

# FOAL FOCUS

A Quarterly Newsletter from Friends of the Auberry Library

## SQUARE ONE DELIGHTS WITH BLUES/ROCK JAMS



On Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, FOAL held its third concert of the year. This was the 124<sup>th</sup> free concert sponsored by FOAL and it featured the Blues/Rock band Square One. As we settle back in to offering programs again we are seeing a steady increase in attendance numbers. Having programs outdoors on the lawn allows plenty of room for social distancing and people seem to be doing this, sitting together with who they came to the concert with but keeping space between themselves and other attendees.

A part of FOAL's mission is to provide a vibrant cultural gathering place and increase the community's access to information and knowledge. FOAL's Free Monthly Concert Series does both. FOAL hires the bands and then offers the concerts to our community for free. Sohm Garden is a wonderful venue for outdoor concerts which are appropriate for all ages making it a perfect family friendly event. Even when the daytime temperatures climb into the low 100's, by the time the music starts the lawn is covered in shade and the grass area naturally keeps the temperature a few degrees cooler than the surrounding area. The result is a very pleasant and comfortable setting for a concert. It's even cool enough that some people find the urge to get up and dance along the perimeter of the lawn irresistible.

One of the goals of the concerts is to bring a wide variety of musical genres to our community throughout the course of the 10-11 free concerts provided by FOAL each year. So far this year we have had concerts featuring classical music by the Tower String Quartet in April, Roots Stomp music by Lance Canales & The Flood in May and the Blues Rock band Square One in June. For future concerts this year, we plan to have bands that feature Bluegrass, Jazz, Soul, Americana and Blues. For information on upcoming concerts check in on our website - [www.friendsofauberrylibrary.org](http://www.friendsofauberrylibrary.org) and our Facebook page.

## ASTRONOMY PROGRAM RESUMES JULY 19, 8PM

Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, from 8-10 p.m. will bring the greatly anticipated return of our family favorite Astronomy Night program to the lawn in the Sohm Garden at the Auberry Library. This free program, which began in 2011, is one of our most popular programs and is finally returning after a two-year hiatus due to the Covid pandemic.

FOAL is eagerly looking forward to its new partnership with the Central Valley Astronomers for this program. The Central Valley Astronomers is a nonprofit organization comprised of both amateur and professional astronomers that has been providing opportunities to both their membership and the public to observe and learn about the vastness of space beyond our planet since 1952.

*Cont'd on p.4*



## CHAT FROM THE CHAIR



Jamelie Taylor, Chair

It's summer again and I'm focusing on my personal flexibility this year. There are numerous ways we all show this capability without conscious thought regarding weather or meeting with friends. Lately though, several friends have had medical procedures suddenly rescheduled or flights canceled that tested their patience and elasticity.

In dealing with summer weather small adjustments need to be made.

I missed a hot, hot week so came home to welcomed cooler nights with windows closed and a light sweater. Now that it's heating up again I'm flexing to opening the house after sunset, blocking the heat's entry as soon as sun rises, and wearing lighter clothes.

Regarding water use, our community has experience flexing how it uses this precious resource. Since most of us are well-owners we have clear ideas of how to monitor our systems to match need vs supply for indoor and outdoor quantities during periods of short supply. Just today I told our house-sitter that some plants have to go unwatered during summer.

FOAL has been endeavoring, like many, to return to event

promotions to feel a sense of normalcy. Our flexible board and director have weighed options with care before scheduling astronomy and concert dates outside where 'friends' can decide where to sit and who to hug. People bring a chair so seating is manageable.

Our community has shown resiliency since the devastating Creek Fire that changed lives for so many. New homes are rising, businesses are rebuilding and our Mountain Strong shows signs of recovery.

To participate in that healing, connect with friends to enjoy an evening of music or star gazing in our Sohm Garden where FOAL will welcome you with flexible, and open, arms.

## CHILDREN'S BOOKS HIGHLIGHTED IN NEXT SALE

Friends of the Auberry Library will be having a series of "themed" book sales in the "Book Vault", their book store located in the old bank vault at the Auberry Library.

As a part of FOAL's mission to increase the community's access to information and knowledge the themed book sales will offer books on specific topics at very affordable prices for a period of 2-4 weeks. This makes the book sale available to the public for more than the normal 2-3 days of our regular book sales.

A second goal of these sales is to draw people into the Auberry Branch Library and make them aware of the wide variety of resources and programs available there. This aligns with another part of FOAL's mission which is to support the Auberry Library as it strives to encourage literacy and lifelong learning.

