Another year passes, this one of relative stability for our department. There is much to look back on and be proud of. We had another excellent Scholars Week in the Spring, and look forward to another set of student papers and presentations this year.

With Dan Boxberger on sabbatical, I’ve been serving as Interim Chair for the last two quarters; a new adventure certainly. None of the traditional Archaeology tools, trowels or whips, turn out to be particularly useful in this new role, although a long view may well be.

As you know the state’s budget crisis continues to deepen. We do not have any clear picture of how far cuts to the university and higher education in general will go. President Shepard has instituted new policies and has been very open and inclusive with the university communities in implementing changes mandated by the Legislature.

Still, we need every supporting voice that we can muster. Please consider urging your representatives to place higher education high on their list of state programs to support.

Our Department has been heavily dependent upon financial support from our alumni to help us develop programs that would not be funded otherwise.

Our Friends of Anthropology Undergraduate research fund, for example, is completely supported by donor gifts. In the last few years, this has enabled students to attend and present their research at regional and national conferences. We also support a scholarship fund for worthy students, and a fund for purchasing teaching materials. All of these are made possible only through your generous donations. Faculty, staff and students all join me in thanking you for your support in the past.

-- Todd Koetje

Viva Barnes, Anthropology's Academic Services Manager was nominated for the 2010 Outstanding Classified Staff Award.

The nomination included specific examples of Viva's demonstrated excellence in performance, effective personal interaction, initiative, creativity and overall outstanding achievement throughout in her service and commitment to the University.

As noted on her nomination, and echoed from around the department by faculty, students and alumni alike, Viva is most definitely the “Secret to the Anthropology Department's success.”
Thanks to our 2010 Donors!
We would like to thank the following generous contributors:

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News from our Faculty

Daniel Boxberger
So, Jean asked me to report on my whereabouts for the annual newsletter. As you may know, because I can't stop telling everyone, I have been on long-awaited professional leave (sabbatical) since June 15. Thanks to Todd for filling in as chair. As I write this it is approaching Thanksgiving and I am lamenting the fact that five months of my leave have already slipped by. I had anticipated giving everyone monthly updates, but never seemed to get around to it. So, here is a recap of the last six months and glimpses of what the next nine months might bring.

June 15
Officially went on leave, left the next day for Winnipeg to do research in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

July 15
Here is a picture of me at Santa Cruz enjoying the surf and sun. I was in Berkeley doing research at the Bancroft Library (honest!).

Daniel Boxberger
Coast to Coast walk across England; Summer 2009
August 15 Cheryl and I went on our annual trek. This year we walked the King Ludwig Trail in Bavaria.

September 15 I was at the Quinault Indian Reservation, doing research on the Quinault ocean fishery.

October 15 I attended the meetings of the American Society for Ethnohistory in Ottawa. I chaired a session giving an update on Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde research and presented on the work I am engaged in on the emergence of identity in the Old Oregon Territory. This latter work will result in a book-length manuscript, the main reason I am on leave.

November 15 Resided at Cedar Key, Florida. Getting some sun and spending the days writing.

December 15 Went back to Bellingham, spent time with family. Over Winter break Cheryl and I went to Hawaii, (for research, again, seriously!).

January 15 I will be moving to Tucson. I have been selected as the 2011 Residential Scholar at the School of Anthropology, University of Arizona. I will be living in Tucson mid-January to May or so. They are giving me the use of an historic adobe house, located next to an ancient Hohokam site, for Spring Semester.

I can stay through Summer Semester if I so choose, they do a field course there every year. I am really excited, it will give me time to devote exclusively to writing and I will be somewhere warm for the winter. And as an additional bonus, I will be able to get briefed on research going on with Indigenous peoples and the borderlands, something I have been doing a long time on the USA/Canada border and something I hope to expand to compare with the USA/Mexico border.

Next year I will catch you up on what happened in 2011!

Joyce Hammond

It’s been a very busy year for me. In July my family and I (new grandchild in tow) flew to Iowa to spend ten days with my sister and her family. My sister likes to express herself in a variety of ways, always encouraging others to do so as well, so we stayed out of the summer heat tie-dying miscellaneous articles of clothing and imitating her belly dance moves. I also spent quite a lot of time having her help me resurrect my French skills since she’s a retired French professor. I did that so that in August, when my partner and I went to the Society and Cook Islands for three weeks, I could manage some coherent conversations with some of the Tahitian women that I and an artist-community activist woman from St. Louis were going to make cultural exchange plans. (There aren’t a lot of people in the Northwest to help me resurrect my long-unused Tahitian language skills!)

