

# THE WESTERN FRONT

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## President Randhawa addresses sexual misconduct with email

Emma Kivlin  
THE WESTERN FRONT

In an email sent to all Western students on Thursday Sept. 27, President Sabah Randhawa addressed sexual violence and sexual misconduct on campus, particularly the university's actions to prevent and respond to such events.

Randhawa outlined the concerns that members of the Western community have voiced in regards to the university's response to incidents of sexual misconduct. He expressed his fear that these concerns could lead to students feeling unable to come forward with cases of sexual misconduct as they would "have no faith in the process and the accountability that follows from it."

In addition to outlining some of the issues with Western's current system of response to cases of sexual misconduct, Randhawa also shared the university's plans to restructure the system.

One of the first steps Western will be taking is to make a separate Title IX Office to focus on investigating cases of sexual misconduct, Randhawa said in the email.

The new office will also oversee Western's "institutional policies, processes and prevention efforts," Randhawa said.

see SABAH, page 3



Composite sketches of three voyeurism suspects // Courtesy of Bellingham Police Department

## Who are the Bellingham voyeurs?

Bellingham Police release yet another composite sketch of a possible voyeur suspect

Cody Clark  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Bellingham Police Department released a composite sketch of a suspect in connection with five new voyeurism

cases reported since the beginning of September. In a statement released by police on Wednesday, Sept. 26 the suspect was described as a white male, 20-30 years old, usually seen wearing a hooded sweatshirt.

Police said the sketch is based on a description given to them during a recent investigation. The suspect's description is consistent with descriptions from 2017 cases.

According to the Bellingham Police Department, it is not yet known whether the more recent reports are connected with those from 2017. However,

the press release stated that the recent incidents appear to be similar in nature to those described in older reports. In those reports, victims described seeing a suspect peering into windows with a light and, in some instances, masturbating.

The department received at least 15 reports of voyeurism near the York neighborhood and Laurel Park between the months of July and December 2017, according to the press release.

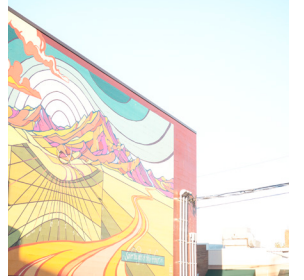
The release also included information on a recent uptick in incidents of voyeurism, with five reported

episodes since Sept. 9.

Police reminded community members to take precautions, such as closing and locking all windows, as well as turning on porch lights.

In the brief, police said voyeurism is historically underreported because witnesses generally don't want to be a nuisance for law enforcement, but believe that the longer a suspect is at-large, the bolder their actions may become. Police urged the public to call 911 immediately if they observe suspicious behavior, but advised against following after the suspect for safety reasons.

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Fireworks paint the night sky during Paint Bellingham Blue on Sept. 26, 2018. The annual event put on by the Western Alumni Association celebrates the return of students for the academic year. // Photo by Jaden Moon

## AS UPDATE

### STUDENT SENATE

On Friday, Sept. 28, the Board of Directors voted on the creation of a new addition to the Associated Students called the Student Senate. The senate is a legislative body that will be made up of students from all the colleges on campus representing students from their college in decisions involving academics.

### SELF DEFENSE

Two AS board members, Camilla Mejia and Anne Lee attended a meeting for the work group on sexual violence prevention and response, and unfortunately were the only students in attendance.

Mejia said she believes self-defense classes offered at the Wade King Student Recreation Center will allow students to feel more prepared and safe if they were ever in a situation of an attack.

"It might not prevent, but it is a good first step," Mejia said.

Compiled by Claudia Cooper

## Students dazzled by Viking Union Late Night

Donella Lalas  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The crowd danced to loud music as bright lights flashed and artists painted live for everyone to see at Western's first Viking Union Late Night of the year. Held on Sept. 28, the event was filled with all sorts of activities and performances.

The event was held outdoors on Old Main lawn to create space for more activities, said Pauline Elevazo, Associated Students Productions Director. Activities included yoga, lawn games, painting and an improv workshop with Western's Dead Parrots Society. There were also performances by DJs, a magician, a violinist, and free pizza for all.

Artists gave live painting demonstrations alongside tents filled with art. People crowded around the DJ to dance while others sat and relaxed in a space called the Tea Lounge. The area consisted of pillows and places to sit on the ground as well

as salt lamps and soothing music.

Third-year student Taryn Ludwig said it was her first time ever going to a VU Late Night.

"It's very rave-like," Ludwig said. "It's a lot more fun than I was expecting, I like it a lot."

Ludwig said her favorite part was seeing the lights and artwork on display.

The event was open to all, but mainly targeted new students to help them connect with the greater Bellingham community as well as with one another, said AS Productions Special Events Coordinator Neal Lynberg.

Lynberg said AS Productions spent about two months planning the event to create a fun atmosphere and place for students to spend their first weekend at Western.

"My favorite part about it all is seeing everyone enjoy the space," Lynberg said. "That's always the best part."

Lynberg also works to put on other similar events around town for Metanoia

Collective. This is an organization that puts on events including art and music to facilitate community growth, connection and creativity, he said.

Lynberg said creating a space where people to express themselves and get to know each other is great.

As for future special events, Lynberg said AS Productions has plans in place for comedy nights, guest speakers and another Late Night event during spring quarter.

Elevazo said she also enjoyed putting on the event.

"Neal's really the brains of the event," Elevazo said. "I really just wanted to support what he wanted it to look like and what he wanted to do."

Elevazo said her favorite part of the event was the DJ and the free pizza that was provided.

