



# New Jersey Bulletin

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA  
NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

July 2008

<http://www.njbmwcca.org>

Volume 39 Number 7

## June Meeting Held at BMW NA by Jeff Burgess

Some call it the big dance. Others consider it the super bowl. I call it the most anticipated NJ BMW CCA meeting of the year! Of course I am talking about the monthly meeting hosted by BMWUSA at the North American Headquarters. If you were there, you know what the excitement was all about. If you were not there, well you better be there next year! I like to compare this meeting to the Grand Canyon, people can tell you about how great it is over and over, but it's not until you experience it in person that you understand how grand it is. I arrived there just a little bit late and it was already packed. I had to park down on the lower parking deck, but that was ok, since it gave me the chance to drive past all of the amazing BMW's and Mini's driven to meeting by fellow members. Of course, my eyes quickly glued to the many nice E30 M3's, but there were beautiful cars from all the

chassis and years. One that comes to mind right away is a black E31, it was like looking into a mirror! A couple new M3's were in the lot as well.

Outside, BMW NA had a nice selection of some hot BMW's; there was an M6, Alpina B7, new M3, and a real nice E46 showcasing BMW's new performance parts line. This stuff was top notch quality and I'm sure fit is OEM. There was also a new 550i with the sports package that was looking pretty good. As I entered the building, there were an X6 and a 128i convertible parked right in the middle of the place. I'll tell you that 128i drop top might find a place in my driveway in the future! Ok, maybe in the distant future, but someday! There was food everywhere, all kinds and types. My favorite was the mini hotdogs. These were not **(Continued on Page 15)**



**M3 Sedan - the benchmark**

Photo by Jeff Burgess

Newsletter of the NJ Chapter  
BMW Car Club of America  
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## President's Line

The great part of summer is not only being able to run my car the "Red Devil" in our driver's schools, but also being a spectator of motorcar racing at any of the race tracks in the area. I define "in the area" as being within a 3 to 4 hour drive. The event of my choice for June was the HSR (Historic Sportscar Racing) Series, which was held at Watkins Glen, New York.

Now I don't only get to tell to you about the sports car racing event that gets my motor running, but I also get to make a plug for the OctoberFest being held at Watkins Glen September 23-27. Before I go any further, I must tell you that there will be plenty of events for the whole family at OctoberFest other than just spending the whole time at Watkins Glen International. Information and registration for OctoberFest can be found at [www.bmwccaofest.org](http://www.bmwccaofest.org).

We (my brother and I) have been spectating at Watkins Glen since 1976. You know you're getting old when some of the cars in attendance at the HSR event were cars that you saw in the heydays of their series. Now we get to watch the cars sans the drivers that made them famous. Or was it the cars that made the drivers famous? Anyway, there were cars of all types, sedans, formula cars, prototypes, Indy cars, Can-Am and NASCAR. I particularly enjoyed seeing several meticulously prepared BMW 3.0 CSLs from the 70's.

This event also gave me the chance to see some Le Mans winning cars up-close, the Audi R8 and the Bentley car. These cars are not really that old, but they have been outdated by the latest in technology. I much rather enjoy seeing them driven at the track then parked in a museum. There never is a shortage of Porsches and Corvettes at these events, a true testament to their racing longevity. Cars similar in performance are grouped together for short 5-lap races, they aren't being driven at their fullest potential but then there is no big prize for winning.

The big thrill for me that weekend was the opportunity to take several parade laps around Watkins Glen International in what else but my trusty 2004 Ford Ranger 4X4. I know many of our members have driven the Glen, the closest I have ever been to being on the circuit was when NJ Driving Instructor Geoff Atkinson gave me ride in his E36 M3 during a driver's school I was attending several years ago but not as a student. It certainly gave me a whole new perspective of the track then what I was accustomed to.

For the sum of \$25, we able to take three parade laps with the intention of not going over 55 mph. After the first lap I was no longer able to see the pace car and ½ lap later I could no longer see the car I was following. It was time to pick up the pace a little bit. There were two things that prevented me from catching the car I was following. The first was my brother sliding around the cab because the previous owner of the truck thought ArmorAll was the best treatment for the vinyl interior and the second was the camping equipment we were carrying in the rear of the truck. The equipment consisted of two boxes of firewood, a gas grill, two lockers of camping necessities, folding chairs, extra clothing, 1 cooler of food and 1 cooler of ummmm, beverages.

We were in awe of being on the circuit that was steeped in Formula 1, NASCAR, IMSA and sports car racing history. Indy car racing is beginning to make their own history there, and should be even greater now that the two open-wheel series have combined. Does anyone remember the Bog?

