

# New Jersey Bulletin

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA NEW JERSEY CHAPTER March 2012

http://www.njbmwcca.org

Volume 43 Number 3

## Pumpkin Patch

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Photo by Bill Dahn

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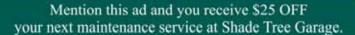
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## The Cone Catcher

By Larry Engel

Well, I have another Rolex 24 under my belt. I can't remember whether this is the sixth or seventh year I've attended this epic event at Daytona. This year's Rolex marked a couple of firsts for me. This was the first time I drove instead of getting on an airplane and it was the first time I had a chance to drive my own car on the famous speedway, even if only at low speed behind the pace car.

I decided that I'd drive this year after a nightmarish experience in 2011. We had one of those two-foot plus snowfalls the night before my 8:00 morning flight. My call to the airline indicated that the flight was scheduled to leave on time, despite the fact that the airport was closed and a state of emergency existed. I got up at 4:00 am, shoveled the six foot snow bank out of my driveway, fired up the iX, and headed to Newark. After risking my life to get to the airport, I stood on the skycap line for an hour to check my bag only to find out that I was too late and my flight had been closed out. I finally got rebooked on a flight scheduled for the next evening, but the damage was done. I missed the Continental race and vowed never to have that experience again.

I was a little hesitant about driving this year, but decided that I'd have more flexibility in doing so. If bad weather was predicted, I could leave a little early or late. While I solicited riders, nobody wanted to come along and I ended up driving alone. It turned out to be the most relaxing trip to Daytona I've ever had. The drive takes about 16 hours, and I broke it into two days each way. I've joked before that my E90 M3 is the only car I've ever owned that has to stop more often than me on a trip, but having to gas up and stretch every four or five hours was a welcome break.

The combination of BMW sport seats and an Aleve tablet before starting out each day made the trip completely non-fatiguing. Knowing your car has quick reflexes also significantly reduces the stress level, as does the communicative steering that is a hallmark feature of all BMWs. The more I think about it, the more I believe that the quality of the car you're driving makes all the difference in the world when it comes to being relaxed and refreshed at the end of a long trip.

Another thing that helped make the miles pass quickly was the music I brought along. I cranked up the tunes all the way down to Daytona and back, and I didn't have to worry about passengers who thought it was too loud or who didn't share my taste for a mix of '70s folk/rock, The Boss, modern country, and assorted other genres. It was perfect. Miraculously, there wasn't any traffic to speak of, either.

As for the pace of my forward progress, I'm one of those who will set the cruise control at 7 or 8 over the posted limit, and I keep an eye out for speed traps. Most of the time I don't have to worry about getting nabbed, and I try to make sure that someone else is the fastest car on the road. This helps reduce the stress level, too. I don't have to worry about expensive speeding tickets. It would be nice to drive 85 or 90 all the way down Interstate 95, but it's not worth the added stress for me. I'd rather set the cruise on 77 in a 70 and not have to look over my shoulder too much.

I buy the super-duper Champions Club race ticket, which is fairly costly but includes access to everything, including the infield Daytona 500 Club on Saturday and Sunday. The club includes a large banquet hall on the first floor, a nice bar facing the start-finish line on the second floor, and a rooftop terrace with a view of virtually the entire track and covered stadium seats with TV monitors facing the start/finish line. It's a great way to watch a race, particularly if the weather isn't so good. This wasn't generally a problem this year. I wore shorts on Thursday and Friday and the weekend was shirtsleeves weather, too.

Since I had my own car with me, I donated fifteen bucks to the Whole in the Wall Charity to get a couple of pace laps on the famous Daytona road course. I was joined by Neil and Al Gambony and a friend of a friend who had never been to a race. I can't say it was terribly exciting because we never got above about 50 miles per hour, and we weren't allowed on the high bank turns. This was OK, because I think we would have fallen off without enough centrifugal force to hold us to the track. I can tell you that the banking is an impressive sight from

the apron, though. It looks like an asphalt wall. They did let us drive next to the wall at the start/finish line, which is moderately banked. I was surprised how much I had to steer into the wall to hold the car up on top of the track. Despite the slow speed, it was pretty neat getting a driver's eye view of the track.

