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Before I was a journalism student at Western, I would pick up Klipsun at various locations on campus, flip through it, read a couple of stories and set it down. I never understood the full magnitude of work that one issue of Klipsun requires. Since the magazine is a student-run publication, everything from the photographs to the stories to the cover design is created, edited and finalized by Western students. Production is an amazing process, and words cannot express how it feels to see the final product on stands throughout Bellingham.

Similar to Klipsun staff members in the past, we have strived to make this issue as flawless and captivating as we can. The editorial staff took pride in choosing stories that catered to a wide variety of people in the community. In this issue, in addition to light stories about poker and bingo, we included stories about environmental issues, such as global warming, and about social issues, such as the illegal use of prescription drugs. While the writers poured their time into creating their stories, we as an editorial staff poured our energy into creating a beautiful final product. I hope all who read this issue keep in mind the incredible journey one issue of Klipsun takes.

We hope you enjoy reading these stories as much as we did and take the time to appreciate the hard work. If you have any questions, comments or story ideas, please call 360.650.3737 or e-mail at klipsunwwu@hotmail.com.

Best wishes.

Jeanna Barrett, Editor-in-Chief

Janna Bronemann is a senior secondary education major with her endorsement areas in English and journalism. She would like to thank all of her interviewees, especially Dixie Pettit, for their contributions to her story. Janna says to anyone that enjoys her story, drop a dauber or troll by the Klipsun office ‘cause she’s starting her collection - bingo for life.

Charlotte Chandler is a Western senior and journalism major. She hopes to one day work in the music industry, but doing what — she’s not exactly sure. She wants to give a shout out to her two guy friends and those who tease her about them.

Tess Alverson is a journalism major in the public relations sequence in her final year at Western. She plans to graduate this summer and dreams of working for either a big-city fashion magazine or for a large public-relations firm. She’d like to thank all the people involved with her story for their cooperation, especially the children and all her friends for their support.
Jack Carr hails from Renton. He plans on graduating in June with a journalism degree in the public relations sequence. His fondness for Bellingham prompted him to write this article, and he hopes it will give people a better idea of what is in store for Bellingham in the future. He would like to thank his father, Don, his mother, Rita, and his sister, Natalie, for their continuous love and encouragement.

Lauren Fior is a senior journalism major in the public relations sequence and English minor. She enjoys writing and would like to work for a public-relations firm after graduation. She would like to thank the three subjects of her article for their honesty and humor.

Connor Clark-Lindh is an environmental journalism senior. Once an engineering and technology major, he changed to journalism to learn to communicate better with others. After graduating, he hopes to work in the Peace Corps and then eventually in international politics. He believes that through education and cooperation, everyone can make the world a better place to live.

Gil Ventura is a senior public relations major, who has compiled a list of his favorite things ever (for now): family, friends, jazz, The Velvet Underground, Smokey Robinson, jogging, traveling, the Seattle SuperSonics and the ocean. He is proud to be Filipino and insists that people stop “hating” on him because he’s from Oak Harbor.
Though the odds of winning are slim, a traditional game finds it still has players who are willing to try their luck. **Janna Bronemann** captures the quirks, quips and charms of four Bingo 262 parlor queens. Photos by **Janna Bronemann**.

A red, white and blue metal building that resembles a warehouse lies a few miles south of the Washington-Canadian border. Instead of boxes or hardware, gamblers, plastic trolls with frizzled, fluorescent hair and a plethora of half-smoked cigarettes occupy the building during the afternoon and evening hours. Possibly an alcoholics anonymous meeting or a polka arena? Hardly — it is Ferndale’s Bingo 262, where many players sit in brown, vinyl chairs on ash-stained, speckled pink, blue and beige carpet.

Whether the players are drawn to Bingo 262 to feed their bingo cravings, engage in a social activity, collect bingo paraphernalia or relieve the weight from everyday stresses, all bingo-goers have one thing in common — they all are willing to pay money for the chance to yell “Bingo” and take home a few extra bucks.

Inside the parlor, the air smells of thick smoke, stale popcorn, burnt coffee and reheated cafeteria food. Eleven televisions and eight bingo screens highlighting the called numbers hang throughout the perimeter of the room. Certificates and awards with the names and accomplishments of high winners line the walls. To the left of the hall is a line of pop machines and Toy Shoppes, where one can use a joystick to control a loose metal claw and grab for stuffed toys behind an enclosed glass case.

At 8 p.m. on a Sunday night, close to 200 people pack the seemingly endless rows of tables at Bingo 262. Silence fills the room as the players wait in anticipation to hear the next number called.

“G-59. That’s G-five-nine,” says the bingo caller from a raised podium at the front of the parlor.

He speaks clearly in a deep, monotone voice into the microphone as he robotically puts the bingo ball to the side and reaches for the next ball to adjust it for view on the television screen.

The players frantically scan their bingo cards like lasers slowly reading UPC bar codes. They search for a square in the “G” column displaying a 59 where they can stamp their freshly inked daubers.

“Bingo!” a woman casually yells as she raises her hand and eyes the room for the closest employee to verify her win.

The walls absorb sounds of sighs and crumpled paper as the surrounding players shake their heads in disappointment and throw their
bingo cards into plastic trash cans by each table. A handful of the garbage cans are neighbor to metal walkers, and an oxygen tank sits next to a table in the hall.

**Queen Rollason**

At 4 p.m. on a Thursday afternoon, three hours before an evening bingo session begins, Joan Rollason picks a seat in the hall to prepare herself for a night at Bingo 262.

Rollason, 62, travels across the Canadian border to play her favorite game at Bingo 262 while her husband, a truck driver, is busy working. She likes Bingo 262 because of its large variety of bingo games, such as satellite bingo and Bonanza. She says that although she rarely walks away with money, the entertainment aspect of the game keeps her coming back week after week.

"It's something to do more than anything," Rollason says. "I've had my moments, but they're few and far between. It's like (classic) gambling. The house wins."

Despite Rollason's infrequent winning record, she says her favorite bingo memory and biggest win came in 1998 when she won $20,000 in a hall in Edmonton, Canada.

"I just about fainted," Rollason says.

To Rollason, bingo is a family affair. Her mother introduced her to bingo 40 years ago, and Rollason quickly was hooked. Rollason now likes to take her two daughters with her for a girls' night away from their husbands. Rollason says her daughters also like playing bingo as a social event.

"It's been going on for three generations," she says.

One of Rollason's favorite activities at Bingo 262 is its special New Year's Eve celebration, where she plays bingo and drinks sparkling cider with her friends. Rollason's husband works on New Year's Eve, so she has celebrated the past five years in good company with her fellow bingo friends.

Rollason tucks her pewter-gray, shoulder-length hair behind her ears, and her face glows as she talks about taking home balloons, hats and toys for her grandchildren but had to keep the corn for herself because it was the cutest.

Rollason continues to reach into her bag as she smiles. "And do I bring snacks? Oh yes, I bring snacks," she says as she grabs a 2-liter bottle of Diet Sprite and a box of caramel corn.

She proceeds to pull out a ruler, a bingo-receipt holder to show proof of card purchase, an electronic hand-held bingo game, a few pens, another bingo bag and a miniature flashlight; all are labeled with particular bingo parlor logos.

"There's all sorts of perks, presents, gifts and things," Rollason says. "It makes it fun."

Rollason says that even though she loves the game, she tries to keep her playing habit to once a week so she does not waste too much money or get too hooked. This particular Thursday, however, was her second day in a row of playing.

"It's addictive," Rollason says. "When you go, you will go back."

**Queen Cameron**

A line begins to form at the card-purchasing desk and Irene Cameron, 47, waits anxiously for the 6 p.m. session to begin. She sits at a table near the small cafeteria and hurriedly shovels bite after bite of a taco salad into her mouth as she looks at the line growing larger by the minute.

Cameron, a bingo veteran of 10 years, says she started playing with her aunt. After Cameron won, she says she could not stop.

"I wish I never started," Cameron says. With a half smirk and somewhat regretful undertone, she laughs, "I used to think it was a stupid thing to do. Now look at me."

