

Gesundheit

Newsletter for the St. Louis Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America Fall 2010



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- Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction / Las Vegas
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For the latest information on club events and discussions, classifieds, and photos, visit the message board at stlbmwcca.org/wwwboard



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For the latest information on club events and discussions, classifieds, and photos, visit the message boards at www.stlbmwcca.org/wwwboard

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President's Letter

As I'm writing this, it's been about two weeks since Dover Motorsports announced the closing of Gateway International Raceway. Financial troubles; leases on the land; losing money on big races; whatever the problem, our track is gone. The website read, "Dover Motorsports announced today that it was ceasing all operations at Gateway International Raceway."

It's a big loss for the St. Louis BMW Club since we did all of our driving events at Gateway; but we're not alone. Lots of other car clubs and motorcycle clubs lost their track, too. Everybody is trying to figure out what they are going to do next year. We hold two different events there, our High Performance Driving Schools and our Tire Rack Street Survival Schools. We'll have to find a different venue for both of them.

Last weekend I went over to Gateway to see what the place looked like and to take some pictures. Everything was still in place, nothing had changed. It seemed deserted and maybe a little sad. I talked to Dan Harman and Tim Giger (two of the execs at Gateway) and they told me that the goal is to sell the whole place with all of the facilities and equipment in-place and ready to race. We hope they're successful.

Where will we do our High Performance Driving Schools?

It looks like we'll be headed out of town. The driving events committee is looking at events in a few near-by tracks.

- Putnam Park (Indiana)
- Mid-America Motorplex (Iowa)
- Hallett Motor Racing (Oklahoma)
- Heartland Park (Kansas)
- Plus several others

We'll have to partner with other clubs or just attend someone else's school as participants. It will require a bigger commitment to attend these schools (out of town all weekend, hotel expenses, food, drinks, etc.) but perhaps this will allow us break out of our comfort area and plan several out-of-town adventures.

Is there a new track coming to town? Some of the BMW Club members were distributing information about a group in Jefferson County that is trying to raise funds and gather permits to build a new road course. That would be exactly what we need, but right now, it's still a dream. There is discussion about this on the

BMW Club's message board (stlbmwcca.org) if you'd like more information.

Where will we do Street Survival Schools?

We have to find a new place to hold our Tire Rack Street Survival Schools (TRSSS). We have a few ideas already but we haven't made any decisions. We discussed, Family Arena, Verizon Amphitheatre, and the Mills Mall. Wherever we end up, we'll have to re-design the course and probably re-engineer the whole event. We got a little spoiled using Gateway.

There are several alternatives we'll consider but, as always, cost becomes a factor in our selection. If Gateway had remained open, we would have had to negotiate a reduction in the rental rate. Our budget to hold a school had been cut. Depending upon what we've seen so far, renting a parking lot is not much cheaper than renting all of Gateway.

But don't worry folks; we **will** hold Street Survival Schools in 2011. We'll figure out costs, location, course layouts and physical facilities. Street Survival Schools are the most important thing we do, and we'll find a way to keep doing them.

Maybe somebody will buy Gateway, re-open the gates and get back to business as usual, but right now that doesn't seem likely. We have to plan that it won't be coming back.

Goodbye Gateway, it was fun.

Story by Tom Allen





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Annual Holiday Party

The St. Louis BMW Club is pleased to invite all of its members to our Annual Holiday Party.

When: Saturday, January 8, 2011
7pm - 11pm
Party begins at 7:00 pm - we have the room until 11:00 pm.

Where: Schlaflly Bottleworks
The Crown Room (walk straight back towards the restrooms and ATM)
7260 Southwest Ave.
Maplewood, MO 63143

Brewery Tour: If you would like a brewery tour, they usually will give one for our Club, but it will start at 6pm, so arrive around 5:45pm and wear closed-toed shoes.

Who's Invited: All members and associate members of the St. Louis BMW Club are invited. Club members may bring 1 adult guest.

