



Autoist

PUBLICATION OF THE VOLKSWAGEN CLUB OF AMERICA



Autoist

STAFF

Editor: Fred Ortlip, 621 E. Essex Ave.,
St. Louis, MO 63122; (314) 518-6162
Email: vwautoist@mindspring.com

Correspondents: Richard Van Treuren, Lois Grace,
Tom Janiszewski, Steve Mierz, Cliff Leppke, Pete
Frost.

NATIONAL OFFICERS

President: Shell Tomlin, 1554 Roanoke Ave., Aurora,
IL 60506, (630) 896-2803. Email: vwclub@aol.com

Vice President: Tom Janiszewski, 417 Dacy St.,
Woodstock, IL 60098, (312) 213-5098. Email:
volkstom@sbcglobal.net (Contact to form a local club.)

Treasurer: Gary Hanson, 107 Mohawk Drive, Clarendon
Hills, IL 60514, (630) 325-4671

Secretary: Open

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Chairman: Gary Hanson, 107 Mohawk Drive, Clarendon Hills,
IL 60514, (630) 325-4671.

Trustees At Large: Cliff Leppke, 3315A N. 47th St., Milwaukee,
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CONTACT VW • AUDI

VW of America: (800) 822-8987 | vw.com

Audi of America: (800) 822-2834 | audiusa.com

DEPARTMENTS

Advertising Director: Shell Tomlin, 1554 Roanoke
Ave., Aurora, IL 60506, (630) 896-2803

**Membership (new, renewals, address changes,
missed issues):** Lynida Tomlin, 1554 Roanoke Ave.,
Aurora, IL 60506, (630) 896-2803

Club Store (Badges, books, decals, clothing): P.O.
Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60542

Activities: Greg Boltz (rallies, gymkhanas), 11007 S.
Harding, Chicago, IL 60655, (773) 239-2685. Ryan
Schulz (car shows), 446 Summersweet Lane, Bartlett,
IL 60103

Recruiting Director: P.O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL
60542

Safety Director: Tom Kravcar, 28W540 Lorraine Dr.,
Winfield, IL 60190

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■ CLUB MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 154, North Aurora, IL 60542-0154

■ REACHING THE CLUB ONLINE

Email: vwclub@aol.com | vwclub.org

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■ **COVER:** The news in September was beyond belief for many VW and TDI enthusiasts: Volkswagen executives admitted that the company intentionally produced cars that violated clean-air laws.

Driver's Seat

■ BY CLIFF LEPPKE

VW has lost its moral compass

I covered the diesel sulphur reduction story in 2007, the one that paved the way for VW's TDI in the USA, and then the conference at the Argonne Labs in Illinois, where government researchers said VW's diesels won the Green Car of the Year in 2009.

I've also reviewed TDI and swifly performed motoring magic; the ropey cable-operated shifter was as lousy as ever—tested in afternoon Chicago traffic. The transmission or clutch needs further attention; it doesn't like sliding into first.

Now, it looks like a Greek tragedy or a theme for a grand opera: VW's navigation had a flawed moral compass, it went big—bet the farm on diesels but faked their goodness.

I'm not happy with being hoodwinked. I'm not happy that those who should have caught VW's fib, didn't. Even the competition didn't raise a red flag—at least in public.

If this were a fable, did VW

go with the rabbit rather than the turtle? I mean, did it use its might to race to 10 million units sold in a wreckless way?

Oedipus wrecked!

■ **MAMA FALL RALLY:** My 1993 Corrado gets one big outing each fall: a trip to the Autobahn Country Club near Joliet, Ill., as part of the Midwest Automotive Media Association's Fall Rally.

This year, its lusty VR6 swiftly performed motoring magic; the ropey cable-operated shifter was as lousy as ever—tested in afternoon Chicago traffic. The transmission or clutch needs further attention; it doesn't like sliding into first.

This auto-um's MAMA Rally let one sample new rides on the street or track. Tom Appel (*Consumer Guide*) and I grabbed the Jetta SE (1.4-liter TSI). We motored on the roadways near the racetrack. Equipped with a sudsy six-speed automatic, the overall sensation was smooth, fluid power. The tranny sometimes had to drop down a cog or two and

■ TURN TO PAGE 30

■ CLIFF LEPPKE | LEPPKE.CLIFF@GMAIL.COM

Small Talk

■ VW • AUDI , QUICKLY

NEW & IMPROVED

■ **FORMULA ONE?:** Rumors are growing that Volkswagen may be a big player in Formula One racing. Reports suggest that the VW Group is entering into a partnership with Red Bull Racing in which VW would not only provide engines but actually buy the team. Red Bull has fallen on hard times since 2013 due to its underperforming Renault engines.

DIESEL SCANDAL

■ **A BOOK AND A MOVIE:** Just as VW executives were attempting to paddle upstream in response to the company's cheating scandal, word arrived that an investigative book and major motion picture were in the works. Paramount Pictures and Appian Way Productions, which is run by actor Leonardo DiCaprio, have acquired the rights to a forthcoming book about the scandal, *The Hollywood Reporter* reported. *New York Times* journalist Jack Ewing signed a six-figure deal for the book with publisher Norton.

■ **NO AWARDS THIS YEAR:** *WardsAuto World* magazine has bestowed many awards in recent years for VW and Audi engines. But in the wake of the VW cheating scandal, the publication is just saying "no" this year. "... The Volkswagen Group has stooped to a new low in the quest for emissions compliance, a competitive edge and consumer appeal," said Tom Murphy, executive editor of the magazine, in a press release. "It seems only fair to exclude VW and Audi from participating in Ward's 10 Best Engines until we are convinced the culture of deceit has been purged, fines have been paid and regulators are satisfied."

■ **NO-BUY FOR A CAN'T-BUY:** Although car buyers are unable to purchase a Jetta TDI or Golf TDI at a dealership, *Consumer Reports* has pulled its "recommended" rating until recall repair work is completed on those cars.

SAFETY FIRST

■ **AUTOMATIC BRAKES:** Ten automakers, including VW and Audi, say they will include automatic emergency braking in its new cars, a step transportation officials say could significantly reduce traffic deaths and injuries. The announcement didn't specify a timetable for making the change.

COMPANY NEWS

■ **UAW SEEKS VW VOTE:** The United Auto Workers announced in late October that it's seeking an election by 165 skilled trades workers at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tenn. A VW spokesman acknowledged the filing and said the company was pleased with its current involvement with the union as well as the workers affiliated with the anti-UAW American Council of Employees. The Chattanooga plant is viewed by the UAW as its best chance to organize a foreign-owned plant in the southern United States.

OBITUARY

■ **FORMER CLUB EXECUTIVE DIES:** Howard Query, past president of the Vintage Volkswagen Club of America, died Sept. 22 in Mason City, Iowa, due to several health issues. He was 62. Mr. Query, longtime publisher of the *Mason City Globe Gazette*, spent most of his life working in the newspaper industry.

Retro Autoist

■ FROM THE ARCHIVES

10 YEARS AGO

■ **NOV/DEC 2005:** German sports car maker Porsche says it will buy a 20 percent stake in Volkswagen, in a move designed to safeguard Europe's largest car manufacturer against a hostile takeover. The deal has surprised the industry. Porsche is only the 24th leading car manufacturer but is coming to the rescue of VW before the likes of Kirk Kerkorian, the Las Vegas hotel magnate, takes advantage of VW's problems and low share price.

20 YEARS AGO

■ **NOV/DEC 1995:** Meet Noah, one of two concept vehicles introduced by VW at the Frankfurt Auto Show. Noah uses aluminum spaceframe construction reminiscent of a boat hull (thus "Noah"

from the Ark days). Noah has wooden floors and seats that are mounted on spars that stretch from the side frame rather than the floor.

■ **NOV/DEC 1995:** Not everyone is appreciating VW's new advertising campaign, called "Drivers Wanted." In *Automotive News*, letter-writer Ron Glantz of San Francisco says: "Volkswagen's new television advertising campaign is reprehensible. It encourages and glorifies speeding and reckless driving."

30 YEARS AGO

■ **NOV/DEC 1985:** Volkswagen isn't bringing back

the Beetle, but its plans for the 1987 model year should make many economy-minded enthusiasts happy. The company has announced that it will import a Brazilian-made car that will be priced to return VW to the market segment once "virtually owned by the Beetle," officials say. The 1986 Golf is priced at \$6,990. (Postscript: VW imported the entry-level Fox from 1987 to 1993).

40 YEARS AGO

■ **NOVEMBER 1975:** The Environmental Protection Agency is testing a diesel-engine Rabbit, reported to be a pickup truck. The 1.5-liter four-cylinder diesel, a VW design, is said to develop 50 hp with a fuel consumption well above 30 MPG. According to insiders, the same engine could also be installed in the somewhat smaller VW Polo and Audi 50, as well as in some of the new VW trucks.

