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KLIPSUN

A Western Washington University Publication

- ▶ renter beware
- ▶ online antiques
- ▶ cramped quarters

A photograph of a tray with several glasses of wine, with the word 'TAX' overlaid in large, bold, white letters. The background is a warm, golden light, possibly from a window or a lamp, creating a soft glow. The tray is set on a wooden table, and the glasses are filled with a golden liquid, likely wine. The overall mood is warm and inviting, but the word 'TAX' suggests a financial or legal theme.

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Many of the 80 million Americans expected to retire in the next decade will depend on certified nursing assistants to care for them. Laura Harlos reports on how a nationwide CNA shortage is affecting one local care facility.

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RED SQUARE

Every day thousands of people pass through Red Square, the heart of campus. Spend an afternoon there and everyone you know will probably pass by. Heather Trimm gives it a try.

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The first day at a new job is always rough. Jon Walsh talks to Mariners' prospect Ron Wright about his brief but eventful first call-up to the big leagues.

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(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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klipsun MAGAZINE

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After forfeiting her deposit and breaking a lease with an individual owner to get out of a flea and spider-infested apartment, senior journalism major Camille decided to find out more about her rights as a renter and educate other college students in similar situations.

Laura is a public relations major who will graduate fall quarter. This is her first contribution to Klipsun; her work has also appeared in the Western Front and the Voice of the Valley. She hopes to someday own property in the county where her future horse, Stella can roam happily.

From her interest in vintage clothes shopping, senior public relations major Marissa chose to write a story on the overwhelming world of online auction businesses. In the process she discovered a local antique store that had a history in Bellingham. She thanks Lynn for sharing her insight and giving her a newfound appreciation for collecting.



Jessica is a public relations major planning to work in the political science field. This is her first story in Klipsun and she hopes it will encourage students to ignore the cultural pressure to stay thin.

Jon is a senior public relations major. He's a longtime Mariner fan who had the chance to see Ron Wright's debut in the big leagues. Jon hopes his story gives readers insight into the long struggle for minor leaguers to make it to the top. He'd like to thank the Tacoma Rainiers and everyone involved for their time and effort.

This is Mindy's second article in Klipsun. She hopes this story will inspire other women to pursue their dreams and make men aware of the benefits of having women work with them in male-dominated jobs.

Taylor is a journalism major in his final quarter at Western. An interest in demographics enticed him to color in this rather gray subject of overpopulation in the Whatcom County Jail. After college he plans to look for work on a publication and to spend time with his 1-year-old daughter, Olivia.



Out with the Old...

Cheryl Leaf Antiques & Gifts recently changed its address. The 50-year-old shop moved from the corner of Northwest Avenue and Illinois Street to www.ebay.com. **Marissa Bisnar** explores how selling the past has benefited from present technology. Photos by Heather Trimm.



From the outside, the white two-story house on the corner of Northwest Avenue and Illinois Street looks just like any other house on its block. But on the inside, it's an antique collector's jackpot.

Items inhabit every corner of the house. Plates and trays filled with antique jar lids camouflage the kitchen sink and counter. The kitchen cabinet doors have been pried off to make room for rich assortments of linens, scarves and christening gowns.

The store smells slightly musty from its aged treasures, but still feels like a home.

In 1950, Lynn Dralle's grandmother, Cheryl Leaf, opened Cheryl Leaf Antiques & Gifts out of her home. Leaf converted the downstairs into an antique shop and lived upstairs.

She filled her front room, kitchen and hallways with items collected from estate sales and buying trips in Europe and Asia. She eventually had to build an adjacent residence to make more room for the store.

Those halls and rooms were recently stripped bare as the store was closed and the business moved exclusively to the Internet.

"She was such an entrepreneur," Dralle, 37, said. "She started her collections before this antique business became popular."

Leaf was destined to produce a family of antique collectors and dealers. Eventually, she found a successor in her granddaughter, Dralle.

Dralle joined her grandmother as a managing partner in 1993, after Leaf broke her leg and was unable to run the store on her own.

Dralle was well prepared for the challenge of running a business. She graduated in 1985 from the University of California with an undergraduate business degree. She obtained an MBA from USC in 1990.

She put her education to use shortly after becoming a managing partner at the store.

To help raise money for her grandmother's rest home fees and boost below-average sales at the store, Dralle developed the store's Web site and began putting items up for sale on eBay, the online auction site.

Dralle soon discovered many of the items collecting dust in the shop, such as a miniature ivory chest that had been sitting in the store for 20 years, sold within a few days online.

"It was marked \$49.50 in the store," Dralle said. "We discovered these miniature chests are really popular, because it sold for \$350 on eBay."

Rather than being skeptical of this new and intimidating form of selling, Dralle said her grandmother welcomed the idea of selling items online. Her grandmother knew retail businesses, especially in the Bellingham area, must create other outlets to gain extra income, Dralle said.

"Her eyes would always get really big when she saw how much items sold for," Dralle said.

Dralle recently sold a set of six Cupie Doll place card holders online. Cupie Dolls are plastic collectible dolls with signature pointed heads and large eyes. The set from her grandmother's collection sold for \$2,400, the most expensive piece Dralle has sold online.



Above: Cheryl Leaf collected beaded necklaces for many years. They were a staple at her antique store. **Left:** Vases and other antique collectables once sold in antique stores can now be found on eBay.

Although Leaf was open to selling merchandise online, she was reluctant to put certain items from her collection for sale.

An enormous oak cabinet from the 1880s stood guard near the front of the store. Still in prime condition, with gargoyle heads framing the top shelf and claws for legs, it was the most expensive piece in the store priced at \$5,500.

"She never wanted to sell that item," Dralle said.

Dralle inherited the store after her grandmother passed away two years ago. But she decided to close the store in order to fulfill a slightly different passion, her lust for eBay.

Online sales were so successful, Dralle moved back to California. She now runs Cheryl Leaf Antiques & Gifts entirely through the Internet. A local shop that has sat comfortably on its corner for years has closed its doors forever.



Above: Lynn Dralle holds a Bellingham Herald photo from 1971 of her and her grandmother, Cheryl Leaf. The picture hung prominently in Leaf's store.

Dralle closed her grandmother's shop due to the small antique market in Bellingham and the boost in profits from eBay.

"A piece like this probably would sell for much more in Snohomish," Dralle said, referring to the expensive, gargoyle-topped cabinet. She explained that Snohomish has a much larger community of antique dealers than Bellingham, making Bellingham a more difficult market to profit in.

However, since Dralle tapped into eBay, she has reaped nothing but positive results.

"We have about 200 items online right now, and we gross about \$15,000 to \$20,000 a month," Dralle said. The numbers add up to almost \$250,000 a year.

By making the transition to online auctions, Dralle widened the customer base from local to international levels. Customers from across the United States, Canada, England and even Australia, shop her site, Dralle said.

Nevertheless, Dralle was reluctant to close the shop that has survived in Bellingham for almost 53 years.

"It's very sad," Dralle said. "I wanted to buy the house and keep it as

"She always said, 'do what you love and the money will follow.'"

—Lynn Dralle

a rental, but that wouldn't work from California. It really has a lot of sentimental value."

Loyal customers to the shop are sad to hear of its closure.

"I'm going to miss the shop," said Sally Huff, longtime customer and friend. "It's one of the finest shops between the two coasts."

A collector for years, Huff developed a close relationship with Leaf after moving to Bellingham from the East Coast in the 1960s. She said Dralle has done a great job of continuing her grandmother's tradition.

"Bellingham is losing a gem," Huff said about the store. "It's been part of my life for many years."

Dralle is determined to continue her grandmother's tradition. Dralle said she learned everything she knows about antiques from her grandmother. Her lessons began with frequent visits to Leaf's shop.

"My grandmother and I were very close," Dralle said.

Leaf started teaching Dralle about antiques at a young age. The proof is evident in a black and white-framed photo hanging above the cash register. The photo was taken for a 1971 Bellingham Herald article about Leaf's shop. In the picture, a 7-year-old Dralle examines a pair of glass bowls at the front counter alongside Leaf.

When she turned 12, Dralle said she was finally allowed to accompany her grandmother to Europe on antique buying trips.

Dralle remembers her grandmother fondly, and continues to follow the lessons Leaf taught her. "She always said, 'do what you love and the money will follow,'" Dralle said.

Evidence from this lesson is Leaf's extensive hand-beaded necklace collection. Several cases filled with multicolored clay, glass and shell necklaces were the first items to greet shoppers as

they entered her store.

When Leaf was 10 years old, she saw a American Indian man walk into her father's Cashmere, Wash. bank covered in beaded necklaces, Dralle explained. She loved the look of the beads, and from that day on, she threaded her necklaces.

"She followed her passion, waking up at 5 a.m. to string beads, and staying up until 2 in the morning," Dralle said.

Spending a large portion of her life soaking up lessons from her grandmother, Dralle has developed a few collections of her own.

In the first three weeks of doing business through eBay, she collected over 200 Texas Ware bowls, vintage plastic marble mixing bowls.

"It's totally addictive," Dralle said.

From her business experience, Dralle has written two online selling and buying guides. Both guides are sold on eBay's site. "iSell," and "iBuy," are designed to help sellers keep track of their sales transactions. Another one of Dralle's books, "The Book of Beanie Babies," was published in 1998 and was



Amazon.com's best-selling book in the pop culture category for that year.

Sales have skyrocketed since Dralle became an eBay member, and she is now qualified as a "power seller" on the site. A power seller is a member who receives 98 percent feedback from customers, fulfills a certain level of sales performance and embraces the integrity of eBay's community values, according to the company's Web site.

Dralle has also appeared on the local television shows, "Northwest Afternoon" and "Evening Magazine." Dralle taught viewers how to track down treasures at garage sales and how to put them up for sale online.

eBay quickly became a popular and accesible medium for selling antiques. Antique businesses throughout Whatcom County have converted a portion of their businesses to online auctions.

Debbie Dahlquist, owner of Applegrove Junction Antiques in Ferndale, sells a few specialty items through online auctions, but warns of customer dissatisfaction with online sales.

"It's tough," Dahlquist said. "If you don't describe the item exactly, once they [the customers] get it, they may change their mind and ship it back."

Despite this inconvenience, Dahlquist said online auctions are a great avenue for expensive specialty items. Online auctions increase the chances of finding that one person who is willing to pay for an expensive rarity.

Walter Robinson, owner of Aladdin's Lamp Antiques & Collectibles on West Holly Street, has also sold merchandise on eBay for the last five years.

Online sales don't bring in as much money as the shop, Robinson said. "But it's a good idea for specialized items."

So, what types of items will sell online?

Dralle said "anything goes." Recently, Dralle sold a 1960s Lincoln Log box for \$60.

The box was empty.

Strange items may sell online so well because they have sentimental value to the buyer, said Alexis Babcock, a former Cheryl Leaf Antiques & Gifts employee.

Among the strangest items Dralle sold online was a 2,000-pound safe, which a Seattle man bought.

"It was fun to watch him try and load it into his truck," Dralle said.

