

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MT for APRIL 2022



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY APRIL “HAPPENINGS”** → What’s new in Ennis, **the Basecamp of the Madison Valley?** → Volunteers helped clean up the mess left in **Lions Club Park** created by the overflow of water during the Gorge! → The Virginia City Rural Fire Department held their annual **Cake Walk**. → Jack Creek Preserve held a successful **Winter Outdoor Skills Camp** for 13-17 year olds. → The Elling House Arts & Humanities Center in Virginia City hosted more **Chautauquas**. → The roads opened in **Yellowstone National Park!** → The Lions Club hosted their annual **Easter Egg Hunt** at Peter T’s Park this year, due to flood damage in the Lions Club Park. → There were more **Wine Dinners** at the **Madison Valley Ranch**. → The **25th Annual Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Big Game Banquet** was held at the historic Round Barn in Twin Bridges. → Water released from **Hebgen Dam** was reduced through April, due to our drought conditions and the forecast for continued low moisture.

➤ **MADISON VALLEY MAY “HAPPENINGS”** → There will be a **Mother’s Day Brunch & Bubbly** from 9 – 12 at the Virginia City Elk’s Lodge on the 8th. Check out the Elks at:



<https://www.virginiacitymontanaelks.com/> → Don’t miss our big May event, **Tap into Ennis** from Noon – 5 PM, in Lions Club Park. Taste and enjoy Montana craft beers, distilleries, premium wines and more! <https://www.ennischamber.com/tap-into-ennis>. → The Virginia City Elks Lodge continues their **Game Night** on Fridays and **Brunch & Bingo** on Sundays. → *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 June 1 - 7 for the Summer BOW camp (**Becoming an Outdoors Woman** is for ladies 18-80) to be held at the UofM Lubrecht Forest, near Missoula, Aug. 12 – 14. See more at: <https://fwp.mt.gov/education/becoming-an-outdoors-woman>. → And kids can sign up for the **“Summer Outdoor Skills Camps”** in July & August, at <http://www.jackcreekpreserve.org/summer-camps>. → The theme for the **86th Ennis 4th of July Parade** will be **“Main Street Stampede!”** → The **2022 Montana State Fair** will be held in Great Falls, July 29 – August 6.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Montana Senator Jon Tester spoke on the Senate floor last Thursday about problems with rising meat prices and issues facing **cattle ranchers** and the agriculture industry. He claims the marketplace isn’t working and wants Congress to act to ensure fairer prices for producers and lower costs for consumers. → Montana’s **economy is the 7th strongest** in the nation with robust growth in 2021 along with the **sharpest growth rate in more than 40 years!** → Montana’s **Unemployment Rate is 2.3%** - the 4th lowest in the nation. → The **Yellowstone** TV series has already injected over \$70M into Montana’s economy.



➤ **FISHING REPORT** → *From Big John.* You know the old saying, “April showers bring May flowers”? It’s a little different here in the Madison Valley, at least this year. Our saying goes, “April snow makes August a **go!**” If you have been in the valley this last month, you know. We have built snowpack all month and are currently sitting at over 90%. This is a game changer for our summer, and there are even a few more storms lined up. Keep bringing it on! Thank you to all who have been doing the snow dance. I am sure lots of whiskey was consumed to encourage dancing, but it was worth it. I know I busted out with some killer moves.

May should start off with a bang. Right now, the fishing is almost out of control on the Madison River. Subsurface game is strong. BWO, stone flies, worms, eggs and any tiny & shiny will keep you bent. Seriously, it is really that good, so get out there, now! The real star of the May show is the **Mothers’ Day Caddis hatch**. With the cold April we had, water temps are a little behind. We need river temps above 50 for the caddis to go. Look for them on the next warmup of several days in a row. Just because the Mothers’ Day caddis might be late, it’s no excuse to be late with a call to your mother. Mothers get pissed when that happens. Trust me on this one. Once the caddis start in the soup, think “webby soft hackle emerges, in green.” This is always the ticket - especially when the caddis are active. Remember to fish them on a stiff tippet, as the strikes are usually abrupt. Dry fly fishing to rising fish will happen on overcast days or in the evening. Be ready - it does not last long, and you need to get it while you can. This is the time. Mom might not be happy, but your boss most certainly will forgive a few sick days in the next two weeks, I am sure.

