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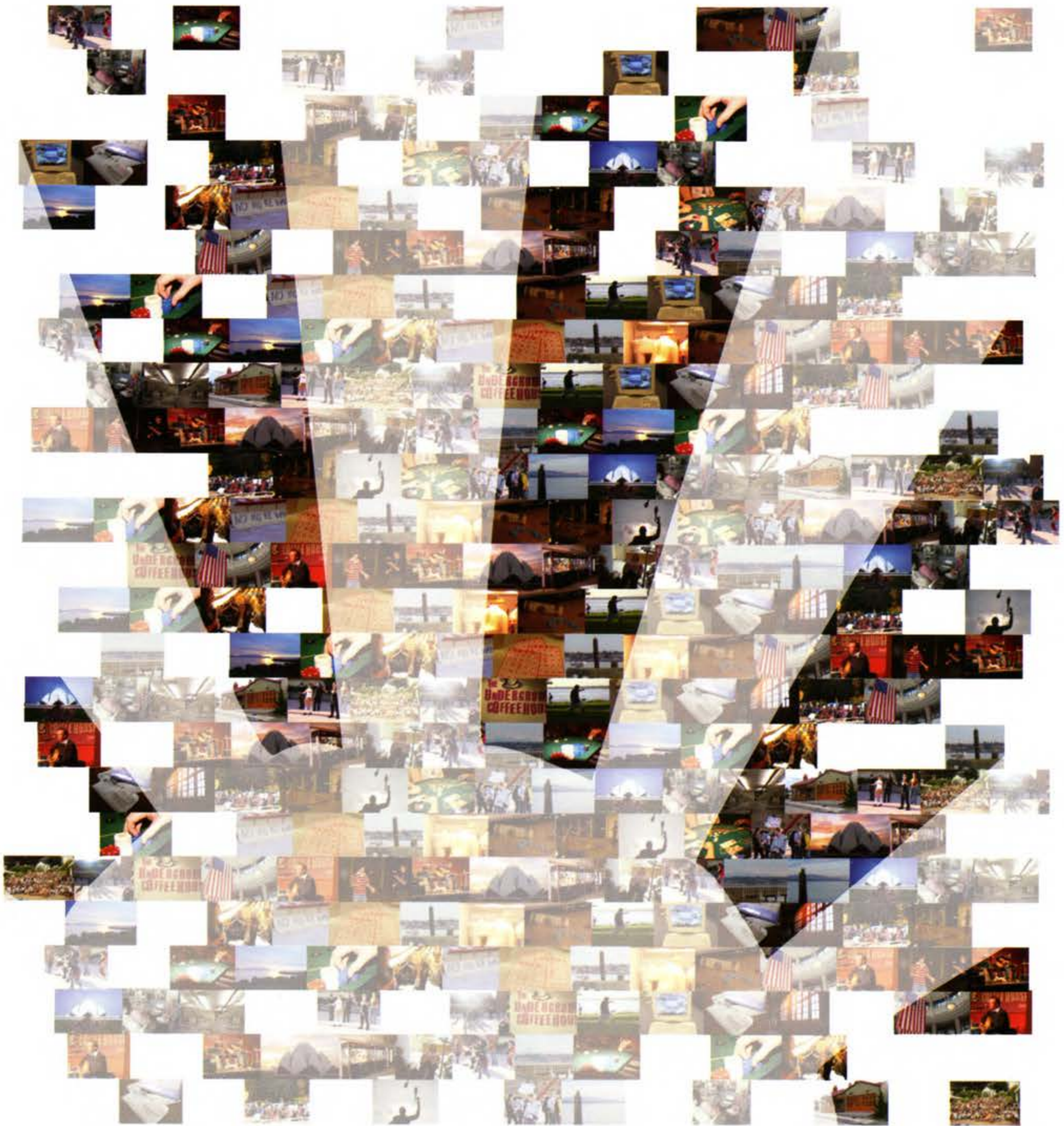
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MAGAZINE

(a). A Lummi word meaning beautiful sunset (b). A student publication of Western Washington University distributed twice a quarter (c). Available free for Western students and the community.

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editor's note



Juggling is an art.

Whether it is juggling school and grueling nightshift labor, balancing spirituality and faith with the demands of a material world or the actual craft of juggling, this skill seems to appear as a resurfacing theme in this issue of Klipsun.

Traditionally, the first issue of the quarter is non-themed and contains a variety of stories. This issue appears more as a mosaic than miscellany. Individual snapshots converge to form the greater picture: our world and lives are in a state of continual tension between two effects, ideas or paths.

In the midst of our juggling act, the sun still rises and sets every day. Life happens. I hope that comes across in this issue.

Thanks for reading! If you have any questions, call us at 360.650.3737 or e-mail us at klipsunwwu@hotmail.com. If you have any comments or story ideas, fill in the survey located on the back flap. Your thoughts are important to us!

Sincerely,

Christina Twu
Editor-in-Chief

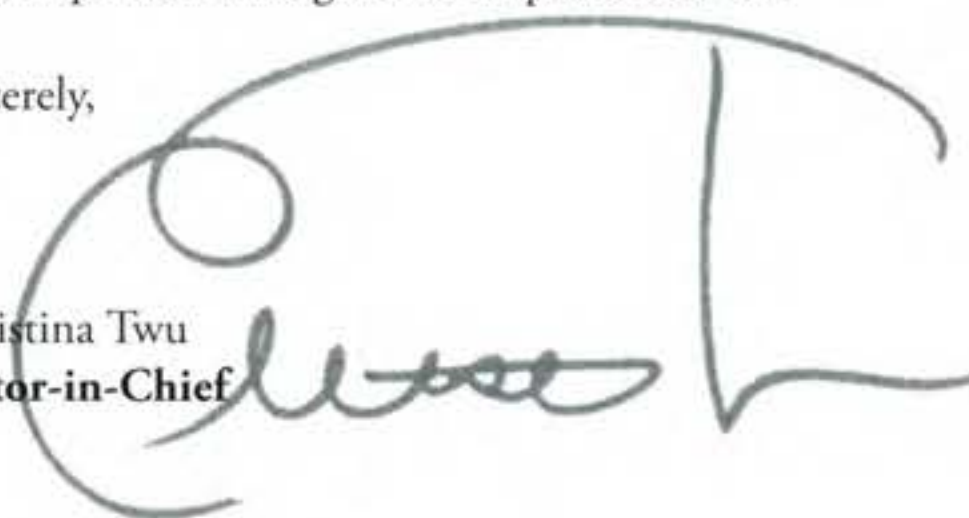


Photo courtesy of Reneé Dimond.



Associated Student Juggling Club members practice in Red Square.

contributors



Jelena Washington

Jelena Washington is a Western senior and journalism major in the public relations sequence. She will graduate this summer and plans on moving somewhere that has no seasons, preferably to San Diego or Los Angeles, and work at either a newspaper or public relations firm. She would like to thank all her sources for being so cooperative and understanding.

Subconscious Science

Page 4



Emily Nuchols

Emily Nuchols is an environmental journalism major at Western. She would like to thank everyone at Graham's for welcoming her to hang around the restaurant, Jill for rescuing her from the computer lab and Courtney for coming along to experience Glacier's crazy night life. And most importantly, she would like to thank her dog, Sandy, for putting up with her this quarter.

Grand Ole Graham's

Page 6



Cara Shaw

Cara Shaw plans to graduate this spring with a communication major and journalism minor. She also would like to express her gratitude and thanks to a certain apartment of great guys who inspired the idea for her article and made it a pleasure to write. She would like to say to her family, "I would not be the woman I am today if it was not for your support, love and friendship through the last 20 years."

Bahá'í: The Quiet Faith

Page 8



Kaitlin King

Kaitlin King is a senior journalism major in the news/editorial sequence and a Spanish minor. She would like to thank all of her friends in the journalism department for their humor and never-ending energy. Those late nights in the newsroom wouldn't have been the same without all of them. She would also like to thank her parents, brother and Grant for their constant love and support.

Eating "In"

Page 12



Jessica Evans

Jessica Evans is a junior journalism student in the public relations sequence. She would like to especially thank the contributors of her story and the small, Bavarian tourist town where she grew up, for reiterating that, sometimes, the most random places procure the most delightfully surprising stories.

Circus Arts

Page 16



Natalie Emery

Natalie Emery is a senior English major with an emphasis in creative writing and a minor in journalism. She would like to thank her mom, dad, sister, friends and co-workers who supported, listened and made her laugh exactly when she needed it. She would also like to thank Matt for his colorful explanations and overall benevolence.

Fairhaven Renaissance

Page 20



Matt DeVeau

Matt DeVeau is a senior journalism major in the public relations sequence. He would like to thank those who took time out of their unorthodox schedules to meet with him. Upon graduation, he hopes to bum around Bellingham until a better opportunity comes along. This is the first time his work has appeared in Klipsun.

A Hard Day's Night

Page 22



Guillermo Ventura

Guillermo Ventura is a journalism major in the public relations sequence. He is in no way, shape or form, hip-hop. He is slowly coming out of his rock 'n' roll shell and, while many may fear that hip-hop will "die," thinks that people should be unconcerned. The next great youth culture movement is already happening in some ghetto, somebody's garage or in the confines of a bedroom.

Billion-Dolla' Beats

Page 24



Jesse Smith

Jesse Smith is a fifth-year business management major pursuing a minor in journalism. He would like to thank everybody involved in the article for their cooperation and dedication to quality music. He would also like to thank his "rockin'" parents for their continued support and love, and his two brothers, who, when not fighting with him, are out fighting "the man."

Kasey Anderson on Rye

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Subconscious SCIENCE

Hypnotherapy is a new form of healing that uses relaxation to calm people and help them manage stress, quit smoking or lose weight. **Jelena Washington** explores this new method of therapy and discovers why professionals want to clear it of its show-like reputation. Design by **Cam Campman**.

With dimmed lights and the moan of fans a constant noise in the background, Jennifer Irwin climbs into a cream-colored, sterile chair in the dental lab at Bellingham Technical College as Leslie Brown pulls up a chair of her own and begins the class assignment.

"I want you to look at my finger, and take some deep breaths and hold them for a few seconds," Brown says in a hushed voice. "I am going to count from five to one and you can close your eyes at any time. I want you to relax and notice all the muscles in your body relaxing."

Bellingham residents Irwin, a stress management counselor, and Brown, a licensed massage therapist, are not dentistry students. The two are intermediate students in the school's three-quarter hypnotherapy course.

Both Irwin and Brown said they became students of hypnotherapy because they want to help their clients in an effective way and it seemed like a natural extension of their present careers.

"For me, hypnotherapy is basically about relaxing and, as a stress management counselor, I want my patients to be relaxed," Irwin says.

Most people probably associate hypnosis with showmanship, says Jami Engholm, a certified hypnotherapist and the class instructor, whose eyes sparkle with long-held passion.

Hypnotherapy is a word people should not lump in the same category as stage hypnotists, says Engholm, who talks with her hands as much as her voice. Instead of a packed bar with a Houdini-like performer on stage making someone bark like a German Shepard, hypnotherapy is fast becoming a clinical way of treating almost any kind of problem.

"I am on a mission to take the fear out of hypnosis," Engholm says with conviction.

She says the negative stigma normally associated with hypnosis and hypnotherapy has decreased in recent years, and that more people are starting to understand that hypnosis is not about mind control, but relaxation.

Engholm recalls with a smirk the beginning of her career as a hypnotherapist. It was 1989. She was a mother, a wife, had a deep-

seated urge to help people and was drawn to hypnosis. At this same time, her husband became injured, and Engholm decided to use her newfound knowledge of hypnosis to aid in her husband's healing process. She asked the doctor if he could explain the healing process so she could help her husband with hypnotherapy sessions and positive visualizations.

"The doctor just patted me on the head and didn't even give me a response," Engholm says as she shakes her head in disbelief. "I just walked away sheepishly. We have come so far from that."

Engholm says medical professionals are embracing hypnotherapy as an alternative to regular medicine and she teaches her course at the Bellingham Technical College to doctors, nurses and psychologists. She says she also has given presentations at local hospitals, fire departments and paramedic units.

HYPNO-WHAT?

Engholm stresses the difference between stage hypnosis and therapeutic hypnosis. Hypnosis for show is guiding someone into his or her subconscious and giving he or she suggestions for comedic purposes. Hypnotherapy uses hypnotic techniques to induce someone into an altered state in order to use therapy applications.

Hypnotherapy is commonly used for problems such as phobias, anxiety, depression, marriage counseling, motivation, pain management, all kinds of abuse and sports enhancement.

"You are limited only by your imagination on what you can use it for," Engholm says.

Hypnosis is a normal state that everyone passes through daily, certified hypnotherapist Ron Roe says, while sitting in his office next to a Sigmund Freud action figure, an electric guitar and an accompanying amplifier. Roe, who runs a private practice in Bellingham, says the brain operates on four states of consciousness and the hypnotic state occurs directly before one falls asleep.

"Have you ever been asleep and jerked awake or fallen asleep with the television on and you can still hear everything?" Roe asks. "That is a state of mind that resembles hypnosis."

A hypnotherapist wants to find the heart of a patient's problem and build new ways of learning, Roe explains. "I am basically flushing out the septic tank of your mind," he says.

THE MECHANICS

Roe believes that people who come to his office do not need to be hypnotized, but “unhypnotized.” He says when people are unable to overcome certain problems, something is in their subconscious that prevents the desired outcome.

