



New Jersey Bulletin

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA
NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
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Volume 38 Number 12

Trouble-Shooting Guide

By Thom Rossi

I grew up in a family where trouble-shooting and fixing anything that was broken was something we did for ourselves. If the Maytag repairman had been relying upon us for his social life, not only would he have been lonely, he might as well have been a hermit. I'm not just talking about fixing cars, this philosophy applied to everything: man, animal, or machine. If it broke, you could fix it. My dad had no formal training in engineering or medicine,

and I never recalled seeing him use anything like a reference book or repair manual. Despite those seeming disadvantages, I've seen him reattach partially severed digits, help engineers solve helicopter design problems, fix broken clocks, appliances, cars and mowers, lance boils, and do every conceivable home construction project. I grew up believing he could fix anything. I remember once reading a headline in the National Enquirer: Oregon Man Reattaches Own Head After Chain Saw Accident. The only question that occurred to me at the time was: **(Continued on page 8)**

Shots from OKTOBERFAST

It was an adventure to Vermont to partake of the Fall colors and the Green Mountain Chapter's OKTOBERFAST. We took the spirited tour, led by John Holzscheiter, and saw Vermont's beautiful scenery, through picturesque valleys and up and down mountains. J. Faber

Isetta



The late Yale Rachlin's 2002.

Photos by C. Kaiser

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President's Line

Where did the year go? The Holiday Season is upon us once again and soon it will be 2008. We had some terrific events this year, with more of the same planned for next. If you have an idea for event, please let me know and we will take it into consideration. The only catch may be you will be involved in the planning for said event.

Every year in the fall I receive a note from the Westlake School in Westfield about how they use the funds from the proceeds of the Club Race and Driving School that we hold in June at Lime Rock Park in Connecticut. This year is no different. The note from Cathy J. Patla, Principal, explained part of the funds were used to hold a Halloween dance party at the school and were able to hire a professional DJ for it. The School holds events for the students during the day trying to make their experience as 'normal' as their neighborhood friends have, as most do not leave their houses once they get home. For our new members who may be unfamiliar with the Westlake School, the School is for students with multiple disabilities.

The Union County Educational Services Foundation honored the NJ BMW CCA in April of this year for not only our monetary contribution to the School, but for also for allowing a small group of students from Westlake to participate at the track. They were able to take a slow speed ride around the track in real racecars, an event they look forward to attending. Many thanks go to Ross Karlin for sparking our association with the School, the driving school students and the Club Racers who attended the event as well as our Race sponsors, this year being Difeo BMW, Paul Miller BMW in Wayne, JMK BMW, and UUC Motorwerks.

Despite the weather, the Whack Your Turkey Rally was a great event as usual and this year thanks go to Jon Trudel, James Kavalieros, and Peter McDade, who were Co- Rallymasters. Participating in the Family/Fun category with Bob Isbistki, Penny Galossi and her mom June, we were victorious. It certainly was a group effort, but it didn't hurt either that we went by a street corner that I stood as a 1st grader waiting for the school bus (yes Thom, they did have busses back then, but they weren't very shiny). Thanks also go to our generous sponsors of the WYT Rally for their donation of prizes, JMK BMW, Flemington BMW, UUC Motorwerks, and Stable Energies. Thanks to all the Club members in attendance who didn't let the weather keep them from participating.

Have you received your membership renewal notice from the National Club office yet? It's a slick postcard with your name on it stating "You Belong Here." Did you toss it out thinking it was junk mail? If you still have the card, it offers you 3 ways of renewing your membership. The first is through your computer at <http://www.bmwcca.org>. No Internet access? No problem, you can call them at 800-878-9292. No phone either? You can still send them a check in the mail to: BMW Car Club of America, 640 South Main Street, Greenville, SC 29601. A lapse of membership even for 1 day will cause you to lose the BMW Membership Reward Rebate, very critical if you're planning on getting a new car next year like either the new 1 series or a V8 powered M3.

