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WELCOME New Members to the Houston Chapter!

In order to help us keep you informed of last minute changes to event schedules, please send your email address to: membership@houston-bmwcca.com

We will add your name to the e-mail list that goes out on a more frequent basis. Also, be sure and visit our website and forum at www.houston-bmwcca.com

ON THE COVER:

Sherman Watters' 1979 E12 on the Rolling in the Twisties drive; Welch, Virginia.

MOVING?

Please send address changes directly to:

BMW CCA, INC.
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 or online at: www.bmwcca.org

The Road Ahead



A good thing about being a member of an active Chapter; it offers an array of activities and possibilities... ah, the good life. And as we closeout the hottest year in recorded history for us [thank God], this last quarter is by no means an exception. Mark your calendars folks, and if you have not yet registered please go to the website calendar and click the event for details.

1. Oct. 2nd - Wash, Wax & Tech at BMW of Houston North
2. Oct. 10th through the 14th - 2011 BMW CCA Annual Oktoberfest in Hoover, Alabama
3. Oct. 22nd - Coffee Morning at Cedar Creek
4. Oct. 23rd - Chapter Autocross at the Houston Police Academy
5. Oct. 28th through the 30th - The Chapter's Annual Fredericksburg Weekend
6. Nov. 12th - Coffee Morning at Cedar Creek
7. Nov. 12th - A Night at The Drive-in
8. Nov. 13th - Chapter Autocross at the Houston Police Academy
9. Nov 19th - Chapter drive to Texas World Speedway in College Station for the BMW CCA Club Race and DE
10. Dec. 2nd & 3rd - Car Control School at the Houston Police Academy
11. Dec. 4th - Chapter Autocross at the Houston Police Academy
12. Dec. 17th - Coffee Morning at Cedar Creek

For the BMW CCA Race and DE in November we are planning a Chapter drive to College

Station. For those that love the track this is an opportunity to get your adrenaline pumping full force. The historic Texas World Speedway is the most established premier road Motorsports venue for Racing, Testing, and Driving Schools in the Southwest. TWS's oval became known as "The World's Fastest Speedway" when Mario Andretti set a world closed course speed record of 214.158 mph on October 6, 1973 while qualifying for an Indy car race. Please get the word out in as many forms as you know that have shown an interest in getting on the track. We are hoping to get a minimum of 20 entries for the DE to make this a successful event for the Chapter. Check our website form for more details and how to register, or contact Ken Finley at kfin2202@sbcglobal.net. Those not wanting to get on the track, your day will not be uninteresting. The Chapter drive plus time to socialize, watch the race and DE will be an exciting and fun way to spend the day. Our Chapter drives are therapy... you know that.

Okay, last time at a push for candidates as 2012 is an election year for our Chapter so bear with me. All members in good standing with the BMW CCA and entertaining the idea of a Chapter Board position for 2012 should first read through the Chapter Ops Manual and Chapter Bylaws located under the "About Us" tab on our website to familiarize yourself with what a Board position involves and how the Board functions. This will provide you with a good overview and information regarding the position you are considering. Then simply contact a member of the Nomination Committee (Jim Iden at jim@waynerussellsearch.com or Priscilla Irawan at irawan.priscilla@gmail.com) and let them know the position you are interested in.

Terms for elected officer are for two (2) years and appointed members are for one (1) year. Appointed members may be re-appointed annually without term limitations; however elected members cannot serve more than two (2) consecutive

terms. Candidates for the President position must have a minimum of one (1) year's prior experience on the Board of Directors either in an elected or appointed position.

Positions becoming available for 2012 are:

Elected...

- President
- Vice President

Appointed...

- Autocross Chair
- Membership Chair
- Social Events Chair
- Driving Events Coordinator
- Newsletter Editor
- Webmaster
- Technical Advisor

It's been a hot crazy summer, and with the events schedule for the remaining of the year we have a lot of excuses to celebrate the magnificent fall weather in Houston. Let's do it.

See ya on the back roads...

