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Page A9

Portland Observer Auto Review

2008 BMW 128i Convertible Droppin' the

Top and Soakin' Up the Sun BY KATHLEEN CARR

Ah, summer time to drop the top and soak up some sun. If you're looking to join the convertible club, BMW has added a model to the mix with its 1 Series, which is new to the U.S. for 2008. I tested a 128i convertible with the 230-horsepower inline-six-cylinderengine.

The 128i is everything you'd expect from BMW. It offers a robust engine, engaging rear-wheel-drive dynamics and communicative steering. It also comports itself well as a 1 Series is also offered). What's either. bound to make buyers gasp, though, is the price tag for this pintsized ragtop, which can reach \$40,000 easily once some basic options are added.

The 1 Series convertible has a vertible. One of the advantages of appreciated in city driving. a retractable hardtop is that it lets might expect in a convertible, rear



Specifications: 3.0-Liter DOHC, 230-hp @ 200 lb-ft. torque, 24-Valve Inline 6-Cylinder engine; 6-Speed manual transmission; 18-City 28-Highway MPG; \$41,950. MSRP

convertible (a coupe version of the in the coupe, but it's not terrible,

If you're looking at the 1 Series convertible primarily as a car for Sunday drives, the 230-hp, 3.0-liter inline-six-cylinderengine in the 128i should provide more than enough thrust. The inline design of the standard power-operated cloth top, engine yields impressive smoothas opposed to a power-retractable ness, and the engine also provides hardtop like the BMW 3 Series con- quite a bit of low-end power that's

I'm not a huge fan of BMW's the convertible keep the sleek lines extra-tall manual transmission of its coupe counterpart. As you shifters, but I'd definitely favor the greater control and slick overall and over-right-shoulder visibility operation of the standard six-speed

penalty with the automatic; it gets 18/27 mpg city/highway, compared to 18/28 mpg for the manual 128i. BMW recommends premium gas.

BMWs are known for exceptional handling, and the 1 Series continues that legacy. The rear-wheeldrive 128i rewards the driver with nicely balanced cornering performance and a chassis that's entirely comfortable powering out of a turn.

Contributing to the sporty driving experience is the steering system, which offers good feedback and requires a little muscle to steer the car. Some people might not like with the top up isn't as good as it is manual to the automatic. You also the extra effort needed to turn the

ing wheels you can easily spin with a finger - but I like this setup, and I imagine the enthusiasts that BMW caters to will like it as well. A big concern with convertibles in general is structural rigidity, which is compromised when you remove the body, and the convertible's windshield pillars only shake slightly road.

tured the \$1,300 Sport Package, which features 17-inch wheels shod with performance tires, sport seats, small car, but there's enough room summer months.

pay a small highway gas mileage wheel — it's not one of those steer- a sport suspension and different trim. Even with this package the ride was tolerable on rougher pavement. With the top up, the cabin is well-isolated from its surroundings, but with the top down at 60 mph it's a little windy in the driver's seat.

Simple elegance is the name of roof. In the 128 i convertible, though, the game with BMW's interiors, there's no noticeable flex in the which have a modernity to them that isn't found in all luxury cars. The 128i convertible's cabin is a when you hit a large bump in the good example of this design concept, as it features mostly plain other segment. If that's what your The 128i convertible I tested fea- surfaces splashed with upscale convertible will be, then the driver's accents, like gray poplar wood trim.

The 128i convertible is a fairly

in the front seats for taller people to get comfortable, and headroom with the top up is good. Leather seats are optional, and the sport buckets provide comfortable cushioning and have side bolsters that grip the sides of your torso, which is appreciated when cornering quickly.

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

The coupe has six standard airbags, including side-impact airbags for the front seats and side curtain airbags. An electronic stability system and antilock brakes are also standard. The convertible loses the side curtain airbags, but keeps the side-impact airbags and features popup roll bars.

The 1 Series also comes with a full complement of technology: Bluetooth for the phone, USB connection for the iPod and Sirius satellite radio, HD radio and a premium sound system for the audiophile.

Whether due to higher gas prices or an iffy economy, many car buyers are considering smaller, less expensive alternatives to what they might have purchased just a few years ago.

Despite the other models in its price range, the 128i convertible still seems like a lot of money for such a small car. Convertibles are often play cars, though, where price matters less than it would in anseat of a 128i droptop seems like a great place to pass the spring and

Running Our Nation Into the Ground

continued A from A4

Bush, a self-styled war president. 'the normalization of war' was thus established."

What's more, Carroll writes, under former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the Pentagon in 2002 embarked "on the stunning project of developing a new generation of nuclear weapons including a burrowing device designed to go after underground targets and 'mini-nukes' to be used in concert with a conventional attack." The effect of all this, Carroll writes, "is to legitimize nuclearbased power politics, giving other nations, friend and foe alike, compelling reasons to acquire a nuclear capacity, if only for deterrence, and prompting them to behave in similar ways." Carroll says the U.S. return to nuclear development was to spur Iran and North Korea to become nuclear-capable and to make states that renounced the atom---such as Brazil, Egypt, South Africa --- rethink that decision. Meanwhile, Carroll says, Russia, China, Israel, India and Pakistan "are all furiously adding to their nuclear arsenals" and "The Pentagon has become the engine of proliferation." If the public hasn't figured it out yet, the United States of America cannot go on this way forever, spending nearly half of every tax dollar on war. It is being run by a criminal enterprise, just as surely as if some family of Mafia gangsters occupied the White House and decided to loot the world. The Bush regime is in Iraq to steal oil, to swindle taxpayers, to give lucrative defense contracts to its friends, to fleece motorists, to explode radioactive ammunition, to test new weapons, and to intimidate the world. And the tyrannosaurus Rex in the family room smashing our domestic tranquility is the military industrial complex. President Eisenhower had the guts to warn us of it. Sen. McCain is a traveling salesman for it. And Sen. Obama, who seemed to be the last best hope for checkmating it, appears in his July 3 call for expanding the military, to have sold out to it. What now, peace-lovers?# Sherwood Ross is a Miamibased writer formerly employed as a reporter at the Chicago Daily News.

