



# WWURA NEWS



April 2010

www.wwu.edu/~wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

## Message from WWURA President

Spring has sprung, the tulips are blooming and it is a great time for a ride down to Skagit Valley to see all the colorful flowers. Hope you have a chance to get out and explore.

This month's newsletter includes the ballot for our 2010-13 directors. Be sure to cast your vote.

We have two events in May. The first is the 2010 Regional Univ. Retirement Assoc. Meeting being held at the Lakeway Inn on May 5-7. Larry Richardson and Barbara Evans have been working hard to make this a fun event. Check out the article for full information.

Our second event is the annual meeting and banquet for new retirees being held May 11 in the Viking Union Multipurpose room. The Prawns will be playing during dinner and we will have plenty of opportunity to meet the new retirees at the reception. Be sure to make your reservation soon for this event.

Have a great day and be sure to take time to go exploring, the nurseries are full of wonderful blooms and there are many lovely gardens to visit.

**Margaret Loudon**

## NW Regional Retirement Association

WWURA is hosting the annual meeting of officers of retirement associations of the NW at the Best Western Hotel on May 5-7. It is expected that each association will send 2-4 designated delegates to attend the various work sessions. Some events are planned for spouses and others attendees. The conference banquet on May 6th will feature music by Rudy Wiess and Johnny Burns. WWURA members are welcomed to attend the banquet. The cost is \$32 and reservations must be made by calling Barbara Evans at 650-9724.

## WWURA Travelogue "Cruising Up and Down the River While Going in the Same Direction" Presented by Karen Morse

Wednesday, April 21  
Squalicum Yacht Club  
6:30 p.m. for socializing  
7:00 p.m. for presentation

After three days in Amsterdam, we had the opportunity to cruise up the Rhine and down the Danube, visiting each country we passed through. We were educated, entertained, fed scrumptious meals, and built friendships with people of many different countries from South Africa to Australia. We will share pictures and activities of our journey including castles (of course), Hungarian horseback riders, an evening in a private palace in Vienna where Beethoven played, a view of the impact of 50 years of communism, the Tito memorial, a hotel of intrigue, and wading in the Black Sea. Many memories to share!!



Joe and Karen at lunch on a Tauck arranged canal boat

If your name begins with **A through L**, please bring a dessert to share. WWURA provides coffee and tea.

## **Making Sense of Vitamins Without Losing Cents!**

*Health Notes by Evelyn Ames*

The frequent reporting in the media about benefits (or lack of) of vitamin supplementation congers up the old adage “dammed if you and dammed if you don’t.” Recent reporting on results of long term studies (Women’s Health Initiative <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/whi/cad.htm> and the Physicians’ Health Study II <http://phs.bwh.harvard.edu/phs2.htm>) indicated that ingesting multivitamin pills (except for Vitamin D) were generally not beneficial to most people. It’s the food that one eats that is most important in obtaining and absorbing nutrients.

The first vitamin to be synthesized was vitamin C (1933-34). For those interested in its history, check this Wikipedia site ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitamin\\_C](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitamin_C)) or a scientifically accurate nutrition textbook. Throughout the remaining years of the twentieth century, other vitamins were discovered and synthesized. Today, the market is glutted with various combinations and various dosages advertised to “treat” or “prevent” a wide a variety of health conditions. About half of all Americans daily take a multivitamin supplement. Is there a beneficial return on this investment of over 20\$ billion a year? Does vitamin supplementation make one healthier or enhance one’s health status? The proof is in the pudding, so to speak. Several schools of medicine and public health (e.g., Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Harvard School of Public Health, and Yale School of Public Health--<http://opa.yale.edu/news/article.aspx?id=1820>) have published reports that show no benefit, and some show harm.

Vitamin D. Research studies are concluding that people need more Vit D, unless they live in a sun-soaked environment and frequent the outdoors soaking in the sun rays. The federal Agency for Health-Care Research and Quality (AHRQ--<http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/vitadtp.htm>) reviewed a large number of studies looking at reduction of fractures and bone loss as a result of increased calcium and D intake. Benefit was primarily in female nursing-home residents. Currently Vit D is being promoted as the “cure-all” for nearly every disease (e.g., cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer’s, diabetes, multiple sclerosis). This vitamin is important and people in the northwest seem to be deficient. But, keep in mind that no one nutrient is the “cure-all”! Doses of 800-1,000 IU from fortified foods and supplements are recommended. Vitamin D3 may be more potent than D2.