“The more people try to quit smoking, the more they end up smoking. The more weight people try to lose, the more they eat. Why? Because it is not tobacco or food they are fighting, it is themselves,” Roe quips. “It is a conflict between the 5 percent of the mind that is consciously trying to force the other 95 percent

of the mind to obey. How are you at obeying? I teach people the mechanics to relaxing.”

Engholm emphasizes that modern hypnotherapists use positive visualization and relaxation as major tools for hypnosis.

“In order to deal with phobias, we use regression,” Engholm says. “In other words, we take the client back to when they first felt the phobia and try to associate it with happy and serene thoughts and get their subconscious mind to relearn a new way of thinking.”

Western alumna Heidi Zosel, a former student of Engholm who graduated with a psychology degree, remembers when Engholm used hypnosis to reduce her phobia of snakes. Zosel smiles as she sifts through her numerous graduate school applications and jokingly says her physiological reactions to snakes was so intense that she could not catch so much as a glimpse of a cartoon snake.

“She took me back to when I first saw a snake and made me think of pleasant things,” Zosel says. “Now when I see one, I still don’t like it, but my reactions are gone. I just see one and keep moving.”

Roe emphasizes that the work of hypnosis is not over after one session and is not limited to the office. He sets up a minimum of 10 appointments and expects each client to practice self-hypnosis, which is a certain form of meditation, for 15 to 20 minutes a day.

THE CONDITIONS

Zosel says that one cannot be hypnotized unless they believe in and have conviction in hypnosis, and if one expects it to work, then it will work.

“If you resist hypnosis, you cannot be hypnotized,” she says.

In a strong, confident voice, Zosel says everyone will benefit from hypnosis whether they quit smoking forever or for six weeks. Hypnosis focuses on positive reinforcement, and everyone should benefit from someone telling them positive things, she says.

Roe says three magic words are key into everyone’s subconscious: relax, please and thanks. He says people tend to talk worse to themselves than they do to other people, but simply being nice opens many doors to your subconscious. He says he is a “tour guide” of the subconscious, and the patient does all of the work.

SUCCESS STORIES

Zosel refers back to one of her first clients who suffered from trichotillomania, a disorder that causes someone to pull their hair

out. Zosel says she helped her client, who is 35 and had suffered from the disorder her entire life, through positive suggestion and regressing back to the first time she pulled her hair. She managed to eliminate the problem for good after approximately six months, Zosel says with pride.

“Her hair is finally growing out,” Zosel exclaims as she demonstrates the length growth on her own chestnut-colored hair. “Now, she does not even have the faintest urge to pull her hair.”

Roe says he once had a patient who complained of chronic allergies and colds. She told Roe that she had been experiencing

the symptoms for more than 20 years. Roe remembers how, during a state of hypnosis, she revealed that she had not cried in more than 20 years. Roe says he connected the two and recommended that she cry.

“She told me she has never had a cold since she cried her eyes out in my office for almost an entire session,” Roe says as he lets out a light chuckle.

FOR THE SKEPTICS

“What is the No. 1 danger of hypnosis?” Roe asks, only to immediately respond to his own question with an adamant, “Nothing.”

He says the biggest side effect of hypnotherapy is the patient falling asleep during a session because they become too relaxed.

Zosel says there may be a concern with untrained state hypnotists because sometimes they do not remove all suggestions given to a client.

“It can get dangerous when someone is at a basketball game and they fall asleep every time people clap,” Zosel says as she pretends to fall asleep.


Roe says he wants people to know that hypnosis cannot be forced upon anyone, and that everyone has the power to resist anything that is suggested to them.

Roe is so confident in his hypnotherapy services that he offers a money-back guarantee if the patient sees no results, but he says this only happens if the patient refuses hypnosis by not relaxing. Roe says that this is rare.

“I wish that people would not be so influenced by Hollywood and stage hypnosis,” Zosel says to all the critics of hypnotherapy. “Let go of the stigma associated with hypnosis and accept the benefits of hypnotherapy.”

Irwin, who was skeptical of hypnosis in the beginning, lies with her arms resting comfortably on the arms of the dental chair. She slowly opens her eyes and looks at Brown.

The women have completed the first part of the day’s practice. It is now Brown’s turn. After a few minutes of hushed talking, the women trade places and begin again.

“I want you to look at my finger and become very relaxed,” Irwin says in a soothing voice. 



GRAND OLD GRAHAM

In an atmosphere where spontaneity and “gourmet deluxe” self-service is encouraged, Graham’s Restaurant in Glacier, Wash., proves to be one of Whatcom County’s best-kept secrets. **Emily Nuchols** discovers the history behind the establishment and reveals its rustic charm. Photos courtesy of **Graham’s Restaurant**. Design by **Samuel Dawson**.

Warm light pours from antique lamps to tables worn from years of use as evening closes in around the mountain town of Glacier, Wash. A Buddha statue draped in metallic Mardi Gras beads, wearing a straw cowboy hat and ski goggles, takes center stage among glass bottles on the bar of Graham’s Restaurant. Yellowed photos adorn the walls and dusty antiques encircle the room, full of diners digging into steaming plates of food and sipping frothy beer.

The building emerged as a general store in the early 1900s in response to the area’s growing mining industry. Throughout the 20th century, Graham’s has closed and re-opened numerous times. It has seen the early mining residents, withstood the rowdy 1970s and stands today as a popular hangout for locals and tourists.

“It is a totally different scene since Graham ran the restaurant in the wild and crazy ‘70s and ‘80s,” restaurant owner Chris Collins, 35, says. “But the atmosphere is still here, beer drinking and a fun time. It’s still run small-town tavern style.”

Collins bought the business three years ago from Gary Graham. The building had been in Graham’s family since 1932, when it was run as a general store by Gary’s grandmother.

Gary, 69, an ex-Boeing aerospace engineer, came to Glacier in the early 1970s. He and his brother, Parker Graham, 51, bought the restaurant and restored the building, which was rotting away after years of disuse. The two brothers, along with Gary’s two young sons, decided to create a restaurant where people could let their guard down and have fun.

The business plan was simple: to come up with an off-the-wall concept and proceed as if it were of great importance. Gary says the goal was to create an atmosphere as ridiculous as possible.

“The idea was to make something totally different,” Gary says, scratching his head and searching for words to describe the bar scene. “Like a ‘Star Wars’ environment.”

Parker took cooking classes and became the head chef, while Gary acted as a waiter and entertainer. When he tired of waiting tables, he would delegate customers to serve themselves.

The idea caught on.

Customers were hesitant at first, but eventually jumped right into the kitchen to whip up their own meals. Gary coined Graham’s a “gourmet deluxe self-service” restaurant, with patrons bartending, cooking and waiting tables.

“There was a lot of chaos, but people really had fun,” he says.

Gary also came up with a schedule of “strange events” to relax customers. He kept a trunk full of wild costumes for times when a particularly uptight customer needed a little loosening up. Gary says, his blue eyes twinkling, when it got cold in the winters he would offer complaining customers a bathrobe or bumblebee suit to stay warm.

Gary explains that events had to be gross, off-color and funny in order to function well. There were no restrictions, and spontaneity was vital.

In 1975, a helicopter landed in the backyard of Graham’s and the pilot wanted an ice cream cone. Gary leans forward eagerly and explains how he persuaded the pilot to airlift a group of diners to a nearby peak for a picnic. Pointing to a framed photo of guests dining atop Church Mountain, Gary says the helicopter picnics became a great success.

Other events included simulated weddings with packaged rings guaranteed to last 48 hours, a tug-of-war with the rope stretched through two holes drilled in opposite sides of the bar and “The Annual Rat Chucking Festival,” which pitted Canadians against Americans by throwing rubber rats into holes.

“We would get an idea and run with it,” Gary says, taking off his glasses and running a hand through his graying hair. “If it was possible, we would do it.”

He rocks back in his cushioned chair and says the early years of Graham’s were spontaneous and open-minded, but eventually times changed, and the games came to an end. The restaurant closed in 1995 and Gary started a company producing exercise machines, Shuttle Systems.

“The days of having fun are over; it is a serious world now,” he says, growing somber. “It will never be like it was.”

Collins says Graham’s still manages to have a fun and funky atmosphere, but the laws and rules of today do not

allow the same free spirit of the days when Gary ran the restaurant.

Collins sits in an aged wooden chair, his dark brown hair clipped close to his head and face tanned from skiing. He renovated the historic restaurant himself and held on to most of the original furniture and decorations. Wearing a Sierra Nevada Brewing Company T-shirt splattered with red sauce from the kitchen, he leans back in his chair and points out memorabilia and historic photos around the room. Gesturing towards the solid mahogany bar and mirror, which was crafted in the 1800s, Collins says Graham's history is what makes it distinctive.

"That bar has seen a lot of knees and elbows," Collins says. "And thousands of reflections in the mirror from all of those mining towns — it's quite amazing."

Collins says the restaurant, which re-opened in 2002, draws crowds of outdoor enthusiasts and tourists in the summer and winter seasons, but essentially is a local bar.

"The locals were screaming for something different than a burger."

-Graham's Restaurant owner Chris Collins

Last summer, Graham's started bringing bands into the venue. Collins says it started with the local bluegrass band, Bent Grass, who plays at the restaurant every other Wednesday.

The shows consist of mostly bluegrass, but Collins says he is trying to incorporate more diverse music. The scene has caught on. Musicians have come from as far as California and North Carolina to play at Graham's.

"That's a lot to say for a little, tiny joint like this," he says. "The focus is on fun, feel-good music."

This summer, Collins plans on opening up the back storage area to incorporate a stage and dance floor to better accommodate musicians.

Robert Tacker, 37, who contracts music for Graham's, says when the back is opened up, he would like to bring in more global music, such as reggae, and put on special events during the off-season.

"I love live music and its capacity to transform people. I've seen the most stoic, reserved guys bang a cow bell with the musicians: To let their guard down and enjoy a human experience," Tacker says,

taking a drink of his a frothy beer. "It's the music, well, and the beer."

On a Saturday night, the sound of pouring rain is drowned out by "yee haws" and "whoops" from excited diners as Chris Stuart and Backcountry begin playing in the corner of Graham's. Tables have been pushed together to accommodate the band. Crowded guests, paying no mind to their close quarters, tap their feet and hands to the beat of the music, pouring amber beer into glasses.

Ginny Wilson, 22, a Western senior and employee at The Mt. Baker Snowboard Shop, says the live music is a much-needed addition to the community.

"The bands are great, and it is a nice way to unwind with a beer after work," Wilson says as she scrapes the last of the ketchup from her paper-lined tray with a "wedgie," Graham's version of home fries.

Stephanie Kosonen, 24, a waitress and 2003 Western graduate, says she hounded Collins for months to work at

Graham's. She has lived in Glacier for the past three winters and stayed through last summer to work as a waitress over the winter.

"Everyone is in a good mood when they come in," Kosonen says, tossing her long blond hair over her shoulder as she pulls a pint from the tap. "It makes my job easy."

A worn newspaper, titled, "Graham's Restaurant Gazette," doubles as a history lesson and menu. Diners have two options at Graham's: "Take it or leave it."

Collins, a long-time chef, says the only other restaurant in Glacier is Milano's, an Italian Restaurant, and he designed his menu to incorporate everything else. The relationship between Milano's and Graham's is complementary rather than competitive, Collins says.

"I'm doing my own thing in a great old restaurant carrying on Gary's legacy," he says.

The rustic, timber building of Graham's is huddled beneath peaks jutting into the star-studded sky and pitted against a green sea of dense forest.

Heat from a large, pot-bellied stove from 1932,

warms the room as the hiss of frying food comes from the kitchen


with the scent of potatoes and toasted bread.

Large photo murals of miners and skiers mix with those of famous Glacier visitors, such as

Clark Gable and Loretta Young, adorn walls painted the color of

freshly-churned butter. The images give only a glimpse into the history of

Graham's.

"There are other bars being built brand new, trying to create this atmosphere," Collins says. "This one already has it." 







The Bahá'í House of Worship located in New Dehli, India.

Geographically reaching nearly as many nations as Christianity, Bahá'í is a faith many in the Western community have embraced. **Cara Shaw** explains the Bahá'í religion and talks to local Bahá'ís. Photos courtesy of **Hayden Weiler**. Design by **Samuel Dawson**.

He had fallen into a state of depression and begun to question the existence of God. The depression came because religion had always been a pillar in his life. Constant prayer and silent meditation did not bring the needed answers, and he had all but given up on spirituality.

It was at this time of hopelessness when Alex Hanson, 21, opted to attend a dance at his boarding school. As he approached the doors that led to dancing, music and fun, Hanson did not enter. Instead, he wandered down to the dock. He recalls standing with rain hitting his skin, looking out to the water and searching for his faith.

It was in the cold rain under starlight, Hanson says, that he began to chant in a sweet, soft voice as though he were singing to a child, "Allah-u-abha, Allah-u-abha, Allah-u-abha." The chant means "God is most great" in Arabic.

While slowly pacing back and forth, Hanson says, he spaced out only to awake three hours later to a security guard's flashlight brightening his face. It was during those three hours, although Hanson cannot say for sure what exactly he was thinking about, when his faith deepened and he became a Bahá'í at heart.

"I had a spiritual connection; I just felt it," Hanson says.

Born into a family of Bahá'ís, Hanson says the faith made sense since he was born. He understood and believed in the Bahá'í concept of equality. But it was not until he was 17 when he developed a spiritual connection and truly became a Bahá'í.

The Bahá'í faith is the second-most widespread of the world's independent religions, geographically reaching the most countries worldwide following Christianity. Followers of this faith inhabit countries around the world, but this diverse faith is still widely unknown.