Cameron works for Canada Bread Company in Langley, just miles past the border. She says she is drawn to Bingo 262 because of the possibility of bringing home extra money.

Cameron has won up to $500 at Bingo 262 but says she usually spends more than $50 for each session, and she sometimes plays two sessions a day. She says she used to play only one card per session, which cost only a couple of dollars, but now she buys four strips of cards each session because the parlor pays out $500 for each win.

"It's exciting when you win," Cameron says. "It beats doing housework."

Despite Cameron's bingo habit, she says the odds of winning are slim because players purchase a large amount of cards each session.

Cameron chomps away on her taco salad and says, "One thing is you'll never get rich. Another thing, you'll get fat. You sit and eat. It's terrible. It's a bad habit, but I love it."

Cameron says she used to play bingo about once a week because she keeps it a secret from her husband since he does not believe women...
should gamble. She says she recently bought a new car, however, so she will play more to try and pay off her bills. "I got to win, but that will never happen," she says.

A cheesy, 1950s song plays in the background as the bingo hall begins to fill with customers.

"Listen to that song," Cameron comments. "That's in a bingo hall only."

She laughs about all the funny sights one can see while visiting a bingo parlor. She says she has seen her friends perform good-luck rituals such as putting a rubber band around their daubers for every win they get before they play. One of her friends applies lipstick before every game and another walks around her chair four times before she plays.

Even though Cameron does not like to partake in the superstitions that often accompany bingo, she still considers herself a bingo fanatic.

Cameron justifies her habit and jokes, "At least I don't go to casinos. But it's still gambling. You got to do something in life. I guess you could take up sports."

**Queen Pettit and Queen Hansen**

Just minutes before the night session begins, Dixie Pettit scrambles to prepare for an evening of bingo. She meets her friend in the smoking section of Bingo 262 and situates herself at a table a couple of rows in front of the caller.

Pettit removes a red comb from her bag and starts combing her short blond hair.

"I must look good for bingo in case I win because then they like to take your picture," she says.

"If you whistle, Lady Luck hears it and rushes right over. Not everyone knows it."

Pettit, 56, is so devoted to the bingo scene that she started working alongside her daughter in the kitchen at Bingo 262 a couple of weeks ago.

"You got to go to work to support a bingo habit," Pettit says.

Too rushed to change her shoes after work, Pettit sits with bare feet and her bingo card in front of her. She explains that she prefers to play with the digital bingo cards on the few computer screens scattered throughout the hall. Pettit says reserving a computer before the session begins is against the law, so her friend, Bess Hansen, comes to the parlor early and pays for an extra computer so Pettit can use it when she gets off work.

"We take care of each other," Pettit says. "We look out after each other. What goes around, comes around."

Hansen, 72, says she and Pettit like to play the computer bingo because it displays 48 cards at one time, as opposed to the small paper strips that have only three cards. Players have to pay for each card, so they end up spending a lot of money to play on the computers.

Pettit, a bingo veteran of 18 years, started going to bingo with a former boyfriend but now says that bingo is a way for her to escape stress and enjoy a social activity. Pettit's husband recently died of lung cancer, so she likes to come to the bingo hall as a release.

"It's a brainless activity," Pettit says.

Pettit won $600 a few weeks ago at Bingo 262 and has won up to $2,000 in the past. Hansen says without much enthusiasm that she has won two cars, a washer and dryer and $10,000 in bingo.

Hansen explains that bingo can be either cheap or expensive depending on how many cards one plays each session.

"You got to keep up with the competition," Hansen says. Pettit says she pays an average of $50 a session.
"I enjoy being a high roller," Pettit says. "I'm thrifty in all avenues of my life, but not bingo."

Pettit says that at her age, she should be smarter about spending so much money when she knows that she does not win most of the time.

"I'm old enough to know better, but I don't," she says.

Pettit often is in the parlor all day when she plays both sessions. Now that she works in the kitchen more, she says she can probably play only one session a day.

"If I don't show up at bingo, everyone's wondering what happened and will start calling me at home," Pettit says.

Hansen gets up from her chair and shakes her hips back and forth as she brags about how her painkillers are curing her cracked tailbone. Pettit hands Hansen some money for more bingo cards, and Hansen walks toward the cashier.

Pettit starts to chat with a Canadian friend who she often plays bingo with and explains that Bingo 262 would not be open if it were not for the many Canadian customers who come to the parlor.

"They're the bread and butter," Pettit says. "We'd be closed up faster than jack shit if it weren't for them."

Hansen and Pettit each light up a cigarette. Two packs of cigarettes sit beside a rainbow of daubers and a small picture of Pettit's grandson for good luck. Hansen describes certain rituals they perform in order to win.

"Rule one — no money on the table, and caps up on the daubers," Pettit says.

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Bingo-shmingo ... what it's really all about

Aside from attracting hundreds of bingo diehards, Bingo 262 is not all about winning or losing a game.

Kathleen Marshall, executive director of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services of Whatcom County, says all Bingo 262's proceeds provide for the service.

Marshall says DVSA is a non-for-profit organization that provides 24-hour crisis services to victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. The organization also provides housing, shelter, hospital assistance, protection orders and support groups for victims. Marshall says most people who play bingo are strictly there for entertainment and do not know they are actually contributing to a worthy cause.

"It is entertainment," Marshall says. "The good thing about it is that the proceeds go to support a good cause. It's considered charitable gambling."

Whereas approximately 70 percent of Bingo 262's revenue goes back to the customers, the other 30 percent goes to DVSA, Marshall says.

She says the profits from Bingo 262 make up approximately $340,000 of the service's annual operations, which is about 35 percent of its whole budget.

Marshall says Bingo 262 and DVSA work together and could not exist without each other.

"The employees out there are our employees," Marshall said. "Bingo 262 is part of us."

Although some bingo players may only be concerned with taking home money, others, such as Rollason, recognize that they are contributing to a worthy cause. Rollason says spending money on bingo is her way of giving back to the community.

"If anyone comes to my house for charity, I say 'no, I give it to bingo,'" Rollason says.

Whereas Rollason's bingo motivation may be donating to charity or socializing with her fellow bingo allies, every bingo player has his or her own incentive for playing. Bingo is not only about gambling and winning money — the bingo experience truly tells the story.
Aimee Rudsit's eyes roam across the fully stocked refrigerator while gentle, cool air floats over her arms and legs. Rudsit, 23, recalls looking for her bag of organic apples hidden somewhere on the bottom shelves of the fridge in her parents' kitchen.

"Since organic food is so expensive, my parents said that I have to buy it myself," she says, laughing softly. "But then they find out that it tastes good and eat it all."

Rudsit recently moved home where heat, Internet access and food — aside from the organic treats she enjoys — are all free.

The trend of returning to the empty nest after living independently or after graduating from college has grown. Whether because of economic hardships or failed relationships, statistics from the National Survey of Families and Households show that 45 percent of parents between the ages of 45 and 54 have an adult child, age 18 or older, living at home.

Like Rudsit, now a co-manager of a Tacoma U.S. Bank branch, moving back home may be unexpected. It can even be difficult, but the following five precautions will help make it less stressful for both parties.

Returning to the comforts of home may equate home-cooked meals, but Charlotte Chandler advises that compromise and communication are key to being on friendly terms with the folks. Here's how to live with your parents without over staying your welcome. Photos by Paolo Mottola.
Communicate with your parents

After being on your own, you may be used to doing whatever you want, whenever you want. This may need to change.

Not one to be told what to do, Rudsit is quick to answer, and her take-charge attitude resounds in her confident voice. Self-sufficient since she was 19, she says in a loud voice that her ego was crushed when she realized she had to move back in with her parents.

Communication in the house is different now than before she first moved out. Julie Rudsit shares in a perky and gentle voice how delighted she was to spend more time with her daughter.

"Aimee was so busy during her senior year of school that I didn't really get a chance to talk with her then," Julie Rudsit says. "But now when she comes home at night, we get a chance to talk, and I feel like we have good communication."

Aimee Rudsit thinks back to her grade-school days and her father's tendency to dominate the conversation.

