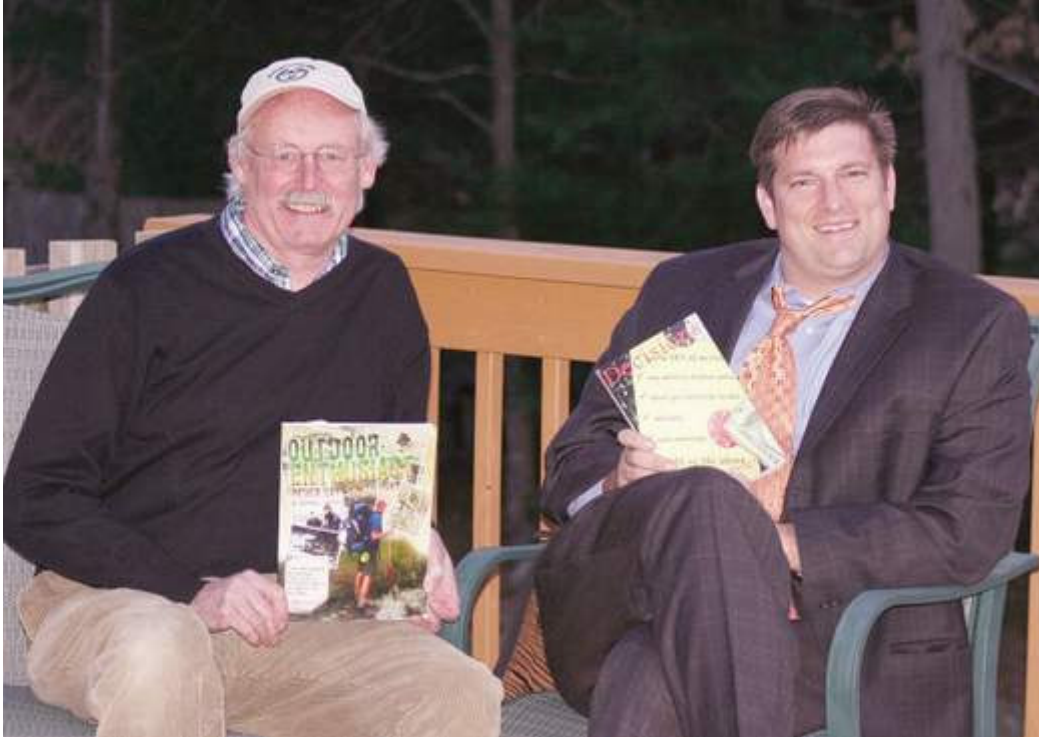


Writing career is all in the family

April 09, 2009 10:25 AM

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ALL IN THE FAMILY: Former Middleboro residents Steve Priest, left, and his son, Shaun, have both been bitten by the writing bug. Steve's projects include two non-fiction books about outdoor sports. Shaun's freshman effort is a novel set primarily in the Bridgewater area.

"Decisions," a newly published novel written by Shaun Priest, has all the makings for a story that local residents could find interesting.

The story is based in Southeastern Massachusetts, primarily in Bridgewater and Raynham, with a side trip to Middleboro, but also in Boston and Reno, Nevada. There is gambling, high-pressured sales, intrigue, organized crime and FBI involvement — it's a fast-paced story that puts main character Jack Fitzpatrick's decisions to the test.

Shaun grew up in Raynham, graduating from Bridgewater Raynham Regional High School before going on to Providence College. He currently lives in Atlanta, Georgia with his wife, Christine, daughter, Madison, and son, Carson.

He is the Vice President of sales for Medseek, an e-health vendor. He began writing a non-fiction book on business, but soon realized that he was basically rewriting other books that he had read.

"I thought, why don't I take some of the business ideas I want to include, and make a story with them," he said. Throwing in some sales, gambling, and personal demons for the main

character, he combined the fiction with the non-fiction and wound up with his mainstream novel.

"There are books out there based on lawyers, police officers, doctors — I haven't seen any using a salesman as the main character," he said.

He noted that he had one person tell him she didn't like the main character at all, when she first began reading the book, but that he grew on her over time. He thinks that means the character is believable.

The story took Shaun three years to write, fitting it in around his full time job. Sometimes he worked on it for 20 hours a week, sometimes he wouldn't pick it up for weeks at a time. Once the book was completed, it took another two years to find an agent.

"I got over 400 rejections before I found someone who was willing to take it," he said.

Shaun was not a stranger to the business end of writing, though. He had watched his father, Steve Priest, go through the process several times.

Steve grew up in Middleboro, graduating from Middleboro High in 1961. He worked at Brockton Hospital as the chief information officer for 20 years, then became the director of computer services at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire before retiring.

Steve's writing career began as an offshoot of his technical job; used to writing up his post-implementation studies, he began writing about his outdoor adventures with his family. He has had hundreds of articles published, and four books, two of which focus on the health field, and two of which relate tales of his outdoor experiences.

Steve's latest book, *Outdoor Enthusiast: Never Say 'I Wish I Had'*, includes as the subtitle his philosophy on life. "How many times have you heard people say "I wish I had?"

"I think it is better to have tried and failed than to never have tried, and that's one of the things I preached to my sons," Steve said. "I told them there are three kinds of people. Those that watch things happen, those that make things happen, and those that wonder what happened. I never wanted to be that last guy."

Steve said he believes that going on outdoor adventures with his sons helped them to bond beyond the traditional roles of father and son. "In the wilderness you have to depend on each other working as a team, and certainly as an equal partner when danger is imminent," he said.

Shaun's book "Decisions" is available through his website, www.shaupriest.com, and on www.amazon.com. Steve's book is also available at www.amazon.com, as well as his website, www.outdoorsteve.com/. Shaun operates a business blog, www.closerq.com, and is also working on a book tour with Barnes and Nobles.