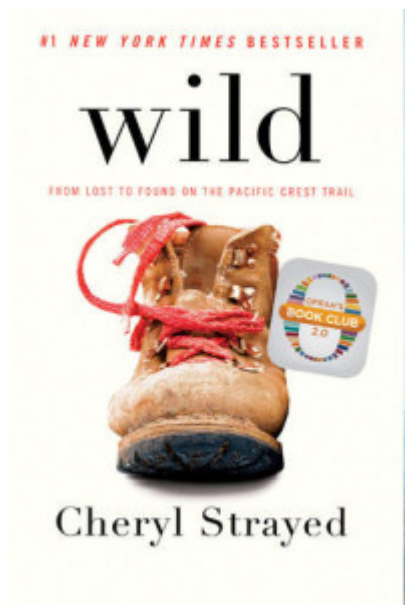


'Wild' – a book of self-discovery along the PCT

By Kathryn Reed

It takes a certain type of person to hike the Pacific Crest Trail. Well trained and experienced are not requirements. Cheryl Strayed proved that.



Her *New York Times* bestseller “Wild” is a testament to how tenacity and perseverance are two important components to backpacking one of the West’s most famous trails.

Strayed’s memoir came out in 2012, while the film starring Reese Witherspoon was released earlier this month. The book is a definite page-turner.

My mom and I last weekend were reading it, with me a few chapters ahead of her. We had to drag mom out of the house to snowshoe because she was so engrossed in the book. She would come downstairs saying something in disbelief about Cheryl – as though we are on a first-name basis with her. And we jokingly referred to Cheryl as “our new best friend” because of how much conversation centered on her.

The fact Strayed survives out in the wild for the better part of a summer is remarkable based on a number of factors – starting with she had never backpacked before, her pack was so

heavy she was stooped over and her boots caused her to lose multiple toenails.

If you are looking for an in-depth look at the PCT – a true outdoors book – this isn't it.

“Wild” is about a woman who in her 20s lost her mom, divorced and saw her relationship with her siblings unravel. The backpacking excursion was about finding herself and overcoming obstacles that were not just on the trail – though there were plenty of trail encounters that also led to a better understanding of herself and the way her life had turned out to that point.