

Ice Lakes News - March '24



Almost Normal

According to Andrew Schwartz at the Central Sierra Snowlab in Soda Springs that what started out as a disappointing winter for skiers and water managers has greatly improved. Sugar Bowl says, as of February 23, that they received eight feet of snow in three weeks. The Central Sierra Snowlab says that recent fall has brought our snowfall totals to 92%* of average and there is more snowfall to come the last week of February. There is still another five weeks left in the snow season.

The snowlab is trying ZOOM meeting to disseminate good information like above. Another one will be held in the beginning of March.

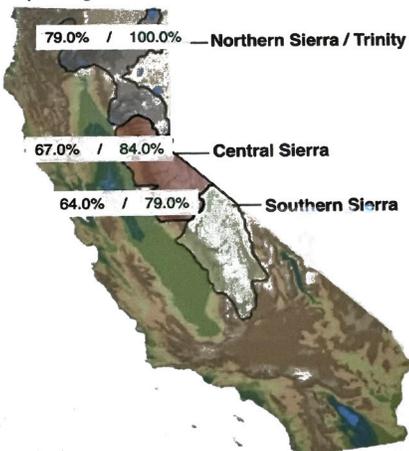
The long range outlook, March to May, calls for higher than normal precipitation (we can hope that will not include the "miracle March" of a few years ago) and higher than normal temperatures.

See the next page to receive announcements from the Snow Lab

Provided by the California Cooperative Snow Surveys

Data For: 21-Feb-2024

% Apr 1 Avg. / % Normal for this Date



*We average 30 feet of snow in a normal season.

President's Message

Hello everyone,

In honor of our dear friend and community member, Sharon Ruffner, we are publishing this newsletter early to ensure everyone has the information and opportunity to attend Sharon's Celebration of Life on March 9th at 11AM. Please see page 3 for more detailed information.

For those of you that had the wonderful experience of knowing Sharon you know how lucky you are. For those of you that did not have the chance to meet Sharon, I hope this newsletter will provide a glimpse of the fantastic person she was and all that she stood for.

Sharon was the most positive, energetic, fun, loving and giving person I have ever met. She will be GREATLY missed but we have the opportunity to honor and make her proud by continuing to stand for the things she held near and dear to her heart. The thing that stands out to me is her dedication to volunteerism. Sharon volunteered for a variety of organizations; Carmichael Parks Foundation, Students Helping Honduras, Kiwanis of Carmichael, and Sierra Vista Community Church. She was selected as the Volunteer of the Year for Carmichael Chamber of Commerce, Daughter of the American Revolution and Sacramento County Board of Supervisors as well. But most important to us, she was a dedicated SLPOA Volunteer who was willing to jump in anywhere needed. I don't think there is a SLPOA event that Sharon and her husband Bob were not involved in. Serene Lakes Days, in particular, was their marquee event and they executed it each year perfectly. We are all so

Go on to page 10

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 SLPOA Meeting:

Saturday March 16 4-6 P.M.
in person and includes budget
Meetings will be once per quarter
potluck follows at the Peasons' 79118 Acorn

More Meetings: 5/26 (10-12 P.M. in person), & 9/1 (annual meeting)

Annual Mtg/BBQ: 9:30 A.M. & 2 P.M. 9/1, 2024
SLPOA Board Org. Mtg. Sept. 2, 2024 9 A.M.

Water Board Meetings: Second Thursday of the month
6:30 district offices 7300 Short Rd. Serene Lakes

Lot 1 Restroom Closure and Beach Closing Up 10/14 10 AM

Sandfling: May 25- 10 AM depending on weather
First Hot Dogs of the season at the sand fling

Snowman Contest December 31, 2023
July 4 Festivities/Chili Cook-off/Parade June 30, 2024
float decorating for July 4 parade: Jun 3 29 5 P.M.
Serene Lakes Days 2024: July 27-28
Trail Runs: 7/30, 9/31, 7/28 2024
Cabin Tour August 31, 2024 Saturday 2 P.M.

Annual BBQ Sept. 1, 2024

Newsletter deadlines: 1/1, 3/1, 6/ 5, 8/7

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Sign up for Central Sierra Snowlab updates:

go to <http://tinyurl.com/mse9u34n> and input their information to be added to the email list

or

reach out to Dr. Schwartz directly.
aschwartz@berkeley.edu

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President

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Sharon Ruffner - Super

Feeling sad.
Feeling grateful that she touched my life.
Sharon has found peace...