If you are moving or the USPS decided to give you a new address for where you currently reside, you should also notify the National Office of your change of address. It will be the quickest way and cause the least amount of interruption of your receiving either the NJ Bulletin or the Roundel.

There still is time to get in on the raffle for the 1995 BMW E36 M3 from the BMW CCA Foundation. The car was donated to the Club with the sole purpose of it benefiting the Foundation. The Foundation is largely responsible for funding the Street Survival™ School. Tickets are 1 for \$10, 3 for \$25. You can purchase tickets and get more information about the car at www.bmwccafoundation.org. Unfortunately, for that you will need Internet access. The deadline for getting tickets is December 14th.

Our meeting in December at the Deutscher Club will be our Election of Officers for 2008 along with the Pinewood Derby, an event that was started by former President Andrew Korinis many years ago. Cars and rules are the same as used by the Boy Scouts. Have some fun while showing your support for our future Club officers.

Please have a safe and Happy Holiday Season; I'll look forward to seeing you in 2008.

Neil Gambony

Annual Banquet

Come join us this year for lots of fun, great food, good companionship, terrific door prizes, and dancing with DJ.

Where: The Grand Colonial Restaurant, Route 173 West, Exit 12 off I-78

Date : February 9, 2008 (Saturday)

Cocktail Hour: 7:00-8:00 PM

Dinner & Social: 8:00-12:00

Cost: \$60.00 per person

The Grand Colonial opened in February of 2005. The main building was originally constructed as a farm house in 1687 and has a personality of its own. The Grand Colonial has gained the reputation of one of the finest Restaurants in Hunterdon County.

Directions From the East:

Travel West on I-78 towards Penn. Exit off I-78 at Exit 12. Make a left in front of the truck stop. Go thru the light pass the Exxon and Liquor Store. The Grand Colonial is on the right ¼ mile from the light (173 West Service Road to I-78).

Directions From the West:

Travel East on I-78. Take Exit 12. Make a quick left at the end of the ramp and another left at the light. Pass over I-78 and make a left at the next light by the Exxon. Follow the directions above.

Registration Form on Page 4



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Annual Banquet Registration Form

To register: Fill out this registration form from the web site or Newsletter and mail along with a check payable to **NJ BMW CCA** to:

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Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Name _____

Number in Party _____

\$60.00 per person _____

Total amount enclosed _____

Please make check payable to NJ BMW CCA

Mail to:

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Bridgewater, NJ 08807

NJ Chapter of the BMW CCA Board Meeting Minutes November 7, 2007

Board members present: Neil Gambony, Ross Karlin, David Hirschhorn, Barry Stevens, David Finch, Jeff White, Warren Brown, Bob Conway and Deborah Kolar. Board member absent: Al Drugos, Jerry Faber. Others present: Blake Smith, Elihu Savad, Penny Galossi, Vic Lucariello and Bob Isbitski.

Neil Gambony called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm at Café Cucina.

President

The NJ Chapter came in 13th for the ZF Award.

The National Conference, April 11th to 13th in Salt Lake City, is for newsletter editors and webmasters.

Vice President

The monthly meeting at Open Road was a success. They have a great facility and were very generous, giving our members numerous prizes.

The 2008 Board elections and Pinewood Derby will be held at the Deutscher Club Tuesday, December 11th. Barry made arrangements for getting the downstairs room.

Secretary

The slate for the 2008 Board is Neil Gambony for President, Barry Stevens for Vice President, Bob Conway for Director of Driving Events, Al Drugos for Director of Social Events, Warren Brown for Treasurer, Deborah Kolar for Secretary and Penny Galossi and David Hirschhorn for Members-at-Large. Since there are no contested positions, the election at the December meeting will be by acclamation.

Treasurer

Warren submitted the financial statement. The Shenandoah Drivers School was -\$500 with one check returned due to insufficient funds. Barry will contact the student to discuss options. Warren will send an email to Ross with the amount received from National for instructor training.

