

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for FEBRUARY 2021



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY FEBRUARY “NON-HAPPENINGS”** → Again, no cancellations, as nothing much was scheduled. But there is news to report. → The **Ennis Ambulance Service** has graduated from a volunteer-staffed service to a Medical Center team of professionals, to keep up with the growing need of the community. Just more good news from the Madison Valley Hospital, which is doing a great job of administering record numbers of vaccinations. You can see lots of your friends and neighbors at the **Covid vaccine clinic!** → Snowpack percentages declined during the warm and dry January but should be approaching normal after all the February snowfall. But it also increased the **avalanche hazard** to “*Considerable.*” → Conditions were perfect to cause the Madison River to **GORGE** once again! It was a sight to behold. It is a fascinating phenomenon. → The **Madison Theatre** has reopened and showing films, once again! Hooray! → There are yoga and dance classes happening at the River Studio in Ennis. → Proposals for three new developments have been presented to the Ennis Town Council for condos and multi-family units in the **North Forty subdivision**, behind the Sportsman’s Lodge. → Not much else happened in February!



➤ **MADISON VALLEY MARCH “HAPPENINGS”** → The **McAllister Inn** will be reopening after a month-long vacation! → **Hunting and fishing license** year begins on March 1. The deadline to apply for deer & elk permits is April 1. Go to <https://fwp.mt.gov/> and click on **BUY & APPLY**. → The Madison Valley Weed Committee is asking for **photographs** for their 2021 calendar, featuring scenic photos and pictures of noxious weeds, in the Madison Valley watershed. Contact mvgweeds@gmail.com for more info. Deadline is March 15. → Remember, **Daylight Savings Time** begins at 2 AM on Sunday, March 14 – turn clocks forward one hour. → The famous **St. Patrick’s Day Parade** in Butte has been **cancelled** once again, but you can check it out on their FB page, at: <https://www.facebook.com/The-annual-St-Patricks-Day-festivities-in-Butte-MT-185783291454565/>. → You can still find fun at the **Bowling Alley**, the restaurants and bars and shops are still open and there is a wide open world of winter recreation out there.



➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Montana may expand **wolf hunting** but may also limit certain species to once-in-a-lifetime. → **Southwest Airlines** is coming to Montana! Starting May 27, they will have 2 daily flights each way from Denver and Las Vegas to Bozeman, with fares starting at \$39! On June 6th, flights will increase to 4 flights a day. → Montana lawmakers endorsed a **Concealed Carry Bill**, allowing guns in public buildings.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → March is a month of transition, here in the Madison Valley. Winter is still hanging on, but everyone knows spring is on the way. In fact, any month that has a holiday that revolves around drinking good Irish whiskey is OK with me. If you look out on the landscape, rebirth is starting to show up. The ranch lots are full of excited new calves. These calves are the “canary in the coal mine” for the entire valley. When we see as many calves as cows, spring is not far off!

The Madison River really wakes up this month. Trout that have been dormant for months get hungry and active. As soon as the water bumps up in temps, even a little, the fish get active. Imagine not eating anything more than grains of rice for months and now you’re hungry for some real food. Snicker bars to the rescue! While most of the fishing this month will be sub-surface, it can be very good. The rainbows start the spawning run and all at once larger chunks of protein are in the river. Do not overlook the egg flies. A guy can still get away with fishing rope. No need for the fine tippets, this time of year. 2X is king of spring.



You will need a new fishing license at the start of the month. Stop by the store and we will get you all hooked up on your adult play card for another year. The river gorged from Ennis Lake up to just above Town. The Valley Garden and Town access are closed and will be for quite some time. Think mid-May before they open up. Bummer, as it will mess up our spring fishing. We like floating down to Town or Valley, this time of year.

