



# WWURA NEWS



February 2015

[www.wwu.edu/wwura](http://www.wwu.edu/wwura)

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff



## President's Note

Your fun loving Board of Directors is undertaking a new project: updating the old WWURA brochure to give it color and more pizzazz. We have contacted

the Department of Communications at Western to ask if a student could assist in the graphic technicalities. If you have such techie skills, we would love to have you help us. Our timeline is to have it ready by May to distribute at President Shepard's retirement dinner and for the pre-retirement benefits fair. Both are scheduled near the end of May. We want to include a few pictures of members socializing, having fun and enjoying various adventures. If you have pictures that highlight WWURA activities, consider putting them on a flash drive and give to Barbara Evans. Also, we are going to develop a DVD that highlights various WWURA interest group activities (informal dining, travel, book club, writing group, bridge group, and skiing group and the travelogues and luncheons). If you have some great photos to share, copy them to a flash drive and give to me (Evelyn Ames).

Please note the request from Ron Ward about volunteering and/or becoming a member of the Board of Directors. Happy Valentine's Day!

- Evelyn Ames

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## Invitation

Our WWURA Board of Directors is pleased at this time to invite members to serve on the Board itself or to participate in one of the organization's several committees:

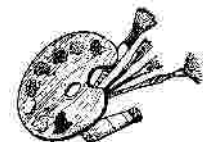
*Hospitality, Membership, Program, Travel, or Travelogue.* Descriptions of committee responsibilities are readily available from President Evelyn Ames

(360-734-3184) [Evelyn.Ames@wwu.edu](mailto:Evelyn.Ames@wwu.edu).



President-Elect Ron Ward chairs the nominations committee; let him know if you are interested in running for a position as Director: [ron.ward740@gmail.com](mailto:ron.ward740@gmail.com) (425-299-4924). Please consider getting involved in one of these ways as a means to stay in touch with university friends/associates as well as to have fun!

## Artists Wanted



**Sending out a call to enter to past exhibitors!**

**Artists wanted for 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Employee Art Show**

Entries are open to ALL full / part-time faculty & staff

**Entry deadline: Wed., February 25, 2015**

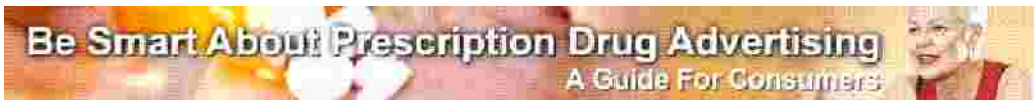
On-line entry form & event details:

<http://www.wwu.edu/artscraftsshow/entryforms.shtml>

Questions? Email [PSO@wwu.edu](mailto:PSO@wwu.edu)

## February 2015 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

### Caution: Drug advertisements may be hazardous to your health!



<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/PrescriptionDrugAdvertising/ucm072077.htm>

It does not go without notice (and with some irritation) how frequently drug advertisements (both prescription and over-the-counter) fill the media, especially television, newspapers and the internet. If you think oversight of food safety is chaotic, so too is oversight of drug safety, efficacy, and advertisement. "A drug is "prescription only" when medical professionals must supervise its use because patients are not able to use the drug safely on their own. Because of this, Congress laid out different requirements for prescription and non-prescription or "over-the-counter" drugs. Congress also gave the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authority to oversee prescription drug ads. In turn, the FDA passed regulations detailing how it would enforce those requirements. These regulations are also known as "rules." However, while the FDA oversees ads for prescription drugs, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) oversees ads for over-the-counter (non-prescription) drugs."

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/PrescriptionDrugAdvertising/ucm072077.htm>

**What Is Direct-to-Consumer Drug Advertising?** "DTCPA can be defined as an effort (usually via popular media) made by a pharmaceutical company to promote its prescription products directly to patients.<sup>4</sup> The U.S. and New Zealand are the only countries that allow DTCPA that includes product claims.<sup>4</sup> Most other countries don't allow DTCPA at all; however, Canada does allow ads that mention either the product or the indication, but not both.<sup>10, 11</sup> The pharmaceutical industry and lobby groups have tried unsuccessfully to overturn bans against DTCPA in Canada and other countries or regions, such as in the European Union (EU).<sup>12, 13</sup> Notably, in 2008, 22 of the 27 EU member states voted against proposed legislation that would have allowed even limited "information to patients" to be provided.<sup>13</sup>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3278148/>

"Researchers Adrienne E. Faerber of The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy & Clinical Practice and David H. Kreling of The University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy found that potentially misleading claims are prevalent throughout consumer-targeted prescription and non-prescription drug advertisements on television." ... "Over the past 15 years, researchers and policymakers have debated whether drug advertising informs consumers about new drugs, or persuades consumers to take medicines that they may not need. "Healthcare consumers need unrestricted access to high-quality information about health," said Faerber of The Dartmouth Institute, "but these TV drug ads had misleading statements that omitted or exaggerated information. These results conflict with arguments that drug ads are helping inform consumers."

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/09/130916140455.htm>

Researchers found false claims, (factually false or unsubstantiated) rare (only 1 in 10 claims false). False advertising is illegal and can lead to criminal and civil penalties. "Most claims were potentially misleading -- 6 in 10 claims left out important information, exaggerated information, provided opinions, or made meaningless associations with lifestyles." "False or potentially misleading claims may be more frequent in over-the-counter drug ads than ads for prescription drugs -- 6 of 10 claims in prescription drug ads were misleading or false, while 8 of 10 claims in OTC drug ads were misleading or false."

