

Fall 2015

Whispering Bomb

BMW Car Club
of America
Los Angeles Chapter



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COVER:

On the cover is the latest BMW concept car - an M4 GTS - shown at Legends of the Autobahn in Monterey. Photos by Kurt Helm

President's Message

by KURTHELM

Fall is upon us. It's a great time of year to simply enjoy a drive in your BMW and experience the SoCal scenery.

I'm excited to see articles being submitted for the Whispering Bomb (WB) from an increasing number Chapter members. These articles will add depth and breadth to the WB which results in an even better newsletter for our members.

We're in the midst of redesigning our Chapter website (losangelesbmwcca.org) to be more user friendly and are hoping to have it completed by the end of this year. We'll let you know via email when the update goes live. In the meantime, you can still visit the site for recent announcements and our activities calendar.

You may have heard about the new BMW Performance Center West at the Thermal Club located in Palm Desert (the city of Thermal to be exact). The Performance Center offers a variety of driving programs (M Schools, Teen Driving Schools, Car Control Clinics). Our Chapter is partnering with the Center to present a half-day event driving the Center's BMWs (a mix of M cars and SAVs) in several different exercises (autocross, drifting, etc.) as well as a great buffet lunch. There will be two opportunities in 2016: one on March 6th and one on March

13th. Each event will be conducted as morning sessions. BMW-owned cars on a private course with other BMW enthusiasts is something you won't want to miss, so keep your eyes open for additional information and registration links.

As with all organizations, our Chapter is constantly evolving which often times results in new opportunities for our members to volunteer to help the Chapter. We currently have openings for an Autocross Chairperson as well as a Driving School Coordinator/Registrar. Both of these positions are extremely important in our driving events program. The volunteers who previously held these posts are available to help a new volunteer transition into the position so if you're interested, please let me know. It's a great way to keep our Chapter strong and to become more involved in our activities.

Although August 2016 seems like a long time from now, it's a good time to start thinking about attending the BMW CCA Oktoberfest in August 2016 at Monterey. It will be BMW's 100th anniversary so you can expect to see some unique cars as well as the other great events put on by National and the Pacific Region.

Enjoy your Club, enjoy your cars! ■

Why I Am In Love*

by STEPHENHARVEY

Here goes...why I am in love. I love the BMW brand. I love that it represents a car manufacturer that values the driving experience as much as I do. My desire for the driving experience struck me even before I could legally drive. It is a great story about a boy and a beautiful black BMW.

It was the mid 1980's, I was a young boy not even old enough to drive yet, and my father's friend called on Saturday afternoon. He wanted my dad to come over and see the car he had just purchased. My dad turned to me and said, "Let's go!" and we set off to see the wonderful new automobile.

We arrived at my dad's friend's house and talked in the driveway for a few minutes until the new car arrived. At the end of the driveway appeared a black, 4-door wonder of German engineering. It was the first time that I had seen a BMW up close and I was seriously impressed. As I mentioned, I was not even able to drive, barely knew the joy of driving, but I instinctively understood that this black BMW was AWESOME.

Lots of time has passed since then and I have continued to fall deeper in love with all motorsports. I returned to my home town after college and needed to acquire transportation. I let my dad know my car situation and, coincidentally, he had spoken with his old friend that had shown off the BMW many years earlier. The planets apparently were aligned just right and the gods were happy with me because the beautiful black BMW was up for sale. Various reasons in play, my dad's friend needed to quickly part with the BMW. He knew that



I had always been a huge fan of the BMW and wanted me to have first right of refusal. I pounced on the opportunity and we struck a great deal. Now the car that I fell in love with those many years ago was actually mine.

Since purchasing the 1984 E28 BMW I have found myself in love with the overall BMW brand. It represents teamwork, great engineering and a desire to deliver the "ultimate driving machine". This is why I am in love with a BMW. ■

*Editor's Note: This article first appeared in Stephen's blog post, thestephenharvey.com, on October 6, 2012.

The Positions of Autocross Chairperson and Driving School Coordinator/Registrar are vacant. If you would like to apply please contact
Kurt Helm - president@losangeles.bmwcca.org

I'm Along for the Ride

As I sat at Legends of the Autobahn under a lovely oak tree (waiting for the esteemed Mr. Helm to finish drooling over all of the mint condition cars), I could hear the cars over at Laguna Seca Raceway tuning up for the weekend races.

As I sat by the pool waiting for Mr. Helm to finish meeting with the National BMW CCA board (OK, I confess - it was 114 degrees in the shade that day, so I was really sitting in air-conditioned luxury editing this WB), I was considering what to write for this column.

As I waited in the Welcome Center at the BMW Performance Center West in Thermal, while most everyone took hot laps before we all gathered back together, I checked email from my "real job" (I know, hard to believe that there is anything for me but all things BMW).

And next spring, we will be going to the BMW "mother ship" to pick up Mr. Helm's new car (he has not yet decided which one - he's still bench racing several models and wondering if the M2 will come out before he has to order).

And darn it, only one person can be insured to drive the new car in Europe (or so Mr. Helm says), so I will take photos and appreciate the beauty of the new places we will go.

As you can tell, there's a theme developing here - I'm along for the ride. I'm not complaining. How can I when I get to go to Monterey, Palm Springs and half of Europe next year on some pretty wonderful vacation jaunts?

I'm also finally starting to really appreciate the inner and outer beauty of BMWs. It helps that we have great contributors to the WB. I learn a lot from reading your articles and sometimes I'm amused by the stories you are telling. I also appreciate that those of you who are true enthusiasts put up with my constant questions and don't care that sometimes I just go over there and sit with a good book to read in the shade.

Sit back now that you have received this issue of the WB, and savor the stories here in this issue. Safe travels as you drive to where ever you are going. Return home safely to your families. ■

Five Questions

**Nick Owen,
BMW CCA Pacific Regional Vice President**

1. How long have you been a club member and how did you get interested in BMW?

I have been a club member for over 10 years. I got my membership a few months after I picked up my e36 M3. My Dad and the shop I worked at both recommended I look into the BMW Club and take the M3 to Autocross. I was living in Monterey (home) at that time and so the Golden Gate chapter was my first chapter, first Car Control Clinic and first few Autocrosses.

I first became interested in BMWs during High School. My mother wanted me to be in a safe car so she would let me commandeer her 1994 e34 530i rather often. So I naturally became the driver to all of my friends and always got nominated to drive. A few years later came the M3 and everything has been BMW ever since.

2. How did you get to be our Regional Vice President?

Prior to becoming RVP, I spent 2 years as the President of the San Diego chapter. I learned a lot about chapter operations and issues so I decided to see if I could offer something new to the National Board of Directors. I ran for election and coincidentally ran unopposed.

3. What is your role as a BMW Club Regional Vice President?

My role as Regional Vice President is to represent the chapters and members in my region to the National Board while monitoring chapters for adherence to minimum standards and assisting in any way possible. For the chapters, I am their source for help and support should

they need assistance in order to carry out a task or have a matter that requires the National Board's attention.

4. What do you like about being our Regional VP?

What I like most about being the Regional VP is being a part of an organization that can help influence and enhance the BMW experience for its members. I also like that I am around people with a lot of life and business experience. For someone like myself that did not pursue a direct career in business, its humbling and very informative to be working with such a highly experienced group of people. At the same time I feel as if I add a different perspective to the board as well.

5. What's your favorite BMW make/model/year and why?

My favorite BMW? Wow good question. Due to my profession as a BMW Technician I have had the opportunity to drive a lot of different BMWs over the years; Alpinas, M cars, i cars as well. All of them have their own type of experience when you drive them. I come from a bloodline of M3s (I've had 3) and the e36 M3 will always have a soft spot with me. There is just something about the exterior styling that's simple but still classy and good looking. The interior has a dash that is faced towards you, kind of like a fighter jet cockpit. The engine has a perfect powerband with just enough power for you to rev it high when accelerating onto a freeway, but not too much power to where you are going to fear for your driver's license every time you want to enjoy the car. And speaking of enjoying the car, the suspension and the way the chassis feels beneath you makes the e36 M3 one of the most fun cars you will ever drive. ■

i3, You 3, We ALL 3, For i3

It's summer time in Southern California and a time when a Moose turns her attention to test driving a new car.

Since I'm always in synch with the latest technology, I decided that I should test drive an all-electric car. Add to that my enjoyment of all things with a roundel, and it stands to reason that I should test drive an all-electric BMW.

I naturally assumed that my friends at BMW would want me to drive the i8 for a month or two at no cost to me. You can imagine my surprise when BMW NA's voicemail system failed. It's the only **possible** explanation as to why they never returned my calls to offer me the i8, perhaps I should have called BMW AG instead.

In any event, there are few things more resourceful than a Moose who wants to test drive a new car so I suggested to Kurt that he should take the Z4M to the dealer for a major (a code word meaning "BIG BUCKS") service and ask for an i8 as a loaner car.

