ALAN RHODES:
Mr. Lefty’s Election Reflections, p.6

CRAFTY UPRISING:
Local artists head south, p.18

BIRTHDAY BASH:
Party at the Shakedown, p.20

Fuzz Buzz, P.10 * Rumor Has It, P.20 * Free Will, P.31
**WEDNESDAY [11.28.12]**

**MUSIC**
- Tracy Spring, TR Richie: 7:30pm, Roeder Home Wine, Women & Song: 7:30pm, Lairmont Manor

**VISUAL ARTS**
- Holiday Festival of the Arts: 10am-6pm, H & M Company Warehouse

**THURSDAY [11.29.12]**

**ONSTAGE**
- Comedy Night: 7pm, Concrete Theatre
- The Pajama Game: 7:30pm, Bellingham Theatre Guild
- Cheaper by the Dozen: 7:30pm, Claire vg
- Thomas Theatre, Lynden
- White Christmas: 7:30pm, Anacortes Community Theatre
- Good, Bad, Ugly: 8pm, Upfront Theatre
- Seven Heavenly Virtues: 8pm, iDiOM Theater
- The Project: 10pm, Upfront Theatre

**DANCE**
- Fall Into Dance: 7:30pm, Performing Arts Center, WWU

**VISUAL ARTS**
- Holiday Festival of the Arts: 10am-6pm, H & M Company Warehouse

**FRIDAY [11.30.12]**

**ONSTAGE**
- How the Grinch Stole Christmas: 7pm, Bellingham Arts Academy for Youth
- A Christmas Carol: 7pm, McIntyre Hall, Mount Vernon
- The Pajama Game: 7:30pm, Bellingham Theatre Guild
- Body Talk: 7:30pm, Firehouse Performing Arts Center
- Cheaper by the Dozen: 7:30pm, Claire vg
- Thomas Theatre, Lynden
- Murder at Club Babalu: 7:30pm, RiverBelle Dinner Theatre, Mount Vernon
- Games Galore: 8pm, Upfront Theatre
- Seven Heavenly Virtues: 8pm, iDiOM Theater
- White Christmas: 8pm, Anacortes Community Theatre
- Director’s Cut: 10pm, Upfront Theatre

**DANCE**
- Fall Into Dance: 7:30pm, Performing Arts Center, WWU

**MUSIC**
- Dark of December: 7pm, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
- Words of Women in Song: 8pm, Performing Arts Center, WWU

Jazz vocalist Cheryl Jewell joins the Whatcom Jazz Singers and the Saltwater Octet for a “Cool Yule” Swingin’ Christmas Show Dec. 1 at the Amadeus Project

**BELLINGHAM WEEKLY**

A glance at what’s happening this week

**Take a “Winter Wonderland Walk” and view a variety of decorated Christmas trees at the annual Festival of Trees fundraiser Nov. 30-Dec. 1 at the Leopold**

**WORDS**

- Holiday Book Sale: 10am-6pm, Blaine Library

**COMMUNITY**

- Festival of Trees: 11am-10pm, Leopold
- Olde Fashioned Christmas: 5-9pm, Pioneer Park, Ferndale
- Native Art Fair: 10am-7pm, Northwest Indian College
- Final Friday Art Walk: 5-9pm, La Conner

**SATURDAY [12.01.12]**

**ONSTAGE**
- How the Grinch Stole Christmas: 2pm and 7pm, Bellingham Arts Academy for Youth
- Body Talk: 5pm and 7:30pm, Firehouse Performing Arts Center
- A Christmas Carol: 7pm, McIntyre Hall, Mount Vernon
- Cheaper by the Dozen: 7:30pm, Claire vg
- Thomas Theatre, Lynden
- The Pajama Game: 7:30pm, Bellingham Theatre Guild
- Murder at Club Babalu: 7:30pm, RiverBelle Dinner Theatre, Mount Vernon
- Games Galore: 8pm, Upfront Theatre
- Seven Heavenly Virtues: 8pm, iDiOM Theater
- White Christmas: 8pm, Anacortes Community Theatre
- Director’s Cut: 10pm, Upfront Theatre

**DANCE**
- Holiday Celebration on Ice: 4pm, Bellingham Sportsplex
- Contra Dance: 7-9:30pm, Depot Arts Center, Anacortes
- Fall Into Dance: 7:30pm, Performing Arts Center, WWU
- Jezebel Cabaret: 8pm, Lincoln Theatre, Mount Vernon
- Jingle Bells: 8pm, Lincoln Theatre, Mount Vernon

**MUSIC**
- Uptown Lowdown Band: 2-5pm, VFW Hall
- Cool Yule: 4pm, Amadeus Project
- Bellingham Chamber Chorale: 4pm, First Congregational Church
- Holly Swanson Album Release: 7pm, YWCA Ballroom
- Dark of December: 7pm, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
- Swing Connection: 7pm, First Baptist Church
- Jonathan Suke: 7:30pm, Amadeus Project
- North Cascades Concert Band: 7:30pm, Blaine High School PAC

**COMMUNITY**

- Holiday Faire: 10am-4pm, Whatcom Hills Waldorf School

Bellingham Figure Skating Club members will show off their talents at a “Holiday Celebration on Ice” Dec. 1-2 at the Bellingham Sportsplex
Festival of Trees: 10am-1pm, Leopold
Fairhaven Holiday Festival: 12-3pm, historic Fairhaven
Olde Fashioned Christmas: 1-9pm, Pioneer Park, Ferndale
Harbor Lights Festival: 2:30-7pm, throughout Blaine
Lighted Christmas Parade: 6pm, downtown Lynden

GET OUT
Jingle Bell Run: 7am, Moose Lodge, Mount Vernon
Girls on the Run: 9:30am, Depot Market Square
Fairhaven Frosty: 10am, Fairhaven Park

FOOD
Bellingham Farmers Market: 10am-3pm, Depot Market Square
Scandinavian Holiday Faire: 10am-4pm, Norway Hall
Christmas Tea: 1-5pm, Deming Library

VISUAL ARTS
Children's Shop: 10am-3pm, Bloedel Donovan Open House: 10am-4pm, Morrison Glass Art
Holiday Festival of the Arts: 10am-6pm, H & M Company Warehouse
Christmas on the Farm Market: 11am-4pm, Bellewood Acres
Objectification 5 Opening: 5-8pm, Smith & Vallee Gallery, Edison

SUNDAY [12.02.12]
ONSTAGE
The Pajama Game: 2pm, Bellingham Theatre Guild
How the Grinch Stole Christmas: 2pm, Bellingham Arts Academy for Youth
Quilters Auditions: 7pm, Bellingham Theatre Guild
Cheaper by the Dozen: 7:30pm, Claire Thoms Theatre, Lynden
A Christmas Carol: 2pm, McIntyre Hall, Mount Vernon
White Christmas: 2pm, Anacortes Community Theatre

DANCE
Holiday Celebration on Ice: 1:30pm, Bellingham Sportsplex

MUSIC
Whatcom Symphony's Holiday Treasures: 3pm, Mount Baker Theatre
Anti-Holiday Holiday Concert: 3pm, Lincoln Theatre, Mount Vernon
North Cascades Concert Band: 3pm, Brodniak Hall, Anacortes

COMMUNITY
Olde Fashioned Christmas: 1-4pm, Pioneer Park, Ferndale

VISUAL ARTS
Holiday Festival of the Arts: 10am-6pm, H & M Company Warehouse
Christmas on the Farm Market: 11am-4pm, Bellewood Acres

MONDAY [12.03.12]
ONSTAGE
Quilters Auditions: 7pm, Bellingham Theatre Guild

Don’t miss the gameshows this weekend!
6pm, 8pm, 9pm, 10pm & 12am
Win up to $5,000 every gameshow!

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Elvis Family Christmas
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"Who shot J.R.?" may have been one of the most successful marketing plays in the history of television, and we're guessing Larry Hagman—who played the conniving oil man on Dallas—had a lot to do with the show's success. The actor, 81, died last week of complications from throat cancer. Fittingly, he was in Texas, where he was reprising his famous role as the head of the dysfunctional Ewing family.

**VIEWS & NEWS**
4: Mailbag
6: Gristle & Rhodes
8: Hard of herring
10: Police blotter, Index
11: Last week's news

**ARTS & LIFE**
14: Snow-free sojourns
16: A world of movement
18: Crafty uprisings
20: A musical birthday
22: Clubs
24: Hits and Pitt
26: Film Shorts

**REAR END**
27: Bulletin Board
28: Advice Goddess
29: Crossword
30: Wellness
31: Free Will Astrology
32: This Modern World, Tom the Dancing Bug
33: Slowpoke, Sudoku
34: Film and fungi

**LITTLE REPORTED**
President Barack Obama delivered the National Defense Authorization Act to his people on New Year's Eve, with little hype from mainstream media. Cheers to Cascadia Weekly for publishing the hit list from Project Censored that kicked off its set with the act that blasted holes through our Constitution.

James Madison wrote, “The means of defense against foreign danger historically have become the instrument of tyranny at home.”

Is the NDAA a war on terror or a war on your civil liberties? You decide.

—Carol Hunter, Bellingham

**GOON SQUAD**
There are two kinds of labor unions, those who work for a better society, and those that only care about themselves. The California Nurses Association is an example of the former. The Northwest Washington Central Labor Council is an example of the latter.

To illustrate what I’m talking about, the California nurses have put their money and bodies on the line against corporations and politicians who put profits before people in the health care industry. Conversely, the Labor Council teams up with corrupt corporations and politicians in order to get a piece of the action.

I first encountered the nefarious Labor Council in the 1990s, when they joined developers and realtors in undermining environmental law in Northwest Washington. Later, when environmentalists wrested control of the local Democratic Party from the Labor Council, the labor representatives shifted party funds into another account before leaving office. When Lummi Indians were invited by the environmentalists to join the local party, labor goons showed up to make it clear they weren’t welcome by physically shoving them around.

Today, as the Labor Council again teams up with developers, realtors, the Chamber of Commerce and the Republican Party against the Lummi Nation over the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal at Cherry Point, their media campaign has taken on a distinctly hostile tone aimed at mobilizing resentment against environmentalists and Indians. While the Labor Council is entitled to its opinion about the economics of taking a powder to support Chinese industry, setting a tone in the media that pits organized labor against Indians and environmentalists is both irresponsible and inexcusable.

