Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone?

By Shanna Gowenlock, Editor

When I received my spring advance registration notice in February, I was pleasantly surprised to find I was slated to register on the very first day. Finally, after five years of blue slips and last-minute schedule changes, I was going to get every single class I wanted. It was my turn to be a class hog; I had made it to the top.

But it also hit me that being at "the top" meant I was soon to graduate, and start at the bottom OUT THERE, in the "real world," that place from which I hid all this time while I got my "education." I'll admit it: one of the reasons I came to college was to have a place to grow up, and perhaps learn a little, before I tried to carve my niche OUT THERE. It's been pretty nice in this safety net of academia; sometimes I'm not sure I want to leave.

But then, I start thinking of all the things I won't miss about school, and the ominous prospect of leaving pales just a little. For instance, I won't miss pulling "all-nighters." I discovered this year that my body doesn't "do" all-nighters like it used to. At the old age of 24, it is used up, frazzled out. Caffeined and junk-fed to hell, it no longer can take the academic Express to Success.

In my study-spree prime, I was hot. I'd truck through the night eating shiny pizza and No-Doz, then I'd sweep onto campus, tired, but satisfied.

Now, an all-nighter means I grimace my way to school, then stagger around uselessly, showing up just long enough to scrawl some lame answers on a test, or to turn in a half-baked term paper. Then I wend my sorry way home, where I unplug the phone and safely lapse into a coma.

never will wax nostalgic for those lamentable dull spots in my academic splendor.

Some of the other things I won't miss when I leave Western are: taking out one student loan to pay off another, having to pay to defer my tuition, going out in public wearing my dirty laundry, sporting an all-nighter hairdo that most closely resembles jet engine aftermath, eating cheap, starchy food and borrowing money from anyone who either is family or employed.

I also won't miss realizing I should go to the library, but knowing I won't. Nor will I miss spending hours there getting nothing accomplished except breaking the no-food rule and reading the bizarre exhortations of demented student prophets in the "Comments" book downstairs. But I will miss reading that gem of banal ramblings.

Actually, one of my more trite memories surrounds that slick, dorm-party banter that centers around, "So, what's your major?" and, "Oh, what do you hope to do with it?" Maybe I'll miss it just because it's so dumb.

And while I won't miss getting parking tickets, I will miss that elated feeling when I know I should have gotten a ticket, but didn't.

I will miss honoring that collegiate code that states one must be properly disdainful of freshmen. And I'll miss laughing at all the shivering sun bunnies out on the lawn by Kappa-Theta who insist on tanning their goose pimples on the first clear day in April.

I will miss having an entire library, gym and computer lab at my disposal. I'll actually miss school. Although I skip my classes half the time, sleep some of the time I'm there and daydream most of the rest of the time, I actually have learned a lot. I can discuss rocks, cave dwellers, mythology, press law, DNA and more. And for $30,000 and five years of my life, there better be a lot more.

I suppose when I'm OUT THERE plyling my trade and it gets too stressful, low-paying or dead-end, or when I just plain miss school, I will find a lot to look back on, and laugh or sigh about. I've done a lot of stupid, funny, brave and nerdy things since my parents first abandoned me to my dorm room five years ago.

As it turned out in February, I wasn't allowed to register that first day because I owed a library fine. But I did enjoy standing in line with the seasoned college veterans inside Old Main's registration center.

I suppose I still have some growing up to do, though, because I enjoyed pretending not to notice the little huddle of students outside, monitoring that same big yellow TV screen I have watched for the last 14 quarters. I felt proud, okay, smug. Maybe it's time to get out of here, after all.
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Klipsun is a Lummi Indian word meaning "beautiful sunset."
Before 1984, DeSte. Croix and Gierman, co-owners of Bellingham Massage had to be fingerprinted, get mug shots taken and submit to a syphilis test once every year before they could get a business license from the city of Bellingham.

“We had to get a license to prostitute,” DeSte. Croix said. “At that time it was called a massage parlor license.”

“The whole thing was very humiliating,” Gierman said.

Bellingham police were allowed to search the massage business at any time, without probable cause or a search warrant. DeSte. Croix witnessed this policy first hand when the police came banging on her business’ door in 1981.

The last six years have witnessed a renaissance in the field of massage therapy, DeSte. Croix said.

In 1984 the two massage therapists met with the Bellingham City Council and “history was changed in an hour,” Gierman said. The massage therapists and the city council worked together to change the licensing code to treat massage therapists as legitimate business people. Some city council members were clients of Bellingham Massage at this time.

Massage therapists are now licensed by the city of Bellingham as business owners, rather than parlor owners DeSte. Croix and Gierman said.

Clients range from prominent three-piece-suit types to Western students, DeSte. Croix said.

Word of mouth from a few students has brought many more clients in, DeSte. Croix said.

Bellingham Massages’ clients are between ages 19 and 85, and about 75 percent of them are women, DeSte. Croix said. This is a change from the past when most of their clients were men. DeSte. Croix and Gierman are uncertain of why the change has occurred.
"People heal better when they're in a relaxed state."

- Diane DeSte.Croix

Diane DeSte. Croix and Michele Gierman, co-owners of Bellingham Massage offer the lowdown on some different types of rubdowns for the tense and weary:

**Aromatic massage.** Different types of essential oils are added to massaging oil to give specific benefits. Oil of tangerine relaxes, Rosemary is cleansing. Bellingham Massage uses a drop of essential oil in their mini-steam baths for added relaxation.

**Reflexology.** Massage is concentrated on the base of the foot. The therapist applies pressure to a specific point that corresponds to troubled muscles. It is effective but because of the “deep” pressure applied it is initially uncomfortable.

**Shiatsu or Acupressure.** Like reflexology it relies on pressure points. For example, if a person suffers from headaches the therapist concentrates on pressure points between the shoulder blades. The therapist applies pressure with fingers, thumbs and elbows.

**Sports massage.** A pre-game treatment loosens joints, ligaments and muscles and increases blood flow. A post-game rubdown aids the body in the removal of lactic acid, which causes sore muscles, and helps the athletes body to recover faster.

**Swedish massage.** It is a basic massage technique. Superficial rolling, kneading, and pulling of the muscles aids in relaxation and nerve stimulation.
Some clients come in for therapy and alleviation of tension. These clients usually get a massage about once a month. Others come in seeking massage as a prescription for the relief of painful injuries.

"Massage isn't a cure for injuries," Gierman said, "but it basically speeds recovery. It restores a range of motion and amount of movement that would otherwise be too painful.

"People heal better when they're in a relaxed state," DeSte. Croix said.

Massage works through muscle stimulation, which sets off a reflex effect through the nerves. This produces a calming feeling over the body's soft tissues, DeSte. Croix and Gierman said.

Kim Hanses, a junior at Western, visited a professional masseur regularly for more than a year. At the time, she was playing volleyball for Walla Walla Community College, which was making her muscles sore.

Hanses said while she was being massaged her body felt like it was "melting."

"Getting my skin and muscles pampered made me feel good. And if you just let everything go the relaxation makes you feel like you're floating," Hanses said.

Massage therapy could also be painful, Hanses said.

"Since I was going for muscle injuries, sometimes the therapist would stroke my muscles hard. They were so sore at times it hurt just to move 'em. Dang, that was painful. But in the end it helped," Hanses said.

Hanses said the relaxing results of her massages lasted only a few hours.

"It feels great but the relaxation is only temporary. After wards I can hardly quit smiling but that's only 'til I have to go back to my room and hit the books," Hanses said.

