

BMW Car Club
of America
Tejas Chapter



TEJAS TRAX

Newsletter for the Tejas Chapter, BMW CCA



On the Bluebonnet Drive

Photo by Herb Looney

May/June 2012

BMW Car Club
of America



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<p style="text-align: center;">Full Page</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Per Year - \$500 Per Month - \$50</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Centerfold</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Per Year - \$900 Per Month - N/A</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Half Page</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Per Year - \$300 Per Month - \$30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Quarter Page</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Per Year - \$200 Per Month - \$20</p>
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Visit the Tejas Chapter Web Site at <http://www.tejaschapter.org/tejas.html>

The Tejas Trax is printed bi-monthly by Enthusiast Media Group, the Roundel publishers.

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From The President

On Newsletter Changes

This is one of those bad news, good news stories that hopefully will have a happy ending.

The story began the first week in April after the April issue of the *Tejas Trax* had been printed. I called the printers to tell them that I was not happy with the printing that month because it was all washed out and didn't look anything like the master copy. I was told that they were glad that I called because they needed to talk to me about our printing cost. I was advised that the small business discount that we were receiving was no longer valid and that I would be contacted about a new price for printing.

Well, true to their word, I got a call a few days later telling me what the new cost would be for printing the newsletter. I almost fell out of my chair!! The new cost was 86% higher than the old cost!! I told them that we could not afford that, but it didn't matter to them. They had been printing the

newsletter for 20+ years, but keeping us as a customer seemed unimportant to them.

Coincidentally, with no connection to our new printing situation, I had received a bid from Enthusiast Media Group (EMG), the company that handles the *Roundel* printing. They were offering to do our newsletter in full-color and on better quality paper for less money than our current printer wanted for B&W. Of course, we couldn't afford either one.

Not being one to run from the first volley, I contacted the national office for our printer and explained the situation to them. To make a long story short, I was eventually contacted with a new price from the printer that was only a 31% increase. We couldn't afford that either.

After careful consideration, the board decided to go with EMG on a bi-monthly basis, which resulted in the full-color newsletter that you now have in your hand.

There are still some issues to be worked like dealing with our advertisers and adjusting rates, but hopefully there will be a happy ending for all.

Until next time

Glenn McConnell

Welcome New Members

Austin

*Randy Clarke
Darrell Dandridge
Daniel Elizalde
Christine Fleischer
Michael Gonzalez
Ben Littler*

*Ivan Milman
Joe Robson
Brett Tarr
Julio Valle
Jonathan Van Shellenbeck
Andrew Yates*

BMW Car Club
of America
Tejas Chapter



Cedar Park

*JP Burd
Justin King
Moirra Zinn*

Round Rock

*Larry Chen
Steve Paul*

San Antonio

James Aiello

Lakeway

Dennis Thompson

Pflugerville

Denise Garcia

Arlington

Rodney Woods

Brackettville

Michael Downey

Houston

Sonny Stetson

Killeen

George Babers

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

Tejas Chapter Blackland Prairie Tour

Saturday, May 19, 2012

Planned by Alan & Jan Greene



We will explore the "Blackland Prairie" area that is due East of Austin between Highway 290 on the north and Highway 71 to the south. Its name comes from the rich black soil native to the area where many of our "native" fruits and vegetables are grown, along with peanuts and pecans. We'll travel the back roads, stop at a famous Painted Church, eat lunch at a Czech bakery/deli, and end our trip in Smithville, a location for many well-known movies (such as Hope Floats) and a great place to shop or just enjoy the small-town ambiance. Bring your cameras and appetites!

9:00AM - Meet at the parking lot of the now-defunct Christian Academy on the NW corner of the intersection of US 183 and FM 969, east of downtown Austin. Driver Meeting at 9:15AM, leave at 9:30AM

Bring your coffee and visit the "facilities" before you leave, as there isn't much else at the academy, which was closed down some time ago.

We will stop briefly to visit St. Paul's Lutheran Church which was founded by German immigrants (known as the Wends) in the mid-1850s. Serbin is also home to the Wendish Cultural Center nearby.

From Serbin, we will then continue to the famous (or infamous) town of LaGrange. We will stop for lunch at Weikel's bakery/deli/service station at approximately noon.



Weikel's is well-known for its supremely good Kolache pastries (sweet and savory) and other Czech delights, and they have a great deli that serves fresh sandwiches and salads.

After lunch, we will take to the back roads and head south from LaGrange for some scenic driving through O'Quinn, Muldoon, and Cistern, where we will head north into Smithville. Our tour ends here, and participants can explore sights and shops of this quintessential (I always wanted to use that word!) Texas small town or head on home.

**More details and RSVP form on the website at
<http://www.tejaschapter.org/tejas.html>**

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Tejas Chapter Fun Rally

Saturday, June 23, 2012
Planned by Sandy McConnell

Meeting Location: Carinos, San Marcos, east parking lot.

