THERE ARE NO STRANGERS HERE
ONLY FRIENDS WHO
HAVE NOT MET
CROSS COUNTRY SKIING
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by Mike Pinch

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TWO-WAY LEARNING
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Cross-Country Skiing

-made easy

Story and photos:
Mike Pinch

The cross-country skier tours flat terrain through the lonely forests. The only tracks the cross-country skier sees are those of the winter animals. When he stops and holds his breath the loudest thing he hears is his heart beat.

He comes to the river; sees the salmon swimming; hears the water gushing... his mind is filled. He dazes. There is no thought. Then a salmon breaks water and snaps the skier’s day dream.
the sport

If you can walk you can cross-country ski. It's that simple. If you have a little money you can get the equipment. It's very inexpensive.

Cross-country skiing has been around for a long time. It is now the country's fastest growing winter sport. This is attributed mainly to its growing popularity along the East Coast. However, a survey done at Western fall quarter indicated that approximately 1200 students were interested in learning to cross-country ski.

Cross-country skiing or ski touring is not to be confused with downhill or alpine skiing. For the latter a ski resort is necessary along with several hundred dollars worth of good ski equipment. Then there are the lift lines, the packed parking lost and the over-priced food. Safety is another basic difference between the two sports. One local athlete had all the cartilage removed from a knee which prevents him from downhill skiing. But he goes ski touring every chance he gets.

equipment

Good skis, poles and bindings can be purchased for under $40. Normal winter or hiking boots will fit into the bindings. The skis should be about one foot higher than the top of your head. They vary in width. For the beginner or the person who is going to carry a back-pack, a wider ski is best. Most cross-country skis are made out of a birch and hickory combination. They don't have metal edges.

Most touring poles are made out of bamboo. They are light, flexible and surprisingly strong. For about seven dollars you can get a pair with adjustable wrist straps, which are essential. The tips of the poles are made of metal and are slightly curved so the pole will come out of the snow easily and with a forward motion. The pole should be higher than your armpit and lower than the top of your shoulder.

The best kind of binding is the "bear-claw" because it fits almost any type of boot or shoe. The toe-piece holds the boot from falling off the sides of the skis. The cable pulls the boot tightly forward into the toe-piece.

waxing

Waxing is very very important to the cross-country skier. It makes a difference between a good day and a bummer. A touring wax should provide enough "stickum" to go up a slight incline and enough "glide" to slide down a slight incline. When the wax does this then you can step or kick forward on flat ground without slipping backwards. Furthermore, after the kick you can slide to the next kick.
No wax is good for all conditions. Factors to be considered are the wetness of the snow and its temperature. All touring waxes come with directions. Before an outing estimate and temperature range and then make sure you have the waxes to cover the range. This usually means two different waxes. Wax is cheap and is a must.

**clothing**

Since you live in the Northwest you most likely have all the clothes you need. Wool clothes are the best. A pair of wool slacks from the Salvation Army can easily be converted into knickers. Knickers are not a requirement but they give your knees more free movement than regular pants. Ski touring causes the body to generate a tremendous amount of heat, so long underwear is not necessary. The ideal clothing for the top half of your body is an undershirt, then a nylon shirt (windshirt), then a sweater and then a coat. The nylon shirt stops the wind after you take your coat off. Most people find it hard to believe that they would take their coat off on a winter day. Once they start roasting they never have to be told.

Stay away from cotton outer clothing. It soaks up water like crazy. A sweaty body covered by wet cotton clothing with a cool wind blowing on it will bring on the chills immediately and then perhaps more serious effects.

Don’t forget some lightweight gloves. You will take those off too once you get going but they are needed for the early morning waxing and preparation.

**beginning**

Like all other physical activities, the best way to learn is by doing. Start by just walking around with the skis on and the poles off. Then try it with the poles. Like regular walking, when the right foot goes forward the left hand goes forward. Just stay relaxed and try to do what comes naturally. The end result should be similar to the gliding motion of ice skating.

Then go for a “ski.” Terrain will vary and technique varies with it. When going down hill thrust the heels of the skis apart, keeping the tips together. This is the infamous snowplow which controls speed without fail. Going uphill can be easy too. If the hill is very steep simply sidestep up it. A shallower hill may be tackled with the herring bone. Put your tips wide apart and keep your tails close together and walk up the hill in this position. If you look back at your tracks you will see why it is called the herring bone. Most hills can be climbed by simply keeping the skis straight and stepping up it. The wax will hold you from sliding backwards.

So that is about it. Sound easy? It is. Oh yes, I almost forgot. Bring your wine skin. Maybe I will see you out there. Good luck!
SILENT WHITE

Photos: Rod del Pozo
Linda Forstrom
Jon Morse
Scott Nagel
Have you ever had a pimple? It seems that an especially annoying type of pimple is the kind that remains below the surface, showing no outward appearance until you touch it—then you know it's there. What is most aggravating about a sub-surface pimple is that you know, sooner or later, that same pimple is going to rise up and make you look ugly. And that is the way the straight folk of Bellingham look at the homosexual community—one big pimple.

There are many different types of communities living side by side in peace in Bellingham. Yet one community, the gay people, by nature of their beliefs, previously felt that they must remain underground. They have not in any way harmed or infringed upon the rights of any other community, yet gay people have been forced to live anonymously and inconspicuously in the mainstream of Bellingham life. But the times are changing.

Following are three accounts of students at WWSC and their attitudes toward their own homosexuality, and the gay movement. Where names are used, free consent was given to the author for that use:
Michael Carr, aged 21, and a student at Fairhaven College, is associated strongly with the Gay Liberation Front. He said that although it takes a long time for homosexuals to admit to themselves what they are, staying "in the closet" did not create a better existence.

Michael is an activist in his feelings toward the gay movement. He doesn't think that a passive, the-straight-world-will-accept-us-in-time attitude will accomplish anything. He doesn't think that the gay movement needs benevolence—it needs power. The way it can gain power is through respect, and it can only gain respect through education: education of homosexuals about themselves, and education and confrontation concerning the attitudes of the straight world. Gayness is not a sickness to be cured.

Role-playing is a subject that Michael Carr felt very strongly about. "I can't or won't play roles," he said. He is sorry for the person who feels that he must act straight on the job, but seek gay relationships at night. The pressure of the schizophrenia is too much. "Come out, gay and proud, whoever you are, wherever you are."

The homosexual movement was compared frequently to the black movement by Michael. The two existing organizations available to gays for channels of social change are the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and the Gay People's Alliance (GPA), although there is no branch of the GLF in Bellingham right now. Michael compared the political and social focus of the GPA and GLF to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Black Panthers, respectively. To further the analogy, he also said that the gay movement now is where the civil rights struggle was in 1957.

Gay people stand alongside other oppressed minorities within this culture, Michael said. And by virtue of the multi-racial make-up of the gay minority, it has built-in problems of its own. He adds, however, "In a way I'm stronger than the Man (white heterosexual society) because I admit who I am and that I am oppressed." He also said, "I advocate an open society, not a closed one, but for this period of time, gay brothers and sisters must prioritize their concerns for themselves."

(The following person would not give me his name or address, or even the use of his initials. He will be called "x".

"Homosexuality is not all Sex"

X is a 26 year old male. He is perfectly content to live a schizophrenic life—a straight student during the day and gay at night. He feels no need to "come out", although even his willingness to talk to an interviewer leaves the closet door half open.

X belongs to no gay organizations, and explains his reasons for not joining any activist groups by the fact that: the members are all 18-20 years old, and are unwise and naive about many of the things they say. "At 18, you're sticking your neck out awfully far to make commitments for the next 60 years." He said that the young activists have little to lose (in terms of job security): you can't lose what you don't have.

