

Art and science come together in perfect poetry



Charles Goldman on July 18 at the unveiling before about 50 people. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

The love Charles Goldman has for Lake Tahoe goes much deeper than the depths of this cobalt blue body of water.

His relationship with the water and somewhat the land is much greater than most beings.

Goldman first came here in 1958 and a year later began what would become a decades-long career of research. He is considered the godfather of limnology, the study of fresh water.

It's not just scientific papers that he has authored, though there are plenty of those. Many of which led to policies that affect the lives of those who live and visit here on a daily basis.

The 86-year-old Goldman has also written two children's books and is in the process of writing another book about the adventures of limnology that will be geared toward the non-scientist.

A while ago he penned a poem about what Tahoe means to him. Now it is visible for all to see at Ski Run Marina on a 48-inch by 70-inch piece of art that was unveiled July 18 near Riva Grill.



Charles Goldman next to the mural with his poem at Ski Run Marina in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Kathryn Reed

I dream of Tahoe wherever I may go

I dream this dream of Tahoe in sunshine or in snow

I see the cobalt waters in the alpine afterglow

Where pine and aspen forests take many years to grow

And I'll return to Tahoe from wherever I may go

Yes I'll return to Tahoe despite where winds might blow

And although my travels wander across the land and sea

My memories of Tahoe will always stay with me

The air is clear and brilliant where Sierra meets sky

It fills me with a sadness when I must say goodbye

But if we keep its blueness this lake will never die

And the children of our children will never have to cry.

Local artist Abner Rivera camouflaged the word "love" into the sky behind the poem to capture the feeling so many have about the lake. Goldman is then seen standing on the top of Mount Tallac looking out to Lake Tahoe with Cascade Lake and Emerald Bay below him.

It was marina owner Elie Alyeshmerni who came up with the idea of adding this layer of art to his center. He and Goldman only met about a month ago, but it was friendship at the get-go. It all came together that fast.

Speaking at the dedication on Wednesday night were Darcie Goodman Collins with the League to Save Lake Tahoe and Geoff

Schladow with the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center. Both have worked with and for Goldman, and revere him. They single Goldman out, recognizing him as the one to sound the alarm to begin protecting Tahoe if it were to have a chance to remain the iconic body of water that it still is.

Slew of events at S. Lake Tahoe Library

The South Lake Tahoe Library on Rufus Allen Boulevard has special events scheduled through September.

Here they are:

- Aug. 7, 6pm: Bagpiper Séan Cummings Concert on the Lawn. The Tahoe bagpiper will return for another summer evening. Bring a picnic dinner. Free and open to all.
- Aug. 15, 6:30pm: Todd Borg, award-winning author, will discuss his much anticipated 16th book in the Owen McKenna mystery series, "Tahoe Skydrop." This mystery set in Tahoe involves a brilliant young child who knows about computer encryption. The child is kidnapped in an effort to unlock stolen software that could be worth as much as a billion dollars. Tahoe Detective Owen McKenna must grapple with a murderous gang as well as with the child's impulsive and obstinate father who doesn't accept that his kid is transgender. Book sale and signing will follow.
- Sept. 8th, 2pm: Peter Mires presents his newest book "Lost Carson City." Carson City has the distinction of being one of the least populated state capitals in the nation, but its contributions to Nevada's history are

anything but diminutive. Set against the backdrop of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, it's a quintessential Wild West town. The gold and silver riches of the nearby Comstock Lode left a legacy that includes the Carson City Mint, one of only nine mints ever to exist in the United States, and the Virginia & Truckee Railroad, which still snakes through the hills. Residents once flocked to the Carson Opera House to take in a show and to the local racetrack to bet on the horses. Mires explores the city's legacies, brick by locally quarried sandstone brick with an illustrated presentation that will inform and delight. Free and open to all.

- Sept. 22, 3pm: Author Mark S. Bacon will answer all your questions including (and not limited to): Who wrote the first murder mystery? Who wrote the first noir mystery? Where did the expression, "The butler did it" come from? In addition he will share his expertise on writing in this genre. Bacon is the author of "Desert Kill Switch," a fast-moving mystery and the second book in his Nostalgia City mystery series. Book sale and signing to follow.

