



# Sun Valley Elkhorn Association



*Photo by Heather Black*

## **SVEA**

***Proactively keeping members well informed of issues affecting them and the broader Elkhorn community.***

*Winter Edition – Elkhorn Community News  
February, 2011*

# What's Inside this Issue?

## **SVEA Amenity Report Summer Pool Opening Dates & Winter Closures**



## *Living with Wildlife*

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## ***Board & Committee Members Needed***

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season! It's a magical time in Sun Valley. It's also the time for our annual meeting, and I'd like to take this time to summarize the events of the meeting held on January 7th. The meeting was well attended with over 961 owners attending in person or by proxy. There was only one official business item - the election of three board members. However, the Board also presented a financial update and discussion of topics of interest - amenities planning, elk feeding and trail improvements. We also had a very enjoyable social hour after the meeting with wine and hors d'oeuvres.

Three owners were elected to the board. Pam Bailey, our Board Vice President, who has also chaired the Nominating, Audit and Insurance committees, was re-elected for another three-year term by the highest vote count ever! Our two new board members are Pete Petersen and David Taylor. Pete is a retired ophthalmologist who lives in Boise, but spends a lot of his time in Sun Valley. Pete served on the Finance and Recreation committees last year and is also president of the Ranch Board of Directors. Pete will head the Recreation Committee and serve on Capital Improvements and Finance in 2011. David Taylor is a retired Electrical Engineer providing consulting services. David spends the majority of the year in Elkhorn and will chair the Architectural Design Liaison Committee and serve on the Capital Improvements, Finance and Recreation Committees. Pete and David replace two directors who were not running for re-election, Steven Smith, and Ted Witt. I'd like to thank both of the parting directors for their significant contributions over the past three years.

Patty Rosewater, our Treasurer and Finance Committee Chairperson, gave the financial report. For the year, she reported we were \$61,000, or about 6% under budget! The Finance Committee has worked closely with staff to prudently manage our resources. Our budget next year will be \$1,030,200, which is 3% higher, due primarily to anticipated increases in capital spending. The good news - no dues increase! Great work by everyone to achieve these results!

While we are on the subject of finances, I'd like to touch on one of the informational topics discussed at the meeting - that of amenity planning. As I've mentioned previously, consistent with our capital reserve component schedule, we anticipate spending somewhere in the neighborhood of \$600,000 to rebuild, refurbish and/or resurface, as needed, our 17 tennis courts within two years. Many of our amenities- tennis courts, pools, spas and basketball court were constructed years ago by the developer of Elkhorn to promote land sales. So the question we have to answer before we decide to spend

that kind of money is—are the amenities that were built years ago still relevant today? Are there amenities that would be better? You will recall that we sent out a questionnaire last year to collect necessary data to help answer those questions. As the issues are complex and fundamental to our long term planning, we are considering hiring a consultant to facilitate the review and analysis of the information and to help determine what other information would be helpful before deciding on spending the \$600,000. You will see a lot more on this issue in the coming months.

Another issue that has been discussed previously is an Elk feeding program. SVEA is a homeowners' association. The City of Sun Valley is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. Idaho Department of Fish and Game has responsibility for wildlife management, and they strongly recommend 'no feeding'. When the former feeding program came to an end approximately three years ago the Wood River Elk Trust II was organized to address the issue. SVEA has virtually the only open space land in which a feeding program could be conducted so the Trust contacted the Board. To consider leasing land to the Trust, SVEA required certain 'protections', which at the time the Trust either couldn't or chose not to meet. Consequently, the Board denied their request to lease SVEA land. Last year, the issue was pretty much dormant as we had a relatively mild winter. With this winter's early storms along with the current snow depth, the topic has resurfaced, with the Mayor requesting a reconsideration of the issue due to his concern that the predators are following the elk into our community. We have informed the Mayor that with the proper protections so SVEA would not face any financial exposure of any sort, we would consider a proposal from the City and the Trust. We will keep you up to speed as discussions proceed. It is clear, however, that these discussions relate only to a possible program for the future, as it is too late to develop one for this year according to the Mayor and the Trust.

