

23 Day's of the Dixie Fire

Morning. Day 1 after the mandatory evacuations. I'm still here at Lake Almanor. Clear sky, and very little smoke in the air. I had all my windows open all night too. Wind is from the NNW at 3mph which is pretty much perfect.

I'm not being macho about staying during a mandatory evacuation, it's just I have no real place to go, and my plan is if fire arrives here on the Peninsula I'm gone!

There were so many sheriff cars, pickups, and SUVs going up and down Peninsula Drive yesterday evening and into the night. There were also many buses apparently going to pick up evacuees. I didn't see the buses returning but there is another way out which would mean I wouldn't have seen them leave.

Wind report is Red Alert for wind beginning about 1pm today and running until tomorrow I believe.

Winds 10-15mph and gusts to 30mph.

Lake Almanor resorts donated their cabins to the firefighters. Those cabins are 200 yards from me, and firefighters spent the night there. They just left, 6 or 7 engines, and trucks, so another reason I feel safe here for now. There are a few of my neighbors here also, and they're all upbeat.

Sleep didn't come easy last night, nor for long. Ha Ha I was surprised I couldn't sleep as I was so tired.

🙏🙏🙏🙏❤️

Day 2

Sorry but it's been crazy here. We're almost surrounded by fire. It's intense. But it's also intellectually okay to be staying.

My daughter gave me the lecture and hung up on me. Ha Ha

The smoke blanket is coming back in. It's the same. Clear occasionally, smoky sometimes, still, breezy, just always changing.

I'm hoping the extra time without wind is giving firefighters and equipment operators more time to do good!!

🙏🙏🙏🙏❤️🙏🙏

No PGE or internet but ATT just came back up. Now we wait. Tonight is either a bad night or not a bad night. I'm really hoping for the latter.

🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

Day 3

All is good here on the Peninsula where I am. The fire yesterday was to my north and the wind changed, essentially blowing it down onto the Peninsula. The firefighters stationed here spent all night patrolling, looking for hot spots, and keeping us safe. So yesterday was apparently the worst day for driving the fire my way, and all is good. 🙏

PG&E is out. ATT came back on yesterday evening which is a real blessing. My internet is down but my data with AT&T is working. The gas station is down because PG&E is down and I'm almost out of gas for the generator.

I drove to the Causeway yesterday afternoon and, while the smoke was thick around Chester, there were no visible fires. 🙏🙏

So I'm good. The Peninsula is good as far as I can tell.

My generator is going and providing power to me and my neighbor who also stayed. There's about 6 or 7 guys who decided to stay for a variety of reasons. We're in contact again now that the phones are working.

Miss my friends and neighbors. Keep the faith. See you all soon I hope.

Day 4

Good morning. At 3 am I saw stars in the sky! It's filled in since but not as bad as yesterday. The smoke yesterday was some of the worst I've ever been in. Just a choking smoke. My neighbor Steven, who also stayed, gave me two N95's which, while a little hard to breathe through at first, really work! Thank you Steven!!

The firefighters continue to make progress! Somehow they got the fire to mostly go around Chester, and then around the Peninsula too. Huge thank you's to them!

I got offers of gasoline yesterday and thank you!! I went to get some from Mike, using my truck, and CHP stopped and told me I could be arrested if caught driving again. The rule, he explained, is if you don't leave during an order to evacuate, you must stay on your property. While he was very matter of fact, he didn't arrest me. Thank you to him.

So much is back now. Internet is up, PG&E is on again, and ATT is also working. What a nice difference having those utilities back on has meant!!!

This is THE quietest I've ever heard it here. I know that's an odd sentence, right? All the auto start generators have shut off which really helped. The only noise now is the firefighters and police coming and going and both of those are rare.

I heard someone tried to break into Wally's Coffee Shop up the street but no corroboration on that. I'm also pretty sure that's why the police don't want those of us who've stayed, my count is 8, to be driving or walking around. It's fine. I'll comply.

So that's about it. We're surviving, I'm eating delicious vegetables from my garden. Still have plenty of dried food and MRE's, but others are running low. I've told them if they can get here I'll share what I have, but I'm not driving to them. I've been warned and getting arrested just isn't my thing.