Jonathan Sorger

An amazing human...inspiring..grateful for so many wonderful times and dear friendship. Rest In Peace.

Kitty Harvey

A great, caring, loving,
and hard working
person. RIP Sharon!
Ed Bubnis

We will miss the joy
that she spread by being
in our midst.
Dennis Fisco

So lucky to have called
her friend...she will be
missed in SO many
ways...rest now Sharon,
your work is finished
Deborah Simmons

Sharon was a beautiful
and spirited soul.
Lorrie Poch

She touched all our
families in such a
special way.
Kristen T. Lincoln

Sharon empowered all
of us with her energy...I
will miss that forever
sparkle in her eyes.
Jane Bielke-Loll

A wonderful, giving human being. She will be greatly missed.
Robert Borchin

Sharon was such amazing person to so many. She will be deeply missed.
Tisha Rugg

This is so sad. We will miss her vivacious soul.
Kathy Gerould

We are so sad to hear this news. Sharon's smile would like up a room. We will miss her immensely. Sending Bob and hugs to Bob and family
Jody Mielcasz

We lost a wonderful friend today. Sharon Ruffner was one of the nicest people we have ever known and the world has lost one of its brightest light today. We will miss her dearly. RIP Sharon!
GF Lamson

I will miss you my friend. The 15 year we ran Serene Lake Days were some of the best time of my life. We laughed, cried and celebrated each and everyone! Love you forever.
Julie Sousa Africa

OMG such a beautiful, wonderful person! Such a sing star during ther time here on earth. You will be missed indeed!
Maria Montano



Sharon and Bob Ruffner at Serene Lakes September 2, 2022 celebrating twenty years at the helm of Serene Lakes Days.

The heart of Serene Lakes. I've known this wonderful woman pretty much my entire life and always looked forward to running into her whenever I was able to sneak away to the cabin. Your beautiful, kind spirit will be missed so much, Sharon.
Charlee Haller

Celebration of life for Sharon Ruffner March 9, 2024
John Smith Hall, La Sierra Community Center,
5325 Engle Road Carmichael, California 95608
11:00 AM Celebration, Light lunch and reception following

Serene Seasons -

Carole Raisback



"Dug myself outa this bank!"

Winter is 'Going to the Dogs!'....

There I was, snug in my "igloo" (INSIDE the cabin) reading by the fire whilst the storm raged: snow pelting, wind howling, snow slides thundering down from the roof, when four paws tapped my knee and two pair of brown eyes pleaded their plight. If rear canine legs could cross in agony, theirs would have twisted beyond tight.

Gird up the loins, Carole. Take the dogs out, now.

Whoever has dogs up here knows this scenario well. We answer the call. Once outside, the duty done, dogs let loose, roll in the drifts, bound over the banks, and if the opportunity presents, race across the ice solid lake. Now this is Serene Lakes Heaven, for them.

Here are a few resident pups loving this Serene Season:



"Bet you've never seen a dog with 6 legs before!"



"Mighty Me bounding(?) over snowbanks"



"Duty done. Now let's RUN!"

"Ollie here. I think I got this haircut too soon!"

Search & Rescue Visit

Usually the Washoe and Placer Search and rescue teams, working together, go to other ice bound lakes to do their regular ice rescue training but this year the ice was not thick enough at Boca or Stampede. So Search and Rescue came to Serene Lakes, also known as Ice Lakes.

In dry suits, in the water, the pairs of divers, tethered with communication and safety tethers practice using their equipment, getting the feel of wearing the equipment, practicing teamwork, and dealing with the cold. They spent one morning in Serene Lakes towards the end of January.

This happens infrequently. The last time your Ice Lakes News reporters came across the search and rescue teams was in January, 2020. You can go to your carefully bound issues of the Ice Lakes News or the newsletters archives on the slpoa.com website. There you will find a wonderful collection of pictures and good story including pictures of what Serene Lakes looks like underwater.

This year our entire reporting department just stumbled across the search and rescue team from Placer County. We drew from participants a story much like the one four years ago. So you may want to go back to the January '20 newsletter issue or to the Placer or Washoe County search and rescue websites. It turns out Washoe County was in our lakes in October, 2023.



