

# Die Zugspitze

New York Chapter Newsletter | Spring 2017

[www.nybmwcca.org](http://www.nybmwcca.org)



Announcing the New York Chapter's  
**"Go Green i-NITIATIVE"**  
See page 19

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New York Chapter  
**2017 Events Calendar**

March	11	25th Annual Beach Party
<b>April</b>	9	<b>Driving School: NJMP Lightning</b>
	15	<b>New York International Auto Show</b>
<b>May</b>	8-9	<b>Driving School: Watkins Glen</b>
<b>June</b>	4	<b>Rallye BMW Show</b>
	11	<b>Dine &amp; Shine</b>
	18	<b>Dine &amp; Shine (rain date)</b>
<b>September</b>	10	<b>Wine &amp; Shine</b>
	17	<b>Wine &amp; Shine (rain date)</b>
	24	<b>Old Westbury Concours d'Elegance</b>
<b>October</b>	1	<b>Concours d'Elegance (rain date)</b>
<b>December</b>		<b>Holiday Party</b>

For more information, go to [www.nybmwcca.org](http://www.nybmwcca.org)  
 or see the Chapter's Facebook page

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**On the Cover** : *Photo courtesy Halhsin Auto Style*

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#### Get your tickets now...

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### New York International Auto Show Saturday, April 15th

Attendees of the 2017 New York International Auto Show MUST purchase tickets in advance from the Jacob Javits Center website [www.autoshowny.com](http://www.autoshowny.com) (\$17.00 adults, \$7.00 children under 12)

Email your Name, Club ID number, and your guests's name (limit of three each per member/associate member) to [autoshow@nybmwcca.org](mailto:autoshow@nybmwcca.org). Your name will be on the list at the entrance.

Arrive at the North Concourse lower doorway of the Javits Center (10th Ave between 37th & 38th Street) by 8:15 a.m on Saturday April 15th.

Bring your BMW CCA Club ID; you will need to show it in order to enter the event.

**\*\* The event starts at 9:00 a.m. If you arrive late you will not be able to attend the show.\*\***

**PLEASE, AS GUESTS OF BMW USA, PLEASE HAVE THE COURTESY TO REMAIN WITHIN THE EXHIBIT FOR THE ENTIRE PRESENTATION.**

# President's Page | Mike Bizzarro



It seems this year even Mother Nature couldn't wait to see our cars back out on the road. Those 70°+ February days were great motivation to finish up the winter projects and start cruising. Little jealous of those SoCal guys for whom this is the norm, but then again, we get snowy opportunities to practice car control that they don't. Obviously on a closed course under proper supervision... or if you

happen to be somewhere in Mexico.

While we're discussing a little Global Warming, you may have noticed our newsletter cover banner announcing the chapter's 'Go Green i-NITIATIVE'. The play on words is not just because we are working towards a cleaner environment and discontinuing the print edition of the newsletter (see page 19). It's a bit of a teaser as this year we will help celebrate the BMW i brand and their involvement in Formula E, specifically at this July's ePrix in Brooklyn. While I can't give away any details yet, I can tell you we will be teaming up with BMW NA and the New Jersey chapter to host some exciting events around this innovative race series.

We have another special team-up happening this year too. For our annual Watkins Glen High Performance Driving Event, not only will the Patroon chapter be joining us, but the Del Valley chapter as well! With a wealth of fellow club members and instructors you may not have had the opportunity to meet or work with yet, this will surely be a great opportunity not to miss!

Our new Reader's Rides section has been a big hit and we've received a great number of submissions. They have almost all, however, been about new cars. We would like to alternate the spotlight a bit to some of the icons of the past as well as the modern day works of art. If you have one of these hidden gems, now's your chance to share your story. I happen to know there's at least one of you with a few Alpina's in the garage...

Before signing off for this issue, I need to take a moment to answer the most frequently asked question... yes, Autocross will return! We are in talks with several venues and are confident we will have a new home soon. More information will be published as we finalize contracts. This also means Street Survival will be returning to teach the next generation of drivers how to safely handle their vehicles and all the responsibilities driving on public roadways imparts. When it occurs, we'll be counting on many of you to volunteer for this valuable program.

Until then, get those rides shined up and we'll see you at the next event!

**Contributors wanted!** Remember your first 2002? Have a BMW that's been in the family for generations? Want to share a funny anecdote about teaching someone to drive a stick, or a project car that just never seems to get finished? Send us your stories and photos and we may publish them in the Chapter newsletter. Send submissions to [newsletter@nybmwcca.org](mailto:newsletter@nybmwcca.org)

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



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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.



