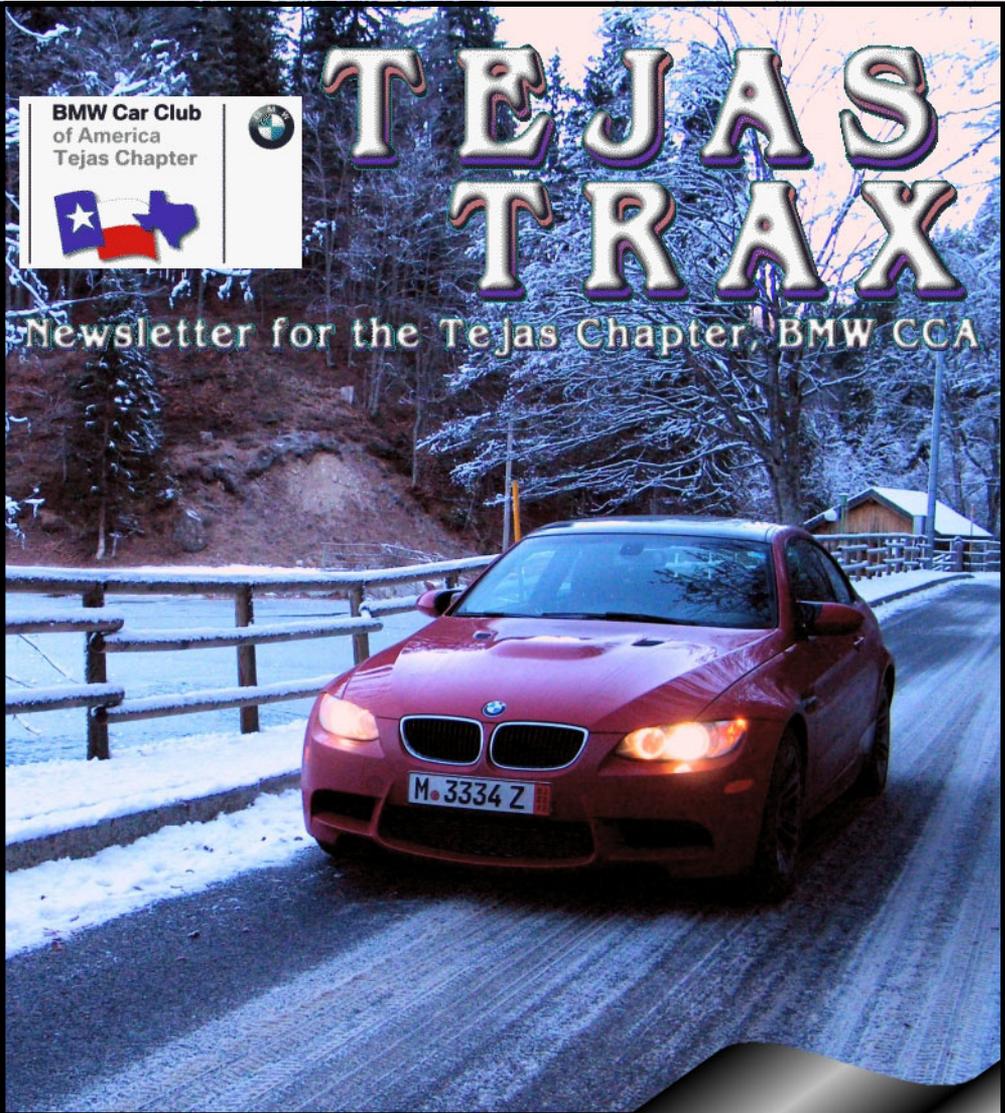


**BMW Car Club
of America
Tejas Chapter**



TEJAS TRAX

Newsletter for the Tejas Chapter, BMW CCA



M3 Winter European Delivery
Photo by Sridhar Kamma

February 2012

**BMW Car Club
of America**



**Inside
This Issue**

- Diversity vs. Focus
- Are You Ready to Re-Tire?
- Post-Holiday Party Review
- M3 Winter European Delivery

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Visit the Tejas Chapter Web Site at <http://www.tejaschapter.org/tejas.html>

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From The President

On New and Old

The Post-Holiday Party initiated the theme of old and new this month with the election of Tejas Chapter officers for the 2012-2013 biennium. Some of the faces stayed the same, but we have some new members of the board and we are looking forward to great things from them. Josh Butts has taken over the Driving Events Coordinator role from Linda Cavazos who is our new Vice President. Paul Goldfine replaced Allan Gazza as our Events Chairman and has hit the ground running with an almost full slate of events for 2012 (see page 24). Herb Looney moved from Vice President to a more demanding role of San Antonio area Project Coordinator and has been busy in that area already. The rest of the board moves forward unchanged.

Next in the old and new theme are some renovations that are being made

to the web site based on feedback from Membership Surveys (see we do listen). The Scrapbook section and the Newsletter section are both being upgraded with what we hope will provide useful tools to the membership. The reason that I say “we hope” is because this is a long and tedious process and the efforts will be wasted if not used by the membership.

The Scrapbook section is being changed to contain more than photos from past events. In addition to the photos, there will be the original event description pages so members can see what the event was all about. In the future this may also include maps of the drive that was taken on an event, if any, so that members who missed the event can still do the drive if they choose.

The Newsletter section is being changed to include past newsletters for reference or in case members want back issues.

This is a lot of resource material and hopefully the membership will find it useful as well as entertaining.

Until next time

Glenn McConnell

Welcome New Members

Austin

*Sonali Arora
Jennifer Casey
Joel Dolisy
Tony Guzman*

*Jenny Peterman
Cameron Rocke
Hector Sanchez
Kurt Stonecipher*

BMW Car Club
of America
Tejas Chapter



Converse

Robert Robey

Driftwood

Rich Love

Brookline

Jedidiah Fehrenbach

Killeen

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Tejas Chapter Three Dudes Tour Saturday, February 18, 2012



The day will start at Cabela's in Buda.

