

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for MARCH 2015



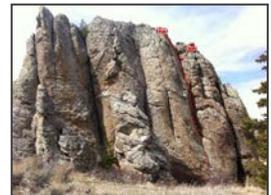
*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*

➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → The Madison Valley History Association celebrated our founder, **William Ennis’ birthday** on March 17 with their annual Irish Stew **Dinner**. [http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org/homedirectory\\_home4\\_madisonv\\_/Home.html](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org/homedirectory_home4_madisonv_/Home.html). → **The**



**Sportsman's Lodge** has repaired and reopened their Bar and Casino! They were just in time for their big Annual Poker Tournament on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Keep track of progress and scheduled events & make reservations, at: <http://www.theennissportsmanslodge.com/>. → The **Gravel Bar & Banditos** hosted another fun event, with a 6-course Dinner and International & Local Beer Paring. Be sure to make reservations for these popular events. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Gravel-Bar/161752173883305>. → The old **Crossroads Market** at the corner in McAllister has been purchased by the

same people who bought and remodeled the McAllister Inn. Their plan is to remodel/rebuild the market. Not sure about the cabins, at this point. → The Bureau of Land Management has proposed a “community-driven” **hiking, running and biking trail** through the Revenue Flats area in North Meadow Creek. Construction is scheduled to be completed by spring of 2016. For more information, go to [http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/info/newsroom/2015/march/dillon\\_field\\_office.html](http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/info/newsroom/2015/march/dillon_field_office.html).



There is already some great rock climbing in this area. → For those who aren't up to all that exercise, a **Senior Center** for Ennis is getting strong community support and a local non-profit group will be submitting a Community Development Block Grant to help fund construction. → **Ennis RadioShack** is going out of business, but Mountain View TV & Satellite will continue serving the community.

➤ **COMING APRIL HAPPENINGS** → The Ennis Lions Club hosts their annual **Easter Egg Hunt** in Lions Park on April 4<sup>th</sup> at 11 am. → **Turkey Season** opens April 11<sup>th</sup> and **Black Bear hunting** begins April 15<sup>th</sup>. → An old fashioned **Chautauqua** will be held on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Elling House in Virginia City. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Elling-House-Arts-Humanities-Center/117490418261518>. → The annual **Ennis Lions Club Auction** will be held at the Rodeo Grounds on April 25<sup>th</sup> starting at 9 AM. They collect items all year for this event and will be offering furniture, appliances, tools, lawn equipment, etc. Proceeds all go back into the community.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → The Montana House passed a proposal to increase the prices of **hunting and fishing licenses**. → Lucas Zukiewicz, water specialist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, says basin percentages have dropped and a lack of snow contributed to below-average **snowpack** percentages in both the Madison and Ruby river basins. He said, “The Madison River Basin as a whole is 80 percent of normal as of March 1. That is down three percent from what it was Feb. 1.” But spring precipitation is expected to improve these conditions. →



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Governor Bullock announced over **\$1 Million in Economic Development Grants** to businesses across Montana. The State awarded Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund grants to seven businesses for business growth and expansion plans. "These grants are a great example of smart and strategic partnerships between the state of Montana and private business to responsibly grow Montana's economy," said Gov. Bullock. "From renewable energy to nutritional supplements and advanced manufacturing, the variety of projects funded shows that many Montana industries are growing and thriving." → **Wolves in the Madison** are become more active. FWP population counts remain stable and wolf harvest is up but they seem to be coming closer to civilization. Wolf packs are pushing elk down onto the golf course and people living in the foothills hear wolves howling regularly. **Watch your dogs.**



