

Magazine of the National Capital Chapter BMW Car Club of America

September/October 2016

der Bayerische



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Cover: Jim Gerock's Riviera Blue 1969 2002ti is all finished after a complete restoration. Read article on page 26.
Photo: Raine Mantysalo

VOLUME 46 | NUMBER 5

2 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

3 FROM THE EDITORS

3 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4 COMING EVENTS

26 TRADITIONS

36 ADVERTISERS INDEX

Magazine of the National Capital Chapter BMW Car Club of America

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8

6 June DIY at Chapman Auto Werks

BY MARC CADEN

8 A Spanish Road Trip in a 116d

BY DONAL NEAVUE

10 Right Coast Bimmerfest: It's Magic

BY ANNA MARIPUU

12 Pie Run – A Rookie's Perspective

BY JOE MARTINEZ

14 2nd Annual Euro Marque Golf Tournament

BY DAVID COSTANZA

16 The BMW M6 Gran Coupe and Audi S8: The True Believers Prevail

BY JAMES CHEW

19 Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix

BY MARC CADEN

22 A Surprising Day at Summit Point

BY ANNA MARIPUU

26 The Deeper You Dig, the More that Needs to be Fixed

BY JIM GEROCK

30 BMW 340i M-Sport: Alles Ist Gut

BY JAMES CHEW



12



14



19



30



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**BMW Car Club
of America**
National Capital Chapter



President's Message

What a great weekend! I was finally able to clear my calendar for the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix and it did not disappoint. The past few years had too many conflicts to dedicate an extended weekend to head north to PA. But with wife and fellow chapter members in tow, we had a spectacular time. The scenic and spirited drive through the mountains was a great start and the BMW CCA Allegheny chapter put on an awesome corral for PVGP weekend. With prime real estate overlooking several turns, it's always comforting to see many vintage and late model BMWs everywhere. I now know why everyone who's been to this event has raved about it. I'll be back for sure and I encourage all NCC members to make the trip up. I'm already trying to secure the Airbnb house we used this trip for the next few years and BMW will be the featured marque in 2018. There's no way I'm missing that!

And speaking of great events, we are pleased to announce our marquee event of 2016. After several months of planning permits, parking, and catering, we've solidified a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity by hosting "The America" and the America's Cup Tour! That's right, we will be setting sail on the famous schooner and have an entire day planned in downtown Annapolis. We'll also be hosting Cars & Coffee, lunch, walk aboard tours of "The America," and plenty of unique show cars. As the only BMW CCA chapter able to pull this off, we hope you and your family will join us for this epic and memorable event.



Attention! Attention! Attention!

To Members of the National Capital Chapter

It takes a great deal of planning and coordination to execute the many club related activities that are put on for the benefit of the membership. It also takes a lot of equipment; the chapter has tents, tables, chairs, banners, and more. Storing and moving these items has become more complex and time consuming as the amount of equipment grows with the increasing number of events.

To address this situation, the chapter is looking to secure a "Chapter Utility Vehicle" to store and move our equipment and supplies. Since we are a BMW club we prefer a BMW Touring model to support our needs. Specifically we are seeking an E39 (1995 to 2003) chassis vehicle. An E34 chassis (1988 to 1995) is also acceptable. Obviously we would like the vehicle to be in the best possible condition, but the need for some degree of minor mechanical repair is acceptable.

If any chapter member owns such a vehicle and is interested in donating it to the chapter we would be interested in hearing from you. Also, if you know of a vehicle meeting our needs that is available outside of the chapter, we would be interested in hearing about it as well.

Please contact one of the following members with any referrals or information:

James Laws, euro6er@gmail.com, 301-717-5950

Marlon Spencer, renntaxi@verizon.net, 240-605-6182

FromThe Editors

The weather is great and the roads are in (reasonably) good shape. So put the top down and let the wind fly through your hair. Well, one of us can, the other has no hair, but never mind, the spirit is there.

I have a new ///M car. The acceleration is such that when I put the pedal to the metal, my eyeballs end up in the back of my head. That hurts.

We have many interesting articles this month. There was lull in the Winter/Spring, but we are making up for it. New cars, DIYs, trips including a foreign trip. I think this makes the NCC international. And of course, there are the articles of drivers bonding with their vehicles. Read *dB* and you will see the wide range of interests of the

chapter members.

We love new themes and photos to accompany them. Please be mindful that we are not mind readers, so pick the few that you think will best highlight an article and send those with captions. And make sure the photos are high resolution. Phone captures really do not make good copy.

Gather your first mates for an exclusive day
on the harbor in Annapolis!

Saturday, September 17th

NCC Hosts the America's Cup



9:00 am to 11:00 am Cars & Coffee

9:00 am to 1:00 pm Walk Aboard Tours of *America*

11:30 am to 1:00 pm Member Lunch

2:00 pm to 5:00 pm Sail Aboard *America*

Free / Open to the Public

Free / Open to the Public

\$20 per adult / \$10 per child under 10

\$85 per adult / \$47.50 17 and Under

Limited Spots Available – Secure Your Spot ncc.motorsportreg.com – Registration Closes Sept. 12th

NCC is the only chapter hosting the America's Cup Tour

Don't miss out on this once in a lifetime opportunity to experience a piece of history!

C A L E N D A R O F E V E N T S

July

- 7 NoVa Social @ Founding Farmers, Tysons, VA
- 13 Board Meeting/Social @ Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD
- 14 Columbia Social @ Greene Turtle, Hanover, MD
- 16 NCC Autocross Points Event #4 (FedEx Field)
- 16 DIY @ Autowerkes, Inc.
- 16 Appomattox Court House Tour
- 21 MoCo Social @ Pizza CS, Rockville, MD
- 23 Summer 2016 M Club Day @ the BMW Performance Center
- 23 2nd Annual Euro-Marque Golf Invitational
- 24 BMW CCA @ Nationals vs. Padres

August

- 4 NoVa Social @ Founding Farmers, Tysons, VA
- 10 Board Meeting/Social @ Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD
- 11 Columbia Social @ Greene Turtle, Hanover, MD
- 13 Just a Tour with Ice Cream
- 14 NCC Autocross Points Event #5 (Bowie)

- 18 MoCo Social @ Pizza CS, Rockville, MD
- 20 Seinfeld Tour About Nothing
- 20-21 Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion
- 23-28 47th Annual Oktoberfest (Monterey, CA)
- 26-28 Oak Tree Grand Prix & Corral @ VIR

September

- 1 NoVa Social - BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse, Tysons, VA
- 4 NCC Autocross Points Event #6 (Regency)
- 8 Columbia Social- The Second Chance Saloon, Columbia, MD
- 9-11 Summit Point, Shenandoah HPDE
- 10 DIY @ BMW of Annapolis
- 11 Bavarian Cars & Brunch Day Tour
- 14 Board Meeting/Social - Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD
- 15 MoCo Social- Pizza CS, Rockville, MD
- 17 America's Cup Tour visits NCC BMW CCA
- 18 Classics on the Green (Central VA) (*)
- 24 2016 NCC Crab Feast
- 30-01 Sunrise to Sunset Tour II

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

- 1 Winter Pre Detailing Workshop - Odds and Ends Detailing, Sterling, VA
- 6 NoVa Social - BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse, Tysons, VA
- 8 NCC Autocross Points Event #7 (Regency)
- 8 DIY @ AKTIV Automotive
- 12 Board Meeting/Social - Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD
- 13 Columbia Social- The Second Chance Saloon, Columbia, MD
- 15 Western Maryland Scenic Railroad
- 20 MoCo Social- Pizza CS, Rockville, MD
- 22-23 Fall M Club Day @ BMW Performance Center
- 22 DIY @ RRT Racing

November

- 3 NoVa Social - BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse, Tysons, VA
- 9 Board Meeting/Social - Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD
- 10 Columbia Social- The Second Chance Saloon, Columbia, MD
- 17 MoCo Social- Pizza CS, Rockville, MD
- 19 Great Pie Run XIX

December

- 1 Social - BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse, Tysons, VA
- 8 Columbia Social- The Second Chance Saloon, Columbia, MD
- 14 Board Meeting/Social - Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD
- 15 MoCo Social- Pizza CS, Rockville, MD
- 19 Christmas Lights Tour

COMING EVENTS

NoVa Social - BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse, Tysons, VA

Thursday, September 1, 2016

NCC Autocross Points Event #6

Sunday, September 4, 2016
Regency Furniture Stadium, 11765 St Linus Dr.,
Waldorf, MD 20602

The NCC Autocross program uses a BMW-centric customized classing structure which pits your BMW or MINI against similar performance models in 3 levels of trim: Showroom, Tuner, and Modified. There is also a simple classing structure for non-BMW competitors. You can check out the full details at www.nccautocross.com.

Columbia Social @ The Second Chance Saloon, Columbia, MD

Thursday, September 8, 2016

Come join us at our great new location, The Second Chance Saloon, located in the Oakland Mills Village Center in Columbia, MD. This local neighborhood favorite has a huge parking area to hang out and a private room just for us. 5888 Robert Oliver Place, Columbia, MD 21045.

NCC September 2016 Summit Point, Shenandoah Circuit

Friday, September 9, 2016 to Sunday, September 11, 2016

DIY @ BMW of Annapolis

Saturday, September 10, 2016

The Do-It-Yourself (DIY) program allows National Capital Chapter Car Club Members to work on their own cars under the supervision of expert mechanics and technicians provided by the DIY Sponsor.

Bavarian Cars and Brunch Tour

Sunday, September 11, 2016

Tour the Maryland and West Virginia Countryside in your favorite Bayerische Motoren Werke vehicle, with stops at the Garthland State Park and Antietam National Battlefield, before a top notch European Sunday Brunch at the Bavarian Inn, located in Shepherdstown, WV.

Board Meeting/Social - Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Come join us at our board meeting location, Brio Tuscan Grille, located in Rockville, MD. We'll have our own private

room to discuss club business and plenty of food and drink to go around.

MoCo Social - Pizza CS, Rockville, MD

Thursday, September 15, 2016

America's Cup Tour visits NCC BMW CCA

Saturday, September 17, 2016 -
Registration at <http://msreg.com/BMWNCCAmericasCup>

Classics on the Green

(Central VA) (Not a chapter event)
Sunday, September 18, 2016

British and European Sports & Classic Car Show and Wine Festival. Sunday, September 18, 2016, at the New Kent Winery, 8400 Old Church Road, New Kent, Virginia.

2016 NCC Crab Feast

Saturday, September 24, 2016

Come join us for our 3rd Annual NCC Crab Feast at Fisherman's Crab Deck in scenic Kent Narrows, MD. This is the last Saturday in September when Maryland blue crabs are at their biggest. For the crab-challenged, there will plenty of normal food, so no one should leave hungry. Northwest BMW will again return as our sponsor and we'll have plenty of giveaways!

Fisherman's Crab Deck 3032 Kent Narrow Way S,
Grasonville, MD 21638

Sunrise to Sunset Tour II

Friday, September 30, 2016 to Saturday, October 1, 2016

We had a blast last year. We will start in Bowie and travel to Chincoteague, VA for an overnight stay. We will then rise Saturday to arrive on the beach for the sunrise, then on to Skyline Drive, stopping along the way for breakfast and lunch, for the sunset. Please note the days. See the website for an explanation.

