



# Coping with a changing climate

BY BARBARA LLOYD McMICHAEL

I'd already been reading two books on climate change for this week's column when I heard a disconcerting story on the news. A peer-reviewed analysis by First Street Foundation predicts that much of the Midwest will become an extreme heat belt over the next 30 years, subject to summer temperatures of 125 degrees Fahrenheit, while the Southeast can expect to broil in 100-plus degree heat for 100 days annually.

The same study shows that while the West Coast will become hotter than it is now, it will remain relatively temperate. But this region likely will become a magnet for climate refugees.

It's deeply unsettling news, and if I'd hoped to find solace in Kathleen Dean Moore's new book of essays, "Take Heart: Encouragement for Earth's Weary Lovers," I was about to be disappointed.

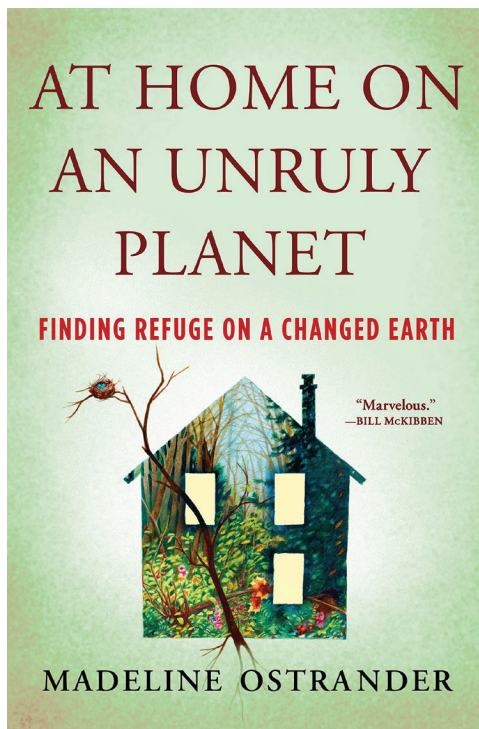
The Corvallis writer is well-known for her environmental advocacy and books that celebrate nature. In this new collection, the titles of her essays are uplifting: "Take a Stand," "Express Gratitude with Good Work," "Set a Strong Example," "Be Earth's Ally" and so on.

I should have stopped there, because in the essays themselves, the author dwells on the causes for her own anguish and regret – a maimed fish, a mortally injured dog, kids who spitefully kill crabs and more. She laments society's "failure to be cut to pieces by the suffering of others."

Did she really think that readers who would be moved to pick up a book titled "Take Heart" haven't already experienced their own encounters with despair? By the book's end, Moore shifts in tone to uplifting messaging, but for this reader it was too little, too late.

I found more solid encouragement in "At Home on an Unruly Planet." In this book, Seattle-based science journalist Madeline Ostrander reports from four locations around the United States that are grappling with different aspects of climate change.

In the Northwest, it's the fire-prone



"At Home on an Unruly Planet" is by Madeline Ostrander.