Last year, out of the blue, a St. Louis artist/global community activist contacted me after being introduced to my now-out-of-print book on the Polynesian textiles of tifaifai and tivaevae and the women who make them. She and some of the Tahitian women of an organization that makes and promotes the art form began plans for a cross-cultural exchange, and she invited me to join into that endeavor. If plans coalesce, the Tahitian tifaifai makers will travel to California sometime next year and I will be participating in that venture.

I had not been back to many of the places in French Polynesia where I spent nearly a year doing dissertation research, so I decided a quick visit was in order to bring myself up to date. Papeete, Tahiti, has changed tremendously in 30 years time, but there was enough of what I could recall from before to make me rather nostalgic while I was there for a few days. As a “working holiday,” I crammed in several meetings with Tahitian women and various government officials to help make rudimentary plans for a group of Tahitians to travel to California with some of their textiles in about a year’s time.

Most of the three weeks in the Pacific, however, were spent in the Cook Islands, farther west, where English is spoken as an official language rather than French. There was a symposium of the Pacific Arts Association that I attended on Rarotonga for three days and an accompanying excellent exhibit of Cook Islands tivaevae. After spending some time on Rarotonga, we flew to the little island of Atiu. In the four days we were there, an island I had never visited. We rented a motorbike for a day to go around the island on the dirt road, see where Captain Cook had anchored, and see the makatea. The island doesn’t have many young adults since many of them have migrated to New Zealand for jobs. We happened upon a group of four middle-aged men drinking their homemade alcoholic drink in a shelter (an activity mentioned in most of the tourist materials about the islands) and sat and visited with them for a while. The people of the main town were busy renovating their church and we were often invited to stop and eat in the outdoor shelter with the workers and those that supplied them food. We wandered around the island visiting some tivaevae artists and taking in a local tour of the flora and fauna. Back on Rarotonga, the last evening of our trip, we had the wonderful experience of looking out to sea and seeing some whales breaching, a very thrilling sight.
Joan Stevenson
Last school year was the worst of my career. Losing the youngest member of the department, Dr. Grimes, was a major blow and you appreciate your colleagues but there is nothing like a sudden death to make you appreciate them more; you miss the friendship, the discussions, the shared worldview—and that they share the advising, reference letter writing, and teaching workload. I was suddenly the only adviser for two successful tracks, the Bioanthropology BS and the Biocultural track within the Anthropology major. Both have grown and represent about 30% of the majors. We were able to hire a replacement, Dr. Mosher, and she brings a wealth of applied health and teaching experience and is publishing rapidly. Students love her. My blood pressure declined as soon as she signed her contract.

Writing/research projects stalled but are back in gear and I remain an associate editor of American Journal of Physical Anthropology, book review editor of American Journal of Human Biology and continue to participate on the program committee for the American Association of Physical Anthropologists.

Five students accompanied me to the meetings last spring and many are getting into prestigious medical/dental/nursing etc. training or bioanthropology graduate programs. Our eldest, Ward, graduated in June 2010, from WWU with a BS in Sociology, minor in Anthropology, John is pursuing artistic endeavors, and Phil is in the middle of remodeling the house.

Judith M.S. Pine
Asst. Prof. Judy Pine spent 9 weeks in China and Thailand this summer, the second of three summers of data collection for her NSF funded Lahu Media Project. Working in China was an eye-opening experience, and moving between China and Thailand was an opportunity for greater insight into both of these research venues. The Lahu Media Project as an exploration of Lahu language media that circulates throughout the Lahu speaking world. Much of the media – karaoke style music videos, music CDs and a very few feature films – is produced in mainland SE Asia even though most Lahu speakers live in China. Prof. Pine now has one of the most extensive collections of Lahu language media in the US, and she will be working with data from this project for many years to come. The paper she will present at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association this year will draw on data collected as part of the Lahu media project, and a paper based on her presentation last year is in review for publication in the journal Pragmatics.

Prof. Pine had the opportunity to return to her dissertation topic, literacy theory, recently, when she gave a talk for Fall Family Weekend on the subject of Literacy/ies. Positive response to this talk includes a note from a parent who works in the public school system in their home city, and who intends to bring some of the material presented to the attention of administrators in that district. Working on that presentation was a lot of fun. It was also quite useful, as she has been asked to work on a literacy theory project with a fellow scholar at Chiangmai University, the Thai university with which she is affiliated for research.

