

River City Bimmers
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BMW Car Club
of America
River City Bimmers



Der Fahrersitz

The Newsletter for the River City Bimmers

April - June 2011



The Ultimate Tanning Machine



Also in this issue:

A call to leadership • Arkansas members gather for drives, coffee • Our man at the Vintage

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Welcome New Members!

Ronald Wallace, Collierville, TN

Jack Hollis, Memphis, TN

Milas Polk, Memphis, TN

Rob Drews, Collierville, TN

Sheila Boswell, Cordova, TN

Clifford Simmons, Senatobia, MS

Steven Myers, Horn Lake, MS

Mark Harbison, Sherwood, AR

Ronda Harbison, Sherwood, AR

Clay Lehman, Little Rock, AR

Lynelle Lehman, Little Rock, AR

Stuart Bennett, Cabot, AR

Brent Thompson, Starkville, MS

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Calendar of Events

June 16, 2011 - 6:30 p.m.

Dinner Meeting

Humdinger's, 6300 Poplar (at Massey)
Memphis, TN (901.260.8292)

PLEASE NOTE: Dinner Meetings will resume
in September

A Summer Get-together and cook-out is in
the planning stages. Please check www.rivercitybimmers.org or our Facebook page
for announcements.

September 24, 2011 - 8:00 am

Autocross

Millington Jetport

October 22, 2011 - 8:00 am

Autocross

Millington Jetport

October 29, 2011 - 8:00 am

Street Survival

Memphis Police Academy

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A Call to Leadership

HELP WANTED....and needed. That's right! We're hiring. It seems that every few years the club reaches a point at which the leadership has been doing so much for so long that we get, well, just really tired. That's how I got involved several years ago, along with James and Susan Parker, Mike Windham, and Greg Flint. Between them, those four and yours truly have been President (twice), Treasurer, Secretary, Driving Events Coordinator, Auto Cross gurus, Rally Meister, VP, Newsletter Editor, club photographer, web master, and social legends. That's more than just beer and bratwurst. It's real work. The hanging out, lying about our cars and driving adventures, and occasional consumption of imported beverages with fellow BMW folk is great, but we really do have to do some stuff or we wouldn't have enough to lie about.

So now it's your turn. We need a few interested, motivated and energetic people. You will notice that car knowledge, mechanical skills, cult-like commitment to doing your own main-

tenance, and disdain for that three pointed star brand are not required. The offices of Treasurer, Social Chair, and Membership Chair are open, and the President and Vice President would both welcome an early end to their terms due to changes in their work lives that are much more demanding of their time than even just a few months ago.

So that's it. We aren't ready to call it a crisis. It's only June after all. But if we are going to have a car club, we must have members who are interested enough and committed enough to keep the club active, vibrant and growing. Otherwise we might as well sell our ultimate driving machines, buy Crown Vics or Buicks, and start hanging out at Sonic and trying to avoid curvy roads. Now that would be awful.

If you would be enthusiastic about, interested in, or even just willing to consider accepting any leadership position in the club, e-mail me (rdcarruth@aol.com). And there is an advantage to volunteering now. It will keep me from badgering the flock until you surrender. Just think of that 15th verse of the invitational hymn ("Just As I Am." if you were lucky) at the First Baptist Church of (Name of your town) and you get the idea of how bad it could get. My dad once walked down the aisle and joined the church just to get to lunch... and he was a deacon. Please don't make me go there.

RDC

Disclaimer

This newsletter is a publication of the River City Bimmers (the Chapter) and its contents remain the property of the Chapter. The Chapter is not connected in any way with BMW A.G. or BMW N.A. All information furnished herein is provided by the membership of the Chapter for members only. The Chapter assumes no liability for any of the information contained herein. The ideas, opinions and suggestions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and no authentication is implied. Unless otherwise noted, none of the information in this newsletter is "factory approved". Permission is hereby granted to reproduce any material published herein provide full credit is given to the author and River City Bimmers, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED OR SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED.

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. You can also 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!

The 650i

The Cure for

The Summertime Blues



It's been said that a car with a convertible top can be forgiven many a sin. Face it, top down driving is a pretty great thing, and even the dullest, plain-Jane car is maybe not so bad when the wind is in your hair.

However, this car isn't dull, nor is it named Jane, plain or otherwise. The 2012 650i Convertible is now available, and in an unusual break from tradition, the drop top precedes the coupe, due later this year. The car is larger than the model it replaces, but seems smaller, more tailored than before. The styling is, ahem, more restrained than in the past few years; OK, ding dong, the Bangle Butt is dead, and the result is a beautiful shape, more balanced, elegant, and athletic. You want to take a look back at it as you walk away. And, as is crucial for convertibles, it's equally gorgeous with the cloth top raised.