To see the Washoe County search and rescue people at Serene Lakes go to: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=311604545199805> There you will find a nice video of the practice dives at Serene Lakes last October including underwater pictures. It might be easier to do a Google search for “Ice Dive Training at Serene Lakes just as the storm started to blow in!” which will get you to the video but also still pictures and more about the Washoe County Search and Res-cue Hasty Team.



The most important piece of information was gathered as the team packed up. Underwater close to the surface the water temperature was thirty-nine degrees. Some feet down it was a balmy forty degrees. That shows how much warmer the winter has been so far. Normally we can get ice almost to the lake bottom imperiling our water intake system. This year it's only the surface that's frozen.

In an emergency, someone falling through the ice, the fire department arrives first and probably effects any rescue. Placer County Search and Rescue typically arrives much later and works on “recovery.” They get called out as many as five times in a season.

SLPOA newsletter January, 2020.



This article first appeared in the SLPOA newsletter in Spring, '06 and requested.

it's rerun in this issue was

Dark Skies – Take Back the Night

By Anne Chadwick, former SLPOA Vice President

Have you ever looked up at the Serene Lakes night sky and said, “Wow, look at all those stars”? In truth, we don’t have more stars over our wonderful community; they’re just more visible here. Because we don’t have the haze or light pollution common to cities and lowlands, we get to see the universe as few others do.

We can all help preserve dark skies, an essential part of the natural beauty that Serene Lakes offers. With good lighting, we all win. We get to appreciate the stars, we see better (and are safer and more secure), we have a more pleasant and comfortable nighttime environment, and we save a great deal of energy and money doing so.

Poor nighttime lighting has several adverse impacts, including “urban sky glow,” glare, light trespass, energy waste, and a trashy looking environment.

So what can be done to ensure dark skies in our neighborhood?

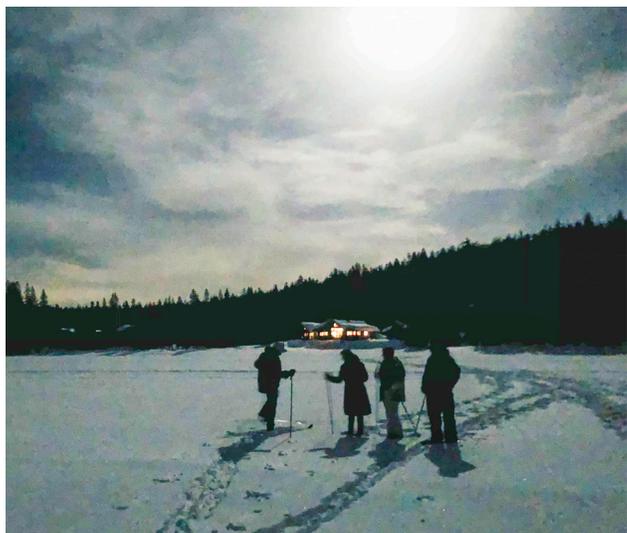
1. Use good lighting. Make sure that the source of any exterior lighting fixture is not visible from the neighboring property.
2. Shine the light down, where it is needed.
3. Use time controls and motion sensors to ensure that light is there when needed, and not there when it is not.
4. Design and install lighting to ensure that glare is minimized.
5. Use the right amount of light for the task, not overkill. When not blinded by glare, the eye is a marvelous instrument and can see very well at what seems to be low lighting.
6. Use energy-efficient light sources. Low wattage (18, 35, or 55 watt) low-pressure sodium lights in a shielded fixture should be adequate.

Be a good neighbor. Let the stars shine through!

For more information, check out www.darksky.org.

Full Moon Lake Outing

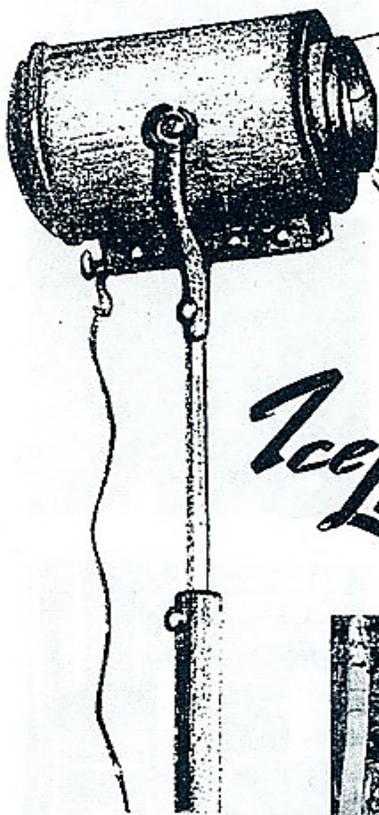
During the recent full moon about twenty people accompanied Dick Simpson and Anne Reisenauer on an enjoyable outing on the lakes. If this appeals to you stay tuned to the SLPOA email blasts for the next outing sometime in March.



