

Author and his fictitious detective are both Michigan born, bred

'He's me, only taller, and he does things I would never do. I guess he's a combination of people I've known who grew up in the '60s.'

— Eric Sauter

By Loraine McClellan
staff writer

Avon Paperbacks launches a new series of suspense novels this fall written by Eric Sauter, who grew up in Farmington with a desire to one day be a published author.

"Hunter," a first-person mystery

written in the sophisticated style of Raymond Chandler and Ross Macdonald, will be on the stands in September, followed by the release of "Icon" and "Skeleton."

The publication of "Hunter" comes after a long period of "getting my ego kicked around in New York, working free lance for a dozen small papers

along the East Coast, and in-between times getting up at 5 a.m. and spending all weekends writing fiction," Sauter said.

The in-between times also produced one ghost-written book that never got off the ground; a serious novel Sauter said he was bored with because he had rewritten it so many times; and the job



Eric Sauter used the ideologies of those he knew as the main character in a number of mysteries, growing up in the '60s to create an aging hippie beginning with "Hunter."

as editor of the company-produced quarterly Squibline.

With the full-time job of editing Squibline in Pennsylvania and finishing up the last of "Skeleton" for his three-book contract, Sauter said, "Now I'm writing nonstop night and day."

Sauter describes his main character, Robert E. Lee Hunter, by saying, "He's me, only taller, and he does things I would never do. I guess he's a combination of people I've known who grew up in the '60s."

Sauter believes that one of the reasons "Hunter" was accepted for publication is that his character is an aging hippie with a perspective of the '60s.

"There isn't a lot that's been published for the people in my generation," Sauter said. "The book was written in an attempt to appreciate them and understand them."

"I know most of our parents never thought we'd make it past 30, and now we're all involved in some kind of work, married and buying houses. I think 'Hunter' shows some of this transition."

As Sauter is Michigan born and bred, so is Hunter. All of Hunter's background is in Detroit, so the book is

sprinkled with places, as well as names, familiar to readers here.

SAUTER SINGLES out Lee Peel, his English teacher while he attended Farmington High School, 1962-66, as giving him his biggest push toward his desired career.

"At Michigan State I was taught creative writing as an art with a capital A; very avant-garde. All that emphasis on creativity was OK, but not very practical for someone who wanted to write something entertaining and readable," he said.

His apprenticeship here was served under Peel while he was on the staff of his high school's newspaper, some free-lancing while he was in college; and a short stint with the Detroit Free Press.

He is married to Beth Olafson, who uses her maiden name in her profession as an attorney, a source he drew on while he was getting Hunter in and out of trouble in his books.

The original manuscript of his first published book is now owned by his parents, Dottie and Ernest Sauter, who received it as a gift last Christmas.

ERNEST SAUTER, retired now after a career with Michigan Bell Tele-

phone Co., has served on the Farmington Community Library Board and the Wayne-Oakland Library Federation's board for the past 20 years.

"Rick grew up with books, so maybe writing comes naturally to him after having so many around," Sauter said of his son.

"We prize the manuscript because we know what dedication it took. I can certainly appreciate the effort after doing just technical pieces in my job."

Though Ernest Sauter said he has never attempted to write fiction, he has always "abounded with story lines," he said.

He's not sure, but he suspects he may have contributed to the story line for "Icons," stemming from a Russian settlement his son told him about in Philadelphia. At the time of this conversation he had just read a news article having to do with a person accused of smuggling the religious symbols out of the Soviet Union.

He has not read that manuscript yet. But he said with tongue in cheek and in reference to his position on the library boards, "I think I can say with reasonable certainty that those books are all going to be available in the Farmington libraries."

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, BILLY BOY?

Life was definitely okay with the movie money from the novel and his own private school on the Delaware River. Hunter had nothing better on his mind than from the front porch when the bad news dropped.

Hunter never could say no to a brand, or a woman. So when his buddy Billy the doggo and his girlfriend came back, Hunter starts moving around and ends up in a dangerous place. He's a dealer who's been told that working people get beaten up by his two-bit buddies in a bar of physical therapy. And now he's in a bind, with his first and last hour.

That was good for starters. Hunter just never counted on Billy's dad heading to an unmarked scene near a covered yard. A Congressman up to his ears in dirt, dust, and in blood... or a boy who never had a Hunter's case.



Robert E. Lee Hunter, the main character in a series of new mystery novels written by Eric

Sauter, makes his debut in "Hunter," to be released by Avon this fall.