Directions to Carinos:
From Austin - Exit 204A, cross under IH 35 to the east side. From San Antonio - Exit 204



Who: YOU and your navigator (solo at your own risk)

What: Tejas Chapter 2012 Fun Rally

When: Registration - 10:00 - 10:30 am; Driver briefing - 10:30am; First car out - 11:00am

Where: Texas Hill Country - around San Marcos.

Prizes: 1st - 3rd Experienced, 1st - 3rd Novice, and Dead Last .. But Finished

The rally will take about two hours to run and end up at a restaurant for lunch. (Panic packets will be available)

Helpful items to consider:

1. Start the rally - full, full, empty
- full stomach - Near by Carino's is a Burger King and a What A Burger; a McDonalds isn't far away either, so you can get breakfast.
- full tank of gas - at our starting location, Conoco and Shell Stations are nearby.
- empty bladder - you get the idea.....
2. Bring a camera.

THIS IS A RAIN OR SHINE EVENT

**More details and RSVP form on the website at
<http://www.tejaschapter.org>**

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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 1st event. A small team of Tejas Chapter members had been putting the plans together for a 2011 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 2012.

Please let the Driving Events Coordinator, Josh Butts at josh@joshbutts.com, 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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Member's Voice

by John Hughan

This time we have responses mostly from members who don't regularly contribute to Trax, which is fantastic because a key goal for this new section has been to expand member participation in Trax by creating an opportunity to contribute (and earn Incentive Points!) without writing an entire article. Let's keep hearing from new voices in addition to the veterans next time too!

Last month's topic focused on BMW's autonomous driving system currently under development as well as the multi-industry efforts around vehicle-to-vehicle communication systems. Here's what members had to say when asked whether they were enthusiastic about the possibilities of these systems or concerned about issues such as reliability and cost:

I've always thought of the concept of letting the car drive as more of a commuter solution, using "public" vehicles rather than personal. I suppose I'd be in favor of it if it mean that large and ungainly vehicles (trucks, SUVs, minivans, etc.) would be relegated to a lane for such vehicles and keep them out of the way of "real" drivers. Yet the idea of being able to take a break from driving while still traveling has its appeal, I suppose I just don't trust the elaborate electronics this would require. After 41 years in Information Technology, I've yet to find a completely "foolproof" system, although great strides have been made in redundant systems and such. I do believe that it would add some weight and a lot of extra complexity to what has already become a very sophisticated electronics system in today's cars. When I first read John's question about this, the first thing that came to mind

was the gentleman who, while driving his RV down an interstate highway, set the "cruise control" and walked back to fix himself a sandwich. The resulting chaos led to a lawsuit against the manufacturer and seller of his RV for failing to advise him that "cruise control" wasn't an "autopilot". —Alan Greene

I'd welcome any technology that would avoid or minimize the probability of a vehicle accident. My ideal system would be passive, monitoring in the background and only interceding when required. But me having zero interaction bothers me. We buy a BMW to enjoy the sheer driving experience (if not we would all drive high-MPG less expensive cars) so why mess with that and let my onboard nanny take me everywhere while I read my Facebook updates? I can see the benefit of a commute without driver participation (hence eliminating error to some extent), but then we already have an existing system called mass transit (rail/bus). It would also be hard for me to imagine this system in the near future and how it would exactly react to me driving my vintage pre-V2V vehicle - would I be a stealth car scaring everybody because I don't show up on the radar screen? Also, what about privacy issues when you are connected to everything? I guess it's still in diapers but I do see this being applied to some extent. Reminds me of the chase scene in Will Smith's "I, Robot" with the automated everything. —Hector Sanchez

I'm a driver. And with the way most drivers behave, until it's mandatory that ALL cars be equipped with V2V and autonomous technology so that traffic really does move smoother & faster, I would not be interested in it. For one, the cost of

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Member's Voice

continued from page 9

these new technologies initially would be terribly high, and you'd really not be able to benefit from them. And two, I'm a driver. I like to be behind the wheel, with my left hand on the steering wheel, my right hand on the shifter and my left foot at the ready for the clutch. Perhaps only for the monotonousness of driving long, straight distances on an open road would I find it useful. But that's definitely not the norm for me. And even then, a nap is out of the question. I'd never totally trust it. —Jonna Clark

When I first read the question about autonomous driving and V2V, I definitely wanted the R&D dollars moved to another area of car technology, but over the past couple of weeks I have changed my mind.

