

Crowsnest Pass makes the shortlist

By Joni MacFarlane, Editor, posted April 9, 2010

A book set partly in Crowsnest Pass has been shortlisted for the Alberta Readers' Choice Award, a new prize created to promote the work of Alberta authors and publishers.

"Fishing for Bacon" is the debut novel from Michael Davie, a coming-of-age romp about teenager Bacon Sobelowski.

Bacon has an absentee father, a neglectful mother and bad timing. All he wants is to find his special someone. The fun revolves around the novel's supporting cast of predatory women and sentimental old men.

Bacon lives in Bellevue with his mother and grandmother and the story follows him as he experiences the usual small-town angst and desperately pursues a series of hapless erotic adventures. These take Bacon from the Pass to Calgary to Waterton and back again to Bellevue.

While writer Davie is originally from Lethbridge, he spent much of his youth in Crowsnest Pass. It was his years in the small towns of the Rocky Mountains that most influenced his creative spirit. Davie's connections to the Pass are strong. A former illustrator, at one time he was the cartoonist for The Promoter.

According to Davie the Pass was the logical choice as a setting for the book for two reasons.

The first was a matter of familiarity.

"I spent all my summers hiking and camping in the Pass so I knew that it was perfectly catered to my character," said Davie. "A small town is somewhat removed and [Bacon] had to be sheltered from outside influences."

This may not have been as possible if the setting had been a big city, he said.

The second reason a small town was chosen was that it allowed Davie to explore a theme he knew well.

"There's a restlessness that comes out of youth," said Davie. "Usually when you're growing up in a small town, you can't wait to get out. You want to get out and experience things. After you do, you find things aren't as good as you thought. There are lots of reasons to come back."