Besides going to school, X also has a job that is in his major field, and it is quite important to him. Because of the nature of the job, he is afraid that if he "came out", he would lose it. As for other students at Western, he can understand and sympathize with them if they would not want to admit their homosexuality either: WWSC is still a teacher's college. How many parents (taxpayers) are going to want a queer to teach their kids?

X thinks that it is unfortunate and ignorant of straights to think of gay people in a sexual role only. "Homosexuality is not all sex—it is also companionship and love, and being able to talk freely."

Sean Reynolds is a 21 year old female homosexual attending Fairhaven College. She said that it is hard enough to live at WWSC if you're gay, but "when you're like me: black, a lesbian, and even an ex-Catholic, then you're really oppressed."

Sean suggests emphatically that if a female is gay and comes to Western, they she had better come with someone. "The majority of women here are co-eds, with co-ed mentality. In two or three years, they'll all have white picket fences, station wagons, and 2.3 children." She said that even the "plastic fantastic Fairhaven freaks" have no more sincere tolerant attitudes. How do you confront co-ed mentality with homosexuality?

Straights cannot comprehend that gays are human, Sean said. They have jobs, go to school, and even go to the bathroom. "Don't straights ever do anything but make love?" she asked. "My goals are exactly the same as everyone else's."
Beck:

Three and one-half years ago I came to Western a wide-eyed eager-to-learn freshman. I met a rather shy church-going, young girl who was to be my roommate (and as I later found out, a good friend as well) and share with me one of the usual dorm rooms. I even had a boyfriend, to whom I was engaged, money to support my learning and my subsistance from my parents, and in general, had very little to worry about.

As the days evolved into weeks and the weeks into quarters, however, I found myself more and more concerned about a troublesome deep feeling within that I couldn't really explain. I had everything in the world going for me but it wasn't enough. Something was missing. It was much like the hungry feeling one experiences now and then that can't be satisfied by anything edible that comes to mind. I tried to be glib; passing it off as "just a silly notion." It didn't work. In fact, it became an obsession. I had a real live monkey on my back that no amount of walking these Bellingham streets day or night could remedy. Finally I found myself at the very bottom of some pit of depression. I knew I had to face it.

I went down a mental list trying to put my finger on all the possible things it might be. I got nowhere. Then I started to examine the impossible. Of all the thoughts that ran through my mind there was one, which I had initially placed at the bottom of my list, that kept reoccurring, chewing and nagging at the back of my mind.

"No," I thought, "Surely not I..." But I couldn't cast it off.

For the first time in my life I knew what it was to be truly honest with oneself. There it was staring me right in the face... I was a homosexual.

All my life I had been allowed to experience an entire relationship with men. I had been molded from birth so that one day I could know a man intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. Half of this knowledge of women had been denied me. Consequently half of my own self was denied growth.

I guess I just took it from there. I began to live my life as I really felt I should. I had been hiding much of what I was for a very long time. I had been crippled. Before my "day of reckoning", being gay meant never being able to be completely honest, not with my parents, not with my friends, not with myself. After I faced the monster, which was never the fact that I wanted to love a woman, but rather the stigma attached by ignorance, I found peace. I discovered my parents as people who had more trouble facing their own prejudices than I ever did with coping with my stigma. I discovered quickly who my friends were. The ones who loved me stayed, the ones who didn't left. (And incidentally, so did my fiance.) Most importantly I discovered my own self-respect the same day I surprised myself by finding I had a strength even I hadn't known about; one which I would need daily from that day on in coping with the ignorance and prejudices which branded me "abnormal".

A year and one-half later, with several casual girlfriends in between, I met a young woman.

As the saying goes, we "fell in love". The very moment we vowed our love we also vowed to fight the "monster", i.e. the shouts of "lezies go home", the hatred and fear which attempts to pass off our devotion as something vulgar and to be "curbed". This day we are an army of two and we are very strong. I could wish no greater happiness for any human being, man or woman, heterosexual or homosexual.

We all speak so freely these days about "doing your own thing". I wonder how many can accurately lay valid claim for having the guts to do so.
Right now, all I feel is pride in
myself and what I represent.

Realizing I was gay was never a problem for me. When adolescence came crashing down on my head with all those new hormones rushing through my body, I suddenly felt new, delightful feelings that had to be expressed. It wasn’t a very long process of trial and error before I found that another woman satisfied my emotional and physical longings best.

Although realizing my gayness was relatively easy, coping with it was not. I knew all too well the fate of known “queers” and I was not anxious to share it with them so I did what, at that time seemed to be the “smart” thing—I kept my mouth shut and played it straight. I surrounded myself with suitable male companions, partied myself to death and even tried to absolve myself with religion. Any relationship I shared with a woman was kept deeply hidden. It was a long, lonely agonizing period of my life. When I was sixteen I met a beautiful girl—my first real lover. Every moment we spent together was both great and dreadful. Fearing societal reprisal we hid our relationship from everyone. Soon the constant pressure from fear of being “found out”, the feelings of guilt we felt from lying to families and friends, and the self-hate we experienced when forced to sneak off into dark corners, drove a wedge between us that not even the force of our love could hold back.

The experience left me bitter and hard. I thought to myself, “Okay sweetheart, they all want you to play the role—be some man’s toy. Although it may be a miserable, mediocre existence to you, at least people will leave you alone.”

So for three years I had a nice, steady boyfriend and I probably would have married him except for a miracle: he was called to a mission from our church to Argentina. I let our relationship float into oblivion.

I spent a long, lonely year by myself in Seattle, frequenting many coffee shops, and just sitting, thinking things out. During this period of self-analysis I slowly came to realize that everything I tried so far to cope with my gayness had left me worse off each time. Leading a double life tore me apart inside, living a heterosexual life left me empty and unsatisfied.

Right then two crucial things happened to me—I met Beck, and the Gay Liberation Front formed in Seattle. Suddenly being gay wasn’t a shameful secret I had to keep hidden. No matter how hard I tried, I could not convince myself that the love I shared with Beck, the love that was based on honesty, trust, equality and mutual self-respect, was “abnormal”, “pathological”, “disgusting”, “immoral”, “sinful”, “neurotic”, or any of the other value-laden adjectives used to describe it. And in the GLF I learned I was not alone.

So now Beck and I are here at Western working with other people trying to organize gays into a force that can demand the civil and social rights so long denied us. Being out of the closet has given me my first taste of freedom—no more pain or guilt feelings. And no paranoia. How can you harm an individual by threatening exposure of a lifestyle they have already proudly and freely proclaimed themselves? Right now, all I feel is pride in myself and what I represent, and anger toward all those people who have tried to rob me of my self respect and civil rights.

To other gays still in the closet, I quote from the front page of Come Out! 1969, “Come Out of the Closet Before the Door is Nailed Shut!”

And to those who would deny us, I quote from the first GLF leaflet, “Do you think homosexuals are revolting? You bet your sweet ass we are!”

Let the oppressors beware.
A student is certainly a strange breed. To most, Bellingham is not their home, not even a town, just a frame for the Western campus picture. The townspeople are out to get the student so why not get them first?

Rentals, though somewhat higher in Bellingham compared to Ellensburg, Pullman and even Seattle, are businesses to the people who own them. For some, it is the only way they make their living. They are not trying to be duplicates of the student’s family home. They are rentals and nothing more. As in any business, the owners are out to make money rather than friends. They will do the least amount of work for the most possible money. This isn’t necessarily fair, just a fact of life.