With life being so busy and not enough time to do everything, this technology would provide me another ~1 to 2 hours a day to do other things, i.e. work on my laptop, put make-up on, have conference calls, read, etc. I have seen people do all that while they are driving, which creates an unsafe environment. It would take a little time to get comfortable with the technology, but I know BMW will do a great job. I would also like the option to turn this off when I want to have driving control. —Linda Cavazos

Drive or be driven? As a guy who loves tech innovations, and a retired airline pilot who rode through computer flown landings in zero-zero weather conditions, you'd think I'd be a proponent of autonomous driving. But, I'm not. When the aircraft computer took us from one place to another, we were widely separated

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from other traffic, were watched by Air Traffic Control and verbally warned of traffic and conflicts. The idea of being several car lengths from another vehicle without being in control is a bit too futuristic for my grey-haired taste. Besides, I own a BMW because it's fun to drive. If I want to ride I can take the bus. —Shell Storer

For next time: The first models of BMW's new line of M Performance Automobiles go on sale in Germany this month: the M550dX, X5 M50d, and X6 M50d. All three feature xDrive and a triple-turbo inline-six diesel engine producing 376 hp and 546 lb-ft @ 2000 RPM. The M550dX goes from 0-60 in 4.7 seconds and gets 37 MPG. Other M tweaks compared to the base models include revised suspension, tires, and front and rear fascias. While none of the launch models will be offered in the US, BMW has committed to offering gasoline-powered M Performance models here, including variants of the Z4, X1, 1 and 3 Series, and possibly others thereafter. M Performance Automobiles

are intended for “customers looking for more emotionality and more performance but who don't want to forgo everyday usability of their cars.”

Questions: What do you think of having an option between the standard series models and their full M counterparts? What do you hope BMW will do with this lineup, or perhaps with the standard series or full M models once this lineup becomes established? Are you the M Performance target market? Do you worry that BMW is trying to be too many things to too many people and diluting its brand as well as M's in the process? Or are you fine with BMW further diversifying to increase revenue so long as it stays focused on its “driver's cars”, the way Porsche created the high-volume Cayenne and Panamera models to generate the necessary revenue to continue developing the low-volume but iconic 911?

Send your short responses to TraxEditorials@gmail.com for 15 Incentive Points and publication in the next issue of Trax!



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 April 26, 2012

<u>640 Pts</u> Alan Greene	<u>140 Pts</u> Scott Bowman	Brad Mitchell	Mike Bassart	Ted Marchut
<u>485 Pts</u> John Hughan	Ken Carson	Frazier Newlin	Dawn Bissell	Brian McKinney
<u>465 Pts</u> Paul Goldfine	Don Yule	Steve Pedersen	Fred Brinkley	Johnny Mitchell
<u>340 Pts</u> Herb Looney	<u>135 Pts</u> Jonna Clark	Steve Tatro	Brenya Buchalski	Shearon Mitchell
<u>280 Pts</u> Josh Butts	Jeff Conner	Brad Thompson	Ron Buchalski	Lisa Moore
Jan Greene	<u>130 Pts</u> Marco Cordon	Javier Torres	Lori Burns	Dorothy Morgan
<u>225 Pts</u> Hector Sanchez	Tom Brown	<u>60 Pts</u> Mohammed Abusalih	David Cloyd	Jonathan Pearson
<u>200 Pts</u> Sridhar Kamma	Kathryn Butts	Don Bishop	Robert Craig-Gray	Al Ridgley
<u>190 Pts</u> Linda Cook	Allan Gazza	Rob Brown	Max Dean	Joe Robson
<u>170 Pts</u> Wayne Eltringham	<u>110 Pts</u> Tom Brown	Eric Chang	Joel Dolisy	Marc Schubert
Mike Sevel	Chris Spencer	Gay Dawson	Ben Eckermann	Cathy St. Martin
<u>155 Pts</u> Linda Cavazos	Tim Cook	Tom Dawson	Fred Egloff	Nicholas Steinour
Roger Williams	Philip Nybro	Jack Laumer	Tim Ehrhart	Brad Theriot
	Connie Stried	Bill Muldoon	Daniel Elizalde	Karl Van Shellenbeck
	Susan Yule	Carl Nybro	Chris Gant	Michael Van Shellenbeck
	<u>80 Pts</u> Brian Gavron	Terry Sayther	John Garvish	Philip White
	Joe Lamping	Jay West	Bert Hernandez	<u>20 Pts</u> Graham Jones
	Jacy Legault	Trent Zou	Kristopher Hicks-Green	<u>10 Pts</u> Steven Stamps
	Tim Master	<u>50 Pts</u> Bill Hoch	Pat Jamail	Joe Sylvester
		<u>40 Pts</u> JP Burd	James Lee	Terre Williams
		<u>30 Pts</u> Bob Ashenbrenner	Jeri Lee	
		Kimberlee Augustine	Robert Lewallen	
			Ben Littler	
			David Mann	
			Margie Mann	
			Amy Marchut	

2012 Bluebonnet Drive

by Alan Greene

The 2012 Tejas Chapter annual Bluebonnet Drive took place on April 21 on what was to be an absolutely gorgeous day. With breeze and sunshine prevailing, we assembled at the “Y” in Oak Hill prior to our departure. This may have been the largest contingent we’ve gathered in quite some time, with over 80 people



in attendance and all sorts of new and old BMWs. We even had a 2013 F30 328i, with the new 2.0-liter turbocharged N20 four-cylinder engine. I also spotted a Z3 M Coupe that was a stunner in bright red, a super-bright and spotless Laguna Seca Blue E46 M3, plus several E92 M3s



and even a 128i Convertible (the one I was driving, belonging to my wife,

Jan).

