



# WWURA NEWS



November 2012

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

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## Board Members Visit with Provost Riordan

Three WWURA board members, Nanette Davis, Barb Evans and Lynne Masland, met with Provost Catherine Riordan recently to discuss ways in which WWURA can become more actively involved in the life of the university. Provost Riordan was receptive to WWURA's ideas and added some suggestions of her own. Among the ideas are:

- Mentoring or tutoring students. This could be arranged through various departments.
- Tutoring athletes in return for tickets to athletic events.
- Helping with Convocation, possibly joining the lines of faculty and alumni who line Memory Walk as incoming freshmen walk from the PAC to Old Main.
- Meet with Cindy Shepherd to explore helping with her annual Compass to Campus program for fifth graders.
- Hosting foreign students, either offering boarding or simply inviting to a dinner.

## WWURA Travelogue

### "The Cities of Belgium and Holland"

Presented by Evelyn Ames, Evelyn Wright and Lynne Masland

Thursday, Nov. 15 *(note date change)*

Squalicum Yacht Club

6:30 - socializing

7:15 - presentation

Visit the cities of Belgium and Holland with Evelyn Ames, Evelyn Wright and Lynne Masland at the WWURA travelogue on Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Squalicum Yacht Club. Beginning in Brussels, we'll travel through medieval Ghent, idyllic Bruges, Delft and Amsterdam, cruising the canals and inspecting the Maeslant water barrier system designed to protect the lowlands from flooding. Our trip includes a sobering day at historic Flanders Fields and a visit to a traditional Belgian brewery, ending in Amsterdam with the Anne Frank House and Van Gogh Museum.



The Grand Place, Brussels

If your name begins with **A through L**, please bring a desert to share. WWURA provides coffee and tea; some members bring wine. Please contact one of the board members if you need a ride.

The Board welcomes other suggestions from Newsletter readers. Send to Barb Evans at [barbandhoward@comcast.net](mailto:barbandhoward@comcast.net). As this program develops, there will be more information shared.



## President's Message

Greetings,

I just heard a collective sigh of relief that the elections are finally over. Despite the hard-fought campaigns by both candidates, it seems apparent that a serious flaw penetrates our democratic process: too much money, too little articulation of policies and way over the top mudslinging. Let's hope the two parties can meet across the aisle in a civil and productive manner once Congress resumes.

In between the rain puddles, the beat of WWURA goes on. Board members just concluded a meeting with Catherine Riordan, Provost, about a greater involvement of our members with the University. I'll update you as soon as we get a response from her office. Our Fall Luncheon was a superb success as we enjoyed another bounteous Northwood Hall buffet and heard our mayor, Kelli Linville, expand on critical city issues. (Could we emphasize the coal trains?)

Another fascinating travelogue coming up November 15 will be presented by Lynne Maslow and Evelyn Ames, "Visiting Belgium and the Netherlands." Don't miss it! You'll be ready to board a plane to take a trip to these charming countries after you see their exciting tour captured in vibrant photos.

Travel... Travel... Travel—that's the name of the WWURA game. Marty and Gail Haines just returned from China and Tibet, and will be presenting a travelogue in January. Kathy Whitmer leads another one of her memorable, last (?) trips to the Christmas markets on the Danube River in December. This marks Kathy's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her first visit to the Christkindl-markts, when she worked as a teacher in Germany. And Barb Evans is putting some finishing touches on plans for Ashland, Oregon's Shakespearean Theatre in Spring 2013. Stay tuned for updates.

Partytime coming up! Our annual Holiday Party will be held at Squaticum Yacht Club on December 19, 6:00 to closing. Come one, come all. Fantastic food! Outstanding music! Brilliant company! Now, that's a party.

See you at our friendly WWURA events,

- **Nanette Davis**

## WWURA Travel News

### OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ASHLAND 2013

WWURA is planning a trip to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, April 30 - May 3, 2013 if there is enough interest. There is a very good choice of plays at that time. We would have the opportunity to see at least four of the following plays:

*King Lear* by William Shakespeare - a contemporary staging of Shakespeare's greatest tragedy.

*The Taming of the Shrew* by Shakespeare..." a surprising love story that dares to ask what roles we play."

*My Fair Lady* - "Lerner and Loewe's effervescent adaptation of Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* is one of the most exquisite musicals ever written. This intimate, two-piano version, approved by composer Frederick Loewe, promises to illuminate the story in ways you haven't heard before."



*Running* by August Wilson - his "searing portrait of African-American life in the '60's tells a complex story of the inner lives of ordinary people at a turning point in American history."