Quiet morning. No wind. And better air quality but still no good air quality.

We're getting through this fire one day at a time!!!

Day 5

This is Day 5 of me staying after the Evacuation Order was issued. Two days later an Imminent Danger Order was issued and we were told to evacuate immediately. Sirens blared every hour and it was intense. I believe there are now 6 people left along Peninsula Dr. who have stayed.

Yesterday my neighbor Craig and I helped carry food to the firefighters that Wally, who owns Peninsula Market, so kindly donated to the firefighters staying at the old Lake Almanor Resorts cabins. One could smell the bacon, sausage, eggs, and toast being cooked, and later in the day, after they had slept, the barbecuing of pork chops and hot dogs. Thank you Wally and thank you firefighters.

The only news I have on the fire is it is being contained by hand crews and dozers. No planes are flying though I did hear some yesterday evening. Just this thick blanket of smoke covering everything. I'm not allowed to drive or walk far because of restrictions and I'm mostly honoring that.

The near panic of several days ago has abated, and the imminent threat of danger is no longer looming. Of course the threat of the fire returning remains, as much forest remains, so it's still one day at a time here.

Life is good for us and we're all holding up just fine. 🙏🧡😊

Day 6

Good morning. The smoke has returned again, and lies over the Peninsula like a blanket. Out respite yesterday was welcomed and refreshing, but far too short. But it gave hope that there is indeed a coming end to the Dixie Fire.

Having not evacuated I'm able to help my neighbors who did evacuate. Watering plants, and feeding pets for instance. I do daily walks down to the lake and around to where the firefighters are staying. They're always friendly and answer my questions as best they can. Sometimes I walk through where their cabins are and you could hear a pin drop as they're all sleeping. Police and sheriff's car are driving around a lot

checking on everyone's properties, and all in all the Peninsula where I am seems safe and secure. I believe the count is 5 people who have stayed along Peninsula Drive, not counting police or fire. I've heard there are several more in the CC and more on the East Shore, but we've been told to stay on our property so we can't and don't socialize.

Calm conditions again today on the Peninsula. 🙏🙏🙏🙏
I remain very optimistic and hopeful.

Day 7

We seem to have fallen into a pattern over the past few days. Smoky mornings where I can barely see 100 yards, with no wind, thankfully, and clearing late morning or early in the afternoon, when I can then see almost across the lake. For the past 2 days I could hear airplanes flying and going towards both sides of the lake probably and hopefully dropping water or retardant onto the fire.

Firefighter strike teams remain at Lake Almanor Resorts just up the road where they come to eat, clean up and sleep between shifts. Having them here allows me to rest too, knowing they wouldn't be sleeping in an unsafe place.

Peninsula Drive is safe as is the entire Peninsula. Having stayed here during a "mandatory evacuation order" means I'm not allowed to walk around much or drive around. But I do walk to the lake and the local market, I do talk with the firefighters, so my knowledge is what I see and hear.

I'm hoping this respite in both the weather and the fire remains calm, rather than the wind whipped, raging inferno of last week! That was a scary few days!!

Day 8

Very smoky this morning. And I'm learning the difference between fresh smoke and older smoke. This morning is fresh smoke! I heard last night, but have not confirmed, that the fire jumped containment lines west of where I live. I then heard helicopters flying back and forth until nearly dark yesterday, and it sounded like their drops weren't that far away. The strike team that stays here left just before 6am this morning and they'll relieve the strike team that's been actively fighting the fire. The firefighters shifts have been 24 hours on and 24 hours off. Whew. That's harsh conditions.

I also heard, but have no confirmation, that the evacuation order will be lifted soon. That is totally contingent on the fire of course! Right now there's only one road open and that's via Susanville.

The fire grew only slightly last night, but it's still a massive, nearly 1/2 million acre fire. 🙏🙏

Day 9

Still very smoky outside. There is a very light breeze this morning but apparently the smoke is SO widespread the breeze is simply moving the smoke from one area of the fire to another. But it's early. The local nursery found I was living here, I know Sam from my almost daily walks to A13 and back, and I was asked to water their plants. Ha Ha Seemed like a good idea! 5 1/2 hours later I was done. I'll go again today and water again. The plants really needed it.

I also water 2 other neighbors plants and feed 1 semi feral cat.

