, a Western sophomore who filled a spot on a UW boat last Saturday since UW was short a player.

"Last year it got to the point where we were planning the boats, so going 15 [or more] knots," Kueysor said. "To the point that if you had the slightest change in your weight, the boats would completely capsize on themselves. It was insane."

Kueysor, junior Zeek Ward and sophomore Hayley Rawden all started sailing with Western in fall 2016 and got to experience just how different sailing in the San Juans can be.

## Last year's race

Ward and Rawden sailed together at Lopez both years.

The sailboats there, Vanguard-15s, have a shallow cockpit designed for self-draining and stability unless the vessel starts to plane.

"Last year there were a couple races where the wind was a normal amount," Ward said. "But by the end of the day it was just survival sailing, for fun."

Fun until Ward's foot had come loose from a broken hiking strap while counterlevering the full sail with Rawden, sending him into a backflip to the cold water.

"There's no recovering from that," Ward said.

He only had the mainsheet line to hold on to after the tiller extension had broken off in one hand.

"If I had let that line out the boat wouldn't have capsized because all the power would go out of the sail," he said.

As the boat tipped over, Rawden found her feet stuck in her straps which were pulled too tight and the angle she was at wasn't helping.

The fear of getting stuck under the boat was real.

Had she not have freed herself before the boat flipped all the way upside down, she could have been trapped under the boat with practically no air bubble.

"It was a little rough," said Rawden, who had managed to get free and fall backward off the side of the boat.

"It was a bit of rookie mistake on my part," she said about not having checked the straps before going out. The V-15 was nearly unusable after they got it upright again.

"Hayley was shivering and shaking and had tears in her eyes," Ward said. "I looked at her like 'I'm not going to sail the boat yet, I'm going to make sure you're OK,' and she was like 'we've got to finish the race!'"

"It was cold," Rawden said.



Members of the Western sailing team racing at Lopez Island on March 3. // Photo courtesy of Bren Hammond

## This year's race

Fast-forward a year and the experience was uneventful and disappointing for Ward and Rawden, with either their boat getting a good start and leading each race or getting off to a bad start and trailing the others.

Most of the fun, Ward said, happens between other boats.

"UW really upped their game," Rawden said.

Kueysor was in the middle of the excitement with his UW boat mate, sophomore Ian Wolcott.

A boat can commit a foul because it doesn't leave enough room around a mark, if the boat taps the mark, if it doesn't respect right of way or because of a collision.

When a boat does commit a foul it has to sail in a circle once or twice, causing it to lose its place.

Kueysor was skipping on his V-15 when it got into a tight scrape during an attempt to herd a couple Western boats away from a mark.

"I thought there was going to be room at the pin to squeeze on in," Kueysor said. "One of the Western boats, and they should not have done this because there was no room, squeezed between me and a boat that was on top of me and then I was pinned at the mark."

Not only did his boat hit the mark, it also ended up hitting the boat who got in close, Kueysor said.

"I purposefully screwed over UW for Western to win that race," he joked.

As a penalty for the double foul he had to do a double circle, or 720 rotation.

being given.

He said Western would get a big bumper once every other race.

"I am susceptible to fouling people," Ward said. "I'm aggressive with how I engage other boats and so I get into a lot of situations with another boat where I'll either be a good sport and take my penalty, or it was their fault and they knew to take a penalty, and more often than not, they don't."

Ward said the Northwest Collegiate Sailing District is chronically under-enforced as far as penalties go.

"If penalties were enforced properly, our boat and their boat would go to a hearing and three judges would have decided whether they had rally fouled me," Ward said.

Winning a protest hearing causes the boat at fault to be kicked out of the race and a decision can be backed up with witnesses. However, no system was set up before the race to do this.

## A good time

"A strength of Western's is no matter what our actual score is or how everyone is doing," Kueysor said, "we're just having a great time and we're doing what we all love which is being on the water."

Ward and Rawden said they were touched by the warm hospitality at the marina in Fisherman Bay.

The highlight this year? "Definitely the brownies," Rawden said blissfully without a second thought.

Ward agreed. Todd Twigg, who used to coach the Lopez Island sailing team and his wife, Kristin, made salmon dinner accompanied by the best brownies they had ever tried with a goat's milk caramel frosting.

"Really good food, really good atmosphere, 40 happy sailors," Ward said.

The only money Twigg asked for was to cover costs, Rawden said, and the Lopez Islander resort let the team eat in their restaurant area which was closed for the season, since they were done after dark.

## Moving forward

Ward and Rawden are looking forward to upcoming national qualifiers in mid-April at Sail Sand Point in Seattle and at the Lakewood Marina on Lake Whatcom.

Kueysor is excited to go to the sailing competition at the Gorge on the Columbia River in mid-May, where there is either a "crap-ton" of wind or no wind whatsoever.

"Either way you still have to deal with a strong current because it's on the river, so it's really fun," Kueysor said.

