New book examines historical plights
Rushworth to sign copies of book Saturday

By ERIK CHALHOUB
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

WATSONVILLE — You can’t change the past, but you could perhaps learn from it.


The novel follows a Cherokee woman named Agana (Beginning Rain) during the time 1,000 years before Columbus. A child has incessant dreams about future massacres, such as the Holocaust, sapping her will to live.

Agana, determined to help save the child’s life, travels through time to meet those responsible for those historical events to show them how their actions have caused suffering and turmoil, with the hopes of “opening the human imagination in a positive way,” Rushworth said.

The author will be signing copies of his new book Saturday from 1-3 p.m. at Crossroads Books, 1935 Main St. in Watsonville.

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Rushworth said.
He pointed to the sharp decline of the Native American population in the United States from first contact to the turn of the century.

Not only is the book written in the first person, but it is from a female point of view, which Rushworth said he never had done before.

“It was very liberating, being able to write from a feminism standpoint,” he said.

The book’s namesake, “Going to Water,” refers to an old Tsalaagi practice of purification and rejuvenation, Rushworth said.

Raised by his Tsalaagi grandfather, Rushworth served in the 1960s as a military volunteer in Vietnam. Upon returning, Rushworth earned a masters degree in language arts.

“Going to Water” is Rushworth’s second novel, the first being “Sam Woods American Healing” in 1991.

A literature instructor at Cabrillo read Rushworth’s first novel, and insisted that he take over the Native American Literature class at the college, which he accepted.

Now retired, but still teaching part-time, Rushworth said he plans to continue writing, maybe even make “Going to Water” into a series.

“At 70 years old, I feel like I’m just getting started,” he said.

“Going to Water: The Journal of Beginning Rain” is available at Crossroads Books, Bookshop Santa Cruz, Capitola Book Cafe and Amazon.com. Rushworth will be signing copies of the book Saturday from 1-3 p.m. at Crossroads Books, 1935 Main St. in Watsonville.

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