We'll meet at **9:15am**, with a drivers' meeting at **9:30am** and a departure at **9:45am**.

The drive will head southwest toward San Marcos, where we'll take a short rest to stretch our legs. From there, we'll head west and then south into New Braunfels to have lunch at approximately 11:30am.

Our lunch stop will be at Schoebel's Restaurant.

This is a family-style restaurant and features a buffet of "6 farm fresh vegetables, a variety of hand-cut meats, soup, salad bar and several homemade desserts." A drink is included in the price of \$10.95 per person. Of course, you can elect to order from the menu also.



From there, it's about an hour northwest and back to San Marcos, where, believe it or not, there's a winery. Three Dudes Winery was established in 2005 and is located just east of IH-35, which is probably why no one knows they exist. (more info)

They have an event room, also overlooking the river, that's reserved for us. We'll have the opportunity to sample several varieties of their wines for \$5 per person.

**RSVP by filling out the RSVP form on the website at
<http://www.tejaschapter.org/tejas.html>**

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M3 European winter delivery, so cool!

by Sridhar Kamma

Three years ago I bought my first M3 and took European delivery in summer of 2009, and that experience was unbelievable, and always thought I would keep that car forever, and it was too good to drive the ultimate driving machine I couldn't help driving it every day and it ultimately became my daily driver! I bought a 1987 635CSI thinking I would use it as a daily driver, but the power and exhilarating experience of the M never got me to stop driving it. The 635 became the classic and weekend car and M3 my daily driver. It was not until about six months ago when two of my friends and I decided to go on a Skiing vacation to Austria, the idea to get a newer M3 with European delivery became more obvious.

I emailed Chris Markey at BMW of Austin in October asking if I could do another European delivery of an M3, and as usual Chris got the paperwork cracking and even accommodated the pickup date in Munich on the 22nd of December, since that was the last day BMW Welt

was open before the holidays and I was to arrive in Munich on the 22nd. The configuration of the 2012 M3 is exactly the same as the 2009 M3. I just needed another European delivery experience because it was too good to miss the opportunity again.

This is the second M3 I purchased from BMW of Austin, and Chris for sure knew how passionate I am about the BMW M3 and the M power! He made a few calls to his contacts at BMW M Facility and he got me a tour at the M facility in Garching on the 22nd of December. Thanks Chris for organizing this and as always making the European delivery process an enjoyable experience to remember.

When I arrived at BMW Welt I was picked up by Adrian Held from BMW M Facility in an "Individual" 7 series. Probably I could just write an article on the Individual 7 series itself. The M facility was about 15 miles from Welt and is a very secure facility. It was a great experience to be welcomed into the M facility. Adrian

continued on page 8

M3 European winter delivery continued from page 7

was very knowledgeable about the M products and he took me to the exclusive M Studio and my first glance was the M3 GTS. One of the master piece displays and even though it was parked there quietly it felt like it was doing 200mph. Stunning car, and I wish I had a chance to drive it ☺ There were the new M5, Moonstone exterior M3, Individual 650i and 550i Touring with M sport package in the studio.

While walking back from the M Studio to the main facility, there were the next gen M6, M5s for the US, 6 Series Grand Coupe all camouflaged and test vehicles. After the tour I was presented with exclusive M lanyard and M pin, and Adrian drove me back to the BMW Welt. Thank you Adrian for the M facility tour and one of the unforgettable memories during the trip.

I picked up the M3 at the Welt and drove to Vienna for a two day stop over and sightseeing, and then drove

to Seeboden, a lake town in the South of Austria, which is also a great place for many ski resorts. One day I drove to Laghi Di Fusine in Northern Italy close to the Austrian border, which is a lake town with breathtaking views of the frozen lake and snow dusted pine trees surroundings. On the way back I took a detour to Ljubljana the capital of Slovenia for some great lunch and Slovenian beer.



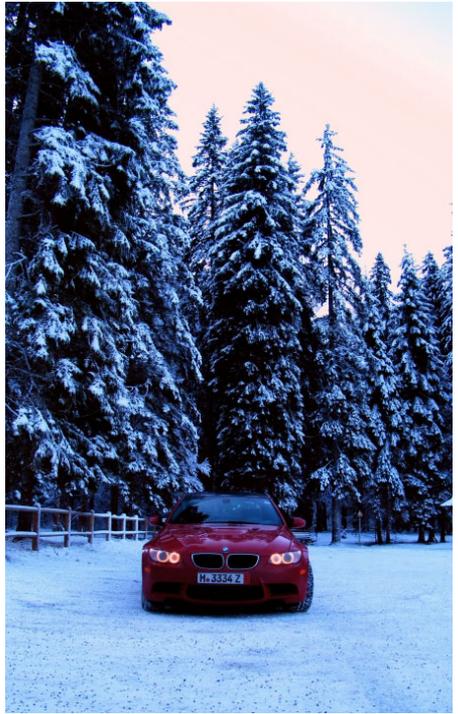
M3 was in fact a great car for taking it to the ski resort, and was very accommodating for three adults with set of skis and 2 sets of snowboard equipment. German and European countries require all cars be equipped with winter tires (M+S rating), and I had to rent them because the M came with performance tires. This is one of



the things to consider when taking European delivery in the winter months.

I drove the car back to Munich, and got the rental tires swapped for the factory performance tires and wheels, and dropped the car at the drop off location. BMW now has a very convenient drop off location in Munich that is outside Terminal 2 at the Munich Airport, called Log IN-OUT that takes care of the shipping the car from Munich to the BMW preparation facility in the US. The car is due to arrive in Brunswick, GA on 6th February and might be delivered to BMW of Austin couple of weeks later, sometime in February. Just counting down the days!