It turns out that the dealer doesn't actually have i8 loaners (a huge marketing faux pas if I've ever seen one) but they do have i3 loaners.

Recalling that great line "Ask not what your loaner can do for you, ask what you can do for your loaner", I decided to Moose-up and take the i3 for a couple of days. To say "it was a gas" wouldn't be quite right, but I can tell you I did "get a charge" out of driving it.

First of all, the torque is astounding for such a small car. It was instantly available and clearly enhanced the takeoff and acceleration.

The braking system was a bit unexpected; if you eased off of the accelerator, the brakes would slow the car down (regenerating the batteries) far faster than one would suspect without the actual application of the brake pedal. It wasn't hard to get used to after a few miles, but the first time it happened, I lurched forward a bit and my antlers knocked the rear view mirror out of alignment. (I was actually able to drive it from home to meet others for coffee and never applied the brakes but simply let the regeneration process bring the car to a complete stop).

The i3 handled very well – just like you would think a BMW all-electric car would handle. Road noise was minimal and visibility was good all the way around. (I did find the headrests in the rear seats to be a bit obtrusive, but lowering the rear seat solved that problem.)



Charging the battery could be accomplished at home on household voltage or you could charge it at various charging stations around town. Mileage differs (so the EPA has been telling us for many years) but in the most economical mode (no air conditioning) I was able to get 72 miles on a fully charged battery. Using air conditioning took that down to about 61 miles.

The interior is somewhat unusual so it becomes a matter of personal preference, but the seats were supportive and ingress/egress was great; lots of room for my antlers to clear without getting hurt.

I really only had one complaint – no AM radio. That puzzled me but one of the local wags opined that since you couldn't find an NPR station on the AM channels, it's likely that some marketing guru decided that folks who would drive an all-electric vehicle were the same demographic as those who listen to NPR so no AM radio was needed. I'm not sure if that's true or not, but I'm pretty sure that there will be some heated discussions about it around the old charging stations over the coming months.

Seriously, take the time to drive this car. It may not be something you would buy now, but technology evolves, and as CCA members, we all like to be on the leading edge of technology. I did suggest to Kurt that he consider setting up a meet and greet event with a local dealer or two so our Chapter members could get some test driving in on a Saturday. ■

“
*Ask not what your loaner can do
 for you, ask what you can do for
 your loaner.*”

Calling All Chapter Members

Last month, we published guidelines for contributing to the Whispering Bomb. (See last issue page 3). From that we had several new chapter members write articles for this issue. I would like to encourage more of you to contribute to this next issue. If you have a picture that relates to your article great! We just need it in 300 dpi or better. If you don't have a photo, no worries. Write something amusing, informative, or show your love for your BMW. We look forward to hearing from more of you.

My first BMW ownership experience was a new 2000 Atlantic blue Z3 2.5 roadster. Even the purchasing experience was great. I'll never forget the drive home from the dealership; top down, great weather, great handling. But what impressed me most were the brakes. I had never experienced anything like the stopping power and handling when I pressed on that brake pedal. Kind of funny that it was the experience of stopping that brought home to me the meaning of Ultimate Driving Machine.

Now I beg your forgiveness here, but I must confess that I committed a grievous sin when I bought the car. It had an automatic transmission (*mea culpa*). I suppose there is a circle in hell waiting for me for that violation of such a wonderful piece of machinery, but hey, what did I know? It was my first BMW, in fact my first high performance car of any kind. That faux pas aside, my wife Sherron and I had some great drives in that car, including an unforgettable trip to Sedona, Arizona. Our Home in Newhall is surrounded by the mountains and canyons of the upper Santa Clarita Valley with its great roads and magnificent vistas. Memorable is the winter morning at 2 AM when we parked in a mountain top rest stop, convertible top down, heater going full blast watching the Perseid meteor shower. The brandy enriched hot chocolate didn't hurt at all.

The only mechanical problem that car ever gave me was its convertible top. It was replaced twice under warranty. When I sold the car in 2004 its third top was showing signs of falling apart.

Then I bought a custom ordered 2004 Z4, 3.0i Sterling Gray with beige extended leather interior, six-speed manual transmission, Harman Kardon sound system, and packages



as follows: convenience, premium, and sport (current mileage, 59,642). My earlier sin was forgiven, I hope. I miss the classic styling of the Z3, but in every other respect, the Z4 is a major improvement. I added an aftermarket built in K4 radar detector, and satellite radio. The handling and acceleration are outstanding, and the six-speed transmission provides an amazing degree of control. For the first couple of years, I enjoyed the power and handling of the car so much that the sport button sport to the left of the gear-shift was pretty much ignored. One day, waiting for a traffic light, I thought, what the heck, and pressed the button. Then the light changed and...holy buckets!! Is someone pushing me? Is this the same car? The acceleration had always been great, but this was unbelievable!

I use that button a lot more these days, especially when straightening out the curves on Bouquet Canyon and Spunky Canyon, or climbing over the mountains and down into the Little Tujunga pass. Our favorite ride is the stretch of highway 154 as it leaves the 101 freeway north of Santa Barbara and winds over the mountain to the San Marcos Pass, through the Cachuma Valley and up to the wineries on Foxen Canyon Rd. near Los Olivos. The fresh mountain air, the view of the Pacific off in the distance, a hawk turning lazy circles in the sky, kind of makes one think that a solid top on a car is a desecration of a true driving experience. Of course there is the obligatory stop at the Chumash casino so that Sherron can make a contribution, and then on to some fabulous wine tasting, a picnic lunch and a lazy afternoon in the sun.

I am not so much a car enthusiast as I am one who values fine engineering and craftsmanship. I appreciate a fine automobile, and there is no finer roadster than the Z4, especially with the manual transmission. I do not eat, breath and sleep BMWs. But during those moments when I am behind the wheel, the wind is rippling my hair, and good music is wafting from those well-placed speakers, I get a small sense of automobile heaven.

By the way, my license plates for the two cars - Z BMW 3 and Z BMW 4. Would you believe people routinely ask what the letters mean? Go figure. ■

Electronic WB Delivery - An Update

We have made progress in finally being able to electronically deliver the WB to those of you who have requested it. We have been reviewing ways to electronically publish the WB and have found that there are several publishing packages that will work. We are working with BMW CCA National and the Los Angeles Chapter Board to determine which publishing approach will work best for our chapter as well as give you, our members, the best electronic newsletter experience. Stand by while we continue to move towards electronic delivery of the WB.



I must be honest as I start this story: I've always gotten a new car every three years and the idea of keeping one longer was not a part of my thought process.

The year was 2005 and the lease on my 2002 540i was ending. Concurrently the 6-series was being born and I was smitten with the idea of an Interlagos Blue M6. Actually, I was salivating at the mere thought, but that M version had not hit our shores. It seemed best to be patient but the end-of-lease was gnawing at me and, having been to a few LA Chapter driving schools, I needed something that would quench my thirst for speed until I got the M6. At the same time I was working on a project that took me to Abu Dhabi on multiple occasions. During one of those trips my jaw dropped as an Interlagos Blue M6 sped past the car in which I was riding. The car I wanted existed! Alas, but not yet in the United States. What to do?

It occurred to me that a lot of the more experienced drivers at the driving schools piloted M3s. I said to myself, "Self, why not get an M3 on a 2 year lease. You can play with it on track, see what the fuss is about, then get the M6 as it goes into the third model year and the kinks have been worked out."

With that superbly logical plan in place I went to Steve Thomas BMW in Camarillo (where my family has purchased over 20 vehicles) and ordered the interim car of my dreams: a 2006 E46 M3 with competition package, manual transmission, sunroof (yes, I love a sunroof) and manual transmission¹. The vehicle was scheduled for delivery in November, 2005.

With fate looking kindly on me, I joined other club members on a tour at BMW's Vehicle Deliver Center in Oxnard. We were escorted by the Center's manager whom I chatted up and asked if there was any way I could get priority delivery of my new car. He asked that I send him the VIN, something I definitely expedited.

The ship with my car arrived as scheduled. By my reckoning, based on the work they do at the Center, my car should have been delivered to Steve Thomas BMW on November 20 (yes, I was a total optimist but hey, why not?). Around 10 AM that day I called my salesman to ask if my car was in. His response became priceless: "Steve, it can take a couple of weeks before we get cars. Just because the ship is in doesn't mean your car has come off. There's a lot of work (pause), uh...wait a minute (pause). Oh my, there's a Wagoner truck unloading cars in front and your car just came off. How did you do that?" I was promised the car could be picked up that afternoon. It made for a great early birthday present.

