

Tahoe-Reno events receive infusion of cash

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

Sixteen special events across the Reno-Tahoe region will receive a total of \$235,000 this year from the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority for marketing efforts.

But in approving the package, the RSCVA board Thursday denied \$15,000 recommended for the first World Championship Chili Cookoff scheduled for Oct. 16-18 at the Grand Sierra Resort.

RSCVA CEO Chris Baum said the panel spent nearly a day reviewing applications for the once-a-year funds. A total of 27 events requested \$841,900 for money that under RSCVA guidelines can be used to augment marketing efforts to increase overnight lodging but not for operational costs.

Read the whole story

How casino games are created

By Andrea Domanick, Las Vegas Sun

Millions of people come to Las Vegas every year hoping to win big at a casino table. But gambling isn't the only way to cash in on casino games.

Anyone with an idea for a new table game can submit it to Nevada's Gaming Control Board to be approved for lease to casinos. Though the majority of design pitches come from major gaming companies and professional game inventors, concepts

from hobbyists and Averages Joes can and do end up on casino floors.

“Someone literally might come to us with a concept drawn out on paper; they can be that rudimentary,” said Jonné Brunette, an agent with the Gaming Control Board enforcement division, which handles table game submissions. “People have pitched anything under the sun. It is amazing what has been submitted to us.”

The enforcement division can’t divulge details about the ideas it receives because of confidentiality agreements, but the majority of pitches tend to be game variations, such as side wagers on existing games such as blackjack. Entirely new game concepts are more rare.

The board approves seven to 10 new games and about 50 game variations per year.

Read the whole story

Tahoe basin taken out of Martis Valley West project



This ridgeline located in Carnelian Bay is what Mountainside Partners wanted to develop.

By Kara Fox, Moonshine Ink

The Lake Tahoe Basin will no longer be included in the Martis Valley West Project, which originally called for 112 residential units on land inside the basin. The developer asked Placer County on Tuesday to exclude 138 acres of Tahoe basin land, while maintaining the transfer of development rights in Martis Valley, after environmental groups urged them to not develop within the basin.

“A part of the Martis Valley West Parcel Project initially contemplated having a Tahoe basin residential development component. Certain parties have made it clear that conservation in the Martis Valley is not their priority,” wrote Project Manager Kurt Krieg to Placer County. “The Tahoe Basin-centric focus ultimately jeopardizes the successful completion of the conservation legacy, upon which stakeholders have been working collaboratively for a decade.”

The developer, Mountainside Partners (formerly East West Partners), also asked that the county suspend the application to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for approval of any new development within an Area Plan in the Tahoe basin, which means any future development on the Tahoe basin land would have to be approved separate from the Martis Valley West Project. Mountain Area Preservation, Sierra Watch, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, and Placer County Supervisors Jennifer Montgomery and Jack Duran had been urging the developer to exclude the basin from its proposal.

“Because the Basin land will be separated from the rest of the project, approvals will not require Tahoe Regional Planning Agency action,” Montgomery said in a statement. “Additionally,

the applicant will work with the agency to more accurately define the boundary line for the Tahoe basin. If necessary, a boundary line adjustment will be done to ensure the project is a separate legal parcel from any land within the Tahoe basin.”

Read the whole story

Tax related phone scams hitting Washoe County

There is a new scam being reported by the Washoe County Sheriff’s Department. Residents are getting calls from people saying they have been chosen to receive a grant for paying their taxes on time or for not having filed bankruptcy.

Fraudsters are instructing people to call and give the operator a “Grant Authorization Number,” then the scammers ask for the person’s checking account number so they can deposit the grant – and siphon your money.

Deputies suggest hanging up on the person and contacting local police.

Tahoe residents working on

climate change

Citizens Climate Lobby is hosting two meetings in South Lake Tahoe.

The first is Jan. 31 at 10am. The one-hour talk is for organizers to talk about CCL and then come up with a plan for how Tahoe can help.

The second meeting is Feb. 7 at 10am. It will start with the "First Saturday of the Month Chapter Phone Call" and then an hour to further organize the Tahoe group.

Both meetings are at Lake Tahoe Community College in the dining area.

More information about CCL may be found online.

Dana Nuccitelli and Jennifer Wood from CCL in Sacramento gave a presentation to more than 60 people in South Lake Tahoe on Jan. 27.