For more pictures and information



about European delivery please visit the website <http://m3eurotrip2.shutterfly.com> and for the BMW European delivery experience at <http://www.bmwusa.com/standard/content/experience/events/europeandelivery/default.aspx>



How I Keep It So Clean

by Alan Greene

Many of you are familiar with my '07 Sparkling Graphite 335i Coupe, which is now 5 1/2 years old (from production date). The color actually is called "Sparkling Graphite", but it is an appropriate description – several members have commented to me on how pristine the car looks and have asked how I keep it that way. So I'm going to tell you how I do it like Frank Sinatra. "My Way" is KEEPING it clean and not letting the elements, dirt, road grime, tree sap and other substances get it so bad that it becomes an impossible chore to make it right again.

Washing - wash the car with a good detergent designed especially for car finishes (available at any auto-parts store). Dish-washing soap will strip off any wax you have and tends to dry the paint out, requiring you to wax it more often. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. It's important that if you hand-wash your car, you use a good amount of suds to float the dirt off and apply it with a clean sponge, soft brush, or terry/chamois wash cloth or mitt. Anything else is going to induce small scratches and swirls in that clearcoat or single-stage paint, creating more work. And none of us wants that, right?

If you use a drive-through car wash, be sure it's safe for low-profile tires on larger-diameter wheels – some of them will scratch the outer lip of alloy wheels. Most of the newer car washes are equipped for higher-end cars, but it's worth making sure. Also, if you have a convertible top, use a mild soap or soft-top-specific cleanser to keep the material clean, and be sure to "seal" it with something like "Ragg-Top" or the stuff

they sell at the Dealership at least twice a year if not more often. Use only plastic cleaner and plastic polish on soft rear windows – don't use Windex, which will dry the plastic and make it turn yellow.

Drying - I use a synthetic chamois called the "Absorber", which is actually softer than a natural chamois and absorbs more water. Be careful with terrycloth towels – I prefer the new micro-fiber ones – to avoid those swirls and scratches. If your wheels are fairly clean, you can use a soft towel to dry them or wipe up any remaining brake dust, although a squirt of wheel cleaner or detailing fluid like Griot's Speed Shine will help get the remaining grit off. More on wheel/tire care later.

Paint Cleaning - I use Griot's paint cleaning clay, but Meguiar's makes a good kit as well. This is a very sticky type of modeling clay that is used with a lubricant (like Speed Shine or Meguiar's or other brand-name detailing fluid) to pull off foreign substances without damaging your paint or removing wax. Flatten the clay into a "patty", spray a small area with the fluid, and slide the clay over the sprayed area. Do this a few times and turn it over to see how much ugly stuff comes off of a freshly-washed car. You will need to "turn" the clay by pulling and kneading it to expose more clean surface so that it doesn't build up and quit working properly. No pressure is required, just glide it over all the panels on your car, including headlights and taillights. Follow up by wiping off the excess detailing fluid with a microfiber towel. Run your fingers over the surface and prepare to be amazed.

Polishing - If your paint is oxidized or dull, you may want to use a "cleaner" and a fine polish to bring up the shine. I

highly recommend the use of an orbital polisher and foam pads to apply these and other finish restoring/protection materials. Unlike the old lambswool buffing pads, these won't burn your paint, and the orbital's eccentric motion will keep from causing swirls. Apply whatever you're using sparingly and don't bear down on it – the weight of the polisher will do the trick. Here again, I like both Meguiar and Griot's products. With the Griot's stuff, you use an orange pad for polishes and a red pad for glaze, sealant, or wax products. Remove the residue/haze with a good soft cloth.

A word about glaze – this stuff is really good for hiding small imperfections in your paint, like mild swirls and scratches in the clearcoat. It adds depth to your paint and restores any lost oils. It's an extra step, but it's one of those things that will make your paint really stand out. I recommend Meguiar's Show Car Glaze or a comparable product from Griot's or other brands. You apply it and remove it just like polish or wax – be sure to use that microfiber or other soft cloth to thoroughly remove the residue.

Waxing/Sealing – this next step will depend on your preference and how often your car is used. Griot's and a number of other suppliers make what's called Paint Sealant, and it's the same stuff the dealers use on new cars. It's a synthetic substance that seals your paint and provides great protection without having to reapply more than once a year. This is the best to use on your daily driver, unless you like waxing every 60 to 90 days. Suffice to say it lasts longer, makes water bead, and it provides ultraviolet protection and a good shine. But here's a secret: on my cars, I apply

a coat of Griot's paint sealant, buff off the residue, and then I apply a coat or two of wax over it for the best possible shine. I use my orbital polisher and the red foam waxing pad for both materials. I recommend a high-carnauba-content liquid or paste wax only – not a "cleaning wax" with abrasive.

Once you've sealed/waxed your paint, you can apply a second coat of wax before buffing off the residue. Yes, this actually is a recommended practice, as it insures you get an even coat of wax that is a little thicker than if you just go with the one coat. When removing the residue, I recommend microfiber towels or a microfiber bonnet over a red waxing pad if you're using an orbital. You'll need a few bonnets as buildup will occur; what I do is remove the residue by hand and then use the bonnet to buff up the shine. By now, you'll need sunglasses even if you're in the garage with the lights on.

Glass – on the outside, use a good brand-name glass cleaner and newspaper (the ink will polish your glass). Griot's makes glass-cleaning clay if you have stuff that won't come off or hard-water stains. For those, use a glass polish – either by hand, or you can get a pad for the orbital to apply it. On the inside – if you have tinted windows, make sure your glass cleaner does not contain any ammonia – it will wreck your window film by drying it out. Use a soft cloth to clean the interior side of the glass, particularly if you have tinting film.

