

# Road Beat: Mazda CX-5 AWD, an all-in-one



The Mazda CX-5 AWD handles well and gets good gas mileage.  
Photos/Larry Weitzman

**By Larry Weitzman**

About a year ago, the Road Beat tested the new generation Mazda CX-5, a mid-size CUV. It was a FWD edition with the 2.5L Skyactiv DOHC, 16 valve inline four. But perhaps the more important model, especially to my readers, is the AWD issue of the same vehicle necessary for the weather and terrain we live in. Even flat landers who frequent the Sierra should opt for this simple single speed AWD system.

There have been no significant changes from 2015 to 2016. The Takeri-themed body remains the best looking in its class, although it is getting some competition from the new Hyundai's in this compact CUV class. The marvelous, aggressive front end remains with its curvaceous lines ending in its tapering rear

end. The co-efficient of drag is a reasonable 0.33.

Its length of 179 inches with a generous width of 72 inches and height of 66 inches places the CX-5 directly into the aforementioned compact CUV class. Its sleek design hides its ability to hold 65 cubic feet of cargo behind the front seats.



### **Specifications**

Price \$22,675 to about \$34,000

### **Engine**

2.0L inline four 16 valve,  
DOHC 155 hp @ 6,000 rpm

150 ft-lb of torque @ 4,000  
rpm

2.5L inline four 16 valve,  
DOHC 184 hp @ 5,700 rpm

185 ft-lb of torque @ 3,250  
rpm

### **Transmission**

Six speed manual

Six speed torque converter  
automatic

### **Configuration**

Transverse front engine/  
FWD/AWD

### **Dimensions**

Wheelbase 106.3 inches

Length 178.7 inches  
Width 72.4 inches  
Height 65.7 inches  
Track (f/r) 62.4/62.5 inches  
Ground clearance 8.5 inches  
Weight 3,589 pounds  
GVWR 4,566 pounds  
Steering lock to lock 2.7 turns  
Turning circle (wall to wall) 38.4 feet  
Wheels 19X7 inch alloys  
Tires 225/55X19  
Cargo capacity (second row up/down) 34.1/65.4 cubic feet  
Fuel capacity 15.3 gallons  
Co-efficient of drag 0.33

### **Performance**

0-60 mph 7.83 seconds  
50-70 mph 4.26 seconds  
50-70 mph uphill 6.75 seconds  
Top speed (mfg) 127 mph  
Fuel economy EPA rated 24/30/26 mpg city/highway/combined.  
Expect 28-29 mpg in rural country driving. 31 mpg on a level highway at legal speeds.

As with my FWD test vehicle, the same 2.5L, 184 hp at a low 5,700 rpm and 185 pounds of twist at just 3,250 rpm, resides in the engine bay of my top of the line Grand Touring edition. This same powertrain is optional in the compact Mazda 3 and 6. With a weight increase of about 150 pounds for the AWD system

to 3,589 pounds, there is a small penalty in 0-60 mph time to 7.83 seconds or about six-tenths of a second when compared to the FWD CX5. Fifty to 70 mph passing times also increase insignificantly to 4.26 seconds on level ground and to 6.75 seconds up a steep grade (FWD times were 4.17 and 6.56 seconds, respectively). Performance is still at or near the top of the class.

EPA numbers show fuel economy losses of a couple of mpg, rating the AWD version at 24/30/26 mpg. But overall I averaged the same 28-29 mpg overall as I did in the FWD version in rural country driving, reflecting the efficiency of the Skyactiv system of direct injection and the use of the Atkinson cycle system of an extremely high compression ratio (13:1) and late closing intake valves.

Power is transmitted to all four wheels via a slick shifting six-speed torque converter tranny.

Handling is a forte in all Mazdas and as with FWD version, it only improves in the CX-5 with the addition of AWD. Suspension is state of the art fully independent in all four corners with MacPherson struts up front and a multi-link system holding up the rear. Both ends have stabilizer bars and coils are the springs of choice. The steering rack is electronically assisted that is a quick 2.7 turns lock to lock and the turning circle is a tight 36 feet. Standard 19 x 7 inch alloys are shod with lower profile, wide 225/55 tires. The results are handling feel and feedback of a sporting sedan, ripping through the twisties with aplomb as Mazda does emphasize handling qualities in all their vehicles with well controlled body roll, super accurate steering, mild understeer and a backend that stays planted.

