

BMW Car Club
of America
Houston Chapter



TORQUE ^{OF} THE TOWN

WINTER 2012

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The Road Ahead



David Dalton - Houston Chapter President

Our chapter is in discussions with the Lone Star and Tejas Chapters regarding a Tri-chapter Nationwide Event to be held at the Circuit of The Americas (COTA) F1 track in Austin. We are hoping to bring this together to be a lot like a mini O'fest. To include an autocross, car show, a BMW CCA Club Race, and of course a DE on the F1 track itself. The dates we are looking at are June 7th, 8th & 9th. As soon as we get the contract signed registration dates will be announced. Hopefully that will be during December or early January. Be looking for updates (facebook, our website, eBlast) as they become available. The DE will most likely fill up in just a matter of days. Tentatively the registration schedule is:

1. Texas club members who have participated in HPDE's or Autocross within the last 1-2 years will be given an advanced window to register for the HPDE and Autocross events.
2. The Houston, Lone Star, and Tejas Chapter members will then be given the next opportunity to register.
3. Afterwards registration will be open for all BMW CCA members nationwide.

We'll be welcoming sponsorship from dealers, after market tuners, independent shops, etc. There will be several "purpose specific" committees to help organize and oversee certain functions. The program is for the Lone Star Chapter to chair the DE and Club Race, the Tejas Chapter will be heavily involved in the support commit-

tees, and the Houston Chapter will chair the Autocross event. To effectively pull this off the aim is to comingle committee participation with members from all three chapters. Being organized in time to gain as much exposure as possible in the Roundel prior to the event is vital in an effort to achieve participation levels required to meet the financial obligation. To date not all committees have been fully organized, however for those that are the contact information for the Chairs are:

- Ross Carmichael HPDE Chair rcarmichael77@gmail.com
- Bruce Heersink Race Chair bruce@heersink.org
- Jeff Conner Hospitality Chair drumwagon@gmail.com
- Aaraj Thyagaraj Autocross Chair mail2aaraj@yahoo.com

This is an enormous opportunity for our chapter, as well as a vast undertaking that will not be victorious without membership support. Please contact the chair person directly for committee participation you have an interest in, and let's make a positive Houston impact on this nationwide event. We do not want people going home with a negative impression of Texas, or how a prime opportunity was blown because it was poorly organized. This is our chapter's opportunity to excel. Let's make it happen!

...See ya on the back roads.

2013 ELIGIBLE BOARD POSITIONS

Secretary... 2 yr. elected position

Treasurer... 2 yr. elected position

Webmaster... 1 yr. appointed position

Tech Advisor... 1 yr. appointed position

Autocross Chair... 1 yr. appointed position

Newsletter Editor... 1 yr. appointed position

Membership Chair... 1 yr. appointed position

Social Events Chair... 1 yr. appointed position

Driving Events Chair... 1 yr. appointed position

Make a difference, get involved, join the Board



Board Member Elections

Houston Chapter – BMW CCA 2013 Executive Committee Ballot

Please note there are 3 ways you may cast your ballot for the 2013 Chapter Elections:

1. Bring your ballot to the Annual Banquet
2. Or mail your ballot to:
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BMW Car Club of America
Post Office Box 56763
Houston, Texas 77256-6763
3. Or email your ballot to Jim Iden:
jim@waynerussellsearch.com

BMW CCA Membership Number

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Sarah Nowak

Chapter Secretary

Pam Johnson



ALL BALLOTS WILL BE COMPILED AND TALLIED WITH RESULTS ANNOUNCED AT THE ANNUAL BANQUET.

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAT JANUARY 12, 2013 TO BE CONSIDERED.

Houston Chapter – BMW CCA 2013 Executive Committee Write-in Ballot

Please note there are 3 ways you may cast your write-in ballot for the 2013 Chapter Elections:

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3. Or email your ballot to Jim Iden:
jim@waynerussellsearch.com

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Nominee's Signature and Membership No.

Signature: Nominated By/Membership No.

Secretary: _____
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Nominee's Signature and Membership No.

Signature: Nominated By/Membership No.

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAT JANUARY 12, 2013 TO BE CONSIDERED.

