

Die Zugspitze

New York Chapter Newsletter | Fall 2014

www.nybmwcca.org



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New York Chapter 2014 Events Calendar

March	22	21st Annual Beach Party (new date)
	30	Test & Tune: Nassau Coliseum
April	19	New York International Auto Show
	21	Driving School: NJ Motorsports Park
May	3	Kart Racing: Oak Valley Race Park
	10	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
	25	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
June	9-10	Driving School: Watkins Glen
	15	Dine & Shine
	21	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
July	6	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
	26	Teen Street Survival: Nassau Coliseum
August	16	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
September	6	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
	14	Wine & Shine
	20	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
	21	Concours d'Elegance "Legends of the Euro Motorways 3"
	28	(Wine & Shine rain date)
October	4	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
	12	Auto-X: Nassau Coliseum
	18	Fall Endurance Karting: Oak Valley Race Park
December	6	Holiday Party & President's Dinner

For the latest information, see www.nybmwcca.org

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On the Cover: *Photo by Mike Allen*

To join the BMW Car Club of America, call 1-800-878-9292 or visit www.bmwcca.org. BMW CCA national dues are \$48 per year, \$15 of which is for Roundel.

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NY Chapter BMW CCA presents

The Vineyard Series Eighth Annual Wine & Shine at Pindar Vineyards

Sunday, September 14th 2014 • 12:00 pm (noon) to 3:00 pm
(Rain date: September 28)

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 late summer sun. Bring the family and a picnic lunch and relax on the pavilion overlooking the vineyards 550 acres. Sample Pindar's award-winning vintages in their beautiful tasting room and on their newly constructed deck. Tour the vineyard's facilities and enjoy complimentary tastings, open to all BMW members. All wines are available to purchase at a special discount to our members only.

All those attending will be eligible to enter their BMW in our clean car "Show and Shine" on the grounds of the vineyard in a separate parking area adjacent to the pavilion. Winners will receive bottles of select vintages of Pindar wines.

All registered entrants will receive their choice of either a bottle of red or white Pindar wine. All entrants must register online to qualify for a bottle of wine. Registration fee is \$10 per person, children are no charge.

While on the North Fork, stop by Briermere's Farm on Sound Ave. for home baked pies, The Jamesport Country Store on Rt. 25, Main Rd., or

one of the many fresh fruit and vegetable stands selling Long Island grown produce.

Register at:
www.nybmwcca.org/shine

For additional information, contact Steve Geraci at stevegeraci@reflexphoto.com

Pindar Vineyard

37645 Main Rd., Peconic, NY 11958
(631) 734-6200 | www.pindar.net
Maps & Info:
www.peconiclandtrust.com
www.liwines.net

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President's Page | *Jim Siegel*



As Fall arrives I start thinking about the end of another season of Club events. But not too soon – we still have several great gatherings ahead of us including the Wine & Shine, Concours, a couple more autocrosses, and of course the Holiday party.

The Wine & Shine is a great gala that has grown substantially over the years, and if not for its relatively isolated location to the rest of the

Northeast chapter BMW clubs, it would definitely be a regional club event. In fact John Sullivan, our regional VP, makes a point of attending every year.

The Concours has also become a “must attend” event. For the past two years we’ve partnered with both Mercedes and Porsche and we’re expecting an even bigger turnout this year. You’re also likely to see several MINIs, as we had a great showing in this category last year. This event is all about great cars, great company, and great food, which will be provided by Chef Rico, who’s become our regular caterer for this event, as well as Rallye BMW, who has generously agreed to be our event sponsor again this year. No doubt they will be bringing a few choice cars to view.

For this year’s Holiday party we’ve decided to do something different, something more interactive. Keep your ears open for details that will be forthcoming in the next couple of months. Hopefully Santa will still be able to attend.

As Winter sets in it’s time to start thinking about next year’s Board of Directors. After three years as President I’ve decided it’s time to pass the baton to the younger generation of board members who have stepped-up over the past few years. Mike Allen, our longstanding Vice President, plans to run again and assuming he’s re-elected will continue to leverage his experience to help guide the Club into the future along with our new president. It’s been a pleasure serving as President and I look forward to continuing in my other roles as Risk Manager and Advertising Manager.

Enjoy what’s left of the warm weather!

2015 Call for Nominations for the New York Chapter Board

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

Members interested in running must be nominated by a member in good standing. Include a short statement supporting the nomination and mail 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 8, 2014.

