

Seeley Swan  
**PATHFINDER**



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## Loon and Fish Festival Something For Everyone

By M. J. KOLEPP

Alpine Artisans hosted the 21st Annual Loon and Fish Festival, held Memorial Day weekend, at Seeley Lake Elementary School (SLE). Artist booths, educational exhibits, interactive demonstrations and musical performances filled the SLE gymnasium. The Backstage presentations, co-produced by Alpine Artisans and the Clearwater Resource Council, offered engaging arts and wildlife programs in the SLE multi-purpose room.



*Mike Strickland, of FWP, setting up the spotting scope for viewing the Summit Lake loon's nest.*



*Ella Corbally, from Helena, checking out the skulls display.*

All art mediums, including watercolor paintings, woodwork, photography and stained glass were just a sampling of the works on display and for purchase. Montana Trappers Association, in partnership with MT Fish Wildlife and Parks, presented a demonstration and exhibit of wildlife, tools and trapping.

Music was performed by local pianists Aiden Kloetzel, vocalist Sarai Grace and clarinetist Zach Blackburn. Jazz band Triple Sec featuring Bill Haffery, Edie Smith, Scott Milner and Carla Green also performed in the SLE Gymnasium.



*Triple Sec jazzing up the Loon & Fish Festival. Pictured left to right: Bill Haffery, Edie Smith, Carla Green, and Scott Milner.*

The Backstage programs were well attended and received. Carol White of Seeley Lake attended the Loon Presentation by Mike Strickland of Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and immediately volunteered to become a Loon Surveyor for the Common Loon Working Group. White said, "I love loons and now I can help monitor them twice a year."



*The Seeley-Swan Food Bank is ready for their annual soup fundraiser on Saturday at the Loon & Fish Festival.*



*Mariah Gladstone, of the Blackfeet Tribe, performing a Native Shawl fancy dance for the audience.*

Native storyteller, signer and dancer Mariah Gladstone, of the Blackfeet Tribe, demonstrated Native sign language while telling anecdotal stories. She then performed a Native Shawl fancy dance for the audience.

Sharon Lukomski of Missoula attended many of the Backstage presentations and all of the films. She said, "It is tremendous to learn about conservation, loons and wildlife. The group of films shown this year were outstanding and I would give them a four star rating." She was unable to decide which film was her favorite.

Additionally there were several opportunities for attendees to venture out with guided tours to the loon viewing station at Summit Lake, a bird walk at the Seeley Lake Ranger Station or a wildflower hike at the Holland Falls Trailhead.

Without a doubt everyone attending found something they especially liked. Seven-year-old Ella Corbally of Helena was no exception. She said, "The coolest thing here this year is the wolf skull."