Spring 2014

Window: The Magazine of Western Washington University, 2014, Volume 06, Issue 02

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Recommended Citation
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https://cedar.wwu.edu/window_magazine/11

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Oceans in Peril
Sunshine lovers

Sunny days don’t get much sweeter than the first 70-degree days of the year. This May, the lawns in front of Old Main were filled with students reading, chatting, texting, flirting, dozing, meeting for class, tossing Frisbees and cranking up Beach Boys tunes.

Students have been filling Twitter and Instagram with their own photos of campus. Search for #mywestern and see for yourself.
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On the cover: Associate Professor of Biology Ben Miner took this photo of a young California sea lion in the Gulf of California while snorkeling with WWU students. Western faculty take students to the region every other year to study tropical marine biology. Read more about Miner's research on Sea Star Wasting Disease on Page 26.
Message
from the President

A diverse Western stands for all Washingtonians

Our state’s wealth and well-being are best measured by the developed talent of our people – all our people. Western must ensure that in the years ahead we reflect the increasingly rich diversity of our state, and provide all Washingtonians who come to Western with the best education possible.

You may have heard this spring that some remarks I had made about that commitment were badly misrepresented in certain media outlets. A full explanation of those remarks is available in my blog post, “Changing Demography, Changing Western.” I encourage you to read what I said and appreciate the context.

Although the initial result of that publicity was a torrent of hateful communication, before long the messages of support began pouring in from across the country. Our students took the initiative in reaffirming their commitments to diversity and to each other by organizing a “Diversity Is” rally on campus. Seeing 700 students and faculty stand up for their Western values was a very proud moment for me as Western’s president.

For Western, and for Washington, these issues are absolutely critical to Western’s ability to live our mission.

For years I have been asking the campus to consider how we should respond to the fact that Washington’s graduating high school classes are becoming increasingly diverse, while total numbers of graduates are remaining stable or are even declining. Consider the following: In Washington’s K-12 public schools from 1986 to 2012, the Latino/a population increased 538 percent, the Asian/Pacific Islander population increased 126 percent and the African American population increased 61.5 percent. Meanwhile, the Caucasian student population declined 2.2 percent. Our state, and Washington’s higher education system, must succeed in educating a more diverse population.

Let me say emphatically that Western does not consider race in admissions and never will. Nor must we change admissions standards or graduation requirements in order to accomplish this goal. On the contrary, given the opportunity and adequate support, we believe a more diverse population of first-generation college students can be just as successful as Western’s student body has been in the past.

While this demographic shift is affecting most of American higher education, Western is not content to ride along in the middle of the pack. Western will continue to be a leader, and as such, it should not surprise us if we take a few arrows for being out in front.

Despite the resistance, the vision for Western remains unequivocally clear: ensuring that deserving students from around the state and beyond have access to the highest-quality education we can provide, and an inclusive campus community in which to thrive.

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. You may also send a note to Window Magazine, Office of University Communications and Marketing, 516 High St., Bellingham, WA, 98225-9011.

Letter: A surprising ‘Alien’ connection to Western

We just finished reading "Aliens on Vacation" to the kids (a friend from Colorado recommended the book, and of course, it takes place in Whatcom County up near the border.) The kids loved it. And then, just a couple of days after finishing the book, the latest copy of Window arrived in the mail. To my surprise, there in the “Author’s Map” (Fall ’13) feature was Clete Smith ('96, English), author of the "Aliens" series, talking about how the Sehome Aboretum gave birth to many of the aliens in his books. Awesome! It’s great to fall in love with a book and then find out it was penned by a WWU alum.

Ken Efta ('90, M.A., English)

Award-winning stories

For the third year in a row, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education has recognized Window magazine stories as among the best in university publications in the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada. This year's award winners are:

- "Linked Through Language," about Linguistics Professor Edward Vajda's study of a dying Siberian language and its clues to human migrations into North America. The "finely painted and richly detailed" story by Western's New Media Coordinator Matthew Anderson ('06), ran in fall 2013 and received a Gold Award.

- "Bringing them Home," about Anthropology alumnus Bill Belcher ('84) and his painstaking work with the U.S. military to identify and return to the U.S. the remains of service members killed in action. Hawaii-based freelance writer Dennis Hollier wrote the "very compelling" story for the fall 2013 edition, which won a Silver Award.

- "View Finder," about alumnus Michael Christopher Brown ('00) and his photography in some of the world’s most conflict-filled regions. The spring 2013 story, “a very different approach to the tragic war violence that has taken its toll on modern photography,” was by Portland-based writer Claire Sykes ('81) and won a Silver Award.
Planetarium’s starry nights just got a whole lot brighter

Each of the 45 seats in Western’s planetarium has a stunning view of the universe, thanks to a new state-of-the-art projection system.

The planetarium, on the third floor of Wilson Library, recently received a $350,000 digital projector system that draws upon the most comprehensive set of astronomical data ever assembled to project high-resolution, three-dimensional images onto the planetarium dome.

The planetarium also received a new name, the Dr. Leslie E. Spanel Planetarium, in memory of Western’s longtime professor of Physics who passed away in 2002. Spanel’s wife, former State Sen. Harriet Spanel, donated funds for the projector and other planetarium upgrades in her husband’s memory.

“He saw the planetarium being important to the community and to younger students,” Harriet Spanel says. “For me, giving this gift was the appropriate and right thing to do for him and the area he loved.”

In addition to images of night skies, stars, planets and constellations, the new system can also project three-dimensional images and video. Plans are to expand the planetarium’s academic use beyond the sciences as well as expand access to the public and to K-12 schools.
Accounting grads are in the top 20 in the nation for passing the CPA exam

Western's Accounting graduates have one of the nation's best pass rates on the Certified Public Accountants exam.

The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy reports that in 2013, 73.3 percent of Western graduates taking the CPA exam passed at least one part of the exam on their first attempt.

This ranked Western 19th in the nation among large accounting programs, and the only large accounting program in the state of Washington in the top 20.

Steve Card is Western's new Athletic Director

Steve Card became Western's new Athletic Director after 23 years as a top administrator in the Athletics Department.

Card had been Western's Interim Athletic Director since May 2013, when Lynda Goodrich ('66, Special Education, Physical Education; '76, M.Ed., Physical Education) retired after 26 years in the top post. He had previously served as associate director for Business and Financial Affairs in Athletics and served as head men's golf coach for 20 years.

Card was selected following a national search. One of his first tasks will be to conduct a comprehensive review of athletics' strategic plan and launch a national search for an associate director for external affairs in athletics.

Hundreds come to campus for higher ed sustainability conference

Western hosted the state's first Washington Higher Education Sustainability Conference earlier this year, drawing more than 500 people to explore how to improve sustainability practices in higher ed.

Keynote speakers included Jennifer Allen from Portland State University's Sustainability Institute and climate change author Nancy Lord. The conference covered how to incorporate sustainability into the curriculum and campus operations, from food service and student life to service-learning projects and zero-waste goals.

The event culminated in a panel with presidents from five higher education institutions: Bruce Shepard of Western, David Mitchell of Olympic College, Kathi Hiyane-Brown of Whatcom Community College, Les Purce of The Evergreen State College and Tom Keegan of Skagit Valley College.

The conference was planned by a state-wide advisory group, led by Western's Office of Sustainability.
Students are regional cyberdefense champs

When it comes to defending against a cyberattack, Western students are gaining a national reputation.

A team of eight students won the Pacific Rim Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition, edging out University of Washington in an underdog upset in March.

In the competition, the students attempt to keep a fictitious business's computer infrastructure humming along while a team of cybersecurity professionals attempt to cause mayhem. Winning the Pacific Rim championship earned the students a trip to San Antonio, Texas, in late April for Western's first appearance in the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition, where they placed fourth.

Western’s team includes Troy Tornow of Spokane, Aaron Griffin of Stanwood, Tim Sargent of Bremerton, Mark Shipley of Silverdale, Rémi Gattaz of France, Michael Hennings of Kingston and James Collins of Conway. Their adviser is Phillip Nordwall, a systems manager in Western’s Computer Science Department.

Western recently created a bachelor’s degree in Computer and Information Systems Security, a combined four-year program with Whatcom Community College, to help address the state and nation's urgent need for computer security specialists.

When it comes to water, Western is strictly BYOB

Western recently became the state’s largest college or university to end the sale of bottled water on its campus.

The ban on bottled water was the culmination of a student-led effort in the name of sustainability and social justice. When students held an advisory vote in 2012, 73 percent favored ending the sales.

"Bottled water and water privatization is detrimental to the environment and to human rights to water. It simply doesn't make sense in a region where we have clean, amazing tap water," says Carolyn Bowie, a member of Students for Sustainable Water at Western.

The ban affects only bottled water without flavor, carbonation or other additives.

Students, faculty and staff who bring their own bottles can fill them at the water bottle refilling stations around campus—which were funded by another student initiative, the Green Energy Fee.
Award-winning prof: Geology is dirty work

Geology Professor Scott Linneman takes his students into the field as much as possible, which is one of the reasons he was recognized as one of the best professors in the nation by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Linneman was named the 2013 Washington Professor of the Year, an award also presented by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and recognized as one of the most prestigious awards honoring undergraduate teaching.

Linneman, who has taught geology and science education at Western since 2000, has taken his students to observe geologic processes on the area's rivers, beaches, glaciers and landslides. He also takes students on overnight trips to national parks.

This isn't Linneman's first teaching award. In 2011 he was named Higher Education Science Teacher of the Year by the Washington Science Teachers Association. But Linneman said he'd like to think the award reflects the attention and care that Western professors give to their students.

"Many professors here at Western are doing great things," he says. "I just happened to be the one nominated."

See Linneman and his students check out geomorphology in action on Sumas Mountain in a video at www.wwu.edu/window.
PRESIDENTIAL WORDSMITH

Six years ago, Jesse Moore recruited students to Western – now he helps write speeches for President Obama

By Lisa Grace Lednicer

Think that a job as a White House speechwriter is glamorous? Jesse Moore ('05, Political Science) will tell you it’s also a lot of long days, late nights and endless text revisions – sometimes just to get a single word or phrase exactly right for an audience far outside Washington, D.C.

