

Lion Mountain

OWNERS ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | FALL 2021

Welcome to our fall newsletter - a place to catch up on neighborhood news and updates from your Lion Mountain Owners Association (LMOA). If you have information you'd like included in our next issue, email CarolineCompton@yahoo.com.

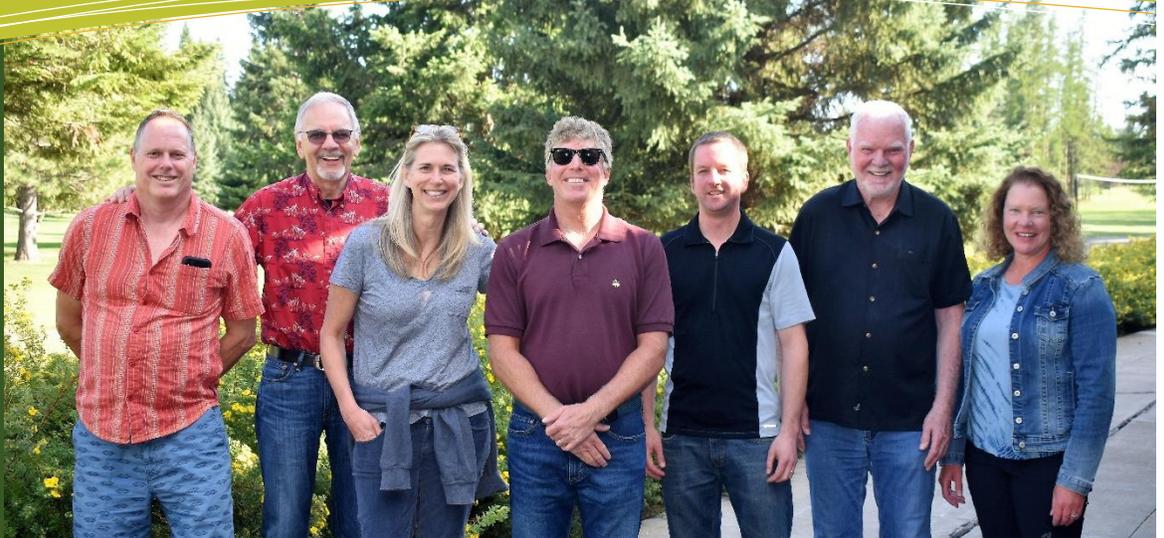
Our LMOA Board

The LMOA Board of Directors has added some new board members. The 2021-22 Board includes:

- Mitch Robinson, President
- Kim Solem, Vice President
- Joe Lewis, Treasurer
- Kristin Ramsey, Secretary
- Mark Svennungsen
- Ragnar Stoelzle
- Ward Foster

Our LMOA Website

Have a question or concern about our neighborhood? You can find answers on LionMountainHOA.com, or you can send an email to info@lionmountainhoa.com. Our private, password-protected website contains valuable homeowner information such as governing documents, CC&R's, emergency exit maps and details about our roads, beach, marina, and water systems. It also houses our Owners' Directory, which allows us to securely share our contact information with our neighbors. Please make sure you have logged in to the website to update your contact information. As always, we welcome your comments, suggestions and feedback on our website as it continues to evolve.



2021-22 Board Members: Joe Lewis, Mark Svennungsen, Kristin Ramsey, Mitch Robinson, Ragnar Stoelzle, Ward Foster and Kim Solem.

Thank You to our Incoming & Outgoing Board Members!

A very heartfelt thank you to Gena Kelly, Del Coolidge, and Todd Votteler, three hard-working Board members who have just completed their three-year terms. We are sincerely grateful for all you've done to help make Lion Mountain a great place to live!

And congratulations to our three new board members, Joe Lewis, Kristin Ramsey, and Ward Foster who were elected at the Annual Meeting last month. We appreciate your willingness to step up to the shared responsibility of managing our neighborhood.

As an owner, if you are interested in getting more involved, these committees would greatly appreciate your time and talent.

