



Western Washington University  
**Western CEDAR**

---

The Planet

Western Student Publications

---

Winter 1990


## The Planet, 1990, Winter

Sara Olason

*Western Washington University*

Associated Students Environmental Center, Western Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cedar.wvu.edu/planet>

 Part of the [Environmental Sciences Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Journalism Studies Commons](#)

---

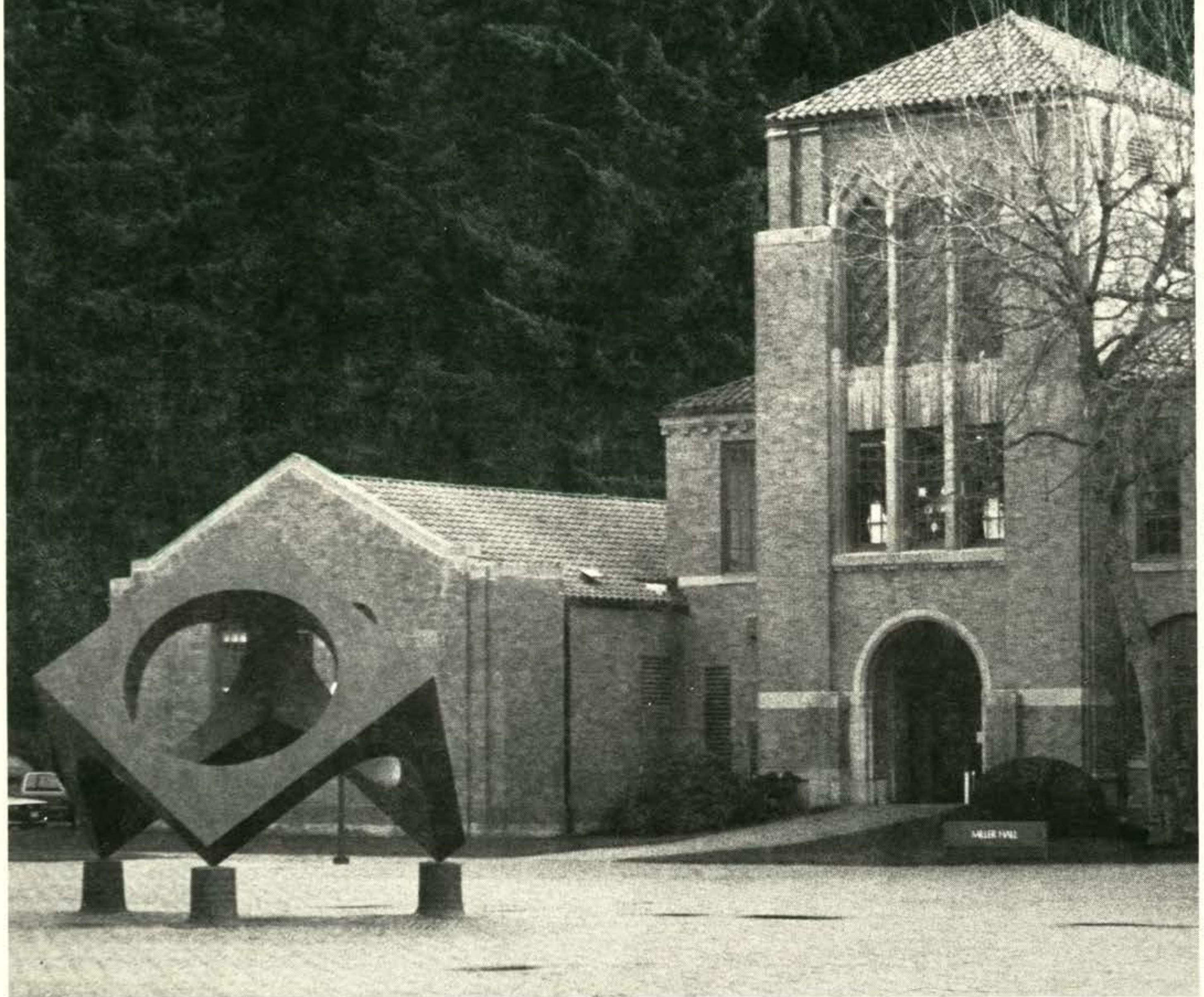
### Recommended Citation

Olason, Sara and Associated Students Environmental Center, Western Washington University, "The Planet, 1990, Winter" (1990). *The Planet*. 4.  
<https://cedar.wvu.edu/planet/4>

This Issue is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Student Publications at Western CEDAR. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Planet by an authorized administrator of Western CEDAR. For more information, please contact [westerncedar@wvu.edu](mailto:westerncedar@wvu.edu).



the Planet



EXPLORING THE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT



# the Planet

WINTER 1990



## C O N T E N T S

<b>With Class</b>	Peter Donaldson	2-4
<b>Green, Gone</b>	Jim Spaich	5-7
<b>Outback Tech</b>	Tore Slette	8-11
<b>Sehome Crisis</b>	Kim Clay	12-15
<b>Toxic U.</b>	Sara Olason/ Michael J. Lehnert	16-19
<b>Saving Trees</b>	Jennifer Hayes	20-22
<b>Cycling Convert</b>	Jeff Koger	23
<b>Student Action</b>	Beth Fries	24

---

### Planet Staff:

Editor: Sara Olason

Managing Editor: Michael J. Lehnert

Artist: Joel West

Contributors: Peter Donaldson, Jim Spaich, Tore Slette, Kim Clay, Jeff Koger, Jennifer Hayes, Beth Fries, Rich Fotheringill, Lowell Dickson, Sandie Lucke

Faculty Adviser: Michael Frome

Graphics Adviser: Roderick C. Burton

---

**Special thanks to:** Jim Schuster, Dave Black, Theresa Bertrand, Laurence Ashley, Wayne Landis, John Miles, Sylvia Burges, Gene Hoerauf, Chuck Page, Lee Enell, Ellis Baker and the Koma Kulshan Native Plant Society.

**The Planet** is a quarterly publication of the Associated Students Environmental Center at Western Washington University. Please address comments to Viking Union 113, WWU, Bellingham, WA, 98225.

This issue of **the Planet** is printed on recycled paper.

**Front cover:** Sehome Hill rises above Miller Hall.

**Back cover:** Branches frame the lawns of Old Main. Photographs by Michael J. Lehnert

## E D I T O R I A L

### No Room for Mistakes

Kenneth P. Mortimer moved into his spacious, lushly carpeted Old Main office about the same time I was settling into a dumpy old house on Grant Street, ready to begin fall quarter of 1988 at Western. I had transferred from the University of Washington in Seattle, and I was thrilled to find Western an emerald gem. Here on a hill, above the town where my mother grew up, a university had trees, lawns, panoramic views, open spaces, the smell of evergreens and the sounds of birds.

But I feared it wouldn't last long. I knew thousands of students like me were clamoring to get into Western, and that the pressure to accommodate them with more parking lots and buildings could easily turn Western into yet another stark, crowded campus. Everyone deserves a chance at a good education, I thought, but how can Western provide it without ruining the qualities that draw students here in the first place? In January I spoke to Western's eleventh president about the future of the campus environment, and I found that while he shares my concerns, our perspectives on Western's problems are different.

"I'm fundamentally concerned about the quality of the environment, about green space on campus," Mortimer told me. His experience in Pennsylvania -- a mostly rural, wooded state plagued by acid rain, and right next door to Love Canal -- brought the environment into his consciousness, and he says it's stayed with him all the way across the country. Pennsylvania State University, where Mortimer served as a top-level administrator for several years, celebrated Earth Day just as Western will this spring.

If the president's predictions come true, Western's enrollment will rise to 12,000 over the next decade -- quite a jump from last fall's headcount of just over 9,300. Solutions to the population crunch will, Mortimer says, be found through "strategic planning," a process that will culminate in publication of a physical master plan for Western in 1992. Far more than a simple map of campus, the physical plan must help answer questions Mortimer summed up himself: "What are we going to do about green space? What are we going to do about parking? Where are we going to put more buildings, if any? What are we going to do about student housing? We're a small campus -- about 200 acres," he continued. "We have a great stake in making sure whatever we do with this campus and however we plan it is sound from a quality of life perspective."

Parking is the issue students most often bring to the president's attention, and I was glad to learn the president shares my aversion to asphalt: "I've been on record as being opposed to more parking lots -- I don't know where we'd put them, and I don't want to pave the place." But he made it clear that any final decisions on parking lots must await completion of the master plan, after the university has studied how many parking spaces it really needs. "If we do come up with a plan that says we must have more parking space, then we have to look at alternatives." The same is true of student housing: The president has asked his planners to come up with a way to house 1,000 more students on campus over the next decade, but how this will be done has yet to be decided.

From my view as a transfer student from an urbanized campus, I'm glad to see the president carefully assessing the real need for more buildings and parking lots at Western before diving into construction. But I also feel Western's administration, under Mortimer's leadership, should be



aggressive in protecting Western's character even while the planning is in process. If better bus service to and from campus were a high priority now, the university might not need to consider paving Western's last green spaces. If renovating or dismantling Edens Hall topped the list, clearing new ground for student housing might not be necessary.

I found President Mortimer to have environmental awareness and sensitivity. He has supported student efforts to bring recycled paper to campus, and he says he would support adding an environmental studies class to the list of classes required for graduation. But with Western facing a population wave, it will require an equivalent swell of conviction for the president to put his stated environmental values into action. As I left his office, President Mortimer asked me to encourage *the Planet* readers to stay informed about the strategic planning process, and to be involved in public comment about it over the next two years. "It will have a substantial impact on the campus environment in the 21st century," he said. By keeping an eye on this process,



Photo by Michael J. Lehnert

and by advocating more environmentally sound practices at Western today, we can make sure the man at Western's helm steers the university toward a progressive, protected campus environment.

*Sara Olason*

## L E T T E R S

Editor,

Your most recent edition on the Upper Skagit Valley was truly impressive. The writing gave a nice feel for the land, and the layout was a knockout with the full color and nice, eye-catching breakouts.

Jack Keith  
Managing Editor, Bellingham Herald

Editor,

You and your colleagues have created something of permanent beauty and value which I'm sure will be cited for years to come as one of the best summaries of the human and natural history of the region.

M. Rupert Cutler, President  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Washington, D.C.

Editor,

It's wonderful to see today's college students aware and involved in issues that face our country's wildlands and rivers. I share your interest in the enjoyment and protection of our outdoor environment. Congratulations on an excellent publication and your fine efforts.

Wally Smith, President  
Recreational Equipment, Inc., Seattle

Editor,

The Planet brought back many memories, since I have hiked and climbed much of the area in that part of the state. The photo of Ross Dam under construction was particularly interesting since my uncle was the Chief Engineer for the construction of the dam, and my cousin and I spent several days up there during that period. My congratulations to all of those who have contributed to an excellent and informative publication.

Daniel J. Evans  
Seattle

Editor,

The photography is beautiful and the text informative and interesting. I enjoyed reviewing it.

Saundra Taylor, VP Student Affairs  
Western Washington University

Editor,

Last year as one of 10 Washington juniors attending the Skagit Valley Institute, I camped near the north end of Ross Lake, exactly where several articles focused. The articles are superb and the research has obviously been extensive.

Cory J. Hahto, Bremerton

Editor,

It's purely and simply an outstanding assemblage of solid, fascinating material on history, culture, politics and nature. This is the best single publication on the Upper Skagit I've seen.

Harvey Manning, Bellevue

Editor,

Our ultimate goal is to pass the natural and cultural resources along with the spirit of the North Cascades unimpaired to the next generation. *The Planet* has greatly assisted us in our quest to meet that goal.

John R. Earnst, Superintendent  
North Cascades National Park

Editor,

The entire issue is very good....as a small matter of style, I was struck and annoyed by a "book report" quality to the writing....I liked the use of historical photographs.

Terry Simmons, California

Editor,

It's beautiful -- please send more copies!

Curley Chittenden, ROSS Committee  
British Columbia, Canada



# ENVIRONMENTALISM

## *With Class*

---

STORY BY PETER DONALDSON  
ILLUSTRATION BY JOEL WEST

**A**s students of the 1990's prepare to become the next generation of movers and earth-shakers, they will find an understanding of the environment essential. I do not mean walking the globe calculating species diversity in river tributaries or other scientific pursuits, although I appreciate their place and purpose. I mean the ability to connect any discipline or profession to issues of the environment. The challenge of our time is to accommodate all interests -- economic, political, and cultural -- into a coexistence with nature.