New York Chapter BMW CCA By-Laws can be downloaded here:
http://www.nybmwcca.org/downloads/NY_Chapter_By-Laws.doc

**BMW Car Club
of America
New York Chapter**



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Treasurer

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msnybmw@aol.com

Secretary

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Drivers School Chair

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Chief Track Instructor

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Sherwin de Shong, srde28@hotmail.com

Autocross Chair

André Noël, noelsm3@gmail.com

AAA Driver Improvement Program

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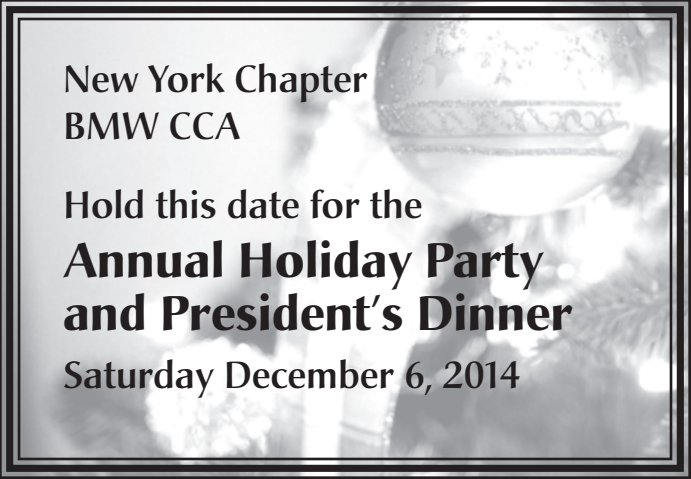
Safety Gear Advisor

Victor Gagliano, VAS 516-908-2180

Welcome

to our New Members!

Michael Acunto	Jerry Fensterstock	Anri Kissilenko
Faraz Ahmed	Victor Fernandes	Lari Konfidan
Miguel Aleman	Mark Fialk	L. Kramer
Ahmad Alkaysey	Victor Fonseca	Kevin Kramer
Sandeep Annam	Danny Galeotafiore	Steven Kwiat
Allan Asuncion	Rudy Gallo	Ali Lalljee
Ubaid Bandukra	Bernard Gannon	Alan Lam
Albert Baranov	Jeremy Goldberg	Samuel Lee
Tahmid Bashir	Dmitry Goldman	Robert Lendvai
Wayne Berkowitz	Michael Gossoff	Charles Limonius
Bill Bosshart	Carlos Grant	Marcin Lisowski
George Boutsikos	Eric Gruber	Oscar Lugay
Matthew Braley	Socrates Halikias	Vasilios Mallas
Martin Callahan	Ralph Harary	Kathy Man
Corwin Carroll	Jonathan Harper	Joseph Maniscalco
Alvee Chowdhury	William Harris	Stefanos Marcopoulos
Christopher Clowdus	Jason Harubin	Silvia Marinova
Josephine Curry	Ian Hermanek	Marcel Martino
Mubashar Dastgir	Saleh Husain	O'Neil Miles
O'Neil Davey	Sharon Intilli	James Moore
McKim de Guzman	Mark Jakubczak	Richard Morrell
Peter DeFilippo	Robert Jean	Marjorie Nesbitt
Matthew DeVincentis	Bryan Jesia	James Oliverio
Amy Dilks	Kevin Junkins	Ashley Oshiro
William Disla	Andrew Kalish	Rodger Ouwerkerk
Jared Dongail	Fred Kamel	Christos Papachristou
Mike Doustan	Alex Kang	Louis Parks
Clement Easton	Madeleine Kelly	Phil Parlato
	James Kirschberg	



Bimal Patel	David Sachs	Stephanie Tate
Michael Patterson	Steve Sama	Frank Tuminelli
Peter Perreault	Mark Sanchez	Thomas Valenti
Ryan Perry	Judah Schorr	Michael Venditti
John Pfail	Aruna Seneviratne	Behan Venter
James Pichardo	Ropberto Sepulveda	Ryan Vespo
Antonio Pilato	Vipul Shah	Marco Viscoso
Rudin Pistoli	Imtiyaz Siddiqui	Ritchie Weston
Stacey Portis	Margaret Singer	Jeffrey Wolfson
Anthony Postiglione	Rejus Skeiris	Kei Yeung
Navid Pourmoradi	Jeremy Skow	Simon Yim
Peter Rand	Jovany Soto	Daniel Yomdin
Jonathan Regis	Joel Spielfogel	Kristin Zink
Kyle Retallack	Kevin Stack	Henry Zucker
Dylan Reynolds	Daniel Stainback	Vladimir Zulin
Craig Rogers	Morris Stemp	
Peter Rose	Baron Stukes	
Stephen Rosen	Keith Sturm	
Phil Rosztoczy	Orestes Tarajano	

And a salute to our long standing members!

