



WWURA NEWS



July 2020

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

President's Notes:

Tuesday, July 7th was the day scheduled for the WWURA Annual Meeting and Picnic. Unfortunately, as with many activities and events during this pandemic, we had to cancel the meeting/picnic. However at 10:30 AM, when the Board would normally be setting up for the picnic, we had a meeting to discuss the business of the Association including; membership renewals, 2020-2021 programs and events, and nominations for the Board/Committee Chairs. The meeting ended at noon. In the spirit of the picnic I put a few racks for ribs, with a smoked paprika rub, on the BBQ for 7 hours; finishing with a Peach glaze and a glass of cheap red wine... very enjoyable picnic except for missing seeing people.

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom...it seems that most face-to-face activities have been shifted to Zoom, FaceTime, or some other online platform. And WWURA may be not different; as the Board had discussions about travelogues and other presentations via Zoom (some of the Interest Groups are meeting via Zoom) We are also planning to start a series of informal coffee hours (more information coming soon) to provide some of the opportunities that the Informal Dining program provides for connecting members. Or multiple people can all "cook" the recipe from Suzanne's "Cooking for One" column and we could eat and discuss together...or all buy the same bottle of wine for "socially distanced" wine tasting. All good potential activities - but for me I'm looking for other ideas of activities we could do in this pandemic time; somehow safely without using the electronic medium. As a group we certainly have a level of risk in this pandemic; for myself I check-off positive on all the risk factors: age, weight, respiratory issues...but could 6 or 8 of us drive separately to the Fairhaven's Marine Park, sit 10 feet apart, wear masks, drink coffee, and tell stories while watching the water? I don't know. I'd appreciate any feedback or ideas/experiences you have that WWURA could think about for next Fall and perhaps beyond.

The Board also continued the conversation about seeking new members for the Board and other positions.

(cont'd on page 3)

Getting to Know Me

Submitted by **Donna Moore**

Have you ever wondered? Of course you have - about a lot of things. But have you ever wondered who you are? Have others wondered who you are?

Imagine growing up and seldom being called by your first name because no one really knew who you were - that is, which twin you were. In grade school I had a first name if I was in my assigned seat. In high school and college, I was Miss Fields. The riding master when I took horse back riding as a PE credit in college thought I was taking the course for two consecutive hours. (And wondered why I did not improve.)

I now go by the first name of Donna. However, someone may have mixed up our identifying blankets when we were new borns or put me into the wrong crib and I am really Diana.

No one knows.



Diana and Donna Fields

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July 2020 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Are Supplements Effective in Improving Brain Health?

A few months ago, the WWURA Board arranged a brown bag lunch featuring the director of Dementia Northwest Support organization. Due to COVID-19 the program was cancelled. The following information focuses on one area that was to be discussed: the efficacy of supplements promoted to prevent/reduce dementia or improve brain health.

Various resources (e.g., AARP, National Center on Aging, Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Research Center) report that more than a quarter of adults in the United States age 50 and older take at least one supplement for brain-health reasons. In 2016, brain-health supplements generated \$3 billion in sales globally. The projection is that by 2023 the amount will reach \$5.8 billion. Despite this wide-spread use of brain-health supplements, there appears to be little scientific evidence to support the efficacy of use. In other words, it is a massive waste of money. "Indeed, one AARP analysis of spending on just six different supplements marketed for brain health shows that 50-plus adults spend more than \$93 million a month on these proprietary blends alone. These people taking these pills are spending between \$20 and \$60 a month and flushing dollars down the toilet that could be better spent on things that actually improve their brain health."

The Global Council on Brain Health (GCBH) is an independent collaborative of scientists, doctors, scholars, and policy experts from all over the world. After undertaking an evidence-review of brain-health supplements potential effectiveness, the GCBH "determined it could not endorse any ingredient, product or supplement formulation designed for brain health." Instead, the GCBH concluded that the best way for most people to get their nutrients for brain health is from a healthy diet. "Scientific evidence does not support the use of any supplement to prevent, slow, reverse, or stop cognitive decline or dementia or other related neurological disease such as Alzheimer's."

For the small handful of dietary supplements that have been well-researched, the results showed no brain health benefit in people with normal nutrient levels. What is unclear or inconclusive due lack of double-blind studies, is whether people with nutritional deficiencies can benefit their brains by taking a supplement. Beyond a few very specific nutrients taken to replace an identified deficiency, there is insufficient evidence to support the use of supplements to benefit the brain.