Many thanks to BMW North America for hosting our June Meeting. It was the biggest gathering we've had there yet. Thanks to Rich Brekus for being able to answer many of our member's questions. We are beginning to learn how to ask questions so they can be answered. BMW is currently building a new facility down the road from their Headquarters with the intention of it being finished by next year's meeting. It should be capable of accommodating a large gathering of members. We look forward to its completion.

You should have received by now information regarding the annual BMW CCA Raffle, which is also known as the 2008 BMW CCA Car of Your Dreams Raffle. The Grand Prize is your choice of any BMW up to a \$100,075 MSRP. Coincidentally, that is the MSRP of a M6. First Prize is the choice of any BMW up to a \$60,000 MSRP. The Main Prize is your choice of a BMW up to a \$42,000 MSRP. The number of tickets sold will determine the number of Main Prizes. The deadline for purchasing tickets, which are \$25 each, is August 29 with a limit of 7 per Club member. Tickets can also be purchased on-line at [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org).

I would like to thank NJ Bulletin contributor and Club Racer Thom Rossi for his generosity in lending me his racecar. I needed a racecar for the Westlake School's Spring Carnival, which was held at the School on May 29. Since we are not holding our Club Race and Driver's School at Lime Rock Park benefiting the Westlake School this year we opted to bring the Club to the School for this event. It was fun watching the students climb through the roll cage to sit in Thom's car. We should have the students back at the track next year when we move the Club Race event to the New Jersey Motorsport Park in Millville. Additional thanks go to Ross Karlin, Elihu Savad, Bill Howard, and Brian Morgan who attended the event in support of the School. I was impressed by how well the Club is received by the School and its personnel.

There is still plenty of space left for the Shenandoah School being held at Summit Point West Virginia on September 13-14. It's a great technical track which has the Carousel Turn replicated from the Nurburgring Circuit in Germany. More information about the event can be found on our website.

Thanks to James Kavalieros for his effort in putting together the Tire Rack's Teen Street Survival School, which was held on June 29 at the NJ Expo Center in Edison. I am also indebted to his crew of instructors and helpers that made Jim's job look easy. Once again the Middlesex Water Company generously donated the water and provided the hoses and an employee for the day.

I look forward to seeing you at the Drivers School/Club Race at Summit Point, July 26-27.

Neil Gambony

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## Welcome New Members

Richard Acciarito  
Melanie Adams  
Ken Ahman  
Richard Ayer  
Paul Barrood  
Lee Bellarmino  
Peter Bozzelli  
Glenn Chin  
Cody Cohen  
William Collan  
Rahul Dahiya  
Debbie Davidson  
John Dolshun  
John Fagard  
Karen Fagard

Gerald Farber  
Leonard Goldenberg  
Gregory Goldenberg  
Gerges Gomez  
Jeff Hale  
Frank Halicek  
James Hutchinson  
Robert Isackson  
Ron Jacobs  
Jeff Kirschenmann  
Jennifer Kovac  
Warren Kraus  
Dennis Lee  
Christopher Lehmann  
Ivor Lewis

Louis Liang  
James Little  
Robert Loiacono  
Thomas Marino  
Luke Masi  
Nick Mozer  
Ravi Mukkilarudhur  
Marc Paladino  
Donald Patterson  
Vincent Rubino  
Paul Santos  
Karlo Santos  
Cesare Scotto  
Andrew Snyder  
Stan Solowski

Bruce Stewart  
Ronald Teng  
Christine Turgeon  
Michael Turgeon  
Robert Vitalis  
Sapan Vyas  
Shane Warner  
Jeff Weisberger  
David Whitlock  
Sandy Yong  
Alice Yu  
Lawrence Yuan  
John Zemkowski



# Philes' Forum

by Vic Lucariello

Hello Bimmerphiles! Sorry to have been absent from these august pages in the June Bulletin. I will attempt to atone for this transgression with this first-of-several columns on E30 parking-brakes and parking-brake cables.

I still wish to receive copies of your NJMVC emissions-inspection reports. You can either mail a photocopy of your report [preferred], or simply e-mail the test data. [Include your name, too, if you want to be famous and be mentioned in Philes' Forum!] Please include both the test results and the pass/fail criterion for each pollutant along with your model and year, transmission type, and mileage. If you know at what mileages your oxygen sensor and spark plugs were last replaced, include that as well. Please indicate what, if any, modifications have been made to your motor [aftermarket chip, intake, exhaust, etc.] and your exact model number [eg: 328i, not 3-Series].

