Hull repairs knock Tahoe Queen out of service

By Kathryn Reed

The Tahoe Queen is being dismantled. Sort of.

In order to comply with an anticipated visit by the U.S. Coast Guard in the fall, the paddle-wheeler will not churn the waters of Lake Tahoe until late April or early May. This is so workers can overhaul the interior of the hull.

The boat will remain docked at Ski Run Marina in South Lake Tahoe while crews do the work.



The Tahoe Queen will remain tied up through April. Photo/Kathryn Reed

â€œThis year our marine engineers came out and looked at the Tahoe Queen. They said we need to go into the bilge area where the inner hull is,â€ said Austin Sass, spokesman for Aramark, which owns the Queen and Dixie II on the South Shore. â€œIn order to do that we need to disassemble all of the galley equipment in the lower part of the boat. The walk-in freezer and grill have to be disassembled. You canâ€™t just move them.â€

Water and electricity will be turned off. The equipment is likely to be temporarily moved to upper decks where guests would normally be.

Sass said the inspection in the fall happens every five years. How inspectors test it will not require disassembling the boat again.

â€œInspectors use special devices to measure the hull and whatever else they inspect,â€ Sass said.

While the Queen is offline, divers will take off algae and other things that may have latched onto the outside of the hull.

Sass didnâ€™t have a dollar figure for what the work will cost or what it might mean in terms of lost revenue. He does not anticipate a rate increase for sightseers because of the work.

The Dixie is expected to pick up customers for the next few months with its offerings being expanded.

â€œI donâ€™t anticipate visitors to Lake Tahoe will have less of an opportunity to go out on the lake and enjoy Emerald Bay and enjoy the experience of cruising,â€ Sass said.

The work is being done now in what is the slow season for cruising so when the summer crowds arrive both boats will be plying the water.

Even though the company released information about trips to Squaw Valley last month, those February and March excursions have been canceled.

Sass said the full Squaw boat trip schedule was originally cutback because work is being done at the Tahoe City Marina. Garwoods Restaurant could accommodate the paddle-wheeler, but he said it was tricky to dock there because of the low lake level and the buoy field.

The water level to-date has not posed a problem for the Queen or Dixie on the South Shore.

The Queen began operating on Lake Tahoe in 1983. In 2008, it received a half million dollar makeover that had to do mostly with cosmetic and interior improvements.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

South Lake Tahoe City Councilman Bruce Grego says he’s not getting special treatment by being the only councilman with a filing cabinet at the city offices. He wants to keep paperwork there. Everyone else in the 44-year history of the city has taken the



Bruce Grego

material home. Former Councilman Ted Long tried to get his own office at city hall, but was denied.

Squaw Valley and Stoli Vodka are bringing back the Ice Bar at High Camp. Guests may ride the Cable Car to High Camp to experience the outdoor bar made entirely out of ice, serving ice cold beer, barbecue items and specialty winter cocktails. The bar will be open during apes ski hours, weather permitting, until the ice melts.

Larry Brown, the former security guard at South Tahoe High

School accused of providing marijuana to a 16-year-old female student, is scheduled to be in El Dorado County Superior Court on Feb. 26.

U.S. Postal Service officials are taking their time in deciding if the Bijou office in South Tahoe should be closed. Originally a decision was expected in late January.

Chris Riva and Mae Fesai of KCRA-TV in Sacramento will broadcast from the Resort at Squaw Creek during the Olympics, Feb. 12-28. It's possible to be part of the audience. Schedule: Feb. 12 – 7-7:30pm; Feb. 13 – 7:30-8pm; Feb. 14 – 6:30-7pm; Feb. 15-20 – 7:30-8pm; Feb. 21 6:30-7pm; Feb. 22-27 – 7:30-8pm; Feb. 28 – 6:30-7:30pm.

Lake Tahoe Community College President Paul Killpatrick had his review at the last board meeting. He gets them quarterly. Because it's a closed session personnel item, it's not known what the board had to say.

Krolicki's entrance to NV senate race possible

By Jon Ralston, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Two Nevada institutions were pronounced dead last week â€" Harry Reid and Yucca Mountain.

These two have died more deaths than Shakespeareâ€™s coward, but both remain alive. But for how long?

I come not to write about the dump today â€" Iâ€™ll save my take on that new panel overseeing alternatives for another column â€" but to muse about whether Reid really is buried â€"

or, as his friend Dina Titus put it recently, â€œdone.â€

The question must be asked (again) because of the blizzard of developments in the contest, both on Reidâ€™s side and for his potential foes. Before delving into this, though, letâ€™s look at the calendar â€” 275 days until the election. Much can happen. Reid may make another inflammatory remark (odds: overwhelming in favor) and the Republicans may slice and dice each other until a hemorrhaging, bankrupt nominee is chosen (odds: equally overwhelming).