## This week's books

"Take Heart: Encouragement for Earth's Weary Lovers" by Kathleen Dean Moore

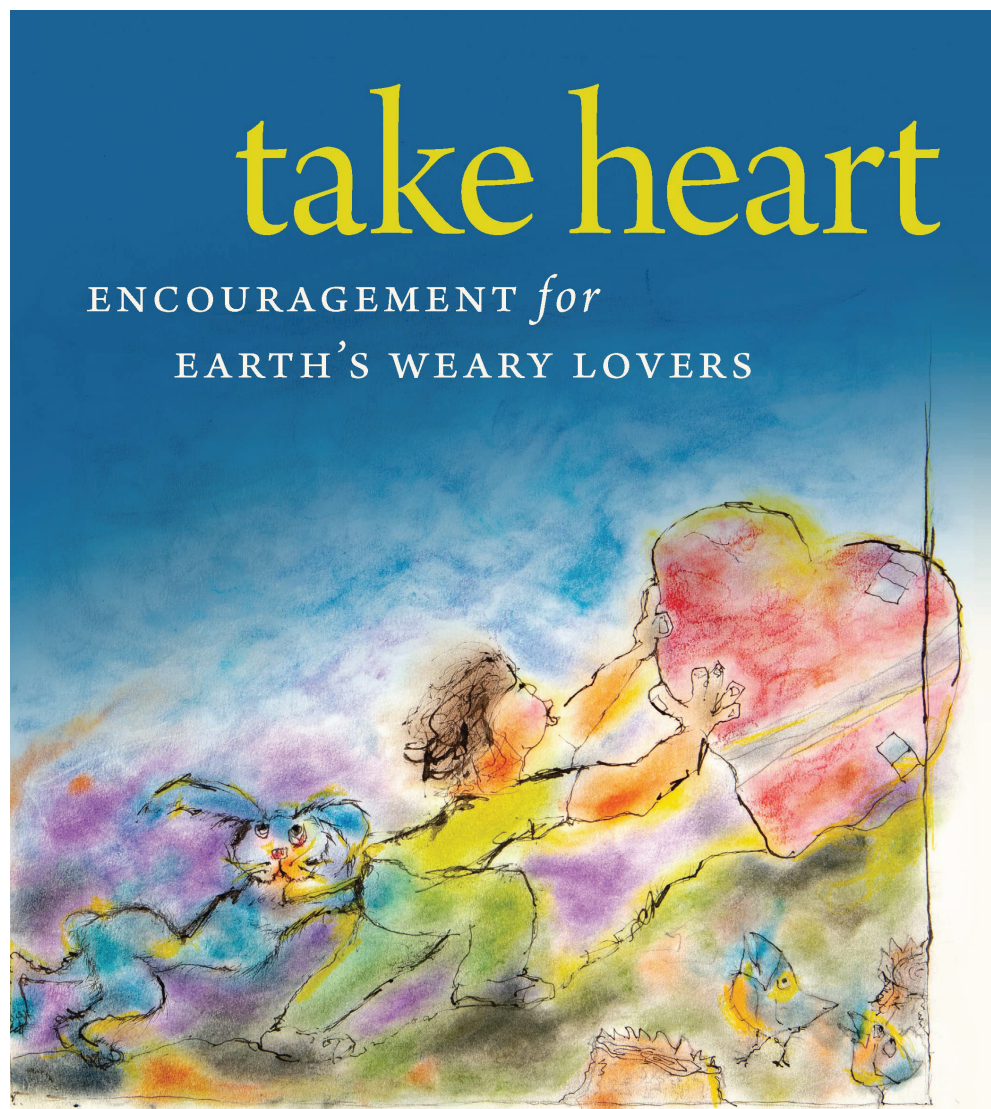
Oregon State University Press –  
160 pp – \$18.95

"At Home on an Unruly Planet"  
by Madeline Ostrander

Henry Holt – 352 pp – \$28.99

eastern slope of the Cascade Mountains. Down the coast, it's a Bay Area community that's been bedeviled by multiple environmental disasters, many caused by an oil refinery located there.

In Alaska, Ostrander focuses on a Yup'ik community that's been displaced from its customary home on a now melting tundra. In St. Augustine, Florida, she talks with preservationists who are struggling to



ESSAYS BY Kathleen Dean Moore ART BY Bob Haverluck

"Take Heart: Encouragement for Earth's Weary Lovers" is a collection of essays by Kathleen Dean Moore.

**DID SHE REALLY THINK THAT READERS WHO WOULD BE MOVED TO PICK UP A BOOK TITLED 'TAKE HEART' HAVEN'T ALREADY EXPERIENCED THEIR OWN ENCOUNTERS WITH DESPAIR? BY THE BOOK'S END, MOORE SHIFTS IN TONE TO UPLIFTING MESSAGING, BUT FOR THIS READER IT WAS TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE.**

protect historic sites from rising sea levels.

This book provides stories of people who are confronting the realities of climate change in their communities, what they've learned and how they're trying to adapt.

"I am not giving you a book of doom. I don't want to ruminate on all the ways we might be evicted or displaced. This is a book about home," Ostrander writes. She provides thoughtful examples of how

communities are trying to reduce the damage that's already been done and, going forward, are developing ways to settle in safely. "At Home on an Unruly Planet" is constructive and well worth your time.

*The Bookmonger is Barbara Lloyd McMichael, who writes this weekly column focusing on books, authors and publishers of the Pacific Northwest. Contact her at [barbaralmcm@gmail.com](mailto:barbaralmcm@gmail.com).*