

Students rally through campus against latest budget cuts pg. 4-5  
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*“Out of all my friends who seemed to have nine lives, Dwight just had one life, and he didn’t make it.”*

-Gavin Aubert,  
friend of Dwight Clark

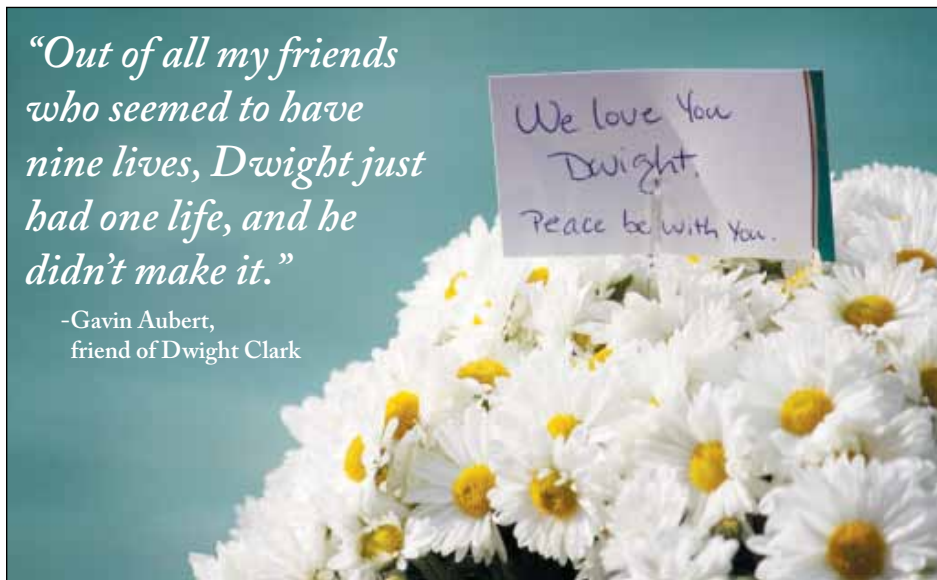


photo by Jaynie Hancock // THE WESTERN FRONT

In remembrance of Western freshman Dwight A. Clark, a bouquet of flowers rests on the fountain in Red Square on Thursday, Oct. 7.

## Dwight Clark remembered

### Closest friends reflect on student’s life

**Benjamin Woodard**  
**Adrienne Woods**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

**G**avin Aubert can sleep at night, knowing — finally — that he doesn’t have to worry where his closest friend, Dwight A. Clark, may be.

Twelve days after he disappeared, Clark’s body was found Wednesday in Bellingham Bay.

An autopsy confirmed he died in the water, and no traumatic wounds were found on the body.

“Out of all my friends who seemed to have nine lives,” Aubert said, “Dwight just had one life, and he didn’t make it.”

Clark and Aubert, both 18, were high school friends from Auburn.

Aubert got a call Wednesday, Oct. 6, that police had found Clark’s body. Aubert said he was skateboarding from his old high school to a skate park where Clark spent many hours riding.

“After I heard the news, I just kept pushing hard until I got there,” he said, “then I fell to the ground and lost it. I had to be there at the skate park.”

He and Clark started a T-shirt printing business in high school. Although they lived in separate towns, their pipe dream was to expand their T-shirt venture, Forevergreen Apparel.

“I dedicate my life to Dwight, and

dedicate Forevergreen to Dwight,” Aubert said. “I will push it as hard as I can and make it as big as I can.”

Aubert came to Bellingham after Clark was reported missing. He helped search for Clark throughout Bellingham, but police and volunteers came up empty handed until Wednesday, when a Bellingham Port Authority worker discovered Clark’s body between a dock and a log boom on the former Georgia-Pacific property.

Kaylie Evans, 21, Clark’s longtime neighborhood friend, said the things she will miss most about Clark are seeing his smile, watching him skateboard and

**CLARK // pg. 3**

## Questions linger after autopsy reveals no trauma

**Benjamin Woodard**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The body of freshman Dwight A. Clark showed no signs of trauma, internal or external, that may have caused his death, according to an autopsy performed yesterday by Whatcom County Medical Examiner Gary Goldfogel.

The findings suggest Clark died in the water, soon after leaving a house at 2 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 26, in the 1000 block of Indian Street.

The final autopsy will not be done for another six to eight weeks as toxicology tests are completed.

