



# New Jersey Bulletin

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA  
NEW JERSEY CHAPTER  
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## 2016 NJ Chapter Banquet

Photos by Jerry Faber





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# President's Column

By Jeff Caldwell

## The Gooseneck and the Lamborghini

I was all set to submit my column on the Rolex 24 race weekend for this news bulletin when a perfect topic simply dropped in my lap. So, consider yourselves spared from another racing article as I attempt to recount the events of several weekends ago. As you have heard me say over the years, the club is truly built on our membership. Sure, we all love the cars, but the people are most often the reason we stay involved. The New Jersey Chapter has a long history and is one of the largest chapters in the country. With this, comes not only sheer numbers of members, but an incredible base of knowledge and dedication. In addition, the club is responsible for many long and lasting friendships that span time and distance. You are probably wondering what the heck this has to do with the title of my column. You are right, I should get to that...

Two Fridays ago a friend of mine posted on social media that his truck had broken down by the Tappan Zee Bridge. He was hauling a "special" car for a customer from Florida. This friend is also a long time New Jersey Chapter member who has relocated to the Sunshine State. He owns an independent shop in Sarasota (tell your friends in FL), but also hauls cars up and down the East Coast on occasion. On this particular trip the transmission in his truck let go in a most inopportune place, right over the Tappan Zee Bridge. Luckily he was able to reset the computer and move the truck and trailer off the interstate to a "safe" location. After many hours of attempting to rent a truck with a gooseneck hitch, he was completely stuck and out of options. It is impossible to rent a truck equipped with a gooseneck anywhere in the tri-state area. Remember that folks! With a valuable car in the trailer and no way to move it, the time had come for members of the BMW CCA to spring into action!

Within minutes of posting on social media there were offers of trucks and assistance coming from BMW CCA friends as far away as upstate New York. As with anything, there were special caveats for the truck and many of the assistance options were ruled out. The truck needed to be a dual rear-wheel with a gooseneck hitch and a full-size bed. The car inside his trailer was so special it needed to stay there and could not be transferred to another truck/trailer combo for the final leg of its trip to the Boston area. Why you ask? The car was a Lamborghini and is so wide that it cannot be driven onto a regular width trailer. It needs to be winched on and tied down. The doors cannot be opened when it is loaded in the trailer. As you can imagine this is somewhat of a delicate operation and the client expects a perfect car to arrive. Door dings are out of the question! Also out of the question was finding an available trailer with the appropriate ramp and winch setup. Not so easy of a task and this was setting up to be a real conundrum.

Turns out my truck was just sitting in the driveway collecting dust over the winter and it had all the necessary features required for the job. A plan was devised. NJ Chapter member Jamie K. had already driven up from Bridgewater to get our friend and they were headed back down south. Our friend drove down to my house and swapped Jamie's truck for mine. This was at 9:00PM on a Friday night. It was cold, it was dark

and my wife and I were out of town for the evening. I had left the keys under the mat in the truck, but couldn't be there to assist. Luckily, my friend is quite handy and made quick work of the truck swap and was on his way. Despite all the excitement of the day, he went directly back to his trailer, hooked up and headed on to the Boston area. Talk about a crazy day! Despite arriving in Boston at 4AM, the precious cargo was unloaded and delivered to its owner on-time the next morning and in perfect condition. These things often do have a happy ending.

What was really remarkable about the events that transpired over those couple days had nothing at all to do with the car or the truck and trailer. The number of people who volunteered to help and offered their trucks, trailers or assistance was inspiring to see. Despite being a thousand miles from home, my friend had a network of people who were ready and willing to come to his aid in the blink of an eye. This is truly what the BMW CCA is all about. This club is about friendship and looking out for each other. The incident I described is not unique. It could be anything from someone needing a jump start to helping a member out with swapping an engine. These things can and do come up and NJ Chapter members are there for each other without fail. I am proud to be a part of the BMW CCA and especially the New Jersey Chapter. There is a true comfort in knowing that when you are in trouble there will be someone by your side with the right tool, truck, or whatever you need to get back up and keep going. This is an amazing club. Thank you all for being part of it.

Jeff's Truck to the Rescue.



Lambo for lucky owner.

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## NJ BMW CCA Banquet and Casino Night

On Saturday, March 5th, the NJ Chapter held its annual Banquet and Casino Night at the Madison Hotel Conservatory. Ninety members and guests shared the night to catch up with friends, partake of a delicious buffet dinner and try their hand at casino tables run by professional dealers. A DJ provided a wide-range of music for our listening pleasure. Both casino dealers and DJ were from WoW Entertainment.

We thank our Club sponsors: Circle BMW, Flemington BMW, Morristown BMW, Tenefly BMW, Shade Tree Garage, Bergen Smile Confidence, Bimmerworld, Guten Parts and Bavarian Autosport who provided door prizes and silent auction treasures. The silent auction included: BMW Carrier and Roof Rack, BMW bicycle, BMW Jacket and two BMW Remote Control Cars. Over \$1200 was raised for the Westlake School.





# Philes' Forum

By Vic Lucariello, Sr.

