



THE OSPREY

ECHO LAKES NEWS AND REVIEW

An Echo Lakes Environment Fund Publication

First Edition

Discovering the Echo Lake Community

By **Chris Paparian**

When I try to explain Echo Lake and its community to an outsider, it ends up sounding like an average summer lake—it's not. There's a magic to Echo that I can't quite put my finger on, but I know it exists.

Some of us were lucky enough to enjoy that Echo magic as children. When I was growing up, I only spent one week each year at Echo. I would come up with my family, spend our week on the upper lake, and head home. They were great trips, and the center of my summer, but different from Lakers who were more involved in the community; the only cabins and people that I knew were those adjacent to my cabin. I don't think I could have named

most of the cabins on the upper lake, let alone any on the lower.

This all changed, however, when I began working at the chalet in 2011, I started to meet and appreciate the greater Echo community—and over the years, I became a part of it.

In my first year working at the Chalet, I began to remember a few Lakers who frequented the store. As time passed, the friendly "Hellos" increased in number, and the daily conversations with Lakers brought me further into the community; by the end of my first summer working under Tom and Kat, I felt a part of the Echo community. After five years, I know most of you and, hopefully, most of you know me. I'm not a nameless Sproul anymore.

There are countless experiences I've had in my time working at the chalet. I met Jean Hittell at 90 years old and helped her up to her stately stone cabin. When Robin Kling's cabin tragically burned down, Tyler Fashinell roused me out of bed at five in

the morning to help man the fireboat. I carried a fridge up to one of the birdcage cabins perched on the mountainside, and propane up Bob and Maggie Grosse's precipitous rocky slope.

Many of you have been kind enough to open up your cabins to me, and for that I am eternally grateful. I keep coming back for more summers because I love Echo Lake, and have made lifetime friends at the chalet, and in the community.

For Echo kids who are having a similar lake experience—being uninvolved in the greater community—I encourage you to work or volunteer at the Chalet. Getting involved with the Echo community adds a whole extra layer to the Echo experience, and the best way to do that is to work at the chalet. If you are willing to put in the effort, you will get to know

Marrying into an Echo Cabin

By **Dan Baum**



First rule of marrying into an Echo Cabin: make sure you're at least officially betrothed, if not actually married, before visiting Echo for the first time.

Otherwise, people will always wonder: did he marry her for the cabin? And if they're not actually wondering, you will wonder if they're wondering, and your nagging doubts will spoil your enjoyment of The Ballad of Sam Magee.

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countless interesting and colorful people around the lake.

On top of that, the Fashinells are an incredible family, and working under them has been a gift.

As I have learned in the past five years, and as countless Lakers have learned before me, working at the Chalet not only teaches you a strong work ethic and pragmatic skills, but gives you a chance to meet the whole lake. You will meet people who knew your grandparents or old friends of your mother, while making new friends that will be returning to Echo Lake, just as you will be, for the rest of your lives.



Chris Paparian sitting with the remaining crew at the end of the 2017 season.



The ELEM Report

Echo Lakes Environment Fund

A Letter from the New ELEM President

By **Junet Bedayn**
President of the ELEM



In the 1960s, a group of determined young lakers organized themselves as the Suckers for Survival and fought for the protection of Echo Lakes's native suckers.

Almost sixty years later, after a successful history of environmental stewardship, those same 1960s youngsters have joined with the upstarts of the 21st century to tackle environmental sustainability in the Echo Lakes basin.

Known as the Echo Lakes Environment Fund (ELEM), this organization has been the eyes, ears, and hands of the Echo Lakes environment for years—looking for potential environmental threats around the lake, staying up to date with the Forest Service and California Fish and Wildlife municipalities, and taking action

when needed to conserve and protect this magnificent wilderness.

