

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for FEBRUARY 2020



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



- **MADISON VALLEY FEBRUARY "HAPPENINGS"** → The Ennis Lions Club hosted a **Poker Tournament** fundraiser. → There was a **Chautauqua** at the Elling House Arts & Humanities Center in Virginia City. → Fishing enthusiasts gathered at Willie's Distillery on Wednesday evenings for "**Bugs & Bourbon**," a fun fly-tying workshop. → **Antler Designs** sold, and the store is being remodeled with something new and exciting coming soon. → **Ennis Big Sky Airport** received \$5.58 million from the FAA to improve its infrastructure. Construction to begin in April 2020. It is a big economic boost for Madison County! → There is a **new vacation rental agency** in town, called **Headwaters Hosting**. Check them out at: <https://www.headwaters.host/>.



- **MADISON VALLEY MARCH "HAPPENINGS"** → You can attend a **Chatauqua** at the Elling House. → Attend the St. Paddy's Dinner at the Elks Lodge in Virginia City. → Support the **Bear Creek Schoolhouse Fundraiser Dinner** on March 6 at the Blue Moon Saloon Café in Cameron. → Join the **Pinochle Card Parties** at the Bear Creek Schoolhouse at 6 PM every Saturday in March. → **Madison Valley Ranch** is again hosting their **Wine Pairing Dinners**. Call for reservations. <https://madisonvalleyranch.com/>. → Submit your entry by April 1st, (*the deadline for application to participate in the juried Ennis Art Show show sponsored by the Ennis Arts Association*), to be held on August 1st. <http://ennisarts.org/>. → There are lots of events happening in **Big Sky**, [bigskyresort.com/events](http://bigskyresort.com/events). → A gang of volunteers keep the **Ice Rink** open in VC for free skating with skates to borrow. → You can still find live music at **Willie's Distillery**, **Blue Moon Saloon**, **Pony Bar**, **Norris Hot Springs (Water of the Gods)**, and the **Gravel Bar**, great shopping and dining, plus first-rate movies at the Madison Theatre and fun at the Bowling Alley! And there are several **gyms and fitness classes** in the area if you want to stay in shape!



- **MONTANA NEWS** → Two Montana women will be competing in the exclusive "**Gaicho Derby**" to be held in the Andes Mountains of Argentina March 5-14. This an extreme horse race produced by a group called The Adventurists and limited to 20 people from around the world! Follow them at: <https://www.theadventurists.com/adventures/gaicho-derby/>. → Montana State lawmakers are considering a state-wide **sales tax** and revising property and income taxes. They are also considering going to **Annual legislative sessions** instead of meeting just every two years.



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➤ **FISHING REPORT** → **The Madison River Fishing Report.** March has arrived and with it, the start to a new season. March is a funny month. It is both described as a lion and a lamb as well as having the luck of the Irish. March can go one of several ways. If it behaves like last year, March was full on winter, all the time -with minus 20-degree temps, snow almost every day, the river so froze it was flowing over the highway and no end in sight. Most times March is not that way. Is it still winter? Absolutely, and we hope the snow train keeps rolling along, at least in the mountains. By the end of the month (or even by the lucky Irish holiday), things will start to change. Like the lucky four-leaf clover, spring starts to emerge. The snow departs from the valley floor and a few sunny days in the 50's gets Ennis residents wearing the short sleeves and flip flops. It is also the official start to our season. The rainbows on their ancient journey start to leave the lake for the annual migration to spawn. The ice banks melt in the welcome sun and fisherman get anxious to hit the river.

With the start of the spawning season, pink flies start to dominate. For a while, it's the ***I do not care what you fish, as long as it is pink phase.*** Eggs, worms, pink P-tails, Pink turds or even pink hooks---just fish it. Remember these fish are hot and have not been fished to in several months. Tippet is more like rope and hook sizes can go larger. Streamer fishing also starts to heat up this month. Remember the water is cold so they will not chase like they do in the fall. Slow and deep is the name of the game. We like olive sculpins as well as black in the spring.