Interior – vacuum it thoroughly every time you wash your car, including between the seat cushions! Removing the grit will keep your upholstery and carpet from deteriorating. And if the carpet or mats are dirty or stained, use

continued on page 12

How I Keep It So Clean

continued from page 11

some foaming interior/carpet cleaner (Blue Coral is good) with a dry sponge, followed by vacuuming to remove any foam or residue.

If you have leather seats and panels, use a cleaner/conditioner combo product every 60 to 90 days. This is especially important in the hotter months, as leather will dry out. Also, as my wife says, it keeps the interior “smelling like Nieman’s”. If your leather is dirty, you may want to use a cleaner first, then follow it with conditioner, and then buff it with a soft cloth. For cloth seats, use a good mild foaming cleanser and vacuum them after cleaning. Be very careful with alcantara – make sure your cleanser is safe for that material.

Under the hood – I like to keep the engine and engine bay clean and free of leaves, debris, and dust/dirt. You can either take your car to a do-it-yourself spray-wand wash and use the green soap (wheel/tire cleaner or some actually have an engine-cleaner setting) to coat your warm engine and bay, or you can use something like Simple Green mixed 50-50 with water. Let it sit at least 5 minutes and then rinse it off with high-pressure spray or the hose nozzle adjusted to a “jet” setting. At the car wash you can follow this up with the “spot-free” rinse if you like. Be careful not to get soap or water into your intake. If you have exposed plug wires/connectors or distributor, avoid spraying directly on them, and dry them off with a cloth when finished. Remove excess water from surfaces and when dry, you can use Armor All or an engine-dressing solution (Griot’s makes one) to enhance the appearance of any plastic trim or hoses.

Wheels and tires – if your wheels are really dirty, use a wheel cleaner or Simple Green diluted 50-50 with water (same as for the engine compartment) to help remove the brake dust and dirt. For the tires, I recommend a long-lasting tire “gel” (Meguiar’s makes a good one) rather than just Armor-All, which can actually make your tire surfaces turn brown. Wipe up any excess that gets on your wheels so the dirt and brake dust won’t stick. Similarly, wipe away any tire dressing that gets on your paint to avoid having dirt and dust stick to it. There’s also a product called “Wheel Wax”, and it really works well to keep brake dust and other grime from sticking to your wheels.

Maintenance – it’s not necessary to do all these steps every time you wash your car, but I highly recommend using a good detailing fluid to bring up the shine and keep the dust off. I also recommend using the clay bar every few months, and more often if your car sits under or near trees – that sap is nasty stuff that the clay will make short work of. You can do just the flat surfaces or the whole car, depending on how anal you are (or how sore your back is).

And finally – whenever possible, keep your car under cover. I work from home and mine stays in the garage most days; if you have access to a parking garage, use it. But my best advice is if you see your car’s finish suffering from exposure to sun, tree sap, road grime, bird deposits, etc. - clean it as soon as possible. Believe me, you’ll thank me a few years from now when your car looks as good as new!

2012 Post Holiday Party Review

by Sandy McConnell

What a fun, relaxed, companionable time we had at the Annual Post Holiday Party!

On January 14th, approximately 40 Tejas members, family and friends met at Saltgrass Steak House, in San Marcos, coming from all around our chapter area, including Donna Bogan, all the way from Corpus Christi, Texas. We had a varied menu, with steak, shrimp, chicken, salmon and even pork chops to choose from! Glenn and I enjoyed the steak & shrimp combo and our daughter the salmon. We can certainly vouch for



those dishes, as they were wonderful. All feedback on the food was positive, though I'm not sure why anyone would be surprised, since we also met at Saltgrass last year and found the location and food *magnifique* then, as well.

As folks checked in they received their name tags and door prize tickets to bid on a wide, coveted, display of contributed items from BMW of San Antonio, Expel Technologies (one of our newest advertisers), Auto Zone and other individual contributors. BMW of San Antonio sent, a BMW ball cap and visor,

thermal mugs and water bottles. Expel sent Tee shirts and Auto Zone a full bucket with cleaning supplies. Ken



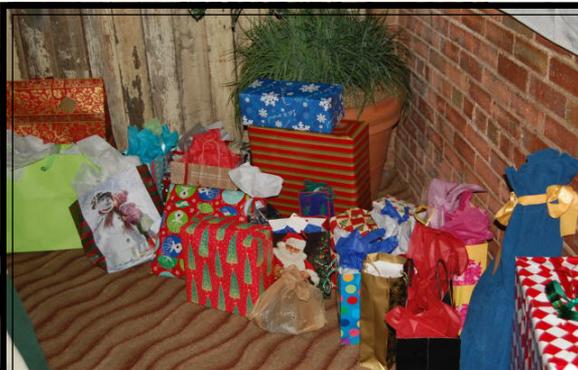
Carson brought an eye-catching, current, 2012 car related picture calendar and Herb Looney brought two of his own beautifully hand crafted items, a lighted wine display case, complete with wine



and glasses, and a BMW ice chest, complete with cold Shiner Bock beer. The size of the chest was thoughtfully custom designed and down-sized from those he's brought for us in the past, as the winners have often been roadster drivers who had to choose between the prized ice chest and their spouse or date to take home with them! We can also thank Herb for a much desired Starbucks gift card.

In case some of you are not aware, the number of door prize tickets one receives depends on whether you are a member or guest, and also is based on the number of incentive points you've

continued on page 16



**Post-Holiday
January
Many thanks to
Many more great photos are available**





Day Party
21, 2012
o Linda Cook
available on the chapter website



2012 Post Holiday Party Review

by Sandy McConnell

earned over the course of the year. The more points you've earned, the more chances you've earned to win!

