

AS election campaigning begins

With voting starting on April 30, candidates are hard at work displaying their platforms on campus. Meet the candidates on page 4



AS candidate posters displayed outside of the Communciations Facility on Tuesday, April 24. // Photo by Kevin Lake

ON THE INSIDE:

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Sports: Western's newest club is dedicated to scouring the forests for Bigfoot. // p. 12

April marks eighth year of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Emily Jackson
THE WESTERN FRONT

CW: Sexual assault April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and this year's theme is "Embrace Your Voice," according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center.

Sexual assault is a type of sexual violence, along with dating violence, domestic violence and stalking, according to Western's Policy 1600.04.[1].

The policy defines it as "any actual or attempted sexual contact or behavior with another person without that person's consent."

Jon Dukes is the men's violence prevention & mental health promotion specialist with Western's Preven-

tion and Wellness Services.

He said people tend to think violence is non-existent where they live. For this reason, awareness can help people grasp the proximity of physical and sexual violence.

"Yes, this is a national problem. Yes, this is a Hollywood problem," he said. "But it's also a

Washington state problem. It's also a Bellingham problem. It's also a Western problem."

Dukes said we all need to support survivors of physical and sexual violence.

Dukes and Michelle Langstraat oversee Consultation and Sexual Assault Support and assist survivors of physical or sexual vio-

lence, he said. Dukes has also worked with several Western students who are helping spread awareness as peer health educators, he said.

Senior Jake Thomson became a peer health educator three years ago.

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Multicultural Center ceremony demonstrators demand recognition of student-led efforts

Julia Berkman
THE WESTERN FRONT

Despite the heavy clouds hanging over their heads, Western students, alumni, faculty and staff packed into the Performing Arts Center plaza to plant a maple tree in celebration of the beginning of the Multicultural Center construction on Friday, April 20.

Also in attendance were about 75 demonstrators, most of whom were Ethnic Student Center club members.

The demonstrators, dressed in black and representing almost all clubs under the ESC umbrella, stood silently holding a ban-

ner reading, "We must remember hxstory" as tribal elders and former Western staff spoke.

Among them were AS President Simrun Chhabra and AS Vice President for Academic Affairs Hunter Eider.

According to members of the demonstration, the purpose was to make sure the efforts of students of color were not glossed over. The demonstrators were not there to condemn or show their support for the MCC, but rather to acknowledge that it was not a collaborative effort to get the project

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Impacted By Sexual Violence or Harassment? Resources & Reporting Options for Students



Confidential Resources:

- Consultation and Sexual Assault Support (CASAS), Old Main 585B, (360) 650-3700
- Student Health Center Campus Services, (360) 650-3400
- Counseling Center Old Main 540, (360) 650-3164
- Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Services of Whatcom County (DVSAS), 24-hour help line (360) 715-1563 or (877) 715-1563

To Report:

- Western's Title IX Coordinator - Sue Guenter-Schlesinger Equal Opportunity Office Old Main 345, (360) 650-3307 Sue.Guenter-Schlesinger@wwu.edu
- University Police, (360) 650-3911 (emergency) or 650-3555 (report)
- Bellingham Police, 911 (emergency) or (360) 778-8800 (report)
- If you live in University Residences, your Resident Director or Resident Advisor

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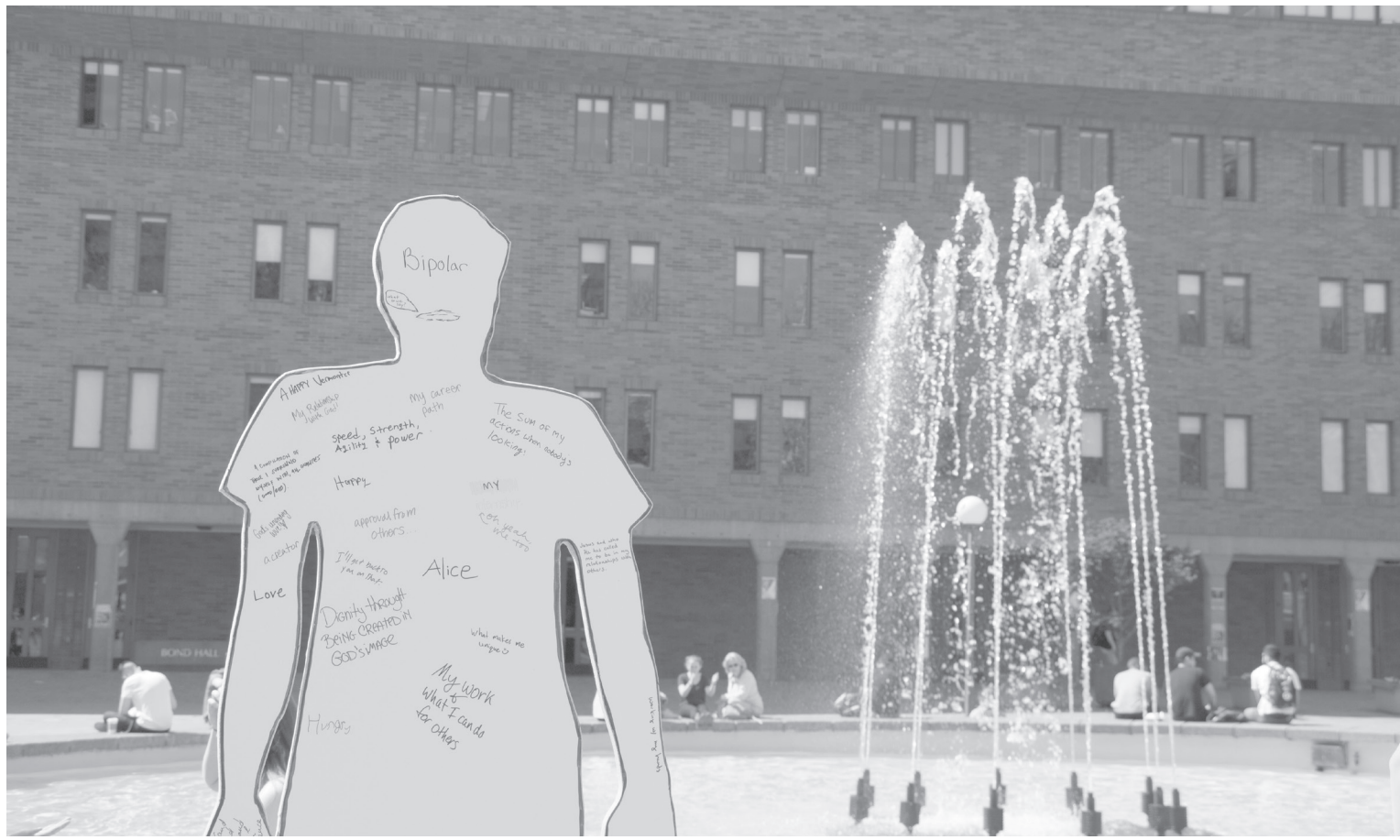
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The Campus Christian Fellowship set up whiteboard cut-outs in Red Square on Tuesday, April 24. The Fellowship asked students to write out who they identify as on the cut-outs. // Photo by Kevin Lake

City Council discusses broadband services

Stella Harvey
THE WESTERN FRONT

A group of community members shared their support for a “Dig Once” policy the Bellingham City Council is considering during the public comment period at the Monday, April 23 meeting.