Besides the lack of evidence of effectiveness for brain-health supplements, there are significant concerns about the truth of marketing claims because of potential lack of safety and purity of the ingredients used in formulating supplements. Current federal law and lack of regulation allow manufacturers and distributors to make vague or exaggerated claims about brain health. Dietary supplements are sold without premarket governmental review of their safety and efficacy or the truthfulness of manufacturers' claims. Chemical analysis and review of purity and content may not have occurred, allowing quality of the ingredients to vary widely. An exception to one supplement relates to deficiencies of vitamin B-12. A small percentage of people over 50 have a B-12 deficiency, often due to poor gastrointestinal absorption or following a vegan diet. Vegan diets are low in B-12. A simple blood test can determine if a deficiency exists.

GCBH experts urge those with certain health conditions to be "especially careful about taking dietary supplements." People on blood thinners or certain other medications: Vitamin K supplements decrease the effect of blood thinner Coumadin. People who are about to have surgery are requested to stop taking herbal medications such as echinacea, garlic, ginkgo, ginseng, kava, saw palmetto, St. John's wort and valerian. These herbs may increase risks during surgery. People who have cancer and take antioxidant vitamins such as vitamins E and C may reduce the effectiveness of chemotherapy. People who have mild cognitive impairment and take melatonin supplements for helping them to sleep increase the risk of falls and other adverse events.

Suggestions for preserving brain health: engage in regular exercise, maintain recommended blood pressure levels, eat a heart-healthy diet, and engage in intellectual hobbies such as reading books and playing board games. In other words, keep the body moving and the brain learning.

<https://www.aarp.org/health/brain-health/global-council-on-brain-health/supplements/>

<https://www.mayo.edu/research/centers-programs/alzheimers-disease-research-center/about/about-center>

Book Review

In the Room Where It Happened by John Bolton: A Review

John Bolton's book about his time as President's national security advisor is a boring, pretentious, meretricious bombshell that does not live up to its hype.

The boring part. It is clear that Bolton has been planning for some time to write this book. Most of its 494 pages read like a close transcript of Bolton's very detailed diary. Here is a sample. "Moon [President of South Korea] complimented Trump's leadership. In turn, Trump pressed him to tell South Korea's media how much Trump was responsible for all this. He then spoke with Abe, [Prime Minister of Japan] to strategize further about the Trump-Kim Summit in light of Moon's report on his meeting with Kim. Abe repeated all the key points he had made at Mar-a-Lago . . ." Bolton treats his readers to nearly 500 pages of that, interspersed with substantial content.

The pretentious part. Bolton condescends to almost everyone, especially the media. He writes about "the press mob," about it "shambling" in. He paints H. R. Mattis, secretary of defense, as weak. He oscillates between condescending to Trump and praising him. He makes unilluminating references to Thucydides and Joseph Addison and uses untranslated Latin phrases like *ab initio* (from the beginning) and *ceteris paribus* (all things else being equal).

The meretricious part. Bolton writes about his time in George W. Bush's administration without admitting his complicity in advancing the lie about weapons of mass destruction. In the 33 page index, there is no entry for WMD. When Bolton discusses the impeachable Trump phone call with President Zelensky of Ukraine, he does not use the official record. He was one of the listeners to the conversation so he feels justified in giving his own version, in which he omits the crucial word "though" from Trump's sentence "I would like you to do us a favor, though." That final word establishes the linking of US aid to Ukraine and an investigation of Joe Biden.

The bombshells. Bolton delivers several, some quite offhandedly, as when he tells us that Trump asked his chief of staff John Kelly if Finland was a part of Russia. Or his remark, in passing, that for Trump "obstruction of justice [was] a way of life." Significantly, Bolton confirms Fiona Hill's testimony that he called the US aid/Ukraine investigation of Joe Biden "a drug deal." Not to forget Trump's asking Xi Jinping to influence the US presidential election by purchasing more American agricultural products.

Bolton constructs a defense of his refusing to testify before Congress without being subpoenaed. William Taylor, Fiona Hill, and others did courageously testify.

To repeat, this is a boring, pretentious, meretricious bombshell.

- Bob McDonnell

President's Notes, *cont'd from page 1*

We also discussed how many of our committees needed members so the responsibilities don't fall to one person. I expect we'll continue these discussions at our August planning session. Remember the door is always open to call if you are interested in getting more involved (or you have been involved in the past and decide that it is time to jump in again).

Finally...it is membership renewal time. It is also the time when we recruit members from people who recently retired from Western. Please submit your own renewal form and reach out to recently retired Western employees who you think would benefit from participating.

Thanks...and stay safe! **Kevin**

JULY 2020 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 have a Zoom meeting at 2 pm on Tuesday, July 21st to discuss

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens, Discussion leader, Barb Evans

A Woman of No Importance by Sonia Purnell (August)

Pilgrimage to Eternity by Timothy Egan (September)

Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell (October)

The Perfect Horse by Elizabeth Letts (November)

INFORMAL DINING—Stephen Hutchens, 360-483-6873
sphutchens@yahoo.com. Contact Steve for more information.

