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Quick Notification and Response Saves Trailer

Story & photo by Andi Bourne
Pathfinder

SEELEY LAKE - The Seeley Lake Rural Fire District responded to smoke in a trailer on Canyon Drive in Seeley Lake the evening of Sunday, July 12. Fire Chief Bob Vanden Heuvel said they located the source, identified the problem and extinguished the burning material. No one was in the trailer.

According to Vanden Heuvel a neighbor saw little wisps of smoke coming from the trailer. They called the owner and notified 911.

When volunteers arrived the source was not obvious. Firefighters removed the skirting around the base of the trailer and went inside to search for the origin of the smoke. While it took a while to local the origin, once it was found it was quickly extinguished.

No one was in the trailer when the smoke was spotted. While the cause is still under investigation, the cause was related to the dryer and dryer hose.

"The potential was there for a large fire," said Vanden Heuvel. "They [members of the public who noticed the smoke and called for help as well as the volunteers] did a great job. Had they not seen the smoke and given us such an early warning, we would have lost the trailer."

Vanden Heuvel reminds anyone who owns a dryer in their home to remove lint build-up from the dryer vent and the hose to mitigate the hazard for fire.



Photo by Andi Bourne, *Pathfinder*

Seeley Lake Rural Fire District volunteers searching a trailer on Canyon Drive for the origin of the smoke reported Sunday night.



Photo by Andi Bourne, *Pathfinder*

Blackfoot Riverkeeper Jerry O'Connell sharing fishing stories during the Blackfoot River Fishing Hole Tour at the Seeley Lake Literary Festival "In the Footsteps of Norman Maclean" July 11. This was the third stop on the tour of fishing holes. O'Connell believes this locations is near the last place Norman, his father Reverend John Norman and his brother Paul last fished together. For the full story see page 7.

Maclean Festival Draws Crowd From Across Nation and Beyond

Story & photos by Betty Vanderwielen
Pathfinder

SEELEY LAKE - London's daily newspaper The Telegraph commissioned Michael Kerr to write an article on "Norman Maclean's Montana" in conjunction with the In the Footsteps of Norman Maclean Festival held in Seeley Lake July 10-13. Kerr sought the assignment because he was an admirer of Maclean's literary works and eager to experience the Montana those works depicted.

Kerr emailed, "I will, of course, be keen to see places where Maclean spent time and to talk to people who knew him." He added,

"Fond as I am of his work, I did wonder in March whether there might be enough to sustain a whole festival."

All doubts of that were erased as the schedule of speakers and activities was firmed up and made known. Kerr referred to the listing as "a great combination of talking and tramping - and of course fishing."

The offerings included an eclectic mix of scholarly panels discussing Maclean's literary works intermingled with reminiscences related by Maclean family members and their Seeley Lake cabin neighbors. There were film screenings of "A River Runs Through It," a tour of Maclean's favorite fishing holes and a stewardship tour of the Blackfoot River.

Sunday centered on discussions of Maclean's book "Young Men and Fire" supplemented by a tour of Mann Gulch where the fire that is the subject of the book took place in 1949 and a tour of the more recent Jocko fire area which threatened Seeley Lake in 2007. Interspersed throughout the day were tales from smoke jumpers and firefighters. Food offerings included a formal dinner on the Blackfoot River, box lunches from Double Arrow, an outdoor barbeque, as well as meals at restaurants throughout Seeley Lake.

Kerr was not the only one who found the festival offerings appealing. More than 200 people

