

OEN member WD7H (Jim from Banks) recently released his first action/adventure novel, **Fracture Gradient**, and was fortunate enough to have it reviewed in the April, 2013 issue of QST. While the book is not about amateur radio, it does feature the practical use of ham radio in the storyline . . . and that caught the notice of ARRL. Not only was the book reviewed in QST, but ARRL also purchased copies to sell on their website. You'll find it in the History & Adventure section of the ARRL Store along with a full description where they referred to it as "A refreshingly accurate portrayal of Amateur Radio and RDF in a powerful story of greed and manipulation within the international oil industry."

Jim checks in on the OEN most evenings and is also a member of the Oregon Tualatin Valley Amateur Radio Club (OTVARC) where he helps out as a VE.

Fracture Gradient is also available on the Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Powell's websites, as well as on www.JimMcCulloch.com.

The ARRL web link to the article is:

http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/arrl/qst_201304/index.php#/48

You need to be an ARRL Member in order to sign in.

His book can be purchased at either his site or the ARRL.

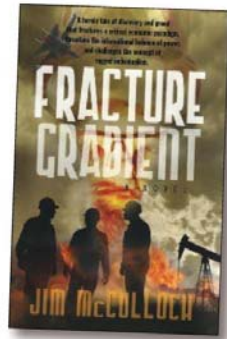
For those who missed the QST review, here it is reproduced with the permission of ARRL.

Fracture Gradient

Jim McCulloch, WD7H

My first reaction to Jim McCulloch's debut novel was, "When's the movie coming out?" A former US Army officer and energy industry veteran, McCulloch concocts a thriller with just the right ingredients to satisfy modern moviegoers, all without relying on zombies or vampires. I say this even though the book's title suggests the all the excitement of an obscure and dusty geology principle, which it is, among other things. McCulloch offers three variant definitions for the term before you reach the title page; each hints at what's to come.

Set during the Reagan Era, *Fracture Gradient* plausibly blends international intrigue, deception, governmental cluelessness and denial, violence — lots of violence — murder and mayhem, geopolitics, and old fashioned sleuthing, with a dash of Amateur Radio thrown in. Some "battle" descriptions are not for the squeamish. How McCulloch resolves things may leave readers wondering whether something like this actually happened?" The plot exploits the same sorts of conspiracy



theory overtones that fuel late night AM talk radio, but if I told you how it ends, what fun would that be?

Here's the basic setup: Some Big Oil scientists develop a revolutionary product that would render their industry largely obsolete — a definite game-changer. The fun begins when word leaks out, and bidding war of sorts erupts. How this plays out without veering too deeply into science fiction (or is it?) is the book's bread and butter, and readers will appreciate the twists

at the end. In furthering the plot, McCulloch expropriates several late 20th and early 21st century figures as well as considerable military weapons nomenclature.

I'll leave it to readers to judge whether ham radio's role in the complex plot is entirely believable or appropriate (hey, this is fiction), but in an age when the characters used pay telephones, short wave radio communication was still cool and cutting edge. The author allows that his rough manuscript "languished in a desk drawer for far too long" before his wife urged him to dust it off and have at it.

If this story ever makes it to the silver screen,

I'll be interested to see who plays Ronald Reagan — and if there's a role for Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Mossy Mountain Publishing, Banks, Oregon, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-9857745-0-9, softcover, 5.5 x 8.5 in, 447 pp. Available from Amazon.com, \$16.00.

