Hitting the road

The heat is on
Taking off with the WSU Alumni Association—hitting the road. And seeing the world. 8, 10

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As of January 1, payout rates are the highest they’ve been in 16 years.

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Wayne and Lindsey Asmussen, both ’86, began dating while they were at WSU. Wayne majored in business (finance) and Lindsey sports management. He loved playing intramurals, she loved cheering him on, and both loved cheering for the Cougs at all sports events. They have remained involved with WSU throughout their lives, both philanthropically and through board and committee service. Wayne learned about the benefits of charitable gift annuities while serving on the WSU Foundation Gift Acceptance Committee for over a decade. The Asmussens have now invested in WSU’s future by funding a charitable gift annuity using appreciated stock. “By providing us excellent tax benefits and future income,” said Wayne, “it has turned out to be a great estate planning tool.”
Flashbacks
The article in the Spring 2024 issue about Rico's in downtown Pullman was the first article in a long time to give me flashbacks. I was a PhD student from 1970 to 1974 and spent many a great afternoon in a "graduate seminar" at Rico's. There were just a handful of us in the program in the speech department, so spending the afternoon sipping beer and pontificating was a weekly occurrence. Often the class was guided by Professor Paul (PC) Wadleigh. I loved those times, so thanks for the great memories!

BRUCE WASSERMAN '75  PHD THEATRE ARTS, SPEECH

Thank you for your great article on Rico's Public House. I have fond memories of hanging out at Rico's, for the beer, for the popcorn, and of course the music and my friends. Perhaps my fondest memory was walking down to Rico's in 1982 following the '82 Apple Cup, joined by my sister and one of my closest friends to celebrate the Cougs' win over the Dawgs. Our one Husky friend in the group picked up the night's entire tab (not unsubstantial, I can assure you). Pullman simply wouldn't be Pullman without Rico's. Go Cougs!

ERIC ROUZEE '83  FINE ARTS

I loved your showing the Cougar flag in Taiwan, in the Spring 2024 issue. With all the tradition of our flag, including College GameDay, I think it should be a mention in every issue. Invite Cougs to submit pics from all over the world. I am sending you one that I took on top of the Rock of Gibraltar, back in 2016. Note the monkey, on my left, in the background. Just an idea that I think would be fun and encouraging Cougs to fly their flags everywhere. Good advertising for the university as well.

TERRY BRAZAS '72  HOTEL & RESTAURANT ADMIN.

Too political?
I have read articles for years in the Seattle and Yakima newspapers about salmon recovery and dam removal, as well as the pros and cons. My wildlife biology professor Irwin Buss at WSU in 1968–72 often spoke of the consequences of the four Snake River dams and the destruction of the river ecosystem, and the demise of all the wildlife in the corridor. He predicted the outcomes.

His lectures about specific species and their life cycles and management were spellbinding and magical. I have never forgotten them and his message. A livable environment for wildlife provides a huge benefit to all life including humans, and in wilderness is the preservation of the earth. This was on his door.

I wonder what current WSU professors think about dam removal and salmon and habitat recovery? Why are they not on the front line and joining tribal leaders in providing the truth about this important topic as we lose more and more species?

Or is it so political that no one risks providing scientific evidence to provide the public with answers?

TERRY SHELTON '72  WILDLIFE CONSERV.

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The events, which hosted between 100 and 200 attendees, combine different WSU offices that would likely visit those places separately to recruit students, build business relationships, and connect alumni. “We’re bringing in our alumni that may have just moved to the area and are looking for a way to engage,” Maki says. “Our volunteers like putting on the event and bringing in speakers, because they see that as recruitment for the chapter.”

Mike Connell (BS Bus.), vice president of advancement and CEO of the WSU Foundation, agrees that “there’s a cohort of passionate alumni who probably show up to almost anything. We’re grateful for their ongoing connection to WSU.”

Connell notes that the “WSU in” events expand the university’s footprint while being more efficient. “It shows everybody how connected we are,” he says. Potential and future WSU students and their families can really see that connection, says Saichi Oba, vice provost of enrollment management.

Attendees can go to panels with recent WSU graduates who speak about their experiences and successes. Parents also hear a powerful and reassuring message, Oba says, when Schulz speaks to them and other people. “That engagement can’t be underestimated. They get to hear from the president of the university, and then they start to drill down more,” he says.

Oba says the Hawaii event especially encouraged students and families to attend the alumni reception and see how the university they will attend is supported by WSU graduates. “They are getting a multigenerational view of the community support,” Maki says.

Alumni who attend also really enjoy the Cougar interaction. Stuart Vreeburg (’30 Comm.) was envious for the Scottdale and Tempe events and is vice president of the WSUAA Arizona chapter.

“If I lived in the state of Washington, I’d be volunteering there and participating. But geographically, it’s tough,” Vreeburg says. “I would love to continue attending these Arizona events.”

The “WSU in” events will continue in fall 2024 and beyond, Maki says. “This isn’t a one-time thing. There’s real excitement that WSU is in their community.”

Connell says “WSU in” will feature a few more events in different places. No matter where they occur, Connell says, “you don’t have to be an alumn to attend. If you’re a prospective student, we’d love to see you. This is WSU, as a whole, coming together and making these connections.”

The Cougar Nation extends far beyond the borders of Washington state. Alumni, students, business connections, and fans continue to travel to Washington State University from California, Hawaii, Arizona, and all across the world to study or visit.

Starting last fall, WSU went to them. In a series of “WSU in” events, representatives of the WSU Alumni Association, WSU Foundation, enrollment and student recruitment, and WSU leaders like President Kirk Schulz joined alumni, potential students and their families, corporate partners, and WSU fans in the home cities.

“We want to plant that WSU flag and let them know that we’re going to come back year after year,” says Mariah Maki, WSU Alumni Association executive director and associate vice president of advancement. “We’re showing that we are in their community.”

Often built around an anchor event like a basketball or football game, the “WSU in” events in fall 2023 and spring 2024 took place in Honolulu, Hawaii; Scottdale and Tempe, Arizona; and Palm Desert and the Bay Area in California.

For example, “WSU in the Bay Area” featured the WSU vs. Cal football game, and included a reception that brought together current parents, prospective students and their families, and WSUAA volunteers.
And that’s really important because that is the ethos of WSU as a land grant institution. We want our students to be leaders, not just in their field, but also in their communities and beyond. While Vreeburg loved the chance to travel with WSUAA, he says, “We understand one another and often become quick friends upon meeting. Getting to experience these incredible trips around the world with fellow Cougs feels priceless.”

Some excursions include an educational component, featuring guest lecturers and local experts to provide historical context. Top-selling adventures include the Galápagos Islands, Tahiti, Scotland, and Canada by train.

And if WSUAA isn’t offering an itinerary a traveler wants? “They can still reach out and we’ll connect them with another trip through our travel partners,” Carpenter says. “You’re not just limited to what’s on our website.”

Learn more about travel opportunities through WSUAA at alumni.wsu.edu/travel.
Henry Rono's long run: Remembering the Nandi Warrior

BY LARRY CLARK

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL HAS ACHIEVED UNPARALLELED SUCCESS IN RECENT YEARS, catapulting a Rapides of roaring fans to Beasley Coliseum and national spotlight on the Palouse. Ethridge has led the women’s team to two NCAA Tournament appearances, including last year’s championship-round victory over top 10–ranked University of Arizona, catapulting the men’s team to the top 25. She is now in her sixth year as a WSU coach. For Smith, seeing his unconventional route to success; Jaylen Wells, a transfer from Division II stalwart from North Macedonia; Isaac Jones, who reinvented his game along the backbone of both squads in recent years. The WSU women, meanwhile, drew a one-seed in the inaugural Women's Basketball Invitational Tournament (WBIT). The Kenyan athlete left behind an incredible legacy at both WSU and on the world stage.

In 1978, Washington State University distance runner Henry Rono broke four world records in just 81 days, an unprecedented achievement that has yet to be matched. He lowered the 10,000-meter by almost eight seconds, the 5,000-meter by 4.5 seconds, the 3,000-meter steeplechase by 25.6 seconds, and the 5,000-meter by three seconds.

Rono’s two-mile run in 1977. NCAA Indoor champion in the 3,000-meter in 1977. WSU's lone track national championship victory, a record that still stands.