Sometimes he’s so tired at the end of the day, he falls asleep with his suit and shoes still on. But he wouldn’t trade his life for anyone else’s.

“It’s amazing work,” says Moore, who grew up in Lynnwood. “We are really touching a lot of lives with what we’re doing here. I really believe in the president, and the work we are trying to accomplish, wholeheartedly.”

Six years ago, Moore, now 32, used up some vacation time from his job in Western’s Office of Admissions to work for Barack Obama’s 2008 campaign for president. Moore went door-to-door in Las Vegas, urging residents to volunteer and attend the Democratic primary caucuses. He then moved on to Seattle, where he organized voter protection attorneys and assisted prominent politicians.

He worked as a regional field director and political officer in several states. After Obama won, Moore accepted a political appointment as a media spokesman and strategist at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Today, Moore works in the White House’s Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs, where he works closely with Valerie Jarrett, President Obama’s senior adviser. He writes everything from op-eds and blogs, to informal remarks or commencement addresses for senior White House officials. He also contributes to talking points or remarks for the president when he is set to address groups of key leaders or stakeholders.

Jason Green, who gave Moore his start by inviting him to volunteer with the Obama campaign, says Moore has “a very sophisticated contextual understanding of the moment. Jesse’s able to see that it’s a speech from the White House to the people, and that’s often the only contact that an individual’s going to have with the White House.” Green also lauds Moore for his leadership skills and willingness to look out for the junior members of the campaign staff.

Those leadership skills were honed at Western, Moore says. As a recruiter for the Office of Admissions, he thought a lot about his audience of incoming students and tailored his presentations to enhance their understanding of what college is about, and what it takes to succeed. He learned to write speeches by giving them at dozens of admissions and Ethnic Student Center events on campus and around the northwest.

His experience at Western gave him a “uniquely personal” perspective on leadership, Moore says.

“People coming out of Western don’t always feel compelled to jump out front, or grab a mic to announce that we are ready to lead,” he says. “We’re people who step into a room or a workplace, who figure out what’s missing, and who can fill that void.”

As a student at Western, Moore led an effort to fully endow five student scholarships and was heavily involved in the Black Student Union.

“He was an ideal student, showing tremendous motivation and a willingness to learn, and tremendous growth as an individual,” says Michael Vendiola ('94, American Cultural Studies; '97, M.Ed., Adult Education), former coordinator of the Western’s Ethnic Student Center. “His ability to negotiate major issues is just outstanding.”

Moore has the ability to imitate the cadence of a person’s speech, a critical tool for any speechwriter.
That negotiating ability serves Moore well in D.C., where, as he puts it, people manage their political capital very closely. To a greater degree than many places, success is dependent upon how well-executed your work is, and mentors can't afford the career hit that occurs when they guide people who don't end up performing well.

"There's this basic level of anxiety all the time," Moore says. But despite the high-stakes nature of politics in D.C., Moore's reputation is such that he has acquired mentors along the way and was recommended for the speechwriting job.

Some speechwriters are history buffs; they're experts at finding obscure historical references and love the research end of the job. Others are wordsmiths — people who understand the poetry of language and how to make a sentence flow in a way that will make the listener tune in and truly feel the significance of the message.

Moore says he is especially passionate about language, and the melody of the spoken word. He's also a good mimic. He was the class clown in elementary school and has the eerie ability to imitate the cadence of a person's speech, a critical tool for any speechwriter.

"My mom told me it's a classic strategy to make people feel comfortable," Moore says. "I want people to feel relaxed."

Despite his love of politics, though, Moore says he's unlikely to run for public office because he prefers solitude. It's where he draws his energy. He does hope to work with youth again one day, focusing on efforts to end cycles of poverty.

Asked what he'll do after the Obama administration packs up and goes home in three years, he says: "I would not mind it involving a beach. At least for a little while."

It would be a nice place to take off his shoes.

Lisa Grace Lednicer is an editor and writer based in Washington, D.C. A former political reporter in Oregon, she was once approached by a prominent lobbyist to run for Congress. She is still trying to figure out whether he was kidding.
Buzz Buzz Buzz

Roby Ventres-Pake, right, with glasses, peers into a beehive at the Outback Farm near Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies. Ventres-Pake, an Environmental Science major, has been working with the Mount Baker Beekeepers Association to maintain an apiary to assist with pollination at the student-run campus farm.

Michael Jaross, left, holding up the hive, is a board member with the association who has been working with Ventres-Pake since 2012. Jaross and Ventres-Pake are teaching students how to keep the hives thriving – they hope to have six hives in the Outback by the end of the summer.

“It’s not an easy learning curve,” Jaross says. “They’re very complex bugs. As with politics, all beekeeping is local.”

See the Viking beekeepers in action at www.wwu.edu/window in a video by Rhys Logan ('11, Visual Journalism).
At the height of the Cold War, we kept nuclear weapons in new silos.

The sky changed.
At the height of the Cold War, we kept nuclear weapons in the sky. One alum flew with them.

By Doug McLnnis

In late 1967, just three years after graduating from Western, Air Force Capt. George “Sam” Sevier was assigned to fly missions under Operation Chrome Dome, the airborne alert program that kept B-52 bombers armed with nuclear weapons in the air around the clock. If a surprise Soviet nuclear strike destroyed U.S. jets and missile silos on the ground, the U.S. could still unleash a counterattack with its airborne nuclear weapons fleet.

“The concept was to make a surprise attack just as costly for the Soviets as it would be for the U.S.,” Sevier says.

Sevier was his crew’s electronics warfare officer. If war broke out, he was to jam enemy radar, allowing the big bomber to penetrate enemy defenses and drop its nuclear weapons on pre-designated targets.

Fortunately, there was never a call to execute a retaliatory strike. Any call to action could have meant the unthinkable - nuclear war. Even if the airborne crews were able to carry out their missions, they would probably have had a heavily damaged, radioactive country to return to. “Nuclear missiles would have devastated our nation,” Sevier says.

This was life in the Cold War, a 46-year standoff between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during which both sides maintained the weaponry to blast each other and much of the rest of the world back to the Stone Age.

The standoff began in 1945 when Sevier was 9 years old. As World War II ended, Soviet troops forced the nations of Eastern Europe under its control, triggering the Cold War’s beginning. On August 29, 1949, four years after the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Japan, the Soviets exploded their first nuclear weapon at a test site in Kazakhstan. From that day until the Cold War ended in 1991, the threat of nuclear annihilation was ever present.

But Sevier knew little of this history as he grew up in rural Deming, in Whatcom County. “I wasn’t up on the Cold War
any more than any other 18-year-old," he recalls. "I was more
interested in cars and getting a job."

That changed with his Air Force enlistment in 1956 - sud-
denly he was a tiny cog in the Cold War machine. When his
hitch was up, he worked his way through Western, earning a
bachelor's degree in 1964 with concentrations in mathematics,
electronics and economics. He then reenlisted and went through
officer training, along with navigator and electronic warfare in-
struction. Eventually Sevier found himself aboard a B-52 fully
armed for war.

Of course, neither side wanted war, so they took numerous
measures to avoid one. The U.S., for example, required both the
pilot and co-pilot of airborne alert flights to separately receive
the "go" code before launching an attack, Sevier recalls. "It was
the same with everything else in the nuclear weapons program.
Everybody followed a failsafe approach." No single rogue service
member could launch Armageddon.

In addition, nuclear weapons were constructed to prevent a
nuclear blast if one of the bombers accidentally dropped its pay-
load or crashed, as a B-52 did over Greenland on a 1968 flight.
The arming sequence for nuclear weapons had to take place be-
fore a nuclear explosion would occur, says Sevier. "If the arming
sequence wasn't activated, a crash wouldn't start the chain reac-
tion. You might get radiation leakage, but no mushroom cloud."

Sevier also flew on more than 100 Peacetime Air
Reconnaissance missions designed to minimize the chance of
war. These were conducted under provisions of the SALT II
National Scientific Inspection/Verification agreement between
the U.S. and the Soviets. The provisions allowed each side to
monitor the other’s ballistic missile tests. On air reconnaissance
missions, Sevier operated sophisticated optical equipment that
collected data used to evaluate Soviet missile capabilities.

The theory behind this agreement was ingenious. If each
side knew what the other was capable of, it would prevent their
imaginations from running wild with unsubstantiated fears that
might spur them to launch a preemptive strike. "Those SALT II
missions were the most important missions I had," says Sevier,
who also flew bombing runs in Vietnam. "Those missions kept
each side from being spooked."

Sevier retired with the rank of colonel in 1990. The next year,
the Soviet Union broke up and the Cold War was over. Neither
side had fired a shot at the other, much less used their vast
nuclear arsenals.

Sevier's career in defense work continued as a civilian.
He served as a high-level executive in the defense industry
and as Deputy Director of the Defense Technology Security
Administration, which collects information on and reviews all
proposed exports of arms and technology that may have military
applications. One goal of the review process is to keep weapons
out of the wrong hands. Sevier still works as a consultant on de-
fense work and leads the U.S. State Department's Defense Trade
Advisory Group.

Sevier also stays involved with Western, and is a member of
the Alumni Association's Board of Directors.

Had nuclear conflict occurred, Sevier believes, the U.S. as
we know it would have vanished, its economy, infrastructure
and government wiped away. "The survivors would have been
reduced to hunter-gatherers. They would have been out there
trying to kill something in order to eat."

Doug McInnis is a freelance journalist who has written for the
His most recent story for Window was about Seattle attorney James
Pirtle (01) and his human rights work in Uganda.
The Power of Resilience

Some of us grow stronger after the unthinkable happens — Western’s disaster researcher tells us why

By Hilary Parker ('95)

HOW COULD THIS BE YOUR TOWN?

Streets are strewn with debris: roofs ripped off, cars overturned and glass shattered from windows. Your neighbors now live in improvised homes of scraps of wood and cardboard. You search for family and friends in shelters and makeshift hospitals. It’s been weeks since you turned on a light, flushed a toilet or warmed a baby bottle. With bridges collapsed, roads block you in and keep aid and recovery out. You and your neighbors are on your own.

Hardships like these are very real for people around the world who fall victim to natural disasters, from the devastating landslide this spring in Snohomish County to Super Typhoon Haiyan, which struck the Philippines this past November.

