

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for MARCH 2020



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY MARCH "HAPPENINGS"** → Not much happened in March, as most scheduled events were cancelled and the gradual shutdown began. → The photo is downtown Ennis, March 2016. It is very eerie. → **The Madisonian** is offering free access to their on-line newspaper to everyone so you can keep up with the news. Go to: <http://www.madisoniannews.com/eedition>. → The valley has lost a legend with the passing of Dan Leadbetter, cowboy, champion roper, rancher, developer, great family man and a good friend to the Madison Valley. Dan and his wife Debbie owned the Valley Garden Ranch from the late 50's to 2008. He donated part of the VGR to help create the golf course. → Our Governor has just ordered **visitors to Montana to quarantine for 14 days**. So, be sure to make your travel plans, accordingly. There are currently just 4 cases in the Madison Valley, and we would like to see it stop right there.



<https://news.mt.gov/governor-bullock-directs-14-day-quarantine-for-travelers-arriving-in-montana-from-another-state-or-country>.

➤ **MADISON VALLEY APRIL "HAPPENINGS"** → Hopefully, everyone will be able to resume a somewhat normal life again. Most events scheduled for April have been cancelled, and it is still uncertain if our restaurants and bars will be open. But we can hope! At this point, we cannot predict what Ennis, Montana or the rest of the country will be doing, in the foreseeable future. As for now, our restaurants are providing "take out" plus Madison Foods and Demo's Meats always have lots of food! → You can still find: some snow for back country or crosscountry skiing, clear trails for biking/hiking/running/4-wheeling, open waters & hungry fish, lots of open space for shed and morel hunting, room on the river & lakes for floating and kyaking, and the golf course is open for play! All safe and healthy activities! SO much to do!

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → A cowgirl from Manhattan, Montana won the 300-mile horse race, in the exclusive "**Gacho Derby**," held in the Andes Mountains of Argentina in March. 5-14. → Montana is the "**oldest**" state west of the Mississippi, according to median age statistics from the US Census Bureau. With half of the state's population 40 or older, Montana is the 9th oldest in the nation. Births, deaths and migration contribute to an aging population. This trend affects health care services, work force, taxes, farming, churches, non-profits and the generations behind. Montana is on the forefront of this national trend, giving Montanans an opportunity to "**redesign how we live.**" Follow the 6-month series of stories and broadcasts at: <https://montanafreepress.org/series/graying-pains/>. NOTE: *My personal experience suggests that the Montana population is older because living here makes people happier and healthier which leads to a higher quality of life and longevity!*



ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729

Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana
(406) 682-4290 → www.arrowreal.com → www.eralandmark.com → arrow@3rivers.net. Don & Toni Bowen

➤ **FISHING REPORT → The Madison River Fishing Report.** How to write a fishing report during a global pandemic? Currently, the Madison Valley, like many areas of the country, is really lonely. Social distancing, travel restrictions, non-essential business closures and most of America out of work, makes for lonely times. I have faith our country will get past this enemy, still many small businesses will not, and the landscape of Main Street will look different.

This COVID-19 has taught me a few lessons. First, I am in this business for the people, number one. Yes, I do love fishing, but what I love more is teaching others, showing others our great state and sharing experiences with others. What I have learned is it was never about the fishing, but the people. We use fishing to make people happy and in turn that makes us happy. The fishing is just the vehicle for helping others. Without the people, the fishing is less important.

The second thing I have learned is that I have taken life way too seriously. Just a month ago I was king of the world, or so I thought. Things were rolling, spring was on its way and we were off to another great year. Bam, how quick things change. Now, my only thoughts are how to keep the Tackle Shop Family and friends healthy. I realize I should have taken the time to fish with those special people.

Many say, "Why don't you practice 'social distancing' on the river?" Sure, and lots of folks are doing just that while taking advantage of some damn good fishing. So, if you're already in Montana and want to fish, now is a darn good time. Those pesky guides and clients won't bother you, as they are not out here!

