**Brentwood Author Discusses Latest Book**

**In County History Series at Luncheon Feb. 7**

Brentwood author Dan Hanel will discuss his latest book, Beneath the Tangled Vines, at a luncheon on February 7 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the Bentwood Community Center. The book weaves a modern-day mystery story with the history of winemaking in Contra Costa County.

Wine will be served at the luncheon, which is a fundraiser for the Friends of the Brentwood Library. Tickets are $40 and are available at [www.friendsofthebrentwoodlibrary.org](http://www.friendsofthebrentwoodlibrary.org/).

Hanel will speak about the early wine industry in the county, including the story of Winehaven, which was the largest winery in the world. The book is the most recent novel in his In the Shadow of Diablo series.

“Winehaven was located in Richmond and processed wine from grapes grown throughout Contra Costa County and elsewhere in the state,” Hanel said. The winery was established after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, which destroyed most of the city’s 27 wine warehouses.

“I grew up in Richmond and never knew about the winery,” Hanel said. The winery closed after Prohibition, and county farmers found other crops to grow. The building was used during World War II as a U.S. Navy fueling depot and hasn’t been used since as city leaders try to determine the best use of the site.

Many of the workers in the fields were Chinese immigrants. The book’s modern-day mystery hunters are high school teachers who help an Asian-American student uncover the story of his immigrant ancestors.

*Beneath* the Tangled Vines is the fourth book in the series, which Hanel began with a book about the John Marsh House, The Mystery of the Great Stone House. “My wife and I attended a fundraiser in 2010 for the John Marsh House, and I became fascinated with its story. At the time, I had been thinking about writing a novel but didn’t know what to write about. I decided to write one based on John Marsh’s story.

Hanel, an award-winning high school biology teacher, decided to have the modern mystery hero also have that career. He matched the character with a high school foreign language teacher. The two develop a romantic relationship.

Hanel did his own detective work for the books by searching through the historical records of the East Contra Costa County Historical Society and other historical collections.

"Dan is a great storyteller, whose insights help us understand our county’s history,” said Friends board member Diane Alexander, who helped organize the event. “The funds we raise will support children’s programs and other activities at the library