Anniversary milestones for members who joined between April and June

5th Anniversary	Renzo Lombardozzi	Michael Castagnetta	Haralabos Vassos	Theodore Kapela	Craig Braun
Alejandro Alamon	Victor Mauro	Calton Chan	Andrew Wagner	Douglas Katz	William Gotsis
Dave Berke	Sunita Ravikumar	Ronald Feldman	John Wei	Suzin Koehler	Burghardt Jegutzki
Tasby Best	Garth Redwood	Joe Fuchs	Bruce Wexler	John Lafond	Peter Kulka
Michael Better	William Roche	Andrew Grech	Gregory White	Anthony Lamantia	Paul Weiss
Brian Crawley	Brian Smalley	Stephen Havasy	15th Anniversary	Wayne Miller	25th Anniversary
John Decorato	Jocelyn Sontag	Harry Kuhn	Vincent Apicella	Winston Patrick	Robert Boynton
Andrew Fantini	Janet Turansky	Steve Levy	William Breen	William Schlesinger	Richard Johnson
Paul Frieder	Raymundo Valle	Richard Meyer	Mark Camaj	Howard Schulman	Frank Orofino
Daniel Gomes	Marlyne Wallace	Linton Peixoto	Dan Carroll	Donald Spates	Michael Rosenhack
Robert Hazan	10th Anniversary	Frederic Phinney	Richard Derizans	Gerard Stigliano	30th Anniversary
Jason Heiss	Claudio Acquafredda	T. Pierson	Wm Dilgard	Craig Von Bargaen	Lewis Kaster
John Jessey	Chris Bacchi	Bence Rabo	Marlon Drummond	Mark Winkelman	Glenroy Smith
Matthew Kalish	Stuart Baker	Gary Rindner	Stan Feld	Paul Zacher	40th Anniversary
Brian Kerr		Elliot Siegel	Marc Finkelstein	20th Anniversary	Wm Bormann
Michael Licican		James Stave	Kenneth Hirsch	Richard Adler	Raymond Nickel
Pedro Linares					

Autocross Corner

2014 Autocross Season

Hello Autocross Fans!

The 2014 season is in full swing, but not without a surprising start. This year the Coliseum decided to rent out a portion of Lot 8 to a car dealership for storage, and we were told about the changes only two weeks before the season began. This effected in a big way the design of the courses for the upcoming season. Special thanks to Tony Howell for redesigning the courses, keeping them interesting and fun, and staying within guidelines set by the national office.

This year's Class D has a large following with several people competing for the top prize. Classes C and CR are also having their own battle with some members driving a lot better, making it an even tighter race for the gold. This should make for a very interesting rest of the season. Good luck to everyone battling for the gold!

André

Photos by Gary Simmons



Alex shows dance skills with his partner, a 2013 MINI



If Batman had a BMW this might be it



Rose reminds us why everyone needs a 1M



Joe in his 95 M3 might be the new king—time will tell



Austin makes it look easy; this guy has talent



Our newest instructor Dave proves he has what it takes



New York Chapter BMW CCA Presents

Admission Fees for Spectators

Members of OWG	FREE
General Admission	\$10
Adults over 62	\$8
Youth (7-12)	\$5

(Payable at the gate.)

Classifications

Street: Judged on exterior only (No undercarriage; tops up on convertibles)

Concours: Judged on interior, exterior, engine compartment, trunk (No undercarriage, tops up on convertibles)

Tuner: Judged on interior, exterior, engine compartment (No undercarriage, tops up on convertibles), with a focus on creativity and uniqueness.

MINI Corral: "Best of Show". Mini's only. Judged on interior, exterior, engine compartment and trunk (No undercarriage, tops up on convertibles)

Location

Old Westbury Gardens
71 Old Westbury Road
Old Westbury, NY 11568

Directions To Old Westbury Gardens

www.oldwestburygardens.org
For additional directions
call (516) 333-0048

Registration

Deadline: September 12th, 2014
Online Registration at
www.motorsportreg.com

For additional information

Contact: Gordon DeShong
srde28@hotmail.com

Concours d'Elegance

"Legends Of The Euro Motorways 3"

on the beautiful grounds of
Old Westbury Gardens

Sponsored by:

RALLYE BMW

Divine Catering (Chef Rico)

Gliptone (Let Gliptone Make It Shine)

BMW CCA NY Chapter

Sunday September 21, 2014

Gates open at 7:45 AM for entrants, 10:00 AM for general public
Judging will begin at 11:00 AM

Entrants Fees: (includes Gardens' admission fee for driver)

Pre-registration BMWs, \$40.00 (payment must be made
by September 15th);

Registration, day of event BMWs – \$50.00, space available basis

Pre-registration MINIs – \$25.00 (payment must be made by
September 15th)

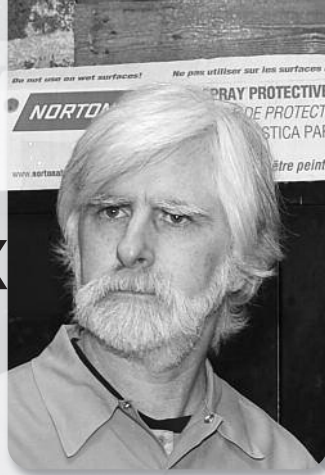
Registration, day of event MINIs – \$30.00, space available basis

The featured marques are BMW, Porsche, Mercedes Benz, with
special appearance by Aston-Martin

Please make plans to attend this great event. Bring your family
out to enjoy a gorgeous Sunday on the Great Lawns of Old
Westbury Gardens. Divine Catering will be on site to provide a
reasonably priced buffet.

