



Fall 2012

# Window: The Magazine of Western Washington University, 2012, Volume 05, Issue 01

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# WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY WINDOW

FALL/WINTER 2012



## Porch light groupies

Western Biology professor's website shows the stunning diversity of moths of the PNW

### Bringing them home

Anthropology alum helps find and identify service members lost in war

### Linked through language

A dying language in remote Siberia might hold a clue to ancient human migrations



# Lovers of the light

Which dainty, colorful creatures are fluttering around your porch light? Take a closer look and check out Biology Professor Merrill Peterson's website, Pacific Northwest Moths ([pnwmoths.biol.wvu.edu](http://pnwmoths.biol.wvu.edu)), an interactive collection of high-resolution photographs of more than 1,200 species of moths found in the Pacific Northwest.

Pacific Northwest Moths includes specimens collected by Peterson, Western's resident moth expert, as well as scientists from Washington State University, Oregon State University, University of Idaho, the Canadian National Collection, and the Washington and Oregon departments of agriculture. One of the largest contributors was Bellingham radiologist Lars Crabo, an amateur collector who happens to be an internationally recognized moth expert. Western Biology and Computer Science students also played a major role in developing the site, which was funded by the National Science Foundation.

Peterson and his colleagues designed the site for scientists and the general public to identify moths as well as learn about the stunning diversity of moths in the Pacific Northwest. Check out the lovelies on this page for a small sample.



The **large yellow underwing moth**, *Noctua pronuba*, is a newcomer to North America. The Eurasian species was accidentally introduced in Nova Scotia around 1979 and has rapidly spread across North America ever since.



The best chance of spotting the **great tiger moth**, *Arctia caja*, is in mid-to late summer, particularly west of the Cascades.



If you feel like someone's watching you in the forest, maybe this widespread **sphinx moth**, *Smerinthus ophthalmica*, with its distinctive black and bright blue eyespot, is nearby.



"Bipectinate" is the word scientists use to describe those combed antennae on the **Hera buckmoth**, *Hemileuca hera*.



Check out the delicately scalloped edges on the wings of the **lettered habrosyne**, *Habrosyne scripta*.







Spot the first green of spring in the wings of the **deceptive sallow moth**, *Feralia deceptiva*, which flies in early spring among western conifer forests.



Watch for the **Aholibah underwing moth**, *Catocala aholibah*, flitting among oak trees in Eastern Washington, Oregon and southern Vancouver Island.



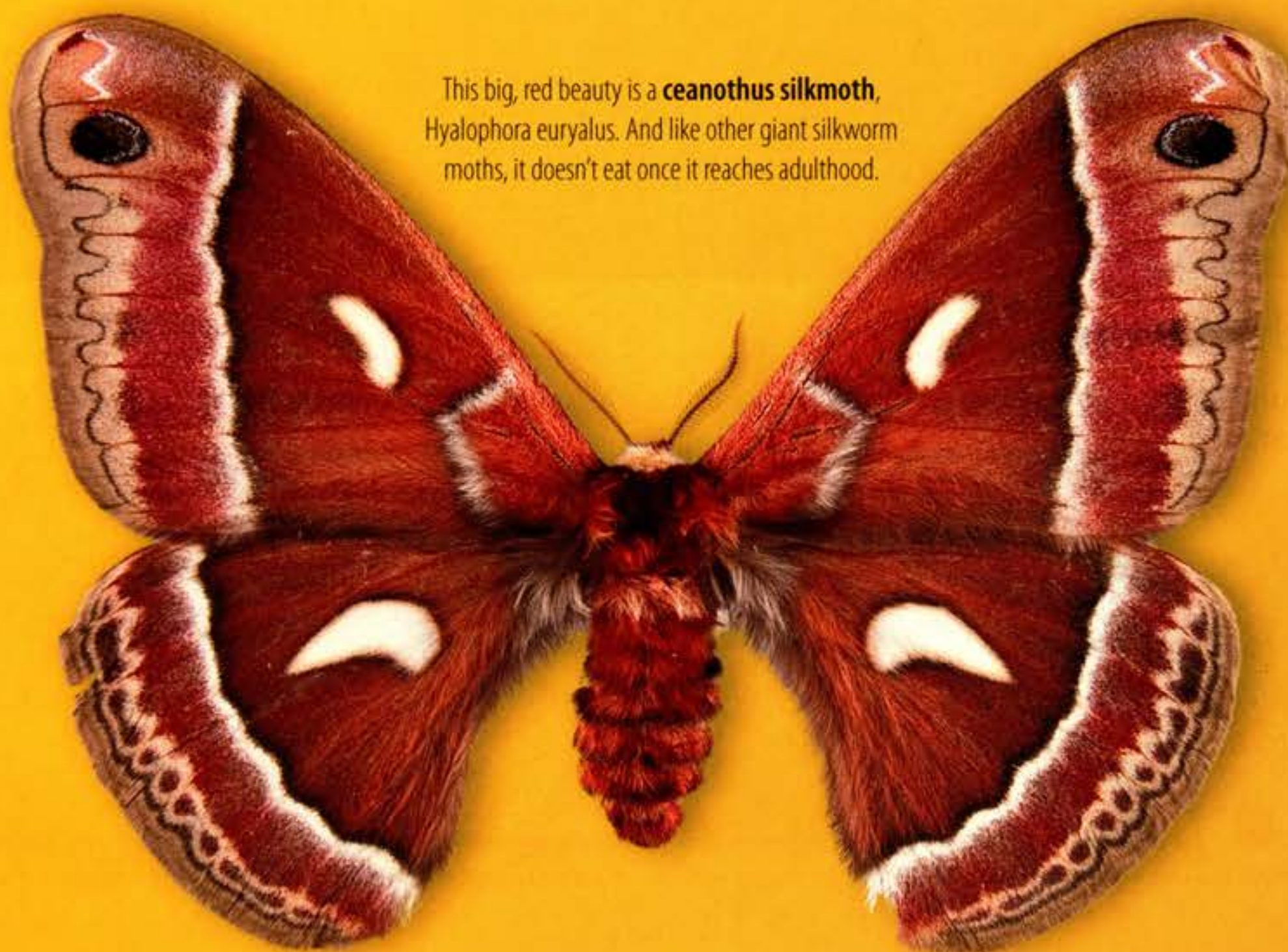
The **white-lined sphinx moth**, *Hyles lineata*, is also known as a "hummingbird moth" — it's often spotted at dusk, hovering among flowers. Gardeners beware: Their caterpillars love to munch on evening primroses.



The **arched hooktip moth**, *Drepana arcuata*, is known for its staying power — it flies from spring all the way until fall.



That bumblebee hovering among the flowers in spring and summer might actually be this day-flying **sphinx moth**, *Hemaris thetis*.



This big, red beauty is a **ceanothus silkmoth**, *Hyalophora euryalus*. And like other giant silkworm moths, it doesn't eat once it reaches adulthood.





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Forensic anthropologist **Bill Belcher** ('84 and '85) travels the world helping the military search for thousands of service members who never returned from war.

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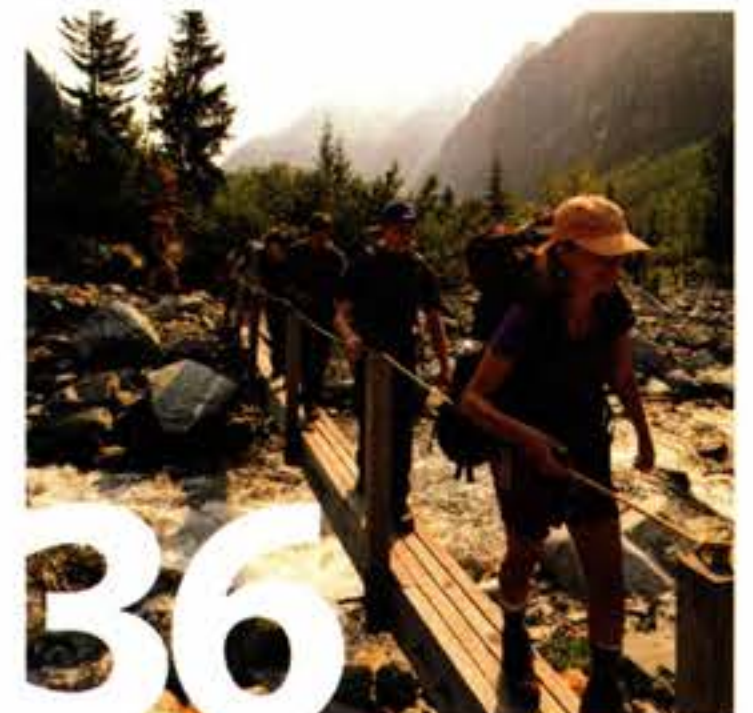
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**On the cover:** This great tiger moth, *Arctia caja*, was collected at Joseph Whidbey State Park in July 1995 by Lars Crabo and Jim Troubridge. It's one of 1,200 moth species in Western's Pacific Northwest Moths website, [pnwmoths.biol.wvu.edu](http://pnwmoths.biol.wvu.edu). Photo by Biology Professor Merrill Peterson.





Photo by Rachel Bayne





# Message

from the President

## Innovation remains a core Western value

Over the years, many successful enterprises in both the private and the public sectors have been overtaken by change, sometimes with disastrous results. Think big-box bookstores, record shops and daily newspapers. Automotive and computer manufacturing in the U.S. was slow to change, or even recognize the need to do so. While they rested on their laurels, their foreign competitors moved up the food chain, figuring out along the way how to apply emerging technologies to higher quality and higher revenue products.

Some worry the brick-and-mortar university may similarly be at risk of becoming obsolete, as states across the country – with Washington leading the way – dramatically cut funding to public higher education and educational delivery methods change. Meanwhile, new kinds of competitors like for-profit institutions enter the market.

Our crystal ball is murky, and some of our visions of the future will be wrong. But, I think we can clearly see what constitutes our rudder in navigating the changes to come: the commitments we have always had to liberal arts-based undergraduate excellence. Even as darker skies threaten, relentless innovation is the wind in our sails.

As the times change, so must universities. Western is no exception. In fact we prize our spirit of innovation and creativity in the face of transformations sweeping our society. Periods of major transformation open enormous opportunities.

Innovation happens every day on campus. Gifted faculty constantly search for better ways to teach and involve their students in cutting-edge research. Dedicated staff members tirelessly scrutinize and improve campus operations, seeking to be more efficient, more effective.

Western students are active participants too, as they challenge campus thinking and steer us toward bold and imaginative new paths. Western's national leadership in energy was one such example. For years now, Western has annually offset 100 percent of its electrical consumption via purchases of renewable energy credits. That initiative was envisioned and led by students, and it shows that the learning that goes on at Western flows in both directions.

And what is our destination, our ultimate goal? The answer is in who we are as a campus community. We are here to make a difference. To be the difference. We are not active minds alone. We are about changing lives through innovation, knowledge and creativity. And that will continue to be what motivates us, every day, as Western students, faculty, staff and alumni change lives in their communities across our state and nation.

*Bruce Shepard*



Photo by Dan Levine





## WINDOW

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# What do you think about WINDOW?

If something you read in Window sparks a memory, question, inspiration or critique, let us know! We'll run a sampling of your feedback in each edition. Send your thoughts to [window@wwu.edu](mailto:window@wwu.edu). Or, find us online at [www.wwu.edu/window](http://www.wwu.edu/window) and on Facebook. You may also send a note to Window Magazine, Office of University Communications, 516 High St., Bellingham, WA, 98225-9011.

## Photographic memory

The photo of a couple strolling down Memory Walk in front of Old Main, published in the Spring 2012 edition of Window ("Who will follow in your footsteps?"), brought back fond memories for **Chuck Stutz** ('60, Industrial Technology).

Stutz took the photo, "Memory Walk," originally published in the 1956 Klipsun yearbook. Many more of Stutz's photographs appear in Klipsuns throughout the mid- to late '50s.

"Thank you for taking me back," writes Stutz, who is retired and living in Fresno, Calif. "Good years!"

After chronicling student life at Western, Stutz went on to a long career in photography.

Having served as a photographer in the U.S. Navy helped pay his tuition at Western. After graduation, he taught photography and coached swimming at Sammamish High School for three years and then spent 21 years as a representative for the Eastman Kodak Co.

As a Kodak rep in California, Stutz got to work with Ansel Adams, sitting in on Adams' classes and helping the "Master of Light" print photos in his darkroom. Stutz also met Joe Rosenthal, who shot the famous "Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima," and he received an invitation to sit in the cockpit of a then-top-secret U-2 spy plane.

"Photography has given me a good life," Stutz says.

