NEW NERD STORE
Unique toys, games and collectibles offered at Nerdcore

INDOOR TRACK
Central athletes look for championship at season’s finish line

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Coming to a front door near you: Weed delivery service

BY BRIAN COOK
Staff Reporter

State legislation has begun looking at a bill which would allow up to five marijuana retailers to deliver their products to local customers.

House Bill 2368 (HB 2368) is a new bill that would form a two-year pilot program for five marijuana retailers licensed under initiative 502.

This bill is being sponsored by Democrat Representative Christopher Hurst, who is also sponsoring House Bill 2347 to reduce state excise tax on marijuana from 37 percent to 25 percent. The bill is also being sponsored by Republican Representative Cary Conodotta.

Since this bill could be passed as a pilot, cities that have a population of 650,000 or more would qualify for the legal marijuana delivery service under HB 2368.

As reported by King 5 News, Seattle Mayor Ed Murray is in full support of HB 2368 along with City Attorney Pete Holmes.

Currently, marijuana delivery services are available in Seattle, although they operate in a grey area of the I-502 state law. With quick Google searches, text messages, age verifications and cash payment, anyone can have one of the near 20 black market marijuana delivery services bring them up to the legal limit of weed, oils and edibles straight to their door.

Homes has advised Seattle’s black market marijuana delivery services to stop their operations immediately, not just operate underground, before legal actions begin taking place. Taking down these services could be the cities next priority.

While Washington has only licensed 19 marijuana retailers in Seattle, there are nearly 20 illegal delivery services for the area.

Though they have been advised to stop operations, many services such as Raccoons Club 21+ are still operating at the risk of being shut down.

Raccoons Club has been active on Twitter, posting “We are OPEN!” multiple times throughout the day.

As of Feb. 12, HB 2368 has been sent to the floor of the state senate and will be scheduled for a second reading.

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Weekend sports information: Sunday 5 p.m. Letters to the editor: Sunday 5 p.m. Entertainment, meetings, calendar events, display ads, classified ads: Friday 5 p.m.

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GBRPHGR By Grace Lindsley

GRAPHIC BY: GRACE LINDSLEY
“Free to finish” could help students

A day in the life of two teenage Mormon missionaries

BY MCKENZIE LAKRY Staff Reporter

The temperature is barely making an effort to rise above freezing as missionaries Elder Carroll and Elder Putnam begin their day.

They pull one of the eight white shirts in their closet, grab a pair of slacks and decide which tie they can wear in order to complete their look from the day before.

Their name tags are clipped tightly to the outside of their jackets, reading, “THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.”

Nowhere on that tag will you find their first names, and they’ll be hesitant to tell you if you ask.

Mission

They are just two of nearly 334 missions in approximately 120 countries. Missions can span from 18 months to 2 years depending on the individual and the location.

Carroll and Putnam are just beginning their two-year mission that has placed them in the Pacific Northwest and, more specifically, Ellensburg.

“It’s called the Yakima mission,” Carroll said. “It’s all of Central Washington, from the border of Canada into the Dalles of Oregon.”

According to Gaudino, the bill had no opposition and passed unanimously and quickly, through committee and has a high level of support.

Having at least 70 percent of the adult population in Washington will find themselves after four years being some credits short,” Gaudino said. “If they do fall short then this bill will help repair them and get them back into school.”

While being two independent ideas, both the Free to Finish college program and the possible “Degree Planter” program from Central have the goal of increasing degree completion.

“If the idea of this kind of degree planning is successful, then fewer people, fewer students will find themselves after four years being some credits short,” Gaudino said. “If they’re living on financial aid or loans and you get to that four-year mark, you realize you’re out of money,” Gaudino said.

According to Gaudino, one of the key problems is the amount of students who don’t even make it to the four-year mark, but they instead run out of money earlier and can no longer afford the tuition.

“Some students run out money or have family crises or something before the three years and they still drop out,” Gaudino said. “Whenever they have to leave, if it’s 15 hours and it’s all that they need, Hansen’s bill will come in.”

Each university will have their own autonomy with this program.

Gaudino said his goal is to implement this program as soon as it is passed, recognizing that the university will have to be timely and proactive about spreading information and reaching out to potential students.

While being two independent ideas, both the Free to Finish college program and the possible “Degree Planter” program from Central have the goal of increasing degree completion.

“If the idea of this kind of degree planning is successful, then fewer people, fewer students will find themselves after four years being some credits short,” Gaudino said. “If they do fall short then this bill will help repair them and get them back into school.”

The implementation of this program would be part of a larger effort by the university to assist students with advising and to ensure students remain on track to graduate with the funds necessary.

“If it’s our responsibility not to graduate you but to give you every opportunity to graduate,” Gaudino said. “If our responsibility to make that as transparent a system as we possibly can and to develop little safeguards that warn you if you’re off your plan.”

Should the bill pass, the university will reach out to students who have been gone for longer periods of time, but aren’t ready to return to full-time and assisting them with completing their degrees.

“I think it will have big impact on current Central students, but also on previous students that were enrolled here that they’ll be able to finish up their degree and get on with their life,” Gaudino said.

The two will remain within this designated area for the entirety of their mission along with approximately 180 other missionaries placed throughout the region.

Though they cannot leave these boundaries, they can be transferred around the area every six weeks.

Unplugged

Putnam and Carroll are just 18 and 19 years old, respectively.

They enjoy playing sports and talking about music; Carroll said The Weeknd’s “I Can’t Feel My Face” in his go-to song. Their breakfast usually consists of a couple granola bars.

However, their days are far from average.

You’ll never see them with headphones in as they listen to music, which has shifted mainly to gospel music since they started their mission, and their news is based solely on what they hear in passing.

“We don’t access the internet during [our mission],” Carroll said. “We don’t read the news, we don’t watch...
TV, we don’t play video games,” Carroll said. “It’s just to keep us focused. It can be really distracting to get caught up in things like that.”

While they do have a cell-phone, Carroll said it’s a “brick phone” that they use to contact people they’ve met throughout the week.

The two do have access to the internet, but only on Monday evenings to email their families a brief update on how they’re doing.

During their mission they will only see their families a total of four times, Skyping them twice a year for Christmas and Mother’s Day.

“Going away from your family is probably the hardest part,” Putnam said. “But once you get working you don’t really have a lot of time to worry, you just have to get down and get to work.”

**Misconceptions**

While both say that misconceptions of the LDS Church are common and can be frustrating at times, neither one seems to doubt their mission or the work they have set out to do.

“I’ve never really questioned why I’m here or what I’m doing,” Carroll said. “It’s all we do, all day, every single day. I think that sometimes people don’t understand where our church is coming from or the beliefs that we have, and so as missionaries that’s all we do is share those beliefs with people.”

Carroll and Putnam also say that they have felt welcomed by the community, citing only a few instances where they have been faced with conflict.

“There have been a couple times where we’ve been threatened a little bit,” Putnam said. “But if they’re like that, you just have to get out of there.”

