

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Employees of South Tahoe Public Utility District are making donations to Christmas Cheer and Live Violence Free this holiday season. Staff collected donations of food, toys, and more than \$200 in cash for Christmas Cheer. They filled wish lists for 15 families of Live Violence Free.
 - Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board is putting on a Climate Change Adaptation Planning workshop Jan. 15 from 8:30am-noon at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe.
 - Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra is accepting grant applications. Applications and information are available online. The deadline is due Jan. 31.
 - Squaw Valley will host the annual 2015 Reebok Spartan Race World Championship in 2015. The obstacle race series will be Oct. 3-4.
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Free snow removal for military families

Alpine Smith Inc. South Lake Tahoe is providing free snow and ice removal services to families of currently deployed military personnel as well as wounded and disabled veterans.

Project EverGreen's SnowCare for Troops program for in its fifth season. Snowplow and landscape professionals from across

the country donate their services and time to ease the burden on military families or disabled and wounded veterans needing assistance this winter. Nearly 1,400 snow and ice contractors currently volunteer.

Interested local military families may register by calling 530.541.0250 or emailing info@alpinesmith.com.

Free backcountry demo day at Alpine

The Lake Tahoe Backcountry Demo Event, North America's largest venue for all things alpine touring, telemark and splitboard returns Jan. 10.

Alpenglow Sports has once again partnered with Alpine Meadows for the 9am to 3pm event at the ski resort.

Participating vendors will include DPS, Dynafit, G3, Scarpa, NTN, Salomon, K2, Scott, Marker, Volkl, Twenty-Two Designs, La Sportiva, Voile, Moment, Julbo, Fly Low, Smith Optics, Jones Snowboards and more.

In addition to the opportunity to try more than 100 styles of skis, Alpenglow and Rich Meyer Alpine Guide will also provide a free, informal avalanche companion rescue class. It will include beacon searches, strategic shoveling, and probing and will begin at 1pm at the Alpenglow registration tent.

The event is free, but participants must possess a valid lift ticket or season pass purchased from Alpine Meadows or Squaw Valley, along with a driver's license and credit card for

deposit.

Call 530.583.6917 with questions.

Fining parents may stop teen drinking

By Patti Neighmond, NPR

When it comes to teenage drinking, the typical venue is a party – where some teens play drinking games and binge. It may surprise you to learn that the majority of parents are aware that alcohol is flowing at these events.

On any given weekend, some teenagers receive three to four text messages about parties, says Bettina Frieese, a public health researcher at the Prevention Research Center in Oakland.

Frieese recently conducted a study on teen drinking. She interviewed 1,100 teenagers living in Northern California. Most did not host parties with alcohol. But of the 39 percent who did, 70 percent said their parents knew kids at the party were drinking. Twenty-four percent said their parents “probably” knew, leaving just a handful of parents in the dark.

Now some communities across the United States are trying to hold these parents accountable and fine them for allowing underage drinking in their homes.

Read the whole story

Nev. No. 2 in U.S. for mortgage fraud

By Eli Segall, Las Vegas Sun

Mortgage fraud is rising nationally and remains more active in Nevada than in almost every other state, a report shows.

Some 74 percent of U.S. home loans last year involved some kind of fraud or misrepresentation on the application, up from 69 percent in 2012 and 61 percent in 2011, according to LexisNexis Risk Solutions.

The most notable jump, the report said, was in fraudulent or misleading credit documentation, with 17 percent of loans investigated for that, up from 5 percent in 2012.

Read the whole story

Road beat: Mazda 3 top of its class



The Mazda 3 stands out in its class of cars. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Mazda has always made edgy, tight cars with class leading performance and handling. And with the all-new Mazda 3, Mazda has now combined those two qualities with class leading design.

While not the most powerful compact car, the 2.5L Mazda 3 now provides the best balance of performance and fuel economy of perhaps any car in current production. I understand that is a huge statement, but you will see it backed up with loads of data.

