



Edelweiss Maintenance Commission

209 Goat Creek Road • Winthrop, WA 98862

Tel 509-664-7888

Spring 2019 Newsletter

! CALLING ALL EDELWEISSIANS !
The Annual Meeting – May 25, 2019
12:00 PM - Pot Luck Lunch
Free Bratwursts – What a deal!
1:00 – Meeting Will Be Called to Order

Annual Meeting Election of the Board of Directors

We hope to see all of you at the Edelweiss Annual Meeting. We've had a bunch of new property owners since last year, and it will be a great opportunity to meet the rest of the Edelweiss community and for everybody to catch up on the news of our 'town'.

The Board of Directors is looking for a few good people. The Board 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. Each of the nine Board members normally serves for three years. This year three positions will be opening, and one member will be leaving before the end of his term. Two of the incumbents - John Kirner (current president) and Sern Watt (current treasurer) - will be running for an additional term. In addition, we have received interest from two property owners, whose bios follow below.

Anne Johnson – Originally from St. Paul Minnesota, Anne holds a law degree and an MBA certificate. She moved to Bellingham, Washington from Juneau, Alaska in June of 2015 when she retired from her position as a land manager with the Department of Natural Resources. Prior to that position she worked in the Department of Law for the State of Alaska. She now splits her time between Edelweiss and Bellingham. Anne is an advocate for public land and enjoys nordic skiing and trail running. In past years she served on the board of the St. Paul YWCA and the Juneau running club. She has volunteered with programs for disabled skiers and kayakers, and disadvantaged women, and she currently volunteers with the Methow trails ski patrol and the Washington Trails Association. Anne says that she loves the Methow valley, as the people and the land remind her of the beauty and adventure she found in Alaska.

Katharine Bill – Katherine moved to the Methow Valley with her husband, Flash Clark in 1996. She has a Masters in Forestry from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. For over 20 years she has focused on community-based conservation and education projects here in the Methow Valley. From 1999-2008

she has held positions as Stewardship Director, Project Manager and Executive Director for the Methow Conservancy. From 2008 to 2013 she was an independent conservation consultant for the Okanogan Land Trust, the Trust for Public Land and Trout Unlimited. She also has run strategic planning retreats for numerous local non-profits. In 2014 Katharine completed her science teaching certificate for grades 5-12. She is currently the Family and Community Outreach Coordinator for the Methow Valley School District, where she runs after-school programs at the elementary school. She also leads the community-based internship program at Liberty Bell High School. Katharine and Flash have two daughters (Sisu, 9 and Neva, 5). They enjoy mountaineering, skiing, biking, building, gardening and many other outdoor adventures.

Sern Watt – Sern is at the end of his first three year term on the Board. He asks for your vote so he can continue to serve Edelweiss. He has enjoyed working with the other Board members as they all have worked to stabilize funding and create and act on long range plans, including the Reserve Study, the Fire-wise committee, the new Road Committee (which he is leading), and rebuilding our water delivery system. In September, 2018 he accepted responsibility as Treasurer. He came up to speed quickly on this, and would like to continue this important work. He is hoping for your support.

John Kirner – John's current three-year term will be up as of this annual meeting. As President of the Board, he has been instrumental in the construction of our new pool,

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

As you all should be aware at this time, Dick Volckmann has announced his retirement as Edelweiss General Manager, effective May 31st of this year. He gave us a long lead-time on his

announcement so we could conduct a search, and hire a replacement staff, in time for him to provide a good month of training on the critical issues important to Edelweiss.

Dick has been the face of Edelweiss for nearly 12 years. In this role, he has represented us before state and federal regulatory agencies, County Commissioners, and local representatives. The issues included the public health impacts of water supply and waste disposal, road maintenance, taxation, and land use. He has represented Edelweiss with regard to environmental protection and the proposed Flag Mountain Mine, and he has withstood the onslaught of free-range cattle who were intent on fattening themselves with the delicious, organic gardens of Edelweiss. Dick and Craig Hook have spent many hours every year running and repairing the fences, that separate grazing from residential lands, an activity better suited to 25-year-old cowboys!

I am most grateful for Dick's helpful and cooperative attitude when dealing with the Edelweiss community. This is not always easy, but he has always acted with the best interests of Edelweiss and the members of this community. This doesn't mean that he was able to embrace every idea proposed, but he has carefully considered the ideas and acted in support of the greater good of the residents whenever possible.

Dick has a wonderful background that has prepared him well for this sometimes thankless job. He's a scientist, holding a Ph.D. in Geology from the University of Michigan. He worked 14 years with the United States Geological Service (USGS), gaining training and experience that made him uniquely qualified to comment on the risks to the Methow Valley should the Flag Mountain Mine have become a reality. He also worked as a property manager at Hilton Head, South Carolina, where he dealt with a diverse group of property owners and their varied concerns, not unlike Edelweiss. One of my greatest pleasures is watching Dick try to figure out answers to problems facing the Edelweiss community. During the construction of our pool, the State required a significantly revised fencing system around the perimeter of the pool. This resulted in Dick gathering picks and shovels and bags of Sakrete, and whatever help he could muster, to hand-dig the fencepost holes, and secure them in place. Certain things are not in the job description, but Dick always did what was needed to make things happen.

