

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for DECEMBER 2016



Trout live in nice neighborhoods

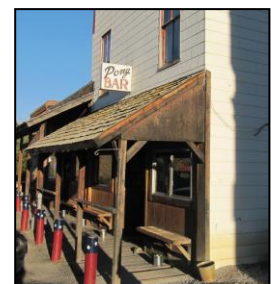


➤ **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → December was a busy month with the hustle and bustle of the holidays and visitors in town. → The **Christmas Stroll** through downtown Ennis kicked off the season with old fashioned fun. → Local skiers snapped up bargains at the annual **Ski Swap** at the Gravel Bar. → Kids got to **ski with Santa and his elves** at the skating rink in Virginia City. → **Hunting season** was a little disappointing to many hunters with harvest rates down from 2015. The warm weather was definitely a factor. → Demand on the Madison County airports is growing and a master planning study will be done over the next year. **The Ennis Big Sky Airport** is on the cusp of going from a B-II to a C-II. An AWOS



III (weather observing station) was installed over the summer, which is a critical element for aviation safety. → The **new bridge over Blaine Spring Creek** is now open to traffic! It looks great and will be much safer! → Work is moving forward on **Flood Hazard Mapping of the Madison River** to determine floodplains and channel migration. The Madison, Beaverhead, Jefferson, Gallatin and E. Gallatin Rivers are all part of the mapping process which is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2017. → But, most exciting event was the **Madison River Gorge! A real sight to be seen!**

➤ **COMING JANUARY “HAPPENINGS”** → Don't miss the Winter Classic Pond Hockey Tournament on January 6 – 7 in Virginia City! → Head for the famous **Pony Bar** in Pony, MT on Sunday, the 8th and 15th for some great music from **Tessie Lou and the Shotgun Stars!** Check them out on FB at <https://www.facebook.com/tessylouandtheshotgunstars/>. → The Elling House in Virginia City will be hosting their Chatauqua series every third Saturday in January, February, March and April. See more on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Elling-House-Arts-Humanities-Center-117490418261518/>. And **Willie's Distillery** continues their live music in the tasting room, every Friday evening at 5:30!



➤ **MONTANA NEWS → GO WEST YOUNG MAN!** Montana is facing an *impending economic calamity* due to the coming critical shortfall of workers. Due to an aging population and faster-than-average economic growth rates, Montana's labor force is not expected to keep up with businesses' demand for workers over the next 10 years. Montana's labor force is about 500,000 workers right now, but the state is expected to lose 120,000 baby boomers to retirement over the next decade. Already, state economists are expecting slower employment growth over the next 10 years in Montana because of the tight labor market. Montana will have 32,500 more jobs to fill in the next decade, mostly because we are getting older, and partly because of growth. According to the MT Dept. of Labor & Industry, our state experienced **record economic growth** in 2015, and 2016 wasn't far behind. The low unemployment rate is also driving up wages. Personal income growth since 2006 is the 10th-fastest in the nation and Montana has had the sixth-fastest wage growth over the last five years. Wage growth grew by 3% last year and Montana's average annual wage is now \$45,000.



➤ **FISHING REPORT → Madison River Fishing Report from The Tackle Shop, January 1, 2017.** Happy new “fishing” year to everyone! While the calendar says it is a new year and all things



revolve around fishing, then it must be a new fishing year as well. This means that the fish you caught just the other day is last year's news and you need to get out and make some new memories for this year. For those in Ennis right now needing to scratch the itch and are not headed to play in the snow, there are a few options. It is more about **where** you fish. The Madison is gorged from Ennis Lake upstream above 8 Mile. This means the go-to-water around town is off limits. Our best bet to get bent in January is below Ennis Dam and below Hebgen Dam. Both of these areas are nearly

ice free. Worms, eggs, and little midge stuff near the bottom will do the trick. We like either a red san juan or pink Meth followed by a zebra midge. Add plenty of split shot to your 2X tippet to get it down in the zone. They will not move for a fly. It really needs to hit them right in the face. If the weather ever stabilizes we should see some midge activity but, that is in the future. Even though the fishing is marginal right now, we are seeing quite a bit of July and August water piling up in the mountains. Good spring fishing is right around the corner so take heart! *John Way*. <http://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 →** Winter finally showed up in a big way! Making up for the late arrival, temps dropped so fast and so low, we were scrambling for our long johns! Thanks to a few consecutive days of below-zero temps, the Madison River gorge moved rapidly upstream from Ennis Lake and reached Ennis,

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flowing up and over the bridge! The Madison River is very shallow which causes it to freeze from the bottom up, with frazil ice building up like bricks and mortar. You can read more about the Gorge at, <http://ennismontanahomesandland.blogspot.com/2011/01/madison-river-gorge-ennis-montana.html>. The high for December was **28°** and the low was **-14°**. And that doesn't come close to the Wind Chill Factor that was down to -30 degrees! Despite what you might hear on a weather report, **wind chill** isn't actually a **measure** of how cold the air feels. A **wind chill** temperature is a calculation of how cold it would have to be to cause the same rate of heat loss from your skin if there were no wind blowing. According to the National Weather Service, **frostbite can occur within 5** minutes in temperatures between **0°** and **-19° F**.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → *al-ter-na-tive en-er-gy*. Energy generated in ways that do not deplete natural resources or harm the environment, especially by avoiding the use of fossil fuels and nuclear power.



