

Multi-instrumentalist to perform on South Shore

Have you heard any good Middle Eastern Oud or Kemenche lately? How about South American Charango and Zamponia or East Indian Tablas or Santoor? These and many other ethnic instruments from the Middle East, Central Asia, India, China and South America will be played by multi-instrumentalist Todd Green at 7pm March 27 at South Tahoe High School theater.

His performance will be enhanced by digital samplers, which allow him to record and over-dub instruments one by one, making him a one-man-orchestra of unique and exotic instruments.

The concert will be preceded by a half-hour quiet strings-only, live prelude.

Admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$5 for children.

Green is performing in South Shore schools through March 25 as part of Tahoe Arts Project's performing arts program. He is also giving a free lecture-demonstration March 21 at 3pm at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

For more information, contact Tahoe Arts Project at 530.542.3632.

Energy reduction help for

TDPUD customers

Truckee Donner Public Utility District customers who sign up for a free residential energy survey will receive two free LED light bulbs.

Truckee Donner Public Utility District has been helping their commercial customers transition to LEDs and improve their bottom line for years. In 2013, TDPUD introduced a \$5 per bulb residential electric customer LED rebate and demand for this program has risen more than 300 percent in one year.

To get the free LED light bulbs, TDPUD customers can call the Conservation Department at 530.582.3931 for an appointment. An energy surveyor will visit the customer's home and conduct a visual survey. Based on what is needed, the customer will be provided with free energy and water saving products, including installation of up to 24 energy-efficient light bulbs (including the two LEDs) and two shower heads. The survey typically takes 90 minutes.

Road beat: Toyota Yaris – economical, efficient



Toyota Yaris evolves through the years – especially in looks.
Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Yaris has been in the Toyota stable since 1999 starting as the egg shaped Echo, not exactly the most attractive car in Toyota history, but it was quite a performer knocking off 0-60 mph times in the eights and easily achieving 30 mpg plus. Now in its third generation (since 2011) and the second generation using the Yaris name (2005), it remains a sporty runner.

Styling since the introduction of the second generation was a significant improvement over the original Echo, now appearing as a two-box shape with sharper lines. It's a small car with a long wheelbase of 99 inches and a short length of 155 inches. Width is svelte at 67 inches and it stands tall at 59 inches. For 2015 the new Yaris, while keeping the shape of the third generation, gets a face lift with the new Toyota themed front end which looks like a black wide upside down smile. You can

see the same look in the Corolla and Camry. Even the Highlander gets a similar front end styling theme. Yaris is not a bad looking car, as its design is based on maximum utility, but it is also designed for maximizing economy. Yaris co-efficient of drag is a low 0.29. If you look at the Yaris from the side, you can see its slick profile and the steep rake of the windshield.

Getting to the nuts and bolts of the Yaris, it is powered by a peppy little 1.5L DOHC 16 valve inline four-cylinder engine cranking out 106 hp at 6,000 rpm and 103 pounds of torque at 4,200 rpm (82 hp at 4,200 rpm). It is connected to a five-speed manual tranny or an optional four-speed torque converter automatic as was my tester. When I tested the original Echo about 15 years ago, it had an almost identical 1.5L inline four rated at 108 hp and 106 pounds of twist. With a five-speed manual, it could scamper to 60 mph in 8 seconds and at 163 inches in length it was slighter larger, but I couldn't say anything nice about its appearance.

This new Yaris is a bit quicker than its perhaps small car rival the Mitsu Mirage by stopping the chondex in a sprint to 60 mph in 9.94 seconds. Not as quick as the original Echo, but the Echo was a five-speed manual. This Yaris with



Specifications

Price

\$15, 670 to about \$19,500 all in

Engine

1.5L 16 valve, DOHC inline four cylinder 106 hp @ 6,000

103 lb-ft of torque @ 4,200 rpm

Transmission

Five speed manual

Four speed automatic

Configuration

Front engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 98.8 inches

Length 155.5 inches

Width 66.7 inches

Height 59.4 inches

Track 57.5/56.9 inches

Ground clearance 5.5 inches

a manual should break into the high eights. Passing times also show a bit of spirit with a 50-70 mph simulated passing time of 5.63 seconds on a level highway and 11.19 seconds up a 6 percent grade. Yaris wasn't designed for racing.

