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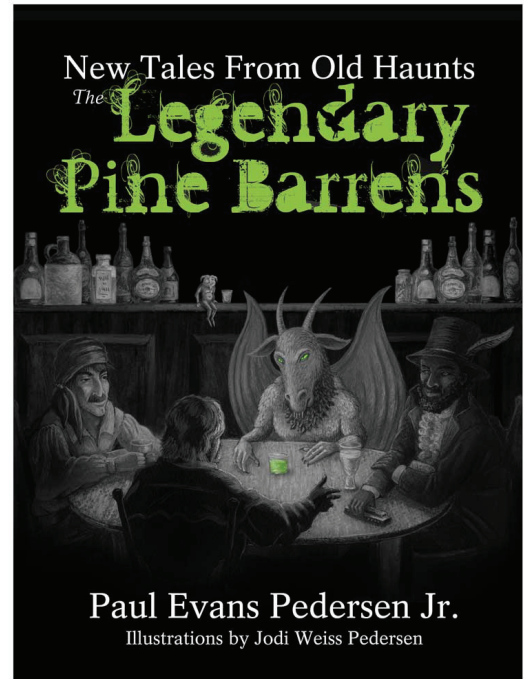
Plexus Publishing, Inc.

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THE LEGENDARY PINE BARRENS: NEW TALES FROM OLD HAUNTS

Southern NJ-Based Plexus Publishing, Inc.—*New York Times*-Bestselling Publisher of *Boardwalk Empire* and Other Jersey-Centric Books—to Release Paul Evans Pedersen’s Collection of “Dark and Quirky” Tales Today



June 24, 2013, Medford, NJ—Plexus Publishing, Inc. announced the publication of *The Legendary Pine Barrens: New Tales From Old Haunts*, a new collection of short stories by Paul Evans Pedersen Jr.

The Legendary Pine Barrens is Pedersen’s second published collection and his first with Plexus, and features 21 stories and three songs along with 17 original illustrations by Jodi Weiss Pedersen. The author introduces a rogue’s gallery of weird and colorful characters in tales that run the gamut from offbeat explanations of natural phenomena to unconventional takes on popular legends to strange doings in mysterious Piney towns and taverns.

Born and raised in southern New Jersey, Pedersen fell in love with the area’s world-famous Pine Barrens in 1962, at the age of seven, on his first camping trip with the Boy Scouts. “Years later,” he said, “I had kids of my own and introduced them to the Pine Barrens when they were very young. I continued to explore and study the many gifts and treasures this remarkable area has to offer, writing songs and stories about what I’d learned and imagined.”

Pedersen recalls another memorable camping trip, this one in 1966, when his Scout troop was terrorized by “a long blood-curdling scream the likes of which I’d never heard before and have yet to hear again.” The author believes the campsite had been visited by the legendary Jersey

— more —

Devil, a view he says was shared by the scoutmaster as well as his fellow scouts. He credits the incident, along with his father's scary bedtime stories, for inspiring the dark, mysterious, and often creepy themes that dominate his own inventive brand of storytelling.

"These are not your traditional stories about the Pine Barrens," according to John B. Bryans, Pedersen's editor at Plexus. "They bear some resemblance to familiar legends, but Paul has created something fresh and original, inspired by South Jersey folklore."

Comprising over 1.25 million acres in southern New Jersey and accounting for approximately 30 percent of the state's total land area, the Pine Barrens has a long and colorful human history. Native American tribes including the Lenape inhabited and hunted here for thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers in the 17th century. During the American colonial period leading up to the Revolutionary War, the Pine Barrens' many settlements and industries produced a distinctive "Piney" culture notable for its rich storytelling tradition. Legends and lore have been passed down from generation to generation, including the oft-told story of the 13th child of "Mother Leeds"—the infamous, immortal Jersey Devil.

Paul Evans Pedersen Jr. is an accomplished journalist, photographer, and musician and a multiple Grammy-nominated songwriter and recording artist. He has been a reporter for the *Hammonton Gazette*, *Hammonton News*, *Vineland Daily Journal*, and *Weekly Retrospect*. He has worked as a professional firefighter in both New Jersey and Houston, Texas, and as a volunteer firefighter in Collingswood, New Jersey. Pedersen is known to South Jersey fashionistas as the inventor and maker of "Pine Barrens Diamonds," a line of jewelry he handcrafts from antique glass. He lives in Elm, New Jersey, with his wife Cookie.

Pedersen will be making numerous public appearances throughout New Jersey and in the Philadelphia area in support of *The Legendary Pine Barrens*. He is available for a range of presentations including book talks and signings enhanced by his engaging storytelling and musical performance skills. For booking information contact Marcela Dunham at mdbestsellers@gmail.com.

The Legendary Pine Barrens: New Tales From Old Haunts (200 pp/softcover/\$14.95/ISBN 978-0-937548-76-9) is available in both print and ebook editions and may be purchased in bookstores through Baker & Taylor, online from all major booksellers, and by contacting the publisher directly. For more information and to order call or email the publisher at 609/654-6500 or info@plexuspublishing.com or visit the Plexus website at www.plexuspublishing.com.

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