



WWURA NEWS



June 2021

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Serving Retired Faculty and Staff

President's Notes:

I am thankful that this year is drawing to a close (you'll note I still run my life on the academic calendar). I certainly don't need to repeat the challenges we all faced as individuals this past year...and that WWURA faced as an organization as we tried to maintain some semblance of "normal" activities without the benefit of face-to-face contact. I appreciate the commitments and efforts by the Board members to keep things flowing.

I've been meeting recently with WWU officials to discuss what services are available for retirees and how we can maintain better connections between retirees and the University. I'm looking forward to resuming our organizational programming soon...with any changes necessary to maintain a safe environment for members. Please take the opportunity, in this newsletter, to update your membership for the coming year. We'll be seeing you soon.

Kevin

ANNOUNCING: JUNE TRAVELOGUE

Susan Donnelly and her husband David Carroll have entertained us over the past several months with their beautifully created trip around the globe. You will not want to miss their final episode, which arrives by Zoom this month!

Mark your calendar for **Wednesday, June 16th, at 4:00-5:30**. This trip to Egypt and Greece will be 90 minutes long and include a 10-minute intermission about halfway through.

A Zoom link will be sent the day before to all WWURA members. Feel free to invite other friends. This Zoom Travelogue will be recorded. For more information contact Lina.

* WWURA Membership Application or Renewal Form for 2021-2022

- * Name _____
- * Spouse/Partner's Name (if applicable) _____
- * Address _____
- * City _____ State _____ Zip _____
- * Phone _____ Email _____
- * Year Retired _____ Years of WWU Service _____ Dept. _____
- * 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 \$35.00
- * Surviving Spouse or partner \$10.00
- * Contribution to WWURA Scholarship fund (Deductible) \$ _____
- * Total amount Enclosed \$ _____
- * Signature _____ Date _____
- * Please mail this application and check (payable to WWURA) to;
- * WWURA Membership, c/o Barbara Evans,
- * 715 North Garden Street, #502
- * Bellingham, WA 98225

INSIDE :

Interest Groups	p. 2
Book Review	p. 3
Cooking for One (or Two)	p. 4
Health Notes	p. 5,6

JUNE 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

We will meet Tuesday, June 15th at 2:00 pm on Zoom (Lina will send a link.)

to discuss: *Death in Mud Lick* by Eric Eyre, discussion leader-Ev Kepler.

July's book is *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell, discussion leader-Barb Evans.

August's book is *The Poison Squad* by Deborah Blum, discussion leader-Barbara Davidson.

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.

Metropolitan Opera streaming schedule for June 4 through June 13 (remaining weeks not listed):

Here is the list for June:

June 4-Gershwin's Porgy and Bess (2/1/20);

June 5 -Verdi's MacBeth (10/11/14);

June 6-Phillip Glass's Akhnaten (11/23/19);

June 7-Verdi's Rigoletto (2/16/13);

June 8-Gounod's Faust (12/10/11;

June 9-Bellini's LaSonnambula (3/21/09;

June 10-Handel's Agrippina 2/29/20;

June 11-Thomas Ades's The Tempest (11/10/12;

June 12-Verdi's Falstaff (12/14/13);

June 13-Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutti (3/31/18).

CBC Radio is playing operas of the MET from previous years. Start at Saturday 1 pm 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 - This writer's group of six (five at present) has an opening for one writer.

We have decided to keep our group all female. We meet on second and fourth Thursdays from

2p.m till about 4 p.m. If you would like to be part of a supportive group where your writing can

be heard and receive feedback, as you wish, at every meeting, we welcome hearing from you .

. . Contact: troyfaithward@gmail.com 360 -738-8900.

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.

Book Review

Buyer Beware

Sometimes I find a lauded book quite disappointing, and while I usually review only books I've liked and hope you will like too, here are a few I think you might just as well avoid. Only in my opinion, of course.

The Silence: A Novel, Don DeLillo (2020, Scribner)

Written shortly before the pandemic, this book's scenario of a sudden loss of all electric power and communication media in New York City has been hailed as eerily foreseeing our isolation in fighting Covid. That's scarcely a reason to like it, though. And it isn't a novel: it's a short story gussied up in imitation typewriter-font and triple-spaced in small format to stretch it to 116 pages.

But is it a good short story?