I loved the car. The more I drove it, the less I thought about the M6. By January I had a couple thousand miles on it and felt it broken in enough for a track weekend with the CCA at Buttonwillow. It was a beautiful weekend and the car performed flawlessly. I didn't push it hard (it was brand new),



yet questioned my sanity when it started raining and we all continued to run.

I continued to take it to many tracks (Phoenix International, Las Vegas, Sears Point) and slowly understood why so many others had the M3. As I became a better driver I thought of doing some performance-enhancing modifications but one very wise instructor said, "Steve, the car is better than you. Until you are better than the car you shouldn't make any changes." I took this to heart and was excited at a CCA event at California Speedway when, on the oval, my instructor said I couldn't go any faster on the stock tires. This led to a set of Nitto NT-01 R Comps for track use. And if I was going to go fast I decided that superior stopping was required so I started putting Raybestos pads on the front whenever I went to track events.

But the M6 - I still pined for it and put a deposit down; the money put me in line to order the car when they got an allocation. I was nearing the end of the second year with my M3 and realized a decision was in order: do I let this car go and regret it. Do I buy it and lease the M6 (my wife explained that was out of the question)? When ordering time for the M6 arrived I backed out. My M3 was staying with me.

Since then I've taken the vehicle to TC Kline in Santa Barbara for truly excellent suspension, adjustable for either street or track. The ride remains awesome and track days are still memorable².

I never thought I'd keep a car for 10 years. Now I cannot imagine ever giving this one up. And the M6? Too big, too unwieldy for what I enjoy. And too grown-up. After all I'm just a big kid.

1. Recently in Roundel I learned this vehicle's configuration is one of less than 1300 sold in the U.S.
2. Up next: Zionsville Radiator and Oil Cooler as well as Brembo brakes. ■

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Normally you have to sacrifice comfort and reliability for performance. But Dinan, our performance partner, develops products in that sweet spot where your car acts like a racer on track days, and a dependable, responsive ride for comfortable everyday driving. No matter which BMW you drive, there's an almost endless array of engine management, forced induction, drive train, suspension, braking, exhaust and wheel enhancements available for it. And Dinan is working on new advancements every day.

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The Hunt for the Inexpensive Daily Driver, Chapter 2

by JORGE DIAZ-AMADOR

A recap from last time - I was looking for a daily driver and decided Craigslist was a good option...

Two months went by dealing with the frustrations of Craigslist; not being able to find any worth pursuing, dealing with sellers that wouldn't respond, cars that were only advertised for one day and sold by the time I got a call back, cars that were just too far away to check out, cars that stated "clean title" and showed up as salvage/rebuilt on Carfax, avoiding the dreaded E46 SULEV cars, very high mileage cars with no mention of maintenance, and the list goes on.

One pet peeve that made me click onto the next ad every time I saw it: "V6 gas saver" in a BMW ad. If you don't even know what kind of engine your car has, why would I think that you know how to properly take care of it?

Finally, at the point where I had all but given up, I spotted a Craigslist ad for a 2000 323i located close by. It was a Sport Package car and pre-SULEV, with the M52tu 2.5L I-6. It was a Steptronic, but I was willing to accept the less reliable automatic, since holding out for a manual could take several months. I pulled the Carfax and it was a clean title car that had always been in California.

And the seller was actually honest, stating the following problems: "All of the warning lights intermittently turn on and off at will. The speedometer doesn't show your speed. The A/C is not very cold, noticeable on hot days." Best of all, the seller did not list a phone number (I prefer to establish contact via e-mail first - I feel it gives me an advantage).

The wagon turned out to be owned by a young couple who weren't "car guys". It had been the wife's car, but she now had a new SUV and the wagon was just sitting.

Based on the description, and a search of the forums (your best friend if you own an older BMW), I guessed that the wagon needed at the very least a battery charge, at most a new battery, and wheel speed sensor.

I arrived to check out the car. There was a stack of service receipts and the original window sticker in the glove box. The wagon ran and drove well, but the DSC, BRAKE, and ABS warning lights were all on and the speedometer did not respond (as advertised). The lights on the climate control unit would flash and there was no air conditioning. There were a few minor trouble codes in the DME, but the Service Engine Soon light was not on. The battery was eight years old.

It was too late on a Sunday to get a smog check. Not wanting to take the risk that a used car dealer would scoop it up, I made a cash offer and took my new-old E46 wagon home without a smog test.

Less than a week and \$300 later, after a bottle of Techron, a gallon of 100 AKI unleaded race fuel in half a tank of gas, an oil change, a new battery, and a new wheel speed sensor, and following a 100-mile highway drive, all the warning lights were out. The DME showed no trouble codes and the wagon passed smog without trouble.

So for less than the sales tax on the 335i when it was new, I have a car that's reasonably fun to drive, with great sport seats, fantastic handling for a wagon, and a smooth but underpowered engine.

Now the real fun begins: All the deferred maintenance the wagon didn't get that I now have to catch up. **To be continued...** ■

Really. It's not. I've been a bad, bad man. At least, so it would seem as I've spent a couple of hours in the purgatory of traffic school. For those of you just joining the story, I got popped for speeding when all I was doing was cruising up the freeway.¹ According to Officer Saenz, the speed limit had dropped to 55 due to an upcoming construction zone, but I didn't see the sign. I have no reason to disbelieve him, but when I took the same route two weeks later, I still didn't see the sign. Whatever.

I haven't had a ticket that required traffic school in a very long time, but the last couple of times were painful. In one instance, when I picked up a ticket for 71 in a 65 zone in our old 325iT, I spent all weekend sitting in the terrible seats of an Orange County courtroom listening to a retired CHP officer doing his best to keep us awake and engaged.² The other was for an illegal U-turn in our old Mini, The Smurf Of Death, which I would have previously sworn was legal.

What can I tell you? I was wrong. It wasn't.

For that one, I attended an online school where you read the selection and typed in the code word at the end to take the stunt test in practice for the final. The only problem was that you couldn't read at your own pace, and the timing was set for people who have to move their lips when they read. And if you didn't type the code word in at the proper time and within the time allotted, it bounced you back to the beginning and you had to start all over again. Heaven forbid you needed a bathroom break. Let me just say this: time flies when you're having a cerebral hemorrhage. It took way longer than it should have, but not as long as the in-person option³, so I counted myself lucky. Brain dead and pissed off, but lucky.

Now, at least for Orange County scofflaws, the program has a lot more options. The court sends you a four-page list in itty-bitty print of their approved schools. Finding one that doesn't suck is a crapshoot, but I did my due diligence. I checked reviews online, and they were all over the place. Some were from people who move their lips when they read. Others were bitter that they didn't pass. Still others were bitter that they had to be there at all and protested their innocence even in the review.⁴

In the end, I did the one by The Improv. Right, that one. The comedy club. It got decent ratings, was relatively cheap, plus I got four tickets to the club. I figured that, worst case, there'd be some cheesy jokes, a few stupid cartoons and maybe a video or two to distract me from the countdown clock before I moved on to the next section.

Guess what? It doesn't work that way any more. Sure, the cheesy jokes were there along with a few cartoons illustrating the stupidity of stupidity behind the wheel, but there was no countdown timer. And if you were feeling brain dead, there

were actually funny videos by name comedians available that were peripherally related to the subject matter.

However, if you chose to read the material instead of watching the instructional video or having the material read to you, and if you skipped funny parts and read the necessary parts to yourself, you could get out with a passing grade on the final in less than half the time. Way less if you read quickly.

Since I read quickly, since I have a life, and since at least I find me funny, I hauled through in what, traffic school-wise, was record time. I took the test, missed two, and passed with way more points than I needed.⁵ They can get me for speeding up the freeway, but speeding through traffic school? It's not even patrolled.

1. I'm not saying I wasn't speeding. I was. The problem was that I was going pretty much the same speed I always do and had passed two other CHP officers at that speed within the prior half hour and they didn't even look up.
2. He gets points for trying, but it was a futile effort. I didn't doze off, but two people did and were politely asked to leave. Another guy came back from lunch hammered and was taken to the ground and cuffed by bailiffs when he started to get lippy. Now that kept us awake.
3. And the chairs were way better.
4. If the reviewer claims to be a great driver and was simply engaging in his god-given right to do what they were ticketed for doing, it's a safe bet that they are actually a terrible driver and should probably be incarcerated for all of the things that weren't caught for.
5. One I was just wrong, and the other had answers that were oddly phrased. I mentioned that they might want to have an English major actually read that stuff. ■

“
*Let me just say this: time flies
when you're having a cerebral
hemorrhage.*”



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I am not one much for naming cars. I have usually identified them by their color, size, and make. Like the time we had two BMWs: The Yellow Car and The Blue Car. Simple, plain, clinically descriptive. I tried to hang names my cars but they sounded artificial and insincere. I did once name my Ford Explorer, my first 4X4, Whitey Ford after the famous New York Yankee pitcher in the 1950s. I first admired Whitey for his World Series expertise on the mound, and then read that he was a heavy drinker and this perhaps shortened his career. Drivers give their cars endearing names, often a countrified name, or an old-fashioned woman's name, and I always enjoy hearing the affectionate voicing of these names by the owners. Names are always associated in my mind with animals, usually furry ones. A few marine mammals get named, the most famous being Moby Dick. You might think that by owning a series of BMWs I would be encouraged to put a name to at least one of them. They are wonderful machines but anthropomorphizing them is not my cup of tea.

