



# New Jersey Bulletin

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA  
NEW JERSEY CHAPTER  
April 2014

<http://www.njbmwcca.org>

Volume 45 Number 4

## Still a Winter Theme

Where is this?



**Virginia International Raceway**

Photo By: Thom Rossi

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# President's Column

By Jeff Caldwell

## "More wobble in the wobble"

You are probably wondering what in the world the title of my article means. Either that or you think I've lost my mind. I promise I have not gone crazy. Stick with me here, it will make sense soon. As with every off-season, most of us with track cars spend a good bit of time fixing all of the things we managed to break during the year. I am no different, and as fate would have it, the transmission in my race car ceased to function last October. Thanks to the snow, frigid temps, holidays, and tons of other excuses I could list (but won't!) things were definitely not on schedule come the end of February. My car had not left the trailer since I loaded it back in October and the new transmission was still collecting dust in my basement. Something had to be done!

Enter a couple fantastic friends and fellow NJ Chapter members who offered their help to get the work finished. We planned a day in late February to get together and swap the transmission. However, mother nature had other ideas. About a week before the date we got a big storm and close to a foot of snow. Big surprise, right? The trailer was buried again and I was really concerned about digging it out and moving things around safely. As my stress level began to build, the sun magically came out and the snow melted! Still, the roads were not in great shape and ice was a big problem. I didn't want to tow the trailer an hour north to my buddy's house, so I reached out to a local club member in my town who has a lift. He generously offered use of his garage on short notice and we were back in business. I managed to shoehorn the 28 foot trailer in his driveway and get the car inside.

Removing and replacing the transmission in an E30 (1990 3 series) with the engine in the car is not a terribly difficult job if you have the right tools and some experience. Luckily, between the four of us assembled we had the tools and a brain trust of E30 knowledge. This was going to be easy, or so we thought! The thing that's quite hard about the job is getting to the bolts on the top of the transmission and also the two that hold the starter. There is very little space to get a socket in to those places, so to get around the problem we use very long "wobble" extensions (several feet) with the ratchet. See where I'm going here? The purpose of the wobble is to allow the extensions to bend enough to clear the transmission and get to the bolts. It works really well, but there is a good deal of trial and error figuring out the right combination of extensions. After several attempts and some frustration we almost had it. Scott, who was guiding the socket to the bolt suggested that we needed "more wobble in the wobble". After a good laugh we decided he was right, added one more extension and presto, we had success. I also had a great title for my column!

The tough part is that basically you are working blind because the bolts are hidden and it's all by feel. Once the extension formula was in place, the bolts and transmission came out pretty quickly. Everything looked good with the clutch so we decided to leave it alone and simply install the new unit. After prepping the new transmission we lifted it up and fitted it into place. A few of the lower bolts to hold it were ratcheted in and we were off and running. But wait, it's never that's simple! As we were starting to install more of the bolts I looked down on the floor of the garage...and there it was. The throw out bearing that was supposed to be inside what had just installed was laying on the ground. Oh no! So we have to take out the bolts, remove the unit, install the throw out bearing, and reinstall unit. Not entirely uneventful, but we managed to get it all back together in another couple hours.

All in all it took about five hours to complete the work and we really didn't have too many surprises along the way. Having the

lift was priceless and I would like to thank my friend Mike for his hospitality and help. Also huge thanks to Bob and Scott for spending a Saturday with me getting the race car in order. As I have mentioned in the past, we have a great group of people in the club with a wealth of information and the energy to share it. This type of work is going on in garages all over the country as club members come together and help each other out with projects both large and small. Whether you are changing your oil, or pulling an engine I would bet there is someone right here in our own chapter who can help. So call you friends and get working on that transmission swap, but don't forget the wobble!

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## April Meeting

Our April meeting will be held on April 17th at Unique Photo in Fairfield, NJ. Matt Sweetwood, President of Unique Photo, the largest camera store in NJ, and longtime club member will be hosting us once again at his state-of-the-art facility.

