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McKenna Cardwell
Western Washington University

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KLIPSUN



PASSAGE
WINTER 2019

Letter From the Editor



DEAR READER,

As winter extends its icy hold, I often think about life and the journey that lies ahead. There's something about the frosty mornings and endless grey light that lends itself to self-reflection. If you, like me, find yourself diving into an internal dialogue, you may discover you have an idea of where you want to go, but are caught without a roadmap.

Along this path of life, there will be times of uncertainty. Of narrow alleyways you have to pass through in order to get where you're wanting to go – of passage. But it's the choices we make during these moments that hold potential to transform us into the person we want to be.

This quarter, Klipsun writers have sought to capture this idea through various interpretations. They've crafted narratives about the passage of time, the passage to safety or of passage in its literal form - transportation.

Allow these compelling stories to move you, the photography inspire you, but most of all, I hope this magazine makes you feel like you have a place in this cosmic universe.

Be brave enough to cross through your passage.

Yours,

McKenna Cardwell

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Front cover "Dan the Spaceman" and back images by Alex Powell

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Help From

Meet Joe, a Search and Rescue volunteer who has dedicated his life to saving fellow hikers after being rescued himself

Story by Brinnon Kummer
Photos courtesy of Jason R. Fortenbacher
Additional photo by Brinnon Kummer



Above

On a clear day in the summer of 2011, somewhere around 10,000 feet above the Pacific Ocean, Joe Edmark found himself in a situation that competed with the cruelest of ironies.

Edmark and a friend, Laura Potash, were in the latter half of a two-day expedition on the Pacific Northwest's crown jewel, Mount Rainier. This was a mountain he had become familiar enough with to consider it a dear friend.

Everything was going as planned, and the pair were making great time. They had taken a less common route along the Kautz glacier, and were working their way down a large patch of snow and ice known as "The Turtle." Edmark was glissading (sitting and sliding using an ice axe to control speed) down a steep section, and came to a stop when he realized something was wrong.

"I went to stand up and my foot was flopping. I never felt the break," Edmark said.

He didn't remember hitting anything, he just knew that he couldn't walk, and that this was not the place to be stranded.

Just a few weeks prior, Edmark had joined Everett Mountain Rescue and had been working towards becoming an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) with Snohomish County Search and Rescue (SAR). He said the irony of the situation was worse than any pain.

Flash forward to today, the freshly turned 30-year-old rescue technician is able to tell this story with a smile. He chuckles and pulls his hat down over his face, an accessory that he is rarely seen without.

He remembers shimmying 100 yards to a flatter part of the mountain, and splinting his leg using an ice axe and some straps. He activated his locator beacon and settled in, knowing that help was hours away.

For 19 hours, Edmark was carried down the mountain by a team of rescue volunteers. They worked through the night, his only memory being a blur of headlamps and muffled voices. He was guided across crevasses, wheeled through rocky sections and then skied down to Paradise, the primary starting point for most expeditions on Mount Rainier.

He was then transferred to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, where he underwent surgery to install a rod down his knee. Within four months, he was back on the mountains. Shortly after that, he broke his leg again in a motorcycle accident, but was back at it again following recovery.

Nothing could keep him away. A home away from home, as he put it.

The years have helped bury the irony, and Edmark appreciates holding a perspective that many of his fellow volunteers don't have.

"Empathy is ingrained in me because I experienced being on the other side," He said. "I don't recommend breaking your leg, but it was a unique opportunity."

The wild has always called to Edmark. As a boy, he remembers his days at a cabin outside of Leavenworth, Washington, hiking in the Enchantments and planting the seeds of a lifelong love for the outdoors. As he grew older, he discovered another interest: helping people.

"I'd always been interested in a life of service," Edmark said. "I could attribute that to my parent's religious beliefs and what they did for their community."

He began to take EMT courses and soon learned how he could combine these two passions into a reality. He was nearly finished with his schooling when he reached an unexpected yet wonderful speed bump: a baby boy named Sam, who was born when Edmark was 20 years old.

Edmark chose to set aside medicine and the outdoors for a while to work full-time and provide for his son. In 2010, his employer shut down and Edmark was unemployed, but with Sam now in school, he was able to spend more time back outside. His days became filled



“Each rescue I’ve been on made a difference in someone’s life, and it’s always a team effort. No one stands alone.”

fully take them back down to the trailhead where they decide whether the patient needs immediate medical attention, or if they can wait for someone to come pick them up.

This was Edmark’s standard mission for years, but there was one rescue that would change his life in the most peculiar way.

He was responding to a call that at first seemed like any other; a kid who needed help getting down the Mount Dickerman trail. He arrived and began to head up the mountain when he encountered another SAR member, Dietrich, who was coming back down.

Dietrich said that he wasn’t feeling well, and needed to rest at the trailhead for a moment. Normally, Edmark would’ve wished the man well and continued up the trail but that day he chose to make sure Dietrich made it back.

And without Edmark’s help, he never would’ve.

A few minutes later, Dietrich collapsed face first onto the ground. Edmark rolled him over and checked his pulse. He was in cardiac arrest. He radioed for help and began to perform CPR.

Nothing.

A team finally arrived with a defibrillator and administered a shock.

Still nothing.

They delivered a second shock, and finally began to see electrical activity again in his heart. Members of Dietrich’s team quickly carted him down the trail and flew him to the nearest hospital where he would undergo heart surgery and walk out three days later.

Edmark was presented with Lifesaving Awards for his actions from the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office as well as from fellow volunteer associations. Awards that he rarely shows or speaks of, hidden away in his bedroom.

“I don’t do it for the glory,” Edmark said. “Each rescue I’ve been on made a difference in someone’s life, and it’s always a team effort. No one stands alone.”

Danny Wikstrom, a former SAR Sergeant, has worked in the service for 40 years and was present the day of the incident. He has worked with countless brave volunteers, but Edmark’s actions that day stood out to him.

“I saw Joe in action that night,” Wikstrom said. “Calm, capable, skilled, caring and driven to help a man in desperate need. Joe Edmark stands among the very best of the best.”



with climbing Washington’s highest peaks, working ski patrol at Snoqualmie Pass and setting his sights back on how he could help others.

“I had all this time, so I took a wilderness EMT course,” Joe said. “It was in the mountains in Leavenworth and you were there on site for a month, it was really cool.” He remembers doing mock rescues in the middle of the night, sleeping beneath the jagged peaks of the Stuart Range and seeing the reflection of the stars in the alpine lakes of the Enchantments.

He knew this was exactly where he wanted to be.

He finished the course and began searching for accreditation, a necessary yet difficult-to-earn status for any aspiring EMT. He learned about local mountain rescue teams from a friend and was immediately interested. He was warned that the selection process was tough, but he applied anyway and soon he was accredited as a volunteer EMT at Everett Mountain Rescue and Snohomish County SAR after that.

He got a new full time job at a commercial bakery in Lynnwood, and whenever he wasn’t working, he was on duty. He went on countless ground missions that could take him anywhere in the 49,000 acres of forest and 124 miles of trails that make up the central Cascades.

The amount of hikers in the Cascades has more than doubled in the last 10 years, according to an article posted by The Seattle Times. More hikers on the trails equates to more injuries, making the need for SAR volunteers greater than ever.

A study conducted by the University of Washington School of Medicine found that more than 50 percent of hiking injuries are sprains, fractures and dislocations, generally in the ankles or legs. These are the most common calls the SAR team receives, he said.

It’s a sunny Saturday afternoon and Edmark is on duty. He is sitting at home when he receives a rescue notification on his phone. Once a full team has responded to the notification, Edmark springs into action.

On-duty volunteers are required to be within 20 minutes from the base, so the team is quick to arrive. He gears up and prepares the rescue trucks with the necessary equipment, while others pull up topographical maps of the area and plot out the fastest way to get to the patient. They work like a well-oiled machine, and within minutes are en route to the trail.

Once there, Edmark and his team ascend to the patient’s location and assess the situation. They will then dress or splint the wound, put them into a large, one-wheeled cart known as a litter, and then care-



Rescue Technician Joe Edmark hangs from helicopter during Helicopter Rescue Team (HRT) training.

That day brought another unexpected change in Edmark’s life. A fellow SAR member, Cassy, was also on the scene that day. The two bonded over the trauma of the experience, and a year later they were married. They went on a mountaineering road trip across America, took engagement pictures atop the Grand Teton in Wyoming and have worked together on numerous rescues.

Edmark continued with standard ground missions, but he always felt that there was more he could do. It was in 2013 that he set his sights on a new goal.

Snohomish County SAR is also home to a special division known as the Helicopter Rescue Team, the proud owners of a large Vietnam-era “huey” capable of landing in rugged terrain, dropping in EMTs and speedy evacuations for more serious injuries. Open positions are rare and only the best get certified and approved, but Edmark wanted in. In 2014, a senior member gave up his spot, and Joe didn’t hesitate. He passed all the necessary tests and became an official rescue technician on the helicopter team.

His new position was a dream come true, but not without a catch. As a member, he must remain available at all times if a call requiring the air team is made, and these calls are less common. His days have been much slower as a result.

“It’s been an unexpected side effect of being on the team,” Edmark said. “I see everyone going on missions I can’t go on. I can’t hike, I can’t go too far north or south. I can’t commit to anything I can’t immediately walk away from.”

Edmark has always loved what he does, and smiles telling the stories, but there is a dark side to the job. Not everyone can be rescued.

He has dealt with several suicides in his time with SAR. He has cleaned up the gruesome aftermath of victims who have suffered long falls. His team was even asked by police to take part in an evidence search for a local homicide.

“Somebody has to do the job, and not everybody can handle that,” He said. “You sort of become a bit calloused, because you can’t let it affect you. The people that can’t do that don’t last long.”

