

Fall 2008

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DIE ZUGSPITZE

NEW YORK CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



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We are here Monday through Friday 8AM-5PM and on Saturdays 8AM-3PM



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2008 NEW YORK CHAPTER EVENTS CALENDAR

September

23rd-28th Oktoberfest 2008 at Watkins Glen
(Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel)
Sponsored by Genesee Chapter

October

5th 2nd Annual Wine & Shine, 12 noon - 3 pm
Pindar Vineyard and Wineries, Peconic NY
25th Autocross#7 Nassau Colliseum

December

20th Annual President's Dinner and Holiday Party

On The Cover: Event
Co-organizer Icela Fischthal displays the BMW logo with pride at the Annual Family BBQ in July
Photo by Mike Allen



2008 Call for Nominations

For the BMW CCA New York Chapter Board

Open Positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary

Members interested in running need to be nominated by a member in good standing. Include a short statement supporting the nomination to:

New York BMW CCA, PO BOX 920576, Arverne NY 11692

Candidates for President and Treasurer must have prior service as a member of the Board of Directors in order to be eligible to serve.

Nominations must be received no later than October 8th 2008.

NY Chapter BMW CCA Bylaws can be downloaded here:
http://www.nybmwcca.org/oldsite/new_bylaws.html

Recession Got you Down?

Top Ten Reasons Why You Should Join the Board

- 10... An annual salary of \$135,000 - tax free!
- 9... A lifetime supply of free Snell 2000 helmets
- 8... Access to insider trading information on BMW stock
- 7... A chance to demonstrate your leadership potential
- 6... Lots of mediocre Italian food once per month
- 5... Editor-In-Chief Satch Carlson's home address (and possibly the car keys to his latest ride)
- 4... The opportunity to have your photo in five Chapter newsletters and Roundel
- 3... Door prize tickets guaranteed to win at least a set of wiper blades or a clay block
- 2... A LOT of wine, I mean, a heck of a lot of Pindar wine

And the Number 1 Reason to Run for the Board

A free E30 M3 to drive any time you like! (specify preferred color)



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

André Noël

Hello NY Chapter Members,

The summer season is behind us now and what a summer it was. Record HIGH GAS PRICES made a lot of us rethink our travel plans. Just taking a simple drive to the store to pick up a few things had many of us making a list to make sure we did not forget anything. There is one positive outcome from all this and that is there are fewer BIG SUVs on the road. Now before I receive a ton of e-mail about this let me explain: I really do not care what you drive on the street as long as it is safe and you are not putting anyone else at risk. I remember not too long ago that if I looked up in front of me while driving I could see way down the road. Things changed with the arrival of the minivan and eventually SUVs became very popular. But lately I can see down the road again. That brings a big smile to my face. I no longer have to change lanes just to see what is going on in front of me.

In July we held our fourth annual event for young drivers called Street Survival. This year thirty-eight young men and women came out to learn how to handle their cars with more confidence. I would like to thank Matt Brod, our Street Survival Chairman, for doing an outstanding job. Also, thanks to all the instructors and volunteers who made the event a success. Special thanks to the Uniondale Fire Department once again for their help in keeping the skid pad wet. I would like to express my utmost gratitude to the parents of the young men and women who signed their teens up and came out to watch them improve their driving skills. Your love and support will make them better, safer drivers. And finally, to the students, please be careful out there. Always leave yourself an escape path and look down the road to take in the big picture. If there are fewer SUVs on the road that just might be a little easier for us all.

Oktoberfest is a few weeks away and this year it will be held in beautiful Watkins Glen, NY. I'm looking forward to seeing old friends from all across the country. If you are a first timer to O'fest you will feel the true spirit of the club. So drive on up to the Fingerlakes, have some fun and make new BMW friends.

Fall brings three items for the members to think about. First, our Second Annual Wine & Shine will be held at the famous Pindar Winery and Pavilion. This is guaranteed to be a wonderful event. Second, please see the Call for Nominations and consider joining the Board. If you are interested in being more involved in the chapter now is the time to step up. And finally, we are excited about planning for our Holiday Party and President's Dinner in December. Please sign up early.

So drive safely and watch out for each other.

