

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

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



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → December was full of holiday preparations. The **Christmas Stroll** kicked off the holidays on Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> with decorations, live music, pictures with Santa, wagon rides, refreshments and special store discounts from downtown Ennis merchants. → The **Christmas Bird count** in Ennis recorded 67 species, the second highest count on record, since 1958! → Most of the **Snowbirds** have already flown south, the hunters are gone and there are very few tourists around. So Ennis is much quieter and it's easier to find a parking place. There were lots of parties and festivities, as the valley is quite social. → Several restaurants have closed for the winter. The Summit Café has closed and will reopen in the spring as the new/old **Ennis Café!** The Alley Bistro, McAllister Inn, Sportsman's Lodge, Gravel Bar, Grizzly Bar & Grill and Blue Moon Saloon all remain open for our enjoyment. → The **Ennis Big Sky Airport** will be reconstructing and upgrading the aprons & taxiways in the spring, due to age and to accommodate the increased volume and type of traffic the airport is now experiencing. → The **Ennis Senior Center** is the latest “hot spot” in town, with a huge increase in attendance at the new location, great food, lively attendees and fun activities, Tuesday through Friday. → The **Ennis Ambulance** will now be equipped with a **LUCAS device** which produces automatic compression, standardizing CPR on a patient. This is a great life-saving measure for our community.



➤ **COMING JANUARY HAPPENINGS** → The Elling House Arts and Humanities Center in Virginia City will be hosting their **Chautauqua Program** this winter, with the next event on January 16<sup>th</sup>. → The continuing winter activities are numerous: **bowling, first-run movies, Pilates, Yoga and aerobics,** the **Madison Valley Woman's Club, Ennis Arts Association, Lions Club, Quilt Guild, Continuing Ed Classes, Friday night entertainment at Willie's Distillery** and many **volunteer activities** to keep people active and entertained. There are outstanding opportunities to enjoy outdoor winter sports in the Madison Valley as well as **Big Sky and Yellowstone National Park.**



➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Bozeman may become the center of the Universe one day, as more and more high tech companies recognize the benefits of opening centers in the middle of Montana! **Oracle Corp.,** one of the largest tech firms in the world, is building a new operations center on the outskirts of Bozeman, which promises to bring even more high-paying jobs to the area. A new 20,000 SF building is under construction which will be used as a global operation center to control Oracle's network of data centers. Read more



**ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE** → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729  
Now associated with **ERA LANDMARK Real Estate,** with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana  
(406) 682-4290 → [www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) → [www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) → [arrow@3rivers.net](mailto:arrow@3rivers.net). Don & Toni Bowen

about it at: [http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/economy/new-oracle-operations-center-to-bring-bozeman-more-tech-jobs/article\\_1875caa6-2d00-560b-98ac-e6d55c0a5069.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/economy/new-oracle-operations-center-to-bring-bozeman-more-tech-jobs/article_1875caa6-2d00-560b-98ac-e6d55c0a5069.html). → Rumors have it that either **Google or Facebook** may be planning to build data centers in the Bozeman area as well. [http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/economy/officials-clearing-way-for-google-or-facebook-to-build-data/article\\_6a3c5b03-20b8-594c-a392-401ebd42ba48.html](http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/economy/officials-clearing-way-for-google-or-facebook-to-build-data/article_6a3c5b03-20b8-594c-a392-401ebd42ba48.html). Anyone interested in buying property in the Bozeman area, should do so sooner than later!

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → Madison River regulations:

<http://myemail.constantcontact.com/November-13--2015--Newsletter-.html?soid=1102486473086&aid=cKL3EUdS6Cc>. Read about the MT FWP changes that affect the river. → The **Tackle Shop's Madison River Fishing Report for January 1, 2016**. With the glitz and glamour of the holidays now over it may just be the time to try out that new rod or waders you received from the big guy. Even though our valley is covered with snow and it feels like the tundra some days there are still fish to be had if you plan the right day and the right spot. Look for days with little or no wind as well as warmer than average. We have been having some ice flow in the river right now so look for places with less ice flow. The best bet has been in the Bear Trap Canyon. Less ice escapes from the gates of the dam and the canyon walls keep the wind at bay most days. Other areas are \$3 Bridge and Reynolds Pass. While these are more windy there is considerably less ice to contend with. Now that you have picked your day and your spot what to fish. The bobber lobbbers and those going sub surface will have the advantage. We have been doing best with egg patterns as well as midge larva. A nymph rig with a soft egg and a zebra midge has been the ticket to staying bent. If this does not work try a red or pink San Juan. For you streamer junkies think deep and slow. Keep your offering just off the bottom with almost a dead drift or occasional twitch. The key this time of year is finding the fish. Look for the eddies behind rocks, inside turns and anywhere they can get out of the main current. Once you catch a fish keep fishing that spot as there are probably a bunch more fish right there. The dry fly guys still have some hope and on the right day can have some good fishing. Look for midge hatches in the slicks. If the weather is right and you have the right spot you can find some rising fish. The rises will almost be undetectable so keep a good look out. Once you find a rising fish, a buzz ball or para midge will get the job done. No need to go to 5X a good stout 3X should be all you need this time of year. There is still fish to be had this time of year and if you need to scratch the itch or get your January fish there is hope. Right now we are sitting on about 103% of normal snow pack and if this keeps up we are in store for a great spring and summer season. Stop by the store for some coffee and the latest river gossip. *John Way*



