

die flüsternde **bombe**

September 2011



This issue:

Poetic Wine Tour
Ridge Route to Santa Barbara Tour
Car-Control Clinic Perspectives



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On the cover

How poetic! Two Z4 roadsters frolic together on the Poetic Winery driving tour.

Photo: Jeff Cowan

Your input is encouraged!
Magazine submissions
deadline is the first of each
month prior to publication.

BMW Car Club
of America
Golden Gate Chapter



Die Flüsternde Bombe:

"The Whispering Bomb"

The Official Magazine of the
Golden Gate Chapter, BMW CCA

1969-2011: Celebrating 42 years
of BMW enthusiasm in the Golden
Gate region.

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Commercial advertisers are responsible for supplying their own ad copy. All commercial advertising must be paid in advance. Contact the Advertising Manager for further details: Advertising@ggcbmwcca.org. Please note, this publication is sent Bulk Rate USPS.

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 San Rafael, CA 94903

BMW CCA

The BMW Car Club of America, Inc. is a not-for-profit national association of over 70,000 members, dedicated to the enjoyment of driving BMWs. Membership is not limited to BMW owners and aims to provide access to driving and social events, maintenance and technical information, parts discounts, and more. Dues are \$48 per year, with an associate member added for \$10 more. Members receive the monthly *Roundel* magazine and a newsletter from their local chapter, or from a chapter of their choice. The Golden Gate Chapter is one of the largest chapters in the BMW CCA with over 4,300 members.

For a new membership or to renew an existing one, please call toll free 800 878-9292 or visit www.bmwcca.org. Visa and Mastercard accepted.

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Membership address corrections are only accepted at the BMW CCA website or national office.

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Commit to:	1 issue	2-3 issues	4-7 issues	8-10 issues
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UPDATED PRICES
 NEXT ISSUE

PRIVACY STATEMENT

By joining the BMW Car Club of America (BMW CCA), you provided personal information that allows us to contact you. BMW CCA provides this information to the Golden Gate Chapter (GGC) of the BMW CCA for the following purposes:

- To send the GGC magazine (*Die Flüsternde Bombe*) by U.S. Mail.
- To help us create content and events most relevant to you.
- To alert you to updated information and other new services from ggcbmwcca.org using an email announcement list.

GGC BMW CCA does not distribute personal information to any third parties. The information you provide to BMW CCA to be used by the GGC will not be used for any other purpose—we promise.



Big news this month: The *Bombe* is now all color! Kellie Melby—our consistently upbeat go-to *spunkmeister* and sales manager at Commerce Printing—sent a note out of the blue to our editor, saying, “I want you to start putting four-color throughout the magazine—at no additional charge.” It took about a millisecond for editor Kelly Kirkland to respond with an exuberant, “OKAY!”

Commerce Printing has been an extremely supportive partner—and not just to our chapter; they produce Sacramento Valley’s newsletter, too. Owner Gil Ceravantes, an avid Club racer, has been accommodating our needs for affordable printing since 2004, when they offered to print the *Bombe* for less than we had been paying for all-black-and-white print with another company—and include eight pages of color! It’s been a great pleasure to work with Commerce, and we’re grateful for such a generous, colorful gift to the chapter! Please consider this environmentally conscious print company for your printing needs; check out their ad on the back page.

When people are generous, it’s a reminder to spread that act of generosity around—and in July, I got a chance to participate in a cool driving event that really pays it forward. The BMW Drive for Team USA donates \$10 to Team USA, helping American athletes train and compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, for every test-drive you take at one of their events.

It isn’t your typical dealer test drive: After a simple registration, you jump behind the wheel of a wide range of BMW models—and their direct competitors. It’s a great way to see for yourself what puts a modern BMW on top of the game.