For eBay newcomers craving a profit, Dralle said the best places to look for good finds are at estate sales. Valuable family heirlooms and antiques can be found at these sales. Other good starting points are church sales and moving sales.

"Most people are in a hurry to move and are willing to give good stuff away," Dralle said.

Kids clothes in good condition, merchandise still in the box, stuff from the 1940s and 1950s and anything with a company's

emblem, name or a year are easy to find and usually sell well online, Dralle said.

"Shabby chic is always popular," Dralle added. "Kitschy items from the 1970s and 1980s are really hot right now too. But, you never know what will sell."

A collection of "bride's baskets," metal framed baskets which were a popular bridal gift during the Victorian Era, were a surprising sale, Dralle said.

"People were bidding \$80 to \$100 just for the metal frames," Dralle said. "You don't know what people want."

Dralle suggests buying cheap items because they aren't a big investment and may turn a big profit on eBay.

"If you find something that's 25 cents to 50 cents or a dollar, just buy it," Dralle said.

Although much of Dralle's antique knowledge was passed down from her grandmother, Dralle said it's easy for a newcomer to identify collectibles by looking them up on eBay.

For example, an unrecognizable plate can be identified and priced by typing in its manufacturer's name, and comparing it with other bids at the site, Dralle said.

"But, [research] can be extremely overwhelming for beginners," Dralle said.

When she worked with her grandmother, they would both spend countless hours looking up a product's background in outdated research books, never finding anything, Dralle said.

The key, Dralle said, is patience.

Although Cheryl Leaf Antiques & Gifts has closed its doors, Dralle has succeeded in revitalizing Leaf's business by making the online transition. But no matter what medium she uses, Dralle still carries on her grandmother's passion for antiques. ❖

selling IMAGE**b.** by the

They appear on telephone poles, bulletin boards and in millions of e-mail inboxes every day — ads for the latest fad diets promising miraculous results. **Jessica Herring** explores the dangerous side effects of what sounds too good to be true.

Dieting and weight loss consumes the American public. The evidence is everywhere: in magazines, television commercials and diet pamphlets in grocery store checkout lines. Fad diets often claim to help people lose seemingly unrealistic amounts of weight in unrealistic amounts of time.

The National Eating Disorders Association, a research and advocacy group, says dieting has become a "national pastime, especially for women," and that Americans spend more than \$34 billion dollars a year on dieting and diet-related products. The group estimates 40 to 50 percent of American women are dieting at any given time, and that 95 percent of these dieters regain their lost weight within one to five years. Unfortunately, the public buys into forms of unhealthy eating. This is perpetuated by the often unhealthy image of thinness promoted through every possible medium. While fad diets offer promising results, the unaddressed side effects are often harmful, ranging from dehydration to the development of eating disorders.

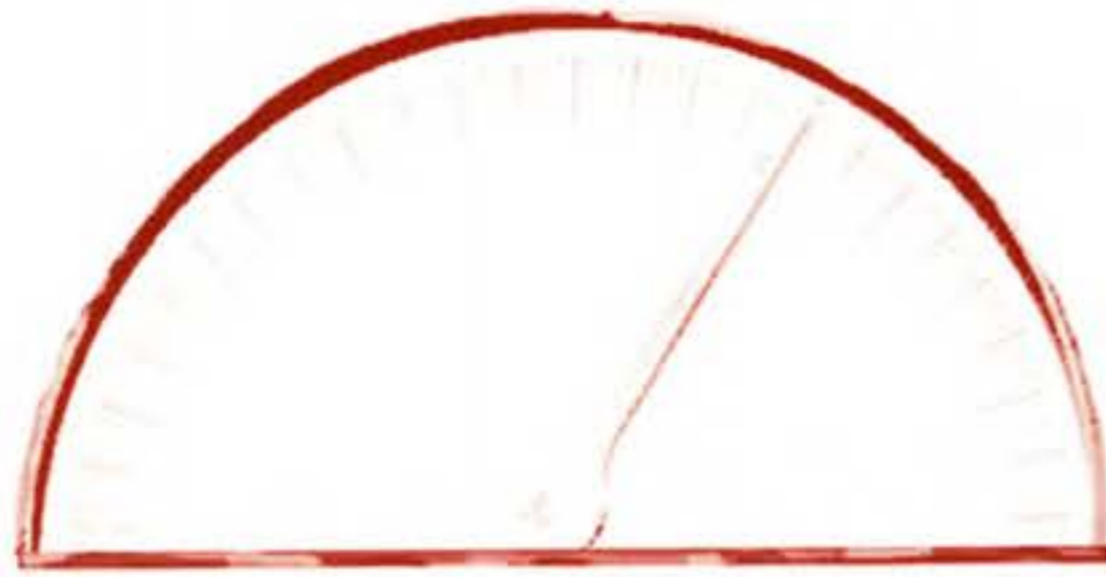
"I had an eating disorder when I was in elementary school and junior high," said Western junior Cindy Mackay. "When I got into college, I was in the recovery process. I still am."

Mackay is a Lifestyle Advisor for the Positive Body Image group on campus. She also helped create the Body Empowerment United (BE-U) club to include more students involved in PBI's goals. Students can join BE-U without the training necessary to become a Lifestyle Advisor. Mackay said the groups have provided her with a positive atmosphere, and those involved have had similar experiences which they were able to relate to hers.

Mackay said she was teased a lot as a kid, which encouraged her negative eating behavior. Other kids would tease her for anything: She was overweight. She didn't wear Keds like everybody else at school. Kids can be ruthless.

"I stopped eating for a long time in the sixth and seventh grades," she said. "I had one friend who told me she would buy me a present at the end of the year if I ate my lunch every day."

Mackay said she did not realize she had an eating disorder until she was in high school.



"You can have an eating disorder and not even know it because you're so involved in it," she said.

Mackay said doctors discovered a hole in her heart caused by the eating disorder when she was in high school. When she was on the dance team at school, she fainted in class and was frequently dizzy. She had to see doctors for her heart condition until this year.

"I'm still recovering," she said. "It sucks. It takes a long time to feel normal without stressing about it all day long. I still might have negative body image, but I won't push myself to that edge again."

Mackay does not weigh herself, which she said keeps her from obsessing about her weight. She hasn't known her weight for six years.

"That's my advice to all women," she said. "People shouldn't value themselves by numbers."

Mackay said Positive Body Image also sees many concerned friends of people with eating disorders. The group usually refers them to counseling or health centers.

"The number one thing is to be supportive," Mackay said. "Don't just try to find them help, but be there, too. Be a good listener."

Besides just being unsuccessful, dieting can lead to dangerous eating patterns. Dr. Candice Wiggum, a mental health counselor at Western, said eating disorders often follow a diet.

"When the body is deprived, it leads to binge eating," she said. "If the diet works, anorexia can develop."

Wiggum said eating disorders can be traced to America's cultural obsession with thinness and beauty.

"We live in a culture that has promoted a certain image," she said. "Teenagers, in particular, are targeted because they have more disposable income. They are targeted by advertisers."

Wiggum said very few people fit the ideal, ultra-thin image. She also said people should be aware of the "giant image prejudice of size and shape in society."

She said people should focus on their main values and not define themselves by the way they look.

Fad diet products often enjoy high sales because they feed upon the consumer's desire to get thin quickly. The difficulty that many face lies in the fact that fad diets are sometimes difficult to discern from healthy dieting.

Some popular fad diets today are the Zone diet, the Dr. Atkins diet and the new Suzanne Somers diet. Jan Templeton, a certified nutritionist at Discovering Health in Bellingham, said traits of fad diets include magic or miracle foods, rigid menus, bizarre quantities and specific combinations of foods.

A popular fad diet claim is that people can lose weight without increasing their physical activity, which contradicts the American Heart Association's suggestion of exercising three to four times a week for good health. It also recommends "a total of 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activities on most days of the week."

"A fad means a craze," said Western professor and coordinator of Health Education, Dr. Evelyn Ames. "It is the diet of the day or week that people jump on board to lose weight without a change in behavior."

Ames said people typically stay on a fad diet for two to three weeks. She said people rarely stay on fad diets because they can cause constipation and the foods involved often taste bad.

Ames gave several suggestions for leading a healthy lifestyle. She recommended eating breakfast and eating regularly, rather than starving oneself throughout the day.

"Start walking when you can walk, and don't ride," Ames suggested. "Become more physically active. Eat a variety of foods that taste good. Add pleasurable things in your daily activity that don't involve food."

Ames pointed out that students have grown accustomed to "eating on the run," rather than sitting down to eat a balanced meal. Even on campus, there are plenty of opportunities to eat while on the run.

"You can have an eating disorder and not even know it because you're so involved in it."

**— Cindy Mackay
Positive Body Image
group lifestyle advisor**



"Students can eat and drink their way across campus," Ames said. "People are drinking rather caloric coffee drinks. If you start at Arntzen, there's a food place there. There are subs and Starbucks at Carver and then there's Miller."

A myriad of fast foods are also available at the Viking Union. Pastries, coffee and other foods are available everywhere. The foods that fit into the "on the run" category are rarely nutritious. Pizza, cookies and other foods students can eat while walking across campus are not as healthy as a salad, soup or sandwich that they would have to sit down to eat.

**"I don't believe in dieting.
I believe in smart nutrition."**

**— Jan Templeton
local nutritionist**

"I don't believe in dieting," Templeton said. "I believe in smart nutrition."

She said eating whole, non-processed foods, organic fruits and vegetables and hormone and antibiotic-free meats constitutes smart eating.

Templeton said each person is different and will lose weight at different rates. She said keeping hormones, blood sugar and digestion in balance is the smartest way to achieve good health and weight loss.

"We have so many people walking around constipated," she said. "Once we balance digestion, people can really lose weight."

Western senior Michelle Muri, another Lifestyle Advisor for Positive Body Image, said people can go from a negative body image to chronic dieting. She said "yo-yo dieting," or fad dieting, can become part of this. When these diets do not work, she said the person could turn to obsessive exercising. Because muscle weighs three times more than fat, the dieter can actually gain weight from exercising. This is often why people develop anorexia. Compulsive eating (or binge eating) develops when people starve themselves for long periods of time. This often

leads to bulimia.

Western students seem to be consistent with national averages in their approach to health and weight loss. In 2000, a random study of 616 students by Western's Prevention and Wellness Services found that 23.7 percent of respondents dieted to lose weight within the 30 days prior to the survey, compared to a 2000 American College Health Association national college study, which found 26 percent of student respondents dieted to lose weight within 30 days of the survey. The Prevention and Wellness Center also found that small percentages of Western respondents vomited, took diet pills, or laxatives to lose weight in the 30 days prior to the study. The study found that about 4 percent of respondents had been previously diagnosed with anorexia or bulimia.

The national survey indicated 21 percent of student respondents thought they were overweight, and 8.1 percent viewed themselves as obese. Thirty-eight percent of Western students viewed themselves as slightly overweight to very overweight.

Western sophomore Nickie Dane said she has lost 10 pounds so far on the Weight Watchers diet.

"I eat what I'm supposed to eat, just not as much as I used to," Dane said.

