



WWURA NEWS

December 2017

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

President's Note

What beautiful weather we are having. I've been busy doing all the fall cleanup I didn't get done due to all the rain. Hope you are enjoying the weather and getting out to visit family and friends, see all the decorations, and attend concerts, plays, the Jingle Bell Run and other festivities at this time of year. As we enjoy this special season of the year please don't forget those less fortunate, by donating a few extra cans or boxes to the Food Bank, or putting a little extra in the Salvation Army kettle. You might also donate to Toys for Tots or, if you prefer, donate to your favorite charities (WWURA Scholarship) as the year winds down.

Our board has been busy this month planning the Holiday Party. All WWURA members are invited to come help us celebrate the holidays together on Wednesday, December 20th at the Squalicum Yacht Club. Our celebration begins with a decorating party at 2 pm (all are welcome to join us in making the yacht club a festive scene) followed by a social time at 6 pm and dinner at 6:30. Meat, coffee and tea are provided by the board and our members bring the side dishes, salads and desserts to share. Our favorite keyboardist, **Lou Lippman**, will be there to play background music. Be sure to mail your check and registration form (*see page 5*) by the deadline **Saturday, December 16th** and join us for this joyous occasion.

We have been busy planning lots of exciting luncheon programs and travelogues for the remainder of the WWURA year. Please note the new date for the April luncheon. It has been changed to Friday, April 13, 2018.

As 2017 comes to a close, I wish you good health, good weather, rewarding friendships and many exciting adventures in 2018. See you at the party!

- Peggy Loudon

Annual Holiday Party Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Squalicum Yacht Club
2633 South Harbor Loop Rd.

“Celebrate the holidays with friends, good food and lovely music”

- Social gathering—6 p.m.
- Potluck dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. There will be turkey, ham, coffee and tea plus potluck items as assigned below.
- Bring your own wine or soft drink, if you wish.
- Music by keyboardist Lou Lippman
- Bring your own plates and flatware.
- Cost is \$7 per person.
- Please bring a dish (to share) as listed below.
- Last names beginning with **A-G** bring a **dessert**, **H-Q** bring a **hot dish** (such as a vegetable, potato/yam, or bean dish); and **R-Z** bring a **salad**.

The \$7 fee per person covers the cost of the hall, music, and some food.

Deadline for reservations is Saturday, December 16. Mail your check and reservation form (*found on page 5*) to **Chris Gerhold, 829 Racine St. Bellingham, WA 98229.** Questions? Call Chris at **733-9265**.

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December 2017 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Change December Blues to December Cheer!



As a noun, blues is defined as melancholy, depressed spirits, despondency (e.g., rainy days make me feel blue). Cheer as a verb or noun is to shout for joy or encouragement, to give support, or to inject optimism in a gloomy season! We all have those “blah” days or days when we feel out of sorts. But why do they happen and what can we do about them?

Some reasons why we feel out of sorts!

- Brain chemicals: Some of us have brains that are more sensitive to the effects of stress. “*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* suggests that differences in the way our brain’s process a chemical called **galanin** makes some of us less resilient and able to bounce back after difficult experiences.”
- Weather: Less sunshine in winter months can lead people, some more than others, to feeling blue. Those who experience seasonal affective disorder may incur full-blown depression which may result in changes in sleep, appetite, and motivation.
- Insufficient levels of Vitamin D. Lack of exposure to sunshine, inadequate diet, or lessened ability to process vitamin D from sunshine or food affect one’s mood.
- Expectations of events/happenings in our lives. Expecting fair or special treatment all the time or expecting everything to stay the same is a recipe for disappointment. Broaden your outlook and focus on the good things and experiences that have happened to you.
- Negative thinking patterns. Researchers suggest that “prolonged stress in childhood can make our brains less interconnected and resilient.” When our brains get “stuck” in negative thinking patterns we become less able to change tracks and have less time for recovery and less able to bounce back. Sitting around brooding about disappointments leads to loss of motivation and action.
- The inner critic! “Do you have a critical inner voice constantly judging and criticizing everything you do, especially when things don’t go your way? The inner critic compounds the effect of anything negative in your life by blaming you for it.”
- Loneliness. Human brains are wired to be social. “Research using MRI brain scans shows that even minor social rejection lights up the same areas of our brains as physical pain. Feeling left out, rejected, or excluded makes us sad and can also lead to rumination about what is wrong with us that further darkens our moods.”

Consider the following suggestions as ways of helping you become cheerful and to act cheerfully!

*Put a smile on your face! *Focus your brain each morning on the good things and tasks to do each day.
*Think before criticizing or writing a negative note! *Say positive things to yourself! *Regulate criticism by ignoring peoples unwanted negative comments about you. *Enjoy the company of friends and neighbors. *Create or try something new or look at diverse ways to overcome problems. *Admit the truth! *Focus on memories! *Review your daily/weekly schedule and consider taking a time-out or

Health Notes, cont'd

respite. *Practice gratitude (say thanks) and patience, especially when driving during this time of year or even when waiting in a checkout line. *Meditate, breathe, or pray to ponder the goodness of life. *Let go of past negativity or stop worrying about the future and focus on the here and now. *Be kind to yourself! *Give someone a hug! *Take a long walk! *Do some muscle stretches. *Stand up straight (you would be amazed how it can perk you up) and walk with a “bounce” in your stride!
*Bake cookies or a cake and enjoy them! *Rely on yourself rather than others to bring cheer into your life!
*Buy yourself a ticket to a movie or concert! *Always remember that happiness comes from within!

Sources:

<http://www.drchristinahibbert.com/be-of-good-cheer-12-ways-to-become-more-cheerful/>

<https://www.mindinspirations.com/2008/03/20/10-ways-to-stay-cheerful-and-have-a-stress-free-life/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-mindful-self-express/201411/10-scientific-reasons-you-re-feeling-depressed>.

