

BMW Car Club  
of America  
Tejas Chapter



# TEJAS TRAX

Newsletter for the Tejas Chapter, BMW CCA



**BMW of Austin Tech Day**

Photos by Raquel Robles

BMW Car Club  
of America



January  
February  
2016

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BMW of Austin Tech Review

## Tejas Chapter Officers

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## Project Coordinators, Chapter Email and Newsletter

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

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*From  
The  
President*

**Bring on 2016?? .....**

Well, last year was the year of my 50th high school class reunion. If you are 50, you just think you are old, but 50 years since graduating from high school? Now that's old. But what never gets old is looking forward to another great year of events with the great members and families of the Tejas Chapter.

We left a very good year behind us, with many great memories, but those are all in the past now. The new year, 2016, brings the opportunities for new challenges and new memories. One of the best parts of last year was

that we had a few new people step up and plan an event. Maybe 2016 could be the year for you to do that.

If you don't step up to plan a chapter event, maybe you could just get more involved. Maybe this is the year to attend an event or two or three. Maybe 2016 could be the year for you to do that. Maybe this could be the year that you write that great article that all our members would love to read.

As a New Year's resolution, I hope that you choose to make 2016 a year that you will be an active participant in the Tejas Chapter. From personal experience, I know that it will be a resolution that you will never, ever be sorry that you kept.

**Until next time ....**

**Glenn McConnell**

*Welcome New Members*

Austin

*Cameron Adams  
Elliott Beck  
Steve Boren  
Evan Bowers  
Geoffrey Gilbert  
Robert Gonzalez  
Ken Harris  
Steven Kruger*

*Angela McKee  
Michael Shapiro  
Kimberly Simpson  
Stephen Smith  
Bryan Townsend  
Reed Ulvestad  
Feng Xu*

New Braunfels

*Lajauna Garten  
Charles Hadlock*

Cedar Park

*Amanda DeSota  
Fred DeSota  
Troy Laigast  
Brian Monnone*

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Round Rock

*Michael Lobsenz  
David Maguire  
Matthew Peterson  
Sharon Scott*

Boerne

*Debra-Lou Lantz  
Catherine Rickert*

Georgetown

*Judy Dearing  
James Mossman*

Kerrville

*Laura Beene  
Phillip Beene*

San Antonio

*James Benoit  
William Day  
Ryan Lupo  
Alan Solis Gurria*

Harlingen

*Mike Zayac*

Ingram

*Gilda Wilkinson*

Leander

*Kaitlin Zimmerman*

Utopia

*Bernie Adams  
Doris Adams*

Marble Falls

*Lisa Carmona*

Midland

*Tuong Nguyen*

Lakeway

*Pat Fahey*

Pflugerville

*Derrick Houghton*

Wimberley

*Grace Duncan*

Kingsville

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vehicle/trade-in or to research the finance/lease options on your next BMW.

*The Tejas Chapter's Annual  
Post-Holiday Party  
and  
Incentive Awards Presentation*

*Saturday, January 23rd, 2016*

*6-10 pm*

Planned by Jonna Clark & Brad Mitchell

Please join us for our traditional Tejas Chapter Post-Holiday party at Palmer's Restaurant in San Marcos! This party is open to all Tejas Chapter members, spouses, friends, and family.



Our annual get-together is a great opportunity to relax after the holiday rush is over, exchange holiday stories and plans for the New Year, have some good food, and have a great time!!!

The evening will include our 2015 Incentive Awards, always awesome door prizes and our traditional White Elephant gift exchange\*.



**Time:** We'll start at 6:00 pm for social time. We'll be seated by 6:30 pm to allow dinner orders to be placed.

**Menu:** We will have our own menu with options that include a steak, pork chops, chicken and fish. Salad, tea, coffee and dessert are included with the meal! Cash bar will be available.

**Cost:** Meal will be FREE for all current BMW CCA members. For non-members/guests the meal is \$20 per person (check or cash only).

\*We encourage all our members to participate in the white elephant gift exchange. Bring your most exotic (good/working condition) BMW or automobile related exchange items!!

(Gag gifts are acceptable, but no junk please)



Palmer's Restaurant, 218 Moore Street, San Marcos 78666  
[www.palmerstexas.com](http://www.palmerstexas.com)

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



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# Spicewood Vineyards & Opie's BBQ

**Saturday, February 20, 2016**

Planned by Ken Carson

9:00am - Meet at the "Y" in Oakhill (US 290 and SH 71), in the parking lot in front of Gatti's;

Take off driving at 9:30am.

Coffee and bathrooms are available at several locations nearby.



We will have a morning drive and visit Spicewood Vineyards in Spicewood, TX.



After wine tasting we will go to Opie's BBQ in Spicewood for lunch, where you select your meats from the pit and then go through a line.



They are well known for their tender meats, homemade desserts, and their big pot of delicious butter beans.

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



## Finding a Daily Driver, Part 2

by Ken Carson

It took me most of the remainder of our trip to the Carolinas to put the disappointment of the 318ti in Kentucky in perspective. You will recall that I had looked at the car while on a trip with my wife, only to discover the car had been hit in the tail end at some point. The most distressing part of this was the fact that the owner at no time during our frank discussions of the car's condition mentioned this important tidbit. And I had decided during a month's worth of emails and phone calls that the seller was trustworthy. I'm just glad I went to look at the car; I have been known to buy a car over the internet after lengthy discussion with the owner and had it delivered to Texas without seeing it in person.

