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When the Earth Moves
Skim Success
Handi-capable
Dear Reader,

You may not realize it, or acknowledge it in any way, but you’re doing it right now. Your eyes are going from right to left as you read these words. Time is passing, the clock is ticking and somewhere in the world, someone is fighting for social justice and maybe even for his or her right to party.

Movement. It’s not just a physical action. Of course, movement is incorporated into our workouts and daily routines. We move from one place to another. We move up in the professional world. And we even move our hips when Shakira tells us they don’t lie. But, movement is more than that, encompassing many aspects of our lives.

This issue of Klipsun takes a look at the various types of movement. You will see how movement can be a daily habit, or a life-altering circumstance. From something as simple as fidgeting to something as serious as migration after a natural disaster, each story examines movement in a different light.

In Handi-capable, the Seattle Slam quadriplegic rugby team found new ways of moving, and in Skim Success, Western students turned their love of skimboarding into an international business. Happy reading!
BREAKDOWN OF A BLOODSPORT
THE RIGHT TO SKATE
TAKING CHARGE
NAUTICAL NOMADS
ACT II: LIFE AFTER BALLET
SURVIVAL OF HISTORY
FRUITFUL FIDGETING

WHEN THE EARTH MOVES
Lives are displaced by natural disasters.

SKIM SUCCESS
A local skimboard company goes international.

HANDI-CAPABLE
Quadriplegic athletes turn disability into ability.

ONLINE @ KLIPSUN.WWU.EDU:
Driving South for the Winter
Bellingham Auto Racing
Forwarding Kindness
Blocked at the Border

ON THE COVER: DB Skimboards team rider Tony Saddler throws a frontside shove-it out of a make-shift pole-jam. Photo by Skyler Wilder | KLIPSUN
It's like entering another world. Floor mats, punching bags, weights, speed bags, striking dummies and Ultimate Fighting Championship posters line the walls. A full-size fight ring fills one corner in the former warehouse. The strong smell of sweat and cleaning chemicals is overwhelming as about a dozen chiseled fighters punch, kick, train and pound on every piece of equipment in sight — or on each other. And that is just the ground level. Upstairs, an entire floor of mats is dedicated to sparring, wrestling, grappling with training classes given almost every night of the week.

This is home for Cody Houston. Houston is the head instructor at West Coast Fight Club (WCFC), a mixed martial arts (MMA) gym on Franklin Street in Bellingham, that teaches Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Muay Thai kickboxing, MMA, wrestling and boxing. The WCFC puts on several events a year through Fight Night Entertainment, a Washington-based nonprofit organization focused on promoting MMA events.

Hosting MMA classes, sponsoring an amateur MMA team and providing a facility for exercise and training, the WCFC promotes itself as a place where anyone from beginners to professional fighters can train, learn and enjoy the sport of MMA.

“One thing we have based this gym on since day one is a family and team environment,” Houston says. “This type of training really develops strong bonds — everybody here is literally family.”

Not what one might expect to hear from a veteran of the sport of hand-to-hand combat, in which the goal is to either knock the opponent out, choke them unconscious or submit them by tap-out. But Houston says at its core, MMA is a sport that breeds humility.

“There is always someone out there who is bigger and badder than you,” Houston says. “I’ve seen guys who have never even spoken to each other, then fought, and now they’ve been friends for years.”

Houston says he has seen the shocking difference in society’s acceptance of MMA since he began training 10 years ago. He used to rent Ultimate Fighting Championship videos from porn shops because they were considered indecent.

“People just called it a ‘blood sport,’” Houston says. “But that was simply because they didn’t understand what we do.”

Houston says sometimes he worries that MMA’s increase
in mainstream popularity could contribute to the sport losing its heart. Television shows such as “The Ultimate Fighter” can misrepresent what MMA fighters do.

“We don’t bring in the egotistical fighter,” Houston says. “We do our training in here, so there is no reason to go out and prove anything on the street.”

Exemplifying the progression of MMA is WCFC boxing coach and fighter Stephanie Eggink.

Eggink, 21, was formerly on the U.S. Olympic National Boxing Team and a professional boxer. In 2007, at just 18, she was named number one in the nation in amateur boxing and competed for the U.S. in the Pan American Games in Brazil.

In January, Eggink won her first professional boxing match at the Silver Reef Casino in Ferndale. But Eggink traded it all for MMA. She retired from professional boxing, and now focuses all her training on the sport.

Eggink says she experienced too many politics and too much arrogance in boxing.

“MMA is a much more humble than boxing,” Eggink says. “In boxing it takes just your hands; in MMA it takes your entire body. You have to give it all.”

Eggink says one of her biggest challenges in MMA is overcoming the stereotypes of women’s sports.

She says comments always surface regarding looks, or the sarcastic realization, ‘Oh, she can actually fight.’

“I want to prove that girls can be just as badass as guys,” Eggink says. “We definitely have to work harder to get respect.”

And Eggink works hard. A typical workout at WCFC starts with stretching, warm-ups and jump rope circuits. It then transitions into technique drills, perfecting punching form and body position. Punching mitt drills follow, in which fighters partner up and use a flat-surfaced glove to practice combination punching. Next, the fighters work on grappling and wrestling, in which fighters partner up and practice escapes, take-downs, submission and wrestling maneuvers, all while striking each other in sparring style at an energy level of what Houston calls ‘75 percent.’

A cardio workout and more stretching finishes the day for most of the fighters in the studio, but Eggink isn’t finished. Houston trains Eggink and WCFC fighter and wrestling coach Harrison Bevens a little extra as amateur sponsored team members.

Several circuits of roundhouse leg kicks, rope climbing, catching and throwing the medicine ball leave Eggink and Bevens doubled over or laying on the matted floor.

Houston, Eggink and Bevens spend most of their daily lives at WCFC, and wouldn’t have it any other way.