Winter Prep Detailing Workshop

Saturday, October 1, 2016
Odds and Ends Detailing
201 Davis Drive Suite LL, Sterling, VA 20164
703-675-8819
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Registration for this event will be available through MotorsportReg.com.

While winter is months away, Darryl Nichols, owner of Odds and Ends Detailing, will present a clinic to provide tips for getting our cars prepared and protected from the mid-Atlantic winter elements.

For more information about the event, or questions or topics you'd like to have covered please contact John McWilliams - john.mcwilliams@gmail.com

NoVa Social @ BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse in Tysons, VA

Thursday, October 6, 2016

NCC Autocross Points Event #7 (Regency)

Saturday, October 8, 2016

DIY @ AKTIV Automotive

Saturday, 8, 2016

Board Meeting/Social @ Brio Tuscan Grille, Rockville, MD

Wednesday, October 12, 2016

Columbia Social @ The Second Chance Saloon in Columbia, MD

Thursday, October 13, 2016

Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

Saturday, October 15, 2016

We will take no planes. But we will take automobiles and a train as we ride the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad as it cuts through the Great Allegheny Passage. This will be a great opportunity to take in the fall foliage while riding the trains of days gone past.

MoCo Social @ Pizza CS in Rockville, MD

Thursday, October 20, 2016 - Thursday, October 22, 2016

Fall 2016 M Club Day @ BMW Performance Center

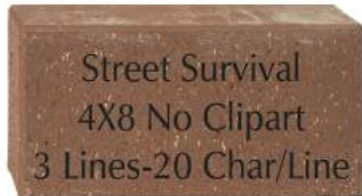
October 22, 2016 through Saturday, October 23, 2016

The National Capital and Tarheel Chapters are headed back to the BMW Performance Center in Greer, South Carolina on October 22nd and 23rd for our first two //M Club Day driving events of 2016. As always, the Performance Center provides current model //M cars, instructors, gas, tires, lunch and a first-class facility for a fun-filled day at the track. Just show up ready to drive!

No helmets or previous driving school experience is required. All skill levels are welcome and encouraged to attend. Our event hotel is the Greenville Marriott. The special BMW rate includes the breakfast buffet for up to two people plus Internet service. Register at www.marriott.com/GSPAP and enter BMW as the Corporate code.

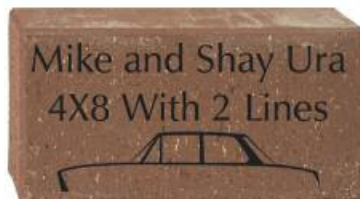
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With Clipart or Chapter Logo
2 Lines of Text
20 Characters/Line

8X8 Engraved Brick
\$200
With Clipart or Chapter Logo
4 Lines of Text
20 Characters/Line

For details on purchasing your tax-deductible brick, go to www.bmwccafoundation.org

When ordering, be sure to indicate it should be applied toward the Chapter Challenge!

Makes a great gift!



Chapter Challenge

The chapter(s) whose members purchase the most bricks will win lasting recognition at the BMW CCA Foundation. There are four tiers based on chapter sizes. NCC is Tier 4, which covers chapters with over 2000 members. Dual-membership members will have a percentage of the brick purchase applied to both chapters.

Chapters who reach 10% participation receive a 4x8 brick engraved with the chapter's official logo, while 20% participation receives a 8x8 official chapter logo brick.

Our Chapter Ambassadors are Anna Maripuu (anna@nccbmwcca.org) and Chris Wootten (cjwootten@nccbmwcca.org). Please contact them if you have questions regarding the purchase of bricks.

NCC Incentives

- An anonymous donor will match the first 10 NCC bricks bought by members
- NCC will donate \$20 toward the first 50 NCC bricks bought by members
- Chapter will buy 10 4x8 NCC logo bricks for each chapter program



June DIY at Chapman Auto Werks

By Marc Caden

Our chapter's June DIY was held at Chapman Auto Werks (in Sterling, VA), a longtime supporter of the DIY program. The owner, Taylor Chapman, and shop foreman, Andrew Goodnight run a special shop with attention to detail, discounts for club members, and the ability to handle both routine service and large projects. They can also set your car up to go faster from a stop light, at an autocross, or on the track!

However, what I really like about Chapman Auto Werks is that they are a throwback to the day when you had a real relationship with the people at the shop that maintains your car. At Chapman, the same person standing behind the counter will also likely perform the service on your vehicle. There are no hoops to travel through like having to deal with a separate service writer and technician.

At Chapman, their foundation is built on the people who service your car and the loyal relationship they have with their customer base. In some respects, when you are at their shop it feels almost familial. They are true car enthusiasts and seem to have a genuine concern for your car's good health. Perhaps what says the most about Chapman's business model is that they do no advertising whatsoever, it is all referral based.

DIY events are a good place to take on a task where you think that having a lift might come in handy. For example, our chapter's Vice President James Laws replaced the front and rear brake pads/rotors on his 1999 528it.

DIY regular Nick Nickas replaced the coolant and did a brake fluid flush on his 1985 325. Alan Marsh replaced the brake pads on his 1992 Volvo 240. James Austin changed the transfer case fluid on his 2011 BMW 328it. Brian Lovecchio replaced the steering coupler and power steering fluid lines on his 2001 330ci.

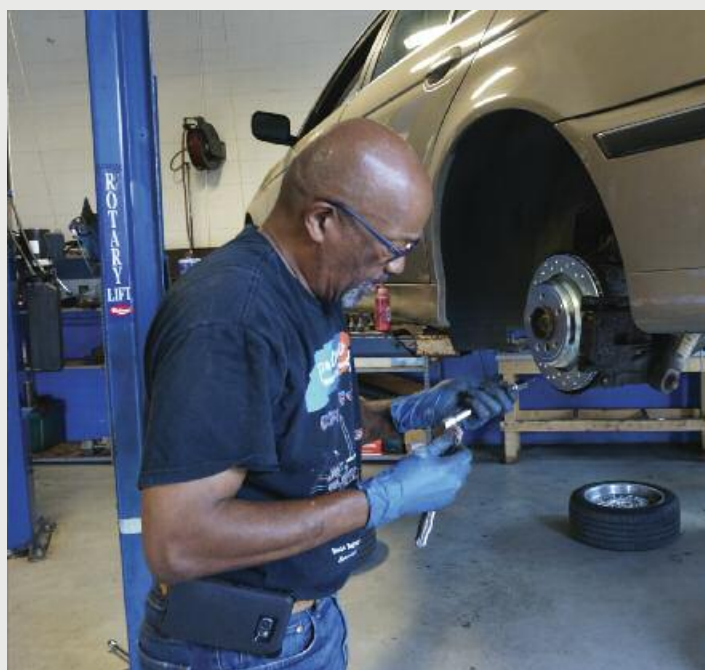


(Top) Frank Kapitan had to remove the rear bumper cover on his X3 in order to mount a new trailer hitch. (Above) Brian Lovecchio and Shop Foreman Andrew Goodnight work on replacing the power steering hoses on Brian's 330ci.

The most involved task of the day was taken on by Frank Kapitan on his 2005 X3. At first blush, the installation of a trailer hitch on his SUV seemed pretty innocuous. I did this on my wife's SUV several years ago and on most cars this is simply a matter of holding the hitch in place while installing some bolts. But BMW didn't want to let Frank off the hook that easily! To reach the mounting points for the hitch, the rear inner fender liners and rear bumper cover needed to be removed. While this isn't an impossible task, it certainly helped having a lift and a couple of extra sets of hands to assist. Within a couple of hours, the new trailer hitch was in place and Frank was ready to start towing. In case you are considering putting a trailer hitch on your first generation BMW X3, here is a link to a helpful set of instructions: [http://www.xoutpost.com/articles/x3/](http://www.xoutpost.com/articles/x3/body-style/16752-how-install-bmw-factory-trailer-hitch-2006-x3.html)

[body-style/16752-how-install-bmw-factory-trailer-hitch-2006-x3.html](http://www.xoutpost.com/articles/x3/body-style/16752-how-install-bmw-factory-trailer-hitch-2006-x3.html).

The club provided attendees with doughnuts in the morning and some delicious sandwiches in the afternoon. Many thanks go out to Chapman Auto Werks for hosting our June DIY and for their continued support of our program.



(Above Left) Nick Nickas concocts a 50/50 mixture of coolant with distilled water the old fashioned way. (Above Right) Chapter Vice President James Laws puts some shiny new rotors on his 528i.



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A Spanish Road Trip in a 116d

By Donal Neavue

Following James Chew's suggestion that *der Bayerische* could use more articles, especially about Euro BMWs, here is my recount of a two-week Spanish adventure, in a SIXT BMW.

The SIXT experience is almost like any other car rental, but you do get to request the make and fuel type for your rental car. Requesting a diesel BMW was simple enough, but you may get a Benz or an Audi.

Happily, on rental day, there was an almost brand new, 1,000 km, white BMW 5-door 116d with M-trim, 6 gears, nice wheels, and subtle M-color accents. The cloth sport seats were manual and the Nav was the usual, with no voice input. But what a nifty, right-sized car. It attracted other BMW's in parking lots. Apparently, the M trim was pretty special. Thank you SIXT!

Over the next ten days, we covered 2,000 km, starting in Madrid. Next stops were Toledo, Córdoba, Seville, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Malaga, Granada, Valencia, and finally, Barcelona. This turned out to be an educational vacation, with daily schedules, must-see locations, and driving that cool little car. Next time, there will be a day off in the schedule.

The 116d is what you might call "long-legged." More than once, slowing down in cities, we started to feel each cylinder stroke as we dropped under 50 Kph in 6th. On the other hand, running along at 150 Kph required only 3,000 rpm. Power seemed equivalent to my 2015 320i, which isn't saying much, but

like Rolls Royce, it is "sufficient." Over 2,000 km, I filled the diesel tank twice, at about 38 Euros each time. That part, like the 320i's 42 mpg, is surprising.

The Spanish national speed limit is 120 kph or almost 80 mph. This was a comfortable, economical speed, but many bigger cars far exceeded it. We learned why Mercedes and Audi put big chrome grilles on their cars – you can see them coming, a kilometer back, in the rear view mirror. And when they are closing in on you at 200 kph, you better get out of the way, right now. But we didn't always putt along at 120 kph. The stretch from Malaga to Granada on the A4 goes through some gorgeous, remote mountain scenery, and the A4 is smooth, with long vistas. 150 kph seemed about right. 160 kph was floaty. We didn't see any enforcement. What we did see were bugs. Many, many more bugs than we have here along the northeast corridor. The car was plastered with bugs.

We had heard horror stories about Highway tolls in Spain. But the actual cost was nothing exceptional. SIXT provided for electronic toll payments on the base invoice, so that made it easy. There will be no second invoice for tolls months later. There was one large toll: 40 Euros from Valencia to Barcelona on the E4. Apparently, E means express – very express. This stretch of the A4 gets the local beach traffic, which can be thick in the summer months.



(Top) View of the City of Toledo. (Above) "Sixt BMW 116d 5-door."

