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WINTER 2014

The Voice of the Houston Chapter BMW Car Club of America



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### Houston Chapter

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**David R. Dalton**  
President - Houston Chapter

Did you miss the opportunity to attend the Trifecta event at the Circuit of The Americas last June? As it turned out we had more participants than O'fest, and those that attended had an experience they will not soon forget. An opportunity to drive on what is being called the world's best F1 track is exhilarating. And we are now in the planning stages for the Texas Trifecta II. Not a lot to report at this early date, except proposing a date in late March this go around. As more information becomes available it will be posted on our website and in the monthly eBlast. As last year we expect this event to fill very quickly, so watch for updates. Mark your calendar, our Annual Dinner & Banquet is scheduled for January 18th, to be held at the Houston Racquet Club. Join us for an evening of good food, socializing and a chance to win some really nice prizes. If you are a new member or just don't get the chance to attend many events throughout the year, this is the one you do not want to miss.

Enough for now, more details will be available on the website and in the upcoming eBlasts. It's that time of year to gather the names of those interested in running for a 2014 board position. If you have leadership skills and ideas on how the chapter can improve, or simply love what the chapter is and want to get involved, now is the time to step up. A sound core of members to help with operations is essential for a chapter of our size. If you would like to give back by serving on the board please let a member of the Nomination Committee know the position you are interested in:

- Jim Iden at [jim@waynerussellsearch.com](mailto:jim@waynerussellsearch.com)**
- Lori Van Rooyen at [downsouth-dutch@yahoo.com](mailto:downsouth-dutch@yahoo.com)**

For your review each position description is available on our website in the Chapter Ops Manual under the about us tab. Check our website regularly to stay informed as events are scheduled and information becomes available. Also, if you are not receiving

our monthly eBlast for some reason you may signup directly from the website at [www.houston-bmwcca.com](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com).

**See ya on the back roads.**

<b>2 Year Elected Positions</b>
President
Vice-President
<b>1 Year Appointed Positions</b>
Webmaster
Autocross Chair
Newsletter Editor
Membership Chair
Social Events Chair
Driving Events Coordinator
<b>1 Year Appointed Liaison Positions</b>
Social Media Chair (fb)
Technical Advisor



**Stay Informed!! - eBlast Signup**

Once a month the Chapter emails an eBlast to all members who have indicated that they want to be kept informed about 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](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com). The eBlast request is located at the lower left on the front page.

# Board Member Elections

## Houston Chapter – BMW CCA 2014 Executive Committee Ballot

Please note there are 3 ways you may cast your ballot for the 2014 Chapter Elections:

1. Bring your ballot to the Annual Banquet
2. Or mail your ballot to:

Houston Chapter  
BMW Car Club of America  
Post Office Box 56763  
Houston, Texas 77256-6763

3. Or email your ballot to: Jim Iden  
[jim@waynerussellsearch.com](mailto:jim@waynerussellsearch.com) or Lori Van Rooyen  
[downsouthdutch@yahoo.com](mailto:downsouthdutch@yahoo.com)

---

BMW CCA Membership Number

### Chapter President:

Dennis Nowak

### Chapter Vice-President:

Blake LaGrone

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

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN JANUARY 14, 2014 TO BE CONSIDERED.

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3. Or email your ballot to: Jim Iden  
[jim@waynerussellsearch.com](mailto:jim@waynerussellsearch.com) or Lori Van Rooyen  
[downsouthdutch@yahoo.com](mailto:downsouthdutch@yahoo.com)

---

BMW CCA Membership Number

### President:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Name (PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Signature and Membership No.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Nominated By/Membership No.

### Vice President:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Name (PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Signature and Membership No.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Nominated By/Membership No.

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN JANUARY 14, 2014 TO BE CONSIDERED.

# Why You Should Try Autocross

by Jeff Otten

If you never tried an autocross event, trust me, you don't realize the bargain opportunity it is. The Houston Chapter runs an excellent program, ideal for the newcomer.