**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** → December was wild! Mother Nature wants to make sure everyone is prepared for winter by giving us an extreme training exercise right up front! That first BIG snowfall is always a surprise and we have to relearn how to drive on roads with ice, blowing/shifting snow and snow snakes! It snowed 13 days in December adding another .41" of precipitation to the snowpack. We started out in

*ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE* → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729

Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana

(406) 682-4290 → [www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) → [www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) → [arrow@3rivers.net](mailto:arrow@3rivers.net). Don & Toni Bowen

December at 69% of normal and are now up to 108% of normal! The recorded **December** high in Ennis was **51°** with a low of **-4°**.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS → TOP TEN “MUST HAVE” FEATURES OF 2015.** Trends vary around the country, depending upon weather, lifestyle, space, etc. But the attributes most highlighted in listing descriptions from Realtor.com that have become veritable selling points in our market, in the past year, are listed below. These features contribute to the perceived and actual value of a home.

1. **FIREPLACE** → Natural or cultured stone or rock are most popular
2. **WOOD FLOORING** → Natural, rustic, low maintenance preferred
3. **GRANITE** → Still in high demand, even though some other natural materials are seen
4. **STAINLESS STEEL APPLIANCES** → Adds a high quality look
5. **OPEN FLOOR PLAN** → Fits the casual western lifestyle and makes the home seem larger
6. **WALK-IN CLOSETS** → Almost a “must,” especially if it also adds more storage space
7. **VAULTED CEILINGS** → Gives a wonderful feeling of space
8. **CHEF’S KITCHEN with BREAKFAST BAR and/or ISLAND** → Also fits the casual western lifestyle - Great for entertaining - Always a big selling point that makes a lasting impression
9. **GREAT VIEWS** → Windows that take advantage of our spectacular views are a “must”
10. **LANDSCAPING/TREES LANDSCAPING/TREES** → Remember Curb Appeal and a finished look that feels natural.



➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL ... Featured Property of the Month** → **UNIQUE COTTAGE on 8+ ACRES** with spectacular views of the valley, privacy, beautiful setting, room for guests and lots of toys! The main house has a master BR, full bath and office, large patio off the living area, great kitchen and entry. A separate guest quarters are upstairs over the 2-car attached garage, consisting of 2 BR, bath and large living area with its own entrance. The property also includes a

separate garage for more storage. Less than 5 miles to town. 104 Old Virginia City Highway, Ennis. MLS # 209502. **\$299,500.** <http://www.arrowreal.com/propDisplay.php?mlsID=209502>

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (December 22, 2015) — Existing-home sales dropped off considerably in November to the slowest pace in 19 months, but some of the decrease was likely because of an apparent rise in closing timeframes that may have pushed some transactions into December, according to the [National Association of Realtors®](#). All four major regions saw sales declines in November. Total existing-home sales, which are completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops, fell 10.5 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.76 million in November (lowest since April 2014 at 4.75 million) from a downwardly revised 5.32 million in October. After last month's decline (largest since July 2010 at 22.5 percent), sales are now 3.8 percent below a year ago — the first year-over-year decrease since September 2014.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says multiple factors led to November's sales decline, but the primary reason could be an anomaly as the industry adjusts to the new Know-Before-You-Owe rule. "Sparse inventory and affordability issues continue to impede a large pool of buyers' ability to buy, which is holding back sales,"

**ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE** → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729

Now associated with **ERA LANDMARK Real Estate**, with offices in **Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana**  
(406) 682-4290 → [www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) → [www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) → [arrow@3rivers.net](mailto:arrow@3rivers.net). Don & Toni Bowen

he said. "However, signed contracts have remained mostly steady in recent months, and properties sold faster in November. Therefore it's highly possible the stark sales decline wasn't because of sudden, withering demand." According to Yun, although Realtors® are adjusting accordingly to the Know-Before-You-Owe initiative, the main takeaway so far has been the need for longer closing times. According to NAR's Realtors® Confidence Index, 47 percent of respondents in November reported that they are experiencing a longer time to close compared to a year ago, up from 37 percent in October. "It's possible the longer timeframes pushed a latter portion of would-be November transactions into December," says Yun. "As long as closing timeframes don't rise even further, it's likely more sales will register to this month's total, and November's large dip will be more of an outlier."

The median existing-home price for all housing types in November was \$220,300, which is 6.3 percent above November 2014 (\$207,200). November's price increase marks the 45th consecutive month of year-over-year gains. Total housing inventory at the end of November decreased 3.3 percent to 2.04 million existing homes available for sale, and is now 1.9 percent lower than a year ago (2.08 million). Unsold inventory is at a 5.1-month supply at the current sales pace, up from 4.8 months in October.