We will see the first hatches of the year this month, that are not midges. Blue Winged Olives will show themselves, sometime. If you find the four-leaf clover, look for rising fish on cloudy, warm no-wind days. Usually BWO's like a little moisture as well, so throw in some spitting rain or snow and you're really in luck. March is a great time to get out and fish and knock the rust off from a long winter. Not many folks are around fishing as long as Big Sky has epic powder days, so you might be lonely. I will be the guy wearing flip flops and short sleeves.

The start of the season is also a good time to go over gear and make sure you are set for the upcoming season. Remember to check your fly line. A new line will make casting a breeze and mending easier. Any cracks in the line and it is time to replace it. A fly line will only last and produce well for one or two seasons. Come by the store for a good deal on a new line, some hot coffee and a story or two. We are also running our **Spring on the Madison Guide Trip Special.** This is a full-day trip for two anglers, a hot lunch riverside, all the gear you may need and a good time for only \$400. Less than the price of a half day, later in the season. Come see why our guides think spring is the best time to fish the Madison! Look for our new podcast, **The Montana Fly Fishing Podcast.** 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/>

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Joe Dilschneider's Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatrout.com/>

Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **WEATHER** → February was not so bad! Our average high for February is 39° and the low is 15°. But **this** February daytime high was **51°** and daytime low at **22°**. Nighttime high was **34°** with the low of **-1°**. The snow on the ground, in the valley, is melting. But more snow will be coming!

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **the NEW AMERICAN HOME!**

The National Association of Realtors® reports that a model home was unveiled at January's International Builders' Show in Las Vegas that reflects the most technologically advanced methods of achieving energy efficiency, using the latest in construction and design standards.



This model home is a 6,428 SF, 5-BR home, but studies show that the average home size continues to decrease, and the current average is 2,520 SF. The industry is trying to meet the demands of the entry-level home buyer. New trends include efficient lighting, programmable thermostat and Energy Star-rated appliances. Read the entire article and see the slideshow, at:

[https://magazine.realtor/technology/feature/article/2020/02/a-vision-for-the-greenest-homes-ever?AdobeAnalytics=ed\\_rid%3D10739%26om\\_mid%3D2093%7CMembersEdgeNews\\_2020\\_2\\_27\\_Agents%26om\\_ntype%3DMEMBER%27S%20EDGE%20%28news%29](https://magazine.realtor/technology/feature/article/2020/02/a-vision-for-the-greenest-homes-ever?AdobeAnalytics=ed_rid%3D10739%26om_mid%3D2093%7CMembersEdgeNews_2020_2_27_Agents%26om_ntype%3DMEMBER%27S%20EDGE%20%28news%29)

The NAHB also highlighted home design trends coming in the future, such as:

- Colorful kitchens incorporating aqua, dark woods, and new colored textures
- Crisp colors paired with warm woods
- Expansive, large-format windows
- High-quality signature front entries and improved streetscapes
- Nontraditional storage solutions. Instead of cabinetry, designers are opting for shelving, both as a storage solution and a design element
- Seamless indoor and outdoor connections.
- Increased use of mixed metals, materials, and textures, including wallpaper, to add depth to designs.
- Wood detailing to create texture.

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL... Featured Property of the Month ...** Wide open spaces and



fabulous views from this 20-acre parcel, about 15 miles south of Ennis. Lot 31 is a premium lot on a dead-end road, bordering a large ranch property with no public access, making this a very private spot. The 360° views are spectacular, looking east towards Sphinx Mountain in the Madison Range and west towards the Gravelly Range. The property has underground power & phone, year-around access. It is strategically located in the middle of the Madison Valley, close to great hunting, fishing and all kinds of recreational opportunities. Lots of elbow room, peace & quiet, and natural beauty. A great place to build your Montana dream home. **Lonesome Dove Ranch, Lot 31,**

Sec. 35. **\$119,500.** MLS# 342639. GoogleEarth Coordinates: 45.177150°, -111.697043°, elevation, 5,430'.

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➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (February 27, 2020) – Pending home sales rebounded in January, ticking up following a decline in December, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Only the West region reported a minor drop in month-over-month contract activity, while the other three major regions each saw pending home sales grow. Year-over-year pending home sales activity was up in all four regions and thus up nationally compared to one year ago. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI),\* [www.nar.realtor/pending-home-sales](http://www.nar.realtor/pending-home-sales), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, grew 5.2% to 108.8 in January. Year-over-year contract signings increased 5.7%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.