So there I was, a long day's drive from my beloved M Coupe, getting ready for my annual High Sierra camping trip with the boys, wondering what possessed me to spend an inordinate amount of time and energy to plunk myself in a saddle when I could be zipping around the city in my BMW. My usual head-trips of doubt cycled before me like a flipbook of images becoming a movie loop of questions. Why go to all the trouble?

"Petunia," answered the wrangler when I asked her the name of my mule. A cute name! Perhaps my M Coupe would bear this name in memory of the mule? I rode Petunia ten miles up a rock-strewn trail to camp at a 10,000-foot elevation. This was my first time on a mule, though not the first time on an equine. A variety of stable nags and trail horses carried me as a tourist or youthful wannabe cowboy in the days when riding held a ton of romance and saddle sores were part of the fun.

Cars are predictable and fast. Horses and mules on a trail are usually steady, but not fast, thankfully. The image of a cowboy galloping through the wild outdoors is great on the movie screen but in real life you've got to be a darn good rider to avoid getting your spine pounded into the leather with pile driver force. If you don't know how to ride, pretty soon the horse knows you don't know how to ride, and to show you it knows you ain't never been on a ranch, the horse goes into a bumpety-bumpety jogging canter that is pure hell on the nether regions, guys. A horse or mule might not score as high as us on an IQ test, but they really know when their human cargo is fearful or ignorant. The animal likes to take charge if it can, and will exercise its own mind by stopping to munch grass every chance it gets or brush you against a tree trunk. It might be saying with great irony "Oh, did I whack your knee on that immovable object? So sorry!"

I put in a request to the wranglers at the pack station, familiar folks from many years of packing our gear to the lake: "I want to ride stock that is not going to fall, that will

follow the trail and not have to be reined, and that will be comfortable. I don't care what color it is, what gender it is, or if it is particularly good looking." Cassandra replied, "All our stock is safe to ride, so that is not a problem." I had ridden a draft horse up to the lake years ago, and the broad back of this huge animal served to separate my knees in such a way that I felt I was to be permanently bow-legged and then have knee surgery.

Why trade BMW rides for such torture atop a mule? It is important to relish the beauty of nature far away from the city. To live life as if it were in another millennium and gaze upon mountains through crystal air, lakes with not a whisper of breeze on a glass surface, trees blasted by lightning and then ravaged by rot and beetle bores, rainstorms suddenly arriving with driving sheets of flooding water spanking across the lake surface in an opaque shimmer. After poking the accelerator like a toddler thrusting his fingers into the eyes of another creature, sending throttling vibrations through my brain, whipping around corners with unsettling G-force, I want release from all this modern machine mania. As much as the delightful act of driving puts joy into my heart, I have to get back to an earlier time in natural history, an ideal time. But I want several degrees of modern comfort carried by the pack animals to the High Country: propane stove, sleeping bags, block ice, booze, all sorts of food and snacks for our six day getaway. You see, while we are settled into our comfy camping chairs watching a movie - I didn't mention the movies on an iPad with a Bluetooth speaker? - we want to feel, well, happy. That is the evening schedule, with campfires very limited due to National Forest regulations in our Western drought.

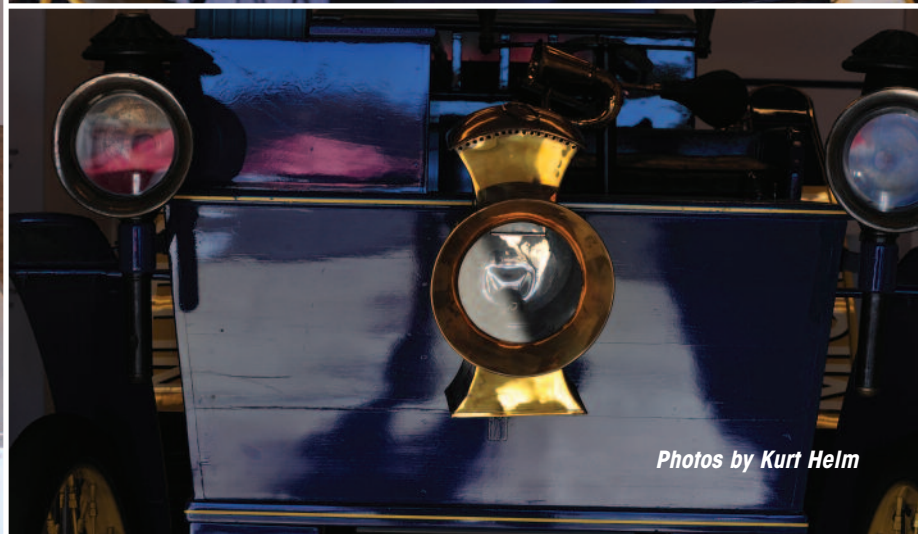
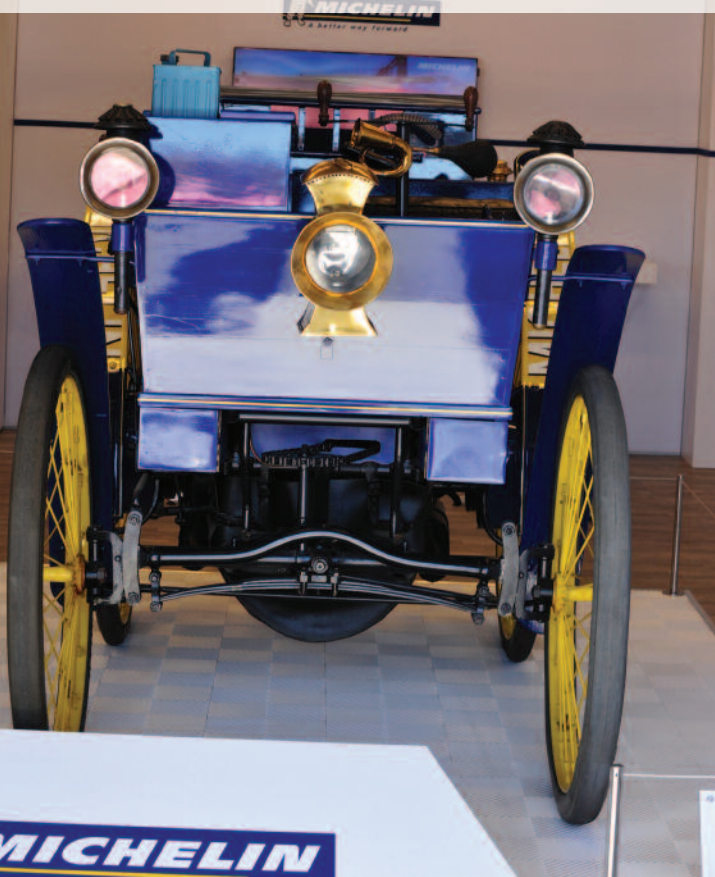
In the daytime my compadres fish, nap, read, smoke, drink moderately (at least in the beginning), and talk. I dodge some of this to take my sketchpad and colored pens and then sneak away to draw a vista. While drawing I cannot think of cars, of cities, of noise, of the human crush below me. It takes about four hours of meditative, slow work to produce a drawing that is an obvious amateur effort. When I return to camp in late afternoon at cocktail hour the talk returns me to civilization.

Not a day at camp goes by that I do not think of my green M Coupe sitting in the garage gathering dust. At these moments I look forward to returning to the city and its thrumming energy and creativity, its tingling circus excitement. It even crosses my mind to name my car. Would Petunia do? Petunia the mule carried me gracefully up to the lake in comfort with nary a hitch in her getalong, her beautiful ears the length of unshucked corn, she waggled them directionally to take in the sounds of the forest wind. What a lovely creature she was.

My car is green. The flowers named petunia are always brightly colored. Perhaps another car in another time will be graced with the name Petunia.

The Little Green Car - that's how I still refer to my M Coupe. ■

Michelin brought an 1895 L'Eclair commissioned by the Michelin brothers, from its museum in France for Monterey week and it was on display in the paddock area at Laguna Seca Raceway on Saturday.

