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BMW

Die Sonnenkueste

NEWS FROM THE FLORIDA SUNCOAST CHAPTER OF THE BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA

Tour to Yalaha, Antiques, and German Food

By Jim Ringold

This driving tour was organized by our Florida Suncoast Chapter president Bob Ziegler. He stated that the tour was primarily for the ladies, but one that the guys could enjoy too. The meeting point was the wonderful German Yalaha Bakery in Yalaha, Florida. Some members stopped first at our traditional tour breakfast spot, the Cracker Barrel at I-75 and S.H. 50.

Those who did not eat at the Cracker Barrel found plenty of German pastries to carb up on at the bakery. There were shaded picnic tables outside to sit at while eating the treats and listen to some live Mexican music. Beer and bratwurst were also available outside at an outside concession.

From Yalaha, Bob lead us on a tour to the Renninger's Antique Center, an antique and collectible mall on U.S. 441 in Mount Dora. It has a large air conditioned building with about any type of antique/collectible you can imagine. In addition to the inside booths there were outside buildings featuring an even larger variety of interesting stuff; even a toy store with lots of model cars!

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Yalaha Bakery Member's Only parking area





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Tour to Yalaha, Antiques, and German Food

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From there, the Ziegler's led us to downtown Mount Dora, Florida, where we enjoyed some very authentic and tasty German food at The Bavarian Haus. The service was good as was the food. They handled our large group without breaking a sweat. If you find yourself in Mount Dora, the Haus is at 433 N. Alexander Street. Well worth a visit.

We have a running joke in the Florida Suncoast Chapter that we go on tours that consist of driving and eating, driving and eating, driving and eating! Our tradition was certainly upheld on the Mount Dora tour! Thanks so much to Bob and Joanne Ziegler for being our host and hostess for this very enjoyable day in a beautiful part of central Florida.

It was great fun looking at all the items for sale at Renningers Antiques In Mount Dora, Florida



AGENT ORANGE

by Russ Garvey

This is all Sidney Ringold's fault. That has to be said up front. Let's go back a few years; spring 2011, Easter Sunday, to be specific. We're having diner with BMW club members Jim and Sidney Ringold and a few of our other like minded friends when Sidney pipes up about a "BMW for sale in the St. Pete Times," "a '94 e36 convertible, one owner, garage kept, low miles..." "has anyone else seen the ad?" and, finally, "one of us should really go see it and check it out."

"Well, Sidney, since you brought it up, why don't you go look at the car?" I asked, innocently.

"Oh no, we don't need another BMW."

Nobody *needs* another BMW, she's just throwing it out there for one of us to bite. Instigating is what she's doing, I thought – or stirring the pot. Might be working too because the next day, I mention it to Bob Ziegler, but the car wasn't "old" enough for him.

I think you know where this is headed. On the following Tuesday, I find the ad in the paper (still in the recycle bin) and give the guy a call. And it is interesting – 56,000 original miles, certainly worth a look. I mean, it can't hurt - nothing ventured, nothing gained – right?

And it just so happened our airport car* was in need of replacing.

Generally, I don't leave good cars at work, but this one came with a car cover – bonus! Now, as a rule, I wouldn't say that Judi and I are convertible people. We never really thought about it one way or another; never had a burning desire to feel the air of the open road. A sunroof always seemed to suffice quite nicely. But this car was in such good condition, near mint actually, the fact that this was a rag top was not the issue. What was the issue is that this car could be a long term CAV (Club Activities Vehicle) for BMW events and outings as we neared retirement and beyond – our version of a "2002" so to speak. And I could always drive the sedan ('98 318i) to work for the short time I had left. So we did indeed make a deal to purchase this very nice '94 318ic Samoab-lau Metallic with navy top.

Ah, but there is a fly in all this ointment. I'll get to that in a moment. But first, back to the present, and Agent Orange. Here we are in May, 2013, now both retired; we were planning to buy a new car in 2014, our first "new" purchase since 1989. That car, a white e30 325i, was our first BMW and the one that started all this madness.