As the new president of the Board of Directors, I, along with the rest of the board, am grateful for the service of Doug Best, Butch Conlan, John Durain, Barney Howard, Lisa Murphy, Eleanor Rasmussen, Alan Reinke, and Kathy Wallenberg who have recently retired, as well as the dedication of Fran Leonard, who spent years producing the ELEM Report, and providing invaluable legal advice to the ELEM. The current Board stands ten directors strong, including: Jesse Bedayn (The Osprey Editor), Junet Bedayn (President), Rich Best, Cracker Eshleman, Elizabeth Leonard, Isaac Mirzadegan (Treasurer), Elena O'Shea, Larkin O'Shea (Secretary), Maggie Phillips, and Jo Robinson.

The new team has already embarked on projects to help educate the Echo Lakes community, ensuring that, as guests on

the lake, our environmental impact is minimal.

This new ELEM publication, The Osprey, will serve as a medium not only to foster a supportive and engaged community, but to encourage sustainable living in the Echo Lakes region.

In the coming months, look for articles on living with bears, the South Lake Tahoe Refuse Co., fire safety and prevention, and more. For our first, hands-on community project, we will be working with the Echo Lakes Association to host a clean-a-thon at the Boy Scout Camp. The exact date of this event will be announced in the next publication, and we encourage everyone who is available to join us.

Lastly, on July 14th at 10am the ELEM will be hosting a presentation from the Lake Valley Fire Department about fire safety in the wilderness. All are welcome to attend. Energy is high right now among Board Directors, and we are thrilled to get to work this summer. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions and suggestions.

Upcoming Projects:

1. Fire Prevention Education Workshop:

We are hosting a fire prevention workshop 14 July 2018, at 10AM in the Chalet Meadow, in partnership with the Lake Valley Fire Department, in order to educate Lakers on fire.

2. Sustainable Soaps:

Conventional soap products contain chemicals that can contaminate the lakes and imperile the fish. The ELEM is working to educate and promote the use of sustainable, natural, soap products that will have no negative impact on the surrounding environment. (*See the pull-out: Sustainable Soap*).

2. Old Boy Scout Campsite Cleanup:

The ELEM will be working with the ELA to clear the old dump sites at the Boy Scout Camp with a community clean-a-thon this coming summer.



Follow us on Facebook:

@EchoLakesEnvironmentFund and keep up to date with ELEM projects and community events. Look for our upcoming website in the next edition!

Questions or Donations:

If you are interested in making a donation to the ELEM, or have a question or suggestion, please email us at elenvironmentfund@gmail.com.

Volunteering and Email

List: If you wish to volunteer with us this summer, or would like to receive regular ELEM updates, please join our email list at <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/elefvolunteers>

Echoes from the Past

Revisiting Old Echo Lake Newsletters

A Note From the Editor

Our beautiful lake is made ever more special by the community of families that make up its history and spirit. To appreciate the past 85 years of Echo Lake, I have created this section, Echoes from the Past. In each new edition of The Osprey you may find an article—re-published from the old Echo newsletters, the rubber boa reader and Little Echoes—perhaps written by your own hand, or your parent's, or grandmother's. This section is a way to connect us to Echo's past, to our family histories, and our enduring community.

The Story Behind Buying the Chalet

Published in Volume 1, No. 1 of the Little Echoes in May, 1988

By Tom Fashinell

Owner of the Chalet



In the early 1951's my family began camping along the South Fork of the American River. We became "regulars" at

the, now defunct, Firs Campground, and in 1954 purchased the cabin on Lot #47 near the Alpine Club. Ralph King and family befriended me, and I went on to spend that summer fishing many of the Desolation Valley Lakes along with Echo, Audrain, and the American River.

I also started to hang around the Chalet, where the crew seemed to have the best jobs in the world! In those days, boat boys like Doug Freeman and Bruce Crater would exit the harbor with throttles wide open and fisher-men's' lines dangling. It all looked very exciting to me—and trout fishing began to take a back seat. Having absolutely no boating experience, I began to "help out" around the store. The following year I continued to be a nuisance and in 1956 I began the first of six years in Jorgy's employ. Bob Kent was my first

manager, Sid Ames the motor mechanic; and the crew was bolstered by the likes of Trighe Berge, Bat, and Slim.

