

Welcome to summer in Montana



Chapter newsletter May 2021

First up ... Ennis - June 3-6, 2021

**Big Sky FMCA Rally
Ennis RV Village
Ennis, MT**

Hosts: Klaas and Johanna Kloosterhof

Thursday June 3

Arrive starting at noon

4:30 Happy Hour at the Clubhouse

Brings snacks or heavy horse d'oeuvres

Friday June 4

8:30 Continental breakfast

Your choice of activities for the day.

4 until 4:45 p.m. Happy Hour

5 p.m. Dinner at the Sportsman Lodge south of Ennis

Dinner choices will be emailed to you late May.

Saturday June 5

8:30 Continental breakfast

Again, your choice of activities for the day!

Love to see you back at **4:30** for Happy Hour

followed by a potluck dinner.

Sunday June 6

8:30 Continental breakfast

Departure before noon

Safe travels until next time!

Getting there

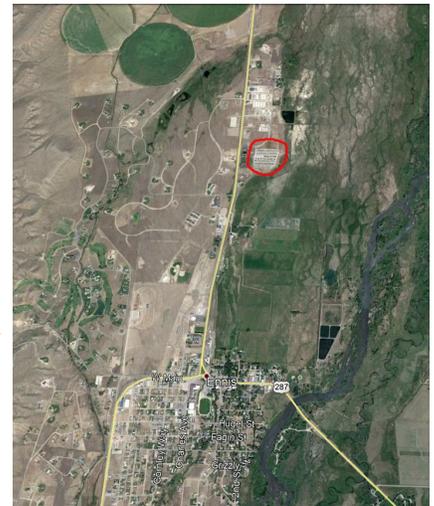
However you get to Ennis, know that the RV Park is on the north side of town east of U.S. Highway 287.

Their address is 15 Geyser Street, Ennis, MT 59729.

Look for the Ennis RV Village sign on the east side of the highway. The Madison Valley Rural Fire District Station is on the west side of the highway.

Turn east off of U.S. Highway 287 onto Geyser Street and proceed straight east to the RV office.

Here are the coordinates that will get you to the RV office: **45° 22' 02" N 111° 43' 40" W.**



President's message

As I look out my window, I can see my tulips blooming and robins chirping so I guess it must be spring. If spring is here, it must not be long before summer and FMCA rallies. It looks like the wagonmaster has set up some fun places to gather. Sealy Lake, Ennis and Fort Benton and Fort Peck.



I hope that you have gotten your rigs ready and are looking forward to seeing old friends and having good food. Enjoy your spring with all its beauty and see you soon.

*Donna Dehn
President*

Looking forward to Fort Benton — June 24-27, 2021

Hosts: Dennis & Carol Ogle
Chouteau County Fairgrounds
205 Fairgrounds Loop
(south city limits of Fort Benton)

There are twenty 30-amp spaces available. No water or sewer at sites. However, there is water and a dump available on the grounds. Please make reservation through me at dennis.carol.ogle@gmail.com. The Fairgrounds fee is \$22/night with Electric and the Rally Fee is \$20; both to be settled upon arrival. Checks to be made out to Big Sky FMCA.

Fort Benton's legendary Summer Celebration is being held June 25-27. This year's theme will celebrate Fort Benton's 175th Birthday. Enjoy the live entertainment, arts and crafts vendors and parade during the day to street dances and fireworks at night. A detailed schedule of events will be provided in your registration packet. Fort Benton, the birth-

place of Montana, is located on the banks of the Missouri River in the Golden Triangle of Central Montana. It is one of the oldest communities in Montana. Imagine the sight of a dozen steamboats docked along the levee. Established in 1846 as an American Fur Company Trading Post, it remains one of the prettiest little communities in the west today.

Getting there

Traveling on Hwy 87 at intersection Hwy 80 and 223 (Flashing light) take Hwy 80 into Fort Benton. Proceed to 13th Street (also Hwy 80), turn left on 13th, then go five blocks, turn right on Main Street and proceed straight to Fairgrounds entrance.

Questions: call 406-439-2242 or email dennis.carol.ogle@gmail.com

Things to see in historic Old Fort Benton

Levee Walk & Historic District 24 historical sites along the river

Including these highlights:

- **Grand Union Hotel** restored in the 1990's after years of neglect. It was built in 1882 and known for its elegance—the finest accommodation between Minneapolis and Seattle. It housed the rich and famous and was the heart of social life during the golden years.
- **Old Engine House** (1887) Fort Benton's first firehouse contains the original hand pumper that came upriver by steamboat
- **Old Fort Benton Bridge** (1888) was the first bridge to span the Missouri in Montana. The first span was a swing span to allow passage of the steamboats. The flood of 1908 collapsed the swing span. The present one was installed in 1927.
- **Mandan Replica** A keelboat that was used on the river prior to steamboats. The Mandan was built for the movie *The Big Sky*. The original Mandan's last voyage was in 1921.
- **Ruins of old Fort Benton** (1846). Only one bas-



tion is left of the original adobe fort, located inside the reconstructed fort.

