

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for JANUARY 2017



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → 2016 ended with a small 2.0 **earthquake** in the Tobacco Root Mountains between Norris and Virginia City. → The **Gorge** pushed the river across the highway between Odell Creek and the Madison River once again, leaving a sheet of ice on the highway. → But some ice is good, especially for the **Winter Classic Pond Hockey Tournament** in Virginia City, which has become quite a famous event! → That was followed by the annual **Winterfest** in Virginia City, featuring those ever popular sports, **Broomball, Log Saw and Fire Hose Roll** + much more! → And if you were still standing, you could have competed in the **NAIFC Ice Fishing Tournament** in West Yellowstone! → The Elling House in Virginia City began their winter **Chautauqua** series. → The Ennis City Council voted to outlaw **potbellied pigs** in town. Oh well. → You will now be safer when you hike into our mountains. The **Madison County Search and Rescue** has added drone technology to their operations, making it easier and faster to locate lost people. → It probably won't help if you fall through the ice though. It is reported that **ice fishing** at Hebgen Lake has been good with ice depths on the east side of the lake measuring up to 16". → The Madison River Basin **Snow Pack** is growing – but as of January 1, it was just 79% of normal. Think snow.



➤ **COMING FEBRUARY “HAPPENINGS”** → The Elling House in Virginia City will continue to host their **Chautauqua** series every third Saturday in February, March and April. See more on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Elling-House-Arts-Humanities-Center-117490418261518/>. And **Willie's Distillery** continues their live music in their tasting room, every Friday evening at 5:30! All winter long! → Plus, you can enjoy live music at the **Norris Hot Springs** every weekend. Check it out at <https://norrishotsprings.com/>. → Check out the **Super Bowl Parties** at the Blue Moon Saloon in Cameron or the Virginia City Elks Club.



➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → According to the Public News Service, Montana Gov. Steve Bullock has temporarily banned the slaughter of Yellowstone bison in Montana, saving 40 bison held in the park right now. But their fate and the fate of many other bison still remains unclear. Last January, the National Park Service released a draft plan for a bison quarantine and relocation program – already established on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeast Montana – as a way to resettle bison that would otherwise be killed. But the federal agency never made a decision.

The Park Service and Montana reached an agreement in the 1990s to maintain a bison population of 3,500 in Yellowstone, and the current count is about 5,500. The state has stated that they want to kill between 900 and 1,300 buffalo to reduce the population this year. The captured bison have tested negative for brucellosis, a bacterial disease that livestock managers fear could be spread to cattle.



Since 2012, tribes of the Fork Peck Reservation and Fort Belknap area have relocated about 300 bison to save them from slaughter. Robert Magnan, director of Fort Peck Tribes Fish and Game, says the Yellowstone bison are different from any other bison on the continent. "The buffalo in Yellowstone National Park are the last, very few of what we have left of the genetically pure animals," he points out. "The rest of the other buffalo have traces of cattle gene in them. And that's what makes these animals so unique."

You can learn all about bison on the Threshold podcast on Montana Public Radio, at: <http://mtptr.org/post/threshold-season-1-preview-story-bison-and-people>.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → **Madison River Fishing Report from The Tackle Shop**, February 1, 2017. While February is the shortest month it usually feels like it lasts forever. It is the month football ends and that weekly ritual most of us have enjoyed is now gone and we are looking to start something new. The weather, at least in the Madison Valley, is still locked into the wind/snow of winter which makes outdoor activity a pick-your-day game. Lastly, the warming winds of spring are on the horizon with the arrival of March and we are all excited to reconnect. While most are concerned with racking up powder days some still have their eye on the river yearlong.

If you must get a line wet this month there are a few options. The typical late winter stuff around Ennis is off limits this year because of the large gorge. It will take some serious warm weather to make Valley Garden or even 8 Mile fishable. Our favorite winter water for February is in two places. The first is below the Ennis Dam. This area is the local go-to place for winter fishing. Good nymphing and even the occasional midge hatch keep us coming back. The second one is above Lyons Bridge. Deep snow might hinder access but the effort is worth it. Winter rigs are usually very simple. Try nymphing with a stonefly and a midge larva like a zebra. And the old worm and egg combo is tough to beat. We like pink worms and crystal meth eggs this time of year. Keep them near the bottom and on a stiff tippet of 2X. Look for the deepest, slowest water you can find and then just stay there. Some days there is a great midge hatch and you can even find a few risers. Look for days above 40° with little or no *wind* and overcast skies.



