

# MRR Newsletter

Madison River Ranch Association

Fall, 2011

## Happy Holidays

To you and your family!

## Fishing Report...

By Gene Welch

### Madison Trout and Temperature

This may be more about temperature and fish than many of you wanted to know. However, if you care about trout, especially in the Madison, here are some facts that will interest you...

*page 2*

## Cooking with Martha

By Martha Crawley

*page 2*

## Introducing...

Marv and Barbara Gibbs and Family

*page 4*

## For Sale!!

*page 8*

### Dave Crawley, MRR Safety Director:

- **Bear Safety**
- **Fire Safety**
- **Air Ambulance Service**
- **Mailboxes**

*pages 6, 7, and 8*

## From the President's Corner...

by Mike Wells



Welcome from beautiful southwestern Montana. Autumn is in full swing and painting another masterpiece in the Madison Valley. The seemingly endless variety of hues of green, gold, brown, red and gray in the grasses, willows and sage compliments the evergreen of the conifers that contrast with the fluorescent display of yellow, gold and orange aspen. The entire scene is topped off with snowcapped peaks and the bluest or grayest sky you will ever see and brought to maximum visual impact by the otherworldly sunlight at this special time of year. The animals and birds are beginning their migrations to winter homes and present daily opportunities for excitement and amazement. This past week I saw flocks of bluebirds all over the Ranch, a bugling 6X6 bull elk with a harem of 14 cows grazing and resting in the Nielsen's front yard for an entire afternoon and the next morning a 5X6 bull with 21 cows/calves on the Arms/Heiss lot. There are regular sightings of pronghorn, mule deer, raptors (various hawks, American Kestrels, golden and bald eagles, osprey), badgers, owls, foxes and more on the Ranch. There have also been occasional sightings of grizzly and black bears, mountain lions, wolves and coyotes. The Ranch is becoming a virtual wildlife refuge.

Please refer to the 2011 annual meeting minutes that Frank Davis so painstakingly and brilliantly compiles to keep your finger on the pulse of Ranch business and important issues. The highlight of the meeting for those that attended was most likely that it only lasted three hours! The following day the Annual Work Day was well attended. Those lending a hand cleaned up the common area, pulled weeds, removed old interior fences and much more. Special kudos to Ray Strickland and Dave Crawley for pulling miles of the old interior fence posts with Ray's tractor.

*continued, page 2*

## Mike Wells

*Continued from page 1*

Since the annual meeting, all of the regular Ranch maintenance has been satisfactorily completed. Roads were graded, weeds sprayed, log entries stained and fences and gates repaired. This summer we also sold our cattle guards that were removed in 2009 for a tidy sum, installed the new mailboxes at the highway (see page 8) and mowed the road easements which the fire chief had been requesting that we do for years to provide an additional firebreak and protection for the firefighters should they ever have to respond to a fire on the Ranch. We actually used to mow the easements annually in the "old" days. These 3 projects were all completed due to the extra effort and diligence of Dave Crawley.

There have been some complaints about the condition of the roads this year. The only sections that did not hold up well are Flatiron Trail from Madison Trail to Gravelly Trail and Gravelly Trail from Flatiron Trail to Hilgard Trail. All other roads are in excellent condition in my opinion. The sections of road that didn't hold up well this year are the most heavily used and abused. The timing of the road work in relation to the weather was not optimal this year due to conditions beyond our control and those heavily used sections didn't get a chance to settle before traffic took a major toll on them. We will pay extra attention to those sections next year. Also, if you and your family, friends, contractors, etc. can't/won't drive the suggested speed limit please don't complain about the condition of the roads.

Regarding the motion made and passed at the 2011 Annual Meeting that the annual dues be waived for lot 106 (lot with the community well). I met with Hans and Josie Thallmeyer (owners of lot 106) and I explained that to actually achieve the waiver of dues on lot 106 the association would have to amend the CCR's and the existing easement which would require a significant amount of labor, funds and an attorney. They stated that they did not want to have the association or its representatives suffer that burden and that they no longer want the dues on lot 106 waived and would send the dues payment ASAP. They also stated that being compensated financially was never the issue or their desire. Rather, they see what they think is an abuse of the probable original intent of the easement, and the right to use the well by certain

Association members as a nuisance.