Tex Fest IV

James Saynay

Every once in a while it just happens. Everything comes together and life is good. However, you would not expect it to happen in the small town of Rockdale, TX – but it did. For the fourth year in a row lovers and drivers of BMW came together in what was one fantastic weekend. This event – previously called Lone Star Burgers and FIVES (get it) occurred. When it started it was – you guessed it – an event for BMW 5-series only. However, now it has expanded to the full range of the brand so in great Texas fashion it was renamed to TEX-FEST. Yes in four short years this event grew from a handful of vehicles to over 30 this year. The father of Tex Fest is one of our own – Mr. Sherman Watters. He, Jim Moffitt, Memo Calderon and Todd Farley all have worked the past several years to put on one hell of an event – sponsors and all.

Arriving at the Rainbow Courts resorts in Rockdale we saw several E28 fivers lined up. The Rainbow Courts is a quant villa style resort that started in 1918. The staff is pleasant and very accommodating. We were one of two groups that occupied the resort that weekend – the other was a family gathering in which we were told “if they are too loud for you just let us know” - yeah right. Apparently they know nothing of BMW people.

It was a real thrill to watch the other folks arrive. One after another an 80's or early 90's vehicle pulled in with that classic BMW sound. Yes there were some later model Bimmers as well and they certainly held their own.

After registration we all headed for dinner and then back to the courtyard for some home brew and other libation – it's funny how the room keys could be easily mistaken for the earlier model year car keys – something that took me around 20 minutes to figure out at 2 am. But enough about that.

This year the activities included a road rally, car show and tech session and a “spirited” drive.

The road rally was pretty ingenious. Starting at the old Rockdale train station, now museum, each car paired up with another car and headed separate ways. Somewhere along the way the cars would end up passing each other and had to pass the baton – which was in reality a stuffed armadillo. The winners would be the vehicles that arrived together in the closest time. Prior to the baton hand off we could use phones or other means to contact each other. After the baton communication was prohibited. We looked at the map with our partners and decided to be clever by picking the mid point for each of us to meet. Unfortunately so did everyone else. Funny when we pulled into Lexington, TX how a bunch of other BMW's were parked just waiting for their partners. All in all it was an 81 mile loop – which we completed in good time. We ended up back at the train station less than 30 seconds apart – I was sure we would win, but we didn't. One group arrived at the EXACT SAME TIME.

After the rally all of the cars lined up for a car show. I think we had a high percentage of E-28's currently

on the road. We also had a very beautiful E-23 that was purchased in Arizona and on the way to its new home in Tennessee. A very pristine and well looked after 1985 7-series it was. So much so in fact that it was voted best in show!

The tech session was just awesome. There were exhibits on how to modify the fuel delivery system on pre-90's cars, how to adjust valves and a lot of ad hoc help person to person in fixing issues with their cars.

The weather was perfect – even the rainstorms that blew through did not dampen anyone's spirits. We all huddled in the largest cabin and watched videos and laughed and just had a great time eating – what else – burgers!

The next morning the spirited drive was the same route as the rally – it was a wonderful route through rolling hills and twisties. Unfortunately my exhaust suffered a bit of damage (mostly from my old 5er being dropped to a semi ridiculous level). Nevertheless we all enjoyed our time in Rockdale and made some new friends.

That is the beauty of BMW people. No matter who you are or where you come from there is always a camaraderie that exists when gear heads / petrol heads / enthusiasts or drivers gather.



F1 History in Texas

Tony Sakkis



I remember precisely where I was July 8, 1984.

It wasn't Dallas.

In retrospect, I kind of wish I had been in Dallas that weekend. Here. Like being a part of a tsunami. Being able to say you'd lived through it made you heroic. After all, it was a failure so massive, so unbelievably bad, one had to actually be there for people to believe it. Like the time the Oakland A's played a Major League game to a house of 216 people. Or when F1 only raced with six cars at the USGP in 2005.

Unfortunately, July 8, 1984 was worse than the two combined. It was the one and only time F1 came to the Lone Star State. And it was an epic, massive, total failure. Fail. Total. With a Capital F. I had been to the two previous GP's that year; Detroit and Montreal. But not Dallas. I didn't have the time that year, so I stayed away. Again, I wish I had gone. So I was at home, in my living room, watching the CBS live broadcast – which I still have the live broadcast on tape. I watched it again about two months ago. Here it was: F1. In Texas. But it was a holocaust of a race. An embarrassment. Not even F. An F-minus. And it represented perfectly how Americans – specifically Texans -- thought of racing in general, and F1 in particular.

