

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

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



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



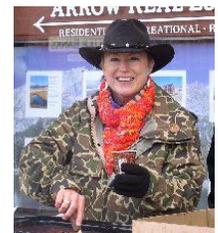
➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → **Ennis High School** was named #1 in the State of Montana for 2015! Bigger is not always better when it comes to quality education, and the graduates coming out of our small (but excellent) school system are proof of that! → September events started out with the famous & popular **Tie One On!**, the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Ennis-on-the-Madison **Fly Fishing Festival**, sponsored by the Madison River Foundation. → Art lovers filled the Wells Fargo Steakhouse in Virginia City for the Ennis Arts Associations annual event, **An Evening Over the Mountains**, with dinner and silent auction. → There were big crowds of locals & tourists at the 3<sup>rd</sup> **Annual Fall Pig Roast & Gathering at Willie’s Distillery**. The weather was perfect, music was great, food was delicious & abundant and we’re looking forward to their Spring Pig Fest! → The rain did not daunt the large group of people who spent two days following the 2015 **Montana Range Tour**, hosted by the Madison Conservation District in Ennis, which showcased successful, working land projects in the area.



→ The new **Ennis Senior Center** held an Open House to show off their new facility, ready to welcome seniors to participate in a wide range of activities and good food! → A **moose family** has taken up residence in Ennis!



➤ **COMING OCTOBER HAPPENINGS** → The Ennis Chamber will be hosting the **30th annual Hunters Feed & Chili Cook-off** on October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 3 to 5 PM. All along Main Street, the local businesses offer up homemade wild game dishes for tasting. Time to clean out the freezer to make room for new game! The event is **free** and hungry hunters dominate, so come early for the best selection. I will again be making my famous **Tequila Elk Chili**, so be sure to stop at our office for a taste and the recipe! →



➤ **HUNTING REPORT** → Montana FWP reports that **antelope** populations are continuing to recover in central and eastern Montana and there are a few more special licenses available. They also report that these are good times for elk hunters as our **elk** populations continue to improve across most of the state. The general hunting season for 2015 runs October 24<sup>th</sup> through November 29<sup>th</sup>. Check out the new hunting regulations at: <http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting/regulations/default.html>.



➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Most Montanans have seen bison, but they probably don't realize the animals they see aren't *wild*. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has researched re-establishing **wild bison**, and there are success stories where small herds exist in Utah and Arizona. See more at: <http://www.publicnewsservice.org/2015-09-11/endangered-species-and-wildlife/mt-wild-bison-options-on-the-table/a48064-1>. → The federal government’s announcement that they will not be adding the

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**greater sage grouse** to the endangered species list is being called a historic decision and a States' Rights Victory. That's because the threat of listing the bird spurred state governments, ranchers, the energy industry and environmentalists to come up alternative strategies to protect the bird. → **Virginia and Nevada Cities**, together, were the number one state-owned tourist attraction in the state for the fourth year in a row – which is more than all of the state parks combined! → **The Unemployment Rate in Montana is 4.1%** as compared with 5.1% for the entire U.S. Job growth in Montana continues to be well above average with 10,700 more jobs than this time last year. Another good reason to move to Montana! **To hunt, fish, and work!**

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → The Montana FWP has approved several changes in Fishing Regulations that affect the Madison River. The Public Comment period is open until Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> and final changes will be approved on Oct. 8. One of the changes would allow the harvest of 1 trout daily and another would allow year-round fishing, from Hebgen to Ennis Lake. Read the proposed changes and comment at: [http://fwp.mt.gov/fishing/publicComments/2015/2016\\_19fishingRegs.html](http://fwp.mt.gov/fishing/publicComments/2015/2016_19fishingRegs.html).

