

Ice Lakes News - March '16

The Floods of '16

It wasn't '97, not quite, but there was still a lot of water. The storm came in on January 29th, Friday, bringing rain the entire day and into the night. During the deluge a little over 4 inches of rain fell* running down the roads. Escape into the lakes was prevented by ice dams along the roads from snowplows and previous "rain on snow" events. Soda Springs Rd. flooded a couple of feet deep between Dulzura and almost to Ice Lakes Lodge and the road was closed. Serene Rd. at Kilborn and Westshore was also flooded. One house on Westshore had several feet of water in it and another at the end of Lake was flooded. Those residents were home. The fire department also identified a score of other houses potentially flooded but no one was in residence. SLPOA's Linda Cashion contacted the owners.

By Sunday the local flooding had subsided but by then the water that had fallen in Castle Valley (in the Boreal/Castle Pk. valley) had rushed down Castle Cr. to Van Norden. The mountains around Van Norden made their contribution. A total of 6,000 acres of watershed drained into Van Norden.** The lake filled and overflowed. The water ran into ice dams along the parking lots in the Yuba River channel. Soda Springs parking lots filled and water swept over the road. Soda Springs Rd. was closed and Serene Lakes was isolated. Nevada County brought in large pieces of equipment and began removing ice, snow, and willows. Then the big excavator blew a hydraulic hose and shut down. Just before 4 PM, after having been closed all day, the road was re-opened for processions of ten cars at a time, the first procession testing whether it was safe. Everyone made it. The parking lot began to empty as those waiting to leave Serene Lakes on a Sunday, were finally able to.

Monday the road crews were out building a snow dike along Soda Springs Rd. to channel water and digging out around the bridge at Soda Springs Ski Area. The sky was bright blue, there was some fresh powder, and the world had righted itself.



go to page 4

Above: Soda Springs Rd. between Dulzura and Ice Lakes Lodge. The water was a couple of feet deep.

The newsletter of the Serene Lakes Property Owners' Association
P.O. 669 Soda Springs, CA 95728
Serene Lakes on the Internet: <http://www.slpoa.com>

SLPOA Calendar

Next Meeting: Saturday Mar. 19: 4 P.M.
 SLCWD Water Treatment Bldg. Short Rd.
 potluck follows 6:30 @ Siegerts' 5495 Hemlock
 More Meetings: 3/19 6/4 7/23 9/4
 Annual Mtg/BBQ: 10AM & 2 PM 9/4, 2016
 SLPOA Board Org. Mtg. Sept. 5, 2016 9AM

Sandfling: May 28- 10 AM
 alternate dates if El Nino delivers: 6/4, 6/11
 First Hot Dogs of the season at the sand fling.
 Campfire Nights: 7/5 and August Saturdays 7:30 PM

DSAA Summit Clean-up June TBA

July 4 Celebrations July 3, 2015
 Float decorating for 7/3 parade 7/2/16 5 PM (see page 6)
 (pizza, wine, soda)
 (decorating bikes, floats, wagons, dogs, etc.)

SLPOA Crafts Faire/Flea Market/Art Show - July 3
Chile Cook-off, Kids' Parade July 3
Serene Lakes Days 2015: July 30/31
Kids' Activities on the beach - TBA
Cabin Tour Sept. 3, 2015 Saturday 2 PM
 Sailboat Races - 1st - July 3, 2nd July 31, 3rd - Sept. 4

Water Board Meetings: Second Friday of the month
 5:00 district offices 7300 Short Rd. Serene Lakes

SLPOA Officers

President: Mark Himelstein mh@himellaw.com

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Administrative Ass't: Linda Cashion AdminAsst@slpoa.com



Boat Storage signups begin April 2 see page 10

Serene Lakes Gourmet Book Club

Linda Cashion

The Serene Lakes "Gourmet" Book Club meets the second Monday of the month. If you would like to join us for food and conversation, please email me at lmcashion@yahoo.com and I will put you on the email list. We have selected book titles for 2016. The dates and books for our next meetings are listed below. In July we will discuss the upcoming Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival production of "Comedy of Error" (my personal favorite!) and then attend a performance later in July.