One case in particular, the disappearance of 28-year-old Sam Sayers on the Vesper Peak trail in August of 2018, stands out. In his experience, Edmark said, missing hikers are found dead or alive within a day or two almost 100 percent of the time. Almost, he said. Sam Sayers is the reason he has to say almost.

After Sayers disappearance, Edmark was among the first people to arrive at the trail. They began to search using standard lost hiker protocol, first tracing the trail from bottom to top, and then searching in places that commonly draw people off trail like vistas or lakes, but there was no sign of her.

The family of Sayers has continued the search months after her disappearance, but they have yet to find anything. Edmark believes if she was alive on that mountain, she would’ve already been found.

“It’s tough, we’ve done everything we can and the family has put a lot of pressure on increasing efforts,” Edmark said. “The best thing we can do is learn and become better from it.”

It’s not a glamorous position and there is no pay, but Edmark can’t see himself doing anything else with his free time. The people he rescues are his fellow outdoor enthusiasts, people who saved his life once when he needed it most.

“There are mountain rescue teams everywhere, and there will always be people who need help, and I plan to be there for them.” Edmark said with a smile. “Just like they were there for me.”

Counterculture Circulation

The underground newspaper scene in Bellingham circa 1969 told through contributing reporters of the Northwest Passage

Story by Mathew Roland

Tucked away in the Center for Northwest Archives is a sliver of journalism history. A slender cardboard box contains dozens of copies of the Northwest Passage, a counterculture biweekly newspaper published at the time of the Vietnam War.

Elizabeth Joffrion, director of heritage resources, pulls the lid off the box and warns me to be delicate with copies of the paper.

“Old newsprint tears easily,” she said.

I pull out a stack and turn them upside down on the table, flipping through the detailed art and graphic designs. These yellowing pages are artifacts in our current age of digital storytelling. The historic copies of newsprint offer a glimpse into the '70s, a rebellious and turbulent time characterized by anti-war protests, environmental consciousness and the continued fight for equality.

The bi-weekly publication broke the mold of traditional newspapers of the time. It was staffed by volunteers and accepted stories from community contributors, thus providing an avenue for people to express their voice. The Northwest Passage worked to represent viewpoints of marginalized groups, covering politics, protests, sex, drugs, poetry, women's rights, gay rights and the Native American and Chicano movements. In addition, the Northwest Passage was also a frequent contributor to environmental debates.

In an office in Fairhaven, the Northwest Passage served the community from 1969-86. According to Mapping American Social Movements, a project at the University of Washington, the Northwest Passage had a circulation of 4,000 copies between Bellingham and Seattle. The paper was one of more than 2,600 counterculture and underground publications

in the United States from 1965-75. The project reveals the impact of the underground press on the civil rights movement, protests against the draft, and other social changes that define this era. Joel Connelly, a Bellingham native and political reporter and columnist for The Seattle P.I., contributed environmental stories to the Passage.

“The freedom to express yourself was a strength of the Northwest Passage,” Connelly said.

“The freedom to express yourself was a strength of the Northwest Passage,” Connelly said.

Now 70 years old, Connelly said he began contributing stories to the newspaper when he became conscious of the environmental issues facing Western Washington.

One of the big breaks for the Northwest Passage was exposing that Georgia Pacific was spilling mercury into Bellingham Bay. They reported that seven tons of mercury were being deposited into Bellingham Bay each year. The headline read “Georgia Pacific Poisons,” accompanied by a photo illustration of a gasmask and sunflowers.

The following excerpt from that story highlights the tone of the Northwest Passage. “Above all, the public must demand that Georgia Pacific, which is the same company leading the rape of the redwoods in Northern California, stop its wanton exploitation and pollution of the environment for corporate profit. Georgia Pacific and corporations like it abuse land and natural resources because they regard them as commodities belonging to man, rather than land and natural resources being part of a community to which we belong where man has the right to use, but not to abuse, the products of nature.”

“I think the Northwest Passage focused the pollution issue where it belonged,” Connelly said.

There were unique challenges facing the Northwest Passage, ranging from budget constraints to distributors who were nervous about the use of profanity. Not everyone in Bellingham was a part of the counterculture movement. The mayor of Bellingham at the time, Reg Williams, even attempted to bring obscenity charges against the paper.

Despite efforts to dismantle the paper, it persisted within the counterculture scene of Fairhaven, Bellingham and Seattle. Seventy-year-old journalist John Dodge contributed environmental stories to the

Northwest Passage. His career in journalism spanned 35 years after leaving the Passage. Much of Dodge's journalism career was spent at The Olympian as an environmental reporter and columnist.

“The target audience were basically folks fed up with the war, fed up with racism and sexism, and wanted rapid change,” Dodge said. “They weren't comfortable with slow methodical change from within the system, things weren't changing fast enough.”

When the public discovered the U.S. had bombed Cambodia in 1969, it sparked outrage that the government was expanding the Vietnam War into neighboring countries. Dodge said in Bellingham, hundreds of students and citizens marched up the Lakeway freeway onramp and out onto the freeway in protest, consequently shutting down I-5.

“The very first driver to come up to our blockade was a little old lady who got out of her car and sat down with us on the freeway,” Dodge said. Nearly 50 years later, a similar protest shut down I-5 in solidarity with those against the Dakota Access Pipeline in February 2017.

As I delicately close the last few pages of the Northwest Passage and place them upright back in the cardboard box, I am reminded of the responsibility journalists must uphold everyday. The stories we write and the photos we make may one day be archived for future generations to learn from, thus having a lasting impact on the communities they serve.



Story by Kelsie Noble
Photos by Mathew Roland

In the Shadows of a Graveyard

The fall of “Galloping Gertie,” the original Tacoma Narrows bridge, and the rise of new life in its remnants

When speaking about the possibility of the world's largest octopus hiding under the bridge, Bingham pointed out how long the legend has been around — decades.

Hunks of metal sit twisted like the arms of an octopus, out of place in the foyer of Harbor History Museum in Gig Harbor. These metal scraps are remnants of the collapse of “Galloping Gertie,” the original 1940 bridge that reached across the Tacoma Narrows strait.

The sister pieces to this metal, ripped away from the bridge by the sheer force of nature, have all found different resting spots. Some went to scrap while others settled at the bottom of the strait where they have laid for nearly 80 years.

“Galloping Gertie”—once deemed an engineering triumph—stood for only four months. A wind storm hit the Narrows on Nov. 7, 1940 with gusts reaching 40 mph. It caused a structural failure, sending one car and large pieces of the bridge spiraling into the depths below.

When entering through the Harbor History Museum’s front doors, it’s easy to walk past the piece of “Galloping Gertie” — now a twisted heap — without a second glance.

Nora Thompson, membership coordinator at the museum, looked at the metal as she recounted her knowledge of the 1940 accident. Luckily, no human lives were lost, she said.

“One man came close,” Thompson said.

Leonard Coatsworth, an editor at the Tacoma News Tribune, escaped his vehicle but returned to try and get his daughter’s dog out of the car, according to the Washington State Department of Transportation website. The dog, a three-legged cocker spaniel named Tubby, was the only life lost in the accident.

“The dog was so frightened that he wouldn’t come and that man just barely made it across before the bridge went down,” Thompson said.

The part of the roadway that collapsed into the waters below has become an artificial reef for the marine life of the Puget Sound. It’s now a destination spot for recreational divers, marine biologists and those that believe in a local legend that says the largest octopus in the world lurks around those parts.

“Some of the stuff that’s still under there is hard to

get to because it’s deep, and of course it’s super, super windy,” Thompson said. “But of course, divers do like it just to go down and take a look at everything.”

Brian Bingham, interim director of the marine science program at Western, said the Narrows is teeming with marine life.

“It gets very strong current exchange underneath there so you see a real strong movement of water,” Bingham said. “Lots of different kinds of animals really like that kind of environment.”

The strong current creates a water exchange that brings in food to the marine life that populates that area, Bingham said. “That’s a place that’s well-known for lots of octopus and wolf eels which are some of the more impressive marine fish around here,” Bingham said. “You’ll have big fields of sea anemones, very large barnacles, sea stars and sea slugs, just a really large diversity of marine invertebrates are there.”

Diver Greg McGowan has jumped into the chilly waters of the Narrows himself. McGowan is a Puget Sound native and has been diving for upwards of 30 years.

“I have always been fascinated with diving — with things under water,” McGowan said.

His salt and pepper hair and Boeing-approved office attire is juxtaposed with a motorcycle helmet held under one arm and a padded jacket covering his upper half. With three decades of experience in underwater excursions, Greg is still able to recount his trip under the Tacoma Narrows Bridge back in the early ‘80s vividly.

“Well, a friend of mine was a commercial diver,” McGowan chuckled. “He had a boat and it was moored out of Tacoma. We would use it to go through different types of dives around the Puget Sound and, being a bit of a thrill-seeker, it’s always about, ‘Well, okay, what haven’t we done?’”

The Puget Sound is a giant marine life exploration center for anyone that loves the water. There is plenty to discover for those interested in the deep blue, from commercial divers to underwater photographers.

“The Tacoma Narrows dive is an interesting dive in that one— you have that dilapidated bridge structure on the bottom,” McGowan said. “Also, it’s a very, very deep dive and kind of a technical dive, the currents there are just outrageously fast.”

McGowan and his diving partner Rick Meyers would dive on the west side of the Narrows, towards Gig Harbor. McGowan said they would swim down about 110 feet, which made it more of a technical dive than a recreational one as recreational diving is between 30 and 60 feet.

When divers reach waters 100 feet deep, they can start to get nitrogen narcosis, a buildup of nitrogen in the blood. It makes it difficult to think straight, forcing them to concentrate, McGowan said.

“We set everything up, decided to make things interesting and go spearfishing as well, got in the water at the right time and then we descended, following the anchor all the way to the bottom,” McGowan recalled of their Tacoma Narrows dive.