50 YEARS AGO

■ **NOVEMBER 1965:** As part of improvements to safety and convenience, the new 1966 Beetle will allow drivers to use fingertip control of the headlight dimmer switch. This was accomplished by replacing the traditional floor-mounted foot switch with a microswitch built into the turn signal lever switch.

60 YEARS AGO

■ **NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1955:** After publishing issue No. 3 in October 1955, No. 4 didn't appear until January 1956.





ENGINE WITH A SPLIT PERSONALITY PUTS VOLKSWAGEN ON HOT SEAT

BY CLIFF LEPPKE

Company admits it cheated in stunning diesel emissions scheme, vows to make things right and regain trust

An illegal software algorithm that duped EPA emissions testing is VW's biggest crisis since World War II. Now, the Think Small company must Think Big, Very BIG. It's in a colossal jam. The power of its German engineering that gave us "clean diesels" was a sham. If this diesel-dinging saga were a movie, its title could be "The Smartest Guys in the Room" (Enron); "All the President's Men" (Watergate); or "Catch Me if You Can" (Frank Abignale's mastery of deception).

■ CLIFF LEPPKE | LEPPKE.CLIFF@GMAIL.COM



TOM JANISZEWSKI

Should VW come clean and do it on a grand scale, the latter story, which explored the crook's redemption, might fit. Marquette University public relations professor Daradirek Ekachai says VW was a respected brand. She says it could stage a comeback but only if it is straightforward. She says

VW Group CEO Martin Winterkorn's apology after the world heard about VW's breathtaking betrayal of the public's trust stuck her as ineffective. He had to go, Ekachai says, and he did.

VW admits that it cheated: its EA 189 2.0-liter turbocharged clean-diesel four-cylinder engine has a split personality. On laboratory test dynamometers (treadmills for cars) a software "switch" makes these mills squeaky clean — best-

Diesels at a glance

482,000 VW models in the U.S. are affected

- Jetta TDI and Jetta SportWagen TDI, 2009–2015
- Golf TDI, 2010–2015
- Golf SportWagen TDI, 2015
- Beetle TDI and Beetle convertible TDI, 2012–2015
- Passat TDI, 2012–2015
- Nearly 13,000 Audi models in the U.S. are affected

MORE INFO: vwdieselform.com

ing the EPA's targets for the bane of diesel engines: smog-producing nitrogen of oxides, that murky air that makes it hard to see and for some people to breathe.

We'll call this the Dr. Jekyll, the smiley side of VW's diesel engines, as lovable as the Bug and sunny as a Microbus. On the road,

however, they become Mr. Hyde with a road-mode "switch" that lets them emit 10 to 40 percent more particulate filth than the EPA permits.

How did VW do this? Simple. *Consumer Reports'* Douglas Love tells the *AUTOIST* that most new cars have test-mode software. It turns off stability programs so cars run on dynamometers. VW used data such as steering wheel movement, rates and durations of acceleration, deceleration ▶

SCANDAL

not only to turn on the test mode, but also tweak the emissions-system performance to meet emissions mandates.

Evidence gathered by West Virginia University's real-world investigation of diesel-car emissions is significant. It led investigators to discover VW's dirty secret. VW's TDI engines aren't just a bit worse than expected, they're a lot worse. Bad enough, according to the Associated Press' consultants, that based on epidemiological studies, the extra 1,300 tons of NOx produced by VW's cars could contribute to 16 to 94 deaths annually in the United States.

USA

Today's

Chris Woodyard, however, tells the AUTOIST that while pollution is bad, the situation is far more serious because VW intentionally broke clean-air laws. That's like BP's Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the Exxon Valdez gusher wrapped into one nasty mess, ignited by shame: People at the people's-car company deliberately spewed filth. VW admits to wrongdoing and does not dispute health concerns. It put a stop-sale order on its new and used diesel cars.

On one hand, VW's diesel engines comprise fewer than 1 percent of the vehicles on American roadways. Therefore, their environmental impact is less than some other pollution sources. And diesel cars consume less fossil fuel than comparable gas-powered ones, reducing carbon emissions. On the other hand in USA, where VW has

struggled for relevancy, the discovery of diesel deceit has hurt its reputation. That's the tip of the iceberg. VW also admits it fudged European air-pollution regulations, plus its errant power trains are in about 11 million vehicles sold worldwide. That's a whopper.

VW's use of what the EPA calls a defeat device (auxiliary emission control device) is illegal and subjects the firm to steep fines and criminal prosecution.

VOLKSWAGEN		VEHICLE EMISSION CONTROL INFORMATION		2012 MY
Conforms to regulations:				
U.S. EPA:	T2B5	LDV	OBD: CA II	Fuel: Diesel
California:	ULEV II	PC	OBD: CA II	Fuel: Diesel
No adjustments needed.				
Group:	CVWXXV02.0U5N			
Evap:	N/A			

The tab: \$37,500 for each of the 482,000 vehicles sold or about \$18 billion. Marquette law professor Michael O'Hear tells the AUTOIST that the EPA's regulatory

power under

the Clean Air Act reaches further

than the National Highway Safety Administration—the agency that investigated Toyota's flawed throttle pedals and GM's defective ignition switches. Violating the Clean Air Act puts VW into an even hotter seat than GM or Toyota. And unlike Ford's recent misrepresented fuel economy figures or Hyundai's gaming the same, VW cannot skirt responsibility; there's no interpretive wiggle room: Its defeat device had one purpose, deception. That's a crime.

The EPA's outrage is only the beginning. Individual states, such as California with its Air Resources Board, can sue VW. Even Texas has charged VW/Audi with breaching the state's consumer protection law. Harris County, Texas, sued

VW for \$100 million, while West Virginia's attorney general is seeking restitution payments and civil penalties. Scores of people who bought TDIs, who thought they were buying clean cars, are hopping mad. They're suing for damages. False advertising is another charge. Meanwhile, VW and those who bought its clean-diesel cars received tax credits for buying and selling so-called green cars. VW got at least \$51 million under one federal benefit. It's now clear that VW's green cars aren't green. In fact, they're producing red ink.

■ WHO BROKE THE STORY? An examination of VW's dirty-secret scandal could start with the EPA's Sept. 18, 2015, letter to VW. It charged the firm with violating the Clean Air Act. In that letter, VW is cited as admitting to duping the EPA with the use of a defeat device. For the most part, the focus was on VW/Audi's EA 189 TDI engine (model years 2009-2014). Nonetheless, VW's new-for-2015 EA 288 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder diesel is also problematic.

VW disclosed its use of a defeat device to the EPA at a Sept. 3, 2015, meeting. Before that meeting, the EPA and the California board confronted VW with evidence from a West Virginia University study released in May 2014. It discovered that VW's clean diesels did not meet air-quality NOx targets. Three light-duty diesel vehicles were compared in real world driving on the West Coast using portable gear developed to evaluate heavy-duty diesel engines that historically have played a big role in producing smog.

Previously, the EPA cited Cummins, Caterpillar and Volvo (1998) for using defeat devices to fool emission testing. Non-diesel vehicles have also been nabbed for hoodwinking-defeat devices: GM paid a \$45 million fine in 1995 for selling 470,000 Cadillacs from 1991-1995 with 4.9-liter engines that incorporated a device that increased carbon monoxide emissions when the climate

control was on. The EPA, at the time tested, cars with the HVAC off. This led to the first court-ordered vehicle recall for environmental concerns.

Other violations include Honda and Chrysler products with onboard software designed not to register engine misfires. Ford got nabbed for an emissions defeat device on its 1997 Econoline vans. And in 1974 VW settled an EPA complaint that it failed to disclose the existence of two devices that modified emissions controls on 25,000 1973 model-year VWs.

The WVU study financed by the non-profit International Council on Clean Transportation, didn't seek to catch a crook, says professor Arvind Thiruvengadam. Project leader Daniel Carder couldn't be reached for a comment, but Thiruvengadam said they thought they'd be the first to publish academic papers about real-world testing of late-model diesel cars. Their study was designed to compare two of VW's EA 189 mills, a 2012 VW Jetta SportWagen with a lean NOx trap, a 2013 VW Passat with a Selective Catalytic Reduction system (urea injection/AdBlue) and a BMW X5 diesel with SCR.

VW's diesels were significantly worse than the target figures; they varied from the norm (10-40 percent more) depending their emission systems and driving modes, which included highway and city situations. The NOx-trap Jetta fared worse than the SCR Passat, yet neither vehicle met the EPA's guidelines. In contrast, the BMW did.

When first confronted with these findings, VW cited several technical issues. It later recalled TDI cars in December 2014 for a software patch. The California Air Resources Board and the EPA quickly determined that the recall did not work, leading researchers to suspect an illegal defeat device.