"It's almost like the best-kept secret, but shouldn't be a secret," says Hayden Weiler, a Bahá'í and contact person for Western's Bahá'í club.

Communications professor Michael Karlberg, 39, has been a Bahá'í since his years in college. He has his own thoughts on why the majority of people remain uninformed of his faith. At 150 years old, it is the youngest of the world's independent religions and is still growing, and therefore the word is still spreading.

Karlberg attributes some of the unfamiliarity of the faith to the lack of visibility in the mass media. He explains that Bahá'ís do not pressure or entice others to convert or become Bahá'í. Because they are not aggressively promoting their faith, they tend to stay out of highly partisan politics and are therefore absent from the media.

"You can't impose religion on someone else," says Hanson, an active Bahá'í in Bellingham and on Western's campus. "It is something you have to figure out yourself."

Although Bahá'ís do not pressure or entice others to join, they find it important to spread the word of their faith.

"The more people who learn about the teachings, that's when change can come," Weiler says. "The Bahá'í teachings are a model to the way we hope society should be."

With each day, the Bahá'í faith is growing. Currently, the Local Spiritual Assembly in Bellingham is working to bring the Bahá'ís' ideas — unity, diversity and love, and the application of those services — to Bellingham, Hanson says.

Around 15 Bahá'ís currently populate Western and around 70 Bahá'ís live Bellingham, Weiler says. He also points out that number is continuously growing.

According to the 1992 Encyclopedia Britannica Book of the Year, the Bahá'í community grew from 400,000 to more than 5 million members between 1963 and 1993.

The Local Spiritual Assembly is a democratically elected body of Bahá'ís who work together to service the people and make decisions on behalf of the Bahá'í community. There is no clergy in this faith due to the concept of equality.

The assembly is raising funds to purchase a building so Bahá'ís and anyone else can have a concrete place to go to learn about the faith. The building will also strengthen the capacities for teaching, learning and cultivating the spiritual journey in one's self, Hanson says. He believes this will make the Bahá'í faith more visible in the community, he says.

A MESSENGER OF GOD

Karlberg is sitting at his desk alone. His chestnut hair stands out sharply against the white walls of his office. He does not have much time to talk because he has an important appointment — picking up his children from school. Their drawings and pictures decorate his office. With a genuine smile and a friendly introduction, he begins to proudly talk of the origins of his faith.

The main belief of Bahá'ís is that there is one unknowable, a divine creator referred to as God. Karlberg says Bahá'ís accept all divine religions and their traditions because all of the major religions spring from the same source — God.

Karlberg says that throughout time, God has manifested his will in ways that are proportional to the times. He calls this idea as progressive revelation. He says in today's world where prejudice, inequality and the separation of humanity are present, global unity is needed.

"The peoples of the world, of whatever race or religion, derive their inspiration from one heavenly Source, and are the subject of one God," Karlberg says.

One hundred and fifty years ago, these words were spoken by the author of the Bahá'í teachings named Baha'u'llah. His mission was to foster the unity of the entire human family.

Bahá'ís believe God sent Baha'u'llah to manifest God's will among the people. According to the Bahá'í International Community, Baha'u'llah is not seen as the last prophet, but as the latest prophet following Abraham, Krishna, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad and The Bab.

Baha'u'llah left behind many books, tablets and letters that he transcribed himself. They make up the Writings of Baha'u'llah, which is similar to the Bible. Through these scriptures, he passed on his knowledge and his message to future followers of the Bahá'í faith.

According to the Bahá'í International Community, the worldwide Bahá'í community can come from almost all nationalities, ethnicities, social class and religious backgrounds.

Bahá'í communities have been established in 205 countries throughout the world and in every continent. These communities are most prominent in Africa and the Americas. These numbers come from the latest statistics from the 1992 Encyclopedia Britannica Book of the Year.

GLOBAL UNITY AND PERSONAL GROWTH

"The Bahá'ís offer a system for how the world can be run," Hanson says. "I think the guidance in these writings are applicable to this day."

This guidance, or the main concept of the faith, is unity. To Baha'is, unity means recognizing that the world is of one race — the human race — and that people must embrace each other to incorporate the ideas of peace, love and acceptance into making one unified global society.

Baha'u'llah wrote, "He Who is your Lord, the All-Merciful, cherisheth in His heart the desire of beholding the entire human race as one soul and one body."

Other concepts of the Bahá'í faith include the equality of men and women, the harmony of science and religion and the elimination of all forms of prejudice, Weiler says.

Additionally, Baha'u'llah wrote about eliminating the extreme sides of poverty and wealth, a balance between nature and technology, religious tolerance, as well as a universal education and an auxiliary language.



Hanson and more than 700 youths from around the world gathered in Saopolo, Brazil for a Bahá'í youth conference in 2001.

Prayer and meditation are two ways in which Bahá'ís grow spiritually and Weiler explains prayer and meditation are used as a way of cultivating those concepts into his life every day. He says daily prayer and meditation are necessary to stay focused on spiritual things rather than material things.

“Prayer I see as food for your soul,” Weiler says.

According to the Bahá'í International Community, Baha'u'llah wrote many prayers but also wrote three prayers for daily use. Bahá'ís are encouraged to recite one of these three prayers everyday. The shortest one is this: “I bear witness, O my God, that Thou hast created me to know Thee and to worship Thee. I testify, at this moment, to my powerlessness and to Thy might, to my poverty and to Thy wealth. There is none other God but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.”

Spiritually progressing by incorporating these main concepts into one's life will lead them closer to God in the spiritual world after death, Hanson says. Bahá'ís believe there is no heaven or hell but a spiritual world that is very mystical, and no one knows really what it is until they go there. Hanson explains there are many worlds of God. As a person grows spiritually, they ascend to a higher world and become closer to God.

Hanson uses the analogy of a baby in the mother's womb to describe the process of spiritually progressing. Inside the

“The Bahá'í teachings are a model to the way we hope society should be.”

-Hayden Weiler

womb, a baby is growing body parts such as arms and legs. While in the womb, arms and legs are unnecessary; there is no use for them there. It is not until the baby is born and enters the world when those arms and legs become essential to living.

He compares the baby in the womb to human beings on Earth. Through interactions with the world, people are learning virtues and spiritual qualities like love and truth. These qualities, Hanson says, are one's arms and legs for entering the spiritual world.

SERVICE TO HUMANITY

Standing outside a rundown school on the outskirts of Guayaquil, Ecuador, Weiler focused on the task at hand: to help. He recalls how the scorching sun burned his arms and face and bleached his already lightened hair. A T-shirt and worn-out jeans covered his slim frame. Normally, he would wear shorts in the hot and humid weather, but he opted for pants this day at the school as a sign of respect.

As he entered the doors as he has done for months now, the chipped-paint walls and substandard school supplies did not faze him.

“‘Thank God you've come,’ says the principal of the school,” Weiler relates in his recollection.

The teacher was absent that day and the principal asked Weiler to teach the class, and he graciously accepted. Standing in front of the children, with their dark eyes fixated on his own striking blue ones, Weiler says, he felt his faith growing stronger.

“I always thought the teachings of the Bahá'í faith were logical, but it didn't touch my heart 'til I spent 10 months in Ecuador,” Weiler says.

In Ecuador, Weiler taught trustworthiness, unity, obedience to parents and other virtues to 4- to 13-year-olds. This was a time of service to benefit humanity, something Weiler says is one of the main concepts of his faith.

Weiler emphasizes the importance of service. He says work in the spirit of service is prayer if you are doing it to benefit mankind. In addition to his service in Ecuador, which Weiler undertook through his own will, he traveled to India last summer as part of a service to humanity.

In his two-bedroom apartment, Weiler sits at his kitchen table, which is actually a coffee table no more than two feet off the ground. Six mismatching couch cushions serve as chairs. Weiler is comfortably relaxed in a cushion as he proudly reveals a photo album. Fondly flipping through the pages of photographs, Weiler obligingly pauses to explain each one and the memories of traveling to India where he volunteered at the Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi.

The Bahá'í House of Worship is among seven houses of worship located throughout the world. Each house of worship has its own unique design with nine sides and a central dome. People of all religions are welcome inside the temples. There are no sermons, rituals or clergy at these temples. It is a place for prayer and meditation.

Weiler says the actual service is the easy part. He says what is hard for him is maintaining the focus of serving the greater good in his everyday life. Every day is a struggle for Weiler. He says it is easy to lose focus of his spiritual beliefs where his daily life also centers on going to class, studying, participating in extra curricular activities and being social.

Hanson says he also struggles with keeping to his beliefs in such a materialistic society. He points to gossip as an example. Gossip is seen as disruptive to community life, which directly counteracts the Bahá'í goal of unity. He says it is hard to get away from it, but he meditates and prays to clear his mind and focus on his faith.

MORE THAN A RELIGION — A WAY OF LIFE

“My object is none other than the betterment of the world and the tranquility of its peoples,” Baha'u'llah writes.

To see this objective mirrored in the faces of Weiler, Hanson and Karlberg, one cannot help but understand why they radiate love, acceptance and friendship.

Midnight has arrived and gone. The need to slumber is slowly approaching the group as another yawn escapes from one mouth, but no one seems to want to leave. About 20 friends and members of the Bahá'í community, including Weiler and Hanson, are sitting in Karlberg's family room.

Laughter and shouts echo off the vaulted ceilings as an exciting game of Taboo is coming to a close. This type of gathering at Karlberg's house happens once a month. It is an occasion for eating, socializing and making connections with people of the Bahá'í faith. There are no Bahá'í services like Sunday morning church. Only these types of gatherings provided a time where the Bahá'í community comes together.

To Weiler, Hanson and Karlberg, the Bahá'í faith is more than a religion, it is a way of life. They all say that, even if no one takes on the identity of being a Bahá'í, absorbing their concepts and world views into everyday life can only positively affect humanity. ☞

EATING

“In”

Fad diets are eating unconfident Americans alive. **Kaitlin King** talks to fad diet veterans about their experiences and discusses alternative methods to improve body image. Photos by **Amanda Woolley**. Design by **Anna Tahl**.



Amy Hutt, a 22-year-old Western senior, was hungry. Like millions of other Americans each year, she resolved three years ago to lose weight. Unfortunately, she fell off the bandwagon shortly after.

She recalls tediously obsessing, worrying and remaining helplessly fixated on any morsel that she put into her mouth. She also remembers feeling endlessly hungry.

"I did the points diet," Hutt says. "I stuck to the diet — I really did — and I gained 15 pounds. It was so irritating to end with that result, too, because I could hardly eat anything on the diet, and I still gained weight."

Hutt had attempted — and failed — a fad diet.

FAD DIETING — MORE THAN JUST A TREND

Fad diets are eating regimes that are usually followed by people desperately trying to lose weight. People are lured in by their promises of rapid weight loss and an instantly slimmer figure. So enticed by the idea of a quick fix, approximately 45 million Americans are currently feeding the never-ending desire to be thin by partaking in a diet, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Fad diets, however, are not a new concept in the United States. Dieting became a widespread national phenomenon in the 1800s when the plump look took a backseat to looking slim. According to a March 1, 2004 newsday.com article, fashion played a large part in the dieting craze. Corsets became unstylish, and natural slenderness gained dominance.

Today, approximately 50 recognized fad diets are on the market, ranging from the Blood Type Diet, to the cottage cheese diet, to various diet pills.

Vanessa Rosenberg, a 20-year-old Western junior, says she fell victim to the diet fad frenzy last year when a friend told her about a common over-the-counter diet pill called Xenadrine.

"The friend that told me about it was very skinny, which made me think about taking it," Rosenberg says, shrugging her shoulders. "I figured, 'She's skinny, so it must work.'"

Rosenberg says she purchased a bottle of Xenadrine shortly thereafter in hopes of shedding a couple of unwanted pounds, but instead of losing weight, she says she had daunting negative side-effects.

"I took Xenadrine for only a couple of weeks, and in that time, it made my heart race a mile a minute," Rosenberg says. "One pill is supposed to be equal to one coffee, and you're supposed to take two three times a day in addition to a 30-minute workout. It was just too much."

Rosenberg says she stopped taking the pills after frightening physical effects began bothering her on a daily basis.

"It made me shake," she says, demonstrating by holding her palms out face-down and vibrating them back and forth. "It made me so jittery and edgy, and I just couldn't handle it anymore."

Rosenberg says it was her friends who were finally able to convince her she was wasting her time.

"My friends really tried to get me off of it after they saw what it was doing to me. I eventually realized it wasn't worth it," she says. "This definitely didn't work for me. I think you just have to find the right (diet) for you."

A HEALTHIER APPROACH

With new fad diets springing up every day, Western Registered Dietitian Jill Kelly says people need to move away from the idea of dieting and into creating a healthy overall lifestyle.

"I would urge people to move away from diets. If someone goes 'on' a diet, then that means they will go 'off' a diet," Kelly says. "With fad diets, people may experience significant weight loss at first with a loss of fluids. If no lifelong lifestyle changes are made, it is difficult to continue toward the goal of weight loss or maintenance."

But in a society where thin is in, Americans have a hard time avoiding these diet fads. According to the Weight-control Information Network, Americans spend \$33 billion annually on weight-loss products and services. This includes money from diet books. "Dr. Atkins' Diet Revolution" alone has sold more than 10 million copies in the United States.

Fad diets also have surged in popularity at the same time the obesity epidemic in the United States has been widely publicized. According to the American Obesity Association, approximately 127 million adults in



the United States are overweight, 60 million are obese and 9 million are severely obese. Overweight is defined as a Body Mass Index, which is a measurement tool used to determine excess body weight of 25 pounds or more. Obesity is defined as 30 or more pounds, and severe obesity is 40 or more pounds.

