Homeless youth in EDC to benefit from state group

Each year, the Child Support Directors Association of California raises funds to help support a nonprofit selected by the CSDA president. Next year's funds will support El Dorado County students identified as homeless by the McKinney-Vento Act through a charity called the Homeless Children Matter Fund.

Don Semon, director of El Dorado County's Child Support Services, is the incoming director of the state association.

The money will help students throughout the county.

Fundraising activities will begin this month and continue until the CSDA annual training conference in May. Historically, these fundraising activities have raised more than $25,000 annually for the selected charity.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures that children identified as homeless (defined as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence) receive access to all school programs and services for which they are eligible. These services include academic support, school nutrition, and transportation to the school where they were enrolled when permanently housed. In El Dorado County nearly 1,000 enrolled students have been identified by McKinney-Vento as homeless.

For more information or to arrange a donation, contact Ginger Harms at 530.642.7238 or at ginger.harms@edcgov.us

Road Beat: Another great choice in luxury



The 2017 Volvo S90 T6 AWD Inscription is worth a test drive. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Volvo's been kind of quiet lately. Facing financial difficulty after being discarded by Ford, Volvo received a stability infusion from the Chinese automaker Geely (it bought Volvo from Ford) and Volvo is on the way back, big time. The new S90 is an example of the new modern, high performance Volvos.

Instead of the slope back design of a 1947 Chrysler as in the P544, then to the three box 140 series of the late 1960s and '70s, Volvos evolved, now making extremely stylish cars; witness the new S90. Even the S80 introduced almost 15 years ago was a handsome ride. But the new S90 is a giant leap

forward.

However, careful study of its new body looks as if it was melded from the prior generation of the Kia Cadenza and an Audi A6. Nothing wrong with that, but the resemblance is strong in the grille, window line and cut off rear end. The bottom line is that the new S90 improves on those designs, while adding a few touches of its own with its subtle character line and hood treatment to bring us a very handsome body and face. It is a great looking ride but maybe the Volvo nameplate in the grille is a bit too large.

Size-wise it is a large midsize with outside dimensions of 195 x 74 x 57 inches. Its slickness is confirmed by a drag coefficient of 0.28. The rear seat feels like a limo and the trunk is huge at nearly 18 cubic feet.

With the AWD system comes Volvo’s T6 2.0L turbo and supercharged inline four-cylinder engine. The T5 in the FWD is a turbo only version of the same engine and makes 66 less hp and about 40 pounds less twist. At a relatively low peak hp rpm of 5,700 rpm, this mini-mite unit cranks out 316 hp and 295 pounds of twist at anywhere from 2,200 rpm-5,400 rpm which is basically the full power range of this engine. The comparison demonstrates the power gained from the mechanical supercharger. Understand that whether the supercharging is done by a mechanical device connected to the engine or by a turbo supercharger driven by exhaust It is still supercharging which is the principle of shoving more air and fuel into each cylinder under pressure.



Specifications

Price

$53,945 to $66,015

Engine (AWD)

2.0LDOHC 16valave direct injected, turbo and supercharged inline four cylinder

316 hp @ 5,700rpm

295 lb.-ft. of torque @ 2,200-5,400 rpm

Transmission

Eight-speed torque automatic

Configuration

Transverse front engine/front wheel drive/all wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 115.8 inches

Length 195.4 inches

Width 74.0 inches

Height 56.8 inches

Ground clearance 6.0 inches

Track (f/r 20-inch wheel) 63.7/63.7 inches

Weight 4,080 pounds

Furl capacity 15.9 gallons

Trunk volume 17.7 cubic feet

Trailer capacity 4,600

pounds
Wheels 20 inch alloys
Tires 255/35X20
Turning circle (wall to wall) 38.7 feet
Co-efficient of drag 0.28

Performance

0-60 mph 5.84 seconds
50-70 mph 2.96 seconds
50-70 mph uphill 4.10 seconds
Toip speed 130 mph governor limited

Fuel economy

EPA rated at 22/31/25 mpg city/highway/combined.
Expect 25 mpg in mixed driving and 34 mpg on a level highway at legal speeds.

Performance of the new S90 is world class as 0-60 mph comes up in just 5.84 seconds. It backs up that quick off the line acceleration with a 50-70 mph simulated pass in just 2.96 seconds and the same run up a steep grade only slows that time by about a second to 4.10 seconds. Those are the times of a world class sedan. While there is no turbo lag because of the supercharger, there seems to be a disconnect in the fly by wire throttle system as there is a lag time between mashing the throttle and the engine lighting off to full tilt boogie. More on this disconnect later.

