



**President's Message
by Pat Leigh**

Budget Ratification Meeting - Our 2010 budget was approved by the Board of Directors at our meeting on January 16, 2010, and posted on the Edelweiss website on January 18, at: www.edelweissmethowvalley.org/
The budget ratification meeting will be held in the campground building at 9 AM on Saturday, Feb. 27.

Our bylaws state, "**Section 2.3 Budget Meeting.** Within 30 days after adoption of any proposed budget for the Association, the Board shall provide a summary of the budget to all of the members and set a date for a meeting of the members to consider ratification of the budget, which date shall be not less than 14 nor more than 60 days after mailing the summary. Unless at the meeting members holding a majority of the votes in the Association vote to reject the budget, the budget is ratified, whether or not a quorum is present for the meeting. In the event the proposed budget is rejected or the required notice for the meeting is not given, the budget last ratified by the Owners shall be continued until a budget proposed by the Board is ratified."

In an effort to save Edelweiss money, we are providing this information electronically to everyone who has provided an email address. If you prefer hard copy, please let me know by calling 509-996-3303. Members without email will receive a copy in the mail.

Water System Upgrade Calls for Special Assessment. Vote Coming in May at the Annual Meeting.

- Now that I have your attention, it's not as bad as it sounds. Those of you who lived here in 1996 may remember the big one; a \$3000 special assessment needed for water system improvements. This proposal is for a small fraction of that. The amount of the proposed assessment is \$225 per lot for the year 2010 only. Campground lots will not be included in the assessment. It is imperative that the Cassal Booster Pump to Reservoir Line be replaced as soon as possible. The current supply line is not buried deeply enough and the quality of the piping is suspect. If this line were to fail, water would not be delivered to the reservoirs. This line has been designated as a major priority in several engineering reports and additionally by management. An estimate has been obtained to complete this work and the cost is included in the 2010 proposed budget but passage of the special assessment is needed to have adequate funds. A new information page will be added to our website with a detailed explanation of the needed project. Please feel free to contact me or Karen Reneau, Treasurer, via email or by phone with any questions you might have. Dick Volckmann would also be happy to discuss this water system project with you.

-- Pat Leigh, President: 509-996-3303
or patricialeigh1@mac.com

-- Karen Reneau, Treasurer: 509-996-3888
or karen@methownet.com
-- Dick Volckmann, General Manager: 509-996-9897
or emcmanager@centurytel.net

A letter from your Board of Directors with a complete explanation of our findings is at the end of this newsletter. It will also be posted on our website along with a list of "Questions and Answers" that we hope you will find helpful.

New Board Members Needed! - There couldn't be a better time to think about serving your community as a Board member. Edelweiss is currently served by a dynamic, talented, hard-working Board of Directors, who are taking on our most critical issues. EMC Board members are elected to three-year terms. Officers are elected by the Board each Spring. This year, our Treasurer's three-year term is expiring and Karen Reneau has decided not to run again, as she and her husband Dave Ness are planning to travel. Karen will be especially missed because of her familiarity with our accounting system. She has not only served as our Treasurer, but has assisted with our bookkeeping system and our website for many years. Stan Wentzel's term will also expire and because of the demands of his business, he will not be running again. Stan's level-headed approach to problem solving and business savvy has been invaluable. Leonard Yerkes' 3-year term is expiring as well. He has expressed his willingness to continue his good work on the Board as well as the Long Range Planning Committee. While I plan to fulfill my three-year term on the Board, I will not be running for another term as President. I am finding that my involvement in other organizations in the Valley (including running for the OCEC/Electric Coop Board, serving on the Board of the Nordic Club, coaching for the ski team and other volunteer work) will prevent me from devoting the same amount of time and energy to Edelweiss matters. It has been very rewarding to serve as your President for the past two years. I feel satisfied with our many accomplishments and very fortunate to have Dick Volckmann and Craig Hook as our management team. These two men have worked diligently to learn everything they need to know about our infrastructure in order to keep things running smoothly. I can assure you that we are in good hands.