Kelly says a lot of college students get involved in fad diets because they are looking for the easy way out of the common weight gain associated with starting college.

"The 'freshman 15' contains a lot of stereotypes and generalizations, and a lot of people diet to avoid it," Kelly says. "People usually come to college from a home where you're eating at least one good meal together and aren't used to doing all their grocery shopping alone."

Kelly says incorporating healthy choices into one's lifestyle is the best way to lose weight, if necessary.

"Making little changes, such as switching from 2 percent milk to non-fat, eating whole-wheat English muffins instead of white, etc., will all contribute to a healthier lifelong diet," Kelly says.

Beverly Andrews, a 43-year-old Seattle resident and mother of two, says she tried the Atkins diet six years ago, but after a month on the diet, she began to experience some strange physical reactions and was concerned about her health.

"I did some more reading and investigation and found out some of the health risks associated with that type of diet, such as the enormously heavy strain that it can put on your kidneys and liver," Andrews says. "I chose to go off of it and steadily put the weight right back on."

A year and a half ago, Andrews was fed up and frustrated with her constant fatigue and sore joints, so she decided to give another diet a try. She joined Weight Watchers — a diet in which each food is rated on a point system and participants must only eat a certain amount worth of points each day. Andrews hoped that, this time, her

"I took Xenadrine for only a couple of weeks, and in that time, it made my heart race a mile a minute. One pill is supposed to be equal to one coffee, and you're supposed to take two three times a day in addition to a 30-minute workout. It was just too much."

- *Western junior Vanessa Rosenberg*

diet results would be different.

"I have lost 72 pounds over 18 months," Andrews says proudly. "This averages out to about 1 pound a week — a slow, safe and recommended amount."

Andrews says she believes her diet worked the second time around because she was finally determined to lose the weight.

"I truly believe that I was ready to do this," Andrews says. "I had made up my mind that I did not care how hard or how long it took — I was going to lose the weight."

And, as Kelly advises, Andrews says the reason she thinks Weight Watchers worked for her was because she incorporated it into her everyday lifestyle. Unlike a fad, the philosophy of the Weight Watchers diet is still an everyday part of her life.

"The principles are all very logical and level-headed — nothing fad-like," Andrews says. "It is all about making the right and healthiest choices in your food patterns."

Kelly says the problem with many fad diets is that they haven't been around long enough to be fully researched for long-term effects. Despite this, she says, the short-term effects are often visibly clear.

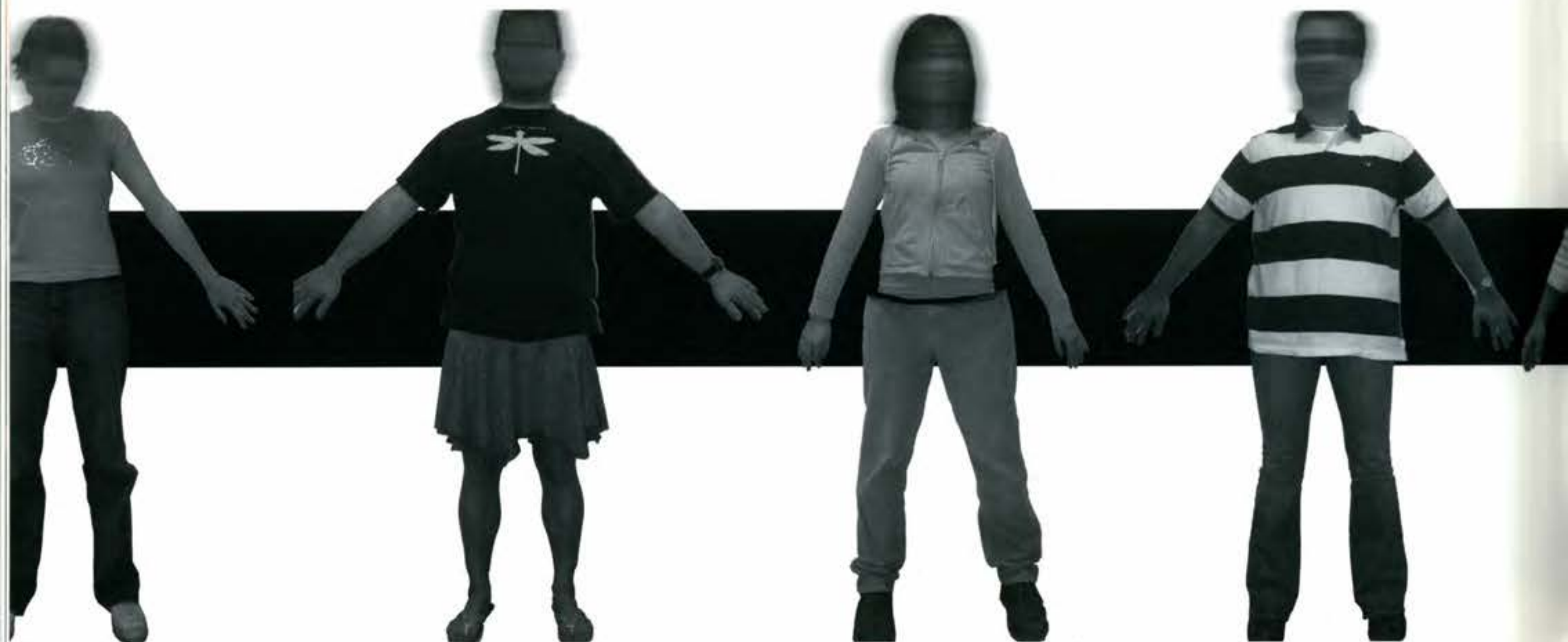
"Many of those diets, which limit carbs and fruits, restrict your body from receiving vital antioxidants and vitamins," Kelly says. "In the short term, people can experience various problems ranging from headaches to fatigue. People also can feel confused and irritable and not be able to think as clearly."

The right kind of diet, however, can have positive effects, Kelly says.

Andrews says the changes she noticed were definitely positive.

"Before I changed my habits, I was tired a lot," Andrews says. "My legs, knees and feet hurt. I have been athletic most of my life, and I was unable to do anything very athletic anymore. I became winded just going up and down the stairs in our home. I felt a change by the time I lost the first 10 pounds. As the weight continued to drop, I felt stronger and healthier with every lost pound."

Andrews says the emotional effects she experienced were almost



as beneficial as the physical.

“Emotionally, I felt very different as well. My self confidence has recovered now, and I don’t worry or doubt myself in the same way,” Andrews says. “When I was the heaviest, I was continually searching for clothing that would make me look better. It was a never-ending treasure hunt. My closet was full of clothes that didn’t fit and I could not face getting rid of. There were only a few things that I could wear. Now I know that I can wear everything hanging (in my closet).

DIETING — MORE THAN JUST LOSING WEIGHT

Deena Rathkamp, a psychologist at Western’s Counseling Center, says she thinks a much deeper expectation exists when many decide to embark on a fad diet.

“I think many of the women I talk to want to impose these dieting rules upon themselves in hopes that they will become ultimately thin, thereby attractive, thereby self-confident, thereby noticed by others and approved of, and thereby loved, so that they can live happily ever after,” Rathkamp says. “Physical beauty is ever-evasive and is not all it’s cracked up to be.”

Hutt agrees. After gaining 15 pounds on her diet, she says she was only able to lose weight after she was truly happy.

“It wasn’t until I rekindled my relationship with my (current) fiancée that I began to lose weight – and this was after I ended my diet,” Hutt remembers. “I only lost weight after I was finally truly happy.”

Rathkamp echoes many of the sentiments that Kelly says are dangerous about dieting.

“The dieting mentality demands that you transcend your own needs and bodily cues — that your own needs are selfish and unacceptable, and that the only way to feel good about yourself is to have strict control over what you eat and how much you work out,” Rathkamp says. “I’ve also noticed that women who tend to buy into the dieting mentality work hard to (ignore their true feelings) and act nice, kind, thoughtful and giving.”

These behaviors are especially risky, Rathkamp says, because the effects of dieting can be mentally similar to the effects of narcotics.

“Dieting, bingeing, purging, constant hunger and restricting food can all work to temporarily numb out your own feelings of anger, sadness and loneliness, much like drugs do,” Rathkamp says. “When this system works, the diet rules become your ‘friend,’ for they save you from your own ‘bad’ self.”

Rathkamp says many people feel the need to begin these “quick fix” diets because our pop culture reinforces competition between women, creating an incessant comparison of body fat and beauty that leaves women feeling isolated and untrusting of one another.

The best way to get away from this notion, she says, is for people to ask themselves how they can change the voices in their head that size other women up in terms of status. Rathkamp says moving away from these feelings improves.

“Strict eating rules and behaviors, over time, can turn caring individuals into selfless shells of people who feel empty inside,” Rathkamp says. “Recovering from the effects of the dieting mentality is a process of reconnecting with your feelings — whatever they are — of discovering what you want and what you need in life, and of treating yourself with greater compassion and nurturance instead of abuse and self-denial.”

Part of Kelly’s job at the Wade King Student Recreation Center and Student Health Center is helping students achieve healthy goals. This includes anyone who needs assistance with meal planning, sports diets, eating healthfully, cooking, nutrition complications or a better overall diet, Kelly says.

Counselors in Western’s Counseling Center are also available to help people create healthy relationships with food.

When current fad diets lose popularity, they are replaced by bigger and better ones, Kelly says, but two things should remain clear.

“Trying to find a quick fix is the first red flag, and putting foods into categories of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ foods is the second,” she says. “Eating in moderation and not eating when you are not hungry, as well as listening to your body are a much better way to be healthy.”

“Recovering from the effects of the dieting mentality is a process of reconnecting with your feelings — whatever they are — of discovering what you want and what you need in life, and of treating yourself with greater compassion and nurturance instead of abuse and self-denial.”

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Circus

The circus is often seen as an exotic culture on the fringes of society. But the lessons one learns from big-top performances can apply to life outside of the stage. **Jessica Evans** discovers the people behind the art. Photos courtesy of **Amiel Martin**. Design by **Samuel Dawson**.

“**B**ig top, live band and ringmaster — I knew my act was coming up because the ringmaster would be singing ‘A Whole New World’ from Disney’s ‘Aladdin.’ I don’t think I’ll ever get that song out of my head, but God knows I’ve tried,” Ferndale resident Mike Naylor says, recalling a typical performance from his past, before heading out the door to perform a different but similar kind of act: mathematics.

Some activities enter and leave our lives like chapters flowing through a book — we finish one before moving on to the next, while others linger and groove such deep impressions that our lives become changed forever. Circus is one such activity to greatly affect its participants.

A JUGGLING PROFESSOR

After opening a drawstring maroon bag, Ferndale resident Mike Naylor, 37, dumps out six faded-green juggling balls, two of which are patched with white masking tape to keep the birdseed inside the well-worn fabric.

Effortlessly juggling the toys of a past lifestyle, Naylor, a Western math professor, says circus acts are now hobbies he incorporates into his math classes.

The circus entered his life with a juggling book he received his freshman year in college. The book was a gift his parents have regretted ever since, Naylor says with a big smile. He explains that his parents held hopes of him becoming a doctor, not a professional juggler, like he wanted to be.

“I was absolutely hooked on it,” Naylor says. “My parents were not happy.”

Naylor says he began clowning to better market himself as an entertainer.

“Most people don’t have a party and think, ‘Let’s get a juggler.’ They want a clown,” Naylor says as he casually squishes clear, glittery, putty-like goo into his left hand.

Replacing the remaining goo into the kind of inch-size plastic container that comes out of quarter machines, Naylor says that after graduation from Michigan State University, he ditched the idea of medical school to join the circus.

“In clown culture, the highest honor is being accepted in the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College,” Naylor says. “It’s the most selective school in the world; with over 2,000 applicants, they take 30.”



The Juggling Jollies during a 2004 European tour.

Naylor says the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College is more difficult to get into than Harvard Medical School.

“So naturally, it became imperative I go to this school, and I got accepted in 1993,” Naylor says.

Seventy-five faculty and 30 students worked 12 to 14 hours a day, six days a week in Baraboo, Wisc., the 1993 headquarters of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Naylor says. The college trained approximately 1,400 people before it was discontinued in 1997.

“At clown college, we had classes in mime, improvisation, history, clowning, acrobatics, makeup and I’m sure more,” Naylor says.

After the eight-week program, Naylor says he landed a job with the Royal Hanneford Circus, in which he spent a year touring before going to graduate school for a doctorate in mathematics education at Florida State University, home of the FSU Flying High Circus.

Squinting his face in a cuckoo expression, Naylor jokingly says the circus affected him in all sorts of weird ways. For example, his “Math of Juggling” lecture, which is about encoding juggling patterns and discovering the rules of how the patterns can go together in order to craft new patterns, brought him to South Africa, Denmark and even Canada, Naylor says. He adds that the circus has certainly made him a better math professor.

“There are showmanship aspects in teaching,” Naylor says.

Naylor compares a classroom of students to an audience captivated by a big voice and gestures. Ending each “show” or class with an elaborate finish “leaves the audience wanting more,” he says.

Languidly crossing his arms, Naylor ponders the plethora of gifts he has received from his circus talents.

“Overall, I think my past experience as a street juggler has given me (the) confidence that I can survive on anything,” Naylor says. “I could lose everything tomorrow and go find three rocks and be able to eat.”

Pausing for reflection with a glance outside his Bond Hall office window, Naylor says a fellowship of jugglers exists around the globe.