Hello, bimmerphiles! This time out we have a great E36 tip from none other than Rick Kiceniuk and his protégé, Jamie Hann. Also a little tip for you X3 owners.

For those of you who don't know Rick, he is the inveterate proprietor of Kiceniuk Automotive in Annandale. He is off Rt 31 just south of Rt 78. [908 782 4335] Rick has been fixing BMWs for more than 40 years [I know him for 30.], and has arguably the most loyal customer base you are likely to find. In addition, he is one of the most honest persons I have had the pleasure to know. Rick is a former SCCA IT racer who serves as an instructor for our driver schools whenever we are lucky enough to get him. Indeed he was one of my instructors when I was starting out in the mid-80s. He had me going so fast at Watkins Glen that the exhaust broke on my 2002!

Anyway, seemingly every E36 [92-99 3-Series] I have ever worked on, including the 5 in my family, has a drooping piece of underbody insulation rubbing on the front of the driveshaft, right behind the transmission. This really does not hurt anything, and most folks are unaware of the problem, but I must say it has bugged me for years.

I was over at Rick's recently, and he happened to



Photo #1 - Rick's Fix

The International Automobile Technicians Network [iATN] is an 80,000-strong, worldwide internet group of professional automobile technicians, some of whom are marque specialists or area specialists [e.g., air conditioning] and some of whom are general practitioners. I believe that some of the sharpest English-speaking technicians in the world are participating members.

Occasionally I run across a BMW-specific item that I think might be of interest to my bimmerphile readership. A recent item concerning a no-crank [no starter operation] problem on a 2007 X3 [E83] was no exception, and it was posted by a member right here in NJ.

The symptom at first seemed somewhat complicated, as the starter was making a "clicking" sound that was suggesting a dead or discharged battery. [See "The Click" installment of *Philes' Forum* in the Fall 2015 *NJ Bulletin*.] Additionally, CAS [Car Access System], which provides anti-theft and starter-interlock functions [starter will not engage unless the transmission is in PARK or NEUTRAL], was reporting that the transmission shifter was in the "Drive" position and not in NEUTRAL or PARK, even though the shifter was in PARK. So was the problem a dead battery, a bad starter, or a problem with the

neutral-safety switch, which on this Bimmer is inside the transmission? Hmmmmmm.....

Some testing with a simple digital voltmeter suggested that the battery was not discharged or bad and that full battery voltage was available at the starter, so the starter was removed and bench tested, and it tested *GOOD*. Further voltmeter testing of the reinstalled starter [which by the way should have been done before the starter was removed] suggested that the starter ground was no good.

Examination of the X3's ground straps revealed a corroded strap near the right-front wheel. Replacing the strap solved "The Click" problem as well as the miss-reporting of the neutral-safety switch, and the X3 was sent happily on its way.

Just to emphasize how the basics do not change, I am reminded of a problem instructor Rich "Tex" Meltzer had with his 1600 [predecessor of the famous 2002] at rainy event-eve Tech session for a circa 1987 Lime Rock driver school. Tex was complaining of an intermittent no-crank on the 1600 and in fact had contacted some of his Delaware Valley Chapter buddies and asked that they bring him a starter. Bill Koptis and I did some simple voltmeter testing in the dark under the carport of the Sharon Motor Lodge and determined that the starter ground was the problem. Removing and cleaning the ground strap put Tex back in action so he could give his students thrill rides on the track the next day.

There are a couple take-aways here: First, despite the high-tech nature of recent Bimmers and other marques, basic electrical-troubleshooting techniques still apply, and even an inexpensive digital voltmeter can in the right hands do a great deal of diagnosing.

Second, electrical components need both adequate power *and* ground to function properly. Poor grounds can cause a plethora of seemingly unrelated symptoms.

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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Photo #2 - Rick's Fix—Another View

# The Cuteness Factor...An Opposing View

By Karin Murphy Engel

I am not a car person. I'm not impressed by the rev of an engine or the stickiness of tires; I don't want to debate the merits of a V this or an M that. Nope. Instead, let's talk cute.

Car cuteness is a combination of several factors.....important among which are size, color and shape. A dainty but not-too-tiny size is certainly appealing. And when considering colors, red is definitely cute, white can be, and there are a few adorable racetrack-named blues....but I have no love for those stately grays or majestic blacks. A cute shape is a little harder to define...but it's undeniable in a Mini, it was there in the 1 series, and maybe there's a little left in the 2's. It's somehow about the lines and the balance.

Mind you, cute can also be practical....red makes a car more noticeable in traffic; small makes for great maneuverability in downtown traffic and into mall parking spaces; and sometimes that petite size translates into a smaller environmental footprint. But I digress...

What about a convertible? Aren't convertibles notoriously cute, you ask? My answer is that I think you are confusing the car with notoriously cute convertible drivers (Like Larry? - JF). And, to be cute in a convertible you have to have convertible hair. That wind-tossed look works for some, but not me.

But, you're right, how you look and feel in the car are very important cuteness factors. Maybe it's those same lines and balance considerations we mentioned before....but here we're talking about how a cute car somehow erases those age lines and how it balances out those feelings you have when your husband tells you he yet again dropped a bundle on making his car "more trackable."

