

# MCEWEN AUTHORS SNIPER NOVEL

-Continued from PAGE ONE  
helicopter pilot being held by Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan."

The trial attorney teamed up with fellow writer Thomas Koloniar in the creation of the 400-page book. Koloniar is the author of the post-apocalyptic novel "Cannibal Reign"; he holds a Bachelor of Arts in English literature from the University of Akron.



Scott McEwen

Though the novel is obviously McEwen's brainchild, he said Koloniar's input was invaluable.

"I'm still practicing law, so when it comes to dialogue and a lot of things that need to get done in finishing a novel...it was really important to me to have other people I can work with."

McEwen described the process as a team effort.

"We both have ideas; we toss them back and forth to each other. I have greater access to those who create the story line because I live in San Diego, where a lot of SEAL teams are based. In a novel where you're using a lot of real ops to base your characters and scenes, it's important that you have that reality-based information," McEwen said, adding that Koloniar's background in literature brings a special aspect to their working relationship.

"He is definitely a much more proficient editor of our work. He's very strict as far as his use of prose, so it's been good for me to work with him in that regard," said McEwen.

He said the pair knocked out the writing relatively quickly...for a novel.

"Once the ideas were formed, we knocked it out in about nine months," he said, adding that the entire process of writing and selling the book took about a year.

He said the process of writing a fiction book was both easier and more difficult than nonfiction.

"I find it more challenging in that you are responsible for your characters' development and knowing where the story is going to go with them," McEwen said. "With nonfiction, it is what it is, and you just make it as interesting as you can in the telling. Your latitude is wider with fiction but you also have the responsibility for character development and to stay consistent with it."

He said he enjoyed fiction writing because he was able to choose the ways in which the character would express his views.

"The character that is in 'Sniper Elite' is extremely patriotic, extremely pro-U.S., extremely pro-U.S. military, an amalgamation, very efficient in what he does. That was more entertaining for me in the final stages of the book," said McEwen, "to give you the exact ending you want to have."

And what is that ending, that vision?

"The book essentially envisions a United States that is hesitant but ultimately uses the full force of its power to save the life of one soldier who had been taken hostage in Afghanistan," he said. "In essence, the message of the book is that I would like to United States to take that attitude in every conflict. Either we give it our all or we make it our decision not to be there."

The book will officially be released June 4 but is already available for pre-order through some sites. It will be available in hardcover, ebook and audiobook from retailers like Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Books-a-Million, eBooks, Walmart, iTunes, audible.com and others. McEwen said response to the book has been good so far.

"There's been some really good reaction on both hardcover and Kindle," he said. "It's doing pretty well

and I'm pretty happy with it, and so is the publisher."

In light of all this writing, the Gazette asked McEwen about a statement he once made about never wanting to be a writer.

"I guess I'm getting to like it more," he quipped, then clarified, saying he'd never envisioned it as a career.

"It wasn't as if I didn't like to write to tell stories or share a vision, but it's a difficult thing to break into," he said. "For most people, it doesn't, if you will, pay the bills. For most writers, it's a difficult way to make a living."

McEwen obviously likes the process of writing. With his second book about to be released, he's already looking forward.

"I'm already in the middle of doing a sequel to 'Sniper Elite,' and I'm excited about that as well," he said.

### Meanwhile, on the big screen...

Although "Sniper Elite: One Way Trip" will not be officially released until next month, the novel has already been picked up by director Ridley Scott and Scott Free Productions, which has turned out modern classic action films like Alien, Gladiator and Black Hawk Down. Plans are in the works to make the novel into a feature film.

It may have been this final piece of success that put McEwen at a near loss for words.

"It's pretty amazing," he said.

Then again, there is more to tell.

Also on the movie front, the "American Sniper" movie is moving forward, with more big news and big names. The project, based on SEAL sniper Chris Kyle's autobiography, already packed clout due to the involvement of Hollywood heavy-hitter Bradley Cooper—Cooper has been developing the project as producer and will also star in the film. Now, the "American Sniper" movie has taken another leap with

the involvement of none other than living legend Steven Spielberg.

"It was kind of like affirmation of what was already an amazing project," said McEwen of Spielberg's involvement. McEwen is serving as a consultant to the movie. "That Spielberg actually picked it up and made a decision to invest his time and efforts in it, was a great honor to Chris and Chris's memory."

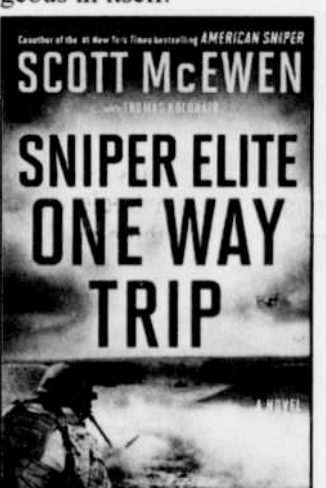
Word of Spielberg's involvement hit the press at the beginning of the month. The film mogul has apparently been on the hunt for a project to follow up the award-winning Lincoln.

Spielberg will also produce, along with Andrew Lazar, via Mad Chance Productions, and Peter Morgan.

Jason Hall wrote the script and will executive produce. The movie will be a Warner Brothers/DreamWorks co-production. A first-quarter 2014 start date is planned at this time, with no word on when the project will wrap.