Manage water where it falls for a healthier landscape

By Melinda Myers

Too much, not enough, and never when you need it. This is a common complaint of gardeners. Keeping and using water where it falls is the first step in managing this precious resource.

Planting and maintaining a healthy landscape is a good place to start. Trees, shrubs, groundcovers and other plantings

improve water quality and reduce storm water runoff. The plants capture nutrients, preventing them from leaching through the soil. A dense covering of greenery and mulch helps prevent soil erosion and keeps phosphorous and other pollutants out of our waterways.



Native plants have deep root systems that open pathways through the soil and allow the water to penetrate the soil surface, providing moisture to plant roots on the way to recharging groundwater. Photo/Melinda Myers LLC

Incorporate native plants whenever possible. Not only are most adapted to the local growing conditions, but many have deep root systems that open pathways through the soil. These openings allow the water to penetrate the soil surface, providing moisture to plant roots on the way to recharging the groundwater. And as the old roots die they add organic matter to the soil, increasing its ability to absorb rainwater.

Adding more organic matter in the form of compost will also increase the soil's ability to absorb water; reducing surface water runoff into the street and storm sewer. Compost also helps capture contaminants so they don't leach into our waterways or get absorbed by plants.

Capture rain falling onto your roof with rain barrels to use for watering containers and ornamental plantings. Start with a call to your local municipality. Some restrict the use of these water-collecting devices, while most offer incentives and rebates for including them in your landscape.

Make your own rain barrel from a food grade container or purchase one from your local garden center, retail outlet or online garden supply company. Select rain barrels suited to your landscape design. Purchase one of the more decorative barrels, turn a plain barrel into garden art with a bit of paint or mask it with a few plants.

And don't worry about mosquitoes. Just toss a doughnut shaped cake of *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) into the rain barrel. This naturally occurring bacteria only kills the larvae of mosquitoes, black flies and fungus gnats. It won't harm people, pets, fish or other wildlife.

Consider adding these to areas subject to periods of standing water. One dunk provides control of a 100-square-foot surface of water for 30 days. The hole in the middle allows you to stake the dunk in place, preventing it from being washed away in heavy rains. It remains in place and provides control when the area is flooded again.

Add beauty and prevent surface water runoff with a rain garden. These gardens are located and designed to intercept the water running off walks, drives and the lawn before it enters the street and storm sewer. The water percolates through and is filtered by the plant roots and soil before entering the groundwater. Do a bit of research before digging in. Proper placement, soil preparation and plant selection are essential to success.

Managing water where it falls is not only good for your garden, but also the environment. You'll enjoy the beautiful surroundings and know you made a difference by incorporating

one or more of these strategies in your landscape.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts the Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio segments.

El Dorado County offering caregiving class

The El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency, Senior Health Education Program and Family Caregiver Support Program will be presenting a Powerful Tools for Caregivers educational series for older adults in August.

This six-week program will be from 2-3:30pm each Friday afternoon from Aug. 24-Sept. 28 at the Cameron Park Community Center located at 2502 Country Club Drive in Cameron Park.

The trainings in the educational series will provide caregivers aged 60 or older with tools and strategies to assist them in handling the unique challenges they face. The series topics include:

Aug. 24 – Taking Care of You

Aug. 31 – Identifying and Reducing Personal Stress

Sept. 7 – Communicating Feelings, Needs, and Concerns

Sept. 14 – Communicating in Challenging Situations

Sept. 21 – Learning From Our Emotions

Sept. 28 – Mastering Caregiving Decisions.

Participants are asked to attend all six sessions; certificates of completion will be presented at the end of the

series.

Class size is limited and registration is required. The training series is offered at no cost; donations are accepted. Call 530.621.6192 to register or for questions.

Event to raise money for Squaw Olympic museum

The 100th birthday of Sandy Poulsen and the 75th anniversary of her 22 kick-turns and the resultant naming of KT-22.

The event will be Aug. 11 at 1pm at the Poulsen estate in Squaw Valley. There will be a barbecue, cocktails, games, music and more.

Money raised will go toward a project that is important to the family – a museum of the 1960 Olympics and Sierra Nevada Ski History.

The vision of the Squaw Valley Ski Museum Foundation is to establish a local place where the evolution of winter sports and the legacy 1960 Winter Olympics can be researched, studied, and displayed and where local legends can be recognized and celebrated.

Tickets are available **online**. Tickets are limited to 150.