Autocross is a motorsport where truly a “run what ya brung” effort can be successful. Consider it the lowest form of four wheeled motorsport. What is most appealing is that a street car and even a daily driver can be both fun and competitive. It is not necessary to own a dedicated track car. On top of that, and most importantly, it gives you an opportunity and safe environment to improve your driving.

So what is Autocross? Essentially a circuit is defined by polyurethane cones. Electronic timing is used at the start and the finish. Times are recorded on a PC to a thousandth of a second. Knock over a cone and a 2 second penalty is added to your time. Each driver has the course to himself, a starter to tell you when to start, corner workers (usually at four (4) stations) watch your run and if you hit a cone they call in the penalty to the timekeeper on a two-way radio. The corner captain handles the radio and also a red flag to flag a driver to a stop in the event there is a possibility of contact with another car. Each driver usually gets six (6) “runs” and drives in a “run group” of about thirty (30) cars. All runs are recorded but only the fastest run counts for determining class position.

Usually the events have two (2) or three (3) run groups. Each driver will “work” in one group and drive in another. Autocross courses are intended to be limited to street legal speeds of about 65mph tops for the faster cars. This means for most BMW's you can drive the entire course in second gear. Runs will be about 40 to 60 seconds depending on the course length and speed potential of the cars. Driven well, a run can be quite an adrenaline rush.

Helmets are required to be worn and closed toe shoes. The chapter owns several loaner helmets for newcomers. Drivers must have a

valid driver's license and BMWCCA membership.

The Houston Chapter events are run at the Houston Police Academy (HPA) facility.

The course is set up on the HPA track and sometimes will also use part of one of the parking lots. Each event has a different course set up. So the course will always be different at the next event. Some elements may be similar, but each course will have a different feel.

The most common work assignment is resetting cones, but there are plenty of other jobs if you're not able for that one, such as working timing, working grid, handing out time slips, tech inspection and announcing.

The event is put on by a club committee of volunteers.

They put in a significant effort to make sure that our events are insured by BMWCCA, our dates, are secured with HPA, a new course is designed for each event, and each event runs smoothly.

At the end of our events the webmaster will post the results on the chapter website under the autocross tab. The results for each class are tracked for the year, and normally the best six (6) results are tallied to determine the annual class positions.

The calendar for next year (2014) has the typical ten (10) events that has been the standard for the Houston Chapter for a long time.

The Houston Chapter will conclude the 2013 calendar with the December event, but the season really concludes at the Annual Dinner in January, where our class winners and 2nd and 3rd places will be recognized and awarded trophies.





The most well known Autocross program in the country is run by the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA). Many of our club members also compete regularly in SCCA events. They have a somewhat complex rule book with many classes and quite frankly, many BMW's are not classed very well to be competitive. BMW's can be competitive in some of the more modified classes. The Houston Chapter rule book is much simpler and ranks BMW's by performance potential. Modification points allow most cars

Need help classifying your car or more information? There is a lot of good information on the club website. Picture and video links can be found in the Autocross section of the club forum. Contact the autocross committee at: [autocross-coordinators@houston-bmw-cca.com](mailto:autocross-coordinators@houston-bmw-cca.com) or [techadvisor@houston-bmwcca.com](mailto:techadvisor@houston-bmwcca.com) we're there to help.

Autocross really rewards driver skill. Courses are tight to keep the speed down and obstacles will come up more rapidly to the driver than on a race track. Good course designs will reward both good handling and high acceleration performance by having a mix of features that balance the course. It is often said "a good driver in a slow car will beat a slow driver in a fast car" and "there is more to be gained by improving driving, than by modifying the car."