But Yaris was designed to pass gas stations. EPA rated at 30/36/32 mpg city/highway/combined it does a bit better. Overall the Yaris averaged 34 mpg in suburban driving and 39.2 mpg in a two-way level highway run at 70 mph. While it may be quicker than a Mitsu Mirage, the Mirage returns about 5 more mpg. At least Toyota saw fit to have a larger fuel tank with 11.1 gallons giving you a solid 300-plus-mile range.

Suspension is MacPherson struts up front with a semi-independent torsion beam in the rear. But instead of tires modeled after a Winchell's doughnut, my test came with 16-inch alloys with 195/50 series rubber that was V rated to withstand 149 mph for 24 hours. Don't expect the Yaris to approach 149 mph, but it is sporty rubber and it shows when you get aggressive in the twisties. Besides its quick steering of 2.65 turns lock to lock its turning

Weight 2,335 pounds
Fuel capacity 11.1 gallons
Passenger volume 85.5 c/f
Cargo volume 15.5 c/f
Turning circle 36.1 feet
Steering lock to lock 2.65 turns
Wheels 16 inch alloys
Tires 195/50VR16
Co-efficient of drag 0.29
Performance
0-60 mph 9.94 seconds
50-70 mph 5.63 seconds
50-70 uphill 11.19 seconds
Top speed, well over the century mark
Fuel economy EPA rated 30/36/32 mpg city/highway/combined. Expect 34 mpg in suburban driving, 39 mpg on the highway at legal speeds.

circle is only 36 feet. On center steering feel is very good. With that wider 16-inch low profile rubber the Yaris can corner. It only weighs 2,335 pounds, which also reduces tire loads improving cornering power. Turn in is crisp making it powerful, predictable, balanced and fun in the twisties with good feedback. It was surprisingly good even getting some controlled rotation when pushed very hard in the corners. Wait a second; the Yaris might be fun in an autocross. Even the base Yaris gets 15-inch steel wheels with 175/65 series rubber.

Ride quality is smooth on the highway, but on coarse roads there is some road noise. It handles bumps well, but you can feel when the suspension reaches its limits on huge bumps. The engine spins 2,950 rpm at 70 mph and is nearly inaudible. A fifth gear could improve the highway mileage. Wind noise is at a minimum.

With SE model you also get four-wheel disc brakes instead of drum rear brakes on the base model. Of course ABS and most every other safety acronym is standard. Stops from 40 mph are made in a very good 42 feet with perfect control. Nine airbags are standard along with a tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS). Of course vehicle stability control, traction control and even smart stop technology is standard.

Inside are firm, stylish comfortable seats with complete manual adjustments. They are actually quite nice and the back seat is roomy for two full size adults. Behind the rear seats there still remains over 15 cubic feet of cargo volume. Folding the rear 60/40 seats turns the Yaris into a mini SUV.



Mileage makes the Yaris a good commuter vehicle.

Instrumentation is complete with a speedo and tach plus a trip computer. All the materials are Toyota quality. The center stack has a large touch screen and the \$899 upgrade to a NAV system works well. It is a terrific commuter that actually gives you a lot more. Full power is standard, including power windows, locks and mirrors.

Pricing for Yaris L starts at \$14,845 plus \$825 for the boat from France (yes, Yaris is assembled in France. You will need to check for croissant crumbs on delivery). That is for a manual, three-door model with still standard power windows, locks and mirrors. The full boat model SE that I tested stickered for \$17,620 plus destination plus the NAV system. Embroidered carpeted floor mats were \$180 bringing the total to \$19,524. In combined driving you should get 36 mpg, spunky performance with plenty of bells and whistles. And the sound system sounds great. What's not to like. I drove it for a week and enjoyed every day going places.

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.

SLT solidifies end of commercial air service

By Kathryn Reed

A significant chapter in Lake Tahoe Airport's history came to a close Tuesday when the City Council unanimously agreed to give up the FAA certificate that allows commercial air service.

