

Dixie to run this summer, Queen to sit idle

By Kathryn Reed

Aramark will continue to only have one paddle-wheeler plying the waters of Lake Tahoe for the unforeseeable future.

This is because the company's permit with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency does not allow both boats to operate out of Zephyr Cove. Normally the Tahoe Queen is docked at Ski Run Marina, but it has been running out of the Nevada marina because the lake is too low at the California site for it to reach the dock. The other reason the Queen has been operating from Zephyr Cove is the M.S. Dixie II is undergoing a seven-figure remodel.

"The permit allows Aramark to operate the Dixie out of Zephyr Cove and the Tahoe Queen out of Ski Run Marina. Because the Dixie is not operating and getting her engines rebuilt/replaced, and because the Tahoe Queen is unable to operate out of Ski Run Marina because of low water levels, TRPA has authorized Aramark to operate the Tahoe Queen out of Zephyr Cove until the Dixie is operating again," Tom Lotshaw with TRPA told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The exception to both being operational out of Zephyr will be Labor Day weekend for the annual race between the two paddle-wheelers.



The interior of the M.S.
Dixie on June 15 shows much
work still needs to be done.
Photos/Kathryn Reed

It is Aramark's responsibility to dredge the Ski Run channel – not the marina owner. Aramark has not sought a permit to do so. The last time it was dredged was 24 years ago.

"We have to dredge in order for us to go back there. At this point in the season it is not doable," Joao Rodrigues, who oversees Aramark's water and marine operations at Lake Tahoe, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "They would have to block off the whole channel to do dredging."

Rodrigues said the dredging might occur in the fall.

Aramark is shooting for the Dixie to be back in operation by July 1. The plan is for three cruises seven days a week instead of the normal two. The idea is this will help compensate for the Queen being idle. The Dixie can hold 500 people.

The major part of the renovation is the engines, which were the original ones – and 21 years old.

Rodrigues said today it would be impossible to build a paddle-wheeler like the Queen or Dixie at Tahoe because of TRPA regulations. He said refurbishing the boat is costing about what it did to build it in 1994.



The M.S. Dixie has new engines.

The engines are the latest model – tier four – to meet all of the Environmental Protection Agency regulations. The work is being done with the boat in the water at Zephyr.

Skipperliner out of Wisconsin, which built the original engines, has manufactured the new ones.

Last week the vessel looked very much like a construction site. Crews were cutting pipes. The interior was total chaos.

The inside and outside will be receiving a fresh coat of paint. New carpet will be laid.

“The carpets are a different patten. The walls are a different color. It brightens up the rom,” Rodrigues said.

Rodrigues said renovating the two bars might not make the July 1 deadline.

Winds whip Markleeville fire to 6,500 acres

Updated 11:45pm

The Washington Fire had consumed 6,500 acres as of late Sunday.

The blaze nearly 10 miles south of Markleeville continues to be a threat to multiple structures.

“The entire fire area is under extreme winds. The fire is continuing short uphill runs and single tree/group torching,” authorities said.

Winds on June 21 were from the south, with the fire burning northeast.

Updated 5:45pm

Sustained winds are making it difficult for firefighters to get a handle on the fire burning south of Markleeville. By Sunday afternoon 3,500 acres had burned.

No structures have burned, but about two dozen remain threatened.

A spot fire started on the west side of Highway 4, forcing the evacuation up the Carson River to the north end of Markleeville. Protecting that town – the county seat of Alpine County is the highest priority right now.

The fire is in the Bagley Valley, having moved to the north side of Highway 89.

Monitor pass is closed at Highway 89 and Highway 4 is closed.

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The Washington Fire burning about 10 miles south of Markleeville has grown to more than 1,300 acres.

Five residences are threatened and evacuated, and an additional 15 historic cabins are threatened.

The fire started in a remote and rugged area in the Silver Creek Drainage, which is making hard for crews get a handle on the blaze. The fire is now in the Wolf Creek Drainage. Five helicopters and three air tankers are working the fire along with crews on the ground.

