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To the Honorable Chair, Senator Amodei, and Committee Members of the Senate Judiciary,

My name is Sandy Hellman. I am a foster and adoptive parent of 8 children. Today, I appear before you on behalf of The Northeastern Nevada Foster and Adoptive Parents' Association, where I serve as Vice-President. We fully support SB 267 which opens records to adult adoptees, and we seek your aye vote.

Nevada began sealing adoption records in 1953, as a means to protect the child and their newly formed family from intrusion and from the stigma of illegitimacy. The first and foremost concern was the best interest of the child, which remains at the heart of adoption in Nevada today. As we look to the public image of adoption in the 1950s, we can clearly see that social workers were concerned about intrusion from birthmothers, who may have regretted their decision of relinquishment of their child. There were repeated cases of birthmothers following the newly formed adoptive family, even to the point of what we today call stalking. The Las Vegas Sun published an article by reporter Archie Teague in 1954 which stated: "Any social worker will tell you the first thing to consider in protecting a child is keeping secret from the natural mother the names of adoptive parents." This is why records were sealed in Nevada. This is our true history. It is not fair to claim decades later that it was some design to assure anonymous relinquishment for birthparents, or to keep adoptees from knowing the full facts of their birth and adoption.

A few months ago, in October of 2002, our daughter was abducted by her birthmother. Nicki was taken from our neighborhood in Elko, Nevada. Thanks to a successful Amber Alert, she was found safe on a Texas highway and we were on the next plane to join her. It was an adoptive parents' worst nightmare - having a birthparent come back for a child. We lived this nightmare. We understand the good work of the 1953 legislature that sealed court records here in Nevada. We understand why this action was taken - in the best interests of the child. However, adoption practitioners today understand that openness and adult adoptee access to their own records serves them best - and is indeed considered best adoption practice.

So even with this experience my family has endured, I come before you today to speak to the best interests of the child. The child now grown. To the restoration of rights to adults, adopted as children, to access their own true birth and adoption records. We are speaking now of adults. Adults we have raised with love and candor. We believe in our grown children, that they have instilled within them the values of honesty and truth. With dignity and full vested rights as American citizens, grant them access to their state held records on par with non-adopted adults.

We ask that this legislative body continue to consider the best interests of the child - now grown. We seek your aye vote on SB 267.

## **AMBER ALERT**

**Canceled Tuesday October 8th.**

Less than a day after the state activated Austin's first Amber Alert, the missing teen has been found safe.

The Texas DPS located 14-year-old Nicole Hellman who is also known as Nikki Lightfoot Wednesday afternoon on Interstate Highway 37.



They also arrested her biological mom and a man. The case had Austin drivers on alert through the night and into Wednesday.

"It's a big deal. We want it to be a big deal. When we put it out, we want people to say, 'Oh no we need to keep an eye out for this,'" Mange said.

That's exactly what Austin drivers have been doing since the state activated the area's first Amber Alert.

"I noticed the signs that said kidnapped child," Austin driver Desirre McClurg said, "I immediately started looking' around for a Chevy truck looking."

Looking for the truck police officers in Elko, Nevada believe could lead law enforcement to the missing Nevada teen.

"Alerts have gone out. We're just not quite sure if they were appropriate in this circumstance," Mange said.

Worries for validity of the alert and the safety of the child are confirmed on Elko's Web site where officers caution that the man she could be with is armed and dangerous.

"It has to be believed that this child is in immediate physical danger and that's what the Elko police department told us when they contacted us last night," Mange said.

Credits: WorldNow and KXAN 36 TV, Austin Tx.

<http://codeamber.org/lightfoot/>

This page can be printed as a flyer. Please print and circulate!

# Found Safe



Nicole Lightfoot Hellman

If you have information concerning this abduction, please contact:  
Elko Police Department (775) 777-7300, or  
The Polly Klaas® Foundation (800) 587-4357

<http://www.pollyklaas.org/hellman.htm>

H-3

**Abductee information:**

Nickname: Nicky  
Date Missing: 10/5/02  
Missing from: Elko, NV  
Date of Birth: 1/1/88  
Age at Disappearance: 14 years  
Race: Caucasian  
Sex: Female  
Height: 4'11"  
Weight: 75 lbs.  
Eyes: Green  
Hair: Blonde, flipped under bob.

Last Seen Wearing: White crochet duster type sweater, pale pink turtleneck, Nike tennis shoes with lime-green 'swoosh,' blue denim flare-bottom jeans.

Circumstances: Nicole Hellman disappeared the evening of October 5, 2002 while riding her bicycle near her home in Elko, Nevada. Her bicycle was found around the corner from her home. She may be traveling with Lois 'Sassy' Lightfoot in a white pickup truck. A warrant for Kidnapping has been issued for the abductor. They may be traveling to Texas or Florida.

Nicole Hellman was located safe in Texas on October 9, 2002.

