

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER



## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for the month of AUGUST 2011

*Trout live in nice neighborhoods.*

**ENNIS AND MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → Absolutely breathtaking beauty in the valley, from the striking moon rises to the spectacular lighting shows and the joyful rainbows! → August was a very busy month, with lots of special events going on, in addition to all the regular summer activities. → The “**Guest Hatch**” was in full swing and visitors accompanied their local hosts to most all the events. → The 13<sup>th</sup> annual **Weed Fundraiser and Auction** was held at the Sitz

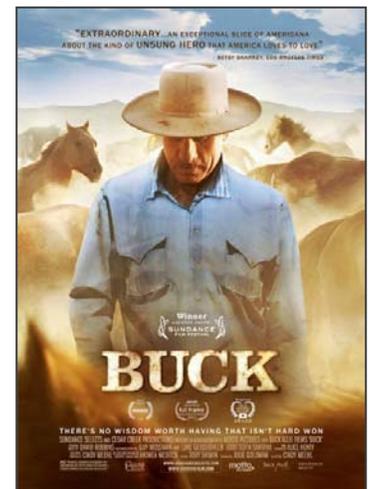


Ranch near Harrison. We took the afternoon tour of the ranch and Bob Sitz provided an interesting “show and tell” about their international Black Angus operation. There was a great turnout for the event and once again the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group has a generous operating budget to



continue the fight against noxious weeds in the Madison Valley. Be sure and plan to be here the first weekend in August 2012 for the next Weed Feed, at yet another local ranch.

→ The local movie theatre was filled for the 3-night showing of “**BUCK**”, a new documentary film chronicling the life of local legend and world-renowned horseman **Buck Brannaman**, who grew up in Madison County. He is just “Buck” to many locals who knew him as a kid or have attended his clinics, and a standing ovation followed the film. It was a real treat to learn more about him and the magic he does with horses and their owners. The following week, he held a horse-training clinic over in the Ruby Valley, where he spent 4 days teaching people about the connection between horse and rider. → Runners participated in the challenging **Madison River Run**, an annual trek through the mountains. → Dozens of booths filled the park at the First Madison Valley Bank for the annual **Madison Valley Arts Festival**, a juried arts and crafts show and sale. → Shedhorn Sports hosted their annual **Hunters Rendezvous Sale**, offering such a huge firearms selection, they claim it is bigger and better than any gun show!



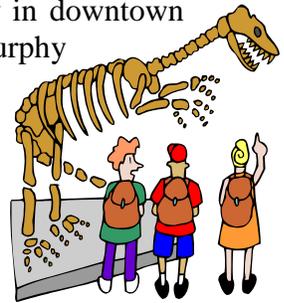
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➤ **SEPTEMBER EVENTS** → Labor Day Weekend, the 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, features the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Ennis on the **Madison Fly Fishing Festival!** A very big event with live music, raffles, clinics, speakers, contests. The festival is a project of the Madison River Foundation, a non-profit organization, whose mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the Madison River. Check out their organization and this event at [www.madisonriverfoundation.org](http://www.madisonriverfoundation.org). → Local artists present their work at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual **Evening Over the Mountains**, put on by the Ennis Arts Association, *over* in Virginia City. This is a great opportunity to see and purchase local art, meet and greet the artists and enjoy great dining.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → **BILLINGS** - Dinosaurs in the news! A new facility in downtown Billings lets people see what it takes to bring those bones back to life. Nate Murphy built the lab to process bones he finds all over the region. Inside is \$100,000 worth of equipment and literally tons of dinosaur bones. "A lot of people don't realize finding a dinosaur in the field only represents 20% of the work," Murphy said. Paleontologists dress their finds in the field in large jackets to transport them to the lab. Murphy said the real work happens in the dino lab, where he uses dental picks and exacto knives to painstakingly remove dirt from the bones. The next step is done in a microsandblaster. The machine uses a small tool, high pressure, and dental grade baking soda to remove any access dirt from the bones. Murphy then pieces together the cleaned bits of bones till he sees history books come to life. It's a process you can see for yourself in tours of the facility. "To see these dinosaurs come out of their grave and the bones being cleaned to the point you can see all the details and imagine what the animal looked like; you'll never look at a dinosaur exhibit in any museum the same way again," Murphy said. He wants to share his discoveries with tours of the dino lab. For more information call 696-5842, or email Nate at [jrdi@bresnan.net](mailto:jrdi@bresnan.net). The **Dino Lab** is located at 1518 1st Ave N. Suite 2 in Billings.