Researchers involved with the Women’s Health Initiative, observing 161,808 women for eight years, could find no link between those taking multivitamins and a lower risk of cancer, heart disease, and stroke; nor did they find any link between multivitamin use and total mortality. “These results were similar to Harvard’s Nurses’ Health Study, in which researchers found no significant health advantage to taking multivitamins, except for a slightly lower risk for colon cancer in women taking multivitamins for more than 15 years.” A slight increased risk for fatal non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma was found with multivitamin users.

The National Institutes of Health sponsored a conference in 2006 to evaluate the evidence for multivitamin use in relation to chronic disease. They concluded that there was not sufficient evidence to recommend taking vitamins for chronic disease prevention. They also said there was insufficient evidence to suggest that taking multivitamins increased health risks.

The American Cancer Society’s guidelines on nutrition and cancer prevention do not recommend taking multivitamins. Researchers at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York warned that vitamin C seems to protect not just healthy cells but cancer cells, too. This means that C supplementation

reduces the effectiveness of cancer therapy (<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/10/01/vitamin-c-may-interfere-with-cancer-treatment>). The Nurses' Health Study showed that women taking multivitamins with vitamin A were getting too much vitamin A and showed a significant increased risk for osteoporosis.

The Physicians' Health Study demonstrated that individual vitamin E and vitamin C supplements did not reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events (Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Harvard School of Public Health). Several reports in recent years have challenged the notion that megadoses of vitamins are good. A [Johns Hopkins School of Medicine review](#) of 19 vitamin E clinical trials of more than 135,000 people showed high doses of vitamin E (greater than 400 IUs) increased a person's risk of dying during the study period by 4%. Taking vitamin E with other vitamins and minerals resulted in a 6 percent higher risk of dying. [Another study of daily vitamin E](#) showed vitamin E takers had a 13 percent higher risk for heart failure.

Studies consistently show that ingesting multivitamins is not an effective strategy for improving one's health. Eating healthfully gives significant advantage over multivitamins. "A healthful diet means eating more fruits and vegetables; limiting animal fats, cholesterol, and sugar-laden and refined foods; and eating more whole-grain breads, unrefined cereals, nuts, and legumes. If you want better nutrition, put your money in these proven effective dietary methods (*Archives of Internal Medicine*. 2009;169(3):294-304).

Who may need multivitamins? Older adults may need vitamin B-12 supplements because they absorb less of this vitamin. People with problems absorbing nutrients such as those with celiac disease which can cause the villi in the intestinal tract to disappear, resulting in absorption problems, may need extra vitamins. Strict vegetarians often are quite low in B-12. One study showed vegans to have such low levels that they showed signs of brain atrophy. Supplements of vitamin C (500 mg), E (400 IU), beta-carotene (15 mg), zinc oxide (80 mg), and copper (2mg) may slow the progression in people with early or moderate macular degeneration. People who are heavy alcohol drinkers, or smokers, or are on very low calorie-restricted diets are recommended to take vitamin supplements.

Concluding remark: Healthy people who eat enough calories from a varied diet do not benefit from multivitamin supplements. Save your cents for fun activities! Calories provide energy for the body, not vitamins!

For an updated explanation of the food pyramid for older adults, check out this site from Tufts University: [http://nutrition.tufts.edu/1174562918285/Nutrition-Page-n12w\\_1203674431946.html](http://nutrition.tufts.edu/1174562918285/Nutrition-Page-n12w_1203674431946.html)

-----

## **Book and Film Corner**

Lynne Masland

To finish up the retirement films theme, here are a couple more suggestions. *Unforgiven* (1992) stars Clint Eastwood as William Munny, retired gunman turned hog farmer, who comes out from retirement to mete out justice. The Wall Street Journal calls it "almost flawless."

Everyone will remember *On Golden Pond* (1981), starring Henry Fonda and Katherine Hepburn, who face growing old together with indomitable spirits. A perennial favorite to be enjoyed over and over.

## WWURA INTEREST GROUPS

WWURA'S interest groups are open to all. If you are interested in a group, call the contact person. If you have an idea for another interest group, call Barb Evans, 650-9724.

