

OPEN LETTER TO MR/ECRLOC LANDOWNERS

I'm not much on going around flapping my lip about everything, but the time has come to end the B.S. that's going on. The three amigos have been spreading lies, fabrications & defaming my character. Although their words don't bother me, in fact I find them quite entertaining (like watching a Three Stooges movie), their words and actions are tearing at the very fabric of our community and the Landowners Corporation. They have accomplished nothing more than to pit neighbor against neighbor based solely on lies, fabrications and defamation of character.

Part of these fabrications are about my motives and agenda. I find this amusing, since they know nothing about me. So, to set the record straight, here's who I am and what my agenda is.

Me

I was raised in Alaska and joined the US Marine Corps in 1967. My MOS (Military Occupation Standard) was Infantry and Recon. For you folks who don't know what Recon is, it's the Marine Corp's version of the Army Rangers (the Rangers were the Green Beret at the time) or the Navy Seals (the Navy Seals were UDT (Underwater Demolition Team)) at the time.

I spent a tour in Vietnam and in February 1969 got a free ride out of Vietnam aboard a US Air Force MediVac flight. I spent 7 months in military and VA hospitals, from the Philippines, Japan, Travis AFB, Bremerton Naval Hospital, and then finally Ft Harrison VA Hospital. In September of 1969 I was retired from the Marine Corps, released from Ft Harrison and walked away from that facility, never looking back.

This is something I normally don't talk about. I only mention it because Mr Belew felt it necessary to mention his 22 years of service, as if it provides some kind of credibility for his lies, fabrications and defamation of character. Personally, I find his words and actions repugnant and not in the spirit of "Semper Fidelis". It's clear these are just words to Mr Belew, and not the spirit of a moral compass.

My Life

After my military service I've been in many industries and jobs. Everything from a dishwasher, to trucker (1 million miles of driving and I still have my CDL), to an executive at a large trucking company. In 2000 I resigned a well paying position to start my own business. Little did I know that when I started it, we were in the middle of a recession, and the next year we had 9/11. Long story short, the first 5 years were hell. Lori and I had our home in Great Falls foreclosed on twice because I was pouring the revenues back into the business to keep it afloat. 21 years later we have a thriving business that employs 8 full-time team members.

Lori and I have been married for 41 years. We have 6 children, 17 grand children and 6 great-grand children. Our children and grand children are the center of our universe.

Our Moving to the Community

In 2015 we purchased our cabin as our retirement home. This is our final residence, where we will live until we die. We live here year-around and cherish living in God's amazing country. We have since sold our home in Great Falls.

Volunteering for the Board

Like many Landowners, Lori and I have attended every Landowners Annual Meeting since we've been here. And like many, we were in the dark as to what the old LOC was doing. We never heard anything from the Board except for the budget that was presented at the annual meeting. We never knew when or if the roads would be maintained or repaired, and we didn't know where our money was going.

All we knew, we sent our assessment payments to "Big Sky Escrow", and from that point on it was just a black hole.

Moreover, at each annual meeting we would hear complaining about roads not being fixed and covenants not being enforced, among other things. However, I never saw anything changing. It was just the same old thing year after year.

You see, when Lori & I bought our property we did our due diligence. We obtained copies of the LOC bylaws and covenants, obtained all of the easements on our roads, and tracked down our water rights to the South Fork of Stickney Creek. We knew before we signed on the dotted line, what we could and couldn't do on our property and the roads that ran through it. When we purchased the property we had a legally binding contract with the LOC. We would pay our assessments and the LOC would maintain & repair roads, enforce covenants, spray for weeds on the road easements, and collect on delinquent assessments. We did our part, we paid our assessments. The LOC never did its part.

I volunteered for the Board because I wanted to see the LOC finally start doing its job. I've spoken with many landowners who echoed my frustration that nothing was being done.

I took the position as President and Chairman of the Board by default. In our first Board meeting it was asked, who should be nominated for these positions. There was dead silence, crickets. After a number of minutes, with everyone looking at each other in silence, David Brandt said, "step up to the plate Dennis". I told them I would take the positions if nobody else would. At the time, I wasn't really interested in either position, I had enough to do in my life as it was. However, I told them I would take the positions, but I've been on a million committees and boards over the years and my one frustration was nothing ever gets done. If this was going to be a another situation where we were discussing the same problems year after year and accomplishing nothing, I didn't want to be part of it. They all agreed and I accepted the positions.

Despite the lies and character assassination I've endured, I'm proud of the job the Board and I have done. We've established a budget that will make a difference in the community, have moved forward on covenant enforcement, made some real repairs to the roads, are moving forward on collecting delinquent assessments, setup a cloud server desktop where all the LOC's records are stored, have implemented a true accounting system, have a professional accounting firm managing our finances, and have created a website that contains news, information and documents for all Landowners to review. Talk about transparency. Although we still have much to do, we are light years ahead of where we were under the old LOC.