March	The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah
April	Descent by Tim Johnston
May	We Never Asked for Wings by Vanessa Diffenbaugh
June	Pope Joan by Donna Woolfolk
July	Comedy of Errors by William Shakespeare
August	The Big Burn by Timothy Egan
September	Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer
October	The Secret History of Wonder Woman by Jill Lapore
November	The Major's Daughter by J.P. Francis
December	Last Bus to Wisdom by Ivan Doig

editor:

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President's Message

Mark Himelstein
SLPOA President

Spring is around the corner and, as the season's change, so do the activities at Serene Lakes. So, it's time to turn off your TV's, leave the good theatre but terrible politics of the Republican Presidential debates, say goodbye to "Downton Abbey" and breathe a deep breath of fresh air at 7000 feet in the Sierra. The deep snow and ice will melt and our lakes will return as they do with every change of season. The warm clothes will be for the closet and the tank tops and shorts will be out in no time. Spring is the season of rebirth (as all of our religions tell us) and reproduction, so let the fun begin.

And, of course, the fun starts with a recitation of what will transpire at our next Board meeting. At that meeting we will be discussing issues which arose during the past winter as well as preparation for the coming summer months.

The unseasonal rain caused quite a bit of flooding in this area, as many of you know. We are going to discuss setting up a standing committee to deal with these issues and especially the drainage problems which caught us flat footed during those rain storms. Any of you who have any ideas of how to proceed are welcome to attend the March meeting which will be held on Saturday, March 19th at the Water District Board room.

We will also discuss setting up the boat storage program for the second year, landscaping at Lot One this summer (also a drainage issue) and organizing our summer activities (July 4th, Serene Lakes Days, summer sailboat races, etc.), and checking on continuing issues of interest. We will have a lot on the table so be there to be heard.

This past winter has seen a return to a more normal weather cycle which has made for a successful ski season (both downhill and cross country). Smiles have replaced frowns on a lot of faces representative of the ski industry and local businesses. In point of fact, as locals can tell you, Serene Lakes has been jammed on most winter weekends this past ski season. And, with more people come their pets, especially their dogs (I am a dog owner, as well). And, with more dogs we have seen greater accumulations of dog poop on our streets. SLPOA has sprung into action to deal with this mighty problem. We have purchased new, all weather, dog poop stations to be placed at both ends of the lakes so human dog walkers can find poop bags and dispensaries to keep our streets clean and pristine. We hope all will use these facilities for the common good.

'Nough of this stuff. Get ready to put your skis away and get your roller blades and bicycles tuned up for the summer months.

Right, President Himelstein breathing "fresh air at 7,000 feet.



Membership Renewal

Sharon Ruffner
Membership Chair

Have You Renewed Your SLPOA Membership?

Reminder! If you haven't yet renewed your SLPOA Membership, it is now past due.

The membership cycle coincides with the calendar year and runs January through December. To guarantee that you receive the next issue of the heirloom quality newsletter or to maintain your access to the SLPOA website, it is important that you renew your membership today!

Other terrific membership benefits include (but aren't limited to) free chipping, boat storage, annual BBQ tickets, cabin tour tickets and the code to the bathroom at the beach!

Visit SLPOA.COM to renew today. If you prefer to send a check, you can download the renewal form via the membership enrollment tab on the website.

Flooding from page 1

Flooding has happened in Serene Lakes before and will again. The worst in memory was New Year's '97 when Soda Springs Rd. also flooded, due to ice dams, to a depth of four feet. You can see the blue painted line on the pump house between Dulzura and Ice Lakes Lodge. The bridge at the Soda Springs Ski Area was under a few feet of water, isolating Serene Lakes for a few days.

The problem is that rain falls on snow, saturating and melting it. What doesn't melt becomes the heaviest of "Sierra Cement," as locals affectionately refer to the snow dropped by "Pineapple Express" storms coming straight across the Pacific. That heavy snow forms a barrier to flowing water along the roads, and the usual routes for water to the lakes or the Yuba River are plugged.

