

# Fallen Leaf Lake Homeowners Association

## Spring 2017 Newsletter



**Introduction:** The biggest story by far this past winter season was the extraordinary amount of snow dumped on Fallen Leaf and the Northern Sierra Nevada. Most measurements are right around 200% of normal. This amount of snow created great conditions for the rejuvenation of trees and other vegetation and will help the forests fight off bark beetles and other insects, which have thrived lately on trees weakened by draught. In a sense, the five-year draught is over, but long-term trends suggest that more dry years may lie ahead. California's Governor Brown and others have suggested that we continue to conserve water into the foreseeable future.

**Fallen Leaf Snow:** After five years of draught with so little snow that the metal gates on Fallen Leaf Road and Tahoe Mountain Road were seldom closed (last year not at all) we had so much snow that many of the smaller cabins, including the church, almost disappeared under the white blanket. In January and February, there were winds and heavy snowfalls, closely followed by heavy rains. The lake level was so high that many docks were fully a foot under water. The dam at the north end of the lake, which lets water into Taylor Creek, was wide open most of that time. Flooding was avoided because the debris barrier at the dam prevented logs and other floating debris from getting to and clogging the dam outlet. In addition, Les Bates and others made periodic visits and cleaned up debris above the dam. In early June, the dam was still wide open and the lake level was about a foot and a half higher than normal for that time. If we do not have a warm spell or a warm rain in the near future, we hope to keep the lake level at a safe level.

Tom Craven continued to plow Fallen Leaf Road leaving berms alongside the road that reached ten feet or more in places, but allowed needed traffic on the road. His plow shoots the snow in a great arc to the side; we have found many bits of tar and gravel on our stairs and even on the roof.

**Security:** The high water level of the lake lifted one dock off its foundation and allowed it to float onto a neighboring dock. Our Caretaker, Ron Buck, secured the wayward dock so it could cause no more damage. Many docks had minor damage. One boathouse and one outhouse on the East Side were crushed by the accumulated weight of snow. Some decks and railings were damaged throughout the area. In addition, some stovepipes were damaged by snow sliding off roofs.

A big snow slide came down behind Stanford Camp severely damaging cabins, blocking the road and taking down several power poles. It took several weeks to restore power to Stanford Hill, the Lily Lake area, and Stanford Camp. Two power poles had to be helicoptered in and dropped into pre-dug holes in the ground.

In addition, there were instances of wind damage—trees blown over, limbs down, and shingles blown off roofs. Considering the severity of the winter, altogether the damage was minimal.

We had one instance of human damage. Someone tried to enter the Firehouse through the west side door, but was unsuccessful, however the door handle was completely removed.

**Bears:** Several bears have been at Fallen Leaf in the early spring, but were very well behaved and showed no apparent interest in cabins. Bears included a large brown colored bear on Stanford Hill and two mothers, one with blond cubs and one with dark cubs, were exploring the Emigrant Road area on the east side. In late spring, their behavior changed and at least four different cabins were entered. Damage ranged from trivial to moderate. One dark bear that is probably about two years old and foraging on his own entered cabins while people were inside urging him to leave. The Sheriff was notified, came out and pelted him with bean bags, which made him retreat somewhat. This bear shows no fear of humans and has been reported to the Fish and Game Commission.

**Forest Service:** The Forest Service will continue this summer to remove excess fuel and to thin the forest in the area east of Fallen Leaf Road and ranging from south of the Campground to Highway 89. A second area where they will do the same thing is south of Highway 89 from Taylor Creek eastward for about two miles.

**Road Damage:** The exceptional amount of snow that fell on Fallen Leaf caused considerable damage to local roads. As the temperature warmed and snow started to melt, streams formed at the base of the snow that ran precipitously toward the lake. In many areas, the thin asphalt layer was eroded and potholes dug. Some potholes were several feet across and more than a foot deep. In one area where the natural drainage crosses Fallen Leaf Road, the whole road was washed away. Tom Craven, with the cooperation of the El Dorado County Transportation Department, filled that area by dumping 50 cubic yards of gravel into the hole. There is still a mound of gravel at this location. Elsewhere Tom and the Transportation Department dumped more gravel so that the total volume of gravel to repair the road is probably around 100 cubic yards.

The Transportation Department of El Dorado County informed me that they are behind in their road repairs because the asphalt plant at South Lake Tahoe is not functioning, the plant near Minden does not make what is required, so asphalt has been trucked from Sacramento to repair Fallen Leaf Road. As the potholes dry, they will be repaired starting at Highway 89 and working southward. There are no current plans to repave or otherwise improve the entire road.

**New Board Members:** After a considerable time canvassing for additional Fallen Leaf Lake Homeowners Association Board Members, we added four new members at our regular spring meeting. We have been telling potential candidates, with only modest exaggeration, that we wished to reduce the average age of the Board Members to below 80 years.

The new, younger, knowledgeable and dynamic members are—Patty Taylor, Sheila Jordan, Alexandra Kingzett and Wanda Kownacki. All of the new Board Members have particular talents and capabilities that dovetail nicely with those of the existing members. Moreover, the new energy and enthusiasm they bring to their roles assures the long-term viability of the Homeowners Association.

**New Bookkeeper:** We have also recently streamlined our bookkeeping system. The main change was to acquire a new bookkeeper, Cynthia Montgomery, who experienced and very familiar with Fallen Leaf and its issues. She is the Secretary for the Community Services District Board and the Secretary for Fire Chief and General Manager Gary Gerren. Another plus is that she lives in South Lake Tahoe, is readily available, and it is a pleasure to work with her.

You have probably noticed that the address for the annual dues payment has also changed. Those of you who pay your dues automatically please change the address so your dues will go to the new and correct location.

**Emergency Evacuation:** CALSTAR, the company that will evacuate you in case of medical necessity, has been purchased by and is now a part of the AirMedCare Network (AMCN) that operates in all 48 contiguous states, but not in Hawaii and Alaska and not in U.S. Territories or Possessions. The old dues for a year were \$45, or if you were a member of the FLLHA Group \$35. The new fees are \$65, or if you mention that you are a member of the FLLHA Group \$55. The AMCN will send out dues notices to all who have signed up in the past.

For additional information or clarification, please contact:

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**Fallen Leaf Lake Homeowners Association Board:** The current members of the Fallen Leaf Lake Homeowners Association Board are:

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

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

Our Caretaker is Ron Buck, 1036 Fallen Leaf Road, Tel: (530) 541-1222, who is on duty from September 15 through May 31, patrolling all properties at Fallen Leaf except the West Side, but including the East Side, Stanford Hill, Lily Lake and Glen Alpine Springs.

If Ron sees any damage to cabins or docks by snow, winds, fallen trees, bears or human vandalism or anything else, he makes temporary repairs and contacts the owner by text and photos. The owner is responsible for arranging for permanent repairs if such are needed.

We also have cameras that record all movement in and out of Fallen Leaf. Ron has excellent relations with the Sheriff and contacts him whenever necessary.

Please do not hesitate to contact any or all of us with your comments and suggestions (see [www.fllha.org](http://www.fllha.org) for contact information). Lastly, the payment of your dues is what makes it possible to provide you with security during the winter season.

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