David Sattler, professor of Psychology, traveled to the Philippines in the weeks after the typhoon to interview survivors. Sattler has made many such trips in his 22 years as a disaster researcher, learning about the mental health of people living in the aftermath of calamity. These days, his research explores fundamental questions about who grows stronger after disasters: How does adversity brought on by catastrophic stressors promote resilience? When does living through a natural disaster cause us to reflect on what provides meaning in our lives?

These questions are central to a phenomenon known as “post-traumatic growth” or “resiliency.”
Psychology Professor David Sattler visited the Philippines weeks after Super Typhoon Haiyan and met this man, whose house had been demolished. The man had cut bamboo from nearby trees to build a frame for a house and had gathered palm leaves for a roof and siding. He is a fisherman and lives with his wife in a small fishing village 100 feet from the ocean.

Photo by David Sattler
Disasters threaten our feelings of control, predictability, safety and trust, Sattler explains. They make us question when and if our lives or those of loved ones will be threatened. Regaining our confidence in each of these areas is vital to getting back on course after a traumatic event.

For many, the recovery process also includes counting their blessings. "It is not uncommon for people to reflect on their lives as soon as five weeks after a disaster. They are asking essential questions about what they value most and what gives life meaning," Sattler says. "This can give strength and hope and offer survivors a way to move forward."

In his surveys, Sattler asks survivors if they have had an increase or decrease in feeling they can "count on people in times of trouble" or in "appreciating each day more." These are two of the items on a scale measuring post-traumatic growth.

One response Sattler finds particularly interesting is the answer to the statement: "I have made new friends." Eighty percent of people - across the world and following hurricanes, earthquakes, and tsunamis - tell us they made new friends in the initial weeks during recovery," Sattler says.

After Super Typhoon Haiyan devastated areas of the Philippines, almost three-quarters of survivors reported to Sattler that they had discovered they are stronger than they thought they were. And 68 percent reported they are "learning a great deal about how wonderful people are." Sattler says these numbers are similar to those reported by survivors in Thailand after the Indian Ocean Tsunami - the fourth deadliest disaster in history.

"People need help and want to help," Sattler says. "It's extraordinary to see communities come together. The care and compassion we show for one another in times of need is a vital lesson."

WORLDWIDE RESEARCH

Sattler has been traveling to the sites of natural disasters since 1992. Just two weeks after he began his first tenure-track position at the College of Charleston in South Carolina, Hurricane Andrew hit Florida. He and a group of students packed up a van and drove 14 hours south to interview survivors.

Sattler began his career studying mental health in the aftermath of hurricanes and earthquakes across the U.S., including the territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Dominican Republic. Shortly after arriving at Western in 2000, he traveled to El Salvador with a psychology graduate student after an earthquake destroyed the region - they experienced a powerful aftershock. He also conducted research in...
India following an earthquake that killed 20,000 and destroyed 400,000 homes. He and a graduate student traveled to a region of Indonesia destroyed by an earthquake and threatened by volcanic eruptions.

One of Sattler's biggest projects is his work in the wake of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, which killed about 250,000 people in 2004.

Sattler and a graduate student traveled to Thailand six weeks after the tsunami and again 12 months later. On that second trip, with his sister, Heidi Philips, a licensed clinical social worker, he discovered stress levels remained high as rumors of another tsunami rippled through the shelters where many of the survivors lived.

Sattler interviewed one woman in her late 70s who was living in near-constant fear. She didn't know what caused the tsunami in the first place, nor did she know the warning signs that another was on its way—the lack of predictability and control caused her extreme anxiety.

Sattler and Philips explained the warning signs of tsunamis and how they could be predicted. "The weight of the world seemed to evaporate," he says.

This interaction got Sattler thinking about how he could disseminate this information to a population that didn't have the resources to learn about disaster preparedness or recovery through mass media such as newspapers or television. He decided on an education center. And so was born the International Tsunami Museum—thanks to a little help from a Western connection.

Sattler and his students created a video with a cartoon elephant narrator to help explain tsunamis and their warning signs to kids.

Restaurateur Lim Phong had seen the tsunami coming that morning and was able to rush several people to safety on the upper level of his restaurant. Phong volunteered to house the museum in an unoccupied space next to his restaurant and oversee its day-to-day operations. Sattler and a group of undergraduate students designed exhibits with a graphic artist at Western; four students traveled with Sattler back to Thailand to paint and install the exhibits. The museum was up and running in less than two weeks.

In its first year, 10,000 people visited the museum, both tourists and residents. Sattler set up a partnership with a local nonprofit organization, and donations to the museum provided clean drinking wa-
Weeks after surviving earthquakes, tsunamis and hurricanes, 80 percent of people say they have made new friends.

ter and lunches to children at local village schools, repaired school buildings and built a house for orphaned children.

Schools brought children by the busload to the museum. For children too far away to visit by bus, Sattler and his students created a video with a cartoon elephant narrator to help explain tsunamis and their warning signs in a safe, approachable way for kids.

The museum and video are the kinds of projects that typify Sattler’s desire to share what he learns with the public, Dinnel says. “What he has to say is not just academic. It’s something we can use in everyday life.”

**IT TAKES A TEAM**

Traveling with a team of research assistants to communities ravaged by disaster all over the world is a feat unto itself. “The logistics are a nightmare,” Sattler admits.

“At lot of that type of research is about the connections you can make and how quickly you can get there,” points out Dinnel, who says Sattler does an extremely good job at both.

One of Sattler’s key connections for the Philippines was Richard Atienza, a University of Washington lecturer who teaches Tagalog, one of the official languages of the Philippines. Atienza translated the survey and accompanied Sattler to the Philippines over winter break. He also introduced Sattler to the mayor of the town they visited; she in turn assigned some of her own staff members to help the team.

After surveying hundreds of Filipinos in the aftermath of the typhoon, Sattler found that many survivors expressed fears of global climate change.

“Global warming is a unique source of stress for survivors in the Philippines,” Sattler says, separate from factors commonly associated with posttraumatic stress, such as fear of loss of life or loss of resources. The survivors who talked to Sattler understood that temperatures are on the rise across the globe, creating warmer temperatures in the oceans, and feeding bigger and stronger typhoons.

**HELPING OURSELVES**

But what about those who face personal “catastrophes” that shake our sense of well-being, such as going through a divorce or losing a job?

“Our research shows people are fairly hardy when they lose ‘object resources’ such as a home or a car,” Sattler says. Where individuals often struggle, he continues, is when their “personal characteristic resources,” such as feelings of optimism and hope and their self-esteem, are threatened.

Job loss is a prime example of how anyone might begin to cycle down into
what Sattler calls a “resource loss spiral.” Our financial stability, sense of self related to our job and self-esteem may take a hit first, then optimism falters as the search for new employment wears on. Each additional loss makes a timely recovery even harder.

“We need to develop interventions and programs to help people minimize these losses, especially of personal characteristic resources, and to replenish them in a timely way,” Sattler says.

Sattler takes great pride that in its own unique way, the tsunami museum did just that for the Thai people. It helped them re-establish feelings of control and predictability and showed them that millions of people around the world donated time and money to help them rebuild their lives. Millions cared about their condition. "It made them feel grateful," Sattler says.

A GREATER GOOD

Looking back over his 20-plus years of travel to disaster-torn communities, Sattler’s experiences have left him with an indelible imprint of hope.

"It’s difficult to see people coping with extreme loss – knowing that it will take years for communities to recover and knowing somewhat of the hardships that await," Sattler says. "Like them, I find I need to reflect on what’s essential and provides meaning. It’s heartwarming to see communities pull together and to witness true caring and compassion.

"Resilience in the face of adversity is a strong testament to power of the human spirit."

Hilary Parker ('95, journalism) is a freelance writer based in Bellingham. Her most recent story for Window magazine was about History Professor Randall Jimerson and his family’s donation of a piece of civil rights history to the Smithsonian.

Above: A boy who was orphaned by the Indian Ocean Tsunami holds a shovel as a foundation is prepared at his new home. Donations to the International Tsunami Museum funded a new house for the boy, his sister and grandparents.

Left: Super Typhoon Haiyan leveled homes and businesses across the Philippines. This man, who lives in a village near the ocean, rebuilds a shelter with a frame of bamboo and a roof of sheets of tin.
Juvenile Cortez wrasse swim among the branches of Gorgonian coral, commonly found in the Gulf of California, where Associate Professor of Biology Ben Miner was snorkeling with WWU students.

Photo by Ben Miner
Oceans in Peril

By John Thompson

Brady Olson, a scientist at Western's Shannon Point Marine Center, holds a flask of seawater and stares intently at the tiny creatures called copepods swimming inside it. They dart about like frenzied boatmen, through water altered to reflect what climate scientists call "the worst case scenario:" that in 100 years, the ocean could become so acidic that seawater literally scoursthe calcium skins from some of the tiny creatures at the foundation of the oceanic food web.

This scenario – projected as the coming reality by the more than 2,000 scientists worldwide serving on the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – drives researchers like Olson and his peer at Shannon Point, Brooke Love. It's why they spend so many hours on the water collecting specimens and analyzing data from their experiments in the lab. At the heart of their passion lies the central question:

What does this mean for our planet?
Brady Olson has so many questions, but every answer he gets from his research into ocean acidification seems to spawn five new lines of inquiry.

"The scope of what we’re researching – the implications of what this could mean for the planet – can feel pretty daunting, pretty important," said Olson, a marine scientist at Western’s Shannon Point Marine Center in Anacortes, where many scientists and students collaborate on ocean research. "We understand what is at stake."

Olson and his fellow ocean acidification researcher at Shannon Point Brooke Love are in the right place to research this topic, as a number of natural environmental factors make the Pacific Northwest a global hotspot for ocean acidification. The Northern Pacific’s cold water retains its carbon dioxide levels longer than warm water. And undersea currents that have been moving along the bottom of the Pacific, accruing Carbon dioxide (CO\textsubscript{2}) for years, upwell in the Pacific Northwest, delivering high carbon dioxide counts.

