Lahontan: Saving Paiute trout worth poisoning stream



By Kathryn Reed

Anything with a gill breathing apparatus living in Alpine County's Silver King Creek is about to die.

This decision by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board is an attempt to preserve the Paiute cutthroat trout. This is the only place in the world where this fish lives.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife website, the Paiute was listed as endangered on March 11, 1967, and reclassified as threatened on July 16, 1975.

The problem is the California Department of Fish & Game stocked the remote wilderness area creek with nonnative fish starting in the early 1900s and ending in 1991. Those fish are the same ones the DFG now wants to kill.

Successfully poisoning waterways to rid them of nonnative species isn't something the California Department of Fish & Game has a great record with. Think Lake Davis. (Another water board handles that area of the state.)

Pumping Rotenone into the lake near Portola in 1997 was disastrous. Eighteen months later the northern pike were back. Fast forward to 2007, the lake was poisoned again. This time the nonnative pike seem to have disappeared for good – or until someone recklessly reintroduces them to the lake.

Rotenone is the same poison that will be used latter this year on an 11-mile stretch of Silver King Creek. This poison was tried before starting in the 1960s and continuing into the 1990s without success.



Stafford Lehr with the Department of Fish & Gane addresses the Lahontan board. Photo/Kathryn Reed

DFG thinks its plan this time around is more comprehensive and will work. Stafford Lehr with the DFG told the board and nearly packed room at Lake Tahoe Community College that he knows his department is under a microscope and that everything is being done to ensure the project's success.

Even though the Alpine County Board of Supervisors is against the poisoning and no real economic consequences to California's smallest county have been forecast, the poisoning of the stream is going forward.

Lahontan board member Eric Sandel was the lone vote Wednesday night against the poisoning. He believes staff was too dependent on making its findings based on DFG data and not enough independent study was used to come to the recommendation.

Former board member Laurel Ames is against the poisoning, pointing out how Rotenone is banned in some areas and it has links to Parkinson's disease. She also took issue with how long the EIR/EIS has been available to the public.

Anyone with "trout" in their organization's name spoke in favor of the plan.

Executive Director Harold Singer added more monitoring to the plan.

The area will essentially be dead for three to four years. Once it's determined everything that should have died did die, the Paiute will be reintroduced to the creek. They will be collected from the headwaters area and put into the creek.

The DFG has also taken the Paiute cutthroat trout to locations in the Southern Sierra, beyond Lahontan's jurisdiction. This ensures the species continues to live, even if it's not in its native habitat.

Land swap possible in El Dorado County

A land swap between Eldorado Irrigation District and the U.S. Forest Service will be discussed April 26 at 10am.

The meeting is at 2890 Mosquito Road in Placerville.

All of the property involved is in El Dorado County, with the federal parcels in Eldorado National Forest.

For more information, call (530) 642.0482.

’50 Ways to Love Your School’ fundraiser

While Paul Simon says there are “50 Ways to Leave your Lover,” Whittell High School says there are “50 Ways to Love Your School”.

The Zephyr Cove school’s spring auction fundraiser “50 Ways to Love Your School” is May 22 at 6pm at MontBleu Casino in Stateline.

MontBleu will be transformed into a walk down memory lane. There will be a silent auction, wine toss, fast-paced live auction featuring nostalgic items, dinner, dancing and more.

Proceeds will benefit the students at Whittell High and Zephyr Cove Elementary schools. Last year’s event distributed $40,000 into the classrooms with technology such as smart boards and other teacher tools, sports uniforms and equipment, enrichment activities and field trips.

The event website has where tickets can be purchased, sponsorship opportunities detailed and auction items reviewed.

For more information, call: (530) 307.8658 cell or email lv2plan@aol.com

Summer enrichment program for middle school kids

El Dorado County Office of Education and El Dorado Center of Folsom Lake College are excited to announce the Intensive Summer Enrichment Experience (I SEE) hosted at the El Dorado Center campus in Placerville. This summer school opportunity is designed for middle school students who are interested in taking enrichment classes in the areas of language arts, computer science, foreign language, science and the arts. This summer's course offerings include astronomy, multicultural art, drama, conversational Spanish, creative writing and web design ("Cool Tools on the Web"). The program is intended to be a unique summer program that allows for academic and creative discovery within our own local college environment.

Also, it is a great way for the participants to meet other students who share similar interests.

Classes begin June 21 and run for two weeks, Monday through Thursday, ending July 1.

Morning and afternoon sessions are available to students who are finishing sixth, seventh or eighth grade. Complete registration information will be available at local middle schools and on the EDCOE webpage (www.edcoe.org) and registration dates will be April 19-26.

For more information on this program, please contact Lisa Laird at llaird@edcoe.org or at (530) 295.2415.

El Dorado County sheriff's candidates politely spar

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Relaxing the renewal process for people carrying concealed weapons and knowing the budget will be a critical issue facing the next sheriff of El Dorado County are two things the six candidates for the job agree on.

During a lunch meeting Wednesday at Harrah's Lake Tahoe that was hosted by Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe, six questions were presented to the men who want to be sheriff.



El Dorado County sheriff's candidates.

The candidates were lined up as they will appear on the June 8 ballot: Ernie Hillman, retired sheriff's captain; Larry Hennick, retired sheriff's sergeant; George Nielsen, Placerville police chief; Craig Therkildsen, El Dorado County sheriff's captain; Bob Luca, retired chief of the California Bureau of Investigation; and John D'Agostini, district attorney's investigator.

The need for a new sheriff is because Jeff Neves left in December before his term was to expire at the end of this

year. Undersheriff Fred Kollar was appointed to be interim sheriff until the next sheriff is elected. He had planned to retire at the end of the year and will still do so.

If no candidate receives more than 50 percent in the June primary, then there will be a run-off in November.

