

Dogs must be leashed in sheep grazing areas

Dog hiking on the Whites Creek and Thomas Creek trails on the Carson Ranger District must be leashed at the trailheads and within one mile of the trailheads.

There have been a number of incidents where off-leash dogs have harassed herds of sheep being used by the district to reduce hazardous fuels in the area.

The U.S. Forest Service have released sheep on the Arrowhawk project area to reduce hazardous fuels by removing cheatgrass and other non-native vegetation from forest lands. The unit being grazed is more than 1,000 acres of land located approximately 10 miles southwest of Reno and just west of the Arrowcreek residential area urban interface.

For more information, contact Anna Belle Monti at 775.884.8103.

Finding tranquility in Tahoe even on a holiday



The start of another glorious day at Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

It's possible to enjoy Lake Tahoe without tourists on a holiday, but it will cost you.

The cost is losing sleep.

Getting up to see the sunrise at Emerald Bay on the Fourth of July provided a natural explosion of color that no fireworks show could ever come close to duplicating.



Eagle Falls splashes down to Emerald Bay. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The bay was glass; it would have been perfect for water skiing if there weren't the 5 mph no wake zone. A sailboat appeared to have been moored overnight just off Fannette Island. Plenty of vessels were at the boat-in campground.

A handful of other sunrise seekers were scattered about the rocks above the bay and at Eagle Falls. Most with cameras, others capturing mental images.

Eagle Falls is thundering down to the bay. This is the lower falls; Upper Eagle Falls is across Highway 89, up the path that leads to Eagle Lake.



Snow melt from Desolation Wilderness creates Glen Alpine Falls. Photo/Kathryn Reed

This was not the only magical spot at this hour of the day. (Sunrise was at 5:39am.)

Glen Alpine Falls on the far end of Fallen Leaf Lake Road was the next destination. It was hard to catch a wink in the car; this El Dorado County owned road is horrendous, with potholes almost taking up a whole travel lane.



Wildflowers near Glen Alpine Falls are starting to bloom. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Still, the destination was worth testing the suspension and being worried about the alignment.

There is more water than rock showing; usually it's the other way around.

The third fall was **Hawley Grade** in Meyers. It's accessed at the end of South Upper Truckee Road.



Hawley Grade Falls are not passable right now.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

When there is less water it's possible to cross the falls. It doesn't even look inviting right now or like it would be a possibility anytime soon.

This is a relatively short jaunt, with an elevation gain of 900 feet.

By 8:30am we had seen the sunrise, three waterfalls and did a short hike.

It's naptime.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Calfire and Truckee fire suspended all residential outdoor burning within the state responsibility area of Nevada, Yuba, Placer and Sierra counties.
- The Truckee Municipal Code prohibits possession and use

of all fireworks without a valid use permit issued by the Truckee Fire Protection District.

- Here is the El Dorado-Tahoe roadwork schedule from Caltrans for the week.

- Democrat Patricia Ackerman plans to challenge Douglas County Republican Jim Wheeler for the Assembly District 39 seat.

- A new version of Citizen Science Tahoe is available for **download**. Users will need to download this version and reset their password to keep using the app.

Road Beat: Toyota Prius Prime has a kick



Toyota Prius Prime is one of the best hybrids on the market.
Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

As most of you know I am not a big fan of electric vehicles. They are expensive to build and have limited utility creating range anxiety. If Tesla didn't have government and utility subsidies of about 25 percent of the purchase price, they would have folded long ago. Even though their stock is over \$300 a share and their market cap is equal to Ford's, they have yet to turn a real profit and that's with receiving \$1 billion in government subsidies directly and indirectly in the last five or six years. Over the last five years, losses totaled about \$2 billion, including the income from subsidies. And that's not counting discounted electrical rates to the purchaser, another subsidy.

But the Prius Prime is a different animal. You will never run out of electrons because of its 1.8L 95 hp (at 5,200 rpm) four-cylinder engine tucked under the hood that meshes

perfectly using a CVT transmission with its two-electric motor/generators of 31 and 71 hp, respectively. But the maximum combined hp is limited to a total of 121 hp which will not exactly create escape velocity.

Outside the Prime looks right out of the Jetsons. To call it beautiful would be an overstatement, but if you want to be recognized as driving a plug-in hybrid, saving the world, then this is your ride. From the rear, it somewhat reminds me of a 1959 Chevy with its aircraft carrier flight deck. While it may not look sleek with its big, busy front end, its co-efficient of drag is a minimal 0.25. While a compact car in size (183L x 70W x 58H inches), inside dimensions are mid-size.