Read the whole story

Mancuso struggles to regain dominance on slopes

By Barry Svrluga, Washington Post

Julia Mancuso’s image, calculated or not, was important to her. Winning an Olympic gold medal with a tiara on her head, reveling in the idea that her coaches called her a “princess,” surfing and swimming and being the picture of good health in the waves of Maui, posing seductively in lingerie and ski boots — it all became part of who she was and is, “probably the most honest athlete out there,” according to Chemmy Alcott of Great Britain, her good friend and fellow World Cup skier.

Mancuso was to carry that image into this month’s Vancouver Olympics. Mancuso, not Lindsey Vonn, is the only female American Alpine skier with an Olympic medal to her credit, the gold in the giant slalom won four years ago in the Italian village of Sestriere. Mancuso is the skier featured in fashion shoots in outdoors magazines, her hair done up, her clothes

just so, the one



Julia
Mancuso

with the blog and the Web site that features a “shopping” section.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Olympians build skiercross courses at home resorts

By Lauren Gustus, Renog Gazette-Journal

Building your own ski cross course is becoming the popular thing to do at Lake Tahoe these days.

Errol Kerr, the Jamaican ski cross racer and Truckee resident, is the latest to construct a course. His is at Alpine Meadows, which is Kerr’s home mountain.

Earlier this month, U.S. ski cross racer and fellow Truckee resident Daron Rahlves helped design a course at his home mountain of Sugar Bowl.

Read the whole story

DCSD wants input into superintendent search

Douglas County School District wants to know what people want in the next superintendent. Click here to take a survey.

Lecture at Explore Tahoe

On Feb. 11 at 6pm at the Explore Tahoe Visitor Center Tara McCarthy, U.S. Forest Service forestry technician and Ski With A Ranger program leader, presents a slideshow tour of Heavenly Mountain Resort.

The program will highlight geology, watershed, forest management and wildlife studies that are part of the USFS partnership with Heavenly.

This program is free.

Explore Tahoe is in the Heavenly Village next to Cecil’s Fountain Plaza in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 542.4637.

Snowshoe Thompson lecture

On Feb. 18 at 6pm Explore Tahoe Visitor Center presents Nina MacLeod and Sue Knight from Friends of Snowshoe Thompson.

The two will tell the story of the legendary mailman of the Sierra Nevada in the â€œThe Life and Adventures of Snowshoe Thompson.â€

This program is free and refreshments will be provided.

Explore Tahoe is located in the Heavenly Village next to Cecil's Fountain Plaza in South Lake Tahoe. For more information, call (530) 542.4637.

Bahrke satisfied with training before Olympics

By USSA

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo. – Less than one week before the 2010 Games open in Vancouver, the U.S. Olympic moguls team has returned to the site of its Olympic Trials event and are putting the finishing touches on their runs before they are Vancouver Bound.

"The camp is going great here in Steamboat. It is like a breath of fresh air after the tense Olympic qualifying World Cups," 2002 Olympic silver medalist Shannon Bahrke (Tahoe City, CA) said. "I am able to focus on what I want to do in

Vancouver and not worry about anything else. I only have one job to do now.”

“Steamboat has a long and proud freestyle tradition, so it only seems appropriate that Ski Town USA hosts the U.S. Olympic Moguls Team as it makes final preparations for the Vancouver Olympics,” said Andy Wirth, Steamboat Ski and Resort Corp.â€™s senior vice president of sales and marketing. “The resort has worked extensively with the U.S. Ski team to ensure the training venue on Voo Doo is similar in as many ways as possible to the one that Americaâ€™s best athletes will be competing on in Vancouver.”

Tearing up the Voo Doo run before they cross the Canadian border on Sunday, U.S. Moguls Coach Scott Rawles says training at Steamboat Springs is the perfect way to send off the athletes.

“It is always great to come back to a resort town with such a great history of sending athletes to the Olympic Games,” Rawles said. “Steamboat will be a great place to get back our focus after taking a week off after a series of grueling January World Cups.”

Steamboat completely rebuilt its moguls run in order to help prepare the moguls athletes for what the course at Cypress Mountain will be.

“Steamboat has done an excellent job preparing the course for us, building the jumps so they will be similar to the ones that will be up in Vancouver,” Bahrke said.

The Team starts its journey to Canada on Sunday, before the Olympic Opening Ceremony officially kick off two weeks of athletic competition on Friday. Women’s moguls will get underway on Feb. 13.

Million-dollar home sales decline in Tahoe

By Jim Wasserman, Sacramento Bee

Sales of homes costing $1 million or more fell sharply across the capital region and throughout California last year as buyers remained wary, large mortgages were hard to get and more homes slipped below the benchmark value, researcher MDA Dataquick reported Thursday.

The La Jolla firm counted 291 sales of homes priced above $1 million in 2009 in Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, Yolo and Nevada counties. A year earlier, the tally was 502 in the eight-county region. The capital region accounted for 1.6 percent of high-end sales in a state where coastal regions rule the luxury market sector.

Read the whole story