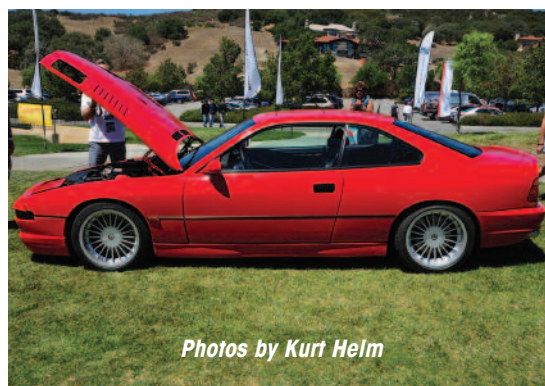


Photos by Kurt Helm



Legends of the Autobahn • August 14





Photos by Kurt Helm



Laguna Seca Raceway • Saturday, August 8



Photos by Kurt Helm

BMW FESTORICS AT THE MONTEREY MOTORSPORTS REUNION

This year in mid-August I once again found myself in beautiful Monterey to participate in the BMW portion of the many events that take place during Monterey car week, which is now a huge event. Of course the BMW events are but a small fraction of the car related events during Monterey car week.

The weekend starts for BMW on Friday with Legends of the Autobahn. At the urging of Chief Judge Paul Cain, again this year I volunteered to be a Legends concours judge. This event, held at the Nicklaus Golf Club, brings together the BMW CCA with the Mercedes Benz Club of North America and the Audi Club of North America. Each club had their own judging teams and there were spectacular cars from all three marques, including a 1937 Mercedes Benz 540K.

I was assigned to judge the 2002 class with Mike Pelly, Wendie Martin, and Nic Johnson. We had five cars to judge, everything from Ben Miller's "barn find" 1972 2002tii Alpina A4S, still in "barn find" condition (with very clean rust), to Gary Balleisen's beautiful 2002 factory turbo. Even with only five cars, the judging was difficult given that the cars were so well prepared (and how many points does clean rust get?), but we did come up with our class winners, the top three separated by only a few points. First in class was Cordelia Wolfe's early production 1972 2002tii; second was Gary Balleisen's 2002 turbo; and third was Gavin Arthur's 1974 2002tii.

Lunch was provided and this was the first day of the Paulaner beer garden. Yes, from the first day at Legends, to the end of Festorics, Paulaner was at every social event with complimentary German beer. It was a beautiful summer day at the Nicklaus Golf Club and we did manage to share some cold ones while thoroughly enjoying the cars, and the beautiful day. Is this a great country or what?

And BMW also brought and displayed many special historic BMWs, such as the new Alpina 6 series Gran Coupe, the number 25 Tudor United Series Z4 driven by Bill Auberlen, and Dirk Werner along with the newly restored 2001 M3 GTR (E46) race car, to name a few. Also on display was the 2015 Car of Your Dreams Grand Prize Dinan Club Edition M4 that was given away to the lucky raffle winner at



Oktoberfest in New Jersey. Tickets were \$25 which garners a 1 in 5,000 chance to win a prize. After the Grand Prize M4, First Prize was an F30 M3 and the Main Prizes were the hot new M235i.

Friday night there was the Festorics dinner, also at the Nicklaus Golf Club. Many thanks and kudos to the CCA national office staff and Steven Schlossman, Wayne Wundrum, Eddy Funahashi, Delight Lucas, Chief Judge Paul Cain, and all of the many local volunteers who worked so long and hard to make this event a success. If you have never been to Legends, put it on your bucket list for next year.

But wait, there's more. Besides all of the many car-related events during Monterey Week, including the auctions, the Pebble Beach Concours itself was on Sunday. And of course there was the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion which included the BMW Festorics and the Turn 5 Corral, hospitality area (including the Paulaner beer garden). We were also granted access to all of the historic races, and the pits, at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. BMW had quite a display in the pits as well, including the CSL Homage R (which looks a lot better in person), a Z8 Alpina, the number 2 M1 race car, and of course the number 25 1975 CSL that CEO Ludwig Willisch drives in the historic races.

But wait, there is even more. 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of BMW. It was announced that BMW would be the featured marque at the Motorsports Reunion, and the BMW CCA Oktoberfest will follow the next week in Monterey next year. This is similar to the events of 2013, but knowing how BMW doesn't hold back when it comes to celebrating important historical events, this one should be over the top. So start making plans now, you don't want to miss it.

All in all, a great time was had by all. ■



Photos by Kurt Helm



Dorkfest 2015, that happy annual event, once again drew a jolly crowd of Dorks from both coasts for a weekend of driving and car talk. And for me, what a lucky time it was.

OK, back up a minute. What is Dorkfest, right? We are an informal subset of the BMW CCA. The very muscular M Coupe and the very cute Z3 Coupe draw us together; the car was manufactured from 1999 through 2002 with a total production run of less than 4500. This is the car spawned by rebel engineers at BMW who saw the racing potential of the Z3 roadster, the very popular convertible that was highly promoted in the mid 1990s and manufactured by the gazillions. BMW engineers took the roadster and sculpted a coupe with a distinct steel hardtop extending to the back of the silhouette ending with a hatchback. The full-length roof accomplished two purposes: a more rigid car that gives it better handling and luggage space. The coupe became a wonderful track car, or just fun to goose onto the freeway when a Cal-Trans curve with a beautiful radius just begs for some gas pedal. OK, a lot of gas pedal. The car can hold enough personal items beyond the tiny trunk in the roadster so that a week-long trip is not an exercise in rinsing garments in the motel bathroom sink and switching between the wet shirt and the dry shirt. Eww!

The excitement of Dorkfest begins with driving a BMW performance car like no other. What separates Dorks from other car groups is that unique quality. We are outsiders, all of us. Yet there is the connection to the Ultimate Driving Machine with its performance blended into the car-magic BMW drivers love. So when we get together we recognize kindred spirits - people who want BMW performance and also like standing out from the crowd. In a gathering of Dorks it is simply wonderful to walk up to a complete stranger, make introductions, and begin talking about the cars. We are a gathering of nerds, engineers, mechanics, designers, retirees, track addicts, and computer people, young and old, who enjoy showering attention on this special car. No, you do not have to own an M Coupe to be welcomed. Just bring your curiosity and you will be enlightened.

What a relief for Dorks from warmer climes to be on the beach in Ventura at the Crowne Plaza Hotel for a weekend in late August! A balcony on every room provided a coastline view stretching for miles. Folks from Utah, Arizona, Boston, Colorado, and Texas bathed in the marine air, immersing in

ocean-scented cologne. The hotel coned off a parking area and this became the meeting place where hoods were opened and engines fired up to fill the night and day with throbbing waves of thrumming superchargers. And of course lively conversations about the Coupe abounded. How long have you had it? How did you find the car? Or did the car find you? What is that mod and how did you do that? Each owner told an inspired passionate tale of obsession or lifelong dream come true.

Dorkfest has to be managed, like all events. Goddess of the Dorks, otherwise known as Delight Lucas, kept the main organizers of Dorkfest on their toes. Robert Ramirez Leoning was the go-to liaison who managed to personally talk to everyone. Sam and Briana Kriemelmeyer were the locals who made hotel arrangements and led a spirited Saturday drive. Mark Cohen, "Mr. Z3", led a drive on a very pretty Sunday morning and provided us with a tasty continental breakfast under the shade of spreading oaks in mystical Ojai, his hometown.

Our first formal Dorkfest event, a trip to the Mullin Automotive Museum in Oxnard on Saturday morning for the French Curves exhibit, was a hit for all. The museum is a wonderful collection of Bugattis, which despite the name, is actually a French car. Ettore Bugatti immigrated to France in the early days of automobiles. Bugatti, with his son Jean, designed and crafted racing automobiles with great flair for design, and Sr. Bugatti's signature grill is still seen today on the Veyron and Chiron. The focus of the Mullin collection is Art Deco; the curves and colors in French cars are arranged to show the languid beauty of this florid art period. In order to put a historical context to the cars, there were displays of Art Deco furniture and lovely paintings. Peter Mullin, an insurance executive, has spent hundreds of millions on the purchase and restoration of his cars, and his sharing them with us is an act of generosity. The museum exhibits drew gasps, stares, and "That's amazing!" comments. Put this automotive museum on your bucket list.

The true highlight of every Dorkfest is The Drive, because these cars were made to push the gas pedal to the limit as often as (sanely) possible. The Kriemelmeyers and their constant companion, Omar Little, designed a driving route and led Dorks on Saturday afternoon through the lovely coastal mountains on winding two-lane roads with a large

Dorkfest 2015

contingency of Coupes. The situation was fluid, I am told, and all enjoyed an afternoon of fun.

Saturday night dinner at Café Fiore - how better to honor Ettore Bugatti's celebrated cars? - crowned Dorkfest. Café Fiore paraded before us succulent courses of antipasti, salads, pasta and pizza which had us all saying "What!? There's more!? And then we packed the leftovers to go. Back at the hotel Robert Ramirez Leoning and Jeremy Von Phoenix held the prize drawing. It was my great luck to win the final prize, a gift certificate for next years' Oktoberfest. And a bonus - 2016 Dorkfest will be held at the same time next August in Monterey. Mark your calendars.