**W**hen I arrived in January as a Huxley College major I assumed I would find a range of environmental classes

introducing students to the environment while at the same time satisfying GUR requirements. However, the catalogue lists only two environmental studies GUR courses under natural sciences and, unbelievably, only one in the social sciences. This limited selection seems inadequate in treating the relationship between humans and our environment. On a broader front, for students who are not majoring in environmental studies, there should be opportunities to learn this relationship through their own disciplines.

**T**hrough my own survey, I found a diversity of professors deeply interested in connecting their own courses of study with the environment. Following are a few of them.



George Cvetkovich in the psychology department, whose own research concentrates on human reaction and interaction to environmentally related hazards, told me the emotional nature of environmental issues provides an excellent medium by which to study human responses. He teaches Psychology 528, a graduate seminar in social psychology. He also teaches Environmental Psychology 440, focusing on responses from individuals, societies, and literature to environmental threats. Unfortunately, because of insufficient staffing the class is offered only every other year.

Antoni "Jontek" Wodzicki in geology told me of two pertinent GUR courses: Geology 214 (Applied Earth Science), and Geology 215 (Minerals, Energy, and Society). The latter, which Wodzicki teaches this spring, concentrates on human interaction with the environment, specifically mineral and energy resources and our persistent search for them. Besides the GURs, Geology 314 (Environmental and Engineering Geology), designed more for the science major, is also offered.

"Geology has a great input in ecological awareness," Wodzicki told me. Though geologists do not write environmental assessment reports themselves, they study the landforms and geological structures on which ecosystems are built. He mentioned the inescapable connection between petroleum removal and ecological impact. Industry and development also affect geological aspects of the environment. I found attempts by Wodzicki and others in geology to incorporate this important relationship promising in the development of a rounded curriculum.

Paul Lindholdt in English was eager to inform me that English and the environment are taught together. His spring course, College Writing or Fairhaven 221, will include reading and writing about environmental themes. The reason he chooses environmental issues spe-

cifically, Lindholdt said, lies in their very nature. "These issues tend to polarize people with little room for middle ground. It is this polarization that allows for a perfect situation to demonstrate the written argument." Lindholdt mentioned observing a positive change in the English department and the school in general as environmental issues have gained greater attention. Lindholdt's interest and enthusiasm for communicative processes will make Fairhaven 221 an excellent course.

Also deserving mention is Rand Jack of Fairhaven College. Jack said he has taught Environmental Law but was unsure if it would be offered again.

Theodore Mork, chairperson of Educational Curriculum and Instruction, has been teaching a graduate course, EdCI 583, Reading and Children's Literature, during winter quarter. The course includes discussions of whether the literature under question encompasses sound environmental practices. For example, do the characters dispose of trash properly? Although environmental issues are not the primary focus they are certainly emphasized. In addition to this course, Mork recently met with John Miles, dean of Huxley College, to strengthen ties between environmental themes and courses in education.

Kenneth Hoover, chairperson of political science, mentioned two

winter courses: Political Science 420 (Politics, Administration, and Environment) and Political Science 466 (Systems, Thinking, Government and Environment). Also listed in the catalogue is PoliSci 467 (Politics, Transformation, and Environment). These classes are offered through Huxley College with the same course numbers and titles.

Hoover feels current events relating to the environment offer one of the best opportunities to demonstrate various aspects of political science. "Laws, policy decisions, administration,





and ethics or morality are all associated with public reaction to the environment," Hoover said. "There has been increased attention, discussion, and emphasis on environmental issues by the faculty."

The availability of environmental news and information for research or leisure is an indicator of Western's commitment to environmental interests. On the fourth floor of Wilson Library, in the Science and Technology Library, I found Envirofiche, a large catalogued list of environmental articles and papers dating back to 1971. The articles are listed alphabetically in a subject index and those marked with an asterisk are contained on microfiche. I

## The challenge of our time is to accommodate all interests -- economic, political, and cultural -- into a coexistence with nature.

was pleased to learn from a librarian that it is the biggest collection of environmental papers in the state.

In addition, a science reading room on the fourth floor contains environmental science journals. Excluding *Sierra* and *National Wildlife*, these journals are scientific and would not normally be read by students other than science majors. I find it a little disappointing that material such as *High Country News*, *Earth First Journal*, *Environmental Action*, or a host of other less complex magazines are not available. (On the other hand, a wide selection of alternative reading material is available in Viking Union room 113, home of the Associated Students Environmental Center). Environmental journals Wilson Library does have should be included in the general periodical reading room on the first floor, giving greater exposure to the important problems discussed within them.

I found the concerns and attitudes of those with whom I spoke outside of Huxley College reassuring. The environment will need help from professionals in all disciplines, not just graduates of Environmental Studies. To make the 90's "the decade of the environment," professors must teach it across the boards and students must jump in with both feet. O

Peter Donaldson is a transfer student from Seattle Central Community College, majoring in environmental journalism at Western.

*Education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws.*

Thomas Henry Huxley, 19th-century British scientist, educational reformer and writer for whom Huxley College was named

In fall of 1970 the Huxley College of Environmental Studies opened its doors with a mandate to give environmental studies "the widest possible definition, recognizing that man's environment extends from his immediate surroundings to the biosphere, and includes not only physical and biological entities, but also the social structure within which he functions and the cultural heritage which molds his response."

This philosophy is still apparent twenty years later, in the range of courses Huxley offers. There truly is something for most everyone interested in the environment: students of chemistry, biology, political and social sciences, history, health, journalism, education and other subjects can find Huxley classes that put their disciplines in an environmental perspective. Here are some of them, arranged by subject (those in italics will be offered this spring):

### **Anthropology / Social Sciences:**

*Environmental Studies: A Social Science Approach (ES 202); Human Ecology (ES 303).*

### **Biology / Ecology:**

*Estuaries (ES 422); Stream Ecology (ES 429); Limnology (ES 430).*

### **Chemistry:**

*Aquatic Chemistry (ES 446); Topics in Wildlife and Terrestrial Environmental Toxicology (ES 499b).*

### **Computer Science:**

*Environmental Studies: Computer Applications (ES 309).*

### **Economics:**

*Multinational Corporations and Global Ecology (ES 491).*

### **Education:**

*Environmental Education (ES 371); Environmental Interpretation (ES 473); "Spring Block" (ES 474-477).*

### **Geology:**

*Watershed Processes and Management (ES 433).*

### **History:**

*History of Conservation in America (ES 376).*

### **Human Health:**

*Principles of Nutrition (ES 352);*

*Nutrition and Health (ES 454).*

### **Journalism/Literature:**

*Advanced Environmental Writing (ES 482); Producing the Planet (ES 497j); Environmental Classics (ES 499a).*

### **Physics:**

*Energy and Energy Resources (ES 365).*

### **Political Science:**

*Politics, Transformation and Environment (ES 467); United States Environmental Policy (ES 464).*

Even if you don't enroll in any of these, take advantage of other resources Huxley College offers:

**Library:** An extensive collection of periodicals, environmental impact statements and textbooks, on the fifth floor of the Environmental Studies building.

**Huxley Hotline:** The college's weekly newsletter is a goldmine of information about environmental events and issues on and off-campus. Look for it on the upper floors of the building. -S.O.



# GREEN, GROWING, GONE ?

**Take a tour of  
Western's islands  
of nature;  
it may be your  
last chance**

STORY BY JIM SPAICH



Follow the red brick road: Firs frame the path toward Parks Hall.  
Photo by Sandle Lucke.

Every time I walk by Carver Gym, I gaze at a prisoner on death row. The "innocent prisoner" is not human, but a precious little parcel of life opposite Arntzen Hall, calmly awaiting suffocation by Western's new science building. With each passing, I become more convinced this area should be placed on an endangered species list and granted clemency.

Destruction of this piece of ground doesn't compare to the massacre of the world's tropical rainforests and the depletion of old-growth forests in this country, but saving this wild parcel would be a responsible act, showing Western's respect for the environment. Preservation of natural areas is a must both globally and locally. Western especially needs such areas. They make the campus aesthetically pleasant, integrating it with our beautiful surroundings: the firs and maples of Sehome Hill Arboretum, the rocky peaks of the Cascades, picturesque Bellingham Bay and Lummi Island, and forested Chuckanut Mountain. University grounds must be a part of this natural beauty, not a blight on the landscape.

I gave myself a guided tour of campus to verify the rarity of Western's natural areas. First I visited the area in front of Old Main, a broad expanse of grass accented by several large, beautiful trees. The manicured grounds have a certain appeal, but are definitely not wild. Even

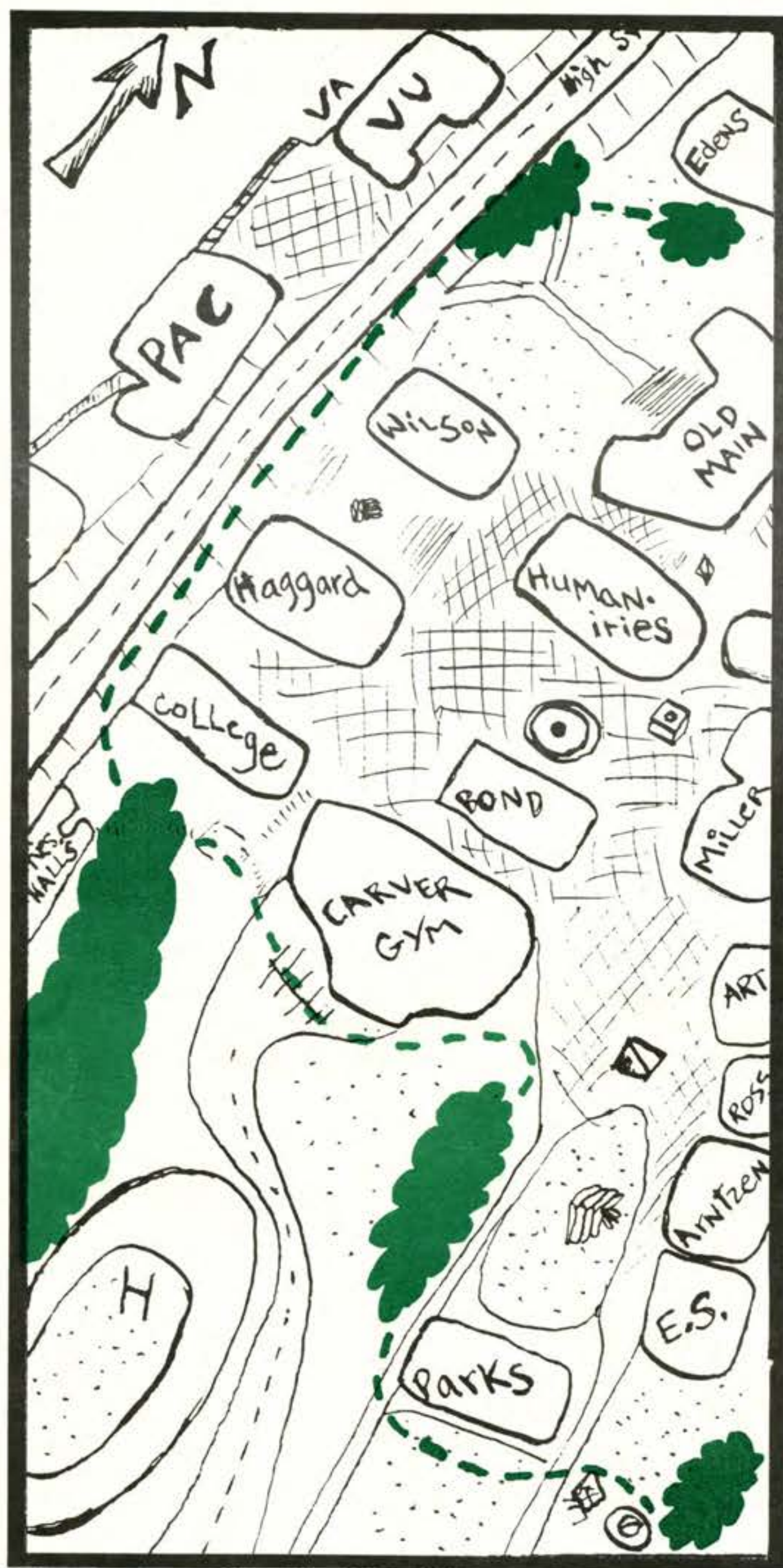
the bird sanctuary, with its rhododendrons and tall firs, strikes me as civilized. From the bird sanctuary I spied a small section of ground in front of Edens Hall. I braved my way into the jungle, feeling as if I was, indeed, in the garden of Eden. This small embankment qualifies as a natural area. Wild growth also carpets the hill between College Hall and the Ridgeway residence halls. The tall firs, towering above an array of ferns, bushes, and ivy, welcomed me into their domain. Near the rock rings and steam sculpture I discovered one final island of wilderness. These areas best represent the natural appeal this campus needs. But they are obscure backdrops, not evident unless you're looking. Scattered patches of landscaped lawns comprise most of the campus grounds. On my tour I saw plenty of grass, straight rows of shrubbery, and elegant orna-

**University grounds must be a part  
of this natural beauty, not a  
blight on the landscape.**

mental trees. And I saw red -- thousands of red bricks.

