

**BMW IM HERZEN DES SUDENS**

BMW IN THE HEART OF THE SOUTH

**BRIDLEWOOD FARMS—BREEDING REAL HORSE POWER!**

**W**e walked over to the the edge of the pasture to see 3 horses grazing in the field. When they spotted us, they started toward us at a fast trot, breaking into a slow gallop toward us. Approaching the fence with caution, they were soon enjoying the attention of the crowd. We took turns petting the horses as they worked their way down the line of people.

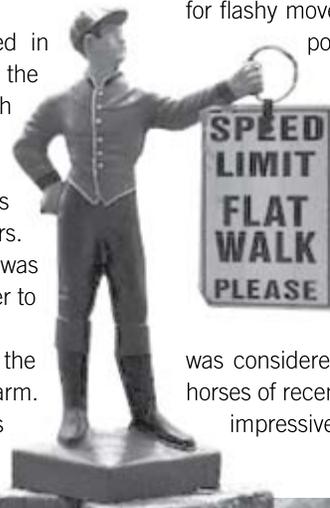
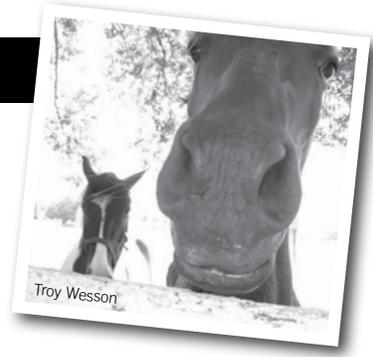
That was how our tour of Bridlewood Farm ended in Shelbyville, Tennessee, the “Walking Horse Capital of the World”. We started out that morning from Madison in North Alabama, and as usual, the drive through the Tennessee countryside was charming. After about an hour and a half, we arrived at Bridlewood Farm, 250 acres of rollings hills including a residential community for horse lovers. Bridlewood, owned by Larry Lowman and Judith Burgess was begun in 1992 as a breeding farm, recently switching over to being a training and boarding facility.

Larry was our tour guide and we started our tour in the lobby of the stables, viewing a video on the history of the Farm. Throughout it's breeding years, Bridlewood Farm has

specialized in the Tennessee Walking Horse. This breed has a reputation for having a very good disposition, and is considered to be a calm and easygoing. The horses are famous for flashy movement, and they are

popular for trail and pleasure riding as well as

showing. They are notable for their unusual natural “override”. We moved on to the stables where we viewed some horses in their stalls while Larry spoke about the farm and it's very successful breeding program. He also spoke about the farm's most famous and beloved horse, Iron Works, who came to the farm in 2000 after a long and ribboned 14-year career. In his last year on the show circuit, he won the Plantation World Grand Championship title. He was considered by many in the industry to be the greatest walking horses of recent times. He is buried on the grounds and has a mighty impressive monument on his grave.



*(continued on page 3)*



**2010 OFFICERS:****President**

Ron Drenning  
205-492-2306 (cell)  
e-mail: rdrenning@albmwcca.org

**Vice President**

Steve Lowery  
256-773-1814 (home)  
256-464-2147 (work)  
e-mail: slowery@albmwcca.org

**Secretary**

Allan Morris  
205-577-0263  
e-mail: clubsecretary@albmwcca.org

**Treasurer**

Dale Sitton  
205-987-2680 (home)  
205-822-0299 (work)  
e-mail: dsitton@albmwcca.org

**2010 BOARD MEMBERS:****Membership Chair**

Pam Smith  
205-870-4854 (Home)  
email:  
membershipchair@albmwcca.org

**Event Coordinator**

Carol Lowery  
256-773-1814 (home)  
256-722-7200 (work)  
e-mail: clowery@albmwcca.org

**Driving Event Coordinator**

Jack Joyner  
Email: chiefinstructor@albmwcca.org

**Webmaster**

Hank Bowman  
205-979-7599 (home)  
205-567-8623 (cell)  
e-mail: hbowman@albmwcca.org

**Newsletter Editor**

Lisa Drenning  
205-987-3293  
email: ldrenning@albmwcca.org

**Chapter Website:**

www.albmwcca.org

Written & photographic contributions to the Heart of Dixie Newsletter are welcomed. Please send them to:

ldrenning@albmwcca.org

PO Box 361645  
Birmingham, AL 35236

**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

It's mid-year and I think those club members who have participated in any of the 2010 events have had a good time (or if not please let me know why). In May, we once again had a very successful Driving Event, Racing School and Instructor Training at Barber Motorsports Park. Thanks to the people who organized and pulled it off: Jack Joyner, Steve and Carol Lowery, Mike Morton, Jim LeVie, and April Curtis. And thanks to the many members who pitched to help out with the details!

