

Die Zugspitze

New York Chapter Newsletter | Fall 2017

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***The allure
of Dine&Shine...***



The New York Chapter BMW CCA “Go Green i-NITIATIVE”

Starting in 2018, our newsletter, *Die Zugspitze*, will be distributed in digital format unless you opt-in to the printed version. With money saved from costs associated with printing and mailing, additional funds will be available to provide you, our members, with more events!

The next issue will be the last you receive in the mail, unless you opt-in to the print newsletter. You will receive an email from BMW CCA announcing the change with instructions to select your newsletter preference. Your choice will not effect Roundel, which is available only in print.

Please contact the chapter with any questions or comments. To register an address for uninterrupted newsletter delivery in either digital or print form, visit www.bmwcca.org or call 1-800-878-9292.

Have an idea for an event? Please email us at events@nybmwcca.org

New York Chapter 2017 Events Calendar

March	11	24th Annual Beach Party
April	9	Driving School: NJMP Lightning
	15	New York International Auto Show
May	8-9	Driving School: Watkins Glen
June	4	Rallye BMW Show
	11	Dine & Shine
	18	Dine & Shine (rain date)
September	10	Wine & Shine
	17	Wine & Shine (rain date)
	24	Old Westbury Concours d'Elegance
October	1	Concours d'Elegance (rain date)
December		Holiday Party

For more information, go to www.nybmwcca.org
or see the Chapter's Facebook page

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On the Cover : View from the deck at Alure Restaurant overlooking the Port of Egypt Marina in Southold, LI, with Peconic Bay and Shelter Island in the distance, at the 2017 Dine&Shine NY Chapter event.
Photo by Jerry Goldstein

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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- Partial and complete restorations, overseeing work which is not done in-house, such as painting, upholstery and rechromin

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.



Race car preparation:

- Installation of roll bars, harnesses, racing seats, fire systems and other safety devices
- Suspension modification, such as coil-over conversions, larger sway bars and urethane bushings
- Chassis stiffening and reinforcement: Bolt-on engine modifications, such as cams, cold-air boxes, exhaust systems and larger radiators
- Fuel cell installation
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President's Page | Mike Bizzarro



It's that time of year again, when we reach out to all of you to find the next group of members with aspirations to lead the Chapter to new heights. I am of course referring to the Call for Nominations to the New York Chapter board. The positions available for candidate nominations are President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. (President and Treasurer candidates must have previously held a board

position.) Nominations and candidacy statements can be submitted digitally to nominations@nybmwcca.org or mailed to New York BMW CCA, PO Box 102, Williston Park, NY 11596 and must be received no later than October 25th to make the next newsletter publication. Of course, if a board leadership position isn't your cup of tea, we are always looking for new volunteers to help us host events. If at any time, you would like to help or have an idea for an event you would like to host, please e-mail board@nybmwcca.org.

Speaking of board positions, please join me in wishing a congratulations and fond farewell to Ludwig Willisch, who has retired as President and CEO of BMW of North America, LLC. For over two decades Ludwig has done everything from sales, marketing and distribution to being a brand ambassador and mentor to the upcoming teams – even racing historic BMWs in the Rolex Monterey vintage races. His many contributions to the marque, including those while President of BMW M GmbH, have shaped the brand we all know and love today. We're sad to see him go, but thank him for his work and wish him the best of luck in his retirement. Hopefully that means less business and more track time.

Another special thank you goes out to all the members who attended the first ever Beers, Brats, and BMWs Benefit. Your contributions are helping to raise awareness and fund research to find a cure for Prader-Willi Syndrome.

Just one more reminder, be sure to drink your Ovaltine... I mean, update your e-mail address with National (www.bmwcca.org) to continue receiving the digital version of our newsletter. Only one more issue to go before we switch to digital delivery for our Going Green i-NITIATIVE.

2018 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 102, Williston Park, NY 11596 or via email: nominations@nybmwcca.org.

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 25, 2017.