Prof. Pine will continue her practice of bringing material from the field into the classroom in her Asian ethnography and Linguistic Anthropology courses. Nowhere are such examples more useful, however, than in the Qualitative Research Methods class. She particularly enjoys being able to compare times when things go horribly, horribly wrong – and since this is a hands-on class there are always some examples of things not going exactly as expected.

As part of the WWU Faculty GUR program in 2009-10, Judy gave a two-part class on the concept of Asia and the question of whether human rights is a monolithic idea. Participation in Faculty GUR was so rewarding that she became a coordinator of the program for 2010-11. The first two presentations of the series, one on basic mathematics and one on what we can learn about leadership from Classical literature, took place in Fall quarter.

Prof. Pine also joined Prof. Hammond and the Anthropology Club in developing a very successful four-fields presentation for fifth graders who visited campus as part of the Compass2Campus program. As a bit of pre-Halloween fun, Prof. Pine gave the first presentation of the Linguistics Club "Crash Course" series, leading participants in the creation of a usable language in an hour.

MJ Mosher
This June I had the opportunity to help Introduce Anthropological Genetics to the graduate students in Argentina at Universidad Nacional De Córdoba.

My section covered the role of nutrition and epigenetics. Darío, a professor of Bioanthropology at the university was a colleague of mine when we attended the University of Kansas. We worked together on the Kansas Mennonite Project, examining the relationship of diet, adipokines, and apolipoprotein serum cholesterol levels.

Robert C Marshall
This is a story about lead time, planning, and the time it all takes. The idea that cooperation would make a good theme for a Society of Economic Anthropology annual meeting first came to me at the 2004 SEA end-of-meeting banquet. I broached it with the officers and they encouraged me to write up a proposal. A year later my theme was chosen for the 2008 meeting and I became program organizer for that meeting. I rewrote the proposal as a call for papers to be announced at the 2006 meeting and began to receive papers with a deadline of the end of October, 2007.
One of the unique features of SEA is that it does not accept abstracts as the basis for consideration for inclusion in the meeting because there is space for only 12 – 15 papers in the plenary sessions; each paper gets about an hour of everyone’s attention; only one paper is presented at a time. All other submissions are accepted as posters. The meeting papers becomes the next annual volume in the SEA monograph series. About 50 papers on the theme of cooperation came in. I selected 14 to be the program for the annual meeting of April, 2008, using the criterion of how interestingly they dealt with the topic. The program included papers in physical anthropology and archaeology as well as ethnology.

From that point it took two and a half years to get all the papers revised; my own introduction to the topic and the papers written; the peer-review and second editing finished; everything set, proofed and revised again; indexed; bound; and all this with the 2010 AAA meetings looming, to ride on the coattails of the fortuitous Nobel economics award to Eleanor Ostrom, whose life work has been to understand the cooperative management of common property, especially irrigation systems.

If you have in mind generating and editing a collection of papers, perhaps you can move more quickly, but I really doubt it. Except that it took a little long to find three qualified peer reviewers and then get useful reviews from them, I don't see anywhere even a couple of months could be squeezed from this sequence. Other volumes in this monogram series have taken longer, and it has a willing and helpful publisher; it is well-established. From the germ of an idea to a book for sale, this project took six and a half years, and I haven't seen the book itself yet, only the cover – here it is; and of course the papers, many, many times.


Kathleen Saunders
Kathleen Saunders, an instructor in the Department of Anthropology at was named the recipient of the 2009-2010 Ronald Kleinknecht Excellence in Teaching Award for NonTenure Track faculty from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

From the award announcement:
Students and colleagues praise Professor Saunders as an extremely effective and innovative teacher and as a caring and dedicated mentor/advisor. Her carefully planned class sessions coupled with the learning opportunities she facilitates outside the classroom have enhanced her students’ educational experience.

The Award Committee was very impressed by the breadth and depth of Professor Saunders’ teaching portfolio. The “hands-on” learning that characterizes the Community Action aspect of Professor Saunders’ Cultural Anthropology course is a good example of just how thoroughly she engages her students not only in the practice of anthropology, but in critical thinking and in ethics. Another hallmark of Professor Saunders’ teaching is her commitment to the teaching of writing skills; her “Instrumental Writing” has been featured in Western’s Innovative Teaching Showcase.