One situation occurred while Carroll and Putnam were visiting Yakima during the beginning of their mission.

They were greeted at the door by the homeowner and his gun.

Putnam recalled a similar situation in which a man “got in their faces” while telling them that it was “gonna get ugly.”

“Most people that try and intimidate you want a response,” Carroll said. “They want you to be scared or fight back. But if you’re just like, ‘Oh yeah, have a nice day too,’ then they just don’t know what to do because that’s not something they expect. You just have to keep calm and be nice, that’s all.”

**Remaining focused**

Carroll and Putnam wake up before dawn, pray and prepare themselves for their day, keeping in mind the reason that they’ve agreed to place their normal lives on hold for two years.

“That’s why we’re out here, just to invite others into Christ,” Carroll said. “It’s almost like a whole different life in a way, but it’s cool because there’s no other perceivable mission that’s all.”

“Most people that try and intimidate you want a response,” Carroll said. “They want you to be scared or fight back. But if you’re just like, ‘Oh yeah, have a nice day too,’ then they just don’t know what to do because that’s not something they expect. You just have to keep calm and be nice, that’s all.”

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By OBSERVER STAFF

The Washington State Patrol is warning residents of phone scams where people pose as representatives of the agency, often the IRS, according to the Daily Record.

Kittitas County 9-1-1 reported a fraud on Feb. 12 at 8:49 a.m., that a reporting caller received a phone call from someone claiming to be IRS. The callers were demanding money and were very rude to her.

Additionally, the Washington State Patrol has said it has received phone calls from the public indicating the agency has called them asking for payments for bail or legal costs for a family member or friend who has been arrested, reported by the Daily Record.

The release stated that the phone calls appear to be from individuals attempting to scam people in the Ellensburg area.

The release also said a scammer identified themselves as a high ranking member within the Washington State Patrol.

The scammer requested the answering party go to Target and purchase an iTunes card so the cash could be used for “Pre Trial Payments,” according to the WSP release.
Stefan Bradley is coming to Central to speak on his experiences at the front line of Ferguson with his speech, “Freedom and Beyond: Activism, Access and Achievement in the Age of Ferguson.” Bradly, director of African American studies at Saint Louis University (SLU), is from Washington, having received his bachelor’s degree from Gonzaga University and master’s from Washington State University.

According to Bradley, the speech is his “opportunity to share with people in the audience what the uprising in Ferguson looked like at the ground level as a professor in the area.”

Bradley has worked at SLU for eight years and was involved in the Ferguson protests on multiple levels.

The day after the Michael Brown shooting, Bradley heard his students were in confrontation with police during protests. This was the beginning of his involvement.

“That was the night that the QuikTrip burned,” Bradley said. “I was worried about all of them and tried to get them to go home, but they refused.”

The next day, Bradley went to Ferguson to stand with his students.

“I saw and ran from the arrest,” Bradley said. “I made a choice to amplify the voices of the concerned citizens of the area whom the news networks wouldn’t ever interview.”

“I also knew that because of my status as a professor and a ‘respectable’ African American, I would have a platform to speak,” Bradley said.

According to Bradley, the local media was portraying his students as “thugs” and many people were focusing on criticizing the tactics of some protesters, overlooking the issues.

“I made a choice to amplify the voices of the concerned citizens of the area whom the news networks wouldn’t ever interview,” Bradley said.

“This is the experience and viewpoint Bradley wants to bring to Central.”

BY KAILAN MANANDIC
Assistant News Editor

Kittitas County 9-1-1 calls
Feb. 2-9
Can I bum a ride?

A man in a grey hoodie was trying to catch a ride on the 1000 block of North Chestnut Street at 2:59 p.m. on Wednesday, February 3. 13 minutes later a man was reportedly walking down Main Street. Apparently no one gave him the car ride that he was seeking.

A man who resides on Hudley Road in Cle Elum locked himself out of his home on Wednesday, February 3 at 7:25 p.m. He refused to accept the number for a locksmith and continued to wait outside in his “slippers and bath robe” until the police arrived, whichever came first.

A “newer” red Dodge pickup truck was excited to test out its new wheels in the parking lot near South Canyon road on Wednesday, February 3 at 7:50 p.m. It proceeded to do donuts until the police were notified.

On Tuesday, February 9 at 3:32 p.m., an individual reported that the driver of a white van “made hand gestures” at them while they were driving on I-90 near Cle Elum. The hand gesture was most likely a friendly wave “hello.”

After escaping the confines of his yard, one local dog channeled his inner bull and charged his neighbor at 5:43 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9. No word from the dog yet on whether or not there will be a rematch between him and his matador.

A resident on North Airport Road, likely unaware that the “block sender” option is available on his account, reported long-distance harassment via email on Tuesday, February 2 at 4:40 p.m. Attempting to show off to his fellow SUV friends, a vehicle reportedly high-centered on a snow pile near Creeksedge Way.

The vehicle was stuck for five days prior to the report on Tuesday, February 9. The vehicle will likely avoid snow piles following the embarrassment.

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“I made a choice to amplify the voices of the concerned citizens of the area whom the news networks wouldn’t ever interview,” Bradley said.

“This is the experience and viewpoint Bradley wants to bring to Central.”
I was once criticized for wearing a Washington Husky sweatshirt by, who I assumed, were locals in downtown Ellensburg. I exchanged a few choice words with them and really emphasized the fact that I was raised a Husky fan and I am here for school, not athletics. I thoroughly enjoy this school and their athletics, but I am a Husky at heart. And if you are a Husky fan in this day and age, you are, or should be, ecstatic for the next few years. I’m talking both basketball and football.

The future for basketball and football seemed rather cloudy this past spring. The football team just lost one of the worst bowl games I’ve ever seen and lost their best playmaker, John Ross, to a season ending ACL injury. Yes, they had their future star quarterback signed, but what about their defense? Offensive line? Running back? All these questions seemed to have vague answers in the beginning.

Much like the football team, the basketball team had internal issues. Lorenzo Romar was fighting for his job. Their best defender, Robert Upshaw, was kicked off the team and they lost 15 of their final 20 games. Fast forward to the beginning of the 2015-2016 football season: true freshman Myles Gaskin burst onto the scene as the team’s starting running back. Gaskin ended the season with 1302 rushing yards and 14 touchdowns.

The Huskies’ first big victory of the season came against USC in Los Angeles, against their former head coach Steve Sarkisian. Skipping ahead to their final games of the season, University of Washington (UW) annihilated Oregon State University and Washington State University in the Apple Cup, earning them a trip to a bowl game against the University of Southern Mississippi (USM).

The Huskies went on to beat USM and, for the first time ever, the Huskies were the Zaxby’s Heart of Dallas bowl champions. Who really cared though? The point of those last three games was recruiting. Since the end of that season, head coach Chris Petersen signed four-star commits. According to ESPN.com, the recruits include the 16th best cornerback in the country, the 15th best lineman, the 7th best athlete and the 25th best safety.