After our driver’s meeting at 9:15 AM, we departed westward on Highway 290 with event organizer John Hughan and his wife Corey leading us in his E92 M3. A short drive later, we turned north on Fitzhugh Road. This nicely-paved rural road took us past numerous homes, small ranches, a few businesses, Pedernales Falls State Park, and eventually led us all the way into Johnson City for our first rest stop. We didn’t see too many bluebonnets, but there was an abundance of red and yellow wildflowers all along the route and the scenery and curves were outright delightful. And lo and behold – Herb Looney and Jonna Clark (in her new Z4 M Coupe) were waiting in ambush



for us with their cameras just as we were nearing the outskirts!

Once in Johnson City, we proceeded to the County Courthouse and parked in front of it and the adjacent Pecan Street Brewing Company where we had lunch on our event last year. A chance to walk

continued on page 16

2012 Incentive Points Challenge Rookies Leader Board				
As of April 26, 2012				
<u>10.83 Pts</u>	<u>4.38 Pts</u>	<u>3.00 Pts</u>	<u>2.81 Pts</u>	<u>2.68 Pts</u>
Kathryn Butts	JP Burd	Joe Robson	James Lee	Marc Schubert
<u>9.60 Pts</u>	<u>3.31 Pts</u>	<u>2.98 Pts</u>	<u>2.79 Pts</u>	
Chris Spencer	Daniel Elizalde	Ben Littler	Amy Marchut	
<u>5.85 Pts</u>	Jeri Lee	<u>2.87 Pts</u>	<u>2.77 Pts</u>	
Carl Nybro		Max Dean	Ted Marchut	



Annual Blue
April 2
Many thanks to
Many more great photos are av





ponnet Drive
1, 2012
o John Hughan
available on the chapter website



2012 Bluebonnet Drive

continued from page 13

around and stretch our legs, chat with fellow members, take pictures, and empty some bladders before



continuing on our quest to see our erstwhile state flower. Spring rains came early this year, as did the Bluebonnets which were out in abundance a few weeks before our event, but there were plenty left to see. After approximately 20 minutes or thereabouts, we headed out of town, following Nugent Avenue back to Highway 281, where we headed north.

After a short distance, we turned west on Farm Road 1323 towards Willow City, home of the famous Willow City Loop. Along the way, the wildflowers were in great abundance and our long caravan took in the sights and



snapped photos of the flowers and the cars ahead and behind. The sun grew warmer and those of us with topless cars soon began to feel the growing warmth

on exposed arms and legs, but we were undeterred. We arrived at Willow City and took the right turn onto the Willow City Loop, a private road that has become so popular that signs have been posted urging sightseers to remain in their cars. On previous trips we had actually stopped to take photos and stretch a bit, but with all the curves and elevation changes in the road, it is hazardous to do so. We did encounter a few vehicles that fortunately were able to pull over far enough to let our caravan by without any hard braking and swerving to avoid contact.

The loop is probably one of the most picturesque spots in all of Central Texas, particularly during Wildflower season. The going is somewhat slow due to the narrowness of the road, numerous cattle guards, and low-water crossings. But there were fields of flowers everywhere, plus exposed-rock hills and cliffs that highlighted our route. At one point along



the loop, there was a large field, several acres in size, that seemed like it was ablaze with red wildflowers – as far as one could see, it was like a dazzling red blanket. We managed to get a photo, although it was a bit blurred due to our



moving along at 35 mph and the bumps in the road surface, but suffice to say, it was one of the most unusual sights on the entire trip.

Once we made it through the loop, we turned south on Highway 16 towards Fredericksburg. The cruise along this faster and larger roadway was quite a contrast to the leisurely pace along the preceding loop, but allowed us to cool down some, as the temperature began rising past the mid-70s. Once in Fredericksburg, we proceeded to Hondo's restaurant, where we quickly filled the parking lot, the driveway leading into it, and the street leading up to it. But once there, we found a great shaded outdoor seating area with picnic tables and benches shaded by huge trees. The tables were reserved for us and we gathered 6 to 8 at a table, where we



marked our orders on a menu and then went inside to place our table's order all at once. While we waited, we were

treated to trays of chips and salsa and curly fries. The food arrived fairly quickly and was exemplary – huge burger and salads that were nicely presented and very well-prepared. The restaurant's indoor section had a great antique bar and great "Western" murals



on the walls, reminiscent of old-time dance halls and saloons.