New York Chapter BMW CCA By-Laws can be downloaded here: <http://www.nybmwcca.org/bylaws>

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of America
New York Chapter



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All Things Aftermarket

The Importance of Balance in Performance

by Mitchell Frischer



If you're up on all news BMW and MINI related, then you may have heard a couple of very interesting things by now. First is the upcoming, brand new Z4. Finally, BMW is getting it's feet wet in the department of not needing to make more power if you lose some weight!

The Z4 was never really a "rival" to the Porsche Boxster, but it looks like that's about to change! Reportedly the new Z4 is going to shed between 200-500 lbs from the outgoing model by way of losing the folding hardtop, rear wheel steering and other weight-saving measures. Their goal is to have the car weigh in between 3000-3200 lbs. In comparison, the Boxster weighs just under 3000 lbs with a manual transmission and slightly more with an automatic. There will be three engine options by way of two 4-cylinder versions, one being a 248hp turbo variant that will likely be the only one offered here in the U.S. There are reports that the heavier version will enjoy the turbocharged inline 6-cylinder engine making 320hp with an optional "competition package" that, amongst other things, will raise the power to 360hp. Not too shabby and suddenly a viable competitor to the Boxster, which has largely outsold the Z4.



You're probably saying to yourself "these engines are already available in other BMW cars", which is true. The big news is the weight savings, because anyone who understands the basic principles of physics knows that power-to-weight ratios are more important than mere HP numbers. This is great news for enthusiasts who've longed for a more competitive Z4!

Now, we all know there are many options to bump power up on either of these engines since they're both turbocharged with simple bolt-ons and a tune. Imagine a 3200 lb Z4 that's lightly modded making over 400hp! Not too shabby, right? Watch out Porsche! You've dominated this market segment long enough and it's time for BMW to return to its roots, which is exactly what they're doing. It'll only be a matter of time before we start seeing these new Z4's on racetracks and autocross events everywhere. I, for one am excited to see the outcome of it all and from the

various renderings anyone can find online the Z4 will be a much edgier and aggressive-looking car too. Ahhh...the anticipation! I hope you're reading this BMW NA, as I would love to get my

hands on one for a solid and thorough review!

Which brings me to the next bit of news by way of the M2 purportedly coming out with a new competition package of its own. This will fit nicely between the standard M2 and the upcoming M2 CS that many people are waiting for. If we look at the cost of other competition packages (like the M4) the price is around \$4750 and even less for the convertible M4. If BMW pulls this off it will be a tremendous seller and perhaps they'll even offer a "retrofit competition package" for existing M2's that will keep the factory warranty intact. While no specific details have been disclosed as of this writing, we can only assume that it should offer more power, potential weight savings, and perhaps suspension and brake upgrades as well. Way to go BMW! It's our time to shine and once again regain the footing in the truest form of "The Ultimate Driving Machine". Perhaps reviving that slogan wouldn't be such a bad idea either!

With just these two pieces of news I find the future as a BMW and MINI enthusiast to be incredibly promising. Now, as a MINI owner I just wish they'd come out with a "competition package" for the Cooper S that goes far beyond that of the John Cooper Works Package. Shed some weight, tweak the suspension and brakes while adding enough HP to bring it up to the 300+ level so it'd be a viable contender to the STi, Focus RS, Civic Type 'R' and other such cars. I can see it coming, as it's inevitable! For all the tuning companies out there; pay attention as these cars are always engineered to take "more" and many will be looking for it. The future is exciting and I'm embracing it fully. Hope you are as well!

Seventh Annual NYBMW CCA
Dine & Shine
June 25, 2017



“Oh Say Can You See”

by Steve Geraci with photos by Jerry Goldstein

Another great day on the North Fork of Long Island for the many members who motored east to Pindar Vineyard and Winery for a bit of dining and shining, though not necessarily in that order.

Whether wandering around the vineyards or sitting in the tasting room, it's always a great way to unwind on a summer Sunday. No pressure, just BMW owners showing off their rides. This year we were treated to several notable BMW's both new and old, starting with a rarely seen Z8, a super clean 850i, a new Alpina B7, an awesome M5 in black, and the latest version of the M2, wearing motorsport colors, courtesy of Competition Imports.