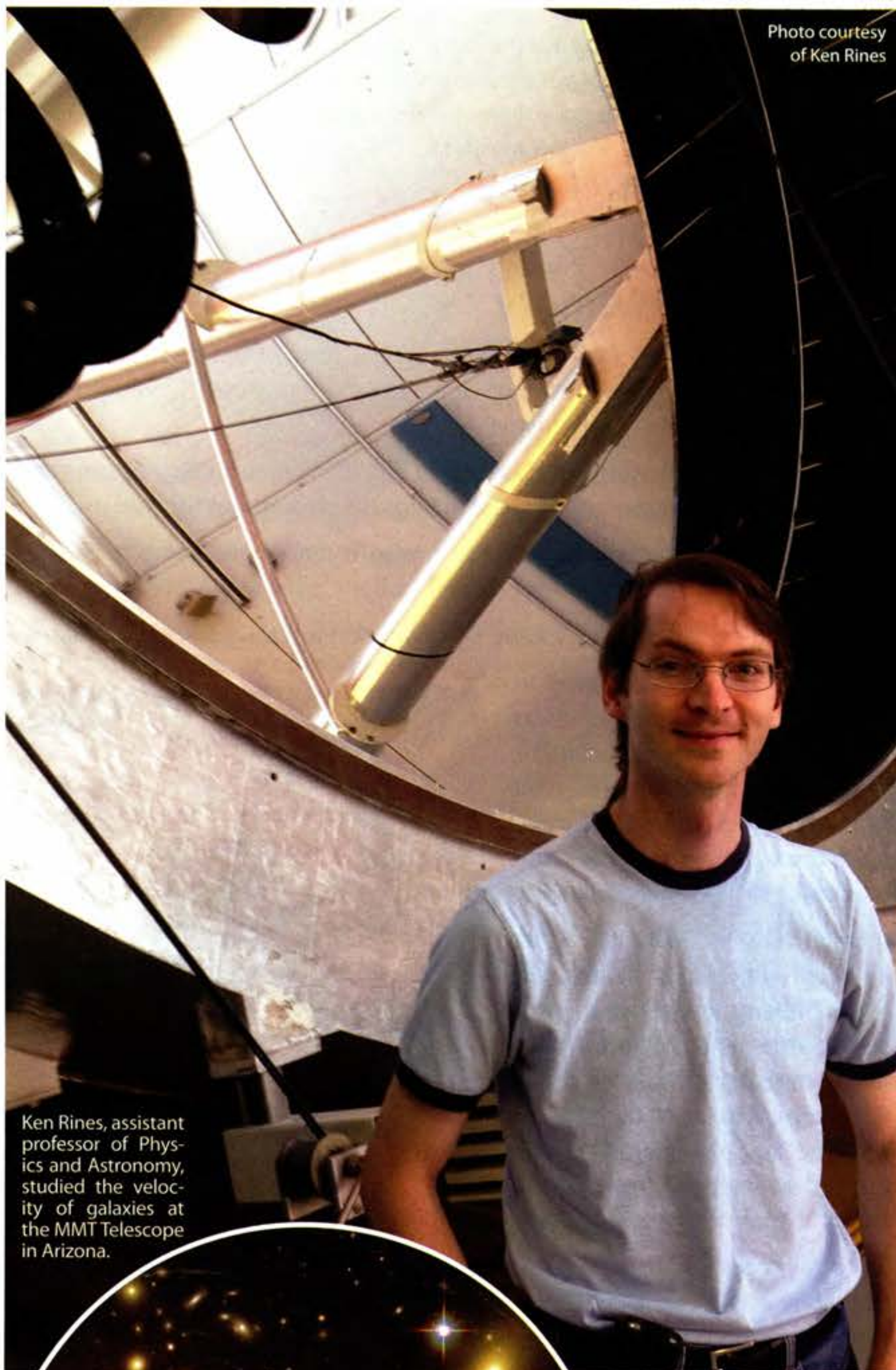
Many of Stutz's 1950s campus images now reside in Western Washington University Libraries Special Collections.



Photo courtesy of Western  
Washington University  
Libraries Special Collections

Chuck Stutz's "Memory Walk," first published in 1956, appeared in the spring 2012 edition of Window.





## Physics' Ken Rines studies the growth of the biggest galaxies in the universe

Like a snowball rolling downhill and getting larger and larger, galaxies form clusters that grow as they careen through the cosmos. Just how big they could get and how long they'll keep growing is the subject of a research team headed by Western's Ken Rines.

Rines, assistant professor of Physics and Astronomy, and his fellow researchers from the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and the University of Torino in Italy used the state-of-the-art MMT Telescope south of Tucson, Ariz., to observe thousands of galaxies, measure their velocities and gain a truer measurement of the cluster's overall mass.

Rines and his colleagues studied data from one of the most massive galaxy clusters known, Abell 1689, pictured here in this image from NASA's Hubble Space Telescope.

Rines and his team, which recently submitted their work to The Astrophysical Journal, found no end in sight for the trillion-star snowballs, which they believe will continue to grow as they capture all the galaxies within reach of the cluster's gravity, creating virtual island universes.

"Our own Milky Way Galaxy will have a similar, lonely fate as all the other galaxies rush away, leaving the stars to slowly die out over trillions of years," Rines says.



*"Our own Milky Way Galaxy will have a similar, lonely fate..."*

Photo courtesy of NASA, ESA, N. Benitez (JHU), T. Broadhurst (Racah Inst. of Physics/The Hebrew Univ.) H. Ford (JHU), M. Clampin and G. Hartig (STScI), G. Illingworth (UCO/Lick Observ.), and the ACS Science Team.



## Biologist's research warns of the growing global impacts of extinction

Loss of biodiversity appears to harm ecosystems as much as climate change, pollution and other forms of environmental calamity, according to a new study from an international research team headed by Western Biology Professor Dave Hooper and published in the prestigious scientific journal *Nature* last summer.

Until now, it was unclear how biodiversity losses stack up against other human-caused environmental changes that affect ecosystem health and productivity.

"Some people have assumed that biodiversity effects are relatively minor compared to other environmental stressors," says Hooper, the lead author of the *Nature* paper. "Our new results show that future loss of species has the potential to affect plant production just as much as global warming and pollution."

Hooper and his team combined data from more than 190 studies to build a database to compare to global environmental stressors.

Studies over the last two decades demonstrate that biologically diverse ecosystems are more productive. As a result, there has been growing concern that the very high rates of modern



WWU Biology professor David Hooper and graduate student Leslie Gonzalez measure plant diversity and productivity in experimental grassland plots in California.

extinctions – due to habitat loss, overharvesting and other human-caused environmental changes – could reduce nature's ability to provide food, clean water and a stable climate.

"The balance of scientific evidence brought together by this study clearly shows that sound management of biological diversity is one of the key issues in sustainable management of the planet," Hooper says.

## Chemistry research highlights sustainability

Western Chemistry students are studying whether algae can be part of a cheap biofuel and creating new ways to break down harmful greenhouse gasses.

Students Josh Corliss of Vashon Island, Aaron Culler of Spokane and John Williams of Battle Ground are working with Associate Professor Greg O'Neil to explore new ways to create a less expensive biofuel. O'Neil's research is funded by a \$430,000 grant from the National Science Foundation.

Culler said developing new renewable sources for biofuels is a pressing issue because of the country's continued reliance on traditional fossil fuels. Algae-produced biofuels aren't economically competitive with other fuel sources yet,



Photo by Maddy Mixer

After three years and thousands of hours in the lab, Western grad student Zach Thammavongsy's research into breaking down carbon dioxide has just been published in the research journal *Inorganic Chemistry*.

he says. But that might change if scientists can figure out how to synthesize certain components of algae that are used in making biofuel.

Meanwhile, Chemistry Graduate Student Zach Thammavongsy's research un-

der the guidance of Assistant Professor John Gilbertson also has an eye toward sustainability. Thammavongsy's efforts to find new ways to break down harmful greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide were recently published in the research journal *Inorganic Chemistry*.



## Grant funds Woodring collaboration with Skagit County school



Students and faculty from Western's Woodring College of Education will work closely with students and teachers at a Mount Vernon elementary school as part of a new state-grant-funded collaboration.

The \$500,000 grant, called Collaborative Schools for Innovation and Success, will fund the partnership with Washington Elementary School, where a large majority of students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch and many are English language learners.

The goal of the partnership is to not only help boost academic achievement among students who are disadvantaged by poverty or who are learning English, but also to determine how best to prepare teachers and administrators to best serve students with such diverse needs.

Woodring students and faculty from Elementary Education, Counseling, Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Math Education and Human Services will come to Washington Elementary. Student interns will work closely with mentor teachers and Woodring faculty will assist with professional development activities.

"Collaboration with families and the community is also an important element of this grant," says Elementary Education Professor Joanne Carney, who directs the grant along with Washington Principal Bill Nutting.

"We're interested in making this a model for how schools and teacher education programs can establish partnerships to improve the preparation of teachers and other educational professionals as they enhance the achievement of students who may be currently lagging," Carney says "This includes English language learners in particular."

## Check out these latest numbers

For the fourth year in a row, Western was the top public masters-granting university in the Pacific Northwest, according to U.S. News and World Report.

But have you heard of these other numbers?

**2** Forbes Magazine ranked Western as the second-best public university in the state in its annual list of the nation's 650 top colleges. Western ranked 353 overall, after University of Washington (87) and ahead of Washington State University (464).

**2** Western ranks second among medium-sized universities with alumni serving in the Peace Corps.

**10** Western is 10th among Division II schools and 58th overall on the National Collegiate Scouting Association's Annual Power Rankings, measuring academics and athletics at all 300 NCAA II schools.

**15** When it comes to helping veterans and active duty military service members pursue a college degree, Western is among the top 15 percent of all universities in the country, according to a list of "Military Friendly Schools" in G.I. Jobs magazine.

**18** Western is 18th on the EPA's list of the top 20 green energy purchasers in higher education.



## Adversity strengthens new Western hoops coach

By Jim Carberry

If what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, then you won't find many people stronger than **Tony Dominguez** ('94, Communication), who has faced hardships that not only killed his dreams but nearly killed him.

Yet now the man who never played college ball is the interim head coach of the Western Washington University men's basketball team, the Division II national champion.

"It's pretty amazing to get the chance," says Dominguez, who started at Western 17 years ago as a volunteer assistant to friend and mentor Brad Jackson.

"We're lucky that we kept him this long," says Athletic Director **Lynda Goodrich** ('66, Special Education, Physical Education; '76, M.Ed., Physical Education). "We always felt he was going to be a good head coach. He had his opportunities to go somewhere else. Now he has his opportunity here, and I think he's ready for it."

Growing up, basketball was Dominguez's intense passion.



Photos by Dan Levine

Then in high school he was diagnosed with rheumatic heart disease, an illness that nearly killed him and permanently damaged his heart valves. Doctors told him he had to give up basketball.

"That's not happening," Dominguez remembers thinking. "I was so obstinate that they let me on varsity as a junior."

But two tragic, high-profile deaths of basketball players to heart problems – All-America college player Hank Gathers in 1990 and Western's Duke Wallenborn 1992 – eventually kept Dominguez off the court for good.

He turned his passion to coaching and dreamed of leading a Division I team. After coaching high school and AAU teams, he offered to work at Western for free. "He basically worked full-time for two years," Jackson says. "That was impressive."

Soon Dominguez became an assistant whose responsibilities would grow to include scheduling, scouting, budgeting and, especially, recruiting. He became an integral part of Western's basketball operations.

Finally, after Western's historic 2012 season and national championship, Dominguez thought his time had arrived. But after another unsuccessful job search – the few head coaching jobs along the West Coast were taken – he took his family on vacation "to figure life out," he says.

While Dominguez was visiting New York City, he learned Jackson had taken an assistant coaching position at the University of Washington. Standing in Times Square, surrounded by his family, Dominguez got the call from Goodrich offering him the top coaching job.

"Some of the adversity that he's gone through has strengthened him in a lot of ways," Goodrich says. "It gives him a little more empathy with the player who's struggling."

Empathy, yes. But great expectations, too.

"I don't expect anything less than the national title," says Dominguez, who recruited most of the national championship players. "It's going to be hard, but it's always a coach's goal."





Story by Mary Lane Gallagher

**A**s a student at Western Washington University, Heidi Grant Murphy's ('87, Music Performance) dream was to teach high school choir. But a little voice kept telling her she should be the one at center stage.

Actually, it was the not-so-little voice of former Professor of Music C. Bruce Pullan, who wrote on several of Murphy's evaluations, in red pen, "You should be a singer!!!"

But Murphy longed to raise a family in Bellingham, her hometown. She pictured herself teaching choir at Bellingham High School, sharing her love of music with students at the school she had attended.

Instead she was recruited to University of Indiana's Jacobs School of Music and a shot at the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions. Soon, she made her debut at the Met and spent the next 20-plus years singing with the world's most prestigious opera companies and symphony orchestras.

Grant's voice, perhaps one of the best sopranos on stage today, still inspires music critics to write with emotion, if not in red pen. "Her singing was sensitive, deliciously multicolored in tone quality and altogether stupendous in its technical control," wrote a Boston Globe critic after one performance. "You realized that this was why people have adored and worshipped the human voice."

Murphy recently returned to Western to receive an honorary doctorate and sing the school's Alma Mater at the summer Commencement ceremony.

**An introduction to opera – and car maintenance:**

Murphy learned to love singing in church, where her father, Jeffrey Grant, was a pastor. But her operatic training began in her family's garage, where her father liked to listen to The Metropolitan Opera on the radio while tinkering with his father's old truck.

**Western was a safe place:** Murphy felt supported and encouraged by Western faculty members, particularly Marianne Weltmann, whom she credits with teaching her how to use her voice safely. They also nudged her out of the nest. "A lovely, safe place, Bellingham," Robert Scandrett, professor emeritus of Music told her. "You should try something in a bigger pond."

**The world came to her:** In her senior year, Murphy performed with Norman Phillips, a baritone visiting from the prestigious Jacobs School of Music. He persuaded Murphy to not only attend graduate school in Indiana, but to try out for the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions, something of a regional "American Idol" contest for up-and-coming opera singers. She won the contest and headed to

# Voice with Passion

Famed soprano Heidi Grant Murphy blends the notes of performance, teaching and family

High notes: Heidi Grant Murphy, above, was suspended high above the stage in the Metropolitan Opera's "Orfeo ed Euridice."

Photo by Marty Sohl



New York City after just a year in Indiana.

**A real education:** Murphy says she had a lot of raw talent when she arrived at the Met, but she had a lot of learning to do. Much of her education came in the wings of the great stage at the Met, watching Kathleen Battle, Kiri Te Kanawa and other superstars. “That was probably the most valuable experience,” she says.

**Family matters:** Murphy and her husband, pianist Kevin Murphy, have four children age 8 to 17. In the world of opera, Murphy says, having one child is a big deal. “If you have four, you’re crazy.” When the children were younger, they came along as Murphy performed abroad. But now that they’re older, they have stayed home for their own commitments – and their mom has missed more soccer and football games than she’d like.