Despite Rono’s successes, he never had the chance to show his speed in the Olympics. Despite Rono’s successes, he never had the chance to show his speed in the Olympics.

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Rono also set the fastest 10,000-meter cross-country time in NCAA history in 1976 (21:15 overall. They ended their season 21–15 overall.

IN MAY 1978 (PHOTO CHRISTOPHER CREVELING)

BY RJ WOLCOTT

Heeney’s 52 victories are the most of any coach in program history in their first six seasons. The 2023–24 season marks the fourth straight appearance in post-season play for the women's team. This spring, Smith became the fourth WSU coach and first since Tony Bennett to be named John R. Wooden Coach of the Year for the conference. The WSU women, meanwhile, drew a one-seed in the inaugural Women’s Basketball Invitational Tournament (WBIT). Ethridge has now in her sixth year at WSU as a track coach, previously having been named the National Women’s Basketball Coach of the Year by the Athletic

The Kenyan athlete left behind an incredible legacy at both WSU and on the world stage.

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Waterworld made a splash at Expo ’74

BY ADDY HATCH

Water was the star of the show in Washington State University’s pavilion at Expo ’74 in Spokane.

Expo ’74 organizers approached WSU to create an exhibit highlighting the importance of water. After all, the event would be the first environment-themed World’s Fair. Its location straddled the Spokane River. And WSU’s Albrook Hydraulics Laboratory was renowned for its water research.

The opportunities for worldwide exposure of our students and University are almost beyond comprehension,” then WSU president Glenn Terrell said in a February 1974 memo to WSU administrators announcing the university’s participation in the World’s Fair.

In a few short months, WSU created Waterworld, a pavilion sandwiched between the United States and USSR pavilions, both big draws at the fair. Among Waterworld’s exhibits was a dazzling “waterbell” fountain and a room-sized scale model showing the life cycle of water.

WSU students also participated. About two dozen were hired to serve as pavilion hosts for the duration of the fair. Clad in red-and-blue polyester jumpsuits, they answered questions, gave scripted explanations of the exhibits, and even did some maintenance, recalls John Ahlers, a civil engineering student who was one of the hosts.

The fountain was “a beautiful water sculpture,” he says. “Then people started putting coins in our fountain. The algae would grow in there and we’d have to roll up our pant legs and clean the jets out.”

Albrook lab director John Orsborn and civil engineering faculty member Manuel Arce led the work on the pavilion’s exhibits. The watershed model, which demonstrated the demands on streams as they flow through coastal, arid, and temperate regions, was built at the lab.

“We were having a heck of a time carving the mountains,” Ahlers (’75 Civ. Eng.) says. “Someone had a connection with the architecture program, and I remember one Saturday we had about 20 architecture students over there helping us carve this beautiful mountain.”

Waterworld also featured a synchronized slideshow with taped narration, a scale that showed visitors how much of their body weight was water, and a small display on WSU. Upstairs was a VIP lounge for customers and business associates of Rainier National Bank in Seattle, which donated money for the pavilion.

An estimated 1.5 million to 1.6 million people visited Waterworld during the World’s Fair.

WSU’s ties to Expo ’74 included cosponsoring a symposium that September titled “The Environment and the Economy—Exploring the Tradeoffs.” Speakers included officials from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Sierra Club, and the Bonneville Power Administration.

The university also sent one of its public relations staff, Al Ruddy, to Spokane to help Expo ’74 with publicity. Ruddy recalls that he got to meet celebrity Danny Kaye on Expo’s opening day.

Gary Southern, a WSU pharmacy student and Waterworld host, still has his polyester jumpsuit and other mementos of the experience. He and other student hosts would carpool to Spokane from Pullman for their Expo ’74 shifts until summer break started. Then some stayed with friends and family while others rented shared housing.

“We had free passes to get into Expo because we were hosts,” Southern (’78 Pharm.) says. “I remember meeting people from all over the world.”

Leslie Neftness (’75 Env. Sci.) says she saw her first concert—John Denver—at Expo ’74.

Robin Lee Gillis (’75 Psych.) says the camaraderie of the WSU student hosts is what she remembers most fondly.

Says Ahlers, “It was a great group of people and a great experience. We knew everybody in all the pavilions, there were people from Iran, Australia, South Africa, and we often got together. That was a good summer.”

He adds, “It’s something WSU did that we should be very proud of.”
Looking into lock ‘em up

BY BECKY KRAMER

Getting arrested for a minor crime in rural Washington can result in a week of jail time—and that’s often before the trial and sentencing.

Those jail stays are costly for taxpayers, and they can lead to tarnished reputations and lost jobs for the offenders, according to two Washington State University sociology professors.

“The data is really contrary to what most people think—that there are lots of bad guys locked up in jail,” says James F. Short Distinguished Professor Jennifer Schwartz. “People arrested for serious felonies represent less than 10 percent of the jail population. The rest are probably your neighbors or other community members you don’t consider a safety threat.”

Schwartz and colleague Jennifer Sherman analyzed incarceration data from five Washington counties to find out why people were in jail. The results surprised them. Arrears for a previous failure to appear in court was the top reason people were jailed. Other reasons included misdemeanor assaults, driving under the influence, drug offenses, and driving with a suspended license.

Many of the offenders faced difficulties in resolving their case—such as inability to pay fines or find transportation to court hearings or court-ordered drug treatment. When people cycled in and out of jail, their chances of becoming unemployed and homeless increased.

“We found that trouble navigating the criminal justice system was sucking people back into jail,” Sherman says.

In Okanogan County, for instance, about 20 percent of pretrial jail bookings were the result of failure to appear. That’s useful data for the county, says Robert Grim (‘07 Crim. Jus.), a superior court judge in Okanogan.

“It helps us hold a mirror up to our practices,” Grim says. “Some folks aren’t going to appear in court one way or another. But if there are things we can do to increase their likelihood of appearance—whether that’s remote appearances or automated text message or email reminders—we should look into that.”

The meetings have been valuable for keeping people out of jail also saves taxpayer dollars. The minimum cost to Okanogan County is about $100 per day. If inmates have specialized medical, housing, or dietary needs, the daily cost can run into thousands of dollars.

Schwartz and Sherman are meeting with county stakeholders to discuss local solutions for reducing incarceration rates. In Okanogan County, the meetings connect officials from law enforcement; the jail courts, and probation with social services providers and nonprofit community groups.

The meetings have been valuable for exchanging ideas, Grim says. Many people are homeless when they leave jail. Being able to connect them with resources for temporary housing or transportation to a drug treatment program can provide the support they need to avoid future jail time, he says.

“The thing I hear most consistently in my interviews is, ‘I’m not a bad person. I’m just a human being who made mistakes,’” Sherman says. *
Mustard

BY ADRIANA JANOVICE

Without it, your hot dog just wouldn’t cut it.

Neither would your portfolio, deviled eggs, or classic cheeseburger.

Mustard adds a bold and slightly bitter and acidic bite to any entree with which it’s served. Its particular tart and tangy, potent and pungent flavor complements sandwiches, sausages, cheese boards, and fast food. It pairs well with pork and potatoes, brightens rich and creamy pasta sauces, lends depth and complexity to veggie dishes, and creates a beautiful crust for salmon, leg of lamb, and roast turkey.

That’s the might and magic of mustard. The distinctive condiment not only tingles the sinuses and awakens the palate but elevates all sorts of dishes with its savory sharpness. “I just love the extra kick it gives to food,” says Tracy Savage (’91 Ag. Ed.) of Savage Mustard. Its motto: “Kinda Sweet, Kinda Savage.”

The small-batch, Zillah-based mustard company makes three kinds of mustard: Savage Chili Pepper, Del-ish Deli, and Sassy Savage. The original flavor and top seller. All three include a touch of horseradish for even more of a kick.

Savage Chili Pepper, made with jalapenos, packs the most punch. Sassy Sweet is based on Savage’s grandmother’s recipe. “She was German and used her hot honey mustard in lots of different dishes,” says Savage, an elementary school principal with a spicy side hustle. She launched Savage Mustard in 2022 after participating in that year’s Enterprise Challenge, an annual business competition organized by the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce and Yakima County Development Association. “They help connect you with the right people and provide resources to kick-start your small business. The experience was just phenomenal.”