CO\textsubscript{2} is being released in greater and greater quantities into the atmosphere – from smokestacks, from automobiles, from the increasingly prevalent burning of fossil fuels everywhere. This potent greenhouse gas not only plays a well-known role in the overall warming of the planet through the greenhouse effect, but atmospheric carbon dioxide also dissolves in water and undergoes a chemical process that raises the water's acidity.

This process has always been part of what scientists call the "carbon cycle." But since the Industrial Revolution, so much carbon has been dumped into the ocean that it has begun to quickly alter the ocean's chemistry.

Certainly, many organisms will suffer as acidity climbs in the oceans and bays; the tiny larvae of commercially crucial species such as oysters and mussels are already being hit hard. But other species such as the eelgrass – so vital as nursery areas in near-shore habitats for herring and young salmon – could use CO\textsubscript{2} like a fertilizer to potentially help them spread.

"It’s these big-picture questions that underlie all of what we do," said Olson. "But we know this, unequivocally – the health of the base of the food web, these tiniest of living things, is crucial to the success of all the other creatures in the web as well. That’s why we’re working so hard to find out how plankton react not only to present-day ocean conditions, but to those conditions forecast as being likely 100 years from now."

Looking into an oceanic crystal ball is no easy proposition, but Olson and Love are well-positioned to do just that.

"This area has a very unique ecosystem, and it’s a bellwether for the ocean acidification problem," Olson said. "And this ecosystem is going to experience changes as the global climate evolves. What the ocean will look like, what will be swimming in it generations from now – as its chemistry continues to be in flux – that’s what we’re trying to understand."

John Thompson is Western’s marketing manager and the assistant director of the Office of Marketing and Communications. Before a career in journalism, Thompson was a fisheries biologist with the state of Delaware, helping monitor the health of Delaware Bay.

Greg Rau ('71, Biology) funded the new Ocean Acidification Research (OAR) endowment in hopes that others would join him in supporting the scientists at Shannon Point. To learn more, get in touch with Manca Valum at manca.valum@wwu.edu.
Ocean Acidification
What does more carbon dioxide mean for oceans?

Atmospheric carbon dioxide ($\text{CO}_2$) dissolves into the ocean.

Phytoplankton absorb the $\text{CO}_2$ and convert it into organic sugars (an organic carbon) through photosynthesis.

This organic carbon makes its way through the food web, until a portion of it sinks and settles into the ocean sediment.

Some $\text{CO}_2$ returns to the atmosphere through a process called "outgassing."

TODAY, so much $\text{CO}_2$ enters the ocean that phytoplankton can't keep pace with the rapid rate of supply. The new $\text{CO}_2$ that isn't used by the ocean's biology becomes carbonic acid, raising the ocean's acidity.

Among the effects of increased ocean acidity: Certain types of plankton will be less nutritious, and the acidity makes it harder for calcifying organisms to make and keep their calcium shells.
**Dopamine-Producing Sea Lettuce**

Each summer, the Pacific Northwest’s “green tides” create huge blooms of seaweed that cover local beaches with smelly green piles as they decompose. But Kathy Van Alstyne (Shannon Point Marine Center) is paying particular attention to dark sea lettuce. As it decomposes, the lettuce releases dopamine, the “feel good” neurotransmitter released in our brains when we exercise. But this good-time sea lettuce is a lousy neighbor; it releases so much dopamine that it’s toxic to crab larvae and other important species.

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**Sea Star Trauma**

The ubiquitous tide pool favorites are dying all along the West Coast and nobody knows why. Ben Miner (Biology) is studying Sea Star Wasting Disease, which is killing these vital invertebrates. The disease causes such trauma that the sea stars often literally rip off their own arms before dissolving into a bacterial mat on the seafloor.
Counting Seabirds
John Bower (Fairhaven) is studying the declining number of marine seabirds along Washington’s coast. His data show the population of the western grebe has declined by more than 80 percent, and more than 90 percent for common murres, for example, compared with the numbers from the previous census in the late 1970s.

Power of Wetlands
John Rybczyk (Environmental Science) is working to understand how wetlands – vital areas where the ocean and the land meet – store carbon and keep it from re-entering the atmosphere. As more and more wetlands are filled in and developed, can they be rehabilitated to once again be the carbon sponges so vital to helping to slow global climate change?

Jellyfish in the Mediterranean
Jellyfish populations appear to be increasing in the Mediterranean Sea, which has Jennifer Purcell (Shannon Point Marine Center and Biology) wondering why. She’s also looking at the problems they cause: They kill penned fish, eat fish eggs and larvae and compete with fish for food. They’re not great for the tourism industry, either. But Purcell will tell you that jellyfish are also valuable members of a balanced ecosystem, providing food for fishes, sea turtles and humans, and offer new opportunities for biomedical products.

Monitoring Sea Ice
David Shull (Environmental Science) is studying how global climate change and shrinking levels of sea ice in the Bering Sea are affecting the ecosystems that provide the foundation for the most important commercial fishery in North America. The Bering Sea’s annual cycle of freeze-and-thaw triggers an annual explosion of plankton – microscopic food that is the foundation of the entire food web. But rising water temperatures and melting sea ice are altering the spring plankton bloom on which so much depends; how, exactly, is what Shull and his team are working to find out.

Tiny Food, Huge Impact
Groundfish species that we like to eat, including pollock, flounder and rockfish, are showing large population fluctuations in the Gulf of Alaska and elsewhere. We know these fluctuations are related to climate patterns and ocean conditions, and that they have the strongest effects on the youngest fish, Suzanne Strom (Shannon Point Marine Center) and colleagues from NOAA and the University of Alaska are researching how the tiny planktonic organisms that support young fish respond to different ocean conditions.
Make Me a Writer

The author who introduced us to environmental memoirs and neurodiversity explores how we are remade by parenthood

By Claire Sykes ('81)

Her dog on one side of her and the cat on the other, Suzanne Paola sits on the living room sofa with her laptop, words filling the screen. “I don’t remember ever not writing, as soon as I could form letters,” says the award-winning Bellingham poet, author and Western creative writing professor. “But I wouldn’t say I love writing. It’s always a complicated relationship. I feel as if things get stuck in my head, and if I don’t write they’ll never get unstuck. And I love connecting with people who may feel a kinship with one of my works.”

Readers certainly have a choice with Paola’s books – poetry, fiction, memoir and creative nonfiction, along with the textbook that she co-wrote with fellow Western English Professor Brenda Miller. Her writing has been included in numerous poetry and prose anthologies, The New York Times and Orion magazine. Her subjects are just as diverse: from neurodiversity, the environment and mental health to parenting and spirituality. Even lipstick, shoes and handbags show up. Paola strips them of their chick-lit tropes and dons them with a deeper meaning in her recent e-book novella, “Stolen Moments” (Shebooks, 2014), published under the pen name Susanne Antonetta Paola.

She drops the Paola for most of her prose, including her latest book, “Make Me a Mother” (W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2014), which tells her story of adopting a six-month-old South Korean boy. But it’s more than a memoir.

“Ever since childhood, I thought I’d adopt. I was always aware of too many humans on the planet, many not taken care of. Adopting made sense as a way for me to form my family,” Paola says. So she and her husband, Bruce Beasley, also a poet and English professor at Western, decided on Asia, where Jin was waiting for them in Seoul.

The first thing she learned as a mother was “just how much you can love a child. You know that, but it still takes you by surprise. And when you adopt, you fall in love with someone with the awareness of how they’re different from
“When you adopt, you fall in love with someone with the awareness of how they’re different from you.”
"I started dealing with more expansive topics, but I'd still pound them into poems."

Paola and her family enjoy their ties to Bellingham's Korean community, as friends, members of the First Korean Baptist Church, and eager learners of the language. She also teaches at the low-residency M.F.A. program at City University in Hong Kong.

"I'm intensely aware of the adoptiveness of life. To a certain extent, your friends, your family, all the people in your life are those you've adopted," says Paola, whose book also explores adoption, culturally and historically, and motherhood, in general. Being a parent has expanded her notion of family, shed light on her own troubled childhood, and helped her heal her relationship with her now-elderly and infirm parents. "My mother had a hard time having a daughter. Now she's got Alzheimer's and is very needy. I think it's the mother side of me that's come through to help take care of her," she says.

Paola visits her parents multiple times a year in New Jersey, where she was born. Growing up there in the late '60s to early '70s, she spent part of each summer in the Pine Barrens area, one of the most environmentally contaminated places in the country. Its leached chemicals from corporations and a nearby nuclear plant assaulted the neighborhood, and for Paola that meant pollution-related illnesses.

She talks about this in "Body Toxic: An Environmental Memoir" (Counterpoint, 2002). Her first nonfiction work, and with her pen name (originally "to have some distance from my family"), it was selected as a New York Times Notable Book of the year and won an American Book Award. The pages turn through her teens: Paola struggling with bipolar disorder, which runs in her family, dropping out of high school and getting a G.E.D.; and being dependent on drugs. "When I was 17, I took an overdose of methadone and was sick for a week. When it was over, I just couldn't do it anymore. And I didn't ever go back."

Somewhere in there, she wrote – poems, plays, songs. "It was such an escape route and safety valve for me. But neither of my parents was particularly interested in literature, and no teachers were, either. I didn't have huge plans for my writing, or know where I was going with it."

After Paola's bachelor's degree in English from Oberlin College, where she met her husband, the two went off to the University of Virginia, he for a Ph.D. and she an M.F.A. in poetry. "First I primarily wrote poetry, then I started dealing with more expansive topics, but I'd still pound them into poems. They were getting longer and longer and didn't fit, and so I just started doing them in prose." Eventually, she received a Pushcart Prize, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and other awards.

"Teaching was the occupation that went along with writing, but I discovered that I really loved it." Half-time tenured at Western since 1992, Paola teaches mostly creative writing, as well as research-based and environmental writing, women's studies and literature. She says, "As a writer, I'm very much words on paper, but as a teacher, I'm fascinated by alternative forms," with multimedia writing (video, graphic essays, animated artwork and hypertext) and digital publishing.

While her students "constantly give me focus and ideas," for her own writing, she gives them "an enormous amount of my time and attention," says Paola. "I try to understand people's strengths and teach them how to use them. I definitely push and challenge them, but also nurture."
“Suzanne is a dynamic teacher. She’s always bringing in new material, and on the lookout for how the field is evolving, regarding ethics, pushing boundaries between fiction and nonfiction, and the digital age,” says Brenda Miller, co-author with Paola of “Tell It Slant: Creating, Refining, and Publishing Creative Nonfiction” (McGraw-Hill, 2012).