Walking slowly along the brick path overlooking Alice Aycock's uniquely named sculpture, "The Islands of the Rose Apple Tree Surrounded by the Oceans of the World, For You, Oh My Darling," I studied the wild parcel scheduled to die. Every time I walk across campus, I'm comforted by the diverse growth across





Map by Sara Olason

from Arntzen Hall which offsets the surrounding sterile brick and concrete. I stepped cautiously into this wilderness, observing how the ground drops, creating a steep embankment teeming with life. I saw ivy spreading down the bank, winding around the trunks of trees, lifting itself from the earth. A huge holly tree beckoned me to touch its stiff prickly leaves. The frond of a fern brushed soft against my hand. Blackberry bushes entangled along the bank grabbed at my jeans and jacket. The prisoner pressured me to document its beauty, pleaded with my senses until I proclaimed it a sanctuary. Students need sanctuaries. We need natural areas to counter classroom stress. In these temples we can unite with nature among a medley of plants.

Leaving the sanctuary, I crossed the asphalt path and planted myself on the grassy knoll in front of Parks Hall. I resisted a childlike urge to lie down and roll to the bottom of the slope, coming to rest at the base of a small apple tree. I have often joined other students in this grove of trees to eat lunch or study. The artistic nuance of the grove changes with the seasons. Green leaves of spring rustle in soft breezes. Autumn leaves of various shades of yellow glow on the green grass. In winter, the dark branches of the naked trees stand stark against the white background of Parks Hall. The grove is a haven for relaxing between classes.

I wandered across the grass to the log sculpture. The four ramps angle upward, elevated ends seemingly suspended by air. Students interact with this sculpture more than any other on campus, using the ramps as a comfortable place to sit. The trees nearby enhance the sculpture, establishing a relationship between logs and forests. This relationship is strengthened by the natural area across the path. I sat on a ramp and looked into the thicket, looked to the tops of the trees, listened to the wind rushing through the branches. I realized how necessary places like this are on campus.

### **Students need sanctuaries. We need natural areas to counter classroom stress.**

Unless a reprieve is granted, the sanctuary will be gone. Western intends to build a new science building on this site. The old science facilities in Haggard Hall are considered inadequate and plans to replace them are progressing. The proposal calls for three phases of construction: first, quarters for a chemistry department, then a biology department and new lecture halls. Total estimated cost is nearly \$52 million. State funding has been allocated through phase one and planning for phase two.

Several factors influenced the decision to construct new facilities rather than remodel existing ones. George Gerhold, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, told me Haggard Hall (finished in 1960) was designed to accommodate the biology, chemistry, geology and physics departments. Western was still a state teachers college, not a multifaceted university requiring science preparation. According to Peter Elich, dean of Arts and Sciences, there has been "exponential growth in the field of science (and the departments) are using a lot of stuff in laboratories never used before." Along with the new substances come the dangers of handling them. Since toxic fumes pose a major problem, the laboratories must have adequate ventilation. Last fall Haggard failed this requirement when circulating toxic fumes from a charred epoxy mixture forced evacuation of the building. Apparently the fumes were drawn into a ventilation hood and released through the exhaust vent on the rooftop, only to be sucked back into the building via intake vents. Fortunately, there were no serious injuries, and the physical plant plans to modify the rooftop ventilation stacks. But presently Haggard is, at best, marginally safe.





Winter's bare branches grace this ridge across from Arntzen Hall -- future site of Western's new science building. This view is from the recreational field south of Carver Gym. Photo by Michael J. Lehnert.

I wondered why Haggard Hall couldn't be remodeled. Why not bring safety standards up to par without constructing a new building? Gerhold explained the university's reasoning. Haggard's concrete walls, he said, prohibit punching holes for new ductwork without causing loss of support for the building. Removing significant amounts of asbestos increases the cost of remodeling. Also, remodeling takes time; where would facilities be relocated during the process? After two studies, insisted upon by the state, the science building committees concluded remodeling would be more laborious than constructing new facilities.

A new building entails selecting an appropriate site. The committees rejected a plan to build on the site of the small parking lot near the Performing Arts Center because of inadequate space and the loss of a prime parking area. Gerhold said the south end of campus provided the most feasible location for new construction. The original assumption placed the building on the playing field adjacent to, and perhaps adjoining, the Environmental Studies building. Architecturally, this concept proved difficult because of significant amounts of peat in the ground. Besides, added Gerhold, "a new building would destroy one of the few recreational fields on campus."

So, the muddy recreational field survives, and the natural thicketed ridge must die. The ridge contains the proper ingredients for construction -- south end of

## **I mourn the loss of this spirited plot. The trees will be cut and the thicket bulldozed.**

campus, solid bedrock, and an architect's dream of creating a new quadrant rather than continuing a linear design. Many people with whom I spoke told me the internationally famous architect is very concerned about compatibility with the environment; Western also touts itself as an environmentally aware university. I find such claims hard to believe when I see a level grass-covered field preserved, while a beautiful little oasis of botanicals will be destroyed.

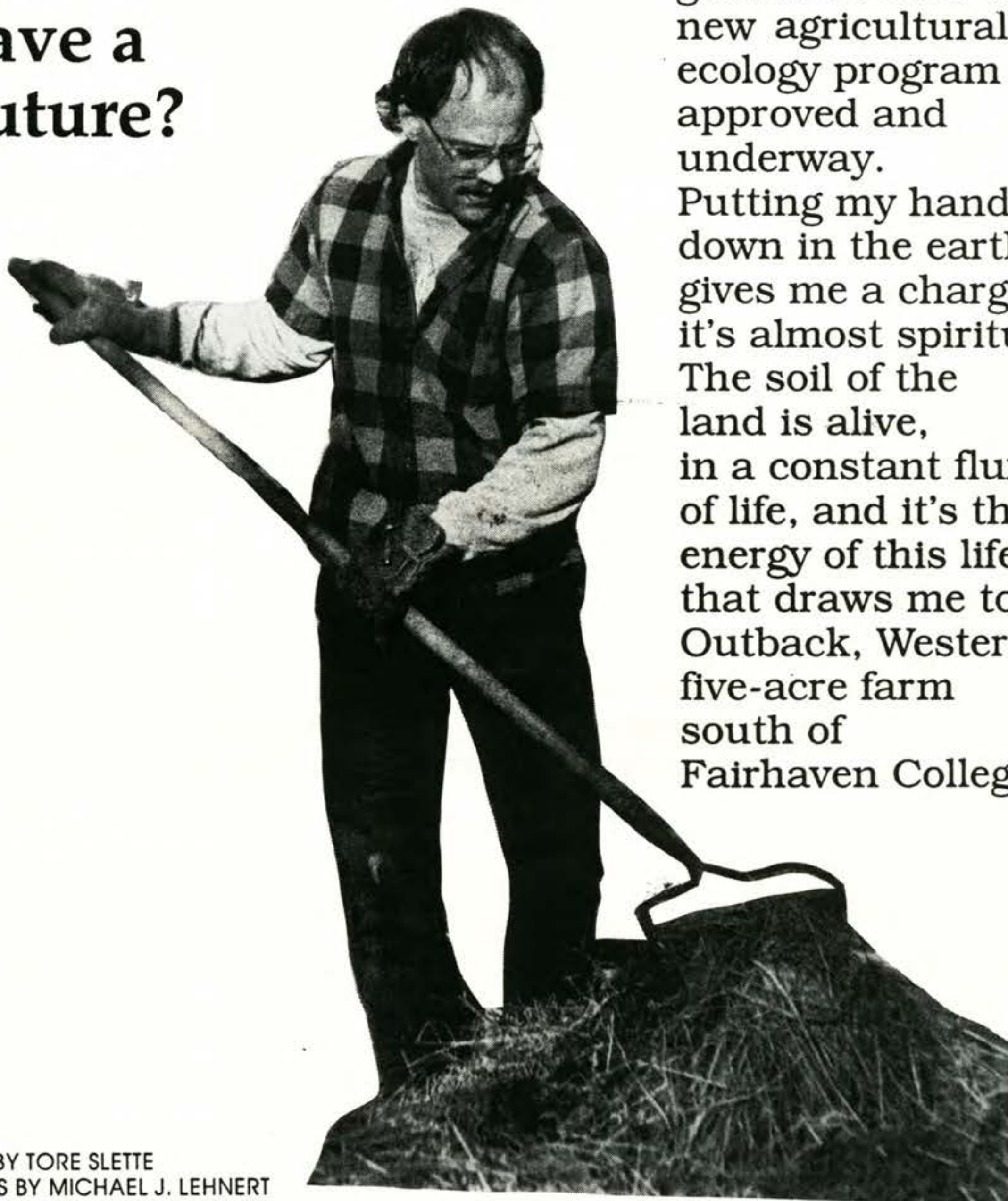
I mourn the loss of this spirited plot. The trees will be cut and the thicket bulldozed. Concrete and red brick will replace them. Current plans call for leaving some of the grassy knoll, some of the trees, and the log ramp sculpture. But it won't be the same. It will be just another manicured lawn surrounded by buildings, another token green spot among red brick and concrete. The precious natural areas of this campus are dwindling. After the wild ridge is dead, will a future decision be made to build on the playing field after all? And then what? Maybe a dome over the campus? We must stop and reconsider building policy. We must save our small, precious wilderness areas, starting now with the death row prisoner. ○

Jim Spalch is completing his master's degree in English.



# SOIL FOR THE SPIRIT

## Does Outback Tech have a Future?

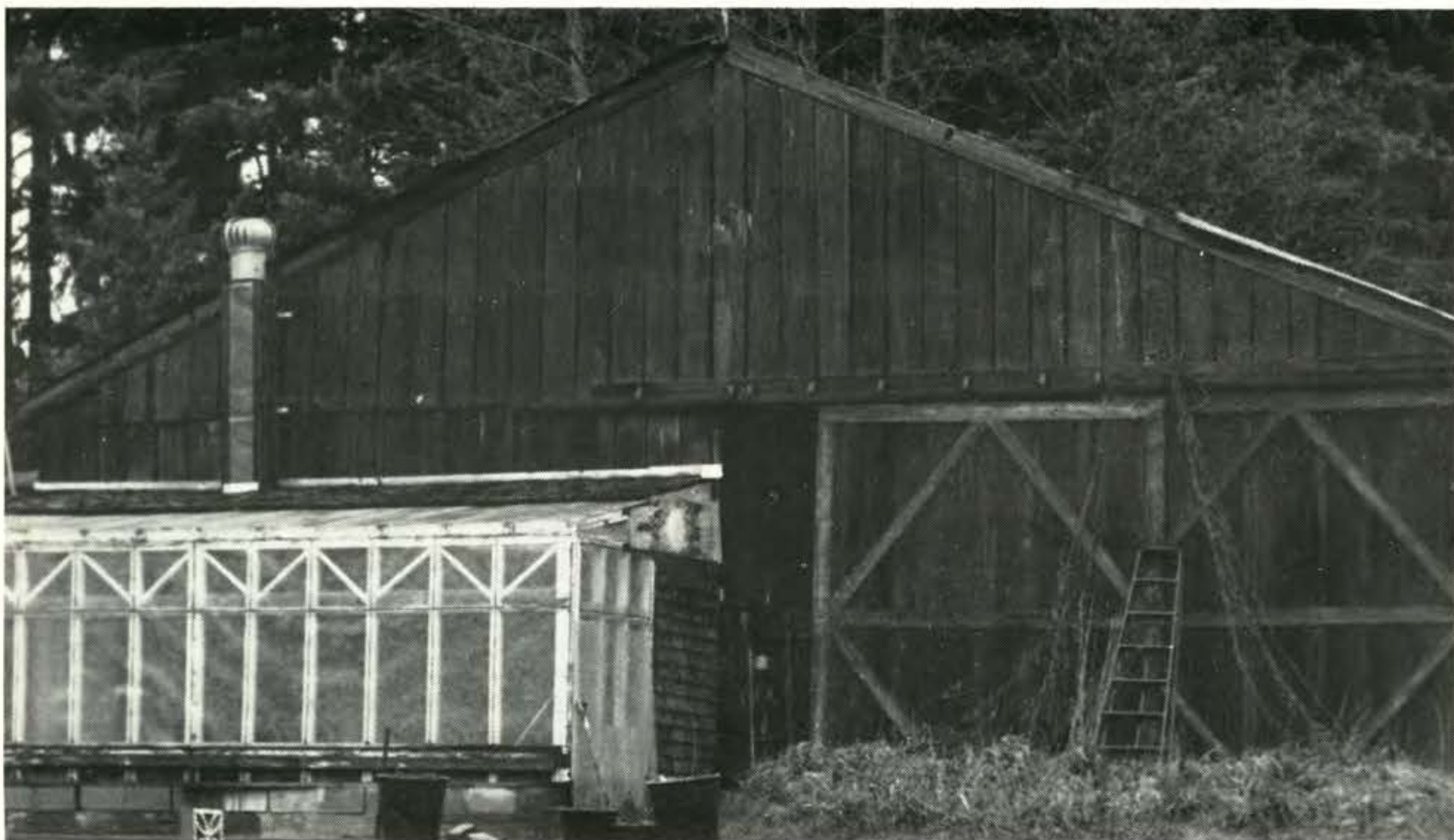


I want to be the Outback farm's first graduate, once the new agricultural ecology program is approved and underway.