But, I think we can all agree here. It definitely is always about how you feel in your car. Car guys want to feel the wind, the speed, and the power. I just want to feel the cute!

## New Jersey BMW CCA Board Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2015

Board members present: Jeff Caldwell, Ron Gemeinhardt, Jeff White, Bob Isbitski, Jerry Faber, Dave Allaway, Ross Karlin, John Gyorfy, Vic Lucariello, Jr. Board members absent: Marc Goeller, Neil Gambony, Colin Vozeh. Others present: Matt Baratz, Larry Engel, Doug Feigel, Elihu Savad, Warren Brown, Jamie Kavalieros, Stan Mayer, Paul Ngai, Brian Morgan.

Jeff Caldwell called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM at Alfonso's in Somerville. Jeff Caldwell motioned to accept the

October minutes as distributed and Jeff White seconded. Carried unanimously.

### President

Jeff Caldwell will send an eUpdate specific to next weekend's Whack-Your-Turkey Rally. We have 16 teams registered already. Jeff will send a more comprehensive eUpdate prior to the December meeting, with information on the elections, Pinewood Derby, and 2016 track dates. We had a limited turnout for the October meeting at the Deutscher Club of Clark (DCC). Vic Lucariello, Jr. reported on the recent Guten Parts get-together. The December

8th meeting at the DCC will be the elections and Pinewood Derby. Marc Goeller will be arranging a meeting at C&D Auto Body in South Hackensack. John Gyorfy suggested a Show & Shine event, possibly in conjunction with Flemington BMW. John will coordinate with Matt Baratz. Matt brought sponsor-donated prizes for the rally.

### Driving Events

Jamie Kavalieros reported that we have not yet purchased Snell 2015 helmets. Ross Karlin will make the purchase from Stable Energies. There will be a regional Driving Events Coiffm (DCC) meeting in Albany area in January and Ross is looking for topics. Ross noted that he will not be running as regional representative to the National DCC next year. Larry Engel reported that the tentative dates for TireRack Street Survival (TSS) at Campgaw Reservation are June 26th and September 25th.

### Driver Schools

Jeff White reported that he has secured track dates for next year. Jeff noted that the tracks were difficult to deal with. The June race will be at Lightning, not Thunderbolt. We will have four track events: Monday-Tuesday April 4-5 at NJMP Thunderbolt (Driver School and ITS), Monday-Tuesday June 6-7 at NJMP Lightning (Driver School and Club Race event to benefit the Westlake School), Saturday-Sunday July 23-24 at Summit Point (Geoff Atkinson Memorial Driver School & Club Race), and Saturday-Sunday October 8-9 at Shenandoah (Driver School). We will have no Intro School and no Club Racing School next year. There was discussion on the scarce availability of club dates and competition from multiple organizations, especially motorcycles. Jeff noted that NJMP had already booked 50 bike days for Thunderbolt. We have no date conflicts with the DelVal Chapter next year, and we will cross-promote each other's events. Jeff will post the dates to the website and MotorsportReg.

### Autocross

Elihu Savad is still formulating autocross dates for next year. Elihu is thinking of streamlining the autocross process, and using MotorsportReg. There was board consensus that we should do this, as it would be worth it for the increased visibility of our autocross events. Elihu will hand over our new timing equipment to Colin Vozeh to resolve a wireless issue.

January 13, 2016

Board members present: Jeff Caldwell, Ron Gemeinhardt, Jeff White, Bob Isbitski, Jerry Faber, Dave Allaway, Ross Karlin, John Gyorfy, Vic Lucariello, Jr., Marc Goeller, Neil Gambony, Colin Vozeh. Others present: Blake Smith, Matt Baratz, Larry Engel, Doug Feigel, Elihu Savad, Warren Brown, Jamie Kavalieros, Stan Mayer, Paul Ngai.

### President

Jeff Caldwell called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM at Alfonso's in Somerville. Neil Gambony motioned to accept the November minutes as distributed and Ron Gemeinhardt seconded (carried unanimously). Jeff Caldwell motioned to appoint Jerry Faber as Newsletter Editor and Neil Gambony seconded (carried unanimously). Jeff Caldwell motioned to appoint Colin Vozeh as Webmaster and Vic Lucariello, Jr. seconded (carried unanimously). Jeff Caldwell motioned to appoint Jeff White as Driver School Chair and Member-at-Large, and Colin Vozeh seconded (carried unanimously). Jeff White motioned to appoint Ross Karlin as Race Chair and Member-at-Large, and Ron Gemeinhardt seconded (carried unanimously). Jeff Caldwell shared his 2016 goals, including focusing on the eUpdate, and encouraging better communication between board members and being proactive. The end of this week there will be a specific eUpdate on the banquet, for which John Gyorfy has already submitted copy. John noted that we need signups for the banquet two weeks in advance. We also need to agree on the method of payment. The 2016 track events are set. There was a discussion on content and schedule for the eUpdates. There was a discussion on nominees for national recognition awards, including Friend of the BMW CCA, Outstanding Chapter Volunteer, Outstanding Officer, Outstanding CCA Supporter - BMW Center, and Outstanding CCA Supporter - Independent Business. Nominations may come from any BMW CCA member. Larry Engel volunteered to draft a nomination for Flemington BMW.