But that doesn't necessarily mean a loss in ride quality. Strong, stiff construction enhances both ride and handling. While firm, it is still quite compliant that is a good balance as CX-5 handles both big and small bumps well. Wind noise at

speed is non-existent and the tires are quiet on all but the coarsest roads. Engine speed is a reasonably low 2,200 rpm at 70 mph, the same as the FWD model as it also uses the exact same gear ratios through the gears.

Braking is excellent, repeating the 41 foot stop of the FWD model from 40 mph. Safety is second to none with standard rear cross traffic alert, a rear view camera, available lane departure warning, radar cruise control, smart braking (I-Activsense package \$1,500), LED front headlights (and LED lights everywhere else) that are adaptive with auto high beam. CX-5 also has Smart city braking and more (Tech package \$1,155).

Inside are gorgeous standard leather seats that sit as good as they look. A precision, Swiss watch type instrument panel has all the appropriate gauges including a tach and speedo plus a trip computer. However, the center stack if you can call it that still uses a mouse like system that needs work, plus a screen that looks like an afterthought. It needs to be improved.

Rear seating is a pinch for three if the trip becomes more than an hour, but cargo volume is about average for the class, plenty for a Home Depot run.

Pricing for my top of the line CX-5 AWD Grand Touring model stickers for \$29,870 which includes the Nav system. The two option packages plus a few small items like \$300 for the Soul Red paint brought the total to \$33,685 plus \$800 for the boat from Hiroshima, Japan. CX-5 remains at the top of its class which has some pretty heady competition like the RAV4, CR-V, Rouge, Escape, Jeep Cherokee, Kia Sportage and more. However, the new Hyundai Santa Fe Sport 2.0T may be its equal and a bit more. Both were tested back to back, but you be the judge.

*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.*

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## **‘Mother of Nevada Wilderness’ Marge Sill dies**



Marge Sill's conservation efforts took her to places all over Nevada.  
Photo/Friends of Nevada Wilderness

**By Henry Brean, Las Vegas Review-Journal**

The wilds of Nevada have lost their matriarch.

Through more than five decades of conservation work, Marge Sill came to be known as the mother and, later, the grandmother of Nevada wilderness.

“It was a title she embraced fully and loved,” said Shaaron Netherton, executive director of the Friends of Nevada Wilderness, a nonprofit advocacy group that Sill helped found in 1984. “She’s just been a force in Nevada conservation for a long time.”

Sill died Sunday at her home in Reno at age 92.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Free Halloween party for South Shore kids**

The 14th annual Halloween Treat Street event, an indoor trick or treating option hosted by radio station KRLT and KOWL radio stations, will take place in and around Lake Tahoe Community College's physical education building on Oct. 31 from 5-8pm.

This free event is open to all children and their parents.

There will be plenty of candy handed out, much of it donated by local businesses and organizations. There will also be a Mad Scientist laboratory hosted by LTCC math and chemistry instructors Bruce Armbrust and Sean Ryland, gruesome games to play created by several LTCC student clubs, a haunted house with just the right amount of "haunt" for little children, hijinks and fun with LTCC's coyote mascot, creepy Halloween music, loads of festive and spooky decorations, and more.

A portion of the loop road in LTCC's main parking lot will be closed in front of the PE building starting at 4pm.

For more information, contact Diane Lewis at 530.541.4660, ext. 716 or [Lewis@ltcc.edu](mailto:Lewis@ltcc.edu).

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# Night of magic to benefit TY&FS

Tahoe Youth & Family Services' inaugural Night of Magic is Nov. 4 at The Loft at Heavenly Village in South Lake Tahoe from 7:30-10:30pm.

This fundraiser will start off with wine and appetizers. Then at 9pm the party moves into the theater for a special Magic Fusion show.

Tickets are \$60 per person and all proceeds will go to fund needed programs in the community that serve youth and families.

TYFS has added an interactive feature to the evening where everyone can donate and watch a moving thermometer, something attendees (and those not attending) may participate in with a code word and a text.

Text to donate: TAHOEYOUTH to 41444.