"When he gets mad about something, he dwells on it," she says. "He'll come and tell you that he's upset and why, then leave, but then come back and talk about it some more. Now I'll just say, 'Dad, get over it.'"

Aimee Rudsit and her father Bernie have better communication now by sharing how they feel and leaving it at that, Julie Rudsit says.

Hang out with your parents

While parents may give the impression that they are a bit bothered by the children moving back home, in their hearts happiness and excitement also may lie. Rudsit says her parents understand that she has her own plans and activities on her time off.

"They don't really expect me to do anything with them," she says. "They do their thing, and I do mine."

She acknowledges that her parents still enjoy spending time with her when both schedules allow. If she is home on a Sunday, the three sometimes grocery shop together. If they are all at home in the evening, Rudsit says that they will meet in the living room and watch the television show "Law and Order."

Like Rudsit, Adam Flamiatos, a 2003 Western graduate, moved home after graduation. He chuckles under his breath as he remembers how his parents knew at his graduation that he would soon be asking if he could move back. Flamiatos, 23, says he knew his parents enjoyed having him home because of the light-hearted attitude in the house. He recounts the typical joking and bantering in the home.

"The idea of changing the locks on the doors one day while I was away came up a few times for sure," he says.

Expect to give up a little freedom

Rudsit says it was awkward and frustrating to lose the freedom of having friends come over.

"Sometimes I would go out after work and have a drink," Rudsit says. "Instead of taking a cab home, my friends and I used to sleep over at each other's places when we each had our own. Now, no one ever wants to come hang out or spend the night at my house because my parents are there."

It may be difficult to give up your long-enjoyed freedom though Rudsit's parents trusted her to make responsible decisions. But if you are living here, using the facilities and eating the food, have the common courtesy to be respectful of your parents' rules. Think of yourself as a helpful roommate — who also happened to have been birthed by one of the other roommates.

Be prepared to save some money

One of the most important reasons students and graduates move home is to save money. This could be to pay off college loans, to go back to school after taking some time off, or to rent or purchase a house.

Though Flamiatos says he had other reasons for moving home, the opportunity to save money on rent and food was the deciding factor for him when he was debating whether to return.

"For practical reasons, I was doing the right thing," Flamiatos says. "I didn't have to pay rent, and my commute was smaller as well."

Adelina Miranda, a 2004 Western graduate, says she enjoyed returning home because of the "no rent" aspect as well. Miranda, 22, says she appreciates the time she now has at home with her mother and brother. She understands, however, that living with her mom again is not the way her life is going to be for long.

Miranda's current job as a smoker intervention specialist pays well, but Miranda says she is unhappy and wishes to go back to school.

"I would like to get a master's in social work at the University of Washington-Tacoma, which means I will be at home for a few more years," she says.

Don't wear out your welcome

When Flamiatos moved back home after graduation, his mother warned him that it would not be a long-term arrangement.

"She said she didn't want me to be like my older brother's friend who lived with his parents until he was 30," he says.

Flamiatos recently moved out of his parents' house and into a house with some of his buddies. Though Flamiatos may miss the college house parties with aggressively loud music that would deny him sleep, he says he now enjoys being able to go to bed before midnight.

Most parents look forward to the day when their sons or daughters regain self-reliance and move into their own homes. They enjoy their children, but they do not necessarily want them to become too warm and cozy at mom and dad's house.

By talking to their parents about plans to move out children will be motivated to keep looking through those advertisements in the classifieds. Eventually, they'll get out of the nest. By planning and sticking to a budget, they will save a certain amount of money each month, and move out when they have saved the desired amount.

As graduation looms ahead, and students anticipate one of life's rough patches, they may need a place to stay. Give your parents a call. Flamiatos says it can be as beneficial to the parents as it is to the child.

"It was good for my parents to see how much I've grown and to see that I'm different."

As Flamiatos, Miranda and Rudsit can attest to, it's possible for both parties to be comfortable.

"FORTY-FIVE PERCENT OF PARENTS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 45 AND 54 HAVE AN ADULT CHILD, AGE 18 OR OLDER, LIVING AT HOME."

—National Survey of Families & Households
In the past year, 20,000 minors were arrested and convicted for various crimes in Whatcom County. Tess Alverson explores the juvenile court system and listens to the stories of adolescents trying to pull their lives back together. Photos by Paolo Mottola, and additional photos courtesy of the Whatcom County Juvenile Detention Center.

Jatonna* is a delicately framed 15-year-old. She stands on the fifth floor of the Whatcom County Courthouse, slumping over a windowsill and gazing out between the beads of rain, as she patiently waits for her monthly meeting with her probation officer. She makes no apologies for the constant release of water dripping from her hair and over her left eye. She is shivering, and her rhythmic drumming foot shows nervousness, yet she cunningly smiles in a slight attempt to be polite.

“Sorry,” she says. “I walked here, and now I am soaking wet.”

Jatonna straightens up, brushes her hair to the side and yanks at her oversized clothes as if trying to make a better first impression. With all appearances to the contrary, she has a kind of modesty to her.

*Whose last name has been omitted for ethical reasons.
Jatonna is one of many adolescents in Whatcom County who is slowly trying to pull her life back together.

According to Washington Access, more than 710,592 children made up the juvenile detention population in 2003, and in Whatcom County alone, an average of 19 juveniles come into the detention center daily.

Jatonna was sentenced to four months in juvenile detention after giving marijuana to a friend who later developed an almost deadly allergic reaction to the substance. Jatonna has been out of juvenile detention for three months.

Dave Reynolds, a juvenile court administrator, oversees the Whatcom County probation officers who assist the juveniles after their release from detention.

Reynolds says most of the juveniles in the center are arrested for minor in possession of alcohol or marijuana, property crimes, domestic violence, sex offenses and shoplifting. The children are not being children anymore, Reynolds says.

Reynolds adds that people should start looking at other variables in a youth’s life instead of looking at just the crime.

Jatonna remembers her traumatized life at home.

"After my parents split, I had to live with my dad, and I didn’t get to see my mom until I was 11 years old," she says.

Jatonna looks around before speaking again as if she is telling a secret. Her tone is rickety.

"I will always remember what my dad said to my mom the day we went to court for custody," Jatonna says. "He explained how he didn’t need my mom because he had someone who looked exactly like her."

Despite the years of abuse, Jatonna bravely continued to look after her younger sisters while she watched her brothers go in and out of juvenile detention.

Jatonna says she wanted to be a veterinarian when she was little and never dreamed her life would end up like this.

Similar to Jatonna, most teenagers would not say they wanted to spend their childhood days in juvenile detention, watching their futures fade before their eyes.

Reynolds says the juvenile process starts with the initial arrest. From the arrest, the child goes straight to juvenile detention if it is a felony crime or if he or she committed it while another charge was outstanding.

According to Whatcom County Juvenile Services, five forms of crimes exist for juveniles. Misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors are the smallest offenses, which include shoplifting and minor in possession of alcohol. Class A felonies, Class B felonies and Class C felonies can involve murder or burglary, which can lead the juveniles straight to court.

T.J.*, 15, remembers the juvenile courts well. T.J. has been in juvenile detention seven times.

"It never fails," he says. "No matter if it was my first time or my seventh time, I always sweat a ton, my hands start to shake and I get this nervous laugh."

T.J. is anything but timid, and as he sits in his chair, his knuckles bend and crack with harmonious popping sounds. T.J. adamantly describes the courtroom as a small area with stale, humid air. He remembers 13 dimly lit fluorescent lights shining down on the American and state flags, casting human-like shadows on the walls.

"It is so uncomfortable in the courtroom," T.J. says. "There’s just a judge who is peering down on you and a room of prosecutors or probation officers shaking their heads at you. It would make any kid feel sick."

T.J. feverishly fidgets with a McDonald’s Monopoly game piece, and a single misty layer of perspiration starts to bead on his forehead as he lists off his offenses. He has broken into a Pepsi building, broken windows at Taco Del Mar and violated probation five times.

"I guess you can say I keep causing trouble because I am constantly running from things," T.J. says. "All I have are people around me telling me I can’t do anything right, so I rebel."