Dane started the diet after her stepmother lost 40 pounds on the diet. She said she wanted to lose weight so she could row for Western's crew next year. She has two weeks left in the 12-week program. Dane said she also works out so she can "build lots of muscles."

"I don't consider it dieting," she said. "I consider it changing my eating habits to a healthier level."

Other students have chosen not to diet. Fairhaven junior Ingrid Dahl said she stays away from dieting. She said she works out to get in shape, but tries not to weigh herself because she actually gains weight from gaining muscle.

"I eat a good, healthy diet," Dahl said. "I eat as little crap as possible — few processed foods."



Dr. Ellen Coleman wrote in her article, "Ketogenic Diets" for Healthcare Reality Check, that the initial rapid weight loss from diets such as the Dr. Atkins diet, which advises a high protein, low carbohydrate diet including mostly meats, does not represent fat loss. She said the decreased carbohydrate intake causes a large excretion of water through liver and glycogen depletion in muscles. Coleman wrote that ketogenic diets may cause dangerous side effects, such as dehydration, electrolyte loss, calcium depletion and kidney problems. Those with heart disease, hypertension, kidney disease or diabetes are at greater risk for developing side effects.

The Atkins diet claims when "digestible carbohydrates are sufficiently restricted (without caloric restriction), the body converts from the primary pathway of burning carbohydrates to burning fat as its main energy source. This results in weight loss."

Coleman, however, stated that the high fat Atkins diet causes ketosis, which suppresses hunger, and "thus contributes to caloric restriction." Therefore, if the diet works, it is because of calorie restriction rather than the burning of fat.

Western's Community Health Center said "losing more than one to two pounds a week means muscle loss, not fat loss."

In the American Dietetic Association's survey "Nutrition and You: Trends in 2002," 63 percent of the respondents said they considered body weight to be an indicator of a healthful diet.

"In reality, no two people have the same body composition. The measure of a person's diet, as well as overall health, is a combination of factors, including weight," ADA spokesperson Chris Rosenbloom said.

Rosenbloom said nutrition information and misconceptions can be difficult to discern. He suggested relying on dietetics and the ADA for nutritional information. The ADA can be contacted at www.eatright.com.

Even though the American public has access to a variety of diets claiming to encourage weight loss, experts have maintained that the food guide pyramid is still a balanced way to achieve a

NURITIONAL FACTS

The Food Guide Pyramid calls for eating a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need and the right amount of calories to maintain a healthy diet.

	SERVINGS
bread, cereal, rice & pasta	6—11
fruit groups	2—4
meat, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, nuts	2—3
vegetable group	3—5
milk, yogurt and cheese groups	2—3
fats, oils & sweets	sparingly

The Food Guide Pyramid is an outline of what to eat each day based on the Dietary Guidelines. It's not a rigid prescription but a general guide that lets you choose a healthful diet that's right for you.

healthy diet. The U.S. Department of Agriculture suggests using their pyramid, which includes a balanced daily allocation of healthy foods. The bread, cereal, rice and pasta group continues to be the base of the pyramid. This rule directly opposes low-carbohydrate diets, such as the Atkin's diet. Fruits and vegetables are very important, while the milk, yogurt and cheese group only receives two to three servings. The same goes for the meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs and nuts group. Fats, oils and sweets should be eaten sparingly. The pyramid is taught to children in grade school and has been recognized as a stable, nutritious diet for many years. Much of the American public, however, is still tempted by the "quick-fix" route.

Dr. Wiggum's advice helps to bring a healthy lifestyle into perspective:

"Think: what are my main values?" Wiggum said. "What do I want to have on my tombstone when I die? That I was a good person or that I had the thinnest thighs?" ❖

READING

the fine print



Renting a first place can be an intimidating experience, and knowing their rights is invaluable in protecting first-time renters **Camille Penix** investigates the worst of what can happen to the uninformed renter. Photos by Heather Trimm.

During finals week in December of 2000, Rachel Peterson and her three roommates spent valuable study time cleaning their duplex. They wiped their windowsills with Q-tips and cleaned the space behind the fridge. They replaced the drip pans on the stove and sterilized the oven. They filled all of the nail holes in the walls and painted every corner including the bathrooms, closets and pantries. They painted the duplex from floor to ceiling — vaulted ceiling. The cleaning was not to aid their pre-test jitters. It was preparation for a Stebner Real Estate (SRE) walk-through.

Many students find themselves renting an apartment or house for the first time during their stay in Bellingham. What they don't know is that without knowledge of renters' rights and the internal workings of the court system, some can run into legal problems with their rental management corporations. Some may even end up in small claims court. SRE, specializing in housing around Western's campus, is one rental management corporation that is familiar with the inside of a court room.

"We had heard that you will not get your deposit back when you rent from Stebner," Peterson, 22-year-old Western senior, said.

They ended up getting all but an estimated \$175 back from their \$1,200 deposit after assisting the SRE employee on the walk-through. The fee was charged for cleaning carpets that the women said were in bad condition when they moved into the four-bedroom split-level duplex.

When Peterson and her roommates moved in, the duplex was not as clean as they expected.

"The carpet was really stained," Peterson said. "It almost looked like there was throw-up all the way up the stairs."

Splotches of paint were hastily applied to the wall, duct tape stuck to the high ceilings and cupboards were too dirty to put plates in, she said.

"You can please believe that our window sills were cleaned with no Q-tips before we moved in," Peterson said, with a raised voice, while laughing.

The SRE rental lease suggests cleaning with Q-tips as a way to ensure getting a full deposit back.

The women were sophomores, fresh out of the dorms, when they moved into the



duplex on 21st Street in September of 1999.

"We loved it when we first saw it — it was beautiful," Peterson said. "Then, we had a winter."

Peterson and her roommates nicknamed the downstairs 'The Arctic,' and spent little time there during the winter months. The women who lived in the two bedrooms downstairs kept towels shoved under the doors and always left them shut.

"I am not exaggerating, it was probably 40 degrees down there," Peterson said. "We had an astronomical heating bill."

The women broke the lease the following December because they said they couldn't handle another winter. SRE allowed them to break the lease for about \$100.

Would Peterson ever rent from Stebner again?

"Never," she said quickly. "The way they make you clean is not something you would have to do for anyone else."

SRE, established in 1995, owns \$2.98 million in Whatcom County rental property, according to Whatcom County tax assessment files. The company leases approximately 500 rental units, some of which it only manages and does not own.

Although numbers are difficult to ascertain due to inconsistencies in county court files, SRE alone, excluding many cases dealing directly with president Derek Stebner, has been involved in at least 44 small claims court cases within the last five years. SRE was the plaintiff in about 78 percent of those cases.

"Just because we spend a lot of time in court does not mean that we are the party being sued," said Kena Stebner, head leasing agent at SRE and Derek Stebner's wife. "If a tenant owes us money for past due rent or damages we choose to pursue them in small claims court."

Compared to other rental management companies in Whatcom County, SRE is involved in litigation with renters at a much higher rate.

Property Management Professionals, Inc. also rents property to students throughout Bellingham. The company manages about 1,800 units, and owns \$6.98 million in rental property, according to Whatcom County tax assessment files. Since 1997, Property Management has been involved in 36 small claims court cases. In about 76 percent of those cases, it was the plaintiff.

Despite the large difference in the number of renters —

Property Management handles about 3.6 times more units than SRE — SRE has more often gone into litigation with renters in the same period of time.

Despite the numbers, Kena Stebner said SRE is not difficult to deal with.

"We just ask our tenants to abide by the rules, regulations and policies explained in our lease agreement," she said. "It is pretty cut and dry."

SRE has revised its lease several times during the past seven years.

"We created a very specific lease agreement to protect property owners, the tenants and our management company," Stebner said. "Everything is laid out on the table from day one. We do not permit parties or noise and we want tenants to respect the property."

Crystal Fry, a 22-year-old Western senior, is one of the eight plaintiffs who has recently sued SRE.

Fry moved into a SRE-owned duplex on 24th Street and Donovan Avenue with three other women during the summer of 1999. They also had no previous renting experience, and ran into problems when moving out of the rental.

A provision in the SRE lease states that tenants must give 20 days notice before moving out; otherwise the lease will continue for another month.

Fry and her roommates said they mailed the notice to SRE, but the company said they didn't receive it. SRE then charged the tenants roughly \$1,200 more in rent.

"So we said, 'that's not gonna work out, Stebner — sorry,'" Fry said, shaking her short, red pigtails as she laughed.

Fry, who represented the rest of her roommates, said SRE knew the women were moving, because it put up a 'For Rent' sign in the front yard.

"[SRE] claimed that they do that to all their properties, regardless of if the tenants were moving," Fry said, pausing with her eyebrows furrowed and then letting out a short, quick laugh.





Kena Stebner explains a pre-lease agreement to a pair of potential renters.



The Stebner Real Estate office is busy with people interested in moving in to rental properties.

Fry and her roommates cleaned the unit and gave SRE the keys, behaving as if they were moving out.

Fry drafted a letter saying the lease was legally terminated, but SRE wouldn't sign it. Fry then filed a small claim notice for \$1250, which was the amount of the deposit. SRE then filed a counter-claim for \$2,500, the estimated cost of past due rent, damages, and the cost associated with re-renting the unit, which may include advertising and the lease transfer fee. Oct. 26, 2000, Fry and SRE went to court.

Although the judgement was in favor of SRE for \$268.50, Fry and her roommates considered it a victory.

Fry was unfamiliar with the law when the process began and prepared herself by using the law library in the Whatcom County Courthouse. She also talked to lawyers and previous rental managers. Fry brought pictures of her apartment, in the condition she left it in, as evidence.

"They accused us of leaving the property in horrible condition," Fry said. "It was so funny because he [Derek Stebner] had gone through explaining to the judge 'yeah the place was so trashed, there was garbage all over, blah, blah, blah,' and we were

"We had heard that you will not get your deposit back when you rent from Stebner."

**—Rachel Peterson
Western senior**

sitting there with all these photos showing how clean it was."

Fry said the overall experience taught her more about her rights as a renter.

"While it was a little aggravating having to deal with that company, experiencing the legal aspects of it was really, really helpful," Fry said.

As advice to tenants, Fry said to read over the lease carefully.

"Just know your rights," Fry said. "Because people have rights that they don't know about."

Kena Stebner also has some advice to first-time renters.

"Where do I start?," she said. "The most important piece of advice I can offer is this: make sure you know your roommates. When you enter a lease contract with someone, each tenant is liable in the event of a breach of contract. I have seen some interesting roommate situations over the years. First-time renters just need to make sure that they know someone really well before they decide to live together."

She likened selecting the perfect rental property to shopping for a car or any other major purchase.

"Another piece of advice: carefully inspect and evaluate properties before you rent," Kena said. "I hear horror stories of groups who decided to rent out old houses because the base rent is cheap. First time renters also need to evaluate and compare costs associated with maintaining the house. Sure, the base rent may be \$995 for a big five-bedroom house, but how much will it

cost to heat? Is landscape included in rent? Is water, sewer and garbage included in rent? I usually give prospective tenants power and gas averages for the previous year. Why would you want to rent an old house and shell out \$500 a month for your electric bill?"