David R. Dalton
President, Houston Chapter



Race Event

For the most current events listings, visit houston-bmwcca.com and check the up-to-date version of the calendar



Race or School?	This is a BMW CCA Club Race.
Event Type:	Regular Event
Event Location:	Club Race at Texas World Speedway
Event Start Date:	Nov 19, 2011
Event End Date:	Nov 20, 2011
Registration Opens Date:	Sep 03, 2011
Registration Closes Date:	Nov 15, 2011
Event Info:	Join the Houston Chapter of BMWCCA for our annual fall event at the fastest track in Texas. Ask any Texas racer what their favorite track in Texas is and they will tell you Texas World Speedway (TWS). With fifteen turns TWS has a few very technical corners, a couple of fast sweepers and a few high speed corners that always make for great racing. There are many good places to pass at this 2.9 mile marvel. So join us and enjoy the beautiful cool weather of Texas in the fall. We will be have a 40 minute race and two 30 minute sprint races. It will be necessary to register with Club registration for the Texas Race of Champions. Mark payment undetermined. All payments and BMW Club Race registration will go through the Houston Chapter.
Primary Contact Person:	Steve Amos
Primary Contact Email:	st_amos@yahoo.com
Sponsoring Chapter:	Houston Chapter
Special Info:	We will be racing with the Texas Race of Champions organization. Like PBOC the Texas Race of Champions will include many different makes and models of race cars and this will add to the fun. There will be a DE sponsored by the race track and managed by the highly skilled high speed instructors of TWS. The DE registration is available through the Texas World Speedway website.
Early Bird Info:	
Regular Price Date:	Pricing for the two day event is \$375.
Test Day Info:	
Refund Policy:	Full refund if you do not get your car on the track.
Payment Method:	Pay by Check Participants must register on this web site, and then mail a check to the event registrar. Checks should be made out to: BMW CCA Houston Chapter and them mailed to: Steve Amos 25526 Saddlebrook Way Katy, Texas 77494

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Vintage in the Vineyards

Sherman Watters



Cars, that's what this club and magazine are about right? Not exactly. That's only half the equation. "What's the other half?", you ask. The people, yep that's right the people. I mean really, how much fun is your car if you're not in it. I know I do like to sometimes just sit back on the bench beside the driveway and admire the cars I get to drive, but if that's all I could do, well I just don't think we could be friends anymore, with my cars that is. And if there weren't other cars with owner/drivers that felt the same way, well again, that would place some great limitations on my own experiences with my own cars

I guess to say it simply, we need each other to find real fulfillment within our cars.

One such experience; Last year, Memorial Day weekend, one of our own, Jim Moffitt, in his E34 ///M5, and myself along with my wife, in our E12 528i, met just north of Houston and headed northeast towards our ultimate destination, The Vintage at the Vineyards, now simply "The Vintage", in Mt. Airy, NC. This is an annual event, which changes locations but stays in that same general area. This years event was held in Old Town Winston-Salem. My hat's off to Scott Sturdy and crew for the work that goes in to make this such a successful event.

One of the nicest things about our cars, or at least my cars, is that they were meant to be driven, no garage queens at my house, at least not yet, and that's exactly what we did. Any of you that know Jim, and the Road Monkey blood that flows through his veins, know that we didn't head up I-45 North or US 59 North or I-10 East to get to NC. No, we headed up, over, through, somewhere, "to grandmother's house I thought we were going", well I don't remember exactly for sure at this point, but it was off the beaten path, to enjoy the journey both as a scenic adventure and an ultimate driving adventure. Scenic it was. Some good some bad. Sorry, no pics of the bad. We did see a house on fire, we didn't stop as the local firefighters had it under control. There were a couple of, I think three, automobile accidents. One involving an overturned tow vehicle and towed, as in on a trailer, vehicle. Again we didn't stop as there were emergency personnel on hand. Enough of that...

Now for some of the good stuff. Our first goal was to meet up with Donald Derham, an INKA E10 owner/driver out of Slidell, LA. Speaking earlier about the people; well Jim nor I had previously met Don, except through The Vintage forum. This years, 2011 trip back meant hooking up again with Don for some more people stuff. Anyway, back on topic, but that was related, he had no a/c so instead of us meeting in Meridian, MS and caravanning on to Chattanooga, because he needed air flowing through his windows he pushed on to Chattanooga to wait



for us.