I quickly grabbed a new 4.4-liter V8 twin-turbo 650i convertible—Vermilion Red Metallic—hopped in the wild land shark, and set off! The route was well laid out through up-and-down hilly sections of Highway 92 between San Mateo and Highway 280—an area that provides a range of situations, including merging to a fast road from a slow entrance, and a couple of g-force-inducing on- and off-ramps.

This route gave me a good impression of the car’s capabilities. The uphill acceleration of this 400-horsepower beast was an instant push, without the noticeable lag you might expect if you’ve only driven older turbocharged cars. The turn-in was surprisingly crisp for a 4,500-pound roofless car, and ride quality was extremely smooth but sporty. I noticed a bit of understeer in sharp corners, but it could be easily fixed with stickier tires and setting more negative front camber.

I’ve always considered the 6 Series as more of GT than a true sports car, but this test drive changed my perception; this car could be serious weapon after minor tweaks! Or maybe I’ll just buy the upcoming M version!

When I got back to the dealership, I was eager to try another BMW, but all those demo rides had already been claimed. Rather than waiting, I decided to try a competitor, and grabbed the key to a monstrous Mercedes S550. Being familiar with smaller Mercedes products, I was impressed by the car’s ability to provide the energetic driving that would be expected more from a C-Class than from this luxurious tank.

Unfortunately, Mercedes engineers have managed to push any spirited-driving idea out of the driver’s head. I spent some time trying to activate sport mode for the suspension, and finally found a button only slightly bigger than an iPhone’s ring/silent switch. It seemed like a statement: “Do you really need this button? Nein nein, don’t worry your pretty head, just sit back and relax and enjoy the luxury!”

I really wanted to try the 7 Series next to compare it with the Mercedes, but the event was so busy that the driving program was limited to two rides. However, a sales rep from the dealership looked around for something for me to drive. A few minutes later I was staring at the controls of the jewel of the BMW line up: a stunning Alpine White E90 M3, equipped with dual-clutch transmission (DCT) and electronic damping control.

Wow, what a ride it was! I felt the entire car meld with me, with every bit of the sophisticated mechanics and electronics working together in harmony. The result was so compelling that the entire world disappeared, leaving me and the car alone in pure driving nirvana! I found DCT and Electronic Damper Control (EDC) to be valuable options; set the DCT to Drive and choose the softest EDC settings to get a comfortable commuter. Put DCT to Manual Mode, choose the hardest EDC setting, push the steering wheel’s M button, and you get a race car!

BMW not only makes such exceptional cars, but also involves itself with the community by supporting our U.S. Olympians, as well as sponsoring the 2012 Olympics. This event clearly reminded me why we are fans of BMW and their products—and made me proud to be a part of a Club that unifies the enthusiasts of such a great marque. **GSC**



By Aleksey Kadukin, Secretary



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

» SEPTEMBER

Sep 15 Board Meeting **GG Chpt**
 Round Table Pizza, San Mateo Donna Seeley
www.ggcbmwcca.org president@ggcbmwcca.org

Sep 16 -18 ALMS Corral at Laguna Seca **GG Chpt**
 Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, Monterey Mark Radovan
www.ggcbmwcca.org montereyarearep@ggcbmwcca.org

Sep 24 Autocross **GG Chpt**
 Marina Municipal Airport, Marina Rodger Ball & Jeff Roberts
www.ggcbmwcca.org autocross@ggcbmwcca.org

Sep 25 Monterey Car Show **GG Chpt**
 BMW of Monterey, Seaside Mike Zampiceni
www.ggcbmwcca.org socialdirector@ggcbmwcca.org

» OCTOBER

Oct 1 Lost Coast Tour **GG Chpt**
 Lost Coast, CA Paula Williamson
www.ggcbmwcca.org NorthArearep@ggcbmwcca.org

Oct 10-16 *BMW CCA Oktoberfest **BMW CCA**
 Barber Motorsports Park, Birmingham, AL Linda Axelson
www.bmwccaofest.org LindaA@bmwcca.org