“I don’t do much else besides

"IN BOXING IT TAKES JUST YOUR HANDS; IN MMA IT TAKES YOUR ENTIRE BODY. YOU HAVE TO GIVE IT ALL."

- STEPHANIE EGGINK, MMA FIGHTER
work and come here," Bevens says.

Bellingham native Bevens, 23, teaches WCFC classes Wednesday nights but continues training in preparation of defending his Fight Night Entertainment title as the 170-pound titleholder.

"I like knowing that my teammates are focused on getting me ready," Bevens says. "And when someone else is preparing, I am focused on them."

It takes focus to win a fight, says WCFC fighter and Bellingham resident Jimmy Sorrentino.

Sorrentino, who fights at 135 pounds, received the nickname 'Mighty Mouse' from the WCFC fighters, not because of the cape-sporting rodent tattooed on his forearm, but because in his first amateur bout he defeated an opponent who outweighed him by 80 pounds.

"When I get in the ring, I get tunnel vision," Sorrentino says. "You don't hear the crowd or anything else but your coaches in your corner."

Sorrentino says there is nothing like getting your hand raised at the end of a fight, but that's not what keeps him coming back to WCFC.

"I like to test myself through fights, but I don't have any plans to be professional," Sorrentino says. "I love coming here because of the community."

The sounds of fists and feet meeting bags, mats and bodies echoing off the walls of the WCFC will continue for a long time, Houston says.

Houston says the future of the gym and of MMA is bright.

"MMA will eventually be in the Olympics," he says. "The athletes in mixed martial arts are some of the best trained athletes in the world. Even in 10 years, you will see a completely evolved version of the sport, where the kids who are practicing now, will be fighting as adults."

For now, the fighters at WCFC will continue to sweat and bleed, working toward building up their amateur records.

Every punch or kick thrown at the WCFC is a step toward reaching their dreams in the world of professional MMA fighting, or a chance to knock someone out and make a new friend.
The Right to Skate
Saving Glacier skate park

Story by Oliver Lazenby
Photos by Skyler Wilder

ABOVE: Getting up onto a rock-to-fakie, Dan Parhaniemi avoids the rubble along the sides of the do it yourself ramps.
On a dry day in early March, seven skateboarders gathered at a patch of concrete under a cloudless sky. Most of them drove 35 miles from Bellingham to roll the curves of a half-finished, renegade skate park behind Graham’s Restaurant in Glacier, the last outpost on the scenic Mount Baker Highway. A collection of wheelbarrows, shovels, and buckets for mixing and shaping wet concrete, along with a sign reading, “Take your empty cans with you,” is a testament to the do-it-yourself nature of the skate park and its builders.

The makeshift skate park started out of necessity — skaters needed something to do in the secluded mountain town. But because the park is on private land, it is in danger of being demolished.

On Nov. 20, 2009, Joe King, a Lynden-area resident bought the 25-acre plot of land that includes the makeshift park in a tax auction. The logging company that formerly owned the land had not paid property taxes in seven years. King, who was unaware of the construction on the property, was issued a citation one day later with two options — pay thousands of dollars to get permits for the skate park Miller created, or bulldoze it. The dreams of Whatcom County skaters would come crumbling down with the concrete.

“I think it’s way better than the Bellingham skate park. It’s really creative and well thought out,” says Dave Bolt, an agile skateboarder from Bellingham riding the glacier skate park for the first time. “It’s built with love.”

The completed section of the Glacier skate park is roughly 10,000 square feet, about half the size of a tennis court — tiny compared to Bellingham’s nearly 25,000-square-foot park.

King originally planned to bulldoze the skate park, as it is in the best spot on the property but changed his mind when he saw
how much the park meant to the people of Glacier, and the skaters of Whatcom County.

Since learning about it, the Glacier Chamber of Commerce and the Whatcom County Parks Department have been supportive of the skate parks project.

Jim Evangelista, president of the Glacier Chamber of Commerce, says the park is a good outlet for the young people of Glacier.

“The kids out here are really into the outdoors and because there’s only a few kids around there’s not a lot for them to do,” he says. “I have two teenage kids that come up here and skate with their buddies in the summer, so it’s a real focus for them.”

A LABOR OF LOVE

Among the skaters is the father of the park, Jeremy Miller, a 33-year-old Glacier resident outfitted with his sweatshirt hood pulled over his beanie. Miller, who started building the park four years ago with a couple bags of cement, skates his creation as well as anyone. Gliding effortlessly through steep, curved inclines that resemble a swimming pool’s shallow end, he accelerates toward the biggest wall in the park. After flying off the nearly vertical seven-foot-tall concrete ramp and grabbing his board mid-air, all he has to do is hang on. He lands and rolls away to the sound of cheering and skateboards smacking the cement in applause.

Miller, who is emotionally attached to the skate park after pouring seemingly endless amounts of time into it the last four years, started the Glacier Skatepark Association, a nonprofit group central to the movement to save the project. An engineering surveyor and a lawyer volunteered to work for the nonprofit for free.

Miller and King are still negotiating, but King, the landowner, says he will allow the skate park to stay if the nonprofit group meets his requirements. The skate park must obtain liability insurance, keep the area clean, and put up signs informing park users of the recreational immunity law, which protects King from being sued for injury on his property.

“He wants to create a stipulation where if we’re blowing it, it can be torn out,” Miller says. “And I kind of like that. That’s how all the other parks are.”

DUMP CLEAN UP

Tall alder and fir trees growing out of the spongy soil
and a nearby creek make a picturesque backdrop to the sound of urethane wheels screeching through gritty concrete corners.

But the forest surrounding the half-finished park wasn’t always so pretty. Buried in soggy leaves and branches, a mossy piece of scrap metal hints at what the land used to look like.

