

The myth of the hero cop

By David Feige, Slate

Baltimore's state's attorney, Marilyn J. Mosby, moved quickly in securing indictments against six police officers in the death of Freddie Gray. But getting a grand jury to indict police officers is a lot easier than getting convictions at trial. That's because like any prosecutor trying to hold cops accountable, Mosby will be working on an uneven playing field. To prove her case, she won't just need sufficient evidence. She will also have to overcome a number of deep-seated structural impediments to convicting police officers of crimes—no matter how guilty they are.

It's hard to prosecute cops. There are two main reasons for this: The first is the special deference that jurors, judges, and prosecutors show officers thanks to the widespread perception that they are heroic public figures valiantly trying to protect us. The second is the bevy of special laws around the country that are designed to shield police officers from the very tactics the police regularly use on ordinary suspects. For example, in most states, law enforcement officers cannot be questioned until they have been given a few days to get their stories straight. And many states have passed laws—such as Section 50-a of New York's Civil Rights Law—that are specifically designed to make it almost impossible to obtain or use at trial records of a police officer's prior brutality or misconduct. These two factors can make convicting police officers extremely difficult, and it is no accident; it is the direct result of the sustained effort by police unions to protect officers from even the most deserved discipline or prosecution.

It is far safer to be a NYPD officer than an average black man in Baltimore.

While the rules that unfairly protect the police must be changed, it is also high time to re-examine the foundation of these policies: the public perception—lovingly curated by police unions—of the very nature of police work.

[Read the whole story](#)

Study: Trans fats may affect memory

By Dennis Thompson, CBS News

Trans fats may play havoc with your memory along with your cholesterol levels, a new study suggests.

Younger men who ate high levels of trans fats performed more poorly on a memory test involving word recall than those who ate lower levels, the researchers found.

In the study, each gram of trans fats eaten per day was associated with 12 to 21 fewer words recalled, out of an average score of 86, said lead author Dr. Beatrice Golomb, a professor of family and preventive medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

[Read the whole story](#)

SummerFest concert tickets on sale

World renowned pianist Joseph Kalichstein will open the Lake Tahoe SummerFest season on July 31.

The Incline Village event goes through Aug. 16.

The three weekend series of nine concerts will include masterpieces translated by renowned artists and a nationally acclaimed orchestra led by Joel Revzen, artistic director and conductor. Many of the players have principal positions in prestigious symphonies including the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the philharmonics of New York and Los Angeles, and the symphonies of San Francisco, Seattle, Dallas, and Vancouver. Friday and Sunday concerts include the 40 member orchestra, while Saturday performances feature an intimate “Meet the Music – Meet the Musicians” chamber music series, featuring smaller ensembles from the orchestra followed by post-event receptions for attendees and artists to mingle.

The Lake Tahoe SummerFest orchestra performs in a 500-seat acoustical tent pavilion on the campus of Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village.

Tickets are \$85 (Fridays and Sundays) and \$65 (Saturdays) for adults, \$15 for children 15 and under, \$20 for students and include reserved seating, free parking, and complimentary desserts following the performance. The first six rows of reserved seats are \$100. For more info or to buy tickets, call 775.298.0245.

Douglas County libraries expand AV offering

Douglas County Public Library is expanding its media collection to meet growing demand and current technology.

The library has added a variety of movies, TV series, and music to its audio-visual collection.

Hundreds of new DVD titles have already been added and many more are on the way.

Television program series “Downton Abbey,” “Breaking Bad,” “Dr. Who,” and “Game of Thrones” are now in the DVD collection.

The Douglas County Public Library is located at 1625 Library Lane in Minden and 233 Warrior Way in Zephyr Cove.

EDC Fair can be a dizzying, thrilling experience



The Midway at the El Dorado County Fair has a new operator. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

PLACERVILLE – With at least 2,000 carnival wristbands sold before the El Dorado County Fair even opens, it's obvious the Midway is a huge draw.

New this year at the Placerville fair is the company operating the rides and games – Carnival California.

