



NEWS BIZ SPORTS HS SPORTS FORUMS BLOGS VIDEO ENTERTAINMENT LIVING JOBS AUTOS REAL ESTATE CLASSIFIEDS SHOPPING

OregonLive.com - News

SEARCH Enter Keyword(s) GO!

The Oregonian

• Subscribe
• Today's Paper & More

BLOGS

Breaking News

- Roloff acquitted by judge after jury misconduct discovered 11 15 a.m. PT
- Woman's body found during rush hour 10 40 a.m. PT
- [More Entries](#)

Politics

- Washington adds online voter registration 2 57 p.m. PT
- [More Entries](#)

TODAY'S PHOTOS



Click image to enlarge

By Steve Nehl
Matt Roloff, who heads a family that is chronicled in the TLC show "Little People, Big World," is on trial for DUI in Washington County.

• [See More Photos](#)

FORUMS

Oregon Forum

- Interesting take on FEMA... by *proveltome* 01/10/2008 9:43 a.m. PT
- Interesting subject and... by *resistol* 01/10/2008 9:48 a.m. PT
- [More](#)

Hot Topics

- Religion
- Townsquare
- National Politics
- US at War
- [All Forums | Highlights](#)

TOP STORIES

- Washington coalition files suicide initiative
- Area bank faces loss of \$27.8 million
- New fee would repave Portland
- [More Headlines](#)

A moment of Zenn in an addicted world

Monday, December 17, 2007

While reading about Congress' efforts to raise auto fuel-efficiency standards, a smug smile spread across my face. Within a week my family's new car, built in France and re-engineered in Canada, will arrive in our driveway. You see, while Congress haggles over raising the U.S. fleet standards to a pathetic 35 miles per gallon by 2020, my wife and I will pass laughingly by gas stations in our new electric car, which will easily obtain the financial equivalent of 297 mpg (figuring gas at \$3.20 per gallon).

The fact is, U.S. automakers and oil companies have us all, the American public, addicted to oil, and that drug that we grudgingly pump into our fuel tanks has clouded our judgment. Advertisers convince us that we need a vehicle capable of accelerating from zero to 60 in less than four seconds and obtaining speeds of more than 130 mph, and loaded up with such luxuries as heated seats and satellite navigation. In reality, we rot on the highways, stuck in gridlock while our internal combustion engines spew a toxic cocktail from our tailpipes.

Last month, like smokers tired of being short of breath, we decided to work to end our destructive habit. We no longer wanted to depend on a vehicle that's fouling our planet and that requires a pirate's chest to fuel up. So we researched the alternatives. We sold our BMW to pay for our treatment program. And now, like children waiting for Santa, we're waiting for our moment of Zenn.

Our electric Zenn, that is. It's for real, a car manufactured by the Bnteau group (think high-tech racing sailboats) in France and then heavily modified by the Zenn factory in Quebec, Canada. It will be the car we use in and around town -- not our second car but our first. It will get us to and from work, shuttle the kids to school and soccer, and get us to the market. It will meet 90 percent of our transportation needs. With no engine noise. Only the tunes on the CD player. And the birds.

Our critics will no doubt point out each and every flaw (some true, some not) associated with the electric car. They'll scoff and say we won't last. We'll get stranded. It's too slow. It's too this. It's too that. They'll do it to justify their addiction to the infernal gas pump. But now that we're clean and sober, our vision is crystal clear.

Perhaps in time others will see how happy we are, knowing that our yearly cost to operate our Zenn will be about \$65, without the thousands needed for gas.

Is the electric car for everyone? No, not yet. But it could be for the majority of us. And today, not in some distant future. We hope others join us. For clean air. For true independence from oil-producing countries with questionable regimes. For a pristine Arctic.

Our moment of Zenn will be more than a brief passing. It's our future.

Oooooommmmm. Life is good.

Brian Toye lives in Lake Oswego.

The Beard of Avon by *Almy Freed*
JANUARY 15 - MARCH 9

ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN
A TRUE REPERTORY EXPERIENCE
AT
PORTLAND CENTER STAGE
William Shakespeare
TWELFTH NIGHT
JANUARY 22 - MARCH 9

SHARE THIS STORY

- [Reddit](#)
- [Digg](#)
- [del.icio.us](#)
- [Google](#)
- [Yahoo](#)
- [How Does It Work?](#)

SITE TOOLS

- [E-mail This](#)
- [Print This](#)
- [Newsletters](#)

- » Auto Show Ticket Sweepstakes
- » Nominate your favorite teacher!
- » Beard of Avon/Twelfth Night Sweepstakes

SPONSORED LINKS

- [Oregon Lottery](#)

**TIRES
CAR WASHES
RENTAL CARS**

When you become a
Dick Hannah
CUSTOMER
FOR LIFE!

FIND OUT MORE!

Dick Hannah

TOYOTA

800-926-3107
2632 Coweeman Park Drive, Kelso