Armed robber takes cash from Kings Beach eatery

An undisclosed amount of cash was stolen last week from the Char Pit restaurant in Kings Beach.

Employees told Placer County sheriff's deputies that a man entered the unlocked rear door of the restaurant about 9pm Oct. 16, which was after hours, displayed a handgun and demanded money. He fled on foot.

The suspect was wearing a "Scream" Halloween-type mask during the armed robbery.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Placer County Sheriff's Office at 530.581.6320. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous and be eligible for a cash reward of up to $1,000 for information leading to an arrest should contact Placer County Crime Stoppers at 800.923.8191.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Barbells for Boobs fundraiser at ST Crossfit

South Tahoe Crossfit is putting on a Barbells for Boobs fundraiser on Oct. 24 starting at 9:30am.

The event will raise funds to provide mammograms for early detection of breast cancer, especially for people younger than 40. There will be a tribute workout to breast cancer fighters and survivors. People may join the workout or watch

and support.

This year's event is dedicated to **Renee Gorevin,** a teacher in Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

Donations may be made online.

For more information about Barbells for Boobs, go **online**.

Study: Get mammograms based on menopause status, not age

By Claudia Buck, Sacramento Bee

For years, women were advised to get their annual mammogram starting at age 40, an effort to detect breast cancer before it turned deadly. But that guideline became contentious with the medical community divided on what age – and how often – women should get their breast checks done. Some recommended that women over age 50 scale back to once-every-two-year mammograms.

Tuesday, a new UC Davis study says women should get annual mammograms based on their menopausal status, not their age. Its research is folded into new American Cancer Society breast cancer screening guidelines, expected to be released today. Previously, the society recommended yearly mammograms for all women over age 40.

"We found menopausal status was a much better predictor of who benefits from screenings," said Diana Miglioretti, a biostatistics professor with the UC Davis Department of Public Health Sciences, who conducted the research project, which looked at mammogram results from more than 15,000 U.S. women.

Read the whole story

Road beat: AWD best choice with Highlander



The Highlander comes close to perfection. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Now in the second year of its third generation, the Highlander remains a midsize crossover SUV based on the Toyota Camry chassis. While it is about 3-inches wider (76 inches) than the Camry, it rides on a similar 110-inch wheelbase and it is a Camry like 191-inches long. It uses the V-6 engine and transmissions as well. The Highlander does get a slightly bigger 2.7 L inline four. About the only similarity in their

appearance is the huge wide-mouth frown grill that seems to be a Toyota and Lexus theme in most of its vehicle.

Outside the Highlander has great proportions with a sleek window line hiding its boxiness and its shelf lights. Both tail lights and the head lights are finished with a flat chromed shelf. You can find this treatment also in the tail lights of the RAV 4.



Specifications

Price $29,675 to about $46,000

Engine

2.7L DOHC 16 valve inline four 185 hp 5,600 rpm

184 lb-ft of torque @ 4,200 rpm

3.5L DOHC 24 valve V-6 270 hp @ 6,200 rpm

248 lb-ft of torque @ 4,700 rpm

Transmission

Six speed torque converter automatic

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/FWDAWD

Dimensions

Wheelbase 109.8 inches

Length 191.1 inches
Width 75.8 inches
Height 68.1 inches (add two inches for the shark fin antenna)
Ground clearance 8.0 inches
Track (f/r) 64.4/64.2 inches
Fuel capacity 19.2 gallons
Passenger volume (moon roof) 154.0 cubic feet
Cargo volume behind 1st row/ 2nd row/ 3rd row 82.6/42.0/13.8 cubic feet
Weight (FWD/AWD) 4,354/4,508
Max Tow 5,000 pounds
Steering lock to lock 2.74 turns
Turning circle 38.7 feet
Performance
0-60 mph 6.69 seconds
50-70 mph 3.65 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 5.28 seconds
Top Speed Well into triple digits
Fuel economy EPA rated 19/25/21 mpg city/highway/ combined. Expect 28-29 mpg on the highway at legal speeds 22-23 mpg overall in suburban driving.