Before that, Savage gave her mustard as gifts to family and friends, who encouraged her to start a business. “More and more people were asking for it. They said, ‘Hey, this is really good. You should sell it.’”

A co-packer on the west side of the state helped her scale up her recipe for retail. And, in 2023, she doubled her sales over her first year in business. So far, she’s made five bulk batches of 4,000 jars in all. Her personal favorite is Del-ish Deli, a brown mustard she uses for dipping as well as in pork, chicken, and other recipes.

Mustard, made from the seeds of the mustard plant, comes from two closely related species: white mustard (Sinapis alba or Brassica alba) and brown mustard (Brassica juncea). White mustard seeds, also known as yellow mustard seeds, are milder than the black or brown seeds used in Dijon and deli mustard.

Mustard has been used as a spice and for medicinal purposes as early as 3000 BCE. Greeks and Romans blended ground mustard seeds with grape juice to make a plosifie. That could be where its name comes from. Latin for freshly pressed grape juice is mustum. French is moutarde. Freshly pressed grape juice, or “must,” was originally used in making French mustard, or moutarde.

Early recipes also included ground nuts. First-century Roman writer Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella featured a recipe in his 12-volume work on agriculture, De rustica, with ground mustard seeds, vinegar, pine nuts, and almonds. Both Romans and Moors used nuts to temper mustard’s pungency. This sort of nutty mustard was made well into the Middle Ages.

“A tale without love is like beef without mustard, an inanious dish,” Anatole France wrote in 1894’s La Révolte des anges. Mustard shows up in the writings of William Shakespeare, too. Mustardseed, for example, is the name of a mischievous fairy in A Midsummer Night’s Dream. In an oft-quoted parable in the Bible, a single seed symbolizes the potential of faith. In folklore from many countries, mustard keeps evil spirits out of the house.

The quick-growing, cool-season specialty crop, a member of the Brassica family, is commonly grown in rotation with small grains. It’s particularly prevalent on the Palouse. In fact, Washington is one of the country’s top mustard-growing states, along with Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and North Dakota. In 2020, the United States produced 81.8 million pounds of mustard, valued at $22.1 million, from a harvest of a total of 91,400 acres.

Whole mustard seeds are odorless. Their flavor comes from mixing ground seeds with water, wine, or vinegar, which produces a chemical reaction and gives mustard its fiery sting. Wine and vinegar lessen the reaction, resulting in milder mustard.

Mix mustard into salad dressings, marinades, and sauces. Add to sauces and pickling liquids. Or, like Savage, make your own. Her Savage Mustard is for sale at more than 30 locations, mostly in and around the Yakima Valley, as well as online. She encourages people to “think outside the box. Mustard is not just for hamburgers and hot dogs.” Savage says. “You can put it on a lot of different things to enhance the flavor.”

She’s even tried it on pizza. Mustard on pizza? “It was awesome,” she says.

**SAUCE RECIPES:**

**Aged Cheddar Mustard:**

4 sandwiches

**Yield:**

2 tablespoons room temperature butter

2 tablespoons whole grain mustard

6 ounces Cougar Gold cheese

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees F. Butter each slice of bread lightly on one side. On the other side, spread the mustard. Form sandwiches with the buttered sides on the outside and mustard and cheese in the inside. In a pan on the stovetop, cook over medium heat until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Then turn over and repeat. Transfer to a baking sheet and place in the 300-degree oven until the cheese is completely melted. Enjoy!

**OF NOURISHING SUBSTANCE:**

**MUSTARD TYPES**

**Chinese**—intensely hot, this sinus-clearing mustard is made with water for a bigger, more fiery bite.

**Dijon**—White wine tones down the acidity in this hot, pungent, French-made mustard.

**English**—Made with a combination of brown and white seeds, this variety is particularly potent, but not as hot as Chinese mustard. It’s slightly less pungent than French.

**German**—There are many styles, but the most common are a smooth, hot mustard and Bavarian, which is sweeter, milder, and coarser.

**Spicy brown or deli**—Made from brown seeds, this style is mild and has a slightly yellow mustard, has a complex texture, and often features spices such as allspice and nutmeg.

**Whole grain**—Seeds are left whole for a grainy texture.

**Yellow**—Creamy, bright yellow, and acclive, this American classic is best on hot dogs.
A fallen Cougar, at last home

BY ADRIANA JANOVICH

Capt. Donald Harvey Froemke ('38 Forestry) was killed in the Netherlands during World War II while taking part in Operation Market Garden, an Allied military maneuver aiming to liberate Holland and create an invasion route into northern Germany. He was near the village of Opheusden when his unit was attacked on October 5, 1944.

"According to all of the sources I found, Captain Froemke was moving across an open field to aid a wounded man when he was killed by enemy fire," says J. T. Menard ('15, '19 MA History), who researched Froemke's life and death as part of the Fallen Cougars Project at Washington State University. "The Germans overran the village he was defending. His body could not be recovered at the time."

He was 31.

In 1949, remains believed to be Froemke's were sent home. Nearly eight decades after his death, his remaining relatives learned he was killed by enemy fire, says J. T. Menard, who teaches history at Heritage University in Toppenish. He updated Froemke's report, originally prepared by Jenna Reynolds ('21 Anthro.), for the Fallen Cougars Project.

Led by associate professor of history Raymond "Ray" Sun, the project commemorates the approximately 250 military personnel with ties to WSU who made the ultimate sacrifice during World War II. The small cohort of history faculty and students is compiling the stories of the men and women who didn't make it back, for an online memo-rial. Froemke's report is slated for publication on the website later this spring. Nearly 200 families have been researched so far.

"The Fallen Cougars Project seeks to restore the humanity of Washington State's World War II war dead," Sun says. "By telling their life stories in a digital format, we transform them from being names on a bronze plaque to individuals with their unique backgrounds, experiences, talents, and interests. They once were part of our Washington State community. As has been literally accomplished with Capt. Froemke, we hope to bring them all home in a virtual manner and allow our students, staff, and faculty to pay their respects and welcome them back to the Cougar Nation."

Froemke enlisted in 1941. He was assigned to Company B of the 326th Airborne Engineer Battalion of the famed 101st Airborne Division. His first combat experience: the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. One day shy of four months after D-Day, he disappeared.

Froemke was born October 15, 1912, in southwest Washington and moved to Yakima at a young age. His family included a younger brother, Virgil, Holloway's father, who also served in World War II.

At Washington State College, Froemke was a member of the Montezuma Club for residents of Stinson Hall. The 1936 Chinook shows him in a sweater and tie, sitting in the front row of a group photo of basketball managers, responsible for "handling the team's equipment and for preparing the gymnasium for home games."

He worked as a range manager for the US Forest Service in McCall Valley, Idaho, before enlisting. He never married and had no children.

"I've researched a fair number of Fallen Cougars," Menard says. "You see them in their high school yearbooks. You see them in the Chinook. They're just kids. You think of the potential they had. You think: What life could they have lived if they had not given their life in service to their country? It's noble. It's valiant. I honor and respect that sacrifice."

But there’s that if...

Froemke posthumously received a Purple Heart, World War II Victory Medal, and European campaign medal. He also received a Presidential Unit Citation as part of the 101st Airborne.

In correspondence with Froemke's family after the captain died, WSC president E. O. Hollands described him as "a fine college citizen and a young man of superior ability who was eager to make his contribution to society."

Last September, Holloway told the Yakima Herald-Republic, "We're glad he's finally home."

The year 2023 was the planet’s hottest on record, and 2024 has already broken monthly temperature highs.

In the Pacific Northwest, that means more heat in a region historically known for its mild climate.

At Washington State University, researchers are addressing the public health risks of heat exposure. Their work includes passive cooling for buildings, safeguards for outdoor workers and athletes, and keeping pets healthy on hot days.

The heat is on
The Pacific Northwest heats up

BY BECKY KRAMER

When Skamania County’s temperature shot past 110 degrees, Deepti Singh took refuge in the Wind River.

A Washington State University researcher who studies extreme weather events, Singh and her friends unwittingly planned a weekend getaway that coincided with the 2021 Pacific Northwest heat dome. As temperate Western Washington heated up like Death Valley, they abandoned plans for a Columbia River Gorge hike and submerged themselves in the nearby river.