Meyers and McGowan got separated during their dive and that’s when he ran across the bridge decking.

“There is a lot of just flat, cracked-up pieces of concrete stacked on each other,” McGowan remembered. “You can see some twisted steel and there’s a lot of pockets underneath where the things have stacked up and that’s where we were looking for fish.”

Meyers, McGowan’s old diving partner, brought some friends down to the Narrows dive. One of them stumbled upon an octopus hiding in one of the crevices created by the wreckage and decided he wanted to reach in and grab it.

“After the fact he realized this was a mistake because now he had eight arms swinging around grabbing his face mask, grabbing all over his body and you know— two arms against eight legs, he couldn’t get control of him,” McGowan said, his arms flailing as though he was the one in the incident.

When speaking about the possibility of the world’s largest octopus hiding under the bridge, Bingham pointed out how long the legend has been around — decades.

“Well, then we know it’s false,” Bingham laughed. “Giant Pacific octopuses live a max of five years, probably closer to three. They grow very fast but there’s not going to be one down there that stays for 20 years or 10 years even.”

While large octopuses are seen fairly routinely under the bridge, the “world’s largest” is probably not there, Bingham said. Although the legend might be dispelled, large octopuses are seen fairly routinely under the bridge.

While the glamorized hunks of metal in the foyer of the Harbor History Museum serve little purpose other than to inform visitors about the fateful incident, the pieces that never made it out of the water are just the opposite. Since they have been under water for nearly 80 years now, they have grown to hold so much life, wonder and mystery that one could only imagine unless they dive there themselves.



Looking up at the Tacoma Narrows bridge in Tacoma, WA.

Like Father,

A feeble attempt at showing appreciation to my dad

Story by Hailey Palmer
Photo Courtesy of Hailey Palmer

I got my first iPod Touch when I was 13 years old. My dad handed it to me on my birthday and told me to put the song “Daughters” by John Mayer in it. I didn’t really understand why because at the time I was busy putting in “Love Story” by Taylor Swift, if I’m being honest.

There have been plenty of instances in my life where I haven’t understood something about my dad. He’s also one of the few people in my life I think I understand the most. That’s because my personality is an exact copy of his. I know genetically that’s not how it works, but for the sake of this essay, that’s how it’s going to work.

My sarcasm, wit, tendency to downplay important things and general inability to properly express emotions comes from Ed Palmer. So, to my friends reading this, next time one of those traits annoys you, direct your feelings his way because it’s not my fault.

It wasn’t until October, when my dad was hospitalized, that I came to realize just how similar he and I were. He was originally admitted for chest pains, but while he was there, the doctors found a lot of blockage in his heart. They scheduled a triple bypass surgery.

“It’s no big deal,” he said.

How nonchalant he was when he said that drove me crazy because, obviously, that kind of thing is a big deal. It was also in that moment I realized I would have said the same thing to my friends and family in a similar situation. Downplaying most things and the general inability to express emotions, remember?

For all the things I’ve picked up from my dad that I can’t stand, including the laid back approach I take to most situations, there’s plenty of things I’m thankful for. His love and passion for sports is one of them.

Growing up, my two brothers played sports and my dad coached. I had to either learn the games they played or get left behind. I chose to learn.

I went to every practice and game whether it was football, baseball or wrestling. The smell of sweaty prepubescent boy was one I became all too familiar with.

Throughout my childhood, I spent weeknights at some type of practice and weekends at games or tournaments.

Constantly being surrounded and immersed in that world became my norm.

It wasn’t until high school I really decided I wanted sports to be a part of my career. Seeing as I’m 5 feet 5 inches tall, being a professional athlete wasn’t really an option.

My dad and I were watching football one night and one of the sideline reporters came on the screen.

“You could do something like that when you grow up,” he said.

Realistically, that’s not the exact moment I decided I wanted to pursue journalism as a career, but it is the moment the idea was planted into my head.

I was constantly surrounded by male-dominated sports growing up, but never once did I think I didn’t belong in that world. I owe that to my dad. If we hadn’t watched ESPN constantly, I really don’t know what I’d be doing today in college. Probably something that makes more money.

Since my dad was discharged from the hospital in late October, I’ve noticed some changes. He calls me almost

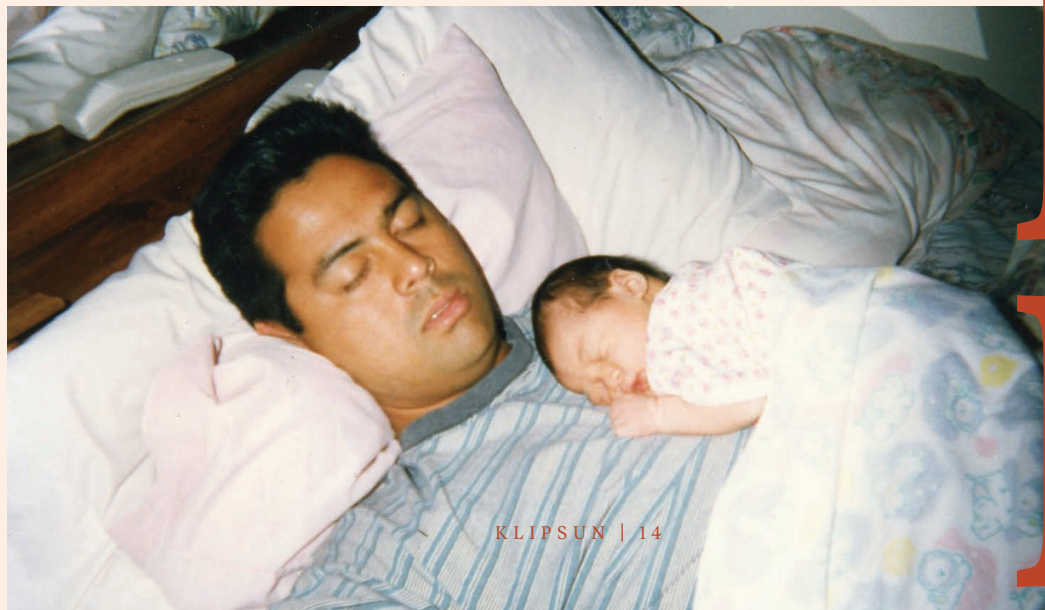
every day now instead of once or twice a week like he used to. He ends every call with an “I love you” or an “I’ll call you again later.” I think he’s working on the “inability to express emotions” thing. Probably because open heart surgery will make a man come to some realizations.

It’s definitely made me realize some things. My dad’s health has always been something I try not to think of.

He began having heart problems two years ago and since then, I’ve known his health isn’t the best. I pushed it to the back of my mind because I didn’t want to deal with it. The whole triple bypass thing forced me to deal with it.

I’m scared of my parents not being around to see me do something significant with my life. This was one of my first thoughts the day of my dad’s surgery. I’m not ready to think about the days where I won’t have my dad around anymore. It’s hard to grasp that one of the main people responsible for my personality and love for sports won’t be around forever.

At 22 years old, I unashamedly still listen to some of the same music I listened to when I was 13, “Love Story” included. I didn’t understand why my dad wanted me to put that John Mayer song in my iPod at the time, but I do now. It was his subtle way of saying he loves and cares about me.



Like Daughter

Then They Came For Your Family

How Bellingham families are coping in the aftermath of a devastating ICE raid

Story by Questen Ingram
Contributing Writer Laura Place
Illustration by Mouse Bird

Ruby Castañeda was lying with her one-month-old son on Aug. 29 when she received a phone call from her husband, Daniel. He had left for work at Granite Precasting and Concrete in Bellingham two hours before. He usually texts her during his break, but this call came early. He told her he needed her to stay calm and to bring him tennis shoes.

"They had a really labor-intensive job moving concrete, so my first thought was like, shit, he hurt his leg or his leg got cut off or something," Ruby recalled.

Instead, she was shocked to hear him say he'd been pulled over and arrested by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement while on his commute to work.

"I just started freaking out and crying," Ruby said. "And I was like, 'Oh my god, what's going to happen?' He's like, 'I don't know. But stay calm. I need you to be calm for the kids. Just get yourself together and then they're going to tell you where to meet them.'"

Daniel had to persuade the ICE agents to let him call Ruby. He didn't want her to hear what happened from a stranger. During the phone call, the ICE agent told Ruby to meet them at a gas station. She brought them the shoes, and they told her that Daniel would call again once he was in Tacoma at the Northwest Detention Center.

"That was basically it. They gave me his keys, his wallet, his belt, his boots and told me where to get his truck. They told me where it was parked, which was literally down the road from my house," Ruby said. "And that was it."

That same day, Marisol Chapina worried about what happened to Jahn, her partner, after he called saying he was stopped by law enforcement five minutes after leaving for work at the precasting company. She didn't hear back from him. She called Bellingham Police and Highway Patrol. No one had been arrested

that morning, they told her. They transferred her to Border Patrol, who said they had him, but could not provide any more information other than the location of his car, which they had parked in the Barkley movie theater lot.

Daniel and Jahn, along with 14 others, were detained on Aug. 29 in an ICE raid targeting workers of Granite Precasting and Concrete while they were on their commutes. The raid resulted in the deportation of nine people over the following months, one as recent as Nov. 4, with seven still awaiting court dates to determine if they are eligible to remain in the United States, the land of their work, family and homes.

Ruby and Marisol ended up meeting one another the day after the raid at a community meeting hosted by Community to Community Development, or C2C, a women-led group in Bellingham which advocates for migrant and immigrant labor rights.

C2C had planned an action to stop the bus which would take the men from a Ferndale Border Patrol facility to the Northwest Detention Center, but when they arrived at 6 a.m., they discovered the men had been transported in the night, C2C media coordinator Liz Darrow said.

