



Western Washington University
Western CEDAR

Klipsun Magazine

Western Student Publications

Fall 2015

Klipsun Magazine, 2015, Volume 46, Issue 01 - Fall

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Latronica, Leesy, "Klipsun Magazine, 2015, Volume 46, Issue 01 - Fall" (2015). *Klipsun Magazine*. 259.
https://cedar.wwu.edu/klipsun_magazine/259

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KLIPSUN

FALL / 2015



F L U X

editor's note



If you've stood ankle-deep in the ocean, you may know the magic. I remember peering down toward my ankles as waves broke and rolled onto the shore. When the water would retreat, the backwards drag created a distinct floating illusion, as if the ebbing tide was pulling me out to sea along with it.

Or perhaps you've seen your share of Bellingham Bay sunsets. When the sky shifts and the sun sinks with it, if the right elements align, the diffused light creates a giant scoop of rainbow sherbet melting over the horizon.

The simplest sets of motion can produce grand moments.

Flux is defined as "the action or process of flowing or flowing out," or "continuous change."

At Klipsun Magazine, we are constantly in a state of forward motion. With each new quarter and each new issue, one generation of writers and staff flows out as another flows in. The faces you see and stories you read while flipping through the spring edition are shed in time for fall and winter, but their significance is preserved in every past page.

Amid the inherent and perpetual change on Western's campus and in the Bellingham community, Klipsun aims to keep evolving to fit our readers' needs and interests.

Our previous issue, *Timeless*, marked a shift from a bi-quarterly to a quarterly and online-first publication. With *Flux*, we embrace the restorative nature of change.

We encourage you to observe each gradient in the next sunset, to find your equivalent moment of magic, or allow us to tell you a story and transport you to another person's world for a moment. Step into an ancient bead shop or medieval village, follow a henna crown artist from a writer's personal perspective, or learn how people in juvenile detention reflect and connect with paper and pencil.

While this is our tribute to forward motion, take a second to pause and flip through.

Leesy Latronica

◀ COVER DESIGN BY SKYLAR AIETA | PHOTO BY DANNY MILLER ▶



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KLIPSUN

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STUDENT PUBLICATION OF
WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



BABY STEPS

Western's First Step physical therapy program

I gave up climbing stairs my freshman year at Western. While living in the dorms and getting to know the campus and surroundings, I developed chronic knee pain — searing, I-want-to-cry-but-am-in-public pain. After nearly half a dozen doctors' appointments to figure out what was happening to me, I was diagnosed with chondromalacia patella: runner's knee. This was a surprise, as I am not a runner, but tell that to my angry kneecaps. I spent my first winter break in college attending physical therapy.

PHYSICAL INJURY CAN HAPPEN TO anyone for any number of reasons. For example, approximately 88 percent of college musicians develop a playing-related injury, according to a 2000 study in the journal *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*. Injury can severely limit mobility or motivation for movement, and busy university students may not always have time to stop and deal with pain or discomfort, even if it is hindering their lives. The Wade King Student Recreation Center offers a way to address this issue: the First Step program.

Housed in an unassuming section of the recreation center — past the rock wall and attendant desk, neighboring the MAC Gym — is the Injury Rehabilitation Clinic. This small, quiet room

is a world away from the bright, full-tilt, sometimes-quixotic atmosphere of the rest of the recreation center environment. In addition to providing longer-term and athlete-specific physical therapy, this clinic is where the First Step journey begins.

First Step is a program created by campus recreation clinical athletic trainer Lori deKubber, a Western alumna who has been working as a trainer at the university for 25 years. After moving from the Student Health Center to campus recreation in 2012, deKubber found a void to fill.

"In injury rehabilitation [work], I noticed a gap between treating an injury and some of the other ways that people get exercise and other activity in their life," deKubber says.

When she recognized the many people who fell into that gap, deKubber sought to provide a service to fulfill that need. First Step was born in 2012. Since then, approximately 20 people per quarter have used the program, which is free to all Western students and staff.

The First Step program is implemented in several stages.

First is an initial muscular-skeletal evaluation to determine any physical limitations or other bodily concerns, which addresses what the client wants to be able to do, activity-wise. This involves a series of tests checking flexibility and movement

▲ *Marina Stoermer, second from left, leads a First Step class by showing a dance routine in the Wade King Student Recreation Center on Western's campus. First Step classes are instructed by Western kinesiology students and the classes offer a range of activities such as swimming, hiking and Ultimate Frisbee.*

patterns, including a walking simulation wherein the client holds a bamboo rod across their shoulders, Mulan-training-montage-style, and carefully steps over a mini-hurdle placed in front of them, touching their heels to the ground.

Then, clients have three personalized sessions, each an hour long, with a trainer who works solely with that individual for their time in the program. For example, if a client has chronic knee pain but wants to be able to have the improved mobility to go on hikes, the team will focus on strengthening or flexibility exercises addressing the movement patterns found in the assessment examination.

By the last session, the trainer and client have formed a regimen that the client can hopefully continue with on their own, ranging from series of stretches and strengthening exercises to embarking on a new type of movement activity. First Step also facilitates connections to other campus groups and services, such as additional personal training and intramural opportunities, that can fulfill client goals, as well as any necessary program follow-up needs.

All eight trainers are kinesiology students who have been personal-trainer certified and selectively hired for the program. This hands-on experience with training is beneficial for students who want to stand out in an academic field that has seen substantial growth across the nation. The American Kinesiology Association estimates that the number of undergraduate majors grew 50 percent from 2003 to 2008, according to an article from Inside Higher Ed, a professional educator development and news website.

Western senior Marina Stoermer is a pre-healthcare kinesiology student and the lead trainer in the Injury Rehabilitation Clinic. Stoermer is in charge of organizing First Step Wednesday activities, weekly hour-long classes with a social, non-competitive movement focus, to encourage participants to engage without barriers such as the fear of pressure or comparison. Interested community members can participate, even if they are not currently enrolled in the individual First Step program. Activities vary from pool days and dancing to hide-and-seek and jump-roping.

Both deKubber and Stoermer are emphatic about the program's holistic and sustainable practices.

"We want people to find activities they can do for the rest of their lives," deKubber says. deKubber says having fun with

"WE WANT TO SPREAD INFORMATION THAT IS EMPOWERING, RATHER THAN SHAMING. [EMPOWERMENT] IS A MAIN GOAL OF OURS."


body movement is something highly stressed throughout the program.

Stoermer says that there is a preconceived notion that exercise has to be hard or uncomfortable.

"[Exercise] should be fun movements you love to do — pickleball, dancing, swimming, knitting — anything you would want to keep doing," she says.

The program focuses on any movement activities that clients like or are interested in, rather than a difficult or tedious approach to exercise, deKubber says. Restrictive ideas of ideal activities, weights, body types and eating habits such as fad dieting can present issues, she says.

"We just don't buy into that," she says. "We want to spread information that is empowering, rather than shaming. [Empowerment] is a main goal of ours."

Whether participants want to climb stairs or climb a mountain, the people in the First Step program want to help members of the Western community get moving and keep going. 

▼ *Participants in the First Step rehabilitation program are silhouetted as they dance during a class in the Wade King Student Recreation Center on Western's campus. The weekly, hour-long classes are open to students and faculty seeking more fluid body movement.*



FROM PARIS TO BLAINE

Resort chef's zest for life translates to the kitchen



THE MAZE OF HALLWAYS AND

corridors through the Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine, Washington, ends at Pierside Kitchen and Packers Oyster Bar, with a sprawling view of Drayton Harbor and British Columbia in the distance. The smell of fresh seafood welcomes guests to the two restaurants. A friendly voice with a distinguished French accent carries out from one of the kitchens.

When Eric A. Truglas was a child, members of his family owned dairy, fish and other shops at a farmers market in his native Paris, exposing him to the world of food at a young age. He grew up and attended the Culinary State School in Paris before he went on to get a degree in hotel and

restaurant management. Now 49, Truglas is the culinary director at the Semiahmoo Resort.

In his work, Truglas focuses on the farm-to-table philosophy, showcasing local ingredients and creating dishes inspired by the Pacific Northwest. Truglas has worked in places all over the world, from London to the West Indies, and eventually landed in the United States, where he continues to expand his knowledge and grow as a chef.

When Truglas first came to the United States, he worked at the Meridian Hotel in Boston, where there is an annual clam chowder contest that every hotel and restaurant enters, he says. After coming up short the first year, Truglas and his team did their research, came back and

▲ *Eric A. Truglas passes a plate of fresh house-made artisan bread topped with Dungeness crab, arugula and tomato vinaigrette in Packers Oyster Bar.*

claimed the win the second year. He's done many versions of chowder, including alligator tail when he worked in Florida. Now, he uses fresh Washington fish for the signature seafood chowder at Packers, a dish he likes to top with Tabasco hot sauce, he says.

Each morning before work, Truglas drops off his two kids, 8-year-old Vinzent and 12-year-old Sophia, at school. Fresh seafood gets delivered to Blaine three days a week, so he often heads to the local dock to make sure everything is in order before making his way to the resort. Once there, it's time to do a tour of his operation: he heads to Pierside first to check on breakfast, then the banquet kitchen, always greeting his staff to set an optimistic tone for the day. After that he attends multiple meetings and then retreats to his office until it's time to repeat the process for lunch, and later, dinner.

"Some chefs manage directly from the office and people come to them," Truglas says. "I like to manage from the operation; being available and walking through is the best way to manage a place."

Andrew Cross is chef de cuisine at Packers and Pierside, and effectively, Truglas' right hand man. Both chefs have similar management styles that focus on working closely with their staff, having a laidback mindset and supportive energy all while maintaining a productive atmosphere. Truglas is a demanding boss, but is very understanding and always willing to work alongside his staff, Cross says.

On Valentine's Day in 2014, one of the dish-washers ended up being a no-show, and Truglas was the first person to jump in and start knocking out the dirty dishes, Cross says. Truglas' humble attitude is one of the reasons Cross admires him, he says. Plus, Truglas' heart is undeniably still in the food, even though his job isn't centered on cooking anymore.

"The higher up you move, the further you get from cooking, and you're using your nice pen instead of your knife," he says. "You have to stay close to that because if not, you lose that happiness."

Traveling is a hobby Truglas has enjoyed all his life that also saves him from getting worn out by his work, which is especially easy to do as a chef, he says. Whenever he needs to take a break from the hustle and bustle of his work, he'll take some time off to travel.

"You should always travel when you can," Truglas says. "Traveling will expand your mind. There's nothing to lose except a few bucks, and it's not really losing, it's investing."

Every year, Truglas makes a trip back to France with Vinzent and Sophia, who spend



their summer vacations with their grandma in Southern France. Truglas returns to Blaine after a few days, but rejoins his family at the end of the season to spend a couple of weeks in his home country and reconnect with his roots.

"My mother lives in a small town south of Paris, so it's very different [from here]. My daughter loves it over there. Every year it's like she doesn't want to come back," Truglas says with a laugh. "I think it's good for them to be exposed to that culture as well."

One aspect of Truglas' job that keeps him close to his passion for food is designing the dishes and menus with Cross. Their first considerations are always what is in season at the time, and once he and Cross have an idea for a dish, what ingredients they can use that are local. The fresh and local philosophy is exemplified in many of the dishes, using fresh fish from Lummi Island and local beer for the fish-and-chips beer batter.

Once the full dish has been conceptualized, they then price the items in the recipe to see how much it will cost to make so they can figure out a selling price. After the process is completed for each dish and the menu is completed, each item is prepared so the kitchen and wait staff can ask questions and sample the dishes.

Truglas has been working at Semiahmoo for two years, but he still feels like it was just yesterday that he was first arriving in Blaine, which is a good sign, he says.

"You have to be passionate about being in the food business," Truglas says. "It's a lifestyle, and if you pace yourself, you'll stay in it for a long time." ■

▲ *An oyster plate in Packers Oyster Bar features oysters from across the Pacific coast of Washington, keeping up with Semiahmoo's theme of local and sustainable seafood.*



EYES ON THE SKY

Local group strives to protect birds and their environments

SEVERAL BIRDS FLIT ACROSS THE

gray sky as rain trickles down. A dozen binoculars pan upward, tracking the animals in flight.