➤ **FISHING REPORT** → Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MT FWP) released its annual **Madison River Health Report for 2014** and Pat Clancy, FWP fish biologist says, "Madison River health generally is pretty good. Even in drought years we have a pretty good water supply." Clancy says, "The trout populations are in really good shape. In most instances, the numbers of larger fish are in very high levels." → **April 1, 2015, Madison River Fishing Report** from *The Tackle Shop*, "April is here the weather is nice and the fishing is great. We have been having a nice warm spring so far and the fish have certainly noticed. The Madison River is in great shape and getting better by the day. The bobber lobbers are certainly catching most of the fish. Try chucking a rubber leg stone fly nymph in brown or black with either a soft hackle PT or red copper john behind it. If you fish the deeper water on 3X you should stay bent all day. The blue winged olives are starting to hatch in the afternoons on overcast days. If your fishing on one of these days try a soft hackle PT for the morning and if you see risers change over to a purple haze or shuck off BWO on 4X. For you streamer guys it is getting better by the day. We have had some reports of good streamer fishing on Sparkle Minnows in the Ghost color as well as black sculpin imitations. The slow strip, twitch or drag has been doing best. Remember to fish these on a stout tippet of 2X as takes are aggressive. The fishing should just get better and better as the month rolls along. April is our guides' favorite month to fish the Madison as you can have it to yourself on most days. New gear arriving daily and the new website is up and running. Check it out and let us know what you think." *John Way*, The Tackle Shop. See John's full reports and more at <https://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** → The month of March is characterized by *rapidly rising* daily high temperatures. And we certainly had some nice spikes! Our winter weather has been SO pleasant, that many Snowbirds didn't even fly south this year! The recorded high in Ennis for the month of March was **74°** with a low of **-1°**. The average high was **56°** and the average low was **27°**. March Precipitation was **.14"**. We are waiting for the rains to come and turn these fields from brown to green!



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➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **Hot Housing Trends for 2015**, Realtor Magazine reports, “Everyone wants to be hip, and the latest trends in design can help distinguish one home from another. And it’s not all flash; many new home fads are geared to pare maintenance and energy use and deliver information faster. Here’s a look at what’s coming.” **Barbara Ballinger**, <http://realtormag.realtor.org/home-and-design/feature/article/2014/12/21-hot-housing-trends-for-2015>. Here are just a few:

1. **The IN color.** A blast of a new color is often the easiest change for sellers to make, offering the biggest bang for their buck. Sherwin-Williams says **Coral Reef** is 2015’s color of the year because it reflects the country’s optimism about the future. And the Pantone Color Institute has named **Marsala** as their 2015 color of the year. They claim Marsala enriches our mind, body and soul, exuding confidence and stability. It is a warm, subtly seductive shade that draws us in. *Your choice!*

2. **Open spaces go mainstream.** An open floor plan may feel like old hat, but it’s becoming a wish beyond the young hipster demographic, so you’ll increasingly see this layout in traditional condo buildings and single-family suburban homes in 2015.

3. **Off-the-shelf plans.** Buyers who don’t want to spend time or money for a custom house have another option. House plan companies offer myriad blueprints to modify for site, code, budget, and climate conditions, says James Roche, whose [Houseplans.com](http://Houseplans.com) firm has 40,000 choices.

4. **Freestanding tubs.** Freestanding tubs may conjure images of Victorian-era opulence, but the newest iteration from companies like Kohler shows a cool sculptural hand. *Here is a very cool, hammered copper tub.* →

5. **Quartzite.** While granite still appeals, **quartzite** is becoming the new hot contender, thanks to its reputation as a natural stone that’s virtually indestructible. It also more closely resembles the most luxury classic—marble—without the drawbacks of staining easily. Quartzite is moving ahead of last year’s favorite, quartz, which is also tough but is manmade.

6. **Porcelain floors.** If you’re going to go with imitation wood, **porcelain** will be your 2015 go-to. It’s less expensive and wears as well as or better than the real thing. Porcelain can be found in traditional small tiles or long, linear planks. It’s also available in numerous colors and textures, including popular one-color combos with slight variations for a hint of differentiation. Good places to use this material are high-traffic rooms, hallways, and areas exposed to moisture.

7. **Charging stations.** With the size of electronic devices shrinking and the proliferation of Wi-Fi, demand for large desks and separate home office is waning. However, home owners still need a dedicated space for charging devices, and the most popular locations are a corner of a kitchen, entrance from the garage, and the mud room.