“Luckily, our cabin was air-conditioned, and we also spent hours just sitting in the water,” says Singh, an assistant professor at WSU Vancouver’s School of the Environment. “Even had we not known, I’d put my dog in the river, and she hates the water.”

The heat dome toppled records across the Northwest and ranked among 2021’s global weather extremes. It’s cited in the FHS National Climate Assessment as an example of how extreme weather events are becoming more frequent as the climate changes.

Singh is among the climate assessment’s coauthors, who also include WSU colleague Kirti Rajagopalan, assistant professor of biological systems engineering. Released in November, the report outlines how hotter temperatures are already impacting the Northwest, and what we can expect in the future.

Better known for its gray skies and drizzle, the Northwest is a relative stranger to extreme heat, particularly in areas west of the Cascades where many homes lack air-conditioning. But since the 1980s, extreme heat has emerged as a critical concern for the western United States.

The West is experiencing a greater magnitude of warming from climate change than the East Coast, the assessment says. Climate models indicate the Northwest is on a similar path, with higher rates of summertime warming than other parts of the continental United States. That will trigger a new normal for Northwest summers. Even average years will feature more days with uncomfortably hot temperatures. And heat waves and extreme heat events will occur more frequently.

Washington’s and Idaho’s average temperatures have climbed by nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1900, and Oregon by 2.5 degrees. While the increase may seem negligible, it represents a heat accumulation that’s already destabilizing historic climate patterns.

“Even these seemingly small increases have such big impacts on our society,” says Singh—a point she drives home with undergraduate students in an earth climate systems class. “I even talk about it on my walks near the Wind River. It was a stark reminder of how ill-prepared the Northwest is for a hotter climate.”

Meanwhile, the effects of the 2021 heat dome will be felt in the region for decades to come, Singh says. Salmon populations were lost when streams became too hot for survival. The heat killed young trees and scorching new growth in the Olympic Peninsula’s forests. And the village of Lytton, British Columbia, is still rebuilding after a wildfire destroyed the town and killed two people a day after the temperature hit 121.3 degrees F—the highest recorded in Canada.

“I think the biggest lesson from the 2021 heat dome is that these events are not isolated,” Singh says. “We often remember them as a few bad days, but they have cascading impacts throughout our lives and our ecosystems that last for years.”

Searing summer heat would have the greatest impact on parts of central and southeastern Washington, which could expect an average of 10 to 20 additional days above 95 degrees F each year.

The likelihood of record-breaking heat domes increases as well. Some scientists have described the 2021 heat dome as a 1,000-year event made 150 times more likely by climate change. Instead of being a rare anomaly, events like the heat dome could occur every five to 10 years with 2 degrees C of global warming, they say.

During the heat dome, parts of the Northwest recorded temperatures up to 40 degrees F above normal. Even at temperatures peaked, above-average heat lingered into mid-July. It was a stark reminder of how ill-prepared the Northwest is for a hotter climate.

“Everything depends on our climate—from the food we grow, to our water supplies, the buildings we design, and our physical and mental health. When we have these extreme events, we see the impact from fatalities to infrastructure damage to ecosystems in distress,” Singh says.

An estimated 1,400 deaths in the United States and Canada were attributed to the heat dome. Shellfish and other marine animals experienced mass die-offs. Crops were lost, sections of Interstate 5 buckled, and Portland’s Max commuter train shut down when its attached power lines melted.

“Our infrastructure was built for the climate of a few decades ago. And that climate has changed and continues to change,” Singh says.

The Northwest can prepare for a hotter future by adapting infrastructure and putting measures in place to protect vulnerable populations. But the future is in human hands, the National Climate Assessment notes. The volume of emissions from burning fossil fuels and the release of other greenhouse gases will determine the future climate.

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A WARMING SCENARIO FOR WASHINGTON STATE COUNTIES

The change in the yearly number of days over 95°F/35°C with a global temperature warming of 3.6°F/2°C*

*COMPARED TO 2019 LANDMARK SOURCE: NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT, INFORMATIVE ASSET

Outdoor workers

feeling the heat

BY BECKY KRAMER

Many of us spend our summer days in air-conditioned offices or homes, where heat and wildfire smoke are nuisances but rarely life-threatening.

For outdoor workers, however, heat and smoke have become inseparable parts of summer shifts. When temperatures climb and air quality drops, folks are still shingled, concrete is poured, garbage is collected, trees are trimmed, houses are painted, and fruits and vegetables are harvested by hand.

Combining physical exertion, time-sensitive work, and heat can have deadly results—and agricultural workers are at particular risk. Heat-related illnesses and deaths are more prevalent among farmworkers than any other US occupation, including construction.

“Farmwork involves direct sun exposure and high workloads,” says Mayra Reiter, project director for occupational safety and health at Farmworker Justice, in Washington, DC-based nonprofit. “Many workers get paid on a piece-rate basis, which creates incentives to work harder, work faster, and work longer before taking breaks.”

Across the West, climate change has made working outdoors riskier. In 2021, two Northwest agricultural workers died after working in triple-digit heat—one at an Oregon blueberry farm and another in a hops field in Yakima County. By mid-century, the average number of days US agricultural workers spend laboring in unsafe heat conditions is projected to double.

That’s a challenging reality for Washington’s multi-billion-dollar agricultural industry. And it’s an area where Washington State University researchers are working to provide information to industry leaders and policymakers, with a focus on practical solutions for protecting employees.
FEATURE

Mobile text alerts in English and Spanish will be available for workers in the Northwest's ag and food industry in summer. Growing populations of front line workers and outdoor jobs are increasing the need for real-time health warnings.

AgWeatherNet launched a mobile text alert system to warn farmworkers and others about heat waves and high levels of air pollution. The system grew out of a Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center initiative.

Many workers who tend to the land and particularly those who work in construction and other outdoor jobs are at risk for heat-related issues. More than 160,000 people work in the agriculture and food industry in Washington state, where industry officials have been active in discussions about worker health.

Growers are using text alerts to warn workers, says Jon DeVaney, president of the Washington State Tree Fruit Association. “Heat has always been a consideration for growers—for the safety of their workforce and for the quality of the fruit,” he says. “What is changing is that weather patterns have been less predictable. We’ve had some of these high heat days in June or early July when they aren’t as expected.”

Most of the state’s tree fruit crops are grown in semi-arid central Washington. Cherries are picked at the height of summer. Apple harvest starts in early August with Galas and Honeycrispers and extends through fall with later varieties.

Tree fruit harvest typically starts at daybreak to take advantage of the cooler parts of the day, but some growers have switched to nighttime harvest under artificial lights, DeVaney says. Scheduling night shifts helps reduce heat exposure for workers and damage to fruit, but many growers make night shifts optional, he says.

“Some workers really like it, but others find it too disruptive for their families,” DeVaney says. “Think about how hard it is to get childcare. It’s harder at night.”

Washington is among a handful of states that mandate temperature-related breaks, access to shade and cool drinking water, and heat awareness training for workers. The state’s smoke rule requires distribution of respirators when air quality crosses certain thresholds.

Washington rules also require close observation of employees during heat waves and when they aren’t used to physical activity at high temperatures. Even healthy workers are at risk for heat-related illness or death, according to health officials. Heat generated by exertion—combined with hot air temperatures—can overwhelm the body’s ability to maintain a normal core temperature.

“Dehydration really matters in terms of tipping someone over the edge to heat stress or heat exhaustion,” Postma says. Being on medication can have the same effect.

Physical activity on hot days can damage the heart, lungs, and kidneys. And a rare but serious condition called rhabdomyolysis develops when damaged muscle tissue releases proteins and electrolytes into the bloodstream.

When workers acclimatize to heat by gradually ramping up their activity levels, they sweat more efficiently and more blood flows to the skin, enhancing cooling through evaporation. They also work at lower heart rates and with lower core body temperatures. But acclimatization can take up to two weeks to develop, and it’s short-lived. Employers lose their acclimatization after a week away from working in a hot environment, Postma says.

Climate change will continue to increase the hazards of outdoor work. It’s a public health issue for agricultural communities, particularly where crops require high inputs of human labor, she says.

