A dry Colorado River has some people sweating

By Jonathan Waterman, National Geographic

During a recent discussion of water at the Aspen Institute's Environment Forum In Colorado, former Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt told a packed house: "The American Southwest is not one of those regions where there is water scarcity. It's hard to believe, given all the hyping in the national and local and regional press."

The audience and his copanelists – Sandra Postel, director of the Global Water Policy Project and freshwater fellow for the National Geographic Society, and Pat Mulroy, general manager of Southern Nevada Water Authority (overseeing Las Vegas water) – were taken aback by these statements.

Throughout the Southwest, and particularly in a region that I know, the Colorado River Basin, the so called "water buffalos" (those who line their pockets with virtual water) commonly talk about this river as though it has not run dry. If only because the water continues to irrigate 2,000,000 acres of agriculture, run 336 miles into Phoenix and Tucson, 224 miles to Los Angeles, or under the Rockies toward Denver through no less than 12 tunnels. So water-related business certainly isn't scarce. That includes Kentucky Blue Grass lawns, water-consumptive cotton, and a mega dairyshed of cows eating Colorado River grown hay to produce countless gallons of milk.

Read the whole story

Orchard and berry production workshop

A harvest-time workshop on orchard and berry production could bear fruit for those interested in becoming commercial small farmers, or improving their current farming processes.

Western Nevada College Specialty Crop Institute is having an orchard and berry production workshop on Sept. 10, 9am-4:30pm at WNC Carson City campus, 2201 West College Parkway.

Cost is $35 if registered by Aug. 31, or $45 after Aug. 31. Lunch is included in registration; seating is limited.

Participants will learn about orchard and berry production for the small farm including best varieties to grow in northern Nevada's climate and soils; site selection and planting, fertilization, pruning, pest management, and more. The workshop is intended for experienced and new farmers interested in small-scale commercial production and sales. It includes classroom training and an on-farm tour of Agape Organics, a certified organic apple orchard in Washoe Valley.

Featured speaker is local expert Michael Janik, who has grown and experimented with orchard fruits and berries for more than a decade. He's grown more than 100 apple varieties, as well as currants, grapes, berries and more. Janik is a certified arborist and is accomplished at grafting.

The WNC Specialty Crop Institute is an innovative education program to teach alternative farming methods, allowing growers to diversify from low-value crops to high-value, direct-marketed specialty crops; increase per-acre return; and manage water efficiently. It is made possible with funding from the Nevada Department of Agriculture and USDA/AMS through the Specialty Crop Block Grant.

For workshop registration or details, contact Ann Louhela at (775) 351.2551 or email louhelaa@wnc.edu.

Tahoe Area Sierra Club fundraiser

On Aug. 13 from 5-7pm at Aspen Hollow Nursery at 541 Emerald Bay Road in South Lake Tahoe there will be a Garden Party sponsored by the Tahoe Area Sierra Club and the nursery.

Proceeds benefit the Sierra Club's efforts to protect Lake Tahoe.

Cost is $10 for wine and appetizers.

For more information, call (530) 577.4945.

Magicians keep audience wondering what happened

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Eagerly giving up their diamond rings, three women and a roomful of people saw a guy put them in tissue. But they weren't in the tissue as he tore it up. They ended up in a box with a bow.

While this might seem ordinary, it wasn't. No one saw the guy put them in the box and we were sitting right in front of him.



Tony Clark, center, has Sarrah and Jeff tie him up at MontBleu on Aug. 6. Photos/Kathryn Reed

“I don’t understand.” That was the feeling I had the whole time watching Masters of Magic at MontBleu. And for the entertainers on the casino’s stage that’s just how they like it.

Magician Tony Clark joked, “The more you drink, the more magic you see.” The sober truth is the sleight of hand and illusion displayed brought forth remarks of “That was cool.” and “How did he do that?” from the children and parents in the audience.

Sitting up close means a good chance of becoming part of the entertainment. Clark brought Jeff and Sarah on stage to help tie his wrists. A little adult humor was thrown in that likely went over the heads of the kids in the crowd.

Clark had put his watch in his back pocket. The couple made sure the rope was secure, solid – nothing funny about it. Before anyone could say abracadabra, Clark was no longer tied up in knots and his watch was back on.

Illusionist Danny Cole completely changed outfits before our eyes. From red suit to black; ties came and went. But no one

ever saw him get undressed. His wardrobe just changed right before our eyes without us knowing how.

Much of the time the audience was silent. They must have been like me – too busy trying to figure out what was going on, scratching their heads and unable to put their hands together.



Bryson Lane juggles sickles.

I know my lack of applause had nothing to do with not being appreciative of what was going on before me – instead, it had everything to do with wanting them to go a little slower, maybe, just maybe then I would figure out how they did it.

Bryson Lane takes juggling to a new level with sickles being tossed in the air as he chomps on a stick that has a spinning ball on it.

Joel Ward makes Stacey disappear into a box that he seems to slice in half. Somehow she reappears in the audience.

This is one of the shows that leaves you entertained as well as frustrated because you keep wondering how they do what they do.



Joel Ward seems to cut Stacey (in the box) in half.

The hour-plus show features Tony Clark, Joel Ward, Bryson Lang, Danny Cole and assistant Stacey. It runs through Sept. 5, Wednesday-Sunday at 8pm at MontBleu casino in Stateline. Cost is $19.95 for adults, $12.95 for ages 17 and younger. For more information, call (775) 588.3515.

Walkers put their foot down on cancer at Relay for Life

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Cancer. It's one of the deadliest words in the English language. But with events like Relay for Life, a cancer diagnosis is no longer a death sentence.