8. **Multiple master suites.** Having two master bedroom suites, each with its own adjoining bathroom, makes a house work better for multiple generations. Such an arrangement allows grown children and aging parents to move in for long- or short-term stays, but the arrangement also welcomes out-of-town guests. In areas where people buy vacation homes, it is very appealing for two couples looking to share a vacation home.

9. **Fireplaces and fire pits.** The sight of a flame—real or faux—has universal appeal as a signal of warmth, romance, and togetherness. New versions on the market make this amenity more accessible with more compact design and fewer venting concerns. This year, be on the lookout for the latest iteration on this classic: chic, modern takes on the humble **wood stove**.

10. **Grander garages.** The new trends here include bringing the driveway’s material into the garage, temperature controls, sleek glass doors, specialized zones for home audiovisual controls, and a big sink or tub to wash pets.



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11. **Keyless entry.** Forget your key (again)? No big deal as builders start to switch to biometric fingerprint door locks with numerical algorithms entered in a database. Some systems permit home owners to track who entered and when.

12. **Cool copper.** First came pewter; then brass made a comeback. The 2015 “it” metal is **copper**, which can exude industrial warmth in large swaths or judiciously in a few backsplash tiles, hanging fixture, or pots dangling from a rack. The appeal comes from the popularity of industrial chic, which Restoration Hardware’s iconic style has helped promote.

13. **Return to human scale.** During the McMansion craze, kitchens got so big they almost required skates to get around. This year we’ll see a return to a more human, comfortable scale. In many living or family rooms that will mean just enough space for one conversation grouping, and in kitchens one set of appliances, fewer countertops, and smaller islands.

14. **Shades of white kitchens.** Despite all the variations in colors and textures for kitchen counters, backsplashes, cabinets, and flooring, the all-white kitchen still gets the brass ring. When cabinets are white, home owners can choose bigger, bolder hardware.

15. **Outdoor living.** Interest in spending time outdoors keeps mushrooming, and 2015 will hold a few new options for enhancing the space, including outdoor showers adjacent to pools and hot tubs. Also expect to see improvements in perks for pets, such as private dog runs and wash stations.

➤ **FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH** → A magnificent *MADISON VALLEY ESTATE* bordering large ranch, less than a mile to the Madison River, in the beautiful Jeffers area. This home of over 5,000 SF, includes 5 BR, 6 BA, home theater, art studio, home gym, 1000-bottle wine cellar, 3 ponds, 2 creeks, trees, metal yard art sculptures, 2-car garage, separate guest quarters and more. All this on 8+ acres. Furniture/furnishings package offered separately. **\$2,875,000.** MLS # 204135. Google Earth Coordinates: latitude 45.382450°, longitude -111.674939°, Elev: 4,936’.



➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (March 30, 2015) – Pending home sales in February increased to their highest level since June 2013 as sizeable gains in the Midwest and West offset smaller declines in the Northeast and South, according to the **National Association of Realtors®**. The **Pending Home Sales Index** (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, rose 3.1 percent to 106.9 in February from a slight downward revision of 103.7 in January and is now 12.0 percent above February 2014 (95.4). The index is at its highest level since June 2013 (109.4), has increased year-over-year for six consecutive months and is above 100 – considered an average level of activity – for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive month.

**Lawrence Yun**, NAR chief economist, says demand appears to be strengthening as we head into the spring buying season. “Pending sales showed solid gains last month, driven by a steadily-improving labor market, mortgage rates hovering around 4 percent and the likelihood of more renters looking to hedge against increasing rents,” he said. “These factors bode well for the prospect of an uptick in sales in coming months. However, the underlying obstacle – especially for first-time buyers – continues to be the depressed level of homes available for sale.” According to NAR’s monthly **Realtors® Confidence Index**, the percent share of first-time buyers increased slightly for the first time in February since November 2014, up to 29 percent from 28 percent in January. “Several markets remain highly-

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competitive due to supply pressures, and Realtors® are reporting severe shortages of move-in ready and available properties in lower price ranges,” adds Yun. “The return of first-time buyers this year will depend on how quickly inventory shows up in the market.”

