

The Betty Pages

Cascadia's most inclusive alternative-lifestyle entertainment tabloid

Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) March 31st

Visibility with Joy. Resistance with Pride!

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March

2026



The Betty Pages Needs Your Support!

The Betty Pages is ONLINE ONLY this month!

Don't worry I haven't given up keeping it going, I just can't keep it printed unless I get some solid sponsors/advertisers.

Or, even better- More Patreon Supporters! I would love to put a big ol Community Sponsored label on the front but I need enough of the community to be able to do that.

Patreon tiers start at \$2! At the \$5 level you get early access and at the \$10 you get a printed copy when available.

Feedback is welcome as I explore Patreon options and try to figure out worthy rewards!

www.patreon.com/TheBettyPages



\$2 : Name on the website

\$5 : Early access to read

\$10 : Print copy when available

\$15 : Behind the Scenes screenshots and polls (help me with covers and ideas)

\$20 : Exploring ideas for rewards!

\$30 : Still exploring ideas for rewards!

\$75 : Limited Quantity Tier!
If filled then guaranteed
The Betty Pages keeps printing.

The Betty Pages has taken a pause in printing to make some adjustments. We will also be rebuilding the website to include ad space!

Help sponsor The Betty Pages!

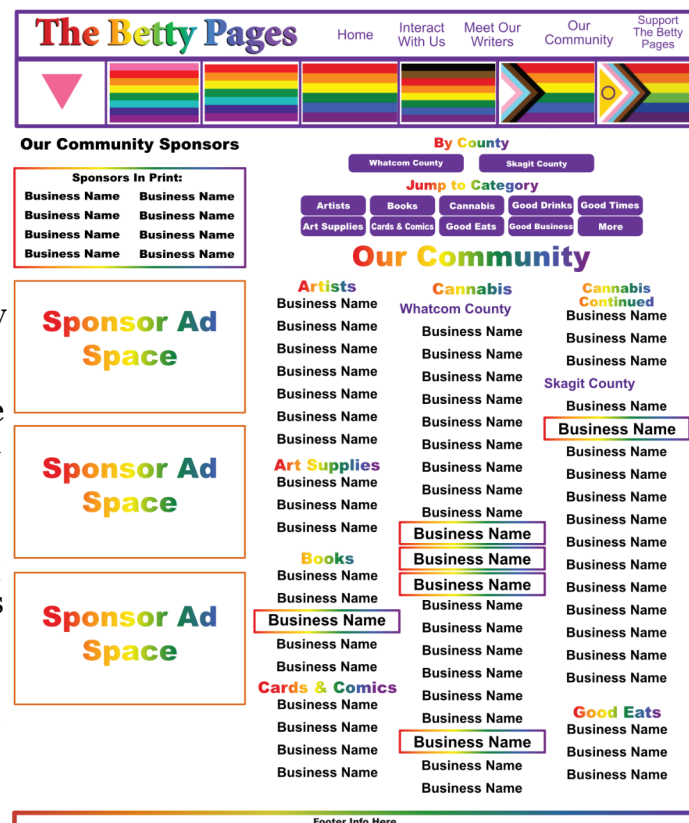
Limited ad spots will be available when the website is rebuilt. All ads will have the option to be full color with a link to your business or organization.

Ads on our website will be mentioned in Our Sponsors section in the paper whenever it's printed. Those only wanting a printed ad will be mentioned in Our Sponsors section of the website and linked to site/socials.

Ad options will be limited on Front/Home page and View online page; and a new page, Our Community, will have two options with semi limited availability.

Our Community page will be a listing of all LGBTQ+ friendly businesses in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. I've been asking around but I would love to know of any that I should add. Those on this list do not have to pay. I will do my best to link names with any sites/socials.

If you want a sponsor spot on Our Community page there will be two options. \$25 a month or \$240 year gives you a rectangle spot (great for a business card), while \$10 a month or \$100 a year gives you a rainbow border and larger font in the business listing. See example below. This is not the final look! I am working with a proper website designer, the end results will be better and truly accessible!



Our Community Page will probably end up being multiple pages. Ad spots available per page. Ads will be placed near appropriate business listing and location, first come first in basis and then shuffled monthly.

Open to feedback

Note: This is a mockup/draft/prototype

Thank you to our Supporters

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Vote **NO** on IL26-001, IL26-638

Washingtonians respect and care for each other. We may not always agree, but we work together to protect our children from harm. This November, VOTE NO on IL26-001 and IL26-638, which endanger Washington students with invasive genital exams, forced LGBTQ+ outings, and restricted access to help when they need it most, exposing them to more hate, bullying, and harassment.



www.nohateinwastate.org

Welcome to March!

Those who are College Basketball fans will be waiting to watch March Madness. Others are getting gardening tools out of the shed to begin gardening season. Political junkies fresh from watching the State of the Union will still be nursing hangovers from the drinking games played in order to survive a nearly 2 hour fact checkers nightmare of a speech by President Trump. I watched the speech. Alcohol free, but with a fair amount of weed on board. I enjoyed most of the people who were honored. I did not enjoy the vicious use of a young woman's choice to not transition as an attack on the 1% of our population that are transgender.

All in all it was very short on policy and very long on stated accomplishments with no receipts to back up the claims. Apparently anyone who has any concern or disagreement with the Trump agenda has their views dismissed as Trump Derangement Syndrome. So since I'm infected, let's move on.