The LOC Budget

Coming up with a realistic budget was probably the most difficult tasks we had to tackle. We all agreed that the \$100 a year was, beyond stupid. You can't do anything with a \$100 a year except maybe flat blade some of the main roads.

We had many things to consider when establishing the budget:

- **Roads.** How much was it realistically going to cost to repair and maintain roads? Minimal maintenance had been completed on the roads over the years and there had been no repairs other than washouts. We have many areas that are so deep in mud, it's difficult if not dangerous to drive on them.
- **Covenant Enforcement.** This is something that has never been done in the past and a real issue for many Landowners. We don't want to tell people how to live. However, when a lot is overrun with junk cars, building debris and garbage, it's time to say enough is enough. This not only affects the community, but in many cases it's an environmental issue.

We had one instance where a lot purchaser brought in a junkie old motor home, then ran a sewer line from the motor home into the North Fork of Stickney Creek.

I can't believe how some people slap Mother Nature in face the way they do. No respect for the community or Mother Nature. The LOC has a legal obligation to ensure the mountain is respected.

From a personal standpoint Lori & I bought the lot next to ours. We didn't want another lot, we were happy with the lot we had. The only reason we went in debt and bought the lot was to keep someone from buying it, building a tar paper shack, hauling in their junk cars, and throwing garbage all over the place, right next to our place. A Landowner should never have to do this. The LOC is supposed to make sure this doesn't happen.

■ **Weed Control.** The LOC is responsible for the maintenance of the road easements. This includes weed control. It is getting to the point that weeds are out of control. The LOC must control the weeds on the road easements and encourage Landowners to control weeds on their lots. The longer this is delayed, the longer and more expensive it will become to get things under control.

■ **Past Due Assessments.** The LOC can only be successful if all Landowners pay their fair share. This wasn't done in the past and was never addresses. As a Board, we were determined to ensure everyone pays their fair share. This is the single largest complaint I hear from Landowners. They understand the need to increase the assessments, but are livid that some Landowners aren't paying their fair share. They are tired of paying for freeloaders.

■ **Reserve.** The LOC has always operated on a wing and a prayer. They only had \$15,000 - \$20,000 to work with each year. There was no reserve or backup. A while back no road grading was completed because all of the money went to washout repair. And many years ago Eagle Canyon Drive was completely washed out. It was determined that we needed to establish a reserve fund to pay for unexpected expenses or emergency repairs. We wanted road maintenance and repair to continue, even if we experience a catastrophic situation.

There was a lot of debate and different ideas were brought to the table before we settled on the \$400 per year assessment to meet the budget needs. We were also aware some folks may not be able to afford this since they're on a fixed income, have health, age or other struggles. We believed that we could draft a hardship policy that would cover these folks so that they weren't financially burdened.

We also knew the assessments had nowhere to go but down. After we establish a reserve fund, shape and ditch the roads, established a low rate of assessment delinquency, and clean up the covenant violations, we will need less money to cover these areas. However, it's is going to take all of the \$400 to get to that point. Personally, I would like to see assessments around \$200 per year. I don't like paying \$800 per year for my two lots either. But, I know that's what it's going to take to get the job done.

My Agenda

Property Values. There are many fabrications regarding my "agenda". The most touted is that I'm trying to drive up property values. As I previously stated, this is Lori's and my home until we die. I'm pretty sure I won't be concerned about property values when I'm dead.

However, let me ask you a question. How many Landowners want their property values to go down? I only see three hands.

Before all the BS started I had a conversation with Roy McFarlane. We both had similar experiences, in that we both looked at property in Dearborn and MR/EC. I passed on to him that I told Lori we could never buy in Dearborn because the roads were so bad. I told her I'd have to buy a new pickup every year. Roy laughed and said, "that's why land is so cheap over there". Hmmm. A very interesting change in attitude, isn't it?

I'm really not interested in rising property values. However, Lori and I have a big investment in our properties. I don't want to see our land values drop because of bad roads and garbage dumps in the community.

Another fabrication going around is that Mark Pieloch is going to build million dollar mansions up here. As far as I know, Mark has never built any structures, on any of his properties. I don't know Mark's intentions, but what would you rather have? A million dollar mansion next to your lot, or a garbage dump?

Roads

The condition of the roads are the single most important responsibility of the LOC. It's also the most important issue for year-around residents; and even more so for our elderly folks who have health or other issues, who may need an ambulance or the ability to get out in an emergency. We have 21-23 miles of road to take care of. Of these, most roads are good and don't require repairs. They just need to be shaped and ditched so the runoff won't destroy them every year.

