

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MT for MARCH 2022



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



➤ **MADISON VALLEY MARCH “HAPPENINGS”** → What’s new in Ennis, **the Basecamp of the Madison Valley?** → **Lions Club Park** is still clogged with ice and closed until further notice. → There is a new Main Street business, **Youthful Expressions** (next to the Ennis Café), a spa offering numerous services, including facials, waxing & lots more! → The **Ennis Café** is still closed for remodeling. → There were **Wine Dinners** at the Madison Valley Ranch. → The **Ennis Arts Association** members toured several creative businesses. → The **Elling House Arts & Humanities Center** in Virginia City held their March Chautauqua Celebration, also featured the Youth of Madison County Art Show and held a reception and talk on “Porcupines & Making Friends with Them!” → The Silver Dollar Saloon hosted the Annual Earl Holt – John Seaman 14<sup>th</sup> **Annual Poker Tournament** to benefit Ennis HS scholarships. → There is another luxury resort scheduled for Big Sky. Lone Mountain Land Co. is developing a part of the original **Moonlight Basin** for One & Only Resorts. They paid the Jumping Horse Ranch, east of Ennis, to retire acreages from irrigation to offset the water consumption needs of the new resort. Check it out at: <https://www.oneandonlyresorts.com/moonlight-basin>.



➤ **MADISON VALLEY APRIL “HAPPENINGS”** → The VC Rural Fire Department will hold a **Cake Walk Benefit** on the 9<sup>th</sup>. → Get your tickets for the 25<sup>th</sup> **Annual Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Big Game Banquet** at the historic Round Barn in Twin Bridges on April 30<sup>th</sup>. [https://events.rmef.org/shop/vigilante?utm\\_source=rmef.org&utm\\_medium=events\\_page](https://events.rmef.org/shop/vigilante?utm_source=rmef.org&utm_medium=events_page). → Make reservations for one of the **Wine Dinners** scheduled for the public at the **Madison Valley Ranch** – April 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. <https://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/fly-fishing-resort-food-and-wine>. → The Virginia City Elks Lodge continues their **Game Night** on Fridays and **Brunch & Bingo** on Sundays. (406) 660-1559 for more info. → *And you can still ski at Big Sky, go fishing or boating, hiking, 4wheeling, trail riding, bowling, eat, drink, take in a movie and go shopping!*

➤ **LOOKING AHEAD** → Registration opens April 1 for the Jack Creek Preserve “**Summer Outdoor Skills Camps**” in July and August 2022. <http://www.jackcreekpreserve.org/summer-camps>.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → **Meat processed in Montana has increased 50%** in 2022, which adds value to our commodities and preserves the Montana brand through the supply chain. The increase is due to substantial investments in local processing and greater consumer interest in buying local food. → Montana’s population in 2022 is expected to be **1.14 million**, making us the 43<sup>rd</sup> populous state and the eighth least populous in the US! Billings is the most populous city at 117,116; Missoula at 73,489; Great

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Falls at 60,442; Bozeman at 53,293; Butte at 35,133; and **Ennis at 917** people and, hopefully, 11,000,000 trout! → **California** and **Washington State** were the top origin states for new MT residents in 2021. → And Montana's **unemployment reached a record low of 2.7%** in January, making MT the 5<sup>th</sup> lowest in the nation, which has a 4.0% unemployment rate. → Montana State University has been named a **Top Ten Military-Friendly** school. <https://www.montana.edu/veteran/>. **Avalanche danger** is considerable across the Gallatin National Forest. → "**Power of the Dog**," a movie based upon a book by Montana author, Thomas Savage, received 12 Oscar nominations.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → *From Big John*. April has arrived and **it is fishing season in the Madison Valley!** April might just be the perfect month to fish the Madison. Low, clear, warming water and air temps, hungry trout and fewer folks on the river, make it the favorite time to fish for both guides and locals.

Like all the calves bouncing around the pastures, April brings excitement to the Madison Valley. It is the start of our season and expectations could not be higher. But keep in mind that we are sitting at about 80% of our snowpack. While this is not horrible, we could use a few more dumps of the wet stuff, especially up in the high country. It is supposed to snow up high today, so there is some hope. Right now, the lake is really low, and we could use a big runoff to fill her up. And because the lake is so low, the all-knowing powers who control the dam are releasing very less water. In fact, this week they were in the store and announced that they are cutting flows even more! If you're a drift boat guy, you will make friends with rocks you never knew existed. On that note, I'm thinking about turning the fly shop into a fiberglass drift boat repair facility! I think it will be a money maker this year. So, plan for lower-than-average flows, at least for now.