The length of time the calming feeling lasts varies from person to person. Most people tell me it lasts three to five days, Gierman said.

Massage not only is used to heal pains of athletic strain, it is used to improve performance.

"Scientifically, a pre-game massage increases an athlete's performance by 10 to 20 percent," DeSte. Croix said.

Through massage DeSte. Croix helped an Alaskan marathon runner recover from a serious muscle cramp in her leg. Without the help of sports massage the woman would not have been able to run in the race for which she had traveled to Bellingham. However, the runner was not only able to run, she finished first in her division, DeSte. Croix said.

The price of professional massage varies. The Whatcom County YMCA offers the least expensive deal, $15 for a half hour session. At a private practice the prices range from $20 to $50.

Many massage businesses also offer full or mini-size steam baths. A mini-steamer is a comical looking body-size box that a person sits in with only his or her head sticking out. The steam's heat relaxes clients before their massage, DeSte. Croix said. The price of a mini-steam at Bellingham Massage is $5.

DeSte. Croix first became interested in massage by dabbling in massage books and trying out what she learned on friends and family. Any basic massage book can be a tool for helping oneself and one's friends reduce worry and feel more comfortable through massage, she said.

Gierman often encourages people to use massage on their own.

A person can lie down, tape two tennis balls together and roll it under his or her neck while he or she lies on the ground, Gierman said.

"Doing that for 10 to 15 minutes will really help to relieve tension," Gierman said.

"I've had couples come in and watch one another while I massage them, that way they can do it later for each other," Gierman said.

Massage has emerged from a seedy reputation, once associated with brothels and the underbelly of society, to become a treatment for the stresses and strains of today's hustle and bustle.
Hundreds of Western students are killing and being killed in the dorms at Western. It has happened in Mathes and Buchanan Towers. Omega and Kappa reported mass killing last year.

Kappa is especially notorious. Michelle O'Rourke, a Freshman, already has killed four people just this past fall within the walls of Kappa.

Last year Western student Marty Savage put together a posse and reportedly stalked the halls of Kappa shooting anybody in his way.

Sgt. Chuck Page of campus security said, "We live in a sick society and this is a reflection of our society."

Kappa Resident Director Scott Barton said "It started early fall quarter as a chance for people to get to know other people."

Students at Western are playing a game called "Assassin," where people are given "contract hits," which are made with water guns. Whoever is the last person "alive" wins both prize money (usually $25) and the respect of his or her dormmates.

The most common guns used are the little green, blue or red squirt guns followed closely by water spray bottles.

Last year Matt Kruz possessed state-of-the-art assassin equipment: a battery operated submachine squirt gun complete with a cartridge full of water, which shoots a steady stream about 25 feet.

Kruz was among the final four out of about 40 people in a Kappa assassin tournament last year. After signing up to play, he received a notice in the mail, which confirmed his participation and received a scrap of paper --
the assassin's contract -- which supplied him with a name and room number. He then began to hunt down his first victim.

To control what could be an out-of-hand situation, the game has guidelines, which keep the bathroom off limits, suspend play between midnight and 7 a.m., and keep the game inside the dorms. Also, only one witness is allowed to witness the murder.

The witness rule is crucial. There is safety in numbers.

"I always had two people with me at all times," O'Rourke said.

Kruz once entered the room of a friend only to find out his "hit" was in the room, along with two other guys.

"The guy was sitting right there. He saw me and we both knew -- he gave me that look that said 'uh-oh,'" Kruz said. After about a 20-minute talk, the other guys got up to leave. "He panicked and ran. I chased him three laps through Kappa and then he disappeared," Kruz said.

Kruz then heard a noise on the stairwell, looked down and saw his victim. "I aimed through a guard rail slot and drenched his head. I never heard so many four-letter words in one sitting," Kruz said.

O'Rourke, in an assassin tournament last fall at Kappa, felt "kind of stupid" at first, then she became drawn into the competition.

The tourney came down to her and one other guy. "I was psyched to get him, but he knew I was after him and he would not leave his room," O'Rourke said.

She got a girl whom the guy liked to call him up and ask him over. It was a set-up. "He ran over there and didn't even bring his gun," O'Rourke said.

O'Rourke hid in the closet and at the right time, burst out and pulled the cool white trigger of her pale-green squirt gun and blew him out of the game.

"He was devastated. He yelled 'Oh no!' and ran out of the room," O'Rourke said.

While O'Rourke never had to experience the agony of defeat, Kruz did. He was killed while innocently taking a drink of water, about 15 feet from his door. His assassin had a foot long syringe about one and a half inches wide.

"I had to change my clothes I was so set. It felt like a garden hose had been turned on me," Kruz said.

The guy had been trying to kill Kruz for five days.

Kruz couldn't believe he was "dead." "I thought I was prepared for losing, but when it actually happened I couldn't believe it." He sat down for five minutes going over the events leading to his demise. "If only I wouldn't have done this...," he thought.

Many resident directors were reluctant to discuss the game, giving the impression they view it as disruptive.

Kappa Resident Director Scott Barton was hesitant at first because "assassin" sounded like a big water fight. He found it "not disruptive in the halls at all." Barton said he wouldn't have any problems if the students want to play it again.

Kruz saw it as an excellent way to blow off some pent-up steam. "After three straight quarters I was getting real antsy, Kruz said. It's nice to get away from it all the take out aggressions with water. It's fun to knock off a few people," he said.
Even though Mickey Mouse turned 60 last year, the pint-sized Merlin still casts a spell on millions yearly.

Disney buff Craig Enberg is one of the happy millions, intoxicated by Mickey memorabilia and soaked in a flood of Disney fanfare.

The pale green walls of Enberg’s Nash dorm room are strung with colorful twinkle lights and plastered with posters, postcards and prints of the celebrated rodent and many of his Disney relatives.

To hear Enberg, a Western senior and resident adviser, talk about how his interest in Disney sprang from a childhood trip to Disneyland is almost as exhilarating as watching Peter Pan soar through London skies.

“There’s always been something about Disneyland and Disney stuff that I’ve liked,” he said.

An understatement, considering Enberg’s room contains a seemingly limitless amount of Disney merchandise, including slippers, a bedspread, towels, a calendar, stuffed dolls, Christmas ornaments, an empty gumball machine, a phone, lollipops and a Christmas stocking. The walls showcase pictures featuring Disneyland attractions such as Space Mountain and Captain EO and movies such as Fantasia, Something Wicked This Way Comes, Pinocchio, Cinderella and Who Framed Roger Rabbit?

Seattle-born and Kirkland-bred, Enberg, 22, is majoring in speech communication, which, he said, doesn’t surprise a lot of people. He described himself as outgoing, loud, and, of all things, animated. “That is me and I like that about me,” he said.

“I get my energy from people,” he said. “That is something I need. Not 100 percent of the time,” he added quickly, “but that’s where I get it.”

Getting to know people is what Enberg wants to do. “The career I get into will involve working with people. Disney is an option,” he said.

Enberg got a job at Disneyland for Christmas of 1987 and summer of last year. He described it as an opportunity he couldn’t refuse. During Christmas, he worked the Adventureland Jungle Cruise, where once, during training, he rammed the boat in front of him and knocked a passenger into the water. “He wasn’t hurt,” Enberg said, smiling abashedly. “But he was cold.”

During the summer he did public relations, where he found Disneyland guests often seem to leave common sense behind. He said the park makes people feel they can get away with stunts such as going backstage on attractions, where they could get hurt or electrocuted. He said a typical question visitors asked was, “Are you open until you’re closed?”