I asked a Jaguar rep, who's launching that firm's first U.S.-bound diesel-engine cars, what VW's trickery does. Reducing NOx emissions, ►



Thiruvengadam



Carder

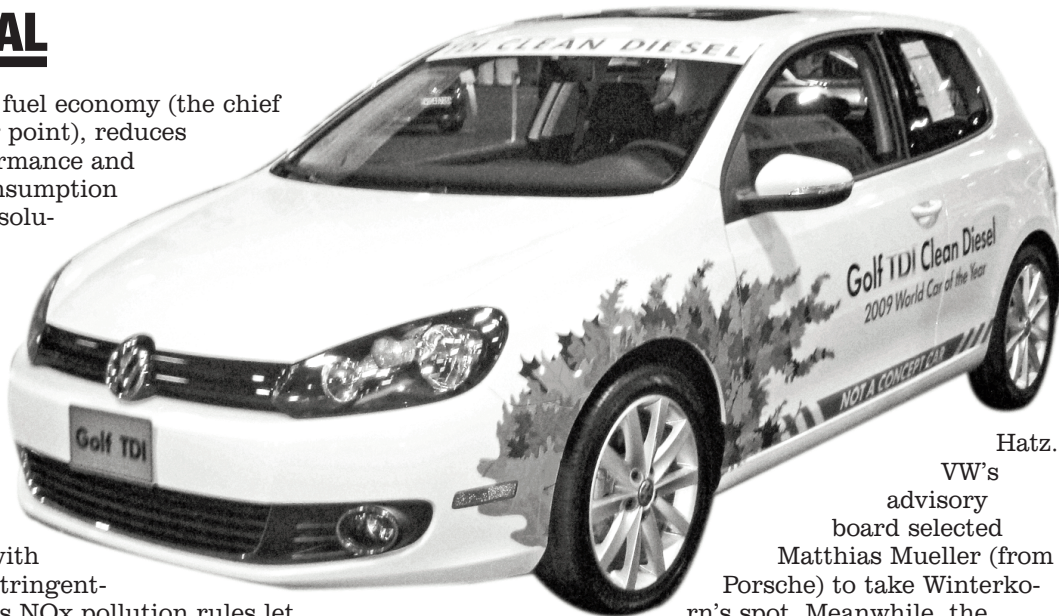
SCANDAL

he said, cuts fuel economy (the chief diesel selling point), reduces engine performance and increases consumption of AdBlue, a solution used for the correct operation of an advanced pollution control technology installed in the exhaust system.

VW's faux-compliance with U.S.'s more stringent-than-Europe's NOx pollution rules let it use a cheaper Lean NOx Trap on its Jetta, Golf and Beetle models. *Consumer Reports' Love* tells the AUTOIST that *CR* dropped its recommendation of VW TDI cars until it can evaluate those that have been fixed. *CR* also simulated driving VW diesels in the "test" modes and found acceleration times slowed by about one second to 60 mph and fuel economy was off as much as 5 mpg. VWoA's CEO Michael Horn says it's possible to lower TDI NOx emissions and yet meet their EPA fuel-economy figures. Unless there's a miracle solution, diesel owners will notice mpg drops further, increasing the "payback" calculation for VW's more expensive but potentially thriffter TDI.

Within hours of the EPA's September letter, VW's management changed. Winterkorn resigned. Just months earlier he survived a Ferdinand Piech-led effort to oust him. Although Winterkorn said he had no direct knowledge of the deception (he wasn't VW's top-dog, when the illegal software was developed), he did not handle the situation brewing in the USA well.

Improving sales in the USA is a key VW objective. VW suspended its top engineers: Ulrich Hackenburg, Heinz-Jakob Neusser and Wolfgang



Hatz.
VW's
advisory
board selected
Matthias Mueller (from
Porsche) to take Winterkorn's spot. Meanwhile, the

board realigned its brand management. For North America, Michael Horn (VWoA CEO) should get a new boss. The first one picked, Skoda Chairman Winfried Vahland, backed out on Oct 14. VW hired U.S. law firm Jones Day to investigate wrongdoing at VW. Some charge VW with relying too heavily on its own supervisory board. VW's board filed a criminal complaint with German prosecutors. VW also hired U.S. Kirkland & Ellis (it handled BP's oil-spill disaster) to deal with its scandal.

On Oct 7, meeting a deadline dictated by the German government, Mueller announced sketchy details of a European recall plan for the firm's EA 189 engines. It will involve not three (the number of engine/emission system types pegged by the EPA) fixes but thousands depending on car, engine, transmission and locale. Some cars might receive software changes while others will need different hardware too. He said the process would take one year commencing in January 2016. Meanwhile, Mueller warned of significant cutbacks at VW in order to finance the diesel pollution solution.

A day later, Horn testified before Congress. His prepared statement offered the ritual apolo-

gies we've come to expect when there's corporate malfeasance. Several congressmen grilled Horn. Rep. Peter Welch, D-Vt., flat out said VW is the auto industry's Lance Armstrong—referring to the Tour de France-winning cyclist who evaded detection and denied doping when in fact he had.

Other congressmen began their inquiries by stating their fondness for VWs and their past or present ownership of its products. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Va., recalled his mother's Squareback, his grandmother's Super Beetle (he still has it), his 376,225-mile 2003 Passat and a 2012 Passat TDI. Their remarks revealed a sense of betrayal. They let Horn know that their ire was personal. Horn was widely attacked for not providing recall specifics. VW was deemed arrogant. Horn maintained that he didn't know about the defeat device until the EPA meeting in September. He claimed that this form of deception was not a core VW value. Meanwhile in Germany, police raided VW's HQ seeking evidence for prosecution.

After further questions, Horn said it's likely that VW's American recall plan will take two years, involve significant hardware updates and take up to 10 hours on some vehicles to complete. Those reading between the lines think larger catalytic converters or NOx traps are necessary, but VW's cars might not have space for this hardware. As mentioned earlier, VW expects recalled-and-fixed TDIs to maintain their EPA fuel-economy ratings. That sounds, however, like real-world VW diesel mpg might fall. Nearly all TDI VWs the AUTOIST has tested easily beat their EPA fuel economy estimates.

VW also withdrew its certification application for its 2016 EA 288 engines (Jetta, Golf, Passat, Beetle TDIs), after admitting that these vehicles have an unapproved auxiliary emission control

device. In EPA speak, a defeat device is an AECD, but Horn didn't use those words. The EPA permits some AECs—for example software designed to prevent overheating. On Oct. 13, 2015, VW confirmed that this AECD is a defeat-type device. VW says it's working with the EPA to eventually get certification for its 2016-model year EA 288 engines. For now, scores of them are Gorilla-Glued to dealer lots.

VWoA has coughed up money to keep its dealers solvent. Its TDI vehicles were roughly 20 percent of its sales volume. Besides dealer money, consumers benefit too. Through early November,

VW offered \$2,000 loyalty money in addition to earlier incentives on many new gasoline or hybrid models. I priced a two-door Golf TSI. It lists for about \$21,000. The deal: \$16,875, attractive.

■ WHAT OWNERS

SAY: Many news accounts cite VW TDI owners who say they'll never buy a VW again.

Their faith in the brand

is forever busted. Others, who bought their TDI for fuel economy or because they love driving diesels—TDIs are spunky—want VW to make things right but not take their mpg thrills away. The AUTOIST's Tom Janiszewski, also the VWCA's vice president, is in this camp.

Tom's view:

"As an enthusiast and a TDI owner, I'm extremely let down and embarrassed. Until this scandal broke, I was an ambassador of the TDI. Two years after buying my red Beetle Convertible, I still get positive compliments in the warm months from other motorists. I always made it a point to tell them it's a diesel and that I consistently average 45-50 mpg. Now it feels like I've been cheating.

"The special cartoon I penned for this issue illustrates the culture that seems to exist within Volkswagen wherein they don't listen to anyone.►



Weeks after the scandal broke, AudiUSA.com's website hadn't gotten the heads-up.

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The TDI issue for me simply adds to the frustration many of us have had with VW's refusal to bring to the U.S. models that would fill market segments that other import brands either pioneered or are leading in.

"I'm confident VW will fix my car, however I will not be happy if my performance or fuel economy are dramatically impacted.

"Long-term, I'm disappointed in how this will impact future models. Will we never see an attempt at a proper modern Microbus? Frankly, I can't think of a better big-picture solution to bring some excitement and positive feelings back."

Public surveys show that VW's favorable rating dropped from seven out of 10 before the scandal broke to two out of 10. Those measuring public perception also note that far more adults surveyed heard negative rather than positive info about VW. Early auto auction data show prices of used VW diesels slumping: off 13 percent or \$1,676 as of Oct. 2, 2015. Prices of VW's gas-powered cars fell 2 percent or \$222. Analysts say this drop is sudden. VW says it will not buy back TDIs. Previously, Ford and Hyundai owners, who bought cars with inflated mpg figures, got refunds up to \$5,000.

As it stands, VW's TDI vehicles are safe and legal to drive. It's VW's responsibility to rectify its wrongdoing by fixing the cars, paying fines and other compensation.