“I’ve structured an entire course around this book,” says Julie Marie Wade ('03, MA, English), an assistant professor of creative writing at Florida International University and former student of Paola’s. “I was floored by the way she taught. She has this huge range, open to all kinds of poetry. And I loved that she had a plan, but she could also interact with your work on the fly. She’s a model for a lot of how I want to be as a creative writing teacher,” a profession she never considered until Paola. “She’s living the life that a lot of people told me you couldn’t have – the life of the literary person.”

It’s a life that often means spending more time promoting your new books, with author appearances and readings, than writing. “That can be a little bit frustrating,” admits Paola. But now, along with working on a poetry manuscript, she’s expanding her Shebooks novella into a novel.

So when she’s not in the classroom, out in her vegetable garden or in the kitchen making strawberry jam – or being mother to a “typical teen,” as she puts it – she’s on the living room sofa, her fingers tapping away. And there’s always something furry nearby.

Claire Sykes ('81, Community Service and the Arts) is a freelance writer based in Portland, Ore., who covers the arts, wellness, health care, philanthropy, business and general interest for national publications and regional organizations. Her most recent story for Window was a profile of poet Kate Lebo ('05). Claire fondly remembers her Fairhaven independent-study course in poetry with Annis Hovde.

Books by Paola


• “A Mind Apart: Travels in a Neurodiverse World,” by Susanne Antonetta (Tarcher, 2007). A literary memoir that explores the gifts, strengths and unusual abilities linked to mental health “disabilities.” Winner of the 2006 Ken Johnson Award from the National Alliance on Mental Illness.


• “Stolen Moments,” by Susanne Antonetta Paola (Shebooks, 2014). Three interconnected stories about women have one thing in common: a lipstick discovered in a thrift store bag.

• “Make Me a Mother,” by Susanne Antonetta Paola (W.W. Norton & Co., 2014). A memoir of Antonetta’s adoption, with her husband English Professor Bruce Beasley, of a baby from Korea, and how becoming a mother helped her reconcile with her own parents.
Outstanding Alumni

Western’s Alumni Association honors extraordinary Vikings

Mina Ghattas
Lifetime Achievement Award

Photo by Becky Tachihara ('12, Environmental Studies/Journalism)
Lifetime Achievement Award

Mina Ghattas
('59, History/Social Studies; '60, M.Ed., Secondary Education)

Mina Ghattas was a Palestinian refugee studying at the American University of Beirut when an encounter with the owner of a Bellingham television station changed his life.

Ghattas was a student assistant in AUB's audio visual department in 1957 when he met Rogan Jones, owner of KVOS-TV in Bellingham. Jones invited Ghattas to Bellingham to learn about broadcasting and then return to Lebanon and work at a new station Jones was planning. Jones and KVOS also paid for Ghattas to complete his education at Western - and Ghattas remains deeply grateful to Jones for the opportunities that influenced his career.

Jones' plans for the television station in Lebanon didn't pan out, but Ghattas completed his bachelor's and master's degrees at Western and returned to Beirut, where he taught at AUB and directed the university's Audiovisual Center. Soon, he returned to the U.S. to continue his education.

Ghattas earned a doctorate at the University of Wisconsin in 1970, where he met his wife, Meredith Ghattas, now a retired high school administrator and math teacher. They married in 1969. He spent much of his career at Northeastern University in Boston, where he directed the Office of Learning Resources.

Ghattas was an early proponent of distance education and led many projects, both at Northeastern and later as an independent consultant, that used broadcasting technology to expand access to education around the world. For example, in conjunction with the World Bank, he worked with Chinese officials who were developing 17 polytechnic institutions and bringing college-level classes to the whole country through Radio Television University. He also worked with the education ministry in Yemen to use tutored video instruction to train teachers across the country. He helped teach Turkish educators to adapt their lessons for delivery on video. And at Northeastern University, his lab had the first bank of microcomputers on campus, for computer-assisted instruction.

Ghattas' many other projects include helping to develop a bilingual school and an institute for children with learning disabilities, both in Kuwait. He has served on college and university accreditation teams, designed graduate educational technology programs and many directed grant-funded projects.

Mina and Meredith Ghattas now live in the Boston area, where they enjoy the symphony, theatre, opera and international travel.

Larry "Go Vikings!" Taylor Alumni Service Award

Jo Metzger-Levin
('81, Physical Education – Secondary; '85, M.Ed., Physical Education)

Metzger-Levin is arguably the best women's basketball player in Western's history. A former All-American, she was named Western's female athlete of the 20th century. But it's the players of this century whom Metzger-Levin continues to support. When the women's basketball team made it to the Elite Eight in 2012, Metzger-Levin met the team bus on the way to the airport for a one-woman pep rally – and gave the team matching T-shirts. She also funds a scholarship for women's basketball and is working to build the Goodrich-Dolfo Endowment for Excellence in Women's Basketball, giving a boost to the next generation of women's basketball players.
Young Alumnus of the Year

Brett Mitchell
('01, Music Composition)

At 34, Mitchell is one of classical music's rising stars. He is the assistant conductor of The Cleveland Orchestra, music director of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, and music director of the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra. His work has been impressing audiences around the world for more than a decade. He has worked with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Washington D.C.'s National Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, as well as the orchestras of Oregon, Rochester, Baltimore, Memphis and Pittsburgh. He served as assistant conductor of both the Houston Symphony (2007-11) and the Orchestre National de France (2006-09). With such a lengthy résumé, no wonder a reviewer from the Austin Chronicle called him a "bright young hope for classical music’s future."
Distinguished Alumni

College of Fine and Performing Arts

Francis Johnston
('73, Visual Communication – Design)

1973 was a big year for Fritz Johnston, the year he graduated from Western, married Diane Johnston ('70) and went to work for Boeing as an entry-level designer. This year he will retire as the company’s vice president of Global Brand Management and Advertising, overseeing the worldwide development of the company’s brand. He plans to spend more time on campus once he and his wife retire to the Pacific Northwest. Their daughter, Kimberly Johnston ('01, Marketing, Psychology), is chief of staff for U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen, whose district includes Bellingham.

College of Science and Technology

Robert Matson
('69, Chemistry; '71, M.S., Chemistry)

Matson is president and co-founder of QuantiScientifics, LLC, a Southern California-based company specializing in life science clinical research and in vitro diagnostics. The company provides products that enable multiple, simultaneous tests for biomarker discovery, clinical research, vaccine screening, allergy testing and other processes.

Woodring College of Education

Bill Wright
('60, Elementary Education)

More than 50 years ago, Wright won the U.S. Amateur Public Links tournament, winning the title with the help of seven birdies in the first nine holes. He also smashed a race barrier that day in 1959 by becoming the first African-American to win a U.S. Golf Association title. The following year, he was the first Western athlete to bring home a title in any sport when he won the 1960 NAIA national golf title – he was also the first African American to win that title, too. Wright’s skill made a powerful statement in an era when many golf courses – including public courses in Seattle – refused membership to black people. Wright later appeared in the U.S. Open in 1966 and in five Senior U.S. Opens in the 1980s and ’90s. He continues to teach golf in Los Angeles.

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Kirby M. Larson
('76, Broadcast Communication)

Before she was a famous children's book author – her “Hattie Big Sky” was a 2007 Newbery Honor Book – Larson was a college student working two jobs while earning her degree. She persevered through more than 200 rejection letters before publishing her first book. She’s now the author of 19 titles, from picture books for American Girl to historical fiction to true-life adventure tales about animals. Larson and her husband, Neil Larson ('76, Accounting), also serve on the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Advancement Council and support student scholarships and writing programs in Western’s English Department.

College of Business and Economics

Jason Warnick
('94, Accounting)

Western students who enjoy the networking opportunities in Western’s chapter of Beta Alpha Psi have Warnick to thank. He was instrumental in establishing Western’s student chapter of the international honor society for accounting, finance and information systems professionals. Today he is at Amazon.com, where he is the vice president of Finance, Internal Audit/Competitive Analysis. He still returns to Western to speak or to recruit top students for internships – watch for him at Beta Alpha Psi meetings.

Huxley College of the Environment

Roberta Riley
('82, Environmental Science)

Riley has worked tirelessly at the intersection of empowering women and achieving environmental sustainability. In 2001, as Legal Counsel for Planned Parenthood, she argued a landmark federal court decision that prompted American companies to cover prescription contraception in worker health plans. She later led the World at 7 Billion Project, emphasizing the connection between women’s health and dignity and achieving sustainability. She continues to advocate for health as a fundamental human right in her current role as communications director for Northwest Health Law Advocates.

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Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies

Tom Thornton
('78, Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration)

Thornton and his wife, Cheryl Thornton ('78, Marine Resources), a graduate of Huxley College of the Environment, started Cloud Mountain Farm in Everson soon after graduation and have built it into a thriving center for farming practices. In 2011 they turned their business into a nonprofit educational farm center with the goal of providing hands-on learning opportunities to the next generation of farmers as well as providing regional information to the gardening community. The farm center recently added a vegetable processing facility that will prepare products for schools and is involved in building up local organic salad production capabilities. Tom Thornton has participated in many boards including the Whatcom Land Trust, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement and was a founding board member for the Whatcom Community Foundation. Now he sits on the boards of Whatcom Farmers Co-op and Northwest Agricultural Research Foundation.

Campus Volunteer Recognition Award

Tamara Belts
('76, History)

Belts manages Western Libraries Special Collections, which is where Western keeps its historical artifacts, from academic publications by faculty, staff, students and alumni to campus memorabilia and photographs. Belts is also a major contributor to Special Collections' Oral History project and has interviewed 88 people, gathering stories from alumni and retired faculty and staff. And she's an active volunteer for many campus events, including commencements and Viking Night.