Enberg’s favorite Disney item is a gold-plated Disneyland Host pin featuring Tinkerbell and Sleeping Beauty Castle. He earned it by memorizing a 16-page spiel about the park, while working there.

He said the experience of working at Disneyland is incred-
ible. “You gain a different respect for the park. You don’t really lose the magic.” But, he said, the company had policies he thought were a bit unfair and strict. For instance, men could not wear jewelry or have long or “extreme” hairstyles. He said employees needed to have “a certain Disney look.”

Dressed in a long-sleeved, white and turquoise T-shirt, acid-wash jeans and white New Balance tennis shoes, and wearing a black, glittery-faced Fantasia Mickey watch, Enberg seemed to have the Disney look, complete with blond hair, which, he admitted, he highlights.

Enberg said Mickey Mouse is his favorite Disney character. “He actually represents America. He’s even going James Dean-style, it’s cool.”

In 1937, Disney released the first, full-length animated movie ever made, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Enberg described the film as “artistically ... beautiful. Incredible animation. I don’t think you’ll ever see anything like that again.”

An overnight critical and commercial success, Snow White paved the way for other great Disney animation classics, such as 1940’s Fantasia. “I love Fantasia, he said. “(The) neatest thing about that movie is that it was way ahead of its time. Nobody appreciated it (in 1940), but now everyone sees it as a classic.” It also contains Enberg’s favorite Mickey role, as the sorcerer’s apprentice who “makes a mistake and gets in trouble, like we all do.”

The costly 1951 cartoon, Alice in Wonderland, featured Enberg’s least favorite Disney character, the Cheshire Cat. He described him as cocky. “I don’t like the way he smiles and disappears. He’s an important part of the book, I’m sure, but I just didn’t like the way he was presented in the movie.”

Enberg said the 1964 musical fantasy, Mary Poppins, is his favorite Disney film. The movie is often remembered as the last great film personally supervised by Disney, who died of lung cancer in 1966. Enberg sounded promotional when he called it “Disney magic at its best.”

Last year’s Disney flick, Who Framed Roger Rabbit? returned to what Enberg called “that (old) Disney style, but I don’t think it will achieve the classical status of Mary Poppins ... yet.”

The expensive sci-fi flop of 1979, The Black Hole, was Enberg’s selection as his least favorite Disney film. He thought the story was corny, but enjoyed the special effects.

“After Walt passed away, the company floundered,” Enberg said. “Over the past five years, the company’s accelerated. The movies match an audience that is willing to see fun movies without corny undertones.”

The newer, more adult Disney productions released under the Touchstone banner, such as Splash! (1984), Down and Out in Beverly Hills (1986) and Stakeout (1987), are great, Enberg said.

Enberg said he’s proud to be a Disney fan and collector. “I find it almost a second nature.”

“I love Fantasia. The neatest thing about that movie is that it was way ahead of its time.”

- Craig Enberg

Enberg, surrounded by a portion of his FANTastic collection.

Michael J. Lehnert
A TAROT TRIP
Writer explores what's in the cards

By Francine Ott

After four years at Western and an impending need of finding a job soon, it was obvious to me I was in need of some form of divination. I wasn't sure how to get it. I didn't want the old standby palm reading or my prophecy decided on the basis of tea residue. I don't even like tea. I like art and sometimes I play cards, so the tarot was the obvious choice to unfold my fate.

A consultation with a tarot reader, I mused, could give my life a new outlook, a new meaning, and maybe I’d learn I would die soon. Then I could drop out of school and move to Amsterdam. The tarot has been around for 600 years and is rumored to tap the psychic energy of those who read the cards, enabling them to see the future and illuminate the present.

“The Devil’s Picture Book” is a phrase given to the tarot by many as a warning, but that title makes the cards even more enticing. It’s similar to those people who say “The Last Temptation of Christ” is blasphemous and despicable. Accusations like these make me want to go see how scandalous it really is. Negative publicity worked for the movie and the tarot.

Insane King Charles VI of France owned one of the first known decks of tarot cards (circa 1329). The eccentric ruler was known throughout Europe as “King Charles the Mad,” which may have contributed to the increased popularity of the tarot during the Middle Ages.

The exact origin of the cards is unknown. Leonardo da Vinci sometimes has been credited with their invention, but if this were true, the cards probably would have paintings of saints and naked men. So, their maker still remains a mystery.

The first mention of the cards is found in Italian writings during the 14th century. Italy usually is considered the tarot’s birthplace.

Leaving for my psychic appointment, I tried to imagine what sort of a person would invent a deck of cards that tells the future through strange images and symbols.

I pictured a young man named Franco, in his early 20’s, who was basically good looking, but had a hard time getting a date. My mythological Franco insisted on cutting and bleaching his hair, while most 14th century Italian women preferred long, dark tresses.

An important ball was coming up called, “Let’s Shake Off These Middle Ages,” and Franco needed a dance partner. He came up with the idea of reading young and available women’s fortunes with cards only he could interpret. He embossed a deck of 78 cards with elaborate decorations of complex and elusive symbols.

Franco then told a willing subject he had the power to read her future. He interpreted the cards to say it was inevitable that she date him. This surprisingly worked, and she agreed to accompany Franco to the ball. For the rest of his life, Franco had an
I wanted to have a strong aura. It's embarrassing when my aura doesn't materialize; I look like I haven't had a spiritual experience in five years.

I saw shadows on the floor that danced sporadically. Could it be some kind of mystical force I asked myself — no, it was only the silhouette of plants on the windowsill waving in the afternoon breeze.

The woman who was to interpret the fall of the tarot was seated in the middle of the room cross-legged and looked a bit drowsy, as if she had just finished meditating. She smiled as I entered and gestured for me to join her.

She introduced herself as June (not her real name; she wished not to be identified). She was ordinary looking, with bright eyes that lit up when she smiled. She wore a mis-matched sweat-suit that was a collage of many pastels.

After my mental image of Franco, I had assumed his ancestors would carry on the tarot tradition. I had expected a darkly-clad woman with black eyes and a harsh voice to interpret the tarot for me, not the sweet peaches-and-cream look of June.

While I was checking to make sure my aura was in place, a small leather drawstring bag with fringe seized my attention. Immediately after my recognition of the bag, June reached inside it and revealed the cards meant to act as guides for prophesying, and shuffled the deck.

After a short time, June handed the cards to me and asked me to shuffle the deck while focusing all my energy on the cards. Couldn't she see my aura? Couldn't she tell that's where all my energy was? Nevertheless, I transformed some of my psychic essence in order to enrich the tarot.

While shuffling the cards, I thought of Dante. He used tarot symbolism in the “Divine Comedy,” and T.S. Eliot and Yeats referred to the cards in their poems. I was beginning to feel the tarot did have some real power. Maybe if I concentrated hard enough, my writing could also be influenced by the supernatural. If it was influenced in any way, I'd probably be guided to write the Time/Life series, “Mysteries of the Unknown.”

When I felt enough of my psyche had possessed the deck, I handed the cards back to June, who in turn laid down the first card.

“This is a growth card. It represents a journey process you cannot avoid. This process will involve creative conflict and will expand your consciousness.” June explained. The card was the Two of Pentacles, which June said denotes harmonic change through creative stretching and conflict. I took her word for it, but the only thing I saw was a crazy looking juggler hooting a jig with two pentacles in his hands.

I nodded to June indicating I understood what she meant (not that I really did). With that signal, the next card was played.

