



# WWURA NEWS

April 2020

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

## President's Notes

It is Tuesday, April 7th. Sally and I are entering our 27th day in a "staying at home" mode. With the exception of our daily neighborhood walk we are limited to the space of our house and yard. We have had some short 10-12 feet apart conversations with the neighbors or friends we have seen on the walks. Somehow 6 feet just doesn't seem like enough space between so we like to have a greater distance, but not so far we need to yell to be heard. Our membership is certainly in the high-risk group and I hope you are all practicing an appropriate discipline in the desire to "flatten the curve" by staying safe.

Perhaps the main focus of WWURA is to provide opportunities for personal connections and interactions between people with a direct or indirect connection with WWU. Of course with the current restrictions on gatherings and traveling WWURA has had to cancel all its programs in the past month and for the foreseeable future. We currently have a reservation for the annual meeting/picnic on July 7th but it seems that we will need to push that event back.

Although we cannot have direct physical contact I'm encouraging you to regularly reach out to other WWURA members to prevent others and ourselves from becoming more "socially isolated" while we are required to be physically apart. Email and text messages are good but the telephone or face-to-face computer applications provide a more direct human touch.

I'm encouraging members to schedule a regular time (perhaps daily or MWF or ?) to pull out your membership directory and make contact with another WWURA member. Naturally most people will call people they know, but please use this opportunity to also make new connections. Just a short discussion about: how things are going, what you have been reading, what's blooming in your garden, etc., can provide needed human contact in these times of social distancing.

## Memories . . . Memories

*A Time of Travel - or Travail?*

In 1969, the NEA invited some American teacher trainers to spend a summer updating Ethiopian teachers and I was invited to join this effort. We were to "retrain" some 20 "shop" teachers from all over Ethiopia. It was my first overseas adventure, starting with a ride in a brand new 747 (which leaked water on the passengers) to Rome and on to Addis Abba via Ethiopian Airlines. We were guarded by flight attendants who were armed, and checked baggage which included a few sheep and ducks. We were then transported to Jimma - 300 km south of the Capital - in rural southern Ethiopia - to utilize a secondary school as the training site. At that time, the nation featured 18 secondary schools with the potential of 18 million students. Obviously, school enrollment was sparse, and the nation quite illiterate.

Our shop teacher students started arriving - mainly by walking long distances - in keeping with the customary "walkabout" experience by most young men. They came dressed up as fitting distinguished pedagogues, but we soon issued surplus American GE  
*(cont'd on page 3)*

Keep your spirits up in this difficult time and stay safe.... **Kevin**

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## April 2020 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames Benefits of Art Events to Health

Art activities (theater, museums, opera, and concerts) are classified as “multimodal” health interventions. They combine multiple psychological, intellectual, physical, social, and behavioral factors with an intrinsic aesthetic motivation to engage. “By nature, human beings are creative, and we enjoy immersing ourselves in an array of artistic endeavors. After all, if we didn’t, we wouldn’t have museums, art galleries or graffiti on subway cars. But scientists have delved into art’s value from an evolutionary perspective, and research suggests that art and artistic activities may actually be a key to a longer life expectancy.”

A long-term study in England explored the association between different frequencies of arts engagement and mortality in adults aged 50 years and older. The follow-up period was 14 years. The researchers considered a comprehensive list of covariates, including demographics, socioeconomic status, health conditions, behaviors, cognitive state, and other social and civic engagement. A major question asked: is there is a strong theoretical rationale that underlies the hypothesis that arts engagement could be linked to people’s chance of survival? That is, do people live longer if they are engaged in art events?

The premise of the study suggested that arts engagement may be ‘linked to longevity by alleviating chronic stress and depression, providing emotional, cognitive, and social coping resources that support the biological regulatory systems and behavioral choices. “Arts engagement is also known to enhance social capital, which builds individual and collective resources and to reduce loneliness, which is associated with mortality.” Arts engagement can support cognitive reserve and promote empathy, social perception, and emotional intelligence, which are all linked to a greater chance of survival.