The Agenda: The Club will provide appetizers and dessert.
Due to the nature of our club, it is a cash bar.
There will be a charity raffle as usual, so, if you would like to participate, please bring cash for raffle tickets.
We ask that you bring some non-perishable food items so we can donate to a local food shelter.
There will be a short presentation.
The Bottleworks is non-smoking; however, smoking is allowed outside.

RSVP: RSVP by December 31, 2010 (menu is based on RSVPs)
Indicate If you will be bringing a guest and if you'd like to join the brewery tour at 6pm.

Respond to: Alex April arecks@gmail.com

Email me for questions.

Hope to see you there!

Alex April
Social Events Coordinator
The St. Louis BMW Club
arecks@gmail.com



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Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction / Las Vegas

By Connie Curran



Last September was my second trip to Las Vegas to see the Barrett-Jackson Auction. The trip the year before was just to go to the auction. My wife and I went with another couple, figuring that the guys could go to the auction and the women could see as much or as little of the auction as they wanted with plenty of other things for them to do. Everyone had a good time and we talked about the possibility of going back in a few years.

Since I was planning on running in the Silver State Classic Challenge in Nevada and the auction was the next weekend I couldn't pass up the opportunity to go again. My son, Steve, was going to be my navigator for the race and had the vacation time to stay. Keith, a friend of mine from college, decided to join us on Monday for a guy's week in Las Vegas.

Before the auction started on Thursday we decided to take a tour of the Carroll Shelby factory and museum. On the way there I managed to make a wrong turn and as we were heading back toward Las Vegas on highway 15 we passed two test mules. The drivers were not very happy when Steve and Keith started taking pictures of their cars. The tour of the factory included the assembly area for Cobra's and where upgrades of Shelby and GT Mustangs were done. In the museum were cars from Carroll Shelby's racing days and cars on loan from individuals. One of the loaner cars was from the days of Carroll's affiliation with Chrysler, a low mileage example of one of five hundred 1986 Omni GLHS's

produced. It was something to see the same car I have sitting in my driveway on display in Carroll Shelby's museum.

When we were leaving the museum we heard the sound of engines at speed coming from the nearby Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Since this was the middle of the week we decided to see if we could get in to watch tire testing or whatever was going on. It turned out to be the Richard Petty Driving Experience. After watching for awhile Keith and Steve decided to do the ride along. After putting on helmets and driving suits they got to do three laps at speed, topping out at about 160 mph. When they suited up they had a flash drive on a cord around their wrist. In the car it was plugged into two cameras, one on the passenger's face and one showing the track. Keith decided to purchase the CD of his ride, it took a few weeks for him to receive it and since he lives in Kansas City, I haven't had a chance to see it yet.

We also stopped in to see the car collection at the Imperial Palace, where a lot of the cars on display are for sale.

Since Steve is an avid bicycle rider, in checking out the events going on in Vegas, he came across a world class Cycle Cross event that was taking place Wednesday night at a large outdoor athletic complex. It was amazing how fast the elite women and men could ride on a grueling grass course. For those of you that have seen



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the movie *The Hangover*, there was even young male spectator walking around drinking a beer, with a plastic baby in a carrier on his chest.

Thursday we arrived at Mandalay Bay in time for the National Anthem ready to see some cars cross the auction block. At B-J the first day always starts with cars for entry level collector, which means cars that can be driven and enjoyed. The quality of the cars increase as the auction progresses, with the best of the best scheduled to be sold at the end of the auction late Saturday afternoon. One of early cars across the block was a '79 Lincoln Continental Mark V that went for \$1,375. All of the cars at B-J are sold at no reserve, which means that all cars sell no matter how low the bid is.

