

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for APRIL 2018



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



➤ **MADISON VALLEY APRIL “HAPPENINGS”** → The overflowing inventory at the Annual **Lions Club Auction** drew a large crowd rewarded with amazing bargains. → The **Bear Trap Grill** will now be open for dinners only, Thursday – Mondays, <http://www.beartrapgrille.com/> and BYOB! → MT FWP introduced a draft of a **Madison River Recreation Management Plan** regulating commercial use. Read more about it at: [http://fwp.mt.gov/news/newsReleases/fishing/nr\\_1118.html](http://fwp.mt.gov/news/newsReleases/fishing/nr_1118.html). However, it was unanimously rejected by the FWP Commission on 4/19. → **The Chautauqua** series continued through April at the Elling House Arts and Humanities Center in Virginia City. → There is a new business coming to town – **Ruby Valley Brew** from Sheridan will be building a new brewery just



north of Ennis. → Sheridan and Harrison High Schools held Donkey Basketball games and we think Ennis needs to bring back this unique sport where players ride donkeys in rubber booties while shooting baskets! What could be more fun?! → And locally, live music at **Willie’s Distillery**, the **Pony Bar**, **Norris Hot Springs (Water of the Gods)** and the **Gravel Bar** (soon to have a new brewery, too!), great shopping and dining, plus first-rate Movies at the **Madison Theatre** and fun at the **Bowling Alley!**

➤ **MADISON VALLEY MAY “HAPPENINGS”** → If you are planning a family vacation in the Madison Valley, send your 12 – 18-year-olds to a Summer Youth Camp to learn a variety of outdoor skills in a wilderness setting. Choose July 26 – 29 or August 9 – 12. For more info and to sign up – [www.Jackcreekpreserve.org/summer-camps](http://www.Jackcreekpreserve.org/summer-camps) or call (406) 682-3358. → **Virginia City** will mark their official **Season Opening** with a parade and celebration on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. → Mark your calendar to be in Ennis on May 19<sup>th</sup> for the Brew Fest, the annual **Tap Into Ennis Brew & Spirits Festival**, 3-7 pm at the Lions Club Park.



→ The new gallery next to our office will be opening in May, as the **Black Jack Ranch Gallery**. Now there will be 4 art galleries in town – **BJR Gallery**, **Artists on Main**, **Gallery 287** and **Cattleman’s Gallery**. → Ennis Friends of the Library is hosting a **1950’s Murder Mystery Fundraiser** on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Call 682-7244 for info. → Plan ahead to make sure you are in town and signed up for the **Twentieth Annual Noxious Weed Dinner and Fund Raiser** on Saturday, Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Sphinx Mountain Ranch east of Cameron. Contact: (406) 682-3259. → Rumor has it that the **Ennis Homestead** will go up for public auction on the Court House steps in July. A wonderful property with lots of potential, for someone with money and vision!

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Montana **Snowpack** is still on the rise – well above average with records set in February and March for accumulation. Monthly water supply outlook reports can be found at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/mt/snow/waterproducts/basin/>. →



Twelve and a half million visitors spent over **\$3.4 Billion dollars** in Montana last year! And if not for the smoky skies, the number would have been higher. → According to U of M's Institute of Tourism & Recreation Research, outfitting and guiding accounted for 11% of the \$3.4 B that non-residents spent while visiting Montana in 2017. **Outfitting** is in 4<sup>th</sup> position in the state behind Fuel, Food and Lodging, coming up from 6<sup>th</sup> position in 2014.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → **Madison River Fishing Report from The Tackle Shop.** May is here, May is here! It is the greatest feeling of the year! For those of us who survived the past arctic-like winter, nice weather and the turn of the calendar are great signs. If you live for the summer season and for the dry fly, your time is coming.

If May is like all the other months of 2018, things will be a little behind schedule. So far, the coming of spring, early hatches, water temps and even the greening of grasses has been about 2 weeks late. It is good that Mothers' Day is late this year because the famous caddis hatch that bears its name is also slightly behind schedule. We are just now starting to see caddis on the lower river below the Bear Trap and it will be at least a few more days before the main hatch hits the upper. If you want to fish this great hatch, start your day swinging soft hackles. Everything from traditional patterns to CDC Princess will get them. The "webbier" soft hackle on it the better. You really want to trap a little air bubble in your soft hackle just like the natural insect does. That is why a soft hackle of CDC works so well. Who knew duck butt feathers would come in SO handy.