This Excellence in Teaching Award is given each year to an instructor or visiting faculty member from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Depending on availability of funding, the award normally includes a $1,000 stipend.

Todd Koetje
This year Sarah Campbell and I taught the Department’s Archaeological Field School at Woodstock Farm on Chuckanut Bay. It was our third year testing the site WH 55, and resurveying other sites in and around the bay. So far several Master’s theses and many undergraduate projects have come out of this work.

I was also able to spend several weeks at Weasel cave in North Ossettia, southern Russia. Along with my Russian and American colleagues, I've been working at Weasel Cave since 1995. The cave is an extremely large, deep, complex paleolithic site with deposits in three major chambers dating from approximately 900,000 to ~28,000 years ago. I have been working mostly in the more recent deposits between 75-28,000 years ago, the time frame when early modern humans and neanderthals overlapped in the area. We are presenting a paper and two posters at the Society for American Archaeology meetings in Sacramento this spring. I also took over as Interim Department Chair, while Dan is off on sabbatical.

James Loucky
James …. has been putting words in the computer, mostly how we might have humane migration and borders in the United States and elsewhere. It is been good as well to encourage dialog and learning about how social equity is part of ecological stewardship, and something to affirm through the commons.

FAST FACTS: The Department of Anthropology has 204 undergraduate majors including 27 bio-anth majors, 41 archaeology concentration, 14 anth–ed concentration and 21 bio-cultural concentration. In any year we have between eight and twelve new graduate students, in 2010/2011 there are 21 graduate students enrolled. In the last year faculty offered 72 undergraduate courses and 18 graduate courses. In 2009-2010, 105 anthropology majors received their degrees and 4 graduate students completed the requirements for a masters degree.
Pairing comparative knowledge with anthropological perspective seems to me vital in our time. A diversity of experiences have helped shaped what I have come to believe and do, and I especially owe much to longstanding relationships with Maya friends and families. To this was added a memorable day of feasting with an extended family a colleague of mine had married into in a village an hour from Mérida, where the Applied Anthropology meeting was held.

James Loucky in front of Copper Ridge in the Casades

There and again through the African Studies Association, I helped develop workshops on asylum. Recognizing the contributions of all, and addressing particularly egregious practices like separating families, are just two of the many sensible things to do. (SfAA meets in Seattle, March 29-April 2, 2011, and includes an immigration panel in Bellingham on April 2.)

I am happy to work with others to bring the world to our community through the Bellingham Human Rights Film Festival. BHRFF is entirely free and sustained through volunteers – like me, and many students over the years. (NOTE that the 11th annual BHRFF is 17-26 February, with screenings at Fairhaven College auditorium and throughout the community; lineup to be posted on Facebook.)

ALUMNI!! We'd love to know what you are doing (and where) these days! Please drop me a line with some details and include a photo if you have one. We love to see our grads living and loving life after college! Email me: jean.webster@wwu.edu

Working with the World Issues Forum has also been a very constructive way to bring critical contemporary issues and incredible speakers to campus. Suggestions for potential speakers/presenters and films are welcome!

Spring 2010 started by marking the 40th anniversary of Earth Day (some of us remember that one) – through a week of Earth Days of films and activities, made all the more compelling in light of the ecocide in the Gulf. I particularly enjoyed organizing a dialog with Bellingham Mayor and community visionaries and activists, and incorporating everyone into my “Global Ethics” class that day. Diversity, cultural as well as environmental, is fundamental for helping mother Earth herself. So I look forward to continuing to look to “best practices” and values that cultures develop to foster both community and ecological wellbeing, as an equally good research and ethical endeavor.

Cultural Anth Major, Ariadnne A. Pena, is Western's honorary recipient of WWU's 100,000th degree

Western Washington University President Bruce Shepard with Western graduate Ariadnne Alatriste Pena, the honorary recipient of Western’s 100,000th degree, and Dennis Madsen, chair of Western’s Board of Trustees

Cultural Anthropology major Ariadnne Alatriste Peña was recognized at Commencement Saturday Dec. 11 as Western Washington University’s honorary 100,000th degree recipient.

Western officials knew the 100,000th degree would be awarded Saturday and selected a student at random to represent the recipient of the landmark degree. Alatriste, of Laguna Hills, Calif., had entered the drawing to be considered, but did not know she had been selected until it was her turn to walk across the stage at Saturday’s Commencement ceremony. She received a gift basket filled with Western Washington University memorabilia, including a blanket, clock, coffee cup, keychain and “Western at 100” book.

