

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER



## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for the month of JANUARY 2012

*Trout live in nice neighborhoods.*

- **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS” → HAPPY NEW YEAR!** The big news so far this year



has been the unusually mild weather. Not much else was happening except for clubs, committees, volunteering and recovering from the holidays. Skiers and snowmobilers are still awaiting more snow before they can start their winter season, in our area. Elk are happily grazing in the fields with little snow cover.

- **MADISON COUNTY → Big Sky, Livingston and MADISON COUNTY** are finalists for the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame. Our county may have just improved their chances for being selected after the historic Round Barn and acreage outside of Twin Bridges was donated for a potential site. → **Thirty Two Thousand Cows!** The Madison County Commissioners recently passed a resolution allowing for the formation of a **Livestock Protective Committee**. The board received a petition from local stock growers - 136 cattle owners in the county, who collectively own 32,458 cattle, offered their support for the petition, as did 17 of the counties sheep owners who own 847 sheep. The committee has the authority to impose a fee not to exceed 50 cents on all adult sheep and cattle in the county to be deposited into a special deputy fund. Commissioners said that both stock growers and sportsman alike would benefit because it gives the county the ability to fund a proactive management plan for the counties growing **wolf population**. The county says we don't get enough help from our state and federal partners as it relates to wolf management. Madison County Commissioner, Dave Schultz says, "We know that wolves are coming into the valley and starting to create problems." The committee will advise, assist and cooperate with the Montana Department of Livestock, county commissioners, the sheriff and all other public officials or police officers with duties pertaining to hide and brand inspection, apprehension and prevention livestock rustlers, enforcement of laws governing the movement and sale of livestock and other matters of interest and value to Madison County's livestock industry. Unlike other county boards, the committee will communicate with but act independently of the county commissioners as they decide how best utilize funds raised by the livestock fee. *So start counting your sheeeeeeep.....zzzzzz.*



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Don Bowen, Toni Bowen, Jay Willett, Karen Swedman

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → **One Million Montanans!** The state has finally surpassed 1 million people for the first time. Some Montanans are sorry to see the frontier days left behind but there are still a lot of empty spaces, with just 6 people per square mile, compared to the national average of nearly 80! → **Eight Hundred Wolves!** Wolf management continues to be a thorny topic in



Montana. Officials from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks spoke at a meeting of the Montana Environmental Quality Council and were criticized for the way they're handling wolf management in the state - spending wolf management money on administration rather than on collaring and killing wolves in response to livestock conflicts. The trouble is, like many federal agencies, Wildlife

Services has seen a cut in their operating funds. This has led to either a limitation in services when responding to wolf depredation incidents or more money out of the pockets of livestock producers to help the federal agency kill wolves suspected of killing livestock. FWP receives the vast majority of its funding from sportsmen, through state license sales, and a federal tax on various types of hunting equipment. Since the wolf issue impacts more than just sportsmen, maybe more state funding for Wildlife Services should come from the state legislature. But the fact is there are far more wolves in the state than was agreed to in the wolf management plan which said the state needed to carry a population of 150 wolves including 30 breeding pairs. Now some estimation has the wolf population in the state at about **800 wolves**, maybe more. The main concern for local livestock producers now, is the agency saddled with killing wolves causing problems for ranchers, doesn't have the money it needs to do the job. *Hence the need for the Madison County Livestock Protective Committee.*

➤ **FEBRUARY EVENTS** → More of the same, except snow is expected so let the fun begin!



➤ **HUNTING REPORT** → Right now, you **could** be hunting Bison, Beaver, Mountain Lion or Wolves in Montana. Check out the seasons and regulations at <http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting>.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → Montana FWP will host 4 public meetings in the upcoming months in the process of developing a recreation management plan for the Madison River. A draft management plan will be prepared and circulated for public comment. The goal of the plan is to help preserve the quality of the recreational experiences and protect natural resources along the Madison River, the most heavily fished river in the state. Visit <http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/management/madison/default.html> for more information on the Plan.



Check out fishing reports at:

- ✚ Kelly Galloup's Slide Inn at: <http://www.slideinn.com/blog/category/fishing-report/>.
- ✚ Dan Delekta's report at <http://beartoothflyfishing.com/flyfishingreports/uppermadisonriver.htm>.
- ✚ The Tackle Shop's Orvis report at [http://www.orvis.com/fishing\\_report.aspx?locationid=5974](http://www.orvis.com/fishing_report.aspx?locationid=5974)
- ✚ The Madison Valley Ranch at <http://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/blog/>
- ✚ Joe Dilschneider's Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatrout.com/>
- ✚ Madison River Fishing Company at: <http://www.mrfc.com/MadisonRiverMontanaFishing/MadisonRiverReport.aspx>.
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