■ **VW TALKS:** This one's difficult. The AUTOIST sent emails to

VW's PR department asking for clarification. One item was whether the new-for-2015 EA 288 diesel engine, which wasn't tested for real-world emissions, was in hot water for illegal software. No answer. I had grave doubts about VW's ability to talk straight until the October Midwest Automotive Media Association's Fall Rally at the Autobahn Country Club near Joliet, Ill. VW's Mark Gillies and Victoria Gagliardi were there with a Golf R and a Jetta 1.4-liter TSI.

Gillies says no one at VWoA can discuss the dirty-diesel disaster with the press. He is not replying to emails. He will, however, answer his phone and politely direct one toward accurate sources. Prepared texts from VW's top leadership were quickly dispatched. Gillies' response was consistent with what other insider sources at VWoA have told the AUTOIST.

Those working for VW realize that the diesel tumult raises questions about previous VW managers and the entire fleet of diesel light vehicles in Europe. A Leeds University study of drive-by

■ TURN TO PAGE 14

clean diesel TDI

“ You have power, you have energy, you have emissions: You get to choose two of them.

• Don Hillebrand, director of energy systems research at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois

“ I am writing you today to offer a personal and profound apology. Volkswagen has violated your trust. I understand and fully appreciate your anger and frustration. I would like you to know that we take full responsibility and are cooperating with all responsible agencies. I can also assure you that we are committed to making this right for you – and taking steps to prevent something like this from ever happening again.

• Michael Horn
President and CEO,
Volkswagen Group of America

“ Yes, VW “cheated” in the sense that it programmed its diesel cars to emit within government standards (extremely, almost impossibly strict) while hooked up to a diagnostic machine – the machines they hook your car up to when you take it in for an emissions test. When unhooked – and on the road – the software re-adjusted to make the engine perform better and deliver better fuel economy, too.

This latter is the key point. By delivering better fuel economy, the vehicles at issue used less fuel. Let that sink in for a minute.

They used less fuel than they otherwise would have (if adjusted to meet the government’s insanely strict standards).

• Eric Peters, Libertarian commentator, ericpetersautos.com

TDI

“ VW’s illegal diesel emissions of 15 to 40 percent were shouted, never actually quoting real figures in case people note that 40 percent of next to nothing is still next to nothing.

• AUTOIST correspondent Richard G. VanTreuren (Page 24)

“ I am shocked by the events of the past few days. Above all, I am stunned that misconduct on such a scale was possible in the Volkswagen Group. ... Volkswagen needs a fresh start – also in terms of personnel. I am clearing the way for this fresh start with my resignation.”

• VW Group CEO Martin Winterkorn

“ The culture and organizational structure of Volkswagen are not comparable to Daimler or BMW. It is something specific. All you hear when you speak to people is that there is a special pressure at VW.

• Professor Ferdinand Dudenhöffer, automotive expert at the University of Duisburg-Essen

SCANDAL

tailpipe emissions found that none of the newest light-duty diesel vehicles designed to meet Euro 6 limits for NOx (0.08 grams per kilometer) did. Strangely, VW's EA 288 TDIs fared better than most (35 percent less than comparable cars). And while VW's EA 189 was 4.2 times the EU limit, other cars were worse. Nonetheless, growing evidence suggests that the European focus on reducing greenhouse gas-emissions (carbon emissions) and lowering the consumption of imported fuel, created a situation where carmakers faked NOx emission compliance and have gotten away with it.

■ WRONG TURN IN 2006?: Those who know VW wonder whether a key moment when its managers made a wrong turn began nearly a decade ago. That's when VW's Wolfgang Bernhard lured Bernd Pischetsrieder from Daimler and set out to build a new diesel engine for the U.S. market named the EA 189. Both deny involvement in VW's cheating scandal. Hackenberg and Hatz rebuffed Bernhard, who wanted to license Mercedes' BlueTec diesel technology. By the end of 2006, Bernhard's team developed an EA 189 prototype. In December 2006, Ferdinand Piech, VW's chairman, replaced Pischetsrieder. Bernhard left in early 2007.

By August 2007, VW canceled its BlueTec deal, opting for its newly minted turbocharged direct injection diesel (TDI). VW also introduced BlueMotion branding for fuel-efficient, reduced-emissions technologies used on both TDI and turbo gas engines. The EA 189 engine went into production in 2008, the emissions-cheating software installed sometime before that. Bosch, VW's fuel/emissions equipment supplier, warned VW against emissions rigging in a 2007 letter.

For this VW enthusiast, it's difficult to believe that people working for VW put the firm in jeopardy. Does VW have an insular culture? Did its managers not realize that real-world emission testing would reveal their deception? That strikes me as unbelievably stupid. As Horn put it: "VW screwed up."

It's sabotage. It makes you wonder whether VW should have kept thinking small rather than pursuing big ambitions—goals such as becoming the best-selling car company. To be fair, VW executives said they sought clean factories, good workplaces and sales volume. But now a vintage VW ad tagline takes on new meaning: It's ugly but it gets you there. Many of us endured pressure from others because we owned an imported VW. Lately, we're chided for not driving a reliable Toyota. Now, we're asked what's wrong with VW? It's not about the car but the people who designed and marketed it.

The financial fallout from VW's fraud is financially frightening. Its moral implications are troubling too. Its sin crushed core beliefs. A regulatory environment that relies on self-compliance often shaped by the goals of industrial giants must change. The immediate backlash will undermine many things that those who worked for VW, Seat, Skoda, Audi struggled to achieve. VW will become a parable and a paradigm shift. The firm that upended complacency with its off-beat small car, groundbreaking advertising, continuous product improvement and efficient distribution system has now become a story of corruption about intertwined politics and profits.

VW represented a national culture known for its high professional and personal standards, a love of nature and exacting precision. The shocking revelation that it of all firms broke the rules is nearly incomprehensible.

For those who are angry with VW and no longer trust the firm, I understand your pain. I argue that it makes sense to see whether VW will do right. It has a big mess to fix, far greater than recalling cars. VW must be fair providing proper compensation for all injured parties. Plus, a sincere effort must be made to offset years of pollution. While VW faces billions in fines, it makes sense for regulators tread carefully. Don't hobble VW so much that it cannot afford to make good on its misdeeds, including those whose livelihoods depend on Volkswagen. Those who committed crimes should be prosecuted. **VWCA**

LOOKING FOR LIMITS ON CORPORATE SLEAZE

BY KEVIN HORRIGAN

According to a very simple diagram published last week in the *New York Times*, the fiendishly clever way that Volkswagen cheated on its emissions systems was ...

Who am I kidding? I didn't understand it. All I could think about were the engine compartments of Bob, my 1969 VW Beetle, and Ruby, my 1972 VW Karmann Ghia. Ignition, carburetor, four pistons. Go.

These were college-first job cars, the first I ever bought with my own money. They had a moral component. Easy on gas, no A/C. Simple. Uncomfortable. Noble.

You could abuse these cars. You could, hypothetically, leave Bob's emergency brake on while driving through West Texas, discover that you'd stupidly burned up your brakes, turn around and drive 100 miles back to San Angelo, the only town in West Texas where they might ever have seen a Volkswagen, using the clutch to slow down. Armadillos died.

Sure, the VW guy in San Angelo might have to order the parts from Dallas, but that would give you two days to watch the only movie in town over and over again. It was "Love Story." Love is never having to say you forgot to take the parking brake off.

Sure Bob and Ruby were a little dirty, but they had only four cylinders. How bad could it be? With a copy of "How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive: A Manual of Step-by-Step Procedures for the Compleat Idiot," you could keep them running.

Rust was a problem, but you could always weld a piece of sheet metal under the engine to keep it from falling into the road. Hypothetically.

Cars are better now, but people might be worse. On the other hand, Volkswagens were Hitler's idea, so maybe there's room for discussion, moral component-wise.

Still, the idea that VW thought it could fake emissions standards on 11 million cars suggests a level of corporate sleaze that might be hard to match. Except of course it isn't.

Last week was a big one for arrogant CEOs. At long last, it appeared that there are boundaries that they are not allowed to cross.

VW's Martin Winterkorn resigned on Wednesday, saying he was "shocked" and "stunned," although "I am not aware of any wrongdoing on my part." He sounded like a German Richard Nixon.

Meanwhile, a federal judge in Atlanta sentenced Stewart Parnell, the former president of Peanut Corp. of America, to 28 years in prison for knowingly shipping contaminated peanut butter and faking tests designed to detect salmonella contamination. Nine people died after eating the product.

And Martin Shkreli of Turing Pharmaceuticals was vilified after it was announced that his firm was raising the price of a Daraprim, a 62-year-old drug that fights parasitic infections in AIDS

and chemotherapy patients. The price went from \$13.50 per pill to \$750.