In my "Trump Derangement Syndrome" opinion, we are in perilous times. In 1 year our President, through school yard bully tactics and disrespect for the rule of law. Insulting leaders of sovereign nations, making threats to take over other sovereign countries, has succeeded in Alienating every ally we've had in my lifetime. We are becoming more and more isolated.

I'm concerned that we are about to find out the hard way that the rest of the world doesn't need us as much as we think they do, and that we need them far more than our current leadership is willing to admit. I absolutely don't fault the rest of the western Democracies for finding a work around our tariff insanity. Governments, like people, can only excuse disrespect for so long. The trust lost in our word will take decades to repair. In the meantime we must not isolate from each other. Strong community will be what helps us through potential commodity shortages. There are many things that we like, things that make our standard of living enjoyable, that have been outsourced to other Countries since the last time isolationist's controlled the levers of Federal power. Everything from soup to nuts is going to be effected. Now is the time to build friendship with your neighbors. Build connections with your fellow citizens. Sharing what we have together so all thrive. Make no mistake. We need each other. Rugged individualism has been a great distraction, but it's time to set aside distraction and work to convert separation into coming together. We, like the sovereign nations who are building a work around our insane tariffs need to build a work around the potential shortages and price increases that we may have to face in the very near future.

Did I mention the President celebrated the end of D E I ? For those who don't know, those letters stand for embracing our Nation's racial and cultural Diversity, working for economic Equity, for all our citizens, and the societal Inclusion of all who live and love this land. Since Federally that has been pronounced dead we must keep it thriving locally until our Federal leadership recovers from its fever dreams.

Outdoor Crystal Rock & Gem Sale

- Raw Specimens
- Polished Carvings
- Lapidary Material
- Stone Slabs
- Cabochons
- Handmade Jewelry
- Rocks Cut (4.5" or smaller)



When: Friday, March 6, 11 am - 7 pm
Saturday, March 7, 9 am - 5 pm

Where: 1407 E. Maryland St.
Bellingham, WA 98226



3 Vendors including Trekantreasures & Karma Kards metaphysical store.

This show will go on regardless of weather, so we hope you can stop by!

Cash (preferred), credit, debit, tap, Venmo accepted
*9.1% sales tax for electronic payments



Trekantreasures

In The Mix

By Bridget Adams

Friends, the month got away from me. Lots of reasons; no excuses. So, forgive me, but you're getting a reprint this month. I promise to be back in April. Until then, take care of you—and each other.

The morning of my honeymoon with my first husband, I woke up sobbing. We were in DisneyWorld, staying at one of the luxurious park hotels...and I was sobbing: "I'm a Wiiiiiiiife....." While it turned out to be premonitory, at the time, it surprised both of us. We were in love. No, seriously. What I had forgotten and he'd never realized, though, was that I truly never wanted to get married. Even as a child playing house, instead of a house and a husband, I had an apartment and a boyfriend. He would come over and spend Wednesday night, then go away again. So, partnership was part of my expectations; marriage was not.

In fairness to my ex, he made all the right noises. Said all the right things. That "wife" and "husband" were just words. That we could create the relationship that we wanted, not one society expected of us. I held on to that conversation for years—far longer than I should have if truth be told. Held on to while we did just the opposite and became everything I had never wanted to be: a wife with a husband, and all the gender expectations implied therein.

Skip forward nearly two decades. I'm divorced and really enjoying being single and have absolutely no desire to get married or be a wife, ever again, thank you very much. So, when David really wanted to get married, I was skeptical when he said that we didn't have to be husband and wife. Nope. I'd been down this road, and I knew where it went.

But then he went on to talk about how he didn't like the word "husband." How it had connotations he had never been comfortable with. How he had come to reject them—and didn't want a "wife" either. Suddenly, I was listening.

We batted around some options, eventually settling on "wusband." Next thing I knew, we were married.

Only the morning after our wedding, I didn't burst into sobbing tears. I leaned over him, grinning, and said "Good morning, Wusband." And he grinned back, calling me Wusband. As of last month, he and I have been married longer than my ex-husband and I were together. There are lots of reasons for that, but getting to be wusbands instead of husband and wife is definitely one of them.

So, last month, I read with great interest the New York Times article about how couples are, slowly but surely, moving away from the labels husband and wife. It was one of the first articles as society begins to gear up to "wedding season" come Spring and Summer, so the reporter focused mainly on wedding choices. Partner is a well-known one, coming from our community and being adopted by couples, gay, straight, and nonbinary. "Marrier" has come into existence. And "broom," combining "bride" and "groom," is becoming popular.

Need I say that I am thrilled? Not only is this happening, but it's so mainstream that it's made the freaking New York Times.

Now, don't get me wrong—I know people for whom traditional gender roles are important. My own stepdaughter's email address is (son-in-law's name)wifey@email.com. Good for her! And most of my trans friends claim their binary gender vehemently, having fought so hard for it.

But I also love options. I love being able to reject that which we are not and embrace that which we are. To choose the words that matter to us and define ourselves in our own ways. If that's wifey or broom or partner, it doesn't matter as much as it once did. That is worth celebrating.