But BMW NA had other ideas about waiting. "The Ultimate Driving Experience," a nationwide BMW sales promotion was held at the Sarasota dealership on Tuesday, May 21. I attended this very nice event with several other club members, including Jim Slane, Jim Maher and Phil and Terry Howe to name a few. In fact, the Howe's bought a car that day! I drove the X1 (shopping) and a 6 series 4 door coupé (just for fun) and stayed for some snacks and socializing. Both Susan Schoengold and Jack Hojnacki (our eventual salesman) and the rest of the staff from the dealership and BMW of North America went the distance to make sure this event was run smoothly. It was a fun event and I think the Sarasota dealership sold quite a few cars that day in addition to Phil and Terry's purchase. I had Jack run some preliminary numbers for me on a particular X1 on the lot and convinced him to let me take it home for an extended drive, since Judi wasn't with me.

We had already determined that this purchase had to be a 4 door hatch (see below) and had eliminated all the usual suspects at or below our price range: The new Fiat 500 4 door (too small and other performance numbers were not up to snuff, although the 2-door version had great MPG numbers); Audi A3 (Audi took a move right out of BMWs playbook and stopped US delivery of this car); Mini Countryman (disappointing gas mileage, and, as it turned out, not much cheaper than the X1); and the soon to be released 3 series GT (which came in at a much higher base price than anticipated – by me, at least – of \$41K). That left the X1; and when to buy it.

In steps Jack Hojnacki, who begins to deftly smack down all my reasons for waiting until 2014 – our original plan. European delivery? Something I had

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always wanted to do? Unless I wanted to order a car right now and fly to Germany in eight weeks or so, this was not going to be an option; not for the X1 for 2014 models and beyond ordered next year. X1 production is moving to South Carolina. Then how about waiting for the release of the new 3 Series GT? I really was interested in this car, as I seemed to be the only club member who actually liked the 5 Series version. "What was your price range again," asked Jack as he spins his monitor around so I can see the dealer numbers on the 3'er GT? Really disappointing to say the least; high end of \$39K, base price. Add in dealer prep and delivery and you're just south of \$41K. Strike two.

Strike three, the price Jack offered for the X1 we were considering, we mulled over for another ten days. We emailed Jack a few times in the interim and even talked to our financial advisor. Even she told us not to wait based on the numbers we were given. (Were she and Jack secretly in cahoots? Who knows?)

In the end, with the price offered for this vehicle, waiting a year could have cost us up to an additional \$2000. And, after waiting more than a week, the car we wanted was still on the lot – a good omen. I emailed Jack one last time to suggest financing. We were going to pay cash, but the rates are so good – not to mention looming medical bills for an eye injury (A long story – not now!) – that we wanted this option too.

So, Agent Orange is now in our garage, a Valencia Orange (duh) with black interior 2013 X1, our sixth BMW. Obviously, with an "in stock" vehicle, you don't get to pick your options, but this came with a few nice ones: The middle radio upgrade (I think there's three) with blue tooth and USB and Aux inputs; Power seats – could have passed on this; Upgraded wheels and tires, in fact, double upgraded to 19s; And, of course, it's not black, or silver, or white, or silver, or grey, or silver, or silver... Orange would have actually been my first choice on a special order, and it was the only one on the lot

for over two weeks. I'm not sure if we would have pulled the trigger so soon on any other color. The only thing I might have wanted to order was leather. But a surprising number of you (other club members) tell me that's crazy. It feels nice and smells nice, but long term, it's difficult to maintain – especially if you keep the car long term, like we do.

Now the hard part; the last option I couldn't get, even on order. This is my FIRST AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION – EVER! I'm not happy about it, but there it is. Being a fan of the BMW "old school" maintenance program, the transmission fluid and rear end are decidedly not going to be lifetime fill. But, the eight speed transmission does seem to be a nice one, with smooth shifts and four shift mode options, if you count the Eco modes. So, I guess I can live with this.

