

From Legal Pads in Lanikai, H2ONU Reaches Its First U.S. Bookstore — BookEnds, Kailua

Twenty years after it was written by hand on Lanikai legal pads, H2ONU reaches its first U.S. bookstore — BookEnds, Kailua. Plus: 20 founding affiliate spots.

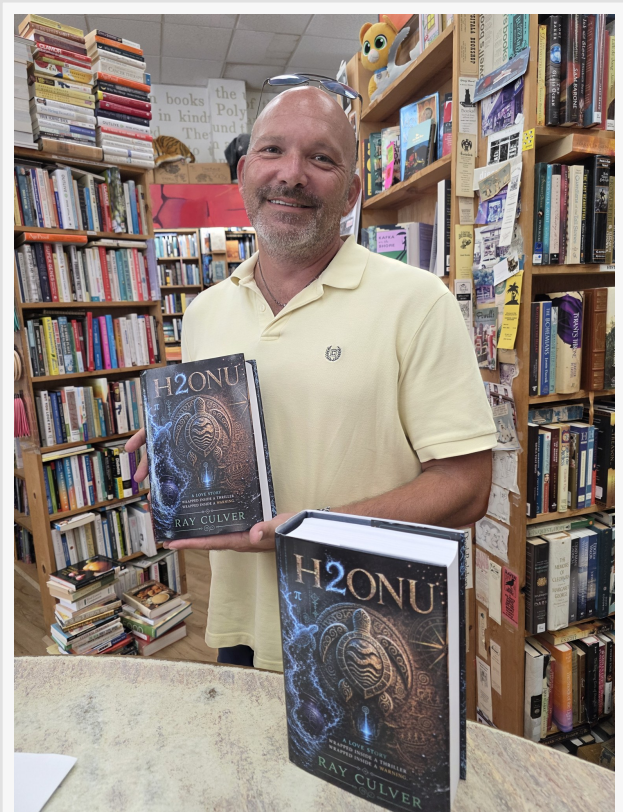
HONOLULU, HI, UNITED STATES, September 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- HONOLULU, Hawaii — Twenty years ago, Ray Culver was living in Lanikai, working nights and spending his mornings writing a novel by hand on legal pads near the beach. More than 4,000 handwritten pages later, that idea became H2ONU: A Novel by Ray Culver, a 752-page, 80-chapter, full-color First Edition.

Now, two decades after the first pages were written on Oahu's windward side, BookEnds in Kailua has become the first brick-and-mortar bookstore in the United States to stock H2ONU. For Culver, the placement carries a significance that goes well beyond distribution.

"In 2006, I was living in Lanikai and working nights. When I got home in the mornings, I would walk to the beach and write H2ONU on legal pads. More than 4,000 pages of them. Between then and now, life happened. Philadelphia, relationships, jobs, the ups, the downs, the doubts, the 'what the f' am I doing here?' moments. Somehow, through what I can only assume was God's plan, mercy, miracle and blessing, I ended up back where H2ONU all started."

That history makes the bookstore placement feel less like a conventional retail milestone and more like a return.

"It's both serendipitous and ceremonial that BookEnds in Kailua is the first physical bookstore in America to stock H2ONU," Culver said. "Twenty years later, somehow the book found its way home."



Author Ray Culver at BookEnds in Kailua, Hawaii, holding the H2ONU First Edition.

From Legal Pads in Lanikai to a 752-
Page First Edition

The earliest version of H2ONU looked
nothing like the finished book now on a
bookstore shelf.

There was no publishing company, no
launch strategy, no finished
manuscript.

There were legal pads.

Thousands of handwritten pages
accumulated as Culver developed the
characters, ideas and interconnected
story that would eventually become
H2ONU.

A photograph from that period still
survives: Culver sitting near the water
with his writing, an iPod, and the same
Ron Jon beach towel he still owns
today. Dave Matthews Band's "So
Damn Lucky" was playing when the
photo was taken.

What followed was considerably less
linear.

Life happened.

