

Gemütlichkeit

BMW CCA Old Hickory Chapter Newsletter – Fall 2015

BMW Car Club
of America
Old Hickory Chapter



BIMMERSPOTTING IN BERMUDA



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

As I write this letter it's hard to believe that summer 2015 is in the rear view mirror. I hope your summer was a good one and filled with many great memories, be they graduations, weddings or a great vacation. The lazy days of summer 2015 are officially over, or at least almost over.

For myself it has been a summer of mixed emotions. I learned a valuable lesson this past summer: be careful what you wish for. My cousin, a department head at RIT in Rochester, New York, was telling me about his upcoming sabbatical as he and I were traveling last August. I remarked how great it would be to have a year off (paid, no less) to do whatever I wanted. Much to my amazement that is almost exactly what I got when I found out in April I was going to be without a job beginning in May.

So this has been my "Endless Summer," as I've come to call it. Five months of doing pretty much whatever I've wanted as long as the bills got paid. Now, with work looming on the horizon again, I am in a mad rush to make it last just a bit longer. Two more events and it's officially over: Rennsport Reunion at Laguna Seca, then Petite LeMans at Road Atlanta the weekend after that, will mark the end of my "Endless Summer" and my re-entry to the real world.

This fall has gotten off to a great start with German Cars and Coffee this past weekend. If you haven't made it out to German C&C, you're missing a great event. For the last two gatherings we have been meeting at The Factory in Franklin in a parking area set aside just for those of us participating. Unlike regular Cars & Coffee, this event is not open to the general public, so it is much more regulated (and if I can say so, more friendly).

We had a good selection of BMWs at this last event, with a large number of our younger members who don't make it to our regular meetings and events. Hopefully German Cars & Coffee better meets their busy schedules and keeps them connected to our club. We are always looking for ways to connect with our members, through our traditional events and rides or events like this.

Also this summer I became acquainted with David Nordhaus. If you have a Z3, Z4, Z Coupe, M Coupe, (what have I missed?) then you want to know David. He is a Z enthusiast and runs a Nashville BMW Enthusiast group page on Facebook. It is a closed group but just "like" the page and they will add you to their group and send you updates on their meet ups.

We have some great events planned for this fall too. We have our first picnic/show & shine/swap meet planned for Sunday, October 18 at Edwin Warner Park. We are also going to do a Fall Colors breakfast run on Saturday, November 7th to Paradise Point, Kentucky. If you haven't been to Paradise Point for breakfast you are in for a treat, so mark it on your calendar. There are many other events between now and the end of the year, so check out the schedule in the newsletter and check for updates at oldhickorybmw.org.

Lastly, attendance at our last several dinner meetings has been much improved, so thank you to all of you that have been coming out. If you haven't come out yet come out and join us for a fun and informal time of food and talking cars, two of my favorite things. Till next time – *Joe*

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In this issue: Chapter Events – New Members – Routine Maintenance Gone South – Pristine Classics at Keeneland – Grandma's Last Car – Fast Cars on a Slow Island – A Call for Touring Drivers – Parting with an M3

CHAPTER EVENTS

Check oldhickorybmwcca.org and your email for updates!

Old Hickory Chapter Fall Extravaganza!

Picnic, Show & Shine, Swap Meet

Sunday October 18, 12-3 p.m., Edwin Warner Park Shelter 10. Bring family & friends, plus your own drinks and a picnic side dish to share. If your last name begins with A-R, bring a salad, veggie, appetizer, chips, etc. If your last name starts with S-Z, bring a dessert to share. The club will provide brats, dogs, buns, condiments and paper goods.

Bring games, folding chairs and sunscreen ... and hope we need it! The shelter is covered and has lots of picnic tables in case of inclement weather. Come rain or shine, we've rented the spot!

To plan for food, please let Jackie know if you can attend and the number in your party by October 15th Jackie can be reached at VicePresident@OldHickoryBMWCCA.org or by cell phone at 615-496-7624.

For the Show & Shine, there will be a people's choice vote and prizes for the top three cars. If you have car pieces/parts not currently in use that you want to sell or trade, or auto products tried & set aside, bring them along!

Chapter Meetings

Meet other members for food and conversation! Meetings begin at 6:30. Second Thursday of the month. Check our website and our member emails for updates and locations! October 8: Famous Dave's BBQ in Cool Springs; November 12: Rafferty's in 100 Oaks near the BMW dealership; December 10 TBA.

Other Chapter Events

Tail of the Dragon Multi-Chapter Fall Drive. November 13-15. Old Hickory Chapter is joining six other BMW CCA chapters for a HUGE event in the North Carolina and Tennessee mountains—a drive on the famous "Tail of the Dragon," a scenic mountain drive boasting more than 300 turns in 11 miles.

River City Bimmers has contracted a group rate of \$99 a night for 16 rooms at the Fontana Village Resort. To use this rate you will need to call the main number to make your reservation and mention you are with the River City Bimmers BMW CCA Chapter group. These rates will only go for a month, so you need to do this **before October 13th**. After this date, the non-booked rooms will be released. You can still book rooms if they are available after the cut-off date at regular rates.

