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Golfdom Sales Staff

Pat Roberts
Publisher, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130
Phone: 440-891-2903, Fax: 440-891-2675
E-mail: proberts@questex.com

Kevin Stoltman
Associate Publisher, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130
Phone: 440-891-2772, Fax: 440-891-2675
E-mail: kstoltman@questex.com

George Casey
National Account Manager, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130
Phone: 440-891-3146, Fax: 440-891-2675
E-mail: gcasey@questex.com

Michael Harris
Regional Manager, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130
Phone: 440-891-3118, Fax: 440-826-2865
E-mail: mharris@questex.com

Leslie Montgomery
Account Executive, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130
Phone: 440-891-3139, Fax: 440-826-2865
E-mail: lmontgomery@questex.com

Brian Olesinski
Classified, Account Executive, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130
Phone: 800-225-4569 x2694, Fax: 440-826-2865
E-mail: bolesinski@questex.com

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hybrid cars

Although thoroughly out of character, I would like to be serious and say a few words about the astronomical price of gas and the geopolitical implications therein — AAAGHHH!

Someone please help my wallet from being punctured like a hot-air balloon near a duck hunt!

Thank you for the indulgence, as I feel better now. While doomsayers set up scenarios of petroleum shortages, as refineries need updating, and the country maintains its dependence on black gold from sandy climes, the rest of us suffer from severe gas pains that can’t be cured with Tums alone.

Although alternative sources for gasoline have been talked about since the energy crunch of the 1970s, only recently have automakers done a darn thing about it. As with any emerging technology, the results remain a mixed bag. However, the mainstreaming of hybrid cars do provide a window of hope in the increasingly expensive world of driving.

I am not an engineer, but here’s how the things work: rather than plug hybrids into an outlet to get a charge — like the short-lived, underpowered electric cars — hybrid cars contain small gas engines that work with an electric motor. This dramatically improves your engine’s productivity to braking.

AT 60 MILES PER GALLON, WE CAN’T HELP BUT BRAKE FOR THESE GAS-SAVING ALTERNATIVES

BY MARK LUCE

The cars aren’t foolproof, as batteries for the things can run into the thousands of dollars, so make sure to check the warranty and do your research before plunking down your money. That said, the hybrid car certainly is the wave of the future (at least until hydrogen cars) and will help, albeit slowly, not only to reduce our dependence on oil but also significantly reduce the amount of emissions that slowly poison our air.

Happy efficient driving.

Mark Luce lives in Kansas City, Mo., where he dreams of hybrid hovercrafts.
It's noon and the course superintendent's workday is half over. Only 8 hours to go.

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