As for the race itself, this year they were celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Rolex 24. During the early years, the race wasn't actually 24 hours long, but nobody seemed to care about details like that and it was the 50th anniversary of sports car racing at Daytona. The crowd was immense, far bigger than I'd ever seen at this race. Having been at Sebring for the last two years, I'd guess that this crowd was bigger. If this is any indication, sports car racing should have a pretty good year. It wasn't a great race for BMW as the Michael Shank Ford won the DP class and the Magnus Racing Porsche topped the GT race. There were a couple of interesting back stories, as both winning teams were considered underdogs, despite famous drivers like A. J. Allmendinger and Andy Lally.

I'm getting very excited about the Grand-Am Series' return to New Jersey Motorsports Park, our Chapter's home track. The Grand-Am Rolex Series race will be held on Sunday, May 13th on NJMP's Thunderbolt Raceway. There's going to be an infield BMW corral so we can all get together to enjoy the race. Yes, this is Mother's Day, and some of you might not be able to attend. Fear not, because the Continental Challenge Race will be on Saturday the 12th, and the Conti Races are just as exciting (if not more so) than the Rolex Races. The Continental Challenge series features two classes of cars, ST and GS. ST cars include 328s, 128s, and Mini Cooper S cars. And the GS class has many E92 M3s running in it. James Clay and his team at Bimmerworld are among the class of the field in ST with their very fast 328s, and Will and his crew at Turner Motorsport are the defending champs in GS with their familiar yellow and blue M3s. These teams both have lots of close friends in the New Jersey Chapter, and many chapter members will be there to cheer them on. Turner also runs M3s in the GT class of the Rolex Race on Sunday. This year, Boris Said has signed on as a full time driver to help Paul Dalla Lana defend his GS title and to take another run at GT. For tickets, you can go to the NJMP website (www.njmp.com) and buy the tickets online. Corral tickets are \$35 for Saturday and \$45 for Sunday, and include infield parking and a couple of added freebies. We'll try to arrange meet a greet sessions with a couple of the teams, so check with our website for details.

It won't be long before the weather warms up and we can start having more fun with our cars in New Jersey again. Until then, keep the cones standing!



Larry at Daytona (where are the sponsor stickers?)



## Philes' Forum

and some more info on brake-fluid changing/flushing.

I would very much like to receive a copy of your NJMVC inspection report. You can either mail a photocopy of your report (preferred), or simply email the test data. (Include your name, too, if you want to be famous and be mentioned in Philes' Forum!) There is no need to send in reports of "passed" OBD II inspections [This is where they scan your car for fault codes.], as these reports contain no useful information. However, for failed OBD II tests and for passed or failed OBD I tailpipe tests, there is good info for my database. Please include both the test results for each pollutant along with your exact model and year, transmission type, and mileage. If you know at what mileages your oxygen sensors and spark plugs were last replaced, include that as well. For OBDII failures, please include the trouble codes. Please indicate what, if any, modifications have been made to your motor (aftermarket "chip" or software, intake, exhaust, etc.). You can obtain copies of passed OBD I tailpipe tests from the NJMVC website.

Before we begin, I was in the local library the other day; thumbing through the March, 2012 issue of Consumer Reports. Lo and behold, there was a road test of the BMW X3. Quoth CU: "The X3 threaded our [accident-] avoidance maneuver at a quick 53.5 MPH, the same as the BMW 328i sedan." Some might say that this is quite a feat for a 4125lb. [CU's number] SUV [SAV?] on Bridgestone Dueler run-flats. Others might suggest that the 3-Series [presumably an E90] sedans are getting a bit soft.

In the March, 2010 Philes' Forum I wrote about a rust spot that I discovered after removing the luggage-compartment gasket from

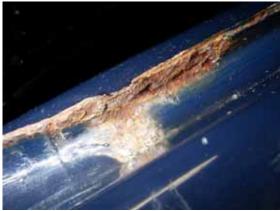


Photo #1 — Rust Never Sleeps!

gasket was to wax the gutter. Anyway, I decided to try some Wurth Rust Guard on the rust. I promised to report back in a year.