Fontana Village puts you in the heart of the Dragon, Cherohala Skyway, and other great drives for the weekend. Friday night is a meet and greet with other clubs. Driving will be done Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon is open for those interested in doing some shopping. River City Bimmers hosts dinner Saturday night, and on Sunday, drivers can return home at their convenience (or do some other fantastic roads!)

Call Please call the Fontana Resort at 828-498-2211 to make your reservation. Go to facebook.com/events/1464629340515195/ to learn more about the event. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP with Joe Questel as soon as possible so we have an accurate count. Joe can be reached at president@oldhickorybmwcca.org or by phone/text at 615-714-6662.

Many more events on the next page!

Please welcome our NEW MEMBERS

David Allen, Nashville
William Axon, Brentwood
Marvin Blair, Franklin
Alycia Byrd, Hermitage
Jerry Combs, Columbia
Mark Ellis, Murfreesboro
John Groomes, Brentwood
Timothy Hambly, Franklin
Shanta Hayes, Old Hickory
Henry Hill, Clarksville
Bill Holleman, Mount Juliet
Thomas Howard, Nashville
Michael Luczak, Nashville
Andrew Marsteller, Hermitage
Paul Mullen, White House
Bill O'Donnell, Brentwood
Michael Pilar, Charlotte
Brandon Pitts, Brentwood
David Richardson, Nashville
Marcus Schulz, Nashville
Jay Sterrett, Hendersonville
Haotian Sun, Nashville
Belinda Vanatta, Chapmansboro
Richard Weems, Spring Hill
Marie York, Nashville

To all new and current members:

- Be sure to visit oldhickorybmwcca.org, our official website, for news, event updates, and other good stuff.
- If you're not receiving emails about our Chapter activities, contact Tyree at tpeters@oldhickorybmwcca.org. Be sure your email is registered with BMW CCA.
- You can also follow us at twitter.com/OldHickoryBMW and at facebook.com/OldHickoryBMWCCA.



Scan these codes with your smartphone to visit us on Twitter (left) and Facebook (right).



Gemütlichkeit wants to know! Did one of our articles get you thinking? Do you have a sweet car or event photo to share? A good BMW story? A Bimmer for sale? Do you have an idea for an article? Send letters, stories, classifieds, and big photos to newsletter@oldhickorybmwcca.org.

Pass *Gemütlichkeit* on to a friend! You can help us spread the word about BMW CCA activities, discounts, and benefits by keeping *Gemütlichkeit* in circulation. Forward this issue to another BMW owner or someone interested in cars. Send a link to someone you know. Print interesting articles – or write one! – to show your friends. And join us at chapter events! See (and share) the membership benefits sheet later in this issue.

CHAPTER EVENTS (CONTINUED)

BMW Driving School and M School

Have you ever wanted to do a BMW Driving school or an M School but the high cost and time kept you from signing up? There is a solution to those two sticking points, and it is a BMW Chapter School.

The BMW Performance Center offers one-day schools for chapters, and we have been invited to go in with the Choo Choo Bimmer Chapter. We do not have a firm date yet, but we need a group of 32 people in order to get the reduced rate of \$625 for the M School (full day) or \$355 for the regular driving school (half day). Due to how they structure the day, we have to do one school or the other and can't mix it up.

Here is the description from the BMW Performance Center: *I would like to inform you of a special driving program for BMW CCA members. The program is the BMW Car Club's M day. It's a full day of driving the BMW Performance Center's fleet of M3s, M4s, and M5s in a variety of events including skid pad, driving dynamics on a handling course, and timed competition among others. It's based on 32 participants at a cost of \$20,000 for the Performance Center in Greer, South Carolina. The program runs from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and includes instruction from the BMW Performance Center's staff of professional drivers, current model M cars, lunch, and gift bags containing caps and tee shirts.*

If you have any interest in going please email Joe Questel at joe@questel.net or call him at 615 714-6662 by September 25 (ASAP!) so we know if we have enough people to get a group together.

Other Car Events

Cars & Coffee. Saturdays at the Carmike Theater parking lot Cool Springs Blvd, 8:00. This has grown into a big C&C, and an especially large turnout, including exotics, shows up the first Saturday of every month. See facebook.com/carsandcoffeenashville.

Party on the Lawn Car Show. September 27, 11:00 a.m. Christ Presbyterian Church, 2323 Old Hickory Blvd. Party on the Lawn is a

time to meet new friends and catch up with old ones. Last year, this fun-filled Sunday afternoon included a Cyclocross race, homemade ice cream contest, horse rides, inflatables, 21 food trucks, live music, a car show, and much more. Visit christpres.org/party for details and car show registration.

The **Rally for Kids with Cancer** is back in Nashville on October the 2nd & 3rd. This memorable event gives participants two days of fun in support of the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. The event is described as a high-end scavenger hunt meets "Amazing Race" & "Celebrity Apprentice." To learn more visit rallyforkids.com/Nashville.

Antique Automobile Club of America 26th annual Car Show, October 4, 9:00 a.m., the Factory at Franklin. Participation in the show is open to any and all cars and trucks. This year vehicle owners are welcome to park wherever they like on the show field after they have been judged as part of the registration process. See battlefieldaaca.com for complete details and registration.