The Original Car Talk Guy

By Steve Geraci



I've known Mike Shiffer of EuroMeccanica Inc. in Mount Vernon since most BMW enthusiasts' daily drivers were 2002's. In the early days we all attended Mike's tech sessions and the New York Chapter's Beach Parties at his shop. It's been awhile since I've made the trip from the North Fork of Long Island to his shop for the Beach Party, but even as so many things have changed (except the Beach Party), Mike and his outlook on cars and life seem to remain constant. I can still call and ask him a technical question and after I've been given several possible fixes – in descending order of likelihood, in which the first answer invariably is always the correct one – we can chat about any topic for another half hour. A recent example of a problem I encountered was with my 1987 325iS project – rough running, poor acceleration, and a host of other nasty behaviors. Mike's first likely culprit:

the oxygen sensor. I replaced the O2 sensor, and bingo, the car ran like new. I've leaned on him many times over the years, knowing he would be my "Lifeline", keeping me from drowning in a sea of bills for replacement parts and work I didn't need.

I'm sure many of you have read his Tech Talk column in Die Zugspitze and know exactly what I'm talking about, but for the rest of you out there who haven't had the experience of speaking to him, you're missing the best link between you and your car. For those of you still reading, it's probably because you're thinking, hey, maybe I should see if this guy can diagnose that funny sound I hear coming from somewhere under the hood. I think I'll call him, maybe I can get an answer to my problem just like on Car Talk on NPR radio. Well, funny thing being, he is the original Car Talk guy. Long before Tom and Ray decided to call themselves Click and Clack, Mike was dispensing technical advice along with his unique perspectives and opinions on the subject of the day.

I know now, just as I did when he first became the Chapter Technical Advisor, he will always make time to help a BMW owner (that would be me) with a problem. Many of my issues deal with less obvious issues than a defective oxygen sensor; so trust me, if you need technical advice, give him a call, he is the original... and he is the best.

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"Whatever you say sir!"



On July 26th our intrepid crew hosted our Seventh Annual Tire Rack Street Survival event.

The weather, as requested, was great; low 80s with some cloud cover. This year we also had a nice change of scenery by using a different lot at Nassau Coliseum. This afforded a more relaxed venue for the classroom session of 40+ students.

The greatest part of the event was having former TRSS graduates

come back and instruct for the day. Yes, we had several former students instructing our newest crop of neophytes. As always, a huge debt of gratitude goes out to the Men and Women of the BMW CCA and beyond for all their help in making this a winner of an event, year after year.

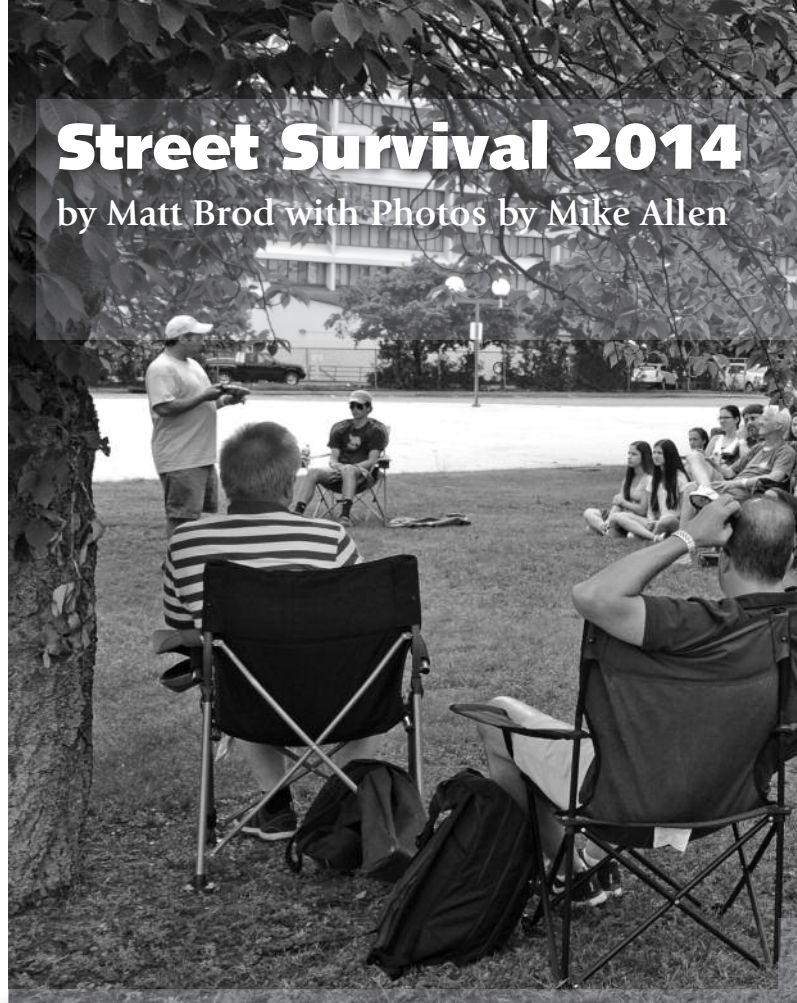
On a side note, part of the morning classroom session dealt with police interaction. I explained to the students that when getting pulled over, do the following: windows down, car off, keys on dash, hands at 12, wait. If you plan on getting anything when the officer is near your car, announce your intentions, move slowly and explain why you are reaching for anything during the stop. All these steps make the officer feel safer and more relaxed.

