

Bodies found at Fallen Leaf Lake identified

Officials have positively identified the two bodies found last year in Fallen Leaf Lake. One had been there since 2004, the other since 2001.

The body of Cynthia Ellis, aka Cynthia Prehoda, of South Lake Tahoe was retrieved Aug. 29, 2017.

Her son, David Ward, had drowned at this South Shore lake in 1996. Five years later his 71-year-old mother left a suicide note saying she was “going to join her son,” according to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*.

A forensic anthropologist was unable to determine a cause of death.

Two months later the crew from **Bruce’s Legacy** found the body of 74-year-old Michael Whalen.

Whalen went missing in 2004 after traveling to the Lake Tahoe area from Florida. He arrived on the South Shore in his van carrying a brown, wood colored canoe. Whalen’s van was located near Fallen Leaf Lake in late 2004. The whereabouts of his canoe are unknown.

The small anchor and rope around Whalen’s legs were consistent with an anchor used for a canoe, according to El Dorado County sheriff’s detectives.

His cause of death remains unknown. There was no evidence of foul play.

Anyone with information on Whalen, the location of his canoe, or any canoe found at Fallen Leaf Lake in 2004 or 2005 is asked to call El Dorado County sheriff’s Detective Rich Horn at 530.642.4729 or Detective Damian Frisby at 530.573.3022.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*