

Author has a passion for outdoor experiences

By Ceili Cornelius
Correspondent

Ruby McConnell is a featured author at the Sisters Festival of Books, taking place October 18-20 at venues around town.

The festival proceeds benefit the Sisters Festival of Books scholarship fund.

McConnell is a writer, geologist, and adventurer whose work focuses on nature, the environment, and the relationship between landscape and the human experience. Her experiences as a researcher, activist, and explorer in the wildlands of the western United States led her to write "A Woman's Guide to the Wild," which is touted as the definitive outdoor guide for anyone who identifies as, or loves, women (or just wants to learn how to read a map).

McConnell believes that positive outdoor experiences are the key to healthy living and protecting the environment, and is committed to breaking down barriers that prevent all kinds of people from being outside. Her writing has appeared in publications such as *Grain Literary Journal*, *Oregon Humanities Magazine*, and *Mother Earth News* and was awarded an Oregon Literary Arts Fellowship in 2016.

McConnell stumbled into writing by accident. By trade and study, she is an environmental geologist. During the recession, however, she wasn't working much in that field. Also a dancer, she embraced her creative side while she had the time to do so. She entered her first piece of writing after seeing a competition for *Tiny Stories*. She sat down and wrote a tiny story and ended up winning the competition. Shortly after, she read about an essay contest and entered her personal essays. They ended up getting picked up as articles and she fell in love with writing and

has been doing it ever since.

Her writing primarily focuses on environmentalism and the human connection to the natural world.

"It stems from working as a field geologist, and in that profession there is a lot that isn't thought about ahead of time, about what to do out there," she told *The Nugget*. "As a woman working out in the elements with gear that didn't fit me, I felt as if there wasn't enough out there about how to be prepared in the wilderness, especially focused specifically on women."

That inspired the start of her own field guide: "A Woman's Guide to the Wild."

She had been taking notes and creating it since 2008 and released it in 2016.

"I realized that my skill-set had caught up to my desire for a women's field guide during my own field work, and wrote my own," she said.

She got funding for the book with a Kickstarter, and eventually publishers picked up her book because there wasn't anything out there like it and there was a market for it.

"I wanted to write something that wasn't just strictly about survival, but just how to be comfortable in the natural world and out in the field," she said.

McConnell also has a "Girl's Guide" series of field guides. She is in the process of releasing the third installment of her *Kid's Nature Books*.

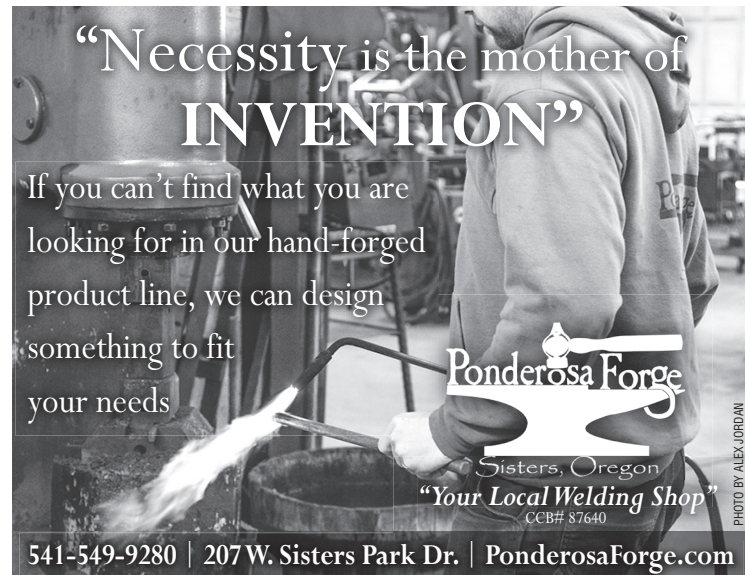
"A lot of that writing stems from my work as an outdoor school teacher and working at summer camps with kids," she said.

She is also releasing her personal essays focused on environmentalism and the human connection to the movement, as well as the natural world itself. Recently, she received an Oregon Literary Arts Fellowship to help with

See **AUTHOR** on page 6

"Necessity is the mother of **INVENTION**"

If you can't find what you are looking for in our hand-forged product line, we can design something to fit your needs



Ponderosa Forge
Sisters, Oregon
"Your Local Welding Shop"
CCB# 87640

541-549-9280 | 207 W. Sisters Park Dr. | PonderosaForge.com

PHOTO BY ALEX JORDAN

Homecoming Parade...



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER

Sisters High School students and other community members got creative in their costuming for the annual Homecoming Parade down Hood Avenue last week.



Tires LES SCHWAB

FALL TIRE SALE

SAVE UP TO \$152

- ON A SET OF 4 SELECT LIGHT TRUCK AND SUV TIRES -

<p>TERRAMAX H/T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good tread wear • Value priced • Mud & snow rated 	<p>BACK COUNTRY TOURING H/T</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding durability • Superior handling • All-season performance • Mud & snow rated 	<p>BACK COUNTRY ALL TERRAIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended tread life • Outstanding traction • Quiet ride • Designed for comfort 	<p>BACK COUNTRY MT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut and chip resistant • Outstanding mud and snow traction • Severe duty applications • Durable 3-ply sidewall
--	--	--	---

DOING THE **RIGHT** THING SINCE 1952.

Limited time offer. While supplies last. Actual discount amount depends on tire size and type. Cannot be combined with other offers. Details at LesSchwab.com.

View prices and book an appointment at www.LesSchwab.com EXPIRES OCTOBER 31, 2019

SISTERS LES SCHWAB	REDMOND	PRINEVILLE	MADRAS	La PINE	BEND-SOUTH	BEND-FRANKLIN	BEND-NORTH
600 W. HOOD AVE. • 541-549-1560	845 NW 6th 541-548-4011	1250 East 3rd 541-447-5686	1412 SW Hwy. 97 541-475-3834	52596 N. Hwy. 97 541-536-3009	61085 S. Hwy. 97 541-385-4702	105 NE Franklin 541-382-3551	63590 Hunnell Rd. 541-318-0281