Electricity is provided by about a five to six-hour charge from 120-volt household GFI circuit which provides about 6 kWh of energy to the 8.8 kWh L-I battery. The reason is that the Prime only can use about 6 kWh of its battery energy before it morphs into a regular hybrid, like a standard Prius. But even with half of its total energy remaining and in EV mode, if you go full throttle at about 50 mph while running pure EV, the engine lights off to add some more fuel to the fire.



Specifications

Price \$27,965 to about \$36,000

Engine and motors

Gasoline: 1.8L Inline four cylinder DOHC, 16 valve 95

hp @ 5,200 rpm

105 lb.-ft. of torque @
3,600 rpm

Electric Two
motor/generators 31 hp and
30 lb.-ft. of torque and 71
hp and 120 lb.-ft. of torque
Battery 8.8 kWh Lithium-ion,
265 pounds

Transmission

Continuously Variable

Configuration

Transverse front engine and
motors/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 106.3 inches

Length 182.9 inches

Width 69.3 inches

Height 57.9 inches

Track (f/r) 60.2/60.6 inches

Ground clearance 4.8 inches

Fuel Capacity 11.3 gallons

Passenger volume 91.5 cubic
feet

Cargo volume 19.8 cubic feet

Weight 3,375 pounds

Wheels 15X6.5-inch alloy

Tires 195/65X15

Turning circle 33.4 feet

Coefficient of drag 0.25

Performance

0-60 mph 9.71 seconds

50-70 mph 5.38 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 10.20
seconds

Top speed Estimated at 115
mph

Fuel economy for the first 22-25 miles its infinite, in hybrid EPA rated at 55/53/54 mpg city/highway/combined. In suburban driving expect 60-65 mpg and on the highway (level) at legal speeds 57 mpg.

With a full charge in pure EV, it was able to easily run 24-25 miles pure electric. You can see from my pictures how many days I averaged 199.9 mpg even driving more than 25 miles as I recharged in between drives and most of these drives were in 10-12 mile stages at 50 mph plus with little stop and go and up and down some 3-4 percent grades.

As to performance, the Prime in hybrid mode which you can do even with a full charge and save the battery for later, the Prime averaged 9.71 seconds in 0-60 mph runs which is very comparable to a regular Prius. Passing times in hybrid mode from 50-70 mph was 5.38 seconds and the same run up a 6-7 percent grade lengthened that time to 10.20 seconds, again very comparable to the current Prius. In pure EV all those times expand by about a second. The CVT has a gear called "B" and it really does a nice job of recharging the battery and controlling speed in a long downgrade. I used it extensively in controlling speed down the nine-mile Spooner Summit.

But here is the deal, it feels spunkier than those times reveal, even when pure electric. In normal or even somewhat aggressive driving the Prime will surprise you, especially from 10-50 mph. Yeah, sure there isn't much left after 70-75 mph, but the Prime is not about racing and if you compare it to the sedans of the 1970s or earlier, the Prius rocks pretty good.

But buying a Prius Prime is about minimizing gasoline energy use which it does admirably. It's easy to achieve 4 miles out

of every kilowatt hour of energy which costs on average in the United States about 13-14 cents a kWh or about 3.5 cents a mile for the energy costs. And it will return about 22-25 miles on a full charge without ever lighting off the gas engine. I made several 24 mile round trips where the computer shows a fuel economy of 199.9 mpg, meaning you used no gas. I did not use the A/C during the entire test.

In a climb over the Sierra to Carson City, I started with a full charge and depleted the energy allowed until hybrid mode kicks at about 18 miles, but had climbed in elevation about 1,200 feet up Highway 50. The 210-mile round trip averaged an astounding 66 mpg and no plug-in charging was done during the trip. But I did pick up enough energy from the downhill into Carson City to spend 10-12 miles around Carson City on pure EV.

Hybrid highway full economy is just a bit better than the EPA data which indicates fuel economy numbers of 55/53/54 mpg city/highway/combined. At 70 mph, the Prime in hybrid mode averaged 57 mpg in two, two way runs. Prime will cruise at 70 mph in EV mode as well, but in about 20 minutes the hybrid will automatically kick in. Overall fuel economy exceeded 60 mpg.

