

Writer's 'Chasing' a stroke of genius

Nothing can be more fascinating than a true story about corporate America going astray, motivated into a book and a movie.

With "Chasing the Green," Craig Frankel, a former Clark resident, has written, with the aid of screenwriter Emilio Iasiello, both an incredibly frightening and heart-rending book, with real-life situations that can frustrate the hardest-hearted reader. At the same time, he has completed a movie of the same title, with the screenplay written by Iasiello and starring William Devane.

Frankel, who resided in Clark when he was growing up and who now lives in Texas, has painted a true portrait of corporate America as it pertains to his family. Using fictitious names, Frankel tells an almost unbelievable story about two young, ambitious brothers in their 20s, Adam and Ross, who begin a business in 1990 in Texas, employ friends, become entrepreneurs while turning their company into a huge success, only to lose it and millions and millions of dollars along with the loss. He provides details of the "first-ever case brought by the Federal Trade Commission against a company in the credit card processing industry" and how the FTC, urged by competitors, nearly destroys the company. Additionally, he tells how a court-appointed receiver offers to sell company secrets for \$6 million and gets away with it.

The names of the characters, according to the author, may be fictitious, but the story is true. It is well-written with a simplicity, with a wit and with a humanity that is close to a reader's heart. Frankel, who is Adam in the book, always obsessed about the game of golf and describes his childhood growing up in Clark. Through his eyes and his historical recollections, he offers a brief background of the township, its access to the Garden State Parkway, his athletic prowess, his sports participation in school, varsity basketball and baseball, making firm friends with his teammates and being a Crusader at Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School.

He tells, with fondness, of his

On The Shelf

By Bea Smith



two active brothers and his devoted, highly intelligent, divorced mother, who worked for and received a master's degree, while her sons were in public schools. She was, he admitted, his inspiration in life, and she also was instrumental in talking the three teenage boys into moving to Texas.

It is self-assured brother Ross, who can make no mistakes, who induces Adam to go into partnership in the electronic transaction-credit card processing industry. It was a vast improvement over his managerial duties at Andy's Subs.

The success of the rapidly growing brothers' business allows Adam to take to the green — the golf course, of course, to spend more and more time there and, with assurance, overlook government

warnings to respond to complaints regarding contracts. The contracts, as far as the brothers are concerned, are all legally binding, but somehow the FTC finds a way to creep into loopholes — and completely demolish what these two ambitious brothers, with sweat and tears and sacrifices, have succeeded in building into an empire.

It all seems so unreasonable but, according to Frankel, it did happen — and now the brothers have gone their separate ways. Still, Frankel has been putting a great effort into his golf games and tournaments. And having learned his lesson the hard way, he is looking toward a future in motion pictures — and golf, always and forever, golf.

"Chasing the Green" can mean dollars or the green grass of golf. This well-written, highly informative book can chase away the other books on the shelf of this reviewer's bookcase — and proudly, with dignity, stand alone.

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