“I couldn’t believe it,” Alatriste said about being selected to represent the 100,000th degree recipient. Just days before graduating, Alatriste had experienced jitters about her finals and term papers and worried she wouldn’t graduate on time. “Next thing I knew, I was winning the 100,000th degree. Everyone got up and applauded. Western works in incredible ways.”

In addition to the celebration Saturday, Western is honoring the entire 2010-11 graduating class with a commemorative brick paver installed in the sidewalk in front of Old Main. Western began awarding degrees in 1933 and this recognition does not include certificates and other diplomas awarded prior to 1933.

During her time at Western, Alatriste was involved with the Ethnic Student Center and was an officer in Western’s MEChA club. She helped found Western’s Student Coalition for Immigration Rights to rally support for the DREAM Act. She studied at Hawaii Pacific University for a quarter on a student exchange, completing an internship in Hawaii with the grassroots prison reform group Community Alliance for Prisoners. And she showcased her academic talents during Western’s Scholars Week, when she presented “Epicenters of MDR-Tuberculosis: Russian Prisons,” a study of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis in Russian prisons.

Alatriste, who first heard about Western from a family friend, says her experience at the university helped her bring an academic focus to her interest in human rights. “I like helping the oppressed and helping those who don’t have a voice,” she said. “I got to Western and the next thing I knew, I was studying with Associate Professor Kathleen Young about war and human rights, sex and gender issues, and I was thinking, ‘This is it.’ My major is Cultural Anthropology. It’s all about reaching out and mingling with people.”

Alatriste plans to attend graduate school at University of California, Santa Cruz or at University of Colorado, Boulder, to study colonization, war, human rights and sovereignty. But first, she plans to move to Mexico and work with youth in a drug rehabilitation center.
** WWU’s Megan Otis to Speak at Association of National Teaching Fellows Symposium in London May 13-14, 2010 **

Megan Otis, Western Washington University graduate student and program assistant of WWU’s Teaching-Learning Academy, traveled to London to speak at the Association of National Teaching Fellows 10th Annual Symposium on May 13-14, 2010.

During the symposium, Otis, a native of Kent, spoke on how students and faculty can work together to improve teaching and learning, and how to help every student participate actively in their own learning. These are the topics of “Engaging Student Voices in the Study of Teaching and Learning,” a book Otis recently co-edited with Carmen Werder, director of WWU’s Teaching-Learning Academy.

Otis was invited to speak at the event following the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning conference in October 2009 in Indiana. During the conference, which launched “Engaging Student Voices,” Otis and Werder met several professors from the United Kingdom who were interested in their book and work in the Teaching-Learning Academy.

After the symposium, Otis also visited the University of Reading, University of Leicester, and University of Chester in England and University College in Cork, Ireland to talk about WWU’s Teaching-Learning Academy.

The Teaching-Learning Academy is the central forum for the scholarship of teaching and learning at WWU and brings together a broad spectrum of perspective from across campus.

Engaged in studying the intersections between teaching and learning, Teaching-Learning Academy members include faculty, students, administrators, and staff from across WWU, as well as several alumni and community members. The Teaching-Learning Academy’s central mission is to create a community of scholars who work together to better understand the existing learning culture, to share that understanding with others, and to enhance the learning environment for everyone.

“It’s very gratifying that scholars are interested in the work we’ve been doing at [WWU] for so many years,” Otis said. “I’m honored to have had the opportunity to go to England and Ireland to talk to folks about the wonderful work we’ve been doing together at Western – to study and enhance teaching and learning.”

For more information, contact Otis at megan.otis@wwu.edu.

** SPOTLIGHT :: SPEAKERS AT WESTERN **

The Department of Anthropology at Western Washington University welcomed a delegation from Brunei Darussalam to campus on Saturday, May 1, 2010.

Pahin Dato Seri Setia Lim Jock Seng, Brunei minister of foreign affairs, and Dato Yusoff Abd Hamid, ambassador to the United States, made a special trip to WWU with their delegation while passing through Seattle on their way to Washington, D.C. The purpose of the trip was to visit Linda Kimball, professor emerita of anthropology at WWU. Kimball is a noted scholar on Brunei Malay language and culture.