Lee Grochmal, the senior deputy public defender and juvenile court supervisor, deals with children like T.J. every day. Grochmal says her office handles more than 1,200 juvenile cases a year.

"As I look on my desk right now, I am dealing with about 70 cases at any given time," Grochmal says. "It is disturbing to me that many of these cases are sexual offenses by kids who have been victims themselves and are now sexually abusing their sisters, brothers or other kids at school."

Grochmal has been a lawyer for more than 10 years and says she is proud to be defending juveniles in Whatcom County. She says children can hire private lawyers, but most cannot afford them. Grochmal says a private lawyer costs roughly $1,000, and the rate increases depending on the offense.

"I have a sense of pride in my job," Grochmal says. "Most lawyers wouldn’t even go in this field, and I can’t imagine doing anything else."
While Grochmal works with juveniles in the courtroom setting, Aileen Hetrick, 22, a Whatcom County juvenile detention officer, connects with the children in a different surrounding.

Hetrick does the book-ins, or processes into detention, for the children who are sentenced to spend time in juvenile detention.

"I take their personal property away and give them their beautiful juvee blues," Hetrick says with a slight smile.

Yet Hetrick is all too familiar with the children's lives who walk through the doors at the juvenile detention center.

"I grew up in an abusive and dysfunctional family," Hetrick says. "My parents went through a horrible divorce that ultimately lead to the abuse given to me by my stepmother."

Although Hetrick has had a hard life, her painful past ironically shines a light of hope on other children's futures.

"There was never a question in my head what I wanted to spend my life doing," Hetrick says. "I knew I wanted to major in sociology, specializing in law and deviant family life. I guess you could say it came naturally, I guess. To this day, I still think like these kids do."

She looks as if what she had just said is still a shock to her.

Hetrick says some children wind up in juvenile detention because their parents supposedly cannot control them, but most of the time, the parents are not there to establish control in the first place.

"I keep running away from my home because I am afraid," T.J. says. "I have never had a stable life, and I have never had someone who cares about what I do or where I go. I want a family, I want loving parents, and I want to belong and I want to stand still for once."

T.J. has been in and out of foster homes since his mother was charged with reckless abandonment.

"I was a good kid when I was in a structured foster home," T.J. says. "And then the minute I got my shit together, they sent me back to my mom. The probation officers and the children-custody people just think the kids are the problem, but they don't even know us. Sending me back to my family means sending me back to juvee."

T.J.'s eyes are fixated on the table, and he is unwilling to make eye contact. He now seems upset and is desperately trying to hold back years of bottled-up emotions. For T.J., these emotions are like a bomb, waiting to detonate at any second. He wants so badly to be heard.

"I got so lonely and bored that I would call the mental-health lady in the juvenile detention center just to talk to someone and hear a voice," T.J. says.

T.J. explains how he has to be around people, and in juvenile detention, the administrators isolate him as if that would make him behave more properly in life.

Reynolds says the entire juvenile detention system is structured. The system places strict rules on what the children can and cannot do. For example, the center does not allow physical contact except during recreational games such as basketball.

"I have a sense of pride in my job. Most lawyers wouldn't even go in this field, and I can't imagine doing anything else."

- Lee Grochmal

"Basically, juvee is more like a mental institution than a place for kids to become better people," Jatonna says.

Jatonna describes a cold cement building where children have to walk with their hands behind their backs, as if they are in handcuffs, and a small, cold, cubical cell is home.

"Imagine sleeping on the concrete ground because no one ever remembered to bring you a mattress," Jatonna says. "In juvee, you wear the underwear someone just wore a day ago, you never know what time it is, and all the adults there just make you feel worse about yourself — as if that is what we need."

Reynolds says the precautions are mainly for the children's safety but also so they cannot coordinate activities like escape plans or group fights.

Detention manager Robin Ingman knows how important precautions are because she is responsible for the protection and well-being of the children in juvenile detention.

"Although we have not had any coordinated events in the Whatcom County Juvenile Detention Center, these precautions are so it will never happen," Ingman says.

While the juvenile system as a whole has all the right pieces, it has a hard time putting them together to work for the children, Hetrick says. She adds that the system fails because these precautions are not the perfect way to rehabilitate people.

Ingman says the juvenile detention center sees many of the same juveniles coming in and out of the detention center, and the children's peers have an affect on one another's actions. T.J. says he
agrees. He says that most of the time, his friends influence him to do the activities he does.

“All our friends hang out on the streets downtown,” Jatonna says. “The parents kick them out, and then they have no place to go. I guess we all stick together, and some get into trouble because they have nothing else to do.”

Ingman says any positive influence or environment for these children would decrease the times they attend juvenile detention.

Reynolds adds that if the community gets involved in mentoring youth, the lives of the children would improve and so would the community as a whole.

“These are good kids, and most of them do these crimes for money, attention or because they have no one to tell them not to,” Hetrick says. “The justice system locks these kids in jail, thinking if it gets those kids out of society, there will be no more problems. But we cannot just keep attending to this problem this way because eventually there is no more room, no more cells. We need to take a stand now and take responsibility for these kids; they are just kids.”
The sun sets behind the majestic San Juan Islands on a mild and overcast October evening. Along the Bellingham waterfront, plumes of white steam rise from the vacant Georgia-Pacific plant, a sailboat calmly drifts into Squalicum Harbor, and the only sounds one hears are the chatter of seagulls and the sputtering motors from two fishing boats returning from the open sea.

As of now, the waterfront remains relatively dormant, bracing for an upcoming explosion of cleanup and development ventures community members have never seen. Throughout the next three decades, Bellingham’s waterfront will endure a mass transformation and redevelopment project that will shape the future of the city for generations to come. The vision of this transformation lies in the hands of the Waterfront Futures Group, which was created in early 2003. It is made up of 11 members and is co-sponsored by the city and the Port of Bellingham.

The group split up three work committees to simultaneously address the following focus areas: Jobs and the Economy; Natural Systems and the Environment; and Character, Uses and Design.

Bellingham residents John Blethen, Steve Koch and Ted Mischakov served as the chairmen of the three work groups and have shared their stories about the group’s 18-month visionary process, which concluded in September.
John Blethen: Chair of the Natural Systems and the Environment Work Group

"Want to hear some Bulgarian dance music?" asks an energetic John Blethen, 61, as he turns up his computer speakers. "I went to a Bulgarian dance class this weekend!" he proudly boasts.

Dressed modestly in a gray fleece, old jeans with a light brown belt and tennis shoes with blue socks, Blethen suddenly looks uncomfortable and nervous as he leans back in his rusty orange office chair.

Blethen's main responsibilities as chair of the Natural Systems and the Environment Work Group were to figure out how to redevelop the waterfront without setting back the environment and how to increase public access to the waterfront while improving the natural habitat.

"Balancing those things was hard to do," Blethen says. "The issue was to identify the most important environmental areas along the bay that needed to be protected and then look for opportunities to improve and enhance what was there."

Blethen says he enjoyed working on the project even though he had no idea it was going to take so much work.

"I had a good time because I got to form the natural history portion of the project, and we actually walked the waterfront from one end of the city to the other," Blethen says. "We had a biologist usually with us and some natural history-type folks and really learned a lot about the city, so I was lucky in that regard."

Blethen and his group also focused on how to get people down to the waterfront.

"The most important thing to me is that the people that live in this community are going to be able to access the waterfront that they haven't been able to ... in years and years and years," Blethen says.

Blethen spent most of his adolescence in Tacoma. After high school, he left to attend Antioch College in Ohio, where he graduated with a teaching degree.

A couple of years later, he moved back to the Pacific Northwest, landing in Fairhaven. In 1975, Blethen bought a small building in downtown Bellingham where he opened up a woodworks shop called New Whatcom Interiors.

Blethen has served on various boards and committees within the city for years.

He supervised the project that built the community garden in Fairhaven and helped facilitate the remodel of the Bellingham Public Library floor. He has also personally built about half a mile of trails within the greenways in the city. One might say that Blethen has left his mark on Bellingham.

"Well, I have tried," Blethen says. "None of these things I have done alone. I've been fortunate to be involved in a town where people really do care about the environment and where people are willing to work hard and spend their money to make stuff happen."