Subsequent management included Bob Elmore, Pete Larmer, Bert Robinson, and Tom Phair. Butch Conlan and I competed for smallest, quickest store boy (he won). In 1961, I too became management and had a chance to see the Chalet operation from the inside. For my last years at Berkeley I worked a night shift on Chevron Richmond long wharf and saw Echo only on brief vacations. In 1966, while I was at school, and against my expressed wishes, our cabin was sold. I was crushed, but by then Echo, it's people and the Chalet were firmly entrenched in my life and dreams.

In 1972 I almost bought the Chalet from Jorgy via Roy Johnson. I considered taking up practice in Placerville or South Lake Tahoe and bringing in Brian Hays as a manager/partner. Somehow things didn't quite work out that way, I stayed on at U.C. Davis and Brian moved to Coloma (hence he occasionally ships us his fine pottery.) Over the next several years, Jacque and Byrne Pike kindly shared their cabin with me, and I hoped another cabin might come onto

the open market. Then along came that day in 1984 when Stacey Howard and Carole Elmore told me that the Chalet might be for sale. My thoughts turned back to the 1972 discussion with Jorgy, Brian, Roy Johnson, the Forest Service, and many Lakers and advisors. With many reservations, I proceeded to trash my long-planned Mendocino vacation with Kathleen and came back to Echo for "a look."

The Chalet property was in pretty bad shape after three years of Medshallah corporation's ownership, and negotiations were difficult, at best. With the full support of my bride-to-be (I hadn't sprung the question yet) I decided to trade in a good part of my profitable and comfortable life style for an old love affair.

Since taking over in August 1984, we have invested a great deal of our time, money, and love at Echo, and have made a our own "crew to be."

Kat and I were married in the Chalet on June 6, 1985 and we plan to be around for many years to come. Hopefully, in the course of things, we will continue to learn from our experiences and improve the Chalet; as well as learn to take the time to enjoy Echo Lake and our many friends.

Spring Skiing: A Winter Update

By **Isaac Mirzadegan**
Treasurer of the ELEF



Those who have had the privilege of skiing into Echo during

the winter months know that each trip brings its own perils and pleasures.

I was two years old during my first winter trip to Echo. As my mom, Sarah Knox, recalls: the adults, along with Carl Einarsson's husky, hauled me up the fro-

zen lake. Though my toes nearly froze on the way in, once we were settled I had a wonderful time frolicking on the snowy Upper Echo islands.

As a ten-year-old, I skied in with my uncle's family during a white-out blizzard. Luckily, the



following day the skies were blue, though the unforgiving glare from the snow gave me a sunburn after a spirited snowball fight on the roof.

Most recently, I skied into the cabin in the last weekend of March. The snow was deep, the lakes



largely frozen, but the weather gorgeous and sunny. It felt special to be able to share the spring magic of Echo with my partner, Jared. In turn, he executed what I believe was the first Passover Seder to take place in our cabin. We skied out the next day just in time for Easter dinner.

Sustainable Soap Recipes and Products

By **Maggie Phillips** and **Jo Robinson**

The goal of bathing and cleaning is to maintain our hygiene and keep our cabins sanitary. But what if the products we use in our cabins are harming the lake?

Many cleaning and shower products contain ingredients that can disrupt and damage aquatic ecosystems. Some detergents, for example, can destroy the external mucous layers of fish, which causes damage to their gills and makes them more susceptible to disease.

Phosphates, which are used in shampoos and

hygiene products, can act as fertilizer—and if they end up in the lake, they feed algae and other plants, which can disrupt the lake's ecosystem and reduce the amount of oxygen available to fish.

In order to preserve the Echo Lakes ecology, we should all be mindful of what kinds of products we use in our cabins.