In the May Philes' Forum I wrote about Bimmerphile Tom Watson's 1997 5-Series failing NJ inspection because of an illuminated MIL [Malfunction-Indicator Lamp, AKA "Check Engine" Lamp]. Well, Tom has very kindly followed up with more information after he successfully passed a retest after his Bimmer was repaired.

As previously mentioned in Philes' Forum, New Jersey has discontinued doing actual emissions testing on OBD II [On-Board Diagnostics - Level II]-compliant vehicles. Generally speaking, 1996 and newer passenger cars meet the OBD II requirements of the EPA. In lieu of the dynamometer emissions test, the vehicle's powertrain-control computer, or PCM, is scanned for any stored DTCs [Diagnostic Trouble Codes] and the MIL status and operation is checked. A vehicle with an inoperative MIL or illuminated MIL [which should be the result of stored DTCs in the PCM] will fail inspection. The inspection report will list the actual DTCs that caused the inspection failure. As I mentioned in May, Tom is the first Bimmerphile to contact me regarding a failed OBD II inspection.

The rationale behind doing the OBD II scan in lieu of actual emissions testing is that OBD II is designed to identify anything that will result in a predicted emissions increase of 50% over the emissions levels the vehicle was certified to be in compliance with. Many states that have emissions testing have adopted the OBD II scan. It remains to be seen what the testing authorities will do with older non-OBD II-compliant vehicles. My guess, and hope, is that older vehicles will no longer be subject to dynamometer testing for emissions and that NJ will return to the idle and 2500 RPM unloaded emissions testing of years past.

In Tom's case, his Bimmer failed for having DTC P0133 stored in the PCM. The beauty of the OBD II "P" [Powertrain] codes is that the "P0" codes are generic and should apply to any OBD II-compliant vehicle. OBD II also provides for manufacturer-specific codes, which are designated as "P1" and "P2" codes [eg: P1140], and we'll talk about them another time.

Anyway, DTC P0133 is defined in the E39 Bentley Manual as "O2 Sensor Circuit Slow Response [Bank 1 Sensor 1]". Bank 1 Sensor 1 indicates that the suspect sensor is for cylinders 1-3 and is upstream of the catalytic converter. Bank 2 Sensor 2 would be the sensor on that same bank, but the one after the converter. The sensors downstream of the converter are used mainly for catalyst-efficiency monitoring, another topic for a future Philes' Forum. Although many of the DTCs associated with O2 sensors can be misleading because the DTCs can be set by problems other than sensor problems, P0133 is fairly straightforward because it suggests that the sensor has become desensitized due to age, contamination, or other factors. Indeed, at Tom's Fiver's 120,000 miles, I am not surprised to see a P0133 code set.

Taking his technician's advice, Tom elected to have all 4 O2 sensors changed. These would be the two sensors upstream of the two catalytic converters and the two downstream sensors. While it could be argued that only the offending sensor needed to be replaced in order to pass inspection, I feel that Tom made a wise choice to change them all at 120,000 miles. Indeed, I could argue that it is prudent, despite it being contrary to BMW's recommendations, to change your OBD II Bimmer's

spark plugs every 60,000 miles or so, and its O2 sensors every 120,000 miles or so.

Much thanks to Bimmerphile Tom for taking the time to send me the test reports for both his initial test and retest along with several e-mails detailing what he did to have the problem repaired.

Whew, that took longer than I thought. I'll at least introduce the material I intended to present this month on E30 parking brakes.

Anyone who has ever changed a Bimmer rear-brake rotor has discovered that there is a miniature drum brake under that cruddy old rotor he/she just



**Photo #1 Brake Rotor**

removed. See Photo #1. This is the parking brake that is on the other end of that handle you should be pulling up every time you park your ride. A pair of cables connects the handle to the parking-brake shoes, and whenever you change a rotor you should pay particular attention to the condition of these cables and the parking-brakes themselves.

Before you even begin a rear-rotor-replacement job, examine carefully the parking-brake cables - the approximately 1/2-inch [12 mm] diameter black tubes that run down the control arms and into the backsides of the parking brakes. Check for any places where either cable's outer "plastic" covering has been breached by corrosion or mechanical damage. Photo #2 is a



**Photo #2 Parking Brake Cable**

close up showing corrosion to a 23-year-old E30 parking-brake cable just where it enters the parking brake. Although the parking brakes on this Bimmer were still working fine, it would only be a matter of time before the breached cable started sticking and affecting parking-brake operation. So if you see deteriorated cables, buy new ones before you begin the rotor job. I'll continue this saga in the next Philes' Forum, so please stay tuned.