Advice from tenants and landlords is valuable before a conflict. But when a disagreement arises, alternatives to small claims court exist. The Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center on Prospect Street is one of those alternatives. The organization offers mediation services for several issues, including rental disagreements. Filing in small claims court costs \$25. The WDRC gets a list of the plaintiffs and sends them a letter inviting them to mediate. For those who have filed, mediation is free; if not, WRDC charges a \$40 fee. WDRC is a small, non-profit organization, so most of the clientele hear about it after filing in small claims court. Ninety percent of WDRC's clientele choose to settle and cancel their court date.

At the WDRC, the landlord and tenant have a chance to share their side of the story, uninterrupted, and resolve the dispute prior to the court date.

"It is more empowering for the clients," said Cate Westphalen, executive director of WDRC. "They both have an opportunity to come out winning."

During mediation, clients negotiate and usually meet each person's needs, Westphalen said.

"Our biggest concern is that college students do not read their leases before they sign them," she said. "They need to know what they are signing."

Students don't understand the difference between a damage, security or pet deposit and don't understand that the deposit money isn't all guaranteed to come back, Westphalen said.

Westphalen advises students to walk through the apartment with the landlord during the move-in process to assess previous damage.

"Students need to scrutinize where they are moving in," she said. "They need to protect themselves, slow down and contemplate what they are doing."

Most students, after coming to the WDRC, give up when they realize they didn't read their lease. Most students would likely lose in court, because judges rule by the lease, Westphalen said.

Laurie Brown, property manager at Wellman and Zuck Properties, started working in the rental management field straight out of high school almost 25 years ago. Wellman and Zuck is a first-name basis, small company. It manages four buildings, the largest of which has 21 units and is located on

Western's south end of campus.

Brown is the former owner of Chuckanut Properties and said she likes working in a college town because it keeps her job exciting.

"It's hustle and bustle and find them a place," she said. "You meet all kinds of interesting people. There is always something new; it never gets boring."

Several years ago, Brown gave an informal information session on Western's campus with a goal to educate student renters. She said student renters encounter problems most often when they break their lease and forfeit their deposit, or when they don't

anticipate the costs that go along with moving.

She said some students don't read the lease carefully and have the mindset that they can break it if necessary. But signing a lease is essentially signing a contract for a specific amount of money.

"If they have to sign a 12-month lease to get a place, they go ahead and sign it," Brown said. "It's sort of a Catch-22."

Most students sign year-long leases, knowing they're only going

to reside in the unit for nine months. Even if they plan on going home for the summer, they must either pay rent for an empty place, sublease it or break the lease.

When the renters do move out, they don't have a feel for the cost of what rental companies pay for people to clean, Brown said. The average cleaning person makes \$25 an hour, so the cleaning for one unit can easily be \$100. If the unit has to be painted or needs work on the carpet, it gets even more expensive.

Brown advises renters to understand the paperwork before they sign it. She also said students should be realistic and accept responsibility for contracts they sign instead of blaming problems on the landlord.

"When someone tries to figure this out, it would be a happier place," Brown said. "It's hard on both of us." ❖

"We created a very specific lease agreement to protect property owners, the tenants and our management company. Everything is laid out on the table from day one. We do not permit parties or noise and we want tenants to respect the property."

**— Kena Stebner
head leasing agent**



sign here
sign here

X _____
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This ~~is~~ ^{was} a man's world

Although women have made significant progress toward gender equality in the workforce, some professions remain male-dominated. **Mindy Ransford** presents four women who accepted the challenge of working in a man's world. Photos by **Heather Trimm**.

In the 1970s Helen Reddy sang "I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman." Four local women — a Navy lieutenant, a cab driver, a police officer and a firefighter — have successfully broken into the workforce in areas once considered the domain of men. Each of these women has a different story to tell. But their stories form a pattern for a modern day phenomenon.

Christina Hansen, a self-proclaimed tomboy, is a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. Every day she makes decisions about aircraft maintenance and personnel.

Sarah Peters is one of two women taxi drivers in Bellingham.

Tonya Stanfield serves and protects Bellingham. As a local police officer, she knows what it is like to face adversity from being a female in uniform.

Jessie R. Schroeder graduated from Whatcom County Fire and Rescue Academy as one of three women in a class of 40.

"I definitely consider myself a tomboy," Hansen, 28, said. "I had three older brothers and I was always playing their games, climbing trees and playing with a football. I had a dirt bike. I had a lot of female friends, but I was more comfortable with guys."

Left: Norma Keiser, aviation metalsmith 3rd class, checks a hydraulic pump of an aircraft for leaks.
Right: Jessie Schroeder is a volunteer firefighter. She works at the District 6 station on Chuckanut Drive.



As a way to gain financial freedom from her family, Hansen, whose father served in the military, decided the Navy ROTC program at the University of California, San Diego would help her accomplish her goals.

"The ROTC paid for all my tuition, fees and books," she said. "I was able to graduate without any college loans."

Hansen said in her college ROTC classes had plenty of women in them, but once she was in the aviation field, there were far fewer.

According to statistics compiled by the U.S. Navy in 2002, women represent 8% of the aviation community and 14% of Naval officers. Hansen said while she feels accepted by the men she works with, on occasion problems arise with men from other squadrons.

"Sometimes they don't seem to give you the same amount of respect or treat you as they would if you were a man trying to do the same job," Hansen said. "It's nothing overt. It's just their body language or an intuition that because I am a woman I don't belong."

When passing through hangers, it is rare to see a woman. Hansen can often be found in the quality control office, signing papers for the new enlistees. Dressed in her khaki officer's uniform, she blends in with the taller men standing around.

Senior Chief Petty Officer Rex Spencer, a co-worker, said he doesn't consider Hansen's gender when he's working with her.

"What I do look at is that we are all in the Navy together, men and women," Spencer said. "I acknowledge rank, not sex."

For the most part, Hansen said she approaches her job like she would if she was doing something that wasn't in a male dominated environment — with ambition.

"There are times during the workday when I'm reminded I'm a woman, like when I go to a meeting and there are 40 people and I'm the only woman," Hansen said. "But sometimes I forget. I just see myself as wearing a uniform. When I am interacting with my co-workers, I don't think about being a woman, I think about getting my job done."

Hansen said women in the military offer a new perspective on the job, just like the perspectives of those who have been in the

service for a long time. Because she is one of a few women officers in her squadron, many of her co-workers come looking to her for a different perspective.

She always stresses that women in her squadron use the proper chain of command, meaning the enlisted women don't come straight to Hansen with a problem; they are expected to first address their immediate supervisor.

"At times I may be consulted for a different perspective; there may be something the male officers are missing," Hansen said. "For instance, in our plan of the week there was a note specifying a certain shoe required to be worn for inspection. I had to explain the term 'flat' couldn't be used to describe the type of shoe the officers were trying to describe. A flat is a shoe with a heel; they wanted a shoe with no heel. What they meant was an

"Sometimes they don't give you the same amount of respect. It's nothing overt. It's just their body language or an intuition that, because I am a woman, I don't belong."

— Christina Hansen

Oxford lace up. Little stuff like that sometimes isn't understood, so it's helpful to talk to a woman."

Hansen said she feels she has had to prove herself due to her lack of experience, more than because she is a woman.

"Hansen's rank is higher than mine," Spencer said. "But I have been in the Navy longer; we are on two different career paths. When the officers first get out of school, they are often advised to take the advice of their [chief petty officers] because we have been in a long time."

When Hansen graduated from college and joined the Navy, she went in as a commissioned officer.

"I'm in charge of people who have been in the service for 20 years or more," she said. "Some have children my age or older."

Hansen is considering leaving the Navy in December to start a family.

"I want to have kids," she said. "I want to be a mom. A lot of



people have been telling me I shouldn't get out and I could have a great career. They don't see motherhood as a career, or they don't value the role of a parent being committed to a child while the other spouse works."

Peters was brave enough to join the "boys club" of taxi cab drivers 15 months ago. Working a 12-hour day, Peters successfully gets tourists, drunks and those without their own transportation where they need to be.

Like Hansen, Peters, 30, was the only female child in her family.

"I was the middle of three children and the only girl," Peters said. "I was the only girl on my soccer team when I was growing up."

Soft spoken, she uses a light, easy-going tone with her customers.

"There are times when I'll get uneasy about a customer," Peters said. "They might look suspicious or be acting strangely. I just won't pick those people up, the money isn't worth the risk."

That is no different from what any of the guy drivers would do, only where they are worried about theft, I have to worry about theft and rape."

Peters doesn't see driving a cab as a lifetime commitment. On the side she makes Mardi Gras and Halloween masks and is writing a comic book.

"For now, driving the cab gives me the independence I crave and money to pay the bills," Peters said.

With her hair pulled back in a loose ponytail, Peters keeps one eye on the rearview mirror, one hand on the CB, and one on the wheel. Pulling to the curb, customers open the door to the shiny yellow cab Peters contracts out. With a grin on her face, Peters awaits the all too familiar comments she receives from most of

**"Some guys think they can make snide comments because I'm female and won't stand up for myself. After a few minutes in my cab they see that's not the case."
— Sarah Peters**

the groups she picks up.

"How long have they been letting women drive cabs?" One inebriated passenger slurred. "You're the prettiest cab driver I've ever seen."

Causally, and with the ease of a pro, Peters replied, "Well that's not saying much since I've seen the other cab drivers."

Peters said a lot of people are surprised to see a woman when they get into her cab.

"I have definitely had to prove myself more so than if I were male," Peters said.

Besides her passengers, Peters deals with some flack from her co-workers.

"They had a problem with me working nights," Peters said. "I had to really fight to be allowed to."

Peters said she knows her co-workers can get irritated with some things, like if she accidentally takes one of their rides.

"I always apologize, and I would never do that intentionally," Peters said. "Sometimes I can almost feel them rolling their eyes over the CB and attributing the mistake to my being a woman."

While her co-workers sometimes shun her, Peters said when it comes down to it, she has no doubt in her mind they would back her up if she needed help.

The raspy voice of the dispatcher directed Peters to a call in Fairhaven. Perplexed, Peters furrowed her brow trying to figure out the location. Breaking through the static another fellow driver gives Peters some tip on how to find the address.

She said she appreciated her co-workers' help but sometimes questioned their motives.

"Sometimes I don't know how much of it is help, and how much of it is them trying to make sure I know they've been

around longer than me," Peters said, rolling her eyes.

Single with no children, Peters said marriage is something she would like one day, but for now she likes what she's doing.

"I kind of like the reactions I get when I tell people I'm a cab driver," she said.

Peters said reactions range anywhere from pleasant surprise to flirtation to rudeness.

"Some guys think they can make snide comments as I drive because I'm female and won't stand up for myself," Peters said. "After spending a few minutes in my cab, however, they soon see that's not the case."

Schroeder, a volunteer firefighter, and police officer Stanfield both grew up with sisters, but both said they were always very competitive and played sports.