Visiting the BMW CCA Foundation Center, the BMW Performance Center, and attending the inaugural Classics at the Biltmore Concours in the Carolinas helped to wipe away the bad taste left in my mouth by our Kentucky side trip. And I'm sure that driving the Tail of the Dragon and the Cherohala Skyway along the way didn't hurt, either! Driving an M Roadster is always therapeutic. By the time we arrived back in Texas, I was trolling the internet for BMW

Compacts, again.

There were some desirable ti's for sale on the 318ti.org forum. Most were in the \$2500 to \$4500 range, although a one-owner enthusiast-owned example in Connecticut was listed at \$5100. Most had performance mods, but I wanted a daily driver that could haul "stuff" and that was fuel efficient without sacrificing any fun factor. The high-revving 1.9 liter engine was enough as long as it had a manual transmission; shifting gears can turn a mundane commute into an enjoyable daily experience. Besides, I'd rather find something locally that I could drive.

Craigslist showed two Compacts for sale in San Antonio. I called first about a car that had a thorough description of the car and a list of maintenance items already completed. The asking price was \$4300 and after talking to the seller, I found out that he had been in possession of the car for four months and wasn't willing to negotiate on the price. He also said the interior needed some work. Now it's not necessarily a knock against a car if the owner is just flipping it. Basic work has been done and the seller has little, if any, emotional attachment to the car. That can be good for negotiating. But this seller was asking top dollar for a car that still needed

work. I thanked him for the information and told him I would let him know if I wanted to look at the car.

I moved on to the other offering on Craigslist, an ad that was only one line long – “Good daily driver, manual transmission, with newer tires and 119,000 miles. \$3500” - with four fuzzy pictures that showed the front, rear, one side, and the other side with the front door open to see the interior. I could see from that picture that the driver’s door was missing the door card. That meant the window probably wasn’t working. I also noticed that all the pictures were taken right after the car had been washed. It was still dripping wet in every shot.

I called the number and spoke to Pete, who said the car had 119,000 miles on it, the tires were like new, the car ran and drove great, but he only used it occasionally. He drove a van most of the time for his landscaping business. When asked about the missing door card, he said that he had the door card but neither of the windows worked. He had gotten the plastic clips for the regulators, but hadn’t put them in, yet. The air conditioning worked. The interior needed a good cleaning, but other than those things, he assured me it was a good car. He couldn’t tell me what engine oil was in the car or when the filters or other fluids were replaced last. Most of the cars I had found for sale were either near or past the 200,000 mile mark. If this one really did have only 119,000 on it, then I definitely needed to look at it. I made arrangements with Pete to look at the car the next day, a Wednesday. We exchanged phone numbers and I got his address. I went to the bank and got cash, just in case.

The 318ti was in the driveway when I pulled up to Pete’s house. Pete’s van was blocking the driveway, backed up over the curb and driveway at the same time. Pete shook my hand and pointed to the car. He

said to have at it and returned to loading flowers into the back of his van. I noticed that the flowers were freshly dug up from in front of the house and around the trees in the front yard. I saw two other men working: one was removing the gutter from the front of the house, while the other was dismantling a car port that spanned the driveway on the side of the house. Pete explained that the bank was kicking him out of his house after twenty years and he wasn’t leaving them anything that he had recently done to the house.

I walked around the car and noticed that the wheels were original and in good shape and the tires did look fairly new with deep and even tread all around. The body panels were fairly straight with only a few dings. Someone had replaced the blue and white roundels on the body and wheels with green and white roundels. The green metallic paint was dull in spots with no clear coat left on it, especially on the roof and under the back windows. The sunroof was closed and flush with the roof. The glass was good all around, without cracks or chips. The hood had one ding in it, but there were, and I’m not exaggerating, thousands of scratches in the paint, as though a family of cats used the hood as a scratching post. This had led to the clear coat failing and flaking off in spots, although not large bare spots like the roof had.

My second walk around revealed some surprises. The rocker covers were color matched to the body of the car. The rear valance and front spoiler were also color matched. Also color matched covers filled the spots where fog lights usually reside on these cars. These curiosities plus the sunroof meant this car wasn’t a base model. I next got under the car and was surprised to see a clean and rust-free undercarriage and engine. The muffler was original, too. The

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## Finding a Daily Driver, Part 2

continued from page 9

brake pads looked new. The only wet spot I could find was on the power steering hoses encased in black goo. Opening the hood revealed an engine bay that hadn't been cleaned in a long time. The battery was spotless. Maybe it was new. Brake, oil, and cooling fluids were all topped off to the correct levels, although the brake fluid was too dark to be fresh. The oil was black, too. The coolant reservoir showed bluish coolant inside. At least it was the right color.

