

LTCC seeking directors, actors, designers for plays

Lake Tahoe Community College is looking for directors, actors, and theatrical designers to be part of this spring's four one-act plays.

The four selected directors will get the chance to choose their sets, lighting, and costumes, and will be given full reign and support to create a theatrical event. The final result will be a two-week run of performances in LTCC's Duke Theatre with all four one-act plays featured each night.

LTCC will conduct an open interview process on March 7 at 7pm in the Duke Theatre to select the four directors. To be considered, potential directors should have a one-act play already chosen that takes approximately 30 minutes to perform and that doesn't require significant set needs. No prior directing experience is required, but interviewees should be familiar with the rehearsal process and ready to approach their chosen material from a director's point of view.

For more information or to request an interview appointment, send your name and the name of the one-act play to David Hamilton at hamilton@ltcc.edu by March 6. The four directors and plays will be selected by March 9.

For those interested in set, lighting or costume design, submit your name and a description of your experience or a resumé to Kurt Munger at munger@ltcc.edu. You do not need to have significant design experience to be considered, but you should have a good working knowledge of your chosen field. After the directors are chosen on March 9, they may contact potential designers to work on their individual productions. If you are not chosen by a director, you may still be added to the general crew list if you wish.

For newer directors and designers, director-producer David Hamilton and technical director Kurt Munger will provide instruction and guidance to help with the process.

Actors who wish to perform in one or more of the four one-act plays may audition April 10 at 7pm in LTCC's Duke Theatre. More information about the shows and featured parts will be posted by March 15. Play rehearsals will be on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and performances will be June 14-16 and June 21-24.

Recycling grants available in Nevada

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection's Recycling Program has \$50,000 in grant funding available for projects to increase recycling, public awareness of the importance of conserving natural resources, and for the reduction, reuse and recycling of solid waste.

NDEP encourages action-oriented projects rather than projects oriented toward research and development. The funding comes from the Solid Waste Management Account which receives \$1 per retail tire sold in Nevada.

Preference will be given to applications that provide the greatest regional coverage and demonstrate a likelihood of on-going success. Grantees may be offered partial funding, and while matching funds and in-kind contributions are not required, they are encouraged.

Proposals will be accepted from municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, school districts, the Nevada System of

Higher Education, and other public institutions.

More information about the grant program and application process is available **online**. The deadline to submit an application is Feb. 26.

Truckee plans to gather input with regular online surveys

The Truckee Chamber of Commerce has partnered with FlashVote to reach large numbers of citizens so they can easily give input.

Local residents, second homeowners, incoming commuters and visitors who have one minute a month to participate may sign up **online** for Truckee surveys. All surveys are designed to be one minute or less and the results of each survey are shared with participants. Surveys are live for two days, take about one minute, and can be completed via mobile phone.

“The Quality of Life Surveys will establish a baseline for 2018, to be measured again annually in order to identify trends that we need to carefully pay attention to. Questions include such concepts as optimism, work situation, and hope for the future in ways that have never been measured before in Truckee,” said Colleen Dalton, brand communications director for Truckee Chamber, said in a press release.

The three Truckee Quality of Life survey themes are live, work and play, reflecting Truckee’s core values (healthy lifestyle, community minded, natural beauty, family friendly, history,

art and culture) as measured in the 2016 Truckee Tomorrow Phase I, Place Based Marketing Initiative.

Ice carving contest at Truckee River Winery

Truckee River Winery's 2018 Wine n' Ice will take place March 7.

It will benefit the Truckee River Watershed Foundation, a local nonprofit that "identifies, coordinates, funds and implements restoration, prevention and monitoring projects directly related to the health, beauty, and economy of the watershed."

Ten competitors will be given the chance to sculpt 300 pound blocks of ice into sculptures. This year's carving competition will be centered around the Truckee River Watershed Council's new motto "foriver." The top three contestants will win an assortment of prizes.

Registration is a \$50 donation to the Banovich Memorial Fund. Truckee River Winery will be purchasing all ice blocks. Participants must be 18 and provide their carving tools.

