

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for JANUARY 2021



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



- **MADISON VALLEY JANUARY “NON-HAPPENINGS”** → Again, no cancellations, as nothing much was scheduled. But there is news to report. → The **snowpack** in Southwest Montana is well below normal, as of this date. It ranges between 66 and 87% of normal. More snow, please! → Update on the **Jack Creek “Road Pass.”** Who can get one, how to get one and where to get one? Find out at: <https://www.roadpass.org/>. Read the full article at: <http://www.madisoniannews.com/news/jack-creek-road-passes-qa>. → **Montana WILD Zoom Family Trivia Night.** Check it out on <https://www.youtube.com/user/MontanaWildOutdoors>.



- **MADISON VALLEY FEBRUARY “HAPPENINGS”** → Enjoy **Brunch and Bingo** with neighbors and make new friends on Sundays at 10 AM at the Virginia City Elks Lodge, from January 17 – March 28<sup>th</sup>. → There are no other live events scheduled for February, so far. → The marquee at the **Ennis Theatre** is showing a upcoming film! First one in a very long time! → But the **Bowling Alley** is still open. The restaurants and bars and shops are open and there is a wide open world of winter recreation out there.
- **MONTANA NEWS** → Amtrak says it will work with the **Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority** in an effort to bring a rail line back to Southern Montana. → A bill allowing people across the state to **conceal-carry weapons without a permit**, including on college campuses, is now working its way through the Montana Senate after passing the House of Representatives on party lines. → People are still trying to buy property and move to Montana, as inventory disappears, around the state. Reminds me of a cartoon by Brian Basset I saw many years ago. Man sits up in bed and says, *“Laura, you awake?! I just had this horrible nightmare where we got so far behind in our bills that we had to sell everything! The house! The furniture! The car!!! Everything!! And we bought an old VW bus and moved to Montana. Living in a cabin along a river with these really big mountains all around.”* She sits up in bed and after some consideration, says, *“Sounds like a dream to me!”*



- **FISHING REPORT** → The Madison River Fishing Report, by John Way. Hello Friends! February is one of the in between months, here in Ennis. Past the Holiday fun, college football and the Pros will soon be a memory. It is full-on winter, but the thoughts of spring are still a long way off. Why does the shortest month of the year always take the longest? Most likely because once we are done with this month, the headlights of spring are shining bright. February is one of those Hallmark Holiday months. A made-up holiday to drive flower, chocolate, and card sales. When does the “fly fishing” or “fly shop” holiday

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exist? I prefer the whiskey holiday, though. More on that subject another time. Like the increasing daylight, life as we know it is getting brighter. Vaccines are rolling out, searches for vacation travel are trending and there is hope on the horizon. Speaking of hope, I hope we get more snow. We are still down in yearly snow fall. If you have any favors with Mother Nature, please call them in now.

If you need to get your February Sweetheart fish, there are options. Nymphing tiny and shiny midge larva are all the rage and keeping folks happy. If you're looking for that *unicorn* dry fly fish, there is a chance for that. Look for days with little to no wind and temps above freezing. Midge hatches are in the afternoon. We like the \$3 Bridge area. Lots of springs in that area that boost the river temp about one degree during the winter months. For this, we like para midges, buzz balls and griffiths gnats. All of these are small. Do not inhale deeply when tying on. Think 18-20 in size. For leader, you will need to go small. Think 5X, just to get into the eye of the hook. Again, don't inhale.

Lots of opportunity in this soft winter weather. Most days the river is ice-free and fishable. Not much traffic or "*perceived overcrowding*" from November till June. Lots of open space and open water. If you need any advice on where to fish, what to use, or want to book your spring float trip, give us a call. We will be running our spring special once again. A full-day guided trip for two anglers, hot lunch and all the fun you can have for a half-day rate. Good 'till May 1. We will be closed for about a week this month. Mini remodel happening in the store. We will also be launching the new intergalactic website for the Tackle Shop this month. Lots of fun things coming down the road.

Stay strong, friends and survive the hallmark holiday, the shortest month of the year, and soon it will be spring-like weather. Just get past February. If you need any help, give us a call. Also, we are taking names for a petition to have a national Fly Shop Holiday. Hoping to get it added to the calendar and adopted by congress we need 2 million names. We have 5 on the list now. A good start, right? Call if you would like to sign our petition! 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.montanatrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **WEATHER** → We are STILL enjoying that extended Fall, with mild temps and very little snow. Pleasant for enjoying outdoors activities, for driving, and especially for the construction workers putting up houses all over the valley! In January! Still waiting for the real winter! The January daytime high was 45°, with a daytime low was 29°. The January nighttime high was 38° and nighttime low was 3°. So, once again, this month was not much colder than the last.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → "**HIPCAMPS**" This may be something you've never heard of, but this is a booming, new industry. It is something that might be of interest to people looking to maximize their property investment. So, what is a Hipcamp?

- The organization identifies itself as the AirBnB of camping.
- Locations could offer anything from open fields, sheepherder wagons, cabins, apartments, RV's, yurts, etc.
- Since Covid led to the rapid increase in people camping/glamping, the Hipcamp company has seen an enormous uptick in use across the United states.
- There are approximately 550 Hipcamp locations in the state of Montana, already.
- The average Hipcamp location generates \$8,000 per year in revenue with the most active locations earning as much as \$100,000.
- So, how does it work? Check it out at: <https://www.hipcamp.com/>
- Most people that use Hipcamp regularly, are using it for road trips or for unique vacations in scenic areas.
- It is particularly popular on the east coast where public land is scarce and struggling farms need additional revenue to remain viable. But everyone wants to come to Montana!
- All it takes is someone who enjoys hosting people, has land, and might not want the major investment of time and money, nor the cleanup that comes with the typical vacation rental.
- There are currently no certified Hipcamp locations in the Madison Valley and it could be an opportunity that you didn't know existed!
- But there is a local expert if you would like to learn more! Just contact Alex Buskey at [alex@therangervt.com](mailto:alex@therangervt.com) if you are interested in becoming a Hipcamp host.



➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL. FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH.** Own 20 or 40 ACRES bordering National Forest. Great recreational property in the Upper Madison Valley with easy access to the Sheep Creek Canyon area, close to Yellowstone National Park, Quake, Hebgen, Cliff & Wade Lakes and the Madison River. Two adjoining lots with end-of-the-road privacy, spectacular views near great hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, trail riding, etc. Build your cabin *off-the-grid* and get away from it all. **Cameron, Montana, Sportsman's Paradise subdivision:**



- Lot A54, \$245,000, MLS #198924, GoogleEarth 44.798401°, -111.439244°, elevation 6,557'.
- Lot A55, \$217,000, MLS #198927, GoogleEarth 44.796263°, -111.441165°, elevation 6,549'

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (January 29, 2021) – Despite dropping slightly in the last month of 2020, the latest pending home sales registered as the highest ever recorded in the month of December, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The decrease marks the fourth consecutive month of month-over-month declines. While contract transitions fell in one of the four major U.S. regions, activity climbed or remained flat in the three other areas. Compared to a year ago, all four regions witnessed double-digit gains in pending home sales transactions.

The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator of home sales based on contract signings, waned 0.3% to 125.5 in December. Year-over-year, contract signings jumped 21.4%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.

"Pending home sales contracts have dipped during recent months, but I would attribute that to having too few homes for sale," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "There is a high demand for housing and a great number of would-be buyers, and therefore sales should rise with more new listings. This elevated demand without a significant boost in supply has caused home prices to increase and we can expect further upward pressure on prices for the foreseeable future," Yun said.

Yun continues to project that 2021 will bring about strong economic growth, supported by low mortgage rates and fiscal stimulus, which in turn will bolster existing-home sales. Yun added that, with rates to remain low, existing-homes sales are likely to reach 6.49 million, which would be a 15% increase from 5.64 million in 2020. "There will also be slower home price appreciation, likely 6.6%, as increased confidence from homebuilders will ultimately lead to an increase in housing starts."

**December Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown:** The Northeast PHSI rose 3.1% to 112.0 in December, a 22.1% increase from a year ago. In the Midwest, the index fell 3.6% to 111.7 last month, up 13.9% from December 2019. Pending home sales in the South increased 0.1% to an index of 150.6 in December, up 26.6% from December 2019. The index in the West was unchanged in December, remaining at 111.3, which is up 18.9% 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.*

➤ **REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS:** There was a short breather at the end of January, but it is still going strong. There is very little left to sell but we are hoping for lots of new listings in the spring. **Big Sky Country** Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony), for the month of JANUARY, were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 25↓ homes listed (\$249,000 to \$2,500,000); 20↑ pending sales (\$179,000 to \$650,000); and 3 homes sold so far, in 2021 (\$121,000 to \$1,251,500), totaling \$2,206,500 at **100%**↑ of list prices!
- **LAND:** 21↓ vacant lots listed (\$34,900 to \$119,900; with 43↑ pending sales (\$54,900 to \$864,900); and 21 lots have sold so far in 2021 (\$37,000 to \$350,000), totaling \$2,173,600 at **100%**↑ of list prices!
- **RANCHES:** 6 ranches listed (\$590,000 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:** 7↓ listed (\$139,900 to \$950,000); 3 pending sales (\$99,900 to \$249,900); and 1 commercial property has sold, so far in 2021 (\$430,000), at **90.9%** 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

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA... Did you know.... That the town of Cameron was named for the pioneering Cameron family, but the settlement was originally known as Bear Creek?**

**Cameron** is actually a large unincorporated community in Madison County, with the post office in the little town just 13 miles south of Ennis. The town is named after its founders, brothers James and Addison Bovey Cameron, who took up desert claims here in



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1886. Add Cameron built a store with a post office on the ground floor of the building and a dance or community hall on the upper floor. In 1919, the Cameron store building was bought by Frank Falbaum, who moved the building six miles down the road to Hwy 286, to take advantage of the highway business generated by tourists travelling between Ennis and Yellowstone Park. This angered the Bear Creek settlers, and for years none of them would trade at the Cameron store. Today, the store, café and Blue Moon Saloon are very popular with the whole valley as well as travelers passing through the valley - just as Frank Falbaum predicted, over one hundred years ago! And it is again **for sale!** You can buy the **whole town**, on 2.44 acres, including the saloon, café, general store, upstairs apartment, 6 cabins, laundromat, large metal storage shed and RV spaces! And you could be all things, from mayor to dog catcher! All for \$950,000!

## ***SEE YOU IN MONTANA!***

***Social Distancing Champions, since 1889!***  
***Be not afraid. STAY SAFE, SANE AND SOBER!***



**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.

***After 26 years in the same location, our office has moved across the street, to the Lone Elk Mall, Unit 1-D (the 5<sup>th</sup> door down the boardwalk). We are now working in our new digs. Please stop in and visit us there.***



***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/](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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