“Dig Once” policies have been used by other cities to expand broadband internet service, according to the City Council agenda bill.

The policy would require a minimum of two conduits, or small tubes that protect power lines and fiber optic cables, to be installed underground in all applicable construction projects in Bellingham, according to the City Council agenda bill.

Ted Carlson, the City of Bellingham’s public works director, said in the public works committee meeting that one conduit would be reserved for use by the city to ensure secure high-speed connections for public agencies and infrastructure. He also said the second conduit would be available for future leasing to private broadband service providers.

Bob Hayes, a Bellingham resident of 24 years, showed his support for the policy by speaking during the public comment period.

Hayes said he believes expanding broadband service would have a positive impact on all Bellingham residents.

“I think we in Bellingham have a responsibility to facilitate access to broadband to low-income residents here in town,” Hayes said. “There are a lot of people at the low end of the spectrum who do not have the ability to pay for the package offerings that Comcast, the principle provider of internet in Bellingham, has.”

The policy aims to expand infrastructure required to provide broadband service to Bellingham residents, and minimize the amount of construction on existing roadways, according to the drafted policy.

It is estimated adding conduit installation to public works projects would cost \$100,000 in staffing and resources annually, with future studies adding an additional \$300,000, according to the City Council agenda bill.

Councilmember Gene Knutson, chair of the Public Works and Natural Resources Committee, ended the session by promising more discussion on the policy in the next few weeks.

“In order to get the right policy, we have to discuss this further,” Knutson said.

Students host identity presentation

Ali Raetz
THE WESTERN FRONT

Life-size whiteboard body silhouettes stood in Red Square on Tuesday, April 24, inviting students to answer the question “What do you put your identity in?”

Campus Christian Fellowship hosted the demonstration and was looking to stir conversations with students about identity by inviting them to talk about who they are, CCF intern and Western alumnus Christian Castro said.

“Being in a university setting, you’re figuring out who you are and the kind of person you want to be after you graduate,” Castro said. “At Western there are so many conversations about identity, so we’re getting engaged with what people are thinking, or rather not thinking.”

Junior Rachel McDonald said some students were drawn to the demonstration after seeing the large silhouettes from far away.

She said some students were taking the question very seriously and writing out deep messages, while others wrote simple responses.

Some of the identities that students wrote down included “queer,” “a voice for those who are uncomfortable to use theirs,” “a musician,” “mixed race,” “future teacher,” “a socialist,” “child of God,” “love for others” and “work in progress.”

Sophomore Anastasia Vederoff said she liked the demonstration.

“Western is a very opinionated place, and this provides an open space for people to have a voice, but not having to put your name on it if you don’t want to,” she said.

The idea for this interactive demonstration was sparked from an event that happened in Red Square a couple years ago, Castro said.

“There was a person standing out here with a sign that said ‘label me’ and people came by and wrote on her,” Castro said. “I was kind of thinking of the same idea with identity, as the silhouette represents a person, and it shows what they put their identity in.”

The event began at 11 a.m. and continued until about 2 p.m. It will occur again on Friday, April 27, at the same time, Castro said.

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Anti-plagiarism software records increase in academic dishonesty

This story is one of a three-part collaborative report on academic dishonesty by James Egaran, Logan Portteus and Hailey Palmer. They collectively obtained and analyzed data, and interviewed sources.

By Logan Portteus
FOR THE WESTERN FRONT

In December 2016, a Western student received a letter from Mathematics Chair Tjalling Ypma of the WWU Academic Honesty Board, rejecting their appeal to a charge of academic dishonesty.

The appeal case was presented to the university’s Academic Honesty Board after the student’s professor found that much of their opening pages of their term paper was copied directly from Wikipedia with no source attribution.

According to the letter, the student appealed this by stating that the information is public knowledge and therefore didn’t require attribution, to which Ypma wrote, “I disagree with that assessment — that material certainly includes things outside my own experience.”

This case is one of many appeals of the roughly 1,000 cases of academic dishonesty at Western in the past 17 years.

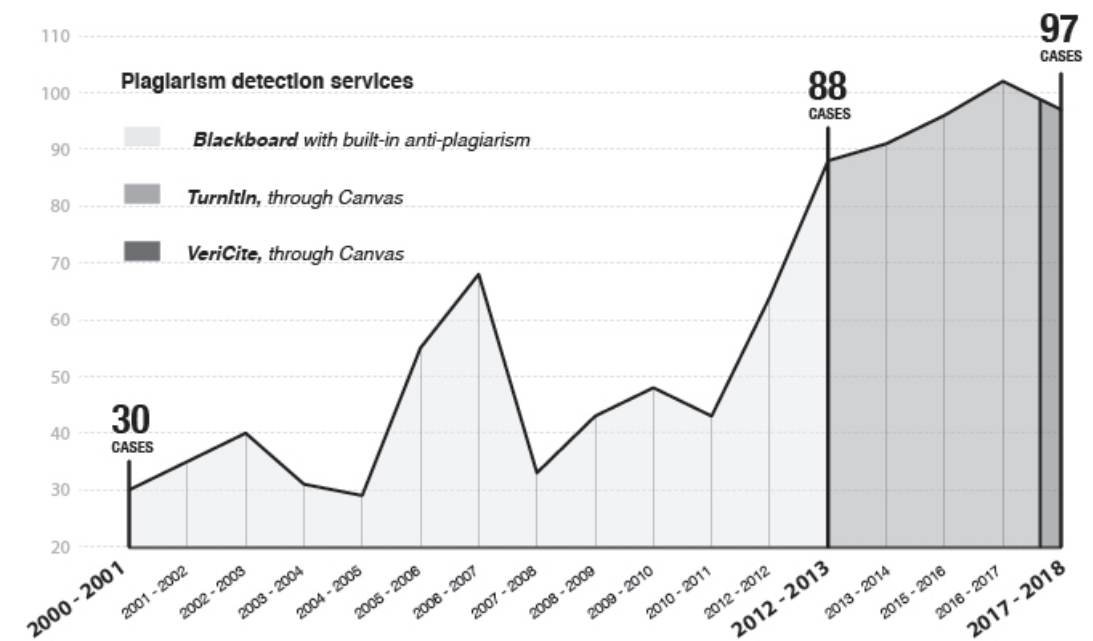
These cases include all forms of academic dishonesty, such as using a cell phone on a test, collaboration with a classmate, unauthorized notes and copying homework. The most common form of academic dishonesty over a 17-year time period is plagiarism, with roughly 387 reported cases.

