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Author offers 'A Shot of Poison'

Christopher Long tells the inside story of rock group Poison

By Alexandra Scheirer, OF THE MORNING CALL

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You don't know Poison until you have read Christopher Long's book.

"A Shot of Poison" documents Long's experiences with glam rock band Poison as a friend, journalist and personal assistant.

Long will sign copies at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Barnes & Noble bookstore at the Lehigh Valley Mall.

The unauthorized collection of tales told from Long's perspective spans the rise and demise of Poison, covering substance abuse, bassist Bobby Dall's backstage class-clown antics and the animosity between members leading to a 2006 on-stage fist fight between frontman Bret Michaels and Dall.

The book is not just a catalog of Poison anecdotes. It also tells Long's personal story. He was a rock fan living the dream of touring with one of his favorite bands and simultaneously coping with the reality of that dream's disappointments.

Long's relationship with the princes of party anthems began as a personal friendship with Dall throughout the 1980s and 1990s, then professionally as a rock journalist spending time with Poison in the early 2000s, and eventually touring with the band as a personal assistant from 2006-2008.

Long says he decided to write a book about what the music industry and Poison were really like. "It's like 'The Wizard of Oz'," he says, "pull back the curtain and see who is operating the machinery."

Long says it was important to tell the story from his perspective as an insider yet an outsider. He also feared if the band was involved, the book would never have been published. "Look," he says "those four guys [the members of Poison] couldn't agree on what to eat for dinner let alone what is going to be published about them."

At least one Poison member is aware of the book. Long says about a month before "A Shot of Poison" was released, drummer Rikki Rockett called him and told Long he wasn't upset about the publication. According to Long, Rockett understood Long was a writer and the band never made him sign confidentiality agreements.

The book is often unflattering, but Long says he in no way meant to trash the band. He says he is still one of Poison's biggest fans.

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BOOK SIGNING

•**What:** Chris Long signs copies of his book 'A Shot of Poison.'

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•**When:** 2 p.m. Saturday

•**Where:** Barnes and Noble, Lehigh Valley Mall, Whitehall

•**Info:** 610-264-0238, <http://www.myspace.com/ashotofpoison>

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