As we witnessed in the past, the anti-Indian, anti-environmentalist bigotry that lies just below the surface in some organized labor milieus can rise in the form of open hostility and violence with little provocation. Deliberately fanning the flames of resentment is something the Labor Council will have to answer for if they don’t rein in the inflammatory deceptions of their reckless public relations campaign. Because in the end, the disaster waiting to happen isn’t just to the environment; it’s perhaps more importantly what happens to the social fabric that matters.

—Jay Taber, San Francisco
Valid only at Nooksack River Casino. Valid December 1, 2012 only. Limit one person. Must be a Winners Club Member and 21 years of age to redeem. No cash value. Not transferable. Management reserves all rights to alter, amend or cancel offer at any time. Use of coupon implies an understanding and acceptance of all rules. Duplications will not be accepted. Coupon requires validation at Winners Club Booth to be redeemed. Not valid if printed via internet.
PDA DOA? Just as the target at last finally drifts into view, Bellingham policymakers may lose one steeley arrow in their quiver for negotiations on the future of the city’s central waterfront. In their budget talks this month, Bellingham City Council appeared uncertain about the future of its Public Development Authority, created in 2008 to help manage city assets and develop public-private partnerships that might assist in the redevelopment of the former Georgia-Pacific mill site and adjoining properties.

The Bellingham PDA was modeled after similar organizations around the country that assist in large-scale redevelopment projects, such as the successful redevelopment by the Port of Tacoma of a portion of that city’s waterfront. Implicit in their creation is the understanding that elected policymakers are often unsuited to detailed property negotiation, and general purpose municipal governments often lack the instruments to focus on grand projects of this magnitude. An ideal PDA, then, is an association of private developers and entrepreneurs appointed by city administration and led by someone who has managed this sort of public-private partnership before. The city got that in organizing the Bellingham PDA and its accomplished executive director, Jim Long.

Yet also implicit in the creation of the Bellingham PDA was the understanding of former Bellingham Mayor Dan Pike that he needed an instrument to help defend city interests and push back against the port’s intransigent negotiating style of thimblerigging and gaslighting his administration around phony panic deadlines and fraudulent assertions.

Early on, City Council had surrendered much of its braking authority and bargaining tools, with several members declaring openly that they would not in any way impede the port’s $150 million diamond plan for the waterfront. The city had early on surrendered its rights to collect taxes or fees on developments there, and thus their ability to forgive and forget those collections as a bargaining chip to help steer the plan in appropriate ways. And, critically, the city had early on surrendered its powerful position as lead agency in the environmental review, in effect letting the contractor write the contract.

The Pike administration considered the PDA might ease a growing friction between the city’s weak and pliant negotiating position and that of the port.

Ideally, both organizations would form and fund the PDA; and the authority would act on behalf of and in the interests of both. Through rents and revenues collected on key public properties, the PDA could be self-funding and self-sufficient.

The port, however, perhaps correctly perceiving that a joint public-private development authority might inject compromise and outside competence into their plans, declined to contribute to the PDA, crippling its efficacy and dooming its ultimate success.

Kelli Linville entered office in 2012 critical of Dan Pike’s stalled negotiations with the Port of Bellingham. Like the port, she perhaps perceived the PDA more as obstacle than instrument in rekindling those negotiations. And with negotiations stalled and waterfront redevelopment plans underwater, the very purpose of a costly PDA seemed unclear to her. For certain, the PDA is not recovering its own costs, as originally imagined.

“The timing was bad for our PDA because we were...
right into the recession,” Linville explained.

Early in drafting a proposed 2013 city budget, Linville proposed an end to the authority’s $358,000-a-year appropriation from the general fund to help balance that budget by 2015.

It’s an uncomfortable moment to abruptly dissolve the PDA, just as the city prepares to close on joint master planning next year. The purpose of the organization is only this moment coming into focus. Moreover, the PDA in 2011 engineered the sale of city property at Cornwall and Maple streets (at a substantial loss of more than a quarter of a million dollars to the city’s often-raided parking fund) in order to finance early waterfront infrastructure staging near Central Avenue at Army Street. The sale raised $1.2 million. The staging could help address some of the thornier street alignment and access problems into the former mill site.

The PDA also manages other properties along Whatcom Creek, again key to tying the waterfront district to Old Town. Indeed, the PDA’s suggested alternate for the waterfront district is in many respects superior to the port plan, particularly in its understanding of traffic flows and view corridors.

In a special work session with the council on the budget, Mayor Linville proposed that some portion of that $1.2 million could allow the authority and Director Long to energize their work finding tenants for city-owned properties through 2013 as a means to make the PDA self-funding. At the very least, her proposal would allow the PDA to weigh in on the master plan, even as the organization winds down. Long, perhaps perceiving all this could take longer, proposed an alternative that would keep the PDA operating through 2014, at which point—he predicted—the city would begin to more than recover its investment on redeveloped properties. He estimated that could be worth more than $120 million if fully developed according to PDA plans.

Council appears torn between the brushfire clearing proposed by the mayor, or the longer burn suggested by Long. Several chafe at the raid on the parking fund and the forfeit of any immediate parking solution downtown. Others wonder about the raison d’être of a development authority missing two of three development partners: The port, and private sector interest.

Admittedly, wound into the authority’s DNA is Dan Pike’s more aggressive approach to push against the weakest elements of the port’s plan. That push should continue.
the familiar black diving ducks with the red and white
whales, seals, sea lions, porpoises and surf scoters,
lingcod, harbor seals, herons, Western grebes, com-
mum murre, rhinoceros auklets, tufted puffins, Orca
whales, seals, sea lions, porpoises and surf scoters,
the familiar black diving ducks with the red and white
head (a.k.a. the skunk-head coot).

The missing studies were part of an agreement signed
by SSA Marine, the intended builder of Gateway Pacific
Terminal at Cherry Point, in a state-monitored settle-
ment with a coalition of state agencies and environ-
mental groups. The coalition had challenged Whatcom
County's issuance of a shoreline development permit, for
an early iteration of GPT as a grain and fertilizer port.
The state Shoreline Hearings Board sent the two sides
home to work out an agreement.

Eighteen months of difficult, often-heated negotiations
followed. The final settlement was reviewed and upheld
by the Shoreline Hearings Board. Thirteen years later, the
GPT project has grown into a proposal for the continent's
largest coal export terminal, without the promised herring
studies. The company says they'll still happen.

"SSA Marine remains committed to implementing the
settlement agreement," Gary Smith said last week. He's
the Smith half of Smith and Stark Strategic Solutions
of Seattle, and the amiable public relations voice of
SSA Marine.

"The agreement calls for a two-year acoustical-trawl
measurement of spawning herring. [Researchers use a
sonic fish finder to determine the number and size of
fish, and bring up netted fish at the same time to learn
what species they're seeing on the sonar.] Those would
provide a baseline for measuring changes in the future.

"It should be gathered as close as possible to the ac-
actual construction time frame, and SSA Marine remains
committed to doing that."

That's only one of the many pieces of saltwater re-
search the company's required to do, under terms of the
settlement agreement. The complete list is pages long;
the studies are not known by neat, short titles. A short,
partial list would include:
• Placing caged mussels in the water column to see
what toxins the mussels are taking in.
• Identifying the route herring follow from the deep
waters offshore, into the spawning areas.
• Learning the herring's sensitivity to light and noise.
• Studying the response of herring embryo to toxins
likely to be present in shipping and other industrial
settings.

SSA Vice President Bob Watters suggests the Depart-
ment of Natural Resources is to blame for the studies not being
done. DNR oversees the use of tidelands in Washington,
and created an Aquatic Preserve in 2000 that included
the Cherry Point spawning grounds. Watters contends
that uncertainty about DNR's plans caused SSA to hold
off the studies it had agreed to do.

"DNR had declared the area part of an Aquatic Pre-
sure but there was no management plan," Watters said.
"We didn't know what the restrictions would be, or if it
would even be economically desirable to build the proj-
ect. No bank would lend on such a project if we didn't
know whether we'd ever get to do it.

"Now that we have the management plan and have
seen the language, we can do the studies."

Barry Wenger, a retired senior planner for the Depart-
ment of Ecology, was one of the negotiators for the
coalition of state agencies and environmental organiza-
tions. No excuse, he says.

"To begin with, SSA signed the agreement a year before
the Aquatic Preserve was created. And there's nothing in
it that mentions financial feasibility or ability to get a
loan. They agreed to do the studies. Then, year after year,
they kept putting them off and trying to get rid of the
studies they'd agreed to. That's what happened."

For whatever reason, nearly all the studies remain un-
done. Thirteen years of data that might have helped ex-
plain the herring enigma don't exist.

With the permitting process underway for the coal
export version of GPT (a county-state-federal team is
currently accepting public comment on the scope of the
project's Environmental Impact Statement), the compa-
ny continues to insist it will keep its 1999 promises.

The state agencies involved seem understandably reluc-
tant to use legal suasion on a company with the money,
lawyers and political clout of SSA Marine. It may be the
largest seaport builder and operator in the world.

As one of the negotiators of the 1999 settlement puts
it, "The agencies figure, why pick a fight with the big
guys and lose, if you don't have to?"

On an uncertain day in spring, triggered by a stimulus
that scientists have yet to understand, large patches
of the inshore waters at Cherry Point turn milky white.
Thousands of male herring schooling above circling females
and discharge white clouds of semen.

The semen, or milt, carries a chemical that sends the
females into frenzy, dispersing thousands of eggs onto
eelgrass, kelp, or marine algae, on rocks, even on under-
water creosoted pilings where the eggs die within a few
days. A single female may deposit 10,000 eggs without
stopping. Two of the 10,000 will grow into adult fish.

Herring watchers say the patches of white water were
a fairly common sight a few years ago, in late spring,
in the shallows near Cherry Point. Now it requires search-
ing and luck on just the right day. The Cherry Point herring
were calculated at 15,000 biomass tons in 1973. By
2010, they were down to 775 tons.

It isn't just the falling numbers that worry Kurt Stick,
the biologist who calculates the rate of the herring col-
lapse for the Washington Department of Fish and

HERRING, CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
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December 6

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**FUZZ BUZZ**

**BLACK FRIDAY BARGAINS**
On Nov. 21, a man fled Walmart with stolen video games.

On Nov. 23, two men fled a store at Bellis Fair Mall, concealing stolen jeans. Bellingham Police caught them.

On Nov. 24, Bellingham Police arrested another man for shoplifting from a store at Bellis Fair Mall.