Are friendships giving you a boost or bringing you down?

By Tara Parker-Pope, New York Times

Are you spending time with the right people for your health and happiness?

While many of us focus primarily on diet and exercise to achieve better health, science suggests that our well-being also is influenced by the company we keep. Researchers have found that certain health behaviors appear to be contagious and that our social networks – in person and online – can influence obesity, anxiety and overall happiness. A recent report found that a person's exercise routine was strongly influenced by his or her social network.

[Read the whole story](#)

**Road Beat: 2018 GS F best
Lexus sedan**



The 2018 Lexus GS F may be the best sports sedan ever.
Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Lexus has a reputation of producing exquisite cars, beautifully finished with highly polished road manners, never mind occupant comfort. While that is still quite true, Lexus has never had a super high-performance automobile, a car you could almost take to the track and compete with. Yeah, sure they had an SC400, a performance GT coupe, but it wasn't a raucous, balls to the wall, pedal to the metal super sedan. That started to change with the introduction of the LFA super car, but the price was that of your first born (\$375,000).

Then Lexus surprised us with the recently introduced LC500 super coupe. Yeah, it had four seats, but the rear seats were for the severely vertically challenged or perhaps members of the Cirque de Soleil. But it was the best car I had ever driven, period. And it stickered for a base of just over \$90 large. Not only was it the best car I have ever driven, it was

the best buy in a super car. Now Lexus has produced the best Super sedan I have ever driven – GS F. So good, that because of its ease of entry and exit, bigger size, true five-adult passenger capacity (I had a guy 6-foot-4 in the back seat that had at least half a foot of rear knee room), that I would rather drive the GS F. And it stickers for under \$85 large. Let me explain.

To create the GS, Lexus took a regular GS body (perhaps its only weakness as the GS design while still quite attractive, isn't my favorite as the roof shape is a bit tall and not well shaped) and installed the same 5.0L DOHC, 32 valve normally aspirated V-8 as found in the LC500. Knocking down 467 hp at a sky high 7,100 rpm and a peak twist of 389 pounds between 4,800 to 5,600 rpm. It makes sounds befitting a champion NASCAR. Nothing, and I repeat nothing has ever sounded better. It even comes with a switchable enhancement system called ASC (Active Sound Control) that enhances the melodious, sweet music this V-8 produces.

Performance is of super car, world class quality with an average 0-60 mph elapsed time of 4.18 seconds. With some further testing and improved technique 4.1 seconds would be the target as reflected by the F's astounding passing times of 1.79 and 2.19 seconds respectively in 50-70 mph simulated passing runs on the level and up a 6-7 percent grade. The 1.79 second time is the best ever achieved by the Road Beat, besting the Lexus LC500 V-8 (which ran 0-60 mph in 3.91 seconds) level 50-70 mph run by a tenth of a second and tying its 50-70 mph run up a grade. Perhaps a four second flat 0-60 mph is possible? It is the quickest sedan ever tested by the Road Beat.



Specifications

Price \$85,345 to about \$90,000

Engine

5.0L DOHC, 32 valve normally aspirated V-8 467 hp @ 7,100 rpm

389 lb.-ft. of torque @ 4,800-5,600 rpm

Transmission

Eight-speed torque converter automatic

Configuration

Longitudinal front engine/rear wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 112.2 inches

Length 193.5 inches

Width 72.6 inches

Height 56.7 inches

Track (f/r) 61.2/61.4 inches

Ground clearance 5.1 inches

Fuel capacity 17.4 gallons

Trunk capacity 14.0 cubic feet

Passenger volume 90.8 cubic feet

Curb weight 4,034 pounds

Weight distribution 53/47

percent

Wheels (f/r) 19X9/19X10
inches

Tires (f/r)
255/35X19/27535X19 inches

Steering lock to lock 2.84
turns

Turning circle 36.8 feet

Performance

0-60 mph 4.18 seconds

50-70 mph 1.79 seconds

50-70 mph uphill (6-7
percent) 2.19 seconds

Top speed Governed at 168
mph

Fuel economy EPA rated
16/24/19 mpg
city/highway/combined.

Expect 21-22 mpg in
rural/suburban driving and
29 mpg on the highway at
legal speeds.