And, if after the wedding, once "marrier" and "broom" aren't as easily appropriate, may I recommend "wusband." It's certainly served us well.

Until next month, take care of you—and each other.

GEM AND MINERAL SHOW

Our 64th ANNUAL SHOW

March 28-29, 2026 (Saturday 10 - 6, Sunday 10 - 5)

ROCKS, MINERALS, FOSSILS, GEMS, JEWELRY, DEMOS, DEALERS, EXHIBITS, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE, ON-GOING SILENT AUCTION, CLUB SALES, FOOD SERVICE, ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS, AND MORE!

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Community Meal

2nd and 4th Sunday of the month

2pm - 4pm

First Christian Church

495 E Bakerview Road, Bellingham



Meal Hosts:

2nd Sunday Interfaith Congregations

4th Sunday WWU Neighbors Group



Menu of Chili (w/ meat or vegetarian) with Fritos, cheese, onions, and macaroni for toppings, corn bread with honey butter, salad, and blondie brownies with toffee and chocolate.

Dog food and dog treats available for any canine companions.

Not everyone who is living rough or otherwise food insecure is also one of our queerly beloveds but we do understand there is a higher percentage of people from this community who are at risk - especially young adults who are in need of a hot meal and a welcoming place to be.

**First Christian Church office phone 360-734-6820
or Interfaith Coalition 360-734-3983**



We have bottled water and other supplies for our guests to take with them (such as toiletries, first aid, space blankets and so on)

Also the “blessing box” is stocked with food and other sundries available 24/7 on the Deemer road side of the building.

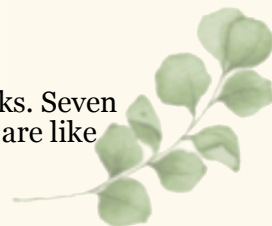
Public Transportation from Downtown Bellingham: Bus 331 from Bellingham Transit Station, stop 3442 or 3428 and take a short walk down Deemer to the Church.



INTERFAITH COALITION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

Interfaith Coalition is a nonprofit that works with housing insecure folks. Seven of the partner congregations are working together on this meal (There are like 38 or so total faith communities associated with interfaith)



BQC Update

By Michelle Harmeier



Bellingham Queer Collective (BQC) Update

Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV)

Visibility with Joy. Resistance with Pride!

March 31, 2026 | 6:30–8:30 PM
Bellingham Senior Activity Center
315 Halleck St., Bellingham, WA 98225

***Doors Open 6:00 PM** for light appetizers and socializing

Hosted by BQC, PFLAG Whatcom/Bellingham, and LGBTQ+ Western

On March 31, our community will come together for our 2nd Annual Bellingham Transgender Day of Visibility celebration — an evening dedicated to honoring, uplifting, and standing alongside our transgender neighbors.

We're excited to gather at the Bellingham Senior Activity Center, home of our beloved *Generations of Pride* monthly dinners. The venue offers free, plentiful, and accessible parking, making it easy for everyone to attend.

Why Transgender Day of Visibility Matters

Transgender Day of Visibility is a time to celebrate the courage, resilience, and contributions of transgender people while raising awareness about the discrimination and legislative threats they continue to face. It's both a joyful celebration and a call to action.

During the evening, we will:

- Celebrate the progress, milestones, and successes of the past year
- Educate ourselves about current national challenges and two initiatives appearing on Washington's November ballot
- Strengthen community connections through shared stories and dialogue

Featured Speaker: Erika Shepard

We are honored to welcome Erika Shepard, a local retired geologist, author, and transgender advocate.

Erika is best known for her award-winning memoir, *Transformations: From Field Boots to Sensible Heels*, which earned First Place in the Journeys category at the 2024 Chanticleer Book Reviews Conference. Her story is one of authenticity, perseverance, and transformation — and her voice is both powerful and deeply inspiring.

How to connect with the BQC

- ◆ Go to our website <http://bellinghamqueercollective.org> for more information about our community center, visit the [upcoming events](#) and [calendar](#) pages, and sign up for our monthly newsletter for more detailed information.
- ◆ Follow our Bellingham Queer Collective Facebook Public Page
- ◆ Join our private Facebook Group, Bellingham Queer Collective
- ◆ Follow us on Instagram @BellinghamQueerCollective
- ◆ Email us at info@bellinghamqueercollective.org

The evening will also include a panel discussion featuring diverse transgender voices from our local community, sharing lived experiences, insight, and hope.

Event Details

- Ages 13+
- Registration required
- Promo Code: TDOV for free registration
- Suggested donation: \$10
Additional contributions are warmly appreciated and help cover event costs, including beverages and a delicious charcuterie table provided by Hela Provisions.

Transgender Day of Visibility is about more than visibility — it's about belonging. It's about standing together in celebration and solidarity.

We hope you'll join us for this meaningful and uplifting evening.

Register today and be part of a community that shows up with pride.

<https://live.givebutter.com/c/bellingham-transgender-day-of-visibility-tdov-event-copy-qotcnv>



INTERNATIONAL
TRANSGENDER
DAY OF
VISIBILITY
ADVOCACY EVENT



Press Release

By Voxel Gallery

Voxel Gallery Opens Double Exposure

A Bold Group Exhibition Exploring the Human Form

Voxel Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of Double Exposure, a provocative group exhibition exploring the beauty, complexity, and vulnerability of the human body. The exhibition opens with a public reception on Friday, February 6, 2026, and will be on view through March 27, 2026, at Voxel Gallery, 312 West Champion Street, Bellingham, WA.