It was somewhat disturbing at first — The Devil. It wasn't just an ordinary depiction of the devil, but straight out of a nightmare. He had fiery eyes, a ghoulis grin and long spindly fingers holding a smoldering pitchfork. I cringed.

June explained the card merely meant I should express my emotions freely, without any suppression. Wow, what a load off my mind. I thought I was destined for hell and I don't even believe in hell.

The next card was the Eight of Swords, which depicted a tied and bound figure surrounded by eight swords. June said I feel now, or will soon feel some sort of confinement, but it is a temporary condition. And I will soon experience enlightenment through self-knowledge, as shown by The Sun, the next card June laid down.

More cards were played and June saw themes surfacing from past lives. “During this lifetime, you will be forced to experience the full realm of society and your power potential will be expressed. You will be forced to finish old karma, and balance the polarity in your life — the polarity between material and spirit,” June interpreted.

This seemed logical, for I sensed I had a lot of karma which needed resolving. But I didn't re-
member any past lives so I didn’t recognize the themes. The separation of the spirit and material wasn’t as clear either, but June said it would become more evident over the next nine years.

The Three of Cups was taken next from the deck. It portrayed three women wearing long, flowing gowns, jubilantly dancing in a meadow. The women had large gold chalices with which they toasted each other. The three chalices came together to form a pyramid. June said the Three of Cups promised emotional satisfaction and contentment. This was comforting, but the next card drawn was incredibly disturbing. Those damn Swords surfaced again, only this time it was the Ten of Swords. It showed a man lying on his stomach with ten swords pierced through his back in a parallel line. Did this mean I’ll have an accident with that food processor again?

June explained it really wasn’t as horrid as it seemed. The Ten of Swords meant I will have to go through some emotional pain, but I will be happy in the end. I was a little perturbed. What kind of jokes were these cards playing on me? First, they tell me I’ll be emotionally content and then they say I’ll be pained emotionally.

The following cards told June about my future life of enlightenment. “When there is a possibility of illusion, the bubbles will be burst. This always involves some kind of pain, but the rewards are tremendous,” she said, smiling.

The next cards conveyed spiritual renewal and awakening. June interpreted. “You will become more psychic and develop a mystical union with your unconscious.”

This was exciting news. When I look at the sun I can’t even tell what time it is; becoming psychic would sure help.

June construed the last card to mean I would ultimately be left alone. “You will lead the path of individualization,” she said. “You may not be physically left alone, but you will realize we are all really alone.”

With that optimistic note, June informed me the reading was done.

My legs were getting cramped and I was glad to hear this was the end. I looked at my watch and was surprised to find two hours had passed since I ventured into the unknown territory known as my future.

I wasn’t sure of what to make of the reading. Some things June said made sense, but I was skeptical of the prophesies. The whole psychic world is dubious to me, but I did feel a little closer to the unknown. Or maybe I just felt self-conscious, because my aura was overcharged and obvious.

I think the tarot is a mystery to everyone who comes in contact with it. Even though the tarot explained my future, I know the next time I asked the cards what fate had in store for me, they would tell a different story. This isn’t to say I didn’t believe June’s cards. I trust them. But I also trust my life will experience as many different situations as there are tarot cards.
PASSAGES
Living in Transition
By Rich Royston

The 23-year journey home from Vietnam for Bill Amspacher ended on a hot, sunny Friday afternoon in a quiet cemetery in Chatsworth, Calif. Bill, the Navy flyer and radar technician, is here at last, among those who love him.

Bill, my cousin, was missing in action for more than two decades. Bill’s grave, long marked by a Navy bronze plaque inscribed, “William Harry Amspacher Jr., born July 26, 1944, missing in action June 2, 1965,” no longer is empty.

Bill’s plane, a modified Skyraider 1A, from the carrier USS Midway, was on a rescue mission, searching for a downed flyer over the South China Sea when it was hit by enemy fire, the Navy reported. The aircraft carrying the 20-year-old Navy man and three other crewmen crashed about one-half mile inland, witnesses told Navy officials last year, Cmdr. William Reed said. The crash occurred at the end of the second week of Bill’s second tour. He had volunteered for the tour of Vietnam to be near a woman he hoped to marry.

His final trip home began when his remains and those of two of his comrades were finally returned by Vietnam officials last July. The fourth crewman was never found.

Bill and the other crewmen’s remains were positively identified at the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. Bill and his two comrades were among only 27 of 100
returned MIAs whose remains have been identified since 1987, under agreement with Vietnam, said Lt. Col. Tom Boyd, of the U.S. Pacific Command.

A Pentagon official and a Navy officer came to Bill's parents' home in November and presented documents to them to verify Bill's identity. After doing so, the military then transported his body from Hawaii to Moffett Field Naval Air Station, near San Francisco, Calif., where the Navy made final preparations for his return.

Naval escort yeoman 1st class Susan G. Carty accompanied Bill's remains to San Francisco International Airport for the last leg of the journey. Carty watched as the coffin was placed on board the aircraft one-half hour before flight time. She then boarded the aircraft and told the flight crew they were taking the body of a Naval MIA back to the states.

"The crew was very kind and respectful," Carty said. "They told me they were pleased and honored to be bringing Bill home." Carty said after the plane was airborne the flight captain announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are carrying Naval MIA Bill Amspacher on his last flight home."

Carty told Bill's family many passengers told her they felt privileged and honored to be on the same flight.

Bill actually had two funeral services. The first was arranged by the National League of Families, an umbrella MIA organization. The Navy sponsored Bill's second service, Navy Lt. Gordon Delcambre said. The Navy's service concluded with a 21-gun salute and with a bugler playing Taps.

Afterward, the attending family members went to Bill's parents' home and sat and talked until midnight, remembering Bill and getting reacquainted. Because fall finals were upon me, I couldn't attend the Dec. 2 funeral. I stayed in Washington and remembered Bill alone.

The phone call, 23 years ago, from my mother, who told me Bill was missing, is forever etched in my mind. It came about three weeks before my first son was born. After mother hung up, I slammed down my receiver, cursed more than I ever had before, or since. I ended my anguished tirade with, "Stupid war. It's such a waste."

After all these years, those of us who knew Bill are finally finding peace over his fate. Until last summer, we were never quite sure if Bill was a captive in Southeast Asia, or dead.

The Bill Amspacher I knew and loved was the typical "kid next door." He loved baseball, football, bowling, girl-watching and having fun. He had mischievous blue eyes; sandy-colored hair — parted to the right — which he was forever combing as a teen; and dimples and freckles that danced when he laughed, which was often.

Bill grew up in Canoga Park, Calif., a suburb of Los Angeles, during the late 40's and 50's. It was a time of relative innocence: you never locked your car or front door.

We were cousins, but, not cousins in the real sense of the word. Step-cousins is the proper term. Bill's mother, Virginia, married Bob Tiffany, my mother's oldest brother. Bill was 10. I was 16.

The night Uncle Bob and Aunt Virginia were married, we put on an old-fashioned chivere. The newlyweds retired to the one-bedroom house behind my maternal grandparents home. Then all heck broke loose. The whole Tiffany clan was there. Uncle Bob's brother, two sisters, their spouses and kids. Fifteen in all. We beat on pots and pans, blew whistles, clanged a large cow bell we had hung in a tree outside the newlyweds bedroom window. We yelled, and someone fired off "Popa's" .45-caliber rifle a couple of times. Bill was into the fun as much as the rest of us.

It wasn't long after Uncle Bob's and Aunt Virginia's marriage that Bill and I became real friends. Bill was more like a brother than a cousin.