Again no pics of the bad stuff, but I found out my low fuel level light comes on a bit after factory specs say it should. I mean WTH, after 31 years this things not accurate. As this car was my DD at the time, I always filled it up at or just below the $\frac{3}{4}$ mark. I'll admit I did run it down to "light on" status a few times but always immediately refueled. This time, somewhere around Monroe, LA the light came on and I radioed Jim we needed to stop within the next 20-40 miles or so to refuel. Well, guess what, 10 miles down the road I'm pulling over sputtering. Thankful that Jim is the good sport he is, and with the bumpers our cars have, a towel was all that was needed to cushion the push necessary to get me the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the next exit for fuel. My light that was supposed to come on at/or about the 14 gallon used mark, meaning I had 2.6 gallons remaining, illuminated at the 16 gallon mark.

See, I learned something that day about 1st 5er and about Jim that I hadn't known before. The car is obvious, but with Jim I discovered that he was more concerned about me and my dilemma than he was about his car. See, it is about the people (owner/driver). There were other opportunities, which are relived on the event referenced sites, where owner/driver interaction was what made for a successful trip.

We did finally make it to Chattanooga, TN and met up with Don and got a good night's rest before heading out the next morning on the second leg that would end us up in Mt. Airy, NC for The Vintage meet.

Continued on p. 9



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Jim and I were going to stay on after The Vintage and run a 900 mile trek through the Great Smokey Mountains with about 12 other enthusiasts from around the country and Canada. Since we weren't going to make the whole trip, and Don was headed back to LA immediately after Vintage, we elected to run the Cherokee Skyway and the Tail of the Dragon now instead of 6 days later with the RTT (Rolling the Twisties) group. Boy was that a treat. My wife, being the good sport that she is, after riding up to the summit as a passenger, us chasing that INKA that was chasing Jim's ///M5 and coming back down the same way commented, "That's the best abdominal workout I've ever had". I'll have to add that chasing that INKA gave me a whole new respect for BMWs long commitment to the road handling capabilities of their products.

A couple of stops along the way to The Vintage generated some great photo ops which we of course stopped and took advantage of.

We arrived in Mt. Airy a bit tired from the two days of driving, but excited about what lay ahead. The Shelton Vineyards agreed to host this event targeted at vintage BMWs. Much to our surprise this years event was chosen as the national meet for the 2002 owner/drivers and their cars. There were just over 150 2002s in attendance from all over the country, and I mean all over. There was one car from as far away as you could probably get, Washington State. They were awesome to see setting on that hillside.

That was Saturday. Sunday began a whole new experience, that to quote Jim, "was the best driving vacation I've ever been on". This my friends is RTT, Rolling the Twisties. 5 days enjoying North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and back into North Carolina. Each day consisted of 200 to 250 of the best backroad miles the Great Smokey Mountains have to offer. The closest I can come to describing it would be to quote Jim again, "the best driving vacation I've ever been on".

On the RTT adventure there turned out to be 5 Canadian cars; 3 of which were E28 ///M5's, 1 E28 Alpina B7 Turbo, and an E46 ///M3; 2 Florida E28s, several from the Northeast including an E34 525i auto tragic and an E30 with a M52 swap;

E30 ///M3 from TN joined us; and of course our 2 cars from TX.

There are plenty of opportunities around the country, some closer to home than others, but what better way to build and enjoy relationships with other Bimmer addicts, aholics, enthusiasts, etc. than attending one of these events. These events are about the cars, but without the owner/drivers, they just couldn't get there and have the fun they were built to have. These events, and so many others are designed just for that purpose, allowing the team of car/owner/drivers to enjoy each other to the maximum allowable by law.

Included in the text are links to the events referenced, and many more events can be found while surfing the web. Most of the major events are either on the West Coast or East Coast which has the potential to keep a lot of folks from participating. That is why, in 2009 myself and several other local E28 enthusiasts wanted to start an event central to the Texas metroplexes, so we birthed Tex-Fest LoneStar Burgers & Fives (pun intended).