On Nov. 24, an employee at Bellis Fair Mall watched a heavyset woman steal seven gray hooded, fur-lined sweatshirts from the front of the store. She escaped.

On Nov. 24, a man stole merchandise from the Bellingham Community Food Co-op downtown. Employees followed the man out of the store and recovered the merchandise. The man fled on foot. Police were not able to locate the man.

On Nov. 24, a man told Bellingham Police his motorcycle helmet had been stolen off his bike while he shopped at Bellis Fair Mall.

On Nov. 20, two men were seen at Sunset Square running to a vehicle wearing ski masks. Bellingham Police located and spoke to the registered owner of the vehicle, who said he’d loaned it to a friend.

**PAID IN FULL**
On Nov. 20, a man smashed the windshield of a truck with a dead fish. Satiated, he handed the owner of the vehicle a $100 bill.

On Nov. 19, police investigated a fight on Holly Street in Bellingham. One man reportedly made derogatory comments to a group of people, who then beat the tar out of him. Oh, and they also took his wallet.

**BIG STICK STICK-UP**
On Nov. 23, a man approached a pedestrian near Bellingham Technical College and asked for money. The pedestrian searched for small bills, but the man grabbed all the money from his hand and ran. The pedestrian ran after the man, but the thief picked up a stick and swung it at the pedestrian. The man eluded police. The pedestrian was uninjured in the attack.

**RINGING IN THE HOLIDAYS**
On Nov. 21, a visitor to a home near Whatcom Community College pounded on the front door and yelled and swore at the residents inside.

On Nov. 22, a visitor pounded on the door of a home near Barkley Village for 30 minutes before Bellingham Police arrived.

**MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS**
On Nov. 12, a supervisor at Lake Whatcom Treatment Center requested that Bellingham Police remove a woman from several properties operated by the center. The supervisor said the woman has a history of befriending their clients and then taking advantage of them. Officers located her and issued her trespass warnings from three different apartment complexes.

On Nov. 21, an elderly woman was pulling into traffic at the intersection of Holly Street and Broadway in Bellingham’s Old Town. A young man in the crosswalk began yelling and waving his arms at the 74-year-old. She rolled down her window to speak to the man. He punched her in the face, breaking her glasses and causing significant bruising. He fled.

**PRODIGAL SONS**
On Nov. 2, Blaine Police responded to a reported domestic dispute between father and son. “They arrived to find that the dispute had been over money owed by one young man to his brother,” police noted. “The money was paid back and the son who was causing the problems left before police arrived. Dad wanted his argumentative son trespassed from the property, but police were not able to find him in the area.”

On Nov. 4, a fight erupted between guests at an apartment complex near Sunset Square. Bellingham Police arrested a mother and her son on assault charges. Police later threw additional charges on the son for having violated a court order concerning an earlier assault.

On Nov. 4, a man ran away from his house in the Lettered Streets neighborhood when Bellingham Police knocked on his door to serve him with an arrest warrant. Since they knew where the man lived, police were eventually able to serve the papers.

**HOLIDAY SPIRITS**
On Nov. 20, a drunk was reported making lewd gestures to pedestrians near Sehome Village.

On Nov. 19, a highly intoxicated woman tumbled into a ditch on Texas Street. She was taken to the hospital by medics.

**DEATH TAKES A HOLIDAY**
On Nov. 25, a caller informed Bellingham Police that the Grim Reaper had come by, urinated on his neighbor’s tree, put a spell on his water and scared his cat. Police were unable to locate the Cowled One.

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**SOURCES:** Northwest Jobs Alliance; Northwest Labor Council; Gallatin Public Affairs; Oregon Public Broadcasting poll; Institute for Public Service and Policy Research; U.S. Dept. of Education; U.S. Census Bureau; Martin Associates
Whatcom County’s unemployment rate falls to its lowest level in almost four years. The county’s jobless rate in October was 6.4 percent, down from 6.9 percent the previous month. Whatcom County’s unemployment rate is lower than many neighboring counties. Skagit County had a jobless rate of 8.1 percent in October.

Manslaughter is added to charges facing a Skagit County couple accused of abusing their adopted teenage daughter. Prosecutors say Larry and Carri Williams mistreated and starved Hana Williams for a “prolonged period of time.” She died in May of hypothermia caused by malnutrition. The couple also face charges of 1st degree child assault against their adopted son.

A late night fire proves difficult to put out, severely damaging a downtown pedestrian/cycling bridge spanning Whatcom Creek. Nearby residents notice the fire shortly after 11pm. Flames quickly spread across the bridge. Two fire companies knock down the main body of the fire, then spend the next four hours pouring copious amounts of water on the bridge in an attempt to completely extinguish the blaze. By daybreak crews finally locate and extinguish a particularly stubborn fire in a beam underneath the concrete bridge deck. A preliminary investigation of the cause of the fire suggests a transient woman, using the bridge as a shelter, started the blaze with her propane heating system. She was not harmed in the fire.

On Cyber Monday, the online equivalent of Black Friday, state leaders and lawmakers urge Congress to pass legislation that would treat large, out-of-state sellers the same as local businesses, requiring them to collect sales tax. If supported, the Marketplace Fairness Act would give states the option to collect sales and use tax revenues from out-of-state sellers through a new, simplified tax system. Policymakers note that these would not be new taxes, but rather current taxes that go uncollected by remote sellers due to a 1992 U.S. Supreme Court chamber of Commerce and Industry, helped organize the effort as co-chair of the Northwest Jobs Alliance. The signatures help document wide support for family-wage jobs created under high environmental standards, he said.

From the steps of the Seattle Aquarium, Gov. Chris Gregoire warns of the dangers of increasing acidity in the world’s oceans and its threat to the food supply. Gregoire appointed a panel of science and policy experts in February to suggest ways to protect shellfish and promote clean water industries. Ocean acidification is caused by increased carbon dioxide in the air and from polluted runoff.

A Swinomish tribal member pleads guilty to murdering his common-law wife, a Lummi tribal member. In the plea in U.S. District Court in Seattle, Kevin O’Leary, 55, admitted that he smothered Valerie Jefferson with a pillow, wrapped her body in a blanket and hid it under the bed in their Lummi Reservation home. The murder happened last June. Law enforcement officers found the body five days later. O’Leary tells the judge she was killed while they were arguing about an affair he had had more than a decade ago.

A former receptionist at a Bellingham eye doctor’s office is charged with stealing prescriptions so she could get painkillers—within months of running the same scheme in Woodinville. The Bellingham Herald reports the 33-year-old is accused of taking up to 300 prescription sheets from her employer soon after her hiring in March. Police found evidence she passed off 21 forged prescriptions for oxycodone and Percocet at local pharmacies. In November 2011, she had worked as a receptionist in Woodinville, where she allegedly forged prescriptions for painkillers.

Business and labor leaders delivered 10,000 signatures to the Whatcom County Executive in support of the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal at Cherry Point. Ken Opinger (center), who heads the Bellingham/Whatcom County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, helped organize the effort as co-chair of the Northwest Jobs Alliance. The signatures help document the wide support for family-wage jobs created under high environmental standards, he said.

A former receptionist at a Bellingham eye doctor’s office is charged with stealing prescriptions so she could get painkillers—within months of running the same scheme in Woodinville. The Bellingham Herald reports the 33-year-old is accused of taking up to 300 prescription sheets from her employer soon after her hiring in March. Police found evidence she passed off 21 forged prescriptions for oxycodone and Percocet at local pharmacies. In November 2011, she had worked as a receptionist in Woodinville, where she allegedly forged prescriptions for painkillers.
HERRING, FROM PAGE 8

Wildlife. The Cherry Point herring are, on average, an inch shorter than they were 30 years ago. Stick observes the average age is two to four years, as compared to the five-year-old average in the 1970s. Then there’s the prevalence of deformed larvae. About 60 percent of the eggs produce fish with deformed heads or hearts. What’s causing the deformities? “We don’t know.”

Part of SSA Marine’s path to permitting is to make the case that heavy industries already operating at Cherry Point—two oil refineries and an aluminum plant—are not to blame for the herring crash, the implication being that industry and herring can live side by side, gill by cargo ship. The company published a briefing paper on the herring problem and presented it to reporters on the day of the first EIS scoping meeting in Bellingham, Oct. 27.

The handout includes a graph representing the number of herring in the Cherry Point waters in 1920, and decade-by-decade through 2010. There are dramatic swings in the curve, demonstrating how widely the herring population varied over the years before industrial development. A note defines the pre-1970 curve as one derived from “historical estimates.”

Footnotes indicate the graph was developed in part from a 2010 presentation by WDFW’s Kurt Stick. “It’s misleading,” Stick objected, “to suggest that hard numbers can be presented for the Cherry Point herring stock size prior to 1973.”

He pointed out that no one was systematically calculating herring numbers before 1973. “The main point,” Smith countered, “well established the world over, is this: herring populations tend to rise and fall over time. That’s exactly what the chart on local herring populations in our draft shows.”

Stick and his colleagues at WDFW know the dimensions of the 30-year crash but, like everyone else, they don’t know the cause. Without the legislative backing and funds to do some costly studies, WDFW is still guessing, after 26 years of watching the herring disappear.

The agency will not pin the blame on the aluminum plant and two oil refineries that have operated on Cherry Point since the early 1970s, all with piers, all with industrial outfalls that carry closely regulated effluent into the deep water.

In 2005, WDFW was concerned enough about human causes to petition the National Marine Fisheries Service to protect the Cherry Point herring under the Endangered Species Act. The feds refused. Not that the herring aren’t imperiled—they are—but NMFS decided that Cherry Point herring—while they are a genetically distinct stock, are not distinct enough to be listed with other endangered creatures such as the Chinook salmon. And never mind that herring make up two-thirds of the threatened Chinook’s diet. There are still plenty of herring in the sea. The decision suited the scoping team members of Whatcom County. Department of Ecology and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have decided what should be studied, it’s a good bet that the Cherry Point herring will be on the list. The EIS team can recommend that the state require new studies before the terminal can be permitted. But, Wenger and others insist, the EIS decision makers will know far less about the imperiled herring than they would have if the base line studies been completed years ago.

“Even the simplest data that might have been initiated in 1999, such as

“They agreed to do the studies. Then, year after year, they kept putting them off and trying to get rid of the studies they’d agreed to.”

—Barry Wenger, retired senior planner for the Department of Ecology

gests, and some other herring stock will fill in as those at Cherry Point die off.