We just recently returned from a ten day 3400 mile trip and the car is a nice highway cruiser and is much roomier than our e36 sedan. It delivered a respectable, but not great, 30 MPG for the trip. I was expecting a bit more. But, due to the Eco modes, the difference between highway and in-town MPG appears to be less than I'm used to.

One last thing, the color orange harkens back to the legacy colors of the old 2002 era: Sahara (tan); Inka (red); Siennabraun; Mintgrun; Pastellblau - and many others, including only ONE silver (Polaris). Oh, and Colorado (orange).

So, how is this all Sidney's fault? Well, years ago, when we were young and our son Ryan was younger still, we figured we needed a "grown up" car. You know, four doors, sedan size - actually, the aforementioned e30. No more flipping seats forward to squeeze into back seats for us or our friends. No more economy boxes for us, no siree! Well Judi got used to this and demanded that at least one car, forevermore, had to be a four door sedan. We also needed utility of sorts. Now, I'm not a fan of big vehicles, but we have always had at least a hatch in the family. Right now, that duty is being fulfilled by my little 318ti. As some of you know, the ti was transformed into my weekend track car some time ago, but it is also the Home Depot car. Alas, with the X1, it is also now on the bottom rung of the family stable.

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When I get tired of changing wheels and tires and changing out brakes to go to the auto-cross or track my beloved ti and its utility will be sent on its way to a new home.

So, with the four door sedan on the way out (it's for sale), the ti likely to go next and a pristine convertible keeper that is neither a four door nor a hatch, the next car *had* to be a four door hatch. Totally Sidney's fault.

*Airport Car: The car that drops to the bottom of the in-house inventory. Used to drive to work and sit at an airport all day getting dirty from all the detritus that emerges from the business end of all those jet engines. A generally forlorn, neglected, POS. A GEO in this case.



Sunshine Mini Road Rally by Barry Miller

On June 22nd, over thirty Mini owners met in the parking lot at the Brandon Mall. We were given directions and “clues” for our Scavenger Hunt style rally.

Steve and Jeff put together a fun rally for the Sunshine Mini group. We were launched at one minute intervals from the Mall. The Scavenger Hunt type rally had directions based on mileage, and visual items to record. Directions were very well written!

Dara and I took her Mini Countryman out for the three hour event. Steve and Jeff set up a wonderful road trip through the country roads of Lithia, Riverview and Valrico, then north toward Wesley Chapel. The countryside was relaxing with a scenery mix of farmland, cows and old homesteads. There were even some hills! It was a very fun drive with no traffic, and a view of the occasional lost Mini driver who made a U turn to get back on track.



The event ended at Mini of Wesley Chapel. The dealership had an impressive lunch buffet waiting. The dealership raffled off some goodies and then we all went out to the service area for a group photo.

Welcome New Members

March

Bruce Bickelmann, Naples
 Rush Bird, Tampa
 Shirley Brady, Clearwater Beach
 Paul Byrum, Tampa
 Jennifer Carlson, Tampa
 Chad Davidson, Tampa
 Steve Emburey, Valrico
 Clifford Morris, Bonita Springs
 Dora Rosenbaum, Saint Petersburg
 Roger Schmiedel, Pine Ridge
 Gary Smith, Palm Harbor
 Dara Thomas, Brandon

April

Alex Cordo, Tampa
 Fernando and Suzanne Diaz, Lutz
 William Gee, St Petersburg
 Bob Haas, Fort Myers
 Herbert Husbands, Tampa
 Andrew McKinley, Apollo Beach
 Robert Noriega, Tampa
 Stephen Pate, Tampa
 Quoc Pham, Clearwater
 Joseph Savino, Lithia
 Leonard Solie, Tampa
 Howard Van Atter, Naples
 Terry Worthington, New Port Richey
 Ken Zambito, Tampa

May

Luis Colon, Temple Terrace
 Duane Daiker, Tampa
 Donte Franco, Cape Coral
 Lou Gonzales, Englewood
 Lance Hungerford, Lutz
 Alexandre Mosc, Tampa
 Zach Price, Cape Coral
 Santu Rohatgi, Land O Lakes
 Afram Seryani, Seffner



Presidents Message . . .