After lunch, our event was officially over, and we headed out of town towards home. By this time, the sun was fairly hot, and although we decided not to put on some sunscreen for the return drive, we regretted the decision when we arrived home about 90 minutes later – probably the worst "convertible burn" we'd ever experienced, but definitely worth it. A gorgeous day, a superb ride with great friends in great cars, and a superb lunch, all on-time and well-executed. Our thanks to John HUGHAN for this well-planned event!

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A Brief History of Texas License Plates

By Alan Greene

Every year, all of us renew our vehicle registration, which is a form of taxation to provide funding for road and bridge maintenance in the county where we reside. Our registration is tied to our vehicles by VIN number and is displayed on our cars via license plates and a windshield sticker indicating when the registration expires. Over the years, the concept of a numbered license plate has taken many forms using a variety of materials, including tin, wood, aluminum, and leather.

In Texas, the first vehicle registrations began in 1907, and were assigned by county. Back then, the plates were numbered sequentially as each vehicle registration was recorded. There were no county names or even the word “Texas” on the plates, so there were lots of duplicates. All that was required was to display the number in a “conspicuous place”, so many vehicle owners used house numbers attached to wood shingles, pieces of tin, or whatever was handy. Others actually painted their number on their vehicle! And then there were the porcelain kits with interchangeable numbers that came from, of all places, Chicago. Imagine being able to change your plate number at will to foil the local sheriff!

By 1910, there were over 14,000 registered motor vehicles in Texas. In 1917, the State Highway Department was created and assumed responsibility for licensing from the 254 Texas counties. That same year, the first embossed plates were issued and were dark blue with white lettering. But

instead of a windshield sticker (some vehicles didn’t actually have windshields back then), a round “radiator seal” was used for the yearly plate validation and were red with white letters and affixed



to the vehicle’s radiator. In those days, the radiator was always at the front of the car with no “grille” ahead of it, and the “seal” was easy to spot.

By 1918, there were over a quarter-million vehicles registered in Texas and the seal color was changed to blue on white, and later to white on blue, just as our current registration stickers change color from year to year. The round seals had the current year on a 5-pointed star with the letters “TEXAS” between the points and the words “Registered Motor Vehicle” around the circumference. There were some problems in the early 1920s with stolen seals, so a rectangular shape was introduced along with a serial number stamped into the seal, which didn’t actually match the number on what was called the “base plates”. By 1922, there were half a million vehicles registered – that number having doubled in only four years!

Beginning in 1923, the plate number was up to 6 digits and had a “lone star” separating the first and second group of

numbers – no letters were used yet. Plates were white numerals on black and had the word “TEXAS” on each end of the plate. In 1925, the year for the plate



appeared on the right edge and the era of the yearly plates began. The color changed to white on maroon background – perhaps influenced by Texas A&M somehow?

1927 brought the first use of a letter for the plate number, the color changed to white on green, and plates had the words “front” and “rear” on the left edge. This continued until 1930, and plates continued to change colors each year, with orange on white (UT colors) appearing in 1933. Plates were still a long rectangular shape (somewhat similar to the euro plates today) until 1939, when they became taller and shorter in width, similar to the plate shapes we see today. Of course, everyone has heard jokes about “going to work in the license plate factory” (referring to being sentenced to State prison), but that activity didn’t begin until 1935 in Huntsville. That year, the plates were the Texas A&M colors of white on Maroon. Could there have been some Aggie alums involved in the manufacturing process?



Except for the 1936 “Centennial” plates,

which had the letters “TEX” as a separator for the plate digits, the lone star continued in the center of the plate. With the start of WWII in 1941, metal conservation was started to support the war effort, and license plates were collected for recycling. Starting in 1943, plates were revalidated with metal tabs affixed to the plates themselves, and in 1945, new plates were



issued singularly instead of in sets of two due to continuing metal shortages. That same year saw the introduction of specific plates for trucks, tractor trucks (as in 18-wheeler), and farm trucks to replace the older “commercial” and “farm” plates. 1947 saw plate renewals done with windshield stickers, but new plates began to be issued in pairs later that year. In 1948, the first “House Trailer” plates appeared, and the “Side Car” (for motorcycles) plates were discontinued. As were sidecars.

The 1950s saw the first “Motor Scooter” (smaller than motorcycle) plates issued in 1953, but none in any of the years since. The “Amateur Radio” plates popular with “Ham” radio buffs appeared in 1954. In 1956, the standardized 6” x 12” plate size was adopted, along with “Consular Official” plates for diplomats. Dropped in 1946, the “lone star” separator appeared again in the middle of the 1957 plates, which also introduced the first black-on-white plate color scheme. This scheme was

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Texas License Plates

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alternated with white on black every year until 1970.

