

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MT for JANUARY 2023



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY JANUARY “HAPPENINGS”** → What’s happened in Ennis, the **Basecamp of the Madison Valley?** → *Well, it’s still happening!* → **The Madisonian**, Montana’s oldest publishing weekly newspaper, established in 1873, is celebrating 150 years of publishing in 2023. <https://www.madisoniannews.com/>. → The Elling House presented the first **Chautauqua** of the season. →



The **Madison Valley Ranch** in Jeffers hosted more of their incredible **Wine Dinners**. → The **Ladies of the Valley** held their monthly **Meet & Greet** at the Sportsman’s Lodge. → There was a **Back Country Safety & First Aid Awareness** class. → Gardeners swarmed to the **Garden Seed Swap** at the Ennis Library. → The County Commissioners voted to place **Common Mullein** on the list of Noxious Weeds in the Madison Valley. → And, *you can still go fishing, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, “disc” golfing, bowling, do yoga and exercise classes, play Mah Jongg, or eat, drink, stroll through Ennis, take in a movie, and go shopping! Just do it all!*



➤ **MADISON VALLEY FEBRUARY “HAPPENINGS”** → Try **Skijoring** in Big Sky on Feb. 4th & 5th! [Big Sky Skijoring Association](http://www.bigskyskijoring.com/). → **Madison Valley Ranch** in Jeffers will be hosting more of their **Wine Dinners**, the 10th & 11th. Reservations at (800) 891-6158, info@madisonvalleyranch.com. → The Elling House will be offering another **Chautauqua** on **February 18th**. (406) 843-5507, infor@ellinghouse.org. → Some **Yellowstone Park** roads are open. Go to: <https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/parkroads.htm> for more info. → Sign up for **Crop School & Livestock Auction** in Three Forks, hosted by MSU Extension. (406) 266-9242.



➤ **MADISON VALLEY FUTURE “HAPPENINGS”** → Mark your calendars and secure your seats for future **Wine Dinners** at the **Madison Valley Ranch** in Jeffers on March 24 & 25. → The **Jack Creek Preserve** will be again offering their **Winter Outdoor Skills Camp** to 14 - 18-year-olds, March 24-26. More information at: <http://www.jackcreekpreserve.org/winter-outdoor-skills-camps>. → The Elling House in VC will be holding more **Chautauquas** on March 18 & April 15th. → This year will be the **160th anniversary of Virginia City** and they will be celebrating all year! <https://virginiacity.com/history>.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Montana’s 48th **Annual Economic Outlook Seminar** is focused on the blistering growth performance in 2022. Concerns for the future will include the effects of inflation, global commodity prices, the state’s housing industry, mortgage rates, recession, and the new wave of in-migration

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and what it all means for the state. The Covid pandemic brought many people to Montana with the promise of keeping their jobs in the big city while enjoying the lifestyle of the West. It changed Montana: more people, different people, and more expensive housing. Tourism has also increased. The TV series **Yellowstone** has sparked the interest of a worldwide audience, bringing an estimated 2.1 million visitors and \$730 million in additional spending to the state in 2021. The demand for “Montana” has increased. → A coalition of over 100 hunters, landowners, outfitters and policy makers unveiled hunting-centric legislative proposals at a gathering in Helena, dubbed, “**Elk Camp at the Capital.**”

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → *From Big John.* Well, if you can survive the “year of February,” then you deserve the good things to come. Every year, the month of February feels like it is a year long! Only 29 short days, but it feels like forever. (*That’s why I am in Belize!*) February is a wasted month for the fisherman. That’s why Hallmark created a holiday right in the middle. It gives February a reason for being. But if you’re not into fake holidays, and would rather be fishing, good things are on the horizon, if you can just get to them! So, if you really need to catch a fish this month, there are a few options. Right now, the Madison, from Ennis Lake upstream to 8 Mile, is locked in the icy gorge. This is a no-go zone for quite a while. It will take a bunch of warm weather to melt all that ice and open the access points. Think May. Like with all winter fishing, it is about *when* and *where*, more than *what*. Think the Bear Trap Canyon, or above \$3 Bridge. Both spots will be ice-free before the other areas and will offer some opportunity. We like the Beartrap this time of year.

The only thing hatching now is midges, and “*tiny and shiny*” will be the name of the game. As the month rolls along, expect some good midge hatches, and even some rising fish on good days. Look for days that are above freezing, with little to no wind, and overcast. There will only be a few of them, so be ready to take advantage when it happens. Zebra midges in black, silver, and red will do the trick below the surface, and buzz balls will take all risers, if you’re lucky enough to find them.