The **Tackle Shop Madison River Fishing Report** for October 1. The glory time of the year is upon us and if you're a serious fisherman now is the time to be on the Madison River. During the month of October larger than normal brown trout get really active ahead of and during the spawning period. This is the opportunity you have been waiting for all summer to land the fish of the year or even lifetime. If you're searching for the big boys, sub surface is the name of the game. Big bunny fur streamers on stout tippets are the standard fare. We like anything sculpin-like in colors olive, natural, black and white. Have plenty with you and rotate colors, retrieve and depth till you find out what the fish are looking for. All of these should be fished on stout 2X tippets. Follow all your streamers with a bead head nymph to get the most out of your set up. We have been having the best luck with small flash purple princes. For you nymphers, the trusty pats rubber leg is still the ticket on the Madison River. We will also see a good blue winged olive hatch as the month rolls along so you should fish some tight bodied may fly nymphs like the psycho may and micro may's both in olive. For you dry fly guys, think rainy overcast days and look for blue winged olives. These are small bugs and look for rises behind rocks in the slicks and on inside turns of the river. Blue wing's like overcast rainy days so pick the worst weather days. Close out fall specials happening all month at the store so stop in for great savings and the latest fishing report. *Good fishing, John Way.* See John's full reports and more at: <https://www.thetacklesop.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** → September was glorious! Cool, crisp mornings, bright, clear skies, golden leaves and some snow on the mountain tops! Our favorite time of year. It's hard to believe that the last day of September was 80°! Winter is going to come as a real shock! But some people would rather have the fall weather – better for fishing and hunting. The recorded **daytime** high in Ennis for the month of September was 87° with a low of 49° and a **nighttime** high of 49° and a low of 28°. It's time to dig out the comforter! Total precipitation for the month was 1.25" and the fire restrictions have been lifted!

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➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **The Importance of CONSERVATION EASEMENTS & OPEN SPACE.** Excerpts from an article by Robyn Erlenbush, Broker/Owner ERA Landmark Arrow Real Estate. Aerial photo of Ennis Lake and the fingers of the Madison River.

July was **Montana Open Land Month**, celebrated with festivals, walks, bike tours, films, workdays and more, as our state celebrated the beauty we call Montana. Conservation Easements are considered an integral part of the big picture. But,

**What**, exactly are they?

- A legal agreement that ensures that the protected resources on your property will never be destroyed or developed.
- It can be used to permanently conserve working farms and ranches; wildlife habitat and corridors; rivers and creeks; open space and scenic values; and prime soils.
- When a landowner establishes a C.E., they still retain ownership of the property.
- It can be used to farm, ranch, recreate, etc., as long as the activities sustain the land's resources.
- The land can still be sold or passed along to heirs.
- The C.E. transfers with the land in perpetuity.
- A C.E. can be created to protect the property as a whole, a portion of it, or even just some of the key resources present.

**Why?**

- The rationale of developing a C.E. is important not only for preservation and protection of property but also for tax benefits.
- Since 1976, private landowners have appreciated the fact that the value of their donated easement is considered a charitable donation which can provide income tax deductions.
- The addition of an easement most likely will reduce the resale value of a property which assists with estate planning.



**Where?**

- The National Conservation Easement Database (<http://www.conservationaleasement.us/>) compiles records from land trusts and private agencies around the nation.
- Very specific state statistics are available with data including type of landowner, purpose of easement, date of acquisition, and much more.
- By county in Montana, Flathead leads the way in number of easements, with 189, followed by Missoula County with 184, and Madison County with 163.
- The Montana Association of Land Trusts (MALT) in Helena is another great resource for all things related to land conservation. There are currently 12 nonprofit land trust organizations that are members of MALT, all working toward the common goal of keeping Montana the best it can be.

Montanans are so lucky to live in a state where people respect and protect our open space and unobstructed views for all to enjoy with an immense passion.

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL... Featured Property of the Month** → **CUSTOM CHARMER!** Great views from this top-quality, custom-built home in excellent condition. This home has 2,080 SF, 3 BR, 2.5 BA, great kitchen, large storage room, wood stove + propane FA furnace, covered decks, 3-car "serious" garage/shop, mature landscaping, gardens with underground sprinklers, all on 1 acre, 7 miles north of Ennis. 1 N Salmonfly Lane, Troutdale, McAllister. **\$325,000.** (MLS #208549).



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➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (September 28, 2015) — Pending home sales retreated in August but remained at a healthy level of activity and have now risen year-over-year for 12 consecutive months, according to the National Association of Realtors®. A modest increase in the West was offset by declines in all other regions. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, decreased 1.4 percent to 109.4 in August from 110.9 in July but is still 6.1 percent above August 2014 (103.1).

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says even with the modest decline in contract signings, demand continues to outpace housing supply and elevate price growth in numerous markets. "Pending sales have leveled off since mid-summer, with buyers being bounded by rising prices and few available and affordable properties within their budget," he said. "Even with existing-housing supply barely budging all summer and no relief coming from new construction, contract activity is still higher than earlier this year and a year ago."