That week, Ruby met with Darrow, and Pamela Jons, executive vice president of the Whatcom Community Foundation to discuss the needs of the families. It was there that Raid Relief to Reunite Families was born. Because Ruby is bilingual, she offered to coordinate the group for the families, and Marisol stepped in to help lead it, Ruby said.

Raid Relief to Reunite Families funds bail bonds and legal fees for those detained by ICE and provides necessities for their families, many of whom lost their principal working family members.

The Whatcom Community Foundation, a nonprofit charity group, accepts donations for Raid Relief,



which then is granted to the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship and Catholic Community Services which disperses the money as needed. As of mid-November, over 200 people have donated to the foundation and to the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship to support the families affected by the raid. Between the two groups, \$200,000 was raised as of mid-November, Jons said.

"It's not about immigration policy, or residential status, it's about how everyone who lives here should have the opportunity to thrive," Jons said.

Six of the men have been released from the detention center on bail bond, ranging from \$3,000 to \$18,000, Ruby said. Jahn was not offered bond, along with another man who was deported back to Honduras on Nov. 4 who has an 8-year-old son still in the United States.

"Some of them that are released right now I don't think would be released without this foundation. They would not have been able to post the bonds," Marisol said. "The hope is that these bonds will be returned when their cases are solved, and that money would be recycled and hopefully we'd be able to help other families."

The Northwest Detention Center, with a capacity to confine 1,575 people, is the fourth largest immigrant detention center in the country and is one of many

owned by The GEO Group, a multibillion-dollar corporation which is contracted by the federal government.

Marisol said that Jahn and other detainees have been quarantined for chickenpox and mumps, during which times they are not allowed to receive visits from family or lawyers. She said that missed hearings because of quarantines cause delays in court schedules and as a consequence, longer times in detention. She described how Jahn complains about the food in the center, and how they are only allowed to go outside for one hour a day.

"They're treated like criminals basically. He's like, 'We have no rights,'" she said.

Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson filed a lawsuit in September 2017 against The GEO Group for violation of the state's minimum wage laws and for unjust enrichment. The GEO Group pays its Northwest Detention Center inmates one dollar a day or in extra food for work that keeps the facility operational, the Office of the Attorney General stated in a press release. In April, a federal judge rejected a motion by The GEO Group to dismiss the lawsuit.

The detention center has also been the site of a hunger strike by an asylum seeker from Russia, who died in a Tacoma hospital on Nov. 24 after attempting to hang himself at the center. Prior to his attempt, the detainee had detailed his inhumane treatment in the center, including being left in an isolated cell with no clothes, in a written note to his attorney, according to an article by The Seattle Times. According to the Human Rights Watch, 74 people have died at the facility since 2010.

Tanya Roman, an ICE public affairs officer, stated in an email that they "take both the mental and physical wellbeing of those within our care very seriously." Roman also addressed the matter of detainees being quarantined in the event of illness, saying that those put in quarantines still have access to family and lawyer visits, so long as they wear a mask.

"In an exercise of caution, ICE houses individuals together who may have been exposed to chickenpox to determine immunity," Roman said. "Visitors entering the facility are informed when there is an active chickenpox case, but not prevented from entering."

When asked if the raid was carried out due to past criminal records of any of the detainees, Roman said, "ICE does not conduct sweeps, checkpoints or raids that target aliens indiscriminately. On Aug. 29, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) arrested 16 individuals in a targeted immigration enforcement operation." Roman did not address whether any of the targeted men had prior criminal records.

Roman stated that ICE cannot comment further on the case as it is part of a longer ongoing investigation.

While awaiting decisions about his future in the U.S., Marisol recalled her and Jahn's first years together.

"We both went to a karaoke night at a restaurant and ended up sitting next to each other. He ended

Crossing the Line

up asking for my phone number and it was kind of funny-- a few weeks later I had foot surgery and so he was there for me. We had just met so we bonded more over that," she reminisced.

Marisol and Jahn felt they were at the age to start a family, and they soon decided to move in together, she said. They fell in love with a house they'd seen for sale, and they bought it. He was detained right before their first mortgage payment, Marisol said.

Jahn came to the United States from Honduras in 2014, fleeing the threat of organized crime. His father also arrived from Honduras in June, but was detained and sent to a facility in Louisiana until Marisol and Jahn posted his bail on Aug. 27 and got him a plane ticket. At last, on Aug. 28 Jahn's father arrived and saw him for the first time in five years. They spent the evening together after his shift at work, only for Jahn to be taken the next day.

"It's just like, we couldn't believe it. We had just gone through that process, it was supposed to be a celebratory weekend, and he was excited, and--" Marisol paused--"it's been awful ever since."

Ruby also described the progress she and Daniel had been making in their life together. She first met Daniel working at a restaurant in Lynden. They later reconnected, leading to their marriage in September 2017. On the day of the raid, they were planning to move in with a friend in order to save money while they began the process of obtaining his permanent resident status, Ruby said.

"It's something that you always talk about with your spouse who's undocumented, like, 'What's our plan? What's going to happen?'" Ruby said. "I would always tell him to shut up, it's not going to happen to us, like you've been here for 12 years, you don't have a ticket, you're not a bad person, you don't look for trouble, and we're in the process of getting your permanent residency."

Daniel came from Mexico in 2006 with his first wife, who moved to the United States on a work visa. She was pregnant and they already had a 5-month old child. They moved to Washington 11 years ago.

Ruby found herself unable to explain the situation to her 8-year-old daughter, who wondered how Daniel could be in jail if he didn't do anything wrong and he only lacked the proper papers.

"And she's like, 'Well what kind of papers does he need? Why can't we just go to Walmart or Target and buy them for him and get him out, because he's sitting in a place where only bad people belong,'" Ruby recalled her daughter asking. "I just instantly started crying because I didn't know how else to explain it."

Ruby said after nine days of Daniel in detention, she scrambled around Tacoma, depositing checks and waiting in ICE offices to pay Daniel's bond. Finally, Daniel was released.

"It was a huge relief," Ruby said. But with her on maternity leave and Daniel prohibited from working, they had to move again, this time into her parents' house. Ruby admits that not being able to work has been stressful for Daniel, but until the outcome of his trial, Daniel remains productive, and Ruby remains hopeful.

"It's obvious that Daniel would have a job when he's able to work. He has ties to the community, he's working on his English, he's been going to school, he's volunteering at the food bank," Ruby said. "He's doing things just to prove that he's worthy of being member of the community. So I'm not scared. I just don't feel like anyone can say no to that."

Daniel's first hearing in court is set for March 29, Ruby said.

As for Jahn, his asylum claim was deemed credible and he is awaiting his hearing set for Jan. 28.

"Jahn and I are still in a way appreciative that he's not deported. There's been some people that didn't even have the option--they were just deported," Marisol said. She is hopeful that Jahn will be released.

The family members of Julio Ayala, another worker of the precasting company detained by ICE during the raid, have been left feeling hopeless following Julio's recent deportation. Julio was deported and arrived back to Mexico on Sept. 19, leaving behind his wife Laura Noriega, his four stepchildren and his daughter, who was three weeks old at the time of the raid.

It was the first day of school for Laura's children and her car had broken down, but Julio wouldn't answer her phone calls, Laura explained through translation by Marisol. When he did call her, it was to tell her that he was detained and where to pick up his truck. Julio was at the detention center for two weeks until he was deported back to Mexico.

Laura was ill during her pregnancy and Julio had been helping take care of the family. With Julio gone, Laura's eldest son, who is 18 years old, had to drop out of his senior year of high school in order to begin working to support the family, she said.

Since arriving back to Mexico, Julio has been staying with some of his other children. He is trying to find work and wants to come back, but there is not much hope for the foreseeable future of him returning to see his newborn child, Laura said.

Laura met Julio at a dance four years ago. "It was something unexpected," she said. Laura came to the United States in 2008 and Julio has been in Bellingham since 2013.

The teachers at her children's school have been supportive, and the donations from Raid Relief to Reunite Families have helped her pay for necessities, bills and clothes for the baby, Laura said.

"Had it not been for the foundation, I don't know what I would have done," she said.

"These are people that come to work, they don't come to harm anyone," Laura stressed of the men who were taken on the August morning. "Everyone was on their way to work."

All information in this story is correct and updated as of Nov. 30, 2018.

Recent changes in marijuana policy on both sides of the Canadian-U.S. Border has already led to confusion for Canadians and Americans alike

Story by Gwen Roley
Photos by Suzanna Leung

The U.S.-Canadian crossing between Blaine, Washington and Surrey, British Columbia is marked by the Peace Arch monument which promises friendship and a perpetually open border. Americans and Canadians from the surrounding communities casually cross the border on a regular basis, but in the last few months, security has become tighter. Some vehicles are stopped and searched before even reaching the line for passport checks. After the passport checkpoint, border security pulls aside more vehicles for secondary screenings.

These changes in border procedure can be explained by a new sign, displayed so every traveller can read it following the sentiments of fraternity found on the Peace Arch: "Attention! All cannabis products must be declared."

Recreational marijuana was nationally legalized in Canada on Oct. 17, 2018, after the Canadian Senate passed "The Cannabis Act" in June. However, marijuana is still federally illegal in the United States. This means Canadians

crossing the border from British Columbia into Washington, where recreational marijuana has been legal since 2014, could be banned from the U.S. for life for admitting to their participation in the legal marijuana industry. Canadians who are found inadmissible can appeal their status with a waiver, which costs \$580 (U.S.) and takes four to six months to process.

"With Canada legalizing federally, that creates a whole layer of confusion," said Laurie Trautman, director of the Border Policy Research Institute at Western Washington University. "The potential for consequences crossing back and forth are pretty severe."

