

POETRY CORNER

Twenty-four Hours

By H. Ní Aódagaín
leb.97527@gmail.com

The chickadees fly
from hawthorn to mulberry
in search of suet
hanging from a branch

Metal-gray and threatening
massive cloud banks
block the sun
turn the world two-toned
stark brown limbs of leafless trees
in silhouette against hills
of evergreen forest

We walk the land
spreading her ashes
in the special places
where she ran after fox and rabbit,
leapt from pond's edge
to retrieve the tossed ball

Beloved friend, she went so
fast, our hearts unprepared
for such sudden loss

In the midst of snowfall
green tips of daffodils emerge
purple violets line the garden path
willow shoots sprout up
from winter's debris

Six more weeks of winter
the wind ice cold against my face
I call the garden store
check on the arrival
of seed potatoes, inquire about
the availability of pea inoculant

The turning of the wheel
the march of the seasons
this morning the frost is thick
on the rooves, a blanket of diamonds
lit by the sun.

May you walk in Beauty.

H. Ní Aódagaín has been writing for the past 25 years. Her writings, which celebrate feminism, aging, spirituality, and land-based living, have appeared in numerous anthologies and publications such as *Woman of Power*, *Midwifery Today*, *Home Education Magazine*, and *Oregon Quarterly*. She is a proud member of Applegate Poets and is often inspired to write of her life in the Applegate Valley. To contact H. Ní Aódagaín, write hnauthor@gmail.com or go to hnauthor.com.

Have a submission for Poetry Corner, either by an Applegate resident or about the Applegate? Email it to *Applegater* poetry editor Paul Tipton at ptipton4u2c@gmail.com.

BOOK REVIEW

The Living

A novel by Annie Dillard

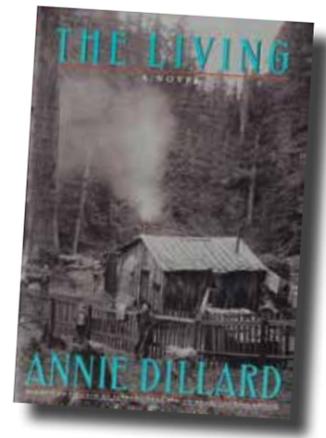
BY CHRISTIN LORE WEBER

Way back in 1974, my life did one of those drastic turns, the sort that brings a rush of unknowing what you might do next. I asked a good friend, who answered my question by handing me a book. Annie Dillard had just won the Pulitzer Prize with her *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. Reading it, I promised myself I would read everything she might write in the future. I also honed my own writing skills, while at the same time accepting a job that would put food on the table.

In the years between then and now, I did buy all her books and also wrote several of my own. Two of hers, *Holy the Firm* and *The Living*, take place in the Pacific Northwest close to Bellingham, Lummi Island, and the San Juans. For a while, about five years, during which I lived on Discovery Bay in Washington State, I was close enough to drive to Bellingham and visit the places Dillard describes, especially in *The Living*.

A master of description, Dillard sets a scene we can recognize even from a day-trip on the Redwood Highway to Brookings. In 1855, though, quite a way north we might have encountered Ada Fishburn with her husband, Rooney, and their four children as they approached the wilderness settlement of Bellingham from schooner via the Bay. Dillard tells us: "It was the rough edge of the world, where the trees came smack down to the stones. The shore looked to Ada as if the corner of the continent had got torn off right here, sometime near yesterday, and the dark trees kept on growing like nothing happened. The ocean just filled in the tear and settled down" (pages 3-4).

The author continues with such vivid description all the way to the story's end. But in between—oh my. What an effort it is to claim a wilderness. Dillard gives us a knowledgeable and enticing peek into every aspect of this task. We have an opportunity to meet the Lummi native tribe and their leader, Chowitzit. The author is adept at character-building, and we experience the negotiations between cultures. Almost every human endeavor is part of this story, so that we witness the great opposites that make up the beauty, agony, loves, accomplishments, hopes,



violence, fears, and ecstasies of human and ecological strivings.

Until I read *The Living*, I didn't know that our settlers might live inside a tree, one like the Pacific Cedar or the Coastal Redwood. I did know many children died from causes I would not have considered. "Nettie died when she was four, of an earache that leaked into her brain. Lura Rush bade Rooney blow pipe smoke into Nettie's ear, for that was the only remedy they knew, and she had not squirmed, only looked off, but it failed. Rooney especially took it hard, for he was wild about the girl, and Ada still worried during the second or third year afterwards that Rooney would never find the heart to keep on and keep up."