Fuel economy is EPA rated at 22/31/25 mpg city/highway/combined but the big Volvo does a bit better with a constant 70 mph on a level highway returning 34.3 mpg average. In my run from Placerville on Highway 50 to Carson City and back it averaged 28.4 mpg and overall it averaged 25

mpg with almost no time spent on the highway, substantial stop and go and all performance testing.

Suspension is double wishbone up front and an integral axle in the rear. Although 19 inch alloys are standard, my tester had the optional 20 inch alloys shod with monster 255/35 rubber. Steering is a quick electric power rack that guides the Volvo's wide track of 63.7 front and rear. The whole system can be adjusted from the cockpit from comfort to dynamic with positions for ECO in which you lose the tach or you can custom tune your settings to your liking. Dynamic felt too disconnected and artificial. In comfort the steering felt more natural and that is where most Volvo drivers will operate. Also in dynamic, the engine and tranny are remapped, holding the car in the lower gears too long, an annoyance. If you need power the eight-speed auto cog swapper will do the job for you without the engine racing along.

While there is some body roll, the Volvo has amazing grip. But the handling is still a bit disconnected meaning if attacking the twisties you will have to guide it; however, you can make some good speed at the twisty tango. Not bad for a 4,100-pound car. Turning circle is 38 feet.

Ride quality is firm maybe enhanced by the super low profile tires. In freeway cruising it is quite solid and there is little cush. In top gear the engine spins just 1,900 rpm at 70 mph and the Volvo is quiet.

Safety is Volvo amazing with about every electronic intervention, including Volvo's pilot assist, semi-autonomous driving which I let operate at close guard. It works, but I prefer human intervention. Brakes (four-wheel discs) are huge and powerful and the headlights are fantastic. I am sure the Volvo designed body will protect you like an Abrams tank, but I wasn't about to put the slightest scratch in is gorgeous flawless extra cost ($560) light Mussel Blue metallic paint. It is a fabulous color.

Inside is a Nappa leather interior and in Volvo tradition the seats, all except perhaps the middle rear are sublime. Instrumentation is complete, Speedo, tach and ancillary gauges. With a trip info gauge pop up in the lower tach area and the center counsel is made up primarily of a huge vertical color screen with more functions than most computers. You can even bring up the owner's manual or a fuel economy analysis. It wasn't that hard to learn, 10 minutes of dual and your good to go. The only issue were the fingerprints. Volvo comes with a special cloth to clean it when it begins to look like a crime scene investigator's nirvana.

With the Inscription, there is plenty of real linear walnut inlays and the materials covering the dash and door panels are leather. This is a luxurious ride.

Volvo is out for your business. This All Wheel Drive Inscription stickers for $56,250 plus $995 for the boat from Gothenburg, Sweden. What and you thought it was made in Shanghai? My tester had more options including the 20-inch wheels ($750) as 19 inch are standard, a Bowers and Wilkins Sound system ($2,650), the vision package which includes a 360-degree surround camera ($1,950) and more bringing up the price of admission to $66,105. It is less than the comparable competition, but it's your decision. You should check out the fit. It could be your glove.

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.

Delving into why dogs are so friendly

By James Gorman, New York Times

Tail-wagging, face-licking, jump-in-your-lap friendliness is what dog lovers adore and cat people scorn. But like it or not, the incredible sociability of many – although not all – dogs is universally recognized. It sets dogs apart from their wild relatives.

Even the most socialized, friendly wolf is cold company compared with a Labrador retriever in full face-licking mode.

But what produces this social exuberance? A team of researchers reported in the journal Science Advances that the friendliness of dogs may share a genetic basis with a human disease called Williams-Beuren syndrome.

Read the whole story

Movie highlights struggles of schizophrenia

“Elizabeth Blue,” a movie about schizophrenia, is being brought to South Lake Tahoe by NAMI El Dorado.

The drama stars Anna Schafer, Ryan Vincent, Kathleen Quinlan, and Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje. The story centers on the Elizabeth – played by Schafer – who suffers from schizophrenia and is struggling to regain control of her mental stability and her life as she begins to plan her wedding.

The film will be shown Sept. 16 at 3pm in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College. It is free. Doors open at 2:45pm.

Pair of dogs in Incline need special home



A special pair of dogs came to Pet Network Humane Society in Incline Village last month.