It concerns five people: Max, a man who is frustrated because the outage prevents him from watching the Super Bowl, his wife, a philosophy professor, and her former student, a high school teacher who has come to watch the game, and a couple also invited for the occasion, whose airplane, returning them from France, has barely managed to crash-land as the power outage begins. In their relief, the invited couple have sex, twice (scant description), and the wife and ex-student think about having sex, but don't. Everybody except Max has Thoughts and the two philosophers engage in Wisdom, especially concerning Einstein and relativity. Max imagines and voices a broadcaster reporting on the invisible game. Then he falls silent. Some of this is amusing, I admit. But some of it is just pretentious.

Interior Chinatown, Charles Yu (2020, Pantheon Book(Penguin Random House)

It's a great pity about this novel, because until approximately half way through it well justifies its National Book Award. But at that point Yu loses confidence in us, his readers, and has his characters give us page after page of speeches laying out the discrimination suffered by Chinese immigrants and their American children that he's already presented so forcefully in the first part of the book.

The premise is that Americans in general see Chinese Americans only as nameless alien stereotypes. The narrator lives in a decaying building of tiny apartments rented to Chinese Americans, most of whom work in the restaurant on the ground floor and serve as extras in a TV detective series being filmed in the building's courtyard. The real lives of the characters are presented through TV scripts, their hopes centered on getting a TV bit-part or a kung-fu role. The slowly-revealed story of the narrator's educated parents doomed to this desperate life is moving, and the TV detectives are well-parodied. But then, sadly, we find ourselves in a stuffy courtroom for what seems like ages on end.

- Minda Rae Amiran

COOKING FOR ONE (or Two)

Suzanne Krogh

It's June and that means zucchini season is almost upon us! Gardeners are just about to heap their extras at your doorstep while you wonder what to do with the bounty. Today we offer one lovely solution from Chelle Davidson, Bellingham resident and member of the Krogh extended family.

Chelle is married to a Whatcom County firefighter whose schedule often keeps him away for a few days at a time. Chelle uses these opportunities to experiment with new cooking ideas, surprising Ray upon his return with the more successful results.

The idea for these fritters emerged right after Chelle had made a breakfast of cottage cheese pancakes (see WWURA Newsletter, April 2021) and wondered if there might be a way to do some sort of savory version. There definitely was. The results were enjoyed by her husband and other family members as well, including myself. I didn't let her know until much later that, well, I'm not all that fond of zucchini. Nevertheless, I admit to finding the fritters absolutely delicious.

CHELLE'S ZUCCHINI FRITTERS FOR ONE

Ingredients

- 1 medium zucchini
- ½ beaten egg
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoons flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
- zest from one small lemon
- 1 small minced shallot
- ¼ cup crumbled feta or cheddar cheese
- pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Peel the zucchini, then grate by hand or in food processor. Put the grated zucchini in a strainer or colander and place it over a bowl. Sprinkle ¼ teaspoon salt over it to draw out the water. Let it rest for at least 30 minutes.
2. While the zucchini drips, mix the rest of the ingredients in another bowl.
3. After about 30 minutes, use your hands to squeeze as much liquid as possible from the zucchini into the bowl. There will be a lot. Stir the zucchini into the other ingredients and mix well.
4. Heat a griddle to 350 degrees or skillet to medium hot. Add and melt about 2 tablespoons butter. For 5 minutes, while the pan heats and the butter melts, give the zucchini mixture one last good stir and then let it rest so the flour can absorb the liquid well.
5. Make 3 large or 4 smaller patties. Fry on each side until golden brown and cooked through. Serve with plain yogurt or salsa of your choice.

Tips

1. This is a fun dish for experimentation. Other ingredients Chelle has added include Hungarian paprika, chopped mint, chive flowers, and garlic cloves.
2. For two people, simply double everything.

Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

Medical Alert Systems

Medical alert systems are in-home and/or wearable devices that allow people to call for help (e.g., falling, feeling confused, injured and for other medical or healthcare needs). Typically, a medical alert device consists of a base unit and a portable emergency help button that can be worn like a bracelet or a neck pendant. The button triggers a small radio transmitter in the base station that is connected to a personal emergency response system (PERS) automatically, which could be a mobile phone, a wi-fi connection or a landline receptor, and alerts a trained care professional. The alert system is directed to a monitoring center with care professionals available around-the-clock who assess the situation and/or to loved ones who can dispatch emergency medical services to the home if necessary. The systems are made for the purpose of providing people with help when medical emergencies occur. Early intervention usually improves the chances of recovery (e.g., early treatment for heart attacks improves survival rates). One out of every three adults over 65 falls each year and recovery is much better when there is early intervention. There are some unmonitored medical alert systems available. In such devices, where there is no monthly fee or a very low initial cost, users can provide the numbers of emergency contacts who are alerted when the button is pressed during an emergency. In case the first one does not respond, it dials the next one and so on. If no one responds, then it finally dials 911. Also, there are medical ID bracelets that contain identifying information and pertinent healthcare details such as allergies and include the name of an emergency contact. They do not charge monthly fees but have limited capabilities. The unmonitored system connects directly to 911 or to the contacts the user provides but it usually lacks features like fall detection, activity tracking, and medication reminders.

Key benefits of a medical alert system include:

- Help when one needs it (systems are monitored 24 hours a day, every day).
- Ease of use. Systems are designed to be worn on the wrist or around the neck and have an open two-way communication channel with the push of a button.
- Peace of mind: it is not uncommon to develop a fear of falling. Fear affects confidence and then makes people afraid to continue many of their physical activities. When older adults limit movement, their mobility and balance decline which increases the risk of falling. Knowing that help is available offers peace of mind.
- Other reasons: monitors side effects that occur due to medications, lessens feeling anxious about living alone and getting help and/or not living close to a family member, having a health condition that can result in confusion or wandering, and assurance of being able to contact help when out of the house.

Costs of medical alert systems: when choosing a system, be aware of fees such as monthly fees, annual fees, shipping fees, activation fees, and upfront device fees. Medicare Part B does not cover medical alert systems (they are not considered durable equipment such as crutches and wheelchairs). Medical alert systems with no monthly fees operate similarly to those with monthly fees but the main difference is who receives the call for help in an emergency. Monitored medical alert systems connect to a call center where a representative determines the severity of the emergency. An unmonitored system directly dials family/loved ones or the 911 system. Medical alert button users only need to press the button of their device to call for help. Medical alerts often come with Fall Detection technology. This means, without even pressing a button, help can be sent in the case of an emergency both in and out the home.

The use of cells phones for medical alerts. All cell phones can call 911 or have a designated emergency button (ICE or in case of emergency). A user can download any number of apps that sync to medical devices and to a medical alert system. According to Medical Alerts Pros, the pros of using cell/smart phones as one's alert system include availability of a flexible budget, ease of dialing 911 in emergency, availability of emergency apps for downloading, the use of only one device to carry making traveling easier, a variety of functions or uses with the phone, and the inclusion of GPS.

[Continued on next page]

Health Notes [Continued from Page 5]

The cons of using smart phones are that they can be confusing to use, especially for older adults who are just beginning to use cell phones. The learning curve for adjusting to a new device can be frustrating. The user needs to remember to carry the phone and to remember where it is in the house. The cell phone user may need to take multiple steps before calling for help. Other issues are that the screen text may be small, phone buttons may be difficult to push or are easily miss hit, phone plans can be expensive (some are quite high), and the possibility of not having the cell phone in hand when an emergency occurs. As for expense, one may be able to download an app without additional expense. To offset the cons, companies are now offering cell phones that are made with medical emergencies in mind. These phones offer limited access to typical phone functions, such as making calls and sending texts, to keep things simple. Most often, these are flip phones with only a few buttons that allow the user to dial out for help in the event of an emergency.

In summation: medical alert systems include a variety of features, such as being able to automatically detect falls and call for help, track location, and remind one to take medications. One can opt for a simple system or for a high-tech wearable smartwatch. The more features the higher the cost. When buying, consider which features will be used and how much each cost. Review the company's policies to understand how the monitoring center works, contract obligations, and out-of-pocket fees like activation and equipment charges.

A few sources that review systems and costs:

<https://www.usnews.com/360-reviews/medical-alert-system/how-to-choose>

<https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-medical-alert-systems>

<https://www.consumerreports.org/medical-alert-systems/best-medical-alert-systems/>

Food and Drug Administration provides reports of adverse problems with medical devices;
(<https://www.fda.gov/Medical-Devices>)

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