



WWURA NEWS

November 2020

www.wvu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

President's Notes by Kevin Majkut

The Board met this past Tuesday, November 3rd...Election Day. The meeting ended at noon and I started watching the election results and commentary. Every election is critical but it is not an overstatement to characterize this election as very significant for the present and future of our country. I can remember for several years lamenting that elections seemed to put up candidates that were often very similar and did not present much of a choice. That is certainly not the situation in this election at all levels.

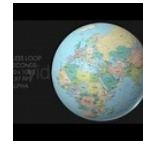
Unfortunately, as a society, we have turned those differences into bludgeons against people with different opinions. That is true across the country, in our state, in our city, and even within our small organization, where tensions have arisen. I've spoken in past columns about Higher Education's collective responsibility to help students to become active citizens. Critical to that process is a strong core of understanding of history, political science, and economics paired with the skills of analysis, media literacy, and decision making.

This election is far from over, my flipping between MSNBC, Fox News, and the major networks, spiced up by scanning several newspapers have given me an appreciation for my own education and ability to "wade" through the differing information...sometimes news (facts), sometimes commentary (opinion), but not always identified clearly. The coverage has also illustrated the problems with the pace of the news cycle...in retrospect I long for the days when you needed to wait until the next daily newspaper to get updated information, which allowed for the facts to "settle" into some perspective rather than leap out every 20 minutes.

With all the negativity and conflict surrounding the election process, I appreciate the efforts of

WWURA Travelogue Wednesday, November 18, 2020 7:00 p.m. Presentation via Zoom

*The day before, **Lina Zeine** will send the necessary link to all WWURA members by email.*



Title: "Around the World in 138 days"

David Carroll & Susan Donnelly, retirees from Woodring College WWU (2018), embarked on a round the world trek, beginning in December, 2018. They will share highlights from their travels to places in Central and South America, Polynesia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Their focus will be on exploring cultures with the help of local experts.

Secretaries of State and election staffs are working tirelessly to maintain a clear and fair voting process. As an organization I hope we can someday have a civil discussion surrounding these election events. In fact I expect we will.

Please stay safe as we continue to endure this new peak in the pandemic. **-Kevin**

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2020 November Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Actively Reducing Holiday Stress

Fall and winter celebrations, such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Halloween, Día de los Muertos, Navratri, Diwali, Thanksgiving, Día de la Virgen de Guadalupe, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, and New Year's, typically include large gatherings of families and friends, crowded parties, and travel that may put people at increased risk of transmittable diseases and/or emotional physical distress. With the continuing pandemic, the end of the year 2020 and beginning of 2021 leave unanswered questions about family and friend gatherings. For many, events surrounding holidays create stress, wanted or unwanted; or what can be called eustress, which is positive, and distress, which is negative. How can you actively deal with stress and maintain a quality of life throughout the seasons?

Expressing appreciation and gratitude of what one has, being optimistic in these difficult pandemic times, helping others by performing acts of kindness, staying connected with friends and family whether virtual or otherwise, taking some deep breaths when a negative stressor pops up, maintaining your physical energy level, and savoring life's joys by remembering that simple things bring rewards.

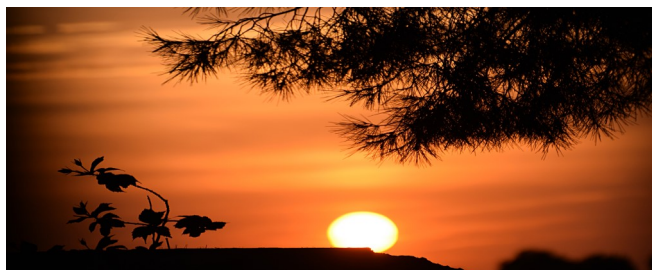
The Mayo Clinic provides the following tips to prevent holiday stress and depression:

- Acknowledge feelings. It is okay to express feelings, especially sad ones.
- Reach out. Feeling lonely or isolated? Seek out social events in your community. Many community (e.g., religious, professional, retirement, exercise) groups have online support groups and virtual events. Due to COVID-19, it is not going to be easy to volunteer but consider dropping off a meal or dessert at a friend's or neighbor's house.
- Be realistic because holidays do not have to be perfect or like those you experienced last year. Create new traditions. As more of us are "Zooming" or using other forms to chat online, set aside time to meet virtually. Remember the good old telephone is right at your fingertips!
- Set aside grievances and differences until an appropriate time to discuss them.
- Establish a budget and stick with it. "Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts." Remember the adage that money does not buy happiness. Consider making homemade gifts or donating to a charity in a person's name.
- Maintain your store of healthy habits. A healthy snack before holiday meals may help one from going overboard on drinks and sweets.
- Get plenty of sleep. Incorporate regular physical activity into each day.
- Consider adjusting the amount of time spent viewing news, especially distressing news, and social media.
- Learn to say no because saying yes when you wanted to say no often makes a person feel resentful and overwhelmed.
- Make time for yourself! Find activities you enjoy and do them! Read a book! Listen to music. Watch beautiful sunsets!
Laugh!!!! Smile!!!!