In Granada, our hotel was on a pedestrian street. We had to provide passport numbers and license plate number to the hotel to be allowed to drive to the hotel for luggage drop off. We had to park across town, which led to the one and only scam on the trip. As we set off through a maze of streets so narrow we had to pull in the mirrors, an official looking gentleman on a scooter knocked on the window and asked, officiously, did we need some help? Being primed for trouble, we said yes. He then offered to lead us to the garage. But after we started thinking about the situation, we told him to get lost. He did, and then came back. All of this was communicated in very poor Spanish/English. Finally, he understood that I was asking for some credentials and he took off. We saw him later "helping" other tourists.

BMW was a great help on our trip. In those narrow Granada streets, I managed to touch one of the stone walls with the 116's rear bumper cover, leaving a small ding in the paint. So, we set the Nav to take us to BMW of Valencia, to obtain some "pintura blanco" in my best Home Depot Spanish. After some difficult translation, the parts counter person came out to look at the problem. Once he saw the little scrape and the SIXT sticker, he laughed, understanding the problem. But, he didn't have that paint. He then called BMW of Barcelona, our next stop. We did the touch up in the Barcelona dealer's parking lot and went on our way. I brought the left over paint home for a friend with a white X5. Apparently, the fix was good enough – SIXT took the car back with no comments. It did look pretty good.



(Above) The 116d with M-Sport and Premium Packages, Navigation, cloth Sport Seats and M6 transmission.

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Right Coast Bimmerfest: It's Magic

By Anna Maripuu

There are two things I have learned through my interest in motorsports and involvement in the car club. One, is to go with the flow and relax. Two, is to expect the unexpected and magic will happen.

I flew out to Los Angeles over Memorial Day weekend in a very last-minute way. I had completely forgotten that Bimmerfest West was going to be held at Fontana Auto Club Speedway that weekend. After renting a car and being very tempted to "upgrade" my Volkswagen Passat rental to a bright red Porsche 911, my first stop was the In-n-Out Burger on Sepulveda Boulevard.

The best thing about this In-n-Out Burger (besides the wonderfully yummy burgers, which can only be had on the West Coast), is that it is located right next to LAX's runway 24-Right on the east side of the airport. This happens to be where many international arrivals land. It is an absolutely great place for plane spotting, as the planes fly by so low that one can make out all the identifiers. The best time of day to catch the most

international flights is afternoon or early evening. I love hearing these huge airplanes roar by my head and watching them touch down in the not so far distance.

Because this In-n-Out Burger is so popular, chances are you will have to wait a while for your order to be ready. While you do, take the opportunity to see British Airways and

Saudia land practically at your feet. As I was standing around, mesmerized by the big jets, I spotted a familiar looking character leaning against one of the bright red outside pillars of the patio eating area. I thought my eyes must be playing tricks on me because this guy looked just like Steven Schlossman. I looked again and made eye contact. Finally, my

befuddled brain realized that it was Steven Schiossman! Our eyes met and I said, "what the h*** are you doing here?" to which Steven replied "what the h*** are YOU doing here?".

We laughed as he gestured toward Frank Patek and Chris Hennecey who were standing some distance away. I greeted them and they explained that they were on their way to Fontana for the start of Bimmerfest West. Now that this event was on my radar screen, I decided I would have to try to make it over there during the weekend.

I had plans for Friday and Saturday, but I carved out some time on Sunday to head over to "Fontucky" as the locals fondly call it, otherwise known as the Auto Club Speedway. It is a low-banked, D-shaped oval superspeedway which has hosted NASCAR racing annually since 1997. There is an alternate configuration for a sports car course.

When I arrived, I could see that the absolutely HUGE parking area was filled with Bimmers as far as the eye could see even though some



(Top) Enthusiasts wait by the M3s for their hot laps to start on the Auto Club Speedway. (Above) BMW Performance Center West Driving Instructors Johnny Kanavas and Brandon Watson pose with their M3's prior to a full day of hot laps at AAA Speedway.

things were starting to wind down. Prizes had already been given in the Battle of the Bimmers for categories such as classic, clean/stock, modified ///M, modified non-///M, best of show and rising star.

The main sponsor of the event was ESS Tuning, along with many gold sponsors including BBS, Bilstein, Dinan, Koni, Liqui Moly, Pokal, Rolloface, Toyo, and VMR, to name a few. Along with the vendor tents, there was a food truck festival going on and a Biergarten set up.

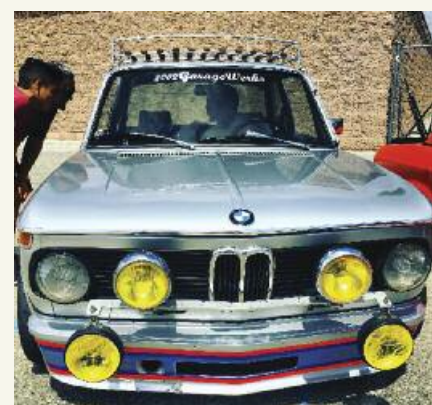
The Z owners had their own corral and there was a heritage corral sponsored by Pelican Parts. BMW CCA sponsored an autocross on Saturday, and on both days, you could track your car for \$199. You could also put your car on a Dyno and get a color laminated printout showing your car's horsepower, torque and RPM. Go kart racing was taking place on Sunday.

The BMW CCA tent was set up and I stopped by to say Hi to Steven again. Some very nice cars showed up as part of the BMW NA roadshow, including the new M2 and the M4 GTS, and some retired race cars, such as a Macca F1 GTR, an E46 M3 GTR, and a Z4 GTE.

I observed that a long line of BMWs was forming on the track, and when I asked, I was told it was to be the longest parade lap formed so far. After the parade lap wound down, I learned that hot laps were going to be



(Top) Bimmerfest West was bustling with specialized BMW vendor tents and cars, including the CCA tent. (Top Right) Fans stop to admire a highly modified 2002 tii biturbo (or a look-alike, we weren't sure)...



When I say that this was one of the hottest laps I have ever experienced that is no understatement. I made the mistake of telling Johnny that I was a great passenger who had experienced many a hot lap and never got car sick. I think he took this

given by the BMW Performance Driving Center instructors in a couple of M3s.

I was lucky enough to snag one of those hot laps with Johnny Kanavas, a professional driver, coach, instructor, and racer. He has owned several BMWs and raced them at both the amateur and professional level. This has included endurance racing, drifting, off-road, open wheel, prototype, and vintage/historic racing. For those going out to Thermal to experience the BMW Performance Driving Center West, you may very well find that Johnny is your instructor and you will be in good hands. Look him up online at www.johnnykanavas.com.

Johnny and Brandon Watson were the professional drivers representing the Performance Driving Center and BMW North America. Irene Smith, Amanda White, and Brittany Montellano were the sales and event team for BMW-PC-West and provided amazing support for the hot-lap experience, along with Beth Anderson, which was organized on a walk-up/first-come, first-served

basis. It was simply a matter of signing the insurance waiver, grabbing a helmet and hopping in the car.

Johnny told me that the hot laps had proved to be a very popular event at Bimmerfest West and that it had been tough getting everyone that had signed up into a car. Johnny and Brandon basically ran laps non-stop all day. "It's always a fun few days giving hot lap rides for people, especially if they have never been on a track. Add to that in an M3 with well over 400 hp, on a 2.8 mile – VERY fast track, and it's quite incredible!", said Johnny.

He told me that he and Brandon tried to run most of the laps together as a two-car train since this provided more excitement and kept the participant-flow going and organized. He also mentioned how capable and extremely fun to drive the M3 is. "They are predictable, easy to drive, forgiving, stop well, and are quick." According to Johnny, he and Brandon burned a lot of fuel and used up every bit of rubber (tires) they had with them for the event.



(Above Middle) Beth Anderson watches as Kanavas and Watson refuel the M3s between sessions. (Above) Steven Schlossman, Frank Patek and Chris Hennecy were my surprise bump-ins at the In-in-Out Burger near LAX. (Left) Beth Anderson poses with two excited participants prior to loading them into the M3s for their rides.



as his cue to take me on the ride of my life. The Roval configuration was being used for the hot laps, as this is the same configuration used for track-sessions hosted by Speed Ventures. I did not know this at the time, but Johnny has plenty of experience on this track as he has both raced it and driven it for various manufacturers and driving programs, and for testing and development.

As soon as the car shot out of pit lane, Johnny maneuvered it onto the bank and we made a long sweeping

left turn on the bank. That was followed by a short straight on level pavement and then hard on the brakes to prepare for a hard left at turn 3, followed immediately by a hard right at turn 4. Turn 5 was a horseshoe, followed by a long straight, some right turns, a straight into a bus stop, and a sharp left to propel the car back out around the oval in front of the pit lane for a long, fast straight.

It was clear to me that Johnny is an expert driver, running the car on the edge as we slid around the track,

making the M3 dance. There was a lot of drifting going on, basically at every turn. At times, the car went into a nice controlled drift through the exit of the corner. I followed the golden rule of motorsports: relax and go with the flow and don't be surprised if you are in for an unexpectedly hotter than hot lap!

Thanks so much to Johnny for his expert handling of the beast. Many thanks also to Brandon, Irene, Amanda, and Brittany for making the hot lap magic happen. I know each

and every participant had an exciting time on the track thanks to them.

We shouldn't forget how much goes into making these events special. This includes the BMW NA roadshow, our very own Steve, Chris and Frank with the BMW CCA tent, the BMW Performance Driving Center team, and all the great CCA members who show up in their beautifully modified and maintained cars. Magic definitely happened at Bimmerfest West this year.

Pie Run – A Rookie's Perspective

By Joe Martinez

A Summer Kick-off party on the Jersey Shore, an All-inclusive resort in the Dominican Republic, Colonial Williamsburg; these are places my wife and I have visited over the past half dozen Memorial Day weekends. This year however, a loaded work schedule for me and her covering weekend shifts meant no planned trips. As I sat wondering what to squeeze in, an email showed up that contained some key words; BMW driving, back roads and pie. Needless to say, I read on. Having received the membership as a holiday gift, I joined the BMW CCA in 2015 but had yet to take advantage the events, though several looked appealing. The timing and description made this a perfect inaugural event for me.



(Above) Tourmeister Mark Rosenberg's E90 M3 is ready to hit the mountains.

The alarm went off at 5:45am on a Saturday morning and shortly thereafter I had the top down and was driving to Rockville for the kick-off. Arriving at Scandinavian Import Servicenter, I enjoyed what was described as "light fare", including a variety of breakfast sandwiches and quite the donut assortment. Good driving fuel. We also heard from the owner of Scandinavian Import Servicenter and had a chance to check out the facility. It is good to have quality choices for servicing our vehicles, and from the ratings, Scandinavian seems to be a solid option. A special thank you to Alan Tetervin and Bogdan Poplacean for hosting the

Club at their facility.

