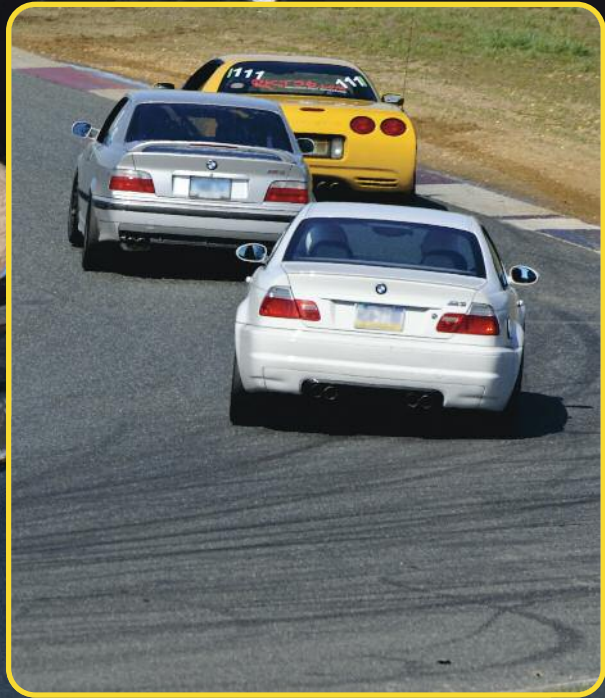


Die Zugspitze

New York Chapter Newsletter | Summer 2016

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New York Chapter 2016 Events Calendar

February	25	BMW of Manhattan Dealership Social
March	5	23rd Annual Beach Party
	26	New York International Auto Show
April	10	Driving School: NJMP Lightening
	17	Karts & Coffee
May	7	Endurance Karting Series
	22	Dine & Shine
	24	Endurance Karting Series
June	6-7	Driving School: Watkins Glen
	26	Karts & Coffee
July	16	Endurance Karting Series
August	21	Karts & Coffee
September	11	Wine & Shine
	18	Wine & Shine (Rain Date)
	25	Concours d'Elegance
October	16	Karts & Coffee
December	3	Holiday Party & President's Dinner

For the latest information, see www.nybmwcca.org

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On the Cover : *High Performance Driving School is serious fun; cover photo by Darby Moses, inset 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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New York Chapter BMW CCA and BMW of Southampton present

The Vineyard Series Tenth Annual Wine & Shine at Pindar Vineyards

Sunday, September 11th 2016 • 12:00 pm (noon) to 3:00 pm

(Rain date: September 18)

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, 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.

Everyone who pre-registers online will be eligible to enter their BMW in our clean car "Show and Shine" on the vineyard grounds. Pre-registration does not commit you to attend, but creates a framework for meaningful classes in the Show & Shine competition. All registered entrants also qualify to receive their choice of a free bottle of Pindar wine.

Please take the time to register online, it will help to insure there is an appropriate classification for your car.

Registration fee is \$10 per person, children are no charge (payable in cash only at the event).

Winners will receive their choice of select vintages of Pindar wines.

BMW of Southampton will sponsor our event again this year. They will bring several new BMW models to the vineyard for everyone to see. Make sure to take a moment to check out the cars and chat with their representatives.

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



President's Page | Mike Bizzarro



Our year of celebrations continues to speed right along!

This year's New York International Auto Show was one worthy of BMW's 100th Anniversary. With a record attendance of over 260 members for the early admission, BMW of North America delighted us with exclusive access to the Alpina B7, X4 M40i, M2, M4 GTS and even the iconic M1. Truly an awe-inspiring array of vehicles befitting the Motorsport moniker.

Our first High Performance Driver Education event of the year took place on New Jersey Motorsports Park's Lightning track. Students were challenged with early morning cold temps and some wet track conditions from the prior day's snowfall (can you believe snow in spring?), then warming into the 60's with near perfect conditions for the 3rd and 4th sessions of the day. Everyone participating left as a better driver, having learned to cope with ever-changing track conditions and to safely drive at the limits of the surface, and their vehicle.