Putting my hands down in the earth gives me a charge -- it's almost spiritual. The soil of the land is alive, in a constant flux of life, and it's the energy of this life that draws me to the Outback, Western's five-acre farm south of Fairhaven College.

STORY BY TORE SLETTE  
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL J. LEHNERT





I first worked at the Outback last fall as a member of Fairhaven's organic gardening class. In September, my gardening partner and I started to work on a large, eight-sided, raised-bed garden plot behind the barn. It was overgrown with all sorts of plants and grasses and hadn't been tended in at least a year, but by the end of the quarter we had the bed cleared and under a layer of mulch for

explore agriculture's effects on the land's ecology. It will also teach environmentally sound horticulture techniques -- techniques that apply to large-scale farming or backyard garden plots.

Last year an ad hoc committee was formed to look into this idea. According to Huxley professor Ernst Gayden, committee chair, Huxley faculty will reach a decision on the program some-

critically needs a full-time farm manager. She and I both saw how students left their projects, completed or otherwise, at the end of their courses. Once abandoned, the plots deteriorated. A farm manager, however, would give direction and discipline to ensure projects are either maintained or dismantled, and not left to go to weeds and blackberry vines.

Fairhaven professor Gary

**"The Outback was more than just a few students taking care of the land and the animals -- it was a whole lifestyle experiment."**

winter protection. During my initial quarter at the Outback I learned composting, planting schedules, and how to build coldframes, among other subjects. I enjoyed that course and learned to love the Outback as an irreplaceable part of Western. Then I heard there might be an agricultural ecology program coming up soon that utilizes the Outback as a learning center. The program will be an option within Huxley's Environmental Studies degree program that will

time this spring. If the faculty approves the program, the administration will be asked to approve funding for new teaching and management positions for the farm.

Allain Van Laanen, a Fairhaven senior, is the student coordinator for the organic gardening series. Soft-spoken and pretty, with long brown hair, her sincerity rubbed off on me immediately when I recently spoke with her about the Outback and its future. Allain feels the Outback

Bornzin, an agricultural ecology committee member, avid gardener and faculty leader of Fairhaven's organic gardening class, agrees with the farm manager idea. "In the past, the vitality of the students kept the Outback together but that was when students lived in the cabins. It was more than just a few students taking care of the land and the animals -- it was a whole lifestyle experiment." At one time the Outback was an active, thriving example of a regenerative,



applied technology farm where plants and animals were raised organically, the electricity was generated by a windmill located at the Outback, and hot water and the greenhouse were heated with solar power. Student caretakers and other community volunteers lived in the cabins and donated their labor.

It now sits empty and deserted with only a few garden plots still maintained. Only two years ago, Western's administration ordered the last student caretak-

ers out of the Outback's two cabins for insurance reasons. Since then no one has taken responsibility for the upkeep of the farm -- and it shows. Except for a few garden plots maintained at the north end of the land, everything else is overgrown and has that "wild" look. The 15 or so students who take the organic gardening class each quarter make up the majority of the people who keep small gardens at the Outback's north end. "When the cabins went, I

changed my mind," professor Bornzin said. "I definitely want to see a farm manager at Outback for the simple reason that there's more demand for official accountability now. The days of ad-hoc student leadership at the Outback are probably over."

In the Outback, Western has a golden opportunity to become a leader in an educational field that's sure to keep growing. Anyone who follows agricultural news and events knows the face of modern farming is changing. Many of today's farmers (as well as their offspring) are shying away from "modern" farming methods in favor of ecologically sound practices; i.e., organic farming. Some farmers prefer to call it "regenerative" or "sustainable" agriculture. Even our government has a name for it now: "low-input sustainable agriculture," or LISA. But it's all basically the same thing: integrating the ecology of the land with crop production instead of fighting a handful of "pests" that come with any healthy ecosystem. Most farmers are changing for one simple reason: Their families eat and drink the same food and water that "modern" farming methods poison.

I predict that graduates of the agricultural ecology program will have many options open to them as well as the skills to be self-sufficient food producers wherever they live. They will be needed as state and federal agriculture employees, farming consultants, farm managers, independent producers, Peace Corps volunteers, and in many interna-



**Overleaf (left):** Tore Slette works in his garden plot at the Outback.

**Overleaf (right):** The Outback barn, nestled into firs south of Fairhaven.

**Left:** Matt Hanewald tills in the Outback soil.

**Facing page:** Chuck Roskam and Colette DePhelps build a coldframe.

Photos by Michael J. Lehnert.





tional organizations that teach self-sufficient farming practices to third-world countries.

Even if the agricultural ecology program is not approved, Western should still find a way to get a farm manager living at the Outback. Many departments and individual classes will benefit from an Outback given care and direction: biology, chemistry, Huxley, applied technology, and fresh water studies classes to name just a few. A showcase botanical garden, with an edu-

cational walkway through it, could be planted and maintained by students. This would get a lot of community attention: grade school teachers would bring their students, senior citizens' groups and others in Whatcom County would enjoy it.

The Outback's intrinsic value as a greenbelt in a community being quickly paved over and developed is far greater in the long term than a parking lot or dormitory housing would ever be. That's why utilizing the Out-

back farm "as is" should be a priority at Western. Once it's "developed" it's lost forever. If it's used as the centerpiece of a program combining hard science with ecological stewardship of the land, however, it will become priceless as an educational asset and there will be no more debate as to what to do with it.

"It's such a unique place," Alain said. "It would be a tragedy not to make use of it. Through the organic gardening class I want to make sure there is always student interest in the Outback. That's the key to its survival -- keeping the place in use. If we let it go, in just one or two years it'll be all overgrown and looking like just another patch of blackberry vines and weeds. If that were to happen then one day the administration would look down here and see the land as a prime place for buildings and parking lots."

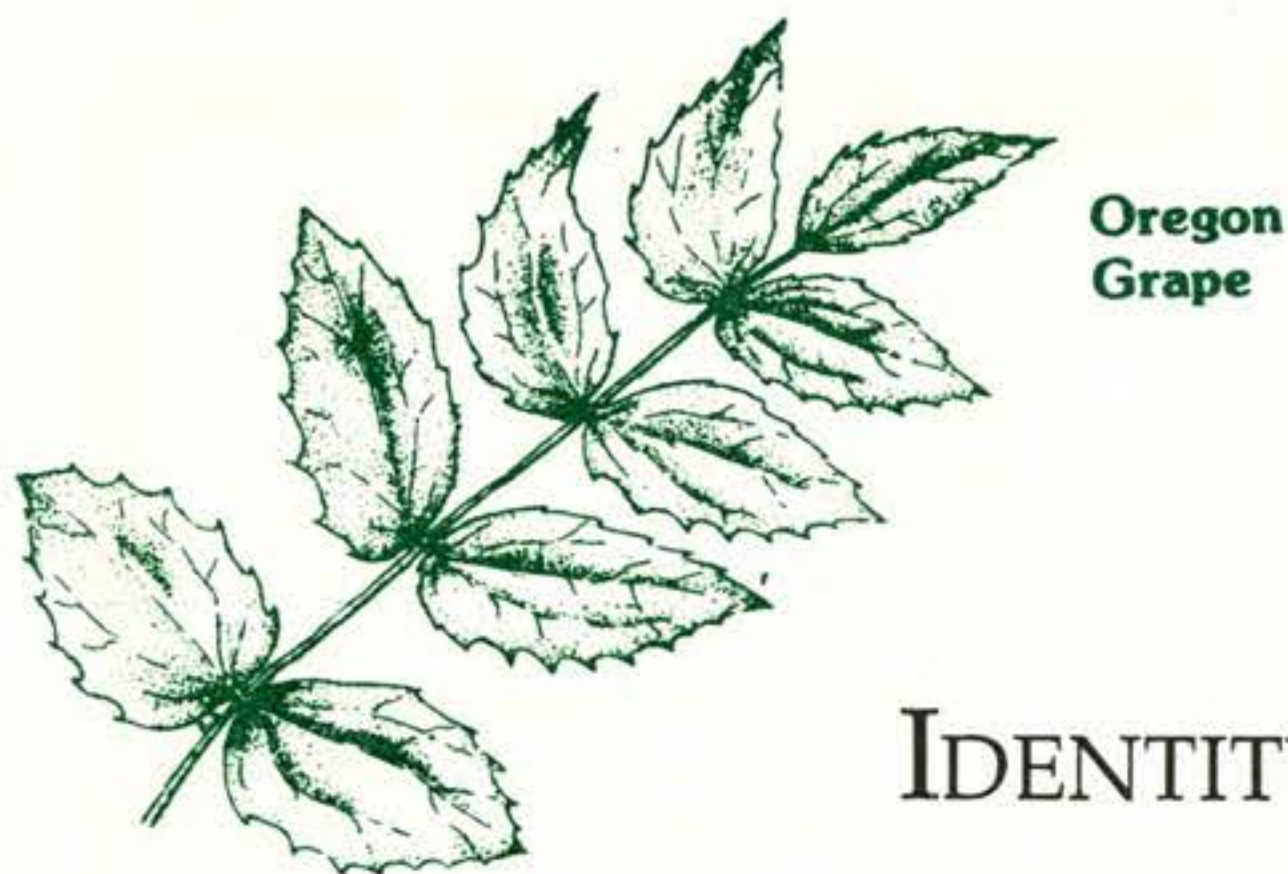
Twentieth century horticultural practices are coming back full circle. The small farmer and the independent producer are making a comeback and due to the increasing markets for organically grown food many of them are prospering. Considering the present pace of development, Bellingham residents now and in the future will be glad indeed to see a productive five-acre model of a working farm as a showpiece of the Western campus. ○

Tore Slette is a seven-year Bellingham resident and prospective Huxley graduate.

---

If you're interested in learning about ecologically sound gardening, check out Western's Ecological Horticulture Club. It will use the Outback as a centerpiece of the club and all club members will have access to a garden plot and all Outback tools and facilities. As a club member you'll get informative newsletters and the shared knowledge of everyone you meet. Some of the topics to be covered include composting, companion planting, organic pest control, greenhouses, hydroponics, herb gardens and winter gardening -- knowledge and skills that can make you self-sufficient for fruits and vegetables anywhere you live, for the rest of your life. Look for club fliers around campus this spring.





Oregon  
Grape



Trillium

# IDENTITY CRISIS ON SEHOME HILL

A wet yellow blanket of leaves covered the trail and a damp, earthy odor hung in the air. Sun sifted through the fog as my friend and I walked to the top of Sehome Hill to escape our studies. As we walked, I looked closer. I realized the forest was recycling itself right beneath our feet. I imagined earthworms and bacteria burrowing through the dead leaves, releasing the nutrients so vital for the plant community. I began to think of the arboretum as more than a pretty backdrop for Western Washington University, but as a small island of wilderness surrounded by a sea of civilization.