André Noël

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NY Chapter Officers

President

André Noël 917-885-3107
new email: noelsm3@nyc.rr.com

Vice President

Mike Allen
jbmike@aol.com

Treasurer

RoseAnn Burke 917-561-8051
msnybmw@aol.com

Secretary

James Siegel 917-841-2841
jim@nj.rr.com

Member-at-Large

GJ Dixon
bmwclubracer@aol.com

Die Zugspitze Editor

Steven Bernstein 917-584-4317
nybmwcca@garageboy.com
Sam Wong
amuroray1@gmail.com

Webmaster

Charles Karnati 718-422-0414
webmaster@nybmwcca.org

Advertising

James Siegel 917-841-2841
jim@nj.rr.com
Sherwin DeShong 917-576-2453
srde28@hotmail.com

Event Chairs

Drivers School Registrar

Mike Allen: jbmike@aol.com

Drivers School Chair

Anthony Howell: unclebimmer@hotmail.com

Chief Track Instructor

Chet Marfatia 917- 539-7672
cmarfatia@gmail.com

Street Survival Chair

Matt Brod: onrailsm3@hotmail.com

Membership Chair

Steve Geraci: stevegeraci@reflexphoto.com

Social Events Director

Icela Fischthal: icela@optonline.net

Charitable Giving Coordinator

Steven Bernstein: nybmwcca@garageboy.com

Greater New York Auto Show

Sherwin DeShong: srde28@hotmail.com

Autocross Chair

André Noël: new email: noelsm3@nyc.rr.com

AAA Driver Improvement Program

Anthony Howell: unclebimmer@hotmail.com
Sherwin DeShong: srde28@hotmail.com

Beach Party, BBQ

Anthony Howell: unclebimmer@hotmail.com

Vineyard Series Chair

Steve Geraci: stevegeraci@reflexphoto.com

Technical Advisors

Mike Shiffer - Euro Meccanica
Office 914-668-1300

NY Chapter BMW CCA Presents

The Vineyard Series

Second Annual Wine & Shine



Sunday, Oct.5, 2008, 12 noon – 3 pm (Rain date, Oct. 19) 37645 Main Rd. (Rt. 25), Peconic, NY 11958

Take a leisurely drive east to Long Island's Wine Country and join us at one of the North Fork's most highly rated vineyards, Pindar Vineyards Winery and Pavilion, for an afternoon in the fall sun. Bring a picnic lunch and relax on the pavilion overlooking the vineyards 550 acres. This is our second in an annual series of tours through the wine region of Eastern Long Island.

Sample some of Pindar's award winning vintages in their beautiful tasting room, tour the vineyard and facilities, and enjoy complimentary wine tasting, open to all BMW members. All vintages are available for purchase at a 15% discount for Chapter members.



All those who attend will be eligible to enter their BMW in a clean car "Show & Shine" on the grounds of the vineyard in a separate parking area adjacent to the pavilion. Winners in each category will receive bottles of select Pindar vintage wines.

While here stop across the street at Krupski's Farm for pumpkins, Briemere's Farm on Sound Ave. for home baked pies, The Jamesport Country Store on The Main Rd.(Rt.25), or one of the many fresh fruit and vegetable stands selling Long Island grown produce.

MAPS & INFO:
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For additional information contact:
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631.553.5164 or
stevegeraci@hotmail.com

Where's My Dipstick, Dipstick?

A Love Affair with Electronics – the Surge that Brought Down the Germans

By Garageboy

Introduction

Technology has changed our lives in so many wondrous ways, and we can barely remember what life was like before the Age of Electronics. BMW embraced electronics in their automobiles since the late 1970s, when they first started using it in engine management systems manufactured by Robert Bosch GmbH. When these systems were working, they performed flawlessly and consistently. However, engineers recognized that these systems weren't yet proven in automobiles, so they often used electronics to supplement existing mechanical systems.

The Past

Consider the introduction of the On-Board Computer (OBC). This innovation was a milestone for BMW, who were pioneers in exploiting the benefits of electronics in automobiles. At the push of a button, a driver could see precise average mileage in mph or kph, as well as precise fuel consumption figures. You could set a warning bell if you exceeded a certain speed. There was a stopwatch – so I can time my laps at the 'ring! If you knew which secret buttons to press, you could determine the number of liters left in the gas tank. And they threw in a sensor to read the temperature outside for free!

