



WWURA NEWS



November 2014

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff



President's Note

Standard time is back. The ghosts and goblins are put to rest for another year and WWURA is getting ready for the November travelogue (Wednesday the 19th) and December holiday party (Wednesday the 17th).

Your WWURA Board has amended the By-laws and has also proposed amendments to the Constitution. Approval of amendments to the WWURA Constitution requires members' to vote for approval. Only minor changes were made:

Under Article V, (2) omit "and shall not be eligible to serve consecutive terms";

Article V, (5) change "Winter" to "Spring" Newsletter;

Article V, (6) insert "by electronic and/or USPS mail";

Article V, (8) omit "The Past President is not eligible for election to another office in the succeeding year";

Article VII. (2) omit "the meeting at which" since Article VII (1) allows the vote to be taken by written poll.

A ballot for voting approval or non-approval is included on page 6 in this newsletter. To view the entire proposed amended version of WWURA's Constitution, go to WWURA's web site and click on Constitution www.wwu.edu/wwura

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Nov. 19 Travelogue Features Deb Dempsey, Columbia River Bar Pilot

Columbia River Bar Pilot Captain **Deb Dempsey** will talk about her experiences as a ship's officer aboard passenger-carrying cargo vessels and as a Columbia River Bar pilot. Her presentation is set for **Wednesday, Nov. 19** at the **Squalicum Yacht Club**, 2633 South Harbor Loop Rd., Bellingham. Socializing, 6:30 p.m.; presentation, 7:00 p.m.

The Columbia River bar can be one of the roughest pieces of water anywhere, a place where Pacific Ocean storms meet outflow from the river.



Bar pilots are taken out by boat in all weather to ships waiting to cross the bar. After the ships have entered the Columbia River, the bar pilot disembarks down a ladder, and a river pilot boards to take the vessel up the river to its destination. A compelling speaker, Dempsey is currently an owner of the Bellingham Bay Community Boating Center in Fairhaven, where kayaks, canoes, and sailboats are available for rental.

Teaching people about boating is her passion.

Members whose last names begin with **A through L** please bring a dessert to share.

WWURA provides coffee and tea; some members bring wine. Contact a board member if you need a ride.

A small donation of \$2/person; \$3/couple is requested.

Book Review

The Signature of All Things by Elizabeth Gilbert: a review

Our author of today's novel is also the author of *Eat, Pray, Love* – much loved and much reviled. In it, Gilbert won me over by the sheer authenticity of her voice. She repulsed many readers by focusing on herself. In *The Signature of All Things*, Gilbert redeems herself—if she needs redeeming—with a beautifully told tale of a fascinating woman.

Signature is the story of Alma Whittaker, a brilliant woman born in 1800 who lives through most of the 19th century. Her brilliance shines through in mathematics, languages, literature, but most of all in biology. The novel begins with the boyhood escapades of her father, who thrives in England as a thief of rare plants, sails on Captain Cook's third voyage as a sort of assistant to Cook's botanist, travels the world, and ends as a savvy and thus wealthy purveyor of plants, especially rare and expensive ones, in Philadelphia. He is also a world-class curmudgeon. Thus Alma is born to privilege by her father's wealth, his intelligence, and his spectacular library.

Ms. Gilbert has populated her novel with a rich cast of beautifully drawn, highly individual characters. Among them is Prudence, Alma's beautiful, serious-minded adopted sister. Another is Retta, a fey girl, who attaches herself to Alma and Prudence and whose pixy qualities end in madness. There's also Ambrose Pike, who enters Alma's world and fascinates her with his mind and soul. They marry. Unfortunately for Alma, Ambrose desires not to have a body. Sent to a Whittaker vanilla plantation in Tahiti, after some years he dies. Seeking to understand him, Alma travels by ship around the Horn to Tahiti and meets, better to say collides with, Tomorrow Morning, a beautiful, powerful, magnetic Tahitian man of mysterious power. The cast of fascinating characters goes on, each drawn with particularity and fervor.