Get out and wet a line in February and enjoy the solitude of the Madison. What are your other options? I hear watching the world curling finals are interesting. The coffee is always hot and we are getting new gear in weekly -- so stop by the store! **John Way**. <http://www.thetackleshop.com/>.

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.montanatrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

- **WEATHER** → It was too cold to snow much in January! The high of 41° was overwhelmed by the string of minus numbers, with a low of -17°. But the skies were bright blue, with sunshine and not much wind. The kind of winter we like! The scanty precipitation only added up to 1.12". But there is a 68" snow base at the top of the mountain in Big Sky! <http://bigskyresort.com/the-mountain/current-conditions>. The forecast for early February shows a warming trend.



- **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **Paint!** Check out the latest color trends and expert tips from Home Advisor, http://welcome.homeadvisor.com/Ultimate_guide_to_interior_paint. Color Do's and Don'ts, according to PPG Paints' Senior Color Marketing Manager:

DO'S: The time has come to ditch yellow-toned beiges in favor of gray-based neutrals and pastels. Gray-based paints look softer on the wall. They'll also complement any furniture and design style.

DON'TS: Stay away from mauves, evergreens and burgundies when choosing interior paint colors. These are solid choices for home exteriors, but they'll send your interior designs right back to the 1990s.

TIPS: 1) Choose paint last. Choose everything from throw pillows to window treatments before you choose your paint colors. Then match the paint to complement the room.

2) Use one swatch at a time. Rather than painting multiple sample swatches on the wall, using one at a time will give you a better feel for how the color will work.

3) Be mindful of lighting. Paint will look different on your walls than it will in the store and will change with the light throughout the day. Always test two-coat swatches on the walls to see exactly how different colors perform in different lighting.

4) Consider the ceiling the fifth wall. Stark white ceilings can be disruptive, especially against darker walls. To create a more integrated look, take lighter colors all the way up through the ceiling and trim. For darker walls, going a few shades lighter on the color card works well on the ceiling.

5) Use high-quality paint and application products. You get what you pay for.

6) Choose the right finish. The finish is just as important as choosing the right color.

Bathrooms: Satin or semi-gloss resists humidity.

Bedrooms: Flat or eggshell diffuses light.

Cabinets: High gloss withstands frequent washings.

Front Doors: High gloss increases curb appeal.

Kitchens: Satin or semi-gloss easily scrubs clean.

Living Rooms: Flat or eggshell has an elegant, low-sheen finish.

- **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL ... *Featured Property of the Month*** → **One acre near Ennis Lake!**

This beautiful, high-quality, custom home was built in 2006 and is in excellent condition. The home has 2,080 SF with 3 BR, 2.5 BA, private well and septic, plus a 3-car garage/shop. This property has so many extras that make it especially charming – shutters, gardens, trees, wood stove, covered deck, covered porch, extra storage room and offers high efficient, low-cost living. **\$349,000.** 1 N. Salmonfly Lane, McAllister MT. *This is an exclusive, in-house listing and cannot be seen anywhere else.* See the property & area at: GoogleEarth coordinates: 45.427675°, -111.730799°.



- **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → **WASHINGTON** (January 30, 2017) — **Pending home sales picked up in December** as solid increases in the South and West offset weakening activity in the Northeast and Midwest, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The Pending Home Sales

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Index (PHSI) a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, increased 1.6% to 109.0 in December from 107.3 in November. With last month's uptick in activity, the index is now 0.3% above last December (108.7).

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says contract activity was mixed throughout the country in December but ultimately ended on a high note to close out 2016. *"Pending sales rebounded last month as enough buyers fended off rising mortgage rates and alarmingly low inventory levels to sign a contract,"* he said. *"The main storyline in the early months of 2017 will be if supply can meaningfully increase to keep price growth at a moderate enough level for households to absorb higher borrowing costs. Sales will struggle to build on last year's strong pace if inventory conditions don't improve."* According to Yun, a large portion of overall supply right now is at the upper end of the market. This is evident by looking at December data on the year-over-year change in single-family sales by price range. Last month, sales were up around 10% compared to December 2015 for homes sold at or above \$250,000, while homes sold between \$100,000 and \$250,000 only increased 2.3%. Meanwhile, sales of homes under \$100,000 were down 11.6% compared to a year ago.

"The dismal number of listings in the affordable price range is squeezing prospective first-time buyers the most," said Yun. *"As a result, young households are missing out on the wealth gains most homeowners have accrued from the 41% cumulative rise in existing home prices since 2011."* Existing-home sales are forecast to be around 5.54 million this year, an increase of 1.7% from 2016, which was the **best year of sales since 2006**.