Registration ends Feb. 23.

College scholarships available for cancer survivors

My Hometown Heroes is accepting scholarship applications for the fall 2018 semester.

Applicants must be a young adult survivor of cancer between the ages of 17 and 39, reside in the United States, and be enrolled, or plan to enroll, with a community college, university or trade school.

Every year there are over 70,000 young adults between the ages of 15 and 39 years old who are diagnosed with cancer. Between the years 2016 and 2020, the cumulative student debt among this college bound population will be more than \$5 billion.

Since 2011 the organization has awarded 56 scholarships to young adult cancer survivors from across the country with the goal of awarding \$1 million in scholarships by 2020.

The My Hometown Heroes scholarship application process will be open through Feb. 15 and candidates will be notified in June.

To apply, donate or find more information, go **online**.

Cascada de Flores music group coming to LTCC

The core members of Cascada de Flores have been re-imagining Mexican tradition for years.

After falling for Mexican music as a young woman, Arwen Lawrence toured with Grammy-winning mariachi heavyweights Los Camperos de Nati Cano, an apprenticeship that honed her skills and deepened her love for Mexico's musical language. With them, she recorded and performed in venues such as the Teatro Degollado in Guadalajara and Lincoln Center in New York.

Jorge Liceaga grew up in Mexico City, buying his first guitar with the money he'd earned shining shoes. Self-taught, he was later mentored by local legend Leonardo Salas, a transplant from Yucatan, who taught Liceaga to play with that Yucatecan swing. He followed his sister and found himself among local masters of artistic communication: The flamencos of Gitanerías. From them he received a raw and complicated education, which contributed to his special sensitivity as accompanist.

The pair founded Cascada de Flores in 1999.

Tahoe Arts Project is bringing Cascada de Flores to Lake Tahoe Community College's Duke Theater on Feb. 2 at 7pm. Doors open at 6:30pm. Adults are \$10 and children (through high school) \$5.

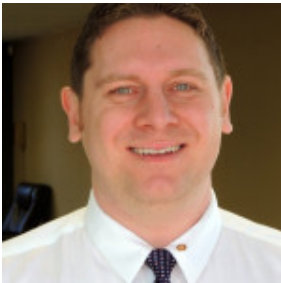
Cascada de Flores will be performing in the South Shore schools the week of Jan. 29.

Money Matters: Benefits of working with a financial

advisor

By Nic Abelow

No matter what your level of investment experience or sophistication, you may benefit from developing a relationship with a financial advisor. Why? Because a qualified financial advisor is trained to analyze your personal situation and design a program to help you address your unique financial goals and objectives.



Nic Abelow

What's in a name?

Financial advisors (also called financial planners or financial consultants) can earn certifications or designations by completing accredited courses of study. Listed below are some frequently sought designations.

- Chartered financial consultant (ChFC) – This program focuses intensively on areas such as estate, retirement and insurance planning. It is similar to the CFP designation (see below).
- Certified financial planner – Generally CFP is a much sought after designation for those who wish to offer financial planning advice. This designation is awarded by the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc.
- Chartered life underwriter (CLU) – This designation represents an advanced certification in life insurance and

estate planning. The CLU is widely considered to be the insurance industry's most respected designation.

- Retirement income certified professional (RICP) – This program focuses on training professionals to help clients turn accumulated assets into retirement income.
- Master of science in financial Services (MSFS) – This program focuses on planning strategies for affluent clients.
- Accredited estate planner (AEP) – This designation is conferred by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils upon certain types of credentialed professionals (e.g., CPAs, attorneys, and others) who meet stringent education and/or experience requirements in the area of estate planning.

In addition to any potential salary they may earn, financial advisors are usually compensated in one of three ways.

1. Fee only – Charge a fee for their time and services, but sell nothing.
2. Commission only – Charge a commission on the sale of investment products such as mutual funds, stocks, bonds, or insurance products.
3. Hybrid – Charge both a planning fee and commission on transactions.