Double Exposure brings together a diverse group of artists whose works engage themes of body composition, sensuality, eroticism, and the nude form. Through painting, photography, sculpture, mixed media, and other visual approaches, the exhibition challenges traditional representations of the body while celebrating its many expressions. The featured works explore the intimate connections between identity, desire, and the corporeal, presenting the human figure in ways that are both raw and refined.

The exhibition highlights artists of varied backgrounds, identities, and career stages, offering a multifaceted perspective on how the body is seen, experienced, and represented today. From figurative realism to conceptual abstraction, Double Exposure invites viewers to confront vulnerability, intimacy, and the evolving language of the human form.

The opening reception on February 6, 2026, is free and open to the public and provides an opportunity to engage with the artwork and the gallery community.

Exhibition Details:

Exhibition Dates: February 6 – March 27, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, February 6, 2026

Location: Voxel Gallery, 312 West Champion Street, Bellingham, WA

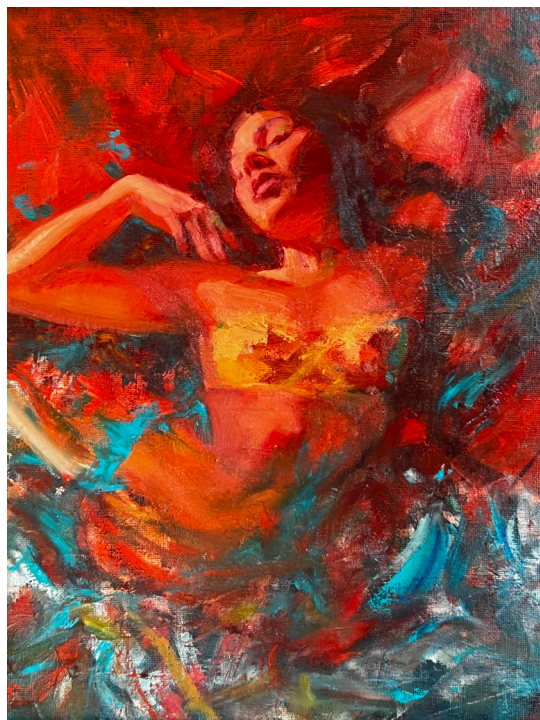
For more information, please visit www.voxelgallery.com or contact Christine@voxelgallery.com.

Follow Voxel Gallery on Instagram for updates: @voxefineart

About Voxel Gallery:

Voxel Gallery is committed to fostering a dynamic and inclusive art space. We focus on underrepresented and emerging artists. Our mission is to amplify voices that challenge conventional artistic norms and spark meaningful dialogue. We feature a diverse range of visual arts, including contemporary photography, painting, and other innovative media, providing a platform for fresh perspectives and creative exploration.

Artwork Courtesy of Agustina Forest



Press Release

By Stones Throw

Women's Day Celebration at Stones Throw Brewery March 31st

A Full Day of Community, Creativity, and Celebration

BELLINGHAM, WA — Stones Throw Brewery invites the community to celebrate International Women's Day with a full day of events honoring creativity, craftsmanship, and the spirit of women. The free, family-friendly, and pet-friendly celebration brings together outdoor adventure, local art, live music, and a special women-brewed beer release — all in one vibrant day.

The celebration kicks off from 12–2 PM with a gravel bike ride led by Shifting Gears as part of their annual Wild Women Week. Female-identifying participants are invited to join the ride and take part in a week dedicated to outdoor adventure and community connection.

From 12–9 PM, guests can enjoy the release of Stones Throw's Women's Brew, crafted by talented female brewers. Ten percent of sales from this beer will be donated to Pink Boots Society, supporting women and non-binary individuals in the fermented and alcoholic beverage industries.

A Makers Market will run from 12–4 PM, featuring 12 female-identifying artists and creators. A portion of vendor sales will be donated to Shifting Gears. Featured taproom artist Devan Ballard will also showcase work during the event.

Live music begins at 4 PM with a performance by The Sweet Goodbyes. Known for intricate melodies, weaving harmonies, and deeply personal lyrics, Taber Darland and Lisa Harmon deliver heartfelt, foot-stomping music that blends political insight with feel-good energy.

From 6–8 PM, DJ Psychedelove will close out the evening with a set highlighting female artists.

The Wild Women Week After Party, hosted by Shifting Gears, runs from 4–8 PM, celebrating a full week of outdoor (and indoor) adventures. At 6 PM, the Wild Person of the Year will be announced, honoring an outstanding female-identifying individual making waves in the outdoor community.

Food will be available from 12–8 PM, with Cicchittis Pizza on site serving throughout the day.

This community-wide celebration brings together art, music, outdoor adventure, and craft beer in support of women locally and beyond.

Event Schedule Overview:

- 12–9 PM: International Women's Day Celebration + Women-brewed beer release
- 12–2 PM: Shifting Gears gravel bike ride
- 12–4 PM: Makers Market
- 4–8 PM: Wild Women Week After Party
- 4–6 PM: Live music by The Sweet Goodbyes
- 6 PM: Wild Person of the Year announcement
- 6–8 PM: DJ Psychedelove
- 12–8 PM: Cicchittis Pizza on site

Cheers to the incredible women who make our world brighter.