Snowberry

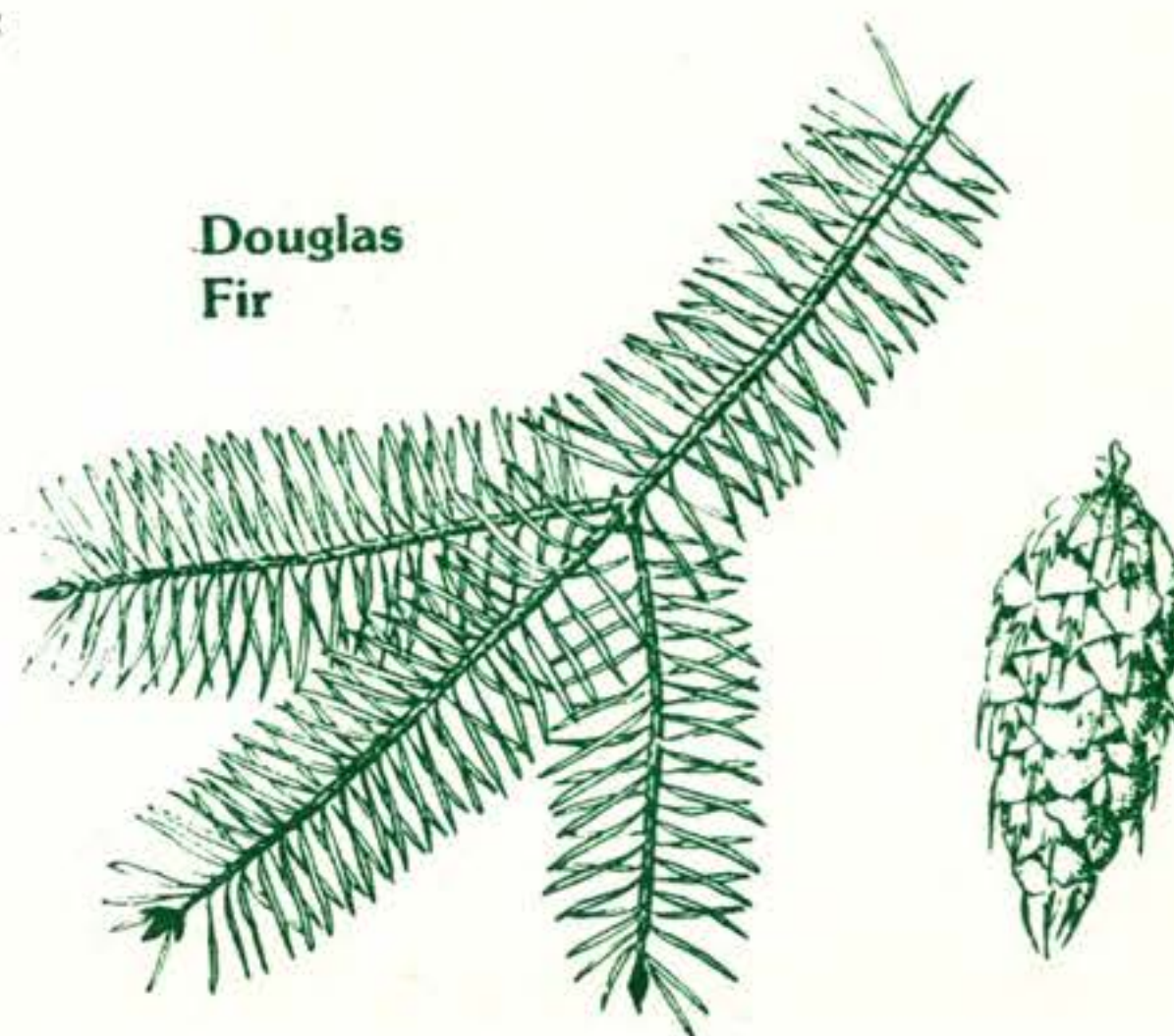


Indian  
Plum

STORY BY KIM CLAY  
ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF  
REBECCA SAMSON



Alder



Douglas  
Fir



Sehome Hill is experiencing rebirth since the late 1890's when it was completely logged. Many native plant and animal species find refuge here from the housing, constant noise and fumes of Georgia Pacific pulp mill, and the university campus that surround them. Roads, trails, and a lookout tower, built for the convenience of humans, are an added stress to these natural communities.

On August 7, 1974, Sehome Hill Arboretum was officially established to preserve this native plant community from further development. An Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the city of Bellingham and Western states that the arboretum is "to be preserved in a natural state, devoted to educational, aesthetic, recreational, and research purposes, and developed in a manner which is compatible with sound ecological concepts." It is the responsibility of the Sehome Hill Arboretum Board of Governors, a committee consisting of city, university, and community appointees, to manage the arboretum and to maintain the terms of the agreement.

After attending meetings of the Board of Governors, I became concerned about how the Board is managing the arboretum. I spoke with Bill Cantrell, a Huxley graduate student and a recent appointee to the Board, and he seemed to share my concern. He believes the arboretum is suffering from an identity crisis. "There is no consistent philosophy of ecosystem management. Each problem is dealt with on a case by case basis," he says.

Last fall, rumors of a bicycle ban in the arboretum circulated throughout campus. I often ride my bike on Bellingham trails, and I worried that a bicycle ban in the arboretum could set a precedent for other trails in the community. But as I wandered through the arboretum that foggy day in November, I noticed many trails were marked by deep ruts and gullies made by bicycle tires. Many "freelance" trails had been carved out of steep slopes, causing severe erosion that could threaten the stability of the hill. With this in mind, I went to the Board of Governors meeting last November to find out how they would solve this problem.

Members of the Mt. Baker Bicycle Club tried to per-

suade the Board that a ban would not work. But the Board members insisted that bicycles had caused unnatural damage in an area that was supposed to be left in a natural state. Convinced they had no alternative, the Board voted to ban bicycles from the arboretum. I felt assured by the enthusiasm of the Board members as they worked to protect Sehome Hill. It was a difficult but responsible decision.



I learned of another decision the Board made last fall that raised questions in my mind about how Board members interpret the Interlocal Agreement, and how they perceive "sound ecological concepts." They have decided to use an herbicide called Triclopyr to control the English Ivy that has invaded the arboretum.

Craig MacConnell, a Whatcom County Cooperative Extension agent who has been working with the Board to find a solution to the ivy problem, told me the ivy is becoming a major threat to the Sehome Hill ecosystem. "It is smothering the vegetation and literally pulling down trees," MacConnell says. "It is beginning to outcompete the native species." There are mechanical alternatives to chemical ivy control, but they would require so much labor and time that the use of Triclopyr has become the most attractive alternative to the Board of Governors, he told me.

Ron Taylor, a biology professor and one of the original members of the Board, says alternatives to herbicides should always be used, but funding from city and state governments is not available for mechanical control programs. He estimated the ivy in the arboretum would have to be cut three to four times a year for about five years before it would be completely eliminated. He believes if Triclopyr is used correctly and the soil is not contaminated, the best method available is to use the herbicide.

Though Triclopyr is the less expensive option in the short term, I found little is known about its long-term effects on the natural environment and on human health. According to Mary H. O'Brien of the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP), Triclopyr is "capable of leaching and running off in wa-





Above: Sehome hill rises majestically above the red bricks of campus.  
Previous Page: English Ivy, a foreign species, has invaded the arboretum.  
Photos by Michael J. Lehnert

ter, can be extremely toxic to fish, is essentially an unknown in terms of effects on wildlife in the field, and is missing adequate tests for most major types of health damage."

Chemical use in an area that is "to be preserved in a natural state" and managed using methods that are "compatible with sound ecological concepts" does not seem justifiable. Triclopyr could be washed into the soil or could harm birds and other animals. If the Board had attacked the ivy problem with as much passion as the bicycle issue, they may have been able to implement a plan utilizing mechanical methods for ivy control rather than taking the easy way out.

Bill Cantrell has been studying another change in the arboretum: a laminated root rot infection which is destroying many of the Douglas fir stands. He discovered about 9.2% of the arboretum is showing signs of infection. Although root rot occurs naturally in old-growth forests, it is an issue the Board of Governors will need to deal with. If left untreated, root rot will eventually replace the coniferous species with bigleaf maples and other deciduous species, changing the character of the arboretum as we know it.

Bill has done extensive mapping of the infected areas

of the hill and has presented several treatment options, including letting the root rot go its natural course, cutting swaths around infected trees and replacing

them with resistant species, and chemical methods. Bill plans to study the long-term effects of the treatment plan the Board adopts. I hope this will set a precedent for future arboretum management strategies. Following up on treatment options chosen should be standard procedure for the Board of Governors to ensure the arboretum retains its character. Board members need to reach a consensus about what "sound ecological concepts" are, and to use this as a guideline when management options are chosen.

Western is lucky to have a backyard brimming with nature. Many classes utilize this unique laboratory, including Principles of Gen-

eral Biology, Field Biology of the Northwest, Environmental Education, Outdoor Education, and Experiential Learning In Environmental Education. Students and Bellingham residents come to experience the natural wonders the arboretum has to offer. All who care about Sehome Hill Arboretum must make sure it is managed with competence and sensitivity. ○

Klm Clay is a senior majoring in environmental studies.

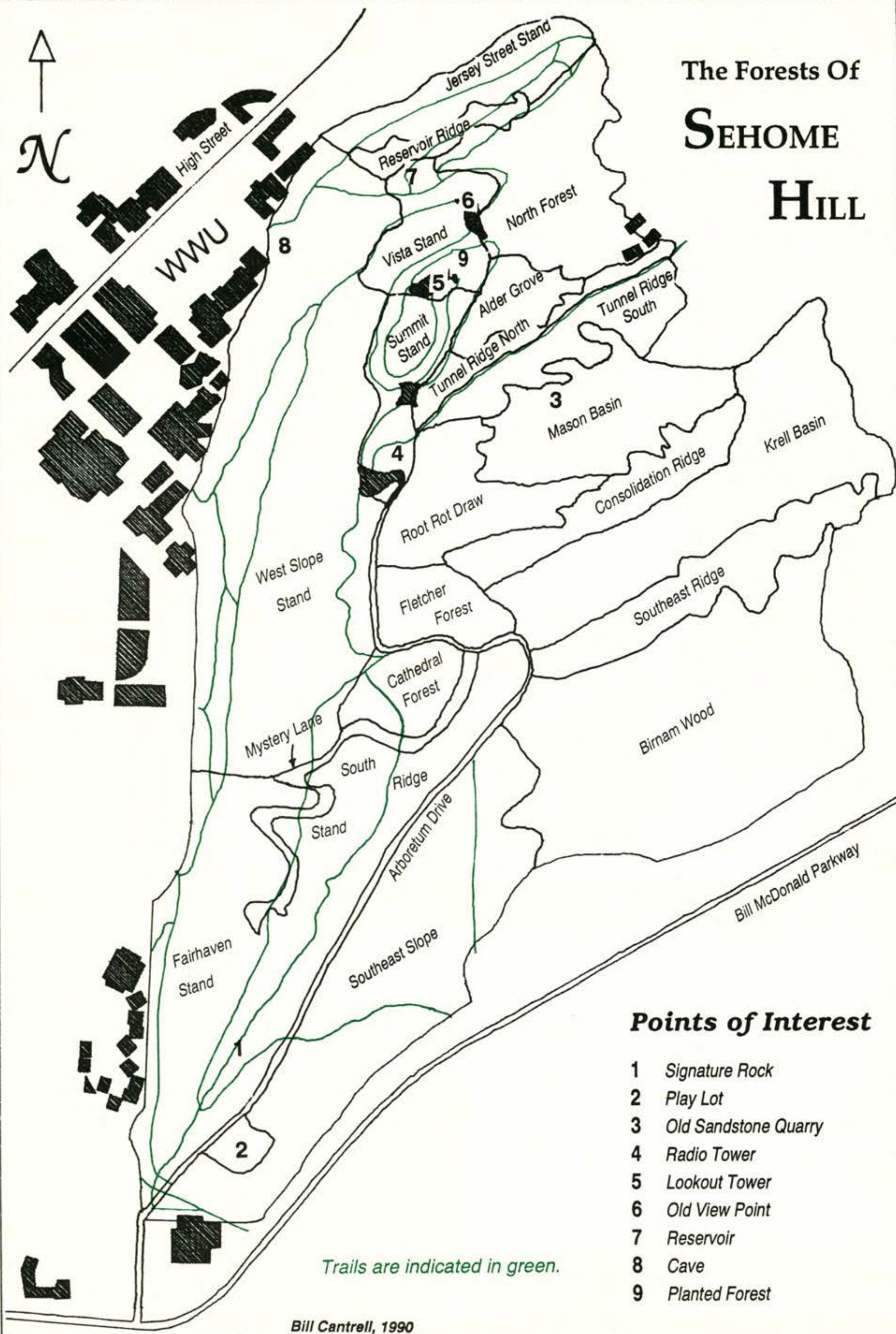


**Sword  
Fern**





# The Forests Of SEHOME HILL



## Points of Interest

- 1 Signature Rock
- 2 Play Lot
- 3 Old Sandstone Quarry
- 4 Radio Tower
- 5 Lookout Tower
- 6 Old View Point
- 7 Reservoir
- 8 Cave
- 9 Planted Forest



# CHEMICALS ON CAMPUS

TRACKING DOWN WESTERN'S HAZARDOUS WASTE



Hazardous waste once seemed as far removed from my life as Love Canal, New York, is from Bellingham, Washington. But last spring I was shocked to learn Western had been sending its waste chemicals to Thermal Reduction Company, a local incinerator not licensed to burn hazardous waste. Department of Ecology hazardous waste inspector Laurence Ashley ordered the waste incineration practice stopped, and directed the university to establish a safe, legal system for disposing of its hazardous waste. Nearly a year after Ashley's visit, I discovered the university has come a long way in its hazardous waste disposal practices -- but there are still disturbing unanswered questions.