Before leaving Pindar and heading east to Alure Restaurant in Southold for lunch, I offered each driver a chance to participate in a fun rally. With a different route

created each year, along a carefully mapped-out course, drivers and their passengers are asked to answer simple questions about what they have seen along the way. It starts at the winery and ends at the restaurant in Southold. Since it was the weekend before the Fourth of July, this year's rally was titled “Oh Say Can You See” and asked participants to also count the number of American flags displayed along the route.

Alure Restaurant is located adjacent to a beautiful marina with a spectacular view of the Peconic Bay and Shelter Island to the south. By special arrangement with the owners, our group had exclusive use of the open-air covered deck overlooking the marina. Aside from the views, the seafood there is great too!

After all the cars had arrived at the restaurant and the lunch orders taken, winners of each of the categories in



the People's Choice car show at Pindar were presented with a bottle of Pindar wine of their choice. Next, we presented the prizes to the winners of the fun rally. This year our Trophy Queen was my 4-year old granddaughter, Cameron. She presented awards in several meaningful categories, with the coveted "Golden Winged Roller Skate" given to the first car to arrive at the restaurant, and the "Silver Snail" to the last car to arrive. Other awards included authorized BMW items such as coffee mugs, caps, etc., for the teams with the most correct answers in several categories of the rally.

Next year, take a Sunday off from mowing the lawn and take a leisurely drive out east and join in the fun. Who knows, you might take home some great memories...and the "Silver Snail".

See color photos on inside back cover.

A blast from the past

by Steve Geraci

2017 marks the 13th anniversary of one of the New York Chapter's most well-respected and attended events in the history of the BMW Car Club, Street Survival. Street Survival is exactly what it says, a young driver program aimed at teenagers who are about to, or who have just received, their driver's license. It provides them with a host of driver safety techniques that convey valuable life-saving skills when presented with a dangerous situation behind the wheel.

The only New York Chapter event that has run longer without interruption is our very popular Beach Party in February, hosted by our long-standing chapter Technical Advisor, Mike Schiffer.

Founded by, and still run by long-standing chapter board member Matt Brod in 2004, Street Survival has been the model for many other BMW chapters and other car clubs to follow, and has also been adapted to provide safe driving techniques for adults.

As a sitting board member at that time, I volunteered as an instructor for that first event.

Here is Matt's story published in the July/August 2004 issue.

STREET SURVIVAL

The First Time is The Charm

By Matt Brod

Saturday, June 5th was a great day for teenagers in New York. The NY Chapter of the BMWCCA in conjunction with the BMW Foundation and all the associated sponsors hosted a teen drivers' program at Nassau Coliseum.

This was the first time the NY Chapter has done this type of event, and as the Chairman for this event, I had my hands full. Let's just say that when I cleared all the Street Survival E-mails out of my inbox my usage on a 10gig service went from 35% to 11%.

With the help of all the volunteers that showed up to teach and administer this event it was a resounding success. The students started the day with a "Classroom"



session where I spoke about several important topics relating to car control and the physics of traction. At one point I thought I was going to freeze up, but when I saw that people were actually paying attention to what I said and not sleeping, I rallied and hit my stride. We also discussed proper seating and hand position with practical demonstrations.



We matched the students to instructors based on several factors. The pairings seemed to work very well. The students were broken up into 4 groups and each group would repeat one of the 4 training sections for approximately 25 minutes. The four sections were a slalom, Figure 8, lane change and sweeping turn. Each section demonstrated different challenges to the drivers. With thoughtful instruction they were smoother and safer through each one.

At 12:30 we broke for lunch. Everyone ate well and

rested as the Fire trucks rolled in. FIRETRUCKS? Yes, part of



the program was to prepare our new drivers for a reduced traction situation so when the snow falls this winter, they will have a clue as to how to handle their cars. So after a small problem with one of the trucks (I broke it by blasting the sirens too much) we got about 3000 gallons of water on the course throughout the day. As you can see these fire trucks have reach.