Serene Lakes History

Here we have a brochure for Ice Lakes Chalet which was the building that stood until 1997 at the corner of Soda Springs Rd. and Serene Rd. It's got some interesting pictures of Serene Lakes in the old days. The seven cabins mentioned below were all across from where the lodge was on Soda Springs Rd. where there are currently four modern houses just before you get to the dirt road. The text mentions two lakes but in 1940 there were three lakes since the dam had not yet been built. The date of the brochure appears to be 1951.

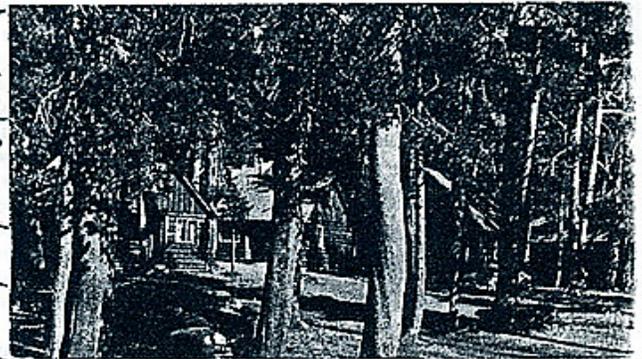
Donner Summit Historical Society



Spotlight
is
on

Ice Lakes
CHALET

By "CHUCK" REYNOLDS



Years ago, during our grandparents rime, a great stage road of the Central Pacific Railway where the famous resort toward Soda Springs is now located, wound it's way nine miles south over a dangerous road to the real Soda Springs so that the passengers could take of the reputable water that came from the ground there.

The narrow wagon road took the coach by two beautiful lakes so passengrs would marvel at the magnificent view that surrounded the two gems, never once dreaming that the same scenic view could be surroundings of an easily accessible resort.

In later years the Central Pacific Railway Company used these same lakes for their refrigeration cars, giving the name "Ice Lakes." While cutting this ice, no one would think that it might be a good idea to use that same ice for the popular sport, Ice Skating.

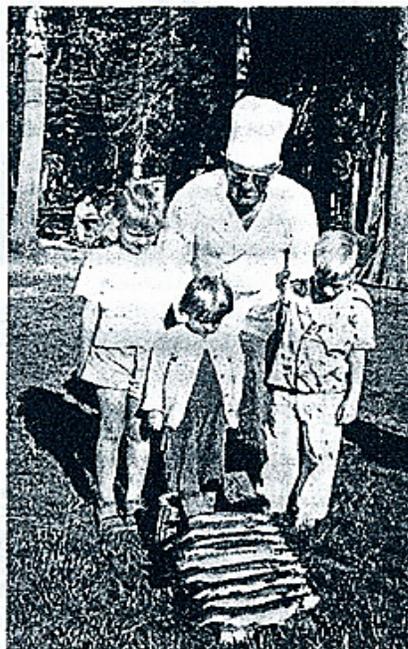
Still years later, when our parents transportation facilities would be improved, they would venture out to Ice Lakes for camping. At that time there was a multitude of catfish and sportsmen and catfish would always be all that they would ever catch from the lakes. Never did they imagine that there would be a fish hatchery where one could buy baby trout to use so those lakes could be turned of the best "Fishing Holes" in the country.

To incorporate these dreams would take a master mind of sight. The first to have this foresight was Mr. Fred Thorinson San Francisco builder and a man who had heard of the legendary hidden away Ice Lakes. One day Dr. Gordon Mackay, a man of Auburn, California, and part owner of the Ice Lakes properties had a visitor. It was Mr. Thorinson. Shortly after the meeting with Thorinson the transaction was enacted that was the birth of Ice Lakes Chalets, Inc., and Fred Thorinson began the development of the beauty spot.

In 1940, seven chalets (cabins) were build. The following year came the construction of the main lodge building. Mr. Ralph R. of the Soda Springs Service Station, was placed as the resident caretaker and manager. Ice Lakes Chalet was operated under that management for several years.