I asked Pete for the key and started the car. It started right up but the idle was rough; I had to give it gas to keep it running. I turned off the key and looked under the hood. I don't know how I hadn't seen it before, but the main intake bellows was half off of the throttle body. When I moved it, I noticed that the vacuum tube coming off of the intake wasn't even attached to the nipple on the underside of the intake. I got my tools from my car and used a screwdriver to tighten the oblong clamp after reattaching the intake and the vacuum tube. Grabbing my tools had attracted the attention of Pete and his two assistants, who were now intently watching my every move. I started the car up again and it idled smoothly. My audience looked at me like I had performed a magic trick. Pete nodded his head and proclaimed, "This man knows his BMWs!" I could have used the rough idle for negotiating for the car later, but I had to know if the rough idle was a simple unmetered air leak or something worse.

I scanned the instrument panel and dash. The check engine and SRS lights glowed brightly. All the gauges were working and the dash had no cracks. Or at least I couldn't see any cracks through the layers of dirt and grime caked on the dash. Glancing around I could see that every square inch of the

interior was covered in the same grime. The interior color was something BMW called sand beige. It was a light gray coupled with a cream colored trim. It was hideous. The seats were leather comfort seats, another clue that this car was more than the base model. Dark round marks and separated seams adorned the front seats. The dark marks looked like they were either from cigarette ash burns or possibly stains from something that splashed on the seats.

The driver's door card was missing and I pressed the power window button. The switch disappeared into the console. I looked at the trim piece that holds the switch in place and it was broken. I removed it, fished the switch out from the console, and pressed it. The window motor sprang to life and lowered the window. After moving a couple of inches, the window tilted towards the front of the door, so I asked Pete to hold the window straight while I closed it. He knew exactly what to do when asked. I wasn't surprised. I then pressed the passenger window switch and the window lowered at an angle, too. At least the motors and switches worked. Pete was right; the plastic clips attaching the window to the regulator whose scissors action raises and lowers the window were broken.

The headliner was attached only by the various trim pieces such as the grab handles and sun visors. Otherwise, it drooped from the ceiling and flapped in front of the rear windows. The fabric was peeling off of both A pillar covers, which were hanging loosely from the pillars they were supposed to be covering. The sunroof switch dangled from a gaping rectangular hole that exposed the sunroof motor. The missing cover piece was in the passenger floor board. It was missing all the plastic clips that would have held it in place, and its fabric matched the filth of the headliner exactly. The sunroof did open on command when I pressed the dangling

switch. More importantly, it also closed.

I got out and opened the rear hatch. If miscellaneous had a definition, I was now staring at it. The missing door card was in the back, along with scattered tools – some looked to be from the car’s tool kit, a work boot, a couple of ball caps, assorted plastic pieces that I assumed were car trim, an empty paint can, a wooden dowel rod, a broom missing its handle, empty drink bottles, and trash. Lots of trash. I am amazed when I find people selling cars without at least cleaning the trash from the vehicle. I would never sell a car without making it as presentable as possible. Yet the only two Compacts I had looked at so far were both filled with stuff that didn’t belong in the car to begin with. It must have taken years for this much stuff to have collected in the back of this car.

I cleaned out most of the debris and looked in the spare tire well. Unlike the Kentucky car, the well was round, dusty, and in good shape. No rust. No spills. No errors.

I was beginning to like this car. In spite of the pitfalls of the interior, I thought that it was a really solid car. It was time to see how it drove. Pete told me the registration was out, but it would be fine to drive it around the neighborhood. The window sticker had the number 11 on it, meaning the car’s registration expired in 2011. I asked him about the registration. Pete had purchased the car in 2010, but had never registered the car. He probably didn’t have it insured, either. And it hadn’t been inspected in five years. And he was still driving the car “occasionally.”

I backed out of the driveway and off the curb at an angle to avoid Pete’s van. I shifted into first and the shift knob came off in my hand. When I replaced it, the knob just spun freely on the shifter. The clutch felt good as I shifted into second.

The engine sounded good, revving freely with the clutch in. I put on the blinker to turn left, and as I began the turn, the car screamed at me. Well, it was more of a loud groan, really. Judging from the muck I had seen underneath the power steering reservoir, there was probably little, if any fluid left. Even when I returned the wheel to center, the power steering hissed at me now. I shifted into second and then third on another street. The hissing stopped.

The car felt good. The suspension was just right: not too soft and not too firm. It handled bumps and dips in the road as it should. The tranny and engine responded well to downshifts. And even though I had removed the shift knob and was using the bare stick, the car felt good as I drove through the neighborhood at speeds up to 40 mph. The brakes operated as they should, although the pedal could have been more firm. I was probably right about the fluid being old. The only things that really bothered me while I drove the car were the groan of the power steering and the headliner drooping behind my head, occasionally brushing against my bald head.

These things could be fixed for probably not much money. I was sure the interior would clean up. This car was a solid car that needed some TLC, and the car was at a turning point. Not many buyers would be willing to put the work or money into this car. And Pete hadn’t been caring for this car at all, I suspected. He would continue to let this car run down until no one would want the car and it would be left in a back yard or alley or junk yard to rot. The sketchiness of the registration was the only issue with me. If Pete could produce a clean and legitimate title, I would make an offer on it.

Next time: I have to meet the previous owner of the ti...