Community Volunteer Recognition Award

R. Emil Hecht

The founder and past director of Bellingham Ear Nose and Throat and Hecht Aesthetic Center, Hecht is a longtime supporter of Western's Communication Sciences and Disorders Department. He has provided countless audiology and speech-language pathology students opportunities for professional mentoring, research and hands-on patient care. He provided free evaluations for Western's vocal rehab patients and referred some of his own patients to Dr. Barbara Mathers-Schmidt at Western for therapy. Hecht and his wife Tannia are also supporters of the Don Cole Graduate Fellowship and of Viking Athletics.

Campus School Recognition Award

Rob Brand
('59, Elementary Education; '66, M.Ed., School Administration)

A longtime teacher and principal in Bellingham, Brand got his start in schooling at Western's Campus School. After completing his education degree at Western, Brand taught in Oak Harbor and returned to Western for a master's degree. He then spent 26 years in Bellingham schools, including service as a principal in five elementary schools. And he keeps returning to Western, most recently as an adjunct faculty member. In 2009, the Elementary Education Department established an annual scholarship in his name. The award goes to an Elementary Ed major who exemplifies hard work and caring — qualities Brand is well known for.
Have you noticed that many of the world’s best inventions are created by people unafraid to stand outside the norm and be a bit different? Those with a unique lens looking to change or improve the status quo – seeking more than just to punch a clock and watch the world spin madly on – are host to great ideas and catalysts for change. Many of them are Viking alums, and many ideas were born at Western.

Just this spring, a group of Western students who live in a house behind the Alumni office used their resources to launch a grassroots fundraising effort to support the rescue and recovery of victims in the recent SR 530 Slide, the tragic mudslide that claimed more than 40 lives near the town of Oso. “Alley Food” serves delicious hamburgers hot off the grill for an affordable price to hungry passersby, and raffles off a week’s worth of hamburgers with proceeds donated to the disaster effort. Without pomp or circumstance, this house of quirky kayakers and snowboarders used their skills and time to serve their community. “Alley Food” is the brainchild of Jordan Johnson (anticipated to graduate in ’15, pictured right with me), and partners Torque Niemi and Chad Spady. Spady is no stranger to flipping burgers, having worked for his grandfather, the founder of the famous Dick’s Drive-In. The success of “Alley Food” prompted Johnson to pursue the purchase of a food truck this summer to keep the business going. Another socially-minded entrepreneur is born.

Another socially minded entrepreneur is born.

And that’s just one story. It wasn’t long ago that alumnus Nick Marvik (’12) was sewing ski and snowboarding jackets in his college basement for friends. Now NWT3K is a thriving online custom outerwear company. Likewise, not much time passed after Kate Cox (’02) was running track for WWU and experimenting with recycled flip-flops to protect her cleats on non-track surfaces. Now she’s selling her invention, Spikease, online and they are soon to be merchandised in retail running and athletic stores.

Each of you, as alums and supporters, stand out in the world with your accomplishments, intellect and fervor, uniquely helping others and making an impact in your communities. As far as I can tell, you’re far from ordinary... and some might say downright quirky. Maybe embracing this is what Viking pride is all about. I’d love to hear your story, please be in touch!

Active Minds Changing Lives
Darcy Camden ('04) helps us make peace with our wardrobes

By Mary Lane Gallagher

Ask Darcy Camden ('04) how she became one of Seattle's best-known personal stylists, and she'll tell you about her major in Communications.

Back when she wore pajama bottoms and her boyfriend's sweatshirt to class, Camden was picking up the fundamentals of communication she would later use to help her clients master the elements of style.

"It's not about the clothes," says Camden, founder and chief stylist of Styled.Seattle. "For me, it's less about 'You look amazing in that dress,' or doing cartwheels over a pair of shoes. I think of myself as more of a consultant or problem-solver."

No makeovers for people who don't want them.

Camden was working as a publicist in 2005 when she got a last-minute call from KOMO-TV to help on a series of "ambush makeovers" on "Northwest Afternoon." She helped dramatically transform the looks of dozens of people who had been nominated by co-workers or loved ones.

"It's not about the clothes," Camden says. "For me, it's less about 'You look amazing in that dress,' or doing cartwheels over a pair of shoes. I think of myself as more of a consultant or problem-solver."

No makeovers for people who don't want them.

Camden learned that while a biker chick certainly looks different after reluctantly giving up her black leather for frothy chiffon, but she may not feel like a better version of herself. "My rule with makeovers now is that you have to nominate yourself," Camden says.

What a styling session is like.

"You get to know people very, very well," says Camden, who launched Styled.Seattle in 2006 as a side business and now employs another full-time stylist and a few part-time assistants. "Never in 700 clients have I had anyone say 'Tell me what to wear.' It's not about me telling anyone else what I like for them. It's more about helping them uncover what they like for themselves."

After going through clients' wardrobes, Camden and her stylists set up camp in a special fitting room in Nordstrom or Macy's and stock it with outfit ideas from many stores.

"We teach our clients to think and shop in outfits," Camden says. "I have a rule of three: Everything you buy should work three different ways."

There aren't enough movie stars and celeb-utantes in Seattle to keep Camden in business.

Most of her clients are "regular people with regular jobs," Camden says -- business actually tripled during the Great Recession. Many clients come to stylists the same reason they go to accountants or landscape architects -- they're looking for expertise that will help them save money and time.

If you hate shopping, maybe you're not doing it right.

Many of us are too specific when we shop, Camden says. "You're looking for that thing; meanwhile you're missing all the other awesome possibilities." Better to keep an open mind and look for the types of things that look best on you.

Camden is also skeptical of sales. "If it's not worth the original price to you, don't buy it," she says. "Those are the things I end up purging out of people's closets."

Rock your own look.

Camden still appears on television as a stylist, particularly on "New Day Northwest" on KING-TV. But she is through picking people out of a crowd to tell them they're getting a makeover. "I think it would be so wrong to look at someone who already feels good and say, 'You don't feel good.' If you feel awesome," she says, "that's great."

Mary Lane Gallagher is editor of Window magazine. Her closet contains a zebra-print jacket that she bought on sale and never wears.
Class Notes

1938 - John Valenta is a retired elementary school principal at schools in Woodinville and Mercer Island. He now lives in Redmond with his wife, Dot.

1964 - Bob Tarleck (English; 69, M.A., English) was appointed to the Seniors Advisory Council of Alberta. Since retiring as mayor of Lethbridge, Alberta, in 2001, Tarleck has worked as a consultant on projects concerning water, alternative energy, aboriginal housing, and education.

1966 - Lynda Goodrich (Special Education, Physical Education; 73, M.Ed., Physical Education) received the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Division 2 Athletics Directors Association. Jim Pearson (English; 75, M.Ed., Secondary) was recently inducted into the Lake Stevens Viking Hall of Fame. He is retired from Ferndale High after 36 years as an English teacher.

1967 - Anne Gardner (Special Education, Mathematics) recently retired after 25 years of teaching math at Wenatchee Valley College, where she recently received the Linda Schultz Herzog Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year Award.

Andrew Joslyn is a violinist and composer who recently toured with Macklemore and Ryan Lewis.

1969 - Bill Lum (Geology) recently retired from his job as a hydrogeologist at the Washington Department of Ecology. Lum also worked for several years at the U.S. Geological Survey and for the Bremerton-Kitsap County Health Department.

1970 - Nancy Hall Anderson (Elementary Education, Speech Communication) is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at Multnomah Biblical Seminary in Portland, Ore. She is also a chaplain at Hearthstone of Beaverton Assisted Living.

1972 - Greg Turner (Business Administration) became chief financial officer of the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory in Menlo Park, Calif. Most recently, he was CFO of Oak Ridge National Laboratory.


Mick Spane (Social Studies - Secondary Education) was recently inducted into the Fife High School Trojan Hall of Fame. Spane was a teacher and administrator in the Fife School District for 30 years before retiring in 2002. He now leads trips for the Kent Senior Activities Center.

1973 - Robert Brookes (English, Special Education) retired in 2011 after 26 years as a special education teacher and middle school counselor in the Sequim School District. He serves on the juvenile diversion board for Clallam County and volunteers for Disabled American Veterans.

1974 - Dale Crosswell (Physics/Mathematics-Secondary; 80, M.Ed., Natural Science/Science Education) recently retired as a science teacher at Camas High School, but plans to continue as the school's volunteer football announcer.

1978 - Larry Weis (Industrial Technology) is the general manager for Austin Energy, the nation's largest publicly owned electric utility.

1979 - Mary Schoenfeldt (Human Services) was inducted into the International Women in Homeland Security and Emergency Management Hall of Fame. Schoenfeldt, who was honored for her pioneering work in school crisis response, disaster stress management and emergency management, is a public education coordinator for the Everett Office of Emergency Management.

1980 - Randy Eggen (Business Administration) became vice president of sales for ComPview Medical LLC, which makes equipment used in minimally invasive surgeries.

1981 - Michael Ward Stewart (Sociology), an emeritus member of the American Sociological Association, recently retired from the state of Hawaii as a human services professional. Stewart is a judge for the National Forensic League and a member of the Marijuana Policy Project.

Nicola Smith became mayor of Lynnwood.

1981 - Anna Marie Spane (Special Education) retired in 2011 after 35 years as a special education teacher at the International School for Disabled American Veterans.

1982 - Jim Tempest (Music - Performance) is the music director of the Delta Concert Band in Metro Vancouver, B.C. Greg Cox (Chemistry) recently had two novels released: "Star Trek: No Time Like the Past," by Pocket Books, and "Gozzella," by Titan Books.

1983 - Chuck Lennox (Environmental Education) received the National Association for Interpretation's President's Award for 2013, in recognition of his work leading the committee in charge of finding a new executive director for the organization. Kathleen Yarr (English; 86, M.A., English) became a member of the Alaska state Board of Education. She teaches prevention programs to first-time drug and alcohol offenders through Ketchikan Youth Court.

1984 - Jim Rothlin (Business Administration) became the Port of Bremerton's chief executive officer. Previously, he was executive director of the Port of Chehalis.

1985 - Chef and writer Greg Atkinson (Community Health) was executive chef at Canlis in Seattle for several years and a chief instructor at the Seattle Culinary Academy at Seattle Central Community College. He recently opened his own restaurant, Restaurant Marché, on Bainbridge Island. Sue Barnes (Visual Communication) is the director of the University of California, Davis, Retiree Center, which serves more than 8,000 U.C. Davis retirees, and is president of the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education.

