



# WWURA NEWS

January 2021

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Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

## President's Notes

This past Tuesday, January 5th, the Board held their monthly meeting. Very positive discussions: the Holiday Party was deemed a fun and successful event and we decided to hold another similar *Zoom activity in February*, **Lina's** fundraising efforts were very successful (Baklava sales were \$364 ) (although for some of us it broke our dieting resolve), and several members also stepped forward with donations in support of the Association. I believe with the advent of the Covid vaccine there was a sense of the future lightning-up and perhaps our ability to return to some WWURA events with person-to-person contact in the foreseeable future. It is certainly important to recognize the efforts of **Suzanne, Peggy, Chris, and Lina** in planning, **Burl** and **Sylvia** performing, and everyone's sharing stories or special articles in making the Party so much fun. We left the meeting on a high note...

And then Wednesday the US Capital building was attacked...for me personally that was a devastating event. I've spoken in past columns about higher education and the academy's responsibility in educating student to be involved citizens. I had spoken at the Board meeting about organizing a Zoom event regarding that responsibility and our current political situation but decided to hold off. However after Wednesday's events I'm thinking that it might be of interest to the membership. Please let me know via email ([majkut.kevin@gmail.com](mailto:majkut.kevin@gmail.com)) if you are interested, would be willing to help organize or lead discussion, or any other thoughts about the possibility of such a discussion group.

As always...please stay safe!

**-Kevin Majkut**

## WWURA Travelogue Wednesday, January 20, 2021

**4:00 p.m. via Zoom**

### Around the World Travelogue Part II

WWURA world travelers, **David Carroll** and **Susan Donnelly**, dazzled us in November with the first stops on their trip around the globe. Don't miss Part II of their adventure, which they will share via Zoom, **January 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM**. *Check your email one or two days before to get your link to their stories from Rapa Nui (Easter Island), French Polynesia, New Zealand, and Sumatra!*

Feel free to invite friends to the presentation. It's not necessary to be a WWURA member.



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## January 2021 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames *Look for the Silver Lining During Pandemic* *"When in Doubt, Have a Nice Cup of Tea" Julie Andrews*

Finding the silver lining in what has been a stressful, exhaustive year is important to everyone's overall health and well-being. Finding meaning and connection and reconnection with friends, relatives, and colleagues through virtual gatherings has helped maintain our overall wellness. This reconnection will more than likely outlast this pandemic. As predictions go, another pandemic may occur within in the next few years. Who knows? But recall a well-known song, "accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative"!

Halbert L. Dunn, in describing "High Level Wellness," said a person finds ways to function at a high potential within an ever-changing environment. Acknowledging that physical deterioration does occur, Dunn focused attention on factors other than physical mobility and capacity in relation to older adults and their capacity to achieve or not achieve high level-wellness. He firmly believed that "the state of being dynamically well involves the exploration and participation by the individual in the fascinating and ever-changing panorama of life itself". (Check November 2009 Health Notes for expanded explanation of *High Level Wellness*.)

The following list of personal activities and suggested activities is shared by our WWURA friends about their behaviors for enhancing their well-being during this period of isolation. Thanks to all who sent their thoughts.