**Back to being a teacher:** The family recently moved from New York City to Bloomington, Ind., where both Murphys now teach at the Jacobs School of Music – Kevin Murphy is the university’s head opera coach. Heidi Grant Murphy continues to travel and perform but expects to spend more time teaching. “Vocally, I’m in my prime,” she says. “Emotionally, and as a mother, it’s just getting harder and harder to continue my schedule. I still love it, but it’s harder and harder to go.”

**The future of opera:** Murphy’s graduate students – all well-trained and talented – are hungry for advice that will help them find a break in the brutally competitive business. “My job is to make them the best they can be,” she says. “Who knows who will be the ones who surprise us all? Learning to do something you love can only be a good thing.”

**Sing “from the inside out”:** Murphy has sung in several languages and in dozens of countries, for conductors like Michael Tilson Thomas and Seiji Ozawa. She has sung the parts of nuns, lovers, ingénues and scorned women – she once sang suspended above the stage, as the god Amor, in the Met’s 2009

**Summer performance in Washington:** Murphy is scheduled to perform in the Bellingham Festival of Music’s 20th anniversary season in summer 2013.

**See and hear** Heidi Grant Murphy sing Western’s Alma Mater at [www.wvu.edu/window](http://www.wvu.edu/window).



production of “Orfeo ed Euridice.” Her decades of experience come down to this advice: “Don’t forget – it’s not about technique, it’s about communicating. If you sing well but don’t communicate what you’re saying, that’s the difference between ‘That was a nice voice’ and ‘That really moved me.’”

**Viking accolades:** Heidi Grant Murphy returned to Western in summer 2012 to receive an honorary doctorate, below. Now a faculty member at the Jacobs School of Music at the University of Indiana, Murphy spent more than 20 years as a soprano with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City.





A man with curly brown hair, wearing a blue lab coat and clear safety glasses, is smiling at the camera. He is in a laboratory setting with various equipment and other people in the background. The background is slightly out of focus, showing several other people standing around lab benches. One person in the background is wearing a grey sweatshirt with 'OC' on it. There are lab benches with equipment, including a large clear plastic bag and some papers. The lighting is bright and even.

# PICTURE-PERFECT MEDICINE

Story by Elaine Porterfield



## Industrial designer Jerimiah Welch ('08) helped build a telepharmacy system that could reduce costs and improve safety

If a movie director put out a casting call for someone embodying the Pacific Northwest, it would probably be **Jerimiah Welch**: rock climber, kayaker and, naturally, high-tech entrepreneur improving the lives of people everywhere.

Welch ('08, Industrial Design) has been developing a virtual telepharmacy system based on digital cameras and computers that allows smaller hospitals to share the vital services of pharmacists and bigger hospitals to reduce medication errors and save money.

It's the first time Welch, director of the New Market Design Lab in Bellingham, has ever been involved in the medical field, but he's finding it intriguing. He's working with client Envision Telepharmacy, based in Texas.

"What my client is doing is creating a system that runs over the Internet that allows smaller hospitals to either share a pharmacist or allows pharmacists to do emergency late-night calls from a home office," he says. "Before telepharmacy, rural (hospitals) couldn't afford pharmacists 24/7 - that means having a minimum of five pharmacists on staff."

So instead of pharmacists, nurses would often double-check the work of a pharmacy technician, Welch says.

While licensed pharmacists have expertise in medications and their safety, nurses have variable levels of training in medications. Pediatric, intravenous and critical care medications can be especially complicated. In addition, unusual medications can pose risks for medical workers who handle them inappropriately.

And then there is the risk of medication errors, sometimes even fatal ones. This fall researchers from the University of California at Davis and the University of Utah medical schools found about 30 percent of patients in rural hospitals faced one or more errors in medications ordered after hours.

"Telepharmacy prevents those situations," Welch says. "It makes it a lot easier to double-check something and easier to verify something is correctly made. It makes medicine safer."

The use of the system also can make health care cheaper, because it can help pharmacists use their time more effectively, Welch says. For example, drug compounding - making unique drugs for patients - is done in sterile rooms, and typically requires a pharmacist to gown up before entering to check a technician's work. But with a telepharmacy camera and computer link, a pharmacist can supervise medications

from a computer station anywhere.

"A pharmacist's time costs about \$1 a minute, including when they get dressed and undressed to go into a clean room," Welch says. "Now they don't have to do that. There's a lot of interest in this in places that compound drugs as well as at major city hospitals."

The most gratifying part of developing a telepharmacy program is how it improves medical care overall, he says.

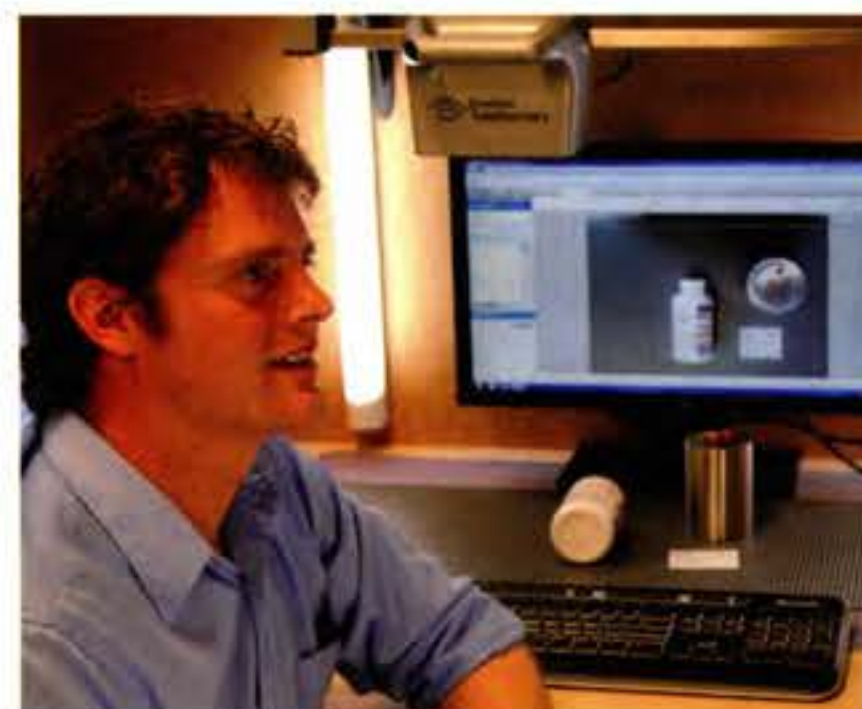
"I feel like it's making a huge impact, even though telepharmacy is still pretty young," he says. "It will save billions for the medical system. And it's already caught quite a few medication errors that would have killed people. That's pretty cool."

WWU Industrial Design Associate Professor Jason Morris says he's not surprised Welch was tapped for such a major project relatively early in his career. "He is one of the most hardworking students I've ever had, and you could see the time he put in on all of his projects. He's just got this combination of talent and also of being very organized."

This fall, Welch began another phase of his association with Western: that of teacher. He is teaching an introductory course in design engineering and an upper-level class on materials for design. One of Welch's former interns from Western, **Anders Mavis** ('10, Industrial Design), says he's sure to be an outstanding instructor.

"The guy is awesome, truly," says Mavis, who now works in outdoor product design for a firm in Boulder, Colo. "He really taught me the skills I needed to survive in the design industry, from understanding relationships in the workplace to acting like a professional. On the design side, he taught me so much from conception to reality and how to work as a team that actually produces something. You don't always understand what it takes to produce something on a large scale. He gave me good insight on that process, and it really prepared me for the real world."

*Elaine Porterfield ('83, English) earned a master's degree in Journalism from Northwestern University. When she's not writing for numerous media outlets, she enjoys Bikram yoga, skiing and running as well as watching her 12-year-old daughter Morgan compete in swimming.*



Working with a Texas company, Jerimiah Welch is developing a telepharmacy system based on cameras and computers that allows smaller hospitals to share resources and reduce medication errors.



# LINKED

## THROUGH LANGUAGE

Linguistics Professor  
Edward Vajda finds  
clues to ancient North  
American migrations in a  
tiny Siberian village

By Matthew Anderson ('06)

There are no roads. There is no train. Most of this area, a gorgeous land of forests, streams and lakes beside the broad Yenisei River, is as undeveloped as it was the day 400 years ago when Russian fur trappers first documented this land.

There is no oil here deep in the north of Siberian Asia. No natural gas. No gold.

But for those interested in the spread of civilization throughout Asia and into North America, there is something here of indescribable value.

Ket, a language spoken by fewer than 50 people, could hold the key to understanding the origin of many Native Americans.


### Clues to a shared ancestry

Kellog Village comprises a handful of Russian-style cabins huddled hard against the Yelogui River, one of the Yenisei's largest tributaries. Most of the 342 people who live here have never seen civilization any bigger than this. The only way in is by helicopter or, during the couple months of Siberian summer, steamboat.

And yet, right now in North America are thousands of people who share ancestry with the people living along this river. They trolled it for fish and floated to its center to avoid the swarms of mosquitos clustered along its shore. They revered the spirit of the sky but reviled his earthly wife, who they believe caused sickness and misfortune among the people. They traded squirrel pelts and used decomposed fish oil as poison with which they'd daub their wooden arrows.

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WWU Linguist Edward Vajda has worked closely with Ket speakers in Siberia, including Ulka, who is one of the last remaining fluent speakers of the language.

Photo by Edward Vajda

One language disappears every two weeks. But the loss of Ket is more than the loss of just another language.



## The Soviets tried to force the Ket to learn Russian, herding Ket children into boarding schools.

That, at least, is the opinion of Ed Vajda, a professor of Linguistics at Western Washington University, who several years ago excited

anthropologists the world over with his hypothesis that these Siberian Ket people share their ancestry with many North Americans, including the Tlingit people of Southeast Alaska and the Navajo and Apache peoples of Arizona and New Mexico.

That shared ancestry, Vajda believes, is revealed in the ways their languages overlap.

In his studies of Ket and its linguistic brethren, for example, Vajda noticed that Yeniseian speakers combined the ideas of fire and water – using one word, “\*igd,” for “down, into the open, toward water, toward fire,” and another word, “eqad < dðq,” for “up, back, away from water, away from fire.” The Na-Dene languages also have directional words that conflate water and fire. And not only that, their words “i’x-d” and “dā’G \*dðG” appear to share a common etymological origin.

Other words, such as those for mosquito, wolverine, river, navel, head, finger and conifer needle, also are similar, Vajda says. The ancient Ket pronounced the word for mosquito (sūj) “soo-ee,” he says, while Na-Dene speakers say “tsoo-ee.”

The more he stumbled on such linguistic similarities, the more Vajda realized they couldn’t be explained away by happenstance. To date, his research has revealed 100-or-so such shared words.

### Kets are sturdy survivors

Ket is the last surviving member of the once robust Yeniseian language family. Now extinct are Yugh, Kott, Assan, Arin and Pumpokol, among others, all of whose speakers lived further south along the Yenisei River, toward Mongolia and civilization. Only the northernmost Ket people, formerly called the Yenisei Ostyak – from a word that the early Russians applied to all west Siberian forest people – survived into the 20th century. (The Ket take their present name from their tribe’s word for “person.”)

And Ket is dwindling fast. Fewer than 50 people – and all of them older than 55 – speak any of the three Ket dialects fluently. The elders still teach Ket to youngsters in several small villages, including Kellog, but most Kets speak Russian and at best know only a few Ket words.

Vajda, who expects the language to disappear as a natural means of communication once today’s elders are gone, traces the language’s demise to the 1930s and ’40s, when the nomadic Ket people were forced by Soviet collectivization campaigns to settle into villages. The Soviets tried to force the Ket and other non-Russian speakers to learn Russian, even going

so far as to herd their children into boarding schools.

Over time, Ket was heard less and less along the river.

“Now, you absolutely can’t get along without Russian in these areas, whether you’re Ket or not,” Vajda says.

Two of Vajda’s best current sources for the Ket language, Marina Irikova and Pavel Sutlin (known in Ket as “Dumgit”, meaning “Little Bird”), know Ket only because they ran away from their boarding schools as young children in the 1950s. They hid in the Siberian Taiga – the Earth’s largest forest – for days and returned to their people only when the Soviets stopped looking. Vajda has worked most extensively with Valentina Romanenkova, a fully fluent speaker who communicates daily with her mother, who is now in her eighties.

### A ‘last living link’

Worldwide, one language disappears every two weeks. But the loss of Ket is more than the loss of just another language, Vajda says.

Ket speakers were the last hunter-gatherers north of the south Siberian steppes, only abandoning their mobile lifestyle during the ’30s. They raised no animals for food, subsisting instead on hunting, fishing and the gathering of wild plants.

They lived among early reindeer-breeding pastoral people, such as Turks, Mongols and Samoyeds, contributing words to their language families, too.

“The words tell us something about prehistoric interaction between peoples in the region between the steppes and the forest,” Vajda says. “Losing Ket as a living language means losing the last living link in this ancient record. Without language documentation, it would be lost forever.”

The Ket can thank their hordes of mosquitos for helping to preserve their language and culture, Vajda says. The mosquito infestation was so bad in summer that the Ket spent the warmer months living on houseboats in the river. The pests made reindeer breeding difficult and discouraged visitors from staying long.

The Ket language, with its prefixing verb structure, is built differently than Turkic, Mongolian and Samoyed, the languages that surrounded it for thousands of years. As such, Ket has adapted itself over the years in ways no other language in human history has had to do, Vajda says.

“Ket is really interesting to study for understanding human language diversity and how languages can contact and influence each other over time,” he says.

He’s at work on a comprehensive dictionary of all Yeniseian languages, fighting against time to preserve all that can be known about the language structures, verbs, tones and vocabularies.

Not only is Ket the last window into the human prehistory of North Asia, Vajda says, it’s also a key to understanding the peopling of the Americas. By studying Ket and changes to the surrounding languages, Vajda believes he can paint a



historical picture, starting as far back as the last ice age, of the movements of people throughout north Asia and across the Bering Strait into North America.

It has long been supposed that these two peoples were linked by language, but Vajda's work is the first to gain widespread acceptance among scholars.

