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Notes from editor (not for publication):

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HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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¹ RFPL hosts Dec. 12 reading by author Matthew
² Hongoltz-Hetling

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⁴ TEXT BODY:

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⁵ Pulitzer-prize nominated author Matthew Hongoltz-
⁶ Hetling will appear at the Rockingham Free Public Library Friday,
⁷ Dec. 12, at 7 p.m., reading from and discussing his work.
⁸ The event will be hosted by Bellows Falls artist and event
⁹ presenter Charlie Hunter.
¹⁰ What happens when libertarians take over a small New
¹¹ Hampshire town, ridding virtually all local government just as the

12 local bear population is exploding? What happens when the
13 American medical system is supplanted by people who believe
14 zombies are real? What happens when paranormal investigators
15 attempt to harness the scientific method to prove the existence of
16 ghosts?

17 Hongoltz-Hetling is fascinated by such questions, and his
18 three contemporary nonfiction books *A Libertarian Walks into a*
19 *Bear*, *If it Sounds Like a Quack*, and *The Ghost Lab* delve deeply
20 into the results. "His writing is at once very funny, extremely
21 thought provoking, and deeply unsettling," wrote organizers in a
22 news release.

23 As a reporter for the *Valley News* a daily newspaper
24 serving the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont,
25 Hongoltz-Hetling got his start with a beat that included Grafton,
26 New Hampshire. The events he covered would become fodder
27 for *A Libertarian Walks into a Bear*.

28 In the story, a group of libertarians hatched the Free Town
29 Project, a plan to take over an American town and completely
30 eliminate its government. In 2004, they set their sights on
31 Grafton, New Hampshire, a barely populated settlement with one
32 paved road.

33 The libertarians slashed public funding for pretty much
34 everything: the fire department, the library, the schoolhouse. State
35 and federal laws became meek suggestions. The citizens built a
36 tent city in an effort to get off the grid, which caught the attention
37 of Grafton's neighbors: the bears, who smelled food and
38 opportunity.

39 *A Libertarian Walks Into a Bear* contains gunplay,
40 adventure, and backstabbing politicians, "the ultimate story of a
41 quintessential American experiment — to live free or die, perhaps
42 from a bear," says the synopsis on Amazon.

43 Books will be available for purchase from Village Square
44 Booksellers at this free event.

45 For more information about this and other programs, call
46 802-463-4270, visit rockinghamlibrary.org, or stop by the library
47 at 65 Westminster St.

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