If you want something local that's designed to connect owner/drivers, we the 5er enthusiasts invite you to join us. We are what you're looking for. This years event is in Blanco, October 21-22-23, 2011. We're also on Facebook, search Tex-Fest LoneStar Burgers & Fives

If you're interested in a nice long 4th of July road trip there's always Tedfest in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Ted Kalman and his crew, the RTT guys, host an awesome event each year.

There are many others, internet "search" is your friend and ticket to locate an event that has the elements you need to derive from your Bimmer the "Ultimate Driving Experience".



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Houston Loves Cars



By James Saynay

There was a time that when someone mentioned the city of Detroit one of two things immediately came to mind. Cars – muscle cars – the kind of cars that have so much raw power that you could get whiplash or Motown – from Smoky Robinson to the Dazz Band. Similarly when you mention the city of Houston one of two things also come to mind – oil and gas or the Medical Center. We have all experienced it – travel out of the state and tell someone that you are from Houston and you eventually get asked how many oil rigs you own. However, there are many things that are not so well known about our city; one of which quite simply is that Houston loves cars!

Yes, Houston loves cars – drive, collect, modify or restore you cannot deny that Houston has some great examples of both new and classic autos. We have the Porsche Club, the Mercedes Club, the Audi Club, the Ferrari Club and even the Mopar Club, and of course our own BMW Club that have a presence in Houston (just to name a few). Regardless of your ride of choice, each club invokes a spirit for driving in the pursuit of that perfect man/machine relationship. We can also show our wears at such gatherings as Cars and Coffee, Urban Speed, Classy Chassis,

Ricekiller or several other events on a regular basis. We have upscale storage that will baby your vehicle for a modest fee. They will wash and wax and detail and rotate and keep the battery charged and even provide a space to meet other enthusiasts.

Through a mutual friendship I was able to tour one such storage facility that contains a very comprehensive collection of high performance autos right here in our own town. More than \$30 million in cars are kept high and dry and away from the elements here. Ferrari, Porsche, Lamborghini, BMW, Mercedes, Rolls Royce, Bentley, Austin Healy, Aston Martin, Mopar, Ford and more are well represented. As you can imagine, this is not Bubba's garage but a very refined and high end storage facility

You might be wondering why such a collection would be featured in a BMW Club's newsletter? Yes we love and I mean LOVE our BMW's. But what made these cars what they are today? Along with the infamous blue and white propeller badge came a myriad of auto manufacturers all seeking to derive passion and perfect that man/machine relationship to astounding levels.



Continued on p. 14

Each year limits are pushed, new benchmarks are set and the unthinkable is made reality through the use of engineering, technology and manufacturing. Champions fall and new heroes born. This competitiveness aided in the evolution of what we have come to know today in the BMW brand.

Walking through the collection (please do not touch!) aroused a sense of awe. You can clearly see the craftsmanship that went into these vehicles. There was an entire row of Porsche 911's from different years and the refinement to the design can be seen in each iteration. Some cars were just plain cool – a Ferrari 340 America Vignale Spyder; 1 of 5 ever built, an authentic Porsche 550 RS - the same car that James Dean drove his last drive, a 'barn find' condition Bughatti, a BMW M1 and on and on. As a club we exemplify one particular brand, but here you could see the progression of style, design, function and technology across all brands.

As I left for the day I wondered how many other collections like this exist. The general consensus is that rare and unique collections of this sort exist only on the West and East Coasts. But here? In Houston? Who'd of thought! The next time I am asked about the city where I live I will simply reply....Houston loves cars.





Premio Brescia

By Tony Sakkis



The Premio Brescia delle Mille Miglia, that insanely fast, insanely dangerous, insanely popular race across the Italian countryside has been extinct now longer than it actually ran. It was held from 1927 through 1957 and there had been loads of accidents and tons of deaths and a great deal of general carnage, but it was a race that captured the interest of fans and participants like no other. Two races – the Carrera Panamericana and the Targa Florio – were inspired by its success. And although successful in their own right, they were always also-rans compared to the Mille Miglia.

