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Analiesse Isherwood ('11) puts her heart—and mind—to work for Haiti's people.

Virginia and Bagley Wright's influence on Western's art scene continues.

'Undefeated'
TJ Martin ('05) brings Oscar home to WWU.

Home of her heart
Analiesse Isherwood ('11) puts her heart—and mind—to work for Haiti's people.

Artistic gifts
Virginia and Bagley Wright's influence on Western's art scene continues.
Last October, more than 300 NCAA Division II Men's Basketball teams began pre-season practice, each with the same ultimate goal in mind. On March 24, the last team standing was Western Washington University.

The Vikings capped a storybook season that day, defeating the University of Montevallo, 72-65, in the national championship game at Highland Heights, Ky., the biggest accomplishment in more than a century of men's basketball at Western.

Every one of the six national tournament victories was closely fought, but in the end, not even the blizzard of confetti that fell from the rafters of The Bank of Kentucky Arena could hide the smiles of the Viking players, coaches and staff. The 2011-12 Western men's basketball team ... now, and forever, NCAA DII National Champions.

Photos by Edward Moorhead
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On the cover: TJ Martin ('05), director of the Academy Award-winning documentary “Undefeated,” stops near Wilson Library on his way to meet students and the media during his visit to campus. Photo by Matthew Anderson ('06)
Critical thinking a hallmark of a Western education

On March 1, Western was treated to an exceptional evening with alumnus TJ Martin, who came to campus just days after winning an Academy Award for his documentary “Undefeated.”

While on campus, TJ hosted the first screening of “Undefeated” in the state of Washington for a packed house at the Performing Arts Center. During the audience Q&A after the screening, I was struck by a comment he made about his time studying at Fairhaven College: “The professors there really encouraged a sense of critical thinking, of critical questioning. I tried to infuse it into my work.”

When you’ve had a chance to see the film, I know you’ll agree that it shows. From gaining the trust of his subjects, to managing logistics on an extended shoot, to editing down 500 hours of raw footage to feature-length, every step in the process took a combination of artistry, discerning judgment and critically informed decision-making.

That reminded me about how valuable a Western education is, often in unexpected ways.

Critical thinking is a hallmark of the liberal arts education offered at Western. Of course the “liberal” in liberal arts has nothing to do with politics – its roots stretch back much further than that. Rather, it refers to the liberation that a broad education – an education suited to free people – provides from the tyranny of ignorance and our own limited experience.

In our technology-driven world, where we are inundated by information from sources of varying credibility, being able to make informed decisions – based on the ability to critically discern – is more important than ever.

I often hear that from employers who have such complimentary things to say about our Western graduates, too. Specialized knowledge, techniques and skills are constantly being updated in today’s competitive world. What they need are people who also have the critical thinking skills to adapt and solve problems that they’ve never seen before.

At Western, we are preparing students for careers not yet invented and projects not yet envisioned. Critical thinking, shaped by a liberal arts education, will play a crucial role in empowering their success. Just ask TJ Martin.

Bruce Shepard
What do you think about WINDOW?

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

This is a good problem

When a Western alumnus wins an Academy Award for the first time, just weeks before Western's first-ever national basketball championship, who goes on the cover of the magazine? Good thing a magazine has two covers.

Window's award-winning story

It's not an NCAA championship trophy or an Academy Award, but Window magazine has an award to celebrate, too. Our cover story from Spring 2011, "Before They're Gone," won a Silver Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education District VIII, a region covering Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska and western Canada. Judges lauded Doug McClintock's profile of alumnus Eric Dinerstein ('75, Ecosystem Analysis), chief scientist for the World Wildlife Fund and part of a global effort to save the habitat of the wild tiger. "Powerful content," the judges wrote. "Follows the evolution of the subject from student to wildlife advocate without being too preachy. The way this story is told puts the reality into a new perspective for the reader." Other universities winning awards in the "Individual Features or Articles (Enrollment of 5,000 to 15,000 FTE)" category were the University of Montana and Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

Alumnus shares memories of a beloved professor

Word that Harley Hiller, who taught history at Western for more than 35 years, had passed away brought back memories for Warren Pugh ('70, Special Education; History/Social Studies). "It would be about 44 years ago that I sat in Harley Hiller's classroom. On the first day he warned us not to cross the first 't' or replace the 'H' with the letter 'K,'" Pugh writes. A retired middle school teacher, Pugh adds that he recently joined one of his former students at an event for those heading off to the University of Maryland - and was delighted to run into one of Hiller's relatives. "Small world, great loss, but he taught us more than history and between he and (late history professor) Carl Schuler I had the best college profs anywhere."

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Western’s newest degree: the honorary doctorate

An acclaimed environmental scientist and an award-winning Northwest author are the first recipients of honorary doctoral degrees from Western.

Jane Lubchenco, chief administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Timothy Egan, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award, each received the honorary degrees at Commencement ceremonies in December 2011 and March 2012 respectively.

Lubchenco, the first marine ecologist and the first woman to hold the top post at NOAA, is a widely respected environmental scientist and a strong advocate for sharing scientific knowledge with the broader community.

Egan, a columnist for The New York Times, is a prolific author of books capturing the sweeping ecological and human landscapes of the West. His “The Worst Hard Time,” about the Dust Bowl, won a National Book Award. And “The Big Burn,” chronicling the largest forest fire in the nation’s history and its impact on the conservation movement, was honored with a Washington State Book Award.

In 2011, the Washington State Legislature gave Western the authority to grant honorary doctoral degrees in recognition of outstanding achievement in arts, letters, sciences or the professions, or for service in education, government or humanitarian endeavors. Recipients are chosen by the Board of Trustees after review by the university president and Faculty Senate.

WWU alumni excel at earning national teaching certification

When it comes to hitting the “gold standard” for excellence in teaching, Western alumni teachers are among the best.

Western was fourth in the nation in 2011 for alumni becoming National Board Certified Teachers, with 104 alumni completing the rigorous process, according to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. National certification is voluntary and goes above and beyond state teacher credentialing programs. It typically takes one to three years of performance-based assessment and testing for teachers to demonstrate how their skills and practices are helping students succeed.

Kim Witte (’00, Physical Education-Elementary), an elementary school teacher in Bremerton, spent many hours writing and editing papers, collecting work samples from students and analyzing data to complete the certification process last year.

“This is just another step to better myself as a person and become a better teacher for my students,” Witte says. “The process challenged me to dig a little deeper to create lessons that were great for all students.”

Learn more about National Board Certification at www.nbpts.org.
Website maps a picture of avalanche risks

A new website maps out local avalanche dangers for those heading into the mountain backcountry, thanks to a joint effort by Huxley College of the Environment and the Northwest Weather and Avalanche Center.

The new site depicts the NWAC's daily regional avalanche forecast on a map of Washington state and the Mount Hood area of Oregon. It's an easier-to-read format that will help backcountry travelers assess avalanche risks.

Michael Medler, who directs the Institute for Spatial Information and Analysis, began working on avalanche-hazard visualization projects in 2004 after one Western student died and several more were buried overnight by an avalanche near Mount Baker.

"After that, I began working with my Geographic Information Systems students to develop maps that would help people understand the avalanche hazards in our local mountains," Medler says. "Each year several students would really latch on to the avalanche projects because the issue had so much meaning for them."

Users can zoom in to see the regional forecast for mountain ranges, but the system isn't meant to provide slope-specific avalanche risks. It's still up to back country travelers themselves -- and their own skills and experience -- to determine the risks on individual slopes, Medler says.

A century of Western's student newspapers go online

The first draft of history, as it has appeared in Western's student publications since 1899, is making its way to the digital age.

Staff members in Western Libraries Special Collections are digitizing and indexing every edition of the Western Front and its student-produced predecessors, including The Normal Messenger, the Northwest Viking, the WWCollegian and others.

Many of the newspapers are now searchable by name, topic, date or keyword and provide detailed glimpses of life on campus for more than a century. So far, staff members have indexed all papers from 1899 through about 1952, including accounts of how students navigated two world wars and the Depression. The early 1970s and all of the 1980s are also fully indexed and staff members are working on the rest. More than 55,000 pages will be digitized and indexed before the work is done.

The newspapers offer not only a view of campus history, but more personal stories, too, says Special Collections Manager Tamara Belts ('76, History). She recently took a call from someone seeking information about a Simon and Garfunkel concert on campus -- it was the caller's parents' first date.

The digitization work is funded through the Western Foundation with the help of donations from two former student journalists, Bert Halprin ('71, Political Science) and Cindy Hacherl ('84, English), along with their spouses, Janice Obuchowski and Don Hacherl.

Find WWU's student newspapers online

Go to http://library.wwu.edu/digitalcollections and click on "Western Washington University Student Newspaper."
Men's basketball brings home a historic title

On a warm, sunny day in northern Kentucky, the Western Washington University men's basketball team was more than happy to stay inside attending to business, as the Vikings claimed their first national championship March 24, defeating Alabama's University of Montevallo 72-65 in the NCAA Division II Men's Basketball National Championship.

The title game followed many close finishes for WWU. A strong regular season earned Western the right to host the tournament's West Regional, where the Vikings opened the tourney by beating Grand Canyon University, 79-73. A 74-65 victory over Chico State University followed, and in the regional final, the Vikings were able to cut down the Sam Carver Gymnasium nets after a 56-50 triumph over Seattle Pacific University.