The research suggests that “arts engagement could help reduce sedentary behaviors, which are well established predictors of cardiovascular health and immune function and might also reduce risk taking behaviors. Arts engagement is linked to a greater sense of purpose in life, which is itself associated with better immune function and healthier behaviors. Further, creativity and imagination, which are an intrinsic part of artistic engagement, have been linked to increased chance of survival across the evolution of our species.”

Other studies have shown that participating in art events increases blood circulation to the brain’s reward center and are found to provoke the release of reward neurochemicals such as dopamine. Creative interpretations may help us better plan and prepare for our future. “Artistic activities encourage emotional expression, which veritably promotes better emotional and mental well-being. Any of these (or all of them) may contribute to art’s impact on a longer life expectancy.”

It appears that the process of simply engaging in art events is enough to promote a longer life expectancy. What if our health care providers prescribed participation/engagement in arts events (art museums, opera, concerts, and theater)? Source: British Medical Journal <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l6377>

With our current self-quarantine recommendations/mandates, web sites of several art museums readers might find interesting. Currently, the ones selected do not require membership or cost to view (at least as of the end of March). Also, check out the Smithsonian in DC.

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2020-03-19/5-museums-offering-virtual-art-while-you-re-quarantined>

<https://www.womenshistory.org/womens-history/online-exhibits>

<https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/women-nasa> (these are the women highlighted in Hidden Figures)

<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection> (Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid) Next to it is the Sofia Reina which shows Picasso’s Guernica

[https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction\\_Review-g187443-d191199-Reviews-](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g187443-d191199-Reviews-Museo_De_Bellas_Artes_De_Sevilla-Seville_Province_of_Seville_Andalucia.html)

[Museo\\_De\\_Bellas\\_Artes\\_De\\_Sevilla-Seville\\_Province\\_of\\_Seville\\_Andalucia.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g187443-d191199-Reviews-Museo_De_Bellas_Artes_De_Sevilla-Seville_Province_of_Seville_Andalucia.html) (Museo De Bellas Artes De Sevilla)

## Health Notes, cont'd

The Barnes Collection in Philadelphia <https://www.barnesfoundation.org/whats-on/collection>  
[https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction\\_Review-g187219-d243577-Reviews-Musee\\_National\\_Fernand\\_Leger-Biot\\_French\\_Riviera\\_Cote\\_d\\_Azur\\_Provence\\_Alpes\\_Cote\\_d.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g187219-d243577-Reviews-Musee_National_Fernand_Leger-Biot_French_Riviera_Cote_d_Azur_Provence_Alpes_Cote_d.html)  
[https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction\\_Review-g187240-d229451-Reviews-Fondation\\_Maeght-St\\_Paul\\_de\\_Vence\\_French\\_Riviera\\_Cote\\_d\\_Azur\\_Provence\\_Alpes\\_Cote\\_d.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g187240-d229451-Reviews-Fondation_Maeght-St_Paul_de_Vence_French_Riviera_Cote_d_Azur_Provence_Alpes_Cote_d.html)  
(Giacometti sculptures).

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## Memories, cont'd from page 1

uniforms so we could address the tasks we were planning to use as training props. For example, we taught welding by repairing 200 broken desks, ceramic by bricklaying additional classrooms, wiring by hooking up an idle water pump which serviced the whole school, shop planning by remodeling four shop classrooms, and replacing hundreds of broken window panes. At first, the teachers were shocked that they could be asked to work with their hands, but soon entered in with energy. Unique problems arose: the delivery of cement and plywood via bicycle, the thievery of monkeys who stole wood from the lumber room, and school closure so all could attend a hanging in the public market. Payday for our student-teachers involved dealing single dollar bills out of a paper bag until the ran out - much to the dismay of the underpaid recipients.