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

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## Summit Point Driver School and Club Race

Our annual combined Driver School and Club Race at Summit Point Raceway is fast approaching. This year our event will be particularly special because it is the event we dedicate to raising money to donate to the Westlake School (see article elsewhere in this issue about the school and the special needs children who go there). The NJ Chapter has a long history of providing funds to Westlake to help buy computers, teaching aids and other instructional materials.

We still have room in the school for additional students; registration is on-line from the chapter website and don't forget that we now accept payment using credit/debit card in addition to personal check. We will be running only two student run groups but we will make every effort to accommodate all registrants. We expect a good turnout of racers since this is the only Club Race sponsored by our chapter this year so there will be plenty of action to watch on the track. The main circuit at Summit Point was paved late last fall and everyone who came to the Advanced School in April can attest to how nice it is to drive on new pavement. For those of you who have driven Summit Point previously, it's a whole new experience.

Remember, we have our Saturday evening barbeque at the track catered by Mr. B's. So, come on down for a great weekend at the track, see some good racing, have a little BBQ and help the kids at Westlake School. What could be better?

Jeff White

## 2008 Driver School Schedule

School	Dates	Location
Driver School/Club Race	July 26-27	Summit Point Raceway, WV
Thunderbolt School	August 22-24	NJ Motorsports Park, Millville, NJ
Shenandoah	Sept. 13-14	Summit Point Raceway, WV

## June 22nd AUTOCROSS

Although the weather forecast for June 22 kept many would-be autocrossers from venturing out, the 45 that showed at the PNC Arts Center enjoyed 10 runs on an enjoyable, fast course that took everything we had to offer.

Class winners were:

AA Dave Ngo  
 A Jamie Kavalieros  
 B Chris Leckenby  
 C Mike Marvuglio  
 D Chris Graff  
 E John Zemkowski  
 F Mike Wiercinski  
 X Eric Gebhardt

Dave Ngo nudged FTD from perennial hotfoot Eric Gebhardt by less than 0.1 seconds. Current champ series results are on the website.

Our remaining autocross schedule is as follows:

July 27 Commerce Bank Ballpark  
 Aug 17 PNC Bank Arts Center  
 Sept 21 Commerce Bank Ballpark  
 Oct 12 Commerce Bank Ballpark  
 Nov 2 Commerce Bank Ballpark

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The 2008 champ series standing are posted on the website, and will be updated regularly.

Elihu Savad



# BMW - Race Bred

Photos by Brian Morgan



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# Destination: Vegas and Beyond

It's true! After 15 years of being together, 13 of them engaged, Sandy and I are now Mr. and Mrs. Burkard. We had our wedding in Las Vegas with Elvis doing the nuptials. The date was May 22nd, 2008 at 6:30pm outdoors in the garden wedding chapel of Caesars Palace. It was sunny and the 74 degree temperature was cool for Vegas, but perfect for our wedding. Everything went smoothly and our special day was all we expected and more. We spent 10 days in the city of sin and packed in a lot in the time we were there.

Many nights were spent in the Casinos, of course. I found myself trying to win several BMWs on various slot machines. At the MGM, I was trying for a new white 328i Convertible that was on display in the middle of all the machines. At the Venetian, I tried again for a black Z4 Convertible that was

there last year too. I had a good run on both machines but the end result was the same; I left empty handed. Sandy had much better luck with Roulette. She was the big winner of the week.

While we were in Vegas, we decided to do a couple road trips. The vehicle of choice this year was a late model V6 Mustang Convertible. Not quite the Boxster or Z4 we've rented in the past. The daily mileage allowance and total cost were more important since we knew we would be going some distance this year. We headed off on Memorial Day to Rachel, Nevada elevation 4970. Rachel is a small town with a population of 98 located in Sand Spring Valley in the southern Nevada high desert, right on highway 375, the Extraterrestrial Highway. Rachel is also home of the world famous Little A'Le'Inn, our destination. **(Continued on Page 11)**



Photos by JT Burkard



**(Continued from Page 10)** The road to Rachel is over 150 miles long from Vegas, right though the vast nothingness of dirt, rock and minimal vegetation. The simple beauty that is the Nevada desert and mountains is awe inspiring. For that alone it was worth the trip. We headed out of Vegas on I-15 for about 25 miles, and then we turned onto I-93, which is a two-lane highway, straight through the middle of the desert. When I say straight through I really mean like an arrow, perfectly straight for as long as the eyes can see. With the top down we settled into our 80+ mile ride on 93 through this wasteland that looked like something out of a Mad Max movie. I must have taken 150 pictures while Sandy was at the wheel. Along this route is also free range country. Numerous cows wander this land. It would be best to keep a clear eye on the road since they will cross at their discretion. At night, the black cows are nearly impossible to see until it's too late.