On a more personal note, please take a moment to help me welcome Jay Rufino, Anthony Rescigno, Rudi Pistoli, and Steed Wells as our newest active board members. They have been diligently working behind the scenes on our HPDE events, karts and coffee program, holiday party, and on securing new club sponsors!

Speaking of sponsors, I'd like to personally thank our newest partners, Union BMW and Off-Camber Autosport. In addition to providing lunch for all the attendees and staff at our New Jersey Motorsports Park event, they both offered unique experiences and benefits for chapter members. Union brought an impressive selection of vehicles to the event, including an X5M and an i8 for us to get acquainted with up-close and personal, as well as offering hot lap ride-alongs in the X5M. Off-Camber provided in-car instruction as well as technical support and consultation on everything from driving tips and safety equipment to car setup and preparation for our students.

Around the corner we have the return of our Dine and Shine featuring the highly popular dual venue format, complete with a fun rally between Pindar Vineyards and Alure Chowder House & Oysteria that the whole family can participate in. Our outdoor Endurance Karting series is back as well with events at Oakland Valley Race Park. We also team up with the Patroon Chapter for our annual driving school at the world famous (and newly repaved) Watkins Glen International raceway. Coming this fall, look for our Karting series to expand with Thursday night Super Track events at Grand Prix New York and of course our regularly scheduled Sunday morning Karts and Coffee to help start the week.

Keep an eye on social media for the latest chapter updates and have a great summer!

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

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



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mbizzarro@nybmwcca.org

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BMW-PORSCHE-AUDI-VOLKSWAGEN-VOLVO-SAAB

Dealership Social

by Megan Yavel

Our first Dealership Social was a huge success! On Thursday, February 25th, BMW of Manhattan closed its doors to the public for a private members-only event. This highly anticipated gathering generated an overwhelming response and we thank everyone who was able to attend. The event was filled and the wait list started 48 hours after the opening of registration!

The Dealership Social was created at the request of the membership (based on last year's survey) and we had a wonderful turnout of first-time club event attendees. BMW of Manhattan was excited to participate and presented a wonderful display of vehicles for everyone to enjoy. Louis Cortes, resident BMW Genius, provided details and history about all the vehicles on display, including a custom Fire Orange wrapped Lime Rock Park Edition Tribute i8, an Alpine White M6 competition package with every possible option, and a BMW Individual Tanzanite Blue M4. Also on display were some privately owned vehicles, such as a red 850 on loan from Adam Urbanczyk and a red E30 M3 belonging to Sergio Brito. Pictures were posted on Instagram and shared to other social platforms and for the first time ever we received over 1,000 likes on Sergio's E30! Congrats and thank you, Sergio! We look forward to holding more of these events in the future and meeting more club members.

Photos shown here and in color on page 19 by Louis Cortes of BMW of Manhattan



Die Zuspitze | New York Chapter Newsletter | SUMMER 2016

2016 NY Auto Show

by Sherwin de Shong

The 2016 New York International Auto Show early preview with BMW USA and BMW CCA members from New York, New Jersey, and as far away as Washington D.C. was, as always, a great event. Our new best friend and host from BMW, Hector Arellano-Belloc and his friends, got us in early to preview a hands-on, seat-of-your-pants sit down and smell the new leather; check out these specifications and talk around/walk around BMW's latest wares. This year's highlights definitely centered around the driving enthusiast, and I mention this because they covered the spectrum from 'I want one' and can afford it if I make some sacrifices to 'I want one' and now all I have to do is win the lottery.

Costing about ten grand less than an M4 and with performance clearly above the 4 Series, John Kelly from BMW highlighted how the M2 slots ever so closely behind the M4. From the basic 0-to-60 time that trails the M4 by 0.2 seconds in both manual and auto/DCT formats, coupled with a shorter wheelbase and less weight, the M2 was THE enthusiast attainable car at the show.

Then Mr. Kelly took a few steps and proceeded to show us the M4 GTS. I could go into the standard roll cage, massive brakes, huge trunk spoiler, and standard water-injected turbo. But why? Because while it was very easy on the eyes and estimated at over \$100,000, it is the enthusiast UNATTAINABLE car since all 700 cars are already spoken for worldwide.

Hector's two guests came to highlight two models that most enthusiast would not take to the track, though they could easily embarrass a lot of cars at a stoplight sprint and at the track.