It was amazing: After watching Wall Street executives go

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■ KEVIN HORRIGAN | KHORRIGAN@POST-DISPATCH.COM

SLEAZE

largely unscathed after cratering the U.S. economy, and coal company executives who scoffed at safety rules go unpunished for mine disasters, it turns out that ultimately there is a moral component: You can't kill people with peanut butter and skate.

They may, however, be able to rip off 11 million Volkswagen owners. Almost certainly they can jack up the price of a vital drug they had no part whatsoever in inventing.

Prosecutors in at least two countries may test Winterkorn's claims of innocence. You can't expect a automotive CEO to know every little detail of how cars are made, but a deliberate scheme to spoof emissions tests in 11 million vehicles is something that might have gotten to the C-level suites.

For sure some people at Volkswagen will face criminal prosecutions. The cars emitted 40 times the allowable limit of nitrogen oxide, a pollutant that can contribute to respiratory problems including asthma, bronchitis and emphysema. It will be harder to link this to individual deaths than say, salmonella in peanut butter, but proving criminal conspiracy shouldn't be hard.

Here's a question I hope gets answered: How

do you rig 11 million cars and not think that sooner or later, someone is going to catch on? The miracle is it took six years.

As to this guy Shkreli, the 32-year-old investor-turned-drug-arbitrager, what do you do with him? He was within his charge-whatever-the-traffic-will bear rights as a capitalist. He found a drug for which he could control the market, bought it and then proposed to do the same thing drug companies do all the time: Fix the price.

Usually they are companies that have developed the drug, or at least piggybacked on the work of scientists at publicly subsidized universities. They claim that high prices and long patent protection rights are their due for innovation. Taxpayers (through Medicare) and insurance companies (who pass on the cost to businesses and their employees) underwrite their profits. It's a ripoff, but at least these companies have some skin in the game.

Not this guy Shkreli. He's just an opportunist with no conscience. Somebody on Twitter asked him how he slept at night. He replied, "You know, ambien."

By 2020, he'll be old enough to run for president. I like his chances. **VWCA**

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

BY FRED ORTLIP

As a college student, I still remember the first Earth Day, celebrated in 1970. Got the button, too. It seemed like a good idea to raise awareness about preserving and protecting the only home we know.

We're going to start recycling newspapers? Sure, I'm in.

I'm not a card carrying member of Greenpeace, but the environment is important to me. It's painful to see long lines of cars idling in traffic, their emissions fouling the air. It's frustrating to

see cars essentially parked in bank and fast-food drive-thru lanes, manned by air-conditioned drivers too lazy or inconvenienced to park and walk to conduct their business.

I'm a gardener, so I've rigged three 55-gallon rain barrels to capture roof runoff. The plants are happier and I use less tap water.

My cars have always veered from the mainstream. Volkswagens. Air-cooled. Distinct exhaust notes. Rear engine. Front drive. But almost always cutting edge for their time and

■ FRED ORTLIP | VWAutoist@mindspring.com

praised for their engineering.

I was enchanted by VW's early diesels because of their quiriness. No spark plugs? Cool. Plus, they saved lots of fuel. But they were dangerously slow and their exhaust blackened the air.

I was driving a gasoline Jetta back when I tried out my brother's Jetta TDI for the first time. Same car, big difference: The low-end torqued and fun-to-drive ratio of his diesel beat the bejeezus out of my gas Jetta. How could that be?

And what's that? This was a *clean* diesel?

VW's clever and ultimately ironic corporate jargon isn't what sold me, but I still believed that these new-generation diesels were representative of how 21st-century machines had evolved, not only in comfort, safety and convenience but also with regard to the environment.

Besides, if the government endorses the slogan — even in California, for goodness sake — it must be the real deal, right?

Green Car of the Year, 2009!

And that's why I enthusiastically embraced the idea of a new Golf TDI in 2012. I've said it many times: This is the best car I've ever owned.

It even comes with a distinctive exhaust note, almost as a paean to the original Volkswagen.

But it was all a sham. Too good to be true.

In 2008, VW press releases bragged about diesel models performing more efficiently in real-world driving than the EPA's tests showed. "Leading third-party certifier, AMCI, tested the Jetta TDI and found it performed 24 percent better in real world conditions, achieving 38 mpg in the city and 44 mpg on the highway," the PR line crowed.

Of course! When the software knew the car wasn't being tested, it delivered far better fuel economy numbers. *Cough cough*.

So a car I've been so proud to own and drive for three years is now a pariah. I'm embarrassed by it. And stuck with it, too. The joke's on me.

Deniers can say that at least this isn't the equivalent of GM's ignition switch scandal; or Toyota's sudden acceleration crisis; or the gruesome air bag fiasco that affected several other models. But it's more than just blowing black particulate.

"Even the small increase in NOx from VW diesel emissions is likely to have worsened pollu-

tion along the roadways where they have traveled, and affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of people," Dan Greenbaum, president of the Health Effects Institute in Boston, told the Associated Press.

Using emission estimates from the EPA, the AP calculated how much pollution was spewed year by year by VW diesels.

Scientists crunched numbers using a sophisticated computer program that studies the health effects of pollutants, the result of which was a rough estimate on deaths and costs to society.

No surprise — the EPA has its own computer model that calculates death and social costs of emissions, roughly finding that nearly 1,300 tons of nitrogen oxides can cause one death.

Using that calculation and AP's emissions totals, the total death figures over the past seven years range from 12 to 69, slightly lower than the AP's calculations of 16 to 94. Either way ...

So the best car I've ever owned, revered by industry experts and owners themselves as technological marvels, has become a slow-walk environmental train wreck, with no end in sight.

VW says it will need much of 2016 or longer to rectify this mess while NOx emissions remain as noxious as ever. Oh, but the cars are safe to drive. Keep your windows rolled up.

A case can be made that this is a convenient turning point for diesel because the future is hybrids and electric. In coming years almost every major carmaker will debut a brand new electric vehicle line. Tesla represents the high bar — the best car *Consumer Reports* has ever tested.

Ironically, VW announced three new electric concepts just a few weeks before the scandal broke. It announced recently it would turn its Phaeton into an electric-only vehicle to demonstrate technological competence. So switching its focus from diesel to electric power may be a good first step in putting this scandal in the rear-view mirror and winning back customers.

As the flawed '80s VW diesels disappeared from the market, so too will these tarnished 21st-century models.

Meanwhile, enthusiasts will be living with this public relations nightmare for years. If only we could hold our breath from the smell. **VWCA**

2015

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Dealers and businesses listed here are friends, and we hope you will patronize them whenever possible. They are soliciting your business and will do all they can to satisfy you.

Several companies offer discounts to VWCA members showing valid membership cards. Discounts are shown next to the dealer's phone number. **P-15, A-10, L-5** means a 15 percent discount on parts, a 10 percent discount on accessories and a 5 percent discount on labor. **AC** means dealers service air-cooled VWs.

Because service and parts advisers may not be familiar with the discount offered, it might be helpful to show a copy of the **AUTOIST** when requesting the discount.

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HOUSTON: DEMONTROND VW, 14101 N. FREEWAY (I-45), 281-872-7200

HOUSTON: MOMENTUM VW/AUDI, 2405 RICHMOND AVE., 713-596-3300

HOUSTON: MOMENTUM VW JERSEY VILLAGE, 19550 NORTHWEST FREEWAY, 281-925-5000, P-10 A-20 L-10

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LAYTON: CUTRUBUS MOTORS VW, 1230 N. MAIN, 801-544-5878, www.cutrubusmotors.com

OREM: KEN GARFF MOTORS, 195 E. UNIVERSITY PKWY., 801-374-1751

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ALEXANDRIA: ALEXANDRIA VW, 107 W. GLEBE ROAD, 703-684-8888,

www.alexandriavw.com,

CHESAPEAKE: SOUTHERN VW-GREENBRIER, 1248 S. MILITARY HWY., 757-424-4689, P-10 A-10 L-10

NEWPORT NEWS: CASEY IMPORTS, 12943 JEFFERSON AVE., 757-988-1200

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L-15

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2015 OKTOBERFEST

KRUISIN' IN KOKOMO

BY SHELL TOMLIN

The City of Firsts Volkswagen Club joined forces with the Kokomo (Ind.) Park District's Summer Concert Series to present its 11th annual Roger S. Wright Oktoberfest and Cruise-In. That sentence says a lot but cannot fully describe the scope of this spectacular event.

By noon on Friday, Sept. 25, the swappers were already setting up their booths in sprawling Foster Park in downtown Kokomo. Although the Cruise-In officially starts at 4 p.m., dozens of magnificent VWs of every Type had begun streaming into Foster Park well before then to get the best parking spot, as it was suggested in the show fliers.

Even after 4 p.m., the cars kept coming until hundreds of VWs completely filled the park. This was, after all, a work day for some, but there was still plenty of time to get settled in, check out the swappers, grab a bite from one of the food vendors and admire all the show cars before the concert began at 7 p.m.