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➤ **WEATHER** → “Winter” stopped by in November, but then it went somewhere else for most of December and even January. Everyone knows that it WILL come. But it was nice while it lasted. Moonlight Basin at Big Sky reports a base of 47” and more on the way. The statistics show the **January** temperatures in Ennis as: a high of **55°** and a low of **-5°**, with an average high of **35°** and an average low of **14°**. Our recorded **January** precipitation totaled **.52”**.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **Signs Pointing to a Real Estate Recovery**

1. **Job Market Improving** → More people will qualify for loans and be able to buy homes when they have jobs and feel secure in their future employment. They can take advantage of the bargains.
2. **Fewer FOR SALE Signs** → The profusion of real estate signs is dwindling in neighborhoods around the country. What you see today is more “normal.”
3. **Median Sales Prices Stabilized** → Prices seem to have found their equilibrium in most areas and there are fewer price reductions.
4. **Starter Homes are Selling Faster** → When the less expensive homes are absorbed, there will be increased demand for the higher priced homes that have not sold well the past few years.
5. **Businesses Reopening** → More people are feeling confident that the economy can support their small business and are taking risks.
6. **Wall Street is Stronger** → The Stock Market has been gaining and some major IPO’s are coming out, signaling high investor interest. Investors have regained some of their losses and now have the funds to invest in real estate.
7. **Interest Rates Remaining Low** → The Feds want to help the struggling housing market and plan to maintain lower interest rates to encourage borrowing.
8. **Fewer Foreclosures** → Banks are beginning to work with borrowers and homeowners are finding alternatives to foreclosure.
9. **Housing Inventory Shrinking** → The number of homes on the market and days on the market are finally headed down instead of up!
10. **Rents are Higher** → Supply and demand has caused rents to go up, making it more feasible to purchase versus renting.
11. **Housing Markets Improving** → The number of improving markets around the country is increasing. According to the Pending Home Sales Index compiled by the National Association of Realtors®, sales in all areas of the country are up from a year ago, except in the Northeast.

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → Washington, DC, January 25, 2012. **Pending Home Sales Decline in December, Remain Above a Year Ago.** After reaching a 19-month high, pending home sales eased in December but stayed above year-ago levels, according to the [National Association of Realtors®](#). The [Pending Home Sales Index](#) (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, declined 3.5% to 96.6 in December from 100.1 in November but is 5.6% above December 2010 when it was 91.5. The data reflects contracts but not closings. [Lawrence Yun](#), NAR chief economist, said the trend line remains positive. “Even with a modest decline, the preceding two months of contract activity are the highest in the past four years outside of the homebuyer tax credit period,” he said. “Contract failures remain an issue, reported by one-third of Realtors® over the past few months, but home buyers are not giving up.” Yun said some buyers successfully complete the sale after a contract delay, while others stay in the market after a contract failure and make another offer. “Housing affordability conditions are too good to pass up,” he said. “Our hope is lending conditions will gradually improve with sustained increases in closed existing-home sales.” The PHSI in the Northeast declined 3.1% to 74.7 in December and is 0.8% below a year ago. In the Midwest the index rose 4.0% to 95.3 and is 13.3% higher

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than Dec. 2010. Pending home sales in the South slipped 2.6% to an index of 101.1 in Dec but are 4.9% above a year ago. In the West the index fell 11% in Dec. to 107.9 but is 3.7% higher than Dec. 2010.

➤ **PROPERTY OF THE MONTH** → A rustic, custom-built home overlooking Historic Virginia City with incredible views. This “picture perfect” Montana home of 2,450 SF has 3 BR, 3 BA, family room & 2 kitchens – plenty of room for 2 families or one large family. Close to town for shopping and dining and Forest Service land for lots of outdoor activities. **\$339,000.** (MLS #181496) See details on our website at: <http://www.arrowreal.com/propDisplay.php?mlsID=181496>.



➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → We had quite a bit of activity in January – phone, walk-in’s and internet hits. It suggests that people are curious and still interested – even if they aren’t quite ready to buy. The winds are changing and we are looking forward to a year of hope and prosperity. The **Southwest Montana Multiple Listing** statistics for the Madison Valley (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall and Cardwell), for the month of **January 2012** are as follows:

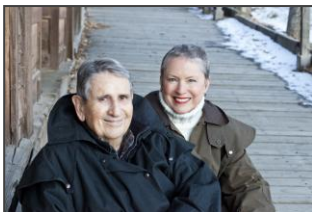
- **LAND: 325 vacant lots listed** (\$8,400 - \$2,490,000), **1 pending sale** (\$149,000), **1 lot sold in 2012** (\$125,000).
- **HOMES: 139 homes listed** (\$38,000 - \$3,250,000), **15 pending sales** (\$67,500 - \$1,500,000), **1 home sold in 2012** (\$245,870).
- **RANCHES: 7 listed** (\$949,000 - \$9,950,000), **0 pending sales, 0 ranches sold in 2012** (\$0)

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU’RE FROM MONTANA WHEN...** you have a lengthy telephone conversation with someone who dialed a wrong number! Even with a million people, Montana is still a “small town.”



➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → Montana has the largest grizzly bear population in the lower 48 states and has named the grizzly bear as their official state animal.

*Thanking you in advance for your personal referrals – they are the lifeblood of our business and the greatest compliment you can give us.*



**Toni and Don Bowen,  
Brokers/Owners, Arrow Real Estate**



**Holly Driskill, Office Manager/Sales Associate**



**Jay and Karen Willett  
Brokers, Arrow Real Estate  
also Property Managers and Owners of Apex Management**



**APEX MANAGEMENT** offers full service property management in the Madison Valley. Whether you are interested in using your home as a vacation or a long-term rental, or looking for assistance in finding a rental, you can expect quality service with a positive attitude. See our website at: [www.apexmontana.com](http://www.apexmontana.com) or call us at (406) 682-7112. Apex Management is **not** a part of Arrow Real Estate.

➤ **USEFUL WEBSITES TO REMEMBER**→

**ENNIS AND THE MADISON VALLEY:**

<http://www.ennismontana.org/> - for community and local government information

<http://www.ennischamber.com/> - The Ennis Chamber of Commerce website

<http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org> – The Madison Valley History Association website

<http://www.mvmedcenter.org> – for information about the Madison Valley Medical Center

<http://www.mvmcf.org> – the Madison Valley Medical Center Foundation website

<http://www.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website

<http://ennis.communityblogs.us/2008/11/17/ennis-community-blog/> - comments and events in Ennis

<http://adayinthelifeofalemon.blogspot.com/> - famous local sculptor, David Lemon's site

<http://my-montana-moments.blogspot.com/> - Artist Penny Hall's photo journal of her MT experience

<http://ennismontanahomesandland.blogspot.com> – Ennis, Montana Happenings, from **Arrow Real Estate**

**MADISON COUNTY:**

<http://madison.homestead.com/index.html> - for Madison County emergency news

<http://www.madison.mt.gov/> - Madison County Government website

<http://virginiacity.com> – Virginia City Chamber of Commerce

**NEWS:**

<http://www.madisoniannews.com/> - the latest news from the Madisonian newspaper for Madison Co.

<http://bozemandailychronicle.com/> - news from the big city of Bozeman, an hour northeast of Ennis

<http://www.mtstandard.com/> - news from historic Butte, an hour & ½ northwest of Ennis

**MONTANA:**

[www.fwp.mt.gov/](http://www.fwp.mt.gov/) - Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks website – for hunting and fishing regulations

<http://fwp.mt.gov/education/bow/> - “Becoming an Outdoors Woman” – a must for female newcomers!

<http://www.visitmt.com/> - Official website Montana Vacations, Recreation, Accommodations and Travel

<http://www.montanapictures.net> – for people homesick for Montana – a great visual connection

[http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis\\_list.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis_list.shtml) - State Highway Web Cams

**SKIING:**

[www.moonlightbasin.com](http://www.moonlightbasin.com) – Check out latest snow conditions on the hill at Big Sky

<http://www.lmranch.com/winter/> - Lone Mountain Ranch in Big Sky for cross country trails

[http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross\\_country\\_skiing.php](http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross_country_skiing.php) - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails

<http://www.madisonvalleyskiclub.org/> - local ski club with access to Big Sky

**HORSEBACK RIDING:**

[www.wolfpackoutfitters.com](http://www.wolfpackoutfitters.com) – trail riding guides for the Madison Valley

<http://www.sphinxmountainoutfitting.com> – trail riding and outfitting guides in the Madison Valley

**RANCHING:**

<http://www.madisonvalleyranchlands.org/> - working to keep the ranching way of life alive

**FISHING:**

<http://www.madisonriverfoundation.org> - The Madison River Foundation

<http://www.montanatu.org/> - Montana Trout Unlimited

**GOLFING:**

<http://www.madisonmeadowsgolfcourse.com> – Madison Meadows Golf Course in Ennis

**REAL ESTATE:**

[www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) – A wealth of resource information, local listings and a portal to the SW MT MLS

[www.houselogic.com](http://www.houselogic.com) – Helpful information from the National Association of Realtors

[www.trulia.com](http://www.trulia.com) – Search for homes for sale and sold, local information, and research

[www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com) – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

[www.homesandland.com](http://www.homesandland.com) – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

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