BY LARRY LUCAS Summer is a season of celebrations. Graduations, family reunions and holidays provide opportunities for catching up with friends and loved ones. For

many, these special occasions also mean parties filled of your medicines. A recent study with lots of delicious, yet high- by Wake Forest University found calorie, food. But with the National that participants who were obese Institutes of Health reporting that had higher blood pressure and more than half of all African Ameri- blood sugar levels and more abnor-

FOR YOUR HEALTH

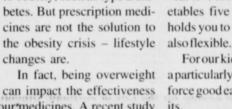
readily available to treat a whole host of diseases, into obesity, such as type 2 diabetes. But prescription medichanges are.

In fact, being overweight a particularly important time to rein- playing video games, and give them better too. force good eating and exercise hab-

A study published by the Ameri- mer isn't about depriving yourself Manufacturers of America.

For example, while it's wonder- can Journal of Public Health found - indulging in a piece of cake at ful to say you're going to "eat that one measure of obesity rose your daughter's graduation party cluding many that are linked healthier," a better goal would be to more than twice as fast when kin- is okay! What is important is to "eat five servings of fruits or veg- dergarten and first-grade students exercise more often than not, and to etables five days a week." This were on summer vacation than when fill most of your diet with fruits and cines are not the solution to holds you to a clear standard, but is they were in school. Don't let these vegetables, whole grains and lean be the lazy days of summer - try meats. These changes won't just For our kids, summer vacation is taking them to the park instead of help you look better - you'll feel

Larry Lucas is a vice president Managing your weight this sum- for Pharmaceutical Research and



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Don't Let Summer Sabotage Your Health

water instead of soft drinks.

Being overweight isn't just about vanity - it's staying alive.

can adults are overweight or obese, mal cholesterol profiles than did we need to learn how to celebrate without a side of sweet potato pie.

Being overweight isn't just about vanity - it's staying alive. Obesity steals years, and in some cases whole decades, from your life. According to the NIH, young African American men who are obese lose up to 20 years of life; Yes, genetics play a part. But it's African American women, up to 5. When you think of it that way, it's a lot easier to say no to the hot dogs and yes to lean meats like chicken ing in your diet and kicking up your at the next cookout!

when innovative medicines are and attainable.

normal-weight participants, even though the former group took more medications for these conditions that are common heart disease risk factors.

I know what you're thinking: "Some people just aren't built to be tall and thin," or, "I'm big boned!" the things we can control - like diet and exercise habits - that primarily contribute to obesity. To start reinexercise, it's important to establish We're lucky to live in an age goals that are measurable, specific



Part 25. Chiropractic and Fitness: The way to wellness in the eighties

and exercising are helpful in maintaining a strong body. But where do I begin? There is so much literature and when I ask my doctor he seems unconcerned. How can I get started?

: A good way to begin is with A : A good way to begin is with the basics. Since 1895 Chiropractic has been the leader in teaching the basics of health to our society. Good health must include proper nutrition. A general rule of thumb is that foods high in fiber are best for you. Limit your meats and refined foods as

cise. For most people it only takes an hour or so a week to stay fit. Walking at a brisk pace with good arm swing is excellent. Rest is paramount. Everyone feels better after how to eliminate it. Total fitness a good nights sleep. In Chiropractic, we will often recommend relaxation exercises as well. Have a joyful spirit. Scientists know now that stepped up to safe effective Chiour attitudes actually affect our ropractic?

: I continue to hear that diet | well as alcohol. Get plenty of exer- | entire chemistry. Finally, always keep a healthy nervous system. Chiropractic is especially suited for understanding the effect of stress on the nervous system and can be only a call away and worth so much more than just another pain prescription. Isn't it time you

Flowers' Chiropractic Office

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Join us for a morning of educational talks by trusted health professionals, with screening tests, information, tasty healthful eats and fun activities related to your well-being!

Hormone Therapy and Menopause 8:30 a.m

Presented by Dr. Linda Moore, OB-GYN

Keeping a Healthy Colon 9:30 a.m.

Marci Reed, RD, LD, dietitian

Legacy Cancer Services

and Nutrition

10:30 a.m.

Presented by Dr. Angela Lewis-Traylor, surgeon Cancer Risk Reduction: Screening, Lifestyle

Presented by Dr. Nathalie Johnson, surgeon, and

The following screenings and blood tests will be offered:

- Heart Health blood pressure, body fat measurement, cholesterol testing, blood sugar analysis
- Stroke Screening with stroke risk miniassessment
- · Colorectal Screening take-home kits to test for blood in stool

Information and activities related to a variety of health topics and community resources will be offered, including breast health, cancer prevention, chair massage and exercise. Participants include the African American Health Coalition, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, the Breast & Cervical Cancer Program and the American Cancer Society.

Saturday, August 2, 2008 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

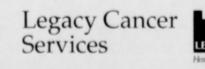
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