Police said they do not suspect foul play.

**AUTOPSY // pg. 3**

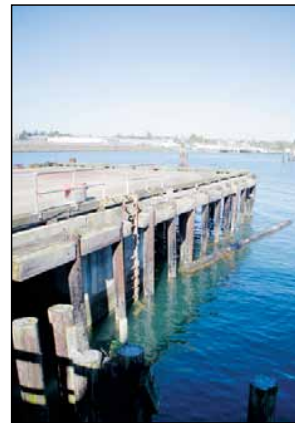


photo by Alex Roberts // THE WESTERN FRONT

Clark’s body was found in a log-boom pond near the former Georgia Pacific plant on Bellingham Bay at about 11 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6.

## Bellingham, Auburn mourn loss of Western freshman



photo courtesy of “FIND Dwight Clark” Facebook page

Western freshman Dwight A. Clark lived in Nash Hall for one week prior to his disappearance.

**Benjamin Woodard**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western mourns the death of one of its own, freshman Dwight A. Clark. The news Clark had been found echoed through campus after police reported finding a body at 11 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 6, in Bellingham Bay.

Thousands gathered in Red Square to honor Clark three and a half hours after police pulled the body from the water.

“Certainly our thoughts are now with his family,” Western President Bruce Shepard said over a small speaker at Western’s gathering.

He said he had met with Clark’s mother, Raelyn Clark, on the morning of Oct. 6.

“I left our discussion amazed at her courage,” he said. “We cry together because we know her pain must be unbearable.”

During the search for Clark, family and friends from his hometown of Auburn, Wash., canvassed the streets of Bellingham, handing out flyers and begging people to come forward with information leading to a clue of his whereabouts.

Last week, hundreds gathered at a candlelight vigil in Red Square, and more gathered in Auburn at a skate park to pray for his safety.

Friends in Auburn plan to hold a memorial service at Brannan Park in Auburn, where Clark spent so many hours at the skate park there. A plaque will be installed at the park, a place friends

describe as his second home.

The people of Auburn have tied green ribbons — Clark’s favorite color — around trees and fences throughout the city in memory of Clark.

Police said they followed leads, such as scribbled messages on signs and Clark’s scent trails leading downtown, and his whereabouts were a mystery for days, but now the search is over — Clark’s body has been found, the identity confirmed by dental records.

Police said they are waiting for the full autopsy report before they decide on the next step in their investigation.

Western encourages those who are struggling with Clark’s death to contact Western’s counseling services at 360-650-3164 or in Old Main 540.

// CLARK

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seeing his clothing line expand. "He was an all-around awesome kid," Evans said. "He loved to skate. He would do anything for his friends and family. He just wanted to live life and live life to the fullest — and he did."

Evans said Clark loved teaching people, both friends and strangers, how to skate. A stranger came up to her on Wednesday at the skate park, pointed to his two sons and said, "Dwight taught these kids how to skate."

She said the boys were only about 4 to 5 years old.

"They will always remember him as the person who taught them how to skate," Evans said.

One winter, Evans watched Clark snowboard off of his roof and into his front yard. She said he got on top of his roof, strapped his snowboard onto his feet and said, "Watch this." Then he snowboarded off his roof.

"That memory keeps playing [in my head] over and over and over again," she said.

Evans said she plans to learn how to snowboard in honor

of Clark.

Danielle Ayers, 18, was Clark's girlfriend of more than two years. She said she will miss his terms of endearment the most, and his "world's best hugs."

"He was my voice of reason," Ayers said. "He would calm me down, and help me look at things logically."

In honor of his memory, she plans to get a tattoo of a fir tree covered in snow, with Clark's initials in the tree bark. She said the snow is to represent his love for snowboarding.

When Ayers returned from Bellingham on Sunday, she said it was nice to see Clark's face all over Auburn. Missing person signs were posted all over town for the duration of Clark's disappearance.

Ayers said she plans to attend every vigil in the area, including the next gathering being held this Saturday, Oct. 9, at Brannan Park in Auburn.

She said family and friends have been very supportive, and Clark's friends have been very protective of her, checking in on her everyday.

Ethan Anderson, Clark's roommate in Nash Hall, couldn't sleep in the room since Clark went missing. He's couch surfed for the last week and a



photo by Colin Diltz // THE WESTERN FRONT

**Western sophomore Brandi Ball writes on a wall set up in Red Square, where students can leave messages that will be forwarded to Dwight Clark's family.**

half. The university provided a single dorm room one floor below the old room, after the body was found.