With the number of joyful screams and big smiles during Wednesday's preview, it looks like there will plenty of fun to be had at the four-day fair that opens today.



Father and son – both Michael Burks – on the bumper cars.

Seven-year-old Michael Burks has been coming to the fair since he was a baby, but June 17 was the first time he had been in a bumper car. His dad, also Michael Burks, had to do the driving because he has longer legs.

A couple head-on collisions bounced them around, but the younger Burks eagerly asked if they could go again.

“We are very excited to have six ‘spectacular’ rides, including the Pharaohs Fury, the Typhoon and of course the ever popular Zipper and classic Century Ferris Wheel,” Jody Gray, fair director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “These rides have LED lights, (bringing a) very impressive look to the carnival.”

This is the third carnival provider in the last 14 years. The previous firm stopped doing shows in Northern California.

Gray believes one reason the Midway is so popular at the Placerville fair is that rides like this are rare in the area.

The fair receives a flat fee from the carnival and the games.



A mini roller coaster delights fair-goers.

The Mega Slide is great for all ages. The smallest of children seemed to fly the fastest down this slick roly slide.

Be prepared to be squished if sitting on the right side of the Sizzler car. Three arms, each with four cars holding two people zoom in and out made the world seem like it is still spinning even after the ride had come to a stop.

The Typhoon is a good starter ride for those unaccustomed to the world of such spinning devices. The person on the left gets the brunt of the crushing.

The main carnival is in its usual spot near the entrance, however other rides are now staged on the far side of the fairgrounds.

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The baby pigs live up to the the fair's theme – Hog Days of Summer.

Notes:

- The fair runs June 18-21.
- Carnival tickets may be purchased in advance online, which includes discount prices.
- Hog Days of Summer is this year's theme. More info about the fair and all events are online.

Posture key to healthy spine

By Constance Sommer, Los Angeles Times

Christiane Carman believed she had good posture. Then one day she woke up with a crick in her neck, a nagging little pain on the left side that didn't go away. Soon it was shooting down her left arm. By the time she landed at UCLA's Spine Clinic, the pain had become her everyday companion. Your problem, a physical therapist at the clinic, Keri Pegram, told her, is the way you sit at work. In other words, Carman had poor posture.

Posture can seem the sort of problem that is easily corrected. But when poor posture becomes a habit, experts say, it can lead to a host of problems, including back pain, ancillary injuries in the shoulders and knees, and struggles with balance and endurance.

"The more the muscles have to work," said Alan Hilibrand, an orthopaedic spine surgeon and professor at Philadelphia's Jefferson Medical College, "the more they get stressed and fatigued."

Read the whole story

Old buses being repurposed as homeless shelters

By Eleanor Goldberg, Huffington Post

Telling a homeless person to "hit the road" could soon be a good thing in Hawaii.

Group 70 International, a Honolulu-based architecture company, is working on retrofitting five retired city buses into a fleet of mobile shelters that could provide homeless people

with everything from a place to sleep to an equipped space to wash up, *Hawaii News Now* reported.

The buses run smoothly, but are being stored only because they have racked up too many miles, KITV reported.

Group 70 told KITV that it drew its inspiration from Lava Mae, a nonprofit in San Francisco that converted two city buses into shower facilities for homeless people, the Associated Press reported. The vehicles boast hot showers, clean toilets, free towels, soap and shampoo.

Read the whole story

Road beat: Plenty of reasons RX350 a top seller



Gas mileage is one of the disappointments with the Lexus RX350. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

2015 marks the sixth year for this third generation Lexus RX350. Why fix what isn't broken? And it's not me, the public knows, too, as the RX remains the best selling of all Lexus models. And it seems that Lexus hasn't rested with continually refining this ride. It has been nearly six years since an RX resided in the my garage and while the vehicle has not physically changed as all chassis and body dimensions has remained the same down to the tenth of an inch, the vehicle impressions have. It subjectively feels significantly more refined, smoother, quieter and more comfortable so much so I noticed it the first time I sat in the front seat. Wow, it was that good.