Dallas got the GP because of that stupid TV show. But it added little and deserved less. And in case you haven't noticed the specifics of the date: it was July. While you think of that one, consider the venue: the Cotton Bowl. Not inside, but through the parking lots. Never had a race there (one can only wonder why) and so nobody knew what a race would be like. And as any good Texan knows, you don't use concrete around the Cotton Bowl for a temporary circuit. So what did they use? Yes, asphalt. Evidently, there was a big sale on the stuff. And it must have been cheap.

July? Regular asphalt? Dallas?

See any problems?

So when cars showed up, the track began to disintegrate. Thursday, before a car had turned a wheel, drivers were already talking boycott. In retrospect, boycott would have been a better outcome. And as soon as practice started, the track began breaking up. Lord knows, they tried to patch it. But, no dice. It was doomed from the announcement months earlier that a race would be held at the Cotton Bowl. And the track fell apart. Broke up into little pieces. And the race was tragic, actually. Like low-clearance Conestoga wagons circling the Santa Fe trail, five-inch-high berms on the inside, outside and centers of the twin ruts that made for track after about ten laps.

And everybody crashed. Niki Lauda crashed. Alain Prost crashed. Derek Warwick crashed. Ayrton Senna almost died from heat stroke. Nigel Mansell passed out at the finish line and had to be taken away in an ambulance. Keke Rosberg won in a poorly handling Williams, but Rosberg was a master of driving crap cars on crap circuits and just proved that he was a driver's driver and a man's man.

But by the time the race ended two things were clear: Dallas would not be on the 1995 F1 calendar, and Americans had better learn to do better if they wanted another GP.

But we were all slow to figure that out. So Detroit soldiered on, and Phoenix came and went and Indianapolis came and went and then ... Austin. I for one shook my head and said, 'Oooh, boy. Here we go again.'

But last weekend was a revelation.



I went to the track in a critical state of mind. It was going to be a failure. Not epic failure, I was already sure. But I had seen how they played with tickets and PSLs and all that other garbage and saw Phoenix in the rear view mirror. And it was Texas, so I saw Dallas.

But when I got there, I saw Shanghai. I saw Sepang. I saw Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi. I didn't even see Silverstone or Monza or Monaco. I didn't see Laguna Seca or Texas Motor Speedway or Daytona or Indy. I saw Singapore. I saw Valencia. I saw world-class. I saw the best in the world. I didn't see Dallas. Anywhere.

It's simple to fawn over something as cool as F1, especially when it's two hours from your front door. But it wasn't that. I was jaded, jaundiced even. I tried being that cynic, the guy who sat in a trailer with 500 GP Champion motorcycle racer Wayne Gardner as he criticized Laguna Seca up and down, wondering why Americans couldn't provide a decent track. Laguna Seca? At the time, it was the best road racing facility in America. And I agreed with Gardner. It wasn't up to snuff. But if Wayne Gardner comes to COTA next April, he'll be surprised. He'll be flabbergasted. He'll be surprised. Happy, even. If he isn't, I have no faith in his judgment.

I did a lot of things wrong for the 2012 GP at Circuit of the Americas. Like not knowing if I was even attending until Thursday. I didn't even try for a pass and then bought seats from a buddy in the worst section – which, I think, is turn 3-4-5. It wasn't bad, mind you. But in walking the circuit I discovered there were many better places. General admission, I must say, is some of the best I've ever seen. You have world class views from GA tickets in turn One, then down the hill in Two up past Five, down in 15 and 17.

The organization was more than superb. You had plenty of staff and you had people who had been briefed on what was actually happening. And, frankly, it felt like Disneyland with fast cars. The Eco Squad was there to pick up trash and the place was so clean, you felt like you were in Yosemite, so you packed all your trash and deposited in the wastebasket. Toilets were accessible. Workers were more than friendly; they were downright helpful. They didn't treat the race as if it would work itself out on its own; and they didn't treat it like it was exclusive. They were inviting and they were friendly and they were, well, professional. All you could ask for.

And fans knew who they were watching. Unlike the previous time F1 had come to Texas and Linda Grey and Harry Hagman were the stars of the event, this time it was the cars, the F1 circus. It felt like Europe. People watched qualifying and knew who was who. They knew the cars. And the grandstands were packed – even Friday, through Saturday and all Sunday, with intelligent fans. Packed ... with people who knew.

