

THE HEART of DIXIE

BMW CAR CLUB
NEWSLETTER

BMW IN THE HEART OF THE SOUTH

BMW IM HERZEN DES SUDENS

Above: A scene from the Euro Auto Festival in Greenville, SC.

FALL TRIP TO THE SMOKIES



Chef Josh Monroe opened his restaurant, The Chef's Table of Waynesville, NC, for lunch especially for the Heart of Dixie travelers.



The club hasn't been to the Smokies in a couple of years, so we decided to hit the road and head north during October, beginning on Thursday, Oct. 18, staying through Sunday, October 21. The weather was great and the driving was easy. We usually take as many rural routes as is practical, so we can enjoy the curvature of the mountain roads in our high-performance driving machines. A couple of highlights of the trip were a special lunch at *The Chef's Table* in Waynesville, NC and the Euro Auto Festival show at the zentrum (factory) in Greenville, SC.



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER**Hello and Greetings to my fellow Bimmerphiles,**

The year is quickly coming to a close and what a year 2012 has been for the club.

A quick review if you'll indulge me—

Kickoff party at the Pelham civic center with a little auto cross thrown in...



I think that's Todd Lattanzi tearing up our course

We took time to find some good places to eat such as Chef Troy's...



I think that's Chris Jones asking why he has to wait to eat-ha!

(continued on next page)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER (CONTINUED)

We had our Driver's school at Barber in May...



Never leave your keys on the dash... is that my son Dylan and my friend Jack taking my car for some hot laps???

That's just 3 of the many events we organized in 2012 and 2013 looks to be just as good. As you can see... we have some good times in your chapter. Come on out and join us.

I know we all have a myriad of reasons to belong to the club from the Roundel, social outings to driving events but I think we all agree it all comes down to our passion for the BMW marquee. If you haven't gotten involved in an activity in the past or you haven't been out with us lately please make it a point to join us in 2013.

On behalf of myself and the officers of the club, "Thank you all for your membership."

We will have our kickoff party this year at Tom Williams BMW in Birmingham on January 20th, 2013 from 12-4. We're still planning the afternoon but rest assured we'll have food, drinks, a prize or two and a special guest from the Roundel joining us to share some funny stories and an anecdote or two along with our calendar of events for 2013.

Oh by the way, have you checked out the new website for the club?

albmwcca.org

Thanks to all of the officers and John Lovoy of Infomedia and an H.O.D. member for their time, support and assistance in launching the new site in 2012.

Happy motoring,

Jonathan Folly



DISMALS CANYON FUN RUN



On August 18th, the Club caravanned to Northwest Alabama to visit Dismals Canyon, a privately-run natural wilderness area. After the drive and before heading to the Canyon, we stopped in at *Chef Troy's Talk of the Town* on County Road 63 for a very good lunch!





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Tom Williams BMW

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PESKY 3 SERIES BUSHINGS

Ron Drenning

We all know there's a plethora of bushings scattered about your BMW. All serve the same purpose of isolating your ears and butt from the nasty bumps and potholes of our somewhat dilapidated infrastructure, but one in particular can rob you of your BMW driving fun faster than all the rest. As seen in #1 that is the almost notorious wishbone reaction bushing. It (somewhat) firmly holds the end of the bottom wishbone arm by its rear mounting point. While it's a simple widget it must hold the end of the wishbone arm while not transferring every little road blemish up—and into—the passenger compartment. Sounds simple but it's not.

BMW has some great engineers that design every little bushing but somewhere in there the BMW accountants tell them that really good design is too expensive. "You will make it less expensive—that's on order!" And so it becomes what all us lucky 3 series owners come to hate at about 60K miles when they need replacing. If it were just the bushing, that wouldn't be so bad as it can be changed on the car with a few simple hand tools, some cussing and a hydraulic press (we all have one—right?). Most of the time it also requires new wishbones thanks to a well-worn and non-replaceable ball-joint that fails about the



same time. The last story I heard put the price at about \$1,500.00 (depending on what town in which you reside and how your mechanic is feeling that day) for replacement of both arms and both bushings. Something to put on your "anticipated maintenance expense" in multiples of 60K miles.

I've changed mine now for the third time and it's a big old pain every time. I use the best aftermarket bushings (#2) but they still fail eventually, even though I do get a better steering response (less wiggle). What bugs me is they so drastically change the way the Bimmer feels while they wear that it robs the owner of all the car could be all the time. BMW really should tell owners where they are located and how to tell if they might need some attention. You can easily see them by inspecting the lolly pop brackets (#3) and looking to see if the rubber inserts show any cracking at all. For most 3 series you can do it with the car on the ground by using nothing more than a flashlight and a mirror. If I was really smart I'd come up with an aftermarket sensor that would tell the driver when the bushings need to go (no luck yet but I'm working on it). For now I suggest you give them a good inspection on a regular (preventive maintenance) schedule. If you feel anything being telegraphed through the steering wheel it is high time to inspect those suckers and replace them if you think they even look suspicious. It's a few bucks spent to keep that brand new feeling in your steering.

The Benefits of a BMW CCA Membership

- **Membership Rewards: Rebates Up to \$1,500 on BMW purchase.**
BMW CCA members in good standing (membership for 12 months prior to the purchase) may be eligible for substantial rebates up to \$1,500 on the purchase or lease of a new or Certified Pre-Owned BMW from any authorized U.S. BMW Center. See bmwcca.org for details.
- **Outstanding national events** including BMW CCA's premier annual gathering, Oktoberfest, which was held for the first time in Birmingham in October 2011.
- **12-month subscription** to the Club magazine, *The Roundel*.
- **Driving schools**, autocrosses, safety schools, fun runs and Club Racing.
- **Regional club-sponsored car corrals** at major road races, like the Indy and Grand Am Series at Barber Motorsports Park.
- **Free classified ads** on the website and in Roundel magazine.
- **Access to our Technical Service Advisors** for personalized advice.
- **Ombudsmen** to help with dealer issues.
- **Friends of BMW:** A roster of fellow BMW CCA members who can offer coffee and conversation, repair tools, workspace, sometimes even help when you're out on the road.
- **Club library and video services.**
Borrow BMW-related books and videos.
- **Availability** of a BMW CCA affinity credit card.
- **Free BMW CCA decals** available from the club office.
- **Access** to all areas of the growing online community at BMWCCA.org.
- **Access** to the BMW CCA social networking tools!

HEART OF DIXIE BMW CCA UPCOMING EVENTS

THE 2013 HEART OF DIXIE KICK-OFF PARTY

*Tom Williams BMW
1000 Tom Williams Way
Irondale, AL 35210
Sunday, January 20, 2012
11:00 am - 3:00 pm
Cost: \$10.00 per person;
children 12 and under, free*

Tom Williams BMW will generously host our 2013 Kick-off Party at the dealership in Irondale. We're also very fortunate to have the Roundel's *The Hack Mechanic*, Rob Siegel as our guest speaker! Rob has been writing his column for *The Roundel* for 25 years and has been fixing stuff for as long as he can



*Rob Siegel,
The Hack Mechanic*

remember. Lunch is included. If you're new to the club, this is one of our most well-attended events of the year (along with the driver's education event at Barber's Motorsport Park on Memorial Day).

Please register early at www.motorsportreg.com so we can get a headcount for lunch. *We hope to see you there!*

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