His hypothesis relies heavily on the studies of Germany's Heinrich Werner, who worked with the Kets and Yughes (relatives of the Ket who went extinct in the 1980s) for more than 30 years. Vajda also has stood on the shoulders of Russia's Andreas Dulzon, who began modern fieldwork with the Ket language in 1955 and continued until his death in 1973.

More recently, Vajda has collaborated with historical linguist George Starostin, of Moscow, and with Germany's Stefan Georg, who in 2000 became the first person from outside Russia to conduct original fieldwork among the Kets, and who has written a robust Ket grammar.

He spent part of fall 2012 studying with Bernard Comrie at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Biology, looking for further evidence of relationships among the Yeniseian and Na-Dene languages.

Part of the reason that Vajda's Dene-Yeniseian hypothesis has gained steam among researchers is that since publicizing his ideas, Vajda has gathered information from other realms of research – including archaeology, genetics and cultural heritage studies – to show that such a connection is not only possible but probable.

## Hints in 'living memory'

Vajda's hypothesis has not gone unnoticed by the Na-Dene people of North America.

"Elders tell me that often too little attention has been paid by linguists and anthropologists to traditional folk belief, to the living memory of the people," Vajda says. "I think they're right."

As he studies further links between these peoples, Vajda hopes to learn migration stories from various Na-Dene tribes in North America.

"I suspect they preserve ancient memory of real events," he says.

Vajda says he's heard enough folklore to intrigue him, including vague stories of ancestral migration over water. One such story even says that dogs could be heard barking from the water during one over-water trip, and some historians have interpreted the barking to be that of seals.

But none of the stories is clear enough to contain any sort of proof of an ancient migration across the Bering Strait,

The more Vajda stumbled on linguistic similarities, the more he realized they couldn't be explained by happenstance.



Edward Vajda spent several weeks in northern Siberia documenting the Ket language in Kellogg Village, which sits along the Yelogui River. Above, Vajda walks down Kellogg's main street with Valentina, whose mother, Ulka, is a perfect speaker of Ket. Valentina, below, and her mother are crucial to Vajda's research.

Vajda says.

"There are some hints in some stories that could be interpreted in that way," he says, "but they could be interpreted in other ways, too."

And that's a problem that can only be settled by further research, Vajda says. After he's done cataloguing for posterity all he knows of the Yeniseian languages, he'll renew his hunt for ways – whether they be linguistic, cultural, spiritual or genetic – that these people from different continents are linked.

"There needs to be a lot more research on various aspects of the connection," he says, "in order for the issue to be settled."

*Matthew Anderson* ('06, Journalism) is Western's New Media coordinator. His previous stories for Window include a profile of Vehicle Research Institute students building a 100-mpg car for the Progressive Automotive X-PRIZE. His other writing, in 140-character increments, can be found on Western's Twitter feed.





Photo by Olivier Koning



# BRINGING THEM HOME

Anthropology alum Bill Belcher helps lead the military's massive effort to find and identify thousands of POW/MIAs

By Dennis Hollier

**L**ike all archaeologists, **Bill Belcher** ('84, Anthropology; '85, M.S., Anthropology) is a kind of detective, patiently sifting the soil for clues to old mysteries. But, while other archaeologists ponder mostly ancient history, Belcher is focused on riddles that still bewilder thousands of American families today.

As the deputy director of the Honolulu-based Central Identification Laboratory at JPAC – the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command – Belcher is responsible for helping the military find and identify the remains of thousands of American servicemen lost in wars around the world. This work has taken him from the jungles of Southeast Asia, to the sea-floor around Palau, to crash sites high in the Indian Himalayas.

But to really understand what Belcher does – and why it matters – it may help to revisit an old case set in the bucolic English countryside.

For more than 55 years, the wreckage of the B-17 Flying Fortress Tondalayo lay buried here in a tidal marsh on the edge of the River Stour. According to Belcher, the old bomber was a part of the so-called Secret Squadron, a fleet of black-painted B-17s that flew nightly sorties over the cities of Germany and occupied Europe in the final stages of World War II. The Secret Squadron's mission was to drop leaflets ahead of Allied bombing campaigns, warning civilians to flee. The devastation wrought by these displays of Allied air power was rapidly bringing the German Wehrmacht to its knees. Within weeks, the war in Europe would be over. But, on March 4, 1945, returning home from a routine mission over Amsterdam



When the B-17 Flying Fortress Tondalayo was shot down over England in 1945, all parachuted to safety except for the pilot and co-pilot. Bill Belcher and his crew recovered remains from the crash site more than 50 years later.

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and Rotterdam, Tondalayo was shot down by an English anti-aircraft battery that mistook the black Flying Fortress for a German bomber.

### A 55-YEAR-OLD CRASH SCENE

This is really the beginning of the story for Belcher. Because, although most the crew of Tondalayo parachuted to safety, the pilot, Lt. Col. Earle Aber Jr., and the co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Maurice Harper, remained aboard, presumably to make sure the crippled plane didn't crash into a populated area. They died when Tondalayo came down in flames, narrowly avoiding the tiny riverside village of Wrabness. The impact of the crash was so violent that, at the time, all rescuers were able to find of the airmen was part of Aber's forearm, identified by his Eagle Scout ring. This was buried at Madingly, the U.S. military cemetery in Cambridge, U.K.

For the next five decades, Tondalayo and its lost crew were forgotten. But by the 1990s, local history buffs and divers, noticing the wreckage jutting from the mud at low tide, had begun researching war records to identify the plane. Finally, in June of 2000, Belcher – then with the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, one of JPAC's predecessor organizations – led an

expedition of military personnel, including explosive ordnance and mortuary affairs specialists, Royal Navy divers and Royal Marine salvage specialists, on a mission to try to recover the remains of Aber and Harper and bring them home.

'If my father had happened to die in Vietnam, I would have wanted somebody to put a really good effort into bringing him back. I try to be that person.'



After nearly 60 years, little remained of the wreckage of the Tondalayo but steel beams jutting out of muddy river flats in southeast England.

Belcher has conducted dozens of these recovery operations, but he still describes the Tondalayo case as one of his most rewarding and challenging. "It was more of a complicated site," he says. "The plane was buried in the mud at the edge of a river, so we had

to have a platform – a kind of barge – stationed there. We were using divers as well. And it was pretty shallow at low tide, so we were using a mechanical excavator, like a back-hoe, mounted on the barge."

As Belcher and his crew worked on the muddy tidal flats, they were watched over by family members of the fallen airmen who had come all the way from the United States, seeking closure. At night, the recovery team and relatives of the missing men dined together and talked. One of the family members solemnly showed them Aber's Eagle Scout ring. "To me, as an Eagle Scout, that was an interesting connection," Belcher says.

And, as the team's lead archaeologist, Belcher choreographed the whole, frenetic operation. "I couldn't stay long in one place," he says. "A lot of the times, I would get in the water, directing where I wanted the excavator. Or I would be sitting up with the operator, indicating where I wanted to pull different material from." But it was also backbreaking, meticulous work. Belcher's crew carefully screened every load from the excavator

for potential human remains or crash site artifacts to be cataloged and packed off to JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory in Honolulu.

A JPAC recovery operation, after all, is a forensic investigation. In fact, JPAC's state-of-the-art Central Identification Laboratory is one of the largest certified forensic labs in the world. When the lab receives skeletal remains or artifacts from a crash site, those items are subjected to rigorous analysis. Scientists at the lab or other Defense laboratories use dental and medical records, as well as technological advances like DNA analysis and mass spectrometers, to help identify human remains. In addition, JPAC historians research military records, eyewitness testimony and other historical documents to lend context to the findings of the archaeologists.

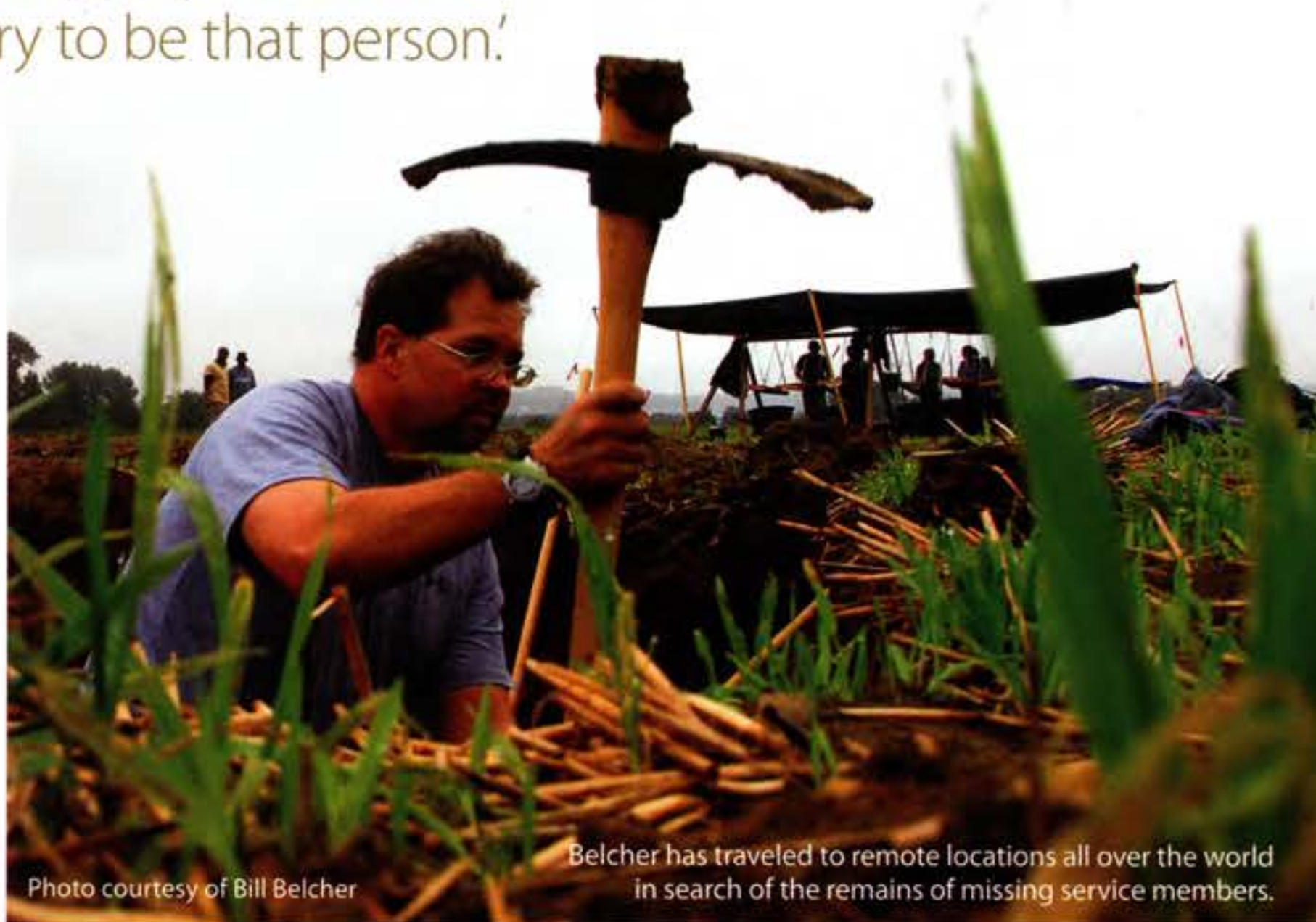


Photo courtesy of Bill Belcher

Belcher has traveled to remote locations all over the world in search of the remains of missing service members.



## JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory is one of the largest certified forensic labs in the world.

### IT STARTED WITH FISH BONES

Like all JPAC archaeologists, Belcher has become an expert at identifying human remains. Recently, for example, JPAC scientists have begun identifying Korean war unknowns by comparing their clavicles with those in

tuberculosis X-rays taken of soldiers just before heading off to war. But it was Belcher's experience with fish bones that first led him to JPAC. He began his academic career under the tutelage of the late Western Anthropology Professor Herbert C. "Bud" Taylor Jr., researching the ethnohistory of shellfishing by the Coast Salish Indians of Puget Sound. Later, Belcher studied maritime adaptation – how people around the world adapt to a coastal environment – at the University of Maine. Largely, that meant sifting through ancient garbage heaps, analyzing fish bones and other debris to gain insight into how the use of maritime resources changed over time.

Belcher did his Ph.D. work at the University of Wisconsin, where South Asia scholar J. Mark Kenoyer learned of Belcher's experience looking at fish bones. "So he asked me, 'Do you want to take a look at some samples of fish bones from Pakistan?'" Belcher remembers. "That's how I got sucked into the South Asian vortex, as we grad students called it."

For the next several years, Belcher was absorbed in the archaeology of the maritime and riverine cultures of ancient Pakistan and India. (Even today, he continues his research of South Asia.) Along the way, he developed a skill-set that would become crucial on cases like the Tondalayo crash. Studying Kenoyer's fish bones, Belcher began to see patterns. "Certain kinds of bones were found in certain areas of the sites, or they had different kinds of cut marks on different parts of the bodies." With these clues, he learned to reconstruct lost cultures of South Asia, to tell the stories in the bones. He immersed himself in his fieldwork to learn more. "I had to live among the locals," he says, "in order to study the traditional fishing practices and butchery practices in the villages and markets of Pakistan."

It's not hard to see how the arcane skills he accumulated as a scholar turned out to be germane to his work at JPAC. "People who study animal bones at archaeological sites are looking at food remains. So, a lot of times it's broken and cut up. By the same token, a lot of the materials that we look at at JPAC have been broken up in plane crashes. I think being a fish bone analyst gives me a unique perspective, because I'm used to dealing with fragmentary bones instead of a complete skeleton."

### THE SON OF A COMBAT VETERAN

Even the time he spent roughing it in southern Pakistan and India turned out to be advantageous at JPAC. "They told me, 'We want you to apply for this job because you've got experi-

ence dealing with both animal and human bones. Plus, you've worked in countries where the infrastructure isn't so well-developed as it is in the U.S.' That's how I ended up at JPAC, 14 years ago."