Adding on to future events, Elevazo said that AS Productions has a lot in store for the year, not only for special events but also concerts, movies and collaborations with other campus organizations as well.

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### Have story ideas?

Email us at

westernfrontonline@gmail.com

to send them our way or discuss sharing information confidentially.

### Corrections:

In a story published in the Welcome Back Issue, it was written that Nickolas Vitalis attended the appeals meeting when in fact he called in via phone.

Jill MacIntyre Wit has no hyphen.

The Environmental Studies department is not the same as the Environmental Science department.

SABAH  
continued from page 1

Title IX, a federal civil rights law passed in 1972, made discrimination against any person because of their gender identity in any educational structure illegal in the U.S.

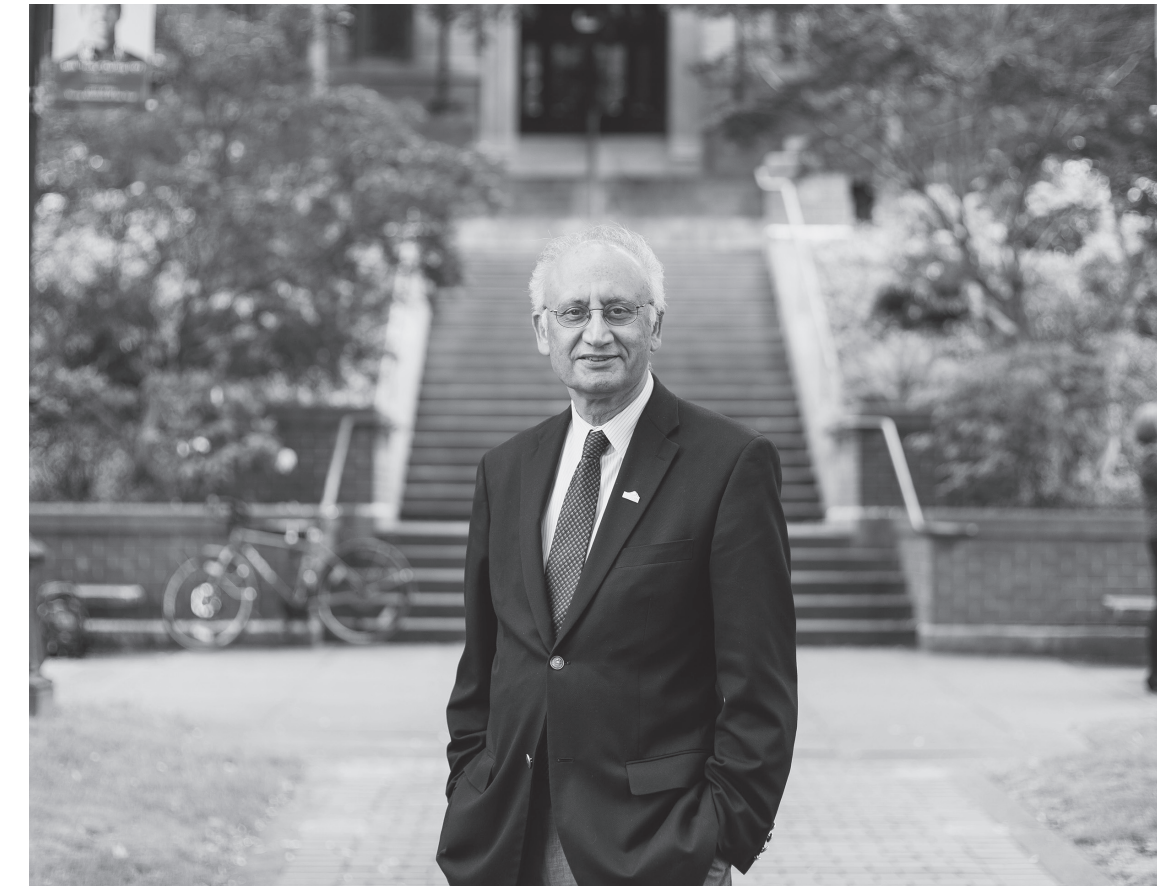
Title IX requires that schools prevent sexual violence and misconduct, and legally requires universities to respond to allegations instead of dismissing cases on the basis of gender.

Western will begin a national search to locate and hire a coordinator with Title IX experience to head the new department.

Until the new coordinator is hired, the Equal Opportunity Office on campus will continue to head Title IX related investigations, Randhawa said.

Randhawa also shared the Internal Audit report that was filed spring 2017, stating that the recommendations from the report suggested specific improvements Western could make to better its response to allegations of sexual misconduct.

These suggestions were primarily focused on providing prompt response times for complaints, increased focus from staff toward the han-



In an email, President Sabah Randhawa announced plans create a separate Title IX Office focused specifically on investigating cases of sexual misconduct. // Photo courtesy of University Communications

dling of misconduct-related cases and communication between students and faculty as well as between the Office of Student Life and the Equal Opportunity Office.

In response to the recommendations, Western's Discrimination Response Pro-

cedure will be revised and updated no later than January 2019. Randhawa said the new procedure will have timely review processes complete with notifications sent to individuals as to the outcome of their cases, Randhawa said.

There will also be efforts

to increase communication among all parties involved in Title IX casework to improve accountability and response time, Randhawa said.

For now, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services Melynda Huskey will become the new Deputy Title

IX Coordinator.

Randhawa also mentioned the current sexual misconduct prevention training that Western requires, an online program called HAVEN, which all new students must take in order to attend school.

This school year will be the start of a required secondary HAVEN training program for all students at the end of their second or beginning of their third year. The new training program is intended to give scenario-based training on communication and consent, Randhawa said.