Aircraft carrying high rollers and celebrities for the annual golf tournament will still be regular fixtures at Lake Tahoe Airport – and some of those planes are substantial in size. The decision also isn't likely to be noticeable to pilots or the general public.

Formally called the Federal Aviation Regulation Part 139 Certificate, this is what the feds require for commercial service to be allowed at airports. Inspections are done annually to ensure an airport meets the specifications. Files and logs kept by the fixed based operator are looked at; the runway and taxiways have to be the correct slope; the pavement must be in a certain condition, as well as markings, lighting, and signage; rescue and firefighting equipment are analyzed, as are personnel training records. The fuel farm and mobile fueler's fire suppression equipment is also checked.

And while no one from the FAA is going to continue to do these inspections, the city intends to maintain the airport as if it had the 139 certificate. According to Michael Golden, who runs Mountain West Aviation – the fixed base operation, this is something pilots like because it means the airport is run at a higher standard than other facilities.

If the day comes that the city wants to have commercial service, it still could. It means filling out FAA paperwork and having an airline lined up. More significantly it could

mean a \$15 million investment – in today's dollars – to bring the runway up to specifications for certain types of aircraft. It's also possible that depending on the airline and plane used, that type of capital outlay would not be needed.



TWA was one of several airlines that used to fly into Lake Tahoe Airport. Photo/Del Laine

It was pointed out that rules can change and there is no guarantee the city would have the means or ability to jump through whatever new hoops the FAA erects.

And the figure above doesn't include the couple million dollars the terminal would likely need to bring it up to national Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regs.

The city's certificate has been in the inactive status because no commercial flights have come in for 14 years.

The reality the elected were faced with on March 17 was that the last commercial flight in and out of the South Lake Tahoe airport was in 2001. This was long after the peak in 1978 of almost 300,000 enplanements. When the city embarked on updating the master plan, which was required after a settlement agreement expired in 2012, the future of the

airport had to be decided.

Last summer the council at the time voted to have the airport become a general aviation facility without commercial service. This week's vote solidified that decision. It also will keep the airport subsidy to \$354,000 a year. It was expected to increase nearly another \$120,000 based on changes to the training for firefighters. (At the peak, the city was subsidizing the airport with \$600,000 a year from the general fund.)

Fire Chief Jeff Meston told the council training will still occur – but onsite, instead of offsite as the feds now mandate.

Another issue the city will have to tackle is replacing the 30-plus-year-old vehicle used specifically for fighting an airplane fire. They cost almost \$1 million.

The staff report says, "Without a letter of intent from an air carrier, it's unlikely that the FAA would participate in funding a new (Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting) vehicle."

Letter: Soroptimist take turn at Bread & Broth

To the community,

Once again sponsoring an Adopt A Day of Nourishment, Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe helped ease hunger by hosting the March 9 evening Bread & Broth dinner. For the Soroptimist volunteer crew, it was a "first time" experience at a B&B dinner for Niki Congero, Sonia Quillian,

Mary Lou Whitcomb and Kris Keesling. They were a great, enthusiastic group and excited about their experience helping others.

“So rewarding to have this opportunity to help the people of our community in need,” said Congero. “It reminds me how blessed I am.”

“What an amazing group of dedicated volunteers creating a successful home cooked, tasty meal,” added Keesling. “I was so surprised this caring group also creates healthy food bags for take home. Being a volunteer truly warms my heart.”

B&B really encourages all of our AAD sponsors to send a crew to be able to experience the great meals, the thankfulness of our dinner guests and their sponsor group’s impact upon the community that their \$250 donation generates.

According to one very happy dinner guest, the Soroptimist served the “best” salmon cakes served with a lemon caper sauce lovingly prepared by the B&B volunteer cooks.

Thanks to the Soroptimists’ generosity and concern for the hungry of our community, B&B was able to provide a healthy, tasty meal for the 90 plus dinner guests. For more B&B information, go online or find us on Facebook.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Food industry bitter over proposed sugar labels

By Evan Halper, Los Angeles Times

Of all the issues the Obama administration is grappling with, a modest redesign of what food labels say about sweeteners might not have seemed among the more controversial. But ever since first lady Michelle Obama unveiled the plan last year, a lobbying frenzy has ensued.

