Return of native fish to spawning area hailed

By Martin Griffith, AP

RENO — Scientists are hailing the return of a threatened fish to its home spawning grounds in Nevada for the first time in 76 years, calling it a milestone in efforts to re-establish a self-sustaining population of the species at a desert lake near Reno.

About 90 Lahontan cutthroat trout weighing up to 25 pounds spawned this spring along the extreme lower two-mile section of the Truckee River, which flows over 100 miles from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake, U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials announced last week.

Pyramid's cutthroats last spawned in the river in 1938 and died out by the 1940s because of overfishing, degraded habitat and the introduction of non-native fish. They also vanished from Tahoe around the same time for similar reasons.

Lisa Heki, fisheries complex manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said the recent spawning activity was a surprise because of low water levels caused by a severe drought.

It offers hope that the species reintroduced into Pyramid in 2006 will be able to reproduce on its own in the future without the help of hatcheries, she said. Heki said she expects the number of cutthroats that spawn in the Truckee to keep increasing.

"It confirms this strain retains its capacity to reproduce naturally and it's ready to take advantage of the stream to spawn," she told the Associated Press. "I think we're on the steps of a new era for this species. It's pretty exciting."

Terence James, vice chairman of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, agreed. His tribe's hatchery has raised cutthroat that originated from outside the Truckee basin since 1974.

"It's a very exciting success story for the tribe," he told the *Reno Gazette-Journal,* which broke the story about the spawning activity on the lower Truckee. "We haven't seen this happen for a very long time."

Officials counted 182 spawning areas along the lower Truckee where cutthroat males and females paired up to lay and fertilize eggs.

Heki said that while it's uncertain whether any of the areas produced fry that survived, it's likely that cutthroats would have more spawning success in a wet year.

The goal is to allow the species to get past a couple of dams on the lower Truckee and spawn around Reno and other upstream areas as it once did, she said.

Nevada's state fish, the cutthroat is prized by anglers because of its taste and size. A record 41-pound cutthroat was caught at Pyramid in 1925, and specimens weighing up to 25 pounds have been reeled in over the last year.

A recovery team also is considering a long-term effort to restore the cutthroat at Lake Tahoe, Heki said, but officials first want to re-establish a self-sustaining population of the species at Fallen Leaf Lake.

"I think this strain would perform quite well at Lake Tahoe," Heki said. "Long-term, with community involvement and support, I think it's definitely feasible to have them there."

West Shore road work to be around-the-clock

Construction work on Highway 89 on the West Shore is switching to around-the-clock work this week.

The $41 million project from Tahoma to Tahoe City includes drainage treatment facilities for stormwater runoff, curb and gutter, shoulder widening and new pavement throughout the 9-mile project limits.

The contractor is working on rebuilding the highway in 3-mile stretches, with the first phase from Wilson Avenue in Tahoma to Cherry Street in Homewood to be completed this construction season. The second phase is scheduled to be built in 2015 and the project will be completed in 2016.

Road and Highway Builders will be working around the clock this week until noon Friday in the McKinney Creek area and will also be working daytime from 6am-6pm Monday through Thursday and until noon Friday in Tahoma.

In addition, Southwest Gas' contractor continues work on the north end of the project limits to relocate and replace gas lines that are in conflict with Caltrans' project. Gas work this week is overnight from 6pm-noon through Friday from Middle Sequoia Avenue to Cathedral Drive. The gas work will go up to Granlibakken Road.

Motorists should expect 5-10 minute delays at each one-way traffic control stop, with total delays not to exceed 20 minutes. No work is allowed between noon Friday and 10pm Sunday.

K’s Kitchen: Drink transports imbiber to Caribbean

By Kathryn Reed

Ginger ale was a drink that was always in Sue’s fridge as a kid. While that’s not the case as an adult, it is still her favorite soft drink.

It’s the ginger that appeals to her.

Ireland is credited as the birthplace of ginger ale; in about 1851. However, it is Canadian John McLaughlin who is noted as the inventor of what we know today as the Canada dry version of ginger ale. This was in 1907.

But sometimes ginger ale requires some doctoring, as in making it a true adult beverage.

The drink below is a little too easy to drink, especially on a warm day. But what’s nice is it is not super sweet. More triple sec and less lime juice would make it sweeter.