Before skaters took over, the area was an illegal dump littered with everything from old cars that were often half-burned and leaking mercury to dirty diapers. "They worked hard and cleaned the place up," says Jan Eskola, secretary of the Glacier Chamber of Commerce. "It had been an eyesore for years."

Miller and a crew of local skaters hauled countless broken appliances and other trash from the former dump to the Whatcom County dump.

STARTING SMALL

Homegrown skate parks are an old concept in skateboarding’s do-it-yourself culture.

Before the project began, Miller had been in Portland cruising the collection of quarter-pipes, banks and bowls under the Burnside Bridge.

Portland skaters began building the Burnside Skate Park in the early 1990s. There was no place to skate in the city, so without getting permission from city officials, local skaters started pouring cement under the bridge.

Miller was inspired by the story of Burnside and it didn’t seem likely that Glacier, with a population of about 100 residents, was going to get a skate park anytime soon, so he started building one himself.

"I found a couple bags of cement, a couple trowels and some chicken wire at a friend’s house and decided to go for it," he says.

The first obstacle in the park was a lump of concrete that smoothed the transition between the ground and a concrete barrier, allowing skaters to ride to the top of the barrier and back down.

"People would laugh at it," Miller says. "We slowly just waited for it to get torn out."

The rest of the building materials were salvaged from other projects or paid for by the builders and local donors.

They even convinced a concrete contractor to give them leftover concrete from a building foundation.

Miller knew all along that his makeshift park could be demolished at anytime, but the enjoyment of rolling and grinding across his creation is worth the labor, even if the structures are temporary.

Miller’s learning curve is apparent in the quality of the walls at the skate park. The first section of the park is small, lumpy and rough compared to the smooth, round walls that Miller and his crew has poured since the summer.

"It was all an experiment," Miller says. "I’m a baker and I smooth whipped cream on cakes. I know the angle of how to make things smooth and it’s basically the same thing."

The next step for the project is to survey the boundaries of the land and start raising money for more concrete and building material, Miller says. Volcom, a skateboard clothing company, has offered to write a check to the nonprofit as soon as they get tax-exempt status.

Although pouring concrete on someone else’s land is illegal, the skate park builders cleaned up a former dump and created something valuable for the youth of Glacier. If King and the Glacier Skate Park Association can reach an agreement, Whatcom County skaters will continue to gather at the dump-turned-playground for years.

Donate to Glacier Skatepark Association at thecoalpaddyskatespot.blogspot.com

Wild Buffalo House of Music will hold a concert benefiting The Glacier Skate Park Association on April 8, 2010.

Pocket Pistols Skates, a skateboarding company, is creating a benefit board for the park. Proceeds will go to Glacier Skatepark.

Sabbath Tattoo, located on Dupont Street in Bellingham, will offer a $25 tattoo in which proceeds will go to Glacier Skatepark.
WHEN THE EARTH MOVES...

...and lives are altered

ABOVE: Penda Snow was displaced after Hurricane Wilma, which tore through Florida in October 2005.
It was 5 a.m. when Penda Sow was shaken awake by her father. The monster her family anticipated in fear had finally arrived outside her Fort Lauderdale, Fla. home. Outside, she saw the furious wind slapping the palm trees. The storm was deafeningly loud and frightening as it raged. For two whole hours, 16-year-old Sow, her father, her eight-month-pregnant mother and two younger sisters huddled under the dining room table waiting for the monster to go away.

The monster's name was Hurricane Wilma. It moved across Florida in late October 2005, devastating everything in its path, the last of four category-five hurricanes off the Atlantic Ocean. Trees toppled over houses. Debris littered the streets as winds reached up to 175 mph. The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale labels sustained winds greater than 155 mph a category-five hurricane, the highest level. This was the same record-breaking season that also saw Hurricane Katrina devour southern Louisiana.

Disasters like these are tragic examples of Mother Nature's power of movement. Needless to say, this was not the welcome Sow, now a Western junior, expected when she arrived in the United States one month earlier from Senegal.

"Everything was gone," Sow says recalling the condition of the house. "The whole house was wet. Water came up to my ankles."

The Sow family did not have anywhere to go. Because they had just arrived, they didn't know anybody in Florida. For a week, they stayed in the rotting house without power or running water. Sow's father, Malick, would put newspaper on the floor to soak up the water left over from the hurricane. The walls were green, swollen with liquid, and reeking from the earthy stench of mold. The ceiling was cracked. When the neighbors' roof collapsed and killed their infant child, the Sow family knew they wouldn't be able to stay any longer.

But it didn't matter what the family decided, because police ordered the Sows to evacuate the house and leave immediately. They packed a single suitcase and were given directions to a church shelter to begin an uncertain future.

"You really don't know how people feel in a disaster until you lose your home, live in a shelter and are homeless," Sow says.

**TRYING TO LEARN FROM DISASTERS**

In just the first two months of 2010, the world had already seen two massive disasters devastate parts of the planet. On Jan. 12, the city of Port-au-Prince in Haiti was turned upside down when a 7.0 magnitude earthquake rocked the city causing severe destruction to the small Caribbean Island's infrastructure and society. U.N. officials estimate more than 200,000 people died and anywhere from 800,000 to 1 million people were left homeless. And on Feb. 27, an 8.8 magnitude earthquake hit off the coast of Maule, Chile with 528 fatalities reported by the United Nations. Since 1900, the largest earthquake on record was a 9.5 magnitude in 1960, also in Chile, killing more than 1,600 people and leaving 2 million people homeless.