And when running these tests, the sounds were literally intoxicating. The absolute best. Throttle response was linear and the engine really came alive when hitting about 4,500 rpm pulling like an F-15 on full afterburner right to red line. It doesn't get any better. If you love cars, you will marry this one without a prenup.

As to buying stock in Chevron or Exxon, that shouldn't be a problem as this world class super car returns reasonable fuel economy considering its other attributes. EPA numbers are 16/24/19 mpg city/highway/combined. In 500 miles of nearly delirious euphoria created by the exhaust and induction sounds (I had the superb Mark Levinson sound system off during much of the test) the "F" averaged 21.4 mpg. Highway fuel economy

at 70 mph with the engine turning a low 1,750 rpm averaged 29.1 mpg in a two-way run. In a 200-mile round trip from Placerville to Carson City and return, the "F" averaged 24.9 mpg and it was an aggressive 200 miles. It's hard to stay out of that throttle. I must comment as to the smaller 17.4-gallon fuel tank. Even a Camry gets an 18.5-gallon fuel tank, although you could stretch things out for about 500 miles before you have to push. Your own tank will probably require a stop before then.

But the "F" story doesn't end there. Handling is also spectacular, with an Adaptive Linear Suspension system using double wishbones up front and a multilink in the rear. Wheels are 19-inch gorgeous BBS manufactured forged alloys that are 9 inches wide up front and 10 inches wide in the rear shod with Michelin Pilot Super Sports, 255/35 and 275/35 tires respectively. Steering is a quick variable power electric rack that is 2.84 turns lock to lock and the turning circle is a tight 36.8 feet. Needless to say, it goes around corner like water in a hose. And it does it with a flat nimble precise attitude that defies its 4,034 pounds. It gets it done, easily as well, if not better than the Kia Stinger GT AWD of last week. It feels better than an "M" BMW when the road bends. You can shut off all the systems and slide and drift like no tomorrow in a totally controlled manner although the re-tire might be expensive. F inspires confidence. Best handling sedan Road Beat ever drove, end of story.

But wait, there is more, a whole lot more. Ride quality defies its handling capabilities. In other words, its supple and quiet like a Lexus. When cruising the engine is only a faint murmur and there is absolutely no wind or surprisingly no road noise from those super high-performance Michelins. It's perfect with a perfect Lexus demeanor.

And there are four noticeable drive modes, Eco (yeah, with this car, who are they kidding with Eco?), normal, Sport S and Sport S plus which control steering, suspension and throttle

mapping and shift points and action. Sport was perfect as you had paddle shifters as well that really were quick acting. In fact, the eight-speed torque converter auto cog swapper shifted like a dual clutch maybe faster. In Sport or Plus under hard throttle it shifted like a NASCAR, like banging through the gears but doing it quickly, smoothly and perfectly. One drive and you will understand.

Safety begins with every acronym which I switched off as the systems when operated acted too strongly against the steering actually making the car uncomfortable. Brakes are spectacular and huge Brembos 15- and 14-inch rotors surrounded with six piston and four piston calipers respectively. They are strong. Headlights are excellent.

Inside were superb, super comfortable red leather seats with black trim (Nice Lexus), that held you in place with the support necessary for the kind of driving one would expect this vehicle to do. Rear seating is similar. Instrumentation comes with a heads-up display a huge center tach that has a digital speedo in its center and a smaller back up analog speedo in the lower right. On the left is a trip computer. Materials are unbelievable with alcantara leather on the dash, headliner, inside the instrument bezel and more. Lexus outdid themselves.

OK, there is one knock and that is the controls for the otherwise beautiful sound system. It's a mouse and it sucks. It's requires too many steps and is too hard to control. Almost dangerous in a car like this. Find a station you like and leave it. The trunk is a large, well-shaped 14 cubic foot.

Pricing is not cheap with a sticker of \$84,350 plus \$995 for the boat from Aichi, Japan, factory. But when compared to its German competition, it becomes a bargain. My tester had a few options like a Mark Levinson sound system (\$1,380), orange painted calipers (\$300), flawless ultrasonic Blue Mica paint (\$595), Heads up display (\$900) and those beautiful BBS alloys

(\$600) bringing the Monroney total to \$89,120 for what I consider the very best performance sedan you can buy and at the sticker it is a bargain compared to the competition.

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.