Bulletin

November 24th is the deadline for the December Bulletin. Jerry asked if we want to mail monthly newsletters in 2008. There was consensus that the monthly printed Bulletin is valuable to the membership. Warren pointed out that Newsletter advertising income is taxable. Advertising and monthly dues should balance the newsletter costs. It will be important to send a NJ Chapter representative to the National Conference to find out what other chapters are doing.

Social Events

The ballroom at the Grand Colonial is finished and awaiting a certificate of occupancy. We need confirmation of the banquet price.

Driving Events

David Finch thanked Elihu and the autocross team for the great job they did at the Teen Street Survival School. The Public Safety Director for the State of New Jersey attended and seemed impressed by the program. The fire department provided special foam that produced a very slick surface. Vic related taking a parent for a ride while the student was in class to demonstrate the skills that would be taught. This proved to be an effective approach and should be considered for inclusion in next year's program. Jamie, Irv and Art are planning to review all the student evaluations. Irv Sherman is interested in heading up the Street Survival program next year. A car control clinic, open to all members, is a priority for next season.

There are 18 cars pre-registered for the Whack Your Turkey Rally.

Jeff White is waiting for Summit Point driving school dates. We have confirmed dates of August 22nd through 24th for the joint event with Del Val at the new Thunderbolt Raceway.

Elihu reported interest in an Advanced Autocross School. Three Flags has large parking lots that are not used for much of the year. Their lot rental

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cost is \$10,000. We should discuss the possibility of getting a better price for a Teen Street Survival School. Elihu will be getting the available dates from the Patriot and PNC lots soon.

Ross needs our plans for an Instructor Seminar for the DNC.

Member-at-Large

David Hirschhorn is working on a membership survey for the December meeting. It will also be posted on the website. He emailed a draft to the board. Anyone with additional comments should email them to David.

Dealer Liaison

Penny Galossi will obtain prizes for the Whack Your Turkey Rally.

New Business

Penny reported on her discussions with Highpoint regarding a mailing, to purchasers of new BMWs, that includes the benefits of joining the NJ Chapter of the BMW CCA. Bob Conway motioned that we approve one joint mailing campaign with Highpoint, pending Board and legal approval. David Hirschhorn seconded. Motion passed. It was pointed out that Liberty Mutual may have a program with BMW NA targeting new purchasers of BMWs.

Neil will ask Dave McIntyre to run the Pinewood Derby.

The next board meeting is Wednesday, January 9th at 7:30 pm at Café Cucina. David Hirschhorn motioned to adjourn at 9:30 pm, Jeff White seconded.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Kolar (Secretary)



Whack Your Turkey Rally

For those of you who have not done one of the clubs gimmick rallies, it is a lot of fun. There are two classes: Competition class, which is just a Driver and Navigator, and Family class, which is for more than 2 people. The latter is great way to involve the whole family and friends in the hobby. You get a set of route instructions with clues to look for as you drive down some lovely back roads. Most rallies are 3 hours long and trust me; you'll need every minute of that time. The scenery is beautiful as well as the houses you see are gorgeous. Some of the clues are relatively easy to spot but some references are more obscure. It takes a bit of skill and knowledge but very rewarding when you find all of the clues in a section. Sandy and I have placed anywhere from 1st in the last rally to a multiple of 8th place finishes on past rallies.

The morning was cold and wet and we were off to a late start. When Sandy and I arrived at Chimney Rock Inn, cars were starting to be sent off already. Our timing was off right from the beginning. We signed in and chatted with the rally masters to get some info we missed since we did not make the drivers meeting. After a couple minutes of conversation we figured it would be best to get our car in line. We were the second to last vehicle out. The rally masters handed us our directions and we're off. Make a right out of the restaurant, go 1.3 miles and make another right onto Gilbride Road. At this turn, the clues started. We did not. Half way down the road we realized that this is the road the clues started and we had to turn around. Something was telling us this was not going to be our rally.