Steve Koch: Chair of Jobs and the Economy Work Group

"No" was Steve Koch's initial reply to Bellingham Mayor Mark Asmundson when he asked Koch if he would like to be a member of the Waterfront Futures Group.

"We have two small children, and my wife had said that 'you are doing too much already,' " Koch says. "But after (the mayor) talked to me for awhile, and I kind of saw the importance, I agreed to do it."
Asmundson refused to take no for an answer — even from a man who at one time played offensive center for the Kansas State Wildcats football team.

Koch grew up in a small farm town in Kansas. Standing 6'3'', weighing 290 pounds, Koch still looks like he could put on a helmet and pads and hike a few snaps at age 53.

Koch went from refusing to be on the Waterfront Futures Group to being voted in as the chair of the Jobs and the Economy Work Group.

“I'm proud of it,” Koch says. “We put an amazing amount of work into this for 18 months. All in all, I was very pleased. It was a very intelligent and innovative group that was willing to listen to lots of other concepts and ideas and at the same time had the ability to create a unique vision of our own.”

Koch’s main responsibilities as chair were to achieve a fairly accurate idea of the historical and existing jobs on the waterfront and where they played into the community as a whole.

Another significant task for Koch’s committee was to determine what future jobs will be available when the project goes into action.

“I think there could be a variety of types of work,” Koch says. “Everything from retail-type jobs to high-tech impact work to service jobs and light-industrial work.”

Koch says that early in the visioning process, the Waterfront Futures Group looked at other places throughout the world that did similar redevelopment projects.

“After we analyzed the other locations, we didn’t see any place where we didn’t think we could do better,” Koch says. “We think we have the ability here to put a whole bunch of different pieces of this puzzle together.”

In 1987, Koch moved to Bellingham where he worked on several construction projects and served on the executive board of Bellingham's local union. Koch eventually took over as the business manager with Labors Local 276, a building and trades construction union, in 1995.

“I like being a labor guy because I once was a laborer,” Koch says. “I like helping people and being able to work with the community in a way so that working people's views and concerns are heard.”
Ted Mischakov: Chair of the Character, Uses and Design Work Group

Dressed professionally in a pair of slacks and a buttoned-up forest green shirt, Ted Mischakov, 41, sits in his sleek office in downtown Fairhaven, pondering what to say first about a project that has become so exciting to him, he can hardly sit still.

Mischakov begins to speak, and his words come fast, filled with driving energy, almost as though he is preaching instead of conversing. "Today, all these planets are aligning and saying this is the time to take action on our waterfront," Mischakov says. "Until Mount Baker blows and this place is covered with ash, we're not going to have the chance to go back and redevelop our waterfront."

As the chair of the Character, Uses and Design Work Group, Mischakov's main obligation was to make sure the redevelopment would be in sync with the character of the region.

"The first thing we did was we looked at what has made up Bellingham," Mischakov says. "It started with natural resources, evolved into education, and it has since evolved into a lifestyle and entrepreneurial demographic."

Mischakov was born in West Virginia, and his family moved to Bellingham when he was 2 years old.

"I like Bellingham, I really do," Mischakov says. "I grew up skiing on Baker, clam digging on the beach, hiking and biking all around the Cascades. It's a really great place, and I think our community is full of wonderful people."

After high school, Mischakov attended Western and graduated with a mathematics and economics degree. After several years of traveling and working abroad, he returned to Bellingham and now owns a real-estate and community-development business based in Fairhaven.

Into the Future

The Waterfront Futures Group's long-term vision is one of large scale that will affect the entire waterfront — from the cement plant in Little Squalicum all the way south to Chuckanut Bay. The core of the project will take place in the center of Bellingham, where the group hopes the link between the water and downtown finally will be restored.

The group's goal is to establish three things in the area of the city center: Bring a part of Western to the waterfront and provide direct, physical transportation from the campus to the water, establish a fixed mass-transit facility to shift the pulse of transit to the waterfront, and build a terrarium and persuade the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to move its fleet from Lake Union to Bellingham Bay.

"If we as a community focus on these three things and commit ourselves to achieving those three elements to the redevelopment of the waterfront, I'll bet that it's a success," Mischakov says.

Now the port and the city of Bellingham will have to see it through and begin work on a project that will change the face of Bellingham for years to come. 🌊
PRESCRIPTION TO FOCUS
The use of stimulants by college students to maintain good study habits has intensified in recent years. Lauren Fior investigates the legal and illegal use of Adderall at Western. Photos by Lauren Fior and Paolo Mottola.

The nonprescription users

The sharp scent of incense wafts out the front door of an apartment near Western’s campus. On a lazy Saturday afternoon, two male roommates hang out in their green-carpeted apartment. Their oak coffee table is scattered with empty bottles of Rolling Rock, SoBe and Gatorade. Lighters, pens, a measuring tape and random pieces of white paper hide the remainder of the tan wood.

Throwing his body forward with a laugh, Justin,* 20, animatedly describes his first Adderall experience.

“The first time, I just swallowed it, and I couldn’t eat the next day because I had been clenching my teeth so hard,” he says. “I was trying to eat spaghetti, and my jaw hurt so bad.”

Justin and Brian* have been friends since high school. Now, both juniors at Western, they share a relaxed living space. Justin sits comfortably in the middle of an L-shaped blue and gray sofa wearing a navy T-shirt and khaki shorts and cradling a half-finished beer in his left hand.

Brian, also 20, sits on the end of the sofa wearing khaki shorts and a Volcom hat. Over the sound of people jumping into the pool below the balcony, the two roommates explain why Adderall is the fun drug.

To Justin and Brian, the prescription drug Adderall is not a new thrill. They have known about it since high school, where many of their friends illegally ingested the substance.

Dr. Sara Cuene of the Student Health Center at Western says Adderall is a prescribed amphetamine medication used to treat people who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. For people with ADHD, Adderall improves attention span, increases ability to follow directions, and decreases impulsivity and aggression. For people who do not have the disorder, Adderall is stimulating and can make users hyperactive, talkative and alert. Cuene says some people who take the medication without a prescription will feel more focused but will appear hyperactive.

Adderall has two different forms: Adderall and Adderall XR, which stands for extended release. Patients usually take prescribed Adderall in the morning and the afternoon, depending on their diagnosis. Adderall XR is a time-release pill, which is a capsule full of small pills released into the system periodically throughout the day. Adderall XR is not as widely consumed by recreational users because it does not have an immediate high. Cuene says patients have to take XR only one time a day, and it lasts 12 hours.

Cuene says Adderall is available in 5-, 10-, 20-, 25- and 30-milligram perforated pills. The pills are perforated to enable a new user to take half a 5-milligram pill; doctors usually start people out with a small dose to see how they react or so regulars can take a smaller dose if needed. Cuene says one 20-milligram pill twice a day is a standard dose.

Patients take Adderall orally with food or after a meal. Justin says recreational users can swallow it, crush and snort it, or free base it, which is when the pill is crushed, put on foil, burned and inhaled through a straw. Adderall XR is full of small pills, so it cannot be crushed and snorted.

Justin has taken Adderall on and off since high school. He used to take it occasionally in high school and says he took it a couple of times a week during his freshman year at Western. He says he has never been addicted to the substance but has “never had a reason to quit.”

In high school, both Justin and Brian say they had access to Adderall from friends who had ADHD.

Justin says he did not pay for Adderall this past year because his friend had it and shared it. Neither Justin nor Brian has a hard time getting Adderall in college even if they do have to pay.

“It never costs a lot to get; the most I’ve paid is $20 for 60 10-milligram pills,” Brian says.

Justin says he likes the way he feels Adderall because it makes everything more interesting and fun.

Elva Giddings, coordinator of Western’s drug and alcohol consultation and assessment services, says students become physically dependent on Adderall because they take it a couple of times unaware of what it will do. She says they also do not know how many milligrams they are consuming, which is potentially dangerous.

“They are not thinking of the risks. They are looking for the effect they get,” Giddings says. “Taking anything without a prescription is a risk.”