Landlords expect their money each month when it is due. One doesn’t try to con a service station into giving them two more weeks to pay for their gas purchase just because they had to buy extra books for their English class. The Property taxes in this town are high and so are insurance costs and water and sewage rates. The rent and damage deposit is usually based on these things and previous experience by the landlord as are the full quarter or first and last month rent requirements.

One landlord stated that the only way he can be assured to get his full rent is to charge for the whole quarter in advance.

“Usually the student has more money (from parents or work) at the beginning of the quarter than at the middle or end,” he said.

This particular landlord does not allow children (“they tend to mark up the walls”) and charges a $40 damage deposit per student. He is considering raising this to $60 as he found at the end of Spring Quarter last year, repairs and replacements amounted to over $40 apiece for four of the six students he rented to. He also rents to students in Seattle and charges about the same as in Bellingham.

“Students are students,” he said “and have the same responsibilities or irresponsibilities no matter what the size of the city or college.”

Another landlord mentioned the cleaning problems involved in renting to students.

“Students are at least as messy as everyone else,” he said.

He pointed out the litter problem on campus and off and felt that students have little time or thought to keep things clean. This landlord, owning four houses and renting to 12 students, finds it necessary to hire a cleaning service to come in at the end of Spring or Summer quarters.

“Part of it is a problem of too many kids in one household and too little organization, of duties,” he said.

Pets, although often forbidden, were cited as a major cause of damage to the rentals and the surrounding property. Stains in rugs and torn draperies are the result, along with torn up lawns. Since parking is at a premium (especially near the college) lawns are often used as parking spaces and tire marks adorn many student rentals.

Dan Gordon of ABG rentals, is the owner of 240 units in Bellingham. His rentals start at $75 and continue up depending on the area, furnishings, etc. Gordon has no particular complaint against students, other than the problem of who is living where.

“Students tend to move around a lot, and often let their friends move in their place when they move on. This is confusing if there is any necessity to find who is living in a specific-unit,” Gordon said.

Gordon expects to hire people to clean after the students move out.

“Landlords who expect their student rentals (or any rentals for that matter) to be in the same condition as when the tenants moved in, are dreaming,” said Gordon.

The newly formed Apartment Owners
The Utilities are providing themselves with insurance too, with their deposit rates. Carol Anderson, at Pacific Northwest Bell, feels that students would fare better if they realized that their credit standing is involved in all transactions. ‘The dormitory phone situation is better here between $50 and $75,’ she said.

All students in the household should have their names on the contract if possible. The cost to be listed is 40 cents per month, but is worth it if the students ever move to a place by themselves and want a phone, providing they have paid their bills. Excess long distance charges are expected due to the nature of the situation. Most Western students are not from Bellingham.

The “676” syndrome is standard on campus—it is the college exchange, but off-campus it is not necessarily given only to students, although most students are on the 676-exchange. “It’s a matter of number shortage on the 733 and 734 lines,” Miss Anderson explained. “Non-students that are new to the town also receive the 676-number unless they specifically request otherwise.”

Cascade Natural Gas Company, as an example for other than electric heat, has no greater problems with students than with other customers.

“Our delinquent student accounts are large, but only because we give service to a lot of students,” one employee said.

The $20 deposit is the same for everyone without...
previous service from Cascade Natural Gas. The only other problem mentioned was maintenance charges and this is usually settled between landlord and student.

Puget Power has tried to be fair to both students and non-students in Bellingham. Jerry Kaufman of Puget Power, feels that credit is the key word for anyone renting a place to live.

"Three years ago, we weren't requiring deposits from students. The problem of a large amount of bills not being paid around June, coupled with the fact that it was a discrimination of sorts against non-students forced us to start asking for deposit from everyone," he said.

The deposits range from $25 to $45 depending on what electric appliances are in the house or apartment. The deposit angle has been made easier by Puget Power, however. If a person requesting service has good credit established elsewhere in the community, Puget Power may waive the deposit. Good credit with Puget Power for a period of one year can also cause the deposit to be lifted, but most students are only in Bellingham eight or nine months out of the year. If there has been bad service previously, Puget Power has the authorization of the State Department of Utilities to take up to double the most recent unpaid bill.

"We are in a business to make money. Our stockholders expect us to make money. But we also want to make it as fair as possible for everyone," Kaufman said. "Even with the deposit, we still have a large write-off around June when most students leave. Students seem to be moving all the time and sometimes the bills don't get paid."

The supermarkets and other stores' main complaint against students is the high rate of shoplifting that occurs. There are items in the Bellingham Herald almost daily about students being arrested for shoplifting. The percentage is high and the damages are great to the store but mostly to the student. Two cents out of every dollar spent in stores goes toward the vast loss by the store due to shoplifting.

Herb Ennen, owner of Ennens Thriftway on Indian and Holly, said that the percentage of students caught shoplifting at his store is greater only because of the proximity of the college and the store.

"Shoplifting has increased all over and people from all walks of life do it," Ennen said.

He stressed that there is no discrimination in his store as to who they pick up.

Animals are barred from food stores as a health and safety precaution only and most students realize and understand this. Ennen cited damages to items on lower shelves as a result of the few animals that do come in the store.

As for the prices, the structure is the same for all Thriftway stores, except where shipping is a problem. The prices definitely take into account write-offs for losses due to theft, but they are as low as possible, Ennen felt.

"Everyday business is a challenge to everyone. Once a student understands that we are working for him as a part of the town of Bellingham, we will all enjoy our business dealings more," he said.

In other words, it's a two-way street in the town-gown relationship. Students are usually in Bellingham around four years, but the residents are here all the time. The townspeople live in Bellingham because they want to. They don't appreciate the high prices any more than the students do, perhaps less because they are here all the time and frequent more local businesses. They appreciate what Western has done for Bellingham in some respects and in most cases, are understanding of the pressures involved. Townspeople see a small sector of students protesting certain local businesses and sometimes it is hard for them not to generalize about the entire college, just as college students tend to go after local business in general on the basis of a few isolated happenings.

Although all businesses contacted feel the students are no worse than certain other patrons, they want to show the student what they are trying to do for the four-year transients. They invite any constructive criticism and will try to act on any workable suggestions.

"Rip-off" is perhaps the right word, but it is a mutual rip-off at best.
The following are excerpts from an interview with one of the many of Bellingham's young, unemployed family men. His name is Ron and he is 21 years old. He worked for three years at Intalco Aluminum but was laid off six months ago. Ron has rent to pay and furniture payments to make as well as a wife and baby to feed. As a consequence and a last resort, he came to the food bank.

Ron: There may be a hundred people working for welfare offices in Bellingham, but even if you get to an appointment early you have to sit and sit and wait. My landlord is trying to throw me out of my house 'cause I owe him some back rent. But there's no where to go. Me and my wife went down to welfare and got there before it even opened. We waited over a half an hour and we were the first people there.

Klipsun: What do you feel is the solution to this waiting?
Ron: Make the people work, do their job. Sometimes they have people just sitting there and reading books. I can't afford the time, a guy has to be out looking for a job.

Klipsun: Did you ever try to get food stamps?
Ron: Sure, I got them twice, but now because I get unemployment I can't afford them. That should be plenty to live on they think. But I got bills to pay they don't
“Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard to get her poor dog a bone. When she got there the cupboard was bare,” so she went downtown to the Whatcom County Food Bank.

In a 1968 report of the Office of Economic Opportunity it was stated that 25 per cent of the citizens of Whatcom County have “empty cupboards”. They are living under poverty conditions. According to the Federal Government, any family of four living on less than $3,960 per year is eligible for membership in America’s ever-widening poverty pocket.

