



WWURA NEWS

February 2016

www.wvu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

President's Note for February

Well, here we are, more than half-way through WWURA's year, fresh off a wintry Travelogue on Iceland with presenter Ariel Lennon and looking forward to our Winter Luncheon with speaker **Richard Mollette**. Be sure to read the info regarding the Luncheon and get your reservations in on time, please.

February is always an interesting month with Groundhog Day, Superbowl Sunday, Chinese New Year's, Mardi Gras, Valentine's Day, President's Day, Oscar Night, and in this very special year, Leap Day! Just think, you have the gift of 24 extra hours to spend however you wish.

This is also the time of year when our Nominating Committee seeks WWURA members who would like to run for election to a position as Director and serve on our Board. We will elect three new Directors to replace others who have completed their years of service and will be rolling off the Board. We also welcome those who would like to serve on any of our standing committees. See our Special Invitation (page 5) and respond to the address given, if interested.

Finally, I would encourage those of you who are able to make a donation to our Scholarship Fund and support our two Western students. Mail your checks, made out to WWURA and designated for scholarships, to Barbara Evans/ 715 N. Garden St. #502, Bellingham, WA 98225.

Hope to see a good crowd for our Luncheon on Friday, February 19, at Northwood Hall.

- Ron Ward

WWURA Winter Luncheon

Friday, February 19, 2016

Northwood Hall, 11:30 a.m.
3240 Northwest Avenue, Bellingham

Our presenter will be **Richard Mollette**, a highly entertaining speaker, who will discuss what stimulated the development of colleges in the Colonial Era of the U.S. and which were the first six. What was the impact they had on the development of our nation and what was to become an interesting irony down the line.

Richard Mollette retired as a U.S. history teacher from Seattle. He was instrumental in introducing new curriculum based on primary source material, a key component in ethno-history which is a combination of anthropology and history. He holds a B.A. in sociology from M.A. in anthropology from the City University of New York. For several years he served as a professional Education Advisory Board member at Seattle Pacific University.

Some of you will remember Richard Mollette for his colorful presentations at the Academy for Lifelong Learning this past Fall and can attest to his engaging manner. Don't miss this opportunity to hear him speak!!

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February 2016 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Ear Buds/Earphones and Noise Induced Hearing Loss

Have you wondered how those small earbuds handed out by flight attendants on airplanes affect your hearing as well as how come they don't fit in your ears! Technological advances have made it possible for people to insert (or try to insert) these small devices into their outer ears to listen to music, book readings, or whatever while walking, sitting, flying, driving, and exercising. These personal sound systems (e.g., I-Pod, MP3) use a variety of amplification systems that come in many shapes and sizes of headphones and earphones. The devices can be worn for extended periods of time and in many locations (airplanes, gymnasiums, homes, buses). Questions we should be asking are: What are these devices doing to our hearing and what affect will long term use be on young peoples' hearing? If you can hear sound coming from a person wearing headphones or earphones, it indicates the sound is too loud and over an extended period can lead to permanent hearing loss. If you are the one wearing headphones/earbuds, the volume is too loud if someone standing near you can hear what you are listening to. If you are one of many who say the buds don't fit, then don't use them.

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders reports that every day people experience environmental sounds from television, radio, household appliances (vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, food processors), and traffic. Normally, these sounds are at safe levels. But sounds can be harmful when they are too loud, even for a brief time, or when they are both loud and long-lasting. Such sounds can damage sensitive structures in the inner ear and cause noise-induced hearing loss. Healthy hair cells send electrical impulses to the brain. When these hair cells are damaged by loud sound, they cannot send impulses for interpretation. Hair cells in the ears cannot be repaired or "fixed."

In general, most portable stereo music systems produce sound in the range of 95-108 dB. Decibels above 85 are consider potentially harmful to hearing. Loudness/time facts using decibel as the unit of measurement suggest that at 115 dB, damage will occur after 15 minutes of exposure per day. At 120 plus, damage occurs almost immediately. "Most MP3 players today can produce sounds up to 120 decibels, equivalent to a sound level at a rock concert. At that level, **hearing loss can occur after only about an hour and 15 minutes.**" Examples of noise levels: 130 dB (jackhammer); 120 dB (jet plane takeoff, siren), 110 dB (some MP3 players, model airplane, chain saw), 106 dB (gas lawn mower, snow blower), 100 dB (hand drill), 90 dB (subway, passing motorcycle), 80-90 dB (blow dryer, kitchen blender, food processor). A simple rule of thumb is the louder the noise and the longer the exposure, the greater the chance of damaging one's hearing. Audiologists recommend no more than an hour at one time of using these devices. Give the ears a rest! Note: Those small earbud style headphones do not block outside sounds. Maybe that is why users tend to turn up the volume! Also, the harder one exercises, the higher the volume of the device. Researchers have found that people who use devices while exercising in gyms tend to turn up the volume to "shut out" noise of the equipment, noise of others, and their own huffing and puffing. They say loud music "pumps" them up.



Simple but useful hints for using bud-style headphones: decrease amount of time using them; turn down the volume; use 60:60 rule (listen to music at 60% of volume for no more than 60 minutes a day); wear older muff-type headphones or noise-reducing headphones; give ears time to recover after they have been exposed to loud noise (sort of noise detox!). Don't block out noise with noise (from MP3 or I-Pod)!

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 at 2:30 Tuesday, February 16th at the home of Donna Moore, 1200 Birch Falls Drive.

February's book is *Leaving Before the Rains Come* by Alexandra Fuller

March's book is *A Spool of Blue Thread* by Anne Tyler

BRIDGE GROUP--Nicholas Bullat, 360-770-7270 <gmb.maestro@q.com>

The Bridge Group will meet at 1:30 pm, February 23rd at Carol Radke's home, 508 Lyla Lane, 733-5876.