Sugar Bowl making a name in the wedding world

Sugar Bowl ski resort is in the Knot's Best of Weddings Hall of Fame after receiving its fourth consecutive Best of Weddings award from organization this year.

Sugar Bowl is one of six wedding venues in the Sacramento/Lake Tahoe/Reno area to claim the distinction. The Knot is the nation's most visited wedding website.

In addition to being recognized by the Knot, Sugar Bowl was also selected for a 2015 WeddingWire Couples' Choice Award, making it among the top 5 percent of venues on the website. The recognition is given based on reviews by couples that chose Sugar Bowl as their wedding venue.

Tahoe Unveiled also included Sugar Bowl in its Top 5 Receptions of 2014 for Venue with the Best View.

Road beat: 'Genesis is now a world-class automobile'



Hyundai redefines its luxury car. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

When Hyundai introduced its first upscale luxury sedan in 2008 as a 2009 model, the Hyundai Genesis, it took a few months before the public realized that a car company that started selling cars in the U.S. with the \$4,995 Hyundai Excel in 1986, could build a luxury car. The original Genesis turned out to be an incredible value. While sales for the first six months were slow, it soon became a huge success.

With the 2015 second generation Hyundai Genesis, Hyundai demonstrates that it can build some of the best cars in the world. The 2015 Genesis is now a world-class automobile, one of the best cars the Road Beat has ever tested. When you consider its relatively low price, it may be the best.

From its all new long 118.5-inch wheelbase (up three inches) and wide track chassis, to its new beautifully flowing sculptured body with no resemblance to the first generation Genesis, this new Genesis makes a muscular statement to those European brands that Hyundai can do it better. It is a rather simple shape that starts with an aggressive snout of a grille. A single character line along its flanks defines its sleekness along with a beautiful window line that ends in a distinctive rear quarter window. There are no wasted curves or unnecessary clutter to otherwise mar this elegant design.



Specs and Techs

Price \$39,450 to about \$55,000

Engines

3.8L DOHC 24 valve V-6 311
hp@ 6,000rpm
293 lb.-ft. of torque @
5,000 rpm
5.0L DOHC 32 valve V-8 420
hp @ 6,000 rpm
383 lb.-ft. of torque @
5,000 rpm
Transmission
Eight speed automatic
Configuration
Longitudinal front
engine/Rear Wheel Drive/All
Wheel Drive
Dimensions
Wheelbase 118.5 inches
Length 196.5 inches
Width 74.4 inches
Height 58.3 inches
Track (f/r) 64.1/65.3 inches
Ground clearance 5.3 inches
Weight (RWD/AWD/5.0L)
4,138/4,295/4,541 pounds
Trunk capacity 15.3 cubic
feet
Fuel Capacity 20.3 gallons
Steering lock to lock 2.55
turns
Turning circle 36.2 feet
Wheels (3.8/5.0)
18X8/19X8.5f; 19X9r inches
Tires (3.8/5.0)
245/45X18/245/40X19f;
275/35X19r
Cabin volume 107.7 cubic
feet
Coefficient of drag 0.26

Performance

0-60 mph 5.89 seconds

50-70 mph level 2.97 seconds, uphill 3.86 seconds

Top speed electronically limited to 149 mph

Fuel economy EPA rated at 18/29/22 mpg combined.

Expect 22-25 mpg in suburban/rural driving.

32-33 mpg on a level highway at 70 mph.

Its coefficient of drag of 0.26 is a testament to its cleanliness. Kudos to Hyundai.

It is a small full-size ride with a length of 196 inches and width of 74 inches while standing 58 inches tall. However, inside are a voluminous interior of 108-cubic-feet and a 15-cubic-foot trunk.

Powering the Genesis rear wheels is one of two engines, a 3.8L DOHC, 24 valve V-6 producing 311 hp at 6,000 rpm along with a peak torque value of 293 pounds at 5,000 rpm or a 5.0L, DOHC, 32 valve V-8 cranking out 420 hp at 6,000 rpm and peak torque of 383 pounds at 5,000 rpm. Unless you need to hear the sound of a wonderful V-8 engine go with the V-6 as was my test vehicle for reasons which I will explain later.