OPERA GROUP--Evelyn Ames, 360-734-3184, evelyn.ames@wwu.edu
Contact Evelyn for more information.

Opera update on Metropolitan Opera weekly streaming: simple way to access is type in search line: metopera.org. Operas begin streaming at 4:30pm and continue until 4pm the next day (Pacific time). You can start and stop any number of times. Check to see if other opera houses are streaming at no cost.

2019-2020 MET HD Opera streaming by the Metropolitan Opera: **Met HD: Radio broadcasts:**
King FM-98.1–10 a.m. and CBC Radio 105.7 - 1 p.m.

WRITER'S GROUP - Troy Faith Ward, 425-299-4924, 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 Bill Smith 360-920-6390, billsmith1545@yahoo.com if interested.

Getting To Know Us

By **Sam Porter**

Joyce, two young sons, and I arrived in Bellingham in 1962 after accepting a job in the Industrial Arts Department – at the urging of Claude and Faye Hill, who assured us we would love Western; they were right!

I taught all sorts of industrial arts and professional education courses, consulted in the public schools, became active in the American Industrial Arts Association, chaired their national convention, and participated in their publications. For eight years I served as Chair of the Department and watched it morph from teacher preparation to non-teaching options in what became the Department of Technology. In 1974 our family, now including a daughter, migrated to Malaysia where I served as a program manager for the U.S. Peace Corps, giving us the opportunity to meet a hundred Peace Corps Volunteers spread from Thailand to Singapore. Other consulting assignments followed in Ethiopia, Liberia, Indonesia, and Sumatra.

Upon retirement in 1989, we decided to spend our winters in warm San Diego – first on a boat, and then in normal condo living. A year ago, we chose to return to Bellingham, to take up residence across from WWU, and spend our time attending a multitude of campus events. With pleasure, we stay in touch with many WWU grads and former Peace Corps Volunteers, and find great pleasure getting reacquainted with former Western Colleagues and the WWURA membership.

Writers Group

The *Aoniu* **by Lynne Masland**

My first husband and I lived in Pago Pago, American Samoa in 1966-68 while he was a television director for the Samoan educational television system, which broadcast lessons to 26 schools scattered throughout Tutuila and the other islands. This excerpt is from *Beneath the Southern Cross: Two Years in American Samoa*, my account of our time there.

I had just boarded the *Aoniu*, a Tongan-owned copra steamer tied at the dock in Pago Pago. She was bound for Tonga where she would pick up cargo of dried copra (coconut) at the various islands, taking it to Suva, Fiji to the Uni-lever plant there.

A loud blast sounded from the ship's whistle summoning any lingerers among the crew and passengers back from the beguiling attractions of shore life. The gangplank was being taken in, and the crew beginning to cast off the thick rope hawsers which bound the ship to the dock. The beat of the *Aoniu*'s engines began to pick up as her bow swung toward the mouth of the harbor.



It was done. I was on my adventure.

The ship slipped past Breakers Point out into the Pacific. Along the rocky coast of Tutuila, water shot up in plumes through blowholes made in the black lava rock by the insistent pounding of the sea. Soon I could see only a fringe of palms along the shore and the rising slopes of Mt. Alava with the blinking red light of the television's antenna on top. Except for the island, nothing was visible in any direction but the rolling blue Pacific Ocean. The *Aoniu* was a world unto itself.

A couple of the crew played out skeins of thin nylon line and attached the ends to the taffrail. "What are you fishing for?" I asked. "Anything that'll bite," grinned a young Tongan sailor, teeth white in his coppery-brown face. "There's skipjack, tuna and mackerel out here, but we don't usually catch nothin'. Trolls too fast, the *Aoniu* does." He ducked his head and skipped off barefoot, eager to get away and back to his mates. I watched the fishing lines bob rhythmically in the ship's wake. There was not the slightest quiver to indicate interest on the part of any fish, only the relentless up and down, up and down of the lines.

I decided to find my stateroom. Most of the five passenger staterooms opened off the main deck. Mine turned out to be located on the next level down, below deck. Holding the white painted iron handrail, I went down the companionway stairs and forward along the passage to the end. My door was on the port, or left, side before the passageway ended in an iron spiral ladder. Taking out my key, I glanced down the ladder and saw it led to the ship's engine room. It seemed a hot, noisy place, smelling of oil. A couple of men working down there looked up, saw me, but didn't see me. I went into my stateroom and closed the door. It was quiet.

