

NOVEMBER 2020 • ISSUE 29

FINLEY POINT BREEZE

We get the Point!

Ric Smith | 406.471.0377

Sarah Beck | 406.261.0641

Ashlee Perry | 406.396.8329



Welcome to the fall edition of the Finley Point Breeze.

While I love this perfect fall weather, our summer was amazing. Countless long days on the lake, long perfect evenings, and the night sky was so brilliant. For a time in August, Neptune, Saturn and Pluto were visible and very close to each other. There is a great app called STARWALK. You can point your phone to the sky and it will identify planets, satellites, stars and constellations live...check it out!

The real estate market is literally crazy -- very strong demand with a shrinking inventory. Smith Team had many sales on the Point this year, and we thank all our clients and friends for their business. If you have ever thought of selling, please reach out to us. We are pleased to provide market data to help arrive at a price for your place.

Looking for a place? Ric, Sarah and Ashlee monitor the inventory throughout each day, every day. If you are looking for something let us know. We will find it. And, yes mortgage rates are at an historic low.

While there is lots of craziness in the world and country, we have much to be thankful for living where we are.

We Get The Point.

Ric Smith

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WHATS MY PLACE WORTH?

Great question...not an easy answer.

You probably know that there has been appreciation over the past half year. This is due to increased demand and diminishing inventory. When we are asked what a property is worth, we provide current market data on active and sold properties. Currently we only look at history from the past three months. (There have been times when we go back a year, but not right now.) Once we have a good picture of current market conditions, we like to have a discussion with the owner about their goals and can then help arrive at an offering price.

We have seen markets where sellers must price low due to the fact that there is so much competition and little demand. Smith Team believes that in our current market we can add in the range of 20% of what market data indicates.

How long will this last, who knows? Does anyone have a crystal ball?

Curious about your value? Reach out, we will help you arrive at a market value.

Comments on the roadways on Finley Point, Polson, Montana

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Last year the road off Highway 35 was vastly improved and a delight to drive on, but the improvements stopped after approximately 1/2 of a mile. The remaining sections of both North and South Finley Point Road as well as Finley Point Lane and all the smaller roads that come off of it are in dire condition despite some significant patch work which was done this summer.

The Board of Lake County Commissioners is considering a Rural Improvement District (RID) to help cover the cost of constructing a new road on the portions of road mentioned above that are in need of redoing. A petition will be circulated to the Homeowners for their approval in order to begin the process of forming the RID in coming months.

We need all the homeowners to get behind this petition. Please support the efforts to redo the roadways on Finley Point.

Here's to smooth sailing!

Bob Hardy



NEED YOUR GUTTER CLEANED?

"I truly love working outside around the house, doing projects etc...however there is one job I really can't stand and that is gutter cleaning."

Sound familiar? Solution found! Ric and Sarah's son, Russell, has started a gutter cleaning business. He will come take a look at your place and give you a bid. Russell is a junior at Washington State in Pullman, WA, studying business hospitality. Russell is attending school this year remotely while living in Polson. Give him a call for a bid to have your gutter cleaned.....406-471-2904

smithteam@century21bigsky.com smithteamflatheadlake.com

Ric Smith 406-471-0377 * Sarah Beck 406-261-0641 * Ashlee Perry 406-396-8329



Idaho artist Lisa Flowers Ross



Chicago-based artist Alice Hargrave

From Flathead Lake Bio Station: 2020 OpenAIR MT Fall Artists-in-Residence

We are excited to announce our 2020 OpenAIR MT Fall Artists-in-Residence! Boise, Idaho, artist Lisa Flowers Ross and Chicago, Illinois, artist Alice Hargrave arrived at the Bio Station on September 22, and will be spending five weeks on our campus creating their incredible artwork alongside our researchers. Please join us in welcoming these fantastic creative talents to FLBS!

Flathead Lakers

Working for clean water, healthy ecosystems, and a lasting quality of life in the Flathead Watershed

Whether your family has lived on Flathead Lake for generations, or you moved here this summer, I want to introduce you to the Flathead Lakers! While we may sound like the recent NBA Championship team or get confused with Kalispell's minor league baseball team, the Flathead Lakers have been working to protect the pristine waters of Flathead Lake since 1958.