Although all three methods of compensating financial advisors are used, some people prefer to simply pay a financial advisor for services provided, in much the same way you would pay an accountant or a lawyer for advice.

Do your due diligence

Knowing what to expect from a financial advisor can help put you at ease and set the foundation for a long and trusting relationship. Here are interview-style questions to ask in an

introductory meeting or phone call.

- What is your educational background?
- What (if anything) did you do before becoming a financial advisor?
- Do you offer specific or general recommendations?
- Will you help to implement these recommendations?
- Do you offer financial advice on noninvestment issues, such as estate law or accounting?
- If so, at what point would you bring in someone else to help?
- How do you keep in touch with your clients?
- Do you initiate annual reviews, or should I?

Getting started

At your first official meeting, you and your advisor will identify your financial needs and goals. Although it sounds simple, this can be harder than you think. Your advisor will be able to ask you the right questions to help you to determine what your goals are, just in case you aren't sure yourself.

To prepare for your first meeting, call your advisor and ask what specific documents and information you should bring. These may include essential documents such as wills, copies of insurance policies, pension information and investment account statements. In addition, you should be prepared to answer or at least discuss the following questions:

- Retirement – When do you plan to retire? In what style do you expect to retire? Do you have any retirement savings?
- Income and savings – What is your current income and

rate of savings? Do you anticipate a change in jobs, leaving a job to stay home with children, or starting your own business?

- College – Do you have plans to fund or help fund your children's education?

- Disasters – Are you prepared for the unexpected? If you lost your job, had a serious accident, or contracted a serious illness, would you be prepared financially?

- Estate planning – Do you have a will? Have you considered the tax implications?

Nic Abelow is a certified financial planner and LPL financial advisor with Abelow, Pratt & Associates Financial Advisors and Wealth Management in Lake Tahoe.

Road Beat: 2018 Mazda 3 Grand Touring – still impressive



The 2018 Mazda 3 Grand Touring, five door is still the best of the best. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

They are cowboys, but they sure can breed them right and ride them the best. I am not talking about cows or horses, but the car company from Japan that the other major manufacturers refer to sometimes as cowboys. With their swagger and panache, you would think they were an American company with 500 hp V-8s, but no, the biggest engine they produce is a 2.5L inline four and in a turbo version it produces a maximum of 250 hp. Normally aspirated, that number drops to either 187 or 184 depending on the installation. How could a car company whose biggest engine is a 2.5L four and 250 hp be called a cowboy? If you are Mazda, that's what the others call you, and for good reasons.

First, is the out of the box styling, Mazda calls it Kodo, but it is the result of a concept car called the Takeri. Mazdas are bold, aggressive and beautifully proportioned with each

line creating a new shapely delight in the body. It starts with the best front end in motordom, aggressive and strong with character lines moving rearward shaping an almost “coke bottle” look that was created by NASA in about 1954 which was the result of the discovery of the “area boundary rule” that allowed air force fighter jets to easily exceed the speed of sound. Look at the fuselage of an early F-102 Delta Dagger and a later F102A or the very similar F-106 Delta Dart. With essentially the same engine, top speed was nearly doubled in the F-106 over the original F-102. Later F-102s were modified with the area boundary rule fuselage allowing them to go supersonic.

The bottom line is that the Mazda3 five door is the best looking compact in the business. Size-wise, the Mazda3 five door (meaning hatchback wagon) is a minuscule 176-inches long by 71-inches wide and 57-inches tall, which makes it slightly shorter than the compact car rule of 180 inches. That’s a bonus as its internals dimensions are not compromised.