A porthole framed the blue Pacific and the faint shadowy smudge on the horizon that was Tutuila. The room was paneled in mahogany. A single bed extended from the wall with built-in bronze-handled drawers. A white china wash basin stood in the corner. It was not a large room. Opening my suitcase, I began to unpack. I put my copy of *The Fatal Impact*, an authoritative new book about the devastating effects of European culture upon Polynesia which all the Americans in Samoa were discussing, on the nightstand. "I'll start reading it tonight," I thought. "After dinner."

Cooking for One (or Two)

Suzanne Krogh

We have received requests for gluten-free recipes, particularly desserts. My personal favorite in this category is the Spanish/Portuguese/Cuban/ Mexican pudding usually known as *flan* or *crème caramel*. There may be slight differences in recipes depending on countries and regions. The version in this month's *Newsletter* comes as close as I've been able to get to the flan my daughter-in-law and I enjoyed in Oaxaca last year.

Ashley and I spent most of a week sampling flan daily in sites as varied as a courtyard restaurant surrounded by farm-to-table vendors and a rooftop bar with nighttime views across the city. Our quest: to find the best flan in Oaxaca. On our last day of vacation, we tried out an upstairs, outdoor restaurant overlooking the zocalo with its chaos of street musicians, balloon vendors, ice cream trucks, and tourists. By this time, we were thoroughly tired of our daily flan, but wanted to try once more to find the best in the city. And we did. This restaurant, called simply Tres, served a flan that was sweet but not too sweet, silky smooth but not slippery, draped in caramelized sugar cooked to a mellow light brown.

The recipe that follows is as close as I've been able to get to the one at Tres. Do give it a try!

Mexican Flan for One or Two

Ingredients

3 tablespoons sugar
½ of a 14 oz. can of sweetened condensed milk
½ cup whole milk
1 whole egg
1 egg yolk
½ teaspoon vanilla



Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

1. Spread sugar on bottom of a small, oven-proof bowl or pan with flat bottom
2. Heat sugar until it liquefies and turns golden brown (how dark is your choice). This might take a half hour or more.
3. While sugar is cooking, place all other ingredients in a blender or processor and mix thoroughly.
4. Pour blended ingredients on top of browned sugar and place bowl in another larger pan. Pour hot water into the larger pan to about an inch deep. Loosely cover the bowl of flan with a piece of foil.

Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. Flan is done when it no longer jiggles.

Remove from the oven to cool on a rack. When it's cool, refrigerate about an hour before serving.

To Serve

Run a knife around the edge of the flan to loosen it. Place a serving plate upside down over the bowl, then flip them both over. Scrape as much of the caramelized sugar as possible from the bottom of the cooking bowl and pour it over the flan.

This is enough flan for one very large serving or two polite ones.

Tip

The sugar can get very hot. In addition to using oven mitts to handle bowls and pans, try using tongs.

Golf/Gala for Bellingham Arthritis Foundation.

Interested in bidding on some interesting wines and other items? The annual Gala, part of the Golf/Gala for Bellingham Arthritis Foundation is scheduled for **Friday, July 17, 2020**. The **2020 Virtual Freedom of Movement Gala & Auction** is from 6:30 –7:30 p.m. Pre-registration is FREE and required to receive the link to sign up for mobile bidding and receive a link for our live virtual portion.

Website: arthritis.org/bellinghamgalagolf

To be auctioned: Honorary Lead Artist, 2019 Best of Bellingham Best Artist Winner - Ben Mann - painting! Art will be auctioned in the live auction offerings. Other items: 2021 season Mariners Tickets , 2021 or 2020 Sounders Tickets . Polish Vodka, Polish dinner and pottery, San Juan Sailing Day Trip, Stockton's Paint and consultation, Professional House Cleaning, Chrysalis Gift card \$300, Samson winery tasting for 10, pickle making, Best of the board wine basket, five night winter cabin stay in Winthrop, \$200 to Teatro Zinzanni in Woodinville, and 2 Hours professional Landscaping Anyone preregistered by 7/7 will receive a printed program by mail. All other items will be available by preview and silent auction items will be available for bid 7/13.

WWURA Membership Application or Renewal Form for 2020-2021

Name _____ Spouse/Partner's Name (if applicable) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Year Retired _____ Years of WWU Service _____ Department/Unit _____

If not a WWU retiree, check one: WWURA Friend Spouse/Partner of Retiree

Retired from what institution/organization _____

Select Membership (includes spouse or partner)

Contributing Membership \$ 50.00 or more

Regular Membership \$ 25.00

Surviving Spouse or partner \$ 6.00

Contribution to WWURA Scholarship fund \$ _____

Total amount Enclosed _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail this application and check (*made payable to WWURA*) to WWURA Membership, c/o Barbara Evans, 715 North Garden Street, #502, Bellingham, WA 98225.

(Contributions are deductible)

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