We rolled through Alamo, Nevada, which will be your last gas station for the next 150 miles. We still had  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a tank so we continued on. Another 10 more we made a left onto NV-318 for less than a mile, and then another left onto NV-375, The Extraterrestrial Highway. When you first get onto the ET you will find a small hand painted sign that says "Little A'Le'Inn 40 miles. Then on the right is an empty round roof metal building with a large silver Alien standing 20 feet tall in front. It looks like someone is going to try and cash in on all the alien tourists but the place was not open yet. The next 40 miles of the drive seemed to get colder. Vegas is 2028 feet above sea level and the temp was about 80 degrees when we left. At the highest point of our trip, Hancock Summit, the elevation is 5592 feet above sea level. Not realizing we rose over 3564 feet, the temperature dropped 20-25 degrees. This top down drive was getting chilly. Still we motored on with the top down. When we crested over the summit, you can see the valley below and one dirt road that went into the mountains. Little did we know we would be on this road in several hours.

As we drove down the mountain and back to the valley floor, I spotted something strange yet familiar a couple miles down off the ET. It was the infamous "Black Mailbox". For those of you who are UFO fans or amateur UFOlogists, you know what we just stumbled across. Contrary to a common misconception it is not the mailbox of Area 51, but it belongs to a local rancher, who owns the only ranch in Tikaboo Valley, on the edge of the Area 51 Base boundaries. The famous Black Mailbox is the spot where UFO watchers like to gather at night, to search the skies over Groom Lake (Area 51's location) for UFOs and other mysterious lights. The mailbox is no longer black and is now incased in a white graffiti covered bulletproof box. I told Sandy to pull in so we can take pictures. Two other couples stopped within the time we were there doing the same thing as us. We all laughed since we knew what we were all there for. A rock with a tiny UFO painted on it was within a few feet of the box too. We got back on the road and went another 20 miles to our destination; the Little A'Le'Inn. Upon arriving we were excited. We took pictures next to the Extraterrestrial Highway sign, and then in front of the A'Le'Inn sign. There is an old 50's Chevy tow truck in front of the Inn with a UFO hanging off the boom. The Inn itself is something you would expect in the middle of nowhere. Nothing fancy, just an open floor plan diner about 1000 square feet with several tables and a counter with UFO pictures and souvenirs around the walls. Sandy spotted a cat on the way in with the same name, Sandy. This was a very friendly cat as everyone who enters and exits pets the calico kitty. We were the only people in the place as several couples (one we met at the mailbox) were just leaving.

We planted ourselves at the counter and I ordered up a couple of Alien Burgers for us. We commenced conversation with the owner and another woman named Michelle. Both women were extremely friendly and welcomed any questions we had. They were also gracious enough to let us use an outlet to recharge our digital camera since I drew the battery down from taking so many pictures from the 2.5 hour trip. We spoke of just about everything from the cows on range to the UFO conference that was just held the day before, to living miles from the next town, and gas. For being in the middle of nowhere, they met a lot of interesting people, in and out of the UFO community. They also warned us about not going beyond the boundaries of the warnings signs for Area 51, as we would be met by security with a face down in the dirt and a trip to some holding cell, plus a minimum of a \$600 fine and up to 6 months in jail. Not quite the way we wanted to spend the last days of our honeymoon.

We spent over 2 hours at the Inn. The food was good, the hospitality was excellent and the sheer excitement of visiting one of those places you've

heard of but never thought you would visit was overwhelming. We bought a few T-Shirts, souvenir mugs, a couple of stuffed Aliens for the nephews, and a 33 cent map of the dirt roads to Area 51. Off we were to find how far we could go.

Remember how I said we didn't realize we would be on that long dirt road into oblivion? Well, we were on our way. 20 miles back and a right turn off the ET at the "Black Mailbox" and we were headed down Groom Lake Road, the dirt road towards the base. I felt badly for the poor Mustang we rented. No sports car, American, German or otherwise should be subjected to roads that look like something the WRC series would run. I would suggest taking an X5, X3, or even a Jeep. Not so much for the 4-wheel drive, just better suspension for the ripples in the dirt from the Caterpillar tracks they use to flatten the road. Also, the car got filthy! We went 5 miles to the intersection and then made a right at the stop sign surrounded by cacti, and then another 9 miles until the base boundary. For something that should have been an easy ride on pavement, the anticipation made it feel much longer. Also the 20-25mph top speed didn't help.