1986 - Michael Roe (Accounting) became chief financial officer of DecisionPoint Systems, Inc., in Irvine, Calif. Nancy Swanson (Interdisciplinary Concentration, Physics) worked as a staff scientist for the U.S. Navy and taught physics at Western. She holds five U.S. patents and wrote two books on women in science.

1989 - Ken Perry (Psychology) is the owner of Grab Plants Value Nursery in Silverdale.


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www.wwu.edu/window
Barb Honchak is a top-ranked mixed martial artist.

1993 - Christina Castorena (M.Ed., Student Personnel Administration) became vice president for student services at Edmonds Community College. Previously, she was dean of student services and diversity advocacy at Everett Community College. Dave Valishnat (M.B.A.) became a member of the advisory board of Green Hygienics Holdings Inc. of Vancouver, B.C.

1994 - Todd Mera (Biochemistry) is the co-founder of AwardWallet, a website that helps users manage their frequent flier miles and other loyalty award balances. Mark Omott (M.S., Mathematics) is a mathematics instructor at Anoka-Ramsey Community College and was recently honored for excellence in teaching by the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges.

1995 - Ron Cubellis (Urban and Regional Planning) became deputy executive director and chief financial officer of the Whatcom Council of Governments. Robin Walback-Forest (Theatre) recently updated and performed her one-woman show, "Tits & Asphalt: Why I Walk for Breast Cancer," at the Valley Center Stage in North Bend. The show is a fundraiser for Relay for Life.

1996 - Josh Henderson (Music) is a chef and founder and partner of the Huxley Wallace Collective, which includes restaurants such as Westward and Little Gulch Grocery in Seattle, the Hollywood Tavern in Woodinville and Cone & Steiner market in Seattle. Mason McWhiter (History) is a history teacher at Curtis Junior High in University Place and recently published a book, "The Life of Ely," about a teacher and wrestling coach who befriends an abused middle school student. After performing with opera companies around the U.S. and Canada, Aaron St. Clair Nicholson (Music - Performance) is artistic and general director of Opera Cœur d'Alene. Oliver Groenewald (Music) is a jazz musician on Orcas Island. Campanile Books recently published "Sinful Folk," a historical novel by Ned Hayes (M.A., English).

1997 - Joy Lockerby (Business Administration) earned her law degree from Seattle University and now has her own law practice in Seattle. Darin Detwiler (History) teaches courses on regulatory affairs and the food industry at Northeastern University in Boston.

1998 - Nicola Smith (M.Ed., Adult Education) became mayor of Lynnwood after 20 years as dean of Student Life and Development at Edmonds Community College.

1999 - Mitzi Emrich (Political Science) became chief social strategist for MWW, a top mid-sized public relations firm. She also teaches graduate-level courses in social media communications at Georgetown University. Monica Bauer (History) was named assistant principal at Lake Stevens High School and was named Assistant Principal of the Year in the WESCO 3A/4A league. Mike Nelson (Finance) became vice president of commercial sales for Great Floors. Jen Roddel (Physical Education) is a physical education specialist at Central Elementary School in Ferndale.

2000 - Jen Brandolini-Register (Marketing), Western's Softball Player of the 20th Century, was inducted into Western's Athletics Hall of Fame. She is a teacher and softball coach in Port St. Lucie, Fla. U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Matthew N. Jones (Anthropology) recently completed his doctorate in Anthropology from the University of Oxford, where he studied food insecurity in Mombasa, Kenya. Barb Honchak (Cellular and Molecular Biology) is one of the top-ranked female mixed martial artists in the world and the first Invicta FC lightweight Champion. Angie Griffin (M.A., English) is a tech services librarian at the Wilton Manors Public Library in Florida. Griffin's wife, Julie Wade (M.A., English), is an assistant professor of Creative Writing at Florida International University in Miami. Her most recent volume of poetry is "When I was Straight." Poems from A Midsummer Night's Press, Rose Lathrop (Planning and Environmental Policy) became executive director of the Northwest American Institute of Architects.

2001 - Brothers Jared (Finance) and Jacob Stevenson (02, General Studies) have a business renovating and reselling homes and were inducted into Western's Athletics Hall of Fame. Jared played seven seasons with the Bellingham Slam and is assistant boys basketball coach at Ferndale High School. Jacob has played nine seasons with the Slam and was the 2013 IBL Player of the Year. Garth Baldwin (Anthropology- Archeology, '04, M.A., Anthropology) recently spent three weeks in Tarawa atoll searching for remains of U.S. service members killed there in a bloody World War II battle. The archaeologist was working with History Flight, a nonprofit group devoted to finding remains of missing World War II service members. Korby Lenker (Humanities) recently released his sixth full-length album and first book of short stories, "Stuffed Piranha." He hopes to log 200 tour dates this year, he told the Idaho Statesman.

2002 - Matthew Hopkins (Theatre) is a puppeteer and puppet artist in Portland, Ore., and has worked on "Star Trek into Darkness," "Portlandia," "Grimm," "Sesame Street Workshop," and others. Kate Cox (Recreation) recently became an associate professor of recreation. Spikease, a cover for the spikes on track and field shoes, came in with the idea while running track at Western and donated the product to Western's track team to try it out. Dan Deutch (Political Science - Indian American Studies; '04, M.A., Political Science) is the public information officer for the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management.

2003 - Adam Gilbertson (Anthropology) recently completed his doctorate in Anthropology from the University of Oxford, where he studied food insecurity in Mombasa, Kenya. Barb Honchak (Cellular and Molecular Biology) is one of the top-ranked female mixed martial artists in the world and the first Invicta FC lightweight Champion. Angie Griffin (M.A., English) is a tech services librarian at the Wilton Manors Public Library in Florida. Griffin's wife, Julie Wade (M.A., English), is an assistant professor of Creative Writing at Florida International University in Miami. Her most recent volume of poetry is "When I was Straight." Poems from A Midsummer Night's Press, Rose Lathrop (Planning and Environmental Policy) became executive director of the Northwest American Institute of Architects.

2004 - Greg Troyer (Teaching Certificate) is a fifth-grade teacher at Spruce Elementary School in Edmonds and was named Elementary Teacher of the Year by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, No. 8870.

2005 - Lydia Ahn (Accounting) became a principal at VSH CPAs in Bellingham. Andy Hageman (M.A., English) is an assistant professor of English at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. He recently gave a talk about science fiction, "Theor from an Other Other" Andrew Joslyn (English - Literature) is a violinst, composer and orchestrator who recently toured with Macklemore and Ryan Lewis. He and his Passenger String Quartet also recently performed with Judy Collins at the Mount Baker Theatre in Bellingham. Dave Stitt (General Science - Secondary) is a math and science teacher at Peninsula High School known for incorporating humor and theatrics into his teaching. He recently told the Peninsula Gateway that a class at Western, "The Drama of Teaching," was instrumental in helping him engage his students.

Andriy Semenyuk is a journalist in Ukraine and helps produce "Ukraine in One Minute," an English-language news show on YouTube.

2006 - Steve Sherman (Theatre) is studying for a graduate degree in Acting at the University of Tennessee. He recently performed as Caleb in "The Whipping Man" at the Clarence Brown Theatre in Knoxville. Tents Hannah (Root) Jones (English - Literature) completed her master's degree in English Literature at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 2010 and published her first novel, "Monochromes," in 2013. These days, she teaches college composition at the Port Gamble S'kiallarm branch of Northwest Indian College and manages Elite Indie Reads, a website that highlights the best in self- and indie-published books. Kate Bystone (General Studies) became a program director for RE Sources in Bellingham. Andy Buckman (Anthropology) returned to Bellingham after five years in China and opened Great Horse Teas in Fairhaven.

2007 - Zach Kyle (Journalism) covers business for the Idaho Statesman. Brett Jenkins (Accounting) is an internal auditor for Russell Investments in Seattle. Lisa LeClaire (Journalism - Public Relations) became product implementation supervisor at Dynacraft, a division of PACCAR in
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Algonia.
Matthew George (Biology - Ecology) recently completed his veterinary degree at Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, Calif., and became a veterinarian at the Kitsap Humane Society in Silverdale.

Alex Nicely (Marine Biology) became the youth volunteer coordinator at the Point Defiance Zoo in Tacoma.

Micaela O’Brien (American Cultural Studies) earned a master’s degree in social work at the University of Washington and is a temporary case manager for Aging and Disability Services.

Andrew Dumont was named to Forbes’ "30 under 30" list of top young marketing executives.

2008 - Larissa Kelly (Communication Sciences and Disorders; ’12, M.A., Speech Language Pathology) became a speech-language pathologist at Central Florida Speech and Hearing Center in Lakeland, Fla.

Travis Platt (General Studies) lives in Los Angeles and is the co-creator and co-host of "BLITZED," a weekly NFL Web show that takes place in a neighborhood bar.

Jacob Lippold (Political Science) became the golf pro and general manager at Peninsula Golf Club in Port Angeles.

Brady Henderson (Journalism) is the editor of 710Sports.com.

2009 - Andriy Semenyuk (General Studies) is a multimedia journalist for Worldwide News Ukraine. He helps produce "Ukraine in One Minute," a series of English-language news stories on YouTube.

Tyler Amaya (General Studies) became assistant men’s basketball coach at Skagit Valley College.

Stephanie Morell (Communication, Journalism - Public Relations) became the marketing director for the Bellingham Bells baseball team.

Meredith Ryan (History) recently received certification to take her own criminal cases in Hampden County District Court in Springfield, Mass.

Anna Brim (Music - Theatre, Communication) recently graduated with a master’s degree in hospitality management from California State Polytechnic University - Pomona.

An article based on her graduate thesis, "The Sustainability of Food Served at Wedding Banquets," was published in the Journal of Culinary Science and Technology. She now works with catering and convention services at The Disneyland Resort.

Danielle Campomar (English - Literature) is a blogger and collection of essays, "A Twenty-Something Nothing," was recently published by Thought Catalog.

Ryan Henderson (M.Ed., Educational Administration) is principal of Beverly Elementary School in Lynnwood.

