# Library **Tidings**

News about the Siuslaw Public Library

Library Tidings by Kevin Mittge features news about upcoming Siuslaw Public Library programs for adults and children, new books and videos, and other library news of interest to the community.

**Book Review** "The Arbornaut: A Life **Discovering the Eighth Continent** in the Trees Above Us" by Meg Lowman

As a graduate student exploring the rain forests of Australia, Meg Lowman realized that she couldn't monitor her beloved leaves using any of the usual methods. So she put together a climbing kit: she sewed a harness from an old seat belt, gathered hundreds of feet of rope, and found a tool belt for her pencils and rulers. Up she went, into the trees.

Forty years later, Lowman remains one of the world's foremost arbornauts, known as the "real-life Lorax." She planned one of the first treetop walkways and helps create more of these bridges all over the world.

With a voice as infectious in its enthusiasm as it is practical in its optimism, "The Arbornaut" chronicles Lowman's irresistible story.

From climbing solo hundreds of feet into the air in Australia's rain forests to measuring tree growth in the northeastern United States, from searching the redwoods of the Pacific coast for new life to studying leaf eaters in Scotland's Highlands, from conducting a BioBlitz in Malaysia to conversation planning in India and collaborating with priests to save Ethiopia's last forests, Lowman launches us into the life and work of a field scientist, ecologist and conservationist. She offers hope, specific plans, and recommendations

Despite devastation across the world, through trees, we can still make an immediate and lasting impact against climate change.

A blend of memoir and fieldwork account, "The Arbornaut" gives us the chance to live among scientists and travel the world, even in a hot-air balloon! It is the engrossing, uplifting story of a nerdy tree climber — the only girl at the science fair — who becomes a giant inspiration, a ground-breaking, ground-defying field biologist and a hero for trees everywhere.

### Florence Festival of Books Features **Melody Carlson and Other Authors**

The Florence Festival of Books will take place this Friday, Sept. 17, and Saturday, Sept. 18, at the Florence Events The festival will feature a keynote

address by best-selling Oregon author Melody Carlson on Friday evening at 7 p.m. at the FEC. This event is free, though it does require pre-registration which will allow the FEC to plan the space for social distancing. All attendees are required to wear masks. Carlson is the author of nearly 300

books, with \$7 million in sales. Some of her books have been made into Hallmark movies (for example, "All Summer Long") with more on the way. Due to COVID restrictions there will be no book sales or signing at the keynote address, but Carlson will join dozens of other authors the following day during the festival of books. There will also be a panel discussion

on Friday afternoon, from 3 to 4:30 p.m., featuring Bob Welch and William Sullivan, discussing "The Path from Writer to Author."

Welch, an award-winning newspaper columnist, is the author of many books including "The Wizard of Foz," "American Nightingale," "52 Lessons from It's a Wonderful Life" and "Cascade Sum-

Sullivan is known for his well-loved "100-Hike" books, but is also the author of "Listening for Coyote," "The Ship in the Hill" and "Cabin Fever: Notes from a Part-Time Pioneer."

## Wildlife habitat improvements benefit future developments

Some of the well-known benefits of wetlands include buffering from flooding and storm surges, providing excellent habitat for wildlife, improving water quality, providing recreation opportunities and storing carbon.

Many years ago, wetlands all over the world were commonly drained, filled and built up for humans at the expense of wildlife and waterways. We now know that wetlands are crucial to a healthy environment and our economy. Estuaries, where ocean tides mix salt water with fresh water, are especially important for fish and other wildlife.

It's expensive to restore those wetlands. Mitigation banking is one way to offset the costs while balancing conservation, development and property rights in a responsible and sustainable way.

Dr. Alex Gonyaw, Senior Fish Biologist of the Klamath Tribes

explains, "Mitigation banks [are] where we make "deposits" of restored habitat land from which we can make "withdrawals" when projects impact or disturb wetland areas." This is just what was done on the Siuslaw River at Cushman, where nearly 150 acres of wetlands were diked and drained in the 1940's to use

for pasture. Beginning around 2000, Don Wilbur and his family began

Oregon's first estuarine mitigation bank. Many agencies and scientists were involved, and helped develop Oregon's rules for estuary mitigation. Wilbur Island Mitigation Bank received its final approval in 2012. Now the whole island, approximately 300 acres, is providing prime habitat for coho as well as steelhead, osprey, ducks, eelgrass & other wildlife while making developments in the Florence and surrounding areas

The benefits for the environment are many: Restoration happens in advance of impacts, so the water quality, fish, other wildlife and climate are already benefitting from it. It emphasizes the best available science and focuses on results. A large project consolidates resources to allow large areas of permanently-protected habitat, with far more benefits than a small patchwork of projects.

For a developer, mitigation reduces uncertainty, design and construction costs, agency oversight and permit processing time. It maximizes use of the developable property, and transfers all responsibility for protection and monitoring to the mitigation banker.

In cases where a special species or habitat would be impacted, mitigation would not be approved; it is only used to replace similar or less valuable marshes. On the Siuslaw as well as in most areas of the country, estuarine wetlands have been disproportionately impacted, so this mitigation may also be allowed to replace some freshwater wetlands.

Having invested decades of care and \$1 million, the Mitigation Bank is now ready for the next owner, and has vast, long-term income potential. The land protections are guaranteed forever, and also allow other low-impact activities such as education, camping, and duck hunting under certain conditions. This is an opportunity of a lifetime that will benefit generations to come.

More information can be found at donwilbur.com/services-offered.

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