

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for DECEMBER 2019



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



### ➤ MADISON VALLEY DECEMBER “HAPPENINGS” → The annual **Christmas Stroll** was a big



success with good weather and lots of happy people enjoying downtown Ennis! → The Elling House in VC hosted their extravagant “**Splendid Feast.**” → Kids had another chance to see Santa at the **Skate with Santa** in Virginia City and during the **Christmas Potluck at the Bear Creek Schoolhouse** in Cameron. → The annual **Christmas Bird Count** sponsored by the Audubon Society started December 14<sup>th</sup> and is conducted between the dates of Sat, Dec 14 through Sunday January



5<sup>th</sup>, adding to a century of community science data. → Big Sky hosted a **Torchlight Parade** on the 24<sup>th</sup>. → There were **Candlelight Services** at 8 local churches. → British photographer, **David Yarrow** staged more photo shoots in Virginia City in December. His previous photo shoot included model Cindy Crawford and a **wolf**. Check out his amazing photos taken in the Pioneer Bar and other locations around VC, at [https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ACYBGNS9NlaAwW\\_9A3eHdrSoCk1p1ZcR\\_A:1577741509659&q=David+Yarrow+photography+in+Montana&tbm=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjV8uuRq\\_d7mAhVFrJ4KHSeVAnMQsAR6BAgJEAE&biw=1280&bih=913](https://www.google.com/search?sxsrf=ACYBGNS9NlaAwW_9A3eHdrSoCk1p1ZcR_A:1577741509659&q=David+Yarrow+photography+in+Montana&tbm=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjV8uuRq_d7mAhVFrJ4KHSeVAnMQsAR6BAgJEAE&biw=1280&bih=913). → **Yellowstone National Park** opened for their Winter season. → New construction on **Main Street** next to the Library where Jane Rybus’ historic house stood, is the start of a new retail store with offices in back. A new apartment building can be seen in the back of the lot. There are several changes coming to Main Street!

### ➤ MADISON VALLEY JANUARY “HAPPENINGS” → Sign up for the famous **Pond Hockey Tournament** on the 10<sup>th</sup> in Virginia City. <https://www.facebook.com/events/virginia-city-ice/pond-hockey-tournament/616412152234721/> → Register for the Hebgen Lake NAIFC Qualifier **Ice Fishing Tournament** the 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> at <http://www.westyellowstonemicefishing.com/>.



→ Call early and take the kids to West Yellowstone the 11-12<sup>th</sup> for the **Kids “N” Snow Weekend**. <http://kidsnsnow.org/> → Another reason to shop local! A new **retail/design center** for furniture, appliances and electronics has opened in Ennis! Check it out at <https://www.ennishomefurnishings.com/>. → Call for reservations for the new **Chautauqua** on the 18<sup>th</sup> at the Ellinghouse Arts & Humanities Center in VC, (406) 843-5454. → Bring an appetizer to share on

**Fridays** at 5 PM to the **VC Elks Lodge**, all during football season. → And gather at the **Elks Lodge** for **Monday Night Football** from 6-10 (*through Super Bowl!*). → You can still find live music at **Willie’s Distillery**, **Blue Moon Saloon**, **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 has two new **world champions!** Helena *steer wrestler*, Ty Erickson, and Miles City *tie-down roper*, Haven Meged, claimed 2019 PRCA world titles in December, during the final round of the **National Finals Rodeo** in Las Vegas! → The state of Montana could soon be represented by a **second representative in the U.S. House** after the 2020 census, according to figures released Monday. Census information first reported by The Wall Street Journal found that the state's population grew by nearly 80,000 between 2010 and 2019, leading analysts to predict the state would be among several to gain representatives in Congress following the official results' release next year. → A privately funded nonprofit organization is creating a 3.2 million-acre wildlife sanctuary – **American Prairie Reserve** – in northeastern Montana, an area long known as cattle country. More: <https://www.mtpr.org/post/big-money-building-new-kind-national-park-great-plains>.



➤ **HUNTING REPORT** → **2019 Hunting Season** saw a decrease in hunters and an average harvest success. → However, the first detection of CWD (**chronic wasting disease**) in Southwest Montana was found in a whitetail deer harvested in the Ruby Valley, District 322.



➤ **FISHING REPORT** → **The Following is Directly from the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Park Commission Site Tuesday November 26, 2019: Scoping Process Begins for Madison River Alternatives.** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Park is beginning a public process to gauge public support and collect feedback on various alternatives for dealing with crowding and conflict on the Madison River. The process, known as scoping, will ask the public their opinions on various alternatives to addressing four main issues: commercial fishing outfitter management, social conflict management on the upper river, lower river recreational management, and angler use management on the upper river. The form of this process will be a public survey. Additionally, the public will weigh in on their support for a management goal for recreational use on the river. The public will have 40 days to comment. Once the scoping process is complete, the department will consider the survey results and draft a proposed rule, which is slated to go before the commission in February. The commission will then choose whether to put the proposed rule out for public comment. "It's taken a long time and a lot of work to get to this point where we can officially collect input on our next steps," said FWP director Martha Williams. "People are passionate about the Madison River, and we know it's important for us to consider all interests in moving forward. We're committed to doing just that."