After the caddis madness, look for runoff to come shortly after. When this happens, is anyone’s guess. I am betting on May 20 for runoff to start. That is the day I board a plane to Belize, so it would work out great. Once we see a bump in flows, think dark-bodied streamers. We like a cone head sculpin in olive and black. High water hammer. Works every time.

Stop by the store and pick up all your Mothers’ Day Caddis needs and even a gift for Mom. Moms like to fish, too! Better yet, bring her in the store on Mothers’ Day to pick out her own gift, before you take her fishing. I promise I will only show her the \$1000 fly rods. Lots of great new gear online and in the store. Guided trip schedule is filling up fast for the summer. If you want a trip with a great Orvis Endorsed Tackle Shop guide, better book it now. Coffee and advice are always free. 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/>
- ✚ Joe Dilschneider’s Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatroutrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **WEATHER** → We had a typical, crazy April, with a daytime high of **70°** and a daytime low was **20°**. The nighttime high was **44°** and the low was **5°**. There were 7 snowy days and 5 rainy days, contributing more moisture to the thirsty snowpack.

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➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS → SIZE MATTERS.** If you are buying a home, the listing likely includes the square footage, a key selling point. But what if you make an offer that's accepted, and the appraisal shows a different square footage than what's on the listing? What gives? Why the discrepancy? There are several reasons why the measurements might differ.

1. There is a difference between official "living space" versus the total space of the house, which could include everything, such as an unheated basement, attic, and other non-living spaces.
2. The county records may show a SF based on an outside measurement by a county appraiser for tax purposes.
3. The county records may not include an addition that was made to the home since the county appraiser's last visit. If a homeowner skips the permitting process, the county won't know there is additional square footage.
4. The owner/seller may provide their own SF measurements when listing.
5. Realtors generally do not measure a property they list, but depend on county or owner measurements, and recommend buyers do their own due diligence regarding size.
6. Licensed appraisers will take actual measurements of the home which will be included in their appraisal report for a lender.
7. Licensed appraisers must follow rules for what can be included in these measurements.
8. If the appraisal shows less SF in the home than the listing states, a buyer may have the right to renegotiate the price or cancel the transaction.

➤ **HOME FOR YOUR SOUL. FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH. PREMIUM LOT IN THE FAMOUS SUN WEST RANCH!**

This parcel consists of nearly 7 acres in an ideal location, with privacy, spectacular views & great building site. It has a wide variety of fauna, surrounded by common area & bordering a large common-area pond. This property has views of the Madison River and the mountains + good access to the SWR facilities. Sun West Ranch is a premier, gated community, located in the most beautiful part of the Madison. SWR is a place where you can experience the pride & lifestyle of authentic ranch ownership without the day-to-day operations. It consists of 55 homesites, selectively placed across 2,000 acres, with over 1,600 acres in common area, including 3 miles of the Madison River for world-class fishing. Owners enjoy equestrian facilities, trails for hiking & trail riding, private stocked ponds, a rental cabin for guests and 24-hour ranch management and services.



Owners enjoy equestrian facilities, trails for hiking & trail riding, private stocked ponds, a rental cabin for guests and 24-hour ranch management and services. **Sun West Ranch, Lot 46 A-1. \$505,000. MLS #361704.** GoogleEarth Coordinates at center of lot: Latitude 44.947093°, Longitude -111.633132°, Elevation 6,003'.

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS → WASHINGTON** (April 27, 2022) – Pending home sales dropped in March, signifying five straight months that contract activity has declined, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Month-over-month, only the Northeast saw an increase in contract signings, while the three other major U.S. regions experienced declines in transactions. All four regions reported decreases in year-over-year contract activity. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator of home sales based on contract signings, fell 1.2% to 103.7 in March. Year-over-year, transactions sank 8.2%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.

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"The falling contract signings are implying that multiple offers will soon dissipate and be replaced by much calmer and normalized market conditions," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "As it stands, the sudden large gains in mortgage rates have reduced the pool of eligible homebuyers, and that has consequently lowered buying activity. "The aspiration to purchase a home remains, but the financial capacity has become a major limiting factor."

