

**Continued from previous page**

start to grasp the deep connections these characters have to one another."

Prior to writing "West of Hell," she wrote short stories, none of which was published. Yet "West of Hell" clocked in at 880 pages, with two more books to go. If that sounds like a major undertaking for a first-time novelist, "It was," Emerson confirmed, laughing.

"This was my first go-around. I really latched on to this story, and originally had planned on it being a 300- or 400-page book," she said. "It grew substantially into a trilogy." She also notes that she rewrote the first novel, start to finish, well over a dozen times over four and a half years.

"I'm glad I did, because it became the story I wanted it to be," she said.

During the last year of writing "West of Hell," she also hunted for representation to help her get it published.

"I could not find, as you can probably imagine, a literary agent that would have any interest in drafting a first-time writer with an 800-page book that's the first in a trilogy," she said. "It's just kind of something you do with passion projects sometimes.

If you hit a wall, then you just find a way around it. That's essentially what I did to get these books published."

What she did was launch a crowdfunding campaign to help finance the publication of "West of Hell," then published via the hybrid press Mascot Books.

Replete with editing, PR and quality, hybrid publishing goes beyond self-publishing or a vanity press.

"I ended up being able to get the book published," Emerson said.

She went the same route to fund the publication of the 830-page, "East of Hell." Thanks to satisfied readers of "West of Hell," which maintains a 5-star rating on Amazon, the new book was financed in about a week's time.

But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the release of "East of Hell," which you can also buy at Dudley's Bookshop Cafe in Bend, was delayed over a year.

"I'm excited that we're finally here at this point," she said. She already knows how the trilogy will conclude — with "South of Hell," which she hopes to have complete, maybe even in print, by summer 2023.

"It's pretty much mapped out," said Emerson,



Submitted photo

**A release party for Whiskey Emerson's new book will be held June 3 at Velvet Lounge in Bend.**

## book notes News from Central Oregon's reading scene

### Revived Oregon poetry journal seeks submissions

After going defunct more than 15 years ago, the longtime poetry publication Fireweed: Poetry of Oregon has been revived as a twice-yearly online publication. Submissions are sought for the Summer 2021 issue and will be accepted through Monday.

All topics are welcome, but poets must reside in Oregon in order to submit. Editor Sydney Elliott hopes to hold regional readings in connection with each issue.

For more information, visit [fireweedmag.org](http://fireweedmag.org) or email [info@fireweedmag.org](mailto:info@fireweedmag.org).



—David Jasper, *The Bulletin*

son, adding that she's "a very type-A, outlining planner."

For the sci-fi novel "Rationem," she's taking a different route to publication, going with a company called Inkshares.

"How they set up publication is you have to get about 750 pre-orders of your novel," Emerson said. "Once you hit that 750 mark, you'll be able to work with them, with an editor. Your book will be printed, depending on how big it gets, you could do a mass, nationwide scale of printing, which would be so amazing." (To pre-order "Rationem," visit

[inkshares.com/books/rationem](http://inkshares.com/books/rationem).)

"I'm really lucky," Emerson said. "I've had a lot of support from not just my family and friends, but also the communities of places I've lived. I did my best to pitch a good story, and I think most people who got into reading 'West' ... loved it enough that they got hooked and wanted to tell other people about it, which is always the right way to get your stuff out there, having people really love what you make and want to share it with others."

■ David Jasper: 541-383-0349, [djasper@bendbulletin.com](mailto:djasper@bendbulletin.com)

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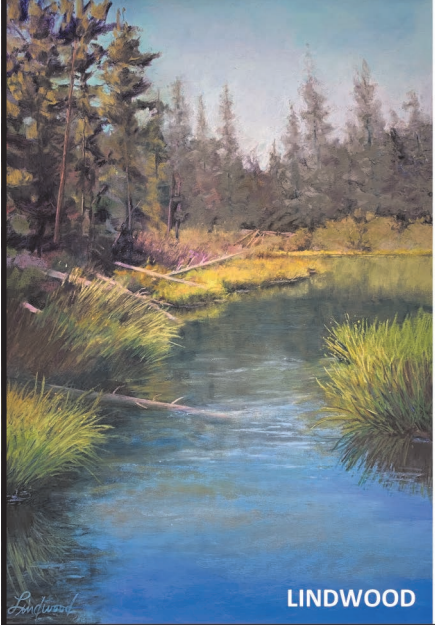
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