April's interest group meetings are listed below:

**BOOK GROUP** - Donna Rochon, 647-2301. Meet at Evelyn Mason's, 914 17th St. 2:30, Apr. 20

April's book is *Burr: a Novel* by Gore Vidal

**OPERA GROUP** - Evelyn Ames, 734-3184. The Metropolitan Opera's Live in HD broadcast is shown at the Lincoln Theatre in Mount Vernon at 10:00 am. Call Evelyn if you need a ride or can drive.

May 1, Armida

**BRIDGE GROUP** - Barb Evans, 650-9724 The bridge group meeting is Apr. 27 at 1:30.

Location to be announced.

**BIKING** - Watch for information in May Newsletter. Call Howard Evans, 650-9724 if you would like to have your name added to the list.

**DOWNHILL SKIING** - Charlie Way, 734-0649. Call Charlie if you are interested.

**INFORMAL DINING** - Dinners will be at various locations throughout April and May. Call Barb Evans, 650-9724, if you would like to be added to the list.

### *WWURA Board of Directors Election*

The Nominating Committee has presented their slate of candidates for election to the WWURA Board of Directors. The three elected positions to be filled by the vote of the members are: 1) faculty, 2) staff/administration, 3) at-large. The candidates have agreed to serve for the three-year terms. The ballot includes space to vote for write-in candidates. (Please be sure that your write-in candidate has agreed to serve on the board.) Below are brief biographic sketches of the three candidates.

**George Gerhold** joined the Chemistry Dept. at Western in 1969. Campus activities included terms as chair of the senate, directing the West Center, and over 20 years as Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences. Since retirement, activities include multimedia development, mineral collecting, and skiing.

**Karen Perry** retired from WWU in 2008, after receiving a BS in Visual Communications and a Master's in Adult Education. While at Western she was the catalog editor, Summer Session coordinator, and the FIGS coordinator as well as teaching in the FIGS program. She has been a member of the Whatcom Weaver's Guild for 30 years and is also a founding member of NET, a small multi media arts group. Karen and her husband, Dan, live on 5 acres of woods in Skagit County.

**Bob Christman**, taught geology and science education at WWU from 1960 to 1995. He received numerous grants to teach summer institutes in earth science. He is still active with the National Association of Geoscience Teachers and the Washington Science Teachers Association. He is the owner of the Firehouse Performing Arts Center in Fairhaven and is treasurer of the South Hill Neighborhood Association. He has served three years on the WWURA Board as newsletter editor (with the help of Margaret Woll).

---

### *Ballot*

\_\_\_\_\_ *George Gerhold*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Karen Perry*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Bob Christman*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Write -in*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Write-in*          \_\_\_\_\_ *Write-in*

Please mail your ballot to Barbara Evans, 622 Everglade Road, Bellingham, 98225

WWURA Spring Banquet  
Tuesday, May 11, 2010  
President's and WWURA's Reception 5:30 p.m., Dinner 6:30 p.m.  
Viking Union Multipurpose Room

Please join us to show our appreciation of years of service to Western by faculty and staff who are retiring. The new retirees will be recognized by President Bruce Shepard. This will be a festive banquet with musical entertaining by The Prawns.

This is your opportunity to welcome and know the newly retired. Please encourage them to become part of WWURA.

**Reservations are required by Saturday May 1**

This year's entrée will be Coq au Vin. A vegetarian entrée of Mushrooms in Croute will be available for those who make their request in advance. Wine and other beverages are included. Fill in the form below and mail by the deadline.

Parking will be available in Lot 14A.

---

Please detach and return by Saturday, May 1, 2010

WWURA Spring Banquet Reservation

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please print

Your phone or email address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of reservations at \$23 each \_\_\_\_\_

Number requests for the vegetarian entree \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to WWURA and mail before May 1 to:

Barbara Evans, 622 Everglade, Bellingham, WA 98225  
For information call Barbara at 650-9724

Western Washington University  
Retirement Association (WWURA)  
Western Washington University  
516 High Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225-9020

## WWURA Calendar 2010

### April

21 Travelogue

### May

4 Board Meeting

5-7 NW Regional Retirement Associations Conference

11 Retirement dinner

### July

14 WWURA Picnic, Whatcom Falls Park

### August

18 Summer Retreat

### September

8-26 Dalmatian Coast

29 Travelogue



