

Cars & Places Magazine

Cars & Places eNews

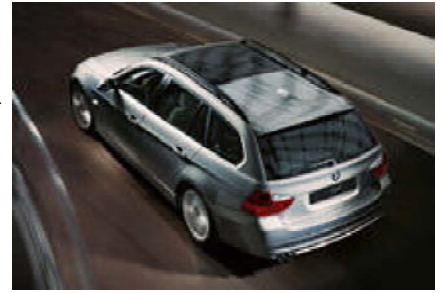
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Hello from Cars & Places! Welcome to eNews, our weekly update on the automotive world and area happenings. If you are a new reader, welcome! We hope you enjoy our tidbits of news as we ramp up our new magazine.

Kia has reintroduced the Sportage, their offering for the small SUV segment. We had extensive experience with the previous generation of the Sportage and are we are anxious to try out the new version. Kia, understanding that the small SUV market is not dominated by hard core off-road types, has designed a new Sportage that has much better on-road manners. The truck-like ride and handling have been replaced with a smoother, less choppy ride. Still available with 4-wheel drive to get through the tough going in winter and back roads, the Sportage is now livable on a daily basis. We hope the new 4-wheel drive system will reliably engage in freezing weather, something the old car's vacuum- operated front hubs could not handle. The interior has a much nicer level of finish, with solid controls and quality materials. Power is provided by the reliable 2 liter, 140 horsepower in-line 4 or an available 2.7 liter V6, generating 173 horsepower. The electronics revolution has come to the Sportage which now has 4 wheel anti-lock brakes with EBD, electronic brake distribution. This system senses when vehicle weight shifts during braking and compensates for it. The Electronic Stability Program, ESP, helps keep the vehicle upright during extreme maneuvering. Two models are available, LX and EX, the EX also can be had with a luxury package which includes leather seating and an upgraded, subwoofer-equipped stereo. Pricing for the LX starts at just \$15,900, the EX starts at \$19,999. All are covered by Kia's 10 year 100,000 mile powertrain warranty. Check out more at www.kia.com.



The new **BMW 3** is just hitting the showrooms and BMW has announced a new model in the line, the 325xi Sports Wagon. We like the Sports Wagon for the versatility it offers combined with legendary BMW performance. The wagon is equipped with the 215 horsepower, 3 liter in-line 6 together with a 6-speed manual transmission. A 6-speed automatic is also available. The open-air motoring experience is encouraged with a huge panoramic glass roof that is almost two feet longer than a conventional sliding roof and lets in 60% more air. The new design is slightly larger than the previous generation, offering more width and height to the cabin occupants. As always, safety is a high priority with BMW and the Sports Wagon features all of the latest thinking. Front, side and roof curtain airbags supplement the seat belt pre-tensioners and force limiters and a sophisticated occupant sensing system. The latter, named OCC detects the presence and weight of each front occupant, to the point of deactivating the system if a infant child carrier is detected in the front passenger seat. Even without driving this car yet, we would expect the driving experience to be excellent, with typical BMW feel and precision. The BMW 325xi will completely change your mind's image of a station wagon. Pricing begins at \$34,695, with typical optional equipment pushes the \$40,000 threshold. Look for it in showrooms this fall. All the details can be found at www.bmwusa.com.



Also from **BMW** for bicycling enthusiasts is the BMW Cruise Bike, designed for leisurely and comfortable riding. The hydroformed aluminum frame supports the rider on wide cruiser style tires, perfect for the boardwalk or the beach. High-end equipment assures easy gear changes and excellent stopping ability. Of course, the Cruise Bike is compatible with the BMW rack system to transport your bike to those great biking spots. The price is \$800.00 and includes the all important BMW logo. The bike is available at www.bmw-online.com.

Places to Be!

by *Cindy Trawick*

Upcoming Road Trips!

We're planning an August trip (in a 2006 Dodge Charger) to **Smithfield, Virginia** ... "Ham Capital of the World." But this is no "junket" ... really! There's much to see and do in this town. Enjoy the historic walking tour, a leisurely stroll of the town's 60 homes featuring Colonial, Federal, and Victorian architecture. At the Isle of Wight Museum, wander through the re-created nineteenth-century country store and see prehistoric fossils from the nearby James River. Opportunities to fish, golf, go boating, horseback riding and shopping abound. For lodging, we're hoping to stay at Smithfield Station, a beautiful inn and marina on the Pagan River. Amenities include an outdoor pool, restaurant and lounge. (www.smithfieldstation.com) Look for our review sometime in late August.



BASE jumping anyone? In October we're planning a trip to Bridge Day at **New River Gorge** in Fayette County, West Virginia. No, we won't be jumping, but we'll be among the



200,000 spectators at this event...the largest extreme sports event in the world. The New River Gorge Bridge stands 876 feet above the New River and is the world's second largest single arch bridge. This will be the launch point for a day of LEGAL BASE jumps on October 15, 2005. We're still looking for a nice place to stay, so if you know of something, send us an email (ctrawick@carsandplaces.com)! Check out all the

details at www.officialbridgeday.com.

We're always looking for great places to visit. Send us info on your favorite spot and if we feature it in a future issue, you'll receive a free Cars & Places polo shirt.

Thanks for reading this edition of eNews! Please forward this to your friends and car buddies! If this was sent to you by a friend, just go to www.carsandplaces.com and sign up for your personal copy. Be sure to stop by the website often to check on the progress of our full-blown publication!

Until next time, enjoy your drive!

Rick Trawick
Publisher

Any comments or questions you may have are welcome. Please email them to info@carsandplaces.com. If you would like to see your event mentioned, send it to the same address.

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