Stop by the store and check out what we have done over the winter – a complete rearrangement of the store space! Lots more room for great products, out-of-work fishing guides, and conversation. Come take a peek. We also launched a new website, complete with a new e-commerce platform. Shop for your favorite gear and even book your guide trips, all from the comfort of your keyboard. **Use code NEWWEBSITE at check out for 20% off your first item.**

Get out and fish this month. Knock the dust off from a long winter inside. The fish and your significant other will probably thank you. Drink some good Irish Whiskey when you get off the river for the day. Sounds like the perfect March Day in the Madison Valley. Good 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.montanatroutr.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **WEATHER** → Well, we certainly had a rude winter awakening in February! Mother Nature was saving up all her worst winter weather to dump on us! Even the contractors took a break from their building projects! But at least we are prepared for that kind of weather. Not so, for the folks in Texas! So, we are not complaining. The February daytime high was 49°, with a daytime low of -9°! The nighttime high in February was 36° and nighttime low was -22°! THAT WAS COLD!

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➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS → WAYS TO AVOID PROBATE COSTS.** During the Covid-19 pandemic, more people could be giving serious thought to estate planning affairs should they fall sick. According to Montana State University Extension educators, the process is not difficult and professionals such as attorneys, accountants and life insurance agents can help. You can order the free publication at: <http://store.msuxextension.org/publications/FamilyFinancialManagement/MT199508HR.pdf>. Here are a few points to consider:

- Gather relevant personal information, such as: real estate and personal property paperwork; checking and savings account information; stocks, bonds, and securities; life insurance; trusts; mortgages and other accounts receivable; real estate debts; liens against personal property; liabilities; retirement benefits; taxable gifts, and locations of important documents.
- A properly designed plan may help save money in income taxes and estate settlement costs, both before and after death, as well as protect a family from disagreements by providing for contingencies and preventing the forced sale of a farm, ranch, or family business.
- A good estate plan can help provide financial security for you and your family, now and in the future.
- Although there is no requirement to plan an estate, if a person has no plan, in Montana, the law allows the state to make decisions on their behalf. Plan ahead!

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL. FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH. 20 acres with exclusive access to the Madison River!** Great recreational property, just minutes from world-class fishing. Beautiful views of the valley and the Gravelly Range, wide open spaces to roam on BLM public lands, close by. Perfect place to build your "off-the-grid" fishing cabin, as power is over a mile away. Get away from it all! (*But there is fiber optic cable!*) Less than an hour away from Yellowstone National Park, National Forest on both sides of the valley, plus rivers, lakes, great hunting, and fishing. What more could you want?! **Cameron, Montana, Sphinx Mountain Subdivision, Lot 70. \$99,000. MLS #350375.** GoogleEarth Coordinates: Lat. 45.152260°, Lon. -111.692766°, elevation 5,360'.



➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS → WASHINGTON** (February 25, 2021) – Pending home sales took a step backward in January as inventory constraints continue to hold back prospective buyers, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The South was the lone region with a modest gain from the month prior, while the other three major U.S. regions experienced month-over-month decreases in January. However, all four areas saw contract transactions increase from a year-over-year standpoint, including two regions reaching double-digit gains, spurring an all-time high for pending home sales in the month of January.

The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator of home sales based on contract signings, dropped 2.8% to 122.8 in January. Year-over-year, contract signings rose 13.0%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001. "Pending home sales fell in January because there are simply not enough homes to match the demand on the market," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "That said, there has been an increase in permits and requests to build new homes."

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There has been a consistent rise in housing permits for single-family homes for eight straight months. According to Yun, this is a good sign that the supply and demand imbalance in the residential real estate market could be easing, as soon as mid-2021. *"There will also be a natural seasonal upswing in inventory in spring and summer after few new listings during the winter months,"* he said. *"These trends, along with an anticipated ramp-up in home construction will provide for much-needed supply."*

[Realtor.com®'s Housing Market Recovery Index](#) which reveals metro areas where the market has recovered or even exceeded prior trends, showed Austin, Texas; Denver, Colo.; San Antonio, Texas; Riverside, Calif.; and Sacramento, Calif., had enjoyed the most significant recovery as of February 13. Following a week where January's existing-home sales increased, Yun noted that pending contracts are a great early indicator for upcoming closed sales but stressed that the timing of the relationship between existing-home sales and pending home sales may not be in lockstep. *"The two measurements aren't always perfectly correlated due to varying amounts of time required to close a contract,"* Yun said. *"This is because a number of fallouts can occur due to a variety of factors, including a buyer not obtaining mortgage financing, a problem with a home inspection, or an appraisal issue."*