Colonel William Rutherford, one of the owners in Donner Summit Lodge and Hotel, a resort but a few miles away from these properties, spent many hours on the Ice Lakes ground. With a background of hotel work and his previous trips to Sweden,

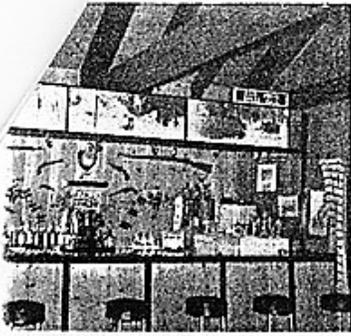
Top right: Shadowed by tall pines, Ice Lakes Chalet offers all the ingredients for a wonderfully refreshing vacation for you and your family. The delightful Chalets have the conveniences and comforts you seek combined with the exhilarating atmosphere of the high Sierra.



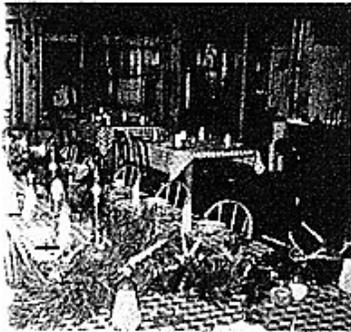
Right: Bill Rutherford, Ice Lakes Chalet's genial host, displays, to a group of his small guests, trout taken from the privately owned and stocked Lakes.

(Continued on next page)

Donner Summit Historical Society



The unique cocktail lounge is rustic in design, carrying out the rustic theme which predominates throughout the entire resort.



The spacious main dining room, which overlooks the veranda and lakes, offers delicious food, artfully served.



Every Chalet has a fire-place to add to your enjoyment and you will find each room comfortable, modern and clean.

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ating is more than
type setting and
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Austria and other famous resort areas of Europe, he also had visions of what could be accomplished in this unique hideaway. On October 15, 1948, Bill took over its management and since that time has transformed the place with his ideas of the European style of hospitality.

Color and atmosphere lend toward what one might find in a remote Swiss Chalet near Interlochen, Switzerland. With this idea in mind, it is apropos that Bill nicknamed Ice Lakes "The Interlochen of the Sierras."

Few people know the real names of these two jewels in the Sierras. They, like so many of the lakes in this area, have names taken from the feminine gender. Their real names are Serena and Dulzura. Dulzura is the one closest to the lodge. Serena, although not as deep as Dulzura, is the larger of the two.

The lakes are now well stocked with the finest of trout. During the last fishing season, 1950, the trout averaged 15 inches in length. As many years ago, there are still many catfish. Numerous guests of Ice Lakes Chalet prefer the catfish to the trout. No matter what your choice might be, the cool mountain water makes the fish the tastiest ever. There are boats at the dock to take the sportsman out to where the "Big Whoppers" hide.

In addition to Ice Lakes Chalets being the "Fisherman's Paradise," it is the family stamping ground. The water is seldom too cold for swimming, the average temperature being 70 degrees. It's gradually sloping beach makes it the worryless place for those that need the vacation most, the parents, whose children can play in the water unattended and yet be as safe as when in their own back yard. Way out, for the more experienced adult swimmer, there is plenty of depth, the deepest spot being 74 feet deep if you can get to it. (Tip to the fishermen: That's where the big one is.)

There are many other things to do at Ice Lakes Chalet beside fishing and swimming. There are trails all through the 3,000 acres of Ice Lakes land plus the rest of the Donner Summit area for hiking and horseback riding. You haven't seen anything until you have seen the backwoods of the Donner Summit country. You Shutterbugs should certainly not forget to bring your cameras.

Accommodations are very comfortable at Ice Lakes Chalet. Each chalet, during the summer season, has complete housekeeping facilities. Groceries can be picked up at the Soda Springs Grocery Store. For those that enjoy eating out, guests can get a most delectable meal in the main lodge building. Every Sunday Ice Lakes Chalet features an outdoor barbecue that is famous throughout the state.

In addition to the dining room in the main lodge, one can find Ice Lakes Chalets' famous little bar. It is the most unique cocktail bar in the area. When you get there ask to hear the bells.

