



Woody's Word:



Be a BMW friend.....

Buying seven new BMW's over a ten year span is not something that I normally see, but last month that is exactly what I encountered. I recognized a familiar face and after a nice conversation with these local BMW enthusiasts it became clear to them that they'd better join the BMW Car Club of America. The cash that they WOULD HAVE received through BMWCCA's rewards program would have totaled something like \$5,000 while the cost of being a member for the last ten years would have been less than \$500. They were taking delivery of a new X5 and the BMWCCA Rewards Program currently provides a \$1,000 cash incentive available nowhere else. There are incentives for brand new and Certified Pre-Owned BMW models.

The service department here at BMW of Peoria extends a 10% discount on all service work done by BMW Car Club members. Maybe, you have had a service bill in the past that totaled \$480 or \$960 or \$4800. I have. You may have friends or acquaintances that service their BMW's at one of the BMW Centers in our Chapter's area. Each of these Centers honor the 10% discount and a \$480 service expense would cover one year membership cost in BMWCCA, while a \$4800 service bill would cover the cost for TEN YEARS. Let's face it, lots of BMW drivers out there are spending this money anyway. Why not recommend membership to these drivers? Why not sit down with them yourself, log on to BMWCCA.ORG and register them? You'd be a hero and they'd really take advantage of the great value of BMWCCA membership.

The same thing for parts purchases is true. Parts purchases are discounted 10% for BMWCCA members at our BMW Centers within the ILLINI Chapter area.

All told, being a part of BMWCCA's Illini Chapter represents a tremendous value. The network of members and the contacts within the club provide an enhanced ownership, experience whether they show up for events or not, whether they read the magnificent Roundel or not and whether they anxiously await the Roundelian each quarter to dive into WOODY'S Word. Do your BMW friends a favor and get them in the club.

You'll be a star!

Woody



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The Pittsburg Vintage Grand Prix ... the Allegheny Chapter comes through again !

by Rick Roudebush

photos by Sonja Roudebush



photo by Steve Hyland



one should arrive the day after we were to leave for Pittsburgh. As much as I wanted to drive the car, the hundred and one degree temps we had been having made it an easy decision to haul the old red beast in the trailer behind the truck. Now instead of using the next day to do last minute things to the car, I would have to prep the truck and trailer. It was ten o'clock before I got in the house, after working all day, and I still had to pack.

We met our friends, Eric Schaffer and JoEllen Francis, Wednesday morning as planned, but slightly frazzled, and caravanned towards "Da Burgh." We saw the remnants of a bad wreck, with

an apparent drug bust sprinkled in with the ever-present construction zones along the way. We enjoyed a nice dinner and a relaxing evening, only three hours west of Pittsburgh. End of day one.

Day two began with a leisurely breakfast and giddy expectations for fun to come. You know you are getting close when you do the "funnel into the tunnel" then cross da bridge and there is Pittsburgh. And a beautiful city it is! The host hotel is northeast of the main part of the city. More bridges to cross, then a CONSTRUCTION ZONE, three lanes into one... all stop. We can't believe it when the semi on the right between Eric and me cranked his steering wheel and nudged the side of the car in between us, lifting the passenger side up a good six inches. Then it just drove on into our lane as if nothing happened. I am really glad the old shark is safe inside the trailer!

We made it to the hotel a short time later, and it was time for a drink. After a cordial greeting from Marianne, checking in, carrying stuff in, drink in tow, I started wandering around looked for old friends and found myself outside under the canopy enjoying the unfamiliar sound and smell of a rain shower. Hank, the owner and caretaker of the gorgeous black MGTD forty two years now, is not as happy to hear the rain as I am. He and his beautiful car were soaked to the bone in the rain earlier in the day and this wouldn't help his little roadster dry out. Hank was eagerly awaiting the arrival of the guys bringing a vintage racing MG he was going to crew for. We talked cars for a while and I have a new hero.