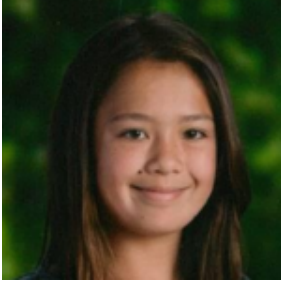
Text to purchase tickets: MAGICTIX to 91999.

Tickets are limited. Another way to buy tickets is to call 530.541.2445.

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## STMS student wins coveted STEM scholarship

Mya Rossi is on a path to see her dreams of being a scientist come true.



Mya Rossi

The South Tahoe Middle School student has received the Hank Aaron Chasing the Dream Scholarship. Through the Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe she applied for the scholarship in the pursuit of following her passion for STEM – science, technology, engineering and math.

The \$3,025 scholarship will help Rossi achieve her dream of going to the Science Camp of America: Air and Space in Hawaii.

Rossi has been active in STEM throughout her school work as well as in extracurricular activities. This past summer sh was picked for the Tech Trek Camp of UC Davis.

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## **Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe**



Bella

Bella is a nice little rat terrier, maybe 20 pounds. She is 8 years old, which means that she is mature yet has many more years to go.

She has lived with dogs, kids and cats, and is house trained and crate trained.

Rat terriers make great pets, as they are affectionate, smart, and sensitive. They have lots of personality and like to be with their people. Bella will make a great addition to just about any family.

Bella is spayed, microchipped, tested for heartworm, 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

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# Learning from dogs as they sniff the world

By Jan Hoffman, New York Times

Our daily tug of leash war goes like this. I tell Chico we're taking a left. He yanks right, wet black nostrils burrowing in loamy leaf piles. Me versus a 15-pound Havanese, incensed by scent.

Today, I let him win.

That's because I have fresh appreciation for his sniffing behavior, after reading a new book, "Being a Dog: Following the Dog into a World of Smell," by Alexandra Horowitz, a professor of cognitive science who runs the Dog Cognition Lab at Barnard College. In it, she explains the elegant engineering of the dog's olfactory system and how familiar canine behaviors – licking, sneezing, tail-wagging – have associations with smell. Horowitz also describes how she trained herself to enhance her inferior human sniffing ability.

**Read the whole story**

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# Tahoe memorial honors 5 firefighters who died

By Susan Wood

CARSON CITY – If you don't think wildland fire is on the back of Clear Creek residents' minds, just look at road landmarks.

One of which was just established on Highway 50 east of Spooner Summit where the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, with its brethren, came out a few weeks ago to memorialize the five firefighters who died during the 1926 Clear Creek Fire.

More than 40 people attended the ceremony on Sept. 28, the 90th anniversary. A version of "Taps" played while people reflected on the five unmanned helmets to signify George Brown, J.E. Mitchell, Bryant Whitmore, Arthur Sunday and Ross Morris.

A little-known permanent plaque on a cement block describing the horrendous fire has been installed at the Highway 50 turnout. The memorial overlooks the "Double Barrel" turn in the canyon where the three inmates, forest ranger and V&T railroad gandy dancer, respectively, were trapped there by swirling Zephyr winds.

These represent the same notorious winds residents in the sleepy neighborhood southwest of Carson City were keeping their eyes on earlier this month. **On Oct. 13**, a wildland fire broke out east of the canyon.



Five helmets just east of Spooner Summit on Highway 50 represent the firefighters killed in 1926. Photo/Provided

The men and women who defend the area are fully aware of the danger and know the possibility of another tragedy like the 1926 fatal fire exists when strong winds and drought conditions are combined with a dangerous topography like Clear Creek.

During the 1926 fire that started at 4am, those notorious winds kicked up and a fire was sparked, with the results disastrous.

"The wind shifted three times on them," Tahoe Douglas Fire spokesman Eric Guevin said while looking over the canyon.

"Their lives were spent saving resources important to Nevada," Guevin pointed out, referring to the forested area.

As the modern-day firefighter glanced out on the perch overlooking the valley, an ominous haze lay hanging above the

valley floor from an El Dorado County prescribed burn.

“This was our largest fatal wildland fire in this area. The fire went downhill, then came back up when the winds shifted. I think they thought to go into a defensive mode, but caught too much fire. It must have been difficult,” Guevin told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Our crew was named the Zephyr crew from those winds. (That 1926 fire) was definitely fanned by those winds.”