But there was more. There was that glorious track itself. Yow. Talk about a challenge. It was nice to be out there for first practice and watch

consummate pros struggle with a proper racing line. It's a very technical place and there are many ways to negotiate the 21—turn monster. Vettel worked it differently than Webber and Alonso worked it differently than both. And watching them struggle with it, and not things like runoff and access and safety and heat and a disintegrating track surface was more than cool, it was, as mentioned, a revelation. It's what we should have had all those years ago, when Watkins Glen was dying out and a replacement was being located.

I would have bet you a month ago that this was a doomed race from the beginning. I figured they'd lose money this year (I assume they still did) and the organizers would figure they were better off without F1 and that would be the end of that. That thought is no longer in my mind. The race, the track, the support, was top tier. Top. As in A. Maybe not A+. I'm still a critic, after all. But it was damned close.

I was at every practice and qualifying in Austin. But I didn't stick around for the race. I watched it on TV again in my living room, and I recorded it. I'll likely look back in another 30 years and say, no, I wasn't there. But I wished I had been. For completely different reasons.

CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS™



The Lucky 7

Greg Flint

Until I met Johnny Guest several years ago, I had no idea that I wanted an E23 745i.

I first met John at River City Bimmers' inaugural Street Survival. He was lurking around my then stock 1995 525iT. We struck up a conversation, and it wasn't long before he recruited me to assist in designing a rally and arranging for CCA sponsorship and insurance for 5er Fest 2009 in Tupelo, MS, a national event catering primarily to E12, E28 and E34 5 series cars. It was at 5er Fest that I first got to take a turn behind the wheel of "Big Blue," Johnny's 1985 745i Executive. Before I returned in the car to the car show lot, I knew that I would own one of these Autobahn stormers one day. The hunt was on!

For those who may not know, the 745i was BMW's flagship of the first generation 7 series (E23 chassis). It was never offered outside the European market, although many came over during the early to mid eighties due to the strength of the dollar to the Deutsche Mark and the desire for well heeled Americans to blast down the highway at ridiculously illegal speeds in a full sized well handling luxuriously appointed driving machine. Many of these cars were Executive models with front and rear heated and reclining water buffalo covered seats, leather dash, consoles and headliners, rear passenger radio controls and other over the top options. The best part of any 745i though is the factory installed turbocharger that in stock form put out 249 HP and 276 lbft of torque. Turning up the boost moderately yields well over 300 reliable horsepower at the wheels. I have always loved big fast sedans and this fit the bill.

Over the next few years, I searched high and low for the right 745i for me. I talked to people all over the United States and had several 745i aficionados regularly sending me information on cars that might be for sale. In July of this year, I received a text picture from Johnny of a beautiful Cosmosblau 1985 745i. A mutual friend that I met at 5er Fest 2009 had just picked the car up that day in Portland, OR and was driving it home to Phoenix. The more I learned about this car, the more I wanted it. This was a very low option car, the only options showing on the build sheet were an electric sunroof, front armrests and side turn repeaters mounted on the front fenders. The interior was comprised of manual Pacificblau cloth seats, manual (crank) windows, and my absolute favorite, manual HVAC. The automatic HVAC fitted to most 745i's is likely the most problematic ever designed by BMW and very few E23's have fully functioning climate control. The car had been treated to some tasteful upgrades including BMW Motorsport springs with Bilstein shocks (self leveling rear suspension was deleted), monstrous adjustable sway bars and BBS RZ's. In my mind's eye it was the perfect 745i. I sent the owner, Chris Kohler, a revered collector of fine rare high performance BMW's on the mye28.com forum a text of congratulations, believing that this would be another fine addition to his stable that would take up residence along side his E12 M535i, E28 M535i, E28 Alpina B7 Turbo and E34 Touring, never to be sold.

On October 2, I learned that Chris was putting the car up for sale. He decided he had too many



projects, and in order to move forward on some of his other fine machinery, he was offering up my dream car.

October 11, 2012, a scant 9 days after Chris listed the car for sale (and incidentally, my 15th wedding anniversary...my wife is a saint! This is not the first time I've headed across the USA to pick up a car sight unseen and drive it home), Vance and I boarded a plane bound for Phoenix. Upon arrival, Chris picked us up in his E34T and drove us the short distance back to his house. We got to check out his really cool collection of BMW's and BMW paraphernalia and after a good lunch, we hit the open highway. At the first gas stop, just outside of Phoenix, I dubbed the 745i "Jules" after a certain character's wallet in Pulp Fiction. She had earned the moniker on the short stretch of I-10.