The Houston Chapter events typically have a mix of about 30 to 35 BMW's and about 30 to 35 other cars. No, you do not have to run a BMW or Mini. Generally any BMW can be run, and most other cars can run except for high center of gravity vehicles like a Suburban or truck. Two (2) drivers can share one car, or one can single drive a car. The start of each event includes registration, tech inspection of your car, walking the course and a mandatory driver's meeting. The driver's meeting is required for relaying any unusual safety considerations to be considered for the course. Drivers should enter and pay online and the cost is reasonable. Spectators can attend (free) and ride with an instructor. It used to be any driver could take passengers, but insurance rules force limiting riders to instructors either riding or driving. There are always plenty of qualified people at our events so finding a ride is not a problem. If you're experienced and ready to instruct, contact the autocross committee and get on the list.

some level of tuning with typical street legal performance modifications. BMW's are ranked A through G and all other cars are ranked X1 through X4. The Houston Chapter events are true club events for fun. So no formal car audits or protests are done.



### So why compete?

**Practice and test your driving skill**

**Compare your times with similar and other cars**

**Test your car to determine where deficiencies or improvements are**

**To learn new driving skills**

**To drive at or near the limit to improve car control skill and overall driving skill**

**To develop into a safer driver on the road by improving car control skill and awareness**

**To socialize with other car enthusiasts and have fun**



See you at the next event!

Jeff Otten

**2013 Houston Chapter BMW CCA Annual Dinner  
Saturday January 18, 2014  
6:00pm-10:00pm**

**Houston Racquet Club  
10709 Memorial Drive  
Houston, Texas 77024  
713-464-4811**

**For Details and Registration Go To: [www.houston-bmwcca.com](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com)**



## Volunteering for the Grand Prix of Houston

by David Leung

IndyCar Grand Prix of Houston returned in 2013 for the first time since 2007 to Reliant Park. With major sponsors, Shell, Pennzoil, and Honda, the event turned out to be the premier auto racing event that will continue for the next four years here in Houston. Since retiring from NASA in January, 2011 and having a passion for volunteering for the big yearly events, particularly, the Circuit of the America Formula One race in Austin and Shell Houston Open, so the decision to volunteer for the 2013 Grand Prix of Houston was not difficult to make as I was one of the first ones to register to volunteer in late July. If you have the time and the right attitude, volunteering for these events is very rewarding; you meet many interesting people from many different backgrounds, and finally, there are perks that are not available to the paying spectators. The benefits reminded me of the tagline: There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's MasterCard. The reward for volunteering is priceless.

Here is what the volunteers received in content. I can assure you there were other unwritten benefits.

- **Official Grand Prix of Houston Volunteer Credential, providing gate admission, Paddock Access**
- **Uniform shirts**
- **One daily meal during their shift, along with beverages and take-away snacks available throughout the day**
- **Collectible Grand Prix of Houston lapel pin**
- **Two (2) complimentary admission grounds Grand Prix tickets for Friday**
- **A discount on reserved grandstand tickets to be extended to family and friends**
- **A certificate of appreciation,**
- **Two tickets to the Volunteer Appreciation Party, Sun, Oct 13, 3-5 pm Dave & Buster's 6010 Richmond Ave. Houston, Texas**
- **Parking on days you are volunteering**



Between August and October, weekly "5 pm pit parties" were held around Houston to promote volunteering for the event. I was unable to attend any of them because of my personal obligation as the sports photographer for the local high school near my home. I have an attachment to that high school because several of my 18 high school exchange students attended that school when they were here in the USA. Nevertheless, I kept in touch with the volunteer coordinator and the volunteer recruiting manager by emails, showing my continued interest in the event. Early in the recruitment, when the request went out for "captains" for Transportation, I raised my hand, knowing that I would be stuck with working long hours to fill in for volunteers who did not show up for their work shifts.

Over 525 people signed up, mostly online, for the 10 volunteer committees: Ceremonies, Credentials, Hospitality, Information, Media, Track Services, Transportation, Volunteer services, Pit Lane Access & Security, and Ushers. In the end, approximately 350 people were assigned committees. The managers of the committees held weekly meetings with the coordinator and the recruiting manager to work out the details of their responsibilities and coordination. Not having participated in any of the pit parties and never having met the recruiting manager or the coordinator, five days before the start of event I received a call from the recruiting manager asking if I would be the manager for Transportation, OMG. The recruiter explained to me that the Transportation manager never attended any of the weekly manager meetings, refused to resign, so she fired him.