The reception was attended by Bellingham Mayor Dan Pike, WWU Provost Catherine Riordan, Department of Anthropology Chair Daniel Boxberger and other members of the WWU Department of Anthropology.

Minister Pahin Dato Lim Jock Seng is an anthropologist and former curator of the National Museum of Brunei and collaborated with Professor Kimball on a number of projects. Kimball retired in 2007 after 30 years of service at WWU.
News from Our Undergrad Alumni -  
Excerpts taken from Facebook, emails and notes from faculty.

Alex McAlvay, a graduating senior in Bio Anth applied for and won the Undergraduate Ethnobiologist Award this 2010. He won a one-year membership in the Society, a waiver for the Society of Ethnobiology annual meeting registration, accommodation for three nights during the conference, and $250 USD to put towards travel.  

Jami Wright, Graduate Student, via email: 
I'm sending out this email to let you know that I recently published an article (NOT my thesis) regarding some of the research I've done on wolf reintroduction in Idaho. Please check it out at http://www.jizlwane.org/lessons-from-wolves.html. 

Julienne Gage, Graduate Alumni, via email: 
This is Par II of a series I've been doing on Cuba and Science for Discovery News. The first was about U.S.-Cuba marine biology collaboration in the Gulf of Mexico, the last will be about medical collaboration and why Americans should care regardless of politics. This one was to coincide with All Saints season, and I think it'll make my former professors grin. Couldn't have done this without all of your teaching! 

Science of Santeria: Do a Little Happy Trance  
Santeria Slideshow  

From: Douglas Herrin, Undergraduate Alumni, via email: 
NIH has now uploaded me on to their system...NIH considers me a Fellow! That came as a surprise to me :) I did not know that I was getting a Fellowship. And I get my own phone number, desk, computer with a morning sunrise view (yeah, totally unexpected), and personal lab space (a huge blessing because I do not have to share my lab bench). I am becoming a morning person and never thought that would happen. Plus I can use nearly 10K of my stipend/grant money for the NGO (non-profit Non-Governmental Organization) in Jamaica. 

From Lisa Spicer, Graduate Student, via email: 
Here is a link to the Compass2Campus website video. As I was mentioning, the Anthropology department has a nice presence in this short (gee, talk about having a bias as a filmmaker-anthropologist!). Here's the link to the video! 

http://www.wce.wwu.edu/C2C/#top  

Danielle Shook, Undergraduate Alumni, via Facebook  
I got into City University and I start the psychology program in October. I am really excited, thank you for helping me get in. It's a three year program, and the state of Washington requires 3,000 probation hours, so in 5 years I should be a licensed psychologist! Five years seems like a long time, but I am excited. 

Kaela, Former Anth Major, via email  
I have been on quite the journey since graduation and have so much I would love to share with you. Of course over 3 years I have no idea where to begin! As I don't have the luxury of just popping by Bellingham to have a coffee and catchup, I will share just a bit...Two things that have dominated my time here in Canada are nursing school and my friend Amanda. Amanda has been one of my closest friends since moving to Calgary in 2007...she was one of the first connections I made and has been instrumental in much of my time here. I am not sure if you have heard of her but I will tell you briefly. She is a photojournalist who has traveled to every imaginable corner of our world and who, in August of 2008, was kidnapped while doing a piece on the refugee camps in Somalia. 

We lost Amanda to captivity for 15 months and in July of 2009 the Canadian government sat family and friends down and washed their hands of her ordeal (due to the demands of her ransom, not for lack of trying). Under unofficial advice, a team for Amanda’s release was immediately formed. I had the honor of being part of that team. Our incredibly small team of miracle workers were able to do, in 4 months, what the Canadian government could not do in 11. Amanda’s release was secured on Thanksgiving and she was home in time for Christmas! As you can imagine this consumed my life and, as did the entire group, I fell off the map for awhile. Amanda is doing incredibly well, she remains positive and believes that she has been gifted a rare opportunity to truly understand forgiveness and freedom. If I had any doubt before, she is truly an inspiration. Words cannot describe how it feels to have her home! 

Parallel to this journey I have been enrolled in a “fast track” nursing program - 20 months to a (second) Bachelors degree....It has been intense to say the least but the passion I have for this work is immeasurable as to the one I had for teaching. Something about nursing feels more organic, I am in love with it and it allows my passions to blossom! I will graduate in September and with the state of the job market here, I will most likely end up back in the states for a year prior to traveling, but who knows...forever the nomad. 