(You may not be able to catch a fish right now, due to the ice-gorged river, but you might just catch a fox!)



The best advice for February, from a fishing guide, is this. Take this month and spend some time with your significant other. Even participate in that dreaded, made-up holiday. Buy flowers, go on a dinner date and be on your best behavior. Theory is that when the fishing starts to get good next month, you will have paid your dues and can go fishing. Now is also the time to get your gear ready. Waders, fly lines and flies all need attention prior to the start of the season. Nothing will ruin your first river day faster than leaky waders, non-floating fly line or not having the right fly. Stop by the store and we can make sure you are good to go for the first outing. Nothing like starting the season with new waders and fly line! You just fish better when you are well prepared. 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: <https://www.mrfc.com/>
- ✚ Dan Delekta at: <https://www.beartoothflyfishing.com/>
- ✚ The Madison Valley Ranch at: <https://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/>
- ✚ Joe Dilschneider’s Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatroutr.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

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WEATHER → Well, it is still winter in the Madison Valley, but the beauty, stillness, and serenity, make it a very special time of year. Yes, it's cold, but if you dress right and drive carefully, you will survive. And the Groundhog saw his shadow, so we may have 6 more weeks of winter! The daytime high in January was **37°**, the daytime low was **-1°**. The nighttime high was **28°** with a nighttime low of **-25°**! The snowpack in the Madison River Basin is now at 136% and the river is still fully **gorged!** The setting sun over the snow-capped Madison Range is truly breathtaking.



➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS. FAILURE TO DISCLOSE.** According to a recent survey, **94% of sellers don't disclose property defects.** Failure to properly disclose can lead to misrepresentation claims, ranging from fraud to negligence and, in some states, innocent misrepresentation. This has become a more urgent problem in real estate since buyers in the recent frenzied market started waiving the home inspection contingency to win bidding wars. Home buyers who waive the inspection contingency must rely heavily on seller disclosures to be informed about any potential problems with the property. But more than 90% of buyers say they found at least one issue with their home after the transaction that the seller didn't disclose. Below are the problem types and areas where buyers found issues after closing:

1. Electrical – 88%
2. Fixtures – 58%
3. Plumbing – 58%
4. Exterior structures – 54%
5. Leaks – 54%
6. Basement – 52%
7. Water damage – 46%
8. Heating and cooling – 43%
9. Exterior façade -42%
10. Mold or termites – 39%
11. Major appliances – 34%
12. Roof – 31%
13. Foundation – 27%



This "vintage" fixer-upper might have just a few adverse material facts to disclose!

➤ **HOME FOR YOUR SOUL. FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH.** This beautifully remodeled family home of 3,222 SF, with 3 BR, 3 BA, + 1 BR apartment above the 3-car attached garage/shop + a 2-car, detached, garage/shop, on 1+ acres,



has great views, greenhouse, privacy, and is an easy commute to Bozeman. It has a great layout for working from home, with fiber optic cable and a separate office. Or, for even more privacy, the apartment over the garage could be used for a larger home office setup. This would be an ideal situation for a family who works from home and has lots of toys, hobbies, vehicles or has a good use for all the garage space. **9 Kokanee Drive, McAllister, MT 59740. \$747,000.** MLS # 374654. GoogleEarth Coordinates: Lat. 45.433005°, Lon. -111.729303°, Elevation: 4,906'. Taxes =

\$1,436.93 for 2022. **This property is now under contract, with contingencies. Backup offers accepted.**

➤ **WASHINGTON** (January 27, 2023) – Pending home sales **increased in December** for the first time since May 2022 — following six consecutive months of declines — according to the National Association of Realtors®. The Northeast and Midwest recorded month-over-month reductions, while the **South and West** posted monthly gains. All four U.S. regions saw year-over-year decreases in transactions, with the West experiencing the largest decline at 37.5%.

The **Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI)*** — a forward-looking indicator of home sales based on contract signings — improved 2.5% to 76.9 in December. Year-over-year, pending transactions dropped by 33.8%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001. *“This recent low point in home sales activity is likely over,”* said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun. *“Mortgage rates are the dominant factor driving home sales, and recent declines in rates are clearly helping to stabilize the market.”*

Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown. The Northeast PHSI dropped 6.5% from last month to 64.7, a decrease of 32.5% from December 2021. The Midwest index shrank 0.3% to 77.6 in December, a decline of 30.1% from one year ago. The South PHSI rose 6.1% to 94.1 in December, dropping 34.5% from the prior year. The West index advanced 6.4% in December to 58.6, decreasing 37.5% from December 2021.