I-10 through southeast Arizona and New Mexico is really scenic. We stopped at the Texas Canyon rest stop and got some beautiful photos. We pushed on and made it to El Paso after a very long day. We stopped at Rudy's Country BBQ and had some of the most awesome brisket and some of the best beer I've ever consumed. The fact that we had been up and moving for about 18 hours made it so much the better. While we were in Rudy's having quite the big time, Jules waited patiently in the parking lot, as the biggest rainstorm of the year in El Paso came through. I don't really know that it was the biggest, but the clerk at the Hampton Inn across the parking lot from Rudy's said it was. We got soaked in the few feet from the parking space to the front desk. On the positive side, we discovered that Jules was in fact water tight. No leaks to the passenger compartment.

The next morning, we were up and on the road pretty early. We had about 650 miles to cover to make it to Rockdale, TX for the Lone Star Burgers and Fives. Oh yeah, we weren't going to miss that! I-10 through West Texas has a recommended speed of 80 mph and Jules was quite obliged to exceed that for hours on end. I'm pretty certain that we burned through at least one 100 liter tank of premium completely in the triple digits. That was the redeeming quality of this stretch of highway, as the scenery was nothing but shades of boring beige and tumbleweed. On the road, I checked the thread on mye28.com for the Lone

Star get together and saw that someone had already made it with an Alpineweiß 1995 E34 Touring. Well, I thought, I'm glad I'm bringing something different. After a stop for lawn chairs, a cooler, ice and beer in Round

Rock, TX, we finally pulled into the Rainbow Courts in Rockdale, TX a bit after dark. Once again, we were famished. We pulled into the lot, checked in and planned to make a brief stop with the gathered Bimmerphiles to be social before heading out for something to eat. As we checked in with those gathered in the courtyard to let them know we were heading out to forage for food, the host and the organizer of TexFest, Sherman Watters, declared it dinner time and much to our surprise, the whole gang saddled up and headed out to strap on the feed bag. It was almost like they were waiting for us to show up to eat. How cool could this weekend get?!

Apparently it could get pretty dang cool. Dinner, once again, was outstanding. Not sure if the food was that good, or we were that hungry, but nonetheless, it was tremendously enjoyed. After the fine meal, we headed back to the Rainbow Courts where we got to enjoy the comfort of our new chairs, the companionship of new friends, and some really great beer brewed by some of those new friends, Wyatt and Amanda Shanks. Remember that Alpineweiß E34T? Not only do they have great taste in cars, they brew the heck out of some beer as well.

Saturday morning, we were up and at'em. Well, I was, Vance may have been feeling the effects of Wyatt and Amanda's fine brew, but maybe not. After all, what happens in Rockdale stays in Rockdale right? Anyway, Saturday morning was the big team rally. I have participated (pretty successfully at times) in quite a few TSD rallies, and with the assistance of several other more qualified rallyists, I helped set up the TSD rally for Oktoberfest 2011 in Birmingham, AL. I have never participated in a team rally like this, but what fun it was. Each team consisted of two cars leaving from the same point at the same time. One of the cars was given a stuffed animal that had to be passed to the other car at



some point during the rally. The rally course is a complete circle and when team member A leaves the starting point in one direction, team member B leaves in the opposite direction. The two team cars may communicate as much as they wish during the rally until the point at which the animal is passed, and after that moment, communication was cut off. The goal is to arrive back at the starting point at the same moment as your team mate.

After the rally, Vance and I sat down for lunch with Pavel, a really cool guy that I had met virtually on both mye28.com and bimmerforums.com, and finally at TexFest in person. Pavel is the owner of a very nice looking hellrot 1995 540i 6 speed and apparently an awesome rally driver, but I'm getting way ahead of myself.

This was not your typical BMW car show with a bunch of uptight judges walking around with white gloves checking the nether regions of differentials and brake calipers thank goodness. Sherman and the crew had set this show up to be judged by the people. Everyone that participated was given a ballot and sent out to vote their choice for "Rattle-can Sensation" (best paint), "Tastiest Guts" (best interior), and the crowning glory, the "At Least It's Better than Voting for Obama (best in show, gotta love those Texans!)"

We lined all the cars up in the gravel lot of the Rainbow Courts and the judging began. Fortunately, Amanda and Wyatt had brought out more ice cold kegs of their various beers to sample while we made our decisions. An hour or so into the car show and judging, the unthinkable happened. The bottom fell out of the sky and we had a Texas size thunderstorm.

