



WWURA NEWS



October 2021

Western Washington University Retirement Association
Welcoming retired WWU Faculty and Staff and others

www.wwu.edu/wwura

Notes from our leader:

Fall is here with its windy, rainy, sunny days. Hope you have a chance to get out and view the lovely fall leaves.

Since Kevin has abandoned us to spend a few months of quality time with the grandchildren in that other Washington, I will be leading WWURA. If you have any questions/concerns/suggestions about WWURA feel free to call or e-mail me. Your input is vital to our organization if we are to keep it active.

At the picnic Kevin talked about the need for more members to participate in the running of WWURA. We need directors, committee members and chairs. It is important to have more member participation so we can have a variety of opinions on where we can improve our services and where we go from here. Please consider joining the board or taking a more active role in the running of WWURA.

For the moment we will have to go back to Zoom meetings and events but your board is continually updating our plans and we hope to be back to in-person meetings and events as soon as possible.

We miss seeing you,
Peggy Loudon

PeggyLou99@gmail.com 360-733-6052

Upcoming events:

No meeting planned for October

Future events hope to be in person. In the meantime, we are following up-to-date CDC guidelines.

November 15th or 17th - Travelogue - lots of possibilities are being discussed.

November 19th, 7:30 to 9:30am - Virtual YWCA Annual Leadership Breakfast

More info at: YWCABellingham.org

December 11th - Jingle Bell Run/Walk

December TBA - Holiday Party

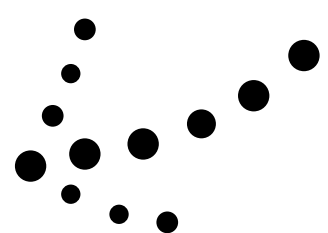
***Don't miss the
Whatcom Museum Glass Exhibit - it ends Oct 10th !!!

INNOCULATIONS:

Please consult your physician/pharmacy about boosters for COVID and about your annual flu shot.

REMEMBER TO;

- * Get your flu shot !
- ✓ * Meet on Zoom - above and Interest Groups
- ✓ * Interact with others!
- * Join the WWURA JINGLEBELL Event register/donate now at; events.arthritis.org
- ✓ and search for Bellingham, WA



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Book Review

by Minda Rae Amiran

Summerwater, by Sarah Moss (2020, Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

A number of Scots and English people have rented (or own) vacation cottages beside a loch north of Glasgow, at the end of an unpaved one-lane road ten miles from the highway, with no telephone reception. It's been pouring the whole week and everybody is on edge, and what's worse, a woman in one of the cottages has been having parties with loud music that has kept almost everyone else awake all night long.

This is the opening situation of Sarah Moss's extraordinary novel, which follows the thoughts of most of the characters throughout a single day, starting at dawn with a mother out for her daily run and ending late at night with a young boy on the outskirts of the catastrophe.

For there is a catastrophe. It involves the woman responsible for the invasive parties, a "foreigner" who is still here with her little daughter, despite Brexit. But the power of the novel doesn't come from its almost nonexistent plot; it comes from the author's penetrating picture of each person's mind: the elderly self-satisfied doctor and his wife, some rebellious teenagers, a number of children (one only four years old), several mothers and fathers, a young engaged couple, a spoiled young girl. One hilarious chapter follows the thoughts of the young woman having sex with her fiancé. Another, in a tour de force, follows the doctor's wife as she enters dementia unawares. A disturbing chapter is devoted to the cruel, self-preening daddy's girl. The voice in each character's head has a different style, and each family relationship is different. You know these people. The portraits show up the characters in run-of-the-mill novels as the flat, single-colored things they are.

Beyond the characters, drenched in their personal concerns, lies the natural world surrounding the cottages, and beyond that, our shared present of climate change, economic worries, wars, famines, and refugees. The characters are fleetingly aware of these worlds from time to time. Short descriptions of the natural setting appear in front of each chapter. The writing is wry, vivid, precise, sometimes lyrical.

The novel is just 202 pages long. In my opinion, it's one not to miss.

* Notes: This and previous Book Reviews are available on the website: www.wvu.edu/wwura

Village Books gives WWURA Members a discount. <https://www.villagebooks.com/>

After retiring from her career as a litigation paralegal, Anne Calico left Seattle for Bellingham in 2018. She now has the time and space to enjoy growing tomatoes on her deck in an “earth box” from starters acquired at Joe’s Gardens.

Anne is happy, and easily able, to share with us a recipe for just one or two people because she has been cooking just for herself most of her adult life. Additionally, since discovering as a teenager that commercial fast food didn’t do good things to her health, she has spent many years discovering recipes to make at home.

Today’s “Cooking for One” contribution is just such a recipe. It is adapted from “Nutrition Action Healthletter” a publication that is both online and in print. Anne suggests giving at least the online version a try at <http://www.nutritionaction.com>.

Like all the recipes in “Nutrition Action”, this tomato-basil pesto is designed to be both healthy and delicious. I found it somewhat unusual in its uncooked freshness and delicacy. Meanwhile, I’m happy to direct your attention to the “list” of instructions, consisting of exactly one...yes, one...step. Once the sauce is ready, pour it over your favorite pasta. And enjoy!

Anne Calico’s Cherry Tomato – Basil Pesto

Ingredients

- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup fresh basil
- 1-3 cloves garlic
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¾ teaspoon salt

Instructions

1. Place all ingredients in a food processor or blender and process until as smooth as you desire.

Tips

1. For a slightly different flavor, walnuts can be used instead of pine nuts. Both Anne and I vote for the pine nuts.
2. Powdered garlic, or no garlic at all, can be used instead of fresh.

