

River City Bimmers
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River City Bimmers BMW CCA April - June 2010

Der Fahrersitz

The Newsletter for the
River City Bimmers

**The new
335i**



**Maybe you don't need
an M3 after all**

Also in this issue:

- April's Fool; A member's tale
- Membership Drive; recruit a member, get a fiver (not that kind)
- Street Survival, Autocross scheduled for second half of 2010

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AUTOCROSS!



The weather finally cooperated, and we got in an autocross! 16 cars meant plenty of runs for everybody, and it was great to have representation from Little Rock coming over the river! Several new faces were on hand as well, some trying out their skills and new cars for the first time. More photos are at rivercitybimmers.org, so drop by and see all of the action. Watch the Facebook page and your e-mail inbox for info on upcoming autocrosses and other club events.

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Welcome New Members!

Careton Ealy • 335 iC • Germantown, TN

Reynaldo Reg • X3 • Cordova, TN

Everett Miller • 740iL • Memphis, TN

Joseph Hurst • 528i • Little Rock, AR

Don Deems • X5 • Little Rock, AR

Stephen Jackson • Collierville, TN

James Rhodes • 135iC • Bartlett, TN

Gary & Debbie Reynolds • M Roadster • Pine Bluff, AR

Bradley Paul • Z3 Roadster • N. Little Rock, AR,

Drennen & Anna Bullock • 328i • N. Little Rock, AR,

Steve Ford • 335i • Germantown, TN

Harold Sterling • 750iL • Lakeland, TN

David Lowe • 750Li • Memphis, TN

Karim & Teresa Chalhoub • 98 528i • Memphis, TN

Charles White • 635 CSI • Millington, TN

Thomas Jones • M3 Conv. • Memphis, TN

Richard Mason • 335i • Arlington, TN

David Isom • Little Rock, AR

Steven Rose • 540i • Collierville, TN



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Got stuff in your garage you need to sell? Looking for parts, want to sell your car, looking for a ride to Oktoberfest? Place a classy classified here in your newsletter! Send the information to Greg Aplin at otto99@roadfly.com

Calendar of Events

June 17 - Come check out the next River City Bimmers meeting/dinner! It will be held on June 17, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at the Presidential Palace (also known as Dick and Marian Carruth's house), 2108 Allen Court Drive in Germantown. Home-made pizza and drinks will be served poolside. Feel free to bring cookies. RSVP to otto99@roadfly.org or on Facebook! Looking forward to a big crowd!

July 22 - Dinner meeting at Buckley's Fine Filet Grille, 5355 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38119

Aug 19 - Dinner meeting at The Flying Saucer, 1400 Germantown Pkwy, Suite 114 Cordova, TN 38016

Street Survival/Autocross - We are planning at least one more autocross this year, maybe more if there's 1) enough interest and, 2) more volunteers to help design courses, deal with the previous evening's set-up, and so on. Send an e-mail to Rdcarruth@aol.com or james3342@comcast.net to find out how you can help. A planning committee is being set up to organize a Street Survival event this year. If you don't know about Street Survival, visit <http://www.streetsurvival.org>. We need several people willing to step up and help make this valuable program available to area teenage drivers. Find out how you can make the Street Survival happen by contacting Susan Parker via e-mail at sueann3342@comcast.net.

WE WELCOME IDEAS ON MEETING PROGRAMS AND LOCATIONS! E-MAIL AN OFFICER WITH YOUR SUGGESTIONS!

Visit River City Bimmers on Facebook or online at www.rivercitybimmers.org. 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. You can also follow-follow us on Twitter.

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

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Letter From the President

Dick Carruth

A summer approaches, and it feels like it's already here, I find myself faced with the single most difficult task that comes with the job. It isn't the manipulation of power, the sleepless nights or the back room politics. I expected all of that. What I didn't think about, and no one mentioned, was that once a quarter I am expected to produce a timely, topical, and coherent letter to the membership which gets printed, making it impossible to deny later anything that I say. Well, here goes. You have been warned.

As with any new job there is new stuff to learn. These are just a few of my first lessons.