Recorded dishonesty rates will not reflect the total number of students cheating, because the number of students that don’t get caught will always be unknown, in addition to incidents where professors choose to handle it internally instead of going through the process of a dishonesty report.

The Spike of 2012

The annual rates of aca-

Annual rates of cheating at Western



Infographic by Sophia Greif

demical dishonesty have substantially increased since 2012.

The recorded number of cheating cases in the 2011-12 school year was 64, followed by 89 cases in 2012-13. Last year, there were 97 cases of professors accusing students of cheating, and in 2015-16, there were 102, or 0.00064 percent of the student population.

The data of recorded cases of academic dishonesty from 2000-17 was obtained via public records requests to the university and correspondence with the Provost Office. The total enrollment numbers for this time period were obtained from Associate Director of Institutional Research Sharon Schmitz.

While this leap may not seem dramatic, the average number of dishonesty cases between 2012 and 2017 was 100 cases, compared to the

43-case average of the 12-year period prior. Whether this indicates higher rates of cheating or more students being caught is a difficult, potentially unanswerable question.

With an increase in average recorded cases, a single question becomes clear: What caused the spike?

The question may be obvious, but the answer is elusive.

“I find it hard to suggest that Canvas or TurnItIn might’ve been the reason for [the spike],” Director of Academic Technology and User Services John Farquhar said. “Other than perhaps more faculty were aware of the tools and it was easier to utilize, but I don’t have any specific data to translate that the tool was being used more at all.”

Western adopted its previous management system, Blackboard, around 1999, which later provided a built-in plagiarism detection software as one of its new services around 2007, Farquhar said.

When Western made the conversion to the new program Canvas in 2013, there was no anti-plagiarism add-on like before. Farquhar said they wanted to replicate the old functions with a third-party provider. They initially adopted TurnItIn, which was switched to VeriCite last summer.

While academic dishonesty is a problem for the university and educational integrity, there are a wide range of reasons that may lead to a student cheating, including lack of understanding of academic honesty policies at Western.

TurnItIn acquired VeriCite in February, but it is unclear at this time whether or not this will change the functionality of the software.

The TurnItIn-VeriCite merger was announced on the TurnItIn website three days after the interview with Farquhar and Lanham.

Western faculty’s increasing reliance on online assignments and tests may be a contributing factor to the recorded dishonesty cases, according to Farquhar.

With a rise in internet-based content and testing, he explained, professors are becoming more attentive of students being who they say they are, and if they are using other online resources to complete their assignment or test.

While faculty are unable to view which websites students are accessing when testing, they are able to see when students access Canvas pages linked to their course, including pages with information that may be part of the test.

This means if a student is taking an online quiz or test, the instructor for that course is able to identify if they are cheating with course material on Canvas. This may apply to tests being taken during class too, as the instructor is able to see the time and date that students access their Canvas material for their course.

Read the full story at westernfrontonline.com

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ELECTION
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Compiled by Emily Jackson and Drew Stuart

Millka Solomon *AS President*

Issues or problems you'd like to solve?


I personally really want to advance ethnic studies on campus. Western used to have a college of ethnic studies, and we don't anymore. It got established the same year as Fairhaven and Huxley, and it got shut down. We don't have a lot of diverse classes on campus, or the classes will be unspecified or super broad. It's super important to have more representative classes on campus.



Levi Eckman *VP of Academic Affairs*

What sets you apart from other candidates?


I grew up in a smaller area, and came into my sexuality early on. There was a piece of me I wanted to experience, but hadn't yet had the opportunity to. This gives me an understanding to the importance and need for safe spaces in communities.



Kyle McCaffery *VP of Academic Affairs*

Issues or problems you'd like to solve?


[One of my biggest things is] undergraduate bottlenecks. There are a lot of issues with undergrads where you can't take the entry-level classes you need because there aren't enough professors, or there's too many seniors that are switching majors that are taking all the classes.



Noble Solana-Walkinshaw *VP of Academic Affairs*

Anything you'd like to say?


This position is not about me, the position is about representing students. Even if I don't agree with them, even if we have different opinions, I want as much interaction with students as possible.



Jacob Molloy *VP of Academic Affairs*

What inspired you to run?

What really inspired me to run was to shift towards a student union system and to find innovative ways, such as a student senate, to start shifting the way that students can interact with administration, hold administration accountable and have discussions with the administration.



Ama Monkah *VP of Activities*

What sets you apart from other candidates?

I'm somebody who has experience in the AS. I was part of the African Caribbean Club, I know how to plan events on campus, I know how to get people to go to different clubs, I know how to stay organized and on top of my work.




VP of Activities

What inspired you to run?

I think that clubs on Western's campus are a really underused resource. I think students here at the school put a lot of effort into maintaining and staffing these clubs. The actual participation from students, I think, is very low.

Jarrold Stambaugh




VP of Diversity

Issues or problems you'd like to solve?

Personally, I'm very much the type of person where I first want to ask students, "what do you need", instead of assuming I know what they need. One of my top priorities is to listen to students.

Camilla Mejia




VP of Governmental Affairs

What inspired you to run?

I have been heavily involved with LAC, Legislative Affairs Council, this past year. It was my involvement with LAC that inspired me to run because I was able to see the legislative process here at Western and I really enjoyed the entire process.

Natasha Hessami




VP of Governmental Affairs

What sets you apart from other candidates?

I've already been on the board so I already understand how things work in terms of budgets [and] meetings. I already have connections within the university. Instead of taking the time to learn how the university system works. I can just hit the ground running and start establishing relations outside of the university.

Hunter Eider




VP of Student Life

Issues or problems you'd like to solve?

I have three concrete things that I am expressing as my platform. My first is with housing – basic security, continuing conversations and [ensuring] to address issues of lighting. The second thing is general safety and security on and off campus. My third thing is continuing current efforts to expand sustainability, to make it more inclusive and representative of the student body on our campus.

Anne Lee




VP of Student Life

What inspired you to run?

It's been frustrating to see how nothing seems to be changing. It's something I really want, to help move Western's culture into a better light. I know one person, by myself, can't do this. But if I can help promote other events to get people talking about what's wrong and everything, that would be great.