Fast forward to the end of 2011, when Photo #2 was taken. I am happy to report that the Rust Guard seems to have done its job.

In the final Philes' Forum of 2011, I wrote about our new brake-fluid boiling-point tester, and how I planned on trying to determine answers to some burning [boiling?] questions about brake fluid and how it deteriorates with age. Among the questions posed in that column, I failed to include one that I have been asked repeatedly over the years: How much fluid do I need to run through the system to thoroughly purge it of old fluid? My extemporaneous answer has always been: at least a liter.

Armed with our new brake-fluid tester, my homemade pressure bleeder, and a couple liters of Ate Type 200 brake fluid, I set about doing a fluid change/flush on my E30 M3.

Ate Type 200 [DOT 4] is the non-tinted version of the Ate Super Blue fluid used by many folks for street and track service. My understanding is that the two fluids differ only in price and tint. As I get more data on the Super Blue, we'll know if the boiling points of Type 200 and

Hello, Bimmerphiles! This time out I have a follow-up to a 2010 column Super Blue are in fact the same. But that is fodder for a future Philes' Forum ...



Photo #2 - Bravo Wurth Rust Guard

I go through a lot of Type 200 in the shop, and have been sampling every can of it I have opened since getting our fluid tester. I have found little canto-can variation, and average boiling point of fresh Type 200 is, according to our tester. about 570

Fahrenheit [F] or about 300 Celsius [C]. See Photo #3. On the fluid

can, Ate represents the dry boiling point of Type 200 as "at least 280C", or 536F.

Joanne's

Photo #1.

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Before removing 1986 as much fluid as I See could from the M3 brake-fluid surprised reservoir, to find this measured the because boiling point of is the old kept [Castrol GT LMA DOT 4] at about rigorous about 450F. The data I the have thus far on trunk-gasket the Castrol LMA suggests its out-of it -the-can boiling In point is about m y 530F, SO several-year-old fluid in my M3 had degraded significantly,



at Photo #3 — New Ate Type 200 Fluid

least insofar as boiling-point was concerned.

After refilling the reservoir with the Type 200 and filling and connecting my pressure bleeder, I withdrew 150 milliliters [ml] of fluid from the right-rear brake caliper and measured the boiling point. [For those of you not familiar with metric measurement, a liter is slightly more than a quart, and 150 ml is about 5 liquid ounces.] I chose the 150 ml sample point because, if one uses a liter of fluid for a fluid flush, after you refill the reservoir and flush the clutch hydraulics, you are only left with about 150 ml each for the four brake calipers. The boiling point of the 150 ml sample was only about 523 F; certainly an improvement over 450 F, but not very close to the 570 F fluid that was going in the system.

I took another 150 ml sample and measured its boiling point. This time it was about 560 F - pretty good. Withdrawing still more fluid did not result in a significant improvement over the 560 F. As a final [in]sanity check. I retested the new fluid in the reservoir. See Photo #4.

(Continued on Page 6)

## **Finish Lines**

By Thom and Kathy Rossi

It is one of the mysteries of marriage that spouses often share the same wouldn't be the right ones. experience but not the same perceptions. Husbands have a timehonored method for dealing with this reality and I will share that method at the end of this column. Take note, newlyweds.

In my last column I recounted my version of events surrounding preparing my daughter's Audi for winter driving. Mrs. R. was featured prominently in that story, and quite naturally, had a few "corrections" that she felt should be added to the Finish Line record.

As you may recall, Mrs. R. entered into the story after I had taken the Audi out for a test drive and gotten stranded when a wheel fell off.

First off, no one calls me Mrs. R, Kathy will do.

While I was working inside the house preparing for some overnight guests, Thom was out working in the garage on Jenny's car. I had no idea he was out there, nor that he had left the house on a test drive. Much to my surprise when the phone rang, my husband was on the other end.

"I'm stuck on Headquarters road, bring a flashlight and come get me."

What? Who is this? Where are you?

Reunited with an old friend - Part II

isn't available during the week because of college.

"Don't ask any questions, just come get me. Hurry up."

What the ...?