Honey and Buddy were confiscated from a severe home environment. Honey, a 14-year-old Dachshund blinded due to neglect, requires constant guidance. Luckily, she has Buddy, a 4-year-old German shepherd/Pyrenees mix, who has taken on the role as her service dog.

The dogs came from Lassen County Animal Shelter in Susanville. They have requested the two dogs be adopted together.

The two are inseparable, as Buddy guides Honey, shows her where food is located, and introduces her to strangers. He even pushes Honey’s bed toward her, and makes sure she is always within his view.

Although Honey recently had a mammary tumor removed and is blind, she is in good health. She is very sweet and wags her tail when you call her name. She listens well, and staff guide her by stomping their feet. Buddy is also very sweet, and loves to go on walks and play fetch. He is the most joyful when he is with his Honey.

If you can give Honey and Buddy a fresh start, call Pet Network at 775.832.4404 or visit them at 401 Village Blvd., Incline Village.

Why kids need exposure to germs

By Lulu Garcia-Navarro, NPR

As a new parent, Jack Gilbert got a lot of different advice on how to properly look after his child: when to give him antibiotics or how often he should sterilize his pacifier, for example.

After the birth of his second child, Gilbert, a scientist who studies microbial ecosystems at the University of Chicago, decided to find out what's actually known about the risks involved when modern-day children come in contact with germs.

"It turned out that most of the exposures were actually beneficial," Gilbert says. "So that dirty pacifier that fell on the floor – if you just stick it in your mouth and lick it, and then pop it back in little Tommy's mouth, it's actually going to stimulate their immune system. Their immune system's going to become stronger because of it."

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Peaches

Peaches is a year-old silver pit bull who is very pretty.

She loves to play with other dogs and didn't chase the cats that she met at the shelter. She is also very affectionate. The shelter's Facebook page has a fun video of Peaches playing with a couple of the other dogs who are also looking for new homes.

Peaches is spayed, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet. For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe

residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

Etheridge’s lyrics continue to resonate with fans

By Susan Wood

SPARKS – From her gritty heartland rock to the resurging heartfelt soul, Melissa Etheridge’s love of her craft has stood the test of time.

It shows in concert when she switches guitars, engages her audience with a wink, a nod and a roll of the eyes as well as those times she belts out those confessional lyrics with that signature raspy voice.

Once again, she proved it in front of hundreds of adoring fans at the Nugget Saturday night in Sparks with a four-member band. At one point near the end, the singer-guitarist-songwriter clad in blue jeans and a black leather coat even joined the drummer with synchronized percussion.

Always dancing to her own drummer, Etheridge from the opener to the end gave the audience a taste of her diversity between light beams on stage with a few classics like “Hold On, I’m Coming” off her current album “Memphis Rock and Soul,” a follow up to the more contemporary “This is M.E.” compilation.

“I have so much music to play for you tonight,” she said, with a coy smile in the beginning.

And the crowd reciprocated, raising phones to chronicle the moments. Throughout the night, many rocked out with abandon when she knocked out some of her biggest hits “I’m the Only One,” “The Way I Do,” “Come to My Window,” “I Want to Come Over,” “Resist,” “If I Wanted To” and her career-launching “Bring Me Some Water.”

With the help of good acoustics, the concert was delightfully refreshing and certainly nostalgic. After all, Etheridge is more than a singer in these last 30 years.



Melissa Etheridge delights hundreds of fans at the Sparks Nugget on July 29. Photo/Kathryn Reed

She’s a songwriter with 15 Grammy Award nominations – winning two in 1993 and 1995. She’s an accomplished guitarist, who can lay down the blues to accompany the searing rock anthems she’s known for. She’s a no-holds-barred activist, who has collaborated with other artists and organizations ranging from her contributions to gay causes and participation in the environmental movement. The latter led to an Academy Award for Best Original Song “I Need to Wake Up” for Al Gore’s documentary “An Inconvenient Truth.”

All of this is a far cry from those young days at age 8 when she first started strumming the guitar in Leavenworth, Kansas.

I wondered if she expected the extent of success and fame, so I asked her in an interview before the Sparks concert.

“That was the dream growing up, but it certainly was not what I thought it would be,” she told *Lake Tahoe News.*

I saw her play at the 3772 Club in Pasadena.

“Yeah, but back then we called it Vermie’s,” she said, snickering.