The BPRI studies Canadian-American relations in the Pacific Northwest. Their studies on the effects of legalization predict that border crossings by Canadians may drop for fear of being banned, and Americans will be wanting to avoid the longer waits resulting from stricter border security. U.S. Customs and Border Protection has stated that they will continue to enforce federal drug laws and decide when to screen travelers on a case-by-case basis.

British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest. have always shared similarities in geography, culture and economics. Many businesses in Whatcom County and British Columbia are built around serving cross-border customers, but now there is a fear that tightening the border will discourage this form of international commerce.

A new sign in Blaine, WA warns travelers not to bring cannabis over the U.S.-Canadian border after Canadian legalization.



Canna-business

Trautman, along with Blaine immigration lawyer Len Saunders, has predicted economic implications for the U.S. once marijuana is legalized in Canada.

“[Whatcom County businesses] rely upon Canadians for keeping businesses going, because they cater to Canadian clients,” Saunders said.

The cannabis industry is not exempt from this international economic phenomenon. Aaron Nelson, Director of Actualization at growing Bellingham marijuana business 2020 Solutions, estimates between 12 and 15 percent of his company’s business comes from Canadian “pot tourists.”

“I actually think that the Canadian legalization will lead to an increase in Canadians purchasing and consuming here because they’re not going to bring it across the border with them,” Nelson said. “But as it’s more and more accepted in Canada, it’ll be just a normal thing to do on vacation or won’t be as taboo as it currently is in some social circles.”

So far, it’s hard to tell what the long-term effects of this policy change will be. Since Canadian legalization, only one recreational store has opened in B.C. in Kamloops, about three hours from the border. There are medical marijuana shops in B.C. which will be making the transition into the recreational market, but many have closed down as they make their way through the bureaucratic process of opening a legal cannabis store. One exception is Weeds Glass and Gifts in downtown Vancouver, owned by Don Briere.

Weeds, which has 17 retail stores across Canada, has been open for over five years and existed within a legal grey area where they were licensed to operate while recreational cannabis was still illegal. Like 2020 Solutions, Weeds has benefitted from a market of international tourism.

“Many people have come from all over the world,” Briere said. “They’re amazed, impressed, dazzled.”

There are Americans and Canadians in the marijuana business who are optimistic about the future of their industry. Nelson says after the Canadian government has blazed this path forward, American federal legalization could be possible, but it’s more dependent on the demographics of elected officials. Since this remains out of their control, many businesses focus on educating people on cannabis laws and benefits.

“We see ourselves as an asset to society because a lot of people use cannabis as an exit drug to get off of opioids,” Briere said. “So we do help people and we are beneficial to society and people really like us and support us.”

Nelson, despite his own disagreement with American marijuana regulation, makes a point of eliminating confusion for customers when it comes to the substance’s legal status.

“If they mentioned they’re travelling, we tell them it’s not legal to leave the state of Washington with any of the products they purchased, even to neighboring states that do have legalized cannabis such as Oregon,” Nelson said. “You’re still not permitted to cross the state lines with cannabis because it’s illegal on the federal level.”



(bottom left) Don Briere shows off merchandise at his store, Weeds Glass and Gifts, in Vancouver, B.C.

(top left) Don Briere holds up a cannabis candy advent calendar.

(top right) Stickers showing the Canadian marijuana industry’s support for the LGBTQ+ community at Weeds’ warehouse.

Comprehending Cannabis in Cascadia

Trautman and the BPRI took great pains to predict the effect legalizing cannabis in Canada would have on the Pacific Northwest. Her report “Cannabis in Cascadia: Impacts of Legalization in the Region” was completed just days before Canadian legalization was passed.

Since legalization has reached Canada, the West Coast of North America is now the only contiguous region in the world where marijuana is legal. For this reason, many residents of the Cascadia region accept marijuana’s legality as universal.

“I think for a lot of people living in Washington state, especially younger people, there’s kind of a general sense that marijuana is just legal,” Trautman said. “People see stores everywhere so I’m just not sure how much knowledge there is that it’s really federally illegal.”

In the past, the federal governments in the U.S. and Canada have both taken a hands-off approach to marijuana. In the U.S., the allowance of legal medical and, more recently, recreational marijuana has been left up to the states. Medically legal marijuana must be prescribed by a doctor, but in legal recreational markets anyone over the age limit of 21 years old can buy and consume cannabis from a vendor.

By 2000, California, Washington and Oregon had all legalized medical marijuana and between 2014 and 2018 Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Nevada, California and Massachusetts all opened legal recreational markets. As of 2018, Maine, Vermont, Michigan and Washington, D.C. all allow the possession and use of marijuana but do not have legal retail markets.

In 2001, Canada legalized medical sale of marijuana. Since then, Canadian law enforcement has paid less and less attention to marijuana possession. Shops with a quasi-legal status selling “B.C. Bud” began to pop up in British Columbia.

“All the provinces one by one said ‘we’re going to go the federal route and legalize it and get involved with the sale and distribution.’” Saunders said. “In the U.S. it went the other way around. It’s the states that legalized this and so that is where you have the inconsistency.”

The legal age of consumption of marijuana in most of the provinces is 19 years old, the exceptions being Alberta and Quebec, where it is 18.

A survey conducted by Trautman of students at Western Washington University found 83.3 percent of respondents knew Canada was legalizing cannabis. However, 38 percent of respondents thought crossing the border into B.C. or Washington with marijuana would be legal once Canada legalized recreational cannabis, but 56 percent of respondents knew crossing the border with marijuana would remain illegal.

Since some people at Western have either dual or full Canadian citizenship, there were discrepancies in Trautman’s results. She said many people thought crossing the border with cannabis would be legal for Canadians. This is not the case, she said, as the U.S. still considers marijuana an illegal drug and will ban any non-American who has a marijuana conviction or admits to consuming cannabis.

“As marijuana continues to be a controlled substance under United States law, working or facilitating the proliferation of the legal marijuana industry in U.S. where it is deemed legal or Canada may affect admissibility to the U.S.” U.S. Customs and Border Protection stated in September.

Banned for life

From his position in Blaine, right across the border from Canada, Saunders sees a lot of cases of Canadians trying to be readmitted to the U.S. after admitting to cannabis use. These cases were not uncommon before Washington legalization, but in the past four years they have spiked, Saunders said.

“It started going from one or two cases a month to literally one or two cases a week,” Saunders said. “Sometimes it verges on one or two a day.”

Saunders, a Canadian-American dual citizen himself, said when he first opened his practice in the border town he had anticipated working on cases involving citizenship and marriages between people of different nationalities. However, circumstance has pushed him toward making marijuana inadmissibility cases his specialty.

“You have to remember, I’m just one little attorney,” Saunders said. “I’m not in downtown Vancouver at some office in the Columbia Building, I’m in Blaine.”

Most of Saunders’ clients call him from over the border just after being denied entry. He coordinates with them on how they will be filing their waiver of inadmissibility, where fees and wait times can

vary from case to case. Saunders said he has filed upwards of 3,000 of these waivers and all of them will have to be renewed either when the underlying visa expires or after five years.

Saunders also deals with clients who participate in legal marijuana industries in both the U.S. and Canada. Many cannabis companies in the U.S. rely on angel investors from Canada to provide capital for new businesses since banks won’t give them a loan to open a marijuana store or manufacturing site. He recently had to process a waiver for businessmen in Surrey who manufacture agricultural trimming machines.

“Guess what kind of plants it trims,” Saunders joked sarcastically.

Saunders pointed out that many of his clients are ordinary people who admit to using marijuana. They include family vacationers, international employees who work in the U.S.

and one Olympian snowboarder, Ross Rebagliati, who admitted to smoking pot on The Jay Leno Show in 1998. The next time he tried to go to the U.S. he was barred.

“It’s life-changing. If [a U.S. citizen is] denied entry to Canada it’s not the end the world,” Saunders said. “If Canadians get denied entry to this country it’s a big issue.”

In March of 2018, Saunders traveled to Ottawa to testify to the Canadian Senate about this issue and brought up the example of Rebagliati’s case. He also explained under this U.S. policy, once Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau leaves office and is no longer travelling on a diplomatic passport, he too would be deemed inadmissible due to his public admission to having used marijuana in the past. Saunders said the Senate was shocked by these facts.

“For me to get clients waivers, when marijuana is legal in Washington state and everybody knows it, and it’s legal in Canada, is a colossal waste of time,” Saunders said.

The Peace Arch crossing on I-5 in the U.S. and Highway 99 in Canada, sitting between the major cities of Vancouver, B.C. and Seattle, Washington, is the busiest U.S.-Canada border crossing west of Detroit. Now that marijuana is legal in Canada, this crossing system is the busiest entry point with legal cannabis markets on both sides of the border.

Thank You, Shonda Rhimes



The importance of racial representation on major television networks, using *Scandal* as the lens

Story by Sanyu Namome
Illustration by Mouse Bird

High-profile political figures, twisted secrets, forbidden relationships and one powerful black woman at the center. This is essentially what Shonda Rhimes' ABC political drama series "Scandal" is about. Rhimes is also the creator of other popular dramas such as "Grey's Anatomy" and "How to Get Away with Murder," in which we also see powerful black women represented as the standard to aspire to.

"Scandal" protagonist Olivia Pope, played by Kerry Washington, owns a crisis management firm in Washington D.C., where she assists elite officials with a variety of problems they encounter in order to keep them in the good graces of the American people. These include issues regarding treason, infidelity, money laundering, and terrorism. All the while, Pope herself is managing her personal life which is centered around her affair with the President of the United States, Fitzgerald Grant III.

Confession: I'm a gladiator ("Scandal" jargon meaning loyal viewer). From the day it aired in April of 2012, I knew Pope's storyline would intrigue me. Pope represents the strong, successful black woman who makes things happen, by any means necessary. She is the leader, the go-getter, the one everyone can rely on to fix a political disaster. She is the figure who works twice as hard to receive half as much as her white male peers. From episode one, we see she is a force to be reckoned with.