There are a number of places that become almost impassible when it's wet. A foot of mud (slippery mud at that) is unacceptable. We have to bring in road base (gravel) in order to mix with the mud to form a solid road base. We have already started this on Arrow Drive, Charbonneau and Beaverslide Loop. We also have to shape and ditch these areas so that runoff doesn't destroy our repairs. Contrary to what the naysayer's have been saying, the repairs made are holding and doing exactly what they're supposed to do, mix with the mud.

In the past roads were graded once a year. We believe that the main roads need to be graded, shaped and ditched twice a year. Grading them once a year just repairs the damage done over an entire year. Grading them twice a year will begin the process of shaping and ditching, which will eventually produce lasting roads, which will need less maintenance in the future.

Another fabrication going around is the Boards intentions of building "fancy" roads throughout the community. This is not only untrue, but stupid on its face. If you believe repairing a hundred foot mud hole so you can actually drive on it is a "fancy" road, then I don't know what to say to you.

I Want Everyone to Live Like We Do

Lori and I have been very blessed in our lives. We have an awesome family and through hard work and sacrifice, we are financially comfortable. We're not rich, we're not even well off. We're comfortable. Not everyone has been as blessed as we have, and we certainly understand financial hardship. This is why I've been a huge proponent of establishing a "Hardship" policy to assist folks who are on a fixed income or have other financial hardships. I believe everyone should be able to live on the mountain without financial stress or worry. We are all equal. And just because you have money or don't have money doesn't make you any more or less of a person.

Mark Pieloch's Lapdog

I've never been anyone's lapdog. Speaking of lapdog's, did you notice how silent David Allen was at the annual meeting?

He sat silently while all his lapdog's screamed and shouted and turned the meeting into a "shit show". This is the true meaning of a lapdog.

I don't know Mark Pieloch very well. We don't communicate, go out to dinner together or have any social contact. However, I have worked with Mark over the last year on the Board and have found him to be a caring and ethical businessman.

I judge people by their character and not their financial standing. Did you know that Mark provides huge support to veterans organizations? Did you know that he spent millions building a "no kill" animal shelter in Lincoln Nebraska so that animals wouldn't be killed at the government run shelter? Yes, Mark is a good person with a good heart. Money doesn't have anything to do with character.

While serving on the Board with Mark, we haven't always agreed. You see, that's how a Board works. Everyone has their own view on issues, and you debate the merits of the different positions until you reach a consensus. Then you vote on the matter. The three amigos apparently don't understand how a Board works, since they say that a 5-0 vote on issues means that the Board has been rubber stamping Mark's position. The reality is, there were debates where the other Board members changed Mark's mind. And, visa-versa. Everyone has the opportunity to speak their piece, listen to the other's perspectives, debate the issue, and then finally vote on the issue. There was never an issue we voted on, where we disagreed after debating the issue. We may have changed our minds during the debate, but we always came to a consensus.

Covenant Enforcement.

I've already pretty much covered this subject. We live by the covenants, and expect our neighbors to do the same. That's only fair for all Landowners.

So, the bottom line of my agenda is to operate the LOC the way it should have been operated all along. To provide the services and protections the Landowners deserve, and pay for.

The Three Amigos

Unlike the three amigos, I won't fabricate stories, lie or libel them. I will only tell you what I know for a fact.

David Allen

David Allen is a wheeler dealer and buys and sells land directly. He doesn't go through Title companies when he buys and sells, therefore doesn't obtain all of the documentation regarding the property. David is free to handle his business anyway he wants. However, if he wasn't aware the land he bought was part of a LOC, that's his fault not the LOC's.

Before all the fabrications began I had a number of conversations with David. He told me that he wanted to build a cattle ranch but he couldn't buy larger parcels of land because the big ranches bought them up. He said he was buying smaller 20 acre parcels in the community so that he could combine them into a ranch. He told me that he couldn't afford the assessments and that "I was ruining his dream". I told him the LOC needed the money in order to fix the roads and enforce the covenants. Here's what he told me:

- I don't want to pay to fix roads I never drive on.
- The people who bought the lots knew the roads were bad when they bought them, so they should just live with them.
- I don't want property values to go up, because I'll just have to pay more taxes.

It should also be noted that David Allen has never paid any assessment since he moved to the community. Not when it was \$80, not when it was \$100 and not when it was \$400.

He tells folks that he didn't pay because the LOC was trying to charge him a prior assessments on a lot he bought. This is completely false. A letter was sent to David informing him the LOC would not charge him for the past owners assessments. You know what David's answer was? Crickets, nothing. Additionally, the Board forgave all delinquent assessments prior to 1/1/2020. Just more B.S.

