

# Edelweiss Maintenance Commission

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## Spring 2013 - Newsletter

**Edelweiss Community Annual Meeting - May 25, 2013**

**Potluck Lunch Begins 12:00 PM - - - Meeting Begins 1:00**

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### **President's Message from John Kirner**

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Hello, Edelweiss members. It's spring once again and that brings the annual Board meeting on Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. I hope we'll have a good crowd at the meeting, and I want to give you advance notice of several of the topics that will be discussed at the meeting. These are issues that have occupied the Board during the past year and may have future impact on costs and operations on an ongoing basis.

**The community wastewater system:** This is the large wastewater system that serves a significant number of the lots in Edelweiss while the rest of us are served by individual septic tanks. During the past year, The WA State Department of Health - the primary regulatory agency for large sewerage systems - advised the Board that they believed the system was badly undersized for the number of houses being served. They then placed a temporary ban on further connections to the system. The result was that owners of the lots scheduled to be served by this system were prohibited from building on their lots. In addition, the value of the affected lots was considerably diminished. After several months of data collection by Edelweiss staff and negotiation with DOH, the moratorium on new connections to the system was removed. A key factor in resolving this problem was a commitment by Edelweiss to install additional drainfield capacity in the lower meadow to meet existing and future demand. This means that sometime this coming summer there will be a week or two of construction in the lower meadow to accomplish this work. The good news is that we have an existing fund which will pay for this work. This type of new installation, as well as ongoing repair and maintenance of the large wastewater system is a continuing responsibility of Edelweiss.

**The community water system:** The Edelweiss water system serves all residences within the community as well as the campground. Currently, there are problems with areas of either very low or very high pressures in the system. The system is also reaching an age where the need for ongoing repair and replacement are increasing. Because of these issues, the Board has contracted with Erlandsen Engineering, of Wenatchee to

review the existing system and make recommendations for future improvements, if necessary. The results of this review, which could impact the cost of water system operation in the future, are expected to be available for the annual meeting. They will be presented to members at that time.

**State mandated metering of water services:** A recently passed State regulation requires that all community water systems must be fully metered by the end of 2016. This will force Edelweiss to install meters on all service connections over the next three years. Staff have advised that many of our existing service installations will not accommodate the addition of a water meter without revisions. The costs of complying with this regulation may be substantial due to the cost of metering equipment and the costs of modifying existing services. It is expected that individual lot owners will bear a significant portion of this cost of compliance with State regulation.

I hope many of you will be present at the meeting. These are all significant issues that we all need to address. The bratwurst will be good too.

John Kirner, President

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### **General Managers' Message from Dick Volekman**

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Two weeks ago I traded my vehicle's snow tires for the summer kind. A week later, on a warm sunny afternoon, I took this photo of the first spring beauties of the year.



Western Spring Beauty (Claytonia lanceolata)

The next day (March 20th) it snowed four inches - the most since December. If our driveway, was a ski hill, it would be rated a double black diamond, which makes it a thrill to drive down with summer tires and a slick layer of new wet snow. Anyway, the snow lasted until the afternoon, making the roadways a slushy quagmire. But today, two weeks later, most of winter is forgotten, under clear blue skies and temperatures into the 60's. The forest floor is covered with pink and white spring beauties, and soon the arrow leaf balsam root with paint the hillsides in bright golden yellow. OK, so much for botany in Edelweiss for now.

The winter has been, as always, unpredictable. We started off with a steadily increasing snowpack through December, followed by a dump of snow right after the bells of Christmas. And then none to speak of until winter's last feeble attempt. Luckily, it stayed really cold throughout most of January and February, which meant that the snow stayed. The cross country ski trails remained in groom-able condition throughout the period. And now we're already well into spring, and wondering if maybe this year we'll actually try to grow a garden.

On March 25th, the Washington DOT began clearing Highway 20 of the winter's snowpack, which is less than that of 2012. By April 1st, they had cleared the east side two miles uphill from the Cutthroat trailhead. The aim is to have the road open by the first part of May. It's looking good, but no one is making any promises. We all look forward to having our 'back door' opened up!

**Snowplowing:** Once again, we contracted with Jerry Palm to do the plowing and snow blowing of the roads. Our roads were in great shape this past winter, due in part to the timely response to our calls for plowing and the tireless work done by his employees

**Edelweiss Accounts:** With a few exceptions, owner's payments are coming in at a satisfactory rate. If you have not made your dues/fees payment, please remember that all payments will be overdue after April 15th..

**Architectural Control Committee:** So far this year, the ACC has approved the plans for three homes, one on Homestead, one on West Fawn Creek and the third on Trillium. The home on Quaking Aspen, approved last fall, was held up over the winter, but work has begun again. I have been told of still another home to built this year, but don't have the particulars yet.

**Chipping:** I've noticed several lots where owners have left piles of branches along the roadside, with the thought that they would be chipped. Edelweiss maintenance is no longer in the chipping business. We sold our (broken) chipper 3 years ago. So if you have some 'chippable' woody material, give a call to Mike Meyers (996-3848) or Dennis Jones (997-2007).

**Thefts:** The microwave that has been at the pool for years is no longer there. The thief either has a key, or had to climb over the fence to gain access. Also a big heavy chain used with our tractor was taken. Neither is a huge financial loss - it's just disappointing when you have to accept that there are some folks who have a low regard for the property of others.

**Maintenance:** I noted this in a previous newsletter, but I think it bears repeating what it takes to keep our community running smoothly. So, here is a brief description of the activities of your maintenance team.

**Routine activities include:**

- Monthly sampling of our water, which is tested by the Okanogan County Dept of Health. (The water continues to test free from any contamination.)
- Daily monitoring of the booster pumps that provide water from our wells to the reservoir tanks above the community.
- Rolling out the dumpsters at the garbage area for garbage pickup every Monday morning.
- Approving vendor's bills and invoices. These are also approved by the Treasurer of the Board of Directors before delivery to our accountant for payment.
- Responding to all emergency issues, water leaks, stray cows, roads maintenance, etc.
- Responding to owner's questions on all sorts Edelweiss issues.
- Keeping current with all changes in property ownership.

**Spring :**

- Smoothing out the potholes in the roads and applying gravel where necessary.
- Switching from the underground water tanks to the above-ground reservoir.
- Mending the fences between the National Forest and Edelweiss to keep the cows out of the community.
- Treating the common areas with herbicide to try to keep noxious weeds under control.
- Preparing and submitting several different reports to the Department of Health regarding the quality of our water and the efficiency of the water system.
- Preparing the pool for summer use.

**Summer:**

- Maintenance of the pool area, cleaning and monitoring the chemicals of the pool, watering the plants and flowers, mowing the lawn, etc.
- Arranging for and monitoring the the application of lignin to the roads.

**Fall:**

- Preparing the pool for winter.
- Switching from the above-ground water reservoir to the under ground reservoir.
- Preparing the road surfaces for the plowing season.

**Winter:**

- monitoring snowfall and supervising snowplowing.
- working with the board of directors to develop the budget for the following year.
- For the first part of the year, sending out over 300 invoices, then cataloguing owners payments of dues and fees and delivering them to our accountant for posting and depositing..

**In Conclusion:** I want you to know that I feel a special connection toward the Edelweiss community and, as a resident, have a personal interest in it's smooth operation. The above description covers the basics, but it's impossible to note all the occurrences that crop up without notice and may be too mundane to note, but need to be dealt with on a daily basis. It keeps Craig and me on the go. As Albert Einstein said, " Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." And, because we never know what surprises await, we do!

Have a great summer. See you at the Annual Meeting on May 25th!

Dick Volckmann, General Manager  
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