We went down around a bend about 8 miles and we spotted one of the Gray Chevy pick ups that patrol the outer edges of the boundary. Sandy was getting nervous and to be honest, my heart rate was raised. Down into a little valley then back up around a corner and we were at the edge of the boundary. Sensors on top of the hills to the right and left of us, a Chevy 4x4 patrol truck spying us with binoculars, and signs that state, "WARNING, Do Not Enter, Use of deadly force authorized" and "Photography of this area is prohibited". So naturally, I had to take pictures. The folks at the A'Le'Inn told us they do not have the authority to interfere with our activities if we stay behind, but DO NOT GO PAST THE SIGNS! We didn't. I took a couple pictures and then Sandy turned around and got us out of there just in case. She was the wheelman (or is it wheelwoman?) I was in such a hurry; I forgot to use the video camera we brought. Drats! Oh well, next time.

We headed back down the long Groom Lake road on our way back to the Extraterrestrial Highway. As we were driving back, again at around 25 mph, we noticed in the distance a dust cloud that was looming behind us about 1-2 miles behind. Sandy said "no one passed us so that has to be coming from the base". It was odd. We stopped and I got out of the car and took a picture of the dust cloud coming from the road. I then zoomed in to see what was making the dust storm behind us. Nothing. That's right, it was a dust cloud with no visual source. Was it some strange stealth vehicle, or a trail from a "special project"? Nope, it wound up being a result from when we were traveling at a higher speed and then slowed down to the point where we were not kicking up the dirt. Since there was no wind, it just lingered where we drove. Darn, and we thought we spotted some secret US undercover project.

So with the day done, and the sun setting, it was a pretty interesting trip. The ride back was less intense except for watching for black cows crossing the highway at night. Oh yea, and we filled up at Alamo since the next gas was about 90 miles from that direction.

If you find yourself in the Vegas area and have a taste for the odd and strange, I would suggest taking a trip on the Extraterrestrial Highway and to the Little A'Le'Inn. You never know what you might find. Just make sure you have the right vehicle.

JT and Sandy Burkard

Send comments and suggestions to: [jtformula@aol.com](mailto:jtformula@aol.com)



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# Time to Buy a Gas Guzzler

By Thom Rossi

If you're looking for a guide to socially responsible use of fossil fuels for automotive enthusiasts, don't look here. Here is the sum total of the credibility I place on the whole "theory" of global warming: zero. This theory is based on highly complicated and unproven mathematical models, which are used to extrapolate a future climate state based upon inaccurate and incomplete historical data, and moreover it is not testable in any scientifically meaningful way. That is why when I head to the track, I'm thinking about my tire contact patch, not my "carbon footprint", and I strongly advise you to do the same. It is also why I don't have even a slight twitch of guilty conscience for enjoying my hobby, including fuel burned at the track and to and fro.

Regarding the "high" price of gas, I actually think it's pretty amazing that gas is as cheap as it is. Let's do some math. A barrel of oil costs about \$120. From each barrel, about 21 gallons of gasoline is refined (about 38% of the barrel by volume). So the raw materials that go into a gallon of gas cost about \$6.00. Of course, the remainder of the barrel is utilized for other petroleum products, but still, even if you assume 100% efficient use of that barrel of oil, the portion allocated to gasoline is over \$2 per gallon. Add to that raw material cost, the operation of the refinery, distribution, retail mark-up and taxes (in New Jersey, 14.5 cents/gallon is state tax, and 18.4 cents/gallon is federal tax, totaling a direct consumption tax of about 33 cents/gallon) and it won't take you long to marvel that we only pay about \$4/gallon at the pump. Compare this to the cost of a gallon of other fluids essential to high performance drivers: Evian spring water (\$6.50), automotive antifreeze (\$4.20), Red Bull (\$31), Chanel No. 5 perfume (\$25,600). OK, that last item in the list is there for the benefit of all of you who have to justify the cost of our go-go juice to the estrogen enriched members of your family.