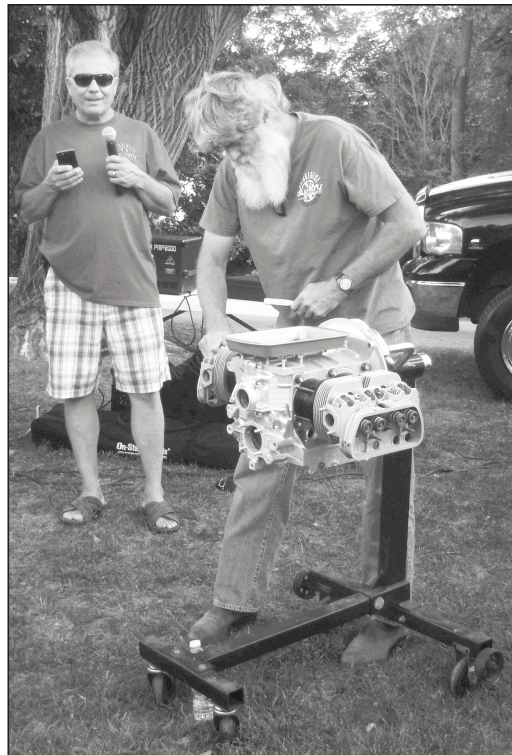
You don't need a shiny car to enjoy the Kokomo Oktoberfest.

Oh, did we mention the concert? Well, not just a concert but the Lovin' Spoonful (sans founder John Sebastian) on its 50th anniversary tour, entertaining us from the park's Performing Arts

■ SHELL TOMLIN | VWCLUB@AOL.COM



ABOVE: The Lovin' Spoonful entertained in Kokomo's Foster Park.
BELOW: The VWCA info booth drew plenty of visitors.



Garry McNew (left), events coordinator of City of Firsts VW Club, cheers on a contestant in the Spark Plug Challenge.

Pavilion. During the breaks, the City of Firsts VW Club staff kept things interesting with raffles, door prizes and their popular "Spark Plug Challenge," where participants must race the clock while installing all four spark plugs in a VW air-cooled Beetle engine. (The winner completed the task in less than 45 seconds!) And entry to the car show, swap meet and concert were all FREE. You can't ask for more than that!

Festivities in the park wrapped up after 10 p.m., but there was still more to do on Saturday. As usual for Oktoberfest weekend, the James Dean Festival, the Gas City Ducktail Run and the New Earth Festival are within a few minutes'

drive. Then it was back to Kokomo at 6 p.m. for the block party at the Lake Erie & Western Railroad Depot Historic District.

Many thanks to Randy Morris, Kokomo Parks & Recreation Superintendent, and to Garry and Sandy McNew, event coordinators for the City of Firsts Volkswagen Club. These kind folks have also offered to help us organize our 61st VWCA Convention in Kokomo for 2016. We want to be sure to select a date that will feature the season's best performers, but next year's summer concert schedule had not been firmed up as of this issue's closing date.

Watch for convention dates and other details at vwclub.org. And while you're there, check out the Oktoberfest photo gallery as well! Did we capture a shot of your VW there? vwca

The Frontdriver

■ BY RICHARD G. VAN TREUREN

Diesel emissions overkill

On my previous AUTOIST anniversaries I have tried to have an interesting column that makes a worthwhile cover story, though in these past 37 years I haven't always been worthy. Since the Golf has just passed the big four-oh itself, perhaps we could have gone with that celebration, for which VW debuted the production version of the Golf GTI Clubsport at the Frankfurt Motor Show. (The Clubsport will pump out 261 hp, up from 217 in the basic GTI model.) Clubsport features an overboost function, which for short periods will be able to boost the horsepower output by 10 percent. Cover story material for sure — except Clubsport, like many worthy VWs, won't be sold here. The reasons why lead us into the cover story I would not have wanted to be a part of.

As one automotive blogger wrote shortly after the diesel scandal broke, the affected vehicles actually run better than they would have, had VW not “recalibrated” the software that runs the computer that controls the operation of the engines in these vehicles. They get higher mileage — and give better performance.

The last time something like this happened — that I know about — was in 1973, when GM's Pontiac division (R.I.P.) tried to slip the high-performance SD-455 V8 (destined for the Trans-Am) under the EPA's radar. Pontiac included this detuned race engine within the already-approved “family” of ordinary 455 V8s, even though the SD shared almost no parts (in particular, its high-performance camshaft) with ordinary, run-of-the-mill 455s. EPA found out — and Pontiac got “busted.”

But back then, people cheered Pontiac. And booed the EPA.

Other than the occasional fouling of a river with toxic sludge (oops, sorry!), today's EPA is not being booed. Yet beyond yellow journalism or even the need to justify enhanced budget requests, EPA's response to the VW case seems more targeted. Perhaps we should prepare ourselves for the shock of a future Edward Snowden-style hacker revealing emails suggesting some Richard Nixon-style selective use of a government agency to aid an ally or punish an opponent.

Funny how the media blitz exploded just as VW briefly held the No. 1 spot in world sales, and the long sought goal of 5 percent of the American market seemed possible. I could not help but think about such a scenario when sitting at a traffic light behind a Detroit pickup truck with Cummins diesel belching black smoke and stench, a vehicle the EPA passes with flying colors.

VW's illegal diesel emissions of 15 to 40 percent were shouted, never actually quoting real figures in case people note that 40 percent of next to nothing is still next to nothing. A range of 15 to 40 percent is a pretty wide range of slop for equipment that the average person thinks must be the equivalent of the National Bureau of Standards, yet somehow affordable by the neighborhood testing stations.

It should help us realize that picking pepper out of the fly manure would be child's play by comparison, reminding us of the cost of trying to just accurately measure, let alone eliminate, those last few fractions of a percent. What was the marvel of efficient, clean energy just a few years ago is suddenly now not only filthy, it's criminal.

Even with measurement as accurate as our science allows, as we strive to manufacture out of

■ RICHARD G. VANTREUREN | RGVANT@JUNO.COM

FRONTDRIVER

existence those final parts per million, the cost per successive partial percentage point goes up exponentially. Ultimately, the cost is infinite, but at the point we still have some measurable pollutants. The average car now costs \$30,000, when the average income is \$60,000 a year. Sales are based on a low-interest credit bubble. How much more is enough? Fact is, we have probably reached the practical limit as to how “clean” internal combustion of ancient swamp goo can be made “affordably.” A few more partial percentage points may not be achievable even at much higher price levels.

Thanks to our EPA’s moral equivalent of shouting “fire!” in a crowded theater, when it had in fact spotted only a fire ant, we are, as of this writing, on the verge of losing the highest-mileage cars sold in America.

Doubtless some VW guys awaiting professional execution are finding it unfathomable how one agency can want to make Mount Everest out of an ant hill. Nor can they grasp how one fraction of a car’s total exhaust component is more important in America than overall energy efficiency and even greenhouse-gas emissions, when the latter is taken much more seriously in Europe.

Oh, that the Clubsport was not the only VW not allowed in the country by our government. Entire families of automobiles the company sells elsewhere are even cheaper and more efficient than those soon to be banned in the U.S. Greater efficiency means reduced overall emissions of both smog components and greenhouse gasses, vs. the concept of drawing an unachievable line for one auto vs. letting a larger one slide.

This writer is not ready to throw VW under the bus when there is no evidence of Corvair/Pinto style corporate mentality, defined as ivory-tower leadership deeming it less costly to pay off some wrongful death lawsuits rather than an expensive recall for rebuilding defective designs. Chrysler recently dragging its feet about recalls said to have killed people. GM cars with bad switches killed people. Runaway Toyotas killed people, defective air bags killed people ... and no

one went to jail. To accuse some software nerds who were trying to make their cars more efficient of killing over a dozen, in the loosely defined hope it will somehow make our air cleaner, is like hastily sacrificing a handy virgin because the moon turned red then suddenly and inexplicably disappeared.

“No matter how small the amounts, VW lied!” was an early and always the final argument. Indeed, myself and other club members can wish VW had not taken advantage of the law’s wording, even if the end result was better performance. But it has happened, and how we proceed from here will determine how many bullets penetrate our own feet as we try to shoot the supposed evildoers. We almost immediately saw Internet pop-ups offering to sue VW on behalf of owners’ “mental anguish” over VW’s “horrific crime” of guessing wrong about performance vs. various competing government agendas, about the letter of the law vs. the intent of the bureaucracy. The lawsuits might drag on for years. If VW can’t get back up after this gut punch, and no longer is a strong sales competitor, will Americans breathe easier? Hardly.

Besides the continued glorification of the EPA, the only other assured result of this debacle is that we’re all going to be paying even more for automotive technology and its use. The air is not going to be noticeably (if even measurably) cleaner. And we’ll be no closer to reducing greenhouse gasses, let alone everyday zero emissions vehicles.