### Vice President

Marc Goeller solicited ideas for chapter meeting topics. The January meeting will be the 27th at the Deutscher Club of Clark with a presentation on European Delivery tours. Potential speakers and topics are: Matt Casiano of C&D Autobody (February), Unique Photo with photo contest (March), artist Tom Montanari (May), Vehicle Distribution Center tour (tentatively April 23rd), BMW NA (possibly June), and Philippe Defechereux as a repeat presentation at a different venue and with better advance publicity. There was a discussion on alternative venues and possible Saturday meetings.

### Driving Events

Neil Gambony reported that there were 24 teams at the Whack-Your-Turkey Rally. Proceeds went to Ron Gemeinhardt for deposit. We discussed making this a charity event in the future (e.g., benefiting a local food bank). Neil is getting the Champ Series awards for the banquet. Larry Engel reported that our TireRack Street Survival (TSS) schools will tentatively be the last Sundays in June and September at Campgaw Reservation. We may also assist the South Jersey Region SCCA and PCA with their TSS schools.

### Driver Schools

Jeff White reported that registration opens on MotorsportReg on Saturday morning. A link will be provided to sign-up for all four events with a discount. Jeff and Scott Ryman will co-promote the eight events across the NJ and DelVal chapters, including a June/August "Lightning Strikes Twice" promotion. There is a regional driving events meeting on February 7th. Let Jeff know if you have any topics. Jamie Kavalieros will purchase Snell 2015-rated helmets. Warren is still working on issues with in-car device mounting (cameras, cell phones, recording devices, etc.). Window tint checking has started. Ross Karlin reported that he is working on the 2016 Instructor Seminar and needs to check on room availability at BMW NA.

### Treasurer

Ron Gemeinhardt distributed the current financials. We have not received an invoice for the Shenandoah event in October. We expect to break-even on that event. We now need to place deposits to reserve dates for NJMP. Ron does not anticipate that we will have a large tax liability for 2015. We posted a \$5,656 net loss for the 2015 autocross program, not including equipment purchases. We received our second installment from National for our O'Fest reimbursement. We still need to ask National for reimbursement for signage (National's agreed responsibility, but purchased by the NJ Chapter on short notice). Ron is projecting approximately \$10K in net income, prior to charitable contributions. Our check to the BMW Foundation has not been cashed. Ron will contact Andrea Galehouse at the foundation. Ross noted that we have received our deposit back from Bergen County for the 2015 TSS. We have not yet received our reimbursements from National for the Instructor Seminar and Instructor Training School (ITS). There was board consensus on matching our prior year total donation to the Westlake School. The exact amount of the chapter contribution will be decided by the board at the December membership meeting.

### Business Manager

Matt Baratz thanked everyone who has provided leads. The Bulletin/web/e-mail combination seems to have been a good idea. Matt suggested that in the future we might want to use Google Ads.

### Secretary

Dave Allaway reported on the 2016 board nominations received, as follows. President: Jeff Caldwell, Vice President: Marc Goeller, Treasurer: Ron Gemeinhardt, Secretary: Dave Allaway, Social Events Chair: John Gyorfy, Driving Events Chair: Neil Gambony, Member-at-Large (two): Bob Isbitski and Vic Lucariello, Jr. Jeff White motioned to close the nominations and Ron Gemeinhardt seconded. Carried unanimously.

### Newsletter

Jerry Faber reported that the columns are all in, and he has lots of pictures from O'Fest. Jerry would like to morph the Bulletin into electronic form in 2016. There was discussion on the minimum standards, and the fact that we are still required to produce four printed issues per year. It was agreed that we would deliver the quarterly Bulletin via e-mail as well as printed in 2016.

### Social Events

John Gyorfy reported that we have made the deposit with the Madison Hotel for the March 5th banquet. A check has been sent for the entertainment. We will also have a DJ for three hours at \$600.

### Members-at-Large

Bob Isbitski reported that he will be taking over the Facebook updates.

### New Business

The next board meeting was set for 7:30 PM on Wednesday, January 13th at Alfonso's. Ross Karlin motioned to adjourn at 9:24 PM and Vic Lucariello, Jr. seconded. Carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Allaway, Secretary

### Autocross

Elihu Savad reported that our annual license application has been submitted, but still requires our insurance renewal. The NJ Expo Center has been paid, but we are still awaiting dates. The PNC Bank Arts Center request for dates is in. Our continued co-participation in MotorSports North East events is undecided. It was noted that 2005 helmets are still acceptable for 2016.

### Treasurer

Ron Gemeinhardt distributed the current financials. The IRS still owes us a \$200 refund. Rally income has not been reflected. There was a late payment for Shenandoah, which was a \$300 net loss. A check for \$6,500 will be written to the Westlake School. Driving events were negative for the year, but we ended positive overall.

### Secretary

The slate of 2016 board nominees was approved unanimously at the December membership meeting.