Bob Frisch introduced the 2017 Alpina B7 with just the facts. Priced at over \$140,000 with 600 hp, 590 lb-ft torque, xDrive and a long wheelbase, Alpina also goes on to massage the V8 engine and increase turbo boost with new turbos, tweaks the exhaust and offers a suspension that allows the B7 to put that power to the pavement in less than 3.7 seconds in the 0-to-60 sprint. That is quick.

Jason Chen then introduced us to the M760 Li xDrive. With two monoscroll turbos, (one for each bank of six cylinders, did I mention this has a V12?) and what I would call a fair amount (6.6 liters) of displacement – also putting out 600 hp and 590 lb-ft torque created in a slightly less aggressive but smoother fashion – BMW has another Seven that will move quite briskly, the 0-60 sprint coming in around 3.9 seconds, but not as aggressively as the Alpina. But it did not stop BMW from giving it some M-performance style as seen with the frozen brown paint, aggressive wheels and as heard through the M-style quad exhaust when the launch control is activated. All this for a price somewhere north of \$140,000.

Also on display was the rest of the current BMW line. But above all, high up on a display balcony overlooking all, was a BMW M1 in red. Heritage, good looks, and still desirable after more than 30 years.

Until next year April, 15th 2017.

Photos shown here, next page, and in color on page 19 by André Noël





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New York BMW CCA Spring Driver's School New Jersey Motorsports Park — Lightning

April 10, 2016
by Mike Allen

After a two-year hiatus, the New York chapter has returned to New Jersey Motorsports Park Lightning track for its Spring HPDE. And what a return it would be: With a total of 95 drivers, 35 of whom were instructors, it proved to be an amazing “season opener”, both for seasoned track junkies and for newcomers experiencing the thrill of the track for the first time.

Mother Nature had somewhat of an amusing sense of humor with 1-3 inches of wet snow falling in the Millville NJ area the day before the event. Overnight temperature was hovering at 28 degrees, and the morning challenge revolved around spraying WD40 in the door locks as a few stalwart drivers found themselves literally frozen out of their cars. Yes, I was one of those unfortunate few. By the time the first session started at 9:00 am the temperature had fortunately risen to the mid-30's and we were lucky enough to have no standing water or snow on the track. Let's not kid ourselves, it was a chilly morning; however the enthusiasm of all attendees more than kept everyone's spirit high! By midday the temperature had risen to the low 50's, and that actually felt warm given the day's starting point.

A special thanks to Lou D'Angeli from the New Jersey chapter who volunteered his time running the Novice and Intermediate classroom session, while Matt Brod of the New York Chapter addressed classroom activities for the more seasoned drivers. One very positive side effect of the chilly weather was the high classroom attendance. Did I mention that the classroom was well heated? Thanks also goes out to Mike Sussman, who was our Chief Instructor for this event.

This year we had two amazing event sponsors, Union Park BMW and Off Camber Motorsport. Both companies stepped up to the plate and provided a lavish lunch for the instructors and students. This was an unexpected bonus perk that attendees really were not accustomed to and was greatly appreciated by all!!

Judging from initial event feedback, it's evident that the recipe we used for this year's event was a huge success. We will review the event with attendees in more detail, relish in the positives and also “listen” to and address any weaknesses identified to ensure that future events are just as rewarding.

As with all Driving Schools, the number one objective is safety and I'm happy to report that there was no bent metal at this event. I attest this to the focus of the students, and more importantly, the professionalism and skill of the instructors riding along in the “passenger seat”. A huge “thanks” to you all for contributing your time to keep the sport alive and well.

Thanks everyone — it was a blast. Next stop — Watkins Glen!







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.)	

Judging Classifications

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

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

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

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

Location

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Directions To Old Westbury Gardens

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Registration

Opens: September 1, 2016
Closes: September 21, 2016
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Gates open at 8:00 AM for entrants, 10:00 AM for general public
Judging will begin at 11:00 AM (Polishing cloths down!!!)

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

Pre-registration BMWs, \$40.00 (payment must be made
by September 21st);

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

Pre-registration MINIs – \$20.00 (payment must be made by
September 21st)

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

Display corral (not judged) for BMWs and MINIs only – \$15.00

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.