Interjection: Ok - this part is true. I didn't want to tell her a wheel fell off the car because sometimes it is better to share bad news a little hit at a time

The last time I had gotten a rescue phone call from Thom he was 30 miles from the house, where he had crashed his bicycle. When I got there, he was a blood and gravel encrusted man-shape sitting on a stone wall next to his broken bike. My point is, I had good reason to believe the situation that night was probably more serious than he was letting on.

When I found Thom and the Audi, it's fair to say he wasn't stuck ON the road. More like in the middle of the road, by a blind corner, in the pitch black of night.

I found him, handed him the flashlight, and watched as he rifled through the Audi's trunk looking for tire changing tools. Naturally, there were none. I was given two options: go home and get the tools or stay here and direct traffic around the car. Did I mention it was freezing cold out? And that we had company on the way? I decided to stay with the car and text our guests and tell them to let themselves in because I figured that no matter what tools I came back with, they

True - good choice. Besides, I didn't want you trying to lift up that heavy jack.

As Thom is getting ready to drive back to the house, I see a giant German Shepherd staring at me. My Dog Whisperer viewing experience taught me not to issue a challenge to the dog by staring back at it. So I quickly turn my back to it and start knocking on the window for Thom to unlock the car door and let me in. He is not wearing his glasses and can't see any of the controls, so there I stand as the dog makes it way over to me and starts rubbing its nose up and down my leg. I watch with some trepidation as Thom pulls away.

OK - that part is true, too. I still don't know where the damn unlock button is on your Lexus.

The road the Audi is stuck on has a 30 mph speed limit. Every car that comes by is going at least 50 mph. My method of helping people avoid crashing into the Audi is to jump out into the road as cars round the corner, and frantically wave the flashlight in the hopes that the drivers will look up from their cell phones long enough to notice me and hit the brakes instead of the Audi. Somehow, I find this experience to be a little terrifying.

I might have been getting a tiny bit aggravated, too. After all, who owns a lift and a workshop full of mechanics' tools but can't put a tire on a car without it falling off? Who goes out for a test drive in the middle of the night when we are expecting company and doesn't even tell his wife he's leaving? Who gets stranded without tools on a test drive? My husband. That's who.

After what seems like an hour, Thom makes it back to the car, driving the pickup truck: the one that's too big to maneuver around the Audi and into the neighboring driveway without pulling into a ditch and uprooting some shrubs. Finally, he gets the truck in the driveway and sets up an impromptu workshop with a jack, tools, lights, and etc. As he puts the tire back onto the car, my job is once again to dissuade drivers from running into him or the Audi.

The next choice given to me was to either drive the monster truck or the Audi back home. I've never driven the truck on the road before (well, except one time when I had to serve as the designated driver) and I hated the thought of it. But if you think I was going to get into the Audi and see if I could make it home without more wheels falling off, well, let's just say that was never going to happen.

Yes, dear.

# Initial Ramblings By JT Burkard

So last month I announced I had the opportunity to buy back an E21 I once owned, and then regretfully sold. This car has some history among club members as it had passed hands from one to another, somehow finding its way into my driveway, and my heart. As the saga continues, I left off making arrangements to buy the car the following weekend. I talked with the owner, Derek, to come down to his home near Philly and buy the 320i but due to circumstances beyond my control, I had to reschedule. I made sure he knew that I was still going to buy the car but it would have to be the following weekend since he

In that week's time I figured I would do a little research to find out what he did to the car. I went on one of the BMW forums he and I are members of and started to pull up posts of the Megasquirt fuel system build and issues he came across. Megasquirt is a stand-alone engine management system so you can take later model EFI components and install them in an earlier car. Benefits include better fuel efficiency, more power and the ability to adjust fuel and spark with a laptop

equipped with the right programs. Sounds great on paper except after doing my research, my gut feeling is the install is flawed, thus the running issue he had and why he decided to sell.