The students were able to see the effects of the water on their level of traction right away. I know that they will have a new respect for Slippery When Wet signs. The program ended at 3:00 PM with a closing meeting to discuss what we learned for the day and to "Talk them down" from the adrenaline rush of driving those cars and trucks at and past the limit.



There was such a positive review of the program and such an interest from the attending parents that the Board is looking into an ALL AGES Driver's safety pro-



gram. Special Thanks goes out to all the instructors that rode double duty on the Figure 8, aka. the barf-o-tron



Formula E in New York City

Story and photos
by Andrew Stumacher



*See color photos on
back cover.*

The future of auto racing has arrived in Brooklyn, NY. On July 15 and 16th the city of New York held this historical racing event, sanctioned by the FIA, the first of its kind within the five boroughs. Formula E's founder Alejandro Agag had long dreamed of a race in New York City and, with his team, spent over a year looking for a suitable venue. They found that venue at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal in Red Hook with a backdrop of the Statue of Liberty and lower Manhattan.

The event was a huge success with the crowds, so much so that the city granted a 10-year contract with the electric racing series. Formula E ran two consecutive race days, as it does at each venue, with DS Virgin Racing taking home winning trophies on both days. Racing fans from all boroughs came together to view these innovative race cars and to catch a glimpse of the drivers that include the likes of Nelson Piquet Jr, Nick Heidfeld, Sebastien Buemi, and others, many of whom have previously raced in Formula One. The race attracted many of New York City's elite, as well as many celebrity attendees such as Michael Douglas, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Chris Helmsworth.

Since its inception in 2012, the Formula E series has been growing in popularity due to its green effort and for its low team operating cost, attracting both Audi and Jaguar, who were participants this season. With the extremely high cost of involvement in top-tier racing events, it is no wonder why

manufacturers have been looking for alternatives. BMW pulled out of Formula One in 2009 to focus on less expensive racing series, and more recently Porsche and Mercedes announced they are pulling out of the 24 hours of LeMans and DTM racing series, respectively. And with countries such as Britain banning the sale of new diesel and petrol cars from 2040 forward, it makes sense for manufacturers to allocate their resources into electric technology. This was enough to persuade Mercedes and Porsche to announce that they will be entering the 2019/2020 Formula E series.

BMW will be entering sooner for the 2018/2019 series as a works team with Andretti Autosport. In this role, BMW will be in charge of powertrain development and run their first all-electric racing drivetrain within the Andretti chassis. Before this announcement, BMW had already been very involved in the Formula E series. Since its inaugural season in 2014, BMW has employed several race-modified cars in the series including an i8 as the official Safety car, an i3 Medical car, and an X5 Xdrive 40e Rescue car.

With top auto manufacturers coming together with other leading companies in sustainable energy, it is safe to say that Formula E is here to stay, and may one day hold the top tier spot in auto racing that F1 currently holds.

Welcome to our New Members!