Brendan O'Neill



Nominee for VP of Business and Operations, Genaro Meza, was unable to be reached. Every photo used was submitted by the candidates themselves; permission was given.

DEMONSTRATORS
continued from page 1

off the ground. Former AS Vice President for Diversity Abby Ramos spoke at the ceremony. "This project was not Western's project, it was the ESC's project," Ramos said. For demonstrators Daniella Navarro and Elizabeth Perez Garcia, the hard-won efforts of ESC students were not part of the narrative of the MCC. "[Western's] administration has taken advantage of student labor to make Western seem diverse," Navarro said. Former ESC Coordinator Nate Panelo echoed that sentiment in his groundbreaking speech. "We are all hoping that [the MCC] isn't just a publicity stunt or a place for campus tours to show to brown people to convince them there's a place for them at this university," he said. To Panelo and all the student demonstrators, managing to secure this space was just the first step. Perez Garcia said she hopes the MCC won't be the end of Western's efforts to make campus a more welcoming place to students with marginalized identities. She said students of color are supposed to be happy that the ESC will grow – and they are. But the demonstrators

AWARENESS
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involved in clubs like Amnesty International and Planned Parenthood Generation, he said. A campus-wide email addressed National Sexual Assault Awareness Month on April 4. The email was sent by Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, vice provost of Equal Opportunity & Employment Diversity and Title IX and ADA coordinator. "Sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, and sexual violence – including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking – are antithetical to our values and are prohibited by Western policy," Guenter-Schlesinger said in the email. Students who want to get involved can apply to volunteer through the PWS website, Dukes said. They can also get

believe Western is ignoring the history behind the MCC. As early as 2005, students were attempting to get the ESC out of the fourth floor of the Viking Union through a plan known as "Project Ascend." The proposal fizzled out and not much was done, Panelo said in his speech. In 2015, there was a plan that would move the ESC up to the fifth floor, effectively doubling the space, Panelo said. "If you've been to the ESC, you know that doubling it wouldn't really do much. It would just be a consolation prize and maybe a publicity stunt so Western could say they helped students of color," Panelo said. He said the students refused to move the ESC, saying that there was not enough space on the fifth floor. "[The students] came up with a letter telling administration to 'go back to the drawing board and do better,'" Panelo said. The MCC construction is the culmination of the efforts of the students of color who came before them, AS Vice President for Diversity Erick Yanzon said. Demonstrators and Yanzon alike are still wondering about the 40 percent of the MCC that will be designated for "multicultural services."

Read the full story at westernfrontonline.com
To view the rest of the article, and photos from the Multicultural Center groundbreaking event, go online.

Guenter-Schlesinger's email included reporting options and resources for survivors of sexual violence. It also contained links to three of Western's policies on ensuring equal opportunity, reporting discrimination and preventing and responding to sex discrimination. One of these prevention efforts is Haven, an online sexual violence prevention training, according to the PWS website. Last year, Western's Haven Training was administered to all incoming students, including freshmen, transfer and graduate students, Dukes said. Training all incoming students will help them all gain the same core information and skill training on the critical issue, PWS Director Elva Munro said in an email. "Assessment of the Haven training demonstrates that the training is effective," she said. Aggregate data reports from EverFi, the parent company for the Haven training, show that Haven is increasing Western students' awareness, knowledge and skills, she said. Munro said according to student feedback, 83 percent of Western students agreed that completing Haven gave them increased understanding of school policies related to the issues covered in the training. Sexual Assault Awareness Month began in April 2010 under former President Barack Obama, according to a White House press release. "I urge all Americans to reach out to victims, learn more about this crime, and speak out against it," Obama said in the release. The campaigns vary each year, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. The 2010 and 2015 National Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaigns both focused on preventing sexual assault on higher education and college campuses, the website said.

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WALKING A MILE IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

The Whatcom Dream's poverty simulation promotes empathy, challenging Bellingham residents to experience life below the poverty line

By Drew Stuart
THE WESTERN FRONT

"You are now Dan Duntley," a greeter said to me as I took in my surroundings at Cornwall Church.

She handed me my new identity on a laminated name tag with a picture of, presumably, me. Still adjusting, I was intrigued at the novelty of assuming the identity of an impoverished 17-year-old.

By the end of the night, however, the reality of a life lived below the poverty line had sunk in.

This was the beginning of Friday night's poverty simulation, an event placing participants from Whatcom County in the shoes of the 40 million Americans who live in poverty today, according to statistics from the Pew Research Center.

Local nonprofit group The Whatcom Dream hosted the simulation, which ran from April 19-20 and attracted more than 60 participants.

Each participant was assigned a new identity and told to fill out a questionnaire asking about their opinions on poverty before walking into a common room with hot dogs, coleslaw and baked beans.

Trudy Shuravloff, the executive director of The Whatcom Dream, told us this dinner was served on purpose. The meal was typical of the 16 percent of Whatcom County residents living in poverty, a reality she was familiar with, she said.

"I grew up in poverty," Shuravloff said. "I grew up on welfare."

Then came the real simulation.

We walked into a town called "Realville," a simulated town set up in the gymnasium of Cornwall Church.

Realville contained several kinds of services and businesses for us, including a general employer, grocery



Trudy Shuravloff, executive director of The Whatcom Dream, talks to a participant in the poverty simulation on Friday, April 20. // Photo by Drew Stuart

store, school, pawnshop and more.

At the center of the gym were our houses — a few foldable chairs with our surnames on them helped us orient ourselves in the simulation.

We were introduced to our families and learned not just our names, but who we were. My character, Dan Duntley, was a 17-year-old dropout running with a crowd of drug dealers. A 16-year-old was expecting my baby.

My father had recently abandoned my mother, sister and I with no explanation. We were tasked with paying for our utilities, rent or mortgage, bank loans and groceries. My mother had no job and my sister was too young to work. I was considered a "delinquent" in Realville and thus, was unlikely to get a job.

We quickly turned to selling our

possessions — each group had certain amenities according to their level of poverty at the beginning of the simulation.

We sold our jewelry and our microwave, but received only a fraction of their retail value from the pawnbroker. My mother found a job after the first week, but wasn't paid well enough to keep us afloat.

The pressure to make ends meet only got worse with time. We had only 15 minutes per "week" to work, buy food and pay bills. Realizing how little money we could make, we scrambled to apply for welfare and keep up with bills.

We were being pulled in every direction all at once.

"What you've experienced tonight is called living in the tyranny of the moment," Shuravloff said. "You just move from crappy crisis to crappy crisis. That results in toxic stress."

By the end of the fourth week, my family was in shambles.

We defaulted on our mortgage payments and were evicted from our house. I tried to sell bus passes to scrounge up some money, but to no avail. It was only after we became homeless that Social Services provided us with any help.