Although we are still in the process of working out the details, this meeting will feature a photography class centered on cars as well as a photo contest for our chapter members. David Haueter, frequent contributor to the Roundel magazine, will be part of the jury too!

In addition to prizes we are expecting to get from our sponsors, the winning photos will have a chance to be part of our future newsletters as well as our website.

Check our website for the latest info on this meeting, which will start at 7:00pm; food and drinks will be served. We look forward to seeing you and your photographs.

- Marc Goeller

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## BMW dazzles Club at Vehicle Distribution Center





# Philes' Forum

By Vic Lucariello

Hello, bimmerphiles! This time out I have a Spring cooling-system maintenance tip and a really cool tool to tell you about.

Ahhh, Spring. The snow has hopefully melted [we still have 6 inches of it in places as I write this in mid-March], the birds they are a chirpin', and the sounds of mowers mowing and cooling systems being flushed pervade the neighborhood. Now's the time to address any cooling-system problems, such as a seeping thermostat housing. If your thermostat housing looks anything like those shown in Photo #1, even if yours has wires sticking out the top, the following applies to your Bimmer.



Photo #1 - OE And Aftermarket Thermostat Housings

In a few cases I have seen, replacing [along with its two gaskets] a thermostat housing that is seeping coolant will not permanently cure the seepage problem. In order to be more assured of achieving a permanent repair, you need to examine closely the cylinder head surface that mates with the thermostat housing.

Although Photo #2 depicts the thermostat-housing mounting area on the M50TU motor from a 1995 E36 325is with about



Photo #2 - Pitted Area on Cylinder Head

200,000 miles, it applies to any M50 - M54 series six from the E34 Fivers right up to early E60 5-Series production, E46 3-

Series, E53 X5s and E83 X3s included. The cooling system on this car had been reasonably well maintained, yet there was a persistent seepage from the bottom of the thermostat housing. My original thought was that the seepage was due to porosity in the aftermarket aluminum-alloy thermostat housing [the lower one in Photo #1], but installing a new, OE "plastic" housing like the upper one in the photo did not cure the seepage for long. This would not have been the first time I had an aftermarket aluminum housing leak either from porosity or poor machining, so unfortunately I overlooked the real problem on my first repair attempt.

If you look closely at Photo #2, you can see a pitted area where the thermostat housing would mount. Unfortunately, the pitted area was *exactly* where the thermostat housing's gasket met the cylinder head. I am thinking that a new gasket was sufficiently resilient to cure the seepage, but after a month or so of heat cycles, couldn't quite do so any longer.

The fix in this case was to apply some JB-Weld to the pitted area after carefully cleaning it out the best I could with a sharp, right-angled pick. Then a sanding block and some fine wet-sanding paper were applied to achieve a nice flat surface. It's been about a year since the repair was effected, and so far, so good. I sure hope I won't be writing about having to pull the cylinder head in order to cure this leak!

It is interesting to note that when I first saw this Bimmer, more than 10 years ago, it had been retrofitted by persons unknown to "regular" green coolant. I subsequently returned the car to BMW OE coolant, but I cannot help but wonder if using the wrong coolant contributed to the pitting problem.

## COOL TOOL DEPARTMENT



Photo #3 - Just Another LED Flashlight

You may recall that, back in February, I wrote about a really trick, double-ended ratchet that I found at Harbor Freight Tools. Well, the response to that item was so unbelievably overwhelming, including telegrams borne by carrier pigeons, I decided to try again.

Photo #3 depicts what at first glance appears to be just another of the ubiquitous LED flashlights on the market. This one, however, takes the concept of a flashlight to new heights. HALO2CLOUD.com.

This flashlight extends to a length of about two feet, and in addition, the segment closest to the LED end is flexible! See Photo #4.



Photo #4 - Just Another LED Flashlight?



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## Philes' Forum (continued)

If that is not enough to get your attention, BOTH ends of the 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.



Photo #5 - Powerful magnet

flashlight have rather powerful magnets, see Photos 5 & 6. If anything, the magnet on the non-LED end of the flashlight is too powerful, as it will latch on to anything magnetic that you put near it. I was able to lift a 2-foot Snap On breaker bar with this magnet!