The ultimate goal is zero particulates. Why not admit that it and the government get out of the way of mass-producing ZEVs? If I had to be critical of VW, it would be it is not leading the world in hydrogen fuel cell car research, whose whole exhaust is pure water. A few other manufacturers are overcoming the tremendous obstacles placed in the path toward ZEVs and are actually leasing a few in California.

VW, I apologize for my fellow Americans’ lynch-mob behavior. I certainly hope you don’t pull out of the U.S. market, though no one could blame you for doing so. **vwca**

Safety Matters

■ BY TOM KRAVCAR

Winter driving

Winter is upon us, and winter driving comes with it. While safety is an important consideration all year long, there are certainly some auto maintenance jobs and safety checks that are specific to winter driving that are a good idea to check before we're knee-deep into the season.

Driving a car is a big responsibility. Not only do you now have to realize that your actions hold the lives of fellow passengers in your hands, but you have to make sure that your vehicle is in safe running order. Make sure that, before winter hits in your area, you have the following items checked out in your car. These items apply to that non-Volkswagen vehicle in the family, too.

■ **ANTIFREEZE:** All Volkswagens aren't air cooled, so this is an important one for winter, as it keeps vital fluids in your car liquid, instead of frozen, during winter. Make sure your antifreeze or coolant is fresh and that it is filled. Also check your engine temperature thermostat if your water-cooled vehicle is a few years old.

■ **EXHAUST SYSTEM:** During the winter months, windows are closed, the air is often recirculated, and snow or ice can shroud a car. If your exhaust system is not working properly, this could result in excess noxious fumes being put into your car's interior. Exhaust fumes are poisonous, and, in large enough quantities, fatal. If you smell gas or exhaust fumes in the interior of your car, have your mechanic check for leaks.

■ **HEATER:** Checking that your heating system works well is probably the last thing you want to check during the warmer days of summer. It could be the one feature of your car that could save your life in the event you become stranded.

If it's not working properly, fix it. This is especially important with those Midwest Bugs that have questionable heater channels.

■ **LIGHTS:** Have a friend stand outside your car and check all your lights — are your signals blinking in back and front, on the driver's side and passenger's side? What about your backup lights? Brake lights? Often, people forget to include the hazard lights in the mix, but they are especially important to make a disabled car stand out when the weather is dreary.

■ **OIL:** During the fall, it's a great time to have your oil changed — and it's vital for some vehicles that use different weights of oil for winter vs. summer. Make sure change your oil to a winter grade.

■ **BRAKES:** They are important all the time. Your brakes are one of the parts in your car that stands between you and death, quite literally. Your brakes should never be in bad shape and should be checked every time you rotate your tires, about every 5,000 miles. But add slippery roads to the mix and making sure you have ample brake shoes or pads and fluid is more important than ever.

■ **DEFROSTER:** The simple fact is not all defrosters are created equal. Your defroster may work well or not. Make sure your defrosting system is in its best possible shape and make allowances for its quirks especially the old VWs.

■ **BATTERY:** One of the less expensive parts of a car is a battery, yet it can shut the entire system down if it's dead. Batteries last varying lengths; the more expensive ones last longer. When a battery is installed, the date of installation should be indicated on the top of the label. If it's not, be sure to put it on yourself when you install a new

■ TOM KRAVCAR | CAR57CHEVY@COMCAST.NET

battery. Nothing is worse than being stuck in the middle of nowhere during a torrential rain or freezing snowstorm with a dead battery — that means no heater or lights, either. Find out today when your battery was installed. If it's getting close to the end of its life, think about replacing it.

■ **TIRES:** Depending upon the area of the country you live in, you may require a completely different set of tires for winter. Other people prefer to carry snow chains when snow isn't a months-long constant, so they don't have to be changing tires over and over. If it's time for snow tires, take this time to also rotate your tires and check for excessive wear.

■ **IGNITION SYSTEM:** Does your car start right up? Or does it take forever to turn over? If it's the latter, find out why before cold mornings add even more stress to your ignition system.

■ **WIPERS:** Summer sun beating down on wiper blades often destroys them before the first rain of fall hits the ground. They harden, split and generally don't clear water off like they should. Wipers, and the cleaning windshield fluid that goes along with them, are easy for anyone to replace. And they're available at many places other than auto supply stores. Put a new set on your next shopping list, and fluid if needed, and put on a fresh pair before the rain comes down. Also, make sure that the jets that deliver your wiper fluid are clear — sometimes they become clogged with hardened water or dirt.

■ **WINTER STORM BAG:** Every motorist should have a bag in his or her trunk that contains potentially life-saving gear. Most of this can be obtained from around the house without spending a dime — such as a blanket for each family

member, matches or lighters and towels, and some nonperishable foods, such as granola bars. Canned fruit and nuts are great as long as you keep the hand-cranked can opener with them. Some bottled water, extra socks and gloves are useful and at hand for most people. Rain gear that fits into a small purse is available in many variety stores very reasonably, so that enough for an entire family can easily go into your supply bag. If you're the type who always brings along appropriate shoes along during a storm, then you won't have to worry about adding some collapsible rubber galoshes to the bag. You'll need a flashlight with extra batteries in case you're on a dark road and need to change a tire or put on chains at night. Some models allow you to use your cigarette lighter to get a tremendous amount of light — but you can't take it with you if you need to walk somewhere — so keep the traditional kind on hand as well.

If you're reliant upon medication to live, such as insulin, make sure you have at least three days' supply with you. Many people every winter become stranded overnight in the snow, so hedge your bets by keeping some extra in your winter kit.

A small sack of sand not only helps keep the back of your car heavier and adhered to the road, but can provide traction when spread on slick surfaces as well. A folding camping shovel doesn't take up much space, but you'll be glad to have it if stuck in mud or snow.

Of course, common sense dictates that everyone should be carrying jumper cables, all year long. It may sound like a lot of extra work, and cost some extra money, but longtime drivers know how many details go into safe motoring.

Have a safe new year! **VWCA**



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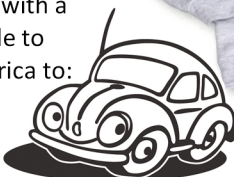
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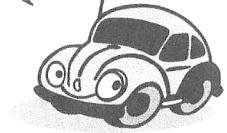
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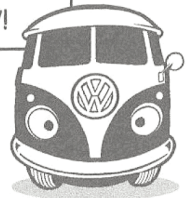
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DRIVER'S SEAT ■ FROM PAGE 3

sudden throttle dips caused slight pauses, but we both found its demeanor quite good. If the automatic doesn't produce engine thrumming—something the 1.8-liter TSI did—this will be a top scoring compact.

A five-speed manual arrives later this year. The interior is still chock full of hard plastics and the trunk lid's treatment crude, but VW has finally got this and the base model S, which uses the same engine (say goodbye to the old 2.0 so slow), tweaked with steering and suspension very close to what one expects from VW. That's a good thing.

VW rep Mark Gillies says the Jetta gets the 1.4-liter alloy-block four-cylinder (same engine's in the Jetta hybrid) because VW wanted to up its mpg ratings. I couldn't evaluate that but found it interesting that VW opted for an imported-from-Europe engine for its Mexican-made

Jetta.

VW recently opened a new Mexican engine plant. Therefore, one would think it would make more sense to source its best-selling model's engine in Mexico. Whether this turbo engine will be durable isn't certain. VW/Audi's



Cliff Leppke, a regular AUTOIST contributor since 1993, has upgraded his wheels since getting his first car in the early '60s. Reach him via email at leppke.cliff@gmail.com.



Cliff Leppke's 1993 VW Corrado continues to perform automotive magic.



The new Jetta SE, powered by a 1.4-liter TSI.

previous turbo fours have been problematic, yet the current automotive trend in four-cylinder engines is turbocharging. When done well, these engines can be thrifty and punchy.

Another new feature: VW has a USB port. This



VW's new Jetta SE, alongside a Golf R at the Midwest Automotive Media Association's Fall Rally.

Jetta has one just forward the shift lever. That's a good move, but I couldn't find another. You'd think VW could locate space in the glove box or center armrest cubby for more ports. And what about those who inhabit the back seat?

The Golf R was lots of fun, a willing partner on the track. Mercedes' GLA 4Matic, which looks a look like the hot Golf, proved sloppy as all get out on the track. Mazda's new Miata is yet another a nifty roadster. It's exceptionally playful on the track even if the horsepower is down a smidgen and the steering feel is slightly less communicative. I wish the Audi TT could do the same for not much more dough, but a \$30k TT is for used car buyers.

Volvo's S60 Inscription, the first mainstream brand model to be imported from China for American drivers, is intended for the BMW 3-Series shopper who wants more legroom, says Volvo. It has a host of driver aids including a pedestrian braking feature to protect those outside of the machine. Because it has this, Volvo doesn't need a bulbous nose to blunt impacts with people. VW debuted its new Tiguan with a

hood-mounted air bag to protect pedestrians. The Volvo's lane guidance behavior is disconcerting. It will wrest the steering wheel out of your hands when it detects that you're not in your lane. It did this despite the fact that there were no painted lines where I drove. It's

suspected that the camera-based system is fooled by variations in pavement darkness. The car's forward collision warning system reflects red LEDs on the windshield. The number of them increases before the car's self-braking takes over.

