

BMW Car Club
of America
River City Bimmers



Der Fahrersitz

The Newsletter for the River City Bimmers

October - December 2012

ALMA MATER

The Parkers go to school!



Calendar of Events

January 24, 2013 - 6:30 p.m.

**Winter Party • Roadshow BMW/MINI • 405 North Germantown Pkwy,
Cordova, TN (901) 365-2584**

February 21, 2013 - 6:30 p.m.

**Dinner Meeting • The Flying Saucer • 1400 N. Germantown Pkwy
Cordova, TN (901) 755-5530**

March 21, 2013 - 6:30 p.m.

**Dinner Meeting • Soul Fish • 3160 Village Shops Drive
Germantown, TN 38138 (901) 755-6988**

Wait 4 it.



The New 4 Series. Coming soon.



www.roadshowbmw.com



901.365.2584



www.roadshowmini.com

Letter from the PresEditor

So, another year come and gone. All in all it was a pretty good year for RCB, and I am looking forward to another year of events and activities. I would like to encourage members to give us suggestions on things the chapter can do to engage it's membership, and we are also looking for a nice flat space between Memphis and Little Rock to hold an autocross, gymkhana, or other driving event allowing our widespread membership more opportunities to get together and take a look at one another.

Special thanks this issue to James and Susan Parker and Greg Flint for providing some great content for the newsletter. If anyone has a story to share, a new ride to show off, or just want to pontificate on the events of the

day, please do not hesitate to contact me. Photo shoots can be arranged, and all submissions are welcome.

In the next issue, it will be my special privilege to share with you some of my experiences and photos from the North American International Automobile Show (NAIAS). As luck, or perhaps cruel fate, would have it, there is a regional chapter congress in Dearborn, MI at the end of January, and the dates coincided with the NAIAS. My loving family, being long tolerant of my automotive leanings, have treated me to an Industry Day pass, allowing full access to all the cars. That's right, my butt in the seats of many fabulous and dreadfully expensive brand new cars. Amongst the big BMW news will be the unveiling of the new 4 Series coupes. I hope to have many a photo and information to share on what's ahead for our beloved marque.

Greg

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Modifications within the warranty period of your BMW may void the warranty.

Visit River City Bimmers online at www.rivercitybimmers.org or on Facebook. Post photos online on the website or on the Facebook page, keep up with meeting notifications, and get to know other members of our club.

Comments are always welcome. Send an e-mail to otto99@roadfly.com with comments, suggestions for articles, or whatever's on your mind!

ALMA MATER

James and Susan Parker recount their experience at the BMW Performance Driving School

After booking almost a year in advance, the weekend had finally arrived! Susan and I were headed to Greer, South Carolina for the 2 day M Performance Driving School. The school is held at the BMW Performance Center located outside Greenville, across the street from the BMW factory. BMW offers several schools including a basic drivers program, teen school, a motorcycle school, and the M school. The M school comes in 2 flavors – 1 day or 2 day. If you are going to make the trip and spend the money, go for the 2 day school. What sets this apart from other driving schools or DEs is you use their cars; M cars, to be exact. We spent 2 days driving the wheels off of the 1M coupe, M3, and the new twin turbo M5s. BMW pays for the wear and tear to the clutch, tires, and brakes. It's nice not to worry about damaging your car or if you'll need new tires when it's over. The performance school goes through a semi truck full of tires per month – that's a lot of Continental rubber left on the track!

We arrived at the Marriott in Greer Thursday night after driving over in Susan's E86 M coupe. The final hour and a half drive was through the Smokey Mountain National Park and allowed for a little bit of enthusiastic driving by Susan. If you go from Memphis, drive. It's not that far and totally worth it. BMW takes care of everything – upon check in reservations at the restaurant are made for you along with complimentary drink tickets. The Marriott hosts all of the

school participants for BMW and the hotel cost and meals are included in the cost of the school. After a delicious dinner we had our first bit of swag from BMW delivered to our room – M school jackets and polo shirts along with an itinerary for the next 2 days.

Day 1 started with a huge break-



fast buffet in the hotel and reserved seating for all M School participants so we could get to know each other. It was great to see fathers and sons, dads and daughters, and husbands and wives (us) all in our class. One man traveled all the way from Hawaii to attend! The shuttle picked us up promptly and whisked us off to the performance center about 12 minutes away.