Winning the regional sent WWU to the NCAA II Elite Eight at The Bank of Kentucky Arena in Highland Heights, Ky. In the quarterfinals, it appeared the visit might be brief, as the Vikings fell behind 16-2 to Midwestern State University from Texas. But WWU tied the game by halftime, and went on to claim a 64-63 victory. In the semifinals, WWU defeated Stonehill College of Massachusetts, 71-66. That set up a championship contest against Montevallo and a moment in the national spotlight. The NCAA II Championship Game is shown annually on CBS, and it typically draws more than 3 million viewers.

If the Vikings were awed by the enormity of the occasion, it didn't show, as WWU took a slim lead at halftime. Montevallo surged to the front early in the second half, but the experience of all those close games paid off. A 20-5 run put WWU in front by 12 with six minutes left, and although Montevallo rallied again, the gap remained large enough that the Vikings knew as the dying seconds ticked away that they had achieved their ultimate goal.

Along the way to the national championship, other honors were given. Coach Brad Jackson, who early in the season earned his 500th career coaching victory, was named NCAA DII Coach of the Year by the National Basketball Coaches Association and Division II Bulletin. Among a number of awards to Viking players, one to senior forward Rory Blanche stood out: He was named a first-team NCAA DII Academic All-American, just the third WWU athlete in any sport to earn such an honor. And not only was the national championship the first in more than a century of men's basketball at WWU, the consistency shown throughout the season resulted in 31-5 record, marking the most wins in school history.
Softball fields renovated thanks to private donors

Western's softball players no longer have to dodge potholes in the outfield thanks to new field renovations — and a new way to fund capital improvements without using state dollars.

The privately funded, $1.2 million project included re-grading and improving drainage in the outfield and replacing the potholed grass with Sport Turf. Workers also renovated the dugouts, replaced outfield poles to meet NCAA standards and replaced the backstop netting.

The project is a dream come true, says coach Amy Suiter. "This gives WWU Softball an opportunity to develop our program and also grow softball in this area," she says.

Players' families got the project started, raising funds and gifts-in-kind while brainstorming ways to fix the fields without state money. The university and the Western Foundation entered the university's first "gift-in-place" agreement essentially giving the foundation the power to coordinate the project and then donate it to Western. It's a common public-private partnership at other universities — and could become more common at Western.

"The economic realities today have inspired a lot of creativity in terms of how we approach raising funds for projects like this softball field," said Stephanie Bowers, Western's vice president of University Advancement. "In this case, a close collaboration with donors was the solution. It might not have happened otherwise. We're very fortunate to have such dedicated support."

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Women's basketball makes it to NCAA regional semifinals

A late-season surge sent the women's basketball team to the NCAA West Regional semifinal game in March, where they ended the season in an 81-66 loss to University of California San Diego.

The No. 4 seed in the region going into the tournament, the Vikings ended the year at 22-8.

Coach Carmen Dolfo ('88, Physical Education, Recreation; '99, M.Ed., Student Personnel Administration) was pleased with the young squad — including five freshmen and just one returning starter.

"To consider where we started and how we finished," Dolfo says, "we're proud of how we improved and what we accomplished."
Rarely has an alma mater asked more of an alumnus than Western has asked of Dennis Murphy ('69, Economics; '71, M.A., Business Education), the recipient of this year's Western Washington University Alumni Association Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award.

After receiving his bachelor's and master's degrees from Western, Murphy left the Pacific Northwest to pursue his doctorate at Indiana University and served on the faculty there and at Emory University in Atlanta before returning to Western in 1979.

Murphy's return began more than 30 years of service to his alma mater, service that has been highlighted with a willingness to step up and take on any task, no matter its scope or size. For example, Murphy took over as dean of the College of Business and Economics in 1983, a position he held until 2007 (and for which he has been named dean emeritus), and twice served as Western's provost, in 1998-99 and from 2007-2009.

Meanwhile, Murphy has been very active in business and community affairs. He served as chairman of the board of Cascade Financial Corporation and Cascade Bank and as president of United Way of Whatcom County and the Bellingham Rotary Club. He also served on the board of the Northwest Medical Bureau and on community boards ranging from Whatcom Chamber of Commerce and Industry to Mount Baker Theatre.

Murphy also brings his sense of humor, storytelling skill and community knowledge to serve as the master of ceremonies of many gatherings, from CBE retirement dinners to community events.

Brian Burton, who took over as dean of CBE after Murphy's departure and who nominated him for this award, credits Murphy's 33 years of service with much of the success the college enjoys today.

"Dennis was the primary force in the college's growth from its beginning to its current status," Burton says. "He led the college to its initial AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accreditation, and his leadership was an important factor in the development of a faculty of true teacher-scholars in the spirit of Western Washington University."

Burton credits Murphy with helping the college to grow by more than 50 percent during his time as dean.

"Without Dennis, CBE would be a very different place," Burton says, "and likely nowhere near as excellent as it is now."

Murphy also has supported Western students through generous annual donations to Western over nearly three decades.

And he's not done. When he retired as dean, Murphy chose to stay on the faculty of his beloved College of Business and Economics, doing what he's done for more than three decades: serving the needs of Western's students.
Thomson Mann established a scholarship fund for Woodring College for her solo show and lending her talents to character and traditional performance. Together Dave and Ann Thomson Mann established a scholarship fund for Woodring College of Education students and funded the “Drive with Pride” program that purchases WWU license plates for graduating seniors.

Annette Devick
Distinguished Alumna, College of Fine and Performing Arts
Annette Devick (’82, Theatre) is a professional actor, physical comedian and circus performer whose resume includes such skills such as acrobatics, dance, artistic bicycling, stage combat, juggling and Chinese chair balancing. Besides film and theatre work, she has performed around the world with Cirque du Soleil, Cirque Eloize, Axis Theatre and the Big Apple Circus. She just returned from Russia where she studied clowning and physical theatre, thanks to a Canada Arts Council Research and Creation Grant. These days Devick is a teacher and director, working on new acts for her solo show and lending her talents to character and traditional roles on stage and screen.

The Larson Family
Legacy Family of the Year Award
The late Evelyn Larson Green (’29) was the start of a four-generation tradition of Western alumni in the Larson family. The late Gerald Larson (’60) was a tireless volunteer and advocate for water quality in Whatcom County. Other proud WWU alumni include Jack Larson, a retired commercial fisherman, Eric Larson (’88), a real estate broker, Kristin Craker, who works for the Bellingham School District. Current students include Tanner Larson, who is interested in studying Accounting. Dennis Larson and Keith Larson also attended Western.
Chase Franklin ('86 Economics/Mathematics) knows what it's like to face catastrophic collapse. His Seattle-based dot-com software company Qpass was poised to go public in 2000 when the bottom fell out of the market. With $25 million in the bank, Qpass had just enough to pay its 200 employees for six months. Franklin quickly realized he needed to make some swift and difficult decisions.

So Franklin, a Microsoft alum who founded Qpass in 1997, made some brash moves to reposition and restart the company. In a software company, people represent the lion's share of operating expense. So almost overnight, the company took steps to lay off two-thirds of its employees, released all of its customers, and began the difficult process of changing direction – all while maintaining the full support and confidence of the company's investors. Qpass went from selling e-commerce services to more than 100 Internet sites to selling a similar product for a much smaller group of wireless carriers.

The move focused the company on a more viable market and positioned it to be sold for more than $300 million in 2006, which at the time was the third-largest acquisition of a privately-held, venture-backed technology company in Washington state.

Not bad for a company that was on the brink of failure just a few years earlier.

Window Magazine caught up with Franklin, who has been working with entrepreneurs for years, to ask him some secrets to start-up success.
You mentioned in your Fall 2011 commencement speech at Western that entrepreneurs “first take the risk and ask permission later.” What did you mean by that?

Entrepreneurs need to be indifferent to risk – or at least have a desire to take risks. It’s similar to someone with a gambling addiction. You almost have to enjoy that constant sense of uncertainty. Especially in technology, the ambiguity of the startup environment means you are constantly trying to make good, high-quality decisions based on profoundly incomplete or inadequate information. When all eyes are on you as the CEO, a startup is a deeply disconcerting place to work if you’re troubled by ambiguity. Ultimately, to be successful, you have to see an opportunity that no one else sees, then muster the courage and determination to pursue it.

You’ve also spoken about the importance of having a talented workforce. How do you attract and keep talented people?

The market for talent in the Northwest’s software industry is ultracompetitive. Not only do you have upwards of 250 active startups, but giants like Amazon, Google, Adobe, Zynga and others employ thousands of software professionals. So you must create a company culture that can rise above the white noise of competition, not only to recruit new employees but even more importantly to retain experienced employees. Everyone must work to create a culture that makes the company a great place to work, that allows for autonomy, responsibility and respect for others. You know your culture is constructive and strong when your employees become genuine evangelists to friends and former colleagues.

What’s the biggest thing you’ve learned from facing failure?

I’ve had many opportunities to learn from failure. Acknowledging and embracing failure are among the best ways to learn and a major strength of America’s form of capitalism. However, I am sometimes bothered by a tendency in the startup community to celebrate failure, as though failure is a badge of honor among the digerati. Saying “Oops, we failed, but we should all feel swell because we worked so hard” is not constructive. I think if you’re too laudatory about failure and simply accept that only 20 percent of startups succeed, then it can take you off the hook. Success is what everyone is trying to achieve, and if you don’t obtain it, people should be really disappointed. And if it’s part of a pattern of failure, then there need to be serious steps to change that course and fix it.

What is the No. 1 piece of advice you have for budding entrepreneurs?

Probably to under-promise and over-deliver.

Entrepreneurs tend to be disproportionately optimistic and confident. Blended with managerial inexperience, the result is often a cascading array of missed dates, forecasts and objectives. It’s easy for entrepreneurs to over-simplify problems, either to employees or their board or peers on the management team. Ultimately, everyone in the business needs to trust the leadership team to guide the company to success, and also be realistic about what the company can do.