- My New Year's resolution is to do more yoga and less TV watching. The Bellingham Senior Activity Center has an excellent class.
- There is one element that has been effective for me and that is keeping busy with projects, things to do, things that have deadlines, and those that are important to me. Knitting while watching TV keeps hands and mind busy!
- For physical health, two Nordic concepts, friluftsliv and hygge, are important. Lots has been written about their importance (including an article in the 12-27-20 NYTimes). Friluftsliv is the concept of spending time outdoors regardless of the weather. Hygge connotes warmth and coziness. An example would be enjoying a mug of glühwein/glögg/warm cider while enjoying a fire in the fireplace after coming in from a walk in the rain or snow. Hygge could be good for mental health, too.
- Multitasking in the evenings while watching/listening to whatever is on TV.
- Catching up on answering emails, browsing through magazines (they do pile up), and re-gluing photos into trip albums.
- It is a time of introspection, to think about life and all that I have to be grateful for. It is also a time for spiritual study which grounds me in my life. Staying active as a volunteer keeps me busy and connected with friends.
- Reaching out to friends occasionally by phone to see how they are coping. This is my way of checking in on them and making sure they are all right. Occasionally sending an e-mail with a photo of birds, sunsets, and other pictures of our beautiful landscapes.
- Retaining membership in the YMCA. The silver sneaker exercise classes are on Zoom but that works (better than no classes). It is worth every penny of my membership fee. The people who teach the classes are fun and very positive. 10:00 each morning for 45 minutes - doable.
- Enjoying lots of chuckles when friends relay humorous e-mails. Friends and laughs are very important!
- Began following the national baking trend and baked several loaves of bread before deciding it wasn't doing much for either my mood or the fit of my jeans. Have substituted jigsaw puzzles, listening to music or podcasts while trying to find the right shapes seems to be a mood enhancing choice.
- One hitch in my activity was a very painful shoulder/neck. Recalled my previous use of a ball in a bag to massage muscles and ligaments against the wall (smooth surface works well). **"Say goodbye to the year 2020. Have fun and have a ball."**
- During this pandemic we have been fortunate to use FaceTime to have wonderful Game Nights several times a week with our family and discuss daily activities. Zoom helped us connect with friends and organize our day with YMCA Silver Sneakers classes, WWURA travelogues, ALL history discussion group, and the City Club. We wear masks and keep a social distance while walking with our friends.
- As days shortened and I was more in the dark, I lit candles, turned on more mood lights, inside and out, played CD's, enjoyed sunrises, sunsets and moons. Sometimes just sat!
- Became an unlikely Zoom "guru" in the last few months, allowing me to connect with family all over the world and "meeting" cousins for the first time. "Zooming" allowed me to stay connected with friends. Cooking (new recipes and trying some of Suzanne's printed in the WWURA Newsletter), reading and walking kept spirits up. "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness" The light will soon

(- cont'd on page 3)

## Health Notes, cont'd

-Appreciating stillness: "It's about making ourselves still in the face of uncertainty. It's about closing our eyes and opening ourselves to the flickering moment and all that actually surrounds us—the good, the bad, the unknown. It's about sifting it through the net of our undivided attention and honing our sense of what's beautiful and true and lasting in this world."

In 370 B.C., Hippocrates alluded to wellness when he stated the following: **"All parts of the body which have a function, if used in moderation and exercised in labors to which each is accustomed, become healthy and well developed and age slowly. But if unused and left idle, they become liable to disease, defective in growth and age quickly."**

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## Book Review

*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, by Isabel Wilkerson (2020, Random House)

You probably have heard of this book, and if you remember reading James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* or Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*, you may feel that you already understand how African Americans experience living in our country and how racism poisons white culture as much as Black. But *Caste* has a somewhat different message.

In this book, Wilkerson compares the caste system of India and of Nazi Germany to the system in this country: she sees the position of African-Americans here as being similar to that of Jews in Hitler's Germany and of Dalits (formerly "untouchables") in India. She believes that our caste system underlies both white supremacy and racism in general, being a system that puts white European-Americans on top, African-Americans of whatever class and education on the bottom, and everybody else in the middle striving to be accepted as whites or near-whites. The characteristics of a caste system, she explains, are the belief that it's divinely or naturally ordained, the fact that status in it is inherited, that it requires marrying within one's caste, that it rests on ideas of purity and pollution and of inherent superiority and inferiority, that it includes an occupational hierarchy, and that it is enforced by terror, cruelty, and dehumanization. Wilkerson traces the development of these beliefs and practices throughout American history, relying on a considerable bibliography of secondary sources (she's a journalist, not an historian).