Handling will surprise most drivers as it could be called nimble. Sure, standard rubber is tall and comparatively skinny 195/65X15 tires, but it has fully independent suspension. And while certainly not a Mini-Cooper, it acquitted itself well when pushed in the twisties. As "Dirty Harry" said, "A man got's to know his limitations." Ditto for the Prime. It certainly exceeded my expectations and what I thought its limitations would be.

Prime rides superb. It is a supple well controlled ride best demonstrated when leaving a driveway that had 45 degree angled four inch curbs as it absorbed the bump better than most every vehicle ever tested and equaling the best such as a Lexus

RX450h. It's a bit cushy, but I doubt any Prime buyer will take his car to the race track or ever participate in a traffic light grand prix. Prime buyers are interested in comfort, quiet and technology. At 70 mph in pure EV there is no engine rpm and even in hybrid mode, it's so quiet, no one cares what the rpm is as it will always pull down 55 mpg or better. While wind and engine noise are well subdued, tire noise can be an issue and on coarser roads it was an issue. Maybe it is the low rolling resistance tires. I'll take one mpg less fuel economy and quieter tires.

As a leader in technology, Prime has all the safety features and four-wheel disc brakes with every acronym. Headlights were excellent.

Inside is a Toyota quality interior with top quality materials. The comfortable seats were done in Toyota's quality SofTex leather like material and were quite comfortable. Rear seating is also decent. But the focal point of the Prime interior is the 12-inch (ok, so it's really 11.6 inches, but it's still big) info screen for GPS, climate control (interior climate as we can't control the exterior climate although the Prime is a great example of adaptation) and the media/sound system. It is a touch screen which is not my favorite as I still prefer buttons and knobs for the accuracy and more positive feel.

Instead of a conventional binnacle in front of the steering wheel it uses a centered dash which uses letters and digits that are too small, but the info that is accessible is amazing, not just fuel economy, but miles per kWh, daily driving fuel economy, a driver's rating system for economical driving and so much more. It is quite the "entertainment system."

Pricing for this line of plug in hybrids starts at \$27,100 for the Prius Prime Plus, \$28,800 for the Prius Prime Premium and \$33,100 for the Prius Prime Advanced. Considering the

alliterations, I am surprised its name isn't the Prius Prime Phantastic. Add to all those numbers \$865 for the boat ride from Aichi, Japan. But here is the deal with EVs and plug-in EVs (PHEV), is the price of the car artificially low. At the sticker price, is Toyota making an appropriate profit as they do on their conventional cars? While Toyota won't tell us, it is important to know as at the sticker price this technology makes lots of dollars and sense. But if the price is artificially low then two things. In your own self-interest, the Prime becomes a great buy, but as to the industry itself, the Prime becomes an expensive exercise for the rest of us. Without government mandates, would the Prime have ever been built?

But here's the deal. Prime is a very comfortable, go anywhere car. It achieves incredible fuel economy. It performs nicely. And it's priced to be affordable. Who cares if Toyota is losing money on every car, although we don't know that. Sure, it's different looking, but Toyota hybrid buyers want that "exclusivity." And if you live within 12 miles of your work, you won't use any gas (you might want to use Stabil in your tank to keep it from going bad), or if you can plug in for 5-6 hours on a 110V or half that time on a 220V receptacle, you can go about 25 miles one way. Now here is the kicker. Many utility companies will subsidize your electric bill for your car and your cost per mile will be 2-3 cents a mile.

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.

Douglas, Carson counties not allowing pot sales

Even though recreational marijuana is now legal in Nevada, it doesn't mean it's available in every county.

While voters said yes to marijuana, ultimately it's up to each county's elected officials to say yes or no.

Douglas County commissioners earlier this year said it's one vice they don't want.

Carson City elected won't allow the sale of pot until Sept. 19.

That means Washoe County is the closest place in Northern Nevada to legally obtain recreational marijuana.

California will allow recreational marijuana sales on Jan. 1, but it's up to each municipality to regulate it.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Southern cooking comes to the mountains



It would be hard to imagine anyone leaving X Crows hungry.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

There was a time when hotel restaurants were just a convenience for travelers; no one living in that town would ever step foot inside of it. X Crows is proving that things have changed – and in an extremely tasty way.

This restaurant inside Hotel Becket in South Lake Tahoe is a destination unto itself. The X = 10.

Executive Chef Trent Bissell hails from Alabama, which is perfect for this restaurant that boasts of all things Southern.