# Tejas Chapter Incentive Points Challenge for 2016

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 2016. 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

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

## 2015 Incentive Points Challenge Awards



January  
23rd  
2016

see page 5

Awards will be given to the members that earned the highest points and the highest “rookie” (see explanation above). To allow for some suspense before the awards are given out, only the top 15 are listed in alphabetical order and the top 5 rookies, also in alphabetical order.

### Challenge Leaders

Gloria Anderson	Thomas Dawson
Scott Bowman	John Hughan
Josh Butts	Herbert Looney
Kathryn Butts	Raquel Robles
Ken Carson	Connie Stried
Jonna Clark	Donald Yule
Marco Cordon	Susan Yule
Mary Beth Cordon	

### Rookies

Gloria Anderson  
Nathaniel Crawford  
Gerald Desch  
Stephen Smith  
Chris Stahl

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# STREET SURVIVAL<sup>®</sup>

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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 1<sup>st</sup> event. A small team of Tejas Chapter members had been putting the plans together for a 2011 event, then a 2012 event, then a 2013 event, then a 2014 event, then a 2015 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 2016.

Please let the Driving Events Coordinator, Scott Bowman at [brglotus@fastmail.fm](mailto:brglotus@fastmail.fm), if you have a contact for a location in the Central Texas area.



**well at least  
a small part of it.**

*The Library, Archives, and Museum Program (LAM) has created a repository for BMW-related historical documents, literature, and paraphernalia, providing the public with access to rare and interesting BMW artifacts while ensuring their continued existence. This archive is housed in Greenville, South Carolina near the BMW CCA National Office and BMW Manufacturing.*

Our growing Archives, Library, and Museum needs your tax-deductible donations. See our website for more info.

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**Calendar of Tejas Chapter  
and Related Events**



**2016**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Meet Location</b>
January 23, 2016	Annual Post-Holiday Party see page 5	San Marcos
February 20, 2016	Spicewood Vineyards and Opie's BBQ see page 7	Austin
March - December 2016	TBD - watch the website and the <i>Tejas Trax</i>	TBD



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# Capital Area Food Bank Charity Event Recap

By John and Corey Hughan

This year for our holiday charity event we returned to the Capital Area of Texas Food Bank, where last year our passion for high performance automobiles clearly translated to a high performance work ethic, because whereas the average volunteer group at CAFB inspects, sorts, and packages roughly 3,500 lbs of food and beverage donations from all types of benefactors, we managed 5,970 lbs, enough to provide 4,975 meals! But lofty though that total was, the natural question on the minds of those who participated in our repeat performance this year was, could we top it this time around?

We gathered in the employee area, where our volunteer coordinator Leonard



went over some basic rules and logistics for the work shift. Then we made our way through their positively enormous warehouse (photos were not allowed in this area, but Costco or the IKEA pickup area for layout and approximate size and you won't be far off) back to the Product Recovery area where we would be working. Here Leonard gave us an overview of how the donation inspection process works, complete with examples of

what is and is not acceptable. This information pertained primarily to those who would be working at the inspection stations and who I believe easily have the



hardest job of all simply due to the number of things that need to be checked before “passing” an item. For example, canned goods must have a label that still clearly identifies what the item is and shows its entire ingredients list, which unfortunately means that most donations from well-meaning Mom and Pop outfits cannot be used; cans with multiple dents, sharp dents, or any dents around the rims cannot be accepted due to the risk of micro-punctures and therefore product contamination; cans that are bulging cannot be accepted due to potential bacterial growth, and cans or other items that have previously been opened cannot be used either, with a few exceptions such as dry beans. At this point you may be wondering why this area is called Product Recovery rather than Product Disposal – well it's because although CAFB is required to dispose of items in certain conditions for health and safety reasons, many items in seemingly bad shape can be used. Boxed items with sealed inner packaging, such as cereal, can be used even if the box is torn up. And most surprisingly, many items can be used even if their expiration date has long since passed. The reason is that most expiration

continued on page 18



**Capital Area Food Bank**  
**December**  
**Many thanks to Job**  
**Many more great photos are av**





**of Texas, Charity Event**  
**r 12, 2015**  
**an & Corey Hughan**  
available on the chapter website



# Charity Event Recap

continued from page 15

dates are set based on when the product is expected to no longer have its peak freshness and flavor, NOT when it will become unsafe to consume. Therefore in



the interest of providing as much food as safely possible to those in need, a whiteboard listed guidelines for various types of items indicating that while some items could only be used if they had expired no more than a few months ago, many were perfectly usable up to 2 years past their expiration date! The one exception was baby food, whose expiration date must be a few months in the future since these items may spend time in the warehouse before being distributed somewhere in the dozens of Texas counties that CAFB serves. A surprising and



initially saddening amount of food has to be thrown out due to these guidelines, but

we kept in mind that most of these donations would have been thrown out in their entirety had it not been for organizations such as CAFB who work to recover what they can in order to provide meals to those in need.

