



## President's Notes:

After review of expenses and discussion at several meetings the Board approved an increase in dues from \$25 to \$35 for regular membership and from \$6 to \$10 for surviving spouses effective July 1st.

We continue to hope that we'll be back face-to-face in the fall. Stay safe.

Kevin Majkut

## WWU Give Day is Thursday, May 27

WWU's sixth annual Give Day is a great way to support the WWURA Scholarship and/or your favorite department, scholarship, team or program at WWU because a percentage of every gift will be matched!

Give on May 27 th here: <https://wwugiveday.wwu.edu/>  
Or, if you prefer to give offline, you can send a check payable to the WWU Foundation anytime between now and May 15 to:

WWU Foundation, 516 High Street, MS 9034 ;  
Bellingham, WA 98225

\* Please indicate "WWU Give Day" and the area you'd like to support on the memo line of your check. For example: "WWU Give Day- WWURA Scholarship"

Visit: <https://wwugiveday.wwu.edu/> for more information.

There are many different matching funds and challenges listed on the website. The WWU Challenge Pool provides a % match for every gift that hasn't been matched by another challenge! Last year's match percent was 19%, so, if you made a \$100 gift on give day, it turned into \$119 for your favorite department or program...\$500 turned into \$595 dollars...and so on! If you'd like to set up your own challenge fund for your favorite scholarship, department or program, please contact Angie Vandenhaak at: [angie.vandenhaak@wwu.edu](mailto:angie.vandenhaak@wwu.edu) or (360) 650-3274.

## ANNOUNCING:

## MAY and JUNE TRAVELOGUES

Over the past few months we have followed David Carroll and his wife Susan Donnelly as they make their way around the world, focusing on each country's culture, its people, and most definitely its food. Over the next two months, we will make sure to get them back home, continuing their delightful storytelling and amazing photography.

**Zoom** links will be sent the day before. No need to reserve in advance.

Please note: Because there is much to cover in the final two episodes, each will be 90 minutes long and include an intermission. Feel free to stay for any or all of each presentation.

### Wednesday, May 19th, 4:00 PM-5:30 PM.

Botswana, wild life safari, Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, and Johannesburg, South Africa. There will be a short intermission followed by a visit to Morocco.

### Wednesday, June 16th, 4:00-5:30 PM.

Egypt and Greece. This visit will also include an intermission.

## INSIDE :

<b>Interest Groups</b>	<b>p. 2</b>
<b>Book Review</b>	<b>p. 3</b>
<b>Cooking for One (or Two)</b>	<b>p. 4</b>
<b>Health Notes - by Evelyn Ames</b>	<b>p. 5,6</b>

## MAY 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 April 20th at 2:00 pm on Zoom to discuss

*Washington Black* by Esi Edugyan. Lina will send a link for Zoom.

June's book is *Death in Mud Lick* by Eric Eyre.

July's book is *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell

**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 May 6 through May 16 (remaining weeks not listed):

Here is the list for May: 6-*Norma*, 2017; 7- *Wozzeck*, 2020; 8-*Madame Butterfly*, 2009;

9-*Agrippina*, 2020; 10-*La Boheme*, 1982; 11- *Don Giovanni*, 1982; 12-*Tristan and Isolde*, 1999;

13-*Der Rosenkavalier*, 2010; 14-*the Audition* (doc-umentary of Met Auditions);

15-*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, 2014; 16 -*Roberto Devereaux*, 2016.

**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.)

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 sup-portive 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

### ***Klara and the Sun*, Kazuo Ishiguro (2021, Alfred A. Knopf)**

Klara, a robot “Artificial Friend” (AF), is the narrator of this remarkable book by Kazuo Ishiguro, the author of *The Remains of the Day* and many other fine novels. In Klara’s world, robots have been made to take over so many human jobs that if children are eventually to work as adults in any of the few remaining middle-class occupations, they must be genetically altered, “lifted,” to be unnaturally smart. Genetic alteration has its risks, of course, and some of the children fall ill with strange ailments from which a few recover but many die. So families with children are faced with a dilemma: to lift or not to lift? The lifted children, tutored separately in their homes over their smart-phones, form what amounts to an exclusive caste, and are provided with AFs to keep them from being lonely.

Klara’s charge, a girl named Josie, lives with her divorced mother, an attorney, in a rural suburb of an unnamed American city. Her only neighbor is her best friend, Rick, a gifted boy whose mother decided not to have him lifted. Josie is ill, and Klara does her best to help her recover and to maintain her affection for the increasingly outcast Rick. But Klara’s understanding is limited by her programming. She is solar-powered, and believes that the sun is a caring God. She is extremely perceptive and can learn through experience but there is much she doesn’t know or understand about the world around her. However, Josie’s mother comes to feel that Klara could replace Josie if Josie dies, a calamity the mother can’t face.