The PHSI in the Northeast fell 2.3 percent to 81.7 in February, but is 4.1 percent above a year ago. In the Midwest the index leaped 11.6 percent to 110.4 in February, and is now 13.8 percent above February 2014. Pending home sales in the South decreased 1.4 percent to an index of 120.2 in February, but is still 10.8 percent above last February. The index in the West climbed 6.6 percent in February to 102.1 (highest since June 2013 at 111.4) and is now 18.3 percent above a year ago.

Total existing-homes sales in 2015 are forecast to be around 5.25 million, an increase of 6.4 percent from 2014. The national median existing-home price for all of this year is expected to increase around 5.6 percent. In 2014, existing-home sales declined 2.9 percent and prices rose 5.7 percent.

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*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>.*

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS.** It may be the good weather that is bringing so many people out to see real estate, but this has been the busiest winter we can remember! **The Southwest Montana Multiple Listing statistics** for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall, Cardwell), for the month of **March 2015** totals are as follows:

- **LAND:** 289↑ vacant lots are listed (\$3,000 to \$2,250,000); 10 pending sales (\$17,950 to \$1,250,000); and a total of 11 lots have sold so far in 2015 (\$7,500 to \$115,000), totaling \$714,700, which was 91% ↓ of asking prices.
- **HOMES:** 104↓ homes are listed (\$49,900 to \$3,475,000); 14 pending sales (\$184,900 to \$1,999,000); and 18 homes have sold so far in 2015 (\$82,500 to \$1,062,500), totaling \$5,283,600, which was 92% ↑ of asking prices.
- **RANCHES:** 5↓ listed (\$1,184,000 to \$9,950,000); 1 pending sale, and 0 ranches have sold in 2015.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 17↑ listed (\$56,000 - \$2,950,000); 1 pending sale (\$259,000); and 1 commercial property sold (\$51,500) so far in 2015.

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

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU’RE FROM MONTANA WHEN ....** *You spend more time outside, in spite of the weather, than most other Americans.* There are no “fair weather” ranchers here. Actually, not many “fair weather” Montanans. Period. We work and play outside all year long. The Outdoor Participation Report from <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchParticipation2013.pdf> shows hiking, running and **fishing** to be the most popular outdoor sports. And we do plenty of that here. Then add all the trail riding, skiing, snowmobiling, cycling, rodeo, rock climbing, boating and hunting, etc., etc., etc., and we are among the most recreationally active states. We don’t let a little weather stop us from enjoying the outdoors! **No wimps!**



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➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA:** *Did you know that....* The Montana town of Ringling was named for John Ringling of the **Ringling Brothers Circus** family? The Ringling family once owned considerable ranch land in the area. Ringling is a small unincorporated community in southern Meagher County. The town was a station stop on the transcontinental main line of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad ("the Milwaukee Road"); it was also the southern terminus of the White Sulphur Springs and Yellowstone Park Railway, which ran from Ringling to White Sulphur Springs. Ringling served as a community center for ranchers and homesteaders in the vicinity, but the town's population declined throughout most of the twentieth century as the region's agricultural activity dwindled. Both railroad lines through Ringling were abandoned in 1980, and only a handful of people remain in the town today. Ringling was also president of the White Sulphur Springs and Yellowstone Park Railway. After acquiring the **Barnum & Bailey Circus**, the combined circus had winter quarters in Bridgeport, CT (the birthplace of P.T. Barnum) and later near the town of Ringling, which was often snow-free unlike most locales at this latitude in the United States. The lower Shields Valley (which contains Ringling and environs) and nearby Big Timber, Montana has one of the warmest average January temperatures in the state of Montana, due to Chinook winds (adiabatic warming).



***SEE YOU IN MONTANA!***

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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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