The final topic I'd like to cover is one of trail improvements. The idea was to create formal trail connections generally around the perimeter of Elkhorn, rather than have hikers use the ad hoc connections that may exist between identified trails in and around Elkhorn. This would allow our residents the opportunity to hike up one trail and down another, rather than just return on the same trail. The ad hoc trails are minimalist at best, and sometimes lead hikers across private property. So by relocating and formalizing the connecting trails, we felt would benefit our owners whose property was closest to the ad hoc trails, and the hikers who enjoy our open space. This program was initially announced at our summer BBQ last year and not one resident voiced concern, nor did we hear any concerns after the conceptual

plan was publicized in our Summer Newsletter or on our website. However, late last fall a few owners in the Keystone and Parker Gulch areas begin voicing their concerns about the potential impact on their privacy, should formal trail connections be established. As a result of that input, SVEA withdrew its application for approval from the City Planning and Zoning Commission relating to the Keystone connector trail. SVEA will be meeting with all concerned owners before reaching any further conclusion regarding trail improvements. To see the existing trails system in Elkhorn and the conceptual trail connections please [click here](#). And be sure to let us know if you have any concerns or suggestions about the trails, or any other topic. SVEA works because of your willingness to be involved.

Thanks, and I hope everyone has a happy and prosperous New Year.

*Jim Fletcher, SVEA President*

### **WINTER WILDLIFE – by Lee Garwood, IDFG Conservation Officer**

The first month of winter 2010-2011 is in the books. An above average snowfall in November and December has shrunk to just under 100% snowpack at this point, a normal winter in the Big Wood River Valley.

I thought I might share a few thoughts about things I have seen this winter and some others that I expect. On my travels out into the side canyons off the main valley floor, elk and deer are wintering well on the south slopes. Their usual winter pattern of feeding a few hours then lying in place chewing their cud or sleeping is as old as the species themselves. I receive at least one call a week from somewhere in the valley reporting an elk or deer that hasn't moved all day long. I let the caller know this is the normal pattern for ungulates and that the animals will likely be feeding by 4:00 p.m. or almost assuredly by 8:00 a.m. the next morning.

I have observed a few situations involving dead animals and would like to mention a few points about that topic. I always take the time to examine



**Elk Photo near Sagehill by Elkhorn Owner Heather Black**

a carcass to see if I can figure out what happened. Recently, near our elk feed site in Warm Springs, I found a calf elk carcass. I knew I was going to find it immediately upon exiting my truck as there was a golden eagle perched in a tree, two ravens calling close by and a group of three magpies flying over and lighting on the ground nearby. The presence of so many carrion birds almost always indicates something dead. As I approached up the trail a fox bounded off through the snow. My steps were covering the prints of a coyote that had used the packed trail before me. Nature's cleanup crew in its many forms was hard at work. As I approached the dead elk I observed that the carcass had been fed upon in almost a perfect circle in the upper chest and the carcass had been partially covered with snow. I then knew what track I was going to find and immediately saw the tracks of a female cougar accompanied by her yearling kitten. The feeding pattern, the caching of the kill and the carcass location at the bottom of a steep slope told me the whole story. I also found a dead calf elk off Elkhorn Road that likely died from a toxic dose of the Yew plant and another elk that had been hit by a car earlier in the winter and had finally succumbed to the wound. These situations are typical for this valley.

I get several questions during a typical winter that branch from this theme, "I found something dead this morning while walking my dog, what should I do"? I always recommend at least two things: First, control your dog by leashing it, especially if it's acting strange or excited. I usually hear of at least one instance a year in which a dog that had never strayed from its master had picked that instant to run off after something it either smelled or saw. The dog doesn't know any better so it's up to us to maintain control of our pets. Secondly, turn around and walk away from the area. There are other places to hike and there is a possibility a predator could be nearby. Why take a chance?

As always, I appreciate hearing from you about the things people are seeing around the Sun Valley-Elkhorn area or if you have a question that I might answer, don't hesitate to call me at (208) 539-4403.

### **WARNINGS FOR LIVING WITH WILDLIFE:**

- Always respect wildlife; view from a distance
- Do not approach or chase elk as the additional stress in their already weakened winter condition can be critical
- Keep dogs on a leash for their safety and so as not to stress wildlife
- Never approach a moose. While elk can be dangerous if approached, moose are infamous for attacks on dogs and people
- If you are walking, with or without dogs, avoid 'kill sites' as wolves or other predators will forcefully protect a claimed kill and may attack a person or dog
- Use caution while driving and watch for elk and other wildlife crossing the roads and streets, particularly during hours of darkness.

## HAVE YOU SEEN LARGE PREDATORS IN ELKHORN THIS WINTER?

While a predator in a residential community is far from ideal, it can be an exciting experience to actually observe one. So far this winter, staff has received several reports from owners who have seen wolf tracks and heard wolves howling. A lucky few have actually seen the animals. We thought it might be interesting to provide some basic identification tips for our readers. If you happen to see something, please let us know the details.