Stress and depression can ruin holidays and hurt one's health. Being realistic, planning ahead, and seeking support help ward off stress and depression.

Sources: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>

Other source to consider: <https://www.npr.org/2019/11/11/778296959/holiday-survival-guide-family-style>



Book Review

Mama's Last Hug: Animal Emotions and What They Tell Us about Ourselves

by Frans de Waal (2018, W.W. Norton & Company)

Mama was a chimpanzee, who, on her deathbed, rose to hug a man she hadn't seen for several years. He had cared for her, and had come to say goodbye when he heard she was ill. A keeper caught the scene on his smartphone and it went viral on the internet: perhaps you saw it. Man and chimpanzee loved one another: de Waal's point is that other animals have the same emotions we do. By "emotions" he means physical changes in the brain/body that result in observable actions. He differentiates them from "feelings," which are the conscious states that may accompany the emotions, but he thinks many species of animals have those too. Feelings may be subject to cultural determinants but emotions are our biological inheritance as hominids, as vertebrates, and even as animals of any kind.

The book considers empathy and sympathy, disgust, shame, guilt, politics, murder, warfare, emotional intelligence, sense of fairness, and free will, as well as smiles and laughter. Clearly, not all of these are what we would call emotions; instead, they are series of actions that involve thinking and planning while starting from various emotional states. De Waal says that emotions "give meaning to everything." He sees animal emotions "not as a topic to contemplate by itself but as capable of shedding light on our very existence, our goals and dreams, and our highly structured societies."

At first blush, some of this sounds far-fetched, but de Waal's examples, based on observations of animals in zoos and in the wild, and on ethologists' experiments with primates, dolphins, crows, rats, and other creatures, are carefully crafted, delightful to read, and quite convincing. Discussing dominance and the role of alpha males and females among chimpanzees and bonobos, de Waal analyses Donald Trump's behavior in his debates with Hillary Clinton—really funny—and explains that we tend to misunderstand the way animal alphas remain in power, which is by ending fights among subordinates, protecting the vulnerable, and maintaining peace. In this connection, he recounts the actions of an alpha male bonobo who warned the keepers cleaning his group's moat not to turn the water back on, because young bonobos had jumped into the dry moat, couldn't get out, and would drown (bonobos can't swim). This alpha's empathy with the youngsters, his understanding of cause and effect, of where the keepers were going when they went away to turn on the water, of the need to warn them at all costs, are truly thought-provoking.

De Waal writes, "the rejection of similarity between humans and other animals...stands in the way of a frank assessment of who we are as a species." I finished reading the book with a better understanding of our similarities to our fellow animals and with a strengthened awareness of basic biological functions that run through so many of our cultural achievements. De Waal writes well, and I think you would find the book as enjoyable and illuminating as I did.

-Minda Rae Amiran

Getting To Know Me by Claire Bowen

(Another in our series of getting to know our Board Members)

I moved to Bellingham four years ago to be close to my grandchildren that live in Victoria B.C. The thing that would probably interest you most is that I do not have, and have never had, any relationship with Western Washington University. I came here alone, after a recent divorce in Seattle, not knowing a single person in the area. I had been advised by friends to "Put Myself Out There" when I arrive; so I enrolled in an ALL class, and found myself sitting next to Peggy Loudon. After some chatting, Peggy invited me to join WWURA. Now, I don't recall whether I had mentioned to Peggy that I had been a computer programmer; so, I'm not sure whether she was simply being kind to a newcomer, or thought I might be capable of managing WWURA's web site. Whatever, it has been a mutually good relationship. So, should you know someone that you would like to see be a member of WWURA, remember, that a relationship with Western is not a requirement.

NOVEMBER 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 not meet in November as many of us are taking Lina Zeine's ALL class on Islam. We will have a December Zoom meeting and will be discussing *The Perfect Horse* by Elizabeth Letts. Lina will be discussion leader.

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

Opera update on Metropolitan Opera weekly streaming: All you need to do on your computer is enter in search line Met.Org live streaming: then you scroll down and find the opera date to click on. 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.

MET Opera live streaming during November:

Thurs., Nov 12 Berg's *Lulu* Starring Marlis Petersen, Susan Graham, Daniel Brenna. From November 21, 2015

Fri, Nov. 13 Britten's *Peter Grimes* Starring Patricia Racette, Anthony Dean Griffey. From March 15, 2008

Sat., Nov 14 Philip Glass's *Akhmaten*.

Sun., November 15 Thomas Adès's *The Exterminating Angel*.

Mon., Nov. 16 (Verdi's *Don Carlo*);

Tues., Nov. 17 (Gounod's *Faust*);

Wed., Nov. 18 (Dvorak's *Rusalka* with Fleming and Zajick and Beczala);

Thurs., Nov. 19 (Verdi's *La Traviata* with Damrau and Florez);

Fri., Nov. 20 (*Dialogues des Carmelites* with Isabel Leonard and A. Pieczonka);

Sat., Nov. 21 (Puccini's *Turandot*);

Sun., Nov. 22 (Berg's *Wozzeck*).