For more information, visit Stones Throw Brewery or follow along on social media for updates.

The Slow Lane

Is Big Time Football Really Worth the Money?

By Robert Ashworth

It is an accomplishment that the Seattle Seahawks got all the way to the Super Bowl and won. Maybe this can be seen as a “blue state victory” as both Washington and Massachusetts are in the blue state category of politics. Both teams made it past all the other teams from both red and blue states to that final match.

That victory is impressive, but it’s still worth asking whether big time football is a wise use of money. Is it consistent with so-called “blue state values.”

I’m not a sports fan as I prefer less competitive activities that are not as dependent on separating the winners from the losers. Is the vast amount of money spent on sports worth it? Could that money be better spent on things like affordable housing or greener transportation?

As time goes on, the stakes get higher and money becomes more important in sports. Across the state, in my hometown of Pullman, WA, there is a less happy story about Football.

Pullman is home to the Washington State University Cougars. For years, the team was part of the Pac-12 West Coast Conference. That conference was made up of teams mostly from larger cities like Los Angeles and Seattle. The WSU Cougars were able to keep up with big city teams for years, but the money behind the scenes is becoming more important these days.

The nearest big city to Pullman is Spokane so it’s harder to fill the stadium with paying football fans when there is less population nearby. Quite a few folks do travel over, from Seattle, to watch the games, but that’s a long trip just for a game. When driving across the state, think of the carbon footprint.

To keep a winning team on the field, one must keep up with competing schools who have top-rated coaches, stadiums and practice facilities. I once heard that the main football coach, in Pullman, was the highest paid public official in the state; with a salary peaking at 3 million dollars per year in 2021. Since then, the main coach salary has gone down to a “modest” \$1,250,000.

In the past, this has been money that came from TV revenue, ticket sales and alumni donations, but in recent years, those income sources have fallen short as costs continue to escalate. As the stakes kept getting higher the Cougars kept spending more money just to keep up with the other Pac-12 schools. They gradually went into debt, around 100 million dollars in debt.

The sports program at WSU kept saying they had a roadmap to pay back that debt, but then the pandemic hit so the games couldn’t be played.

After the pandemic, another unexpected thing happened. The Pac-12 Conference basically crumbled. Schools from larger cities, such as Seattle and Los Angeles, left the conference for a bigger conference. Eventually this left the Pac-12 with only two colleges, Washington State University, in Pullman and Oregon State in Corvallis. People started calling it the Pac-2 Conference.

The conference is now being rebuilt with lower tier schools, such as San Diego State. Games are still being played, and the Cougar spirit is high, but the 100-million-dollar debt is still there, and TV revenue has taken a hit.

I wonder if the Cougars will ever be able to pay off the debt without

having to take some of the money that should be going to other educational pursuits at the university? Much of the university’s budget is state money so Washington’s taxpayers may be on the hook.

The same financial dynamic appears at the professional level. In Seattle, lots of taxpayer money was added to private funds for building both the Seahawk and Mariner stadiums. New stadiums were needed as pro teams were threatening to leave due to the old Kingdome being inadequate. That “old” Kingdome was only 23 years old when it was imploded. Are we an era of disposable stadiums?

If that money were instead spent on public transit and bike paths, it could reduce the ever-persistent traffic in Seattle. What about more affordable housing or better efforts to reduce climate change? Seattle even has another sports arena called the Climate Pledge Arena. Is that name just for symbolism while much of the city’s transportation remains based on private cars burning fossil fuel?

The Seattle area does do a pretty good job with alternative transportation, but things could be even better. I’m a big fan of paths because they provide fitness for the average person. There’s a difference between going out for a walk, jog or bike ride, versus watching a game on TV where the average person is only a spectator.

Here in Bellingham, Western Washington University once had a football team. It was never a major revenue generator, and during a period of budget cuts the university decided to eliminate the program. That decision spared WWU from the kind of escalating costs and debt now facing many larger athletic programs.

Robert Ashworth, Bellingham WA.



The Cougar Football stadium in Pullman sits empty much of the year. It was recently upgraded with a larger press box and other facilities.



The Fuckboy Problem

By Briar Westgren

Let's talk about the "fuckboy" – that cultural shorthand for a man who enjoys casual sex, avoids commitment, strings people along, and ultimately refuses to ride what the "relationship escalator:" the default cultural script of romantic progress wherein you meet, you date, you become exclusive, you cohabitate, you marry, you buy a sectional sofa and die. Every step upward is presumed to be the goal. A fuckboy, by this logic, is someone who steps onto the escalator and then just... stands there, or even turns around to ride it down.

The gendered dimension of this term is worth pausing on. "Fuckboy" as a pejorative is almost exclusively reserved for men, and it carries a very specific cultural freight: the man who takes sexual connection without offering relationship-escalator progression in return. He enjoys the benefits of intimacy while declining its obligations. He is, in the eyes of mainstream dating culture, a thief.