Time to regroup quickly. We have 6 pages of clues and we need to focus! After a brief u-turn back to the beginning of the road, we were ready to go. We did great too. We were picking off clues like the returning champions we were. Clues like: "Where might Prince's beret receive Bronx Cheers?" Answer: "RASPBERRY TRAIL!" Oh yeah, we were on fire. As we drove the route, various objects in people's yards were part of the clues. Mailboxes are a popular item to be used in the rallies. This one "What colors "lure" the mailman" was a fishing lure mailbox. We had to write down what the colors were that it was painted. As we were stopped briefly so Sandy could write down the answer to this and the next clue that was the next house, the homeowner approached us. I lowered the window and she asked with a perplexed look on her face, "Why are all these cars stopping in front of my house?" I explained their fishing lure mailbox was part of a rally clue. She seemed intrigued and relieved to find out. Also, in another leg of the rally a man in a Lincoln asked why all of these cars, mostly BMW's, were driving slowly down the street. I explained again that we were on a rally. He told us good luck and to have fun. One of the questions (#39) was removed from the route "due to a matter of national security." We never found out what this was.

Moving ahead to the fourth page of the rally, time was running thin and we still had 2 pages left and one hour to go. We had to pick things up a bit. Somehow we missed a couple of the bonus questions, which can make or break your rankings. We were still doing well as we were finding just about every clue or so we thought. Move along to the last page of instructions; this is where you can see exactly where we fell apart on our answer sheet. It was the last page, 8.8 miles to go. The now infamous Turn # 45 "Bear right at CR-512/Vally Rd, becomes Liberty Corner Rd, Martinsville." The graphic for this turn even fit the description. So we turned and proceeded to find the clue, which was not there. This was supposed to be a 1.5-mile section and then we turn. Problem is the turn was nowhere in sight. And it wasn't just us too. We passed at least 6 other rally goes back and forth on 512 for over 20 minutes. Then, no more rally cars at all. We were all alone.

Frustration and panic set in. Where do we go? Did we miss something? A few more laps up and down the road and we were still clueless. The name of road was correct, the turn looked right, everything fit perfect, except we were not where we were supposed to be. Finally, against my manly nature to keep driving aimlessly until we find our way, Sandy called one of the rally masters and then a second needed call to them finally got us back on track, 35 minutes later. ARGH! We found that we needed to cross over the first 512 turn to get to the right location. This was a major set back and time was running out fast. We needed to move quickly so we didn't lose points from the time penalty that was eminent. We missed the last few clues since the time crunch was more important than a couple 1-point questions. We finally arrived, frustrated, hungry and disappointed.

The champions have fallen. We handed in the rally sheet to the rally masters and grabbed a table so we could have a delicious lunch. All in all, this was not our crowning glory but we had a good time and will be sure to participate in the next rally.

Congratulations to Ross Karlin and David McIntyre for getting first place in the competition class and to Neil Gambony, Bob Isbitski, Penny G. and Penny's mom for placing first in the Family class. The competition was tough and everyone deserves a round of applause for making it to the end without killing each other. Sandy and I finished 8th out of 20 so even with our major set backs, we still did well.

We need to thank all of the sponsors for the generous donation of the prizes that were given out at the awards luncheon: JMK BMW, Flemington BMW, UUC Motorwerks, Stable Energies, and Michael Katsoris for the Chocolate Turkeys. Last but not least, we would all like to thank our rally masters Jamie Kavalieros, Jon Trudel, and Peter McDade. Without them, we would not have the opportunity to drive these wonderful roads and argue with our co-driver(s). Now where did I put that do-it-yourself divorce kit?

JT Burkard
E21 Enthusiast





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Trouble-Shooting Guide

(Continued from page 1)

What was my dad doing in Oregon? He simply had a genius for looking at something broken and figuring out how to make it right.

