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### UM holds first-year reading experience essay contest

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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Sept. 1, 2009

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**UM HOLDS FIRST-YEAR READING EXPERIENCE ESSAY CONTEST**

**MISSOULA —**

Each fall semester, The University of Montana sponsors a First-Year Reading Experience essay contest open only to entering UM students.

The competition aims to bring students new to the University together to read a selected book and discuss it at events that include campus visits by the author.

The 2009 First-Year Reading Experience book selection is “The Confessions of Max Tivoli” by UM alumnus Andrew Sean Greer.

The novel has garnered international critical acclaim for the beauty of its language, the richness of its historical detail and the heartbreaking nature of its storytelling. It encompasses themes related to aging, the body, memory, identity, love, and the commingling of joy and sorrow in human life.

Freshmen attending UM for the first time during fall semester 2009 are invited to enter the essay contest. A cash prize of \$250 will be awarded to the writer of the best, most compelling essay in each of two categories: the scholarly/analytical essay and the personal essay.

Essays should be 750 to 1,250 words. Students are limited to one entry in each category. The deadline for submitting essays is Monday, Nov. 16.

Guidelines and more details are on the First-Year Reading Experience Web site at <http://www.lib.umt.edu/firstyear/readingexperience.htm>.

Greer will be on campus Wednesday, Oct. 21, to speak at a seminar and lecture designed for those who have read the book. The seminar will begin at 2:10 p.m., and the lecture will take place at 7:30 p.m. Both events will be held in the University Theatre.

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