

Studebaker Turns Tune to Book

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

Just as the bears are starting to wake up and come out of their dens, local author Stacy Studebaker's new book is also beginning to make an appearance around town. "Hey Bear Ho Bear," is Studebaker's first stab at a children's book, but the desire to write one first surfaced almost two decades ago. In the early 1990s Studebaker's folk band, Waterbound, wrote and produced the album, "Alaska Animal Tales and Tunes."

"Hey Bear Ho Bear is the lead song on that CD and over the years people kept saying, "Stacy the lyrics of that song you should turn into a children's book." So I thought about it and thought about it. And then I joined the Kodiak Bear Unified Sub Committee group, the group that works on bear education here in town, bear management. And about two years ago we were talking about outreach and how we could better get our message out to the public and someone said you know we need a children's book, and I said hmm."

Studebaker has a strong background in writing for children, and not just in songs. During the 90s she also produced an award-winning radio show at KMXT called "My Green Earth." The program was picked up nationally, and ultimately went on to air in about 60 countries all over the world. The show, which was catered toward kids, focused on environmental topics. Studebaker hosted the program, but as the character Lila Liverwort, who resurfaces in the pages of "Hey Bear Ho Bear."

"Lila Liverwort is back. She's kind of my alter ego. And she's in this case, in the book, about an 8 to 10-year-old girl that has green hair and she's sort of the narrator of the story and accompanying her throughout the pages and spreads of the book is a little ermine, named Herman the Ermine."

The book is meant for ages 8 to 80, which Studebaker attributes to the breadth of information on every page.

"Each spread in the book is sort of a lesson on how humans can behave and modify their behavior a little bit to coexist with bears. And since we live in this wonderful, beautiful place, with all these wild animals around us, in order to coexist with them, we have to be more aware of them. And we have to modify our behavior, especially in the case of bears, so we can avoid confrontations and can all live here happily. So the book gives you some ideas on how to do that."

The text of the book follows a rhyming pattern, with Studebaker's famous chorus intertwined at various places.

"Hey bear, ho bear, what are you going to do? I'm here your there, I'm just passing through. Hey bear, ho bear, it's such a lovely day. This is your land, I understand, so I'll be on my way."

You can purchase copies of Studebaker's new children's book, "Hey Bear Ho Bear," at various locations around town, including the Alutiiq and Baranov Museums. To hear the full interview with Stacy Studebaker, tune in to KMXT's Talk of the Rock at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

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