We were getting hungry and it was still raining, so we wandered into the bar and found Tom and Sue Madine, green 2002 roundie; Bob Fauconneau, bronzit 633csi; so the four of us bellied up to enjoy the evening chatting with our new friends. After dinner more people were arriving and gathering in the parking lot where the rain had stopped for now. We were thrilled to see some fellow E24 folks we know from the Southeast Shark Fest and some more Allegheny Chapter folks with whom we made friends the last time we were here. The parking lot was where the fun stuff happens. We were basking in the moonlit glow of our favorite shiny cars and the folks that are so crazy in love with them, sharing stories,

"You know, Rick, the Shark car is the featured BMW at the

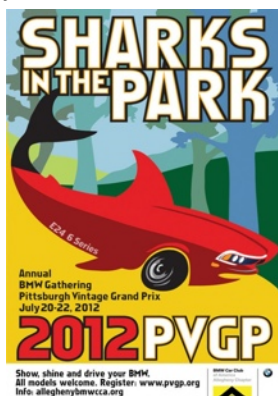
PVGP this year. Any chance you could bring your E24? We are gonna call it "Sharks in the Park." That is how this tale starts out, an email from a friend from 'out der in da burgh'. Seems innocent enough... who woulda thunk it would turn into an adventure, NHAA. NAAAAHM!! That is the dramatic music portion of this article. It helps if you read it out loud. Check to see if anyone is within earshot first, then go on back and read that underlined part out loud. I'll wait here... think over-acted then orchestra!

"Well, if the E24 is the featured car, we have to take the M6 out there to be with all its' buddies!", I plead with my spouseling. It wasn't a tough sell, as we had such a great trip three years ago when we went there our first time. It is a huge car show, MG is the marquee of the year, there are the vintage race cars vrrroooming around the track, and the Allegheny Chapter people really know how to throw a shin-dig. It'll be fun. We agreed!

I can't adequately cover our Pittsburg trip, however, without beginning with the days immediately prior. The Sunday before the Wednesday we were to leave for Pittsburgh was our chapter Wine & Shine event (see page 6). I had just completed a brake caliper rebuild and master cylinder replacement and was anxious to drive the car to make sure everything was working. After washing the car Saturday evening, I tried to start it only to find the battery was dead. I made arrangements to pick up a battery Sunday morning at Batteries Plus, and put the trickle charger on the car late in the evening. It started Sunday morning and we drove off. It was already hot but the A/C worked really well... for about twelve miles. We pushed on with windows and roof open, picked up the battery and made it to the winery.

After a nice lunch and camaraderie (despite the heat), we tried to brave the non-air conditioned ride home. The car wouldn't start. Good thing we drove out of the way to get that battery. I hooked my jumper cables from the old battery to the new one, MacGyver style, and off we went with plans to install the battery when we get home.

When I called my A/C guy Wednesday, we are thinking it just needs a recharge. He said "Bring it on up tonight. We will put it inside and I will give it a recharge in the morning." No such luck, the twenty four year old AC line that goes by the exhaust manifold had been melted in two. A new



drinks and maybe a few exaggerations.

Friday morning after breakfast, two groups of fifteen or so bimmerfiles departed from the hotel for seventy misty miles of twists 'n turns through the gorgeous Allegheny Mountains, then enjoyed lunch overlooking the river and shopping at a wonderful little village nestled in between the river and the mountain. Many thanks to Mike and Marianne Meehan for putting this exceptional drive and destination together. There were a whole lotta car washn' going on when we got back to the hotel. Everybody was getting their favorite Bimmer spiffed up for the big show! I think there were six red E24 M6ers in the parking lot, counting mine. We had worked up an



Mike Renner and the new M5

appetite, and seven of us agreed to try a local favorite Italian restaurant. New friendships were solidified over a great dinner with lively conversation.

When we returned to the host hotel, the welcome meeting was in progress. We joined in and learned the BMW Performance Center's Mike Renner has a new M5 here and would be providing hot laps for charity at one hundred dollars a lap. Sonja and I quickly found two others to ride with us. At 25 dollars each, it sounded like a good investment.

Pittsburgh has been really dry this summer but they got some more rain the pervious night and it was still raining

Saturday morning. This is good for everything except car shows held on a golf course. After stressing out for a few hours, the organizers were relieved to see the rain let up and to hear the groundskeepers declare, "It is a go for a car show"!

We lined up in eager anticipation for the drive through the city to Schenley Park. Our leader took us by some of the most beautiful homes along the way. We really enjoyed seeing the architecture change from old Victorian to modern, watching this old city grow up so to speak. As the Bimmer caravan was guided through the park by many volunteers, we cruised by the MG area, where there must have been 80 of 'em up there already. I could see Hank's beautiful black MDTD glistening in the sun from here. On through the little mud hole lined with cardboard, and one at a time, we

got a little run up BMW Hill to angle park our E24's front and center. Z's over here, 3's over there, 2002's over yonder... you get the idea.