Rising heat and milder winters also drive research into new varieties and mixes of grasses at Washington State University’s new Perennial Grass Breeding and Ecology Farm in Pullman. The right resilient combination of grasses could better withstand hot temperatures—and the pounding of feet on a playing surface. Michael Neff, professor of crop biotechnology and farm manager, walks around the farm on a windy hilltop about a mile from the main campus, just off the highway to Moscow, Idaho. He points out a checkerboard of plantings in varying shades of green and different heights, where each space represents a combination of grass types.

“Some grass might be needed to replace artificial playing surfaces, but that grass might need to be heat resistant. So the same grass could be in a playing field, and it could also be used in a parking lot or in a park,” Neff says.

Neff notes that eastern Washington’s dry summers are ideal for growing grass seed. “Around 80 percent of Kentucky bluegrass seed in the United States is produced in Washington state,” he says. In addition to the familiar Kentucky bluegrass, about half of the farm’s plants are fescues, wheatgrass, and other native grasses, many grown from seed stocks in the US Department of Agriculture’s plant introduction facilities next to the farm.

The farm moved to its new 10-acre location in 2019. About half is dryland and the other half is irrigated. The plots share space with a building that houses customized equipment, workshops, and storage space for the farm.

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As global temperatures continue to rise, so will the cost of keeping us cool. A building technique that’s thousands of years old might help.

Buildings are responsible for 40 percent of total energy use in the United States, including 75 percent of all electricity use, and produce 35 percent of the nation’s total carbon emissions, according to the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory. “Building design has long-term consequences, not only with the building’s operation costs, but for the environment,” says Omar Al-Hassawi, assistant professor in Washington State University’s School of Design and Construction.

Neff and others are funded by the Washington state legislature to grow and test high-wear turf and see if it recovers quickly from damage. One tool is a bulky machine that the researchers dubbed “Frankenstein,” which simulates feet in cleats running on a field.

High-wear turf trials will test varieties across the state at WSU’s Puyallup research extension center, Mount Vernon research extension center, and eventually Prosser and Wenatchee locations. Nathan Cox of Desert Green Turf, who manages the soil for the Seattle Mariners’ field and the practice fields for the Seattle Seahawks, is donating all the sod and installing it for those trials this spring.

“We are trying to work on replacing artificial turf with real turf when appropriate,” Neff says. “As we face climate change and heat, there’s a huge need for this kind of research.”

Playing it cool
BY ALYSEN BOSTON
The university has taught turfgrass classes since 1955, the first such courses in the western United States. Since then, research has shifted to investigate drought- and wear-resistant hybrids and mixes.

One thorny problem is milder winters that affect vernalization—the necessary flowering triggered in cold weather. Neff and the other researchers examine grass vernalization genes, and the application of plant hormones to trigger them, so farmers can get ready for winters that are less cold.

“Kentucky bluegrass, as a perennial, is a useful crop for soil health. If it doesn’t flower and have a high enough yield because of the mild winter, then it won’t pencil out and the farmers will lose money,” Neff says.

“While plant hormones stimulate seed production in place of vernalization, the long-term fix is to breed Kentucky bluegrass that has a lower vernalization requirement,” Neff says.

Neff says the cool season Kentucky bluegrass can also be blended with Bermuda grass, a warm season grass usually found in southern areas like California, Arizona, and Florida. “In the heat of the summer you have the green from Bermuda and in the cooler spring and fall, the green from the Kentucky bluegrass,” he says.

As buildings are responsible for 40 percent of total energy use in the United States, including 75 percent of all electricity use, and produce 35 percent of the nation’s total carbon emissions, according to the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory. “Building design has long-term consequences, not only with the building’s operation costs, but for the environment,” says Omar Al-Hassawi, assistant professor in Washington State University’s School of Design and Construction.

Growing up in Iraq, Al-Hassawi experienced how people cooled their homes without air-conditioning or electricity, often using similar techniques as ancient Egyptians for their buildings.

“One method uses an architectural element called a wind tower to create a cross breeze, which cools the air as it passes through the building,” Al-Hassawi says.

To measure the performance of down-draft cooling towers, Al-Hassawi arranged sensors to record air velocity, water flow, and temperatures inside and outside the tower.

WSU GRASS FARM (COURTESY CAHNRS)

For example, he found Bermuda grass in north-central Washington, a cold environment for warm weather grass. Neff says that grass likely came from cattle drives in the 1860s during the Cariboo Gold Rush in British Columbia, and then adapted to Washington’s climate.

One use for the tough grasses is to replace artificial surfaces on football fields, soccer pitches, and other playing fields. Artificial surfaces can heat up to unsafe temperatures and often have chemicals from rubber and plastic that could harm the environment.

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The WSU Perennial Grass Breeding and Ecology Farm imaged in NDVI (a ratio of near-infrared and red). NDVI shows health of plants as they photosynthesize under stress, with red photosynthesizing the most, green less, and blue/black not at all. Drone image courtesy John Hadish

WSU PERENNIAL GRASS BREEDING AND ECOSYSTEM FARM
down through the tower and into the home. Some of these towers also trap dry heat by using a water source at the base. The water evaporates as the hot air passes over it, reducing the air’s temperature through an effect called evaporative cooling.

Al-Hassawi realized he could improve upon these ancient techniques to help architectural students design more energy-efficient buildings.

“We design buildings that perform better to begin with, before we rely on mechanical systems of cooling, we reduce energy consumption and in turn reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” Al-Hassawi says.

Al-Hassawi experiments with different tower designs in a climate-controlled test chamber housed inside a 60-square-foot, solar-powered shipping container on the WSU Pullman campus.

His work focuses on developing a multistage passive and hybrid down-draft cooling tower that can cool homes better than the traditional wind tower. By adding cooling coils at the top of the tower in addition to the evaporative cooling source at the bottom, the cooling effect is enough to rival a standard air-conditioning system without consuming nearly as much energy.

“The rise in demand for cooling is expected to grow about three times between now and 2050,” Al-Hassawi says. “We can’t keep designing these big glass greenhouses.”

Pet safety in extreme heat

BY AYSEN BOSTON

As temperatures increase and heat waves become the norm, keeping our four-legged friends cool during the summer has become a challenge for pet owners, especially in the Pacific Northwest, where many homes lack air-conditioning.

“Heat is challenging because when we get hot, we sweat, but the only way a dog or cat can get that heat out of their body is by panting or transfer of heat through the paw pads,” says Katie Kuehl, a veterinarian and director of Washington State University’s Shelter Medicine program at Seattle Humane.

A pet’s breed, age, and body condition play a role in its susceptibility to heat stroke. A Chihuahua is going to have an easier time tolerating the heat than a Siberian husky, Kuehl says. Elderly and obese pets also struggle in the heat.

“Taking walks early in the morning, before the sun has a chance to heat the concrete and asphalt, can help keep your pooch cool and protect their paws. If a midday walk is necessary, walking in grassy areas is preferable to putting boots on your pet, which can interfere with their body’s cooling methods,” Kuehl says.

If your pooch needs to cool down fast, use room temperature water rather than ice cubes or cold water.

“The temperature of the ice and cold water constricts the pet’s blood flow,” Kuehl says. “When blood flow is constricted in the paw pads, that means less heat transfer can happen. It can actually make it harder for them to cool off.”

And, as always, never leave your pet in the car, even if the air-conditioning is on.

Temperatures in a parked vehicle can rise to lethal levels in just a few minutes, Kuehl says. If your pet needs to cool down fast, use room temperature water rather than ice cubes or cold water.

“As temperatures increase and heat waves become the norm, keeping our four-legged friends cool during the summer has become a challenge for pet owners, especially in the Pacific Northwest, where many homes lack air-conditioning.”

The condor successfully healed after the surgery and is now back in a breeding project with a different male. “It’s really satisfying and we’re hoping to see some babies,” Logsdon says.

“Project with a different male. “It’s really satisfying and we’re hoping to see some babies,” Logsdon says.

She has a particular fondness for raptors going back many years, but Logsdon and colleagues at the WSU veterinary hospital see an amazing variety of patients. Parrots, reptiles, ferrets, and hamsters are just some of the exotic pets that she sees. Even Taima, an augur hawk and Seattle Seahawks mascot, visited Logsdon for foot surgery last year.

“If it’s not a dog, cat, livestock, or horse, it’s coming to us,” Logsdon says.