The first thing we can do is to make sure we shower inside our cabins, using eco-friendly products, and avoid bathing in the lake with soap and shampoo.

There are two ways to clean with sustainable products: we can make cleaning products our-

selves or buy eco-friendly products. To help make it easy we've compiled a list of proven effective recipes and products that we recommend. You can find them in the pullout of this newsletter.

When choosing a product avoid phosphates, parabens and sulfates. If possible, avoid scented products. These scents can harm the environment and potentially attract bears. Additionally, fragrances can contain many ingredients that may not be listed, some of which are harmful to environmental and human health.

One helpful resource is the Environmental

Working Group (ewg.org), with a user friendly website and app in which you can search for products you already use or want to use to see how environmentally friendly they are.

We recommend getting products that have an A rating and no impact for aquatic toxicity. While there is no perfect product on the market, these are some that can be purchased in stores or online that are better than most.

A list of environmentally safe products is on in the pullout. We encourage everyone to keep it in their cabin to consult before using different cleaning products.

This Valley of Memories

By **Jesse Bedayn**
Editor of The Osprey



My father, Raffi Bedayn's son, Rod Bedayn, grew up in Echo's serene beauty, and my sister and I followed, equally enthralled.

As I grew up, the lake became part of my sister and me, just as it had with my father, my mother, and my grandparents. The bald peaks that grow above the northern shore, the purple Lupine that cover the slope up to Saucer Lake, and our cabin, all hold the voices and history of my family: the conversations, songs, and dances in the cabin, and all those lessons taught and learned, out on the lake, and up into the back country.

All of our histories never cease

to rebound around, echoing off Talking Mountain, and again off Echo Peak. This is a basin that holds our father's, mother's, and grandparent's voices in time, whispering, laughing, chitchatting with the birds, and communing silently in the still nights, remembering and recounting once again the old, often-repeated stories.

We all have our own conversations with the lake, with the islands and the setting sun. Nature always speaks back. The mingling voices of all our families, and the love that imbued those conversations, link us all together. As we enter this valley of memories, we are again with those who have come and gone before us, with their laughs, their singing voices, their stories, their tears.

We commune with those who sit,

or hike, or paddle next to us, as well as with departed loved ones, with the new-born and recently arrived, adding their own notes to the symphony of voices. We live with the older generations, and we take delight in the new. We listen to them all. All those stories, jests, and blessings still echo, and will reverberate forevermore.

We now add our own voices to the harmony, and, if we speak and act with care, our messages will be heard by our descendants, and by those who join them here, in this blessed place. The old Echo Lake newsletters, *The Tattler*, *Little Echoes*, and the rubber boa reader have put some of those voices to the page—my hope is for *The Osprey* to continue that great tradition, and record the many new and old voices of Echo Lake.



Prairie Smoke Flower Walk

By **Kate Sproul**



Keith's Dome is host to some of the most eye-catching wildflowers

in all of Desolation wilderness.

Once the snow starts to melt, the easiest way to reach Keith's Dome is to ascend the south-facing side of the ridge from Haypress Meadows.

One of the rarest flowers growing here is called "Prairie Smoke" (*Geum triflorum*), a member of the Rose family. Bruce Potter, who wrote the *Flora of the Echo Lakes Basin* field guide, 1980, says it only grows on Keith's Dome in the Echo Lakes basin.

Prairie Smoke grows about 10 inches high and hides among the low-growing plants and rocks in the field of vegetation before you reach the rocky summit. Once

your eyes grow accustomed to all the different colors and textures at your feet, the Prairie Smoke's pink, drooping, fairy-lantern like flower pops into your field of vision.

It blooms for only a few

name: "Old Man's Whiskers."

These little flowers can be hard to find and if you miss them, don't despair—there is a myriad of other delightful flowers that bloom on

by Michael Graf.