Wow, I had to figure out what is expected of me in just a few days. With the race to start in less than one week, I was given a volunteer list of 25 people, including myself as the manager, one assistant manager, and 3 captains. It was all on the job training for me. I would try to accommodate all transportation requests. No, was the not the answer. My team was determined to figure out how to accomplish sometimes lack of enough golf carts to move people and properties around the track. We worked through the kinks of coordinating food deliveries from outside to the inside of the track where everyone and everything was stationed including the race car paddocks. Timing was an issue because the practice and race schedules continue to change due to rain and unplanned track repairs. Prior to the race weekend, Transportation delivered five Honda Ridgelines from the dealers to Reliant Park. These vehicles supported transportation needs from off site to the track. The team supported everyone who needed inside and outside track transportation, including the 10 bands who brought their sound equipment from the parking lot into the stages, and the transporting the contestants for Miss Grand Prix, 2013 around the venue. Maybe the highlight was one volunteer golf cart driver transported 3 injured spectators to the medic when at the end of the Sunday's IndyCar race after Dario Franchitti's car launched over Takuma Sato's and sailed into the fence on the final lap showering debris

into the grandstand from both the cars colliding and sent flying into the fence. Daro's badly-damaged car bounced back onto the track. E.J. Viso then hit Sato's car. "The car hit the fence like I've never seen before in my life," a spectator said. "It was insane. Absolutely crazy." Finally, my Transportation team was recognized by the volunteer recruiter. We received compliments for doing an outstanding job, and for that recognition, I would be one of several VIPs to participate in the "Event Car Rides" at the end of the event. Without the support and the dedication of all the Transportation volunteers, the team I would not have been recognized for that honor. But, in the end as the result of the accident, the last two races were canceled, including the scheduled "Event Car Rides". For now, the ride around the 1.7 mile course is only a dream. However, I did drive around the track before it was completed, but not at speed. To all who have read this brief article, volunteers do work and put in many hours, but the reward is far greater than the salary one would have gotten for his time.

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**David Leung**



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Rebates Up to \$1,500 BMW CCA members in good standing may be eligible for substantial rebates on the purchase or lease of a new or Certified Pre-Owned BMW from any authorized U.S. BMW Center. Rebates currently range from \$250 to \$1,500 depending on the model.

### Roundel Magazine

Declared one of the finest car club magazines in the world by Car and Driver, each monthly issue has 140+ pages of articles, reviews, photography, and classifieds dedicated to all things BMW.



### 67 Local Chapters

BMW CCA's local chapters provide a range of social, technical, and driving events. They're your gateway to many of the club's driving schools, rallies, and autocrosses. Many events are geared toward the novice mechanic or driving event participant.

**BMW Car Club of America Houston Chapter**



### MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Members receive special discounts on a wide variety of goods and services, ranging from car care to travel and more!



The Houston Chapter, is more than just a club for BMW enthusiasts. We have a diversified group of over 1,200 members participating in a wide variety of social activities. These events include:

- Dinners
- Driving Events Monthly Coffee
- Meetings
- Annual weekend getaway in Fredricksburg
- Events at the Circuit of the Americas F1 track in Austin
- Monthly Autocross at the Houston Police Academy

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**website**  
[www.bmwwest.com](http://www.bmwwest.com)



# A Passion for BMW's

By Jim Robinson



This is a success story in which all the right attitudes and faith culminate in achieving a huge goal.



As a tenth grader Edgar Tello wanted to become a doctor. He thought about going to medical school but he also had a passion for cars, at the time his interest was in

Mercedes.

His high school auto shop instructor, Mr. Nolan, saw that he had an aptitude and passion for working on cars. He soon realized that diagnosing problems with cars was similar to what doctors do. Automotive shop became for him a sort of Automotive Medical School. Edgar entered a competition and placed 5th out of three hundred. This earned him, in his senior year, the position of Automotive Class President. While in high school he discovered BMW's Z3 roadster having seen the one used



in the James Bond film.