Mazda 3's stunning styling is derived directly from a recent show car called the Takeri. From its clean, aggressive front end to its sculptured character lines, Mazda 3 speaks of an exhilarating driving experience once the lucky driver takes his place in the superbly designed driver's seat. It is a few

inches shorter than your average compact at just 176 inches, but its low, wide hood line and well proportioned cabin give the Mazda 3 the impression of having a sleek long powerful front end found on classics from the 1930s. Mazda's coefficient of drag is a very low 0.28 for the 5-door hatchback and just 0.26 for the sedan, numbers which contribute to its excellent highway fuel economy.



Specifications

Engine

DOHC, 16 valve inline 2.5L
four 184 hp @ 5,700 rpm
185 ft-lb of torque at 3,250 rpm

Transmission

Six Speed torque converter automatic, with paddle shifters

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 106.3 inches
Length 175.6 inches
Width 70.7 inches
Height 57.3 inches
Track (f/r) 61.2/61.4 inches
Ground clearance 6.1 inches
Weight 3,002 pounds

Weight distribution (f/r)
60/40%
Fuel capacity 13.2 gallons
Cargo capacity (rear seats
up/down) 20.2/47.1 cubic
feet
Steering lock to lock 2.57
turns
Turning circle (curb to
curb) 34.78 feet
Turning circle (wall to
wall) 37.07 feet
Wheels 18X7 inch alloys
Tires 215/45X18 all season
radials
Co-efficient of drag
(sedan/hatchback) 0.26/0.28
Performance
0-60 mph 7.08 seconds
50-70 mph 3.91 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 5.74
seconds
Top speed 130 mph
electronically limited
Fuel economy 28/38/32 mpg
city/highway/combined.
Expect 33-34 mpg in rural
country driving and over 40
mpg on a level highway at
legal speeds.

Matching its slick design and under the hood is a 2.5L DOHC, 16 valve normally aspirated inline four which pumps out 184 hp at a low 5,700 rpm plus 185 pounds of twist at a very low 3,250 rpm. Of course it is warm butter smooth. Its hooked up to a six-speed auto cog swapper (only choice, no manual offered with the 2.5L, but you can get a manual six-speed with

the 155 hp 2.0L) that has real paddle shifters that do let you control what's happening if you so desire. Some other 2.5L fours make maybe 10 more hp, but none of them make 184 hp at a low 5,700 rpm meaning the Mazda gets to its hp quicker than other 2.5L inline fours and that equates to better performance especially in everyday driving.

Where most compacts struggle to get to 60 mph is less than 9 seconds, this Mazda 3 will run 0-60 mph in just 7.08 seconds and it will light 'em up with ease if you stab the go pedal. It down right rocks. Passing times are also extremely quick with a 50-70 mph run taking just 3.91 seconds and a steep grade will only slow that time to 5.74 seconds making this the quickest, normally aspirated compact ever tested by the Road Beat and on average by a good margin and it is quicker than some compacts that are turbocharged.

But high performance need not mean that you can't have excellent fuel economy. At a steady 70 mph on a level highway this Mazda 3 will return 43.4 mpg. Overall it averaged 33-34 mpg and on a trip from Placerville to South Lake Tahoe (a climb of 5,500 feet) and back it averaged 38.6 mpg and that included at least half a dozen full throttle passes on Highway 50. EPA says that you should expect 28/38/32 city/highway/combined. As with most every other compact car, the fuel tank is a modest 13.2 gallons. It must be an industry standard as Honda, Nissan and Toyota share the same fuel capacity. Hyundai and Ford compacts have even less tankage.

Perhaps helping its phenomenal performance is Mazda's SKYACTIV-G technology and its i-EL00P regenerative engine braking system. SKYACTIV-G relates to engine design (combustion technology and design) and direct injection. Mazda, because of its design and direct injection where fuel is injected directly into the cylinder (instead of behind the intake valve at the intake port), has a very high compression ratio of 13:1 on regular fuel which makes the engine more efficient and powerful. I-EL00P regen braking isn't a hybrid

but reduces engine drag of a conventional alternator with a variable charging alternator by capturing electrical energy from braking in a capacitor which is then used for some of the Mazda's electrical power needs instead of requiring the alternator to provide power and recharge the battery. You cannot feel it work, but it is there.