The economy is showing promising signs of improvement, according to Yun, especially in light of many millions of Americans already receiving a COVID-19 vaccination. Still, he cautioned that **longer-term interest rates will soon rise**, partly from the better economic prospects, but also due to rising inflationary expectations and higher budget deficits. *"I don't foresee mortgage rates jumping to an alarming level, but we should prepare for a rise of at least a decimal point or two,"* he said.

January Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown. The Northeast PHSI fell 7.4% to 101.6 in January, a 9.6% rise from a year ago. In the Midwest, the index declined 0.9% to 113.2 last month, up 8.6% from January 2020. Pending home sales transactions in the South inched up 0.1% to an index of 151.3 in January, up 17.1% from January 2020. The index in the West dropped 7.8% in January, to 104.6, up 11.5% from a year prior.

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.

➤ **REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS:** Requests continue to come in. What will happen when there is nothing left to sell?? This would be a **very good time to list**, before the bubble bursts! **Big Sky Country** Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony), for the month of FEBRUARY, were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 17↓ homes listed (\$249,000 to \$2,500,000); 33↑ pending sales (\$249,900 to \$1,385,000); and 7 homes sold in 2021 (\$121,000 to \$1,251,500), totaling \$4,826,500 at **100%** of list prices!
- **LAND:** 44↑ vacant lots listed (\$34,900 to \$349,000; with 56↑ pending sales (\$50,000 to \$1,975,000); and 42 lots have sold so far in 2021 (\$37,000 to \$761,000), totaling \$5,559,360 at **100%** of list prices!
- **RANCHES:** 6 ranches listed (\$599,000 to \$7,995,000); 0 pending sales, and 1 ranch has sold so far in 2021 (\$5,700,000), at **97%** of list price.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 5↓ listed (\$139,900 to \$919,999); 3 pending sales (\$99,900 to \$498,000); and 2 commercial properties sold in 2021 (\$664,950), at **92.3%** of list price. There are several commercial properties available for rent.

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

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➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA...** *Did you know.... That the town of Ennis was named after William Ennis,* one of the first three men to locate in the Madison Valley? Ennis was born in County Down, Ireland in 1828, but of Scottish parentage. He came to the US when he was fourteen and to Montana in 1863. Mr. Ennis bought 80 tons of freight in Omaha, consisting of bags of staples, miners' tools and livestock. Along with his 100 head of oxen, some mules, and a few saddle horses, he headed to Bannack, MT. He stayed in Bannack for a while, selling off his freight, then came to the Madison with his livestock, where in 1879 he built a store. He became the first postmaster when the office opened in 1881, and for the next eighty-six years the Ennis postal service was in the hands of his family. His daughter, Jenny Ennis Chowning and then his granddaughter, Winifred Chowning Jeffers, were postmasters. In 1873, Ennis took his family through Yellowstone, on horseback, making them the first white children to see the Park. William Ennis was shot on June 18, 1898, while standing in front of the Madison House in Virginia City – by a neighbor who was angry because of an unfounded rumor that Mr. Ennis had maligned his character. He died of his wounds on July 4th. *From "Names on the Face of Montana" by Roberta Carkeek Cheney and the "Pioneer Trails and Trials."*



SEE YOU IN MONTANA!

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Toni Bowen, Broker Associate and Accredited Buyer Broker representative, with over 25 years of real estate experience, covering residential, commercial, vacant land, recreational & ranch properties in the Madison Valley.



Finley



Don Bowen, with 55 years as a licensed Broker, has decided to place his real estate license on "*inactive*" status in 2021, and do what he wants, when he wants, and will be a consultant and assistant to Toni. This is a new chapter for the Bowen Team.



Our new office, on the boardwalk at the Lone Elk Mall

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

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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/ - 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.

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