Logsdon, also an associate professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine, has worked with the hospital’s exotics and wildlife since 2014. The hospital also has state and federal permits to treat wildlife, from raccoons to great blue herons.

“Last year, we saw over 600 wildlife patients,” she says. “And this year we’re set to see probably quite a few more.”

Many of those wild animals are healthy babies brought in by concerned people.

Wildlife care takes wing

BY LARRY CLARK

The California condor needed her help.

The injured, endangered bird was brought to the Washington State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital in 2022, where veterinarian MARCELLO LOGSDON (’88 Vet. Sci., ’12 SVM) took the lead on a tricky operation.

“She had gotten into a little bit of a scuffle with her mate and had a really gory fracture on one of her legs,” says Logsdon, a wildlife and exotic animal expert.

The condor successfully healed after the surgery and is now back in a breeding project with a different male. “It’s really satisfying and we’re hoping to see some babies,” Logsdon says.

“We definitely get ones that are truly orphaned or injured,” Logsdon says. “Birds in spring and summer are a little less wary of people, while the parents are smart and hiding out of sight.”

It’s free for good Samaritans to bring in wildlife, although the hospital welcomes donations, notes the WSU veterinarians also promote a campaign to ask the public to call first about wildlife they find, as deaths of wild animals are common.

Wildlife rehabilitation emphasizes returning the animals to the wild. Logsdon says they see a number of baby great horned owls, for example, and work to place them
A taste for what’s merry

BY ADRIANA JANOVICH

He lets guests choose. Red or white? Dry or off-dry?

In this tasting, first up is the 2022 Roussanne—white, semi-sweet, and silky. It's creamy yet crisp, with "a lot of pear, a hint of citrus, and a little bit of stone fruit—peach—but not much. There's minerality, too, which is nice. But it's pretty faint," notes winemaker PATRICK MERRY ('05 Enol. Cert.). A few swirls and swishes later, he adds, "I'm getting a little green apple now that it's opened up."

Merry, proprietor of Pullman's only winery, has been offering Roussanne since the late 2010s. The latest vintage was released in December 2023. Merry recommends pairing it with "anything with a cream sauce."

Merry Cellars specializes in single-varietal red wines and red blends, but offers several white varietals as well as a popular, limited-release rosé, which sells out each season. Some of the busiest times at the winery—which celebrates its twentieth anniversary in May—coincide with big events at Washington State University Pullman: Family Weekends, homecoming, commencement.

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE/FACEBOOK
COURTESY WSU NEWS

An Entire Month to Celebrate YOU

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alumni.wsu.edu/MemberMonth
No matter the season, there’s always work to do. “There’s always wine at some point in the maturation process,” explains Merry, who came to the Palouse to pursue a doctoral degree in computer science at the University of Idaho. In between classes, he picked up a new hobby: winemaking. Although he didn’t complete his dissertation, he finished his enology certificate, commuting from Moscow, Idaho, and then Pullman to Prosser.

“Something had to give, and it was the PhD,” Merry says. “I had more fun making wine.” It’s not only that it’s more creative, it’s also more of your own control. I went from one—selling a machine exactly what to do—to being given whatever Mother Nature hands me. I can fix acidity. I can fix sugar. But you can’t make great wine out of mediocre fruit. You can’t fix that.”

Merry established his winery in 2004, producing an initial 400 cases. Today, Merry Cellars makes 6,000 cases per year and sources its grapes from a single vineyard: Stillwater Creek Vineyard on Royal Slope near Royal City. The grapes are hand-picked, hand-sorted, and minimally processed for wines that are, the winery notes, “true to the fruit.”

“All but one of Merry’s employees—four full-time, one part-time—are WSU students or graduates. Sometimes, such as during the winery’s busy barrel tasting, his wife, Shannon (’95 Sc., ’14 MV), will help pour. (She owns her own business, too: Pullman’s Traveling Tails mobile veterinary service.)”

“I’d say 90 percent of our wine is sold and consumed within a 30-mile radius of the winery,” Merry notes. “That for us has been invaluable.”

**Best years**

BY SCOTT JACKSON

TARAS OGIYCHUK uses skills and experience he gained at Washington State University and over three decades in international business to explore new ventures: humanitarian aid and reconstruction in his native Ukraine.

When Ogiychuk (’93 MBA) first set foot on US soil in 1989, “Russia,” said the Billboard Hot 100, a McDonald’s Big Mac was $1.65, and the Berlin Wall was just months from being torn down. He and 15 other university students participated in a six-week exchange program hosted by WSU, and it was a bit of a culture shock.

“In ’89, coming to the US from the Soviet Union, it’s like traveling to a different planet,” Ogiychuk says. “When I met some businesspeople in Ukraine, we merged our experience and our capabilities as a startup business—and one business led to another.”

Ogiychuk struck out on his own and has since formed business partnerships that span multiple industries including power, real estate, and hospitality.

“Having connections in the US and having the knowledge of a business student in the US, I was able to come up with some good business ideas,” Ogiychuk says. “When I first met some businesspeople in Ukraine, we emerged from the experience and our capabilities as a startup business—and one business led to another.”

Ogiychuk couldn’t have known the USSR would dissolve at the end of the year after he began his MBA studies. He returned to a changed economic landscape and soon found the marketing and communication skills he’d learned at WSU were extremely useful in a country rapidly shifting toward capitalism.

After finishing his work with USAID, Ogiychuk struck out on his own and has since formed business partnerships that span multiple industries including power, real estate, and hospitality.

“Now we have more of a tourist and some former business partnerships that are diversifying into new ventures.”

“Merry Cellars is also involved in rebuilding and reconstruction of Ukraine once the war is over,” Ogiychuk says. “With the same partner we also opened a fund called Sprouts of Hope. It’s a charity organization that nights at the Cavern, a local bar on Greek Row, and becoming the first Soviet member of the Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity. He remains in touch with some of his fraternity brothers.

After graduating, Ogiychuk retained his ties to the region. His first job after earning his MBA was with the Postharvest Institute for Perishables at the University of Idaho, working with a grant from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) on projects in Russia and Ukraine.

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“Secret” supergroup

By Adriana Janovich

Krist Novoselic was sorting through old CDs and VHS tapes when he stumbled upon the recordings. It was summer 2020, and the COVID-19 pandemic was keeping the cofounder of the iconic grunge band Nirvana close to home. Novoselic (’16 Soc. Sci.) used the time to practice fingerstyle acoustic guitar in the manner of his hero, the late John Fahey—and to clean out the clutter in the attic.

That’s when he uncovered several riffs recorded back in 2001 with Soundgarden lead guitarist Kim Thayil, Void guitarist Bobba Dupree, and Queens of the Stone Age drummer Alfredo Hernández. And he liked what he heard.

So, in early 2021, two decades after those rediscovered riffs were originally recorded and three decades after the release of Nirvana’s seminal album Nevermind, Novoselic was back in Seattle, jamming with Thayil and Dupree. They didn’t know it at the time, but they were working on what would become Third Secret’s self-titled album, released in 2022. Two songs from the 11-track album, “I Choose Me” and “Diamond in the Cold,” are based on those nearly lost instrumentals.

“That first record was a feat of technology,” says Novoselic, who plays accordion, bass, and six- and 12-string guitars with Third Secret. “We put it all together, and we just dropped the record.”

Third Secret shared the album online sans fanfare. “Most people don’t even know we exist,” Novoselic says of the folk-grunge supergroup. “The band really is kind of a secret. We don’t have a label. We don’t do a lot of promotion. We’re just musicians who love to play music. We’re just doing what we do. It’s for the love of music. We’re veterans of the rock world. And we like to play together.”

Third Secret includes drummer Matt Cameron of Soundgarden and Pearl Jam as well as vocalists Jillian Raye and Jennifer Johnson, both of Giants in the Trees, another of Novoselic’s projects. Raye wrote most of the lyrics, and Jack Endino, who produced Mudhoney, Nirvana, Screaming Trees, and dozens of other bands, mixed all the tracks, and recorded or co-recorded most of them, too.

“It just felt right,” Novoselic says, noting the work is reminiscent of rock records from the 1970s when “they would make these 40-minute records, and there’d be all kinds of variety on them. Listen to Led Zeppelin’s House of the Holy. There’s a lot of different kinds of songs. That’s kind of like what we’re doing here.”