Get it while you can because this thing is going to get big. The remnants of last winter's snow will make an impact on the Madison shortly. *How big is it going to get and for how long?* That is the question we have been trying to answer for anxious callers in the fly shop lately. Our best guess is 2-4 weeks of high and possibly unfishable water. Again, this all depends on what old Mother Nature throws at us in the coming weeks. If it is anything like the last few months, hang on to your hat as we are in for a ride!

Even if the river is high it is often still fishable for most of the month. The high water pushes the fish to the bank. Think big girdle bugs as close to the bank as you can get. It can be some great fishing and you don't even need to get wet! Stop by the store to get the scoop on what leggy thing they want now.

Spring is finally here. As I write this I am sitting on my front deck at home listening to the song birds, noticing the grass is getting greener each day and my heart is soaring. I love Montana! Stop by the store and check out all the new gear. Deliveries are coming in daily with all the newest, latest and greatest for the fisherman. Also, send us your best whitefish photos. We are running a whitefish-only photo contest this summer with some great prizes for best photo, whitefish love (G Rated) and most unusual. Winners will be picked at the Fly Fishing Festival. ***FishEnnis***, from John Way, The Tackle Shop in Ennis, **The 2017 Orvis Outfitter of the Year!** Check it out at <http://www.thetackleshop.com>.

**Check out other fishing reports at:**

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- ✦ 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 have now learned of a Twelfth season in Montana! **Sprinter!** That is a perfect description of what we experienced throughout April! Mother Nature teased us with just enough sun to fool us, but winter kept interrupting our fun. The mountains are still white, the grass is green, and the river is blue – a perfect combination! We experienced a daytime high of **77°** and daytime low of **33°**, a nighttime high of **37°** and nighttime low of **10°**. The average precipitation for April is 1.42” and we received 2.16” + 12.72” of snow!

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS → REAL ESTATE TIPS FOR 2018 – Read the NAR Real Estate News and take heed.**

1. First-Time Homebuyers: Get that starter home NOW! More than half of the home sales in 2018 are expected to be to first-time buyers. That means **more competition**.
2. Sellers: **Hire the right agent**. The best investment a seller can make is time spent researching agents! Narrow your search to 3 agents and interview each, ideally in person, or at least by phone and be sure and check out their on-line presence.
3. Buyers: There's more loan money out there. Borrowers with FICO scores as low as 690 are now getting conforming mortgage loans. Check your **credit score** for free at <https://my.bankrate.com/>
4. Sellers: It may be a seller's market, but... You still need to update selectively, **clean, clean and clean** some more, depersonalize & declutter and illuminate.
5. Renters: It might be time to buy. In many cases, rents are rising faster than home values, yet mortgage rates remain low. Check out a **buy-versus-rent** calculator at Bankrate to compare affordability.
6. If you're a Buyer, don't believe the house is yours – until you have a **signed contract!** Don't accept verbal promises. In heated markets, anything can happen!
7. Sellers: The grass is always greener...But make sure your lawn is greener! Surveys show that strong **curb appeal** can increase prices by 10 percent or more. Green grass is a must!
8. Sellers and Buyers: Know the state of YOUR market. A balanced housing market is defined as one with an average inventory of 6.5 months. When inventory remains below equilibrium, it is a **seller's market**. When inventory lingers well above stasis, you have a **buyer's market**.
9. Sellers: House going on sale in this summer? Take **photos** of your home during other months for your marketing and get it listed as soon as possible for greatest and longest exposure to summer buyers.
10. Buyers: Buying near a waterfront? Even though Montana is a long way from a coastline, there are still lots of rivers that can flood. So, check out those FEMA flood maps and check your insurance. Find out if your lender will require **flood insurance**.