### Business Manager

Matt Baratz noted that we have several renewals coming up. Matt needs dealer numbers from national. We need a link to mkt.com/njbmwcca for banquet payments via major credit cards. Last year Circle BMW and JMK BMW requested the club's 501c3 status for BMW NA. We need clarification from national on this.

### Newsletter

Jerry Faber thanked contributors. Deadlines for 2016 will be two weeks prior to the 3/1, 6/1 and 9/1 issues. Jerry noted that a printed newsletter remains a national requirement only for those who do not opt for electronic delivery.

### Webmaster

Colin Vozeh requested that the officer page be checked for accuracy.

### Members-at-Large

Bob Isbitski reported that Bimmerfest East will be July 30th and 31st. There was a discussion on in-memoriam donations and it was agreed that, as a general guideline, we would refrain from these in the future.

### Social Events

John Gyorfy distributed a checklist and detailed agenda for the March 5th banquet.

### Old Business

Ross Karlin motioned to donate \$2,005 to the Westlake School, in addition to earmarked donations [for a total of \$6,500] and Jeff Caldwell seconded (carried unanimously).

### New Business

The next board meeting was set for 7:30 PM on Wednesday, February 17th at Alfonso's. Jeff White motioned to adjourn at 9:26 PM and Colin Vozeh seconded (carried unanimously).

Respectfully submitted, Dave Allaway, Secretary



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# The Car Nut

By Larry Engel

## A Day of Shopping in Flemington the Car Guy Way

I've been a car nut all my life. Some would say I have an unhealthy addiction. I was never really able to adequately feed my addiction until almost 17 years ago, when I bought the E46 328i that I still own. We've purchased eight more BMW products since then - two X3s, two Mini Coopers, an old E30 325iX, an E90 M3, and the balance of my current fleet, an X5 35d and an M235i convertible. Karin drives her Mini, and I drive the X5 and the 2er. (Every car nut needs a practical car and a fun car, don't they?) The E46 does track duty and the kids use it when they're in town.

Karin's Mini is probably the next car that will be replaced, and we've both thought that maybe she'd move on to something else next time. As we've discussed this a couple of times over the last few months, I've come to realize that I haven't even considered anything other than a BMW product in the past 12 years. Maybe it's time to look at other options, especially now that many of the recent BMWs don't seem to have the same driving dynamics they used to.

Enter Byron Brisby, Jr.; General Manager of Flemington BMW and VP of Flemington Car and Truck Country, a huge supporter of the NJ Chapter for the past several years. During a chat last year at a CCA event, Byron reminded me that our members might have a need to buy vehicles other than BMWs (although I couldn't imagine why at the time), and Flemington Car and Truck Country has franchises for many of the top car and truck brands. Flemington is a pretty long drive from my home, but I was intrigued by the idea of being able to test drive several brands in quick succession. My Client Advisor, Mark Carvalho, gave me another reason to consider Flemington when he moved there last year. Mark and I have built a great relationship over the years, and he understands what I want. I've recommended Flemington to friends who live in the western part of the state for a long time, but I never thought I'd consider shopping there myself. It's funny how things can change.

At any rate, we don't currently have a family sport sedan in the fleet. The E46 is a little too far down the track rat road and Karin would be happier with an automatic. She likes "cute" cars, and I'd prefer to have something that I could drive on the track occasionally - a couple of instructor sessions at a Summit Point Driver School, for example. I'm getting spoiled by the modern conveniences of new BMW's, and from time to time I might like to drive a modern car to SPR and take it out for a couple of instructor sessions without having to go through the ritual of full track car prep. Can I find a "cute" car that might also be capable of a track session now and then?

Maybe the 2 Series with the Track Package is an option, or the new M2. (I've already told Karin how cute she would look in it.) Still, I wonder if there's something else out there. I prefer sedans, and I'd love her to drive one, maybe even a 328 diesel. She doesn't seem so excited. Not cute enough.

This is where Flemington comes in. Maybe there's a cute sedan out there that will catch her fancy and give me something I can borrow now and then. Two brands seem to have growing interest among car nuts like us - Audi and Cadillac. (Cadillac?!?! - Yes, Cadillac.) Flemington happens to have both Audi and Cadillac stores, so I took a road trip to check them out. My initial trip was to determine whether I'd be happy in anything but my favorite brand. Could I live with different control layouts and features? Would I be comfortable with the driving position and seats? Most importantly, how do the driving dynamics compare?

I drove three vehicles in three different classes, but I was trying to identify the basic DNA of each brand. I've certainly driven lots of BMWs so I think I know what to expect there. My brother has an Audi A6 and I've recently driven a friend's S4. My mother-in-law has a Caddy CTS, a car that I drove extensively when we were in Florida a week ago and that I liked surprisingly well. My perception of each brand's basic characteristics hasn't changed as a result of my test drives at Flemington.