On the other hand: do "fuckgirls" exist? Certainly, and the asymmetry is instructive. A man denying the relationship escalator is seen as bad but normal; because our culture frames women as protectors of virginity, women who engage in casual sex are seen as violators of gender norms alongside their violation of unspoken expectations around intimacy. A guy who "hits and runs" could still be seen as a "player" whereas a woman who engages in the same behavior is seen as "loose" and deserving of more scorn, possibly leading to the increased rarity of the "fuckgirl" moniker.

In this case, the term is sort of meaningless; not only are these gender roles culturally constructed by the same people who gave us patriarchy and sex-negativity, they tacitly reinforce the relationship escalator, suggesting that sex is meaningless unless it's for the purpose of procreation and sacred legal union (which flies in the face of evolutionary biology – compare the amount of sex people have to the number of children they have, and we can see sex's role in human society as primarily a form of social bonding).

However, this slang doesn't just exist to enforce hegemonic social norms – there's something deeper at play. Relationship anarchy has something genuinely useful to offer the conversation – not as a defense of bad behavior, but as a clarifying lens. The fuckboy critique is, at face value, about misrepresentation: implying escalator-readiness while harboring none. The wound is that he didn't want commitment, that he performed interest in the escalator while privately planning to exit at the next floor. And that distinction matters, because it locates the harm not in non-monogamy or in preferring casual connection, but in the dishonesty created when one person's actual desires don't match what the dominant script says they should want – and they'd rather hide that than say it plainly.

Like that story of a fish asking "What's water?" it's often rare that people engaging in the relationship escalator will even recognize its existence long enough to ask what their sexual partners' short- or long-term goals are. But if you ask, and someone says they want long-term commitments and then ghost, maybe they do deserve an epithet. On the other hand, if you're not asking someone whether they want something longer-term and then you act surprised if they don't, that's on you.

Paradoxically, my two longest-lasting intimate relationships – the ones that outlasted homes, cities, and several hairstyles – both began as one-night stands where we agreed, explicitly and without much ceremony, not to take things seriously. We met, one thing led to another, and we made a small, frank agreement to not take things too seriously.

But we were both so impressed by someone able to do sexual politics that we kept talking. And kept meeting up. And kept finding that the absence of escalator pressure had created something unexpectedly durable. What both of those connections had in common was precisely the thing that allowed them to last: by decoupling sex from obligation, we found a greater reason to become obligated to each other by choice. There was no game being run; nobody was auditing the relationship for progression. We were just two people who genuinely liked each other and were honest about what we wanted.

This is, I'd argue, the inverse of the fuckboy dynamic. The problem isn't casual sex, but the performance of escalation as a means of obtaining sex from people who've been conditioned to connect the two. The harm is in the con, which is only necessary because we've built a culture where openly preferring casual connection is still, for most people, a source of scorn from others.

The relationship escalator is so normalized that declining to ride it requires an explanation or an apology. We don't have good, neutral language for people who simply prefer connection that doesn't aspire to permanence or exclusivity. "Casual" implies carelessness. "Non-committal" implies avoidance. "Fuckboy" implies predation. None of these capture the reality of someone who simply engages honestly with what they want and invites the same from others.

Meanwhile, those of us who've found our most lasting connections in exactly those low-pressure arrangements are left with a slightly funny story to tell: that the thing which sometimes makes those relationships last is the agreement, in the beginning, that they don't have to. Removing the escalator from the equation invited depth rather than preventing it. When nobody needed the relationship to be something, there was room for it to become whatever it actually was.=



Astrology

By The Cranky Crone

♈ Aries

You're radiating heat that could melt good intentions clean off a saint. March nights bring temptation knockin' in expensive shoes. Open the door if you dare — just don't pretend you're innocent in the morning.

♉ Taurus

Darlin', indulgence looks downright sinful on you... and that's why it fits. Silk sheets, slow kisses, and someone whispering your name like a secret — that's your forecast. Resist? Honey, that ain't your style.

♊ Gemini

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♋ Cancer

Soft eyes, sweet smile, and thoughts you don't confess — oh, you're lethal this month. Someone's gonna mistake your kindness for permission. Whether they're right depends on how lonely the night feels.

♌ Leo

Spotlight, candlelight, or moonlight — you glow in all of it. Admirers line up like it's opening night and you're the main attraction. Pick the one who watches you like they already know the ending.

♍ Virgo

You act proper, sugar... but March knows better. Beneath that tidy exterior is a slow-burn fire just beggin' for oxygen. Someone's about to find out how wild "well-behaved" can be.

♎ Libra

Romance hangs on you like perfume — subtle, expensive, and hard to forget. This month brings a choice between safe and thrilling. Safe sleeps early. Thrilling keeps the lights low and the door locked.

♏ Scorpio

You don't flirt — you haunt. March turns your presence into a full-body experience folks can't shake off. If you want someone, they'll feel it before you even touch 'em... and honey, they'll want you to.

♐ Sagittarius

Adventure calls after midnight, and it sounds like laughter mixed with trouble. You might not remember every detail... but you will remember how good it felt. Some lessons are best learned breathless.

♑ Capricorn

You're all business by day, but nighttime tells the truth. March offers a reward for all that discipline — and it ain't wrapped in paper. Let yourself be wanted. It's a power move.

♒ Aquarius

You're strange, seductive, and just unpredictable enough to be addictive. Somebody's fascinated by your mind... and curious about the rest. Give 'em a taste — mystery always keeps 'em coming back.