Randhawa ended the email by encouraging students and faculty alike to start conversations about ways Western can further address sexual misconduct and included contact information for help centers on campus.

For questions about Western's policies and procedures following allegations of sexual misconduct, contact Dr. Sue Guenther-Schlesinger at (360) 650-3307 or at sue.guenther-schlesinger@wwu.edu.

The office of Consultation and Sexual Assault Support, CASAS, provides support services for incidents of assault harassment, dating violence or emotional abuse. To contact CASAS, call (360) 650-3700.

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# 'Building healing without borders': Western alumnus start podcast, discussion

Olga Araceli and Vicky Matey add to the conversation surrounding undocumented immigrants

**Julia Berkman**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Vicky Matey and Olga Araceli sit beneath an antler chandelier at the Cabin Tavern in downtown Bellingham, drinks and bright purple on-brand stickers in hand, and pose for a photo. The red light from a neon sign behind them frames their heads like a halo. "Make sure we look cute," Matey says.

to supporting undocumented students. Although the pair graduated, Araceli in 2017 and Matey in 2018, they're both still heavily involved in Bellingham's undocumented community.

In spring of 2018, Western alumni and now-producer Caleb Nelson approached Matey with the idea of starting a podcast. Nelson had always wanted to do a podcast, but was struggling at the time with what he would talk about.

Matey was interested. Shifting from presentations on Western's campus to producing a podcast would mean her words could reach a much broader community.

"We wanted to use a different platform to send out our message in a way that's more accessible to other people around the world," Matey said.

Three episodes in, Matey and Araceli have already laid down a theme of healing, strengthening and diversifying within the undocumented community.

"We hold the power and strength to liberate ourselves," said Araceli in the first episode of the podcast.

Matey said the pair plan to bring on guests to talk about subjects ranging from international immigration policies to debunking common myths about being undocumented. The two said they're interested in bringing on guests who don't fit the stereotypical undocumented archetypes.

"There are a lot of people in our community who are completely left out," Matey said.



Matey and Araceli pose for a photo with their stickers at the Cabin Tavern. // Photo by Julia Berkman

For Araceli, this means reaching out to black and queer undocumented communities whose voices may have been overlooked in favor of more common groups.

"When we think of undocumented folks, it's more so Latinx people that are tied to being undocumented," Araceli said.

According to the Migration Policy Institute, more than 45 percent of undocumented immigrants are Latinx, whereas nine percent are black. It's not specified whether or not a portion of the black undocumented community also identifies as Latinx.

A study done at the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law found that only 2.7 percent of undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community. However, sexuality is often underreported in studies.

To represent the undocumented community as a whole, including people of all sexualities and from all corners of the world, Matey and Araceli are opening conversations with their guests. Their plan is to not only break down the stereotypes but to give a more diverse face to a diverse community.

"We want to bring on people that are interested in sharing their opinion and having a voice," Matey said. "Whoever is interested in being a part of this, we want them to be a part of it."

Even Araceli's grandmother, who immigrated to America almost 23 years ago, is interested in being a guest.

"I think that would be a really cool perspective, because she's a part of the older generation," Araceli said. "It would be interesting to see how the immigration process has changed since she came here."

One common myth that Matey and Araceli have tried to debunk is that an undocumented person can never share their immigration status, ever. Matey and Araceli are both fairly open about their status, and believe there isn't much risk in declaring it openly on a podcast that anyone can access.

"There's no way that anyone could force us to

give them information about who we put on, since we're producing it and it's our project," Matey said.

So far, Matey and Araceli think the process for the podcast has gone pretty well.

"When we have conversations, they're very open. We laugh a lot," Matey said. "Even though there are all these burdens that are tied to our identity, we realize that if we weren't undocumented we probably wouldn't be as determined, as passionate, as hardworking as we are because that's what our families ingrained in us."

The pair, along with Nelson, have already put out three episodes: an introduction, an episode debunking common myths and one discussing DACA. Their podcast can be found on iTunes and Stitcher Radio.

*Vickey and Olga's Podcast Recommendations*

**Vickey:**  
NPR's Invisibilia

**Olga:**  
Locatora Radio

# Bellingham citizens rally against nomination of Judge Kavanaugh

**Jaden Moon**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Chants of "We believe you!" flooded the rainy steps of the Bellingham City Hall, where a rally against the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh took place on Sunday, Sept. 30.

President Trump nominated Kavanaugh to fill the court's 9th seat, which was vacated when Justice Anthony Kennedy retired in June 2018. However, controversy erupted after allegations of sexual assault against Kavanaugh were brought to light.

Kavanaugh has maintained that he is innocent.

Upwards of 200 people attended the rally, armed with signs with statements such as "Kava...No!" "Reject Kavanaugh," and "Respect Women, our voices, our bodies, our choices."

Groups including Planned Parenthood, DVSAAS, Raging Grannies (a national organization comprised of grandmas pushing for civil rights) and the Riveters Collective showed their support for survivors of sexual assault through songs, booths, voter registration cards and more.

Erin Montgomery, coordinator of Western's Planned Parenthood Generation club, said the group came out to

voice their support.

"We are here today, in order to stand in solidarity with survivors," Montgomery said.

Three women have come forward with allegations of sexual assault, including Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, Julie Swetnik and Deborah Ramirez, with a fourth accusation in an anonymous letter, according to a Business Insider article.

Dr. Ford is the only accuser who has given a testimony in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The rally took place following a week-long delay of the Senate vote on Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court.

The FBI is entering an investigation of the allegations and Kavanaugh's statements regarding them, which is the cause of the delay. Many senators are skeptical of the allegations, including Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.