The first drive was an Audi S6, which the Audi folks will tell you is their M5 fighter, but is probably closer to the BMW 550i. It's a very nice car, and has a vault-like character that BMWs don't have. It's very smooth and powerful, and hunkers down and cruises down the highway. It feels heavy and substantial. I'm more accustomed to the BMW

controls, and to me the Audi's aren't as intuitive. Considering the grief BMW has received for its steering feel, the Audi was surprisingly uninspiring. The Quattro all-wheel drive probably doesn't help, but while the steering didn't have the over boosted feel of recent BMWs, it didn't transmit much road feel, either. Overall it was a very nice car, but I've already said that.

Second on the list was Cadillac. As I mentioned, I recently spent a week with a previous generation CTS, so I wanted to try another model. For this test I drove the ATS sedan, which is probably what I'd consider for myself. Of the three brands, the Caddy had the best steering, road feel, and general chassis dynamics. It was very confidence-inspiring on the back roads, and tracked well on the highway. The steering had road feel lacking in the other two cars, both of which were at higher price points. As for other aspects, I thought the cabin materials were first class, perhaps even better than the upmarket Audi. The exception was the touch screen control system. No tactile cue (pun intended) to what button you're pushing - just hope you poke the correct spot on the screen. I like it on my iPad, but not in my car. The other thing lacking in the Cadillac was the drivetrain. The motor just doesn't have the thrust or refinement of the BMW two liter. I drove the base model. Maybe the other powertrains are better. If Cadillac bought their powertrains from BMW and fixed the kiddy touch screen, this car would be the clear winner. Maybe they can buy seats from BMW, too. I hope and expect that my friends who are now at Cadillac are reading this, and I hope they can do something about it. I know it can be a tough battle deviating from the corporate parts bin, so I don't know if I should get my hopes up. This car is best-in-class in several ways, and just a couple of things prevent it from being the champ. That's a step in the right direction.

So, that leaves BMW. The car I drove was a 340i with the M Sport package. Price-wise and size-wise it was between the other two. Some of the well-publicized and negatively perceived attributes of newer BMWs are still present - the overly boosted steering being the most noticeable. While the BMW doesn't have the feeling that it's carved from one block of strong metal like the Audi, I've always sensed an athletic feel in BMWs that is unique to the brand. This car has it, as does my M235i. Some recent BMWs haven't given me this feeling, so I'm glad its back. BMW made some suspension changes to this chassis in the past year, and that must have helped. This car felt better to me than the other F30s I've driven.

In the powertrain department, I think BMW still leads the pack. The new six cylinder in the 340 is terrific, but I've driven lots of 28i's and the two-liter turbo 4 is a great motor, too. I prefer manual transmissions in my cars, but I accept the reality of the marketplace and that my choices are more limited than I'd like them to be in this respect. BMW has made driving an automatic tolerable for me. I've told people that the transmission in my X5 is the only automatic I've ever had that seems to know which gear I'd like to be in. The 340 had the same attribute. I still think BMW does powertrains better than anyone else.

BMW interiors are getting to be like a comfortable pair of shoes to me. I know and like where everything is. The cockpit is simple and clear. BMW sport seats and comfort seats are fantastic. I think iDrive is the best solution to systems management in modern cars, certainly much better than Cadillac's. Some of the car magazines have recently complained that BMW's interiors are dull or outdated. If that's the case, I'm OK with that. I think they work better than most of the other solutions in the industry. If it ain't broke, don't fix it!

None of these three cars achieves the perceived perfection that characterized my feelings about the E46 in 1999. If I had to choose today, it would still be a BMW. I don't know when we're actually going to shop for our next car, and a lot can change in a model year or two. When I am ready, I'll seriously consider the Flemington Car and Truck Country Family of Dealerships. My great relationship with Mark Carvalho and my appreciation for Flemington's support of the NJ BMW CCA will assure that. I'm just hoping we can find a car that Karin thinks is cute and I think is fun.

# Initial Ramblings

By JT Burkard

## Sometimes it's About The Chase

I am constantly searching for my next purchase. Sometimes it's for resale, sometimes it's for myself, and sometimes it's both. When I search for BMWs I tend to seek out round headlight cars from the 1960's-1990 and lately expanding to the E46, E38s and E39s when I don't find any early cars that catch my interest. Mostly I find 2002s and E30s, but with the prices of those in decent condition climbing, most are out of the budget I set. So I have been focused on my first love, the E21, and something I never owned before, the E28. The latter will be the subject of this column, a 1986 528e that needed rescue.

My first contact was made back in September 22, 2015. The initial sighting was during a late night search at 10:50PM after I got home from O'Fest. I felt inspired and needed to buy something. The ad was vague with a minimal description and one photo from the front. The e28 looked like it was sitting behind a warehouse. I sent an email requesting more information and if possible more pictures. The seller responded the next day saying this is a car for a mechanic, it doesn't run, and he doesn't know what's wrong with it. Plus he didn't have any further pictures. Not a good start.

I responded with an email saying that I was 140 miles away from the seller as he was located in Bridgeport, Connecticut. I was a BMW enthusiast, club member, and have saved many cars in the past. This was my hobby and profession. Additional pictures will help me decide if the car was worth a day on the road to see the car or not. Plus the expense of fuel and tolls while dragging a trailer behind me. I was hoping this plea would convince him take more pictures for me. If not, I was moving onto my next quest.