LINDA - We'll Miss You! Thank you Linda McWhirter for guiding the EMC Board through a maze of deadlines and for your tireless efforts on behalf of Edelweiss. You have served us like no other could in countless roles, as administrative assistant, welcoming committee, bookkeeper, historian, sign painter, cleaning service, gardener, community advocate, weed patrol, ethics committee, mediator and more. Sit back, relax, enjoy your retirement and please stay near a phone for the next six months while we struggle to learn how to cope without having you on the front lines.

NEW ACCOUNTING FIRM HIRED! - We are very fortunate to have secured an agreement with Bart Bradshaw's CPA firm to handle our accounting needs. This is especially good news, given Linda's retirement and Karen Reneau's pending departure. Karen has been our Treasurer for the past three years and has helped with our bookkeeping practically since the beginning of Edelweiss. Karen's latest three year term on the EMC Board expires this Spring and she and her husband, Dave Ness, plan to tour the country while their daughter Brita is serving as a Senate Page to Senator Patty Murray in Washington D.C. Karen, Linda, Dick and I are working with Bart Bradshaw to ensure a smooth transition.

New Edelweiss Website - Check out our new look at:

www.edelweissmethowvalley.org

After designing our website, an invaluable source of information, and acting as our webmaster for over six years, Karen Reneau has passed the baton to Mike Shirley, our new webmaster. Mike is creating a great new look and adding new information, such as a new GPS feature on the Trailblazers page and a map of *Edelmaze*, Craig Hook's personal contribution to our trail system. Don't miss it! And don't miss the hotlink to Ron Bomba's beautiful new Edelweiss map, available in a wide range of formats and sizes from Ron Bomba Studio at: <http://www.ronbomba.com/>.

E-Town: Not associated with the website, Mike has also created a 'blog' for Edelweiss members. This is meant to be an open discussion group that will allow all owners of property in the Edelweiss community to chat about anything having to do directly with our community and to a lesser degree, those peripheral issues of indirect interest to Edelweiss property owners and residents.

Examples of subjects of interest are the bear and cattle problems or sightings, snow, water, power, DSL, WiFi, phone service, burns, USFS logging, roads, the pool, the trails, the EMC, etc. The list provides members with settings for various levels of Email frequency from no Email (web viewing only), to digesting (once a day if there are one or more daily posts) or every post immediately sent to you (typical setting).

At this time, the group is open only to Edelweiss property owners. You must join the list via Yahoo to be able to see the website, get Emails delivered automatically or receive special timely or important notices. Please help spread the word. To join E-Town, GO TO:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/E-Town-L/> and register.

Please note: The EMC Board is not monitoring this activity and we trust that participants will bring to our attention via direct email or a telephone call, any matters that you feel the Board should address.

Trailblazers - Spring and summer projects are being planned by our faithful Chairs, Jan and Will Fohrell. If you are interested in helping to reestablish the Edelweiss Trail System, be sure to contact them at: wfohrell@comcast.net. You can watch their progress by clicking on the "Trailblazers" hotlink on the front page of our website.

SKI SEASON IS NOT OVER YET! - Some say we have less snow this year than they have seen for the past 40 years. As you drive the valley it's easy to see why. Our upper meadow was only groomed twice this year due to lack of snow. If you are hesitant to visit because of this, let me assure you that the MVSTA has not abandoned us. The Rendezvous is groomed and waiting for you, as is Sun Mountain. Just yesterday, I skate-skied a 20K in the upper valley that was fast and beautifully groomed. They continue to groom Lunachik though it's getting thin and you can now walk Big Valley with your dog. It may have been a lemon of a year, but the MVSTA continues to give us lemonade. All in all, it's been a great ski season. Thank you MVSTA!