The bird watching begins before the group leaves the parking lot, with all participants aware of the birds chirping as they congregate.

The group then traipses through brush and thicket as they make their way to an open field framed by trees on three sides.

Steve Harper, the field trip organizer, collects the 12 participants and leads them further into a vast grassy space near Lake Whatcom in Bellingham.

"One of the reasons I'm bringing you out here is because it's land trust property, so anyone can come out here anytime," Harper says. "It's a great birding spot."

For members of the North Cascade Audubon Society, this is a typical day as bird watching enthusiasts.

The North Cascade Audubon Society (NCAS) was established in 1970 and formed as a chapter of the National Audubon Society (NAS). At the time of NCAS' creation, there was a national push on environmental politics within the chapters.

NCAS has since come back to emphasize education about birds and their welfare as well as wildlife and bird habitat defense.

Paul Woodcock is the current vice president of the local chapter and has been an avid birder and outdoorsman since 1950.

Birding was stereotyped as a nerdy or geeky hobby when he started decades ago, Woodcock says. By the time he joined NCAS in 1973, there had been a spike in popularity as younger generations became more environmentally aware.

Pam Borso, NCAS President, has been with the society since 2008 and became president in 2013.

"I love the programs," Borso says. "I like that they are very welcoming, that they invite beginning birders to come and they sponsor field trips where people can take these skills out into the wild and practice."

NCAS is currently composed of more than 150 paying members and invites all levels of birders to join activities to advance skills and learn about different birding and environmental topics.

"It is really in cooperation with National Audubon, who are trying to educate people as to what the possible ramifications of climate change are," Woodcock says. "People who have been watching birds for years see the changes in their ranges."

Such changes include hummingbirds beginning to live in Bellingham year-round. When Woodcock first came to the city, they were considered rare and were barely present in the 1950s and 60s, he says.

Woodcock describes this change as a shift

▲ *Dick Porter, a Fairhaven resident who has been birding for five years, peers through binoculars looking for a woodpecker. "I spent my whole life inside on computers, so this is the other side of me," Porter says.*

STORY CONTINUED ON PG. 8

► Bellingham resident Judith Akins peers through her binoculars with a birding book for identification in hand. "People are trying to protect the environment, but first you need to know what's in the environment," Akins says.



► Steve Harper, a North Cascade Audubon Society trip organizer, leads the way during an outing near Lake Whatcom.



► Bill Denham, of British Columbia, gazes up to the trees alongside other birders during a North Cascade Audubon Society expedition near Lake Whatcom. Denham has been birding for about three years.



According to the National Audubon Society, there are four strategies for reducing the impacts of climate change and improving birds' lives and habitats for many years to come.

1.



Relocate traditional energy sources such as drill rigs away from critical bird habitats. Thus far, NAS has moved 15 million acres of western oil and gas wells, according to NAS.

2.



Push for more alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar, which have less of an impact on the environment.

3.



Reduce emissions, which begins with changes to legislation and public policy that help to lower the standard of emissions use.

4.



Use models created by data collected in collaboration with other studies, which help identify bird habitats and species that are affected by climate change. Anticipating impacts can deliver preemptive solutions.



north for the birds. It's indicative of the fact that the climate is getting warmer, keeping birds in the area. Hummingbirds are being pushed to the brink of extinction because of this change, restricting their habitats so much that they may not have anywhere to go, he says.

Making people more aware of this information is a benefit to NAS, creatures and environment alike.

Birds may soon face earlier migration dates due to changing climate, Woodcock says. This prediction means resources they depend on during migration would be out of sync with the pattern and result in an endangered existence, he says.

NCAS is presently partnering with Whatcom Land Trust to count birds and collaboratively work toward protecting their habitat. They support the Whatcom Land Trust in finding money to purchase or to get conservation easements on private property so that it's protected as wildlife habitat, Woodcock says. By monitoring birds and water quality in the land trust area, they can track the implications climate change may have on bird populations.

NCAS participants are enthusiastic about educating community members about bird populations and remain hopeful for the future of birds.

▲ *Ken Salzman, front, Bill Denham, middle, and Mike Tanis, locate a bird during a North Cascade Audubon Society outing near Lake Whatcom.*

"I REALLY LIKE THE IDEA OF PRESERVING AS MUCH OF WHAT WE HAVE AS WE CAN, SO THAT OUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS CAN GET OUT THERE AND SEE WHAT THESE ANIMALS DO IN THE WILD."

"[I'm passionate about] the possibility that we will have some places in nature where people will be able to go and enjoy nature just as it is," Borso says. "I really like the idea of preserving as much of what we have as we can, so that our kids and grandkids can get out there and see what these animals do in the wild and how they interact in their world to actually pique their curiosity and to get them to be lifelong learners."

Back on the shores of Lake Whatcom, binoculars pan the surface looking for flapping wings and splashing water.

All is quiet except for the chirping birds and the crunch of gravel and sand under feet. The majority of the group turns away after awhile,

heading back toward the path.

As they begin their journey back, one birder pushes their ears forward to get a better listen of the songbirds singing in the distance. Listening while bird watching is just as important, if not more, than observing the wildlife.


"You're probably wondering why people go birding," Harper says.

At first the group pauses, then they each give their own reason. Among the overlapping chatter, phrases such as "keeps people centered," "treasure hunt," "relaxing" and "increases awareness" hang in the air as the answers stop flowing.

"Listen," one birder says suddenly.

Harper stops and glances up to the tress. He observes for a moment and then puts his binoculars to his eyes.

Harper takes them down again and asks a fellow birder, "Do you see it?"

The fellow birder replies, "No, but I hear it." 

▼ *Members of the North Cascade Audubon Society shift focus to the sky during a birding expedition near Lake Whatcom. "Birding leads to learning about the details around us," says Paul Sarvasy, second from the left.*



A COMMON THREAD

Local nonprofit finds new homes for old fabrics



A LARGE, WAREHOUSE-LIKE BUILDING with concrete floors and bare white walls has its garage doors open on a mild spring afternoon. A musty smell leaks out, indicating the age of its contents. Piles of fabric sit in neat stacks on wooden tables and in boxes on ceiling-high bookshelves. The piles are divided into fabric types, labeled “knits” or “t-shirt material.”

Immediately to the left of the building’s entrance are nearly 45 kimonos dangling from hangers on a metal clothing rack. All the fabric in the building used to be something else before it was cut and stacked, but these kimonos are some of the only pieces left in their original form.

Ragfinery is a downtown Bellingham nonprofit founded in April 2014 that specializes in upcycling fabrics — remaking them into something new and usable — while providing job training for the clients of its parent company, ReUse Works. ReUse Works is a nonprofit in Whatcom County

that focuses on waste recycling and job creation for low-income individuals.

Approximately 15.7 percent of all textiles are donated or recycled, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The rest makes its way into landfills, where only some natural materials such as cotton decompose. With 14.3 million tons of textiles created every year, this means about 2.25 million tons of textiles wind up in landfills annually.

Providing a new use for fabrics that otherwise would have been thrown away is one of Ragfinery’s main focuses.

Ragfinery also offers sewing, weaving and quilt-making classes and a consignment area for local garment-makers and artists to sell their wares. Most of the consignment items sold are upcycled, but rarely, vintage items such as the currently displayed kimonos sneak in, says Shan Sparling, Ragfinery’s business manager.


▲ *Sara West, a Northwest Workforce intern, folds and sorts fabric in the Ragfinery. West decided that Ragfinery would be a fun and creative place to intern.*



bought were turned into large pieces of art, the few remaining at Ragfinery await a new artist or wearer.

Instead of relying on grants or donations as many nonprofits do, ReUse Works, Ragfinery and its sister company, Appliance Depot -- which repairs and sells appliances that otherwise would have wound up in the dump -- are entirely self-sufficient, says ReUse Work's media specialist, Dallas Betz.

"What we hope to be is a creative hub for ideas. We want to inspire people to figure out how to make new things out of something old," Sparling says.

In the meantime, Evan's kimonos will sit untouched, along with the donated pieces of linens, children's old ballerina costumes and huge rolls of sheepskin lying amid the hum of the fabric-cutting machine. 

▲ (top) Phyllis Evans laughs as she speaks with Ragfinery business manager Shan Sparling. Evans gave Ragfinery all but three of her favorite kimonos and more than half of them sold within the first month. (below) A mirror reflects Sally Briton as she sorts fabric. Behind her, a curtain blocks off the employee work area, where employees compress bushels of clothing and fabric to send to Africa.

"I had to basically talk the director into it," Sparling says. "It was a one-time situation for us. We're actually hoping people take some of these kimonos and upcycle them."

The kimonos have recently found a new home at Ragfinery after belonging to local artist Phyllis C. Evans since the early 1990s. A whip-smart woman with a tell-it-as-it-is attitude, "frail" is the last word to use to describe Evans.

"The thing with Phyllis is that she's pretty special," Sparling says. "She has that little twinkle in her eye."

Evans originally purchased three or four bales of kimonos and ended up collecting close to 800.

The kimonos on display in Ragfinery are the last of her collection. She bought each bale for about \$800 from a showroom in California selling thousands of kimonos brought back from Japan.

"Nobody in Japan wanted them," Evans says.

In the 90s, Japan was going through a period of westernization and discarding their kimonos in favor of Americanized clothing, selling their used kimonos to companies such as the one Evans and other artists bought them from.

Evans was particularly interested in the faded quality of the kimonos that reminded her of the places she visited in her travels through Europe.

After her husband died while she was in her sixties, Evans visited her paternal family in northern Italy for about a month. She traveled through the Alps and visited villages along the way. She took photos of her trips and had them printed in larger sizes when she returned home to Aberdeen, Washington.

"I've always worked with textiles and I've always liked sewing and that kind of thing," Evans says. "Forty years ago, I made a wall hanging that depicted a scene that I had in my mind from camping."

She used the enlarged photos to develop tapestry patterns, and then recreated those images using pieces of fabric she took from the kimonos. Over a period of three to four years, Evans used the kimonos to find the exact shades of fabric she needed for each photograph. Out of all the kimonos she bought, she says no two were alike.

Now living in the Leopold Retirement Residence in downtown Bellingham, Evans simply does not have the space in her apartment or a use for the 45 kimonos, so she turned to Ragfinery's consignment area to help her find them new homes.

While the majority of the kimonos Evans



LOCAL BEAT

Community-run radio station provides diverse listening experience

THE CRUNCHING SOUNDS OF

metallic guitar chords make their way down Flora Street, emitting from the depths of Make.Shift Art Space, an all-ages Bellingham music venue. Upon entering Make.Shift, the jarring music can be traced down to the basement, where a hodgepodge crowd of Bellingham residents is rocking out to local band Minor Plains. The audience is comprised of all walks of life, from a 7-year-old boy clinging happily to his punk-rock clad mother to an elderly woman head-banging in front of the loudest speaker. They have gathered here tonight for a benefit show hosted by local radio station 94.9 KVWV — FM.

KVWV is a low-power FM radio station established in 2013 that operates out of a studio on the first floor of Make.Shift. Upon walking into the studio, visitors will find an enormous poster on the main wall containing all the names of bands and radio personalities that people have requested over the years. An extensive music library lines the walls, as well as an old couch next

to the radio microphones and headsets.

"The idea of this whole station is that we will be able to play essentially whatever we want, and also represent the underrepresented voices in the community," says Make.Shift tenant and KVWV staff member Chris Headland.

Headland, 23, graduated from Western in fall 2014 with a bachelor's degree in communications and a minor in film studies. One of his biggest regrets of his college experience was not being involved in Western's radio station, KUGS 89.3 FM, Headland says. While KUGS is obligated to represent Western's agenda in terms of public announcements and music selection, Headland saw KVWV as the perfect opportunity to do things his own way.

The radio station is 100 watts, meaning it is listenable within a five- to seven-mile radius — making it a Bellingham-exclusive station. The funds received from benefit shows and events hosted by KVWV will go towards building a radio FM transmitter. The station's current goal is to

▲ KVWV-FM staff members Natalie Moore, left, and Chris Headland pose for a portrait in the radio station's studio. Moore and Headland have been integral in the fundraising and operation of the low-power FM radio station and they both feel that community radio equates to community power.