Vanessa Blackburn ('95, Journalism) is a freelance writer and former entrepreneur based in Bellingham.

CHASE FRANKLIN ('86)
- Entrepreneur, angel investor, startup strategist
- Started at Western at age 25 after being laid off from Boeing
- Spent more than a decade at Microsoft in product development and business strategy
- Holds three patents
- Preparing to launch another startup tech company
- Endowed an excellence in teaching award at Western’s College of Business and Economics, named it after his daughter and son, Allette and Cayden Franklin.
- Golf fanatic
Road to Oscar

Director and alum TJ Martin returned to Western just days after the Academy Awards to share his film and thank his mentors

By Mary Doherty

Oscar winner TJ Martin ('05, Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration, American Cultural Studies) tells a captivating story: A football team of poor, young black men struggle academically and get tackled repeatedly by failure. But each time, they get back up and finally achieve success with the help of their charismatic coach. That's the story of "Undefeated.”

Martin doesn't just tell a good underdog story. He's lived one, too.

"Undefeated” earned the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature, beating stiff competition from directors more accustomed to the limelight.

“The success of the film is a 100-percent testament to the community of North Memphis opening their doors to us to tell their story responsibly,” Martin said at WWU at the state's first screening of the film, holding the Oscar he had accepted just days prior.

The out-of-nowhere win from unknown directors was as surprising as the subject of the film itself, the unlikely 2009 state playoff bid by the Manassas Tigers of North Memphis. Prior to their red carpet stroll, Martin and co-director Dan Lindsay met doing a film about beer pong. “Last Cup: The road to the world series of Beer Pong” made it to Spike TV and actually brought some people to tears, but it was not an obvious springboard to an Academy Award.

Yet on Oscar night, Martin found himself wearing a tuxedo, holding a golden statuette, and giving an acceptance speech to an audience of Hollywood royalty and millions around the world. That time, words failed him: Martin later apologized for blurting out the f-bomb in a very excited, heartfelt sentiment to his fellow nominees.

The thought of being on that stage on that night was not fathomable a year ago as he and Lindsay struggled in their editing suite wondering if anyone would ever see the film.

“Manassas and North Memphis are the most underdog in the world,” Martin says.

Raised mostly by his father in Seattle after his parents divorced, Martin came to Western because it was the only college he could afford. He enrolled at Fairhaven where under the guidance of his mentors Larry Estrada, J.T. Stewart and Midori Takagi - who apparently has a no-excuses “Coach Bill Courtney” streak of her own – he developed the social entrepreneurship now exhibited in his work.

“You find yourself in environments when you're working in documentaries that are not necessarily where you would normally find yourself,” he says. “So for me to take
TJ. Martin, above, returned to Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies to visit with students — and the faculty who inspired him.

American Cultural Studies classes, it allowed me to have a little bit greater window and sensitivity for individuals coming from different walks of life. It taught me how to navigate a variety of different communities and worlds.”

After college, he mastered production and editing skills, doing everything from wedding videos to high quality concert stage background videos for Top 40 artists like Christina Aguilera and Madonna. At times he was surfing friends’ couches, living paycheck-to-paycheck, searching for his break into the industry.

Soon after wrapping up "Last Cup," Martin and Lindsay learned about an upstart high school football team in North Memphis, packed up and moved there. After consuming about a thousand peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, shooting and editing 500 hours of raw footage and signing one distribution contract with the Harvey Weinstein Co., Martin was an Oscar-winner.

While some declared him the first African-American director to win an Academy Award for a feature-length film, Martin is quick to point out he identifies as “mixed.” It’s a distinction that has been brushed aside by many reporters, he says. But true to his Fairhaven roots, he adds, “I think it warrants a greater discussion.”

During his campus visit he encouraged Fairhaven College students to be resilient, embrace failure and use it as a learning tool.

“I failed many, many times,” he told them, “before I had the opportunity to make a film as beautiful as ‘Undefeated.’”

And as Coach Bill Courtney told Martin with tears in his eyes after seeing it the first time, “You got it right.”

TJ MARTIN JOINS THESE OTHER AWARD-WINNING WWU ALUMNI:

- William Dietrich (’73, Journalism and Interdisciplinary Concentration): Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting
- Kevin Jackson (’92, Journalism): Four Sports Emmy Awards for his work with ESPN
- Erin Wall (’98, Music – Performance): Performed on the album that won 2010 Grammy for Best Classical Album
- Nick Harmer (’98, English), Ben Gibbard (’98, Environmental Science) and Chris Walla of Death Cab for Cutie: Seven Grammy nominations
How much art can you buy with a million bucks? That was the question Virginia Wright faced in 1969, when her father, Northwest timber baron Prentice Bloedel, gave her a million dollar endowment and a mandate to buy public artworks for the region.

Mr. Bloedel's gift came as a surprise: He didn't really like contemporary art. But he knew what made his daughter tick - and that she had the passion, the knowledge and the connections to make his investment a pretty safe bet.

He was right. Since that time, the Virginia Wright Fund has reshaped the landscape of Northwest art and provided the driving force behind Western Washington University's nationally acclaimed Outdoor Sculpture Collection. Of the collection's 25 artworks, the Virginia Wright Fund purchased five and partially paid for two others. Six more works were donated from the Wrights' private collection. Mr. Bloedel would surely be pleased.

If you have a lot of money, giving it away is easy enough. But if you want your money to make a difference, it takes vision, research, hard work and the guts to go out on a limb.

Those are qualities that set that Virginia Wright and her late husband, Bagley, apart from the crowd and made them a power couple whose impact on this region's cultural life began well before Prentice Bloedel endowed the Virginia Wright Fund. Their work has since extended far beyond it.

For starters, Bagley Wright was president of Pentagram, the corporation that built that quirky tower for the 1962 Century 21 World's Fair. Who knew the Space Needle would become Seattle's premier landmark? At a time when Seattle's theatrical scene was nearly non-existent, Bagley helped found the Seattle Repertory Theater and served as its first president. He also served as board president for Seattle Art Museum, trustee of the Seattle Symphony and chairman of the heart defibrillator manufacturer Physio-Control from 1966 to 1980.

A Seattle native, Virginia was a budding art collector, with an art history degree from Barnard College and a job at Manhattan's avant-garde Sidney Janice Gallery, when she met Bagley in the early 1950s. He was a recent Princeton grad, working as a journalist, who immediately set his sights on the brainy, attractive young collector, granddaughter of Northwest timber.
Virginia Wright (right) poses with Mark di Suvero as he assembles "For Hallelujah" in 1974. Wright bought the soaring I-beam sculpture for Western after losing out on a different di Suvero work that would eventually resurface at Dartmouth College.
1975
“For Handel”
Artist: Mark di Suvero
Gift of the Virginia Wright Fund
“I tried to give the sculpture a little bit of that inspirational moment/movement that Handel’s music has,” di Suvero told Sarah Clark-Langager for her 2002 book “Sculpture in Place,” “the sensation of rapture, a spatial concept that gives a sense of being able to make it blaze.”

1977
“India”
Artist: Anthony Caro
Gift of the Virginia Wright Fund
Caro, one of the most influential sculptors of the 20th Century, had not been to India when he created the artwork of rusted and varnished steel; it may have referenced “the lushness of the ancient Indian sculptures embedded in (Indian) architecture,” he later told Clark-Langager.

1978
“Stone Enclosure: Rock Rings”
Artist: Nancy Holt
Supported in part by the Virginia Wright Fund
Holt aligned the sculpture’s stone arches to the North Star. Today, the thick walls of stone quarried near Harrison Hot Springs provide a quiet place for introspection.

1979
“Wright’s Triangle”
Artist: Richard Serra
© 2012 Richard Serra/Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY
Gift of the Virginia Wright Fund, matching a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. A rather imposing wall from the outside, the sculpture is meant to be passed through and explored. Campus musicians know it also offers nice acoustics for impromptu performances.

1980
“Curve/Diagonal”
Artist: Robert Maki (’62, Technology Education)
Gift of the Virginia Wright Fund
Maki’s sculpture appears to “open” as the light changes throughout the day.

1982
Untitled
Artist: Donald Judd
Art © Judd Foundation, Licensed by VAGA, NY
Gift of the Virginia Wright Fund
On a clear day, peak through Judd’s minimalist sculpture and then-president Charles Flora about donating a sculpture called “X-Delta” by an up-and-coming artist named Mark di Suvero. Response was enthusiastic. Agreements were signed. Then immediately the $40,000 deal started to go south.

It turned out that “X-Delta” had been stolen! Or rather, as Wright tells it, while still in New York on loan to a “questionable” art dealer, the 11-foot-tall artwork had been seized to satisfy an unpaid debt. (The piece has since resurfaced and now stands on the campus of Dartmouth College.) The artist was at a loss on how to recover “X-Delta” and offered to create a new, site-specific piece for WWU in its place. That sounded like a great idea.

But one thing after another went wrong during the winter of 1975, and once the artwork was finally installed, a vocal group of students protested against it and circulated a petition to have it removed. They apparently thought the looming, abstract artwork of steel I-beams looked too industrial and interfered with the view (which at that time included Georgia Pacific’s pulp mill). Several students, swinging on the sculpture, brought a moving piece of it crashing to the ground.

It’s likely they didn’t know — or didn’t care — that during that same year di Suvero was honored with a retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and had been the first living artist to exhibit his work at Le Jardin des Tuileries at the Louvre Museum in Paris. Public artworks rarely please everybody — at least in the beginning.

