

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for APRIL 2020



Trout live in nice neighborhoods



➤ **MADISON VALLEY APRIL "HAPPENINGS"** → The Varney Bridge is open for traffic! Hooray! → Most all the restaurants and the Senior Center were busy with "take out" business, including window & curbside service at Willie's Distillery, coffee shops and banks. → Open for business were Ennis True Value, Ennis Pharmacy, some retail shops, Madison Foods, Shedhorn Sports and the Golf Course! → No live events were held, but lots of virtual gatherings going on! → Many locals took to howling at dusk to release pent up feelings and to communicate with others, following many other communities around the world. Howl to your heart's content because soon enough we will all be back out there roaming this great place we call home! There were only 8 confirmed cases of the virus in Madison Co. and only 1 death. We are truly fortunate to live here. → The community came together in wonderful ways to support and feed first responders, to make masks for anyone, to volunteer and to help in so many ways. → The Ennis Chamber of Commerce has a new Executive Director, Marshall Bettendorf plus a wonderful, new website! Check it out at <https://www.ennischamber.com/>



➤ **MADISON VALLEY MAY "HAPPENINGS"** → It is time to make plans to visit SW Montana! Watch this to whet your appetite: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0No1zrsK5rY>. → Many locals will be starting their own Victory Gardens, as nurseries open and the weather invites us outdoors. And we all want to be a little more self-sufficient going forward! → The Madison Co. Board of Health mandated that all motels, hotels, guest ranches, RV sites, camping, short-term rentals and guiding & outfitting services required to cancel all reservations for visitors on or before April 30th. → However, a Phased Reopening will be starting now with many more businesses reopening, including Trenz Salon! Hair & Nails - here we come! → The babies are coming, no matter what! Calves are in the fields and we will soon start seeing baby antelope. It is a great time to visit Yellowstone National Park and see all the new wildlife!



➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → As of April 30th, there are 453 confirmed Covid-19 cases, with 16 deaths, statewide. Governor Bullock has called for a Phased Reopening, with many businesses re-opening their doors. Madison County and the Madison Valley are relatively safer than most other places. See info at: <https://covid19.mt.gov/Portals/223/Documents/Reopening%20Montana%20Phased%20Approach.pdf?ver=2020-04-22-115707-770>. → All the news from Montana was concerning the state's reaction to the virus.

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → **The Madison River Fishing Report. By John Way.** So, that is what the end of the world looks like! I am really mad, as I was preparing for zombies or Russian paratroopers and what do we get? A virus from China! Complete let down. While most of America is still hurting and will be for a while, things here in Montana are better than most. Like the new spring grass that shows hope and rebirth, our state has been recently reborn. Welcome to the new normal and a step back from the edge of the earth. One good thing about social distancing is that there is plenty of that already going on in Montana, even before this nightmare started.

After all of this is over, I just want to hug some folks, shake hands or put my arm around my dear friends. All of this may not be illegal but socially frowned upon even if you shower in sanitizer. Buffs that fly fisherman have worn over their face for years are now all the fashion statement! Who knew I would be a trend-setter? Maybe a supermodel will want to fish with me now. While the pandemic fishing has been good, most people like me found it tough to fish with the weight of the world in your backpack. We should have done more fishing and less worrying or watching national news. The fish do not care.

May is a funny month in Montana, anyway. The spring really hits home in May with green grass, melting snow, and a rebirth for the state. At the beginning of the month, we see some of the best dry fly fishing of the year with the Mothers' Day caddis hatch. Millions of tasty caddis will hatch at one time with hungry fish and not many fishermen around to notice them. If you have hit it, you know how good it can be. Mix in March Brown Mayflies and skwala stone flies and you have a cake of goodness. As the month rolls along, we see increasing flows in the river and our spring runoff, which usually peaks the last week of May or the first week of June. What I am saying is... if you want some good fishing, DO IT NOW. I know a shop that has the right flies—hint, hint.

What I dream about now is a warm 4th of July Parade with lots of folks in town and in the stores. This is followed by a warm summer evening of Rodeo, beer and fireworks and then the entire world is right. Is this just a dream or will we see this again soon? I sure hope so. If we do not, the entire fabric of not just my life but the fabric of Ennis will be eroded and will never look the same again. The bustling stores and town are only here to serve traveling fisherman. What if they do not come back? The town, people, and businesses that make Ennis a special place will be lost. Is it a dream or nightmare?

Give a call to the store or better yet stop in for some free advice. Hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes and face masks at the front door for your use. Lots of great new gear, clothing and flies are in stock and ready. My mantra right now is this. **The comeback is always better than the setback.** Get ready, it is all about to happen in Montana this summer. Probably the safest vacation spot in the world right now!

➤ Happy 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.montanatroutrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.

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➤ **WEATHER** → Even though we were inside for much of April, the weather was quite nice with a daytime high of 77° and a low of 31°. The nighttime high was 42° and the low a chilly 8°. The grass started turning green almost overnight! Our spirits were raised along with the temperatures!

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS → WHAT ARE NOXIOUS WEEDS AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?** For nearly 20 years now, locals have attended the **Annual "Weed" Dinner & Auction** to raise money to fight these invasive plant species that threaten our landscape. (*Definitely not the other kind of "weed!"*) Madison County has been a model for the state in their dedication to fighting these plants.