After our delicious meal and companionable table talk, Linda Cook prepared us for our infamous white elephant gift exchange. There were a number of really terrific gifts this year



and for a while, there was very little stealing going on. Then some of the items, like BMW water bottles, a trickle charger, cleaning products and tools packages suddenly began to move around. Interestingly enough, even the Tinker Bell floor mats changed hands at least once! For the last several years, we've had an attractive "white elephant" figurine resurface. Those who take this



pachyderm home, sign it and bring it back for another round each year. This year Kathryn Butts became the caretaker of this icon. Finally, we always have a

reserved gift for the person who, by vote, has received the worst gift. Mike Sevel put his "Fart" extinguisher in the vote and won... He received a gift package of Meguiar's cleaning products for compensation!



Two other anticipated items on the agenda for the evening were the results of the officer's election and the presentation of the hard earned 2011 Chapter Incentive Program winner's awards. These both have been reviewed in other pages of this *Tejas Trax*.

Many thanks to all of the generous companies and people who contributed door prizes for this annual event. And, a special thanks to Linda Cook for planning our Post-Holiday



Party this year and for being our lovely hostess for the door prize drawings and the gift exchange.

See you next month at the Three Dudes Winery in San Marcos!

Are You Ready To Re-Tire?

A Balanced Approach

By Alan Greene

It happens to all of us, sooner or later – and it’s a big decision. So many options to consider...and all manner of advice available, but who should we listen to? There could be consequences down the road, and financial considerations, plus how comfortable we want to be and what sort of performance we’re looking for. Sound like an investment-firm blurb? In this case, it’s not, but there are similarities. I’m talking about when things have worn down to the point where it’s time to buy new tires. All of the above is true, and I just recently made this decision myself. I did some research, though, and I think I got a very balanced return. Sorry for all the puns, but they do seem to apply.

Those of you still reading this (stay with me now) all drive not-so-ordinary cars that have a higher quotient of performance and handling, and some careful thought should be put into what your next set of tires should be. Why? Well, in addition to ROI, or return on investment, there’s the safety and comfort factors to consider. You definitely want to maximize your return while feeling comfortable and safe. Translation: you want a set of tires that give you performance, safety in variable weather and road conditions, and a comfortable ride over a fairly long period at the right price.

Thus the quandary many of us find ourselves in when confronted with all the options from NTB, Discount Tire,

The Tire Rack, and so on. We want the right speed rating, reasonable tread life, and good handling/performance characteristics – which include grip, water-channeling, quietness, and a ride that won’t disturb your dental work. We all (okay, most of us) want to pay as little as we can for the whole package, including mounting, balancing, valve stems, and tax, title, and license. It can be daunting, but it’s not impossible. It just takes setting a goal (or budget), some research, and ultimately, arming yourself with some facts.

Many of us fellow chapter members drive cars with high-performance low-profile summer tires. Those of us with newer vehicles that were equipped with run-flat tires when purchased have to decide if the higher price and different ride/handling characteristics (harshness due to stiff sidewalls and harder tread compounds) are worth the replacement cost. I will admit that the newest generation of run-flats are very much improved in all ways – but they’re still more expensive and most of the time will require a replacement instead of a repair. There are good and bad things about run-flats, but that’s something usually dictated more by convenience/safety versus cost. For this article, I’m going to concentrate on non-runflats, since many of us have collectively expressed a dislike for run-flat tires.

So where do we begin? Most of us are looking for a good price at the front end; some of us are looking for performance first, and then there are those of us who want this purchase to last awhile. Your definition of a “good

continued on page 18

A Balanced Approach

continued from page 17

price” is usually whatever your wallet/budget can handle, but there are always tradeoffs, same as with treadwear and performance. Your most common type of driving will usually dictate the type of tires you should buy. If your driving is mostly commuting/highway cruising, you’ll be looking more at treadwear and comfort rather than all-out cornering power.

Up until recently, the “Z-rated” performance tires on our cars meant softer compounds for handling at the expense of tread life. All-season tires, which are better in wet and colder/snowy weather, generally have harder rubber compounds and last longer, but they give up a fair amount in handling. Also, low-profile tires tend to ride more harshly than higher-profile. As wheel diameters increase, section width has to decrease to keep the overall tire diameter as close to original as possible. Translated, this generally means that 16”-17” tires and wheels will give a more comfortable ride because the higher sidewalls will flex more and provide a cushion against road irregularities than 18”, 19”, or 20” tires and wheels with the same overall diameter. But - the same sidewall flexibility that gives that comfy ride also compromises handling by reducing the size of the contact patch (literally meaning where the rubber meets the road) when making turns.

A quick note – the tire rating (Z, Y, X, H, etc.) reflect the tire’s sustained-speed rating and also generally reflects how hard or soft the

tread compound is. As an example, Z-rated tires are considerably softer than an H-rated tire, with correspondingly more grip but far less treadwear. There’s another rating factor called UTQG, or Uniform Tire Quality Guide, which gives a numeric scale on which to judge treadwear, with the smallest number having the lowest tread life. As an example, a great many Z-rated tires have a UTQG number of anywhere from 140 to 280 – relatively low. A Z-rating means they’re safe at sustained speeds of 150+ mph – but they’re also “summer” tires, which don’t handle well in cold weather. All-season tires can be anywhere from H- to Y-rated for lower speeds and temperatures and don’t handle as well as Z-rated, but their UTQG is well over 300.

OK – enough of the technical stuff. Here’s what I do when I look for tires – I peruse the tire-vendor websites and I actually read the reviews of the tires that are candidates for purchase. It’s amazing how what you might think is the absolute best choice can quickly move down the list after reading other people’s experiences with that tire on their cars. Another good source of info is from one of the online forums, such as E90Post.com, where you can submit a post about what you’re considering and get input from drivers of your same car type. I’ll give you an example: we all consider Michelin tires to be the “Egg McMuffin” of performance tires – but it turns out that not only are they pricey, they are sometimes noisy and have lower tread life. Many people swear by them; others swear at them; however, they are for the most part held in very high

regard despite their higher cost.