According to results from a spring 2004 survey by Western’s drug and alcohol consultation and assessment services, 0.7 percent of Western students had used amphetamines in the past three months. Compared to the 11,900 students not using amphetamines, Giddings says that number is relatively low.

According to a study at the University of Wisconsin in 2002, as many as one in five college students have illegally used amphetamines such as Adderall or Ritalin. Cuene says she has not noticed an increase in the number of students requesting a diagnosis of ADHD.

Justin says he now only takes Adderall when he has a test.
"It's the best thing for studying," Justin says. "I'll write down everything, and everything is interesting."

If he has an 8 a.m. test, he says he can wake up at 5 a.m., take a pill, go back to sleep for half an hour, wake up and study for two hours before class.

Cuene says Adderall stimulates a part of the brain called the reticular activator, which helps people focus. She says caffeine stimulates the same part of the brain. Too much Adderall can cause the user to "stare into space," she says.

According to a 2002 article from The Johns Hopkins News-Letter, the effects of Adderall are comparable to that of cocaine. Cocaine blocks the reuptake of dopamine, a brain neurotransmitter that tends to promote mood elevations and feelings of alertness and superiority. Adderall does not block the reuptake of dopamine. It instead causes the release of more dopamine and norepinephrine, a neurotransmitter, which causes similar effects on the brain.

Throughout the summer, Justin says he took Adderall three times recreationally. He says he has taken Adderall twice since he has been at school this year. In the past, he has taken Adderall up to three times a week. He usually takes 5- to 10-milligrams, which equals one or two 5-milligram pills.

As Justin speaks, he looks across the room at the blank screen of the television. Casually sipping his beer and speaking lightheartedly, he says he does not think Adderall is a dangerous substance. He says he has never acquired any health problems from it, and it has so far helped him stay focused in school. Justin cannot, however, avoid its side effects. He says he experiences dry mouth, impotence, loss of appetite, insomnia and headaches when coming down from Adderall. This does not stop him from taking it.

"The positives outweigh the negatives," Justin says nonchalantly. "You learn to deal with the side effects. Taking Adderall in the morning before a test can leave you drained by the end of the day. Once it starts to wear off, you feel out of it, and the only thing that helps is a couple of beers."

Although Justin says he has never been addicted to Adderall, he says he builds a tolerance to it after awhile.

"The first times are more intense — you get a tingling feeling," Justin says seriously.

He says the intensity comes from a lack of tolerance. If he does it often, he does not feel the initial high.

Justin says he is a social smoker, but Adderall makes him want to smoke a lot because he always wants to be doing something. Brian and Justin have both learned that some of the side effects are avoidable.

"The best thing to do is eat before then take it because you won't be able to eat while on it," Brian says with certainty.

Justin says taking NyQuil at night to help fight the insomnia caused by Adderall is common. Brian has learned to chew gum to relax his jaw while taking the drug.

Giddings says Adderall provides no positive effects for nonprescription users because they are consuming a chemical they do not need. She says college students tend to be sleep deprived, and Adderall can magnify this problem. A small amount of Adderall helps students focus, Giddings says, but too much can make a nonprescription user more scattered than usual.

"People feel like they can do a lot, they have lots of energy," Giddings says.

Dr. Eve VanCauter at the University of Chicago conducted a study and found that sleep deprivation slowed the body's production of glucose by as much as 40 percent. Glucose is the brain's principle source of energy, and lack of sleep can directly affect one's attention span and ability to concentrate.

Paying attention during classes he enjoys is easy for Justin, but he finds that he spaces out during the boring ones. If he had Adderall during those classes, he says they would be more interesting, but he knows that is not a reason to take it. He says Adderall has not significantly improved his grades, but he feels more confident and focused when he studies.

"Time goes by really fast when you are on it because you are always doing something," Justin says.

As Justin speaks about Adderall, he makes it apparent that although he enjoys the effects of Adderall, he does not want to take it every day. He knows it can be addictive, and he does not want that to happen to him.

### The prescription user

After a night of camping at Lummi Island with a group of friends, Sergio Haberman, 22, sits in his room and transcribes his handwritten notes from class to his computer. His espresso-scented apartment is clean and organized. Salsa music fills the background with soft noise as Haberman, a Western junior, takes a seat at his kitchen table.

Wearing a kelly-green T-shirt, Haberman is attentive and forthright with his opinion on Adderall and his recent diagnosis of ADHD. He explains that he has always had a lack of attention when it came to school and everyday activities. He says he would be studying and something would catch his eye and distract him from what he needed to do. He was diagnosed a year ago.

As he speaks, he quickly rubs his forehead with his hand and raises his dark eyebrows in thought. Haberman says he knew he needed help when studying became difficult. Haberman says the process of receiving an Adderall prescription is difficult.

"It's pretty hard to fake; you can't just go get a prescription for Ad-
derall," Haberman says, reaching a hand toward his head and touching his disheveled black curls. He says the patient has to go to a doctor and then to a behavioral psychologist who studies the person's behavior and fills out questionnaires.

Cuene says doctors also can request an early history from the patient's parents, elementary-school report cards and information from a friend who has known the patient since he or she was young. She says doctors do this because they need to know if the symptoms are recent or long-term.

"I have to wait 30 days in between picking up my prescriptions," Haberman says. "If I try to get them sooner, I get turned away."

Cuene says Adderall is a controlled and regulated substance, which is why patients cannot pick up their prescriptions early.

She says most of her patients with ADHD come in for a checkup once a month to make sure their blood pressures and heart rates are normal. If everything is normal and the patients are doing well with their recommended doses, then they can pick up their prescriptions. If the patients do not need a checkup, they can just call for prescriptions. Every time patients pick up prescriptions, they have to have their blood pressures taken as a health precaution.

Haberman says he notices an increase in his heart rate when he takes Adderall. Adderall, however, has not affected his health in a negative way. He says he experiences some side effects like dry mouth and fidgeting. Haberman takes three 10-milligram pills in the morning and two 10-milligram pills in the afternoon. On the weekend, when he does not need to study as much or be as focused, he takes two 10-milligram pills when he wakes up and none in the afternoon. If he studies on the weekend, he takes two pills in the morning and two more at approximately 4 p.m. Cuene says every patient needs a different dose depending on his or her diagnosis of ADHD.

According to Western's Student Health Center patient information sheet, side effects of Adderall frequently disappear in less than two weeks or when the recommended dose is lowered. It also states that as the medicine wears off, hyperactivity or bad moods may briefly worsen.

Haberman says only positive things about the effects of Adderall. He says that because of Adderall, he is more organized and efficient. He says it helps him stay focused and complete his work.

"Before using it, I would tell myself to do something, but I wouldn't," Haberman says.

He says that before using Adderall, he was too distracted to sit and study for a couple of hours. Haberman now studies for approximately one or two hours and then gives himself breaks. Giddings says that for prescribed users, Adderall helps filter out distractions and makes them more attentive.

"It gives me more confidence to know that I can study for something," Haberman says.

He also has noticed that his grades are better than before he began taking Adderall because he can concentrate.

During the summer, Haberman stopped taking Adderall for approximately two weeks because he ran out of the prescription and didn't have time to get more. After college, Haberman plans to stop using the medication permanently. He says he might have to go off of it because of its high prices. At this time, it costs him $30 per bottle of Adderall, but Haberman says that without health insurance, it could cost up to $240 per bottle.

He is on his mother's insurance, but Haberman says he will be dropped from it in approximately one year. After that time, he will decide if he wants to continue taking Adderall.

Haberman is a recreation major and says he does not plan on having a desk job in which he would need to focus. Cuene says people who go off of Adderall might need to take it occasionally for work if they need to concentrate.

Haberman is aware that people take Adderall without a prescription. He says that Adderall is for people who need it.

"People have joked around about getting some during finals, but I always say no," Haberman says.

He says he has never sold any and does not understand why anyone would.

"If you abuse it, that's when it's addictive," Haberman says.

Haberman does not take any other drugs and says he does not see the point as to why other people do. He suggests drinking a cup of coffee if a person needs to stay up.

"I don't want to freak out," Haberman says. "I'm content, I don't need drugs."