Vance and I fled to the converted schoolhouse we were staying in and did what any two self respecting southern boys, forced indoors on a Saturday

afternoon would do. We drank beer and watched SEC football. After an hour or so, a knock came at our door. So many things ran through my mind that Vance could have done to bring trouble to our doorstep. In spite of this, we opened the door to find our master of ceremonies, Sherman Watters.

"We need you boys at the awards ceremony."

To the ceremony we went, under the cover of Sherman's umbrella. After a couple of burgers, the awards part got underway. I'll spare you the suspense and let you know that Pavel and his partner won the rally. As a matter of fact, they knocked it out of the park! They arrived back at the starting point within seconds of each other. I thought that Vance and I did well arriving within minutes of Nathan, but seconds?! This was not ours to win. The car show was a different story. We won. All of it. Best paint, best interior and best of show. I felt guilty about it, having just picked this car up and having done nothing to it other than driving the hell out of it and stopping at TexFest, but I certainly wasn't turning down the grand prize, a grill, made out of a wheel. As some readers may know, I'm kind of a wheel guy. I can't think of a better trophy. After the awards ceremony closed, the skies gave us some relief and quit raining all over our beautiful Bimmers. We were free to walk around the parking lot again, cold beers in hand and once again admire what everyone had brought to the party. After a bit more celebration, we retired back to the schoolhouse and slept the sleep of the righteous, or maybe the sleep of the slightly impaired, probably a bit of both.

The next morning, the guys and gals of the TexFest contingent were once again headed out on the road for a spirited drive, however, having quite a bit of ground to cover to get Vance back to his fiancée, (about 600 miles), we passed on that spirited drive and started our own. As the first 1100 miles had

passed, so passed the next 600. Without any hint of a mechanical hiccup. The only issue we had on the final leg of our journey was Vance's inattention to the odometer. We missed the rollover to 100000 miles. I figure if that's the worst that happened, we did pretty well. Heck, we didn't even get stopped by the police except for the brief interlude with the US Border Patrol, but we can't really count that since they were stopping everyone.

Late on Sunday October 14th, we made it safely back to Memphis. I dropped Vance off at his car, which was still parked at the Memphis Airport and I headed home. This is not my first experience buying a BMW sight unseen hundreds (in this case thousands) of miles away, or my second, or my third...I digress. This was however the best. I am very thankful that the car was exactly as Chris described it, with no surprises at all, even 6 weeks later, as I write this. I am also fortunate to have made the acquaintance of so many good people at TexFest. I'm still absolutely blown away by the hospitality, camaraderie, and the awesome reception we received at the show. It was such a great experience to see old friends like Sherman and Jackie, and meet so many new ones. Pavel, Wyatt and Amanda (yes, I am planning on bringing the E34 next year, I promise), Clinton (this guy showed up with a real M535i!), Nathan (sorry about the rally man, next time, no sack of shit for Vance, I promise!), Layne (showed up with an E34 540i/6 Touring, a true legend and an inspiration to E34T guys everywhere), James, Memo, LJ and the Nebraska crew, Michael, (your M20 turbo is faster than my M30 turbo...for now), Jim (yes, Vance still has the hots for your ///M5), and everyone else that I have forgotten to mention because I am old and can't remember everything from 6 weeks ago. Big thanks as well to Johnny Guest. Had I never met this guy, I still might not know what a 745i was or how badly I needed one!



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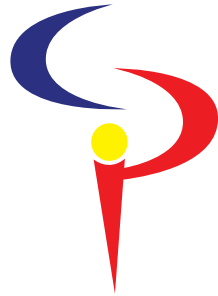
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TECH TIP Jeff Otten



E34 Door Panel Repair

Here is fix I have done to the rear doors on both sides of my 1995 525i. The rear doors are covered with vinyl and leather. With age the vinyl starts to separate from the door cards. The vinyl is form fitted when the panels are made and glued to the door cards. With Texas heat and age the glue separates in the high highest stress areas and also tries to shrink back to a flat state, no longer following the contour of the door card. For my E34 the center leather piece then separates and flops around. So here is how to remove the panel, modify the vinyl to prevent the separation, and have the panel back in near new appearance. Here is my panel with the leather insert loose and the vinyl pulling away (shrinking) from the contour.



To remove any door panel you need to identify where the fasteners are. Here is a picture of the back of the E34 right rear door.

Sources for the fastener locations are the Bentley Manuals, internet forums, and there are some videos on YouTube. Bavarian Soundwerks also has a number of door panel removal procedures on their web site and on Youtube.