- Firewise & Weed Management (Ed Lieser, liesered@yahoo.com)
- Architectural (Mitch Robinson, mrobinson@glaciersir.com)
- Security & Compliance (Ragnar Stoelzle, rsresourcesmt@gmail.com)
- Communications (Caroline Compton, carolinecompton@yahoo.com)
- Nominations & Elections (Kim Solem, kim_solem@msn.com)

- Roads (Ward Foster, wardfoster777@gmail.com)
- Finance (Steve Compton, skcompton@yahoo.com)
- Beach (Mitch Robinson, mrobinson@glaciersir.com)
- Water & Septic (Mark Svennungsen, svenmark@gmail.com)
- Social (Kristin Ramsey, ramseyka@yahoo.com)

To learn more about any of these committees, please email the contact above.



WATER SYSTEMS UPDATE

The water system serving the majority of LMOA members worked efficiently this past fiscal year and suffered no leaks in the distribution system. We had no major equipment breakdowns and all water purity testing passed the criteria for biological and chemical standards imposed by federal and state authorities.

In September, we will be upgrading the software on our computer monitoring system. The system allows us to view the water system performance remotely, increasing our ability to detect and quickly respond to problems such as water leaks and pump failures.

We are also exploring the need for an independent backup power generator to safeguard our ability to pump water from the upper two wells into the upper tank should we lose electrical power in a sustained power outage.

Finance Committee Wraps Up Another Year in the Black

Financially, our LMOA is in great shape; we are very pleased to report that we ended this fiscal year in July with a surplus. We are grateful to outgoing Treasurer Del Coolidge and Committee Chair Steve Compton for their careful oversight of our budget and expenses.

This surplus is a result of effective cost management along with changes to our winter road maintenance materials. Water Manager Mark Munsinger and Beach Manager Jim Laidlaw have held down costs for their respective areas with no unexpected major expenses in the operation of the water system, beach or marina. Roads, our other large expense category, experienced reduced costs due to lower-than-average snowfall and the use of a new winter road application that reduced the need for

additional traction material and spring road cleanup work.

The budget surplus will go into a reserve fund to be used for major expenditures that we anticipate in the next few years, such as extensive road work, replacing outdated water pumps, and upgrading the Beach Lane gate.

The vast majority of our homeowners are very prompt in paying dues which greatly simplifies the collection process--thank you! We have also built a strong partnership this year with Underwood Point residents who have been very cooperative by contributing to shared neighborhood expenses. A special thank you to Mitch Robinson and Jim Laidlaw for their work on this important relationship.



We had a terrific turnout for our June Weed Pull with over 40 neighbors helping clear the beach of noxious weeds. We enjoyed burgers, brats, and all kinds of delicious sides and great conversation afterward. A special thanks to Dugan Reber and Jane Decker for organizing the event. Job well done!



NEIGHBOR SPOTLIGHT

Del & Linda Coolidge

NEIGHBORLY REMINDERS

The following are a few neighborly reminders from your Homeowners Association:

- Keep all pets on leash, and clean up after them no matter where they are “doing their business” on Lion Mountain. Remember, other pet owners and hikers are walking in those same places. Help keep Lion Mountain fresh and clean!
- The speed limit throughout Lion Mountain is 20 MPH. Please drive carefully.
- Trash and recycling bins should be put out in the morning and put away in the evening on collection days. Please store them out of sight and inaccessible to bears and other wildlife. Bear-proof receptacles are highly recommended, and can be ordered through our local garbage & recycling company, Republic Services.
- If you store a boat, trailer or camper on your lot, it should not be visible from the roadway or adjoining property.

When the Coolidges settled in Whitefish 47 years ago, it was a quiet place. “It used to be a small, blue collar town,” said Linda. “Tourism was not such a big influence at that time; the skiers stayed on the mountain, and the town was not overrun by tourists in the summers. It was a very different atmosphere. Now, when we want some peace and quiet, we go to Polebridge.”

Del grew up in Shelby, and Linda grew up three hours away in Great Falls. Both their families were from Great Falls; their parents went to high school together and recreated in Polebridge and Whitefish. Both Linda and Del couldn’t wait to ‘get outta Dodge’ after attending small town high schools. Linda moved to San Diego to live with her grandmother and study Microbiology at San Diego State. Graduate studies followed at UCSD.