I uncovered a wrinkle in my sources while researching this article: Potter says the petals of Prairie Smoke are yellow and the sepals are pink, while Graf claims the pet-



Photo by Josua Mayer | Flickr

weeks, and after fertilization, the flower petals and sepals fall away and achenes, (fruit with one seed) attached to 1 to 1½ inch tendrils, stretch upwards to catch the wind. This wavy head of tendrils reflects its other common

this ridge from early to mid-summer. Some of the most colorful are Arrow-leaved balsam-root (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*), Sierra Wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*), Applegate's paintbrush (*Castilleja applegatei*),

and Showy polemonium (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*) Showy polemonium blooms in a few spots among the rocky outcroppings near the dome.

Since botanists are always revising the latin names of plants, I have used the latin names cited in the more recent *Plants of the Tahoe Basin*, 1999,

als and sepals are pink.

A Field Guide to Pacific States Wildflowers, 1976, by Niehaus and Ripper, states that the "flower buds are distinct nodding bells of red sepals which become small erect yellow flowers."

Now I have a few more flower questions to try and solve next summer. Are the petals of the flower yellow or pink? Could I time my walks to catch these flowers as they evolve from nodding bells to upright flowers?

Perhaps I'll see you up on Keith's Dome, just after the snow melts, pondering the same magical mysteries out on the mountain.



Photo by Steve Dunleavy | SmugMug

Marrying into an Echo Cabin

By **Dan Baum**

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I first saw Echo in the fall of 1986, about six months before I married Margaret Knox (north shore, upper lake.) If you grew up at Echo, it might be hard for you to imagine what it's like to see it for the first time as an adult. Riding a motorboat past Flagpole, I kept thinking I'd been sucked into a postcard. In three days, Margaret and I saw a pine marten, a noisy squadron of Steller's jays, and, bouncing along in the saddle between Echo Peak and Flagpole, a mule deer. We camped

at Aloha Lake amidst silence so profound it was almost painful to the ears, under stars that seemed to make the sky mostly white. Margaret was already the perfect woman for me; this was just icing on the cake. But what icing!

I wasn't quite prepared for the sense of peonage that descended when the rest of her family arrived. After thirty years of washing dishes I was made to understand that I didn't know how to do it. At least, I didn't know how to do it the Echo way – the sparing use of dish soap; the careful prioritizing of the glasses, plates, and flatware; the

meticulous attention to the disposal of greasy dishwater. Neither, it seems, did I understand that there is only one proper way to light a gas burner, load a stove with logs, wash and hang towels, or make pancakes. One member of the family was always at my shoulder, murmuring instructions about the proper way to do it. "An Echo cabin is a delicate ecosystem, short on resources and loaded with tradition," Margaret explained. "We do things a certain way because it's hard to recover from mistakes here and because well, we do things a certain way." Nobody seemed to have any trouble, oddly, with the

way I recharged the toilet, filled the jerry jugs, or took them down to the chalet for emptying. That they were willing to let me do without interference.

Of course, it didn't take long to understand that it is learning the Echo way to stir batter, hang laundry, and stack firewood that makes the place so rewarding.

Margaret and I have been married for thirty years and while I've never seen another mule deer at Echo, I have frequently had the privilege of filling and emptying toilet jugs unsupervised. And pretty soon, I'm told, they're going to let me wash dishes all by myself.

Bear Safety for Cabin Users

By **Cracker Dunlap Eshelman**

Thirty years ago, sightings of the American Black Bear around Echo Lakes were rare. Ten years later, however, bear sightings increased and so did cabin break-ins.

In 2001, the Board of Directors of the ELEF contacted the BEAR League of Tahoe, founded in 1998 to educate the public about living with bears, and sent an ELEF director, myself, to Bear Response Training.

For several years after, the ELEF hand-delivered to cabins educational material on living with bears in the hope of

retraining bears to stay away from our cabins.

