



Edelweiss Maintenance Commission

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Spring 2015 Newsletter

Edelweiss Annual Meeting – May 23, 2015

Place – The Edelweiss Pool

12:00 - Pot luck lunch (Bratwursts served by EMC)

1:00 PM – Annual Meeting

President's Message from John Kirner

Edelweiss Pool - The effort to build a new swimming pool for the Edelweiss community seems to be following the rule that nothing goes as smoothly as it should. Last fall and winter the Board and Long Range Planning Committee contacted a number of contractors who could play a key role in the development of the new pool. These contacts included people from the Valley as well as people outside the Valley who had the special expertise that would be needed. We selected a pool contractor who, we were advised, was the best in the region. As spring approached, we were eager to sign a contract with him, and urged him to provide us with his draft contract as soon as possible. However, when we received his proposal, it did not meet the needs of Edelweiss. When questioned about the proposed contract, the contractor advised us that he had changed his business plan. He no longer wanted to be the pool contractor, but instead wanted to act as our consultant in lining up other contractors and supervising the work. Neither the Board nor the Long Range Planning Committee felt that this arrangement would be satisfactory for the Edelweiss community.

Subsequently we have gone outside the region in search of a well-recommended company who could take on the role of pool contractor. We have contacted companies on the West side who have done work in this area, as well as companies in Yakima and Spokane. At the same time, we have continued to pursue permitting of the new pool using the general design that was discussed with the membership at our last general meeting. The permit application is with the State at this time, and preliminary comments from the State indicate that the design is approvable with minor changes. We also have found three companies with experience building commercial pools, who have expressed interest in this project. Unfortunately, the prices they have given to us exceed previous estimates by a minimum of

\$56,800.00. This represents an increase in previously presented costs of \$175.00 per lot, which makes a total of \$860.00 per lot. Be assured that the Board and Management will work with potential contractors to make sure that all possible cost savings will be obtained. This additional cost would be spread over the three-year assessment period.

Whether or not this increased cost would be acceptable depends on the viewpoint of the members of the community. Would you use the new pool; would it raise your property values; would it be an asset to the community? We ask that you make your views known to your Board members, either personally or by sending an email to edelweiss@edelweissmethowvalley.org. It is very important that we hear from you, and time is of the essence; accordingly, we need your input by May 11, 2015. If it is the general view of the membership that we should continue with the building of a new pool, we need to move forward this year to avoid any further increase in costs due to construction cost inflation. In the meantime, if necessary, Edelweiss management will take steps to make the existing pool functional for this year.

General Manager's Message from Dick Volckmann

The Methow is welcoming another spring. The serviceberry is in bloom, the days are warm and the nights still brisk. Daffodils are displaying their transient, too-short color and lilacs are soon to appear. The hills are yellow with balsamroot flowers, and my car is yellow with pine pollen. What a perfect time of year. It almost seems like winter never happened – which is rather close to the truth. The relative lack of snow this year portends a drier than normal summer with the attendant and perhaps overly wishful hope that it is a less stressful one than that of 2014. Which segues into the following:

Fire! – It goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway) that the absolute worst thing that could happen in Edelweiss would be a forest fire. We all felt the anxiety of the Carleton complex fire of 2014, but luckily, we were spared the devastation that occurred down valley from us. However, we cannot rest on our laurels. If this summer turns out to be as dry and hot as expected, we all need to be vigilant, especially as regards open fires. The Board of Directors of Edelweiss has mandated that there will be no open fires permitted in Edelweiss after May 1st of this year. This, whether or not Okanogan County has yet declared a 'no burn' policy. Soon you will see signs posted at the entrances to the community that look like this:



Yes, I know they're kind of garish, but that's the idea! We want them to be noticed. We'll do everything we can to minimize the danger of fire and to keep our community safe.

Power Outage – As I reported in the Fall 2014 newsletter, one of the problems that Edelweiss faced last summer was the extended power outage of slightly more than a week. As a result of the outage, our water pumps are not operational and we were dependent on the water left in the reservoirs. Although most part-time residents were absent from the community, our water use remained at the normal high summer use. This was due mostly to the fact that many homeowner's irrigation systems continued to run. Absentee homeowners had no way to turn off their irrigation. The ultimate result was that our water supply was exhausted in 4 days, whereas if all irrigation had been turned off during the lack of power, our water should have lasted at least a week, given normal domestic use. In order to prevent this from happening in the future, please:

- 1- if you have an irrigation system remove the battery back-up from the system.
- 2- if you have a battery-only irrigation system let me know (by email) where it is and how to turn it off. It would only be turned off in the event of a power failure, and will be turned on again when the power returns.

This simple procedure will be of great benefit to the folks who remain in the community during the power outage, and will go a long way toward maintaining a continued supply of domestic water.

Water Issues – The next batch of 72 water meters will be installed this spring and summer with a few homeowners needing new vaults as well (is the collective noun of water meters a "dial of water meters"?). This will leave about 35 more meters to be installed during the summer of 2016 in order to meet the Department of Health deadline of December 31, 2016.

- J.A. Wright Construction will soon begin trenching for a new 4 inch water line, replacing the 2 inch line from Highland Road across West Fawn Creek up to Eagles Nest Road. The hope is that the new larger line will alleviate the inconsistent water pressure that currently exists at the residences on Eagles nest. Okanogan County Electric Coop (OCEC) will share in a portion of the cost as a new conduit for a future power line will be installed in the trench with our water line.

- Hasse Excavation is scheduled to install a pressure reducing valve in the main water system. the purpose is to alleviate the very high water pressures at many points in Edelweiss.

- Buzzard Excavation is scheduled by OCEC to re-route the power line on River Road. Edelweiss intends to share in the cost by installing a new water line in the trench. This had been scheduled for the summer of 2014, and we're hoping that this summer it will actually happen!

Weeds – Within the week I'll be out and about trying to eliminate from our roadside and meadows those pesky noxious weeds such as ragweed, knapweed, hoary cress (white top), leafy spurge (whatever that is!) and other undesirable botanical specimens. The product I use is a chemical called 'Opensight' which is so safe that if used on a pasture, cattle can be allowed to graze within 24 hours. But, if I were you, I wouldn't test it!

Cattle – Craig and I soon will be checking the miles of fence between Edelweiss and the National Forest for damage from trees knocked down by the winter winds and from the pressure of what little snow we had. The fence is intended to keep the summer grazers out of Edelweiss – often with little avail! Last summer, the cows obviously were equipped with barbed wire cutters, as they invaded Edelweiss often and in great numbers. We're going to do our best to keep that from happening again this year. And we are confiscating the wire cutters!

Well, that's all from here for now. We hope to see you all at the annual meeting. It may be your last chance this year to score a free bratwurst!

Dick Volckmann