This was the first time I met original owners of the M Coupe. Lou Johnson has owned his Estoril Blue Coupe since 2000. He saw it. He wanted it. He bought it - a week later. Then the car languished in a warehouse for ten years, the victim of a crash. Lou decided that the cost of restoring the M Coupe to running order would be better than buying a new car. Lou is still so excited by his Coupe that when speaking with him I initially thought he had just bought it two weeks ago. Sean Green also bought a brand new 2000 Coupe, silver with red and black interior, and no sunroof. When he picked up the car in Dallas, the car dealer had paid

Sean \$2500 for his travel expenses. Sean is an enterprising lad. He flew with a friend to pick up the car and then drove back to Los Angeles, taming the beast along the way and pocketing the difference. When was the last time you bought a car and got paid to take delivery?

Kurt and Jeane Mills really did buy their Coupe two weeks ago. Kurt, a tall rangy guy, wanted a sunroof delete so he can put on a helmet for track days. An Estoril Blue with blue and black interior came into view, was snapped up, and looks darn good. I really think Jeane likes the car more. You might see her on the track too.

We are a friendly group, us Dorks. While we focus on the Coupe we are not exclusive, so come to our next celebration! If you are in the market for an M Coupe, visit the top-notch website of Jon Martin, mcoupebuyersguide.com. The website has sale listings of Coupes as well as further information. Go to dorkfest.org for event listings. Jeremy Von Phoenix's site coupeaday.com is another excellent source.

I was truly lucky to win the big prize at the Saturday night drawing. But my best luck of all is being part of the Dork community. Being a Dork is really, really cool! Come check us out. All are welcome.

Editor's Note: Our thanks to Coupe Cartel for the photo. ■

“ We are a friendly group, us Dorks. While we focus on the Coupe we are not exclusive. ”

Calendar of Events

Below is our current calendar of events.

You can also find information on our website at <http://www.losangelesbmwcca.org/events-calendar-2>.

- **November 2** – Articles are due to the WB Editor for the January issue. Email them to editor@losangeles.bmwcca.org.
- **January 10** – De-stress from all of your obligatory holiday events by celebrating the New Year with us at our annual Holiday Party. We will hold it at the Automotive Driving Museum in El Segundo. Look for more information about how to sign up and attend in future emails from the club.
- **March 6 and/or 13** – The LA Chapter will be out at the BMW Performance Center West Experience in Thermal, CA (just past Palm Springs). This is a good time of year (not too hot, not too cold) to join your fellow chapter members to spend a half-day trying out the new track. Watch for future emails with details and sign up information.
- **August 2016** – Join your fellow CCA members for a 10 day BMW extravaganza! Look for details from both our chapter Activities Chair as well as our National Board during the 10 months leading up to these legendary events.
 - August 12 – Legends of the Autobahn
 - August 13-14 – 16th Annual Festorics at Laguna Seca Raceway
 - August 16-21 – BMW Oktoberfest, celebrating BMW's 100 years of being the Ultimate Driving Machine!

The Ultimate Driving Trip with the Ultimate Driving Machine

Late in the Summer of 1998, as I was contemplating returning to college in Texas for my senior year and trying not to contemplate all possible meanings of the phrase "responsible and productive member of society", my father made a surprising and ostensibly ridiculous pronouncement: "Cathy," he said to my mother, "you need a new car." This was ridiculous because my parents were less than two weeks away from spending a year living overseas for my father's work. They had been systematically preparing to rent out the house, divesting themselves of the accumulated effluvia and detritus of living in one place for 10 years and even going so far as to selling my mother's well-loved and -maintained 1991 Infiniti G20. The plan was that I would return to school with my car (a non-BMW) and before my parents left for parts unknown, I would assume responsibility for the care and feeding of Dad's pride and joy, a 1994 BMW 318ic.

It turns out that Dad had just discovered the European Delivery program, and living overseas for a year seemed like a good opportunity to take advantage of the program. So, eventually (even though Mom kind of wanted a Volvo) it was determined that after I graduated in May of 1999, I would fly to Germany and join them in the new car for a month-long driving adventure in Europe. The car in question was an E46 323i, Premium package, no sunroof, 5-speed, because as my mother so eloquently put it, "For \$1,200 I can shift it myself." Dad finagled Mom into getting the Harman-Kardon sound system, thinking it came with a CD player. The fact was that it did not almost cause a divorce. As you can imagine, the trip was everything we'd ever dreamed of - through 14 countries and putting nearly 7,000 miles on the car in just over a month. Twenty-two-year old Brian swore that one day he would pick up his own BMW in Europe and have another grand adventure.

Things have a way of getting away from you as life intervenes, and while I've been



to Europe many times since 1999 and owned many BMWs since 1999, never have those two facts collided. Mom's E46 now sits in my driveway, 143,000 miles and a few dings later, but still shiny and very drivable. I've learned more about water pumps, cooling systems, valve cover gaskets and control arm bushings than I ever thought I would, plus resetting airbag lights and check engine lights. The joys of owning a mature BMW...

About a year ago as I looked at the various demands on my life over the next few years, I figured that if European Delivery was in the cards, it would need to be the summer of 2015, or it would have to wait at least three more years. 'Carpe Bimmer' seemed a fitting motto, so I began to make arrangements to order my dream car and undertake an adventure 16 years in the making.

The first difficulty was which car to order. I'm a finance guy by training and an accountant by trade, but where cars are involved, economics have nothing to do with anything, so I wasn't overly concerned with budget, though I knew I should have been. I had already decided that an M5 was too much car. I loved my E92 M3, so the F80 was attractive, but I also own a 1970 2002, and so an M235i seemed fitting as well. I spent a lot of time researching and a good bit of time driving each one. My primary challenge was that regardless of which car I chose, it would be a six-speed manual. I know, I know, I know, the flappy paddle cars are "better" and faster. I didn't care. I wanted three pedals and a real shifter. And of course, Southern California BMW dealers generally don't keep stick shift cars in stock.

Test driving automatic cars didn't help. I found that the M4 was fairly unengaging (the dealer didn't have an M3 in stock when I did my test drive), even if it was scary fast and compared to the sound of my E92 M3, the sound of the new twin-turbo six was...an adjustment. I actually liked the drive of the M235i much better, but as a coupe and a car intended to be my daily driver, it felt small. Ultimately, because of my intended use of the car, I decided an M3 was the way to go.

Then I entered the world of all the possible permutations of options. Suffice to say that I didn't want an overabundance of electronic nannies, had to have the carbon fiber roof (though no sunroof), wanted the full Silverstone leather, and had no use whatsoever for electronic dampers or \$8,000 brakes. The only hang up was the color. I love blue cars. But to me, Yas Marina looks like someone took a bunch of Smurfs, ground them up with a mortar and pestle, and then smeared them on a BMW. It's a neat color, but I knew I would grow tired of it. Thus, I was forced to go with Silverstone (beautiful, but boring), or try and get an Individual color. A quick query with BMW told me that Tanzanite Blue Metallic would set me back \$5,000, so Silverstone would be good enough. Two weeks later, through a quirk in the ordering system, I was able to switch to Tanzanite for \$1,900. The order was finalized; delivery was confirmed for June 15.

The next four months were various forms of hurry up and wait. I was able to follow the car through production, sign all the papers to borrow an awful lot of money from BMW Financial Services, and make my trip plans. I was traveling with three friends from work and we decided to fly into Frankfurt to relive our college days in Heidelberg before proceeding to Munich via train. From Munich, we would drive to Lausanne, Switzerland to see some friends, then proceed as rapidly as possible across France to Spain. It has been my dream since living in Spain as a teenager to drive my own car across Spain in the summer while blasting 'Hotel California'. After spending about six days in Spain we would return to Nice, France to drop off the car and fly home.

Everything went better than expected. It was raining in Munich the day we took delivery of the car, but I was like a kid at

Christmas when we checked in at BMW Welt. What an amazing place! Walking down the giant staircase and having my car waiting for me on the turntable was one of the best experiences of my automotive life. Daniel, who delivered my car was very kind, and explained that several other customers had asked about the car, because of the color. We went over the features, crammed the luggage in, took a picture, and Daniel even presented me with a commemorative book on the BMW 328. We did a victory lap of the Welt and headed out into the big, bad world.

The car was fantastic; even better than I anticipated. It was comfortable, sounded great, had plenty of power, and was surprisingly fuel efficient (26mpg). I was advised to keep it under 110mph, which was surprisingly difficult. We successfully traversed France, did some fantastic driving and hiking in the Pyrenees, enjoyed great wine in Spain, and dropped off the car in Nice. I wondered if I would see it again, leaving it sitting all alone and dusty in the Nice airport.