The cause of the fire that started the night of June 19 is still unknown. However, there was no lightning a that time.

Highway 4 is closed to the top of Ebbetts Pass. Campgrounds have been evacuated.

This has been declared a red flag day – meaning a severe fire threat because of winds and humidity.

The U.S. Forest Service is the lead agency.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

**‘Sixth mass extinction’ may
wipe out 75% of animal**

species

By Alan Neuhauser, U.S. News and World Report

From rhinos to tigers to elephants, three out of four “familiar” animal species – those commonly thought of and well understood by human beings – will be extinguished within three human lifetimes, a new study finds, confirming that Earth is in the midst of what’s become known as the “sixth mass extinction” driven by runaway development, shrinking animal habitats and climate change.

“Scientists never like to say anything for sure, but this is close as we’re ever going to get to saying, ‘We’re certain that this is a huge problem,’” says study coauthor Anthony Barnosky, a paleontologist at UC Berkeley, calling the problem “quite dire.”

The hundreds of species eliminated in the past century alone would otherwise have lasted at least another 800 to 10,000 years, the study found. Coral reefs “are in danger of annihilation” as soon as 2070, Barnosky says, potentially erasing a quarter of the ocean’s species.

Read the whole story

**Incline house severely
damaged in fire**



No one was hurt in the June 21 house fire in Incline.
Photo/Provided

A fire caused substantial damage to a house in Incline Village on Sunday.

The blaze was reported at 6:30am June 21 at 101 Pinion Drive.

The fire was contained to the single-family residence.

Assisting North Lake Tahoe firefighters were crews from Tahoe Douglas, North Tahoe Fire and Truckee Meadows.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Court: Signs are a matter of free speech

By Hans von Spakovsky, Daily Signal

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court struck down a town's sign ordinance as an unconstitutional, content-based regulation of speech. This ruling for free speech means the

government can't pick and choose what speech deserves more protection based on the content of the speech.

Like most other towns in America, Gilbert, Ariz., regulates when, where and how signs may be displayed around town. Temporary non-commercial signs are classified by their content, and each category has its own set of regulations.

Real estate signs, for example, may be up to 80 square feet, and political signs may be up to 32 square feet; political signs may be displayed for four and a half months before an election, including in the public right of way; and homeowners' association event signs may be displayed for 30 days.

Read the whole story

Wildland fire burning south of Markleeville



A fire south of Markleeville is burning out of control June 20. Photo/Provided

Updated 10:20pm:

A wildland fire is burning near Markleeville, having consumed more than 350 acres.

A large plume of smoke could be seen from Genoa and other parts of the Carson Valley on Saturday afternoon.

Known as the Washington Fire, it is burning about eight miles south for Markleeville in the Silver Creek Drainage. It started June 19 about 7pm on U.S. Forest Service land. Highway 4 is closed from the intersection of highways 4 and 89 to the summit area.

A red flag warning has been issued over the fire until 10pm June 21 because of gusty winds up to 40 mph and low relative humidity.

Authorities said, "Steep rocky terrain, lack of vehicle access, and heavy timber with numerous downfalls are hampering firefighting progress. Access to the fire is primarily long distance hiking overland or deployment of personnel via helicopter."

At this time no structures are threatened.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

El Dorado County drug case results in 2 indictments

A federal grand jury returned an indictment Friday against Sacramento residents Benjamin Macias, 37, and Sergio Ambriz, 26, charging them with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, distributing cocaine, and distributing methamphetamine in El Dorado and Sacramento counties.

Macias is also charged with possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime and being a felon in possession of firearm.

According to court documents, in 2014 and 2015, Macias supplied Ambriz with cocaine and Ambriz sold the cocaine to an undercover agent in the two counties. Ambriz also sold allegedly the undercover agent methamphetamine. When Macias was arrested, a Ruger 9mm pistol was found in his vehicle.

