

Heavenly chairlifts back in operation

By Kathryn Reed

Investigators determined that the chair that fell off the North Bowl chairlift at Heavenly Mountain Resort was the result of collar screws that attach the chair to the cable splitting and shearing in half.

“There was nothing found that pointed to why the screws failed,” Lisa Herron with the U.S. Forest Service told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Because the same system is used on the Boulder lift, that chair was also taken out of service to be inspected. Both lifts are now operating.

On Jan. 3 a chair on the downhill side fell from the North Bowl lift. No one was injured, but about 60 people had to be evacuated.

Resort officials would not answer whether this could have been prevented.

“At Heavenly, the safety of our guests and employees is our No. 1 priority and we maintain the highest standards of quality in terms of equipment and maintenance,” is all spokesman Coop Cooper told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The incident was reviewed by the Forest Service, Heavenly and two third-party inspectors – Tram Support Inc., and Gmuender Engineering, which are an engineer and a parts supplier that services these types of lifts.

They could not find a reason why the screws sheered.

The Forest Service wrote a letter to Heavenly saying bimonthly

inspections of the clip and hanger head are required, as well as set other inspection time lines for the collar.