▼ *Grant Eadie of Manatee Commune is bathed in the light of a projector as he performs at the KVWV-FM Radio Benefit Show Saturday, April 18, 2015 at Make. Shift Art Space. The show was put on to raise funds for the online-only radio station, which plans on using the money to purchase a FM radio transmitter so that the station will be on the radio airwaves.*

be on the FM radio dial by 2016. KVWV currently streams online 24/7.

As long as KVWV streams exclusively online, the station does not need to abide by Federal Communications Commission guidelines. This makes it possible for listeners to hear a swear-word or two along with an endless flow of diverse radio content.

While KVWV is committed to giving more than half its airtime to local bands, other specialized music and talk shows are available for listening, from the soothing sounds of Celtic music to the provocative, unabashed representatives of the LGBTQ community. The talk shows performed on KVWV discuss a range of hot and controversial topics, and also feature different community members, Headland says.

"KVWV is a platform for the community to strengthen itself," Headland says. "It gives voices to people who don't typically get heard."

Low-power FM (LPFM) radio stations are small, non-commercial stations run by nonprofit organizations such as schools, community groups and churches, according to the Common Frequency (CF) website. CF is a radio advocacy group dedicated to launching new community and college radio stations by providing free and low-cost aid to these grassroots stations. With the help of CF, Make.Shift applied for the KVWV license in 2013. This may have been the last application window ever for LPFM stations, since the FCC has made no indication of opening

another application window, according to the KVWV website.

Community radio is community power, Headland says.

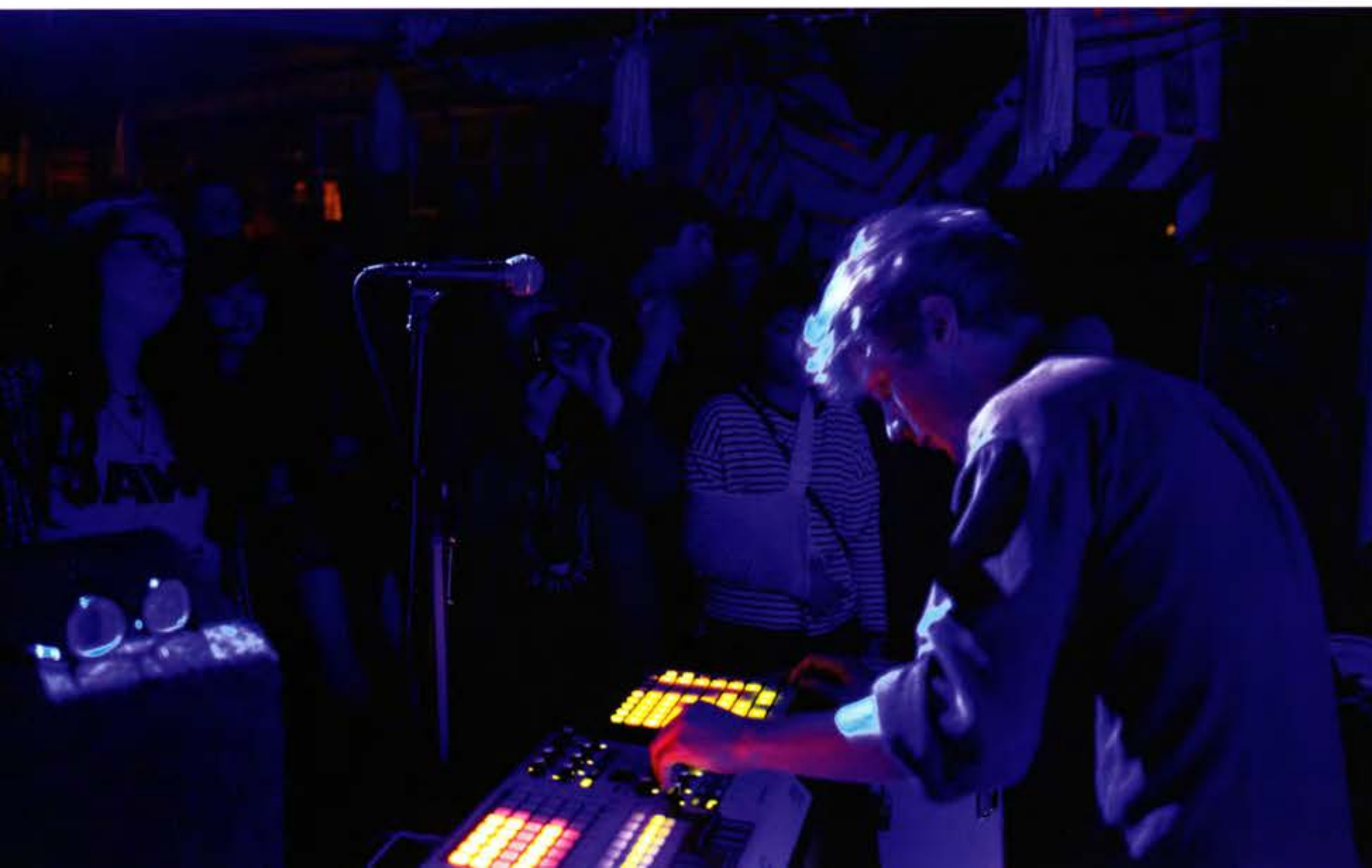
Essentially anything is possible with the current state of programming at KVWV, says KVWV staff member Natalie Moore. Different stations give voice to different people in Bellingham, and KVWV provides a listening experience suitable for all ages, Moore says.

Moore, 20, is a junior at Western who plans on studying physics. She has her own radio show on KUGS, and helps Headland coordinate KVWV benefit shows. Being involved in local radio allows her to experience a greater connection to Bellingham as a community and gives her a purpose outside of campus life, Moore says.

"I hope that I'll still be [involved in KVWV] for as long as I'll be living in Bellingham, because I know it's going to grow a lot in the next few years," Moore says.

KVWV staff members and volunteers will now be present at the Bellingham Farmers Market every Saturday so visitors can chat, record sound bites for radio and make donations, Moore says.

So far, KVWV is well on its way to raising its \$30,000 goal. As of April 25, KVWV raised \$25,500 courtesy of community contributions as well as private donors, according the KVWV website. At this rate, by early 2016, they may be able to turn their FM dial dreams into reality. ■



HEALING WITH HENNA

Artists create alternative option for those experiencing hair loss



I watched an artist draw a henna crown on my mother's bald head. Until now, she hid her scalp by adorning it with various hats and scarves. It was difficult watching clumps of hair fall from her head the day after my 21st birthday, but six months later it was decorated with flowers and patterns circling the entirety of where her hair used to be. This unwanted change in her life became beautiful.

DEBBIE AMUNDSON FELT HEALTHY.

But according to her doctor, cancer was spreading within her body: non-small cell adenocarcinoma, originating from lungs that had never inhaled a cigarette. Two years of radiation and chemotherapy treatment later, the 48-year-old mother of three was completely bald.

Type into Google search: "chemotherapy

hair loss options," and the first three options suggest hiding behind wigs, scarves or hats.

Amundson used those options for a couple months until she found an alternative, lesser-known option — a henna crown to cover the entirety of a chemotherapy patient's bald head.

HENNA CROWNS

"It's kind of nice to have a different option," Sarah Walters, a Kirkland henna artist says about the crowns. "And if you can do something artistic, unique and creative at the same time, I think that's a beautiful thing."

Sarah Walters has been providing free henna crowns for four years through her business, SARAHENNA. She estimates she has done 20-30 henna crowns.

During a henna crown appointment, the

▲ Sarah Walters provided free henna crowns at her home studio in Kirkland, Washington. An ornate design provides an alternative to wigs and hats for those experiencing hair loss.

client is invited into Walters' home studio. The studio has a warm, peaceful atmosphere with a view into a luscious, green backyard.

Walters mixes a henna paste recipe containing henna, sugar, water and essential oil extracted a couple hours before the appointment. The mix is subjective to each henna artist, but the essential oil is key, since chemotherapy patients can have high skin sensitivity.

Before the henna crown appointment, Walters talks with the client for a few minutes to inspire ideas for the crown. In the past, Walter has incorporated meaningful symbols, motifs, animals and quotes into some of her many henna crowns.

Once they settle on an idea, Walters starts the crown. As she draws the design, the client and Walters talk. Difficult emotions often come up, while tears flow.

"I have no idea what their prognosis looks like, yet they have a very positive attitude and they're maybe more joyful than I am," Walters says. "And it makes me stop and think. 'Why was I being such a baby earlier because my toast got burned?' It's the perspective thing."

Walters lost her stepdad in 2004 from a rare form of cancer called multiple myeloma. He died six months after his diagnosis at age 53.

His death came years before Walters had considered doing henna, but later influenced her desire to start creating henna crowns on a donation basis. Walters wants the crowns to be accessible, and this is her way of giving back.

Two years after Walters started doing crowns, she heard about the non-profit henna crown organization, Henna Heals, through other artists. The organization set up a list of henna artists around the world and connected artists to people who had lost their hair and were interested in crowns. Walters joined the organization.

HENNA HEALS

"[Henna Heals] originally started with the goal of trying to raise awareness of henna crowns," says Frances Darwin, founder of Henna Heals. "I thought that henna crowns would be a really great way to spread awareness of self-empowerment."

Darwin, a Toronto-native photographer, established the Henna Heals organization in 2011 after a trip to San Francisco, during which she met a local henna crown artist.



"I THOUGHT THAT HENNA CROWNS
WOULD BE A REALLY
GREAT WAY TO SPREAD AWARENESS
OF SELF-EMPOWERMENT."

Within two years, various media outlets caught on and covered stories on Henna Heals.

After the media coverage, more artists contacted Henna Heals to join the organization and more crowns were being requested.

Walters was one of the artists that contacted Henna Heals. Another was 18-year-old Camas High School senior, Abby Engel.

ABBY

Around the same time Henna Heals started, Abby Engel was first introduced to henna.

At 13, Engel had always been artistic. One day, she was puffy-painting a shirt and started painting on herself – swirling designs and doodles covering her hand.

Her mother's friend was visiting that same day and told Engel that those swirling designs strongly resembled henna. They went to Whole Foods, picked up a henna kit and Engel has been drawing henna ever since.

Years later, during her senior year of high school, a friend tagged Engel on Facebook in a 2014 Henna Heals article.

Engel knew she wanted to make a difference in people's lives, so she joined the organization.

A few months after joining, her first appointment was with a 20-year-old with an autoimmune disease, alopecia, which results in hair loss. Engel drew a unique design incorporating a sun, moon and feathers, with jewelry-like henna twirling around the front of the scalp.

After Engel's first henna crown appointment, she was featured in a Vancouver, Washington, newspaper, The Columbian, and on a Portland broadcasting station, KGW News.

CONNECTIONS

One morning, Debbie Amundson picked up *The Columbian* to see Engel's henna crowns.

For five months, Amundson had no hair. She never publically announced her baldness or displayed her scalp. Trying on hats at the store, she'd peek around to see if anyone was looking, throw off the hat she was wearing and pull on the new hat.

However, henna crowns intrigued Amundson. Through mutual friends, she was able to contact Engel and set up an appointment.

Amundson and her daughters were invited into Engel's home. They sat in a sunlit room with soft music playing in the background, while Engel and Amundson discussed designs for the crown. Engel started the crown with a flower, and eventually swirling details spread across the entirety of Amundson's head.

Amundson changed her Facebook profile picture to a photograph her daughter had taken, showing the end result of the crown. This was the first time she shared her baldness on social media.

THE FUTURE

Six months into Henna Heals, Darwin sadly knew it wasn't going to be a financially profitable organization.

The organization had never been about money. However, Darwin knew she needed to support herself, since she was the only one running Henna Heals.

"For the last four years, it's just been me on my computer in my basement," Darwin says.

Darwin plans on raising money to archive the website so people are able to access the health and safety information.