The waters that you enjoyed swimming in, boating on, and fishing from this summer are free of phosphate detergents, invasive Zebra and Quagga Mussels, and other contaminants, thanks to the efforts of the Flathead Lakers. In addition to our advocacy work at the local and state levels, we educate students on the importance of a healthy watershed, assist lakeside property owners with advice from septic systems to native plants, and conserve natural areas on the North Shore to ensure we have clean water following into the lake.

Although our office is currently closed, due to Covid-19 precautions, we do encourage you to visit our mural depicting the natural and cultural history of the watershed, which was installed in September. We recently relocated to the Salish Building, in downtown Polson, along the lake front, and can be found at 110 Main St. (below Fiesta in Jalisco!).

Please reach out if you have questions about living on Flathead Lake, our work, or simply to introduce yourself! Our new website is flatheadlakers.org and I can be reached at 406.253.1583 or kate@flatheadlakers.org. Have a safe, enjoyable fall – it's my favorite season on the lake – and I look forward to meeting you!

Kate Sheridan, Executive Director

smithteam@century21bigsky.com smithteamflatheadlake.com

Ric Smith 406-471-0377 * Sarah Beck 406-261-0641 * Ashlee Perry 406-396-8329



facebook.com/smithteamflatheadlake



[smith_team_flathead_lake](https://www.instagram.com/smith_team_flathead_lake)

Buying a House: Tips for First-Time Homeowners and Investors

by Suzie Wilson
of happierhome.net

For first-time home buyers and real estate investors alike, buying a home can be a long and complicated process! If you're located in Western Montana, the reputable real estate agents at Century 21 Big Sky Real Estate can help you put an offer down on the perfect property and provide additional support if you're selling your current home, too. What else can you do to find the right home? Both investors and first-time buyers can benefit from following these tips.



Financial Tasks

Whether you're a first-time homebuyer or investment buyer, you'll need to determine what you can spend before you begin searching for properties. According to Money Under 30, first-time buyers should aim to purchase a home where their monthly mortgage payments will be less than 28 percent of their gross monthly income. Investment buyers will have to consider their potential return on investment in a particular area to come up with a reasonable figure.

Unless you plan to buy in cash, your next step is applying for a mortgage! Buyers can research a variety of available choices to find the right fit. Many first-time buyers will choose to apply for FHA loans, which have looser credit requirements and flexible down payment options. On the other hand, investment buyers should anticipate securing conventional loans, which offer lower interest rates and will allow them to avoid paying private mortgage insurance with down payments of over 20 percent.

Where to Buy?

As a first-time buyer, you might be trying to find an area with good local schools, pet-friendly parks, walkable communities, reliable public transport, or other factors. If you're an investor, your priorities might be a little different! Research locations where local industries are growing and attracting job seekers, causing the population to increase and spur higher demands for rentals.

If you're buying during a recession, prices in markets that were previously too expensive for you may be dropping slightly. However, this does not mean these areas won't still be desirable in the future. Feel free to look around at attractive neighborhoods where prices are beginning to decline!

smithteam@century21bigsky.com smithteamflatheadlake.com

*Ric Smith 406-471-0377 * Sarah Beck 406-261-0641 * Ashlee Perry 406-396-8329*



facebook.com/smithteamflatheadlake



smith_team_flathead_lake

The Right Real Estate Agent

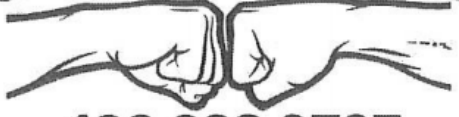
Trying to navigate the real estate market on your own can be challenging, which is why working with a knowledgeable real estate agent can make all the difference! First-time buyers should ask their loved ones who have recently bought homes about the agents they used and whether or not they were satisfied with their efforts. But not all agents specialize in working with investors, so investment buyers will need to look more carefully for someone who suits their needs! According to Millionacres, an effective investor-friendly agent will have a large professional network, long-term expertise on the local market, and fantastic negotiation skills.