In July of 2004, the USFS sent an urgent notice to Echo Lake permittees requiring each permit holder and all cabin users to immediately cooperate in ensuring that bears not be "rewarded" by finding food associated with human activity. The Forest Service had adopted a "zero-tolerance" policy toward permit holders who fed bears, whether intentionally or not. It is against the law in California to feed wild life including bears, deer, squirrels and any other wild animal. Fines can be up to \$1,000 with the possibility of jail time.

While many in our Echo community want to protect both bears and cabins, and have been complying with the Forest Service mandate, it takes compliance from everyone for bears to learn that our cabins are not large food boxes.

Once rewarded with food, bears will invariably return—they have excellent memories. We hope to re-educating ourselves, everyone in the Echo Lakes community, and visitors. It is possible to retrain our Echo bears, but it requires the cooperation of all.

When hiking around Echo or in the back country, make plenty of noise. If you encounter

a bear, DO NOT run, slowly back away, allowing the bear room to pass or withdraw. Do not make eye contact; make yourself look bigger by stretching arms overhead and picking up small children. Black bears are unlikely to attack but will try to exit the way they enter so do not block their exit.

A handout on bear safety will be delivered to cabins over the 2018 summer. If you would like more information now, you can search for:

1. Tahoe Council for Living with Bears
2. BEAR League
3. USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

Climate Change is Threatening the Sierra Nevada Pika



Photo by the US Forest Service

By **Alan Reinke**

The pika, a tiny, round-eared cousin of the rabbit, doesn't handle heat well. So climate change has posed a problem.

New research says the mountain-dwelling animals have vanished from part of the northern Sierra Nevada

where they once roamed.

In the area of study, about 64 square miles in the north Lake Tahoe region, the average temperature rose more than 3 degrees Fahrenheit between 1910 and 2015.

The shift may seem subtle, but in the mountains, habitat changes rapidly with elevation.

“So relatively small increases in temperature take away a huge amount of these high-elevation species' range,” says Joseph Stewart, an ecologist at U.C. Santa Cruz and lead author of the study.

The pika likely succumbed to a combination of threats introduced by the warmer

climate, among them overheating, lack of food and increasing vulnerability to disease and predators, he says.

Pikas are not yet considered endangered. Mr. Stewart said you can still spot them at higher elevations within the Tahoe area. But perhaps not forever.

An Echo Lake Tale: The Trick Rider

By **Lynne Scott**



I've been creating and telling stories most of my life, so although my first memories of Echo are generally of my grandparents' cabin on the south shore being filled with family throughout the summers, I did hear others describe my earliest known tale at Echo often enough for it to stick.

When I was four, my parents, newborn baby brother, and I were staying at the cabin when my

mother learned that a couple was renting one of the cabins above us and sent me up the hill to invite them to have dinner with us.

Mom had my tiny brother to look after and would have sent my dad, but he was trying to fix his portable radio, which had gone on the fritz, so to speak.

I was delighted to go, and sat and chatted with the couple for quite a while, describing in great detail how Daddy and I were trick riders in the California Rodeo.

My grandfather, Russell Scott, was City Attorney of Salinas and thus the official

Salinas Rodeo attorney, with box seats right behind the reviewing stand, so I knew all the vocabulary. I had also ridden horses, and evidently, I was entirely persuasive. During dinner, the husband asked Daddy how he liked working with his little daughter. To say that my father—then a deputy district attorney for Monterey County and later a three-term DA—was stunned to learn that his guests believed he was a trick rider, is probably putting it mildly, but they all laughed, and the conversation soon turned to his busted radio.

Hearing that the problem was that leaking batteries had made a mess of its innards, the man asked Dad what kind of batteries they were. “Eveready,” he said.

That led to the second surprise, two weeks after we returned home, when a package came for Daddy, containing a brand new portable radio, a year's supply of Eveready batteries, and a nice note from the neighbor's renter on stationery revealing him as Vice President of Eveready.

So, I can safely say that that was the first time one of my tales paid off.