Adil Ahsanuddin	Irving Contreras	Choquette Graham	Steve Larit	William Rombauts
Alden Almedilla	Samantha Davidson	Ryan Gravesande	Matt Leonard	Alexander Rossini
Andres Alvarez	Stacy Dennis	Adam Greenberg	Rick LePore	Kevin Segreti
Elliott Andersen	Giovanni DePietro	Paul Greenberg	Chris Libardi	Daryl Sewgobind
Marc Balthrop	Benjamin Dobreuenaski	Noel Greenstein	Michael Lowery	Kenneth Sewgobind
Brenden Banks	Michael Dolin	Corey Gresko	Daniel Mackay	Kamil Slazak
Christian Barrett	Fred Donner	Stephen Grocher	Simon Malian	Devin Staudt
George Bates	Michael Donner	Perry Guarracino	Jeffrey Markowitz	Sud Subrahmanyan
John Bellizzi	Jacob Edwards	Dale Hanley	Michael Marmorale	Greg Sullivan
Kevin Blewitt	Jeffrey Einhorn	Raymond Harris	Gianluca Marotta	Ralson Thompson
Carl Bombara	Karl Emigholz	Taha Hatab	Percy McAfee	Herbert Toler
Vincent Bonomo	Neil Erbesh	Tyler Heinz	Benjamin Messing	Ian Trombley
Kaylee Bowman	Vidal Erbesh	Braeden Henry	Trevor Mohr	Roberto Vargas
James Bradshaw	Greg Evans	Miguel Heredia	Frank Mueller	Erlin Velasquez
Jeff Bressler	Rob Fenstermacher	Hasib Hossain	Frasher Muruchi	Dennis Vetrano
Wayne Brown	Faris Fetyani	William Hsu	Paul Ng	Mario Villamizar
Dana Brussel	Rami Fetyani	A. Islam	Steven Odrich	Preston Wolf
David Burnett	Fernando Figueras	Alton Johnson	Willem Oswald	Lance Yudkin
Andrew Campagnola	Diane Fitzgerald	Kenneth Johnson	Michele Pascucci	Karl Yung
Chris Carpentieri	Robert Gantzer	Maxine Johnson	Scott Pascucci	Jeffrey Zalkin
Bobby Carrig	Rob Gill	Alex Kaliontzakis	Elliott Phipps	Qi Zhang
Juan Casas	Alexander Ginis	Brandon Kaplan	Rudin Pistoli	Yuhao Zhao
Partha Chakraverty	David Gomes	Lorraine Karten	Robert Pivec	
Michael Charles	Matthew Gomes	Mark Karten	Yaroslav Presman	
Andy Chen	Frank Gournelos	Ed Katzen	Marc Reich	
Colleen Clarke		Andrzej Laczek	Roger Rice	

And a salute to our long standing members!

Anniversary milestones for members who joined between April and June

5th Anniversary	Sundaram Ravikumar	Demetrius Mossaidis	William Graham	Lawrence Ohlmann	Over 40 Years!
Dayan Abeyaratne	Benjamin Spector	Kurt Nossan	Larry Groskin	Karl Ruhry	Peter Alp
Melissa Barreto	Jay Yook	Pete Pasciucco	Maher Kader	Charles Scott	Kevin Bange
Edwin Cord-Cruz	10th Anniversary	Henry Pierre-Louis	John Levonick	25th Anniversary	Steven Cappel
Richard Dziedziula	Jay Alexander	Joseph Rinaldi	Howard McVitie	Jay Beckerman	Stephen Carney
George Engel	Emanuel Almeida	Harold Sachs	Richard Moritz	Augusto Limjoco	Neal Feldman
Michael Escue	Charles Ange	Robert Segal	Howard Paley	30th Anniversary	Burton Fleming
James Forde	Amy Bettan	John Woelz	Richard Pulsonetti	Joseph Batelich	John Ganey
John Fredsall	Pat Blewitt	Wendy Yip	David Raines	Stephen Herman	Steve Geraci
Matthew Guarracino	Barbara Clayton	15th Anniversary	Gregory Robbins	Brian McCarthy	Charles Greenel
Maxim Kakhovsky	William Clayton	John Agoglia	Gary Santoro	Walter Selva	Neal Gronich
Oleg Kaplun	Athanasios Damis	Steven Amato	Dumitru Serban	Dale Traub	Bill Hedberg
Paul Kastell	Christian Davidson	Sy Aryeh	Frank Tuminelli	Robert Wechsler	Christopher McGuinness
Katrina Klumper	Charles DeLuca	David Brown	Veronica Veras	35th Anniversary	Matthew Meng
David Koval	Jason Farkas	David Brown	Jon Walsh	John Chu	Seymour Mogal
Andre Magduke	Kenneth Gan	Joseph Campanella	Thomas Wang	George Conley	John Schroeder
Philip Marano	Michael Golia	Kathryn Caulfield	Jeffrey Wells	Robert Donadt	Gerald Stoller
Robert Meditz	Marty Halper	David Corr	Henry Yam	John Lipsky	Karl Topp
Paul Mertens	Mark Hampton	Victor Dusovic	Victor Yim	Rod Luccioni	Curtis Vanvalkenburgh
Thomas Moravcik	Edmund Hwee	Norman Escoffery	20th Anniversary	Manuel Matnick	Jim Wiggins
Denise Noble	Andrew Lok	Bradley Fischman	Thomas Barone	Selwyn Prince	45 Years!!
Daniel Pijuan	Wendy Lok	Fred Friedman	Nicholas Carmi	Robert Sass	Stuart Rosenthal
Enrique Pijuan	Richard Marchisotto	Alan Fruchtman	Wyndham Chow	Jonathan Spira	
Marusia Popovech		Garrett Fruchtman	Roman Khodosh		
		Franklin Gittes			