As distinguished visitors, we were invited to the Jubilee Palace to attend the 65th birthday of Emperor Haile Selassie where we were served fancy drinks, raw beef from half carcasses swing from the shoulders of bare-chested couriers, and observed by windows full of hungry locals. We discovered that taxi rides to the party cost more going than coming, because going was uphill and the return trip was downhill. The major glitch to the party was that the guest of honor did not show up.

At the end of the eight week program, we departed, leaving a school much repaired and functional. We also arranged for several of the attendees to enroll at WWU the following summers. One such Western enrollee later became the Ethiopian Minister of Industry. During his time at Western, he entertained a remarkable guest: Marta Tekle Wold who later became the Ethiopia's first woman Senator and now heads a large K-12 school in that country.

As a retiree, one is supposed to revel in memories of old times, and surely my 1969 visit to Ethiopia has provided much fodder for that effort.

- Sam Porter

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## Worthy For-Profit—The Skagit Tulip Festival

Now that we are all sheltering in place, the Skagit Tulip Festival, usually held this week, is cancelled, and our treasured tulip growers are being hit hard. Perhaps this would be a good time to consider sending flowers, maybe even tulips, to friends and family who are shut-ins, in nursing facilities, or in hospitals. We might also consider sending flowers to our treasured health care providers, maybe to hospital wards. We could do worse. We might also at this time of special need remember those worthy non-profits that provide basic necessities—like the **Bellingham Food Bank**, the **Lighthouse Mission**, **Lydia Place**, etc., etc.



## Book Review

### *American Dialogue* by Joseph Ellis: a Review

Here is a book for our time. Joseph Ellis, a distinguished historian of our nation's founding, inspects the discussions and arguments—"dialogues"—that our "founding brothers" had with and among themselves about the salient issues of their day—which turn out to be some of the salient issues of ours. Among others, the issues are race, federal/state balance, the nature of our constitution, the balance between commercial and agrarian society,. Ellis organizes his book with chapters on "then" and "now."

His best chapters focus on "then." His understanding of the 4 year epistolary dialogue between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson is perhaps the most compelling. Jefferson, ensconced at Monticello with its multitude of slaves, saw ("dreamt" might be a better word) an idyllic agrarian future for America with a natural aristocracy. Clear-eyed John Adams maintained that "property" would inevitably produce a commercial society with economic disparity and an oligarchic top tier. As Ellis notes, Adams was right. He cites the Gilded Ages of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and of our own time.

On race, our founding brothers, many of them slaveowners, finessed the issue of slavery, which it took the Civil War to decide, followed by Jim Crow, the civil rights movement of the 60s, and our current difficult state of affairs. In Ellis's narration, Jefferson does not come out well.

On the role of government and the nature of our constitution, Ellis pays particular attention to James Madison, who played a major role at the Constitutional Convention and in effect wrote the Bill of Rights. Madison morphed from being a strict Federalist to upholding a federal/state balance and understood the Constitution to be a "living document." In his "now" chapter, Ellis takes on the "originalist" school of constitutional interpretation, finding it disingenuous in claiming to be objective while veiling its conservative political agenda. In particular, Ellis excoriates Antonin Scalia's majority opinion in *Heller*, the Second Amendment case in which the Supreme Court newly found the right to bear arms to be an individual right. Ellis has harsh words for Scalia and his *Heller* opinion.

There is more. Ellis laments that the vigorous debates, arguments, dialogues our founding brothers had are no longer easily available, largely because one side no longer fully honors facts.

- Bob McDonnell

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## COOKING FOR ONE (OR TWO)

Suzanne Krogh

Not long ago, although given recent news it seems like a lifetime, a group of WWURA singles were discussing the challenges of cooking for one. Almost all recipes, we agreed, are designed for four or six or, on rare occasions, for two. We also agreed that it might be fun, maybe even helpful, to include recipes-for-one in the *WWURA Newsletter*. Now that we are all housebound for a while, it seems like the right time for it. It might even help us keep busy and happily fed. And since we're all at home, we should also include instructions for couples.