The objections have come not only from candy makers and bottlers of soft drinks.

The governor of Massachusetts implored the administration to rethink its proposal. The governor of Wisconsin protested too. So did the government of Australia, which warned the move could violate international trade agreements.

The proposal being considered by the Food and Drug Administration would add a new line to labels on packaged products noting how many teaspoons of sugar had been added.

Read the whole story

South Tahoe skaters carve up competition



South Lake Tahoe skaters, from left, Anett Fenyvesi, Zoe Wanzer, Carly Cox, Kiara Furrer, Maddy Monroe, Dayna Genna, Savannah Purvance, Alyssa Reeves, Olivia Herrera, Summer Furrer, Kristen Oleson, Allana Jones, Grace Zanetti, Olive Hamner-Jillson, Kylie Muskovitz, Sophia Purvance, and Keatyn Louise. (Four team members not pictured.) Photo/Provided

All skaters from the Tahoe Snowflakes placed either first or second last weekend at the Shamrock competition at the Yerba Buena Ice Skating Center in San Francisco.

The team, which skates out of the South Lake Tahoe Ice Rink, placed first in production, second for synchronized junior youth team (ages 5-8), first in synchronized youth team (ages 7-11), and first for senior youth synchronized team (ages 11-14).

The South Tahoe rink earned the third place overall award, which is calculated by adding the points awarded by the placements of each skater and teams from each of the

participating rinks.

Keatyn Louise, Olivia Herrera, Kiara Furrer, Olive Hamner-Jillson and Summer Furrer also competed in solo events in the senior youth category. Alyssa Reeves, Kristen Oleson, Hamner-Jillson and Summer Furrer also skated as duos. Reeves, Oleson, Herrera and Summer Furrer, all from the South Tahoe Middle School presented an ensemble to the theme of the musical "Grease" which they choreographed. They placed second after a team from Oakland.

In addition to coaching the Tahoe skaters, Susan Campbell-Howe and Alex Furrer were judges for other events.

The Ice Skating Institute sanctioned the March 14 competition.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Mancuso ends season early due to hip injury

By Nick Zaccardi, NBC

Julia Mancuso's impeccable record of competing (and usually making the podium) at major events will blemish this week.

Mancuso, who owns nine Olympic or World Championships medals, was in Maui while the rest of the world's best Alpine skiers traveled to Meribel, France, for this week's World Cup Finals.

She called an early end to her season due to pain in her right hip, a problem area throughout her career that intensified after she fell on her right side in a giant slalom in Are, Sweden, on Dec. 12.

“Since I’m planning on continuing to ski, it’s not worth pushing it,” Mancuso said in a phone interview Monday. “I need to look at the problem a little closer.”

Read the whole story

Study: SBA loans going to luxury retailers, resorts

By Bruce Parker, Fox News

The Small Business Administration is the federal agency that helps “little guy” businesses get loans they couldn’t get through traditional lenders. Or so the story goes.

According to a 2014 federal oversight report from public research group American Transparency, taxpayer-backed SBA loans are popular with businesses serving “wealthy lifestyles.”

Found among the list of borrowers were Rolex and Lamborghini dealers, Napa Valley wineries, Sears and State Farm affiliates, Jackson Hole and Lake Tahoe resorts, and Levine Leichtman Capital Partners in Beverly Hills – not your typical mom-and-pop shops.

Read the whole story

Moose head stolen from Sunnyside

There is a moose on the loose. And this is no ordinary moose.

Thieves entered the lobby of Sunnyside and made off with the resort's pet of sorts.

A mounted moose head was stolen from the Tahoe City restaurant-hotel between midnight and 7am Jan. 22. Placer County sheriff's deputies are just now getting around to telling the public.

Anyone with information regarding the burglary or the whereabouts of the moose head are asked to call Detective John Lasagna at 530.581.6323 or remain anonymous by calling Placer County Crime Stoppers at 800.923.8191.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*