Del went the other direction, studying biology at Grinnell College in Iowa. He went on to medical school at the University of Iowa and completed his residency in Utah as a family practitioner. Del also spent two years as a US Navy doctor with the Marine Corps at Camp Pendleton in southern California.

But the forests and mountains of Montana were calling, and both Del and Linda independently made their way back to Whitefish. Their paths finally crossed at North Valley Hospital in 1974, where Linda was working as a medical technologist and Del was a general practitioner. “Those were

the good old days,” reminisced Del, when the medical community was small and everyone just ‘pitched in’ for the patient.”

Since that time, their medical careers have taken them to Portland and Alaska, where Linda worked for SmithKline Beecham (now Quest Diagnostics) selling clinical laboratory testing services to the medical community and Del worked in family medicine. Del also worked for the community health center in Cut Bank.

All that time they kept their house in Lion Mountain, where they raised their blended family of four children.

And when they want to slow life down a little, they head to Polebridge where you can find them fishing, rafting, hiking, or just putting their feet up. “More and more, I just like putting my feet up,” said Del, “...with a beer,” he adds with a smile.

This past summer, Polebridge was not so restful. The Hay Creek fire was just three miles from their cabin, which was a little too close for comfort. “It was a little nerve wracking there for a while, but it looks like we survived another one,” says Del. His parents’ original cabin, built on the property in 1969, burned down in the 1988 fire. The Coolidges built their current log home on that same property in 2005.

“We like being off the grid, with no

connectivity,” says Linda. And when their seven grandchildren visit? “They watch the wildlife instead of their phones! We see black bears, grizzlies, wolves, moose, elk, mountain lions, coyotes, badgers, bobcats, and birds of prey. It’s much better live than on a device,” laughs Linda.

Two fun facts about the Coolidges: Linda was born 6400 miles away – in Chile - where her dad worked for a copper mine. And in 1990, Meryl Streep rented the Coolidges’ house while she was filming *The River Wild*. “She was a great tenant,” remembers Del, “especially since she came with her own cleaning crew.”

We are grateful to both Del and Linda for serving on the Lion Mountain board. Linda was secretary from 1986 to 1988, and just last month, Del completed his term as treasurer. Del carefully watched over all the dollars and cents for many years, in addition to serving on the Water committee – a job that required responding to late night alarms and hunting down leaks. Thanks to Del, our community water system is clean, working and has reserves for the future.

Del and Linda, our heartfelt thanks to both of you for giving your time and talent to make Lion Mountain a great place to live.



Our Next Step in Forest Management: Thinning

LMOA has actively promoted a plan to prepare for potential wildfires by clearing dead and downed trees and brush during our annual spring cleanup. However, many of our forested hillsides are ready for the next important step in a forest management plan to reduce hazardous fuels. We are grateful to Ed Lieser, our resident forester and Fire Wise expert, for his guidance in our fire prevention plans.

“Not only is Lion Mountain heavily forested, but we also have steep slopes that can easily foster the spread of a wildland fire,” says Ed. “So in addition to clearing dead and down vegetation, we all need to make thinning live trees a part of our annual property management plan. We live in a very productive area where annual vegetation growth is significant, and just like a lawn, regular treatments of the vegetative growth must be considered.”

Effective thinning involves removing smaller trees that can become hazardous fuels in late summer. It also enables the residual trees to flourish. When trees are dense, they compete for soil nutrients, water and light. “Just take out the smaller, understory trees,” advises Ed, “much as you would weed a garden to protect your crop. Thinning will improve your forest’s health by allowing diverse species to grow stronger. It also improves wildlife habitat.”

Thinning is easiest when the trees are small and can be clipped with pruning shears rather than needing a chainsaw. Select the healthiest seedling or sapling in a 10-foot square area and remove the rest. Repeating this process every few years minimizes the harder and more

expensive work of cutting down larger trees with a chainsaw and dragging them out.