The national median existing-home price in 2017 is expected to increase around 4%. In 2016, existing sales increased 3.8% and prices rose 5.2%. Yun expects housing starts – which for another year undershot overall demand – to jump to around 1.26 million units, an increase of 7.9% from 2016 (1.16 million). *"Especially if construction-related regulations are relaxed, all eyes will be on the homebuilding industry this year to see if they can finally start making up lost ground on the severe housing shortages impacting much of the country,"* added Yun.

The PHSI in the Northeast declined 1.6% to 96.4 in December, and is now 1.2% below a year ago. In the Midwest the index decreased 0.8% to 102.7 in December, and is now 3.4% lower than December 2015. Pending home sales in the South rose 2.4% to an index of 121.3 in December and are now 0.5% above last December. The index in the West jumped 5.0% in December to 106.1, and is now 5.0% higher than a year ago.

The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1.1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → We are entering our typical winter lull when showings, listings and sales generally slow down. In the old days, we even went south for a few months! But no more! Buyers surf the web all winter looking for properties they want to see when they come here on vacation. They keep us busy searching for suitable properties, sending information and educating them as to the realities of rural Montana living. This January is pretty similar to last January in listings and sales. The Southwest Montana Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall, and Cardwell), for the month of **January 2017** are as follows:

- **HOMES:** 86 homes are listed (\$50,000 to \$5,600,000); 9 pending sales (\$115,000 to \$2,675,000);

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and 5 homes sold (\$75,000 to \$448,000), totaling \$1,472,000, which was 95%↑ of asking prices.

- **LAND:** 289 vacant lots are listed (\$7,000 to \$1,650,000); with 5 pending sales (\$28,900 to \$195,000); and 3 lots sold (\$30,000 to \$59,000), totaling \$144,000, which was 94%↑ of asking prices.
- **RANCHES:** 3 listed (\$1,200,000 to \$9,950,000); 1 pending sale (\$6,750,000), and 0 ranches sold.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 28 listed (\$44,500 - \$2,950,000); 2 pending sales (\$95,000 to \$260,000); and 0 commercial properties sold.

"The best investment on Earth is earth." Louis J. Glickman, real estate mogul/philanthropist

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know that ... LOTS of famous people came from Montana? (some were not actually born here though!)* Alphabetically, here is an interesting list: **Stephen Ambrose** – author, Undaunted Courage; **Jeff Ament** – guitarist, Pearl Jam; **Brad Bird** – director, Ratatouille; **Dana Carvey** – comedian, Saturday Night Live; **Gary Cooper** – actor, High Noon; **Jack Horner** – dinosaur expert, curator, Museum of the Rockies; **Chet Huntley** – newscaster, NBC; **Phil Jackson** – coach, Chicago Bulls; **Evil Knievel** – stunt motorcyclist; **Myrna Loy** – silent films actress; **Mike Mansfield** – Senate Majority Leader, 1961 – 1977; **Christopher Paolini** – author, Eragon; **Jeannette Rankin** – first woman elected to US Congress; **Steve Reeves** – body builder; **Charles Russell** – western artist; **Ted Turner** – CNN +++; **Michelle Williams** – Hollywood actress. *When people ask me if I am from Montana originally, I tell them not really, but it wasn't my fault, and I got here as soon as I could!*



SEE YOU IN MONTANA!

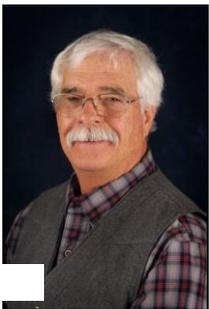


Don & Toni Bowen, Broker Associates and Accredited Buyer Representatives, with over 75 years of combined real estate experience - covering residential, commercial, vacant land & ranch properties in the Madison Valley. *We are in the business of "match making."*



Office manager,

Debbie Reilly-Richardson



Ron Gay, Sales Associate



***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.mvmcf.org> – the Madison Valley Medical Center Foundation website
<http://www.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website
<http://www.ennisartsassociation.org> – The Ennis Arts Association website for all artists!
<http://www.backroadtoyellowstone.com> – information for travelers about the route through our valley

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
<http://montanakids.com/> - State website for all things KIDS in Montana
<https://www.facebook.com/Ennisrealestate?ref=hl> – Facebook page for ERA Landmark Arrow R. E.

SKIING:

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

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
<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
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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