## Race car preparation:

- Installation of roll bars, harnesses, racing seats, fire systems and other safety devices
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BMW CCA New York Chapter Presents

# The 7th Annual Dine & Shine

Sunday, June 11th 2017

BMW Car Club  
of America  
New York Chapter



The Dine & Shine is back by popular demand. We will gather at Pindar Vineyards for our usual Clean Car competition, and then off to ALure Restaurant in Southold for lunch on the deck overlooking Peconic Bay and Shelter Island. Between venues, you will have the opportunity to participate in one of our famous, fun rallies. Anyone can request a set of questions that

must be answered along the route from Pindar Vineyards in Peconic to ALure Restaurant in Southold. Winners of the Clean Car competition and the rally will be awarded a bottle of Pindar wine and a fabulous prize to be determined by the Chapter.

### Event times:

Arrive Pindar Vineyard 10:00-11:00 AM  
Leave Pindar Vineyard approx. 1:00 PM  
Arrive ALure Restaurant in Southold 1:30 PM  
Leave ALure Restaurant approx. 3:30 PM

### All members MUST REGISTER ON-LINE at [www.nybmwcca.org/shine](http://www.nybmwcca.org/shine)

If the event is canceled because of weather, the rain date is the following Sunday, June 18th.

**Lunch is optional**, but all members will receive a 10% discount.

### CHECK ALURE WEBSITE FOR LUNCH MENU

### For more information,

contact Event Chairperson Steve Geraci:  
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BMW Car Club  
of America  
New York Chapter



NY BMWCCA High Performance Driving School  
NEW JERSEY MOTORSPORTS PARK  
Lightning Course  
Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup> 2017

With **Spring** just around the corner, it's time to dust off those driving cob webs and get ready for an amazing driving season! That being said, the New York Chapter will be hosting a **High Performance Driving School at New Jersey Motorsports Lightning** track on **Sunday April 9<sup>th</sup>** to satisfy the needs of all adrenaline junkies. This event will cater to **Advanced Solo** drivers along with **Student** run groups from **Novice thru Advanced** and give you the opportunity to experience the performance capabilities of your car. Student run groups will have in car instruction. As in the past, we will be ordering excellent warm sunny weather for the school! Lunch will be provided for Instructors.

The 1.9 mile Northern Circuit, **Lightning**, is a challenging fast 10 corner circuit featuring some of the most interesting and dramatic corners and elevation changes in the park. We have Instructors ready to guide you through another amazing track session at an **exceptional value of \$240 for BMWCCA members and \$270 for non-members**. Please note that the additional \$30 for non-members will automatically make them club members for one year, commencing the week prior to the event.

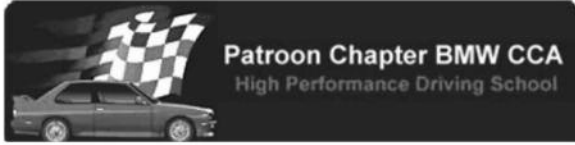
Registration is on [www.motorsportreg.com](http://www.motorsportreg.com) or via the link on our Chapter website [www.nybmwcca.org](http://www.nybmwcca.org)



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We will be having our traditional student run groups, **Novice** thru **Advanced**, with our **Advanced Solo** drivers sharing the track with the **Instructors** during their on-track sessions.

*There will NOT be dedicated Open Track group for this event, but as always, Experienced & Advanced students are eligible for sign-offs per the opinion of your Instructor.*

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**For additional information and to register, please visit our website, [www.nybmwcca.org](http://www.nybmwcca.org) or contact Mike Allen at: [jbmike@aol.com](mailto:jbmike@aol.com)**



# Reader's Ride

## Going Rogue

Female Owned. Daily Driven. Táí R, who hails from Long Island, New York, holds the crown of New York's BMW Princess. She is one of the many few to own and operate BMW's newest machine in the M lineup. Táí is the proud owner of a 2016 BMW M2 in Long Beach Blue Metallic with double-clutch transmission and executive package, which she named Rogue.

We were able to catch up with Táí and have a one-on-one interview with the BMW Princess herself to learn all about her and Rogue the M2.

**Mr. B:** "Congratulations on owning the M2! Tell me about the M2?"

**Táí:** "I am going to be pretty biased, the M2 is hands down my favorite BMW of all time. I love the drive and the handling. It has 365 horsepower and goes 0-60 in 4.1 seconds. I chose the M2 due to the fact that it is the successor of the 1M, which I could not get my hands on. My first BMW was a 2007 328xi (E90) and then I got Bullet, the 2015 Glacier Silver 228xi. I ordered the M2 from BMW of Freeport in February/March of 2016 and the long-awaited

delivery was August 28, 2016. During those months I had purchased all my car parts, from the gloss black M2 emblem to the BMW M performance parts. I was just patiently waiting for Rogue the M2 to be delivered.