In the history of the great race, non-Italian cars won a total of three times – in 1931, 1940 and 1955. All others were Italian drivers in Italian cars. In 1931, the great Rudy Carriola – who sounds Italian, but who was German – won in a Mercedes; in 1955, Englishman Stirling Moss also won in a Mercedes SLR. And then, in 1940, a BMW 328 driven by German Fritz von Hanstein, known as Huschke, took the overall victory, only the second win by a German in a German car.

It's probably the most notable win for a BMW in the history of the make. It wasn't easy, it wasn't pretty, and it wasn't without its problems. But it was, and will always be, one of the finest of BMWs victories.

The car that won, the 328, had actually won its class at the Mille Miglia in 1938. But class wins and overall wins are two very different results. Although the car had been one of the leading sports cars by 1940, having participated in myriad competitions in the two-liter class and having even done well against larger displacement competition, it had not shown its dominance in any major events. The Mille Miglia would change all that.

The car was designed by Fritz Fiedler and the tuned engines produced some 135 bhp. Paired with its Touring of Milan aluminum bodies, the car's thin skin on a load-bearing tubular space frame, gave the coupe a weight of 1700 pounds and a top speed of about 140 MPH. Five cars were produced for the 1940 season; three roadsters and two coupes.

BMW really put its hope on the coupes, which they believed, despite size and weight penalties, would do better than the open sports car. The engine would have less drag on it and the car, with its space frame, could win the whole event against larger more powerful Alfas.

The coupe, internally known as the Project AM 1007, was not a trouble free effort. The body was poorly assembled and had to be reworked. And although the test runs produced very good results in terms of speed, the car handled like a barge. It was unstable and tended to walk around at speed.

When the Rome-Berlin pact was signed, every effort was made to cooperate, so the body was farmed out to Carrozzeria Touring to produce a better streamlined body. Since they had done something similar for Alfa, they were able to scramble and produce a body in

just under a month.

Although the original body had been wind-tunnel tested, there was no time for the new body and no time to test, or to correct problems – of what nature they were blissfully unaware. It was painted white and test runs had indicated that although it was slightly slower than the original, it was at least stable at speed.

Germany's national racing team was competing in BMW 328 roadsters, and since BMW was required by previous agreement to give the team its latest technology, it followed that the coupe was to be given to the national team. The coupe covered 1,981 miles of the 24 Hours of Le Mans at an average speed of 82.5 mph to take first in its class and fifth overall. At the same time, BMW went back to work on another coupe, which was lighter, faster and sleeker than the Italian car. But that wasn't what they were after. It was the Mille Miglia they really had their sights on.

The 1939 Mille Miglia had been halted due to a spate of crashes, and it was though the race might not be held again. But Italian love of racing put pressure on the organizers and the race was announced.

Just prior to the race, the starting field assembled in the main square – which was overwhelmingly red, the Italian racing color – with 70 Italian teams fielding Lancia, Alfa-Romeo and Fiat. The streamlined German cars stuck out like proverbial sore thumbs. For our story, the important thing to know is that one car was piloted by von Hanstein a coupe. It was originally planned that Giovanni Lurani, an Enzo Ferrari associate and one of the prime movers in Italian racing, would co-drive for von Hanstein. According to the stories, however, after practice, Lurani bailed on the co-driving, saying von Hanstein drove like a rabid dog. So Lurani was given another 328. In the meantime, Walter Baumer replaced Lurani. All drivers were instructed to take it easy, not push too hard, and finish the race above all else.

At 4 a.m. the cars were sent on their way at one-minute intervals. Von Hanstein was released at 6.40 a.m., but did very little to manage the car. He covered the first lap at record speed and opened a gap over the French Delage by ninety seconds. Lurani was third in the second BMW Coupé, followed by an Alfa Romeo.

The three Roadsters were seventh, eighth and ninth positions.