Huskies basketball is also in a similar situation going into the second half of the season. UW had a tremendous 2015 recruiting class, with most of the recruits coming from the Seattle area. Dejounte Murray and Marmute Chris were the two players that the Husky fans were most excited about. However, other future star players have emerged along with Chris and Murray.

Noah Dickerson was originally committed to Florida, but when Billy Donovan left the Gators to coach in the NBA, Dickerson flipped his commitment to UW. David Crisp was another young player from Tacoma who has been vital to the team’s success.

Four out of the five starters for UW are freshmen. Seven members of the Huskies are true freshman and five members are sophomores.

Romar continues to maintain his 14 year tenure by signing the 18th best basketball prospect in the nation, according to ESPN.com. Markelle Fultz from DeMatha High School in Maryland will be joining the program next year.

With all this being said, there is no reason the Huskies wouldn’t have a shot at the PAC 12 titles in the near future, for either basketball and football.

Petersen and Romar have engineered teams that have all the tools to succeed. All they need to do now is win. And keep players from leaving for millions of dollars, of course.

We aren’t supposed to talk about religion or politics, so let’s talk about religion and politics.

I personally do not care what your opinion is on either subject, but I am really interested in why you believe whatever you believe. Unfortunately, this is difficult information to get from someone because so many people have an “I don’t discuss these topics” rule, which seems completely asinine.

Why don’t you talk about religion or politics? You don’t want to get into an argument? Then don’t define yourself by your beliefs.

That might be going a bit far, but basing all of your morals on a single belief system is just stupid. But basing all of your morals on a particular religion, we won’t elect them. How much sense does that make?

If your beliefs are so closely held that you can’t separate yourself from them, then why aren’t you willing to argue about them?

I’m not saying we should all start yelling at each other without regard for the others, but it does seem a little paradoxical that you love something so much that you won’t back it up.

That type of ignorance seems to lead to misunderstanding and fear (I’m looking at you immigration reform). Whether literally or figuratively, we can’t just wall ourselves off. Have you heard of The Berlin Wall?

We have become a slander society. When presidential commercialism starts running during election season, you’ll see the same thing that you always see: politicians ignoring their stances and making personal attacks on their opponents.

This is why religious and political discussions don’t work.

The people we choose as our leaders can’t even speak to each other civilly.

It’s never “this is what my side believes and here are some reasons that it is better than what the other side believes.” It’s always “my opponent is clearly Hitler and choosing them will lead to the rise of a new, dictatorial world order.”

We need to talk, because we rarely do
Get your nerd on!
New store in town offers a wide variety of toys, collectibles and games for everyone

BY VICTORIA SHAMRELL
Scene Editor

Walking into Nerdcore, custo-
momers see Monster High dolls
on one wall, Disney on another,
Star Wars and Marvel in the
back and collectibles all about.

Everyone is greeted with a
hello, except the regulars who
are greeted by name.

“A young girl dragged her
mom over to the Disney section
with glee.

It’s like a kid in a candy store,
but in this case, it’s the nerd in
Nerdcore.

Nerdcore Toys and Collect-
ibles had its grand opening on
Sep. 14. At their opening, 88.1
the ‘Burg blasted music as Pizza
Calin handed out slices of pizza.

Jason Shaw is the general
manager and buyer for the store.
His wife, Denise Shaw, is the
owner.

The idea for the store came
about when the Shaws decided
they wanted to open a business in
Ellensburg.

According to Jason Shaw,
they realized there wasn’t really a
toy or collectible store in the area
for serious collectors.

Jason Shaw said that both he
and Denise Shaw are big collec-
tors. He added that Denise Shaw
is a gamer.

“We thought that Nerdcore
would be a perfect fit in Ellens-
burg because of the college com-

munity and the family commu-
nity,” Jason Shaw said.

“It would be something that
Ellensburg definitely needed.”

The store carries a large va-
rity of toys and collectibles that
you normally wouldn’t find at
any other store, Jason Shaw said.
One such example is a line
called Kid Robot, which was the
first U.S. based company to bring
over the Japanese vinyl style toys
that have been popular in Japan
for the last 20 years.

“We tend to carry more col-
lectible like pieces that the adult
collector looks for, as opposed
to just going to a Target or a
Walmart,” Jason Shaw said.

The name of the store is a
play on the phrase “nerd to the
core;” hence the name Nerdcore.

According to Jason Shaw,
Central students make up about
80 percent of the customer base
that comes into Nerdcore.

This quarter, Nerdcore began
hosting a game night one night
oon a month at the Brooks Library,
providing exposure for the store.

[Brooks Library] “had your
your typical Monopoly, Battleship
and Scrabble and they didn’t have
the turn out they wanted,” Jason
Shaw said.

Another of our approaches was
and said ‘hey could you bring in
some new and exciting games and
some new stuff to spotlight and
gainer interest with the student
body’ and we’ve done that and
will continue to do that.

Nerdcore offers games such
Apples to Apples, Trivial Pursuit
‘Nightmare before Christmas’
edition and Ghostbusters the
board game.

Lindsey Otto, senior Asian
philosophy major, first found
out about Nerdcore at January’s
game night.

“I was both shocked and very
excited when I heard about it and
wondered why I didn’t know
about it beforehand,” Otto said.

Although Jason Shaw has
tried to reach out to
of the different nerd
club’s on campus
one has responded.

Jason Shaw said he would
love to set something up with any
clubs on campus and he enthus-
iasitcally encourages students
in those clubs to get in contact
with him.

Although common toys
can be found at stores like Fred
Meyer, Nerdcore tends to carry the
more special edition collectibles
that can’t be found at a big box
store.

“We really pride ourselves on
being able to do special orders
for our customers,” Jason Shaw
said.

With special orders, he will
track down the items, get the de-
tails and then calls the customer
to tell him what he found.

“It’s re-

ally nice that the
owner is
more than
happy to
order just
about any-
thing online
for you if
you don’t
see it in
store,” Otto
said.

“I re-
member him
telling me
that he’s really good at hunting
down even the rarest of collector
items.”

With special orders, a 50
percent deposit is required and
then when the order comes in,
the customer pays the remaining
balance.

“I’ve been in the retail busi-

ness for a number of years and
have always prided myself on
maintaining a large clientele that
knows me by name and knows
they can come to me for excel-
lent customer service, excellent
knowledge on the product and to
be able to have me locate items
that they normally wouldn’t be
able to find anywhere else,” Jason
Shaw said.

Many people aren’t able to
travel to the big comic book con-
ventions where one-off special
collectibles are released, but Ja-
son Shaw is usually able to track
down those types of items.

The store has yet to reach its
six month mark, but has been
profitable, according to Jason
Shaw.

One of store’s busiest days
was on Jan. 16, when they hosted
a brewery in their store as part of
Brewfest.

“We’ve been doing really
well,” Jason Shaw said. “We
had a great Christmas and, like
with any other business, things
have kind of slowed down after
Christmas, but still were doing
great.”