Specifically the probable original intent was for filling small containers to accommodate members camping on their property or staying at their cabins for short periods of time, not to fill large containers for members to run their whole house and water their landscaping for extended periods of time; the containers used to haul water are getting larger and larger requiring more time to fill and more vehicle to haul them (they mentioned someone has pulled up with a flatbed trailer with 2 extremely large cisterns on it and sat there for one hour or more filling them); there are times when 2-3 vehicles are lined up waiting to pump water; people fill up at any time of day.

We as a community need to come up with some solutions to mitigate these nuisances. I offered again to plant trees to screen the well area that had previously been suggested by John Clark and Bill Hoolan. They said that they would appreciate that being done but that they didn't want association funds used to do it. I stated that the funds would come from and/or work be done by the people that use the well, the same as when the turnaround was installed. They agreed to those conditions. In my experience Hans and Josie can always be counted on to be good neighbors and community members.

FYI: The \$3 Ranch restored the old Cliff Lake schoolhouse this summer and it looks great (hopefully we can do the same with our common area buildings in the future); if you see cattle loose on the Ranch please contact Dave Crawley at 406-682-5348 not neighboring ranchers.

In closing I would like to encourage all MRR members to be good neighbors and community members. The few complaints I hear are due to people not knowing or not abiding by our rules and regulations. We come to this Ranch for as many different reasons as there are people here but none of us come here to be aggravated. Let's be considerate of our neighbors and conscientious of the ramifications of our actions.

Have a great winter!

*Mike Wells*



## The Montana Fishing Report

**Gene Welch**

*Continued from page 1*

I was surprised to learn about the extensive, ongoing temperature monitoring and fish kill prevention effort that is going on.

Temperature is probably the most important environmental variable that regulates reproduction, growth, survival and distribution of fish populations. Being poikilothermic (i.e., cold-blooded), a fish's body temperature varies with the ambient water temperature. As cold-water species, trout have thermal requirements that are lower than most other freshwater fish. There are species differences, but generally trout prefer temperature in the range of 53-65F, which is optimal for growth and activity. Above or below that range they will be much less active, which is of interest to fisher people. At higher temperature there is little or no energy left for growth after normal metabolic demands, so remaining active is not energy efficient - and they are smarter than that. Continuous exposure to about 75F for four days is usually lethal.

Temperature is extremely important in the Madison, because the river reaches maximums that exceed the usual preferred range in the upper river and lethal levels in the lower river downstream from Ennis Reservoir. Thermally caused fish kills have occurred in the lower river in the past. To manage river temperature and prevent a thermal fish kill in the lower river, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) continuously records water temperature at 15 sites throughout the river's length from April-October and air temperature at 7 sites. Operators of the two hydro dams have funded this work for the past 20 years - first by Montana Power and more recently PPL Montana as mandated by their FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) license.

Maximum river temperatures usually occur in late July and early August. Average maximum during the warmest 14-day period at three up-river sites in 2010 was 69F with only about 1F variation among the sites. The sites are at Kirby (upstream of the West Fork), Wall Creek and McAtee Bridge. The highest summer maximums averaged 71F for the three sites. So trout in the upper river were exposed to high temperatures well above their optimal range for an extended period in 2010, which was not the warmest summer in the past ten years; the summer maximums at the upriver sites in 2007 averaged 2F higher (73F).

*continued, page 5*

## Cooking with Martha

**Martha Crawley**

It's a beautiful October here at the ranch. We are enjoying the gorgeous golden Aspens, and until a couple of days ago (I am writing this on Oct. 6) it was warm enough to sit out on our screened porch. What a lovely summer it was after a slow start!

