

Murillo accepts SoCal college presidency

Kindred Murillo, who has been president of Lake Tahoe Community College since 2011, is moving on to Southwestern Community College in Chula Vista.



Kindred
Murillo

Murillo gave her notice to the local board nearly a year ago, with the intent to leave in February 2017. Since that time she has been looking at various presidency and chancellor positions.

Moving to Southern California gets her closer to family.

She will be president of a college that has about 20,000 students a semester, and offers more than 320 associate degree and certificate options. This is a student population that is about five times larger than LTCC.

"I am looking forward to working with the students, faculty, staff, leadership and governing board at Southwestern College. They are a leader in the state in the area of diversity and equity, two places where I believe community colleges can have the most impact on the State of California's and the nation's socioeconomic success," Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

A final vote by the SCC board is scheduled for Dec. 14; the

contract is expected to be confirmed then as well.

She will be leaving LTCC at the end of January.

At the Dec. 6 board meeting, through tears she said, "I just love you guys. It's been the best 5 1/2 years of my life – other than raising my children."

She received a standing ovation from the nearly packed room.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tips to fire proof home with holiday decorations

The following are tips from the National Fire Protection Association are designed to keep homes safe during the holiday season:

- Choose decorations that are flame resistant and flame retardant.
- Keep candles away from decorations and other things that can burn. According to the NFPA, two of every five home decoration fires are started by candles, and nearly half of decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source. Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any strings of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.

- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords don't get damaged.
 - Keep decorations away from windows and doors.
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Shoulder surgery topic of lecture

Kyle Swanson is going to talk about the good, bad and ugly of shoulder replacement surgery on Dec. 8.

The Barton physician will also discuss what is shoulder arthritis, types of shoulder replacement and what to expect as a patient going through shoulder replacement surgery.

The free talk is from 5-6pm in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Nev. gun check law could affect suicide prevention

By Wesley Juhl, Las Vegas Review-Journal

If a loved one is suffering from suicidal thoughts, one of the first things to do is remove guns from the home.

But in states across the U.S., universal background check laws – like the one that just passed in Nevada – and restrictions

on temporary gun transfers can be an obstacle to getting guns out.

A November report from the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research examined universal background check laws around the U.S. to see how they measure up in terms of suicide prevention.

Read the whole story

Biting cold to sweep through Tahoe region

By Kathryn Reed

While no records are expected to be broken in the next week, it's going to get even colder in the Tahoe-Truckee area in the coming days.

Wednesday morning is expected to be the coldest, according to the National Weather Service in Reno. Most lows will be in the teens, though Truckee may hit 5 degrees.

Record lows for this area are below zero, which isn't expected to occur with the series of storms that are lined up to the west.

The initial system will bring more cold than moisture.

"The snow level is going to be tough to predict with this one. We are still working out numbers on that," Zach Tolby, meteorologist with the Weather Service, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It's going to start cold, warm up and then cool down so the snow level will fluctuate a lot as the storm comes in this

weekend.”

Not only are the snow levels unknown right now, but the amount of white stuff also isn't being predicted.

The bulk of rain and snow is expected to reach Tahoe on Thursday and Friday. The weekend system is not expected to be as strong.

With the cold temps it means area ski resorts have been able to make snow. Add that to what Mother Nature will be dropping, and it means more terrain will be opening.

Opinion: Will Calif. ever let Sierra forests burn?

By Andrew C. Revkin, New York Times

In this centennial year of the National Park System, it's been encouraging to see management of the western components of this remarkable ecological patrimony shifting ever so slowly toward incorporating knowledge of natural cycles of fire in maintaining forest health. For forests in California's Sierra Nevada, particularly, a dangerous and ecologically disruptive “fire deficit” has been built through generations of land policies fixated on fire suppression.

In early June, I was fortunate to see an all-too-rare prescribed burn while spending several days in Kings Canyon National Park.

The problem?

It took 13 years to carry out this one 760-acre planned fire.

The state's stringent air quality rules add vast regulatory obligations to planned a managed fire but don't apply if the same area ends up burning on its own – as would be inevitable.

Read the whole story

Lots of demand in Calif. for record mushroom crop

By Debbie Arrington, Sacramento Bee

Mushrooms can grow on you. For mushroom farmers and nutritionists, that's a good thing.

According to experts, demand for the tasty fungi keeps, well, mushrooming as consumers discover more varieties to try in different ways.

Demand peaks during November, prompted in part by mushroom stuffing and other holiday favorites. But year-round, mushrooms can find their way into almost any savory food.

The average American eats about 2 pounds of mushrooms a year. To meet that demand, more mushrooms are imported from Canada and Mexico.

