DNA tests turning up unknown family members

By Molly Sullivan, Sacramento Bee

When Jaclyn Baxter spit into her 23andMe DNA kit, she wanted to know if she carried any troublesome genes she could pass on to her infant son, Jack.

The Placerville mother of two worried about his chances of developing Alzheimer's or Type I Diabetes— diseases ran in her family. Or so she believed. When she got her results, however, they changed everything she thought she knew about herself.

Baxter, 33, knew she was an only child until three months ago, when she discovered a half-brother in her DNA matches. This discovery launched a three-month long journey that revealed three half-siblings and a sperm donor they all had in common. And there could be many more siblings, possibly hundreds. Baxter figured her dad could be her half-brothers' sperm donor.

Read the whole story

Opportunity to discard unused prescriptions

Douglas County is participating in the Oct. 28 National Drug Take Back Day.

It is the goal of Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Partnership of Community Resources and East Fork Fire and Paramedic

District, who have partnered with the DEA to collect every unused, unwanted and expired prescription, along with non-prescriptive medication at the five drop locations.

The locations will be operating from 10am to 2pm at Wal-Mart in Carson City, Walgreens in Gardnerville, DCSO Ranchos substation, East Fork Fire and Paramedic station No. 4 in Topaz Ranch Estates, and Safeway grocery store in Zephyr Cove.

You may also drop off pet medications and liquid form of medications.

Incline shelter getting animals from hurricane relief efforts

More than 160 cats and dogs from New Orleans shelters will be arriving at the Reno-Tahoe airport on Saturday in hopes of finding a new forever home in the region.

Shelters there need to make room for animal victims of Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma.

Jason Stipp, executive director of Pet Network Humane Society in Incline Village, will depart for New Orleans today with a team of volunteer rescue workers. A plane is set to arrive with 80 animals into Reno-Tahoe International Airport, and another with another 80 animals into Hayward Executive Airport on Oct. 7.

New Orleans residents remember well the assistance they received from neighboring states when Hurricane Katrina

devastated their region in 2005, leaving many thousands of people and animals homeless. Louisiana animal rescue organizations consider this payback time. They have taken in thousands of displaced dogs and cats from Texas and Florida, and are anticipating receiving animal victims from Puerto Rico soon. Their shelters are filled well beyond capacity.

Stipp obtained grants from Maddie's Fund and the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation to make the trip possible.

Road Beat: Toyota Corolla iM, new name, same great car



The Toyota Corolla iM handles great and is comfortable. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Two years ago, I tested the iM is a press preview in the Santa Cruz mountains, spending 100 miles behind the wheel and couldn't praise it enough. Of the carryover Scion brands, (the iA and iM), the iM is the one to buy. And the praise of my first test holds true two years later.

If the new iM design looks a bit familiar, don't think you are hallucinating, it does and that vehicle is the RAV4. If you study the iM's shape, it has an almost identical window line, roof line, shoulder and character line, tail lights, and a nearly identical front end. It's as if the RAV4 was squished a bit, leaving the iM looking sleeker (co-efficient of drag is a very low 0.30) and sportier while offering utility and fuel economy with a good level of performance and handling.

Dimensions are sub-compact, with a length of 172 inches a width of 67 inches and standing just 59 inches tall, which is a little taller than most sub-compacts making the iM a bit of a crossover genre.

Powering the iM is a powerful 1.8L 16 valve, DOHC inline four-cylinder engine of 137 hp at 6,100 rpm and 126 pounds of twist at 4,000 rpm. It drives the front wheels through a seven speed CVT automatic. While its gear rations are infinite, under full throttle you can detect it acting like a seven-speed geared tranny as it accelerates up to its peak hp rpm and drops to about 5,000 rpm and then doing it all over again as if it upshifted through the "gears." A CVT will normally accelerate to near peak hp rpm and then remain there as tranny ratios infinitely numerically lower themselves as the vehicle accelerates. In sport mode, the iM will shift through seven distinct ratios manually.

In my prior review, I predicted 0-60 mph to be in the high eights. My seat of the pants number was exact as under the stop watch it averaged 8.87 seconds. Not bad, but even better

is the responsive feel the CVT returns. It actually feels more powerful. Passing times are decent as well with a 50-70 mph simulated passing run taking 4.67 seconds on the level and 9.38 seconds up a seven percent grade.