Everybody started rubbn' on their car to get that last speck of dust or water spot off. I opened the trunk to get our lawn chairs and noticed my car detail kit is not in there. Rushed packing, remember. Before I got done moaning about it, my neighbor Jim (black E24 M6) offered up his quick detailer spray. Bimmer folks are nice.

And then came some more of them. As the traffic managers rose to the task, another wave of cars entered the park. We just had to go see all two thousand of them. So many cars, so little time! And there was the Spaten

beer tent right behind us and the food tent is next to that. I love the PVGP!

Just when we thought it couldn't get any better, it was time to take our aforementioned M5 hot lap. The new M5 has 560 hp, 502 ft-lbs of earth rotation reversing torque, two turbos nestled into the hot V, and a transmission that shifts 7 gears lighting fast at the touch of a paddle. And Mike had had two weeks to explore the



Friends in the Spaten tent.

limits of this car down there at the Performance Center. He proceeded to demonstrate those limits to us by pressing us firmly into the backs of our seats, then doing a controlled drift all the way around the uphill right hander just below Bimmer Hill, roasting the rear tires the whole way round while we screamed with delight and laughed uncontrollably. This guy can *drive*! Did I mention I love the PVGP?

After dinner with more new friends at The Hofbrauhaus, it was back to the hotel parking lot for more storytelling and adult beverages. Our group broke up earlier than usual, midnight, and I made my way back to my room via parking lot rather than the long hallway. After all, there were cars to look at outside, right? Well, as I got to the door, there were Hank and his crew, still celebrating their win today! Hank was sporting a camouflage belt with pockets for six beers. Living large and in the moment. I love it! I told Hank it must have been the superior skills and knowledge of the pit crew that gave them the edge. He just smiled and winked at me, but he and the rest of the crew were obviously filled with pride. "You sir, are what I want to be when I grow up. Carry on. " I proclaim, and after a toast, I called it a night.

Sunday was kind of a laid back day at PVGP with a few less cars on display. Another good lunch and more free Spaten. The BMW performance center had donated a two-day, M Performance Center Driving School to be raffled off, with proceeds going to charity. Local chapter members had been dutifully hawking tickets all weekend. I bought a few, Sonja bought a few. We had six chances at the grand prize. The awards had been given for concours winners, donated prizes drawn for and awarded. Now it was time for the grand prize. Eric Zagrocki asks one of the Spaten girls to come over and draw the grand prize ticket. When he reads **my** name, I literally jump up and

start screaming, "YES, YES, YES, that's me!" What a topper to a great weekend. **NAAH NAAAHM!!!**

I told you it was an adventure. Did I mention I love the PVGP? I sure am glad my buds, Dee and Brett Sutton gave me the heads up on Sharks in the Park!



photo from: <http://www.pvgp.org>



The Bimmer & Porsche Folks Gather for an Informal Drive

by Steve Hyland



On June 1st, our chapter and Green Chevrolet hosted a rather informal (but fun) drive, along with some friends from the Lincoln Trail Chapter of the Porsche Club of

America. This time, we took an occasionally spirited drive north out of Peoria, through some nice scenery on some barely paved roads, and back down the east side of the Illinois river. The drive was organized by Prez Woody, who provided the directions. But we experienced automotive enthusiasts who fancy ourselves as Nanook of the North, certainly don't need any stinkin' directions! Okay, we sorta got lost but, just like Nanook, we relied on our navigation systems to get us to the restaurant that was our destination. We even came close to taking the prescribed route!

Prior to the drive, there were lots of nice cars over which to drool, including fine new and vintage German machines, some vintage American iron, a special built car and even a CART racer once driven by Paul Tracy.



The CART car is actually encased in a Green facility conference table.

A couple of our members displayed outstanding courage. In the 1st quarter edition of the *Roundellian*, James and Sherrod Moses told us about a work in process... the restoration of a '73 2002 Tii that had been in Sherrod's family since new. This was a major restoration

of a machine that had spent years languishing, unattended to, in a barn. James and Sherrod picked up the finished product the very day of the drive and joined the rest of the pack. Fortunately, the car drove like a charm and I got to see one of my "bold" predictions come true... I predicted this would be a great car. Kinda like predicting it'll be dark tonight.