Public Assistance grants allow only 25 cents per meal for each member of a family of four. Although this is hardly sufficient to feed them, many people try to survive on this. Just last August, 4,628 people in this county received some sort of public assistance. But what happened to the remainder of that impoverished 25 per cent? There is a significant number of poverty-ridden individuals who are receiving no public assistance whatsoever. They remain unaccounted for. It is due partly to the demand recognized through this increasing large group of people, that the Whatcom County Food Banks have found a temporary niche in the growing welfare situation in the Bellingham area.

Finding its seeds in Seattle’s “Neighbors in Need”, the Food Bank Program began last May through the guidance of the Bellingham Council of Churches and the Laymen’s League in Lynden.

Reverend Bob Williams, chairman of the food bank's steering committee said, “Opening a food bank indicates a poverty situation. Through it we are trying to open the minds of the community into a sharing concept.”

But has the food bank been successful in fulfilling the intended goals?

As of October, the food bank had fed 208 people on an emergency, short-term basis. The Bellingham office, housed in the Salvation Army building, 209 Prospect, has lately been feeding an average of 75 people and their families per week. The week before Thanksgiving they had about 140 customers. As unusual as it may sound, business—at least at the food bank—is getting better every day.

Familiarity with the food bank facilities brought about through advertising and the food drive last November, has increased business tremendously . . . but not community interest. The small filing cabinet becomes more crowded each week, but the food, donations and volunteer workers are slim. Yet as far as the applicant is concerned, the so-called “application” for all practical purposes doesn’t exist.

While talking to a secretary at the Salvation Army a number of applicants entered the office. One girl had just been in the previous Friday, and the secretary gave her a small, white card with her name and address on it.

“You take this down to Mac,” she said. “I don’t know what he’ll
There was no interview, no questions asked. Implication would have it that obtaining food would be similar to applying for food stamps, but just the fact that she was there seemed to be enough to assure that she was needy.

This seemed to offer a direct invitation to an easy rip-off. Someone wouldn’t have to be very clever to eat continually free of charge courtesy of the Whatcom County Food Bank. Consequently, many of those who are legitimately needy may suffer due to lack of supplies.

The food bank is run on an entirely volunteer basis. The shelves of food are kept stocked strictly depending on public donations. Ever since the food drive, contributions have been few and far between. According to Jeff McKay of the Community Action Center, dependence on volunteers and donations is a major problem and limitation of the food bank idea. Yet McKay was optimistic about this problem.

“The mere existence of the food bank has stirred concern in the community,” he added.

Feeding the hungry on an emergency basis is the number one goal of the food bank. It seems self-defeating that recipients of this organization are not required to give any evidence of their financial situation, thus opening the doors wide for those who willfully take advantage of such charity. But abuse of this service has been very slight, so placing restrictions is probably one of the more insignificant problems.

Another obstacle standing in the way of the food bank's success is the hours which it is open: from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. This is an inconvenience to most working men who need assistance until a paycheck comes through, or to the man who spends his days pounding the sidewalks looking for a job. He can’t afford the time he loses waiting in welfare lines, or going to the food bank when it is also the prime time for businesses to be open. It is for this type of situation the food bank was designed, according to a faithful 65-year-old volunteer who spends nearly all of the open hours at the bank.

“High rent makes things much more difficult,” he said. The paycheck could easily be spent on rent and utilities with nothing left to buy food until the next one comes in.”

Even when they do obtain food, many families often lack the facilities to cook it. Jeannette Smeder of the Salvation Army, who helps out when there is a shortage of volunteers, claims that, “Low income people need most to learn how to better utilize money for better nutrition.” The volunteers try to encourage many of their “customers” to look into established Federal Assistance such as Food Stamps or Welfare. Many people do not realize that they are eligible for such programs, but even if they are eligible, public assistance rarely provides enough funds to care for a family. As far as the food bank is concerned, the key factor is not eligibility but availability of goods.

Trying to overcome the problem of community participation is the second major goal of the Food Bank. Whether the public is merely uninformed...
or unconcerned is not what matters. Either way, there has been a phenomenal lack of cooperation on the part of the citizens of Bellingham. There are quite a few one-shot volunteers, but only about a half dozen volunteers return on a regular basis. The churches of Bellingham are reportedly the major supporters of the food bank and their participation has been sadly lacking. There is a definite need for contributions. Anyone can donate canned or dried food stuffs to the many boxes found around the city. Financial aid is also badly needed.

More interest on the part of the public in volunteering time or food stuffs would help to alleviate a number of the problems encountered in effectively achieving the main goal, offering emergency assistance to your hungry neighbors and friends in Whatcom County ... go down and see for yourself, they really are hungry!

There is another problem, perhaps, in the location of the food bank. The Salvation Army was generous in donating space, but many people hesitate to seek assistance from any organization with religious overtones. Another definite problem is that of transportation for those who live out in the county and cannot afford the bus fare and do not have a car. Is it necessary that the mere location present such an obstacle? Perhaps a non-sectarian location should be sought and the possibility of free delivery or other alternatives should be discussed.

As in so many welfare situations, the need for something like the food bank is obvious. But is the food bank as it is now an effective way of feeding those who need it the most?
TWO-WAY LEARNING

Nooksack and Lummi tutoring benefits not only the children, but also the WWSC students who donate their time. As one Fairhaven co-ed put it, "I don't feel as though I'm teaching—I'm the one who is learning."

Photos: Jon Morse
Mike Veitenhans
Scott Nagel
Learning is the ultimate of intangibles, but these children of Whatcom County who are involved in alternative forms of education show the excitement of creative learning.
See Learning?
LOVE: A HEADSTART

Any solution which perpetuates the existing authoritarian bureaucracy is doomed to failure. And I have very much wanted to say that competence is impossible without love, for in this centralized, technological, expert ridden age of ours, it desperately needs to be said. To say it indicates too the direction of essential change. We must transfer authority to where concern already exists. We must place it where there is nothing in the environment which will inevitably destroy the vital breath of concern. Authority must reside in the community. It must be local, homely, modest, sensitive. And it must be tied, once and for all, to the persons who not only do care, but will go on caring. In my opinion, there is no other hope but this.

George Dennission
Lives of Children

"The key to good learning is individual attention."

Anita Morrissey

A child feels joy—
He wants to share it.
Pain and sorrow can crush a small heart—
Unless someone cares.

But how many of the average public schools grant and encourage children to demand and receive personal attention from someone special who cares? The love needed for a child's emotional/intellectual growth is poorly dispensed from the sterile, remote Miss Susan of Romper Room: that's obvious. Unfortunately, the medium cool medium of t.v. flows over in to the real live classroom and quick-freeze kiddies are expectorated—ready to fit society nicely as alienated beings—separated from others by oceans of repressed emotions.

The cure? Alternative forms of education are seen by many observers as the only hope for American children. The Bellingham area has responded to this with several "free schools"—of which one of the most significant is, surprisingly enough, the federally funded local Headstart program which is located in the basement of the Aldersgate Methodist church.

Designed to work with three and four year old children from low income and poverty families, Headstart is funded through the federal and state governments, but relies entirely on parents and the community for the design of the format and budget which the program follows. Believing that community support is essential for the success of programs such as Headstart, the federal government requires proof of the active support by requiring 20 per cent of the budget to be in the form of donations such as services and facilities. Funding is limited to 30 students although many more children apply for the program.