Yet, that help consisted of only \$85 of EBT — a food-benefits program allowing us to eat.

After roughly an hour, the simulation came to a close. Many participants shared their experiences afterwards with the group. Stories about getting evicted and going hungry were common.

Margie Cochran, a participant in the simulation, fared about as

well as our group did. Her character, Ann Aber, held a low-paying job to support her husband and three children. Without knowing how to get help, her family was also evicted from their home.

"I was feeling really frustrated at the chaotic system that people had to contend with," Cochran said.

Cochran was able to get back into her home with a late payment, but had another payment due the next week that she knew she wouldn't be able to pay.

"It was humiliating," Cochran said.

A common thread among participants was empathy. By the end of the simulation, every participant felt the effects of toxic stress and the constant struggle that accompanied it.

It was clear that once someone is in poverty, especially if they're young, it becomes incredibly challenging to get out. This observation isn't anecdotal either. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, 35 to 46 percent of children who grew up in medium to high levels of poverty were still poor as adults.

According to Shuravloff, that's the point. She said she knows that walking in someone else's shoes — almost literally — has a profound effect on people.

"This event is for people who did not grow up in poverty," Shuravloff said. "I want to raise awareness."

Cari Griffith, The Whatcom Dream secretary, said she hopes the simulation created an understanding of what living in poverty is like for the participants.

"It's gonna take people willing to look at people in the eye with kindness and compassion," Griffith said.

Becoming a part of the solution

Opportunities to help end homelessness abound in Bellingham



By Emily Jackson
THE WESTERN FRONT

Bond Hall 112 was brightly lit and filled with laughter despite the dripping rain outside. A group of students pulled wooden desks into a circle and began to strategize.

Members of the Western Community Outreach Club were planning Melee for Meals, a charity video game tournament.

Students competed from noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 21, in Viking Union 565. The event raised over \$500, junior Hannah Svendsen, the club co-president, said.

The gaming competition was created in partnership with the WWU Super Smash Bros. Club, she said. The goal of the event was to raise funds to benefit the homeless and hungry in Bellingham, according to the website. The video game of choice: Super Smash Bros. Melee.

All of the proceeds from the venue fee will be used to buy food and supplies for people experiencing homelessness in Bellingham, the website said.

Students like these help serve the homeless community in Whatcom County and beyond. They also invite other students to volunteer their time to help end homelessness at events like Melee for Meals.

Volunteering at Western:

Western Community Outreach Club is dedicated to assisting and reaching out to the homeless community in Whatcom County, according to their website. This outreach includes quarterly events, including Be Our Guest, a day when students offer a guest meal to people struggling to find food.

The next Be Our Guest event is June 8, Svendsen said.

"It's a great experience," she said. "I've met a lot of awesome people through this club."

Junior Nicole Rhodes is the community outreach officer for the club. Rhodes said her task is to reach out to organizations in Bellingham to find volunteer opportunities. She's been involved with the club for over a year now, she said.



Participants in Melee for Meals focus intently during one of their tournament matchups. // Photo by Emily Jackson

In addition to special events like Melee for Meals, WCO has hosted bake sales, sock drives and group trips to city hall meetings, Svendsen said. The club has also volunteered with Lydia Place, the Lighthouse Mission, and HomesNow!, three local organizations that work to end homelessness, she said.

Rhodes said the club is always looking for volunteers, even if students can only come occasionally. There are even volunteer opportunities open this Saturday at Melee for Meals.

If you would like to volunteer, contact: wco.wwu@gmail.com.

Volunteering in the Community:

There are multiple organizations working to end homelessness in Whatcom County, Bellingham Mayor Kelli Linville said in an email, all of which students can get involved with too.

Linville said she thinks students are a valued part of the effort to end homelessness in Whatcom County.

"We have many partners that are helping people in need," she said. "We very much appreciate it when students get involved."

The City of Bellingham website contains a list of local organizations and agencies that address the issue of homelessness.

One of these organizations, Lydia Place, hosted an Earth Day volunteer event Sunday, April 22. Students who want to help in other ways are invited to visit the volunteer tab on the Lydia Place website, said Shultzie Willows, community engagement director for Lydia Place.

Willows said students can donate time and resources to ongoing fundraising programs like their community thrift store Wise Buys. Students can also donate time and

Did you know? There are currently 742 people and 520 households in Whatcom County experiencing homelessness.

Volunteering in Washington State:

Volunteer opportunities aren't just at Western, either. Students in other parts of Washington state are advocating for the homeless community too.

Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness partners with other organizations to spread awareness about the issue in the community.

Project director Catherine Hinrichsen said students recently participated in Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day in Olympia on Feb. 1.

Hinrichsen worked with a team of student employees, Katie Bradley, Tess Riski and Madison Vucci, who inspired 500 people to write postcards to a key legislator about affordable housing and homelessness. The student team presented the postcards at a legislative district meeting in Olympia on Feb. 1, she said.

Students who want to hear about other advocacy opportunities can sign up for advocacy updates from the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, she said.

While people can have divided opinions on student involvement, Hinrichsen said in her experience, adults can learn from students and vice versa.

"Students can be a really powerful force for organizing change," she said.



A poster for Melee for Meals hangs over TV monitors as gamers stay focused. // Photo by Emily Jackson



A sign welcomes participants to their new home, "Realville." // Photo by Drew Stuart

CELEBRATING AN EARTH FOR US ALL

Students and community members volunteered their time to celebrate Earth Day and support local salmon populations



Volunteers plant young trees to celebrate Earth Day with the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association. // Photo by Kenzie Mahoskey

Kenzie Mahoskey
THE WESTERN FRONT

Eager volunteers ready to make a difference in the lives of salmon gathered together on Earth Day for an event run by The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association.

At the World Fish Migration and Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 21, volunteers planted pots with bareroot plants that will eventually be used at restoration project sites along streams with salmon.

NSEA Work Manager Amy Johnson said the plants provide shade and will help to keep the water clean by limiting erosion and filtering toxins from stormwater.

Rachel Vasak, the association's executive director, said in an email that the association tries to engage students and volunteers to participate in planting events after the plants have a chance to grow for one to two years in their nursery.

NSEA was founded in 1991 and since then has done over 400 restoration projects, according to their website.

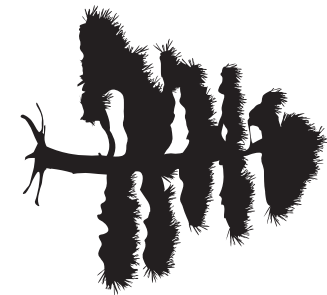
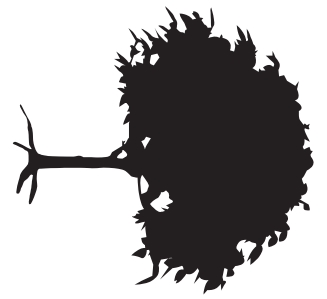
The association works at different locations throughout Whatcom County, removing barriers that keep the salmon from being able to swim upstream.