Using a massive pellet smoker, Bissell is able to slow cook the various meats – even vegetables – to get that flavor like no other method does. The brisket and pork butt are smoked overnight; the other meats need less time and are cooked fresh

each day.



Executive Chef Trent Bissell at the smoker. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Up to 500 pounds of meat can be cooked at once. So far, no bears have come to investigate the outside smoker, which has been named Arlene.

Bissell calls that smoky aroma “Southern cologne.” Pork, including ribs and his own sausage recipe, are what he specializes in.

Starting with the black eye pea hummus (\$8) we knew this wasn’t going to be a typical Tahoe meal. Often hummus has a bland, almost chalky taste. No so with this one. The benne seed crackers were a nice accompaniment; and there were plenty of them.

The smoked portabella (\$13) was hefty. Even cutting it in half I had a hard time getting my mouth around it, but once I did the flavor was outrageously good. While this is the only

vegetarian entrée on the menu, Bissell said he has ideas for more.

Like most barbecue joints, sides are a big part of the offerings. They range from smoky greens (which Sue raved about) to house cut fries (some of the best I've had) to stone ground cheddar grits. Specials are also common, with Sue loving the fresh squash mix.

And some of those sides would make for a good vegetarian meal.



Cocktails are refreshing and the hummus outstanding. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Sue opted to have the fried catfish (\$18) mostly because it's not something you see on a Tahoe menu. She wasn't disappointed.

It was served with a super-hot sauce that even I couldn't handle. It also came with Bissell's Alabama white sauce, which is more like an aioli. Because it is mayonnaise based it is

not on the table with the other sauces. This white sauce was terrific with the fish, portabella and fries.

To pay homage to the mountain that is across the street the menu includes the Heavenly happy meal (\$17) – chopped pork or chopped chicken sandwich, with fries, a shot of Jameson and a PBR.

Take-outs are encouraged, with sides being available by the pint and quart. Entrees are priced a little less for those taking it to go.

Desserts, as the chef says, are meant for two. The banana pudding (\$7) could serve four. Two days before I had had my friend Sharla's banana pudding, and she's from Kentucky, so I knew what good banana pudding tasted like. She might want to go to X Crows and save herself the trouble of making it.

Whiskey is the dominate drink of choice here, with more than 60 to choose from.

"Whiskey and barbecue are best friends. A lot of bourbons have a smokiness," Bissell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

If straight whiskey isn't your thing, I recommend the Southern Sazerac (\$10) – Bulleit rye, absinthe wash, burnt orange peel and Peychaud bitters.

Beer is the other dominate drink choice, with about 30 bottles and six on tap. Wine and other specialty cocktails are also available.

One of the most memorable things about dinner at X Crows was the service. It was off the charts good. Meesh is more than just a server.

She moved to Tahoe from Pennsylvania last year. She quickly learned about the Tahoe Food Hub in Truckee and now X Crows is sourcing some of its food from there. Meesh is also teaching the chef how to grow herbs and vegetables.

“I have a farming background. I love food,” she told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Her love of food is evident in how she describes the various dishes, gets excited about all the vinegar-based homemade barbecue sauces and helps diners choose what to order.

What she brings to the table is a level of service that is hard to find in the basin. She was as refreshing as the restaurant itself.



The plan is to eventually sell the homemade sauces. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Notes:

- X Crows is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Hours are 7am-9pm Sunday-Wednesday; closing at 11pm on

Friday and Saturday.

- Tables are inside and outside. The bar seats 10.
 - Dogs are welcome.
 - The only negative is how loud the music is across the street at Heavenly Village.
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Opinion: California first on the Fourth

By Joe Mathews

Dear America,

I suppose I should wish you happy birthday. But I'm just not feeling it.

You and I, the United States and California, used to be pretty darn close—"indivisible" was your word and "inseparable" was mine. Sure, we had our differences—I've always been a little out there. But



Joe Mathews

America wouldn't be America without California, and California was proudly part of America, which tolerated our excesses for

our mutual glory.

But you and I have been drifting apart. Today, I look at you and feel like I'm an entirely different place, with different values, even different realities. And I find myself wondering: Do you and I have a future together?

Who is responsible for our problems? It's really not me. It's you. While I'm the almond-producing state, you're the one that has gone nuts.

Everyone is entitled to a mid-life crisis, even 18th-century republics. But you are having an especially nasty meltdown. I feel like you've turned against everything you used to love: immigrants, trade, international alliances, voting rights, women's rights, science, national parks, infrastructure, and treating people with respect.