Prior to January 1972, Headstart was similar to all the other schools — relatively structured and divided into periods such as rest and study time. The first of this year marked the instigation by Teacher-Co-ordinator Anita Morrissey of a type of team teaching. Now the 30 children who attend Headstart arrive about 9:30 a.m. and divide into two groups with one teacher and one aid each. During this "homeroom" the children are informed what activities are available in the different areas of the school. After a group project and a snack, the children are free for one and one half to two hours to do what they want... "with guidance,"

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stressed Mrs. Morrissey. "The key to good learning is individual attention." This philosophy is conscientiously employed by situating staff members at each of the several activity centers.

Probably the busiest room is the play area equipped with gymnastic equipment, inner tubes, a play kitchen and "dress up" clothes. "This is where they let off steam," commented a student aid from Western, Vicki Chandley. "It's their free-for-all period. One of the most important aspects of being four is to let off steam."

That these kids have an ample extra energy supply is evident—as one of the aids pointed out, "These kids are always moving—even when they're 'sitting still'."

The math-science room has typewriters, workbooks, maps, and numbered blocks. The literature room is filled with all sorts of books and reading toys. Integral is the art room which provides an atmosphere for free creative expression.

"Jody, what do you like best here?"
"Painting."
"Painting what?"
"Red, yellow and blue."

The free time period appears to be immensely successful. The children are free to investigate what appeals to them most. Staff members are always there to guide and encourage young, energetic minds and bodies.

The most obvious difference between the average public school and Headstart is the enthusiasm and participation of the children's parents. No lethargic PTA is this group. As one mother who was volunteering her services put it, "Most of the parents get involved—a few of them won't try—some can't. They're really missing something good." Some people who offer their services do not have children at the school. When pressed for a concrete reason as to why they are there,
they shrug. Mary Blake, Parent Co-ordinator, explained her involvement, “They needed a driver and ... well ... I'm going on my third year here now.”

All of the parents are involved in policymaking and setting up the budgets. This year, because of government budget cuts in funding, the parents rallied to raise more money by having on two different occasions a rummage sale and a bazar which were both successful. Other such activities are planned for the future. The community activities not only serve to raise money, but also to make close ties of friendship among the various people who are part of the Headstart program.

There are intangibles involved. These—the home environment, love, enthusiasm, individual

“How can you tell when you've got your shoes on the right feet?”
“How can you tell?”
“I think—real hard.”
attention—differentiate the public school from the Bellingham Headstart program. At first it was difficult to get parents involved; but since they arrived, they have not left.

The parents are not the only proponents of the school. Don Todhunter, a driver and kitchen helper working at Headstart for his first year has two children, one of whom has graduated from Headstart. "If these kids weren’t going to school, they’d practically break down and cry."

“Wendy, what do you like best about coming here?”

“EVERYTHING!”

Aside from the enthusiasm, it can not be ignored that these children are destined for public schools—very few of which are set up similar to the Headstart program. Will the children be able to adjust to the new structure? "The biggest adjustment isn’t the atmosphere,” explained Mrs. Morrissey, “but rather the amount of time the teacher has to spend with the kids.

Headstart appears to provide what the name implies. Hopefully it and other such schools will provide an impetus for change in the staid and stoic structure of the public schools. Until that time, at least some kids in Bellingham are given the individual attention they deserve.
For an artist, writing about violence should be an easy thing to do. Violence is all around us. It’s in the morning paper, it’s on the TV at dinner and in the movies. Most of us dig violence vicariously through the words, music, pictures, and films of the artists and communicators who reflect our world back at us. We shut out the actual violence that takes place in our daily lives unless it hits so hard that it smashes (usually only temporary) the rose colored glasses we see the world through.

Some of us never experience anything on our own unique emotional plane. We feel emotions but they are molded and shaped in the form and pattern of something we have seen, read, or been told. We experience love, hate, fear, even what we feel when we fuck, according to the script of an artist’s soul.

The artist must shed all insulation to feelings in order to relate them on an emotional level. We are the monkey on his back and also the justification for his existence as an artist. We are willing to become both his media and his audience. Because to take off those glasses and become a seer for ourselves is to go into the darkness without knowing how far you will fall or what you may land on. To take off those glasses is to be looked upon as weird, maybe even to be weird or sometimes insane.

Once the magic lenses are gone no replacement will ever do the same job. There are drugs that will take the edge off paranoia and dull the fear of your own mind, still allowing you to feel without the feelings crippling you. Dig Hesse walking the dark streets of his own mind, his head reeling from cocaine, or Kerouac raving over his typewriter out of his mind on amphetamines and wine, Billie Holiday trucking around the stage, her track marks hidden by the glaring lights, myself with my head flying with nothing but emotion at the controls.

The memory of my rose glasses and the event that shattered them like the memory of a drug experience. It sometimes comes on the threshold of sleep. It is always like the incident is still taking place, and time has warped or stretched itself in the middle to include the years since the accident in a long flash into the future while the crash is still going on around me without me being able to do anything to stop it.

Even dying won’t stop it because my death isn’t in the self-written script until the end of the time warp.

I think the glasses may have been cracked or damaged at the moment of my conception, because I have always had this uncomfortable feeling that I was acting or playing a role in a movie of my life that had been written and directed by someone I couldn’t identify or identify with.

The accident in which they were shattered and discarded for good happened about four years ago. I had just come back to Seattle after being in the service. I was working at Boeing as an engineering coordinator. I was playing a role running away from a fate I knew was coming but didn’t understand then nor do I now. I worked in a large room with wall to wall desks. It had about 500 small metal peon type desks, each with a phone, a drawing board, and a drawer for your junk. There were always phones ringing, the paging announcer blaring, the dull rasping hustle of bodies and paper moving. There was the feeling of over 500 people breathing, perspiring, exhausting, loving, hating, and playing games, all enclosed by
four institutional walls. I played lots of games then. As a matter of fact I used to move from one desk, or rather from sitting next to one chick, to another each time I got bored with the present one. This happened about every two weeks, or long enough for one good weekend anyway.

I said I loved them all, but I didn’t know what I meant by it then. Boeing had this buzzer to tell you when to start and stop work. We were only allowed to eat or smoke when it buzzed at break or lunch. We could go to the toilet any time we needed, and I needed to go at least once each day a little after lunch to fix. I was smacking then. It was a habit I picked up in the service. I both loved and hated Boeing: it was a perverse place and it was an innocent place. The people there were happy in their material-filled insulated lives, that is to say they were into what years of education and conditioning had taught them as well-adjusted sane happiness, and I loved them for it like a kid with his nose against the window of a doughnut shop. I thought I wanted to fit in, not playing a role but really being like them. I was afraid of being myself because I was weird.

During the time all this was happening I was living in a singles apartment building in Federal Way. Karin and Ron lived together in the building. Ron was an engineer and Karin worked in the shop. Both of them were about five years older than I and had been working for Boeing since they left school. I drove them to work and back, and in return they were teaching me how to survive and score in the giant plastic paycheck and sex-mill that is Boeing, or was Boeing for them. The evening the accident happened was a Friday.

I walked over to the parking lot and sat in the car waiting for
them. I usually dug waiting until the lot was empty—the battle of the parking lot was always a good show. Hundreds of car engines roaring angrily as though cursing each other. Everyone in a hurry to be the first on the road. Each driver trying to force his machine over or through the others like piglets fighting to suck on the same nipple, ignoring the other vacant tits. Well, this was Friday and I wanted to be home getting ready to get it on with a date I had. So with rose shades firmly in place I joined the fight as soon as Karin and Ron were strapped to their seats.

I lurched the Volvo in front of a camper truck, prompting its driver to simultaneously slam on the brakes and throw an obscene gesture my way which I returned while turning sharply to avoid another car trying to cut in on me. In a few minutes we were on our way to the new freeway—new to me because it was finished when I was away.