- Planning an Autocross is easy. Predicting the weather sucks. Our first date was for Memphis in Mud, er May Music Fest weekend. What kind of idiot would do that? You get one guess. We did cancel two days before. Good thing too, since most of Millington was under water that Saturday. The next week, same thing with less water. We finally pulled it off but it took three attempts. To be fair, it was worth the wait. We had 16 drivers who got 11 runs each and were finished just after one o'clock. If you haven't tried this, you are missing one of the best, safest, and least expensive ways to find out how all of that German engineering works together, and test (improve) your driving skill. It is also the most fun you will ever have in second gear. Please join us for our June event.

- At the national congress in Dallas we learned that most BMWCCA chapters are not all that much better at this than we are. We all seem to share pretty much the same problems. On one level that's comforting. On another it is disturbing since we went to Dallas looking for ideas that would make our chapter stronger and more appealing to the members. About the best thing we learned is that Texas beef is really good. We also learned that if you don't leave the hotel it really doesn't matter where the meeting is

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

held, and that owners of BMW convertibles are generally ticked off at BMWCCA. We will keep looking for ways to do a better job, but the inspiration will likely have to come from within. From you that is. Please don't be shy. If there is something that you think would make us better and appeal to a fair number of your fellow bimmeristas, let me know.

- It is not easy to find a suitable place for the club to meet each month. Seems that most of the places that would like to have us are not places that we would want to be seen. In April our first choice of restaurants, a new Germantown pizza joint which we will just call the "Musty Mushroom" accepted our reservation then uninvited us at the last minute. Seems we are not worth the trouble. I would just like to know who rattled us out. The replacement (not so) Fresh Slices in Bartlett wanted to get rid of us so badly that they tried to run us off with awful service. Unfortunately for them, they didn't cut off the flow of beverages and by the time we noticed the lack of food it didn't matter all that much. It must have frustrated them too since they didn't charge us for our food, a good thing for those who actually got served. May was much better, great in fact. The Flying Saucer is a great place to meet in good weather and the weather was perfect. We will go back there. Here, again, your suggestions are needed. If you have a favorite place in the metro area, let us know.

If you are not in the Memphis area and would like to start meeting with other owners in your area, let us know that too. We are willing to help with contact information, suggestions for the kind of events that seem to work well and even some financial participation to get the ball rolling.

This month, for our last planned full dinner meeting until the fall, we're trying something a little different. We'll be meeting at a small neighborhood place in Germantown. We will have the place to ourselves too. No screaming kids, Greg Aplin has promised to behave (*Ed. Note - Lies. No one asked me anything.*), and no long waits for service. The beer and soft drinks and pizza will be tableside; the pizza which will be prepared on site and served not more than a minute or two out of the oven. It's cheap, too @ \$10 for food and beverage. So....

Polish up your ultimate driving machine and make plans to join us on June 17 at my house, 2108 Allen Court Drive in Germantown at 6:30. (I did warn you that it isn't easy to find a reputable place that will host us). The neighbors have been warned, the dog doesn't bite unless you drive a Mercedes, and Marian will get over it. See you there.

And feel free to bring cookies.

The new 335is - We love our specialty cars, and BMW USA just cannot disappoint.

Greg Aplin

Heavy on the throttle, the revs go up and the cams begin to sing, pull the upshift paddle, POP goes the exhaust, we're in second. Growling sounds that go from baritone to soprano in a few seconds just make you giggle like you're a kid getting away with something. It's been a while since I've giggled like that. And you?

If it's been awhile for you, then I have good news - that kind of fun is back, and it's called the 335is.

It's not that the regular 335 Coupe wasn't enough, or certainly couldn't be with some aftermarket attention. There was obviously a market for a little or a lot more 3 than stock, and money spent on tuner cars can far surpass the amount of a loaded M3. BMW USA saw this, and figured they knew a thing or two about getting some more spirit out of their cars, there's a market for, harumph, tuner cars, so why not make one of our own?

Sound familiar? They did it once with some added sporty parts and gave them an "S" after the i. E30 318is's are coveted prizes, the E28is kept us happy if we couldn't have an M5, and E36 is models are all over the place in autocross and club racing. When the E46 came along, they decided to add a bit more oomph to the package by putting just about every available option in the go-fast catalog on the car, saving you the trouble, and called it ZHP. The package also was offered as a high-zoot sedan, as no E46 M car was offered with 4 doors, and those sedans are one of

the most sought after niche cars in recent model history.

So how do you top that? Take a perfectly normal and certainly capable car, add some M suspension and body parts, fiddle with the electronics, and call it the 335is.