The next themed book sale will feature Children's books and it will run from July 19 – 30. An Art Books theme ran in early July. Future themes will include

Cooking, History, Biography and Health as well as our special Holiday sale which features "Like New" condition books that make great presents for both yourself and others. They are all priced at the bargain rate of just \$1 *Cont'd on p5*



## ANNE NEAL SPEAKER SERIES: BETH LINDER CARR



On June 28 Beth Linder Carr read selections from her Masters in Fine Arts thesis: "Walking to School Through the Forest with Zoë" for the Anne Neal Lecture series at the Auberry Library. This event, held outdoors on the lawn, was skillfully planned and performed by Linder Carr who showed the books that were featured in her various essays.

The title essay is based on the author's walks to Sierra High School along the trail that connects her home to the school.

The readings were both humorous and insightful and

The appreciative audience, comprised of former colleagues and students as well as community members, enjoyed hearing the essays as well as visiting with and congratulating Linder Carr on her achievement.

FOAL's mission is to

- Support the Auberry Branch Library as it strives to encourage literacy and lifelong learning
- Provide a vibrant cultural gathering place;
- Enhance the Library's resources and services;
- Increase community access to information and knowledge.

## ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

The FOAL board held its annual meeting on June 15 outside of the Auberry branch library in the Sohm Garden. The lovely evening event was a brief review of the year followed by future hopes and then ice cream.

The current chairperson, Jamelie Taylor, welcomed the attending board members with business cards so they could further promote the community-based organization with a professional look. Volunteers Aaron Turner and Susan Smith were given credit for FOAL's economic gains from Amazon sales which they process from donated books. Memorial donations in the names of Lotus Van Sciver and Mary Taylor as well as grants from AHS Foundation and Valley Iron also benefited the year's financial outcome.

As for a future outlook, Taylor talked about saving money through the rental of a smaller office space with lower utility costs along with partnering with local businesses for events such as the recent shredding with Central Valley Community Bank. There will be a benefit concert in the fall with opportunities to sponsor for increased fundraising. Planning for fall indoor events is currently on hold awaiting COVID updates.

Taylor brought up a concern about the number of patrons currently using the library. The summer children's programs have been increasingly well-attended but library use is very low. Ideas to increase use are welcome. FOAL is currently researching the possibility of adding a charging station to the library property. New signage for the library property is in the works and hopefully will be installed sometime this fall.

After the seventeen minute meeting, ice cream sundaes topped with Stan Neal's chocolate sauce recipe were enjoyed by the group.



Jamelie Taylor addresses the members in Sohm Garden

## LIBRARY LINK: AUBERRY BRANCH UPDATE

For those who have visited the library recently, you may have noticed Summer At Your Library (SAYL) is in full swing. Staff and library customers are cherishing this year's events even more as this is the first time since the pandemic where we have had all summer programs in-person at the library. SAYL started on June 20th this year and will run until July 31st. In addition to in-person programs, we are still offering several virtual programs that will allow library customers the opportunity to enjoy programs at their convenience.

This summer, Auberry Library's programs are happening on Wednesday mornings at 10am. We have had fantastic visits from the Gilly Girls, the Bubble Show, and most recently Reptile Ron. Reptile Ron had an astounding 155 people in attendance! There are also weekly Take & Make crafts for teens. There are virtual programs for teens online and our Teen Instagram page (@fresnolibraryteens), as well as online adult programs. All of our on-demand summer program videos can be found at our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/fresnpubliclibrary/videos>

Along with summer programs, all ages can sign up for our Summer Reading Program. Youth, from 0-17 years, can register online or at the branch. This year, we're asking children and teens to read 8 hours total, including being read to. After completing 4 hours of reading, come by the library to get your first book prize. Once you read all 8 hours, you can pick up your second book prize and make sure you get entered into our drawing for some great grand prizes this summer! You have until August 7th to get all your reading done for the drawing. If you wish to sign up online, please visit: <https://fresnolibrary.bookpoints.org/>

We hope to see you at the library this summer!

*Submitted by Jamie Kurumaji, FCPL*

### CONT'D FROM P1.

#### ASTRONOMY

The program will begin with a discussion about the night sky including some of the constellations viewable that night and some of the things we will be viewing with our telescopes once the sky gets dark. As always, we encourage questions from the audience. As darkness sets in we will begin to observe the different constellations overhead and then follow that up with looking at more distant items through the telescopes. There will be three telescopes set up for viewing different parts of the sky.