**Mr. B:** "The people want to know, well just me, why did you name your car Rogue and what does it mean?"

**Táí:** "The concept of Rogue the M2 is developed based off my attitude towards everyday life and social norms, which is being "society's rebel." Fun fact I have "society's rebel" tattooed on my arm. Rogue is all about going against the norm and not caring about being socially accepted or belonging. One thing for sure is that the car world is a man's world. For me, building this M2 meant showing the car community that a woman has the dedication, talent and heart to put together a serious build."

**Mr. B:** "What did you do to your car that brings the name Rogue to life?"

**Táí:** "On day one of getting the keys, I dropped Rogue off at Exclusive Vinyl in Bellmore, NY. People told me don't wrap the roof just leave it body color. I wrapped the roof gloss black. They told me to do the front and rear reflectors body color because that's what everybody else does. You know what I did? I got the reflectors in gloss black. They said get springs, I got the BMW M Performance coilovers. They said just get downpipes, I got the BMW M Performance exhaust.



the M2 "



Even as something as simple as what color I should get for the Eventuri Intake System. Everyone said get black or blue, I chose the yellow Kevlar. As you can see Rogue is not about what the majority does in life. I don't want to look like everybody else on the road."

**Mr. B:** "Tell me about these wheels because I have never seen anything like this. They are absolutely amazing. Why did you choose Elite Design Concepts?"

**Tái:** "When you sit around for months waiting for your car to be delivered, choosing wheels is a major decision to make. I had a wheel concept of directional-style wheels with the Long Beach Blue painted in the wheel. There were several wheel companies contacting me regarding setting up my new M2 with some shoes. I told them the wheel concept I had and I got shut down. They all told me they wouldn't be

able to paint the Long Beach Blue but to choose one of the directional style wheels on their website. That was a no for me. I then was able to connect with Vinnie Budhram from Elite Design Concepts. What I love about EDC is that no two wheels are the same and each set of wheels is personalized to the build. I told Vinnie what I wanted and he told me "challenge accepted." The 20" EDC Classic-D Wheels were born! The wheels are three-pieced forged style and have a carbon fiber face, black chrome lip, Long Beach Blue rivets with Pirelli PZero Neros. These wheels are definitely a head turner everywhere I go.

**Mr. B:** "What are your plans for Rogue the M2 in 2017?"

**Tái:** "Rogue will definitely be hitting the track at some of the NY BMW CCA events and ready to be a showstopper at the car shows. I have already attended my first car show with Rogue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the Elite Tuner Eurofest. We won the top 30 Euro cars and that is where we also debuted the EDC Classic-D Wheels. Rogue will be getting some new mods this summer, but you just have to wait and see."

Well that is all folks! Táí is an absolute pleasure to chat with and that M2 definitely fits her personality.

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# All Things Aftermarket

## The Rest is History

by Mitchell Frischer

Remember when driving a car required skill? When two of the exact same cars lined up against each other left driver input and know-how to determine the outcome of the race? Boy, do I miss those days!

Fewer and fewer cars are available with the option of a manual transmission these days. When it comes to European cars available in the U.S., the choices even less so. I, for one prefer a manual transmission as I feel it gives the driver more control of the vehicle. My MINI Cooper S (R53) is a blast to drive! I can't imagine it without a manual gearbox. The good news is BMW/MINI cars still have them available on models like the M3/M4 and many other models. A family member recently picked up a new 435i with a 6-speed and it's just awesome! When looking at comparable cars, we checked out the Audi S5 and Mercedes C43, neither of which provide the option for a manual (note: the Audi S5 no longer offers one for 2017+) and it's a shame. As good as these cars are, in my opinion they'd be that much better and more fun with a manual transmission. Given that, the options were then limited to only BMW (out of the 3 marques) and cars like Ferrari and others, where older manual transmission cars are commanding a premium in the used market. It's easy to see that this niche still has a good audience.

I recently read that less than 18% of American drivers know how to drive a true manual. That's just sad. I learned how to drive on one (a 1963 Corvette with a 4-speed) and it laid the groundwork for my enthusiasm and desire to master driving a car with a real clutch pedal. Just today I was at a traffic light with two Nissan GTR's in front of me. They both launched from the light and it was a dead-tie in the end. This would never have been the case if these cars had clutch pedals. The determining factor would have been driver skill, and I can't help but wonder if these automated manuals are removing not only a serious "fun factor", but also leaving many average drivers thinking and feeling far more skilled than they truly are.