Finally, as the son of a veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam wars, Belcher has a heart for the work that JPAC does. "When I was growing up we fully understood that my father might get killed in Vietnam," he says. "So when I'm out there on any case, one of the things I think about is trying to do the work as efficiently as possible so that the family gets resolution. If my father had happened to die in Vietnam, I would have wanted somebody to put a really good effort into bringing him back. I try to be that person."

That sense of service was evident 12 years ago on the banks of the River Stour. Here, Belcher and his crew eventually put together the story of the last, heroic moments aboard Tondalayo. The remains of Lt. Col. Aber and 2nd Lt. Harper were found near the bomb racks of the shattered plane. The men were either wearing their parachutes or holding them.

"The bomb bay was the emergency escape route for the pilot and co-pilot," Belcher says. "They had managed to avoid crashing into the village, and, I believe, they were trying to get out of the plane."

"They just ran out of time."

The remains of Aber and Harper were buried together at Arlington National Cemetery.

*Dennis Hollier is a senior writer for Hawaii Business Magazine. As a freelancer, he also writes extensively about science, nature and Hawaiian culture.*

### JPAC BY THE NUMBERS

**400:** approximate number of staff, including civilian anthropologists, historians, lab technicians, military commanders, ordnance specialists, language experts and logistics support staff

**83,000:** number of American service men and women still missing from past conflicts

**13,700-plus:** number of case files maintained by JPAC, including 2,600 from the Vietnam War, 8,100 from the Korean War, 3,000 from WWII, and a "handful of others."

**35,000:** number of missing American WWII service men and women whose remains JPAC considers "recoverable"

**23:** number of JPAC expeditions over the last year to places like Laos, Vietnam, North Korea, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, France and Canada

**5:** average number of weeks for a JPAC recovery operation

Learn more at [www.jpac.pacom.mil/](http://www.jpac.pacom.mil/)



# Building Beautiful Music

Millions of gorgeous guitars get their start in Steve McMinn's mill in the Cascade foothills

By Mary Lane Gallagher

Thirty years ago, **Steve McMinn** ('83, Technology Education) ordered a guitar kit that changed his life.

An experienced woodworker preparing to teach woodworking to kids, McMinn planned to build this guitar then learn how to play it. But his motivation changed when he opened the box and found guitar parts made of low-quality wood.

Unsatisfied with both the materials and his own handiwork, McMinn ended up burning his unfinished guitar in his Bellingham driveway, but not before it sparked an idea.

"I thought, somebody who was smarter, who would work harder – and who had a rich uncle – could probably make a business out of this," he says.

At first, he hoped to just keep himself employed. Today, McMinn owns Pacific Rim Tonewoods, a mill in the Cascade foothills town of Concrete. McMinn and his business partner and general manager, Eric Warner – along with 25 employees – are a key supplier of finely crafted parts for high-end guitar companies such as Taylor, Martin, Gibson and others.

And after more than two decades of smarts and hard work, McMinn has become his own "rich uncle." High quality



The company supplies Taylor, Martin and other companies specializing in hand-crafted guitars.

acoustic guitars are a thriving niche market. If guitars were cars, then the Taylor and Martin companies – competitors who both count on Pacific Rim Tonewoods for their

materials – would make Audis and Lexuses, McMinn says.

"It seems like a lot to spend \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000 on a guitar, but then think about what cars cost," he says. "This is a cultural artifact that's beautiful. You can pass it on and you can make something beautiful with it."

It starts with McMinn examining the cross-section of a centuries-old log.

**Reading the wood:** McMinn runs his fingers along the concentric rings of a 400-year-old Sitka spruce and stops at dark stains left by 200-year-old pitch. Some bad years – drought, wind and other stressors – caused the rings to shrink, swell and compress, he says. He drives a power-driven wedge cutter down into the log to crack it open along the grain line.

**Carving out the soundboards:** Where the rings are wide, bright and uniform, he carves out wedge-shaped pieces wide enough for half a soundboard – the face of the guitar. Smaller pieces are put aside to be made into interior framing structures and even small edging pieces. McMinn carefully carves around the bad years, tossing them aside to be ground down into burning bricks for wood stoves. "We're trying to use everything but the squeal," he says.

**Hand-picking the trees:** McMinn estimates he and his employees spend a total of 140 days a year in the woods from Mendocino, Calif., to Kodiak, Alaska, picking out hundreds of logs. Most of the trees have been cut down already and are on their way to Asia before a Pacific Rim Tonewoods worker plucks them out of a log boom. So far this year, they've bought more than 100 logs in Haida Gwaii, B.C., formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands. "If we don't hustle, the logs almost never come to us," he says. "You have to go find them."

**High-tech mill:** Though the success of his business depends on the human skill of "reading" old growth spruce and maple, McMinn also relies on modern equipment to finish the pieces with minimal waste. A new, specially adapted saw from Austria, for example, reduces the amount of wood lost to sawdust. McMinn also added a third production line and made other changes this year to increase output by 50 percent and keep up with demand. Baby boomers, it turns out, love nice guitars.

**Tree farm dreams:** Last year, McMinn bought an old maple log from Ferndale with a beautiful rippling texture often found in violins. It's an extremely rare, desirable characteristic, he says, and it could be genetic. So they buried the maple stump by the mill's vegetable garden, wrapped it in deer-proof fencing and swaddled it in a shade tarp. McMinn dreams of cultivating the shoots into rows and rows of replicas of the best maple he has ever cut. Except the shoots wouldn't grow. "I was the butt of many jokes," he says. Then this summer, a Pacific Rim Tonewoods employee spotted growth on one of the stump pieces. McMinn had some of the cells cultivated. "We've got some test tube babies coming," he said. "We'll see where that goes."





Above, Steve McMinn carefully splits logs into bolts to be milled into components of guitars, mandolins and other stringed instruments.

Below, Sawyer Derrick Schmidt cuts wide panels that will later be cut into soundboards.

Photos by Rachel Bayne



# More than words



Noah Chen, 6, plays "Sorry!" with a straw in his mouth to help him pronounce the "S" sound during his appointment at Western's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic with graduate students Mindy Simmill, bottom left, and Christen Lindgren, top left. Parents can listen and watch their child's progress on the other side of the one-way glass behind Noah.



Story by Meri-Jo Borzilleri  
Photos by Rachel Bayne



## Graduate students at Western's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic help children and adults overcome communication problems

**A**t 4 o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon inside the austere named Academic Instructional Center, some serious playtime is going on.

Western's Speech-Language-Hearing clinic is in full swing the first week of the fall quarter. That means all 11 therapy rooms are occupied with clients. On this day, most are kids – one to a room, each getting a ton of gentle attention from a pair of graduate students.

In one room, the students – and their trained supervisor – are singing a hello song to a boy with autism. They're trying to teach him to follow commands. In another, students shine a flashlight into the mouth of a young girl who had cleft-palate surgery. They're trying to get her to speak more clearly. In a third room, students use a board game to help a boy who stutters let the words ...just...flow.

The students – all clinicians in training – are part of Western's Communication Sciences and Disorders' two-year graduate program, where textbook examples and classroom hypotheticals literally come to life.

### 60-hour weeks

Starting on their first day, grad students – some just months removed from getting undergraduate degrees – get hands-on experience providing therapy to toddlers, kids and adults coping with disorders ranging

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from autism and injury- or stroke-related language impairments to hearing loss and voice disorders.

"You get your feet wet super-fast," says grad student **Alyssa Ellingboe** ('09, Business Administration), 26, who attended Western as an undergrad.

The clinic diagnoses and provides therapy for language, speech and hearing disorders in people of all ages. About 200 people are seen at the clinic each academic quarter.

But for students, just getting into the program is tough: This year, 173 applicants applied for 20 spots. A total 40

students participate in the program. And the challenges don't end there.

Along with a heavy courseload each quarter, each student must complete 400 hours with clients over two years. Expect 50- to 60-hour weeks of study and clinic work, first-year grad students are told. That doesn't count the 10 to 20 hours per week many spend as teaching or research assistants. The biggest adjustment from undergraduate life? Time management.

"My planner is full," says first-year **Helen Strausz** ('12, Communication Sciences and Disorders), squeezing in a few minutes of clinic report work while waiting for an interview at an on-campus Starbucks. "On top of schoolwork, we have meetings with supervisors."

All those clinic hours can be the make-or-break indicator of whether you're cut out for this type of work.

Students begin working with clients right away, at first with other students and later on their own – and always under the supervision of a clinical educator. Students often have new clients each 10-week quarter.

The learning curve is steep, helped by constant monitoring and assessment. Therapy rooms have one-way mirrors, where supervisors and parents can ob-

serve without being seen. The sessions are videorecorded to study both client and clinician.

"It's very intimidating," says Mindy Simmill, 27, a second-year who says she has gotten more comfortable over time. "Your co-clinician is watching you, your supervisor, your client's family; you're being videotaped and you have a giant mirror," Simmill says. "And then you have your client. You think you're never going to help them because, at least in the beginning, you feel like you don't know anything."

Part of that is by design, because you can't know everything. Speech and language pathology, along with audiology, are wide-ranging fields, affecting "anything between the top of your head and your lungs" that has to do with communication says Jennifer Gruenert, a speech-language pathologist and one of 13 clinic supervisors.

That's why clinic work is so important for students.

"That weeds out people," says **Kristin Clements** ('00, Recreation; '09, M.A., Speech-Language Pathology), a 2009 graduate now working as a speech-language pathologist at the Whatcom Center for Early Learning in Bellingham. "You have to be able to take

## Students bring their skills to the community

Western's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic expands into the community through outreach programs, including regular visits to assisted-living facilities for testing and hearing-aid fittings, maintenance and repair.

Students also complete internships in schools, hospitals, birth-to-three centers, veterans hospitals, nursing homes and in private practice.



Maureen Hagan, a graduate student clinician, helps Nick Baker, right, with his "SP" sounds. The cards on the table remind Nick to breathe, relax and slow down as he speaks.





*“...You’re going to have to think on the fly and be quick.”*

the book skills and transfer it onto the real (client). You don’t know what people – kids, adults – are going to throw at you. You’re going to have to think on the fly and be quick.”

You’re constantly re-adjusting your carefully made plans, says second-year student Kara Johnson, 23. A child might not have slept well or had a meltdown before coming to the clinic. “It makes you a good clinician,” Johnson says.

### ‘Miraculous’ improvement

Dominic Alexander’s life turned upside-down more than a year ago when he went hunting for deck-chair pillows. In a rush – friends were coming over – he climbed a 12-foot ladder to a garage loft.

Alexander, 33, fell and hit his head. His brain swelled so quickly he almost died. Doctors removed part of his skull to relieve the pressure, but Alexander suffered a brain injury that affected his speech.

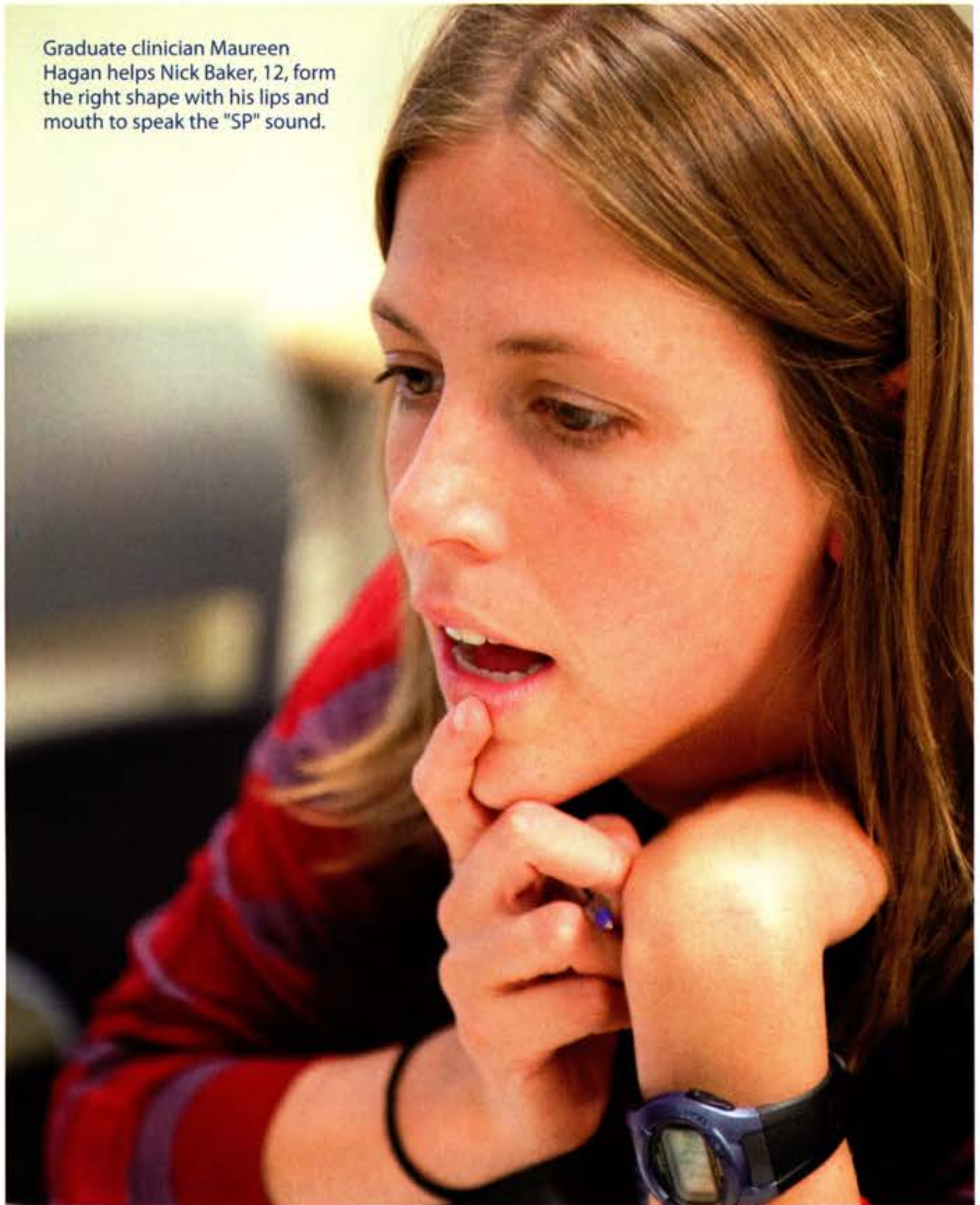
Today, he attends the clinic twice a week, once for individual therapy and once for group sessions. He lights up talking about them. Alexander’s improvement has been “miraculous,” says his wife, Teresa. Both hold hopes he will eventually return to his job at the BP plant.