Ron started passing around a quart of warm beer. We all lit cigarettes and the muscles in the back of my neck began to loosen up. When we got to the freeway I jumped over to the far right lane as soon as I could and let the Volvo out on its run, the speed climbing like a slow rush up to 90. I was digging the speed and letting the cool wind hit me in the face and blow through my hair. I was off on a dream thinking of that giant boobed chick from the cafeteria I was so sure of balling that night. I was high loving the feeling of the car. I still love to drive although it scares me now.

I first saw the Mustang as a yellow dot coming from just behind Ron's head reflected in the mirror. They must have been doing about 120 because in less than a second they flashed by too close to my left side. Then suddenly it was one of those situations where time seems to slow way down and one second seems like five. The Mustang's rear end bounced once or twice. I heard screaming as the yellow death machine stood on its nose disintegrating as it flipped end over end throwing off automobile parts and what looked like a human figure, arm and leg waving in the air, just above my windshield. I must have jerked the wheel because I felt the Volvo start sliding. Time speeded up again and we were off the road to the right, spun around the wrong way looking back at the smashed Mustang.

My mind flashed, this has happened before in Vietnam. Was I ever there? Was I here now? Did I get back? Am I dead?

I was running toward a lump I saw in the road.

Where was I?

I slid and fell on something soft and wet but hot like.

I slid and fell on something soft and wet but hot like a woman's body.

Oh God it was a woman.

Or what was left of her body.

My stomach spun in unison with my head as I tried to stand up. The body seemed to be shivering. Her tongue twisting and stretching in a torn blood filled mouth-like she was trying to scream or as if she were having an orgasm. But she was dead. She couldn't have been alive. Half of her face was gone and her neck and back were broken. Time kept speeding up and slowing down. Everything was covered with blood.

God how is it to feel yourself die?

Could she feel herself fly out of the car?

How long do brain cells stay alive?

Suddenly everything I had repressed and kept locked in all my life came at me out of a red and asphalt cesspool. I could feel myself vomiting and trying to scream at the same time. All the ugliness of Vietnam was splashing on the bloody asphalt mixing with her blood and hair—or was it my blood?

Could she hear it?

Did she hear herself try to scream?

Then I couldn't hear anything any more. It was like I was standing watching myself doubled over her on the asphalt, then lying bleeding on a river bank in Vietnam. I saw myself and the woman as she must have been once making love on a sandy beach in the sun.

Now Ron was grabbing my shoulder. He was screaming, "The guy in the car is dead. I've never seen anything so . . . ."

He stopped as he looked down at the body over my shoulder. I bolted and ran toward the car. I could hear a siren down the highway, then the sound of a woman screaming. It was Karin. We were leaning on the side of the car. She was holding me. I couldn't stop crying or shaking. There was blood and vomit smeared all over our clothes. A lot of people were
standing around staring. Their eyes were wide open with dilated pupils, their faces flushed. One bastard was even grinning. Ron was talking to the cops. I don't know what he told them. I couldn't talk. I just stood there crying. When they were finished I got in the back seat and lay there shaking while Ron drove the rest of the way home.

We all went into my apartment. Karin was still crying. I went into the bathroom and did up an unscheduled hit, then stayed in the shower for what at least seemed like two hours. When I came out Ron and Karin had gone home leaving me a drink poured. Instead of drinking it I cooked some more smack and loaded the biggest hit I had ever done. I had to because I was having feelings that there are no definitions for, not mention the paranoia I felt building in me. The images of the crash kept coming back, only more vivid and distorted than they actually were. I wanted to be off on a big run.

The smack started into my blood. That woman—there she was in my dipper. I could smell her body and feel her hot damp flesh as she rushed from the point stuck in my vein—up my arm—into my head—merging her body with mine, her tongue twisting and darting between ice blue lips. She combined her consciousness with mine, slowly engulfing my body—then my mind—isolating me from any other feelings—then I had no feeling.

I was dying.

Or had I died out on the freeway. Maybe we were each other, she and I.

Don't slip away.

Hang on, my mind whispered. You're conscious, man. You can see the room. See, it's getting clear.

Move.

All of a sudden I wanted to feel, to see things with my own eyes, not through someone else's. I wanted to understand and dig everything. But now how would I handle the paranoia, that fear of everything I can only describe so you will understand it as the fear of the thing or event that will bring on the end of the time warp.

The morning paper had a story about the accident. The couple were from Seattle University going to Portland for the weekend. The article said both had died instantly in the one car accident and that the blood tests showed both were intoxicated.

Ron and Karin are married now and both are still working for Boeing. And I am an artist making a living as a student on the G.I. Bill. I don't use smack any more because it sends you where you don't or can't care or feel, and I can't afford that or the expense anymore.
TURNING TO JESUS
IN BELLINGHAM

"Praise the Lord, brother."

Jim was an old friend from high school. I met him downtown in Bellingham today. He claims to be a reborn man as he stands on the corner selling Truth newspapers. He smiles at passers-by and tells them "Jesus loves you. Would you like a paper?" Some people ignore him, some get mad, and then some people come up and just start telling Jim their problems. The ministry is on the streets, not in the church.

I told Jim I was writing an article about Jesus people in town. He told me of the One Way Coffee House, and Canaan. The coffee house is located underneath the YMCA, it's only marker a sign with one index finger pointing up; one way. Inside it is dim, but not smoky. The ceiling is hung with fishnet and the wall-hangings are tie-dyed. The room is big and warm.

I met a big, bearded man named Tiny, who spoke of how the coffee house came to be. Tiny came up to Bellingham with $40 in his pocket and the Lord told him to start a coffee house. He looked around for a location, and found a bare, large room with bathrooms at the YMCA for $150 a month. Tiny liked the place, but didn't have the money to rent the rooms or the means to furnish them. So he started to pray, and things began to happen.

Someone dropped by and asked if the coffee house needed a piano—Tiny had prayed for one. Another person gave them a large number of folding chairs. Puget Power called to donate old cable spools for tables. The rent was payed. In the space of a month the coffee house was operating, and Tiny was thanking the Lord.

Sitting in the coffee house presupposes that either you have been saved, or soon will be. People sit around at tables, thumbing through Bibles and going over their lives. A newcomer arrives—the coffee house exists to extend the ministry; is the newcomer saved? People from the coffee house come up and talk about their experiences, Bibles in hand. Quotations are frequently read to emphasize a point. Some people are calm and deliberate, others impatient, according to each one's personality.

Tiny is very charismatic. He can tell stories well. He has a smile and an air of self-assurance. Others are less secure in their beliefs, clutching firmly to a few well-rehearsed propositions and Bible passages.

The drama unfolds when a newcomer enters the coffee house and begins talking with the people. Eventually the newcomer is asked if he knows Jesus. If he has any problems he is told to pray. Once in a while, when a discussion moves across the floor to the prayer room, knowing smiles and hallelujahs are exchanged.

While at the coffee house I talked to Jim about his life before Jesus. He spoke of being despondent, feeling tense and at odds with the people he lived with, being tired and feeling empty. One day a close friend came, saw Jim's trouble, and asked if he had ever talked to Jesus. They prayed together and "the
dam burst, all my old worries, hassles and fears were washed away, and I was reborn."

Jim gave up all his other concerns and went to the coffee house to live, to sell Truth newspapers and to share the gospel. While at the coffee house, Jim told me about Canaan, a large mansion in Edgemoor, Bellingham's "Beverly Hills." The manion is a home for roughly 40 Jesus people, and also serves as a meeting place for all Jesus people in town. Jim and I drove up to attend a Saturday night fellowship meeting. We walked into the glassed-in foyer of the mansion. The room was packed; balcony, chairs and floor. People milled around to find places in the huge room with 40 foot ceilings and flickering stone fireplace. Fellowship night at Canaan is a time for people to get together to sing, to pray and to bear witness.