- The spread of invasive plant species is changing the Madison River watershed - affecting the environment and the people who live, work and play in the Madison Valley.
- There are currently over 30 species of problem plants found in Montana. By learning to identify these noxious weeds and either reporting or removing them, you can help prevent them from become established in new areas.
- Invasive species of any kind can be harmful to an ecosystem. Most invasive plants, or noxious weeds, found in North America were brought here from other continents. When invasive plants like Spotted Knapweed become established, they often spread and can dominate the vegetative community.
- By altering plant communities, these noxious weeds can lead to changes in: soil & water quality; habitat and forage for wildlife; abundance, quality and productivity of agricultural lands; natural environmental processes in the ecosystem and species biodiversity; visual quality and aesthetic value of the landscape.
- Weed control timing is important for a few reasons: 1) to perform application prior to the weed going to seed. Seeds are generally not susceptible to herbicides and may build a resistance to herbicide. 2) To perform application at optimal time of plant growth for better efficiency of herbicide thus resulting in better weed control.
- The importance of professional service is that these licensed experts are in the field daily to recognize these important times. They are familiar with all area weed types and they use the appropriate herbicide to best control them. They are well-equipped utilizing UTV spray rigs and GPS/GIS mapping showing where they travel and sprayed, building a history of weeds on your property.

Check out their main page at: <https://www.madisonvalleyranchlands.org/> and on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/Madison-Valley-Ranchlands-Group-Weed-Committee-671491362985488/>.

We recommend Charles McDougal of 4M Weed Control, at (406) 925-1494 to get after your weeds!

➤ **FIND A HOME FOR YOUR SOUL... Featured Property of the Month ... Perfect place for your Montana Dream Home!** This premier lot of 7+ acres sits on the edge of a bench with unobstructed views of the valley and the mountains beyond. Conveniently located, just a mile to the Madison Meadows Golf Course, about 2.5 miles to Ennis and minutes to Ennis Lake or the Madison River. A great location in a wonderful community. This lot has end-of-the-road privacy and borders a large ranch to the north which is under Conservation Easement and can never be developed. This is THE place to be. Pintail Ridge, Lot 31, Mallard's Roost Road, Ennis, MT 59729. **\$195,000.** MLS # 344772.



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➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE NEWS** → WASHINGTON (April 29, 2020) – Pending home sales fell in March, seeing expected declines as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Each of the four major regions saw drops in month-over-month contract activity and year-over-year pending home sales transactions. The Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI), a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, decreased 20.8% to 88.2 in March. Year-over-year, contract signings declined 16.3%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.

“The housing market is temporarily grappling with the coronavirus-induced shutdown, which pulled down new listings and new contracts,” said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist. *“As consumers become more accustomed to social distancing protocols, and with the economy slowly and safely reopening, listings and buying activity will resume, especially given the record low mortgage rates.”* *“The usual Spring buying season will be missed, however, so a bounce-back later in the year will be insufficient to make up for the loss of sales in the second quarter,”* he said. *“Overall, home sales are projected to have declined 14% for the year.”*

Citing results from NAR’s April 19 – 20 Flash Survey, Yun says technology tools such as virtual tours and e-signings are helping connect buyers and sellers. Fifty-eight percent of Realtors® reported that buyers are using virtual tours and 43% said buyers have taken advantage of e-closings. *“Although the pandemic continues to be a major disruption in regard to the timing of home sales, home prices have been holding up well,”* Yun said. *“In fact, due to the ongoing housing shortage, home prices are likely to squeeze out a gain in 2020 to a new record high. I project the national median home price to increase 1.3% for the year, though there will be local market variations and the upper-end market will likely experience a reduction in home price.”*

March Pending Home Sales Regional Breakdown: The Northeast PHSI dropped 14.5% to 82.3 in March, 11.0% lower than a year ago. In the Midwest, the index decreased 22.0% to 85.6 last month, down 12.4% from March 2019. Pending in the South sank 19.5% to an index of 103.7 in March, a 17.8% drop from March 2019. The index in the West fell 26.8% in March 2020 to 71.4, down 21.5% 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** → We survived April and **hope** is alive and well! We have been busy answering requests for information on properties in our area. **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 2020**, were as follows:

- **HOMES:** 53↑ homes listed (\$75,000 to \$2,990,000); 16↓ pending sales (\$165,000 to \$998,000); and 16 homes have sold in 2020 (\$180,000 to \$1,325,000), totaling \$8,797,900 at 97.1%↑ of list prices.
- **LAND:** 180↓ vacant lots listed (\$9,500 to \$2,200,000; with 10↑ pending sales (\$35,000 to \$249,900); and 24 lots have sold in 2020 (\$37,000 to \$505,000), totaling \$2,367,300 at 92.3%↓ of list prices.
- **RANCHES:** 7 ranches listed (\$599,000 to \$15,900,000); 0 pending sales, and 1 ranch has sold in 2020 (\$4,000,000), at 89% of list price.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 13 listed (\$99,000 to \$950,000); 1 pending sales; and 0 commercial properties have sold in 2020.

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

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➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA...***Did you know... that The Beartooth Plateau in southern Montana and northern Wyoming is the largest continuous landmass above 10,000 feet in the continental U.S., and contains some of the oldest exposed rock formations on the planet, with samples dating back to around 3.3 billion years ago?!* The plateau also contains Granite Peak, Montana's tallest at 12,808 feet, and the Beartooth Highway, a seasonal "All-American" or National Scenic Byway that traverses plateau. And a white-knuckle drive! In 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed the Park Approach Act into law, which funded the construction of scenic routes to the country's national parks through federally owned land. The plateau's northern flank is one of the world's major sources of chromite, platinum and palladium. This drive along US 212, MP 69, south of Red Lodge, is a definite "must see," so put it on your Bucket List! https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beartooth_Mountains.



***SEE YOU IN MONTANA! (soon!)
Social Distancing Champions, since 1889!
Be not afraid. STAY SAFE, SANE AND SOBER!***

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 our new office puppy, Finley!



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/ - 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.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 - 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 Big Sky MLS

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 – Helpful information from the National Association of Realtors

www.homesandland.com – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

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