Don't get me wrong, I don't want to pay any more for gas than I have to. I'll take that gas tax holiday anytime, thank you. But when you come right down to it, gas still isn't so expensive that it really makes our hobby difficult. I calculated the differential cost of my trip to Watkins Glen a week or two ago, and compared to last year, it cost me about \$60 more round trip while towing my race car. Not great news, but not terrible either. Curiously, last year the race gas pumped at the track was \$7.50/gallon for 100 octane. This year, it was \$8.50. For some reason, the proportional impact on race

fuel isn't as great as it has been at the retail pump. So I guess you could say that right now, relative to the price of retail gas, race fuel is at bargain prices.

I'm hoping that the high gas prices will have a long-term benefit to car enthusiasts; I'd love to see our cars get lighter, more aerodynamic and therefore more fuel efficient. I'm not a fan of new "green" technologies, as thus far, I have not seen anything that really competes in terms of acquisition cost, operating cost, longevity, performance, and safety, versus traditional internal combustion engines. That is especially true if one includes the newest generation of diesels as part of traditional technology. In fact, I find it amazing that you have to spend substantial premiums on hybrid technology only to get cars that are competitive with the fuel efficiency that BMW was able to achieve on the 1980's era 325e's. I'd rather buy an old e30 for one tenth the cost of a new hybrid and have some fun with it. But who knows, maybe the gas prices are high enough now to stimulate some serious innovation and the newer technologies will start to look more attractive.

Lest you conclude incorrectly that I am not sensitive to the economic stress placed on people by the sudden increase in gas prices, let me remind you that I am thus far only referring to the impact of fuel costs on our hobby, where we only burn relatively small amounts of gas. It's gotta be a real pain in the neck for people with long commutes right now. That's a different story. But back to our hobby.

Right now it's a buyers market for the big ole SUVs and pickup trucks that we depend upon to get ourselves to and from the track. Nobody wants to buy SUVs or pickups at the moment. As usual, the shift in automotive preferences caught the manufacturers off guard, so there is a huge excess inventory of every brand of truck. If ever you wanted to get a good discount on a new tow vehicle, now is the time. About a month ago I was in the local Toyota dealership for some parts, and in the process of just requesting a brochure for a Tundra 5.7 liter, with crew cab and all the bells and whistles, the sales associate offered me a 25% discount off the sticker of the truck I was walking by. The truck is still parked in the same spot of the dealer's lot, so I imagine if I were serious, I'd be able to pick it up for well south of the \$30k mark. I don't need a new truck, but still, they're getting mighty cheap compared to a gallon of Chanel No. 5.

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## NJ BMW CCA Membership Contest

Ground rules for the membership contest are as follows:

A new membership is defined as: (1) an individual or business that has never belonged to the BMW CCA or (2) an individual or business that was previously a BMW CCA member but whose membership lapsed at least six months prior to the date of the new membership. A new membership with a corresponding associate membership only counts as one new membership. Associate membership will not be counted as a new membership.

To be eligible to participate in the contest, you must be a current paid member in good standing. (Memberships "comped" by BMW CCA or BMW CCA Chapters are ineligible to participate) Associate members are eligible to refer a new member.

Please be sure to have the individual or business include your name and membership number on their application. You will not receive credit if referring member information is not included.

The prize for our contest, which will be drawn at the Pinewood Derby/Election meeting in December, will be two tickets to the 2009 Banquet - date yet to be determined.

You will receive one prize chance for each member referred; the more new members you sign up, the more chances you will receive.

New members can join by phone, website, or snail mail.

**By Phone:** have the new member call 1-800-878-9292 to submit their application and credit card information over the phone. To receive credit the referring member's name and BMW CCA member number must be provided at the time the call is made.

**By Website:** have the new member visit the [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org) website to submit an application online. To receive credit the referring member's name and BMW CCA member number must be entered in the appropriate space in the online application form.

**By Snail Mail:** have the new member mail a membership application to the National Office. Membership applications are available from the National Office by calling 864-250-0022 or sending an e-mail to [stevens@bmwcca.org](mailto:stevens@bmwcca.org). In order to receive credit, the referring member's name and BMW CCA member number must be written on the application.

Now go get those new members!