On the other hand, we see Pope as vulnerable and emotionally clouded by her complicated affair with the president. Their intense love for each other coupled with her rise to power throughout the seasons take a toll on her ability to navigate certain relationships. She begins to make tougher and more sinister judgment calls, such as when she doesn't stop her father from murdering her best friend who has the capacity to expose Pope's own murderous history.

Pope encounters many situations where her power, vast connections and influence on the president don't hold weight because she is still a black woman. She faces racial and gender discrimination while attempting to maneuver her way through the scandal of her complicated relationship with a married man. She gracefully handles the criticism, backlash and underlying racism that can only be

caught by paying attention to the show's subliminal messages. As a black woman herself, it's safe to assume that Rhimes is dedicated to shining light on issues like these through the shows she creates.

Olivia Pope made me begin to fantasize about a life where all I need to do is snap my fingers to make things happen, simply because I have power, intelligence and connections. Her charm, intensity, drive and influence got her to incredible heights that I could never have predicted as the seasons progressed.

There is power in a show that allows young black women to believe the world is in their hands. Having representation of any kind is powerful on its own. Airing a show like "Scandal," with complex political relationships, dramatic twists, high-level crime and violence, and real human beings running the country is one thing. However, having a black woman at the center of it all, pulling the most important strings in America, on a major television network like ABC, is beyond remarkable.

Fellow gladiator and Western junior Lauren Baker got hooked on "Scandal" through Pope's captivating persona and watching the cast deal with world issues, she said.

"Olivia Pope is very strong," Baker explained. "She knows what she wants in life, which is what I hope to be someday."

Baker went on to discuss the impact of racial representation in television.

"[Racial representation] is most important for kids. I wish growing up that I had more African-American leads to look up to. Usually they're the side character or supporting character," Baker said. "Seeing a main character who looks like you in a show or movie is inspiring."

Black women have fought for years to be painted in a light that reflects more than just struggle, anger, bitterness and the stereotypical "I don't need anyone for anything" persona on television. "Scandal" showed me that a black woman can most definitely have power, maintain it, and have thousands of people look up to her and still be human. Olivia Pope gave me someone to aspire to be. She showed me that a black woman can wear many hats, all of them put on by her, and not by society.

Finding Herself Among the Sunflowers

A story about Gabriela Pelogi's return to Brazil and finding a missing part of herself

Story by Tyler Urke
Photos Courtesy of Gabriela Pelogi

(above and below)
Gabi Pelogi on her trip to Brazil.

"I felt like I forgot who I was," Gabi said. "I was confused and lost."

It wasn't until she sat cross-legged at the gate waiting for her flight that Gabi Pelogi started feeling butterflies in her stomach. Surrounded by people chatting in Portuguese waiting to return to their families, she finally realized she too was going home.

A 9 hour-40-minute plane ride from Mexico City was the last leg of a long trek that began in Bellingham. Gabi was leaving her boyfriend behind and forsaking a month of her soccer offseason to travel solo to São Paulo, Brazil.

The purpose of her trip? To find something that had been missing for more than a decade.

Anxious thoughts crept into her mind.

"How's my Portuguese?" she wondered as the plane descended on a muggy July morning in southeast Brazil.

When she landed in São Paulo, her luggage was missing. After an unsuccessful and frustrating attempt to explain her dilemma in Portuguese to an airport employee, she called her friend, Celina Sampaio, who was on the way to pick her up. Sampaio walked her through what to do, and 30 minutes later, Gabi's only worry was being chastised by Sampaio for wearing slippers instead of shoes on the plane.

Their dynamic hadn't changed in the 10 years since they'd last seen each other. Gabi wanted to listen to every word Sampaio had to say on their drive to the center of the city, but at the moment, she could only focus on the slums they passed along the way.

Gabi's earliest memories come from inside the walls of an orphanage where she lived from the ages of 5 to 12. Or at least that's how old workers guessed she was when they took her in—she has no way of knowing her real age.

Her parents were shot and killed in the favelas, Portuguese for slums, for reasons that are unclear to her still to this day. She wasn't there to witness their deaths, unlike her brother, William, but it's still something she struggles to talk about now.

Gabi planned the first nine days of her trip to be emotional. She planned to stay with Sampaio and return to the orphanage. Sampaio is a social worker who helped facilitate her adoption to Rodrigo and Tabitha Pelogi from Federal Way, and she knew more about Gabi's biological parents than Gabi.

Before leaving for Brazil, Gabi said she often felt depressed and unmotivated. A multidisciplinary studies major, she was coming up on her senior year of college at Western. She had a loving boyfriend in Bellingham, a supportive family in Federal Way and three adopted siblings who shared the same orphan background. Just last season, she'd led the Great Northwest Athletic Conference in goals scored. Still, she couldn't shake the feeling of emptiness.

"I felt like I forgot who I was," Gabi said. "I was confused and lost."

As she and Sampaio drove an hour south to the orphanage, whose name Lar Social Girassol means sunflower social home in Portuguese, Gabi felt both nervous and excited. She thought of her adoptive father, Rodrigo, who'd been the inspiration for the trip. Last summer, he and his two biological sons had visited Brazil and suggested that Gabi do the same.

Journeying from the metropolis of São Paulo to just outside the favelas in Grajaú, she started to recognize sights from her childhood. There was the tree she used to climb. And there was the mural covering the brick borders of the orphanage—her favorite flower, a sunflower.

The orphanage, now a daycare, wasn't as big as she remembered it being. The playground had been refurbished to include aqua floors that looked like a puzzle of the sky and a wooden hut-like structure with an attached slide and swing set. But there were the same three buildings that housed roughly 50 girls when she was here. One of these thatched-roof buildings was just a slightly smaller than the locker room building at Robert S. Harrington Field.

Sampaio had arranged for Gabi to have lunch with another child from the orphanage. Although Gabi didn't totally remember her, she wasn't going to turn down another chance to snack on Brazilian food. It had been a steady diet of rice and beans and fresh fruit since she landed.

As the three caught up, Gabi's adoption process came into the conversation. Sampaio filled in details for Gabi that she had either forgotten or never known. She told Gabi most girls had the opportunity to be adopted but many didn't take it, and Gabi wondered what made her decide to be different from the other girls.

When Gabi was 9 or 10 years old, her older sister Natalia ran away from the orphanage. She had run away plenty of times before, but this time no one bothered to bring her back. Gabi would later learn that Natalia lived in the favelas and got pregnant shortly after leaving. William had already abandoned the orphanage and was living in the favelas as well. He was deemed too dangerous to return to the orphanage after he set two girls on fire when he was 7 years old.

Nights in the orphanage were frightening after Natalia left, Gabi recalls. Often, she would hear gunshots ring out and on one occasion men came into the orphanage to rob it.

"I was too scared to run away," Gabi said. "But I don't remember life being tough because the orphanage was all I knew. That was my life. I remember a lot of girls tried to fight us because a lot of the orphanage caretakers really liked me. I was a good girl and a good student."

Eventually, it was just Gabi and her younger sister Jessica at the orphanage. The two were adopted together at first, but Jessica was scared and wouldn't stop crying. Gabi chose to return to Lar Social Girassol with her sister rather than stay with the adoptive parents.

When Jessica was adopted again, alone this time, it still didn't work out. Before a family can take their adopted child back to their respective country, they must live together in Brazil for a month. Gabi said during this time Jessica would call her begging to come back to her at the orphanage, and eventually, she did.





Gabi said returning to Brazil helped her re-discover her motivation. With the support of her family, Gabi hopes to play soccer at least one more year.



The second time Gabi was adopted, she knew she needed a change of scenery, even if it meant leaving Jessica.

"I said to myself, 'I'm going to have to be strong and do this,'" Gabi said.

So, at 12 years old, Gabi moved to Walla Walla, Washington with an American woman that spoke little Portuguese. Gabi said there was no connection between the two.

"She really felt like she was home."

"I was constantly crying and didn't want to learn English," Gabi said. "I wanted to go back to Brazil. I just remember being scared and very confused."

Luckily, the woman knew Rodrigo and Tabitha, and she was aware the two had already adopted three children from Liberia. Rodrigo is a Brazilian native, and the two met there while Tabitha was traveling from America. Both were fluent in Portuguese and had the means to support a 12-year-old Brazilian girl. So Gabi found a new home.

She said being surrounded by her adopted brothers and sister helped her feel more comfortable. Plus, the family often made Brazilian food for dinner.

Gabi broke down as Sampaio talked about her biological parents and leaving Jessica. She was feeling things she had suppressed for so long because she wanted to appear tough.

Gabi thanked Sampaio for everything she had done to help her adoption process along and prepared for the next chapter of her Brazil trip.

For the next nine days, Gabi visited with Rodrigo's mother, a hysterically opinionated Brazilian woman who kept things light and relaxing. And of course, Gabi ate more food.

She called Claire Morgan, assistant soccer coach at Western after roughly a week in Brazil and explained she hadn't been doing all the offseason running the Vikings players were supposed to be doing. She also let slip how being back in Brazil was making her feel.

"She called me and said, 'Claire, I don't think I'm coming back to America. I love it here,'" Morgan said. "She really felt like she was home."

Morgan said she could have freaked out, but told Gabi she'd support the decision.

"She called me a week later saying she was returning to America as planned and I knew she would make her way back home," Morgan said. "But I had to let her come to that decision on her own."

The last stretch of her journey led her two hours north of São Paulo to Piracicaba where Jessica, now 21, lives. The roads were rocky and at times Gabi worried about her grandparents' car breaking down where they didn't have cell phone service. They drove past lush forests and coffee fields. The rich red soil and craggy terrain opened to a bustling city of almost 400,000 people.