Gear Heads Car & Bike Show. 5-7:00 PM, October 18. Granite City Food & Brewery, 1864 West McEwen Dr., Franklin. A more reserved alternative to cars and coffee! A parking area to the right of the restaurant is cordoned off to only allow participants to park. They have a beer trailer set up with draft beer and can provide other beverages for purchase.

Car Show at the Heritage at Brentwood. Saturday, October 24, 10:00 a.m., 900 Heritage Way, Brentwood. Come see original and restored cars, collectible cars, restorods, and other special cars. Free coffee and donuts. Space for 28 cars. For questions contact Martin Stickley, 615-432-2820.

German Cars, Motorcycles, and Coffee. Saturday November 7, 8-10:00 AM. Join a family of German cars, motorcycles and coffee at the historic Factory in Franklin! The Factory at Franklin has a great coffee shop, Honest Coffee Roasters, that will have food and beverage available for purchase. **On October 10-11 there's a special event** associated with Nashville Oktoberfest. Stay tuned for further information!

MURRAY'S MUSINGS Murray Crow

Adventures in BMW Maintenance

When it comes to taking care of the BMWs in my household, I tend to think long-term in order to maximize the longevity and dependability of each vehicle. This translates to making sure that the primary systems of the car, engine, and transmission are maintained above and beyond the manufacturer recommendations. Within the past year, we purchased a new (to us) BMW after selling an e36 that was my daughter's daily driver.

The new car was a 2006 325i e90; the first year of this 3 Series generation. We had been searching for a four-door e90 (she has to have doors for her dogs) and found there was a pretty broad selection and price range available. We found a suitable car for an acceptable price found in West Tennessee. The car

had high mileage, with 150,000 miles, but was in great condition, with brand new tires, a well-documented maintenance history, and no check engine lights. It became the newest addition to the fleet.

While reviewing the maintenance history and quizzing the seller about any upcoming maintenance needs, he said the only upcoming needs were an oil change and a transmission fluid and filter change. He advised that the (lifetime) transmission fluid was changed at 100,000. These items were pretty basic, and I thought to myself that as many times that I've performed them, they would be no big deal. Little did I realize the comedy of mishaps that would take place while doing an automatic transmission service.

(Murray's Musings continued)

The first step was to do a little online research to learn about the transmission. I learned the car had a six-speed ZF transmission and was considered to be pretty much problem-free for that particular year. The research also revealed that the fluid for this transmission is not available except through BMW or ZF, with the price ranging from \$23 to \$27 per quart—and no, *per quart* is not a misprint. Six quarts would be needed, and with a little online shopping, I found a service kit that included six quarts of fluid, a new pan with gasket, (the filter is inside the pan on this particular trans), all new pan bolts, and a new “mechatronic sleeve.” More about the mechatronic sleeve later, but basically, it is a cylinder-shaped sleeve through which the electrical connections to the transmission are made. It has an O-ring seal on it that is prone to leaking fluid, so it should be changed when the transmission is serviced.

A do-it-yourself article I once read about a jack stand transmission service suggested that the first thing you should do is pour a quart of fluid it all over yourself just to get beyond the notion that it can be done free of any mess. I've done this service lying on my back multiple times and never really had a problem with it getting on my clothing, the floor, or myself. It's just a matter of taking your time and using due caution at each step.

After draining the fluid, the pan removal went off without a hitch. My recently acquired Craftsman cordless impact wrench made quick work of the 22 bolts holding the pan in place. Next came the mechatronic sleeve. On the outside of the transmission housing is the electrical control cable, which has to be detached from the transmission by releasing a typical BMW twist connector. After this is connector is removed, you pull down on a small latch handle on inside of the transmission, which releases the sleeve. When you pull the latch, the mechatronic sleeve comes right out. The new sleeve seals to the transmission housing with an O-ring to prevent leaks. The electrical connectors also have O-rings that seal together when you re-attach the twist connector.

So now the new sleeve is in place, but when I push the latch, it won't go back up. Something doesn't seem right because the latch came down very easily but seems to be hanging up or hitting something preventing it from going back up into place. For over an hour, I remove and replace the sleeve with no success pushing the latch back in place. Now I'm frustrated, and I've learned to take a break when this happens.

So I go in the house and have a text conversation with my friend Google. My friend Google directs me to multiple links where others like me (mechatronic sleeve first timers) have had the same issue. The problem is that before the latch can be pushed in place, considerable pressure has to be exerted on the mechatronic sleeve to compress the O-ring.

Now it's time to go back and finish the job. I crawl back underneath the car, take a look at the situation, and determine that a short piece of 2' x 2" wood should serve nicely as a “special tool” to push on the sleeve to aid in re-installation. I go get said piece of wood and crawl back underneath the car, properly place the “special tool.” apply

pressure on the sleeve, push on the latch, and the latch smoothly seats to lock in the sleeve...Whew!

I'm home free now and proceed quickly to install the pan/filter with the new bolts provided. In a short time I was ready to fill it back up with fluid. The initial three quarts go in, and then fluid starts to overflow the filler hole (as it should), indicating that it's time to start the engine and continue filling. To fill the transmission to the proper level, the transmission fluid needs to be warm and the engine needs to be running.