Following his high school years Edgar attended Wyoming Technical Institute which garnered him a job offer from Mercedes. While still at school he met a BMW Recruiter. Mr. Nelson was so impressed with Edgar that he offered to place him in BMW's Step program; a selection in which only fifteen were chosen from the entire country. As one of those fifteen students Edgar went to Orlando Florida for the class. From there Edgar was offered a job at BMW of North Houston which was then called Intercontinental BMW. They were so impress with his drive and determination they put him on the "Fast Track" after two months and within two years Edgar became a Master Technician and team leader and began instructing others on the job. By

that time Edgar got married and started a family. Soon after Edgar's second child was born he was offered a position of Shop Foreman but that entailed a sizable pay cut. He considered the offer but couldn't accept those terms with his family responsibilities. He began thinking about opening his own automotive business.

In order to pursue that goal he decided to leave BMW of Houston North and went to work for a small independent shop to learn the business. Again,

his drive, determination and whole lot of faith led him to seek a small business loan. The loan officer was so impressed with Edgar's attitude and his detailed business plan developed from all his automotive activities since high school that, even in the tight economic climate, his loan was approved and he began to put together a team of technicians which became North Houston Beemer.

Edgar enlisted his long-time friend and ex-coworker Alex Torres to join him in this effort. Alex had a similar career path –

A passion for BMW's, excelling in his work at Intercontinental BMW, where he quickly rose from parts advisor to service advisor and then parts manager for BMW of Houston North of the Woodlands.

As part of Alex's training he was offered access to all the newest

cars in BMW's product line. Alex brought his previous work experience to become Operations Manager, in harmony with Edgar's organizational skills and sense of honesty, character, and integrity North Houston Beemer has become one of the leading independent BMW shops in the Houston area.

**With these skills sets, work ethics and the desire to develop relationships and humbly serve their customers they are able to offer a wide range of options for their customers.**



**While Edgar has no Ph. D. the medical profession's loss is a huge gain for BMW owners whether they own new or classic BMW's.**





## Oil Filter Housing Leak Repairs

X5 M54 6-cylinder engine

Most of the BMW's in our household have high mileage. With age and temperature the rubber parts begin to degrade, and oil leaks may begin to develop. Our X5 was purchased used as a third owner vehicle and began to develop leaks to the driveway. At about 85,000 miles and a 2005 year model, it was likely the valve cover gasket was no longer sealing.

However after to doing some inspections (remove the plastic front pan and the engine structural aluminum plate), I was surprised to find significant leaks on the driver side of the block. Since the BMW sixes are slant sixes with the engine tilted to the passenger side (left), normally valve cover leaks are found on the passenger side of the car. On closer inspection there were significant puddles of oil in the block cavities around the oil filter housing. This is a rare leak, however we did find this problem on my son's 92 325i, however at a much greater mileage and age.

Whenever I work on BMW engines, I reach for the appropriate Bentley Manual. Typically the manual will have a brief description of the process and a few photos of critical steps. Much to my surprise, in the X5 manual, there was no guidance to be found. I also checked a couple other Bentley books (E34 and E36) and also nothing. Since I had previously done this on an M50 engine, I wasn't deterred.

The oil filter housing is bolts to the left side of the engine with four (4) bolts. The housing has electrical connections for pressure and temperature and an oil line to the Vanos solenoid. The housing bolts directly to the bolt and seals with a special gasket that fits in groove in the housing. Over time the elastomer loses resiliency and will eventually get brittle.