The first hour introduced all of our instructors and went over basic car control/principles and the exercises planned for the day. The 12 of us were divided into 3 groups which allowed us to rotate among the 1M, M3, and M5. The 1M was the only manual in

the group with the M3 and M5 having the DCT. Each session involved one aspect of car control and learning different parts of the track. We spent time working on heel/toe shifting in the 1M, then controlling over steer on the wet polished concrete skid pad in the M5. The skid pad was the only exercise where the instructor actually rode in the car with you. All other exercises involved the instructor driving the lead car and communicating via 2 way radios to everyone. The lap would be explained as we followed and then we'd be on our own



to put it into practice. With only 4 to a group it was easy for the instructors to provide constant feedback to how we were doing without the stress of having someone in the car with you. After a delicious lunch provided by the chefs at the Performance School (yes – they have chefs. The food was amazing) we had a timed autocross in the 1Ms. It was ironic that they had trouble with their electronic timing equipment and had to resort to our way of timing with a stopwatch. We rotated to the wet figure 8 exercises in the M3's and then back to the M5's for more track work.

Dinner was also at the performance center, this time complete with German beer, wine, an incredible buffet

with appetizers, and lots of good company. The instructors had dinner with us as well so we had ample time to discuss the lessons of the day and which car was our favorite. What a tough gig they have – beating on BMW's fastest cars all day and eating gourmet meals prepared by a chef. It's a sweet place to be.

Day 2 started with a short overview of the day's activities and handing out of our new custom painted Snell 2010 SA rated helmets. With speeds increasing and more track opening up to us, today would be a day we'd be required to wear helmets. Once again we rotated through the 1M, M3, and M5 on different areas of the track for the morning. After another delicious lunch we were given thumb drives that would record our laps in the M3 and M5 around the entire course. There were 2 cameras in each car, one on the driver and the other out the window. The Race Keeper software was hooked up to the OBD port and recorded everything – throttle position, brakes, speed, rpm, and even lateral g forces. How cool is that! Hot lapping the M3 and M5 was something I'll never forget. The cars are superb and totally in their element on a track. It's almost a shame for someone to buy one of these and never take it to a track or use it only to commute to work. They were made to be pushed hard and enjoyed.

At the end of the second day and hot lapping the entire course the instructors took us for a ride in the M3s to show us the true capabilities of these cars. At the first straight I noticed the car wasn't braking as we blew past the braking markers. With a stab of the throttle the car went sideways and we drifted the entire sweeper, at speed. We actually drifted every single corner on the entire track – the instructors there are truly world class drivers with a total command of

the car at all times. It made us realize how much performance the M cars have and how woefully far we were from harnessing even a small bit of it. I almost wish I had hung out and watched instead of riding – to see 4 M3s all drifting the corners of the track would have been amazing.

So how were the cars? Incredible. Stunning. Amazing. Warp Factor 10 Mr. Sulu! I've been leery of the DCT equipped cars but after driving the M3 and M5 I have been converted! These cars are simply amazing to drive. Shifts under full throttle are instantaneous and the when downshifting into second for a hard corner the computer would blip the throttle and rev match perfectly. And the sound....

The M3 easily won this competition. With its naturally aspirated V8 screaming at redline, the sound was intoxicating. You couldn't help but grin like a fool every time you shifted and ran it to redline. The 1M was the smallest and lightest car in the group

and the only one with a manual transmission. I loved the car but just don't think it's a "ground up" M car. The twin turbo M5? 560 horsepower. 500 pound feet of torque. It's a beast. It's also HUGE. The brakes on this thing stop you faster than dropping a 2 ton anchor out the back. Amazing things can be done with this car – I never came close to driving it at even 50% of its potential and I tried – I really did. Still, to me, the perfect Goldilocks choice would be the M3. It seems to get everything just right – not too big, not too small. No turbo lag, just a beautiful sounding V8 that simply won't quit. Incredible feedback from the steering and suspension – for me it's the one to own.

It was a fantastic weekend and an unforgettable experience. For more information on registering and scheduling a weekend for yourself, check out <http://www.bmwusa.com/performancecenter>. Remember as a club member you get 15% off all schools!



Until I met Johnny Guest several years ago, I had no idea that I wanted an E23 745i.

