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## Frankel is 'Chasing the Green' in new novel

By **Bea Smith, Staff Writer**

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CLARK, NJ - Craig Frankel, a former Clark resident, can be considered a man of integrity and pride. And he can stand apart from the throng of businessmen who have had their companies taken away, their assets demolished.

More than a decade ago, he and his brother lost millions of dollars when the Federal Trade Commission brought a case against the successful credit card processing company the two had founded in Texas. They were young men, in their 20s, and they were among the first to market electronic terminals for credit card transactions. The brothers never believed anything could go wrong in corporate America; yet, everything did, and they were dispossessed of their livelihood and that of their employee-friends.

Frankel explained, "It was the first ever case filed by the Federal Trade Commission against a company in the credit card processing business. More than \$23 million were paid in fines, as well as a forced sale of the company. A receiver in charge of our case appointed by a judge tried to sell our company secrets for \$6 million."

Frankel took up golf as a hobby in order to forget this disaster. It became a way of life. In 2000, Frankel had an idea for a book about the intensely lucrative growing company.

"Actually," Frankel said, "back in 2000, when we were running the company, I can remember discussing the story with my brother. I told him it would make a fascinating story about how two brothers built a large company, bringing so many good friends with us into the company. And how two people, who owned this company, had to believe in its success, even though we were so young. And I said I wanted to write the story. They all laughed at me. 'You can't write a book.' I agreed. I said, however, that I would do it one day."

And for Frankel, following the disaster, the day had come. "I started doing it, started researching it. I wrote a little more than 100 pages myself," Frankel mentioned, "and sent them out to publishers to kind of get a feel of what they thought about it. And could it really be a book?"

"So," he said, "what happened was I found a movie producer in New York, Howard Nash, who liked the story and started plans to make the movie, get some financing for the film and still find a publisher for the book. We did both at the same time."

Nash found Emilio Iasiello, who had written a screenplay for the producer.

"I had him write the screenplay. I also wrote the story and he developed it into a book, like a true writer. It was called 'Chasing the Green.' The title was kind of a dual meaning. One is for the money — green — and the other is a golf term. And from my notes, Emilio wrote the screenplay. I'm thrilled that we were able to do it both at the same time."

Frankel said that all took place in 2006. "It took six to eight months to write everything. And we started searching for publishers. And it took about a year to do the movie. The picture should be out at the beginning of the year, in February or March, through my company, IGolf Productions. The book can be purchased online from [Amazon.com](#) and [Barnes&Noble.com](#)."

Frankel admitted that "about 95 percent of the book and the movie is factual. I'm just telling the truth. I'm not sure people can see for themselves what actually transpired. We're not the only ones this had been happening to. My brother and I never had discussed the complaints. We were not criminals. If they just hadn't tried to take over the company, we would have taken care of the problems. It was crazy. I'm never going to find out why they took this approach."

These days, Frankel said, "I play a lot of golf — more than 100 rounds a year. I travel, too. I have a 14-year-old daughter in high school and I'm so proud of her. I like reminiscing about my hometown of Clark. I loved living there. I moved in 1989, but I still have friends with whom I keep in touch. There's a friend from high school, Joe Klimko, whom I see when I'm in the area."

Frankel is very excited about the book and the film. "I'm really looking forward to the success of the book and the movie. If the movie makes a little money, that would be fine. We'll see what happens. I'm writing a television script right now. It's a little movie called 'PJ' and it was a play in Chicago. John Heard will star in it. It's actually Howard's project and I'm the producer."

Frankel said, "It will be out in DVD next month. And, as far as my brother is concerned, he started another company here in Texas. And I can play golf year-round these days. And that's just great!"

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