➤ **FISHING REPORT**→ The Madison River Fishing Company in Ennis says, *“Based on personal experience as well as most reports coming in over the past few days it seems as if we’re starting to see a bit more consistency here on the Madison. Maybe it’s the lighter than average pressure, maybe the stable, if lower than necessary, flow or possibly the fish are feeling the seasonal imperative to pack on some extra bulk. Whatever the case they seem to be eating on at least a semi-regular basis. We’re still seeing better numbers of bigger fish being caught subsurface but more and more we’re seeing and getting reports of some really good ones being caught on top. The other possible explanation is the appearance of the first few flights of ants here in the valley. It’s not full-blown and we’ve not had the clouds of the big honey colored versions on the river yet but we’re all expecting that any day now. Obviously the fish have seen a few whether its been the tinier rust colored ones or the two toned black and rust jobs, they’ve been pretty willing to come up and eat ant patterns off the surface lately. If the real show starts here in the next few days we’ll see some real pigs come out of this river on the dries. Nothing...and I mean nothing, brings fish to the surface like an ant “hatch”. Most folks are throwing the ant as a dropper off of some variation of a foam grasshopper pattern. On most days about ¾ of the fish will eat the ant and the rest will want the hopper despite the size disparity of the prospective meals. Of course on a day to day basis or at least until the ant thing really gets going and especially on cloudy days, the streamer/bead head rig will account for more bigger fish. Most guys are still doing the slow drag thing as opposed to working very hard stripping fast. Lots of weight and concentrate on the deeper runs and holes, particularly later in the heat of the day.”*



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✦ **Smile!** You're on "the fishing" camera! Recently reported in the Madison River Foundation Newsletter, "If you've floated the Madison lately you may have spotted a big guy on the banks snapping photos as you passed by. That's probably Joel Solberg, a photographer who has launched a new business enterprise in the valley. Joel takes professional-grade photos of drift boats on the river then posts them on his web site [www.madisonriverphoto.com](http://www.madisonriverphoto.com). If you've been on the river, your pic may be posted and Joel will be happy to sell you a nice print for a reasonable price. You can search the web site by the date you were on the river with your favorite guide or fishing buddies. Or you can have your photo printed on a postcard to mail to your friends who are sure to be envious and wish they could spend a day floating and fishing the beautiful Madison. And by this weekend Joel will be set up to offer color prints in the Tackle Shop on Main Street in Ennis. Check it out."



...check out additional fishing reports at:

✦ Kelly Galloup's Slide Inn at:

<http://www.slideinn.com/blog/category/fishing-report/>.

✦ Dan Delekta's report at

<http://beartoothflyfishing.com/flyfishingreports/uppermadisonriver.htm>.

✦ The Tackle Shop's Orvis report at [http://www.orvis.com/fishing\\_report.aspx?locationid=5974](http://www.orvis.com/fishing_report.aspx?locationid=5974)

✦ The Madison Valley Ranch at <http://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/blog/>

✦ Joe Dilschneider's Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatrout.com/>

✦ Madison River Fishing Company at:

<http://www.mrfc.com/MadisonRiverMontanaFishing/MadisonRiverReport.aspx>.

➤ **WEATHER** → August weather has been pretty typical – warm days, cool nights, spectacular storms and lots of sun! The fishermen seem happy and good weather is predicted for the upcoming Labor Day Weekend and the Fly Fishing Festival. The statistics show the **August** temperatures in Ennis as: a high of **96°** and a low of **40°**, with an average high of **82°** and an average low of **45°**. (Almost the same as for July!) Our recorded **August** precipitation totaled **.62"**. So we are happy for the rain we get.



➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS** → **6 Reasons to Google Your Address**

Trulia.com advises that with virtually any type of information imaginable online, it makes sense to do regular internet searches for your home's address. There are at least six compelling reasons it makes sense to do so, especially if it's an address you're thinking of renting, buying or selling. Smart homeowners would do well to search for their addresses, too, and here's why:

**1. To See If Megan's Law Registrants Live Nearby** - There is plenty of information available to the public regarding registered sex offenders in their neighborhoods. Nearly every state that has a Megan's law--type sex offender registry has an online version that serves up the names, addresses, sex--offense history, and even photos in many cases, of convicted sex offenders. Googling your address and "Megan's law"-- or even your city or ZIP code and "Megan's law" -- will turn up a quick list of nearby registrants.

**2. To Find Crime Reports and Data For Your Home and Environs** - City, county and state law enforcement agencies all post crime data online, but a Google search for your address or city and "crime reports" is most likely to turn up your local police office's crime map. Or, you can check out Trulia Crime

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Maps for a crime map of recent incident reports for the whole city, ZIP code or neighborhood. The map is color-coded to represent the intensity of crimes in each area.

**3. To Detect Scammers Trying to Rent or Sell Your House** - Internet scammers have taken to ripping off home information and putting together fake listings offering other people's homes for rent or lease-to-own. They often list the home on extremely cheap and easy terms, and then ask the would-be-buyer or tenant to please wire or send the deposit money overseas. These scams often come to light only after the homeowner or current resident notices bargain-hunters checking out the place. If you start getting an inordinate amount of foot traffic to your home, or someone knocking on your door asking if they can see the place, you may want to Google your address. If you find a fraudulent listing, identify yourself as the home's rightful owner and ask the offending site to take the scam posting down -- stat! *(THIS actually happened to us!)*

**4. To See What Your Neighbor's Place Sold For and Possibly Lower Your Property Taxes** - In real estate, the value of your home is largely driven by what is similar or how much nearby homes have sold for. If you search your address, Trulia will first surface some sort of image of your home, a map, the basic property details from the public records (see No. 5, below), and recent sales data for your own home before listing out the comps -- homes with similar numbers of beds, baths and square feet near yours, and what they recently sold for. If you see a pattern of homes selling for lower than your home's assessed value, you can use those comps to petition your county to lower your own property taxes!