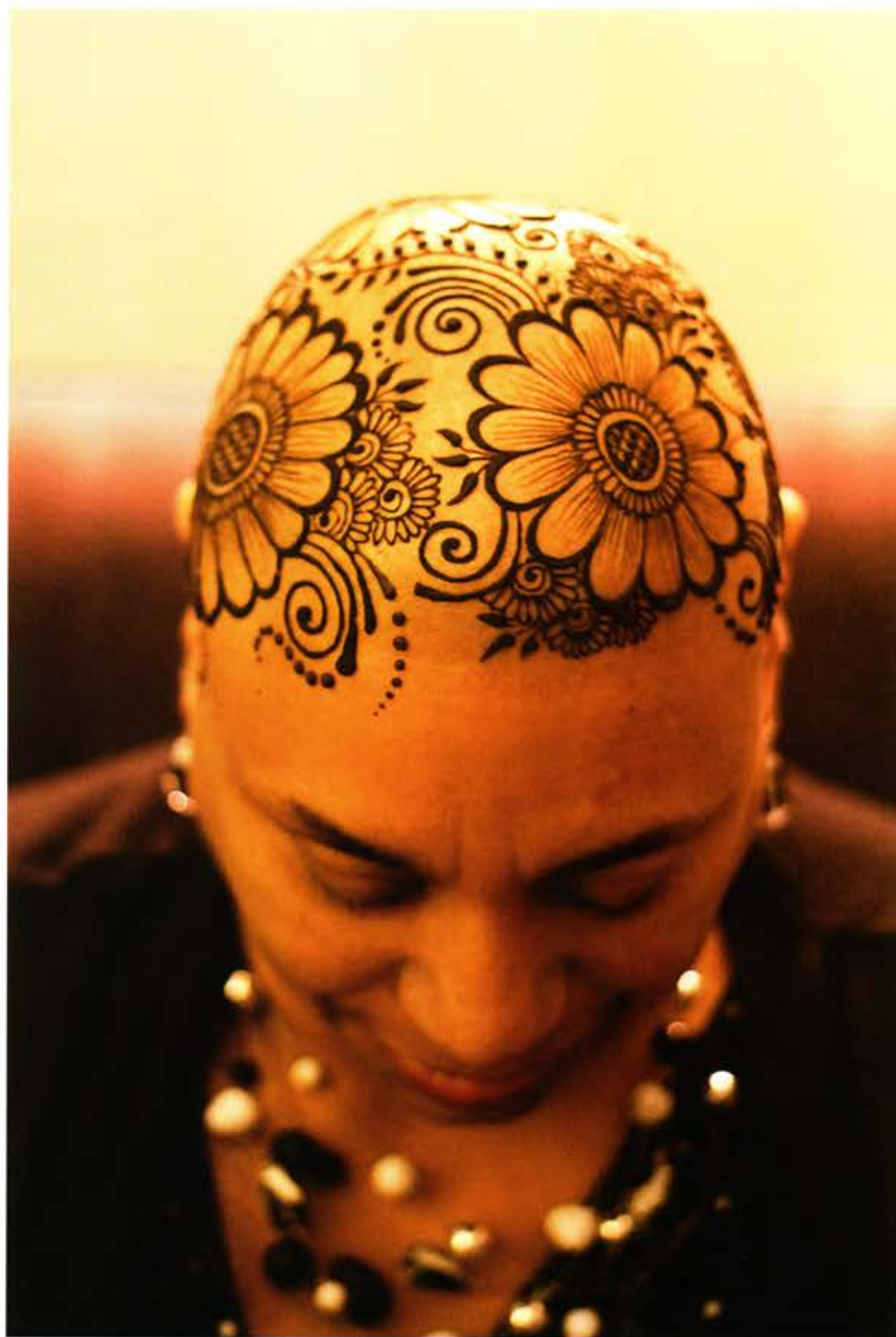
However, this isn't the end of henna crowns.

Engel is going to the University of Portland in fall 2015 to enroll in the nursing program. She will still be close to her hometown and hopes people will stay in touch for henna crowns.

Walters continues offering henna crowns for free and encourages anyone going through chemotherapy or hair loss to try a henna crown.

"If you can find a professional henna artist and they're licensed, that's always a good indication that you're dealing with someone responsible and professional," Walters says. "Then ask them about their ingredients. Talk to your doctor and get the green light. And give it a try."

In the end, Henna Heals reached its ultimate goal of raising awareness of henna crowns, and Darwin hopes to archive the website during the summer 2015.



Cancer is hard. In so many ways, it takes and takes and takes. It takes hope. It takes happiness. It takes away sense of security. Cancer squeezes the life out of you, filling you with drugs that might take away your hair. Finding hope is difficult, and seeing my mother find empowerment in a henna crown is more than fulfilling. It fills the empty void that cancer created and creates beauty in a horrible disease.

To my cousin, Stefanie, who cancer took away a year ago: Rest in peace. K

▲ *Before starting the crown, Walters discusses meaningful symbols with her clients to incorporate into the henna design.*

ON THE MAT

Yoga practice provides multiple sclerosis relief



STORY BY
JAMES HEARNE

Photo by
Nick Danielson

No one sees multiple sclerosis coming. It is sneaky, covert and mocks any attempts at predictability or control.

"The only predictable thing about MS is that it's unpredictable," I read on support sites for sufferers shortly after my diagnosis.

This mantra, meant to be encouraging, may quickly become a taunt.

I can no longer reliably control my body the way I used to. A walk once performed with ease now requires frequent rests. I am acutely aware of every step I take.

No cure exists for MS. Those who are diagnosed live with it for the rest of their lives. The only sure relief is death.

Anything that supports regained sense of control is a comfort. Medication helps, while yoga provides momentary liberation.

▲ *Students join Staten in one of their finishing poses at the end of class. Some students have been attending Staten's yoga class for more than 10 years, while others, who were more recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, have only been coming since last year.*

A SMALL ROOM IN CHRIST THE

Servant Lutheran Church is covered in yoga mats on a cloudless Friday in Bellingham.

Most of the owners appear to be over age 60.

They are mostly women, except for myself and another man. Each of us comes from a different background, has various beliefs and experiences diverse ways of living, but there is one commonality amongst the group.

We all have multiple sclerosis.

Abby Staten leads our class by offering many self-care exercises that make MS more bearable.

We are first led through what is referred to as a self-massage. Here, a tennis ball is rolled along

the sole of a bare foot. The purpose of this exercise becomes clear as the numbness and tingling in the foot — one of the hallmarks of MS — seems to lift for a short while.

Similar exercises include stretching movements of the legs and arms. As one of the symptoms of MS is difficulty with balance, there are rarely any unmoving poses.

"It's important for people with MS try to move as much as possible," Staten says. "Yoga is particularly ideal for that."

Staten mentions the mind-body connection as one of the main benefits of yoga.

She talks about the idea of proprioception, which is the cognitive function of how the body knows where it is in space. With MS, this function slowly breaks down.

"The more you are conscious of where your body is, the more you will be able to continue to use it," Staten says.

One of the other students asks me how I am doing as the class begins to warm up.

I recognize what she is asking. This is no "How's your day?" or "How 'bout those Mariners?" sort of greeting. What she is asking is how I'm grappling with my condition, the one that brought us all here, together.

"I'm coping," I say, trying to keep casual. "You know, still standing."


The room chuckles with an undercurrent of understanding. The student smiles intuitively at me.

"We all are," she says. ■

UPROOTING CONVENTIONS

Female farmers dig into agriculture



A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a denim vest over an orange shirt, harvesting radishes in a field. She is holding a bunch of radishes with green leaves. The background shows a dark, cloudy sky and a large evergreen tree. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or dusk.

STORY BY SHELBY ROWE

Photos by Danny Miller

▲ Roslyn McNicholl, operator of Rabbit Fields Farm, harvests radishes at the end of the day in the fields of her farm located in Mount Vernon, Washington. McNicholl studied at Western and her organic produce is sold at many local grocery stores and markets.



IT'S THE LAST TREE STANDING ON the eighth-of-an-acre plot.

Hundreds of thin branches twist outward and a young wiry kiwi vine with small green leaves leans up against the cracked bark of a tree trunk.

In a year or two it will become part of the tree, just barely, by growing around it for stability while the other plants grow around a trellis, which helps support the thin vines.

Excess metal wire from the kiwi trellis encircles one of the tree's severed limbs and behind it are piles of wood – remnants of the other trees torn down by Anne Baxter, owner of Arguta Farm, to plant 36 kiwi stems.

Two years ago, the plants started out as sticks about a foot long. While the vines appear to be frail, each one will produce approximately 100 pounds of hardy kiwis that are roughly the size of a date.

People may be accustomed to the fuzzy kiwis imported from New Zealand, but Baxter doesn't have as much competition growing her variety, the Arguta kiwi, which is much smaller.

"I got into growing kiwis because I taught high school in Samoa while I was in the Peace Corps and I really tried to emphasize healthy foods," she says. "I started looking at fruits that were available to them and which were the most nutritious. Kiwis came to the top and apples were at the bottom. Nutritionally, they provide a fraction of what kiwis give you."

Teaching science in Samoa opened Baxter up to a new perspective on life, one where people don't work three jobs to sustain themselves; they live off the land.

She joined the Peace Corps in 2000 because she wanted to make a difference and says she got back a lot more than she gave.

"I realized that people work too much and don't take the time to be in the community," Baxter says. "I wouldn't be here now if I hadn't gone to a place where people grow their own food."

She works full-time studying microbiology in fish with the Marine Microbes and Toxins Program at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Seattle. Baxter commutes nearly 70 miles on the weekends to Viva Farms, where she leases a small plot of land.

Viva is a nonprofit incubator farm in Burlington that is promoting a new generation of farmers and helping them to establish their own business by providing land, equipment and education.

Baxter is among the nearly 1 million female farmers in Washington — a number that has increased more than 40 percent since 2002, according to a 2012 U.S. Department of Agriculture Census.

Roslyn McNicholl, principle operator of Rabbit Fields Farm, says women can get a lot of respect in the agriculture world.

McNicholl didn't originally plan on going into agriculture. She was studying business and entrepreneurship at Western and started working in Everson at Broadleaf Farm as a way to spend her summers outside.

It was at Broadleaf that McNicholl began a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Her small project quickly grew, and she decided to buy her own plot of land in Mount Vernon.

▲ *Anne Baxter, owner of Arguta Farms, tends to her kiwi farm located near Burlington. Baxter leases the land and tends to her farm on her own time, commuting from Seattle.*

Her organic produce is now in more than a dozen local restaurants and several grocery stores.

Margaret Viebrock, director of the Washington State University Chelan-Douglas County Extension, says one reason for the sudden increase in female farmers is a change in how women's work is viewed by the USDA.

The census formerly counted who owns the farm, which is often a male, even though the female spouse is often a principle operator alongside her husband.

Female farmers have always existed in this male-dominated industry. Now, the numbers reflect how much influence women have in agriculture — they make up nearly one-third of the farmers in Washington, Viebrock says.

However, the demographic of female-owned farms is different than most male-operated farms.

Ninety-eight percent of female farmers have small-scale, specialty crops that rake in less than \$250,000 annually, and the women generally aren't coming from a traditional farming background, Viebrock says.

Many of the women have college degrees. Often, they are new to traditional farming and it is a second career, she says.

Baxter received her undergraduate degree in zoology at the University of Washington in Seattle after transferring from Sonoma State University in California, where she played basketball.

The self-proclaimed Northwest girl came back to her roots and later got her master's degree at University of Washington for fishery sciences and microbial ecology.

She hopes to establish herself at Viva and eventually buy her own plot of land to farm kiwis and build a plant nursery.

"Now, with the economy and the way things are, that could be a ways out," she says. "Money is something I want out of [farming], but as a government employee, you don't make much money. So I have to supplement my income with farming."

This is the first year Baxter will reap the rewards of her hard work, as it takes years for the kiwi trees to mature and grow fruit.

Baxter also plants garlic, which has sprouted from the ground like fistfuls of long grass in rows next to her kiwi trellises. She'll likely sell them at a local farmer's market when the plants peak at the end of summer 2015.

When all of her kiwi trees bear fruit, her sales could reach \$30,000 for 2015, and the garlic will bring in around \$1,500.

She says she hopes to eventually reach a point when she can quit her day job and farm fulltime.

Gretchen Hoyt was a full-time farmer for more than 40 years and is currently the co-principal

operator of Alm Hill Gardens in Everson. Her husband bought the 64 acres of land at a young age for \$12,000.