“The new normal for mortgage rates will likely be in the 5.5% to 6.5% range,” Yun added. *“Job gains will steadily become important in driving local home-sales markets. The South, in particular, is set to outperform the rest of the country, thanks primarily to better job market conditions in this part of the country compared to other regions.”*

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. The term Realtor® is a registered collective membership mark that identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of Realtors® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS:** Still busy! Inventory is moving, but it’s not too late to find a good property for a reasonable price! There is less competition in the winter! We should see more listings in the spring. **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 JANUARY were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 21↓ homes listed (\$359,000 to \$15,000,000); 9↑ pending sales (\$850,000 to \$1,400,000); and 2 homes sold in 2023 (\$1,064,259 to \$1,200,000), totaling \$2,264,259 at **94.3%**↓ of list prices. (2 listings terminated or expired in January)
- **LAND:** 62↓ vacant lots listed (\$75,000 to \$4,500,000); 12↑ pending sales (\$42,000 to \$632,000); and 3 lots have sold in 2023 (\$10,000 to \$850,000), totaling \$1,032,500 at **97.1%**↓ of list prices. (7 listings terminated or expired in January)
- **RANCHES:** The same 2 ranches are still listed (\$2,250,000 to \$6,999,999); 0 pending sales, and 0 ranches sold in 2023.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 9↓ properties listed (\$93,500 to \$2,500,000); 1 pending sale (\$1,400,000); and 0 commercial properties have sold in 2023. (1 listing terminated or expired in January)

“The best investment on Earth is earth.” Louis J. Glickman, real estate mogul/philanthropist
Also, according to Jordan Davis & Luke Bryan, in their hit song, **“Buy Dirt!”**

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➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA... *Did you know... UFO's are real, and they have landed here in Montana?*** You can learn all about it in a book out by Joan Bird called [Montana UFO's and Extraterrestrials](https://www.mtpr.org/montana-news/2022-09-14/why-are-there-so-many-ufo-sightings-in-montana). Whether a skeptic or a believer, this book will inform, entertain, and challenge you to take a closer look at the possibility – even the probability – of UFOs. In 1950, two spinning disks flew over Great Falls, Montana, and were filmed on a hand-held camera. Today, those “flying saucers” in the now-famous, 1950 Montana UFO Film, still defy conventional explanation. In the 1960s, UFO's were reported at Minuteman missile solos in Montana. In separate incidents, while a IFO was overhead, armed and ready nuclear missiles were suddenly deactivated as missile launch officers watched helplessly. The U.S. Air Force ordered these men never to tell anyone what happened. This book critically examines these and other UFO events in Montana, including reported contact with extraterrestrials. Drawing on recently declassified government documents, historic reports, and first-hand interviews, Ph.D., zoologist and author, Joan Bird, presents compelling evidence that UFOs are real, have frequented Montana's Big Sky, and have landed in our state. <https://www.mtpr.org/montana-news/2022-09-14/why-are-there-so-many-ufo-sightings-in-montana>; <https://riverbendpublishing.com/products/montana-ufos-and-extraterrestrials>

SEE YOU IN MONTANA!

**A wise Old Timer from the area once told me,
“Don't try to change the Madison Valley... let the Valley change you!”**



Toni Bowen, Broker Associate and Accredited Buyer Broker representative, with over 30 years of real estate experience, covering residential, commercial, vacant land, recreational & ranch properties in the Madison Valley. Toni is a 2022 ERA National “Circle of Achievement” Awards winner.



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/assistant to Toni. 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.



Recent Testimonial: *“Toni was wonderful! Highly recommended. She was very quick to show us properties, send over agreements, etc. We can't recommend Toni enough. We are so grateful for her expertise.” Emily and Austin*

***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!

Facebook: [Ask Ennis](#); [This is Really Ennis](#); [Ennis Montana Thoughts & Rants](#); [Ennis Online Yard Sale](#)

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.

https://madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org/homedirectory_home4_madisonv_/Home.html - MV History

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.msuetension.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!

<https://montanafreepress.org/>. MT news from an independent, **nonprofit** source – information & analysis.

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.RideWolfpack.com> – trail riding guides for 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

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