The auction takes place in an arena, with floor seating for the registered bidders (early registration fee is \$400, then it goes to \$500) and elevated areas on either side of the floor for VIP bidders and celebrities. We were sitting in the general admission seats (\$20 for one day & \$10 for seniors) along the side and above the VIP area only to look down and see Richard Petty. He was there to promote the charity sale of one of his team's racing cars. Keith decided that after contributing to him via the ride along that it would only be fair if Richard Petty gave him an autograph. After a short wait Keith got The King to sign his admission ticket and Steve got a picture of Richard Petty handing the ticket back to Keith provide the provenance for the autograph.

There is a large vendor display area with a little bit of everything including Ariel Atoms, Meguair's car care products, motor homes, bar-b-que pits in the shape of

automobile engines, jewelry and much, much more. It is easy to spend time browsing the aisles.

After passing through the vendor display area you get to the auction vehicle display, which is one huge car show where all of the auction vehicles are available for viewing. You are also able to hear them run as they are driven to and from the auction arena.

Because there is so much to do at the auction I record the broadcast on the Speed channel to catch what I miss and hear what the commentators have to say about the cars. When they are about to go to a commercial break a lot of the time the cameras go the vehicle display area to show the people viewing the cars. After I got home and was watching the Thursday afternoon recording sure enough the camera caught the three of us walking across the exhibition floor for our 5 seconds of fame.

At the ride and drive track on a large parking lot, Ford and GM had displays set up and offered a variety of vehicles to drive on a short course set up with cones similar to an auto cross. After driving two of each manufactures vehicles, with an instructor from a driving school, you could get a ride in either a race prepared Mustang or ZR1 Corvette. The Ford offerings were not very exciting. I ended up in a manual transmission Fiesta and a six cylinder Mustang. GM was better with a Cadillac CTS (a non V) and my favorite a 2011 Corvette Grand Sport. The course was too short and too tight to realize the potential of the 430 horse power but it sure was fun trying. At the end of the course there was an intersection with the separate course for the race Mustangs and ZR1 Corvettes. As we were waiting our turn to cross the instructor from the

Spring Mountain driving school turned and asked me where I learned to drive, because I was the only one he rode with that day that followed the correct line through the course. I guess I actually have learned something from all the auto crossing and driving schools over the years.

Also on the parking lot was a giant car-niverous machine which is half dinosaur and half robot named Robosaurus eating cars at various times during the day. It is veteran of Barrett-Jackson, having been sold for \$575,000 in January of '08 at the Scottsdale auction. Of course it did not actually go across the auction block. When Robosaurus was performing the ride and drives about came to a stop. Of course there are videos on youtube.

In the three days of the auction there were about 300 vehicles that were sold. There were what looked like factory fresh stock restorations, resto-mods with up dated engines brakes and suspension, customs, covered wagons, John Deere tractors, muscle cars galore, a rat rod by Jesse James, and a 2008 Bugatti Veyron that went for \$770,000. You can get the flavor of the auction by watching it on the Speed channel but it is quite a spectacle to witness in person. With a list of vehicles being auctioned each day you can plan to be in the arena about the time a certain car goes across the block. I liked

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to watch during the times the auction was not televised and come back to the arena through out the day to sit down and take a break from walking around the vendor and display areas.

To see all of the vehicles that were at the auction you can go to Barrett-Jackson.com. By clicking on the lot number you can see the information on the car including the sale price. Or you can search for a specific car to see if one has been sold at any of their auctions.

As far as BMWs in the auction, the closest car this year was a Mini Cooper S. However, last year I was wishing I had registered as a bidder. There was a 1995 M3

with a supercharged aluminum GM LS6 and a T56 6-speed transmission. It sold with buyer's commission for \$23,650. As the TV commentators say you couldn't have built it for that.

So if you are considering a trip to Las Vegas, I would recommend planning it around a September Barrett-Jackson Auction. The weather was great and there is plenty for a car person to see and do. Oh, and I hear they have gambling and lavish shows there, too.