As her father's successor in business, Alma becomes a renowned expert on mosses. It is in pondering the variation in mosses that Alma arrives at, independently from Darwin, a theory of natural selection to explain variation in all life forms. She refuses to publish her theory because she considers it incomplete since she cannot explain by natural selection humankind's altruism, its selflessness—of which she is a complicated example. In the end, at age eighty-three, Alma achieves a sense of satisfaction, partly through a meeting with Alfred Russel Wallace, Darwin's barely recognized parallel developer of a theory of evolution.

But this is the barest hint of the riches of the novel. Alma father's travels the world. Alma herself travels to Tahiti and experiences exotic adventure. She spends her final years in Holland as head of the world's foremost botanic firm.

It's a rich tale, richly told. It fascinated me.

- Bob McDonnell



Cushion Moss, Fern Moss & Patridge Berry

Rock Cap Moss Dicronum



NOVEMBER 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, Nov. 18th at 2:30 p.m. at Donna Moore's home at 346 Bayside Rd.

November's book is *Empire of the Summer Moon* by S. C. Gwynne

December's book is *Short Night of the Shadow Catcher* by Tim Egan

BRIDGE GROUP--Barb Evans, 360-650-9724, <barbandhoward@comcast.net

We will meet Tuesday, November 25th at 1:30 p.m. at Janet Berg's home, 1029 16th St.,

733-4654, <janetlila@hotmail.com

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

Metropolitan Opera HD Series for 2014-2015, 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.

November 22 - Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*

Encore - November 26 at 6:30 p.m.

December 13 - Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg*

Lincoln Theater in Mt. Vernon: <http://www.lincolntheatre.org/welcome> ([click on calendar](#))

Check the Pickford Film Center for European opera showings:

<http://pickfordfilmcenter.org/>

SKIING - Charlie Way, 360-734-0649. Winter is coming!! Check with Charlie if you are interested in skiing.

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

Meets twice a month. The group is kept small so there is time for reading and critiquing each other's work.

President's Note, *cont'd*

Anyone interested in putting archival skills to use? We are looking for someone to archive the history of WWURA. Please let Board members know if this task interests you!

We welcome your comments about WWURA events, our Newsletter and encourage members to promote WWURA membership to those who have recently retired from WWU or from other institutions and those who participate in WWU activities (e.g., Academy for Lifelong Learning).

Hope to see you at the upcoming travelogue. View the exploits of a Columbia River Bar Pilot!

- Evelyn Ames

November 2014 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Symptoms/Transmission/Treatment/Prevention of Seasonal Flu

Historically, influenza has been documented since early times (Egyptian/Greek/Roman). According to the World Health Organization, influenza has historically been a major threat to human health. "Every year seasonal influenza affects from 5% to 15% of the world's population and causes an estimated 250 000 to 500 000 deaths worldwide. Novel influenza A virus strains can cause sporadic pandemics, such as the 1918 "Spanish flu" that killed at least 3% of the world's population. Although recent influenza pandemics, including the A (H1N1) pandemic in 2009, have been less severe, they nevertheless serve as vivid reminders of people's vulnerability to communicable respiratory viruses." [Bulletin of the World Health Organization Volume 90, Number 4, April 2012, 245-320](#). It was estimated that the 1918 (a virulent H1N1 influenza) "killed an estimated 50 million people worldwide. The illness quickly created respiratory distress and pneumonia in its victims with a distinct peak of deaths in young adults 20–40 years of age." (<http://www.historyofinfluenza.com/spanish.aspx>)

According to CDC (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/flu-season-2014-2015.htm>), it is not possible to predict what this flu season will be like. Flu seasons are unpredictable and the timing, severity, and length of the season usually varies from one season to another. For more information about how flu viruses change, visit [How the Flu Virus Can Change](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/viruses/change.htm)(<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/viruses/change.htm>). Flu activity most commonly peaks in the U.S. between December and February, but seasonal flu activity can begin as early as October and continue to occur as late as May.