STORY BY SARA OLASON  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOEL WEST



While studying voluminous state and federal hazardous waste laws, I realized the stringent requirements for hazardous waste generators are meant to prevent future Love Canals, to hold those who create the wastes responsible for their proper disposal. The old "out of sight, out of mind" attitude toward hazardous wastes, which allowed the Hooker Chemical Company to bury millions of gallons of toxins in Love Canal, is no longer legal or ethical. Western's hazardous wastes would be but a drop in Love Canal's bucket, but still the university is legally accountable for what happens to them -- forever. Thus the university is required to keep careful record of the kinds and amounts of hazardous waste on campus, to hire responsible hazardous waste transport and disposal companies, and to make sure the wastes do actually reach their final resting spots. It's vital for everyone who generates hazardous waste at Western to make sure their wastes are analyzed, packaged, and duly recorded.

With this in mind, I wondered, what exactly comprises Western's hazardous waste, where does it come from, and where does it go? How can those who generate hazardous waste on campus be held accountable for its safe disposal? After weeks of library research, after dozens of interviews with state and federal officials, Western administrators, chemists, physical plant personnel, stockroom technicians and faculty all over campus, and after witnessing for myself how hazardous wastes have been managed here, I was frustrated to find only partial answers to these questions -- but I realized I wasn't the only one having trouble answering them.

The very nature of the university makes tracking down hazardous wastes on campus difficult. Western abounds with a labyrinth of hazardous waste sources, as I discovered when I tried this winter to map waste hotspots on campus. Labora-

tories, art studios, technology shops, darkrooms, even offices create wastes ranging from paint sludge to photographic chemicals, mercury compounds to wood preservatives. The physical plant even has its own, separate system for disposing of used motor oil, pesticides, degreasing solvents and other wastes generated in maintaining the campus grounds and buildings. All of these have the potential to do serious environmental harm if their wastes are carelessly managed, yet so far the university has no official system for policing them.

What Western does finally have is a hazardous waste collection and disposal service, established through the hard work of chemistry professor Bill Wilson, Huxley graduate student Jim Wiggins, and hazardous waste chemist Kevin Uttech. Through the program,



Western faculty and staff can now arrange to have their wastes picked up and properly disposed (see box, page 19).

When I caught Uttech in his Haggard Hall lab last January, he was using a chemical process to remove chromium, a heavy metal, from bottles of a greenish waste solution collected from student chemistry labs. Heavy metals are toxic and accumulate in the tissues of living organisms; the most notorious are mercury and lead, but metals such as zinc and silver are also regulated by

the state as hazardous wastes. While talking to Kevin, I remembered a book I read by consultant Howard H. Fawcett, who wrote in 1984 that old-fashioned methods of laboratory waste disposal are becoming obsolete: "No longer can we think in terms of dumping chemicals down the sink drain, or in evaporating them up the [fume] hood. It is necessary to *identify* and *evaluate*, as well as plainly *mark* and *segregate* chemicals if they are to be safely, as well as legally, transported and disposed."

The environmental dangers of dumping hazardous waste chemicals down lab sinks are quite real, for Bellingham's sewage treatment plant is not designed to remove them from the wastewater it discharges into Bellingham Bay. The plant has only primary treatment, a physical

process that removes solids. Some heavy metals stick to the solids and settle out with them, contaminating the sewer sludge; some pass right through the plant into the bay.

Metals aren't the only problem. Some laboratory solvents, such as toluene, used to clean glassware, don't mix with water, and so can stick to the insides of plumbing. Concentrated acids poured down sinks can damage plumbing, and can even form explosive compounds in the pipes. Other solvents, such as methanol or wood alcohol, are volatile and may evaporate during the treatment process, but again, their removal from the wastewater stream is not guaranteed. When the plant upgrades to secondary treatment, the problems from

hazardous waste dumping into our sewers will still be severe, for the microorganisms used in the secondary treatment process can be harmed by toxins in the wastewater.

As a scientist and a journalist, I began to feel Western has a moral as well as a legal duty to make sure its hazardous wastes are not poured down sinks, dumped into garbage cans or simply left to evaporate. My concern shifted from the accumulation of hazardous wastes on campus -- a serious problem last year before



# DOWN THE DARKROOM DRAIN?

STORY AND PHOTO BY MICHAEL J. LEHNERT

Black and white photography is enjoying a resurgence in popularity, due in part to its dramatic appeal and relatively simple processing and printing. Numerous weekend photographers are setting up new home-darkrooms and others are dusting off old equipment. At Western, several darkrooms range in size from one-person darkrooms to one that accommodates nearly 20. Everyone who uses them must be aware of proper procedures for disposing of darkroom chemicals.

Silver is the most important element in the magic that is photography. When combined with chlorine or bromine atoms, the resulting mixture becomes light-sensitive and is perfect for making photographic film and printing paper. After film or paper coated with this emulsion is exposed to light, chemicals must be used to make the image visible, wash away the unexposed emulsion and fix the image permanently onto the film or paper. During processing, silver winds up in the used chemicals.

Improper disposal of these photo-chemicals allows the silver to enter our rivers, lakes and oceans where it is highly toxic to many forms of aquatic life. Large, commercial photo labs are required to remove the silver (some even sell it at a profit), or dispose of it as toxic waste. The regulations for small-scale operations are less strict, and in some cases vague on the exact way to dispose of the chemicals.

Many people working in small darkrooms get into the habit of just dumping their used chemicals directly down the drain, not caring or realizing the effect their actions might have on the environment. Some might believe that by diluting the chemicals and flushing them to Bellingham's sewage treatment plant they will be safely disposed of, but this is not true. The metal is still a danger to the environment, especially here in Bellingham, where the Post Point treatment plant is only a primary treatment facility. Secondary and tertiary treatment plants can remove some of the silver, but still the drain is not the best place for used photo-chemicals.

Instead of dumping darkroom wastes, store them in re-sealable containers such as water, juice or milk

jugs. Do not mix the chemicals. To dispose of darkroom waste on campus, see box on facing page. For home darkrooms, call 676-6724 in Bellingham, or 384-1565 in the county.

By asking friends and family to rinse out and save their empty jugs, you should have an ample supply of free containers. The water jugs also work well for mixing new photo chemicals. (After all making use of an item in a way it was not originally intended is the next best thing to recycling).

If you do it right, photography does not have to be dangerous to the environment. In fact, it can be an environmental rallying point. We used to say a picture is worth a thousand words. Today it is more like ten-thousand. Good photographs tell stories, convey emotions and even make us feel we are looking through a window. Over the past 150 years, advances in cameras and film brought photography to the masses. Cameras come in all price ranges and for all skill levels. Manufacturers have even developed disposable cameras. (As if we don't have enough problems in today's throw-away society.) Photography can be used to show the beauty of nature and the havoc mankind is capable of wreaking upon the planet.

Conservationists learned the power of photography in the early part of the century -- the hard way. The fight to stop the damming of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park was lost, in large part, because proponents of the dam used photographs to mislead the public. Having learned an important lesson, conservationists since that time have used photography to promote environmental causes. In the 1960's, when the government planned to dam the Grand Canyon, photographs were used to show the public the scenic wonders that would be lost if the plan went through. This time, the conservationists won.

A little bit of effort goes a long way, and if we all do our own small part we can have a dramatic effect on keeping the environment a safe place to live. ○

Michael J. Lehnert studies journalism at Western.



**Our Wickiup**  
North American  
Indian Art

2854 Highway 20  
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284  
Erma J. Smith Phone: 826-3876



**base camp, inc.**

901 W. Holly St.  
Bellingham, WA 98225  
733-5461

**BACKCOUNTRY  
OUTFITTERS**

Patagonia  
Sierra  
Designs  
Merrell  
Moonstone  
Boot and  
Pack Rentals



**JR STAINED GLASS**

SINCE 1978  
custom  
windows & lamps  
classes for  
beginners & advanced

Glass - Tools - Etching  
Sand Blasting - Repairs

MON-FRI  
10-5:30  
SAT 10-4

**734-4431**

1017 N STATE  
TWO BLOCKS SOUTH OF THE HERALD BLDG



Wilson took the lead in hiring disposal companies to ship out accumulated waste chemicals -- to how Western's hazardous waste affects the world beyond the university's red brick boundaries.

I became convinced that Western, with its emphasis on environmental studies and environmental ethics, ought to mandate responsible hazardous waste management in all labs, shops and studios on campus. We demand regular inspections of labs that use animals for research, and we require certification for laboratory users of radioactive materials; certified histopathology labs endure yearly inspections of hazardous waste disposal and other practices by the College Association of Pathologists. Why should the same stringent policing and inspection policies not also apply to all campus areas that generate hazardous wastes?

I asked several people on campus, and the standard response was: The first responsibility for proper hazardous waste management lies with the faculty and staff who generate the wastes in the first place. When I put the problem to vice-president for business and finance George Pierce, he said, "You really can't mandate it -- the [department] chair can always say, 'Don't pour things down the drain,' but it's the faculty member who needs to always be conscious of that. All you can really do is make sure the proper safety training, procedures and literature are in place."

This part of the hazardous waste program may finally be gearing up. University officials say they will begin an educational program to raise hazardous waste consciousness early this spring. They also promise to purchase a hazardous waste storage

When it comes to hazardous waste, the "out of sight, out of mind" philosophy is both dangerous and illegal. Law defines hazardous wastes as waste materials that are flammable, reactive, corrosive, toxic or capable of accumulating in the tissues of living organisms and poisoning the food chain. Not all chemical wastes meet the legal definition as hazardous, but some common examples are:

- heavy metals (such as mercury, chromium, lead, and compounds containing these)
- solvents (such as benzene, acetone, methanol)
- formaldehyde solutions (used to preserve specimens)
- paint and lacquer thinner
- some office chemicals, such as Xerox toner

These substances must not be dumped into sinks or garbage cans. Instead, call the hazardous waste program at extension 3444 to arrange proper disposal (while not yet connected as we go to press, the extension should be in operation soon). Keep wastes separate, and do not pour liquid wastes into absorbent materials such as sawdust.

shed, to replace the current, un-ventilated Haggard Hall basement room where waste chemicals are now stored; to find laboratory space for hazardous waste analysis outside of Haggard Hall; and to hire a hazardous waste technician.

Perhaps an educational approach will succeed. My alma mater, the University of Washington in Seattle, has had a voluntary hazardous waste collection system in place for several years, and UW environmental health officer Kim Jones told me it's been successful in keeping hazardous wastes from the UW's many large labs out of garbage cans and sewers. The UW's program is well-advertised, and it keeps Jones and his staff running; many generators keep regular pick-up schedules with the UW's hazardous waste office.

But with the potential for serious damage to human health and the environment, and legal liability to Western for improper waste disposal, the university must go beyond advertising to enforce a hazardous waste

ethic on campus. Even if there is now no way to reasonably monitor Western's many hazardous waste generators, the new program still needs teeth. Dr. Pierce told me anyone caught improperly disposing of hazardous wastes on campus would be reported to his or other top-level administrative offices; I hope they will treat such violations with the seriousness they deserve.

Says a National Research Council committee on laboratory waste disposal, "It is essential that laboratory management at all levels, or faculty in an academic institution, be openly and actively committed to support of sound waste-management policies and practices." I'm encouraged to see Western making steps in this direction. In education and enforcement, Western should shine as an example of proper hazardous waste management -- and holding individuals accountable for the wastes they create is part of that example. ○

Sara Olason is a zoologist studying environmental journalism.