Neil Gambony

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# SHADE TREE GARAGE

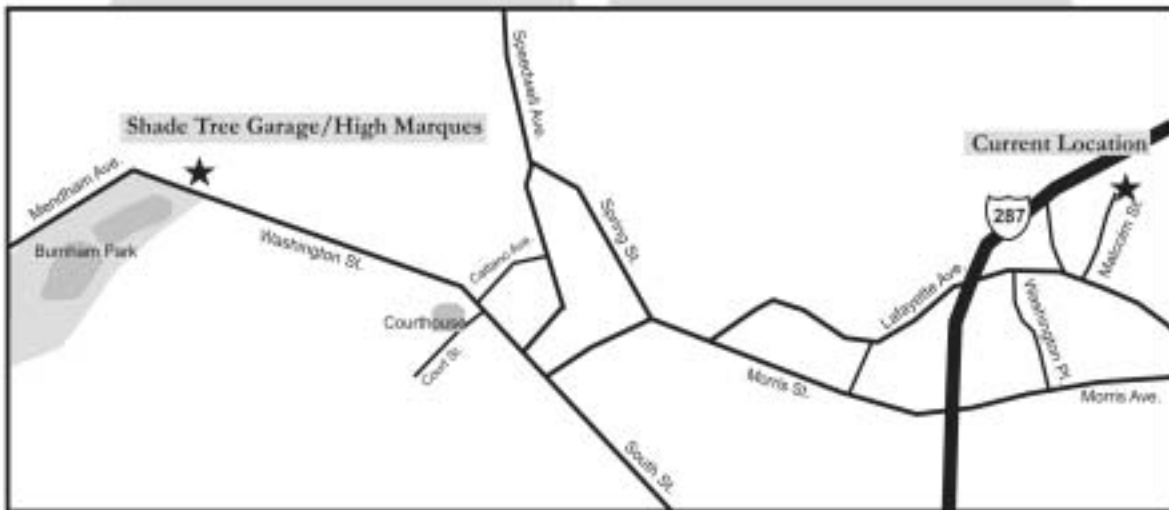
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# NJ Chapter Calendar

## July 2008

July 16th

Monthly meeting at the Deutscher Club in Clark. We will have Northeast Regional Marketing guru Peggy Findeison for Mobil 1. Meeting starts at 7:30PM.

July 26-27th

Driver School / Club Race at Summit Point in West Virginia. See website for details.

July 27th

Autocross at Commerce Bank Ballpark in Bridgewater.

## August 2008

Aug 17th

Autocross at PNC Arts Center in Holmdel.

Aug 22, 23, 24

Inaugural BMW CCA Thunderbolt Driver School in Millville, NJ. This is a DelVal/NJ Joint Driver School.



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### ADVERTISEMENT POLICIES

Advertising Rates Per Issue

Full Page - \$300 Half Page - \$160 Quarter Page - \$80 Business Card - \$55

For information on advertising, or for an advertising contract, please contact the Bulletin's business manager, Paul Ngai. Send advertising artwork to the *Bulletin's* PO Box. Send classified advertisements to Chet Marfatia, Classifieds Editor. Please do not send membership renewals or address changes to the Chapter.

### 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](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)

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

New Jersey Chapter Dues and Bulletin Subscription ("dual citizenship" for primary members of other chapters): \$15.30.

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 NJ Chapter by sending \$15.30 to the National BMW CCA Office.

# June Monthly Meeting Held at BMW NA

(Continued from Page 1) your regular run of the mill mini hotdogs, no sir. In true BMW fashion they were the most detailed mini hotdogs I have ever seen. They even were topped with mini relish. Genius, just genius. Of course the rest of the spread was just as good and was replenished time and time again. Not eating before I left home really paid off that night!

The Q&A session was a blast as usual. Where else can you go for a comedy show and lots of good info on new BMW's. I think it's so cool that the people talking to us at these meetings are in charge of what options, colors, etc. our cars will get. These folks get to drive the new models well before they are out, many times when they are in disguise. As usual, the presentation was led by Rich Brekus. For those of you that have never heard him talk, this man knows his way around the English language. I wonder if I took Public Speaking 101 in college like all my friends, would I be able to handle a crowd like him? We also heard from the brand managers

for the various lines, X series, 5 series, 3 series, M series, etc. Ever wonder why we don't get rear fogs on the US models? Ask Mr. Brekus, I'm sure he'll tell you why! BMW NA also was very generous with door prizes. They gave out clothing, intricate BMW models, and books, as well as other great gifts. Larry Koch, the M brand manager even randomly placed 50 tickets for a race at Lime Rock Park under the seats for 50 lucky folks. I was not so lucky that night! Between the door prizes and food, BMW NA was very generous to our club.

After it was all over I was treated to a nice cool night for my drive home on the Parkway in my M. It was a great way to end a great night. The meeting was a great success, as always. On behalf of the NJBMWCCA I would like to thank BMWNA for inviting us into their house, not as customers, but as fellow enthusiasts. Having a company who supports the hobby as much as BMW really is a key ingredient in making our car club the best in the world.



Photos by Jeff Burgess



Photos by JT Burkard



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