In addition to taking the survey, people can submit written comments to [madisonrivercom@mt.gov](mailto:madisonrivercom@mt.gov). People have until January 6<sup>th</sup> to participate online regarding the potential Madison River regulations. The survey can be found at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RDWKFXW>.

**The Madison River Fishing Report for January from The Tackle Shop → Happy New Year!** The new year brings new beginnings and resolutions. Some want to lose 20 pounds, some want to make more money, but everyone should resolve to spend more time fishing! Come on now... we live in the "cultural epicenter of the Trout Kingdom" that is Ennis, Montana. We should all have brown trout tattoos above our hearts. I know I have one. Not above my heart but in another sensitive area. Well, I digress.

If you're like me and you resolve to fish more this year, you're in luck. 2020 is going to be **The Year of the Fish**, in the angler calendar. As of now, we are sitting a little light in our snowpack, at about 80%, but with a storm on the way. Way too early to *break glass in case of emergency*, just yet. But, if you have a

secret tribal snow dance, I will turn up the music and sponsor the whiskey shots. We have had 3 good water years in a row and the fish are fat and happy. Fish like water and the more water, the more fish.

If you need to catch that New Year's fish or try out a great set of new waders or rod (*that Santa probably purchased from the Tackle Shop for you*), there are still opportunities. Any day with warmer temps should have good fishing. Remember, winter fishing is at least as much about *where* as *what*. Think the deepest, slowest runs and you will find fish. Once you find them, do not move, as you will be able to catch multiples. Typical winter fare of eggs, worms, midges and stone fly stuff tied on anchor rope tippet will fool all the hungry winter fish. If you're lucky enough to find a day with warm temps and no wind, look for a good midge hatch in midafternoon. These midge risers are tricky buggers and you really need to hunt them down. If you get that yeti-of-a dry-fly-midge January fish, please let us know.

Lots to look forward to in the new year. The days are officially getting longer and for a solar powered person, that gives me hope. Good spring fishing is a few short months away and college football is almost over. Stop by the store for great winter deals on everything. We call it the Keep-the-Heat-On sale. A few of the limited edition, Artist Series, Orvis Helios 3 fly rods are still on the rack. Get them before they are gone for good. Also, stop by for some coffee. We like company... especially people who talk fishing. Look for our podcast, **The Montana Fly Fishing Podcast** to drop shortly. Just more of me yacking in your ear. Happy New Year, good Fishing and God Bless, *FishEnnis*, from John Way, Owner of **The Tackle Shop**, <http://www.thetackleshop.com>) Ennis, Montana, the **CULTURAL EPICENTER OF TROUT**. (406) 682-4263, or cell: (406) 370-5206.

**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 mild – no complaints. The daytime high was 50° and daytime low at 27°. Nighttime high was 39° with the low at 5°. It was so dry during December, a white Christmas was not expected, but snow came for Christmas Eve! It was lovely and timely.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **HOW TO GET TAX CREDITS FOR SOLAR...** The 2016-2019 federal tax credit remains at 30 percent of the cost of the system. In 2020, owners of new residential and commercial solar can deduct 26 % of the cost of the system from their taxes. In 2021, owners of new residential and commercial solar can deduct 22 percent of the cost of the system from their taxes.

#### **What Qualifies for the Solar Tax Credit?**

- The entire bill for a qualified system, minus the sales tax. That includes solar panels; labor costs for on-site preparation, assembly, and installation of the system; and piping or wiring to connect the system to your house.
- Installation of a solar system in a primary or second house.
- Systems purchased outright or with a loan.
- Solar roofing tiles, like those being sold by Tesla.
- Solar installed in a property that you live in for at least part of the year. That could cover, for instance, a second home that you rent out when you're not there. The credit



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is prorated based on how much time you spend in the residence. For a multifamily home in which you live but also collect rent, you may be eligible for either the residential or business tax credit, depending on how much of the property is used for business. Check with a tax expert for details.

<https://www.consumerreports.org/solar-panels/how-to-get-a-solar-tax-credit/>.