One of the parents who has been a cop for 24 years came up to me and said that info was "on the money". He also suggested that drivers should turn on the interior lights at night, and added that a little humility goes a long way.

Good advice for all.

Street Survival 2014

by Matt Brod with Photos by Mike Allen



From Student to Instructor

by Stephanie Jung



You "almost" already know where this is going. Like any other teenager, I didn't want to wake up at 8AM on a Saturday morning. I didn't want to drive a car through an empty parking lot, yadda yadda yadda... I was unsure of what to expect from Tire Rack's Street Survival school. What I can tell you about my experience is that I don't think anyone in the world could have as much fun driving a Nissan Rogue than I did when I took the course as a student. Not only was the course fun and engaging, but the personal instruction gave me exposure to the fundamental driving techniques necessary when I drive every day.

As a teenage driver, I thought I was invincible on the road. But I made all the rookie mistakes - I went over the speed limit, didn't use turn signals, etc. At the time, I couldn't comprehend how my driving could affect all of the other drivers on



Photos: A fun day on the grass; Below: Trying hard not to smile. Additional photos on back cover.



the road. Who needs to spend \$75 to learn how to drive when Driver's Ed was already mandatory and free (in my school, anyway)? What I didn't realize is that \$75 gave me priceless lessons and experience that would later save my life time and time again.

So, onto the course you might say? The "fun" began in the classroom. No, really. While all of the others were falling asleep, I learned about tire contact patches, weight transfer and smooth inputs. Who wouldn't want to learn about all of that good stuff? Students watched Matt Brod present physical demonstrations of how not to sit in their cars, and why the "gangsta' lean" probably won't give you enough leverage to actually turn your

vehicle, in the event that something happened.

The rest of the students were less than eager to get out to the parking lot, where a majority of the day's exercises take place. Once the students got an overview of the kinds of things that live under the hood and properly set up their seats and mirrors, it was time to go get some hands-on experience behind the wheel.

As a student, the moment I got out and experienced the exercises that were so carefully set up was the moment that changed me forever. I understood that the instructors were there for me, to help make me become a better driver overall. Megan Yavel was my personal instructor

for the day. She was super energetic and I could tell she had plenty to teach me. I had to just keep an open mind and not be stubborn. Each exercise had a clearly understood purpose and could be related to a street driving situation. Not only were the exercises useful but they were also incredibly fun. This was the moment where most students converted from being "dragged out by their parents" to "sign me up for more, this is awesome!" From slaloms that teach hand-eye coordination and vehicle placement to the high-speed lane change + ABS braking, which teaches weight transfer, everything was there in front of you to grasp and take in. The big idea was to get first-hand experience

making the sorts of maneuvers you might have to make in an emergency situation. Not only that, but complete vehicle dynamics were taught as well, including a skid pad to demonstrate what the vehicles could do in the event they completely lose control.

After the full day of school, my mind was so jumbled that I didn't even know what to think anymore! But I had a new perspective on defensive driving. I learned car control skills in ways I couldn't even imagine. I realized that before taking this school, I honestly had no idea how to remain in control during dangerous situations. This school truly taught me valuable lessons that I apply every time I get in my car and drive.