The 10-track second album, The Second Third Secret, dropped online last year much like the first—with little promotion.

Novoselic worked on both albums in Seattle and at home in Deep River, where his roots go back more than three decades. He moved to Wahkiakum County in 1992, the same year Nevermind went to number one on the Billboard 200 and Nirvana won MTV Video Music Awards for Best New Artist in a Video and Best Alternative Video for Smells Like Teen Spirit. This year marks 30 years since the death of lead singer and founding member Kurt Cobain, and the breakup of the band.

“There are whole new generations of fans,” Novoselic notes. “The T-shirts are everywhere. And I’m really grateful that people are connecting with the music.”

Fans can connect with Third Secret via Facebook and YouTube. The band’s music videos are “all live-to-camera. So there’s no conceptual footage. What you see is what you get. It’s what we sound like,” says Novoselic, who’s released five albums since 2017; two with Third Secret, two with Giants in the Trees, and one with kyplopen, nature writer, and fellow Grange member Robert Michael Pyck.

Novoselic, who turns 59 in May, and his wife, Darbury Stenderu, keep chickens and rescue animals on their homestead, anchored by a farmhouse that’s more than 100 years old. They’re members of the Wine-by-Cougars wine club.

Novoselic enrolled in Washington State University Global Campus after seeing a billboard promoting the online program. He credits WSU with increasing his critical thinking skills. “You’ve got to watch out for confirmation bias. That something I learned in my WSU studies,” he says. “I have n00grets about getting my degree. Getting it online was perfect for me. And it was a challenge. I’m proud of my degree.” *
The adoption of the eight-hour workday, and failed expectations. Music, television, cars, can- nabis, consumerism, sports, smartphones, and drugs and alcohol make appearances. So does America’s obsession with productivity and the perhaps overvalued idea of work ethic.

Alan, the broad, well-researched history Cross presents does not suggest solutions for the future. “Offering a detailed blueprint for the personal realization of free time for culture is beyond the scope of this book, as is ‘what is to be done’” outline of a political and social path that would erase such personal realization,” writes Cross, a Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Modern History at Pennsylvania State University.

On a bleak note, Cross ventures, “I am not very encouraged by the fact that a hundred years of advancement in productivity and innovation has not produced a better outcome than the cultural politics that seem to dominate discussions in the halls of government and in our homes today.”

— Adriana Janovch

The Evergreen Collection: Exceptional Stories from Across Washington State
EDITED BY LARRY CLARK  ‘94 COMM.  & ADRIANA JANOVCH
WSU PRESS 2023

This volume brings together some of the best stories published over the last 20 years in Washington State Magazine. As a regular reader and occasional contributor, I found essays that had missed when originally published and enjoyed revisiting pieces I had read but forgotten.

The stories are arranged geographi- cally and thematically under the following headings: across the state; across the sound, along the river, in the mountains, and on the plateau. Beautiful photographs highlight the distinct qualities of these regions. One common theme across all the writing is the profound impact that WSU’s faculty and alumni have had across the state. The style of writing is approachable with short, stand-alone pieces that are perfect for reading aloud to a partner or for those with limited blocks of spare time.

The book answers key WSU questions, such as, Why does Cougar Gold taste so good? Is it the discovery by Professor Normann-Shiley Golding that adding a second starter culture (WSU-109) to the cheese before being canned reduced the calcium dihydrate and, as a happy by-product, created a softer and creamier finish to the taste.

What is about the loess soil in Whitman County that produces such bountiful crops and the diverse soil types along the Columbia River that produce distinctive and delicious wines? Profiles of WSU soil scientists answer these questions as they share their expertise in describing the geological creation of these unique soils, mapping them, and efforts to conserve them.

We learn along the way the stories of key figures in Washington State University, such as Chief Kamiah, who observed during treaty negotiations in 1855 that “the White men are not speaking straight,” and the eccentric Virgil McCroskey, who we have to thank for the preservation of Steptoe Butte as a state park and the creation of McCroskey Park in Latah County. This is a lovely book for WSU alumni or any reader curious about the state of Washington. Even with a generous-sized book (251 pages), the editors had to make difficult decisions about what to include and what left out, so this single volume will not replace your 20 years of saved issues. Luckily, the magazine maintains a complete archive of its contents online at magazine.wsu.edu.

— Trevor James Bond 17 PhD History

Obsessed
[podcast] EDITED BY PETTY HOUCHIN  ‘95 COMM.  FOOD NETWORK: 2021–24

Food of television, chefs, and cooking get a plentiful of advice and behind-the-scenes sto- ries in each weekly episode of Food Network’s first official podcast.

Food blogger and TV host Jaymee Sire chats each week with chefs from Food Network shows, famous restaurants, and the world of elite cooking about making their shows and their secrets for succeeding in the kitchen.

With over 100 episodes available, lis- teners can find conversations with many of their favorite chefs, such as Carla Hall, who recently talked about Chasing Flavor, her new show on OWN that digs into the origins of ingredients and attracting culture to a dish. Hall also advises on how to recover flavorless dishes at home.

Other episodes from this spring featured pastry chef and cake artist Ashley Holt, a.k.a. the “Sugar Monster,” on the intricacies of making cakes, and Iron Chef Jose Garces talking about secrets to winning cooking competitions, his new charity, and how he ended up in the culinary world.

Our recently was a sports anchor on ESPN, a judge on Food Network shows including Beat Bobby Flay and Food Network Star, and a floor reporter on the first season of Iron Chef America.

Find the Obsessed on Apple, Spotify, and other directories, or visit wwu.wsu.edu/extra/food-obsessed.

— Larry Clark

BRIEFLY NOTED
We Few, We Academic Sisters: How We Persevered and Excelled in Higher Education EDITED BY KETTY HOUCHIN WINFIELD; WRITTEN BY LOIS B. DEFLEUR, SANDRA BALL-ROKEACH, AND MARYLIN WINGER-TALLMAN WSU PRESS 2023

Three former WSU sociology faculty members share their stories of becoming professors during a time when such an accomplishment was exceedingly rare for women. Forty years later, a colleague prompted the “Troika,” as they call themselves, to collaborate on a trilogy memoir that she then edited.

Betty Houchin Winfield was an assistant professor in the Murrow School of Communication when she met the trio. Lois B. Defleur is a former dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Marilyn Winger-Tallman is a former sociology department chair, and Sandra Ball-Rokeach taught at WSU from 1972 to 1996.

Architecture, Film, and the In- between: Spatio-Cinematic Betwixt EDITED BY YAHAD VAHDAT AND JAMES F. KERESTES INTELLECT: 2023

This essay collection explores how films depict architectural in-between spaces, often instilling them with fantasy or horror. Globally known contributors—scholars and theorists to practitioners—discuss how architects and filmmakers, such as David Lynch, use imagery and infographics to map movie spaces and more. Coeditor Vahdat Vahdat is an assistant professor of architecture and interior design at WSU’s School of Design and Construction. James F. Kerestes is an associate professor of architecture at Ball State University’s College of Architecture and Planning.

Wallace Stegner’s Unsettled Country: Ruin, Realism, and Possibility in the American West
EDITED BY MARK FIEGE ‘85 MA HISTORY, MICHAEL J. LANSING, AND LEISL CARR CHILDERS UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS: 2024

This anthology examines the work, life, legacy, and enduring relevance of “the dean of Western writers” 30 years after his death. Throughout his 60-year career, Wallace Stegner wrote 30 books, started the Creative Writing Program at Stanford University, won a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award, and more. Here, his contributions as a prolific writer, historian, environmentalist, and professor are explored through the lens of contemporary crises and concerns.

Coeditor Mark Fiege is a professor of history and Wallace Stegner Chair in Western American Studies at Montana State University.

Eyes in the Back of Your Head: A Toolbox of Exceptional Classroom Management Strategies LARRY F. GREGORY 64, 70 MA HISTORY, AND MARCIE BELGARD AMAZON: 2023

Part of the Effective Teacher series, this volume highlights key practices of effective teachers for keeping students focused and engaged. Marcie Belgard is a retired English teacher and former WSU Tri-Cities instructor. Retired principal Larry F. Gregory also taught at WSU Tri-Cities.

