

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for MARCH 2018



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY MARCH “HAPPENINGS”** → March was crazy busy with lots of goings on. → There was a **Snowmobile Expo** in West Yellowstone with races, exhibits and demos. → A birthday party for our founder, **William Ennis**, was held at the Ennis Senior Center. → **Beekeeping** classes were offered through Continuing Ed at the high school. → **Jack Creek Preserve** now has an office in Ennis in the Lone Elk Mall on Main Street and a new Executive Director, Abi King. Give her a call at 682-3358 to learn about this incredible local resource or go to: www.JackCreekPreserve.org, info@JackCreekPreserve.org. → The



winter **Chautauqua Series** continued through March in Virginia City. → There was a Grand Opening of the new shop on Main Street, **Cabin Creek**. → The Ennis Town Council is working on **new zoning regulations**. This project is expected to be a long process before a final Ordinance is approved. → And the **BIGGEST** story of the month was the

Accident in the Canyon where a truck & trailer carrying 223 pigs rolled over, blocking traffic for 7 hours! These little piggies did NOT make it to market! Local ranchers corralled the pigs and transported them to the stockyard in Three Forks. That corner in the canyon is a real truck catcher! → Second **BIGGEST** story is that **Madison County ranked Healthiest County in Montana!** An



annual comparative health report published by researchers at the U. of Wisconsin incorporated 35 different factors to determine health rankings. A full report at www.countyhealthrankings.org/. → Madison County also ranked third in the state for **“Value Received for Property Tax Dollars,”** using data on the quality of schools and the local crime rates. Full study at: <https://smartasset.com/taxes/montana-property-tax-calculator>.

➤ **MADISON VALLEY APRIL “HAPPENINGS”** → They promise that spring will come soon! A Book Launch of Hollowtop Smoke Signals: A Collection of Humorous Essays by local author, Art Kehler, will be held at the Ennis Public Library on April 15th at 2 PM. → The Chautauqua series continues through April at the Elling House Arts and Humanities Center in Virginia City. (pictured to the left) → And locally, live music at **Willie’s Distillery**, **the Pony Bar**, **Norris Hot Springs (Water of the Gods)** and the **Gravel Bar**, great shopping and dining, plus first-rate Movies at the **Madison Theatre** and fun at the **Bowling Alley!**



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➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Montana **Snowpack** is looking very good! → A tiny juvenile **Tyrannosaurus Rex** fossil has been found in Montana's fossil-rich Hell Creek Wildlife Refuge. This is a significant finding of many pieces. More at: <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2018/03/tyrannosaurus-rex-nanotyrannus-fossil-found-montana-spd/>. → If you own property in Montana,



you most likely have **Noxious Weeds** on your land. These invasive, non-native species are a serious environmental threat that is affecting and degrading natural ecosystems throughout the west. But they can be controlled and treated. Weed control in Madison County has been a model for the State due to education and commitment. Contact the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group's Weed Committee at 682-3732 or the Madison Co. Weed Board at 842-5595 for help identifying weeds on your property, cost/share information or treatment recommendations. The annual Weed Dinner in August raises money from their auction to support this weed-fighting effort.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → **Madison River Fishing Report from The Tackle Shop.** April, the month of Easter, rebirth, Tax Day and the Final 4. For fisherman on the Madison River, April is the start of the main course. It's go time. April is the month when most people abandon winter pursuits in favor of spring and summer activities. I know the ski resorts are open most of the month and the snow in the backcountry is "Epic Brah," but about April all eyes look to spring.

With that said now is the time to get out there. Weather is stabilizing, and the fish are hungry. With Easter falling in the beginning of the month you should do like the bunny and fish pastel flies. We like pink this time of year. I am not sure why the fish like the color scheme of Easter, but pink is the color for spring. For subsurface, fish a pink worm, pink egg pattern, pink lightning bug, pink may fly or even a pink stone fly. This time of year, if it has pink, fish it. The fish are not very leader shy and you can get away with rope so fish 2X. As the month wears along the fish will go off the pink. At that point bugs will start to get active and stone fly nymphs, Blue Winged Olive Nymphs, will take over their main diet. Keep throwing a pink worm all month, as some fish love it all season long. This is the month when we will see our first hatches. About midmonth look for Blue Winged Olives to start and skwala stonefly to begin.

For you streamer junkies out there, get ready for the party is about to begin. As the water warms in April fish will be more apt to chase a big streamer. In fact, some really large fish are caught in April each year. We always like natural colors in sculpins and baitfish imitations. Also, do not forget about the sparkle minnow. This gaudy flashy streamer is one of our favorites this time of year.