"I'm sorry, you needed to go to the cops," Graham said to Dr. Christine Blasey Ford in response to her explanation on why she did not report the alleged misconduct sooner after it happened.

John Bower, Western Fairhaven College professor, was a primary organizer of the rally.

"Could you imagine if half



Two rallygoers embrace after one speaks of their experiences. // Photo by Jaden Moon

of the senators were women?" He said. "Kavanaugh would not be up for nomination."

Currently, 23 senators are women, with only two of them being Republicans, the majority party in the Senate.

Senior Class President of Squalicum High School Paige Censale spoke at the rally.

"I'm here to tell you the time is up," Censale said. "We will no longer take sorry as an excuse. Our generation will not accept this."

Censale is also a member of Students for Action, an organization comprised of students from four high schools in Bellingham with the primary goal of ensuring student safety. They were one of the primary organiz-

ers of the rally, and they said they believe speaking out against Kavanaugh's nomination is vital.

"Being a Supreme Court Justice means you'll be there for decades, and someone that doesn't follow our moral code should not be able to make precedent for years to come," Censale said.

The potential outcomes of the vote were explored by journalist Dylan Matthews in an article written for Vox on Sept. 4, 2018.

In the article, Matthews explained that many monumental cases that could shape society are currently facing the Supreme Court. If Kavanaugh's nomination is accepted, Matthews wrote

that years of liberal progress are more likely to be erased. That means past decisions, including monumental cases like Roe v. Wade, could possibly be overturned. Anti-discrimination laws could also be forgone for religious purposes and capital punishment could be bolstered.

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A Shot of Truth logo, designed by Osvaldo Flores, a guest on episode one of the podcast. // Logo courtesy of Matey and Araceli



# BELLINGHAM'S FIRST SUNDIAL MURAL UNVEILED

Ten years after local sundialist Sasch Stephens had a vision, Bellingham's first sundial mural is complete

By Grace Westermann  
THE WESTERN FRONT

On Sept. 22, an overcast sky encapsulated the city of Bellingham in a drizzly, dreary rain. It was the autumn equinox, marking the beginning of fall and the reveal of Bellingham's new sundial mural.

On the south-facing wall of Ciao Thyme, a restaurant on Unity Street in downtown Bellingham, a sundial within a mural of Mount Baker and the Skagit Valley projected off the red bricks in bright colors, transforming the gloomy day.

The mural's fusion of science and art was the brainchild of Sasch Stephens. Stephens, a professional sundialist for 35 years, said he has been trying to get this project off the ground for 10 years.

Stephens said when he first saw the 30-foot by 60-foot wall, it was like love at first sight, because it was south-facing, which would provide a symmetrical path for the sun's shadow. Stephens proposed the idea to Mataio and Jessica Gillis, co-owners of Ciao Thyme, but Mataio told Stephens he needed time to warm up to the idea.

Stephens said one of the things that convinced Mataio to go forward with the project was showing him a picture of a town in Italy with almost 100 sundials.

However, in order for Stephens to make his sundial mural a

reality, he needed a fiscal sponsor. Local nonprofit Allied Arts partnered with Stephens, allowing him to accept donations for the mural because of his affiliation with the organization, said Katy Tolles, Allied Arts artist services coordinator.

After partnering with Allied Arts, the selection committee for the mural asked for artists to submit proposals of their visions for the mural. According to Stephens, they received 27 art submissions from 11 countries in total. The selection committee consisted of six experts in the field of art and sundials, as well as Mataio Gillis.

"We worked really hard coming up with a long list of artist and architects, even street artist and sundialist all over the world to push this idea, to get the best sundial we could get," Stephens said.

The committee chose Bellingham artist Gretchen Leggitt's submission in June 2017. According to Allied Arts, Leggitt's design was chosen for its originality, visual impact, connection to setting and sundial design accuracy.

Sitting down with Leggitt two days prior to the ceremony, she was bundled up, her hands red from the cold with paint stains all over her fingers. Leggitt said she had been working 14-hour days on another project in Bellingham, a mural the size of two football fields, but was still eager to talk about the finished sundial mural.

Originally from Colorado, Leggitt went to college for fine arts with a focus on painting and art history. Before becoming a full-time artist, she balanced a career as a part-time K-8 art teacher and part-time artist.

Leggitt said her inspiration to translate nature's kinetic energy into art comes from flow sports, like snowboarding and mountain biking,

because she's able to experience and create movement in nature.

She said she was drawn to submit a design because she loved the idea of creating something that had a scientific and artistic purpose.

"This idea of marrying both imagery and an actual moving shadow, the science to it and precision to these measure-

ments," she said. "I thought it was really intriguing."

Leggitt explained that her goal when designing the mural was to capture the horizon glow that illuminates the mountains and clouds, known as the alpenglow, on Mount Baker from the perspective of the Skagit Valley.

She said she wanted the mural to remind viewers in the gloomy months of fall and winter that beauty and light exists in the Pacific Northwest.

Over her six day painting process, Leggitt said she felt motivated by community members who approached her and expressed their gratitude.

"I was having conversations with all types, all ages, all races [of people], from all walks of life," Leggitt said. "This is not just for people of the upper and middle classes, this is for people in all walks of life, where everyone can appreciate a more beautiful city."

During the celebration, the clouds would break intermittently, allowing the sun to cast a shadow on the gnomon, the metal piece in the center of the sundial, created by local artist Aaron Loveitt, owner of Altility Art Studio.

Speakers took turns expressing their gratitude for the mural and spoke about its importance, including Woody Sullivan, a professor at University of Washington in the department of astronomy.