Pageant tickets now on sale

Tickets are now on sale for the 10th Annual Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant, when 11 area women will vie for the title of Miss Farmington 1983 and the opportunity to compete in the Miss Michigan and Miss America pageants.

Vying for the title of Miss Farmington 1983 are Milena Alestra, Ami Allen, Iana Dealey, Kelly Dwyer, Kimberly Edwards, Anne Gilardone, Lori Land, Kathy Penner, Sue Strauss, Lisa Varty and Dolane Whinnery.

The scholarship pageant, one of the highlights of the annual Farmington and Farmington Hills Founders' Festival, begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday, July 27, in Vladimir's on Grand River Avenue in Farmington. Tickets for the pageant, which has traditionally entertained standing-room-only crowds, are \$5 per person and are on sale in Farm-

ington Area Chamber of Commerce office, 33201 Grand River, east of Farmington Road.

Miss Farmington 1983 will be selected by a panel of judges who will award points to each contestant in the talent, swimsuit, on-stage personality, and judges' interview categories.

The judges' private interviews with the contestants will be conducted on the afternoon prior to the pageant and are based on the woman's personality, mental alertness, sincerity, general knowledge and intelligence.

TOTAL CUMULATIVE points in each of the four categories are computed and the names of the top five point earners are sent to the judges, who then select Miss Farmington and her first and second runners up. An award also is presented to the winner of the

talent competition.

The Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant is a franchise of the Miss Michigan and Miss America Pageants, and the winner of the local pageant will automatically advance to the 1984 Miss Michigan Pageant with a chance of going on to compete in the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City.

Holly Schmidt Lichtman, Miss Farmington 1976, was chosen Miss Michigan 1977 and went on to compete in the Miss America Pageant.

Miss Farmington 1982 Roxanne D'Ascenzo will relinquish her crown at the 1983 Scholarship Pageant.

Patricia Fialan is director of the Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant. Persons wishing to attend the pageant are advised to purchase their tickets early as the pageant has been sold out for the past ten years.

Pets called to enter showing

Area pets will take the spotlight at 3 p.m. Friday, July 29, when Pets 'N' Particulars and Plaza Veterinary Hospital sponsors its 16th annual Pet Show in conjunction with Farmington Founders' Festival on the stageable in Downtown Shopping Center.

Official entry blanks are available now and trophies are waiting for the pets who come in for first, second and third place spots in nine categories.

All of the rules are spelled out on the official entry forms that can be picked up by those under the age of 16 in both

libraries, a number of area super markets, the Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce, all Parks and Recreation Department playgrounds, and in Pets 'N' Particulars.

Contestants will be called to bring their pet into the show ring vying for the most talented pet, the best presentation of a caged pet, the pet with the waggiest tail, the most unusual pet, the shaggiest pet, the most articulate pet, the best dressed pet, and the ugliest pet.

In one other category, judges will determine the winners in the twin class, or the two most evenly matched pets.

The trophies to be given are all on display now in Pets 'N' Particulars, 21830 Mooney, across the street from Plaza Shopping Center.

Deadline for entry is at noon on the date of the show.

Lamaze classes to start

Lamaze Childbirth Education Association of Livonia begins a seven-week series of classes from 7:30-9:30 p.m. beginning Tuesday, Aug. 9, in St. Alexander Catholic Church, 37825 Shawwassee.

Classes offer information about pregnancy, labor and delivery, a childbirth film along with breathing techniques, relaxation exercises, and com-

fort measures. Classes should be started about 8-12 weeks before the woman's due date. Fee is \$35 per couple and is due before the first session.

All instructors are registered nurses, trained in the Lamaze method and are mothers themselves. To register call, 464-1215.

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- SOUTHGATE: Southgate Shopping Center, 1573 Southgate Rd. 282-6161
- STERLING HEIGHTS: 44142 Van Dyke, 878-0444
- TROY: South Plaza, 75 E. Long Lake Rd. 878-1000
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- WARREN-SCHOENHEIMER: Howard Center Shopping Center, 14 Lakes & Schoenheimer, 282-3933
- WEST DEARBORN: 20111 Michigan Ave. 1 mile E. of Telegraph, 277-4000
- WESTLAND: Westland Shopping Center, 186 E. Westland Rd., corner of Cherry Ave. 259-7900
- YPSILANTI: South Village Shopping Center, 1023 Southpark Road 485-2300