Once the inspectors have meticulously reviewed the items that the delivery team has brought to their stations, they are placed onto a conveyor belt, along



either side of which wait a line of volunteers working as sorters, whose role is to remove the items from the belt and sort them into boxes with labels such as canned protein, fruits & vegetables, pre-packaged goods, beverages, and others. This year the speed of the inspectors and sorters seemed fairly well matched, but when the former is passing items faster than the latter can sort them, parallels can certainly be drawn between the CAFB conveyor belt and the famous chocolate factory scene from “I Love Lucy”. When the sorters have filled a particular box to



its prescribed weight for its category, the box is sent down a line of rollers to a CAFB employee, who inspects it to verify that the contents are appropriate to the category and to perform an additional safety check for items that should be thrown out, then the box goes to the packagers and labelers, who verify that the weight is within the 1-pound tolerance (returning or retrieving items from the sorting area as necessary to adjust) and then find an appropriately sized lid for the box and affix a label to its exterior that identifies the contents, weight, and date of sorting. Finally, it is sent to the end of the roller line to another team that moves it onto one of the large pallets lining the wall of the



Product Recovery area, once again separated into the various food item categories, and once a pallet has been loaded with the prescribed number of boxes, a CAFB employee raises it on a pallet jack and shuttles it into the warehouse for later distribution.

So how did we do this year? Remember, the average team nets 3,500 lbs of usable food in a shift, and last year we

managed 5,970 lbs. Well, much as the performance of BMWs improves with successive model generations, so too did our output – our work yielded 6,180 lbs, enough for 5,051 meals! Having completed our work as Santa’s elves of sorts, we finished off the event with lunch at BJ’s Brewhouse in Sunset Valley. Unfortunately upon our arrival, despite my having coordinated the



menu for a pizza and salad buffet with two different managers at that location starting in October and having called twice in the week leading up to the event to update the expected number of guests, they had no record of our reservation. Fortunately, however, they had ample seating capacity, so instead we simply ordered individually off of their huge and wide-ranging regular menu. Our December charity event has always proven a rewarding experience for members, leaving them feeling that they’ve done something generous and important for others, and this year was certainly no exception. Many thanks to those who volunteered their time and efforts, and to those who missed out, we hope to see you at next year’s charity event. But before then, we’ll also hope to see you over what is sure to be yet another year of fun events in 2016, leading off with our traditional Post-Holiday Party in January. You won’t want to miss it!

# BMW of Austin Tech Session Recap

By John Hughan

I'm going to admit to bias right out of the gate on this event recap – I love BMW of Austin. It began for me right at the beginning of my foray into BMW, with the smooth and enjoyable experience I had ordering my M3 through Chris Markey there. It continued with my service experience, where I've lost count of how many times Thad Tucker has gone above and beyond for me over the years. Then there are the little things, like the way all of the staff members greet you with a smile and stop where they're going or even backtrack in order to open a door for you even while you're still 50 feet away. And as if all of that weren't enough, the facility itself is impressive. Not only is it practically spotless, from the showroom to the service waiting area to even the service bays themselves, but how many dealerships do you know of that offer customers who choose to wait for their car the opportunity to order up a premium coffee beverage, prepared by a full-time barista and free of charge, and then pass the time in an in-house movie theater complete with reclining leather lounge

chairs and a 500-disc Blu-ray changer chocked full of everything from classics to new releases? I know of exactly one such dealership.

In addition to being fortunate as individuals to have such an outstanding dealership in town, we're fortunate as a chapter to have BMW of Austin in that they are so committed to maintaining a strong relationship with BMW CCA, and especially the Tejas Chapter. They continue to offer members discounts on parts and service even as other dealerships in the country have dropped or dramatically scaled back that benefit, and they have a long history of hosting events for us – events that require a significant number of staff to run, often include meals, and somehow are none-the-less free for members to attend. My first such event was around the launch of the current M5 and M6, when BMW of Austin invited local patrons to come see the cars on display and learn about them from Matt Russell, M Brand Manager for BMW North America at the time, but a cursory look at the Scrapbook section of the chapter website shows that their history of hosting us for events such as these goes back at least 10 years.

And in that tradition, since BMW of Austin once again reached out to the Tejas

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Chapter, expressing interest in holding a Tech Session day for us, we gathered there for an afternoon of not just informative tech sessions, but also fun raffles, delicious food, and for some members, DIY projects under the watchful eyes and occasional assistance of BMW of Austin's own service techs, who along with the other wonderful staff members coordinating this event had taken time out of their Sundays to make this happen for us. As we checked in inside their ENORMOUS service bay



area, each of us received a BMW of Austin reusable bag that would become a swag bag for some lucky winners throughout the day but that initially contained a T-shirt, some raffle tickets, and a printout showing the schedule for the day. Having taken our seats, John Myrtle took us through an overview of the day, which included a breakdown of the many raffles that were



to occur throughout the event. The (relatively) smaller items such as gym

bags, luggage, and even a BMW “i” solar-powered battery charger, could be sought by placing the raffle tickets in our bag into bowls in front of the items, but the showcase item for which raffle tickets could be purchased via charitable donation was off to John's left: a BMW Cruise M-Bike Limited Edition. BMW has been producing bicycles for over 60 years, releasing a new model range each year, and as this particular model was created to celebrate BMW M, it features a hydroformed aluminum frame and carbon elements to keep it both light and stable. Only 500 examples were made, all of which were painted in (oh so fittingly for us) BMW M's Austin Yellow metallic paint, as seen on the current M3 and M4!