Sullivan said sundials offer scientific and philosophical contemplations through the personalized motto that most have. Etched in blue and white is Bellingham's sundial motto, "Savor the gifts of this hour."

Sullivan continued to

explain that using the shadow of the sun, the sundial displays the date and time based on how it reflects on the painted grid.

Sullivan said the shadow of the ball goes straight across on the horizontal line, also referred to as the equinox line. The curved lines are in one month intervals. Viewers can tell what month and time it is based on where the shadow reflects on the curved lines slightly above the horizontal line.

Physics and astronomy professor from Western Kristin Larson expressed her hope for what the sundial will do for Bellingham residents.

"When we come and admire this beautiful piece of artwork and this illustration of science, I hope it will get us to ask these questions," Larson said. "Not just what time is it Bellingham, but where are we, where are we going and who are we and who do we need to be."

Many attendees of the event included individuals who donated money to the project. Currently, the project is still in need of donations, said Stephens.

As the ceremony wound down, the crowd wrapped up the event with an acoustic sing-a-long of Pink Floyd's song, "Time." The lyrics "you are young and life is long and there is time to kill today," rippled across the crowd.

The sundial will not only let viewers track the motions of the sun, but allow them to contemplate the motions in our solar system and universe, reminding us of our tiny planet that we need to take care of, Stephens said.



Mural Artist Gretchen Leggitt examines her finished mural as Bellingham residents celebrate with a song. // Photo by Grace Westermann



Leggitt's mural features a motto reading "savor the gifts of this hour." // Photo by Jaden Moon



The gnomon, or the metal piece in the center of the sundial, created by Aaron Loveitt // Photo by Jaden Moon



Close up of Gretchen Leggitt's mural on the south-facing wall of Ciao Thyme on Unity Street in downtown Bellingham. // Photo by Jaden Moon



# RUNNING FOR A CAUSE



By Alexia Suarez  
THE WESTERN FRONT

On Saturday, Oct. 6, runners will be taking over the streets of Bellingham for the 11th annual Run Like a Girl race. Now a popular tradition, founder Cyndi Meuchel started the race in 2007 after deciding to make a change in her lifestyle.

Meuchel was addicted to fast food and grieving from a recent loss and decided she wanted a positive change in

her life, so she started running. With Meuchel's newfound passion, she began exercising, eating healthier and overall becoming happier. She even set a goal of running a half-marathon. Meuchel invited her friends to come run with her and soon word spread and the group grew.

Eventually, her hobby evolved into an official race, Run Like a Girl.

The Bellingham Run Like a Girl race is organized by volunteer coordinator Sharon Stone, who shared Meuchel's story.

Stone recalled their first race 11 years ago. She said Meuchel and other participants pitched in to organize fun surprises at milestones along the race to make the long run more exciting. Stone

said upon race day, 30 people joined Meuchel to complete her goal.

After the run, Meuchel donated the remaining funds to Whatcom County's local branch of the nonprofit Girls on the Run program through the YMCA, and paired up with Stone to make Run Like a Girl a yearly, non-competitive race.

According to their website, Girls on the Run is a national organization that teaches grade-school-age girls ways to be healthy and confident using a curriculum which integrates running.

The Whatcom County branch of Girls on the Run has an average of 300 participants in the program per year over its two seasons, Stone said. After each 10-week program, participants run a 5K alongside their friends and family. Stone said the race is important because fundraising plays a major role in providing their programs to schools in the area.

Run Like a Girl will host their annual half marathon and 10K run on Saturday, Oct. 6. All of the proceeds from the race will be donated to Girls on the Run to be used for scholarships and more.

Stone said there are 25 running teams across different elementary schools in Whatcom County and most of the funds the race brings in go toward scholarships for families that might need help with the program's cost.

The participation fee is \$120, which Stone said can be too expensive for some families. She said scholarships for Girls on the Run work on a sliding scale, meaning families pay however much they can and the organization works to cover the rest of the cost.

According to Stone, last year Run Like a Girl was the biggest fundraiser for What-



Runners stop on the trail to play with some bubbles. // Photo courtesy of Sharon Stone

com County's Girls on the Run programs, raising almost \$15,000.

Shelley Buyagawan, a long-time supporter of Run Like a Girl, said she is drawn back to the race each year because of its message and positive energy.

"The spirit of the race is what draws me back to it every year," Buyagawan said. "You can come with no experience and feel welcomed, encouraged and have a lot of fun with women in the same situation as you."

After seven years of participating in Run Like a Girl, Buyagawan is now involved with Girls on the Run through her daughter's school, Happy Valley Elementary.

According to Buyagawan, Run Like a Girl encourages all women to get out and run alongside each other, regardless of shape or size. The race is not timed and there are decorated tents along the run with supporters cheering on the runners as they make their way to the finish line.

"It's an experience I look forward to each year," Buyagawan said. "[I enjoy] participating with other positive,

like-minded women who are out to have an experience that's memorable, encouraging and positive."

Buyagawan said there's even a special award for runners after they complete their race.

"At the finish line there is a firefighter waiting to award finishers a locally-made artisan medal for hard work no matter what time, skill level or how out-of-breath you are," Buyagawan said.

Race day begins with registration at 8 a.m. in Fairhaven Park. The half-marathon portion begins at 9 a.m. and the 10K begins at 10 a.m. There is a pre-race dinner open to the public the night before the race where donations can be made.

Registration for Run Like a Girl and the pre-race dinner can be found online at their website, [www.runlikeagirl-bellingham.org](http://www.runlikeagirl-bellingham.org).