Here is the replacement gasket:



This one is from [www.autohausaz.com](http://www.autohausaz.com). Genuine parts are good too, but I was already ordering enough other parts to get free shipping and didn't to make a special trip to the dealer. I wasn't too bothered to use a genuine part since the original had failed earlier than expected. Sometimes aftermarket gaskets get developed after problems are known so in some cases may be better. Realoem says the part is only \$6.08 each Autohaus has a Victor Reinz part for \$3.78, so not much savings. For those who want to keep their cars completely genuine, keep in mind that BMW buys parts like this from subcontractors (possibly Victor Reinz), so if you buy a part like this through BMW you are paying for the part, BMW costs (procurement, quality control, shipping and warehousing), and BMW profit.

To remove the filter housing, it is not necessary to drain the engine oil because the housing is above pan. The next step is to clear the accessories from the engine.

### Plan to remove:

- Air intake duct
- Air box
- Fan belt
- Injector cover
- Alternator
- Power steering reservoir and pump moved out of the way
- Oil filter
- Breather line

The air duct removes by pulling the pins on the four (4) fasteners. Here is the X5 engine with the air duct removed.



The Bentley manual does have directions for the alternator removal, so they may be of assistance.

The engine with the air box, MAF and air intake removed.



I like the mechanical fan out of the way for more room, here are the tools used to remove the fan. The wrench is a standard Craftsman 32mm combination wrench, the special thin wrenches aren't really necessary to remove the fan clutch. Remember the fan clutch is left hand thread.



Remove the cap from the oil filter canister and remove the oil filter. This will allow the oil to run back to the pan and reduce the mess when pulling the housing.



Use a rag to prevent knocking any grit in the housing. Remove the zip tie holding the cable to the water hose.

Note the position of the Vano oil line.

This will have to be removed to remove the housing. I recommend replacing the aluminum crush washers. The PN is 32411093596 there are four (4) total, two at each end of the line. I removed the front end of the line first, thinking the housing end could be left in place. I forgot to order these, but I had four (4) left in the kit below.



This kit has come in handy, plus keeps the parts nicely organized. BMW uses the DIN standard washers so they are an exact replacement. Available from [www.jcwhitney.com](http://www.jcwhitney.com) (SKU #: JCW-075894). The battery should be disconnected before removing the alternator, disconnect the negative cable. Remove the alternator bolts first and then then disconnect the wires. Reference Section 121-12 of the Bentley X5 book.

The alternator is removed here and the power steering reservoir moved over. Note that the PS pulley is still installed; it should be loosened to allow access to the pump bolts. The PS lines can be left connected.



Disconnect the two sensor wires; they have typical push in clips. Note the location for reassembly. There are three different length bolts holding the filter housing to the block so take note as they are removed. It often saves time at reassembly to number them as they are taken out. Once the bolts are out, wiggle the housing to loosen from the block. Note the locating dowel at the upper left in the

picture below. Do not use a screwdriver to pry between the faces as the sealing surfaces may be damaged. If you must use a pry tool, try a plastic trim tool.



Note the amount of oil that is on the block from my engine.



The gasket that came out, cracked and fairly brittle:



Clean the block and the groove on the housing and install the new gasket. A thin coating of oil on the gasket helps it slide as the bolts are made up. Apply never seize on the bolt threads (especially important for an aluminum block engine).

The housing was difficult to reinstall due to the Vanos line interfering and the angle of the block. Removing the line from the housing end eases the installation. There is sufficient room to reinstall it later.

Once the housing is positioned on the dowel, start the bolts and tighten evenly in a cross pattern. I didn't think a torque wrench was necessary, but the correct

torque for the M8 bolts is 22 Nm (16.2 ft-lbs).

Reinstall the Vanos line, the sensor wires, and the breather line. Reinstall the PS pump, alternator, belt, fan and air box. A new filter (Mann) was used and the oil was topped up. Torque for the filter cap is 25 Nm (18 ft-lbs), since it is plastic a torque wrench is recommended.

On the X5, the air box is not rigid enough on my car and the clamp to the MAF has come loose in the past. Placing a zip tie at the back mount through the fender mount to hold the box more firmly as shown in the picture below seems to help.



Changing the oil filter housing gasket made a big reduction in the oil leaks on my engine. However I still needed to replace the valve cover gasket. Due to time constraints I decided to drive for a week or so and then replace the valve cover gaskets.

