

Lake Valley holiday engine ready to roll

Here is the schedule for the Lake Valley Fire Protection District holiday truck:

Dec. 11 – Echo View Estates, Tahoe Mountain Road, Mule Deer Circle

Dec. 12 – Lake Tahoe Boulevard from Boulder Mountain Drive to Grizzly Mountain Drive

Dec. 13 – West side of North Upper Truckee from Zuni Street Highway 50, Chiapa Drive

Dec. 14 – East side of North Upper Truckee from Grizzly Mountain to West San Bernardino Avenue

Dec. 15 – Christmas Valley from Highway 50 to Grass Lake Road

Dec. 16 –North side of Highway 50 in Meyers (lower Apache, Magnet School), behind Station 7 (Cornelian Drive, Navahoe Drive, Cheyenne Drive)

Dec. 17 – North of Pioneer Trail from Highway 50 to Elks Club (Southern Pines Drive, Tionontati Street, Meadow Vale Drive), Player Drive

Dec. 18 – Upper Apache Drive and Mandan Street

Dec. 19 – Pioneer Trail from Busch Way to Washoan Boulevard (Glen Eagles Drive, Hekpa Drive)

Dec. 20 – Pioneer Trail from Washoan Boulevard to Jicarilla Drive (Apalachee Drive, Nadowa Street, Susquehana Drive)

Dec. 21 – Kokanee Estates (Marshall Trail, High Meadow Trail)

Dec. 22 – Golden Bear Trail, Meadow View Estates (Plateau Circle, Cattleman's Trail)

Dec. 23 – Cold Creek Trail, Del Norte Street, Black Bart from Pioneer Trail to Meadow Crest Drive.

'No Vacancy' signs vanishing from U.S. highways

By Paul Lukas, Bloomberg

You've been driving for a good chunk of the day, you're pulling into an unfamiliar town, and you need a place to stay for the night. Happily, there's a comforting sight just ahead—a motel with an illuminated "Vacancy" sign, the "No" thankfully darkened.

The "(No) Vacancy" sign, a beacon of hospitality and/or disappointment, has greeted road-weary American travelers for generations. But just as paper maps and toll booth clerks increasingly seem quaint relics of the analog age, the classic "(No) Vacancy" sign may soon become another victim of shifting travel habits and market forces.

"We don't really have any customers who want that type of sign anymore," said Alex Lauretano of the Lauretano Sign Group, a leading sign manufacturer for the hospitality industry. "At one point they were useful—but not anymore, with online booking." Julie Hall, a spokesperson for AAA, which inspects and rates motels, confirmed that vacancy indicators are on the wane and also cited online booking as a key factor.

Read the whole story

Holiday music at South Lake Tahoe Library

The Sierra Strings Trio (violin, viola, cello) will perform for free at the South Lake Tahoe Library on Dec. 3 at 11am.

The trio will play traditional and unusual songs of the season. Join them for a sing along and refreshments.

The concert is sponsored by Friends of the Library. The library is at 1000 Rufus Allen Boulevard.

For more info, call 530.573.3185.

Bread & Broth in need of volunteers

Bread & Broth, an all volunteer organization whose mission is to ease hunger on the South Shore, needs volunteers for a variety of jobs..

There are openings in the B&B 4 Kids program to help with packing weekend food for local schoolchildren on Thursday at 3pm at St. Theresa Grace Hall and for drivers interested in picking up the food bags on Thursdays and delivering to

schools on Fridays. The food donation pickup crew is in need of volunteers to pickup food from local donors on Monday and/or Friday mornings.

The Second Serving team has openings for volunteers who are interested in helping with the soup and simple entrée dinners on Friday at the Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian church from 3:30-6pm.

Monday Meals at St. Theresa Grace Hall is looking for cooks and dinner setup/serving crew members.

In leadership positions, the Monday Meal and Second Serving team coordinators are looking for individuals to assist with the meal setup and serving team coordination. Administrative openings include communications chairperson and B&B 4 Kids grant writer.

If you are interested in any of these positions or need more information regarding volunteering opportunities, go **online** or email Myee Avecilla at mavecilla24@gmail.com.

Kenny Traum – 1971-2016



Kenneth Charles Traum

Kenneth Charles Traum passed away suddenly at his home in Martinez, Calif., on Nov. 5, 2016. He was 45.

Kenny was born on July 17, 1971, at Alta Bates Hospital in Berkeley. He moved to South Lake Tahoe with his mother, Judy, and brother, Mike, when both boys were toddlers. He attended preschool at Under the Magic Pine Tree, followed by Meyers and Al Tahoe elementary schools, South Tahoe Middle School, and graduated from South Tahoe High School in 1989.

Kenny was a football player in high school and a member of the ski team. As teenagers, both he and his brother had Heavenly season passes, where the boys and their friends spent countless days together on the mountain. Kenny was also an accomplished drummer. He was in both the symphonic and jazz bands in middle and high school.