## ASSOCIATED STUDENTS RECYCLE

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY • BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON • 98225

### What to Recycle:

- ALUMINUM
- GLASS
- ALL GRADES OF PAPER

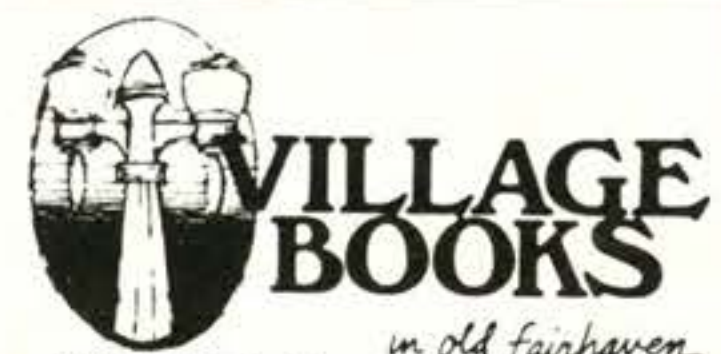
### Where to Recycle:

- ARNTZEN HALL
- MILLER HALL
- VIKING UNION
- RESIDENCE HALLS

### For More Information:

Recycle Education Program 647-6129

Recycle Center 676-3088



1210 11th St.  
Bellingham, WA 98225

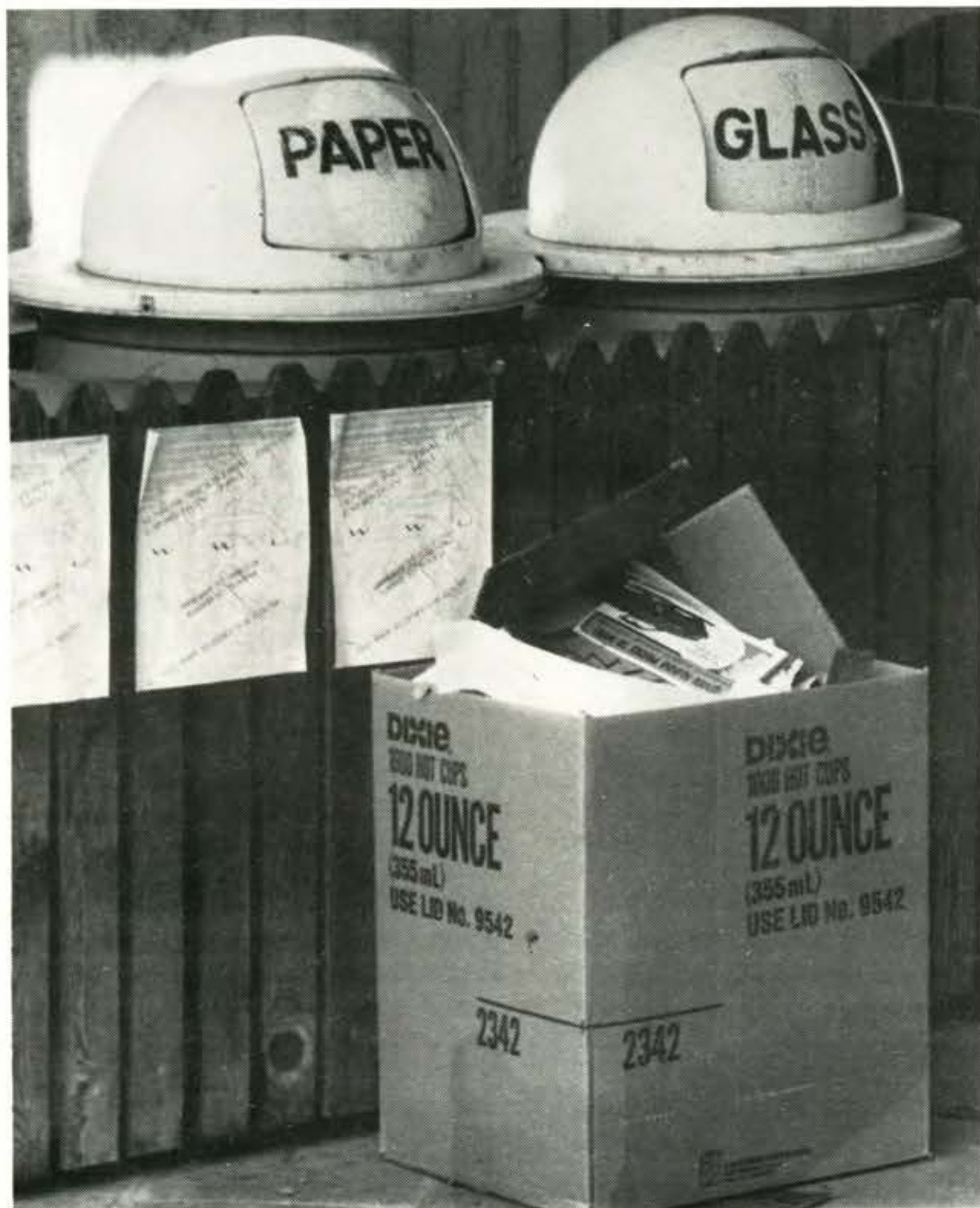
Hours: 10 - 10 Monday thru Saturday  
10 - 6 Sunday

Phone: Toll - Free Nationwide  
1-800-392-BOOK  
In Bellingham 671-2626



# PRACTICING

---



## WHAT WE PREACH

---

**Recycled paper products are  
the only choice for Western**

For years, Americans have blamed the chemical industry for dumping hazardous wastes, fast-food restaurants for styrofoam packaging, oil companies for offshore oil spills, the timber industry for clearcutting, and the list goes on. Now we know better. The nation realizes that pollution and environmental woes are a collective responsibility and that only collective effort will restore our environment.

Luckily, public recognition has sprouted like a weed from the garbage. A recent issue of *The New Yorker* I received in the mail came with a cover wrapped in brown paper instead of the usual throwaway plastic. It was one sign of many that the socially responsible want to reduce their share of environmental overload. The Western Washington University community also has tried to do its part through the Associated Students Recycle Center by collecting recyclables such as paper, aluminum cans, and cardboard. Last year, the Center collected 110 tons of mixed paper, 27 tons of newspaper, and 25 tons of "high grade" computer paper. It all adds up.

But recycling our campus refuse isn't enough: Western is working to reduce its share of environmental harm even further, by purchasing recycled paper instead of virgin paper.

STORY BY JENNIFER HAYES





Three steps in the recycling process at Western:

Left: Paper, glass and aluminum are deposited in barrels such as these outside Arntzen Hall. (Photo by Rich Fotheringhill.)

Above: Student workers truck the recyclables from campus collection sites to the AS Recycle Center on 21st. Ken Friedman sorts mixed paper generated on campus. (Photo by Lowell Dickson.)

Next page: Northwest Recycling, in downtown Bellingham, receives recyclables from Western, and ships them to Seattle for shipment overseas. (Photo by Lowell Dickson)

The environmental savings of the switch to recycled paper are now beyond doubt. Producing a ton of recycled paper requires half the energy and half the water needed for a ton of virgin paper, spews out 74 percent less air pollution and 35 percent less water pollution, and saves 17 trees. And it's only appropriate, on a campus where students are raising money to protect parcels of tropical rainforest through the Nature Conservancy, that Western not provide a market for any of the 800 million pounds of cheap tropical wood paper the United States buys each year from Brazil.

Today Western is moving toward purchasing recycled paper -- thanks largely to the initiative of dedicated students. Western's Associated Students will soon bring lined, recycled notebook paper to the student bookstore. Greg Anderton, AS vice president for external affairs, told me recycled paper can be 30 to 40 percent more expensive than its virgin counterpart, but that the AS may subsidize some of the difference, bringing the price of recycled paper closer to virgin. The AS also plans to launch an awareness campaign, so students will be more likely to choose recycled paper.

Getting recycled paper onto campus department shelves is not as definite. The university is trying to locate several kinds of commonly used, recycled paper products that could be used on campus. But Dale Monroe, Western purchasing director, said while he realizes many students are interested in purchasing recycled paper, a number of details need to be worked out: Should the university purchase "pure," 100 percent recycled paper, or paper with only 50 percent recycled content? What kind of recycled

paper could be used in presses and copiers without changing the machinery? Should small amounts of some items be purchased as a test, and other items avoided until someone asks for them? And the bottom line is, are faculty and staff interested enough to use recycled paper in their departments?

So far Huxley College, Fairhaven College, and the Associated Students have indicated they would purchase recycled paper. But the future of recycled paper in one of the biggest paper sinks on campus -- copy machines -- is still tenuous. Some say recycled paper will add wear and tear to campus copy machines, increasing service costs. However, many recycled paper companies now offer high-quality papers made specifically for copiers. In the future, copier manufacturers should do their part to design machines that accommodate recycled papers.

I've been interested to learn the process of recycling paper is relatively simple. Waste paper is brought to a recycled paper mill where it is dumped into a mixing machine called a pulper pit, mixed with water, then heated to change it into pulp. The pulp is screened to remove items such as staples and paper clips, "cleaned" by centrifugal cleaners and water washes, pressed and dried. When used with bleaching and de-inking processes, the procedure produces white paper.

Although the process is similar to that for producing virgin paper, many printers claim recycled paper is harder to work with. Ken Nuckolls, owner and president of the Union Printing Company in Bellingham, says running recycled paper through the presses is comparable to "pushing a string (through a press) instead of pulling it," and that only large sheets of recycled paper can run through presses like virgin. Printers say recycled paper fibers aren't long enough to give paper any direction through presses and copiers because "grippers" and "suckers" can't hold onto the paper. A run of 5,000 sheets of recycled paper can take as long as an additional hour and a half as a similar run of virgin paper, because presses have to be slowed to accommodate the difference, Nuckolls added.

Representatives of Earthcare Paper Inc., a recycled paper supplier in Wisconsin, dispute these claims. They admit that in the past, some batches of recycled paper

---

Here are other ways to conserve virgin paper:

- Stop buying yellow paper, because it can't be recycled as easily as other types of paper. Recently, New York City banned the use of yellow legal pads for this reason.
- Copy material on both sides of a sheet instead of just one. Most copiers now have this option.
- Reuse discarded paper for reminder notes; sticky pad paper may not be recycled as easily.
- Use electronic mail instead of memos.
- Bring your own bags to the grocery store to cut down on the use of paper bags and plastic bags. Even biodegradable plastic bags are considered harmful because the effects of the degrading plastic on landfills are still unknown.
- Bring your own cup when buying coffee or drinks on campus. Paper cups cannot be recycled because the wax coating won't come off during the recycling process. Using your own cup is cheaper, too.





were better than others, but with today's technology uniform batches come out of the mills and have similar grains as those found in virgin paper. And they add, as demand for recycled paper increases, the batches will continue to improve.

Kim Maxwell, an environmental studies student who has been a driving force behind Western's interest in recycled paper, admits that convincing all of Western to use recycled paper won't happen overnight, but she is optimistic. Earlier this year, Kim gathered several Western students and administrators together to discuss the issue, and most expressed definite interest. The AS Print Shop now prints many projects -- such as this issue of *the Planet* -- on recycled paper. Kim believes Western may someday serve as an example for other universities to follow.

I've come to realize, with the rest of our nation, that there is no such thing as "away." We've watched our landfills become a simmering witches' brew -- mixing our trash into a lethal combination that has leaked into our drinking water and polluted our air. We recognize that recycling can save some of a landfill's ingredients from becoming part of the soup, and we've compiled statistics to prove it: If the United States would recycle half the newspapers it discards every year, 6 million tons of waste would never reach our bulging landfills; recycling a single press run of the Sunday *New York Times* would save 75,000 trees from the same fate.

But because we are more aware of environmental dangers and may be recycling more does not mean we've done our duty for the environment. We also have to take steps to use the products that have been recycled -- a difficult task since "new" items are often considered superior. We must change our values to reflect the recycling slogan: If you're not recycling, you're throwing it all away -- and if we aren't using recycled paper we aren't recycling. The only way to make recycled paper common is to demand that state agencies, organizations, corporations, and institutions such as Western stock it. Once these agencies realize we care for our environment, using virgin paper and other virgin products will become as out-dated as the electric typewriter. Recycled products must be the only choice. ○

Jennifer Hayes is an environmental journalism student at Western.

THE *Bagelry*

Muffins Cakes  
Salads Soup

*everything is made fresh  
on the premises each day.*

1319 Railroad Bellingham  
676-5288

Mon.-Fri. 7-5, Sat. 8-5, Sun. 9-4

The  
*Food Co.op*  
Quality From The Ground Up!