To remove the door panel, first remove the covers for the screws, then the screws. Be prepared with Torx and Phillips head screw drivers. Use a small screw driver very carefully to pop the plugs out. Try to avoid denting the surrounding plastic. Sometimes a small piece of masking tape on a flat blade screwdriver where you are prying helps. Remove all screws before prying on the plastic clips. Also remove the lock stem which threads off. Cars with a flush lock button can be left on. Also remove the window switch. On the E34 there are two metal clips at each end of the switch.



Use a plastic trim tool to pop the clips. The one shown is from Harbor Freight and generally works well and the set is inexpensive. Use the flat side to slide in near the clips then pry up.

Move the trim tool sideways until you can feel the clip then pry. Start on one side and work your way to the bottom and around the panel.



You want all the clips popped loose, but the door panel is still attached by the top clip and the center clip. The panel clips are PN 51-41-1-973-500, I suggest you have a half dozen or so spare.

On the E34 panels there is an aluminum trim along the top at the window seal.



Do not try to remove this without removing the



door panel first. Use your trim tool and pry the door panel down and loose from the aluminum trim. You want to remove the panel without disturbing the aluminum trim as the clips are very robust that hold it down.

Once you get the top and all clips loose, the only thing holding the door panel will be the center clip and the cable for the door handle.

Here is what the centerclip looks like:



The plastic piece will be retained to the door, so the panel must be lifted upwards for it to slide off the metal bracket. Once you get the panel free, unhook the door handle cable. The grommet for the door handle cable may be disintegrated. You can only get a new one by buying a new handle. I have used a small piece of vinyl tubing (Home Depot or other) to replace them and it has worked fine.

Use water pump pliers to squeeze both sides of the center clip and remove the plastic piece from the door. It will be installed on the door panel for reinstallation.

Below is the panel with the insert and door handle removed. In order to re-glue the delaminated portion I cut a slit (utility knife) in the center and holes at each end to reduce the stress. This slit will be used to apply glue between the vinyl and the door card.

The glue I use is either Permatex Headliner Adhesive or 3M weatherstrip glue. Both are readily available at Autozone or other auto parts. Glue all the loose edges around the exterior and the door handle. Spray glue in the slit. Let the glue set, then press together. Only pull up the vinyl where it is already loose.



center clip. Then start at the top and snap in the panel clips. If the clips are not aligned, use the trim tool to shift them slightly, then pop in. On the completed panel, the contour is now clearly visible again.

Good for another several years. The same technique should work for other models.

More pictures from TEX Fest IV

The vinyl probably won't stick down due to the contour, so next put pop rivets in the corners to reduce the stress on the glue and to form the contour in the vinyl. Push the vinyl down at the corner and drill a 1/8" hole about 1/2" from the corner. Use 1/8" aluminum rivets with an aluminum washer on both sides. On the vinyl side, put the rounded edge of the washer against the vinyl. The rivets should be 1/4" long. Squeeze the pop rivets gently to set them without damaging the vinyl. The pop rivets will provide a strong point, and reduce the stress on the glue. Notice that I am working on an old blanket to prevent damage to the panel.



Now re-glue the center leather trim. Below is the back.



Note the rivets and the center plastic clip is re-installed. Also check the plastic supports for the panel clips are still glued to the panel. If any are loose, I put JB Weld Quick on them to hold them down. Sometimes you will find they are completely gone or broken. If one is gone, you can bend a piece of flat aluminum stock drill a hole in it and glue in place. I find the door panels only stay tight if all the clips are in place.

Remember to reconnect the door handle wire and feed the window switch through, then you are ready to snap the panel back on. Fit the upper edge under the trim and then snap the



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Metropolitan Collision Open House

Jim Robinson

Several Houston Chapter members visited Metropolitan Collision & Service on Saturday December 1st. We were given a tour of the facility and met with Owner/Operator Andy Holder and other staff members.

Metropolitan Collision & Service has grown



Andy Holder - Owner/Operator

from a small family owned blacksmith shop in Waco, Texas in 1917 to one of Houston's most respected collision repair services.

Andy told us that his company is founded on hard work, sound business principles, exceptional customer service and impeccable craftsmanship.

Andy Holder has built his company on assuring quality workmanship. He has put together a team of professionals with many years experience. Advanced on-going training and keeping up with industry trends has been an essential component of their success. Metropolitan Collision Service provides complete collision repair service on all makes and models, foreign and domestic. BMW comprises about 45% of their work along with other makers such as Audi, Mercedes Benz, Lamborghini and Porsche.