"That was the closest we got to damaging a boat and we didn't, so we were good," he said.

## Lessons learned

It was interesting to sail with UW, Kueysor said. It helped him to see things from the other side.

"UW was pretty sharp on their commands," he said. "You want to say crisp and clear, so everyone can hear, 'We're going to go with this play, to get this winning combination.'"

He said UW, while having fun, was much more serious when out on the water than Western, especially when it came to fouling.

"Let's just say Western is a very polite school and we don't really like to call fouls," he said.

If a foul isn't called out after about two to five seconds, Kueysor said, it virtually doesn't happen.

"The more aggressive a team is on calling them out, the more strategically advantaged they are," he said. And so penalties often weren't

# Men's golf led by balanced attack

Five different golfers have been the low man in tournament play while the Viking men seek their 20th consecutive trip to the Division II national championships

Aaron Gillis  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Viking men's golf team's spring season is officially underway and the team is feeling ready to go.

Head coach Luke Bennett is in his fifth year with the team and thinks they are in position to succeed this season.

"The team is looking pretty solid so far," Bennett said in an email. "I believe every member on the team has the ability to win any given week."

The team has had a different low man in nearly every tournament since the fall.

Freshman Devin Andrews was the team's low man at the Saint Martin's Invitational; freshman Brody Bonfilio at the Western Invite; junior Cody Roth at the Concordia Invitational; senior Adam Barker at the Otter Invitational and sophomore Ethan Casto at the Bay

Area Invitational.

Roth thinks everyone on the team has potential going forward.

"There's plenty of guys on our team that have lots of tools and can play really well. These are guys who have shown some good golf and had high finishes," he said.

Junior Michael Butler also believes that the team's diverse age and skill levels will be a bonus for the team.

"I think we have a really good team with a good mix of youth and experience, and I think everyone has a chance to contribute to the team," Butler said.

Diversity in a golf team is desired, as each golf course poses a different challenge. Long hitters may thrive on certain courses, while players who pride themselves on their short game may struggle and vice versa.

Roth looks forward to every tournament throughout the season, equally excited for each one.



Ethan Casto placed second at the Bay Area Invitational on Feb 27, with a 7-over-par 223. // Photo courtesy of Western Athletics

"They're all kind of fun. You get to travel and play in warm places," Roth said.

The team has made it to nationals in the past 19 consecutive seasons and Roth's main goal is to make that 20th appearance.

Bennett was more immediate in his thinking of goals for the team this season.

"Be competitive in every event," Bennett said. "Improve in every event, get better as a team after each competitive round and not just with golf scores but in everything, course management, execution, focus, trust and more fun."

Bennett's coaching has been appreciated by the players.

"He helps us whenever we need it, he's really knowledgeable and he's a good player himself," Roth said.

Butler added that Bennett helps the team in approaching new courses and selecting the right clubs for

each shot.

The Vikings had a strong fall season, winning the Saint Martin's Invitational at Olympia Country Club. They also tied for a sixth place finish in the Western Invitational at Bellingham Golf and Country Club and took fourth in the Concordia Invitational at Columbia Edgewater Country Club in Portland.

The team kicked off the spring season with a fourth place finish in the Bay Area Invitational at The Course at Wente Vineyards, on Feb. 26 and 27.

The Vikings tied for sixth place at the Tim Tierney Pioneer Shootout at The Club at Ruby Hill in Pleasanton, California on March 5 and 6.

The Vikings tied for fourth place at the Notre Dame de Namur Argonaut Invitational at Poppy Ridge Golf Course in Livermore, California on March 12 and 13.



Sophomore Ethan Casto was named GNAC Golfer of the Week on March 5. // Photo courtesy of Western Athletics

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# Olympian breezes her way back to Bellingham

*Breezy Johnson, a Western sophomore and alpine skier who competed in the 2018 Winter Olympics, is looking forward to declaring as an English major this spring and eating some gelato in Fairhaven*

**Kelly Pearce**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

For Western student and Olympic athlete Breezy Johnson, slowing down is never an option.

At 22 years old, Johnson has garnered notoriety on campus and around the world as being one of the youngest U.S. ski competitors in the 2018 Winter Olympics.

Less than three weeks ago, Johnson completed her stay in Pyeongchang, South Korea, where she competed in two downhill skiing events as part of the U.S. Ski Team.

While some might assume this would be the pinnacle of a skier's career, Johnson feels it's just another reason to keep working hard.

"The Olympics are a huge deal, but they are also like every race we do every week in certain aspects: the competitors are the same, you have the same time frame, you prepare the same," she said in an email. "It just happens to be the most-watched race of the next four years."

Johnson placed seventh in downhill skiing and 14th in the super-G event,



**Breezy Johnson competed in the World Cup finals in Are, Sweden on Wednesday, March 14.** // Photo courtesy of Sarah Brunson

which she said was her best super-G result and second-best downhill race she has had in any competition.