Upon graduating, Kenny attended UC Berkeley, where he became a drummer in "the pacesetter of college marching bands" and "The Pride of California," the University of California Marching

Band. Kenny embodied the band's adage of "spirit, drive and excellence." He lived in the band's Tellefsen Hall and was fortunate to travel the country, including performing in the 1991 season's Citrus Bowl in Orlando.

At Cal, Kenny also became an active member of the Delta Deuteron charge of the Theta Delta Chi (TDX) International Fraternity and lived in the Delta Deut house for a couple of years. After receiving his degree at Cal, Kenny moved to the East Coast where he earned a master's degree in public health from the University of South Carolina.

After returning to the West Coast, Kenny met fellow Cal grad Tina Morris. The two were married in 2001 and had their only child, Jacob, in 2004. The family spent many years living in Bend, Ore., before returning to and settling in the Bay Area. For most of his working career, Kenny was a human resources executive in the Bay Area's burgeoning technological industry.

Kenny's formative years at Lake Tahoe, the relationships and friendships he made during his time at Cal, and most of all the role of being a father, wholly defined the person that he was. In fact, just a short time before he passed, Kenny enthusiastically shared with the family that the time he spent with Jacob during the summer of 2016 was the greatest couple of months of his life.

Kenny is survived by his parents Judy Brown (Alan) of South Lake Tahoe, and Robert Traum (Valerie) of Henderson, Nev.; his wife Tina Morris-Traum and their 12-year-old son Jacob of Martinez; his brother Michael Traum (Tracy) of Davis, and their two children (Tylar, Miller); half-brothers Matthew (Sharon) and Jonathan (Susan) Traum who each have two children; and his aunt Barbara Riggs of South Lake Tahoe. He is predeceased by his uncle David Traum.

The family plans a private interment at Happy Homestead Cemetery in South Lake Tahoe. A casual celebration of life is

planned for Dec. 4 from 2-4pm in the convention center at Harrah's Lake Tahoe. The family would be honored to have you join them to remember Kenny on that day. Please contact his brother, Mike, at memoriesforkennytraum@gmail.com to RSVP and for information about a custodial fund established for Kenny's son.

Bill Crawford – 1934-2016



Bill Crawford

Billy "Bill" Crawford passed away on Nov. 25, 2016, in Reno after a brief illness with his family at his side. Bill lived in South Lake Tahoe for 49 years. During that time, he taught in the Lake Tahoe Unified School District and served two terms on the South Lake Tahoe City Council.

Bill loved his family, the mountains, skiing, and poetry.

He is survived by his wife, Jonnie; his children Marlowe, Paul

and David; and granddaughter Caitlin. Bill requested no funeral or memorial service; the family is honoring his wish.

Bill was born in Little Rock, Ark., in 1934. A child of the Depression, the Crawford extended family of Blytheville, Ark., moved west and settled in Torrance in the greater Los Angeles area.

As a young man, he was an accomplished athlete, a champion quarterback and baseball player in the Los Angeles metro area during the 1950s. As quarterback of the 1954 El Camino Junior College football team he led El Camino to the Los Angeles Metro League Championship, and was named most valuable player of the Los Angeles Metro League. In 1973, he was inducted into the El Camino Junior College Athletic Hall of Fame.

Later in life he would enjoy running marathons, fishing, rock climbing, and alpine and cross country skiing.

In 1954, Bill married the love his life, Jonnie Brock of Inglewood, in the Wayfarer's Chapel in Palos Verdes. They started a family and lived in Mojave, and Diamond Springs near Placerville before eventually settling in South Lake Tahoe in 1967.

Bill was an English teacher at South Tahoe High School and Mt. Tallac Continuation High School from 1967 to the late 1980s. Aside from teaching English at Mt. Tallac, he also taught subjects such as astronomy and orienteering. At South Tahoe High he also coached for the football and ski teams.

A teacher at heart, on weekends in the winter season in the 1970s and 1980s, he also taught cross country skiing in Meyers. There he taught everyone from your typical Tahoe tourist to Navy Seals the basics of cross country skiing. As a ski instructor he also guided Boy Scout troops on ski camping trips to Meiss Meadow near Carson Pass.

Bill also loved the city of South Lake Tahoe. He was concerned

about local issues and voiced his concerns about the direction of the city. He was prolific in writing letters to the editor and served two terms as a city councilman.

In his spare time, Bill wrote poetry, a verse every two or three days for well over three decades. It was his form of meditation.

Bill is loved by his family, and he will be missed.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Aqua

Aqua is a nice 2-year-old Husky. She has lots of energy, and needs a very secure yard as like most Huskys she likes to escape.