So I start the engine and continue adding transmission fluid. The fill hole for the transmission is on the passenger side about three inches directly beside the exhaust pipe, so you need to take care not to burn yourself on the exhaust. At this time, I have three open quarts of fluid underneath the car, and I'm pumping the fluid into the transmission with a small transfer pump while the engine is running.

In case you have never done this, being underneath a vehicle on your back while the engine is running is quite unnerving. Picture this: I'm pumping with one hand and holding the discharge pipe going into the transmission in place with the other while on my back. The hand holding the discharge pipe is in the immediate vicinity of the exhaust... then it happened. My discharge pipe hand hits the exhaust and recoils, causing my pump hand to slip, causing the half full quart of fluid to fall over, knocking over the other two quarts that were uncapped. At the same time, the discharge pipe came loose from the pump while the pipe was still in the filler hole, and now the fluid is siphoning out of the transmission onto the floor.

I watched it all in slow motion but in reality, it happened in less than a second. Here I was, on my back underneath a running vehicle, attempting to stand three bottles of expensive transmission fluid upright, as well as trying to remove the pipe from the transmission that is now siphoning hot fluid on the floor. It didn't turn out well. For some reason I was thinking about what I had read regarding pouring a quart of transmission fluid on myself, because at the moment, I was covered in and lying in about two quarts' worth.

Well, I was finally able to regain my composure, stand the bottles upright, and remove the pipe that was siphoning, and continue to fill the transmission with what little fluid I had left. However, I was now short of the amount of fluid I needed by over two quarts. Of course this was a weekend, so going to BMW of Nashville to get more fluid was out of the question, and no one in town carries ZF fluid. But I did find out that newer model Fords have ZF transmissions, and Ford sells their own brand of fluid that is in reality re-labeled ZF fluid. So a trip to the local Ford dealer provided supplemental fluid to fill the transmission, and I was finally done.

Was it worth it to do in myself? In this case probably not, but it was a learning experience that will cause me to hesitate before I try it again. By the way, it takes over five pounds of cat litter to soak up two-plus quarts of oil, in case you were wondering.

Happy Motoring!

– Murray

VINTAGE VANTAGE

David and Lora Yando visit the Keeneland Concours d'Elegance



For the past decade, mid-July has found Lora and me at the Keeneland Concours d'Elegance in Lexington, Kentucky exhibiting cars from Lane Motor Museum, and this year was no different. Well, yeah, I suppose it was different! This year, Keeneland's organizers offered the museum an unheard of opportunity – they would send down a transporter, and we could fill it up with an entire class of our own!

We went back and forth with them over the winter and into spring, and finally settled on a group of nine cars that would fit in the transporter and give a good cross-section of what the museum is all about. We were able to show European, American, and Asian models, wood, steel, and fiberglass bodies, gasoline, diesel, and rotary engines, three- and four-wheelers, one-offs, microcars, prop-driven, fuel misers, amphibians, and competition cars, all in one group of nine!

Since we were taking so many cars, and since the museum was being honored, Jeff Lane, our director, decided to attend for the first time in many years. I'm glad, because I don't fit in a lot of the smaller cars, and moving so many to the show field in a short period of time was a challenge. The more hands the better!

Imagine my delight and surprise when I noticed some familiar cars on the field right behind us—several of them in Motorsport colors. It's kinda hard to miss an M1 parked next to a 3.0 CSL and a pre-war 328! Even more delightful was seeing old friends Lance White, Safet Hatic, and Scott Hughes, the owners of these cars. Lora had mooched a ride at Watkins Glen in Lance's Group 5 Kenwood M1, and we hadn't seen it since. His off-white 328 was in hundreds of parts last time I'd seen it. Scott's #51 CSL is becoming a familiar sight, showing up at Concours and vintage races, and gracing the pages of magazines more and more often. All the cars have great history behind them, and it was great seeing them together as the filling of a 1914 Duesenberg Indy car – 2000 Audi R8 LeMans car sandwich in the Racing class.

Also in attendance was West Virginian Bruce Hall's one-family-owned-since-new '72 2002 tii. This is a car with ironclad history, all original except for a few wear items like tires and brake pads, with only 47,000 miles. This Verona red '02 is seen at shows up and down the eastern half of the country, and is now an

exemplar used by restorers as a “correct” example of the model. It's truly stunning in person.

And it was hot! Maybe that's why we only saw one Old Hickory Chapter member, and only one other Nashvillian in attendance. The Bluegrass Chapter had a corral, as did many other clubs. We parked our E30 M3 among its brethren but didn't spend much time away from our shady spot! There were about 20 Bimmers, which would be a good turnout at many events. But the Porsche Club had 115 member cars show up, eclipsed only by the Corvettes. At least we had more turnout than the Corvair Club, with only three cars.

Next year, with BMW celebrating a significant milestone (centenary, anyone?) I'd be surprised if the *Blau mit Weiss* didn't play a significant role in most major concours around the world, Keeneland included. Lexington is a first-class event, and is an easy day trip from Nashville, plus there's plenty else to do to turn it into a long weekend if desired. We hope to see more familiar faces on the bluegrass next year.