Tunnels and dams can act as barriers because they block the water or are too small for fish to pass through, according to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Fish Migration.

In addition to the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, there are 14 other groups in Washington dedicated to a similar mission. The groups incorporate volunteers and landowners in their efforts to help the salmon, according to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife website.

Johnson said NSEA has a no-cost environmental science program called Students for Salmon. The program provides fourth-grade students with hands-on experience and teaches them facts about salmon and how to help.

The association welcomes anyone to volunteer. Check out their website <http://www.n-sea.org/> under the "get involved" tab for more information.



FRONTLINE

Opinions of the Editorial Board

AS elections affect students, and so does low voter turnout

Many things happen when the sun finally comes out in spring quarter: people are slacklining, identical hammocks are being strung between trees all over campus and suddenly AS elections posters spring up on wall after wall overnight. Spring is here, and so are AS elections. Unsurprisingly, student voter turnout for AS elections is usually abysmal. In 2016, only 15.5 percent of students voted – just over 2,000 of the 14,000 students enrolled in spring that year.

Because of the AS position titles and the way student government works can be hazy, it might not be immediately clear how elections will affect students. From controlling millions of dollars in funding for student

life to being the voice of the student body, board members have a great deal of power and what they do directly impacts students.

Board members serve as the liaison between the student body and university administration. Voting for a candidate that represents your views ensures your voice will be heard by the administration.

Last year, four of the AS Board candidates elected ran on campaigns focusing on representing students from marginalized communities. Their actions as elected officials reflect those values.

At a ceremony celebrating the start of construction on the Multicultural Center Friday, April 20, AS President Simrun Chhabra was among 75 demonstrators, many of whom were there representing one of the 17 clubs in the Ethnic Student Center. The students were not protesting the ceremony, but were there to represent the work students of color have put in since 2005 that led to the center's construction.

The demonstrators worried the Multicultural Center would be used to make the university look more diverse and would be the stopping point for making campus more inclusive. Chhabra and other AS Board members were elected to represent students to the administration, and that's exactly what they did. Voting for candidates is a way for students to show the administration what they care about. Electing AS VP for Governmental Affairs Ana Ramirez, who is undocumented, showed the campus community supports undocumented students and told the administration they should too. Electing AS Board members doesn't just affect campus policies and issues. The board also represents student interests at the state and federal level, which determines funding for the university.

The AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs oversees the creation of legislative agendas for student lobby days in Olympia and Washington, D.C. This year, students urged state lawmakers to support funding for the State Need Grant and undocumented students. Later this quarter, Western students will go to Washington, D.C. to push for some of the same issues.

The board also handles millions of dollars. The AS Vice President for Business and Operations drafts the AS budget each year with the AS Budget Committee, which is then approved by the board. The 2018 budget allo-

cated nearly \$3 million to different groups, events and funds on campus, including Earth Day events, KUGS radio station and the Queer Resource Center.

If students are not interested in voting for board members, other important items are often included on the ballot: referendums. Students have voted on everything from renewing the transportation fee that provides them with bus passes, to building the Multicultural Center currently under construction – and if we should be charged a fee to help fund it.

This election, students will vote on whether or not campus should become smoke-free and if the AS should support strengthening ethnic studies on campus and including ethnic studies courses in GURs.

When voting in general elections for senators or presidents, it's easy to feel like your voice is lost on the journey from ballot to legislation. Voting for AS board members will have an effect on campus as soon as next fall. The things they work towards will affect students directly.

While AS elections may seem reminiscent of voting for your high school student body president, the stakes are much higher. Students pay a lot to attend Western and they deserve to have representation in student government, especially when AS board members are responsible for so many aspects of campus life.

How do I vote in AS elections?

1

Know your candidates

See interviews with candidates on page 4, or online at www.westernfrontonline.com.

See candidates and referenda on the Associated Students website at as.wvu.edu under the "Board of Directors" tab.

2

Vote!

Visit <http://www.edu/vote> to vote online.

Infographic by Sophia Greif

The Western Front Editorial Board is composed of Taylor Nichols, Kira Erickson and Eric Trent

Viking Voices

What do you think the most important function of the AS Board is?



Xana Waughman
Junior, behavioral neuroscience

"I think that giving student perspectives within the administration, because the administration can only understand the student life to an extent. I think [with] the AS, their role is to bring in how it feels to be a student and hold the administrators accountable with that information."



Jaykish Patel
Sophomore, biology

"Standing up for the Western students and having one voice for all of us."



Johanna Urbach
Sophomore, biochemistry

"To be honest, I didn't know what it was [until this question]. I mean, I see some posters around but nobody ever defines what they are or what they do. When people say 'vote for the election,' I don't know what to vote for or what I'm voting for."



Colter Lemons
Junior, environmental science and ecology

"To plan for the future events that will be happening in campus culture, and the things that will influence campus life for future Western students, like making the decisions, continuing a contact with a food service or keeping a bus pass – that kind of thing."

Compiled by Mia Steben

Late start won't slow Butler down

Mia Steben
THE WESTERN FRONT

Michael Butler didn't start playing golf seriously until his sophomore year of high school. Now he's a leader on the Western men's golf team.

Butler grew up in Sammamish, Washington where he played baseball and basketball. Butler said he was not as good as some golfers who had played their whole lives, which fueled his motivation to work harder and become better.

"I made varsity and fell in love with it," Butler said.

His senior year of high school in 2014, Butler went to state for golf, marking not only an athletic achievement but motivating him to accomplish even more. He wanted to continue improving his skills, even if that meant foregoing immediately signing with a university.

"I knew I wanted to play in college but I wanted an extra year to get recruited, so I took a year off and pretty much played and focused on golf," Butler said.

Western men's golf head coach Luke Bennett noticed him after graduation. Bennett said he knew about Butler's gap year and saw his improvement from his final high school years to the summer after on paper.

"It was a neat thing to see that this young man was willing to put forth the effort and time and was rewarded



Junior Michael Butler practices his chip shots onto the green. // Photo by Courtesy of Michael Butler

with some really good playing," Bennett said.

Butler said that although a lot of athletes were being recruited early, Bennett sent him an email, and they

talked several times. Butler decided to visit and later signed a letter of intent to compete in the fall of 2015.

"I can definitely count on him just getting it done and doing his job and

giving it 100 percent from beginning to end," Bennett said.