COMMUNITY OWNED  
SINCE 1970



1059 N. STATE  
Monday-Saturday 9-8  
Sunday 11-6



Herbs for natural healing

**Wonderland  
Tea and Spice**

- Bulk Herbs • Fresh Spices • Oils
- Traditional teas -- Potpourries
- Books • Herbal teas • Crystals & Gems
- Dried flowers & Wreaths

1305 Railroad Bellingham 733-0517



I was once an environmental hazard, but I decided to reform. I drove everywhere in my white Nissan Hard-Body truck. I drove to the mountains. I drove to the beach. I drove to the corner store two blocks away. Last year I sold my truck. Now I ride a ten-speed bike to my classes at Western.

# PEDAL POWER

STORY BY JEFF KOGER  
PHOTO BY MICHAEL J. LEHNERT

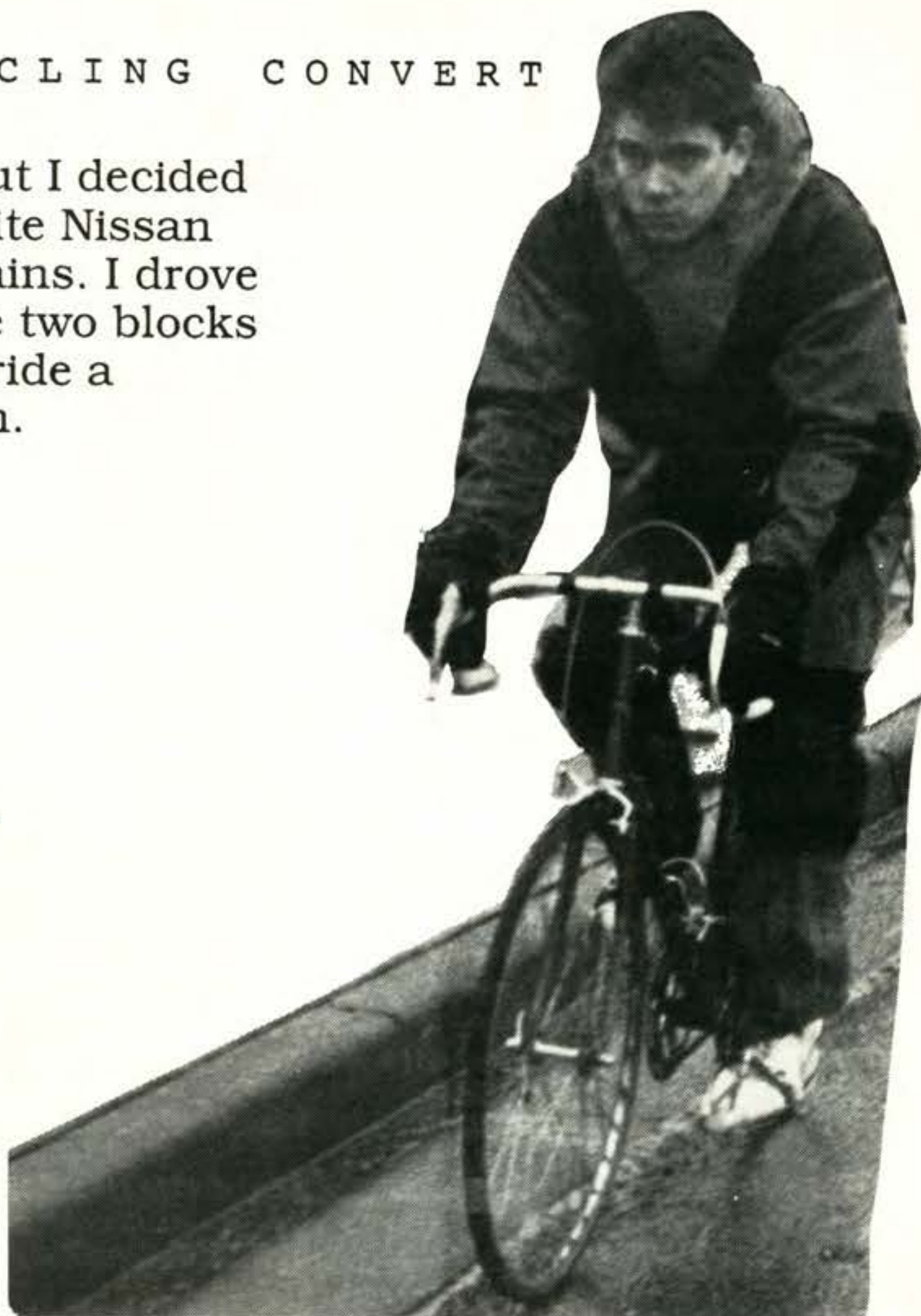
My attitude toward driving changed last fall when I read an article in *Scientific American* by Thomas E. Graedel and Paul J. Crutzen. Ozone high in the atmosphere shields us from deadly ultraviolet radiation, they wrote. Ozone from car exhaust hovering at ground level mutates and kills everything living. Besides poisoning the atmosphere, congesting streets and promoting stress, I learned that Western's addiction to driving has brought the university to a parking crisis.

I recently discussed the problem with Ann Wallace, Western's parking and transportation manager. She estimated that for 1989 - 1990 the university sold more than 640 resident parking permits and 2,200 commuter permits. Yet only 1,200 student parking spaces were available. This means the parking spaces were oversold by 1,640 permits. Overselling is possible, Ms. Wallace explained, because part-time students don't park in the spaces eight hours a day every day, and students taking night classes park only at night.

She gave me some other surprising facts. In the past, some of the parking spaces sat vacant, and the university couldn't sell all the available permits. Now, because of demand for permits, it's possible for them to oversell the spaces. Ms. Wallace has watched a trend over the past decade of more students driving their cars to campus. If students are responsible for the increase in car use, should Western be accountable for expanding parking for additional vehicles?

How will Western solve its parking crisis? One option might be to yield to the pressure of more cars, by building an expensive multi-level parking garage, or paving over Western's last green spaces. Or Western students and administration could petition for a comprehensive upgrade in Bellingham's mass transit system to include bus runs past seven p.m. for students with night classes. Walking and biking to class would relieve great pressure from the overburdened parking system.

I've already made my choice. I've found an alternative to driving, my bicycle. Pedaling my bike toward campus, I smell the wet early morning grass, hear birds singing



and feel the biting winter air on my cheeks. John Muir once climbed a tree in a wind storm to become synchronized with nature. I ride my bike to feel in sync with nature. Even in torrential rain storms I am happy. The more time I spend outdoors the more I feel connected to the Earth. The exercise makes me healthier. In addition to the spiritual and health benefits, the cost of a good bike is low. Repairs are inexpensive and I do them myself. The operating cost of a bike is low because I don't need oil, gas, insurance or a permit.

More parking spaces treat a symptom, not the problem. I think the problem is we are addicted to cars. Anti-car attitudes are taboo in this society. We are programmed from infancy to depend on cars for freedom and social status. I believe most Western students view people through their cars. Friends and classmates have told me I am crazy because I sold my truck. Maybe so, but I feel responsible for environmental pollution. I stopped driving to lessen my impact on the natural world.

A *New York Times* / *CBS News* poll in June, 1989 found 80 percent of people polled agreed protecting the environment is so important that requirements and standards cannot be too high, and that continuing environmental improvements must be made regardless of cost. Five years ago only 20 percent of the people polled were willing to make sacrifices for the environment. If our driving habits are an indicator, Western is behind the times.

So if you see me riding my Bianchi, say hello or wave, but don't honk your horn. ○

Jeff Koger is a sophomore and prospective environmental journalist.



# ACTIONS

## SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

STORY BY BETH FRIES  
ILLUSTRATION BY JOEL WEST



When I open my eyes at Western, I see a university community that cares deeply about the trees, water and air that make this part of the world a paradise. I see students walking around with re-usable coffee cups. I see faculty members with paper-recycling boxes next to their desks. At least once a week I greet a student coming in to the Environmental Center asking how she or he can make a difference.

During the first week of my job as Environmental Center assistant coordinator, my compadre, E.C. coordinator Brandy Reed and I wrote up a calendar of events and divvied up our responsibilities. Most of my energy would go into booking and promoting evening shows -- speakers, slideshows and a musician. I was enthused and excited, but sometimes I wondered if that was enough to make things really happen.

True enough, our efforts were well received. E.C. crowds were larger than in years past and our co-workers commented on the energy level within the Environmental Center. A turning point came for me when the Associated Students (AS) sponsored my attendance at a conference for student activists at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The conference, billed as an activist convention, did not live up to my expectations, but it did redirect my strategies. For most of three days 1,700 student leaders sat passively while speaker after speaker spoke about corporate crimes, the "ineffective" protests of the sixties and our own glowing roles in history. We were the enlightened, the chosen. I had the feeling we had proven ourselves simply by attending a conference.

On reflection, however, I realized the world was no closer to salvation. The people who had learned a skill and acquired self-confidence were the conference organizers -- the rest of us would have been better off to stay home and picket restaurants that use rainforest beef and styrofoam. During my negative reverie on the plane ride back, between the ginger ale and toffee-covered peanuts, I recognized the parallels between the Student Environmental Action Coalition conference and my own efforts in the E.C. Listening to lectures

is not enough. I ruminated further and decided to make changes.

When he visited our campus this quarter, forest activist Lou Gold said, "Environmentalism is no longer a spectator sport. Now is not the time to watch, it is the time to act." I believe Lou. And I believe the role of the E.C. is not just to disseminate information, but also to facilitate student involvement in the environmental issues around us. It's fine to care for nature when watching a special about jaguars on the Discover Channel, or shopping for a Sierra Club calendar at Christmas, but that's not enough. That may be the first step in awareness, but active involvement makes the difference.

We occupy a unique time in history. We have power. I feel we have a moral obligation to exercise that power. Whichever way we go, we will make a decision: By not acting we give our tacit consent to let the destruction continue. By making our voices heard there is a chance, at least, that the beauty of the Puget Sound will be protected by the National Marine Sanctuary Act, and that the majestic trees of the Pacific Northwest will always have the spotted owl nesting in their branches. If we stop just watching and join the fray, we can get something done. If we take a chance at Western, we can save the world. O

Beth Fries is an environmental studies major at Western.

If you want to get involved, here are a few suggestions:

- Join the campaign to get Western Washington University to use recycled paper.
- Work with CUSP -- Citizens United for Safe Paper. CUSP, organized by English teacher Paul Lindholdt, is trying to stop the use of dioxin-creating chemicals to bleach paper.
- Help organize Earth Day 1990, the 20-year anniversary of the biggest environmental celebration in history (see inside back cover for details of Western's celebration).
- Preserve the wild places left in Whatcom County by working for the Open Space bond that will be voted on this spring.
- Work with Audubon's Adopt-a-Forest group to help save our national forests from the biggest cut in our region's history.
- Help win National Marine Sanctuary designation for Puget Sound.
- Write for *the Planet* next quarter or next year.
- Work or volunteer in the Environmental Center.
- Get club status from the AS (that way you get 50 bucks and a mailbox), and start fighting for the environmental issue that means the most to you.
- Become involved in one of the many on - and off - campus environmental groups including: Friends of Lake Whatcom, the Green Party, Neighbors Opposed to Power Encroachment, Student Environmental Action League, Concerned Southside Citizens, Safe Airport For Everyone, Citizens for Greenways, and/or the Puget Sounders.

For more information, please stop by the Environmental Center in Viking Union Room 113, or call 647-6129.



# EARTH DAY 1990

***Sunday, April 22***

Join Western Washington University and the Bellingham community in celebrating Earth Day, 1990!

As part of this global celebration of our natural environment, Western's Earth Day Committee and community organizations will sponsor a number of events:

**Lectures -- April 16 - 20**

Daily noontime speakers will inspire and challenge with lectures on various environmental topics.

**Films -- April 20, 22**

Cinematography will bring vital environmental issues up close, as no other medium can. Sponsored by Associated Students Film Series and Fairhaven Films.

**Earth Fair -- April 21**

A free day of music, speakers, slide shows, videos, children's programs, and information from environmental organizations.  
11 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Western's Red Square.

**Earth Day Dance -- April 21**

Revel in the sounds of popular world music.  
(Band to be announced.)

**Park and Walk -- April 22**

Join your neighbors in an afternoon of fun without petroleum, and help patrol our community for litter. Sponsored by Puget Sounders.

**Art Show -- April 3-26**

Come view "Celebrating Life: Earth Day 1990" in the Viking Union Gallery. Reception April 20.

***Help make the environment  
EVERYONE'S BUSINESS!***

For more information, call Western's Environmental Center (647-6129) or Puget Sounders (676-8094).