Maybe not. Most herring spawn in winter. The Cherry Point herring, for reasons of their own, wait until late spring. Countless thousands of predator birds and predator fish depend on the annual spring feast provided by that peculiar spawning for their own survival. The delayed spawning time makes it unlikely that Cherry Point herring will recruit winter spawners from other waters.

Fred Felleman, an outspoken marine life consultant who took part in the settlement negotiations with SSA, researched a 1972 crude oil spill near Cherry Point. He’s persuaded that it was considerably larger than the 20,000 gallons reported. His search of refinery records turned up 57 reportable spills at Cherry Point. He’s persuaded that it was considerably larger than the 20,000 gallons reported. His search of refinery records turned up 57 reportable spills at Cherry Point between 1972 and 1999. Felleman suggests that the spill, immediately after spawning, “whacked the genetic code” of the herring eggs, and that the deformities and early mortality of Cherry Point herring could result, generations later. He argues that cumulative effects of the large oil spill, the smaller ones that followed, along with the day by day, ton by ton, carefully monitored and thoroughly legal effluent from three industrial plants, have to be considered in the list of what’s killing the herring.

“If WDFW acknowledged the herring problem as human caused, they’d have to do something about it,” Felleman says. “They don’t have the appetite for it.”

When the current phase of the GPT environmental impact study is finished and water temperature, salinity, oxygen, turbidity, and so forth, we still don’t have,” Wenger says. “And we don’t know what’s happened in the past ten years. What of the five herring viruses that we have now in Puget Sound and didn’t have at the peak of herring numbers 30 years ago? What if those have been coming into our area in the ballast water of foreign ships? We don’t know.”

Bob Everett, North Sound Regional Director for WDFW, does not share Wenger’s impatience at the absence of the required studies. They’ll be completed sooner or later he says, or the terminal won’t be built.

“SSA agreed to the studies, and those are part of what goes into the Whatcom County Shoreline Development Permit,” Everett said. “If they don’t do the studies, they don’t get the project. The longer they go without performing the studies, the longer they have to wait for the permit before they can begin construction.”

“The only way they could get out of doing the studies is to apply for a new permit and begin the process all over again.” At some point in the long road to approving GPT, decision makers will have to ponder the Cherry Point herring’s overall importance and their chances of survival. What if they’re already below the level of possible recovery and repopulation? Some scientists set the survival threshold at 3200 to 3500 biomass tons. The Cherry Point herring numbers fell to one quarter of that level, two years ago. At what point can they be said not to exist?
COMMUNITY

WED., NOV. 28
GEOLOGY ASSISTANCE: A volunteer from the Whatcom Geology society will be available to help with research from 10am-2pm at the Bellingham Public Library, 210 Central Ave. The service is free.

DOWNTOWN MEETING: All are welcome at the Downtown Bellingham Partnership’s meeting happening from 6-7:30pm at the Leopold, 1224 Cornwall Ave. The meeting aims to connect neighbors, foster community involvement and responsively address issues to maintain a healthy downtown neighborhood. Please attend and participate.

WWW.DOWNTOWNBELLINGHAM.COM

THURS., NOV. 29
WHATCOM GIVE-A-THON: The 6th annual Whatcom Give-A-Thon takes place from 11am-6pm at Elks Lodge No. 194, 710 S. Samish Way. Thirty local nonprofit groups will be present at the free event to outline their services to the community and list their specific needs. There’ll also be live music, pictures with Santa Claus, treats and much more.

WWW.WHATSOMGIVE.ORG

NOV. 30-DEC. 1
FAIRHAVEN HOLIDAY FESTIVAL: As part of the Fairhaven Holiday Festival continuing every Friday and Saturday through Dec. 22, most stores in Fairhaven will stay open until 8pm every Friday, and from 12-3pm Saturdays, the Village Inn will host Santa and horse-drawn carriage rides.

WWW.FAIRHAVENSE.COM

FESTIVAL OF TREES: Sixteen beautifully decorated Christmas trees can be perused at the Festival of Trees “Winter Wonderland Walk” from 11am-10pm Friday and 10am-1pm Saturday at the Leopold, 1224 Cornwall Ave. From 6:30-9:30pm, attend a Gala Dinner and Auction with food, drinks, live music, auctions, a dessert dash and more. Entry is $50 for the gala, and by donation for the walk. Funds raised benefit the Health Support Center.

WWW.HEALTHSUPPORTCENTER.ORG

NOV. 30-DEC. 2
OLDE FASHIONED CHRISTMAS: “Twenty Years of Memories” will be the theme of the Ferndale Heritage Society’s 20th annual “Olde Fashioned Christmas” happening from 5-9pm Fri., 1-9pm Sat. and 1-4pm Sunday at the town’s Pioneer Park, 2004 Cherry St. Old-time crafts making, games, music, historic re-creations, photos with Santa, Christmas displays, a horse barn and much more will be part of the festive fun. Entry is $3-$4.

WWW.FERNADELEHERITAGESOCIETY.COM

SAT., DEC. 1
HOLIDAY FAIRE: Live music, baked treats, a seasonal puppet play, visits with the Snow Queen, craft-making, goods from local artisans and more will be part of a Holiday Faire happening from 10am-4pm at the Whatcom Hills Waldorf School, 941 Austin St. Entry is free.

WWW.BHWWS.ORG

SKAGIT CHRISTMAS: As part of a “Skagit Christmas” series, kids and adults can take part in hand-on craft and cookie decorating and gift-making from 11am-5pm at La Conner’s Skagit County Historical Museum, 501 S. Fourth St. Entry is $3-$4.

WWW.SKAGITCOUNTY.NET/MUSEUM

HARBOR LIGHTS FESTIVAL: Caroling, music, visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, free horse and carriage rides, refreshments, a book sale, a fun run and a boat parade in the marina and more will all be part of the Holiday Harbor Lights Festival happening from 2:30-7pm throughout downtown Blaine.

WWW.BLAINECHAMBER.COM

WONDERS OF WHATCOM: “Bay to Baker and Back,” featuring a scenic tour from the Salish Sea to Mt. Baker, will be the focus of today’s “Wonders of Whatcom” program from 2:30-4pm at the Fairhaven Library, 1117 12th St. Entry is free.

WWW.BHWWS.ORG

LIGHTED CHRISTMAS PARADE: Holiday carolers and a dazzling display of lighted trucks, cars, floats, wagons, farm equipment and more will be part of the 22nd annual Lighted Christmas Parade starting at 6pm at the Fairway Center in downtown Lynden. Illuminated designs and storefronts will continue through the holidays.

WWW.LYNDEN.ORG

DEC. 1-2
PHOTOS WITH THE GRINCH: Local photographer Tim Chandonnet will be available to take photos at the annual “Photos with the Grinch” from 11am-6pm Saturday and 12-5pm Sunday in the Readings Gallery at Village Books, 1200 11th St. Cost is $10, and the event happens again at various dates through Dec. 23.

WWW.VILLAGEBOOKS.COM

WED., DEC. 5
GREEN DRINKS: Network with likeminded environmentally conscious folks at the monthly Green Drinks from 5-7pm at Make.Shift Art Space, 306 Flora St. Please BYOG (Bring Your Own Glass).

WWW.RE-SOURCES.ORG

THURS., DEC. 6
REAL HEROES DINNER: The Mt. Baker Chapter of the American Red Cross hosts its annual “Real Heroes” Celebration Dinner at 6pm at the Best Western Lakeway Inn, 714 Lakeway Dr. Reservations are required. Entry is by donation.

733-9200, EXT. 1018

www.healthsupportcenter.org

www.fernaledheritagesociety.com

www.bhwws.org

www.skagitcounty.net/museum

www.blainechamber.com

www.wbhwws.org

www lynden.org

www.villagebooks.com

www.re-sources.org

13
Snow-free Diversions
SUBDUE D WINTER EXCITEMENT

In the mountains, the snow is falling. The curtain has come down and the time for skis, snowboards and snowshoes is at hand. The North Cascades, by and large, will be buried until June (or August). But what if you’re allergic to the white stuff and prefer your outdoor explorations on bare—albeit often frozen—earth? Fear not. After living in this wonderful corner of the country for a few years, I have had the good fortune to experience a plethora of remarkable snow-free winter experiences. On a sunny day, they’re sublime. And on a rainy day, they’re still pretty damn good. Here, in no particular order, are a few of the best:

**Hike the Chuckanuts:** Just south of the City of Subdued Excitement rises a splendid curl of mountain that, were it not subject to comparison with the North Cascades next door, would be regionally famous. A myriad of trails lead through forest to cold little lakes, awesome rock gardens (remnants of the long-gone glaciers) and epic saltwater views that will warm the winter heart. Pick up Ken Wilcox’s book, *Hiking Whatcom County*, a local bible for hiking the Chuckanuts. These trails will keep you entertained, and enlightened, for many days. One of the best: Oyster Dome, with its last-minute epiphany of glittering sea, green islands and (on a very clear day) Mt. Rainier.

**Paddle Baker Lake:** In the summer, Baker Lake is a zoo—all subwoofers and keg parties. But come winter, a welcome serenity descends on the lake. With a surface elevation of a mere 700 feet, the shores of the lake remain snow-free for much of the winter, affording ready access to the water. Canoes or kayaks can be launched near the dam at the Kulshan campground, which is maintained by Puget Sound Energy. The campground here is open in the winter, affording a convenient bivouac site to facilitate an early-morning launch. Paddling out on the lake, one feels removed from the mechanized world, enveloped in the silence. The views of Baker and Shuksan, rising among their coterie of snowy peaks, are magnificent. There are several campsites on the eastern shore, each with its own appeal and character. In the dead of winter, loneliness is assured.

**Visit a Waterfall:** Nooksack Falls, at 1,500 feet, is often at the edge of the snowline. If your desire is to avoid tromping through snow, timing is everything. The falls, located off the Mount Baker Highway, seven miles east of Glacier, drop 88 feet in two sections and fill the Nooksack River canyon with spray. The path is short, direct and to the point, leading to the edge of the abyss. A chain-link fence keeps you on the up and up. Over the years, a few have perished here by venturing beyond the fence. No need to win a Darwin Award—contemplate the spectacle from behind the fence. The thunder will inhabit your dreams.

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1224 Cornwall Ave.
Bellingham WA 98225
Lily Cai Dance Company
A WORLD OF MOVEMENT

When you watch the women of the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company move, it can be hard to know where to rest your eyes. That’s because in addition to the sensual swirls of movement they create onstage, they often use props such as silk ribbons, fans and other accessories to further their many talents.