If convicted, Macias faces a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison and a \$5 million fine. Ambriz faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and an \$8 million fine.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Man arrested after standoff at Tahoe Keys Marina



Law enforcement surround the suspect

Saturday afternoon at
the Tahoe Keys
Marina. Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Updated June 21 6:03pm

From a SLTPD press release today:

[Cory] Pearson attempted to drive over a berm, but became high centered. The Armored Rescue Vehicle pinned Pearson's vehicle against the rock. Pearson attempted to flee on foot and turned toward officers, concealing his hands in his waistband. A less lethal shotgun bean bag round was deployed, striking Pearson, causing him to fall to the ground. Officers approached Pearson with a K9 unit. Pearson continued to refuse officers commands, so the K9 unit was deployed and Pearson was ultimately apprehended without further incident.

A black replica, semi-automatic pistol was located in Pearson's waistband, where he was concealing his hands. Pearson was transported to Barton Hospital for medical treatment as a result of the bean bag and K9 deployment. Pearson was booked into EDSO jail by deputies for driving a stolen vehicle, felony evading, possession of an altered or imitation firearm, resisting an officer with violence or threats of violence, wearing a mask during the commission of a crime and driving on a suspended license.

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Updated June 20 7:14pm:

Cory Pearson, 35, of Sacramento is the man who was arrested. Exact charges have not been released.

Update 5:19pm:

What started as an El Dorado County sheriff's deputy checking

on a vehicle pulled to the side of Highway 50 in Meyers ended with one suspect in custody more than four hours later.

El Dorado County sheriff's Sgt. Paul Hadjes told *Lake Tahoe News* the subject was wearing a bandana over his face and told the deputy he had taken some bad drugs. While the deputy was calling for back up, the suspect took off.

A slow speed chase Saturday afternoon led everyone through South Lake Tahoe to where the Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association office is. The suspect was able to maneuver around all the cop cars and went down Venice Drive to the Tahoe Keys Marina. At this point he was trapped.

South Lake Tahoe police, California Highway Patrol and U.S. Forest Service provided additional resources.

The suspect, whose name has not been released, moved the stolen white sedan several times around the parking lot before parking it to the right of the launch ramp.

South Lake Tahoe Sgt. Travis Cabral told *LTN* the vehicle had earlier been stolen from Lakeland Village.

The suspect was eventually taken into custody after bean bags were fired at the vehicle.

The suspect had a fake firearm that looked like a real weapon, according to authorities.

Cabral told *LTN* the CHP helicopter was used to give more eyes on the scene in case there were other people lurking in bushes or who might have been in the vehicle and tried to escape.

Update 4:25pm:

One person has been taken into custody after officers shot out the back window with bean bags.

The suspect was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital with

injuries from the bean bags.

The suspect had a replicated handgun, according to authorities.

Update 4:12pm

The restaurant patrons were allowed to leave at 4:07pm under sheriff's deputy escort.

Most had a story to tell.

Jim and Tauni Pace of Boise recalled being abruptly interrupted from their patio lunch when the chopper told them to quickly go inside and lock the doors.

"We didn't know what the heck was going on," she said.

Terry Scales of South Lake Tahoe wondered the same thing.

I've never seen anything like this," the 39-year resident said. "I've never been on lockdown. This is usually a fun time— you come here for a rum runner."

Update 3:33pm:

A small army of law enforcement with assault rifles is aimed at a white sedan parked to the right side of the launch ramp at Tahoe Keys Marina.

A California Highway Patrol helicopter has been circling above more than 20 patrons at the Fresh Ketch who are stuck inside the restaurant because law enforcement has placed it on lock down. The vehicle is occupied by a South Lake Tahoe man, according to restaurant patrons.

South Lake Tahoe Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News* the man is reportedly armed.