The fifth annual Relay on the South Shore is going on now at Kahle Community Park in Stateline.



Cancer survivors start the South Shore Relay for Life on Aug. 7. Photos/Kathryn Reed

It all began with survivors of cancer making the first lap. Then caregivers followed. Many wore sashes saying which group they belong to. Most were smiling. They clearly had something to celebrate.

It's all about raising money for the American Cancer Society. Going into Saturday's festivities that started shortly after 4pm more than $40,000 had been collected.

Fundraising by the various teams, individuals paying $10 to walk and money still to be tallied from Taste of Tahoe could bring this year's event to about $60,000 – which would be double what was raised in 2009.

Jenn Boyd, who coordinated this year's Relay for Life, said the plan is to expand Taste of Tahoe next year because of how successful it was. This year 10 restaurants donated a portion of a week's worth of proceeds to Relay.

People can show up any time between now and 6am Sunday. Relay will be going on all night – signifying how cancer doesn't sleep. Or listen on KRLT-93.9FM or KTHO-96.1FM – both radio stations plan to broadcast live for part of the event.



Cancer survivor Esther Carlen gets a hug from comic Howie Nave.

The dog walk is from 7-8pm – then all four-legged walkers must leave the park.

Michael Clark and Band will play from 8-10pm.

The luminaria ceremony is from 9-10pm. People write on or decorate paper bags that are then illuminated with a candle. It’s hard to not cry reading about friends and family who have died and about just as many who have survived.

Deep Fried Mojo will entertain the group from 10pm-midnight.



Event organizer Jenn Boyd at work.

A massive Twister game will go on for about an hour starting at midnight.

Coffee and a light breakfast will be available at 5am. Closing ceremonies and awards are at 6m.

To get involved with Relay for Life 2011 or find out more information about it, call Jenn Boyd at (702) 278.1932 or email boydjenn@gmail.com.

Hazardous weather warning issued for Sierra

A hazardous weather warning has been issued by the National Weather Service for the Eastern Sierra, including the Lake Tahoe and Reno areas.

Thunderstorms will develop Saturday afternoon and into the evening, mainly north of Highway 50 and through Mono County. Rainfall rates could meet or exceed 2 inches per hour and therefore localized flash flooding is a possibility under stationary or slow moving stronger storms, NWS warns.

Moisture could linger into Sunday.

In other weather news, July was the seventh warmest July in Reno since 1906. The temperature reached at least 90 degrees on every day in July except the first four days of the month.

– Compiled by Kathryn Reed

‘Good headway’ on Wolf Creek Fire

The Wolf Creek Fire remains at 580 acres today.

“Firefighters are making good headway as the fire continues to be managed for resource benefits,” fire spokesman Dave Zaski said. “Firefighters are starting to remove excess portable equipment and evidence of chainsaw use for fire line construction to restore the area to its natural characteristics.”

Three hand crews, one helicopter module, and two SEAT fixed wing aircraft that have been on standby will be released today. There are 280 people on the incident.

World’s scientists call warming ‘unmistakable’

By Brian K. Sullivan, Bloomberg News

Scientific evidence that the world is getting warmer is “unmistakable,” according to a report by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration drawing on research from 48 countries, including Russia and China.

The past decade was the warmest on record and the past 50 years have been getting hotter, the researchers said, citing 10 main indicators, including surface and ocean temperatures, the amount of sea ice and glaciers and levels of humidity.

“The records come from many institutions worldwide,” Jane

Lubchenco, NOAA administrator and undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere, said in a statement. “These independently produced lines of evidence all point to the same conclusion: Our planet is warming.”

Read the whole story

Truckee embraces Cruiser Madness

Gear up and get ready for Downtown Truckee Thursdays’ rendition of Cruiser Madness on Aug. 12 at 5pm when the popular weekly summer event pays homage to biking enthusiasts.

Put together a whacky costume, decorate your ride and pedal on down for the rebirth of the infamous Cruiser Madness event that launched at Squaw Valley years ago.

Those who show up dressed in costume will vie for a chance to win cool prizes and be crowned King and Queen of the cruiser parade.

Costumed bicyclists are asked to check in at the SnowBomb event information tent adjacent to the Truckee train depot at 5pm to be judged before the parade. Parade embarks promptly at 5:30pm.

Adding to the festivities will be the band Crazy performing a musical tribute to Patsy Cline at the Beer Garden.

Downtown Truckee Thursdays 2010 continues through Aug. 19 from 5-9pm.

The 10-week series was launched three years ago by the Truckee

Downtown Merchants Association in an effort to highlight and revitalize the town and underscore a Think Local attitude. In addition to children's activities, Truckee Thursdays also offers live music, art, the Foothills Farmers Market, a beer garden, various catering and "foodie" trucks and vendors of all kinds. Additionally, many of the local merchants showcase special wares on the sidewalk outside of their stores.

For more information, contact Downtown Truckee Thursdays at (530) 584.1222.

Disc golf tournament on South Shore

Tahoe Hemp Company Pro-Am Disc Golf Tournament, a PDGA sanctioned C-Tier event, is Sept. 11-12 at Zephyr Cove Disc Golf Course.

Player check-in and preregistration is Sept. 10 from 4-6 pm at Tahoe Hemp Company at 3564 Lake Tahoe Blvd., unit B in South Lake Tahoe.

Contact Dan Thrift at (530) 559. 4519 or danthrift@etahoe.com for information.

Registration forms are available at Tahoe Hemp Company, Bijou and Zephyr Cove Disc Golf Courses or online.