



# WWURA NEWS



May 2013

www.wvu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff



## Letter from the President

It's the merry month of May – the time, when amidst all the flowering trees and gardens, we say goodbye to last year's president, Nanette

Davis and thank her for her leadership during the year. We also welcome three new board members: Bob McDonnell, former English department chair; Erlene Poole, former retirement benefits manager; and Patricia Roberts, retired Secondary Education program manager at Woodring College of Education. Returning board members include John Reay, WWURA treasurer; Donna Moore, Secretary; Kirsti Charlton, Rudi Weiss, Bill Smith, Larry Richardson and Nanette Davis. Special kudos to Margaret Woll, who produces our monthly newsletter, and John Woll, who maintains the WWURA website.

WWURA members had the chance to greet new retirees at Western's Retirement Banquet the evening of May 8 and share with them the wealth of new activities that retirement offers. We look forward to having several new members join us. Visiting with friends and colleagues was fun. The amazing Johnny Barnes, formerly with the Platters and Inkspots and still going strong at 80, together with Lou Lippman and The Prawns, provided lively music from the 50s and early 60s.

We have some fun summer activities on tap beginning with our annual Summer Picnic, set at Whatcom Falls Park covered picnic shelter on July 10. In August, we'll hold our annual planning meeting at WWU's Lakewood boathouse on the shore of Lake Whatcom. By September, we're into our social season with travelogues, luncheons and

## Inside:

Health Notes— Truths/Half Truths -	
Walnuts & Chocolates	p. 2, 3
May Interest Groups	p. 3
Writing Group Corner	p. 4
Book Review	p. 5
Calendar	p. 5
Looking Ahead	p. 5

interest groups in full swing. We plan five travelogues, three luncheons and a Holiday Party each year. Our exciting interest groups offer enjoyment and a chance to meet new friends through the Book Group, Bridge Group, Informal Dinning, Opera Group, Downhill Skiing and Writers Group. For those who want a workout there's the Biking Group with Howard Evans. Look for details in our monthly newsletter.

Besides social activities and travel opportunities, WWURA has a more serious side. We offer two scholarships each year for returning students. This year, with the help of a generous donation from a WWURA member, we're hoping to increase the number of scholarships to three. You can help by including a scholarship contribution along with your regular WWURA dues. It's a heart-warming chance to make a real difference in students' lives by helping them achieve their academic goals through a financial boost.

A special invitation to those retiring from Western this year – Join WWURA and enjoy the many activities and friendships that continue to make our lives rich. See you soon!

- Lynne Masland

Are these statements the truth and nothing but the truth?

- “Eating walnuts or chocolate can help ward off disease.”
- “Eating walnuts may reduce the risk for Type 2 diabetes in women?”
- “Dark chocolate can reduce your risk of heart disease.”



A media story in *New York Times* (April 9, 2013) led with: “Eating walnuts may reduce the risk for Type 2 diabetes in women.” It never explained why the polar opposite that eating walnuts may not reduce that risk. Health news journalists evaluated the media report as being unsatisfactorily in some respects because it did not quote an independent source. Only the author of the study was quoted. “The story did note that the study was partially funded by the California Walnut Commission. It did not mention that the researcher quoted in the story has received funding support from that commission.” The news reviewers asked: “What about other nuts, such as almonds? Can the study be extrapolated to them? Or does it have to be walnuts?” “Given the fact that walnuts are an excellent source of Omega-3, would fish oil do the same thing? Or, do walnuts have something special for humans that fish, or fish oil does not?”

<http://www.healthnewsreview.org/review/walnuts-for-diabetes/>

**Dark Chocolate:** “Stories on the health benefits of consuming Cocoa Products have increasingly made the news, following the discovery that they are a rich source of catechins, which are polyphenols of the flavanol group, and which are believed to protect against heart disease, cancer, and various other medical conditions. Chocolate manufacturers, retailers, and the media have been taking advantage of these findings by not only trying to make chocolate lovers feel less guilty about their addiction, but also by trying to target more health-conscious consumers with regular doses of "research studies" praising the supposed health benefits of consuming (dark) chocolate, among them that:

- eating chocolate does not trigger migraine headaches,
- eating chocolate reduces the risk of heart disease and cancer.
- eating chocolate does not give someone acne or other skin eruptions,
- eating chocolate boosts one's appetite, but does not cause weight gain,
- eating moderate amounts of chocolate makes one live almost a year longer,
- eating chocolate releases endorphins in the brain, which act as pain-relievers,
- the sugar in chocolate may have a calming and pain relieving effect.” <http://www.acu-cell.com/choc.html> (The Clinical Research Resource for Cellular Nutrition & Trace Mineral Analysis)



“If people were to consume **pure cocoa**, they might indeed be able to enjoy a few health benefits, including a positive effect on blood pressure and glucose metabolism, however the majority of people eat **processed chocolate** with all the other less desirable ingredients (i.e. added sugar, corn syrup, milk fats / dairy cream, hydrogenated oils, etc.), and where the actual cocoa content may be less than 20%, so unless premium dark chocolate is consumed,” the benefits are questionable. <http://www.acu-cell.com/choc.html>. Cocoa, which is the main ingredient in chocolate, is high in antioxidants (flavanols). These are also found in red wine, tea and certain fruits (e.g., blueberries, strawberries, and apricots). “Flavonoids is a broader category of compounds that include flavanols. “Some epidemiological studies have found an association between high flavanol intake (typically from sources other than chocolate) and lower rates of heart attacks and heart diseases, while other studies have found no relationships” (Davis, R. J. *The Healthy Skeptic*). Which type of chocolate has the most flavonoids? “The highest levels are in natural cocoa powder (not Dutch cocoa, though, because it is alkalized cocoa). The type second highest in flavonoids is unsweetened baking chocolate. Dark chocolate and semisweet chocolate chips rank third, with milk chocolate and chocolate syrup at the bottom of the list.” Not All Chocolate Is Created Equal! <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/health-by-chocolate?page=2> Flavanol levels in types of chocolate can vary based on the cocoa beans selected,