Jason Shaw said he loves the
location of the store since it’s in
the heart of downtown Ellens-
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burg.
The door is hard to find. Though a sign on the front reads “Entrance through the alleyway,” it’s not there. A heavyset man and a girl wearing a black Central Washington University sweatshirt are hanging out in the alley, talking about their Narcotics Anonymous group.

They talk about their struggle with addiction and how they’re getting better. They talk about how they smoke cigarettes to curb their cravings. They talk about people they no longer know; about that guy, Chase Wade, who overdosed in Kiscanis Park three years ago.

Just as doubt starts to set in that this isn’t the right place, Julia pulls up in her silver Subaru Crosstrek right on time—12:30 p.m. Her car slides on the ice as she tries to back into a space. She steps out of her car, walks briskly past the two recovering addicts and out of site around the corner.

She’s wearing designer boots and a black North Face jacket. (She later says it’s the first jacket she’s bought out of the program.)

“What’s different this time? You got a better plan in your head?” Julia asks.

“Hopefully.”

“Well, what’re you gonna do when you run into the hood rats again?” Julia fires back.

Meth users say a lot of things, she says. She makes a stabbing motion with her hand at her arm. “Pff, pff, pff.”

But Michael had plans to go back to rehab on Feb. 2—his birthday. After the last trip, he was clean for 11 and a half months. Until he moved back to Ellensburg.

“So you moved back and saw the same kind of people?” asks Sue Kendall, one of the volunteers.

“Yeah. First day, I relapsed,” he says.

“What’s different this time? You got a better plan in your head?” Julia asks.

“Hopelessly.”

“Well, what’re you gonna do when you run into the hood rats again?” Julia fires back.

“I don’t know. Eat some candy?” Michael offers, hiding the needle in his arm, sores on his face and a dirty wife beater on his back.

“Hopefully.”

“Hi,” the first visitor of the day says. His speech is slurred. He doesn’t say much. His denim jacket hides a conspicuous mustache. He has track marks on his arm, sores on his face and a dirty wife beater on his back under a heavy black coat. He’s high on meth.

He just turned 18 and has been using since he was 14.

“I ran out of what you guys gave me last week,” he says. “I’ve just been going on with what other people gave me.”

Michael exchanges about 100 used syringes for the week, which seems like a lot.

Julia Karns, who works at Kittitas County Public Health, runs the Kittitas County Needle Exchange Program, says he’s using even more than he’s turning in.

“Meth users use a lot of syringes,” she says. She makes a stabbing motion with her hand at her arm. “Pff, pff, pff.”

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He just turned 18 and has been using since he was 14.

“I ran out of what you guys gave me last week,” he says. “I’ve just been going on with what other people gave me.”

Michael exchanges about 100 used syringes for the week, which seems like a lot.

Julia Karns, who works at Kittitas County Public Health, runs the Kittitas County Needle Exchange Program, says he’s using even more than he’s turning in.

“Meth users use a lot of syringes,” she says. She makes a stabbing motion with her hand at her arm. “Pff, pff, pff.”

But Michael had plans to go back to rehab on Feb. 2—his birthday. After the last trip, he was clean for 11 and a half months. Until he moved back to Ellensburg.

“So you moved back and saw the same kind of people?” asks Sue Kendall, one of the volunteers.

“Yeah. First day, I relapsed,” he says.

“What’s different this time? You got a better plan in your head?” Julia asks.

“Hopelessly.”

“Well, what’re you gonna do when you run into the hood rats again?” Julia fires back.

“I don’t know. Eat some candy?” Michael offers, hiding the needle in his arm, sores on his face and a dirty wife beater on his back.

“Hopefully.”

The needle-exchange program gives out all kinds of supplies including tourniquets, condoms and candy.

PHOTOS BY JONATHAN GLOVER/ROBSEWER

Before the Kittitas County Needle Exchange Program moved to the “happiest church in town” – the First United Methodist Church, across from the Ellensburg Public Library on Ruby Street – Julia used to dole out syringes from her desk at Kittitas County Public Health. This year marks her 16th anniversary.

She’s a public health worker, and she says she’s survived round after round of budget cuts for two reasons: She’s bilingual, (she actually lived in Mexico City for much of her life) and she has a “classy persona.”

What started as a handful of syringes passed out in an office turned into a modest 1,000 syringes exchanged in the first year. In 2015, the program gave out about 8,000 needles, and brought in around 15,000 from the streets.

Throughout it all, Julia says the county has fought her at every turn. First, it was a battle over funding. She won by having the county match funds the program receives from a Coordinated Prevention Grant – a grant from the state Department of Ecology that is used to facilitate waste reduction.

Then it was public perception, which she is still fighting to this day. Even as heroin use reached all-time highs in Washington, according to the University of Washington Alcohol & Drug Abuse Institute, Julia says many community members still look down on the needle-exchange program as promoting drug use.

Even employees at Kittitas County Public Health don’t see eye to eye with her.

“There are very few, but in our department, I was surprised to encounter them, because I believe the best in everyone,” she says.

As clients come in, Julia and Sue spring to life to help choose needle sizes (meth users prefer a smaller needle), they offer free Hepatitis C screenings, or just shoot the shit for a few minutes. Julia says she used to focus more on offering help and advice, but after seeing the same faces over and over, she instead decided warm conversation might be what they need.

But the most important function of the exchange is to do just that: exchange. Everyone who comes in swaps used needles for a fresh bag of sharps. Some addicts are tidier and keep their needles in a plastic container. Others forget, and bring needles in plastic bottles or leftover coffee filters.

Each time the heavy green door swings open, Julia and Sue act as though they are briefly reunited with their own children. “Hello?” they both exclaim as they quickly move to the front of the room to strike up a conversation.

“Hi,” the first visitor of the day says. His speech is slurred. He could easily be mistaken as homeless, though he says he was “on his lunch break.”

He doesn’t say much. His denim jacket hides a container of sharps, which he exchanges for about 30 new needles. Julia says later that a full one-quart container can hold about 50. He also takes about 25 cotton balls, a few tourniquets and sanitary pads, then goes on his way.

But before he departs, Julia adds, in a motherly tone, “The idea is that you use something clean.” A friendly reminder.
Program staffer fights to keep drug users safe

Hebetween visitors, Julia and Sue keep warm with conversation and an old heating furnace that swirls in lukewarm air at foot level. A Narcotics Anonymous group sings chants outside the window – a dash of irony not lost on the two. “I requested the exchange to be at a different time than the group meeting,” Julia says. But once the meeting got moved, there wasn’t much she could do. “I just hope nobody is upset.”

The room is concrete and cold. It smells like a damp carpet. Pamphlets are fanned out on a table amid drug paraphernalia – tourniquets, small cups for cooking meth or heroin, cotton balls which are used to filter heroin before it hits the syringe. Some users will save used ones for when the heroin runs out. Just add water and, presto, a small amount in the nick of time.

Julia says the room was likely used for Sunday school, or something like that. The chalkboard in the corner indicates she’s right.