The 1960s was pretty straightforward, with the only major



introductions being the first personalized, or vanity, plates in 1965, with the lone star disappearing that one year. In 1966, the first “reflectorized” plates were issued for vanity plates only, with all plates being reflectorized in 1969. 1968 marks the year that TXDOT began computerizing motor vehicle records. Most likely, this was done with an enormous “mainframe” computer the size of an 18-wheeler trailer. Ask me how I know this.

The 1970s were years of “color”, in that while the plate background stayed white, the numbers were blue, black, green, and red, finally reverting back to black on white in 1975. That same year saw the introduction of the month



and year stickers affixed to plates designed to last 5 years, and the lone star “separator” was officially

changed to a Texas silhouette. In 1978, plates could now be renewed in any month instead of by March 31 each year. Thus began the annual affixing of stickers to the plates.

By 1980, the “five-year” plates were holding up quite well, so it was decided they could be used indefinitely. In 1982, the ABC-123 format of plate numbers was exhausted, so the 123-ABC format was introduced. 1985 saw a subtle change: the word “Texas” appeared in red, along with the Texas silhouette “separator”. In 1988, Texas decided that an 8-year lifecycle was appropriate and new plates would be issued if the vehicle was still in use.

By 1990, the 123-ABC numbering format was exhausted (in only 8 years!), so a new ABC-12D format was introduced. The Texas flag was added in 1992 along with the slogan “The Lone Star State” at the bottom



of the plate. In 1994, the last of the plate validation stickers were issued and thus began the era of the windshield sticker. You could also get special college and university plate designs beginning that year as well. During the rest of the 1990s, the “waving flag” was alternated from left of “TEXAS” to the right for the next 4 years. 1997 was quite a year for plates – the ABC-12D format was exhausted, so the new A12-BCD format began, and vowels were

discontinued (not even Vanna White could get one!).

With the turn of the Century, plates became very graphic, with pictures of the space shuttle, the moon and stars, oil derricks, a mounted rider, and other silhouettes and pictures and slogans appearing on plates. By 2004, the ABC-123 numbering format was re-introduced and by 2009, a 7-digit format appeared. That same year, “myplates.com” (from Australia) began offering State-sanctioned custom plates, went out of business after only selling less than 1300 plates, but then quickly regrouped after simplifying their design choices. These custom plates are priced above and beyond the normal yearly registration fee. They go way beyond the original vanity plates, where all

you could get was a custom set of 6 digits or letters on a standard plate format – the sky is literally the limit now, only no “inappropriate” words are permitted. I thought about “KS MY GRTS”, but that had too many letters, as does “MLNM FLCN” (you closet Star Wars fans ought to appreciate that one).

And one last bit of trivia – during the mid-1980s, a bill was introduced for gold-plated bronze plates for an extra \$1000 above the normal registration fee. You’d think for that much, they could have just included it at no extra cost! It failed to pass, however, as it probably wouldn’t have appealed to very many of us normal folks, not to mention the fact that it would have been a superb “steal me – my owner is loaded” indicator.



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Car Maintenance Using Common Household Items

Part 1

By Mike Sevel

I have attended 60+ club events over the last 5+ years and it is quite apparent to me that our members maintain their Bimmers quite well. My '03 Z4 is approaching 74,000 miles and it is always a challenge to keep the exterior looking spiffy when stone nicks, scratches and other paint fading/abrasions occur. Also the interior has a variety of finishes/materials that require unique cleaners.

Over the years, I have used a combination of commercially available car cleaning/waxing products, supplemented with common household items. I thought it might be informative to our members to summarize car cleaning attributes of common household items for exterior and interior maintenance at a fraction of the cost for commercial cleaners. The following list includes some household products, used for car maintenance, that you may be aware of along with a few surprises. No guarantees are implied and your results may vary. At future events, you may wish to advise our members if you had good or bad experiences with the listed options.

Keep those Bimmers beautiful!!

Tube Socks

Wheel cleaning. Use old tube socks to clean wheels and you will avoid rough edges and avoid coming in contact with brake dust that can be corrosive to your skin. Tire changing. Store a pair of tube socks in your trunk to keep your hands clean while changing a tire.

Peanut Butter

Exterior black or gray trim moldings. Most Bimmers have some black or gray trim moldings in varying sizes and loca-

tions. The moldings can develop a whitish appearance and it is difficult to clean and must be masked (covered) with a product such as Meguiar's "Back to Black", \$8 for a 12 ounce bottle. The final buffed finish is overly shiny and can attract dirt. I tried the peanut butter option on the black moldings surrounding the the windshield wipers and along the entire length of the lower windshield molding. Using only a few tablespoons of peanut butter, I applied it in a circular motion, allowed it to dry and buffed with a towel. Apparently peanut butter has a mild abrasive which removes the whitish residue and it also contains oil which penetrates and seals the plastic finish. The final wipe revealed a even matte sheen with no white residue. To date, I have washed the Z4 three times and the molding is shedding water nicely and the appearance has not deteriorated.