Some American car companies embraced electronics too. Anyone remember the Buick Reatta? They removed the dashboard's analog dials

entirely, displaying the driver's speed and a whole host of other important information in a bright blue LED display. When the displays died, and they did with appalling frequency, the driver lost everything – gas gauge, temperature gauge, speedometer, odometer, oxygen sensor status, etc. Owners had to spend quite a lot of money if they ever wanted to know how fast they were going... or whether their Reatta was overheating and about to explode.

The Germans clearly had a different approach. They did not remove the gauges (although these were electronic too). Were they being overcautious? No – the engineers at BMW were humble enough to recognize that electronic components were not infallible. When you put electronics in a harsh environment like an automobile that can get sweltering hot and brutally cold, electronics can fail. So they followed three simple rules: make the electronic components easy to access, make the system easy to repair or replace, and wherever possible, give the owner a workaround (like the sunroof motor access panel) in case they fail at an inconvenient moment.

The Present

Whether we like it or not, BMW is now doing their best to appeal to mainstream buyers. Why? Volume sales – that is where the money is at. This has changed the company irreversibly and forever. It's not about the enthusiast anymore, and it's never going — *continued on p9*



Charitable Giving Update — Now More Than Ever

By Icela Fischthal, Social Events Director

The New York Chapter of the BMW CCA is once again pleased to select the Lawrence Woodmere Academy in Woodmere, Long Island, as one of the main charitable groups for which we raise funds in 2008. LWA began more than a century ago with the founding of Lawrence Country Day School in 1891 and Woodmere Academy in 1912. In 1990 the two schools merged to create Lawrence Woodmere Academy, which is the most significant source for independent school education on the south shore of Long Island. As a mission-driven school, LWA enrolls 340 students who embody the ideals of the school motto: truth, integrity, and service. A strong sense of community is the cornerstone of the LWA experience. Students come from Long Island, Brooklyn, and Queens as well as countries abroad. A microcosm of the world at its best, LWA students see themselves as a family, appreciating one another's individual qualities. The NY BMWCCA supports them because their need-based financial aid program helps to maintain the unique socio economic diversity of the school culture. Students at LWA develop an awareness and understanding of cultural diversity that will serve them well once they graduate.

Last year Lawrence Woodmere Academy focused on integrating the essential literacy skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in all subject areas throughout all grades. In the coming school year, there will be a focus on integrating technology into the learning process. Technology skills will no longer be taught in isolation from classroom experiences. With the support of "technology integrators" who will

work with the faculty, students will learn to use technology throughout the curriculum. This model closely resembles the way students will use technology to solve problems once they enter the working world.

Lawrence Woodmere Academy has developed many opportunities for students to engage in community service. This aspect of the curriculum reflects the core values that are represented in the school mission. Community service requirements exist in all three divisions – Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools. Students participate so that they can learn the importance of volunteerism and altruism in a world that so desperately needs this kind of commitment. This year, LWA students will spend time focusing on understanding the challenges in our environment and the importance of conservation. These programs and objectives help LWA students to develop into concerned citizens who are driven to improve the world around them.

At the Holiday Party last December, the New York Chapter donated a generous portion of its proceeds to Lawrence Woodmere Academy. The support of our Chapter enables well deserving students to attend LWA who might not otherwise have this opportunity and plays a crucial role in ensuring the school's continued success. The NY Chapter takes pride in our numerous and significant contributions to the organizations in our community. Therefore, we look forward to once again joining our fellow chapter members to raise money at our Holiday Party on December 20th 2008 for this worthy charity. ❖



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Where's My Dipstick, Dipstick?

— *continued from p5*

back to the old way. As BMW works hard to attract mainstream buyers, they believe that mainstream owners won't check their tire pressures or open the hood to check their oil. They believe mainstream owners won't spend money to maintain their cars. To combat mainstream behavior, BMW now promotes Free Maintenance for the entire warranty period of the car. And they are correct, because mainstream owners trying to impress their neighbors with a shiny BMW, have never considered their cars anything more than an appliance. It has to look like a BMW and maybe even drive like a BMW, but it doesn't have to endure like a BMW. The mainstream mentality teaches us to just use it until it breaks, throw it away and buy a new one.