Aqua is spayed, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are

waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

How exercise might keep depression at bay

By Gretchen Reynolds, New York Times

Exercise may be an effective treatment for depression and might even help prevent us from becoming depressed in the first place, according to three timely new studies. The studies pool outcomes from past research involving more than a million men and women and, taken together, strongly suggest that regular exercise alters our bodies and brains in ways that make us resistant to despair.

Scientists have long questioned whether and how physical activity affects mental health. While we know that exercise alters the body, how physical activity affects moods and emotions is less well understood.

Past studies have sometimes muddled rather than clarified the body and mind connections. Some randomized controlled trials have found that exercise programs, often involving walking, ease symptoms in people with major depression.

Read the whole story

Saving rain is easy with a barrel

By Debbie Arrington, Sacramento Bee

After a soggy October, a rainy winter – hopefully – may be on the horizon. Or maybe not.

Given that uncertainty, how do you save some of that free water for possible dry days ahead? Those extra gallons could come in handy, especially if we face another year of drought. Current forecasts seem to point toward La Niña conditions and a subpar water year.

Rain barrels and cisterns allow for on-site storage of rainwater, a boon for homeowners facing watering restrictions. Regardless of drought conditions, saving rainwater can make sense for any gardener. Plants like rainwater, which is naturally soft and chemical-free. And if you usually get your water through municipal pipes, it saves money as well as water.

After five years of drought, rain barrels and equipment are easier to find at major home improvement stores and local nurseries.

Read the whole story

Road Beat: Honda Civic – a rocket that uses no fuel



The Honda Civic continues to be a delight to drive.
Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

When Honda introduced its current Civic Coupe, engineers knew it might be a winner. In two words, it is, especially when it comes to looks, performance, fuel economy and handling. It is at the top of its class. This is the 10th generation Civic since its introduction in 1972 as a 1973 model. My wife owned a first generation CVCC Civic. In those 44 years Honda has sold 20 million Civics worldwide.

Its new super sleek design looks quick standing still. It is Honda's biggest hit in a long time. It looks racy even with a significant use of bright metal on the grille and window line.

Its low, long and wide with a length of 182 inches and a height and width of just 56 and 71 inches, respectively, on a long wheelbase of 106 inches. Without going into a detailed analysis, this is one great looking ride with near perfect proportions, a long window line, strong front end/grille with almost no unnecessary design details to ruin its smooth, somewhat edgy body work defined by its subtle curvaceous character/shoulder line that runs the length of the body.



Specifications

Engine

1.5L turbocharged, direct injected, DOHC, 16 valve inline four cylinder 174 hp @ 6,000 rpm
162 lb.-ft. of torque @ 1,700-5,500 rpm

Redline 6,500 rpm

2.0L DOHC, 16 valve inline four cylinder 158 @ 6,500 rpm

138 lb.-ft. of torque @ 4,200 rpm

Redline 6,700 rpm

Fuel requirement both engines regular unleaded

Transmission

Six speed manual

CVT

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 106.3 inches

Length 182.3 inches

Width 70.8 inches

Height 55.7 inches

Track (f/r) 60.9/61.5 inches

Weight 2,888

Weight distribution (f/r) 62/38

Fuel capacity 12.39 gallons

Trunk capacity 11.9 cubic feet

Passenger volume 88.6 cubic feet

Wheels 17X7 inch alloys

Tires 215/50X17 H (speed rating of 130 mph)

Steering lock to lock 2.22 turns

Turning circle 35.7 feet

Performance

0-60 mph 6.48 seconds

50-70 mph 3.41 seconds

50-70 mph up a 6-7 % grade 4.63 seconds

Top speed 130 mph easy

Fuel economy EPA rated at 31/41/35 mpg

city/highway/combined. Expect 38 mpg overall and 50 plus mpg on the highway at legal speeds.

OK, so it's got the looks, but can it back it up with the promised performance. You can bet the farm on that one. Even the lowest powered version of the Civic has serious motivation. The base engine in the LX series is a 2 liter 158 hp (at 6,500 rpm) inline four with all the bells and whistles and square engine dimensions. I hope to get one soon to wring out. But my touring model is blessed with a 174 hp at 6,000

rpm, 162 pounds of twist from a low of 1,700 rpm to 5,500 rpm, 1.5L inline turbocharged four cylinder DOHC, 16 valve mill with all important direct injection. Max boost from the turbo is 16.5 psi. Without direct injection turbo mills lose their economy advantage.

Both engines can be had with a 6 speed manual or a CVT which sometimes feels like it shifts gears. But the CVT does not have paddle shifters or a manual shifter; just D, S and L for downhill braking. As I have written in the past, max acceleration is best left to the geniuses who designed this car. Leave it in D and nail it. And this compact sporty car scoots with a 0-60 mph average elapsed time of a miniscule 6.48 seconds. Honda has yet to introduce the new Civic Si. Passing times are also record setting for a compact with a 50-70 mph simulated pass on a level road requiring just 3.41 seconds and the same run up a 6-7 percent grade only slows that time to 4.68 seconds. Those are phenomenal numbers.