But if your budget constrains you (like most of us), there are alternatives that not only provide great performance, but are quieter and have better tread life at a much lower cost. How do they do this? Clever engineering and the use of multiple tread compounds across the surface of the tire. A couple of examples: Bridgestone RE-760 and Continental Extreme Contact DW are two new Z-rated summer tires with treadwear ratings of 320 and 340, yet they are less expensive, quiet, ride very smoothly, and provide great grip in wet and dry conditions. Now – I'm not trying to recommend or denigrate any specific brand here, but giving you some insight into my selection process. I chose the Contis for my 335i with 18" wheels, and went up one

tire size (235/40 front and 265/35 rear) to increase the sidewall height, resulting in a great ride, better handling, and improved wet-weather characteristics, all at a very reasonable price.



In conclusion – buying new tires (re-tiring) is a process that greatly resembles retirement planning. Careful research, including insight into the personal experiences of others, will result in peace of mind without having to give up the things that matter to you the most!

The advertisement for Texas World Speedway features a dynamic scene of three race cars on a track. In the foreground, a silver and black Dodge Viper race car with the number 007 is prominent. Behind it, a red Dodge Viper and another red race car are visible. The background shows the Texas World Speedway grandstands and a large Texas state map logo. The text "TEXAS WORLD SPEEDWAY" is written in a stylized font across the logo, with "MOTORSPORT COUNTRY CLUB" below it. At the bottom, the text reads "Join the Experience. Partake in the Legend." followed by the website "www.texasworldspeedway.com" and the phone number "979-690-2500".

Join the Experience. Partake in the Legend.
www.texasworldspeedway.com
979-690-2500

The TWS schedule for 2012 will be in the next issue

Diversity vs. Focus

by John Hughan

My wife and I recently returned from our delayed honeymoon in Italy. After we'd finished planning the wedding, neither of us was keen on planning each day of our honeymoon, so instead we purchased a 12-day guided group tour that covered all of the locations that each of us wanted to visit and allowed us to pay one lump sum for someone else to book all of the accommodations and manage all of the travel. It worked fantastically well, offering a good mix of structured events and free time in the various cities. Italy in winter was chilly but never unreasonable, and the tourist crowds and prices were both down compared to summer.

Naturally I couldn't help but notice the drastically different car scene there. SUVs in Italy are about as common as station wagons here, and station wagons there are about as common as SUVs here. The ratio of diesel to gasoline engines is also just about the exact opposite, as is the ratio of manual to automatic transmissions – in fact, all due respect to Porsche for introducing a 7-speed manual on the latest 911, but I spent a fair amount of time in a vehicle that sported three pedals and a whopping 8 speeds – our charter bus! Even focusing on BMWs in particular, it was a completely different world. The overwhelming majority of BMWs were of the 320d variety in all four body styles, and I also encountered many 1 Series hatchbacks, X1s, E60 520xd's, and even the occasional F10 5 Series Touring wagons– that last looks so much better than the GT variant we get

that I can't imagine what possessed BMW to build the GT. I got a fleeting glance at what I think was a 335i (the only 335 and the only gasoline BMW I saw on the entire trip), and in 12 days in Italy I didn't see a single M car.

This experience prompted some research upon my return as to just how many vehicles exist in BMW's global lineup – and as I visited the BMW websites for various other countries, the revelation that awaited combined with some recent BMW news had me worrying whether BMW is in a phase of building a vehicle for every conceivable niche just to see whether it will sell, in essence throwing spaghetti at the wall to see what sticks. I would be amazed if a few years into this apparent experiment BMW didn't announce that they were reducing model variants or even canceling whole models in order to “focus their offerings” and “return to their roots”, because I can't imagine that the hypergrowth trajectory they seem to be on at the moment could be sustainable. Let's take a look, first at where they are now and then where they've announced they're going, and see what you think.

Arguably the model that's most frequently pictured when people think “BMW” is the 3 Series. But which one? There's the coupe, sedan, convertible, and wagon; there's RWD and xDrive; gasoline and diesel; and here we have 328i, 335i, 335is, and 335d, for a total of 15 varieties in the US. But in BMW's global portfolio, that number swells to a staggering 54– and that's just the 3 Series! Some of these distinctions are true head-scratchers. For example, in addition to our 328i there exists a 325i and a

330 is still in production, not to be confused with the older US models that bore the same name. All are 3.0-liter naturally aspirated straight-six engines; the 325i is rated for 218 hp, the 328i for 230, and the 330i for 272. I wasn't able to find a definitive explanation for the existence of 3 so similarly rated engines, but I suspect it has to do with certain engines being emissions-tested only in certain countries. Is that process so expensive that it's cheaper to add another model variant to production? BMW clearly knows that those engines are too similar, because it appears that a given country gets either the 328i or both the 325i and 330i, never all three or even two "neighbor" engines. This engine lineup and offering pattern extends to the 5 Series as well.

As far as what's in the pipeline, the F30 3 Series will diversify even further with the introduction of the Sport, Modern, and Luxury lines, essentially rather extensive interior and exterior appearance packages. The 6 Series will gain a four-door variant named the Gran Coupe to

compete with the Mercedes CLS Class. In addition to the X1, already available elsewhere and rumored to come to the US after its mid-cycle refresh, BMW will introduce an X4. The X4 will be a scaled down version of the X6, so named to match BMW's rechristening of its two-door 3 Series variants as the 4 Series. The 1 Series for its redesign will reportedly be renamed the 2 Series in order to make room at the bottom of the lineup for a front-wheel drive urban commuter line. The upcoming i3 and i8 models constitute a foray into a completely new frontier for BMW, the former an all-electric model to compete in the small and economical segment (think Nissan Leaf and Smart ForTwo), and the latter a high performance hybrid to compete with the future vehicles of Ferrari and Porsche, expected to command an MSRP around \$375K. And naturally more of the "standard" BMW models will be available as hybrids.