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/09/130916140455.htm>

Food for thought: how many hours each year of television drug advertising do you watch compared to how many yearly hours/minutes of visits with your primary care physician? DTC advertising has been subject to

## Health Notes, *cont'd*

charges such as it encourages consumers to pressure doctors for drugs they don't need, glamorizes drugs that have later been found to have dangerous side effects, and promotes medical drugs for recreation uses (e.g., erectile-dysfunction drugs).

Significant dates Food and Drug Law History: [www.HYPERLINK](http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/WhatWeDo/History/Milestones/ucm128305.htm)  
"<http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/WhatWeDo/History/Milestones/ucm128305.htm>"  
[fda.gov/AboutFDA/WhatWeDo/History/Milestones/ucm128305.htm](http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/WhatWeDo/History/Milestones/ucm128305.htm)

Other sites to consider: <http://www.commercialalert.org/news/archive/2006/10/ten-years-later-direct-to-consumer-drug-advertising> (up through 2014) and <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3278148/> (more info here)

Interested in providing input in planning the program for Arthritis Foundation's Bone and Joint Symposium on Saturday, October 3 at Bellingham Technical College? Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZGG2B9G>; respond to 7 questions.

## Poetry Corner

### MEMORY

Often the things that trigger  
A memory are elusive.  
Pictures from the past  
Just flash unbidden on the inner  
Screen, or a madeleine-like  
Trigger floods awareness.

The bits of the past seem so  
True: "That's what happened."  
If time travel were possible  
And all forward experience  
Were wiped away - What  
Would the former self really  
Be experiencing?

When we are gone to another  
Realm what of our present reality  
Might remain - and will  
It seem true - or a constructed  
Fiction?

- by **Pat Clarke**

### *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande: a Review

This is an important book. It has important implications for most of us, is a deeply felt book about that most difficult topic, the final days of our “being mortal.” Atul Gawande, our author, is eminently qualified to write it. The son of immigrants from India, both of whom are or were physicians, Gawande is a graduate of Harvard Medical School where he now teaches, while also being a best selling author and a staff writer for *The New Yorker*.

Gawande explores our society’s attempts and those of the medical profession to “build a health care system that will actually help people achieve what’s most important to them at the end of their lives.” Early in the book, he relates the final days of his grandfather who died in India at the age of 110, surrounded, supported, and cared for by his family. In the latter part of the book, he tells how he and his father struggled to achieve something similar here in America for his father—and how difficult it was, despite both of them being physicians. Gawande tells both stories with heartfelt involvement and compassion.

He also traces in some detail how our society has developed several institutions to help people in their final months: the county poor home, the nursing home, assisted living homes, hospice. Gawande points out how each of those institutions has fallen short of providing the kind of care that we would all want for ourselves and for those we love. At one point, he draws attention powerfully to how some nursing homes and prisons are seen to resemble each other.

Throughout the book, Gawande enriches his telling with the experiences, in their final days, of patients of his and of people who were important to him. He focuses again and again on the importance of the conversations between the patient, the physician, and the patient’s family and says, importantly, “No one conversation can address” all the concerns of those days, and adds, equally importantly, that “the process requires as much listening as talking.”

Toward the end of the book, Gawande writes briefly about the Village Movement, which began with the Beacon Hill Village in Boston. A local Village organizes all the kinds of help a person wishing to continue living in his or her own home would need from a handyman to in-home nursing care. He mentions it because a Village had recently been organized in Athens, Ohio, where his parents lived, and thus was an option for his father. When the Gawandes were faced with the choice between the Athens Village and hospice, they chose hospice. (Good news: efforts are now afoot to organize a Bellingham village called Bellingham At Home.)

Reading *Being Mortal* has given me a new perspective on my own final health directives, and I’ll find out more about Bellingham At Home. I think almost everyone would benefit from reading *Being Mortal* and pondering its implications.

**- Bob McDonnell**



## 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](mailto:dfmoore12@gmail.com)

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

February's book is *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel Brown

March 17, 2015: Book is *No Ordinary Time* by Doris Kearns Goodwin

BRIDGE GROUP--Caryl Hinckley, 360-734-3728, <[carylchinckley@hotmail.com](mailto:carylchinckley@hotmail.com)

We will meet February 24th. Location to be announced.

INFORMAL DINING -- Janet Berg, 360-733-4654, <[janetlila@hotmail.com](mailto:janetlila@hotmail.com)

Meets in small groups each month at member's homes.

OPERA GROUP--Evelyn Ames, 360-734-3184, <[evelyn.ames@wwu.edu](mailto: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 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.

February 14 - Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta* / Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* (new production)

Encore - February 18

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. Winter is here!! Check with Charlie if you are interested in skiing.

WRITER'S GROUP - Evelyn Wright, 676-0227, <[ewright410@comcast.net](mailto:ewright410@comcast.net)> Meets twice a month. The groups are kept small so there is time for reading and critiquing each other's work.

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## WWURA Calendar

### February 2015

3- Board Meeting

13- WWURA Luncheon—Speaker, **Professor Laura Laffrado** on “The Ella Higginson Project”

### March 2015

3 - Board Meeting

18—Travelogue—Africa with **Margaret Loudon**

### April 2015

7—Board Meeting

10—WWURA Lunch, **Fred Moody**, Speaker

15—Travelogue



**HAPPY**  
**VALENTINE'S**  
*Day*

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