Of course, Ice Lakes Chalet isn't only a summer resort. In the winter season there is skiing and skating. The ski hill is just small enough and yet steep enough to make it the ideal hill for the entire family. The treat of a lifetime is the ride in the snowmobile and the old antique four passenger sleigh. The kids will love it. So will you.

No, all of this was not the dream of those passengers of the old stage coach that used to marvel at the scenic beauty that surrounded Serena and Dulzura. It's not a dream at all. It's right at Ice Lakes Chalet now. The nice thing about it is that you, Mr. and Mrs. Public, have a standing invitation from Bill Rutherford to bring the whole family to Ice Lakes Chalet and enjoy this scenic beauty, as our grandparents did.

the second page is printed "as is" from a scanned picture

"Interlaken of the Sierras"

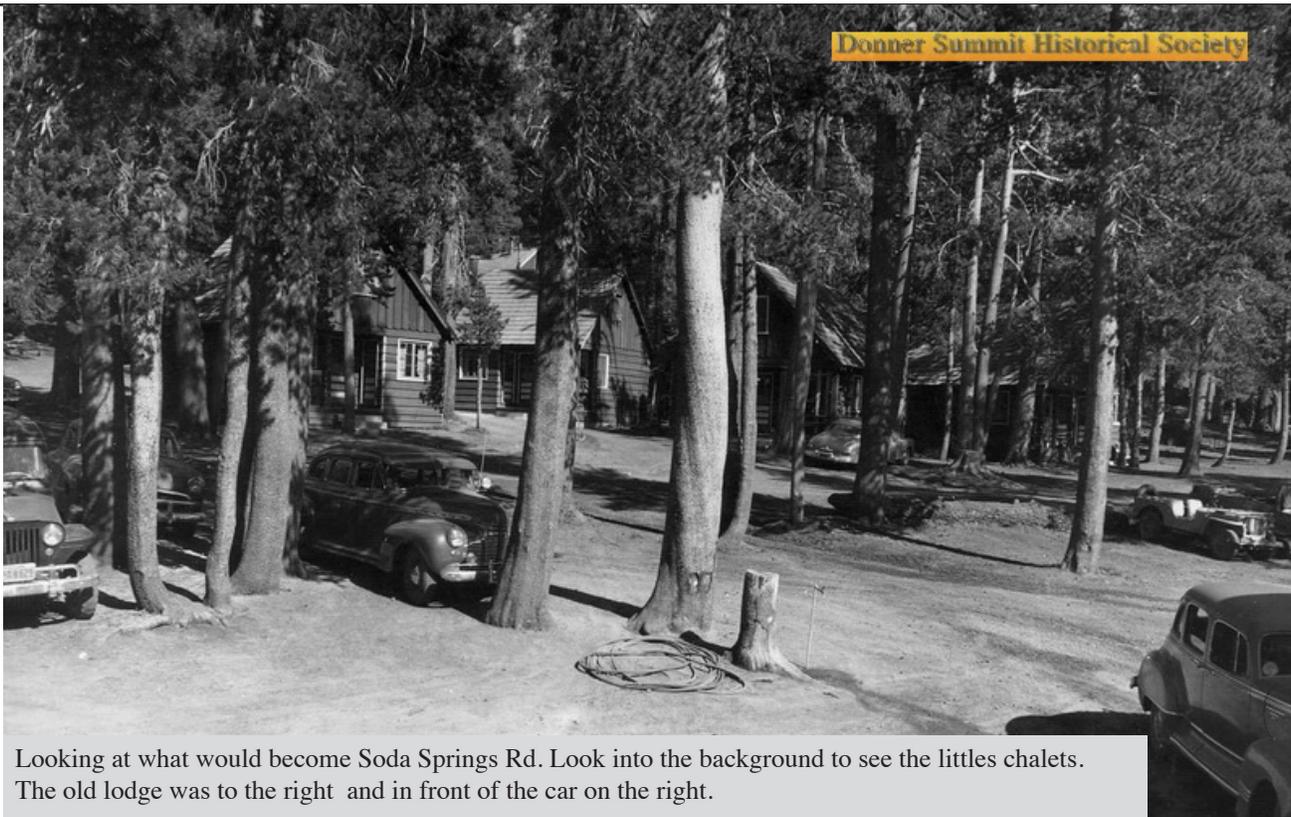
The first stocking of trout was in 1867 in Serene Lakes. Stocking with catfish came about twenty years later. The deepest part of the lakes is not 74' but rather 35 feet or so in Lake Dulzura and 20 or so feet in Serena - according to bathymetry done by the people who wanted to develop Serene Lakes in 2006. The Mr. "Ralph R" on the first page is Ralph Rowton for whom Rowton Pk. is named. He had a gas station at the corner of Soda Springs Rd. and Donner Pass Rd. across the street from the condominiums. The building, remodeled many times, still stands.