He admits the protective equipment has improved dramatically, including the uniform, goggles and masks. Ninety years ago, firefighters wore water-soaked bandanas – but they would get fatigued breathing into them.

What hasn’t changed are the winds known to shift dramatically. Another constant threat – more people live in what’s called the wildland fire urban interface – meaning on the edge of the forest.

Guevin described the memorial ceremony as having a somber mood mixed with a fitting sense of camaraderie. “A lot of our younger guys didn’t know about it. So having them there standing brother to brother was a neat feeling for something so well deserved.”

Three of the firefighters died at the scene. The other two succumbed to burns on 80 percent of their bodies in the hospital.

Consequently, two of the inmates were pardoned.

“They gave the ultimate sacrifice,” Guevin summarized.

Residents to this day are constantly worried about another fire.

“We worry about people starting fires up here,” contractor Steve Cote told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The 20-year resident has put a lot of money and effort behind

keeping his 12 acres maintained. He has a large mower and other heavy equipment designed to manage the brush around his property.



Tahoe Douglas firefighter Eric Guevin plays the bugle during the ceremony this fall honoring those who died 90 years ago. Photo/Provided

“These (firefighters) are heroes, but sometimes (the fires) get away,” he said outside his home perched on a hill as strong winds blew the vegetation in the distance. “Sparks can even cause one.”

Cote was referring to power equipment, adding he doesn’t run his when it’s really hot outside.

If a fire is sparked, vigilant neighbors are on hyper alert.

“We all kind of look out for each other here,” he said, pointing out how he saw the lightning strike for another fire sparked closer to Jacks Valley months ago.

Down his driveway to the privately-owned Clear Creek Road, signs of every sort are placed on the road to remind residents and the limited visitors who drive the seldom-used road to be extra careful.

One sign reads: "Beware of Fires."

Others declare a list of "fire safety rules" as in no "off road activity, camping, campfires, fireworks, outside smoking and open flames."

Another homemade plywood sign at a fork in the road marking a development even notes the emergency exit.

To a longtime resident like Dixie Busch, there's no messing around or leniency when it comes to the threat made by the careless. The intrepid senior who's lived at her Clear Creek Road home for 30 years has even stood up to a stranger trying to camp in the canyon telling him to move along.

"I asked him where he lives," said Busch, who lives on a road named after her family. When the man answered, she said: "Good, then I'll come camp on your lawn."

"We've been lucky this year. We've had more rain, and that's helped a lot. But it's still dangerous," she said.

To alleviate the threat, Busch has much of her property mowed down like Cote. But beyond the Busch estate, she wished some of her neighbors on the other side of Clear Creek Road took the same extra care. The canyon is heavily forested, with ladder fuels blanketing the area.

When the strong Zephyr winds roar through, residents like Cote and Busch become even more sensitive to traffic on the road. Their stranger danger threat could be someone setting a fire.

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# Makerspaces expanding influence in Tahoe-Truckee



Lake Tahoe School in Incline Village opened a makerspace last year.  
Photo/Provided

**By Laura Read, Moonshine Ink**

With the imminent arrival of the Truckee Roundhouse membership-based workshop, set to open at the Truckee Tahoe Airport Dec. 1, the region joins ranks with places around the world that offer work spaces where anyone can construct the projects of their imaginations.

But Truckee Roundhouse isn't the only local enterprise that's sharing resources and costs to bring brains and brawn together under one roof.

Like in similar communities, Tahoe area locals have been building things together for years: A house construction site

is a makerspace where people of different skills make objects on a single site in order to build a shelter; Riverside Studios, in its original form on Riverside Drive, was a makerspace where in a collection of low-rent buildings several artists created work for sale; North Tahoe Arts in Tahoe City has held artisan classes for both hobby and sale in a large room above its downstairs galleries.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Talk to focus on being healthy on the slopes**

Barton Health is putting on a free lecture about maximizing on hill performance.

The talk will be Nov. 1 from 6-7pm in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Presenters will be: Terry Orr, Jeremy Vandehurst, Jeff Brown, Nick Ward, and Beachy Orr.

They will talk about:

- Injury prevention
- Concussion recognition and care
- Preseason conditioning and demonstrations
- Strength training to maximize the season

- Importance of wellness and fitness.