Seismologists use a Magnitude scale to express the seismic energy released by each earthquake. An earthquake starts with a terrible rumble as the ground shakes uncontrollably and debris falls from every direction. Buildings collapse, creating massive clouds of dust. The pavement cracks and rises while screaming people run for cover. Chaos ensues while a 30-second quake seems to last an eternity. The aftermath of disasters can take cities and countries years to recover.
A COMPARISON OF RECENT EARTHQUAKES
How disasters in Haiti and Chile affected residents

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<th>Haiti 1.12.2010</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>Chile 2.27.2010</th>
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<td>7.0</td>
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<td>$14 billion (as of 3.09.10)</td>
<td>DAMAGES</td>
<td>$30 billion projected (as of 3.12.10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>200,000 (as of 3.12.10)</td>
<td>DEATHS</td>
<td>528 (as of 3.08.10)</td>
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<td>No building codes</td>
<td>REASON</td>
<td>Codes made buildings stronger</td>
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<td>800,000-1 million homeless</td>
<td>DISPLACED</td>
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considers his upcoming trip to Haiti with the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute to be. This will be the biggest post-disaster reconnaissance he's ever done.

During a lecture in Miles' disaster risk reduction class on Jan. 10, one of his students received a text message alert and interrupted class, saying there was a large earthquake in Haiti.

Miles stopped his lecture and pulled up the USGS report on the overhead projector for his students to see. He predicted the damage would be catastrophic based on the fact that Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and without building codes, many of the structures there were unstable.

"Earthquakes don't kill people, buildings kill people," Miles says.

Miles, along with Associate Director of the Resilience Institute Rebekah Green, joined an inspection team in Port-au-Prince to assess the damage caused by the earthquake.

The team spent a week surveying the neighborhoods and cataloged the site conditions, like the foundation of a structure and the ground it was built on. The earthquake in Chile occurred the same day Miles and Green departed for the trip to Haiti.

But devastating natural disasters don't just happen in remote countries. Washington is one of the highest disaster risks in the world, Miles says. The Boulder Creek fault, which stretches from Bellingham to the Canadian border, was discovered in 2008 and makes Whatcom County a risk for earthquakes.

It's difficult to fathom what a large earthquake feels like in this area because so few occur. Washington's largest earthquake on record was a 6.8 magnitude on Dec. 15, 1872 near Lake Chelan at a time when fewer people inhabited the area.

Despite the risks in the Pacific Northwest, Miles says there's much to be learned from disasters like Haiti. This knowledge can help all earthquake-prone areas, including Whatcom County, become more resilient by improving everything from building practices, how buildings are reinforced, to bridge-building.

"Every time you go and learn about earthquakes, you're improving that state of knowledge and you can take that back home," he says.

MOVING AWAY FROM THE RUBBLE

The hurricane had come and gone, but the shelter was no refuge for Sow. The church shelter, about the size of the Viking Union cafeteria, had approximately 500 cots crammed into one large room with only two feet separating each cot.

To shower, people had to drive one mile away for running water. Body odor multiplied by 500 people smothered the air. At night, the dark shelter turned into a dangerous place where anyone could stay. Malick Sow would not sleep as he watched over his family, making sure no one touched or harassed his family.

The church supplied school materials and donated clothes to the Sow children as they continued to attend school. One of Sow's high school teachers also gave clothes to the family, understanding their difficult situation. Sow asked her teacher not to let any other students know her situation.

"I didn't want my peers to know I was living in a shelter and was homeless," Sow says.

Sow spent her first American Thanksgiving dinner in the shelter. She gathered with strangers for a feast of spaghetti and warmed-
up frozen turkey, which tasted as though it came from a can. FEMA supplied the food and entertainment with live music as children danced and laughed, a sight that hadn't been seen since people arrived in the shelter.

Despite losing her home and all her belongings, Sow still had a lot to be grateful for.

"At first I was mad," she says. "It's not fair that I didn't have any clothes to wear. But my family survived and we stuck together and that is the most important thing."

After one month in the shelter, the Sows moved into a hotel for another month before eventually getting an apartment. In December, her mother gave birth to a boy. Things started to get back to normal again.

During their displaced period, Sow's mother befriended a Red Cross volunteer from Port Townsend, Wash. The woman wanted to help the family start a new life and suggested they move to Washington so they wouldn't have to live in fear of hurricanes. After Malick was laid off from his Florida job at Microsoft when the company suffered damage from the hurricane, he was having a hard time finding a job. In March 2006, the Sows moved to a new house in Port Townsend and started their lives over again.

FROM SURVIVING TO LIVING

Five years ago, Sow's clothes were ruined and moldy. Now, she sits on the stadium stairs on Western's campus in a clean white Western sweatshirt and pressed blue jeans, sharing her story of perseverance. She speaks four languages. She's majoring in communication with a minor in Spanish and international studies.

And while she loves college life, Sow can't help but feel a little different from everyone else.

For many of the friends she'll make in college, homework, boyfriend troubles, or struggling to pay for weekend beer after rent, tuition and books are the greatest tribulations they will struggle with.

For Sow, memories are what she has to contend with: having to steal to survive when she lived in Senegal, and then moving to a new country—only to have her home ravaged by a hurricane. She lives with the memory of sleeping in fear every night when she was homeless. Yet, she somehow takes it all in stride.

"When I talk about this I don't feel sad," Sow says. "I'm glad I went through this. It made me a better person."

And a stronger person, too. How many people can say they've survived a monster?
RIGHT: Emile Panerio throws a lofty pop shove-it off of a pole-jam. A simple length of PVC pipe propped by a "V"-shaped piece of driftwood makes for the ultimate do-it-yourself skim spot. TOP LEFT: Isaac Thomas warms up with a classic pop shove-it at Bellingham Bay. BOTTOM LEFT: Bryce Hermansen (left) and Emile Panerio (right) do a synchronized pop shove-it.

From its modest start in a garage near Tacoma, DB Skimboards has achieved international recognition — and the company continues to grow.

Story and photos by Skyler Wilder
What started as a hobby for high school students in the Tacoma area has morphed into a competitive skimboard company. Today, the faces behind Dashboards Skimboards (DB) have their work cut out for them, juggling college course loads and maintaining shop productivity. And in a time when small businesses are not succeeding, DB needs to find a way to stand out.