Story and Photos by Connie Curran





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Anybody remember the old British cold war/science fiction/action adventure TV series from the 60's "The Avengers"? Come on, I know some of us guys (ages 49 and older?) remember Mrs. Emma Peel (Dame Diana Rigg), or at least her blue Lotus Elan. If you don't know what I'm talking about, look it up. Anyways there was this one episode (The Avengers (1967) "Dead Man's Treasure") where a wealthy English gentleman had created an early version of a video driving game. He set it up to give a mild electric shock and a bell rang when you went off track. It did him in as I remember, but the idea stuck with me for years (the simulated driving, not the electric shock learning enforcement, maybe for the next street survival or DE though, eh?).

Fast forward almost half a century, into the Digital Age.

Not many of us are going to actually drive at multiple race tracks all over the country. It's hard enough to find time and \$\$ to drive at Gateway International Raceway. (Let's not get into that sad subject). Even less are going to be able to drive a competitive car in a race at these tracks. Dollars, time, and most of all "risk of hurting our pink little bodies", all conspire to prevent us from fulfilling our "Walter Mitty" Race Car Driver Fantasy.

We've all gone to arcades or played with various video simulation games. (How do those kids drive so well with their thumbs?). I've never been really impressed because they lack that "seat of the pants" feeling that is so critical to high speed driving. Even more detracting is that a race quickly devolves into a demolition derby, the simulated sheetmetal carnage making NASCAR look like a Sunday drive. To win, you want to be in second place at the last turn using the leader's car as a braking factor as you simultaneously punt him/her into the weeds/wall while taking the checkered flag.

Good clean fun for a while, but soon boring, and relegated to the pile of old video games. (Pong anyone?) I've also seen very expensive (\$25K+) "full-motion platforms" advertised. Not really feasible.

So, I delved into what I think is the most cutting edge of the publicly accessible Driving Simulators available, iRacing.com™.

First off though, let me tell you what it's not. Nobody's been able to create a gravity generator like we see in science fiction, so still no "seat of the pants" feel. No acceleration, or deceleration. But it is amazing what good visual and sound effects will do to fool your brain. Think of how you momentarily feel like you're going backwards when the car next to you edges forwards.

Key to this simulation is a "Drivers Code". Bangers need not apply. There's a system of graduated licensing based on a safety rating which will confine imprudently aggressive drivers to the "rookie" league, and limit what kinds of races you can compete in.

Dropping two wheels off constitutes an "incident" (1X) as does a spin ("loss of control"), contact with a wall ("2X"), and most importantly contact with another car ("4X" incident points).

In "Test", or "Single-Car Practice" mode, you can drive any car you "own" at any track you have license to. So you can be as aggressive as you need to be, while learning the car and track and not effecting your safety rating. The magic reset button is there to erase the damage incurred! Just a bruised ego remains. There are also "Fun Series" races which don't effect you safety rating. A good and fun way to dip your toes in the "deep end" of higher powered cars without worrying about your license rating.

As all this is digital, your practice laps and race laps can be recorded for entertainment and learning. In another step towards reality, there is also a "race stewards" board. Incidents between drivers can be reported. A human "Steward" will review it. (with digital multi-aspect recordings to back up complaints) and penalties ranging from "non-incident" to "you've just forfeited your subscription, you can't play here anymore. NO REFUND". I ran this by iRacing's Director of Communication, Steve Potter, and found this has rarely happened, but it's the ability to hit someone in their pocket book that gives the board "teeth". I actually tested this feature, and had an interesting conversation via e-mail with the race steward. I was satisfied with the explanation, and got some insight as to how they rule.

You can't get hurt, unless you go obsessive and get hand and shoulder cramps from driving too much. (Ever lost track of time while playing a video game? Ask Michelle, She went 1hr and 21min. The clock can't lie, boy was she surprised!).

