

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER



NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for the month of FEBRUARY 2014

Trout live in nice neighborhoods

➤ **MADISON VALLEY "HAPPENINGS"** → Another whirlwind month with lots of



activity in the office and in town. You could have... taken an **ice hockey** clinic in Virginia City, enjoyed a luncheon with the **Madison Valley Woman's Club**, attended a fabulous dinner at Banditos monthly **Supper Club**, joined a guided **Snowshoe trek** with a Ranger in Yellowstone Park, tied some flies, learned about our U.S. **Constitution** at a 6-part class in Ennis, **cross country** skied through



the Madison Meadows Golf Course, or soaked in the **Norris Hot Springs** while enjoying live music. Now what more could you want! → On another note, according to our Madison County detention officer reporting on the jail population, "Numbers have skyrocketed since August!" Just since the beginning of 2014, the county housed **3 inmates** per month! So some people must be having TOO much fun.



➤ **COMING MARCH HAPPENINGS** → Winter is long in Montana and you can expect about the same kind of activities for March, plus the **Madison Valley Library Book Fair** on March 28-29. → The Tackle Shop reports that sometime around mid March, the **Skwala stone fly** emerges on the Bitterroot and Clark Fork Rivers, for hard-core fisherpersons. → Arrow Real Estate will have an **announcement**.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → The Bozeman Daily Chronicle recently reported on the **Montana Land Rush**. Apparently the Oakland Institute, an independent think tank related to world-wide food issues, published a document detailing how institutional investors looking for safe harbors for large sums of money are looking to ag land as farmers retire. The report listed some of the high-profile landowners who have bought up huge chunks of land in Montana and how this trend could have an effect on food and land



prices. → With all the recent storms, the **snowpack** has been replenished all over the state with fabulous snow at all Montana ski resorts and expectation for good run off to fill the rivers this summer. Check out the **Big Sky** Snow Reports <https://www.bigskymontana.org/snowreport/> and plan your ski trip – and while you're at it, schedule a \$300 **float trip** on the Madison River before May at <http://www.thetackleshop.com/index.asp>.

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Don Bowen and Toni Bowen plus Kayla Crawford Way, Office Manager

✚ **FISHING REPORT** → March 2, 2014, by John Way, The Tackle Shop, “In like a lion and out like a lamb. This is an age old saying for the month of March. The first part is at least proving true this year. Let’s all hope the remainder is true as well. Like the above saying the fishing does get significantly better as the month rolls along. The general warming trend energizes the fish to come out of winter mode and start eating in earnest again. One needs to remember that the upper Madison above McAtee Bridge and below the Ennis Bridge to Ennis Lake is now closed to fishing. This will reopen again on May 17. This closure was originally designed to help reduce stress on the rainbow trout that spawn in this area. Also your old 2013 fishing license is not expired. The license year for Fish Wildlife and Parks runs till Feb 28 so if you want to fish this month stop by the shop and pick up a new fishing license. Concentrate your efforts this month below Ennis Dam in the Bear trap and all the way downstream to Blacks Ford. In this area the water temps tend to warm up quicker in the spring. Look for rising fish during the heat of the day to midges. A standard parachute midge or buzz ball in size 16 on a 4X should take all risers. If you’re not seeing risers or the dreaded wind is blowing, try going sub surface with a standard nymph rig. Start with an olive or brown rubber leg stone fly nymph trailed with a midge larva like a zebra midge. If this is not working try a pink San Juan Worm. Sometimes in the spring the fish will aggressively take the pink worm over all other flies. Why I don’t know. Also remember it is spawning season for rainbow trout and the river will soon be full of eggs again. Try either a pink or flesh colored egg pattern in size 12. I like the Otters soft egg pattern. Also remember that if you notice rainbow spawning leave them alone and let them do their thing. Please do not walk over redds as this can damage the freshly deposited eggs. March is when the door starts to open for our main fishing season and the fishing gets better day by day. If you’re itching to wet a line do it, you might just be surprised by the best fishing you have seen in a while. We are getting new gear and clothing in the store each day. Stop by and grab your new fishing license and check out the new arrivals.” *John Way* See The Tackle Shop’s report at <http://www.thetackleshop.com/fly-fishing-report-Madison-River.asp>.