♓ Pisces

You drift like a dream people don't wanna wake from. This month, fantasy and reality blur in the best possible way. Just remember, sweetheart — sometimes the fantasy wants you back.



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You are NOT alone



PFLAG Whatcom County

Visit online for a list of resources and help lines
pflagwhatcom.org/support/help-lines/

LGBT National Hotline - 888-843-4564

LGBT National Youth Talkline - 800-246-7743

LGBT National Senior Hotline - 888-234-7243

LGBT National Coming Out Support Hotline - 888-688-5428

<https://lgbthotline.org>

Need to Vent? **Simply text HOME or HOLA to 741741** to reach a live volunteer Crisis Counselor. We are always here for you. **Free, 24/7, confidential.**

www.crisistextline.org

The Trevor Project **866-488-7386**

Trans Lifeline **877-565-8860**

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/>

Skagit YMCA Oasis Youth Shelter

The Oasis Youth Shelter provides youth with a safe place to spend the night every day of the year. Other than being age 13-17, there are no strict eligibility requirements.

Address: 125 N 5th St, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Phone: 360-419-9058

Email: shelter@skagitymca.org

Oasis Text Hotline: 360-230-0587

Mental health crisis lines

Crisis lines are available for all people in Washington regardless of your income or whether you have insurance or not.

For a life threatening-emergency: Call 911.

For 24-hour suicide prevention or a behavioral health crisis: Call or text 988

For substance use, problem gambling, or mental health support: Contact the Washington Recovery Help Line or the behavioral health crisis line in your area.

What happens if you call a crisis line?

After you call or text 988 or call a county crisis line:

A professional provides you with support and asks you for information about the crisis.

They will offer in-person crisis services, including Mobile Crisis Outreach (for adults and youth), Designated Crisis Responders, and safety officers.

Mobile crisis outreach and emergency services may need to ask further questions to determine the appropriate response.

The dispatched crisis service will then help the individual receive appropriate care.

Learn more about all available crisis programs and regional crisis lines online at www.hca.wa.gov/free-or-low-cost-health-care/i-need-behavioral-health-support/mental-health-crisis-lines

Whatcom & Skagit County Regional Line: 1-800-584-3578

FOOD RESOURCE LINKS

Whatcom & Skagit Counties

No shame in needing help or if you can - follow links to donate



www.bellinghamfoodbank.org

svneighborsinneed.com



basicneeds.wvu.edu/food-resources

www.communityactionskagit.org/skagit-food-distribution-center/



Whatcom
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

www.whatcom.edu/college-life/student-life-and-development/orca-food-pantry

www.skagit.edu/student-resources/student-basic-needs-resources.html

SVC
Skagit Valley College

 Sustainable
Connections

sustainableconnections.org/freedge/

helpinghandsskagit.org/distribution/

 findhelp

www.findhelp.org/food/food-pantry--bellingham-wa





Food & Meal Guide Whatcom Food Banks



Call or walk-in: (360) 734-5121 option 3
1111 Cornwall Ave. - Monday - Friday, 9am - 4pm

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Bellingham Food Bank:
1824 Ellis St.
10am - 6pm

Blaine Food Bank:
500 C St.
9am - 12pm

Ferndale Food Bank:
1671 Main St.
9 - 11am

Lynden Project Hope:
205 S BC Ave.
9:30am - 12pm

Salvation Army:
1515 Birchwood Ave.
1 - 3pm
For Seniors (60+) only on Mondays

Bellingham Food Bank Drive-thru:
1824 Ellis St.
Required: make a reservation online
3:30 - 6:30pm

Foothills Food Bank:
8255 Kendall Rd.
8 - 11am

Lynden Project Hope:
205 S BC Ave.
3 - 6pm

Salvation Army:
1515 Birchwood Ave.
10am - 1pm

SeaMar Food Farmacia:
4455 Cordata Pkwy.
12 - 3pm

Bellingham Food Bank:
1824 Ellis St.
10am - 6pm

Blaine Food Bank:
500 C St.
5 - 7pm

Ferndale Food Bank:
1671 Main St.
9 - 11am

Foothills Food Bank:
8255 Kendall Rd.
4pm - 7pm

Nooksack Valley Food Bank Everson:
100 E. 2nd St.
10am - 1pm & 6:30 - 7:30pm

Sumas:
461 Second St.
11am - 1pm

Salvation Army:
1515 Birchwood Ave.
10am - 1pm

Southside Food Bank:
1504 Larrabee Ave.
1st & 3rd Thurs., 10 - 11:30am

Bellingham Food Bank: 1824 Ellis St.
10am - 6pm

Blaine Food Bank:
500 C St.
9am - 12pm

Food Lifeline:
8255 Kendall Rd.
3rd Fri., 10 - 11am

Lummi Food Bank:
2830 Kwina Rd.
12:30 - 3:30pm, closed 1st Friday
For low-income reservation residents & tribal members only

Lynden Project Hope:
205 S BC Ave.
9:30am - 12pm

Nooksack Food Bank:
5061 Deming Rd.
1st Fri., 10am - 1pm

Point Roberts Food Bank: 1437 Gulf Rd.
8:30 - 10:30am

Ferndale Food Bank:
1671 Main St.
9 - 11am

Food Lifeline Mobile Pantry:
8255 Kendall Rd.
1st Saturday, 11:30am - 12:30pm

Lord's Table River of Life:
4037 Valley Hwy.
2nd/4th Saturday, 10am - 12pm

All dates, times, and locations are subject to change without notice. Please help us keep this resource up to date: email changes to communityresources@oppco.org

Community Freedges:
Community refrigerators packed with free nutritious food.

