



December DIY at Craftsman Auto Care

By Marc Caden

I have always enjoyed displaying our club's specialty license plates on my cars. If you haven't seen them before, they show the BMW CCA logo in addition to a special tag number which includes the letters "BMW" followed by a series of numbers. Whenever I see a BMW with our club specialty tag out on the road it puts a smile on my face and is usually followed by either a wave or some acknowledgement from me to the other driver or vice versa.

Unfortunately, our club's specialty tags are only available to Maryland residents. This is because Virginia has very strict requirements for creating specialty license plates that include the request being introduced by a state legislator, then passed as a bill in the General Assembly, and ultimately signed into law by the Governor. Virginia's bureaucratic process appears unnecessarily complex and if you really want club tags it might just be easier for you to move to Maryland (I kid of course - I am not

really trying to play favorites among neighboring states in the DMV area). On the flip side, if you have political connections in Virginia (is Ralph Northam a club member?) I would encourage you to try to navigate this process on behalf of our club.

At our December DIY at Craftsman Auto Care in Alexandria, I noticed that one of our club members who I won't embarrass specifically by name -- Paul Seto -- had an M3 wearing an updated version of our club specialty tag. The change is very slight, but it makes the tag even more attractive. The BMW CCA logo is now striped with the traditional "M" motorsports tricolor scheme. It looks very sporty and if you don't have one already, I would encourage you to consider getting a BMW CCA specialty tag for your vehicle. Applications for the updated club

license plate are available on our website: <https://www.nccbmwcca.org/ncc-bmw-md-tags-process/>



(Top) It is always good to have an extra pair of helping hands - here helper Wayne Zhang is assisting DIY participant Jugadesh Yellapu. (Above) DIY Chair Chris Wootten with Vice President James Laws.



(Above) Chris Wootten greets a group of eager DIY participants.

Craftsman Auto Care and its owner Matt Curry are longtime sponsors of chapter activities including both the DIY and HPDE programs. Matt is a dedicated car enthusiast, racer, HPDE instructor, and he even sponsors his own Cars

& Coffee events with prizes. His formula for success includes having highly skilled and trusted technicians who can handle anything from routine maintenance to track day or autocross prep.

Although our December DIY

event was at the Alexandria shop, Craftsman Auto Care has three other Virginia locations in Chantilly, Merrifield, and Fairfax. Every vehicle serviced at Craftsman gets a digital inspection, resulting in the owner receiving pictures of their car sent

electronically either by text message or email. They also provide a three-year/36,000 mile nationwide warranty on all parts and labor. The Alexandria facility has six lifts, an alignment bay, and eight technicians. Craftsman offers free shuttle service

(Below) Craftsman Auto Care has four facilities in Alexandria, Merrifield, Chantilly, and Fairfax.





(Above from Left) James Laws positions a transmission jack under his car to replace the transmission mounts; Keven Kuo gets ready to bleed the brakes on his 335i.

to both the Franconia and Springfield metro stops and can drop you off either at your home or work if you live nearby. All BMW CCA members receive a five percent discount on parts and labor. Hours of operation are 7 AM - 7 PM on Monday through Friday and 8 AM - 4 PM on Saturday.

Shop Manager Drew Rodgers and DIY Coordinator Chris Wootten gave everyone some brief safety instructions before people got busy

on their projects. James Austin replaced the engine oil and differential fluid on his 2011 328xi Touring. Jagadesh Yellapu did an oil change and replaced the engine air filter on his 2012 328i. Chapter President Paul Seto swapped some winter wheels/snow tires onto his M3. Ray Jenkins replaced the wheel sensors on his 1997 BMW 740i. DIY regular Chris Parente did an oil change and underbody inspection on

his 2016 X5. Tom Mercer replaced fuel lines on his beloved 1995 525i - which was also the oldest car in attendance.

The DIY Committee provided a traditional coffee and doughnut breakfast followed by a pizza lunch in the afternoon. Special thanks goes out to Wayne Zhang who signed up as a helper and provided an extra set of helpful hands to several attendees. And, many thanks to Matt Curry and

Craftsman Auto Care for continuing to support our club and the DIY program. We hope to see you at an upcoming event.



(Below from Left) Our club has a brake bleeder that can be loaned to DIY participants; President Paul Seto swaps a set of winter wheels/tires onto his M3.