If April represents rebirth it is certainly the rebirth of fly fisherman for another season. Like the first hints of green grass the Madison River is opening itself to a great season of opportunity. Get out and fish. Conditions and hatches change rapidly this time of year. Give the shop a call for the latest. Also, take advantage of our **Spring on the Madison Guide Trip Special**. A full day guide trip for two with all the gear you might need and a hot lunch for the half-day price of \$400. Like available in April!

Come by the store for some hot Black Rifle Coffee and to look over all the new merchandise. **FishEnnis**, from John Way, The Tackle Shop in Ennis, **The 2017 Orvis Outfitter of the Year!** Check it out at <http://www.thetackleshop.com>.

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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** → I just discovered the **ELEVEN SEASONS OF MONTANA!** They are: **Winter, Fool's Spring, Second Winter, Spring of Deception, Third Winter, Mud Season, Actual Spring, Summer, False Fall, Second Summer (1 week!), and Actual Fall.** Mother Nature has quite a sense of humor and she keeps us guessing. Just remember to dress in layers and always keep a jacket in your car! March ended in "Second Winter," with a wide range of "seasons." We enjoyed a daytime high of **56°** and daytime low of **25°**, a nighttime high of **40°** and nighttime low of **12°**. The average precipitation for March is .48" and we received 1.81" + 6.69" of snow! → The Snowpack is still holding above normal.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **REAL ESTATE TRENDS FOR 2018 - WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT** – Time for Spring Cleaning, Sprucing up and Redecorating! Whether your home is due for a décor update or you simply prefer to keep up with the latest interior design styles, experts have revealed the decorating trends that will dominate 2018. If you're planning to put your house on the market and want it to appear like the freshest spot on the block, you need to know what's hot and what's not!

*IN: Mixed Metallics - Colorful Appliances - Patterned Flooring - Bold Patterned Fabrics - Curvy Furniture and Natural Accent Pieces - Spa-Like Bathrooms - Jewel Tone Accents - Bold Unexpected Colors - Feature Walls - Statement Lighting - Smart homes with new technology - Quartz Countertops - Bold Backsplashes - Statement Sinks - Black Stainless Steel - Warm Tones, Browns, Tans, Taupe - Natural and Organic Patterns and Pastels – Simplification - Mixed Materials - Black is Back – and the Color of the Year: **Ultra Violet/Purple!***

OUT: Lab-like Kitchens - White Kitchens - Gray Hues – Granite Countertops - Straight, Severe Lines - High-polish Hardware.

Style trends come and go, so don't invest in the latest look unless you love it. A too highly-personalized or outdated style choice can limit the appeal of your property for resale. For major renovation projects, it's always a good idea to stick to neutral colors and classic styles. It will give your remodel longevity and appeal to the greatest number of buyers when it comes to sell. Use non-permanent fixtures – like paint, furniture and accept pieces – to personalize the space and incorporate trendier choices.

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL ... Featured Property of the Month** → **Plan to own a piece of Montana!** There is still an abundance of wonderful, buildable lots, from ½ acre to 20 acres, just waiting for a charming cabin to be built. There is still time to make your Montana Dream come true. But Bozeman and Big Sky are booming and land in the Madison Valley will not always be as plentiful nor affordable, as it is now. Lots are available from one end of the valley to the other, with a variety of features and prices. Let us help you find your little piece of Montana Heaven. This is a view from **40 acres** in Mustang Ranches, with power and access into the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. Less than 10 miles from Ennis and close to Nat. Forest - hunting, hiking, fishing! Just **\$122,000**. MLS # 216195.



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➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (March 28, 2018) — Pending home sales snapped back in much of the country in February but weakening affordability and not enough inventory on the market restricted overall activity compared to a year ago, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The **Pending Home Sales Index** (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, grew 3.1% to 107.5 in February from a downwardly revised 104.3 in January. Even with last month's increase in activity, the index is 4.1% below a year ago.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says the housing market has gotten off to an uneven start so far in 2018. *“Contract signings rebounded in most areas in February, but the gains were not large enough to keep up with last February’s level, which was the second highest in over a decade (112.1),”* he said. *“The expanding economy and healthy job market are generating sizeable homebuyer demand, but the miniscule number of listings on the market and its adverse effect on affordability are squeezing buyers and suppressing overall activity.”* Added Yun, *“Expect ongoing volatility in the Northeast region at least through March. Although pending sales there bounced back in February following January’s cold weather-related decline, the multiple winter storms over these last few weeks likely put a chill on contract signings once again this month.”*

With the start of the spring buying season in full swing, Yun believes that one of the top wild cards for the housing market in coming months will be how both buyers and potential sellers adjust to the steady climb in mortgage rates since late last year. Prospective buyers continue to feel the strain of swift price growth – up 5.9% so far in 2018 – and the higher borrowing costs will only add to the pressures placed on their budget. Meanwhile, more would-be sellers deciding to balk at listing their home for sale out of uneasiness of losing their low mortgage rate – especially if they refinanced in recent years – would not be good news for any alleviation of the ongoing supply shortages in much of the country.