Locked Mail Boxes - by Tory DeSalvo - Mail theft is becoming a reality here in the Methow. James and I were in the unfortunate situation of having mail go missing from our mail box at the bottom of Edelweiss this past month. In addition to feeling vulnerable (it had my SS number on it), the inconvenience of having to contact all parties involved, including banks and credit reporting agencies (we put an alert on our credit reports), made us never want to be in that situation again.

To securely receive our mail we have 2 options: a PO box at the post office for \$40 a year, or a cluster of locking mail boxes at the bottom of Edelweiss for roughly \$100 per box for a life time. The convenience of having our mail picked up at the bottom of the hill is something we would like to see continue. We hope that neighbors who are interested in receiving their mail on Goat Creek Road will decide that buying a locked mailbox system is a good idea.

We would like to test a locked system by asking for a show of hands from those who would be willing to invest in one. If you share in the cost of this system, the box would stay with your property. It is an asset that you would pass on to the next owner. Edelweiss does not have the resources to cover the cost, so we must have enough interested parties pay in advance to make this viable.

With a cluster system, the postal carrier's key opens the single back door where mail is deposited. On the front, each person has their own door with a separate key to retrieve their mail. There is an additional box for package deliveries. The postal carrier places the package box key inside your personal mail box, and you leave the key inside the package mail box when you retrieve the package. There is also a secured box for outgoing mail.

Let's spend our time proactively changing our mail system, rather than wasting time and being inconvenienced when mail goes missing.

NOTE: PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO PAT LEIGH AT patricialeigh1@mac.com if you would be willing to share in the cost of a secure mail system. We will let you know how many boxes we need, recommend a purchase and ask you to pay in advance for this investment. --- Thanks, Tory DeSalvo

**General Manager's Report
Richard P. Volckmann**

A local Methow resident has referred to this season as 'The Winter of March'! Every time we hear a weather report predicting a major snowfall overnight, we awake to maybe four inches. I stopped keeping track, but I don't think we've had three feet of snow this winter. This, as compared to over ten feet two years ago. And compared with last year, when our roads were consistently covered in ice, this winter, with the temperature in the 30s and 40s, is the season of slush. Maybe we'll get some more snow before spring, but I fear El Nino is firmly in charge.

Change of Address: We've decided that our rural delivery mailbox on Goat Creek Road is not as secure as we'd like it to be. In these days of the increasing need to protect against identity theft, it becomes necessary to take all measures against mail 'misappropriation'. Therefore Edelweiss has removed the mailbox at the Goat Creek Road address and has established a mailbox at the Winthrop Post Office.
Please make note of our new address:

**Edelweiss Maintenance Commission
P.O. Box 846
Winthrop, WA 98862**

The postal service will forward mail sent to our old Goat Creek Road address for 12 months; however, using the new address will ensure timely delivery.

Change of Phone Number: We have abandoned the Edelweiss phone number (509-996-9232). Since the office phone was not being used very much, we decided to save the money and have all calls come to my home number. In the future if you need to contact us, please call **(509-996-9897)**.

Water Leaks: Edelweiss has had very little problem this winter with frozen water pipes. One exception was a pressure-reducing valve, which cracked from a freeze, and when it thawed sent a river of water down Cassal road. Luckily, we caught it before it did any significant damage and the leak was repaired easily. In addition, we have experienced three different instances of leaks at water meters, which have cracked due to freezing. In these instances we discovered and rectified the problem before any damage was done.

Craig and I would like to enlist your help in identifying any leaks in the system. If you ever hear the sound of water running in your home, and there is no water turned on, please notify one of us immediately. The sooner we can identify a problem, the sooner we can effect a repair.

Lights: I'd like to remind homeowners to remember to turn off your outside lights whenever you retire for the night, or before you return home from your vacation cabin. This is one of the few places left in the country where the night sky is truly, luxuriously dark. Lets try and maintain that 'darkitude'.