Still, I wanted to buy the car back. Even though it has issues, it didn't stop me the first time I got it so why not rescue it again. The weekend approaches and I ready the trailer for hauling duties. I Mapquest the directions to his house to plan the best route. It seemed like if I took RT 70 all the way from my home in Brick out to his home in Erial NJ it's only 1 hour and 24 minutes and only 61 miles. If I took 195 west to 295 south, its 1 hour and 26 minutes but 74 miles. If the time difference is the same, why drive the extra miles and burn up extra fuel? I only get 11-12 mpg towing the trailer, which is 2 more gallons of ever increasing costly dinosaur juice. Sounds like sound thinking right? Well just as the Megasquirt looked fine on paper but not in reality, the RT 70 trip was a nightmare as well. I forgot that once I get to Medford, there are a lot of traffic lights which prolongs one of the most boring trips thru this State. Lots of ARGHS and sighs were heard in my truck cab as people were cutting me off or not allowing me to merge over when I started (Continued on Page 6)

## Philes' Forum (Continued from Page 4)

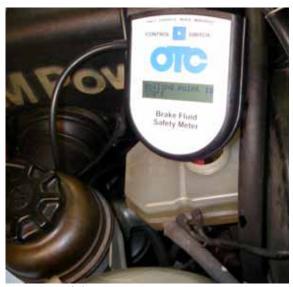


Photo #4 - (In)Sanity Check

So, Bimmerphiles, in this particular case, it required more like a liter and a half to do a good fluid flush. This was admittedly a severe case, because the fluid was guite degraded, and I was replacing it with a higher-rated fluid. I intend on repeating this kind of test on 6-monthold and 1-year-old Type 200 fluid to see if we really need to change the old "1-liter" fluid-flush rule of thumb.

That's all for now Bimmerphiles, see you next time!

Anyone wishing to contribute to Philes' Forum can contact me at vic.sr@njbmwcca.org. I'm interested in tech tips, repair /maintenance questions, repair horror stories, emissions-inspection sagas, product evaluations, etc.

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### Initial Ramblings (Continued from Page 5)

be stuck behind a trailer. My total travel time was 2 hours and 15 minutes give or take a few choice "you're number 1" hand signals along the way. Argh!

I finally arrive about an hour later than I hoped but there was still daylight. As I pull up to the house, there she was sitting in the driveway like a homeless lady wrapped up in Goodwill clothing and a wobbly wheeled shopping cart. I was in love with it all over again. It needed a bath. The Sierra Beige paint had dots of gray primer all over the place like pimples on a pubescent teenager. The front rubber filler between the bumper and grill was missing. The trunk was filled with old K-Jet parts. The backseat was also loaded up with boxes of parts and an ancient 11-year old Dell Inspiron 5000 laptop containing the proper programs to tweak the system. I asked if he tried to see if it ran so I can drive it onto the trailer. Derek said he tried but the battery was weak and it didn't fire.

After doing a full inspection, I realized the spark plug wires were pulled out. Hmmm.., he didn't realize the plug wires were off, what other issues are going to pop up? I had some reservations on buying it. I can see the daunting task of tracing the new wiring harness and discovering components that I have no clue what they were, it was scary.

In the back on my mind I thought "What is the worst thing that can happen? If I can't figure what is going on I take off all the crap he put on and reinstall the original injection components. Then I can sell off the MegaSquirt stuff and get money back." I can handle that. Actually, I prefer it. First I have to make a deal then get it loaded up. We struck a price that was agreeable and the first hurdle was jumped. Lucky for me, his driveway was on the downhill and the car rolled 80% onto the trailer. I had to use a come-along to get it on the last 3 feet but that was no big deal. Second hurdle cleared. After strapping the 320i down, I set my GPS to HOME and figured there has to be a better way back than the slow road to China I took getting there. Sure enough, TomTom suggested 295 to 195 to get home and that only took 1 hour and 15 minutes, one hour less. That's loaded with the car ON the trailer! Let me tell you, the extra mileage for an hour savings in time was well worth it.

So now I have this dirty homeless woman with pimples that needs help. I brought the car to my shop and all I had to do was charge the battery and it sprung to life. I can tell it wasn't running well and there might be months of aggravation to correct it. I enlisted the help of one of our club members who has experience with this type of fuel management

getting in the more populated areas again. Apparently no one wants to system and once I gave him all the info he came to the same conclusion: I t was a poor installation and may take many frustrating hours of learning, checking, correcting, etc to get this thing to perform like it should. Lucky for me, I have my back up plan. Everything is coming out and the original K-Jet is going back on. I am more comfortable with this set up, I know it, and I can fix it easily.