Buying a Home "As Is"


During a recession, you will likely come across many foreclosures and "fixer uppers" on the market. Purchasing a home like this can be significantly cheaper than you expected, making it a particularly enticing option for investors - but is it worth the risks?

It's important to fully understand what you're agreeing to when you buy a home "as is." You will be the one responsible for addressing structural issues, a leaking roof, mildew and mold, and even pest infestations, not the seller. If you're tempted by the foreclosed homes and properties that need a little TLC appearing on the market in the midst of a recession, make sure to factor in the cost of repairs and remodeling. And if you'll be moving in, you'll also need to account for temporary, alternative accommodations.

Perhaps you're excited to get the keys to your first home or welcome your first tenants to your new rental. Either way, it pays to be an informed home buyer! With these tips, you'll be well-prepared to purchase a residential or investment property.

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*Ric Smith 406-471-0377 * Sarah Beck 406-261-0641 * Ashlee Perry 406-396-8329*

Curb Appeal

8 Ways to Make Your House Look Welcoming in Winter

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Put down that cup of tea, throw on a coat, and head outdoors to take a good look at your house from the street. In the weak light of November, do you see room for improvement? Here are 8 foolproof ways to add curb appeal and make your home look welcoming from now through winter:

1. Frame the Facade

Prune trees so their silhouettes frame the house instead of blocking it. The best time to prune most trees is when they're dormant; it's easier to see the structure and shape of a tree when it doesn't have leaves. When pruning, remove diseased or damaged branches first. Then prune for shape: remove low-hanging branches that obstruct views or hang over walkways or block access to driveways. Thin the crown to allow light and air circulation.

2. Glam up a Gate

Upgrade the latch on your gate. You know the one: it doesn't catch properly (hasn't for years, maybe) and it annoys you every time because the gate doesn't close unless you fiddle with it. Now is the perfect time to take care of this problem because there's not much else in the garden to distract you from the task.



3. DIY or Buy a Birdfeeder

Add a colorful bird feeder in your front yard. A well-placed feeder adds color and life to an otherwise gray landscape.



4. Add Handsome House Numbers

Replace house numbers. Is there an ugly font above your door? Chances are it's more noticeable—and annoying—during winter months when you're not distracted by other colors and textures in the garden.

5. How about a Small Tree?

This holiday season, buy an extra small Christmas tree (or two!) to place near the front door. You can wrap the bottom of the tree with some burlap or place it in a basket. If you have an electrical outlet nearby, add a string of lights.

6. Clear the Snow

Nothing makes a home look unkempt in the winter faster than snow that hasn't been cleared. Take the time to shovel the front walkway and shovel or use the snowblower on the driveway to keep paths clear and safe.

7. Try a Lantern

Hang a lantern on a post near your entryway or set one or two on the steps for a charming, welcoming look. Lanterns can be either hard-wired or battery-operated.

8. Get to painting

Break from the expected and go for a bold color on your front door. The pop of color may be just what your home needs during the depths of winter.

Also, consider sprucing up your mailbox for another fun pop of color.

smithteam@century21bigsky.com smithteamflatheadlake.com

*Ric Smith 406-471-0377 * Sarah Beck 406-261-0641 * Ashlee Perry 406-396-8329*



facebook.com/smithteamflatheadlake



[smith_team_flathead_lake](https://www.instagram.com/smith_team_flathead_lake)

Finley Point Market Data

There have been 18 Residential sales on Finley Point for 2020 as of October 15, 2020. Seven of the 18 residential sales were interior Finley Point lots or off-lake parcels on the Point.