I would very much like to receive a copy of your NJMVC vehicle-inspection report. You can either email a scan 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,

That's all for now, bimmerphiles. See you next time.



Photo #6 - Powerful magnet

Anyone wishing to contribute to *Philes' Forum* can contact me at [vic.sr@njbmwcca.org](mailto: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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## NJ Chapter of BMW CCA Board Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2014

Board members present: Jeff Caldwell, Ron Gemeinhardt, Doug Feigel, Paul Ngai, Jeff White, Neil Gambony, Colin Vozeh, Marc Goeller, Dave Allaway, Board members absent: Ross Karlin, John Gyorfy, Jerry Faber. Others present: Bob Isbitski, Vic Lucariello, Elihu Savad, Blake Smith, Chuck Schmidt.

### President

Jeff Caldwell called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM at Alfonso's in Somerville. Jeff White moved to accept the minutes of the January meeting and Neil Gambony seconded (carried unanimously). Jeff Caldwell distributed proposed changes to the bylaws, to be voted upon at a future membership meeting. Jeff thanked John Gyorfy and Chuck Schmidt for their work on the banquet, which was very successful and well-attended. Also, the door prizes were excellent and well-managed. Jeff was contacted by Watkins Glen International regarding interest in a BMW corral at the GrandAm event (Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen: 6/26-29). Jeff declined direct participation by the NJ Chapter, but thanked the Genesee Valley Chapter (GVC) for thinking of us.

### Vice-President

Marc Goeller noted that we are ready to migrate to the new website this month, the weekend after the monthly meeting. Marc reviewed upcoming meetings as follows: Next Thursday (2/20) will be a Tech Panel at the Deutscher Club of Clark (DCC). The tour of the BMW Vehicle Distribution Center (VDC) will be 3/29. Registration will open on 3/1. Jeff White will set this up on MotorsportReg. This will be our monthly meeting for March. April will tentatively be a photo contest meeting at Unique Photo. The May meeting will be Tuesday 5/20 at Circle BMW, with a speaker from BMW NA. There was a discussion on having a content manager to coordinate NJ Chapter event schedules and descriptions for the quarterly regional newsletter, website, blast e-mails, NJ Chapter Bulletin, etc.

### Treasurer

Ron Gemeinhardt distributed the current financial report. This included partial expenses for the banquet. Autocross expenses included our license renewal, and EMT payment for October 2013. All 2014 deposits have been paid for NJMP.

### Business Manager

Doug Feigel reported that Circle BMW has renewed. Shade Tree Garage has also renewed. Eurosport is in the process of renewing. Doug noted that renewals and payments are being transitioned to Matt Baratz. Jeff Caldwell has been in contact with the Fairfield Inn in Millville regarding a group rate and other incentives.

### Social Events

Chuck Schmidt thanked everyone for their feedback on the banquet, which was very positive. We will attempt a February date for 2015. The Board consensus was to repeat at the Madison Hotel in 2015. Ron noted that, due to fees, we may not want to use PayPal next year.

### Newsletter

Jerry Faber relayed a reminder that content is due in the next three days.

### Website

Colin asked to be notified promptly of any needed updates or issues with the website.

### Members-at-Large

Paul Ngai reported that Lime Rock Park wishes to have a BMW CCA Day at the 2014 Historic Festival, which National has agreed to help promote. This would include a tent, special parking, etc. for Saturday-Sunday (8/30-31). Paul has been asked by Bruce Hazard to participate in a National Awards Committee. Jeff Caldwell noted that he is working with BMW NA on having a club presence at the Rolex 24 At Daytona in 2015.

### Driving Events

Jeff White reported that the Driving Events Committee meeting is this weekend, at which event prices will be set for 2014. Registration will be open on MotorsportReg on Monday. Jeff White reported, on Ross Karlin's behalf, that we are keeping tabs on GVC's plan to move their September club race to June, which conflicts with the scheduling policy. Blake Smith has sent out applications for the Instructor Training School (ITS). A special club jacket was presented to Elihu Savad in recognition of his past and ongoing work as chair of the NJ Chapter autocross program.