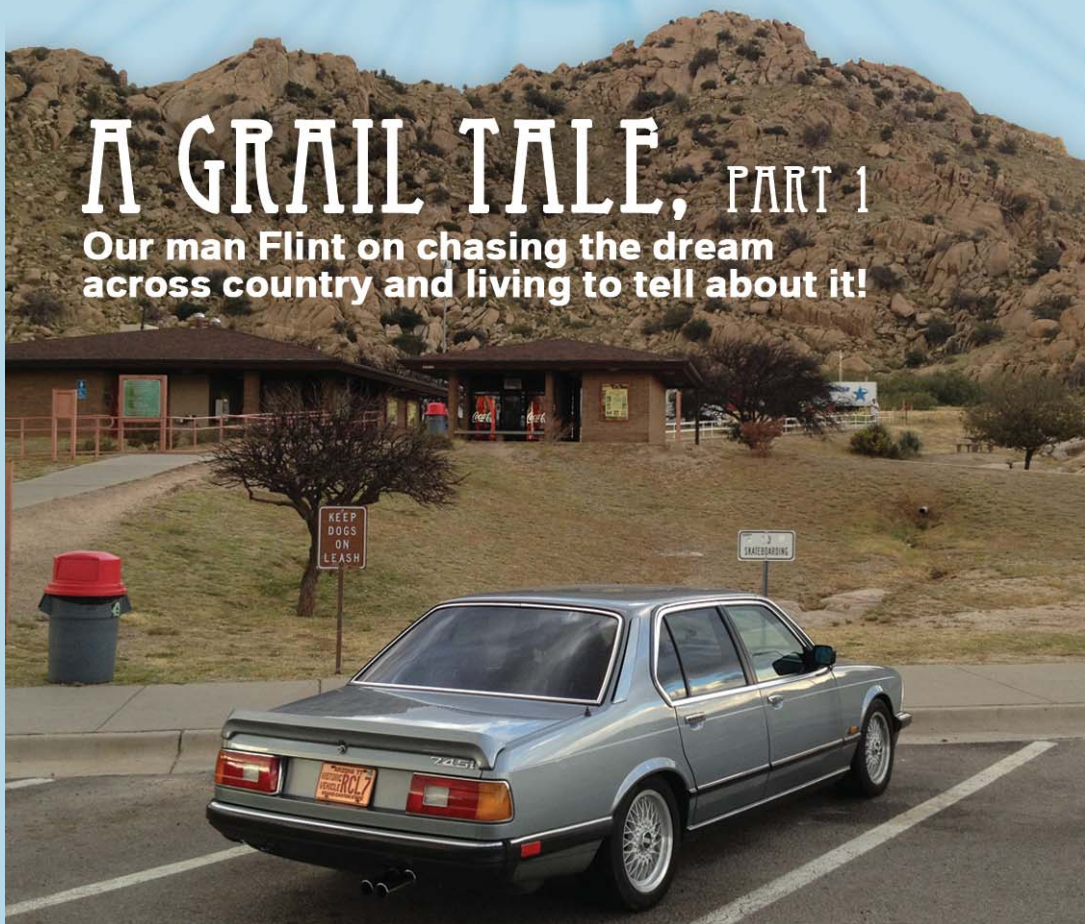
I first met John at River City Bimmers' inaugural Street Survival. He was lurking around my then stock 1995 525iT. We struck up a conversation, and it wasn't long before he recruited me to assist in designing a rally and arranging for CCA sponsorship and insurance for 5er Fest 2009 in Tupelo, MS, a national event catering primarily to E12, E28 and E34 5 series cars. It was at 5er Fest that I first got to take a turn behind the wheel of "Big Blue," Johnny's 1985 745i Executive. Before I returned in the car to the car show lot, I knew that I would own one of these Autobahn stormers one day. The hunt was on!

The 745i was BMW's flagship of the

first generation 7 series (E23 chassis). It was never offered outside the European market, although many came over during the early to mid eighties due to the strength of the dollar to the Deutsche Mark and the desire for well heeled Americans to blast down the highway at ridiculously illegal speeds in a full sized well handling luxuriously appointed driving machine. Many of these cars were Executive models with front and rear heated and reclining water buffalo covered seats, leather dash, consoles and headliners, rear passenger radio controls and other over the top options. The best part of any 745i though is the factory installed turbocharger that in stock form put out 249 HP and 276 lbft of torque. Turning up the boost moderately yields well over 300 reli-

A GRAIL TALE, PART 1

**Our man Flint on chasing the dream
across country and living to tell about it!**



Greg Flint's 745i



able horsepower at the wheels. I have always loved big fast sedans and this fit the bill.