After setting forth the caste system in the first part of the book, Wilkerson turns to its effects on everyone's life today—our health, our education, our economy. For all of these, the caste system is costly to maintain. In a section called "Backlash" Wilkerson analyses the rise of far right hate groups in response to the Obama presidency and explains Trump's appeal to the many people who seemingly vote against their own interests in supporting him. These people, she argues, are voting to preserve their status as top caste, no matter how poor or uneducated (or well-off) they might be.

Some critics have argued that Wilkerson is wrong to think caste explains more than racism. In a sense the two are one, but looking at our society as a caste system gives one's understanding a valuable jolt. The book is fairly long (388 pages of text), but it is divided into many short chapters gathered into seven parts, so one doesn't get lost in it, and it's clearly written in unpretentious prose. No matter how familiar you are with the problems of minorities in our country, I think you will find new insights in this book, and a new framework for facts you already know.

-Minda Rae Amiran



Look for details about the **Zoom Valentine Party** in the February 2021 WWURA Newsletter. We'll look forward to seeing you!!!

## Writers Group

### Bomber Escort Cover, by Burl D. Harmon, November 17, 2020

The other side of bombing Axis targets embraces the fighter escort planes. From May to October 1944, I flew 38 combat missions, protected by pursuit planes, the P38 twin-engine attack craft and later the P51 fighter planes, piloted by the intrepid 332<sup>nd</sup> Black Squadron, Tuskegee Airmen.

For the first part of my Italian mission, the P38 flew cover for our bombardment groups. As we approached the target, we were constantly harassed by German aircraft. The escort cover had limited protection, though, hampered by lack of maneuverability, requiring a seven-mile circle to engage the enemy fighter planes.

About half way through my tour of duty, the Army Air Corp deemed the P38 fighter cover planes too slow, cumbersome and ineffective, replacing them with the sleeker, more agile P51, a single engine plane manned by one pilot. The situation changed dramatically once the Black Squadron daredevils began their dive-bombing and strafing missions against the German attack planes.

The all-black squadron served with distinction in World War II from May 1943 through June 1945. The fabled “Red Tail” presence in the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force raised the morale of bomber crews, who often requested to be escorted by these fighter pilots. Without a doubt, I am alive today because of their heroic efforts.

My admiration for the Tuskegee airmen grew out of the realization that the Jim Crow laws, still extant during this period, had outlawed African Americans from becoming pilots. In 1941, fewer than 4,000 African Americans were serving in the military and only twelve African American had become officers. By 1945, more than 1.2 million African Americans were serving in uniform on the Home Front, in Europe and the Pacific, including thousands of African American women in the women’s auxiliaries.

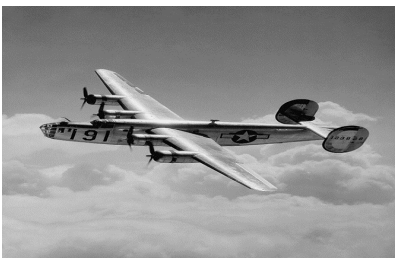
The National WWII Museum, located in New Orleans, honors the contributions of the Tuskegee airmen in World War II by highlighting some of their exceptional achievements. I will be forever awed by these intrepid pilots.

“The Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 15,000 sorties between May 1943 and June 1945 [and lost only 250 bombers]. Bomber crews often requested to be escorted by these “Red Tails,” a nickname acquired from the painted tails of Tuskegee fighter plane, which were a distinctive deep red. Sixty-six Tuskegee Airmen died in combat, having the lowest loss records of any escort fighter group... In all, the Tuskegee Airmen earned eight purple hearts, fourteen Bronze Stars, three Distinguished Unit Citations, and 96 Distinguished Flying Crosses.”

Despite the P51’s excellent cover, our crew had a near-death experience with a group of Focke-Wulfs, who whizzed over our plane at speeds of up to 350 miles per hour. I paraphrase my navigator who reported what the waist gunners, who could see the action, told him about the destructive attack on the bomber just ahead of us.