23rd Annual Beach Party at EuroMeccanica

by Dave Flores

The Annual Beach Party is not an actual day at the beach, but generally a social tech session with various speakers, demonstrations with Q&A and a hot buffet. We hold the event in Spring's infancy with hopes that warmer weather is just around the corner and we can wash, wax and bring our cars out of winter hibernation. This was our Twenty-third Annual Beach Party hosted by Michael Shiffer at EuroMeccanica in Yonkers, NY.

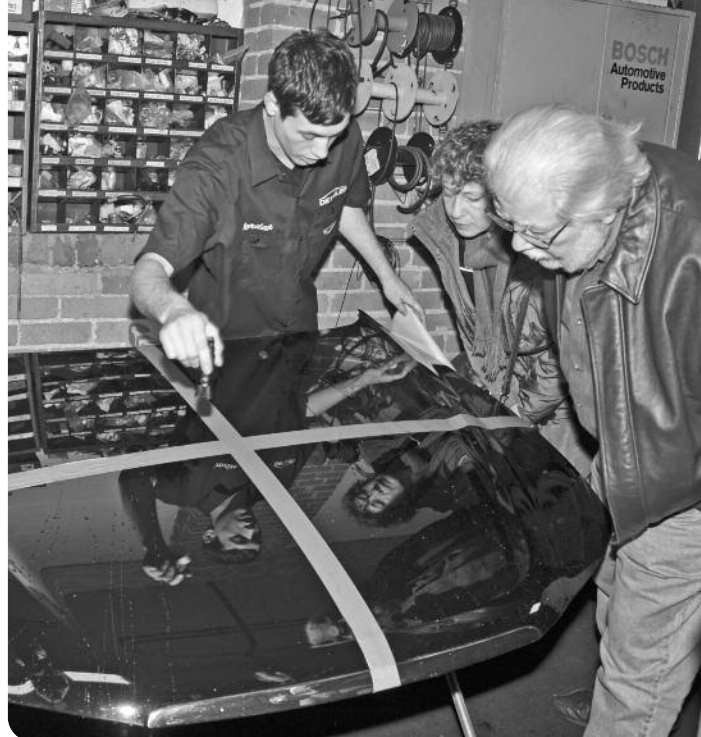
EuroMeccanica was started by Michael Shiffer in 1991. EuroMeccanica is a well-known and highly-respected shop that has overseen the partial and total restoration of BMW, Mercedes, Jaguar, Rolls Royce, Bentley, Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Daimler and other cars. It has prepared track cars for competition, driving schools and vintage racing. Repairs and maintenance are performed on modern European cars. Michael is also the tech advisor for New York BMW CCA. The shop's atmosphere is warm and open.

This year Mike showed us the kinds of trash his shop generates in an average week. You would be surprised how much can be learned from studying wasted or discarded car parts. Mike showed us a comparison between diaphragm systems used by BMWs of two different engine types. On the first system (I believe came from an older eight cylinder) the diaphragm replacement process was fairly simple since it had an external housing built-in, allowing you to change this diaphragm in a process similar to changing your air filter, for a quick and inexpensive fix. In the more recent motor (from a turbocharged six cylinder) he showed a similar diaphragm system, but it was integrated with the cylinder valve cover, which is made of plastic, encasing the diaphragm within. To change the diaphragm on this motor the whole valve cover needed to be replaced, a very extensive process that's costly in both parts and labor. This comparison opens thought into the engineering process behind production of these engines and the cost of production versus cost and ease of maintenance.

We also had guest speakers Jordan Zecher from Detailed and Christopher Defeo from CL Visual, both of Copiague, NY. Jordan, the owner of Detailed, is a professional detailer trained by the detailers for Air Force One. He apprised us of the services the company provides, such as paint correction, luxury detailing, durable coatings and interior reconditioning. Chris is a partner for CL Visual, a company that offers multiple design services in addition to vehicle wrapping and decals. He brought a car hood divided into four sections with each section showing different levels of paint reconditioning and paint protection. Chris also spoke about several different protective clear and matte finish wraps for vehicles, some of which are even self-healing in the event of minor scratches. The discussion was then opened to a Q&A session. Both guests explained how their approach to customer service, satisfaction and attention to detail set them apart from companies offering similar services.

