

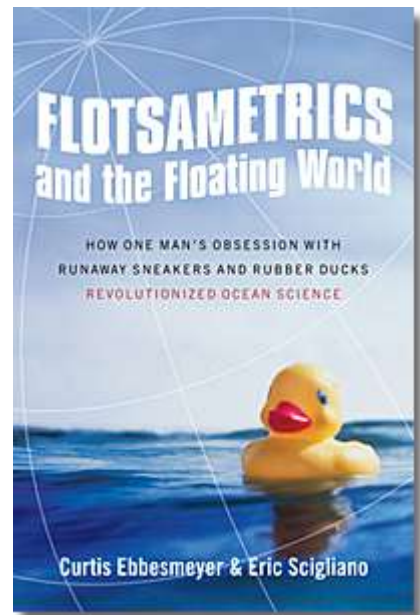
February 7, 2012

## Oceanographer's lifelong study of flotsam is timely and poignant

Oceanographer Curtis Ebbesmeyer will be at the [Olympia Timberland Library](#) on Wednesday, February 15 from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. to discuss his book "[Flotsametrics and the Floating World: How One Man's Obsession with Runaway Sneakers and Rubber Ducks Revolutionized Ocean Science.](#)"

*Flotsametrics* recounts how tracking debris in the oceans reveals the rhythmic and harmonic order in vast oceanic currents and how flotsam has even changed the course of history. The program takes place after the library closes. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

Dr. Ebbesmeyer will focus much of his talk on debris from the March 2011 tsunami in Japan that began washing up in December on beaches in Washington and British Columbia. In an interview with the Port Angeles Peninsula Daily News, Ebbesmeyer said that debris should be treated with reverence, respect and caution and reported to appropriate authorities as families in Japan are waiting to hear of any items that may have been associated with their loved ones. Items that wash up may include human remains as well as portions of large objects such as houses and personal items such as shoes. There is also the possibility of radiation contamination.



Ebbesmeyer holds a Ph.D. in oceanography from the University of Washington. An expert on ocean currents and floating objects, Dr. Ebbesmeyer turned beachcombing into a science in the early 1990s when he marshaled the efforts of an international network of beachcombers to trace the ocean's currents using thousands of sneakers and plastic bath toys spilled from freighters.

Now retired and living in Seattle, Ebbesmeyer talks at beachcomber fairs in Alaska, Florida, and Washington. He also publishes the quarterly newsletter, Beachcombers' Alert, and blogs at <http://beachcombersalert.blogspot.com>.

The Olympia Timberland Library is at 313 8th Avenue. For more information, please contact the library at (360) 352-0595 or go to [www.TRL.org](http://www.TRL.org).