For McEwen, the "American Sniper" book-to-movie deal has been "an amazing run." From 18 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list—13 weeks at number one—to Spielberg at the helm of the movie, he says he's not making any guesses on where it could go next.

"It's hard to see the future. It's already had such an amazing success," McEwen said. "To expect where it went to this stage is outrageous in itself."



Sniper Elite: One Way Trip will be released June 4 but is available for pre-order now.

# Rain doesn't dampen free spray day



"Spike," the mascot for Weed Awareness Week, waves to passing cars during the Free Spray Day sponsored by the Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Undeterred by the rain, area homeowners were given up to two gallons of free spray to help eradicate problem weeds and promote weed awareness locally. This is the third year for the free spray day, which is growing in popularity. "People love this; we always have a good response," said Morrow SWCD Manager Janet Greenup. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

# Rich in history, low in numbers

By Caitlynn Bailey

The Heppner Garden Club has been disbanded due to its lack of members. They are now known as the Heppner Volunteers, a group of people who provide services to the community and, more specifically, the community garden. The garden has relocated from its previous residence on Riverside Street to its current one near the Heppner High School Greenhouse on the Agricultural Land Lab.

The Heppner Community Garden has been around since 1995 and has been open for the public's free use. It continues to provide an opportunity to those who choose to put forth their time and effort to gardening. The only things needed are the seeds for planting, an able back and pair of hands, and the time to care for a plot. Sadly, only very few individuals and even fewer younger kids have taken advantage

of this great opportunity. Some people find a garden too time-consuming and wonder, "Why go to all the trouble to grow a garden, when I could buy produce from the grocery store?"

The benefits of a community garden are vast. In a sense, a community garden beautifies an area and gives a calm, cultural feeling to a town. It provides a stopping point for conversation and is an easy way to meet new people. A community garden can also be for all ages. It helps children better understand where food comes from. When given a space of their own, children can develop a sense of accomplishment while watching their seedlings grow.

A community garden can be a powerful thing. If you don't use it to your and everyone else's advantage, you could lose it. So make your way to the Heppner Community Garden and get a plot of your own.

# Funding available for county cultural groups

Each year, the Morrow County Cultural Coalition receives funding from Oregon's Cultural Trust to support culture and the arts in Morrow County. It is time for qualifying organization to start preparing a Funding Proposal Request Form to take advantage of available funds.

Qualifying groups or projects might fall under any of these categories: literary, historical preservation, visual and performing arts, or humanities and cultural organizations.

Organizations are invited to submit completed Funding Proposal Request Forms to Morrow County Cultural Coalition by August 1. Proposed projects must include a timeline and be completed by July 30, 2014.

Organizations need not have IRS tax-exempt status to apply. Project proposals must meet criteria noted on the Morrow County application. Funding awarded will vary in amount according to the needs of the

proposed project and the amount of county funds awarded by the Oregon Cultural Trust.

Grants are awarded for no more than 50 percent of the total project cost. Proposals funded in 2012 included: North Morrow Community Foundation, Windy River Elementary School Writing Festival, Boardman Park and Recreation District Fun-tastic Kids, and the Morrow County Chronicles.

To receive a Funding

Proposal Request Form, contact Susan Russell, Morrow County Cultural Coalition, 69247 Kunze Lane, Boardman, OR 97818, 541-481-4277. Funding for Morrow County Cultural Coalition proposals originates from contributions and donations to the Oregon Cultural Trust. To learn more about supporting culture in Oregon, or individual and business tax credits for donations to the trust, visit [www.cultural-trust.org](http://www.cultural-trust.org).

# Harvesting 100 years of memories at the Morrow County Fair

The Morrow County 4-H program is looking for any 4-H memorabilia (Morrow County and non-Morrow County alike) to share in a display at this year's Centennial of the Morrow County Fair, held August 14-17, 2013.

Local 4-H organizers say photos, ribbons, trophies, pins, exhibits citizens made or their grandparents

made when they were in 4-H, or any other memorabilia would be a great addition to this year's display recognizing the hard work and memories from 4-H throughout the years. They also say they are happy to make copies or take photos of items people don't feel comfortable to have out on display.

Contact the Morrow County 4-H office or 4-H leader Doashea Qualls at 541-676-9642 for more information.

Members can check out the 4-H section of the Morrow County Fair Book (can be found on our website) for entry details at the 2013 fair.

"We hope to have a great showing of exhibits and their exhibitors this year," says a county coordinator. "Let's make it a great Centennial Celebration Morrow County!"

Anyone interested in volunteering either before or during the fair, call the 4-H office for complete details: 541-676-9642. They say they can always use help with various things, from cleanup and decorating, to sorting and assisting with exhibits.

For more information about 4-H in Morrow County, check out <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/morrow/>, and follow them on Facebook.

## 8th Annual Youth Fishing Derby

Free

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Morrow County Parks are sponsoring a FREE YOUTH FISHING DERBY**

**Where:** Cutsforth Park

**When:** Saturday, June 1, 2013

**For children 14 years old and younger**

**Address:** 58430 Willow Creek Rd., Heppner, Oregon

**Start Time:** 8:30 am

**End Time:** 11:00 am

For more information contact Betty Gray at the Morrow County Public Works Office (541) 989-8214