Several decades of BMWs



This is what you get when you keep it in the family.



43 years of TLC.



A large, eclectic display from the Lane Motor Museum.

GRAF'S GRUMBLINGS

Graf Hilgenhurst

Grandma's Last Car

Our family has come to the end of an era. Grandma officially handed over the keys to her Buick. It was her decision, and I respect her for it. She wanted to go out on her own terms; she'd seen firsthand what happens when you stay in the game too long, and it becomes someone else's decision. So we inherited a 2005 Buick LeSabre with a mere 54,000 miles on it. It's in perfect shape. It hasn't been driven enough to need anything.

I remember a similar transition a generation ago. Back then it was a 1964 Buick Skylark that we inherited, with equally low miles. In those days, Buicks had V-8 engines delivering upwards of 200 horsepower, coupled with featherbed suspensions, which made them a hoot to drive as long as no turns were involved. That one became my sister's first car. It's what happens to grandma's last car. It becomes a teenager's first car, especially if it's sturdy and safe. Unless it's "classic car" material, it will be driven until the wheels fall off, or in that case until it rusted out, a common fate of cars in New England in the 1970s.

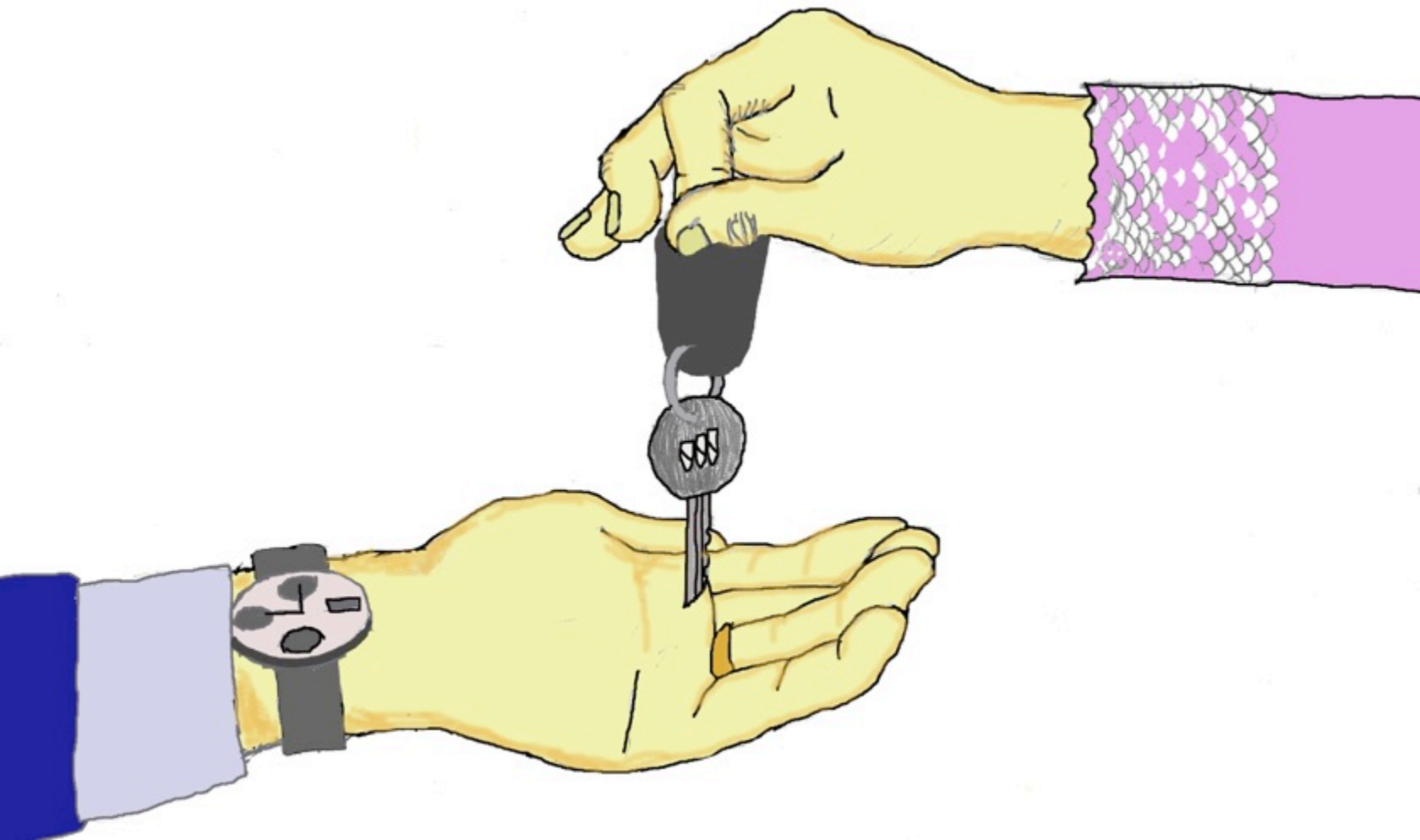
The LeSabre is from a different era in GM history. Not quite the V-8 from the 1960s, before the days of emissions controls. Thankfully it's not from the bad old days of the 1970s and 1980s, when Americans turned to Japanese cars in record numbers. This was more of a "comeback" car for GM, respectable in every way, with no squeaks or rattles. By the way, GM cars of today are *much more* than respectable, with the current Buick Regal winning a 10 best award from Consumer Reports.