The future

What do all three of these users have in common? The desire to stop using Adderall after college. Justin and Brian are using it to have fun and help themselves focus while they are in school. Haberman uses the drug to control himself in social situations and to focus on school work.

Although the numbers of Adderall users on college campuses are climbing, it seems to be a temporary high for nonprescription users. For the future, people need to be aware of its consequences. Giddings says healthy students without ADHD should not need Adderall to study or maintain focus.
As skiers and snowboarders enjoy the winter wonderland atop Mount Baker, many remain oblivious to environmental changes. Connor Clark-Lindh examines how global warming could affect Whatcom County in years to come. Photos by Vivian Lian.

On the way to the Artist Point lookout, the Mt. Baker Highway winds past faded, peeling, white fences, farmhouses dulled by rain and snow and cows standing silently and munching on frosted crabgrass. Past the rural farmlands, the four-lane highway loses two lanes and continues through misty evergreen forests dusted with snow and ice. The thoroughfare ends at alpine meadows dotted with patches of muddy snow, jagged stones and trees.

Chunks of ice larger than the Empire State Building go through cycles of growth and melt on Mount Baker. On the ski slopes, skiers and snowboarders play in fields of powdery white crystals. And down in the cities of Whatcom County, people drink that snow and ice as it melts under the summer sun.

Yet all is not right. The glaciers are melting faster than ever, the snowfalls are getting unpredictable and, as the snow melts, the people of Whatcom County will have less water.

"This whole global warming thing is just not cut and dry," says Joe Wood, an environmental studies graduate student at Western. For his master's thesis, Wood is trying to understand how global warming affects glaciers.

Wood's passion for glaciers began five years ago when he interned in Alaska studying the giant ice.

"I found it truly amazing how dynamic (glaciers) are and how active," Wood says. "There were areas in the middle of these mile-wide glaciers that were moving sometimes 30 centimeters a day."

Leaning over a topographic map on a waist-high table half the size of the room, Wood traces the early summer snowline on Mount Baker with the tip of his finger.

"The snow line had moved far back behind the terminus of Deming Glacier when I went up last," Wood says, running his finger across a line far up the glacier. As the snowline moves above the terminus, or the end of the glacier, the lowest part of the glacier melts faster.

Standing up and looking out the window, Wood mutters, "It's amazing how quickly the glaciers are disappearing."

According to a November 2002 World Wildlife Fund article, worldwide mountain glaciers have lost an estimated 400 kilometers of water since 1960. This loss was more than the annual discharge of the Orinoco, Congo, Yangtze and Mississippi rivers combined. The rate of melting was twice as fast during the 1990s than ever before.

"The cool season is going to shorten," says Brad Colman, a Northwest National Weather Service scientist.

With that, glaciers have less time to grow and high-elevation snow will melt sooner, he says. "(Glaciers) don't recede, but they do melt," Colman says. "We don't see much contrasting behavior with our glaciers. They will all likely fade away."

As the glaciers continue to decline and eventually disappear, the most important result will be a huge drop in summer river flows, says Andy Bach, associate professor of environmental studies at Western.

According to a 2002 study by Bach, glacier melt and other high-elevation snowmelt contributes to approximately 27 percent of summer flow to the Nooksack River. If the glaciers melt away, river levels likely will drop that amount during the summer.

Yet this will not happen soon. Snow packs likely will decline over many years. Because of the difficulty in predicting weather and climate, every place in the world will be affected differently.

Mt. Baker Ski Area probably will not be noticeably affected by global warming for at least 20 years, says Philip Mote, a research scientist at the University of Washington.

"In an area that rarely freezes, one degree warmer can dramatically reduce the amount of snow," Mote says.

According to a June 2003 article by Mote published in Geophysical Research Letters, temperature increases drastically decreased the amount of snow in lower elevations.

"At elevations nearer the mean freezing level, a moderate change in temperature can dramatically change the fraction of precipitation that falls as snow," Mote says in the study.

He says that above 4,000 feet, however, a change in temperature has little effect on snowfall. Thus, Mt. Baker Ski Area's 5,000-foot elevation
Snowboarders trek up Mount Shuksan. Mount Shuksan from a distance.

Humans have raised concentration levels of carbon dioxide not seen in at least a million years, Mote says. Each year, humans release an additional estimated four gigatons, or approximately 8,800 billion pounds, of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

In the United States, each person produces almost 15,000 pounds of greenhouse gases every year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Global Warming Web site. Eighty-two percent of the emissions come from burning gasoline and other fossil fuels. Methane from landfills and livestock and emissions from coal and other industrial chemicals make up the remaining 18 percent.

“WE ARE TINKERING WITH OUR PLANET, AND WE DON’T KNOW HOW IT WILL TURN OUT. THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION IS TO BE CAREFUL.” — PHILIPMOTE

Scientists base projections on past changes in greenhouse gases, related climate changes and a host of recent climate observations. Using this information, they try to project what future increases in greenhouse gases might mean, Hooper says.

Added to these projections are additional local weather systems like El Niño and La Niña and long-term systems like the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, a recently discovered system with periods of warming or cooling, which each last approximately 20 years. These systems make it even harder to predict weather changes, Bach says.

“I am a firm believer that local variability … will possibly either mask out or counter the global warming trend,” he says.

Yet beyond all the uncertainties, scientists are seeing some trends. For the glaciers Wood is studying, the future is bleak. For the snow on Mount Baker, the future is rough. And for the people of Whatcom County, the future is thirsty.

“We are tinkering with our planet, and we don’t know what will happen,” says Doug Clark, an associate professor of glacier geology at Western.

As Clark talks about global warming, his voice erupts with annoyance and frustration at people who deny that global warming is happening. He seems to relax, however, when he speaks about the unpredictability of weather systems.

“The earth is getting warmer, but climate is a hard thing to figure out — the earth does warm and cool naturally,” he says.

Yet beyond actual weather forecasting, scientists say they are starting to see some trends.

“One thing we are seeing on Mount Baker is not as much consistency in snow packs from year to year,” Wood says. “Often we saw a string of good years and bad years. But now it seems like Baker gets a year with world-record snowfall followed by a few OK years and a few crappy snow years.”

But the average snowfall has not declined. Gwyn Howat, Mt. Baker Ski and Snowboard Area’s spokesperson, says the area’s five-year snowfall projections show no change in average snowfall. Ski area officials conduct studies based on past snowfall recordings.

“Some of the scary effects of global warming are we don’t know...
A new phenomenon is sweeping the nation at a rapid rate, making its appearance on television and in college dorm rooms. Gil Ventura investigates the hype behind Texas Hold 'Em. Photos by Gil Ventura and Vivian Lian.
Upon entering the Tulalip Casino on a Wednesday afternoon at 3 p.m., a paradox emerges: Entertainment bombards gamblers' senses as an aura of boredom fills the casino. Here, the geriatric elite dominates and inhales heaps of processed air smothered with the pungent musk of nicotine. Cash credits dwindle with every impulsive slot-machine pull amid an orchestra of cacophonous jingles. And emanating from these machines are neon, laser lights that violently reflect on and off faces to reveal sullen, disinterested expressions.

Away from such tediousness, Chad Alcombrack, a poker room supervisor at the casino, protects his domain with the vigilance of a guard dog. Alcombrack appears in the poker room as a man of business with his tidy flattop, lavender oxfords and matching suspenders. With purposeful gait, Alcombrack stalks the room. His eyes dart quickly and decisively as he investigates his surroundings. He has the kind of pale blue eyes that don't look at you but rather see through you.

For 13 years, Alcombrack has been employed with the Tulalip Casino, but until recently, he has never seen such a boom of interest in his job field.

"(Poker has) been around since mankind, but now they're treating it like a sport; that's where the interest comes from," Alcombrack says in a steady, calculated manner. "Because of television coverage, kids now equate these players like they would a football player."

The "they" Alcombrack refers to is television executives who are profiting from the poker shows' high ratings, due in large part to astute changes in coverage.