Performance for the V-6 is world-class with a 0-60 mph time of 5.89 seconds. Passing times also reflect world-class numbers of 2.97 seconds and 3.86 seconds in passing tests from 50-70 mph on level ground and up a 6 percent grade. While the V-8 may be a half a second or so quicker, it is hardly worth the loss in fuel economy or the extra cost of acquisition.

Hyundai's new eight-speed automatic is also worth mentioning with intuitive, silky shifts. Its ratios are perfectly spaced,

allowing the engine to feel even more powerful than the numbers would indicate. And there are handy paddle shifters that can accommodate those enthusiasts who prefer the longer windy way home. This Genesis seriously rocks.

Eight speeds also mean good fuel economy. EPA says that you should expect 18/29/22 mpg city/highway/combined. In actual testing the Genesis returned on a level highway with the Smart cruise control set at 70 mph 32 mpg. During a 50-mile trip through Sacramento with 5 o'clock freeway traffic, which included 10 percent stop and go, the Genesis returned 31.4 mpg. Overall the Genesis averaged between 22-25 mpg, which is excellent for a 4,100-pound, 300 plus hp luxury car. No guilt here.

If there is a rub, some enthusiasts may say the new Genesis is too soft. That could be true if your intended purpose was to spend lots of time doing laps at Sonoma Raceway, Thunderhill or Laguna Seca. Sure you could have more fun in a Mini Cooper Turbo or a Golf R type or even an M series BMW, but that's not the reason most people buy a luxury ride, to do laps at the race track. But after tracking the Genesis in the tight twisties this Genesis acquitted itself quite well.

Genesis suspenders are state of the art Independent 5 link system at all four corners that include high performance gas shocks and coils. It also has solid stabilizer bars at both ends. The steering is an electric variable ratio power rack that is exceedingly quick at 2.55 turns lock-to-lock. Also adding to its handling credentials are 18 x 8 inch alloys plus 245/45 series rubber and a very wide track of 64 and 65 inches front and rear. By the numbers the Genesis should do corners like water in a hose. It almost does except for a bit of body roll and steering numbness. But the cornering power is there, it just takes a bit of driver concentration. Consequently it doesn't give you the feel of a true sports sedan. However, after spending a fair amount of time in the twisties, this Genesis would surprise most enthusiast drivers at the track

because of its creds. Genesis performs.



Plenty of leg room no matter where one sits.

But there are huge positives because of the Genesis advance suspension and those can be found in its near perfect ride quality. First the Genesis rides like it was built out of the amour plate from a battleship. It is that solid. It is one of the finest riding automobiles ever encountered by the Road Beat. It is extremely smooth, it absorbs road imperfections like a giant sponge and yet it has no float or wallow. It just simply levels any road. And finally Genesis is quiet, so quiet you have to think in a whisper.

Four big disc brakes with all the acronyms arrest the Genesis forward progress from 40 mph in a benchmark 40 feet. Besides every safety acronym and electronic intervention ever thought of by humankind, like blind spot warning and a super smart cruise control, Genesis adds one more, Lane Keep Assist. It's almost scary in what it can do. When activated it will actually vibrate the steering wheel and put slight pressure in the opposite direction of your drift if you leave a lane.

But wait there is more and this is the scary part. If you take your hands off the steering wheel while going down a freeway, after literally bumping off lane markers a couple of times as the system nudges the Genesis back into its lane, a warning light came on in the heads up display and in the TFT display

between the tach and speedo saying "Keep hands on the steering wheel." What a great safety feature especially for texters or inattentive drivers. Genesis also has an auto emergency braking system. What a car!

Inside is a luxurious leather interior and soft touch materials everywhere. The one package I recommend, the \$3,500 Tech Package, (it has the lane departure warning and lane keep system) you get the upgraded leather seats with power side bolsters and seat cushion extender. They are comfortable. But the standard equipment list is so long with features like standard heated front power seats, you might be overwhelmed with its standard features. Rear seating with the new longer wheelbase is massive and sublime as well. The trunk is well shaped and huge.

Hyundai has outdone itself. Genesis starts at \$38,000, plus a \$950 boat ride from Asan, Korea, for the base loaded V-6. Maybe using the word "base" is a misnomer, luxury is more appropriate. But wait, maybe I have saved the best for last. Genesis at \$40,500 becomes an all-wheel drive vehicle with extra standard features like heated rear seats, heated steering wheel and headlamp washers. If you want the V-8, it is still a bargain at \$51,500 considering its even more expansive standard equipment list. This is a vehicle that I am considering owning (in AWD).