But that of course was for later in the day. To start things off, though, John said that some of us had already won a prize! To find out, all we had to do was reach for our schedule printout in our bags and scan the QR code in the corner. After a bit of confused muttering about how to scan a QR code or what a QR code even was, attendees reached for their smartphones, navigated to their app store, and downloaded an app suitable for the task – whereupon 10-15 members found that they had won detail packages worth \$229! A few others won BMW i8 computer mice, though unfortunately NOT among the giveaways was the REAL i8 parked halfway down the service bay area. This example wearing gleaming white paint was

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# BofA Tech Session Recap

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the first one to arrive at BMW of Austin not having been ordered by a customer;



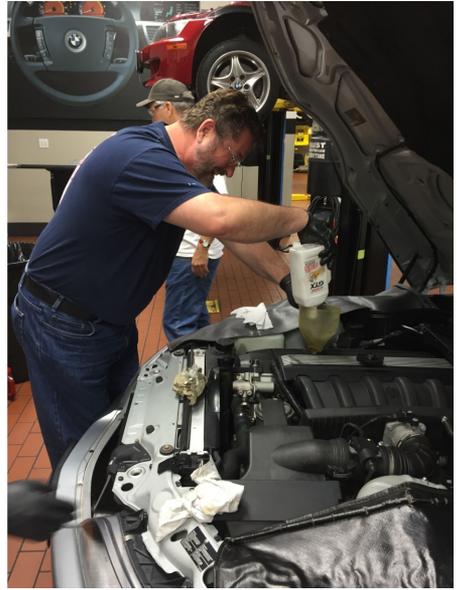
clearing that wait list took 2 years!

The preliminary festivities completed, we broke off into groups to explore the impressive array of activities and demos that BMW of Austin had prepared for us. Tech sessions held at stations running the length of the service bays covered topics such as suspension components and operation, iDrive/Connected Apps, Dinan performance upgrades, and driving techniques, both performance and teen safety-related.



The new 7 Series attracted members all through the event, with a staff member available to demonstrate some of its trick new features, including the ability to control iDrive with literal waves of the hand through the air! A circular motion would raise or lower the volume, and a backhanded slap motion would dismiss an incoming phone call, for example. I asked whether this example included the optional BMW Display Key that can be used to (among other things) navigate

the car into and out of tight parking spaces even while the driver is outside the car, and I was told that yes it did, but that the key was not out for display due to the risk of damaging or losing a key whose replacement cost is roughly \$600 – you’ve been warned! Those who had signed up to do DIY work were paired up with techs who brought members’ cars into the service bay, put



it up on a lift, and assisted with tasks such as oil and power steering fluid changes, brake pad swaps, and minor repairs. The techs also took the time to give members tips for how to do these tasks more efficiently as well as taking the opportunity of having the car on a lift to show members how things worked and point to what to keep an eye on or watch out for in terms of maintenance and repairs. One member even got an alignment, for which BMW of Austin uses a very advanced rack made by Hunter, and this too attracted many curious spectators, including yours truly. I had no idea the level of complexity and

number of steps involved in properly aligning a BMW!

Lunch was served partway through the event, consisting of hot dogs and burgers that were being grilled just outside



the service bays, along with a smorgasbord of toppings allowing members to build their own – and for dessert, BMW of Austin brought in a variety of flavors of Amy’s Ice Cream, ALSO with a broad selection of toppings. This gave us the opportunity for us all to discuss what we’d each learned from various tech sessions or DIY experiences, recommend particular activities to those who had not yet investigated them, and develop a plot to wrangle the i8 out for a battery of test drives, that last an endeavor in which we were sadly unsuccessful. After a very tasty meal, those who had signed up for the second DIY window were paired up with techs, and others once again broke out to explore whatever we had missed beforehand until it was time to go home. I want to thank John Myrtle at BMW of Austin for coordinating this event with us

and everyone there who worked so hard to put on yet another absolutely first-rate event for the Tejas Chapter. It’s wonderful for us enthusiasts to have a dealership that provides these types of tech sessions, access to services and new products (and of course the free swag!) We deeply appreciate your generosity and support of BMW CCA, and we look forward to doing it again sooner rather than later!



# Enjoying The Performance Center Delivery Experience

By Terry Jones

Once again I started to have that feeling about acquiring another BMW. Rationalizing is what it really takes when the Z4 coupe you are currently driving is perfectly fine and needs nothing. But, the siren song of the M235 kept calling me as I read online reviews plus occasionally hearing the significant other say go ahead if that is what you really want because you are not getting a day younger.

So this past July I started looking in earnest at dealer inventories in Austin, San Antonio, and other cities. It is amazing the few choices the dealers give you for color, especially all of those black interiors, and options. The Build Your Own car on the BMWUSA website sure was helpful in determining how the car would appear and to determine the msrp. Having decided to order the M235 optioned with the color, interior, and options we actually wanted on the car, I called the salesman who took care of us when we bought the X5 two years ago. This happened on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Ordering a car over the telephone sure is easy.