Wild Carnivores of New Mexico SCOTT BENDER 94 VET SCI., 95 DVM, CONTRIBUTOR UNIVERSES OF NEW MEXICO PRESS: 2023

In this first-ever landmark study of New Mexico’s wild carnivores, editors Jean-Luc E. Cartron and Jennifer K. Frey assembled a team of leading biologists to explore the animals and the major issues that shape their continued presence in the state. Scott Bender, a faculty member at Dixie College on the Navajo Nation in Arizona, contributed to the work.

Ophelia Starluck Saves the Galaxy KRISTEN GWEN JOHNSON 96 ENGLISH SQUIRREL POWER BOOKS: 2023

This plucky space adventure, the first in a quirky new series aimed at middle-grade readers, focuses on friendship, overcoming adversity—a mad, invading space weasel with knowledge and skill, and saving the galaxy. It’s all up to the young space woman Ophelia Starluck and her friend Finn. When Finn admits he’s been keeping a secret, Ophelia is devastated. Their twins relationship and the fate of the galaxy are at risk.
Samantha (Samantha) is an Edward R. Murrow senior vice president and market manager for iHeartMedia.

James Donaldson ('79 Soc.) has been inducted to the Sacramento Sports Hall of Fame. Donaldson played baseball as a center for the Washington State from 1973 to 1979 and will fill the time-career leader in batted balls. He was drafted by the Seattle SuperSonics in 1979, traded to the Dallas Mavericks, and later the New York Knicks and the Utah Jazz, where he finished his career. He was inducted to the WSU Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006.

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The colors he chose represent “the classic color palette of red, black, and green that you may typically see represented in Black art or during Black History Month,” Cramer said. “I created them so that you feel represented, and you feel your place.”

By Chloe Cramer

Classnotes

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Janet Caldwell ('92 Ed.) sits on the board of directors of the Oregon Food Bank. She is a vice president for United Way of Tri-Cities. She serves on the board of directors of the Oregon Food Bank and is a member of the board of directors of the United Way of America.

Pamela Baker ('95 Min.) is a senior vice president of the Washington Post. She is an Edward R. Murrow for more than 20 years.

Tawny Dotson ('00 Busi.) is president of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld. She is a partner at the firm's Los Angeles office. She is a member of the board of directors of the Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld Foundation.

Tiffany Smith ('06 History) is senior vice president of development at the Corning Museum of Glass. She is a member of the board of directors of the Corning Museum of Glass and is a member of the board of governors of the Glass Art Society.

The colors he chose represent “the classic color palette of red, black, and green that you may typically see represented in Black art or during Black History Month,” Cramer said. “I created them so that you feel represented, and you feel your place.”

By Chloe Cramer
REMEMBERING REX DAVIS

He learned to play tennis while serving overseas.

Rex Stuart Davis was drafted into the US Army during the Korean War, serving from 1953—the year he was married—to 1955. He perfected his serve in Seoul, then introduced the sport to military members and their families as a physical activities specialist at Camp Zama, Japan.

The experience was life-changing. Davis spent the rest of his life coaching, teaching, and playing tennis, mostly at Washington State University.

Davis (’31 MS Phys.) died October 10, 2023, in Pullman. He was 91.

“Rex Davis will forever be a true Cougar,” says former WSU athletic director Pat Chun. “From student-athlete to professor to head coach, Rex was a part of the fabric of WSU tennis for 30-plus years and left his mark on the countless student-athletes he mentored. His caring nature endeared him not only to his players, but made him a pillar in the Pullman community.”

Davis arrived in Pullman from Richland in 1949 as a promising young mountaineer who went on to earn three varsity letters and serve as team captain his senior year. He was also a member of the cheer squad.

He returned to WSU more than a decade after graduation to teach and to lead the men’s gymnastics program. The job was short-lived, lasting from 1968 to 1969.

But, a year after he came back to Pullman, he added men’s tennis to his repertoire, coaching the team from 1967 until the program’s end in 1994 and amassing 269 wins. From 1987 to 1990, he also coached women’s tennis, garnering another 91 wins. His all-time total—360 victories—is second only to the four-time swimming coach in WSU history at the time of his retirement.

Along the way, he earned his doctoral degree in education from the University of the Pacific.

In 1959, a year after he retired, he won the WSU Alumni Achievement Award, and the central court at the WSU tennis facility was named in his honor. In 2015, he was inducted into the WSU Athletics Hall of Fame.

He met the love of his life, Alice (’53 Music Ed.), at church during college. He attended Simpson United Methodist Church, where she sang in the choir. According to his obituary, “I wasawol first sight.”

The couple married July 11, 1953, in Walla Walla.

He is survived by his wife and partner of 70 years, their four children, 12 grandchildren—all of whom Davis taught to play tennis—and seven great-grandchildren. Each of their children—Vicky Elliott (’77), Cathy Haley (’77 Ed.); Gary Davis (’84; Const. Mgmt.) and Penny Davis (’80 B.B. & Lisl. Stud.)—attended WSU. Gary played one year on the WSU tennis team with his dad as coach and continued summer leagues with his dad until his ninetieth birthday. Penny played WSU tennis for four years with her dad as coach.

Last year, in a note to Washington State Magazine, he wrote: “Thanks, WSU. You are, and have been, a big part of our lives over the years.”

BY ADRIANA JANOVICH

COURTESY CORBELL FUNERAL HOMES
IN Memoriam


CORRECTION DEBRA J. MENIN ('85 Comm.) was mistakenly listed in the Spring 2024 issue’s In Memoriam. We apologize for the error.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Evan Henniger (above) comes from a long line of Cougs. Growing up, he never doubted he’d be one, too, someday. His parents, Mike and Lisa, weren’t as sure. Born with an intellectual disability (IDD), it seemed unlikely that Evan could enjoy the same WSU experience as his siblings.

But nothing stops a Coug.

In 2018, the College of Education launched WSU ROAR—a unique, inclusive two-year program for students with IDD. Evan was there on day one.

“He thrived in the ROAR program,” said Mike. “Everything he did, Evan found success in. He learned and grew, and we supported him.”

Now in its fifth year, ROAR allows students like Evan to audit university courses and build employment, academic, and independent living skills. ROAR scholars reside in dorms and apartments at WSU Pullman, creating a supportive peer network that fosters independence and meaningful growth.

Donor-supported scholarships provide a lifeline for ROAR families who, having been told college wouldn’t be possible, did not plan for the expense. The Henniger family established the Henniger Family Opportunity Fund to help families close that gap. “Parents who may have thought college wasn’t an option for their kids need to understand that it is, and they need to start planning now,” Mike said.

“Anyone considering ROAR should take that chance,” Evan said. “It’s a journey that can truly change your life. ROAR is like a family.”

Scan this code to make a gift to the ROAR program.

BY ADRIANA JANOVICH

The place

IT’S WRITTEN IN RED HIGH ABOVE THE FRONT DOOR.

The sign—hand-painted against a yellow backdrop—declares: “This is the place.”

It first caught Squeak Meisel’s eye during a self-directed residency in downtown Los Angeles during the summer of 2015. It spoke to him. It—along with the Nickel Diner’s warm hospitality and famed maple-bacon doughnuts—made him feel welcome. It also made him want to share the sentiment with students.

“I thought it was an interesting assertion: ‘This is the place,’” says Meisel, chair of the Department of Art at Washington State University. “I feel that way about the art department. There’s no other department at WSU that looks like ours.”

When he returned to LA the following summer, he frequented the Nickel Diner and snapped a photo of its vintage sign. That fall semester, he brought the saying to the Pullman campus.

Meisel (’02 MFA) projected the words onto a large sheet of paper and used a Sharpie to make his first version of the sign, displaying it high above the front doors of the Fine Arts Building. He still has that paper sign; it’s rolled up in a corner of his office.

Today, a more permanent version greets students, staff, faculty, and visitors alike. Meisel created that one, too, with a white backdrop. But the words are the same: “This is the place. There is no place quite like this place anywhere near this place so this must be the place.”

The aim is to welcome and to inspire and to build a sense of community.

“Making art is all about perspective,” says Meisel, who’s served as department chair since 2016. “I was just trying to lean into our uniqueness.”

Scan this code to make a gift to the ROAR program.
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