DB is a small company that makes an innovative kind of skimboard the market has never seen. Apart from one recent college graduate, DB is run by a group of friends who are currently finishing their college degrees. They hope to put their years of studying to use on their privately owned business.

“We want to make the best skimboards possible because there aren’t many good boards out there,” Bryce Hermansen, co-owner of DB Skimboards and Western junior says. “We want a quality product.”

What started out as a fun way to pass the time quickly grew into something much more than a leisure activity. By attaining contracts with local skate shops, DB turned into a legitimate business, with a niche market to satisfy.

THE BASICS

Similar to a skateboard, skimboards are made up of several layers of pressed wood that are kicked and spun around along the edge of the beach as a recreational board sport. Typically skimboards are similar in length to longboards, but can be as wide as a surfboard.

There are four styles of skimboards ranging from the basic “plank” to the premium “pro” model. Styles
WITH MORE THAN 40 SHOPS IN THE US CARRYING DB GEAR, AND INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR DB SKIMBOARDS IN TAIWAN, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, THE IMPACT THIS COMPANY HAS ON THE SPORT IS HARD TO IGNORE.

are based on the grade of materials that make them; each board is available in small, medium and large. DB strives to provide a board for everyone, from the inexperienced novice, to the up and coming pros.

What really makes DB stand out among their competitors is the foam top available on the three higher-grade boards.

The “plank,” like most traditional skimboards, uses wax on the top sheet for bare feet to catch on. But the other DB boards have what they call “Super Cush Traction,” which creates a gripping, yet comfortable ride that dampens vibrations.

The thick ripples of foam on the top of the board allow the rider to jump on it with confidence that they won’t slip off or bruise their heels. When a rider is ready to start learning tricks, the foam makes a more inviting surface to stomp their feet down on.

THE BEGINNING

Instead of garages in their parent’s houses, these boards are assembled in a small warehouse and sold either in bulk or on a case-by-case scenario. It’s no secret this small company is thriving. Last year alone, DB sold more than one thousand skimboards.

Gliding toward its seventh summer, DB is still growing and beginning to draw international attention. With more than 40 shops in the US carrying DB gear, and international representatives for DB in Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand, the impact this company has on the sport is hard to ignore.

Skimboarding dates back to the late 1920s, but the progressive movement of the sport has just recently taken flight. Previously conceived as a very limited sport, DB strives to push the sport to new heights by promoting progressive skimboarding through films that showcase the DB pro team’s skill. DB uses innovative boxes and rails to showcase their tricks and boards on the water.

Western senior Isaac Thomas has been with DB since the beginning. Representing the company as a pro team rider and as the skim camp manager, Thomas is always working to advance the sport. He believes that hosting summer contests is the key to creating a strong skimboard community.

“Kids knowing they have a contest to look forward to every year that they can practice and enter. Having something stable like that really allows the sport to grow,” Thomas says. “This summer we are going to try and hold more contests than in previous years.”

THE INNOVATION

Carrying their foam technology over to a new product this season, DB will soon be ready to release its longboard series that maintains their unique board feel—foam-top griptape.

“You have an option to get normal griptape [sandpaper-like material] on your board or a thin layer of foam with griptape on top. It gives you the feel of griptape but with the cushion [cushion] and comfort of a skimboard.” says Emile Panerio, Western freshman and DB pro team rider. “You can also get [plain] foam and ride barefoot.”

Just “feelin it out,” DB is not looking to take over the longboarding market, Hermansen says. Because everyone on the team rides longboards, everyone felt like they knew what they wanted with the product so they just went for it.

If nothing else, the new launch of longboard series illustrates a healthy growth rate for a company first produced by friends in their parent’s garages.

But it’s not just about capitalizing and commercializing; it began as a recreational way to have fun at the beach with a board to kick around.

“It’s all about fun!” Thomas says. “Skimboarding isn’t a super intense sport, it’s something fun to do and it’s fairly inexpensive.”

THE FUTURE

Looking into the future, Hermansen says DB will continue to take it step by step and maintain to make a quality product to help the progression of both the sport and company.

Not many college students can say they have a successful business. By focusing on quality relationships with core retail shops and increasing online sales, Hermansen feels that apart from potentially moving to a bigger warehouse, DB is steadily growing.

The future of DB is unknown but one thing remains certain, these guys aren’t going anywhere.
Taking Charge

Story and photo by Reiko Endo
Quadriplegic rugby players prove that disability does not mean an end for true athleticism.

Story and photos by Madeline Stevens
dish brown hair are dripping with sweat as he takes a water break. His red muscle shirt shows off the dragon and 'W' tattoo on his muscular upper arms. He is the loudest on the team, belting out a random “WOOOOO!” several times during drills. Walston grew up in Los Angeles and brought an “I don't care what you think of me” L.A. attitude to the Seattle Slam.

Now 31, it has been five years since Walston got into a co-worker’s brand new Porsche after a rowdy bachelor party. The temptation to ride in a Porsche for the first time was too much. After ignoring his friends’ cautious warnings, Walston climbed into the passenger seat.

The intoxicated co-worker sped up, flying past a stop sign. The next thing Walston knew, they were going 110 mph and had only driven about two blocks. Seeing the stop sign was the last thing he remembered when he woke from his coma a month later and was informed that his co-worker died in the crash.

When the car hit a steel light pole at such high speed, Walston shattered the bones in his legs and feet; his right foot was twisted all the way around and was hanging from his ankle. The muscles in his left hand and wrist were also severely damaged. The back of his skull had a six-inch-long gash and one of his eyelids had been sliced open leaving the muscle that makes the eyelid move dangling from its rightful place.

