

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for DECEMBER 2014



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → December was a very busy month with the Christmas Stroll, the Splendid Feast in Virginia City, The Ennis Community Choir Christmas Concerts, private parties and the “quiet” opening of the **McAllister Inn!** The long-awaited reopening of the only bar/restaurant in McAllister has been a huge success and was worth the wait. The interior is beautiful, the food wonderful and the bar is still a great place to hang out and meet friends. Like them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/McAllister-Inn-Steakhouse/624469374331218>.



→ Changes on Main Street Ennis – The former Corral Creek Coffee Company building is now home to the **Whispering Willow** Skincare Salon. We’ve heard the old Three Seasons shop will soon be a restaurant and the Blue Heron building was just sold to Prudential for office consolidation. → 2014 was a busy and exciting time in the Madison Valley and we all look forward to a continuation of an improving economy. Bozeman and Big Sky are booming with a serious shortage of affordable housing. **Big Sky** especially has a high demand for workers and minimal supply of employee housing. This could put more pressure on those attempting to either open the Jack Creek Road to the public or find a new route from Big Sky to the Ennis side of the mountain. It continues to be the most persistent rumor. → **Sadie**, the missing dog, has been located and plans are in the works to have her reunited with Bobby Bock, at the old Rusty Cowboy cabin.



➤ **COMING JANUARY HAPPENINGS** → The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **Pond Hockey Tournament** will be held in Virginia City and was organized by Scott from the Gravel Bar. This promises to be a highlight event of future winter seasons. Teams travel from Bozeman and surrounding areas to be a part of this fun event. If you miss this one, get in shape for next year! → January is generally pretty quiet as people recover from the holidays and late the snow birds start heading south. But the hardcore residents find many ways to stay in shape and entertained throughout the **Montana Winter**. You will find great downhill skiing in Big Sky, groomed cross country trails and snow coach trips in Yellowstone National Park, snowmobiling all around the area, and snow shoeing out your back door! Try cross country skiing on the Madison Meadows Golf Course after the next big snow storm! Go to the Montana state website for more winter fun ideas at: [http://wintermt.com/?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=Brand&gclid=CjwKEAiAw56lBRCs29jB9uOvkygSJADnD3-6UJyWeFnQHESNNdAnruIz99tzL1SJpWvZAN64sW3YmhoCODnw\\_wcB](http://wintermt.com/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Brand&gclid=CjwKEAiAw56lBRCs29jB9uOvkygSJADnD3-6UJyWeFnQHESNNdAnruIz99tzL1SJpWvZAN64sW3YmhoCODnw_wcB).



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➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Governor Bullock signed an executive order establishing an **Invasive Species Council** to advise state government on a push back of unwanted invaders, such as Quagga Mussels or Watermilfoil, invasive non-native species which pose a threat to our native habitats, wildlife and fisheries. → A recently published U.S. Geological Survey shows that the western part of the Missouri River watershed, which includes the Madison and the Missouri headwaters, evidenced downward trends in annual stream flow over the past six decades. So it is true, the **Madison River** is smaller than it used to be. → The Montana Legislature is considering a new **Dress Code** proposed for 2015. The main item of concern is leggings! The list suggests proper attire for legislators should be “Business Formal.” 1. “Business Formal” for men is defined as a suit, or dress slacks, jacket, tie, dress shirt and dress shoes or dress boots. 2. “Business Formal” for women, is defined as a suit or dress slacks, skirt, jacket, and dress blouse or suit-like dress and appropriate shoes (flip flops, tennis shoes, and open-toe sandals are not considered appropriate). **Leggings are not considered dress pants.** 3. Women should be sensitive to skirt lengths and necklines. 4. Jeans or denim material, including colored denim, is not allowed. Fleece and jersey (sweatshirt) material are not considered “Business Formal.” Evidently “clean jeans” are no longer considered *Montana formal*.