Tahoe Beach Bash not just a beer event

Tahoe Beach Bash is a fundraiser for the Tahoe Homeless Coalition.

The event will be July 28 from noon-4pm at Tahoe Beach Retreat in South Lake Tahoe. It is a kid friendly event with activities like obstacle course, kids games, and face painter and bounce house.

Twelve home brews will be available. Participants will be asked to vote for their favorite.

Tahoe Blue Vodka will also be there sampling their Moscow mules. Crystal Basin Cellars and the Boisset Collection will be pouring wine and bubbly. Other vendors include Kona Brewery, Lagunitas, Lake Tahoe Aleworx, and Sierra Nevada Brewing.

Tahoe Beach Bash is a \$40 ticket; \$20 is if you don't want alcohol AND \$10 for kids under 12. They are available **online**. There is no onsite parking. A bike valet will be available.

Road Beat: 2018 Kia Stinger GT2 AWD stands out



Dollar-for-dollar the 2018 Kia Stinger GT2 AWD has top in its class. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

It has been a long time coming, but the day that Korea could claim to be the manufacturer of the best performance sedan value in the world has arrived in the form of the Kia Stinger.

While it is built in Sohari, South Korea, its origins and design are all German. Stinger was penned in Frankfurt, Germany, by Peter Schreyer (now president of Kia North America and the designer of the Audi TT) and Greg Guillaume, Kia's

chief designer. Kia's new executive VP of performance, Albert Biermann, whose prior work includes being the former vice president and head of engineering for BMW M series super high-performance cars, headed the engineering team for the Stinger. The results were obvious, Stinger is a leadoff grand salami right out of the box. It is the best performance sedan value in the world.

First, Stinger is beautiful with some of the best lines ever to grace a midsize sedan. A massive, yet sleek aggressive front-end flows rearward creating a slick window line that terminates in a rear end that reminds an automobile gourmet of either an Audi A7 or an Alfa Guilia. Everyone who sees it remarks of its fabulous design and looks. While a perfect midsize 190 inches long, Stinger rides on a huge 114-inch wheelbase meaning lots of rear leg room and a smoother ride. At 74 inches wide it sports broad shoulders, strong hips with bulging muscles. The smooth roof line flows into a hatchback design that still looks like a slick sedan.



Specifications

Price \$32,800 to \$52,300

Engine

2.0L DOHC 16 valve direct
injected turbo four cylinder
255 hp @ 6,200 rpm

260 lb.-ft. of torque @
1,400-4,000 rpm

3.3L DOHC 24 valve directed

injected turbo V-6 365 hp @
6,000 rpm
376 lb.-ft. of torque @
1,300-4,500 rpm

Transmission

Eight-speed torque converter
automatic

Configuration

Longitudinal front
engine/RWD/AWD

Dimensions

Wheelbase 114.4 inches

Length 190.2 inches

Width 73.6 inches

Height 55.1 inches

Track (f/r) (19-inch wheels)
62.6/63.7

Weight (V-6/AWD 4,023 pounds

Fuel tank 15.9 gallons

Turning circle 38.4 feet

Steering lock to lock (AWD)
2.1 turns

Wheels (19-inch f/r)
19X8/19X8.5 inches

Tires (f//r)
225/40X19//255/35X19

Passenger volume 93.8 cubic
feet

Cargo volume (seats up/down
23.3/40.9 cubic feet

Brake diameter (f/r)
13.8/13.4 inches

Performance

0-60 mph 4.66 seconds

50-70 mph 2.00 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 2.47
seconds

Top speed Governed @ 167 mph
Fuel economy (V-6 AWD) EPA
rated 19/25/21
city/highway/combined mpg.
Expect 22-23 mpg in rural
suburban driving and 27 mpg
on the highway at legal
speeds.

OK, so the Stinger is beautiful, but does it fulfill its promises. The one-word answer is yes, and then some. No other sports sedan comes close for the money. There are two engine choices, a 2.0L DOHC twin scroll turbo charged four belting out 255 hp at 6,200 rpm and 260 pounds of twist between 1,400 to 4,000 rpm and a 3.3L DOHC twin turbo V-6 monster motor that cranks out 365 hp at 6,000 rpm and 376 pounds of twist from 1,300 to 4,500 rpm. My tester was the GT model, which means the V-6. Both engines are longitudinally mounted to drive the rear wheels but also have an AWD option. Whatever the configuration, both engines drive through the same super slick eight speed torque converter auto cog-swapper. And, yes, there are paddle shifters. My tester was an AWD version which adds about 200 pounds and \$2,200 as my fully optioned GT2 AWD tester weighed in at 4,023 pounds, certainly no lightweight.