**Sue’s Cool Caribbean**

1 shot rum

1½ shots triple sec

1½ shots lime juice

2/3 cup ginger ale

Ice

Pour all ingredients over ice. Stir. Drink. Repeat.

Krolicki leaves office having made a difference

By Susan Wood

Nevada Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki may serve his last day on the job come January, but it will always be Labor Day in which he made the most lasting impression on former state official Sue Wagner.

Fourteen years ago on that day, Wagner narrowly survived a plane crash with Krolicki while campaigning for her lieutenant governor's seat, along with Nevada Treasurer Bob Seale, who was also injured. Seale's wife died. Krolicki was ejected from the plane and got help at a farmhouse miles away.

"He calls me every Labor Day," Wagner told *Lake Tahoe News* in a soft voice. "I'll always be indebted to him for that. He was instrumental in getting us out of the plane."



Brian Krolicki

Like others in high-profile state office posts, Wagner complimented Krolicki on his two terms as lieutenant governor – in particular for going "out of his way" to bring business into the state. Krolicki's background is in finance for the private sector and has used it effectively in the public arena.

"He's done an incredible job as lieutenant governor," she said.

Wagner believes Krolicki has managed to view life with a seize-the-day mentality since surviving the plane crash, causing him to excel in his long list of endeavors and accomplishments. They include his service as chairman on the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition and his tenure as president of the state Senate.

Wagner is in good company with her assessment of Krolicki. Gov. Brian Sandoval holds Krolicki in the same high regard.

Since coming into the highest state office, Sandoval has been tested in the last few years with an ensemble of tragedies, ranging from a mass shooting at the IHOP in Carson City to an air show disaster in Reno.

“We’ve talked about that day, and I can’t wish that on anyone. If you survive something like that and you remind yourself to make the most of each day, then there’s something to that with Brian,” Sandoval told *Lake Tahoe News*, further admitting to having spent poignant moments with “BK.” The two Nevada leaders have embraced their nicknames. Sandoval joked he’s referred to as “BS.”

The duo has traveled extensively together.

Sandoval said Krolicki is protective of his home turf – Lake Tahoe, but he has also covered the far reaches of the high desert state. Krolicki, his wife and their three daughters live in Stateline.

“He can never get enough of Nevada,” Sandoval said.

He reflected on a time when both men wanted to get home after attending the Ely Crab Crack. They left Ely in the middle of the night and kept each other awake chatting.

“You really get to know somebody when you travel Highway 50,” said the governor, who has known Krolicki personally and professionally for 20 years.

“I respected him immediately for his work ethic, and he’s a family man,” he said, also citing Krolicki’s sense of humor.

Sandoval said he hasn’t been privy to whether Krolicki ever thought about challenging the popular governor in their Republican Party.

“Whatever he chooses to do, I’m sure he’ll do it extremely well,” Sandoval said.

Nevada Commission on Tourism Deputy Director Larry Friedman, who threw out “ambassador” as a title for Krolicki, shared those thoughts.

Friedman mentioned being impressed that Krolicki only missed the state’s Rural Conference one time in eight years. He cites Krolicki’s accessibility to many residents over the years as a commendable quality.

“Not only has he always been at the awards ceremony we’ve asked him to speak at, he has stayed the whole time. This is huge. He enjoys it, and he’s fun,” Friedman said. “The constituents are there, and they have access to him.”

And beyond Nevada, Krolicki has a reputation for touting the state overseas – whether it involves trips to China, Japan or India. Friedman said he overheard the latter nation’s officials saying “he gets it” when it comes to tourism.

“He made such a difference when he was there. He reached out to everybody,” Friedman said.

And now the state could be gearing up to reach out to him. Friedman mentioned talk of a tribute to Krolicki at next fall’s Governor’s Conference in Reno. Details are being worked out.

Personally, Friedman noted Krolicki’s tenacity in the early years. He referenced Krolicki’s two blind dates he had with his wife, Kelly. They were seven years apart. But the last one must have sealed it for them.

To those who know the lieutenant governor well, patience and dedication are two of his strong virtues.

Jon Killoran, executive director of the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition, cited the long-standing commitment Krolicki has maintained to the get the Olympics back to the Tahoe-Reno region. The coalition is working on securing the 2026 Winter

Games; a full two decades after Krolicki became involved in the effort.