On the second lap, the two BMW Coupés were now 1-2. Von Hanstein had set the fastest time ever recorded in a sports car at the circuit with an average speed of 104 MPH. In the meantime, Baumer was red-hot mad, as von Hanstein refused to give up the wheel of the car. But the two men finally swapped seats a few miles from the finish, with Bäumer crossing the line to claim overall victory. It would be more than 15 minutes before the first Alfa Romeo came in. BMW had topped both the team and overall standings, and the 328 coupe had set a record with the victory with a top speed of 139 mph. Bäumer drove the Touring Coupe across the finish line to claim the overall victory with an elapsed time of 8 hours, 54 minutes and 46 seconds. The remaining BMWs finished in third, fifth and sixth place.

The Italians, who had just signed the Rome-Berlin pact aligning themselves with Hitler, were none too happy with the alliance, and it was made clearly enough afterward when they expressed displeasure with the result. Italians might have been in a pact with Nazi Germany, but they were still supremely unhappy with the victory. Of course, within months the Nazis and the Mussolini fascists were a bit preoccupied with the war anyway.

The Mille Miglia Coupe was lost until 1945,

when an enthusiast named Robert Grier found the car – which had been crashed. He raced it for a short time and it sat in storage in a Connecticut garage for more than 30 years, until it was found and purchased by Jim Proffitt in the mid eighties. He sold the car in 2002 to BMW, where BMW still looks at it as the most historically significant racecar in their collection.



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Nov 11 - SCCA Drivers
Nov 25 - NASA & Yellow Drivers

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The Ultimate Delivery Experience



By Art Yee

It all started at the 2010 BMWCCA O'fest in Wisconsin. BMW was revealing to attending club members a new car never shown to the general public. Turns out it was just a tease as in "striptease", what we witnessed at the final banquet was the drivers side lower front quarter panel of the upcoming 1 series M coupe! A glimpse of a new color "Valencia Orange" From what we could see was a very aggressive front spoiler with the new air curtain technology. I said to myself "Is that all? I want to see the whole car!"

I decided then that I was interested in that car, so I followed the internet message board "1 Addicts" to get the latest info. All the rumors were that the car would be limited production in the USA of 600 cars for ~350 BMW dealers. In November 2010 I went up to BMW of Houston North and put a deposit down. My CA Gregg Schell said "What car is that?" I assured him the 1 series M Coupe was coming. Fortunately I was #1 and started the waiting list which grew to 5+ in a short time.

I became obsessed, following the 1 Addicts message board daily. I even attended the NAIAS in Detroit in January of 2011 to see the public debut of the car! Production of the 1 series M Coupe started in March 2011; I received my allocation on March 10th for a week 14 build. I decided that I wanted to do Euro Delivery and Performance Center Delivery for redelivery in the U.S. The earliest ED date I could get was June 8th. I was a little bummed since I already had a family vacation booked for May 1st-15th in Germany and wanted the delivery at the end of that. Never the less I wanted the car and June 8th ED it was.

For ED, you have to pay your way to Munich, Germany and your own hotels. BMW covers your insurance to drive car for 15 days plus ship car back to the U.S for you along with a wonderful delivery experience. Plus you will get a admission for 2 to the BMW museum worth 30 euros, 15 euro food voucher, and 10 euro gift shop voucher. A bonus is that you receive a minimum of ~7% discount from US MSRP, but some have been able to negotiate more off which the ED invoice price is ~ another 7-8% less.

I booked my flight and hotels. It would be a short stay due to my family vacation but I really wanted the ED experience. Now the wait, I was checking daily on the

BMW USA website to get production status of my vehicle. Turns out my car was not built until 2 weeks before my ED delivery date. My initial order was for an Alpine White car with heated seats and usb/ipod connection. While in Germany on my family vacation I emailed Greg to change the color to Valencia Orange and add Bluetooth package. Then 1 week before my car was built I changed my order to all options except Satellite radio. I guess I couldn't do without my luxury items.

So the big day eventually came. On June 7th I flew from Houston to Munich and arrived there at 7:45am June 8th. We got on the S train from airport to Marienplatz, and then changed to U bahn to Olympic plaz. From there it was a short ½ block walk to the BMW Welt. What a sight to see, a massive modern structure for the BMW European delivery program. We checked in at the front desk where they accepted our luggage to hold until my delivery time which was 3:30pm. Inside the Welt many new BMWs are on display along with a large gift shop and restaurants. Car deliveries are on the second and third floor, not open to general public.