Alexander, a former star football and baseball player at Lynden High, says he’s inspired by those in the group, most of whom are at least 20 years older. During these sessions, conversation flows freely.

“There are some words that we miss” that the clinician helps with, he says. “But we want to do it by ourselves. That’s how we improve.”

Jennifer Boer is mom to Nathan, age 4, and Evan, 3. Both have had therapy at the clinic for speech disorders. Boer says Western helped because she and her husband could afford therapy twice a week there versus once a week with private therapy. She says that though the students were young, she trusted them and their supervisor. They “were very professional and very nice and caring,”

Graduate clinician Maureen Hagan helps Nick Baker, 12, form the right shape with his lips and mouth to speak the “SP” sound.



Boer says.

Dr. David Olson, a Bellingham Ear, Nose and Throat physician, regularly refers patients to Western’s clinic. What patients get in the university setting that they might not get in private therapy, Olson says, is more one-on-one time.

“They have more time to learn the therapy” under the watchful eye of the clinician, he says, rather than going home and doing it themselves.

What students lack in experience, they make up for with the chance to develop a longer relationship with the patient. They bring fresh ideas and new energy. Seasoned faculty, like Professor

Barbara Mathers-Schmidt, CSD department chairwoman, and Professor Lina Zeine, bring expertise from university research and the latest developments in the field.

Making the clinic tick is seven-year director Terry Sacks, whose office is just steps from the therapy rooms. Sacks is also a clinical educator working closely with students, clients and their families. Students say she’s part den mother, part Pied Piper.

Strausz, the grad student with the full planner, didn’t know much about the field of CSD when she started an under-

Continued on page 28



*"It's a high-demand profession, students are offered jobs before they graduate."*



Genevieve Rohrbach, 8, paints during a visit with graduate student Melissa Hill at Western's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic.

graduate work-study job as Sacks' office assistant, helping with filing, recycling and some clinic check-in.

"Her passion for the field is so empowering," Strausz says of Sacks. "She just turned a light on for me. I just fell in love with it."

For a clinic that has been operating since the late 1970s, Speech-Language-Hearing keeps a low profile even in its high-rise digs. Occupying two floors in the sparkling new Academic Instructional Center, it also houses clinics in audiology and aural rehab, led by CSD associate professors Rieko Darling and Kimberly Peters, respectively. Another associate professor, Eva Baharav, works with children with autism and their parents.

## Out of 'The Dungeon'

The building, completed in 2009, is a big step up from the clinic's former cramped surroundings in the lower level of Parks Hall. Students had nicknamed it "The Dungeon."

Still, what goes on in the current AIC is off-the-radar to most students walking past on this October day. For privacy reasons, the main clinic entrance faces the back parking lot. The building itself is sometimes confused with Communications next door, and each year an undergrad or two wanders the hall looking for a Comm classroom.

In similar fashion, the study of Communications Sciences and Disorders takes some discovering too. Graduate students in the program are typically

in their mid-20s or older. Undergrads sometimes major in something else, like child development, before finding out about CSD at Western. But the undergraduate program is growing, too, with 114 students majoring in CSD.

"It's one of those things that are not part of people's conventional wisdom unless you know somebody who stutters, has had a stroke...or some kind of significant disability," Gruenert says, though the exploding incidence of autism is changing things. "Generally speaking, only 10 percent of the population has a communication disorder."

Students troubled by a dead-end job market would do well to explore this field of study, especially at Western, where the graduate program has a 100 percent post-graduation employment rate. Speech language pathologists can work in places like schools, hospitals and private practice, and the low-stress profession not only pays well but consistently ranks well in job-satisfaction polls.

"It's a high-demand profession," says Mathers-Schmidt, the CSD department chairwoman. "Students are offered jobs before they graduate."

Kara Johnson, the second-year grad student, knew at a young age she was destined for this kind of work. An early clue: She didn't enjoy babysitting, because she didn't want to just sit. She got the most satisfaction from helping a child learn something or overcome a developmental obstacle.

She's doing just that in the clinic, where 10-weeks-at-a-time can seem, at times, painfully short.

"I'm looking forward to having my own (clients) so I don't have to say goodbye," she says.

*Meri-Jo Borzilleri is a Bellingham freelance journalist whose work has appeared in USA Today, The Miami Herald, The Seattle Times, Seattle Metropolitan Magazine, The Boston Globe, Yale Alumni Magazine, The Penn Stater magazine and ESPN.com, among other outlets.*



# Alumni Conversations



**By Deborah DeWees**  
Executive Director  
Western Alumni Association

Everyone knows the Western experience is about more than memorizing text in books, warming a seat in a lecture hall and filling in bubbles on a test. WWU students work closely in partnership with their instructors to develop a unique educational experience for building a career, purpose and life after college.

Beyond the educational aspects, working with our alumni has given me the privilege to witness the untold stories of the Western experience that go even deeper – the ongoing connections and lifelong relationships that began at Western.

The picture on the inside back cover tells one such story of seven close friends who gravitated to each other through different activities and social intersections while at Western. These women came to WWU wanting a quality education, liked the fact that we don't have sororities, and ended up finding each other. What began in classrooms and lunches on Red Square developed into campus running partners and softball teammates, and grew into becoming roommates, co-workers, travel companions, bridesmaids and confidants well into adulthood.

This group of proud Viking women is now spread across the country with successful careers and families. Yet more than 20 years later, they still reunite at least twice a year to continue growing their bond of support and friendship. And through their life changes, Western remains a common bond – each of these women is a member of the Alumni Association and a proud Western supporter. Each one has a philanthropic heart, giving her time and financial support to make an impact in a variety of nonprofit causes, as well as supporting WWU scholarships.

And this is just one group of girlfriends.

There are many more stories of friendships, marriages and partnerships that began with students who sought out Western for its academic excellence and found a deeper thread weaving them together through college and beyond, creating the tapestry of their lives.



**"We've leaned on each other and have been there through everything. Western not only launched us into our lives and careers, it gave us this friendship we will have our whole lives."**

*-Tina (Pappas) Aigner ('90)*

What's your story? How have the people you met at Western continued to enrich your lives? How do you stay connected and support the University to enable other lives to be affected this way? The easiest way is to become a member of the Alumni Association. Membership provides opportunities to bring you and your friends together again, in addition to supporting the place where it all began.

Join us!

Deborah DeWees

A handwritten signature of Deborah DeWees in black ink.



# diy ELEGANCE

Event planner-alum's own hand-crafted nuptials appear in Martha Stewart Weddings magazine



Photos by Michèle M. Waite



## By Olena Rypich

Every bit the hands-on event designer, **Steven Moore** ('03, Communication) has been known to create everything from floral arrangements to bridal gowns for his clients at Steven Moore Designs in Bellingham.

When it came to his own wedding, the hand-crafted details – from the wedding dress he created for his wife to the transformation of an old barn in Lynden for the reception – caught the attention of Martha Stewart Weddings magazine, which featured the nuptials in its "Real Couples" section in summer 2012.

**Starting the business:** When I was growing up, my mother taught me how to do different things, like sewing, so I was helping friends out by doing their cakes and making their dresses. Back in college, no one had money for those things. Then I realized it could turn into a lucrative business. In October 2005, I got my business started.

**Jamie, his wife and business partner, is really, really organized:** The business has never been stronger since Jamie joined. Things that normally stress brides out don't even cause my wife to blink. There's no one in this world that I trust more than her.

**Creating Jamie's wedding dress wasn't part of the original plan:** When she started shopping for dresses, I didn't even suggest it. But a month and a half before the wedding, she called me from the dress shop, on the verge of tears [upon finding the dress was 5 inches too short]. I offered to make it for her. I thought she would be completely against it, but she was pretty excited.

**Turning an old barn and church gym into a rustically elegant setting takes carpet, chandeliers and extra fabric to hide the basketball hoop:** We didn't want to get married at a venue that felt like work. We also wanted a place that wasn't a wedding venue and that has never done a wedding and will never do another wedding.

**Steve reupholstered a tired old couch to create a stylish conversation nook at the reception:** So many people want to rush through (the engagement) and get to the day. But it's such a cool season. When else in your life are you going to plan and look forward to something for so long that will culminate in this beautiful event with all the people you love coming together?

**Your wedding is your story:** List the things you love and the things people would say defines who you are. When people walk in, it should be a true reflection of your personality, not traditions you thought you had to follow. If you don't want to wear a white dress, don't wear a white dress. If you want to wear tennis shoes, wear them.

**But it's not all about you:** I always tell my clients to focus on their guests and on them being comfortable. Then it always comes together.

**Future of Steven Moore Designs:** We spent the first year learning to be married and enjoying being married. Now we're excited about dreaming big and defining what we want. We've talked about expanding nationally.

**The bottom line:** We want to make the art of fine living very approachable and take the pretentious, arrogant side out of it and celebrate beauty. You only live once. Why not enjoy it?

**Olena Rypich** ('12, Journalism-Public Relations) has been planning her wedding since the age of 3 and hopes it will someday incorporate her family's Eastern Orthodox traditions as well as her love of Ukrainian culture.



## Class Notes

**1944 – Georgie Bright Kunkel** (Elementary Education) is a weekly columnist for the West Seattle Herald, appears regularly at the Comedy Underground and recently spoke at the American School Counselors Association national conference. These days, she's writing a book about her late brother, **Norman Bright** ('31, Elementary Education), an accomplished distance runner who competed while blind during his later years. Those with memories of Norman Bright may send their stories to his sister at [gnkunkel@comcast.net](mailto:gnkunkel@comcast.net).

**1946 – Joyce Gillie** (Elementary Education; M.Ed., Elementary Education) was named a Living Legend of Thurston County for her decades of community service. Gillie is a retired elementary teacher and principal in Olympia schools as well as a founding member of what is now Olympia's Family Support Center.

**1968 – Mary Skowronski** (English-Secondary) was recently appointed interim assistant principal of Redding Elementary School in Connecticut. Skowronski has worked as a reading and literacy consultant and held interim leadership positions at several Connecticut schools.

**1970 – Gerald Apple** (English-Secondary; '76, M.Ed., History) has taught driver's education for 40 years, most recently at Shelton High School. He recently received the 2012 Teacher Excellence Award from the National Road Safety Foundation.

**1971 – Kate Lloyd** (Art) is working on the sequel to "Leaving Lancaster," a novel published by David C. Cook in March 2012 and inspired by Pennsylvania Amish Country. Her first novel, "A Portrait of Marguerite," is set in Seattle. **Bill Lahmann** (Elementary Education) recently retired as superintendent of the Olympia School District.

**1973 – Larry Sparks** (History) recently e-published his memoir, "Fishing for Freedom," an adventure story about a summer he worked on his father's fishing boat in southeast Alaska and Puget Sound. **Dennis Mansker** (English) was recently named Thurston County Democrat of the Year. The author of "A Bad Attitude: A Novel from the Vietnam War," Mansker is the editor of the Thurston County Democrats newspaper.

**1974 – Bob Crowley** (Sociology) recently retired after 36 years in the Alaska Marine Highway System, including 20

as a captain. He spent his entire career on the M/V Tustumena, the "Trusty Tusty," ferrying passengers and goods along the coast from Homer to Dutch Harbor.

**1979 – Cameron Leuthy** (History/Social Studies) is a budget and congressional analyst for Bloomberg Government. Previously he worked at the White House Office of Management and Budget, the Defense Department and at Booz Allen Hamilton.

**1982 – Clayton Mork** (Physics/Mathematics-Secondary; '90, M.Ed., School Administration-Secondary) recently became the superintendent of the Crescent School District in Clallam County. **Lief Christenson** (Geology, '86, M.S., Geology) was honored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for his recent work as a water resources adviser in Afghanistan. Christenson assisted with the development of water infrastructure and watershed restoration in eastern Afghanistan. **Greg Cox** (Chemistry) had two novels come out in summer 2012. "Riese: Kingdom Falling" (Simon & Schuster) is a young-adult science fiction novel based on a popular Web series, while "The Dark Knight Rises" (Titan) is the official novelization of the most recent Batman movie. Cox is also working on new novels based on the "Leverage" and "Star Trek" television series. **David Shockley** (Urban and Regional Planning; '89, Teaching Certificate; '95, M.A., History, Principal's Initial Certificate) became principal for the Odyssey Multiage program, the Mosaic Home Partnership and Eagle Harbor High School on Bainbridge Island.

**1983 – Chuck Lennox** (Environmental Education), principal of Cascade Interpretive Consulting, received E3 Washington President's Award in June.

**1984 – Rod Underhill** (Biology) ran unopposed to become the district attorney for Multnomah County, Oregon. **Patrick Paris** (Speech Communication) is a public relations consultant in New York City. He has worked with the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, authors Judy Collins, Neil Sedaka, Lisa Bloom and Kris Carr, the School of Visual Arts Annual Film and Animation Festival and the launch of directmale.com.

**1985 – Dave Christensen** (Sociology) is head football coach at the University of Wyoming. **Mark Steen** (Business Administration) recently opened Plateau Runner, a shoe store for runners, walkers and joggers in Sammamish, with his wife, Elizabeth.