Over the next few years, I searched high and low for the right 745i for me. I talked to people all over the United States and had several 745i aficionados regularly sending me information on cars that might be for sale. In July of this year, I received a text picture from Johnny of a beautiful Cosmosblau 1985 745i. A mutual friend that I met at 5er Fest 2009 had just picked the car up that day in Portland, OR and was driving it home to Phoenix. The more I learned about this car, the more I wanted it. This was a very low option car, the only options showing on the build sheet were an electric sunroof, front arm-rests and side turn repeaters mounted on the front fenders. The interior was comprised of manual Pacificblau cloth seats, manual (crank) windows, and my absolute favorite, manual HVAC. The automatic HVAC fitted to most 745i's is likely the most problematic ever designed by BMW and very few E23's have fully functioning climate control. The car had been treated to some tasteful upgrades including BMW Motorsport springs

with Bilstein shocks (self leveling rear suspension was deleted), monstrous adjustable sway bars and BBS RZ's. In my mind's eye it was the perfect 745i. I sent the owner, Chris Kohler, a revered collector of fine rare high performance BMW's on the mye28.com forum a text of congratulations, believing that this would be another fine addition to his stable that would take up residence along side his E12 M535i, E28 M535i, E28 Alpina B7 Turbo and E34 Touring, never to be sold.

On October 2, I learned that Chris was putting the car up for sale. He decided he had too many projects, and in order to move forward on some of his other fine machinery, he was offering up my dream car. I reached out to Chris and we made a deal over the phone. I had already taken a few days off in October, having made a plan to drive to Texas for the TexFest Lone Star Burgers and Fives rally and show in Rockdale, TX. My plan initially was to take the E34 525iT. Having recently swapped the S50 into the car, I was jonesing for a good road trip, and I knew that the touring would be a hit at this event. However, that wasn't to be. For a second time in less than 6 months, the

E34 would be staying home and not making a big planned road trip. Instead, I booked two one way tickets to Phoenix, AZ. I figured I needed some company on a 1700+ road trip, and since I had planned to make the TexFest trip with my good friend Vance Yerby, I figured he wouldn't mind accompanying me on a slight detour to Phoenix on the way. The fact that Vance owns two E23 745i's was icing on the cake.

October 11, 2012, a scant 9 days after Chris listed the car for sale (and incidentally, my 15th wedding anniversary...my wife is a saint! This is not the first time I've headed across the USA to pick up a car sight unseen and drive it home), Vance and I boarded a



plane bound for Phoenix. Upon arrival, Chris picked us up in his E34T and drove us the short distance back to his house. We got to check out his really cool collection of BMW's and BMW paraphernalia and after a good lunch, we hit the open highway. At the first gas stop, just outside of Phoenix, I dubbed the 745i "Jules" after a certain character's wallet in Pulp Fiction. She had earned the moniker on the short stretch of I-10.

I-10 through southeast Arizona and New Mexico is really scenic. We stopped at the Texas Canyon rest stop and got some beautiful photos. We pushed on and made it to El Paso after a very long day. We stopped at Rudy's Country BBQ and had some of the most awesome brisket and some of the best beer I've ever consumed. The fact that we had been up and

moving for about 18 hours made it so much the better. While we were in Rudy's having quite the big time, Jules waited patiently in the parking lot, as the biggest rainstorm of the year in El Paso came through. I don't really know that it was the biggest, but the clerk at the Hampton Inn across the parking lot from Rudy's said it was. We got soaked in the few feet from the parking space to the front desk. On the positive side, we discovered that Jules was in fact water tight. No leaks to the passenger compartment. The next morning, we were up and on the road pretty early. We had about 650 miles to cover to make it to Rockdale, TX for the Lone Star Burgers and Fives. Oh yeah, we weren't going to miss that!

To be continued in the next issue...



Welcome New Members!

Nicholas William McConnell
Collierville TN

David Bauer
Oxford, MS

Michael Muhlert
Germantown, TN

Chastity Myles
Collierville, TN

William Sere
Memphis, TN

Chip Woods
Moscow, TN

Senu Apewokin
Little Rock, AR

Amer Bassyouni
Collierville, TN

Teodoro Del Rosario
Memphis, TN

Clyde Gates
Tumbling Shoals, AR

Sarah Ann Gates
Tumbling Shoals, AR

Walker Len Rayburn
Maumelle, AR

Torian Thomas
Cordova, TN

Kris Williams
Paragould, AR

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More photos from the Parker's M School experience



Susan's M Coupe outside the BMW Performance Center.



An M3 completes the short autocross track. Small sections of the course were learned and then added together until we were driving the entire track.



A real M1 came by the school. Amazing and very rare car - even the instructors were grabbing photos of it.

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well at least a small part of it.

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Autocross & Other Driving Events

We will be planning some different driving events for 2013 to include some autocrosses, and we are keen to find a location between Memphis and Little Rock to stage one. Other ideas include a gymkhana, and another attempt at Street Survival in the late spring. The photo scavenger hunt was a lot of fun, and it's been a while since we've done a TSD. If there's anything you'd like to do as a club driving event, please let us know and we'll get on it. Thanks!

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