There are 19 more simulated cars (as of this writing 1 more planned) available. Cost for these is \$11.95 each. A one time license fee. (Same for tracks.) As you progress in license, you'll need to buy new cars to compete. I'm not big on simulated cars. You can simulate a 66' VW outperforming an F1 car on a computer. (Sorry "Love Bug" fans). They're eye candy for the most part, but you have to delineate different race series somehow. A lot of time has been put into the "Physics Engines" so as to simulate the actual car. Damage is also simulated, and a critical factor in a race as is tire wear, heat/pressures and fuel usage. I'd like to see a report on professional drivers doing laps in reality and simulation to see how they compare.



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The best part of this simulation however is the tracks themselves. Road America was worth the subscription fee alone for me. There are 44 total tracks. All, except for the Centripetal Circuit (skid pad), modeled and licensed after real world tracks. Examples: VIR, Road Atlanta, Barber Motorsports Park, Mid Ohio, Watkins Glen. I've bought all the road courses since I like road racing, but if you like NASCAR oval racing, there's plenty of tracks for that as well.

And they have been adding new cars and tracks on a regular basis. In the pipe line is a spec Miata. (update: the Miata is available and a blast! Great entry level racer. I've got to try one of these for real!)

Even if you have no interest in computer simulated racing, by learning the track, you will find a huge change in how you view televised auto races at these tracks. You will know where the cars are on the track, what turn they are heading into, where they might attempt a pass, and even have a better understanding of the announcers chatter and driver interviews.

I don't know if this would help reduce your "real world" lap time, once you've physically driven a track and "learned" it. But if your going say, to Road America, for the first time. Imagine how helpful it would be to at least have a working knowledge of the track before you get there.

I understand now why the "Kink" must be taken without lifting (if your car is set up right) to be competitive. Thank God for a reset button. I stuffed it into the concrete barrier there so many times the next time I go there for real, I could put up a shrine.

Another interesting benefit is that this is an international affair. When I started, I could hear driver chatter in multiple languages. (you can turn this feature off). I set up a mic (\$15.00) and was soon talking to other drivers. Finland, Italy, Germany, Spain, Great Britain, Japan, Australia to name a few. (It's a little depressing when you realize most other nations speak multiple languages.) A couple of really good drivers who were quite helpful in changing my mind set from DE "your faster than me, I'll wave you by at the next opportunity" to maintaining my line, and letting the faster car make it's move, maybe lifting a little so that no incidents occur. (Contact penalizes both cars regardless of "fault"). Some Germans showed me the line at Zandvoort.

As in any technological sport, you can really get involved monetarily. "Speed costs money, how fast do you want to go?" However, this has a technologically leveled playing field, so while you can make the simulated view very realistic, by spending more money, you will still be only as competitive as your own "God given talents" allow, and figuring out how to set up the car to those talents. The website has a good technical description of what's needed. The minimum is a Computer/laptop probably 3years old or newer, a controller (wheel, joystick, game-

pad for you "thumb drivers") about \$40.00 and up. Microphone is optional, but well worth it from my experience. I talked with iRacing, and they have offered our chapter members a special \$49.00 intro subscription rate. If your interested, go to their website (iRacing.com™) and contract them regarding the St. Louis BMW Club special offer.

So, for under \$150.00 you can be practicing, and/or competitively racing, at major racetracks all over the world. That's less than half the cost of a DE, or one new tire, balanced and mounted. I'm not saying this will replace going to the track, but it's a great adjunct!

I bought a two year subscription for \$179.00 (the range is about \$7.46 to \$12.00 per month depending on how long you subscribe). You get three cars (Ford Spec Racer, Pontiac Solstice, and Legends '34 coupe), and eight tracks. Charlotte Motor Speedway, South Boston, Oxford Plains Speedway, Lanier National Speedway, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, Summit Point, Lime Rock Park, and Thompson International Speedway. (15 total variation). In addition, I bought a Logitech G27 wheel (\$240), and am using a \$700 two year old computer. Make sure to check your video graphics card specs. VERY IMPORTANT. The PC does other functions as well, it's not dedicated to this game.

I bought a BobEarlRacing.com seat (\$275.00) and am using our main television for a bigger screen. None of this is required. Just for fun.