“First and foremost, his passion and vision have always been there since the time of bringing the Olympic project to my attention,” Killoran said, calling the chairman very approachable to everyone – even across the party aisle.

The executive cited Krolicki’s die-hard dedication to hosting the World Financial Group’s curling event in Las Vegas in January.

“That was a watermark moment for our movement,” Killoran told *Lake Tahoe News*. Some competitors went on to represent countries at the Winter Games in Sochi, Russia, a month later.

The accomplishments don’t end there. Krolicki has helped to organize the World Curling Federation Congress next September at the Peppermill in Reno, the first North American city to host the event.

Killoran said the events have built credibility for the state and the Olympic movement.

“It’s been a pleasure and an honor to work with him,” Killoran said.

Krolicki seems to feel the same way about those he has worked with over the years.

“I’ve walked in that capitol building for 24 years, and I’ve had many, many good memories,” he told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Some days were better than others, as in all jobs in public service.”

Gaining good jobs for Nevadans and promoting the state are goals Krolicki holds near and dear.

“Economic opportunities and job creation is what public service is really about,” he said.

Apparently, he may soon live on the other end of that mantra.

“I’m excited about the possibilities,” he said, declining to provide specifics of what he’s planning to do.

He didn’t rule out a future public service opportunity.

“There are incredible successes that will forever outlast my time here. It’s been a great privilege,” he said. “It’s time to step down. I think that’s healthy to see where the journey takes us.”

Krolicki has earned the reputation of being a survivor – one who takes a tragic experience and turns it into a lesson for his professional life. He speaks of the plane crash.

“That accident was brutal. It took away or forever changed some extraordinary people. I was the only one not physically impaired from that crash. I must be the luckiest man in the world – not many people get to walk away from being ejected from an airplane. My public service has been a great way to manifest that,” he said.

There are other reasons he feels lucky – and a survivor.

His wife Kelly was a catch he wouldn’t say no to on their double blind date. He snickered at the thought of her agreeing to it for a second time years later. She first met him prior to the plane crash.

He believes they were in different places of their lives on the two dates. Now, they have blossomed in similar interests, including travel, the outdoors and time with their girls, ages 12, 14 and 16. When asked if it’s expected the male suitors would come to the door to greet the girls, his response was quick and decisive in pure Nevada style: “The Krolickis wholeheartedly believe in the Second Amendment.”

But the right to bear arms may take a back seat to the right to give bear hugs to those who have worked so closely with him

and will miss “BK.”

“I’ve always said I have the best job in Nevada because I work for the nicest guy. He’s ethical and honest,” Linda Frederick, Krolicki’s longtime assistant, said.

Frederick followed Krolicki from his wife’s golf course development company to Krolicki’s two terms at the state treasurer’s office to now – logging 14 years with the man.

In that time, Krolicki created the Nevada College Savings Plan and the Nevada Prepaid Tuition Program, along with the Gov. (Kenny) Guinn Millennium Scholarship. As state treasurer, Krolicki endured some of the largest corporate failures in U.S. history during the Enron and WorldCom scandals. Krolicki ensured Nevada taxpayers didn’t lose money in the financial disasters. In 2004, his peers selected him as the nation’s “most outstanding state treasurer.”

Krolicki is not only a veteran of financial affairs, he has assisted military veterans in their post-war efforts, hosting conferences at both ends of the state.

In the earlier years of community service, Krolicki served as a Douglas County planning commissioner and member of the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Task Force for the state.

Where he will land after being termed out as the No. 2 man in Nevada politics remains to be seen.

Opinion: Electric ratepayers

are being used

By Dave McClure

Liberty Utilities, owned by Canadian utility giant Algonquin Power, is on a mission to raise our rates for electricity to feed their insatiable appetite for more profits. Look out California Lake Tahoe residents, businesses, and homeowners as the foreign corporation spins their message that rate increases are necessary for “safe and reliable service.”

Don’t be taken in by their siren’s song.

Remember the last general rate case in which Liberty claimed only a modest 4.6 percent increase beginning January 2013? We wrote that it was deceptive because the 4.6 percent accounted for only $3.75 million of their approved $12.5 million. The rest of the increase ($8.7 million) was temporarily offset by a refund of over-collected wholesale power costs. That refund will end next year resulting in a huge rate increase.