*A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams - "Southern aristocrat Blanche down on her luck, is reduced to living with her sister Stella and Stella's pugnacious husband, Stanley in a tiny tenement apartment." This scenario sets them up for an epic battle in William's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic.

If you are interested in going to Ashland on this trip, please either call or email Barb Evans, 650-9724 or <barbandhoward@comcast.net> as soon as possible. It should be a great opportunity to see some very good theater.

## HEALTH NOTES by Evelyn Ames

### *Back Pain! Is It Osteoarthritis of the Spine?*

“With an aging U.S. population, back pain may be growing into an even greater problem, since osteoarthritis (OA) typically emerges in people over 40, and the spine is a prime target for this common joint condition. But just how much of our nation’s back pain is caused by OA?” (*Arthritis Today*, 2012)

<http://www.arthritistoday.org/conditions/osteoarthritis/oa-beyond-the-basics/oa-and-back-pain.php>

“Degenerative changes” in the spine is also termed degenerative joint disease or degenerative arthritis and occurs most commonly in the neck and lower back. Osteoarthritis of the spine results in a narrowing of the spaces between the vertebrae. The gradually rubbing together of the vertebrae causes bone spurs to form which then cause the spine to stiffen and lose flexibility. This rubbing together causes the vertebrae and areas surrounding the cartilage to become inflamed and painful.

(<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/medical/IM01682>). “Cartilage is a form of usually slick, slightly elastic, connective tissue that covers the ends of the bone joints. In part, cartilage serves as a protective shock absorber to minimize the impact of bouncing, jumping and other types of daily activities on the joints – and is thus subjected to considerable wear and tear during life. Indeed, heavy work, sports, repeated injuries and obesity take a heavy toll on the joints of the limbs and spine. To be healthy, all joints should be exercised” ((<http://www.spine-health.com/conditions/arthritis/osteoarthritis-spine>)). Because of pain, an individual often begins to lessen daily movement and physical activity. The more there is less physical inactivity and less neck/upper/lower back movement (it hurts to move!), the more there is stiffening of the spine.

Another point of explanation about back pain is that “As we age, persistent pressure on the spine wears away the tough cartilage lining facet joints. Meanwhile, disks in the spine begin to narrow due to water loss, adding to pressure on the facet joints (and subtracting from your overall height, which is why people shrink as they age). As a result of these changes, the facet joints ... can develop inflammation” (*Arthritis Today*, 2012). “In response to spine being unstable, growths called osteophytes, or bone spurs, can form in the joints. While bone spurs appear to be the body’s attempt to restore stability, they can cause the spine to stiffen. As OA worsens, bone spurs can narrow the “frames” where nerves exit the spinal cord. This condition, called spinal stenosis, can pinch nerves and cause numbness and weakness in the legs” (*Arthritis Today*, 2012).

Osteoarthritis in the spine is divided into:

“Lower back (lumbar spine) osteoarthritis, sometimes called lumbosacral arthritis, which produces stiffness and pain in the lower spine and [sacroiliac joint](#) (between the spine and pelvis).

Neck ([cervical spine](#)) osteoarthritis, sometimes called cervical [spondylosis](#) (spondy- implies the spine, and -osis is an abnormal condition), which can cause stiffness and pain in the upper spine, neck, shoulders, arms and head” (<http://www.spine-health.com/conditions/arthritis/osteoarthritis-spine>).

**What else causes back pain?** Norman Marcus, MD, author of *End Back Pain Forever* (Atria, 2012) and director of muscle pain research in the department of anesthesiology at the New York University School of Medicine “argues that weak, stiff or damaged muscles are responsible for three out of four bad backs, regardless of age” (*Arthritis Today*, 2012). Back pain is often “referred,” (that is, a muscle damaged in another part of the body triggers pain/aching felt in the back. Marcus believes that doctors who target OA of the spine as a significant contributor to this common problem are misguided. According to The Dartmouth Institute, spending on neck and back problems is approximately \$90 billion a year. Back pain is the second most common reason why people go to the doctor. What the consumer/patient should do is to have a knowledgeable (about back pain) health care provider rule out (or in) osteoarthritis of the spine.

(cont’d next page)

## Health Notes: Back Pain, *cont'd*

**Exercise:** A **MUST** for reducing back pain! There is no “one-size-fits all” for treatment of back pain. “People often believe their pain is unsafe,” says Carol Hartigan, MD, a spine physician at New England Rehabilitation Hospital in Boston. “They become fearful of moving, and start to anticipate pain and avoid activities” (*Arthritis Today*, 2012). This makes a person’s muscles weak and tight, which in turn makes one more sensitive to pain. It is most important for one to increase the strength and flexibility of muscles that surround and support the spine.