Specifications

Engine

DOHC, 16 valve inline 2.5L
four 184 hp @ 5,700 rpm
185 ft-lb of torque at 3,250
rpm

Transmission

Six speed torque converter
automatic, with paddle

shifters

Six speed manual

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 106.3 inches

Length 175.6 inches

Width 70.7 inches

Height 57.3 inches

Track (f/r) 61.2/61.4 inches

Ground clearance 6.1 inches

Weight 3,046 pounds

Weight distribution (f/r)
60/40%

Fuel capacity 13.2 gallons

Cargo capacity (rear seats up/down) 20.2/47.1 cubic feet

Steering lock to lock 2.57 turns

Turning circle (curb to curb) 34.78 feet

Turning circle (wall to wall) 37.07 feet

Wheels 18X7 inch alloys

Tires 215/45X18 all season radials

Co-efficient of drag (sedan/hatchback) 0.26/0.28

Performance

0-60 mph 6.92 seconds

50-70 mph 3.43 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 5.31 seconds

Top speed 130 mph electronically limited

Fuel economy 26/35/30 mpg city/highway/combined. Expect 32 mpg in rural country driving and over 37 mpg on a level highway at legal speeds.

Under hood is, you guessed it, Mazda's 2.5L Skyactiv DOHC, 16 valve inline four that creates 184 hp at 5,700 rpm at full boil. Redline extends to about 6,500 rpm. Torque of 185 pounds of twist is developed at a low 3,250 rpm meaning this is a strong down low engine and its performance numbers demonstrate that power. Skyactiv's most significant feature is direct injection.

Zero to 60 mph arrives in under 7 seconds at 6.92 seconds. Passing performance is also outstanding with 50-70 mph acceleration taking 3.43 seconds and the same run up a steep grade (6-7 percent) just slowing that time to 5.31 seconds. Fifteen to 20 years ago a 5-second run on level ground was considered good. In other words, the Mazda3 with the 2.5 engine is the strongest performer in the compact class save for a couple of the new turbo Hondas which in the Si model is a bit quicker.

In comparison to the six-speed manual Mazda3 five door GT, the automatic is quicker as the manual posted numbers a year ago as follows: 6.98, 3.95 and 6.12, respectively, for the same three performance parameters. Go with the six-speed torque converter automatic which comes with paddle shifters as well. It is responsive and super smooth. This Mazda3 will push you well back in the seat even with part throttle. It feels powerful and that makes it lots of fun.

Fuel economy as rated by the EPA cycle is 26/35/30 mpg. Mazda has the title as the most fuel efficient company, followed closely by Honda. In real life at 70 mph on a level highway and making a 20-mile two-way run, the Mazda3 returned 37.3

mpg. Overall 30-32 was the averaged for 600 miles and in a 200-mile run from Placerville to Carson City over the Sierra on Highway 50 in aggressive driving the Mazda3 averaged 36.9 mpg. The speed limit is 55 mph on Highway 50, but there were more than a dozen full throttle passes. Amazing economy considering its very high performance, or even not considering the Mazda3's amazing performance as a compact.

Suspenders are state of the art independent, no torsion beam rear axle. It's a true independent, which makes a difference when pushing the vehicle hard at maximum performance. And this Mazda3 can be pushed in the twisties. It's no wonder that more Mazdas are raced than any other brand, especially Mazda3s and Miatas.

We have a huge Miata champion right here in El Dorado County in the form of Mark Hoover who races a highly modified Miata and consistently wins at the national level. He is a Mazda expert. Just drop by European Performance where he is preparing his Miata for the upcoming season. He will also tell you when it comes to grooving corners, Mazdas do them best. Steering, tracking and roll control are as close to perfect as you can get. Mazda3 gets it done.

On the flip side, the Mazda3 rides on the firm side of the equation, smoothing out road imperfections with aplomb. It is smooth and quiet with little road noise; no wind noise and the engine is silent as it turns a low 2,000 rpm at 70 mph and has a pleasant growl when you get your foot into it.

Safety is not compromised as all the acronyms are present and includes a rear back up camera. Brakes a very strong with large four-wheel discs and air bags abound. Special mention needs to be made about the LED headlights with standard auto high beam and AFS that track with steering. The auto dim and tracking are part of the \$1,600 Premium package that also gets you lane departure warning, lane keep assist, radar cruise, smart braking and more. It's a bargain.