We decided to take advantage of the

Performance Center Delivery because it sounded like a lot of fun and we are always up for a road trip. My wife and I are SC natives, so we knew it would be a good thing to return to that part of the world even if for only a short visit. Again the BMWUSA website had a lot of useful information about the delivery program and what to expect. But first we had to wait on the car to be built and delivered to the US. We knew it would take a couple of months and this turned out to be true. Part of the fun was checking the BMW website every day to check on the status of the vehicle. Slowly it went from being ordered, to being built, to being shipped, to being prepped and finally to being delivered to SC. Our salesman was able to determine a definite date, October 9<sup>th</sup>, for us to be in SC for the delivery. We quickly got our one way airline tickets to SC from Austin. Luckily, United has multiple flights each day directly from Houston to Greenville, SC.

As instructed, when we arrived at the Greenville/Spartanburg airport, we called the number given to us for the Marriott. In a few minutes we were chauffeured to the Marriott in a sparkling new X5, escorted to a very nice room and invited to enjoy a nice dinner, drinks included, in the excellent hotel restaurant. At dinner

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we met another couple who were from Cincinnati picking up their car as we were.

The hotel staff advised us that, in true German tradition, to be in the lobby and be ready to go the next morning at 7:45 am, not 7:46 am. After a hardy breakfast at the hotel buffet, we met in the lobby and boarded the shuttle bus that took us to the BMW plant, a short drive away from the hotel. There we went to a classroom where we met three of the BMW staff driving instructors. All three had



impressive driving resumes. We were told that the Center does from 40 to 50 new car deliveries each week. Our group had about 10 new car owners.

We were escorted to the track area and each new owner was provided a car very similar to the one they had purchased. Our first activity was to learn how to really use the abs braking system. It is true that the older we are and the longer we have been driving, i.e., pre abs, we are reluctant to really slam on the brakes in the way that abs braking is intended to be used. Most everyone got really better stopping from 50/60 mph after multiple attempts. As some drivers were doing the abs training others took turns going through the obstacle course with cones, corners, and turns on the track. Not too much speed was involved, but you sure got a feel of how your new vehicle would handle and corner. We then went to experience the skid pad. Each driver got into a 435 with an instructor who explained we would experience traction control off and then on.

The circular track is kept wet, so as I was driving around it, the instructor told me to hit the accelerator which instantly resulted



in a 360 spin which included another 180 spin. Wow! We then switched the traction control on and this time when the accelerator was hit, the vehicle hardly fishtailed. Amazing what vehicle computers can do. Before leaving the track, we each got a ride with an instructor in an M3. Boy, what an experience. And, they get paid to do this!

After the track experience, we were given a new X5 and learned what the vehicles could do in an off road situation. The course included driving slowly with two wheels off of the ground and seeing the ability of the Xdrive to safely get you back on solid ground. We could not go through the deep water drive because the water was too deep due to the recent flooding rains. So, we then took the vehicles up a steep hill and came down using the hill descent feature which was truly amazing.

Next came a wonderful lunch in the Center café. Many German entrees were available. This time allowed us to meet more new owners and hear their stories and love of all things BMW.

We then proceeded to the guided tour of the factory. The SC plant is the only one that produces the X models, except

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## Performance Center Delivery

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for the X1. Seventy percent are shipped overseas. A nearby inland port has a dedicated rail line to ship the new vehicles to Charleston where they are shipped all over the world. The plant, which has over 1 million square feet, has two 10 hour shifts each day, producing 1200 suvs per day. It was amazing to see the robots installing sunroofs, windshields, rear windows, etc. Each vehicle has a module attached to the hood that tells the robot the configuration for that vehicle because every vehicle is ordered and none are spec built. Amazing is the fact that the factory receives shipments from suppliers every 45 minutes, keeping no inventory at the plant. Severe penalties face any company that is late with a delivery. The guide said that within two years they will be building the X7 series at this same plant.

When the factory tour was completed, we went to a nearby area in the parking lot where hospitality tents had been set up with our vehicle inside. There we met a specialist who answered all questions and explained the features of the car. A nice touch for us.

Before leaving, we went over to the nearby Zentrum BMW museum and



spent time there looking at the various vehicles including quite a few motorcycles. I was somewhat disappointed, when compared to what I had seen in Munich.

Originally we were going to travel the famed roads in the area, including the Tail of the Dragon, but the weather was deteriorating, the leaf peepers were going to be on the roads going 15 mph, and the motels were charging top dollar. Instead we headed to Atlanta where we discovered the Friday afternoon rush hour. After two and a half hours of bumper to bumper traffic we made it to Jane's brother who lives in Marietta. The Bimmer did great.

Our trip ended on Sunday night arriving home in Marble Falls. The new ride averaged 31 mpg. I have been totally pleased with the M235 which is evidenced by the stupid grin on my face, especially when you switch from comfort mode to sport mode. Oh my!

I would highly recommend the Performance Center Delivery for a fun experience. A couple of items I had to



dig out on my own. The dealer gives you the temporary tag which you take with you and install on the vehicle before leaving and after returning home you have to take to vehicle to the dealer to have the inspection done before the permanent tag can be issued. Also, I learned that I had ordered a 2015 model in August, but it became a 2016 model when delivered in October, saving me a year's depreciation. The price went up, but more features became standard equipment. Otherwise, the whole experience was great and highly recommended.