The fire that spotted across the containment line north of me was extinguished yesterday at 20 acres. Ed Staub's propane truck came out of nowhere and he filled my tank! When he backed up my drive I said, "First truck here in the middle of a massive forest fire is a propane truck?" and we both laughed. So, we're still under our gray smoke blanket. I'm still optimistic and happy, and still hopeful this smoke lifts soon! Stay well.

Day 10

Last night we learned the Evacuation Order was being lifted for Chester, etc., at 11am this morning. Immediately after learning that news PG&E went down. At 10pm the emergency siren went off, the local fire strike team left, word spread the fire had jumped the causeway and was headed this way. Sheriffs patrolling with loud speakers saying there was imminent danger and to leave immediately. The major threat, besides the fire, was the wind of course. However by 1am the wind still had not come up, the strike team came back, and went to bed. I did too. We're all awaiting further news at this time. PG&E is down of course and they haven't issued any news of why or when they'll be back up! PG&E should be recalled!!!

It's super smoky outside. Freshest smoke for weeks now. My generator is running, my truck is packed, and I'm hoping for yet another positive outcome for the Peninsula.

The 5 of us who stayed are all accounted for. A couple are / were pretty scared last night, and hopefully they too got some rest.

I'm remaining positive of course, I'm grateful and remembering those who haven't fared so well.

This is a fire that is seemingly insatiable, and is trying to devour all it can. I'll update more later, as and when I can.

Day 11

This morning, like seemingly every morning lately, starts with me tucked in by the smoke blanket. Today it's a lighter blanket compared to the heavier, thicker blankets of past days. Yesterday I got to see blue sky for about an hour about 3:30. Blue sky and some wispy, white clouds. Later I used the leaf blower (yes it was so loud!) but it removed several days of ash and debris from my deck and driveway, etc. I think it's my attempt for a modicum of normalcy. It helped. And the ash and embers weren't very thick either. I wore a mask 😊

So lots of information being talked about. The Peninsula where I live in intact. There are no fires here. The firefighters strike team(s) are still eating and sleeping here, and, personally, they're my barometer. There was concern yesterday evening that the wind, if it increased from the east, could cause the Peninsula harm, but the wind died down and it was a calm evening.

We still have no PG&E and NO word from the company at all! Their people were here yesterday painting the bottom of some of the their poles with retardant. You'd think trimming trees would be a better long term solution, right?

The Nursery is doing better. The lavender has bounced back somewhat. I wish I could spray this message for you to smell! Many more bumblebees now too. And of course the hummingbirds.

So that's about it. Personally, I am trying for some daily normalcy, and my heart and mind feels the pain for those who are not as fortunate as I am. Stay strong and let's hope the mandatory evacuation order is lifted very soon. 🙏🙏🙏🙏

Day 12

This morning the blanket of smoke is much heavier. I can't see much more than a hundred yards. It's also very still. Of course my generator shattered the silence but coffee is SO important. This is day 3 without PG&E too. I've begun siphoning gas from my boat.

Yesterday the smoke left here early afternoon, and by 5 o'clock there were semi blue clouds, and I got to open my windows.

My neighbor stayed too and ran several extension cords to my generator, so I'm keeping his freezer and refrigerator cold, TV on etc. But it's about 3 hours in the morning, 2 hours around noon, then 4 hours from 5 to 9 or so. Trying to keep things frozen and conserve gas, and all the little things- news, charging cell phones, reading, all the things we take for granted when PG&E is on.

So no fires here. No wind either. I know many are in daily worry about this monster fire, and I wish you all the very best.

I'm having a day off watering the nursery.
Ha Ha The plants agreed they'd be okay with that!

Minor update:

Certainly. There are more bumblebees on the lavender plants I'm watering!!

The fire is moving away from where I live despite the news reports. It's a beautiful, calm, though a little smoky, day.

PG&E is still out-Day 3.

I have a generator, and all the necessities of life, so I'm good. The lack of people, cars, and the incessant noise people make is totally refreshing.

Tomorrow I'm not watering the nursery. Monday back to it unless the owners and workers return ☹️☹️

My daughter has freaked because I've stayed. She actually said these words: "How would you feel if I did something you didn't want me to do?" I laughed of course as I remembered her teenage years and beyond. Ha Ha

Life is good. I'm good. But this fire is tenacious and relentless. Ugh.