“There’s a bogey at 4 o’clock, and I’ve counted: four shoots out.” What he left unsaid was that six didn’t get out. I had the sinking feeling we must be next in line for buckling up our parachutes and launching into the air.

The crew never talked about the incident in an attempt to wipe it from our minds.



B24, Liberator Aircraft

I still have a vivid memory of the thought of going to the back of the plane and bailing out. The recollection leaves me inwardly cringing at how close I came to plunging over German territory.

Burl, at 20 years old, a P51 flight engineer



## Cooking for One (or Two) by Suzanne Krogh

When WWURA member **Pat Clarke** was just four years old, her sweet face and blonde curls convinced her mother that she was a shoe-in to be the “next Shirley Temple”. Conveniently, Pat’s grandmother and great-grandmother lived in Los Angeles, with easy access to dance classes, elocution lessons, and Shirley Temple-style hair dressers. For an entire year, Pat began her days with her grandmother’s curling iron and ended them with her great-grandmother’s wonderful cooking.

Once the year ended, it was time for her big interview, and world-famous dancer Gene Kelley was assigned to see how Pat measured up. She remembers what he said: “So. Do you want to stay here in Hollywood and be in movies?”

And she remembers her answer: “No. I don’t. I want to go home to Spokane. In less than a minute, an entire year of training and hair curling proved to be a waste of time as she was quickly ushered out. As far as Pat can recall, her great-grandmother’s recipe for cooked apples was the one good thing to come from the experience. The recipe below is, she believes, the authentic, great-grandma-approved version.

### Great-Grandma Martha’s Apple Bake for One

#### Ingredients

1 medium apple  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
½ teaspoon melted butter or oil of your choice  
1 tablespoon raw oats  
½ teaspoon artificial sweetener or sugar

#### Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.  
In a medium bowl, mix the cinnamon, oil, and oats.  
Peel the apple, cut it in thin slices, and mix with other ingredients.  
Arrange the slices in a pie pan and sprinkle with the sweetener.  
Cover the pan with foil.  
Bake about 20 minutes. Test with a fork. Apple slices are done when they are soft.



#### Tips

\*To retain more vitamins, don’t peel the apple.  
\*This is a good recipe for a toaster oven, but set the temperature at 325 degrees and check for doneness after 15 minutes.

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## Baklava

Need a gift for someone special during the year? **Lina Zeine** has said that if anyone wants to give a gift of Baklava during the year, she will make her scrumptious Baklava and donate the revenue to WWURA.



You can order in increments of 1/2 dozen at \$2.00 a piece. A full tray contains 48 pieces = \$96.  
You may call or email Lina to place an order and agree on a delivery time, then send a check made out to WWURA to Treasurer **Norm Lindquist** at 1819 Olympic Place, Bellingham, WA 98229.

**Lina:** 360-734-7408, lzeine@comcast.net

## **JANUARY 2021 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](mailto:dfmoore12@gmail.com)

We will meet January 19th at 2:00 pm on Zoom. We will be discussing *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richardson. Discussion leader - Donna Moore. Lina will send a link for Zoom.

February's book is *This Tender Land* by William Krueger

March's book is *Mama's Last Hug* by Frans de Waal

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

Contact Evelyn for more information.

#### **Metropolitan Opera streaming:**

Renee Fleming week: January 11-17: Figaro (1998), Thais (2008), Rosenkavalier (2010), Armida (2010—includes 7 tenors), Capriccio, Rodelinda (2011), Rusalka (2014).

CBC Radio is playing operas of the MET from previous years. Start at Saturday 1pm PST. King FM broadcasts Seattle productions 10 am on Saturdays.

**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 your 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](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 Bill Smith 360-920-6390, [billsmith1545@yahoo.com](mailto:billsmith1545@yahoo.com) if interested.

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