Eight weeks later to the day, the dealer called. My car was ready. I had asked them to install the black M Performance grills and have the windows tinted. It's been very surreal driving the car on US roads. Overall, the experience was an even more meaningful adventure than I remembered. If you can spare the time (almost nine months from ordering to delivery) I highly recommend doing European Delivery at least once. You'll bring best the best souvenir you possibly can - your own custom ordered BMW.

Editor's Note: Well the rest of the story is that after picking up the M3 at the dealer on Tuesday one week, Brian brought home a new 235i 6-speed convertible the next Monday to keep it company. He admits that, yes, he's crazy. But I think that there are many BMW owners out there who think he's spot on in garaging more than one... ■



New Members

JUNE - AUGUST

Kathleen Acab	Allen Chen
Allen Acab	Charles Chen
Nader Afshari	Aliaksandr Chernolevski
Lawrence Ambrosio	Jessica Chinen
Michael Andrasch	Ryan Chiu
Ed Attlesey	Tom Chow
Sarkis Aznavour	Rick Chua
S Babaian	Mel Cortes
Peter Baci	Dina Daleo
George Back	Dave De Lorm
Gabriel Baltierra	Derek Dee
Rose Baltierra	Peter DiFilippo
Peter Beal	Aaron DiFilippo
Felice Becker	Tony Do
Fred Beltran	Andrew Dodge
Darius Billing	Daniel Ershadi
Marshall Burnett	Aggie Faustino
Brett Byrd	Sharel Felger
Beverley Calderone	Kent Fisher
Fausto Carrera	Michelle Freitas
Richard Chao	Michael Frese
	William Galdamez

Rick Garner
Manuel Gomez
Kenneth Gorsline
Sergey Gulak
Kim Henon
Rob Hewlett
Paula Hinck
Ann Ho
Paul Hofmann
Gregory Hornsby, Sr.
David Huang
Kara Huang
Gregory Hwang
Austin Hyde
Barry Isaacson
Jim Jaqua
Peter Joe
Blake Johnston
Brian Johnston
Nathaniel Jones
David Kalman
Alexander Kappner
Kris Kasarjian
Tim Kashani

John Keefer
Melvin Kuo
Johnny Lam
Michael Leggitt
Daniel Leimel
Eric Limcaco
Ernie Loo
Pablo Lopez
Gordon Louffit
William Luu
Jean Maalouf
Edwin Mangassarian
Kelly Marsh
Yogi Matharu
Benjamin Mauceri
Jon McClintock
Matthew Mckeirnan
Thomas Miholick
Denise Mikalson
Marc Moore
Cory Murdock
Andrew Murphy
Lionel Neff
Igor Nemerovsky

Sony Nguyen
Lynn Noah
Wendy Noah
Matthew Noll
Renee Norris
Xavier Palmer
Bruce Powers
Eric Quimbo
Gina Ramirez
Leena Rivina
Derek Schatz
David Schoneveld
Jason Seal
John Seput
Harlan Seyton
Hansel Seyton
Colleen Sheehan
Wail Shoga
Barbara Singer
Bruce Slawson
Chad Smart
Gorkem Somer
Austin Steele
Lorne Steiner

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A Nice Pair

My first car was a used (it's called "pre-owned now") 1980 Dodge Omni 024. A competitor to the VW Scirocco, my Omni was Dodge's first affordable sports car designed in an era when both stringent fuel economy and engine emission standards drove new vehicle development. My Omni 024 looked sporty, handled well, and was able to achieve a combined 27 miles per gallon. However, its 1.7 liter four cylinder electronically carbureted engine, coupled with a three speed automatic transmission, made straight-line acceleration a laughable experience (how many of you remember when Dodge tried to make 0-50 mph the new acceleration standard?). And despite the outstanding handling from the front wheel drive architecture, that 70 horsepower engine (wheel horsepower was 35) made canyon driving more like a leisurely Sunday drive rather than road racing. But the car was quite easy to maintain and repair, and the rear hatchback and folding rear seats made an ideal first "sporty" car. And my girlfriend at the time liked it.

One never forgets the feeling of freedom and spirit from their first car. And every time I'm driving a 2-door coupe, I think of that Omni 024.

Such was the case when I drove both the BMW 428i M Sport and Audi A5 S-line Quattro. While visiting both Northern and Southern California, I observed that both coupes were quite popular with young men working at technology companies. When asked why, they all cited the sporty, seductive styling, the driving experience, and the relative practicality. They also said that young professional women like them.

For a week, I drove both vehicles to gain an appreciation of two different approaches to a young man's sports car.

Both introduced in 2013, BMW and Audi focused on their performance heritage when designing these respective coupes. It's no surprise that our 428 was rear wheel drive with a 50/50 weight distribution while the Audi A5 featured their famous Quattro system with the engine placed behind the front wheels to help alleviate the forward weight distribution bias of a front-wheel drive car. For those that prefer all-wheel drive the 4-series can be ordered with the proven X-drive.

Both cars featured the optional sport appearance packages - M Sport for the 428 and S-line for the A5. This may annoy sports car purists, but the respective marketing departments

know that sporty looks sell. Remember my 70 horsepower Omni 024? It had a rear spoiler!

As you can see from the photos, both coupes are seductively attractive. When someone asked my preference, I said that it's like trying to decide between Heidi Klum and Claudia Schiffer. And I hope it's not because of a bias, but I prefer the BMW 428's exterior design to the Audi A5. In my opinion, the 428's exterior has better definition and flows better while the aerodynamically enhanced A5 design seems a little blurry. In my opinion, both coupes were in their best exterior color - blue for the BMW and red for the Audi,

When it comes to the interior, I prefer the Audi to the BMW. Audi, who set the benchmark for interior design, keeps raising the bar. The dash flows much better and the rear seating area features clever rear seat drink holders located near the rocker panels as well as cup holders integrated in to the center armrest. The BMW interior has a much roomier feel than the Audi. But the BMW's "floating" dash screen design makes that screen appear to be an afterthought. It makes me wonder if BMW is working with Apple to create an iPad port that will eventually replace the display screen.

Both the BMW iDrive and Audi MMI systems have improved significantly since they were introduced. Both systems feature large, high definition displays and outstanding graphics. Operating both is intuitive. It was a breeze to connect smartphones to these systems. Both systems use buttons to "jump" to the more popular items such as navigation, phone, and entertainment, and the knob for operating those selections. However, it still drives me nuts that you turn the knob counterclockwise to scroll up!

The front and rear seats are quite supportive and will have the driver and occupants feeling refreshed after a long drive. The relatively high center console makes the Audi's interior feel smaller than the BMW. While no one buys these coupes for the rear seating area, we found that two middle aged six foot men were much more comfortable in the rear seating area of the BMW 428i over the Audi A5.

While both are hatchbacks, each has impressive cargo room. Both have large trunks and both feature folding rear seats, which significantly increase their cargo carrying capacity. It's quite impressive to have this level of practicality and versatility in a coupe.

Both coupes featured fuel-efficient four cylinder engines. Unlike the engine in my 1980 Omni 024, both impressive four-cylinder engines feature race-proven direct gas injection



The BMW 428i M Sport and the Audi A5 S line Quattro

technology and turbocharging. The BMW's engine is the now familiar 2.0 liter four cylinder engine that produced 240 horsepower and 258 foot pounds of torque. The Audi 2.0 liter four-cylinder engine produces 220 horsepower and 258 foot pounds of torque. Both engines require premium gas and feature the "stop start" technology to further increase in-city fuel economy. In combined city and highway driving, both coupes achieved close to 30 MPG.

While all the aforementioned items are important when selecting a sports coupe, it's the driving experience that distinguishes both coupes from their competition. And whether in the city, on the freeway, or over mountain roads, both the BMW and Audi were a delight to drive.

BMW's rear wheel drive and 50/50 weight distribution, coupled with the twin turbo 4-cylinder engine and 7-speed DCT provides a delightfully tossable driving experience. The standard run-flat tires have improved significantly to the point that there's not a perceptible difference in driving, handling, and ride characteristics. And while some may yearn for a manual shifter, I think the 7-speed DCT with paddle shifters provides a much better driving experience. I suspect that the experienced gained from the BMW Racing vehicles has helped tune the 4-series chassis, suspension, engine, and especially the DCT.

The Audi Quattro system, along with the twin-turbo 4-cylinder engine and manual six-speed shifter was also a delight to drive. Audi did two things to try to alleviate this vehicle's natural front wheel drive bias. First, they moved the engine behind the front wheels. Second, they didn't use run flat tires, so the full size spare tire adds some weight to the rear of the vehicle. And while the Audi A5 did feel a little heavier than the 428, it was as just delightful to drive.