Then in the 1970s, Wright and her advisers turned their eyes toward the growing campus of WWU, which Wright saw as “a happening place” with a lot of pride, where some of the region’s best architects were designing new buildings. Some thought Wright was attracted to WWU because her father was born in Bellingham. Not true, she says. “It really was because the site was so beautiful. We fell in love with the campus.”

timber magnates R.D. Merrill and J. H. Bloedel. They married, started a family, and moved back to Seattle in 1955.

While her husband was busy raising buildings and running businesses, Virginia was raising the couple’s four children — Charlie, Merrill, Robin and Bing — and, step by step, building the Northwest’s premier collection of post-World War II art. (That collection is a promised gift to the Seattle Art Museum.) For a while, Virginia ran her own gallery in Pioneer Square, specializing in prints by blue chip New York artists. But it wasn’t until her father’s gift that she found the perfect channel for her education and her energy, she said: “It gave me a purpose, and it changed my life.”

The first outdoor sculpture Wright purchased was a snap: Barnett Newman’s stunning 26-foot tall, Cor-Ten steel “Broken Obelisk.” Virginia saw it, loved it, wrote a check for $100,000, and donated the piece to the University of Washington, where it still resides prominently in Red Square, a university icon. Two other versions of the sculpture exist: one at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the other at the Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas.

Public artworks rarely please everybody — at least in the beginning.

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Wright herself was flabbergasted when she saw the enormous 27-by-36-by-64-foot sculpture titled “For Handel,” so different from the compact piece she had originally purchased. “It took my breath away it was so big,” she recalls. That experience taught her an enduring lesson about the gamble of com-
study of boxes and space for a lovely view of the Canadian coastal mountains.

1999  
"Stadium Piece"  
Artist: Bruce Nauman  
© 2012 Bruce Nauman/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York  
Gift of the Virginia Wright Fund  
Nauman's sculpture plays on the concepts of up, down, in and out. And on a sunny day, it's just a nice place to be.

2005  
"Normanno Column"  
Artist: Beverly Pepper  
Gift of Virginia and Bagley Wright  
Created in 1980, "Normanno Column" was a part of the Wrights' private collection until 2005. It's part of the same series as Pepper's "Normanno Wedge" in Haskell Plaza.

"Mindseye"  
Artist: Mark di Suvero  
Gift of Virginia and Bagley Wright  
This 1978 artwork is a sharp contrast from the soaring red I-beams of di Suvero's "For Handel," which can be seen through the window next to "Mindseye."

"Two-Part Chairs, Right Angle Version (a Pair)"  
Artist: Scott Burton  
© 2012 Estate of Scott Burton/Artist Rights Society (ARS), NY  
Gift of Virginia and Bagley Wright  
Burton's minimalist granite sculptures, fabricated in 1987, flank the library's Haggard Hall entrance.

As Wright continued to add to the Outdoor Sculpture Collection at Western, she also built a separate collection of important 20th century works on paper, including pieces by Mark Rothko, Robert Rauschenberg, Jim Dine, Roy Lichtenstein and others. Rather than give the artworks to one institution, she created the innovative Washington Art Consortium, an association of seven museums (including the Western Gallery) that now share ownership of the collection.

Recently, the Wrights added another targeted gift—a $250,000 donation that will enable the university to create two new galleries in the Performing Arts Center and renovate an existing gallery. The couple made the gift in honor of Clark-Langager, Virginia's longtime friend. Sadly, Mr. Wright died last summer at 87, before he could see the results of that gift.

Through it all, Virginia Wright sees her experiences collecting and bestowing artworks as the time of her life. "It's what I really love," she said. "I can only look back on all that as kind of a joy ride. It was interesting; it got me in connection with a lot of interesting people. It was the best kind of fun."

Sheila Farr (94, M.A., English) writes about the arts from Seattle and is the author of books on Northwest painters Fay Jones, Leo Kenney and James Martin.

www.wwu.edu/window 19
Former astronaut George ‘Pinky’ Nelson is devoted to improving science education

Weightless and untethered in the vastness of outer space, astronaut George “Pinky” Nelson maneuvered toward the errant satellite for the world’s first in-orbit satellite repair.

The date was April 11, 1984, but Nelson’s trip into space had really begun back in 1957 when the Soviets’ Sputnik 1 soared over him and his Illinois farm town. The 7-year-old boy was already dreaming of the stars after gaping at a two-tailed comet through binoculars from a neighbor’s back porch. But the sight of a Soviet satellite ringing the planet galvanized the U.S. into pouring billions into science research and development; the Space Race to dominate the skies launched Nelson’s career as an astronaut.

Back in Mission Control, a room full of nervous engineers and Cold War-era military brass watched on screens as Nelson inched closer to the satellite. His colleagues on the Challenger space shuttle, trained test pilots who wished to God they were out there instead of the red-haired astrophysicist tooling around in a real-life jetpack, crowded together to peek at Nelson through a window.

He moved forward, nice and stable like in the simulations back on Earth. The satellite was rolling ever-so-slowly; he moved the Manned Maneuvering Unit to dock onto the satellite.

And bounced right off. Twice. Nelson grabbed the solar array, but the darn thing wouldn’t stop rolling through space.

Luckily, NASA and the Challenger crew had a back-up plan: A robot arm brought the satellite to a work bench in the shuttle’s cargo bay. After replacing the electronics unit and attitude control system, they let it go again to observe the sun for another five years.

Growing up in the shadow of Sputnik and working as an astronaut for more than a decade taught Nelson the power of collaboration and tenacity. When smart people work together and won’t give up, they can put a man on the moon, fix satellites in orbit, or as in his final mission in 1988, fly a space shuttle again after the catastrophic Challenger explosion.

Now more than two decades after his final space flight, Nelson leads another mission that requires collaboration and tenacity: changing the way science is taught in the state of Washington.

Is it more difficult than fixing a satellite in space? Much. “School systems are pretty resilient,” Nelson says. “They all want to be better, but they don’t want to change.”
After leaving NASA, Nelson became a college professor and became fascinated with how to improve science education. After working as a professor and administrator at the University of Washington, Nelson moved to Washington, D.C., to direct education reform efforts for the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He arrived at Western in 2002 to direct the Science Mathematics and Technology Education program, an unusual multidisciplinary collaboration of science and education faculty training the next generation of math and science teachers. Nelson and other faculty scour the research for proven ways teachers can help even the youngest students think like scientists — to observe, ponder, question, wrestle and analyze.

They have also received nearly $20 million in grants to work with teachers and principals throughout the state to improve science education. Among the current grants are two three-year partnerships with six school districts. Dozens of teachers and principals from the districts spend a week each summer at Western and two days during the school year immersing themselves in science content and learning about best instructional practices. Teachers also meet regularly at their own schools to share their successes and struggles with science teaching.

The work is paying off: Students whose teachers are involved in the partnership tend to do better on the state's science tests. In 2011, 65 percent of the grant's fifth-graders passed the science portion of the state's Measurements of Student Progress test, compared with 56 percent of fifth-graders statewide.

That gap grew even wider when looking at fifth-graders from low-income families. Low-income fifth-graders whose teachers participated in the grant passed the test 53 percent of the time, compared with 40 percent of low-income fifth-graders across the state.

Nelson and his colleagues share with teachers many proven techniques to help kids learn science. For example, research "If there’s another Sputnik, this is it. It can be our greatest gift to humanity."
shows giving kids grades or scores on their homework as they learn a new concept can undermine their success, apparently confirming their doubts that they can't do it, while written feedback can help kids focus on learning more.

Just as critical, Nelson says, is a "shared belief" that all students are capable of learning. Nelson sees the biggest improvements in schools where that belief is truly shared -- not tacitly ignored -- from the principals who set schools' priorities to teachers who won't let their students give up.

Some schools have seen their successes build through successive partnerships with Western. Ann Renker, principal of the 170-student Neah Bay High School/Markishum Middle School on the Makah Reservation, says the results go way beyond higher test scores. Graduation rates are climbing, and last spring 100 percent of the school's seniors were accepted to some form of post-secondary education, Renker says.

"The local folks are excited," Renker says, "because the tribe wants kids to go into science, technology, engineering and math fields because they have tons of jobs available that they would like to fill locally. That's a real-life impact."

"If you can do one thing in the 10,000 hours you have kids in school, it's give them the capacity to learn new stuff."

T he most important part about teaching science is the "how," not the "what," says Shannon Warren ('95, M.Ed., Secondary Education), a former middle school teacher who now directs the elementary and high school science education partnership grants. Learning science means exploring and analyzing, she says, not just memorizing facts and listening to lectures.

"We can stand and tell kids the answers as long as we want," Warren says. "But research says they're only learning them long enough to regurgitate them on the test."

Nelson actually urged teachers to cover fewer science topics at a recent Saturday gathering of the partnership school districts. Students need more time to develop a deeper understanding of scientific concepts, he says.

"If you can do one thing in the 10,000 hours you have kids in school, it's to give them the capacity to learn new stuff," Nelson told the group. He notes that when today's students grow up, they'll use technology and skills that don't exist today. He also addresses what he knows weighs heavily on the teachers and principals in the room: "If you teach your students to think well, even if you don't cover all the material, they will do better on the state tests."