According to Freddie Mac, the [average commitment rate](#) for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage hovered below 4 percent for the fourth consecutive month but increased in November to 3.94 from 3.80 percent in October. A year ago, the average commitment rate was 4.00 percent. "The Federal Reserve's decision this month to raise short-term rates is the first of many increases over the next couple of years," says Yun. "Although this first move will likely have minimal impact on mortgage rates, additional hikes will push borrowing costs to around 4.50 percent by the end of next year. With home prices expected to continue rising, wages and new home construction need to start increasing substantially to preserve affordability."

Single-family home sales dropped 12.1 % to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.15 million in November from 4.72 million in October, and are now 4.6 % lower than the 4.35 million pace a year ago. The median existing single-family home price was \$221,600 in November, up 6.6 % from November 2014.

Existing-home sales in the West dropped 13.9 percent to an annual rate of 990,000 in November, and are now 4.8 percent lower than a year ago. The median price in the West was \$319,700, which is 8.3 percent above November 2014.

###

*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 was nice to have a break over Christmas and luckily we did not have to go out in the blizzard to show any properties! **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 **December 2015** are as follows:

- **LAND:** **306** vacant lots are listed (\$1,500 to \$975,000); **13** pending sales (\$7,000 to \$299,000); and a total of **97** lots sold in 2015 (\$1,200 to \$1,200,000), totaling \$7,047,999, which was 87% of asking prices. Avg. Days on the Market = 268.
- **HOMES:** **98** homes are listed (\$65,000 to \$2,950,000); **10** pending sales (\$22,500 to \$567,000); and **88** homes sold in 2015 (\$44,000 to \$1,800,000), totaling \$29,038,550, which was 92% of asking prices. Avg. Days on the Market = 234.
- **RANCHES:** **6** listed (\$485,000 to \$9,950,000); **1** pending sale (\$1,295,000), and **1** ranch sold in 2015 (\$5,500,000) which was 66% of asking price. Avg. Days on the Market = 151.

**ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE** → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729  
Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana  
(406) 682-4290 → [www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) → [www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) → [arrow@3rivers.net](mailto:arrow@3rivers.net). Don & Toni Bowen

• **COMMERCIAL:** 26 listed (\$56,000 - \$2,950,000); 0 pending sales; and 3 commercial properties sold in 2015 (\$51,500 and \$355,500), totaling \$654,000, which was 87% of asking prices. Avg. Days on the Market = 44.

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

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU’RE FROM MONTANA....when you know and love your beer and have probably visited most of the breweries in the state!** It is a great way to see nearly every corner of Montana and have the satisfaction of getting your Montana Brewery Passport stamped at all the different breweries! <http://montanabrewers.org/trail-map>, <http://montanabrewers.org/category/news/>. Here are the top rated beers from Montana, so far, but at the rate of growth of new breweries, there are sure to be more added to this list in the future! <http://www.beeradocate.com/lists/state/mt/>. Montana ranks fourth in the nation for the number of breweries, per capita. It shouldn’t be too difficult to get to Number One! (*Ennis needs one!*)



➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know... that Montana is considered a TAX HAVEN? Well it is.* You can read all the details at: <http://mtpr.org/post/how-montana-became-tax-haven>, but the simple version is Montana law does NOT require a vehicle to be in the state to be registered here, and you don’t have to be a Montana resident, either. You can get a Montana address by creating an LLC, or limited liability company. And since there is no sales or excise tax here, Montana plates are cheap — just \$300 to register a new motorhome, no matter how much it cost to buy. It’s no wonder companies have sprung up taking advantage of this loophole. Just Google “Montana LLC” and you’ll find lots of firms eager to help you set up your own shell company. Some people have saved as much as \$30,000 in sales taxes.



Many other states consider this to be tax evasion and have gone after their residents whose vehicles have Montana plates. But Montana is not inclined to change their laws. Just one more reason why people love Montana! *It is still the Wild West.*

## 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**



**Introducing Ron Gay, new Sales Associate with ERA Landmark Arrow Real Estate**

*Thank you in advance for your personal referrals.  
They are the lifeblood of our business and the greatest compliment you can give us.*

ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE → 219 E. Main Street → POB 546 → Ennis, MT 59729  
Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana  
(406) 682-4290 → [www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) → [www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) → [arrow@3rivers.net](mailto:arrow@3rivers.net). Don & Toni Bowen

## 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

<http://www.realtor.com/> - The world's #1 Real Estate website. The source for all properties on 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

*ERA LANDMARK ARROW REAL ESTATE*→ 219 E. Main Street→ POB 546→ Ennis, MT 59729

Now associated with ERA LANDMARK Real Estate, with offices in Bozeman, Big Sky, Livingston & Ennis, Montana

(406) 682-4290→ [www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) → [www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) → [arrow@3rivers.net](mailto:arrow@3rivers.net). Don & Toni Bowen