



WWURA NEWS



February 2014

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

President's Message



Valentine Greetings to you all,

In wintery February our thoughts may be turning to chocolate, but I need to talk turkey with you. Our WWURA board needs help. WWURA runs solely on volunteers; we have no staff support from the university. We have nearly 165 members who enjoy the WWURA activities, book club, luncheons, informal dining and travelogues, but we need more of you to serve on the board and committees to keep our organization moving along. Currently we have board vacancies for the President-elect position, and Program, Hospitality and Travelogue chairs open. So please step up and volunteer!

Our Health committee chair Evelyn Ames notes that participating in WWURA activities and the board may be an excellent supplemental "health policy." "Studies show" that socializing and being part of an organization increases well-being and may keep our physical and cognitive faculties stronger. Our monthly board meetings are lively and fun, with coffee and refreshments provided. Consider joining us.

Email me at lmasland@comcast.net or call 676-9821 to chat about opportunities to serve.

Recently, Evelyn Ames organized a Brown Bag lunch at the REI Community Room with a guest speaker talking about osteoarthritis. She's planning another hour-long program on inflammation and arthritis for March. Stay tuned for details.

Our **March 19 travelogue** promises to be a very interesting presentation by **David Mauro** of his ascent up Mt. Everest. Since this is an adventure we will probably not attempt, it's a vicarious way to share in one of mountain climbing's world class experiences.

Inside:

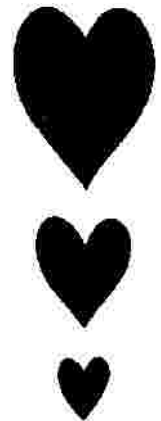
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Socializing begins at 6:30 at the Squalicum Yacht Club. January's presentation by Bob Moles was very well attended with over 40 people enjoying his travels in New Zealand.

Remember, we need volunteers to keep our WWURA organization and activities going! Let me hear from you.

- **Lynne Masland**

Looking forward to seeing many
of you on Valentine's Day
at our Winter Lunch,
Friday, February 14th
at Northwood Hall.



Our speaker, Gary McKinney, is a novelist, musician, and publisher. He will be entertaining us as he speaks about his "Life (so far) in Words and Music."

(Originally scheduled for the 7th, this luncheon was rescheduled for the 14th. Details are in the January newsletter.)

February 2014 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Medication Interactions: How Do They occur? What You Should Know?

“On average, seniors take six different medications, and more than 15% of seniors use at least 10 drugs at the same time. More often than not, this is polypharmacy: when patients are on multiple medications, more than are needed to improve and maintain their health. While there may be legitimate reasons for the use of multiple medications, it’s often the case that a number of the drugs are unnecessary and may even be harmful”

<http://lab.express-scripts.com/adherence/polypharmacy-how-much-is-too-much/>.

“A drug interaction can be defined as an interaction between a drug and another substance that prevents the drug from performing as expected. This definition applies to interactions of drugs with other drugs (drug-drug interactions), as well as drugs with food (drug-food interactions) and other substances”

(<http://www.rxlist.com/drug-interaction-checker.htm>.)

Medicine (drug) interactions fall into three broad categories:

Drug-drug interactions occur when two or more drugs react with each other. This may cause one to experience an unexpected side effect such as mixing a sedative to help one sleep with an antihistamine for allergies can slow reactions and make driving a car or operating machinery dangerous.

Drug-food/beverage interactions result from drugs reacting with foods or beverages (e.g., mixing alcohol with some drugs may cause a feeling of tiredness and/or lightheadedness, slow reactions, and lead to falls). Also, eating grapefruit with a cholesterol-lowering drug may interfere the absorption or metabolism of the drug.

Drug-condition interactions may occur when an existing medical condition makes certain drugs potentially harmful (e.g., a person with high blood pressure could experience an unwanted reaction if a nasal decongestant which contains a stimulant is taken.