The words were comforting -- and challenging -- to fourth-grade teacher Ann Long ('06, Spanish-Elementary Education), who sat in the audience with a handful of other teachers from Nooksack Elementary School. Sometimes it's hard to let go of the "checklist" of topics to cover in favor of covering material...
Science Education partnerships at Western

Western’s Science, Mathematics and Technology Education (SMATE) program has millions of dollars in grants in the works:
- Sustaining Partnerships Enhancing Collaboration K-8 (SPECK-8) with Concrete, Sedro-Woolley and Nooksack Valley school districts, funded by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- College Readiness in Science Partnership (CRISP) with Blaine, Cape Flattery and Mount Vernon school districts, funded by the Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- Model of Research-Based Education for Teachers (MORE for Teachers), which follows the development and effectiveness of WWU-trained science education teachers, funded by the National Science Foundation.
- North Cascades and Olympic Science Partnership (NCOSP), a collaboration with 26 school districts and three two-year colleges, funded by the National Science Foundation.

more deeply, says Long.

“You’re teaching kids how to think,” she says, “not just cramming information down them.”

Nooksack Elementary, located in a rural, largely low-income district along the Canadian border, is a longtime science education partner with Western. The grants have reinforced the school’s commitment to keep science in the school day alongside reading and math – subjects that dominate high-stakes tests – says Principal Cindy Tjoelker (’85, Elementary Education; ’90, M.Ed., Natural Science/Science Education).

Perhaps as a result, Nooksack Elementary kids posts some of the highest test scores in the state – more than 95 percent of fifth-graders passed the state’s science test in 2011, compared with less than 56 percent statewide.

Long recently divided her fourth-grade class into groups and gave them an assignment to explore the concepts of energy transfer with a group of small toys. Soon, one group of kids is happily careening tiny toy cars into the wall to watch them bounce.

“A scientist listens to other scientists’ ideas, seeing whether they agree or disagree,” Long tells the group. “Are you being scientists or playing with toys?”

She steps away to check on another group – someone’s broken the flashlight that lights up when you squeeze it – and the kids erupt in observations about the different kinds of energy on display. Elastic energy seems to build when you pull back on the car, one notices, and gives way to motion energy when you let go. But what about that clicking sound, asks another. Is that sound energy? Where does that come in?

Long has fixed the flashlight and looks over her shoulder at the clock – five minutes left in the day. She calls the students over to the carpet. How did they see energy transfer in action, she asks. Their discussion spills past the sound of the bell, and Long promises them more time to talk about their findings the next day.

“It’s messy some days,” she says. “But I’m seeing progress. I’m surprised and impressed with how well they can keep each other on topic.”

Nelson, like many of the scientists and academics whose careers were funded and driven by the Space Race, is preparing to retire this summer. Meanwhile, he’s working on a proposal to the National Science Foundation to fund a partnership with the Bellingham School District “to try to take what we’ve learned with science and apply it in math and science in some of the Bellingham elementary schools.” He also hopes the Washington state Legislature will fund a proposal to expand Western’s science teacher preparation programs to be a model for the rest of the state.

Whatever the future projects, Nelson hopes to play a role; plenty of work remains.

Perhaps the nation needs another Sputnik – another crisis -- to inspire a new generation to get serious about science education. If so, Nelson says, we already have one: Can the world produce enough energy to sustain our growing global population at a reasonable standard of living – without destroying the planet?

“If there’s another Sputnik, this is it,” he says. “It’s an urgent need that’s happening faster than most of us think, and the United States has the capacity to take this challenge on. It can be our greatest gift to humanity.”

But it will also take a lot of collaboration, tenacity, and many grown-up fourth-graders who have “the capacity to learn new stuff.”

George "Pinky" Nelson, director of Western's Science, Mathematics and Technology Education program, chats with teachers during a recent Saturday session on improving science education.
It was intended to be the Christmas toy giveaway in the church.

In Cité Soleil [site so-lay, Sun City] the poorest slum in Port-au-Prince, the chaotic capital of Haiti, Analiesse Isherwood ('11, Behavioral Neuroscience) came bearing gifts for the Christmas toy giveaway in the church. She saw the boy on the dirt street in Cité Soleil, naked but for a scrap of undefinable cloth. Plastic bottle on a string. Sitting in the passing tap-tap with her mission team, Analiesse Isherwood had the sack filled with toys – real, American toys – she had spent all her spare dollars on.

She was here to help boys much like that boy, nearly naked, playing with a bottle on a string. “In my head I had seen this picture of a child accepting this toy and being emotional and touched and overjoyed at having this toy,” Isherwood says, describing how the dolls and stuffed animals and trucks and balls were lovingly pyramided at the front of a church packed with Haitian children and their parents who had assembled for prayer and gifts from an American medical mission team. But instead of a touching moment, Isherwood says, the toy giveaway “ended...”
Sure we made people better in the moment, but what long-term good are we really doing?"

As she was hurriedly stuffed into the tap-tap (think pickup truck with a tall canopy and benches in back), Isherwood remembers looking over her shoulder to see people throwing punches in a scrum over the toys.

And this was before the earthquake. Two weeks before. “I remember walking away confused at the face of poverty,” Isherwood says.

It was perhaps the classic collision of a First World white American with Third World desperation, and it forced her to examine not only her reactions, but her expectations and Haitian reality. The critical self-examination helped Isherwood make good, early friendships with Haitians – friends she lost in the magnitude 7.0 earthquake just weeks after she returned to Bellingham.

The deaths of her new friends, the wide swath of destruction and the enormous need have since driven Isherwood to return to Haiti four more times in the last two years - bearing not just toys, but an emerging vision to enroll children in school, to establish permanent medical clinics in villages, and to create an accessible medical records system for the countryside. And to somehow connect the people of Haiti with people in her hometown of Moses Lake and elsewhere.

“She never stops thinking about how to improve the world around her,” says Psychology Associate Professor Janet Finlay, who saw Isherwood develop traits of critical examination as an undergrad research lab assistant in Western’s Behavioral Neuroscience program.

Isherwood graduated cum laude in 2011 and is now a first-year student in the University of Washington School of Medicine’s program in Spokane.

She was in her second year at Western, already certain she was going to become a doctor – one who served others on the medical team and with Haitians.

She realized that as visitors we often don’t see – or we mis-see – the local realities. Impoverished parents in the church in Cité Soleil – parents with hungry kids, and who frequently feel the gnaw of hunger themselves – didn’t see heartwarming toys; they saw a pyramid of cash, toys that could be converted into rice or cooking lard.

She’s deepened these understandings – learning more of the language and culture – in subsequent visits after the quake, especially when it comes to how aid is delivered.

But after that first trip came this: She was back in Bellingham – clean air, snow-capped mountains, treated sewage – and switched on her cell phone when she left the research lab. “January 12, 2010. That day is forever in my mind,” Isherwood says. Her phone lit up with messages about the earthquake and Caring hands: Isherwood, left, now in medical school at the University of Washington, has assisted in several medical clinics in Haiti. She now is working on a simple medical records system that could help bring stability to health care in the country.
ANALIESSE ISHERWOOD:

- 2011 Presidential Scholar; College of Sciences and Technology
- Commencement speaker; spring 2011
- Part of a team presenting research on brain structure and schizophrenia at the Society for Neuroscience Conference in fall 2012.
- Recipient of several WWU scholarships, including the Western Alumni Leadership Award and the Women of Western Scholarship.
- Student in the University of Washington School of Medicine's Targeted Rural and Underserved Track.
- Attended the 2012 Clinton Global Initiative University in Washington, D.C.
- Miss Moses Lake 2012

terrible news. The guesthouse where she had stayed collapsed, killing six people. She lost several friends, both Haitian and American, when a clinic collapsed, and dozens of other Haitians she had met died when their workplaces were destroyed.

Isherwood says she stayed in her room for a week. "I really struggled that quarter. I knew I had to go back."

By March, she had raised money, assembled medical gear and was in a plane carrying many Haitian expatriates returning to check on family. Approaching Port-au-Prince, people looked out the windows and saw entire neighborhoods had been shaken loose from hillsides. The familiar sprawl of tin shacks was gone. "It was like the whole plane gasped. Immediately it was filled with Haitians sobbing," Isherwood says.

T he indigenous health system has vanished, too, washed away by the tsunami of aid. Isherwood sees this as Haiti trading self-reliance for dependency on outsiders.

Paul Farmer, the humanitarian doctor profiled in Tracy Kidder's book, "Mountains Beyond Mountains," has collected essays in "Haiti: After the Earthquake" exploring the effect of aid. Can "this republic of NGOs," he asks, make Haiti a better place? The answer is uncertain.

Isherwood says Haitians, not outside NGOs with disparate agendas, need to be key players. It has caused a disagreement between her and the Haitian head of GCOM over that organization's practice of running mobile clinics and her view that people are better served by permanent clinics.

She is careful not to belittle the help offered at the mobile clinics, nor disrespect GCOM or the doctors who travel to volunteer with it. But, Isherwood says, there is a dynamic to the mobile clinics akin to that Christmas toy giveaway that went so wrong. The way they are designed, the medical teams get hit after hit of gratitude for the work they do, the gifts they bring. Then they go home.

"Sure we made people better in the moment, but what long-term good are we really doing? It's careless to go in and give some of these drugs and then walk out," Isherwood says. Haitians in the slums – and especially in the remote countryside where little aid is ever delivered – have little or no access to follow-up care, education, prevention.

Isherwood recalls a story about surgeons who treated a hydrocephalic child by installing a shunt to drain fluids from the brain.

"Doctors rush in, they want to help. They see this child and do something miraculous. A few months later [the shunt is] incredibly infected, the child's life is worse off than it was before, the doctor's gone, there's no instruction for follow-up..." Isherwood says. This is a drawback to temporary docs. "I'm more systematic. It's not just about putting a smile on their face, but how are we going to make a change so they have a better long-term life and potential?"

