



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stanley, IDAHO—Author and new Sawtooth Society board member, Patrick Lee, will present a free talk at The Community Library in Ketchum on his new book, “Kickers—A Novel of the Secret War” on Thursday, March 27, at 6 p.m. The Sawtooth Society will provide refreshments.

In 1961, newly elected President Jack Kennedy was anxious to limit the gains of Communist guerillas in Southeast Asia, while also careful not to expand hostilities that might involve the U.S. in a nuclear war. Where did the government turn? To Idaho’s smokejumper community! Lee’s new novel “Kickers” based on his experiences of surviving smokejumpers that were recruited by the CIA to provide airborne support to Meo tribesman in a war against the Communist insurgents in Laos.

“It really was a secret war,” Lee said. “Most Americans at the time weren’t aware of the Laos war or that the U.S. was using local tribesmen to fight for us. Even fewer knew that the CIA was recruiting college-age smokejumpers to train these barefoot mountain people in parachute jumping and parachute rigging for cargo drops into the jungle.”

“Kickers” follows the story of three young jumpers from their entry into smokejumper fire fighting in Idaho to their exciting but harrowing experiences in Laos incorporating elements of the experiences of the jumpers who were there.

Sheila M. Trask for the Clarion Review wrote, “Spot-on details shed light on a seldom discussed episode in American foreign policy. If high school history teachers assigned stories like Patrick Lee’s Kickers, students would learn a lot more about the conflicts that have shaped our world than they ever would from a typical textbook. It may be fiction, but Lee’s on-the-ground account of covert CIA operations in Laos during the 1960s rings true.”

Lee is a former smokejumper that made twenty-five parachute jumps into the Idaho Primitive Area fighting forest fires. After leaving jumping to study law, he began to hear of smokejumper deaths in Laos including those of men who had been his jump partners.

Interviews of surviving smokejumpers about their CIA experiences in Laos convinced Lee their stories needed to be told. He incorporated core elements of their recollections in "Kickers."

In 2012, Lee was awarded a writer's residency by the Jentel Artist Residency Program based on the "Kickers" manuscript. After forty-five years of practicing law in Washington, D.C., Lee lives and writes on a ranch in the Sawtooth Mountains in Idaho with his wife Janis.

"Kickers" is available for purchase at Iconoclast Books and Chapter One Bookstore in Ketchum and is also available through Amazon.com in paperback and Kindle editions. Further information about the book is available on the website [www.kickersthenovel.com](http://www.kickersthenovel.com).