



Former championship curler Ed Lukowich is a member of the Calgary Winter Club. He has traded his broom for a pen and has written a new book called *The Trillionist*, which is based on a theory he has created about the start of the universe. Ted Rhodes/Calgary Herald

Curling champ takes on universe in novel

Ed Lukowich pens debut sci-fi book

ERIC VOLMERS
CALGARY HERALD


SPOTLIGHT:

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Ed (Fast Eddy) Lukowich believes the scientists got it wrong.

Wrong when it comes to the most elemental of questions about the creation of life and time and the universe. The accepted logic about the beginnings of our cosmos, as explained by the Big Bang theory, and the age of the universe, generally believed to be 15 billion years old, are way off, he maintains.

On the phone from his Calgary home, the two-time Brier curling champ acknowledges this is a bold assertion from someone who doesn't have formal training as a scientist.

But he'll be happy to explain it to you. Or, you could just read about it in his debut sci-fi novel, *The Trillionist* (EDGE, 243 Pages, \$14.95), which he wrote under the pen name Sagan Jeffries.

"We're getting into deep thoughts now," says Lukowich with a laugh, when asked how he formed his theories. "I would say I was a great reader of science magazines, not just the novels, but actual science magazines. So I became

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an expert reader on all the different things about how the cosmos works. I really started to think, 'Does it really operate this way or could it be a little bit different?' I started to formulate my own ideas. And certainly one of the ones that comes out of *The Trillionist* is the age of the universe. It's thought to be 15 billion years old because that's the age of our oldest stars. But that's not what the *Trillionist* says."

Granted, the *Trillionist* is a fictional character. As the centre of Sagan Jeffries's otherworldly debut novel, he is a genius inventor and futurist known as Sage Rojan.

Sage is a boy genius, turned madman, turned saviour who possesses knowledge about our universe that can save millions who were put in jeopardy by his own "ill-considered actions."

All of this is unravelling on a planet known as Tidon.

But have no fear, curling fans, it's not that Lukowich doesn't have lost his senses and doesn't know the dif-

ference between fact and fiction.

But he sees *The Trillionist* as a good first step in getting his scientific theories out into the world. A companion book called *The Trillion Universe Theory*, which has yet to be published, fully explains his ideas, although he is quick to point out that the novel can stand alone without the scientific context. But for those who are curious, *The Trillionist* has 17 QR codes that will take the reader to Lukowich's website, where theories that he has been exploring since he was a child are explained in fuller detail.

"When it comes to me writing a universe theory book, a lot of people are saying, 'This is crazy,'" says Lukowich. "Well, yes it is. There's no doubt about it. And it comes from a curler. What an unnatural source. On the other hand, it is what it is. These ideas have been fighting to get out of me. I think I've given a lot of thought about the right way to present it."

So he figured presenting it through fiction was the way to go, not unlike his hero and nom-de-plume namesake Carl Sagan.

He created a pen name in an attempt to distance himself from the sport that made him famous. As Ed Lukowich, he has published three curling instruction books and a coffee-table book on the topic. But it's

as a player that he is best known. Skip of both the 1978 and 1986 Canadian Champion Teams, he also represented Canada at the 1988 Olympic Games when curling was a demonstration sport. His 1986 team also became world champions after capturing the Silver Broom. When he began writing the book in 1998, he was a colour commentator on Sportsnet for curling before becoming the national and Olympic coach with the United States Curling Association. He resigned as athletic development director in 2009 and returned to his manuscript.

"There were eight or nine years where I got very little writing done," he says. "I had a good time with my work, so I don't look back with any regret, but it was certainly a time when I could have got the book published."

And what exactly is the "Trillion Universe Theory?"

Basically, the idea is that the universe is a trillion years old and has been recycled many times.

"There's been many recycles of the universe," he says.

"What does that mean? If we are living one life in this cycle and we've had reincarnations and if there has been many recycles of the universe, how old is our spirit? Really, it's a book of hope for people."