Toothpaste

Headlight lens cleaner. Spread three or four lines of any toothpaste on the cloudy headlight lens. Wipe in a circular motion with a towel. Allow to dry, wash off and towel dry. Repeat if necessary. Apply car wax for final sealing.

Mayonnaise

Tar and sap removal. Place a dab of mayo on the stains for 15-20 minutes. Rub with towel until stains are removed. Stubborn stains might require use of WD-40 or lighter fluid. Interior cigarette burn holes. Dab mayo on the burned area surrounding the hole and allow to set for 10-15 minutes. Wash off with damp towel. Hole can then be repaired using tips on the internet.

White Vinegar

Windshield cleaner. Use a 50/50 vinegar/water solution in a spray bottle. apply in the shade and wipe off with paper towel

quickly. Car chrome. Polish with full strength vinegar followed by buffing with towel. Car sickness residue odor. Fill a bowl with full strength vinegar, place it on the floor, close the windows and allow to remain overnight. Test for odor next day and repeat if necessary. Vinyl upholstery. A 50-50 mix of vinegar and water in a spray bottle will clean vinyl upholstery. Follow with a plain water wipe with a towel. Car trunk odor. Soak a slice of white bread with full strength vinegar and allow to remain overnight. Decal removal. Spray full strength vinegar on the decals and allow to soak in for 30 minutes. Use the edge of an old credit card to determine if the decal can be scraped off. A second application may be needed. Decals will eventually come off leaving no residue. Carpet stains. Use a 50-50 mixture of vinegar and water and spray on the stains and

blot with clean towel. Vacuum after stain has been removed. Gum globs. Daub full strength vinegar on the gum and it should peel off. If some residue remains, repeat again or press an ice cube on the gum for a few minutes to harden it and will aid in removal. Exterior wash. Add a small amount of full strength vinegar to the soapy wash bucket. It will create a shiny finish between wax applications. Hard water body stains. Use one part vinegar to three parts soft water, wash in the shade and towel dry quickly.

Club Soda

Carpet stain. Fill a sprayer with club soda. Spray on stain, blot and vacuum dry.

Cornstarch

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Calendar of Tejas Chapter and Related Events		
2012		
Date	Event	Meet Location
May 19, 2012	Blackland Prairie Tour see page 5	Austin
June 23, 2012	Fun Rally see page 7	San Marcos
July 2012	XPEL Tech Session	San Antonio
August 2012	TBD	TBD
September 2012	Tri-Marque Concours	Austin
October 19-21, 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.		

Common Household Items

Continued from page 23

Greasy carpets. Sprinkle cornstarch on the the grease and allow to remain overnight. Next day vacuum the cornstarch.

Alcohol

Windshield wipers. Soak cotton balls in rubbing alcohol and rub along the wiper blades and discard. Repeat with additional applications until the all dirt has been removed. Interior plastics. Spray 50-50 mixture of alcohol and water and wipe off with dryer sheets. Windshield cleaning. As an alternative to a vinegar solution, use a 50-50 mixture of alcohol and water in a sprayer. wipe off with paper towels.

Lint Rollers

Convertible top. Use rollers on the top as an in-between car wash removal of dirt, bugs, etc. Interior seats and carpets. Rollers allow a fast removal of dirt without dragging out the ol' vacuum cleaner.

Newspaper

Windshield cleaning. Crumple a few sections of a black and white newspaper and buff the windshield after first cleaning it with a spray solution of your choice. The newspaper will remove foggy film and add a shine.

Baking Soda

Battery terminal. Apply a paste of baking soda and water on the terminals and clean with a stiff brush. Wipe dry and apply a thin coat of grease. Chrome cleaner. Rub a thin paste on the chrome and allow it to dry to a haze. Buff with towel.

Kitty Litter

Asstrays. If you smoke and deposit ashes in the ash tray, fill the lower third with kitty litter. The odor will be minimized and the ashes will be contained within the litter for easier removal.

WD-40

Seat crayon stains. Spray WD-40 on the stains. wipe with paper towel. follow with a mild solution of dishwasher fluid and water. Use a wet towel for final wipe.

Spray Cooking Oil

Grills/wheels. After washing the car and allowing it to dry, spray a light coat of cooking oil on the grill and wheels. Bugs are less likely to adhere to the grill and the wheels will repel brake dust more efficiently than untreated wheels.

Part 2 - To be continued next issue.

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Classified Ads



2009 335i

M Package, Approx 26k miles with 6 year/100k mile CPO warranty, 6-speed manual, Black Sapphire Metallic, Black Dakota Leather, M Sport Package with 18" M wheels, gray poplar wood trim, sport seats, M steering wheel and shifter, and aerodynamic kit (front bumper), Comfort Access with Keyless Entry, Moonroof, Heated seats, Automatic Climate Control, Dynamic Cruise Control, iPod and USB adapter, LOGIQ 7 sound system, Park Distance Control (rear), BMW Assist with Bluetooth, Asking \$33,000. Great condition in and out. As with any car, there are a few small chips from highway rocks, but nothing out of the ordinary. Please see photo attached and contact Brian at 512-660-9200, or brianmgus@gmail.com, if interested. I have more photos readily available.