Thanks to all who attended this year's event, making it another great success. I look forward to seeing everyone at all the club's various events throughout the year.

Photos by Mike Allen and Darby Moses



Welcome to our New Members!

Sean Ackerman
Jonathan Adler
Ahmad Alkaysey
Robert Ancona
Dario Ando
Marilyn Antoine
Tassos Argyros
Rome Arnold
Haluk Aydinoglu
Eric Bandov
Sean Bani
Etienne Barg-Townsend
George Bess
John Blascovich
John Boswell
Christopher Bracken
Markus Braun
Raanan Bregman
Kevin Brennan
Long Chen
Keith Cheung
Victor Chu
Michelle Coke
Karen Cornelius
Conrad Cutler
Hunter Cutler
Mark Dallman

George Davidson
Michael D'Ecclesiis
Rob DeGaudenzi
Paul Frydman
Robert Furst
Marvin Gerestant
Spyro Gerontidis
Greg Goldstein
Frank Gournelos
Adrian Green
Shawn Guy
Sameah Haider
Jason Harney
Terri Horak
Ronald Huether
Joseph Iberti
Joel Jebb
Kathrine Jongebloed
Raymond Junkins
Daniel Kajiya
Valeriy Katsnelson
Marat Khandros
Melissa Kinckle
Christopher Krapf
Tatiana Kuzmowycz
Michael Kyriacou
Philip Kyriacou

Michele Lambright
Gregory Landi
Margaret Lewis
Kevin Li
Mitchel Lichtman
Robert Marchhart
LaRon McCravey
David Micca
David Mosberg
Raymond Nelson
Dan Ostrower
Joon Park
Christina Parsons
Rich Pennamen
James Plousadis
Jeff Polly
Valentino Pompeo
Daniel Quiles
Joseph Quiles
Shehrose Raja
Carolyn Reidy
Christopher Reinwald
Duho Rhee
Ralph Ronavita
Jeremie Scheiner
George Scruggs
Peter Seelbinder

Tonino Sementilli
Anthony Shabani
Alan Shamah
Alexander Sherman
Qingyuan Shi
Anton Shkreli
Andrew Siebengartner
James Skerritt
Robin Slone
Brian Smith
J Smith
H Stern
John Tan
Jonathan Thiessen
David Tomforde
Brian Walling
Robert Walters
Andrew Wells
Rodger Williams
Stephanie Wolman
Natalie Wrynn
Kenny Yau
Daniel Yomdin
Amanda Zanetti
Ran Zhou

And a salute to our long standing members!

Anniversary milestones for members who joined between January and March

5th Anniversary

Paul Angelo
Christopher Bauer
George Blednick
Angelo Bucolo
Richard Calogero
Seth Chesney
Martin Copland
Frank Cortale
Oleg Dorfan
Alex Echeverry
Melissa Fischman
Christopher Foresto
Robert Hirsch
Thomas Kemp
Andrey Krolik
Linda Levine
Steven Levine
Julio Luna
Carol Mankuta
Marc Mankuta
Glen Markowitz
Peter Moy

Timoth Ralls
Edwin Rivas
Nick Sabatino
Philip Sharfstein
Meletios Tsarouchtsis
Amit Veeramachaneni
Kristine Wares
Arnold Widman

10th Anniversary

Jeffrey Becker
Chris Carpentieri
Joseph Cioffi
S Conigliaro
Dennis Cooper
Jeffrey Costabile
Christopher Cotronei
Thomas Dehler
Christopher DeRosa
Jeff Heifetz
Timothy Hicks
Jamie Hirsch
Henry Kwok
Peter Manning

Bennett McCarroll
Brian Mckay
Matthew Murray
Tammy Murray
Raymond Olsen
Tedd Page
John Pedi
Steven Pelaez
Jorge Restrepo
Natasha Restrepo
Christopher Rownd
Steve Shaw
Daniel Spector
David Tamburelli
Lyudmila Vishnyakov
Rafal Walkiewicz

