

Welch's New Book a Delightful Adventure  
Kris Wiley for The News Review

Readers searching for an inspirational, humorous, heartfelt book need look no further than Eugene writer Bob Welch's latest title.

"Seven Summers (and a Few Bummers): My Adventure Hiking the 2,650-Mile PCT" chronicles Welch's years-long efforts to conquer the Pacific Crest Trail with his brother-in-law.

The longtime Register-Guard features editor/columnist and bestselling author will visit Roseburg Public Library to discuss "Seven Summers" at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 6. Copies of the book will be available for purchase by cash or credit card.

Welch's program will cap the library's fifth-anniversary celebration. The free event begins at 10 a.m. with hands-on craft stations for youth. City of Roseburg and Douglas Education Service District officials will speak at 10:30 a.m.

Throughout the morning, the library will provide cookies, coffee, water and library-branded items such as stickers, pens and notepads.

Although I am not the outdoorsy type, I love reading about others' adventures. "Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail" by Cheryl Strayed. "A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail" by Bill Bryson. "Welcome to the Goddamn Ice Cube: Chasing Fear and Finding Home in the Great White North" by Blair Braverman. There is nothing like exploring the wilderness from my recliner.

Add "Seven Summers" to that list of engaging personal narratives. I read the book in two days, delighting in Welch's pursuit of completing a feat that bests more than half of those who try.

Welch has been a lifelong outdoors enthusiast, so it didn't seem too extreme when he decided to hike the Oregon section of the PCT in 2011. On his wife's suggestion, he asked his brother-in-law, Glenn, to join him, and he chronicled that journey in "Cascade Summer: My Adventure on Oregon's Pacific Crest Trail." Welch condensed that first summer into the beginning of "Seven Summers."

Despite the blisters, aches and pains of the Oregon trek – or maybe, in part, because of them – Welch got the notion that he and Glenn should tackle the entire PCT, from Mexico to Canada.

The rest of "Seven Summers" details The Oregon Boys' adventures section hiking California and Washington through joy, loss and the natural beauty of the trail.

What resonated most with me was Welch's ability to create connections with the people he meets along the way. He strikes up conversations and friendships with a variety of

characters who add insight and humor to the book. It's amazing how often these hikers reappear throughout the story.

Most of all, I celebrated the understated but deep connection between Welch and Glenn. Through the most challenging, even perilous, parts of the journey, they were present for each other. I closed the book thinking we should all be so lucky to have a hiking partner like Glenn.

I highly recommend the piece of Trail Magic that is "Seven Summers," and I hope you'll stop in to hear from Welch in person.

### This Week's Library Events

Wednesday, January 3, 10:15 a.m. – Storytime with Aurora

Wednesday, January 3, 3 p.m. – Artist exploration for K-5 students

Thursday, January 4, 10:15 a.m. – Storytime with Aurora

Thursday, January 4, 6:30 p.m. – Author Rebecca Heisman: "Flight Paths" on Facebook Live @roseburglibrary

Saturday, January 6, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. – Fifth anniversary celebration

10 a.m.-12 p.m., Kids crafts

10:30 a.m., Remarks from local officials

11 a.m., Author Bob Welch