

“People Who Need to Die” Author Supports Evergreen Fire Depart.

Katherine Gotthardt | November 18, 2014 | Arts & Entertainment



Manassas author and filmmaker Victor Rook was one of dozens of vendors at this past weekend's fundraiser for Evergreen Volunteer Fire Department in Haymarket. But Rook had something a little different to offer – his newest book entitled, “People Who Need to Die.”

The title generally evokes laughter, but Rook said he wasn't laughing when he decided to write the collection of satirical short stories.

“It was watching the chaos of shoppers and mall trampling in 2013 that provoked me to write the first story for the book, ‘Black Friday Revenge,’” he said.

The story portrays a father who seeks retribution for his son's death by luring Black Friday shoppers into an abandoned warehouse decked out to look like a store, then makes them play shopping games to survive.

“From there I came up with other people's peeves – bad drivers, distracted cell phone users, horrible bosses, litterbugs, spammers, and more – and wrote a story on each.”

Rook said his biggest challenge in writing the book was making his “kill list,” of the kinds of people to write a story about.

“I wanted to make sure I covered the biggies,” he said. “At one point, I paused and thought, hell, I guess I'm not so angry after all. Then I thought of litterbugs, and I was back to cracking away at the keyboard.”

In spite of the anger and somewhat ghoulish nature of “People Who Need to Die,” it was popular at the fundraiser.

“People love the title,” Rook said. Sally DeLuca, owner of Crest Hill Antiques in The Plains bought three copies for herself and friends, and several others opted for the book over traditional holiday gifts like candles and knitted scarves.

Rook recalled that at another recent book signing, a woman came into the store and said, “My husband saw a flyer on this, and I couldn't believe there was a book with this title. I had to come see for myself!”

“She snatched it up instantly,” said Rook. “Because it's so straight forward and in your face, people get a kick out of the title. I still cringe a bit inside when I mention it, wondering how they'll react, but once they hear the list of stories, they are all for it. People even add to the list.”

“People Who Need to Die” marks Rook's fourth book, but Rook said he enjoyed writing this particular volume because each story is so different.

“It was like a fresh start every time with new characters and new scenarios and new ways to ‘off’ them.”

But it's more than that. Rook tackles some important issues, like cyber-bullying in the story “Internet Trolls.”

“Every story has one or more stories embedded within it, a reason for people seeking revenge,” Rook said.

What is Rook's advice to aspiring writers?

“Every big process is made up of little processes. Writing is very tough, but you have to stick with it and celebrate every small step you make. Don't doubt what is in your mind. Just say it like you think and feel it, and it will never be wrong. Before you know it, you'll have a finished story or book in your hand.”

Rook's next signing will be held on December 20th from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Second & Charles in Woodbridge. More information on the author and “People Who Need to Die” can be found at www.victorrook.com.