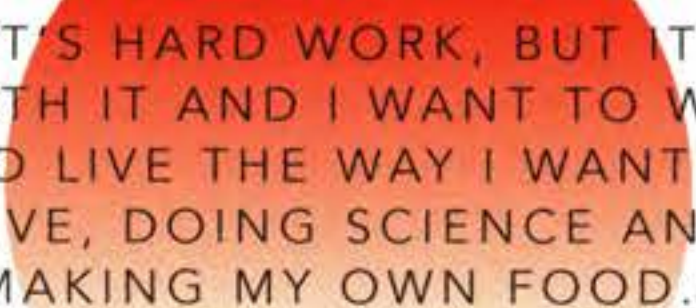
Hoyt, on the other hand, didn't have any farming experience.

"At the time, I didn't know any other women who were farming," she says. "I was driving the tractor and doing that kind of thing. Even today, with the older growers, they think [women] can't be farmers."

Hoyt raised her two of her four children on the farm and remembers fastening them into a backpack before climbing into the tractor. Her children helped tend the farm before her family hired seasonal workers.

Being a self-employed female farmer had its advantages because she could choose her hours and spend more time with her family.

Hoyt managed the farm and several employees before her family started leasing most of the



"IT'S HARD WORK, BUT IT'S WORTH IT AND I WANT TO WORK AND LIVE THE WAY I WANT TO LIVE, DOING SCIENCE AND MAKING MY OWN FOOD."

land to Growing Washington, a nonprofit group that farms the land and sells CSA boxes. Her management style was to hear the voices of as many employees as possible to improve the farm instead of running it as a hierarchy, she says.

Hoyt remembers a time when she was one of the only women attending agriculture conferences.

Viebrock says she noticed women as an underserved community several years ago. She then began facilitating a Women in Agriculture Conference that is aimed specifically at women helping other women with the risk management factors of farming.

The conference is now held in 16 locations throughout the state, including Skagit County, Spokane County and Thurston County, and educates women about business and financial management, marketing, legal liabilities, economic risk and wellbeing.

Viebrock says she's getting more and more fathers who want to learn how to integrate their daughters into farm work, although it has formerly been traditional for sons to take over the business.

"Women learn differently," Viebrock says. "Men

don't share their crop size, yields and how much money they made last year. Women talk about their problems and mentor each other."

Receiving loans for start-up farms is especially difficult for women because of their limited farming background, and many bankers are looking for experience. Finances are part of the reason so many women have small-scale farms. Farming niche crops gives them an edge in the industry.

"I know a woman who farms the microgreens you see in salads," Viebrock says. "She sells her produce to the expensive restaurants in town."

Sustainable and organic small-scale farms are largely popular in Washington, Viebrock says.

It's kind of a revolution in the food system and some people want to move away from processed, packaged foods, Hoyt says. Selling her organic produce directly to consumers at farmers markets makes it easier to have a small farm and still make money.

Baxter wants to contribute by producing food that is ecologically friendly, she says.

She occasionally bends down to tug tufts of crabgrass out of the soil, shaking off the excess dirt from the roots.

Her fingers are thinly coated in dust from digging into the ground with her bare hands, and tiny light fragments ricochet off her sparkly nail polish when exposed to the afternoon sun.

She's relaxed, legs crossed, sitting on a bale of brittle, heat-baked hay that overlooks her petite farm and the less-attractive highway about a half-mile away.

Unfazed by the occasional bee that flits by, she plays with two opal rings strung around her neck. They no longer fit her fingers, but her dad gave them to her years ago and, after he passed away in April, she wanted to keep them close to her.

"I'm trying to make it work," she says. "It's hard work, but it's worth it and I want to work and live the way I want to live, doing science and making my own food." ■

▼ *Roslyn McNicholl, operator of Rabbit Fields Farm, harvests radishes in the fields of her farm located in Mount Vernon.*



BEADS ACROSS BORDERS

Bellingham artist collects artifacts, creates new accessories



STORY BY
SHELBY ROWE

*Photos by
Nick Danielson*

▲ *Backed by necklaces and artifacts from around the world, owner of Oasis Bead Lounge Karen Murphy sits with her dog while watching her grandson, Rohan, play on the sidewalk outside of the Bead Lounge. Murphy is often seen sitting here on sunny days so that she can socialize with potential customers.*

SILK INDIAN SARIS EMBROIDERED with gold thread and silver beads hang from a post inside Oasis Bead Lounge in downtown Bellingham. African masks that are hundreds of years old decorate the walls next to modern, metal versions.

Cultures from around the world are preserved through ancient beads that have been strung into ornate necklaces or sit atop glass bottles on wooden shelves.

The oldest piece is a necklace made in 3,000 B.C., which a San Francisco woman bought on Etsy for \$6,000.

Owner Karen Murphy stands barefoot inside the shop and peers through thick glasses.

"These are my favorite right now," she says, tugging on two multi-strand necklaces she made with beads from several different countries, including China and Afghanistan, as well as some she crafted from polymer, a clay-like material. "My pieces are unique and it wasn't originally appreciated to mix culture or put glass beads with polymer. It took a while, but I got quite a following in Seattle."

Most of Murphy's inventory is from a splurge 20 years ago when her husband sold his business and she used \$1.5 million buying beads from all over the globe at trade shows in New York and Washington D.C to make necklaces, bracelets and earrings.

On her 40th birthday, she gifted herself a polymer class and started making ornate buttons and

eventually beads. A woven basket sitting atop the glass front counter holds handmade camels, long-maned lions and other intricate figures that Murphy crafted from polymer.

Her first shop was a studio she shared with 10 to 15 other artists in an old brick building in Seattle 28 years ago, but her love for the arts truly started when she was 3 years old, sculpting foxes out of clay.

Some of her cultural inspiration came from an around-the-world trip where she toured dozens of countries in her early 20s.

"I'm really fascinated by how much art other cultures have absorbed into their life. People wear their wealth in their jewelry and their ornate clothing. They make things by hand and everything is very decorated. Here it's rare," she says. "We don't have the depth of expectation of beauty in our intimate individual environment."

Pieces of Murphy's own life live amongst the artifacts. Her mother's 1940s fur coat is draped over a beaded chair from the Yaritza tribe in West Africa and bronze-coated statues of Murphy's family share a shelf with strands of glass beads.

As she gets older, Murphy says, it's become her job to find homes for the beads with people who appreciate their cultural significance. ■



WINES AND SIGNS

Bellingham native pairs wine with astrology

"WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?"

The answer to this classic question might predict a person's future, but it can also predict something else, Katie Bechkowiak says: what wine matches their personality.

Bechkowiak coined the term "vinostrology" while writing a wine blog, when she decided to look at astrological sign characteristics to see how they sync up with features of wines and wine varietals. A varietal is a wine made primarily from one grape variety, such as Merlot or Chardonnay. She views wine as having more personality than just tasting notes, and uses these personalities to compare wine to people.

Throughout her 51 years, Bechkowiak has never been an avid follower of astrology beyond the hopeful horoscope check we all submit to now and again (she's a Sagittarius, by the way). Still, the zodiac provided her with something else: a new way to think about her passion, an unpaved road leading to a fresh understanding of wine.

"Let's say you had an interesting Rosé," Bechkowiak says. "Rosés don't tend to take themselves too seriously, so I'd compare it to Lucille Ball, just kind of lighthearted."

Aside from looking at the finished wine's flavor

and body, Bechkowiak also incorporates her knowledge of the grapes and their behavior depending on where they're grown, as this impacts their development.

"You can taste a Syrah from France and a Syrah from Washington state and although they're the same varietal, they taste diabolically different because of the part of the world they're grown in," Bechkowiak says.

Syrah is a dry, red wine that features bold flavors such as dark fruit and chocolate, with medium acidity and a peppery aftertaste, according to Seattle-based wine website Wine Folly.

BUILDING A BUSINESS

Vinostrology turned into more than a wine blogger's idea when Bechkowiak opened her wine lounge under the same name in May 2013.

A longtime wine lover, Bechkowiak worked in various jobs within the industry, from back room stockperson to distributing. These jobs allowed Bechkowiak to constantly expand her knowledge of wine and helped lead her to where she is now.

After she was laid off at a wine sales job at the height of the recession, Bechkowiak decided to focus on her dream of opening a place where

▲ *Katie Bechkowiak, owner of Vinostrology wine lounge, has always been interested in astrological signs. In 2013, she decided to pair her interest in zodiac signs with her love of wine to create Vinostrology.*



people who were curious about wine and full-blown connoisseurs could coexist.

Maxwell Vukas, 22, is a Western student who has frequented Vinostrology for a year and a half and now helps out there part-time. He was an instant fan of the vibe and the fact that even the older crowd was willing to talk to younger customers, which was a nice change, he says.

"One thing that bothers me about wine is that people think it's an elitist drink, and I've really tried to stay away from that idea," Bechkowiak says. "When people come in and say they don't know anything about wine, I'm psyched."

WINE ON TAP

Bechkowiak was always bothered when buying a glass of wine and not knowing how long the bottle had been sitting open, as wine gradually loses its robust flavors after it is opened. This led to a standout feature of Vinostrology: the WineStations, which sit in a shiny row of five stainless steel boxes behind the bar.

WineStations dispense wine in 1-ounce tastes, half and full glasses, as well as preserve the wine they hold. Most wines lose their natural aroma and flavor after two or three weeks at best, but the WineStation preserves them for up to 60 days. This keeps the wine tasting like the cork was just pulled.

"The wine list is a living thing here," Bechkowiak says. "Something usually runs out every day so there's always something new, and that helps to keep people coming back."

As a guest, Vukas agrees that it's fun to try such a wide variety of wines in one place, especially since they change so frequently.

Bechkowiak tries to have something for everyone in the stations. In addition to always keeping eight whites and 12 reds on tap, plus the occasional port or dessert wine, she makes sure to include wines from different countries, price points and more.

Vukas enjoys the wines from Corbières, one of France's largest wine-producing regions, which Vinostrology offered in April 2015.

Bechkowiak believes everyone has their own taste and there's no right or wrong varietal of wine to call your favorite, whether it's a sweet white or bold red.

Today, Bechkowiak is sharing her passion through her business, honoring her hometown, and debunking wine myths one sip at a time.

"I love seeing the look on people's faces when they're hell-bent on not liking a certain wine, then they try it and they like it," Bechkowiak says. "It's good to have that adventure sip." **K**

▲ *Karla Swan, left, and Caitlin Thorpe enjoy a glass of wine at Vinostrology on West Holly Street in Bellingham.*

A BODY BEHIND THE LENS

Bellingham police implement body cameras to improve law enforcement practices



ASSESS THE SITUATION.

Are they reaching for a weapon? Are they going to flee?

Are they a threat?

When a scene reaches a boiling point and use-of-force is necessary, Lt. Rick Sucee of the Bellingham Police Department says he's the only one between the aggressor and the public.

Sucee says there's no time for fear.

"My goal throughout my entire career is, I'm coming home at the end of the day," he says. "So I'm not going to let some guy who's bent on killing me get away with it. I think officers have to have that kind of mindset, that they're coming home at the end of the day."

Sucee is a Bellingham native and has been part of the Bellingham police force for more than 40 years.

His raspy voice and kind smile exude the warmth of someone who loves his community, but while in uniform, he commands noticeable attention in public.

▲ While responding to a welfare check on Northwest Ave, Officer Andria Fountain updates Bellingham Police Department Dispatch of the reported individual's status and identification from a call that came in describing a person lying on the ground outside of a gas station. Bellingham Police Department officers have to choose to start recording situations with their body cameras (seen here attached to Officer Fountain's sunglasses), however, Fountain says that she records most scenarios given constant unpredictability.

The police force has evolved over the years, Sucee says.

The Bellingham department began using body cameras in spring 2014, and while only 35 of the 115 officers are wearing the cameras, the department is in favor of the technology. Since the program started, more officers are asking for cameras – at least 10 more officers will have cameras by August 2015. Lt. Mike Johnston is program manager for the

STORY CONTINUED ON PG. 28



▲ Bellingham Police Officer Andria Fountain adjusts a man's handcuffs while Officer Rene Wagner checks his pockets during an arrest for a restraining order violation in the King Mountain neighborhood of Bellingham. During the first few minutes of their interaction, Fountain explained to the man and his friends that they were being recorded by her body camera. Fountain says she likes to let civilians know they are being recorded in hopes that it will deter them from making aggressive decisions or running away.