Wanted Any X5 M Series

Looking for a clean, gently used X5 M Series. This is a birthday gift for my fiancée Rebecca who is a two-time cancer survivor. She currently drives at 2002 Ford Explorer, and I'm looking forward to letting her enjoy The Ultimate Drive! Contact Robert Marraro at (775) 203-4024 or send email to laudatedominum@att.net.



1989 535i

Purchased new in Germany in 1989. Federalized in U.S. in 1990 and remained with original owner in Dallas next 19 years. Last 3 years in La Grange. 88.6K miles. 3.5L, 5 speed. New radio and Michelins. Polaris white with med gray cloth Recaro style interior. New Michelins and audio. Outstanding and unique car. \$16,000. Contact Frank Singer at 979.968.6198 or send email to franksinger68@gmail.com



2006 Z4M

This is BMW 2006 Z4M roadster is a 6spd manual which was purchased in May 2011 from Northern Dealership and re-located to sunny Texas. Am currently the 2nd Owner car has been cared for with post purchase inspection and servicing by Rhine West, San Antonio Texas in July 2011. 30k Servicing done at that time to include

Classified Ads

Valves, brake pads and updated stainless steel brake lines. Full fluid flush and updated with new fluids and oil change at that time. Upgraded exhaust with SuperSprint Sport Free Flow Performance exhaust (OEM exhaust is available also) as well as updated Auflugen 19" Wheel and new Yokohama Advan Sport tires on all 4 wheels. (Original OEM wheels with Bridgestone OEM tires are also available) Bluetooth and BWM Assist along with Navigation (BMW 2011 Nav DVD maps included) makes this a real beauty. Black leather Interior in great condition with aluminum finish. Mediabridge Ipod adapter and Sirius Radio added also. Top is in excellent condition. Car runs great otherwise and currently car has 34,535 miles on it. Military member moving overseas therefore must part with it as need room for family travels. Asking \$27,500. Contact Rob @202-549-9961 or mdrobc1213@me.com.



2009 X3

Low-low mileage (27k). One non-smoker owner; always garaged, no accidents, very-very clean, and current & scheduled maintenance at the BMW dealer; records available. Factory Warranty & free maintenance to Nov 2012 or 50k; great running vehicle...no

maintenance issues. Color: Space Gray Metallic with Sand Beige interior. Premium Package (pkg ZPP); 6-Speed Stepronic Auto-Trans; GPS navigation system; Beige Nevada leather & Popular Wood Trim (4BP); Xenon Adaptive Headlights w/ auto-leveling, luminous rings, (pkg 522); Sport Activity Package w/ running boards (pkg ZAP); Cold Weather Package (ski bag heated front and rear seats); Panoramic Moonroof; Hill descent control; power windows & door locks, cruise control & power steering; dual air bags Driver & Passenger; Rear Passenger Head Air Bags; 8-way power front seats; Privacy glass; and Split 60/40 rear seats and more. Clean Title in hand. Asking \$30,950 obo. Kelly Blue Book ranges this model X3 from \$30k to 32k; good thru excellent condition and this vehicle is rated as "very good" making it a very good deal for a buyer (want to sell on own rather than do a trade-in; win-win for me and potential buyer). Will send more pictures if asked prefer local / Central South Texas buyers. Contact James Aiello at 210.601.9086 or send email to james.aiello@att.net.

Roof Rack for Sale

Selling my base roof rack + (1) bicycle mount. Will fit all e46 sedans and wagons I believe, but e46 coupes may be different. Please verify fitment for your vehicle just to be safe. Asking \$100 OBO. Contact Tad Goodwin at 5127792489 or send email to tadgoodwin@gmail.com.

Classified Ads



Wheels & Tires for Sale

4 OZ Racing Wheels with Kumho Ecsta ASX tires. Wheels are 8 1/2 x 17 with 5x120 bolt pattern and center caps. Wheels are in excellent condition. The tires are 235/45/17 with about 25% tread left. The set was on my 1988 M6. Ask \$475 OBO. Contact Bruce Mason at 512-502-9066 or send email to amazon@austin.rr.com



Wheels & tires for Sale

Up for sale is a set of four pristine 15X8 TR Motorsports wheels with Nitto NT01 DOT track tires. I used this set up just one track day on my e30 BMW and have since sold that car. Wheels are in perfect condition with no curb rash, dings, scraps, etc. Tires are in great shape and are perfect for many more track weekends to come. This is the perfect set up for an e30 BMW or other cars requiring a +ET20 offset. \$795 o.b.o. Contact Jeff Adolph at 5129347672 or send email to jladolph@yahoo.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.

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