The driver has moved the vehicle multiple times. It was first parked in one of the stalls outside the Fresh Ketch. The

driver has since moved it closer to the launch ramp. Law enforcement is not letting people down Venice Drive.

There are reportedly people at the beach at Cove East who are not allowed to walk back on the path.

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A man who claims he is armed has forced the evacuation of the Tahoe Keys Marina in South Lake Tahoe.

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies chased the man to the marina in their vehicles. What initiated the pursuit is unknown. Deputies were not available.

"He will not surrender and he has indicated he is armed," South Lake Tahoe Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The immediate area was cordoned off just before 2pm June 20.

Negotiators and tactical teams have been called in.

No one at the Fresh Ketch restaurant was answering the phone.

— *Kathryn Reed and Susan Wood*

Regan Beach's future in state of flux

By Kathryn Reed

Abandon the park; make it bigger and better. Those are the extreme viewpoints of what to do with South Lake Tahoe's Regan Beach.

About 40 people gathered this week at the city's recreation department to discuss how to generate revenue to offset operations and maintenance costs, what to do to improve the environment, look at how to distinguish the park from other facilities in the area, and what do about dogs.

South Lake Tahoe is on a quest to develop a plan for this park that has not had much attention in the five decades since it was built. The retaining wall is crumbling, the building where food is prepped has a leaky roof and dogs don't stay in their designated area.



South Lake Tahoe residents express what they want Regan Beach to look like in the future. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Later this summer a refined proposal is expected to be completed under the guidance of the Parks and Recreation Commission. It is likely to be presented to the City Council in September.

City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News* what she hopes to see is three levels of ideas – things that must get done to address accessibility, safety and maintenance issues; medium level ideas that include wants more than needs; and then possibilities if funding were not an issue.

While the 2015-16 budget will be approved about the same time the council hears what is proposed for Regan Beach, that doesn't mean the area will miss out on the next fiscal cycle.

The budget is often adjusted midyear and work could be incorporated into the 2016 capital improvement plan schedule.

People at the five tables were all over the place when it came to ideas for the park. **Some of the ideas were:**

- Demolish the food building and start over.
- Have food service available year-round.
- Have a building big enough to be used as a reception for weddings and other meetings.
- Create a designated sledding hill.
- Build a pier.
- Have food trucks.
- Remove much of the grass.
- Decrease the amenities so they are in line with money available for maintenance.
- Balance the facilities at the park to not impact the neighborhood.
- Remove many of the trees; plant shade trees.
- Ban dogs.
- Restrict dogs to a small area.
- Rebuild the bulkhead.
- Remove the bulkhead so there is more beach.
- Have a ramp to launch human powered watercraft.
- Create more access to the water.
- Rent beach chairs and water toys.

- Add bike racks.
- Take out most of the parking to create a bike-in, walk-in park; leaving a few spots for people with disabilities.
- Get rid of chipped tires.
- Install bear boxes.
- Build a staircase from the bulkhead to the water.
- Get rid of non-native vegetation.
- Add recycling stations.

There will be more public meetings this summer for people to give input as the ideas are refined. An online survey is another way to give feedback.

Woman's portrait will appear on \$10 bill

By Jackie Calmes, New York Times

WASHINGTON — Growing numbers of Americans are going cashless, but demands to finally put a woman on paper currency persist. And now the Treasury has announced that a portrait of a woman, to be determined soon, will grace the \$10 bill.

The note will continue to have some image, also to be determined, of the current \$10 honoree, Alexander Hamilton, a founding father (there were, of course, no mothers) and Treasury secretary to President George Washington (he of the \$1 bill). Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew, who by law makes the selection of an honoree, will disclose his choice by the

end of the year. The new note will appear in 2020 – the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

The only criterion under law is that the chosen person must be dead, but the Treasury said Mr. Lew was looking for a woman “who was a champion for our inclusive democracy.” That would include the abolitionist Harriet Tubman, who was the top choice on social media of a campaign to put a woman on the \$20 bill.

Read the whole story