



Edelweiss Maintenance Commission

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Spring 2018 Newsletter

Edelweiss Annual Meeting – May 26, 2018
12:00 PM - Pot Luck Lunch (Feel free to bring a pot-full of luck)
Bratwursts will be grilled by EMC
1:00 – Meeting Will Be Called to Order

Annual Meeting Election of the Board of Directors

Everyone is encouraged to attend the Edelweiss Annual Meeting. It's a good time to catch up with the latest news and Edelweiss plans, and to ask any questions you might have about them. It's also a great place to catch up with folks you may not have seen since last year, and for new members of the community, to meet some of your new neighbors. We hope to see you there.

The Board of Directors is the main governing body of the Edelweiss. It oversees the infrastructure, finances and maintenance issues of the community, including providing oversight and guidance to our maintenance staff. A strong knowledgeable Board is essential to the health and well being of Edelweiss. As a Board member, you can gain an understanding of the many and changing issues which face Edelweiss, and will have the opportunity to influence the direction and financial health of the community. All members of the community are encouraged to consider membership on the Board.

The normal term for a Board member is three years, with voting to take place at our annual meeting. This year, Will Fohrell is stepping down, after a 6-year participation. Alan Fahnestock and Kirk Schumacher are running for re-election. Peter Speer, replacing retired Board member Sara Knapp, will be running for her remaining two-years.

If you are interested in running for the Board, contact Dick Volckmann (emcdvol@gmail.com) with a brief bio and an explanation as to why you would like to be a Board member. He will answer any questions you might have, and will circulate your information to the community prior to the annual meeting.

President's Message from John Kirner

There are a number of major issues confronting the Edelweiss Board of Directors at this time. We believe it is important for us to address these issues and we will require your support. Some involve significant expenditures, and will be discussed at the Annual meeting. The first of these is the installation of water mains in conjunction with the replacement of underground powerlines by OCEC, our electricity provider. OCEC is pursuing

a major replacement of underground, unshielded direct-buried electric lines in Edelweiss as a result of old age and concerns of line failure. They will encase new (3-phase) power lines in conduit, thus providing shielded and uninterrupted power for years to come. Edelweiss has the opportunity to work closely with OCEC to replace old waterlines at the time of powerline replacement. Many of EMC waterlines initially were installed at inadequate depths and substandard materials were used. Most have reached an age where they need to be replaced. There is an advantage to both EMC and OCEC to work together on this project since it allows each of us to share some of the costs including excavation and backfilling. If we choose not to proceed in conjunction with OCEC we will both lose a financial partner on the work and we will have to work around OCEC power lines when we eventually replace our waterlines.

This year's assessment of \$250.00 per lot was the first installment for this major project which could continue for 5-10 years. In order to pay for this work we can pursue assessments for each year as we proceed, we can raise water rates as needed, or we could pursue a combination of the two.

The next major category of concern is preparing for replacement of other major infrastructure. This includes components of the water system (in addition to water mains), and maintenance and repair of EMC streets, structures and equipment. The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) sets guidelines for the establishment of reserve funds for home owners associations. This is RCW 64-38-065-090 which establishes the rules and procedures which should be followed in establishing a Reserve Fund. In addition to being a State requirement we believe the establishment of such a reserve fund is critical to the ongoing protection of our community. The amount of such a fund is really dependent upon our assessment of future needs.

The Board is concerned about these needs and would like to provide for an enhanced role for Edelweiss members in developing the budget. At the annual meeting, in addition to voting for Board Members, we will be discussing, and voting on proposed changes to the Edelweiss Bylaws (indicated in red on the copy of the Bylaws attached). The proposals from the Board are: 1- Ratifying the validity of membership voting by email; 2- Replacing the restriction of annual dues increases by the CPI percentage, in favor of a *maximum* annual increase of 15%.

Any such increase in annual dues will need to be approved by the membership, as part of the budget process. This will be discussed throughout the year and will likely be implemented in the 2019 budget. Even more reason to run for the Board.

General Manager's Message from Dick Volckmann

It's 70 degrees and sunny: So why am I sitting inside writing a newsletter? Because if I don't do it now, procrastination will overcome my enthusiasm, and I won't be able to relay all the news of the day! So without further.....

Water line replacement: This coming summer, because of the positive response to the assessment, we will have the funds to replace approximately 2500 feet of water line along Highland Meadow Road and Homestead Road. As mentioned in John's message, this will be done in cooperation with the (OCEC). We're unsure at this time when construction will begin, but we'll keep you informed as we develop a time-line.