The infamous Madison River Planning Committee is still hard at work trying to come up with new rules for the Madison River commercial operators and recreational fisherman. Nothing has been decided yet. Just know that things will be changing, for both the guides and those who just use the river recreationally. When there is a decision and a new plan, I will let you know. This is a tough process, and every user group is going to need to change and give a little to make the future work.

If you're in Ennis, **now** is the time to fish. The longer days make it possible to fish after work. Or just call in sick and go fishing. (I am sure your boss won't mind!) Right now, it is still a subsurface game, with nymphs and streamers. Stone flies, eggs, worms, and midge stuff will keep you bent on most days. Keep a look out for dry fly fishing. It is right around the corner. Skwala stone flies, Blue Winged Olives, March Browns, and caddis are on the horizon this month. Just keep going fishing and you will see it.

Lots of great new gear arriving at the fly shop every day. Come by and get your fishing supplies, drift boat repair materials, good coffee, and great advice. The fly bins are full and ready for all your needs. Fish now, while it is good, and give the river to the tourists in July. *Good Fishing and God Bless*, 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.

***If people concentrated on the REALLY important things in life, there would be a shortage of fishing poles! 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** → March came in like a baby lion and went out like a baby lamb! The wild weather was in the middle of the month. But it does feel like spring is actually here now. The daytime high was a balmy **67°** and the daytime low was **18°**. The nighttime high was **45°** and the low was **-12°**. There were a few snowy days, but it melted quickly. We're happy for the moisture, as the snowpack is only at 80%. Check out snow conditions at: <https://bigskyresort.com/snow-report>. They are still skiing!

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **Are On-Line Computerized Estimates an Accurate Way to Determine my Property's Value?** There are many online companies offering value estimates for properties in our area. Zillow and Redfin are examples of these services. The estimates provided by these services are derived from algorithm calculations based upon "public data sources" and are normally very inaccurate and thus they provide consumers with false conclusions. These forms of estimates are more adapted to markets where there is an abundance of very similar properties contributing to the outcome.

Montana properties are unique in terms of location, construction, and many other intangible features. Plus, **Montana is a "non-disclosure" state** where sold prices are not of public record. Accurate property valuation is of utmost importance to both sellers and buyers. Most real estate agents are willing to provide property valuation opinions (CMA's) based upon MLS data, without charge or obligation. Alternatively, licensed appraisers can provide full reports, for a fee. Either way, consumers are well advised to procure the most accurate estimates for properties they are considering selling or buying, not just a computerized "guesstimate." For more information: <https://www.fool.com/the-ascent/mortgages/articles/why-online-home-valuations-are-often-wrong/>

➤ **HOME FOR YOUR SOUL. FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH. BEAUTIFUL VIEWS of CREEK, TREES & MOUNTAINS!** This premier property consists of 5+ acres on a bench overlooking the Bar 7 Ranch, which is under conservation easement and cannot be developed. Build your dream home, with unobstructed views, on the edge of this bench and enjoy the best of Montana! Property owners in Shining Mountains have exclusive access to mountain lakes and access into National Forest and BLM. This property is just 14 miles/24 minutes from downtown Ennis, the "basecamp" for the Madison Valley. This lot is partially fenced, has power across the road, irrigation water rights, fiber optic cable and year around access. Just needs well and septic. Easy access into the National Forest in the Gravelly Range above, and to the Madison



River at the Varney Bridge, below. Great country living, but close to town. Perfect. **\$250,000**. MLS # 368852. Google Earth Coordinates: Lat. 45.209455°, Lon. -111.772307°, Elevation: 5,455'.

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → **WASHINGTON** (March 25, 2022) – Pending home sales slipped in February, marking four consecutive months of transaction decreases, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Three of the four major U.S. regions saw contract signings fall month-over-month, with the Northeast being the only area that reported an increase. All four regions registered a decline in year-over-year contract activity. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator of

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home sales based on contract signings, waned 4.1% to 104.9 in February. Year-over-year, transactions dropped 5.4%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.