We've experienced new routes and destinations for our Fun Runs, like the winery tour that was an eye opening experience. I thought that Alabama wineries only made Muscadine wine. I was wrong, and I'm glad I was. I plan to visit the Ozan Winery on a more regular basis.

This brings up something new for our members. I know some of you probably have some good ideas for a Fun Run but are a bit wary of taking the time and money to go set up a route that the other members might also enjoy. We can't do anything about the time it takes but the club will reimburse you for trip expenses if you'd like to plan a Fun Run. With gas, oil and tires not getting any cheaper this should lessen the cost for anybody who is willing to invest their time in a club event. We really could use some help with future events for the 2011 schedule. Please contact any Board Member for details.

Keep in mind that 2011 is our year to show all the other BMW CCA chapters just how good Alabama and Barber Motorsports can be. We're hosting Oktoberfest for 2011 and even now the planning is already underway. Our own Mike Kim had been selected to make a teaser



Albert Hicks

**The Heart of Dixie Driver's Event (DE), Club Racing School, and Instructor Training School was held at Barber Motorsports on Memorial Day weekend.**

and meet some really great people; time and effort well spent.

FYI, We are planning a Fall trip to the BMW factory and the surrounding mountains. The dates are October 21 thru 24. It's too early to book reservations at the factory so we'll email the details in a few weeks. So if you need to reserve a vacation slot at work speak up for Thursday and Friday (10/21 & 10/22) of October. We'll use Sunday to return home via some fun roads or you can dash back on the Freeway.

Ron

## REAL HORSEPOWER (CONTINUED)

We also saw a demonstration of the high-stepping stride called the "Big Lick". In performing this show step, the horse extends his front legs high and outward due to training and the "stacks" or wooden blocks he is wearing on his front hooves. It's an unusual looking gait if you've never seen it.

After our tour, we drove a few miles away to the cute little town of Bell Buckle for lunch at the Bell Buckle Cafe. It was packed, but we had a reservation in the back room where we listened in on the *J. Gregory Jamboree Live Radio Show*, a fitting end to our journey through horse country. Thanks to Steve and Carol Lowery for putting together this great trip, and to Larry Lowman for the invitation!

—Lisa Drenning

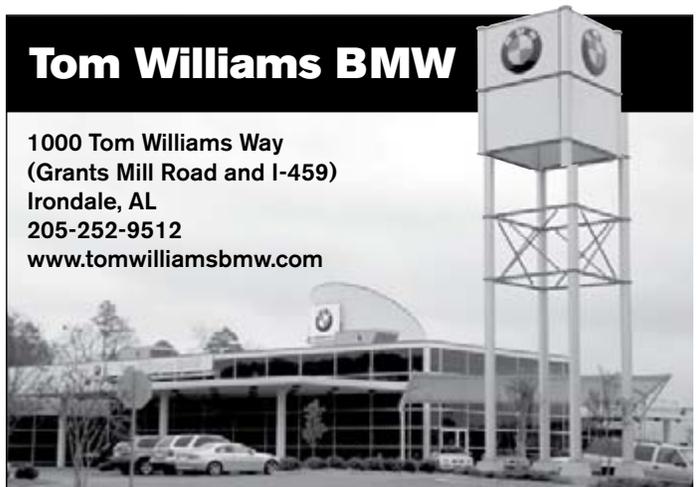
**At left, Bridlewood Farms owner, Larry Lowman in front of the monument to their most famous horse, Iron Works.**

**At right, a rider demonstrates the high-stepping show stride.**



### Tom Williams BMW

1000 Tom Williams Way  
(Grants Mill Road and I-459)  
Irondale, AL  
205-252-9512  
[www.tomwilliamsbmw.com](http://www.tomwilliamsbmw.com)



# HEART OF DIXIE CHAPTER TOURS ~~NAPA VALLEY~~ CALERA COUNTY

Troy Wesson

So there we were, on another fun run, with all of our BMW friends. This time it was to explore some of the wineries of Alabama (yes, we have wineries) and food. So on May 15, we all met up at the I-20 exit outside of Barber Motorsports Park. At 9:30am, Dale and Linda Sitton led the way towards our our first stop.