There was a time when racing a car meant always driving a stick shift. Nowadays, not so much. DSG, SMG, DCT, F1, etc. are all monikers we're becoming quite used to hearing. Then again, so are Xbox, PlayStation, etc. I mean, when did driving a car become more akin to playing a video game than actually DRIVING?!? I'll give it up to technology that these new transmissions are faster in every way beyond what a human being can do, but is that truly fun? Some will argue the logic, but to me, faster doesn't always mean better. I suppose if that was the case I wouldn't be driving a MINI but truth is, I didn't buy my car for straight acceleration, I got it for the fun factor. I love downshifting into turns, the way the car sounds between shifts, and having complete control of the vehicle. The manual transmission is a huge part of the driving experience and no automated gearbox without a clutch pedal can replicate that no matter how much faster it operates.

What do you think? Are you prepared for the day when they no longer exist? I certainly am not. I get that more and more people are buying automated gearboxes and it opens the audience to a wider berth of customers, but still – it's not the same. If you've got the opportunity to buy a car with a manual gearbox I say "get em while they last!" because it's only a matter of time before they're gone, like combustion engines. When that day comes everyone will be driving the automotive equivalent of really nice golf carts. I know that sounds archaic and maybe, just maybe I'm showing my age (mid-40's); but until that day comes, I'll always want the ultimate in control, driver input, and fun so the determining factor of spirited driving, or even racing, can be up to me and my skills, not what a computer can do for me. One day I'll look back on this article and "Remember When". In the meantime, I'll take my cars the way they were initially conceived, which is to maximize the true and raw pleasure one can only get with a manual transmission. I hope to have the option available for as long as possible and kudos to BMW/MINI for keeping it alive

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA

# DIE ZUGSPITZE

NEW YORK CHAPTER VOL. 23 NO. 1 1997

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- EuroMeccanica Tech Session
- Wet, Me Worry?
- Club By-Law Changes
- Election Information
- BMW Websites (New Listing!)

*Place : Lake Bridgehampton, aka Turn 5 at Bridgehampton Race Circuit  
Event : Amphi car driver' school and U-boat races*



# A blast from the past

by Steve Geraci

Once again, let's go back to the days when driver schools, now known as High Performance Driver Events (HPDE) were run here on Long Island at the "Nirvana" of race tracks, Bridgehampton Race Circuit, known world-over as a true driver's track.

Twenty years ago, this story appeared in Die Zugspitze in early 1997. That year would be the last season the track would feel wheels scream down the 3,000 ft. straight, high up on a plateau that looked out to the north over Peconic Bay and Robins Island. As you came to the end of that straight and went under the Chevron

## A Novice Returns, Then Splits

by Melanie Coronetz

"What brings you back after eight years?" asked the tech inspector.

I was ready to say, "The weather," but the truth is, I wanted to see if my husband's newest find, a Hartge 6, measured up to my deceased Bavaria. (see the Roundel, Sept. 1988). And I wanted to be part of the absolutely, positively, very last New York Chapter Driver's School at Bridgehampton. (Ahem, aren't they all the very last?)

But, drenched and cold, I ended up in a steaming bubble bath at my Shelter Island home, before my tires ever hit the track. I didn't punk out, mind you, but I received signs from the heavens, and they were not good. Aside from the raging Nor'easter, a bad omen in the form of a peculiar-looking 2002 showed up for tech inspection.

At first I thought it was an amphi-car, so I figured, great! This will float through the puddles. But I got nervous when a guy started pulling off the wheels. Why did I care? Because that was my instructor, and the mutant mobile was the car I was supposed to ride in for the Novice-as-passengers run.

The Black run group lined up, but the 2002 was still under repair. I introduced myself to the instructor. He nodded at the car and at his busy helpers, and told me they weren't quite ready. I don't mean to put words in his mouth, but I bet he meant, "We may never be ready."

Then I saw a boy with a lug wrench securing the front wheel. That was the ultimate sign. I left the Hartge for my Husband, hopped in our 535i, and zipped home, wondering what I might miss, yet thankful, in a way, that I'd never find out.

## An Instructor (Captain) Returns, And Stays

by Steve Geraci

Little did anyone know, but that was the ultimate sign, you see that boy is a member of my pit crew. Though Andrew Geraci, 12 years old, may seem a bit out of place to the casual novice student, he has been involved in track activities for more than half his years. He had crewed for my EMRA GT-3 2002 race team for 5 years and for several years prior as we sorted the car at drivers schools. He has been to every race track in the Northeast and then some, having been a part of over 2 dozen first place sprint race finishes.

As for the other member of my crew, anybody who has attended a drivers school in the past several years knows my older son Douglas as an accomplished instructor who had been my crew chief during those same years.