This recipe is fun to make, and the cookies are really good. We like to put ice cream between two of them for ice cream sandwiches, but they're delish plain too. The recipe comes from a favorite cookbook called The Best of Bainbridge, from Bainbridge Island near Seattle. It was put out by Island Children's Montessori School. I will give this to you as written, but be warned! It makes a TON (the name "Monster Cookies" refers to the batch size - you can make the cookies whatever size you want! In fact, I've never made a whole batch (I always do a half batch) because I don't have a bowl big enough.

### Monster Cookies

6 eggs, beaten  
 1 lb. brown sugar  
 2 cups white sugar  
 1 ½ tsp. vanilla  
 4 tsp. baking soda  
 1 Tbsp. Karo light syrup  
 1 ½ lb. peanut butter (I've made it with both crunchy and smooth, but I think it's best with smooth)  
 9 cups oatmeal  
 ½ lb. chocolate chips  
 ½ lb. M&M's

Combine all ingredients. Drop dough on an ungreased cookie sheet.\* Bake at 350F for 12 minutes.

\*I use the non-stick foil on my cookie sheet, so I can't vouch for whether or not they'll stick on an ungreased cookie sheet.

This is a fun and easy recipe for children to help with.

Enjoy this loveliest autumn.

## Introducing... the Marv and Barbara Gibbs Family

We, Marv and Barbara, had been coming to Montana every summer to visit Marv's aunt and uncle, Louise and Scottie Chapman, since we were first married 38 years ago. Scottie spent his entire career as a ranger in Yellowstone Park and introduced Marv to flyfishing when Marv was very young.



We had a dream that we wanted to buy land near a flyfishing stream someday! In 1992 we had opportunity to start our search for that dream. That summer on our trip home from Montana we stopped at several realtors in Bozeman and the employees at Yellowstone Basin Properties were the only realtors that were willing to show us property on a Sunday afternoon. Our daughters Summer and Ashley were 11 and 7 years old at the time and joined us on our walk about the properties on the Ranch. Initially we bought lot 52, but on the ride home the girls talked us into switching to lot 53 because they preferred the "rock" at the edge of the bench that they thought would make a great seat to watch the sunsets.

That first year we parked on the road and camped on the other side of the barbwire fence since there was no gate to get onto our property. The next year our friend, Dan, from Helena offered to help us put in a gate and begin construction of our cabin. It was a few years before we could actually sleep in the cabin instead of the tent. A person really appreciates the comfort of shelter after living in a tent through thunderstorms, freezing temperatures, windstorms and snow.

Every year we planned and completed a project to improve the cabin. As the girls became teenagers they informed us that driving to town once or twice a week for a shower was not acceptable. Imagine that! The shower went through many iterations; solar shower, hot man shower, portable streamside pump in a bucket

shower (all these were pre-water system and showering was a family activity that required help from someone other than the showerie). Finally Marv designed the cabin water system complete with hot water heater, pressure

pump and tank.

We had been fortunate to be able to spend at least three weeks as a family at the cabin every summer until daughter Summer started her graduate studies in Biomedical Engineering at Dartmouth College. Summer has completed her doctorate and is currently an Instructor at Harvard University. She married Mat Strauss in Teton National Park in June of 2007. Mat is a certified environmental engineer working in Boston.

Ashley is currently completing her doctorate in Biophysics at Harvard University; she believes she will finish in June of next year. We are happy to announce that Ashley will marry June 30 next year at Mount Sunapee Ski resort in New Hampshire. Ashley's fiancé Jon Bischof will complete his doctorate in Statistics from Harvard University shortly after they are married.

Our kids are far too busy to spend much time at the cabin these days although they treasure what time they can spend there. It gives us pleasure to know that our family built our cabin. We still plan and complete improvement projects every year though now Barbara and Marv work on these projects themselves.

We have been empty nesters for several years now; we filled the empty nest with our German Shorthair Pointer, Sage. She loves trips to the cabin where she hunts whistle pigs, helps us fly kites, but her favorite cabin activity, is the same as ours, fishing on the Madison River.