Part of the fallout from this approach is that most new 3-series models no longer have a dipstick for owners to check their oil. No dipstick. Zip. Nada. BMW considers the 3 series such a run-of-the-mill car that they don't trust owners to check their oil. BMW's liability attorneys have taught the engineers that a single sensor in the oil pan is all that is needed. If KITT tells Knight Rider to add oil and he neglects to do so, there is an undisputable record of this, and BMW won't be held liable if the engine blows up.

How's this for helpful technology? According to the 276-page M3 Owner's Manual, after you warm up the car, when you instruct the On-Board Computer to check the oil, "...this can take about 1 minute if the car is at a standstill on a level surface, or about 5 minutes while the car is moving. If engine oil was added, it can take up to 30 minutes to get an oil level reading." I hope none of you track junkies ever have to add

oil to your E90 during the middle of a track session – the manual also says: "The oil level can be displayed when the engine is warm. Continuous short distance travel or a very sporty driving style may make measurement impossible." I would love to hear the computer say "Cannot obtain oil reading – sporty driving makes measurement impossible" to me as I'm flying into Fuchsrohe...

The Problem

The problem isn't that BMW wants to use a sensor to report on whether the oil level is low. They have been using them for decades – I have always been grateful for the oil level sensors in my E28s. Whenever the oil dipped to the bottom line on the dipstick, that trusty yellow triangle would start flashing in my face, the low oil warning light would stay lit, and I knew just what to do. But now, despite their long-term experiences with electronics in their cars over the past 30 years, BMW has increasingly made this leap of faith of replacing mechanical systems with electronic equivalents for critical functions without thinking through the consequences. Moreover, they took the life blood of a BMW – the engine oil – and removed the backup system for determining the oil level. With a dipstick *and* a sensor, there was always a backup system.

The Solution

There is some irony in the fact that while the BMW owner doesn't have to open the hood to learn that the engine is a quart low, they still have to make sure they have access to a quart of BMW High Performance Synthetic Oil (good luck finding an equivalent 10W/60

— *continued on p17*

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Exclusive Oktoberfest Preview

Guiding the Glen By Henry Broggi



Photo by Marcie Allen

Drivers Enjoy perfect weather for the June Patroon/New York school at Watkins Glen International Raceway

June means graduations, young children excited about getting out of school and older kids thrilled to be going back to school – especially when it means performance driver's school at Watkins Glen in Upstate New York. The local Patroon Chapter co-sponsored its annual Driver's School with the New York Chapter on June 16th and 17th; and it was a huge success. One can't help but feel privileged to be driving the same track where legends like Hill, Andretti, Moss, and Stewart made racing history.

The History

There is something very special about Watkins Glen and its fascinating history; home of American Grand Prix racing. Its roots are similar to the once great Bridgehampton Race track. Both started on a course designed around the streets and roads of their towns. The man responsible for the first road race at "The Glen" was Cameron Argetsinger, who unfortunately passed away last April. Argetsinger was referred to as the "Father of American road racing". He was a lawyer who summered in the Fingerlakes region around Watkins Glen, owned sports cars, and needed a place to race them.¹

The first race Mr. Argetsinger designed was in 1948, sanctioned by the SCCA and driven on a 6.6-mile

course through the town and country side. It was an overwhelming success which led to the eventual building of the permanent track in 1956. In 1961 history was made when the first American Formula One Grand Prix was run at The Glen. Legendary drivers, including Graham Hill, Dan Gurney and Sterling Moss competed with winner Innes Ireland.²

In 1971 the "Boot" was added to the Glen to bring its length to its present size of 3.4 miles. The track now offers the driver eleven turns, eleven stories of elevation change, two major straights, a chicane, and even a few seconds of breathing and set up time (unlike Pocono Raceway and Lime Rock Park

“Legendary drivers, including Graham Hill, Dan Gurney and Sterling Moss competed with winner Innes Ireland.”



These beautiful E30 M3's are too clean to drive on the track... but they do!

where you're constantly working the wheel). I think we all love the esses at The Glen where you literally dance with your car and build up some serious speed entering the back straight.

School Is In Session

The Driver's School in June was an important event for me. It was my return to the scene of my first and to-date only run off [also affectionately called Off-Track Experience – ed.]. Since that day of infamy, I've done several driver's schools at Pocono Raceway and Lime Rock Park. Excellent teachers and the additional seat time helped me to build up my confidence and skills to where I felt ready to face the "Boot Monster". With the help of Ron Bass, a very skilled and supportive instructor, who also drives an E30 M3 and Formula V, we managed to slay the dragon and have one of the best driver's schools I've ever participated in.