Here's a man who believes he should be a Board member and represent the Corporation, when he hasn't payed a penny to it. Not only has he paid nothing, now he's encouraging other Landowners not to pay their assessments. Wow!!

Roy McFarlane

As previously stated I've had a number of conversations with Roy McFarlane.

In the beginning, they were cordiale. After the three amigos went on the warpath, the conversations turned 180. Roy has told me:

- He doesn't want anyone driving on Arrow Drive, or any repairs made to Arrow Drive.
- The worse the roads are, the less traffic.
- 2 wheel drive cars shouldn't be allowed to travel on the roads.
- Nobody should be allowed to rent their cabins on Air B&B.
- And, Roy was furious on our October Board meeting call, about covenant enforcement. He wanted to know who authorized covenant enforcement. We told him it was the duty of the Board to enforce the covenants. He was not happy with this explanation.

Again, it should be noted that Roy McFarlane has not paid his assessments and is encouraging other Landowners not to pay theirs.

Mark Belew

I don't really know where this guy is coming from. I do know that he's in the lead on fabricating stories and spreading lies. I also know he's probably one the most vulgar people I've ever been associated with.

Again, it should be noted that Mark Belew has not paid his assessments and is encouraging other Landowners not to pay theirs.

Another curious thing about the three amigos is their GoFund Me page. Here's a guy (along with the two amigos) who lives in a \$300,000 home, hasn't paid any assessments and is involved in the solicitation of money from Landowners to take legal action against the LOC.

So, you donate to the GoFund Me page, take legal action against the LOC, and then pay assessments to hire an attorney to defend the LOC against these folks. If you stop and think about it, your donating to take legal action against yourself. What a scam.

The bottom line of their agenda is pit neighbor against neighbor, spread lies and fabrications to achieve their ultimate goal of destroying the LOC.

I will no longer stand idly by while they continue to attack my character. They have crossed the line into legal defamation. And, because they are short in the understanding department, I've include the legal definition of defamation:

Any intentional false communication, either written or spoken, that harms a person's reputation; decreases the respect, regard, or confidence in which a person is held; or induces disparaging, hostile, or disagreeable opinions or feelings against a person.

Defamation may be a criminal or civil charge. It encompasses both written statements, known as libel, and spoken statements, called slander.

Sound familiar??

So boys, you have a choice on your hands. STOP the fabrications, lies, half-truths and attacks on my character or, I will be taking appropriate legal action. I not only have the horsepower to do this, but I also have the evidence. That's right.

Do you really think I don't have copies of all your posts from your silly little Facebook site? Do you really think I don't have copies of all your secret little letters sent out to Landowners. I have received numerous emails beginning with, "Dennis, how stupid are you". Well, who's stupid now, Mr Belew?

Now some folks may wonder how I can say these things about the three amigos, when I'm doing the same thing they are? The answer is quite simple, what I've said in this letter is true. What they've said about me

is not.

A few more things, for this overly long letter:

Russ Greaves. You have been attacking the Board and its officers for as long as anyone can remember. If you were on the Board you would be attacking your own self. I will not respond to your eight page, certified letters arguing what the meaning of the word “is”, is. Additionally, I will not waste anymore of the Landowners hard earned money on attorney responses to your baseless claims. All of the LOC required documents are posted on the website. Feel free to utilize this resource at any time. If you believe that the Board or myself are in violation of the Bylaws, covenants or the Montana Non Profit Act, you are free to file a civil action.

The Previous LOC. In my letter I’ve reference the previous LOC. I want everyone to know the problems with the previous LOC were in no way a reflection on Wade and Marie Crittenden. Wade and Marie did an outstanding job for many years. They were never given the resources they needed to fulfill all the LOC obligations. It wasn’t their fault, it was the Lanes.

When you look back, it’s really amazing how much they were able to accomplish, with so little. Thanks Wade & Marie. Your hard work doesn’t go unappreciated.

To all of the Landowners who support what the Board has been trying to accomplish, THANK YOU! There are many more of you than anyone realizes.

To the Landowners who have believed the crap coming from these people, or just don’t know what to believe; I ask one thing of you. If you hear a B.S. story, ask them for the evidence that backs up the story. It’s easy to make up a lie if you aren’t challenged. You’ll find they have no proof. It’s all fabrication.

And to the three amigos. You are welcome to post anything you want on the website as long as it’s not vulgar. However, does anyone really believe you want to post your secret letters, or Facebook posts on the LOC website? We asked you to provide us with photos and position statements so that we could add them to the Board Member page on the website. That was in September. Still waiting guys....

Thank you for reading this long letter. I wanted it to be short, but because of all the B.S. there was much to cover.

Stay safe and HAPPY, spring is around the corner.

Dennis Greany
President and Chairman of the Board