As you can imagine, Dick will leave some big shoes to be filled. The Board needed to act quickly in order to take advantage of the long lead-time and training opportunity that Dick provided. A committee consisting of four Board Members (Peter Speer, Sern Watt, Nicole McCullough, and myself) reviewed the position descriptions. The position of General Manager was advertised for several weeks in the Methow Valley News. Nine applications were received, and three individuals were interviewed for the position. After a review of the applications, it was felt that the best approach would be to revise the job descriptions to place elements of the Edelweiss plant (roads, water, sewer, pool, and waste management) under the responsibility of the newly created Systems Manager for Edelweiss. Administrative functions (financial management, interactions with federal, state and local officials, and most importantly interaction with Edelweiss members) would be placed under the position of Administrative Manager of Edelweiss. Clearly there are interactions between these two positions which will require regular mutual

communication, and frequent reporting to the Board of Directors. There are definitely situations that will require close coordination and cross-training between these two positions in order to achieve the best solution for the Edelweiss community.

The Board selected Craig Hook as the Systems Manager and Gregg Strome, also an Edelweiss resident, as the Administrative Manager. We hope you will all attend the Annual Meeting on May 25, 2019, to welcome our new management team and say farewell to Dick.

General Manager's Message from Dick Volckmann

Another spring has rolled around in the Methow: So what's this about the temperatures predicted in the 30's for next week! Well, maybe, but not to worry. Soon we'll be complaining about the heat! Although we had some persistent cold weather, our snow total this last winter was only about 75 inches as compared to 122 inches the winter before. Good news for folks who dislike shoveling, not so good for the landscape. Lets hope for some rain in the next few weeks. Only not during the annual meeting.

Water line replacement: Last summer, in cooperation with OCEC, we were able to replace about 2700 feet of 4 inch water line along Highland Meadow and Homestead Roads, and connected 450 feet of 6 inch water line that had been installed several years ago along East Fawn Creek Road.. We appreciate the patience of those folks who had to put up with some inconvenience as the work progressed. This coming summer we're going to inconvenience some different people! Again in cooperation with OCEC, we'll be replacing another section of waterline. The route will extend from the intersection of Crabapple and Highland Roads to the 'No Name Road' along lots 57/58, to Quaking Aspen and along Quaking Aspen to its intersection with Highland Road. We'll try to keep traffic moving as smoothly as possible.

Also in the works -The Department of Public Works of Okanogan County may be replacing their sewer line along Highland Meadow Road this summer. However, we have not received definite word on their plans. We'll let you know as soon as we do.

The water line work produced an abundance of extra fill. Craig was able to find a used 4-foot culvert that was placed in West Fawn Creek at the end of River Road. By dumping the excess fill over the top of the culvert, a walking trail was established from the end of River Road to the end of Lupine Road. Voila! Get rid of fill – get a trail into the bargain.

Apple Maggot Quarantine: First, *what the heck is an apple maggot?* Glad you asked. The apple maggot is a nasty little species of fruit fly that lays its eggs in certain fruits. It is native to the Northeastern United States (thank you New England!) and was likely introduced to Washington by moving infested apples from east to west. (Bringing apples to Washington is sort of like carrying coals to Newcastle - - - but I digress.)

In November of 2018, part of Okanogan County was included in the apple maggot quarantine area, which includes the upper part of the Methow Valley, and that means Edelweiss. Consequently, certain organic material cannot be transported out of our area to points east, out of the quarantine area. The material (or 'green

waste') includes homegrown vegetables or fruit, woody debris or yard waste. In other words anything grown or trimmed or cut down in Edelweiss needs to stay in Edelweiss. That stuff cannot be thrown out in the trash, as it is taken to the land fill in

Okanogan, which is outside the quarantine area. Fruit and vegetables that you buy in the supermarket are trash-worthy, as they come from somewhere else, and presumably are apple maggot-free.

So if you have waste from home-grown veggies or fruit, it's best thrown into the compost pile. Of course then the bears will get at it, but that's another story in itself!

Mailboxes: With a minimum of fuss . . . well, a bit of fuss! . . . last fall we installed our new USPS 'cluster' mailbox units at the campground. Thank are due to the volunteers who helped unpack the unwieldy and heavy rectangles and wrangled them onto their stands. And thanks to Don Fitzpatrick who built and installed the magnificent new 'green box' (now brown) for the delivery of packages. The USPS, UPS and FEDEX guys have all been grateful for the fact that they don't have to risk life and or limb while delivering letters or packages next to a busy Goat Creek Road. Incidentally, there are still a couple of empty cluster box units available, so if you think you missed out, you haven't - yet.

Mining Withdrawal: In case you didn't know - - And although not specifically an internal Edelweiss matter, the concern over the possibility of a Canadian company mining copper in the upper Methow headwaters has been heavy on the minds of the residents of the Methow Valley for well over a year. After much discussion, letter writing (including from John Kirner and myself), political wrangling by some very savvy Methow Valley activists, and enormous help from Senator Maria Cantwell, the 'Methow Headwaters Protection Act' recently was signed into federal law, thus preserving the headwaters against such destructive activity, and preserving the quality of the waters of the Methow River forever.

Adieu: It seems completely beyond comprehension that this is the last Edelweiss newsletter that will be written by yours truly. Almost 12 years! What a ride! And mostly, it's been a blast!

"It was," as Walter Cronkite used to say, (before most of you were born) *"a time filled with those events that alter and illuminate our time. And you were there!"*

So, I was here, and I'm thrilled to have been here, as your backstop and communicator since August of 2007. I'm overwhelmingly grateful for the expressions of support that I've received from the community after making the announcement of my retirement. They've been appreciated more than I can say. The rewards of being your advocate have been incalculable.

It should go without saying (but I'm saying it anyway!) that the friendships that Carol and I have developed here in this community are more than special, and will never fade.

But it's onward, upward and outward. I'm dropping the mike! Soon Carol, Spirit and I will be white-knuckling our motor coach (which we've named 'Pogo') off to see the country. And there's a lot of country to see - some for the first time and some once again. But, because of you all, the memories made here on this special place on the mountain side, will be forever etched in our minds. And for the gift of them, we thank you....

Gratefully,

Dick Volckmann