



MICHAEL JULIA / MICHIGAN NEWS

The valley is perfect for crime books, Keith Raffel says! "Don't we have as much ambition, money and greed as Wall Street or Hollywood?"

## Tech executive turned mystery writer finds a wealth of plot lines in the valley

Keith Raffel says region's can-do attitude inspires his whodunits

No sooner does the question leave my lips than I realize just how dumb it is.

What makes Silicon Valley a good setting for a novel?

Keith Raffel is a nice guy. He doesn't

laugh, roll his eyes or ask me to leave the comfort of his Palo Alto living room. He doesn't repeat the question three or four times with incredulity.

But the truth is that Raffel can't walk down the street of his hometown without bump-

### KEITH RAFFEL

**Age:** 58

**Education:** Palo Alto High School; bachelor's and doctorate of law, Harvard University; master's, University of Oxford.

#### **Business and career highlights:**

Founded Uphot, which was sold to Sabal Systems, which in turn was sold to Oracle; also worked as counsel to the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee.

**Family:** Married to Teri Raffel; four children

in Los Angeles or Chicago, he asks, turning the question on me. "Don't we have as much ambition, money and greed as Wall Street or Hollywood?"

Sure we do, which is great news for someone who writes stories in which someone does or could end up dead.

Raffel knows the valley, as well as anyone. He grew up here. And he's lived the life that the valley is known for worldwide. Writing is not Raffel's first career. Way back in the 1990s, he started Uphot, a pioneer in software-as-a-service.

No surprise then that Ian McEwan's, the startup executive protagonist of his first novel, "Dot-Dead," resembles in "Sinsaber," battling to save the company from a hostile takeover, while simultaneously trying to save his prosecutive wife



MIKE CASSIDY

launched a career as a mystery writer.

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