To listen to radio broadcasting of operas, the following stations offer opera each Saturday: CBC Radio 2 at 105.7 (starts at 1 pm with Ben Heppner). King FM (98.1) at 10:00 am (try computer if our radio/stereo does not connect). Note: Metropolitan Opera 2020-2021 season is cancelled.

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. Call Bill Smith 360-920-6390, billsmith1545@yahoo.com if interested.

Baklava for the Winter Holidays?

If you would like Baklava for the winter holidays, **Lina Zeine** is proposing to make some for you for a very reasonable price- **to benefit WWURA**. Baklava freezes well (for a few weeks) if placed in wax paper in plastic containers e.g. , "Tupperware") and then allowed to get to room temperature (about 30 minutes) before serving.

You can order in increments of ½ dozen at \$2.00/ a piece. A full tray contains 48 pieces = \$96

Please call Lina (360-734-7408) or email her at lzeine@comcast.net to place your order and agree on a delivery time, then send a check made out to WWURA to Norm Lindquist, 1819 Olympic Place, Bellingham, WA 98229

Pick up or delivery- you may pick up at Lina's home or we have drivers who will deliver to your home. Baklava is not gluten free, and contains flour, sugar, butter and walnuts. No honey, just homemade syrup with rosewater.

First come first served: **Deadline for ordering is December 16, 2020**



Cooking for One (or Two)

Suzanne Krogh

Last week, my southern sister took a respite from the craziness of Florida politics and came for a visit. One morning she decided it was time to make breakfast for me. Leslie is a big fan of all things lo-cal-but-delicious and, if something is gluten free, that's an added benefit.

The result of her efforts was a pan of wonderful lo-cal, gluten free blueberry muffins that surprised me with how filling they were. Her recipe....from a couple on-line versions with some additions of her own....makes ten good size muffins. Of course, that number is more than a Cooking for One recipe should call for. However, she promises me they freeze well.

Most months I try to bring you recipes with few steps and ingredients, but these muffins are worth the extra effort.

Leslie's Blueberry Muffins

Ingredients

3 tablespoons soft butter
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 tablespoons unsweetened applesauce
2/3 cup non-fat Greek yogurt
1 ¼ cups oat flour
9 packets stevia (or 1/3 cup your favorite sweetener)
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup blueberries



Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In large bowl, mix together butter, eggs, vanilla, applesauce, and yogurt.

Stir together oat flour, stevia, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add to large bowl and mix until well blended.

Gently fold in the blueberries.

Spray 10 muffin cups with cooking spray or line them with paper cups. Fill with batter.

Bake for 15-17 minutes. Muffins are done if gently pressing the tops with your finger makes them bounce back.

Tips

The store was out of oat flour, so we ground up dry oatmeal in the food processor until it was very fine, and then sifted it too, just to make sure. This worked fine.

Worthy Non-Profit -Your WWU Retirement Association.



Did you know that donations to WWURA are tax deductible? They are!

Because the pandemic has limited our ability to socialize at luncheons, travelogues, informal dining, etc., we have attempted to stay in touch with you by other means; i.e., zooming and sending you a newsletter **every month** (at a cost of \$2.54 per issue) instead of the usual 10 months of the year. Our yearly \$25 dues per household will not cover this increase. We are looking at other ways to make up the difference before the end of our fiscal year. So, if you have some extra money, please consider making a donation to WWURA by sending a check (made out to WWURA) to our treasurer, Norm Lindquist, 1819 Olympic Place, Bellingham, WA 98229.

Note: The Scholarship Fund is a separate account and is **not affected** by a deficit in our Operating Budget.

Information about the 2020 local Arthritis Foundation's Bellingham Jingle Bell Run and WWURA team. The December 2020 JBR is going to be virtual. I hope that you will join me in supporting our local Arthritis Foundation programs. Our JBR will occur December 11-13. The 2020 Jingle Bell Run is going virtual so don't let that stop you from jingling. Join the original festive race for charity from anywhere! You have the option of donating to WWURA team or joining the team. If you click on "Register," you will need an email address + password to join team. Find the WWURA team. Or if wanting just to donate, click on "donate" and scroll down to find WWURA team. Here are several internet addresses that may help you navigate the Bellingham site.

<https://events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=1102>

[https://events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?](https://events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.search&search=search&eventID=1102&searchTerm=wwura)

[fuseaction=donorDrive.search&search=search&eventID=1102&searchTerm=wwura](https://events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.participant&participantID=212718)

<https://events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.participant&participantID=212718>

Thank you. *Evelyn Ames*

Health Care Insurance Policies. Numerous advertisements have flooded our mailboxes offering/recommending policies to cover health care insurance. If you are satisfied with your current coverage (includes your primary care doctor preference, physician referral, prescriptions, co-pays, wellness programs, overall monthly premiums, etc.), consider not stressing yourself about whether to change plans by staying with your current one. Some advertised plans are suggesting "free prescription costs, free dental and eye care". Remember there is no such thing as "free coverage." Generally, plans that advertise low costs are plans that provide inadequate coverage for physician and hospital visits. If you question the adequacy and expense of your plan, call the health care plan you want to know about. Have your list of questions in hand so you can compare your present policy with the proposed policies.

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