**1986 – Colleen Haggerty** (Recreation) became executive director of Sean

Humphrey House, a nonprofit adult family home in Bellingham serving low-income people living with HIV and AIDS. **Chip Vincent** (Urban and Regional Planning) became administrator of the city of Renton's Community and Economic Development Department.

**1987 – Mark Brewer** (Biology) became chief executive officer and a member of the board of directors of Typesafe, which creates scalable software platforms designed for multicore, parallel and cloud computing applications.

**1988 – Wendy Staley Colbert** (Journalism) recently published personal essays on Salon.com, in "Whole Life Times," as well as the anthology "We Came to Say: A Collection of Memoir."

**1989 – Shawn Ledford** (Sociology-Criminology) became Shoreline's police chief. Previously, he worked for the King County Sheriff's Office for 23 years. **John Walsh** (Geography) became city administrator for St. Helens, Ore. **Ronald Craig** (Humanities) became director of the North Olympic Skills Center in Port Angeles.

**1990 – Nikoll Noe** (Sociology) lives in Rocklin, Calif., where she works in her husband's software consulting business. Her nephew attends Western. **Bonnie Leaf** (Business Administration-Marketing) lives in Orange County, Calif., and works as a claims manager with CBRE, the world's largest commercial real estate services firm, in the Global Risk Management department. **Pat Leedy** (M.A., History) recently published her second children's book, "Shemsu: A Story Told in Comic Verse." Along with 2011's "The Shemsu Alphabet," it was inspired by Leedy's shelter rescue dog.

**1991 – Chong Porter** (Art) recently became an associate vice chancellor and the primary fundraising officer for the U.C. Davis Health System. **Christine Woodward** (Huxley – Student/Faculty Designed), director of natural resources for the Samish Indian Nation, was honored for her contributions to the field of Indian forestry and natural resources at the Intertribal Timber Council's national conference in May. **Cathleen Meyer** (Business Administration-Marketing) is an asset manager at RREEF Real Estate in Seattle, overseeing a 5 million-square-foot industrial portfolio. **Tina Pappas Aigner** (Communication) is a senior property manager of commercial real estate for a major Seattle investment firm. **Maribeth (Murphy) Ingemansen** (Biology) earned her nursing degree at Seattle University and is the manager of the post-anesthesia care unit, pre-admit clinic and GI lab at MultiCare Good Samaritan Hospital in Puyallup.

**Liane Bear-Donald** (Communication) is a consultant for Microsoft, supporting the company's Garage project, a laid-back innovation lab where employees can tinker with ideas. **Steve Rabb** (School Administration – Secondary) recently became vice president of the Association of Washington Middle Level Principals. **Robert Penney** (German) and his wife, Dayna, opened a Menchie's frozen yogurt store in Bellingham.

**1992 – Krag Oglesby** (Industrial Technology) is a mechanic on the pit crew for Sam Schmidt Motorsports racing team, one of the top teams in IndyCar racing. When driver Simon Pagenaud rolls in for a pit stop, that's Oglesby operating the rear jack. **Dan Templeman** (Sociology), deputy chief of the Everett Police Department, recently graduated from the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Va.

**1993 – Steve Lawrence** (Teaching Certificate) is the 2012 Washington State American History Teacher of the Year. He teaches U.S. history and government, law and society and comparative religion at Meridian High School in Whatcom County. He also spent two weeks this summer as a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Scholar, studying the music, history and culture of the Mississippi Delta. Mountaineers Books just published **Mike McQuaide's** (English-Writing) "75 Classic Rides: Washington; The Best Road Biking Routes." McQuaide's five other books include guides on trail running, day hikes in the Cascades, and exploring

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the Mount Baker/Mount Shuksan regions. **Stephanie Paul Doscher** (M.Ed., Secondary Education) is associate director of Global Learning Initiatives at Florida International University, where she recently completed her doctorate in Educational Administration and Supervision. **Chris Hardy** (Sociology) became the director of business development for the new Tempe office of Xtreme Consulting Group Inc. **Sena Camarata** (Chemistry) was named Outstanding Secondary Teacher by the Renton School Board. Camarata teaches at Hazen High School.

**1994 – Renee Lancaster** (Spanish; '02, M.Ed., School Administration-Secondary, Principal's Initial Certificate) became the assistant principal at Stevens Middle School in Port Angeles. She also teaches Spanish at Port Angeles High School.

**1996 – Jeffry R. Keyes** (Accounting) became Chief Financial Officer of Digirad Corporation, which manufactures diagnostic imaging equipment. Previously, Keyes was corporate controller of Sapphire Energy, an alternative energy company. **Guy Leahy** (M.Ed., Physical Education) is the exercise psychologist at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz. Leahy says he's thankful that Western was willing to give him a shot in graduate school, even though his bachelor's degree was in an unrelated field. Today, he's the author or co-author of more than 30 professional journal articles and often presents at national conferences. Disney-Hyperion recently published "Alien on a Rampage," the second in a series by **Clete Barrett Smith** (English-Secondary). His first book, "Aliens on Vacation," has been optioned into a film under the working title, "Grandma's Intergalactic Bed and Breakfast." **Hugh Hudson** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) and his sister, **Holly**

**Hudson** ('00, Art-Drawing) recently collaborated on "Solo's Garden," a children's book about a little owl who meets friends in the desert. It's available on iTunes.

**1997 – Eric Wingerter** (Planning and Environmental Policy), the vice president of Communications and New Media for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, recently won the Medgar Evers Award, the organization's highest award for NAACP staff members. Wingerter helped create NAACP's New Media Department three years ago.

**1998 – Michael Pearce** (Political Science), business development director for Swedish Medical Group, was recently included in the Puget Sound Business Journal's "40 Under 40" list of leaders in business and community.

**1999 – Mark Lane** (Psychology), a professional waterski instructor, was recently inducted into the Georgia Water Ski Hall of Fame. "Apostle Islands," the second in a series by **Tommy Zurhellen** (M.A., English) that offers a playful, modern retelling of the life of Jesus Christ, was published in September by Atticus Books. After emerging from 40 days and nights in the Badlands of North Dakota, Zurhellen's modern Messiah heads to the Apostle Islands of Lake Superior, ready to find his "fishers of men."

**2000 – Josh** (History; '06, M.Ed., Educational Administration) and **Beth** (History) **Zarling** moved to Trinidad and Tobago to work at the International School of Port of Spain. Josh is middle school principal while Beth is a sixth-grade language arts/social studies teacher. **Nathalie Hardy** (Journalism) became the county government and politics reporter for the News-Register in McMinnville, Ore. A frequent blogger, Hardy also teaches journalism for the online education site Big Picture Classes.

**2001 – Mike Bahn** (M.S., Human Movement and Performance) became the senior strength and conditioning coach for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association, the national parent organization of Olympic skiing and snowboarding. He works with the men's and women's national moguls teams and helps develop the nation's top young skiers through the association's Academy Program. **Christopher Work** (Accounting) became Chief Financial Officer at Zumiez, the retail chain specializing in clothing, footwear and accessories for skate- and snowboarders. Work has been at the Lynnwood-based company since 2007, most recently as its vice president and controller.

**Andrew Gall** (Business Administration-Marketing) recently became creative director at Ogilvy & Mather, a Chicago advertising agency. His second book, "Make Your Own Bucket List" (Adams Media) will be on the shelves this holiday season. **Brett Mitchell** (Music Composition) became music director for the Moores Opera Center at the University of Houston. As an assistant professor at the Moores School of Music, Mitchell will lead the opera program in up to four fully staged works each season. He'll also continue to serve as music director of Michigan's Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra. **Tiffany Campbell** (English-Writing, Environmental Studies/Journalism) became the digital managing editor for WBUR, an NPR affiliate in Boston. **Jordan Hartt** (English-Writing) is a writer, teacher and community and events organizer in Spokane. He co-founded the Conversations Across Borders literary journal. **Will Braden's** (English-Writing) tongue-in-cheek study of the existential angst of Henri the Cat won the Internet Cat Video Film Festival in September. "Henri 2: Paw de Deux" has been seen more than 6 million times. **Travis Silvers** (Music-Performance) teaches guitar in the San Joaquin Valley in California and plays in a guitar trio, ¡Tritarra! **Michael Eliason** (Political Science), who earned his law degree from Willamette University, became the legal counsel for the Association of Oregon Counties.

**2002 – Identical twins John Prosser** (Philosophy) and **Ryan Prosser** (Philosophy) are team teachers in a social studies and language arts class at Gaudrone Middle School in Tacoma. **Felice Cleveland** (Art History) became director of education at the Mattress Factory Art Museum in Pittsburgh. **Dan Pringle** (Humanities) is adult services librarian at the Liberty Lake Municipal Library near Spokane. **Curt Woodward** (Journalism) moved to Boston with his wife, **Tiffany Campbell** ('01, English-Writing, Environmental Studies/Journalism) who got a new job, but he continues to cover Seattle technology businesses for Xconomy.com.

**2003 – Cassandra McKinney** (Environmental Science) became director of the College of Lake County Green Economy and Sustainable Water Center, where she creates programs to help individuals and businesses operate within a green economy. **Michael Griego** ('03, M.S., Psychology) became an associate partner for Annik Technology Services, a global research technology company.

**2004 – Brandon S. Gillin** (Politics/Philosophy/Economics) is an attorney in Wenatchee. His article about

problems relating to garbage generation and collection in China was recently published by the Vermont Journal of Environmental Law. Gillin lived in Nanjing, China, for two years before attending law school in Vermont. **Jordan Lindstrom** (Journalism-Public Relations) became the director of marketing and sales for Mission Ridge Ski & Board Resort in Wenatchee. **Kristen Proctor** (Art-Design Production), a graphic designer and illustrator, was selected by the Mountlake Terrace Arts Advisory commission to exhibit her paintings and drawings at the Mountlake Terrace Library. **Emily O'Connor** (Political Science, Sociology) became the executive director of Lydia Place, a transitional housing program for women and children in Bellingham.

**2005 – Nathan Shields** (Master in Teaching) received the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, which came with \$10,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C. Shields teaches math at Fort Vancouver High School, where he creates interactive websites for his students and colleagues, coaches the Math Team, and helps students and other teachers create videos about mathematics. His "Pi Rap Battle – Lose Yourself (In the Digits)" has been seen more than 169,000 times on YouTube. Navy Ensign **Calvin Sessions** (Electronics Engineering Technology) graduated from Navy Officer Candidate School and received a commission as an ensign while assigned to Officer Training Command in Newport, R.I.

**2006 – Anna Barker** (Political Science/Social Studies) was named Mount Vernon High School Rotary Teacher of the Year. Barker teaches American Government and French. **Michelle Ota** (M.Ed., Educational Administration) became principal at Viewlands Elementary School in Seattle. **Amy Brown** (M.Ed., Environmental Education), who coordinates the North Cascades Institute's Wild program, received an E3 Washington Award of Excellence in June. The Wild program offers wilderness expeditions in the North Cascades to high school students.

**2007 – Michael Miller** (Theatre) became the pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Clovis, Calif. **John Clary Davies** (Environmental Studies/Journalism) became associate editor of Powder, The Skier's Magazine. Davies is former intern for Powder and a longtime senior correspondent. **Caleb Breakey** (Journalism) has two books in the works with Harvest House Publishers: "Following Jesus without Leaving the Church" for fall 2013 – and also the subject of a DVD series – and "Falling in Love without Falling

## Send us your Class Notes

Got a promotion? Published your novel? Making a difference in your community? Share your news with other alumni in Class Notes. We collect information from published accounts, press releases and alumni themselves. Notes are edited for style, clarity and length and are published as space allows. For more information, or to submit your own information for Class Notes, email [Mary.Gallagher@wwu.edu](mailto:Mary.Gallagher@wwu.edu).



## Juan Fernando Guerrero

Junior

International Business major

Puyallup resident

Scholarship recipient

WWU Phonathon caller

**Drawn by the sense of community:** Coming from a small town, I really wanted to experience something new without being in too big of a place. What really made the difference was the nice and accepting community. It's a place where I feel everyone is welcomed no matter their background.

**A role model to other kids from migrant families:** I work with the Migrant Youth Leadership Conference as a mentor for migrant youth in Skagit and Whatcom counties to encourage kids from struggling backgrounds to make it to college and fulfill their dreams. My parents come from a migrant background so I understand how hard it can be trying to succeed in a new culture and the struggle to keep bread on the table. It's important that these kids have role models who understand the problems they face and use that to emphasize the importance of pursuing an education.

**A future in teaching:** After graduation I'd like to work with Teach for America in East L.A. and I hope I'll someday have the opportunity to travel the world.

**Why he hopes you'll answer and make a gift:** I rely on financial aid, in addition to my job, to pay for my education. Beyond the financial support it means even more to know that there's an entire community of alumni and friends who don't just hope to help me and other students succeed but are actually willing to do so.





## Class Notes

on Your Face," for spring 2014. He also wrote a story that appears in "Chicken Soup for the Soul: Here Comes the Bride," about how his honeymoon began with Bellingham police pulling him over and handcuffing him and his wife because their car was mistaken for the getaway vehicle in a recent robbery. Musician **Coty Hogue** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) played at Seattle Folklife Festival and released her first live album, "When We Get to Shore," in summer 2012. **Nathan Panelo** (Human Services) became the coordinator for Western's Ethnic Student Center. Previously, Panelo was a resident director at Seattle University.

**2008 – Tina Duffey** (Biology), stewardship and trails assistant for the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, was recently included in the Wenatchee World's "30 Under 35" list of up-and-coming community leaders. **Whitney Murphy** (Communication Sciences and Disorders) became a speech language pathologist at the Yakima Valley Hearing & Speech Center. **Susan Brennan** (General Studies) recently started a personal assistant company, Consider It Done, based in Kirkland. She provides personalized assistant services to professionals, seniors and everyone in between. **Doug Self** (Business Administration-Marketing) became an account executive with Red Sky Public Relations in Boise, Idaho. **Patrick Harlin** (Music-Composition) was selected as a resident composer for the University of Missouri New Music Summer Festival. Army Reserve Spc. **Rebecca L. Welker** (Business Administration) graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C. **Elizabeth Edleman** (Psychology) became an administrative assistant at American College of Healthcare Sciences in Portland, Ore.