Reality Versus Simulation.

Top Gear posted an interesting experiment. A 30 year old man from Finland, Greger Huttu who had won the "iRacing World Championship" was taken to Road Atlanta and put in a Star Mazda Spec Racer. He'd never competed in any automotive sport before, but had literally thousands of simulated laps in this car. How'd he do? On the plus side he was able to get within 3 seconds of a competitive lap on his 4th lap. The Star Mazda Team who loaned the car was impressed. On the negative side, it was summer, in Georgia, He was from the "Great White North", and in "average" shape. He was able to complete 15 laps. There may have been some jet lag involved. The point is, he has some innate talent that this simulation exposed and honed. Check out the whole story at Top Gear.

Me, I've got no talent, but on a cold, rainy or snowy day, or just some free time, I'm still putting down laps at Laguna Seca, over to Road America, and up to Lime Rock. All in less than 1 hour. The practice sessions and racing are 24/7. If you've got the time, they've got the race. I've since bought more cars and tracks, and am hoping to act as a "test track" for our club members. Eventually we may be able to have a Club League if enough people are interested. Contact me thru the club, and I'll make arrangements for you to "test drive" iRacing!

Story by Ed Yopez

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Member Connections



Each issue, we profile a member's vehicle with the objective of providing information, enjoyment and perhaps some ideas for your ride. If you are a member and would like to have your vehicle considered to be profiled, contact John at jch197@charter.net. Not a member? No problem, contact our membership chairman Alex at membership@stlbmwcca.org to learn how easy it is to join our club and enjoy all our benefits.

For your enjoyment in this issue: **ML Hillard**

What ML wants you to know about his ride:

Having owned British iron for over 40 years, and now retired from 26 years of E-Prod and Vintage racing, it came time to sell those cars, along with a very fine street 1965 MGB. Back in 2004 a good friend suggested the Z3 as a great upgrade open road car. Roadsters have been our life since 1964, and I needed a replacement. [As they used to say about wire wheels and now convertibles, "you either have them or want them"] We found a Z3 in Chicago, thoroughly enjoyed it but fell in "love" with the more aggressive Z4. Going to the Z Homecomings at Spartanburg, SC and seeing hundreds lined up did not help a bit. We knew this was our future with BMW's.

In 2008, one evening on a "cheap date night", we stopped at Laurel Westmont BMW and sat on the curb under the street lights like a couple of teenagers. We stared at a Titanium Silver Z4si, with those great 108 wheels. We said, "now that would be the one we would want."

Later having found a decent used Z4 up north, I stopped in at Newbold, O'Fallon, on a trip here to get moved into our new home. We had the Z3 serviced at Newbold's, had friends there and was checking on the history of the used Z4 in Chicago. The sales agent, asked me, "if I could put you in the one your standing next to, brand new for just a little more than you are about to pay for the used one up in Chicago, what would you say?" That's all it took. It was a Titanium Silver, Z4si, on the floor and had not even been outside on the lot. It had the livery, wheels, equipment we wanted, and when I checked with SWMBO, she said on the phone long distance..."what is there to think about?" [Don't you love it??] The deal was done and we took possession of the very car we had seen week's earlier sitting on that curb. And we have never looked back. It is a "zkeeper".

Weekends find us top-down, searching out all the alphabet "twisties" in Missouri, and taking great week-end getaways. [Missouri was spared the intolerable glacial

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flat-scraping unlike Illinois.] And this “si” is definitely not our grocery-getter.

By the way, this has led to my wife, Janet and my sister, IK, obtaining their own identical X3's. [Newbold loves

to see us walk in the door] Having been a member of Windy City chapter, though not able then to participate as I wished due to travel restrictions, we moved here, joined up with the St. Louis BMW Club, and now this is home. It's great to be here and in the club.