## **BMW CCA Oktoberfest September 2015**

Written by Dan McLaughlin  
Photos by Chris Stokes

I started off on a bright, sunny Thursday morning in September. With my M5 all cleaned up, fluids and tire pressures checked, and luggage in the trunk, I was headed east to Natchitoches, Louisiana to meet up with the Road Monkeys for our annual pilgrimage to the BMW CCA O'Fest, this year in Absecon, New Jersey on the famous Jersey shore. This is the story of a 12 day journey that will never be forgotten.



Meeting the rest of the group at the Church St. Inn with a glass of wine welcome, we prepared for several days of driving. Friday morning, with route directions in hand, we headed out on the back roads. With a detour for

construction, some dust devils and a fantastic lunch stop, we made our way through Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi, ending our day at Pickwick Landing State Park, Tennessee arriving as night fell.

Day two was a continuation with even more winding roads and little towns as we headed into the Appalachian Mountains. With a long lunch stop, busy Saturday traffic, and then an hour delay as the group got stuck in a traffic jam because of the largest car show in eastern Tennessee, it made for a very late arrival in Burnsville, North Carolina.

Day three we headed east and hopped on to the Blue Ridge Parkway for a stint of beautiful mountain roads with stunning vistas. Stopping for gas and a potty break we realized we were running way behind schedule for our dinner reservations. Abandoning the planned route, we decided on more direct roads through Charlotte to Norfolk, Virginia making it across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel before sunset. An hour later we arrived at our next stop in quaint Onancock, Virginia. Dinner and drinks were fabulous as we all looked forward to an easier day of driving the next morning.

Monday the skies were dreary and the roads wet but it did not deter a single member as we headed north and boarded the ferry to Cape May. With just a short drive up the Garden State Parkway, we pulled into our destination, the beautiful Stockton Seaview Hotel and Resort.

After checking into our rooms, we headed to registration, picking up our events packets and goodie bags.

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## BMW CCA Oktoberfest

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Plenty of vendors too, with the BMW Foundation, Giro's Garage and Odometer Gears to just name a few. Just walking around the hotel, we all started running into old friends and acquaintances and catching up with each other on our adventures the past year since O'Fest 2014 in Beaver Creek, Colorado.



Tuesday is always Concours day sponsored by Pirelli Tires. With the car wash stations busy, rags and cotton swaps were brandished with skill as the owners scrubbed away the grime of several days of travel. And what a sight was in store for everyone as all the cars, contestants and display onlys, were arranged on the hotel's front lawn. A vintage 1932 F76 triwheel van to a trio of brand new i8's and every variation you can imagine in between were on view for all. The afternoon was also the TSD competition plus the start of the Fun Rally and Gymkhana challenges.



Wednesday being a Jewish holiday, no official events were planned but a

Cape May wine tour and the Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum tour in Philadelphia were arranged for those wanting to head out for the day and explore. All week many other events came and went. A golf tournament, car control clinics, trivia contest, test drives and a weekend of BMW Club racing. There is something for everyone's interests and hobbies. I even got my hands on the keys to a M235i convertible for a little drive around the countryside.



Thursday started the performance segment of the program. AutoXing on Thursday and Friday and HPDE's Thursday through Sunday at New Jersey



Motorsports Park which features two tracks, Lightning and Thunderbolt. With the vendors moving over to the track, the BMW Foundation set up charity rides with BMW RLL team driver Bill Auberlin, Mike Renner of the BMW Performance Center and former BMW race car driver Hans Stuck.

On Thursday evening, a 1920's Prohibition party filled the hotel. The hotel, built in 1914, was the perfect

backdrop as flappers, gangsters and more over flowed the lobby into the



hotel bars and outdoor spaces. With beer provided by Spaten, the party extended through dinner and into the night.

Friday night's Awards Banquet was hosted at the Resorts Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City. Hundreds of our fellow Beemer heads packed the Starlight Room to a 5 course dinner. The winners of the Car of your Dreams drawing were announced. Awards were given out to many deserving participants for the Concours, AutoX and Photo contests. My fellow Road Monkeys earned quite a few awards including AutoX class wins for myself



and Chris Stokes, and a 3rd place for Jeff Thomson in a hotly contested "modified M3" class. Chris and Leann Stokes won 2nd place in the Gymkhana as well as an award in the Photo contest. Plus there were numerous raffles as Valerie Baker won a Michelin Tire gift certificate and I

snagged a Shell Gas gift card. Thank you sponsors! This years special guest speakers were Bill Auberlin and Hans



Stuck who entertained us with their experiences and racing stories. *(Ed. Note: photo shows Brian Redman and Bill Auberlin)*

Saturday is the day we pack up and head home as we have a long drive back to Texas. We say our goodbyes for another year as we begin to look forward to next years O'Fest, in Monterrey, CA. This year was a bit special for me as I got to see members from my old chapter in New York who came down for the festivities. These are the people who taught me so much about BMW's and how to actually drive. Thank you Andre and the rest of the gang. It was great seeing y'all again.

Hitting the road, several of us decided not to rush back, taking 3 days instead of 2. It's hard when you're driving solo. We managed to avoid a nasty backup on I81 from a truck accident. Found the best Chinese/Thai food restaurant in Tennessee and we all hit the first BBQ joint we could once back in Texas.

Thank you Road Monkeys for making what could be a mundane drive into one full of great back roads, adventures and camaraderie. I wouldn't do it any other way.

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