Spring nyming, Blue winged olive mayflies, skwala stone flies and midges will all be hatching this month. The fish are relatively uneducated after a long winter and slow spring, so far. Now is the time to get on the river and make it happen. Large rainbows are moving, browns are hungry and fishing guides are sitting on their hands. April is my favorite month to fish and what a great time to be an angler in the Madison Valley. While I would love to sell you the hot new skwala pattern or point out on a map where you should head, we are currently closed by Government Decree. Hopefully on the 10th we can open again and start making people happy. That will go a long way to making us happy, again! Happy Fishing and God Bless, *FishEnnis*, from John Way, Owner of **The Tackle Shop**, (<http://www.thetackleshop.com>) Ennis, Montana, the **CULTURAL EPICENTER OF TROUT**. (406) 682-4263, or cell: (406) 370-5206.



Check out other fishing reports at:

- ✚ Madison River Fishing Company at: <http://www.mrfc.com/MadisonRiverMontanaFishing/MadisonRiverReport.aspx>.
- ✚ Dan Delekta at <http://beartoothflyfishing.com/flyfishingreports/uppermadisonriver.htm>.
- ✚ The Madison Valley Ranch at <http://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/blog/>
- ✚ Joe Dilschneider's Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatroutrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729
Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana
(406) 682-4290 → www.arrowreal.com → www.eralandmark.com → arrow@3rivers.net. Don & Toni Bowen

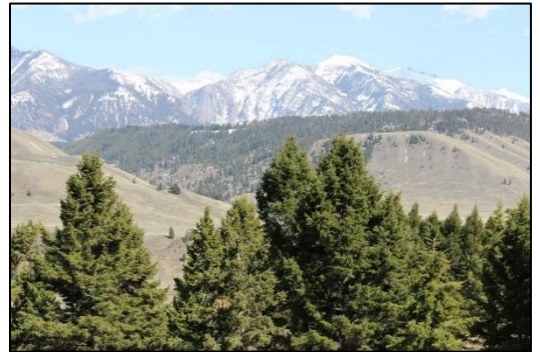
➤ **WEATHER** → March came in like a gentle lamb and went out like a lion cub! Soft, wet snow covered the ground on the last day of March, but nothing dramatic. The daytime high in March was **61°** and the low **21°**. The nighttime high was **40°** and the low **-2°**. The robins and blue birds are back, so it must be spring!

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **How the CORONA VIRUS AFFECTS REAL ESTATE.** There many things to consider that are new and different in our world today. And real estate has its own unique set of challenges. The NAR has provided us with an abundance of information, resources and guidance, for agents, buyers, sellers, lenders, as well as appraisers and inspectors. We are all faced with questions and situations we have never thought of before, such as:

- Sellers may not want any showings. How can you see the property?
- Buyers may not want to view homes in person. Will the seller allow video tours?
- Should buyers provide a COVID-19 screening questionnaire before being shown a home?
- Are there any risks or potential liability to showing a property to a buyer, virtually?
- Does the fact that someone had COVID-19 in the home create a stigmatized property, and if so, does it need to be disclosed?
- Will there be delayed closings due to the virus? Can closings all be done digitally?
- What about notarizing documents which are always required in person?
- Can Sellers or Buyers cancel a purchase agreement, after all contingencies are met, because of unique complications of the COVID-19 virus, without forfeiting earnest money?
- Will it be more difficult to obtain mortgages during the epidemic?
- Will mortgage approvals and underwriting be more complicated or delayed?

If you are buying or selling property, at this time, or considering either, discuss your questions with your Realtor and lender. Situations and/or regulations may change daily. **But the rates are great!!**

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL... Featured Property of the Month ... Imagine yourself "quarantined" in a mountain cabin of your dreams, overlooking the Madison River!** This premier lot of 6.9+ acres sits among the pines, in a gated community of 2,000 acres, where 1,600 of those acres are designated common area for the private use of property owners. The Sun West Ranch provides a Montana ranch lifestyle, along the banks of the Madison River, plus an equestrian center, riding and hiking trails, common wells, underground power, phone, satellite and abundance of privacy and natural "social distancing." Owners enjoy the services of ranch management and many other perks.



Sun West Ranch, Lot 16, \$275,000, MLS #220224. South Sun West Road, Cameron MT 59720. GoogleEarth Coordinates: 45.1924591°, -111.6788406°, elevation, 6,012'. Check out the Video Tour: <https://videos.era.com/lot-16-sun-west-ranch-cameron-mt-59720/MLS-220224>.