▲ After talking with store security camera operators, Officer Andria Fountain takes down information from a theft report that had happened earlier that evening at the Meridian WinCo. Fountain chose not to record the interaction with the WinCo security camera operators and says that there is a lot of video data being accumulated that no one ever views.

body-worn cameras and was among those who implement them to showcase how well the officers handle themselves. He had heard positive feedback about other departments who used the cameras.

If a use-of-force complaint comes in, there is no dispute over what happened and the department can view the footage, Johnston says. Anyone can video record an incident on the street, and now the police have thousands of their own tapes.

"Now, if [an officer] does something wrong then [the tapes] are going to show that too," Sucee says.

William Farrar, police chief of the Rialto Police Department in California, published a one-year study in 2013 that found a 50 percent reduction in use-of-force complaints after the department started using body cameras.

One explanation is that humans are more likely to cooperate with rules when they know they are being observed, so people become more prone to socially acceptable behavior, according to the report.

The physical presence of other people often deters bad behavior and the cameras act like that

second pair of eyes.

Johnston agrees that the cameras can stop officers from potentially reacting harshly to a situation, and while the department rarely has use-of-force complaints, the cameras could stop an officer from cussing back at a subject if the person is verbally volatile first.

In Bellingham, only the newly hired officers are required to wear the body cameras. The department wants all the police officers to wear them, but officers already on the force were given the option to wear one or not, Johnston says.

Some resistance comes from officers who don't want their commanding officers scrutinizing every second of their shift, thumbing through the footage and nit-picking their every action, Sucee says.

But management only reviews the footage if there is a citizen complaint, and from there the commanding officer decides if discipline is necessary.

Most of the complaints that come in are people that were drinking the night before and accuse the officer of being unreasonably rough



▲ Bellingham Police Officer Keith Johnston, one of the department's officers who wears a body camera, talks with a homeless man who is frequently reported for welfare checks. The reported man was sleeping outside of the Northwest Chiropractic Clinic. As long as they are already turned on, the body cameras that are being used retrieve the past 30 seconds of video once they start recording, which allows officers to capture unpredicted events.

► Bellingham Police Officer Andria Fountain walks a man into the Whatcom County Jail to be processed and admitted for the night. The man, arrested for driving under the influence, claimed to only have one beer that night but registered a blood alcohol content level .09 — above the legal limit.

Fountain, who was the first of four officers on the scene, says many people don't realize how fast officers have to make life-impacting decisions in the field, which is one of the reasons body cameras are being implemented.



"I THINK THERE IS MORE EMPHASIS NOW ON REACTING QUICKLY TO PERCEIVED THREATS AND REACTING IN A WAY THAT WILL STOP THE THREAT."

or rude, Sucee says.

Rewind to the 1970s and Bellingham was like the Wild West.

Brawls broke out at the Salty Pelican — a bar that is no longer in existence — and drunken fights erupted on Holly Street.

Back then, people seemed to have more respect for police officers and they could arrest someone in the middle of a drunken crowd without being harassed, Sucee says.

Even then it was typical to get into three or four physical fights a week with rowdy citizens while working patrol on the night shift.

The community culture has changed throughout the years, and while Sucee says he isn't sure why the fighting has died down, police use-of-force is highly publicized.

"I think use-of-force is reported more," he says. "I think with the invention of cell-phone cameras it has come to the forefront. I'm not saying what they've filmed is right or wrong, but anyone who takes the picture, if they don't have the full story, they can put a spin on it."

Peter Scharf, a criminology professor at Louisiana State University and former Seattle resident, agrees that use-of-force and deadly force numbers are lower than they were several decades ago, but now, everyone is a walking cameraman and the

media may be memorializing deadly-force cases.

America has moved away from tight-knit communities and toward a phenomenon where we are all strangers, which can create mistrust between citizens and the local police officers, Scharf says.

The key is noticing the signs when a situation escalates and trying to de-escalate it before it turns to deadly force.

A situation may look like excessive force if it's one person against five police officers, but the main goal is minimum force and it's safer for both parties if multiple officers can subdue the subject, Sucee says.

A one-on-one fight often results in more injuries, he says.

Sucee says he tries de-escalation tactics to calm the situation by talking to the subject and giving them space. If an arrest is necessary, it's better for the officer to explain what they are doing instead of roughly handcuffing them, he says.

But sometimes it intensifies and a defensive reaction is necessary.

Police training used to mirror military basic training, but that approach died down by the time Sucee went through the academy 42 years ago.

Now there is more stress on community relations, but also more prominence on weapons and defensive training, he says.

"I think there is more emphasis now on reacting quickly to perceived threats and reacting in a way that will stop the threat," Sucee says. "That's not the way I was trained, but is that going to cause more lethal situations or people who get injured? I don't know."

The issue may not be with militarized training, but with a person whose personality is to snap under a stressful situation, he says.

"...Like I said earlier, I'm going home at the end of the day and I'll do what I have to." **K**



"LET'S BEGIN BY ALIGNING THE head over the chest and the stomach," says instructor Art Baner as he guides seven students through warm-ups at a Wednesday evening Tai Chi class in Bellingham.

"Take a comfortable breath in and exhale as your weight settles down through the legs, into your feet and down into the ground. Relax the shoulders and calm the mind. This is the most important part of the form."

The students stand with their feet shoulder-width apart. Hands rise slowly above their heads and flow down to create a full-body stretch in the opening warm-up posture. Serene energy flows freely through the room. Chi, which means air or power in Chinese, is the empowering energy said to flow throughout the body as Tai Chi is practiced.

Tai Chi, the self-paced mind-body exercise now gaining popularity in the United States, consists of physical exercise and stretching where each posture flows into the next without pause.

In 2013, the number of Tai Chi participants aged 6 years and older was about 3.47 million worldwide, according to Statista, an online

resource for research data.

In this slow-motion exercise, participants move without pausing, flowing through a series of circular motions. The Yang style is the most popular and widely practiced form, which includes 24 smooth full-body movements in its simple form and 108 movements in the traditional form.

Meditation, movement and deep breathing are the three main components of Tai Chi.

Baner is a certified Tai Chi instructor at his business, Full Circle Internal Arts in Bellingham, where he teaches Yang style Tai Chi, mediation and Qigong, a series of smaller, slow, graceful movements and breathing exercises which can be done while sitting, standing or lying down.

Qigong has roots in ancient China and India from more than 2,000 years ago and focuses on letting go of all distractions, bringing awareness to each body movement and noticing the sensations that come with every movement.

Tai Chi originated in China around the 12th century A.D., when Chang San-Feng is said to have observed five animals — a tiger, dragon, leopard, snake and crane — to create move-

▲ *Tai Chi instructor Art Baner, center, leads a Tai Chi class at the Majestic banquet hall in Bellingham. Baner has been practicing the Chinese martial art for more than 25 years.*

ments that imitated the animals' movements, according to the American Tai Chi and Qigong Association. Tai Chi was first practiced as a form of self-defense in a small Chinese farming village called Chen Village, and sought to cultivate relaxation in addition to muscular strength.

"[Villagers] were constantly being harassed by marauders and needed a method of protecting themselves that would also be beneficial from the health standpoint because they were farmers," Baner says.

Learning the traditional form is only one level of Tai Chi. Once participants learn each move, Baner encourages people to go into a spontaneous expression of the form when they are practicing on their own, so that the movement becomes more authentic.

"That way, it is a beautiful and much more fulfilling way to practice because you're listening to how your body wants to move with these things," Baner says. "A lot of people that do Tai Chi don't necessarily get to that level, unless they are encouraged to or have a little creativity."

"Grasp the bird's tail left, grasp the bird's tail right," Baner calls as the class continues to move in slow flowing movements. In Tai Chi, there are five moves that are named after animals.

"All of the names of those movements have historical reference," Baner says. "They are not just randomly made up and tend to have a little story behind them."

As Baner calls "White Crane spreads its wings," everyone in the class creates a crescent moon shape with their arms, resembling a group of cranes with their wings spread wide. The White Crane is a symbol of patience and longevity.

Baner started his career in Pennsylvania at a community college with taekwondo and switched to Wing Chun, another Chinese martial art and form of close-range combat and self-defense. He then became interested in the healing arts — practices that promote healing, wellness and coping strategies for improving one's health. Baner then switched to the subtler martial art of Tai Chi, which he has now been practicing for more than 30 years.

"In China, healing art and martial art are often taught together, so Tai Chi is a martial art, but a healing art as well," Baner says.

Students have come to Baner's class with back, knee and neck injuries that have improved with Tai Chi, he says.

"I even had people report to me that it's gotten them out of some tricky situations," he says.

Baner recalls a story about his former student, who was walking down the street one day.

"He heard this dog barking, and this Rottweiler started running towards him wanting to



make lunch out of his leg. He turned towards it, raises his leg and clocks this dog without really thinking about it," Baner says. "The dog falls to the ground, shakes his head, turns in the other direction and the man is able to continue his stroll down the street."

Although at first glance this Tai Chi move may seem impractical, it proved to be useful, Baner says.

Lan Totten has been a student of Baner for approximately 10 years since her friend, who was also taking classes from Baner, showed her a basic warm-up exercise. After taking classes on and off for about five years, Totten left to take a break to go to school, but also became sick with emphysema, a chronic obstructive pulmonary disease that makes it hard for one to breathe.

Then, seven years later, Totten returned to practicing Tai Chi with a whole different attitude and a goal to improve her health.

"The more I practiced, the better my breathing got," Totten says. She explains that her overall strength and stamina have increased, making it easier for her to breathe and perform simple tasks such as sitting in a chair. Practicing Tai Chi continues to make a positive impact on Totten's mental and emotional wellbeing, she says.

The last step in Baner's class is a practice called Zhang Zhuang, a stance in which the body is completely still to give the sensation that its roots are grounded beneath.

As the sun sets, casting a shade of darkness outside the window, both the day and the practice come to an end.

"And return back to Earth," Baner says. All seven people turn their palms down, returning their arms to their sides. ■

▲ *Michael Kolodenko, left, and Melody Ghirardini loosen their bodies and clear their minds before the start of a Tai Chi class at the Majestic banquet hall in Bellingham. A form of martial art, Tai Chi originated in China and is practiced for self-defense training and its health benefits.*

A CLEAN SLATE

Bellingham organization connects with incarcerated teens through creative writing



FOUR TEENAGE BOYS WEARING navy blue t-shirts and pants sit hunched over their composition notebooks, scribbling away. Silence. They occasionally stop to think, tapping their feet in their identical orange sandals. The boys are inmates at the Whatcom County Juvenile Detention Center participating in a two-hour creative writing class.

"It's poetry. You make it up as you go," says teacher Matthew Brouwer to the class. He has asked the boys to write a poem where each line starts with "I like."

In the classroom hang world maps, a National Poetry Month poster and a sketch of hands drawing themselves. Through a window the main detention area has white walls and cell doors marked by "C1" and "C2."

Sharing is voluntary. One boy reads his poem, which is about how he loves to go midnight fishing in Bellingham. He once caught 36 king

salmon in one day, he explains. Brouwer encourages him to describe the sights and sounds in his writing, such as water lapping against the boat.

"I look forward to that every year," the boy says. "Hopefully I'll get out before then."

Brouwer, 33, founded the Whatcom Juvenile Justice Creative Writing Project in 2013 to give teens in juvenile detention an outlet to express themselves. He is one of three teachers who run a weekly creative writing class at the detention center, located on the sixth floor of the Whatcom County Courthouse in downtown Bellingham. The project is part of the nonprofit Whatcom Young Writers.

The teens, who range from 13- to 17-years-old, often come from troubled homes where child abuse and alcoholism are problems, he says. Many are serving sentences for drug possession, theft and assault. He hopes to show his students that writing can be a way to process

▲ *Matthew Brouwer, co-founder of the Whatcom Juvenile Justice Creative Writing Project, begins a class consisting of four male inmates. During the two-hour class, Matthew covered topics such as fiction, poem and free-form writing and demonstrated multiple performances of original poems.*

difficult experiences.

“Learning to tell stories becomes a way to figure out what’s going on in your own story,” says Brouwer, a Bellingham performance poet and creative writing teacher at Shuksan Middle School.