Ken Pratt, Graduate Alumni, via email:  
The attachment is some news you may be interested in knowing. It’s gratifying to me but also (weirdly) a little bit embarrassing: not the kind of thing I’m used to or particularly comfortable with... 

ANCSA  
On behalf of the Alaska Region’s ANCSA Office, on 6 March 2010, ANCSA Program Manager Ken Pratt accepted the Alaskana of the Year Award from the Alaska Library Association (AKLA) in recognition of the book Chasing the Dark: Perspectives on Place, History and Alaska Native Land Claims. This award applied to books published in 2009. Unless no suitable book is nominated, the AKLA selects one book per year for this special award, which “recognizes works that make a significant contribution to the understanding of Alaska and exhibit originality, depth of research and knowledge of Alaska.” Considering the large number of (fiction and nonfiction) books annually published about Alaska, to be selected for this award is a true honor. 

AKLA is a nonprofit professional organization for the employees, volunteers and advocates at academic, public, school and special libraries of all sizes in Alaska. As explained in the Preface of Chasing the Dark, the book was designed to be accessible to everyday readers; and its central objectives were to increase public awareness of the ANCSA 14(h)(1) Program, and provide some idea of the valuable information the BIA maintains concerning Alaska history and the traditions of Alaska Native peoples. That an organization representing the entire reading public of Alaska chose this book for
Jamie Cordes, Undergraduate Alumni, via Facebook:

Well, I will try to keep the last 12 years to a minimum... I was fortunate enough to get a job doing fieldwork for a Seattle-based archaeology firm just a week after graduation. I worked for 6 months near the Tolt River (Carnation area) where the City of Seattle was preparing to build a water treatment facility. Low and behold... stone tools were recovered during the test-pit survey, and so a 1-year contract was agreed upon to extract as many artifacts and information as possible before the area was altered. We worked with the Snoqualmie Tribe very closely, and it was a rewarding experience, as well as back-breaking!! When the weather turned nasty, I re-evaluated my ‘passion’ for archaeology, and came to the conclusion that my skills could be applied in a different way. One of the officers I worked with at WWUPD mentioned the FBI utilized skill sets like mine for crime scene work, and he urged me to apply. My mother, wanting to see her daughter in a stable job with “good” benefits, begged me to apply. One year later... I was on board for quite another adventure.

I started with the FBI here in Seattle in April ’99. Despite my degree, I entered into the ranks as a clerk (of sorts) and quickly made my degree and interests known to the Team Leader for the Evidence Response Team (ERT). I took a position as an Evidence Technician later that year, and joined the ranks of ERT in 2000. After 5 years of storing, cataloging, shipping, and schlepping evidence around, I was promoted to an Investigative Operations Analyst (IOA) for our Field Intelligence Group (FIG), which is a component of the U.S. intelligence community. I conduct background investigations, security and threat assessments, and prepare statistical reports and linkage projects for all sorts of investigations, from terrorism to organized crime and white collar shenanigans. My focus these days is Aryan Nations/White Supremacy/Domestic Terrorism movements, ideologies, leadership, funding, etc. What a long and twisted history to wrap your head around! So, in a nutshell, that’s my 9-5 cubicle job. However, my real “passion” at the FBI is my role on ERT.

I’ve been part of the ERT now for 10 years... I can’t believe it. I’m a Team Leader myself, and have the privilege of working with amazing local, federal, and military law enforcement partners doing some of the hardest work out there. We respond to crimes on federal property primarily (military installations, tribal lands, borders, ports, int’l waters), although we also assist small police departments when a case is overwhelming or special techniques/tools are in need. I’ve been all over the nation to attend trainings... it’s been an adventure to be sure. Sadly, in the past few years our crime responses have shifted from bank robbery vehicles and such to kidnappings, rape, homicide, and bombings. I’ve seen awful, awful things... savage brutality, familial indifference and neglect, and the murder of children. There are days when I am ready to say “enough”, but I know in my heart that the work we do does make a difference and I can speak for the dead when they no longer can, through evidence recovery and thorough investigative work.

I wish you all the best, both personally and professionally. Looking forward to hearing from you again when time allows.

Rad Cunningham, Undergraduate Alumni, via email:

I was a peace corps volunteer in Paraguay where I learned to speak Spanish and Guarani and had time to read the brown book (is it still brown?) cover to cover, and worked on environmental health projects relating to parasites, fumes from indoor cooking, and safe water.