A guitar was brought out and the crowd sang with great enthusiasm, ending each song with hallelujahs and "Thank you, Jesus!" Then came the time of bearing witness, which consisted of people individually expressing their love of Jesus, and their thanks for being saved.

As the rest of the room remained silent, one person would chant his own thoughts; "Thank you Jesus for giving me strength, for helping me to see your love. Thank you Jesus for showing me the way."

The chant was sung alone, but the whole group's support hovered around the singer. The sourest notes and weakest voices were met with the warmest smiles. Gradually the songs and chants merged into one common group voice chanting ahhhhhhhhhhhhh. The separateness of each individual seemed to melt away into one multi-faceted voice, louder and louder. Hands rose up towards the ceiling, eyes closed, faces turned upwards. A man in the middle of the room started chanting incoherent words and phrases. I assumed this was speaking in tongues—being filled with the spirit and uttering words of some long-forgotten language my ears had never heard.

The group voice was very loud, the room pulsated with energy. People got up and danced. Someone said that the Lord wanted his children to praise him and be joyful; roars of laughter went up all around the room.

Another night I went up to Canaan to see a pre-taped message by a preacher named Derek Prince on a color video-tape unit. The presentation itself was a demonstration of one of the tools a modern evangelist may have at his disposal.

Using Bible passages as evidence, Mr. Prince prophesied that this generation of college-aged people would live to see the second coming—the day of judgment when Christ would return to the earth and sit in judgment of every soul. On hearing this the assembled gave shouts of "Hallelujah" and "Thank you, Jesus." Mr. Prince continued that since the judgment day was so near, it was of utmost importance to make the world ready.

He went on to say that God has sovereign
purposes for nations that He plans to fulfill. Any nation that fulfills the will of God shall flourish, while nations that don’t shall perish. God has looked favorably on the United States, he said. The forefathers were God-fearing men, and the U.S. is the land of the covenant fulfilling God’s purposes.

Mr. Prince believed that only the U.S. had the resources and the technology to carry out such world-wide evangelism. At this point, Mr. Prince asked all those who were willing to do God’s will to stand, and, as one, the crowd stood with cries of “Thank you, Jesus” and “Praise the Lord.” Again the crowd spontaneously launched into the wordless chant, and the sound of foreign languages emerged. Voices layered one on another, hands uplifted, eyes closed in group experience.

After the voices died down, Bob Swinford, the founder of Canaan extolled the technology that would make world-wide evangelism a reality.

“Just think,” he said. “The Japanese are coming out with a casset player that will cost a dollar. With $20,000 you could buy 20,000 units, and sprinkle them all through Africa preaching the word of God in Swahili, Bantu or whatever. You could convert Africa!”

“Praise the Lord,” agreed the crowd.

The things I heard that night bothered me. The people seemed so naive. Wrapped up in their little shell at Canaan. How could they suspect that people in South America might hate them just for being American, no matter how good their intentions? They all talked of the tools and wealth of the United States that would save the world, and they all took it for granted that the natives of any country would be eager to hear, and willing to trust any American, provided he was equipped with the latest. I wondered; if America’s role were to shift from policeman of the world to prophet, who would listen? Not the Vietnamese.

The biggest danger seemed to me to be when people become so convinced that they are fulfilling the Divine Will, for then they believe they have the sanction to do anything they want. The crusades stand out as an ugly reminder of how misguided Christianity can become.

I asked Bob Swinford what would become of those people who refused to accept Jesus into their hearts, who might stand in evangelism’s way. Would the evangelists take God’s will into their own hands?

Swinford said “We’ll leave that up to God.”

I hope so.

The phenomena of the Jesus People movement represents a fairly new trend in the history of Christianity. Many of the concepts are old, dating back to the garden of Eden. They use the same Bible that has existed since King James, yet they voice
some fairly revolutionary ideas. They all seem to agree that the second coming, the day of judgment, is very close at hand (within this generation), and that given this situation, most established Christian churches are not equal to the task of turning people's hearts to Jesus.

The Jesus people's fellowship meetings and evangelical outlook resemble practices of churches such as the Pentecostal and Jehovah's Witness groups, but their membership is quite different.

The Jesus people I talked to at the coffee house, the ones I met at Canaan and the ones I see on the street all had one thing in common—they were all young.

Ideologically, the Jesus people believe that being a Christian is something you are all the time, not just on Sundays. They believe in the literal interpretation of the Bible, and therefore maintain that the only way to be saved is through Jesus Christ, being reborn as a child of God.

The Jesus people are a movement. Their numbers can be found in many cities and towns across the country. Many non-Christian friends of mine have related their surprise on returning to their home towns to find old friends newly converted, and trying to convert them. There can be no doubt that the Jesus people's numbers are growing. But why? Why are they so closely related in age? What are the needs Jesus satisfies?

If you accept Christ into your heart you will never be alone again. A convert will always have something to fall back on through thick and thin.

No Jesus person in Bellingham is starving either for food or companionship. There are fellowship meetings at the coffee house, Canaan and in homes all over town, seven days a week. And, if you live for Christ, as Jim says he does, you don't worry about where the next meal is coming from—the Lord will provide.

You don't worry—and that, I believe, is the key to why so many college-aged people are turning to Christ. I know the fear and anxiety that confronts you when suddenly out of high school you are expected to be responsible for your own decisions and welfare. What are you going to make out of your life? Are you going to college, and if not, what are you going to do?

In such a time of worry and self-doubt, turning to Christ and being reborn as a "child of God" can be a positive relief. Suddenly the decisions are no longer yours to make, and if a question bothers you, all you have to do is listen, and the Lord will provide the answer to what is right.

Suddenly you are a child again with a father you
IECC: Creating a Cultural Awareness

Story: Karen Yale

"You're nothing but a sheltered, middle-class white chick who doesn't know anything about what's 'outside'," a friend once told me. It's cool when you realize a friend understands you, even if you don't. I never looked at myself in that aspect, and I wonder how many other sheltered white people there are on this campus.

There are whites who do not realize the cultural differences that minorities carry at Western. But, minority groups are well aware of this. Their cultural life styles are not understood by each other, nor are they understood by whites, and for this reason, campus students developed the IECC, Inter Ethnic Communications Committee.

As a new program on campus, IECC was started by staff members of the residence halls. It was officially recognized as a group during the summer and has been in actual existence for only about three months. Representing minority groups on Western's campus, the program has four main minority unions, Chicano's (MECHA), Blacks (BSU), Indians (AISU), and Asians (ASU), all who are playing a major part in the development of IECC.

The unions grouped together in mutual concern to increase their influence and involvement on campus and in the community. They are faced with the same problems. Part of the function of the individual unions is to give the members a place to identify themselves with, and to meet people that are of their own background. Singly, these unions are small, but by joining together as one larger group for representative purposes, they can emphasize the importance of their needs. This idea of merging is not to integrate their cultures, but to provide a center where minorities can join for certain causes and activities. Positioned in society as minorities, these groups when combined, develop the atmosphere of a majority. The unions are equal, and no one group has "power" over the others.

There has been trouble in the past, and there still is, between minority and non-minority residents in campus dorms, an IECC member pointed out, and living together proved to be so difficult for some that the motive for IECC became apparent. So, one of the major concerns for the program is to provide awareness for white people, as well as for themselves, about ethnic cultures. With this in mind, they want to set up portable programs, which will move from area to area on campus and in the community educating others about their cultures with the aid of films and speakers. They would be available for programs, and for class studies.

