

Rensenbrink brings life to fiction

By
Anita R. Savio
IVN Contributing Writer

Local author Nicole Rensenbrink brings deep insight from years of professional experience to bear in her book series for young adults: “The Girls at Sawyers Crossing.”

The series follows several teenage girls from their adolescent years into adulthood in a community that has transitioned economically from timber to marijuana.

Sound familiar?

Rensenbrink, a licensed clinical social worker with 20 years of experience working with teens, currently runs the Passages program for middle- and high-school girls at Cave Junction-based nonprofit Healthy U.

Rensenbrink points out that our local marijuana industry is just one factor among many that are shared by rural communities throughout America.

“Equally important is that the girls [in the series] are in a rural community,” she said. “Young people in rural communities don’t dress up and go to work each day. The whole idea of professional life is missing. Teens don’t see people who are in a lot of different professional capacities. Here it’s just, ‘I see school teachers and nurses.’”

Substance abuse is a big problem here, as in other rural communities, she notes, and has a big impact

on the girls in her books.

“In rural communities there are less options for fun than in an urban community,” she said. “In an urban community there are movies, bowling, under 21 clubs, dance clubs, fitness centers. Here, what teens do on a weekend is go to the football game, and then they party.”

But, the local marijuana industry adds another level of concern.

“The marijuana culture has been illegal, so everyone involved around that culture is doing something [illegal],” she said. “Secrecy becomes a norm. It can make it easier to do things that are outside the social norms because you’re already involved.”

Rensenbrink cites several factors as her inspiration for the series.

“I was a wild child myself growing up and, being a social worker, of course I’m interested in people’s problems,” she said. “Other things I wanted to point out have to do with my own values around diversity.”

“But,” she adds, “my values around friendship are a big reason behind why I wrote [the series]. Friendship around girls and women has really touched my heart.”

Asked to describe her writing process, Rensenbrink said, “I run in the morning and it seems that’s where I get my best ideas.”

She adds: “I had these set ideas about how the characters will develop, but then the characters took on a life of their own. I love fantasy

life.”

A fourth and final book is in the works. Rensenbrink says it will bring all of her characters into adulthood.

“The idea is basically that there’s a lot of ways to do life and they’re all valid,” she said.

Without the requisite contacts in the publishing world, Rensenbrink’s series has achieved only

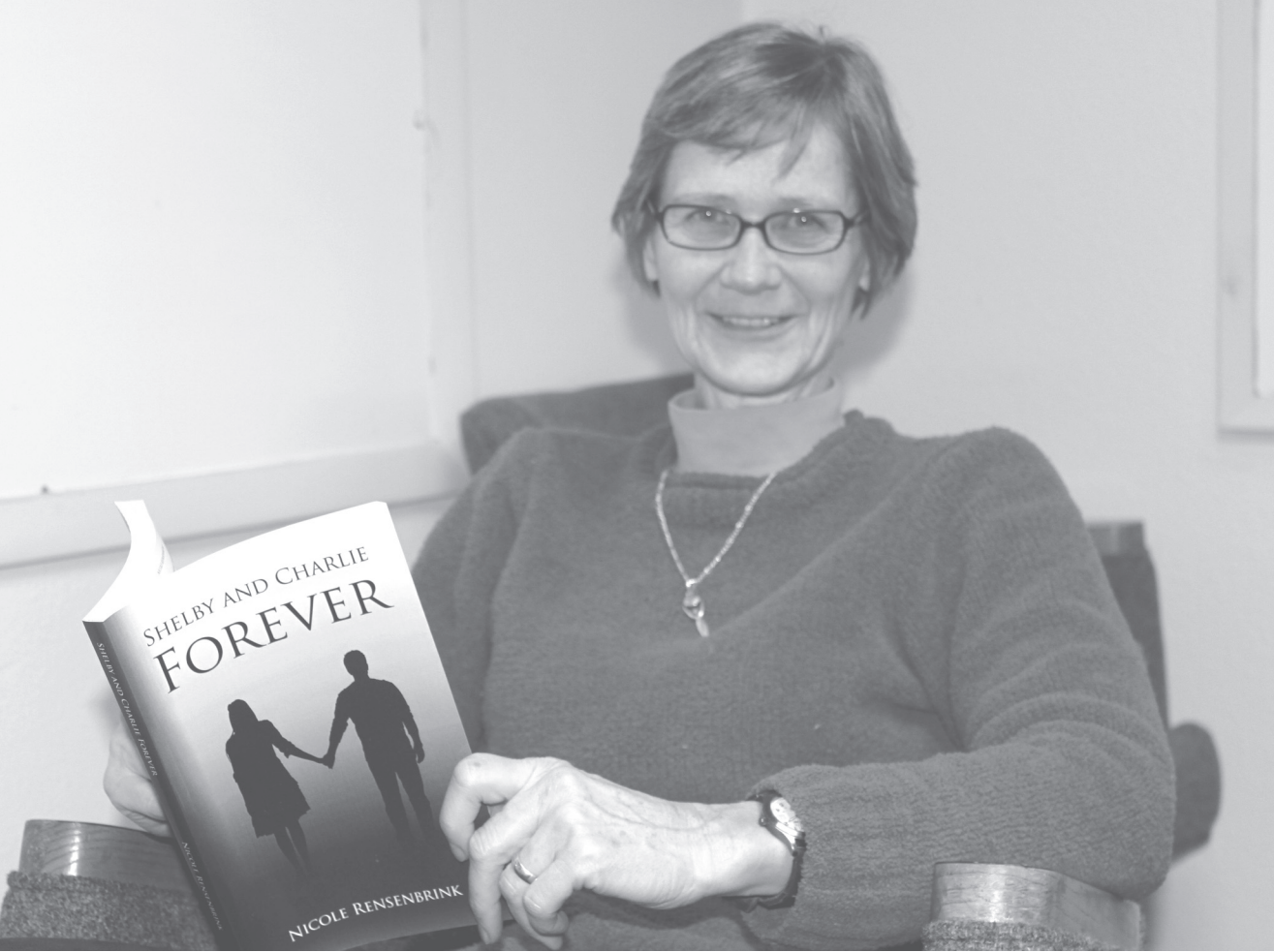
limited marketing success.

