



## FALLEN LEAF LAKE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

### FALL NEWSLETTER, 2017

**Introduction:** As I'm writing this in mid September it is windy, rainy and cold outside and night temperatures have gotten into the 30's and in some cases the 20's. Late September reputedly will be sunny and warmer—typical of most Fallen Leaf Septembers.

**Lake Level:** The winter of 2016-2017 was the wettest in at least six years. The run off from the Fallen Leaf drainage area was so impressively high that for most of the summer all three gates of the dam were wide open to prevent flooding of the shore of the lake. Many of the docks were completely covered with water in parts of May and June. The lake level is today still higher than normal, but in control, and with lots of water for the spawning of the Kokanee salmon later on.

**Forest Health:** As everyone who has come to Fallen Leaf this summer knows, the main road was badly damaged by water run off—in one place, less than a mile from the Tahoe Mountain Road junction, about 100 feet of the road was completely washed away. Temporary repairs were made by the El Dorado County Transportation Department that included replacing the missing road with more than 50 cubic yards of rocks and gravel. This brought the road from nearly impassable in April to tolerable by July and from bad to quasi-normal by August.

The County of El Dorado has now decided to repair the storm damage on Fallen Leaf Road and Tahoe Mountain Road. In early September they published a notice seeking sealed bids to repair the “Fallen Leaf Road/Tahoe Mountain Road Storm Damage.” The bids were opened on September 15, 2017, and there will be meetings about the repairs over the next few weeks. The project includes roadway and drainage improvements, repair of washed out road, repair of failed roadway drainages, replacement of existing culverts with plastic pipes, paving with asphalt, repair of shoulders, and re-establishment of existing drainage ditches.

The work is not to take more than 20 days and has an anticipated cost of \$460,000. Contract documents, including the Project Plans may be viewed and/or downloaded from the Quest website at <http://www.questcdn.com>. A telephone connection is (952) 233-1632.

**Security:** Despite the heavy snows this winter there were very few instances of weather damage to cabins. There were the usual shutters blown off windows and doors, but no serious damage to any cabins. Bears entered several cabins, but in general did minimal damage and went on their way. There were no incidents involving human perpetrators at Fallen Leaf this winter.

**BEARS:** This summer I've heard many more bear stories than normal, so it's about time to review some basic bear facts and the protocol for human—bear behavior.

In California we have only one species of wild bear, *Ursus Americanus*, commonly known as the Black Bear. Black Bears can be any color from black to cinnamon to blond and mixtures of these colors. In weight the females average about 140 pounds while the males average slightly over 200 pounds. Larger bears are not uncommon with males reaching 400 pounds or even more.

Black Bears are largely vegetarians eating the inner layer of tree bark, berries grass and other plants, insects in rotten logs, honey, and occasionally small mammals and fish. The Black Bear is a powerful swimmer and tree climber and can run up to 30 miles per hour.

During the winter the bears dig a den where they can escape the cold of winter and where the females give birth in January or February to one to three cubs, each of which weighs about half a pound. When the cubs emerge from their den they will stay close to their mother for as long as two years. At age three they reach maturity. In the 1980's there were about 10,000 to 12,000 Black Bears in California. Because of various legal protective services the Black Bear population has increased to about 25,000 to 30,000 today.

When ambling around in the forests and mountains Black Bears have one overriding topic they think about—food. They need a lot of food to maintain their bulk and will search for it constantly.

Over generations living in the Sierra Nevada and the Tahoe Basin some bears have become familiar with food made available by humans. This food includes picnic spreads, dinners ready to eat on campground tables, coolers that the bears have learned contain food, and refrigerators inside cabins where bears know humans store food. Some bears have become very skillful at breaking into cabins once they have seen a refrigerator inside. There are even accounts of smaller cubs passing food out of small windows to the mother who was too large to get in!