"It seemed almost natural that I would choose a profession that had a competitive edge to it," Stanfield, 37, said. "I studied architecture at Washington State University because I liked the fact that there weren't many women in the field."

Entering into a male-dominated field is one way to nourish the competitive spirit. Each woman described some adversity regarding her chosen career path, but they also stressed the camaraderie and benefits of their jobs.

Schroeder said the firemen she works with are like a second family that takes care of each other.

Stanfield explained that, as a representative of the community, it is important to have both men and women on the force.

Like Stanfield, Schroeder said women firefighters are valuable because in some instances, a person will be calmer with a woman than with a man.

"Little kids who are hurt usually want their mothers, so it is beneficial to have a woman firefighter to keep the child calm," Schroeder said.

Barabara Collamer, a psychology instructor at Western, said women don't flock to these types of jobs.

"Women go in these directions a lot of times because of their backgrounds," Collamer said. "They might have come from a military family, so they go into the military. Also women who grew up as tomboys are more likely to enter these fields."

Collamer said in the past women were allowed into these jobs to fill quotas, but that is not the trend today.

"These women have to meet the physical demands of the job," Collamer said. "In most cases the jobs are not going to accommodate them because they are women."

Schroeder said in order to become a volunteer fire fighter she has had to prove herself by working harder to prove her physical capabilities.

"You have to watch your diet and work out harder," she said. "Men naturally have more leverage than women do; I mean, we have 25 percent body fat, where men are dealing with 12 on average."

Schroeder said she still wears makeup and styles her hair.

"But if my pager goes off at 2 a.m., with morning breath and

all, I'm out of there," Schroeder said.

In the United States, around 5,600 women currently work as full-time, career firefighters and officers. Several hundred hold the rank of lieutenant or captain, and about 60 are district chiefs, battalion chiefs, division chiefs, or assistant chiefs. An estimated 30-40,000 women are volunteer firefighters in the United States.

Though many roadblocks for women have been eliminated, stereotypes still exist about motherhood.

Stanfield, who has been married for 6 years, explains that she maintains her family as well as her career.

"It is a myth that women who perform these types of jobs can't balance a family as well," she said. "My husband supports me."

Peters and Schroeder said it is sometimes a misconception that women in these fields are lesbians.

"The women who forged the way for us had to be tougher than us," Officer Stanfield said. "What it really comes down to is we are women and we are capable." ❧

Left: Tonya Stanfield works as a crime prevention officer for the Bellingham Police Department.

Below: Sarah Peters has been working as a taxi driver for 15 months; she just recently began driving for Evergreen Taxi in Bellingham.

Bottom: Lt. Christina Hansen, an officer in the United States Navy, models 'crane ears,' which are worn to protect ears from loud aircraft engines.





A CERTIFIED SHORTAGE

Many of the 80 million Americans who will retire in the next decade will depend on certified nursing assistants to care for them. Laura Harlos reports on a nationwide CNA shortage that is affecting one local care facility. Photos by Heather Trimm.

Norma Spring sits in her wheelchair, shoulders slightly slumped forward, eyes wide in a blank stare. Her shoulder-length gray hair falls softly around her contented face. Her husband pushes her chair out of the elevator and toward her room.

"She made it all the way to the front door," he says.

Spring, 90, has Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia. Alzheimer's is a disease of the brain where cells are destroyed without being replaced. It results in impaired memory, thinking and behavior.

Spring got past the staff at Cordata Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center where she lives, down the elevator and to the front door before her husband caught her. Spring's near-escape is only one symptom of the effects of an overworked staff.

"She's always out cruising around in other people's rooms,"

says Catira Morris, a CNA at Cordata, a 122-bed, 24-hour nursing care facility in Bellingham. For CNAs, dealing with the unexpected is part of the daily routine.

Healthcare facilities nationwide are in need of people like Morris. Each day she wakes up patients for breakfast and helps them get dressed and take showers. She also helps them use the restroom and takes care of anything else they need. Despite demand, significantly fewer people are entering Morris' profession. The result is an overwhelming shortage of CNAs and nurses.

The nationwide shortage has put a strain on the healthcare industry to recruit and retain vital employees. Low wages, few benefits, more appealing industry alternatives and strenuous, stressful working conditions attribute to a nearly 100 percent annual turnover rate for CNAs.

The starting salary for a beginning CNA is \$7.60 per hour, less than \$15,000 per year. This low wage makes it difficult to support a family as a CNA.

According to the American Health Care Association the nation needs up to 60,000 nurses and 250,000 CNAs. This shortage will only get worse when the nearly 80 million Baby Boomers reach retirement age, beginning around 2009.

Whatcom County has 14 senior healthcare facilities. As the county's elderly population grows, these facilities will not be able to keep up. Soon, more CNA positions will have to be created and filled to keep up with the overwhelming need.

According to the American Health Care Association, nursing homes serve about 1.5 million Americans. This number is expected to more than quadruple to 6.5 million in the next 50 years.

This shortage has already made its mark on local facilities like Cordata.

"The trend is quite negative right now," says Terry Robertson, executive director at Cordata. "I think it is going to have to reach a crisis before anyone pays attention to it."

To compensate for the shortage, the center's employees are forced to take on the extra work. This is a difficult task for everyone to handle.

outside the patient's door. Patients press the button when they need help for any reason.

At 1:30 p.m., two CNAs are working, Tyrone and DeDe Prado. Their purple nursing outfits set them apart from other healthcare staff. Prado walks briskly out of room 230 and tells the patient's visitors it is OK for them to enter the room. Her blond ponytail hurries after her as she shifts her attention down the hall to two more rooms with blinking lights.

Ding-ding, ding-ding, ding-ding. The call buttons imitate the sound of a car door demanding attention when its driver has left the headlights on. Prado walks in one room, and in seconds the light turns off and she is on her way to the next. The dinging stops eight minutes after it began.

Prado's cheeks are flushed pink from a full day of running around in her white sneakers. It has been a race to keep up with all the patients' needs.

Mary Gould, activities coordinator at Cordata, walks quickly through the hall announcing that the Salvation Army will be here at 2 p.m. to provide entertainment and everyone is invited to attend. She walks down the hall, stopping occasionally to stick her head into rooms and make her announcement.

At 1:43 p.m. the dinging begins again. Two minutes later

Left: Catira Morris has a caring touch with the patients she works with at Cordata Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center.
Right: Morris keeps track of the eating patterns of her patients.



"There is stress and frustration because, as the administrator, I have to go in and ask (CNAs and nurses) 'can you take on more? Can you take one more patient?' Robertson says. "And their work load gets higher and higher."

Although state law does not stipulate a maximum number of patients per nurse, the ratio CNAs work with is considered by many to be strenuous and unsafe.

"We are down to two nursing assistants by 1 p.m.," says Brenda Tyrone, a CNA at Cordata. "There is supposed to be one nurse per five residents."

The two nursing assistants on duty are responsible for 26 patients. With 13 patients per nurse, the afternoons typically are exhausting.

Each patient has a call button in their room that lights up a panel and dings at the nurse's station. A light also illuminates

Tyrone strides out of one room and into the next. The dinging stops again at 1:47 p.m. for about 15 seconds. Tyrone barely makes it back to the nursing station, before the dinger sounds again. She moves swiftly toward the patient's room. In one minute the dinger is silent again, this time for a little longer.

At 1:50 p.m. both CNAs are behind the nurse's desk doing their daily paper work. They are preparing the next crew, whose shift will begin in 40 minutes. At 1:51 p.m. the dinging begins again and both CNAs are off to different rooms.

Working with a skeleton crew in the afternoon makes it difficult for CNAs to provide timely service to patients.

"Sometimes there are lights going off and we can't get to them right away," Morris says. "If you go into a room to get somebody dressed, it's going to take 10 to 15 minutes to do that. So if a light goes off, I can't get there."



The nation needs up to 60,000 nurses and 250,000 CNAs. This shortage will only get worse when the nearly 80 million Baby Boomers reach retirement age, beginning around 2009.

Patients sometimes get stuck in the bathroom waiting for a CNA to get to them, Morris says.

Constant demand for attention makes taking a break virtually impossible on busy afternoons.

"Sometimes we don't get our afternoon breaks," Tyrone says. "There are going to be days when you just can't do it."

The combination of low pay and physical and mental strain deters many potential professionals from making this career choice. Many new CNAs do not last longer than 90 days.

Turnover is a constant worry for administrators and others working in the facility. Administrators focus on recruiting potential caregivers while other employees are expected to constantly ease new employees into their environment.

"So far this year, turnover (for Cordata) is at about 90 percent for all employees in the facility," Robertson says. "CNAs certainly have the highest turnover rate."

Tania Daniel, 66, has been a patient in the facility for almost two years. She says she remembers many CNAs that couldn't handle the stress of the job.

"I remember a few that left right away," Daniel says. "It was too hard for them and they couldn't do it."

"The ones that stay are always so cheerful. I don't see how they do it," Daniel says. "Cat [Morris] is out of the ordinary; she does things that surprise the heck out of you."

To keep up with the constant turnover of CNAs and nurses, Cordata holds training sessions in the facility three days a week. The high turnover rate is an enormous expense for the facility. At Cordata, more than \$11,000 is spent each month on initial and refresher training for employees.

Patricia Albright is a patient in the facility for the second time. She was admitted for the first time in September, after extensive hip surgery. She spent five weeks in the rehabilitation center recovering from the initial surgery. She was readmitted in May to recover after a second surgical procedure.

"I'll be here until I can learn to get in and out of bed by myself," Albright says.

"She'll have to learn how to put lotion on her feet," Morris teases.

"If I waited for that, I'd be here till I'm 90," Albright says with a laugh.

Albright had to wear a body cast from her chest down the first time she stayed at Cordata.

"It was a silly looking thing with a broomstick keeping my legs apart," Albright says. "The nurses told me they were going to save it so I would be able to ride it home."

Albright lays her head back down on her pillow to rest from telling the exhausting story. Her rosy cheeks and short, curly brown hair stand out against the white hospital bed pillow.

"It used to take four girls to get me out of bed," Albright says.

"Two would be at my feet and two at the top. They would load me into a boat of a wheel chair. I thought everyone was going to have a broken back by the time I got out of here."

"We are still here," Tyrone says. She smiles at the memory of loading the upbeat, cheerful Albright into her wheel chair last September.

Each day health care professionals face difficult situations. They are a vital part of the industry as they offer constant comfort to ailing patients. They take care of children, parents and grandparents.

"There are a lot of individuals working in nursing homes that are very dedicated," Robertson says. "The are [generous] individuals and don't get thanked enough. I'm just amazed at the staff here."

Morris recognizes that her job entails more than turning down beds and escorting patients to the bathroom.

"You have to be more personable than just sufficient," Morris says. "I just see them as all my grandmas and grandpas. You have to be sensitive to their feelings."

Donald Zettle, 75, inches his wheelchair into his room with his feet. He moves slowly in front of his roommate's television and then stops, hunched over in a slumber.