Ramblings of a MINIac

by Peter Burke

I hope everyone had a great summer, and enjoyed the various auto shows on the Island. My favorite is Oak

Beach/Captree Sunday Mornings. Not to mention the Labor Day Weekend Lime Rock Historic Festival. And the Great Marques of Long Island Concours d'Elegance MINI corral is the best!

Good news for MINI, the new generation Countryman (UKL2 platform) has been given the Top Safety pick by the IIHS. Note that the model that earned this award was equipped with optional front crash prevention system. Not that a Countryman without the system didn't do too shabby, scoring well in all five categories. The Countryman also received a top five-star rating in the Euro NCAP crash test.

MINI USA has done something to make MINI ownership a little easier. There is a limited edition MINI Cooper hardtop on sale called the Oxford Edition that is aimed at students and recent grads. The MSRP is \$19,750, and includes all of the standard features found on the Cooper plus upgraded 17-inch wheels, automatic or manual transmission and heated seats as well as premium paint and an anthracite headliner. The value of these options alone is worth \$3,750 on a regular Cooper, and sources indicate the car is available to all buyers for \$21,600 without the student/grad discount. Kudos to MINI USA for making an entry level MINI available again.

More positive news for MINI: JD Power has awarded the MINI Clubman the top pick in compact car and the MINI Cooper (3-door hatch) top pick in compact sporty car categories. Overall MINI gained more than 30 points from last year's JD Power survey, tying with Jaguar in ninth place, with a total score of 838 points.



As far as future product news, BMW Group has indicated that by 2025 they expect 15-25% of sales to be from electrified vehicles. MINI will introduce an all-electric Cooper sometime in 2019. The electric MINI will be built in plant Oxford, with the electric drivetrain fabricated in the e-mobility center in Dingolfing and Landshut. Rumors are circulating that this vehicle will have a range of 250 miles. We will get more information in September when BMW Group will be unveiling the MINI E concept at the Frankfurt IAA.

In closing, I hope you all enjoy your fall motoring and hope to see you out there on the twisties! All the best.

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TechTalk with Mike Shiffer

Leaks, the kind you can't see

Every car relies on fluids for cooling, lubrication, insulation and power transmission, so every car has nearly a dozen different liquids and gasses that live in systems meant to keep them doing their jobs and not fraternizing with each other. Many of them are under pressure and subject to heat and violent movement.

Given half a chance, a fluid will leave its

assigned location and seek refuge elsewhere. The technical term for this undesirable yet understandable tendency is "Leak".

Engineers put enormous effort into designing hose and pipe connections, seals, gaskets and hardware that discourage leaks, but corrosion, fatigue, decay, the outgassing of plasticizers and the determination of fluids to make you crazy are irresistible over time. Eventually, everything that can leak, will.

This column is about gasses, and your car contains (or tries to contain) quite a few.

Air is a biggie. Compressed inside tires and air suspensions, it holds your car off the ground and makes the ride smooth by absorbing much of the vertical motion generated by unevenness in the road surface. When a tire leaks, it is most often due to a screw or nail stuck through the tread. Less frequently, air can slip out between the tire and rim. This happens when the tire doesn't seal properly after it has just been mounted, when the wheel is deformed from hitting a pothole, or from corrosion. Tire valves can also leak through the tip or around the base where they seat in the rim. Once in a great while, a wheel will become porous and air will leak right through the metal.