These days, you're constantly freaking out. And the government you installed in Washington—a government my voters opposed by historic margins—is trying to take away people's health care, make it harder to vote, roll back environmental regulations, restart the failed drug war, and pick fights with my trading partners, perfectly friendly countries like Mexico, Canada, Germany, Sweden, and South Korea.

Your crazy nonsense is pretty bad. But here's what's even worse: You keep trying to justify your crack-up as just a natural reaction to what you say is my awfulness. In your narrative, I'm too coastal, too elite, too rich, too educated, too Hollywood, too tech, too globalist, too uninterested in the pain of the rest of the country, and thus too out of touch with you. And so you've had to go stone-cold crazy to get my attention, to wake me up.

That thesis is—how do I put this?—exactly what the cows drop in Tulare County pastures after a good feed.

I shouldn't have to say this, but my people and I know the

pain of poverty (we're tops in the nation in it), economic dislocation (just look back at the carnage of our 1990s recession and our 2000s housing crisis), and drug abuse (the opioid crisis? it's here, thank you). There is no American malady I don't suffer.

So the fact that you keep projecting your outrageous behavior onto me tells me that you've taken leave of your senses.

I'm also worried that you're going get me nuked by North Korea.

So, going forward, our relationship can't be the same.

Now, I'm not going to march out the door and become my own country, like the crazy, Russia-compromised #Calexit movement proposed. You are still my country, and I'm not surrendering you.

But I do need to put some distance between you and me. I need some boundaries (and I don't mean a wall). I must think about my own needs first.

A few weeks ago, a small group of Californians filed a ballot initiative that will give me some space. The initiative, called "California's Future: A Path to Independence," does have a separatist bent—it takes "inseparable" out of the California Constitution's line about California being part of the United States. But it's agnostic on the idea of California leaving the Union.

"America, whatever" is its attitude; "California first," is its policy. The initiative sets up a commission to expand California's autonomy while "buffering Californians" and their values (respect for diversity, science and democracy) "against chaos, dysfunction, and uncertainty at the federal level."

It's time for "California to take stock of the leverage it has over the United States, and to use this leverage to negotiate

for ever greater autonomy,” the measure says. For example, my people should seek changes to budgeting policy so that I’m not paying more in taxes than I’m getting back in services. And I’m not interested in subsidizing your irresponsible debt or your constant wars.

The initiative’s proposed commission – which is modeled on one of California’s most enduring governing entities, the reform body known as the Little Hoover Commission – would pursue federal and state policy changes and demand progress from elected leaders on ever-greater California autonomy.

Yes, I’m going my own way. But my people are just as American as yours, and so on July 4, I’ll still host enough barbecues, parades and fireworks displays for 39.5 million of your citizens. Back east of the Sierra, I hope your celebrations are bigger than ever, and that your people will stand extra close to the fireworks.

Maybe all the explosions will wake you the hell up.

Independently yours,

California

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zocalo Public Square.

Alleged sexual predator arrested in SLT



Omar Ocegüera

A 27-year-old Tracy man was behind bars on seven felony counts related to sexual relations with a 16-year-old girl.

Omar Ocegüera was arrested July 2 in South Lake Tahoe. He was transferred to a jail in San Joaquin County on Monday because that is where the alleged crimes occurred.

Bail has been set at \$1.515 million.

Ocegüera and the teenager had been missing since June 18. The girl was in the car when they were stopped by local officers. She has since been reunited with her parents.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Firefighters gain upper hand on Genoa fire



Smoke from the Foothill Fire captured by the Alert Tahoe cameras on Monday afternoon.

Updated 9:43pm:

A fire burning off Jacks Valley Road in Douglas County was at 45 acres Monday night, with crews saying they halted forward progress.

The Foothill Fire was reported just after 4pm July 3 just north of Genoa Lakes 2 Golf Course.

No evacuations have been ordered.

The fire is being fought on the ground and from the air.

There is no cause at this time.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Fire closes Interstate 80 in

Nevada



Smoke from the Truckee fire
via the Alert Tahoe camera.

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Due to low visibility caused by the Truckee Fire, Interstate 80 near Mustang has been closed in both directions, according to Nevada Highway Patrol.

The fire has grown to 4,500 acres and is now 15 percent contained.

The Truckee Fire, which is south of Pyramid Lake, has been battled throughout Monday and is not expected to cause any structural damage.

Read the whole story