Volunteer opportunities for set-up, take-down and other tasks can be arranged by contacting the coordinators with their information under the "Contact Us" bar on the website.

## FRONTLINE

### Access to voting is a privilege: use it

Alyssa Bruce  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Reflecting on this season two years ago, I remember many things. There were leaves on the ground, puddles on the sidewalk and so many questions yet to be answered regarding the future of our country. Two years have passed and a new election season has begun.

With registration deadlines approaching, our participation in the upcoming election comes into question: does my vote actually matter?

Nowadays, about 60 percent of the voting-eligible population votes during presidential elections, and an estimated 40 percent votes during midterm elections, according to a report. If the pattern remains true, the voter turnout for the nearing midterm election may also be limited in numbers.

Equally important, voter turnout in the U.S. remains significantly lower than most similarly-developed countries, according to the Pew Research Center. This comparison was drawn using voting data from the more than 30 countries that are part of the Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development, an organization focused on socioeconomic development. Out of the countries that make up the OECD, the U.S. ranked No. 26.

According to a Pew Research Center survey, 70 percent of eligible voters in U.S. believe high voter turnout is important. So, why isn't it better?

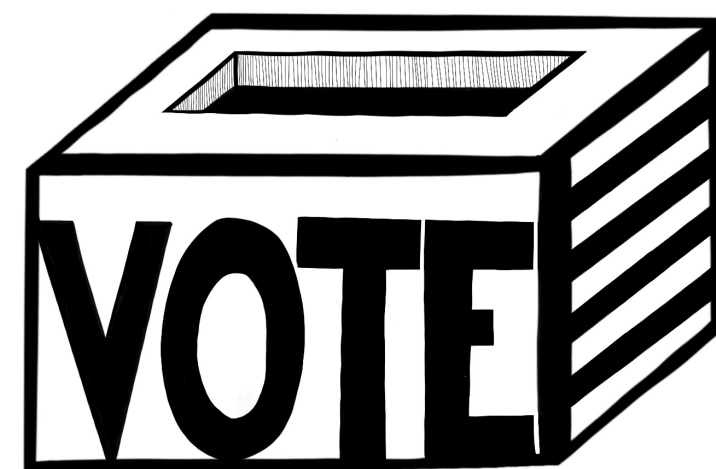
According to a New York Times article, Americans under the age of 30, a group largely made up of college-age individuals, tend to be "socially liberal," and for many on Western's campus, that's true. Many students here have expressed their concerns about environmental sustainability, firearm safety and affordable housing, all three of which will be addressed on the ballot next month. But if a belief is not translated into a vote, legislation might not change.

If passed at the state level, Initiative 1631, an initia-

tive to promote clean energy, could set a national precedent. A group of more than 200 organizations joined forces to make a plan to reduce pollution in Washington by charging fees to the largest industrial polluters and then investing the money back into projects promoting a healthier environment.

In the 2016 presidential election, then candidate Donald Trump lost the popular vote but won the electoral vote, ultimately resulting in him winning the presidency. Because of the way voting districts are divided in each state, the final Electoral College results were determined by less than 80,000 votes, NPR reported.

Today, in some states, ballots still must be submitted in person and no matter how you vote, identification is required. Moreover, those who are unable to access or obtain the required forms of identification remain both unrepresented and unheard.



Eighty thousand people is less than half the population of Whatcom County.

The political landscape in the U.S. has changed significantly since the 2016 election. Many changes have been made to legislation including the repeal of NAFTA, threats to DACA and restrictions on access to healthcare.

These changes have more severely affected members of marginalized and underrepresented communities. This means that those in positions of privilege are able to avoid the negative effects of discriminatory legislation- regardless of whether they vote

including the repeal of NAFTA, threats to DACA and restrictions on access to healthcare. These changes have more severely affected members of marginalized and underrepresented communities. This means that those in positions of privilege are able to avoid the negative effects of discriminatory legislation- regardless of whether they vote

or not. This is nothing new either. The voices of marginalized communities have intentionally been pushed out of political discourse for years by making voting inaccessible — whether it was under the guise of a "literacy" test, or blatant, like gender-based discrimination and Jim Crow Era legislation.

Voting is a platform from which you can directly voice your opinion and effect political change, and not all have access to it. Why not take advantage of it? That means that if "socially liberal" folks under the age of 30 have access to the resources necessary to vote, then a responsibility comes with that privilege. That responsibility is free now too, as Washington state has agreed to pay all postage for ballots in an effort to increase participation.

Illustration by Cole Sandhofer

The Western Front Editorial Board is composed of Alyssa Bruce, Julia Furukawa and Ray Garcia.

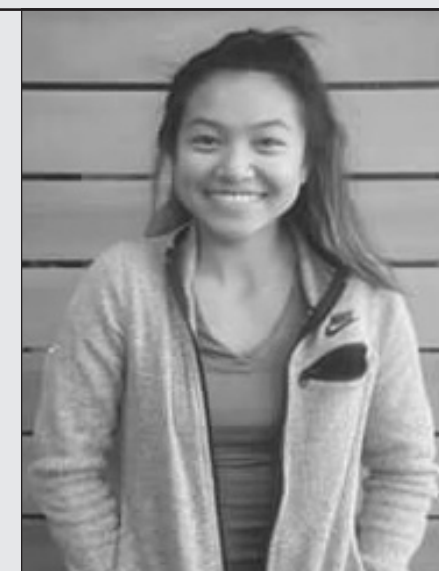
## Viking Voices

Are you going to vote in the midterm elections?



David Ritscher  
Second year

"I want to say yes, but I might not just because I don't know anything really. I probably will because I think it is important to vote, but it's something I do not really think about."