As volunteer to head this project, I will be more of a coordinator than an all-knowing expert. Thus, I'm looking forward to having *Newsletter* readers submit recipes-for-one (or two) that they have found successful. Please email them to me at [slkrogh@wwu.edu](mailto:slkrogh@wwu.edu).

This first recipe comes from my upbringing in Miami, back when Florida really was a southern state, and a rural one at that. Shrimp and cheese grits is a brunch specialty, but it also makes a nice light supper. With a side salad, and maybe some garlic toast, you'll have a balanced meal.

## Cooking for One or Two, cont'd

All the ingredients can be found at your neighborhood Haggen. The quick grits are shelved next to the oatmeal. The hot sauce is alongside the ketchup; for an authentic southern experience, choose Tabasco. From the butcher counter, choose whatever shrimp looks the tastiest and/or best priced; for less labor, choose already peeled.

### For a Simpler Recipe:

You are stuck at home with time to do some real cooking. However, if this two-part recipe seems like too much trouble: just make the cheese grits; fry a few slices of bacon, and drape them artistically on top.

## SHRIMP & CHEESE GRITS FOR ONE

For two people, just double the amounts

### Ingredients

For the grits:

- 1/4 cup uncooked "quick" grits
- 1 cup water
- salt & pepper
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 cup shredded sharp, or extra-sharp, cheddar cheese
- hot sauce to your taste (Start with just 2 drops)

For the shrimp:

- 1/4 pound raw medium shrimp (a little less if you buy already peeled shrimp)
- 2 slices bacon, chopped
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions



### Instructions

For the grits:

- Bring the water and salt to a boil; slowly stir in grits.
- Cover the pan and reduce heat to low.
- Cook for 6 or 7 minutes, stirring from the bottom a couple times.
- Remove from the heat and add the butter, hot sauce, and cheddar. Stir until the cheese melts.

For the shrimp:

- Fry the bacon until it's as crispy as you like it. Drain on a paper towel.
- Peel and devein the shrimp; add them to the bacon grease.
- Add the lemon juice, parsley and onions.
- On medium heat, saute' everything together for 3-4 minutes, until the shrimp turns pink.

### To serve:

Place the grits in a flat bowl or on a plate. Mix the bacon with the shrimp ingredients and spoon on top of the grits. Sprinkle some more parsley over the top.

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Place the grits in a flat bowl or on a plate. Mix the bacon with the shrimp ingredients and spoon on top of the grits. Sprinkle some more parsley over the top.

## APRIL 2020 INTEREST GROUPS

If you are interested in one of the groups please call or email the contact person. Given the "stay at home" order, these groups are not currently meeting in person. Check with the contact person to see if they are finding other ways of staying in contact with each other.

**BOOK GROUP**--Donna Moore, 360-733-5769 [dfmoore12@gmail.com](mailto:dfmoore12@gmail.com)

This group has chosen the following books to read.

*The Library Book* by Susan Orlean.

*Persuasion* by Jane Austen.

*A Moment of Lift* by Melinda Gates

*Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

*A Woman of No Importance* by Sonia Purnell

*Pilgrimage to Eternity* by Timothy Egan

**INFORMAL DINING**—Stephen Hutchens, 360-483-6873 [sphutchens@yahoo.com](mailto:sphutchens@yahoo.com).

Dinners have been cancelled. Hopefully they can begin again in the Fall.

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

Contact Evelyn for more information. See **Nightly Met Opera Streams** below.

**WRITER'S GROUP** - Troy Faith Ward, 425-299-4924, [troyfaithward@gmail.com](mailto:troyfaithward@gmail.com). Meets twice a month.

The groups are kept small so there is time for reading and critiquing each other's work.