## Gene Welch

*continued from pg. 3*

Fortunately for the trout, summer clear nights in MT are cool causing substantially lower daily minimum water temperatures. The average daily minimum for the same 14-days was 57F at the three up-river sites in 2010. That represents a 12F difference between average maximum and average minimum, which was about the same as the average of daily differences. The low nighttime temperature allows the fish a respite from the stressful daytime highs. As a result, trout growth and survival are dependent on the daily average temperature, more than the daily maximum. The average daily median temperature, which is similar to the daily average, was 63F for the 14-day period - actually within the optimal range. This pattern is a clue to fisher people who wish to spend their time on the river when fish are most active. However, as we all know, action also depends on hatches.

Hebgen Reservoir also has a cooling effect on the river, because outflow is drawn from depth. Its outlet average daily median temperature during the warmest 15-day period in 2007 was 6F cooler than the inlet.

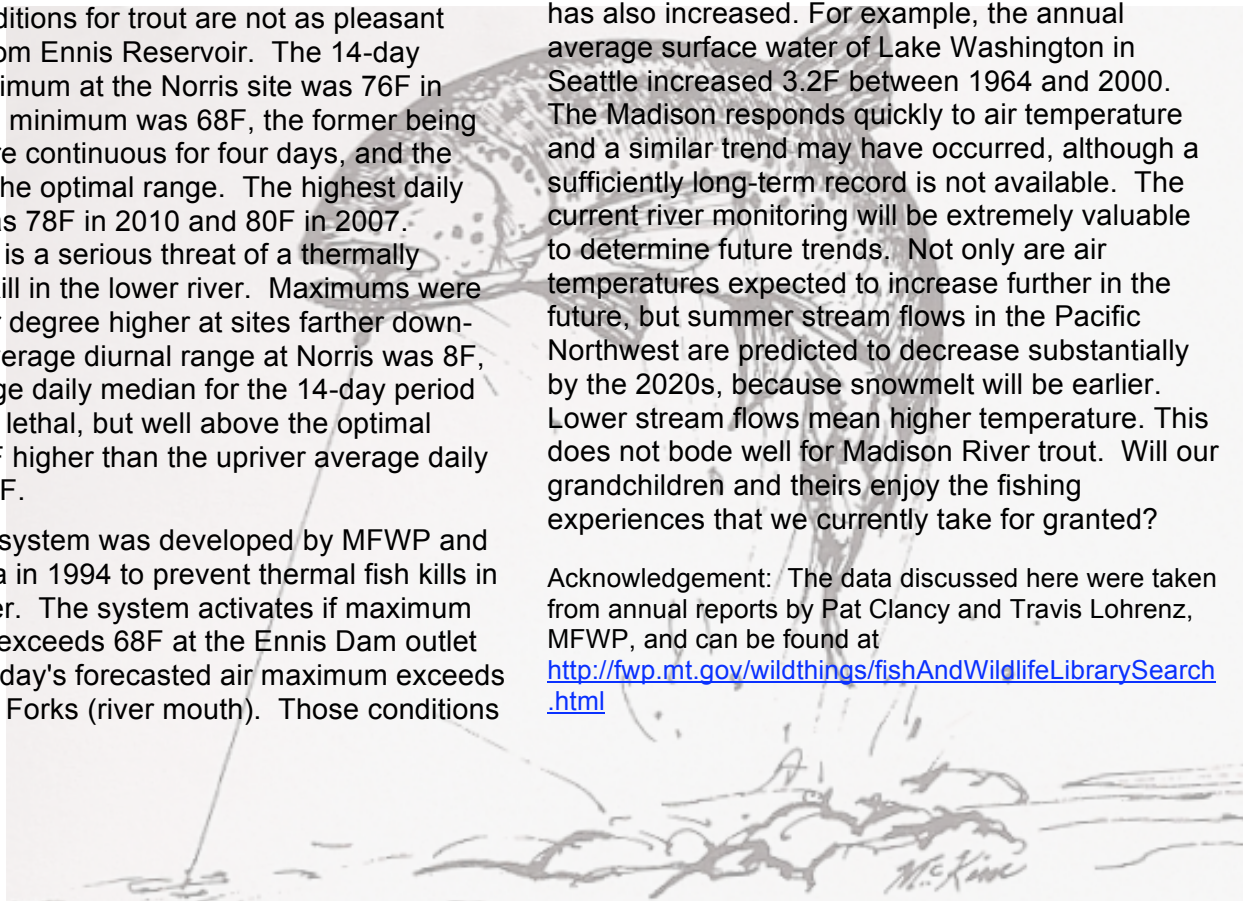
Thermal conditions for trout are not as pleasant down river from Ennis Reservoir. The 14-day average maximum at the Norris site was 76F in 2010 and the minimum was 68F, the former being lethal if it were continuous for four days, and the latter above the optimal range. The highest daily maximum was 78F in 2010 and 80F in 2007. Clearly there is a serious threat of a thermally caused fish kill in the lower river. Maximums were even another degree higher at sites farther down-river. The average diurnal range at Norris was 8F, so the average daily median for the 14-day period was 72F, not lethal, but well above the optimal range and 9F higher than the upriver average daily median of 63F.