Solutions

Snow is a problem in Serene Lakes, averaging 34' of fall in a winter, and it's hard to find places to put it all so traffic can flow. The County, though, should look at marking those stream courses where they cross the roads and try to avoid blowing snow into them. That blown snow further compacts and further dams. Norm Sayler was out on his backhoe and could not even dent that packed snow in places.

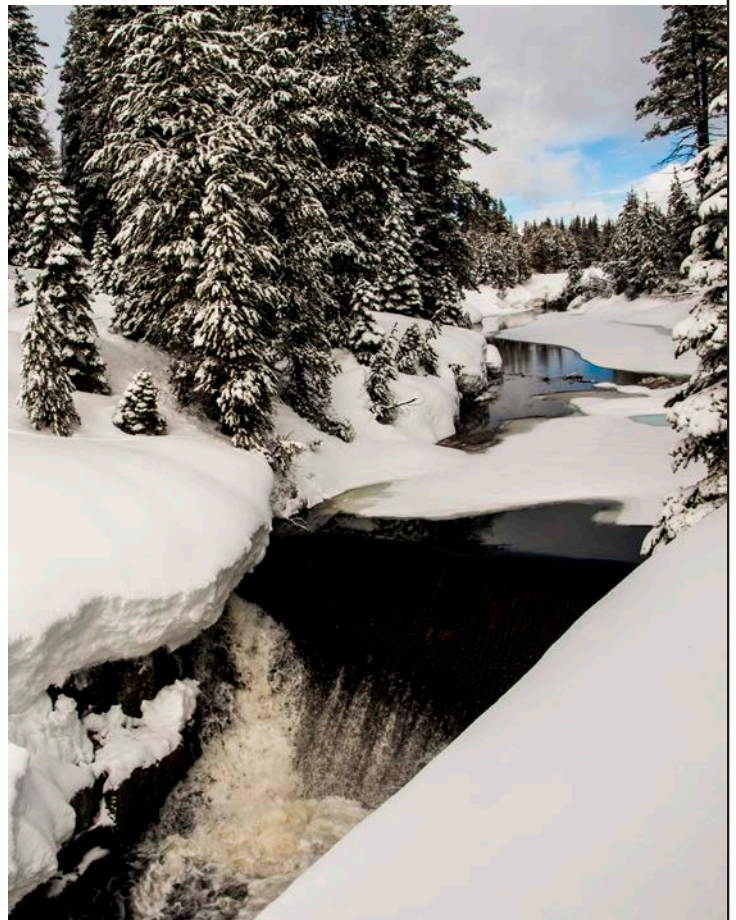
Another, only partial solution, would be to keep the drainages clear of blockage. The one that runs across Soda Springs Rd. just at the end of Lake is filled with brush, and has been for years, despite requests to the County to clear it. That plugged drainage was a big reason Soda Springs Rd. and the house at the end of Lake flooded. [See also page 10 for solutions]

And there's more

Besides the flooding there is another danger in these conditions. The water freezes when temperatures drop after a rain as happened Friday night. Three inches of snow fell later. The ice can damage propane tank-to-house connections at the tank and at the house. 2011 was a good example with many leaks, a couple of houses blowing up, and emergency services set up at the water district building. File away note in your minds. Just because your house is not flooded does not mean you are out of danger. Clear your propane tank regulators and lines. If your propane company has not replaced your rigid line with a flexible one, give them a call – after snow melt.

*Randall Osterhuber, Central Sierra Snow Lab, Soda Springs

** George Lamson analysis - see page 7.



Above, water rushing over the dam at Serena Creek, January 30, an unusual event in January when everything is usually frozen.

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Beyond the Call of Duty, 2016

In emergencies people are called upon beyond the normal. During the flooding Norm Sayler was out in the mess with his back hoe trying to clear the drainage channels. The snow was so compacted he could not do much good and could not reach far enough into the snow banks. He was able to help clear the ice dams at Soda Springs and help open the road.

On Sunday morning Placer County supervisor Jennifer Montgomery (Cascade Rd.) was out with a shovel helping Mickey Grey (Lake Dr.) keep a channel open so water could flow from Soda Springs Rd. to the Sierra boat dock.