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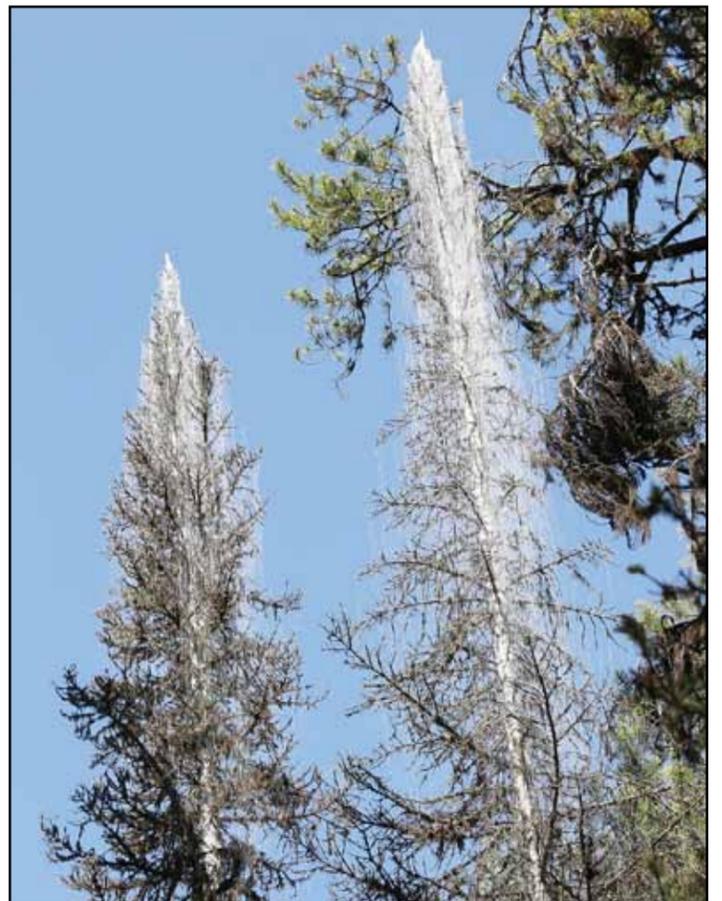


Photo by Nathan Bourne, *Pathfinder*

The tops of subalpine fir trees layered with silk from western spruce budworm. Photo taken June 25 on the trail to Morrell Falls.

Spruce Budworm Activity Catches Eyes

by Andi Bourne
Photos by Nathan Bourne
Pathfinder

Travel through dense spruce and fir stands this year in the Seeley-Swan and it is hard not to notice. The tops of conifers are covered in what appears to be cobwebs and needles are missing on the ends of the tree limbs and at the top. The main culprit is the western spruce budworm (WSBW) that eats new

growth from Douglas fir, true firs, spruce and larch.

WSBW defoliation increased across Montana from 596,000 acres affected in 2013, to just over 878,000 acres in 2014. The report for 2015 has not been released yet but entomologists believe that the hot dry weather has been a primary influence helping the budworm thrive. WSBW is the most

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Montana Governor Steve Bullock discussing the economic, conservation and literary impact of Norman Maclean.

Festival
(continued from pg. 1)

from Wisconsin, Georgia, Louisiana, New Jersey and a number of other states and Canada convened at the Double Arrow pavilion Saturday, July 11.

Montana Governor Steve Bullock gave the festival's inaugural address. He said, "In economy, conservation and writing, the impact of Norman Maclean has certainly been profound."

To explain the economic impact, the governor cited statistics which showed that the year following the publication of "A River Runs Through It," the fly fishing industry in Montana grew by 60 percent and by another 60 percent in the following year. He said that Montana has a population of roughly one million, but 11 million people visit annually.

Bullock added, "While there's no way to trace what role Norman played in that, it is indeed foundational. Folks don't come to Montana for shopping or for our Walmarts; they come to experience what we all experience through his writing."

Concerning Maclean's influence on conservation, Bullock said, "'A River Runs Through It' galvanized a love of the Blackfoot River and gave that love to a nation."

As to Maclean's impact on writing, Bullock said Maclean gave a whole generation of writers permission to embed their stories in place. The governor explained that place, in this context, encompasses more than scenic descriptions. He said, "Montana makes us who we are."

Keynote speaker Pete Dexter spoke of "A River Runs Through It" as a near-perfect book and said, "I wanted to be the guy who wrote it." He

added the "near" qualifier because he, personally, wondered whether the title might have made a better ending line than "I am haunted by waters." Nonetheless, Dexter said that "I am haunted by waters" is one of the two or three most famous endings in American literature of the last century.

Dexter was not the only one who expressed the desire to be able to write as well as Maclean had done in his signature works. And more than one scholar who has studied those works, or teachers who have taught them for years openly admitted, as did the editor of "The Norman Maclean



John Maclean, Norman's son, presented a slide show that included pictures of the cabin built on Seeley Lake in the early 1920s. The cabin is still used by Norman's children and grandchildren. It still has only a pit toilet and no hot water. John said, "We all love it dearly."

Reader" Alan Weltzien, "The best pages of Norman always bring me to tears."