A pulse-flow system was developed by MFWP and PPL Montana in 1994 to prevent thermal fish kills in the lower river. The system activates if maximum temperature exceeds 68F at the Ennis Dam outlet and the next day's forecasted air maximum exceeds 80F at Three Forks (river mouth). Those conditions

result in a pulse release of 1400 cfs (cubic feet/second) in early morning to cool the downstream reach by late afternoon. With incremental warming of the outlet up to 73F and next day predicted Three Forks air up to 95F, pulse releases will increase to as high as 2400 cfs. Pulse releases were needed each year from 2000 to 2007, but not in 2008-2010. Water is released from Hebgen Reservoir to replace the water loss from Ennis Reservoir. There were 29 to 43 pulse releases in 2000, 2003 and 2007, while 12-18 releases occurred during the other five summers. These releases drew down Hebgen 2.68 and 2.12 feet in 2003 and 2007, with lesser amounts the other years, during that 2000-2007 period. Fisher people in the upper Madison probably noticed flow increases at times during warm spells in those years.

Temperature conditions in the Madison are probably worse than in the past given that air temperature increased from 0.9 to 3.6F at nearly all of over a hundred monitoring sites in the Pacific Northwest during 1920 to 2000. Air temperature has also increased. For example, the annual average surface water of Lake Washington in Seattle increased 3.2F between 1964 and 2000. The Madison responds quickly to air temperature and a similar trend may have occurred, although a sufficiently long-term record is not available. The current river monitoring will be extremely valuable to determine future trends. Not only are air temperatures expected to increase further in the future, but summer stream flows in the Pacific Northwest are predicted to decrease substantially by the 2020s, because snowmelt will be earlier. Lower stream flows mean higher temperature. This does not bode well for Madison River trout. Will our grandchildren and theirs enjoy the fishing experiences that we currently take for granted?

Acknowledgement: The data discussed here were taken from annual reports by Pat Clancy and Travis Lohrenz, MFWP, and can be found at <http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/fishAndWildlifeLibrarySearch.html>



# Lions and Tigers and Bears - OH MY!

Dave Crawley, MRR Safety Director

Hi folks – I got drafted onto the board last spring to fill the board position vacated by Bill Hoolan who sold his home on the Madison River Ranch. I will be serving as an appointee until Bill's term expires next year when the position will be up for election. Mike Wells moved into Bill's actual position on the board and is serving as President. One of Mike's first official duties was to designate me as "Safety Director" of the ranch. You might wonder why we need a safety director – unless you happened to be on the ranch early in June when four (possibly five) DIFFERENT grizzly bears were spotted roaming through various tracts on the ranch.

So BEAR SAFETY for all residents will be one of my primary concerns. A second safety issue will be WILD FIRES and their prevention. In order to reduce the potential hazards associated with these two items, my focus will be on education. I plan to do this through occasional presentations by outside experts at our annual homeowners meeting, and through articles such as this in the MRR Newsletter.