Series:	E85
Model:	Z4 3.0si, 6 speed Manual
Category:	“Weekend Cruiser”
Year:	2008
Color:	Exterior-Titanium Silver Metallic; Interior-Black Leather
Performance modifications:	In addition to the OEM Sport Suspension, this Z4 has up-rated adjustable H&R bars front and rear, Goodyear F-1's [after quickly shedding the run-flats], Stebro exhaust, a Dinan front strut bar, and some extra little mods to make the car a great road-trip-car.



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Club Events

Tom said he'd like a "wrap up" on 2010 Cars and Coffee for the year, so here goes. At this past February club meeting, I asked about the Cars & Coffee concept--and if anyone was doing anything like it besides the one at St. Louis Motorsports. Los Angeles has them "en masse", Dallas, Atlanta also. Why should we be left out? Tom looked around, no one spoke up, but some said "great idea" and the "Prez" said, "ML, go for it." So I did.

Alex April helped me secure a central location which has been a great place for getting in and out and with plenty of parking. First I did not wish in any way to conflict with the St. Louis Motorsport dealer's first Saturday of the month, so it was booked mid-month. I also felt personally it had to be more than just a BMW event, as multiple marques and the differing cars has always been a personal pleasure. So background searches on area clubs was done, lists compiled, newsletter & web editors were contacted. The response was at first pretty neutral for the most part, then, the idea grew supportive.

So I sallied forth with no better trust that to announce it, and see what happened. First month was May, a rainy morning and 12 cars. But from then on each month has gotten bigger and better. Averaging it out has come to 30 cars+, with one month 22, one at 57, and the rest all in the mid to high 40's. Last one this past October was 45.

Now the interesting thing has been the automobile variety. Kind of like a Chinese menu---huge lists in different groups, but all with similar aspects. BMW's of all types of course each month and well represented---thanks Bimmer members; but also Austin Healey, Jaguar, Alfa, Sunbeam Tiger, MG's of all varieties, MINI, Porsche, VW, Chevy Corvair, and one fine new Camaro. Then the oldest-- a 1952 Brit Singer. It was original, running and with a delightful 58 year old patina---of course British Racing Green.

The people have been interesting as well---every age, background and totally diverse. Actually a pretty neat thing---to see 25-70 people most months, at first not knowing each other, but as the months rolled on, greeting each other as friends. Most were repeats of course, but each month, some could not make it, and new folks took their place, but all were included. There were clusters

everywhere discussing the latest mod, history or configuration as only "gear-heads" can.

I am well aware that most clubs have a fairly extensive seasonal driving or social schedule, and the C&C's were an "additional" event. At first some clubs were a bit reluctant to list "another" event. But this year's C&C bears out the idea that when busy people have a couple of hours each month to get out on an early Saturday morning, this event works---that's the beauty of it. It does not depend upon shiny cars, or being there each month. Some people came because they did not wish to go too far on any event, for any number of reasons, but this C&C was perfect for a fun, short driving happening. I am also convinced that easy going, fun events with our cars and friends keep our car cultures alive. It's fairly boring to have great cars, and not much to do with them except drive to work.

Next year? Well, start up will probably be in May 2011, mid-month, so as not to interfere with the dealer sponsored C&C---if they continue it. The place most likely will stay the same, as a decent, but less than M.I.T. sanctioned survey has location approval. Good for both west and east-siders and close to central St. Louis routes. Continuity is important for the second year as well. The parking is excellent with no interference from business traffic, shoppers, or other coffee hungry cars coming and going. This has been a plus actually. Some coffee places are just too close to other businesses, so our parking area has been superb. Coming and going is a breeze. You don't have to weave your way through a tangle of other poorly driven cars with distracted Saturday drivers, parking-lot islands, shoppers and complicated suburban intersections to get out of there and on your way. Huzzah, huzzah!!

That's about it; not much more to tell. It's been a great year, most of all it's just been plain fun with cars and people. Except for having the Z4 on some Missouri alphabet "twisties", or missing my old track days, this has been a great new car pleasure. Thanks for the memories.

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