



Platt's 'Deadstream' familiar setting

By Eric Hamp

Bradley Platt has turned his fondness for Roscommon County into a setting for his recently published novel, "Deadstream."

The novel takes place at Houghton Lake and Roscommon County as a whole is the focus. Readers find mention of other Northern Michigan towns and cities throughout the book as well as local places such as Reedsburg Dam, Michelson and Merritt.

"It's about human beings and the challenges we face in life," Platt, a former Houghton Lake resident, said in a telephone interview last week.

"'Deadstream' is a timeless novel about the depth and boundaries of the human spirit," the back cover of his novel reads. "It is a searing portrait of what man is truly capable of when tested. A compelling drama combined with the haunting introspection of a coming-of-age story—a thriller that really thrills."

He said the Houghton Lake area was a wonderful influence on him.

"There are times when the story is dark," Platt said. "My life wasn't."

"I feel lucky to have grown up in Roscommon County," Platt said, adding that he could walk out his back

door and find true wilderness. "It was just a great place to grow up."

Platt said none of his characters are based on true people but there are scenarios in the book that did happen to him.

"In my travels I've met people so unique that I've blended certain aspect of their personalities into characters in my story," he said.

After graduating from Houghton Lake High School in 1989 and Central Michigan University in 1994, Platt moved to Vail, CO and then to Whitefish, MT before settling in Chicago six years ago. Since high school he has backpacked through 20 countries.

Platt uses his time when traveling to write.

"There's a lot of clarity when I'm in a place so different," Platt said. "Michigan becomes clearer."

Platt has been writing seriously for six years and has studied for the past five years under Jerry Cleaver at the Writer's Loft in Chicago.

"It was a huge influence," Platt said of the program. He said Cleaver tells his students, "A professional writer is an amateur who didn't quit."

Platt said he wants to be known for his "artistic integrity."

"I want to be the writer who writes how people actually think," he said, adding that he pulls no punches in his prose. "My goal is to be known as a great writer of literary fiction."

He said he asks himself, "What happened to the classics?"

"That's what gets me up in the morning," Platt said.

He spent thousands of hours writing the book and five to six years writing and rewriting it.

"This last year almost killed me," Platt said. "I sleep for seven hours a day and the others I'm running."

In addition to his writing, Platt also works full-time for an Informational Technology Consulting Firm. He lives in Chicago with his wife, Julia Lilley, who is from London, England.

Platt held a book launch lunch at Habatat Galleries in Chicago on Dec. 3 and said over 120 attended, including some Houghton Lake residents.

"I was very flattered," Platt said.

The book was published by Xlibris and copies of the book can be purchased by visiting www.deadstream.com or calling (888)795-4274. Copies of "Deadstream" will also be available at the Resorter's Houghton Lake office starting Friday.

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