There are two other option packages for the V-6, the Signature package (\$4,000) and Ultimate Package (\$3,500). Anyway you consider this new luxury ride; it is the new industry luxury value leader. You need to experience this car. It is so very impressive.

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.

LTUSD asked to be on national TV show

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Unified School District is about to be on the national stage.

The school board on Tuesday night voted to enter into an agreement with Fox Business Network to be part of a segment of “In View”, which is hosted by Larry King.

LTUSD was chosen because of the infrastructure improvements made in the last several years, the programs being offered and how the K-12 district is an economic driver in the community.

The show’s purpose is to highlight what is working in education, how districts are being innovative, using technology at all levels and providing students options.

LTUSD has all of those components. And all levels will be highlighted in the show – not just South Tahoe High, where the bulk of the makeover took place.

Besides being on national television, the district will be left with professional footage that it may use in other venues as a marketing component.

“We have control over the content, which is critical for us because we want to put out a consistent message,” Assistant Superintendent Ivone Larson told the board Jan. 27.

The show, which will air in the fall, is 30 minutes and includes other districts in the country. However, the crew is expected to shoot 10 hours of footage this spring. Lake Tahoe

Unified School District will have rights to all of that film.

The board and staff see this as a way to market the district, especially the nearly \$100 million in facilities improvements in the last handful of years.

Enrollment is increasing, which is attributed to improved schools.

Ginger Nicolay-Davis, a school board member and real estate agent, said clients often want to see the high school in addition to houses.

Because there are no commercials and a third party does the filming, the districts must pay to be part of the project. LTUSD's costs are \$27,900.

The goal is to get sponsors to pay for it. Already lined up is LPA, the architects behind all of the new buildings. Money will also come from the regional occupation program.

Superintendent Jim Tarwater said he will be asking others like SMC, the contractor for all the new facilities; South Tahoe Association of Realtors, since the schools, especially South Tahoe High, are a draw for people moving to South Lake Tahoe; and Barton Health with the link to the sports medicine program at STHS.

"If we get six new students, it covers the cost," Larson told *Lake Tahoe News*. That means more families in the area and the ability to help stabilize the economy, she added.

In other action:

- CFO Deb Yates went over Gov. Jerry Brown's budget that was released Jan. 9. She told the board there is more good in it than bad for LTUSD, but that the May revise will be the true test.
- Students and staff at South Tahoe Middle School spoke about

the culture change at the school, various assemblies and how people are treating each other with more respect.

Editorial: Time for 'family values' Congress to value families

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Jan. 24, 2015, Sacramento Bee.*

There are few realizations as sobering for working parents as that moment when the actual cost of child care becomes clear.

In California, a year of infant day care – in a day care center, not with a nanny – averages \$11,628, roughly the cost of buying a new Nissan Versa every year until preschool. A typical family with two kids in child care can expect to spend less on a year's rent than on baby-sitting.

And California isn't the exception. According to Child Care Aware of America, which tracks child care costs in this country, this state isn't even among the least affordable places to raise a child while drawing a paycheck. (Memo to working couples: Don't procreate in Massachusetts.)

An analysis last year by Vox found that since 1994, child care costs have risen at nearly double the rate of prices economy-wide. Another, by the Pew Research Center, marked a concurrent uptick in working mothers opting to stay home rather than pay for day care.

Read the whole story

Charity races losing money, but not going extinct

By Brian Alexander, Outdoor

Has the charity race craze—all those walks, runs, rides, and mud runs done to raise money for good causes—begun to fizzle? The numbers for 2014 aren't in yet, but a survey of the top 30 programs showed a total drop of \$44.5 million in 2013.

Make no mistake. Despite the declines, charity races and endurance events are still big business. In 2013, the top ten powerhouses affiliating with, or holding, such events raised more than \$1 billion, led by the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life at \$380 million, followed by the Susan G. Komen for the Cure's Race for the Cure at almost \$107 million, according to Peer-to-Peer Professional Forum. But six of those top ten events saw income declines, continuing a trend despite the improving economy.

Industry pros say the overall participation rates are flat or down only very slightly. So what accounts for the decline in total revenues? It may be that newer, jazzier events are cannibalizing participants from the older, established pioneers. Three day walks are out, mud runs are in.

Read the whole story