Even BMW M has not been spared the push to expand. Earlier this month BMW M announced a new line of M

continued on page 22



Diversity vs. Focus

continued from page 21

Performance Automobiles, which will “offer exclusive engine variants, noticeably enhanced agility and outstanding precision on the road, plus design laced with emotional appeal.” Isn’t that what current M cars do? Well maybe, but as M President Friedrich Nitschke puts it, “We are targeting our efforts at customers looking for more emotionality and more performance, but who don’t want to forgo the everyday usability of their cars.” I for one wasn’t aware that I was forgoing everyday usability with my M3, but happily my apparent misconception has now been corrected. Still, Mr. Nitschke may want to talk to his marketing division, since high performance married to everyday usability is exactly how they are describing the current M cars. The M Performance Automobiles will apparently be available in diesel and/or AWD varieties, with the first examples confirmed to be the X6 M50dX and M550dX – neither are expected to make it to the US. I expect that in addition to sparking many more model names that roll off the tongue as fluidly as those just mentioned, placing the M name and badge on “partial M” cars will only confuse BMW customers, not to mention the broader population. I just hope it doesn’t affect the M cars themselves.

Faced with all of this news, I can’t help but be reminded of the automaker that most recently mounted a hypergrowth campaign: Toyota. They set their sights on becoming the #1 auto manufacturer in volume, and they

succeeded, but as the world observed a few years later it came at a terrible cost. By their own CEO’s admission, their focus on increasing volume so significantly in such a short time caused them to compromise on parts and build quality. That decision led to a series of recalls that eventually grew to cover 15 million vehicles spanning multiple model lines, multiple model years, and both the Toyota and Lexus marques. Combined with the barrage of bad press, Toyota’s focus on growth did incalculable damage to their brand, whose reputation had been built almost solely on reliability.

BMW in recent years has come under fire for compromising on some of its own brand principles. The iconic 3 Series has gotten much heavier and, according to some, much less engaging. BMW M, which previously swore they would never do AWD, or forced induction, or SUVs, or diesel, is or will soon be doing all of those – in some cases all in the same model. For a while it seemed that BMW was openly severing ties with its past when it replaced its Ultimate Driving Machine slogan with the Joy campaign, though it has mercifully reversed course on that decision. I simply hope that this swell in BMW’s lineup represents a temporary foraging campaign to see what sells and what doesn’t, and that once that question is answered BMW will refocus its lineup on a smaller number of models that are all brilliantly executed rather than following in Toyota’s footsteps of a wide swath of mediocre offerings. I’m just not sure how much of my feeling is conviction and how much is mere hope.

Tejas Chapter Incentive Points Challenge for 2012

To encourage participation, the successful Incentive Points Challenge began in 1998. The members who earn the highest number of points by the end of the year (up to 10th place) receive valuable prizes at the Post-Holiday Party in January 2012. The Rookie of the Year award is for the member that joined in the current year and earns Rookie Points based on points earned divided by the time as a member during the year.

Activity	Points
Return Survey Form (form available on request or at website)	50
Attend a meeting or event	30
Organize a monthly event, (social/technical etc.)	100
Assist with a monthly event (credited by organizer)	50
Each new member recruited (credited by CCA)	30
Original photo(s) published in the Trax (30 pts max/issue)	10
Original photo(s) published on the website (30 pts max/event)	10
Original Tech Tip published in the Trax	15
Original Article published in the Trax (500 words or more)	60
Original Article published in the Trax (less than 500 words)	30
Recruitment of a commercial ad for Trax	20% of ad cost

2012 Incentive Points Challenge Leader Board As of January 27, 2012

<u>200 Pts</u> Alan Greene	<u>120 Pts</u> Sridhar Kamma	Mike Sevel <u>50 Pts</u>	Ken Carson Linda Cavazos	Pat Jamail Jack Laumer
<u>140 Pts</u> John Hughan	<u>80 Pts</u> Paul Goldfine	Bill Hoch	Tim Cook	Cathy St. Martin
<u>130 Pts</u> Linda Cook	Don Yule	<u>30 Pts</u> Rob Brown	Marco Cordon	Connie Stried
	<u>60 Pts</u> Herb Looney	Tom Brown	Tim Ehrhart	Roger Williams
		Josh Butts	Allan Gazza	Susan Yule
			Jan Greene	Trent Zou

2011 Incentive Points Challenge Winners

- 1st Place - 980 Points - Alan Greene
- 2nd Place - 835 Points - Mike Sevel
- 3rd Place - 770 Points - Herb Looney
- 4th Place - 730 Points - Paul Goldfine
- 5th Place - 720 Points - Ken Carson
- 6th Place - 700 Points - Roger Williams
- 7th Place - 630 Points - Susan Yule
- 8th Place - 580 Points - Linda Cavazos
- 9th Place - 520 Points - John Hughan
- 10th Place - 490 Points - Jonna Clark
- 1st Rookie - 300 Points - Jan Greene
- 2nd Rookie - 160 Points - Scott Bowman
- Honorable Mention - 470 Points - Eric Chang & Don Yule



Calendar of Tejas Chapter
and Related Events



2012

Date	Event	Meet Location
February 18, 2012	Three Dudes Winery see page 5	Buda
March 31, 2012	HPDE Track Event	San Marcos
April 2012	Bluebonnet Drive	TBD
May 2012	TBD	TBD
June 2012	Fun Rally	TBD
July 2012	XPEL Tech Session	San Antonio
August 2012	TBD	TBD
September 2012	Tri-Marque Concours	Austin
October 2012	Utopia Weekend	TBD
November 10, 2012	BMW of Austin Tech Session	Austin
December 2012	Annual Charity Event	TBD

<http://www.tejaschapter.org> for the most up-to-date information about the TejasChapter.