Sometimes it's the simple things that are most memorable and this event was such an example. Many thanks to Mr. Jeff Green for providing a great venue for beginning the drive.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to members who joined the Illini Chapter since the last publication of the *Roundellian*.

Dave Allsop, Bloomington, IL	Jeff Hunt, Springfield, IL
Joshua Avins, Urbana, IL	Bill Jankovsky, Dunlap, IL
Michael Benet, Peoria, IL	Larry Kuester, Bloomington, IL
Tom Buchholz, Bloomington, IL	Gary Lickfett, Danville, IL
Gary Carpenter, Quincy, IL	Larry Livingston, Decatur
Kevin Cook, Coal Valley, IL	Fred Ringness, Morton, IL

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Calendar of Events

Our chapter calendar is being finalized, but here's some of the dates established so far (contact illinibmw@live.com for more information):

- 1st Saturday of every month, Morning Mingle, BMW of Peoria.
- Sept. 8, Charity Car Show for St. Jude's, 11 am, Meadows Tap, E. Peoria (<http://www.facebook.com/events/209126299215008/>).
- Oct. 13, Leaf Twirl drive to Starved Rock State Park and social gathering.
- Oct. 28, Trick or Treat Tour (driving tour and social), 5 pm, BMW of Peoria.
- Dec. 9, Illini Chapter holiday dinner.

Our Motorsports Driving Events Chairman, Boris Peharda (peharda@sbcglobal.net), will be instructing at the following track event:

- Sept. 29-30, Badger BMW CCA, Road America.

Here's another opportunity for you to show off your wheels:

- Sep. 8 (Sep. 9 rain date), car show at the David Davis Mansion, Bloomington, IL. Contact Don & Cindy at (309)378-4391 or



Robyn Hovey
President

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Classified Ads may be posted by members at no cost. All ads must pertain to BMW oriented items. The Editor reserves the right to edit ads.

Parts for BMW E-30 3-Series 2-door coupes 1984-1991: Interior parts – complete door panel sets in black, beige, grey, & red; front and rear seats in black leatherette, grey fabric, and new custom leather front and rear seats in red and grey; rear shelf in beige or grey, sets of 5 each - stock 14" bottle cap, (4 x 100), good condition and O.E.M. BBS 14", (4 x 100), cross-spoke wheels newly media blasted and powder coated; stock and aftermarket radios, knobs, switches, multiple steering wheels, speedo/tachometer gauges, trunk tool kits,... email with your parts requests.

Wanted: low-cost, non-rusted, E-30 coupe ('87-'91). I'm ready to start my next restoration project. cjhrdh@sbcglobal.net

Two ContiSport Contact 225/45R17 91W Summer Compounds that came off the front of the 2006 E46 325ci Convertible. Nearly brand new. Will take \$60.00 each. Contact Scott at roadbiker_2@att.net.

- Genuine OEM BMW M6 wheels in great condition; used in summer only. Rear tires are fair, fronts have more life; could probably get another summer or two out of the tires. \$2500 / OBO.
- Genuine OEM set of four all weather mats to fit E60. Excellent condition, \$50.
- OEM BMW all weather cargo tray for E60, EC, \$50.
- 7 quarts of Castrol Syntec 10w-60, \$10/qt.

Contact Ron Kullman, redm3sedan@gmail.com.



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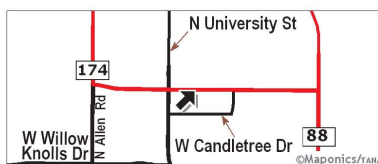
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The Wine & Shine ...

... still our chapter's most popular event

by Merilynn Hyland

photos by Steve Hyland



How can you top it? What more can be said?

Well, the short answer to the first question ... you cannot beat the Wine 'n' Shine at Mackinaw Valley Winery. A mix of old and new friends, old and new BMW's (and this year, we added some Porsche Club cars and people), old and new wines. Add the great food from Pottstown Meats and Deli to the potluck side dishes, salads, and desserts. The sum is sumptuous. The party couldn't get more fun, what with live music and an art fair happening at the same time

Now, if we could just turn down the thermostat a little

We started by meeting under the Bob Michel bridge in downtown Peoria, with 14 cars ready to take the preliminary drive. Drive directions were provided, with my husband, Steve, pointing out that there would be two options near the end:

- a very interesting 6-mile stretch that involved a half mile dirt road.
- a less interesting version, but totally paved.