According to the EPA, i-EL00P should give you one more mpg in the Hatchback five-door model. In the sedan EPA numbers are the same that leaves this writer with the question if the expense of the i-EL00P system is worth the extra cost. If it improves, your fuel economy of 35 mpg by a half mpg and you drive 15,000 miles a year it might save you 6 gallons of gas or about \$24. Mazda would not reveal the cost of the system, but you can bet it adds at least \$300 to the cost of the car.

Aside from this nitpicking, Mazda also shows itself off with class leading handling. It comes with state of the art MacPherson struts up front and a multilink system in the rear and while other manufacturers may have a similar system, Mazda seems to have done it better. You can say the same thing about the steering with its electric power rack, not only is it tuned to perfection; it is the quickest of just about any car tested by the Road Beat, never mind any compact vehicle. It is just 2.57 turns lock to lock. And with the 3 S model you also get 18x7 inch alloys shod with wide 215/45 rubber.



Leather seats add to the comfort.

With its aforementioned superbly balanced suspension, super quick steering with natural feeling and feedback and extremely wide track of over 61 inches, not many cars change directions with the aplomb of a Mazda 3. In fact, on the track, it might give its MX-5 Miata sibling a good run for the money even with 500 extra pounds (The 3 S weighs 3,002 pounds). No other compact, except for perhaps a VW GTI, a Honda Si or a Focus ST can match the Mazda 3 when the road bends. The Mazda 3 is about as much fun as you can have while seated. If you have a mind like mine, the rear cargo area with the rear seats folded flat has over 47 cubes for Home Depot trips or camping.

Ride quality can best be described as firm supple. It is quiet on all but the coarsest roads when some road noise will intrude into the cabin. There is no wind noise. The engine spins a low 2,000 rpm at 70 mph. It is a terrific road car with superb ride control.

Braking with four-wheel discs, front ventilated, with about every acronym is excellent arresting forward progress from 40 mph in a benchmark 40 feet. It has blind spot monitoring and rear cross traffic alert plus stability and traction control and a host of other safety features and the usual inventory of airbags. Standard headlights were adaptive HID with a bright wide spread and sharp cut off but they could have used a bit more distance when on low beam.

Not letting anything go without refinement, the quality Mazda 3 interior is near perfect with great looking leather seats that give you long haul comfort and perfect support and positioning. This loaded Mazda came with a heads-up display for the speedo plus a large central tach with another digital speedo located in the lower right quadrant of the tach. Quality abounds on every surface with sublime, soft touch materials. About the only personal knock is the central mounted, stand up screen for operating the GPS, radio and other systems. It just kind of sticks out from the top of the center of the instrument panel. You might think it would

retract into the panel, but it doesn't. One other nitpick is that the awesome sound system was hard to use, especially pre-selecting radio stations. Maybe there is a learning curve.

My top of the line tester stickered for \$26,495, plus \$795 for destination. It had the \$1,800 technology package that included the i-EL00P regen system that also included the Smart City Braking System, a boon for those who do other things while driving. I would take a pass. However, there is no question the new Mazda 3 is now at the top of the class for all compacts even if you purchased the \$16,945 2.0L. No other compact offers the driving enjoyment and world class looks, notwithstanding its top of the class performance and fuel economy. It is the most rocking compact you can buy while being about as stable as you can get. The answer to the initial question is a resounding yes.

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.

S. Lake cemetery to honor military, public safety



This is what the memorial niches will be like at Happy Homestead Cemetery. Rendering/Gabriel Hydrick

By Kathryn Reed

Plans are drawn, permits are being sought and the construction bid process is under way for what will be a memorial at Happy Homestead Cemetery for veterans and public safety.

“We are trying to make it as good as Arlington or better,” cemetery manager Mike Warren told *Lake Tahoe News*.

It will certainly be smaller. The entire area is about 30 feet by 40 feet.

The new feature will be in front of the office of the South Lake Tahoe cemetery where the annual Memorial Day ceremony is conducted.

The \$120,000 project is expected to begin next building season, with completion in the summer.

It will be comprised of three niche banks, with a total of 178 niches. Each niche has enough room for two sets of ashes. There will also be an area for in-ground cremations.