Having never participated in a club tour, I was intrigued as to how things





(Above) Gennaro Layo on his first Pie Run in his beautiful Frozen Red E92 M3. (Middle) Scandinavian Import in Rockville kicks off our fun run with Duck Donuts for breakfast. (Bottom) Tourmeister Mark Rosenberg giving the last minute pep talk before we depart CMO.

would flow. Mark Rosenberg gave participants general instructions and handed out directions. Shortly thereafter we were on our way. I understood the concept of driving in a group and tracking the directions to mileage, but was interested to see how it would play out. One is quickly immersed in the flow since the traffic light to cross Route 355 took about 5 seconds to change. So there I was, instantly in a group that was led by two M3's, a 5 Series, a Z3, me and another 5 Series behind me.

The early part of the trip felt more like a typical errand trip than an exciting country drive as we were mired in the hell of Rockville traffic. Shortly, a sign that things would get better came across as the sweet sound of the M3's throttling up and down. It wasn't long before we got to

some clear roads and the start of winding roads. Around this time, a tip that was mentioned during the kickoff talk came through loud and clear and especially important if you are new to this kind of tour. If you are riding solo, make sure you are following a car that has a team. It is impossible to drive and manage the direction and mileage sheet, and even if you are a master multitasking millennial, you are not going to enjoy the ride.

As the trip continued, we encountered a small hiccup as our leader missed a turn. It did not take long to get back on track. Our group had somehow pared itself down to four with two M3's, the Z3, and me bringing up the rear. We were well into the meat of the drive at this point. This included some great scenery and roads that allowed one to

push the car. The highlights were tight curves and clear downhill straight-aways. Keeping up with the pack was fun and as we were coming up to the last 10 miles, we actually caught up to another pack of drivers. At this point the convoy was about 10 cars deep. This was the pack that would make a left turn onto

Route 15 and pull into Catoclin Mountain Orchard (CMO).

The CMO stop allowed for some time to regroup and work on the next highlight; picking up the pies. This was also a good time to take in the vehicle inventory. There was a nice assortment across multiple generations; several customized M3's, an M4, a classic M6 and a new M6 with some great carbon fiber highlights, Z3's and Z4's, a wildcard Tesla Roadster and a Mercedes C63 thrown in.

Eventually, Mark huddled the group again and provided directions and instructions for the next leg. I will admit it was a bit intimidating at first because this part of the drive was a ninety-mile haul. Next was breaking up into groups; Fast, Spirited and Cruising. I was tempted to join the



'Fast' crowd, but after seeing the array of M cars in that group plus listening to the description of the route, I decided otherwise. My car may have the soul of an M but it still has the heart and organs of a 128i. So I decided to blend into the 'Spirited' group and soon we were on our way.

The second leg started a bit slow, but rather than this being due to traffic, it was mainly a result of a Honda Odyssey Minivan going up Catocin Mountain. Once that was cleared, our group was on its way, led by an E30 325i convertible, my 128i, an E46 M3 Convertible and a Z4. This leg of the trip featured a drive up the mountain which provided some great uphill roads. Once we came out of the park, we were treated to a fresh assortment of great back roads and

fine scenery. The added wrinkle on this leg was that it included some pretty fun undulating roads, where it would be pretty easy to go a little airborne as you crest some of the small hills. Think of it as a personal roller coaster ride. We drove through farmland, parks, golf courses, small towns, one-way bridges and tunnels, crossing state lines and seeing some interesting historical markers. All of this while maintaining a "spirited" driving mode. Again, if you were a solo driver, following a paired car was exponentially better, plus it was clear that the lead 325i driving team were pros. Though I originally thought 90 miles sounded daunting, it was not long before I noticed we were already up to the 80-mile marker and soon we were pulling into AKA Friscos in

Frederick. Drive complete.

My take away is simple; if you have not participated in a tour yet, it's definitely worth it. If you feel intimidated, don't. You will quickly pick up the gist of it. If you think it's a competition or only for racers, it's not. You can pack with your choice of enthusiast, perky or mosey drivers.

Spending day after day in the torture that is navigating the Beltway will suck the joy of driving out of you. Doing a drive like this in a fun car brings it all back. On multiple occasions I smiled at the sight of an open straight away or an upcoming tight curve. So take the top of off, open the windows and sunroof, and join in. I will be looking forward to the next event and hopefully more rookie participants will come on board.

Kudos to the following:

- Mark Rosenberg for designing the road trip and organizing the event. I could not imagine how one documents all the directions and maps out the roads.
- Alan Tetervin and Bogdan Poplacean at Scandinavian for hosting.
- The drivers of that E30 325i convertible for a fine job on the 2nd leg, they did not miss a single turn. I did not get a chance to mention it at the end. If I see you at a future drive, I am hitching my wagon to you.
- CMO for baking some fine pies. If you are a pie enthusiast check this place out.
- AKA Friscos for fantastic sandwiches and baked potatoes.

2nd Annual Euro Marque Golf Tournament

By David Costanza

The morning dawned hot and it only was going to get worse throughout the day. With highs forecast in the upper-90s, everyone was well aware of the toll that the heat could take on the participants. The teams arrived early for warmups, stretching, and a little friendly trash talking. Coaches shared their wisdom about the competition, sportsmanship, and the importance of sunscreen and staying hydrated. After final instructions from the event organizers, and the national anthem, the ManorGate Marlins and the Chinquapin Wahoos got down to business in their annual grudge match swim meet.

Oh, sorry, wrong newsletter. Two stories on a short deadline. Anyway, your author started his day at 8:00am, refereeing the Marlins-Wahoo swim meet

before heading off to the other heat-infused, grudge match competition of the day, the 2nd Annual Euro Marque Golf Tournament and Concours. On this stultifying hot July afternoon, 13 NCC BMW CCA members squared off against Team Porsche (and some other marques' teams, but mostly Porsche) at the Raspberry Falls Golf & Hunt Club.

After last year's sartorial confusion, Club President Paul Seto arranged for Team BMW to have matching BMW Championship shirts (sending a not-so-subtle message about his expectations for the outcome) and M-Power hats (what we would need to beat the guys who drive cars with engines in the wrong end). Thanks to BMW of Sterling for outfitting the team. Team member and Head Pro



(Above) Team BMW looking sharp in their Euro Marque uniforms provided by BMW of Sterling.
(Below) Brian Hair walking over to teammate Chris Henn who's lining up the birdie putt.

at Raspberry Falls, Willy Lutz (fun fact: his full name is Wilhelm Augustus Lutz — any wonder he drives BMWs?) suggested black shorts which looked great with the shirts and hats but left team members feeling the heat, literally. Team Porsche showed up in their pit crew shirts again.

Unlike last year's tournament, which featured five teams competing, BMW, Porsche, Audi, Mercedes, and Aston, only Teams BMW and Porsche fielded competitive foursomes this year. The other marques' teams sent only social golfers, apparently not wanting to get caught up in the Munich v. Stuttgart brawl or perhaps because they realized their golf games are more like their cars, social boulevard cruisers.

As noted in the wrong introduction above, it was hot. Really hot. Willy admonished everyone to drink plenty of fluids and, in a spasm of sportsmanship, Team Porsche provided water and Gatorade at the start. Fortunately, no one fainted or

lost consciousness during the round and everyone staggered home, Ken Venturi 1964 U.S. Open-style, about five hours after starting.

Team BMW's competitive flight consisted of three groups this year. The foursome of Brian Hair, Tim Gallagher, Rich Sperry, and Chris Henn carded a very respectable 66.

A threesome made up of Ryan Mosel, Mike Mosel, and Adam Froemming also played well, posting a 65 for their round. The final competitive foursome, a reprise of last year's second place finishers Paul Seto, Willy Lutz, Cynthia Heller, and your author improved on their score of last year by three strokes,



recording 8 birdies and no bogies on the way to a round of 64. Unfortunately, that was not good enough as Team Porsche had three teams which posted better scores, the lowest of them a 61. All of the closest to the pin awards went to some other teams' players but Ryan Mosel, besting even Willy's massive blast on #3, represented Team BMW well, winning the Longest Drive contest.

After the competition, all the players enjoyed a nice buffet meal, drinks, and some (mostly) good natured cheering although Team Porsche waving their little Porsche flags throughout the meal might have been taking the ribbing a bit too far.

After dinner, the golfers headed out to the field to judge the People's Choice Concours. Golfers had parked their cars in a field off to the side of the clubhouse for judging. This was a "show what you drove" and, despite Team Porsche's false claims of illegal field dressing by some BMW drivers last year, the judging went off without controversy.

Voters were allowed to pick one car among each of the marques except their own for a People's Choice award. In the end, the only Aston there was picked by default, a black Audi A7 beat a black Audi A4, a beautiful white Boxster Spyder topped all of the Porsches, and President Seto's M3 won for a second year in a row for BMW. Once again, inexplicably, neither of the side-by-side, beautiful Monaco Blue E90s got any Concours votes.

In the end, it was a fun day of golf, food, and cars. Team BMW acquitted itself well but will have to look forward to the 3rd annual competition as the next chance to bring victory home for the Blue and White.

P.S. The ManorGate Marlins went into the final few events trailing but won seven of the 12 relays and pulled out a hard fought 229-215 victory. Perhaps Team BMW will follow the Marlins' lead next summer and finally vanquish Team Porsche.

The BMW M6 Gran Coupe and Audi S8

The True Believers Prevailed

By James Chew

During the 1980's, a war was being waged within this country. It was the war on cars.

It was a messy three-front war. Waging a losing battle on the insurance company front, the "Big 4" automakers were fighting two others: one with the new Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards and the other with more stringent EPA car emissions standards while dealing with newly enacted Federal Government regulations that dictated all new cars use unleaded gas and catalytic converters. The once all-American V-8 engines that powered our car were being constricted to producing well under 200 horsepower. During that era, the Camaro Z28's 5.0 liter V-8 produced 165 horsepower and the Mustang GT with a 5.0 V-6 produced 140 horsepower.

The "anti-car" Army envisioned a sound victory, forcing us to use public transportation or car pool. As for cars – the "anti-car" Army were envisioning an America where we drove nothing but small, four-cylinder cars, making cars so unattractive that we would resort to building European-style public transportation systems.

But the "anti-car" forces underestimated the American desire for horsepower and freedom. The true believers had two secret weapons that



would allow them to win the war. The first was technology. The second were our Allies – in particular BMW.

While a Mechanical Engineering undergraduate at Cal Poly Pomona (and an active member of SAE and ASME), I was a "private" in the "Big 4" Army. I hung out with the folks at the Chrysler Shelby Performance Center in Santa Fe Springs, CA, where they were tuning the competent Dodge front-wheel-

drive cars into legitimate performance machines. We had no idea about the pioneering work we were performing. Our lessons learned are now being applied to the new generation of German front-wheel-drive performance luxury vehicles.

But we were all taken aback when BMW launched the M3. While we at Dodge developed turbochargers for our legendary (OK guys – this is MY article and I'll call it as I

please) 2.2 liter 4-cylinder engine to produce 146 horsepower with Shelby adding an intercooler to produce 175 horsepower, BMW launched the M3 with a naturally aspirated 16-valve four cylinder engine that produced 195 to 230 horsepower. While we were wrestling with torque steer, torque management (NOT to tear up the manual and automatic transaxles), front weight bias and trying to engineer 15" wheels with Goodyear "gatorbacks" in to the wheel wells, the M3 was perfectly balanced with fender blisters. And as we stuffed as many luxury features in to the Dodge Daytona Turbo Z to justify a higher MSRP, the M3 was a minimalist vehicle. In fact, when one bolted in a roll cage, the E30 M3 was instantly the car to beat on any racetrack.