Sites for additional information (diagnosis, causes, treatments) involving OA and other joints (knees and hips): <http://health.nytimes.com/health/guides/disease/osteoarthritis/overview.html>  
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/arthritis/AN00124>



Remember: December 8, 2012 is Bellingham’s 25<sup>th</sup> year for the Jingle Bell Run/Walk. Please join or donate to our WWURA team. Easy to get to web site: <http://bellinghamjbrw.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1027414> or drop by the Arthritis Foundation office on Chestnut at South Campus of PeaceHealth.

Comment on glucosamine: Are you allergic to shellfish? Several companies manufacture their glucosamine (a dietary supplement) from the shells of shrimp, crab, lobster, and crayfish. People with shellfish allergies are advised not to use such glucosamine supplements.



## Book Corner

Lynne Masland

In November, we honor our veterans with a day of remembrance for their sacrifices. Washington author Karl Marlantes, a graduate of Yale and Oxford Universities, has written *What It Is Like To Go to War* (2011), a weaving of personal recollection of his experiences in Vietnam with an analysis of the effects of war on soldiers and how we can better prepare them for the experience of war.

Marlantes grew up in the small logging town of Seaside, Oregon and, at age 19, completed a Marine Training Program. With a National Merit Scholarship, he went to Yale, receiving a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford, where he finished a semester and then chose to go to Vietnam. As a lieutenant, he led a platoon and received, among other decorations, the Navy Cross, Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts. After service, he finished his MA at Oxford in philosophy, politics and education and became an international business consultant. However, he continued to struggle with PTSD and the haunting after effects of war, eventually publishing his award-winning novel *Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War* (2010). The impetus for his novel, 33 years in the making, was the reception Vietnam veterans received when they returned home. His second non-fiction memoir continues his reflections upon the practice of war with the aim of helping struggling veterans and enlightening citizens and policymakers about what it means to declare war. This book is not an easy one, but it is important as we try to understand and bring aid and comfort to our veterans.



## Writing Group Corner

Writing Group members are sharing some of their pieces and poems with newsletter readers. This month, **Nanette Davis** offers a selection from her new book, *The ABCs of Caregiving: Words to Inspire You*, to be published next month by House of Harmony Press.

### “The Language of Care

Few of us are aware of how language affects our everyday interactions with others. The words we use, our tone of voice, the looks we give and even our body language all communicate loud and clear what we *really* mean. We all know that in public and even private spaces, common courtesy, once taken for granted, isn't so common anymore.

When you use endearing words, such as, “I really care about you,” *how* are you saying the words? And with what intent? Are you using eye contact? What are tell-tale signs that perhaps you actually do *not* care as much as your words purport to say? Looking away, speaking gruffly, mumbling, being twitchy or restless all indicate your mind may be elsewhere. A frown or grimace can give you away, as can arms folded tightly across your chest—you really aren't very sincere. Or worse, if you take an argumentative tone, it could show you may not care at all!

*Care talk* is a gift we can bring to others, and entails a number of simple rules. How many of these do you follow when you interact with your loved one?

- Give the person your full attention—recognition of another person opens the door to real communication. When possible, interact on a face-to-face basis when talking with a person with dementia or severe debilitation.
- Speak in a tone of voice that is appropriate for the person and the situation. Low tones fit when you're speaking to a person who hears well. You may need to speak louder and enunciate more clearly for someone who is hearing-impaired or in a crowded room.
- Use nurturing words that invite the other to respond. “May I help you” can be far more pleasing to a disabled person than “I can do this for you.” The “may I” phrase allows the other an opportunity to say “no” in a gracious way.
- Emphasize words that encourage, inspire, support, soothe, hearten or elevate the mood of your ill relative. You can easily stifle a response when you push for an agenda with “must,” “should,” or “have to” words. “You'd *better* go to your physical therapy appointment today” has a discouraging ring. (*Could* something bad happen if I don't go?) What about: “You *get* to go to your physical therapist today.” This is an opportunity waiting to happen.
- Be aware of your gestures, voice and facial expressions. If you mean what you say, say it with conviction and certainty. Let your gestures reinforce your message. If you are bringing bad news—“Dr. Smith thinks you will need surgery in a few months”—extend your arms, speak with warmth and sympathy and be ready to embrace your loved one.
- Practice compassion—feeling *with* your loved one if they are suffering—and the care words will come effortlessly. Let the milk of human kindness flow through you. When you act from the heart, you are always on target.

You might keep in mind advice from the ancient sage Lao Tzu who said: “I have three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures.” When you apply these words to caregiving, your load lifts and your spirit soars.”