On Monday after the driving sessions and rain ended we participated in a turn by turn class around the track. At speed, it sometimes feels as if the turns begin to blend together. It was very revealing to see the banking, camber and elevation changes up close.

The Tip of the Iceberg

Now, for my driving tip: learn the importance of "Patience". This is difficult to master in today's world of instant gratification, instant information and instant credit. There was a time not that long ago when young people began by becoming an apprentice, being taught by a master of the trade. After years of tutelage and perfecting each aspect of their profession, they would graduate to the title of master or "Meister" craftsman.

I believe driving is similar – one must learn the basics to the point of perfection before they can hope to reach any level of



Drivers Line Up for their Session

“With the help of Ron Bass, a very skilled and supportive instructor, who also drives an E30 M3 and Formula V, we managed to slay the dragon...”

proficiency or excellence. Prodigies are very rare and most people must work diligently to achieve success. In driving, work on consistency and smoothness, perfect your heel and toe, hit the line and apexes, keep your eyes high and be open to learning. Instructors have more years of track driving than you. They have been taught to instruct and make your experience safe and enjoyable. At a driver's school, remember what they tell you in the morning introduction, "there's no trophy to win". This is your apprenticeship. Learning the basics well will make things a lot easier if you decide to take your driving to the next level. The perfected skills are like tools – the more you have, the more you can accomplish. If you haven't participated in a driver's school, sign up today. A school at the Glen is the biggest bang for your buck. It's guaranteed to make you a better driver both on and off the track.

See you back in school.

¹SportsCar SCCA. June 2008 "Cameron Argetsinger"

²Speed Secrets at the Glen. DVD Kollins Communications, 2006



Street Survival Redux

On the morning of July 13th, dozens of volunteer driving instructors gathered at the Nassau Coliseum to participate with nearly 40 students and their parents in the Street Survival program.

Every year that we have held this event, under the strict supervision of Street Survival Chairman Matt Brod, the feedback from students and their parents has been overwhelmingly positive.

Teaching teenagers to drive is no easy feat, but this program is structured so well that each event has been a tremendous success. The local press from Newsday showed up this year, and wrote a very complimentary article on the event. More photos can be found at:



Photo by Mike Allen

The Uniondale Fire Department never disappoints. They're here to keep the skid pad wet.



Photo by Icela Fischthal

Street Survival Chairman Matt Brod Congratulates Student Brendon Shultz



Photos by Mike Allen

Another kidney-grill car enters the skidpad.



An E36 navigates the slalom.



Drivers and Students Mingle between sessions.

<http://www.newsday.com/news/local/ny-liteen0714pg.0,7426191.photogallery>



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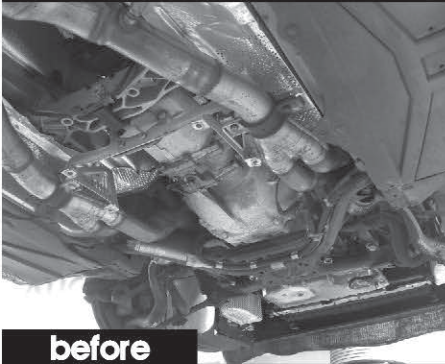


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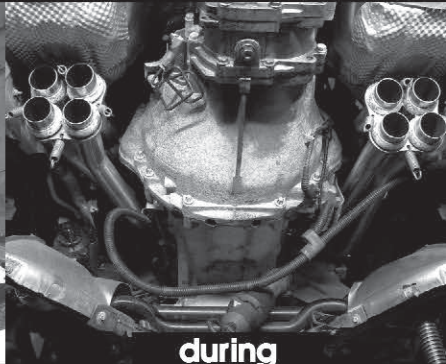
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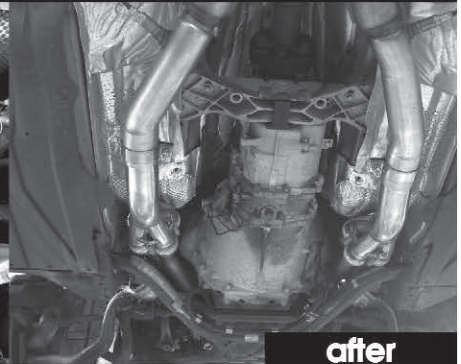
Header Installs