Powering my test vehicle was Toyota’s ubiquitous DOHC 24 valve V-6 which also powers the Camry, Sienna, Avalon, Lexus RX, IS, ES, RC and GS and maybe a couple of other models. It cranks out 270 hp at 6,200 rpm and 248 pounds of twist at 4,700 rpm which equates to 222 hp at 4,700 rpm. There is another option,

a big stroking inline four that makes 185 hp at 5,600 rpm and 184 pounds of twist at 4,200 rpm. Both engines use the same six-speed torque converter auto cog swapper. If you want AWD, it only comes with the V-6 for a reasonable $1,460 and the mileage penalty is one mpg over the FWD. Forget the four as it only offers one mpg over the V-6 and no AWD. Later you will see another huge reason for AWD.

Performance is excellent, posting excellent numbers and more than that, it feels powerful. Zero-60 mph takes just 6.69 seconds. Passing performance runs from 50-70 mph on the level is just 3.65 seconds and up a steep grade only slows that time to 5.28 seconds. Highlander absolutely rocks. As this was an FWD car and with that much power there is significant torque steer. If you stab the throttle too quickly, even with the traction control engaged, it will still smoke the tires. That is why AWD will improve the Highlander as it will reduce the tendency for both issues. That alone is reason enough to go for AWD, never mind the better traction and utility it offers.

Fuel economy is also better than advertised, even better than the four banger’s EPA numbers. The V-6 EPA numbers are 19/25/21 mpg city/highway/combined. For the AWD it drops one mpg with numbers of 18/24/20. The four cylinder returns 20/25/22, but here are the numbers attained during this test during a highway run at 70 mph the Highlander averaged 28.9 mpg and overall the average was 22 mpg. With the exact same gearing the AWD might lose one mpg with its 154-pound weight penalty (4,354 vs.4, 508 pounds). Buy the V-6 AWD.

Handling by the numbers should be good, but it’s a bit soft, so when pushed hard body roll is an issue. Steering is very quick at 2.74 turns lock to lock, 7.5 x 19 alloys and 245/55 x 19 rubber which should mean great handling doesn’t always work all that well. Understand in normal driving it is a luxury ride with easy handling, but high speed (.8-.9) in the twisties the Highlander becomes a lowlander. I would prefer an slight retuning of the of the state of the art suspension

system. Rapidly oscillating the steering wheel approximately 1-inch left and right on the highway had little effect on the vehicle. It doesn’t require constant correction on the highway, but it does reduce on center feel.

Ride quality on the other hand is superb. Suspension is state of the art with MacPherson struts up front and a trailing arm double wishbone out back. It comes with front and rear stab bars. It has the set up and the ride reflects that. Not only is it extremely smooth, it is anechoic chamber quiet. So for 99 percent of the people out there it would be hard to find a better ride. The engine spins a low 2,000 rpm at 70 mph which helps highway mileage.

Braking with large four-wheel (front ventilated) discs and all the acronyms is very good arresting forward progress from 40 mph in 41 feet. In addition to great brakes, it features about every safety acronym known including hill start assist, downhill assist, blind spot monitor and rear parking assist and I am only warming up here. The V-6 is rated to tow a substantial 5,000 pounds with the tow package.



Plenty of room for family and friends.

Inside is an interior that could be mistaken for a Lexus. Lots of leather, super seats, up to eight passengers, all the electronic wizardry and most everything you can touch is soft-touch materials. Even the front seats are heated and cooled while the second row has its own heat system in the Platinum

edition. Third row seating is three place with a 60/40 split and they fold flat into the floor. Its massive interior is also impressive. Total interior volume is 154 cubic feet with the standard panoramic moon roof that comes with the Platinum. The second and third row seats folding cargo volume is 82.6 cubic feet. The third row up it still has nearly 14 cubes of cargo volume, or the size of your average mid-size sedan. Don’t go to Home Depot without a spending limit.

Its instrument panel has all the gauges including a big tach and a complete trip computer. There was nothing left wanting. Even the sound system did a great imitation of Carnegie Hall.

OK, so you think it will take 50 large to buy one. My fully loaded FWD Limited Platinum stickered for (2016) $42,680 plus $885 for the train from Princeton, Ind. Running boards, mud guards, tow package, mats and a couple of other small items brought the total to $45,718. AWD, which I recommend highly, adds $1,460. But a Limited AWD with the tow package should come in at about $45 large and that is a smoking deal for a near luxury loaded crossover do all vehicle. It’s not perfect, but it’s darn close.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Feds to regulate recreational drones

By Craig Whitlock, Washington Post

Federal regulators said Monday that they will require recreational drone users to register their aircraft with the government for the first time in an attempt to track rogue flying robots that are increasingly posing a threat to aviation safety.