Water source – a review: The water that comes out of your faucet originates in one of a couple of deep wells near Goat Creek Road. It is pumped from the well to a pump station on East Fawn Creek road, and from there is 'boosted' up to a 120,000 gallon reservoir/tank above the community. The water then flows by gravity to your kitchen sink. The controlling heart of the whole arrangement is a system of radio telemetry. As the water level in the reservoir reaches a certain low point, a mechanical float activates a transmitter which relays a signal to a receiver at the booster pump which 'tells' it to begin pumping. When that happens, a signal is sent to the well pump to come on. The well pump and the booster pump continue to operate together until the float in the reservoir 'tells' the booster pump that it's full, and the pumps shut down.

This all works well - - - except when it doesn't. But lately, it hasn't been working as well as it should. We need to depend on the system turning itself on and off automatically, but in the past couple of years, that has been a hope rather than a certainty. There have been instances when the tank has run nearly dry because the pumps failed to come on when they should have, and conversely, there have been times when the pumps didn't shut off, overflowing the reservoir.

So, with hope of remedying the situation, we will be replacing all the mechanical parts (floats, switches, relays, etc.) with modern age digital equipment. The result will be a much more reliable operation. And we will be able to monitor the operation of the system remotely, with digital warnings of a malfunction. This conversion is expected to occur within the next couple of weeks, perhaps by the time you read this.

Of course, the system will still need to be monitored, as we do now, at least once every day. But we will know right away if something goes wrong when we're not watching. And the chances are that we'll know how to fix it if it does.

Mailboxes: There is a general opinion that the mailbox assembly should be relocated. First, it has been pointed out that there is an increase of people leaving their cars at the mailbox structure, especially in winter. The cars can block the view from Lupine Road, making it somewhat thrilling, and definitely risky, pulling

onto Goat Creek Road. Second, last fall, the mailbox assembly collided with an out-of-control pickup truck, which tore off the roof and damaged some of the mailboxes. Third, there have been instances when a skidding, out-of-control, vehicle has skated across Goat Creek Road from Highland Road, plowing into the structure. So far, no one has been hurt.

The Board of Directors has determined that rather than repair the rickety structure, mail delivery/pick-up would be better moved to the entrance of the campground parking area. The Board has proposed that rather than rebuild the mailbox structure, the safest and most convenient system of receiving mail would be to replace the individual mail boxes with secure, locking 'cluster box units' two of which already are in place at the current mailbox assembly. We'll have more information on this at the annual meeting.

Fire Season: Our annual reminder - Every summer brings the threat of fire in the valley. Please be aware that the smallest spark can set off an inferno, so be especially careful during fire season. Okanogan County will invoke a 'no-burn' requirement at some time in the early summer, although Edelweiss may announce an outdoor burn ban early than that. We will let you know when that happens. And, please respect the big yellow 'No Open Fires' signs when they are posted.

Bears: It's standard newsletter fare, but it bears (sorry) repeating for those who may be new to the area..... It's now the end of hibernation, and it won't be long before there are visitors of the massive hirsute ursine omnivorous persuasion. We have never had a dangerous confrontation with a bear in Edelweiss, so we needn't be concerned with their presence. However, it is essential that all garbage be safely stored in a bear-proof container. If you have a compost (bear candy) bin it needs to be protected as well. And don't leave food in your car unless it already needs to be redecorated. All these 'don'ts' are mostly for the safety of the bears. If they become habituated to free food, they can become a nuisance. And a nuisance bear may need to be trapped and removed – or worse. If you feel that a bear is becoming too friendly, please don't call Edelweiss Management. The wildlife officer, Jason Day (not the golfer), can be contacted at 509-826-7371.

Swimming Pool: We hope to have the pool ready for use by Memorial Weekend, the caveat being that it will be closed during the time of the annual meeting (approximately 1 – 4 P.M.). After that it will be open every day from 9:00 AM until dusk. There are no lights at the pool, so occupancy after dusk will not be permitted. For your safety, a telephone will be available for emergencies – the phone number is 509-996-3892. Long distance calls are blocked. However, 996-, 800-, and 911 calls can be made.

Lights Out: What do Bryce Canyon, Death Valley, Baxter State Park in Maine and Edelweiss have in common? They (and we) have some of the darkest skies in U.S. When there is no moon we can see the beauty of the stars, and the milky way without the interference of city lights. And, as long as we are conscious of turning off our outside lights when we retire for the night, it will remain so. Thank you all for keeping us in the dark,

So, that's it. Thanks for reading this far! Have a great spring. I'll see you at the meeting!

Dick Volckmann

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EMC

<http://www.edelweissmethowvalley.org>