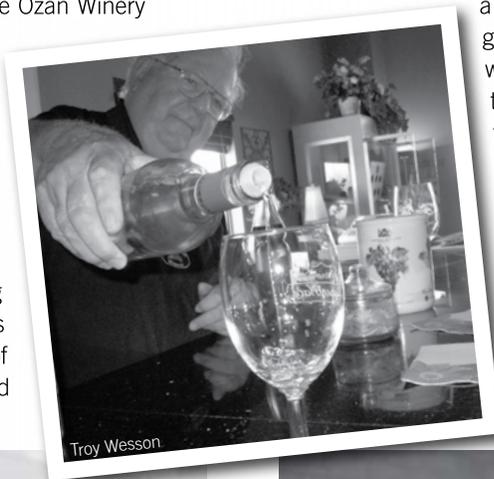
After a swift run thru the curves on Highway 25 from Leeds to Vincent, we first arrived at Miller's Cheese House ([www.millerscheese.com](http://www.millerscheese.com)). Mrs. Kim Miller had a spread set out for a bunch of hungry drivers and passengers. We sampled various cheeses, salsas, pickles, dips and more. After making our purchases and loading up our coolers, we headed off to our first winery.

Our peaceful and winding drive led us to the Ozan Winery ([www.ozanwine.com](http://www.ozanwine.com)) in Calera. Ozan is home to Alabama's own wine train whose tracks are at the entrance of the property as we drove up into the winery. The staff was set up for us with a large covered patio and two tasting menus of 12 wines, each menu available for \$7 including a souvenir glass. (It was possible to sample up to 3 wines for free.) After choosing one of the menus, the hostess made the rounds providing samples and encouraging us to nibble crackers in between offerings to clear your palette. Many of the grapes are grown on-site in their own vineyard

that we overlooked as we enjoyed the pleasant May weather. After purchasing some bottles to go, our group headed out for the next destination - and lunch!

Arrangements had been made for our group to enjoy lunch at the Vizzini Winery ([vizzinifarmswinery.com](http://vizzinifarmswinery.com)), a short drive up the road from the Ozan Winery. They had a nice restaurant that served a variety of sandwiches and large appetizers. The staff did their best to accommodate our group and joked that we "classed" up the place with the parking lot full of Bimmers! While waiting for lunch, many of the club members took the opportunity to sample more wines at the bar which were provided for free. After a filling lunch, we received a tour from the owner of the winery. The gracious gentleman gave a detailed talk about the entire winemaking process, from testing grapes for their sugar level, receiving the grapes (most from other wineries in and out of state), creating and getting the juice, fermenting them in steel tanks, and bottling the delicious result.

This was a great fun run that provided some great roads, good scenery, and awesome fellowship. I can't wait until next year when we may have an opportunity to tour more of Alabama's local wineries with the Heart of Dixie BMW Car Club!



## Do it yourself and save!

In *Fast Times*, our free, tech newsletter, we show you – step by step – how to repair and maintain your BMW or MINI. You can save hundreds, if not thousands of dollars on labor.

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# I AM HOOKED AFTER MY FIRST DE!

Tiresa Locklear

It all started at the 2010 Heart of Dixie Kick-Off Party. After a nice lunch and an entertaining story about the recent One Lap event, Keith (my husband) and I were enjoying some conversation with some new members when Steve and Carol started the raffle. I clapped as some really great prizes were being given away, and then the ticket was called for the Barber Motorsports Park HPDE (High-Performance Driving Event). Turns out, it was my lucky day! I was fortunate enough to have the winning ticket. I don't think anyone could have wiped the smile off my face as I walked to the front. Ron was kind enough to tell me all about the event, since I had not been to or participated in a DE. Reality set in a little as I walked back to the table, and I can remember thinking... Wow, I won... I'm going to get to drive on an amazing track... I'm going to get to drive my 550i that doesn't have a scratch on it on an amazing track... We're still making payments on the 550i... What have I gotten myself into???