The Buick has been my daily driver for the past few weeks, and it's pleasant, if a bit dull. Let's just say I have resisted the

temptation to make the drive to Interstate 840 at dawn on a Sunday just to "see what she can do," which I might have done in the distant past. The Skylark, incidentally, topped out at 110.

I recall a parody article called "How to tell if you are a GM guy" from my favorite motorcycle clothing supplier, Rider's Wearhouse. It draws obvious parallels between human beings and their vehicles (don't get them started on Harley guys). It starts with "Are you a few pounds heavier than you need to be? Rather softly sprung? A little vague about your direction in life? But generally sunny, reliable and easy to live with? Then you might be a GM guy!" And that describes virtually every GM product I have ever driven, including this one.

The end of an era is also a time for reflection. I began to think about a day in the far distant future, perhaps on my 95th birthday, when a grandchild will come to me and ask me for my keys. After some reflection, I will hand them over. I will resist the temptation to go for one last ride, for in the words of Keith Richards, "I would never knowingly do anything for the last time!" An ad will go in the local Craigslist: *BMW M3 Sedan. Immaculate condition. Driven by a little old man on weekends only. Never seen rain.* A prospective buyer will come and check it out. He will notice the adjustable camber plates, Koni shocks, and Schroth harnesses. He'll realize that there is a little more to the story than was in the ad but will buy it anyway. As he drives off, the grandchild will call after him "Take good care of it... Grandpa loved that car!"



Bermuda

There are BMWs there, but just look at this water.



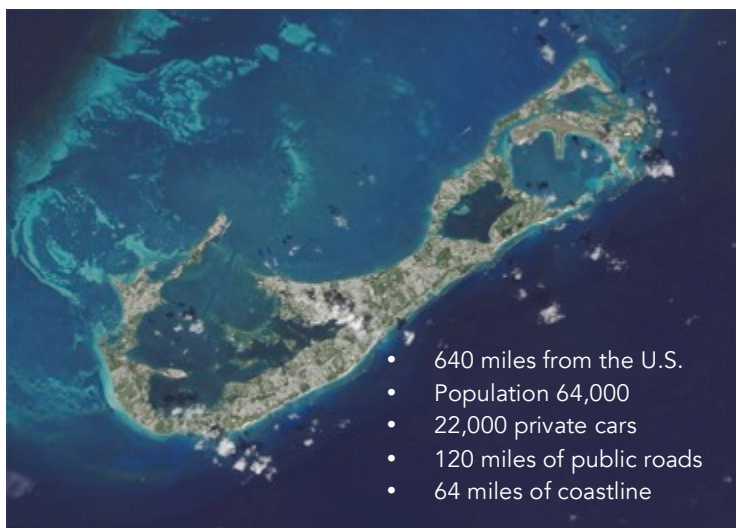
Matt and Hailey just spent a lovely vacation in Bermuda, where they made a few observations of the local Bavarian fauna.

But only a few. There are no cars at the beach.



If you're moving in a straight line for more than a hundred feet on Bermuda's roads, you're probably on a bridge. Across most of the island's 21 square miles, the roads twist and climb and plunge. If it were a racetrack, Bermuda would be all chicanes, hairpins, and corkscrews. A driver's paradise, right?

Well, maybe not. The roads are narrow, for one thing. One skinny lane each way, with no shoulders, medians, or turning lanes outside of downtown Hamilton. And all of those tight bends are *blind* – hemmed in by palms or dense brush or walls of the island's limestone. They actually have mirrors mounted on some curves so you can check for oncoming traffic. Plus, being British, Bermudians drive on the left side of the road. Oh, and the entire country's highest speed limit is 35 kilometers per hour, which in miles is ... anyway, very slow.



But don't worry about any of that: you can't drive there anyway. Visitors can't rent or even borrow a car. Imagine 300,000 tourists a year jamming the island's 140 miles of roads with rented Versas and Fits, and you can understand why.

You can always rent a scooter, which does look fun. But you're better off in a bus or taxi, so you can gawk at the gorgeous scenery all around you. Most of Bermuda is less than a mile wide, so from the crest of every hill you can see the blue ocean glistening away to the horizon.

Even resident Bermudians can only have one car per household. And given those narrow lanes, there are also vehicle size limits. Many of the cars you see are odd little models you might not have heard of. (Hyundai Atos? Kia Picanto?) Gas is expensive, licensing fees are high, and import duties are exorbitant.

And yet within Bermuda's restrictive and expensive driving culture, many locals have chosen BMWs. Among new Bimmers, this means 1 Series models almost exclusively, though we did spot a few Z4s. Each 1 Series we saw was a 116i, one of those cool hatchbacks we can't have in the U.S. They have 136 horsepower and a 0-60 time of around 8.5 seconds. Pretty modest numbers compared with the models we're used to at home – yet far, far more than any Bermudian would ever need.