And while audiences are sure to pick up on the Chinese elements the dancers bring to the forefront—especially when they’re utilizing those eye-catching, energy-extending props—their shows also incorporate many facets of Western ballet and modern dance, making for performances that are at once both ancient and contemporary.

When founder Lily Cai started the company more than 20 years ago, it was with the aim of merging the divergent dance styles to create a performance style that was open to many different types of choreography.

As a former dancer with the Shanghai Opera House, Cai started her dance company as a way to move away from the rigid guidelines she’d experienced during her years with the government-funded behemoth—which had two different departments (dance and opera) and more than 1,000 employees.

While she was with the opera house, it was being run by Russians, and dancers needed to learn Chinese classical, as well as foreign styles of dance, ballet and folk-ethnic dances. That was all well and good, but Cai recalls that they spent many years learning choreography that was never, ever used.

Another guideline that rankled Cai was that, despite their many years of study, dancers were forced to retire when they hit the age of 30.

Deciding she wanted to control her own destiny, in 1983 Cai left Shanghai and moved to the United States. It would be five years before she started her own company in San Francisco, but by the time she did in 1988, she knew exactly what she wanted to do.

First off, she chose dancers who were passionate about their craft as well as proficient. Secondly, she developed her own technique to improve the strength and stamina of the dancers. Drawing upon her history and culture, she uses the Chinese philosophy of Yin-Yang and the concepts of energy flow to further the talents of her performers. Meditation comes into play, as well.

When “Dynasties and Beyond” comes to the Mount Baker Theatre Dec. 1, audiences can see for themselves how Cai has used her heritage—and her own talents—to create a one-of-a-kind company. Even if you’re not sure where to aim your eyes, you can rest assured there’ll always be something interesting to see.
Nov. 30-Dec. 2

Grinchy Christmas: Showings of How the Grinch Stole Christmas can be seen at 7pm Friday, 2pm and 7pm Saturday, and 2pm Sunday at the Bellingham Arts Academy for Youth, 1059 N. State St. Tickets are $10.  
WWW.BAAY.ORG

A Christmas Carol: META Performing Arts presents A Christmas Carol at 7pm Friday and Saturday and 2pm Sunday at Mount Vernon’s McIntyre Hall, 2501 E. College Way. Tickets are $10-$25.  
WWW.MCINTYREHALL.ORG

Sat., Dec. 1

Virginia Woolf Auditions: Open auditions for the roles of Nick and Honey in Little Bird Theatre’s upcoming production of Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf happen from 12:30-3:30pm at the Connections Building at the Community Food Co-op.  
WWW.LITTLEBIRDTHEATER.COM

Dec. 2-3

Quilters Auditions: Women ages 15 to 65 are invited to audition for upcoming performances of Quilters at 7pm Sunday and Monday at the Bellingham Theatre Guild, 1600 H St. Please see the website for specifics.  
WWW.BELLINGHAMTHEATREGUILD.COM

Dec. 6-8

Monologue Project: Western Washington University’s Department of Theatre and Dance presents “The Monologue Project VII” in conjunction with Fairhaven Middle School at 7:30pm Thurs.-Sat. at the Firehouse Performing Arts Center, 1314 Harris Ave. Tickets are $5-$8.  
650-7320

Dance

Nov. 29-Dec. 1

Fall Into Dance: Original choreography and contemporary movement by students in Western Washington University’s Dance program can be seen at the annual “Fall Into Dance” performance at 7:30pm Thursday through Saturday at the school’s Performing Arts Center. Tickets are $6-$12.  
650-6146 OR WWW.TICKETS.WWU.EDU

Sat., Dec. 1

Skagit Contra: Both experienced dancers and beginners can take part in a Skagit Contra Dancers gathering from 7-9:30pm in Anacortes at the Depot Arts Center, 611 R Ave. Live music will be provided by Flowing Tide. Entry is $8 at the door.  
WWW.SKAGITCONTRA.ORG

Jezabel Cabaret: Burlesque moves both humorous and titillating can be seen when the Jezabel Cabaret performs at 8pm at Mount Vernon’s Lincoln Theatre, 712 S. First St. Drag icon Betty Desire will emcee the show. Tickets are $17.  
WWW.LINCOLNTHEATRE.ORG

Dec. 1-2

Celebration on Ice: Members of the Bellingham Figure Skating Club present their “Holiday Celebration on Ice” at performances at 4pm Saturday and 1:30pm Sunday at the Bellingham Sportsplex, 1225 Civic Field Way. Tickets are $7-$9.  
WWW.BFSC.INFO

Art Talk Dec 12 at 7pm
Taking Reservations for Holiday Parties
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Friday Liter Steins $8 all day

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Bellingham Theatre Guild
presents
the
Pajama Game
Nov. 23 to Dec. 9, 2012
Tickets 733-1811
info bellinghamtheatreguild.com

Humanitarian Work in North Korea

A report by a Bellingham resident on his experiences there last month, plus recent developments in the country.

7:30 pm, Wed., Dec. 5
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church
2117 Walnut St. @ Eldridge
www.StPaulsBellingham.org

Explore Spirituality † Encounter the Sacred
Crafty and Creative
BELLMINGHAM ARTISTS TAKE PART IN AN UPRISING

When she travels to Seattle this weekend for the Urban Craft Uprising, Moth and Squirrel’s Libby Chenault won’t be alone. After making it through the competitive vetting process to take part in Seattle’s largest indie craft show, the Bellingham artist discovered she’ll be joined by a variety of other creative types from Whatcom County, including Rachel Price, Kate Henefin, Jenny Rose, Teresa Remple, Erin Boyd, and others. We caught up with Chenault last week to find out more.

Cascadia Weekly: For those who aren't familiar with your work, can you describe what your primary goal is with Moth and Squirrel?
Libby Chenault: To make classic yet unique hats, gifts and accessories from reclaimed and recycled materials.

Cascadia Weekly: If you had a motto for the way you create, what would it be?
Libby Chenault: “Making recycled remarkable.” I want to always use interesting sewing techniques, color combinations and my own personal quirks to make items that are well crafted, tell an interesting story and make people happy—while being good for the environment.

ATTEND
WHAT: Urban Craft Uprising
WHEN: 11am-5pm Dec. 1-2
WHERE: Seattle Center Exhibition Hall
COST: Entry is free
INFO: www.urbancraft uprising.com

Words: Amy Kepferle

© Cascadia Weekly
UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV. 28-DEC. 2
FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS: The 33rd annual Allied Arts Holiday Festival of the Arts continues this weekend from 10am-6pm Wednesday through Sunday at the H & M Company Warehouse, 1200 Meadow Ave. The event, which features the work of more than 100 local artists and craftspeople, will be open from 10am-6pm every Wed.-Sun. through Christmas Eve. [www.alliedarts.org]

FRI., NOV. 30
NATIVE ART FAIR: Attend a Native Arts and Crafts Fair from 10am-7pm in the log building on the Northwest Indian College campus, 2922 Kwinna Rd. Entry is free. [931-4235]

ART WALK: The Final Friday Art Walk takes place from 5-9pm on the last Friday of every month at various galleries and businesses in La Conner. Entry is free. [www.laconner.org]

GALLERY CYGNUS OPENING: As part of Final Friday Art Walk, attend an opening reception for the second iteration of the “We Remember John Simon” exhibit from 5-9pm at Gallery Cygnus, 109 Commercial Ave. See the works through Dec. 24. [www.gallerycygnus.com]

NOV. 30-DEC. 1
CHRISTMAS BAZAAR: The 6th annual Homemade Arts & Crafts Christmas Bazaar takes place from 9am-4pm Friday and Saturday at the Blaine Community Senior Center, 763 G St. Works by more than 30 local artisans will be on hand, and, from 10am-2pm Saturday, photos with Santa can be taken. [338-5840]

HANDCRAFTED CHRISTMAS: Jewelry, ornaments, quilts, candles, soaps and many more handmade items will be available for purchase and perusal at “Handcrafted Christmas” from 12-9pm Fri. and 9am-4pm Sat. at Christ Evangelical Church, 4600 Meridian St. [www.ccebellingham.com]

NOV. 30-DEC. 2
HOLIDAY MARKET: Handmade crafts, arts, jewelry, woodwork and more will be available at the 5th annual Holiday Craft Fair from 10am-6pm at the Sudden Valley Dance Barn, Gate 2. [www.suddenvalleymusic.org]

SALISH FESTIVAL: Authentic Native American artwork handcrafted by dozens of local tribal artists can be perused at the Coast Salish Winter Festival from 10am-6pm at Ferndale’s Lummi Gateway Center, 4988 Rural Ave. The event happens again Dec. 8 and 15. [www.lummitowncenter.com]

SMITH & VALLEE OPENING: An opening reception for the “Objectification” exhibit happens from 5-8pm at Edicson’s Smith & Vallee Gallery, 5742 Gilkey Ave. The annual multi-artist exhibit, which features three-dimensional art objects in a variety of media, shows through Dec. 23. [www.smithandvallee.com]

DEC. 1-2
ART BELLWOOD: Members of the Whatcom Art Guild and other local artists and vendors will be on hand for a “Christmas on the Farm Market” event from 11am-4pm Saturday and Sunday at Bellwood Acres, 6140 Guide Meridian. The venue will be open from 9am-6pm, and will also feature holiday music, food specials and Christmas trees. [www.bellwoodfarms.com]

SUN., DEC. 2
CHRISTMAS MARKET: Artisans Northwest will host a “Sunday Christmas Market” from 11am-4pm at the Depot Market Square, 1200 Railroad Ave. The event, which happens again Dec. 9, will also feature live music by Lindsay Street Band. [www.artisansnwmarket.com]

ONGOING EXHIBITS

ALLIED ARTS: “This Town,” featuring works focusing on Bellingham and Whatcom County by Anita Aparicio, David Ridgway, and Donald Simpson, shows through Dec. 1 at Allied Arts, 1418 Cornwall Ave., s [www.alliedarts.org]

ARTWOOD: View new work from Artwood members through November at Artwood Gallery, 1000 Harris Ave. [www.artwoodgallery.com]

FISHBOY GALLERY: Check out the contemporary folk art of RR Clark from 1:30-5pm every Mon.-Fri. at the FishBoy Gallery, 617 Virginia St. [734-0185 or www.fishboygallery.com]

GOOD EARTH: Works by Eugene and Ene Lewis will be on display through November at Good Earth Pottery, 1000 Harris Ave. [www.goodearthpots.com]

LUCIA DOUGLAS: “Sense of Place,” featuring new works by Bellingham painter and muralist Lanny Little, shows through Dec. 22 at the Lucia Douglas Gallery, 1415 33rd St. [www.lucia douglas.com]

MAKESHIFT: View John Overly’s “Beardingham” exhibit through Dec. 1 at MakeShift Art Space, 306 Flora St. [www.makeshiftproject.com]

MONA: “Pilgrimage: Ideas and Circular from the Permanent Collection” will be on display through Jan. 1 at La Conner’s Museum of Northwest Art, 121 S. First St. Admission is $3-$8. [www.museumofnorthwestart.org]

WHATCOM MUSEUM: “Wild East Meets Wild West: Photos from Nakodka, Russia,” “Romantically Modern: Pacific Northwest Landscapes” and “California Impressionism: Selections from the Irvine Museum” can currently be viewed at the Whatcom Museum’s Old City Hall and the Lighthouse Building. [www.whatcommuseum.org]
Rumor Has It

I KNOW WHEN I receive an invitation to an event and said invite is in all caps and contains many exclamation points, this is a thing I should be taking seriously.