Or, as Steve said, a "non-wuss" and a "wuss" option.

Steve really wanted to take the "non-wuss" route, but wouldn't do

so if there

were no followers. He was pleasantly surprised when more than half the group agreed to take their prized German machines (and one Mini) on the more interesting version, and we set out with our two groups.

We wound through East Peoria, then out through the countryside, and were somehow able to pretty much keep together all the way to the dreaded wuss decision point, where we broke into the prescribed twin groups.



At the end, those who braved the dirt portion agreed it wasn't at all bad and the twisty, scenic back roads, with their dips and dives through the woods, made it worthwhile. We moved slowly across the dirt and kept adequate distance between the cars to ensure no dinks or chips. Of course we did pick up our share of dust that took some of the sparkle away from our cars when we parked them around the lake at the vineyard, but, hey, Bimmers, Porsches and Minis are made to be driven!

When we arrived at the vineyard, more cars came to join us. Our President, "Woody", his brother Walt, and friend Dan Cordray, were hard at it, erecting the chapter's new 20' x 20' canopy. Once that was set up, a new BMW available for sale from the dealership was under it for all to see.





As in previous years, we parked our cars around the vineyard's private lake, and were joined by other interesting machines. The cars represented included Mustangs, Chevys, a vintage Cadillac, a Viper and even a 1938 International pickup truck.

Speaking of Mr. Cordray, we owe special thanks to him and his wife, Heide. Our social chairman was unavailable to organize this year's event and Steve and I had other obligations during the weekend, including another car show that took place the prior day. Dan and Heide stepped up to the plate and hit a home run. There was ample great food for the nearly 50 participants and all went off smoothly.

The Wine & Shine is our chapter's most popular event, and our venue, the Mackinaw Valley Vineyard, certainly contributes to that fact. Not only is the setting ideal for showing off the cars, the art fair and live music provide additional sources of entertainment.

And make no mistake, these folks brew up some fine vins. Checking out their web site, I found out they've won numerous international and regional awards, including a bronze medal at the New York Finger Lakes International Wine Competition and Best in Show at the 2003 Illinois State Fair Commercial Wine Competition. They also received an Illinois Vineyard of the Year award and owner, Paul Hahn, received an Illinois Winemaker of the Year award.

Wish we could do this twice a year at that venue because the friendships become even more precious than the cars!

Articles in this publication generally end with a Roundel symbol. This time, let's ask Emily Stewart to do the honors.





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European Delivery ...

... not a Bimmer, but still a Trip of a Lifetime

by Boris Peharda

In May of 2000 our good friends, Bill and Pat Jankovsky, traveled to Stuttgart, Germany to take delivery of a new Porsche and tour Europe. When they returned, they told us it was one of the best trips they have ever taken. Five years later they went back to Stuttgart, this time to pick up a Mercedes. Again they came back raving about what a fantastic trip they had. Kelly and I immediately put European delivery on our bucket list. You see, Bill and Pat travel all over the world and do things most people only dream about. When they say you should do something, you try to do it.

Another "must do" item on our list has been a trip to Croatia, a country where I was born and lived until age 12. I had been back twice but each time without Kelly. This only made my desire to take her there stronger. Late last year, I decided to combine European delivery with a trip to Croatia and started planning our "trip of a lifetime". I did not know when exactly this special trip would take place. I knew that it would consist of picking up a fast car in Germany and covering 2000 plus kilometers, depending on how many sights and relatives we visit. It was now just a matter of selling our 2009 Cayman S and deciding on its replacement.

In mid-March I submitted an ad for inclusion in the May issue of the *Panorama*, the Porsche Club of America magazine. The very next day, I received a telephone call that went something like this: "Good Morning, my name is Mitch Schneringer, Sales Manager for Porsche of Omaha. I sold your Cayman S to the original owner and would now like to purchase it for our pre-owned inventory. What are you considering as a replacement?"

BMW's factory in Munich is 225 kilometers closer to Croatia than the Porsche and Mercedes factories in Stuttgart. Therefore, we were leaning toward European delivery of new BMW, most likely a 3-Series. However, with an empty nest, our need for a sedan diminished and recent articles about the new 2013 Boxster caught our interest. At only 2880 lbs, it is considerably lighter than our Cayman S. This lightness, combined with the low center of gravity and low polar moment of inertia, which only a mid-mounted, flat-6 engine can provide, produces amazing agility. The new model's stunning good looks and 15% higher fuel economy won Kelly over. We also agreed we would stick with the lighter and more fuel-efficient 2.7 liter engine as well.