Day 13

PG&E is back on!! Gosh, that is such a big deal for all of us here, including the firefighters, Peninsula Market, and everyone and everything I don't even know. Power was off for just over 4 days.

Yesterday was super smoky all day. This morning has started exactly the same, but the weather report indicated the wind would come out of the west today and blow some of this away.

From the fire standpoint we seem to be in the clear now. I know a lot of superstitious people just cringed, so I'll add these ☹️☹️☹️☹️☹️☹️

I have loved writing my daily updates but now I think I'm done. Life here is slowly returning to normal, the smoke is really the only issue from the fire. I'm hoping the mandatory evacuation orders are lifted ever so quickly now. Of course I will miss the total quiet I got to experience, the near total lack of traffic, the silver fox crossing the road and walking through property's without worrying about people. The deer and their fawns, the bucks in velvet, or the many other wonderful experiences.

Please, when you come back, drive slowly, as the wildlife has gotten used to the roads having less traffic. Thank you all.

Peace and love to you all.

Day 14

Okay, okay. A few more days then! I honestly didn't know so many liked my daily reports.

Yesterday evening was gorgeous here. No wind or smoke; finally no smoke. There was a big, yellow, half-moon sitting in the sky too. No obnoxious generators with their incessant roaring. No, instead there was a quiet, moonlit night. So welcome and so lovely.

I've heard of a potential wind event, and that has alarmed many people. I asked the firefighters staying near me about it, and they're confident their containment lines will hold. I talked with a 2nd firefighter who told me they're not rescinding the mandatory evacuation orders yet because they don't want a repeat of any past horrible events.

Probably Thursday though, once the winds are gone, and if the status quo has been maintained.

I'm seeing a few more trucks driving around now. Some local builders trucks and some others.

A pine squirrel came right up to me yesterday evening. It was chattering, and stopped at my feet. A few more chattering's, and it went slowly off.

So cute!!! I don't speak pine squirrel but I think it was thanking me for the clean, fresh, water I put out several times a day.

My motto living here is to be prepared, but also to take advantage of the precious, peaceful days whenever I can. So last night my only "news" was sitting outside enjoying the moonlight, and the peace and quiet.

The blanket of smoke is being pulled over the Peninsula once again this morning.

Take good care.

Day 15

Good morning! There is no "smoke blanket" this morning. I can see patches of blue sky, and it is a little windy. My property is positioned such that I can hear the wind blowing in the trees rather than always feel it. My 6 or so wind chimes also alert me, in the nicest possible way, to the strength of the wind. This morning the wind is gusting but not badly here.

As a pragmatic person living on the Peninsula, and on Peninsula Drive in particular, it's easy to think that while there's a fire somewhere, because I can smell and see the smoke, there is no danger at all to me or my home. Usually my conversations with the firefighters reinforce that belief with the exception of 2 Thursday nights. Overall though the Peninsula and Peninsula Drive have been and remains safe. The AQI is 178 today, after having been in the 700's, the temperature is 48 and the wind NE at 8mph. It's a very nice morning here! I sincerely hope it is where you are too.

Quick update

Peninsula Dr and the Peninsula in general seems fine. I believe Chester is in good shape too. 🙏🙏🙏🙏
It's smoky, and a little windy here but otherwise we're good.

🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

Yay - Day 16

What a day yesterday was! The mandatory evacuation order was lifted, the wind finally subsided, the containment lines held all around Lake Almanor, PG&E went down but came back up, and slowly people started arriving. Sam, who owns the nursery, stopped by to say thank you. Tammy, who manages the Shell station, and her husband, stopped by, just thankful to be back. A dozen or so vehicles with Nevada plates drove by headed to their homes.

Sam bought me a cold six pack of Sierra Nevada at the Shell station, and I came home and drank one, sitting outside in my chair!

My neighbor, Craig, and I hooted and hollered some, arms raised and laughing, giving thanks and proclaiming how we'd lived through not only a forest fire but the largest forest fire ever in California. My dear friend Lisa and her husband who run Peninsula Market, sold me some delicious meat loaf and potato salad, which I ate for dinner. And by 9 o'clock I was in bed.