What I’m trying to say is, all caps? Multiple exclamation points? Stop trying to seduce me by speaking my own language (don’t stop). Such a cheap ploy will never work (it’s totally working).

The event in question comes via Cheese Meat(s) Beer, which is somewhat of a surprise, given the establishment inside the Whatcom Museum’s Lightcatcher building is far more known for its delicious and inventive plates of cheese, meats and beer than they are for hosting music. The show features the Cave Singers (a band with a proven track record in Bellingham) and Poor Moon and takes place at 8pm Mon., Dec. 10 in the lobby of the Lightcatcher. It is worth noting tickets for this show are very limited, and a number of them have already been sold. As such, if you’d like to see what will no doubt be a memorable night of music in a gorgeous setting while you munch exceedingly tasty treats, you should probably hit up Cheese Meat(s) Beer’s website and fetch yourself a ticket.

If you’ve been paying attention, it’s likely you’ve noticed the Shakedown has been changing some things up with regard to its regularly scheduled weekly programming. First, they introduced some kind of Wednesday drink-special insanity called Pound It Wednesdays, at which (a band with a proven track record in Bellingham) and Poor Moon and (a band with a proven track record in Bellingham) will play short sets for the assembled masses, who will then vote near the end of the night for their favorite band. The winning band gets the door dollars, plus a chance to duke it out again with other winning bands for the door and a considerable cash prize ($100).

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Confidential to bands trying to get a toehold in town: Maybe I don’t have to spell this out for you, but this is your golden opportunity to get yourself on the Shakedown’s radar, start earning yourself a fan base and nab yourselves some cold, hard scratch, all at the same time. If you think this is an opportunity you can pass up, your brains are not making your decisions for you. Now stop reading this and go sign yourselves up.
**ART EVENTS**

**WED., NOV. 28**

**SPRING AND RICHIE** Singer and guitarist Tracy Spring and award-winning songwriter and instrumentalist TR Richie perform at 7:30pm at the Roeder Home, 2600 Sunset Dr. Surprise guests may also show up to join in the concert. Suggested donation is $10-$15.

**WWW.TRAVSPRING.COM**

**WINE, WOMEN & SONG** Performances by the Allegro Women’s Choir, the Colibri Ensemble, and the Whatcom Sound Jazz Singers will be part of a “Wine, Women & Song” concert at 7:30pm at the Laurnmont Manor, 405 Fieldston Rd. Tickets are $25 in advance and $30 at the door and include refreshments, a live auction and musical surprises; funds raised benefit Bellingham Sings.

**WWW.BELLINGHAMSIGNS.COM**

**THURS., NOV. 29**

**OPEN MIC NIGHT** Musicians, performers and writers can share their various talents at an Open Mic Night starting at 7:30pm at Burlington’s North Cove Coffee, 1330 S. Burlington Blvd. Entry is free and open to audiences of all ages.

**(360) 707-LOVE**

**FRI., NOV. 30**

**WOMEN IN SONG** Faculty members from Western Washington University will present “Words of Women in Song II” at 8pm at the school’s Performing Arts Center Concert Hall. The event will showcase three great women writers to the work of three great composers. Entry is free and open to the public.

**360-3130**

**NOV. 30-DEC. 1**

**DARK OF DECEMBER** The Bellingham High School Jazz Band presents the 8th annual “Dark of December” concerts at 7pm at Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, 1207 E. Washington St. There’ll also be a dessert bar and raffle. Tickets are $5-$10.

**366-6470**

**SAT., DEC. 1**

**JAZZ SOCIETY** The Bellingham Traditional Jazz Society presents music by the internationally known Uptown Lowdown Band for your dancing and listening pleasure from 2-5pm at the VFW Hall, 625 N. State St. Entry is $6-$10.

**WWW.BELTMUSIC.COM**

**COOL YULE** Jazz vocalist Cheryl Jewell, the Saltwater Octet, and the Whatcom Jazz Singers present “Cool Yule: A Swingin’ Christmas Show” at 4pm at the Amadeus Project, 1209 Cornwall Ave. Tickets are $12-$15.

**WWW.BELLINGHAMSIGNS.ORG**

**CHAMBER CHORALE** The Bellingham Chamber Chorale presents its 10th season with “Rejoice! A Classical Christmas” at 4pm at the First Congregational Church, 2403 Cornwall Ave. Tickets are $5-$15.

**WWW.BELLINGHAMCHAMBERCHORALE.ORG**

**HOLLY SWANSON ALBUM RELEASE** Help local musician Holly Swanson celebrate the release of her debut album, Love Free, from 7-9pm at the YWCA Ballroom, 1026 N. Forest St. Swanson will be joined by her HS Band and special guests. Suggested donation is $5. Entry is free for kids.

**WWW.HOLLYSWANSONMUSIC.WORDPRESS.COM**

**SWINGIN’ IN THE SEASON** The Swing Connection big band presents “Swingin’ in the Season” at 7pm at the First Baptist Church of Bellingham, 110 Flora St. They’ll be joined by the Honeybees, a women’s vocal group. Tickets are $10.

**934-4500**

**ART OF SONG** Baritone Jonathan Suek presents “The Art of Song” vocal recital at 7:30pm at the Amadeus Project, 1209 Cornwall Ave. Expect everything from Italian art songs to lively American songs. Entry is $5-$15.

**WWW.THEAMADEUSPROJECT.ORG**

**BUG HOLIDAY PARTY** Join the members of the Bellingham Ukulele Group for their annual BUG Holiday Party from 2-5pm at St. James Presbyterian Church, 910 14th St. Bring dessert or finger food to share, and prepare to have a musical afternoon. There will be no beginner session today. Suggested donation is $5.

**476-7209 OR WWW.BELLINGHAMUKULELEGROUP.COM**

**CHUCK D** Longtime local musician Chuck Dinge will play selections from his vast repertoire of songs at 7:30pm at the Fireside Martini & Wine Bar, 416 W. Bakerview Road. Entry is free.

**366-1000**

**DEC. 1-2**

**CONCERT BAND** The North Cascades Concert Band performs at 7:30pm Saturday at the Blaine High School Performing Arts Center and 3pm Sunday in Anacortes at Bodruck Hall. Tickets to see the 50-piece wind band are $5-$12.

**WWW.NCCBAND.ORG**

**SUN., DEC. 2**

**WHATCOM SYMPHONY** “Holiday Treasures” will be the theme of today’s Whatcom Symphony concert at 3pm at the Mount Baker Theatre, 104 N. Commercial St. Expect dazzling orchestral and choral works, old favorites and a sing-along. Members of the Bellingham Chamber Chorale will also perform. Tickets are $12-$42.

**364-4080 OR WWW.MOUNTBAKERTHEATRE.COM**

**ANTI-HOLIDAY CONCERT** Sing and songwriter Christine Lavin will be joined by the folk-pop trio Uncle Bonsai for “Just One Angel,” an anti-holiday holiday concert featuring everything from Christmas to Hanukkah to Solstice and New Year’s music, at 3pm at Mount Vernon’s Lincoln Theatre, 712 S. First St. Tickets are $24-$27.

**WWW.LINCOLNTHEATRE.ORG**

**TUES., DEC. 4**

**HOLIDAY CONCERT** Members of the Skagit Valley Music Department present a Holiday Concert at 7:30pm at Mount Vernon’s McIntyre Hall, 2901 E. College Way. Tickets are $10.

**WWW.MCINTYREHALL.ORG**

**WED., DEC. 5**

**MUSIC CLUB** The Mount Baker Toppers will share their barbershop talents at the Bellingham Music Club’s monthly concert at 10:30am at Trinity Lutheran Church, 119 Texas St. Entry is free and open to all.

**WWW.BELLINGHAMMUSICCLUB.ORG**

**THURS., DEC. 6**

**PLANET SOUNDS** Phil Haven will join Dean and Dudley Evenson for a “Soundings of the Planet” brown bag concert at 12:30pm at Whatcom Museum’s Old City Hall, 121 Prospect St. Suggested donation is $3.

**WWW.WHATCOMMUSEUM.ORG**

**KRISTINA OLSEN** Songwriter, singer and instrumentalist Kristina Olsen performs at 7:30pm at the Roeder Home, 2600 Sunset Dr. Suggested donation is $10-$15.

**WWW.KRISTINOlsen.NET**

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### Music Venues

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**Blue Horse Gallery**

301 W. Holly St. • 671-2305 | **Boundary Bay Brewery**

1107 Railroad Ave • 647-5593 | **Brown Lantern Ale House**

412 Commercial Ave., Anacortes • (360) 293-2544 | **Commodore Ballroom**

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**Free Light-Up Gift Bows December 1**

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**W. hose the fun and food never ends**
### music venues

See below for venue addresses and phone numbers.

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Killing Them Softly
LIKE SAUCE ON RIBS

A

juicy, bloody, grimy and profane crime drama that amply satisfies as a deep-dish genre piece. Killing Them Softly rather insistently also wants to be something more.

Writer-director Andrew Dominik, whose extraordinary Western The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford proved too long and arty for the masses, repositions George V. Higgins’ 1974 Boston mob-world novel as a metaphor for the ills of American capitalism circa 2008, a neatly provocative tact. But he also shamelessly shows off his directorial acumen; unlike the leading character, who’s all business, Dominik makes sure you notice all his moves. The movie is tight, absorbing and entertainingly performed by a virtually all-male cast topped by Brad Pitt.