Selecting the colors, as always, was Kelly's job. She chose the Carrara white exterior with a black top and black leather interior. Selecting the options was my job and keeping the car light and pure was my primary goal. Since the new models are very well equipped to begin with, my job was easy. I only had to check five boxes: manual "sport plus" seats, sport steering wheel, painted white roll bar hoops (to match the exterior color), colored wheel center caps, and the "convenience package". This package includes a dual zone automatic climate control, heated seats, and a wind blocker. I thought twice about it, then realized it made perfect sense since our cars are always enjoyed year round... even the sports cars.

When I told Mitch we were considering the new Boxster, he calmly said: "We have allocation for one in May and it is not yet sold. Buying your Cayman S and selling you a new Boxster would be like icing on the cake." One thing led to another and a couple of weeks later, Mitch placed an order for European delivery of a new Boxster. As luck would have it, Kelly and I would be enjoying a spectacular trip to Europe in late June, during our 29th anniversary!

After placing the order, Mitch put us in touch with Jamie Dillon, European Delivery Specialist with Porsche Cars North America. Jamie arranged our Porsche factory tour, our Porsche museum tour, our hotel in Stuttgart and our transportation to and from the Porsche factory and the hotel. She answered all of our questions relative to the new car delivery program and the vehicle return process, as well as registration and insurance. She also provided us with information relative to travel in Germany, Austria, Slovenia and Croatia and arranged a loaner navigation system for us to use while driving. Working with Jamie was a pure delight and made us look forward to our trip even more.

On June 20th, Kelly and I were off for Europe. To say that we were very excited would be an understatement! On June 21st we were in Stuttgart. While in a taxi on our way from the airport to our hotel in the city centre, we saw two new Boxsters. We agreed they looked fantastic and realized that in less than 24 hours, we would be experiencing our very own Boxster. We could hardly wait!

After checking into the wonderful Steinberger Graff Zeppelin hotel, we took a walk along Konigstasse market place. Across from Schlozzplatz' fountains and gardens, we found outdoor seating at Café Tarrazza. It was a beautiful evening, about 70° F, a very pleasant change from the 90° F weather we had been dealing with in Central Illinois. Eating outside, people and car watching from our table turned out to be a great way to spend our first evening in Germany. Once the sun set we realized it was almost 10:00 PM. Our vacation was off to a perfect start and the best was yet to come!

Finally, June 22nd arrived! After a delicious breakfast at our hotel, we took a taxi to Porscheplatz. Excitement was building as we neared the Porsche factory. Upon arriving to the factory "Collection Centre", we were greeted by Tilmann Hancke, Porsche Customer Service Representative. Tilmann explained the morning program to us then showed us our new car. A photographer was also present and took several photos of us with our new car. Tilmann explained many new features on new Boxsters and showed us how to operate its various systems. He also explained the break-in process and programmed our navigation system for our first destination. Tilmann did an amazing job, covering everything in a very clear and efficient manner while also answering all of our questions along the way. After presenting us with high quality photos of us with our car, he introduced us to two factory tour guides. Yes, Kelly and I each had our own personal tour guide! We thanked Tilmann for his fantastic assistance and set off on our factory tour.

The tour guides showed us Porsche's engine assembly and sports car assembly processes. They explained how Porsche goes to great lengths to make sure quality and reliability is never compromised and showed us many examples of how exactly this is accomplished. It was very exciting to be in the factory and realize our new Boxster, and three fantastic Porsches we owned previously, were all built on the assembly line we were watching. Our tour concluded at Gastecasio, Porsche's own VIP restaurant. There we were treated to an amazing multi-course meal and a



choice of many beverages. The food and service were fantastic but Kelly and I were so excited to drive our new car, we skipped the desert!

It was a gorgeous day, sunny with a few puffy white clouds and about 74°F. We immediately lowered the convertible top, placed our bags in "his" (front) and hers" (rear) storage compartments, and got underway. Here we were, living

the dream, driving our new Boxster on a German autobahn without a speed limit and with the top down. The feeling of total freedom was intoxicating. Kelly took over the driving just past Munich and drove to Salzburg, Austria. There we stopped for dinner and our first fuel stop.

