

THE HOUNDS OF HEAVEN

Author unleashes novel spiced with environmentalism and religion

JOE PALIANI

ILLUSTRATED BY NOAH WARREN

BY PATRICK WEBB

The Hounds of Heaven” does not begin well for proselytizing Jehovah’s Witnesses who approach the novel’s main character. Grant Parish cusses them out, shoots his powerful Glock pistol into the air and sends them away.

So begins a story about environmental activism and community members coming together, from author Joe Paliani. The manner in which sect members Sally and Kurt forgive the rude man and join his campaign is a core element.

After a career with programs battling poverty in California, Paliani retired to Ocean Park, Washington, and sent himself to work writing plays. Several of these have been performed by Ilwaco based theater troupe the Peninsula Players.

Now, Paliani’s first novel, penned during the past two years of isolation, has come to fruition. According to Paliani, he didn’t intend to write it, but his New York-based publishers categorize it as a young readers’ work.

The story features Parish and his wife Charlotte, named for Paliani’s wife, as they campaign against a wealthy transplant developer who wants to flood their valley and bring jobs and supposed prosperity to their idyllic home in Washington state.

The way they rally the community against the threat, and the role religion plays in this process, forms the centerpiece of the action, which covers 136 pages. The only annoyances for this reader were that the somewhat large type was centered, which made it occasionally awkward to read, as did the varying number of lines on each page. One, for instance has only seven.

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