

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for SEPTEMBER 2014



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **A MESSAGE FROM THE TOP** → **MONTANA MAKES US PROUD!** Montana. The long-standing nickname is “The Treasure State,” which gives homage to our rich history of assets found naturally throughout the state. The more modern moniker is “Big Sky Country.” This term was gleaned from a bestselling novel about the fur trade written by A.B. Guthrie, Jr. But regardless of the names we are called, there is a sense of pride in being able to refer to yourself as a Montanan. Though our state is large in size, it often feels more like a tight knit family that pulls together as needed for support and encouragement. Perhaps that feeling was prevalent when William Kittredge coined it “The Last Best Place.” Recently I picked up the August edition of the Delta Sky Magazine and was drawn in by the amazing examples of how our state overcomes the perceived issues of geographic isolation (147,000 square miles in our state) coupled with a relatively small population (though we have finally topped 1 million residents) and truly shines as a different type of treasure. Our governor, Steve Bullock, gives his



insight on why Montana is currently experiencing the highest rate of start-up businesses per capita in the United States. *“Having a reliable technology, transportation, and low-tax infrastructure in place really provides a solid foundation that businesses in Montana can count on,”* states Governor Bullock. There are many indicators to prove that Montana’s economic future is, in fact, bright. [Read more.](#)
Robyn Erlenbush, CRS, GRI, CRB, Broker Owner, ERA Landmark, Bozeman MT.

➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → No rest for the weary! September has kept pace with August and the summer party continues. → The Ennis Arts Association **Evening Over the Mountains Dinner & Silent Auction** filled the Wells Fargo in Virginia City and was a big success for the EAA. → Hundreds enjoyed the Fall Jamboree at **Willie’s Distillery** with food, drinks and live music. → Over 60 ladies attended **The Madison Valley Woman’s Club Fall Potluck** starting off their 2014-2015 season. <http://www.madisonvalleywomansclub.com/>. → There were several gallery **Evening with the Artists** events. → **Bow hunting** season arrived and hunters in camouflage were NOT invisible on the streets of Ennis. → Parking was still scarce in town and you needed reservations for dinner most everywhere. → But there is plenty of parking around the old **Blue Heron**, which is now officially closed. It is a sad end to an important and popular business that helped set the tone for a thriving downtown Ennis for so many years. The building is for sale and ready for a new life!



➤ **COMING OCTOBER HAPPENINGS** → The whirlwind is slowing down and October will be a nice transition into fall. Several of the restaurants will be closing for the season and more rentals will be opening up. → No big events are scheduled until the **29th Annual Ennis Hunters’ Feed** on October 24th. This is always held on the Friday before rifle season opens and Main Street is lined with

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tables laden with wild game dishes competing for prizes. The event is free and held from 3 to 5 PM. Plan to come early because the best dishes disappear fast! The **Chili Queen** is planning to come out of retirement and participate once again with my **Tequila Elk Chili**. Check out my recipe on our website at: <http://www.arrowreal.com/wildWomanCookbook2.php?recipie=2>. Skip lunch and come hungry! Or stay home, get your own elk, and make your own chili!

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → **The Future of Montana's Waters.** The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) spent the last few years working with various interest groups to update the **Montana State Water Plan**. Now, a draft of the 2015 plan is available for review and public comment. http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_mgmt/state_water_plan/. The DNRC reported in a press release, "The plan provides guidance for the conservation and management of water resources in Montana for the next 20 years." DNRC Upper Missouri Water Basin planner Ann Schwend said, "We're



going to have to come together as communities to really think about how we will manage water. How do we meet all of the beneficial needs, such as for agriculture, while ensuring we still have enough water for municipalities or fish and wildlife?" [Read more...](#) → And speaking of water, **Northwestern Energy** has been given approval to purchase 11 hydroelectric plants from PPL Montana. Two of those dams, the Madison Dam at the top of Ennis Lake and Hebgen Dam, on the Upper Madison, are here in our valley. The purchase will reduce the amount of power Northwestern Energy must buy on the open market for its Montana customers. We will once again be using electricity generated from Montana's own waterways. → The **Yellowstone Volcano** will **NOT** be erupting any time soon, according to the experts. Read more at <http://www.nps.gov/yell/naturescience/volcanoqa.htm>.