I've observed that when comparably equipped, Audis tends to be less expensive than BMWs. Such is the case with the 428i and the A5. With the sport appearance package, leather



interior, satellite radio, rear back-up camera, and navigation, the Audi's MSRP was under \$50,000 while the BMW was well over \$50,000. And with X-drive, a comparably equipped 4-series is priced close to \$60,000. But even with what I would consider to be a steep price, both coupes are popular with young tech-savvy men. Perhaps it's because both vehicles have rather attractive leasing rates.

One of the results of these short-term leases is that it allows the targets to "own" both vehicles. After a week in the 428i and the A5, it's clear that both should provide a delightful owner's experience. Depending on which car I was driving, I was surprised at the number of young men that approached me and mentioned that their previous car was an A5 or 4-series.

This pair of German performance coupes provides outstanding competition for each other, forcing both companies to keep raising the bar. That's great for us, but bad for Mercedes, Lexus, Cadillac, and Infiniti.

As for my 1980 Omni 024, after four years of ownership and driving it more than 80,000 miles I sold it to a college student for almost the same amount that I paid for it. I hope that Omni gave him just as much enjoyment as it gave me. ■



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BMW CCA LA Chapter BALANCE SHEET

by BRIANTHOMASON

	<u>Dec 31, 14</u>	<u>Dec 31, 13</u>
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
City National Bank-Checking	27,292.82	47,780.99
Total Checking/Savings	<u>27,292.82</u>	<u>47,780.99</u>
Other Current Assets		
Prepaid Postage	6,423.12	3,873.73
Total Other Current Assets	<u>6,423.12</u>	<u>3,873.73</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>33,715.94</u>	<u>51,654.72</u>
Fixed Assets		
Helmets 2014	2,075.00	0.00
Tent Equipment 2013	274.19	274.19
Generator 2013	652.91	652.91
EZUP Tents 2010	1,298.68	1,298.68
Ramps	716.97	716.97
Helmets 2008	1,000.00	1,000.00
Box Truck	8,500.00	8,500.00
Helmets - 2007	2,186.12	2,186.12
Autocross Timing Equipment	4,426.03	4,426.03
Club Radios 1999	0.00	0.00
Generator	953.59	953.59
Helmet Radios 1999	0.00	0.00
Trailer	0.00	0.00
Accumulated Dep.	(18,045.32)	(16,701.32)
Total Fixed Assets	<u>4,038.17</u>	<u>3,307.17</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>37,754.11</u></u>	<u><u>54,961.89</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Other Current Liabilities		
Unearned Registration Fees	520.00	520.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>520.00</u>	<u>520.00</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>520.00</u>	<u>520.00</u>
Total Liabilities	520.00	520.00
Equity		
Opening Bal Equity	80,371.34	80,371.34
Unrestrict (retained earnings)	(25,929.45)	4,024.70
Net Income	(17,207.78)	(29,954.15)
Total Equity	<u>37,234.11</u>	<u>54,441.89</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>37,754.11</u></u>	<u><u>54,961.89</u></u>

BMW CCA LA Chapter INCOME STATEMENT 2014

	Nov 30 - Dec 31, 14	Nov 30 - Dec 31, 13	Jan - Dec 14
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Other Income - Membership	0.00	0.01	0.00
Car Control Clinic	470.00	0.00	4,522.71
Wine Tour	0.00	1,730.00	0.00
Advertising Revenue	0.00	25.00	50.00
Advertising Sponsorships	315.00	1,975.00	4,568.00
Autocross	0.00	130.00	7,411.29
BMW Dues Rebate	3,459.08	3,456.53	41,678.51
Driving Schools Income	1,150.00	9,346.80	47,877.85
Event Revenue	0.00	1,249.00	9,160.20
Holiday Party	0.00	680.00	190.00
Insurance Rebate National	0.00	0.00	185.00
Interest Income	2.46	2.77	14.58
Total Income	<u>5,396.54</u>	<u>18,595.11</u>	<u>115,658.14</u>
Gross Profit	5,396.54	18,595.11	115,658.14
Expense			
Sales Tax	0.00	22.05	0.00
Trophy Sponsorship - General	0.00	0.00	400.00
Dorkfest	0.00	900.00	2,136.40
Insurance	0.00	0.00	235.00
Car Control Clinic Expense	14.85	0.00	354.85
General Office Supplies	0.00	0.00	326.99
Email Service	0.00	49.79	70.64
Box Truck Expenses	0.00	0.00	3,073.00
Reconciliation Discrepancies	(26.96)	0.00	(26.96)
Street Survival	0.00	1,983.90	126.66
DEC Meeting	0.00	0.00	358.00
Office Supplies	0.00	0.00	266.61
Supplies General	0.00	0.00	54.25
Autocross Expenses	0.00	2.19	13,496.25
Bank Service Charges	84.95	200.78	1,127.74
Contribution	0.00	2,454.00	0.00
Depreciation	1,344.00	1,032.00	1,344.00
D&O Insurance	0.00	0.00	596.60
Driving Schools	9,927.05	24,989.29	71,109.73
FTB Form 199 Filing Fee	0.00	0.00	10.00
Holiday Party Expense	0.00	0.00	3,900.00
Newsletter - Printing	6,016.00	6,046.08	18,716.00
PO Box Fee	0.00	0.00	232.00
Postage & Shipping	330.00	1,611.42	10,805.51
Website	9.00	68.00	165.00
Wine Tour Expense	0.00	0.00	3,987.65
Total Expense	<u>17,698.89</u>	<u>39,359.50</u>	<u>132,865.92</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>(12,302.35)</u>	<u>(20,764.39)</u>	<u>(17,207.78)</u>
Net Income	<u><u>(12,302.35)</u></u>	<u><u>(20,764.39)</u></u>	<u><u>(17,207.78)</u></u>

Los Angeles Chapter - BMW CCA Board of Directors & Staff

The WHISPERINGbomb is published four times a year for the members of Los Angeles Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America (formerly the BMW Automobile Club of America, Los Angeles Region), and our friends in the BMW motoring community. Since October, 1970 it has been carrying information about our club and BMW's many successes throughout the world. The ideas and opinions expressed are those of the authors. The editor ... publisher ... BMW ACA ... BMW NA ... BMW CCA and authors claim no liability for authenticity or correctness. Modifications to a new BMW may be cause to void the warranties.

The Los Angeles Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America (BMW CCA - LA) was founded in 1970 as the BMW Automobile Club of America – Los Angeles Region (BMW ACA - LA). As a separate club, the BMW ACA - LA was affiliated with the International Council of BMW Clubs and BMW Clubs Europa eV. In 1997, the BMW ACA - LA merged into the national BMW CCA and became the Los Angeles Chapter of the BMW CCA. The BMW CCA continues to maintain those relationships with the worldwide BMW community. The LA Chapter has grown from a few charter members in 1970 to a current membership of over 3000, one of the largest BMW CCA chapters nationwide. The Chapter includes members from Santa Barbara, to Orange County to the Inland Empire. We invite Chapter members and all owners of BMW cars to join us at our various activities. General meetings/events are open to all and are held in various venues throughout the Chapter's territory. The time and place for each event is announced on the Chapter website. The Board of Directors also meets regularly, and members may attend those meetings as well. To attend a board meeting, you can contact any board member for additional information. Upcoming events such as autocrosses, driving schools, wine tours, open houses, are also announced on the chapter website, via eBlasts and in the Whispering Bomb. Come join us at an event, you won't regret it.

CLUB DUES INFORMATION:

Membership - \$48.00 Associate Membership - \$10.00
(for spouses & significant others)

Sign up for 2+ years & SAVE!!!

FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: **Call (800) 878-9292**

WEBSITE:

<http://www.losangelesbmwcca.org>

CHECK THE CHAPTER WEBSITE FOR MEETINGS AND EVENTS!

STAY UP TO DATE!!! ADD YOURSELF TO THE EMAIL BLAST LIST.
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BMW CCA LA Chapter DRAFT BUDGET 2015

	<u>2015 Proposed</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Advertising Sponsorships	4,500.00
Autocross	
BMW Dues Rebate	41,500.00
Driving Schools Income	25,000.00
Event Revenue	9,000.00
Holiday Party	4,000.00
Interest Income	10.00
Total Income	<u>84,010.00</u>
Gross Profit	
Expense	
Dorkfest	2,000.00
Insurance	250.00
General Office Supplies	600.00
Box Truck Expenses	3,000.00
Bank Service Charges	500.00
Depreciation	1,500.00
D&O Insurance	600.00
Driving Schools	37,000.00
FTB Form 199 Filing Fee	10.00
Holiday Party Expense	2,900.00
Newsletter - Printing	18,500.00
PO Box Fee	250.00
Postage & Shipping	11,000.00
Website	150.00
Wine Tour Expense	4,000.00
Total Expense	<u>82,260.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>1,750.00</u>
Net Income	<u><u>1,750.00</u></u>

...GOING

