

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

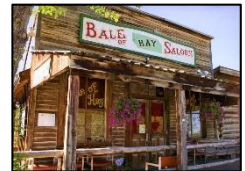
## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MT for FEBRUARY 2023



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



- **MADISON VALLEY FEBRUARY “HAPPENINGS”** → What’s happened in Ennis, **the Basecamp of the Madison Valley?** → **The Madisonian**, Montana’s oldest publishing weekly newspaper, established in 1873, is still celebrating 150 years of publishing in 2023. <https://www.madisoniannews.com/>. → The Elling House presented another **Chautauqua**. → 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 Ranchers Roundtable. **Back Country Safety & First Aid Awareness** class. → Gardeners swarmed to the **Garden Seed Swap** at the Ennis Library. → Ennis is open and busy!
- **MADISON VALLEY MARCH “HAPPENINGS”** → The Ennis Chamber of Commerce, **“Business After Hours”** at the Continental Divide Restaurant on the 2nd. → Elling House will host an **Artists’ Reception** on the 11<sup>th</sup>. (406) 843-5507, [infor@ellinghouse.org](mailto:infor@ellinghouse.org). → The Ennis Continuing Ed is offering a **Country Western Dance Class** on the 4<sup>th</sup>. → The **First St. Patrick’s Day Men’s Lunch** will be held at the Sportsman’s Lodge from 12-1 on the 17<sup>th</sup>. → It would also be appropriate to raise a toast to our founder, **William Ennis**, born March 17, 1828, in County Down, Ireland. Ennis came to the Madison Valley as a freighter in 1879 and built the first store and became the first postmaster. → Following lunch, head over to the Elks Lodge in Virginia City and continue celebrating the Green at the **St. Paddy’s Day Dinner** from 5-7PM. → **Madison Valley Ranch** in Jeffers will be hosting more of their **Wine Dinners**, the 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>. Reservations at (800) 891-6158, [info@madisonvalleyranch.com](mailto:info@madisonvalleyranch.com). → The **Jack Creek Preserve** will hold a **Winter Outdoor Skills Camp** for 14 - 18-year-olds, March 24-26. More information at: <http://www.jackcreekpreserve.org/winter-outdoor-skills-camps>. → **Yellowstone Park** roads are open to “oversnow” vehicles only. Go to: <https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/parkroads.htm> for more info. → The Madison County Commissioners are deciding on the future of the **Madison Meadows Golf Course**. This is very important, not only for golfers, but to the town of Ennis, the valley, and the entire county. → There is **Brunch & Bingo** at the VC Elks Lodge on Sundays 10-12 through March. → *And you can still go fishing, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, “disc” golfing, bowling, do yoga and exercise classes, play Pickleball, Mahjongg, or eat, drink, stroll through Ennis, take in a movie, and go shopping! Just do it all!*
- **MADISON VALLEY FUTURE “HAPPENINGS”** → The Elling House in VC will be holding a **Chautauqua** on April 15. → **Tap into Ennis** on May 20. → **Virginia City Official Summer Opening**, May 27. → **Brothel Days** in Virginia City, June 17. → **Music in the Park** in Ennis, June 29 through Aug 17. → **July Fourth** festivities in Ennis, July 3 & 4. → **Vigilante Car Show** in VC, July 8. → The Annual **Madison Valley Arts Festival**, July 29. → **Virginia City Art Show**, Aug 11-13. → **Hunters’ Feed** in Ennis, October 20. → **Spirit of Christmas Stroll** in Ennis, Dec. 8. → This year will be the **160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Virginia City** and they will be celebrating all year! <https://virginiacity.com/history>.