Air suspension systems develop leaks at the bags that take the place of springs at each wheel. If a bag is leaking slowly, the only clue may be that the car is noticeably lower on one corner, side or end. Even though the pump may bring the car up to proper ride height, it will be cycling more often to maintain pressure and may burn out if the leak isn't fixed promptly.

Air is also what cools off your engine and transmission, since the liquid coolant and oil give up their heat to the air flowing over the radiator and coolers. It cools you off too, as it passes through the evaporator in your dash which draws heat and moisture from it before it comes out your A/C vents. Warms you up in the winter by absorbing heat from a little radiator and blowing hot onto your grateful toes. Cars direct the air around them by channeling it through ducts, taking advantage of the flow generated by moving, or by drawing it in with fans. If the ducts which direct airflow to the radiator get damaged or displaced, air can bypass the radiator. This can cause the engine to run hot and in some cases overheat.

As you drive, air enters your fuel tank as fuel leaves it. (If it doesn't, your car will act as if it has run out of gas because of the vacuum created.) This air is rich in hydrocarbons from the fuel underneath it evaporating. The tank is vented to a carbon filter, which prevents HCs from entering the atmosphere. The evaporative emission system regularly purges the filter by drawing air through it into the engine to be burned, along with evaporated fuel. Evap systems also have a device that periodically closes the system, pressurizes

it, then measures the time it takes for the pressure to drop. If it doesn't build pressure or the pressure drops too quickly, you will see the dreaded "Check Engine" light. Then somebody like me will need to find the leak or replace the evap pump.

The most complex and closely contained system that uses air is the engine itself. Air is burned, and the amount the engine consumes is carefully measured in order to meter the correct amount of fuel to make a combustible mixture. If the intake tract is leaking, the computer will be getting false information and will supply too little fuel, especially at idle. If the leak is large enough, the "check engine" light will come on. Common leak points on BMWs include intake runner (DISA) valves, crankcase breather systems, intake boots, vacuum hoses and on some six cylinder engines, cracked valve covers.

Another gas that makes driving bearable is refrigerant, used in air conditioning systems. (Although refrigerant is a gas at normal temperature and pressure, it is compressed and cooled and turned into a liquid by your A/C system. When forced through a small port in the expansion valve into the evaporator, the liquid becomes a gas again and in the process absorbs a great deal of heat from the air passing by the evaporator and out the vents in the dashboard. The gas runs back to the compressor and the cycle repeats. This is how A/C works.) When your air conditioner seems weak, only works on one side of the dash and/or makes strange gurgling noises, you most likely have lost some refrigerant. If the front of the car has been damaged, the condenser may be leaking. It lives right in front of the radiator and can be punctured by road debris, or even by other components near it, if a collision has caused stuff to get rearranged. Other common leak points are the service ports, which are used to charge the system and measure its pressure, the compressor, hose connections and the expansion valve. A/C leaks can be difficult to find, so we often add dye to the refrigerant in a system which over time will leave a visible stain at any leak point.

The last gas common to all combustion engines is exhaust. It leaves the engine hot and dirty, gets examined for its oxygen content, gets even hotter passing through the catalytic converters which burn whatever is left in it that can burn, gets checked for oxygen again so the engine management can see if the cats are working, bounces around in the mufflers which quiet it down, then exits out the tailpipe: cooler, cleaner and quieter than when it entered. Leaks in modern exhaust systems are rare, as systems are heavier and better designed than they used to be. Still, bolts that hold the pipes together rust away and mufflers can be punctured or removed completely by road debris. In modern cars, exhaust leaks are less dangerous than in older, carbon monoxide-rich cars, but still need to be dealt with. They will cause air to enter the exhaust, which can throw off the oxy sensor readings and cause the computer to call for the check engine light when it realizes something fishy is going on.

Next column, I will describe the far more visible and messy results of liquid leaks. 🚗

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