He responded the following day with this email: "Most people on Craigslist are wondering how long they can drive it before doing any work, and I don't have the time or patience for their lack of reading or mechanical comprehension. You are the type of guy the car is waiting for. It's a good candidate for more years on the road. I'll get some more photos."



It wasn't until the 26th that the pictures arrived. To my surprise the seller took 24 amazingly detailed pictures showing the entire exterior, interior, door jams, engine compartment etc. Even the tire tread. It appeared to be very solid and worth saving. He also informed me his mother was the second owner since 1989. Mileage is 148,000 but that's not much for this car. I made the decision to try and buy it. But with the distance in the way, finding a day to go up was going to be challenging.

It took multiple times of rescheduling before I made it up there. It seemed like every day I chose to take the trip, something came up. Whether it was doing auction runs for a couple used car dealers, or a new car dealer swap in New Hampshire, or picking up a rare Riley Elf racecar in Ohio, each week had its own challenges.

As the holidays approached and the ad expired I lost track of his phone number my interest waned but I still kept it in my thoughts. Then late in December the owner shot me an email to say he was down south for the Holidays and is back. If I am still interested, we can finally make arrangements. January 7th was the magic day I went to CT to pick up my new restoration project.

The day was fantastic, almost in the 60's, the traffic was light and it seemed like everything was going too well. We had agreed on 11:00AM to meet up. I was running slightly behind schedule but only by a few minutes. I called to let him know my location. He informed me I was only 20 minutes away and gave me easy directions once I got off I95. When he told me what to look for my red flag went up. I was to look for an abandoned house that was burned down. WAIT WHAT? This doesn't sound too safe. The neighborhood was not nice and as I went down the block, it was getting scarier. Then I pull up to a shell of what used to be a house but now is condemned. There is a pickup truck in the street with a car trailer attached with Tennessee plates and a man standing in the back of the yard by a huge concrete garage waiting.

OK let's add this up. Out of state plates, trailer, burned out house, and murder scene location. Sounds perfectly safe. But there was a Bronzit Beige 528e sitting next to the garage, which was the building I had seen in the original pictures. Putting my faith in society, I stepped out of my truck and walked towards the seller who greeted me with a smile and a handshake. Not an axe murderer after all. He explained the home was in his family for years and recently burned down. He bought property in TN and once this place sold he was moving down there permanently which is the reason why he was selling the car.

The E28 was everything he said it was. It was filthy from sitting since 2010 but surprisingly in very good shape for a northeast car. Solid underside, no rot, no major dings, leather interior was intact, and even had the selling paper work from the original owner who took European delivery! It even had a dealer installed radar detector under the dash with the manual in the glove box. WOW! These are the little things I like to see. After some stiff negotiation (he didn't want to budge) the money was exchanged and the car was hand-winchd onto the trailer. (A side note, I really need to install that electric winch Sandy got me for Christmas several years ago.)

On the way home I stopped for road food at the rest area and gave the car another once over. I was really happy I bought this 528e. It's not my favorite color, it's an automatic, and it hasn't been on the road in 6 years but it was just too good of a car to let it sit any longer. So far I've only managed to get it off the trailer, put a battery in it and diagnose the main fuel pump to be faulty. Parts will be ordered soon but I need to find time to actually work on the car. Hopefully it won't turn into a Bavarian lawn ornament.

So stay tuned, the adventure is just beginning. Lucky for me it didn't end inside a charred 3 story home several states away never to be found again.

JT Burkard

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

Send comments and suggestions to [jtburkard@comcast.net](mailto:jtburkard@comcast.net)



# 2016 Driver School Events

By Jeff White

**Registration is now open for all 2016  
NJ BMW CCA track events on [Motorsportreg.com](http://Motorsportreg.com)**



Photo By EtechPhoto [www.facebook.com/etech.photos](http://www.facebook.com/etech.photos)

Come out and join us for a terrific 2016 driver school and club racing season. Our schedule has been trimmed from 5 events to 4 this year but we are still offering an exciting and varied track season. We have held our prices essentially constant from last year and we have added a new promotion: register and pay for all 4 driver schools with a single click for the package price of \$1500 - a savings of \$175 compared to pricing for each event individually. Go to [njbmwcca.motorsportreg.com](http://njbmwcca.motorsportreg.com) and choose the first package to take advantage of this special promotion.

**eight**  
EVENT

**8 Tracks in 8 Events!!** Working closely with our friends in the Delaware Valley chapter (register at [www.dvc.motorsportreg.com](http://www.dvc.motorsportreg.com) for DV events), we are offering a spectacular season in which you will be able to experience 8 different tracks/configurations over the span of 8 events that are well spaced over the full driver school season:

- We start the year with the NJ chapter at Thunderbolt Raceway at NJMP with the combined driver school and instructor training school on April 4-5.
- Next up is the traditional DelVal event at Jefferson/Summit main on April 16-18 with 2 days on the newly expanded Jefferson circuit, one day in each direction, followed by Monday on the main track at Summit Point.
- DelVal then goes to the twists, turns and elevation changes of Palmer Motorsports Park on the weekend of May 14-15.
- NJ's traditional driver school and club race to benefit the Westlake School will be on Lightning Raceway at NJMP this year on June 6-7 with the Monday evening auction and banquet at the Officer's Club at Thunderbolt. This is a fantastic spectator event. If you are curious about what all this track stuff is all about, come on down. See the school, watch some racing, we can get you a ride with an instructor and then stay for the banquet if you wish. (This is how I got started almost 20 years ago and I've loved every minute since then.)