The 335is pumps out 320 hp and a healthy 332 lb-ft of torque, topping the standard car's 300/300 split. However, the programmers wrote a script that allows the engine to produce up to an additional 50 lb-ft when called upon by lots of throttle input, and it's a kick in the pants you can feel coming on. As would be expected, the car is docile and very tractable around town, belying the power within.

Figures from 0-60 are given at 5.1 seconds for the 6-speed manual, and 5.0 dead for cars equipped with the seven-speed dual clutch transmission (DCT) when using the launch control. And about the DCT; forget any experience you've had with harsh, choppy shifts, or the vagaries of other auto boxes with a sequential shift gates. This transmission is really nice, offering seamless, barely noticeable shifts when toodling along, but nearly immediate upshifts when giving it the gas. You can use the stubby little shifter which offers very short throws, or use the paddles behind the wheel, right side for up, left for down. Whichever, you'd have to be a master to shift quicker with a manual.

Handling is everything you'd expect from a BMW and then some. The steering has been adjusted just enough to be a tad quicker, and to my hand, a little lighter ef-

2010 Membership Drive

Member to member outreach is essential to maintaining the growth and health of the Club. It is the also the most cost effective recruitment tool. Bringing new members into the Club should be fun and rewarding. The fun is in meeting new and interesting people. The rewards will be provided by National!

Each year the BMW CCA Membership Drive offers great prizes and rewards to participating members. Chapters and individual members are eligible for BMW CCA Bucks and prize drawings based on their recruitment efforts.

2010 Membership Drive Highlights:

- For each new member joining, referring members will receive \$5.00 in "BMW CCA Bucks" that may be used for the purchase of any goods sold by BMW CCA or applied to CCA memberships. There is no limit to the amount of "BMW CCA Bucks" a member may receive based on new member referrals

• Additionally, there are grand prizes for the three BMW CCA members who refer the most members. Qualifying members will be eligible to win the following prizes:

1st Prize: One-day M School at the BMW Performance Center, plus two nights lodging for one, not including transportation. Minimum of 50 referrals to qualify. Must be redeemed by December 31, 2011.


2nd Prize: 2011 Oktoberfest Registration, not including transportation. Minimum of 30 referrals to qualify.

3rd Prize: Valentine 1 radar detector, Minimum of 15 referrals to qualify.



Check you e-mail for a message from National about the Membership Drive, and forward it on to people who may be interested in joining the club. Questions about the 2010 BMW CCA Membership Drive may be directed to frank_patek@bmwcca.org. We have new recruitment brochures and "take one" applications available -- please call or write to order some.




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April's Fool, cont.

You see, my problem is that actually owning that which I hunt down makes me the captured party. I am unable to see myself carving the mountain in that Alfa Romeo GTV because the burden of ownership in the driveway is in the way. Ownership is the sponge that soaks up my joy. It is the paradise dream stealer. I realized that I don't want it...I just want to find it and go with you to get it. I don't want to drive it more than once...I want to watch you drive it at an event. I don't want to deal with it...I...well you see where I am going here.

Yeah, it's a commitment thing. My whole life lacks it... No kids, no calendars with ink on them, seeing an anchor when I look at the house that I am lucky enough to have, and no desire to change it. It's by design. I have seen more by spectating then I could ever see by owning. The experience is the same for me as I only need it once to be fulfilled. After that I am ready for the next one.

You know what...I don't care about this outcome either. I would do it all over again to have the same lesson taught. Like I have said before, the heart wants what the heart wants. And with me, this want is simply to dip my toe in the water of reality. It will stay for just a second though, never becoming drenched with enough commitment to resemble a prune. You see to those like me, the dream and the hunt can replicate the satisfaction felt by those of you who actually own your dream bimmer. If you are like me, then take comfort that you are not alone. Don't fret about it and try to fix it either. Embrace it. Explore it. Have it. If you are one of the normal ones who can commit, please don't judge me for my ways. Just drive your bimmer like you stole it and hope that no birds cross the window you have been shaving in front of all these years.

As for the car, well it was sold to a club member who

will give it a much better life than I ever could. I am sure you will see the car soon enough on the road or at some event. You won't miss it...it truly is stunning. It would be well worth your time to see what I saw when I first saw it from 50 feet. I realize now that the person I saw in the driver side window from that distance was the new owner and not me. But even that does not make me love it any less. In my case, when you love something you set it free... then change your address so it can't find you.

