

Author's new novel takes place in Angels

By Krissi Khokhobashvili

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The foothills made such an impression on Duke Pasquini as a child that now the author has penned a book that takes place in Angels Camp.

“A Warrior’s Son” is the tale of 13-year-old Jake Bennett, told through the eyes of the now-adult narrator. Jake’s dad serves three tours of duty in Iraq, and the story is about how Jake, his mother and little brother cope with his absences.

“I was familiar with Angels Camp,” said Pasquini, a McArthur resident. “They say write what you know, and I was looking for a smaller community.”

As a boy growing up in Stockton, Pasquini spent most of his summers in and around Angels Camp. He fondly recalls fishing trips at Hunters Dam and scenic drives up Murphys Grade Road, and said that when the idea for “Warrior” was born, he knew Angels Camp would provide the perfect backdrop.

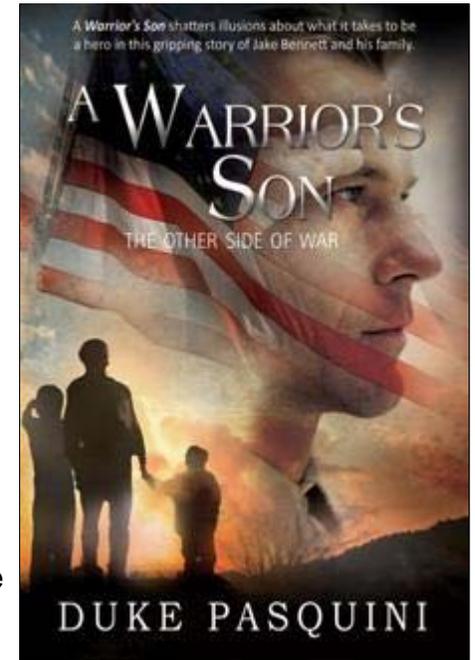
“I just re-created a lot of that into real life,” the author said. “There’s the theater ... the frogs, just little stuff about the town.”

The book begins when Jake is a student at Mark Twain Elementary School, living in Angels Camp with his family. After his father leaves, Jake goes on to Bret Harte High School, where he reluctantly starts playing football. “He does normal things that kids do when they grow up,” Pasquini said, “but his father is back and forth. So his mother is kind of left with the responsibility.”

“A Warrior’s Son’ follows Jake through his teen years as he struggles to find a place in his hurting family while navigating the complexities of girls, sports and friends through middle school and high school,” according to the book summary. “The story is a testament to the resilience of military families and to the determination of one boy who must cope with adolescence and the emotional stress of being a warrior’s son.”

Pasquini, 68, is a retired educator who is now a full-time writer. He taught business in Stockton and Burney, and was a principal in Alturas before retiring to McArthur.

“A Warrior’s Son” is self-published and was released in March. Pasquini is also the author of “The Power Six Invert Defense for Winning Football,” through Parker Publishing, and has written many articles for sports magazines.



While writing “Warrior” took about two months, Pasquini said, “The actual editing took forever.” The author credits friends, family and Calaveras County residents with their help through the process. He visited the foothills several times to research the setting, and even received feedback from a group of Mark Twain Elementary School students who were assigned the book to read in class.

In the book’s acknowledgements, Pasquini thanks several Angels Camp adults and students for their help: Sue Edmonson, Henrietta Sparks (who he credits with the idea for his book), Geneva Bush, Mary Lentz, Mike and Ann Sahlin, Eleanor Bernardo, Carol Hoodenpyle Prabhu, Pat Brown, Sharon Rogers, Henrietta Sparks, Eve Chandler, Derek Oliver, Kandi Maxwell, Joan Nelson, Debbie O’Shea, Deb Dean, Trey Kramer, Chelsi Woodard, Shelby Selvidge, Jacob Schwartz, Luke Urlic, Jordan Johnson, Michael Impink, David Valentine and Ashley Ingalls.

“I just finished your book tonight and I am speechless,” wrote Bob Stewart, Pasquini’s fraternity brother and retired Air Force officer. “It truly was great, but at times it was hard for me to read. ... It made me cry a few times because it was so close to home and I had to put it down to get myself together so I could continue to read.”

“Warrior’s Son” is available through [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [xlibris.com](https://www.xlibris.com), and on Pasquini’s website, [jakesgold.com](https://www.jakesgold.com).

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