before

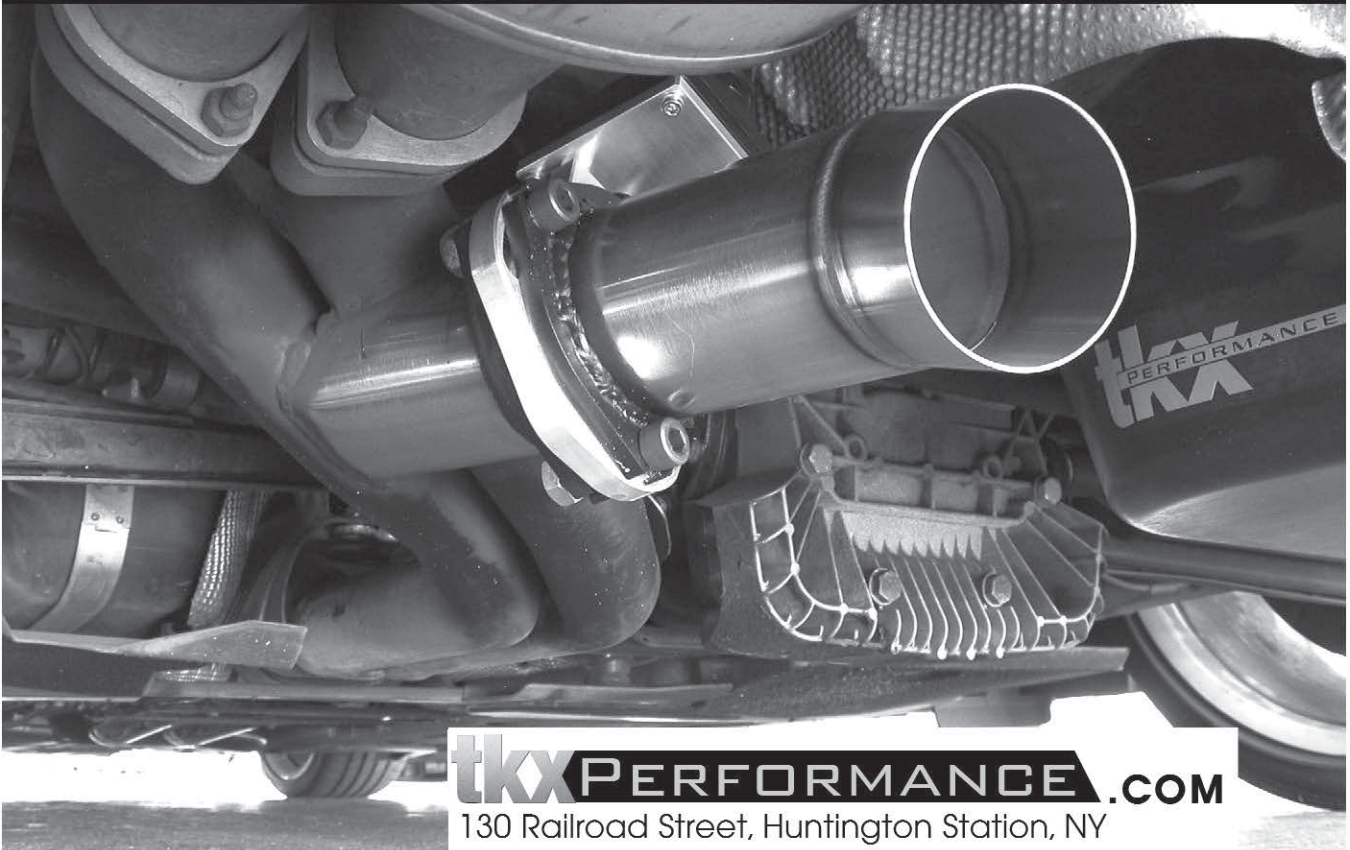


during



after

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Annual Family BBQ Photos: Displaying BMW Pride

Our Treasurer, RoseAnn Burke, and our Social Events Director, Icela Fischthal, did a beautiful job organizing our Annual Family BBQ July 19th at Eisenhower Park on Long Island. Despite extreme temperatures, our members and their families enjoyed good food and face painting in the shade while catching up with old friends. There was no shortage of cars in the parking lot for our members to engage in our never-ending discussion of all things BMW.