RX is a smaller mid-size luxury SUV with an overall length of 188 inches and a wide bean of 74 inches which gives an interior impression of a big vehicle as shoulder room is 58 inches. Its sleek proportions give the RX a rakish low look, but it actually stands 66-inches tall without the roof racks. You can't miss the L'finnesse front end and styling clues so you know it's a Lexus at your first glance. The long, high strong belt line shoulder is still with us, which was the most significant body change from generation two to this generation three. It's a shape that has held up well for over ten years. Co-efficient of drag is a low 0.33.



Specifications

Price \$41,880 to about \$55,000

Engine-conventional

3.5L DOHC 24 valve V-6 270 hp @ 6,200 rpm

248 ft.-lb. of torque @ 4,700 rpm

Transmission

Conventional six speed automatic

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/front wheel drive/all wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 107.9 inches

Length 187.8 inches

Height 66.3 inches

Width 74.2 inches

Weight (AWD) 4,343

Track (f/r) 64.2/63.8 inches

Ground clearance 7.3 inches

GVWR 5,650 pounds

Tow capacity 3,500 pounds

Weight distribution (f/r)

58.6/41.4 percent

Fuel capacity 19.2 gallons

Cargo volume (second row

up/second row folded)
40.0/80.3 cubic feet
Seat belts (passenger
capacity) 5
Wheels (std/opt)
18X7.5/19X7.5 inch alloys
Tires (std/opt)
235/60X18/235/55X19
Turning circle 40.0 feet
Steering lock to lock 2.79
turns
Coefficient of drag 0.33
Performance RX350 AWD
0-60 mph 6.30 seconds
50-70 mph 3.59 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 4.66
seconds
Top Speed Electronically
limited to 112 mph
Fuel economy EPA rated at
18/24/20
city/highway/combined mpg
(AWD). Expect 21 mpg in
rural country driving with
some stop and go and 25 mpg
on the highway at legal
speeds.

Powering the RX350 is the same engine for the last 10 years when the 2007 model was introduced in 2006. Power production has essentially remained the same as this 2015 model achieves 270 hp at 6,200 rpm and peak torque of 248 pounds is achieved at 4,700 rpm meaning the engine at 4,700 rpm makes 222 hp. At 6,200 rpm, which is the engine's peak hp rpm, the engine is producing 229 pounds of torque. In spite of the loss of 20 pounds of torque at 6,200 rpm, the engine is cranking out significant more power and better performance (48 more hp).

While torque curves are important, vehicle performance is all about hp.

My AWD tester had slightly improved performance even though peak hp is off by 5 hp and torque is down by 8 pounds. Zero-60 mph averaged an almost world class time of 6.30 seconds. Passing performance is also reflective of the 0-60 time as the RX was able to run from 50-70 mph on a level highway in 3.59 seconds while the same performance parameter up a six percent grade slowed that time to 4.66 seconds. My last tester had times of 6.56, 3.42 and 4.90 seconds respectively. The RX gets it done.

While the RX is a superb over the road vehicle and although it has an EPA rating of 18/24/20 mpg city/highway/combined, I was expecting much better. Don't. At 70 mph on a level highway it achieved 25 mpg. Overall the number was 21.2 mpg. Decent but more is better. But on the other side the RX returned a very good 25.8 mpg in a round trip from Placerville to South Lake Tahoe. I had almost no traffic, only made about half a dozen full throttle passes in the passing zones and averaged 58-59 mph when the speed limit was 55 which was most of the time although speeds were correspondingly higher when the speed limit was 65 mph.

Suspension is state of the art with front MacPherson struts and a double wishbone system in the rear. Steering is a quick electric rack that is 2.79 turns lock to lock. Wheels are 18X7.5 inch alloys shod with 235/60 series tires. Sure you might hear complaints of slightly numb steering, but the reality is the RX handles well with good cornering power. Do the twisties at eight-tenths and you will be surprised how well the RX acquits itself. It takes some attention but you can feel the tires working telling you what is going on. It will surprise you. Body roll is well controlled for an SUV.