We had some high ol' times, and some rough times too. We always were there for one another. We suffered the loss of my namesake and grandfather as teenagers in August of 1957. We handled our grief the night "Popa" died by going to a baseball game between the then-Los Angeles Angels and the Hollywood Stars of the old Pacific Coast League. It was a way to ease the pain of our first close encounter with death.

Three days later, during the ride home from "Popa's" funeral, Bill's maternal grandfather suffered a fatal heart attack. We went bowling to forget.

During the next few weeks we went to a lot of baseball games. We saw the end of the old AAA Los Angeles Angels, and the arrival of the L.A. Dodgers and the birth of the major league Los Angeles Angels, renamed the California Angels a few years later.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we are carrying Naval MIA Bill Amspacher on his last flight home."

- Flight captain of flight carrying Bill Amspacher

We sat behind home plate during a New York Yankee v. L.A. Angels game the year Roger Maris beat Babe Ruth's single-season home run mark. Maris struck out three times that night. We figured the Babe's record was safe. Maris wouldn't break it that year, no way. But he did.

We went to Santa Monica Beach, beginning in 1956, just to watch the girls. That was before the advent of the bikini. We always wore brightly colored Hawaiian print shirts, the brighter the better, and capris.

We attended many Los Angeles Dodgers baseball games in the coliseum and Dodger Stadium. One warm July night in 1958, Bill, 14, and myself, 20, got
Dodgers great Gil Hodges' autograph.

In August, we took our Bay area cousin, Gary Tuley, 16, with us to a L.A. Dodgers v. San Francisco Giants game. Giants fan Gary sat between us two rabid Dodger fans. The immortal Sandy Koufax was pitching for the Dodgers that night.

Koufax struck out 18 Giants batters in the game to tie Bob Feller's record for most strikeouts in a nine-inning game. A dramatic bases-loaded home run in the bottom of the ninth inning won the game for Koufax.

I suspect Gary had a sore back and ribs for a week because of the enthusiastic pounding he got during and at the end of the game.

During the fall of 1957 and 1958, Bill was the ball and water boy for Pierce College's football team. I was the student manager. During home games, Bill's job was to look after the game ball when our offense was on the sideline, and to lug a crate of 12, small, glass water jars onto the field during time-outs. This was years ahead of Gatorade.

In late June, 1961, while Bill and I were at the arcade on Santa Monica Pier, eyeing the girls, the owner of the joint asked us if each of us would like a nice girl. He said he could get them by making a few phone calls. Being young and green, not knowing what else to say, we said sure. The guy left to make his phone calls, we thought better of the idea and got the heck out of there.

On Bill's 16th birthday, 1960, we went to a steak house that featured old-west decor, right down to the sawdust on the floor.

We ate until we thought we would burst, then ate some more, laughing all the while.

I'm sure we embarrassed Bill's folks, although they didn't say a word. They laughed a good bit too. People at neighboring tables glared at us, perhaps upset at our frivolity. Or maybe they thought us intoxicated. We were drunk, just not on alcohol. To us, life was full of promise and hope.

Although we didn't know it, these were Bill's last few years. At ages 16 and 22, we thought, as young people often do, we were immortal.

After that birthday, we didn't get together as often. I was working full-time in advertising at the Los Angeles Times and Bill had his high school pals.

In September, 1962, I moved to Boston. I wanted to see how the other half of the country lived. Bill and I visited in early August at a family picnic in Costa Mesa, Calif. We talked about the future. Bill wasn't sure what he wanted to do. He was thinking of joining the Navy. He wanted to fly. Bill also liked the attention Navy uniforms got from women.

Bill thought the Navy would be an adventure, while I wanted to be a great writer. Looking back, I can see we were drifting apart, as often happens when friends grow in different directions. That was the last time I saw Bill.

Bill was on the brink of manhood when he volunteered for the Navy in the fall of 1962. His only letter to me, in January 1964, was full of excitement and enthusiasm about flying.

"When I'm up there in that plane, hurtling through the sky, I feel so free of everything. I like flying almost better than anything else. I might work for an airline when my enlistment is up," he wrote.

Later, I discovered the survival training course Bill took at Fairchild Air Force Base, near Spokane, had scared the daylights out of him. He was terrified at the possibility of capture and torture by the Viet Cong.

Thank God you're home, Bill, away from that hostile environment you have been in for so long. You belong here with friends and family. Good-bye, Bill.
GRANNY'S STUDMUFFIN

Entrepreneur Ralph Black and his money-making muffins.

Jesse Tinsley

WESTERN GRAD BAKES HIS WAY TO THE TOP
By Jenny Shuler

When asked what his employees call him, he laughed and said, "Well, that depends on whether they're mad at me or not, but they usually call me Ralph. It makes me sound too old. You can call me Ralph."

Ralph Black drives a Ford Tempo and buys his shoes at Kinney's. Most of his clothes are gifts from friends or his wife, Susan, who shops at Mervyn's.

"I don't like to wear a suit and tie and appear too business-like. In fact, I never color-coordinate my socks. I like to be out of uniform. I like to be different."

One might never guess Black, a 32-year-old Western graduate, is creator, owner and operator of Grannys Gourmet Muffins, one of the fastest-growing businesses in town. He prides himself on being a down-to-earth sort of guy.

One might say Black is rolling in the dough, except muffins are made from batter. His muffin sales probably will exceed $2 million in 1989. Black's goal is to reach national recognition within 10 years, but he believes he will achieve this goal much sooner. Already the muffins are distributed throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Alaska, California and even Taiwan, at an Armed Forces base.

Initially, Grannys was a small retail outlet, which opened August 13, 1985. It was located in the Meridian Mall. The location swarmed with potential customers and the large exodus of people to EXPO '86 helped the business grow almost exponentially.

Currently located in Hannegan Business Park, Black is planning to move his business to an even larger facility somewhere in Whatcom County to accommodate the company's growth.

Grannys is known for its designer muffins, which weigh approximately five ounces, stand about three inches tall, flare out at the top in a 5-inch diameter circle and come in more than 100 different flavors.

Black entertained the idea of a muffin business while he was working for United States Immigration and Naturalization Service at Blaine's border crossing.

"It all started with a newspaper article about the Canadian muffin industry. I thought it didn't sound so tough to sell muffins. So I called my brother and asked him what he thought about the idea. We went through a maybe or maybe not period and just decided to go for it."

Hoping to get an idea of how to start producing muffins, Black frequented Canadian stores while he worked for immigration.

"I'd go into a store and buy a muffin. I'd tell the owner they (muffins) were really good and ask how they were made, where they were made, etc. I just sort of bluffed my way in."

So, with his new-found information and support from his family, Black created Grannys Gourmet Muffins. He said it didn't require much expertise to be successful, but a lot of determination and a degree of luck were involved.

"If you can do it, do it. We started with $9,000 cash, a $6,000 bank loan, and a lot of sweat equity. The entire family did all of the manual labor like painting, cleaning, and remodeling to get the first bakery ready."

None of his family really had any business experience and none of them knew the first thing about mass muffin production. Black went so far as to climb into old restaurant dumpsters to peel labels from packages, hoping to find helpful hints and addresses.

Black's wife and mother were brave enough to attempt the modification of an old family recipe. They baked about 5,000 muffins at home, which they promptly threw away until the perfect formula was derived.

Black said, "Measuring out small amounts for a dozen or so muffins is easy, but trying to adjust the ratio of ingredients to a larger scale requires some basic chemistry 101. We took a common muffin base and modified it. Just add one part of this to one part of that and bake it. Then pass the muffins out to family and friends and have them perform a blind taste test."