Ice Lakes about 1940



The Old Ice Lakes Lodge beach area. There was no Lot 1 in those days. This is looking east where the chalets or little cabins used to be.



Looking at what would become Soda Springs Rd. Look into the background to see the little chalets. The old lodge was to the right and in front of the car on the right.

President's Message from Page 1

grateful for their dedication, organization, planning, and execution of our biggest event of the year. They set the bar high! And I couldn't be more thankful to Wendy Lair and Veronica Derrick for taking the reins and continuing to make Serene Lakes Days the wonderful event it continues to be.

So, in the spirit of Sharon, I would like to share what it takes to make this little community tick, hum and churn throughout the year...it's volunteers!!! In a recent Facebook poll, I asked how many volunteers it takes to run our events. The options were:

- 50-75
- 75-100
- 125-140
- 300+

The correct answer did not get a single vote...the correct answer is that it takes OVER 350 volunteers to pull off all our events. Without volunteers there would be no events.

While we are in the slow time of the year, we still have many volunteers helping throughout the community. So far this winter we have had the Snow Creation Contest, the Membership Committee held a Moonlight Ski/Snowshoe Tour and SLPOA hosted its first New Year's Eve Party. Additionally, the community Dog Stations continue to be managed by volunteers year round – rain, snow and shine! Even these small events and community benefits required over 30 volunteers to bring to fruition.

Throughout the year SLPOA hosts 23 events and runs 20 committees. All require people with the passion and dedication to see that they are executed seamlessly. If you are interested in volunteering and supporting our wonderful community, please reach out president@slpoa.com to discuss further.

One of our largest and most popular volunteer organizations is in need of a "Manager" or management team this year. The beloved Snack Shack!!! I can tell you from firsthand experience this is the most fun volunteer job ever. But I will warn you that you may gain a few pounds if you do not watch out. You meet so many wonderful people, the kids are the BEST!!! Dogs seems to like it too.

The Snack Shack is open from July 4th weekend to Labor Day (approx. 10 weekends on Saturdays and Sundays only – 11AM to 4PM). Notably, as the Manager of Snack Shack operations and logistics you would be supported by a strong team of established

volunteers who stand ready to work the shifts. Logistics include:

- Purchasing/restocking
- Opening and Closing procedures
- Training
- Oversight
- Coordinate with other major events volunteers (SLD, BBQ, 4th of July, etc.)
- Volunteer Shift Mgmt
- Cash Management
- Sales

While menu items are not set in stone, traditionally we've offered hot dogs, chips, popcorn, nachos, candy, ice cream, frozen juice bars, root beer floats, pretzels, sodas, water, juices and adult beverages (event weekends with permit). Ultimately, you can make it anything you want it to be!

We have a GREAT crew willing to train and bring you up to speed. You will not be left to fend for yourself or figure it out on your own. We even have an operations manual to guide your work and management. If you are interested, please email me at



president@slpoa.com I would be happy to share more about the role. If this "position" is not filled the Snack Shack will most likely only be open during the main summer events (4th of July BBQ, Serene Lakes Days and Labor Day weekend). That would leave seven weekends during the summer without provisions and service from the Snack Shack.

I hope all our SLPOA members can appreciate the effort that goes into our events and recognize the critical need for a full bench of volunteers. Kids are welcome and encouraged to help as well. I'd even be willing to sign off on school/community volunteer hours (with proof of service).

In closing, I hope you will join me in honoring Sharon and her legacy of volunteerism. Let's make her proud by continuing to serve our community and continue to make Serene Lakes the place where we thrive.