- DelVal then goes to Watkins Glen on July 13-14 for two days on the full and completely repaved track with a paddock party on Wednesday evening.

- NJ holds the 3rd Annual Geoff Atkinson Memorial Driver School and Club Race on July 23-24 on the main track at Summit Point. We will be having our traditional track-side BBQ on Saturday evening.

- DelVal returns to Lightning Raceway on Aug 19-21 for a combined driver school and club race with extended time for advanced students and instructors and a special endurance race on Friday. DV's traditional paddock party will be on Saturday night.

NJ finishes the season with our weekend event on the Shenandoah Circuit at Summit Point on October 8-9 where the run groups are small, track walks are fun and everyone gets time on the skid pad.



**Club Racers**, we have not forgotten about you. As the above schedule states, we have races scheduled at Lightning in June, Summit Point in July and back to Lightning in August. GVC has returned its Watkins Glen race to the traditional September weekend so throw that in along with Mid-Ohio or VIR and you have a nice season.

**Promotions:** We have several promotions for our 2016 events to make it easier for new participants to attend and to encourage you to bring out family and friends. All promotions are retroactive to include early registrants so go ahead and sign up now and don't worry about missing out on special options.

Remember to register early to avoid ending up on the waiting list. More extensive event descriptions, our Driver School FAQ and other useful links are on the chapter website. Think warm thoughts, visualize your perfect laps and we'll see you in the Spring.



Photo By Brian Morgan

## Autocross News

Get ready for another fun and competitive season.

Our autocross season starts on April 17th at the PNC Bank Art Center. After April, we again are scheduled at the PNC Bank Art Center on May 22nd. I'm working on a July autocross at the NJ Expo Center (date TBD). We also are looking at a site in Wayne.





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## NJ CHAPTER CALENDAR

### March 2016

Thursday, 24th

Meeting and photo contest at Unique Photo with David Haueter and Dom Miliano as presenters on car photography.

### April 2016

Saturday, 23rd

NJ Chapter tour of BMW's Vehicle Distribution Center in Jersey City. See website for details and sign-up.

### June 2016

Saturday, 18th at 2pm

Artist Thom Montanari (noted BMW artist) will present automotive art at the Hopewell Valley Vineyards.

### Communications

To reach our members in the fastest way possible we use email. Please make sure your email address is part of your profile at the BMW CCA National website. If you don't have one, get one.

## Welcome New Members

Evan Acuna  
Chima Agbam  
Mousa Ammar  
Alexander Aquilino  
Amanda Avci  
Bryan Barrett  
Ricardo Batista  
Jim Berg  
Brandon Blank  
Mark Carvalho  
Timothy Casey  
Frank Clemente  
Dana Critchlaw  
Anthony de Padova  
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James Derogatis  
Ankur Dharia  
Glen Domaoan  
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Robin Edwin  
Paul Eilbacher  
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Brandon Fetch  
Melissa Fetch  
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Sean Garvin  
Michelle Gelinas  
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Andrew Heholt  
Russell Highton  
Kenn Hom  
Ronald Joho  
Shafayat Kamal  
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Mike Klein  
Susan Klinger  
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Abdel McCrea  
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Ronald Novrit  
Michael O'Connor

Kevin Ohara  
Ricardo Oliveira  
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Pranav Reddy Singareddy  
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Herb Steinmann  
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Deutscher Club (DC)



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### ADVERTISEMENT POLICIES

For information on advertising or for an advertising contract, please contact the Bulletin's business manager. Send advertising artwork to the Bulletin's PO Box or to the business manager's email address.

### 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

Annual BMW CCA and New Jersey Chapter dues: \$48.00. New Jersey Chapter Dues and Bulletin Subscription ("dual citizenship" for primary members of other chapters): \$15.30. All membership applications, renewals, and address changes can be done via the BMW CCA National website: [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org) or can be sent to:

BMW CCA National Office, 640 South Main Street, Suite 201, Greenville, SC 29601  
800-878-9292 (Mastercard or Visa)

Please do not send applications, renewals, and address changes to the newsletter, the PO Box or any of the club's officers; contact the National office. Members of other BMW CCA local chapters may additionally join the New Jersey Chapter. Contact the National BMW CCA office for details.



## NJ Chapter Banquet

Photos by Jerry Faber



Championship Series Winners



Not present: Alex Fadeev, Champ Series Winner.  
Pictured L to R Mark Mallory (2nd) and Elihu Savad (3rd).





## DRIVING CONFIDENCE + SMILE CONFIDENCE A WINNING COMBINATION



Photo by Klaus Schnitzer

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