

'Fallen 7' judge tosses out prior crashes. Page 3

The Conway Daily Sun

TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2020

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The Conway Daily Sun
Daily Edition On Line

Climbing duo featured on TV tonight

By TOM EASTMAN
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

JACKSON — The network premiere

of "Lost on Everest," featuring local jour-
nalists/climbers Mark Synnott and Thom
Pollard, both of Jackson, will air on the

National Geographic channel (Channel 50

see **EVEREST** page 5



Madison firefighter Taffy Case (left) and Freedom Deputy Fire Chief Eric Seamans work on raking out a fire line at the pinch point where crews directed the flames after surrounding a forest fire near Durgin Pond off of Lead Mine Road in Madison on Sunday. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Lightning sparks 2 Madison fires

By DAYMOND STEER
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

MADISON — A pair of lightning

strikes kept area firefighters busy
Sunday afternoon. One strike burned
about an acre of woods off of Lead Mine

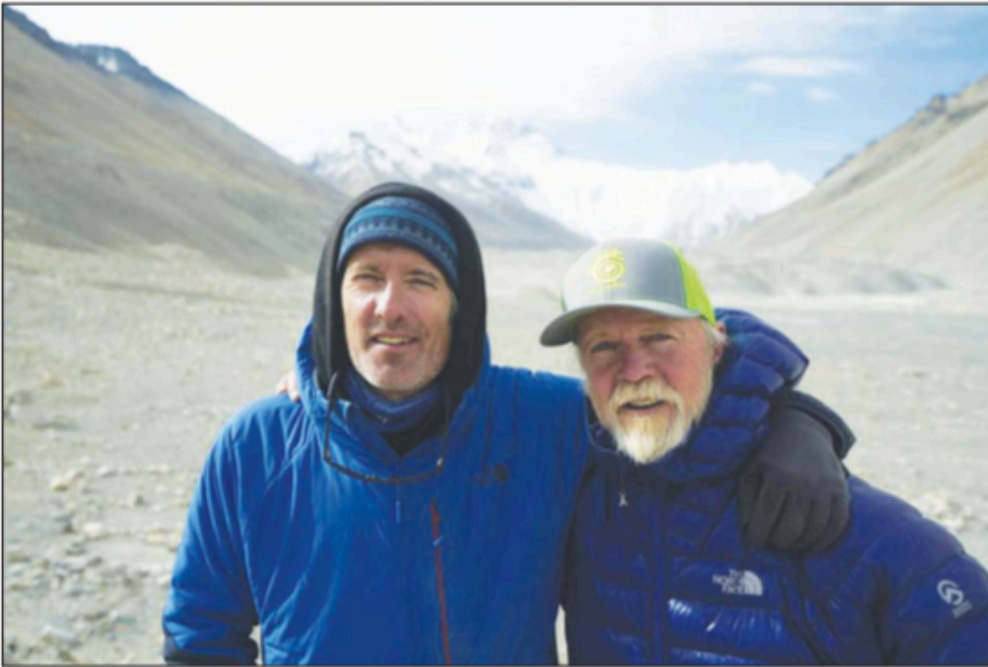
Road. The other damaged a rental home

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Mark Synnott (left) and Thom Pollard are shown leaving Everest Base Camp in spring 2019. The National Geographic Channel is airing "Lost on Everest" tonight at 9 p.m., a documentary about a mystery they tried to solve on the mountain. (COURTESY PHOTO)

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on Spectrum) tonight at 9 p.m.

The documentary chronicles their quest to scale the Tibetan north side of Everest in the spring of 2019. In it, the team tackles the age-old mystery of what happened to fabled British climbing pioneers George Mallory and Sandy Irvine, last seen on June 8, 1924, climbing toward the base of the summit pyramid.

Pollard said the film is "top of the charts," which is high praise coming from an Emmy award-winning documentary filmmaker.

"Lost on Everest" premiered at the Banff Film Festival about a month ago," he said. "People who saw it have been calling me saying they now get it about Everest; I have had people in their 80s telling me after seeing it that now they wished they had tried to climb it. It is a very, very, very good film — one of the most unusual films about Everest that has ever been made," said Pollard on Monday, who along with Synnott and several others in the expedition are key figures in the film directed by Renan Ozturk.