As for the amphi-car, that's not its name... it's the Tii-tanic, a 1974 2002Tii. Just as some ships have had a few problems on their maiden voyages, our car was on its proverbial "shake-down" cruise. We felt that was appropriate considering the weather conditions. Just for the record, the Tii-tanic ran fine except for a slight over-heating of the main boiler, and I personally veered "off-course" several times and hit a few buoys. But otherwise I made it back to port, I mean the pits, safely.

Next season, the Tii-tanic will be sporting a new paint scheme to replace the gray bottom paint and barnacle effect, with Motorsports colors painted laterally like a ship's waterline.

See you at Lake Bridgehampton.

Bridge, drivers who wanted a bit more excitement resisted the natural urge to brake before the bridge and would keep their foot to the floor, knowing the track elevation dropped out from under them as the track swept to the right. Anyone who's done it knows the rest of the story. It had become an addiction for us, we just couldn't get enough of it.

Though we knew its days were numbered and we had been warned several times the track might close, we never really

took it seriously, or even contemplated what we would do without "our" race track.

Many of our old newsletters are full of articles and accounts of warm sunny days spent challenging the 2.85 mile, thirteen-turn circuit. But on this weekend, it rained heavily all night Friday before Saturday's driver school. Here's a different take on that weekend in late 1996, when the weather was not so cooperative....

# Welcome to our New Members!

John Almond  
Lana Alwari  
Kevin Anglum  
Theresa Bartolotta  
Eugene Bradshaw  
Brendan Butler  
Ivan Carrasquillo  
David Cerbone  
Rex Chuachingco  
Craig Chung  
Fabrizio Coduri  
Miguel Correa  
Bruce Crawford  
Charles Crocco  
Matthew Crowley  
Raymond Dattwyler  
Jesse Davis  
Jennifer Delaney  
Edwin Delasantos  
Louis Dorante  
Gregg Dukofsky  
Jose Figuereo  
Kenneth Fonseca  
Andrew Fox  
Anthony Freglette  
Connie Friedrich

Melissa Fusco  
Richard Garces  
Victor Gaudelli  
Sheldon George  
John Gicking  
Patrick Gordon  
Andrew Gougelmann  
Paul Gousias  
Carlson Guerrier  
John Haglof  
Sukhrob Hasan  
Eli Hazan  
Zak Hillel  
Ashraful Hossain  
Tzuyen Hsu  
Curtis Hughes  
Kallie Kanakos  
Robert Kaufman  
Kristopher Kendall  
Michael Kennedy  
Chris Lando  
Howard Levine  
Marc Levine  
Andrea Lloyd  
Scott Macomber  
Michael Maglio

Christopher Melito  
Jeffrey Meredith  
Merle Merlin  
Joseph Miller  
Christopher Moks  
Doreen Moran  
Darby Moses  
Alexander Mourokh  
Shey Mukundan  
Ronnie Murray  
Rafael Nisimov  
Edmond Nurse  
Evan Omahony  
Anthony Ortega  
Boris Peaker  
Steven Pedolsky  
Alexandra Presti  
Evelyn Preston  
George Psaras  
Romel Punsal  
Rebecca Rawson  
Eric Rehe  
Daniel Restivo  
Bob Rodriguez  
Jay Rufino  
Amir Sadim

Christopher Salvo  
Robert Sands  
Anthony Saoulidis  
Granit Selimaj  
Alexandra Shanteau  
daniel solomito  
Derek Spears  
Marti Spears  
Yolanda Spears  
Brian Squicciarini  
Robert Squicciarini  
Artur Tadevosyan  
Daniel Talassazan  
Geoffrey Turnbull  
Shalom Weberman  
Gregory Wege  
Jahmair Williams  
Randall Yang  
Joseph Yee  
Cheung Y. Yeung  
Mark Zeldin  
Thomas Ziancas  
Paul Zucconi  
Richard Zyta

## And a salute to our long standing members!

Anniversary milestones for members who joined between October and December

### 5th Anniversary

Sameet Ahmed  
Larry Berstein  
Christopher Bruderer  
Rajendra Chandrika  
Damon Crawford  
Michael Davis  
Dawn Dietrich  
Joey Eppedio  
Peter Esguerra  
John Hyman  
Barry Kassoﬀ  
Rick Kennell  
Dan Klar  
Donald Krisowaty  
Adam Lesser  
Bradley Levine  
Elizabeth Levinsohn  
Ken Lippmann  
Carmen Llopiz-Valle  
Jason Manske  
Terrence Mortell  
Berkhan Mustafa  
Chris Peterson