Read the whole story

Measure T's future not decided

By Kathryn Reed

A decision about whether Measure T will stand will not be decided until the end of January at the earliest.

A hearing on Dec. 5 in Placerville before El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Jim Wagoner lasted about 15 minutes. He set a briefing schedule for the parties and agreed to let Bruce Grego file a motion to intervene.

The case was brought this summer by Jason Collin, who will take the oath of office to be on South Lake Tahoe City Council in eight days, to stop Measure T from getting on the November ballot. He lost that attempt, but the judge said he would determine the validity of the measure if it passed. It did pass.

What proponents of Measure T were seeking was the ability down the road to have the right to vote on a preferred route for the loop road and not leave it up to the City Council. The loop road would reroute Highway 50 behind Harrah's and MontBleu and turn the current highway into a city-county street.

Since the election Collin's attorney has dropped everyone from the lawsuit except the city.

Grego with Laurel Ames and the late Bill Crawford were the trio who got Measure T on the ballot.

"I said from what I hear and see the city of South Lake Tahoe will not defend this. This is why we need to intervene; it's why we need someone to champion this on behalf of the public," Grego told *Lake Tahoe News*. If the judge does not grant his

motion to intervene, Grego will not have a right to voice his opinion at future hearings.

City Attorney Tom Watson said there is a state Supreme Court case that says at this juncture, because the voters have spoken, there are no individual rights. He believes that the case now being *Collin v. South Lake Tahoe* is how it should be.

The City Council at its Dec. 13 meeting will have a closed session item about this lawsuit. At that time Watson will be seeking direction from the four who can partake in the discussion.

"I need the judge to say what the initiative means and stay out of trouble," Watson told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I could see someone claiming that 'you approved a low income housing project and in doing so you supported the loop road because you supported low income housing.' I don't want the council to be in that position."

Collin's attorney at the Monday hearing made a motion for a preliminary injunction of the enforcement of Measure T. The judge said to file a brief.

Collin did not return a phone call.

The next hearing is set for Jan. 27.

2 people arrested after Truckee BofA robbed

Two people have been arrested in connection with the Dec. 3 robbery at the Bank of America in Truckee.

The suspect entered the bank on Donner Pass Road at about 10am Saturday, displayed a handgun and ordered employees to place an undisclosed amount of money in a bag, according to officers.

Working with the FBI, Truckee detectives said they determined bank employee Grant Schaeffer, 20, was in on the heist. The Reno resident was arrested that day on felony robbery and conspiracy charges.

On Dec. 5, Alex Frasier, 19, of Reno was located in Redding. The alleged robber faces the same charges.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Road Beat: Mazda 3 six-speed manual shines



The Mazda 3 six-speed manual – sporty is, as sporty does.
Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

About a year ago the Road Beat tested the 2015 Mazda 3 hatchback with the 2.5L 184 hp inline Skyact four with Mazda's six-speed torque converter auto cog swapper. There was little question, nothing in its class could outperform or outhandle this superb ride. It was the top of its compact class.

When I was given to opportunity to test the same Mazda 3 model (Grand Touring Hatchback S) with a six-speed manual, I jumped at the chance to explore the differences between the two otherwise identical vehicles.

Mazda 3 hatchback is the best looking of all the compact cars and there is some pretty heady competition from Focus, Civic and Elantra. Modeled after the Takeri concept car, Mazda calls the shape following the Kodo styling philosophy. Being a hatchback model, it is about 5 inches shorter at only 176

inches, while still riding on a long 106-wheel base. Width is 71 inches. Co-efficient of drag is 0.28 for the hatchback.



Specifications

Engine

D0HC, 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

Six Speed Manual

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 3,046 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 6.98 seconds

50-70 mph 3.95 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 6.12 seconds

Top speed 130 mph electronically limited

Fuel economy 26/35/29 mpg city/highway/combined.

Expect 32-33 mpg in rural country driving and over 38 mpg on a level highway at legal speeds.

With the 2.5L direct injected Skyactiv four-cylinder power plant turns a compact car into a very high performance economy car. This direct injected, DOHC, 16 valve, locomotive style inline four pumps out 185 hp at a low 5,700 rpm and 184 pounds of twist at an extremely low 3,250 rpm which translates to power down low. With the six speed manual it will scamper from 0-60 mph in 6.98 seconds. Passing performance in simulated 50-70 mph acceleration runs on a level highway and up a steep grade posted numbers of 3.95 and 6.12 seconds respectively.