I know, I know. What is this doing in a newsletter? Simple. As your current membership chairman I can explain the club to you from my experience while offering an explanation of why I sold my bimmer so fast to those who know me. We are all human, and made up of different bits that make us tick. If one were to play the same song to the beat of you and then I surely the tune would not sound the same. But it would still be a tune. That is what makes the club work. We march to the same blue and white drum, but in different time...which makes the club diverse. And a diverse club that is full of resources is a happy club. You see, you can own a bimmer, you can join the ranks of the hunters (like me) and help others find and come to own bimmers, or you can just watch bimmers drive around. It really does not matter in the end. It's the side trips and the people that make the club work, not the cars themselves.

Okay, I'm done here. Now it's your turn to drop us a line about yourself. What makes you tick? What experiences have you had? What ideas can you bring forth from those experiences that can add another facet to the club? Don't be shy either; I know you have sheets of music collecting dust in your head. Leave your stage fright at the door and tune up your instruments. We, as a club, are all ears for a new song to dance to.

fort than the 335i sedans I've driven recently. The ride is taut, but surprisingly compliant considering the optional 19" wheels and the nature of the beast. That could have been a factor of the convertible's inherent flex; there was some cowl shake with the hardtop down, but nothing to be alarmed about. And this droptop handles nicely, thank you, and with the top up, felt nice and tight. I can't wait to drive a coupe. Sadly, the is doesn't come as a sedan.

So, it's fun, it's fast, it's devastatingly good-looking. What more can you want? In our test convertible, I'm guessing not much. Starting at a tick over \$59,000, our tester had the cold weather package with heated seats, mirrors, and other warmed bits, iDrive, convenience package, premium package, navigation, the optional wheels, and stuff like the iPod connection and satellite radio. All told, it stickered at \$69,575. Coupes start at \$50,575, and fully loaded will probably peak somewhere just north of \$60,000. That's a lot of coin, but still about \$10,000 less than an M3.

And options aren't what this car is about. Choose the transmission you want (DCT is a \$1,575 option), and let the rest go. The standard wheels are 18" gun metal gray five-spokes, similar to the M6 wheel, and unique to the 335is. The optional wheels are lovely, but the standard wheels look more the part.

BMW marketing wants everyone to know you have something special, and uncharacteristically, there are more badges than ever seen on a BMW. There's the usual trunk,



plus the front fenders, the tach, and one in the glove box trim. Other touches are shadowline trim on grille and windows (chrome on the droptop), a special diffuser beneath the rear valance, and black chrome exhaust tips.

A great car, no doubt. A special, will be sought after car, to be sure. Buy the coupe, but drive the convertible once. Tell me you don't giggle when it pops in second.

Dressing up parking lots The RCB way!



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April's Fool

Ben Wardlow

One day last February I awoke to the call heard in my head so many times before. I left my bed, took in two cups of coffee, and then I took stock. There I stood, looking in the mirror. Seeing the lines in my face formed from years of traveling the same road. These lines were witness to triumphs and failure, both born from passion...for the hunt. I have done this all my life you see. I have spent most of my waking moments looking into another world, where the hunt was all that mattered. Sometimes I was the tour guide, leading others to their desired destination. Other times I was the tourist, seeking that for which I came. And every now and then, the hunt spilled over into reality and sent me traveling to procure some sort of item in the real world for, or with, somebody else. Sometimes I assisted in finding or picking up a dream car that somebody had been looking for. Other times, it was just a heavily discounted part for a car. I have even traveled two states over with someone for a vintage mountain bike in years past and spent one night driving around town looking for a spork.

Let me stop here before this goes any further with a confession about the hunt. Whether it was in the real world or the dream world in my head, I owe you an apology because of what the hunt does to me. It is very likely that I simply tuned you out while you were talking to me in the past. I found myself opening a barn door, shedding the first rays of light in years on a Porsche 356 coupe that I was about to take home for a restoration. Or I am driving an early Alfa Romeo GTV on some perfect winding road on a mountain in perfect weather, both hands busy gripping at the wooden wheel and manipulating the stick shift in a perfect frenzy. If you were talking to me you would have never known this, unless I let you in on where it was I was in my mind. It's nothing personal, or even the topic of conversation we were engaged in, it's just how I am wired. Some call it attention deficit disorder; I just call it the simple order of things. Hopefully this diagnosis will help you walk with me as we continue.