So...the plot twist occurs when I became an in-car coach one year after graduating from Street Survival. How was I a student one summer and then an instructor the next year? After having such a great experience as a student, I naturally wanted to go volunteer at the next school. Participating at autocross events further developed the skills that I learned as a student at the school. More importantly, it kept me sharp and on my toes while driving on the street. In an era where most drivers drive distracted, it has been of utmost importance to drive defensively and look ahead to practice accident avoidance. As a volunteer, I figured I would help out by picking up cones or aiding with registration. Then André Noël informed me that they were short on instructors and they needed me to instruct. So here I was freaking out, I'm not qualified for this, I can't do it, I'm not good enough...

While the students were listening to Matt during the lecture, I, along with the rest of the instructors, drove through each of the various exercises. We were taught how to correctly guide students through each of the four tasks. In essence, we had to help them learn on their own when to make a safe and sound decision. For example, when exiting off the highway ramp simulation, we had to inform the student when to brake, where to steer towards, and then get back on the gas.

Once the classroom session was over, I was assigned to instruct a student named Melissa who drove a baby blue Toyota Camry. As I approached her with a nervous smile, she grinned and introduced herself. She told me "I have no idea what to expect but I bet it's going to be an awesome day!" Right then and there, I immediately felt at ease. I took the school the previous year and I had a few autocrosses under my belt. I can do this! I first showed her some basics about her car, like how to add the correct amount of air in the tires, how to check if the oil was running low, etc. Then we finally began the hands-on driving experience! The course was set up very similarly to the previous summer's course. Each driver would go through each exercise a few times during the morning and afternoon session. During the morning session, as I guided Melissa through all of the stations, I noticed that she was a little hesitant with braking hard, pressing the gas pedal, etc. She had never learned the limits of her car until now. But I got her out of her comfort zone and in the afternoon session, she was getting much more comfortable behind the wheel and learning how she could truly control her car. I knew that after everything Melissa learned, she would feel better and be more confident about her driving skills.

Things I learned as an instructor and autocrosser:

* Slalom: all about looking ahead. You can't just turn at each cone, or you'll plow down every single one like I did my first few times around! You also have to learn to know exactly where your car is.

* Emergency lane change: It is difficult in the sense that you always have to be prepared for anything that suddenly appears in front of you. This teaches you to look ahead.

* Highway exit ramp: Real-life exit

ramps vary; there are constant radius and increasing/decreasing radius turns. To me, the trickiest type of turn is the decreasing radius. It catches you off guard when you are going through a turn and then it tightens up near the end, which can create a potentially dangerous situation.

* Skidpad was all about understeer and oversteer. The sooner you can differentiate between the two and understand how to counteract them, the better.

* While instructing, I didn't realize how rough it was to be a passenger as I was getting thrown around in my seat when my student pushed her car to its limit!

Transitioning from a student to an instructor wasn't an easy task. I thoroughly enjoyed spending my day instructing Melissa. It felt good that I helped someone become a better driver in terms of being more aware and being in control of possibly hazardous situations. I tried my best relaying all of my knowledge onto her. I was super impressed that she understood all the car control techniques fairly quickly and at the end of the school, she wanted to be a volunteer at the next Street Survival. Two years after completing Street Survival as a student, I now feel like I have gained more experience through daily driving and autocrosses. I am continually learning car control skills and I hope to improve as an instructor from now on!

Well, now we're mid-season in autocross and I'm looking to win...see you at the next race ;)

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SMALL CHANGE

by Peter Burke

We have all heard the adage, change is good. Some folks resist change, we are all guilty of it to some extent. One of the

best quotes involving change was by Winston Churchill. The great man said "to improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often." Well, if this is the case, MINI is the perfect car (which I have saying for years). Since the MINI was introduced in North America in 2002 (a year behind the UK) the MINI Hardtop has now gone through two transformations, the latest being the recent introduction of the F56.

Recently I was fortunate enough to take part in a focus group that compared the newest MINI aka the F56 2014 Hardtop to the R56 Hardtop, which was produced from 2007 thru 2013. Not to talk out of school, but many in my group did not welcome the changes to the 2014

Hardtop (but I hear other groups praised the new model). The one complaint that was leveled at the F56 was it was larger than the R56 and it was losing the cuteness that was the cornerstone of Frank Stephenson's execution of the R50 MINI.

To be honest, when the first "leaked" images of the F56 MINI Cooper Hardtop hit the Internet, I was dismayed. The nose was different, the tail lamps were bigger, and there was talk that the speedometer wasn't going to be in the center of the dash! Looking back when the 2007 R56 Cooper appeared, it took some time for me to warm up to it. The reluctance to change goes back even further. Some owners of BMC Minis (produced 2000 and before) thought the BMW MINIs weren't true Minis! My argument with these individuals has always been that if BMW had not "adopted" MINI, the marque would be on the heap of bygone automotive brands.

