

Gallatin River property sells for record \$4.25 million

By TED SULLIVAN Chronicle Staff Writer

Talk about a trophy home. A Connecticut couple with four children bought the most-expensive home ever sold in the Gallatin Valley last year, a \$4.25 million property on the Gallatin River along U.S. Highway 191.

The 1.5-acre lot has a 7,000-square-foot "river lodge" with four bedrooms, seven bathrooms, granite kitchen countertops, a threelevel deck and a wood staircase dropping down to the river.

It also has a second 4,000-square-foot "trout house," with four bedrooms, five bathrooms and an expansive riverside screened-in porch.

Both houses have wall-to-wall, ceiling-to-floor windows facing the rapids of the Gallatin River, with rocky cliffs and mountain peaks as the backdrop. The buyers, who work on Wall Street, also own a vacation home in Rhode Island. The "river lodge" will be for skiing. "We are selling a lifestyle," said Vivian Bridaham, owner of The Collection Sotheby's International Realty. She broke her own real-estate record when she sold the home. "This house makes you feel like you're on the river. It's all open to the outdoors," Bridaham said. "The biggest selling point is location. It's such a fascinating piece of river."

The property also comes with a Hollywood story.

A scene from the movie "A River Runs Through It" was shot in the river, right in front of the home.

"That's the rock Brad Pitt stood on," Bridaham said, pointing toward a rock sticking out of the water in front of the property.

Although it was the most expensive piece of property ever sold in the valley on the Multiple Listing Service, according to the Gallatin Association of Realtors, that does not include homes sold in Big Sky.

"You can see how dramatic this is," Bridaham said as she walked around the property, pointing out luxury amenities like water fountains, stone patios and custom log accents.

Despite national trends in home sales, the luxury real-estate market in Gallatin County shows no signs of slowing down. Eight homes in the valley sold for \$1.9 million or more in 2006, up from three in 2005, according to the Realtors association. Currently, 27 luxury properties are listed in Gallatin County, ranging in price from \$1.9 million to \$10 million, according to the Realtors association.

The most expensive property, priced at \$10 million, is located on 640 acres along Bridger Canyon Road and is surrounded by national forest at the base of the Bridger Mountains.

Ted Sullivan is at tsullivan@dailychronicle.com



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The deck of a home on property bought for \$4.25 million overlooks the banks of the Gallatin River along U.S. Highway 191.