As she approached Jessica's house, Gabi wondered if it would be strange seeing her sister. It had been 10 years since she left her. She held her breath as she approached Jessica's front door and knocked three times.

The door swung open and the wrinkles of Gabi's smile spread across her face. Gabi's family had been telling her how much she looked like Jessica, and now Gabi agreed.

"I couldn't stop looking at her," Gabi said. "I felt relieved seeing her. It was like, 'OK, I can breathe. She's fine. She's happy.'"

Jessica ushered Gabi and her grandparents into her home and brought them food. As the two caught up, talk shifted to William, who had turned to using crack. Jessica knew where he lived, so the two decided to visit him at some point during the next nine days.

While staying at Jessica's house, Natalia messaged Gabi on Facebook for the first time ever and asked if she could FaceTime her. Natalia had no idea Gabi was in Brazil or that she was staying with her sister. It was pure coincidence.

"All these things kept happening to me while I was there," Gabi said. "It was like every minute was meant to be."

Natalia showed Gabi her children and Gabi cried as she looked at Natalia's youngest son. He looked like Gabi, too.

Gabi and Jessica went to meet their brother for dinner. Gabi said he was nervous and had a skinny face from using drugs. He might have been withdrawing from them because his hands were sweaty, but she wasn't sure. She said it was sad seeing him in his current state and they kept telling him he needed to get better.

When Jessica dropped Gabi off at the airport, Gabi bawled. She listened to a Brazilian song Jessica had shown her on repeat to numb the pain of leaving her sister and Brazil. She knew she had to return to help lead Western's women's soccer team and she missed her boyfriend, family and friends.

"If I didn't have any other commitments in America, I probably would have stayed or stayed longer," Gabi said.

When she returned to Federal Way, Gabi told her adoptive brother from Liberia, Odason, about her month in Brazil. Odason hasn't returned to Liberia since being adopted, but the 24-year-old graduate from Northwestern is now planning his own trip back home.

"It was good for her to see where she came from," Odason said. "It inspired me."

As she wraps up her final year of college, Gabi is thinking about the future—and the past. She wants to play soccer for at least one more year, and ideally, she will do it in Brazil. She can see herself working through something like the Peace Corps where she gets to travel and help kids that have been through a lot, like she has.

She didn't have this kind of direction before returning to Brazil. She was never satisfied and lacked motivation.

"I had all these people telling me who I am, and I didn't feel like I was that," Gabi said. "Going back to Brazil helped me. It helped me be content and realize I'm lucky ... [It] was the best experience I've ever had."

She finally found the thing that had been missing.

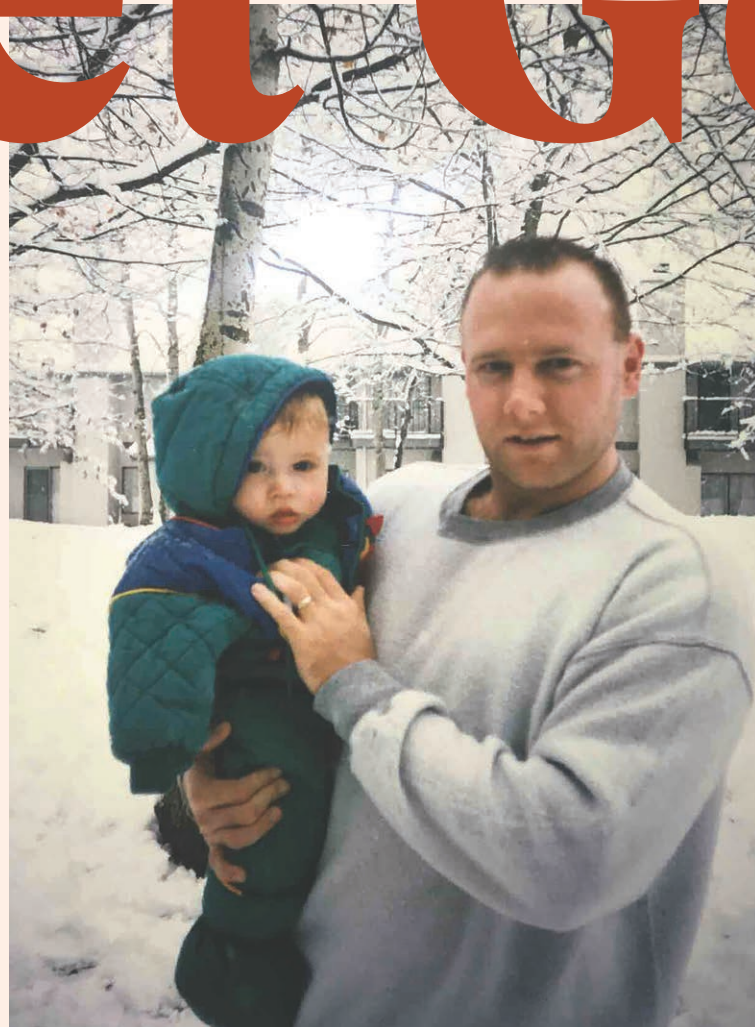
Want to know more about Gabi's soccer skills? Read 'Genuinely Good at Soccer' by Tyler Urke at klipsunmagazine.com.



Learning to Love & Let Go

How my father overcame his demons and taught me what it takes to raise a child

Story by Brinnon Kummer
Photo Courtesy of Brinnon Kummer



Whenever I think about my father, a very specific scene drifts into my mind. It is early June in 2009, somewhere along the Oregon Coast between Newport and Cannon Beach. I am 13, sitting in the passenger seat of my dad's black Ford F-150 with the window down and my hair blowing in the breeze. I smile and stare out at the rolling cliffs and ocean. His "Journey's Greatest Hits" CD is playing again for probably the third or fourth time, but I don't mind. My dad is eccentrically weaving another one of his childhood tales that never fail to make me laugh, regardless of whether or not I understand the jokes. It's a moment in time, a memory that I still turn to when the going gets tough. One that reminds me how lucky I am to have such a pleasant place to mentally escape to. I truly appreciate it, because our life together could've gone very differently.

My dad was the second youngest of four children. His own father was a workaholic, often absent and uninvolved in their lives. The parenting fell on the shoulders of his mother, a common dynamic at the time of their marriage.

His parents divorced when my dad was a teenager, and the divide in loyalties and responsibilities allowed the kids to do whatever they wanted. All four of them were sociable, funny and well-liked by their peers, but without parental guidance, they each began descents into trouble.

My dad took the divorce particularly hard, and began to experiment with drugs and alcohol in high school. He checked into rehab when he was 18, attended a quarter and a half of community college, and then dropped out and resumed his old ways. When he was 22, he met a girl from across town, newly divorced with a 2-year-old daughter. Luckily for me, they hit it off almost immediately.

Within a year she was pregnant with me, yet my father still fought to shake his dependence on alcohol. After I was born, they got married and saved up enough money to move into a small house in Arlington. Being away from his past helped, but it was not far enough. A bad day at work or an injury at the gym was all it took to turn him back to his vices. Life went on as usual, a flux of progress and stagnation that would build to a crescendo culminating shortly after my sixth birthday.

Drinking had made my dad unlike himself. He was angry for no reason, short with my mother and myself over the slightest things. He couldn't be happy until he was drunk.

I don't remember much from those early years, but I do remember the day that it all came crashing down. My sister and I were watching "Fear Factor" on the living room couch. I could hear my parents arguing upstairs, progressively louder and louder and then

finally I heard a BOOM. My mother came rushing down the stairs, picked me up and told us we needed to leave now. Her eyes were red and puffy, and while she was shaking with fear she seemed overpowered by a maternal instinct to protect her cubs. She led us out across the lawn, into the car and to our grandmother's house.

It would've been easier—and probably safer—for my mother to cut him out and for me to have never really known my father, but she didn't. She could've pressed charges against him for assault, but she didn't. She could've tried for sole custody and I could've never seen him again, but she didn't. She could've moved us out-of-state, but she didn't. Instead, she gave him a firm message: their marriage was over, but she reminded him that he still had a son, and that he had more in life than just chemicals.

I remember visiting him for the first time in rehab after the incident, wearing my red Power Ranger costume that I would be trick-or-treating in later that night. He cried and hugged me and told me that he would be done soon and that I would be able to spend the weekends with him, thanks to a deal my mother was able to make. I wasn't really old enough to grasp the weight of the situation, but I could tell he loved me, and I was happy to have my dad back.

He spent months in rehab; and upon release, I began seeing him again regularly. At first it was in my grandfather's basement, then a sleazy apartment in downtown Everett, then a small house in a nice neighborhood. He worked his way to a managerial position at a high-end window and door factory in Everett. Every cent that didn't go towards bills, he would spend on us.

My dad found himself at rock bottom. It wasn't God, or the law or any external force that pulled him out; he did it himself, with the love he had for his child. As I navigate the age that he struggled through, I find myself surrounded by the same temptations and fears. I see old friends going down similar paths. I see peers unable to let go of the college lifestyle and become adults. I see classmates expecting children, emotionally unprepared for them.

I was lucky to be able to learn the standard fatherly lessons from the man himself: how to throw a football, how to change a tire, how to shave. But I also learned some things that are much harder to teach. I learned how to care. I learned how to give. I learned how to prioritize what matters and what doesn't. And above all else, I learned how to love, truly and selflessly. I watched a boy become a man, and then a father. Today, as I escape to that stretch of coastal highway somewhere in the back of my mind, suddenly the thought of becoming one myself doesn't seem so scary after all.

The Camry Camper

A collection of journal entries reflecting on the week I lived out of my 1994 Toyota Camry

Story and Photos by Tyler Morris

The First Night

Day was giving way to a cold October night. Scouring through REI, I tried to make a mental note of what I still might need for my time in the car. As the stars came out and the store began to close, I knew I had to get started. If I wasn't going to do it that night, I wasn't going to do it at all.