Finally, they were ready to begin mass production at the bakery.

Black said, "We would crack thousands of eggs a day. It was a full-time job. I soon realized how foolish it was to stand around cracking eggs. I called up a local egg producer, you know a chicken farm, and asked how to go about ordering large quantities of shelled eggs. Now we buy 30-pound containers and use 150 containers a week. That's 2.25 tons of eggs a week."

Grannys is capable of producing some of the most exotic flavors in the muffin business. Grannys sells such flavors such as amaretto, pumpkin, cranberry,
raspberry swirl, peanut butter-chocolate chip, banana split and many others. Of the 100 flavors, some are seasonal and at least 20 different kinds are baked every day.

"At Thanksgiving we sell as many pumpkin muffins as we can make. But after the season's over we can't give a pumpkin one away," Black said. "The favorite is the old standby, blueberry. Blueberry is a world-wide flavor. People love choice, but they want certainty. Everyone knows that a blueberry muffin is guaranteed to be good."

Now that Grannys is dealing in such large volume, Black is hoping to conquer the California market and do there what he has done in Whatcom County. He said muffins are a hot item with the health-crazed Californians.

Black said, "We try to incorporate a little home, health, family, freshness and all of those kinds of good things into our product."

All 35 employees have the authority to pull off the production line any muffin that doesn't look right, no questions asked. "When you start getting into mass production, you can't afford to put out a dog," Black said.

The muffins have an image of their own. They sell themselves.

Black attended Western in 1974, but said he was not serious about studying. After two years of partying, he quit school and went into business with his brother. He returned to Western in 1980 to complete his degree and graduated in 1983 with a combined major in economics and political science. After graduation, he received a full-time position at the border crossing, but he wanted to do something different.

Today, his brother is vice president and secretary treasurer for the company, his sister is retail manager and his mother is in charge of quality control. He also hires as many Western students as he can during the summer and some students have been employed at Grannys since its start.

Black said he now takes off Sundays and every other Saturday.

"I haven't had time for vacation. People tend to take vacations to escape things that aren't fun. My business is still fun — I don't want to get away."

He added, halfheartedly, "I would like to be able to retire in 10 years and move to the Bahamas. But, my wife was born and raised in Whatcom County and she wouldn't go along with that. As a matter of fact, we still live in the same house as we did when we were married. I suppose someday we'll get around to building a new one."

He said he enjoys success and believes anyone can achieve it. Black emphasized he was not the most scholastic student to ever roam Western's campus. In fact, he made the president's list once for having a frighteningly low grade point average, which gradually tapered out to about 2.5.

"The secret," he said, "is to drive your business and not let your business drive you."

"We would crack thousands of eggs a day. It was a full-time job. I soon realized how foolish it was to stand around cracking eggs."

- Ralph Black
YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO RICH OR TOO THIN
AND DAVE IS COMING FOR DINNER.
HOW WILL I COPE?!
By Jennifer Wynn

Advertisers, Can I Talk To You About Diarrhea?

Just Follow Your Nose to the nearest Snap, Crackle, Pop of any TV set and, TUMMM-TUM-TUM-TUM-TUM-TUMS, Know Whatta Mean Vern? get blasted with commercial overload.

Plop, Plop, Fizz, Fizz: Oh What A Relief It Is to use Sheer Energy and Let Your Fingers Do The Walking to the TV's off button and tune out the hypnotizing noise of jingles and slogans. If we don't, We Are Driven to Revive With Vivarin to watch the explosive Kibbles And Bits of television commercials with any sort of Anticipation.

Raise Your Hand If You're Sure. If not, Just For The Fun Of It, Go See Cal. Better yet, Ask The Morton's Fisherman, Inspector 12 or the Tidy Bowl Man. Even some old guy at Pepperidge Farms Remembers When It Rains, It Pours. Ads clog the airwaves. They Plump When You Cook 'Em. In fact, so many ads exist, Who Could Ask For Anything More?

Gee, No GTE, The Heartbeat Of America has just about had a coronary because There's No Slowing Down With The Silver Bullet Tonight.

Viewers are not In Good Hands, when they watch TV. They're Wanted Throughout the West. It's a Mutual Of Omaha's Wild Kingdom out there, and they're jungle bait.

Oh Yeeeaah! When Nature Needs A Helpin' Hand, when you need to make The Right Choice, ads are Like A Good Neighbor — To The Rescue, A Friend of the Family. But Mama Mia, Either You've Got It Or You Don't and viewers have too much. The TV set has become A Good Place For A Stick-up.

Ore Ida All Righta, A-L-L commercials aren't that bad. Some Bring Good Things To Life, They're Grrreat, M'm M'm Good, A Breed Apart, real Eye-Openers. You Have My Word On It. But Sorry Charlie, A Little Dab Will Do Ya, A Pinch Is All It Takes.

People are getting some real mixed messages. I mean, Dig 'Em ...

The New Generation will Love It At Levitz, but they'll Find It At Freddy's.

TV glutons can Buy More, Payless, but The Savings Place? That's at K-mart.

People are Looking Smarter than Ever, they're Sexier in their BVD's, but, There's Nothing Like A Maidenform Woman.

Viewers have to try and Put On A Happy Face while they've Got The 501 Blues.

Beef makes sense, but where is it? And So On, And So On, And So On ...

But, Have It Your Way. Admittedly, in this Marlboro Country some Inquiring Minds Want To Know why Choosy Mothers Choose Jif, and why English Muffins have all those nooks and crannies. To them, This Is Living, and, of course, A Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Waste. But they are the minority. Most don't need to be told Boys Wet In The Front and Girls In The Middle. It's Been Too Long, so it's time to get to The Chewy-Gooey On The Inside. You advertisers live in The Ultimate Bubble and it needs popping by a White Tornado, a Mr. Muscle.

Viewers Have a Headache This Big And It's Got advertising Written All Over It while what they really want is something that Coats, Soothes, Relieves.

And one day, when you advertisers finally Fill It To The Rim, TV viewers are going to Get A Rope and have a Revolution. They'll have Calgon Take them Away. They'll Make A Run For The Border to Avoid The Noid and other television atrocities that lack Schweppervescence.

It's time you did something before the ad Engine Does Something To Get viewers Heated Up and they get A Piece Of The Rock to throw at the TV. This is not your ordinary Big Mac Attack or Pizza Emergency.

So How Do You Spell Relief? Lose The Fat, Pinch An Inch. But, Nut N' Honey, will take the place of fewer ads on the tube.

Go With The Spirit, advertisers, and Give A Hoot, Don't Pollute the airwaves with that stuff. You should know When to Say When. Cut back on those commercials 'cuz It's the Right Thing To Do. It would only take Just Two Weeks, With A Couple Of Two-Day Follow-ups.

It Would Be a Nice Reflection On You and the Toughest Job You'll Ever Love. I Guarantee It.

Be All You Can Be. It's time to Shout It Out. No Excuses. Just Do it.

Go Ahead, I Dare You To Knock It Off.

Thank You For Your Support.
By Luis Cabrera

The homeless have several ways to break the cycle of hunger, alcoholism and rootless poverty, Rod Strider said.

"One is to kill yourself."

Strider chose another way. A former transient, he has haunted missions, forests and alleyways from Los Angeles to Bellingham. He has lived from the land and garbage cans. He has survived.