This has resulted in one of the enormous tasks the 22-year-old Isherwood is Only 19, Isherwood joined a medical team running a mobile clinic staffed by doctors and nurses from North America and Europe
In March, a medical team working with GCOM began a test run of a simple, card-based medical records system that Isherwood has devised. It's a first step toward her ultimate goal of establishing permanent clinics in villages.

On her four post-earthquake trips to Haiti, Isherwood has increasingly forged her own way. Traveling only with a driver and a translator, she has left Port-au-Prince for the countryside, which sees little aid because of terrible roads – or even no roads.

On her most recent trip in December, Isherwood found farming communities where children walk up to two hours in the morning to get to school. People often walk five or six hours on roads that we here in Washington might characterize as mountain hiking trails to reach a “market” that looks like a lemonade stand.

Isherwood has introduced this world to eighth-grade students at Frontier and Chief Moses middle schools in Moses Lake, and she's hoping to add schools in Ellensburg and Spokane. Teachers Tracy Strophy and Linda Miller say their students are captivated by Isherwood’s stories.

Over the last couple of years, the Moses Lake middle-schoolers have grown with Isherwood. They don’t collect just toys anymore, but also have assembled 800 rehydration packets for cholera victims – life-saving self-help kits Isherwood gives away during cholera prevention talks in the Haitian countryside. The Moses Lake students also have helped her raise money to enroll Haitian children in school and to buy supplies for barren Haitian classrooms. She shares the results in photographs.

“Isherwood, “It’s wonderful the way she brings the story and shares it at kid level. They get really motivated. Right now I have two students going (to Haiti over spring break) with a church group to build a church and school building. There you go, there’s your ripple.”

If awareness of Haiti and concern for its people has impact as far away as Moses Lake, that’s a great ripple effect, as far as Isherwood is concerned.

And she’s gone back, and she’s gone back, and she’s gone back to the nation she calls the home of her heart. She carries Haiti with her in the sense that she’s contracted bronchitis at least twice from breathing the dust mixed with waste from the ubiquitous open sewers; and she’s gotten cholera, too. She’s planning up to two months in Haiti this summer and she brings more than toys. Analiesse Isherwood is bringing determination. She brings hope.

Kevin Taylor of Spokane is a free-lance writer who covers tribal and environmental issues, as well as the proper way to barbecue a marmot.

Moses Lake middle-schoolers don’t collect just toys anymore, but also have assembled 800 rehydration packets — life-saving self-help kits for Haiti’s cholera victims

COULD SCRAP PLASTIC SHELTER HAITI’S HOMELESS?

Students in Western’s Engineering Technology program are working with the nonprofit Response Ability Builders to figure out if the scrap plastic littering the landscape in Haiti could help house the estimated half-million people who remain homeless following the January 2010 quake. The enterprise — collecting the material, melting it down into building components, and building the structures themselves — could also put many Haitians to work. Several Western students hope to travel to Haiti this summer with Associate Professor Nicole Larson to work on the project. Learn more at www.wwu.edu/window
What's in there?
MEMORY WALK'S MYSTERY ENDURES

The contents of the 1912 and 1913 time capsules will be on display in Wilson Library during Back2Bellingham in May.

Anthropology Associate Professor Todd Koetje, left, carefully removes the contents of the 1913 time capsule under the eye of media representatives and WWU staff in Western’s Facilities Management workshop.

Utility worker Pete Elich, foreground, peers underneath the 1913 class year paver on Memory Walk in search of a 99-year-old time capsule. Workers had just unearthed the 1912 stone but hadn't yet found the box buried beneath.

The Memory Walk tradition may have been first suggested by Ada Hogle Abbot, an art instructor, 1912 class adviser, originator of Western’s school song, “The White and Blue,” and designer of the stone bridge over the creek at Whatcom Falls Park.

Strolling across Memory Walk, lined with stone pavers engraved with class years dating back to 1912, it’s hard to not think about the thousands of Western students who walked the same path – and left something under it.

According to campus lore, graduating students started burying time capsules filled with mementos under the walkway by Old Main in 1912. With the century mark approaching, university workers recently pulled up the bricks to see just what treasures were left behind by history.

Anthropology faculty, Old Main staff members and more than a few students gathered in the chilly Friday afternoon sun and buzzed about what could be buried in the walkway. After carefully stacking the red bricks, workers lifted the 200-plus-pound “1912” paver to reveal – nothing.

Intrigued, workers then lifted “1913.” Anthropology Professor Sarah Campbell reached underneath but felt nothing but damp earth. Then the growing crowd let out a gasp as workers turned over 1913: A box was partially embedded in the cement underneath. Turns out, a box was completely buried in the 1912 slab, too.

Unfortunately, time and the elements were not kind to the contents of either box. Associate Professor of Anthropology Todd Koetje used a paint brush to gather up much of the bits of paper, fabric and rust. But he did find a few recognizable parts of words.

Campbell and her students compared the pieces to copies of 1912 Messengers. Almost right away, they found three letters from the name of Esther Franzen (’12) in the senior directory. Enough to show the 1912 students placed copies of the student publications in the box – and to encourage the 2012 students to keep scouring the remnants for more clues, Campbell said.

No decision has been made on when to dig up more time capsules. Perhaps a regular excavation can be incorporated into an Archaeology class. But for now, university workers are making sure the capsules buried under Memory Walk these days will stand the test of time.
Alumni Conversations
By Deborah DeWees
Executive Director, Western Alumni Association

Western is enjoying unprecedented national attention and making history with one alumnus holding an Oscar and the men's basketball team hoisting their first-ever NCAA Division II National Championship trophy. In the same month, alumnus Stephan Aarstol ('96, Business Administration), made his own national spotlight and managed to take home more than a trophy.

Aarstol pitched his latest company, Tower Paddle Boards, to the billionaire investors of ABC's Shark Tank on March 16th. Throwing his paddle board to the sharks proved successful as Aarstol won the approval and partnership of billionaire Mark Cuban, owner of HDNet and the Dallas Mavericks. Cuban's deal combined a $150,000 investment for 30 percent of Tower Paddle Boards and the right of first refusal on future business partnership opportunities with Aarstol.

In the first 72 hours following the Shark Tank episode, Tower Paddle Boards did more sales than they had in the first six months in business. Tower is on pace to do $1.5 million in sales in 2012.

I had the privilege of meeting this dynamic alumnus the same week of his television debut and heard about his entrepreneurial ventures.

He shared stories about projects at Western, new business plans he cultivated as a student, turning his first $10,000 investment into a $2.5 million in revenues in five years, and working those ideas out with some of his fellow grads.

“IT [Western] was a great experience. I have lifelong friends that I've traveled with and still keep in contact with,” says Aarstol, who lived in Nash Hall. “There's even people down in San Diego, where I live now, who went to Western. The guy who introduced me to stand up paddle boarding is actually from Western.”

Aarstol continues to foster his Western relationships by donating a Tower paddle board for Western's Seattle Business Forum, and wants to be a mentor for CBE students.

We are proud of our alumni and students whose successes keep Western newsworthy. Go Vikings!
Taxes – and their influence weaving through all of our lives – fascinate law school graduate Ceci Lopez ('08, Law, Diversity & Justice). But Lopez is also first to acknowledge that laws governing taxation are as complicated as they are significant.

"The tax code is not an easy read," she says. "And when you muster the courage to call the IRS, it's not easy to navigate the system." That's when many – especially those who do not speak English – get lost, she says. And these are the people she wants to help. Lopez, who grew up in Guatemala, has made it her goal to help her primarily Spanish-speaking clients navigate the tax code to become successful business owners and community members.

Lopez came to Western in the spring of 2005, enrolling in the Law, Diversity & Justice concentration in the Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies, where faculty such as Raquel Montoya-Lewis and Dan First Scout Rowe inspired her activism in the community. "Their mentorship encouraged me to dream big and ultimately modeled the confidence I needed to pursue those dreams," she says.

After graduating in June 2008, she went to the University of Washington School of Law, where in a federal income tax course she found a conduit for her growing interest in community service: taxation. "I fell in love with tax," she says. "Regardless of economic or social status, age, ability, ethnicity or nationality, everyone is affected by tax from birth to death."

She volunteered at the law school's Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic, which provides free legal representation to low-income taxpayers who have disagreements with the Internal Revenue Service. In her year and a half of experience with the clinic, she has helped clients understand – or at least helped to simplify – the process of taxation.

"A lot of people don't understand how to legitimize their businesses," she says. "A lot of them don't think of themselves as entrepreneurs, so they don't think many of the laws apply to them."

After earning her law degree in June 2011, Lopez remained at UW to earn a Master of Laws in Taxation in March 2012. Before graduating, she won the Public Service Tax Fellowship from the American Bar Association. The prestigious two-year award will finance an agency (housed in the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic and supported by the School of Law) that will serve low-income taxpayers and support small businesses and entrepreneurs to legitimize their operations.

Lopez will also reach out to the region's Spanish-speaking community through radio programming and meeting with clients in Whatcom and Skagit counties. Eventually, she hopes to establish partnerships between entrepreneurs and students from the UW School of Business. "It's very important to empower people so they become active participants in their own economic growth," she says.

Lopez eventually wants to establish a nonprofit agency offering business and tax law services for low- and middle-income immigrants.

"There is a real need for something like that," she says. "In some areas of Washington, where Latino residents account for the majority of the population, this is a great opportunity to strengthen communities from within – economically and culturally; it is in the state's best interest."

Olena Rypich is a senior Journalism-Public Relations major and an intern in Western's Office of University Communications.
1970 - Dewey Desler recently retired as deputy administrator and director of Administrative Services for Whatcom County. He began working for the county as a planning intern in 1969.