15th Anniversary

Michael Allen
Andre Augustine
William Bet
Lance Burns
Darren Cerullo
Wilgene Cheng

Eugene Demark
Marco Di Stefano
Joseph Laliberte
Alvin Mok
Slavko Pavlovic
Mary Penick
James Siegel
Edward Socolow
Kazimierz Sperling
Nathaniel Wisch
Plamen Zarankov

20th Anniversary

Anthony Castagna
Michael Greenfield
Evan Hutchison
Craig Keen
Rick Marone

25th Anniversary

Carlos Bermudez
Kalim Chan
Norman Kleiman
Vitaliano Rafael
Lewis Ricciuti

Jay Tanski
Alan Weinschel

35th Anniversary

Roy Levine
Anthony Vassos

Over 40 Years!

Peter Alp
Wm Bormann
John Damtoft
Neal Feldman
Burton Fleming
Steve Geraci
Bill Hedberg
Christopher McGuiness
Seymour Mogal
Raymond Nickel
John Schroeder
Karl Topp

45 Years!!

Stuart Rosenthal

A blast from the past

by Steve Geraci

This issue of Die Zugspitze features an article on the 2016 New York International Auto Show, so I decided to rummage around the archives and look for an article also relating to the show. From 1991, twenty-five years ago, here is what I found...

N.Y. Automobile Show, Javits Center, N.Y.

Steve Geraci

I think the last time I went to the International Automobile Show in N.Y. I was 12 years old. My dad took me. I can still remember the fins on everything, though I can't say that I remember a BMW display.

This time I took my 6 year old son and his two buddies. The Time Machine from "Back To The Future" was the advertised attraction. Well, we found the DeLorean and several other "neat" race cars. Mr. Goodwrench Grand National Stock Car, Nissan GTP cars, Mercedes Group C Racer, Ferrari F-40, and several other styling experiments with a glimpse into the next century.

Well I finally satisfied all their requests, including several stops for food, soda and the bathroom, and made my way to the BMW Exhibit.

Quite tasteful, is about how I'd size it up. Elegant and conservative (no race cars or hi-tech gimmicks) just BMW NA's current line-up including the new 850i and the 750i. They did have a hospitality suite, but by then I didn't have the heart to "infect" it with three 6 year olds. Several miscellaneous displays included a V-12 motor, suspension display and color and fabric choices. Not much fun when your 6 year old goes. So, with our polaroids of each of the three boys sitting in the Time Machine (complete with flux capacitor) and my



polaroid of me with the Budweiser girls we called it a night. I think I

had as much fun as I did the last time I went! ■



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Photo By: Steve Geraci/Reflex Photo

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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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Ramblings of a **MINI**iac

by Peter Burke

Well it looks like we made it through another winter. Spring has sprung, though as I write this article it still feels like Spring is a long way off. I'd figure that I would pick up where I left off in my last piece about the MINI Clubman, specifically my friend Mike's Clubbie.

In late March, I went with Mike for a ride to the East End of Long Island. He handed me the keys to the Clubbie and we were off. Now those of you who know me well enough know I am a three door hardtop purist, but I was very impressed. The six-speed manual was precise; the new BMW sourced B48 turbo engine magnificent with both the power range and the noises it emits.

The interior pieces are well put together, very BMW. Much different from my '05 JCW! No squeaks, very solid. I was chuffed! I have driven this car several times and I am still impressed. One night recently Mike had to show me how the Clubbie handles on a certain entrance ramp in Uniondale – he said he never had a car that handled like this. This is where I think the folks in Munich have really gotten it right. Some may smirk at a larger MINI, but it is bringing more folks into the tent. It may not be as quick and agile as a JCW, but the DNA is there. The more the merrier!

As far as upcoming events, we are having the annual MINI Q event at BMW/MINI Service Center, 100 Cleveland Avenue, Freeport, Sunday June 5 at 10AM. Please stop down and say hello. There will be food and refreshments and lots of cars and good people.

MINIs on Top will be held June 17th through June 18th up at Mount Washington; visit the website at www.minisonstop.org.

The biennial MINI Takes the States event takes place July 9 through July 23, meandering from the Atlanta Motor Speedway to the Thermal Club in Palm Springs California. More information at www.minitakesthestates.com.