➤ **FISHING REPORT** → January 1, 2015, *from The Tackle Shop*, **Madison River Fishing Report.**



Here we are in the dead of winter in the most prolific trout fishery in the world. If you need to scratch an itch and catch a fish or just want to try out the new rod or waders Santa left under the tree the good news is there is definitely an opportunity to do that. Fishing this time of year requires a series of decisions. First you must decide on your day. Try days where the temps are above freezing with little to no wind. Second you must pick your spot. Try areas that have good cover and slower water and places where big boulders cause eddies or slicks or on the inside of turns. A few areas that have been successful lately have been 3 Dollar Bridge upstream, below Ennis Dam and below the Bear Trap canyon. If you pick your day and spot with enough care you can be assured of some good fishing. In fact, lately there has been some really great fishing. The best part about it is that you will have the entire river to yourself! Once you have made the above decisions and arrived at your spot, start off nymphing. Try a pats rubber leg with a zebra midge, 3 Dollar Dip, or serendipity trailer all in size 16-18. The main hatch is midges and the smaller midge larva patterns are doing well. Fish all of these on a 4X leader about 6 ft. from your indicator. Takes can be soft so keep a good eye on your indicator. Also keep an eye out especially in the afternoon for risers in the slicks behind rocks. These fish will be rising to midges and the rise forms are subtle. On rising fish a size 18 para midge or buzz ball will usually take any rising fish. Lately, people have been coming in the shop reporting good dry fly fishing all afternoon on days with little to no wind. If you're headed out to try your luck swing by the shop and we can get you lined up. *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 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>.

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➤ **WEATHER** → I can no longer find the weather statistics for the previous months, but I can report that December was cold and snowy! And we had a beautiful white Christmas! According to the Old Farmer's Almanac, January 2015 will be fairly mild with temperatures 7° above average and precipitation 2" above average, with periods of rain and snow. Our Snowpack is below average for Madison County. Southwest Montana is actually the driest place in the state right now. We will need more snow and heavy spring rains to fill our reservoirs. *Downtown Ennis in December* →



➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **Selling a Home in 2015: Resolutions for Success**

If you're considering selling your home in 2015, you should know that a lot has probably changed in the real estate market since you last sold. Knowing what works today — and resolving to put the tips and advice of the past to rest — will help you sell your home quickly and for top dollar.



1) **Appeal to mobile buyers:** Today nearly all home searches begin on a smartphone or tablet — not on the Web, and not using the newspaper. If you want to get the right kind of buyer activity on your home, you need to make sure that you optimize your listing and your photos for mobile devices. If you use the tips and tricks of a generation past, you may miss out on today's new generation of buyers.

2) **Be ready to separate your "home" from your "investment":** Many sellers make the mistake of letting their emotions get the best of them. Selling a home is not like selling a used car — it holds memories and occupies a special place in your heart. When it comes time to sell, however, it's important to realize that your home is also an investment. Being able to change your homeowner hat to your investor hat is crucial. If you are too sentimentally attached to your home, you may reject a good price or fail to negotiate with a serious buyer. Don't let your emotions sabotage your sale.

3) **Don't list your home until you're serious about selling:** Many homeowners think they're ready to sell, but they haven't fully gone through the emotional process of the decision. Do you have a place to go if you sell? Have you fully cleaned and de-cluttered your home? Have you taken your agent's advice on staging and pricing? Many sellers list their home before they are truly ready to sell, only to shoot themselves in the foot by overpricing it or not presenting it to the market in its best possible light.

4) **Don't hire just any agent:** The agent you used to purchase the home 15 years ago may seem like the logical choice for listing your home this time around. But are they really the best option? With access to so much information online and so much at stake, sellers should talk to a few agents before committing. Get a referral from someone who recently sold, and use online resources to research agents' sales activity and expertise. The right agent makes all the difference and if you have any doubt about an agent's abilities, hold off on establishing a relationship.

5) **Make the best impression online:** Nothing frustrates an active and aggressive buyer more than getting an email or mobile notification alert for a new property listing only to access the listing and not see any photos. Buyers' first impressions today are on the Internet. If you list your home without complete information — including photos, description and accurate data — not only will you turn them off, but they may simply not come back later. Make sure you review what your agent posts.

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Brendon DeSimone is the author of "[Next Generation Real Estate: New Rules for Smarter Home Buying & Faster Selling](#)," the go-to insider's guide for navigating and better understanding the complex and ever-evolving world of selling a home.

➤ **FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH** → **A Special Shining Mountains Lot with Trees and Creeks! Lots 157 & 158 have what everyone wants - 14.5 fenced acres, with year around creek, plus a ditch/creek, a spring, spectacular views, near power with good access. Property owners in Shining Mountains have exclusive access to stocked mountain lakes behind a locked gate in Shining Mountains III. This lush property is available for \$159,500. (MLS# 197187) GoogleEarth Coordinates: lat 45.210904° lon - 111.800967°, Elevation: 5,604'.**



➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (December 31, 2014) — Pending home sales slightly improved in November and are above year-over-year levels for the third straight month, according to the [National Association of Realtors®](#). All major regions except for the Midwest experienced a slight gain in activity in November. The [Pending Home Sales Index](#), (PHSI) a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, increased 0.8 percent to 104.8 in November from a slightly downwardly revised 104.0 in October and is now 4.1 percent above November 2013 (100.7) – the highest year-over-year gain since August 2013 (5.6 percent).