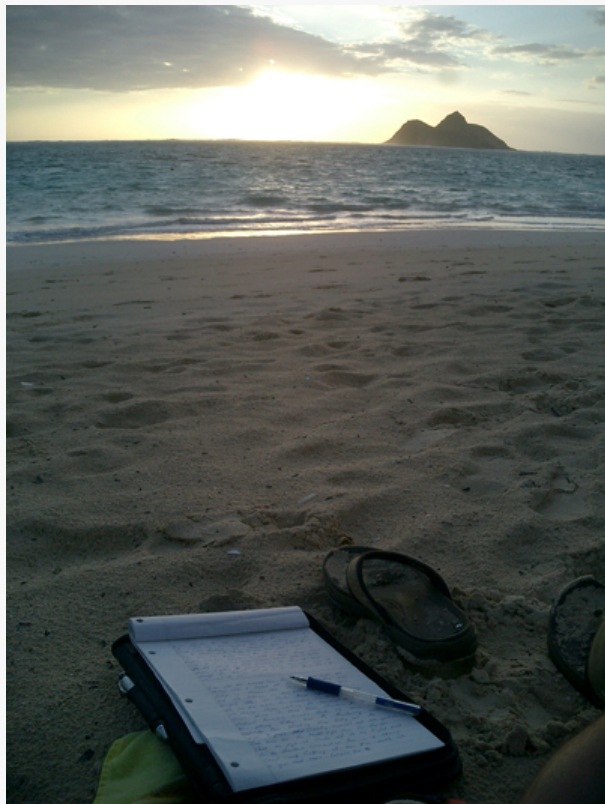
Philadelphia happened.

Relationships, careers, moves, doubts
and long stretches when the idea of
finishing a sprawling novel conceived
on a beach in Hawai'i seemed somewhere between improbable and insane.

Somehow, the path eventually led Culver back to O'ahu, and back to the place where H2ONU
had begun.



BookEnds in Kailua, Hawaii - the first U.S. bookstore
to stock H2ONU.



Where it began: Ray Culver wrote H2ONU by hand on
legal pads at Lanikai, on Oahu's windward side.

The manuscript evolved, stopped, restarted and expanded.

The eventual First Edition became a physical object far removed from the yellow legal pads that began it: 752 full-color pages across 80 chapters, incorporating artwork, typography, symbols, documents and recurring visual elements into the story itself.

The book was released in 2026.

And its first American bookstore shelf ended up only a few miles from where it began.

The milestone is meaningful because the physical edition has always been central to how H2ONU was designed. Readers encounter artwork, documents, symbols and visual clues throughout the novel; moving backward and forward through the book and noticing patterns is part of the experience.

"For months, people have discovered H2ONU through screens, videos and posts," Culver said. "Now somebody can discover it the oldest way there is. Walk into a bookstore, see something they've never seen before, pick it up, and open it."

H2ONU Opens 20 Founding Affiliate Positions

Alongside its first brick-and-mortar placement, H2ONU has opened a Founding Affiliate Program for readers, reviewers and creators who want to introduce the novel to their audiences. The program is limited to 20 founding partners.

Approved partners begin with a 20% commission on qualifying First Edition sales, with the opportunity to advance to 25%. Participants receive a private tracking link and an H2ONU Partner Kit of promotional materials for social media, reviews, podcasts and newsletters. The process is simple: apply, get approved, share, and earn. Applications are [available at H2ONU.com/affiliate](https://H2ONU.com/affiliate).

"The people who understand this book are better at finding its next reader than an algorithm is," Culver said. "If someone genuinely connects another person to H2ONU, they should participate in the value they helped create."

The program is designed particularly for book reviewers, literary and culture creators, mystery and thriller audiences, environmental communities and existing readers.

One Price. Different Ways In.

The hardcover First Edition remains \$79.99. H2ONU is not using the affiliate program to create a cycle of changing promotional prices; instead, audience incentives can include free-shipping codes, giving partners something tangible to offer without changing the book's retail value.

"I don't want one reader paying \$79.99 while somebody else waits for the next artificial markdown," Culver said. "The First Edition has one price. The affiliate program rewards the introduction, not the discount."

The novel resists a single genre. At its center is a love story; around it are a political thriller, an environmental warning, a technological race, and questions of surveillance, faith, power and free will. The story examines what might happen if a technology capable of turning water into clean, portable energy became viable — and what that would mean for the institutions built around controlling energy. But the machine is not the novel's only subject; it is the pressure that exposes the people around it.

"There isn't one correct doorway into H2ONU," Culver said. "People recognize different things in it. That's exactly why personal recommendation matters."

About H2ONU: A Novel by Ray Culver

H2ONU: A Novel by Ray Culver is a 752-page, 80-chapter, full-color First Edition that connects a love story, political thriller and environmental warning through five interlocking voices. Set across Hawaii and beyond, it explores environmental collapse, technology, surveillance, political power, spirituality, mathematics and free will through a system of recurring images and ideas. Some of it is fiction. Some of it isn't.

The hardcover First Edition is available at H2ONU.com and is now stocked at BookEnds in Kailua, Hawaii. Creators and prospective partners can apply at [H2ONU.com/affiliate](https://h2onu.com/affiliate).

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