Since we were early, I choose to do a factory tour where the E90 and E91 are built. The start is inside the Welt and the actual factory is across the street. The tour takes about 2 hours. When we finished we are escorted up a glass elevator to the Delivery lounge on the third floor. I check in and sign all my paper work (about 15 mins). Then we go to the lounge waiting area. Now, this is no ordinary waiting area, there is a huge room with leather couches and tables and a long food bar with all types of drinks, desserts, fruit, yogurt, and another table full of hot food sausages/wieners and bread. Needless to say, we took full advantage of the hospitality. This lounge overlooked the delivery floor below, and what a sight to see. There were many different models BMW's waiting to be delivered on individual turntables. My car was off to the side since we were early; I eagerly took many pictures of my car along with the others. Eventually my delivery time came so I met up with my delivery specialist Rolf at the top of a stairway that led down to the cars awaiting delivery. As we walk down the stairs the turntable and spotlights are turned on. My car was slowly rotating with the paint



Continued on p. 22

BMW 8 "THE LAZY 8"

BY RUDY CASTILLO



PICTURES BY DANH PHAN

Earlier this month, I was approached by a Houston BMW CCA member in regards to my e31 8-series after my car was seen in the video "Level 2 BMW" shot by Shedrick Mask for districtSpeed.com. She had asked about how I came about getting the car, why I picked a e31 and the details getting the car to where it is now. The funny thing is - the cars' story has a lot more behind it than many think.

A little background to my love of BMW before I go into further detail about my e31: I had originally owned a couple BMWs prior to the 8-series through my high school years, mainly consisting of a e34 525i, and a e39 540i. Both are great cars, but have quirks that taught me very valuable lessons as far as upkeep and the usual "do's and don'ts" of BMW ownership. My interest in the e31 chassis came from it's resemblance to a M1 as seen in the movie The Italian Job. I knew from first sight that the 8-series was something I was destined to own in my lifetime.

Eventually, I graduated high school and started my freshman year in college, still driving my old faithful e34 (almost 240k miles). Unfortunately, I ended up overheating the car in traffic off Interstate 45 heading to school one afternoon. The usual cracked/warped head was the end result and I ended up selling the car for parts value. To this day I still miss that car. With the money I got from parting the 525, I had a base towards getting an e31. Even with all my bad luck that semester at school, I did manage to get a paid internship at a

oil company from of New Orleans, and six months later with countless hours flying from Houston to New Orleans, and in and out of oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico, I managed to have a good chunk of change to go towards my e31 purchase. My internship ended with the rig evacuation due to Tropical Storm Gustav. So back to Houston I went - home sweet home.

The search for my e31 began, only to find there were not many 8 series in good shape within my budget. Eventually, I found a 1994 BMW 840ci in Sugar Land that was owned by a former BMW tech from one of the local BMW dealerships in Houston. The majority of the maintenance was in good order but the car had been neglected cosmetically. The paint on the bumpers was cracked, the clear coat was extremely thin, the tires had flat spots, and the leather was cracked. On occasion, the car would leave a drip of coolant on the driveway. Since most of my money went towards the purchase of the car, I didn't have the funds to thoroughly diagnose the small coolant leak, and with my awesome streak of bad luck, the car decided to puke all of its coolant out one night driving home. At this point I was scared I killed my 840ci just like my e34, but I went home, put all my worries aside and slept on it.

The next day I towed it to Bay Area Bimmers in



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Kemah and found it was just a blown out hose. With a new hose and topped off coolant, my e31 was alive and well! My dream of having this modern classic came true. Every time I drove it around town, I had at least one person ask me about the car. Something about the classic square lines and popup headlights somewhat reminded me about the times I'd watch Magnum P.I and watch that old Ferrari 308 fly through the Hawaiian roads. The e31 has that 80s supercar look.