Sue, with short grey hair and half-moon spectacles, is Julia’s best volunteer and a recovering addict. The two women – who are energetic and talkative – show up every Thursday right after lunch time and stay for two and a half hours. Sometimes, Julia has more volunteers. She says she usually gets one or two students from Central to help out, but no luck this year.

One of the first things they tell people is how needles should be stored after each use. Never reuse them, never share them, they say. The Centers for Disease Control estimates about 3.5 million people are living with a chronic hepatitis C infection – and a large number of cases come from needle sharing. But Julia says the number is probably much higher. She calls it the “very important emerging silent epidemic.”

When a needle is reused – even if it’s only the second time – it can tear the skin. This is how track marks are formed, and how veins become abscessed or collapsed. Even some of the worst junkies know this. At this pro-

The last visitor of the day is Rachel. (She doesn’t share her real name, not even with Julia and Sue.) She also has a street name which she picked up at the age of 18. She was an “Ave Rat” – a homeless person living near the University District in Seattle.

“I had 24, 25-year-olds calling me momma and I was only 16,” she says. “I’m a nurturer. I still do that with people.”

Rachel doesn’t shoot heroin or meth – though she did have a meth addiction for seven years. She instead shoots Percocets, a prescription painkiller she crushes and mixes with water in old pill bottles. She then filters it through a coffee filter (she doesn’t use shirts like some users, which leaves a “gross residue”) and shoots it in her arm. She came in to exchange 180 needles for two weeks.

Rachel insists she doesn’t have a drug problem. She has friends who use meth and heroin to “get high and nod out.” She doesn’t understand that. She uses the Percocets to relieve her chronic back pain.

“My doctor knows that I don’t take my Percocets traditionally, which is by mouth, but he doesn’t necessarily know that I’ve been shooting them up,” she says. “If he gets ahold of that, then I could get them taken away.”
Megan Kruse, invited to Central for the Lion Rock writer series, will be giving both a craft talk and reading for students.

Kruse’s first craft talk is titled “Crafting Emotion: Object Resonance and Transcendent Details.”

Kruse will be reading from her famous novel, “Call Me Home,” in her second talk that evening.

Kruse was recently named by the National Book Foundation as one of the “5 Under 35” honorees.

According to the synopsis, the book tells the story about a family from three different perspectives.

One perspective is focused on Amy, a woman that leaves home at the age of 19 to live with a man and her two children, Jackson and Lydia.

These children have to live with their parents’ abusive relationship, causing emotional issues.

The story is about people having to live with the choices they make. According to Lisa Norris, who is in charge of the Lion Rock project and is the coordinator of the professional and creative writing major for the campus, this project promotes interdisciplinarity and collaboration while providing a bridge to the community.

“Many universities have visiting writing programs to expose students to ideas and different ways of writing. This is a great way for them to meet living writers, this brings some excitement,” Norris said.

According to Norris, an average of 100 to 150 students come to the meetings.

“That’s a good opportunity to do some networking,” Norris said.

The presentations will also be available online. To gain access, students will need to request a link through Lisa Norris.

Kruse is not the only writer coming this year. There will be other writers including Ava Chin, Fred D’Aguiar and Natalie Diaz.

Chin is the author of the book “Eating Wildly,” and she will be presenting a craft talk called “Why I Write: Tips for Aspiring Writers” in April.

Chin’s book was chosen as the novel for the “One Book One Region” reading program and Central’s book club this quarter.

According to Norris, they are still in the process of contacting other writers.

One of these writers is Tim O’Brien, a writer known for his novel “The Things They Carried,” in which he wrote short stories inspired by his experiences in the Vietnam War.

Nothing is confirmed yet, but the Lion Rock team is committed to bringing him in and giving students the opportunity to meet him.
The trucks of food in Ellensburg

By Holly Chester

With the relatively small selection of restaurants in Ellensburg, it’s easy to get bored eating the same thing over and over. However, with their low-key positioning and small size, food trucks may be the hidden gems of the area.

The first food truck you’ll see when coming off the east interchange and heading into town is Fidelina’s Taqueria.

Fidelina’s is a family-owned business that has been around for a little over three years. Inside is a small area with bright walls decorated with art and photographs.

While the restaurant itself isn’t a food truck, Fidelina’s still maintains its food truck status because of its immobile truck that is stationed outside of the establishment.

Lucky Gonzalez is a part of the Fidelina’s family. She recommended the burrito mole to customers, as it’s the most popular item. Gonzalez enjoys working in the community with local people and college students.

“We are so lucky to be here in Ellensburg,” Gonzales said. “People have been so nice, recommending us and spreading the word.”

The new food truck on campus is the spot for a grab-and-go late to early evening.

Though the campus food truck offers more than just Mexican cuisine, senior safety and health management major Davis Engel, a cook on the truck, recommends the steak tacos.

“They are amazing. Also, it’s easy to make, which is a favorite among the cooks,” Engel said.

The tacos were topped with a jalapeño sour cream that added the perfect amount of spice. While the items at the campus food truck cost a little bit more than those at other trucks, the quality is there.

“We offer the connection card discount for students and staff which creates another option on campus,” Engel said. Another spot to pick up some tacos is the Tacos Chalitos truck.

Tacos Chalitos has been around since 1997 and has been in the same spot since 2000.

Upon visiting, they recommended the pork sopes that are $3.50 each.

The sopes were garnished with veggies, cotija cheese and avocado. All of Tacos Chalitos items are served with a salsa verde and a spicy red salsa.

The sopes tasted great, but were a bit messy. A fork and knife are recommended.

Tacos Chalitos is one of the many food trucks in Ellensburg and has been in the same spot since 2000.

Soul and R&B performer coming to Central

By Britany Decker

The CWUp Late series has another event planned for Central students and the Ellensburg community. Campus Activities is presenting a performance by Jasmine Jordan.

This soul and R&B performer is a close friend to Central senior Samantha Hayes, who has known her since the age of three.

Hayes, event planning major, decided that the time to pursue her music career.

“God is her number one thing,” Hayes said. “She really is a great performer.”

Unlike most artists, Jordan doesn’t affiliate herself with any certain genre.

“She just sings what she loves,” Hayes said.

Loving music since high school, Jordan sang covers of songs by artists like Drake and Tupac, often posting them to YouTube.

In an interview with Central’s Hype magazine, Jordan talked about why she sings.

“I sing because that’s my release,” Jordan said. “That’s my platform to share my truths.”

Jasmine Jordan’s music has an upbeat style of songwriting that features positive lyrics and quick tempos.

That’s the way I feel I can get back to the world.”

According to Hayes, after Jordan graduated from college, she decided that the time to pursue her music career.

Now touring the west coast, Jordan has come a long way from posting videos on YouTube.

“She is so fun. She is so friendly,” Hayes said. “She puts everyone’s needs before herself and she’s so genuine. She just wants to get to know people and loves chatting.

Jordan has more than just a passion for music as well.

“She will definitely be a great Friday night show,” Hayes said.

Upon visiting, they recommended the pork sopes that are $3.50 each.

The sopes were garnished with veggies, cotija cheese and avocado. All of Tacos Chalitos items are served with a salsa verde and a spicy red salsa.