Happy Homestead is already the final resting place for many veterans – about 1,000.

A black granite wall will have engraved badges from the public safety members.

While normally a requirement to be buried at Happy Homestead is to have been a resident of the district – which is roughly the same as the Lake Tahoe Unified School District boundary – Warren said any member of the military, police or fire services who dies in the line of duty will be able to be interred in the new area.

Warren said the district is looking at changing the residency rule for the whole cemetery, but added it is a complex process. It has to do with the state Health and Safety Code. The current rule means people who die on the Nevada side of the South Shore don't have a local cemetery to use.

To help pay for the upcoming improvements the cemetery district is selling \$100 memorial bricks that will be the paving stones at the site. They may be in honor of or in memory of a person in public safety or the military.

A new flagpole will also be erected.

People are already reserving a space in the memorial niche. They are also buying bricks.

For more information, call the cemetery at 530.541.7070.

Opinion: End death penalty or charade of delays

By Marcos Breton, Sacramento Bee

Why even seek the death penalty when it hasn't been implemented in California in nearly a decade and when Democrats who rule the state allow it to linger in perpetual limbo?

Jan Scully, the outgoing district attorney for Sacramento, answered the question without a hint of cynicism on Tuesday – quite a feat considering how cynical people on both sides of this issue have become.

Some death penalty supporters have come to believe that death penalty cases just waste taxpayer money because legal obstacles have prevented anyone from being put to death in California since Clarence Ray Allen was executed by lethal injection on Jan. 17, 2006.

Yet there was Scully, and her counterpart from Placer County, announcing they would seek the death penalty for Luis Enriquez Monroy Bracamontes, the Mexican national accused of killing two law enforcement officers in a terrifying late October crime spree that gripped the region.

[Read the whole story](#)

Weight gain at holidays not

horrible for athletes

By Amanda MacMilian, Outside

Enjoy that fruitcake. There's nothing wrong with athletes gaining a few pounds over the holidays. In fact, for someone like a runner who's been competing at race weight, it's healthy to bulk up a bit during off-season.

"This can be a great time to work on your strength and your endurance by really feeding yourself well and giving your body a little extra fuel," says Jim White, registered dietitian and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and certified personal trainer. "It's hard to maintain a super clean diet during the holidays, and taking a break from it will give you both a physical and mental breather."

It's possible to compromise your immunity if you've been restricting calories and therefore restricting nutrients needed for your body to operate optimally, White says. Adding a few extra pounds can help your body better defend against stress, the demands of exercise, and cold and flu germs.

The catch? You've still have to be smart about what you're eating—and not overdo it. In other words, enjoy that slice of fruitcake, but don't eat the whole pie in one day. "Whether training or not, you should never aim to eat a lot of desserts or rich holiday food," says Alicia Shay, a nutritionist and professional runner. "Too much indulgence will leave you feeling heavy and crummy when training resumes."

Read the whole story

8th-grader accused of bringing gun to school

A Truckee eighth-grader was stopped Tuesday morning by police officers when he got off the bus at school because they had been tipped that the youth had a gun in his backpack.

“(The 14-year-old) had brought a .40-caliber semiautomatic handgun to the campus (Monday) during school hours. The student had the handgun in his backpack and showed it to at least four other male students throughout the day,” officers said in a press release.

Truckee police officers received a call at 7:15am Dec. 15 from a parent about the Alder Creek Middle School student possibly having a gun on him. When officers met him at the bus they took him into custody and subsequently learned he had brought the weapon to school the previous day. The weapon was located at his home on Tuesday.

“The firearm was found to be unloaded at the time, but had unsecured ammunition in close proximity to the unlocked storage location in the home,” the press release said. “The student had found the unsecured firearm while looking for his mobile phone that had previously been taken from him by his parents for discipline purposes.”

Officers believe the student brought the handgun to school to show it off, not to do harm.

He was arrested and released on a juvenile citation of felony charges of bringing a firearm on a school campus. This case remains under investigation as to whether the parents will face any criminal charges for not securing the firearm and ammunition.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