- **Rider of the Purple Sage** was gifted to Fort Benton in 2007 by the George Montgomery Foundation for the Arts (Actor/Artist).
- **Shep's Memorial Statue.** After the memorial service commemorating the 50th anniversary of his passing in 1942, the renewed interest in Shep's story prompted the community to erect a tribute to their faithful mascot. He became famous when his story was featured in Ripley's *Believe it or Not*. Shep was buried on the bluffs above the railroad depot. Even today, you can visit this site marked by an obelisk and steel silhouette of Shep himself.

Museums

- **Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Interpretive Center** (Natural and cultural history of the Upper Missouri River)
- **Museum of the Upper Missouri** (Old Fort Tour, Star Gallery)
- **Museum of Northern Great Plains & Agricultural Center** (Homestead Village, Hornaday Gallery featuring Smithsonian Buffalo)

WAGONMASTER'S REPORT

Here's hoping that many of you are getting your rigs ready for the summer season. It should be a good one!

Our first rally will be at the Ennis RV Village in Ennis, MT June 3-6. So far, 18 couples have made reservations for the Ennis Rally.

If you haven't yet made a reservation, there may still be some sites available.

Call (406) 682-5272 or (866) 682-5272. Let them know you're with Big Sky FMCA. They give a discount for Good Sam members.



Here's a quick reminder of our other rallies this summer:

Fort Benton - June 24-27: Contact Dennis Ogle at carol.dennis.ogle@gmail.com to be put on his list.

Seeley Lake - July 20-23: Contact Sig Dehn at sigdehn@gmail.com or call/text (406) 581-3282 to get on my list.

Fort Peck - Aug. 19-22: Contact Dixie Teague at dixieormike@yahoo.com or call/text (406) 868-6711 for information.

*Sig Dehn, Wagonmaster
406-581-3282
sigdehn@gmail.com*

Planning for Fort Peck

It's time to start planning for our Fort Peck Rally in August.

The night we have planned for the Fort Peck Summer Theater is Friday, Aug 20 at 7:30 p.m. The play is "Terms of Endearment."

Book your seats at anytime online—the sooner the better! The ticket prices are \$23 and \$18. The website is: <https://www.fortpecktheatre.org/>

Of course this is an optional outing... it's your choice! We had a great time when we were there 4 years ago and the play was fabulous. We will have our potluck Friday before the theater and then caravan to the Playhouse.

Diane will be sending out an email at a later date regarding our dinner at the Gateway Restaurant on Saturday.

As of today we have 15 RV's coming. We are looking forward to seeing you all in Fort Peck!

*Your Co-Hosts
Mike & Dixie Teague
Loren & Diane Unrau*

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Hello everyone, this is a quick note from membership.

Please join me in welcoming our four new members to Montana Big Sky FMCA! They are Wayne & Rena Bucher (F517124) from Billings, Shaun & Jan Combs (F516511) from Huntley, Norman & Janet Mittleman (F141989) from Columbia Falls, and Mike & Trudie Spangler (F474171) from Hamilton.



It has been a pleasure to get to know a little about them and I am excited to meet them this summer.

Phyllis Viccione from Great Falls is another National FMCA Montanan interested in joining our group. I have extended an invitation for Phyllis to join us in Ennis to see if she would like to join.

As always, if you know someone who would like to join the chapter, send me some contact information and I can get ahold of them. Or get them a membership application form, attached to the last page of this newsletter.

Looking forward to seeing everyone again this summer! See you in Ennis!

*Linda Gibson, membership chairman
406-570-0882*

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

With the new camping season comes return of your Big Sky Chapter newsletter. First priority always is what you need to know for the upcoming rallies – everything from GPS coordinates and driving directions to the campground contacts and costs, how to make reservations, schedules, local sights and things to bring. But I also like to highlight the rallies just past.



One of the bright spots of past newsletters has been photos shared by members ... both from around the campground but also from activities away from the lineup of RVs. While you are out and about during this summer's rallies, get out the camera or cell phone and snap a few photos of members. Email them to me and I'll include them in the next newsletter.

*Bob Gibson, newsletter editor
bob@robertcgibson.com*

BIG SKY FMCA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____ FMCA # _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell#(Optional) _____

E-Mail(s) _____

Annual dues: \$15.00 plus one-time \$5 new-member sign-up fee

Badges \$12/pair (pin); \$15/pair (Magnetic) (Circle one)

Make checks out to Big Sky FMCA.

Multi-year memberships available. Circle: 1 yr 2 yr. 3 yr.

Total amount Enclosed \$ _____

Mail to:

Linda Gibson, Membership

2030 Greenbriar Road

Billings, MT 59105