DECEMBER 2017 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

December 19th meeting will be our annual party and will be at Suzanne Krogh's home, 402 Boulevard #103 at noon. Please bring something to share for lunch and suggestions for books for the year. There is parking for 8 cars in the front and on the side.

BRIDGE GROUP—The bridge group will not meet in December, but will resume in January. Caryl Hinckley 360-739-1036 carylchinckley@hotmail.com

We are looking for a few more bridge players. If you would like to join our friendly, fun bridge group, please call Caryl and let her know.

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

Informal dining has started!

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

Contact Evelyn if you want information about scheduled dates and locations for the Metropolitan Opera and Skagit Opera.

Met HD: January 27, 2018 a new productin of *Tosca*

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

Skagit Opera: <http://skagitopera.org/performances/> (now Pacific Northwest Opera)

Web site for Vancouver Opera: <https://www.vancouveropera.ca/>

Seattle Opera: <https://www.seattleopera.org/>

Pacific Opera Victoria: <http://www.pov.bc.ca/>

PLAY READING—Margaret Woll, 360-734-8427, mhildeb408@aol.com We will not meet in December. We will resume in January 2018 and will start reading *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller.

WRITER'S GROUP - Troy Faith Ward, 425-299-4924, ron.ward740@gmail.com Meets twice a month. The groups are kept small so there is time for reading and critiquing each other's work.

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles: A Review

This beautifully conceived and beautifully written novel is a constant delight, in spite of its 462 page length. Its central character, Count Alexander Ilyich Rostov, having been a pre-revolutionary hero, is sentenced to house arrest in the Hotel Metropol, grand hotel in the center of Moscow. He makes the best of it by being a gentleman, polite, polished, urbane, kind, an esthete, looking at his world with fascination and a dash of irony.

He needs those qualities. Immediately after sentencing he is removed from his luxury apartment and shunted to cramped and dingy servant quarters on the top floor. If he leaves the hotel, he is to be summarily shot. So he makes the Metropol his world, aided in this project by Nina, a young girl who has a lively curiosity about life and a master key to all the rooms in the hotel. Count and girl amuse themselves by exploring.

After a while, it appears that the Count must take part in the work of running the place. He becomes a waiter at the Boyarsky, legendary restaurant in the Metropol where his taste for proper serving transforms his work from tedium to artistry. Exquisitely aware of the importance of seating arrangements, the Count reminds us that “if Paris had not been seated next to Helen” the Trojan would not have happened. The Count lives through, survives the most brutal times of the Soviet domination—the strife-torn Twenties, the Thirties with the starvation of Ukraine and the political purges, the Second World War—with his humanity, polish, kindness, and gentleness all intact. Towles’ writing reminds one reviewer of the gentle irony of Alexander McCall Smith.

Both hero and writer, Count and Towles’ narrator are gentle souls with enough distance to look with sly affection on the world they inhabit. It is the Count gentlemanly qualities that allow him to survive and enjoy. I think you will like this book.

- Bob McDonnell



Metropol Hotel in
Moscow

Worthy Non-Profit – Make a Wish Foundation

In this season of giving, it seems right and just to highlight the Make A Wish Foundation, whose goal is the provide a joy-giving, soul-lifting experience to children with a life-threatening medical condition. It operates out of headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona, and has provided 15,300 wishes this past year. It grew out of the experience of the adults who provided 6 year old Christopher Greicius with his wish of becoming a police officer. In his wished experience, Chris wore a custom made police uniform, was sworn in as Arizona’s first honorary Public Safety officer, spent a day as a police officer, and rode in a police helicopter. Shortly after his day, Chris died of leukemia. A video is available on the Web.

John Cena, a pro wrestler, is the most prolific grantor of wishes at more than 500. Justin Bieber has volunteered in providing more than 250 wishes. Chi Omega, national women’s sorority, has raised more than 14 million dollars for Make a Wish since 2001. There is a Make A Wish office in Seattle.

Poetry Corner

It's past midnight now
Alone she walks down the hall
Looking for herself

by **Evelyn Wright**

Joyful lovely ball
One by one guests slip away
She is now alone

by **Pat Clarke**

It's Party Time!



We'll be decorating the Squalicum Yacht Club at 2 p.m. on December 20th in preparation for our party that night. If you would like to be part of this fun event, please join us.

WWURA Calendar 2017 - 2018

December 2017

5—Board Meeting
9—Jingle Bell Run/Walk
20—Holiday Party

January 2018

2—Board Meeting
17—Travelogue—Roy Clumpner, Churchill, Manitoba

February 2018

6—Board Meeting
16—WWURA Lunch—Bert Webber, Speaker

March 2018

6—Board Meeting
21—Travelogue

April 2018

3—Board Meeting
18—Travelogue
13—WWURA Lunch—Ambassador John Koenig,
Speaker



Reservation Form
Holiday Party
Wednesday, December 20, 2017
Squalicum Yacht Club
2633 South Harbor Loop Road



Name(s) _____ Phone Number _____

Enclosed is a check (payable to WWURA) for \$_____ for _____ people

Send your reservation(s) and **\$7 per person** (to cover the cost of the hall, music, and some food) to:

Chris Gerhold
829 Racine Street
Bellingham, WA 98229

Questions? Call Chris at 733-9265.

Deadline for reservations—December 16, 2017

Mark Your Calendar for our Travelogue January 17th. . .

...when Roy Clumpner will take us to Churchill, Manitoba where he joined others on a 6 day educational excursion led by the Northern Studies Research Centre. This presentation will provide an overview of the trip and what was learned and experienced. A highlight of the trip was to learn and kayak among 40,000 beluga whales.



Beluga Whale

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