<http://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/ucm163354.htm>

How do drug interactions occur? The interaction mechanism can result when there is an increase or decrease in absorption of a drug into the body, when there is a change in the distribution of the drug within the body, when alterations are made to the metabolism of the drug by the body, and when changes occur in the elimination of the drug from the body. “Most of the important drug interactions result from a change in the absorption, metabolism, or elimination of a drug. Drug interactions also may occur when two drugs that have similar (additive) effects or opposite (canceling) effects on the body are administered together. For example, there may be major sedation when two drugs that have sedation as side effects are given, for example, narcotics and antihistamines. Another source of drug interactions occurs when one drug alters the concentration of a substance that is normally present in the body. The alteration of this substance reduces or enhances the effect of another drug that is being taken. The drug interaction between warfarin (Coumadin) and vitamin K-containing products is a good example of this type of interaction. Warfarin acts by reducing the concentration of the active form of vitamin K in the body. Therefore, when vitamin K is taken, it reduces the effect of warfarin” (<http://www.rxlist.com/drug-interaction-checker.htm>)

Cause and Effect of Polypharmacy: “One major factor behind polypharmacy is that most seniors are under the care of several different specialist physicians who may not be aware of or as knowledgeable about medications the patient has been prescribed by other doctors. An Express Scripts study found that [seniors who see two different doctors](#) had an average of 27 prescription fills and were at risk for 10 medication errors each year. When the number of doctors caring for the senior increased to seven, prescription fills jumped to 52 and errors more than doubled (22) in a year.” See more at: <http://lab.express-scripts.com/adherence/polypharmacy-how-much-is-too-much/#sthash.agZW3HO.dpuf>

Drug Interactions and Over-the-Counter Medicines. OTC labels include important information about possible drug interactions. It is recommended that one read information included under “active ingredients” and “purposes.” Drug labels may change as new information becomes known.

<http://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/ucm163354.htm> Questions to ask doctor or pharmacist: Can I take it with other drugs? Should I avoid certain foods, beverages or other products? What are possible drug interaction signs I should know about? How will the drug work in my body? Is there more information available about the drug or my condition (in health and medical literature)?

Phytochemicals and medications. Diet is one of many factors that could alter the pharmacokinetics of drugs. An abstract from *J Food Sci.* 2011 May;76(4):R112-24. provides information about phytochemicals in fruits and vegetables and drugs: “It has been well established that complex mixtures of phytochemicals in fruits and vegetables can be beneficial for human health. Moreover, it is becoming increasingly apparent that phytochemicals can influence the pharmacological activity of drugs by modifying their absorption characteristics through interactions with drug transporters as well as drug-metabolizing enzyme systems. ... Alterations in cytochrome P450 and other enzyme activities may influence the fate of drugs subject to extensive first-pass metabolism.” “Many phytochemicals have been shown to have pharmacokinetic interactions with drugs.” This study looked at the phytochemistry and pharmacokinetic interactions of “grapefruit, orange, tangerine, grapes, cranberry, pomegranate, mango, guava, black raspberry, black mulberry, apple, broccoli, cauliflower, watercress, spinach, tomato, carrot, and avocado.” The conclusion was that “our knowledge of the potential risk of nutrient-drug interactions is still limited. Therefore, efforts to elucidate potential risks resulting from food-drug interactions should be intensified in order to prevent undesired and harmful clinical consequences” <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/m/pubmed/22417366/>. Several fruits and berries have recently been shown to contain agents that affect drug-metabolizing enzymes. Inhibiting cytochrome P450 3A4 (CYP3A4), which is the most important enzyme in drug metabolism, can “influence the pharmacological activity of drugs by modifying their absorption characteristics through interaction with drug transporters. Clearly, phytochemicals have the potential to alter the effectiveness of drugs, either impairing or exaggerating their pharmacological activity.”

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/m/pubmed/18084364/?i=2> HYPERLINK

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This web site (<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Medicine/medicine.htm>) provides information about alcohol interacting with popular painkillers and cough/cold/allergy remedies. Some medicines contain alcohol (a little bit of alcohol makes the medicine go down!) with some as much as 10 percent. Cough syrup and laxatives may have some of the highest alcohol concentrations.



Book Review

Another Book About the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

After writing last month's review of *My Promised Land* by Ari Shavit, I began recommending it to anyone who would listen. One friend in return recommended to me *The Lemon Tree* by Sandy Tolan, a book published in 2006. So I bought it, read it, and now I'm recommending it to you.