✚ **FISHING REPORT** → October 1 2014, from The Tackle Shop, Madison River Fishing Report → Fall is here and beautiful colors line the Madison River. The temperature has cooled and fishing is heating up. It is hard to have a bad day on the river this time of year. The brown trout are getting into their spawning mood and are all dressed up for the big party.



If you are on the Madison right now it might just be the best time to fish for the entire year. The water temps are cool and all the fish are feeding up ahead of the long winter ahead. The brown trout are making their yearly migration up out of each lake in our system to spawn. If you're a streamer guy this is your time to shine. We have been having the best luck on black or white streamers. Try either a double bunny, flash fry, sculpzilla, or just a standard bow river bugger. Make sure to get it down with a little weight. We have been having our best luck recently on the slow strip almost a swing. If you're not getting any love try switching size, color or retrieve. Double your chances by adding a bead head trailer. We have been doing best with the fly formerly known as prince, red copper johns or sin city specials. We have been fishing the streamer with a 2X and the bead head on a 3X tippet. If you're looking for some of those big spawning browns, try and target the first 10 river miles above each lake in the system.

If you're a dry fly guy you still have some very good dry fly fishing ahead. On overcast days, look for hatches of BWO's. Keep an eye on the soft water behind rocks, and on slow curves for heads. A sparkle dun or para Baetis will do the trick on most days. You will need to drop down to a 4X tippet when fishing the little dries. As a searching pattern try a black or cinnamon ant as these are still available to the fish. It is a great time of year to fish and the busy traffic of summer has gone. You might just have the river all to yourself and catch the biggest brown of the season. Stop by the store for season end sales

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as well as the up to the minute fishing report. *John Way*. See The Tackle Shop's reports 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.montanatrout.com/>
- ✦ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

➤ **WEATHER** → September is usually a great month and it was true to form – with warm days, cool nights, a little rain and even a sprinkling of white stuff. The clouds make beautiful patterns across the sky and hay bales dot the country side. Pretty close to Heaven. Weather, distance, and geography play major roles in the forming of a Montanan's character. As far as the weather goes, this cliché surfaced long ago: *"If you don't like the weather, wait five minutes!"* The recorded high in Ennis for the month of **September** was **86°** with a low of **24°**. The average high was **72°** and the average low was **36°**. September precipitation was **.85"**, compared to the average of **.97"**. The cumulative precipitation for the year, so far, is **8.63"**. Our average annual precipitation is **13.36"**. More rain, please.



➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **Landscape Tips Protect Against Winter Temps**, from the DAILY REAL ESTATE NEWS. The Farmer's Almanac recently announced a winter forecast with below-normal temperatures for three-quarters of the nation. Last winter was extremely difficult for plants, trees, and shrubs, and damage has been observed across much of the nation.



It is important to protect your landscape investment and avoid costly replacements. Here are two important tips from the [Professional Landcare Network](#) (PLANET), the National Landscape Industry Association, on how to prepare the lawn and landscape for the upcoming winter weather's frigid temperatures, snow, and ice. *And in Montana, we have to consider the wind as well as the deer, antelope, elk and moose who think you planted your lawn, trees and shrubs just for them!*

Water deeply in late fall. Many home owners think their plants don't need water in the winter or they assume snow melt will provide enough hydration. Plants do need to have access to water in the soil during winter. Watering plants and trees deeply in late fall before the first frost will help ensure that they have access to water after the ground freezes.

Wrap plants or smaller trees. Many plant varieties like roses, butterfly bushes, hydrangeas, and crape myrtles experienced damage last winter. To provide plants with extra protection from the wind and cold, wrap them in burlap or a frost protection fabric, especially at night. Leaves can also be stuffed inside and around the branches and at the base to add extra insulation.