*"Pending transactions diminished in February mainly due to the low number of homes for sale,"* said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. *"Buyer demand is still intense, but it's as simple as 'one cannot buy what is not for sale.'"* Along with climbing home prices, Yun added that now buyers must grapple with rising mortgage rates and noted that shoppers will likely want to lock in before rates increase further. *"It is still an extremely competitive market, but fast-changing conditions regarding affordability are ahead,"* he said. *"Consequently, home sellers cannot simply bump up prices in the upcoming months, but need to assess the changing market conditions to attract buyers."*

As of February 2022, higher mortgage rates and sustained price appreciation has led to a year-over-year increase of 28% in mortgage payments. *"The surge in home prices combined with rising mortgage rates can easily translate to another \$200 to \$300 in mortgage payments per month, which is a major strain for many families already on tight budgets."* **Yun forecasts mortgage rates to be about 4.5% to 5% for the remainder of the year and expects about a 7% reduction in home sales in 2022 compared to 2021.** *"Home prices themselves are still on solid ground,"* he added. *"They may rise around 5% by year's end and we should see much softer gains in the second half of the year."*

Realtor.com®'s Hottest Housing Markets data in February showed that of the largest 40 metros, the most improved markets over the past year were Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, Fla.; Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Nashville-Davidson, Tenn.; Indianapolis, Ind.; and San Diego-Carlsbad, Calif.

**February Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown.** Month-over-month, the Northeast PHSI rose 1.9% to 85.0 in February, a 9.2% drop from a year ago. In the Midwest, the index decreased 6.0% to 99.7 last month, down 5.2% from February 2021. Pending home sales transactions in the South declined 4.4% to an index of 127.2 in February, down 4.3% from February 2021. The index in the West slid 5.4% in February to 90.0, down 5.3% from a year prior.

*The National Association of Realtors® is America's largest trade association, representing more than 1.5 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.*

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS:** March continues to bring more buyers than sellers, as well as rising prices. Every sale encourages sellers to expect even more for their property. But the tide will turn. **Big Sky Country** Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Nevada City, Harrison, Pony), for the month of **MARCH** were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 12↓ homes listed (\$260,000 to \$4,200,000); 28↑ pending sales (\$595,000 to \$2,950,000); and 17 homes have sold in 2022 (\$199,000 to \$1,285,000), totaling \$10,783,900 at **100%** of list prices.
- **LAND:** 46↑ vacant lots listed (\$50,000 to \$4,997,000); 19↑ pending sales (\$139,000 to \$3,860,000); and 39 lots have sold in 2022 (\$60,000 to \$605,000), totaling \$9,156,800, at **95.2%**↑ of list prices.
- **RANCHES:** 1 ranch listed (\$7,995,000); 0 pending sales, and 0 ranches have sold in 2022.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 5↓ properties listed (\$300,000 to \$7,900,000); 3 pending sales (\$465,000 to \$1,775,000) and 1 commercial property has sold in 2022 (\$199,000); at **99.6%** of list price.

***"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 Madison Valley is an important stopover for a wide variety of migratory birds?* Ducks and geese follow ancient pathways from their breeding grounds to wintering areas, an epic journey that has amazed mankind for millennia. Each fall, millions of waterfowl migrate south to warmer regions in search of food and habitat. Banding research helped waterfowl managers map the major migration corridors followed by ducks and geese, which are known today as **flyways**. For management purposes North America is divided into four flyways – the Atlantic, Mississippi, Central and Pacific. The councils were established through the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, to assist in researching and providing migratory game bird management information for Federal, State, and Provincial governments, as well as private conservation entities and the public. A portion of Montana, west of the Continental Divide, lies within the Pacific Flyway. Ten states are formally part of the Central Flyway, but only the portions of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico east of the Continental Divide are included. <https://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/madison-valley>.



➤ **SEE YOU IN MONTANA!**

**Social Distancing Champions, since 1889! STAY SAFE, SANE AND SOBER!**



**Toni Bowen**, Broker Associate and Accredited Buyer Broker representative, with over 28 years of real estate experience, covering residential, commercial, vacant land, recreational & ranch properties in the Madison Valley.

**Don Bowen**, a *Realtor Emeritus*, with 57 years as a licensed Broker, placed his real estate license on “inactive” status in 2021, and is now a consultant and assistant to Toni. This is a new chapter for the Bowen Team.



**Finley**, our office greeter.

Visit us in our office  
on the Boardwalk,  
at the Lone Elk Mall,  
on Main Street, downtown Ennis.



*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

<http://www.jackcreekpreserve.org/> - foundation that provides outdoor education and experiences.

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

<https://madisonjefferson.msuextension.org/> - water test kits, soil sampling, plant & insect id, etc.

<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.

<https://www.mtmemory.org/>. Montana Memory Project – find all about the history of Montana!

### SKIING:

<http://bigskyresort.com/> – Check out latest snow conditions & things to do at Big Sky.

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

### HORSEBACK RIDING:

<https://www.facebook.com/wolfpackmontana> – trail riding guides for the Madison Valley

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

### RANCHING:

<https://www.facebook.com/madisonvalleyranchlandsgroup/>- keeping 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

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