"Dwight had only been missing for three or four days," Anderson said. "The university and my parents were urging me to move out, but I felt like if I left that room, that it meant that I had given up. I knew in my gut

something bad had happened to Dwight, but I wanted to hold on to something."

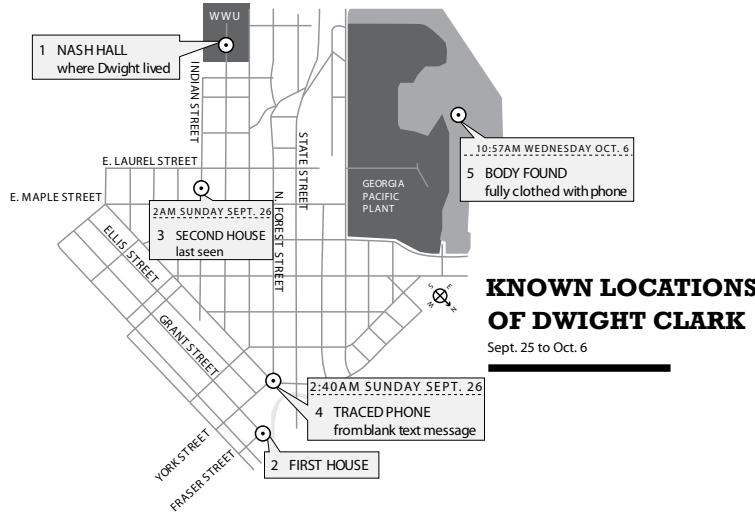
Anderson was in his linguistics class when he got a call that the police found Clark's body. His phone rang repeatedly, and he said he knew what the call was for.

A weight lifted from his shoulders when he found out because he didn't have to worry anymore about where Clark was.

Anderson plans to make a skateboard video dedicated to

Clark, using footage from the day before he disappeared. They had skateboarded all day together. Police took the footage from that day for evidence, but he said he hopes to get it back.

"I lost faith in humanity, but how the campus came together and all the support from the skateboard community, and all the people who were just willing to help — just shows there are still good people out there in this day and age," Anderson said. "And that gave me strength."



**KNOWN LOCATIONS OF DWIGHT CLARK**

Sept. 25 to Oct. 6

infographic by Jonny McConnell // THE WESTERN FRONT



photo by Alex Roberts // THE WESTERN FRONT

**Western President Bruce Shepard lights a candle at a vigil held for Dwight Clark on Sept. 29 in Red Square.**



photo by Alex Roberts // THE WESTERN FRONT

**Bellingham Police spokesman Mark Young addresses reporters at the site where the body of Dwight A. Clark was discovered. Nash Hall, the location of Clark's dorm room, can be seen in the background.**

// AUTOPSY

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Dental records confirm the body belonged to Clark. His driver's license, student ID, credit cards, cell phone and cash were discovered on the body, which was removed from a log-boom pond at the former Georgia Pacific plant on Bellingham Bay around 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6.

A Port Authority worker, who was servicing buoys in a small boat, came across the body at about 11 a.m.

Nothing found on Clark's body indicated drug use, police said. Detectives believe he was drinking but not intoxicated to a point of being

in harm's way.

Bellingham Police spokesperson Mark Young said the body could have floated there from anywhere in the bay — which is very much a possibility because the area where the body was found is completely gated and difficult to get into.

Previous searches of the area were performed by a border helicopter, search dogs and the port authority, but they turned up empty-handed.

Young said a body can be submerged for days before resurfacing.

The last known trace of Clark was a blank text message sent from his cell phone in the downtown area 40 minutes after he was last seen. The message was sent to a friend from Auburn.

The investigation is still

open, Young said, and the final autopsy report will dictate what police plan to do next.

"We still don't know what happened," he said. "And we may never know."

Dozens of volunteers poured in from around the state, some as far away as Pullman, to help police search Bellingham beginning Sunday when Clark's mother, Raelyn Clark, reported him missing. The search parties mostly consisted of family and friends from Clark's hometown.

"All of us at the Bellingham Police Department are deeply saddened with this tragic confirmation," Bellingham Police Chief Todd Ramsay said in a press release. "I want to sincerely thank the many volunteers for coming together in the search for Dwight."