For most of my life I've been trying to figure out how he did it. I've codified some of his more timeless methods in a set of heuristics I call the Rossi Method For Fixing Anything (RMFFA). These are principles you won't find in any repair manual and in fact, in many ways they obviate the need for a repair manual. For all I know, this was taught to my dad by his dad and etcetera back through generations of Rossi's who probably first developed these methods to help them accomplish tasks such as building and fixing the aqueducts. Here's how it works.

Recently, I was enjoying a pleasant dinner at home with Mrs. R. and our daughter, Jenny. Chris had already left to attend the season opener Hunterdon Central v. North Hunterdon football game. The phone rings & Mrs. R. picks up. I see her face get all serious looking and I hear her say "I'll have Dad send a tow truck." Uh oh. I didn't yet know what Chris's problem was, but Mrs. R. was already taking his complaint at face value and bypassing the first and most sacred of all the RMFFA principles. If successfully applied, RMFFA principle number 1 is the most potent work saver known to man: convince the complainant that there is no problem. I'd seen my dad do it dozens of times. (Broken arm? No, it's good if your elbow bends backwards like that. All the major league pitchers can do that, too.) I interceded, of course, and tried to get things back on the right track. I soon learned that he heard a loud noise from his engine bay, saw a tremendous volume of white smoke, and proceeded to drive his car until the engine seized. He did note with passing interest that the temperature gauge was fully pegged when the engine stopped running. This allowed me to invoke the corollary to RMFFA principle 1: if it really is broken, convince the complainant that it was their fault to begin with. This is not a particularly useful trouble shooting principle, but it does allow one to capture the moral high ground and take control of a situation.

Being the proud owner of a flat bed trailer and an SUV, I immediately nixed the idea of a tow truck and set out to retrieve my son. RMFFA principle number 2: never call a professional for help. In no time at all, I had wound my eight foot wide trailer down a three mile stretch of road with only 7 ½ feet of space between cars parked on either side, and had found a couple of idle teenagers to help us push Chris's car onto the trailer. Just as I was struggling in the dark to get the tie-downs in place, a drunk driver in a massive pick up truck came up behind me, staggered out of his vehicle, and began screaming at me to get out of his way. I quickly invoked RMFFA principle 3, my only individual contribution to the methodology: use colorful language whenever possible to convince others of the justness of your cause. It didn't work. The drunk driver persisted in his ranting, but since it never occurred to him to back up and go a different way, I did receive the benefit of his headlights to aid me in my work to secure the car to the trailer. RMFFA principle 4: take advantage of all the tools that come to hand.

Back in the comfort and security of my own garage, I finally got a chance to inspect the car. It will come as no surprise to you e-46 aficionados that the trouble started with the radiator's overflow tank, which was sporting a long split up the side. I didn't know if this was the root cause of the problem, or the result of an overpressure condition caused by overheating the coolant system, but I invoked the first actually useful RMFFA principle (no. 5): start by fixing the most obvious problem and see if that works. It didn't.

After refilling the coolant system and starting the engine we let it run long enough to ensure that the temperature gauge didn't climb past half way. We shut the car off, heard a hissing sound, and within minutes the coolant system had depressurized and I was on the hunt for a leak. It would have been very helpful to have a way of keeping the system pressurized without having to run the engine. So I took a little diversion and assembled an adapter for my air compressor from parts I had purchased at the Home Depot: air couplers, pressure gauges, garden hose washers, hose clamps, valves, and a couple of other doo hickies. In all, I was able to use about \$50 worth of parts to create a pressure tester that would have cost a few hundred bucks if purchased as a specialty tool. Never mind that it added two days to the effort. RMFFA principle no. 6: improvising without the proper tools is always more fun than getting the tool you really need. I

learned that one from my dad when I saw him rebuild an outboard engine with nothing more than a bent screw driver and a rusty pair of pliers while we drifted over 10 foot swells in an 8 foot home-built row boat in a storm on the Long Island Sound. I think I remember him using some parts from a fishing reel to finish off the job and get us home, but I'm not too sure because I was busy puking at the time.