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➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → There are lots of bills pending in the Montana Legislature, but nothing of substance to report, except for one bill that would have drastic consequences for the Madison Valley. That is House Bill 789 which would allow county boundaries to be altered. Much of Madison County's tax revenue comes from the part of the county that lies in the upper portions of Big Sky, which includes Big Sky Resort, Moonlight Basin, and the Yellowstone Club. Big Sky residents make up more than 20% of the population of Madison County. The rest of Big Sky, on the east side, lies in Gallatin County. <https://discoverbigsky.com/blog/what-county-is-big-sky-in>.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → *From Big John*. Can you feel it? No, not the numb fingers and wind-burned face. The buzz of another season is upon us and starting to build. Feels similar to frostbite, but better. While we have been living in the winter apocalypse, the days are getting longer, and things are changing. Right now, there is a battle between the crusty old man winter and the hot women of spring. Winter is kicking their ass right now, but it is a long fight.

March is the month when things start to happen, here in the Madison Valley. Most ranch yards are full of cute baby calves, the spring winds start blowing, daylight increases every day and hope is on the horizon. At the start of the month, sunset is at 6:10 PM and the sun will not set any earlier until late October. That is a strong dose of positivity for today.

The old saying, "*in like a lion, out like a lamb*" is true for most areas of the country, but March the Madison is a little different. Here, it is more like, "*in like a hungry polar bear, out like a grizzly!*" By the end of the month, spring will be on the horizon and fishing will be had. If you want to get your first fish before the Leprechaun Day, think midges and hard core winter fare. Remember, the river is gorged from Ennis Lake up to 8 Mile. Think, the Bear Trap or \$3 Bridge area. We will see warmer temps and the entire river will open up after Leprechaun Day. By the end of the month, spring stuff will be game. Stone flies, eggs, worms and BWO nymphs will start to take fish in force. Remember, the rainbows will start to spawn as soon as warm up happens, so the egg game will be strong. By the end of the month, it will be *game on!*

Remember, we historically get a ton of moisture in March. Right now we are sitting at 115% of normal snow pack and that is darn good. We need to keep the faucet on and the snow dance going. I suggest a few shots of Willie's Whiskey, put on some good '90's hip hop and get your groove on. That's how I do it.

It's all about to startup, here on the Madison. We have almost survived another winter, so hang in there. Good spring fishing is just weeks away. Stop in the store for some great Black Rifle Coffee, grab some bugs and look at all the cool new gear that has arrived. Get stocked up now, spring fishing is really close. 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.montanatrout.com/>
- Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

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➤ **WEATHER** → Just 18 more days of winter, officially, but it still looks and feels like winter, out there! Especially, in the Upper Madison! We did have a few nice days though, just to tease us into thinking winter was winding down. The daytime high in February was **45°**, the daytime low was **-1°**. The nighttime high was **29°** with a nighttime low of **-15°**! There were 7 days of snow and the snowpack in the Madison River Basin is still increasing, which will be great for our rivers this summer. *That small, black thing is a vehicle! This is Horn Creek Road, near the Idaho border.*



➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS. MINERAL RIGHTS.** Typically, in Montana, transfer of smaller parcels of land do not include mineral rights, unless you purchase a Patented Mining Claim. Understanding what mineral property is, how it is defined, what mineral interest is, and some of the basic rules associated with mineral ownership are fundamental to understanding the process of mineral development and the effects on land that you may own or have an interest in.

- What is mineral property? It is real property that can have several different forms. Mineral property includes hydrocarbons (oil, gas and coal); hardrock minerals (gold, silver, copper, and other metals); and other types of minerals (talc, bentonite, uranium and others.)
- Why is mineral property important? When minerals are developed, the owners of the mineral property stand to benefit. Others who do not own the minerals, such as surface owners or neighbors, are not likely to directly gain.
- How do I find out if my land comes with mineral rights? Mineral records are complicated and it may take intensive research to establish title, but minerals are real property and therefore similar to real estate. You can hire an attorney or a title company to search, or hire a “landman.”
- What types of mineral property are there? Mineral ownership can be a “unified or fee simple” estate when both the mineral and surface property are owned together, or a “severed or split estate,” when the mineral rights have been reserved and owned separately. Most reserved minerals are owned by the federal government and administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

For more information, go to: <https://apps.msuextension.org/montguide/guide.html?sku=MT201207AG>

➤ **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. **Sun West Ranch, Lot 46 A-1. \$465,000. MLS # 380621.** GoogleEarth Coordinates at center of lot: Latitude 44.947093°, Longitude -111.633132°, Elevation 6,003’.