I hope all of you enjoy your Spring and Summer driving and stay safe out there.



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TechTalk with Mike Shiffer

Several BMW-savvy people have remarked on my office chair recently. Some of you noticed that it is a BMW seat, and one or two knew it came from an E30 with the sport package. The awe and delight this chair generated was a little surprising to me, as I thought it was common practice to convert car parts into décor and furniture. Also, the chair is not beautiful. It is kind of beat, or, to be kinder, it has “patina”. One young man asked me about whether its distressed appearance was created in the office, and I assured him it had about 200,000 miles behind the wheel before I repurposed it to drive my computer instead of my car.

It has quite a history.

It was originally the driver’s seat in a 1987 BMW 325is built for the US market. The car was the truly classy black-on-black-as-night coupe, and would have made some yuppie very happy if it hadn’t encountered a wee bit of trouble at the New Jersey docks.

To appreciate what happened it will be helpful to understand something about how cars are unloaded from ships. The cars are in rooms in the hold which can be sealed off from one another: several hundred cars to a room. When one room is emptied, it is sealed and flooded with seawater, whose weight serves to level and stabilize the ship after the hundreds of tons of automobile have left it. This makes offloading the next batch much easier.

You know what’s coming, don’t you?

Yup. Somebody made a mistake and flooded a room full of cars. Brand new BMWs. 500 of them. They were submerged in salt water for 24 hours. Salty, yucky harbor water. Engines, transmissions, differentials, computers, motors, pumps, wiring, gauges, switches, upholstery all turned into corroding scrap and fragrant garbage. Total losses, every one.

I was running a race team at the time. We were fielding a 325is in IMSA’s Firestone Firehawk Showroom Stock Endurance series, and doing rather well. Our liaison at BMW asked us if we would like one of the flooded cars to use as a spare shell for the race car, should it ever be demolished. Insurance had covered BMW’s losses, so rather than crush the pristine shell with all its useless components, they sold it to us for a song, with the understanding that it never ever be used on the road.

We failed to destroy our race car, so the hulk sat in one garage or another until 1991, when the team disbanded and I ended up with it by default, since nobody else wanted it. Nobody except a neighbor, who decided he would put it together as a road car. I tried to dissuade him, but he made me an offer that was too good to ignore. I told him not to even try to register it, as it was listed by BMW as a non-car, but he figured he’d find a way around that. He found a wrecked 325i with good

running gear and hired a friend of mine to swap over the parts.

The original seats were frozen in position but were much nicer than the donor car’s seats. My friend Jim dismantled them, freed up the rails, seat back adjusters, headrests, etc., cleaned the leather, reassembled them and put them back in. They looked great. In fact the whole car looked and drove beautifully. Only one problem: it couldn’t be registered. My neighbor went back and forth with DMV for over two years while the car sat, undriven, in his garage. In the end he gave up, and sold it back to me to use for parts. Several years later I acquired a Subaru Outback wagon as an everyday family hauler. Didn’t handle too well, but it was a fine, reliable car. There was only one serious flaw: I couldn’t get used to the driver’s seat, no matter how I adjusted it. It simply didn’t fit my behind. Then I remembered I had a fine seat with a useless car wrapped around it. I quickly adapted the 325is seat to fit and was at last comfortable in the Subaru, whose handling improved in response to its fancy new saddle. We kept that car for about 10 years and 200,000 miles, until the roof at the windshield rusted away and let rainwater drip onto my wife’s knees. When I sold it (yes, somebody wanted a rusty Outback with over 320,000 miles enough to pay for it!), I put back the original driver’s seat. The new owner was thrilled because when she first test drove it she hated the BMW seat. Go figure.

The seat went onto a shelf in my garage. Last fall, my back started really bothering me. I had been spending more time sitting in the office, and it occurred to me that my office chair might be part of the problem. That old driving seat again pushed its way into my consciousness. Maybe it would help! After only three months of procrastinating, I got around to adapting a rolling base I found in the trash to accept the driving seat. I sawed, welded and drilled some strips of steel diamond-plate into an X and wrangled it all together. The first attempt had me sitting up so high my feet dangled over the ground like a six-year-old’s. The second time around I nearly hit the deck when the chair scooted backwards out from under me. Sliding the seat back on its rails cured that, and it has been in use ever since.