### Autocross

Elihu Savad reported that our NJ State Police competition license application has been submitted. We still require an insurance certificate from Lockton Affinity (recently changed from Wells Fargo). Tentative autocross dates are: 4/27 at PNC Bank Arts Center and 5/18 at NJ Expo Center. Elihu is continuing to look at potential sites in Wall Township and South Plainfield. After discussion, it was agreed that we would front the entire cost of first-year club membership for new non-member registrants in the autocross program.

### Old Business

We will continue to look for a projector for meetings. Jeff Caldwell, Jeff White and Ross Karlin will be attending the combined Chapter Congress, Driving Events Committee, and Club Racing Stewards Conference in Dallas (3/14-16).

### New Business

The next Board meeting was set for Wednesday, 3/12 at Alfonso's. Marc moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM and Paul seconded (carried unanimously).

Respectfully submitted, Dave Allaway, Secretary

# Initial Ramblings

By JT Burkard

## Saying Goodbye a Second Time

I came to a realization that I honestly was not going to get the project done. I stared, poked, theorized, planned, cursed and got annoyed at the little Sierra Beige E21 I once owned, sold, and bought back. It's been over a year since I reacquired this sad looking car. I had delusions of grandeur on how I was going to remove the ill planned Megasquirt and reinstall the factory K-Jet. I had thoughts of doing track school and autocross with this car. Eventually the plan was doing the little body work and painting it either the factory color or Delphin Gray. 15" Panasports, stiffer springs, better shocks, Suspension Techniques sway bars, etc. I had the plans. Too bad I did not have the motivation. Procrastination was the death of all dreams. I said I would get to it... tomorrow.

With clarity finally on my side, a couple poorly taken pictures and modestly worded ad on Craigslist, Sierra was listed for sale. It wasn't my usual well described ads with magazine quality pictures, not even close. But it got the job done. I wasn't looking to make money, just recoup my expense that I had into it. I had received several emails from willing buyers. Some were Bimmerphiles, others I had second thoughts of selling it to them. Others I just deleted. Even though I didn't have the time to devote to this BMW, I still felt it was my duty again to find the proper home. I didn't want to sell it to the first person with cash in hand. I wanted it to go to someone who would actually do something with it, the right thing. It's been through the hands of so many others in this Club, I felt I owed it to the car to pass it onto someone who would continue to carry the torch, and not burn it.

I was contacted by a dude named Matt, a not very active member NJ CCA member. He has an E24 he had built with some cool modification and has some actual real technical skills. This might be the right guy. We make an appointment to meet at my shop. He arrives in an E34 Touring. He looks promising already. Then I notice this was the very same wagon I had thought about buying for myself a while ago. The connection is getting better. The usual pleasantries and walk around ensued. He finds some positive aspects and some concerning issues. Lucky for the both of us the good outweighed the minor rust issues and after careful consideration, he makes an offer, I counter offer, delivery is thrown in and alas, I have found the new owner to Sierra.

The next day I had a full day of playing road warrior, just not the Mad Max kind. I have a Semi Tractor for that. In the morning I was delivering a 1986 Trans Am I sold the week before going out to Malvern, PA. Then when I get back, load the E21 and head to North Jersey. I called and asked the guys at my shop in the morning to put the battery charger on Sierra to get the battery up to par. As I arrived at 5pm, the hood was up but no battery charger in sight. Apparently it was only connected for 20 minutes before someone else at my dealership removed it for another car. Their priorities were different than mine and no one bothered to reattach it. At least I was able to get it on the trailer and head out with minimal effort, and a small amount of swearing.