➤ **WASHINGTON** (February 27, 2023) – Pending home sales improved in January for the second consecutive month, according to the National Association of REALTORS®. All four U.S. regions posted monthly gains but saw year-over-year drops in transactions. The **Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI)\*** — a forward-looking indicator of home sales based on contract signings — improved 8.1% to 82.5 in January.

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Year-over-year, pending transactions dropped by 24.1%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.

*“Buyers responded to better affordability from falling mortgage rates in December and January,”* said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun. NAR anticipates the economy will continue to add jobs throughout 2023 and 2024, with the 30-year fixed mortgage rate steadily dropping to an average of 6.1% in 2023 and 5.4% in 2024. With an improving interest rate environment and job gains, Yun still expects annual existing-home sales to drop 11.1% in 2023 to a total of 4.47 million units before jumping 17.7% in 2024 (5.26 million units). NAR projects new-home sales will fall 3.7% year-over-year in 2023 before growing 19.4% in 2024.

*“Home sales activity looks to be bottoming out in the first quarter of this year, before incremental improvements will occur,”* Yun said. *“But an annual gain in home sales will not occur until 2024. Meanwhile, home prices will be steady in most parts of the country with a minor change in the national median home price.”*

NAR also predicts median **existing-home prices will be stable** compared to the previous year for most markets — with the national median home price decreasing by 1.6% in 2023, to \$380,100, before regaining positive traction of 3.1% in 2024, to \$391,800. It estimates median new-home prices will increase by 1.3% in 2023, to \$461,000, and increase by 2.8% in 2024, to \$474,000, due to higher costs of land and construction materials.

**Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown.** The Northeast PHSI rose 6.0% from last month to 68.7, a decline of 19.8% from January 2022. The Midwest index grew 7.9% to 83.3 in January, a drop of 21.1% from one year ago. The South PHSI increased 8.3% to 99.2 in January, dipping 24.7% from the prior year. The West index elevated 10.1% in January to 66.2, diminishing 29.3% from January 2022. *“An extra bump occurred in the West region because of lower home prices, while gains in the South were due to stronger job growth in that region,”* Yun added.

*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:** Yes, it is still busy! Buyers are here but many properties are inaccessible due to the amount of snow we’ve received this winter. There are a few new listings and some sales. There are more listings, but fewer sales, compared to last February. **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 FEBRUARY were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 22↑ homes listed (\$395,000 to \$15,000,000); 12↑ pending sales (\$319,000 to \$1,650,000); and 3 homes sold in 2023 (\$670,000 to \$1,200,000), totaling \$2,934,259 at **95.9%**↑ of list prices.
- **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.
- **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:** 7↓ properties listed (\$93,500 to \$1,999,999); 2 pending sales (\$1,400,000 - \$2,500,000); and 0 commercial properties have sold in 2023.

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***“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!”**

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA...** *Did you know...the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives was from Montana?* As March is **Women’s History Month**, it would be appropriate to honor some of the amazing women who shaped Montana. Check them out at: <https://montanawomenshistory.org/>. There are several inspiring stories of Montana women featured on their website. The most famous of these is Jeannette Rankin, a women’s rights advocate who became the first woman to hold federal office in the United States. She was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Republican from Montana in 1916; she served one term, until she was elected again in 1940. [Jeannette Rankin: Suffragist, Congresswoman, Pacifist | Women's History Matters \(montanawomenshistory.org\)](#).



## **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.



***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](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/](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.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](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](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](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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