The decision to compel drone owners to register their aircraft represents a policy shift by the Obama administration and a tacit admission by the Federal Aviation Administration that it has been unable to safely integrate the popular remote-controlled planes into the national airspace.

U.S. officials said they still need to sort out the basic details of the registration system – which they hope to set up within two months – but concluded that they had to take swift action to cope with a surge in sales of inexpensive, simple-to-fly drones that are interfering with regular air traffic.

Read the whole story

Letter: Adventure firm helps at B&B

To the community,

“Bread & Broth provides a great service to the local community and we’re happy to be a part of serving the South Lake Tahoe community,” said Linda Mueller.

Mueller and husband, Jim, are the owners of Adventure Mountain Resort Lake Tahoe. They have been sponsoring a B&B’s Adopt A Day of Nourishment for the last three years. Hosting a Monday evening meal has been a family and business affair where over

the years their sons and Adventure Mountain Resort team members have volunteered at their sponsorship dinners.

At their Oct. 5 AAD dinner, the Muellers and their son, Max, brought their great work and fun attitudes to help provide a healthy and filling dinner experience for the 96 guests that showed up at St. Theresa Church Grace Hall. They were a great help to the B&B volunteer crew and a very special thank you to Max for his help drying the various pots, pans and dinner trays.

Due to the great donors and AAD sponsors like Adventure Mountain Resort, B&B also provides the Second Serving meal on Fridays at the Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church and, beginning this month has added the St. Theresa B&B 4 Kids program. B&B 4 Kids provides meals for weekends for 103 Lake Tahoe Unified School District K-8 students during the school year.

B&B is so grateful to our community for their generosity to those who need a helping hand and Kudos to Adventure Mountain Resort Lake Tahoe for giving back to their community.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Garbage truck catches fire in S. Lake Tahoe



A garbage truck on Oct. 20 caught fire at the South Tahoe Refuse yard. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

A fire Tuesday at South Tahoe Refuse destroyed the cab and possibly more of one of the garbage trucks.

“To be isolated to that truck is amazing,” John Marchini, who runs the South Lake Tahoe garbage company, said.

The fire was reported about 6:30pm Oct. 20. It had been parked in the truck bay after picking up trash earlier in the day. The doors to the building were closed at the time the fire started.

The sprinkler system worked efficiently, which kept the fire to the truck. Other vehicles and the building were not damaged.

“It could be the regeneration system, or could have been trash that accumulated or could be an electrical short,” Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News*.

He estimated the damage at being $100,000. Meston said the hydraulics were damaged and maybe the engine. A rig had to be used to pull the truck out of the building.

New, these types of vehicles cost several hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The motor is behind the cab and in between the box where the trash is put. The motor area as well as the cab was totally blackened.

Marchini was told by fire officials the blaze did not start in the cab. He is hoping the bulk of the vehicle will be salvageable. It will be taken to the mechanical shop Wednesday morning.

With this truck out of service, it will not impact trash collection. The rest of the fleet will be on the streets at 5am for commercial service and 7am for residential.

Marchini told *Lake Tahoe News* fires have been rare at STR.

TOCCATA sets dates for ‘Messiah’ performances

Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus announces its annual production of Handel’s “Messiah”, with performances in five locations.

“Messiah” was first performed in Dublin, Ireland, on March 23, 1742, and was conducted by its composer. The TOCCATA production is a celebration of the holidays and includes not only favorite selections from “Messiah Parts One and Three”, but also seasonal carols that the audience will be welcome to

join in singing.

Joining the TOCCATA Orchestra and Chorus for this production are soloists Maria Arrigotti, Joy Strotz, Anna Helwing, sopranos; Michael Dwayne and Sherman Modeste, tenors, and Brad Perry, Chris Langdon and Chris Nelson, baritones. The TOCCATA Chamber Orchestra features Brian Fox and Jeff Lyndhurst as concertmasters; Katie Lauder, Nick Haines as continuo; and Josh Dunlap, and John Beckman on baroque trumpets. All performances will be conducted by Maestro James Rawie.

Shows are:

- Dec. 12 7pm, Cornerstone Church, Incline Village
- Dec. 13 3pm, Corpus Christi Church, Carson City
- Dec. 16 7pm, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Reno
- Dec. 18 7pm, St. Theresa Church, South Lake Tahoe
- Dec. 20 3pm, St. Rose of Lima Church, Reno.