Specifications

Engine

1.8L DOHC, 16 valve inline four cylinder 137 hp @ 6,100 rpm

126 lb-ft of torque @ 4,000 rpm

Transmission

Six speed manual

Seven speed CVT

Configuration

Transverse front engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 102.4 inches

Length 170.5 inches

Width 69.3 inches

Height 55.3 inches

Ground clearance 5.5 inches

Track (f/r) 59.6/59.3 inches

Passenger volume 90.4 cubic feet

Cargo capacity 20.8 cubic

feet
Fuel capacity 14 gallons
Weight (m/a) 2,943/3,031 pounds
Steering lock to lock 2.59 turns
Turning circle 35.4
Tires 225/45X17 inches
Co-efficient of drag 0.30

Performance

0-60 mph 8.87 seconds
50-70 mph 4.67 seconds
50–70 mph uphill 9.38 seconds
Top speed over 129 mph
Fuel economy 28/36/31 mpg city/highway/combined. Expect 31-32 mpg in aggressive overall driving and 40-41 mpg on the highway at legal speeds.

EPA rates the new iM at 27/35/30 for the six-speed manual and 28/36/31 for the CVT. In my 100-mile road trip of aggressive hilly driving with more than half a dozen full throttle passes the iM averaged 32.0 mpg. In my 150 miles run to South Lake Tahoe and back to Rescue the iM averaged a solid 33.5 mpg and it included 16 full throttle passes and some otherwise very aggressive driving. No slow in my right foot. In a two-way level highway run at 70 mph, the iM averaged 40.6 mpg. Overall the iM averaged 31.3 mpg with the engine spinning just 2,000 rpm at 70 mph, highway fuel economy might be a bit better than advertised. Fuel tank is a larger than average 14 gallons.

Scion has put some high-tech quality features in this small compact like double wishbone rear suspension along with the MacPherson front struts. Wheels and tires are big and

beautiful 17 x 7 inch alloys shod with super wide (for this class) 225/45 series tires. They are not just calling it sporty, the data says it is. Besides having an extremely refined overall drive (very quiet and smooth), it also has oodles of cornering power.

You want more? Steering is radically quick at 2.59 turns lock to lock. I can see a new class of SCCA type of race car here. It even comes standard with stabilizer bars front and rear.

Even with a weight of 3,031 pounds, turn in is very crisp and changing directions is just a flick of the wheel. Transitions are very smooth; body roll is well controlled and the grip is amazing. Turning circle is a tight 35 feet.

Ride quality was excellent as this Scion is dialed in just right, plenty of sport without the punishment. And with the engine turning just 2,000 on the highway, there is little noise intrusion. It is quiet for a small car and doesn’t beat you up.

Inside is another quality interior. If I liked and praised the seats in the iA, the iM cloth seats are even better for the same reasons, they hold you in place during aggressive driving and are soft in all the right places and providing support where you need it. And they are large enough for 95 percent of drivers. They feel like they were custom design for my backside. Materials are mostly soft touch.

It does have a real two holer dash with a big speedo and tach. For a sub-compact vehicle, it has a huge amount of volume with 90 cubes in the passenger area and 21 cubes in the cargo area. That is the volume of a midsize sedan.

Pricing is $19,490 for the automatic ($740 less for the manual) plus $865 for the boat ride from Aichi, Japan. There were a few minor PIO options, like floor mats, a film paint protector, wheel locks, a rear wind deflector, etc. totaling just under a $1,000 bringing the total to $21,498 all in. Your

choice then becomes paint color and transmission. Get the auto and then pick a color (Electric Storm Blue as was my tester). Most everything else is standard, right down to the heated power mirrors with LED turn signals and back up camera. Also, standard here plus a driver knee airbag. Both vehicles do have some other dealer installed systems such as NAV and there is a body kit for the iM to make it even sportier. iM a lot of car for the money.

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.

Regular health screenings can save lives

By Lisa Carbonell

One important component to living a long and healthy life is to get preventive health screening for serious diseases. If your doctor finds a disease early, it’s often easier to treat and may cause less damage.