The sport Alcombrack refers to is poker—more specifically, a variation of the game called Texas Hold 'Em, which is a contemporary American pop-cultural indulgence and lucrative industry. Texas Hold 'Em is largely considered the "Cadillac of Poker" because its betting structure allows gamblers to bet everything they have and because it is easy to learn. According to top-poker-sites.com, 40 to 50 million Americans now play all forms of poker in casinos, on the Internet and at gatherings.

Competitive poker became an instant television hit when the Travel Channel introduced the World Poker Tour series in 2003 and garnered ratings of 1.5 million viewers per episode. ESPN has aired the highly popular World Series of Poker seven times in its network's history, and this past year enjoyed a sizeable viewership averaging more than one million viewers per episode. Each television show features competitive Texas Hold 'Em games and utilizes advanced camera technology, allowing the audience to see what hand each gambler holds. To keep the shows lively, color commentary is provided to narrate the program.
While poker conjures high stakes and large pots, it traditionally does not earn a high profit margin for casinos. Poker is a mere "feeder game," an opportunity for gamblers to waste time "while the wife's playing a slot machine," Alcombrack says, slouching in his poker chair while picking up and pounding a television remote control twice on a poker table to emphasize his point.

For many establishments, a poker room is considered an amenity because poker tables per square inch don't have the same earning potential as slot machines. Because of the new glamour and high exposure of poker, however, many casinos are adding poker rooms and expanding into larger rooms to accommodate the influx of players.

In the past three months, the Tulalip Casino has added seven poker tables, bringing its total number to 13, and extended its poker room approximately 3,500 square feet. The Tulalip Casino does profit from its poker tables, which enables it to make the poker-room renovations, Alcombrack says. He, however, declined to comment on how much the casino makes from its poker tables.

With the exception of Alcombrack, the mood in the poker room is decidedly light. One can hear the faint murmurings of gamblers. Men as young as 20 wearing baseball caps to 90-year-olds wearing cowboy hats engage in conversation and Texas Hold 'Em. A quick scan of the 30 or so faces in the room reveals few women gamblers.

"When I first watched it, I found it to be real fascinating, but before I watched that show, I didn't know what a flush was," Milan says loosely. What Milan says he finds most fascinating about Texas Hold 'Em is the game's psychological factors: the ability to read or guess if a gambler holds an excellent or poor hand along with the interaction between gamblers and card dealers. He also finds the nature of hot streaks, when gamblers get good cards, intriguing.

Milan, who publishes tarot cards for a living, finds parallels of Zen teachings in Texas Hold 'Em.

"It's an extreme test of patience. You can see how some players get absolutely disturbed at the smallest things while playing the game. By playing, you constantly find something about yourself." - Tamid Milan

Several poker dealers at various tables briskly dispense cards, flexing their spider-like hands to shuffle through fresh decks of cards for new games every five minutes. Players chat up dealers, casually toss chips into the pot and clutch cold drinks while playing; this is in stark contrast to the high-drama plays and silence between players and dealers seen on televised poker games.

At one table, the dealer, a pony-tailed, bearded hulk of a man, plays guessing games with a tall, slender, goateed gentleman about what he does for a living. The man being questioned hunches over his earnings, toying with his chips and only breaks his focus during conversation. At this table, he clearly is leading his opponents.

Tamid Milan, 33, perhaps best represents the young, hip quotient of new poker fans. Donning black rimmed glasses, a fitted orange hoodie and a striped beanie, Milan is part hipster, hippie and mystic.

As many novices are, Milan's first exposure to poker was viewing the World Series of Poker on ESPN. After watching the show, Milan began visiting casinos for hours at a time, four to five times a week, to understand the game.

"Reality TV is the biggest, hottest thing right now," Konopinski says. "Now that people watch the (poker) shows, when they go to the club to play poker, it's now become an extension of what they see on TV."
While television coverage has certainly elevated poker’s profile, inherent to the craze is a celebrity component: Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon and Sarah Jessica Parker all are high-profile poker fans. On the cover of the most recent All In Magazine, a publication that focuses on poker culture, is none other than the XY chromosome of the “Jennifer” monstrosity, Ben Affleck. Celebrity Poker Showdown on Bravo, features camera technology and commentary but includes guest players, such as Matthew Perry, Sarah Silverman and Tony Hawk, who vie to earn $250,000 for charity.

In addition to playing poker hands with friends, Konopinski gambles online. Online poker companies are experiencing a technological gold rush because of their accessibility and inexpensive games, says Vikrant Bharagava, general manager of PartyPoker.com, who calls the Web site his baby since its inception. The online poker industry now is accumulating into the hundreds of millions, Bharagava says. The greatest influence online poker has is its role as satellite to the World Poker Tour. amateurs can participate in online tournaments for as little as a dollar on satellite sites like PartyPoker.com and have the opportunity to participate in professional tournaments.

“The way amateurs play is less dependent on what they see in the eyes — they rely on a good knowledge of probability and statistics,” Bharagava says. “Professionals don’t know how these guys will play. A pro will know how another pro will play, but with amateurs, the combination of a clean slate, unpredictable play and a good knowledge of statistics makes them effective.”

One such example of amateur success was at this year’s PartyPoker.com Millions Tournament, which had a prize pool of $3.7 million. The tournament took place on a cruise ship, and one amateur, who qualified for the tournament by playing a $1 poker game, won $60,000, Bharagava says. A professional player would have to pay at least $12,600 to buy into the tournament.

Recent history of the World Series of Poker would suggest that amateurs are now a dominant force in professional poker. This year’s winner, Greg “Fos-silman” Raymer, and last year’s winner, Chris Moneymaker, were amateurs because of their accessibility and inexpensive games, says Vikrant Bhargava, online general manager of PartyPoker.com, who calls the Web site his baby since its inception.

Bharagava says the offline poker market at U.S. casinos is growing substantially, increasing 30 to 40 percent in the past year. Online poker sites, however, are seeing astronomical growth and have grown 500 percent since last year. Bharagava says he attributes this growth to the Internet, which is becoming commonplace in American households.

With the high accessibility of poker online and poker’s mainstream exposure, however, comes a negative drawback of the poker phenomenon — minors gambling. New York Post, The Indianapolis Star and the Chicago Tribune confirm the nationwide trend of poker’s popularity among young people.

Psychologists and counselors are concerned with the possibility of breeding a new generation of gambling addicts by dual factors. According to The American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 85 percent of parents approve of their children gambling if limited to fundraisers, friendly games with small bets, bingo and casino night. According to the work of clinical psychologists and gambling experts, Henry Lesieur, Ph.D., and Durand Jacobs, Ph.D., teens also are three times more likely than adults to become problem gamblers.

One Western senior, Joel Jorgensen, experienced campus gambling firsthand when he attended underground Texas Hold ‘Em games organized at a Fairhaven dorm room last year.

In the dim light of his apartment, slouching on his sofa, Jorgensen looks disheveled and exhausted, with his thick brown hair in full bed-head mode and eyes saddled with bags. While speaking, Jorgensen has a die resting between his fingers on his left hand that he alternates between each indentation. He says it was obvious that many of the gamblers were poker novices inspired to play by watching the World Series of Poker on ESPN.

“It was annoying,” Jorgensen says. “People were always talking about how blah-blah-blah made this move and how blah-blah-blah made this move.”

Jorgensen says the underground games occurred nightly, sometimes until 4 a.m., with approximately 20 gamblers participating in tournaments with pot sizes as large as $200. He participated in these poker games twice a week and found out about them through word of mouth.

Jorgensen also adds that the content that the poker shows actually air hinders the way novices play.

“The show gave a false perception of poker because they only show hands with a lot of action,” Jorgensen says. “Because of the TV show, when people play poker, they think they have to make a dramatic move.”

So what lies in the cards for a game that is, for now, America’s darling and whose past was synonymous with outlaws and delinquents? What are the odds of survival for a game that pub academics say pits chance versus fate? Is this wave of popularity merely a bluff of a phenomenon? Perhaps the most concise answer to these elusive questions was provided by Konopinski, who said that because of its heightened profile and accessibility, poker will remain in the spotlight.

“It’ll stick around because everyone knows how to shuffle a deck and play a game — whether it’s Old Maid or Goldfish,” Konopinski says.
**Klipsun** is a Lummi word meaning beautiful sunset.