By 4:30 I was awake and thinking about how extraordinary the past 18 days or so have been. When I'm in an experience of this magnitude, and this is my first and hopefully last forest fire, there's really only time for doing the next right things; paying attention, and, of course, surviving. With that now accomplished, the adrenaline is lowering, the anxiety and stress is diminishing rapidly. The one emotion that was odd was claustrophobia. That happened early on when there was no power, the smoke had settled over the Peninsula so thick I couldn't see, and it was the darkest night I can remember! There was no cell service and no internet. I walked outside and that's when I felt claustrophobia. It didn't last long as I was able to think my way out of it. Claustrophobia is not a fun feeling.

So here we are. Day 16. We survived, our hearts are happy but at the same time sad for those so less fortunate. The Dixie Fire has proved it's a monster. This fire is like Grendel was in Beowulf, a monster amongst people who needed to be slain. But Grendel won many battles, just like the Dixie Fire has, and just like Grendel, our modern day Beowulf, the brave firefighters, will vanquish our common enemy.

My deepest sympathy for all who have felt this fire's wrath. May your path forward be better. And to all, may peace and love find a home in your hearts. And thank you to all of you who supported me while I lived through this quite extraordinary experience. Your friendships, prayers, and kind and comforting words kept me smiling. 😊

Day 17

And then, even though I knew the day was coming, it was past! One day a mandatory evacuation order, and then I'm finally buying bird and sunflower seeds in Chester. Yes, Ayoobs opened for the first time yesterday morning. Holiday was open, and seemed to be well stocked. I didn't feel like driving around so I headed home. The east side of the causeway still had several pronounced chimneys of white smoke rising from within the standing trees. As I drove home retardant lined Hwy 36 in places. I did not see any signs of Hwy 36 having burned on the Lake Almanor side between Chester and A13. And neither were there any burn scars along A13 on my drive to Peninsula Drive. Both sides of A13 were as beautiful and serene as usual.

Sam is back and taking care of his nursery. Brian and his family are back too. So the watering and cat feeding are all done. Except for Jeanne's place! The gas cans I emptied are once again full, and those I borrowed returned or ready to be.

So, I was all geared up to survive the Dixie, and to help plants and a cat survive. The deer visited, the birds and squirrels 🐿️ visited and were fed, and then it was done for me. Oh, I know the Dixie is a mean monster, and she still rages on seemingly insatiable. But for me, for us on the Peninsula, and for us around the lake and in Chester, the Dixie fire, though her ominous, fresh smoke lays like a blanket over us again this morning, has mostly moved on.

The Dixie Fire has changed us all; some in small ways and others in large ways. For some the Dixie was and is an inconvenience, and for others the Dixie took most everything they had.

I send my love and hope to all those affected by Dixie. All I can do is care about you, and wish you a swift recovery. 🙏🐾❤️

Day 18

Yesterday was another smoky day, but better than the worst days. I'm looking forward to a few clean air days again.

Yesterday there were many more sheriff cars, and similar to before the mandatory evacuation order was lifted.

I was thinking that when I moved to a new place or neighborhood, I was warned about certain people or certain neighbors, and in particular the mean people or person. I got to thinking about the Dixie Fire and its reputation. Dixie is an insatiable monster it seems, and yet for us on the Peninsula the monster only nibbled at our edges and then left us alone. It's true Dixie took out some structures around Chester and along the West Shore, and most of Canyon Dam. But for the Peninsula the Dixie scared us, threatened us, and tormented us for days. The firefighters, machine operators, planes and helicopters, nudged her back and managed to persuade her to go around us. The weather even helped for when 30mph winds were forecast they didn't materialize.

We experienced one small miracle after another here on the Peninsula, and without each one of them we would not be here today.

As I thank the firefighters, the equipment operators, the pilots, God, the weather, and all the myriad miracles that caused the Dixie fire to spare us, I am so thankful. At the same time I am totally aware of those who this fire didn't spare, and whose lives have been so dramatically altered.

Life is relentless, and hopefully for everyone that will be in the best possible ways going forward.