Over the next several weeks I worked my way through every coolant system part I could replace, one at a time. Every hose, gasket, and o-ring had been heat treated to attain the consistency of petrified wood. It seemed that every time I got rid of one leak, another would crop up. This was an occasion upon which to exercise RMFFA principle 7. If you don't know exactly which part to replace, be optimistic and start with the cheapest and easiest ones to replace. You never know, you might get lucky and that would be a big win. I didn't get lucky. After I had replaced all the radiator hoses, the water pump, the radiator, thermostat and heater valve, and had fixed an oil leak in the bargain, there was still a persistent leak in the coolant system.

All along I had been concerned about the possibility that the extreme overheating situation had caused either a blown head gasket or a warped head. These are not good problems to have and I had been consoling myself by steadfastly holding true to RMFFA principle 7 while making some basic checks for the worst case. I saw no frothing in the oil, the engine ran smoothly, there was no white smoke in the exhaust, no oil in the coolant. The spark plugs looked normal.

I had gotten this far without a repair manual (a RMFFA principle so fundamental, I'm not even giving it a number). It had taken me about 6 weeks of trial and error, and while I had improved the situation, I hadn't completely solved the problem. That's when I exercised RMFFA number 8: try to convince the complainant that a half baked repair is really good enough. After all, I reasoned, the car is only used to go back and forth to high school and for unimportant social appointments. And we have a couple of other vehicles available for longer trips. Besides, if worse came to worse, I could always flat-bed the thing home again. Just check the coolant level each morning, make sure you top it off, and keep an eye on the temp gauge. Mrs. R. and Chris proved to be strangely impervious to this logic.

In the end, I had to rely on the RMFFA principle of last resort. It is a powerful concept but it doesn't come easily to most people who like to do their own repair work. It is brought into play only when you have: a) made an irretrievable mess by sheering several impossible to reach bolt heads or setting your project on fire; b) have run out of time, or; c) are commanded to do so by Mrs. R (and there has always, through the generations, been a Mrs. R). RMFFA principle no. 9: ignore principle 2, give up, and call a professional. I brought the car to Steve Vicari, explained the saga to him, and asked him to take it the rest of the way. It turned out that the final culprit in the leaking coolant system was a couple of plastic pipes that are buried under the intake manifold. Hard to get to and really beyond the level of engine disassembly I would be comfortable in attempting myself.

I now stand at the ready with principle 10: if anything else breaks, look first at the work you did most recently because you probably screwed it up.

So how did the application of the RMFFA principles work out? Not too badly, really. The car has a completely new coolant system, which isn't a bad thing to do at 120k miles, it doesn't leak, and the cost of professional repairs was minimized by doing a bit of work myself first. Chris learned a valuable lesson about paying attention to his car's warning signs. I also got to do a bit of repair work along side Chris, and that is always a good thing, because in this age of consumer electronics, few and far between are the opportunities for me to pass the principles of RMFFA along to the next generation.

Thom can be reached at thomrossi@gmail.com



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NJ Chapter Calendar

December 2007

December 11th
Club Elections and Pinewood Derby at our monthly meeting at the Deutscher Club in Clark.

January 2008

January TBD
Monthly meeting at Deutscher Club in Clark.

February 2008

February 9th
Annual Club Banquet at the Grand Colonial in Hunterdon County. (Save the date - See article on page 2 or our website.)

February TBD

Monthly meeting at Deutscher Club in Clark.

March 2008

Time to finish car for track season.

April 2008

Autocross season starts. Driver schools start.

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION and LOCATION

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 force a different date; please check the calendar of upcoming events (or the website) carefully.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

All membership applications, renewals and address changes can be done via the BMW CCA National website: 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)

Annual BMW CCA and New Jersey Chapter dues: \$40.00.

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Shots from OKTOBERFAST



Photos by C. Kaiser

Bevy of Bimmers in Fall colors

Beautiful 3.0CS



The classic 2002 (but with square taillights)

Classifieds

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