Nick Brown is our local firefighter and he stays in the fire station's upstairs quarters. He was off duty on Saturday and Sunday but he disregarded that and spent both days helping the community with the flooding. He said to this reporter that it just went with the job. Well, nevertheless, we appreciate it.

Right and below, January 31, large machinery at the Yuba River trying to clear ice to let the water flow. The parking lot is full of people from Serene Lakes wanting to see history or leave the area.



Above, the Soda Springs ski area parking lot full of Yuba River.

Left, Norm Sayler at work from the bridge.



Good News - New Plant Works

The rain on snow event, the big rain at the end of January, was bad news for the ski areas, skiers, and those stuck in Serene Lakes on Sunday the 31st hoping to get out. It was bad news for all the County workers pressed into weekend service to try to open the roads. It was bad news for Boreal on two counts. They lost business at their Soda Springs Ski Area and they incurred a lot of costs bringing in equipment and employees to get compacted snow out of the river so the river could drain the flooded parking lots as well as the road.

There was good news however. The new sewer plant was able to deal with the huge amounts of extra water flowing into the SLCWD and DSPUD systems through I & I (inflow and infiltration).

One of the problems the new sewer plant corrects is the imbalance in flows. On days of light population on the summit there is not much flowing through the sewer system. The “bugs” that process the sewage become unhappy at the lack of “food” and die. When the weekend arrives, and especially when heavy weekends arrive, there are not enough “bugs” to process the sewage. The old system could not handle those fluctuations.



One component of the new plant is two equalization tanks, one of 250,000 gallons (from the old system) and a new one of 750,000 gallons. Heavy flows flow into the tanks and build up while a constant flow of sewage goes into the plant. The “bugs” are happy and process sewage optimally.

The tanks were built primarily for equalizing flows that varied from heavy to light occupancy. When the rains started there was all the equalization ready to be filled and fill it did. On the Serene Lakes side flows went from 43,000 gallons on Thursday to 245,000 on Friday the 29th and 276,000 gallons on Saturday the 31st. The Soda Springs flow went from 72,000 gallons on Thursday to 320,000 on Friday the 29th and 300,000 gallons on Saturday the 30th. The tanks almost filled. Then the rain stopped and the flows decreased. There is an emergency tank that could have been pressed into service to keep sewage from going into the river.

There is an interesting aside here. When the plant was being designed, the chief designing engineer, Jeff Hauser, thought that the equalization tanks should be 250,000 gallons (the tank that was part of the old system) and 500,000 gallons. Tom Skjelstad, the DSPUD general manager, and Bill Quesnel, the SLCWD general manager, both pushed for the new tank to be 750,000 gallons at a small additional incremental cost. That looks to have been a good move.



Above: the two equalization tanks. The top one was part of the original plant and is 250k gallons. The bottom one is part of the new project and is 750k gallons

Our new \$25 million plant is working well.

I & I is a problem all sewage systems have to deal with. Because of ground movement on Donner Summit it's a bit more of a problem. When there is rain sewage is not all that flows into the sewer plant. Water enters the system from rain and as ground water rises, primarily through cracks between manhole covers and the barrels below, but also through cracks in pipes, pump vaults under the streets, and even open pipes in people's yards. On the Serene Lakes side the SLCWD has a continuing program aimed at limiting I & I. Staff is constantly looking for leak spots even running TV cameras through sewage pipes to spot leakage. Part of the ongoing program is replacing chimney seals (between the top of the manhole and the barrel below) with accordion-like rubber collars to accommodate ground movement.

SLPOA Social Media & Flooding

During the flooding a good source of up to date information was the SLPOA Facebook page. People turned to it to see posted pictures of flooding, to see when the bridge opened, etc. There were an amazing 42,000 views over two days beating the previous record of 22,000.