Off-lake sold properties price and property details range from:

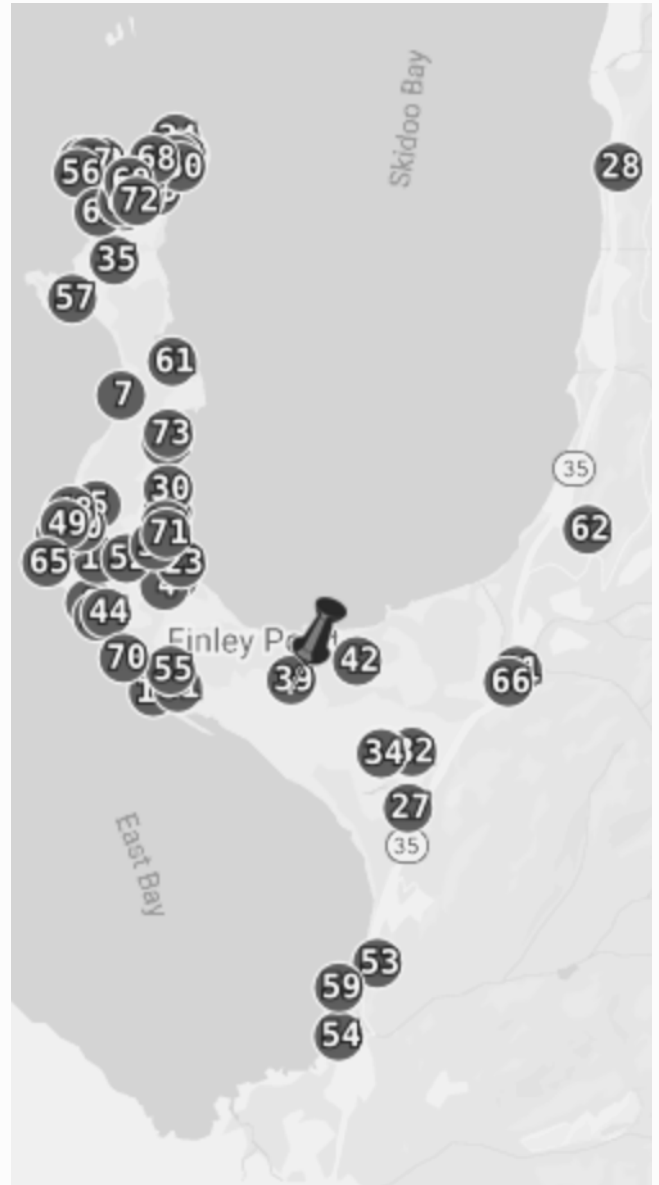
- \$240,000 - 1568 sqft home built in 1989 on a 1.64 acre Mellett Point lot with lake views and detached garage with attached studio
- \$400,000 - 1368 sqft home built in 2004 on 3.7 private interior acres off N. Finley Point with Skidoo Bay views
- \$623,000 - 2000 sqft home built in 2014 on 3.36 private interior acres in the Finley Point Estates

There were 11 Flathead lake sales on Finley Point. Lake sold properties price and property details range from:

- \$900,000 - 2730 sqft home built in 1990 with 1632 sqft guest house and 100' Flathead Lake Frontage near the tip of the point on the South Side
- \$1,575,000 - 3120 sqft exquisitely remodeled fairytale home with attached double garage. 94' Flathead Lake Frontage on Skidoo Bay
- \$2,558,000 - 3480 sqft brand new construction architectural masterpiece. 84' Flathead Lake Frontage on Skidoo Bay
- \$5,600,00 - 9410 sqft newly remodeled lavish home, 2000 sqft boat house, steel dock, pickle ball court, & cherry orchard. 330' Flathead Lake Frontage on Skidoo Bay

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facebook.com/smithteamflatheadlake



smith_team_flathead_lake



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SMITH TEAM REAL ESTATE
Century 21 Big Sky
119 Anchor Way
Polson, MT 59860



Or Current Resident

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Drop us an email at **sarah@century21bigsky.com** with their name and address, and we will happily add them to our mailing list. You may also include their phone number and email address for Century 21 Big Sky's monthly newsletter.

We never sell, share or show anyone our mailing list. It is for exclusive use.

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Finley Point Homeowners Association

Check out the local newspapers for upcoming events.

If you are intersted in joining, please fill out the form below and return to Barry Hansen, FPHA President.

Annual fee for Finley Point Property Owners Association membership is \$10.

Name:

Mailing Address:

Finley Point Address:

Mail form and \$10 to Barry Hansen, President, 33668 Lilac Hedge Lane, Polson, MT 59860.

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