After an estimated 35 surgeries, an incalculable amount of broken and shattered bones, seven months in a hospital bed and roughly 2 ½ years in recreational and physical therapy, he joined the Seattle Slam. Walston has been competing for the past three seasons with the Seattle Slam, the only

"YOU CAN SIT THERE AND CRY ABOUT YOUR INJURIES OR YOU CAN KEEP ON TRUCKING."

- PAUL WALSTON, SEATTLE SLAM TEAM MEMBER

ABOVE: Jeremy Hannaford is the Seattle Slam captain and United States Quad Rugby Association representative.
WE'RE JUST LIKE LITTLE CHAMELEONS. WE JUST ADAPT TO OUR SURROUNDINGS.

- PAUL WALSTON, SEATTLE SLAM TEAM MEMBER

quad rugby team in the state.

"You can sit there and cry about your injuries or you can keep on trucking," Walston says. "I made a bad choice and now I gotta make the best of it. I have to deal with the consequences."

Walston plays in his rugby wheelchair every practice and game; but unlike most of the members of his team, he is not a quadriplegic. At the end of each rugby event Walston is able to lift himself out of his chair and walk to his car without assistance because his injury did not sever his spinal cord.

Walston is not alone. About 10 percent of players can walk, but are eligible to play quad rugby because an accident left at least three limbs impaired. Walston has lost most function in his left wrist and hand, and both calves and feet are partially paralyzed due to muscle damage.

"I'm a gimp but I'm also able-bodied," Walston says. "So I get to see both worlds."

His injuries left him with a heightened sense of caution for each step he takes. Walking slowly, his left foot sometimes drags.

"Everything is in slow motion until I get out on that court," Walston says.

People generally expect that paralysis is all or nothing, but in the three years following Walston's accident, he was able to regain some mobility. Now, four and a half years after his injury, Walston doesn't know how he used to do everyday tasks. The creative way he bends his arm to put on deodorant, for example, is now normal, he says.

"We're just like little chameleons," Walston says with a laugh. "We just adapt to our surroundings. You know how chameleons can camouflage? I mean we stick out like a sore thumb usually, but we adapt to the situation at hand."

Walston has adapted to the way his body works without having to depend entirely on a wheelchair. The players who are wheelchair-bound don't let the chair control them, Chapman says.

Walston may walk slower than before his accident and he may not be able to play basketball like he used to, but with his rugby wheelchair he can still be a competitive athlete.

Coach Curt Chapman, 51, experienced a spinal injury when he was 22 years old, and has been playing quad rugby for the past 10 years. He says the sport
is addictive; it changes people and brings out their competitive side.

"It’s a lot of work. It’s not just a bunch of guys out there rolling a ball around hoping for the best," Chapman says.

Quad rugby is played on a basketball court and the object is to score a goal, which is worth one point, by crossing the goal line with possession of the ball while the opposing team is defending that goal. The team with the most points at the end of the four eight-minute quarters is the winner.

Team members are ranked specifically to their function level. The ranks start at .5 and increase by half-point increments to 3.5. An athlete who is classified as a .5 will have limited function in the arms and hands. A 3.5 will usually have a significant amount of function in the arms, hands and torso.

Classification is based on function, not athletic ability, Walston says. So the four players on the court must not total more than eight points. A typical four-player combination for example is 3-2-2-1, he says. The classification is important to the game because it keeps the game fair.

The fast-paced Seattle Slam practice scrimmage winds down as Coach Chapman rounds up the players, calling them into a wide circle to stretch their upper bodies. Everyone switches from beat-up rugby chairs to well-kept everyday chairs.

The players go separate ways after Sunday's practice. They are one day closer to qualifying for nationals in April. Both Walston and Coach Chapman believe the team has a chance because they are currently ranked 18th out of 45 teams nationwide.

Movement is different in a wheelchair. It means adapting, learning new skills, experiencing a different culture and meeting new people. ■

FAR LEFT: Mike Wagner, in a defensive chair, attempts to pass the ball while Michael Lykins, in an offensive chair, blocks. BOTTOM LEFT: Michael Lykins (left) and Mike Wagner (right) fight for the ball. TOP LEFT: Jeremy Hannaford holds a well-worn Seattle Slam ball. RIGHT: Paul Walston shows off the homemade hand and forearm padding he wears when playing rugby.
The minimalist alternative that sends people to sea takes commitment, but brings comfort and serenity. Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Zizek believes people are truly free when they have no roots to keep them down. For some, the rootless existence of the nomadic human, which Zizek teaches, may be represented by a boat. Zizek says the first thing a human must do to be free is uproot themselves from the land and simply go with the flow. From there, a human can drop anchor wherever they choose and be free in the truest sense of the word. The ocean represents the infinite vastness of nature. At sea, there is no land, no traffic and no people. There is only a boat, the sea and sky, as far as the eye can see.

This is the way of life preferred by Western MBA student Steve Winters, who has lived on a boat with his wife of 18 years, Julie. "Living on a boat provides me with a real sense of freedom," Winters says. "It's kind of like a vacation all the time." Eight years ago, while liv-
ing with Julie in Kirkland, Winters bought a house boat that he docked in the Anacortes marina. The couple would pack clothes and food every Friday evening before driving to the boat for a weekend at sea. On Mondays, they would wake early and drive home to Kirkland for work, he says.

“Eventually we came to the conclusion that we might as well live on the boat, since we spent so much time there anyway,” Winters says. That is exactly what they did. Four years ago, Winters and Julie quit their jobs and sold their townhouse, along with most of their possessions.

“It was quite liberating to get rid of all the furniture and all the other junk we accumulated throughout the years,” he says. “I once read this bumper sticker which said, ‘the more I know, the less I need.’ And that’s how I feel since I have been living on the boat.”

But life at sea is not for everyone, he says, especially for those who have a problem with “cozy” surroundings and sea sickness. For Winters, the confined space of a water nomad’s life has been a successful experience because of the healthy relationship he and his wife share.