The Big 4, as well as the rest of the auto manufacturers, had the new performance car benchmark.

How the M3 idea has evolved after thirty years has been fascinating, to say the least. No longer a street-

(Above) California dreaming in a BMW M6 Gran Coupe. (Below) The interior is a fine balance between driving enthusiast and luxury.



legal racecar, the “M” brand products have evolved to provide both “ultimate” performance and “ultimate” luxury. The Germans manufacturers

appears to have only been primed?

That being said, there is plenty to LOVE about both cars.

The BMW M6 Gran Coupe and

executive sedan, the Gran Coupe exudes an athletic, upscale profile. Now a 10-year-old design, the profile looks just as fresh as it did when it

huckster Ralph Gilles), and all of the current Ford and Lincoln product designs (NOT that other huckster, J. Mays). Simply speaking, his designs stand the test of time.

The interior designs are equally as distinctive and timeless. Shunning trendy fabrics and design cues, both interiors have rich leather upholstery, very supportive seats, driver's seats that can be heated, cooled, and provide a massage (we're not kidding). The driver and passenger controls on both cars are placed in the “just right” positions. Electronic and electronic-assisted controls abound. And it's these electronic controls that generated two minor complaints. I am still unaccustomed to pressing the ignition button twice to shut off the ignition in the new BMWs. And when I shifted the Audi in to reverse, I kept putting it in Park!

It's the rear seating areas that distinguish both vehicles from the other performance luxury sedans. Simply speaking, both the M6 Gran Coupe and Audi S8 make the rear passengers feel as if they're traveling in “first class”. When opening the rear doors, the M6 Gran Coupe rear seating areas appear to not be very spacious while the S8 seating area looks plain. Once seated, the area seems to undergo an instant transformation.

In both vehicles, the rear passengers are treated to comfortable, supportive, ergonomically

have used this idea to develop “ultimate” executive performance sedans, which have now become the favorite cars for the “overnight” technology millionaires. And after a week with a BMW M6 Gran Coupe and one with an Audi S8, it's clear what I would do if I won the Powerball or Mega Millions jackpot (or if I were to become one of those technology millionaires).

One of my favorite Theodore Roosevelt quotes is, “Comparison is the thief of joy”. For that reason, when I'm writing about multiple vehicles, I will take the liberty to provide my preference, but I'll never offer a definite “this is better than that.”

Besides, this would be an impossible task with the M6 Gran Coupe and the S8.

Let me state my ONLY major dislike with both vehicles up front. I can't understand the attraction to the “frosted/matte” paint finishes. For God's sake, both vehicles have MSRPs that are well over \$100,000. Why would one want a car that

the Audi S8 are the “ultimate” expressions of their respective brand exterior and interior design languages.

When it debuted as the CS Concept car, the exterior design of the BMW M6 Gran Coupe was deemed outstanding and timeless. With a low and sleek profile, the Gran Coupe has just enough curves to give it the same “timeless” look as the E39 and E46 BMWs. A classic

debuted. In my opinion, it's the most attractive of the three Gran Coupes on today's market (the Mercedes CLS and Audi A7).

Audi, who started the “aero” exterior design, took a more conservative approach to the S8. For those of us who follow these things, the S8 is a classic Freeman Thomas inspired design. Mr. Thomas was behind the current VW Beetle, the Audi TT, the Chrysler 300 (NOT that

(Top) Audi S8 shows that Audi keeps raising the automotive product design benchmark. (Below) The Audi S8 interior shows why the world's auto design studios are always changing Audi.





(Top) The BMW RRL team is realizing the ultimate performance potential of the M6 engine. (Above) The M6 Gran Coupe trunk is surprisingly large and practical.

designed seats. The rear passengers are treated to individual climate controls and good vision.

With a nod to practicality, both vehicles feature split folding rear seats. Having lived in an area where Rolls-Royces, Bentleys, and Maseratis were common sights in the Costco parking lot, we know such a feature is important to these buyers.

When aggressively driven, both vehicles

prove that their roots are based on the E30 M3.

In "performance" mode, the M6 Gran Coupe is a fantastic modern track vehicle. Whether you're on Angeles Crest Highway or the Tail of the Dragon, you'll immediately notice that the M6 drives as if it's a much smaller car. Whether rear-wheel drive or X-drive, the M6 Gran Coupe felt sure and nimble in all driving conditions.

Having perfected the all-wheel drive, the S8 having the famous "Quattro" system was a given. The engine, shifter, chassis, suspension, brakes, steering, and "Quattro" work in harmony to give the S8 instinctive, "cat-like" reflexes.

Driving either vehicle will warm the driving enthusiast's soul. As you're driving certain back roads, you'll find yourself seeking tracks such as Summit Point, Willow Springs, Laguna Seca, or Martinsville to realize the performance potential. You'll search YouTube for videos of the M6 Gran Coupe and S8 being driven to their limits. You'll be motivated to save some money to attend either the BMW Performance Driving School or the Audi sportscar experience.

And that's what I would do if I won either the PowerBall or Mega Millions jackpot. Buy a new M6 Gran Coupe, take European delivery, then attend the BMW performance driving school and focus on realizing the performance potential of my new vehicle.

Unlike other "ultimate" performance luxury cars, both the M6 Gran Coupe and S8 perform well as daily drivers. Both feel comfortable and content in urban, suburban, and Freeway driving conditions. Both function well in work or school car-pool duties.

And to ensure a complete victory, BMW, Audi, and the rest of the automakers not only designed their performance cars to meet the stringent fuel economy and emissions standards, but they also made them safe. In fact, the most unsafe part of today's performance cars is the driver.

Long exiled from reality, the baby boomer "anti-car" army has become "Get Off My Lawn" senior citizens (see the *Washington Post* Auto Writer). But they are trying to create a ray of hope for their cause. They are now rallying around a single data point that indicated that "millennials" are settling in to urban areas, shunning car ownership, and increasingly interested in autonomous cars. Drinking this Kool-Aid, they firmly believe that the death of the American performance car is now well within their lifetime.

But I see a good number of "millennials" at car shows. I see them lusting for Ms, Ss, AMGs, Fs, Z28's, SRTs, GT, Skylines, Z06s, Vipers,



(Top) The race-tuned Audi S8 engine is simply delightful. (Middle) OK BMW faithful – notice the location of the Audi speedometer and the tachometer! (Above) The Audi S8 trunk shows its German practical side.

GT40s, and Shelys. I see them enrolling in performance driving schools, taking advantage of programs such as those offered by the BMW CCA Foundation, and customizing their cars.

Americans' desire for freedom and horsepower is enduring. Long may it live.

Pittsburgh Celebrates the Vintage Automobile with Racing, Car Shows, and Special Events

By Marc Caden



The 33rd annual running of the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix (PVGP) took place July 8-17, 2016. Once again, the Allegheny Chapter hosted all of the BMW CCA activities, which included a special car corral and a hospitality tent with fine food and Spaten beer located high atop "German Hill." Picture perfect weather and one of the best views of the racing circuit resulted in almost 300 BMWs in attendance.

The PVGP is the only vintage race in the country contested on a street circuit. Most of the BMWs compete in either the under 2.0 liter class or over 2.0 liter class. However, there was also a special Porsche versus BMW Challenge Race event that included several 2002s competing against the 911, 914-6, and 356. BMW was done proud by Perry Genova who won the Challenge Race between the German teams in his 1970 BMW 2002.

While the PVGP on its face appears to be a purely motorsports event, its true mission is a charitable one. Since the PVGP began it has raised millions of dollars in support of the Autism Society of Pittsburgh and the Allegheny Valley School. Each year the Allegheny Chapter gives a check to the Allegheny Valley School for approximately \$30,000 and over the years it has donated several hundred thousand dollars.

There were too many beautiful BMWs to mention them all, but there were a few notables. Doug Dolan from our chapter attended with his beautiful 2002 Z8 and the BMW CCA prominently featured it in one of their Instagram posts. Andrew Wilson

drove his 1973 3.0 CSI, nicknamed "Athena," all the way from Maine. Andrew will soon embark on his own personal odyssey by driving Athena roundtrip to Monterey for Oktoberfest – a 6,000 mile journey! Pennsylvania residents LouAnn and Lonny Shirk brought their pristine 1991 Z1 and demonstrated its disappearing door trick. As always, there was a nice array of 2002s, i8s, E30 M3s, E24s, and even a couple of bright red Isettas. There was also a brand new M2 in Long Beach Blue parked only a few spots away from its predecessor, a 1M in Valencia Orange.

If you like exotic cars from other marques, the PVGP is like Katie's Cars

& Coffee in Great Falls, but on growth hormones! I saw the new Porsche 911 GT3RS parked adjacent to the venerable Carrera GT. My son Andrew pointed out a newly released McLaren 675LT (LT = long tail) Spider. It gets a longer tail for improved aerodynamics and it is a lighter and more powerful version of the 650S. A local dealer brought a 1 of 250 special edition Jaguar called the "Project 7." The Project 7 is essentially an F-Type, but one that has been made lighter, faster, and restyled with a striking aerodynamic hump that pays homage to the old Le Mans winning D-Type. Here is a sampling of some of the other super sports cars we spied over



(Top) The BMW CCA tent at the PVGP sits high atop "German Hill" with a terrific view of turn 13. BMW Performance Instructor Mike Renner's BMW M3 received priority parking during a lunch break in front of the Griot's Garage and BMW CCA vendor tents.

the weekend: Lamborghini – Mangusta, Countach, Diablo, Gallardo, Murcielago, Aventador, Huracán; Ferrari – 512TR, 430, 458, 599GTB, F12; Nissan GTR; Ariel Atom; Lotus – Elise, Exige; McLaren – MP4 12C, 570GT;



Performance Center M3 in return for a charitable donation. While most of the race cars were struggling to reach even 100 mph on the long straight before the hay bale chicane, Mike easily clocked 115 mph and probably could have gone higher. Using my iPhone in conjunction with the Track Addict app and an external GPS, I created a video of my hot lap experience that includes RPMs, throttle position, and accurate speeds. It is available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwe_LPGOraQ.

continues to grow in popularity each year and the scenic drive through the mountains is an added bonus. There were way too many folks from our chapter to list, but I saw President Paul Seto, Vice President James Laws, Tim McNeish, Doug Verner, Steve Tenney, and brothers Doug and David Dolan.

The big news is that Pittsburgh has been awarded Oktoberfest in 2018 and it is planned to coincide with the PVGP. Allegheny Chapter President George Snyder has already started

(Top) During his hot laps of the race circuit, BMW Performance Instructor Mike Renner made sure to smoke the M3's tires each time he passed the BMW CCA tent. (Above) still a little dazed after their hot lap of the circuit, Marc and Andrew Caden pose with Mike Renner. (Below Left) Doug Dolan's Z8 was one of the stars of the PVGP's parking corral. (Below Right) Andrew Wilson plans to drive his 1973 3.0 CSI cross country to Oktoberfest in Monterey, California this August.