Brief History of Pandemics and People's Superstitions

Step back in time. What did people believe to be causes of pandemics that decimated world population several times? How did they behave? Are today's behaviors similar? Scientists now understand the microbes that cause pandemics (e.g., bubonic plague, cholera, smallpox). In past times, people tried to explain the overwhelming number of deaths by believing the gods were angry, using astrological observations, following religious beliefs, blaming others, passing on superstitions and bizarre beliefs. "Throughout the centuries, plague arrived in wave after devastating wave, taking numerous forms—from bubonic (which affects the lymphatic system) to pneumonic (which attacks the lungs) to septicemic (which infiltrates the bloodstream). Perhaps the most virulent occurrence came in the mid-1300s with the Black Death, which felled more than 20 million people across Europe alone." Its cause is largely believed to have been bacteria-carrying fleas "riding" their host, the rat. As human civilizations flourished, so did infectious disease. Large numbers of people living in close proximity to each other and animals, often with poor sanitation and nutrition, provided fertile breeding grounds for disease. New overseas trading routes spread infections far and wide, creating global pandemics. The plague of Justinian (Byzantine Empire, in 541 CE) decimated Constantinople and spread across Europe, Asia, North Africa and Arabia killing an estimated 30 to 50 million people, possibly half of the world's population. The Black Death, in Europe around 1347, claimed an astonishing 200 million lives in just four years.

Angry gods: many early cultures looked to a vengeful or unforgiving God—or gods. "In ancient Greek mythology, Homer wrote in *The Iliad* of the god Apollo raining plague down on the Greek army with his arrows during the Trojan War, killing animals first, then soldiers. Apollo's arrows came to symbolize disease and death." "...The wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague." (Numbers 11:33). During the Middle Ages, it was believed that sneezing not only spread Black Death but caused a person to expel their soul. Hence, "God Bless You!"

Astrological movements and...bad air: astrology and "noxious vapors" were believed to be the breeding ground for pestilence. The alignment of Saturn, Mars, and Jupiter in 1345, and a lunar eclipse, were suggested to be causes of bubonic plague in France. Parisian medical scholars wrote "For Jupiter, being wet and hot, draws up evil vapors from the earth and Mars, because it is immoderately hot and dry, then ignites the vapors, and as a result there were lightning, sparks, noxious vapors and fires throughout the air." As for "bad air," "Terrestrial winds spread the noxious airs widely, smiting down "the life force" of anyone who ingested it into their lungs." "This corrupted air, when breathed in, necessarily penetrates to the heart and corrupts the substance of the spirit there and rots the surrounding moisture, and the heat thus caused destroys the life force, and this is the immediate cause of the present epidemic." The noxious vapors were given another label: "miasma" a few centuries later. If it smelled bad, it must carry disease. Philadelphia and yellow fever is a good example of past beliefs in miasma.

Conspiracy theories: Pandemics have long bred prejudice and mistrust. People look to blame others, including those governing. Long-standing biases bring out the worst. "Throughout medieval Europe the plague became an excuse to scapegoat and massacre Jewish people. Medieval Christian mobs attacked Jewish ghettos with virtually every wave of the disease, claiming that Jewish citizens poisoned wells and conspired with demons to spread the disease. In one pogrom, 2,000 Jews were burned alive in the city of Strasbourg on February 14, 1349". In the 19th and early 20th centuries, as cholera occurred across Europe, class-based conspiracy theories arose. The poor and marginalized accused the ruling elite of ruthlessly spreading the disease and deliberately poisoning them. Citizens took out their hatred on police, government, and medical establishments. Hospitals and town halls were destroyed. With the Russian flu of 1889, "the New York Herald, speculated that the flu could travel on telegraph wires, after a large number of telegraph operators seemed to contract the disease. Others hypothesized that the flu may have arrived on letters from Europe, since mail carriers had begun to fall ill. In Detroit, when bank tellers began to get sick, some jumped to the conclusion that they'd caught it from handling paper money. Other rumored culprits included dust, postage stamps and library books."

Health Notes [continued]

Stopping the plague: with Great Plague of 1665 (killed 100,000 Londoners in seven months) all public entertainment was banned. Victims forcibly shut into their homes; red crosses were painted on their doors along with a plea for forgiveness: "Lord have mercy upon us." Venetian law kept newly arrived sailors in isolation until they showed no sickness. Additional legislation forced isolation of 40 days (quarantino). Smallpox: cowpox used by Edward Jenner to vaccinate against the disease (inoculated gardener's 8-year-old son with cowpox; exposed him to smallpox virus with no ill effect. World Health Organization announced in 1980 that smallpox had been completely eradicated. Snow, in England, removed handle of public water cistern to prevent women fetching water from transmitting cholera due to poor sanitation.

<https://www.history.com/news/how-infectious-diseases-spread-myth-superstition-theories>

The book, *Justinian's Flea: The First Great Plague and the End of the Roman Empire* by William Rosen.

<https://www.history.com/topics/middle-ages/pandemics-timeline>

<https://www.history.com/news/pandemics-end-plague-cholera-black-death-smallpox>

Also read:

www.wsj.com/articles/the-long-history-of-vaccine-mandates-in-america-11631890699

The Long History of Vaccine Mandates in America By David Oshinsky

It covers a lot, including; 1736: Ben Franklin, Revolutionary War: George Washington immunized his troops against smallpox even against their will. Smallpox largely disappeared from the ranks.

In the 19th Century: States passed laws requiring smallpox vaccinations. In 1905: the Supreme Court ruled against a notable Massachusetts man who defied the law and said he had the right to not be vaccinated.

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