

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER



ARROW REAL ESTATE

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

- **FALL WEATHER** - September in the Madison Valley is a glorious time – it may be the BEST time of the year in Montana. The days have been warm and sunny with cool evenings and no wind. The crowds are gone and the fishing is good. What more could you want???



- **FISHING REPORT** – Fishing is still good but somewhat sporadic, according to the local guides. The Madison River is in good shape and summer weather is lingering longer than past years. Flows are hovering around 1000 cfs according to the fly shops. Serious dry fly fishing is slowing and they report that some nasty weather is needed to get the fish pumped up to chase streamers. Check out Dan Delekta's reports at <http://beartoothflyfishing.com/flyfishingreports/uppermadisonriver.htm>.



- **HEBGEN DAM UPDATE** – The malfunction that caused the dam at Hebgen Lake to increase flows by approximately 6 times normal rate in August of 2008 has been repaired by PPL. Since that incident, Madison County officials have been working to improve their emergency communication system. Within a week of the incident, the county had their Emergency Notification System (ENS) in place. Typically referred to as a “reverse 911” system, the ENS program calls all phone numbers in a selected area to notify residents of a potential emergency. Along with the ENS, Madison County now has a new website which is updated daily with basic information like weather forecasts and current emergency happenings like wildfires. The web address is <http://madison.homestead.com>.

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- **MOONLIGHT BASIN** at Big Sky is officially in foreclosure by Lehman Brothers Commercial Bank. This resort has been a boon to the Madison Valley, providing jobs, recreation and exposure for our area. Moonlight brought many new young people into the valley as they increased their projects and staff. They have been extremely generous with the community and we hope they will be able to weather this storm. Operations will continue and you can check their website for updates. <http://www.moonlightbasin.com/site/welcome.html>.

- **ENNIS, MONTANA** – This is one of the **Top Twenty Places to Live in the West**, according to American Cowboy Magazine. We agree and you can read all the reasons why at, <http://www.americancowboy.com/am09/Top-20-Places-to-Live-the-West/index2.php>.



- **GRAVELLY RANGE TOUR** – Every year around July 4th, a forest ranger from our local Ranger Station leads a group through the Gravelly Range to see all the beautiful wild flowers in bloom. Read this nice story about taking “grandma” on this year’s Wild Flower Tour. Check out the “Codger Tour of the Gravelly Range” (Outdoor Bozeman Magazine, Summer 2008)



<http://outsidebozeman.com/magazine.php?action=fullArticle&articleID=1119>.

- **FLY FISHING FESTIVAL** - The seventh annual Ennis on the Madison Fly Fishing Festival took place over Labor Day Weekend in downtown Ennis. After seven years, the fly fishing festival, which is the hallmark event of the Madison River Foundation, www.madisonriverfoundation.org, has become a notable event that people schedule their summers around and look forward to each year. The commercial fly fishing industry participates and supports the festival along with an army of local volunteers. This year the Madison County Economic Development Council auctioned off their 12 original trout sculptures that were painted by local artists.



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Their **Fish Out of Water Project** was a huge success and raised more than \$61,000 to be shared by local nonprofits, the artists and the Economic Development Council, www.madcoedc.org.

- **HUNTING** – The general season for big game begins Saturday, October 24th and hunters know that the kickoff in Ennis starts with the Hunters Feed and Chili



Cook Off on Friday afternoon. This is a very popular event with hunters, locals and visitors alike, as they bravely sample wild game dishes offered up all along Main Street. Be sure and come by Arrow Real Estate and taste Toni's winning Elk Chili. It has been voted #1 for nearly 10 years.

A new Montana law passed in 2009 makes non-resident full-time college students eligible for discounted big game combination licenses.

Qualifying students may purchase the \$70 licenses beginning September 14 at any MT FWP office. Another good reason to go to school in Montana!

- **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** – Sales are down and inventory is up, as it is in most parts of the country. Investors are sitting on the money that used to flow into our valley, awaiting improved financial markets. So there are bargains to be had. We are seeing some of the best home prices in years and good values in desirable vacant parcels. Arrow has been more active and more productive in September than we were the entire summer, but then we generally see more serious buyers in the fall. In past years, most people purchased vacant land so they could build their Montana dream home. Now there are more existing homes selling. MLS shows there are currently 404 parcels of vacant land listed for sale in the valley and 140 residential listings. Sales figures follow:

LAND: in 2006 – 101 lots sold; in 2007 – 59 lots sold (42% down); in 2008 – 49 lots sold (17% down); in 2009 to date – 7 lots have sold (86% down).

RESIDENTIAL: in 2006 – 45 homes sold; in 2007 – 71 homes sold (34% up); in 2008 – 41 homes sold (42% down); in 2009 to date – 15 homes have sold (63% down).

- **ARROW REAL ESTATE** – As a result of a focus group we held in June to help us plan our marketing program for the next year, we have been redesigning our website with the help of Little Apple Technologies in Bozeman. That new website will be ready for launch in late October. Visitors will find much more information and resources that will be helpful in their property research. Be sure and check it out.

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