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (March 20, 2020) – Existing-home sales climbed substantially in February after a slight decline in January, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Of the four major regions, only the Northeast reported a drop in sales, while other areas saw increases, including sizable sales gains in the West. Total existing-home sales (completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops) rose 6.5% from January to a

seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.77 million in February. Additionally, for the eighth straight month, overall sales greatly increased year-over-year, up 7.2% from a year ago (5.38 million in February 2019).

“February’s sales of over 5 million homes were the strongest since February 2007,” said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist. *“I would attribute that to the incredibly low mortgage rates and the steady release of a sizable pent-up housing demand that was built over recent years.”*

The median existing-home price for all housing types in February was \$270,100, up 8.0% from February 2019 (\$250,100), as prices rose in every region. February’s price increase marks 96 straight months of year-over-year gains. Yun noted that February’s home sales were encouraging but not reflective of the current turmoil in the stock market or the significant hit the economy is expected to take because of the coronavirus and corresponding social quarantines. *“These figures show that housing was on a positive trajectory, but the coronavirus has undoubtedly slowed buyer traffic and it is difficult to predict what short-term effects the pandemic will have on future sales,”* Yun said.

Total housing inventory at the end of February totaled 1.47 million units, up 5.0% from January, but down 9.8% from one year ago (1.63 million). Unsold inventory sits at a 3.1-month supply at the current sales pace, equal to the supply recorded in January and down from the 3.6-month figure recorded in February 2019. Properties typically remained on the market for 36 days in February, seasonally down from 43 days in January, and down from 44 days in February 2019. Forty-seven percent of homes sold in February 2020 were on the market for less than a month.

“For the past couple of months, we have seen the number of buyers grow as more people enter the market,” Yun said. *“Once the social-distancing and quarantine measures are relaxed, we should see this temporary pause evaporate, and will have potential buyers return with the same enthusiasm.”* While offering a definitive forecast is extremely difficult, in light of this national and global emergency, Yun says home prices will hold on well. *“Unlike the stock market, home prices are not expected to drop because of the ongoing housing shortage and due to homes getting delisted during this time of crisis,”* he said.

According to Freddie Mac, the average commitment rate for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage decreased to 3.47% in February, down from 3.62% in January. The average commitment rate across all of 2019 was 3.94%.

Single-family home sales sat at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.17 million in February, up from 4.82 million in January, and up 7.3% from a year ago. The median existing single-family home price was \$272,400 in February, up 8.1% from February 2019.

Compared to the month prior, February sales increased in the Midwest, the South and the West, while year-over-year sales are up in each of the four regions. Median home prices in all regions increased from one year ago, with the Northeast and South regions showing the strongest price gains.

February 2020 existing-home sales:

> in the Northeast, fell 4.1%, recording an annual rate of 700,000, a 2.9% increase from a year ago. The median price in the Northeast was \$295,400, up 8.2% from February 2019.

> in the Midwest, increased 0.8% to an annual rate of 1.29 million, up 4.0% from a year ago. The median price in the Midwest was \$203,700, a 7.9% increase from February 2019.

> in the South, climbed 7.2% to an annual rate of 2.52 million in February, up 8.2% from the same time one year ago. The median price in the South was \$238,000, an 8.2% increase from a year ago.

ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729
Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana
(406) 682-4290 → www.arrowreal.com → www.eralandmark.com → arrow@3rivers.net. Don & Toni Bowen

> in the West, surged 18.9% to an annual rate of 1.26 million in February, an 11.5% increase from a year ago. The median price in the West was \$410,100, up 8.1% from February 2019.

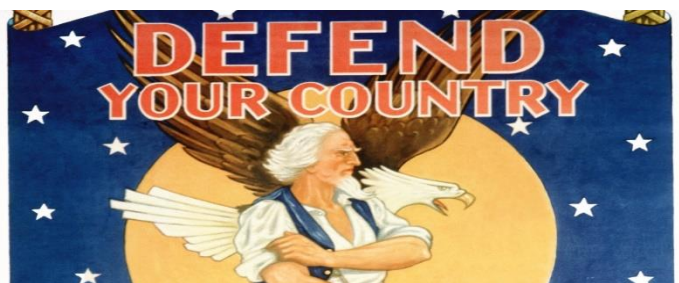
The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1.3 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → **This will be a March we will never forget!** Despite the ongoing volatility of the stock market and the unprecedented social changes we've experienced, we are seeing continued interest in our market. Land is a stable investment in uncertain times and clients view land as the ideal solution to **social distancing**. Right now, being in a place where the distance from your neighbor is measured in miles and not feet, sounds pretty good! So, we believe buyers will be looking at Montana as the place to be. **Real Estate services have been designated as "essential services" therefore we will be open for business but will be taking reasonable precautions. Big Sky Country Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall, and Cardwell), for the month of MARCH 2020, were as follows:**