The average tenure of technicians at Metropolitan is over ten years. They receive both manufacturer and on the job training. They also install custom exhaust systems and other specialized parts and body modifications.

Quality work takes time and attention to detail. Each step of the collision repair process gets the attention it deserves to bring your car back to pristine condition and road worthiness.

The technicians at Metropolitan take collision repair to the level of an art form. From what we saw of the work being done this is the place to go if the unfortunate happens to your prized BMW.



The Body Shop



The Paint Booth



Painted Parts

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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ANNUAL BANQUET

Our Annual Banquet is approaching and volunteers are needed to assist with the details and coordination. We have more attendees at this one event than any other throughout the year. Getting all the pieces to come together in a smooth and orderly fashion is crucial. Your participation to help make this another success will be greatly appreciated. Please send your name and contact info to Kathy Lee at socialevents@houston-bmwcca.com



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Editor's Corner



Two years happens pretty fast. It's been two years now that I have had the honor of putting together the Houston BMW CCA Newsletter. It's been one heck of a lot of fun and I am sad to say that my time is up. Career and life in general prevent me from continuing but I am sure whoever takes the reigns will continue to keep things going.

If I had one piece of advice to give to anyone who bothers to read this column it would simply be this - GET INVOLVED. You will be richly rewarded with wonderful people and wonderful events. The Houston chapter is some 1200 members strong - one of the larger in the country - what a great pool of BMW enthusiasm to pull from!

Keep your eyes peeled in the future as our Chapter will work with other Texas Chapters in renting the Circuit of the Americas F-1 track. What a great way to meet other BMW enthusiasts and be able to test your ride on one of the world's premier tracks!

One thing that I have learned by joining the Houston Chapter is that there is a fervent love for BMW's no matter what vintage you are interested in. So many wonderful drives and wonderful people await you.

I owe a great big THANK YOU to the many people that have helped by submitting articles and pictures for the Chapter Newsletter. As I have said before this is not a job that can be performed in a vacuum.

Make sure you vote for your favorite board member and plan on attending the annual banquet. Other than it being a nice night away for you and your significant other, its a great way to meet the board members, learn about our Chapter and enjoy some great food.

Don't forget to check the Chapter forum for upcoming events - and if you are of the strong and hearty join us in the annual 'Hair of the Dog' drive on Jan 1. It's a great way to shake off the previous nights decadence.

The board wishes everyone a happy and prosperous New Year and we hope to see you at future events!

Until then, keep two hands on the wheel and all four on the ground.

- James



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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Member: Jim Iden

Nominated by: David Dalton

To keep a dynamic chapter viable it requires member support, and a lot of it. The Committee Chairs that ask for volunteer support from time to time know just how frustrating and disappointing it can be to get little response for something that is meant to benefit the membership as a whole. As an example what first comes to mind is the needed help for our newsletter in obtaining sponsorship, and social events to assist in the planning, organizing and presentation of our Annual Banquet, the Annual Fredericksburg Weekend, and events such as drives and dinners put together throughout the year. The more volunteers that step up for chapter gatherings then of course the better they will be. Should you ever feel a function could have been better, or there should be more of a particular type of event, ask yourself what you can do to help your chapter make it happen.

Then there are the special activities our chapter conducts throughout the year such as Street Survival and the Adult Driving School. Where our chapter members give back to the community by teaching safety and car control techniques in a "hands-on" real-world situation on a closed track with trained in-car instructors. And this is where Jim Iden steps up to offer his proficiency in canvassing, petitioning, and organizing volunteers essentially needed to effectively support these

well-regarded courses.

As a past board member Jim has chosen to continue his support in this role by helping these chapter functions run as smooth as possible. Furthermore he volunteers on the Nomination Committee soliciting volunteers for chapter elected officers and appointed committee chairs. Not only is he actively involved behind the scene in this way, he has elected to do so year after year.

Without the committed support Jim gives back to the chapter... well I won't go there. So the next time you see Jim thank him for a job very well done, much needed and very much appreciated.

In his other life Jim is a Certified Personnel Consultant and CEO of Wayne Russell Search Consultants.

Street Survival contact Jim Iden at jiden@sbcglobal.net,

Torque of the Town contact James Saynay, newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com,

Social Committee contact Kathy Kehoe-Lee at socialevents@houston-bmwcca.com

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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

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