

Tribal officer releases second book

By Nicole Montesano
Smoke Signals staff writer

There’s an uncontrolled fire on the fictitious Jericho Nation Reservation during Oregon’s infamous 2020 Labor Day weekend, and the smoke is making it hard to breathe, or even see clearly.

However, Tribal Police Officer Warren Lawson doesn’t have time to worry about it; he’s got a killer to track down. The man has already murdered most of his own family and a police officer, and Lawson must find him before he can kill again.

Meanwhile, firefighters battle to keep the flames from spreading on a weekend when multiple blazes are raging out of control across the state, driven by a hot, dry east wind and dangerously low humidity.

“Jericho Burning,” the second book by Tribal member and Tribal Police Cpl. Tyler Brown, is another fast-paced, ride-along with Lawson as he races to try to stop a killer.

It follows Brown’s first book, “Tribal Honor,” released last December, and picks up a few months after that story ends.

As a corporal and a part-time detective with the Polk County Interagency Major Crimes Team, Brown draws on his own experience to make the stories feel authentic: Jericho Nation seems to be more prone to violence and murder than Grand Ronde, Brown said, but it’s important to him to make the law enforcement agencies and officers portrayed behave realistically in the situations they face.

In addition, he wants to convey the area’s beauty and feeling of peace. He changed the name of the

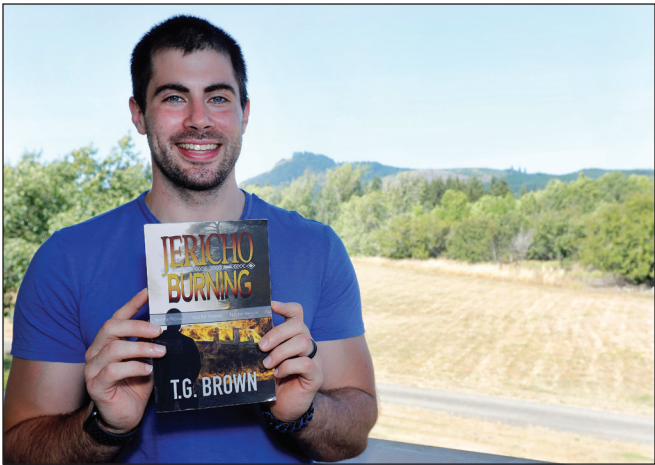


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member Tyler Brown is releasing his second book “Jericho Burning” on Tuesday, Aug. 20. In addition to being an author, Brown is a corporal with the Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department.

Tribe to Jericho Nation, however, to emphasize that the events in the books are fictional. Brown dedicated “Jericho Burning” to “those who serve or have served in the military, law enforcement and fire service.

“Thank you for what you do,” he wrote.

“Jericho Burning,” is the second book in what Brown says will be a series and will be released on Tuesday, Aug. 20. A book signing is set for 4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 25, at Shred City Fitness, located at 1667 S.E. Holman Ave., Dallas.

In addition to his adventures with villains of various stripes, Lawson — Brown’s protagonist — is fighting himself or the person he fears he might turn into, if his “dark side” gains the upper hand. Sometimes he’s fighting his fellow officers, in a debate over how best to do the job they’re all focused on.

Lawson’s internal struggles have formed a theme that carries through

both books, and in “Jericho Burning,” also contain a nod to the killings by police that precipitated months of nationwide Black Lives Matter protests in 2020.

“Police have to change the way we do this job,” Warren tells his partner at one point. “If push comes to shove, we protect life by any means necessary, but the keyword in that sentence is ‘necessary.’”

The discussion occupies only a couple of pages during a lull in the action, but it provides a glimpse into Lawson’s internal quest. He’s a flawed hero and the book reveals exactly why he fears what he’s capable of.

“He’s almost as scared of himself as anything else,” Brown said, noting that fear is frightening, because “the public has to trust this guy and if he doesn’t trust himself, that doesn’t bode well.”

Finding out where Lawson goes from both his moments of grace and his worst failures as the series progresses will be a journey as breathtaking as his adventures in chasing down criminals.

“I’d say he definitely was more affected by the end of book two,” Brown said. “I think he’s starting to question his own mortality a little bit and his own morality as well. He’s doing a job that demands a lot of him and he’s not sure he can

continue it.”

Lawson’s vulnerability is a key part of his message.

“He’s a strong character, but he’s just as scared as anyone else,” he said. “That’s what I wanted to convey: You’re not heroic because you’re fearless, you’re heroic because you face your fears and overcome them.”

Presenting an imperfect character who struggles with his flaws and fears, Brown said, is important to him.

“I wanted to present this strong character who can connect with the people who do this job,” he said. “But who can also connect with readers outside law enforcement. I think what people really come for is the character development. We all feel that; we all have to get through those emotional turmoil points in our life.”

Brown said his fellow officers have been following along with Lawson’s adventures and have been supportive.

“They really liked it,” he said. “They all read it, which is cool.”

With his characters and setting now established, Brown said, he hopes to explore more Native American cultural issues in future books. While “Jericho Burning” is a thriller, the next one will be more of a mystery.

In addition, Brown is working on an unrelated book that he isn’t yet ready to announce.

Brown said he hopes to make Lawson’s series a lengthy one. “It’s not cheap to publish a book,” he said. “As long as I can keep justifying it financially, I’ll keep doing it. ... I’d love to write until I’m 90. I love doing this stuff.” ■

HELP GROW YOUR FAMILY STRONG



Immunizations are important for people of all ages, from infants to elders. Talk with your doctor, nurse, or clinic to make sure your family and friends are up-to-date on their vaccinations.

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program helps provide vaccines to children whose parents or guardians may not be able to afford them. A child is eligible for the VFC Program if he or she is younger than 19 years of age and is American Indian or Alaska Native.

To learn more, visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines



TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE



Contact the TVSO Office if you have any questions or for more event information.

CTGRTribalVSO@GrandRonde.Org

503-879-1484

AUGUST 2024 EVENTS

Veterans Garden

Garden beds have been placed and are in the back of the Community Programs Building. Veterans are welcome to come garden whenever they have a moment. Supplies are in the tote.

Veterans Golf

Veteran makes the arrangements. There are five golf vouchers remaining for the month of August. Come by and pick up a pre-paid card to take to Dallas Golf Club. Veteran will need to call them directly to make an appointment for “T” time.

Please note: Pick up times are between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Thursdays are the best day to pick up due to it being the normal walk-in day.

Save the Date for Upcoming Events:

Parfleche & Painting Classes ~ Sept. 11 and Sept. 18 at the Community Programs Building from 4 to 7 p.m.

Tentative September Events:

Veteran Guitar Music Classes – Due to popular demand, we are setting up another guitar class for veterans. Veteran Cooking Classes – Four cooking classes for veterans.