For decades, America has anticipated the transformational impact of clean energy technologies. As the federal government and industry made long-term investments to support those technologies, some critics became impatient, claiming a clean energy future would “always be five years away.” Today, the clean energy future has arrived. You can read the U.S. Department of Energy report, **Revolution Now**, at:

https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2016/09/f33/Revolutiona%CC%82%E2%82%ACNow%202016%20Report_2.pdf

REASONS: There are more and more reasons to seriously consider adding alternative power to your home's energy systems.

- 1) Little to no global warming emissions – we want to keep Montana, our country and the world safer.
- 2) Improved public health and environmental quality – we want a healthy, clean environment, everywhere.
- 3) A vast and inexhaustible energy supply – in Montana, especially, we have an abundance of wind and sun.
- 4) Jobs and other economic benefits – Montana can always use more industry, especially to replace fossil fuel jobs lost.
- 5) Stable energy prices – you are free from increased power costs.
- 6) Payback period has decreased considerably - Making the investment much more affordable.
- 7) A more reliable and resilient energy system – when the power lines go down or a transformer blows, you still have power!

SOURCES: Montana has a unique position. The state has **five forms of renewable energy available** for heating and electricity generation purposes. These forms of energy include solar, wind, small-scale hydro, biomass, and geothermal sources. Furthermore, there is over fifty times as much energy present in renewable energy resources as is required to heat and provide electricity to Montanans each year. Read a MSU Study at: <http://scholarworks.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1841&context=etd>

SOLAR: A small solar electric or photovoltaic (PV) system can be a reliable and pollution-free producer of electricity for your home or office. Small PV systems also provide a cost-effective power supply in locations where it is expensive or impossible to send electricity through conventional power lines. <https://energy.gov/energysaver/planning-home-solar-electric-system>, <https://energy.gov/savings/residential-renewable-energy-tax-credit>, <http://news.energysage.com/understanding-your-solar-panel-payback-period/>

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WIND: Wind power surged in 2015 with capacity growing by 12% since 2014, representing 41% of all new capacity installed in the U.S. last year. As of 2015, there were nearly 74,000 megawatts of utility-scale wind power deployed across 41 states and territories -- enough to generate electricity for more than 17 million households. http://apps2.eere.energy.gov/wind/windexchange/small_wind.asp.



TAX CREDITS: Residential taxpayers who install an energy system using a recognized non-fossil form of energy on their home are eligible for various **tax credits**. The Alternative Energy Revolving Loan Program (AERLP) provides loans for Solar Water Heat, Solar Photovoltaics, Wind (All), Biomass, Geothermal Heat Pumps, Landfill Gas, Wind (Small), Hydroelectric (Small), Geothermal Direct-Use, and Fuel Cells using Renewable Fuels. For more information, go to: <http://programs.dsireusa.org/system/program/detail/366> and <https://energy.gov/savings/residential-renewable-energy-tax-credit>,



CONTRACTORS: Looking for a renewable energy contractor? See the link below for a list of businesses and the renewable energy technologies they offer. For details and contract information, click on the business name. All businesses on this list are members of the Montana Renewable Energy Association. <http://montanarenewables.org/directory/>

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL ... *Featured Property of the Month*** → **Almost an acre on the Madison River!** A perfect spot to build your dream fishing cabin on the river, near Raynolds Pass Bridge. This lot has already been excavated for a home. Sale includes all site plans including Architectural drawings, geotechnical report, storm water permit and wastewater report (valued at approx. \$75,000). This is the least expensive lot on the Madison River! **\$325,000**. MLS # 212874. See the property & area at: GoogleEarth coordinates: 44.826012°, -111.474282°.



➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (December 28, 2016) — Pending home sales **dipped in November to their lowest level in nearly a year** as the brisk upswing in mortgage rates and not enough inventory dispirited some would-be buyers, according to the National Association of Realtors. Only the Northeast saw monthly and annual pending sales gains last month. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, declined 2.5% to 107.3 in November from 110.0 in October. After last month's decrease in activity, the index is now 0.4% below last November (107.7) and is at its lowest reading since January (105.4).

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says ongoing supply shortages and the surge in mortgage rates took a small bite out of pending sales in November. "The budget of many prospective buyers last month was dealt an abrupt hit by the quick ascension of rates immediately after the election," he said. "Already faced with climbing home prices and minimal listings in the affordable price range, fewer home shoppers in most of the country were successfully able to sign a contract."

Yun says **higher borrowing costs** somewhat cloud the outlook for the housing market. This was evident in NAR's most recent HOME survey, which found that confidence amongst renters about now being a good time to buy has diminished since the beginning of the year. The good news, according to Yun, is that the impact of higher rates will be partly neutralized by stronger wage growth as a result of the 2 million net new job additions expected next year. "Healthy local job markets amidst tight supply means many areas will remain competitive with prices on the rise. Those rushing to lock in a rate before they advance even higher will probably have few listings to choose from," said Yun. "Some buyers will have

to expand the area of their home search or be forced to delay in order to save a little more money for their down payment."