- **HOMES:** 52↑ homes listed (\$75,000 to \$2,990,000); 19↑ pending sales (\$165,000 to \$1,395,000); and 11 homes have sold in 2020 (\$180,000 to \$828,900), totaling \$5,370,900 at 96.6% of list prices.
- **LAND:** 182↑ vacant lots listed (\$9,500 to \$2,200,000; with 7↓ pending sales (\$44,500 to \$249,900); and 21 lots have sold in 2020 (\$37,000 to \$505,000), totaling \$2,088,300 at 92.7% of list prices.
- **RANCHES:** 7 ranches listed (\$599,000 to \$15,900,000); 0 pending sales, and 1 ranch has sold in 2020 (\$4,000,000).
- **COMMERCIAL:** 13↓ listed (\$99,000 to \$950,000); 2 pending sales; and 0 commercial properties have sold in 2020.

"The best investment on Earth is earth." Louis J. Glickman, real estate mogul/philanthropist

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA...***Did you know ... that Montana has sent more than their share of citizens off to battle?* In the Spanish-American War, three times the original quota of soldiers allotted to Montana were mustered into service and left for the front. In World War I, Montana furnished the greatest number of men in proportion to its population to be sent to the front in France. The longest-serving Senate Majority Leader, **Mike Mansfield**, was the youngest soldier from Montana, in World War I. In World War II, Montana's "manpower" contribution is said to be 18% above the proportional average. Montana contributed even more soldiers to the Korean Conflict, the Gulf and Vietnam Wars. Montana is one of four states where the number of veterans, as a share of the adult population, exceeds 10%. MT Patriots.



***SEE YOU IN MONTANA! (eventually!)
Social Distancing Champions, since 1889!
Be not afraid.***

ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729
Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana
(406) 682-4290 → www.arrowreal.com → www.eralandmark.com → arrow@3rivers.net. Don & Toni Bowen

Our ERA Landmark Arrow Real Estate Team



Toni and Don Bowen, Broker Associates and Accredited Buyer Broker Representatives, with over 75 years of real estate experience, between them – covering residential, commercial, vacant land, recreational & ranch properties in the Madison Valley.

And our new office puppy, Finley!



Thank you in advance for your personal referrals. They are the lifeblood of our business and the greatest compliment you can give us.

*Debbie Reilly-Richardson
Office Administrator*



*WE'RE NOT JUST HERE TO MAKE A LIVING
---WE'RE HERE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!*



Looking East, down Main Street, Ennis around 1900

ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729
Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana
(406) 682-4290 → www.arrowreal.com → www.eralandmark.com → arrow@3rivers.net. Don & Toni Bowen

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.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website

<http://ennisarts.org/> - The Ennis Arts Association website for all artists!

<http://www.backroadtoyellowstone.com> – information for travelers about the route through our valley
MADISON COUNTY:

<https://madisoncountymt.gov/525/Emergency-Information> - 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/ - 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 - State Highway Web Cams

<http://montanakids.com/> - State website for all things KIDS in Montana

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/index.htm> - Yellowstone National Park – for all things Yellowstone Park

<https://www.facebook.com/Ennisrealestate?ref=hl> – Facebook page for ERA Landmark Arrow R. E.

SKIING:

<http://bigskyresort.com/> – Check out latest snow conditions & things to do 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 - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails

HORSEBACK RIDING:

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 – A wealth of resource information, local listings and a portal to the Big Sky MLS

www.eralandmark.com – Our Main Office website, covering Bozeman, Livingston, Big Sky & Ennis

<http://www.realtor.com/> - The world’s #1 Real Estate website. The source for all properties on MLS

www.houselogic.com – Helpful information from the National Association of Realtors

www.homesandland.com – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729

Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana

(406) 682-4290 → www.arrowreal.com → www.eralandmark.com → arrow@3rivers.net. Don & Toni Bowen