Soda Springs Flooding Analysis

Read a discussion of the 2016 flooding by George Lamson at

<http://onthesummit.net/wordpress/blog/anatomy-of-a-flood-2/>

From the SLPOA Archives

The flooding of '16 sent the newsletter staff to the SLPOA archival office to see about earlier flooding. There, in the carefully leather-bound volumes of SLPOA newsletters saved for posterity, we found the March, '97 issue about the New Year's flooding (The January issue had already gone in the mail when the New Years flooding occurred. Coincidentally the editor in '97 had the same idea to go back and look at the flooding of '82 to see what happened. [Coincidence #2, '97's editor is the 2016 editor - ed.]

from the SLPOA newsletter, March, '97

The SLPOA newsletter April, 1982, courtesy of Marsha Lose [judiciously edited]

This year we still have tons of snow, and we won't see a daffodil or a crocus until July, but it is spring! The Juncos and Red Wings are back, and I even saw a Robin. This last storm gave us an additional 181 inches of the white fluffy stuff. We didn't see a plow for a week, and nothing moved! Then everyone came up to see and made the situation almost impossible for the clean-up crews. Those who made it up here in spite of all the warnings couldn't get out because we got a warm rain Easter weekend and the Yuba River flooded the bridge making it impassable for almost two days. It took about 32 charges of dynamite to free up the ice dam below the bridge so the river could resume its normal flow.

There will be many stories told about the storm of '82 in the years to come. Those of us living here year 'round spent all of our time shoveling, plowing and moving cars. Some of us couldn't keep ahead of things and lost driveways and snow tunnels. We even lost some cars at the storm's peak.

Even the county plow would have bogged down had the operators been able to get in.

We were totally isolated for 8 straight days. Most of us had plenty of wood and food and were comfortable. It is really essential if you have a cabin up here to keep it stocked with enough staples: powdered milk, bottled water, candles, fire wood, and other necessities to last at least two weeks. A month's supply is ideal. We had some people stuck up here who ran out of food. They could have hiked out, but chose not to and instead called for emergency rations to be brought in by snowmobile.

On the lighter side, the Treons came up to spend a week in their cabin, before going on to their daughter's wedding. They got snowed in and like the rest of us kept waiting for the snow plows. Their daughter was frantic at Southshore. Mom and Dad were frantic in Serene Lakes. The wedding couldn't be postponed and the wedding dress and parents were in Serene Lakes. The Treons couldn't even get to Soda where Amtrak was picking up passengers.

In the end the groom arranged for a helicopter to pick mom and dad up on the lake but the weather was chancy. Finally Norm Saylor chugged in with his blower and guided them out just in time.

This year's 611.5 inches of snow is the second highest in recorded history topped only by the winter of '52.

John Slouber to the Rescue

[SLPOA's '97 newsletter editor]

January 1 [1997] saw the bridge on Baker Ranch Road under four feet or so of water, a lot of stranded New Year's revelers at Serene Lakes and a lot of others on the other side trying to get in. When the water receded a bit the washed out road came into view making it look like people were going to have to walk in and out over the railroad bridge from the Soda Springs ski area's parking lot for some time. That was not to be the case though. John Slouber rode to the rescue at the head of a convoy of hastily assembled construction equipment and young men. Where he found them, no one seemed to have an idea and John just modestly shrugged and got busy on his cell phone when I asked him. It was just something that had to be done and he did it.

[Parenthetically, the SLPOA newsletter editor in 1997 arrived with his wife from Florida after midnight on January 1. It was hard to see in the dark that the bridge at Soda Springs was under three feet of rushing water but we did stop short. We booked the last room available in the Donner Summit Lodge and the next day our mayor, Ralph Suter, came to the Soda Springs Ski Area's parking lot for a pickup. We'd utilized the old Lincoln Highway route opposite the DSL]

A note from Marsha Lose

The 1982 floods

We had word from Lynn Zanetti that the river was rising. We had a house full of friends who needed to get to Reno because of the potential of floods. With sore heads from the previous night's celebration, they got moving. We didn't. Our heads were too sore.

As I recall the last time it flooded was an Easter Sunday. The Easter Bunny was supposed to be skiing, but didn't make it. My kids were in diapers (hard to imagine that they're both over 20 now). The river flooded because of all the rain and the ice dams at Soda Springs. It was Ok in Serene Lakes though. We played games with the neighbors, had inside Easter egg hunts, drank Ramos Fizzes, and then , the power went out and the diapers ran out.