A lawyer, professor and assistant U.S. Attorney who long investigated organized crime in addition to writing 27 novels, Higgins knew well of what he wrote. His first novel, The Friends of Eddie Coyle, was made into a fine film and his third, Cogan’s Trade, the basis of this one, consisted of torrents of exceptionally vivid Beantown wiseguy dialogue with bits of plot tucked almost incidentally into the chatter.

Moving the action to decimated post-Katrina New Orleans without a tourist in sight, Dominik has done a keen, disciplined job of coaxing the plot out of the shadows while retaining the flavor of underclass lingo and attitude. With the background dominated by then-presidential candidate Barack Obama’s optimistic speeches stressing the availability of “the American promise” to all, some bottom-feeding criminals plot what looks like a no-risk scheme: Old-timer Johnny Amato (Vincent Curatola, the great Johnny Sak of The Sopranos) hires unwashed kids Frankie and Russell to raid the regular card night run by Markie Trattman (Ray Liotta), who once robbed his own game and got away with it.

While allowing these low-unders to emerge in all their miserable glory, Dominik also adds his own flourishes right from the outset, from striking lateral camera moves to amusingly supplying one of the young hoods a pathetic little dog. Despite their general ineptitude, the boys pull off the job, but this is bad news for Markie, as it’s going to be assumed he’s run the same scam a second time.

At least this is what is suspected by the unnamed and unseen corporate mob, which has cog-in-the-system “Driver” (Richard Jenkins) engage shrewd hit man Jackie Cogan (Pitt) to deal with this disruption of business as usual. Needlessly, Markie gets horribly beat up, Cogan brings in another hired killer, Mickey (James Gandolfini) to help him with a double killing, and plenty more blood gets spilled before order is, after a fashion, restored.

Although the plot bases are dutifully, if briefly, covered, this is a crime story like so many others in which it doesn’t really matter if you can follow who everyone is and why awful things are happening to them; it’s basically a given that everyone on view is guilty of something, so you can’t feel too badly when they come to grisly ends.

What matter more are style and attitude, which Dominik ladles on like sauce on ribs. Russell’s drug-addled disorientation is represented by multiple distortions of time, visual perception and sound; the pursuit of one victim is imaginatively covered entirely from the outside of the building in which the chase is consummated; Cogan arrives on the scene to the accompaniment of Johnny Cash’s “The Man Comes Around;” the just-scraping-by 21st century hoods drive late-’60s/early-’70s cars like a Riviera and Toronado; and one man’s execution is rendered from many angles in a slow-motion explosion of breaking glass and penetrating bullets so elaborate and prolonged that it resembles a self-standing art installation.

The film is terribly smart in every respect, with ne’er-a-false note performances and superb craft work from top to bottom, but it never lets you forget it, from Pitt’s pithy excoriation of Thomas Jefferson’s hypocrisy right down to his “Crime is the business of America” final line that is bound to be widely quoted.

The film noir crime dramas of the late 1940s and early 1950s were about a palpable unease in the country, but this remained a subtext rather than the overt subject of the films. Here, Dominik explicitly articulates his intended meanings, which have to do with money, institutional rot and what happens when you don’t keep your economic house in order. Either approach is valid but, perhaps in this day and age, audiences need their messages to be quick and direct. Killing Them Softly delivers them that way.
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FILM SHORTS

Anna Karenina: Widely regarded as one of the greatest novels and love stories of all time, this cinematic rendering reunites Keira Knightley with director Joe Wright, the duo responsible for bringing both Pride and Prejudice and Atonement to vivid cinematic life. ★★★★ (R • 2 hrs. 10 min.)

Pickford Film Center See www.pickfordfilmcenter.com for showtimes.

Argo: This movie, which shines cinematic light on a little-known part of the Iranian hostage drama and the Hollywood/CIA partnership that led to the rescue of six of the hostages, is easily the most suspenseful movie of 2012 thus far. Well done, Ben Affleck. ★★★★★ (R • 2 hrs.)

Bellis Fair Call 676-9990 for showtimes.

Big Boys Gone Bananas: This documentary has been called a classic David vs. Goliath story—but is that list I just mentioned, if not shorter. ★★★ (Unrated • 1 hr. 26 min.)

Pickford Film Center Dec. 1 @ 4:30

Chasing Ice: It’s one thing to know the planet is warming, it’s quite another to get an actual sense of what that means. This doc, which features time-lapse sequences of the melting of some of the largest and most remote glaciers on Earth, presents climate change in a fashion too stunning to be ignored. ★★★★★ (R • 2 hrs.)

Pickford Film Center See www.pickfordfilmcenter.com for showtimes.

The Collection: “From the makers of Saw.” No thank you. And no stars for you. Suck it, torture porn. (R • 1 hr. 22 min.)

Sexpress 12/05 | 2:20 | 4:15 | 6:45 | 9:00

Flight: Denzel Washington—the most reliably bankable star on the planet—helms both a plane and this film with his trademark charisma and confidence as only he can. This movie also represents a welcome return to live-action moviemaking by director Robert Zemeckis. ★★★★★ (R • 2 hrs. 18 min.)

Sunset Square 12/10 | 3:15 | 6:45 | 9:45

Killing Them Safely: See review previous page.

★★★★ (R • 1 hr. 37 min.)

Bellis Fair Call 676-9990 for showtimes.

A Late Quartet: While Philip Seymour Hoffman and Catherine Keener offer up their expected excellent performances in this gentle musical drama, it is Christoper Walken who truly shines, in a role as far removed from his trademark twitchy weirdo as you can get. ★★★★ (R • 1 hr. 45 min.)

PFC’s Limelight See www.pickfordfilmcenter.com for showtimes.

Life of Pi: Hollywood can always be counted on to adapt an insightful and visionary bestseller in such a way that it is no longer rendered either insightful or visionary. Thankfully, this one is directed by Ang Lee, so what it lacks in power it makes up for in poetry. ★★★ (PG • 2 hrs. 5 min.)

Sunset Square 12/15 | 4:15 | 7:15 | 10:10

Lincoln: This is only the greatest actor in all the land (Daniel Day-Lewis, Oscar-winning machine) becoming the embodiment of the greatest president in this country’s history (Abraham Lincoln, slavery-ending superhero). Much like Daniel Plainview, I feel pretty certain Lincoln was a man who’d be only too willing to drink your milkshake. ★★★★ (PG-13 • 2 hrs. 29 min.)

Sunset Square 2:45 | 5:05 | 7:30 | 10:00

Searching for Sugar Man: Tells the incredible true story of musician Rodriguez, virtually unknown in America, but a legend in South Africa, where his album Cold Fact improbable helped bring about the fall of Apartheid. A movie with an amazing payoff, and a story that has to be seen to be believed. ★★★★★ (Unrated • 1 hr. 51 min.)

PFC’s Limelight See www.pickfordfilmcenter.com for showtimes.

Seven Psychopaths: Colin Farrell has a proven (and surprising) knack for comedy, which is on full display in this more-mad-than-madcap, action-packed romp. Along with his comedic gifts, the film also features Christopher Walken, Sam Rockwell, Tom Waits, and canine thievery as its catalyzing event. ★★★★ (R • 1 hr. 51 min.)

Pickford Film Center See www.pickfordfilmcenter.com for showtimes.

Skyfall: This movie is about some spy stuff and whatever, but what I’m trying to say here is, take off your shirt, Daniel Craig. ★★★ (PG-13 • 2 hrs. 23 min.)


The Story of Film: An Odyssey, Part 2: The eighth installment of this fascinating series that details everything you ever wanted to know—and then some—about movies and how they’re made brings us to the present day, and takes a glimpse into the future. ★★★★★ (Unrated • 2 hrs.)

Pickford Film Center Dec. 1 @ 11:00am

Tom Wolfe Gets Back to Blood: Few others approach their work with the kind of bravura and style Tom Wolfe seems to so effortlessly harness. See the master at work in this documentary about the making of his latest book, Back to Blood. ★★★ (Unrated • 1 hr. 12 min.)

Pickford Film Center Nov. 29 @ 6:30

The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn, Part 2: Since the last installment of this thinly veiled abstinence saga, K-Stew’s and E-Patt’s own saga took a turn for the sordid due to a not-so-thinly veiled lack of abstinence on the part of a certain lady vampire. Will the Twilight Nation punish this glittery duo with diminishing box-office returns? Seems unlikely. ★★★ (PG-13 • 1 hr. 53 min.)

Bellis Fair Call 676-9990 for showtimes.

Wreck-It Ralph: Poor Ralph is sick of being a videogame villain, so he hatches a game-hopping plot to improve his pixelated rep—and in doing so, unwittingly unleashes chaos and confusion. Undoubtedly, hijinks ensue. ★★★ (PG • 1 hr. 41 min.)

Bellis Fair Call 676-9990 for showtimes.

Wreck-It Ralph 3D: Ralph causes chaos in an additional dimension. Thanks, Ralph? ★★★ (PG • 1 hr. 41 min.)

Bellis Fair Call 676-9990 for showtimes.
**NOW SHOWING Nov 30 - Dec 6**

**PICKFORD FILM CENTER**

**Moms/Dads: Baby Matinee, 12/4 at 11am**

Anna Karenina (R) 35mm/130m

“While Wright’s self-conscious theatricality and dollhouse aesthetic conjure comparisons to Baz Luhrmann and Wes Anderson, he outstrips both those filmmakers in moral seriousness and maturity.” Washington Post

Fri: (3:35), 6:30, 9:20
Sat & Sun: (12:40), 3:35, 6:30, 9:20

*Tue: 11am Baby Matinee! (Crying babies welcome).*

**Chasing Ice** (PG-13) HD/71m Octobter hit returns!

“This amazingly beautiful, and amazingly frightening, documentary captures the immediacy of what climate change is doing to the Arctic landscape.” NY Daily News

Fri: (4:30), 6:40; Sat: (11:50am), 6:40
Sun: (11:50am), 4:30, 6:40; Mon: (4:30)

**Tue & Wed:** (4:30), 6:40; Thu: (1:55)

Seven Psychopaths (R) 35/110m “About seven times more clever than most Hollywood comedies. And way more demented...” USA Today

Fri: 8:50; Sat & Sun: (2:00), 8:50
Mon - Wed: 8:50; Thu: (4:00)

**The Story of Film: Episode 15 (NR) - 120m**

Sat: (11:00am) - The Final Episode! $3.25/$4

**Big Boys Gone Bananas!* (NR)** 90m - True story of a swedish filmmaker & the banana company that sued him.

Sat: 4:30

**Daisies (Sademirsky)**

(73 min + Shorts)

Fandor co-founder Jonathan Marlow introduces this Czech New Wave classic and brings two short films to boot.