To inspire the class, he performs his own “I like” poem about walking the streets in the early morning. He gestures with his hands and spits images of streetlights surrounded by darkness and cats scurrying out from under cars like criminals, his sandy brown hair flying around his face. One boy says he can relate to the image of cats as criminals.

“Keep putting [words] down — even if it’s gibberish, repetitive — so you can unstick your brain,” Brouwer says to the class.

In spring 2013, Brouwer taught the first workshop — a two-week writing intensive course — and then began hosting a weekly writing club. Brouwer, English teacher Sue Likkel and local poet Kevin Murphy take turns teaching the class each week. Likkel loves grammar and plays word games with the kids, while Murphy performs his poetry with drums at the start of class.

Classes are small, made up of three to six teens. As a warm-up, Brouwer shows the teens CNN Student News and tells them to free-write about a news story on a student robot competition. “What abilities would your robot have?” he asks.


The lighthearted activities make it easier for them to open up about heavier topics. “We let them play and have fun because they’re teenagers,” he says. “So much of their life is so serious.”

Working with imagination can help the teens understand themselves in a new way, he says. It’s a powerful exercise, especially for his students, who often don’t have outlets.

The teens write personal narratives based on the prompt “times I told a lie” or “times I was lied to.” One boy writes that he promised his girlfriend he wouldn’t get “locked up” and that she might be pregnant. Another talks about sleeping in the bushes with his girlfriend one night. Brouwer nods, acknowledging that they are sharing difficult stories.

Brouwer suffered a serious backpacking injury in 2012 that left him in chronic pain for nine months. Unable to continue managing a Seattle food bank, he moved back in with his parents in Bellingham. During his recovery — through which he spent several months in a wheelchair — he turned to his poetry.

“When everything else was falling apart, [po-



“LEARNING TO TELL STORIES
BECOMES A WAY TO FIGURE OUT
WHAT’S GOING ON IN
YOUR OWN STORY.”

etry] was my place for personal expression,” he says. After his recovery, he decided to become a full-time poet, performing in Bellingham and around the West coast on two poetry tours. He also began teaching writing to people with chronic medical conditions, as well as middle-school and high-school students.

“To have creative writing be something that is alive for people’s development — that stood out to me during my episode of chronic pain,” Brouwer says. In 2013, he released a poetry book called “Stories We Must Tell” about his struggle with chronic pain.

This project has been a community effort. A 2013 Kickstarter campaign raised \$2,500 for the initial workshop, and house shows have helped fund the weekly writing club, which includes compensation for the teachers and printing “Word from the Inside,” a booklet featuring student work. The booklet was sold at fundraising events and given to supporters of the Kickstarter campaign.

“These kids matter,” Brouwer says. “This is our way of reaching out to them.”

He is currently applying for grants to create a second writing club for Whatcom teens following their release from detention. In the words of one of Brouwer’s former students: “If I had something like this on the outside, it would help keep me out of trouble.”

Pongo Teen Writing is a Seattle non-profit that teaches poetry to youth in King County juvenile detention and psychiatric facilities. Since 1992, Pongo has worked with more than 6,000 teens, according to its website.

Teens who receive community-based services following their release, including educational and vocational training, counseling and substance abuse treatment, are more likely to avoid reoffending and attend work and school, according to Pathways to Desistance, a study which examined 1,354 teen offenders over three years.



Northwest Youth Services is a Whatcom nonprofit that provides at-risk, runaway and homeless youth with housing and job training. Case managers work with young people to help them apply for jobs, get their G.E.D.s and find safe places to live, says Director Riannon Bardsley. For those with criminal backgrounds, talking to employers and landlords can be especially challenging, she says. The program offers legal assistance to help them navigate potential problems, such as what information they must legally disclose about their criminal histories.

As part of a gardening program, youth can learn to plant, grow and harvest food to be sold at a community market stand. Job training helps them build confidence, Bardsley says.

"You see young people start taking care of themselves, washing their hair, smiling," she says. "They're participating in their life in a different way."

At the Whatcom Detention School, teens take reading, writing and math classes, which are typically online courses in computer labs, says Suzanne Harris, a teacher who plans the curriculum. She likes to supplement the core classes with physical education and a book club. When she approached Brouwer with an idea for a

creative writing workshop, he immediately ran with it, she says. The teens call Harris "Sully" and she writes alongside them during class.

Teens cycle quickly through the detention, but some return due to new offenses. When they turn 18, they move across the street to Whatcom County Jail.

Since stays are short, it's hard to measure the workshop's impact, Harris says. If anything, the teachers help to positively engage the teens.

"I like the students to get the exposure to adults who are willing to accept them as students and work with them," she says. From what the teens have said, teachers at their regular schools aren't always as accepting of them.

In the 13 years Harris has taught at the detention, the teens always ask her one question: "Have you been in jail or detention?" It surprises them when she answers no. Most of the adults in their lives have been incarcerated, she says.

Likkel, an English teacher for a Bellingham homeschooling program, explains that the teens in detention often need more love and support than her regular students.

Once she asked her class to write a letter to their 5-year-old selves. The teens dived into the

▲ *Four Whatcom Juvenile Detention Center inmates line up at the door of their academic classroom following a two-hour creative writing class taught by Matthew Brouwer. During the class, each of the boys wrote and shared creative writing pieces with topics varying from fishing memories to past romantic relationships.*

(has my paper on
a ship carved of her
skin some

I like to walk on the
game trails beside logging roads
at night. I like to watch the
stars smile down at me like
the new born babies at a hospital
I like to hear the sounds the
trees make as the wind gently
caresses their branches. I like
to feel the midnight dew collect
on my hair. I like to see
the salmon berry bushes up there
glisten in the moon light like
piles of rubies scattered in the
treasure chest of nature
I like to watch as a
cloud passes over and
for a few seconds
completely disappears you can
see clearly how the universe
works. I like to see the
campfires people have made
many years before the trees
grew up and the moss
growing over them like a lost
city in the amazon.
I like to watch the sun
slowly creep over the treetops and
and the world comes to life
and the tiredness goes away

◀ An example of student poetry from a creative writing class at the Whatcom County Juvenile Detention Center. The students wrote poems where each line started with "I like..."

exercise, aside from one girl who couldn't seem to start writing. The 15-year-old was in foster care when she was five.

"You're smarter now, you've survived," Likkel had said to her student. "What can you tell her? Where would you be?"

Since the teachers aren't allowed to keep in contact with students after their release, they don't know where they go. But it doesn't seem they go to healthy, productive places, Likkel says.

"It would be really great if there were more opportunities for kids to do what they enjoy, that's not destructive to them or others," she says.

At the end of class, Brouwer performs a poem entitled "There Goes a Poet."

I look into a woman/and I see a garden. I look into a man/ and I see a budding tree/This is the way the world comes to me.

With Brouwer's words ringing around them, the boys line up single file at the doorway, hands behind their backs, and wait to return to their cells. Their composition notebooks stay behind on the desks. K

WASHINGTON WILDFLOWERS

Bellingham photographer co-develops native plant identification app

BELLINGHAM PHOTOGRAPHER MARK

Turner recalls coming across a patch of yellow heather in the alpine country at about 6,000 ft. "It's been a year since I've seen you," he says.

Turner's love for wildflowers is deep-rooted. "Some of them just become old friends," he says.

Turner co-created Washington Wildflowers, a wildflower identification app that was released in April 2013. The app provides descriptions of more than 850 common wildflowers, vines and shrubs located in Washington state and neighboring areas of Oregon, Idaho and British Columbia.

High Country Apps programmed the app and David Giblin and Ben Legler at the Burke Museum's University of Washington Herbarium provided the data to build the plant identification key, says Giblin, the collections manager.

The app features wildflower images, all of which were photographed by Turner, who has been taking pictures since he was 6- or 7 years old, he says.

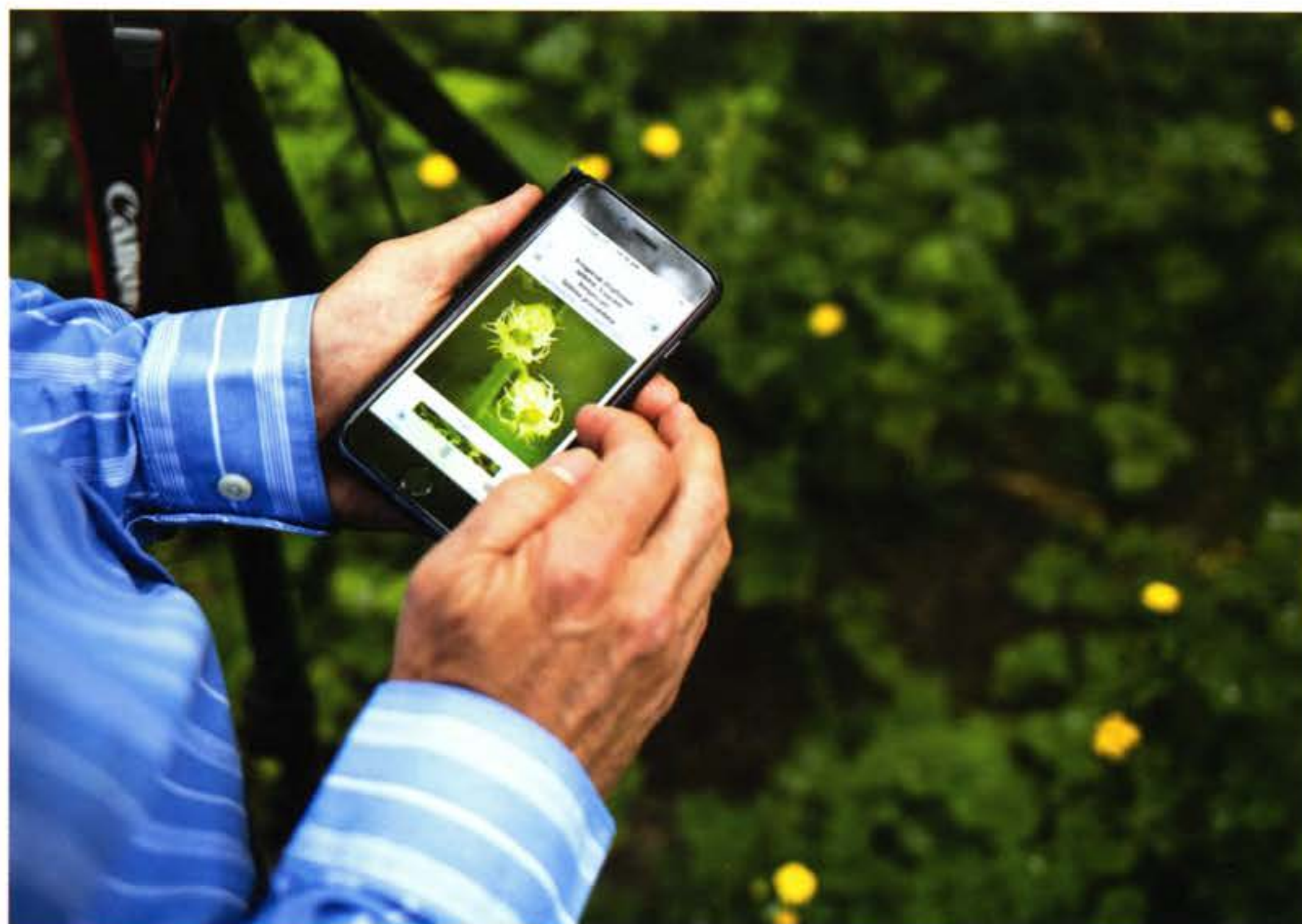
"I've been interested in what's growing around me for a very long time," Turner says. "I grew up in West Virginia, where I wandered the fields."

Turner started his photography business after he was laid off from his job at Western in 1993, when he worked for the Program for Social Service Research, Demonstration and Training, which no longer exists.

Neil Maillet, former acquiring editor at Timber Press, a publication company that specializes in publishing books in the fields of natural history, horticulture and gardening, eventually asked Turner to help develop a wildflower field guide in 2002, which later became "Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest."

Even though Turner was not a botanist, he decided it wasn't completely crazy to work on a field guide, he says.