“Homeowners are already staying in their homes at an all-time high before selling, and any situation where they remain put even longer only exacerbates the nation’s inventory crunch,” said Yun. *“Even if new home construction starts picking up at a faster pace this year, as expected, existing sales will fail to break out if these record low supply levels do not recover enough to meet demand.”* For the year, Yun now forecasts for existing-home sales to be around 5.51 million – flat from 2017. The national median existing-home price is expected to increase around 4.2%. In 2017, existing sales increased 1.1% and prices rose 5.8%.

The PHSI in the Northeast surged 10.3% to 96.0 in February, but is still 5.1% below a year ago. In the Midwest the index inched forward 0.7% to 98.9 in February, but is 9.5% lower than February 2017. Pending home sales in the South rose 3.0% to an index of 125.7 in February, but are 1.5% lower than last February. The index in the West climbed 0.4% in February to 96.9, but is 2.2% below a year ago.

The National Association of Realtors®, “The Voice for Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing 1.2 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

✓ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → Heating back up. Not much of a break!
Big Sky Country Multiple Listing statistics for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall, and Cardwell), for the month of **March 2018** are as follows:

- **HOMES: 78↑** homes listed (\$115,000 to \$4,950,000); **16↑** pending sales (\$179,900 to \$1,150,000); and **17** homes have sold in 2018 (\$149,900 to \$750,000), totaling \$6,651,900, at 96.5% of list prices.

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- **LAND:** 275↑ vacant lots listed (\$25,000 to \$3,300,000); with 10↑ pending sales (\$23,900 to \$1,100,000); and 22 lots have sold in 2018 (\$17,400 to \$280,000), totaling \$1,375,500, at 92.5% of list.
- **RANCHES:** 3 listed (\$3,300,000 to \$14,950,000); 1 pending sale (\$2,850,000), and 0 ranches have sold in 2018, so far!
- **COMMERCIAL:** 22↑ listed (\$44,500 to \$800,000); 1 pending sale (\$425,000); and 2 commercial properties have sold in 2018 (\$120,000 to \$465,000), totaling \$585,000, at 92.9% of list prices.

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

- **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know that... Montana may be next?* (Dubois, Wyo) – The Wyoming Wild Game Department (WWGD) partnering with the **Wyoming Migration Initiative** (WMI) have released the first of 5 planned batches of 90 **Antilopine Kangaroos** into the Wyoming outdoors. Dubbed “*Project Sage Hopper*” by the WWGD team responsible for evaluating the viability of Wyoming’s habitat for Australian marsupials, it has been in the planning stages for 3 years. The goal is two-fold: Create new and interesting wildlife viewing opportunities for tourists, and in several years, potentially provide additional hunting opportunities.



“Antilopine means ‘antelope-like, so we are interested to see how these kangaroos adapt to Wyoming’s wild landscapes,” WMI Director Matt Kauffman said. *“If they start migrating, we’ll be tracking their movements, looking to see how they learn to exploit the sage steppe and the mountains, where they ‘hopover,’ those sorts of things.”*

“This wasn’t an easy project; the international permitting in particular was a huge hassle. Identifying a species that would meet our goals and be able to thrive in Wyoming’s strongly seasonal habitat.” added Kauffman. *“If we can get these Aussie macro pods established and breeding, they are likely to thrive with continued climate change in Wyoming’s already semi-arid climate. Additionally, we believe with their large hind legs, they’ll be able to effectively defend themselves from coyotes, wolves and other predators. Trust me: You don’t want to be kicked by one of these animals.”*

Even as they hope for the successful establishment of Wyoming’s newest large mammal, researchers aren’t giving up on the native big game that so many Wyomingite’s cherish. *“Research is needed now more than ever to identify and map the critical habitats that migratory big game requires,”* Kauffman added. With a successful introduction of kangaroos into Wyoming’s ecosystem, WMI will review other opportunities for the state to be home to other marsupial species. A short-list for future proposed introductions include the **koala**, **wallaby** and the endangered **Tasmanian Devil**. Get a look at the migrations of Wyoming’s other big game species at migrationinitiative.org. ***BELATED APRIL FOOLS! But, can you imagine?!!!***

➤ **SEE YOU IN MONTANA!**



Our ERA Landmark Arrow Real Estate Team:
Debbie Reilly-Richardson, Office Manager
Jonathan Nutt, Broker Associate
Ron Gay, Sales Associate
Toni Bowen and Don Bowen, Broker Associates & Accredited Buyer Representatives, with over 75 years combined real estate experience.

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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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