More Landscape Tips: [You Just Moved In... Now What? 6 Immediate Yard Care To-Dos](#)

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➤ **FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH** → **CAMP CEDAR, a PRIVATE HILLTOP COMPOUND on 16.878 acres**, includes a beautiful 3,390 SF architecturally-designed home, a 1,200 SF guest cabin/office, 1,000 SF garage/shop, large garden & spectacular views. Priced far below appraised value at **\$599,000**. Extra lot available bordering common area. Check out this spectacular Aerial Drone Video of the property at: <http://youtu.be/Qui48mZrJp8>. You will be amazed.



➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (September 22, 2014) – After four consecutive months of gains, existing-home sales slipped in August as investors paying in cash retreated from the market, according to the [National Association of Realtors®](#). Sales increases in the Northeast and Midwest were outweighed by declines in the South and West. Total **existing-home sales**, which are completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops, decreased 1.8% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.05 million in August from a slight downwardly-revised 5.14 million in July. Sales are at the second-highest pace of 2014, but remain 5.3% below the 5.33 million-unit level from last August, which was also the second-highest sales level of 2013.

[Lawrence Yun](#), NAR chief economist, says sales activity remains stronger than earlier in the year, but fell last month as investors stepped away. "There was a marked decline in all-cash sales from investors," he said. "On the positive side, first-time buyers have a better chance of purchasing a home now that bidding wars are receding and supply constraints have significantly eased in many parts of the country." Yun adds, "As long as solid job growth continues, wages should eventually pick up to steadily improve purchasing power and help fully release the pent-up demand for buying."

The median existing-home price for all housing types in August was \$219,800, which is 4.8 percent above August 2013. This marks the **30th consecutive month of year-over-year price gains**. Total housing inventory at the end of August declined 1.7 percent to 2.31 million existing homes available for sale, which represents a 5.5-month supply at the current sales pace. However, unsold inventory is 4.5 percent higher than a year ago, when there were 2.21 million existing homes available for sale. All-cash sales were 23 percent of transactions in August, dropping for the second consecutive month (29 percent in July) and representing the lowest overall share since December 2009 (22 percent). Individual investors, who account for many cash sales, purchased 12 percent of homes in August, down from 16 percent last month and 17 percent in August 2013. Sixty-four percent of investors paid cash in August.

NAR President [Steve Brown](#), co-owner of Irongate, Inc., Realtors® in Dayton, Ohio, says a gradual decline in investor activity, many who pay in cash, is good for the market and creates more opportunity for buyers who rely on financing to purchase a home. On the subject of mortgage financing, Brown adds, "Realtors® applaud the recent policy change to eliminate post-payment interest charges on FHA-insured single-family mortgages," he said. "The prepayment penalty placed an unfair and unreasonable burden on consumers who already face high housing and closing costs."

The percent share of first-time buyers remained unchanged in August from July at 29 percent. First-time buyers have represented less than 30 percent of all buyers in 16 of the past 17 months.

Distressed homes – foreclosures and short sales – represented 8 percent of August sales, remaining in the single-digits for the second straight month and down from 12 percent a year ago. Six percent of August sales were foreclosures and 2 percent were short sales. Foreclosures sold for an average discount of 14

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percent below market value in August (20 percent in July), while short sales were discounted 10 percent (14 percent in July). Properties typically stayed on the market in August longer (53 days) than last month (48 days) and a year ago (43 days). Short sales were on the market for a median of 135 days in August, while foreclosures sold in 53 days and non-distressed homes typically took 52 days. Forty percent of homes sold in August were on the market for less than a month.

According to Freddie Mac, the **average commitment rate** for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage fell for the fourth consecutive month to 4.12 percent in August from 4.13 percent in July, and **remains at the lowest rate since June 2013** (4.07 percent).

Single-family home sales slipped 1.8 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.46 million in August from 4.54 million in July, and are now 4.9 percent below the 4.69 million pace a year ago. The median existing single-family home price was \$220,600 in August, up 5.2 percent from August 2013.