I left town at around 8 p.m. Saturday night. My destination was Excelsior Pass just off the side of the Mount Baker Highway—a long, nerve-wracking drive. Eddie, my light blue 1994 Toyota Camry has nearly 200,000 miles on it, a slight transmission issue, and is the fifth most stolen car in the U.S., according to Forbes. What could possibly go wrong?

When I reached Excelsior Pass, it was around 10 p.m. and I hadn't seen anyone on the road since I'd passed through the town of Glacier 20 minutes earlier. Call it paranoia, but the trailhead gave me a creepy feeling and all I wanted to do was drive home and jump into bed. There was this weird vision I kept

seeing in my head: A flash of light would envelope my car, pull it into the sky and I'd never be heard from again. Instead, I decided to drive to the end of the highway up to Artist Point.

At around 5,000 feet above sea level, Artist Point provides some of the most spectacular views of mountain vistas that Whatcom County has to offer. The temperature dropped to 36 degrees as Eddie and I reached the top. I parked at the far end of the lot facing Mount Baker. The giant sat shrouded in darkness, watching me as I blacked my windows with some poorly made cutouts. The temperature was unbearable outside but being that high up, that late at night, I would have froze to death happy knowing I got to see those stars. This was the first time I had been up to Artist Point on such a clear night.

Defining “homeless” is hard, especially in this context. When you have everything you need and a roof over your head, are you really homeless? This was the question I set out to answer by attempting to living in my car for a week. I made it six days.

You see it on Instagram, the photos of Volkswagens and Sprinter vans turned into tiny mobile homes, parked in some of the most beautiful places on the planet. Or lifted trucks conquering backcountry, reminiscent of the old West; a cowboy and his horse. It’s



a popular lifestyle that’s been picked up on social media. I caught wind of it after seeing a photo of a late ‘60s Ford Bronco turned into a backcountry survivalist vehicle with the old truck charm, complete with everything a person needs to live. Immediately, I was curious. Classic trucks like that command quite a high premium today, the best ones selling for well over \$100,000. I figured anyone who owned such a desirable classic would never use it like that Nobody wants to dent 50-year-old metal. While most vehicle dwellers don’t have old Ford Broncos, I found that the more I learned about vehicle dwelling, the more I started to see it in my own town.

Whatcom County is a prime location for folks to make a go at living their everyday life out of a vehicle. It’s mostly vans and trucks with campers—neither of which I own. Still, my first night up Artist Point was one of the best experiences I had. The next night wasn’t so kind.

Second Morning

My eyelids opened. My head was full, I could hardly breathe—my body hadn’t been properly elevated. I reached for my glasses, the bridge seated perfectly against the shifter, the ideal spot for a fragile object in such a tight space. It was 5:45 a.m. and I was parked in an empty lot outside of Arroyo Park. I slid my key into the ignition, turned it and the Toyota fired to life.

The night dragged on. I’d wake up after each set of headlights darted across the back windshield. Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers was the only company I had, but my phone’s battery had to be parceled out for a morning alarm. Even at the crack of dawn, long before I needed to get up, I was glad to move, to do something other than just lay there. Sleep was the single greatest challenge most nights.

I tore down my car home, rolled up my mattress pad, pried the window inserts from the windows and loaded it all into the trunk. A Ford Explorer darted up Old Samish Road, speeding toward the lot. I hopped into the driver seat as the SUV came to a roll behind me. A spotlight pierced through the rear window.

I couldn’t figure out why Bellingham Police were shining lights into our cars, as it’s legal to live in car in Whatcom County, as long as you follow the proper parking ordinances. This lot is frequented by car campers and “vanlifers.” I’d pulled up the night before to find a Toyota Tacoma doing the same thing, and sometime in the middle of the night a mid-’80s GMC van had also joined our small neighborhood.

The officer panned the light across our cars before moving on. I’d finished packing up and started for the Wade King Student Recreation Center. The hot shower did wonders for the head congestion that had seemed to worsen overnight. With thoughts drifting back to the police car, I readied myself for work.

Spending the night in a car requires problem solving that one would not face living with four walls and a roof. That cold night on Baker, I tried to avoid moisture on the windows by cracking the sunroof open, a smidge, but the heat quickly escaped, turning the car into an icebox. Luckily, I slept fully clothed in a sleeping bag, which did keep me warm, but was extremely uncomfortable.

The sleeping arrangement was one aspect of the whole experience that was less than ideal. It was far from it, in fact. The next morning I felt congested, my back and shoulders ached, and I asked myself if it was worth it. I had taken part of the rear seat out and laid the sleeping pad from the base of the rear passenger seat to the end of truck, a space of about five and a half feet. My head hung slightly off the edge, even with my knees bent. There wasn’t enough room to roll over as my hips got caught on the top of the trunk. If a comfortable sleeping position existed, I failed to find it.



(previous page) Tyler Morris driving away from Lummi Dike in his Camper Camry on a very early foggy morning.

(top right) Tyler Morris car camping with Tyler Tran at Lummi Dike, discussing the ways of vehicle dwelling.

(bottom left) Second morning breakfast, car camping at Mount Baker.

Night Three

By the third night, I was miserable. The car was a mess, there was no order to anything, and I started to feel sick. After pulling over to make dinner at a local park that Tuesday, I decided to try the Walmart parking lot. It was by no means glamorous, but after scouring car camping forums and Reddit, it was a spot that popped up often. While I have issues with their business practices, the parking lot was home for the night. Most Walmarts are open 24 hours, but Bellingham’s closes at midnight. The noise level was reduced with less traffic coming in and out. I parked toward the back, blacked out my windows and tried to fall asleep. The fluorescent light nearby began to hum sometime in the middle of the night. I pinched my eyes shut, eagerly awaiting 5:45 a.m.

The “Cheat” Day

The next morning at work, I sat at my desk with heavy eyes; I couldn’t write one coherent sentence. Aching and sleep deprived, I knew something had to change if I was going to make it any longer. When I got home, my roommate was frying up a piece of chicken, and the smell was the most magnificent thing I’d smelled in days. My diet had consisted of canned goods heated over a little propane stove. It was time to reevaluate. I had initially boiled it down to a tool box, a box of kitchen supplies, a duffle bag of clothes and my sleeping arrangement. It doesn’t seem like much, but the car was a nightmare. The one rule I learned very quickly is everything needs to have a purpose.

I cut my kitchen supplies in half and downsized my clothes. If I was going to continue, it was only for a few more nights. How much stuff was I really going to need? The biggest change, however, was the sleeping setup. I ripped out both back seats so I was able to access the entire trunk from the cabin. This allowed for a much larger (and more comfortable) sleeping pad. I was able to condense everything into the trunk and easily fold the sleeping pad out. I still couldn’t roll over, but I was much more comfortable.

There was only one problem. My head still hung off the back of the seat. I shoved my clothes bag underneath the pad which propped it up enough to rest my head on it. After the car was redone, it was late and already dark, but it would be worth it if I could make up for three nights of lost sleep.

The first few days had their ups and downs. I wanted to make sure that this was something I could do for another three days on top of work and school. The house I live in has a small amount of land surrounding it, and I decided if the new setup wasn’t going to work then at the very least I would be close to home. I ended up with a full eight hours of sleep and felt great the next day. There were some caveats. I slept fully clothed and changed in the rec center as getting dressed in the car required a series of convulsions just to slip on a pair of jeans. Making food was still time consuming and produced tasteless results, but for the first time in this experiment I felt content in my temporary home.

Day Five

I met up with a full-time vehicle dweller who lives out of his Toyota Tundra and we drove out to Lummi Dike. It was clear evening and Mount Baker was visible across the golden fields. We went toward the end of the dike, where the Cascades reached prominently into the sky on one side and the Olympics poked up on the other, just above Orcas Island. I’d spent the night picking his brain about his truck and what led him to choose the vehicle dwelling life. It’s truly amazing what a person can create with so little. Here was a person who had been doing this for the better part of five years; I was on my fifth day and I was already exhausted. For him, it was home.

The Final Night

For the last night, I decided to take it easy. I swiped a beer from the house, parked at a small turn-off along Chuckanut Drive, grabbed my laptop and sat on top of the Camry typing the first of many drafts of this article. I struggled to write, as I wasn’t really sure how to word it or what to say. The sun set over the bay, the beer can emptied and the pages mostly empty. “Why did I do this?” I kept asking myself. It stuck with me well after I went to sleep and continued on with my life. Vehicle dwelling for some is about saving money, and for others it allows them to do the things they love. Ultimately, it allows people to connect with things they love. For me, it allowed me to be around cars.

Passion is a funny thing—you follow it wholeheartedly. Vanlife, car camping, overlanding, all of it is a piece of car culture. Cars have stories and I want to tell those stories, and perhaps create some of my own in the process.

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Online Exclusives



SAILING TO A NEW LIFE

John and June Vigor set out on a six-month voyage to the U.S. after censorship and the inevitable expulsion of foreign journalists in South Africa.



A SEAT AT THE TABLE

In the restaurant industry, the fast-paced environment and prevalence of workplace drug and alcohol use can be a trap for those struggling with substance abuse.

These stories and more at KLIPSUNMAGAZINE.COM.

An aerial photograph of a rugged, layered landscape, possibly a volcanic crater or a series of terraced hills. The terrain is characterized by deep, narrow ridges and valleys, creating a complex, maze-like pattern. The entire scene is bathed in a monochromatic blue light, which emphasizes the textures and shadows of the rock formations. The ridges run roughly parallel to each other, creating a sense of depth and scale.

KLIPSUN IS A CHINUK WAWA WORD FOR SUNSET

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