

HILLSBORO COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEWS

...VOLUME 6: NUMBER 6.....

.....JUNE 2011...

Very Local News

By the time our library acquired *Fire Season*, I had read a half-dozen reviews and decided that I probably wouldn't read it--it sounded like just another introspective, emotional journal about discovering nature. When I saw on our new-books shelf, I begrudgingly scanned the first few pages, expecting my skepticism to be affirmed. Such was not the case. I finished it over the next four evenings.

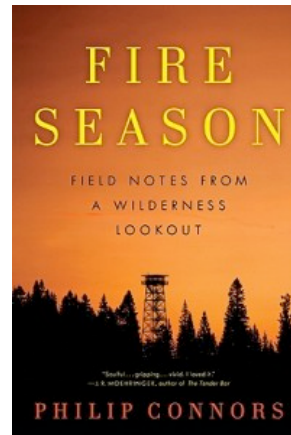
Featured This Month

Fire Season by Philip Connors

By the time *Fire Season* was written, Philip Connors had spent nine summers in the fire tower on Hillsboro Peak. He left an editorial position with the Wall Street Journal to assume this lonely job. He and his wife, Martha, moved from New York to Silver City, where she pursued a degree in nursing. Connors, I'm told, tends bar in Silver City during the cold months when the tower isn't manned.

Connors enjoys his solitude and leisurely days watching a vast forest landscape for incipient fires. Unlike Ed Abbey's protagonist in *Black Sun*, Connors isn't a self-centered sociopath mourning past relationships while exploiting new ones. He is happily married to a wonderfully tolerant wife who endures his ten-day stays on the mountain and hikes in to join him as often as possible. Connors emphasizes that he reads a lot while on the peak, and *Fire Season* shows that he has read well. The book includes a sound history of the Gila and Aldo Leopold Wildernesses and is a clearly written treatise on the changing policies of fire control in United States National Forests.

Connors isn't a fire-tower couch potato—watching the horizon by day and lounging in his cabin during off hours. He and his dog, Alice, explore the steep trails and canyons, sometimes sleeping out at the end of a hike, then hurrying back mornings to assume his duties on schedule. He knows the terrain from above and from within.



Anyone acquainted with the area and its literature can nit-pick the book. For me, two serious omissions exist. First, while castigating the cattle industry in his discussion of land uses, Connors totally ignores the history of Angora goat ranching on the Black Range. Second, Connors fails to acknowledge the first book written by a young man using Forest Service employment in the Black Range as a form of vision quest. In 1915, William Pinkney Lawson wrote *Log of a Timber Cruiser*—the story of young men doing the first timber survey across both faces of the Black Range. A retrospective comparison, it seems to me, would be a natural addition.

I wondered why Connors assigned pseudonyms to the towns of Kingston (Embree in the book—wonder where he got that name!) and Hillsboro (Gaylord—no doubt about the source of this one as well). He called Hillsboro Peak “Apache Peak”, and Animas Canyon “Ghost”). He probably renamed a few other places. This seems a little coy to me—anyone who can read a map will figure out where he worked. I thought Connors was perhaps too taken with “deep ecology,” but he keeps the subject unobtrusively in the background of the book.

To me, *Fire Season* is an honest and well-written book. Connors' love for the mountain and the job is real. He plans to be back on Hillsboro Peak this summer.

Introduction and review by Harley Shaw

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New at the Library

Non-fiction

Dog Days: Dispatches from Bedlam Farm by Jon Katz

This Is Painted Desert by John Wagoner

Navajo Sandpainting Art by Eugene Joe

Petrified Forest by Sidney Ash

One Thousand Years of Clay by Juan Juanico

Wupatki-Sunset Crater by William Breed and others

Fiction

The Obscene Bird of Night by Jose' Donoso

Films on DVD

Becoming Eduardo Gasland

Mystery

Blue Smoke and Murder by Elizabeth Lowell

Wrong Hostage by Elizabeth Lowell

Innocent As Sin by Elizabeth Lowell

Bone by Bone by Carol O'Connell

Films on VHS Tapes

Hide and Seek

Beethoven

Beethoven's 2nd

Dennis the Menace

Hook

Independence Day

Indian Summer

My Giant

National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation

Juvenile Videos

An American Tail

The Borrowers

Free Willy

George of the Jungle

The Little Mermaid

Audio Books on CD

Free Fall by Fern Michaels

Notes from the Library Board:

MANY THANKS!!!

Thanks to all of our supporters (especially Diane Bellack) who bake for and host the monthly Bake Sale for the benefit of the Library.

NO Bake Sale in July - Back again in August

Thank you, Hillsboro Community, for all of the book donations of late and for all you do to support our community library.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Annual Garage/Yard Sale –donators and buyers and sellers alike.

For a complete listing of Library materials, visit <http://www.hillsborocommunitylibrary.com>

Bookmobile: Wednesday, June 22

Hillsboro: 1:00 – 2:00 pm Kingston: 2:30-3:30 pm

Library Hours:

Sunday & Monday: closed

Tues. 3:30 - 5:30pm Wed. 1:00 – 4:00pm

Thurs: 3:30 - 5:30pm Fri: 10:00am – 1:00pm

Saturday 10:00am–2:00pm

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