On Wednesday, each had to explain what sets them apart from the others seated at the front of the room.

Hillman: “My experience differentiates me. I’ve held every sworn position except sheriff (in El Dorado County). I’m the only candidate with military experience. I served two terms in Vietnam.”

Hennick: “I’ve worked the streets here. I have a home here. I have a back to basics approach.”

Nielsen: “I’m a top executive of a law enforcement agency now.”

Therkildsen: “I’m working for you now. I’ve worked up here for 4.5 years.”

Luca: “I didn’t spend my whole career in one department doing the same thing over and over again.”

D’Agostini: “My age. I have three, four terms in me.” He is also the only candidate currently with an elected position. He is on the Pioneer School District board of education.

Another question posed to them was: “What steps will they take to ensure the budget ax doesn’t continue to fall on the sheriff’s department?”

Hillman: “I can’t promise you it will not take a hit. I will argue for every dime we can get. It may be an uncomfortable situation for the Board of Supervisors, but I will take them on.”

Hennick: “You need to be revenue generating. With alternative sentencing programs you have them pay for their time so they are not spending time in jail. Use asset seizure and forfeiture.”

Nielsen: “First, I have experience doing these things. You focus on staffing. I transferred a management person to the streets. We must prioritize public safety. I’ve written five (grants) in the last year and got three. That’s results.”

Therkildsen: “We’ve made cutbacks and have not reduced the number of deputies on the street. We are not going to cut street deputies.”

Luca: “The role of sheriff is to set priorities. I’ve managed large budgets. The role of the sheriff is to be in the community, at the Legislature to lobby.”

D’Agostini: “There will be cuts. The last place I want to cut is the boot on the street. I will do a line item review of the budget. Grants are great, but some come with long tails.”

Hillman’s 30-year career is all with El Dorado County, including a stint as lieutenant on the South Shore. Although now retired, he says his batteries are recharged to take on the job as sheriff.

This is Hennick’s third run for sheriff. He wants to bring back the mounted patrol, have a resident deputy at Meek’s Bay and have the DARE program in schools.

Nielsen says in the last five years he has helped to reduce the crime rate in Placerville by 53 percent. As a law enforcement executive now, he believes he could hit the ground running.

Therkildsen, the only candidate to have his ballot statement translated into Spanish, believes he too will not need a learning curve because he is immersed in the department now as

a captain.

Luca believes his diverse background with the California Bureau of Investigation and as an investigator with the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office is an asset. His priorities are to stop sexual predators and elder abuse.

D'Agostini wants to rebuild community trust. His priorities are solving property crimes and increasing respect for civil rights.

There will be another sheriff's candidates' forum April 20 at 7pm in the El Dorado Hills Community Services District Pavilion, 1021 Harvard Way, El Dorado Hills.

California residents have until May 24 to register for the June 8 primary. There are a slew of positions up for grabs on the ballot.

Talk to the babysitter about emergency situations

To the community,

When you leave your children in the care of a babysitter, take time to cue the babysitter to your family's escape plan. Discuss the floor plan of your house, and leave the phone number where you can be reached. Explain the family fire safety plans to your babysitter.

If the smoke detector sounds, nobody should try to find the fire, much less try to put it out. Make it clear that your only concern is that everyone gets out of the house quickly and safely.

The SLTFD urges you to spend time preparing your family to be fire safe this year.

Sallie Ross-Filgo, South Lake Tahoe Fire Department

Tourism conference in South Lake Tahoe

The Tahoe Tourism "Your Town Forum" will provide South Shore businesses an opportunity to hear from tourism experts all about what's new for summer. The Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority will preview its strategic plan and unveil the 2010 summer marketing campaign. Representatives from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the Sierra Business Council will talk about Geotourism – what it is and why it matters.

Attendees will also learn about the California Welcome Center in El Dorado County and hear presentations on new events in Lake Tahoe, including Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week, Hot August Nights and Iron Girl.

Guest speakers include Pettit Gilwee from California Travel and Tourism Commission, Debbie Manning from El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce, Bruce Walters from Hot August Nights, Bob Kingman from Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Nicole DeJonghe from Sierra Business Council, Duncan/Channon Agency, B Gorman from the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce and Carol Chaplin and Mike Frye from LTVA.

The April 29 event from 9-11am is free and open to the public. It is at Lake Tahoe Community College's Duke Theater in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (775) 588.1728.

Harrah's restructures to avoid defaulting to creditors

By Howard Stutz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Harrah's Entertainment plans to issue $500 million in second priority secured notes that are due in 2018, which will be used to pay down loans that come due over the next two years.

In a statement Tuesday, the casino operator said the offering is subject to several conditions.

Soon after the announcement, Moody's Investors Service maintained a "negative" rating outlook toward Harrah's long-term debt.

Read the whole story

DA: Evidence against Garrido overwhelming

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson said today he has overwhelming evidence to convict accused kidnapper and rapist Phillip Garrido, and that he believes there is evidence to show Nancy Garrido might have been under her husband's control.

"We believe it does exist," Pierson said during a 50-minute hearing in Placerville.



Phillip Garrido

Pierson said the mere existence of the two daughters that kidnap victim Jaycee Lee Dugard had while in Garrido's captivity for 18 years "is incriminating."

"This is a case that we can prove without any difficulty as to Mr. Garrido," Pierson said.

Read the whole story

Choral performance in South Lake

Spring Choir Concert featuring the Blue Ribbon Choir, Tahoe Belles, South Tahoe High School Choir and Tahoe Community Choir on April 23 from 7-8pm at St. Theresa main sanctuary in

South Lake Tahoe.

Donation of $5 is requested.

Proceeds will benefit two traveling competitions.

For information, call Paul Kushner at (530) 541.4111.