Lisa Carbonell

In addition to celebrating milestone birthdays as celebrations, consider them reminders for important health checks. Here's a timeline for health screenings through the decades:

- **Cervical cancer.** The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends screening every three to five years for women who have always had normal PAP tests, starting at age 21. If you have had a history of abnormal PAP tests, you may have a different schedule.
- **Cholesterol.** Baseline testing in your 20s is recommended to screen for inherited cholesterol disorders. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends that average-risk women resume screening by age 45 and women at higher risk resume screening by age 30.
- **Breast cancer.** This screening uses imaging to detect breast cancer when it may be too small to find in a clinical breast exam. The ACOG recommends starting clinical breast exams at age 25. Average-risk women should start getting annual mammograms at age 40, no later than age 50. Talk with your doctor about frequency, as well as other possible testing if you have a family history of breast cancer.
- **Diabetes.** The American Diabetes Association (ADA) suggests that average-risk women be screened for diabetes by age 45. Consider starting at a younger age if you're overweight and/or have other factors that put you at risk for diabetes, such as family history, high cholesterol, or high blood pressure.
- **Colorectal cancer.** The American Cancer Society (ACS) suggests that women be screened for colorectal cancer starting at age 50. The gold standard diagnostic test is the colonoscopy. If no precancerous polyps are found, you may only need this test once every 10 years.
- **Osteoporosis.** The USPSTF suggests that women be screened for osteoporosis starting at age 65. Your doctor might

advise you to start earlier if you are at high risk for bone loss or have had a broken bone.

Screening tests are just one step you can take to prevent disease later in life. Other crucial steps include:

- Scheduling annual physical exams
- Avoiding tobacco and illicit drug use
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy
- Getting at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation.

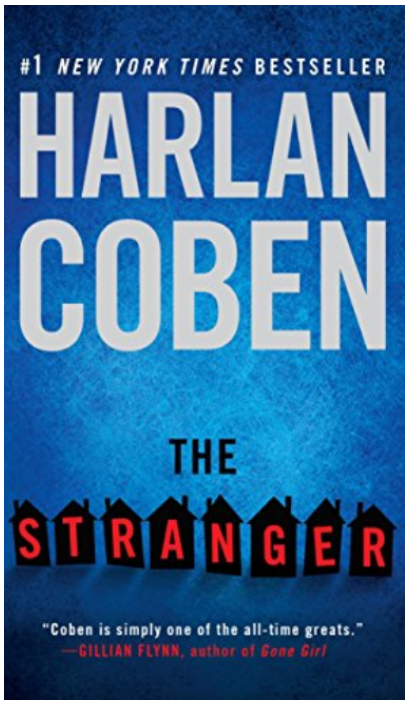
Lisa Carbonell is an OB-GYN at Barton Women's Health. Join clinicians from Barton Women's Health and Barton Medical Imaging on Oct. 4 at 6pm for a free wellness lecture to learn how Barton Health's new 3D tomosynthesis mammogram machine is taking mammography screenings to the next level.

Book review: 'The Stranger' disappoints Coben fans

By Kathryn Reed

If you want a fast read that has an interesting cyber-crimes premise, "The Stranger" by Harlan Coben is it. If a book that has undeveloped characters and leaves lots of questions is not to your liking, skip it.

My book club read the "The Stranger" (Dutton 2015) in September. While some liked it, most found it mediocre at best.



Those who have read Coben before said this was definitely one of his worst books, and were surprised because they've liked his previous works.

Secrets – that's the common theme in the book. Who gets to keep them and who gets to reveal them, and the consequences take center stage. This aspect of the book generated some interesting dialogue at book club. Would we pay to have a secret kept? None of us thought we had interesting enough lives that anyone would blackmail us in that way.

What was so disappointing was the story lines that were introduced and then went nowhere. Actions by characters seemed so unbelievable. All the superfluous characters were hard to remember especially when setting the book down for a few days.

What kept me wanting to read it was hoping there might be more depth on the next page, and trying to figure out how Coben could tie everything together.

Education theme of annual Women's Fund dinner

The Tahoe Women's Community Fund's annual membership celebration dinner will be Nov. 2 from 6-9pm at Harveys.

Tickets are $35 and are available **online**. This is open to non-members.

The theme of this year's dinner is: The Power of Education in our Community. Former Lake Tahoe Community College President Guy Lease will be the keynote speaker.

The inaugural woman of distinction award will be presented to Karin Holmes, principal at Sierra House Elementary School.

In 2017, the Tahoe Women's Community Fund granted $29,000 to various nonprofit organizations in the South Shore. This year, through a $100,000 gift from Lisa Maloff, the group will be matching membership money dollar for dollar.

Tahoe Donner Giving Fund fundraiser this month

The Tahoe Donner Giving Fund will host its third annual dinner and silent auction on Oct. 14 at 6pm at the Alder Creek Adventure Center.