Anthony Protopsaltis  
Michael Prystowsky  
Paul Raiti  
Chris Ryan  
Nick Saltamanikas  
David Schneider  
John Scrimmer  
Sean Senatore  
Avinash Singh  
Wolf Wehner  
Elliot Weitz  
Alexander Wu  
John Yanch  
Daniel Yu  
Alan Zack  
Eitan Zadok

### 10th Anniversary

Albert Belcher  
Eric Blumencranz  
Elizabeth Carson-  
Tompkins  
Michael Castelli  
Jay Creditor  
Tatyana Dubov

Harlan Fischer  
Brad Gruber  
Boris Guzman  
Phillip Harrison  
Donald Heide  
Michael Jermyn  
Michael Madia  
Bill Mar  
Savita Mukherjee  
Sushanta Mukherjee  
James Robinson  
Marcia Rosenberg  
Mithre Sandrasagra  
Brad Schwartz  
Eugene Segall  
Andrew Stumacher  
Bill Stypulkowski  
Victor Trager  
Jorden Weiss

### 15th Anniversary

Neil Brodsky  
Kakau Chan  
Frank Chiachiere  
Judith Epstein

Ron Feinman  
Robert Ferreira  
Jay Goldsmith  
Jeff Goodman  
Gavin Gray  
Jason Mak  
Kevin Markett  
Jorge Mercado  
John Negron  
Robert O'Malley  
John Paton  
Michael Rossen  
Paul Rossen  
Steven Sideratos  
David Wagner  
Jason Wells

### 20th Anniversary

Ernie Feleppa  
Andrew Hershaft  
Gary Langstein  
James Lanzilotta  
Ferdinand Ramos  
Jeffrey Schwartz  
Bob Spyropoulos

Randy Williams

### 25th Anniversary

Gregory Edwards  
Mark Jones  
Kenneth Olsen  
Bedel Saget

### Over 40 Years!

Peter Alp  
Kevin Bange  
Wm Bormann  
Steven Cappel  
Neal Feldman  
Burton Fleming  
Steve Geraci  
Charles Greenel  
Bill Hedberg  
Christopher McGuinness  
Seymour Mogal  
Stuart Rosenthal  
John Schroeder  
Karl Topp

### 45 Years!!

Stuart Rosenthal





# Ramblings of a **MINI**iac

by Peter Burke

## **MINIS & Car Shows**

Folks who know me realize my love for car shows. I have addressed this mania in previous columns; how my dad turned me into a car junkie by the time I was five years old. There are worse vices to be sure, but if one isn't careful the deck won't get stained; plants won't get planted; and sometimes writing this column is delayed to go out of town to see a car show (I confess).

A few weeks ago I travelled down to Philadelphia to the 2017 Auto Show. Though this show may not have the size of the New York show, there is an intimate nature to it (though not on weekends when crowds swell up). New models are spread out on two big floors and access is available to most marques except the usual suspects e.g. Bentley, Rolls, Lamborghini etc.

Naturally I gravitated to the MINI exhibit. In my semi-biased opinion the MINI stand seemed to have a larger than usual amount of foot traffic in its confines. The big draw was the 2017 Countryman, which was completely decked out in the Island Blue metallic paint with a Chesterfield Leather British Oak interior. At the other end of the spectrum was a 2017 MINI JCW Hardtop decked out in a nice Chili Red/Black finish. For some strange reason this model was locked while the "regular" MINIs were open to the public.

Something that I could not help but notice is the growing size of the different MINI models. This has been discussed here as well as on most MINI blogs. Front end shape is dictated by EU pedestrian crash standards and interiors are widening due to safety requirements. The mini MINI concepts, such as the Superleggera and the Rocketman (which may morph into the MINI Vision Next 100 Concept), may bring the waistline of the brand down, if they see the light of day.

By the time this issue of Die Zugspitze reaches your mailbox it will be time for road trips and outdoor car shows. Hope to see you out there. See you at Javits Center and Greenwich to name a few. All the best folks. Enjoy the ride!





## TechTalk with Mike Shiffer

I'd like to project an image of the automotive guru: a sage who knows every part of a car intimately; who diagnoses problems with a careful, thorough analysis of the systems and symptoms involved.

I am not that guy. For diagnosis, I rely first on my experience, then on the experience of others, and finally on my theoretical knowledge and ability to learn what I don't know about how things work.

A magnificent V12 E-Type Jaguar came in a few weeks ago. Like most XKEs these days, it doesn't get much exercise, so it was no surprise that it ran poorly: stumbling at idle and accelerating at a less than impressive rate. The usual cause is fouled spark plugs, but only #1 was loaded up. Clearly it was misfiring, but there was no obvious cause. Tests showed no ignition on cylinder #1 (finding a dead cylinder on a V12 is harder than on engines with fewer cylinders, as there is so much going on with six power strokes per revolution). The cap, ignition wire and plug were all good, and with 3 cylinders sharing each of 4 carburetors, it was unlikely to be a fuel problem. Fortunately, still lurking in my head is the brain cell that held the key to the problem.