“We look out for each other,” Naylor says. “I was struck by how generous the people we met were — willing to take us into their homes, feed us and then send us on our way.”

Naylor says that, although making a living by his wits and talents was an unforgettable experience, it no longer appeals to him.

“Now, math is my life,” Naylor says quite contentedly. “Math is everything, and juggling is a part of that, but there’s so much more. Why would I limit myself?”

A FIRE EATING TEACHER

Like Naylor, Sammamish resident Sharlene Soltero, 58, blended the big top with the classroom.

For 32 years, Kenmore Junior High students learned about exercising, healthy living and fire eating from Soltero, a physical education and health teacher.

Soltero says she and her family joined the Wenatchee Youth Circus when she was 6 years old.

"In the olden days, we traveled in a semi-truck loaded with people sitting on mattress pads over the equipment," Soltero vividly remembers. "That was before there were seatbelt and window laws."

The Wenatchee Youth Circus involved anywhere from 60 to 80 children and their parents and included various circus acts, such as juggling, a flying trapeze and a band.

"The circus is the most rewarding experience a child could have," Soltero says. "You're like one big family."

Soltero says her family endured many hardships as her single mother balanced three jobs to keep her six children clothed and fed.

"The circus was our outlet," Soltero says. "We were poor as a family but became very proud of our successes."

Counting herself as one of the lucky children to be blessed by the circus, Soltero says a desire to learn is the

matter-of-factly. "I'm a trooper though, 'cause they put the fire out and I finished the act — then I ran for the shower!"

Despite second-degree burns painfully marring her face, Soltero performed again at that evening's show.

"I went back out so I wouldn't be afraid to do it again," Soltero says, with the determination of several years past still lingering.

A fire eating presentation typically showcases three basic skills: killing, holding and tasting. "Killing" extinguishes the flame, either by suffocation or actually blowing it out. "Holding" leaves fire in the open palm of an outstretched hand or in a wide-open mouth. "Tasting" puts the burning torch directly into the mouth.

"A lot of fire eaters put Vaseline in their mouths for protection, but I didn't believe in being fake," Soltero says, and adds laughing, "Fire eating kills germs on contact."

In her determination to be authentic, Soltero's mouth took a painful toll.

"Every time I would eat fire, I would burn my lips with second-degree burns," Soltero says. "The burns didn't hurt; they'd just go numb and peel away — like chapped lips."

Soltero says she never imagined the magnitude of

Amiel Martin juggling.



circus's only prerequisite.

"The circus has no prejudices as far as race, wealth or skill," Soltero says. "It helps keep kids off the streets, off drugs and out of trouble."

For 13 summers, Soltero traveled the Northwest with her twin sister, Karlene Bickel, older sister, Patti Sepanen, and her mother and stepfather, who eloped on a circus trip.

Bickel and Soltero often opened the show with fire eating, high wire, tumbling and bull whip acts.

"They used to call me hot lips," Soltero says, smiling at the memory.

Technically speaking, fire breathing is the aspiration of a fuel through a fire, causing the fuel to ignite.

Fire eating, particularly fire breathing, is possibly the most potentially injurious art in the circus, according to www.juggling.org. Soltero says adverse results could include death, severe burns, cancer and lung problems.

Soltero says her worst accident with fire eating occurred at an event in Canada.

"After someone dipped my torches in white gas, they forgot to shake them, so when I put the torch in my mouth, the fire ran down the torch and caught my face on fire," Soltero states

ramifications those little burns would cause.

In October 2004, Soltero noticed a blister with a red ring around it on her bottom lip.

"I thought I was getting my first cold sore, but the blister got bigger and bigger," Soltero says. "After it tore and didn't bleed, my husband, who is an oral medicine specialist, told me to get a biopsy."

Soltero says the biopsy proved she had a possibly fatal, invasive cancer that was spreading across her chin.

"This usually happens to farmers or fishermen with daily sun exposure, but I always wear lip protection and I don't smoke," Soltero says. "Then I put two and two together with the fire eating."

Despite surgery to remove half an inch of her bottom lip, Soltero's warm, friendly face appears minimally different.

Without a trace of a grudge against the circus, Soltero continues to passionately describe the spandex leotards, iridescent with sequins, that she and her sisters wore for aerial work, such as the flying trapeze, Spanish webs and neck hanging.

Soltero explains that a majority of the aerial work was 30 feet in the air.

“We spun from rope and canvas in neat formations while we performed acrobatics,” Soltero recalls. “With our heads through a specially-made leather noose, we’d hang by our necks while spinning and twirling.”

Scoffing at the suggestion of dizziness, Soltero says they knew, like dancers, how to “spot their heads.”

Unlike the way most people remember their dads, Soltero associates her step dad with three big beach balls and an afro of red hair. Chet Endrizzi was not only the spitting image of a real-life Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus clown, he was also a local Wenatchee artist who painted murals on the circus’s three semi-trucks and two Greyhound-style buses.

Soltero’s mom, Gwen Endrizzi, now 86, worked behind the scenes. Endrizzi cared for the Wenatchee Youth Circus as the official head cook and the unofficial circus family’s mother.

“They called her Mama Gwen,” Soltero says, recalling her ball-of-fire mother with a smile and a chuckle.

After graduating from Wenatchee High School in 1964, Soltero says she had a short stint with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, but quit shortly after she tired of the mockery and negative stereotypes.

“I didn’t like being called a ‘Carnie Girl’ — it was degrading because it means you’re like a slut,” Soltero says with a twinge

“Overall, I think my past experience as a street juggler has given me (the) confidence that I can survive on anything. I could lose everything tomorrow and go find three rocks and be able to eat.”

— Western math professor Mike Naylor

of hesitation. “My inner-self wasn’t there; I needed more emotional, intellectual purpose like contributing to others.”

Soltero quit the circus and began pursuing a teaching degree from Central Washington University when she was 18 years old — the same age Naylor learned his first circus acts.

“I would do it over again in a heartbeat; it was awesome,” Soltero says.

THE MUSICAL JUGGLER

Western junior Amiel Martin, 20, arrives hungry to Western’s Viking Union Market, wearing a Calvin and Hobbes T-shirt above dark, loose jeans.

As talented as he is active, Martin works for Western’s Housing Information Technology Services (HITS), entertains with Juggling Jollies — a performing group from the Bellingham Juggling Club, designs lighting for Dance Works and plays the oboe for the Western Symphony Orchestra.

In addition, he plays the baritone saxophone, clarinet and a recently acquired accordion, Martin says, resituating in the tall Viking Union chair.

The self-described adventurous Martin says he wants to make a living juggling, an activity he began learning 10 years ago.

“I find myself juggling in public places, and the most common type of question I get from people has to do with juggling dangerous things, like, ‘Hey, do you do chain saws?’” Martin says.

Martin says the American people’s fascination with danger angers him.

“The skill and practice involved with juggling three chain saws is mostly working strength; bowling balls are just as impressive,” Martin says. “Rev up a saw and Americans love it, and it’s lame.”

Martin calls himself a hypocrite, recalling the grand finale the Juggling Jollies performed throughout Europe in the summer of 2004. It involved a stack of four people, including an accordion player and a fire juggler on top. Everyone wore safety goggles.

“The eye protection is a joke we played up, but it involves that danger, that fear factor,” Martin says while energetically demonstrating how the performers balanced in the finale. “People wanna know dangers — not what you can do skillfully.”

Martin says the Americans who thrive on the sensationalized danger and fear portrayed on Television want the same kind of entertainment from him.

“This is something I have been struggling with for a long time, and as a street performer, I have had to ‘sell out’ and please the crowd, but I try to do it as artistically as possible,” Martin says.

Martin says people are removed from the entertainment they see on TV, unlike the past, when people viewed entertainment, such as the circus, face-to-face.

“It totally comes from TV,” Martin says emphatically. “The U.S. lives on fear.”

Martin’s dark eyes light up a little as he explains that juggling educates as well as entertains.

“If you’ve ever seen a kid watch juggling — the slightly open-mouthed, wide-eyed look — you see their attention is incredible, that captivation...,” Martin says, trailing off. “It’s one of the few times you see a child really watching something.”

Martin seems as excited for the Juggling Jollies to teach juggling this summer at medieval-themed reading workshops in Olympia as he is for a one-hour, \$1,500-paid Canadian gig.

“Not consciously, but subconsciously, juggling taught me how to learn things,” Martin says. “It’s based on dedication to learning.”

In addition to an effective mindset, Martin says juggling keeps him social and in shape.

Imitating tossing juggling clubs, Martin says jugglers not only verbally share tricks but also get together for flinging things back-and-forth, too.

“We get together so we can throw things at each other,” Martin says, with a hint of sarcasm. “It’s sort of an understated community.”

Ready to bike home after a long day on campus, Martin says that the abilities he gains from circus activities enhance other areas of his life.

“Really, what I learned was how to practice a kinetic skill,” Martins says. “I wouldn’t be the musician I am today without juggling.”

Like Naylor and Soltero, the spirit of the circus will continue to thrive within Martin long after college graduation. As educators who show and tell, Naylor, Soltero and Martin will spellbind various audiences throughout the rest of life’s chapters. ♫

FAIRHAVEN

Renaissance

Re-using donated materials to renovate a deserted building can be quite a process. **Natalie Emery** documents the transformation of the old Fairhaven Firehouse from community remnants to performance Mecca as The Firehouse Performing Arts Center opens doors. Photos by **Amanda Woolley** and **Natalie Emery**. Design by **Anna Tahl**.

A construction team is spread around a spacious, earth-toned area. Light from vaulted skylights drips through the glass as the whir of a table saw slashes through the air, halting any conversation until the blade spins to silence. The floor is still dusty with remnants of plywood scattered about, and, in the corner, a man in a woolen brown stocking hat pulls at the air with his arms as he describes the history of the skylights in the ceiling. Walking around with him is reminiscent of following a young boy around his expansive tree house, with much better architecture.

"The skylight here is the original, and the Landmark Review Board made us keep the same style, so we kept it, replaced the actual glass in the old one and added another with the same design," says Matt Christman, a 42-year-old dancer in the local non-profit dance company, Dance Gallery.

Christman purchased the 78-year-old Fairhaven Firehouse in 2003, in order to renovate the area into a community-oriented performing arts center, provide space for theatrical events, have room for dance and improvisational theater classes for all ages, and offer a café and community park.

The Firehouse Performing Arts Center opened in late February, and as the construction process came to a close, Christman says he invested too much time in this project for it to be just a building. The remodeling process involved using environmentally-conscious ideas, such as re-using existing materials for the interior and exterior of the building, as well as maintaining the notion that art serves the greater good of the community.

EARLY STAGES

Christman's father, retired Western geology professor emeritus Robert Christman, posted a note on his house in order to ensure this project was original and environmentally sound. At a cost exceeding \$500,000, Christman has buried himself in this project to ensure that finding salvaged materials in place of brand new products and having an honest sense of community giving are folded into every aspect of the endeavor.

"We really have so much going at this point, and I think we're trying to further the dream of the community," Christman says. "Dad came to Bellingham in 1962 to teach geology, and adopted all four of us kids, so right off the bat that creates a sense of giving that tends to trickle down." The whole concept started when Dance Gallery began building a strong repertoire and simply wanted more space for rehearsals and possibly a performance area, he says.

After searching through the paper, he noticed the city was considering what to do with the former firehouse building, located at 1314 Harris Ave., after the new firehouse was completed in 2001. A trip to a city council meeting proved the interest for use of the firehouse was high. A rush of artists, builders and community members presented proposals for use of the space in various forms.

"There were people there who wanted to use the space for a clay pottery studio, there was a man who wanted to use it to build furniture, there was someone who wanted to remodel it for office space, and there was a proposal for a yoga studio. So there was a real cross section of stuff thrown out there," he says.

Christman's relaxed nature and enthusiasm brings ease to the construction area. An intelligent smile wraps around his teeth, and he sips his coffee.

"We started small, but after talking to neighborhood groups and community members, we gave a proposal to the city to consider creating a space for a performing arts center that includes a main space for a variety of arts, including a dance studio, classes, a café, an art gallery and even massage here," he says.

Wendy Scherrer, former president and current board member of the Happy Valley Neighborhood Association says the group thought Christman's proposal matched goals and objectives of the neighborhood.

"This is a great thing in the south side tradition, working together and coming together as a community," Scherrer says. "We're looking forward to the imminent opening."

BUILDING A GREEN HOUSE

The center plans to host theater, improvisational and dance classes, and made space for a massage and musical therapist, where people seek healing through music, Christman says. According to the American Music Therapy Association's Web site, music therapists assess emotional well-being, physical health, cognitive skills, social functioning and social communication

Members of the Dance Gallery, Julia Milbun, Brooke Evans, Tina Kliy and choreographer Dan Dalley rehearse at the Nancy Whyte School of Ballet in downtown Bellingham. The dance company will rehearse in the The Firehouse Performing Arts Center as soon as it is opens.



through musical responses.

Also included is a retractable seating system with a raked platform to ensure an ideal line-of-sight for the theater. This system works on a counterweight system, where it folds down from the ceiling with a huge hinge. Dance classes can rehearse during the day and then with a turn of a crank, seats are revealed for the performance of the night.

Christman also found theater seats when Renton's Lindbergh High School was remodeling. In an effort to cut costs as well as trying to re-use as much material as possible, he salvaged 100 theater seats. He also tore asphalt from behind the building for the proposed park, complete with benches and grass.

He also salvaged the old roof of Miller Hall at Western. The tiles were in excellent condition, since the heat from years of crowning the building had hardened the clay into a sturdy, less-penetrable material.