Mon: 6:30

Cinema Thyme with Ciao Thyme - **SOLD OUT**

Thu: 6:30 - Arrive at 6:30 appies, Film at 7:00 - Have fun!

**NOW SHOWING Nov 30 - Dec 6**

**at PFC’s Limelight Cinema**

1416 Cornwall

Parentheses ( ) Denote Bargain Pricing

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**NOW SHOWING Nov 30 - Dec 6**

**PFC’s Limelight Cinema**

**Now Forager (NR)** 93m - “charm, intelligence and a cool passion for its principled characters.” LA Times

Fri & Sat: 6:30, 9:00; Sun - Thu: 6:30

*An Evening of Film & Fung* on 12.1 starting at 5:30pm at Allied Arts, with director & composer of NF

---

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JENNY FROM THE BLOCKED

I appreciate that you tell it like it is instead of telling people what they want to hear. I heard you on the radio saying that an online dating site isn't a very good venue for women over 40 who aren't very physically attractive. Honestly, on a scale of 1 to 10, I'm probably a 5. My marriage ended last year, and I'm ready to start dating again. Should I bother with online at all?

—Realistic

Like the 24-year-old part-time model you're competing with on the online dating site, you are female and have owned swimsuits. In fact, you'd wear that same tiny little gold bikini she's got on in her profile pic—if it were socially acceptable to go out on the town in a little gold sleep mask.

Online dating is like going to a very snobby bar where everybody has the attention span of a firefly. People do find love and even marriage online, but those most likely to get lucky are hot 22-year-old women just looking to get lucky. Hot 40-something women will get dates, but because guys tend to go for younger women, many of those messaging them are one foot out of the nursing home (if they aren't using the computer in the nursing home's Activity Room to troll for younger meat).

The problem for anyone online dating is that the format—endless choice—is overwhelming to our quaint little human brains, according to research by social psychologist Dr. Sheena Iyengar. Although we think having loads of options is ideal, when presented with more than a handful, we often choose poorly and are bummed out afterward, or we find ourselves unable to choose at all. So, like a rat pushing a lever for more cocaine, even a man who sincerely wants a relationship and who's just gotten home from a promising date often can't help but make a beeline for the computer. (There's always another one...thousand where that last one came from. No need to stop and smell the 45-year-old roses.)

Especially for women who are over 40 and physically underfabulous, a more realistic criterion for joining is whether you, say, like to combine tennis and Bible study, not whether you have a waist the size of a chewed pencil.

Also, online, the risk of humiliation is low for a guy who's a 5 messaging a woman who's a 9.6 (on the off chance she's bored with rich guys with movie-star looks). In person, it becomes clear he can either go home alone for the rest of his life or go for the more evenly matched. That's when he starts talking to the nice lady on his right—giving you a chance to sparkle in a way you can't online. But, all the better if you sparkle inside and out. (Get Staging Your Comeback, by Christopher Hopkins.) A little money smeared around in the hair, wardrobe and makeup departments can be a powerful thing. Without it, as you see in shots of famous actresses caught sans makeup and groovewear, even some pretty stunning women can end up looking like they've taken a break from picking their pimples in the doublewide to duck into the holler and shoot a squirrel for dinner.

SPAWN JUAN

I'm a woman whose online dating profile states: "If you have or want kids, we are NOT compatible. Move on. Non-negotiable! I don't care if you think your kids are different. They're not." Yet, somehow, men with kids read this and still ping me! Are they stupidly optimistic? Horrifically lacking in reading comprehension?

—Nobody's Stepmom

Maybe they're hoping it'll be like getting a 6 year old to eat his green beans: They'll just pour some ranch dressing on the kid and you'll suddenly find him appealing.

Your irritation is understandable. What about "No kids/non-negotiable!" says, "Octodad, I've been waiting all my life for you?" The answer is, you're hot. I'm guessing you are, anyway. In the face of female hotitude, men have an incredible capacity to rationalize: "Shouldn't have to miss out on a babe just because I got some girl pregnant in high school!" or "You'll change your mind when you see what a sexy beast I am." Consider the annoyance an attractiveness tax, and try to focus on the joys of parenthood, like how you can spend the estimated $200K you're saving (by not having kids) on white carpet, sharp-edged furniture and homeschooling your cat.

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Jen Sorensen SLOWPOKE

Some Wal-Mart workers went on strike on Black Friday, but few Americans seemed to care.

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And when workers went on strike, customers stayed home?

Sudoku

HOW TO SUDOKU: Arrange the digits 1-9 in such a way that each digit occurs only once in each row, only once in each column, and only once in each box. Try it!

1 9 3
2
3 7 9
6 2

6 9 3 1 4
4 8 2 7
7
9 8

8 5 2 6
2

5 2 7 9
1 3 8

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Santa Says, "Don’t buy a bunch of crap from China!"
BY AMY KEPFERLE

Now, Forager
A FUNGAL FILM FOR FOODIES

When viewers first encounter Regina and Lucien, they’re together in a shadowy forest hunting for mushrooms. But, as those watching the action onscreen will soon learn, they might as well be worlds apart.

But forget, for a moment, the tale of a love that is growing distant. Now, Forager, a flick playing Nov. 30-Dec. 6 at Bellingham’s Pickford Film Center, is, at its clever indie heart, a call to action for slow food devotees.

Lucien and Regina, you see, are a couple who make their living selling wild mushrooms they gather with care from dank forest floors and sell to whatever restaurants will buy them, even if they have to drive all over Manhattan—or whatever city they’re in at the moment—to do so.

And although the onscreen action takes them away from their foraging and into the “real” world, it’s difficult to forget the images, and descriptions, of the morels, lion’s mane, chanterelles and dozens of other mycological wonders the camera focuses its lingering lens on at various points throughout the movie.

If Now, Forager were a fairytale, the duo would likely be fighting a mythical villain hiding behind a mossy overgrowth in the forest. But it’s not a fairytale, or an action flick, or even a romantic comedy. Instead it is, as my viewing partner called it, “food porn with a dollop of psychodrama blended in.”

Like the slow food movement it so obviously admires and advocates, the film allows itself to unfold without ever once feeling like it’s a fast-food version of itself. As the story takes the couple throughout the seasons of one year, their marriage begins to strain against the limitations of making a living by following the vagaries of the mushroom season.

When Regina talks about taking a job at a New York City restaurant and sticking in one place for an extended period of time with the goal of perhaps finally “growing up,” Lucien balks, says they should give up their apartment, and counters with his desire to “keep heading south until spring.”

Without giving too much away, I’ll let it slip that Regina takes the job and Lucien makes his way to the Washington D.C. area to scout for mushrooms and reconnect with old friends.

In between the time they make their needs known and the end of the movie, viewers will see the duo facing rogue mushroomers with machetes, a catering job from hell, career decisions that may or may not contain big breaks and, above all, gorgeous shots and dialogue containing food-related wonders.

While any viewing of Now, Forager will contain the aforementioned goodies, those who want to learn even more about the movie—and the mushrooms—are invited to “An Evening of Film & Fungi” happening Sat., Dec. 1 at the Pickford Film Center’s Limelight Cinema.

ATTEND
WHAT: Now, Forager
WHEN: Nov. 30-Dec. 6
WHERE: Pickford Film Center’s Limelight Cinema, 1418 Cornwall Ave.
COST: $6-$9
INFO: www.pickfordfilm.org

WHAT: “An Evening of Film & Fungi”
WHEN: 5:30pm Sat., Dec. 1
WHERE: Lima-light Cinema

BELLINGHAM MARKET: Get the freshest produce—and much more—at the Bellingham Farmers Market from 10am-3pm every Saturday through December at the Depot Market Square on the corner of Chestnut Street and Railroad Avenue. 567-2060 or www.bellinghamfarmers.org

CHRISTMAS IN THE KITCHEN: Kitchen gadget demos, specials, cookie, hot cider, samples, an author signing with Lemon: A Global History author Toby Sonneman and more will be part of a “Christmas in the Kitchen” event from 11am-3pm at Pacific Chef, 1210 11th St. www.pacificchef.com

CHRISTMAS TEA: Tea and cookies will be served alongside music and dance at a “Christmas Tea” from 1-5pm at the Deming Library, 5044 Mt. Baker Hwy. The all-ages event is free. 594-6456

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST: Pancakes, French toast, biscuits and gravy, eggs and more will be available at the monthly Community Breakfast taking place from 8am-1pm at the Rome Grange, 2821 Mt. Baker Hwy. Entry is $2 for kids and $5 for adults. 739-9605

TRAPEZE ANNIVERSARY: Specials on beverage, bakery and deli items will be available throughout the day when Trapeze celebrates its first anniversary at the Bellingham Public Market, 1530 Cornwall Ave. 647-2060 or www.bellinghamfarmers.org

WED., DEC. 5
DIABETES PREVENTION: Registered dietitian Lisa Dixon leads a “Simple Cooking to Prevent Diabetes” course from 6-8:30pm at the Cordata Community Food Co-op, 315 Westerly Rd. Dixon will show you how to create a balanced dinner plate, featuring simple recipes you can easily and affordably
FORAGER,
FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Starting at 5:30pm, attendees are invited to make their way to the Allied Arts gallery next door for a pre-film reception. In addition to the refreshments that will be on hand, there’ll also be information from local foragers and fungi fanatics.

But that’s not all. The 6:30pm showing of the movie will include live music by Chris Brokaw, the guy who created the film’s soundtrack, and a Q & A with co-director and actor Jason Cortlund—otherwise known as Lucien. Cortlund will also introduce the 9pm show.

Additionally, moviegoers seeing any screening of Now, Forager should keep track of their ticket stubs. They can then take them to Ciao Thyme’s on.the.side café, which, in addition to featuring mushroom specials throughout the week, will also throw in a free dessert with any lunch ordered at the café.

In short, if you love mushrooms, slow food and movies that don’t pander to Hollywood versions of what makes a good film, you won’t want to miss this event. If you’re not going to the reception, however, you may want to eat in advance, as you’ll be sure to leave the cinema hungry.
Casino opens at 9 am daily. Must be 21 or older with valid ID to enter casino, buffet or attend shows.

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