A few weeks before the event, Ron provided some very helpful information about getting the car ready. Up until the night before, Keith (now my crew chief) made sure everything was ready to go. It was pouring rain as we headed to the track Friday night to complete the registration. I checked in, had my new helmet inspected, and got a session packet. I found out I would get out there 4 times each day. I never imagined there would be that much time on the track. We spoke to a few people standing around about the weather, and at this point I was starting to get a little nervous. I started thinking... I am really going to drive my car on this track... it's going to be raining... I don't want to be the one to put the first scratch on the car... the helmet fits Keith... thankfully, Carol walked up and told me that the instructor assigned to me wasn't coming, and that she would be my instructor. I was thrilled.

I got up Saturday morning feeling uneasy because I still did not know what to fully expect. The rain came down on the way to the track, and there was actually a flood advisory. We went on not knowing if the DE would go on in the rain and figured we would hang out and catch up with some of the club members if it was cancelled. There were far more people and cars at the track than I imagined, and the control room was full for the morning meeting. One of the coolest parts, I was 1 of 4 women driving. Jack expressed the importance of being safe, but that rain or shine the event goes on - even if there is a 4 foot river going across the track after the corkscrew.

I went on to "class" and found out the majority of my classmates were also participating in their first DE. Most were also using their daily drivers. Our classroom instructor, Dan, shared some interesting stories, but to be honest I was still a little up in the air on what I had gotten myself into! Dan's parting words were, "We'll have a lot to talk about when you guys get back later". He was right about that!

The announcement for "D" group to the grid came, and it was pouring down rain. I wasn't turning back! I donned my new helmet, and Carol and I got situated in the car. As I pulled up she said, "We'll go at a pace you are comfortable with the whole day". Still not knowing what to fully expect, I was waived onto the track. The smile from ear to ear returned! I was driving on the track; driving slowly, but I was

driving my car on the track! Carol began talking me through the turns. She told me how and why to get my braking done in the straights, and to look for the points to turn in and track out. As we returned to the pit area she expressed what I did well and what we would begin to work on. I was still smiling from ear to ear, and amazed by just how different it was to drive on a track versus on the road. I was also amazed at the amount of information I had just taken in. One of the most beneficial learning experiences during a DE is the opportunity to ride with your instructor in their car. I also considered this a highlight! Another first for me...a five point harness; I was strapped in and not going anywhere; I later came to realize this was a good thing. The "I" group was called to the grid. Before heading out, I was asked if I get car sick. Fortunately, I do not! Out of the gate Carol discussed the importance of warming up the tires. I guess I thought this process would take a little longer than it did. Part way around the track, and in the middle of the pack we were off and running!!! Once again I was smiling from ear to ear. Carol continued teaching me as she went around the track... turn in... track out... on the throttle... getting all the braking done before turning in... etc. About 3 laps in she said, "Here comes Jack". I don't think that fully registered at the time. It did



register when he flew by us. It was *on* from then! Carol is an amazing driver and instructor, and I could tell just how much fun she was having. Later in the day, on a dry track it was time to start applying what I had learned from the ride-along. I can't tell you how much it helped. By the end of the day my skills had improved, and I was starting to progress. My speed had doubled, and I was amazed how well the car was handling. To be honest, I was very disappointed when the checkered flag went out during my last run.

Day 2 began with another morning meeting and recap of the events from the prior day. Jack sent us off again with some emphasis on having fun while being safe. I was no longer nervous and eager to continue building upon my skills with Carol. The rain held off for my first run, and I picked up where I had left off the prior day. Two laps into the next run, the rain was back; We were actually called in due to lightning. The rain really set in after lunch, so I determined I was done for the day. I also determined I would do another DE!

For those wondering what happens after your first DE... It might go something like this: You will realize your tires don't look quite the same as they did prior ("marbles") and the stock brake pads dust beyond belief and have to go... You will wash your now favorite ride (if it wasn't already)... You may consider and even start the process of getting a track car (so you can keep your daily driver scratch-free)... You won't stop telling anyone and everyone about your experience!