Bentley Continental GT; Audi R8;
Alfa Romeo 4C; Porsche - 911
Turbo S, GT2, GT3, Cayman GT4,
Boxster Spyder; Jaguar F-Type; and

Mercedes - SLS, AMG GTS.

Like last year, in between races, BMW Driving Instructor Mike Renner gave "hot laps" in a



planning some very special events and expect more on this to come soon.

(Right) Jaguar was the marque of the year and there was no shortage of E-Types, such as this beauty. (Below) LouAnn and Lonny Shirk's BMW Z1. (Below Right) The newly released McLaren 675LT Spider.



(Above Right) A Porsche Carrera GT is parked in front of a McLaren MP4 12C and Lamborghini Aventador. (Below Left to Right) Spoiler alert! A vintage 911 RS America, 911 GT3, and the newly released Cayman GT4 show off Porsche's evolving approach to rear aerodynamics.



A Surprising Day at Summit Point

Anna Maripuu



Rising at o'dark thirty and playing hooky on a work day does not seem like a bad thing when your destination is Summit Point Motorsports Park and a fleet of brand new BMWs awaits. Our day would be full of surprises, as one event after another unfolded, and just when you thought things couldn't get any better, wait, there would be yet another surprise!

A group of club members gathered around 8 am on Wednesday, June 22 for an event sponsored by BMW of Sterling. Besides the dealership reps, led by Ryan Hoover, a true BMW enthusiast, there were two other groups of people without whom this event would not have been possible. These included a set of instructors with BSR (Bill Scott Racing) wearing

red shirts and a handful of BMW advocates, wearing dark blue shirts. The cars being showcased were the latest model 6 Series, 7 Series, M2, and i8.

After a catered breakfast, we gathered in one of the classrooms at the Shenandoah circuit for a safety briefing and a general introduction to the order of the day. We had effectively been split into two groups

during the registration process, and one group was to stay at the track for a Lead-and-Follow event, while the other group piled onto buses to head to the Washington circuit for an autocross event, where the Summit Point Karting used to run.

For the Lead-and-Follow event, an instructor in an M5 led a group of three cars at a time on a run around the Shenandoah circuit. The cars

available to drive were 650xi's and 750i M sports. Lest you think the Lead-and-Follow was tame, the groups got up to 110 to 115 mph on the straightaways, staying in close formation, but keeping about a four car separation. The instructor in the M5 gave instructions throughout the course over a walkie-talkie, leading each driver through the apexes and giving hints about when to hit the throttle and when to brake.

We were given strict instructions not to touch the traction control button. We were also instructed to keep our foot off the brake between runs, to avoid brake fade and ensure the brakes would remain as grippy as possible. Those that felt comfortable were encouraged to use the paddle shifters, but only if they had significant experience using them in their own car already. All the cars were set to sport mode which made for some spirited driving.

We were paired up and my partner, John Althouse, who happens to be an NCC HPDE instructor and a heck of a nice guy, drove first. We felt like the tires needed warming up, but after the first practice lap, we were able to let the cars go. Being

(Below Left) John Althouse waits his turn to track the 750i M sport car around the Shenandoah circuit.



(Top) The M6 competition package car looks slightly menacing as it is touched up by a BMW product advocate.

in first position right behind the instructor was an advantage, because one could easily follow his lines.

The Shenandoah is a 2.2 mile road course with 22 turns, so it's an exciting circuit. For this event, the circuit had been shortened by omitting the portion of the track that includes turns 6 through 11, but it still made for an exciting run.

Since we had to leave the traction control on in the cars, we were instructed to stay off the smooth pavement of the Karussell with its 20 degrees of banking right before turn 13. The main reason for this is that the bank would "trick" the car into thinking it was unstable and traction control would go bonkers and cut off the throttle. Because there were 'newbies' in the group, the organizers opted to keep this safety feature on.

This did not stop us from having a ton of fun. The back straight is always exciting, after the big bend at turn 19, as you can gain

a lot of speed there. The bridge straight is also an opportunity to gain speed before hitting the sweeping turn 12 and bus stop. Everyone enjoys the challenge of the Karussell esses coming out of turn 13, and then going into the corkscrew with its tricky apexes and elevation changes.

One of the nice things about this track is the blind turns that literally drop you off. The corners have both positive and negative camber and increasing and decreasing radius turns with vertical drops. It is considered one of the most technical tracks in the country.

Both John and I did well, keeping our eyes up and, looking in the direction we wanted the car to go, and working our small muscles to smoothly guide the car around the track.

After driving the 650xi, which handled very well on the track, John and I had some time to kill as we sat in the 750i waiting for our turn. We entertained ourselves by pressing as

many buttons as possible (NOT the traction control button, I promise). We found the button that raises and lowers the sun shades in all the rear windows. We also discovered a variety of great little storage bins and cubby holes in which to stow stuff. We marveled at the smooth action of the glove compartment as we opened and closed it, and we discovered some of the cool features that the new 7 has, which includes hand gesture controls. A wave of the hand, for instance, can raise or lower the temperature. We giggled like school children when we discovered that the seats have a massage feature. We decided we should track the car while getting a back massage. Surely that should be new standard equipment in all professional race cars running in a 24-hour race. The trick would be how to engineer the massage equipment so that it wouldn't weigh down the car!

Not surprisingly, piloting this big car around the circuit was not as gratifying as was the nimbler 6 Series. Strategically, the organizers had placed the 7s in third place in the

(Below Right) Club president Paul Seto and DIY Committee Chair Marlon Spencer prepare to take to the track.



lineup of cars, because it simply could not keep up on the fast straights, and would invariably lag somewhat behind the two 6s.

At the conclusion of the Lead-and-Follow event, we were ferried in busses to the autocross location, where two brand spanking new M2s awaited us. To our amusement, the instructor who bussed us over in the 'mothership' proceeded to "walk" us through the autocross course by autocrossing the bus. Everyone laughed as the huge bus yawed and keeled its way through the route. At least it gave us an idea of the course, as there would be no time for any practice runs.

To make the autocross more fun, the organizers had decided to time the runs and have a stop box at the end. Failing to stop within the stop box would add a second to your time. The advocate encouraged us to think of the end of the stop box as a cliff - you wouldn't want to pull a Thelma and Louise and plunge over the cliff, would you? She encouraged us to think of the orange autocross cones as Golden Retriever puppies and not to hit them. You wouldn't want to run over a puppy, right?

Though no one in our group hit

any cones, aka puppies, doing so would add a one-second penalty to your time, and as the product advocate said, publicly shame and humiliate you in front of your friends. Going off course, would void your time altogether.

For everyone at the event, I would bet it was the first time they had driven the M2, or even seen it. Production of this car is only now getting going, and people are paying a premium to put down a deposit and ordering these cars sight unseen and un-test driven.

The M2 Coupe has a 3.0 liter TwinPower turbo inline 6-cylinder engine and is rear-wheel drive. It is only available in four exterior paint colors: Black Sapphire, Alpine White, Mineral Grey and Long Beach Blue.

The cabin is fitted with a host of M specific details such as sports seats in Black Dakota leather with blue contrast stitching and an M logo in the backrests. Familiar M logos also show up on the rev counter, gearshift lever, door sill plates, and M leather steering wheel and paddle shifters. The interior is trimmed with porous carbon fiber and a surprisingly luxurious touch



of Alcantara on the door cards and parking brake lever gaiter.

The BMW engineers decided to fit the M2 with aluminum wheels and mixed-size tires. The lightweight 19-inch forged wheels (front axle: 9J x 19, rear axle 10J x 19) substantially reduce rotating and unsprung mass. Fitted with 19-inch Michelin Pilot Super Sport tires (front axle: 245/35 ZR 19, rear axle: 265/35 ZR 19), these wheels and tires ensure proper grip on the track and comfort on the road.

The only options available for the car is to either get the manual 6-speed transmission or for an additional \$2,900, a 7-speed M double clutch transmission with Driveline, which propels the car from 0 to 60 in 4 seconds. You can add an executive package with features such as rear park distance control, rear-view camera, speed limit info, heated steering wheel, automatic high beams, and active driving assistant, which includes lane departure warning, frontal collision warning, city collision mitigation, and pedestrian protection. The only other add-ons are black kidney grilles, carbon fiber

mirror caps, and stainless steel pedals.

At 365 hp and with a top speed of 163 mph, this nippy little car may well remind people of the E30 M3. Simply the sound of the exhaust was exhilarating and it was a real kick to drive. Gratifyingly, everyone was able to get two runs on the autocross course, and times improved during the second run across the board. Our very own Rafael Garces had one of the best times of the day.

We were bussed back to the Shenandoah Circuit in the "mothership" for a series of hot laps with the instructors in the M5s. They loaded three participants at a time into the cars and took us for a pretty thrilling ride. It included getting on the smooth pavement of the Karussell. I was in a car with Doug Verner and his buddy, and I won't tell you what escaped my mouth when we made contact with that 20-degree bank. The G forces were definitely a fun part of this portion of the day.

As if this were not enough, our day was not over. After enjoying the hotlaps, it was time to take a break and eat lunch. BMW logo goodie



(Top) A fleet of 6 Series and 7 Series cars sit ready and waiting to be driven in the Lead-and-Follow event. (Left) NCC Board members and Committee Chairs gather for a group photo op prior to the day's events.

bags with an M cap, key chain, and promotional literature were given to participants. Just when you thought things couldn't possibly get any better, three beautiful i8 vehicles were produced, in three different colors: crystal white pearl metallic with frozen gray accent, protonic blue metallic with frozen gray accent, and sophisto gray metallic with frozen gray accent. Seeing these three cars lined up in a row with their scissor doors open was quite a sight.

John and I were in the first group of three to get out on the track, and we pretty much had to pinch ourselves as we took our places in the first car (the sophisto grey metallic) behind the instructor car. It was an absolute thrill to pilot this sleek vehicle around the Shenandoah circuit. The center of gravity was

great and the throttle was surprisingly responsive and fast. We hardly had time to indulge in the interior surroundings as there was a line of participants wanting to get some lap-time with this car. We were very lucky to have gotten the chance to each drive two laps. After having a somewhat lackluster opinion about the i8, I can officially say, that I loved how it handled and it was a blast to take on the track.

Getting in and out of the car is quite another challenge, especially getting out. In trying to keep a modicum of graciousness during my exit, I managed to bonk my head on the open scissor door. You have to be pretty sprightly to enter and exit this car.

As I left for the day, I stopped on the bridge to take in the track spread

out below. I could barely hear the cars in the distance and was alone with a light wind, lovely summer day, perfect temperatures, and the soothing sound of crickets and bird song. I watched a line of tiny i8s wind their way far away through the esses. They looked like little toy cars on a toy track. Eventually they came down the bridge straight and passed under me, and you could feel their speed and power.

The most surprising thing about this day was how peaceful relaxing it had been. Spending time behind the wheel of these beautiful driving machines is one of the most grounding, centering and enjoyable things I can think of. It was a day full of one great surprise after another.