60 miles later I arrived at the E21's new home. A narrow ice and snow filled driveway awaits me to back down to the rear garage area. Usually this is not an issue for me. If the trailer fits, I'll get it in. Except this time ice and snow mounds were shifting the trailer sideways and at one point it slid right into the fence post. With the skills of a pro and nerves of steel (slight exaggeration here) I got the whole ensemble where it needed to go. I climb onto the trailer and into the 320i's Recaro seat, turned the key, it cranked slowly then nothing. The battery just didn't have enough in it. We rolled it off and there it sat at its

new home. Matt then showed me his E24 and I felt good that it was in the right hands.

Like all of my cars, I get emotionally attached to them. When I sold this car the first time, I was sad. This time around, I actually felt happy as it went to the right person. What sealed the deal for me was several days later, the new owner sent me a text and a video of the ol' girl running, and running well. Apparently some poor connections and massive vacuum leaks were the only issue with it not running right. Part of me said if I took a couple hours to do that myself, I wouldn't have sold it. The other half of me said this guy is going to do everything I wanted to and is actually doing it. In one week Matt has done more to this car than I had done in over a year.



Final Farewell

I have to admit I am a little sad but to know that I will see Sierra again in a positive way, it dulls the pain of the break up. With the reduction of the collection down another two cars, the cash will go for a new car trailer for the big rig to haul. The biggest lesson learned was that procrastination may have actually lead to something good, the rebirth of this great car.

[jtburkard.blogspot.com](http://jtburkard.blogspot.com)

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# 2014 Driver School Promotions

By Jeff White

We have updated our promotions for 2014. The promotions are:

Promotion	Benefit
New Member Promotion	\$50 rebate - become a member of the NJ chapter on BMW CCA and receive a \$50 rebate in Motorsportreg.com.*
Bring a friend who has never been to a NJ chapter school to the April - Thunderbolt event	\$50 rebate for you and your friend
For students who were "First-timers" at our 2013 October Intro School, attend April - Thunderbolt	\$50 rebate#
Attend April-Thunderbolt event	\$50 rebate for Shenandoah or pay for both April Thunderbolt and Shenandoah by April 2 and get \$80 rebate
Register and pay full price for any 4 schools	Receive a \$300 credit toward 2015
Attend April -Thunderbolt, June -Thunderbolt, Summit Point or Shenandoah^ as a First-time student	\$50 rebate for Shenandoah# or \$50 off your next school in 2015
Attend the Club Race school in June	Receive a \$50 credit toward your July Summit Point racer registration fee

\* Available only to new members.

@ Must attend both events to receive discount

# Cannot be combined with the combined Thunderbolt-Shenandoah registration promotion

^ Shenandoah First-time students only entitled to 2014 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 for 2014. 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](mailto:helmets@njbmwcca.org). Take the plunge and come on out - you'll never forget it.

## Track Dates

Date	Track	Type	Cost
June 2-3 (M-T)	Thunderbolt	DS/CRS/CR	\$405/\$435
July 26-27 (S-S)	Summit Point Main	Driver School/Club Race	\$435
Sep 6-7 (S-S)	Shenandoah	Driver School	\$360
Oct 12-13 (S-M)	Lightning	Driver School	\$160-\$405*

\* Registration fee for October varies for First-time vs. Experienced students and one or two day participation

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## Autocross

By Elihu Savad

The current autocross schedule for 2014:

- April 27 at the PNC Bank Arts Center north lot
- May 18 at the NJ Convention & Expo Center in Edison Raritan Center

Autocross is one of the most fun things you can do with a car, and it is something that BMWs were born to excel at. Experienced instructors will be on hand to help novices, and loaner helmets will be available.

Must be a BMW CCA member to participate. See our website for details.



Photo By: Jerry Faber



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## NJ CHAPTER CALENDAR

**April 2014**

Thursday, 17th

Meeting at Unique Photo in Fairfield (Rt. 46W) will be a photo class and contest. Start time: 7:00pm.

**May 2014**

Tuesday, 20th

Meeting is planned at Circle BMW with guest speaker from BMW NA.

**June 2014**

Sunday, 22nd

TireRack Street Survival program will be held at Campgaw Reservation in Mahwah, NJ on Sunday, June 22.