A second writing group has started and is accepting new members. Meets twice a month.

Call Howard Evans, 360-650-9724, [barbandhoward@comcast.net](mailto:barbandhoward@comcast.net) if interested.

## Nightly Met Opera Streams

During this extraordinary and difficult time, the Met hopes to brighten the lives of our audience members even while our stage is dark. Each day, a different encore presentation from the company's *Live in HD* series is being made available for free streaming on the Met website, with each performance available for a period of 23 hours, from 7:30 p.m. EDT until 6:30 p.m. the following day. The schedule will include outstanding complete performances from the past 14 years of cinema transmissions, starring all of opera's greatest singers.

The streams are also available through the Met Opera on Demand apps for Apple, Amazon, and Roku devices and Samsung Smart TV. To access them without logging in, click "Browse and Preview" in the apps for connected TV, and "Explore the App" on tablets and mobile devices.

### Week 5

[Supplementary content—including synopses, articles, and more—is available here.](#)

Monday, April 13

[Dvořák's \*Rusalka\*](#)

Starring Renée Fleming and Piotr Beczala, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. From February 8, 2014.

Tuesday, April 14

[Mussorgsky's \*Boris Godunov\*](#)

Starring René Pape, conducted by Valery Gergiev. From October 23, 2010.

Wednesday, April 15

(cont'd on page 8)

## Poetry Corner

### The Pangolin's Cry Heard 'Round the World

The tiny pangolin from Africa  
Showed up sometimes  
In a wet meat market in Wuhan

Men fancied its wee scales,  
Which sparkled like sequins.  
Its meat they found a treat.



Beside the dogs, cats, fish and birds,  
Mysterious medical remedies and cures,  
It was just a morsel, an obscure treat.

Unknown to the outside world.

One day this pangolin had met a bat,  
Who passed on its special germ.  
'Twas the COVID-19 virus, akin to SARS.

This pangolin left the market to become a snack,  
Or perhaps a cure.  
Releasing to Wuhan, then on to China  
Its virus, causing panic and fear.

Helped by trains, ships and planes, coughs, sneezes and crowds,  
The germ passed through countries, cities, neighborhoods too,  
Swiftly it spread on silent wings.

Through the world.

Transportation stopped; borders were closed.  
Businesses shut down, hospitals full,  
Peoples were quarantined, others stayed home.

The stock market fell, the economy stricken.  
Schools were closed, all events canceled.  
Uncertain and anxious, everyone frightened.

How long would they have to stay home?  
How would the mortgage, the rent be paid?  
No one knew when it would end.

All from one tiny pangolin, obscure and unknown,  
Who loosed a strange germ that flew all about.  
And thus the cry of the pangolin was heard

Throughout the world.

**Lynne Masland– 2019**

## Nightly Met Opera Streams, *cont'd*

### [Puccini's \*La Rondine\*](#)

Starring Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna, conducted by Marco Armiliato. From January 10, 2009.  
Thursday, April 16

### [Rossini's \*Le Comte Ory\*](#)

Starring Diana Damrau, Joyce DiDonato, and Juan Diego Flórez, conducted by Maurizio Benini. From  
April 9, 2011.

Friday, April 17

### [Viewers' Choice: Puccini's \*Madama Butterfly\*](#)

Starring Patricia Racette, Marcello Giordani, and Dwayne Croft, conducted by Patrick Summers. From  
March 7, 2009.

Saturday, April 18

### [Cilea's \*Adriana Lecouvreur\*](#)

Starring Anna Netrebko, Anita Rachvelishvili, Piotr Beczala, and Ambrogio Maestri, conducted by Gian-  
andrea Noseda. From January 12, 2019.

Sunday, April 19

### [Strauss's \*Der Rosenkavalier\*](#)

Starring Renée Fleming, Elīna Garanča, Erin Morley, and Günther Groissböck, conducted by Sebastian  
Weigle. From May 13, 2017.

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