Oct 15 Board Meeting **GG Chpt**
 Mimi's Café, Foster City Donna Seeley
www.ggcbmwcca.org president@ggcbmwcca.org

Oct 15 Car Control Clinic **GG Chpt**
 Marina Municipal Airport, Marina CCC Team
www.ggcbmwcca.org CarControl@ggcbmwcca.org

Oct 16 Autocross **GG Chpt**
 Marina Municipal Airport, Marina Rodger Ball & Jeff Roberts
www.ggcbmwcca.org autocross@ggcbmwcca.org

» NOVEMBER

Nov 5-6 Thunderhill Driving School **GG Chpt**
 Thunderhill Raceway Park, Willows Kelly Collins
www.ggcbmwcca.org TrackSchools@ggcbmwcca.org

Nov 5-6 Club Race at Thunderhill Raceway **GG Chpt**
 Thunderhill Raceway Park, Willows Tamara Hull
www.ggcbmwcca.org treasurer@ggcbmwcca.org

Nov 12 Top Driver Shootout **GG Chpt**
 Marina Municipal Airport, Marina Matt Visser & Kris Linqvist
www.ggcbmwcca.org autocross@ggcbmwcca.org

Nov 17 Board Meeting **GG Chpt**
 Round Table Pizza, San Mateo Donna Seeley
www.ggcbmwcca.org president@ggcbmwcca.org

» DECEMBER

Dec 17 Board Meeting **GG Chpt**
 Mimi's Café, Foster City Donna Seeley
www.ggcbmwcca.org president@ggcbmwcca.org

* Indicates a regional or national Club event

To add an event to the calendar, email your information to:
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Scan this with your Smartphone to see
 GGC's most current calendar.

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Thunderhill Raceway

November 5-6, 2011

BMW Car Club
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Golden Gate Chapter





ANNOUNCEMENTS

SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING

September 15, 7:00 p.m. (Thursday)
Round Table Pizza, 1304 W. Hillsdale Blvd., San Mateo
Donna Seeley, president@ggcbmwcca.org

Board meetings are open to all members; they're a great way to get involved with your chapter! Come join us for some lively conversation!

Even-numbered-month meetings are held on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. at Mimi's Café, Foster City.

Odd-numbered-month meetings are held during the week at 7:00 p.m. at Round Table Pizza, 1304 W. Hillsdale Blvd., San Mateo.

ALMS CORRAL AT LAGUNA SECA

September 16-18
Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, Monterey
Mark Radovan & Pat deWitt, MontereyAreaRep@ggcbmwcca.org

Round Eight of the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) presented by Tequila Patrón roars into Laguna Seca—and we'll have a hospitality tent and corral at Turn Five, where you can watch all the action! It's another six hours of driving into the darkness at famed Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, featuring the M3s of BMW Team Rahal-Letterman-Lanigan.

Throughout the race weekend, fans are treated to autograph sessions, tech talks, and the ever-popular pre-race grid walk—of course, the stars of the ALMS series take center stage.

We are still in the early planning stages for this event, so keep an eye on this page for more details coming soon.



GGC AUTOCROSS

September 24, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Marina Airport, Marina
Rodger Ball and Jeff Roberts, autocross@ggcbmwcca.org
www.bmwautocross.com

Autocross events are low- to medium-speed auto-racing events that are often run in parking lots and on airport runways. Generally, a course will be defined using traffic cones. One at a time, drivers negotiate the course, testing their skills against the clock. Time penalties are charged for disturbing cones, with a penalty of one second per cone. As a rule, each driver takes six to seven runs at an event, and is awarded the best time of all runs taken.

Autocross is an inexpensive, safe way to experience racing. It develops your driving ability, and helps you discover your car's capabilities and limitations—making you a better, safer driver on the road. Many would-be race drivers use it as a jumping-off point into the sport of road racing, but the greatest thrill of autocross is the challenge of beating

your own time. It's fun! Want to read more? Check out our Autocross Primer at www.ggcbmwcca under Driving Events Overview, or visit www.bmwautocross.com.