This was a safe and controlled way to really show how amazing a BMW is. If you are interested in learning some skills you can take to the road, having a great time, and meeting some new friends then plan to participate in the next DE.

So now, I think I am hooked after my first DE. This is the start of an exciting new story. To be continued... Tiresa Locklear

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Lisa Drenning

If you're a new member of the BMW Car Club of America (BMW CCA), then you may be wondering just what car clubs do. Well, that varies from club to club and from chapter to chapter. Some are more track-oriented and others are more socially-oriented. The Heart of Dixie Club is one of the more well-rounded because we do both.

As a member, you'll get a few nifty perks, such as receiving the Roundel magazine monthly, our chapter newsletter 4 times a year (published when I have the time), discounts on parts, and the popular rebate (up to \$1500 depending on the model) you get from BMW when you purchase a BMW from an authorized US BMW center. You must have had your membership for 1 year with no lapse in order to qualify. Visit [bmwcca.org](http://bmwcca.org) for a more detailed description of the benefits of membership.

Once you become active in the club, you will find that there are several different types of car club members. I've classified them into 3 categories: **Gearheads**, **Track Dogs**, and **Pleasure Drivers**. **Gearheads** love to tinker on their cars, or even rebuild them. They are the do-it-yourselfers in the crowd and they love to be around other gearheads to exchange tips and tricks. What better place to meet other gearheads than a car club. My father-in-law told me that after he bought my husband, Ron (our club president) his first car, he came home from a trip to find that Ron had disassembled the engine and it was laying out on the garage floor. He's a true gear head from way back.

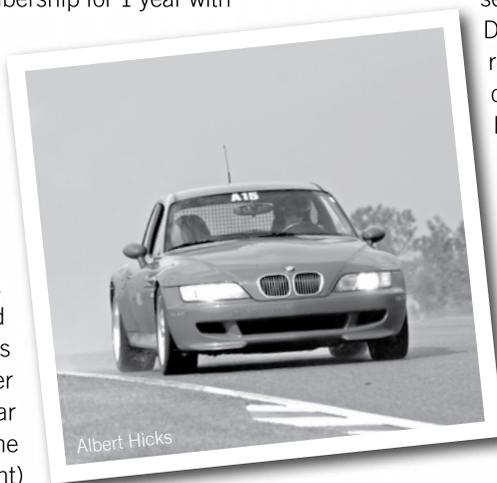
A lot of gearheads also fall into the second category, **Track Dogs**. Track Dogs look forward to our yearly High Performance Driving Event, often referred to as a "DE" at Barber Motorsports Park and other smaller track events. For those not familiar with race tracks, Barber's is a premier destination for racing events and we are lucky to have such a beautiful track in Alabama. Novice to advanced drivers can sign up to drive and learn just how to handle its twists and turns that have been described as "challenging" by some of the best drivers. The purpose is to improve driving skills and also to experience the excitement of driving fast in a controlled environment. DE teachers sit in the passenger seat while instructing and classroom instruction is included. We also take a trips to Spartanburg to participate in the one- or two-day driving schools they hold at the Performance Center. Track Dogs have to be careful though because track driving has been known to become addictive as some of our members will attest (I'm looking at you Jim and Michael). The next step after Track Dog is Club Racer, and well, that's a whole 'nother thing.

**Pleasure Drivers** are by far the largest segment of the Club. They usually are not interested in taking the car apart, but can benefit from advice from the gearheads. They may try the track and like it, but it's not a priority. For them, the social events and drives are what it's about. Our club is active in putting together several one-day destination drives each year. Drive planners try to find the most interesting roads to get us there, so we can put our driving machines to good use. We've had some excellent drives in North and Central Alabama, and Tennessee. In my years as a club member, I have seen more points of interest in Alabama and Tennessee than in all of my years growing up and living here.