**"I just see them as all my grandmas and grandpas. You have to be sensitive to their feelings."
—Catira Morris, certified nursing assistant**



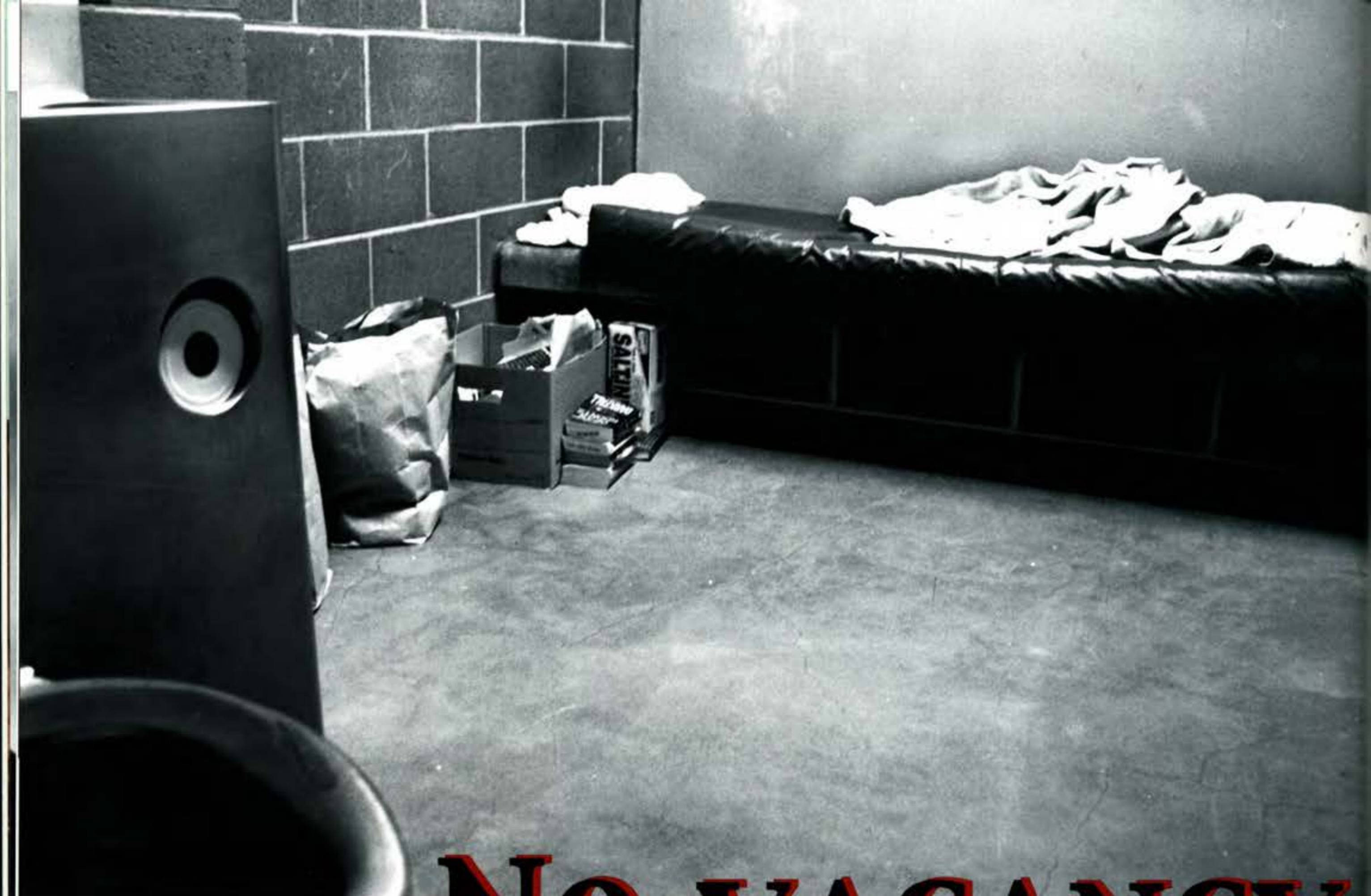
Opposite page:
Nurses help patients in rehabilitation centers with personal hygiene and medication needs.
Left:
Dorothy Hemingway, 88, enjoys a visit from one of her 15 grandchildren.

"Donald. Donald, wake up," Morris says. "Lift your feet, Donald, so I can move your chair."

Zettle barely wakes up long enough to lift his feet. Morris wheels him toward his side of the room.

"OK, lets put you into bed," Morris says. She turns down his bedding and helps him up into bed. Zettle mumbles, somewhere in between asleep and awake, about having gained 10 pounds since this morning. Morris smiles and reassures him he has not gained that much weight in one day. Comfortable in his bed, Zettle falls right to sleep.

Morris smiles, confident that Zettle is alright, and leaves the room. ✎



NO VACANCY

The population of the Whatcom County Jail has increased dramatically since its completion in 1984. **Taylor Phifer** talks to inmates, jail staff and county officials to find out what life is like in an overcrowded jail, and what the county is doing to relieve the pressure. Photos by Heather Trimm.

At the end of a cold hallway, Charles Gjedde sits on a bench, holding his hands between his knees. His sandy, shoulder-length hair is stringy and frames his sharp facial features. He lifts a hand to rub his unshaven face; an orange bracelet hangs from his wrist.

"This place is all waiting," Gjedde, 42, said of the Whatcom County Jail, where he is an inmate. "We play a lot of cards and read a lot and wait. You wait to eat or wait to go work in the kitchen. It's all waiting."

The facility, completed in 1984, was originally designed to hold 146 inmates, but now holds 234. Gjedde said he has been in the jail since April 10 of this year on a felony assault charge. He was due for release in late June.

"One of the worst parts is you don't know who you are going to have to be in there with," he said, pointing to a cell across the hall containing two thin, dark green sleeping mats. "The guy I'm with now is the worst. He passes gas all the time.

I swear he does it on purpose. Then he'll always be bitchin' about how he got here. He never shuts up."

Lt. Mark Raymond, director of corrections for the Whatcom County Jail, said the jail was designed to hold one inmate per cell.

"Each cell has had a bunk added to it and now houses two inmates," he said. "Putting in the extra bunk was supposed to be a solution to the overcrowding issue."

Since the facility's completion, Whatcom County's growth has outpaced the jail's ability to process inmates, Raymond said.

"When the county population goes up, obviously the percentage of less-desirables goes up as well," he said.

The Whatcom County Jail is designed as a holding facility for individuals awaiting trial and transfer to a state prison or who are serving time for less serious crimes. Those who are sentenced to one year or less for any given charge do their time in the county jail. The state prison system accepts only those who have been sentenced to more than a year per charge.

"What this means is that if you are charged with DUI, punishable by one year per charge, three times, the sentences run back to back," he said. "You will be serving three years, but you will be serving them here. This doesn't help the population problem."

As a result, the jail has created booking restrictions on what crimes are punishable by serving time, Raymond said.

"We limit what type of offender will come in," he said. "We don't accept any out-of-county misdemeanor warrants; we take all domestic violence offenders as well anyone charged with a felony."

The crime standards established by the jail created the need for an alternative punishment system for those who commit less serious crimes.

"We have established an alternative programs division and we divert a lot of people (who have committed less serious offenses) to that program," Raymond said. "Right now they have over 300 people in that program."

This diversion program takes these offenders and puts them on work crews. The crews are put to work cleaning roads and parks and doing civic enhancement projects in lieu of serving time. Most, crimes such as shoplifting or vagrancy, will fall into this category to an extent, he said.

"We do have provisions," Raymond said. "If a person is out of control or causing a major disturbance we will bring them in here (the jail) and hold them. Or if you were caught three or four times shoplifting, then it's time to do something about that."

Police Sgt. Mark Holst is the director of the alternative program and said it began as a small operation in 1990.

"We had to start this program to free up bed space in the jail," he said. "We take the nonviolent, less restrictive inmates and put them to supervised work."

Holst said the program has different levels depending on what the inmates qualify for and what fits best for them. They range from supervised work crews to a private workhouse. The work crews are for inmates who need more supervision. Those in the workhouse hold regular jobs in the community and report every night back to the facility where they stay. It works as a sort of in-house probation. Currently, the workhouse, the least restrictive level of the alternative program, hosts 44 inmates.

Despite the alternative program, Raymond said the jail is still overcrowded. With the inmates grossly outnumbering the correction officers, Raymond stresses communication is the officer's best weapon against any violent outbreaks in the facility.

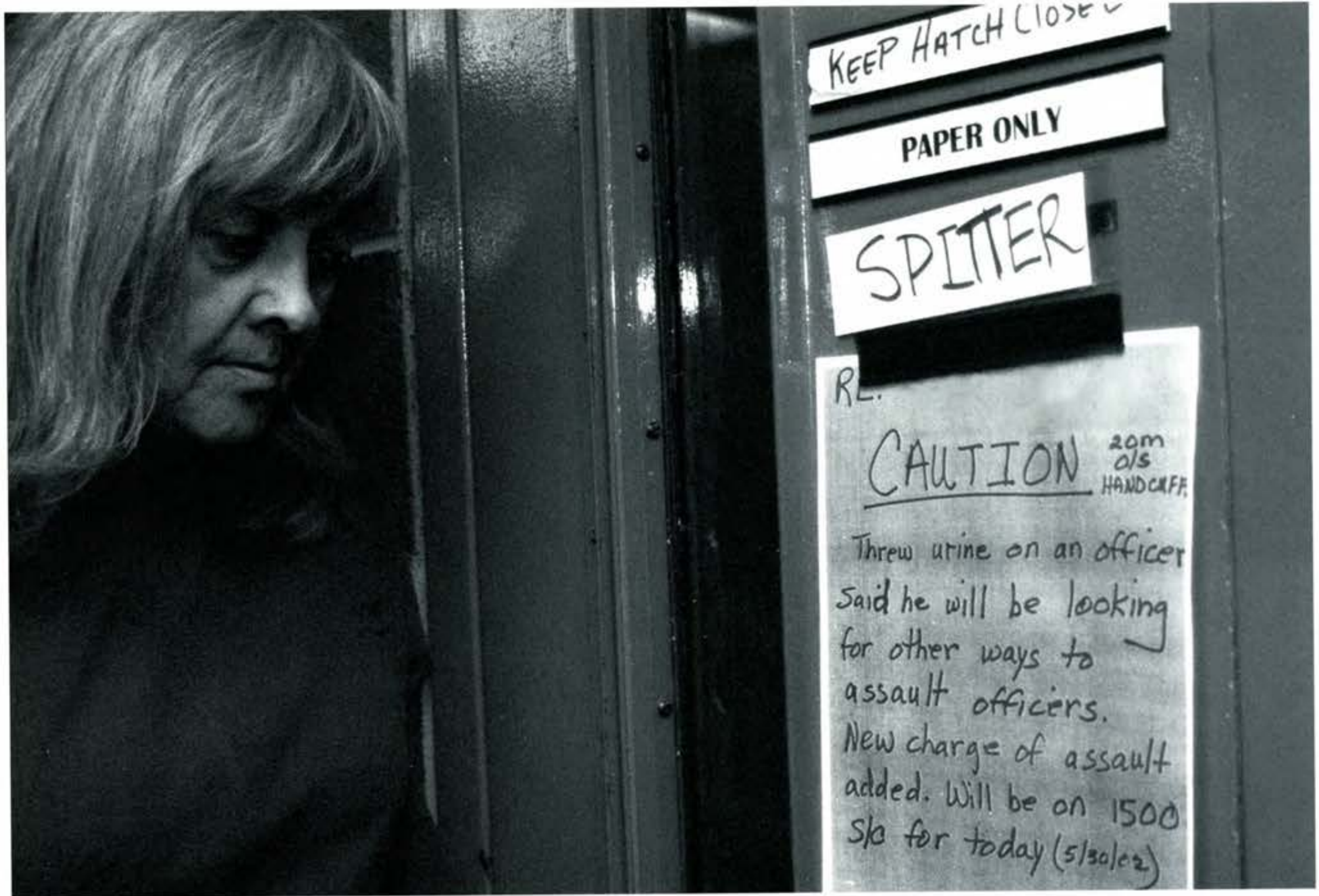
"The jail has several assaults a year between inmates, and we also have several assaults on the staff," he said. "The most important tool a corrections officer has is his mouth. The officers have to be able to communicate effectively with the inmates, who they spend eight hours a day with. Unlike the judges and the law enforcement officers, the corrections officer is the one who has to be able to manage that individual."