Interestingly, BMW decided to forego the trick folding hardtop that comes on the 3 and the Z4. According to Mike Routh at Roadshow, the BMW marketing department found

that while most people live in areas where the top really can't be lowered year-round, they still wanted the look of a convertible, and so the soft top was retained. A style point must be awarded for the look of the flying buttresses at the rear window, which can also be lowered even when the top is up.

Sitting in front of you is the 4.4 liter twin-turbo V8, good for 400 hp and 450 lb/ft of torque, which will propel you to 60 in a reported 4.9 seconds. Our test model was equipped with the 8-speed ZF automatic, and a 6-speed manual is available. Having eight cogs to play with gives the car amazing flexibility; in the Comfort setting on the Dynamic Driving Control (more on that in a minute), but set to shift manually with the wheel-mounted paddles, the car pulled like a Missouri mule on the interstate, even in the top gear. Drop it down a gear or three and the car



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RCB Member takes First Place in Vintage TSD Rally



Congratulations go out to our own Greg and Alison Flint and Rodney Middendorf for taking first place in the TSD Rally at The Vintage, a gathering of total car nuts held Memorial Day weekend in Winston Salem, NC. The Flints and Middendorf scored their first place finish in Middendorf's faithful steed, Bandit, a 1986 535i's 5 speed.

As is obvious from the pictures to the right, an embarrassment of riches is always on display at The Vintage. These are only a handful of stunning photos taken by the Flints and Middendorf, and sadly we couldn't display them all. What we do have on the right in clockwise fashion is an E34 Alpina B10 Turbo, one of a handful of 850CSi's - the M8 to those in the know - a 1987 E24 M6, and a stunning E38 740i Sport that has been converted to a 6-speed transmission. Hopefully we can get a link on the Facebook page and everyone can see what they missed!

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The 650, like last issue's 740i, is equipped with BMW's Dynamic Driving Control that allows the driver to select four different settings for the car, from ride comfort, roll resistance, shift and throttle points, etc. Unlike the 7, where the different settings seemed to tune the car, the 6 transforms dramatically as you move toward Sport +, the maximum performance mode. Steering is noticeably more responsive and firm, the exhaust note is more rumbly and pronounced, and the suspension almost feels like it's crouching a bit and is ready to pounce. Handling is sharp and predictable, the transmission, unlike Steptronics in the past, shifts nearly as quick and crisp as the dual clutch trans in M cars and iS models, and acceleration is breathtaking.

As is traditional with the 6 Series, going back to the E24, the back seat isn't very big, although it is a tad larger than the previous version, which basically had a lovely leather-lined place to put small packages. Child seats will fit in the back of the new model, and two people can sit back there for short periods of time. There's a button and switch for everything, and the ventilated seats, both heat and especially AC, were appreciated on a hot Memphis afternoon. While lost in an iDrive cul-de-sac, the rear view camera got turned on, which was cool, and then the camera switched to an overhead picture, allowing you to see all four corners of the car, which was really cool. But for the first time since using more recent versions of iDrive, the path back to radio or normal use couldn't be found. And the car was so much fun to drive, correcting the problem would have been a waste of time, so it was ignored.

The base 650i costs \$90,500 and is a well-equipped car, as it darn well better be. The Jet Black and Ivory White leather test car stickered at \$103,820, and came with Cold Weather Package, the Driver's Assistance Package - a tech geek dream, including a head's up display, the top and side-view cameras, blind spot detectors, a lane departure warning, and automatic high beams - luxury seating and premium sound (which went untested but is probably sufficient), a night vision and pedestrian warning sys-

tem, and the optional 20" wheels and high performance tires.

A fabulous car at a fabulous price, but the original 6 was a high water mark for BMW at the time, and this car is no different in that respect. But the water line is incredibly higher these days, with similarly priced options available from many marques that really weren't in play in the E24 days, like Jaguar, Aston Martin, and Mercedes. Yet the 650i has retained - or more truthfully rediscovered - what sets it apart; it loves to be driven, and rewards the driver in 6 figures.



AUTOCROSS ACTION!

Some photos from the April 11 and May 21 Autocrosses at the Millington Jetport. Join us for the fun!



Arkansas Members have been increasingly active with drives and cars and coffee gatherings, and have more plans for the near future. All RCB members in Arkansas can join the RCB or Arkansas Bimmers page on Facebook to keep up with scheduled events. We look forward to more and more participation, and would like to offer our thanks to the Arkansas members for stepping up and becoming active in the club.

Arkansas Member Drive!