In addition, pruning live and dead branches on large old trees as high as a person can reach is a critical part of fire prevention. Pruning reduces the possibility of a fire jumping into the crowns of a tree and starting a crown fire. “Crown fires are our greatest threat, particularly in August and September,” says Ed. “Because we live on steep slopes with an essentially closed forest canopy, a fire at this height will spread quickly. If fire reaches the top branches of large trees on a windy September day, there’s nothing that can be done to stop it.”

Clearing dense growth annually and pruning large trees not only gives firefighters a better chance to suppress a wildland fire, but also helps keep our fire insurance rates down. If you need advice on managing the forest on your property, please contact Ed at liesered@yahoo.com.



Do You Have A Forest Management Plan?

This summer’s record temperatures and minimal rainfall created a dangerous fire season in northwest Montana. As we watch temperatures rise and dry out our forests, we need to be more aggressive about fire preparedness and prevention throughout our community.

LMOA has asked Ed Lieser to help each homeowner develop a forest management plan for their property. Ed has assisted other neighborhoods such as Suncrest with community-wide forest planning and management.

For a \$40 fee, Ed will walk through your property and write up a brief, one-page tree thinning and fire prevention recommendation. Ed has also offered to assist homeowners with state grant applications through the Northwest Montana Hazardous Fuels Program that can help cover the costs of tree thinning. This program sends a forester out to estimate the cost of each thinning project based on their guidelines. The program will pay 50% of that estimate, and the work can be performed by either a contractor or the landowner. The availability of these funds is anticipated around the end of this year. Ed will submit your name when the funds become available.

Fires are inevitable on Lion Mountain and throughout our region. Our best chance of avoiding extensive burning and loss of homes is to clear dense trees and dead shrubs across our entire community. This will not stop lightning or a careless cigarette butt from igniting a fire, but it can prevent an uncontrollable wildfire from consuming vast areas. These prevention efforts can also keep our fire insurance rates down.

We are grateful to Ed for sharing his extensive knowledge of forest management and fire prevention with our community. To schedule your property walk-through with Ed, please contact him at liesered@yahoo.com.

Roads Committee Report

Over the past few months, our roads committee has been working closely with Robert Peccia & Associates, a Kalispell Civil Engineering firm that is helping us develop a long-term road maintenance plan. This firm will also act as our intermediary with contractors and vendors to assist with negotiations and project management.

We did some crack sealing in June to limit further moisture damage from the heavy freezing and thawing cycles we experienced over the winter. As our roads age and begin to show wear and tear, we will need to do extensive maintenance over the next several years to keep the roads in good condition.

The new snow maintenance program that we began last fall was a success, so we plan to continue this coming winter. The mixture of salt crystals and molasses applied to the roads served as a highly effective de-icing agent that promotes snowmelt

which reduces plowing. The product also greatly reduced the amount of dust on our roads which minimized our spring cleanup expenses.

Year-round new home construction in our neighborhood has necessitated a weight limit restriction during late fall and early spring when we experience freezing and thawing cycles. By limiting truck traffic with heavy loads during these periods when our roads are most susceptible to damage, we will be able to reduce excessive cracking.

The load limits are 7 tons per single axle, or 14 tons for a tandem axle, and 350 pounds per inch based on tire width.

If you are planning construction projects that will bring heavy vehicles onto our roads, please contact our Roads Committee to discuss your project and timing by emailing Ward Foster, our new Roads Committee Chair, at wardfoster777@gmail.com.



HAPPY HOUR AT THE BEACH!

Thanks to all the neighbors who came out for our Happy Hour at the beach last week. We had a fabulous array of cocktails and appetizers, and a great time was had by all.

To keep the momentum going, we've formed a Social Committee headed by new Board member Kristin Ramsey. We'll be planning some quarterly neighborhood social events such as more Happy Hours, a summer kickoff barbeque, and a holiday progressive dinner. If you'd like to host or help plan events, please reach out to Kristin at ramseyka@yahoo.com.



Can you name all the neighbors in these photos? If not, you'd better come to our next Happy Hour!