Yun expects the 30-year fixed mortgage rate to reach 5.3% by the fourth quarter, mortgage rates to average 4.9% in 2022, and to hit 5.4% by 2023. He forecasts inflation to average 8.2% in 2022, although it will start to moderate to 5.5% in the second half of this year. As of March 2022, higher mortgage rates and sustained price appreciation has led to a year-over-year increase of 31% in mortgage payments. *"Overall existing-home sales this year look to be down 9% from the heated pace of last year,"* said Yun. *"Home prices are in no danger of decline on a nationwide basis, but the price gains will steadily decelerate such that the median home price in 2022 will likely be up 8% from last year."*

While costs have soared for existing and new homes, rental properties have seen monthly payments jump, too, a turn that Yun says will lead to more renters exploring ownership. *"Fast-rising rents will encourage renters to consider buying a home, though higher mortgage rates will present challenges,"* Yun said. *"Strong rent growth nonetheless will lead to a boom in multifamily housing starts, with more than 20% growth this year."* He predicts the unemployment rate will average 3.7% in 2022 and estimates gross domestic product to expand 2.8%. With rising mortgage rates, Yun added that single-family homebuilders will be more cautious, despite the current tight inventory conditions, saying, *"I expect that to result in a boost to construction of less than 5%."*

March Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown. Month-over-month, the Northeast PHSI grew 4.0% to 89.3 in March, a 9.2% fall from a year ago. In the Midwest, the index dropped 6.1% to 94.7 last month, down 4.8% from March 2021. Pending home sales transactions in the South decreased 0.9% to an index of 125.8 in March, down 9.5% from March 2021. The index in the West declined 0.2% in March to 89.8, down 8.4% 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:** Calls and sales are down and listings are up. So maybe the worm is turning. **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 **APRIL** were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 20↑ homes listed (\$260,000 to \$4,200,000); 17↓ pending sales (\$450,000 TO \$1,140,000); and 30 homes have sold in 2022 (\$199,000 to \$2,662,500), totaling \$21,799,400 at **100%** of list prices.
- **LAND:** 52↑ vacant lots listed (\$30,000 to \$4,997,000); 23↑ pending sales (\$95,000 to \$324,800); and 53 lots have sold in 2022 (\$60,000 to \$4,500,000), totaling \$16,396,800, at **97.0%**↑ of list prices.
- **RANCHES:** 1 ranch listed (\$7,995,000); 0 pending sales, and 0 ranches have sold in 2022.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 8↑ properties listed (\$300,000 to \$7,900,000); 2 pending sales (\$1,700,000 to \$1,775,000) and 2 commercial properties have sold in 2022 (\$199,000 to \$450,000); at **98.2%** 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 numerical prefixes on Montana's license plates represent the 1914 population centers?* The prefix numbers were added to MT license plates in 1926 and revised in 1933 to designate the county in which that vehicle was registered. In 1930, Number 1 represented Butte, in Silver Bow County, with the highest population and Number 56 was assigned to Lincoln County with the lowest population. Naturally, these population centers have changed over the years, but the numbers have not changed. If they ever did, Yellowstone County (*Billings*) would be #1, Missoula County #2, Gallatin (*Bozeman*) County #3, and Flathead (*Kalispell*) County #4. Even the original numbers were not totally accurate. Historians have tried to explain some of the inconsistencies with tales of **bribery and political power**, (*imagine that!*) and even simple typographical errors! But none of the explanations given can completely solve the riddle of how so many counties could receive a license plate code that didn't match its rank. **Madison County is still #25.**

The first prison-made plates were issued in 1928. The state map was added to the plates in 1933. The "Treasure State" slogan was first used in 1950 and changed to "Big Sky Country" in 1967, then back to "Treasure State" in 2010.

During 1944, license plates were manufactured from pressed soybean fiberboard due to a shortage of steel caused by the war. Goats, cows, and mice reportedly enjoyed the taste of these plates, with some vehicle owners losing their plates to a snack for the animals! Steel was replaced by aluminum in 1960.

Montana offered its first alternate license plate, the **Amateur Radio Operator** plate in 1958. Personalized (vanity) license plates were first issued in 1974. Now, there are many "specialty" license plates available.

➤ **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/ - 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 - 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 - 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 – 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