**2009 – Katrice Romero** (Human Services) received a scholarship from the Washington Indian Gaming Association for her graduate study in the University of Southern California Master of Social Work Online Program. Romero is also housing director for the Nooksack Tribal Community. **Tela Crane** (Journalism-Public Relations) is a member of the USA Cycling Team as a track cyclist. **Keith Rittel** (Superintendent's Certificate) became superintendent of the Provo School District in Utah. **Cody Coughenour** (Planning and Environmental Policy) and his wife recently opened ToadLily House, a hostel in Port Angeles. **Cara Frank** (Recreation) competed in Whatcom County's Ski to Sea race as the team captain and cross-country skier for The Grateful Deaf. **Hilary Forkner** (Special Education, Elementary Education), a kindergarten teacher at Olympic View Elementary School in Federal Way, was named Teacher of the Week by STAR 101.5 and KOMO 4 News in April. Forkner is pursuing her master's degree in curriculum and instruction at Seattle Pacific University. **Brian Davis** (History/Social Studies) became a teacher and boys basketball coach at Tahoma High School. **Greg Kubitz** (Mathematics; '10, M.S., Mathematics) is a doctoral student in economics at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he trains with the university's Triathlon team.

**2010 – Gabrielle Nomura** (Journalism) was selected to the U.S.-Japan Council Emerging Leaders Program, in which she'll join 12 others at the 2012 U.S.-Japan Council Annual Conference in Seattle. Nomura is the media and program coordinator for the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, which brings together leaders in the U.S. and Canadian public and private sectors for collaborative planning. **Tyler Malek**

(East Asian Studies) is one of the brains behind Salt and Straw, a "farm to cone" ice cream shop in Portland, Ore., recently included in Saveur Magazine's "16 American Ice Cream Shops We Love." Among their signature flavors: Almond brittle with salted ganache, and pear with blue cheese. **Rianne BeCraft** (Environmental Science) founded Redmond Wild, a volunteer group encouraging people to make their yards wildlife friendly to become certified through the National Wildlife Federation.

**2012 – Stephanie Bennett** (M.Ed., Environmental Education) became corporate responsibility manager for the Outdoor Industry Association. **Jake Osterman** (Communication) became a security sales specialist for Security Solutions NW in Bellingham. **Megan Pinske** (Communication) was named an alternate to the Canadian women's national basketball team.

## Marriages and Unions

**Kelsie Buckner** ('09, Sociology) and **Brandon Kays** ('09, Design) on Aug. 4, 2012, in Camas.

**Niclyn Darrow** ('08, Interdisciplinary Child Development – Elementary) and **Brian Davis** ('09, History/Social Studies) on Aug. 5, 2011, in Maple Valley.

**Katie Gray** ('05, Communication Sciences and Disorders) and Andrew Willis on June 23, 2012, in Vancouver, Wash.

Tina Heinzle and **Blake Pommier** ('00, Music) on Aug. 11, 2012, in Bremerton.

## Obituaries

**1932 – Sylvester "Bus" Edquist**, 90, owner of Edquist Grocery in Bellingham and Sequim, on April 9, 2012, in Cedar Grove, W.V. **Mary Belle (Winslow) Gloppen**, 92, on June 2, 2012, in Mount Vernon. **Elizabeth (Squire) Kibbe**, 100, a retired elementary and music teacher and avid traveler, on May 11, 2012, in Moses Lake.

## Did you make it official?

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# REUNITE IN REAL LIFE

Back <sup>2013</sup> **Bellingham** WEEKEND

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**1941 – Richard L.J. Dombroski**, 94, a retired teacher and administrator in the Auburn School District, on April 17, 2012. **Marion M. Nunamaker**, 93, a retired certified nursing assistant, on March 13, 2012, in Pendleton, Ore.

**1944 – Judith Muir Vanderhoef**, 96, who coordinated student-teacher placements at Western in the 1960s and '70s, on March 25, 2012, in Bellingham.

**1945 – Ozella Nadine Willis**, 89, on May 13, 2012.

**1946 – Florence May "Flossie" Mullis McRae Lang**, 87, a retired teacher, artist and community volunteer, on June 22, 2012, in Friday Harbor.

**1950 – Wallace Wendell Croy**, 87, a longtime volunteer firefighter in the Bellingham area, on May 31, 2012.

**1952 – Jerry Arentzen**, 81, a retired teacher and counselor, on July 29, 2012, in Edmonds. **Richard E. Clark**, 82, a historian, former clergy member, promoter of the arts, piano teacher, peace activist, author and supporter of Western's Music Department, on May 26, 2012, in Blaine.

**1953 – Barbara May (Lange) Anderson**, 80, on May 18, 2012. **Jack W. Croghan**, 83, a retired teacher, college faculty member and swim coach, on Feb. 25, 2012.

**1955 – Billie Lee "Bill" Daws**, 79, a retired teacher and coach, on July 19, 2012, in Bellingham.

**1956 – Sarah Jane (Nanney) Smith**, 77, a longtime teacher in the Walnut Creek, Calif., area, on March 15, 2012, in Methuen, Mass.

**1957 – Carl A. "Bud" Erickson**, 89, a retired business owner and social worker, on Aug. 14, 2012, in Bellingham. **Hans Gunther Lorentzen**, 79, who sold life insurance and annuities and was a member of the Mount Baker Toppers barbershop chorus, on July 12, 2012.

**1959 – William Ray Atwood**, a retired teacher, principal and assistant superintendent in the Burlington-Edison School District and avid musician, on June 10, 2012, in Burlington.

**1960 – George "Ian" Monson**, 86, a retired teacher, on June 8, 2012, in Bellingham. **Ronald Walter Spjut**, 74, a retired colonel in the U.S. Air Force, on June 29, 2012, in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

**1961 – Gerald Ingolf Nelson**, 78, a retired high school principal, on Aug. 27, 2012, in Kirkland.

**1963 – Richard Lawrence Fackler**, 89, a retired teacher at Skagit Valley College, on July 16, 2012. **Martin Norman Olson**, 72, a retired English professor at Occidental College, on Jan. 23, 2012, in Chula Vista, Calif.

**1965 – Garry M. Cameron**, 72, a longtime teacher in Marysville, on April 11,

2012. **Mary Alice Pratt Rowe**, 95, a retired teacher and librarian, on April 15, 2012, in St. Louis, Mo.

**1966 – Anita Bauer Johnson**, 67, a retired teacher, on June 7, 2012, in Brewster.

**1967 – Terry Lea Adams**, 66, a longtime teacher in Puyallup, on April 7, 2012, in Centralia. **Dierdre "Dee" De Valois**, 66, a teacher's aide, on May 26, 2012. **John V. Hull**, 66, a retired stockbroker, on July 5, 2012. **Roy Willard "Buddy" Johnson Jr.**, 71, a retired medical technologist and Alaska resident, on May 24, 2012.

**1968 – Sharon Lorraine Koch**, 66, an active community volunteer, on Aug. 25, 2012. **Gary W. Iverson**, 65, a retired Navy Aviation intelligence officer and captain, on May 9, 2012. **Marian J. Main**, 84, an active community volunteer, on May 13, 2012, in Bellingham. **Jane Trueblood**, 82, a retired special education teacher, on April 30, 2012, in Anacortes.

**1969 – Rex W. Johnson**, 86, a retired teacher, football coach and assistant principal, on June 8, 2012, in Bellingham.

**1970 – David Fitzgerald**, a longtime teacher in Sedro-Woolley, on July 6, 2012.

**1973 – G. Kenneth Fox**, 68, a longtime teacher on May 15, 2012, in Bellingham. **Eleanor Penny Gibson**, 62, an active community volunteer in the South Sound, on July 9, 2012. **Stan Allen Sather**, 64, a pattern shop manager and skilled artisan and wooden boat builder, on Feb. 28, 2012. **Joseph Philip Mark Scherting**, 59, founder of the Moka Joe coffee roasting company with his wife, Trudy, on June 3, 2012, in Bellingham.

**1971 – Karen E. Bruun**, 92, a retired librarian for schools in Gilchrist, Ore., on May 4, 2012, in Bellingham. **Paul Phillip Cronauer**, 63, a business and community leader in Port Angeles, on Aug. 16, 2012, in Port Angeles.

**1972 – Timothy T. Timblin**, 62, a retired photo finisher, on Aug. 9, 2012.

**1974 – Rand Charles Maurer**, 59, a district manager for Subway, on March 23, 2012, in Tacoma.

**1975 – David Stewart Tuck**, 59, a longtime teacher and coach, on June 11, 2012.

**1977 – Margaret Sandberg**, 58, a freelance journalist and former television news producer, on April 9, 2012, in Park City, Utah.

**1978 – Rhonda Altom**, 55, an oral surgeon and faculty member at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry, on July 30, 2012. **Leonard Ray Watterson**, 59, an executive with Emeritus Senior Living, on April 15, 2012.

**1980 – Daniel Patrick Farrell**, 68, a retired school administrator, on April 21, 2012. **Robert Norman Thomas**, 75, on April 17, 2012.

**1982 – Daniel P. DeGolier**, 54, a retired real estate appraiser and accomplished athlete, on June 5, 2012.

**1984 – Bob Hughes**, 52, a faculty member at the Art Institute of Seattle, on July 12, 2012.

**1985 – Donna Elaine Goff**, 50, a Head Start teacher, on July 29, 2012, in Pendleton, Ore.

**1986 – Cheryl M. Read**, 68, a retired teacher and community leader in Ferndale, on July 23, 2012. **John Wright**, 50, who worked at the Pierce County Health Department, on July 6, 2012, near North Bend.

**1988 – Maria Kathleen (Bott) Burrows**, 46, who worked for Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Human Resources, Inc., and the University of Phoenix, on June 15, 2012, in Tacoma. She received her MBA from the University of Phoenix on May 19, 2012.

**1989 – Debra Marie Cummings**, 46, director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for the Blaine School District, in April 6, 2012, in Seattle.

**1991 – Michael Allen Fromong**, 46, on July 30, 2012.

**1993 – Paul David Goslow**, 47, who owned a painting company in the Bellingham area, on May 24, 2012. **Sherri Ann Rodgers**, 48, a part-time faculty member at Skagit Valley College, on May 28, 2012, in Mount Vernon.

**1994 – Raymond G. Ferris**, 59, a driver for Whatcom Transit Authority, on June 7, 2012, in Bellingham. **James Alan Langei**, 43, a loan officer and avid boater, on March 30, 2012, in Bellingham.

**1997 – Joseph Christian Chorvat**, 40, on April 16, 2012.

**2001 – Kara Marie Telgenhoff**, 35, an elementary music teacher in the Ferndale area, on June 19, 2012.

**2002 – Brian Malvey**, 58, on July 29, 2012.

**2012 – Justin Thomas Head**, 31, on Aug. 17, 2012, in Florida.

## Faculty and staff

**Americole Remo Biasini**, 77, a former associate professor of Music, on June 3, 2012. He taught at Western from 1970 to 1982, developing courses in jazz history, musicianship and electronic music. The recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award in 1978, he was also an inventor who obtained several patents in music-related products.

**Robert Joe Lawson**, 61, a longtime adjunct faculty member in Western's

Department of Human Services and Rehabilitation, on June 6, 2012, in Lynden. He also earned two degrees from Western: a bachelor's degree in Sociology in 1972 and a Master of Education degree in 1985.

**Neill Douglas Mullen**, 81, a former assistant professor of Education at Western and member of the class of 1953, on Aug. 1, 2012.

**Frank A. Nugent**, 91, professor emeritus of Psychology, on July 26, 2012, in Bellingham. He retired in 1986 and continued teaching until 2000. He also co-founded Western's Counseling Center and served as its director from 1962 to 1973. He spearheaded and coordinated Western's master's degrees in school counseling and mental health counseling and was influential in establishing certification for school counselors. A tenacious advocate for raising standards in the counseling profession, he led efforts to obtain state licensing for mental health counselors. A memorial scholarship has been established in Frank Nugent's name at the Western Foundation.

**Pete Steffens**, 87, professor emeritus of Journalism, on Aug. 23, 2012, in Nanaimo, B.C. Steffens was an accomplished journalist and the son of famous journalists Ella Winter and Lincoln Steffens. He helped found Western's Journalism Department in 1976 and was a member of the faculty for nearly 30 years. The Pete Steffens Native American Scholarship Fund has been established at the Western Foundation.

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# THE WILD SIDE OF ORIENTATION



**It's one thing to get to know your fellow freshmen over lunch in the dining hall, but how about bonding over a late-night campfire in the back country?**

Western Outdoor Orientation Trips (WOOT!) offered incoming first-year students the opportunity to spend a week in the wilderness before the start of fall quarter.

While kayaking or biking in the San Juans, rock climbing in Leavenworth or backpacking in the mountains, students got to know their classmates while pushing their own limits.

"I had one of the greatest weeks of my life," says Dylan Vogel, a freshman from Sandpoint, Idaho, who took his camera along to document his week in the North Cascades.

"I came back much more comfortable with meeting new people," Vogel says. "I saw fantastic landscapes unlike any I had seen before, and I felt very close to my new home."

Vogel, an award-winning photojournalist for his high school newspaper and yearbook, wants to study Visual Journalism at Western, as well as art and social sciences.

Meanwhile, expect more students to start their Western experience in the wild. Five WOOT! trips sold out this year, and more are planned for next year.



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Houses

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Cities

Priorities

All change

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From left to right Tina (Pappas) Aigner ('91), Liane Bear-Donald ('91), Nikoll Noe ('90), Cathleen Meyer ('91), Maribeth (Murphy) Ingemansen ('91), Kara Whelan ('90), Bonnie Leaf ('90)





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