Photo by Mike Allen

Chapter members pose politely



Photo by Mike Allen

Isn't this future BMW driver the most adorable child you've ever seen?



Photo by Mike Allen

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Photo by Matt Brod

Mike and Marcie in love


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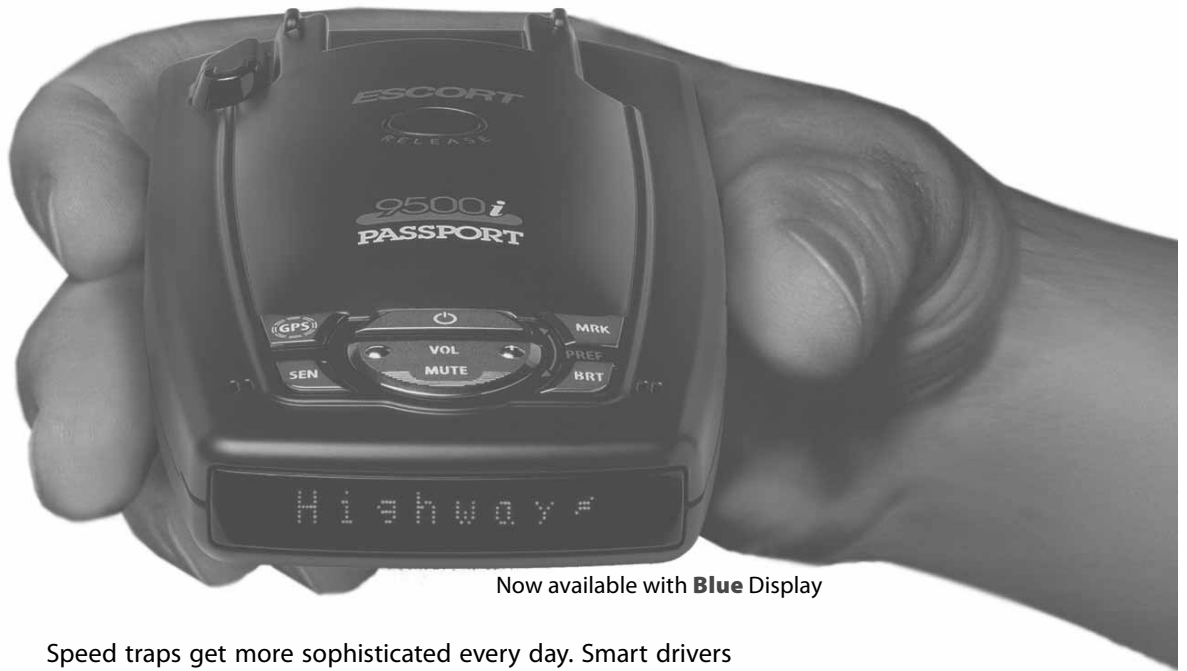


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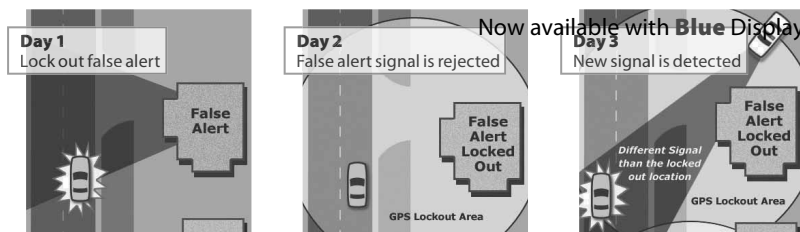
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The audio system of a six-year-old BMW seems archaic, especially when compared to the Logic 7 digital audio system in the new BMW body style. The new BMWs also offer features such as auxiliary audio input (AUX), MP3 playback, and Sirius Satellite Radio. If you spend much time driving a car, you might wonder how you ever lived without these great features. Armed with the right information, you can correctly upgrade AUX, MP3, and Sirius support in your older BMW and have it operate exactly as it would in a new BMW.

