

# Cars & Places Magazine

## Cars & Places eNews

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Hello from Cars & Places! Welcome to eNews, our weekly update on the automotive world and area happenings. If you are a new reader, welcome! We hope you enjoy our tidbits of news as we ramp up our new magazine.

**W**hat's this! Two Volvos in a row! Volvo has been kind enough to lend us their XC90 right after our test of the V70 R last week. (see last week's eNews [here](#)) The XC90 is Volvo's offering for the SUV crowd. We were excited to be able to contrast the XC90 with the slightly smaller V70.

Being a car-based SUV, the XC90 is best described as a crossover vehicle. Crossovers are usually based on car platforms which allow for a smoother ride and better handling than a truck-based SUV. Typically, a crossover will be equipped with a single range, full time all-wheel-drive, whereas a truck based SUV will have a dual range drive system for serious off-road operation.



Equipped with a 4.4 liter V8 with 311 horsepower, the XC90 is no slouch, with a smooth, linear power delivery to all four wheels. Comparing it to the V70, where the turbocharged powerplant power starts slowly, then comes on strong as the turbo spools up. Now that's not a bad thing, just something that took getting used to. In a fuel mileage contest, the V70 averaged over 21 MPG whereas the larger XC90 achieved just over 18 MPG in similar driving.

The XC90's handling is very sure footed, giving the driver great confidence, even in wet or slippery conditions. Volvo's all-wheel-drive with the Instant Traction system instantly delivers power to the wheels with traction when one wheel start to lose grip.

Both vehicles have a similar driving position with the same instrumentation and control arrangements. You just have to remember it's 6 inches further to the ground when stepping out! The seat controls are very good and it was easy to obtain a comfortable seating position for a weekend 4 hour drive without fatigue. Our XC90 was equipped with an excellent climate control system with dual zones and rear passenger controls. One area where the XC90 differs with the V70 is with the 3rd row passengers. The V70 has the traditional station wagon, rear facing seat whereas the XC90 has a superior, forward facing seating arrangement. Both the 2nd and 3rd rows fold flat with each seat being able



to fold independently giving great flexibility when loading people and cargo. This XC90 was also equipped with a rear seat entertainment system, consisting of LCD monitors mounted in back of each front headrest and a DVD player with headphone jacks for the rear seat passenger. Just the thing to keep everyone happy on those weekend drives Mom and Dad like to take!

So how do you choose between two excellent Volvo's? It depends on your needs and driving preferences. Like I wrote last week, the V70 R drives like a sports car, but with room for up to 7. But to achieve that type of handling, a car must be low to the ground. If your travel plans call for driving in snow deeper than 4 inches or you would like to get to that secluded cabin in the mountains, the XC90 is the choice because of its increased ground clearance and short overhangs. Volvo has a couple of great cars in their mix! Pricing starts in the upper 30's, with our well equipped test vehicle listing at \$51,475. See specifications and details at [www.volvocars.com](http://www.volvocars.com).

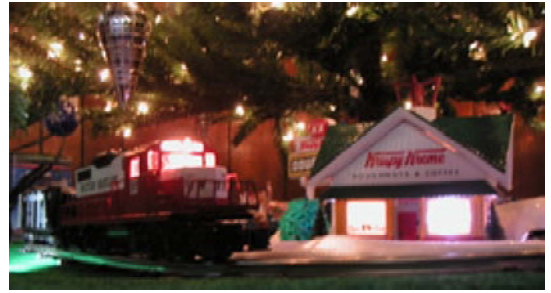
**I**t will come as no surprise to our readers that when the "employee" pricing plans from the big US manufacturers expired in September the sales figures expired with them. October was a dismal month for many dealers. In response, General Motors has announced a new program, the "Red Tag Event". The new sale prices are not quite as low as before, but generally are \$100-\$200 below invoice. Ford's response is the "Keep it Simple" promotion. Keep it Simple is a one price system with the discount already noted on the window sticker. Exact discounts have not been announced. Chrysler has announced it will offer gas debit cards worth \$2,400 to buyers along with extending the powertrain warranty. As with previous promotions, several popular and recently introduced products are not included in the deals. Check your local dealer or the manufacturers websites for details. [www.gm.com](http://www.gm.com), [www.fordvehicles.com](http://www.fordvehicles.com) and [www.chrysler.com](http://www.chrysler.com).

## Places to Be!



**T**he National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, Maryland will open its Christmas exhibit on November 25th. The exhibit will focus on different aspects of 19th century Christmas traditions. The exhibit will compare the celebrations of soldiers in the field with their families at home. The exhibit opens at 10 a.m. and will be open each Saturday through January 8th. Be sure to watch for the Thomas Nast version of Santa to appear! Get all the details of the museum at [www.civilwarmed.org](http://www.civilwarmed.org).

**T**he Holiday season is a traditional time for toy trains! Many of the area railroad museums and model train clubs host open houses this time of year. Just a few are listed below:



Western Maryland Railway Historical Society  
Museum, Union Bridge, Maryland, 410-775-0150.

Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, Pennsylvania, [www.rrmuseumpa.org](http://www.rrmuseumpa.org).



C&O Railway Historical Society, Clifton Forge, Virginia,  
[www.cohs.org](http://www.cohs.org) and [www.chessishop.com](http://www.chessishop.com).

Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum, Hagerstown, Maryland,  
410-739-4665.

Fall Trainfest, November 26, Washington County Ag Center,  
Boonsboro, Maryland, <http://hmrrm.m-star.us:81/>.

This is just a small sampling of railroading and model train events. To find the events closest to you check out [www.trains.com/community/events/](http://www.trains.com/community/events/) and search by zip code. Make tracks!

Thanks for reading this edition of eNews! Please forward this to your friends and car buddies! If this was sent to you by a friend, just go to [www.carsandplaces.com](http://www.carsandplaces.com) and sign up for your personal copy. Be sure to stop by the website often to check on the progress of our full-blown publication!

Until next time, enjoy your drive!

Rick Trawick  
Publisher

Any comments or questions you may have are welcome. Please email them to [info@carsandplaces.com](mailto:info@carsandplaces.com). If you would like to see your event mentioned, send it to the same address.

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