We had to get out. They tried blasting, tractoring and all sorts of things. We left our car in the Soda Springs parking lot, and got a room at the Donner Ski Ranch. We went out by boat, with babies, toothbrushes, and our last diaper. I wasn't worried about going to work because my boss was on the other side of the river. We finally got out when Norm Saylor* brought the loader over, and loaded our Subaru station wagon in the loader and took it across the stream. What adventures we have!

*Note that Norm Saylor was still in the hero business in 2016 on page 4.

Letter to the Editor

Kudos to Soda Springs Mountain Resort

Kathlyn Millon

I would like to thank the Soda Springs Mountain Resort to turning what could have been a frustrating couple of days into some lighthearted fun. The flood across Soda Springs Road inconvenienced many summit residents and visitors, but Soda Springs stepped up to keep us afloat of the madness.

The resort staffers were serving Hot Chocolate while we all watched and waited to see what the solution would be. I think Norm Saylor, Sugar Bowl, and Soda Springs were all doing their best to resolve the issue as fast as possible.

Soda Springs scooped up stranded employees by front loader to staff the restaurant and resort. We were able to get snacks and beer for a fun afternoon.

In addition Soda Springs gave all of us stranded in Serene Lakes \$20 lift tickets! My daughter and I had a great morning of skiing with no crowds. I will be back to ski some more.

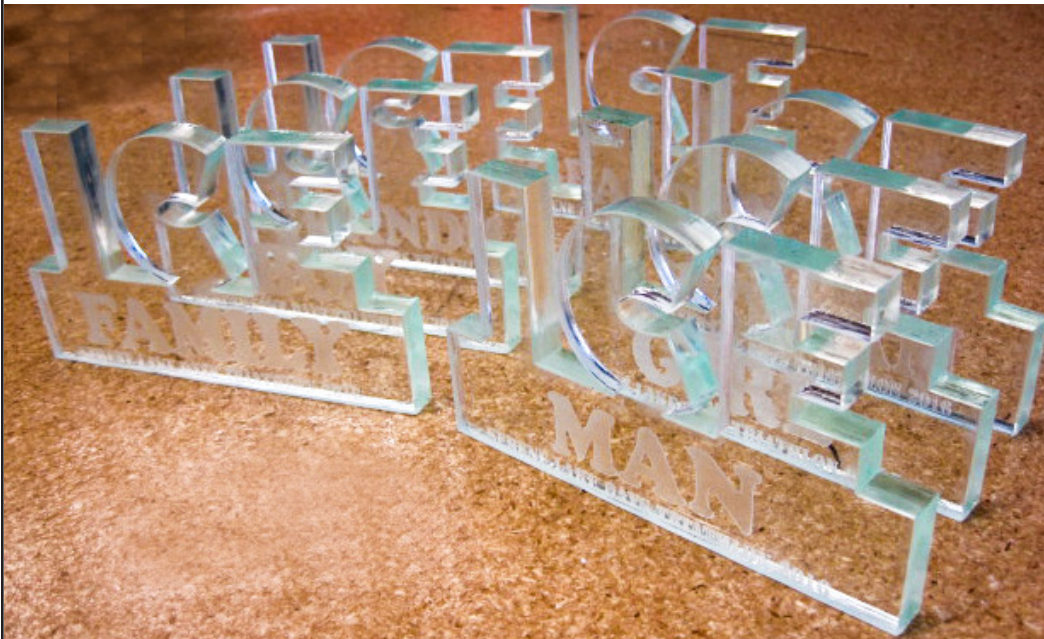
I have found this to be a great mountain community where people are able to make the best of whatever Mother Nature throws at us. Turn it into a party for now—it will all be different tomorrow.

Get Ready for Summer

Sharon Ruffner

3rd Annual Serene lakes Days Ice Lakes Triathlon

Is your family ready for the third annual Ice Lakes Triathlon? The 2016 event will again be staged at the Homeowners't beach affording spectators prime viewing to cheer on all of the athletes as they transition from each leg of the race. The distances for the kayak and swim segments will be the same as last year while the bike portion may be lengthened to add a bit more of a challenge. We are excited to report that plaques will be awarded to the first place finishers in each category.



RC Morton has again donated his design, materials and time to create a very unique plaque for the winners of this race [see left - ed].