On that brisk February day I found myself mentally packing the bus for a trip to a place I had sworn off in one way or another for quite some time. I sent my itinerary to my usual co-pilot, River City Bimmer Vice President, Greg Flint. It read as follows: For sale – 1988 BMW 535is,

zinnerberrot/perlbeige, automatic.... The parts that I had sworn off were right there in the title, red cars (zinnerberrot) and automatic transmissions. These were not allowed. How could I have missed those two things you ask? Simple...the casserole effect. You see, when so many things are mixed together you are often left with a casserole that will knock your socks off. That is what we had here. The crystal clear photos of this E28 in sport guise made my mouth water. The usually sworn off hue of red was resting atop a perfect tan leather interior and the whole dish was cooling through a sunroof cocked up in the rear ever so slightly like only an E28's can. The low mileage and California lineage made the recently rebuilt automatic



transmission seem lovely and acceptable. Infatuated with the smell of the casserole, I ordered it from the menu and set about arranging travel plans to have a taste test.

Greg was quite supportive, having been a constant source of harassment for the past two years who never misses a chance to try to get me to get a bimmer. I can't begin to count the e-mails with sale ads attached that have flowed through my e-mail inbox like the ocean tides. I probably could have sent him a fictitious ad for one of his own cars and he would have told me to get it without even doing the math. In short, he was game to play the part of shoulder devil for the trip to Alpharetta, GA.

Two days later, we struck out on our journey before the sun had a chance to stand. After an uneventful seven hours through some of the less scenic routes in the country, we arrived in what can only be described as a knotted area of traffic bearing the name Alpharetta. We finally got off the congested main drag, rounded the corner of the seller's street, parked in front of the seller's house, and set about sneaking a quick peek at what we came to see. I'd be lying

if I did not already know I was going to buy this car form 50 feet away. It was beautiful. Usually the e28 just does not look finished to me. I don't know why this is. Perhaps it is the often weathered metal bumpers, or the small mesh wheels that BMW loves so much that they try to put them on everything they make. I can't quite put my finger on it, but very few E28s look like they are done to me. In this case I did not have to ponder this. The car was perfect, and it was due to the red hue of all things. The racy red brought the boxy lines of the four door to life and I saw my reflection in the driver side window. In a word, it was spicy. In another word, mine. Closer inspection found the car to be well sorted and in great shape for a car even half its age. We fired it up, drove it, bought it, ate lunch, and started the journey back in under an hour.

After a seven hour road trip back to Mississippi with no issues, I really felt like I stole this car. It drove as good as it looked. I showed it to a few E28 aficionados locally who gave it the thumbs up as well. I finally had a bimmer. Life was good, and I had scored something in the real world rather than my dream world. Greg was off my back and my garage was full. I promptly sent pictures out, showing off my new baby. So this is what it was like to feel complete.

Yep, everything was perfect, until I realized that there was a problem with the mirror that I was standing in front of one March morning...which was the same one I stood before a few weeks prior when this tale started. This mirror still showed my face, my lines...my story. But it took

the quick movement of something in the distance to show me what I was really looking into. A robin flying across the sky alerted me to the fact that I was looking at my reflection in a window rather than a mirror, and that the treasure that I had come home with was not meant for me, but someone else. I wasn't seeing my face; rather I was watching someone else's destiny through the window like it was a crystal ball. I was so confused. I had finally felt the warmth of victory when I scooped the car up, and saw the sparkle in the eye of the victorious from the inside of the eye. How could this be! Why didn't I see the signs from the start of the hunt? I guess the robin explained this as it flew into the trees. It was then that I realized that the trees of desire blocked my view of the forest of reality. This journey was never meant to end with me holding the object of the quest so closely. I was merely a vehicle for the vehicle. In a moment of clarity, I realized that some things are meant to be while other things are meant to be...well, around. Amidst the symbolism I then knew what the future held for me. I sold the car three weeks later...and I have not lost a bit of sleep over it since.

Over the past few weeks I was called some form of sick, reckless, careless, or impulsive by those around me. I was labeled by all except one...my wife. She later told me she saw the change in me within 12 hours of my bringing the car home. She said I was distant, reserved, and staring thousands of miles through my gaze in search of something I could not focus on. She gets me before I get myself and is patient enough to wait for me to catch up.