So, what should a human being do when he or she encounters a bear? First, and most important is to stay calm and realize the bear only wants your food if you have any. The Black Bear has no interest or animosity toward humans—they simply want to eat. Almost always the bear can be scared away by loud noises, banging of pots and pans, and yelling.

There are, of course, ways to annoy a Black Bear sufficiently that he'll take a swat at you and possibly hurt you. First of all, never corner a bear in a cabin, tent, or any enclosure. He may panic, get out past you and take a swipe at you on the way. Second, never get between a mother and her cubs—she may take that as a threat to their safety and react. Third, never feed wild bears. If you are eating lunch out of a paper bag and throw bits of food to the bear he'll note pretty quickly where the food is coming from and may well try to grab the bag, which may injure you. In all cases use common sense. Below are a few suggestions to follow if you meet a Black Bear close up in the wild, at a campground, or in or outside a cabin.

- 1) Stay calm and assess the situation. The bear wants food; you want the bear to go away.
- 2) If the bear has a clear route away, scream, make noise—scare the bear away from the food.
- 3) If the bear is inside, make sure he has a route out, then make much noise to scare him away.
- 4) After the bear leaves check how he got in and make repairs to make it more difficult next time.
- 5) Bears have a very sensitive sense of smell. They can probably smell what you had for dinner yesterday.

So a bear will almost always notice some food smells in a cabin. When absent from the cabin for a short time, close it up. For longer absences remove food from cabins and place containers of "Pine-Sol" or other noxious smelling liquids around. Also, motion activated 'Barking Dog' alarms can be effective.

- 6) Remember, Black Bears were here long before we were—with some consideration and cooperation we can co-exist together peacefully.

**PAUL D'ANNEO:** Paul D'Anne, a much loved and respected pillar of the community and an institution at Fallen Leaf, died last July of cancer. Paul was the eternal optimist, an engineer who could build or repair anything; he was the hub of an extended family that included many children and many dogs. He found and

raised the “Cathedral,” a workboat originally from the San Francisco Bay, from 60 feet of water in northern Fallen Leaf Lake. He then completely restored it—the wood and the motor. It is now on loan at the Tahoe City Boat Museum. We of Fallen Leaf are all enriched for having known Paul and the community is better because of all he did for it. His Memorial Services at Fallen Leaf and Carson City were occasions of much joy and inspiration along with the sadness of saying farewell to such a good friend.

**FALLEN LEAF LAKE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION BOARD:**

The current membership of the Fallen Leaf Lake Homeowners Board is:

Karl Stauffer	President	Dave Bunnett
Ray Egan	Vice President	Tim Pedemonte
Bob Boyd	Secretary	Ruth Rich
Steve Campen		Sheila Jordan
Steve Malley		Alexandra Kingzett
Jim Hill		Patty Taylor
Amy Isenhardt		Wanda Kownacki

(Contact information is on our website at [www.fllha.org](http://www.fllha.org))

Caretaker: Ron Buck  
1036 Fallen Leaf Road  
(530) 541-1222

The principal function of the Fallen Leaf Lake Homeowners Association (FLLHA) is to provide security for the winter season (September 15 through May 31). We provide this with the patrols of our Caretaker, Ron Buck, through the winter to look for any cabin damage caused by snow, fallen trees, bears, wind or anything else. Ron patrols essentially all of Fallen Leaf area, except for the West Side, which has it's own system. These patrols and the cameras that record anything that goes in or out of Fallen Leaf Road have provided tight security for some years now.

Please don't hesitate to contact any or all of us with your comments and suggestions (see [fllha.org](http://fllha.org)) for more information.

Your dues are what makes all this possible so please respond to the accompanying dues notice.

Karl Stauffer  
469 Troy Lane  
Sonoma, CA 95476  
(707) 935-6420

887 Fallen leaf Road  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151  
(530) 541-5323

[kwstauffer@prodigy.net](mailto:kwstauffer@prodigy.net)