More surprising were the little Ti models we saw. You don't see many of BMW's compact 3 Series in the U.S., but in Bermuda we spotted four or five 316ti's in just a few days. Their blunt-ended design makes them a good size for those tangled, spaghetti-thin roads. When we spotted a standard-sized E46 318ci in Hamilton, it looked positively huge.



On a tiny, slow-moving island where a scooter is more than enough, what compels someone to buy a BMW? I guess if you must drive very slow, you might as well get all the enjoyment you can out of those turns. Then there are BMW's safety ratings. We didn't see any accidents, but it's easy to imagine they could be serious. Probably, though, they're like the rest of us: happy to have a high-quality car that looks good and is fun to drive.

Still, you know what's nicer than driving a BMW very slow on the wrong side of the road? Pink beaches and aquamarine surf. A deep blue grotto in a crystalline cave. Visiting with dolphins. Fine dining and spectacular golf courses. You'll see businessmen in navy socks and pink shorts. You'll see pastel houses with white roofs designed to catch rainwater. You can shop, snorkel, sample the local rum, and view the entire country from a lighthouse. *Not* driving is part of getting away from it all – and Bermuda is the perfect place for it.



1 Series hatchbacks and palm trees everywhere you look.



The island has a high concentration of 316ti's as well.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE TOURING DRIVERS GONE?

Barry Wellman

Here's the Touring Paradox: For years, German cars have been considered the epitome of high-speed touring, masters of the rolling Autobahns of Germany and Austria as well as the superb, exciting Alpine passes of Austria and Italy. But in America, it seems that hardly any of the cars going long distances are the German autos built for such touring—at least on the highways of New England outside the bigger cities.

We saw only five Bimmers (all Threes) and no Benzes or Audis during a recent trip south from Canada; none of the Threes were Ms, Xs, or Zs. Moreover, we didn't see any such vaunted sport-tourers in our week of driving on the hundreds of miles of byways, and few other touring specialists: only two Corvettes, no Jags, Maseratis, or Bentleys, and perhaps a few Lexus or Infinitis (both of which are harder to spot among the lesser flocks of Toyotas, Hyundais, Hondas, and Nissans).

My wife, Bev, and I pondered why. We think that the answer is both relative and absolute:

Relative: It may simply be a matter of numbers: There are a lot more of those other cars and SUVs than BMWs. The happy truth for the motoring public is that the relative gap between German touring cars and run-of-the-mill cars has decreased. People can and do go long distances in Asian and American vehicles; there is less need for our kind of car to make these kinds of trips.

Absolute: Yet BMW sales keep going up and up, with new record numbers every year—so where are all the Bimmers? We saw more in 30 minutes in central Toronto than in our entire 1,500-mile week of touring (plus Benzes, Audis, two Maseratis, and one Bentley). The sad answer is that while our 2009 328xi continues to be wonderful for touring, most Bimmers, Benzes, and Audis apparently stay only local—within metropolitan areas.

I expect howls of disbelief from *Roundel* readers at this point. What about all the stories we read in *Roundel*? What about ourselves?

Many of us and our friends tour in BMWs and their brethren, the various Minis and the occasional Rolls-Royce. Apparently we are the minority, although we can easily be persuaded by our participation in Club events to think that we are representative of all BMW drivers. I'd love to see the data—does BMW NA have it?—but I believe that most of the people who own Bimmers, Benzes, and even Porsches take airplanes to go long distances, and use their wonderful cars only on metropolitan streets, hardly ever using them for long-distance driving. (I will

grant an exception for Satch. You know the expression *to live out of one's car*, describing the long-distance driver? Satch seems at times to live *in* his car rather than *out* of it.) I'll bet that few know of our Club, and even fewer have read a copy of *Roundel*.

By contrast, Bev and I read *Roundel* religiously. Indeed, it was Henry Noble's December 2014 story ("Going Through The Change") that shaped our trip, when he wrote of his lovely stay at the Sagamore Resort in Bolton Landing in Lake George, New York. No more would be whiz along the highways between Toronto and Long Island in one day, as we had done for many Mays! Instead, we overnighted in Rhinebeck, New York, and drove the next day to Hartford to see Bev's friend of 72 years.

Like Henry, we found fine drives.

Going west to east cross-country, we marveled at one of the most beautiful roads: NY 199 out of Rhinebeck, continuing as US 44 toward Hartford (although it gets ex/suburban after Winsted, Connecticut). If you're driving to Lime Rock from the west, south, or north, we urge you to enjoy this magnificent, twisty, tree-lined drive. Even better, it was almost empty in late May.

Another neat two-laner is Mass 8, going south from the Mass Pike and continuing as Connecticut 8 to Winsted.

Another nice drive was heading west from Lake George through the Adirondacks, also on two-laners, winding up in Utica to dash west on I-90. The two-lane drive—New York Routes 8 and 28—had broader shoulders, and the road was pretty but not great. We'd give this drive Michelin's two stars ("worth a detour") in comparison to Route 199/44's three ("worth a journey"). The Adirondack drive gave us ex-New Yorkers an additional thrill, with Highway 8 running alongside the headwaters of the mighty Hudson: lots of rafting trips available when the weather gets warmer.