"I didn't win a medal either race, but both races I skied the run I imagined was the best run I could," she said.

Jim Tschabrun, Johnson's former coach and the current head coach for women's skiing at Rowmark Academy in Salt Lake City would have to agree.

"I love following Breezy's results," he said. "Her work ethic, focus, dedication, resilience and courage are inspiring and she is a great model for what it takes to reach the top of her field."

Tschabrun, who said he's worked with skiers of all skill levels, sees Johnson's triumphs, which he's been following since her graduation from Rowmark in 2013, as impressive to say the least.

"Breezy has accomplished more than a significant portion of our country's most elite ski racers in such a short time that it's been remarkable to watch her progress and achievements" Tschabrun said. "Her capacity to reflect on her own skills with a



**Breezy Johnson stands over her hometown, Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Johnson placed seventh and 14th in two downhill events at the Winter Olympics.** // Photo courtesy of Renee Glick

critical eye and look for opportunities to improve in all areas really sets her apart to me."

Johnson's final downhill ski time was 1.12 seconds behind gold medalist Sofia Goggia from Italy.

"A friend described my downhill result as 'an amazing run and you could smell the bronze,'" Johnson said. "I just have to work to make my skiing better and hopefully in four years I can take home some hardware."

Tschabrun's advice to his current students seems to embody what Johnson has been doing since day one.

"Stay focused on the process, regardless of immediate results, with a vision toward the long term and do whatever you can to outwork everyone else." Tschabrun said. "I can name tens of incredibly talented ski racers, some that even made the national team, that plateaued without reaching their potential."

He said it doesn't matter what they do, those who are elite in their field did it by working harder than anyone else.

From Johnson's point of view, these past Winter Olympics were an opportunity to do just that and work even harder, though it was nice to have some fun along the way. One of Johnson's favorite memories from her first Olympics happened right after everyone attended the closing ceremonies, when the German hockey team invited her and the alpine delegation to hang out.

"They had just won silver in hockey, which was like huge for Germany, and their bobsled team had just won gold, so we were hanging out with all of them and just relaxing with all of my teammates and other super cool athletes," Johnson said. "Hearing everyone's stories on how they came to the Olympics is really amazing."

Though the Winter Olympics are over, Johnson is far from done with competing this season.

Currently in Are, Sweden, Johnson is gearing up for the World Cup finals on Wednesday, March 14, and then heads back to the United States to compete in the U.S. Nationals in Sun Valley, Idaho on March 23.

After that, it's the start of her off-season, and skis are momentarily traded in for textbooks as she makes her way back to Bellingham for spring quarter.

So, what does an Olympic athlete do when she's not soaring down hills at 80 mph every day?

For Johnson, the answer might be tweeting out iambic pentameter verse, working out on campus or, according to her, grabbing some dark cocoa gelato at Sirena Gelato in Fairhaven with friends.

Johnson said she's planning to declare herself as an English major this spring.

"I am psyched to finally be able to take Intro to Fiction writing, I've been waiting to be able to get into that class for a while," Johnson said. "But also I'm excited to play frisbee on the lawn this spring with friends."

She said she's also looking forward to getting back into



**Photo courtesy of Sarah Brunson**

classes in Western's honors program.

Scott Linneman, the director of the honors program at Western, remembers when Johnson first came to Western as a high schooler to learn more about the school.

"She seemed very mature and very driven," he said. "She didn't know what she wanted to major in and then she told me that if things worked out the way she wanted she could only come to college in the spring quarter."

Since Johnson spends a majority of the year training and competing professionally, she's only been able to register for one quarter a year, and this spring will be her third total.

Linneman said the honors program is able to offer its members a smaller community of passionate faculty and other students who are completely focused on learning.

"[They're] your peers that you're making weekend plans with and going to dinner with and they're remarkable kids from all over the country," he said. "Breezy is just another one of those, I think. A remarkable person that has all sorts of talents."

**"Breezy has accomplished more than a significant portion of our country's most elite ski racers."**

- Jim Tschabrun, women's skiing head coach at Rowmark Academy

Linneman said when Johnson skied her alpine downhill race, people from the honors program had a viewing party at the honors center.

"We had like 20 students over here watching it here on a screen and she did awesome." Linneman said.

He remembers how supportive friends and classmates were when Johnson came back with crutches in spring of 2017, when she had a tibial plateau fracture after a crash at the World Cup.

"She's just a happy person that is doing something that very few people can so we're trying to support her," Linneman said.

With her community at Western supporting her, Johnson, true to her never-quit attitude, is ready to prepare for her future.

"Obviously I want to go to more Olympics," she said. "But I also want to finish my degree and am thinking of becoming a sports agent, not just for skiers, when I retire."

While the spring is a time for Johnson to take time to study and relax, she's already got plans to check out the slopes around Bellingham, though she'll need to find a way up there first.

"I haven't bought a ticket at a ski resort in about ten years," she said. "Does anyone have a hookup at Baker?"