On top of that rate increase Liberty has applied to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to retroactively collect more than $2 million from vegetation management expenses from 2012. And there are other projects Liberty will be asking for “rate relief” or increased rates to add to their profits.

The largest of these is an unnecessary $50 million boondoggle called “the 625/650 line upgrade.”

Liberty admits this project will cost ratepayers about $7.5 million more per year. Where can you invest money today for a 10 percent after tax (yes, we pay their taxes) guaranteed by state government regulators?

If it could get worse, it does. This monstrous project is not technically justified, and the North Tahoe Citizen Action

Alliance has hired an expert utility engineer with 25 years experience with Southern California Edison to bring technical honesty to this CPUC proceeding.

Liberty carried this project forward from Sierra Pacific Power Company (SPP) based on a technical report from 18 years ago. At the time SPP owned the Nevada and California service territory and conceived this loop upgrade to better serve their customers in Truckee and Incline Village.

Liberty is putting the entire cost of SPP's project on the backs of Liberty ratepayers. In addition, one leg of the loop is in the Lake Tahoe Basin (from Tahoe City to Kings Beach) calls for the largest tree removal (25,000 trees) and road building project in the Tahoe basin's history.

The independent expert has shown their technical studies are obsolete, deeply flawed, and carefully edited to try and prove their case. For several years Liberty has been delaying – holding hostage – a necessary but relatively inexpensive upgrade in an "all or nothing" strategy. We have suggested a staged alternative that may preclude any need for environmental damage to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Liberty is not cooperating with our data requests, because they just want fast track approval from the CPUC.

It's time to fight for justice, honesty, and technical reality. It's time to tell the foreign owners to end their campaign of misinformation and stop pillaging the Tahoe Basin. We are not their sheep. Never in the modern history of Lake Tahoe has there been so egregious an attack on our outstanding national resource, and on all of Liberty's 49,000 California ratepayers, for a project with a clearly false technical basis – only corporate spin, fear, and "we know what is best and we'll take care of you" rhetoric.

We need Tahoe residents to send this message to Liberty Utilities, to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency prior to

their approval, and to the California Public Utilities Commission.

Dave McClure is president of North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance.

Man missing from Ice House area

Vernon “Cody” Mathews, 23, has not been heard from since June 6.

Mathews was dropped off at the family cabin in the Ice House area June 4. His mother spoke with him via telephone June 6 just before he went for a hike.

Mathews was staying at the cabin alone. He has no vehicle and his personal belongings are still at the cabin.

He is 6-feet, 3-inches tall and weighs between 160 and 220 pounds. He has shoulder length strawberry blond hair and a full red beard. It is not known what he was last wearing.

There is no indication of foul play, however Mathews’ cell phone has not been used since June 6.

Search and Rescue teams from Placer, Nevada, Sacramento and Douglas counties are assisting in the search. Canine units, horse mounted units, off road vehicle units and ground units are being used.

If anyone has information, they are asked to call 530.621.6600.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Letter: Laxalt is more than just a name

To the community,

There’s a saying among lawyers that you need to show your case not tell it. While busy telling us that Adam Laxalt’s campaign is all about his last name, Jon Ralston shows us something quite different. As Ralston concedes, Adam Laxalt is, “A graduate of Georgetown University, Adam stayed in Washington for his law degree, too, then landed … jobs with Bolton, an undersecretary of state at the time, and then-Sen. John Warner from Virginia before a five-year stint in the Navy, including a deployment to Iraq as a judge advocate general.”

Ralston could have added that as a JAG in Iraq, Adam held a significant post in detainee operations, putting away jihadist insurgents trying to kill American soldiers and Marines. He could also have stated that Adam served as a Navy and federal prosecutor and then taught law and leadership to future U.S. Navy and Marine Corps officers at the Naval Academy in Annapolis. The point being, if Adam Laxalt were named Adam Smith, to borrow another of Ralston’s jibes, he would still be a great candidate.

I’ve known Adam and his family since we were first year law students at Georgetown. I was in his wedding and he was in mine. Adam could have pursued a partner track at a big Washington law firm. His credentials – and family name – would have made that pretty easy. Instead he went to Iraq.