Tickets are available at the door 30 minutes prior to the concert, or **online**. General admission to all concerts is $30 adults, $25 seniors, $5 students aged 19 to 23 with valid ID, free for those younger than 19. Preferred seating is $40 and $15 for youth/students.

EDC horse diagnosed with West Nile

A horse in El Dorado County has West Nile virus. The horse, from the Greenwood area on the West Slope, is expected to recover.

Horses can get WNV when they are bitten by a mosquito that has the virus. Horses cannot give the virus to people or other

animals.

Vaccination for WNV is recommended as a core standard of care for all horses in North America. Vaccination generally protects the horse for one year. There is no WNV vaccine for humans or other domestic animals; however, llamas and alpacas may benefit from the horse vaccine.

There are no known human cases this year of West Nile in El Dorado County; four birds have tested positive.

Sign issues dominate SLT council meeting



South Lake Tahoe councilmembers want to craft law to allow this sign to remain in town. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Signs – the fee for a permit and one that doesn't meet the letter of the law – were hot topics at the Tuesday South Lake Tahoe City Council meeting.

A unanimous vote by the South Lake Tahoe City Council on Oct. 20 immediately reduced the fee for sign permits.

It's an issue that arose after the council earlier this year changed the entire fee schedule. The goal in doing so was to have the fees reflect what it costs staff to deal with the particular issue. (Recreation is the main area the council agreed should be subsidized and not meet the true cost standard.)

What was approved earlier this year was a sign permit fee of $878. All councilmembers voted for that rate. It was reduced Tuesday to be $120 for a minor sign and up to $300 for a sign permit that is more involved.

No one councilmember championed the cause for the reduction, but instead they all agreed from the get-go when it was pointed out to them that it was excessive.

Work began in July for the fee to be changed. It went to the Planning Commission in September.

Other changes make the sign ordinance more like TRPA's policy.

Also discussed at the meeting was the possibility of allowing Tahoe Trout Farm to keep its seasonal sign on the American Legion property on Highway 50. It is there when the farm is open, which this year was April 28-Oct. 1. The farm has been operating since 1946 – 19 years before the city was incorporated.

It does not meet city or Tahoe Regional Planning Agency regulations; neither allows off-site signs. The issue went to the Planning Commission. But there is nothing in city code to allow the sign.

The council agreed to uphold the Planning Commission's decision to not allow the sign, but also directed staff to come back before spring with a proposal that would allow the sign to stay.

This is even though owner Jim Vallier admitted social media is what is driving people to his business, which he has owned for four years. He boasted to the council that the trout farm has gone from 60th to 12th place on TripAdvisor for things to do in South Lake Tahoe.

Kathy Vaughan, who lives across from the farm, wants the sign to stay, too.

"Let's not eliminate old Tahoe. Keep that sign out there," she told the council.

The city does allow for directional signs and local unique signs. The latter is more historical in nature, but the word "historical" is not used because it would trigger state involvement.

Councilwoman JoAnnConner said put an arrow on the sign and make it directional. It's not that simple. After all, the sign already has an arrow on it.

The council wants to make other changes to the sign ordinance. At a future meeting the electeds will consider changing when sandwich boards can be put on the sidewalk. The Oct. 20 vote changed it to 5pm on Fridays. Councilmembers Tom Davis and Conner advocated to bump that to 2pm. The other three had no appetite to change it at this week's meeting, and voted down the motion. Still, Davis and Conner only needed each other's OK to have it brought back as a separate item down the road.

Also coming back will be whether businesses may use umbrellas with logos on them. Conforming to Tahoe Regional Planning Agency regs will be necessary. Graphic elements and the like will also have to be considered.

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In other action:

· The council agreed to bring back the plastic bag ordinance that took effect Oct. 15 as it pertains to retail establishments.

· Councilwoman Wendy David announced the Cal-Tahoe JPA that handles ambulance service for South Lake Tahoe and Lake Valley fire departments voted not to renew the contract with El Dorado County when it expires in 2019. Solutions are still being worked on.

· Councilman Austin Sass noted the Tahoe Transportation District staff will be presenting updates on the loop road to Douglas County and South Lake Tahoe officials later this fall.

· The council voted 4-1 to establish the Community Play Consortium Joint Powers Authority with Lake Tahoe Community College and Lake Tahoe Unified School District. Councilwoman Conner abstained. She and David, the two on the subcommittee, went back and forth as though they had not been at the same meetings at which the agreements were crafted.