According to Yun, sales in the coming months should be able to roughly maintain their current pace. However, he warns that there are looming speed bumps that have the potential to impact housing. "The possibility of a government shutdown and any ongoing instability in the equity markets could cause some households to put off buying for the time being," adds Yun. "Furthermore, adapting to the changes being implemented next month in the mortgage closing process could delay some sales."

The national median existing-home price is expected to increase 5.8 percent in 2015 to \$220,300. Yun forecasts total existing-home sales this year to increase 7.0 percent to around 5.28 million, about 25 percent below the prior peak set in 2005 (7.08 million).

The PHSI in the Northeast fell 5.6 percent to 93.3 in August, but is still 8.9 percent above a year ago. In the Midwest the index inched down 0.4 percent to 107.4 in August, and is now 6.5 percent above August 2014. Pending home sales in the South declined 2.2 percent to an index of 121.5 in August but are still 4.1 percent above last August. The index in the West rose 1.8 percent in August to 104.9, and is now 7.6 percent above a year ago.

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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** → September is historically strong, but this year it seemed exceptionally busy. Many of the deals made in the summer are closing in September as well as more serious "lookers" starting their search. No slowing up yet and no reason to give up hope for more sales this year. **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 **September 2015** are as follows:



- **LAND:** 346↓ vacant lots are listed (\$2,500 to \$2,250,000); 28 pending sales (\$2,500 to \$595,000); and a total of 62 lots have sold so far in 2015 (\$1,200 to \$1,200,000), totaling \$4,904,599, which was 90% of asking prices.

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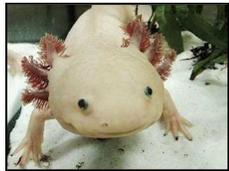
- **HOMES:** 115↓ homes are listed (\$65,000 to \$3,375,000); 16 pending sales (\$22,500 to \$689,000); and 68 homes have sold so far in 2015 (\$44,000 to \$1,800,000), totaling \$23,235,800, which was 92%↓ of asking prices.
- **RANCHES:** 7↓ listed (\$485,000 to \$9,950,000); 3 pending sales (\$344,000 to \$1,295,000), and 1 ranch sold in 2015 (\$5,500,000) which was 66% of asking price.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 23↓ listed (\$56,000 - \$2,950,000); 0 pending sales; and 2 commercial properties sold in 2015 (\$51,500 and \$247,500), totaling \$299,000, which was 84% of asking price.

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

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA...** *when you don't assume you will have cell service or internet coverage wherever you go!* Montana has the slowest average Internet speed in the country. People living in Estonia, Kazakhstan and Madagascar have a faster average Internet speed than many of us who live in Montana! However, the Madison Valley is coming up in the world! Fiber optic cable is being laid to most areas of the valley and should be hooked up soon, or so they tell us! Our cell towers are still few and far between and we're used to dropped calls and “No service.” But then, there is something to be said for being out of touch and disconnected!



➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know... locals believe that a rare, endangered species of an amphibious salamander, called an Axolotl, lives in the Axolotl Lakes, in the Gravelly Range, above the Madison Valley?* But in fact, the amphibians that inhabit those lakes are **not**



← true Axolotls! That name is derived from the Aztec language for a unique amphibian that today survives in the wild, though only



in a few lakes and swamps in the highlands above Mexico City! This is shocking news, as we believed those critters were the real thing! But according to this article on Axolotls, by Paul Driscoll, ours are actually Tiger (or mole) salamanders! (above) ↑ [http://www.bozeman-magpie.com/spotlight-full-article.php?article\\_id=503](http://www.bozeman-magpie.com/spotlight-full-article.php?article_id=503). And for more on the mole salamander, check out: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mole\\_salamander](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mole_salamander). For more information about everything that lives and grows in Montana, the Montana Field Guide is a great source of information for animals, plants and lichen native to our state. <http://fieldguide.mt.gov/default.aspx>.



## SEE YOU IN MONTANA!



**Don & Toni Bowen, Broker Associates and Accredited Buyer**

*Representatives, with over 75 years of real estate experience, between them - covering residential, commercial, vacant land & ranch properties in the Madison Valley. We are in the business of "match making."*



Office manager, **Debbie Reilly-Richardson**



*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

<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](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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