Bring blankets or lawn chairs for seating and flashlights. The outdoor lighting in the Sohm Garden will be turned off to better enable our viewing during the program.

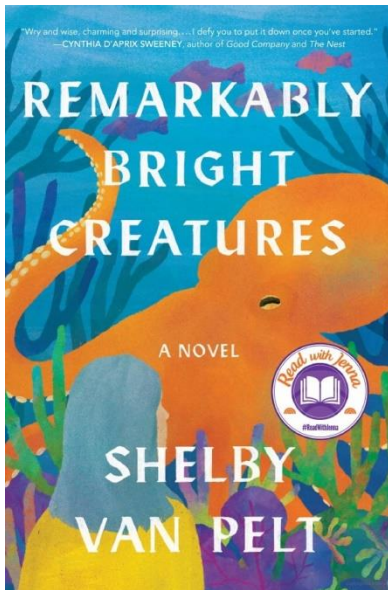


### CONT'D FROM P2:

#### BOOK SALE

Payment is on the honor system. Please pay for your books by using the self-service cash box located in the Book Vault.

Besides the themed books the Book Vault will still have its regular variety of hardcover and paperback books as well as audio books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles. The inventory is restocked a couple of times each week so there is always something new on the shelves. All proceeds go to help fund the wide variety of free programs offered throughout the year by FOAL. Auberry library hours are Tues 10-7, Wed 10-6, Thurs 10-7, Friday & Saturday 10-5.



**Reviewer: Anne Neal**

**Genre: Fiction, mystery**

**Remarkably Bright Creatures** by Shelby Van Pelt (2022)

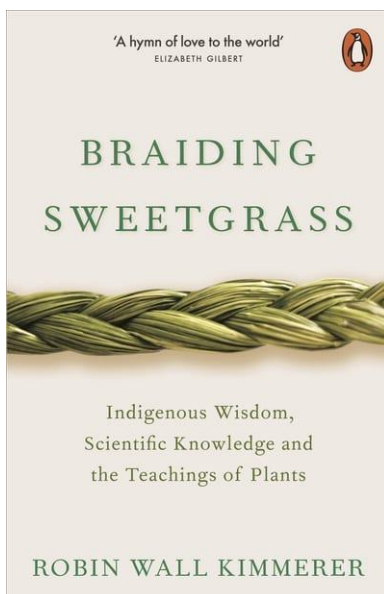
A spunky 70 year old widow, a captive Giant Pacific Octopus, and a down-on-his-luck young man from Modesto lead the cast of endearing characters in this novel set in coastal Washington State.

Marcellus, the octopus, keenly observes the humans and helps nudge along the answers to some decades-old mysteries.

Tova, the Swedish woman who works as a night janitor at the aquarium, is brusque but good-hearted and loves the sea creatures, especially Marcellus.

Cameron, raised by his absent mother's sister, makes his way to the community in search of a father he never knew.

All of these elements add up to a well-told story of responsibility, family connections, and friendship.



**Reviewer: Beth Linder-Carr**

**Genre: Non-Fiction**

**Braiding Sweetgrass** by Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013)

Reading *Braiding Sweetgrass* requires patience and hours of quiet time. This book of essays will reward you, though, just as its strongest message is the importance of *reciprocity*.

From the back cover we learn about her: “Robin Wall Kimmerer is a mother, scientist, decorated professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation...She lives in Fabius, New York, where she is SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of Environmental Biology, and the founder and director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment.”

Kimmerer opens her collection with the creation myth “Skywoman Falling,” a story which introduces its crucial themes: the importance of cooperation between the human people and animal people; gifts and gratitude—a cycle of reciprocity; ceremony—a way to express gratitude, as well as to focus attention so that it becomes *intention*; ceremony as a way to “remember to remember”; sacrifice; the responsibility that flows between humans and the earth.

About the portrait of Skywoman on her wall, Kimmerer says: “I have Bruce King’s portrait of Skywoman, *Moment in Flight*, hanging in my lab. Floating to earth with her handful of seeds and flowers, she looks down at my microscopes and data loggers. It might seem an odd juxtaposition, but to me she belongs here. As a writer, scientist, and a carrier of Skywoman’s story, I sit at the feet of my elder teachers and listen to their songs.”