My heart is on a seesaw- happy yet sad. The insatiable monster didn't get me or the Peninsula. Thank you to everything that made that possible! 🙏 🙏 🙏 🙏

Day 19

Today begins with moderate smoke, no wind, and an AQI of 276. The Dixie Fire is now at nearly 750,000 acres and is 37% contained. Firefighters, though mostly in other areas now, still routinely patrol the Peninsula and the entire Lake Almanor community. There are still two active strike teams located near Peninsula Village. Peninsula Market, with Lisa and John there, did an amazing job!!! Especially with limited resources and they're still not restocked as of yet. I'm waiting on word for when mail and garbage starts again but neither are critical for me.

My phone alerted me several times yesterday with evacuation notices from the Sheriff's Office. The notices were not local for me any longer but they still get my complete and immediate attention. I'm happy they're not for me any longer, and yet I'm sad they're still for anyone.

I believe when Dixie went through here she was at just over 400,000 acres and 21% contained. So Dixie was huge as she came through here and Dixie is still huge!

Some of the large trees apparently contain enough fuel to burn for 1000 hours! 1000 hours is 41.5 days! Times one huge tree burning for 1000 hours by the number of large trees in the forests around us, and then hope we get early rains and snow this winter. Heck, I wouldn't mind if it rained a inch or two tomorrow!!

Stay strong Plumas, Lassen, Tehama, Shasta, and Butte Counties. Please, Stay Strong!!!

Day 20

This morning the smoke is back. Again, it's not a blanket but I can see it. I can also see the sky this morning which is unusual.

The afternoon saw the smoke almost completely disappear and what a beautiful afternoon and evening we had. Finally, yesterday, I was able to do my 2 mile walk along Peninsula Drive to A13 and back. Several people who live here full time are back now, and were busy settling back in. Rick stopped to talk and he relayed some of the devastation he saw on his drive back in from Reno. For the people born and raised here the pain from the losses is great. Their friends and sometimes relatives are spread far and wide, so the losses can be deeply personal. I felt that as I listened to Rick.

But, as I've said before, life is relentless and that can be in the most positive way. There's always a new day tomorrow, and while there will be much grieving for a long time, there will also be much healing. Each day will be followed by another, and my hope is that finally, each of those days becomes better than the day before.

Westwood people got to return yesterday, and I heard from Bev and Bob who sounded happy but busy. I never evacuated so I didn't experience that. It seems though like it wasn't easy even for those who had friends or family to stay with. I am SO happy though that you all made it out and and back safely. I also hope that, now, finally, this fire is past us here.

The 2 firefighter strike teams are still alternating and sleeping etc., at the Lake Almanor cabins near me. By the way those cabins are being donated by their owners to the firefighters.

Each strike team does 24 hours on and 24 hours off.

Thank you. Thank you. 🙏

Finally, a shout out to Lisa and her husband John for their tireless work feeding the firefighters over the past weeks.

Thank you. Thank you. 🙏

Day 21

This morning is the twin of yesterday morning. Seeing the morning air is probably never good, but at least I can see through it somewhat. The afternoon yesterday was another lovely afternoon, as was the evening too. I sat outside until around 8:30, enjoying the quiet, the warmth, the good air, and the beauty of where I live.

I decided then that today I'm going to drive around the lake, at least, and maybe more. My only trip from my place here was into Chester last week, and I got as far as Holiday Market, did my shopping, and returned. I saw some smoldering to the east of the causeway, but nothing else. So for me, living on the untouched by fire Peninsula, has been emotionally stabilizing. I stopped watching TV and because I stayed during an evacuation order I had very little outside news. Now that I've had time to sleep, and to collect myself from the anxiety and occasional worry of Dixie overtaking the Peninsula, I think I'll be okay to go look at what Dixie has done.

I bought here in '02, and this is my second fire. The Chips Fire surely seemed like a monster in August of 2012, burning 85,000 acres.

I haven't driven A13 to 147 yet, nor 147 to 89, but that's how I'll go this morning. I know this will be hard to see.

Funny, as I typed that the sun broke through the trees and shined right onto me. Ha Ha I'll take that as a good omen. 🙏

Day 22

Good morning from the Peninsula at Lake Almanor. It's 37 degrees with a breeze I could immediately feel this morning going outside. The waning, still quite-full moon, is perfectly visible right over head. The smoke is visible through the tall trees, and of course it's the first thing I can smell outdoors.