Raymond stresses that the situation for inmates in the county jail is probably less favorable compared to other state facilities

"If you ask anyone, who has done both state and county time they will tell you county time is hard-

Opposite page: A typical cell in the Whatcom County Jail.
Right: The Alternative Corrections Center organizes work camps to free up space in the jail.





er," he said. "The state has programs. They have weight rooms, outdoor recreation areas and jobs. They have things to fill your time. If you come to do time here, we are going to warehouse you. I'm going to put you in a room and you are going to do your time there."

The general population of the facility resides on the second floor. Here, in small, windowless double-bunked rooms, men clad in green pajama-like outfits spend their time. Some are snoring, some are talking and few are smiling.

A long hallway is separated by what are called "Sally Ports." These are small closet-like rooms with large, blue steel doors on each end. Only one door can be opened at a time. Once inside the room with both doors closed, an officer in the control booth watching through a camera can unlock the other door. This maximum-security measure assures that no two doors are ever opened at the same time.

Gjedde is currently a 'Trusty' in the jail. This is a position inmates can obtain through good behavior. Most look forward to it because it gets them out of the cell, he said.

"I sweep the floors in the hallway, keep it clean and keep an eye on things," he said. "It's really the only exercise I get and it gets me out of the cell."

"The trusties are in a position to make their time easier," Raymond said. "They do some little tasks and have some level of

responsibility. They are still inmates though."

Jaime Hernandez, 32, spent three months in the Whatcom County Jail in October of 2000 for DUI and probation violations. He remembers his experience with disdain.

"The whole time I was there the place was completely full," he said. "They would give some of the guys work releases because they needed room for more people."

Hernandez said he heard from other inmates that Whatcom County Jail is the worst.

"If you're in jail, it's because you have a problem," he said. "But they keep you there without any distractions and some people — they start to get crazy. You don't have anything to occupy your mind, so you sit and think how you could have gotten away with what you did. They don't offer any counseling for those people who want to make their lives better."

The weekends were the worst time to be in the jail, Hernandez said.

"They would bring in the drunks who would start to scream 'let me out I don't deserve this,'" he said. "It was frustrating. You wake up and don't realize where you are. That's the worst."

Once every week for one hour, the inmates have rec time on a basketball court for fresh air and exercise, Hernandez said. The area has four concrete walls and a ceiling. At one end of the room

are large grated windows to the outside. The windows let in a slight breeze and cast four sunlight patterns on the concrete floor.

"They don't have a basketball," Hernandez said. "They don't have any games. They don't have anything. So we would just run - run in a circle around the court for an hour. One hour a week."

Starck Follis, a criminal defense lawyer in Whatcom County, said that incarceration regulations only deal with cruel and unusual situations.

"I know the jail is well over capacity and they don't have enough man power," he said. "These conditions will persist until the federal government looks at overcrowding as cruel and unusual."

Lt. Greg DePaul works with the jail as well as the alternatives program and equates the lack of recreation time directly to the overcrowding.

"There used to be state standards on inmate recreation," he said. "When ever you have a policy in place, it has to be funded. The state didn't want to fund this policy anymore."

Jail officials would like to give inmates as much exercise and recreation time as possible but limitations on supervision and manpower do to the over population, make it difficult, DePaul said.

"With overcrowding we have to take steps to protect the safety of the facility as well as the inmates," he said. "If it is not a right, necessarily, we have to take it away. We would like to have a strict mandate imposed by the state, not only health standards but population standards. There are no such things right now."

Seven officers are in charge of the entire jail population, DePaul said. One officer supervises the 128 inmates on the second floor.

"Getting the inmates out in the rec area is not only good for them but it's good for the officers," he said. "It acts as a stress reliever for everyone."

When the inmates are allowed out into the recreation area, an officer can safely supervise only four at a time, DePaul said. With the population at this level it is impossible to get all the inmates out for more than one hour a week due to time constrictions.

Whatcom County Council Chairman Ward Nelson said, despite the overcrowding, no firm plan exists to expand the jail facility.

"Last year the public voted down both initiatives for a one-tenth of one percent tax increase for the jail," he said. "It's not easy to put together or expand a jail. We are in the process. We need better utilization of our other services. We need to maximize those services to take some pressure off the jail."

Nelson said the county doesn't need another jail "hard-site." Rather than building a new jail, they need to concentrate on expanding programs that defer inmates away from the jail and into programs that will deal with their specific problems. These programs work on a probation system that keeps strict tabs on inmates while offering a community service.

"The alternative program we have now is excellent," he said. "It simply is not big enough."

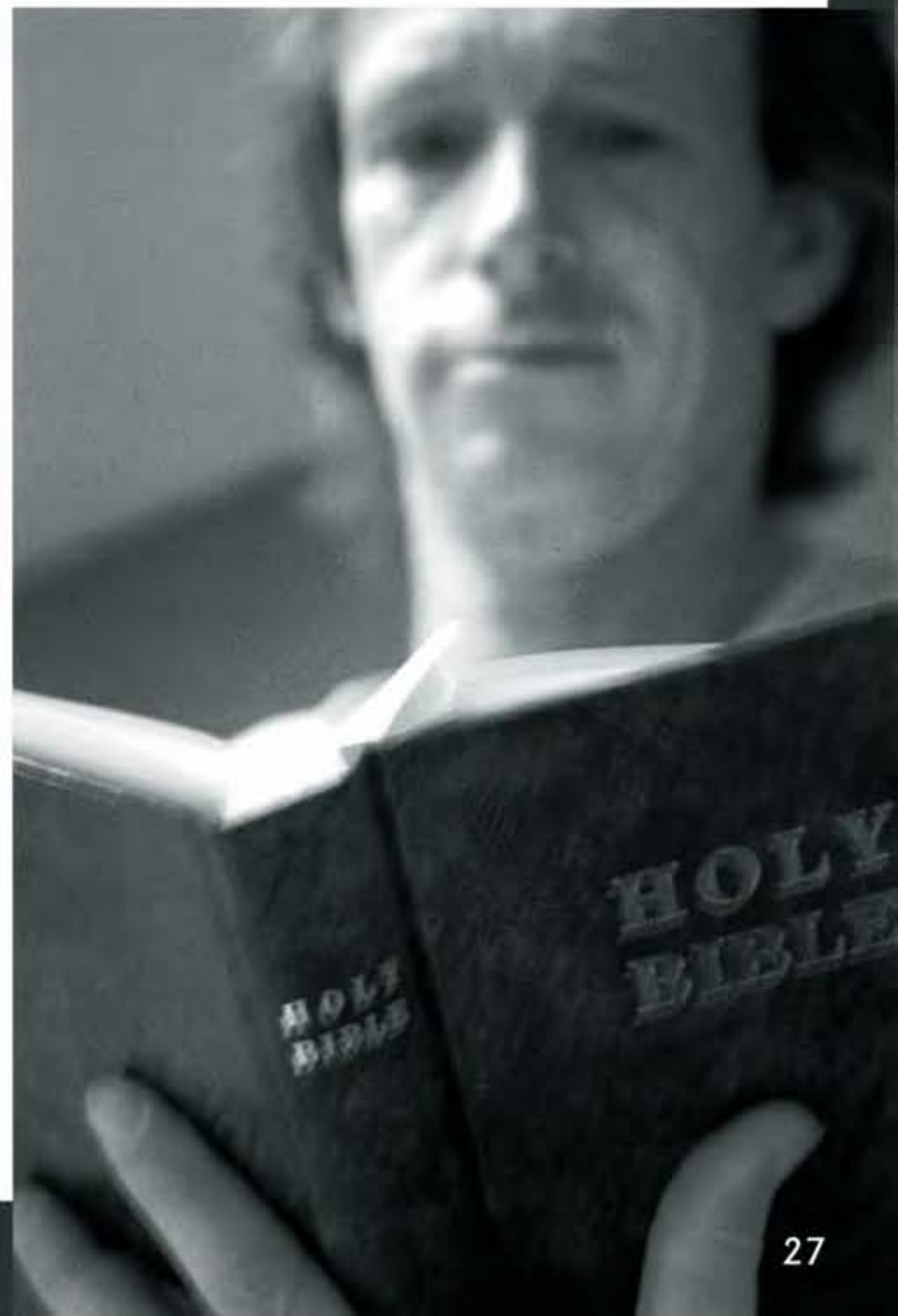
The Council will re-address the overcrowding problem in the next budget session, Nelson said. Until then they have no plan.

"We have to expand and develop our identification programs (to identify those offenders who qualify for alternative programs)," Nelson said. "We would like to develop more services to deal with substance abuse and those with mental problems. We have to put our wants and needs into one area and narrow it down to a certain course of action. The county is required (by federal law) to provide certain facilities. Anything we do will require the community's involvement."

Until a plan is in place and the county is given the go-ahead by the vote of the public, the jail conditions won't change, he said. ❖

Opposite page: Joyce Pearson chats with an inmate in the Whatcom County Jail. She works as a mental health coordinator, helping keep inmates from hurting themselves or others. (Photo altered to protect the identity of the inmate.)

Below: Charles Gjedde said he passes his time in jail by reading the bible.



Every day thousands of people travel to and from classes, passing through the heart of campus. Red Square is a great place to people-watch. Spend an hour, and eventually everyone you know will pass by. Try it sometime. Photo essay by **Heather Trimm**.



red square



On sunny days, the Miller Hall tables are a place where an array of people gather to meet, eat and study.