Causes of influenza (flu): The flu, a contagious upper respiratory illness, is caused by one of several flu viruses and can cause mild to severe illness. It usually comes on suddenly and may include symptoms of fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, and more likely in children, possible stomach symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. The most familiar aspect of the flu is the way it can "knock you off your feet." The fever typically tends to decline on the second or third day. Flu viruses are classified as Types A, B, and C; Type A has a number of subtypes. The viruses are frequently named after the geographical locations from which the viruses originate (e.g., Hong Kong, Russian, Asian, etc.). Individuals most vulnerable to serious effects of the flu are older adults, infants, and immune-compromised persons. (*January 2009 WWURA Health Notes*). Also, [People at risk: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm) and [American Indians and Alaskan Natives](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/native/protect_circle_life_factsheet.pdf)[1.1 MB, 2 pages](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/native/protect_circle_life_factsheet.pdf).

Transmitting the flu: The main transmission way is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes ("droplet spread"). For example, touching contaminated surfaces where people have coughed or sneezed on places such as phones, tables, money and then touching one's nose or mouth. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5 days **after** becoming sick. Children may pass the virus for longer than seven days. (*January 2009 WWURA Health Notes*).

Treatment: Antiviral drugs are used in treating the flu. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) used against the flu. Two FDA-approved influenza antiviral drugs recommended by CDC this season are Tamiflu® (generic name oseltamivir) and Relenza® (generic name zanamivir) are not sold over-the-counter. They are available only with a prescription from a doctor or health care provider. Antiviral drugs differ from antibiotics, which fight against bacterial infections. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/aHYPERLINK> "<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/antivirals/index.htm>"nHYPERLINK "<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/antivirals/index.htm>"tivirals/index.htm. Information about taking care of yourself and taking care of others with flu is at this site, too.

Writing Group

Our dear friend and sister writer Amelia Pryor passed away on Oct. 17, 2014. Evelyn Wright has written this poem to remember Amelia as a witty, clever writer. Each meeting we looked forward to more adventures with her Spanish lover Valentin. We will miss Amelia and her storytelling talent.

A Story for Amelia

Enraptured , we waited for each chapter
of her unfolding adventures , her quest
for love in España. We held our breath
when she headed for the village taberna
and drank vino tinto with Valentin.
Fearless, she dropped by his casa.
He, dauntless and domestic, cooked something
up and washed the dishes.

Is this story
true? we wanted to know. She nodded,
and promised a new chapter next week,
celebrating love and memory,
reading to the end of the story.

- Evelyn Wright

Health Notes, cont'd

Prevention: Medical opinion is that a flu vaccine is still the first and best way to prevent influenza. Washing hands and covering sneezes are important, too!

Is it a cold or is it influenza? In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm>

WWURA Calendar

November 2014

- 4—Board Meeting
- 19—Travelogue—"Life of a Columbia River Bar Pilot"

December 2014

- 2—Board Meeting
- 17—*Holiday Party*

January 2015

- 6—Board Meeting
- 21—Travelogue

WWURA's Team

WWURA's Jingle Bell Run/Walk team is looking for more people to register for our team. *You don't have to walk* but *donations* to our team *help* with local programs and research about arthritis.

Check the October Newsletter for directions for registering on-line.

Thanks, Evelyn Ames



Ballot for Revisions to WWURA's Constitution

Please indicate your approval or disapproval of the following proposed changes to WWURA's Constitution. WWURA's Constitution (with proposed amendments) can be found on our website < www.wvu.edu/wwura

Under Article V, (2) omit "and shall not be eligible to serve consecutive terms"; Yes ___ No ___

Article V, (5) change "Winter" to "Spring" Newsletter; Yes ___ No ___

Article V, (6) insert "by electronic and/or USPS mail"; Yes ___ No ___

Article V, (8) omit "The Past President is not eligible for election to another office in the succeeding year";

Yes ___ No ___

Article VII. (2) omit "the meeting at which" since Article VII (1) allows the vote to be taken by written poll.

Yes ___ No ___

Return this ballot to **Evelyn Ames**, 18 Clematis Lane, Bellingham, WA 98229 by **December 10, 2014**.

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