Check out other fishing reports at:

- ✚ Madison River Fishing Company at: <http://www.mrfc.com/MadisonRiverMontanaFishing/MadisonRiverReport.aspx>.
- ✚ Dan Delekta, <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.montanatrou.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **WEATHER** → February was a doozie! Those beautiful, clear, sunny days can fool you into thinking summer is just around the corner, when the thermometer is struggling to reach 0! The prediction was for March to “come in like a Lion” – and it did! Montana gets a bad rap for its weather, but it seems that the Eastern US has had it worse this year. The recorded high for Ennis for the month of February was **44°** with a low of **-28°**. The average high was **39°** and the average low was **15°**. Precipitation for the month was **.35”** compared to our average of **.48”**! So we **STILL** didn’t get enough snow – *even with the 6 foot drifts in front of our house!*



➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **TOP ARCHITECTURE TRENDS FOR 2014.** Architectural changes come slowing to the building industry, compared to other markets. New home construction has picked up speed over the last 3 years and as more homes are built, new architecture trends will begin to appear. According to Angela Colley’s report on www.Realtor.com, you will probably start seeing some of these trends in 2014:

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1. **Tranquility** – Homeowners see their homes as a place to get away from it all and relax. The spa bathroom is a very important feature and will become a big trend.
 2. **Mission Control** – The kitchen is the new focal point of the house, often placed in the center of an open floor plan. This room becomes a multipurpose room and the center of family activities and entertaining.
 3. **Traditional Design** – Craftsman-style homes with large front porches, columns and detailed gables are making a comeback. A contrast to the midcentury modern design.
 4. **Passive Homes** – A passive home is built to work with the climate. Roofs, windows, flooring and orientation all help to slash energy consumption by up to 90%.
 5. **Flex Rooms** - A growing number of households are becoming multigenerational and this change is leading to a part of the home being designed to give more privacy to larger families. These rooms are usually bedrooms or even small apartments with separate entrances. They work great for parents or boomerang adult children and then later in life, for the caregivers.
- Read more at:** <http://www.realtor.com/news/next-years-top-architecture-trends/>

➤ **FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH: VINTAGE RANCH HOUSE**



This charming 1910 house was moved from the Old Thexton Ranch on Varney Rd. to this fenced & x-fenced 5.6-acre lot. An addition and remodeling created a 1,410 SF beauty with 3 BR, 2 BA, propane FP and country kitchen. Has large garage/shop, hay barn, grain shed & mature landscaping. **\$254,000.** (MLS #190629). *The adjoining 17-acre lot is also available, for more pasture & protection.*

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (February 28, 2014) – Pending home sales were essentially unchanged in January, according to the [National Association of Realtors®](#). Monthly gains in the South and Northeast were offset by declines in the West and Midwest. The [Pending Home Sales Index](#), (PHSI) a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, edged up 0.1% to 95.0 in January from an upwardly revised 94.9 in December, but is 9.0% below January 2013 when it was 104.4.

[Lawrence Yun](#), NAR chief economist, said that factors which dampened December activity also were at play in January. “Ongoing disruptive weather patterns in much of the U.S. inhibited home shopping,” he said. “Limited inventory also is playing a role, especially in the West, while credit remains tight and affordability isn’t as favorable as it was a year ago.” The December index reading was the lowest since November 2011, when it stood at 94.6.

The PHSI in the Northeast rose 2.3% to 79.0 in January, but is 5.3% below a year ago. In the Midwest the index declined 2.5% to 92.9 in January, and is 9.3% lower than January 2013. Pending home sales in the South increased 3.5% to an index of 111.2 in January, and is 5.5% below a year ago. The index in the West fell 4.8% in January to 84.2, and is 17.5% below January 2013. Existing-home sales are expected to be weak in the first quarter, while prices continue to rise from limited inventory. “Increasing new home construction can quickly solve two problems, producing more inventory and taming price growth,” Yun said. **The pace of sales should pick up in the middle part of the year.** Total existing-home sales are projected at just over 5.0 million in 2014, slightly below the volume recorded last year. The national median existing-home price is forecast to grow in the range of 5 to 6% this year.