It did help my back, so much so that what had become a chronic nuisance is now totally gone. Not surprising when you think how much study goes into designing a good driving seat. Office furniture design is more about looking good.

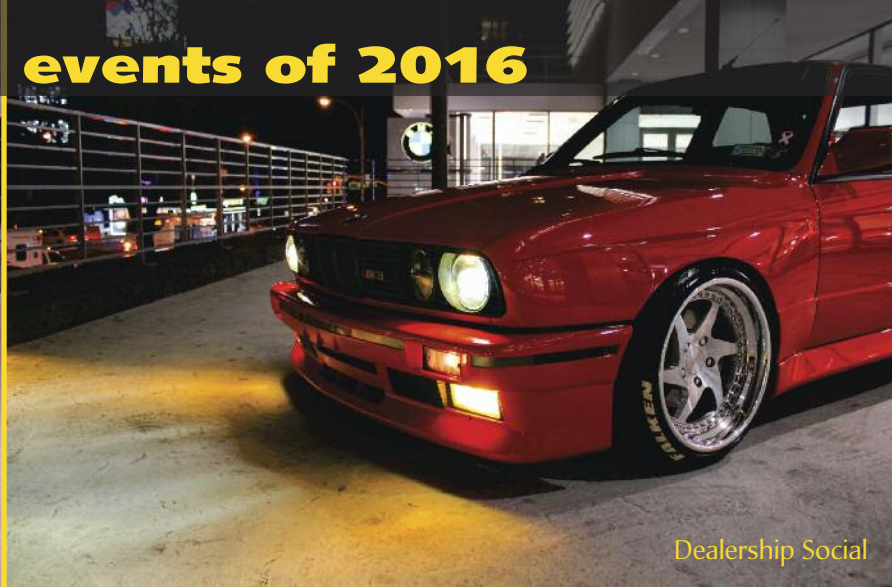
Recaro, Konig and other makers of racing seats build office chairs as well. They are not cheap. And of course they have no backstory, being new and all. Mine has had some life, Dickensian in its ups and downs, mostly behind the wheel of a car it was never intended for, now winding up working in retirement, far off its planned trajectory. 🚗

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First 4 club events of 2016



Dealership Social photos by Louis Cortes



Dealership Social



NY Auto Show



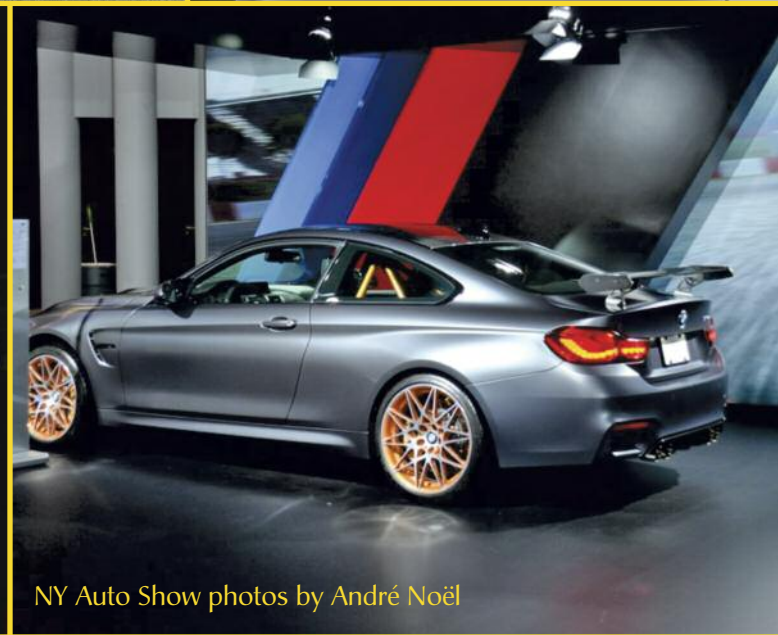
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NY Auto Show



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Photo by Darby Moses



Would you describe this as a black car?

Photo by Mike Allen