A really special thanks goes out to NCC HPDE instructor John

Althouse for being my partner-in-crime in giggling, button pushing, and driving. Because of his gentle, positive and "just-right" coaching when I took the wheel, I definitely drove the circuit better than I would have without him. A huge thank you goes to our club president Paul Seto for being the reason we were invited to this event in the first place. He convinced BMW of Sterling to fill up the morning session with club program heads as Paul's reward to us for our dedication to the club. The rest of the participants were valued BMW of Sterling customers and our thanks goes out to Ryan Hoover of BMW of Sterling for making the day possible.

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Traditions

BY Jim Gerock

PHOTOS Raine Mantysalo

The Deeper You Dig, the More that Needs to be Fixed

"I hope that wasn't your car I saw on that trailer". These are the words my wife Susan uttered to me after she passed a car carrier heading up the street with a rough looking BMW.



The date was Friday, April 13, 2012 and indeed the car in question was my new acquisition from a Craigslist seller in Scottsdale, AZ. According to the seller, the car was in "good running condition" but the engine wouldn't start and after some negotiations the car was purchased and found its way into my garage next to my 73tii. Upon delivery, the truck driver and I had a very difficult time rolling the car down the hill and into my driveway. Luckily, my neighbor (fellow NCC member) Oscar Benetiz was out walking his dog and provided much needed assistance.

My ultimate plan for the car was to update the suspension and braking system to tii specifications and build a dual carbureted engine to resemble the 2002 "tii" model which was never offered by BMW in the United States.

Starting that April, the car was completely disassembled by me with some assistance by fellow NCC member Marshall Lytle. The engine bay and undercarriage were power washed removing many layers of dirt and grime which had accumulated during its previous ownerships in Marin County, CA and Arizona. Accident damage caused by the 2nd owner in California left the nose and tail both bashed in, the left side scarred, and the right door replaced with a red one from a later 2002. Closer inspection revealed the right lower control arm had been replaced and a rebuilt 1976 4-speed transmission installed behind the numbers-matching engine.

Disassembling the seized engine in my garage, I'm convinced a blown head gasket allowed coolant to mix with the engine oil completely ruining the block, pistons, connecting rods, oil pump and many other internal components. Even after soaking the cylinder bores several times, I had to use a length of pipe and large hammer to extract the aluminum pistons. Sadly, the original engine was too far gone so it was taken to the local metal recycler. I had purchased a spare fuel injected engine removed from a Polaris 72tii a



few years ago and it would eventually become the new heart of the 69.

While dismantling the interior, I found the original door handles were broken, the driver's side seat frame broken, the emergency brake base torn and some spare change beneath the dash cover and under the back seat. Removing the carpet and upper dash section revealed two scorpion exoskeletons. I found a receipt under the back seat from a gift shop in Mill Valley, CA dated 11/13/73 and advertisements from a now-closed nightclub in Long Beach down inside the driver's door. The lower portion of the cabin beneath the dash is covered by sections of black cardboard which hides the wiring and hoses for the heater/ventilation system. When I removed the section next to the glove box, an old flip type cell phone dropped to the floor. After looking in our collection of old cell phone chargers, my wife found one which fit and charged it up enough to find the number and some old texts were still in the memory. We concluded the phone was lost by the previous owner in Arizona but my attempts to converse with the seller were futile.

At this point, I was looking for a good set of brown interior door handles. Fellow 2002 owners alerted

me that there were multiple old BMW's for sale which included some 2002's on a large property. After viewing some pictures online, I contacted the seller near Clifton, VA and expressed interest in an Agave green 71 2002 which had previous heavy accident damage but had a decent brown interior (with the door handles I needed). Instead of selling me the door handles, the seller gave me the entire car. Marshall and I collected the car using his truck/trailer and we took turns dismantling this car in his back yard. I sold multiple items, saved some parts for the 69 and then we cut up the entire

(Top and above) New carpet and Momo steering wheel update the original cleaned interior.





(Above) Riviera blue paint works well with factory brown interior color. Riviera 2002's all came with black interiors.

body and made another trip to the metal recycling yard off Edsall Road in Springfield.

Continuing with the disassembly, I removed the front and rear suspensions and installed temporary old ones so I could rebuild both using new components. During one weekend, I traveled to Nashville, TN picking up a set of brakes, struts and

rear trailing arms from a 74tii. New brake rotors, wheel bearings, rebuilt calipers, good used H&R springs and Bilstein Heavy duty inserts were installed in the powder coated front struts. The front subframe was reinforced, powder coated and new lower control arms, tie rods and a 22mm Suspension Techniques anti-sway bar installed using new hardware.

The original 69 rear subframe and the 74tii boxed trailing arms were powder coated and assembled with new stock BMW rubber bushings, brake pipes, bearings, brake components and a 19mm anti-sway bar. The completed

assemblies were then moved inside the house for temporary storage just prior to the car returning from bodywork.

It took a while to locate a suitable body shop to take on the 69 in all its scarred nature. My original idea was to keep the original Nevada color but my wife convinced me to change it to a more appealing color. After viewing many examples online, we narrowed the selection down to two shades of blue: Atlantic and Riviera. Riviera won. For several months, I corresponded with and visited several body shops hoping I could find one which would make the car like-new using the replacement parts I had sourced (used nose panel from a 71 Sahara, NOS front fenders, new tail panel and good used driver's side door from an Inka 76). Most places had never worked on an older BMW, some would not even talk about a price unless they inspected the car in person (actually a very wise business practice) or they quoted me an insane amount I would never recoup knowing I was not building a Concours, rare BMW.

After several months of searching for a body shop, I discussed my quandary with Raine Mantysalo who had recently had some work done on his Chamonix-colored 2002. Raine connected me with Lothar Schuettler and we devised a plan to have him oversee the body and paint work on the 69 at an undisclosed shop Lothar uses for his beautifully restored Vintage BMW's. With Marshall's help (again), we trailered the shell to Lothar's house on March 1, 2014 and I became very anxious to see the freshly painted car. I could not visit the shop performing the work but I received several updates via phone calls from Lothar regarding the status and shade of Riviera which would be applied to the car. On May 31st, Marshall and I retrieved the car from

Lothar's house. I was overwhelmed by the condition of the car. The panels were now straight, the paint was very smooth and I became nervous once again knowing I would have to be extremely careful putting everything back together.

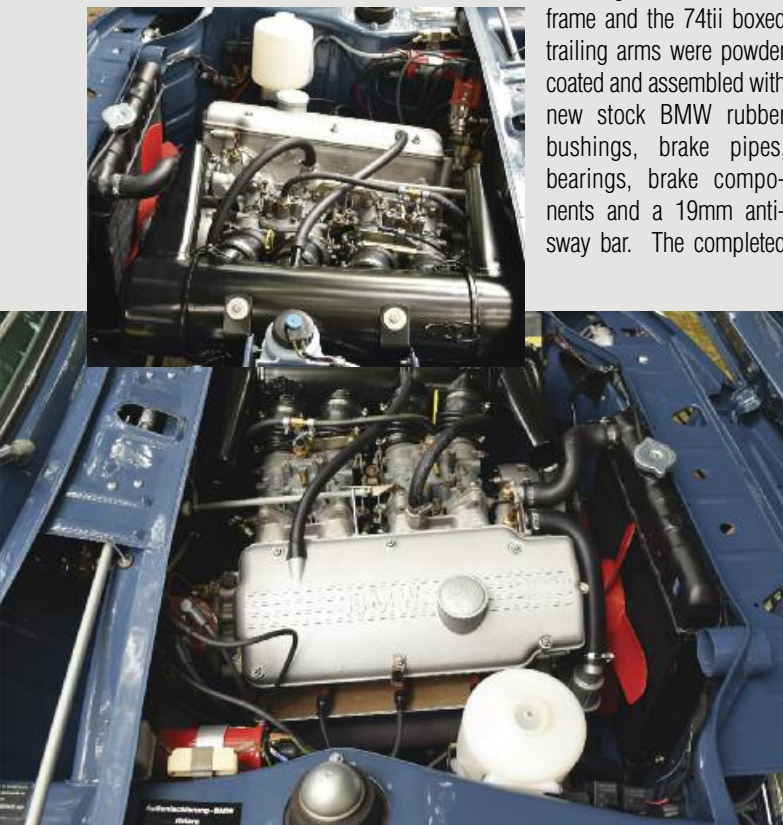
With the car back in my townhouse garage, I began by cleaning the underside and applying Eastwood's rubberized undercoating, leaving the fender wells body colored. The old temporary suspension components were switched to the restored assemblies using all new hardware. New BMW brake hard lines, emergency



(Above) A set of Ronal 13" alloy wheels with 185 series radial tires replace the original stamped steel units for better looks and handling.

cables and stainless braided flex hoses replaced the original well-worn items. The steering box was rebuilt using new gaskets and seals. New BMW belt line and door trim was painstakingly installed to the exterior along with a new set of stainless steel early style bumpers sourced from La Jolla Independent in California. The original gas tank was cleaned and sealed using the Renu system by Looper's Service Center in Rockville, MD. All new fuel lines were installed together with an electric pump and safety inertia cut-off switch in the trunk.

Remember the spare 72tii engine mentioned above? It was treated to a full rebuild converting the factory Kugelfischer fuel injection to older technology Solex 40PHH carburetors which were freshened with new gaskets and seals. The



(Left) Completely rebuilt 72tii engine now features dual Solex 40mm carburetors and factory 2002ti air cleaner assembly.



(Above) Since the car arrived with a severely damaged front end missing grilles and a bumper, new components were sourced (Right).



cylinder head was rebuilt by Korman Autoworks in Greensboro, NC using new valve guides, newer valve seals and the original valves. Back at home, I installed new BMW rocker arms and shafts along with a Schrick 292 camshaft. The engine block, crankshaft, connecting rods and a new set of Mahle pistons were sent to a machine shop in Winchester, VA. Being so rusty, the block was shot blasted externally, bored for the oversized pistons and decked for a fresh sealing surface with the rebuilt head. The machine shop also polished the original crankshaft and a new sprocket was pressed on before I picked up the components for my assembly back at home. Eastwood's ceramic engine paint was applied to the block, then new bearings, seals, timing/oil pump chains and gaskets were used along with all new engine hardware during reassembly. The old flywheel from both the 69 and 72 engines were deemed unusable so a new lightened and balanced steel one was sourced and installed together with new Sachs brand clutch components. Rounding out the engine, a new remanufactured Bosch alternator and E30 M3 type Bosch starter were installed.

Calling on Marshall's help again, we lowered the engine into the car one cold Winter day. I then

installed the resealed 76 transmission, different driveshaft and exhaust system along with the rear differential (stock 3.64:1 ratio open unit) and rebuilt axles with new CV joints. Trying to keep the "ti" theme, I used the stock cast iron tii exhaust manifold, new intermediate pipe, stock type resonator and an older Ansa twin-tip sport muffler. Funny thing about that muffler. The Ansa was originally installed on my 73tii, but I exchanged it for a stock muffler and gave it to Marshall who used it on his 73 and 75 2002. It then was used by at least two other NCC members (Clay Weiland and Dudley Williams) before finding its way back into my hands for use on the 69.