## *Health Notes, cont'd*

processing of the beans and chocolate, and storage and handling conditions. “The evidence for the health benefits of chocolate comes mostly from short-term and uncontrolled studies. More research is needed” <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-chocolate/AN02060>. “While the amount of the healthy antioxidant flavonoids varies from one type of chocolate to another, there's one guideline you can take to the bank: The more nonfat cocoa solids in a chocolate product, the more antioxidants it likely contains.”

Web sources to consider: PubMed ([www.pubmed.gov](http://www.pubmed.gov)); The Cochrane Collaboration ([www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)); Health News Review ([www.healthnewsreview.org](http://www.healthnewsreview.org)); Quackwatch ([www.quackwatch.org](http://www.quackwatch.org))

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## MAY 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 <donnaafmoore12@gmail.com>

Meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Donna Moore's home at 346 Bayside Rd. We will meet May 21st at 2:30 p.m.

May's book is *A spectacle of Corruption* by David Liss.

June's book is *Hero: The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia* by Michael Korda.

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

Meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at member's homes. We will meet May 28th, place to be announced.

**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>.

**SKIING** - Charlie Way, 360-734-0649

**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.

## Writing Group Corner

### A Reading Grandma

Troy Faith Ward

My mother was born in 1919. Her birth coincides with the beginning of Children's Book week. That is significant to me, because she is responsible for introducing me to children's literature. Being read to is among my earliest, most joyful memories and my most formative experiences.

When my younger brother was three, Mama went back to teaching school. Not many years later, the state required that teachers with only junior college degrees earn some hours toward a bachelor's degree each year. For many summers she spent a six-week term boarding with an uncle in southern Arkansas. She completed a B. A. in English the same year my brother graduated from college. Among her favorite electives were library science courses. She learned about more and more children's books; as a second grade teacher, in a school with still no elementary library when she retired in 1977, she just couldn't leave many books on the pages of the Scholastic Book Service catalogs.

By the time she started reading to my older daughter, the shelves in her hallway at home were stacked double and sagging with children's books. During one of our visits to Mama and Daddy's house, I slipped off for an after lunch nap and Mama had agreed to read to Lisa. I don't know how many minutes the nap lasted, but it was approximately a 20-book nap. When I came back into the living room, the evidence was piled all around the couch where they were sitting.

"My goodness, Lisa," I exclaimed, you read a LOT of books."

With a besotted smile she looked up at me and explained, "That's why [because] I have a grandma."

As far as I know they never repeated that marathon story session, although they did spend many more hours together behind the pages of a book during Lisa's pre-literate years. They maintained a strong bond till the end of Mama's life. (Well, it's not really broken, even now.) I don't attribute that bond solely to Mama's reading to her any more than to the single Reading Event. However, there was great wisdom in Lisa's words. "That's why I have a Grandma."

A "Grandma" is a person with time, apparently unlimited time, to spend with you, just you, holding the door open while you do what gives you life and relishing the experience with you. While reading aloud Grandma creates space for you to explore, to risk, to imagine what you can do, can become, loosens soil so you can delve down into your deepest self. By traveling together reader and listener are saying to each other: "You are wonderful, wise, brave, growing, learning, worth being with. I cherish you."



## Book Corner

### Nanette Davis

Not surprisingly, Barbara Kingsolver has done it again. Published in 2012, *Flight Behavior* equals or surpasses some of her earlier work, with its interwoven multiple themes: impact of environment destruction, unfolding of a woman's character and modern complexities of rural existence.

Ideally, we encounter Dellarobia Turnbow, a restless farm wife planning an escape from a joyless marriage while engaging in an obsessive flirtation with a younger man. But apparently overnight the once-familiar mountain side next to her property has undergone an extraordinary change. Millions of Monarch butterfly, wings in motion, vibrate throughout the forest, creating her "miracle," irrevocably altering every familiar object and dissolving her resolve to abandon her family.

In short order, an environmental emergency is declared, scientists set up their headquarters to monitor this unique event and the once-serene Appalachian community confronts urban life head-on. Media opportunists, sightseers, and a remarkable researcher, each with their own agenda, swarm into Dellarobia's tight quarters, exposing her, her family and rural community to one of the most contentious issues of our time: climate change. How fitting. No one comes out unchanged in Kingsolver's brilliant scenario.

#### WWURA 2013 Calendar

**July 10**—Picnic –Whatcom Falls Park

**August 6**—Planning Meeting at Lakewood

**September 18**—Travelogue at Squalicum Yacht Club

**October 11**—Fall Luncheon at Northwood Hall

**November 20**—Travelogue at Squalicum Yacht Club

#### In the June Newsletter -

#### *Look For . . .*

- Information on the upcoming picnic
- Membership Renewal Forms
- Information about the Southern Africa Trip Margaret Loudon is planning.



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