1971 - Rick Tremaine (History) is leading the Whatcom County Historical Society's restoration committee for the 153-year-old Territorial Courthouse in Bellingham, the oldest brick building in Washington. Michael Cain (Sociology, Anthropology) teaches martial arts at Bellingham, the oldest brick building in Washington. Michael Norman (History), a former policeman and programmer, recently served as deputy administrator and director of the Washington State Water Resources Program. "While at Ecology, I met many other Western graduates who are contributing to the protection and management of the state's natural environment," Ken writes. Now the father of two Huxley graduates, Ken plans to volunteer for environmental organizations with an interest in water resources.

1972 - Bob Taylor (Journalism, History) recently retired as sports editor at the Issaquah Press.

1974 - Ken Slattery (Geography) recently retired as Washington's Department of Ecology's highest ranking water resources official, program manager of the State Water Resources Program. "While at Ecology, I met many other Western graduates who are contributing to the protection and management of the state's natural environment," Ken writes. Now the father of two Huxley graduates, Ken plans to volunteer for environmental organizations with an interest in water resources.

1976 - Drew Spruol (Human Services) is director of marketing at Adax, a telecommunication company in Oakland, Calif.

1979 - Kristen Griffin (Anthropology; '84, M.A., Anthropology) is a historic preservation officer for the city and county of Spokane and has worked in cultural resource management in Alaska and Washington for more than 30 years. She serves on the board of directors of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation and is helping to organize the 2012 National Preservation Conference this fall in Spokane. Steven Platt (Art-Elementary, History-Secondary Education), an art teacher in the Grandview School District, was among 250 artists chosen to participate in the international Sarasota Chalk Festival in Florida in November 2011. After 10 years as superintendent of the Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District in Iowa, Dick Magnuson (Technology Education) recently announced he plans to step down and spend more time with his grandchildren. Paul Klein (Music Education) is a middle school music teacher and musician in Bellingham. Ron Cowan (Mathematics-Secondary Education; '84, M.Ed., School Administration) is assistant superintendent of business and operations for the Bellingham School District. Canadian artist Brian Scott (M.Ed., Student/Faculty Designed) is an expressionist oil painter whose work has sold throughout Canada and as well as internationally. Kurt Creager (Planning and Environmental Policy, Student/Faculty Designed) became Housing and Community Development Director for Otak Inc., a planning, design and engineering firm.

1980 - Karee Wardrop (Theatre; '02, M.A., Theatre) is a writer, musician and nationally-certified American Sign Language interpreter who recently played the role of Mute in "The Fantasticks" at the Mount Baker Theatre in Bellingham. She's also at work on two theatrical pieces.

1981 - University of Washington Press recently published "The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States," by Mark Fiege (History). Fiege explored the natural context of nine critical events in American history, including the Civil War, the U.S. Supreme Court's Brown vs. Board of Education decision, and the development of the atomic bomb. He is an associate professor of History and the William E. Morgan Chair of Liberal Arts at Colorado State University, Fort Collins. Joseph Green (81, M.A., English) read from his latest collection of poetry, "That Thread Still Connecting Us," on KUOW radio recently. Green taught creative writing at Lower Columbia College for 25 years.

1982 - Tina Hoagland (Speech Language Pathology; '84, M.A., Speech Pathology/Audiology), an educational audiologist at Montana State University-Billings, was recently appointed to the Montana State Board of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists. Anne Hess (Visual Communication) recently became a regional account manager for Every Door Direct marketed material for TeachersPayTeachers, a website that sells teaching resources created by teachers. She's typically one of the site's top sellers.

1983 - Chuck Lennox (Environmental Education), principal of Cascade Interpreotive Consulting in Seattle, recently traveled to Guyana to train interpretive tour guides to develop the South American nation's eco-tourism industry.

1984 - Mark Davies (Business Administration, Accounting) became president of Alcoa Global Business Services. Previously, Davies was managing vice president of strategic programs for Dell Inc. Diana Shaw (Business Administration) recently became vice president of customer service at Horizon Air. Most recently, Shaw served as Alaska Airlines' managing director of station operations in Seattle.

1985 - Kelly Pearson (Business Administration) became the director of finance and operations for the Port Angeles School District. Most recently, she was a senior finance manager at Microsoft.

1984 - Debra Rose (Schireman Howell, who has taught in the Granite Falls School District for more than 27 years, was recently inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas.

1985 - David Schmidt (Business Administration) became senior vice president for Small Business Capital, LLC, which provides financing services to small and middle-market businesses.


1987 - Norihiko Shirouzu (Journalism) recently left the Wall Street Journal after 18 years to join Thomson Reuters as its Asia auto team leader, based in Beijing, where he's lived since September 2008. He'll lead Reuters' automotive coverage in Asia, covering stories in Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Southeast Asia and possibly India.

1988 - After spending several years as a classroom teacher, Rachel Lynette (Psychology) now creates curricular material for TeachersPayTeachers, a website that sells teaching resources created by teachers. She's typically one of the site's top sellers.

1989 - In 2008, Paul Dokken (Computer Science) left his 17-year job at Boeing to move to Papua New Guinea with this wife and four children. Now with Wycliffe Bible Translators, Dokken uses his software development skills to support Bible translation work in the developing nation, which has more than 800 languages, including many with no written form, Dokken writes. His blog: boundforgp.blogspot.com.
entrepreneur Mark Cuban offered to invest $150,000 for a 30-percent stake in the company.

Mike McLaury (PE: Fitness and Exercise Science), a partner in Everett Physical Therapy and Sports Performance Center, was recently inducted into the Lake Stevens High School Hall of Fame.

Matt Pearcy (M.Ed., Student Personnel Administration) became coordinator of multicultural affairs at Minnesota State University Moorhead. Sean Garvin (Biochemistry), became assistant brewmaster at the Deschutes Brewery in Bend, Ore.

1994 – Rob Endsley (Environmental Science) owns Prince of Wales Sportfishing in Craig, Alaska. “Outside the Lines” the latest book by Amy (Weisz) Hatvany (Sociology), was selected as a February Book Club Pick by targeted. It’s Hatvany’s fourth book — she has also authored books under her previous name, Amy Yurk.

1995 – Corrina Marote (Biology) plans to summit Mount Rainier in September to raise funds for Summit for Someone, which provides wilderness excursions for at-risk kids and adult mentors. Learn more at www.summitforsomeone.org.


1996 – Stephan Aarstol (Business Administration), founder and CEO of the Tower Paddle Boards, appeared in March on the ABC television show “Shark Tank,” in which billionaire businesswoman Barbara Corcoran offered to invest $75,000 for a 20-percent stake in the company.

1997 – Christina Hallock (General Studies) became corporate communications and marketing services manager for American Fast Freight in Fife.

Clint Romag (Business Administration-International Business) released “The Bigfoot Experiment,” the next chapter in his horror series, “The Sasquatch Encounters,” which takes place in and around the Puget Sound region.

1998 – Bryan Samond (General Studies) became the weekend sports anchor for WTVL-TV in New Orleans. Most recently, he was regional sports director for KEZI-TV in Eugene, Ore., and KORV-TV in Medford, Ore.

Ted Brightman (Communication) is a sports anchor and reporter at KTVM-TV in Reno, Nev. Todd J. Cook (Communication), an attorney specializing in commercial litigation, became a shareholder in the firm of Stevens & Lee in Reading, Pa.

1999 – Matthew Taggart (Humanities) is the associate director of development for Ashesi University in Ghana.

Ivan Fraser (Theatre) became the community manager for Zooppa, a “people-powered” advertising agency based in Seattle. Most recently, Fraser was a post-production engineer for INDEMAND Networks. Jason Musante (Environmental Science) is the EPA’s on-site coordinator for the agency’s Skyline Abandoned Uranium Mine project on the Navajo Nation in Utah. Skyline is one of about 520 abandoned uranium mines on Navajo lands, and Musante’s crew is working to bury the radioactive material to protect residents, livestock and the environment. Kathy Harbold (Business Administration-Finance) became Senior Vice President and Real Estate Loan Officer for Cardinal Bank in Virginia. Cory Underwood (Human Services) is working on opening a counseling center in downtown Bellingham to help people living in poverty achieve their dreams; she also wants to help service providers gain a greater understanding of poverty. Charles Burleigh (Principal's Initial Certificate) was appointed to be superintendent of the Mount Baker School District.

Most recently, Burleigh was principal of Kendall Elementary School. Anisha Pickin (M.Ed., School Administration—Instructional Technology) was selected to be principal of Wade King Elementary School in Bellingham.

2000 – Craig Welty (Business Administration-Management), recently inducted into the WWU Athletics Hall of Fame, is the head golf professional at Skagit Golf and Country Club. He’s also a volunteer assistant coach with the Viking’s men’s golf program.

Kimberly Witt (Physical Education-Elementary) teaches elementary school in Bremerton and has spent the last eight summers in Malawi teaching and working with Children of the Nations. She recently earned her National Board Certification.

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2001 – Celeste Hill-Hoffman (PE: Sport Psychology) was inducted into the WWU Athletic Hall of Fame. A former two-time Female Athlete of the Year at Western, she is now a personal trainer and basketball coach in Chesterfield, Va.

Garth Sundem (M.Mus., Music), interviewed dozens of top scientists for his new book, “Brain Trust,” recently published by Three Rivers Press. Sundem got Nobel laureates, MacArthur geniuses and National Science Medal winners to weigh in on “lab-tested secrets to surfing, dating, dieting, gambling, growing man-eating plants and more.”