Your help is GREATLY appreciated,

Laurel Tuggey
SLPOA President

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Jocelyn Michels Stufflebean

(Both properties sold for the highest prices per square foot to date, in Serene Lakes. 2021)



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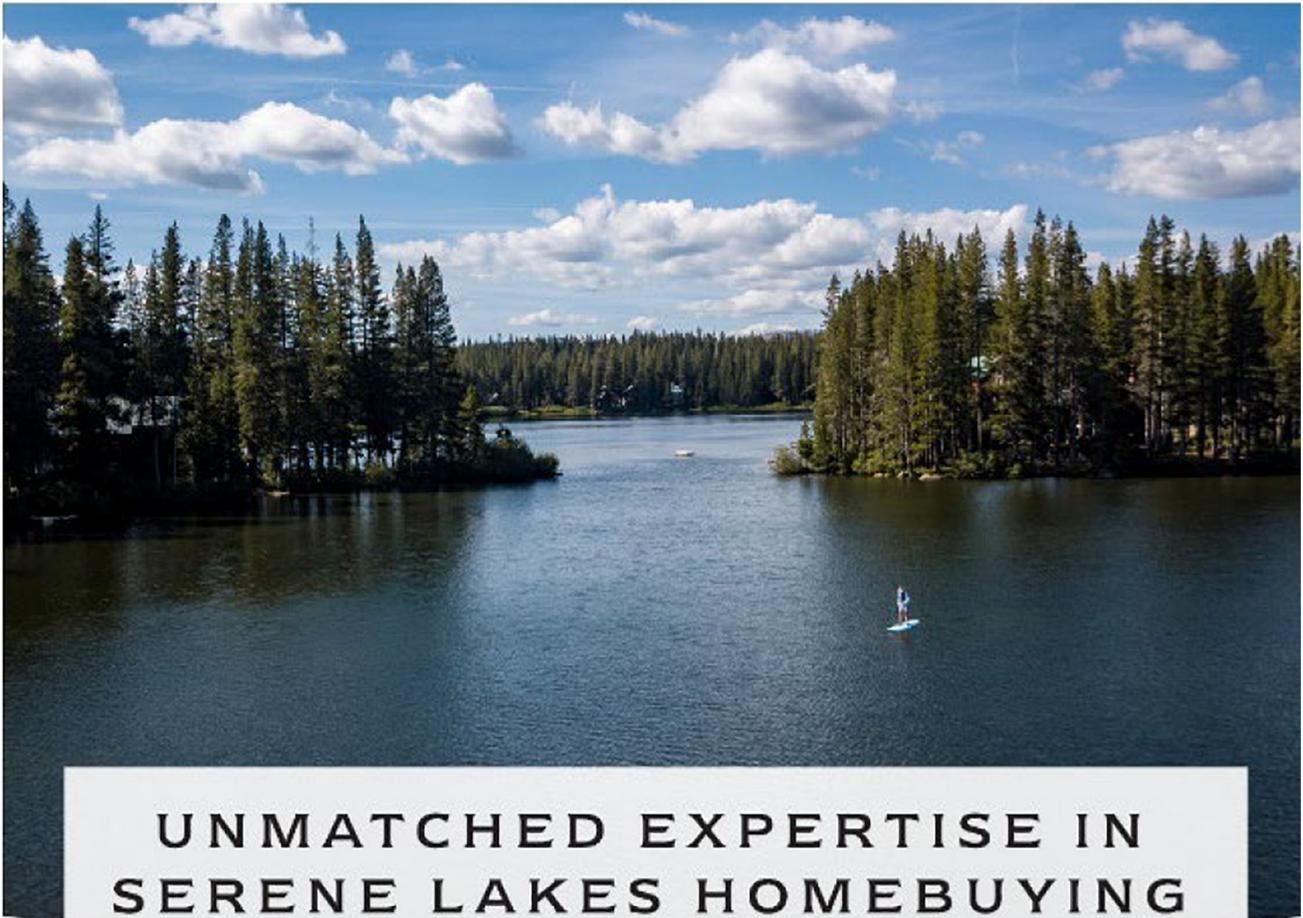
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SERENE LAKES YOUNG SCIENTIST SUMMER CAMP

This hands-on science camp is designed for children of Serene Lakes families to explore the area's unique ecology.

Day campers will explore the natural spaces around Serene Lakes, ask scientific questions, and design and conduct experiments to answer their own research questions.



2024 CAMP DATES

- Week 1:** July 15 - 18 Exploring Water
- Week 2:** July 22 - 25 Investigating Plants and Wildflowers
- Week 3:** July 29 - Aug 1 Research Local Animals and Insects



REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1ST

Sessions run from 9 am to 3 pm
Monday through Thursday

General registration: Ages 5-12
Counselor-in-training program: Ages 13-15

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