2010 - Gabrielle Nomura (Journalism), co-founder of the Relay Dance Collective, collaborated with Seattle Kokon Taiko to create a dance piece that tells the story of the Japanese-American World War II experience. Scheduled performances include June 7 at the Wild Horse Museum.

Kelsey Morinich (Biochemistry) is a medical student at the University of New Mexico.

Alexa Morris (English - Creative Writing) is the marketing coordinator for the Clark County Fair and Event Center.

Her marketing campaigns, including social media, electronic newsletters and brochures, recently won awards at the International Association of Fairs and Festivals Annual Convention.

Angela Kiser (Dance) recently performed in "Positivity," a dance-theatre piece exploring the lives of people who have been affected by HIV/AIDS.

The Bellingham production was created by Pam Kuntz, a senior instructor in Western’s Dance program.

Jeff Cunningham (History) has served as a docent at the Museum of History and Industry and recently became co-president of the Magnolia Historical Society in Seattle.

Tristan Hiegler (Journalism) became a reporter for the Herald and News in Klamath Falls, Ore. He covers public safety, transportation and the school district.

Benjamin Miller and Melanie Viviott (Business Administration) signed as a forward with the Orange County Blues Football Club in Southern California.

Bardsley has also played for the Charlotte Eagles and the Dayton Dutch Lions.

Bill Baumann (Planning and Environmental Policy - Disaster Reduction and Emergency Planning) is an AmeriCorps volunteer working in the emergency management department for the city of Everett.

Evan Marczynski (Journalism) became associate editor of the Bellingham Business Journal.

2013 - Jeff Allen (Finance) became winery accountant for Asselta Vineyard and is also enrolled in Washington State University’s Viticulture Certificate Program.

Stevie Olsen (Mathematics - Elementary) teaches first and second grade in the Mukilteo School District.

John Allen (General Studies) became a coordinator for the Sioux Falls Skyforce NBA development team.

Patrick Castelli (Kinesiology) won the North American Strongman National Championship in the 175-pound weight class.

Deatherage (Planning and Environmental Policy) became a policy assistant at Lehman McShane Strategies in Bellingham.

Most recently, Deatherage worked with Whatcom Wins, a coordinated campaign of four county council candidates.

Katie Berry (English - Creative Writing) became a member of the Alaska Board of Education.

Viticulture Certificate Program.

Kathleen Yarr became a member of the Alaska Board of Education.

Marriages and Unions

James Allen (’13, Community Health) and Kirsten Haan on Aug. 30, 2013, in Ferndale.

Isaac Robin Levin (’10, Management Information Systems) and Ariana Christine Rodriguez (’11, English Literature) on June 22, 2013, in Danby, Vt.


Christopher Parrish (’09, Geography) and Katja Trygg (’06, Exercise Science) on Oct. 12, 2013, in Bend, Ore.

Jeffrey Miller and Melanie Viviott (’08, Business Administration) on Sept. 1, 2013, in Seattle.

Kyle Nelson (’05, Psychology) and Corinne Turner (’06, Communications Sciences and Disorders; ’09, M.A., Speech Language Pathology) on July 20, 2013, in Bellingham.

Annie Griffin (’03, M.A., English) and Julie Marie Wade (’03, M.A., English) on Feb. 24, 2014, at The Black Cat in Bellingham, where they had celebrated their joint poetry thesis defense in 2003.


Jason Ford (’82, Geography) and Keith Vargas on Dec. 18, 2013, in San Diego.

Obituaries

1942 – Grace (Hastie) Rydberg, 99, a talented gardener, active community volunteer and former employee at Fidalgo Care Center, on Dec. 4, 2013, in Anacortes.


1948 – Lt. Col. Joyce A. Christopher (Ret.), 85, who served as a nurse in
the U.S. Army for more than 20 years, including during the Korean War, on Oct. 15, 2013, in Bellingham.


1953 – Donald F. George, 87, a retired teacher in the Monroe and Everett school districts, on Sept. 2, 2013, in Albuquerque, N.M.


1957 – Roland “Rollie” DeKoster, 79, retired teacher and football, baseball and basketball coach at Lynden High School, and a member of the Western Athletics Hall of Fame, on March 11, 2014, in Lynden.


1967 – Maureen Elise (Madden) Hallgrimson, 66, a retired office manager and former coordinator of Western’s foreign studies program who later worked for two decades in international student exchange, on Jan. 14, 2014.


1972 – Glenn Robin Hadland, 67, a member of Western’s All-Century Football Team, on Oct. 29, 2013, in Henderson, Nev.


1975 – Cristine Chandler, a retired psychologist and professor who specialized in working with families of troubled children, on July 26, 2012, on Orcas Island.

1976 – Larry Dale Heimark, 60, a research chemist who patented an antifungal drug and published several research articles and book chapters, on Aug. 23, 2013, in Big Bar, Calif.


1993 – Mary Margaret Abrams Haskell, 92, on Nov. 1, 2013.


1999 – Yancy Alan Salenjus, 38, a former firefighter in Marysville, on March 10, 2014.


2011 – Charles Powell, 83, a retired teacher in schools in Kent, Everson, and former sales executive, on March 6, 2014.


Charles J. "Jerry" Flora
1928-2013

Dr. Flora, who served as Western’s president from 1967 to 1975, died on Dec. 22, 2013, at age 85.

By Charles J. "Jerry" Flora

One of my survivors will have to put in the date because as I write this shortly after my 80th birthday, I have no clue when it will happen. But on that date, I, Charles J. "Jerry" Flora, will have kicked the bucket. There is no sadness in this because I have simply done what so many before me have done and all others will do. Just think what a mess this biosphere would quickly become if none of us ever bit the dust! But enough of that. This is my obituary and I am supposed to talk about the stuff of my life, at least some of it; so here it goes.

JOYFUL THINGS: The most joyful event in my time on terra firma was (is) getting to know a young lady teacher named Amelia Rosemary Germain. Marrying her in 1950 was by far and away the best thing I have ever done. Together we had four beloved children: Deva, Chris, Kim and Lise. Then three equally beloved grandchildren: Etosha, Addeson and Keana. Rosemary and I were very close in all matters of things financial, educational, political, professional and personal. When we grew too old to focus on such youthful endeavors, we became certified SCUBA divers and proceeded to investigate living reefs (bioherms) in many parts of the world’s oceans. This brought us into contact with people in many wonderful places including the Republic of Kiribati and enriched our lives to the end.

The second most joyful event in my time was joining the faculty of Western Washington College of Education (now WWU) and confirming my expectation that, for me, teaching young people would be the most exciting, stimulating and rewarding possible profession.

STUPID THINGS: My life has been fraught with stupid things, mostly because of what Rosemary refers to as my macho tendencies. As a college youth I once tried to swim across the Wabash River as the winter ice started to break and sought to earn money by parachuting at air shows. The latter earned me three right hip replacements in my later years. As I grew older and wiser, machismo declined but never disappeared. As I approached my 77th year, Rosemary and I were riding in a small wooden boat in the Tarawa Lagoon with the president of the Republic of Kiribati, Anote Tong, at the helm and his two children as crew, when I shouted at the body guards in an escort boat, "WAHOO, WAHOO!" to stimulate a race in the choppy water. The products of this were compression fractures of my lower vertebrae and I was evacuated by a Lear jet to Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle. Rosemary was much too tough to be damaged. Also, too many times, I scuba dived too deep and stayed out too long mostly because my wife was too eager to get one more wonderful underwater photograph. All together, I had no right to live this long, but am glad I did.

EXCITING THINGS: Surely the most exciting event in my married life was watching one of our children enter this world. Being Western’s president was exciting at first but might better be listed above stupid things. I accepted the job of out of vanity, but once that wore off, I was left with enormous periods of boring letter writing, budget preparing, etc. Some student protests were exciting and on occasion an accomplishment was rewarding. But, on balance I wish I had stayed in the classroom working with young people. The most exciting professional events of my life were teaching field courses here and in the Pacific islands; and the most fabulous of these was a nine-week summer course in which Rosemary and I escorted 13 bright upper division students to reefs on several islands in the central Pacific Ocean.

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF: Attending Purdue University, a summer at University of Wisconsin, a year at Manchester College and earning graduate degrees at the University of Florida were good things to do. Spending some time in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps during the Korean conflict was interesting. Working with Al Swift at KVOS doing "Tidepool Critters" was stimulating, doing the weather for Andy Anderson on the 10:30 report for a couple of years was O.K. but caused me enormous embarrassment for reporting one night that "the terrible drought in Missouri had killed 3 1/2 chickens that day," when I had meant to say 3.5 million. Working with Jerry Kraft to study Lake Whatcom starting in the 1960’s was good, helping to create the Sundquist Marine Laboratory in Anacortes was splendid as was helping Huxley College come into existence and so much more made life truly wonderful. Being close to Sam Kelly, Alan Ross and Frank Atwood as they gave birth to the Whatcom Community College (without walls) is a great memory and teaching there for a year after I retired was good even though walls had been added.

Though never a skillful writer, I helped produce a few things. The most rewarding book was "The Sound and the Sea," co-authored with Eugene Fairbanks; rewarding because it enabled Rosemary and me to buy some nice furniture. "Normal College Knowledge" was a joy to write and working with the old men of the Lunch Bunch to help create "WWU! As it was," was a fine capstone to later life. My most satisfying writing experiences had to do with Pacific islands e.g. "The SHRIMPER’S Maui," "Abemama an Atoll," and "Karakinakian Taneia (seashore stories)." The most boring was "Seashore Activities" which I was sure I would be struggling with on my terminal day but to my surprise I finished it even though I hated it. There were other things too, such as a few papers including some about microatolls with co-authors Pete Ely and Rosemary Flora, an instructional manual, accreditation reports and things I can’t recall at the moment.

CONCLUSION: College professors, especially old ones, tend to yammer endlessly. I had thought to list the names of more people who were especially important in my life but there are way too many. The Bellingham Herald and the Lynden Tribune combined are not big enough. Thank you all and have a good life.

Cheers,

Charles J. "Jerry" Flora.

Memorials in Dr. Flora’s name may be made to the WWU Foundation, 516 High St., Old Main 430, Bellingham, 98225, directed to the Biology Department.

Photo courtesy of Western Washington University Libraries Special Collections
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