For our one-day Saturday drives, we meet at an assigned starting point usually near Huntsville or Birmingham, and then hit the road in a caravan, following a leader. We travel with two-way radios, so that we can all stay in touch. If you don't have one, there are usually a few available to be borrowed from other members. We make the drive in the morning, and visit our destination before or after lunch. Then we head back home separately usually around 2 or 3:00. Some of our drive destinations have been: Lynchburg Tennessee to visit the Jack Daniels Distillery; Franklin, Tennessee; Little River Canyon; Cloudland Canyon, GA; DeSoto Caverns; Tigers for Tomorrow, a wild animal preserve near Gadsden and many others. You can read about our most recent drives to visit some Alabama wineries, and to Bridlewood Horse Farms in this issue. Also, check out the photos on our website: [albmwcca.org](http://albmwcca.org).

Other activities that our chapter hold include a kick-off party in January; autocross/skidpad events; a drive to the Smokies in October (not held every year); a gathering at the Rolex 250/Indy race; and bimonthly social dinners, where members can meet in Birmingham or Huntsville. Upcoming dates and times are listed on the back of this newsletter.

We update event information via email, so if you want to keep up with club activities, make sure you are signed up for email. If not, see the box at the left to get on our email list. We hope to see you at many future events!



## ARE YOU RECEIVING EMAIL UPDATES FROM THE BMW CLUB?

If not, then we may have an incorrect email address on file for you. We communicate details and updates about our events by email. Many emails bounce back as undeliverable. If your address, phone number, email information has changed, then please update it with BMW CCA National. You can do this online at [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org) or call 864-250-0022.

# UNIFORM TIRE QUALITY GRADE (UTQG) STANDARDS

Part of learning about being a BMW owner is understanding how much tires can affect your car and its driving abilities. Many of us have stepped up to a higher grade of tire, only to be dismayed when they were gone in 12-15 K miles. My friends, it works like this: more money, better grip, less mileage. You can't change the rules of physics. Learn a little about tires wear ratings in the Tire Rack summary below.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Uniform Tire Quality Grade Standards (UTQG) were originated to provide consumers with information to help them purchase tires based on their relative treadwear, traction and temperature capabilities. While it is required by law for most passenger car tires sold in the United States, it is not required for deep treaded light truck tires, winter/snow tires, temporary spare tires, trailer tires, tires under 12" in diameter and other select tires.

When looking at UTQG ratings it is important to realize that the DOT does not conduct the tests. Grades are assigned by tire manufacturers based on their test results or those conducted by an independent testing company they have hired. The NHTSA has the right to inspect the tire manufacturer's data and can fine them if inconsistencies are found. While most new tire lines have their grades established when they are introduced, they are allowed a 6-month grace period to allow the tire manufacturer to test actual production tires. Once a grade is assigned it must be branded on the tire's upper sidewall and printed on its label.

Unfortunately, the rating that is of the most interest to consumers is the one that appears to be the least consistent. While the Treadwear Grade was intended to be assigned purely scientifically, it has also become a marketing tool for manufacturers to help position and promote their tires.

## Treadwear Grades

UTQG Treadwear Grades are based on actual road use in which the test tire is run in a vehicle convoy along with standardized Course Monitoring Tires. The vehicle repeatedly runs a prescribed 400-mile test loop in West Texas for a total of 7,200 miles. The vehicle can have its alignment set, air pressure checked and tires rotated every 800 miles. The test tire's and the Monitoring Tire's wear are measured during and at the conclusion of the test. The tire manufacturers then assign a Treadwear Grade based on the observed wear rates. The Course Monitoring Tire is assigned a grade and the test tire receives a grade indicating its relative treadwear. A grade of 100 would indicate that the tire tread would last as long as the test tire, 200 would indicate the tread would last twice as long, 300 would indicate three times as long, etc.

The problem with UTQG Treadwear Grades is that they are open to some interpretation on the part of the tire manufacturer because they are assigned after the tire has only experienced a little treadwear as it runs the 7,200 miles. This means that the tire manufacturers need to extrapolate their raw wear data when they are assigning Treadwear Grades, and that their grades can to some extent reflect how conservative or optimistic their marketing department is. Comparing the Treadwear Grades of tire lines within a single brand is somewhat helpful, while attempting to compare the grades between different brands is not as helpful.

## Traction Grades

UTQG Traction Grades are based on the tire's straight line wet coefficient of traction as the tire skids across the specified test

surfaces. The UTQG traction test does not evaluate dry braking, dry cornering, wet cornering, or high speed hydroplaning resistance.