With the suspension and drivetrain mostly completed, I turned to the interior. The original wiring harness was cleaned, some problem areas fixed and re-wrapped using 3M friction tape before installing it back into the car. A sealed gel type battery was relocated beneath the rear seat using a thick cable and battery distribution block under the hood. Additional cables were made using 4 GA marine-grade wire

sourced from West Marine to complete the electrical system in the engine bay. Since the 69 only had 6 fuses for circuit protection, I installed a new headlight wiring harness with fused power lead and dual relays (from Susquehanna Motorsports) and H4 lamps. New BMW grills, front turn signals and cleaned rear lamps were installed together with new chrome tail light rings, and rear license plate lights were integrated into the bumper (European style).

Oxidized aluminum sunroof track pieces were polished by Metro Polishing and Plating in Kensington, MD, then installed with good replacement cables and a new headliner. With assistance from fellow NCC members Matthew Cervi and Marshall, we installed the front and rear (original) glass using new BMW seals. Since they were scratched, new door and quarter window glass was sourced from the local BMW dealership and installed with new hardware and good used regulators. Both vent windows received new seals and aluminum glass frames then installed in the doors. A new wool carpet set was installed along with rebuilt and thoroughly cleaned original stock seats. With safety in mind, the original "spaghetti type" non-retractable seat belts were replaced with retractable units sourced from Al Erkanli in Durham, NC.

With a cleaned gauge cluster back together, the dashboard was reinstalled along with a replacement

turn-signal switch and new Momo Prototipo steering wheel. The windshield wipers received new pivots, connecting rods and a freshened drive motor and frame. The heating/cooling system received a new 3-row radiator along with a new water pump, 5-blade fan, BMW branded coolant hoses and a rebuilt heater box. For rolling stock, a set of Ronal Kleeblatt ("snowflake") 13" alloys were used together with new radials sourced from Tire Rack.

Almost four years after the initial purchase, the engine was first started and driven but there were some tuning issues requiring my attention. Using an analog air/fuel gauge, I was able to make the car run well enough to take it to the May 2016 Vintage BMW event in Asheville, NC. After the trip, a new ignition distributor was sourced and installed so I could make adjustments to the advance curve using PC software and a USB cable. Ownership of this car has been very interesting and rewarding knowing I've done so many things at home in my garage. As with most restoration projects, there's always more to do before calling it "done".

(Below) Rear shows removal of USA-specific reflectors and tag lights. New European-type bumper has integrated tag lights.





2016 BMW 340i M-Sport

Alles Ist Gut

By James Chew

BMW's mid-cycle enhancement strategy (refresh in BMW speak) drives their competition crazy. While the other manufacturers use mid-cycle enhancements to introduce some new trim and colors to boost sales, BMW uses a "Pete Carroll half-time" approach. They look at the sales and review owner comments to make product improvements. AND they might introduce a new engine. It's for that reason BMW mid-cycle enhancements received the same amount of media coverage and market reception as a new-product launch. For all practical purposes, it's a "2.0" version of the current model.

And if there ever was a recent BMW in need of such an enhancement, it is the current 3 Series. While the sales have been outstanding, the BMW true believers seem not to have

embraced this one as much as previous generations. Perhaps it was the introduction of "Auto Stop" (rightly nicknamed "Auto Stall" when it was introduced), electronic steering (the BMW engineers spent quite a bit of time calibrating this innovative feature that allows for use of the fuel saving "Auto Stop") to feel as close to a mechanical steering mechanism as possible," or maybe the softening of the driving dynamics in order to appeal to the CamCord/Crossover/Minivan owner contemplating a first BMW. So while this current generation 3 Series has successfully retained the loyal BMW owner and captured a fair number of people new to the BMW brand, it seems to have lost its "Ultimate Driving Machine" aura.

That was all forgotten the moment we sat behind the



(Top) The 2016 340i unleashes the F30's Ultimate Driving Machine's soul.
 (Above) The 3.0 liter TwinPower Turbo inline six a very welcome sight.

wheel of our 2016 340i evaluation vehicle. This vehicle transformed me back in time – to when I first drove the E36 and E46 BMW.

This 340i was equipped “right.” In addition to the delicious 3.0-liter TwinPower Turbo inline six and the outstanding BMW six-speed manual shifter, our test vehicle had the new track-handling package (featuring the M Sport brakes and variable sport steering) as well as the M Sport package (featuring the sport seats, M steering wheel, and 19” wheels and aerodynamic kit) and adjustable suspension. And THAT’s all the BMW enthusiast needs.

We spent most of our time with the adjustable suspension in “Sport” and “Sport Plus” mode as we sought out the many Southern California mountain roads.

There’s something about this car that feels “right” in all traffic and road conditions. The engine, clutch, and manual shifter should not have the driver labor through the gears in heavy traffic while intuitively communicating with the driver when tackling challenging roads. The seats, seating position, and driver vision should



|(Above) Rub your eye BMW faithful, that IS a six-speed manual shifter!

combine with a smooth engine/transmission operation, an intuitive and responsive chassis, suspension, and brakes to create an “ultimate” driving experience, making the driver and their passengers not want the drive to end.

We found driving (attacking) the Angeles Crest Highway, Ortega Highway, Soledad Canyon Road, and Turnball Canyon Road quite enjoyable. Everything “worked.” We were tempted to take Interstate 10 to the

West Coast BMW Performance Center to see if they had a 340i and chat with the professional drivers that had pushed a 340i with track-handling package to its limits, but we ran out of time.

What made the 340i a “must have” was when we were riding in Southern California rush hour traffic. Unlike the competitions’ “near ultimate performance luxury” sedans, we were never hunting for the right gear. The transmission didn’t balk as

we kept using the lower gears. We didn’t experience the acceleration and braking drama (as we had with the Mercedes, Audi, Lexus, and Cadillac) in these irritating traffic conditions. And because our three adult passengers enjoyed the variety of driving conditions, it was clear the 2016 340i with the M Sport package and Track handling package was the perfect daily driver for the driving enthusiast.

Today’s performance luxury sedan buyer does demand luxury and technology. The 340i did not disappoint. In addition to the typical benchmark BMW luxury and technology features, such as the moonroof, Dakota leather, satellite radio, navigation with real-time traffic information, iDrive, Harmon Kardon surround sound, and heads-up display, our test vehicle featured manual rear-window sunshades and a power rear window sunshade. I’ve installed the BMW manual rear-window sunshade in both of the E39s that I’ve owned. You’re going to want this feature – it makes a huge difference in terms of keeping the passenger cabin at a pleasant temperature.

The M Sport package and track-

|(Below) The F30 side profile shows a strong heritage to the benchmark E46.



handling package add to the 340i's "Ultimate Driving Machine" appeal. Again staying at my favorite Orange County hotel – the Renaissance Club Sport and Spa in Aliso Viejo – it seemed that the vehicles driven by the gym members (Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Mercedes, Audi, and other BMWs) gave our evaluation vehicle a nod of respect and approval when we pulled in to the facility's circular driveway.

We averaged 23 miles per gallon during our 1,000-mile week-long evaluation. My initial reaction to this mileage proved that I had recently driven too many TwinPower Turbo 4-cylinder BMWs. This fuel economy was quite respectable for the inline six, especially for the amount of time we were in the "Sport Plus" mode, which deactivates the "Auto Stop".

Oh, and "Auto Stop" – the BMW engineers seem to have exorcised a majority of the past demons such that the typical BMW driver won't notice its operation. And the Track Handling calibration of the electric steering will make the self-declared "buff book" experts think that the 340i has the old BMW mechanical steering.

The 2016 340i M Sport with the six-speed manual transmission and track-handling package is proof that the BMW product development core is still good. Symbolically, it seems that the product development group



(Above from Left) If the 340i's drivers cockpit desalt want to make you want to open in a dive then maybe you should buy a Lexus. The back seat seems roomier than the E39! The manual retractable rear window sun shades are becoming a "must have"!

and the sales and marketing group are still at war – with the product development group now having the advantage. The sales and marketing group got their way when this generation 3 Series was launched, but it's clear that BMW listened as the loyal BMW owners made their dissatisfaction with the "Lexusification" of the new products.

To try to heal the rift between these groups, perhaps the product development group would allow for the sales and marketing group to package the 340i the same as our evaluation vehicle and call it the M340i. The MSRP for our loaded evaluation vehicle was just under \$62,000. That's over \$10,000 less than the equivalently equipped M3. That way, those two groups, as well as the dealers, the performance luxury intenders, and the BMW loyalists would be happy. Just make sure the featured version has an Estoril Blue Metallic exterior with a Coral Red Dakota Leather interior!



(Far Left) The F30 rear profile is a classic BMW look. (Left) All Chocolate Easter Bunnies agree – the 2016 340i interior is rather roomy!



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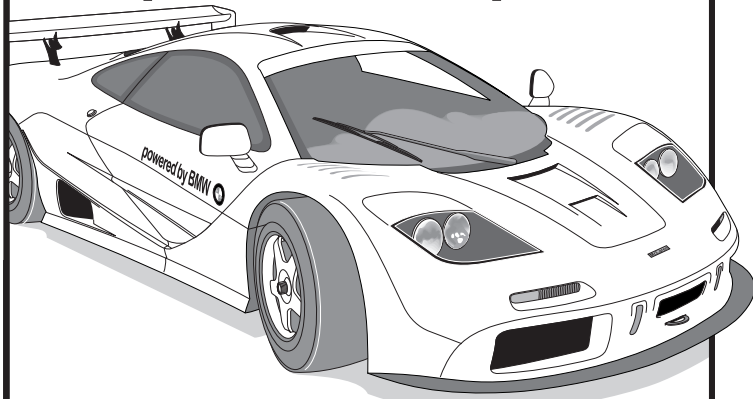
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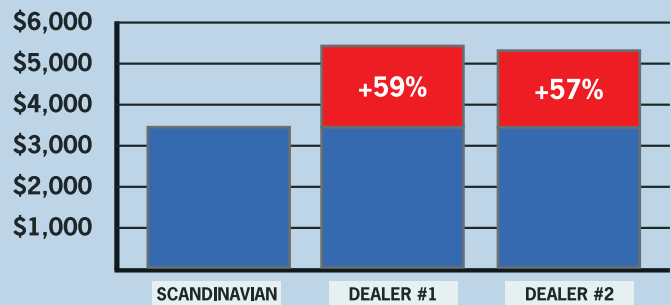
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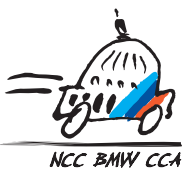
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| | |
|---|----|
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| AutoWerke & Autoy..... | 34 |
| BMW Excluservice..... | 33 |
| BMW of Fairfax..... | C3 |
| BMW of Silver Spring..... | C2 |
| BMW of Sterling..... | C4 |
| Eurasian Service Center..... | 36 |
| J&F Motors, Ltd. | 25 |
| Martin's Auto Service..... | 34 |
| OG Racing..... | 9 |
| Radial Tire..... | 7 |
| Reflections Auto Salon | 25 |
| Road Race Technologies | 33 |
| Scandinavian Import Service Center..... | 34 |
| SpecR53..... | 36 |
| The Drivers Club at Dominion Raceway..... | 25 |



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