During dinner, Kelly remarked how much she enjoyed driving the Boxster. "It is even more fun to drive than I expected... much smoother and faster." Clearly, we



were both very pleased with our choice, although we had each driven the car only once. I then had the pleasure of driving from Salzburg to Villach, where we spent the night. It was a beautiful evening and we could still see the snow on the high peaks of Austrian Alps. At 7:30 PM we were checking into the Holiday Inn in Villach, after covering nearly 600 kilometers in less than five hours. Had we known our new car and the weather were going to be so perfect on our first day of driving, we would have driven all the way to Croatia. Driving a Porsche on German and Austrian autobahns and Alpine roads was even more fun than we had



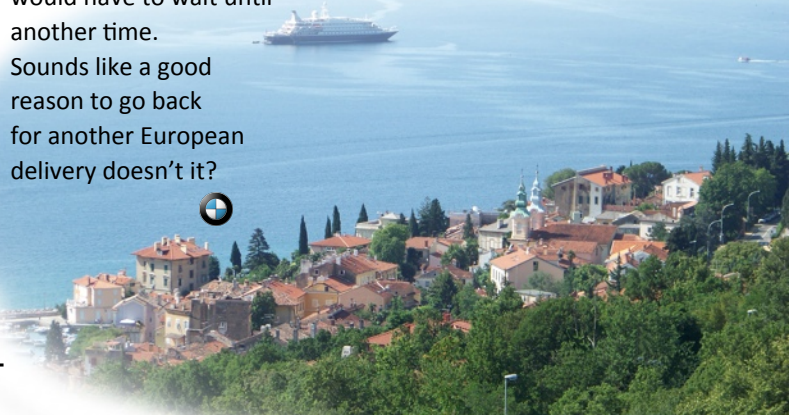
imagined!

Saturday morning arrived and it was another picture perfect day, with blue skies and ideal temperatures. As we neared the Croatian border, my thoughts turned to seeing my relatives and introducing them to Kelly. Shortly after we crossed into Croatia, I spotted a sign announcing the next exit: "Samobor 3 km". While not a place any tourist would visit, Samobor is the town where I was born and I decided to drive through it so Kelly can see it. I had no intention of stopping there but, to my surprise, Kelly really liked Samobor. She found its old buildings and narrow cobblestone streets charming and asked me to park the car so we can take a walk. When we got out of the car, the reality of the situation hit me and I almost had to sit down. Here I was with my wife of 29 years, in a town where I was born more than 54 years ago. "Are you OK?" said Kelly, after observing the tears in my eyes. "Yes, these are tears of joy. It is fantastic that you are FINALLY here with me. If you think Samobor is charming, just wait until you experience the towns along the Adriatic coast!"

Our next stop was the Porsche Center in Zagreb as our Boxster was ready for its first car wash. Here we met Vlado Puric, Porsche Brand Manager. Vlado gave us a pair of Zagreb Porsche Center license plate frames and key fobs as well as some refreshing cold beverages. We thanked Vlado for his kindness then continued to my uncle's house in Petrinja, about 45 kilometers from Zagreb. It was exciting to see how far Croatia had come as a country since my parents and emigrated to the USA 42 years ago. What were once dirt and gravel roads were now highways. Amazing!

Seeing my relatives and introducing them to Kelly was the single best experience of the trip thus far. "Part two" of my dream vacation has now turned into reality and was even better than I had imagined. Kelly loved meeting my relatives and they loved meeting her. Even after four hours of visiting, they did not want us to leave. However, we had six o'clock dinner reservations in Opatija, a seacoast town about 180 kilometers away from Petrinja. Fortunately, a new 6-lane "autoput" connecting Zagreb to Rijeka had recently been opened, making our trip to Vila Kapetanovic Hotel just a little over an hour. The scenery, as we approached the Adriatic Sea, was simply breathtaking. Imagine mountains and sea coming together and you will get an idea. We checked into our hotel where to our delight, we found our "room #30" was actually a two-bedroom penthouse at the very top of the hotel, with a balcony overlooking the sea. "Wow", said Kelly, "this is just unreal. Can we stay here an extra day?" And so we did. Yes, this meant going to the Nurburgring before dropping the car off in Stuttgart would have to wait until another time.

Sounds like a good reason to go back for another European delivery doesn't it?



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