Re-using existing materials is the kind of sustainable building method promoted by many in design and architectural fields. Methods of construction must consider the effect on the environment, says Arunas Oslapas, an associate professor and program coordinator for the industrial design department at Western.

"We have to figure out how to better utilize our current materials and how to re-use them strategically to extend product life, as well as producing something that is easy to disassemble, so you can separate them into contained parts for recycling," Oslapas says.

WORKING WITH THE PAST

"The neat thing was that the tiles date back to almost the same time period as the firehouse, so it adds a bit more history and authenticity to the project, as well as trying to make it sustainable and environmentally sound," Christman says of the re-used materials.

While the building dates back to 1927, the Landmark Review Board recommended that parts of the building remain preserved. Christman and his loyal pack of volunteers and contractors, therefore, could replicate some aspects of the building while applying innovative design.

The hip-roof skylight and a gentle, sprawling Asian Sycamore tree in the lot behind the building, planted in 1972 by Roger Iverson, are both declared local landmarks. Also preserved are the fireplace and a complete, hand-drawn map of Bellingham's streets and fire hydrants circa 1927, which resides on the west corner wall of the building. Christman stares at the wall and talks with his mouth to the map, his leg stretched and toes

pointed away from his body in a true dancer's form.

"It's kind of like a reversion in time in a way," he says. "There's all this construction going on and people can't see inside very well because there isn't a large pane of glass. In the old days, that's all they really had was the separated glass windows, so people would have to come up to the window if they wanted to see in, and that's what I see people doing all the time, peeking, wanting to see what's happening here."

Also replicating original architecture are two sets of opening doors that fold out, which were in place at the firehouse's first opening. When the fire trucks became too large for the doors, a roll-up door was installed. Photos helped Gene McConnell, the general contractor, create a soundproof duplication of the original doors, so neighbors would not be disturbed.

FUTURE OF THE DESIGN


Building with the progress of the community and environment in mind is a concept Oslapas says he hopes will shift into the mainstream of major design, planning and architectural firms. Part of the industrial design program has added courses in sustainable materials and design, a new facet to the department in collaboration with Western's Huxley College of the Environment.

Oslapas contends that using materials void of toxins for construction can alleviate problems known to exist in buildings that contain harmful chemicals. This so-called "sick building syndrome" can cause allergic reactions in people. Using recycled products free from binding agents and adhesives is better for the environment, and in an office setting, it can lower the amount of sick days used and increase worker productivity, Oslapas says. Re-using and sustaining what we have now is what the design community has focused its attention toward. Projects like the Firehouse Performing Arts Center are examples of the kind of shift in ideology Oslapas hopes for.

"The survival of the planet depends on us to be wise stewards of the resources we've been given," Oslapas says.

OPENING DOORS

As the end of construction nears completion, Christman hopes the building will be a place where art can thrive and still be deeply rooted in eco-friendly virtues.

"I think there is an intuitive sense for projects that try to go about themselves based on community sustainability and the democratic process. There's a kind of welcoming trust about it," he says. 

The outside of the newly renovated Fairhaven Firehouse in Fairhaven.



Hard Day's Night...

Some Western students have a good excuse for sleeping in class: They work all night. **Matt DeVeau** explores the student lifestyle of working the graveyard shift. Design by **Cam Campman**.

After five hours and 600 to 700 boxes, Western junior Corrina Joyce is done with work. Like many college students, Joyce affords her car and off-campus apartment by working a part-time job, which, in her case, is at a UPS shipping center in Bellingham.

She drives back to her apartment, where she recuperates from the taxing physical labor, and catches up on homework before falling asleep.

She wakes up to the sound of an alarm clock — approximately one hour later.

It's 10:30 a.m., and after a day of hard work carried out in the wee morning hours, Joyce is about to leave for school.

Many students like Joyce survive by working while most of their peers are asleep. Those who work the night shift often find that the impact it has on their sleep patterns, social lives and academic careers is much greater than that of most other part-time jobs.

People take jobs at odd hours under a variety of circumstances, but one of the most common reasons seems to be the desire for money — which can be plentiful at night jobs — coupled with the relative scarcity of jobs available during “normal” hours. Joyce says she found work at UPS in 2002 after searching Western's Center for Student Work Experience Web site. She soon became aware that her job would not be the typical after-school gig.

“The (UPS interviewer) said, ‘Know this job is going to be an early morning,’ but by then I would take anything because there were no jobs in Bellingham,” she says.

Center program coordinator Mary Murray says the center does not monitor the hours of jobs posted on its Web site or in its office. While Murray does recall that some jobs — such as those at UPS or at hotels — specify night hours in their listings, most of the listings do not.

“It just depends on the student,” she says. “Some students are night owls and they do a great job working at night. Others don't.”

Night owls or not, students who work at night still must attend to their basic human needs.

Asking a night-shifter when he or she sleeps is likely to produce an answer as varied as the content in a few hundred UPS boxes — or a few hundred boxes of frozen food.

The clock reads a few minutes past 10 p.m. as Bellingham resident Roy Graybeal, 24, walks into the Barkley Village Haggen Food & Pharmacy. As the day begins to wind down for most of the town, Graybeal sips away at a Red Bull energy drink; he won't be asleep until around 9:30 a.m.

As a night-stocker in the store's frozen food section, Graybeal wears a brown fleece pullover over his Haggen polo shirt to keep him warm on his many trips into the freezer. In a few moments, he emerges from the back with a metal cart full of frosty boxes, which glint in the florescent lights. His gaze is somewhat distant and his voice sedated as he says, “I'll be doing this for another few hours.”

During the day, Graybeal attends classes at Whatcom Community College. He works from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. four days a week and then sleeps between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. He says he has learned to schedule his classes in the late evening — this quarter, they run from 4 to 8:30 p.m.

Jessie Ellis, a Western junior, was not so lucky when she worked three days a week at the night desk for Conference and Guest Housing on Western's campus this past summer. After working from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., she had to sandwich her sleep around a noon class.

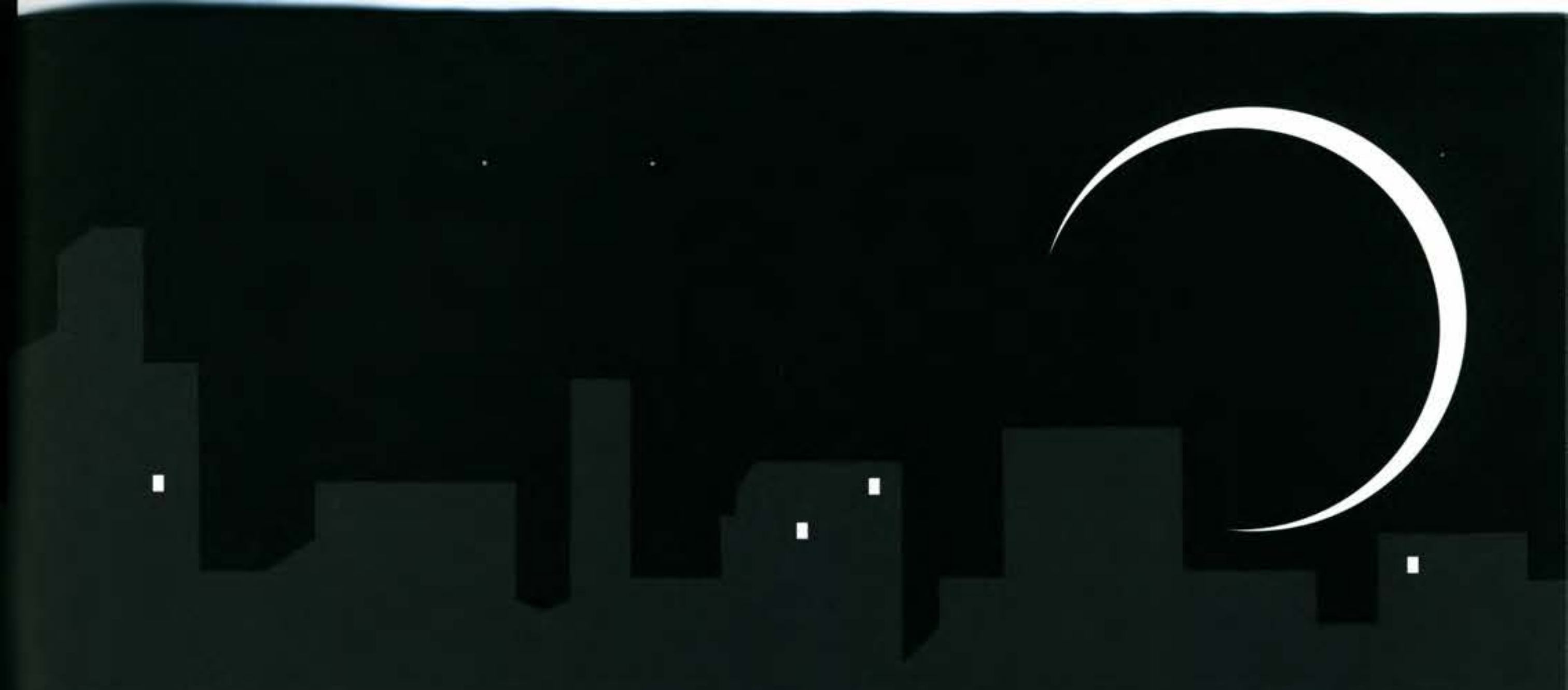
“I would get home at 7 a.m. and sleep for four hours and then go to class,” she says. “Then I'd go back (home) and sleep for another four hours before going back to work. It was awful.”

In addition to her hour-or-so nap after work, Joyce says she typically goes to bed around 9 or 10 p.m. and wakes up at 2 a.m.

“I'm definitely losing sleep,” she says. “(But) I've learned you can't make up sleep. I try to a little bit, but you are tired all day (afterwards).”

But with chores and errands — not to mention homework — piling up, Graybeal says he has resorted to not sleeping between shifts and instead staying up for 36 straight hours “a few times” in the past several years in order to catch up on life. Other times, he has slept for 12, 14 or even 16 hours on his days off to catch up on sleep.

He says schedules such as his often make life's little tasks — doing the laundry, going to the store — nearly impossible. For instance, most businesses cater to people who are awake during the day, and night-shifters must frequently put off doing things until



his or her schedule opens up.

“If you want to go to the bank, that’s really hard because you have to get up early,” Ellis says. “It makes it hard to live your life.”

Banks and other businesses aren’t the only things inaccessible to many who work at night. Some have found that friendships must also be set aside along with errands left un-run. The cause is again simple — night-shifters are usually sleeping or working when their friends are socializing.

“That’s the bad thing about working nights,” Graybeal says. “You can’t go out with everyone. You might be in the middle of a great time with some people but then — ‘It’s 9:30. I have to go to work now.’ ”

Graybeal has found that this has a negative impact on old friendships.

“People I used to be friends with before — they’re just acquaintances now,” he says. “We get together every once in awhile and we might talk or instant message each other, but we’re not that close. I don’t think the opportunity has been there to maintain those relationships.”

Whereas keeping friendships may require some work, maintaining a romantic relationship virtually demands it. Ellis found that, even though they stayed together, the night shift made her relationship with her former boyfriend difficult.

“It was hard because my boyfriend was in Bremerton and he was working in the day and then would go out at night,” she says. “It was hard to find times when we were both not working and awake ... Because it was so short-term, I was willing to just say, ‘Call me whenever and I’ll answer even if it wakes me up.’ Had it been long-term — I don’t know if I could have done that.”

Trouble with sleep, difficulty running errands and strained relationships are problems that go along with most night-shift jobs.

In addition to these worries, both Joyce and Graybeal have school obligations. While some of their night-shift colleagues go home to sleep, recreate or be with friends and family, they must enter a world of lectures, midterms and research papers.

Both Graybeal and Joyce have taken time off from school for various reasons, but Graybeal points to his job, in particular, as having harmed his education.

“I think working nights has slowed down my progress in school,” Graybeal says. “In the beginning when I started working nights, I thought I could handle a full load of school, but I ended up just withdrawing from all my classes. I’d get behind and spend so much time trying to catch up and eventually it would be too much, and I had to give up on the whole thing.”

Graybeal says he stays awake at work and in classes thanks to remaining in “constant motion” and consuming caffeine — he begins each shift with a Red Bull energy drink and consumes several other caffeinated beverages a day. Joyce, however, chooses not to drink caffeine because her Mormon faith does not allow the practice.

This, in part, makes it difficult for her to stay awake in class and has led to at least one embarrassing situation. This past fall, her Spanish professor yelled at her after she fell asleep in class.

“You tell them that you work early in the morning and then they tell you that you need to drink coffee or something to help you, but my religion doesn’t allow that,” she says. “I usually try not to tell people I can’t have coffee. I usually just say that I have an early morning job.”

While the difficulty of staying awake can force some students to choose between work and school, Graybeal’s co-workers have helped him make his choice. He says he would like to leave the night shift and continue his education.