RE Store Freedge:
2316 Kulshan St., Bellingham
Monday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm

North Fork Library Freedge:
7506 Kendall Road, Maple Falls
Tuesday & Thursday, 10am - 8pm
Wednesday & Friday, 10am - 6pm
Saturday, 10am - 5pm

Miracle Food Network
Surplus food distributed throughout Whatcom County. Call (360) 685-1013, or visit miraclefoodnetwork.org for times and locations.

Home Deliveries
Delivery may be available for those unable to visit a food bank. Call (360) 676-0392, or visit bellingshamfoodbank.org/home-delivery

Birchwood Food Share Boxes:
Free food pantry boxes throughout the Birchwood Neighborhood.

- 2833 Birchwood Ave.
- 2930 Patton St.
- 3248 Firwood Ave.
- 3315 Northwest Ave.
- 3329 Pinewood Ave.
- 3304 McAlpine Rd.
- 3138 Cherrywood Ave.
- 3127 Bennett Dr.

Community Meals:

Interfaith's CAST
Arch of Healing and Reconciliation (Behind Bellingham Public Library)
Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, 6 - 7pm

Bellingham Recovery Cafe
First Baptist Church
110 Flora St.
Coffee and lunch, connections with peers and services
Tue & Wed, 12 - 4pm

Maple Alley Inn
Faith Lutheran Church
2750 McLeod Rd.
Lunch Wed & Thurs, 11:30am - 1pm

Southside Community Meal
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
1720 Harris Ave. (360) 733-6749
3rd Sunday, 5 - 6:30pm
subject to change, call for dates

Ferndale Community Meal
United Church of Ferndale
2034 Washington St., Ferndale
3rd Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm

EWRR Community Meal
E. Whatcom Regional Resource Ctr.
8251 Kendall Rd. (360) 599-3944
1st Tuesdays, 6 - 7:30pm
Senior Potluck every Wed, 1 - 3pm
Subject to change, call for dates

A Watered Garden
Everson SDA Community Svcs. Ctr.
700 Strandell St., Everson
Semi-regular community meals.
Check for details:
facebook.com/awateredgardenflc/

Lynden Community/Sr. Center
401 Grover St.
\$7/meal, all ages
Monday - Friday, 12 - 12:30pm.

School Meals:

Apply for Free & Reduced Meals in your school district.
Visit your school district's website to apply online/print an application, or visit your school's office to pick up an application.

Many schools in Whatcom County qualify to provide free meals for all students. Families at these schools are still encouraged to complete an application to qualify for other benefits and services, and to ensure that these schools remain qualified for this program and other funding.

All students at the school eat free in the 2025-2026 school year

Bellingham Public Schools
bellingshamschools.org/school-menus
Alderwood, Birchwood, Carl Cozier, Cordata, Happy Valley, Lowell, Northern Heights, Parkview, Roosevelt, & Sunnysland Elementary Schools; Fairhaven, Shuksan, & Whatcom Middle Schools; Options & Squalicum High Schools

Blaine School District
blainesd.org/page/free-and-reduced-meal-application
Blaine Primary & Blaine Elementary Schools

Ferndale School District
ferndalesd.org/deptprograms/child-nutrition/free-reduced-lunch-application

Lummi Nation School
Applications can be obtained from and returned to any school office.

Lynden School District
lynden.wednet.edu/departments/food-services
Fisher, Isom, and Vossbeck Elementary Schools

Meridian School District
meridian.wednet.edu/food-service-program

Mount Baker School District
mtbaker.wednet.edu/page/child-nutrition-department

Nooksack Valley School District
nv.k12.wa.us/53977_3

Senior Meals:

Meals on a donation-only basis for ages 60 and older (\$6 suggested donation). Membership not required.

Meals on Wheels: (360) 746-6480

Bellingham Sr. Center
315 Halleck St.
Mon - Fri, 11:30am - 12:30pm

Blaine Senior Center
763 G St.
Mon - Fri, 11:30am - 12:30pm

Everson Senior Center
201 Jackson St.
Wed, 11:30am - 12:30pm

Ferndale Senior Center
1999 Cherry St.
Mon - Fri, 12pm - 1pm

Pt. Roberts Senior Center
1437 Gulf Rd.
Wed & Fri, 12pm - 1pm

Sumas Senior Center
461 2nd St.
Wed, 11:30am - 12:30pm

STRETCH YOUR EBT:

SNAP Market Match
This program matches EBT dollars for additional produce at the Bellingham, Twin Sisters, EN Valley, and Lynden Farmers Markets in Whatcom County.

SNAP Produce Match
Use your EBT card to buy \$10+ of fruits & vegetables and get \$5-10 off your next qualifying purchase. Available at Safeway, Haggen, and Community Food Co-Op stores in Whatcom County.

DSHS Customer Service
Call or walk-in: 1 (877) 501-2233
4101 Meridian St.
Monday - Friday, 8am - 3pm

Washington Connection
Apply for benefits online at washingtonconnection.org