[Lawrence Yun](#), NAR chief economist, says signed contracts inched forward in November and have been fairly stable but haven't broken out even as the economy picked up steam this spring. "The consistent economic growth and steady hiring we've seen the second half of this year is giving buyers enough assurance to consider purchasing a home before year's end," he said. "With rents now rising at a seven-year high, historically low rates and moderating price growth are likely to entice more buyers to enter the market in upcoming months." Yun also notes that falling gas prices will likely boost consumer confidence and allow prospective buyers the opportunity to save additional money for a downpayment. NAR's 2014 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers (released in November) found that the median downpayment ranged from 6 percent for first-time buyers to 13 percent for repeat buyers. "There's still misperception out there that a much higher downpayment is needed, while that's not the reality," adds Yun.

The PHSI in the Northeast rose 1.4 percent to 89.1 in November, and is now 7.0 percent above a year ago. In the Midwest the index decreased 0.4 percent to 100.0 in November, and is now 0.5 percent below November 2013. Pending home sales in the South rose 1.3 percent to an index of 119.7 in November, and are 5.1 percent above last November. **The index in the West increased 0.4 percent** in November to 98.5, and is now 4.9 percent above a year ago.

Total existing-homes sales this year are expected to be around 4.94 million, a decline of 3.0 percent from last year (5.09 million), but are then forecasted to rise to 5.30 million in 2015. The national median existing-home price for all of this year will be close to \$208,000, up 5.6 percent from 2013, and is likely to moderate to a pace between 4 and 5 percent next year. Existing-home prices rose 11.4 percent in 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](http://www.houselogic.com) and <http://retradio.com>.

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➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → December activity increased towards Christmas and we have been unusually busy over the holidays. As I reported last month,, winter can be a VERY good time to BUY or SELL! **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 **December 2014** totals are as follows:

- **LAND: 268** vacant lots are listed (\$3,000 to \$2,250,000); **0** pending sales; and a total of **68** lots have sold in 2014 (\$2,500 to \$1,290,000), totaling \$6,925,377 which was **88%** of asking prices.
- **HOMES: 110** homes are listed (\$67,500 to \$2,950,000); **14** pending sales (\$139,000 to \$1,999,000); **and 74** homes have sold in 2014 (\$69,500 to \$2,950,000), totaling \$22,382,600, which was 93% of asking prices.
- **RANCHES: 5** listed (\$1,184,000 to \$9,950,000); **0** pending sales, and **0** ranches have sold in 2014. *(There were, however, a couple of ranch sales that are not listed on the MLS.)*
- **COMMERCIAL: 18** listed (\$56,000 to \$2,950,000); **0** pending sales; and **4** commercial properties have sold in 2014 (\$76,200 to \$385,000), totaling \$687,100, which was approx. 92% of asking prices.

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

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA WHEN** .... *you are content to live a simple life, without a lot of glitzy entertainment.* No one moves to Montana for the rocking nightlife. But you can find a friendly bar in any town in Montana. So there's no point in asking a Montanan if they wish there was more to do. Everyone we know is totally engaged in a full and satisfying life. *Ahhhh...*

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA: Did you know that....** there is a lake located in Yellowstone National Park that straddles the Continental Divide at Craig Pass? It is called Isa Lake and is believed to be the **ONLY NATURAL LAKE IN THE WORLD** which drains to two different oceans **BACKWARDS!** The east side of the lake drains by way of the Lewis River to the Pacific Ocean and the west side of the lake drains by way of the Firehole River to the Atlantic Ocean. This is the opposite of what one would expect since the Atlantic Ocean is east of the lake and the Pacific Ocean is to the west. The lake is easy to visit as it is adjacent to the road that now connects the Old Faithful and West Thumb geysers on what is known as the lower loop of the roadway which traverses through Yellowstone.



### **SEE YOU IN MONTANA IN THE NEW YEAR!**



**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."*



*And our new Office manager,*  
**Elena Lopez Kinnear**



***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.madisonvalleyexpeditions.com/> - a source for experiencing *authentic* Montana in our area

### 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/](http://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](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](http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross_country_skiing.php) - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails

### HORSEBACK RIDING:

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

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