**Was that a wolf? Use the following guide to identify whether an animal is a wolf or a coyote.**



	<b>Grey Wolves (adult)</b>	<b>Coyotes (adult)</b>
<b>LENGTH:</b>	4.5 to 6.5 feet	3.6 to 4.4 feet
<b>HEIGHT:</b> (at shoulder)	26 to 32 inches	16 to 20 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	60 to 115 lbs	20 to 50 lbs
<b>PELAGE:</b>	buff tans grizzled with gray & black, but can also be black or white	gray or reddish brown with rusty legs, feet & ears, & whitish throat & belly
<b>EARS:</b>	rounded, relatively short	pointed, relatively long
<b>MUZZLE:</b>	large and blocky	petite and pointed
<b>TRACK SIZE:</b>	3 ½" x 4 ½"	1 ½" x 2 ½"

**DOG TRACK:** Variable depending on breed. Only a few breeds of dogs leave tracks longer than 4 inches (Great Danes, St. Bernards, some bloodhounds).

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<b>HOWLS:</b>	howl; pitch usually remains constant or varies smoothly; generally deep tone	Howl: yelps, yips and barks: long rising & falling or a series of short notes: relatively high pitch. Most often heard at dusk or night
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## SVEA AMENITY REPORT

### Common Areas

#### ***Conceptual Open Space Trails Map Now On Website***

The most recent version of the ***conceptual*** trail plan is dated January 19, 2011 and is available for viewing on the website: [Click here to view map.](#)

This is not a final plan. The trails denoted in 'red' on the map/plan and called out as 'existing trails' are as definite as can be identified without an actual survey. The trail



locations indicated in 'black' simply represent the most logical starting place for the proposed connector trail segments. At this time it is expected the process will be:

1. Each segment will be carefully studied by staff and trail specialists and flagged for easy "in field" identification
2. Once the flagging is completed, notices will be sent to all owners within 500' of any portion of the segment, as well as to any owner who has expressed interest in the overall trails project, inviting them to review and comment on the proposed segment
3. All comments from the noticing process will be seriously considered and any reasonable concerns addressed as possible
4. The resulting plan will be submitted to the Sun Valley Planning & Zoning Commission to undergo their review process
5. City approved segments will be completed as budget considerations allow.

We plan to keep the membership informed of any changes which may be necessary to the above process and substance and encourage you to watch for changes/updates on the website as well as our notices and other communications.

## **Village Pool & Spa**

### ***Village Open for Your Winter Enjoyment***

The Village facility which includes a hot tub, steam room, and sauna is open from 3:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. These hours will continue until Sun Valley Company closes the skiing operations for the season, on or about April 17, 2011.

The Village Pool will reopen for the summer season the weekend of June 11, 2011. As in previous years, the Village pool will not be staffed with lifeguards.

## **Harker Pool & Spa**

### ***Harker Reopens for Summer Season***

The Harker Pool and hot tub is scheduled to reopen for the summer season on Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. This Memorial Day weekend opening is a perfect way to begin your summer season. The Harker Pool is fully staffed with lifeguards and boasts a saltwater sanitation system.



## **Harker Park**

### ***Closed for Winter***

The Harker Park will reopen as weather permits in the spring. Please plan to come and enjoy the basketball court, horseshoe pits, volleyball court, play structures and picnic areas. Horseshoes, a basketball and volleyball are available at the Harker Pool registration desk upon request. Dogs are welcome to share the park. Please be courteous to others who may be enjoying the area and be sure to use the handy pet cleanup station available for your convenience.

## Tennis Facilities

***Welcome back Bill VanDeinse!!!***



**Bill VanDeinse with student in 2010**

The tennis courts will reopen as weather permits. Nets will be installed at the Harker Center for early season use as soon as weather allows. After all, it is hard to beat an April morning of spring skiing followed by an afternoon of tennis! Tennis Pro Bill VanDeinse will be returning on May 15th for the 2011 season and his 21st year with SVEA! Be sure to keep an eye out for the spring newsletter (scheduled for mailing in mid-May) as it will contain tennis program descriptions and pricing for the summer season. Programs and clinic sizes may be limited, so early sign-up is suggested.

## **ELKHORN GOLF CLUB – NORDIC SKIING**

The SVEA Board extends sincere appreciation to Elkhorn Springs and the Elkhorn Golf Club for the many years of setting Nordic tracks on their golf course for the use of Elkhorn owners and guests. Though underutilized, this was a fun amenity and it will be missed. The difficult decision to no longer set tracks was generally a financial one. Please be reminded the golf course is private property and requires an enormous budget to maintain. Unauthorized use may cause considerable damage to the grass and root systems which would require extensive treatment and expense to revive for the summer golf season. Please avoid the golf course when enjoying your winter walks and other outings.