Non-BMWs are allowed to participate, but all participants must be BMW CCA members. If you are not currently a member, you can add a BMW CCA membership during the registration process and pay during checkout.

We no longer accept on-site registration. Event cost is \$50 (a sack lunch is optional for an extra \$5). Our lunch break is only 30 minutes long. You must return on time! The drivers' meeting begins at 9:00 a.m.; if you miss the drivers' meeting, you will not be allowed to participate in the event.

2011 Season Dates:
October 16 @Marina
November 12 @ Marina (Top Driver Shootout)

MONTEREY CAR SHOW

September 25, 2011
BMW of Monterey, Seaside
Mike Zampiceni, socialdirector@ggcbmwcca.org

Join us for an exciting Fall car show hosted by BMW of Monterey. This show will include several historic and vintage BMW models: Z8, E30 M3, M5, M6, 1600, 2002, 2002 Turbo, 3.0CS, Alpina variants, and various BMW race cars. Help celebrate their provenance and mechanical brilliance by attending this ideal triple-header weekend!

Here's an idea for those of you participating in the Saturday autocross at Marina: Stay overnight so you can attend the Monterey Car Show—and make it a total BMW weekend!

The dealership will provide food and beverages. You'll also be able to test-drive "new-school" BMWs, such as the E90 M3.

Plans are in the works for a back-roads tour to the event, so watch the online calendar for more details.

NORTH BAY AREA: THE LOST COAST TOUR

October 1
Paula Williamson, NorthAreaRep@ggcbmwcca.org

Have you ever heard of California's Lost Coast—or been there? This will be the pinnacle driving event of the North Bay region for 2011! Plan on arriving Friday night, then enjoy the terrain of the Lost Coast with us on Saturday—and finish the day with the group for dinner.

More details to follow on this amazing tour!

BMW CCA OKTOBERFEST 2011

October 10-16
Barber Motorsports Park, Birmingham, AL
Linda Axelson, LindaA@bmwcca.org
www.bmwccaOfest.org

So much to do, so little time! There are five days of driving schools to choose from, a TSD rally, car-control clinic, Club Racing school, fun rally, concours, etc. Registration is open.

CAR-CONTROL CLINIC

October 15, 8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Marina Airport, Marina

CCC Team, CarControl@ggcbmwcca.org

Join us at Marina Airport for our last car-control clinic of the year! You will learn the basics of performance-car control by participating in three low-speed exercises—slalom, skidpad, and emergency-avoidance exercises—complete with instruction. These exercises will better prepare you for situations on the track, as well as in everyday driving.

This event is being held in conjunction with our autocross on Sunday, October 16—so you can learn new car-control skills on Saturday, and put them to the test on Sunday!

NOTE: This car-control clinic is a prerequisite for all first-timers (with no previous on-track driving experience) who plan to attend our high-performance driving schools.

Event cost is \$110 for BMW CCA members and \$158 for non-members (which includes a one-year BMW CCA membership). Lunch is included. If you plan to attend, please read our event overview!

Registration is open!

THUNDERHILL DRIVING SCHOOL

November 5-6

Thunderhill Raceway Park, Willows

Kelly Collins, TrackSchools@ggcbmwcca.org

Come learn the art of high-performance driving at our Thunderhill driving school! It's a great place for both first-timers and experienced drivers alike.

The focus of our driving school is on safety and education; every student is assigned an instructor until they are signed off at the event. Our dedicated team of experienced instructors will help you learn at a comfortable and enjoyable pace.

Your vehicle must undergo a technical inspection by a qualified mechanic within 30 days of the event. Bring the completed, stamped, and signed GGC Tech Inspection Form with you to registration. Self-techs are not allowed, and tech-inspection forms other than GGC's will not be accepted.

