

Mystery in the Valley

John Straley

Friday June 20 at 6pm

Bookwagon on Ashland St.



The Big Both Ways

JOHN STRALEY

Mystery author John Straley will be at Bookwagon Books in Ashland on Friday June 20, on tour with his latest work, *The Big Both Ways*, published in 2008 by Alaska Northwest Books. Set in 1935, times are tough and jobs are scarce. A man leaves a logging camp, helps a woman get her car out of ditch only to find out there's a dead body in the trunk and finds his life taking a course he never would have planned. Eventually the various characters will take a journey through the Inside Passage to Alaska as everyone searches for a new and better life. And with a terrific Ray Troll cover that mimics the previous books.

Straley is a remarkable writer, presenting the living and breathing landscape and people of Alaska. His characters and plots are as quirky and compelling as the titles of his books, which include Shamus Award winner, *The*

Woman Who Married a Bear, *The Music of What Happens*, *Death and the Language of Happiness*, *The Curious Eat Themselves*, and in 2001 *Cold Water Burning*.

The improbability of real life enter Straley's works, who is by profession an investigator with the Alaska Public Defenders Office.

While doing little to lift the human spirit, the unforgiving climate suits the somber tone of this series, which features a pensive private investigator named Cecil Younger, who isn't so much blind to the harsh beauty of the setting as he is fixated on the peculiar psychology of the natives.

Marilyn Stasio
On Straley's *Cold Water Burning*
New York Times Book Review