The sopes tasted great, but were a bit messy. A fork and knife are recommended.
Devlin Marshall is a chef in the kitchen. Herbs and spices are his meter. Breads, meats and cheeses are his direction. And the results are delicious.

“One bite is cheese, and the next bite is a juicy, ripe tomato, the next is cilantro and the next bite you know, it’s lime. And it’s all mixing together to create complex flavors,” Marshall says about his culinary creation the “Mac It.”

Marshall and his wife Leslie opened Curbside on 5th in August of 2015 after many years of planning for a food truck or late night eatery for local college students.

When he first started out he made it simple: “Wrap It, Stack It, and Mac It.” He said it was “easy for when you’re cross-eyed and looking up at the menu” during the odd hours of the night after the bars close and before the sun rises.

The small building has a casual beach house vibe with a light blue-gray paint and a large bannister and split-rail fence. “Curbside on 5th” underlines the order window. The structure was originally a bank vault, which explains why the interior is so small.

“There used to be a tube that would take the money and send it into the bank,” said Jerry Estrada, long time customer of Curbside. “I come here every week. It’s really good and quick. And better than fast food.”

Professional-grade cooking equipment takes up most of the space; racks of spices and food are prepped and ready for Marshall to use to help create one of the dishes.

“The presentation of items on the menu is as charming as the take-out boxes. The names of the various offerings coincide with historical events that happened on 5th Avenue. For example, the first sandwich, the 1890, is hot turkey with Swiss, tomato, and roasted poblano pepper on grilled Parmesan sourdough bread. This is the first item ever made on the menu and 1890 was the first time in recorded history the lot of Curbside was photographed.”

“I love the 1890 sandwich,” said Jerry Estrada, long time customer of Curbside. “I come here every week. It’s really good and quick. And better than fast food.”

In addition to that, one of the specialties is called the N.B.C., a blackened salmon delight. It includes coho salmon, blackened spices, tomato, lettuce, and avocado on a white cheddar boullo roll. The N.B.C. was a bank that was on the block in 1959.

Catherine Canterbury is a first timer at Curbside but she says in the past 24 hours, three people have told her to try the “Mac It.”

“They seem very friendly and it’s smells so good,” Canterbury says.

Marshall says that he decided to try the special of the day, which is written on the board above the order window. In bright colors it reads "Shrimp and avocado tacos."

The menu is going to have a make over, which will include text explaining the historical importance of each dish name on the back of the menu. Marshall says he will work with his local historical society to gather the information.

Curbside incorporates a little bit of Ellenburg in everything it does, not just the menu.

Marshall boasts about being a supporter of local vendors. The pair uses bread from Vinman’s bakery, vegetables from the local farmer’s market (in season), and are looking to use meat from Windham Ranch.

In addition, he and Leslie used a local graphic design shop to help create their business logo. And used a local person to help design their website.

Both Leslie and Marshall are local as well. They say they intend to keep the restaurant in the family by passing it along to their grandchildren. The restaurant is completely family run.

“My cousin is starting up a delivery service (called) Delivery Dog,” Leslie says. “He has limited hours so he isn’t doing anything at night.”

Leslie says the delivery services will most likely be during the day from Tues. to Sat. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

“I’ve always wanted to do something with food service,” Marshall says. He quit his day job, as a chef at the Ellenburg Pasta Company, to work his food business full time.

He says his goal when he started out was to create a menu that wouldn’t compete with local food trucks. In fact, he said he wouldn’t mind developing a food court with the other food vendors in the area.

And “maybe get together once a month,” on 5th Avenue so people can enjoy the different kinds of food offered in the area.

“Most people think that if you have too many businesses in one area, you’ll lose money,” Marshall says. “But that isn’t true, if people have a variety of food to choose from, it’ll help business for everyone.”

Marshall’s love of cooking can be summed up by the small logo on the bottom of the menu, “Craveable grub crafted with love.”

Curbside plans to add homemade ice cream to its menu and hopes to set up tables for customers to dine outside the business when the weather gets a little warmer.

Marshall says he could see a more full-service restaurant happening in the future.

But for right now, the two are happy to be cooking in the cozy kitchen on 5th Avenue. Bon Appétit!
On the prowl
Wildcat athletes eye individual and team titles at the GNAC Indoor Track and Field Championships

BY MITCHELL JOHNSON
Sports Reporter

Led by a GNAC men’s triple jump champion and many top competitors on the women’s side, Central’s track and field team has everything on the line as they push on the verge of earning the GNAC title and a chance to go to nationals in March.

The GNAC Indoor Track and Field Championship is hosted by Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho on Feb. 19 and 20.

“It’s one we really like to look at as kinda almost the preview for the main [outdoor] championship,” head coach Kevin Adkisson said. “It really just helps us get our bearings more than anything. We like to see kinda where we are, how we’re stacking up, if we’re meeting some of the goals we’ve already set for ourselves.”

Senior jumper Luke Plummer, who still has another year of indoor eligibility left, won the GNAC triple jump title and advanced to the national championship meet.

Plummer said his goal for the GNAC championship is to repeat as triple jump champion and advance to the top-five at nationals.

Assistant coach in jumps, Todd Monroe, said Plummer really likes the facility that hosts the GNACs, saying that he has always competed well there and it is almost like a second home to him.

Another goal Plummer said he had was to win the GNAC long jump title. He finished in sixth last year.

“He’s a nerd on the subject [jumping events],” Monroe said. “He studies film, he studies his own film, I work with him on a lot of film,” Monroe said. “He’s really worked on the small things over the last year.”

Adkisson expects Plummer to lead the way for Central with the potential he has in his two years long jump and triple jump.

Also on the men’s side, junior thrower Armando Tafoya ranked top-three in the GNAC in weight throw and shot put.

Adkisson calls Plummer and Tafoya solid and dependable guys for the Wildcats.

Senior sprinter Kent McKinney Jr. will make a run for a single title as well. He is ranked first in the GNAC in the 60-meter race.

“Be great to see if we can get multiple titles out of some of these guys as they finish their careers, especially Luke and Kent,” Adkisson said.

On the women’s side, there are many that have a shot at winning events in the championship meet.

Junior pole vaulter McKenna Emmert placed second in the indoor championship last year, but an injury earlier in the season has caused her some struggles.

“McKenna Emmert just hasn’t vaulted as well as she has in the past yet,” Adkisson said. “She could really come through and really hit her form and be GNAC champion.”

Monroe hopes that Emmert can carry her mark through the GNAC’s and go to nationals.

A couple seniors Adkisson would love to see go out on a high note are Amanda Younger and Dani Eggleston. Youngers does the shot put and weight throw, and Eggleston is a middle distance runner that can score points in a few events, but what she will run is still up in the air.

Adkisson also likes the chances for junior sprinter Madison Garcia’s chances of scoring some points for Central after the great indoor season.

Junior triple jumper Kelly Cronic is another threat to score points for Central’s women’s team.

