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Peace Country inspires new book by Beverly Lein

By Kirsten Goruk, Herald-Tribune staff Posted 4 days ago

As it so often happens with writers, the inspiration for Beverly Lein's latest novel came to her when she least expected it.

"My husband and I were out for a drive in the Peace River area one Sunday afternoon and we drove by the prison," she says.

"As we were driving by, I was trying to think to myself what gets people put in prison? Is it something in your upbringing or life? How do so many people end up in prison?"

Evil on the Peace River is Lein's fifth book and her first foray into the thriller genre. The Manning-based author wrote her first book about her experiences raising a baby elk and she's also delved into young adult and historical fiction.

This latest book tells the story of two psychopathic brothers who find themselves on the run in the Peace River area. Lein says she had the plot all worked out by the time she got home from that inspired Sunday drive.

"When I got home I started writing. I write freehand first and then I put it into the computer. My thoughts come faster than my fingers can type."

The narrative of the book doesn't focus solely on the brothers, as it weaves a tale between several lives that are touched by their murderous tendencies. That said, when it came to writing about them, Lein wasn't afraid to dive into their minds.

"It doesn't bother me because by the time you're my age you know the extent of it. You see so much of it on TV and you read so much about it," says the 62 year-old.

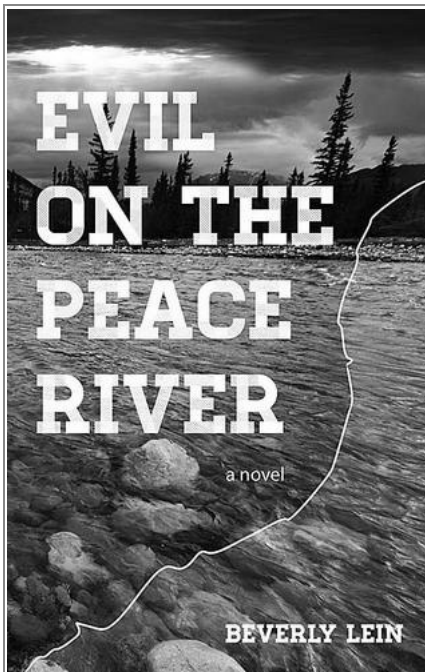
"You know the extent of the goodness that can be in people and you know the extent of the badness that can be in people, that makeup of people."

Most of her books are set in or around Peace River, and the lifestyle of small towns and northern Alberta living is evident in the narrative.

"It's my area and my world. It's where I was brought up," Lein says, adding that her current project, a book that deals with Scotland, pirates and the ocean has her a little out of her element.

"I don't know anything about it so there's lots of research going on. It's harder to write about something that you don't know anything about."

For those who've followed Lein's writing career, she hopes that anyone who knows the area will appreciate Evil on



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the Peace River.

"I have my fans of course that are always looking for my next book. They're easy reads, I think," she says.

"It makes it better because when people are reading, they're reading about people they know and places they know. A lot of people say it becomes like a movie in their mind."

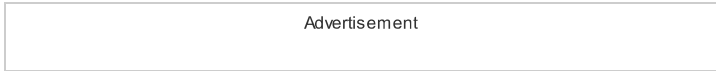
It's hard for Lein to pinpoint what interests her about writing, but since that first book was published in 2006, she's found it difficult to ignore the ideas that are itching to get on the page.

"I think, when you're a writer, you don't have any control over it," she says.

"I think I'm a daydreamer, because all of a sudden it's just like I'll think of something and characters start taking over and I'm away in a story. I don't know where it comes from or why it is, but I think I just have as good a story in my head as any writers do."

Evil on the Peace River is available through several online sites including www.amazon.ca and www.inkwaterbooks.com.

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