So in a fascinating and moving way, this novel asks what it means to be human. As Rick’s mother wonders, should Klara be treated as a person or a vacuum cleaner? On the other hand, is there any part of Josie that Klara can’t duplicate, given a new casing that looks exactly like her? The novel also goes beyond the individual. Ishiguro’s achievement in entering into the mind of a robot, which extends to her careful English, so different from spontaneous human talk, becomes a critique of 21st-century Western society. Might a robotic mind like Klara’s be an improvement over Capitalist man’s? Then again, should the astounding new developments in artificial intelligence we’re hearing about even now be stopped? Elite college education is already such an advantage today that some affluent parents are willing to cheat and bribe to get their children “lifted” into prestigious colleges: should we be rethinking “meritocracy”? Meanwhile homeless people, like Josie’s brilliant but “replaced” father, are to be found wandering around our cities any day of the week, the rejects of a heartless economic system that Ishiguro’s novel calls into question.

- Minda Rae Amiran



## Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

# Overcoming Obstacles to Wearing Hearing Aids

Hearing loss, a common problem caused by noise, aging, disease, and heredity, occurs in approximately one in three people between the ages of 65 and 74 and nearly half of those older than 75. Those with loss may find it hard to have conversations with friends and family, difficulty understanding a doctor's advice, responding to warnings, and hearing doorbells and alarms. Hearing loss can lead to social isolation. There are many causes of age-related hearing loss. Most commonly, it arises from changes in the inner ear as we age, but it can result from changes in the middle ear, or from complex changes along the nerve pathways from the ear to the brain. Certain medical conditions and medications may also play a role.

**Question: why do people hesitate or resist to wearing hearing aid devices? Why is it that people become discouraged and stop using them? Adjusting to hearing aids is not the same as adjusting to wearing eyeglasses!** With glasses, a person is fitted by the optician after having a prescription from an ophthalmologist filled. Seldom does one need to return to the optician. **BUT** for hearing aids, there is a difference. **The difference is that hearing aids are not "perfect" the first time.** According to Dr. Rieko Darling (WWU Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders), "it is more than the "goods" or the technology that has the potential to be of great benefit. It is the relationship that the person with the hearing loss has with the provider of that technology. Each person's hearing loss is different, as is their reaction to the hearing loss, personality, lifestyle, cognitive resources, how they handle difficulties, as well as a myriad of other variables. The audiologist who sees the whole person and takes the time to work with each person is necessary. As is the willingness of the person with the hearing loss to work with the audiologist, to have realistic expectations, and to give the technology a 'fair chance' to work."

Researchers at University of Alberta suggest the following reasons why it is very easy to get turned off to the idea of wearing hearing aids. Some people expect to have hearing restored to what it was. But the hearing system has been damaged. Expectations are often too high, and "when those expectations aren't met, people become disenfranchised, stop using them and tell everyone else it doesn't work." Hearing aids are not designed to restore lost function. The delicate hair cells in the ear have been damaged by noise, age or medications and cannot just be repaired. Hearing devices use tiny directional microphones and a lot of advanced processing to help minimize distracting background noise. In other words, aids maximize one's ability to hear who is talking to you.

Being proactive about wearing hearing aids means if one person in the family has a hearing loss, everyone needs to adjust and be more forgiving. It is all right to ask people not to talk when they are out of the room or while they are running water or while the radio is on. It is all right to ask to have the music turned down in a restaurant. Audiologists suggest that the new user do the following: **Take time to get it right! Keep an open mind! Be persistent to adjusting to new technology! Realize that it is a slow process that has to be worked through. Spend as much time as needed with an audiologist. Counselling, support and time are needed when one begins using hearing aids.**

**The National Institute on Deafness and Communication Disorders simple self-assessment quiz:** Answer "yes" to three or more of these questions, you could have a hearing problem and may need to have your hearing checked. **Questions:** Do you sometimes feel embarrassed when you meet new people because you struggle to hear? Do you feel frustrated when talking to members of your family because you have difficulty hearing them? Do you have difficulty hearing or understanding co-workers, clients, or customers? Do you feel restricted or limited by a hearing problem? Do you have difficulty hearing when visiting friends, relatives, or neighbors? Do you have trouble hearing in the movies or in the theater? Does a hearing problem cause you to argue with family members? Do you have trouble hearing the TV or radio at levels that are loud enough for others? Do you feel that any difficulty with your hearing limits your personal or social life? Do you have trouble hearing family or friends when you are together in a restaurant?

**Health Notes [ Continued from Page 5 ]**

**Suggested sources:**

**<https://www.bloomhearing.com.au/en-au/blog/why-people-dont-wear-hearing-aids> <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/age-related-hearing-loss> <https://www.doctorsofhearinghealthcare.com/people-reject-using-hearing-aids/> <https://www.healthgrades.com/right-care/hearing-loss/why-people-avoid-hearing-aids-and-how-to-help> <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/hearing-loss-common-problem-older-adults> Information**

**Free assessment at the WWU Clinic:**

**Note: Accredited speech and hearing clinic at Western Washington University offers complete audiological assessment to determine the presence, type and severity of hearing impairment. Otoacoustic emissions, electrophysiologic testing and other assessments are conducted to determine candidacy for amplification and/or referral for medical evaluations. Phone 360-650-3885 for scheduling appointment. <https://chssdepts.wwu.edu/csd/audiology-services>**

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