## 2011 SVEA MEETING SCHEDULE



**SVEA Board members at 2008 Summer BBQ**

Meeting dates for 2011 have been set so please mark your calendars with the following events:

<b>Future SVEA Events, Board, Membership, and Sub-Association Presidents' Meetings</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Event or Meeting</b>	<b>Location</b>
Monday, March 28, 2011	Spring Board Meeting – (12:00 noon)	Harker Center
Tuesday, July 19, 2011	Summer Board Meeting – (9:00 am)	Harker Center
Tuesday, July 19, 2011	Sub-Association Presidents' Mtg – (4:00 pm)	Harker Center
Wednesday, July 20, 2011	Owners' Meeting & Barbeque – (5:30 pm)	Harker Center Park
Wednesday, September 7, 2011	Finance Committee Budget Mtg – (3:00 pm)	Harker Center
Friday, September 23, 2011	Fall Board Meeting – (9:00 am)	Harker Center
Wednesday, January 4, 2012	Winter Board Meeting – 12:00 (noon)	Harker Center
Thursday, January 5, 2012	Sub-Association Presidents' Mtg – (3:00 pm)	Harker Center
Friday, January 6, 2012	Annual Meeting – (3:00 pm)	American Legion Hall
Friday, January 6, 2012	Board Meeting – Immediately following Annual	American Legion Hall
Saturday, January 7, 2012	Board Workshop – (12:00 noon)	Harker Center

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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE 2010 AMENITY SURVEY

### ***Your Responses Are Providing Direction ....***

Over 800 of you took the time to complete and return the 2010 Amenity Survey. The responses have been tabulated and may be viewed on the website: [Click here to view](#). Thank you for participating in this important first step in the ongoing capital planning of your association. As Jim Fletcher mentioned in his President's message, *"more on this issue in the coming months"*.



## COMING IN LATE SPRING - WATCH FOR OUR NEW & IMPROVED WEBSITE

One of the 2011 goals of the Board and Staff is to update and enhance our website. Even though your survey responses indicated the current site is informative and easy to navigate, it is a bit dated. Any suggestions for improvements will be appreciated and seriously considered. Please e-mail, fax or telephone your ideas to the administrative office.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### **Thin Ice ...**

A winter situation that can be very dangerous is skating or playing on frozen ponds and lakes. Thin ice accidents happen too often and can easily be avoided by exercising caution when in the area of ponds and waterways, and by carefully supervising your children and pets.





## **THANK YOU TO OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS, TED WITT AND STEPHEN SMITH**

Stephen and Ted served three-year terms on the SVEA Board, volunteering countless hours chairing and serving on various committees. Stephen chaired and or participated on the Sub-Association Liaison, Finance, and Insurance Committees and Ted chaired or served on the Recreation, Harker Center Improvements, ADC, Communications, Pools, and Nominating committees. Stephen was instrumental in developing the two-way communication which currently exists between the SVEA and Sub-Association boards and Ted worked tirelessly on the open space trails conceptual plan. Ted and Stephen, your fellow board members and the staff express our sincere gratitude. Thank you; you will be missed!

## **BOARD & COMMITTEE SERVICE**

Have you been thinking about contributing your talents to your Elkhorn community? We are looking for future board members willing to give their time and knowledge. Not sure about the time commitment of serving on the board? How about participating on one of the SVEA committees? For more information about SVEA committees [click here](#) or contact a current board member or the Harker office.

**RIDE THE BUS – IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY, IT'S A GREAT WAY TO MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS!!!**



Mountain Rides provides a terrific alternative to driving around our wonderful community. Whether taking the bus to the mountain or to town for running errands or attending events, the varied routes, time schedules, new shelters, and professional team of drivers make the choice a good one. Many people must agree as Mountain Rides finished 2010 with a total ridership of 420,720 riders! If you haven't taken the bus, try it! Schedules, routes and maps may be found by visiting [www.mountainrides.org](http://www.mountainrides.org), or you may call 788-RIDE for details.

Thank you Mountain Rides for your service in Elkhorn!

**WELCOME TO NEW OWNERS**

- Deborah & Thomas James*
- Rebecca & Peter Smith*
- Linda & Nagraj Narasimhan*
- Karen Burt*
- Brian McKay*



To be included on the SVEA e-mail list or to update your present e-mail, contact [svea@cox-internet.com](mailto:svea@cox-internet.com).

If you have any Elkhorn pictures that you would like to share in future SVEA newsletters or email blasts, please attach and send photos with the photographers name and a brief description and location to Darlene Kuehn at [svea@cox-internet.com](mailto:svea@cox-internet.com)

I still find each day too  
short for all the thoughts  
I want to think, all the  
walks I want to take, all  
the books I want to read,  
and all the friends I want  
to see.

**John Burroughs**

## Contact Us



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