Proceeds from the event funds grants supporting local nonprofits in the greater Truckee area, and scholarships to local high school graduates.

Stay Caldwell, CEO of the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, will present the evening's dinner topic – Beyond Philanthropy, Making an Impact in our Community.

The cost to attend the dinner is $100 per person, which includes a hospitality mixer, dinner and dessert. Tickets can be purchased **online**. To reserve a table, write to tahoedonnercares@gmail.com.

The Tahoe Donner Giving Fund was created in 2014 to pool contributions from association members to support the work of local nonprofits and provide academic and vocational scholarships to graduates of need.

Pac-Man arcade classic being adapted as a casino game

By Las Vegas Sun

Pac-Man could be munching through gamblers' cash next year, after interactive slot manufacturer Gamblit Gaming announced today it signed an agreement with Pac-Man's creator, Bandai Namco Entertainment Inc., to design a casino version of the arcade classic.

In a news release, Gamblit said it plans to unveil the game, called Pac-Man Battle Casino, this week at the Global Gaming Expo, one of the gaming industry's biggest conventions, at the Sands Expo.

Two to four people will be able to play each other for a cash prize in a contest that keeps the game's familiar maze and much of its original look and feel.

Read the whole story

Plant daffodils now for added spring beauty

By Melinda Myers

Daffodils have a cheery presence in the spring garden and are a surefire way to chase away the winter blues. These fall-planted bulbs are also reliable perennials that require no maintenance and are not bothered by deer or other pests. The National Garden Bureau has declared 2017 the Year of the Daffodil, and with the fall planting season upon us, now is the time to choose your favorites.

Yellow trumpet daffodils are classics, but there are many other flower styles and colors to choose from. Double-flowering types like white and yellow Lingerie and long lasting lemon-yellow Sherbourne feature multiple rows of petals and some varieties look more like peonies than daffodils.

Multi-flowering varieties like Beautiful Eyes, display several flowers on each stem. This variety’s white and orange blossoms have a gardenia-like fragrance. Miniature daffodil Baby Boomer has five to ten flowers per stem. After blooming, the grassy foliage quickly fades away, allowing nearby perennials to take center stage.



Unique daffodil varieties like Lingerie offer double flowering. Photo/Longfield-Gardens.com

Split corona daffodils have an unexpected beauty and are lovely cut flowers. The cups on these daffodils are divided into segments that are pressed back against the petals. Narcissus Cassata has a ruffled yellow split cup and white petals. Lemon Beauty's shorter split cup is adorned with a yellow star.

These are just a few of the many choices that are available for gardens, containers and spring bouquets. Most daffodils are hardy in growing zones 3 to 8. In warmer zones, look for heat tolerant varieties such as Thalia and Silver Smiles.

Mix daffodils into shady gardens filled with hostas, ferns and other shade-loving perennials. As the daffodil blooms fade, the perennials will grow, mask the foliage and provide beauty throughout the remainder of the season.

Plant daffodils on a hillside, woodland border, beside a pond or under trees and shrubs. Over time, the bulbs will grow and multiply with minimal care from you. Choose cultivars with different flower styles and bloom times, and plant in drifts to create an attractive display.

Can't decide? Consider one of the many pre-mixed packages such

as Longfield Garden’s Fragrant, Double, Miniature or Multi-flowering daffodil collections. Or, create your own long-lasting display by combining early, mid and late blooming varieties.

Get your daffodils off to a great start with proper planting. Order the bulbs early for best selection, and plant them in mid to late fall, any time before the ground freezes. Dig a hole and position the bulbs 6-inches deep with the pointy side up. Cover with soil, apply a low nitrogen slow release fertilizer and water thoroughly. Once in the ground, the bulbs can remain in place for years to come.

Reserve a few daffodil bulbs for your containers and window boxes. Pot them up in the fall and make sure they get at least 15 weeks of chilling at 40-45 degrees. In mild climates, the containers can be left outdoors. In zones 6 and colder, they should be stored in an unheated garage where they will be cold, but won’t freeze.

Start now and enjoy a brighter beginning to next year’s garden season. The daffodils you plant this fall will delight you year after year as their carefree blooms announce winter’s end and spring’s return.

Melinda Myers has written numerous books, including S”mall Space Gardening.” She hosts the Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” DVD series and is a columnist and contributing editor for “Birds & Blooms” magazine.