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21st Century Yodeling Cowboy Entertains Packed House

Story and photos by Andi Bourne, Pathfinder

Wylie Gustafson with guitarist Sam Platts entertained a full house Jan. 26 at Seeley-Swan High School (SSHS). From cowboy lullabies to polka yodeling, the Wylie and Sam Duo had the audience singing along, tapping their toes and clapping their hands. Their concert closed out Winterfest 2014.

Gustafson is a Montana native, still ranching on the Quarter Horse Ranch near Conrad, Mont. He has been playing his own brand of cowboy country music for more than 20 years. He takes his song inspirations from cowboy poetry, experiences in the saddle and time under the Big Sky.

"I love to sing songs about Montana," said Gustafson. He said that one of his favorite things to do is put music behind old cowboy poems.

Young guitarist Platts played backup to Gustafson but was able to show off his picking ability while soloing. He said very little until half way through the show when he sang with a rich baritone voice, a contrast to Gustafson's high range.

The duo closed out the main concert with the Highline Polka. The song told of Gustafson as the local yodeling fool of Conrad, Mont. turned famous yodeler after the Yahoo! advertising campaign with his trademark "Yahooo-ooo!" Following the end of this song, the audience stood with applause to which Gustafson and Platts responded with just a few more.

The Wylie and Sam Duo were a part of the Alpine Artisans' 2 Valleys Stage 2013-2014 concert series. The next concert will be The Music and Influence of Alexander Siloti dual concert grand pianos with Steven Hesla and Barbara Blegen April 13, 3 p.m. at SSHS.



Wylie Gustafson onstage at SSHS, Jan. 26. He shared the story of his guitar. It was passed down through the generations starting with his great, great grandfathers until his father sold it to him for \$50. Sam Platts playing an electric guitar he built with his father.



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