Tuesday is garbage pickup day here on Peninsula Drive, and the garbage truck collects going towards A13, does a loop to Hamilton Branch, and then collects the garbage from the houses on the other side of the road. I had almost given up on them but about 8pm I heard the familiar squeal of their truck's brakes! Ha Ha and so nice for all that to be gone.

I heard from Bev, the best EVER mail lady, that we should start getting mail soon too.

And to top yesterday off, my internet started working again! This time it's been down for more than a week.

So, moving from one topic to another without a break, my drive around the lake proved once more that ignorance is, or at least can be, bliss. And that once something is seen, it cannot be unseen.

My route, round trip, was just over 40 miles, and except for the Lake's East Shore, the Peninsula, and most of Chester, the fire caused significant to near total damage in some places. To give you some perspective the Dixie fire is now about 1,165 square miles, and 45% contained, the latter being a good number. On my drive I only covered a fraction of the fire and I stopped at Canyon Dam. The Dixie Fire burned hot as evidenced by the forest floors being a uniform gray ash. There was occasional white ash too, but mostly gray as far as I could see. Gray ash and once healthy mountain trees standing dead and burned, for miles and miles and miles. That forest scene now covers more than 750,000 square acres. The destruction of towns and homes is of course the very worst. Some homes are new, some had generational memories. Towns that went back to the 1850's, and had their roots in the gold rush days were almost completely destroyed by Dixie.

Dixie has caused so many tears! Not being adversely affected by Dixie has caused joy of course, and of course that joy being felt is deeply tempered by the so very visible losses.

Life is relentless, as I have often said. As long as we're alive there will be a new day today and another tomorrow, and so on. That means hard times continue for some, and that also means that those of us not too badly affected can help those who were. We can make life's relentless push forward better for others. If we all do is just one thing to help others we'll make a significant difference.

So while ignorance is indeed blissful, seeing Dixie's destruction for myself has reminded me that other's less fortunate need my and our help.

Meanwhile, I'll stop now and enjoy the beautiful sunrise. I'll give thanks to all those who helped stop Dixie from consuming everything in her path, I'll give thanks to God and the miracles that also saved "us", and slowly we'll all begin to enjoy how relentless life is, and what a true blessing that is.

Day 23

A beautiful, bright orange sun is rising through the forest of trees that are still standing, tall and healthy, here on the Peninsula where I live! I'm blessed of course by the hard work of all the firefighters, equipment operators, ground crews, pilots, God, and the miracles, all of which contributed to me being able to sit here this morning writing this final Day 23 report.

I began this Day report so you would know what was really going on here. There were so many bogus reports it seemed the thing to do- to report the reality of what and how it was like living here! I certainly didn't know that I'd be nearly surrounded by a, at that time, 400,000 acre forest fire. The Peninsula became what I called "the hole in the donut", and the Peninsula was the only safe place here. Twice the Peninsula was seriously threatened, Imminent Danger Orders were issued for evacuation from here, sirens blared, sheriff's deputies in their cars using their loud speakers told those remaining to go immediately. The firefighters talked to me, (I got to know several), and I told them my plan. I told them not to come look for me because I wouldn't be here, and we all shook hands. The night came and by 1:30am the 30mph winds that were forecast never materialized. I came home from my spot on the lake, and went to bed. So, thank you God. Thank you for that miracle, and all the others.

Now the fire is past us. Now the fire is more than 750,000 acres. The three amigos, Craig, Steven, and myself, all came through unscathed. Life is settling back into normalcy again, people are able to continue with their lives again, unafraid that Dixie might harm them.

Yes, the threat of Dixie has indeed finally passed from The Peninsula, and, I believe, all of Lake Almanor.

It has been my honor to write these Day reports and to find so many enjoyed reading them. Your kind words gave me strength and happiness, your prayers and love bolstered me during the two darkest times. Bless you all. Stay strong in your lives. Love and Peace to you all.

It is now September 7th, 2021 and the Dixie fire has currently burned through more than 917,000 acres, and is 59% contained.

I've come to say that Dixie was mean, vicious, ferocious, and insatiable, but not to me.