Now he thrives. Strider operates his own woodcutting and fence building business in the Seattle area. He owns the trailer in which he lives. He also owns a 15-foot fiberglass pleasure boat, a 1975 Chevrolet pick-up, and tools and chainsaws enough to do almost any carpentry or woodcutting job.

Still, the streets are never far from Strider's mind. The homeless days were bitter ones, but he knew freedom then. He sometimes longs for that liberty today. Seated on a couch in his dim-lit trailer house, feet propped on the cushions, beer in hand and back pressed against the wall, Strider recalled his tramping days.

"I was well-versed enough in the woods to find the right places to sleep. I never slept in cardboard boxes and crap like that. I would come into a town and get on one end or the other, where the trees were, and make myself a camp. Then I'd operate out of that camp. If I had to walk five miles, six miles to town, fine and dandy.

"There were a lot of people worse off than I was. I always had the brains for that out there. I'd always prepare myself to meet with the public. You don't go out there looking like a tramp, because nobody's going to pay any attention to you. You have to have an appearance that shows you're really trying, and maybe look for work."

Strider's appearance is imposing, powerful. His hands are calloused, his shoulders broad from wielding a chainsaw, shovel and jackhammer through most of the daylight hours in his years since the streets. His thin-kneed jeans are cinched by a wide, black belt with a silver buckle, and his wool sweater is frayed at the edges. Sandy whiskers sprout wild within the framework of a handlebar mustache and goatee, and his deep brown hair matches his eyes. The couch is small for his 6-foot 3-inch frame.

He lounged back, taking a swig of beer. "I only panhandled a couple of times. I never really went down to that level. You can go out and pick garbage cans for aluminum and make enough money to eat every day. That's a piece of cake in a large city. You hit the condominiums, where they've got the Dempsey dumpsters, and those suckers are full of beer cans.

"You can get food from churches, you get it from food banks, you get it from all over the place. Like Safeway — they throw out a lot of food that's past the pull date. The majority of that stuff is still good for another week or so.

"If they catch you (in their dumpsters) sometimes they call the cops, sometimes they don't. It all depends on where you're at and what you look like. I've been in a lot of them in Everett where the other tramps would get thrown out and I wouldn't. I didn't make a lot of noise."

Home, to Strider, was wherever he happened to be.

"Out in Port Angeles, I basically lived off the dump. I'd go out there and find scrap, get all my building stuff and everything else. I built myself a shack out there out of plastic and plywood. I got an old 50-gallon drum and cut a hole in the back, and put a piece of stovepipe I found in there, and made a woodstove. It was a kickass place."

Strider managed to eat without money, while spending most of the money he made on drink.

"The thing about drinking when you're on the streets is, you
have this thought in your mind that you're a loser. You have nothing. You have nobody behind you. That in itself can cause you to drink.

"The worst part about being a tramp is the rejection you get from everybody else. They snub you. They say things around you and laugh at you. The cops hassle you."

Police, Strider recalled, could be most troublesome at night.

When sleeping, "you're always camouflaging yourself as best as possible. If they see you, they wake you up and very rudely tell you to get your ass out of there. If you're not lucky you might get put in jail for vagrancy. It all depends on how rational they are."

Strider first saw the inside of a jail cell at 13, as a runaway caught in Billings, Mont.

"Thirteen years old, and they put me in the Billings jail with all the rest of the buttholes."

Strider spent most of two days in the jail before he revealed his name and home address.

"Finally, this detective comes in there, and I'd had enough of this, so I told them my real name. You know what he did? He put me on a bus. I had about 300 miles to go, so I jumped off in Bismarck, N.D., and I hitchhiked down south to Mowbrige, S.D. Then I got caught down there.

"An old cop came up. I was walking down the street and it was pretty cold. I was hungry. He said, 'You look like you could use a hamburger.' I said, 'Yep, sure could.'" Strider chuckled to himself.

"So he took me to a cafe, bought me a couple of hamburgers, and started talking. He said, "Well, you're going to be here a little while, so you have to stay in the jail. But I'll leave the door open, and my son will bring his comic books down."

"So I met his son. He was about the same age as me. He even let me go out and play baseball with his kid. They kept the door open; they gave me pillows, comic books. It was pretty good."

Strider returned to his family. He lived with an aunt in Minnesota, then in Idaho, then with his mother in California's San Francisco Bay area.

He was vague about his family. He mumbled and whispered, stared into his beer and brushed questions aside with a frown and the wave of a hand.

He believes, though, "The reason I ended up on the streets is because I didn't stick with my
Physical abuse prompted Strider to run away the first time, he said. Running soon became a pattern in his life.

By 15, Strider had run through the list of relatives who might take him in, and virtually excluded himself from the foster home system. He could see only one way to go. With a statement from his aunt/guardian saying he was of legal age, he entered the U.S. Army.

"It was an escape. I was a kid. Everybody knew that I was a kid."

The military left its impression on Strider. Words such as "chow hall" and "barracks" slip into his speech. Much of his clothing and many of his camping and fishing supplies are military issue, from second hand stores.

But in the Army, as in his family, Strider could make no place for himself.

"The only thing the military did for me was get me involved in drugs," he said.

Drug use was the stated reason for his discharge, after two years and three months of service at Fort Lewis and in Germany.

Strider returned to Minnesota. He lived with relatives for a time, but little had changed. He soon found himself living in a tent in a local park.

Then he drifted. He dabbled in crime, but 90 days in a Los Angeles jail on a burglary charge convinced him to stay within the law.

Noting the high incidence of rape in jails, Strider said, "A black guy tried to do that to me one time. I busted a garbage can over his head — 30-gallon galvanized. We thought we had a riot on our hands. Two-thirds of the cell were all black. But, when it was all said and done, the guy was picked up and carried to the infirmary, all the other blacks came out and said, 'That dude was crazy, man. You did a good turn to get him out of here.'"

Following his release, Strider began tramping in earnest. Drinking, drugs and a sometimes volatile temper kept him from holding a job or female companion for long. The jobs he hardly recalls, but each of the women he has known are a tale fondly told.

"Out in Port Angeles, I basically lived off the dump. I'd go out there and find scrap, get all my building stuff and everything else."

- Rod Strider

He confuses the names, but there was the woman in Anacortes with whom he lived for a time. There was a woman who lived with Strider in a scrap lumber house on Shi Shi Beach, at the very tip of the Olympic Peninsula. There was a woman and her one-year-old boy, with whom Strider lived and supported for a time.

Then there was Naldine. Strider stopped when he said her name. He stared at the roof of his trailer, and a slight smile creased his face.

"She was a nice lady. She chased me all the way down, onto the ferry, and across the mainland to get me to come back. I was stupid not to marry that woman."

Strider tramped through California, Oregon and in various Washington cities and parks through the 70's. Not until the winter of 1980, which he spent in Bellingham, did he begin to pull himself up.

"I started off in the Everett mission. I heard from some other tramps that Bellingham had just opened up a mission, and you could stay there for 30 days, so that's where I went."

"The mission was a barracks-style setup. We had bunk beds in rows, a communal can and chow hall, and a rectory where you read your religion every day. You had to do that, but I got out of it because I was working."

"I started to go down to the unemployment office every morning about 5:30 or so. I was the first one to sign my name on the casual labor list. Then I'd sit in the office until somebody called. I used to work almost all the time."

Strider slept on the streets in Bellingham many times. He slept on Western's campus and in the Sehome Hill Arboretum tower.
Strider ate regularly in Bellingham, often at Western's cafeteria.