Abductor: Lois Renae Lightfoot  
Alias: 'Sassy,' 'Brittany,' 'Hickman' (last name)  
Non-Custodial Mother  
Date of Birth: 8/6/70  
Race: Caucasian  
Sex: Female  
Height: 5'6"  
Weight: 115 lbs.  
Eyes: Brown  
Hair: Bleached Blonde, naturally Dirty Blonde.  
Other: Tattoo of a vine around her right ankle.



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10/09/02 - 5:30 pm Links Available  
**Amber Alert Aids In Finding Teen**

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So while Amber's Austin debut may not have gone off without a hitch, you won't hear any drivers complaining.

"I think it's a great idea," Austin driver Frances Hunter said, "I thought it was a good thing because if police people are looking see the vehicle and have a phone, they can phone it in and help maybe catch them whoever they are."

This Amber Alert marks the second activated by the state. The first involved the case of the baby snatched from a Walmart in Abilene.

A case must meet certain criteria before it can become an Amber Alert including one that proves the child is in immediate physical danger.

### Related Links

Here is a list of links:

- [Texas Association of](#)

### Broadcasters

- [Texas DPS](#)

Free Teeth  
Whitening

for all new adult  
patient exams

H-5

# Child Loser in 'Private' Adoption

By Archib. Teague

Everyone gambles in privacy; and Catholic Community Welfare Service, which arranges baby adoptions, but the person who stands to lose most is the child.

Welfare agencies the country over have files thick with cases of families that have broken up over abusive adoptions. Veterans' social workers tell of instances in which natural mothers have shown up to demand or even blackmail adoptive parents.

There is never any guarantee that adoptive parents and child will adapt themselves to each other. And when adoptions are made through private arrangements, odds against success are high.

Las Vegas: two agencies to adoption—Nevada Welfare Service and Catholic Community Welfare Service. The social worker scored persons who look for "mechanical" solutions. It's understandable that they should want a bright, healthy child, but too many of them don't realize children, no matter how perfect, would change their lives.

Adoption agencies are concerned first with welfare of the child. Every step is taken to protect him and to see that he will enjoy a family life as close to normal as possible.

Any social worker will tell you the first thing to consider in protecting a child is keeping secret from the mother who had said she didn't want it.

Social workers, who eventually must head-off the results of poor placements, are faced with fear-some odds.

For every child adopted through an agency, 15 find their homes through private parties. Why is the ratio so overwhelmingly against them? One state welfare worker put it this way:

"A lot of people want to adopt babies who, in our opinion, would not make good fathers. They are either too old, or their marriage is unstable or they are irresponsible. We will not place a child in a home where he doesn't get at least an even break."

Persons turned down by adoption agencies invariably get their children through private channels. Here, there are no requirements.

TO BE CONTINUED

## 'Something Is There'--III

# Even 'Skeptics' See Flying Discs; Many Sightings in Northwest US

By John Romero

At 8:36, on the evening of July 4, 1947, Captain E. J. Smith, a United States pilot, was about to take off from Boise, Idaho, as a passenger pilot. Just before Smith entered the plane, someone in a crowd at the airport asked him if he had seen any flying saucers.

Smith—a confirmed skeptic—paled back. "I'd believe them when I see them."

Eight minutes after takeoff at 7,100 feet over Emmett, Idaho, Smith saw 102 one, but nine saucers. In Kenneth Arnold's new book, "The Coming of the Saucers," Smith relates the experience like this:

"At first I thought it was a Fourth of July celebration, but then I realized the things weren't aircraft, but were flat and circular. The first group of five appeared to open and close in formation, then veered to the left of the transport, called Ontario, Oregon CAA communication station.

Southern Nevadans who have seen aerial phenomena are invited to send a description of the sighting to the Review Journal. Date, times and names of viewers and witnesses are important.

"At this time my co-pilot (Ralph Stevens) informed me that the first group of discs had disappeared. It was then the second group, three together and the fourth off by itself, appeared. By then the transport had reached 8,200 feet altitude and was cruising over the rugged country leading to the Blue mountains, toward Pendleton, Oregon.

"My co-pilot saw exactly what

## Strange Sight Indeed!



BUSH PILOT SAID HE SAW THIS  
Kenneth Arnold's Model of Mount Rainier Sighting

## 'Orphan' Base Grows Into Full Citizen

Nellis Air Force Base, which came to Las Vegas during World War II as something of an adopted child when it was set up as an aerial gunnery school, has in the years since the war become an integral part of the community and takes great pride in its contributions to the various campaigns for funds which originate within the city of Las Vegas.

There has seldom been a drive of any consequence—whether it be for blood for the Red Cross, funds for the police drive, or clothing for the Korean youngsters—in which Nellis does not enter with all of the spirit of the citizens of the base—represents.

The several commanding officers at the base, since it was re-activated, have set the pattern of civic co-operation, and Brigadier General James Roberts, who is the head man at Nellis now, is going even further. The public relations between "town and base" has come alive under the direction of the general, and local residents know, when they get in trouble for volunteers for some task, they can call upon the air base and volunteers will be forthcoming.

One of the things which makes co-operation possible is the fact that a great many of the young men at the base have...

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