So start getting your teams together and start training so you can compete and win one of these fabulous mantle pieces for your cabin. Yes there will be individual categories as well for female, male, senior and youth. Look for the next newsletter for all the details. Another reason to renew your membership if you haven't done so!

Contact SharonRuffner@yahoo.com for more info.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, July 2nd 5 P.M.

Serene Lakes Community Float Decorating Party!

You will not want to miss this!

Bring your bikes, wagons, hoverboards, pogo sticks, baby buggies, any unique vehicle you can push, pull, pedal, or ? down to lot 1.

We'll supply the decorations, libations, and snacks. You supply the creativity.

**Come join in the fun!
Meet some neighbors.
Bring your friends and family.
Let's party like it's 1776!**

Kathy Gerould, float decorating party chair

Summer boat Storage

George Lamson

Now that we are on the short side of winter it is time to start thinking about summer fun. For many of us that means kayaking, canoeing and sailing around our wonderful lakes. It also means it's time to think about storing that boat at one of the convenient access points around the lakes.

As you probably know SLPOA assumed management of boat storage at Serene Lakes last year. The same program is going to be operating this summer and we invite everyone that wishes to store a boat at an access point on the lake to apply for a sticker. **FOR THOSE OF YOU THAT RECEIVED A STICKER LAST YEAR YOU WILL HAVE TO APPLY FOR A RENEWAL STICKER THIS YEAR.**

Online applications will be opening April 2nd on the SLPOA website (see the boat storage tab at slpoa.com). Look for an email notification with more information coming to you at the end of March. There are a limited number of seasonal (all summer) berths available and applications will be issued on a first come, first serve basis so make sure to get your application in early.



More Flooding Solutions

In addition to a couple of specific solutions to the flooding of '82, '97, and '16 we have the promise of our Placer County supervisor, Jennifer Montgomery, to convene a meeting to look for Serene Lakes as well as Soda Springs solutions to the flooding.

The SLPOA Board meeting on March 19 (see page 2 for time and location) will address the issue as will the SLCWD Board meeting on March 11. The SLCWD meeting will address flooding as it relates to District properties.

Stay tuned for more as things transpire.

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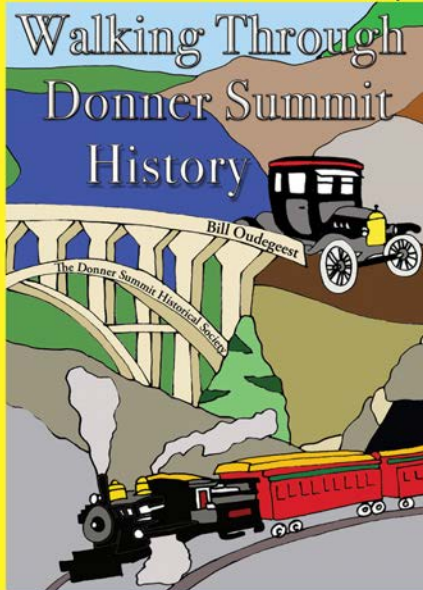
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- Donner State Park Visitors' Center
- The Bookshelf book store in Truckee

- via the web: www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org,
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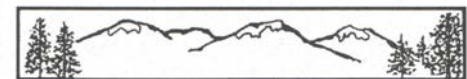


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Cascade Snow Removal

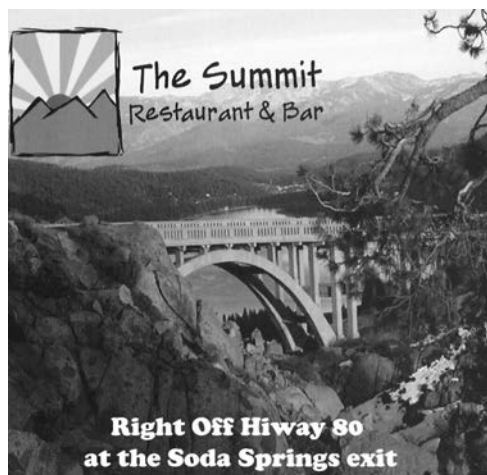


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