**BEAR SAFETY** – The one most important thing that everyone on the ranch can do to prevent problems with bears (black bears or grizzly bears) is to store food and garbage properly – either inside a secure structure or in an approved and tested bear-resistant container. I'm sorry folks, but the Rubbermade garbage cans that I have seen standing outside some residences are a recipe for disaster (small pun here). Bear research has shown that just one exposure of a bear to human food or garbage can change that bear from a "good bear" to a "bad bear." Such exposure causes a bear to exhibit increasingly aggressive behavior that may eventually result in the bear actually breaking into a home to obtain food and/or resulting in an attack on a human. This "humanization" of bears in the Lake Tahoe area of California has led to many of the residents installing steel bars on the windows of their vacation homes. By all of us working together on this – along with our other neighbors in the valley, we can prevent that from happening here.

Our Madison River Ranch is within the Greater Yellowstone Eco System which has an estimated grizzly population today of about 600. This number is estimated to be increasing by about 4% per year.

The good news in all of this is that, so far, we have not yet created any problem bears. The ones we have seen have exhibited normal bear behavior and moved away from their human observers. This is the way we want them to behave. If we all follow the precautions I have outlined here and not become part of the bears' food chain, we can live peacefully with the bears in the Madison Valley.

## Bear Safety

- Store your garbage properly.
- Keep all food – including pet food – indoors or in an approved and tested bear-resistant container.
- No bird feeders (bird seed attracts bears).
- Clean barbecue drip pan and burn off residue after cooking on an outdoor grill.
- When you go for a walk – whether on one of the roads or in the woods – carry bear spray, walk in groups (four or more is safer), and make noise.
- If you encounter a bear, move slowly out of the area. Do not run or scream.

*Bear-resistant trash containers are available through "Humans and Carnivores," a non-profit organization based in the Madison Valley. There are a certain number of FREE containers available, although a contribution to the organization would be appreciated. Contact Steve Primm at (406) 600-9481 for information.*

**WILDFIRE SAFETY** – The Madison River Ranch is, and always has been, in an area of high wildfire danger. This is due to the large expanses of open grassland and sage accompanied by the frequent dry conditions of late summer and early fall. High winds are common in our area and, combined with frequent afternoon and evening thunderstorms, add significantly to the risk. Another factor is the adjacent national forest lands that now contain a significant percentage of trees weakened by insect infestation over the past several years.

*continued, pg. 7*

## Dave Crawley, continued

Obviously we have no control over nature, but we can prevent human-caused fires and we can take some action to prepare for a wildfire, protect our homes and other structures, and reduce the spread of a fire.

John Clark and I took a tour of the ranch in August with our South Madison Fire Chief, Scott McClintic. Scott applauded us for the mowing of the grass and sage along the road easement, which was in progress by a hired contractor at the time of his inspection. Madison Valley Fire Chief, Shawn Christensen, had urged us to do this on an annual basis so that, in the event of a wildfire, there would be a firebreak along the roads that would allow them to get their equipment in to fight the fire. So the mowing is something we will be doing annually. In addition, Scott suggested that we install a water tank on the ranch with a minimum capacity of 10,000 gallons for use by the initial unit dispatched to a fire. He said that this would enhance the ability of his fire department to control a fire immeasurably. The entire Board feels that this is a high priority item, and we are currently studying various types of tanks and will be obtaining bids for a tank and installation. We are hoping to do this by next spring, 2012.

I think for the most part you are all doing a great job of helping to keep our beautiful ranch safe. Keep up the good work so I don't have to put on a badge.

## Fire Safety Precautions

**As individual lot owners, there are some things we can all do to reduce the chance of a fire and to minimize damage and spread in the event of an actual fire.**

- No outdoor burning or campfires. Campfires are allowed on the ranch per the covenants if you have an approved fire ring and *running water*. HOWEVER, the fire department wants us to discourage campfires altogether, and requests that you contact them for a fire permit in the event you do plan to have any type of outdoor fire. The MRR Board of Directors agrees with these recommendations and discourages outdoor fires of any type. This summer there was a county burning ban in place for most of August and September due to the dry conditions and winds. The financial and legal liability incurred should a fire you started get out of control should be kept in mind.
- Establish a safe zone of at least one hundred feet around your house and other structures by removing vegetation (trees, brush, etc.) and keep grass closely mowed and watered within this zone.
- Monitor outdoor barbecues closely during cooking and make sure fire is out when finished.
- Have a properly charged fire extinguisher readily available in each building and especially near the kitchen in the home.
- Make sure all smoke detectors are installed according to the local building code requirements, change batteries annually, and test monthly.
- Report any fire immediately by calling 911. Do not assume you can control it yourself.