Joseph Lucas & Sons, famously reviled manufacturer of British Automotive Electric Products That Sometimes Fail To Please, has struggled manfully to keep up with the times. In the 1970s, they introduced their version of an electronic ignition distributor, calling it Opus: the Latin word for work. Like the English auto industry in the 70s, it worked sporadically, with many tea breaks, when it wasn't out on strike.

The heart of the Opus distributor is a stationary pick-up and a disc that rotates. The disc's edge contains tiny ferrite rods, one for each cylinder, that pass by the pick-up in turn, switching a circuit that fires the ignition coil. What I remembered was that the rods break and fall out, in pieces or completely, causing misfires. Sure enough, my brain retained what the disc could not, and on looking closely I saw several rods were only fragments and one was completely gone. After replacing the disc, the V12 purred like a kitten at idle and ran like a tiger at speed.

This is an example of diagnosis mainly through prior experience. Having seen the exact same problem before is usually the most economical diagnostic tool, and it certainly was here. I was able to zero in on the faulty part without spending much time testing things that were working fine.

The next fastest diagnostic tool is other people's knowledge. When an Audi Q7 came in with a mysterious but massive oil leak, I hit the computer keyboard and queried a group of mechanics. Some of them have far more experience with Audis than I do, and they schooled me. Hidden under the V8's intake manifold is an oil filter housing seal infamous for failing and Exxon Valdez-ing the whole engine. This information, from reliable sources, made me feel much better about starting on the very long and expensive job of removing the intake manifold, whose size and location make it impossible to see the seal in question. Sure enough, it was leaking badly, so the work of exposing it was worthwhile.

The most complicated diagnostic problems need a third tool: general knowledge of the system that isn't working. These problems often consist of a single symptom which is caused by multiple factors. This frequently involves a computer whose response to one failure masks the actual problem. For example, when a BMW has a bad ignition coil, the engine management computer senses a misfiring cylinder and shuts down that cylinder's fuel injector. This prevents raw gasoline from diluting the motor oil and also from ruining the catalytic converters. If you don't know this, you might assume a bad injector was responsible for the misfire. Likewise, some light modules will repurpose another bulb to take the place of a burned out one. If it detects a short to ground, it will shut down that circuit and not power it up until an external computer resets the light module, even if the short has been fixed. This can mess you up in two ways. First, all the lights may appear to be working if you don't realize that some bulbs are doing double duty. Second, even after you find and fix a short, you may wind up replacing a perfectly good light module because it won't do its job until it is told the circuit is fixed.

We had a 745i that was running poorly and had nearly every warning light lit. I hooked up my computer and found it couldn't communicate with any module on the powertrain (PT) network. This means that the network itself is down, usually because the ribbon cable that connects the engine, transmission, ABS/slip control, instrument cluster and airbag modules has a break or short circuit somewhere. This ribbon runs nearly the entire length of the car, from the electronic brake control on the trunk floor, under the rear seat on the left to a resistor, over to the right rocker panel and under the passenger front floor to pick up the accelerometer and yaw module, up the right "A" pillar and out the firewall into the box under the hood which holds the engine and transmission control modules, then along the right front fender to the ABS/DSC module, and ends below the right headlight at another resistor. There were plenty of problems, and each time I found and fixed one I "That oughtta do it!" Nope. It wasn't until I had exposed and repaired three different splices and replace both water-damaged resistors that the network came back to life and allowed me to talk to its clients again. I cleared codes and adaptations and the car ran fine.

In the process of diagnosing and fixing this, I called on other techs, spent much time staring at wiring diagrams and component locators, reading a lot about BMW's PT network strategy and measuring ohms in strange places. Because there were multiple failures, as well as an engine management plan that caused the car to run poorly due to the downed network, I needed to supplement my knowledge with information from BMW, other mechanics and the car itself.

Having a good store of specific knowledge is important, but no more so than a strong grasp of theory. However, what I carry around in my head is not enough. I need other heads, and other knowledge bases. Being able to find and focus on accurate, relevant information and ignore the rest is a function of experience. This ability is not usually associated with gurus, but it gets the job done. 🚗

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

Starting in 2018, our newsletter, *Die Zugspitze*, will only be available online in digital format. These next four issues will be the last you receive in the mail. With the money saved from the costs associated with printing and mailing, we will have additional funds available to provide you, our members, more events!