Recycling: A newcomer to the valley, Casey Buchard, of *Methow Recycling Roundup*, is planning to start a recycling pick-up service. He has a plan that would entail his collecting your recyclables at 'curbside', (or in Edelweiss, at the end of the driveway). He has a variety of plans both for permanent residents and for part-time visitors. He seems like an energetic young man, with a desire to make it easier for folks to recycle their discards. To find out more about his program I encourage you to contact him directly at casey@methownet.com.

In addition, Don Davidson, the owner of *Methow Sanitation Service*, is trying to establish a recycling center near the Mazama Store. The details of his plan have not yet been established. We'll keep you informed as these plans progress.

Linda: As many of you know, Linda McWhirter has decided to charge off into other activities and will no longer be employed as Edelweiss's administrative assistant. We wish her well in her new endeavors, and thank her for her tireless and cheerful work for the benefit of Edelweiss the past seven years. She has been the welcoming face of the community, and as General Manager, I will miss the camaraderie of working with her. Not that she's planning on leaving Edelweiss. She'll still be around, but will be free to spend more time on her artwork and her garden. So if you have a question that in the past you would have directed toward Linda, please give me a call at 509-996-9897. (And if I don't know the answer, I'll call Linda!)

Final Word: Lack of snow, temperatures in the 30s, slushy roads, gray and foggy skies - - all make no difference to the fact that this community of ours, this place called Edelweiss, (irrespective of the fact that no edelweiss flowers grow here), this diverse association of people from all walks of life, is a wonderful place to live and to work. It is a privilege for me to be an active part of it, and I encourage you to contact me whenever you have a question or comment concerning the management of Edelweiss.

Dick Volckmann, General Manager
Edelweiss Maintenance Commission
509-996-9897 or emcmanager@centurytel.net

!!! EMC LOGO CONTEST !!!

NEW EMC LOGO WANTED! We find that our latest logo uses too much ink and it is difficult to adjust the size. We would love to have a fresh new look to go with our new website, preferably something that evokes our beautiful surroundings and that is easy to deal with when printing letterhead, newsletters and such in black and white. Dick Volckmann and Pat Leigh will be the judges. Entries must be received nlt March 31. Winner will receive two bottles of the Lost River wine of his or her choice.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dear Edelweiss Property Owner,

The Long Range Planning Committee and Edelweiss Board of Directors are asking the property owners to vote during the annual meeting on a special assessment needed to fund upgrades and maintenance of our water system. The amount of the proposed assessment is \$225 per lot for the year 2010 only. Campground lots will not be included in the assessment. If approved, billing for the assessment would be sent out ASAP following the meeting. This would need to be done to allow time to complete the work before next winter. As per Article 7.3 of the Edelweiss bylaws, one vote will be allowed for each property owner or his voting representative in attendance at the meeting.

The work to be completed is for a new supply line from the Cassal Booster Pump to the Reservoir. Feeder lines for Ayers Court, Blue Grouse Lane and part of Mustard Mountain Rd will be installed in the same trench. This will result in a very large savings in the long run. It is imperative that the Cassal Booster Pump to Reservoir Line be replaced as soon as possible. The current supply line is not buried deeply enough and the quality of the piping is suspect. If this line were to fail, water would not be delivered to the reservoirs. This line has been designated as a major priority in several engineering reports and additionally by management. An estimate has been obtained to complete this work and the cost is included in the 2010 proposed budget but passage of the special assessment is needed to have adequate funds.

Over the past several years our committee and board has worked to plan for the future needs of our community. As new homes are built, our infrastructure must keep pace.

Some background about our water system:

Edelweiss' water system is a 'Group A public water system', owned by the Edelweiss property owners and operated by The Edelweiss Maintenance Commission (EMC), the management portion of the Edelweiss Community.