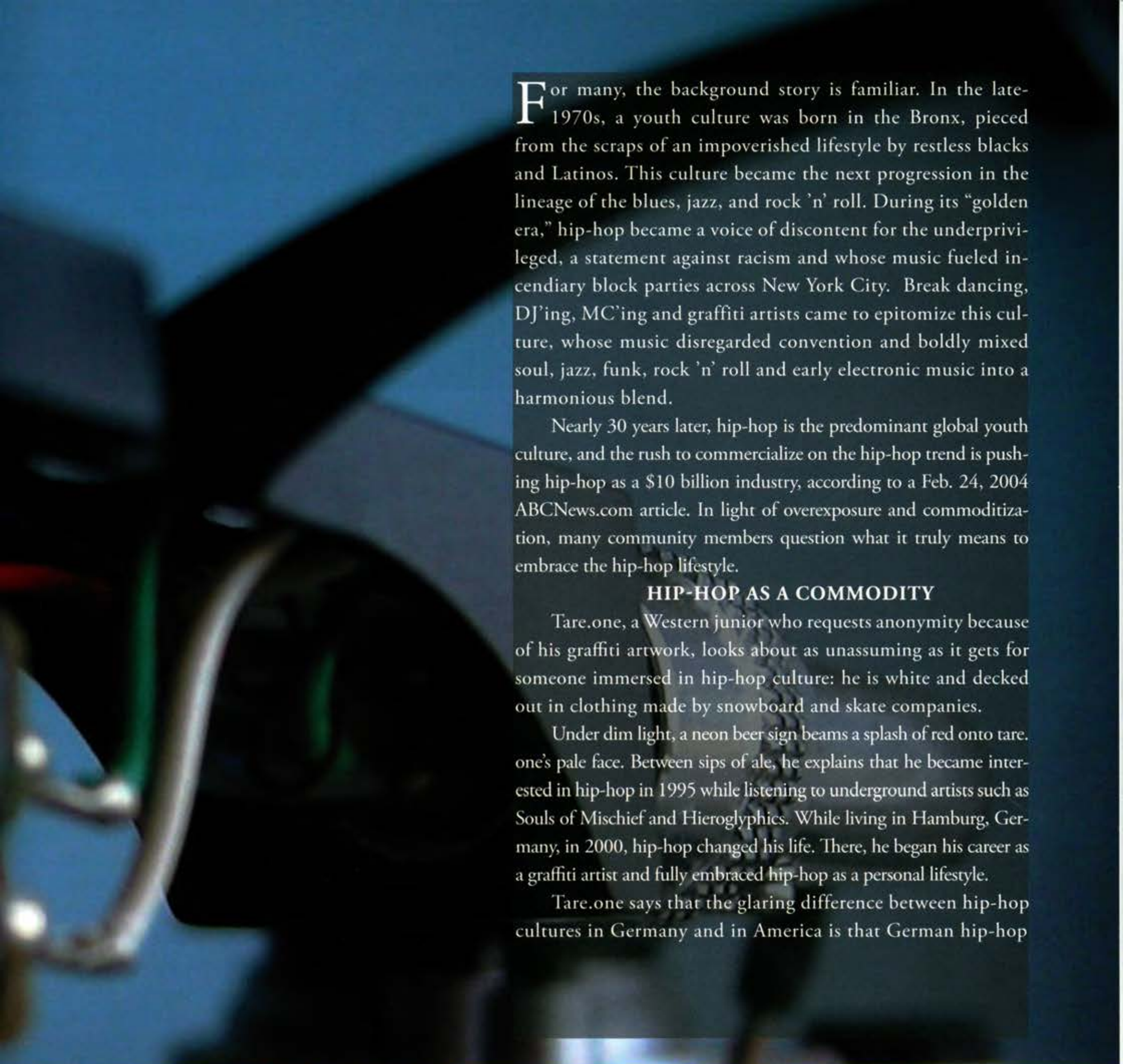
“A number of people’s careers are pretty much in grocery — working on the night crew,” he says. “Since I’ve been there, they’ve been telling me, ‘Go to school. Stay in school. Don’t get stuck here. Don’t get trapped by it.’ ”

But for Joyce and Graybeal, the money is good — and necessary — and the night shift goes on.

Three in the morning is a dead time in Bellingham. The air is heavy and cold, and the stark silence is pierced only by the wind in the trees or the occasional train whistle. Few cars are on the road — the taxicabs full of bar patrons have long since deposited their cargo. The few cars that remain probably belong to a night-shifter. Five days a week, one of these belongs to Joyce as she drives toward 700 boxes and a day of school. ♣

Hip-hop music has made the leap from the streets to the mainstream. On the heels of massive commercial success and intense exposure, the culture struggles to maintain its identity and its integrity. **Guillermo Ventura** explores the dilemma. Photo courtesy of the **Blue Scholars**. Design by **Cam Campman**

BILLION-DOLLAR



For many, the background story is familiar. In the late-1970s, a youth culture was born in the Bronx, pieced from the scraps of an impoverished lifestyle by restless blacks and Latinos. This culture became the next progression in the lineage of the blues, jazz, and rock 'n' roll. During its "golden era," hip-hop became a voice of discontent for the underprivileged, a statement against racism and whose music fueled incendiary block parties across New York City. Break dancing, DJ'ing, MC'ing and graffiti artists came to epitomize this culture, whose music disregarded convention and boldly mixed soul, jazz, funk, rock 'n' roll and early electronic music into a harmonious blend.

Nearly 30 years later, hip-hop is the predominant global youth culture, and the rush to commercialize on the hip-hop trend is pushing hip-hop as a \$10 billion industry, according to a Feb. 24, 2004 ABCNews.com article. In light of overexposure and commoditization, many community members question what it truly means to embrace the hip-hop lifestyle.

HIP-HOP AS A COMMODITY

Tare.one, a Western junior who requests anonymity because of his graffiti artwork, looks about as unassuming as it gets for someone immersed in hip-hop culture: he is white and decked out in clothing made by snowboard and skate companies.

Under dim light, a neon beer sign beams a splash of red onto tare.one's pale face. Between sips of ale, he explains that he became interested in hip-hop in 1995 while listening to underground artists such as Souls of Mischief and Hieroglyphics. While living in Hamburg, Germany, in 2000, hip-hop changed his life. There, he began his career as a graffiti artist and fully embraced hip-hop as a personal lifestyle.

Tare.one says that the glaring difference between hip-hop cultures in Germany and in America is that German hip-hop



fans are more devoted to the culture.

"When it comes to hip-hop, Europeans tend to live it more than in the U.S." tare.one says. "Over here, it's so mainstream."

Tare.one says while Germans looked across the ocean to appreciate hip-hop, admiring such acts as Nas and Wu-Tang Clan, many supported the underground scene with rappers hailing from France and Sweden.

"Here, people don't really understand it," tare.one says. "If you want (to be hip-hop here), then all you have to do is buy it."

One example of hip-hop's commercialization, tare.one says, is that becoming part of the culture often only involves dressing the part by sporting Baby Phat and Russell Simmon's clothing, buying a 50 cent compact disc or simply downloading Music Television rap battles.

In 2003, hip-hop CD sales garnered \$1 billion in sales, according to the NPD Group, a New York-based market information company.

Hip-hop performers who have created clothing lines accounted for \$2 billion in sales in 2002, according to the group. Rapper Jay-Z and music producer Damon Dash, who established the Rocawear line along with another Simmon creation, Baby Phat, each earned \$300 million.

Greg Tate, a Village Voice staff writer, in his collection of essays, "Everything but the Burden," further examines the notion of hip-hop as a commodity.

"Hip-hop is not only a billion-dollar subset of the music industry but one whose taste-making influence makes billions more for every other lifestyle-and-entertainment business under the sun," Tate writes. "With this...come debates that have divided the U.S. Senate, incited police organizations and political opportunists of every ideological stripe, and cleaved generations, genders and classes among every ethnicity in America."

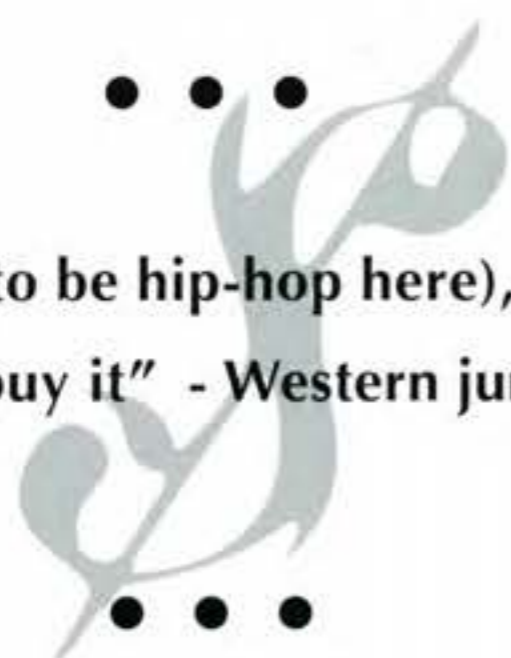
THE APPEAL OF HIP-HOP

While youths are spending billions of dollars on hip-hop, it must be noted what draws them to the culture.

In hip-hop, a paradox exists because its consumers are primarily white. According to the Simmons Lathan Media Group, a production and distribution company of hip-hop-themed media, hip-hop has a consumer base of 45 million people, 80 percent of which are white between the ages of 13 and 34.

Tare.one says that white people may be drawn to the music because of its rebellious nature. He also added that the availability of music on the Internet has spread the culture to white suburbanites.

"If you want (to be hip-hop here), then all you have to do is buy it" - Western junior tare.one



"IF IT COMES TO A POINT WHERE HIP-HOP



Geologic, the MC half the Blue Scholars, a Seattle hip-hop duo, has his own view on how hip-hop crossed over to a white audience. Born George Quibuyen, he believes that because most whites are in the middle- and upper- economic classes, many have turned to hip-hop as consumers.

"Throughout history, the upper class has been stealing from the working class from everything to music, art, fashion, everything," Geologic says. "There is a creative force to being in the working class to survive, whereas being in the upper class, all you can do is consume."

HYPER-MATERIALISM IN HIP-HOP

An enduring criticism is that many hip-hop performers flaunt negative images of excessive materialism. Rappers in music videos frequently display gaudy diamond jewelry or flaunt high-end luxury cars. To Geologic, this greed is attributable to two factors.

Because many rappers are from lower economic backgrounds, Geologic says it would be obvious that the poor value material possessions to a higher degree. Many from the inner city are raised to believe that material wealth equates spiritual happiness, Geologic says.

"You can't really blame poor folks for wanting that gold chain when they've been told that that gold chain will make you happy," Geologic says.

Geologic says the second factor driving hyper-materialism in hip-hop is the media markets the affluent and outrageous black rapper image because that formula makes millions. Geologic says he laments the lack of rappers uninterested in material wealth.

"Instead of giving, those people who say, 'F a gold chain,' they put people on who continue the materialism," Geologic says. "Those kinda people don't get the time of day by the media."

THE COMMODITY OF STREET CREDIBILITY

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of hip-hop music is the issue of street credibility or thug appeal. Arguably, the most controversial figure in hip-hop today is 50 Cent, whose infamous chronicles of ghetto life preceded his career as a rapper. Before his ascent to multi-platinum status, 50 Cent rose through hip-hop's underground scene by being featured on mix tapes compilations, which never saw official record label release. 50 Cent, who hails from Queens, New York, was a recognized star on the mix-tape circuit, however, his reputation for being shot nine times looms most ominous about him.

In hip-hop, the scars of ghetto life equate to badges of honor,



COMES IN THE WAY OF (SOCIAL AWARENESS), WE'LL CHANGE IT AND REVISE IT."



-George "Geologic" Quibuyen, MC of the Blue Scholars

public infatuation, and for record labels, million-dollar figures. An example of this connection can be found in the late Tupac Shakur's first posthumous album, "R U Still Down? (Remember Me)," which sold more than 500,000 copies its first week of release.

Mark Anthony Chubb, a Western music lecturer of African-American descent, says the fascination of ghetto life dates back to the popularity of blaxploitation films of the '70s. While such films were not part of mainstream media, Chubb says one blaxploitation movie, "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song," made \$15 million without the assistance of major film distributors. Once film distributors recognized the potential that existed in distributing blaxploitation films for larger audiences, it became a pivotal moment in which major media outlets capitalized on the public's appetite for urban black culture, Chubb says.

To Chubb, rappers like 50 Cent represent a complicated dilemma. While Chubb agrees that images of several prominent black rappers are negative, he says that people must look past the veneer and find substance in the façade. Chubb says that gangsta rap represents a positive aspect because it confronts the American public with issues of ghetto lifestyle. Artistically, Chubb says many blacks can associate to rap's violent nature because of living conditions in the ghetto. One rapper who embodied the paradox of the thug intellectual was Tupac, Chubb says.

"Mainstream America's perception (of Tupac) was of a person who is bad, who killed people and raped women," Chubb says.

After Tupac's death, Chubb says that he was able to change the public's perception of black rappers through his film, "Tupac Resurrection," which showed Tupac's community work and featured his poetry.

Conversely, Chubb says if 50 Cent were to change his image by not wearing the bulletproof vest he dons on his album cover and seeking a more conservative persona, some critics within the hip-hop community would be outraged.

A LACK OF CREATIVITY

For J-Tyme, a former Western student alumnus and KUGS radio DJ, hip-hop is in a volatile period because the culture may have become too popular, and money may be ruining it. Born Jason Guerrero, J-Tyme spins hip-hop records at dance clubs and says a lack of creativity pervades hip-hop. This stagnancy may be the result of record labels cutting back on hip-hop rosters and focusing primarily on acts that sell well, Guerrero says.

An example of this trend lies with the "crunk" music phenomenon. Crunk music was born in Atlanta and focuses on party anthems that incorporate deep bass beats and simplistic call and response choruses. The man who claims to have created this genre of hip-hop is producer 'Lil Jon, who incorporated crunk into the mainstream by scoring what likely was 2004's biggest single, "Yeah," featuring vocals from pop singer Usher. Guerrero says crunk is currently prominent because record labels are capitalizing on artists within the genre and sales are thriving.