The perspective they want to convey in this portable program is in the philosophy behind IECC, which is idealized basically in self-education, and in experiencing the ideas of others. Thus, relating new ideas to those who don't know anything about what's 'outside'. This philosophy can only be generalized, as the whole outline of goals is still undetermined, and disagreed upon by members.

Program members have indefinite plans for a main cultural center on campus, a building which would be devoted to ethnic cultures, and would include a library and perhaps show the lifestyle and arts of minority groups. They would like to see the center represent a "home away from home", where various cultural life styles might be a part of minority campus life. Minority students could study at the center, and get together with their own people, knowing that someone they could relate to 'would always be there, and knowing that they would be in the majority. Representing a center of identity and education, the members feel the building may be of major importance to ethnic relationships at Western. To IECC, this would also pose as a place where difference could be exposed, creating an awareness to others. This definitely doesn't mean that the individual unions want to be looked upon as "exhibits" for learning purposes of the whites.

There were certain individuals who expressed the desire that IECC be primarily for minority use, not a center of curiosity. But, the majority felt this center could be profitable to themselves as well as to whites, and were all for the center being open to anyone.
A great deal of consideration will be given on the creation of jobs for Western's minority students. More jobs are needed so students can earn enough money to stay in college. But, to create more jobs will, of course, take money. IECC has received money from several organizations: the United Church of Christ, the Western Activities Council, the Inter Hall Council, and from federal funds. But, this is still insufficient for the accomplishments they want to attain.

Though the program has been in effect for only three months, they have gained the support of other organizations and of the administration. But, members of the program feel that involvement is weak. Right now the program is faced with the need for more student support. Everyone knows involvement takes time, but time is necessary to get a definite outline of goals set.

Rick Davis, one of the IECC originators, said, "...socially and politically, this could be one of the most powerful groups on campus. It has a lot of potential." Many of the students who work in, or know of IECC are aware of the power the group could have. This recognition alone may influence student involvement.

Rick Davis resigned from taking the full responsibility of IECC in January, and Joe Bowman, Assistant Dean of Students for Minority Affairs, has taken over. Rick felt that the college was trying to get much of the work done for free, and he didn't want to be used in that way. As resident director at Higginson, with a full course load, he also felt that the potential power of IECC demanded far too much time for one person. "They need a person who can pull all of his time into it. I think that everybody should work. I can't represent the whole group," Rick said.

The ideals of IECC are basically for the minority students: those reaching for their own recognition and cultural identity. But, just as important, they are for the benefit of those "sheltered, middle-class" white people on campus.
THE OLD-AGE SUBCULTURE UNITES

The gradual devaluation of older people, along with a spectacular growth in their numbers, is one of the trends in U.S. life. Twenty million Americans are 65 or over, and, as a group, have increased proportionately to 10 per cent of the population.

Old people have much in common with today's youth; both groups are largely unemployed, introspective and often depressed; their bodies and psyches are changing, and they are heavy users of drugs.

Their families usually disapprove if they wish to marry, and both groups are obsessed with time. Youth calculates time from birth, however, while the aged figure backward from their funeral day.

But youth and age seldom intersect, with the young ignoring those whom they'll resemble in 40 or 50 years.

The paradox is that while medicine has kept them young, technology and the changing family-role of the aged has made them obsolete. For many, the harvest of "the golden years" is isolation, loneliness and despair.

Age-ism, bearing all the traits of racism, blocks the elderly from achieving a meaningful final 10 or 20 years of life. It is always the Depression for the elderly person seeking employment. Medical advances have given many 60- and 70-year-olds the physical capabilities of persons 20 years younger than they, but employers can always fall back to the charge of senility.

Recently, though, a group of college students and a group of the elderly were rated according to the characteristics of senility, and the students were found to be the more neurotic, negative, dissatisfied, socially inept and unrealistic. In short, the students were more senile than their elders.

Other studies have shown that the percentage of psychiatric impairment of old persons is no greater than that for younger groups. But young people are treated as though their psychological problems are severe. When the same symptoms are seen in the elderly, they are considered par for the course for old age.

Eleven thousand Whatcom County residents are over 65, 3 per cent above the national average. The latest census data puts Bellingham's 65-plus population at 5,343, or about 5 per cent above average.

These are the members of the old age subculture—the ones whom most picture as filling the church pews on Sunday and beating a path between home and the doctor on Monday. Since few of them are major decision-makers in the community, and none take to the streets with placards and epithets, they go all but unnoticed.

Treated like outsiders, the aged have increasingly clustered together for mutual support or simply to enjoy themselves. In some areas of California, the answer has been creation of whole towns where only those over 60 are allowed to reside. For others, a meaningful life is moving to one of these towns or to other age-oriented spas in Arizona or Florida.

Most, however, stay in their own state where the able elderly, the vast majority, turn to some form of senior center for the companionship and activity that technology and time have taken from them.

Bellingham's Senior Activity Center, on Holly Street by the YMCA, is the Mecca for this area's elderly. It is operated by the Whatcom County
Council on Aging and has seen phenomenal growth in
the past five years, despite a declining yearly budget.

In 1967 the Center averaged less than a thousand
visits a month. 1971 figures put the average at nearly
4,000 per month and the rate continues to rise.

"The center's mission is to provide services and
activities for the elderly," says Catherine May, Center
director. "It's here to help old people maintain a
positive attitude toward life."

Even a brief description of the Center's services
and activities would fill a small catalog. Classes are
offered in everything from yoga to billiards and lip
reading to ecology and ceramics. The Center also
sponsors string, harmonica and rhythm bands that
regularly tour the area.

Services provided include health and
education—glaucoma screening, diabetes detection
nutrition classes; employment—finding work for the
elderly and sale of craft work and art made by
members; transportation—to and from nursing homes
and private homes, pleasure trips to Seattle or
Vancouver; service projects—sewing and quilt-making
for the Day Care Center, the county infirmary and
the needy; and a hot lunch program and
friendly-caller program for those who are bedridden
or isolated.

And the best feature, in Catherine May's eyes, is
that "it is open to rich or poor, there's always
something for everyone." The 25 cent per month
dues is easy on the inflation-ravaged fixed incomes of

Nobody loves life like an old man.
- Sophocles
many members; less than a round-trip downtown on
the city's busses.

The key factor in the Center's success is the
variety of services and activities, according to Jan
Nelson, the Center's 21-year-old transportation
director.

"Those at the Center have a more positive
outlook on life," he said. "A lot of nursing homes are
breeding grounds for apathy. They hardly ever get to
leave the home and there just isn't a lot to do in most
of them."

Most of the elderly he has seen, Nelson said, are
more interested in serving and enjoying rather than
acquiring and exploiting, in concern for others rather
than control of others, and in "appreciating each
day." They appear to embrace many of the values of
today's saner hippies.

Despite cutbacks to the budget, the Center has
organized "satellite centers" throughout Whatcom
County to provide facilities for rural elderly.

One of the economic bright spots was last
November's voter-approval of a half-million dollar
center to replace the now cramped YMCA Building
quarters. The location has not been determined yet,
but Mrs. May said the bonds have been sold and the
new complex should be completed within two years.
The grant includes $168,000 for expansion of
facilities for the seven satellite centers.

Mrs. May hopes that the new building will
encourage more of the city's elderly to take part in
Center activities.

"We'll be able to enlarge the scope of our services
and activities," she said, "and some day we'll have
one of the best organized facilities for the elderly in
the U.S."
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