The numbers for the automatic are almost identical with 7.08, 3.91 and 5.74, respectively. The difference in the passing numbers can be explained by the fact that with the manual, only third gear was used while the auto gets to use second and third gears making up some of the losses of the torque converter's slightly less efficient transmission of power although most torque converter's lock up when conditions allow it to.

One more important attribute with this 2.5L powerhouse is its flexibility. You can lollygag around at 1,500 rpm in sixth gear smoothly and then accelerate away with moderate power. Even in fifth gear at 1,500 rpm it will accelerate without complaint up a grade. It will pull strong to about 6,200 rpm when a soft rev limiter stops the fun. It feels more like a muscle car V-8 when in the Mazda 3.

Smoother than warm butter, the manual is a blast to drive. Gearing is well chosen and it is so smooth clutchless up shifting is more the norm. For down shifting, the clutch makes it easier. Going first to second I also used the clutch as the ratios are much farther apart to keep it smooth. I am sure most drivers will continue to use the light clutch going up and down.

But here is where it gets interesting, the automatic returns the better fuel economy. EPA numbers also reflect the better automatic fuel economy with the manual getting numbers of 28/35/29 mpg versus the auto's 28/38/32 mpg city/highway/combined numbers. As usual, the real world numbers for the manual are much better with an overall number of 32-33 mpg. The auto version returned one to two mpg better. During a two way run with the cruise control set at 70 mph it averaged 38.5 mpg versus the automatic's highway number of 43.4 mpg. My Lake Tahoe round trip number averaged 35.5 mpg versus the auto number of 38.6 mpg. Why the difference? First the automatic had Mazda's i-Eloop system which takes a load off the alternator (maybe adding a half to a full mpg), but

more important is the lower engine rpm (taller overall gearing) of the automatic. The automatic turns just 2,000 rpm at 70 mph whereas this manual spins at 2,500 rpm. If there are any negative which plagues almost all compact cars it is the small 13.2-gallon fuel tank. It seems that all Japanese compacts must use the same fuel tank vendor as almost all have a capacity of 13.2 gallons.

During highway cruising the automatic's torque converter "locks up" and acts just like a manual as the torque converter is effectively bypassed. In fact, these new super high efficiency torque converters usually lock up in the top five gears in a six speed auto. That's why the auto gets returns more mpg. Perhaps the ultimate tranny would be a dual clutch automated manual, but for now the Mazda torque converter auto is more than fine, it is excellent.

Handling is another department where the Mazda excels. It out handles every other compact save maybe a Focus ST or RS, a VW GTI or a Honda Si which are specially designed for the performance/handling minded and priced accordingly. Mazda's state of the art four-wheel independent suspension is first rate, ditto for the super quick (2.6 turns lock to lock) electric power rack, its wide 61-inch track, 18X7 inch alloys shod with 215/45 rubber all with harmonious tuning do the dancing and this Mazda does dance. It would be disqualified from Dancing with the Stars as a ringer for sure. It is an absolute pleasure when the road bends, inspiring confidence. That's why Mazda 3's and Miata's are so popular in the racing circuit.

Ride quality is as said before, firm supple. Personally, it is a perfect blend. It is quiet on all but the coarsest roads when some road noise will intrude into the cabin. Even though the engine spins 2,500 rpm at 70 mph it is still extremely quiet and smooth only speaking when spoken to (getting into the throttle).

Braking is superb from the four-wheel discs (front ventilated) with all the acronyms. By the time you read this the 2017s will be out and will have ActivSense emergency braking as well as every other safety acronym now available with this current Mazda 3. Headlights are very good.

Inside is a typical fantastic interior all done in standard leather in the Grand Touring model with contrasting red stitching. They give you long haul comfort. The instrument panel is designed for sporty driving with a big central tach using the lower right hand quadrant for a large digital speedo readout. The GT version also comes with a convenient standard heads-up display. This is a very high quality interior but the sound system needs work as does the TFT display stuck on top of the center dash. It is just plain hard to use. Nav is also standard in the GT.

Rear seating is good for two and with the seats folded there are over 47 cubes of cargo volume for your monthly trip to Home Depot or camping out.

Pricing has remained almost constant from the 2015 model with this top of the line GT model whose only option was the surcharge for the Soul Red Metallic paint (\$300) stickered at \$25,745 plus \$835 for the boat from Hofu, Japan. My recommendation would be to spend about a grand more and buy the automatic and forget the go faster paint (This Mazda has plenty of "soul" without the \$300 paint and besides any color as long as it's shiny is OK with me). If shifting is your bag, then this is your best compact ride right here. The auto will get you a few more mpgs and is just as quick This is the compact car I would buy.

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.