Ride quality is excellent, period. It is extremely quiet and smooth, like you're in a Lexus LS460. It feels like a bank

vault, bumps just don't upset this ride or the occupants. The engine spins 2,200 rpm at 70 mph; I would like to see 2,000 and maybe a bit better highway mileage. There is no head tossing either.

Safety in the RX is all inclusive with about every safety feature and acronym thought of by man. The four-wheel discs (front ventilated and 13 inches) stop the RX in 42 feet from 40 mph. HID headlamps plus LED fog lights were superb. Ten airbags are standard.

Inside is another magnificent interior from Lexus. First the seats are amazingly comfortable with soft leather, sublime support and perfect foam densities. Just sit in one and you will get it. Rear seating is good for three. For such a small vehicle cargo capacity is large with 80 cubic feet behind the front row and 40 cubes behind the second row. Total interior volume is 140 cubes or 20 cubes more than your average EPA large vehicle.



A smooth, comfortable ride.

Instrumentation is excellent, with a large speedo and tach plus the necessary ancillary gauges. A trip computer is located in between. The center stack has easy to use A/C controls (but no apparent A/C compressor shut off). However, the media and other controls require the use of a dreaded mouse. If only my cat could eliminate it. It is distracting and not as precise to use as a push button. In an otherwise almost perfect vehicle, the mouse interface is annoying and

bothersome. And Mickey and Mighty use to be two of my favorites characters. Maybe we should blame Walt Disney and Paul Terry for the mouse.

The quality of the interior materials and fit and finish also warrant special mention. They are outstanding.

While my fully loaded AWD tester that included a rear seat movie theater stickered at \$54,340 including \$910 for the boat from Japan, a base RX FWD starts at \$40,970. AWD is a \$1,400 premium. Buy the AWD model. Additionally I would add the Premium package of leather, blind spot monitor, one touch moon roof and more for \$2,760. If you have kids and need the movie theater and NAV, that will add another \$4,060. Things like power front seats, power tilt telescoping wheel and wood trim are all standard. Even the standard radio features great sound and XM satellite. This is a great ride. Drive it and you will understand why it's Lexus' most popular model.

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.

Kings Beach expands July 3 festivities

Fourth of July revelers will have the opportunity to start celebrating the holiday a day early in Kings Beach.

This year the festivities will include activities for attendees to enjoy and participate in during the late afternoon of July 3 and into the evening in celebration of

Independence Day.

On July 3 from 4-10pm the North Tahoe Business Association will host a beach party as a Kings Beach fireworks fundraiser. The event is open to all ages and will feature preferred fireworks seating, food vendors, a beer-wine and mixed drink garden, a knee deep water race, free watermelon eating, sand castle building and patriotic costume contests, free games, music, glow toys, souvenirs, all capped off by the fireworks display at 9:30pm.

Beach party entrance is free and will take place outside of the North Tahoe Event Center.

Preferred fireworks seating is available for \$15/person. Ticket buyers may secure their seats starting at 4pm and will also have access to indoor restrooms at the North Tahoe Event Center. There are a limited number of tickets available. Purchase tickets online.

Walking, biking and public transit are encouraged for getting to the North Tahoe Event Center.

LTCC concert a dual-purpose fundraiser

Traditionally, Rock Ensemble students studying with teacher and professional musician Eric Hellberg stage a professional concert to earn their final grades. This spring, students in LTCC's New Wave Music and Beginning Rock Ensemble classes will be rocking for an even higher purpose: their final exams will also serve as a benefit concert to support a fellow rocker in need.

The LTCC Rock Ensemble Benefit Concert is June 24 at 7pm in the Duke Theatre.

Tickets are \$10 at the door. Half of the proceeds will go to the LTCC Foundation, which supports student scholarships. The other half will go to the Angie Peart Cancer Fund. Peart, a repeat rock ensemble student and wife of LTCC reprographics/phone operator Bob Peart, is battling aggressive brain cancer.