Watch the website for registration info and more details, coming soon.

CLUB RACE: THUNDERHILL RACEWAY

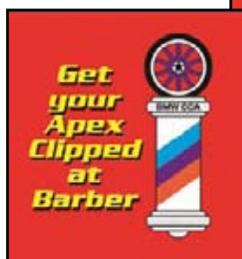
November 5-6

Thunderhill Raceway Park, Willows

Tamara Hull, treasurer@ggcbmwcca.org

Come enjoy the thrill of watching wheel-to-wheel racing!

This event will be combined with our driving school, so you can show your support for our Club racers when not on track yourself.



TOP DRIVER SHOOTOUT

November 12, 8:00 a.m. –5:00 p.m.

Marina Municipal Airport, Marina

Rodger Ball and Jeff Roberts, autocross@ggcbmwcca.org

The Top Driver Shootout is an invitation-only event for drivers who have attended at least three autocross events in our 2011 season. The event is limited to 60 participants; if we cannot fill the event with drivers who qualify, we will invite non-qualifiers to participate. The Top Driver will be awarded the Fechner Cup.

GGC FACEBOOK PAGE

Thank you to everyone who “likes” the Golden Gate Chapter BMW CCA on Facebook! At this point, there are 992 of you—and the numbers keep growing! Our Facebook page can help you to stay up to date on the latest chapter happenings: news, social events, and driving events.

Not onboard yet, but want to be? Find us at www.tinyurl.com/GGC-BMW-CCA-fan.

CHAPTER MERCHANDISE

It's time to stock up on eco-friendly hoodies, shirts, and caps with the GGC logo to show everyone your chapter pride! Our merchandise store also has chapter stickers, mugs, mouse pads, license-plate frames, and bags. Don't forget to pick up the latest edition of the Cars Of GGC calendar, too! Visit our apparel store at www.ggcbmwcca.webstore.us.com.

BMW COLLECTABLES

Looking for some cool historic BMW-related paraphernalia to fill out your collection? The BMW CCA Foundation's online store is filled with temptations for you. They now have over 230 different BMW brochures listed—both car and motorcycles.

Be sure to check out all the other great items in the store. They are still offering free shipping within the U.S., and they're constantly adding new items to the store, so check the site out often! www.bmwccafoundationstore.com.



UNOFFICIAL O'FEST SHIRT

The Windy City chapter doesn't want you to be left out of the fun of the second annual “fun” O'Fest T-shirt. A portion of the proceeds from this unofficial event shirt will be donated to the BMW CCA Foundation. It will be a donation through the Windy City chapter, so the money will be eligible for matching funds from BMW CCA, too.

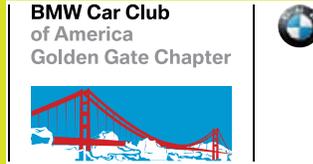
Go to www.bmwccafoundation.org/BarberT-Shirt.pdf for the order form. These shirts are based on pre-orders, so don't miss out. Order date deadline is September 19. **GGC**

WE WANT YOU

to serve on the Golden Gate Chapter Board!

2012 GGC Board elections are coming up soon! You're part of what makes our chapter one of the best in the BMW CCA—so why not join the management team? Just nominate yourself for one of the Board positions below. A description of each position can be found in the Operations Manual posted in the "About" section of the GGC website.

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership Chair



Let's put your talent to work! Just send your nomination and a short candidate statement to GGC Secretary Aleksey Kadukin at secretary@ggcbmwcca.org no later than **October 19, 2011**. Remember, you *are* the Golden Gate Chapter! We're nothing without our volunteers, but with them, we're the greatest chapter in the USA. Let's put new blood and fresh ideas on the board—and keep Golden Gate the best in the West!