My Promised Land, a wonderful book, strives to convey the complexity of the ongoing agony of the conflict between Jews and Palestinians and of the claims to justice that each side can legitimately make. It does this by providing extensive treatment to a series of important events in the history of Israel, like the settlement movement or Israel's development of an atomic bomb. However, it provides only sketches of the surrounding history. *The Lemon Tree* takes a different approach. It tells the wonderful story of a friendship between an Israeli woman, Dalia Eshenazi Landau, and a Palestinian man, Bashir Khairi. It tells the story with engrossing, heartwarming, heart wrenching specificity. And it sketches the macro-history the surrounds their friendship—the development of Zionism, the formation of the British mandate in Palestine after World War I, the kibbutz movement of the 1920's, the Palestinian rebellion of the 1930's against the British mandate, the Holocaust of the 1940's, the UN resolution of 1947 providing for the partition of Palestine into two states, the 1948 War of Independence (according to Jews) or The Catastrophe (according to Palestinians). And more.

In one sense the story begins in 1936 when Ahmad Khairi builds a home for himself and his family in el Ramla, Palestine, and plants a lemon tree in the rear garden. This is the house into which his son Bashir is born in 1942 and from which in 1948 he and his family are forcibly evicted by victorious Jewish armed forces during the War of Independence/Catastrophe. And this is the house into which Dalia Eshkenazi's family--new refugees from Bulgaria--moved, Dalia an infant one year old.

Moving quickly forward, in 1967, just after the Six Day War, Bashir returns from the West Bank to
(cont'd on page 5)

WWU Employee Art Show March 10-21, 2014

WWURA artists and craftspeople in all media are invited to enter the 20th Annual WWU Employee Art Show. The show will open with a reception from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 11 in VU 565. Exhibit hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

The **deadline for entries is February 26**. For entry forms and event details, please visit the website at: <http://www.wwu.edu/artsandcraftsshow/>



Writers Corner

New Year's Day, 2014

The day came, misty, grey, chill
January first on Lopez Island
The beginning of another year.

We walked to Shark's Reef,
To the island's end.

Where seals and otters play.
Where kelp beds shift with the tide.
Where boulders spill down on gravel beach.

How many seals are asleep on the rocks?
One big white one, no two,
Maybe three.

A log drifts on the tide –
Its tail moves; that's four.
Further out three more float on submerged rocks.
Seven.

Three more slowly emerge against the grey reef.
Two babies. A dozen in all.
Two otters' brown heads bob up through kelp.

The sea is calm, light rains begins to fall.
How auspicious this start to the New Year.
How beautiful.

- Lynne Masland

February 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, Feb. 18th at 2:30 P.m. at Donna Moore's home at 346 Bayside Rd.

February's book is *The Lost Wife* by Alyson Richman (leader Evelyn Ames)

March's book is *Mr. Rosenblume's List* by Natasha Solomons. Available at the library under the title *Mr. Rosenblume's Dreams in English* (leader Chris Gerhold)

April's book is *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery

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

Meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at member's homes. We will meet February 25 at Janet Berg's home at 1029 16th St., 733-4654.

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.

Dvorak's *Rusalka*, Encore, February 12, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Borodin's *Prince Igor*, March 1, 2014, 9:00 a.m. Encore March 5, 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>

Book Review, cont'd from page 4)

Ramla (el Ramla to him) to visit the home from which he and his family were evicted nine years earlier. He knocks on the door. A young Jewish woman answers (Dalia, home alone, 19 years old). He asks if he might enter and see the home where he once lived. She hesitates, then agrees. Thus begins a life-long friendship that weathers severe challenges as Bashir becomes a Palestinian activist and experiences multiple instances of imprisonment and physical abuse by Israeli authorities and Dalia becomes convinced in her Zionist convictions. A resolution on one level occurs when Dalia, on a visit to Bashir and his family in the West Bank, asks Bashir what she should do with the house (she has inherited it but lives elsewhere with her husband) and Bashir suggests that she establish a day care center for Palestinian children. And she does.

It is a compelling narrative which furnishes empathetic insights into the experiences of both Israeli and Palestinian.

- Bob McDonnell

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WWURA Calendar

February 2014

- 14—WWURA Winter Lunch
- 26—Deadline-Entries for Art Show

March 2014

- 4—Board Meeting
- 10-21— WWU Employee Art Show
- 19—Travelogue—Climbing Mt.
Everest

April 2014

- 1— Board Meeting
- 11— Spring Lunch
- 16— Travelogue-Portugal and
Southern France

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