“But, I believe that we all have a light to shine and a self to express and I got to do mine by doing this,” she said. “I think it’s got to be about you saying what you have to say, versus where that’s going to go. Then you’re satisfied.”

Rensenbrink will be signing the latest book in her series, “Shelby

and Charlie Forever,” on Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 6 p.m. at the Illinois Valley branch of Josephine Community Libraries.

Books one and two are titled, respectively, “Livin’ the Life” and “The Besties Grow Up.” All three titles are expected to be available for borrowing in time for the book signing.



(Photo by Anita Savio, Illinois Valley News)

Nicole Rensenbrink with her new book *Forever*.

Lasco, Cal spoil Mannion’s night, beat Oregon St

By
Jim Beseda
AP Sports Writer

CORVALLIS, Ore. (AP) — Jared Goff threw a 10-yard touchdown pass to Chris Harper for the go-ahead score with 8:42 remaining Saturday night, rallying Cal to a 44-31 win over Oregon State.

Daniel Lasco rushed for a career-high 188 yards on 30 carries and scored on touchdown runs of 14, 21 and 15 yards to help the Bears (5-4, 3-4 Pac-12) snap a three-game losing streak and move within a game of becoming bowl eligible.

The comeback spoiled a record-setting

performance for Oregon State’s Sean Mannion, who completed 30 of 45 passes for 320 yards and became the Pac-12’s all-time passing leader.

Mannion, who entered the game needing 194 yards to break former USC quarterback Matt Barkley’s record of 12,327 yard, completed passes to seven different receivers, but the Beavers (4-4, 1-4) suffered their third consecutive loss.

The Bears came into game ranked fourth in the nation in passing yards, averaging 371.5 yards a game, but kept OSU off balance with a running game that racked up a season-high 269 yards on 47 carries.

Goff completed 24 of 47 passes for 277

yards, marking the first time in seven games that he had thrown for fewer than 300 yards.

Trailing 27-10 in the third quarter, Mannion guided Oregon State on three consecutive touchdown drives, taking a 31-27 lead on Teron Ward’s 16-yard run with 12:02 to play.

Following Harper’s touchdown, Oregon State’s bid to reclaim the lead ended when Caleb Coleman intercepted a Mannion pass at the Beavers’ 29 with 7:48 to play, setting up a 47-yard James Langford field goal.

The Oregon State offense sputtered in the first quarter as the Beavers ran 14 plays that netted 70 yards and as many punts (three) as first downs and they crossed midfield for the first time when Storm Woods broke a 49-yard run

on the first play of the second quarter that took the ball to the 3.

Mannion then hit tight end Rahmel Dockery slanting right to left with a 3-yard touchdown pass to take 7-3 lead.

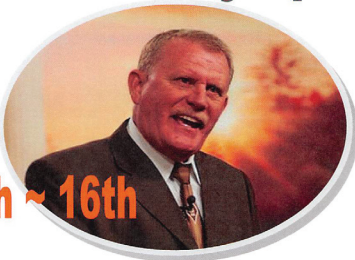
Cal responded with a 10-play, 75-yard scoring drive, capped by Daniel Lasco’s 14-yard run over left tackle with 10:05 remaining in the half.

Three of Oregon State’s four remaining regular-season games are at home, including next week’s game against Washington State.

Cal has an off week before returning and to action Nov. 13 at Southern California. The Bears close out the regular season with home games against Stanford and BYU.

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