Throttle response at tip in is initially soft, but then it turns ferocious. A little care must be taken in traffic. Midrange is terrific and the CVT responds beautifully once underway and at times it almost feels like it is shifting especially during the passing demonstrations. Once the engine approaches its 6,700 rpm redline it seems to fall off to peak torque which is 5,500 rpm. This is no ordinary compact car or midsize for that matter.

And that lack of ordinary also extends to the Civic fuel economy numbers, when it becomes extraordinary. Although rated by the EPA at 31/41/35 mpg city/highway/combined, you can expect much higher numbers. With the cruise control set at 70 mph in a 40 mile two way run on a level highway, the Civic returned an average of 50.7 mpg. Overall in about 500 miles of varied driving including some heavy traffic, mountain byways and perhaps 15 percent on the freeway the Civic averaged 38.0 mpg. In a 20-mile round trip to Carson City and back over the Sierra and some heavy traffic incurred in Carson City, the

Civic averaged 42 mpg. Seven plus liter, 400 plus hp muscle cars from the late 1950s and '60s didn't perform as well and returned 8-10 mpg. One small negative is that the fuel tank has shrunk from 13.2 gallons to a too small 12.4 gallons. Bigger would be nicer and more convenient.

Handling is go-kart like. Honda's has all the ingredients, its attitude is flat, its steering lightning quick and its wide 215/50 tires on 17 x 7 inch wheels provide tenacious grip. Suspension state of the art four wheel independent with stab bars at both ends and that lightning quick steering is just 2.22 turns lock to lock, albeit a bit heavy. That's about the quickest ever encounter in a street car. Turn in is very crisp and understeer while built in is still mild. Also helping is Civics' curb weight which is 2,888 meaning there is less mass to resist changes in direction. Weight bias is 62/38 percent front to rear. It's no wonder this is such a popular car in SCCA racing. It handles like a good sports car. It is a blast to drive and to power out of corners. This Civic gets it done.

However, it rides like a true sports car with a firm, solid ride. It handles bumps well and there is definitely no float. What you will feel are muted bumps, but you will feel them. There is no harshness, but it is not an Acura RLX. And with Hondas there is some road or tire noise. You get that with a sports suspension type of set up along with the handling benefits. The engine spins just 1,900 rpm at 70 mph and is quiet.

Besides strong four-wheel disc brakes (fronts are ventilated) with ABS and all the other braking acronyms, this touring model also comes with about every other safety acronym including lane keep assist, lane departure warning, a collision mitigation braking system, road departure mitigation and a whole lot more. One more important safety advance involves turning right or a lane change to the right. When the right turn signal is activated the display shows a picture of what is on the right side of the vehicle, virtually

eliminating the blind spot. What a great feature. Six airbags are still standard. Brakes are strong and easy to modulate. LED headlights are excellent.

More good news. With the top of the line Touring, everything mentioned is standard including leather seating (and it is nice leather) and other leather trim pieces and floor mats. Hooray for Honda. There are no options to buy. The seats fit my backside perfectly with superb back support. These are all day accommodations.

Instead of a two-tiered dash of the prior generation, front and center is a huge tach with a digital read out speedo in the center. Ancillary gauges are flanking left and right. Trip computer information is also centered inside the large tach giving separate readings for trip A and B with the average fuel econ in digital form and the instant fuel econ in a bar graph. That is a big plus too.

The center stack has a 7-inch screen which is for HVAC, NAV and the sound system. There are no buttons and everything is controlled by touch screen or on the steering wheel. The HVAC has knobs, but the sound system doesn't. Knobs and buttons are easier being more exact and precise.

Rear seating is there and would probably be OK for two, just not me, but it would sure beat walking. But it looks habitable.

Pricing for this top of the line Civic Touring Coupe starts and ends at \$26,125, plus \$835 for the train and truck from Honda's Alliston, Ontario, Canada assembly plant where U.S./Canadian parts are 70 percent of the build. Its paint was an interesting color, Energy Green, which is a very shiny enamel color bright green with some yellow in it. More like a pastel color. You can see it from a mile away or more. It grew on me like a bad mold, but by the end of the week, it became cool. It sure got a lot of attention. Even a colleague in his

story on a Civic of the same color discussed it as an extremely popular attention getter. If you want a slickly styled extremely competent sports coupe that gets phenomenal fuel economy and kicks some serious butt, this is your ride. You might even be finding yourself with an additional set of wheels and tires at Thunderhill, Sonoma Raceway, Buttonwillow or Laguna Seca having some real fun and exploring the Civic uncivilly during track days.

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.