But this historical novel is more about living than dying. It's a living that absorbs the wild edge of things. Some don't survive that kind of living. Others create a new land from its challenges. The first time I visited Sterlingville Cemetery, one grave marker pretty much took my breath away. A whole family was buried there, including "Baby 1, Baby 2, Baby 3..." As I recall there were as many as five babies who died before they were given names. I thought of them when reading the paragraph about little Nettie and her earache and wondered if her dad, Rooney, finally internalized his wild feelings deeply enough to help create a wider world.

Annie Dillard tells a story of the Pacific Northwest that lives even now through the living descendants of people who grappled with the Wild and absorbed its strength. The people of the Applegate did that, too, and continue to this day as *The Living*.

The Living and other books by Annie Dillard can be found at local libraries, bookstores, and on the internet.

Christin Lore Weber
storyweaver1@gmail.com

A Book Faire to Remember

BY DORANNE LONG

Spring is just around the corner, and so is A Book Faire to Remember.

On Friday, April 19, from 5-8 pm, AIM (Author's Innovative Marketing) will host the book fair at the Grants Pass Museum of Art at 229 SW G Street. This is your opportunity to purchase signed copies of books from a variety of genres: historical novels, nonfiction, mysteries with a western theme, crime-solving RVers (recreational vehicle users), self-help for aches and pains, wildlife stories, and even an RV cookbook.

Meet the authors

Author and poet Diana Coogle will share her newest work, *From Friend to Wife to Widow - Six Brief Years*. The vivid poems share the growth of Diana's and her husband's love from the time they were just friends to their marriage and then to his death—from friend to wife to widow in six years.

Fellow prolific poet Gary Lark will also participate. In *River of Solace*, time

twists through the lives in the pages like a deep, dark root. The spells Lark casts are immediate and lasting. The echoes of the poems are haunting.

Leslie Ghiglieri wrote *The Decision to Kill: A True Crime Story of a Teenage Killer and the Mother Who Loved Him* to fulfill the wish of a friend, who asked her to document the story of her husband's 1986 murder in Murphy, Oregon. This book not only shares intimate details of the crime but, more importantly, offers a surprising message of encouragement for those whose loved ones suffer from addiction and mental health disorders.

Carole MacRobert Steele has written *A Pictorial History of Highway 99, The Scenic Route...Redding, California, to Portland, Oregon*, with 650 photographic images of scenes along the highway from the early 1900s to the 1960s.

The historical novel, *Life Along the Applegate Trail: A Tale of Grit and*

Determination, was written by Linda Lochard after she traveled 31 of 50 days via wagon on the Applegate Trail. She invites us to "step into the story, smell the dust, and walk until your shoes are no longer. Whatever you do, whatever happens, keep moving."

Anne Schroeder is an award-winning author of historical novels, short fiction, and a memoir. Her historical novels include themes of inspiration, grit, loss, hope, and enduring love. As a fifth-generation Californian, Anne's love of the West was fueled by stories of bandits and hangings, of her great-grandfather and his neighbors working together to blast the Norwegian Grade in southern California out of solid rock, of Native American caves, and of women who made their own way.

Spirit Bow, by Jim Lettis, captures life in November 1819, when 11-year-old Sean O'Malley sets out on a fateful hunt with his grandfather. In a violent storm, Sean fires at what he believes to be a deer, but what turns out to be a young Native warrior on a vision quest. Grandpa says there is nothing they can do for the

dying boy and takes the boy's Spirit Bow. Grandpa then tells his grandson, "Nice shot." These simple words will haunt Sean for years.

Just released, *Charlie's Secrets* is the sixth Mac 'n' Ivy murder mystery by Lorena M. Courtney. She is the award-winning author of 50 published novels of mystery and romance. Most are of the lighthearted, cozy variety of mystery.

Tales from Gorilla Girl, a fascinating and heartfelt memoir, is about Ann Southcombe's life dedicated to her love and caring for animals. Her passion has stretched over 40 years and has taken her to the wilds of the Amazon, the undersea world of Hawaii, and the beautiful, forested mountains of Oregon. She raised seven captive gorillas; she was the teacher to Michael, the companion of Koko, the gorilla, and to Chantek, the signing orangutan.

For more information, visit aimforwriters.com.

We look forward to seeing you!

Doranne Long
541-643-9289

doranne@yourbodybook.com