**Once, somebody
called Nat an
obsessive
perfectionist.**

**He took it as a
compliment.**

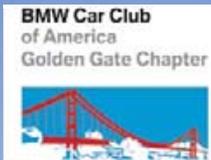
At Bavarian Professionals, we take such words as "obsessive", "exacting", "meticulous" and "prompt" to heart. We are trained experts specializing in BMWs—our clients expect nothing less. After all, some of them are as German in their love for these automobiles as we are. Bavarian Professionals:
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The Ultimate Driving Skills

October 15, 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Marina Municipal Airport, Marina



Experiment with your car's handling! Break your old bad habits! Have some fun, while you pick up some useful driving skills! The GGC Car-Control Clinic is the perfect answer, whether you're starting out as a teen driver, or just want to hone your talents. Remember, the Car-Control Clinic is a prerequisite for GGC track schools, too! But it's also terrific fun—and useful!—in its own right.

Things to know:

- Must be a member of BMW CCA
- Must have a valid driver's license (no learner's permits)
- Notarized Minor Release Waiver required if you are under 18 (see the GGC website, clinic overview)
- Two students can share one car (each must register separately)
- Convertibles allowed
- Be open-minded and willing to have fun!

What you get:

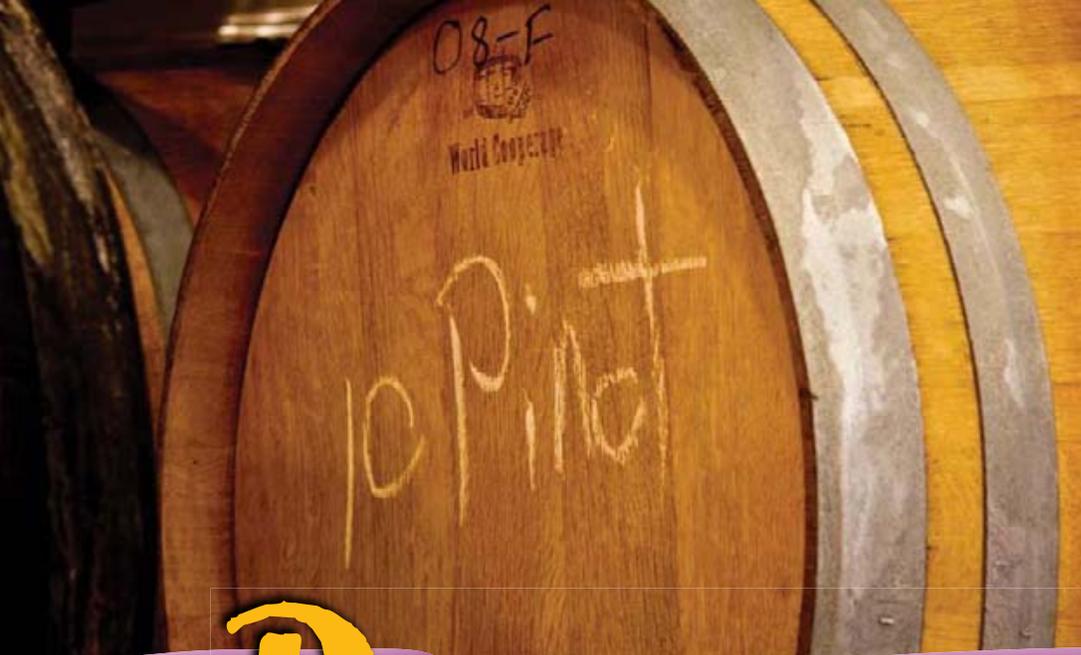
- Personalized attention from experienced GGC instructors
- Instruction geared to your level
- Short "chalk talk" followed by hands-on exercises
- Skid pad, slalom, and braking exercises
- Learn proper use of steering wheel, brakes, and throttle
- Approved pre-requisite for on-track high-performance driving school



Photos by Christina Breton

Car-Control Clinic

- Registration:**
- Online only: go to www.ggcBMWcca.org → Calendar
 - Registration is first come, first served
 - Only \$110 per student—lunch included! (\$158 for non-members, includes one-year membership to BMW CCA)



Poetic Wine Tour

By Jeff Cowan

What do BMWs, mountain roads, lush forest, the Pacific Coast Highway, gourmet lunch, hand-crafted wines, and awesome Club members all have in common? Only what you missed if you didn't come out for the Poetic Cellars driving tour and winery event on July 23!