As counterpoint to discussions of perfect and near perfect, the festival also brought speakers like Maclean's grandson Noah Snyder who knew his famous grandfather only as Moose. Only years later did he come to understand that his Moose belonged to all of Montana and beyond.

Comments from a number of random individuals indicate that the first In the Footsteps of Norman Maclean Festival was a success.

Alana and Mike Seaman came from South Carolina where Alana attends Clemson University. She is doing research for her Ph.D. dissertation on the relationship between literature and tourism. Having found the In the Footsteps of Norman Maclean Festival through an internet search, she added it to the list of literary festivals she is attending this summer. She was impressed with the "layers of history" the Seeley Lake festival covered and felt the organizers brought in top-notch speakers and captured the high points of Maclean's life.

John Monczka, a retired forester from Toronto, Canada, who was drawn to the festival because of his 30-year admiration for Maclean's work said, "It's been everything I had hoped and more. I've loved the personal stories that people have been willing to share. It is so nice to see Maclean in that light and from so many different facets of his life."

Although the festival would not have had as wide a scope without the cooperation of a number of Seeley Lake organizations and individuals, credit for conceiving the idea and carrying it to fruition goes to Alpine Artisans (AAI) and in particular to AAI Program Manager Jenny Rohrer.

"Alpine Artisans is looking forward to the 2016 Maclean Festival which will focus at least in part on the making of the movie, "A River Runs Through It," said Rohrer. "This festival is an incredibly positive 'brand' for Seeley Lake and all of Montana, and many of this year's visitors told us that they are planning on returning."



Chris Jewett handled the sale of Maclean books as well as the books of other speakers and panelists. The tent also served as a temporary gallery displaying the works of Alpine Artisans members.

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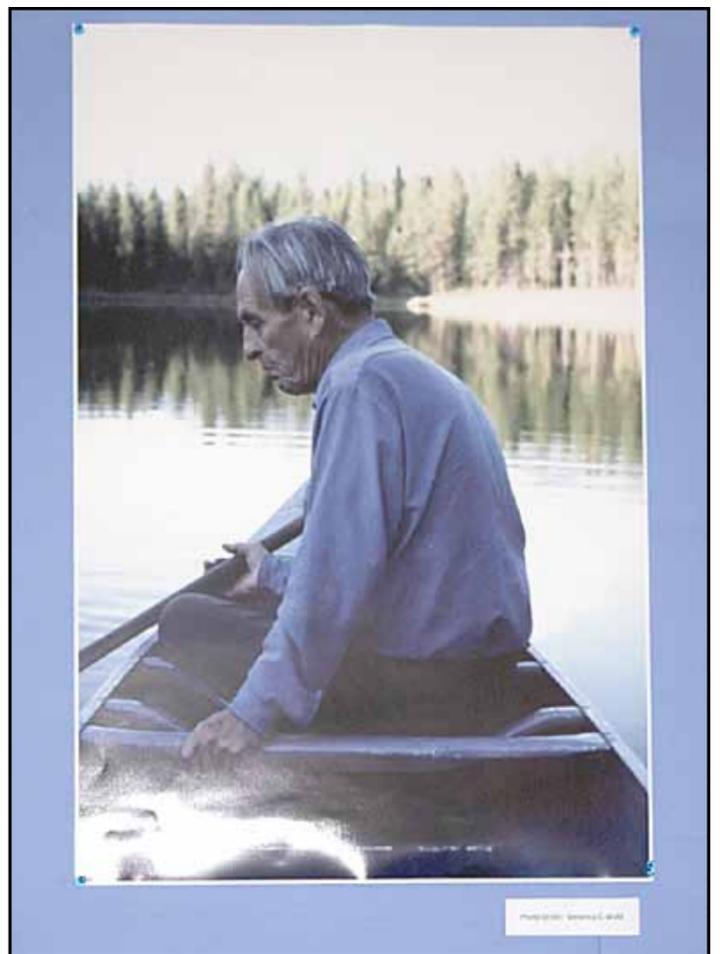
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Veronica Wald spoke of shooting this now widely distributed photo of Norman Maclean. Generally an accompanying caption describes Maclean as being in a contemplative mood. Wald revealed that actually he was turning to tell her that if she continued paddling the way she was, she would capsize their canoe.