It was the mid-1980s. She sat on a stool with a microphone and a guitar in front of about 30 people. I couldn’t understand it. People were talking over her, and I kept urging them to be quiet. They didn’t realize they were witnessing the early stages of musical greatness.

Etheridge met a record executive through a friendship at that tiny bar.

I also followed her outdoors.

During the West Coast Women’s Music Festival in the mid-80s outside Yosemite National Park, the announcer took the stage to announce “a special treat” of a performer. When the announcer yelled “Melissa,” most in the few thousand gathered didn’t know who she was.

But after that, I’m sure they remembered who they saw. She belted out “Piece of My Heart” in pure Janis Joplin style. The audience went crazy.

Her career hit full throttle.

And in the midst of it, I witnessed it again at the 5,000-seat arena of the Harveys Outdoor Summer Concert Series about a decade ago.

There’s only one Melissa. She has such a sense of a longing spirit. She is someone who knows the fragile state of love, writing about the angst like a poet. She also provides the impression of someone who would overcome life’s hard knocks. This especially became apparent when she was diagnosed with breast cancer about a dozen years ago.

But don’t call her a survivor.

“I’m a thriver,” she told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I never thought I would be battling anything other than myself.”

It makes sense. Much of her chronicling her music history Saturday night involved “redemption and resurrection.” She sings it because she lived it – through failed relationships that have taken her on a journey leading to the best time of all. She’s content, married with children, and still playing her music.

Indeed, she gets her strength from internal forces – but gives it out externally to others.

“I’m downright happy,” she said. “I’m proud of my life’s choices. They weren’t always the best choices. But they’re the best I could ask for.”

This is what they mean by “live and learn.”

She gravitates toward the intimacy of the smaller venues, recalling with affection those early days before being discovered. But the party and ride have been fun along the way.

“I’ve done it all. There’s certainly a joy when playing to 30,000 people, but there’s certainly a distance,” she said.

She keeps touring because the opportunities arise, declaring her favorite venues are in Amsterdam, Montreal and Chicago, but she would agree to play in Lake Tahoe again.

Then, there are personal reasons.

“I’ve had two marriages and four children,” she said, hinting at the financial aspect.

“This is what I love to do,” she said, further admitting to having no plans “to slow down.”

As long as she continues to approach new projects and more opportunity for music exploration to match her life’s exploration, she intends to chug along and fight the good fight.

Her music catalog spans 13 albums since 1988.

The compilations exemplify times in her life, and she touched on those times by addressing the crowd on July 29 with an understanding of getting your heart ripped out such as the stirring “Stronger Than Me” from the aptly named “Breakdown” album of 2000.

Throughout the highly personal setbacks and challenges, Etheridge has always used her life’s experiences as an opportunity to professionally share insight.

She even used a selfie stick to record her audience connection.

“Say hi to Twitter,” she yelled to the crowd, adding her extra fascination with Northern Nevada: “This is Reno Sparkssssss.”

She left with the most obvious words of wisdom from a life bent on peaks and valleys.

“Choose love, spread peace,” she called out.

Melissa Etheridge continues her musical journey, playing tonight at the California State Fair and onto the legendary Fillmore concert hall in San Francisco Aug. 1.

A first – Burning Man ‘man’ being built in Reno

By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal

Inside a 1940s bottling factory in the Biggest Little City, a man is being built.

He’s going to be 40 feet tall, made of wood and he’ll be a giant pile of ashes in a month.

Although Burning Man, the annual arts ballyhoo scheduled for Aug. 27 to Sept. 4, is based out of San Francisco, the most important component of Black Rock City is being puzzled together in Reno for the first time ever.

For the past two and a half months, the brick and glass bottling plant built in 1940 as an expansion to the long-shuttered Reno Brewing Co. has housed the construction of Burning Man’s central effigy.

Read the whole story

Book delves into Nevada politics

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Those interested in Nevada history can check out

a significant new addition on the subject with the publication of “Mister Speaker to Madam Speaker,” a labor of love for Carson City resident Cindy Southerland.

The hardbound volume is a compendium of biographies of the speakers who oversaw the Assembly in the Nevada Legislature, starting with three territorial officials who served in what was then called the House of Representatives.

It takes the reader up to the 2013 session of the Assembly, recounting all 65 speakers along the way, including two women: Barbara Buckley and Marilyn Kirkpatrick. The 1995 Assembly also had the distinction of having two speakers who shared duties – Joe Dini, a Democrat, and Lynn Hettrick, a Republican – because there was a 21-21 tie.

Read the whole story