**5. To See Your Home's Property Records** - Your home's records online are populated from the public records about your home, which are either so old they don't include upgrades and additions, or they're just flat out wrong. If you Google your address, or search for it on Trulia, and find that your home's description is riddled with errors, contact your county public record agency to correct them and edit your home facts on Trulia. This is particularly important if you're planning to sell your home anytime soon.

**6. To See Your Home's Google Street View** - When you're selling your home, it's especially critical to see everything that prospective home buyers will see. That means checking out how your home's listing looks on all the online real estate sites (yes, even on Trulia), checking out the flyer -- even stopping by to check out any staging your broker or agent did if you've already moved out. One thing even the savviest sellers don't check out is the way Google Street View depicts your home. If you're about to sell your home, and you notice that the street view is outdated, mention it to your agent, and ask them to make a note of that fact in the listing information.

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET**→ According to the National Association of Realtors®, Washington, DC, August 30, 2011, pending home sales declined in July but remain well above year-ago levels. All regions show monthly declines except for the West, which continues to show the highest level of sales contract activity. In the West the index rose 3.6 percent to 110.8 in July and is 20.6 percent above a year ago. The Pending Home Sales Index, forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, slipped 1.3 percent to 89.7 in July from 90.9 in June but is 14.4 percent above the 78.4 index in July 2010. The data reflects contracts but not closings.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says sales activity is underperforming. "The market can easily move into a healthy expansion if mortgage underwriting standards return to normalcy," he says. "We also need to be mindful that not all sales contracts are leading to closed existing-home sales. Other market frictions need to be addressed, such as assuring that proper comparables are used in appraisal valuations,

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and streamlining the short sales process.” “Looking at pending home sales over a longer span, contract activity over the past three months is fairly comparable to the first three months of the year, and well above the low seen in April,” Yun says. “The underlying factors for improving sales are developing, such as rising rents, record high affordability conditions and investors buying [real estate](#) as a future inflation hedge. It is now a question of lending standards and consumers having the necessary confidence to enter the market.”

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → Activity slowed down for a while but has picked up again and we have a few things going. Town will be busy this weekend for the Fly Fishing Festival so we look forward to helping some of those fishermen find a piece of Montana. The **Southwest Montana Multiple Listing** statistics for the Madison Valley (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall and Cardwell), for the month of **August 2011**, are as follows:

- **LAND: 367 vacant lots listed** (\$8,400 - \$2,490,000), **3 pending sales** (\$55,000 - \$135,000), **16 lots sold, year-to-date** (\$8,000 - \$355,000).
- **HOMES: 188 homes listed** (\$67,500 - \$3,250,000), **5 pending sales** (\$89,900 - \$299,000), **30 homes sold, year-to-date** (\$82,500 - \$1,995,000).
- **RANCHES: 9 listed** (\$849,000 - \$9,950,000), **0 pending sales, 2 ranches sold, year-to-date** (\$925,000 - \$7,217,000)

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA WHEN...**...people you don't know *smile* and say “Howdy” and *wave* when they pass you on the road.

➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → Did you know that 46 out of Montana's 56 counties are considered “*frontier counties*” with an average population of 6 or fewer people per square mile? It is harder to count critters because they roam around and won't stay put for the count! There is a great article about game density at <http://www.westernhuntingdata.com/articles.php?view=8>.



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



**Toni and Don Bowen,  
Brokers/Owners,  
Arrow Real Estate**



***Congratulations to***

**Jay Willett and Karen Swedman (*the newly weds!*)  
Brokers, Arrow Real Estate  
also Property Managers and Owners of  
Apex Management**



**APEX MANAGEMENT** offers full service property management in the Madison Valley. Whether you are interested in using your home as a vacation or a long-term rental, or looking for assistance in finding a rental, you can expect quality service with a positive attitude. See our website at: [www.apexmontana.com](http://www.apexmontana.com) or call us at **(406) 682-7112**.

Apex Management is **not** a part of Arrow Real Estate.

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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.mvvetmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website  
<http://ennis.communityblogs.us/2008/11/17/ennis-community-blog/> - comments and events in Ennis  
<http://adayinthelifeofalemon.blogspot.com/> - famous local sculptor, David Lemon's site  
<http://my-montana-moments.blogspot.com/> - Artist Penny Hall's photo journal of her MT experience  
<http://ennismontanahomesandland.blogspot.com> – Ennis, Montana Happenings, from **Arrow Real Estate**

**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

**SKIING:**

[www.moonlightbasin.com](http://www.moonlightbasin.com) – Check out latest snow conditions on the hill 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

**REAL ESTATE:**

[www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) – A wealth of resource information, local listings and a portal to the SW MT 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

**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

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