The Traction Grade is determined by installing properly inflated test tires on the instrumented axle of a "skid trailer." The skid trailer is pulled behind a truck at a constant 40 mph over wet asphalt and wet concrete test surfaces. Its brakes are momentarily locked and the axle sensors measure the tire's coefficient of friction (braking g forces) as it slides. Since this test evaluates a sliding tire at a constant 40 mph, it places more emphasis on the tire's tread compound and less emphasis on its tread design.

In 1997, the UTQG Traction Grades were revised to provide a new category of AA for the highest performing tires in addition to the earlier A, B and C grades. Previously the A grade had been the highest available and was awarded to tires that offered wet coefficients of traction above 0.47 g on asphalt and 0.35 g on concrete. Today the grades and their traction coefficients are as follows:

<u>Traction Grades</u>	<u>Asphalt g force</u>	<u>Concrete g force</u>
AA	Above 0.54	0.41
A	Above 0.47	0.35
B	Above 0.38	0.26
C	Less Than 0.38	0.26

Unfortunately the immediate value of this change to tire buyers will be limited. Use of the AA grade will first be seen on new tires that are introduced after the standard was enacted and will then appear later on tires that have had the required wet traction all along, but were introduced when the single A was the highest available grade.

## Temperature (Resistance) Grades

The UTQG Temperature Grade indicates the extent to which heat is generated/ or dissipated by a tire. If the tire is unable to dissipate the heat effectively or if the tire is unable to resist the destructive effects of heat buildup, its ability to run at high speeds is reduced. The grade is established by measuring a loaded tire's ability to operate at high speeds without failure by running an inflated test tire against a large diameter high-speed laboratory test wheel.

<u>Temperature Grades</u>	<u>Speeds in mph</u>
A	Over 115
B	Between 100 to 115
C	Between 85 to 100

Every tire sold in the United States must be capable of earning a "C" rating which indicates the ability to withstand 85 mph speeds. While there are numerous detail differences, this laboratory test is similar in nature to those used to confirm a tire's speed ratings.

Unfortunately for all of the money spent to test, brand and label the tires sold in the United States, the Uniform Tire Quality Grade Standards have not fully met their original goal of clearly informing consumers about the capabilities of their tires. Maybe it's because tires are so complex and their uses can be so varied, that the grades don't always reflect their actual performance in real world use.

## HEART OF DIXIE CHAPTER

BMW CCA

PO Box 361645

Birmingham, AL 35236-1645

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## HEART OF DIXIE BMW CCA UPCOMING EVENTS

### FUN RUN TO MENTONE

*Saturday, July 24*

We will have a group starting from Birmingham and a group starting from Huntsville, meeting in the middle at Mentone. Mentone is a cute and quiet little town in Northeast Alabama that is about as high up as you can get in this state. We'll visit Orbix Hot Glass gallery to see the resident glassblower. Email updates will be sent out with starting point information. Please register online at [www.motorsportsreg.com](http://www.motorsportsreg.com).

### CHEAHA FUN RUN

*Saturday, August 14*

It's August and it's HOI so we're going to the highest point in Alabama to have lunch and see how much cooler it might be. The views are nice and the food is fair (Hey, it's a state park, what can we say.) Email updates will be sent out with starting point information. Please register online [www.motorsportsreg.com](http://www.motorsportsreg.com).

### FALL TRIP TO THE SMOKIES

*Thursday, Oct. 21-Sunday, Oct. 24*

Fall means great drives in the Smoky Mountains and a visit to the BMW factory and the Performance Driving Center. Thursday and Friday, we will make our way to Spartanburg. On Friday, we'll take a tour of the factory, heading back home on Sunday. We know where the great roads are and we will enjoy them as BMW intended. Check website and emails for details.



Drivers learn how to corner in a pack the Heart of Dixie Club Racing School at Barber Motorsports in May.

Albert Hicks

### SOCIAL DINNERS

#### **Birmingham**

*Tues., August 17, 7:00 pm*

*Tues., October 5, 7:00 pm*

#### **Huntsville**

*Thurs., August 26, 6:30*

*Thurs., September 23, 6:30*

*Thurs., November 11, 6:30*