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➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL ... Featured Property of the Month** → **“RIVER RUN,” A beautiful custom home on 11+ acres on the banks of the Madison River!** This dream property consists of a lovely home of 1,782 SF with 2 bedrooms, 2 full baths, powder room, gourmet kitchen, office nook, laundry/mud room, large deck with river and mountain views plus a 258 SF bonus room above the garage. This property is not in a subdivision - no covenants or restrictions, just south of the Grizzly Bar & Grill. Good access, but very private with several points of river access. This beautiful property is covered with an abundance of large trees and is professional landscaped around the home. **\$1,125,000.** MLS #317670. *Photo was taken from across the river looking at the property and house at the top of the bluff.*



➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (April 30, 2018) — Pending home sales inched higher for the second consecutive month in March, but unrelenting inventory constraints once again kept overall activity below year ago levels, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The **Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI)**, a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, inched up 0.4% to 107.6 in March from a downwardly revised 107.2 in February. Even with last month's increase in activity, the index declined on an annualized basis (3.0%) for the third straight month.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says contract activity is moving sideways and not breaking higher despite the strong job-creating economy. *"Healthy economic conditions are creating considerable demand for purchasing a home, but not all buyers are able to sign contracts because of the lack of choices in inventory,"* he said. *"Steady price growth and the swift pace listings are coming off the market are proof that more supply is needed to fully satisfy demand<sup>1</sup>.* What continues to hold back sales is the fact that prospective buyers are increasingly having difficulty finding an affordable home to buy." Added Yun, *"As anticipated, the multiple winter storms and unseasonably cold weather contributed to the decrease in contract signings in the Northeast."*

Looking ahead to the upcoming peak months for home sales, Yun believes that affordability will be a significant topic of discussion and driving factor of if overall activity can break out above year ago levels. Price appreciation in most markets continues to outpace incomes, and the recent uptick in mortgage rates to over a four-year high only adds to the budget constraints aspiring buyers are feeling this spring. *"Much of the country is enjoying a thriving job market, but buying a home is becoming more expensive,"* said Yun. *"That is why it is an absolute necessity for there to be a large increase in new and existing homes available for sale in coming months to moderate home price growth. Otherwise, sales will remain stuck in this holding pattern and a growing share of would-be buyers — especially first-time buyers — will be left on the sidelines."*

**Yun forecasts for number of existing-home sales in 2018 to be around 5.61 million — up from 5.51 million in 2017. The national median existing-home price is expected to increase around 4.4%. In 2017, existing sales increased 1.1% and prices rose 5.8%.** The PHSI in the Northeast fell 5.6% to 90.6 in March and is now 8.1% below a year ago. In the Midwest the index rose 2.4% to 101.3 in March but is 6.0% lower than March 2017. Pending home sales in the South climbed 2.5% to an index of 128.6 in March and are 0.3% higher than last March. The index in the West declined 1.1% in March to 94.7 and is 2.2% below a year ago.

*The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1.3 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.*

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✓ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → If the current activity is any indication, this is going to be a wild summer! **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 **April 2018** are as follows:

- **HOMES:** 82↑ homes listed (\$115,000 to \$4,950,000); 18↑ pending sales (\$125,000 to \$799,000); and 25 homes have sold in 2018 (\$120,000 to \$750,000), totaling \$9,610,900, at 96.5% of list prices.
- **LAND:** 265↑ vacant lots listed (\$25,000 to \$890,000); with 19↑ pending sales (\$28,500 to \$1,100,000); and 27 lots have sold in 2018 (\$17,400 to \$280,000), totaling \$1,691,500, at 87.5% of list.
- **RANCHES:** 2 ranches listed (\$4,999,000 to \$14,950,000); 0 pending sales, and 1 ranch has sold in 2018, so far! (\$2,650,000), at 93% of list price.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 21↓ listed (\$44,500 to \$800,000); 2 pending sales (\$49,500 to \$425,000); and 2 commercial properties have sold in 2018 (\$120,000 to \$465,000), totaling \$585,000, at 93% of list prices.

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

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know that... The message behind Montana's State Seal is a mystery - even to many Montanans?* So, learn a little more about the Treasure State and be in the know! The Great Seal of the State of Montana was adopted in 1865 when Montana was a United States Territory. When it became a state in 1889, it was decided to use the same seal. The banner at the bottom of the seal reads the territorial motto of "**Oro y Plata,**" meaning "**Gold and Silver**" in Spanish. The seal of Montana displays symbols of the state's history and natural beauty. It features the sun setting over snowy mountains (the mountains which gave the state its name), the great waterfalls of the Missouri River, three tools (a pick, a shovel, and a plow – symbols of Montana's mining and farming history), and a ribbon with the state motto displayed at the bottom of the seal refers to the mineral wealth which inspired Montana's nickname, the Treasure State. The state flag includes this seal.



***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/](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

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