Earlier, in the preface, Kimmerer explains the purpose of this book: “I could hand you a braid of sweetgrass, as thick and shining as the plait that hung down my grandmother’s back. But it is not mine to give, nor yours to take. *Wiingaaashk* belongs to herself. So I offer, in its place, a braid of stories meant to heal our relationship with the world. This braid is woven from three strands: indigenous ways of knowing, scientific knowledge, and the story of an Anishinabekwe scientist trying to bring them together in service to what matters most. It is an intertwining of science, spirit, and story—old stories and new ones that can be medicine for our broken

relationship with earth, a pharmacopoeia of healing stories that allow us to imagine a different relationship, in which people and land are good medicine for each other.”

The collection comprises five sections:

In **“Planting Sweetgrass,”** she weaves stories about her early life and love of plants.

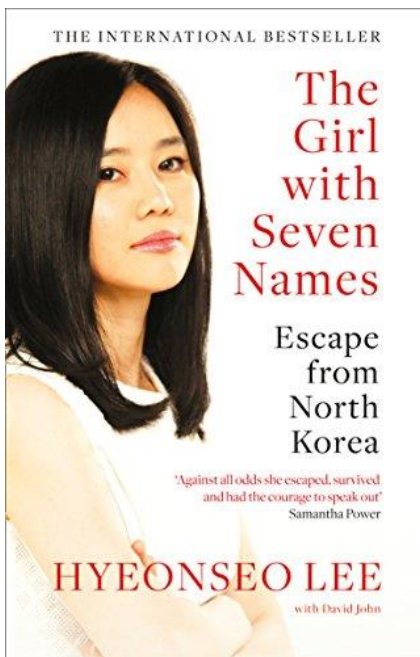
In **“Tending Sweetgrass,”** she weaves stories about her life as a mother, teaching her daughters and students to appreciate the world as well.

In **“Picking Sweetgrass,”** she weaves stories about tending the earth as a gardener and about the concept of the honorable harvest.

In **“Braiding Sweetgrass,”** she weaves stories about becoming indigenous to place.

And in **“Burning Sweetgrass,”** she weaves stories about the current climate crisis, what our response should be, along the way proposing new ways to characterize our relationship to the land.

In the end, I was using the cover to record passages that I didn’t want to forget. The inside was already full, Kimmerer’s words and mine intermingling, in a dance that will lead me to consider my life completely differently. It’s only stating the obvious, then, that I highly recommend you read the book too.



**Reviewer: Mark Schlaefer**

**Genre: Non-Fiction**

**The Girl with Seven Names: A North Korean Defector’s Story** by Hyeonseo Lee (2015)

The Girl with Seven Names spans the author’s childhood in North Korea, follows her through an escape into China, on to Laos, and finally to South Korea. The title is drawn from the fact that this escape takes place over the course of years, and includes a series of narrow escapes that force the author to change her identity repeatedly.

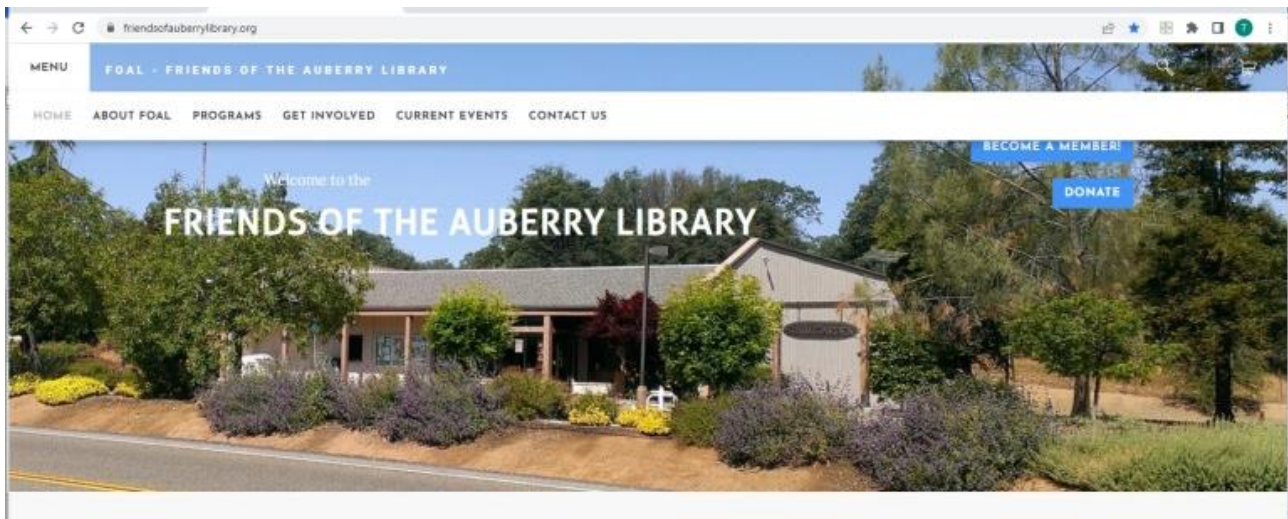
One of the most powerful parts of this book was hearing about the author’s early life. She conveys the constant and intense indoctrination of the North Korean culture. The social structure even today is shaped by a family’s actions in the Korean War, creating a kind of caste system. She describes the blurring of the people’s perception of their leader as superhuman, and their shock at his death. She paints a vivid picture of the culture of citizens watching each other for signs of disloyalty, while also engaging in a healthy black market system. As a teen, Lee becomes increasingly detached from her own culture, and curious about what lies beyond. At age 17, she crosses the river into China.