Please contact the chapter with any questions or comments or to register an email address for newsletter delivery at: [Newsletter@nybmwcca.org](mailto:Newsletter@nybmwcca.org).

Have an idea for an event? Please email us at [events@nybmwcca.org](mailto:events@nybmwcca.org)



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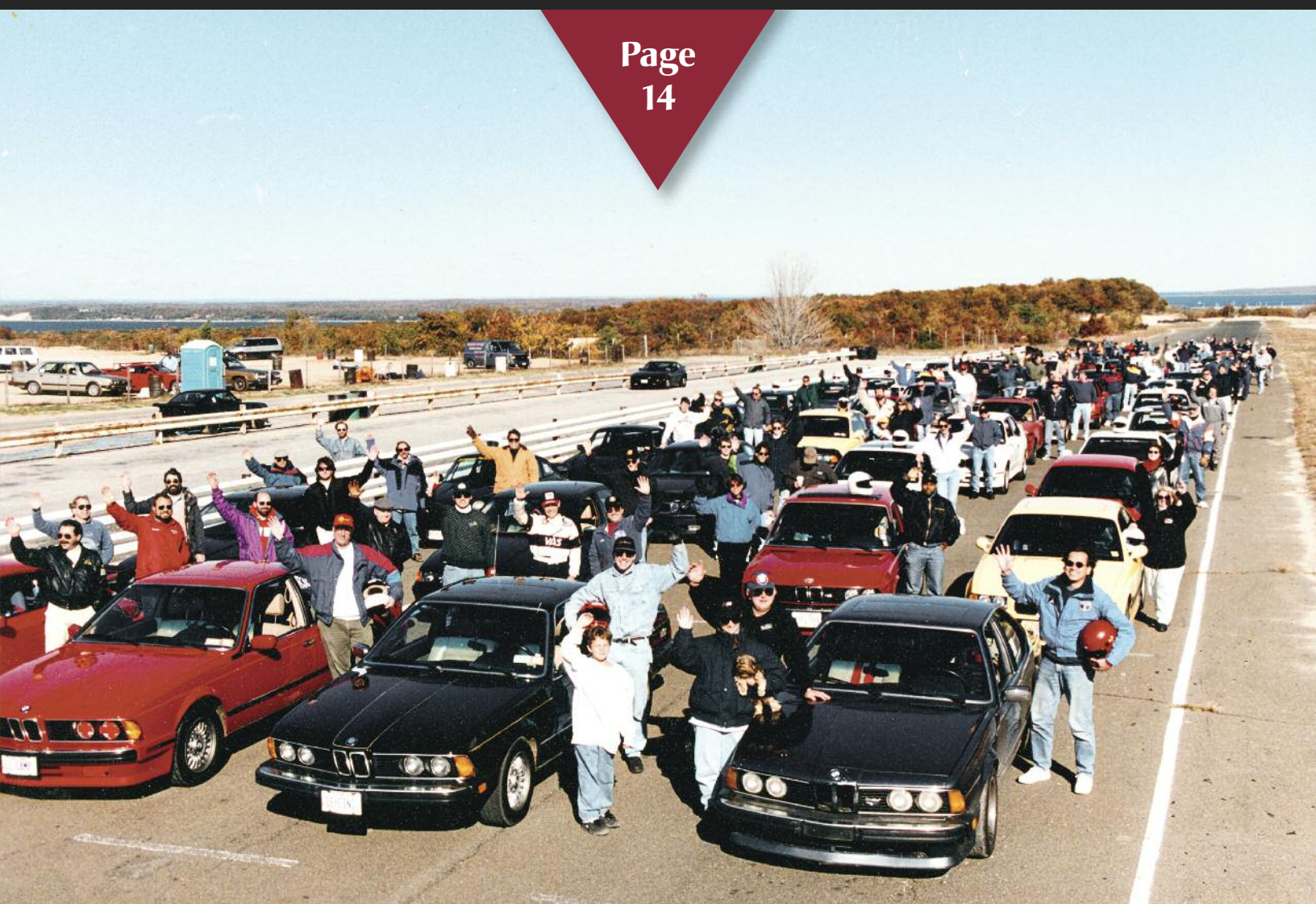
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This photo, from a NY Chapter drivers school at the Bridgehampton Race Circuit, was taken from the start/finish tower in late October 1995 as a final tribute. It originally appeared on the DZ cover (in black & white) in early 1996. At that time the track's demise was imminent, but carried on until the end of 1997,

after which it closed forever. Now a private golf course, the infamous downhill "turn one" at the end of the 3,000 ft. straightaway, was known to "separate the men from the boys", and is the only remnant of the original track that remains. It is now the uphill entrance to the golf course club house. *Photo by Steve Geraci.*