“I was fortunate that I married my best friend,” Winters says. “But, [life at sea] wouldn’t work for a person who needs a lot of personal space. You have to really want to live the lifestyle in order for it to work out successfully. It takes commitment.”

Since living on board, Winters and his wife have cruised from Puget Sound to the Canadian waters, and halfway to Alaska. Instead of the normal nine to five grind with bumper-to-bumper traffic, these water nomads only have to worry about stormy weather and dangerous conditions.

Winters says the positive aspects of living on a boat are the peace and quiet. The sea is larger than any city or state, making it the perfect spot for those who like their space. Not many people live at the marina where their boat docks, but Winters says those who do are some of the nicest people he has ever met.

“There is something about the lifestyle that creates camaraderie amongst all the boaters,” Winters says. “It has something to do with the slow pace of life and that feeling of not being tied down.”

The marina environment is the main draw for many who live aboard. Mark Ravaris, the owner of El Capitan’s hot dog stand, lived on his boat for 11 years. He said he felt free on the boat, but decided to trade his sails in for land legs last spring. Previous to living on the boat, Ravaris owned a condo in Everett for about 10 years. He says the transition from condo-to-boat-to-house was not difficult because he does not develop emotional attachment to material items, like furnishings.

“I just boiled it down to personal items like clothing and my laptop, and then put anything else in storage.” Ravaris says. “You have to adopt a minimalist mind set.”

Ravaris says his favorite memories are of warm, summer days when he would sit on a folding chair, crack open an ice cold beer and enjoy the scenery. Reminiscing about the boat he once called home, Ravaris says he does miss the gentle swaying movements that rocked him to a good night’s sleep.

But, with the gift of good sleep comes the hassle of waking up—and on a boat it’s slightly more difficult to get out of bed. Because living on a boat is similar to camping, but with better shelter, Ravaris says it is tough to get out of bed on mornings when he can hear the cold wind and rain pelting his boat.

Winters’ list of boating life inconveniences is short. Julie adds that having to pump out the holding tank, which contains all that nasty toilet stuff, is one of the few unfortunate aspects of the water life. But the disadvantages are nothing compared to the perks, she says.

“There is nothing better than the serenity I feel when I am anchored out in some quiet, private little cove,” Julie says. “That feeling is so beautiful. Everything we’ve done to live on our boat was worth it. No doubt about it.”

The life of a water nomad is a life of simplicity. No longer slaves to homes and the endless stack of bills that comes with it, they can rest easy and enjoy simple things. Things like sitting on the deck as the seagulls squawk, the waves lap and the sun is just beginning to set over the islands.
Dancers in sparkling, brightly-colored tutus wait in the dimly-lit backstage area for their performance. Each woman’s hair is pulled back while standing on the tips of their pointed shoes and glide onto the stage to the melodies of Tchaikovsky’s score in the orchestra pit.

Judging from their perfect bright lips and powdered faces, it’s no secret they’ve done this before. And yet, the atmosphere is giddy as dancers leave the safety of backstage and enter the vulnerable place where 2,900 pairs of eyes watch them. The size of Marion Oliver McCaw Hall is roughly the equivalent of 15 large movie theaters.

Unlike movie stars, dancers don’t get multiple takes to execute a flawless performance. Instead, they carry the pressure of having to dance without mistakes. Instead of film retouching, dancers must be authentically youthful and possess a physique that looks delicate, yet strong enough for demanding choreography. And instead of star treatment, Pacific Northwest Ballet (PNB) dancers train nine hours a day, five days a week.

Dancers dedicate their entire lives to the art, but the human body can only possess the ballet ideal for so long. Unlike jobs that one can keep until 60 or 70, a ballet dancer’s career often ends during his or her 30s or 40s—an age requiring a career transition, not a retirement plan. After their stage careers, some remain in the dance world, starting their own dance studios or companies while others attend or return to college, and some discover new passion that have nothing to do with performing arts. But, with so much time spent dancing, it’s difficult for the dancers to think about the movement from their careers to life beyond the stage.

PNB, founded as the Pacific Northwest Dance Association in 1972, has a reputation of producing accomplished dancers and exceptional performances. To help these dancers’ career transitions with grace, PNB’s Second Stage program was developed in 1999. The program provides dancers with grants and career counseling, or the option to take night courses offered through Seattle University.

All PNB dancers donate a day’s wages each year to Second Stage, says Chalnessa Eames, a PNB dancer, in order to help fund the program. She knows people who have been successful through Second Stage—like Jordan Pacitti, a PNB dancer who used the program to launch his business: Jordan Samuel Fragrances. After he retires this coming June, he plans to build his line of...
organic fragrances and attend a six-month program at Gary Manuel Aveda Institute in Seattle to become an esthetician.

It is difficult to picture Eames, a 32-year-old woman with a slender athletic build, dark hair and a heart-shaped face, retiring anytime soon. She says she doesn't have an exact plan of life after dance, but has a few ideas.

"I'm excited to see what else I can do," Eames says. "It's reality our bodies can only take so much."

Starting a family with her husband, Ash Modha, designing a dancewear line for Modha's active-wear clothing company and founding a yoga studio are all options Eames is considering after her PNB career.

Eames was raised in Bellingham and took ballet classes at the Nancy Whyte School of Ballet and the Morca Academy of Performing Arts. As a teenager, she studied at a prestigious dance school in Florida, and a summer program through PNB's school. She went on to Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet at age 18, where she became an apprentice, a step up from a student. Just one year later, she landed a job in the corps de ballet, a large ensemble of dancers.

In 2001, Eames joined the PNB corps de ballet, and after six years of dancing with the large ensemble, was promoted to soloist in 2007—a mid-way position between the ensemble and starring roles, in which she performs more solos.

