

Book of Stewarts Point pioneer's anecdotes available in local stores

For a variety of reasons, it took decades to bring "Tractors, Trains & Shipwrecks — Yesteryear Recollections of Sonoma County" to fruition, since the author, Donald R. Richardson of Stewarts Point, died in 1983.

His daughter, Gualala resident Donna Richardson Robbins, was determined to finish the book, which has just arrived at several Gualala stores as well as other retailers in Sonoma County.

The book, a collection christened "Tom Sawyer-like" by lead-

ing historian and long-time Press Democrat columnist Gaye LeBaron, was spawned by his daughter receiving his handwritten stories recounting his youthful exploits while growing up in Stewarts Point.

"When I received these stories of his, I was startled to discover they were all new to me—I don't recall him sharing any of these recollections of his when I was growing up," says Robbins in the book's Introduction. "Yet they were still vivid in his memory decades later as he

wrote these when in his 60s after ill health had him laid up."

Photocopies of these originals comprise Part 2 of the book and are accompanied by vintage black/white photos dating back to Richardson's birth in 1914 which are sprinkled throughout.

The grandson of Herbert Archer Richardson, who arrived in Sonoma County from New Hampshire in 1876 with 40 cents in his pocket and went on to amass 25,000 acres regionally, Richardson was one of nine students who attended the one-room schoolhouse in Stewarts Point, then rode the train from the coast to Santa Rosa High and back weekdays.

Having served as Stewarts Point Postmaster and running the family's longtime general store there, Richardson was also County Supervisor, president of the Farm Bureau and Wool Growers Association, and a professional for-

ester in addition to holding other agricultural leadership roles, both locally and on a statewide basis.

A rancher by trade, Richardson was also an early and avid environmentalist and dedicated steward of the land. He spent his entire life in Sonoma County and the book includes reflections on his later years as well. He penned this collection after falling ill a short while before his death.

Raised in the area, Robbins purchased a home with acreage in Gualala in 2014. Following in her dad's footsteps, she's "dabbling" in raising a small herd of Katahdin sheep for meat, an activity which has reconnected her to her ranching roots. She's also an enthusiastic flower gardener and focused on the care of her orchard.

The new title is available at Four-Eyed Frog Books, Surf Market and the Sea Trader in Gualala and at the Anchor Bay Store.

Fire... from Page 3

reported that through GPS and surveillance footage, investigators had linked Pashilk's car to the sites of several arsons, but didn't have enough evidence to arrest him until after the Clayton Fire started. Hinchcliff said Cal Fire, not the District Attorney's office, made the call on when to arrest him.

"The standard for arresting someone is probable cause ... whether or not a reasonable person would believe someone is committing a crime," Hinchcliff said. But he noted that standard is much lower than the "beyond a reasonable doubt" it takes to convict a person of a crime. "[Investigators] need to have sufficient evidence for a conviction, otherwise it's pointless to arrest someone."

Lynne Tolamchoff, a spokesperson for Cal

Fire, could not disclose many details of the investigation, but noted the year-long process cost the state agency \$450,000 in personnel and equipment.

Pashilk is expected to enter a plea on Sept. 7, and could face 30 years to life in prison if found guilty of the charges, Hinchcliff said. Premeditated arson of inhabited buildings carries a sentence of 10 years to life, and Pashilk could potentially receive 10 years for the first count and 16 months for each count thereafter.

He has a long rap sheet and was previously convicted of felony possession of methamphetamine, possession for sale while armed with a firearm, and numerous misdemeanor crimes. Two of the current charges he faces from his arrest last Monday are for possession of methamphetamine and driving with a suspended license.

Arrests... from Page 1

be in Sonoma County Superior Court in Santa Rosa at 1:30 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 25.

Burkey was appointed to the City Council in September 2011, and was vice-mayor when he resigned in March 2016. This month, Smith filed for candidacy in a five-way race for three City Council seats in the No-

vember election.

The five candidates who filed are Smith, Richard Wasserman, Scott Ignacio, Jane Jarlsberg and Jonathan Torrez.

Anna Dobbins, Jim Koogle and Barbara Burkey (Doug Burkey's ex-wife) have filed for the other two council seats in a separate race.

Neither Doug Burkey nor Smith returned the ICO's calls for comment as of press time.

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