> The reason I like E21s so much is because they are basic and simple. Stay with this notion and life is good. To complicate this with a poorly executed EFI system is like putting a Gucci dress on the old homeless woman. It will look nice on the hanger, but ugly on the lady.

JT Burkard jtburkard.blogspot.com Send comments and suggestions to jtburkard@comcast.net



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## **Driver School Schedule**

Dates	Track	Туре	Cost
April 16-17 (M-T)	Lightning	Driver School/ITS	\$400
June 4-5 (M-T)	Thunderbolt	DS/CRS/CR	\$395/\$425
July 28-29 (S-S)	Summit Point Main	Driver School/Club Race	\$425
Sep 15-16 (S-S)	Shenandoah	Driver School	\$350
Oct 14-15	Lightning	Driver School	\$150-\$395*
* Registration fee for October varies for First-time vs. Experienced students and one or two day participation.			

## 2012 Driver School Promotions Announced

We have updated our promotions for 2012. Once again, our goal is to encourage participation in multiple events. Please note that these promotions are only available to BMW CCA club members. If you are not a club member, join today - the cost of membership is less than the rebate you will receive.

The promotions are:

Bring a friend who has never been to a NJ chapter school	\$50 rebate for you and your friend	
to the April – Lightning event		
For students who were "First-timers" at our 2011 October Intro School, attend April - Lightning	\$50 rebate#	
Attend April-Lightning event	\$50 rebate for Shenandoah <u>or</u> pay for both April Lightning and Shenandoah by April 2 and get \$80 rebate	
Attend any 4 schools	Receive a \$300 credit toward 2013	
Attend Lightning (April), Thunderbolt, Summit Point or	\$50 rebate for Shenandoah <sup>#</sup> or \$50 off your next school in	
Shenandoah^ as a First-time student	2013	
Attend the Club Race school in June	Receive a \$50 credit toward your July Summit Point <u>racer</u> registration fee	

<sup>@</sup> Must attend both events to receive discount

Rebates will be issued as a "credit" to your Motorsportreg.com account after the event.

Please e-mail the Registrar to be sure you are properly credited.

Loaner Helmets: We are continuing our Loaner Helmet program but we have far fewer helmets available as new NJ State regulations require the use of full-face helmets and many of our previous helmets are no longer acceptable. This program is designed for students who are coming to one of our schools as a "First-timer" (you've never been to the track before) and have concerns about the costs involved. If you don't have a helmet to use, we may be able to help! We have helmets that we can loan to you for the event (limited number and sizes), so sign-up early by contacting Jamie Kavalieros at helmets@njbmwcca.org. Take the plunge and come on out - you'll never forget it.

## **Autocross Schedule**

We have 5 events planned (so far), and the schedule looks like this:

Apr 22

May 20

Jun 24

Jul 22

Aua 19

All events will be at the ballpark in Bridgewater. Please check the website for any changes.

Elihu Savad



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<sup>#</sup> Cannot be combined with the combined Lightning-Shenandoah registration promotion

<sup>^</sup> Shenandoah First-time students only entitled to 2013 discount



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#### NJ CHAPTER CALENDAR

#### March 2012

Saturday, March 24th Meeting at the BMW Vehicle Distribution Center in Jersey City. Pre-registered members only. Go to Motorsportreg.com to sign up.

#### April 2012

Saturday, April 7th

BMW of North America will host an early preview for us at the New York Auto Show. See website for details on registering.

Wednesday, April 18th Meeting at Park Avenue BMW. Stay tuned.

#### May 2012

TBD

Monthly meeting TBD.

**EDITOR** 

DRIVING EVENTS

SOCIAL EVENTS

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MEMBER AT LARGE

MEMBER AT LARGE

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**TREASURER** 

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colin@availabledark.com

douglasfeigel@njbmwcca.org

rgemeinhardt@njbmwcca.org

#### **Welcome New Members**

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