Her mark of 38 feet puts her in the top three triple jumpers in the GNAC.

Adkisson believes that the women’s track and field program is becoming a “power school” in the GNAC.

“This year, especially on the women’s side we’d love to… continue the progress we’ve been making and solidify our position in that top,” Adkisson said. “Not necessarily the very top group, but right up there among the higher teams consistently.”

On the men’s side, Adkisson believes that Central is up in the top three or four in the conference.

Central’s biggest challenges at the meet will be Alaska Anchorage University (AAU) and Western Washington University on the men’s side, and AAU and Seattle Pacific University on the women’s side.

Jordan Todd

Rushing Yards: 2,701
Rushing Tds: 29
Receiving Yards: 310
Receiving Tds: 2
Third place- GNAC 2015 championship meet in 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash & 4x100 relay

Luke Plummer wars up during an indoor track and field practice.

According to Mack, the key is to make sure that Todd’s ankle is healthy enough to go without tape.

“One of the biggest things for sprinters is to be able to get off the ground as quickly as possible, and to do that the ankle has to go through a large range of motion,” Mack said.

While the tape helps prevent injury, it also limits the range of motion and in sprinting events, every inch counts.

“You think about taking half-an-inch of your step, every step you take in a 50 and 100-meter dash add up,” Mack said. “He’s such a hard worker I don’t think he’ll have any problems in the spring being where he needs to be.”

Todd said that last week a doctor told him the ankle he has been rehabilitating is actually stronger than the other now.

“Everything’s healed up,” Todd said. “I’m feeling good and stronger than ever.”

He never was down, he never had a bad attitude about it,” Todd said. “Just having people like that around to see how you should behave and how you should take these instances really helped me stay resilient.”

In his time at Central, Todd has run a personal best in the 200-meter dash. His best time is 21.73.

Adkisson also likes the chances for junior sprinter Madison Garcia’s chances of scoring some points for Central after the great indoor season.

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TOP SCORERS

Men:
- 60 meters- Kent McKinney Jr. (2)
- Triple Jump- Luke Plummer (1)
- Weight Throw- Armando Tafoya (2)

Women:
- Pole Vault- McKenna Emmert (2)
- One-mile run & 3,000 meters- Dani Eggleston (4)
- 5,000 meters- Megan Rodgers (5)

- Results from last year’s championship meet

ADKISSON EXPECTS PLUMMER TO LEAD THE WAY FOR CENTRAL WITH THE POTENTIAL HE HAS IN HIS TWO YEARS IN THE LONG JUMP AND TRIPLE JUMP.

“IT’S ONE WE REALLY LIKE TO LOOK AT AS KINDA ALMOST THE PREVIEW FOR THE MAIN [OUTDOOR] CHAMPIONSHIP,” HEAD COACH KEVIN ADKISSON SAID. “IT REALLY JUST HELPS US GET OUR BEARRINGS MORE THAN ANYTHING. WE LIKE TO SEE KINDA WHERE WE ARE, HOW WE’RE STACKING UP, IF WE’RE MEETING SOME OF THE GOALS WE’VE ALREADY SET FOR OURSELVES.”

“HE’S KINDA A NERD ON THE SUBJECT [JUMPING EVENTS],” MONROE SAID. “HE STUDIES FILM, HE STUDIES HIS OWN FILM, I WORK WITH HIM ON A LOT OF FILM,” MONROE SAID. “HE’S REALLY WORKED ON THE SMALL THINGS OVER THE LAST YEAR.”

“HE’S A GYM RAT. YOU CAN’T GET THAT GUY TO STOP WORKING,” MACK SAID. "Dude works his ass off. He’s a gym rat. You can’t get that guy to stop working.”

“ONE OF THE BIGGEST THINGS FOR SPRINTERS IS TO BE ABLE TO GET OFF THE GROUND AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, AND TO DO THAT THE ANKLE HAS TO GO THROUGH A LARGE RANGE OF MOTION.”
Friends live out hoop dreams

BY AUSTIN BENNETT
Assistant Sports Editor

They both share the same middle name; they both attended the same middle school. They’ve had every class together for the four years they’ve been in college, and they’re both sociology majors.

Senior guards Gary Jacobs and Devin Matthews have shared the same dream since their friendship began in sixth grade.

“What sparked our friendship was the love for the game, and both of us just wanting to play basketball and sharing the same dream,” Matthews said.

Their dream of playing basketball at the collegiate level has transformed through the years into a reality, as they both have established themselves as top performers for Central’s basketball team.

Before Central, both Jacobs and Matthews worked hard and used their connections wisely to assume the position they are in today. Both of them didn’t have a single offer from any college coming out of high school, forcing them to look in to any option they could find.

“I’ve never, in my whole career, received a college letter for basketball, or for sports period,” Matthews said.

Fortunately for the two, they’re mutual friend Donovan Williams, who they both played with in high school, was already playing junior college basketball at Pierce Community College (PCC) in Lakewood, Washington.

Williams helped convince PCC’s head coach Bill Mendelson to recruit both Jacobs and Matthews.

Recruiting the pair of athletes paid off for Mendelson as Jacobs earned the team’s MVP and was named First Team All-Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC). Averaging 24 points per game in his two years at PCC, Matthews took the PCC Raiders to the NWAC title game and was the team’s all-time averages leader averaging 7.5 assists per game. He was named to the NWAC first team his sophomore season.

Jacobs and Matthews both had positive experiences beginning their college basketball career in the Northwest.

“It was a great experience, the people, the culture around there was all positive vibes and so welcoming,” Jacobs said. “Our coach there and our athletic director, they were both great to us.”

Even though they enjoyed their time in the Northwest, they had a major culture shock in the beginning.

“That weather man,” Jacobs said.

“We had to talk each other into going to class everyday, that rain was tough to deal with,” Matthews said, finishing Jacobs thought.

Their successful careers at PCC helped shed light on their basketball talents. Jacobs had a few schools look at him, but Central was the most interested in his abilities.

“The main interest I had was from Central,” Jacobs said. “I had a couple schools in Hawaii look at me and Texas A&M Kingsville, but CWU showed the most interest.”

Central was the only school to give Matthews a look.

“Drew Harris was the only one who actually recruited me,” Matthews said. “He went on to say good things about Matthews’ on his IQ.”

“I praise him on having one of the best IQ’s out of anybody I have ever played with,” Jacobs said.

Central pulled the trigger on the right guys. Jacobs has averaged 13 points and five rebounds per game and Matthews has averaged 7.7 points and 4.2 assists per game with four games left in their Central careers.

Both players have seen improvements in the others game throughout the years playing with each other.

“His ball handling and his ability to score the ball in different ways,” Matthews said.

Jacobs has seen a lot of improvement in Matthews’ shooting.

“His jumper, everything about his shot has gotten better,” Jacobs said.

He went on to say good things about Matthews’ IQ.

“I praise him on having one of the best IQ’s out of anybody I have ever played with,” Jacobs said.

After their careers at Central, Jacobs and Matthews have aspirations to play overseas. Along with their dream of playing basketball after college, both Jacobs and Matthews would also want to pursue coaching.