Interior quality is magnificent, with contrasting, comfortable, leather bucket seats, great instrument panel, heads up display and a center stack that I now use as if second nature. It's as nice inside as it is outside.

Pricing is set at \$24,975, plus \$875 for the boat from Hofu, Japan. With the Premium package, Appearance package (\$1,750), go fast Soul Red metallic paint (\$300) and a few other items brought the total to \$29,770. Mazda3 is the best of the best in this highly competitive compact category. End of story.

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 Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Nadine

Nadine is a 2-year-old husky-cattle dog mix who has two different colored eyes.

This girl loves to play with other dogs, but she also likes to chase cats. Good with kids, housebroken, basic commands and good on leash. She is very quiet in the shelter and weighs about 60 pounds.

Nadine pulls on her leash like she's on a mission and might be a good dog for skjoring.

Nadine is spayed, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with 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

Safely manage insects on indoor plants

By Melinda Myers

Winter can be hard on gardeners and our indoor plants. Low light, shorter days and dry air stress our houseplants while helping insects thrive. Don't despair if insects have moved in

and your plants are struggling with yellow or speckled leaves. Instead, invest a bit of time and effort managing these pests and keeping your plants looking their best.

Start by making sure your plants receive the proper amount of light and water. A healthy plant is better able to resist and recover from insect infestations. Check the plant tag, internet or plant book for the recommended growing conditions.

Make needed adjustments in your plant's care. Then take a closer look at the upper and lower leaf surfaces and stems of the plants for clues to the cause of the problem. Here are some of the more common indoor plant pests and organic options, safe for children and pets, for managing them.



Aphids, a common pest of indoor and outdoor plants, suck plant juices, causing leaves to yellow, brown, wilt or become distorted.

Photo/Melinda Myers

Fungus gnats are those small fruit fly-like insects that flit around your house. They feed on plant roots and organic matter in the soil. They usually don't harm the plants, but certainly are annoying.

Just sprinkle an organic insecticide like Summit Mosquito

Bits, that contain the active ingredient *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* on the soil surface. This naturally occurring bacterium only kills the larvae of fungus gnats, black flies and mosquitoes.

Aphids are common pests of indoor and outdoor plants. These small teardrop shaped insects suck plant juices, causing the leaves to yellow, brown, wilt or become distorted. They secrete a clear sticky substance known as honeydew.

Mites cause similar damage, but are too small to see without a hand lens. If you suspect mites, shake a leaf over a white piece of paper and watch for specks, the mites, moving across the paper. Don't wait until you see webbing to control these pests. At that point there are thousands of mites making it difficult to control.

Both these types of pests can be managed in the same way. Start by placing plants in the sink or tub and knock the insects off the plant with a strong blast of water. Follow with several applications of insecticidal soap to kill the adults. Repeat as needed. Or suffocate all stages of the insects with a lightweight horticulture oil like Summit Year-Round Spray Oil.

Bumps on the stems and leaves of plants that can be easily scraped off with a thumbnail are scales. Their shells protect the adults and eggs from predators, weather and most insecticides. A similar pest, mealybug, has white waxy strands on its body for protection. Mealybugs can be found on stems, leaves and area where leaves and stems meet.

Both types of insects suck the plant juices, causing leaves to yellow and plants to decline. And just like aphids and mites, they secrete honeydew. Both are difficult to control and require persistence on your part.

For mealybugs, remove the hard scale covering with your thumbnail or old toothbrush. Use a cotton swap dipped in

alcohol to dissolve its waxy covering and kill the insect. Then spray with insecticidal soap to kill the immature insects. This takes time and persistence to control these pests.

Or apply a lightweight horticulture oil, like that used for mites and aphids, to suffocate both the adult and immature stages of these pests. Continue to watch for outbreaks and treat as needed.

No matter what products you choose, natural or synthetic, make sure they are labeled for the plant and pest you are treating. And always read and follow label directions carefully.

Investing time in managing pests as soon as they appear means healthy and more attractive plants to brighten your indoor décor now and for years to come.

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.