



President Lynne Masland's Message



Season's Greetings to you all,

We're entering the whoosh of the holiday season, the time when the days fly by as we prepare for our celebrations with family and friends. As the days grow shorter and colder, let's not forget those less fortunate, tucking a bit into the Salvation Army kettle or putting a few extra cans and boxes of food into the Food Bank cart.

To make merry together, we'll gather at the Squalicum Yacht Club on Wednesday, Dec. 18 for festive cheer, a shared feast, and lots of music. Our favorite keyboardist, **Lou Lippman**, will be on hand to play holiday songs, and **Burl Harmon** will bring his guitar to inspire us to join him in an old-fashioned sing-along.



The party begins at 6:00 p.m. at the Squalicum Yacht Club, which will be decorated with boughs and lights to get us in the holiday mood.

I'm making a New Year's resolution to grow WWURA's active membership, so I'd like to ask you all to encourage friends and retirees to consider joining our group and participating in our many activities. We welcome not only Western retirees but also others who are interested in our programs.

As the year draws to a close, let me wish you one and all good health, warm friendships and satisfying pursuits in the New Year.

See you at the holiday party.

- Lynne Masland

9th Annual Holiday Party Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2013, 6-10 pm.

Squalicum Yacht Club
2633 South Harbor Loop Rd.

"Come and get into the holiday spirit with friends, good food and lively music"



- Social gathering - 6 pm.
- Potluck dinner begins at 6:30 consisting of roast turkey, ham, coffee & tea plus potluck items as assigned below.
- Bring your own wine, if you wish.
- Music by keyboardist Lou Lippman
- Bring your own plates and silverware.
- Cost is \$10 person.
- Please bring a dish (to share) as listed below:
- Last names beginning with **A-G** bring a **Side Dish**, **H-Q** a **Salad**, and **R-Z** a **Dessert**

The fee is \$10 per person, which covers the costs of the hall, music, decorations, ham and turkey.

Deadline for reservations is December 12th.

Mail your check and Reservation Form (*found on page 6*) to **Nanette Davis, 715 Rosario Ct. Bellingham, WA 98229. Questions? Phone: 360-671-1686.**

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2013 December Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Planning Cataract Surgery? Questions to Ask

The National Eye Institute (at NIH), reports that most cataracts are related to aging, although there are other types. Secondary cataracts form after surgery for other eye problems (e.g., glaucoma) or occur in people with diabetes or are sometimes linked to steroid use. Traumatic cataracts can develop after an eye injury, sometimes years later. Congenital cataracts are when babies are born with cataracts or develop them in childhood. Radiation cataracts develop after exposure to some types of radiation.

http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/ataract/ataract_facts.asp

Common symptoms of cataracts include cloudy or blurry vision; colors seem faded; head-lights/lamps/sunlight appear too bright; halo may appear around lights; poor night vision; double vision or multiple images in one eye (symptom may clear as the cataract gets larger); and frequent prescription changes in eyeglasses or contact lenses.

(http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/ataract/ataract_facts.asp)

Treatment for Cataracts: “symptoms of early cataract may be improved with new eyeglasses, brighter lighting, anti-glare sunglasses, or magnifying lenses. If these measures do not help, surgery is the only effective treatment. Surgery involves removing the cloudy lens and replacing it with an artificial lens.” “A cataract needs to be removed only when vision loss interferes with your everyday activities, such as driving, reading, or watching TV. You and your eye care professional can make this decision together.” “In most cases, delaying cataract surgery will not cause long-term damage to your eye or make the surgery more difficult. You do not have to rush into surgery.” (http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/ataract/ataract_facts.asp) If surgery is done, it is performed on each eye at separate times (approximately 4 to 8 weeks apart (depending on recuperation and health of patient). Another viewpoint about waiting to have surgery is from the *New York Times* health section: “Unlike other eye diseases, there’s no advantage to treating cataracts early,” says Dr. Peter Egbert, professor of ophthalmology at [Stanford University](#). “You don’t miss your chance if you wait. [Cataract surgery](#) isn’t urgent. You can always wait until the time is convenient.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/ref/health/healthguide/esn-cataracts-ask.html> Cataracts do progressively interfere with vision, so one’s ability to drive or get around safely may begin to be impaired.