Developing on that theme, performance is heavyweight as in champion of the world. It's not the fastest or quickest car in the world as there are \$70,000 to \$150,000 sedans that accomplish the 0-60 mph feat in 4 seconds flat. The least expensive being the \$70K base BMW M4 RWD. But by the same token a base Kia Stinger GT with RWD stickers for \$38K making it the absolute best performance sedan buy in the world by tens of thousands of dollars.

My AWD Stinger did the 0-60 mph deed in an amazing 4.66 seconds. In studying the literature, the RWD version, which can be had for about \$38K with a huge standard equipment list

including leather will do the deed in about 4.4 seconds. There are no other sporting sedans or otherwise that offer this kind of World Class performance for such low bucks. Maybe a Mustang GT or a Nissan 370Z, but certainly not if you are thinking Subaru WRX sti.

Passing numbers are also astounding with a 50-70 mph simulated pass taking 2 seconds and the same run up a steep (6-7 percent) grade only slows that time to 2.47 seconds. But there is more. Throttle response is almost instant off the line and once underway this engine and tranny respond like a sledgehammer as it might drop a couple of gears or four and be at full boost in about an eye blink. Part throttle response is wonderful acting like a direct connection to your brain. It's almost unbelievable. But driving in slow traffic, no problem as the throttle is easy to modulate and feather foot.

OK, so it has super car performance, but what about fuel economy. EPA says to expect 10/25/21 mpg city/highway/combined. It does a little better averaging 27.3 mpg on a level highway two-way run at 70 mph with the engine turning a low 1,750 rpm. In my 200-mile round trip to Carson City the Stinger returned a surprising 25.9 mpg with the run from Carson City to Placerville averaging 28.9 mpg. But overall for 500 miles the average was 21.7 mpg, but this was 500 miles of hammering and almost no time on the interstate. In this day an age not exactly stellar fuel economy, but with some restraint you might achieve an extra mpg or two. About the only negative is the Stinger's relatively small 15.9-gallon fuel tank. It should be at least 18 gallons, a minimum for a GT car like the Stinger. The four cylinder should average 3-4 mpg better.

Handling is also spectacular. Of course, suspension is state of the art independent. Steering on the AWD is super quick 2.1 turns lock to lock and my tester had fitment of beautiful staggered 19-inch alloys, 8.0 inches wide in the front and 8.5 inches in the rear shod with super high-performance Michelins

Pilot Sport rubber 225/40s in front and 255/35s in the rear. Track is 63 and 64 inches respectively front and rear. Grip seems limitless and roll control is perfect and the variable ratio electric rack steering is super accurate. It handles absolutely perfect, straightening out the twisties easily and effortlessly as a true GT car should. It is easy to place in a corner, exactly where you want, holding its line perfectly. It's magic. Some saying the RWD handles better than the AWD partly due to less weight.

Some early reports talked of a stiff and unsettled ride. However, my tester with all the suspension bells and whistles actually had a sublime ride and while firm when necessary had some softness to it. Some drivers may actually find the ride on the cushy side. Control of body motions was perfect. Wind, engine and road noise are nonexistent at cruise with the engine spinning a low 1,750 rpm. However, engineers tuned the exhaust note from near a near zero murmur to an enhanced note befitting the Stinger's world class performance. In fact, the whole car can be set up customized to the driver's preference or he/she can select one of four driving modes preset at the factory (eco, comfort, normal and sport).

I was able to log a few miles in a new four-cylinder Stinger, courtesy of the folks at Folsom Lake Kia for comparison. It was almost equally as impressive. In fact, for most drivers it is as impressive. The 255 hp felt more like 300 hp and it sounded like a throaty V-6, making it the best sounding inline four on the market. Wow. I hope to do a full test in the next several months.

Safety is special. With all the acronyms including lane keep assist. Brakes are also special with huge Brembo ventilated discs with four piston calipers up front and two piston calipers in the rear. They are powerful and progressive. Headlights are fabulous LED with auto high beams and directional control.