Maillet and Turner asked plant enthusiast Phyllis Gustafson to write the plant descriptions, Turner says. It was coincidental that



◀ Turner looks up the Fringecup flower using the mobile phone app he co-created, Washington Wildflowers. The app is a database of more than 850 common wildflowers in Washington state with photographs of each one taken mostly by Turner.



Turner and Maillot both knew Gustafson.

“One of those wonderful bits of serendipity,” Turner says.

Gustafson agreed to write the descriptions, although she was also not a professional botanist.

“The book was written for amateurs by amateurs but went on to be used by professors and students,” Gustafson says.

Turner learned what he knows about wildflowers by studying field guides, going out in the field and gathering information from people of varying wildflower expertise, including professional botanists.

After he received his contract, Turner spent almost two years on the road chasing and photographing wildflowers in bloom.

He did not have to hike great distances to find wildflowers, he says. He often found flowers on the side of the street or up many obscure back roads.

Turner also connected with people through the Native Plant Societies in Washington and Oregon, who could take him to wildflower locations, he says.

When in Oregon, Turner would visit Gustafson, where they roamed the Siskiyou Mountains. Gustafson was very knowledgeable about Oregon’s native plants, Turner says.

Similar to Turner, Gustafson’s knowledge of wildflowers sprouted from a passion for plants.

“I was born and raised in a family that always loved flowers. I lived in them,” Gustafson says.

“Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest” contains more than 1,240 of Turner’s wildflower photographs, all of which were captured primarily in Washington, Oregon and northern California.

The Washington Wildflowers app is based in large part on Turner and Gustafson’s book, Turner says. The descriptions of the plants are drawn from the book, as are many of the photographs.

“When we developed the app I went through my entire library and chose between three or four images that would best tell the story of a particular flower,” Turner says.

Turner looks for the best close-up shot of each flower as well as one showing the whole plant, both of which contain characteristics people would use to identify them.

It can take roughly 15 minutes to photograph a specimen and an additional 45 minutes to figure out the name, Turner says. It can be difficult to find a specific plant without knowing what it looks like, Turner says.

Once Turner has identified a wildflower, he will look for the “hero” specimen, a term often used by advertisers meaning the best or most ideal, Turner says.

He then looks for the best vantage point and sets the camera on a tripod. He looks for any distracting elements, such as dead leaves

▲ *Photographer Mark Turner poses with his digital camera amongst yellow Creeping Buttercup wildflowers in Bellingham. An established photographer, Turner documents wildflowers around the United States, working for magazines, field guides and creating most of the photographs for the wildflower identification and location app, Washington Wildflowers.*

"WHEN WE DEVELOPED THE APP, I WENT THROUGH MY ENTIRE LIBRARY AND CHOSE BETWEEN THREE OR FOUR IMAGES THAT WOULD BEST TELL THE STORY OF A PARTICULAR FLOWER."

or grass, which he will then remove from the scene. "Gardening, is what I call it," Turner says. "It's a pretty important process."

Finally, Turner will evaluate the lighting and define the composition until he's ready to take a picture of his hero, he says.

Portraits are Turner's specialty, or where he makes most of his living, but he continues to photograph wildflowers whenever he can.

"Children don't blow in the breeze; wildflowers don't try to scowl at you and run and hide," Turner says.

He has three acres of woods behind his house, where he photographs native species


weekly, when the mood strikes and the lighting is nice, he says.

Turner uses Washington Wildflowers himself on his iPhone 6 anytime he goes looking for plants and finds something he doesn't recognize or doesn't know the name of.

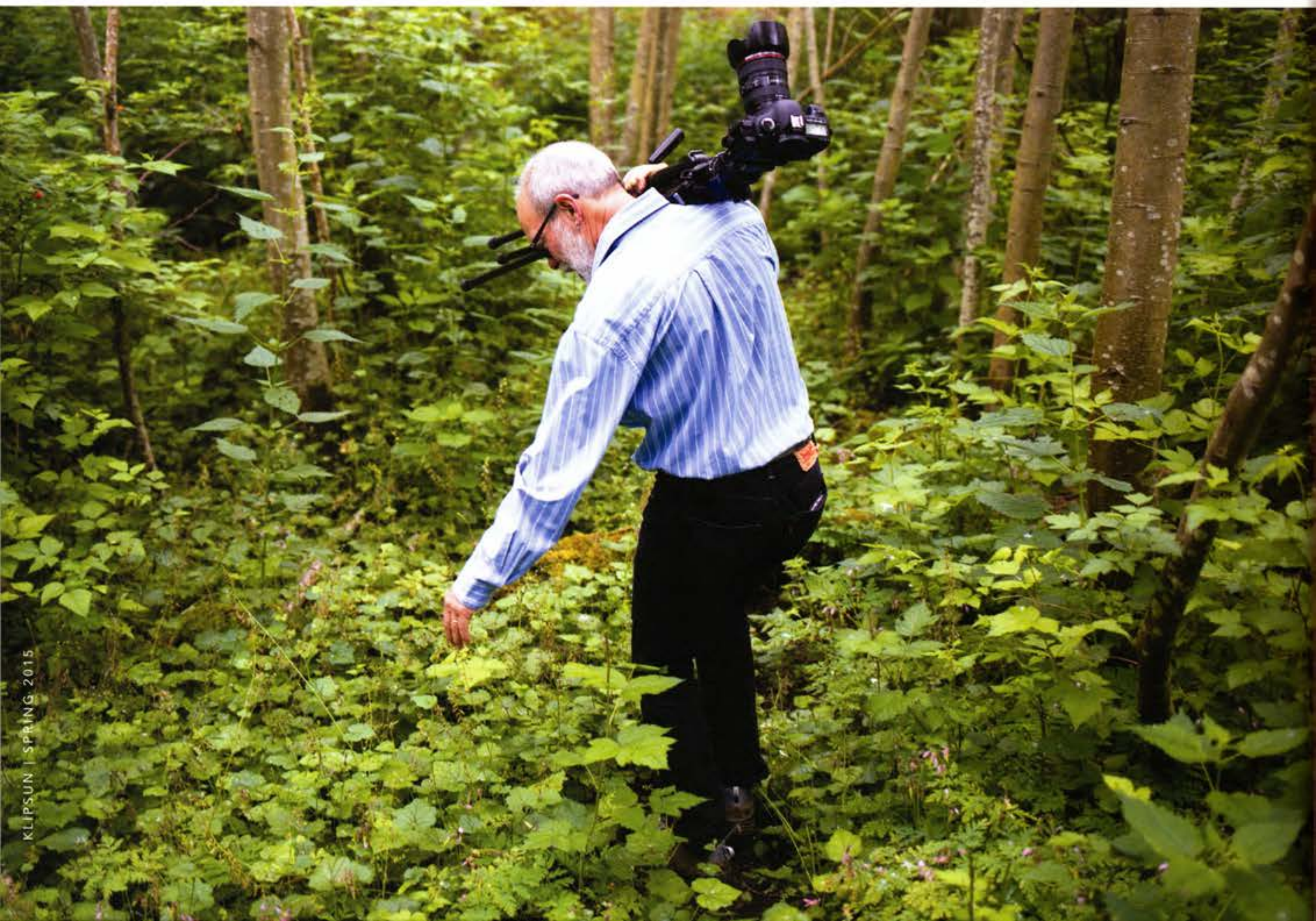
The app does not require an Internet or network connection to run because it runs locally on the processor in the phone, Giblin says. This allows users to access it at remote locations.

The Washington Wildflowers team collaborated to produce a similar app for Idaho, called Idaho Wildflowers, which will increase Washington Wildflower's total species coverage from about 850 to more than 1,000, Giblin says. Washington Wildflowers is expected to update in June 2015, Giblin says.

Turner photographed more than half of the plants in the Idaho Wildflowers app, and the rest are from other photographers, Giblin says.

"There's just such a diversity of trees and plants and the whole natural world," Turner says, reminiscing. "Wildflowers provide a good excuse to get outside." 

▼ *With his camera and tripod slung over his shoulder, Turner wades through low-lying plants while locating the Washington state native wildflower Bleeding Heart in Bellingham. "You never know where you're going to find [the wildflowers]," Turner says. "They could be thousands of feet up in the mountains or just on the side of the road."*



FIELD TRIP TO THE 14TH CENTURY

King County museum reflects rural medieval life



STORY BY
EMILY WILLEMAN

*Photo by
Danny Miller*

▲ *Quinn Wilson, who graduated from Western in 2012, poses for a portrait in medieval wear. Wilson, who earned a history degree with an emphasis in medieval history, works as a historical interpreter at Camlann Medieval Village in Carnation, Washington.*

SPARKS FLY AS QUINN WILSON

strikes a red-hot bar of steel with his hammer. The steady clang of metal on metal permeates the air. Clang. Clang. Clang.

"Let's get out of here!" a nearby boy shouts at his friend, covering his ears. "It's too loud!"

Wilson continues to strike at the metal lying on his anvil. Embers fly toward the walls of his open hut, made out of sticks woven together. His wool clothes are unprotected from the sparks. The grounds smell like a campfire, billows of smoke seeping out of stick huts similar to the one Wilson stands in.

Wilson stops striking to hold the piece of metal aloft.

"Does it look like an arrow yet?" he asks, turning to look at the dozen pairs of eyes squinting toward the metal.

It's not an arrowhead yet, but soon it will be an armor-piercing arrow from the hands of a blacksmith in 2015.

Wilson, 25, graduated from Western in 2012 with a degree in medieval history. Now he puts what he studied into practice as a historical interpreter at Camlann Medieval Village in Carnation, Washington, located approximately an hour's drive east of Seattle.

He never expected to be able to directly apply his medieval history degree to a post-graduation job but chose to study it anyway, Wilson says. He was initially drawn to medieval life after finding it similar to fantasy and sci-fi worlds such as "Lord of the Rings."

Surrounded by trees in the midst of Carnation's farmland, Camlann is removed from the

rest of the world.

As part of a living history museum, Camlann's staff strives to recreate the life of an English village in 1376 in the most accurate way possible. The buildings are made from mud and sticks, but just outside Camlann's entrance, historical interpreters — reenactors — spend their break time chowing down on fast-food and checking their phones while wearing period-specific garb.

Fewer than a dozen buildings connected by well-worn outdoor pathways make up the museum, including the village scribe's room, filled with long white quills and the scent of decaying paper, and the seamstress's hut, where bags of neatly shorn fleece from the neighboring sheep lay.

Wilson worked full-time for two years as Camlann's volunteer coordinator before recently moving into a volunteer position so he could move from Carnation to Seattle. He now works in a specialty archery shop, applying what he learned about bows from Camlann on a day-to-day basis.

Wilson is skilled enough to represent a variety of village trades. He can make shoes from start to finish, shoot arrows straight into the bull's-eye, mold clay into pots and perform a variety of other medieval trades. Although Wilson is capable, it's unusual for someone in England during 1376 to do so many different things, he says, so today he sticks with being a blacksmith — turning rods of metal into arrowheads and hooks with the expert slam of his hammer as wide-eyed children look on in awe. Clang. Clang. Clang. ■

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OUT OF THE ASHES, INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Devon Zahm

Musicians with disabilities share their voices

Out of the Ashes provides a safe place for people with disabilities to express themselves through music. Founder Jon Dalgarn is a musician who has used his skills to facilitate the program. With an array of diverse members, Out of the Ashes performs a variety of popular songs and originals and has recorded its own album.



ROCK TRAIL

Marina Bankowski & Taylor Thetford

Walk along the trail to see Washington's geological history

Created 50 million years ago, the 6,000 meter Chuckanut Formation is found in areas all around Bellingham — stretching to places such as Sehome Hill to the winding Chuckanut Drive Scenic Byway. Seeing the 100-foot tall sandstone cliffs while climbing the Rock Trail at Larrabee State Park, hikers are able to see just a fraction of the Chuckanut Formation in an eye-catching display.



LUPITA'S UPSCALE PUPPY

Mariko Osterberg & Anna Larson

A local day spa for man's best friend

After moving to Bellingham in 2003, Lupita, the owner of Lupita's Upscale Puppy, realized Bellingham was in need of an upscale doggy daycare. Since then, her business has gathered a large following of four-legged customers. Her passion for animals has led to the development of a unique home away from home for Bellingham's furry four-legged friends.

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VOLUME 46 / ISSUE 1