Next I was a contractor for The Carter Center’s Guinea Worm Eradication Program in Southern Sudan. This is the first ever non-vaccine eradication program, so we did safe water, health education, community engagement, treatment, and mass distributions of intervention materials. I was there less than a year after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed ending the war, which made for an interesting program environment. The Dinka were the predominant group in the area where I worked.

Now I am finishing up a Masters in Public health and a Masters in Public Administration and moving to Equatorial Guinea to work as a Public Health Specialist on: less than 5% mortality, maternal mortality, and safe water provision for Montrose Africa, a sister organization to the Malaria Consortium. I am really excited about this position because I think it has the potential to save a lot of lives, but I don’t know all that much about it yet. I would love to come and talk to a class about anything, working in post conflict Sudan and the referendum, or international aid as a career.

Mary Moro, Undergraduate Alumni, via email to Prof. Joan Stevenson:

If it was not for you and Dr. Grimes I don’t think any of us would be where we are today. You might remember Katie McGuire, who is now in her 3 year of medical school at OSU. Halle Kerins is now in her 4th year of medical school at UW, and Kelsay McFall is staring her first year of DO school in Michigan.

If it had not been for the both of you my friends and I would not be on the way to the most amazing careers. Not to mention I would not have my best friends. You and Dr. Grimes literally changed our lives and help us achieve our goals. You too go above and beyond, and I hope you know that.

Natalie Cooper, Undergraduate Alumni, is doing now that she has finished law school at the UW with a focus on international criminal law (war crimes)...

Annie DeVoes, Undergraduate Alumni, worked in Botswana last summer.....

Justin Collquon, Undergraduate Alumni, just finished his physician’s assistant certificate allowing him to now work with Doctor’s Without Borders .

ALUMNI! We’d love to know what you are doing (and where) these days! Please drop me a line with some details and include a photo if you have one. We love to see our grads living and loving life after college! Email me: jean.webster@wwu.edu
Anthropology Club
The Anthropology Club is a group of students and faculty who promote interest in the discipline of anthropology. We plan and promote speakers, trips and events, which relate to all of the sub-fields of the discipline. Anyone with the slightest interest in anthropology is invited to the meetings and events we organize. We welcome undergrads, grad students, faculty, alumni, undecided majors, your kids, your family... Thanks to the officers and other club members for their hard work and support.
Visit the WWU Anthropology Club online: http://www.wwu.edu/anthclub

DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS 2010-2011

Taylor-Anastasio Award
Taylor-Anastasio Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Research Awardees were Britt Bodin for his paper “Lushootseed,” Nathan Harris for his paper “Chlamydophila pneumonia and Atherosclerosis: Lifestyle of Infection?”, and Emily Taber for her paper “Prisons of the Cruel Inner God”

Outstanding Graduate
Our Outstanding Senior for 2010 was Parsan Saffaie whose list of accomplishments speak for themselves. Parsan Saffaie was determined to pursue two degrees in Anthropology in order to become a PhD paleoanthropologist. Although no one had ever accomplished this before, she successfully received her Archaeology BA from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences with a 4.0 grade point and the BS in the dual degree, Biology/Anthropology from the College of Science and Technology with a 3.97 cumulative grade point, magna cum laude for both degrees. Parsan has tutored students one-on-one in many subjects and served as a teaching assistant in 3rd quarter 1st year biology and the Human Physiology classes. She worked with Dr. Heather Van Epps on the neurobiology of nematode motor neurons with implications for the workings of the human brain and participated in an excavation of a Middle Upper Paleolithic site in Vienne France, helping Dr. Marie Soressi identify a pre-Aurignacian tool tradition that is suggestive of interactions between Neanderthal and modern Homo sapiens. She was also selected to apply her bone anatomy knowledge to human remains recovered from burial mounds in the American Southwest, with Dr. Jane Buikstra, phys anth at ASU and winner of the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from the AAPA (Darwin Award). Dr. Buikstra was very positive about Ms. Saffaie's research efforts when we attended the national convention in Albuquerque in early April.

Winner of the Friends of Anthropology Undergraduate Research
The Friends of Anthropology Undergraduate Research recipient for Winter 2010 was Julie Creager for her project “Repatriation of Shageluk Materials”. The project repatriated materials donated to Western's Anthropology Dept. back to the Shageluk Tribe in Alaska.

Altruism and gratitude, the cornerstones of sanity.
Anonymous