This is a very reasonable DIY job. The oil filter housing gasket is essentially the same on the M50, M50tu, M52, M52tu, S50, S52, S54, and M54 engines.

**Jeff Otten**



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### A very much needed THANK YOU!

I have said it many times before “this club is your club, it IS what you make it.” Those of us involved in making the Teen Street Survival course happen truly know the benefits of the program. To give young, novice drivers additional skills is a definite advantage to making them safer drivers. On October 19th, 2013, the Houston Chapter again hosted a TSS course to many young drivers. Some of which were the children of BMWCCA members who have seen first hand the benefits of the program. These courses are worth every minute of time the instructors and volunteers donate to making these kids safer drivers. I say donate, because everyone who is involved, from the planning and implementing of this course, donates his/her time out of their busy schedules to make it happen. No one gets paid to be there. And it takes about 50 people to help out and support the 30 students. To all the instructors and volunteers who help out with the TSS program, the Chapter Board expresses a sincere THANK YOU! All of you are truly making this club what it is. You can take pride in making this club the best darn car club in the world!

**Dennis Nowak**  
Vice-President BMWCCA Houston Chapter

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



**Ken Finley**

Being active in the club you will see many people who have the same passion about the cars and more importantly about helping others while helping to make this club better. I feel appreciative of those folks whom you can count on to get the job done when something needs to happen. Back in August, when the then Coordinator for the Teen Street Survival event felt they could no longer fulfill their duties, I called on Ken Finley to step in to take over. Without much hesitation, Ken accepted the role and pulled the necessary folks together to make the event happen when it seemed it may be in jeopardy. I knew I could count on Ken when he told me he would do it. It’s that kind of dedication that stands out and it’s that kind of person that makes this club such a wonderful entity to be a part of. Not only did Ken step up to take on a challenge for a great event, he did so knowing he would be volunteering his time for the event on his birthday! Thank you Ken!

Have you noticed a member of the club going above and beyond just being a member? If so, you can nominate that person for honorable mention in Member Spotlight and let everyone know how great this clubs members are.  
Send your nomination to: [newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com](mailto:newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com).

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# Editor's Corner

Jim Robinson



## I don't know if you saw this from the website or elsewhere:

It's the "new" BMW Concept 9 Series GT. One more time BMW has a chance to do the right thing and build a real super car to rival the others. On the blog about this concept it speaks in much too much flowery verbiage that this concept begs to hold a V-12 engine. I remember a few years ago when the first pictures of the M1 Homage were shown we never imagined it would devolve into the i8. I think the majority of BMW enthusiasts wanted a McLaren - Mercedes F1 killer. This picture has some design cues of the SLR of that moment in time but I think we're getting to the point in automobile design where all the really good lines have been drawn and fabricated. I've often said that that's the reason music has devolved into noise is because all the really good licks have already been played. Evidence the "sampling" found in otherwise wasted efforts to offend the listener.

Okay, I'm not on the list for one of these 9 series concepts or the i8. Even if I were to win the lottery there are other cars to take up space in my garage. My dream car garage would include: Aston Martin, Ferrari, Bentley, Lamborghini and one of those honkin' V10 M5's just to name a few. My motto is: why dream when you can hallucinate.

Allow me to digress for a moment. When BMW bought Rolls Royce they promptly installed their V12. Now, I'm all for letting bygones be bygones. But, I seem to remember those Rolls Royce Merlin engines in the P-51 Mustangs wreaking havoc on the P-109's and Messerschmitts. Wasn't it a little out of character for the British to sell Rolls Royce to a German company? Remember what Ford did to Jaguar? And is there any hope for Tata Motors to do any better?

Don't get me wrong, BMW builds a fine V12. I'd like to see a 560i with 12 cylinders. Fat chance of that. So, the least they can do is to build something similar to the 9 series concept.



<http://www.bmwblog.com/2013/11/02/bmw-concept-9-series-gt/>



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