Summertime and Living In Florida!

Hi to all our FSC members.

It is summertime in Florida. I know this because it has been raining, thundering and lightning for what seems like forever. We get thunder so strong that the whole house shakes and lightening so strong it sounds like a rifle shot. But we cope.

We deal with the heat. Work on our cars hopefully in our garages with fans going and drink lots of water. As a BMW CCA chapter we try to not plan too many outdoor events at this time of the year. It is truly a good time to do some maintenance on our cars and wait for better (cooler anyway) weather.

But wait something has happened this year the entire west coast of the U.S.A. is sweltering. I see people on the internet from Texas to Oregon frying eggs on the street. The northeast meanwhile is drowning in what appears to be an unending deluge of tropical rain storms.

Wow I feel really bad for these people they have had months of winter weather to work on their cars and now look forward to having fun playing with them. This is terrible!!

We have actually had better weather in Florida than the rest of the country. We are much cooler than the west and drier than the northeast. Maybe I will stop my complaining, put off my maintenance project, put the top down on my roadster, crank the A/C up to full blast and take my wife for ice cream sounds like a plan.

Florida in the summertime. . . . maybe it is not so bad after all.

Enjoy your summer. Attend a meeting with either the Tampa or Naples FSC group's information is contained on the FSC website www.FSCBMWCCA.com and while you are there check out our upcoming events calendar.

Remember it is not about the cars it is about the people.

Stay well!

Bob

**The schedule of events is located
on the back page.**

Upcoming FSC BMW CCA EVENTS ... mark your calendar

Saturday July 20th. Naples breakfast meeting at the Olympia Diner 2800 Davis Blvd. Naples Fl. 8:30am

Monday August 12th FSC monthly dinner at Mimi's Café 11702 N. Dale Mabry Hwy Tampa, Fl. 6:30pm

Saturday August 17th. Monthly breakfast meeting at Olympia Diner 2800 Davis Blvd. Naples 8:30am

Monday September 9th FSC monthly dinner meeting at Logan's Roadhouse 9218 Anderson Rd. Tampa, Fl. 6:30pm

Saturday September 21st. Naples Breakfast meeting at Olympia Diner 2800 Davis Blvd. Naples, Fl. 8:30am

BMW CCA Oktoberfest Aug. 19 thru Aug. 24th
Location is Monterey California. You can find out all the information and register for the event at www.BMWCCA.org

Mark your calendar for either October 12th or October 19th for Oktoberfest hosted by Sarasota BMW. More information and the exact date will be coming soon.

October 18th and 19th EUROFEST at the Zentrum in Greenville SC. FERRARI is the featured Marque! Embassy Suites Hotel in Greenville is the host hotel. www.EuroAutoFestival.com has more information on this event.

Collier Collection in Naples. Mal and his group have set up what should be a great outing for Saturday December 7th at 10am. We will be returning to the Collier collection in Naples.

Rooms are reserved at the Ramada Inn located at 1100 Tamiami Trail in Naples. Room rates are a VERY reasonable \$74 or \$79 including breakfast. Lunch arrangements are at Perkins Restaurant on Pine Ridge located just off exit 109 off I-75.

AutoX

Please visit the FSC website for all our auto-cross and motorsport updates www.FSCBMWCCA.com

Ongoing monthly events

3rd Saturday of every month Cars and Coffee at the DuPont Registry in St. Pete. Starts at 7am but get there early if you want a space

Check our website at www.fscbmwcca.com



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