An article on the film also appears online in National Geographic (nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2020/07/our-team-climbed-everest-to-try-to-solve-its-greatest-mystery-feature).

It notes, "Our team climbed Everest to try and

solve its greatest mystery."

Pollard was part of a PBS "Nova" expedition that located Mallory's body in 1999. The award-winning photographer and filmmaker has been to Everest four times, summiting in 2016.

A feared medical condition kept him from reaching the summit last spring, but Synnott did achieve the feat, as Sun readers will recall ("Brotherly quest: Jackson climbers tackle Everest," July 5, 2019).

Synnott — author of the New York Times best-selling "Impossible Climb" about free-climbing sensation Alex Honnold — is currently working on a book about Everest. "The Third Pole" is scheduled for release in spring 2021.

The mystery concerning whether Mallory and Irvine fell after summiting or on their ascent is one of mountaineering's enduring mysteries.

In spring of 2018, after hearing Pollard speak on Everest at Fryeburg Academy's Leum Hill Eastman Center, Synnott began talking to him about going to Everest in pursuit of finding Irvine's remains and solving the mystery.

Although their expedition last year did not answer the question of what happened, that only adds to the tale's allure, they note.

"Although we would have loved to have solved

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Runner successfully crosses N.H.

By DAYMOND STEER
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

CONWAY — A clean-water advocate who had announced she was going to run across New Hampshire on Saturday as practice for a longer run across Maine in New Hampshire said it was a piece of cake.

Katie Spatz, 33, of South Portland, Maine started out at around 6:30 a.m. at the Vermont-New Hampshire border near Lancaster, and 11 hours, eight minutes later, she arrived at her finish point: the state line between Conway, and Fryeburg Maine.

Her 61-mile route took her through the White Mountain National Forest, and Conway.

"I loved it," said Spatz on Monday. "I thought it would take between 10 and 12, hours and it took 11. I thought the course was perfect."

Spatz said she stopped only to refill her hydration pack at a few gas stations.

At about halfway, the terrain shifted to downhill. "It was nice to know the hardest was behind me — it was supposed to rain and it didn't," said Spatz, adding it didn't get too hot, either. "So the weather and the conditions were perfect."

At about Mile 45 or 50, an ultra runner named Becky joined Spatz for about 6 miles, she said. People could watch her progress on social media because she was wearing a GPS tracker. Another highlight occurred when a deer crossed the road.

After completing her run, she walked to the State Line Store, where her car was parked and went home.

The course was like "trail running on a road" because of how beautiful it was, and how many parks she went through, Spatz said. "I feel really blessed to have had the opportunity to do that."

She said she was interested in running across New Hampshire because it would have hills, which will help her train for a 130-mile endurance challenge across Maine later this summer for the charity fundraising initiative Run4Water.

As part of that challenge, Spatz plans to run across



Katie Spatz of South Portland, Maine, said she had a great 61-mile run across New Hampshire on Saturday. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Maine on Sept. 5, hoping to become the first person to do so. The challenge will raise funds for non-profit Lifewater International in their global mission to ensure every child has safe water.

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it once and for all," said Pollard, "the fact that the mystery continues is good because it keeps people wondering. It gives people something to think and dream about — it draws people to the mountain, and what endures is the thought of people attempting to do things that they thought were impossible."

Synnott was sailing up the East Coast and thus was unavailable for comment this week, but he and Pollard tackle the questions of why people climb Everest and the baffling mystery of Mallory and Irvine in Pollard's "Baker Street with Thom Pollard" podcast, "The Day Everest Broke" (buzzsprout.

com/268133/4306604), which also talks of the notorious climbing traffic-jam day when more than nearly 300 people attempted to scale Everest in May 2019.

In the podcast, Synnott shares with Pollard his view that that people are always fascinated by stories about people trying overcome the impossible and how it especially relates to Everest, particularly in terms of the Mallory and Irvine mystery.

"That's still there. And that will just resonate with the ages. I think we know they probably didn't do it and know that no one is going to solve this and that will continue to resonate," said Synnott on the podcast.

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