

## “Missoula Filmmaking Duo Wins First Annual True/West Award”

By Dylan Tucker, 3-22-06, Newwest.net

Local filmmakers Doug Hawes-Davis and Dru Carr, creators of the award-winning documentary, “Libby, Montana,” have been awarded the first annual True/West Visionary Award for their unique contributions to the world of documentary filmmaking.

Hawes-Davis and Carr were chosen for the award because of the great effect the pair has had on documentary filmmaking in the West, said Michael Falter, director of the True/False West Film Festival.

The award will be presented at the first annual True/False West Film Festival in Bellingham, Wash. on April 23. The film festival is an offshoot of the True/False Film Festival held annually in Columbus, Mo. The festival is a yearly highlight for the town of Columbus, and has become a destination for documentary filmmakers eager to screen their work. Organizers hope that the Western addition will be a highlight for the Bellingham area, Falter said.

“Bellingham loves docs,” Falter said. “We expect a lively crowd for the films.”

Falter was excited to have the Missoula filmmakers be a part of the festival, which will focus on documentaries about subjects west of the Mississippi River. Falter said Hawes-Davis and Carr were particularly inspirational as filmmakers because of the way they tirelessly promote the medium of documentary film.

“Doug and Dru are such great examples for filmmakers,” Falter said. “It makes me tired just thinking of their careers.”

The partners not only direct and produce and distribute their own films, they organize the Big Sky Film Festival as well as contribute at the University of Montana.

The partners founded High Plains Films together in 1992, and brought the Big Sky Film Festival to Missoula in 2003. Their poignant films have brought them international attention and have garnered the pair more than 40 awards.

Their work, which includes “Libby, Montana” the powerful tale of the effect of asbestos mines on a small Montana town, shows the human side to the devastation of society on the natural world, and people’s relationships with the environment around them.

“There is a truly human angle to their work,” Falter said.

Hawes-Davis, who is finishing up “Caught In Headlights” for inclusion in the International Wildlife Film Festival in his hometown of Missoula, will travel to Bellingham for the True/False West festival to receive the award. While there, he will also serve on a panel discussing distribution of documentary film.

Hawes-Davis looked forward to participating in the discussions.

“We’ve been doing self-distribution for a long time,” he said. “It is a topic I’m really interested in because there is so much work being produced, and distribution hasn’t grown commensurate with the interest in documentary film.”

The Missoula filmmakers are currently working on three films, including a “dialog-free” history of wildlife management in America, which will focus largely on the history of the American Bison, and a biopic of Jim Stiles, the flamboyant western writer of “Brave New West.”