While Adam spent time in Washington, he was never of it. When he got out of the Navy, he married a great woman that he met at church. He moved to Nevada to raise his family and work in the private sector. It is hard to picture a path more commendable for someone asking voters to entrust them with public office. And yet somehow this path has less merit to Mr. Ralston than that of Adam's opponent – a 38-year-old career politician, running for another step-up office to the Governor's mansion? As a quarter-century professional observer of Nevada politics, perhaps Ralston should give Nevada voters a bit more credit.

Adam is no doubt honored to carry his family name. From the days since we first met, Adam's finest memories were of spending time with his grandfather and family up at Marlette Lake in the Sierra Nevadas. And who could not love spending time with the unmatchable personalities at Sen. Laxalt's annual lamb fry, when the Basque tradition of Nevada's mountains came to Washington?

Almost all will agree that Sen. Paul Laxalt is a great American. He was the vanguard of the western Republicans that changed America and made the Reagan Revolution possible. Robert Laxalt is Nevada's greatest novelist. Dominque Laxalt conquered Nevada's basin and range as an immigrant Basque sheepherder when Nevada was the frontier, west of the west.

Adam Paul Laxalt will carry on the legacy of that name. But let's not be mistaken, Adam set out on his own path long ago.

Michael McClellan, Newport Beach

2 die, 3 hurt in motorcycle pileup

Two people died and three were injured in an accident on the Geiger Grade that involved three motorcycles.

The accident occurred June 7 just after 9am on Highway 341 approximately 2½ miles south of the Highway 395 junction.

Nevada Highway Patrol troopers said a 2001 orange Harley Davidson driven by James L. Wood, 68, along with passenger Linda J Esterling-Wood, 64, both of Silver Springs, was riding in tandem with a 2004 Black Harley Davidson motorcycle driven by Robert E. Sanders, 60, of Reno along with passenger Lisa M. Cissna, 47, also of Reno. They were traveling south when Woods' motorcycle collided with a 2001 Black Honda motorcycle driven by Jacob W. Jensen, 43, of Sparks. All three three riders were ejected from the bikes.

After the initial collision between Jensen and Woods; Sanders' motorcycle traveled over Jensen's motorcycle which was on the ground. This caused Sanders and Cissna to be ejected off their motorcycle.

Wood and Sanders both died at the scene. Jensen was taken by Care Flight to Renown Medical Center with severe injuries. Esterling-Wood was transported by REMSA to Renown, also with severe injuries. Cissna was also transported by REMSA to Renown but was release later that afternoon.

Although the accident is still under investigation alcohol does not seem to be a factor.

Witnesses or anyone with more information are encouraged to call 775.689.4623.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Poll: Little appetite for drought spending

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

Most Californians surveyed say the statewide drought has had little or no impact on their daily lives, and a majority oppose the suspension of environmental protections or large-scale public spending to boost water supplies, a new USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times poll has found.

Although 89 percent characterize the drought as a major problem or crisis, only 16 percent say it has personally affected them to a major degree.

Despite widespread news coverage of the drought – one of the worst in recent decades – the state's major population centers have largely escaped severe mandatory rationing. Even agriculture, which as California's thirstiest sector is inevitably hit the hardest by drought, has partially compensated for reduced water delivery by pumping more groundwater.

That has softened the drought's effect on many, apparently blunting the desire for drastic remedies and big spending on water projects.

Read the whole story

Northstar’s final EIR for master plan being circulated

Placer County has released the final environmental impact report for the Northstar Mountain Master Plan.

On-mountain improvements include upgrading existing ski lifts, widening existing ski trails, replacing and adding ski lifts and ski trails; and infrastructure to accommodate these features including on-mountain skier service facilities and upgrades, snowmaking facilities, utilities and seasonal spur roadways.

In addition, the plan includes other recreation components such as camping and relocation of cross country ski facilities. Actions associated with this project include:

• Martis Valley Community Plan Amendment to the land use diagram

• Rezone

• Zoning text amendment to allow ski lift facilities and ski runs in the timberland production zone

• Conditional use permit.

Written comments may be sent to: Environmental Coordination Services, Placer County Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603, or to cdraecs@placer.ca.gov.

The complete final and draft EIR are available online.