Valerie Tran  
First year

"Most likely because I know I have a say and I know that it is my right as a citizen to vote and share my opinion."

Compiled by Quynh Trinh



Megan Nelson  
First year

"I am registered to vote because I believe that it is my part to say what I feel and disagree and agree with and that is the way that I can participate and voice my opinions."



Jasmeet Uppal  
Fourth year

"Honestly I have never been that big into voting, but after what happened last time with Donald Trump and all that, yeah I probably will vote. Just so I can do my part."



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# Going the distance

Bellingham Bay Marathon continues its annual fundraising in support of local youth

Emily Erskine  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The rainy streets of downtown Bellingham welcomed another year of Bellingham Bay Marathon runners on Sunday, Sept. 30.

Despite the harsh weather conditions that befell the crowd, runners remained enthusiastic for this local Bellingham fundraising tradition as they crossed the finish line with smiling faces.

The marathon, founded in 2003 by the Bellingham Bay Swim Team, began as a fundraising opportunity for Whatcom County youth nonprofit organizations. Since then, it has continued its tradition of giving back to the Whatcom County community.

The Bellingham Bay Swim Team, Boys and Girls Club of Whatcom County, Girls on the Run, Lummi

Youth Academy and the Whatcom Football Club Rangers are just some of the many organizations that will receive donations from the run, according to the Bellingham Bay Marathon website.

The donations provide financial assistance for these organizations for uniforms, traveling game and event fees, team activities and more.

In order to make the event possible, hundreds of volunteers from both the Bellingham Bay Swim Team and the Whatcom FC Rangers premier soccer club come together each year to make sure the race goes off without a hitch.

Since 2003, the marathon has become an annual tradition for both Bellingham residents and visitors alike, with events for participants of all ages and abilities, including a full

marathon, a half-marathon, a 10k, a 5k and a relay.

The marathon had informational booths, live music, a beer garden and local food vendors for not only participants but viewers, family, community members and volunteers to enjoy.

Among these vendors was Russ Kendall, owner of Gusto Wood Fired Pizza, who has set up a booth at the marathon for seven years.

"I've started to vend less and cater more, but I always keep coming back to this event every year," Kendall said. "There's such a great vibe here, with live music and the outdoors — I love the turnout."

Bundled with jackets and sweatshirts in the Depot Market Square in downtown, half-marathon runner Anna McGarr and Western alumna Vanessa Von Stubbe waited excitedly with fel-



A runner happily perserveres through the elements during the full marathon. // Photo by Oliver Hamlin

low racers under cover for their run to begin. Since the marathon's beginning, the square has become a hub for runners to eat, meet other participants and receive race information.

"The race gets bigger and bigger every year," McGarr said. "It has definitely grown since I started attending."

The square remained crowded with people as the events took place on race day, starting at 7 a.m., lasting until roughly two in the afternoon. The square offers a large area of refuge from the rain and wind, as

well as a nice place for community members to engage with the runners and learn more about the event.

"It rains during the marathon majority of the years but that's not a problem," Von Stubbe said. "It just makes your feet really wet."

Rain or shine, the weather didn't take away from the breathtaking views of Bellingham Bay the course had to offer. The full marathon began at the Wex'liem Community Building near Gooseberry Point on Lummi Nation land and all other events began and ended at the Depot Market Square.

# Phelps makes Viking volleyball history

Sam Carver Gym sees yet another record broken by senior Abby Phelps during 13th season win

Ian Ferguson  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western senior Abby Phelps made history Saturday Sept. 29, setting an all-time women's volleyball record for most career kills during a sweeping

victory over Montana State University Billings. The seventh-ranked Vikings continue to move through the season with success, as the win marks their 13th straight victory.

With an overall standing of

13-3, the Vikings' only three losses occurred at the beginning of the season during the West Florida Invitational against nationally-ranked teams. Western now stands at 8-0 in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference, 5-0 in Sam Carver Gymnasium, and 5-0 at away games.

Phelps left Carver Gym with 10 kills and 13 digs, recording her 14th double-double this season.

Coming into the game, Phelps needed three kills to set the all-time record, previously set by Meghan Evoy who graduated in 2004. The record has been untouched for over a decade. Despite being so close to beating the record, Phelps said during a post-game interview that she and the team did their best to not let this affect the way they prepared for the game.

"I'm somebody who can get in my head so I try really hard not to pay attention to that kind of stuff and just play the game that's in front of me," Phelps said.

However, it was clear early on that the Vikings were hun-

gry to help Phelps achieve the goal.

Phelps put down the first kill of the match, which was quickly answered by an MSU Billings kill. The Vikings weren't phased and Phelps' second kill moved them up to 3-1 against MSU Billings and the team continued to march forward, extending their lead to 9-2.

Phelps needed one kill to go in the first set and the team knew it. At every given opportunity, the Vikings set her up, hoping for her success. Finally, a teammate sent the ball floating left, Phelps eyed it, loaded her jump and smashed it into MSU Billings' court, with an answer that couldn't be returned.

The charged gymnasium exploded, clearly aware of the history that had just been written on Carver Gym's wooden floorboards. The team rallied around Phelps, dancing and cheering, with the crowd joining in. The Vikings finished out the set 25-10 with apparent ease.

After the game, Phelps didn't hesitate to pay her respects to

her team, who she said helped her to this monumental point.

Along with Phelps' record setting evening, Western senior Aubrey Stephens set a milestone of 1,000 career digs. Senior Brette Boesel also came close to 100 career aces, just one ace short by the end of the match.