Two types of surgery: **Phacoemulsification**, or **phaco**. “A small incision is made on the side of the cornea, the clear, dome-shaped surface that covers the front of the eye. Your doctor inserts a tiny probe into the eye. This device emits ultrasound waves that soften and break up the lens so that it can be removed by suction. Most cataract surgery today is done by phacoemulsification. **Extracapsular surgery:** “doctor makes a longer incision on the side of the cornea and removes the cloudy core of the lens in one piece. The rest of the lens is removed by suction.”

(http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/ataract/ataract_facts.asp)

Types of replacement lens: monofocal (covered by Medicare and most insurers) and multifocal lenses (becoming more popular but are not recommended for people with macular degeneration or diabetic retinopathy. Newer types are being use and more than likely in the future other types of lens will be readily available.

Questions to ask your ophthalmologist.

Do you have an eye problem such as age-related macular degeneration or diabetic retinopathy?

Do you have astigmatism? Where is the astigmatism located in the eye? Is it in both eyes? Are you a candidate for toric lens due to your astigmatism?

(cont’d next page)

Health Notes, cont'd

Do you have glaucoma?

Which type of surgery is best for you?

Can contact lens be worn after surgery?

Will reading glasses be needed after surgery? “Whether you will still need glasses or contacts depends on what correction you need and what kind of lenses were implanted. There is no way to test replacement lenses before they are implanted” (NEI).

How competitive in price are the recommended ophthalmologists in your geographical location?

How often does the eye specialist perform cataract surgery and what is the success rate for the ophthalmologist? To gather information about potential eye surgeons, this site might help:

<http://www.healthgrades.com/ophthalmology-directory>

Do you need special lens (e.g., toric lens. These lenses correct for astigmatism. “They can be made from HEMA (soft), silicone hydrogel, or gas permeable materials” (<http://www.eyehhealthweb.com/toric-contact-lenses/>)

Have you had lasik surgery?

Information about LASIK surgery (from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/medical-edge-newspaper-2011/dec-16a.html>):

“Successful cataract surgery is possible for most people who have had laser-assisted in-situ keratomileusis (LASIK surgery) or other types of refractive surgery that reshape the cornea to correct vision. There is one important caveat, though. To ensure the most predictable vision outcome following cataract surgery, you need to provide your cataract surgeon with specific information about your eyes and eyesight from before and after your LASIK surgery.”

“For people like you who have had LASIK surgery, providing the appropriate lens implant for cataract surgery takes additional calculations to determine the correct lens power. In addition to taking measurements of the eye, the surgeon also needs an accurate record of your prescription before and after LASIK surgery, as well as an accurate measurement of the curvature of your cornea before LASIK. The records from your LASIK surgery should contain this information.”

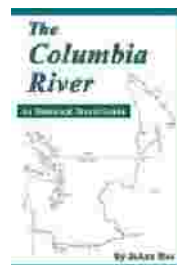
Local health-related program that may be of interest to members: “Putting Pain in Its Place” (an hour long presentation about osteoarthritis and self-management techniques). **Let Evelyn Ames (734-3184) know if you would attend a brown bag lunch arranged for WWURA members in January/February.**

Historical note: Did you know that during the time of Colonial America (on eve of the revolution) the average life expectancy at birth was 34.5 years for men and 36.5 for women? Fifty percent of deaths occurred in those under 10.

Bits and Pieces

Welcome to WWURA’s Board, Joyce Geisler!

At the December Board Meeting, Joyce was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Erlene Poole. Erlene and husband Wendell expect to travel extensively in the coming year. Happy travels and thanks for your service!



Christmas shoppers might be interested in looking at Jo Anne Rose’s recently updated book, “The Columbia River” (Caxton Press) as well as her book, “The San Juan Islands”.

DECEMBER INTEREST GROUPS

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

BOOK GROUP--Donna Moore, 360-733-5769 <dfmoore12@gmail.com>

We will meet Tuesday, Dec. 17th at 2:30 P.m. at Donna Moore's home at 346 Bayside Rd.

December's book is *The Hare with the Amber Eyes* by Edmund DeWaal
(leader, Inge Paulus)

January's book is *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey (leader, Barbara Levin)

BRIDGE GROUP--Nicholas Bullat, <gnbmaestro@gmail.com>

Meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at member's homes. We will not meet in December, but will meet January 28th at Carol Radke's home at 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.

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

This group usually attends the opera independently or in small groups. Call Evelyn if you need a ride.

Metropolitan Opera HD Series for 2013-2014, check this website for cast and dates of encores:

<http://www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/liveinhd/LiveinHD.aspx> In the left corner is Participating Theaters (click on United States and/or Canada for listing). There are 10 HD showings this season. Running times of each opera are listed at main web site.