- **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL... Featured Property of the Month ... 9+ acres** with spectacular 360° views, power nearby, near public lands. Build your Montana dream in a great location, near great hunting, fishing, hiking, trail riding, and all the Madison Valley has to offer. Property owners in Shining Mountains have exclusive access to stocked mountain lakes and access into BLM and Nat. Forest land. Shining Mountains I, Lot 238, Antler Trail, MLS #220664. \$59,000. Google Earth Coordinates: 45.229795°, -111.810807°. <https://www.itourmedia.com/display/index/377223>



- **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS → WASHINGTON** (December 30, 2019) – Pending home sales increased in November, rebounding from the prior month’s decline, according to the National Association of Realtors®. The West region reported the highest growth last month, while the other three major U.S. regions saw only marginal variances in month-over-month contract activity. Pending home sales were up nationally and up in all regions compared to one year ago. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, rose 1.2% to 108.5 in November. Year-over-year contract signings jumped 7.4%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001. *“Despite the insufficient level of inventory, pending home contracts still increased in November,”* said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist, noting that housing inventory has been in decline for six straight months dating back to June 2019. *“The favorable conditions are expected throughout 2020 as well, but supply is not yet meeting the healthy demand.”*

At the recent NAR Real Estate Forecast Summit, the consensus forecast called for 2.0% GDP growth, a 3.7% unemployment rate and a 3.8% average mortgage rate in 2020. Home prices were projected to rise by 3.6% in 2020 after a 5% gain in 2019. *“Sale prices continue to rise, but I am hopeful that we will see price appreciation slow in 2020,”* said Yun. *“Builder confidence levels are high, so we just need housing supply to match and more home construction to take place in the coming year.”*

The regional indices had mixed results in November. The Northeast PHSI slid 0.1% to 96.3 in November, 2.6% higher than a year ago. In the Midwest, the index rose 1.0% to 102.5 last month, 5.0% higher than in November 2018. Pending home sales in the South decreased 0.2% to an index of 125.0 in November, a 7.7% increase from last November. The index in the West grew 5.5% in November 2019 to 98.4, an increase of 14.0% from 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.*

- **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS →** December quieted down, but people are coming in January so they can see what winter “is really like!” **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 **DECEMBER 2019** and year-end, are as follows:

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- **HOMES:** 55↓ homes listed (\$85,000 to \$2,990,000); 8 pending sales (\$250,000 to \$835,000); and 85 homes sold in 2019 (\$70,000 to \$4,500,000), totaling \$39,603,400 at 95.7% of list prices.
- **LAND:** 161↓ vacant lots listed (\$9,500 to \$2,200,000; with 17↓ pending sales (\$54,000 to \$560,000); and 148 lots sold in 2019 (\$9,000 to \$2,900,000), totaling \$14,838,799 at 94.9%↓ of list prices.
- **RANCHES:** 7↓ ranches listed (\$599,000 to \$15,900,000); 1 pending sale (\$4,495,000), and 0 ranches sold in 2019.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 14↓ listed (\$99,000 to \$950,000); 1 pending sale (\$210,000); and 10 commercial properties sold in 2019 (\$54,000 to \$950,000), totaling \$3,618,000, at 93.9% ↑ of list prices.

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

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA...** *Did you know... that Montana Highway 287 follows the ultimate portions of two trails that originally met in Virginia City, the center of the Alder Gulch gold rush of the mid-1860's and the second territorial capital of Montana?* MT Hwy 287 is now a state highway that runs 42.822 miles from MT 41 in Twin Bridges east to U.S. Route 287 in Ennis. It is the primary east-west highway of Madison County. The highway connects the county's four towns, including Sheridan and the county seat of Virginia City. Parts of the highway were improved from rudimentary roads around 1920 from Virginia City to Ennis and makes up part of the Vigilante Trail, originally dedicated in 1924, which provides a corridor for Montana tourists from Butte to West Yellowstone. The trail was marked with the vigilante code, 3-7-77, on bright signs to ensure that visitors would not lose their way. This code served as a warning for frontier ruffians and criminals to leave the area immediately – or else. The trail cuts through the heart of Southwest Montana, taking travelers along the road that was frequented by so many of the early Montana settlers. Rich in territorial history, outdoor recreational opportunities, and genuine Montana hospitality, a trip along the Vigilante Trail will provide a memorable experience for all visitors. <http://southwestmt.com/itineraries/vigilantetrail/>

***SEE YOU IN MONTANA! Be not afraid.***



### **Our ERA Landmark Arrow Real Estate Team**

**Toni and Don Bowen**, Broker Associates and Accredited Buyer Broker Representatives, with over 75 years of real estate experience, between them – covering residential, commercial, vacant land, recreational & ranch properties in the Madison Valley. **And Finley**, our new office puppy!

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

*Debbie Reilly-Richardson  
Office Administrator*



***WE'RE NOT JUST HERE TO MAKE A LIVING  
---WE'RE HERE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!***



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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.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website

<http://ennisarts.org/> - The Ennis Arts Association website for all artists!

<http://www.backroadtoyellowstone.com> – information for travelers about the route through our valley

### MADISON COUNTY:

<https://madisoncountymt.gov/525/Emergency-Information> - 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.nps.gov/yell/index.htm> - Yellowstone National Park – for all things Yellowstone Park

<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 Big Sky MLS

[www.eralandmark.com](http://www.eralandmark.com) – Our Main Office website, covering Bozeman, Livingston, Big Sky & Ennis

<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.homesandland.com](http://www.homesandland.com) – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

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