Mazda's CX3 proved the most fetching of the small cute utes I've recently sampled. Styling trumps practicality, but the thing drives well. A manual transmission isn't offered—zoom, zoom, doom. In contrast, Infinity's larger QX50, which uses a seven-speed automatic rather than the raucous CVTs found in most Nissan products,▶



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DRIVER'S SEAT

was pleasantly sporting. The rear seatbacks flip up or down by pressing buttons.

Jaguar's F Type R coupe is eye and ear candy. The adjustable V-8 rumble, there's a tailpipe logo switch, sounds glorious. The shapely exterior is also fetching.

And surprise, Toyota's Scion iM reminds you of the days when you got more in a Toyota. Appel and I found its interior better trimmed than most compacts, a delightful change from the drab Toyota norm, the six-speed manual was another perk. Engine power was weak however. Chances are it will be economical to operated, though.

I didn't spout my own monologue about just driving a Lincoln because I liked it, but the firm's MKX, a dressy Ford Edge, is much improved. One affectation is the open-pore wood veneer interior trim. It looks and feels like it went the wrong way through a workshop planer. It's rough.

■ **NEW VWs:** VW's Victoria Gagliardi says the 2016 Passat, which was upstaged at its NYC debut by CEO Michael Horn's frank admission that VW did wrong over its diesels, features crisper front and rear styling with interior and exterior trim upgrades. VW's suite of driver mobility aids and a new infotainment system with USB and smartphone integration are also



2016 Passat

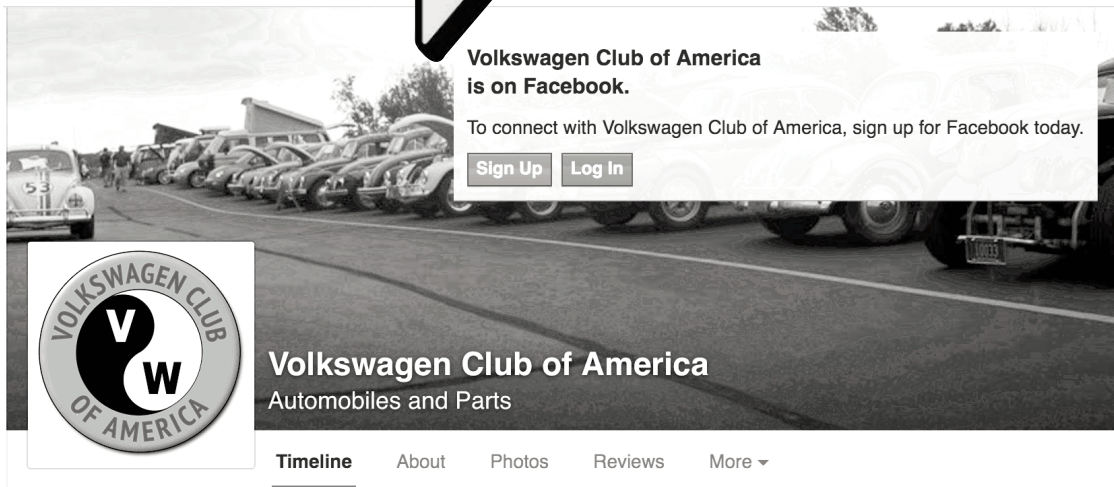
available.

In Europe, VW premiered its new Tiguan based the Golf's MQB toolkit. It's actually lighter and more fuel efficient than the old one, yet it has more interior room. A long wheelbase version should arrive late next year. The latter is intended for American buyers, but we might get the smaller Tiggy too. VWCA

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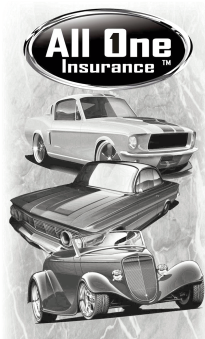
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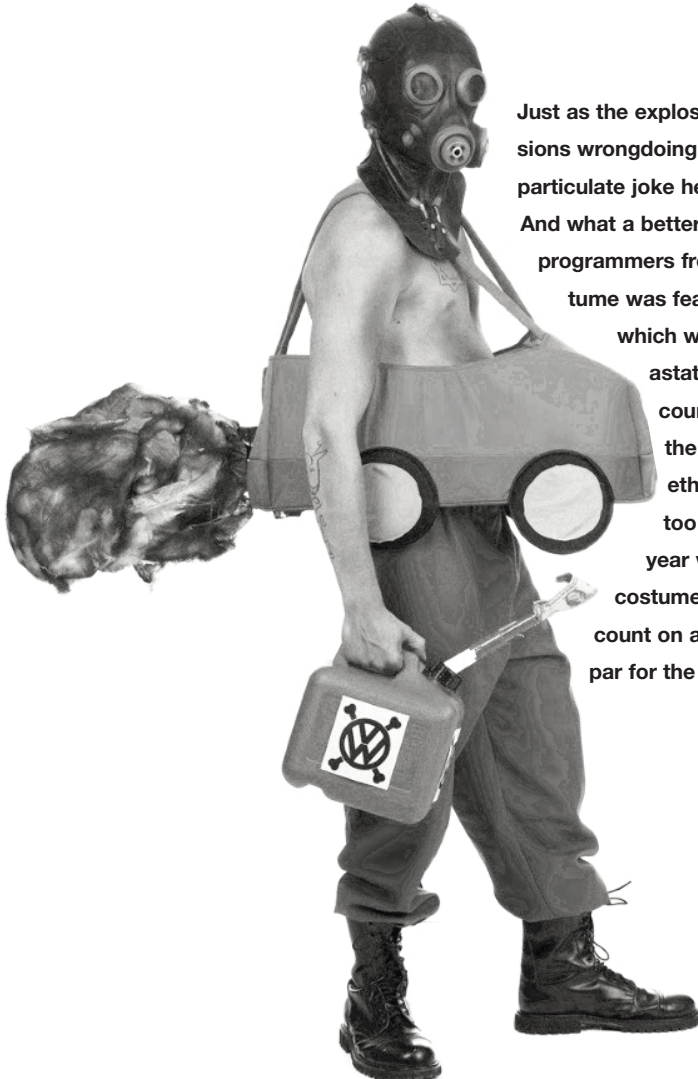
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Parting Shot

■ 'T WAS THE SEASON



Just as the explosion of news revealing VW's emissions wrongdoing was settling to earth (insert your particulate joke here), Halloween was approaching. And what a better time to poke fun at rogue software programmers from Germany. This do-it-yourself costume was featured at halloweencostumes.com, which wrote: "This is not to trivialize a devastating blow to the car industry, or the countless VW employees it impacts, or the questions it raises about values and ethics. It is, well, comedy. When it hurts too much to cry, it's time to laugh! In a year with too many scandals, tasteless costumes, and unfortunate news stories to count on all your fingers and toes, this is just par for the course."

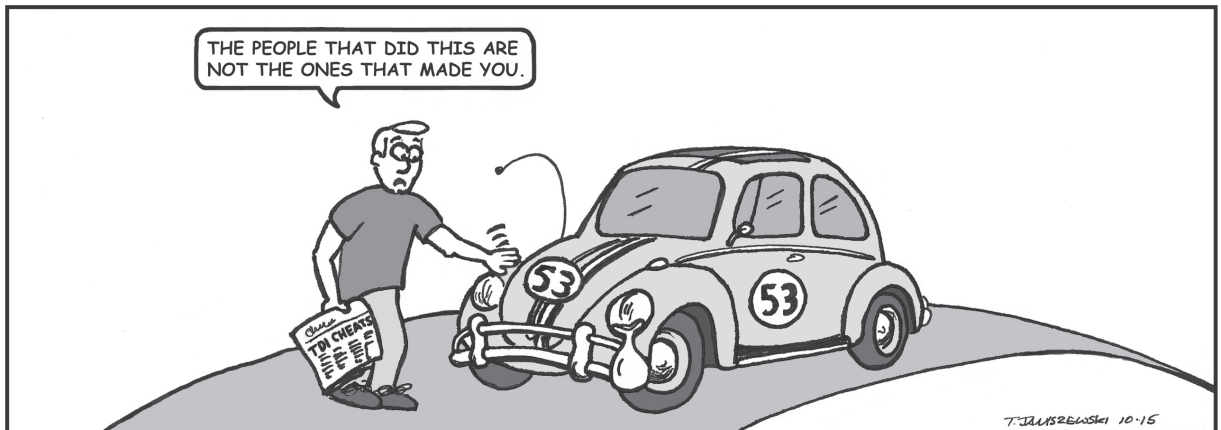
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VW Toon-ups

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