## Air Ambulance Service

Due to the remote location of our ranch and the long distance to any major medical facility, I would like to make all of you aware of an air ambulance service that is available to our area. It is Air Idaho Rescue (A.I.R.) affiliated with Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls.

For a fee of \$49.00 per family per year you may be a "member" of their service. Then, in the event of a severe illness or injury requiring air transportation, you will be entitled basically to a "free" ride. The company will then bill your insurance carrier, but will not charge you any deductible or co-pay. The program is called **OMNIAdvantage**. It's a good thing to do; Martha and I are subscribers.

It is my ultimate hope that none of you ever have to use this service, but for \$49 per year it is a "no-brainer."

For more information and an application for membership contact A.I.R. at **1-800-AIR-IDAHO (1-800-247-4324)** or visit the Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center web site:

<http://eirmc.com/our-services/emergency-trauma-flight-icu/air-idaho-rescue/programs/index.dot>

The OMNIAdvantage application for membership is available at:

<http://eirmc.com/dotAsset/37a4ea43-202c-482a-b833-1ced0fdc0113.pdf>

*Dave Crawley*



Volunteers enjoyed the barbeque after the June Work Party. We hope to see you there next summer!

**Mailboxes!**

There is a new locking mailbox unit installed at the junction of the Cliff/Wade Lake Road and U.S. Highway 287 for residents of the Madison River Ranch.

The installation was accomplished by a team of professionals that included Dave Crawley, Larry Oltheim, Ken Kandryszawtz, Roger Stommel, John and Jeremy Clark, and Paul and Sage Schirmer – all eager volunteers.

There are a total of 16 individual locking boxes. If you would like a box there is a one-time fee of \$110 per box to cover the cost of the box itself and the materials for installation (the labor was free – I just had to shoot a few rounds around their feet). See Dave Crawley - Lot 126 at 1 Dutchman Trail - for a key.

You will also need to go to the post office in Cameron to fill out a card with your box number and physical address. Your signature on this card is required before mail service will commence.

*Dave Crawley*



**MRR Association**

**Board of Directors:**

- Mike Wells, President
- John Clark, Treasurer/  
Vice President
- Frank Davis, Secretary
- Dave Crawley, Safety Director
- Paul Schirmer

Webmaster, Marv Gibbs

<http://www.madisonriverranch.org>

Newsletter Editor, Ann Costello

[noniann@gmail.com](mailto:noniann@gmail.com)

**Links**

<http://www.madisonriverranch.org>

**PLEASE**, if you haven't signed up for electronic delivery of the MRR Newsletter (in living color) go to the Madison River Ranch web site, click on the "**Contact Us**" tab, and sign in.

**For Sale...**

**400gal cistern** tank (can be transported on a pickup).  
Top fill, bottom outlet. \$100

**Whale Pump** also known as a bilge pump (see West Marine catalog).  
Great for transferring water if you do not have electric \$35.

**Pressure washer** (for washing clothes not your cabin) **and wringer**.  
For those with a pioneering spirit (necessary when the Ranch was just materializing). Check it out on Lehmans (non electric) catalog site. Originally \$230. This actually gets your clothes cleaner than a washing machine because pressure is the secret. It is for very small quantities. We could do work pants with this, and we kept two kids with clean clothes. \$100.

[406-581-7059](tel:406-581-7059) Paul Schirmer

Do you have items at MRR you'd like listed "For Sale"?  
Please send your information to [noniann@gmail.com](mailto:noniann@gmail.com)