Transitioning from high school to college golf provided a challenge and opportunity for the already accomplished Butler, he said. He said he saw areas of needed improvement and continued refining his skills through mentorship from veteran players, individual practice and the support from his coach.

Butler said he appreciated the friendships made throughout his golf journey. Cody Roth met Butler playing junior tournaments back in high school.

"Michael is a person you can count on. He's a good guy and always there for you," Roth said.

Roth said he also appreciated Butler's competitiveness.

"You know you're getting the best when you're playing with him," Roth said.

Butler, now a junior, competed for the third time at the Great Northwest Athletic Conference Championship April 23-24 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and finished 16th. The Vikings finished second this year after placing 16th last season. They need to place in the top five at regionals to make it to nationals for a second time in a row.

"I like to think he's getting more and more familiar with the golf course," Bennett said, regarding Butler's playing in Idaho.

Intramurals now run by students

Naomi Schapiro
THE WESTERN FRONT

Grab your racquet and your tennis shoes, spring intramurals are in full swing.

Spring intramurals officially started on Sunday, April 15. There are 12 different sports being offered this quarter, as well as at least five day-tournaments.

This is the first quarter intramurals are completely student-run, and as a result, students are getting more of a say in the sports being offered.

Intramural coordinator Chris Pieroni said he wants to make sure there are a good mix of sports students actually want to play. He also recognizes the fact that not all sports have to be played on a field. Sports can also be played in a classroom or behind a computer screen. One of the tournaments they are offering this quarter is a FIFA tournament that will be on Saturday, April 28 from noon to 4 p.m.

Also new this spring are racquetball, badminton, spike ball and Ultimate Frisbee leagues.

From March 9-13, Pieroni, who has been a part of intramurals for three years, helped with a marketing campaign in Red Square. He had a master list of sports and took into consideration what the students wanted.

Junior Taylor Hallquist, the volleyball lead coordinator, said she also recognizes how important it is for students to get a say in the sports being offered.

"It gives us a chance to step up as leaders, while also giving us the opportunity to give other students what they want out of intramurals," Hallquist said. "We are students ourselves, so we know what it's like."

Hallquist and Pieroni both realize how important intramurals can be for building strong bonds with people you normally wouldn't get the chance to meet.

"Intramurals to me are all about the social cohesion factor," Pieroni said. "I really want intramurals to beef up our resident life participation numbers."

Around four years ago, there were Friday night resident leagues



Five-on-five basketball participants box each other out during an intramural match on Sunday, April 22. // Photo by Kevin Lake

just for the students in the dorms, Pieroni said. Every week, you could play against the other dorms. Pieroni said he is hoping to bring back those tournaments this quarter. He

life-long friendships. "A lot of people played high school sports and don't necessarily have the opportunity to play in college," Basketball Lead Matt Coelho

"It gives us a chance to step up as leaders, while also giving us the opportunity to give other students what they want out of intramurals."

Taylor Hallquist
Intramural volleyball lead

said he is thinking about offering a lawn dart day, with lawn games like cornhole and Ultimate Frisbee and dorms going against each other for the tournament trophy.

Intramurals are great at getting people from all different demographics together, including graduate students and faculty. People who might not have anything else in common can share their love of sports and competition to create

said. "Intramurals let people have that competition in sports that they love and grew up playing."

You can officially sign up with a team on IMLeagues to be on the roster, but walk-ins are also welcome.

Visit <https://wp.wvu.edu/campusrec/intramurals/> for a list of the leagues and tournaments being offered this quarter, as well as frequently asked questions.



The Dumpers face off against the Has Beens in 5-on-5 basketball at Sam Carver Gymnasium on Sunday, April 22. // Photo by Kevin Lake

Opinions
from The
Western
Front staff
on all things
sports

Who
should the
Seahawks
pick with
their first
round draft
choice?

From the sidelines



Molly Workman
Reporter

The Seahawks are in a growing season right now. With the loss of half a dozen players in 2017, the team needs to rebuild, and quickly. With their first round draft choice a tight end should really be a priority. Jimmy Graham and Luke Willson both signed contracts with other teams, leaving the Seahawks without a starting tight end. The Seahawks can look to Penn State's Mike Gesicki to fill that gap. The 22-year-old held up well in the draft combine, scoring the highest for his athletic ability. His 40-yard dash at 4.54 seconds is the kind of speed the Seahawks need to be looking at.



Mckenna Hunt
Reporter

The Seahawks should pick Rasheed Green, defensive end from USC because they are in dire need of a pass rusher. The thing is, the Seahawks never take who you think they are going to pick though. Very unpredictable. Their first pick in 2017 was defensive lineman Malik McDowell in the second round. McDowell never set foot on the field for the Hawks as he was injured in a reported ATV accident, and there are now reports that the team may release him. Hopefully that doesn't scare them off from Green.



Eric Trent
Managing Editor

Where to even start? So many holes to fill with Sherman, Bennett, Jimmy Graham and others gone. I'd go for cornerback first - especially if Iowa's Josh Jackson falls to the No. 18 spot. Scary to think Shaq Griffin and Justin Coleman are the top returning corners. Jackson is a 6-foot-1 ball hawk who led the nation with eight picks last season. He fits the bill perfectly. If he's gone by then, I'd take physical UCF corner Mike Hughes, who likes to jam receivers at the line in press coverage - another asset the Hawks look for.



Tyler Urke
Sports Editor

Protecting your quarterback is one of the most important goals for any NFL team. One of the final plays of last year's Super Bowl was a strip-sack by Brandon Graham of Tom Brady, leading to the Eagles' win. If the Seahawks want to return to relevance in the NFC, they need to protect Russell Wilson. The best offensive lineman in the range of the Hawks' first-round pick is Notre Dame's Mike McGlinchey. He's a 6-foot-8, 309-pound behemoth that never missed a start in his three years for the Irish. Despite all the losses on the defensive side of the ball this offseason, the Hawks still need to find a way to protect their franchise quarterback - and possibly shore up their running game in the process.

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Bigfoot Research Club looking for clues

Club founders say they hope to catch some evidence and learn the real methods of finding Sasquatch

Mckenna Hunt
THE WESTERN FRONT

Matthew Braun and his four roommates enjoy being out in nature and watching “Finding Bigfoot” together. They figured at least a couple other Western students shared their same passions.

“We were like ‘Shoot, what if we made this a reality?’” Braun’s roommate and Pacific Northwest Bigfoot Research Club Treasurer Elliot Scott said.

Scott said the idea of the club, shortened to PBR, is to catch some evidence and learn the real methods of finding Bigfoot.