During their free time, Jacobs and Matthews enjoy playing the NBA 2K games. Jacobs calls them “2K wars.”

“We battle almost every night, we do playoff series and things like that,” Matthews said. “We definitely have fun with the video games.”

Jacobs and Matthews both agree that they have a unique relationship, due to the fact they agree that they have a unique relationship, due to the fact they are so similar.

“When we come from the same area, that’s crazy to see how much we are alike,” Matthews said. “All four years we have taken every single class together, we even have the same middle name, Lavon.”

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GNAC Standings

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BY SAMUEL BEAUMONTE
Staff Reporter

This fall quarter marks the 10-year anniversary of the tennis club, which was created by Central alumni AnnElise Anderson. Anderson created the club because of her passion for the game.

“I played tennis for a lot of my life, and wanted a chance to play in college but since Central didn’t have a collegiate team I had to start a club,” said Anderson, Pacific Northwest coordinator for the United States Tennis Association (USTA). “I reached out to the USTA at my freshman orientation and had it setup by September and enough players recruited to compete by that October.”

Central can’t afford to have a varsity team in every sport, so many teams have to rely on maintaining a club to fund practices and competitions.

Anderson had to start the club from scratch 10 years ago, but was able to get some support from the previous USTA Pacific Northwest coordinator, Mark Poppee.

“It was definitely like a second job, going out to recruit people, but the USTA has a pretty good system,” Anderson said. “In my last two years we were able to go to nationals, which was a pretty big thing to have enough people and money to qualify. It felt like a second job, but when you’re passionate about something, it makes it all worth it.”

Even though Anderson graduated from Central five years ago, her position at the USTA allows her to stay involved with the club.

“Seeing that these kids get to travel, compete and form bonds is great,” she said. “None of the people on the team are people that I knew when I was there, but it’s nice to still be involved with the Central team. It’s fun for me to see the team going strong and playing together.”

For students just coming into Central looking for a tennis team, the switch from a high school experience to the club can take some time to get used to.

“It’s more laid back and not as stressful as high school,” freshman Grace Stiles said. “In high school I was a captain, but we never ran drills. We just listened to what the coach told us to do.”

Since Central’s tennis team is setup as a club, it limits the chances for competition.

“We only play against other club teams, such as [Washington], [Oregon State], and Gonzaga,” sophomore Nick Paulay said, who works as the practice coordinator for the tennis team. “For the most part, we get invited to tournaments and social invites in Yakima.”

Despite the limitation and tendency to travel for competition, Central will be hosting two tennis matches this upcoming spring. The dates have yet to be determined.

A member of Central’s club tennis team prepares to receive a serve during an indoor practice.

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New
M's need to make me believe

After the Seahawks season came to an end about two weeks earlier than Seattle sports fans had been getting used to, I started to see tweets about fans getting excited for the Mariners season to start.

That used to be me, but this year, I just can’t get excited.

A new general manager, a new coach and a revamped roster has helped create a buzz that has some fans putting the awful 2015 season in the rearview mirror.

I’m not sold.

It’s the same story every year for this abysmal franchise. Every year is supposed to be the breakthrough year, but it never is.

The 2014 season was the closest the Mariners have been to making the playoffs in over a decade. The Mariners seemingly came out of nowhere after signing Robinson Cano and fell just one-game short of a wildcard.

In 2009, the team’s big off-season acquisition, one of the best bullpens in the league, couldn’t propel Seattle to the playoff. Hernandez, though. The Mariners never would have been in position to make the playoffs without him, or sign Cano, without him.

Maybe you could put the blame on former manager Lloyd McClendon for not properly handling Erasmo Ramirez against an awful Texas Rangers team in order to push Hernandez’s start back a day to face a better team. Seattle lost that game against the Rangers 1-0, but McClendon is gone and he won’t be able to make that mistake again as a manager in Seattle.

Fast forward through an off-season. The Mariners are the sexy pick by baseball writers across America to win the American League West and compete for their first World Series title.

In typical Mariners fashion, they fell flat on their face. The exact same thing that happened in 2010 when the Mariners were a trendy pick to go deep in the playoffs after a surprisingly good 2009 season.

Not even the historically magnificant month of April put together by Nelson Cruz, the team’s big off-season acquisition, could hold up Seattle’s terrible offense.

Cano, the $240 million man, didn’t start hitting until July and Kyle Seager had an awful month of April after getting his big deal. That was accompanied by one of the worst bullpens in the league.

Kyle Seager had an awful month of April after getting his big deal. The Mariners actually made a good off-season move by hiring Jerry Dipoto. Since his hiring, Seattle’s roster has seen major changes in the outfield and bullpen.

Dipoto said he is committed to making this roster more athletic, which he has done. The roster is no longer filled with first baseman being forced to play in the corner outfield spots.

As a matter of fact, the off-season moves Dipoto made look pretty good on paper. Adam Lind should be able to hit at Safeco Field, Joaquin Benoit and Steve Cishek should be a solid one-two punch in the bullpen and Leonys Martin is a good low-risk acquisition that will provide a much needed defense boost to the outfield.

The team also get lucky when Hisashi Iwakuma’s deal with Los Angeles Dodgers fell through and he returned to Seattle.

They still can’t buy into this team though. They’re going to find a way to lose—they always do.

And if this crop of Mariners can’t make it to the playoffs, help is not on the way.

Zduriencik’s push to win last year left the Mariners minor league talent depleted. They might have the least depth of any organization in the MLB.

Countless ‘can’t miss’ prospects haven’t panned out, top talents Alex Jackson and DJ Peterson struggled as they took their next steps in the minors last season and the rest of the hopes were traded away to get the likes of Mark Trumbo.

It’s hard to admit this, but if you take away the eight-year stretch between 1995 and 2003 when the Mariners were good, they’re the worst franchise in the MLB, and I’m not buying in until they prove to me that they can be a successful franchise.

SPORTS

People on the street: Male leggings

“You know, as long as I don’t see anything, I’m fine with that being a fashion statement. As long as it is visually and socially appropriate, I’m fine with it.”

-Alex Bailey freshman aviation major

“I think it’s mostly ways for guys to show off their lower body… I think it’s silly, why wear leggings?”

-Bord Lanvold senior mathematics major

“Wouldn’t their junk prod out? There’s a lot of junk hanging out if you’re just wearing tights… I don’t want anyone’s genitalia protruding in public.”

-Evan Davie-Brier freshman biology major

“It’s different, I don’t really care. They can do whatever they want, I don’t look at them in the gym.”

-Jake Melnick junior law and justice major

“I’m okay with it. I would do it but I feel like other people would judge me because they don’t do.”

-Jon Bryant freshman mechanical engineering major

“I don’t really care.”

-Lucas Kircher freshman construction management major

“Let’s go with huh. Just huh. I don’t know how to answer this.”

-Matt Petrooke senior math major

“It’s mine, it’s freedom of expression.”

-Taylor Walker senior special education major