While leather is the standard bill of fare in all Stingers, the GT2 gets super soft Nappa leather and the heated/cooled power seats are sublime with terrific lateral support. Instrumentation is complete with a three away trip/info computer that is flanked left and right by a big tach and speedo. Within the info center are boost and torque meters, lap timers and a "g" meter. Trick stuff belying the fact that Stinger is a world class super sports sedan.

With its extra long wheelbase rear seating legroom is huge. Cargo volume is enhanced by its hatchback design with over 23 cubic feet which expands to over 40 cubes with the rear seats folded flat.

Stinger has no flaws; it is about as perfect as you can get except for the smaller fuel tank. How about at least 18 gallons, Kia? Pricing starts at just \$31,900, plus \$900 for the boat from Korea for a 2.0L turbo four RWD with 255 hp which should get to 60 mph in the low sixes. That is the performance bargain of the decade. A GT with the super 3.3L turbo V-6 RWD starts at the bargain price of \$38,350 making it the best performance sedan bargain in the World. Zero to 60 mph in about 4.4 seconds. But wait, the \$32,800 base four cylinder, which should get to 60 mph in about six seconds flat may even be a better near luxo, performance sedan buy. My top of the line, loaded GT2 AWD stickered for \$51,400 and is also a World beater bargain. Any Stinger will make a believer out of you. It's what will be in my garage.

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.

Garden your way to better health

By Melinda Myers

Break out the tools and garden your way to a healthier mind, body and spirit. Gardeners have always know it, but now research proves that gardening is a great form of exercise.

You'll work out all your major muscle groups when raking, digging and planting for an hour. Include gardening as a major component of your workout schedule. You'll stretch and strengthen muscles while promoting cardiovascular health and maintaining bone mass. A University of Arkansas study found that yard work as well as weight training more significantly maintained bone density than aerobics, dancing or bicycling in women over 50.



Heliotrope, nicotiana and other fragrant flowers can provide aromatherapy at the end of a stressful day.

Photo/Melinda Myers

And for those of us trying to lose weight, add 30 minutes of gardening to your daily or weekly routine to help shed some extra pounds. A half hour of raking burns 162 calories, weeding 182, and turning the compost pile a whopping 250 calories. Gardening several times a week will help keep you and your landscape looking its best. Anytime I can receive double or triple the benefit from my time and energy, the more likely I am to complete the task.

Protect your joints and muscles while gardening. Warm up, just as you would for any workout, with a few simple stretches. Protect your knees by using a stool, kneeling pad or one legged kneel (keeping your other foot flat on the ground and back straight) instead of squatting.

And no matter what shape you are in, drink lots of fluids to stay hydrated during and after you finish gardening. This is especially important with the extreme temperatures we are experiencing this summer. Try gardening early in the morning or evening when temperatures are a bit cooler. And time your work in garden beds when they're blanketed in shade.

Protect both your eyes and skin from the sun's intense rays by always wearing sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses. And consider regular checkups with a dermatologist to monitor for skin cancer.

Pace yourself so you can enjoy the process and smell the roses, heliotrope, daphne and alyssum along the way. Gardeners have been into aromatherapy long before its recent rise in popularity. A few strategically placed fragrant flowers can create a delightful welcome home, soothing scent in your secret garden or aromatherapy as you weed and tend your landscape.

Include some edible flowers and fruit for you, the birds and

the butterflies. Nothing beats the flavor or nutritional value of fresh-from-the-garden fruits and vegetables. Plus, watching the butterflies and hummingbirds sip on nectar from a fuchsia, coral honeysuckle, verbena or salvia as the finches feed on coneflower seeds will provide added beauty while the squirrels' acrobatic antics on giant sunflowers are sure to entertain.

If the task is too big or your time is limited, ask for help. Gardening can also be a great team sport. Or make it a round robin as you take turns gardening in each other's gardens. You'll all enjoy a day filled with gardening, conversation and laughter. What was once an overwhelming task suddenly becomes a chance to spend time with friends, enjoy the garden and create new memories. Sharing your knowledge, plant divisions or other talents like cooking or pet sitting may be the perfect trade for your friends' time and energy.

And as a wise person once said, "Planting a garden is a way of showing you believe in tomorrow."

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening." She hosts the Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio segments.