As a club DJ, Guerrero says it is irritating to constantly play "Get Low," a single produced by 'Lil Jon earlier in 2004.

"Personally, it's a pain. It really is," Guerrero says. "I still pack it in my crates, and I hate it when I play it because when I turn on the TV, I hear it, and when I turn on the radio, I hear it all the time."

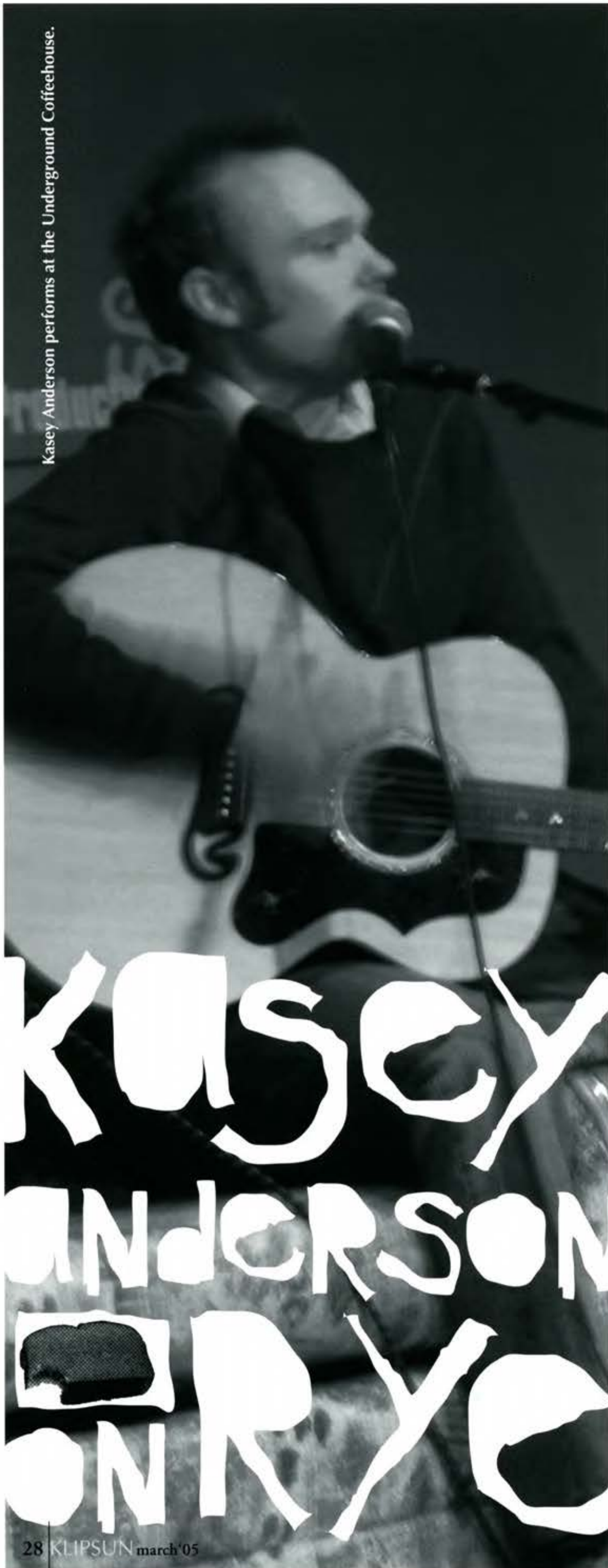
Chubb agrees that record labels profit from current trends but says hip-hop still has innovative artists. Chubb says he is a Kanye West fan and believes his use of soul samples is helping to infuse creativity within the genre. This year, West received 10 Grammy nominations, more than any artist in this year's Grammy Awards. Chubb also says that Outkast, is helping to expand the hip-hop sound.

A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Purists may despair commercialization corrupting hip-hop, but Geologic sees an optimistic future. He is hopeful because young children at local community centers still break dance and keep true components of the culture alive. Hip-hop could also be an incredible political force because Geologic says no other genre of music discusses issues such as drug and gun problems within the inner city.

Still, Geologic heeds caution when examining hip-hop within its political, social and cultural context. While one could celebrate hip-hop's influence as a far-reaching dominant culture, those who align themselves with hip-hop must also be conscious about worldly atrocities.

"Slavery still exists. There are third world countries being raped. It is imperative to know about these things," Geologic says. "For all these things, hip-hop can be a tool to help. If it comes to a point where hip-hop comes in the way of that, we'll change it and revise it."



KASEY ANDERSON ON RYAN

Local bluegrass musician Kasey Anderson may not have a sandwich named after him, but he writes and performs for the love of music. **Jesse Smith** inquires what fame means to a small-town musician and the future of his career. Photos by **Jesse Smith**. Design by **Samuel Dawson**.

As Kasey Anderson drives down State Street in his gray Plymouth Grand Voyager and listens to sports talk radio, he hardly exhibits the wild and eccentric mannerisms often associated with your local rock star, unless you count his disregard for seatbelt laws or the aviator glasses perched neatly on his dashboard.

Having parked perfectly on Railroad Avenue, the slouched and slender Anderson sidles to the curb outside of Casa Que Pasa, stops to pull his arms out of his deep coat pockets, then drops change into the wrong parking meter.

With a sheepish, "Oops," Anderson and his patchy red beard continue to more aptly fit the look and mannerisms expected of his day job as an assistant manager at the Sunset Square Regal Cinema, rather than than an alternative-country rocker – save for his bright-orange Kenneth Cole tennis shoes and his R.P. McMurphy-esque stocking cap.

Anderson's aura instantly transforms as he enters Casa Que Pasa's artsy confines. He gregariously greets some of the tequila bar's patrons while Grammy-nominated Ryan Adams, who shares the Lost Highway recording label with the likes of Johnny Cash, Lyle Lovett and Tift Merritt, croons "Drank Like a River" on the jukebox speakers above.

Anderson motions to the jukebox and says, "The difference between Matthew Ryan and Ryan Adams is Lost Highway Records. Period."

The Matthew Ryan comparison could easily apply to Anderson, 25, who just completed a West Coast tour, has opened shows for Seattle country-punk rockers The Supersuckers, is reviewed by No Depression magazine and yet still remains a relative unknown, making records on his own music label, Resonant Noise.

"I guess fame is relative," Anderson says as he ponders a fork full of chicken enchiladas. "You know what fame is? Fame is having a sandwich named after you. If your name is on a menu somewhere, you're fucking famous."

Anderson, who is dating Carey Ross, the current music editor of The Bellingham Weekly, says being almost famous is fraught with problems, especially when Eric "Roscoe" Ambel produces your new album. Ambel has played guitar for both Steve Earle and Joan Jett's band's and has been a producer for both the Bottle Rockets and Ryan Adams.

"There are probably a lot of people who would say, 'Well it's easy for him to get press because he's dating Carey,' or, 'He's friends with so-and-so,'" Anderson says, sipping his on-the-rocks lime margarita. "But I've worked pretty fucking hard to make sure people hear my songs, so that viewpoint doesn't really hold any water with me."

Though five years his senior, Ross, 30, looks like she could be Anderson's younger sister, even sharing the same pumpkin-colored hair. She says she has always been eager to help musicians who let her know what they are doing, and

that Anderson does not unjustly benefit from his relationship with her.

“Logic dictates that if I were to use whatever limited pull I have to promote Kasey’s interests to the exclusion of all else, I would pretty much torpedo any kind of credibility I possess,” Ross explains.

Last fall, Anderson released his third album, “Dead Roses,” which sounds like a mix between Steve Earle, Ryan Adams and “Let It Bleed”-era Rolling Stones. Anderson says he felt compelled to tour the West Coast in November to see what people outside of Washington thought of his music.

“It’s hard to gauge our national draw playing the majority of our shows in Bellingham or Seattle,” Anderson says. “You get used to playing to a really receptive audience here and it can be kind of a shock to go somewhere foreign, and have an audience just stand and watch. Luckily, we didn’t really encounter that.”

While Anderson says the shows on his tour were received with enthusiasm, he nonetheless found complications along the way. In Los Angeles, his band secured a club gig, only to find that upon arrival, they had been sandwiched between two open-mic performances.

“The doorperson explained to me that, once 20 people had paid, we got half the door cover charge of \$5,” Anderson

Anderson says funding a record and tour is not cheap and the support of his parents has helped him keep his dreams alive.

“My grandfather on my mother’s side was a big band musician,” Anderson says. “He passed away when my mother was 18, so I think that seeing me involved in music is a way for her to connect those dots – from her father to her son.”

Anderson’s father and mother, Kurt and Nancy Anderson, still live in Vancouver, Wash., where Anderson grew up. Nancy agrees that Anderson’s singing career is a welcome continuation of the family’s musical tradition.

“When Kasey picked up a guitar at (age) 12 or 13, it was like, ‘Whoa,’ because we never forced it on him,” Nancy excitedly explains. “For me to be watching that was like watching my dad’s band.”

Kurt compares his support of his son’s music to that often experienced by prodigious child athletes.

“If he was a football or baseball player, you’d do anything to keep the dream alive,” Kurt says. “It’s a gift, it’s a talent.”

Kurt explains his support is due in part to his son’s attitude about the music business.

“He’s Kasey,” Kurt says emphatically. “He’s not going to sing or play something commercial. It’s about the music, not about the money.”

“You know what fame is? Fame is having a sandwich named after you. If your name is on a menu somewhere, you’re fucking famous.” - Kasey Anderson

explains. “So, if 19 people show, we get nothing. If 20 show, we get \$50 – or, so I thought.”

Anderson says that, fortunately, the club was packed and his band expected they would finally have some food money for the two-day drive home. Unfortunately, he says, the club had a distinctly different way of viewing the situation.

Anderson says he happened to be standing next to the door when he overheard the doorperson turning customers away who specified that they were at the club to see him.

Anderson says he asked the doorperson the reason why she kept asking each person who they were at the show to see. He says she told him, “ ‘None, really. We just need to know who they’re here to see so I can count them towards your total.’ ”

Anderson says the doorperson explained that the band needed 20 people who said they were there to specifically see it to get a share of the admission, not 20 people in total attendance.

“Through clenched teeth, I spat at her, ‘Well, it’ll be pretty hard for us to hit that number if you keep turning my few fans away.’ ” Anderson says, temporarily reliving the moment. “She smiled and said, ‘I guess so.’ ”

While Anderson says it has been tough trying to get his music heard, he says he is ecstatic that major retailers such as Tower Records, Amazon and Music Millennium in Portland have chosen to carry his album, which he has promoted extensively through the Internet and college radio.

“Smaller artists, like myself, have to be careful about picking our spots, figuring out what kind of advertising works and promoting ourselves in unorthodox ways,” Anderson says.

Anderson says Ross also has been extremely supportive through the creative process of his songwriting.

“Some writers can sit down with a blank piece of paper and a pen and, 15 minutes later, have a song,” Anderson says. “Mine take hours, in some cases, days. This means that, rather than having to put up with a brooding, frustrated jackass for a few minutes at a time, Carey gets that guy for days at a time.”

Ross admits she tries to stay away from Anderson when he’s writing or playing, but says there are perks to being the girlfriend of a local celebrity.

“It’s nice that people can appreciate him as a person and a musician,” Ross says. “Who the hell wants to have a boyfriend no one likes?”

While he’s proud of “Dead Roses,” Anderson says he has no desire to enjoy any type of mass recognition or fame.

“Success is doing work you’re proud of, that you feel has a place alongside the artists who came before you,” Anderson says. “Bruce Springsteen gave an interview where he referred to songwriting as ‘digging a trench,’ making a place for himself alongside those who came before him. I think that’s an eloquent and apt way to describe my own goal. I’d like to find a place for myself alongside the people I admire.”

Nonetheless, Anderson says he gets excited and feels flattered when he sees people singing along to his songs at shows.

“It’s hard not to get distracted and wonder what it is about that song that strikes a chord in whoever is singing along,” Anderson says.

On the flip side, Anderson says it is discouraging to start a show and see bar patrons who could care less that he is performing on stage.



Anderson, who has also opened up for Tift Merritt, Grammy nominated this year for "Best Country Album," says that playing with well-known artists can be daunting.

"These people came to see The Supersuckers or whoever," Anderson explains. "And you're just 45 minutes they have to sit through to get to the real show."

Anderson acknowledges a nation-wide revival of country-tinged rock and bluegrass music, but says it is important for artists to stay true to their brand of music.

"The popularity of 'O Brother, Where Art Thou?' definitely played a part in putting bluegrass back on people's radars," Anderson explains. "But the down side of that is you've got a million people who think that every band should sound like the 'O Brother' soundtrack and that leads to constipation of the genre."

Press reviews for Anderson's album are mostly glowing. The San Francisco Examiner wrote, "Kasey Anderson's doleful Americana is the melancholy sound of gravel roads and broken-down love." The Oregonian wrote, "The album's blend of storytelling, twang and street-savvy Stratocaster strut is most reminiscent of Ryan Adams' Whiskeytown, back when the band was young, hungry and had something to prove."

Nonetheless, greater fame has also brought Anderson some less-than rave reviews. Anderson says Harp Magazine wrote that he "depends too heavily on the clichés that Dylan deftly avoided and Springsteen so deftly re-energized."

"At least I got compared to Dylan and Springsteen, right?" Anderson says, making the best of the critique. "That's something."

Regardless of whether his increasing popularity endures or he signs a record deal, Anderson says music will always be a part of his life.

"I love music too much for it to disappear from my life," Anderson says. "If I run out of my own songs to play, I'll play somebody else's." ❧

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