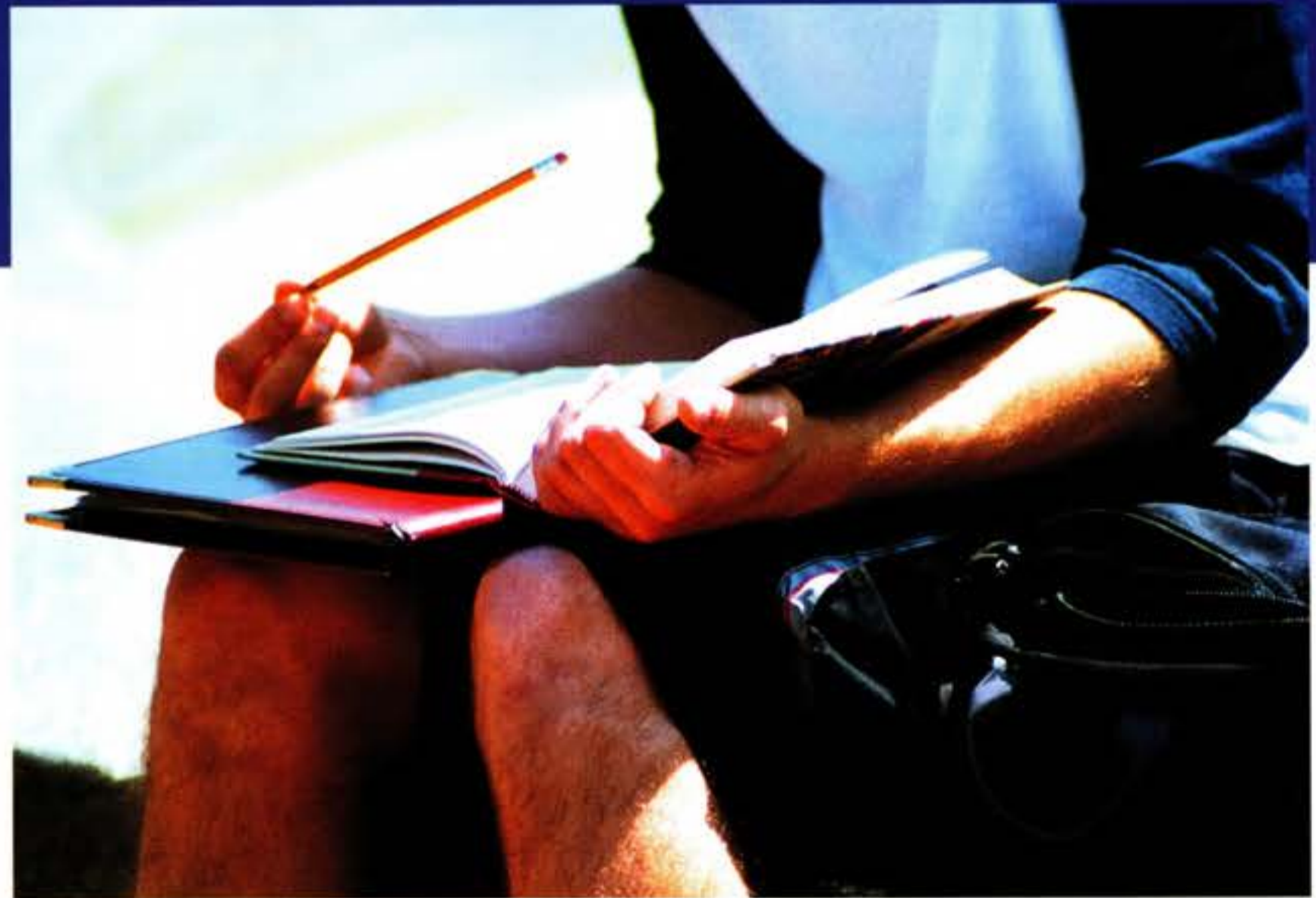
Tiffany Smith and Filomon Afenigus, both 18, chat after class in the shadow of the Humanities Building. "Everyone has something they love to do within Red Square," Afenigus said.



Groups of Hacky Sack players form in Red Square throughout the day. Lucas Snider, 19, said he plays several times a week. "It's better than homework," he said.



Lloyd Hungate adds chlorine to Fisher Fountain. Facilities Maintenance personnel test the acidity of the water daily, adding chemicals when necessary to keep the water clean. Hungate said the fountain is not a swimming pool and asks people not to wade.



Thad Anderson, 23, is studying for his last final ever. "Red Square is about acceptance for everyone in the center of Western's liberal campus," he said. He sees the bricks as symbolic of the paths people take through life.

a major league moment



The first day at a new job is always rough. Jon Walsh talks to Mariners' prospect **Ron Wright** about his brief but eventful first call-up to the big leagues.

It was April 12 when the call came to Ron Wright, first baseman for the Triple A Tacoma Rainiers. The Mariners' legendary designated hitter, Edgar Martinez, was out with an injury and M's manager Lou Piniella said the team needed Wright to take his spot on the roster.

"When I was called up it was really exciting for me because [Piniella] asked me personally," Wright, 26, said. "When I talked to him he said, 'we need a bat and we need you up here.' It was exciting. It's what you work for your whole life."

It was his first time in the big leagues after playing in the minors for six seasons. He was drafted out of Kamiakin High School in Kennewick by the Atlanta Braves in 1994. He also played in the Pittsburgh Pirates, Cincinnati Reds and Tampa Bay Devil Rays' minor league systems before signing with the Mariners last December.

He made his debut on April 14, in Arlington, Texas against the Rangers. The game didn't go exactly as planned, however, and it ended up being the only game he played in before being sent back down to Tacoma. But for one glorious day, the 6-foot-one-inch, 230-pound Wright was where he wanted to be, in a major league uniform, playing for one of the best teams in baseball and skipper Lou Piniella.

"I'm glad I just made it there and got that out of the way," Wright said. "Because now I can say, 'okay, I can do it. I've made it, I've proven to myself that I can play at that level and now I know I have the potential to be a major leaguer.'"

It was a warm, Sunday afternoon in Arlington in front of 33,000 fans when he made his debut, batting seventh as the designated hitter. Pitching for the Rangers was veteran left-hander pitcher Kenny Rogers. This was Wright's opportunity to show he had what it took to play in the big leagues.

Wright said he was awestruck when he was sent up to play for the Mariners. He was standing in a major league batter's box, facing a veteran pitcher in a major league stadium for the first time. He was truly in the big-time.

"The fans amaze you," he said, "but it's when you step into the batter's box that everything becomes real. When you first step into the batter's box, that's when it gets to you. The fans and all that didn't get me as much as that first at bat against Rogers.

"Normally I don't mind hitting off a guy like Rogers, but on that day it was kind of tough. You try to block out whoever you face. But when you're that excited and it's your first at bat, all you want to see is a pitcher throwing about 95 mph because you can't wait to swing that bat. Rogers is more of a finesse pitcher that doesn't throw that hard, changes speeds and hits his spots."

In his first at-bat against Rogers, a 14-year veteran, Wright came up empty with a strikeout on three pitches.

"He threw me a sinking fastball that just ran away from me," he said. "He threw me everything he had in that first at-bat, knowing I was going to be excited and anxious to make contact."

His second time up, things got worse — much worse. He hit into a triple play, one of the rarest plays in baseball. It was the

first triple play in the majors this season and only the sixth time a Mariner has hit into one in the club's 25-year history.

Mariner Ruben Sierra was on third base and John Olerud was on first. Wright hit the ball back to the mound and Rogers threw to second to force out Olerud. Ranger shortstop Alex Rodriguez threw to home plate when Sierra tried to score, trapping Sierra between home and third.

While that was happening, Wright was running at full speed toward second base, trying to get into scoring position. Rogers finally tagged out Sierra, threw to second and Wright was tagged out to end the inning.

"I made decent contact, but I hit it back to the pitcher and it was kind of a weird base running play all around," Wright said.

In his third at bat, things didn't get much better. Wright hit a hard ground ball to Rodriguez, who threw to the second baseman to force out the runner and then threw to first for a double play.

"A-Rod just turned it on me," Wright said. "There was nothing I could do." In three at-bats, Wright was responsible for six outs.

Although his debut didn't go as planned Wright believes that if he got another opportunity he would be ok going back up. It's now a waiting game for his next shot, it could be in a week, a month or a few years, if ever. He just has to keep playing and getting better and wait for another call down to Tacoma.

"If you can focus in on the pitcher and block everything else out, it's still just baseball," Wright said. "Pitchers still make mistakes, just not as many of them and hitters are that much better too. There are levels all the way to the top and that's just a higher level."

Even though he only played one game, his childhood fantasy was fulfilled, Wright said. Making it to the big leagues is what every player works for.

"It's just really cool to be suiting up in a big league clubhouse just a couple lockers down from players like Ichiro," Wright said. "They're a good bunch of guys. They gave me a good reception, congratulated me and treated me like one of them." He got to know many of the players during spring training, when he was one of the last players cut from the roster.

Wright said it was good to finally make it to the big leagues because many talented players spend their whole careers trying to make it and never do.

"There were a lot of battles I had to fight to make it there," he said. "With injuries and things that have gone on in my career, it made my debut that much sweeter for me." Wright has missed two full seasons recovering from various injuries, including a ruptured disk in his back.

Left-handed pitcher Matt Jarvis is a teammate of Wright's. Jarvis signed with the Rainiers in November of 2001. He believes Wright is a big part of why the Rainiers have been at the top of their division all season.

"The kid can hit," Jarvis said. "He's a very dangerous hitter that will make a pitcher pay for their mistakes. I think we're doing as well as we are this season because of Wright. He's a great guy to have around the clubhouse and a great teammate."

Wright said he hopes to prove that he can contribute to a major league ball club.

"I want to get back," he said. "But its going to be tough. They just don't give away big league jobs. There are a lot of guys who come out here and hit a ton every year, but sit here in the minor leagues and rot. There are only so many spots up there. You just have to mind your business, keep going after it and hope somebody will see you and want you up there."

Kevin Kalal, assistant general manager and manager of baseball operations for the Rainiers, said he was happy to see Wright get a shot with the Mariners and hopes he'll get another shot.

"Ron has a lot of years left; he's only 26 and is already a veteran type player," Kalal said. "Since he's played with us, he's been a very steady contributor. He adds additional power to the lineup, he's not just a free swinging power hitter. He doesn't strike out much and can

put the ball in play. Hopefully he can get another shot with the Mariners. His first opportunity was pretty short-lived."

Wright said he's also hoping to get another chance to play for Piniella, who's in his 10th season with the Mariners and has amassed almost 800 wins with the club.

"Lou's a good guy to play for because he expects a lot out of you, but keeps a light attitude," Wright said. "I think as a player you want someone like him as a coach because he expects a lot out of you and that's good because you expect a lot out of yourself. He's a good coach because he's someone who keeps it loose and fun at the same time."

When he was told he was going back to Tacoma after his brief stay in the big leagues to make room for another pitcher on the roster, Wright thanked Piniella for the opportunity and said he hoped he could come back sometime soon.

"When I was sent back down he said 'sorry, we just need a pitcher."

For the time being Wright is going to go out there and do what he does best for the Rainiers. "Just hit the ball and drive in runs." ♣



**"There were a lot of battles I had to fight to make it there. With injuries and things that have gone on in my career, it made my debut that much sweeter for me."
— Ron Wright**