"At that time, for a dollar-and-a-quarter, you could get the short order, which was eggs, and a piece of bacon, and hash browns. You'd go through the door and you'd have all the toast and jam and dry cereal you wanted. You'd always make your can money to get up there and have a good meal. Then the mission would take care of you.

"From Bellingham, I got into woodcutting, and then a lot of fence building and jackhammering. My attitude finally changed."

Strider managed to make, and keep, some friends along the way. They took him into their Seattle-area home, eventually treating him as a family member.

"That's the way I broke out of it. I had good friends. Treat people right and they'll help you."

Strider began picking fruit in Eastern Washington during the summers, and living with his new family in the winter. He eventually saved enough to buy his truck, then began cutting and hauling firewood. Slowly his business grew, until he actually began employing other laborers in fence building and construction jobs.

"I'm frustrated, because I haven't been able to just go out to the woods, for a month or so, in the last two years."

When tramping, "you don't have to have much. You just have to know where to get the food. I could always go back if I ever needed to. It's something to fall back on if push comes to shove."

"I'm a long way from there, though. I'm on the road with no stops. It is kind of a pain in the ass, though, 'cause I never did really want all this stuff."

Sometimes, Strider longs for the freedom he had in his tramping days.

Luis Cabrera

Some, like Strider, make it off the streets. Some don't. Addiction usually is the obstacle. Whether the homeless abuse alcohol and drugs because they are on the street, or whether they are on the streets because of their slavery to the substance, overcoming addiction is their key to finding a home, said Trace Goodnight of the Light House Mission in Bellingham.

"You can find some of the most destitute people in the world, who look so needy, and they have alcohol on their breath. They can get drink easier than food," Goodnight said.

As administrative assistant at the mission, Goodnight has seen men like Strider come and go. The 60-bed mission provides a haven from the cold, and serves three hot meals per day.

In exchange, residents work around the building, attend religious services and observe curfew and other rules.

The mission attempts to replace addiction with religious devotion. Homeless men who show a willingness to change their lifestyle can move into the mission's Christian Life Rehabilitation Program, Goodnight said. There they stay in a separate "dorm" and attend religious services and alcohol abuse classes.

The program works for some. Goodnight said she sometimes receives phone calls from former mission residents who have left the streets behind. Others, including one man who worked his way from transient to graduate of Western, visit regularly.

There is no easy way off the streets, Goodnight said, but overcoming addiction is almost always the first step.
Hey, man — it's Friday night and we're just hanging out. We're cold but ready to party. Yeah, spirits are high. Cool — some chick is poking her face into the glass door. The door slides open and she grabs us. Yeah, we're rockin' and rollin' now. She takes a five-spot out of her wallet and we're startin' to sweat it out, wondering what kind of session this is going to be.

We've all been through this scene before. You know, had a second or third shot at living the big one as brewskies. It's a happenin' way to be. But hey — it doesn't happen all too often. We're some of the luckier hepcats.

Yeah, we brew brothers don't have much say in our destination. Some dudes end up in a landfill, buming out in a pile of garbage, waiting to turn to dust in a million years. It's nasty, too, because the landfill is filled with the ashes of our incinerated brothers. That ain't too respectul to dead Uncle Bud, you know? Besides, the thought of contributing to the pollution of the air and water is a b-a-a-d trip. And man, to be called names like "leachate" — whoa.

Now, being recycled is, like, reincarnation. We're all separated by color, crushed into fine pieces, and then melted at a really high temperature to be reformed into new bottles or jars. Groovy, huh?

Cool. Looks like we made it to a party. Got the Stones playin' and we're grooin' on this lip action. Won't be long until we're empty and our destiny will be decided.

Whoa, man, what a bummer — Ted was just thrown across the room and smashed on the floor. Guess he'll be hangin' out in the landfill after all.

But to get back on track, man ... the grooviest places for a brew brother is to be refilled. We usually hang out on someone's porch or in a garage until recycling day rolls around. Then we get picked up by the recycling dude who takes us with him, so we can party with other bottles and old friends and relatives for a while.

After hangin' at the recycling center, we're trucked on over to a bottling company for, like, rejuvenation. Our labels are torn off and we're washed inside and out and dried. And three of us can be refilled 10 times each with the energy it takes just to make a brand new bottle.

Hey, man — the party's over. We're empty, just hangin' out in the dark with the cigarette butts on the coffee table. So far we've all made it except Ted. Time to wait and see what happens. It'll be a bummer if we get tossed in the incinerator or dumped in the landfill with, like, dirty diapers...

Recycling is a fairly new concept to me. It's embarrassing to admit, but, for years, a beer bottle in my hand was lucky if it even made it to a trash can.

Now, about once every two months my housemates and I cover our sidewalk with mountains of empty Henry Weinhard's and Riunite bottles. Godfather's Pizza and saltine cracker boxes, Bellingham Herald's, Wall Street Journals and Glamour magazines. Soggy brown paper bags struggle to survive the strain of holding empty green-bean, fruit-cocktail and Hormel chill cans. Nearby, Bud Light and Diet Coke cans overflow from sticky cardboard boxes.

It's a scary sight. But it also is a momentous occasion for my roommates and I: after weeks of stumbling over piles of trash on our side porch, we finally remember ... Recycling Day.

Ever since I've lived in our huge home near campus, it's been "house policy" to recycle whatever we possibly can. We're not diehard environmentalists or anything — it's just a good thing to do, especially since a large portion of our trash is recyclable.

I'll be the first to admit that recycling is a pain in the butt. Just trying to remember to put it out each week is bad enough. There's also the problem of where to store the trash without hindering travel paths, looking like pack rats or getting an unwelcome whiff of garbage.

It's also rather annoying to get little notes from Mr. Recycling Man, telling us what we do "wrong" in preparing our recycled goods and how we set them out to be picked up. How dare he refuse to take our milk cartons. And really, who enjoys taking the time to separate different colors of glass or removing the labels from tin cans?

"Golly, Rob, I think the Cheez Whiz jar goes in the 'white' pile. And Leesa, be sure to stomp down that can of Friskies so it's nice and flat."

Then again, after a particularly windy morning, we discovered why we're always asked to bundle up the newspapers. For some reason the neighbors at the end of the block didn't appreciate the chance to read last month's classifieds.

The good news is, around June or July, every Bellingham household will be provided with three bins for recyclable materials, said Jim Madison, of the Associated Students Recycle Center. Pick-up will be every week in every city neighborhood.

That certainly will make recycling a lot more convenient. And like, wow, man ... it sure would make poor, old Ted proud.
* Bellingham incinerates 100 tons of garbage each day. Of this incinerated waste, one third of it easily can be recycled.

* Roughly 7.5 million pounds of recyclable glass are thrown away in Whatcom County every year.

* Approximately 62.5 million pounds of potentially recyclable material are thrown away in Whatcom County every year.

* If the waste Whatcom County residents throw away each year was stuffed into Mt. Baker Theater, the theater would be filled six times.

* Last year, Americans threw away enough recyclable cans to equal one every second since 75 B.C.

* Making recycled paper uses 50 percent less energy than paper made from trees.

* Making glass from recycled glass can save 32 percent of the energy needed to make glass from "scratch."

* The use of recycled aluminum in the manufacturing process saves 95 percent of the energy it takes to make aluminum from "scratch."

* Twenty recycled aluminum cans can be made with the energy it takes to make one new aluminum can from ore.

* Only 35 years worth of tin are left in the world.

* Every day, Americans recycle 78 million aluminum cans. That's enough to make 18 Boeing 747 jetliners.

Source: Bellingham Community Recycle.