While I sitting in the aforementioned focus group, and looking at the two Coopers side-by-side, it started to make sense. Yes, the F56 did appear to be getting bigger than the R56, which was

bigger than the R50. One must not forget that due to mandated European Pedestrian Safety Legislation and also more aerodynamic designs to cheat the wind and meet tougher CAFE requirements cars designs are evolving, and MINI is not immune.

I recently had the opportunity to drive the 2014 F56 MINI and fear not, the MINI DNA is still there. Sure there are some things that will take me awhile to get over (speedo no longer in center, window switches on door), yet the car still handles like a MINI!

And while change has also come to the MINI Hardtop for 2014, the rest of the lineup of MINI products is facing change. There is talk of a four door MINI hardtop soon to be released. Rumors abound on the future of the Clubman as well as the Coupe/Roadster. One welcome change that may be coming from MINI is the Superleggera Vision concept. A two seater that will be available in three or four cylinder configuration, or the same drivetrain that the BMW i3 utilizes. The times they are a changin' and for MINI it is a good thing!

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EuroMeccanica, Inc. was started by Michael Shiffer in 1991. Michael is a tech advisor for NYBMWCCA and EuroMeccanica hosts their annual Beach Party, where dozens of BMW owners and enthusiasts converge to learn more about their cars. The shop's atmosphere is warm and open. Questions and input from our customers are welcome, and we make every effort to explain what we are doing to your car, and why.



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Endurance Karting Rocks!



Oakland Valley Race Park has invited us back for another round of Endurance Karting. The last event was a huge success! To keep things interesting this time, we are going to race under the lights.

Date: Saturday October 18th

Location: Oakland Valley Race Park,
305 Oakland Valley Road
Cuddebackville, NY 12729
www.OVRP.net

Start time: 5:45 pm to approximately 9:15 pm

Cost: \$127.00 per person

This is an “Arrive and Drive” event. Drivers are not required to purchase any gear. You are encouraged to use your own gear (helmet, gloves, suits, etc.). The track will provide any racing gear needed at no extra charge. OVRP is approximately 90 minutes from the Throggs Neck Bridge.

This is a “real” go-kart track with elevation, increasing and decreasing radius turns. There is a lot of curbing to help, or hurt, depending on how much you use. Outdoor karting is very different from indoor karting and in many ways is more challenging. The karts do close to 45 MPH and the event is tailored to accommodate drivers of all skill levels, from veteran racers to novices who have never driven a go-kart.

Each driver will have a short practice stint (about 10 minutes) and then be placed on a team for the endurance race. Teams will be formed at the track by drawing names from a hat. Each driver will have 3 or 4 driving stints, totaling one hour of seat time per driver, in addition to the short practice session prior to the race.

Register by emailing Michael Sussman at suss1173@aol.com. Please include your full name and contact details. All payments will be accepted via paypal to suss1173@aol.com

Registration will remain open until the event is full. The spring karting event sold out leaving many waitlisted; early registration is strongly suggested!



Tech Talk with Mike Shiffer

What do you know? To find out, try teaching it. I have a new apprentice. He's been working for several months now, coming in every day after school for three hours or so. It is nice to have a young man here among us enfeebled middle-aged guys: he bends more easily, lifts heavy objects, does things with enthusiasm and doesn't grunt, groan and grouse about his aches and pains like the rest of us. He is no stranger to tools, having worked as a part-

time bicycle mechanic for several years before starting with me. He's a good kid: reliable, cheerful, bright, energetic and willing. The best part of having him around is being able to tell him what we are thinking as we fix cars. This is called teaching, but it might as well be called co-learning, since explaining what I'm doing is as much an exploration and revelation for me as it is for him. I am forced to organize and articulate the reasons for my actions and in so doing I learn one heck of a lot about what I know, what I guess at and what I take on faith. It makes me confront my assumptions, question them sometimes, lay them out in the open and publicly devise a plan of action.

Consider the oil change.

Here is what's involved if I do it: I put the car on the lift, raise it up, remove the drain plug and oil filter, let the oil run out into a pan, replace the plug & filter, lower the car, add enough oil to show full on the dipstick (if the car has one: don't get me started!), run the engine, turn it off, check the level and top it up, then take the car off the lift.

Here's the same job, explained to my apprentice: the car has to be centered between the posts of the lift, but not as far forward as to interfere with opening the doors. The arms of the lift have to be positioned under the car's jacking points or other strong members with wood blocks to protect the car. If the pinch weld under the rocker panel is used, the blocks must be oriented with the grain of the wood at right angles to the seam to prevent them from splitting. Care must be taken to keep the arms from touching and damaging rocker trim, under trays, exhaust pipes, or anything else. Most BMWs these days have plastic blocks at the jacking points. This is a wonderful thing, or would be if they didn't fall off so easily. Most BMWs we see have one or more of them missing, so we have aluminum blocks of the same thickness to take up the space. Once all four arms are positioned, raise the car by pressing this button. Stop when you see the body lift off the wheels, then check each arm to be sure it is where it belongs. One more thing: don't press the button if the other lift is going up or you hear the air compressor running. Con Ed charges a lot for "peak use", so using only one large power consumer at a time saves money.