Existing sales are still expected to close out 2016 at a pace of around 5.42 million, which will eclipse 2015 (5.25 million) as the highest since 2006 (6.48 million). In 2017, sales are forecast to grow roughly 2% to around 5.52 million. The national median existing-home price is expected to increase to around 5% this year and 4% in 2017. "**Much more robust new home construction is needed to relieve inventory shortages and lessen the affordability pressures present throughout the country,**" added Yun.

The PHSI in the Northeast nudged forward 0.6% to 97.5 in November, and is now 5.7% above a year ago. In the Midwest the index declined 2.5% to 103.5 in November, and is now 2.4% lower than November 2015. Pending home sales in the South decreased 1.2% to an index of 118.7 in November and are now 1.3% lower than last November. The index in the West fell 6.7% in November to 101.0, and is now 1.0% below a year ago.

The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1.1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → Several closings in December kept us busy and we are grateful to all of our clients for an outstanding year. Comparing 2015 year end to 2016, a few trends can be seen: 1) **Residential:** fewer sales, inventory is down, but a slightly higher percentage of sales price to listing prices. 2) **Vacant Land:** more sales, inventory is down, and a higher percentage of sales price to listing prices. 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 and year end for 2016** are as follows:

- **HOMES:** **86**↓ homes are listed (\$50,000 to \$5,600,000); **13** pending sales (\$99,900 to \$2,675,000); and **80** homes sold in 2016 (\$18,000 to \$1,750,000), totaling \$26,947,475, which was **93%** of asking prices.

At the end of December 2015, there were 98 homes listed, (\$65,000 to \$2,950,000), with 10 pending sales and 88 homes sold totaling \$29,038,550, which was 92% of asking prices.

- **LAND:** **289**↓ vacant lots are listed (\$7,000 to \$1,650,000); with **5** pending sales (\$28,900 to \$139,000); and **93** lots sold in 2016 (\$600 to \$856,100), totaling \$7,795,850, which was **90%** of asking prices.

At the end of December 2015, there were 306 lots listed (\$1,500 to \$975,000), with 13 pending sales and 97 lots sold totaling \$7,047,999, which was 87% of asking prices.

- **RANCHES:** **3** listed (\$1,200,000 to \$9,950,000); **1** pending sale (\$6,750,000), and 1 ranch has sold in 2016 (\$3,025,000), which was **92%** of asking price.

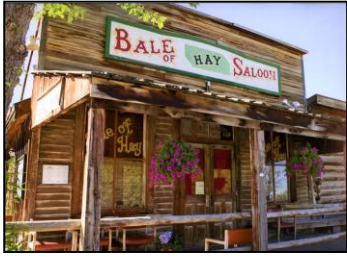
At the end of December 2015, there were 6 ranches listed (\$485,000 to \$9,950,000), with 1 pending sale and 1 ranch sold for \$5,500,000, which was just 66% of asking price.

- **COMMERCIAL:** **28**↓ listed (\$44,500 - \$2,950,000); **2** pending sales (\$95,000 to \$260,000); and **4** commercial properties have sold in 2016 (\$135,000 to \$585,000), totaling \$1,470,000, which was **97%** of asking prices.

At the end of December 2015, there were 26 commercial properties listed (\$56,000 - \$2,950,000) with 0 pending sales and 3 commercial properties sold totaling \$654,000, which was 87% of asking prices.

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

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➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know that ...* after party politics in Washington, D.C. blocked statehood for years, Montana became the 41st state with a population of **143,000** on **November 8, 1889**? Here are some other interesting Montana trivia from the Madison Valley History Association's newsletter, the **Wagon Tongue**. →**1841**...oldest church congregation is St. Mary's Catholic Mission in Stevensville; →**1849**...oldest building is Old Fort in Fort Benton; →**1863**...Oldest bar is the **Bale of Hay Saloon** in Virginia City, →**1882**...Oldest hotel is



Grand Union Hotel in Fort Benton; →**1891**...Oldest continually operating theater is Opera House Theatre in Phillipsburg; →**1902**...Oldest continually operating hotel is Kempton Hotel in Terry; and →**1904**...Oldest steakhouse is Mint Cafe in Belgrade. And I might add, →**1873**...Oldest publishing weekly newspaper is the **Madisonian!** For lots more history of Montana and the Madison Valley in particular, see http://madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org/homedirectory_home4_madisonv/Home.html. You can even read about the famous **Madison Monster!**

SEE YOU IN MONTANA!



Don & Toni Bowen, *Broker Associates and Accredited Buyer Representatives, with over 75 years of combined real estate experience - covering residential, commercial, vacant land & ranch properties in the Madison Valley. We are in the business of "match making."*



Office manager,

Debbie Reilly-Richardson



Ron Gay, Sales Associate



***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.ennisartsassociation.org> – The Ennis Arts Association website for all artists!
<http://www.backroadtoyellowstone.com> – information for travelers about the route through our valley

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