*“This month’s solid activity – the second-highest monthly figure in over two years – is due to the good economic backdrop and exceptionally low mortgage rates,”* said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist. *“We are still lacking in inventory,”* he said, noting December’s and January’s combined supply was at the lowest level since 1999. *“Inventory availability will be the key to consistent future gains.”*

Pointing to data from active listings at realtor.com®, Yun says the year-over-year increases show a strong desire for homeownership. Markets drawing some of the most significant buyer attention include Fort Wayne, Ind.; San Francisco, Calif.; Sacramento, Calif.; Lafayette, Ind.; and San Jose, Calif.

*“With housing starts hovering at 1.6 million in December and January, along with the favorable mortgage rates, among other factors, 2020 has so far presented a very positive sales climate,”* Yun said. *“Moreover, the latest stock market correction could provide exceptional, even lower mortgage rates for a few weeks, and that would help bring about a noticeable upturn in the coming months.”*

The Northeast PHSI rose 1.3% to 92.9 in January, 1.2% higher than a year ago. In the Midwest, the index increased 7.3% to 105.3 last month, 6.5% higher than in January 2019. Pending home sales in the South grew 8.7% to an index of 129.4 in January, a 7.1% increase from January 2019. The index in the West declined 1.1% in January 2020 to 92.6, still a jump of 5.5% from a year ago.

*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 was the busiest February we have EVER experienced! Someone must have opened the gates! Inventory down, demand up. **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 **FEBRUARY 2020**, were as follows:

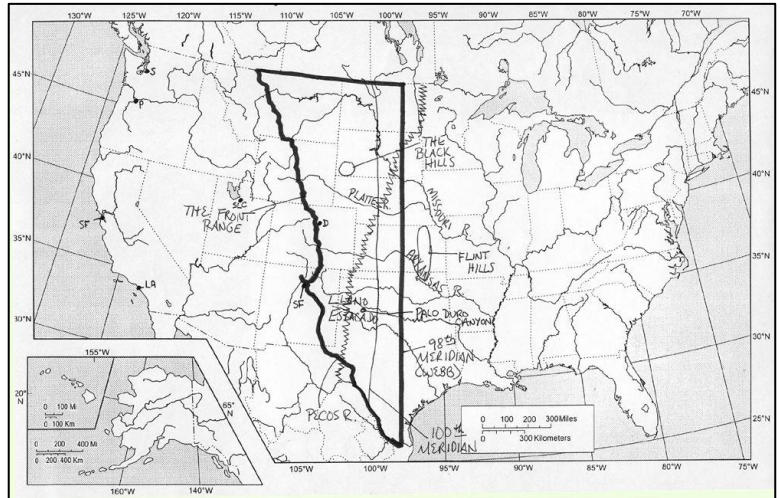
- **HOMES:** 50↓ homes listed (\$75,000 to \$2,990,000); 14 pending sales (\$165,000 to \$1,395,000); and 7 homes have sold in 2020 (\$355,000 to \$828,900), totaling \$3,901,900 at 96.6% of list prices.
- **LAND:** 179 vacant lots listed (\$9,500 to \$2,200,000; with 9↑ pending sales (\$39,900 to \$185,000); and 13 lots have sold in 2020 (\$42,500 to \$505,000), totaling \$1,641,500 at 92.9% 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:** 14 listed (\$99,000 to \$950,000); 0 pending sales; and 0 commercial properties have sold in 2020.

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

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➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA...Did you know... that Montana was once included in the "Great American Desert"?** The desert included parts of Montana, North & South Dakota, Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. It was described by early surveyors as being *"almost wholly unfit for cultivation and uninhabitable by a people depending upon agriculture for their subsistence."* This "Desert" now raises timber, livestock, wool, grain and oil to supply the entire United States, with enough left over to send a sizeable amount to Europe! The area is now usually referred to as the High Plains, and the original term is now sometimes used to describe the arid region of North American, which includes parts of NW Mexico and the American southwest. We showed them!!



**SEE YOU IN MONTANA! Be not afraid.**

**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!*

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## 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/](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

<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](http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross_country_skiing.php) - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails

### 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 Big Sky MLS

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

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

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