December 14 at 9:55 a.m. Verdi's Falstaff. Encores Monday, January 20, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Lincoln Theater in Mt. Vernon: <http://www.lincoltheatre.org/welcome> (click on calendar)

Check the **Pickford Film Center** for European opera showings: <http://pickfordfilmcenter.org/>

SKIING - Charlie Way, 360-734-0649

It continues to snow in the mountains---be sure to let Charlie know if you want to ski this year.

WRITER'S GROUP - Evelyn Wright, 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 in a second group call Bill Smith, 647-4534, <rhetor16@yahoo.com>

Untitled Poem

by Dorothea Grossman

This winter feels colder than ever,
or maybe I'm just more sensitive
these days,
when the wind is
a fire engine
and the moon is sinister
and blue.
I'm all bundled up for it,
stamping my feet,
drinking rum,
counting the days
until the yellow flowers.



Not a Book Review, But a Website Review: TED.com

TED.com is a multifaceted, fascinating and interesting website. I recommend it to people who are interested in ideas, in the world, and who have broad interests. The content of the site is dozens of 18 minute talks by some of the most interesting and innovative minds around. Bill Gates gives 4 of the talks. Malcolm Gladwell, author of *The Tipping Point* and *Outliers* also gives four.

One of the most interesting speakers, for me, is Hans Rosling, a Swedish physician and academic, whose many talks have had me laughing while he was disabusing me of some of my favorite prejudices—while using for his presentation some awesome moving graphs to represent changing statistics about world public health over time. I go back to him again and again.

One of the most inspiring talks, to my taste, is the one by Patrick Awuah, a young Ghanaian who found his way to a BA from Swarthmore and an MBA from UC Berkeley. Then after ten years at Microsoft, he returned to Ghana for a life of service. He has founded, and is president of, Ashesi University, a liberal arts non-profit school in Accra, Ghana, which began with 30 students in 2005 and now has 500. (Ashesi means “beginning” in Akan, Awuah’s native language). He speaks of his life and of his perception that lack of quality leadership is one of Africa’s major problems. He speaks of his belief that a liberal arts education that focuses on business, technology, and leadership may help make governments in Africa work better. His talk moved me.

Sir Ken Robinson gives just one talk, the most visited talk on TED.com. The aim of his life work and of his TED talk is, in his own words, “to transform the culture of education and organizations with a richer conception of human intelligence and creativity.” He’s also one of TED’s funniest speakers.

There are dozens more speakers, all of them interesting. You probably know of most of this almost random list: Al Gore, J.K. Rowling, Isabel Allende, Jennifer Granholm, Richard Dawkins, Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin, Jared Diamond, Jane Goodall, Freeman Dyson, Murray Gell-Man. The website is easy to navigate. I suggest that you try two of three of the speakers.

-Bob McDonnell

2013-2014 WWURA Officers

President—Lynne Masland	671-1686
President Elect—TBA	
Past President—Nanette Davis	676-9821
Secretary— Donna Moore	733-5769
Treasurer— John Reay	733-1195

Board Members

Nanette Davis	671-1686	Bob McDonnell	650-0626
Kirsti Charlton	393-7187	Joyce Geisler	933-1729
Rudi Weiss	733-9155	Patricia Roberts	676-2593
Bill Smith	647-4534		
Lynne Masland	676-9821	Newsletter Editor —Margaret Woll	734-8427
Larry Richardson	671-4277	Webmaster —John Woll	734-8427

WWURA Calendar

December 2013

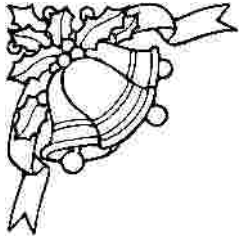
14—Jingle Bell Run
18—Holiday Party

January 2014

7—Board Meeting
15—Travelogue—
New Zealand

February 2014

4—Board Meeting



Reservation Form

Holiday Party—December 18, 2013
Squalicum Yacht Club
2633 South Harbor Loop Road

Name(s) _____

Enclosed is a check (payable to WWURA) for \$ _____ for _____ people

Need a ride? Check here _____ and phone number _____

Send your reservation(s) and \$10 per person to cover the costs of the hall, music, decorations, ham and turkey to **Nanette Davis, 715 Rosario Ct., Bellingham, WA 98229. Questions? Phone: 360-671-1686**

Deadline for reservations—December 12, 2013

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