To demonstrate these technology upgrades, we will focus on a 2001 5 Series E39 with navigation. The 2001 model was selected because it was manufactured just prior to when BMW switched from the Alpine trunk-mounted navigation radio to the Becker version, which has a slightly different radio connector. Despite this difference, it is still quite simple to retrofit a 2001 E39 with AUX, MP3 support, and BMW Sirius Satellite Radio. Initially, it requires upgrading the trunk-mounted radio for the AUX and Sirius Satellite support as well as upgrading the trunk-mounted navigation computer to the DVD MKIV for proper display of the MP3 and Sirius audio text on the navigation screen.

You can address the connector difference between the older Alpine and newer Becker radio by purchasing adapter harnesses from your BMW dealer. There are a few tricks for getting the wiring correct that are detailed on www.bimmernav.com/sirius.html, but overall, it is a simple and quick task in the E39. The navigation radio model year is the crucial component, with the newer radios supporting the most features. Look for a 2006 X5 or E46 replacement radio for the most features. Once you upgrade the radio, you can easily add the other components to your E39 just by plugging them in. Now that your radio has additional modes, displaying this information properly requires upgrading the navigation computer.

Upgrading the navigation computer is a simple plug and play. In the 2001 E39 equipped with the CD navigation computer, you can simply remove the older and slower CD-based system and replace it with the newer and faster DVD-based MKIV navigation computer. Upgrading the navigation computer provides you with a new 3D Map viewing, DVD map of all US and Canada, and it will also display the information on your navigation screen correctly for Sirius, MP3, and AUX.

Starting in 2006, BMW introduced a new CD changer that plays MP3s and can support MP3 ID3 Audiotext on the navigation display. Upgrading to the new CD changer with MP3 support is a simple plug and play. The CD Changer will play MP3s correctly using the old radio and navigation computer, but in order to display ID3 Audiotext, you need the upgraded radio and nav components.

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Where's My Dipstick, Dipstick?

— continued from p9

synthetic at the Quik-E-Mart), and they still have to open the hood and find the filler cap and add the missing quart... and then wait 30 minutes to get an accurate reading. So whatever problem BMW feels they've solved by replacing the dipstick with a complex sensor, they haven't really touched the problem of fixing the loose nut behind the wheel to make sure they add oil when they're supposed to.

Back in the 80s while in college, I was driving my girlfriend home one evening from Troy to Schenectady in my Opel Manta and the car simply died. I limped into the Niskayuna Fire Department's parking lot, and proceeded to "diagnose" the problem. I had determined I was getting spark but no fuel. With a quarter tank of gas according to the gauge, and no other evidence, I came up with the diagnosis that without the aroma of fuel in the engine compartment, my mechanical fuel pump must have failed. A technician from the lab I worked at was kind enough to drive me back to Niskayuna, and I was ready with one I liberated from my parts car Opel. As I was lying under the car getting covered with grease removing a fuel pump for the second time in 12 hours, my friend gave the rear of my Opel a nudge. Not hearing any sloshing in the tank whatsoever, he quipped, "hey college boy, how much gas you got in the car?" I responded without hesitation: "A quarter tank." "Oh, really? And how do you know that?"

It was from that experience running out of gas in college that I learned we still have to rely upon our senses about the physical

world around us just as much now as before we had dials and iDrive and fancy displays and buttons and batteries. Blind reliance on electronics can be very dangerous, especially in automobiles. Electronics can exhibit weird, unexpected behavior when it fails, or when the battery supplying electricity to it fails. We cannot simply relinquish control to what the computer is telling us without confirming it with observations.

I suspect the BMW engineers did not consider that the oil sensors might fail by reporting that the engine was a quart low when in actuality it was not. Yet this was the experience of a disproportionate number of early E90 3-series owners with an electronic oil-level monitor. Owners dutifully added oil when the car told them to, and some ended up damaging their engines by over-filling them. At the dealership, the only thing the service departments could do was drain the oil entirely, replace the sensor, and add precisely the correct amount, hoping that the new sensor read the oil accurately. As an engineer, I could not conscientiously design something that could cause the end-user this much grief.

Today's engineers at BMW need to discover their company's roots to understand how their predecessors designed such great products. If they wish to preserve the BMW brand for the future, and not go the way of their American counterparts, they need to seriously reevaluate where and how they design electronics into BMWs. As their colleagues at Mercedes, Porsche, and Audi are discovering, there may be a heavy price to pay for this approach to automotive design. BMW – I want my dipstick back. Please? ❖



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