Our water is supplied from two high producing wells drilled to a depth of 240 feet located near Goat Creek Road. The water is pumped uphill to a still well located at the intersection of Highland Meadow and East Fawn Creek Road. Two alternating booster pumps send the water further uphill to two separate reservoirs located above Blue Grouse Lane. One of these is an underground tank, holding 75,000 gallons. It is in use during the winter months, in order to avoid the possibility of freezing. The other tank, which has a 120,000-gallon capacity, is above ground, is used during the spring

through fall months and is drained before the winter season. When the water level in the reservoir drops to a certain level, a sophisticated system of telemetry, via radio, signals one or the other of the booster pumps to be activated. When the booster pumps begin to lower the level in the still well, additional telemetry activates a well pump, which keeps the still well supplied with water while the booster pump is active. Water, which has filled the reservoir, is then fed by gravity to Edelweiss homes.

The Edelweiss community currently consists of 316 buildable lots and 25 campground lots. Homes, which are completed or are under construction, exist on 164 of the buildable lots. Over 60 homes have been constructed within the past 10 years. This means that Edelweiss is about 50% built out.

As part of the original development of Edelweiss, water lines, electric power lines and telephone lines were installed, in most cases under the current roads. Unfortunately, some of the piping used was not of sufficient wall thickness to insure against breakage while under pressure and many of the water lines were not buried deep enough to insure against possible freezing in winter. Some of the pipes have been found to be as shallow as two feet. In this climate, a five foot depth is a required minimum.

In preparation for eventual build-out and the resulting increased demand for water, EMC began, in 1996, the development of a comprehensive plan, which details the upgrades needed to correct the deficiencies in the system and sets priorities in order to ensure adequate delivery of water in the future.

You can see the complete plan by going to our website: www.edelweissmethowvalley.org

Part of that plan has been implemented. The new above-ground reservoir was completed in 2006. This reservoir combined with the eventual connection to the underground reservoir has the capacity to supply the community with water at build-out. In addition, a new 4 inch supply line from the Cassal wells to the booster pump house was completed in 2008. This assures adequate delivery from the well pumps. And, finally, in the spring of 2009 a major 6 inch line, 3,600 feet in length, was installed across Highland Meadow. This line will ensure adequate supply to the northwest part of Edelweiss. These upgrades have been funded by water hook-up fees. However, our budget shows that future hookup fees alone will not pay for needed infrastructure upgrades and maintenance.

We have much more work to do. Following the replacement of the booster pump line, all the remaining water lines not already replaced will need to be upgraded at some time in the future as per the comprehensive plan if we are to someday have total build-out of all lots. This is a very long-range plan.

As mentioned above, the comprehensive plan outlines the order and priority of the upgrades. Edelweiss management has requested changes to the priority and there may be other changes in the future if specific needs arise.

Our water, which is arguably some of the best in the world, is our most important commodity. The Edelweiss Board and Long Range Planning Committee cannot stress enough the importance of keeping our water system in good working order. We cannot afford to ignore needed upgrades as our community grows. We urge all property owners to review our comprehensive plan and to vote in favor of this assessment for 2010. The Board recognizes that in these poor economic times it is difficult to pay any additional personal cost. Thus, this vote is only for one year to take care of what is felt to be an urgent need. Any future improvements would require a vote at that time if an assessment is needed.

If you have questions of the Board prior to the annual meeting please direct them to:

- Pat Leigh at 509.996.3303 or patricialeigh1@mac.com
- Karen Reneau at 509.996.3888 (before 8:00 p.m. please) or Karen@methownet.com

Dick Volckmann, General Manager, is also happy to discuss this project with you. Please feel free to contact him at 509-996-9897 or emcmanager@centurytel.com.

Yours truly,

Edelweiss Board of Directors:

Pat Leigh, President

Kelli Rotstan, Vice President

Karen Reneau, Treasurer

Mary Kiesau, Secretary

Leonard Yerkes, Chair, Long Range Planning Cmte.

Bruce Firestone

Tom Lasater

Stan Wentzel

Edelweiss Management:

Dick Volckmann

Craig Hook