Although she enjoys her work, she admits it is fast-paced. At any one time, the dancers rehearse for three to six ballets that could be performed at any time, from the next day to eight months away. But she enjoys the challenges that come along with her job. It's amazing what can be accomplished in rehearsals for a ballet, Eames says.

"At times, I am given parts and I think I can't do it. And then I do, three weeks later on stage," she says with pride.

Sometimes rehearsal and hard work is what gets Eames through each day of dance. Other times, it's all a matter of luck. Knocking on wood, she says she's been fortunate to not have had any major injuries. When dancers are injured, they cannot rehearse, perform or take the daily ballet class—a dancer's bread and butter to staying in shape and maintaining strength and flexibility.

While dancers consider other options outside of performing, some may leave the stage to teach the next wave of dancers, like Vivian Little.

Like Eames, Little grew up and attended school in Bellingham. She was a principal dancer for PNB from 1974 to 1977 and later pursued a performing career at San Francisco Ballet. After taking some time away from ballet altogether, Little realized she missed the art. While in Peru, she became a ballet mistress and began teaching. When Little returned to Seattle, she taught at PNB for seven years.

In 1996, she founded Dance Fremont, located in Seattle. The studio is made up of a performing company of high-school-age students and a younger crowd that take classes in classical ballet and modern dance. The older students commit to attending classes and rehearsals for about 20 hours a week.

Little hopes her students can take life lessons away from their time in dance classes. Through dance, they have learned discipline, how to be adaptable and—above all else—how to have a strong work ethic. She says with the skills learned from dance, former dancers can utilize them in all movements of life, no matter what stage they find themselves on.
Survival of History

Lessons for the future can be learned by listening to tales of the past.

Story by Brynn Regan
Photos by Cejae Thompson

ABOVE: Noémi describes her family portrait (The Shoenberger Family). From left; Juliska, Noemi, Erzsebet and Samu.

A 21-year-old woman on the verge of adulthood is stripped naked head to toe. Her entire body is shaved and crammed into a room with other naked people. Just minutes before, she was separated from her mother, grandmother, younger sister and 6-month-old brother.

Right in front of her youthful eyes, names turn into numbers and humans turn into animals. An unidentifiable, wretched smell lingers through the camp — a smell she still remembers today.

"The very last time I did see my [dear ones] together I thought, 'Thank god they are together,'" Holocaust survivor Noémi Ban remembers. "[I did not know] that the same night or the next morning they were [to be] killed."
Her deep, watery eyes alone tell a story of horror, pain and loss. Ban is a true testament to the struggle endured during the Holocaust — a struggle words, pictures or films cannot define. History will forever move from one generation to the next with these records, but the lessons of that history may not. Our generation is the last to live amongst these survivors. As the number of Holocaust survivors decline, future generations will suffer from a lack of first-hand knowledge, experiences and lessons. This has sparked a movement among archivists to record and document every Holocaust story possible, says Ilana Cone Kennedy, Director of Education at the Washington State Holocaust Education and Resource Center (WSHERC).

Ban, too, has started her own movement — a movement to remember what humans are capable of, a movement to remember the suffering, a movement to remember the truth. A huge push in the early to mid-90s from Steven Spielberg and the Shoah Foundation launched a movement to film every Holocaust survivor possible — country by country, state by state, and city by city. With high-tech equipment and a bottomless pocket of money, the foundation has archived hundreds of stories, Kennedy says.

Simon says archivists hope future technologies will provide novel ways of presenting the Holocaust to people. WSHERC has toyed with the idea of having people adopt a survivor's story and retell it to different audiences, but there is always the chance that people add their own perspective to the story.

"It is much more powerful [to see a survivor speak] because that person who is right there telling you their story is the person who experienced it," Kennedy says. "I think their memories will always be clearer and fresher than somebody who is retelling their story because they are telling it from their first-hand perspective."

WSHERC has also played with the idea of having survivors Skype with small classrooms of people, because they may not be as mobile in years to come. A Skype presentation would give people all over the world, especially children, the opportunity to witness first-hand accounts of the Holocaust.

Holocaust centers around the world are encouraging the descendants of these survivors to speak on behalf of their parents. Some descendants are determined to solidify their parents' stories in history, and are the ones who can make a true testimony to the horror their parents endured without losing the family connection.

Many survivors choose not to retell their story to their children because they do not want them to know how dark and cruel the world can be. But Ban, who now resides in Bellingham, began teaching her two sons, George and Steven, about her story when they were young boys. To Ban, what is most important is for people to tell her story over and over again.

Ban creatively used her essays about the Holocaust for a university class to unveil her past to her sons. They would double-check Ban's English because the family had just escaped from Hungary to Missouri. But what they uncovered was more than they expected.

**BAN, TOO, HAS STARTED HER OWN MOVEMENT—A MOVEMENT TO REMEMBER WHAT HUMANS ARE CAPABLE OF, A MOVEMENT TO REMEMBER THE SUFFERING, A MOVEMENT TO REMEMBER THE TRUTH.**

George remembers waking to his mother's nightmares as a child. When he and his brother Steven would ask their mother what she was dreaming of, she told them bits and pieces of the real-life nightmare of Auschwitz.

"To a 9- or 10-year-old kid, [the nightmares] were really scary at times until we got to know what the reason was for," George says. "It wasn't easy, but it was understandable."

As the pieces fell into place, George and Steven realized they were part of what was known as the "second generation." In Missouri, the Ban brothers found a second generation support group to compare their parents' Holocaust stories with others.

But those support groups no longer exist, George says. When the time comes, he will consider presenting his mother's story with her film and other sources of information.

"The danger is if we don't keep reminding people, then you are going to have people saying with all seriousness that [the Holocaust] never happened," George exclaims. "People will be able to say it without anyone [standing up to them] to say, as my mother says, 'If they are correct, where are my loved ones?'"

An SS guard had pointed to ashes in the sky