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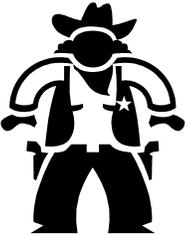
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➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → This has been the coldest, snowiest winter we can remember, and yet we have had one of the busiest. Go figure. People who assume no one wants to buy property here in the winter are just plain wrong! I've tromped through the snow for the past 3 weekends in a row, showing property! There were a few more land and home listings and a few more sales but ranches and commercial are flat. The Southwest Montana Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall and Cardwell), through the month of **February 2014 totals** are as follows:



- **LAND:** 295 vacant lots listed (\$4,000 to \$2,490,000); 6 pending sales (\$49,500 to \$275,000); 7 lots sold in 2014 (\$24,000 to \$1,290,000), totaling \$1,711,000.
- **HOMES:** 132 homes listed (\$95,000 to \$3,350,000); 10 pending sales (\$94,900 to \$750,000); 3 homes sold in 2014 (\$107,000 to \$230,000), totaling \$472,000.
- **RANCHES:** 5 listed (\$625,000 to \$14,999,000); 0 pending sales, 0 ranches sold in 2014
- **COMMERCIAL:** 13 listed (\$50,000 to \$2,950,000); 1 pending sale (\$149,500); 0 commercial properties sold in 2014.

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA WHEN ...** you can leave your keys in the car and the next morning, it's still there! Montana crime statistics indicate a total downward trend in crime based on data from 11 years when violent crime was decreasing and property crime was decreasing. Based on this report, the crime rate in Montana for 2014 is expected to be lower than in 2010 when the state **violent crime rate was lower than the national violent crime rate average by 40.38%** and the state property crime rate was higher than the national property crime rate average by 11.93%. But overall, it's pretty quiet here, as you can tell by our jail population in Madison County!



➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know that...* The notorious outlaw, Henry Plummer, built the first jail constructed in Montana? After Henry was elected Sheriff of Bannack in May of 1863, he quickly began to have the original jail built, the first in what would soon become Montana Territory. He also built a gallows up the hill, which could be seen from the jail. Less than a year later, Plummer was suspected of leading a notorious gang of road agents called the Innocents and on January 10, 1864 50 to 75 men gathered up Plummer and his two main deputies and marched them to those very same gallows that Plummer, himself, had built. All three were hanged. This IS the **Wild West**.



Toni and Don Bowen, both broker/owners with nearly 75 years of real estate experience, between them - covering residential, commercial, land and ranches. They are in the business of "match making," where the perfect fit of buyer and property is the most important goal. The Bowen's pride themselves on being the quality "boutique" of local real estate, providing personal attention and professional service.

and Kayla Crawford Way, Office Manager



Thanking 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.mvmcf.org> – the Madison Valley Medical Center Foundation website
<http://www.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website
<http://www.madisonvalleyexpeditions.com/> - a source for experiencing *authentic* Montana in our area
<http://adayinthelifeofalemon.blogspot.com/> - famous local sculptor, David Lemon's site
<http://ennismontanahomesandland.blogspot.com> – Ennis, Montana Happenings, from **Arrow Real Estate**

MADISON COUNTY:

<http://madison.homestead.com/index.html> - 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/ - 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 - State Highway Web Cams

SKIING:

www.moonlightbasin.com – Check out latest snow conditions on the hill 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 - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails
<http://www.madisonvalleyskiclub.org/> - local ski club with access to Big Sky

HORSEBACK RIDING:

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 – A wealth of resource information, local listings and a portal to the SW MT MLS
www.houselogic.com – Helpful information from the National Association of Realtors
www.trulia.com – Search for homes for sale and sold, local information, and research
www.zillow.com – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates
www.homesandland.com – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

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