I suppose that it's like preaching to the choir, because those urbanites with only commuting miles on their Bavarian wonders—or those other German marques—are hardly likely to run across these notes. But I suspect that some of our fellow members could use a reminder of what the Club is all about: a love of the performance of the Ultimate Driving Machine.

It's a great country for driving—and you certainly have the right car for it!

[Reprinted with permission from *Roundel*, August 2015]

TOUGH DECISIONS

Joe Questel



My wife Deb always says two things when it comes to cars: “don’t tell me about it until you have bought it” and “don’t sell it, you will regret it.” You would think by now I would have learned that she is right at least 50 percent of the time.

I have some remorse. As I write this, I am on a flight to Orlando to pick up a check and deliver the title to my much-loved E36 M3, a car that took me two years to find, gave me five years of great ownership, and was not driven nearly enough—only about 5000 miles in five years.

I always thought this would be one car I would be driving around the retirement home someday, doing burnouts as other residents were shaking their walkers at me. At the same time, I stopped short thinking about being buried in it, but more on that later.

I am an “old school” BMW guy. Not 2002 old, as in the model not the year, but E30, E34, E36, E39, and E46, those were my prime years. Even my E46 was a somewhat rocky relationship. I had two, a sedan and then a 330 coupe with a full Dinan upgrade. But even with that, neither E46 felt just right. (As I read that, I think *crap* I am getting old.) So this is where the E36 M3 fit in; it was that throwback to the best of days, and this one was as close to perfect as I could find.

I am going to miss her, I know that for sure. The decision to sell her was in the back of my mind for the better part of a year. Two things were pushing me to fish or cut bait. Storage, the curse of all car guys! It was costing me the equivalent of a Hyundai Sonata payment, and I am having an affair with yet another car

that will hopefully soon be its replacement, and of course it will need storage!

Also I have to thank Wayne Carrini for making this decision a bit easier to deal with. Wayne spoke at a breakfast that Hagerty Insurance sponsored in Scottsdale back in January. Wayne spoke and I listened, but I wasn’t expecting what he was going to say.

Wayne basically said that we all love cars, and probably most of us have a list of three five, ten, or more cars we would love to own. But is that feasible for the average enthusiast? Not really, as Wayne went on to point out. He did a deep dive into the cost of storage, maintenance, registration, and insurance (much to the McKeel Hagerty’s dismay). It becomes apparent pretty quickly (as many of our members already know firsthand) that this is not for the faint at heart, or for anyone that still has kids to put through college.

Wayne’s thesis was to take that money and make a list of what you really want to own, and go buy what you want, drive it and sell it, move on to the next one. Cycle through what you want to own, maybe having a base collection of one or two, but rotating everything else.

When you think about it, economically it makes sense. Doing it is another story altogether. That goes back to my affair that needs its own bank account. I have been having an affair with air-cooled Porsche 911/912s. I know it is a sin on at least two accounts: after all this is a BMW club, and yes I will still own a BMW after selling the M3, and yes I have been cheating on my M3.

Short wheelbase 911s have been on a tear in recent years, and now is the time to jump in the pool. I don't know what I will come out with, but if I am ever going to do it I need to stop standing on the sidelines, gather my resources and be ready with a trailer when I find that right one.

Just yesterday I ventured down to the mountains of north Georgia to visit a gentleman named Virgil. Virgil is living a good long life, and the last 44 years of it he spent with the same 1968 912 Targa he purchased in 1971. That's right, 44 years of ownership, or as Virgil pointed out, longer than he and his dearly departed wife were together.

I wouldn't want to be Virgil. As he said to me several times, *I wanted to be buried in that car*. And I honestly believe that he literally meant that. The thing preventing that very thing from happening is wife number two. I don't think she is into Virgil's 912 at all. He told me he recently bought a new Miata that she loves. Knowing that, now we *all* would hate to be Virgil.

So yesterday I spent the better part of three hours being interviewed to see if I might be a good caretaker of Virgil's beloved 1968 912 Targa. I don't know if I made the cut, and honestly I don't know if after 44 years he is going to be able to part with that car.

For Virgil it isn't the money. Truth be told, if it were, that car would have been sold and on a truck to southern California the first 24 hours it was on the Internet. Virgil isn't looking for a buyer so much as a new home for his longtime jewel. I did point out that Nashville isn't very far to come visit, offered to bring it

back "home" for a yearly visit, and offered to make him an "Honorary" Judge at the PCA Concours, complete with straw hat.

As for me, my E36 M3 will always be one of my favorite cars I have ever owned. I'm remorseful I didn't treat it better by driving it more, but have loved every day of ownership. And I'm thankful that most of its brothers and sisters were made into track cars, which increased its value as an unmolested example.

Epilogue: I passed Virgil's ownership test but passed on his Targa. My M3 was loaded on a hauler and shipped to Miami, where it was loaded on a freighter and should be in Bahrain by now with its new owner. That's a whole other story!



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