"I was able to get the accolade but I think about all of the people that helped me get there, like my setter, Brette Boesel," said Phelps in the post-game interview. "I would never be in the position that I am without her, our team itself is so good we just create opportunities for each other every single day."

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ONLINE

Read the full  
story online at  
westernfrontonline.  
com

# Men's soccer back on track

The Vikings end their in-conference losing streak with a shutout over Concordia University

Ian Haupt  
THE WESTERN FRONT

"Go Viks, go!" echoed across campus as Western students sporting blue and white around their necks walked to Robert S. Harrington Field to watch the Vikings defeat the Concordia University Cavaliers on Saturday, Sept. 29.

The 2-0 victory against the Cavaliers pulled the Western men out of a losing slump, giving them an overall season winning record of 5-4 and 1-2 in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference. Head Coach Greg Brisbon said he's hoping to improve consistency in his team.

"We got one win," Brisbon said. "Can we get two in a row? That's the next question."

The Saturday game was a March to the Match event, where students gathered at the Wade King Student Recreation Center before kickoff to receive free blue and white scarves to show spirit during the match. Members of the Western cheerleading squad led the charge as the group marched down to Harrington Field, chanting along the way.

Despite the light rain that began to fall during the first

half, the weather was no match for the dedicated fans. They poured into the stands to support the Vikings, with cheers echoing throughout the entire game.

The Vikings passed the ball well in the first half in spite of the wet conditions, forcing the Cavaliers to play a defensive, counter-attacking style of game play.

In the 17th minute, West-

As the rain continued and fatigue set in during the second half, the Vikings lost their passing game. Barker said the Cavaliers started pressing them in the second half, which forced the Vikings to play direct and quick. The match turned into a back-and-forth contest.

The second goal that cemented the Vikings' victory came in the 52nd minute from

"We got one win, can we get two in a row? Now that's the question."

Greg Brisbon  
Head coach

ern's junior forward Ryan Schaefer made a risky run into the box. With a quick turn, Schaefer found senior midfielder Drew Barker near the penalty spot placing Barker in the perfect location to hit the ball into the lower left corner of the net, giving the Vikings a 1-0 lead.

The goal was Barker's first of the season.

freshman midfielder Teagan Eldridge. Eldridge took advantage of a loose ball dropped by the Cavaliers' goalkeeper, and with the keeper on the ground, he confidently put the ball into the back of the net.

With the minutes winding down, the stands only seemed to get louder as fans leaving the women's volleyball game that had ended shortly before joined the crowd. Energetic, shirtless students with the



Stephen Jinneman heads the ball during a home game against Concordia University on Saturday, Sept. 29. // Photo by Oliver Hamlin

word "SPORTS" painted on their chests brought up the energy in the stands as they entered the stadium.

The victory over Concordia leaves the Western men's soccer team with nine GNAC conference games remaining

before the NCAA Division II Championships.

The men's soccer team will be on the road in the upcoming weeks as they travel to MSU Billings on Thursday, Oct. 4 to take on the Yellowjackets.



Runners from the 5 and 10k race down the final stretch as they near the finish line. // Photo by Oliver Hamlin

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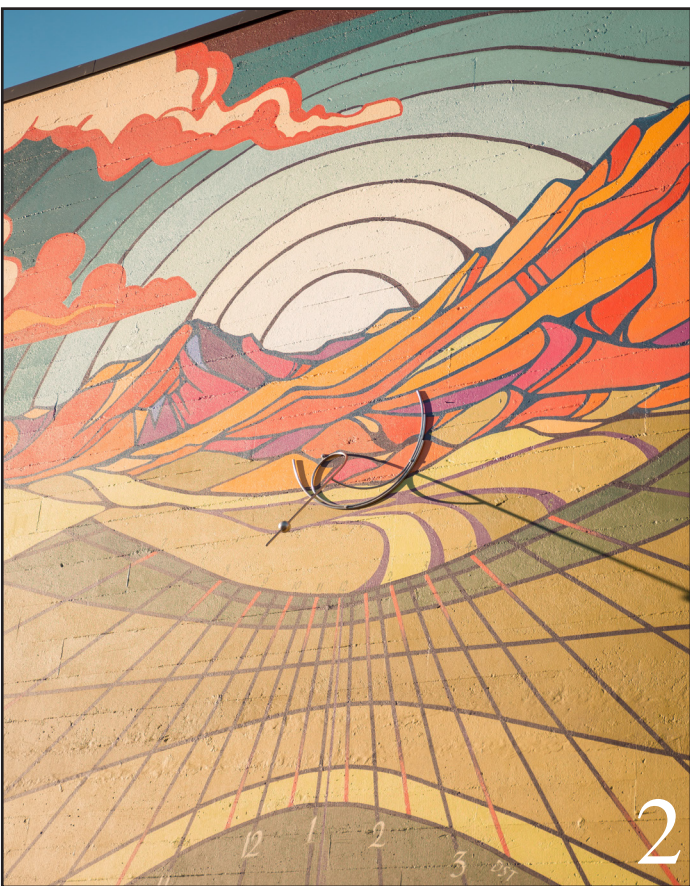


# Bellingham behind the lens

- Selected photos from this week -



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**1. Protestors join their hands in solidarity outside of City Hall.** // Photo by Jaden Moon

**2. Bellingham's new sundial mural glimmers in the light.** // Photo by Jaden Moon

**3. A runner sprints toward the finish line at the Bellingham Bay Marathon.** // Photo by Oliver Hamlin

**4. The finish line looms ahead as supporters cheer on runners for their last few feet.** // Photo by Oliver Hamlin

## SEE MORE ONLINE

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