The club description on the Western Associated Students club website states that the members are, “committed to collecting data, tracing the droppings, rituals, noises, and migration of these creatures to understand their elusive behavior and their overall role in the PNW ecosystem.”

Braun said activities in the club will center around excursions out into the wilderness to search for Bigfoot and using various research methods to do so.

Braun said there will be a lot of overnight camping excursions because Bigfoot is most active in the night. He said day trips will be planned as well.

So far, current research methods will include the imitation of Bigfoot communication through “tree knocks” and specific calls, Braun said. Trail cameras will also be strategically placed where sightings are most common.

“It has been said that they communicate through Bigfoot calls and tree knocks,” Braun said. “I think we’ll try to imitate that and try to get a response.”

Braun said there are 300 Bigfoot sightings every year in the Pacific Northwest alone, which is almost one per week.

“It’s not if, but when.”

Matthew Braun
Club founder

Scott said a large portion of Bigfoot sightings happen all over Washington state.

The internet can be daunting in terms of receiving credible information about Bigfoot, Braun said, but the club has credible sources that they use for reference and to present in meetings.

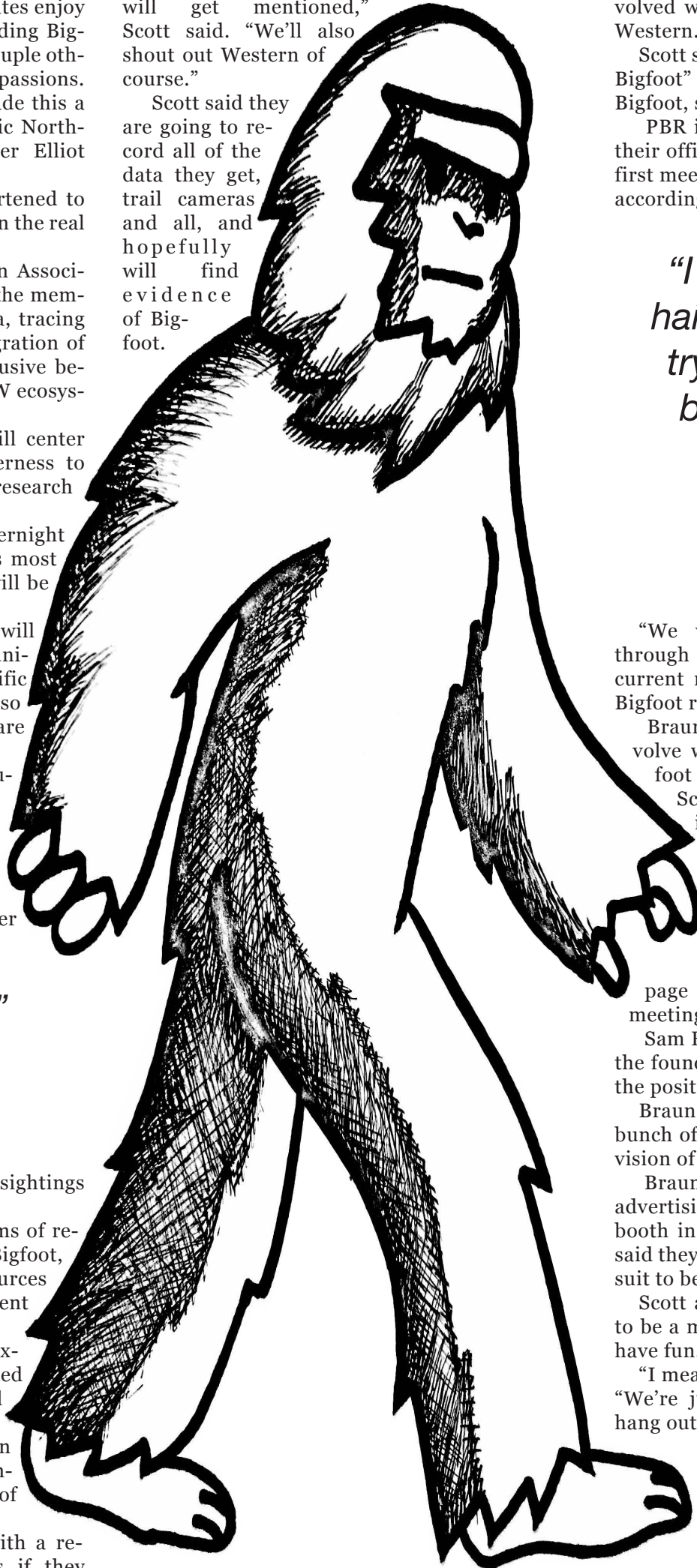
As far as location goes for the club’s excursions, Scott and Braun are interested in heading towards Olympic National Park. Braun said Olympic National Park holds the most Bigfoot sightings in the world. Scott said Snohomish County has also had a significant amount of sightings.

Scott said they would come out with a research paper detailing their findings if they

found Bigfoot.

“All four of us founding members will be authors and co-authors and the rest of the club will get mentioned,” Scott said. “We’ll also shout out Western of course.”

Scott said they are going to record all of the data they get, trail cameras and all, and hopefully will find evidence of Bigfoot.



“It’s not if, but when,” Braun said.

Scott said the club is going to try and reach out to community members who have been involved with Bigfoot to come and give a talk at Western.

Scott said the people on the TV show “Finding Bigfoot” have come to universities to talk about Bigfoot, so that could also be an option.

PBR is still young in terms of club age, with their official start date being Feb. 1, 2018. Their first meeting was held Wednesday, April 18, and according to Braun, went pretty well.

“I mean, we’re pretty hairy dudes. We’re just trying to find another brother to hang out with.”

Elliot Scott
Club treasurer

“We watched some evidence clips, went through a PowerPoint and really just discussed current research and what people know about Bigfoot right now,” Braun said.

Braun and Scott said club meetings will involve watching TV shows, talking about Bigfoot and viewing past research findings.

Scott said that trip planning will also be incorporated into meetings.

If anything, Braun said he would love to hear personal exchanges that people have had with Bigfoot.

Braun said the club is still fairly small because it’s just starting up.

“There are nine members on the club page but only five people came to our first meeting,” Braun said.

Sam Fletcher, Rex Marquardt, and Braun are the founding members of PBR while Scott holds the position of club treasurer.

Braun said he thinks it would be great to get a bunch of people in the club to share a collective vision of finding Bigfoot.

Braun and Scott said they really want to start advertising for the club and hope to rent out a booth in Red Square to spread the word. They said they might even go as far to include a gorilla suit to be a main attraction for the booth.

Scott and Braun said they just want the club to be a means to go out into the wilderness and have fun.

“I mean, we’re pretty hairy dudes,” Scott said. “We’re just trying to find another brother to hang out with.”

Illustration by Julia Furukawa

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