## November Interest Groups

If you are interested in one of the groups please call or email the contact person.

**BOOK GROUP**--Donna Rochon, 360-647-2301, <djrochon1@comcast.net>

Meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at member's homes.

We will meet November 20th Barbara Davidson's, 806 17th Street.

November's book is *Between the Woods and the Water* by Patrick Leigh Fermor

December's book is *World Without End* by Ken Follett

**BRIDGE GROUP**--Nicholas Bullat, 360-676-1156, <gnbmaestro@gmail.com>

Meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at member's homes. We will meet November 27th at Carol Radke's home, 508 Lyla Lane, 733-5876.

**INFORMAL DINING** -- Janet Berg, 360-733-4654, <janetlila@hotmail.com>

Meets in small groups each month at member's homes. The schedule for 2012-2013 has been sent out so members can expect a call from the host for their group soon.

**OPERA GROUP**--Evelyn Ames, 360-734-3184, <Evelyn.ames@wwu.edu>.

Call Evelyn if you need a ride.

November 10 - Ades's *The Tempest*, Met premiere

Encore - November 28

November 14, Encore - Verdi's *Otello*,

December 1, Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*

December 8, *Un Ballo in Maschera*

December 15, *Aida*

Information on venues is in the September newsletter.

**SKIING** - Charlie Way, 360-734-0649, <cbway@aol.com>

Skiing usually starts in January depending on the weather.

**WRITER'S GROUP** - Evelyn Wright, 360-676-0227, <ewright410@comcast.net>

Meets twice a month. The groups are kept small so there is time for reading and critiquing each other's work. The first group is now closed, but if you are interested, please call Evelyn and discuss starting a second group.

Mark Your Calendar for our Holiday  
Party on December 19th



## WWURA Imperial China, Tibet & the Yangtze River Trip Oct. 1-22-2012, as reported by Marty Haines, trip leader



Our group of eleven enjoyed ideal autumn weather as we experienced the wonders of Modern China. Overseas Adventure Travel again provided an educational and most enjoyable overview of this complex and interesting country.

We arrive in Beijing during their annual Nation Day Celebration similar to our 4<sup>th</sup> of July which provided additional excitement and even larger than normal crowds. Our four days in Beijing revealed a vibrant national capital city with a mix of important sites such as Tiananmen Square and the adjacent Forbidden City, the 2008 Olympic Grounds as well as new parks and thousands of new high rise apartments and condominiums. It seemed a very livable city considering the 17 million population.

An overnight sleeper train took us to Xian, home of the Terracotta Soldiers and a beautiful city of 5.2 million. We all would have liked spending more than our two days of sightseeing which included an afternoon at the Terracotta Warriors site. After a flight to Chengdu and a day at the extensive Panda Sanctuary where 111 Pandas of all ages reside, we learned that our group would be allowed into Tibet.

Upon landing in Lhasa, Tibet (the roof of the world at 12,000 ft.) we found a bright sunny morning without any trace of pollution, almost as if we had landed on another continent! Lhasa was captivating with the high plateau and mountain location, a city of only 700,000 people with a significant Buddhist presence including the always visible Buddhist Potala Palace. We found the Tibetans very welcoming; their nomadic heritage was reflected in their deeply tanned faces. Our three days in Tibet was a high point for all of us even though all of us suffered altitude sickness to some degree.

We flew from Lhasa to Chongqing in South Central China where we boarded our Yangtze River cruise ship with about 150 guests for a 4 day cruise of 410 miles to the Three Gorges Dam at Yichang. The magnitude of the project first proposed by Sun Yat-sen in 1919 and its effect on the use of this important river is most impressive. The three goals of the dam: Flood control, Electricity generation and Navigation were achieved and we enjoyed the improved navigation on what is essentially a 410 mile lake! We saw hundreds of small freight ships carrying a variety of cargoes both up and down the river including many loads of Chinese coal going downstream!

Our next flight was to Hong Kong for a partial re-entry to English speaking life! Hong Kong presented an established, densely populated capitalistic city in contrast to the “new” modern cities of mainland China.

We all came home with a heightened respect for China and its people.

**WWURA 2012 Calendar**

Nov. 15 -Travelogue -Belgian & Holland

Dec. 2 - Holiday Markets Trip

Dec. 8 - Jingle Bell Run

Dec. 19 - Holiday Party

**2013 Calendar**

Jan. 16 - Travelogue - China

Feb. 8 -Winter Luncheon

March 20—Travelogue

April 5 - Spring Luncheon

April 17—Travelogue

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