Regionally, August existing-home sales in the **Northeast jumped 4.7 percent** to an annual rate of 670,000, but remain 4.3 percent below a year ago. The **median price in the Northeast was \$265,800**, which is 0.8 percent lower than a year ago. In the **Midwest, existing-home sales increased 2.5 percent** to an annual level of 1.24 million in August, but remain 3.9 percent below August 2013. The median price in the **Midwest was \$173,800, up 5.9 percent** from a year ago. Existing-home sales in the **South declined 4.2 percent** to an annual rate of 2.03 million in August, and are now down 4.2 percent from August 2013. The **median price in the South was \$186,700, up 4.7 percent** from a year ago. **Existing-home sales in the West fell 5.1 percent** to an annual rate of 1.11 million in August, and are 9.8 percent below a year ago. The **median price in the West was \$301,900**, which is 5.4 percent above August 2013.

The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries. For additional commentary and consumer information, visit www.houselogic.com and <http://retradio.com>.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → September was a very busy month, as



predicted. Our market has remained fairly consistent even though the national numbers show a downturn. We should continue to have visitors to the valley through Hunting Season. **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 **September 2014** totals are as follows:

- **LAND:** 296 vacant lots listed (\$5,000 to \$1,995,000); 13 pending sales (\$30,000 to \$1,250,000); 49 lots have sold in 2014 (\$2,500 to \$1,290,000), totaling \$4,929,277 which was approximately 87% of asking prices.
- **HOMES:** 139 homes listed (\$67,500 to \$3,350,000); 19 pending sales (\$99,000 to \$3,200,000); 55 homes have sold in 2014 (\$69,500 to \$985,000), totaling \$14,980,100, which was 94% of asking prices.
- **RANCHES:** 4 listed (\$1,184,000 to \$9,950,000); 0 pending sales, 0 ranches have sold in 2014. (There are, however, a couple of ranch sales pending that are not listed on the MLS.)
- **COMMERCIAL:** 22 listed (\$85,000 to \$2,950,000); 0 pending sales; 2 commercial properties have sold in 2014 (\$76,200 to \$144,500), totaling \$220,700, which was approx. 93% of asking prices.

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

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➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA WHEN ...** the gal next door can probably out fish, out shoot, out ride, our ranch and out hunt you! The women who choose to live in Montana are no-nonsense, independent, self reliant, healthy, outdoors women. One smart young man claimed, *"The best kept secret about Montana is the women. They are tough, smart, sexy and kind-hearted. It's a lucky guy that ends up with a Montana gal.!"* Here is some proof! <http://blog.nwf.org/2014/08/women-and-fly-fishing/>; <http://www.outdoorlife.com/photos/gallery/hunting/2009/06/greatest-women-hunters>; <http://mtstockgrowersblog.com/2014/09/25/nominations-for-ranching-woman-of-the-year-due-november-1/>.



➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA:** *Did you know that....* **Ennis Lake** was formed in 1905 when the Montana Power Company built a dam on the Madison River? The 2.5 mile long lake, originally known to locals as Meadow Lake, was formed to generate hydroelectric power and it is still supplying power today. It is considered a "run of river" project because the dam can generate power from the force of the river alone. The Madison River exits the reservoir at the head of Bear Trap Canyon, creating a wild set of rapids popular with white water rafters. The river runs approximately 183 miles from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming into Montana, and the 50 mile section above Ennis Lake offers the best fly fishing on the entire river. The lake itself is full of brown and rainbow trout, and with 1,920 surface acres of water, there's lots of room for all sorts of water sports. This popular lake is relatively shallow with a maximum depth of 20 feet and an average depth of eight feet. <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishing/siteDetail.html?id=281398>; <http://www.lakelubbers.com/ennis-lake-1933/>; http://missoulian.com/news/local/northwestern-to-buy-ppl-montana-s-hydropower-dams/article_24859418-26ee-11e3-a055-001a4bcf887a.html.



SEE YOU IN MONTANA!



Don & Toni Bowen, *Broker Associates with over 75 years of real estate experience, between them - covering residential, commercial, land & ranches. They are in the business of "match making."*



Kayla Crawford Way, *Office Manager (Kayla will be leaving our office soon to go and work with her husband John at The Tackle Shop. His business is booming and he needs her help. We are sorry to see her go but we wish them all the best.)*

Thank you in advance for your personal referrals. Your referrals 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://ennismontanahomesandland.blogspot.com> – Ennis, Montana Happenings, from **Arrow R. E.**

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

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
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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