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www.showroomfx.com
Facebook: showroomfx



Cell: 972-743-9443

17931 Preston Road, Dallas TX 75252



The Teen Street Survival Program is supported and organized by the BMWCCA to provide defensive driving techniques and actual experience for teenagers with a driving permit or license.

The Tejas Chapter would like to have its 1st event. A small team of Tejas Chapter members had been putting the plans together for a 2010 event, but have run into a roadblock, "the location." The location has to be a large parking lot with minimal obstructions, such as light poles. Several locations have been contacted with no success. Due to this roadblock, the new target to hold an event will be in 2011.

Please let the Driving Events Coordinator, Linda Cavazos at racegirl330@yahoo.com, if you have a contact for a location in the Central Texas area.

Free BMW tech help.

Have a technical question about your BMW or MINI? Our free tech blog – **blog.BavAuto.com** – has a searchable database containing hundreds of tech Q&As, do-it-yourself articles and videos. Just one more way Bavarian Autosport saves you money.



Check it out at blog.BavAuto.com...

Classified Ads



2007 335i

300 hp, Montego blue, beige leather, premium package, navigation, comfort access, start/stop button, adaptive xenon headlights, park-distance control, premium Logic7 surround sound, satellite radio, ceramic window tint, original owner, non-smoker, very-well maintained, all scheduled maintenance, extended warranty to 100k (11/13), fun, fast & close to 30-mpg highway. \$23,490 Firm. ***Willing to trade for 2007-08 X3 or 530i/528i with comparable options***. Contact Nick Papanikolaou at 512-619-7965 or send email to nick.papa12@yahoo.com.



1988 M3

Build Date: 7/87, Alpineweiss- white, Interior: Black, Cobra Imola race seats front with Schroth Harness on both seats, stock rear seat. Factory fronts go with the car. Suspension: Ground Control 700/550 and Ground Control Camber plates. New Group N Bilstein shocks front and rear, Rear Powerflex Bushings on sub-frame and

Control arms with Bimmerworld rear camber kit. with new front wheel bearing on both sides. Wheels: Apex ARC-8 with Kumho tires 17" 235/40/17, Track Wheels: Revolution 15x8 with Toyo R888 225/50/15, Brakes: Stock + Hawk front race pads for track use, BimmerWorld Stainless Steel brake lines. Clutchmaster Stage 4 Clutch and Pressure Plate. Engine: 2.5 EVO spec engine, 11:1 CP pistons, adjustable cam gears, Schrick 284/278 cams, EVO oil pump(shimmed), new E36 chain tensioner, EVO valve springs, Evo air box, all new valve shims, and valve job. Iigo custom 2.5 chip. Exhaust: SuperSprint Race. Milages: 212,000 Chassis, engine 20k. Redline fluids through out. 20/50 engine. 75/90 diff, and MTL Trans. All changed this month. Cibie low beam H4 headlights. Documentation from new and manuals. This car IS maintained perfectly. Also all E30 M3 extra parts go with the car.(extra belts, hoses, race brake pads, and other wear items). The high mileage is from the original owner who was a Air Force officer that drove many times from Maryland to Colorado Springs and back. I have tons more pictures to anyone that ask for them. Call me about the car I have a very low price by different packages on the car. Contact Steve Hodges at 903-491-9464 or send email to SHodges883@gmail.com.

Classified Ads



Wheels & tires for Sale

4 BBS RX wheels wrapped with a set of Dunlop Direzza DZ101 tires . wheels come with all authentic BBS

centercaps and BBS Valve stem covers. Wheels size : 17x8 et 38 Bolt Pattern: 5x120. Tires 225/45r17 front and 245/40r17. Front and rear tires have no more than 1,500 miles on them. I'm asking \$800 obo. Contact Terre Williams at 512 800 2421 or send email to terre328@gmail.com.

Classified ads FOR PERSONAL USE items are printed free for current members of BMW CCA. Ads will run for three issues, unless stopped earlier. Ads may be extended by a request in writing to the Tejas Chapter mailbox or by email. Members are limited to five (5) classified ads running at a time. The ad rate for non-member ads or member ads of a COMMERCIAL nature is \$10.00 per issue. These ads will be accepted on a monthly basis and payment must be received before ad is printed. Classified ads submitted for publication in the Tejas Trax are also placed on the Tejas Chapter's website.

Tejas Chapter Merchandise

T-shirts, denim shirts, polos, visors and caps offered by Alejo USA are decorated with the officially approved BMW CCA Car Club of America Tejas Chapter logos in accordance with the International Council of BMW Clubs.

Are you interested in getting shirts with the Tejas Chapter logo? A Denim Shirt, Polo Shirt, or a T-Shirt perhaps? Long sleeve, short sleeve, or maybe sleeveless. Perhaps a tote bag or ball cap would be of interest to you.

Chapter members Jose & Cathy Alejo of ALEJO USA, can make this happen for you. They can apply our Tejas Chapter logo on almost anything they carry in their catalogs. Embroidered and screen print logos are available. Seen in the picture below, the Denim shirts have embroidered logos and the T-Shirts have color screen print logos.



You may contact Jose or Cathy by calling (254) 527-4060. You may also go online to www.alejousa.com. or email alejousa@alejousa.com.

**BMW Car Club
of America
Texas Chapter**



**P.O. Box 17216
Austin, TX 78760**



DRIVE
FRIENDLY

**PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
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Permit #1434
Austin TX**

A rectangular graphic divided into three horizontal sections. The top section is white with the text 'PRSR STD U.S. Postage PAID Permit #1434 Austin TX' in black. The middle section is red with the word 'FRIENDLY' in white, italicized, serif font. The bottom section is blue with a white five-pointed star in the center. The word 'DRIVE' is written in blue, italicized, serif font across the top of the red and blue sections.