Open the hood. The release is usually near the driver's left knee. On some MINIs it is on the right side of the passenger foot well; on older BMWs (733s, 2002s, e.g.) it is a two-position lever; and on even older ones this lever is inside a box with a button on it whose lid drops down to catch your feet and make you curse. On American cars made before the 70s, there may be no release lever inside the car at all. Look for it under the center of the bumper or under the front edge of the hood above or behind the grille. Next find the safety catch, usually (but not always) in front, between the hood and grille or protruding through the grille. Lift/press/twist/squeeze the lever/rod/paddle/trigger until the hood is free. If the car is exotic, old, or both, expect to spend some time figuring out where it is and which direction it must be moved to relinquish its grip on the hood.

Once the engine bay is revealed, look for the oil filter and the dipstick.

One or both may be missing. The oil filter may be down on the side of the block or screwed into the oil pan, but be assured it is on the car someplace (with some exceptions: many manufacturers didn't routinely fit replaceable oil filters until after WWII). However, the dipstick may not be there at all. If it isn't, the oil level is checked electronically at the dashboard. In this case, measure the oil that comes out and add at least that much when refilling. The electronic sensor needs many minutes to read accurately after an oil change, and it is embarrassing to send a car out which reads full, only to have the customer call the next day to complain that his oil level is low because his temperamental and vindictive sensor lied to us.

(A brief digression: Some Rolls Royce engines from the 1920s had no dipstick either. They had a mechanical float which was connected to a shaft that stuck out the side of the engine. This shaft had a pointer on it which would indicate the oil level by pointing at marks cast into the engine in a semi-circle around the shaft. Of course, the engine bay was somewhat less packed than it is now, which afforded an easy view of the dial. How RR was able to keep the shaft from leaking out the oil it was installed to measure is a mystery to me. Given the well-known and well-earned reputation the British have for oil leaks, this seems miraculous.)

If the oil filter is under the hood, it will almost certainly be an insert type in a housing, rather than a self-contained spin-on filter. When unscrewing the housing cap, remove the O-ring that seals the cap as well as any found on the shaft that sticks through the filter element. Replacements, along with a drain plug seal, are supplied with the new filter. Examine the old filter, checking to see if it looks crushed or if it is missing an end cap. If you see either condition, there may be part of a filter (this one or an earlier one) in the housing. Look inside the housing to make sure there are no pieces of filter stuck in the bottom. Install the new filter right side up (not all filters are symmetrical top to bottom), put some oil on the the housing cap O-ring and screw it on. Use a torque wrench set for the correct torque. The wrench is in foot-pounds and the torque is given in Newton-meters? Use the conversion chart in the drawer where the torque wrench lives. Always relieve the wrench by putting it on its lowest torque setting before you put it away, carefully, in its form-fitted box.

I'll spare the reader (though not the apprentice!) all the details of raising the car the rest of the way (bring the lift down on the safety catches! Don't let the hood hit the ceiling!), finding the drain plug (on some cars it is right next to the the transmission drain: don't take out the wrong one!), catching the oil, disposing it, replacing the drain plug seal after checking the state of the threads (and noting how it screws in: resistance may mean it is worn out and should be replaced), having a look around the underside (a whole topic in itself), then lowering the car and adding fresh oil (how much? what type?).

In addition to the challenges and pleasures of teaching, it is nice to have an appreciative, if captive, audience. Keeps me honest, too. When I have to explain what I'm doing, how and why, I realize how important it is to me to pass on good practices by practicing what I teach (wearing protective gear, e.g.), since it is by example, more than by explanation that this business of fixing cars is passed on.



Michael Shiffer

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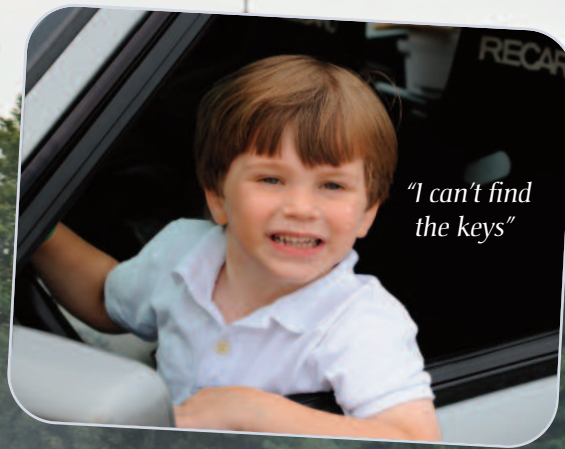


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