Lee spends years in China, enjoying the relative freedom and prosperity she finds there. However, she longs for her family, and ultimately creates a plan to help them escape, with a goal of settling in South Korea. Along the way, they have many close calls, and are detained for months in a Laotian prison. I won’t say how this story ends, other than obviously the author makes it to South Korea.

There are several takeaways I had from this book. First, it was disturbing to hear firsthand the extent of propaganda that controls the North Korean people. Second, it was even more disturbing that the Chinese government would return escapees, knowing they faced a certain death. I was shocked by that.

Clearly, this is not a happy, uplifting book. The style is straightforward and honest. It is easy to read, although the content is heavy. Overall, I definitely recommend it as worthwhile.

# NAVIGATING THE NEW WEBSITE



FOAL recently updated its website, and we hope it will serve our members and community even more effectively. Although things look a little different, the intent is to make information accessible and useful. Instead of having a calendar format, all of our events are in a list format under “Current Events”. You can click on the title and get detailed information. You can also sign up for membership or make a donation under “Get Involved” tab. Check it out at [www.friendsofauberrylibrary.org](http://www.friendsofauberrylibrary.org) . Let us know if you have any thoughts on how to improve it using the “Contact Us” tab—we would love to hear your ideas!

## DONATE BY SHOPPING! ESCRIP AND AMAZON SMILE

There are several programs available to help support your favorite causes during your normal daily activities: grocery shopping at MarVal and shopping online at Amazon! Both programs donate a percentage of your purchases to your declared non-profit. Here is a quick summary of how to use them:

eScrip (per the eScrip and MarVal websites):

- Pick up a community card at MarVal
- Register it with eScrip either by filling out a form at MarVal or going online to [www.eScrip.com](http://www.eScrip.com)
- Declare your desired non-profit recipients (you can have multiple, including schools)
- Show your card every time you check out at MarVal. Up to 5% of your purchase value goes to your recipients

Amazon Smile

Visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

1. Sign in with the same account you use for Amazon.com
2. Select your charity
3. Start shopping! Remember to checkout at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to generate donations for your chosen charity. Amazon donates 0.5% of the proceeds to your chosen recipient.

Tip: Add a bookmark to make it easier to shop at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

There is nothing to lose and much to be gained by using these generous programs. Give it a try!

A BIG THANK YOU to Central Valley Community Bank for their sponsorship of our Community Shred Event in May. They funded the truck, and FOAL provided workers to handle a steady stream of cars for the entire two hours. Now THAT is a wonderful community service event. Thanks again CVCB!

## SUMMER/FALL CALENDAR

Tuesday July 19, **Astronomy Night.** 8-10 pm , Sohm Garden

July 19-30, Children's Book Sale in The Vault, Auberry Library

TBD late July, **Concert.** 7:30-9pm, Sohm Garden.

TBD September, **Benefit Concert.** 7:30-9:00 p.m. Sohm Garden.

## ABOUT US

### Friends of the Auberry Library (FOAL)

*A registered non-profit since 2005*

Board of Directors

Jamelie Taylor, Chair

Sean Marjala, Vice Chair

Anne Neal, Secretary

Connie Schlaefer, Treasurer

Beth Linder Carr

Lorraine Doyle

Chris Schubert

Library Liaison

Jamie Kurumaji

Program Director

Loren Leach

FOAL Focus Newsletter

Connie Schlaefer, Editor

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