

# Body pulled from Fallen Leaf Lake presumed to be missing woman, second unknown corpse recovered

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County sheriff's officials believe one of the bodies recovered recently from Fallen Leaf Lake is that of a woman who took her life after her son drowned in the same lake.

David Ward was 21 when the boat he was fishing in capsized. His buddy made it to shore, but Ward's body was never found. This was in 1996.

Five years later his mother left a suicide note saying she was "going to join her son," according to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*.

The Wisconsin-based search company **Bruce's Legacy** found the woman's body this summer, but EDSO officials were keeping the discovery under wraps until they could put all the pieces together. However, a positive ID has still not been confirmed.

EDSO specifically asked the company to stay in town after they'd been on Lake Tahoe for another rescue to help find the mother and son. Only the woman's body was located on that search in August.

"The body was recovered from the lake and sent to the Sacramento County Coroner for an autopsy. DNA samples were sent to the California Department of Justice Crime Lab for identification. There was no indication of foul play. We have not received the results of the DNA testing," EDSO said in a Nov. 15 press release.

Bruce's Legacy was back at Fallen Leaf last month in hopes of finding Ward. Instead, on Oct. 27 they found a man's body with an anchor tied to one leg.

"The body looked to have been in the lake for many years. It was apparent that we had located a body that we had not known of prior to his recovery. This is an ongoing investigation and it is not known if this is a case of homicide or suicide," the press release said.

That body was also sent to Sacramento for an autopsy, and DNA sample to the crime lab.

Ward's body remains missing.

At its deepest, Fallen Leaf is 415 feet.

Bruce's Legacy in August recovered the body of Pham Dan Vu Thanh just north of Emerald Bay. He had gone kayaking by himself on June 8 from D.L. Bliss State Park and was never heard from again. They also recovered the body of UNR football player Marc Ma in July, about one year after he went missing on the West Shore.

Keith Cormican and Beth Darth through the nonprofit Bruce's Legacy travel the United States with a 22-foot Hewescraft boat in search of people who are presumed to have drowned.