## Welcome New Members

Alexander Bilgeri

Alissa Boyne

Joseph Boyne

Christopher Bradley

Sandy Burkard

Tracy Castle-Newman

Tiffany Cauthen

Matt Cocola

Doug Coen

Julia Craig

Kyle Deckert

Judy Gross

Rafael Hernandez Avellan

Charles Hughes

Danielle Hughes

Karen Hughes

Michael Hughes

Kevin Jayawardena

Michael Kirchner

Charles Leighty

Nelson Medina

Adam Muller

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**3rd Assistant Scrub** Justin DaSilva

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### MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION

The New Jersey Chapter's monthly membership meetings begin at 8pm and are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at the Deutscher Club of Clark. However, special topics often result in a different date and/or location. Please check the calendar of upcoming events (or the Club's website).

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

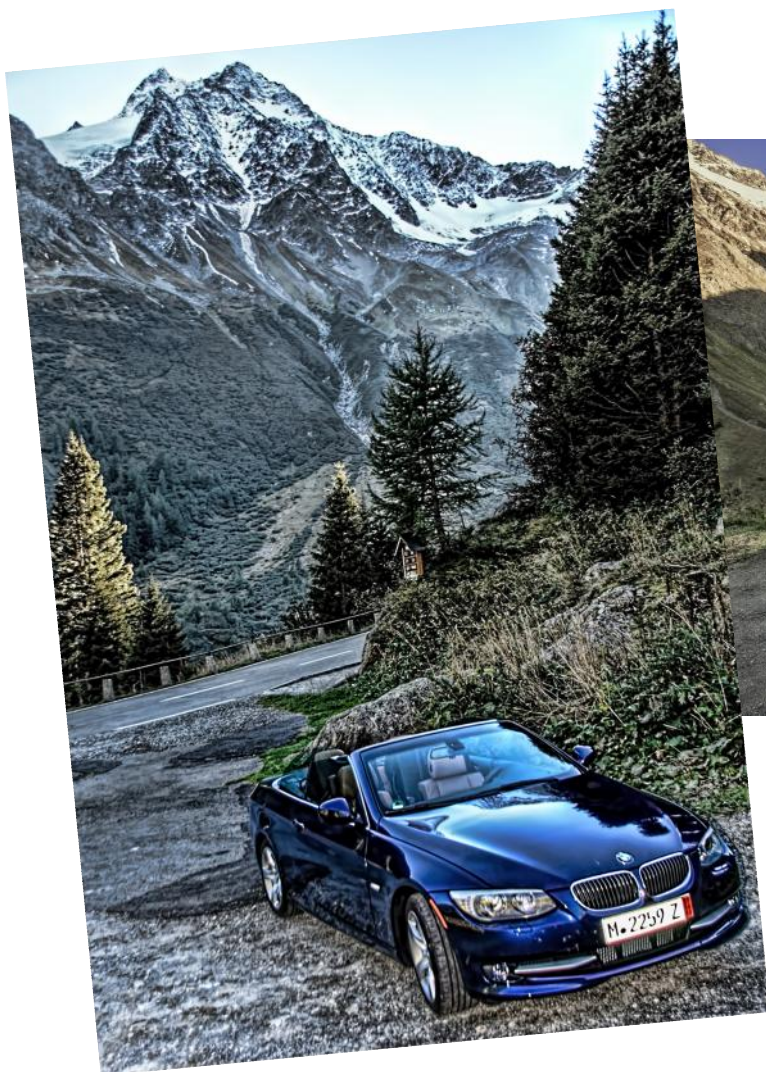
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## Bill and Vin's Excellent Adventure continues



### The Alps and Bimmers

Photos by Vin Ramundo



If you recall from our February issue, Bill Berenbroick and Vin Ramundo took European Delivery of their bimmers. They came back with many, many beautiful photos of their trip. It seemed only right to share these photos, which will continue throughout this year. If the series of shots don't get you to Germany, it's time to check your BMW-pulse.

## Club Racing Almost Here



Photo By: Unknown



James Clay and Nate Thuline, getting the 726 ready to roll some laps.  
Photo By: Thom Rossi



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