2002 – Annie Larsen Schmidt (Planning and Environmental Policy, Humanities), director of the Chumstick Wildlife Stewardship Coalition, was recently included in the Wenatchee Valley Business World’s “30 Under 35” list of young community leaders.

David Gardner (Politics/Philosophy/Economics), an attorney with Winston & Cashatt in Spokane, was appointed to the U.S. Trustee Program’s Chapter 7 trustees for the District of Idaho.

2003 – Damon Anderson (Accounting) has been an auditor in Germany for three years with the Defense Contract Audit Agency’s European Branch Office.

2004 – Elise Tulloss (Environmental Science) got a boost to her doctoral work at the University of California, Davis, with a Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation. Tulloss is studying nitrogen deposition in plants. After several years of teaching and coaching volleyball, including several years as athletic director at Kentridge High School, Liz Bishop-Quitiquit now runs her own photography business. She was recently inducted into the WWU Athletics Hall of Fame.

2005 – Dustin Welch (Spanish) and Stewart Metler (‘08, Industrial Technology) are social entrepreneurs whose Nusol Capacity Fund works with rural communities to install locally sustainable, renewable energy systems. They’re now working on their second project in Peru. Danny Mullane (Human Services) was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Illinois Army National Guard.

2006 – Ryan Scott (Business Administration-Finance) is a financial advisor with The Principal Financial Group in Seattle. He recently earned the Chartered Financial Consultant professional designation from The American College.

2007 – Photographer Aaron Baggenstos recently published “Wildlife of Lake Washington,” his second photography book highlighting the wildlife of western Washington. Drew Butler (Recreation) is program coordinator for the Boys’ & Girls’ Club in Bellingham. Stacy (Wise) Gaber (Biology) is director of North Olympic Land Trust.

2008 – Kristin (Jensen) Petersen (Political Science) and her husband, Rudi Petersen (’09, Manufacturing Engineering Technology), are Peace
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people whose foresight extended beyond their own time to support our students, faculty and programs. By remembering Western in your overall estate or financial plans, you will make a lasting difference, and create new paths for future generations.

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Corps volunteers in a small town in Namibia. Kristin teaches English at a public primary school and is helping to get prosthetics for a talented seventh-grader named McDonald who lost both feet in an accident at his school. Rudi is a science and math teacher at a secondary school and is "working to make the school’s library into an actual, functional library, instead of just a storage closet," Kristin reports. Patricia Gordon (Human Services) is a social worker for the Children’s Administration. She just completed her Master of Social Work at the University of Washington in June 2011. Brad Sherman (Political Science) is a legislative assistant for state Rep. Norma Smith of Clinton and a volunteer firefighter for Central Whidbey Fire and Rescue.

2009 – Lindsey Brown (Master in Teaching) is in Istanbul teaching at a private school and plans to teach in Bahrain next year. Under the pseudonym Quori Scharmyn, she recently self-published "A Gypsy on the Rez," which she describes as an "irreverent, real and raw story of my first year teaching and the culture clash of living on a reservation." She’s now working on another book as well as a collection of poems.

2010 – Bridget Reeves (Sociology) is the women’s ministries manager at Agape Home for Women and Children in Bellingham.

2010 – Adam Blake Tarleton (Plastics Engineering Technology-Vehicle Engineering Technology) became a design engineer at Kenworth Semi Trucks in Kirkland. Peter Jensen (Journalism), who wrote "Survivor’s Story" for the Fall 2011 edition of Window, became the county government and politics reporter at the Napa Valley Register.

in California. Lisa Gonzalez Scott (Principal’s Initial Certification) was appointed to be principal of Kellogg Middle School in Shoreline. Anthony Vendetti (Planning and Environmental Policy) is a VISTA volunteer for Albany, N.Y., developing emergency preparedness plans for the city’s elderly and other vulnerable populations.

2011 – Lauren Thompson (Behavioral Neuroscience) completed a research internship with Central Queensland University in Australia, studying wombats. Michael Helder (Business Administration – Production/Operations Management) is a national account manager at First Star Capital. Erika Quint (Kinesiology) is a physical therapist aide at West Sound Orthopedics in Silverdale and head softball coach at Olympic College. Lauren Erickson (Geography) helped launch Maestro Northwest GIS, a Bellingham-based company specializing in geographic information systems. Adeline Grow (M.A., English) became an assistant in marketing and administration for D.C. Engineers in Spokane. Brenna Anderst (Human Services) just began a Peace Corps stint in Morocco, where she will teach English.

Marriages and Unions


Melissa Lawler (’08, Business Administration-Finance) and Kevin Swanson (’09, Manufacturing Engineering Technology) on July 30, 2011, in Seattle.

Annalise Tomoe (’07, Human Services) and Aaron Spotts (’08, Music-Composition) on Oct. 1, 2011, in Bellingham.

Meaghan Saunders (’06, PE: Fitness and Health Promotion) and Jeremy Condon on Aug. 27, 2011, in Seattle.

Christian Gruetzner and Damon Anderson (’03, Accounting) on July 1, 2011, in Wesbaden, Germany. Angela J. Joyce (’90, Art) and Vince Sampson on May 29, 2010.

Joyce Brose Wold (’57, Music-Elementary) and Jerry Magelssen (’56, Industrial Design) on Sept. 26, 2009, in Arlington.

Obituaries

1930 – Frances Evelyn "Lyn" Greene, a gifted painter and pianist, 102, on June 11, 2011.


1934 – Margaret Jean (Morse) Watts, 93, a former teacher and homemaker, on Jan. 17, 2011.

1938 – Mary Ann Fisher, 97, a retired teacher, writer, tutor and community volunteer, on Jan. 13, 2012. Fisher Fountain in Red Square is named for Mary Ann Fisher’s father, Charles H. Fisher, who was president of Western from 1923 to 1939.


1941 – Betty E. Clark, 90, an active community volunteer who worked with her husband, Bob, in the family business in Bellingham, Clark Feed & Seed, on Nov. 18, 2011. Alice Price Richmond Rohweder on March 8, 2012, in Bellingham.

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1943 – Lorraine Reed, 93, a retired elementary school teacher, on Sept. 27, 2011.
1947 – Evelyn A. Kemphaus, 97, a retired elementary school teacher and principal, on Nov. 6, 2011, in Bellingham.
1957 – Anita Joan Gansler, 73, a retired nurse, on Nov. 14, 2011.
1960 – Michael J. Edwards, 73, a retired school superintendent, on Aug. 11, 2011.
1963 – Clarence Roy Collart, 71, who retired from Frigidaire, on Dec. 21, 2011, in Columbus, Ohio.
1964 – Linea Gail Smith, 69, a retired teacher, volunteer firefighter and community volunteer, on Sept. 29, 2011, in Ferndale.
1973 – James George Helliotis, 61, a teacher and administrator whose career was devoted to serving students with special needs in the Seattle School District, on Feb. 16, 2012, in Seattle.
1984 – Sharon Crouzier, 61, a newspaper editor and publisher, real estate agent and community activist, on Nov. 13, 2011, in Bellingham.
2003 – Philip John Davies, 36, a teacher's assistant and former church youth director, on March 10, 2012.
2004 – Donald J. Mierzejski, 42, a sailboat captain and financial analyst, on Nov. 12, 2011, in Blakely Island.

Faculty and Staff
Meredith Cary, 79, professor emeritus of English, on Feb. 4, 2012. After retiring in 2006 after 42 years as a professor of English Literature, Cary continued to teach online until the day she passed away.

Mary "Morgan" Livingston, 70, who taught Human Services at Western beginning in the mid-1970s and most recently taught at Western's Everett campus as well as Everett Community College and Skagit Valley College, on Jan. 8, 2012. Well loved by her students, she was named Educator of the Year in 2006 by the Northwest Human Services Association. The Morgan Livingston Human Services Scholarship fund was established in her name at the Western Foundation. Email Carole.Morris@wwu.edu for more information.

Gail Ann Kleer, 73, a former archival manager at Western, on Nov. 9, 2011. Mrs. Kleer earned a bachelor's degree in history from Western in 1980 and began working at Western after earning her master's in history in 1983. She retired in 2007.

June Ross, 80, professor emeritus of Biology, on March 10, 2012, in Bellingham. She was a professor in the Biology Department for 37 years, serving as department chair. She was also a marine biologist, publishing extensively on bryozoans, moss-animals, and received many grants supporting her work. In the community, Ross helped establish Family Planning Council, the predecessor to Bellingham's first Planned Parenthood clinic.

Linda Velenchenko, 73, a retired assignments manager for University Residences, on Feb. 3, 2012.
A major renovation gave Western's Miller Hall a modern look, but stroll behind the new glass-and-brick façade to find a prehistoric touch thanks to an impromptu work of student art.

The woolly mammoth emerging from a small wetland area behind Miller Hall is the work of four students in Art Professor Patrick McCormick's ceramics class during fall quarter.

"It was our creature-feature project, is what Pat called it," says Studio Art sophomore Tyler Will of Spokane. "My idea was to make it look like the mammoth was coming out of the swamp, or sinking in."

McCormick got the idea for the assignment from the wetland itself last fall, which he says looked a bit like a bog in need of a monster. Months later, green plants of spring seem to be replacing the muddy water of the bog, but the prehistoric beast remains — for now — an unofficial member of Western's sculpture collection.

Sarah Richardson is a multimedia intern in the Office of University Communications and will graduate in June with a degree in Visual Journalism.
Cruiser. Carabiner. Birkenstock. Anything goes to get the JayRay team to the office. Victor bobbleheads placed strategically upon their desks. Western gear worn proudly upon their backs. Six out of 15 public relations and advertising buffs can’t be wrong.

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