INFORMAL DINING -- Janet Berg, 360-733-4654, <janetlila@hotmail.com>

Meetings will resume in January 2016.

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

Web site for The MET HD: <https://www.metopera.org/Season/InCinemas/>.

and for the Skagit Opera: <http://skagitopera.org/performances/>

Locations for MET HD: Barkley Film Center and Lincoln Theater in Mt. Vernon. Skagit Opera is at McIntyre Hall in Mt. Vernon. At various times the Pickford Film Center offers opera, ballet, and theater productions from Europe venues.

Schedule for Met HD

March 5, *Manon Lescaut* by Puchini, Encore March 9.

SKIING - Charlie Way, 360-734-0649 <cbway@aol.com>

Mt. Baker is Open!! Call Charlie if you are interested.

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.



We are thinking of adding a Play Reading Interest Group.
If this sounds like fun to you, call or email Barb Evans,
650-9724 or <barbandhoward@comcast.net>

Travel Committee News

MIR Corporation in Seattle, which has taken groups to Russia for 30 years, has arranged a custom tour for WWURA and friends to visit Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Kalingrad September 28– October 10, 2016. This cultural tour will highlight museums and musical events as well as wonderful sightseeing. Information will be available at the February Luncheon or by contacting

Kathy Whitmer

(Kathrynwhitmer@comcast.net).

WWURA 2016 Calendar

February

2 Board Meeting

19 WWURA Lunch-Speaker, Richard Mollette

March

1 Board Meeting

16 Travelogue—Basque Area of Spain

April

5 Board Meeting

8 WWURA Luncheon

20 Travelogue

Book Review

The Big Short: book and movie

Yes, both the current movie and the book from 2010, now newly reissued in paperback and on the NY *Times* bestseller list again. The book by Michael Lewis was published shortly after the catastrophic financial meltdown of 2007 and 2008. It explains with marvelous clarity how our real estate enthusiasm and the sub-prime mortgage market combined to create first a bubble and then its ensuing crash. To do this, he identifies several people who early on smelled something fishy about that combination. They are (a) an MD with Aspergers who now heads a small investment fund, (b) the leader of a small investment team mostly independent of but operating under the aegis of Morgan Stanley, and (c) two men in their late twenties operating their own small (\$200 million) investment partnership.

Following each of them allows him to create a fascinating narrative into the realms of high finance, low morals, and culpable ignorance. Along the way, Lewis takes time to explain the several sophisticated financial instruments that played such a central role in the bubble and in the crash. You know, the ARM, the tranche, the credit default swap, the collateralized debt obligation. He makes clear how all the players in the game were involved: the big banks, their greedy (I have tried to avoid that word, but I can't) employees, the mortgage originators, the financial rating agencies.

At the bottom of the situation lurked the sub-prime mortgages, sold by mortgage originators to unsuspecting people who just wanted to own a home, under conditions that virtually guaranteed their failure. Mortgage originators sold ARMs—adjustable rate mortgages—with a low teaser rate of interest that would adjust upwards to a rate that the new home owners could not possible pay—since the mortgages they qualified for were cynically called NINAs (no income, no assets) or (no documentation of the borrowers' financial state).

The movie—a delight—has been nominated for 4 Oscars: best picture, director, supporting actor, adapted screen play. Read the book or see the movie. Better yet, do both.

- Bob McDonnell

Health Notes, *cont'd from page 2*

Some resources: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association:

<http://www.asha.org/public/hearing/Noise/>

<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/pages/noise.aspx>;

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/noise/signs.htm>;

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/hearing-problems/Pages/tips-to-protect-hearing.aspx>

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000495.htm>

<http://www.webmd.com/children/features/hearing-loss-mp3s>

<http://kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/earbuds.html>

<http://www.osteopathic.org/osteopathic-health/about-your-health/health-conditions-library/general-health/Pages/headphone-safety.aspx>

<http://www.healthyhearing.com/content/articles/Hearing-loss/Causes/45680-Hearing-loss-causes-gym>

Writer's Group

Whatever you were meant to do —
Do it now!

Leaning into the future
the next thing,
Time feels infinite
there will always be more
missing the now
What were you saying?
Sorry I wasn't listening
Is it death I am rushing to meet?
How can that be?
I love life!
I love the changing skies, loved ones' faces
The colors of the bay going from gray to blue
The wind in the trees and the stars.
What is this pull taking me away
From all that I love,
Pulling me toward my greatest fear?

-Pat Clarke
(on my sister's birthday)

Tragedy: She died five minutes before the last
episode of *Downton Abbey*.

- Evelyn Wright

Special Invitation

Our WWURA Board of Directors is pleased at this time to invite members to volunteer to run for office as a Director of WWURA for a three-year term. If you are interested, contact President Ron Ward to let him know at:

ron.ward740@gmail.com (425-299-4924).



If you would prefer to participate on one of the organization's several committees: Hospitality, Membership, Program, Travel, or Travelogue, you may obtain detailed descriptions of the various committee responsibilities from Past President Evelyn Ames (360-734-3184)

evelyn.ames@wwu.edu.

Reservation Form

WWURA Winter Luncheon
11:30 a.m., Friday, February 19, 2016
Northwood Hall , 3240 Northwest Avenue

Name(s) _____

Address or Phone Number _____

Amount Enclosed _____ (\$15 member, \$18 for non-member)

Reservation Deadline is Monday, February 15, 2016

Make your **check payable to WWURA** and **mail** with this form to **Margie Belzek**, 5337 Bellaire Dive, Bellingham, WA 98226. Questions? Call Margie at 360-714-1156.

Need a ride? Check here _____ Phone number _____

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