Eventually, I ended up repainting the hood, and fenders mainly because of a buffer accident; a detailer I hired ended up burning through what little was left of the clear. I also ended up getting second hand wheels and tires from a member on bimberforums, did minor audio upgrades and also addressed small interior issues and rattles. Now, she sits in the garage next to an e39 m5, e28 m5 and Dodge Viper, only to be driven on clear cool days or to the occasional Houston Coffee and Cars.

Although the car is powered by the old 4.0 Nikasil v8, and is more of a sloth, I still prefer it over my other cars. At the end of the day it's a BMW and it's my personal ultimate driving machine.



Editor's Corner



Pick up just about any car magazine today and you will see the latest and greatest machines that have hit the market. And why not? New cars are exhilarating! New BMW's are premium examples of today's modern cars taken to the limits. There is however a large faction that is also fond of those BMW's of yesterday - no skid control, no dynamic stability control, no anti lock brakes, and in some cases no power assist at all. This edition of the Torque of the Town is essentially dedicated to these folks. In stark contrast, we have also included one of the lucky few that have had the experience of a European Delivery (drool!).

The reach in which we are gathering stories continues to grow in and outside of our Chapter. This provides our members with the awareness of the events that exist in Houston and around the nation. The theme is common - anyone lucky enough to attend one of these events, drives, tours, etc. truly appreciates whatever type of BMW they drive. As mentioned in "The Road Ahead" (see pg. 4) there are several opportunities to get your Beemer moving in the coming months!

Tony Sakkis has once again brought the history of BMW to our newsletter with outstanding pictures and prose.

Finally, as we end the brutal Summer months make sure to drop your top, lower your windows and open your sunroof and drive to your hearts content. As always we would love to hear from you about suggestions or comments about the Torque. Just email the editor at the address on page 3.

Keep both hands on the wheel and all four on the ground.....

- James

Stay Informed!! - eBlast Signup

Once a month the Chapter emails an eBlast to all members who have indicated they want to be kept abreast of Chapter activities and events, as well as news and information involving the Chapter. If you wish to receive this information and are not already signed up you may do so on the website at www.houston-bmwcca.com. The eBlast request is located at the lower left on the front page.



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glimmering under the spotlights. WOW!!

Rolf went over all the features on my car along with programming the Navigation system with my destinations. The Welt photographer took a picture of me beside my car in which I received a hard copy along with an emailed digital copy. They loaded my luggage which I left at front desk and I was on my way. You start your car and drive down a ramp to the outside world. Outside there is light rain, but it didn't matter. I was anxious to drive my car, so off to the autobahn. A short trip up and down the autobahn made me wish my car was broken in so I could really enjoy the no speed limit.

I drove back to the Welt and parked my car in the complimentary underground garage. My hotel was a block away, so much safer to park there instead of outside at my hotel. The next day I toured the BMW Museum, which is a must do if you are there. Afterwards I dropped my car off at IN and Out at Munich airport for delivery back to the U.S. Everyone at the Welt were very friendly and accommodating to be sure your delivery experience was enjoyable.

My redelivery was at the BMW Performance Center in South Carolina on August 11th. For PCD (Performance Center Delivery) you pay your way to Greenville, South Carolina. BMW pays for your hotel, dinner and breakfast. You enjoy 2+ hours of driving a car like yours on the BMW Performance center track guided by professional drivers. This includes panic braking, skid pad, and short road course. In a way similar to our local chapter Car Control schools, except you drive BMW's cars. They remind you that it is "NYC" Not Your Car, so don't worry about driving it hard. Also included is a factory tour (where the X5, X6, and X3 are built), plus X5/X3 off road driving experience and a delivery experience for your car, except if you had done ED they just put on your license plates and hand you the keys.

On the drive home I headed northwest to North Carolina/Tennessee to drive the "Dragon" also called the Tail of the Dragon, 318 turns in 11 miles, it's like driving a rollercoaster in your car.

I was lucky to be able to experience both ED and PCD, and highly recommend both or one to anyone buying a new BMW. The only drawback is the wait to get your car back to the US on ED, which is approx. 6-8 weeks. Add another 2-3 weeks and you wish to do PCD after ED.



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