We left Palo Alto just before 9:00 a.m. with thirteen cars and 28 folks. The BMW baker's dozen wound their way up and over the mountainous bit of Page Mill road, then snaked down the tiny Alpine road through the forest, made a left onto Pescadero road, and exited the twisties onto Highway 1.

These roads made for some fantastic moments to feel the incredible handling capabilities of our cars. That Jeff Cowan guy leading the pack was politely criticized for maybe—just possibly—driving at too quick a pace in his E30 M3. Yeah, we'll have a chat with him about that. However, everyone drove within their comfort zones, and arrived safe and sound.

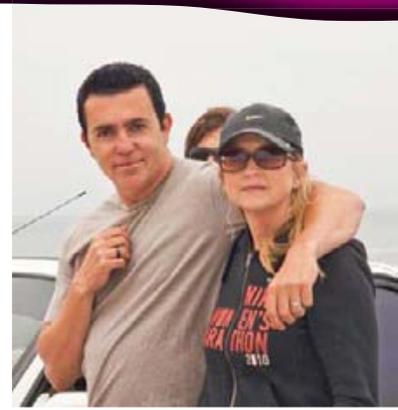
After a short photo shoot at the beautiful Pescadero State Beach, we departed for a cruise south along Highway 1. Just past the small burg of Davenport, we turned west onto Bonny Doon road—a beautiful series of gentle S-curves that connects with Pine Flat Road—and then south on Empire Grade for more of the same, all the way into Santa Cruz. We made our way through Santa Cruz to Branciforte Drive, turning onto Mountain View Road, then up North Rodeo Gulch Road to the beautiful Poetic Cellars tasting room in Soquel.

After this three-hour journey, our stomachs were rumbling louder than the Dinan M3 in our group! We were

ready for the catered lunch consisting of fresh arugula, corn, and tomato salad; roasted fingerl potatoes with peppered bacon; homemade hummus and veggies; and grilled artisan sausages. A lovely berry compote was served for dessert. The friendly folks at Poetic also poured us a full tasting flight of their current releases, which include Chardonnay, Rose, Mantra (a blend of Syrah, Mouvedre, Sangiovese), Merlot, Petite Syrah, and a late-harvest Viognier. Off-menu, we also sampled their Pinot Noir and had a barrel-tasting of the next release of Mouvedre, their signature wine that is typically sold out before bottling.

It was a spectacular day of enthusiastic driving and titillating flavors! These social drives are the kinds of events where we often meet members who are on their first Golden Gate Chapter event—we love to see that! This time was no exception, and some drove significant distances to join us. James T. came from Sacramento and Tom C. from Brentwood. Derek Butts, from Dinan Engineering, brought out his E90 M3 loaded to the grilles with Dinan bits—and some secret skunkworks prototype suspension components soon to hit the market.

Everyone had a fantastic time, and many asked when the next event would be. Our driving tours and wine events are clearly popular, so we'll do our best to continue providing them! In consideration are the Livermore wine valley and the Santa Lucia Highlands in Monterey (Napa and Sonoma, you'll just have to get rid of some of your traffic first). Keep an eye on the GGC calendar for more events, because we want to see you next time! **GGC**





By Dennis Harrold

Photos by Dennis Harrold and John O'Connor

New and exciting trails were the order of the day for the Central Coast group on our Tour de Teton drive through the Santa Ynez Mountains on the last Saturday in July. The main attraction was East Camino Cielo, which offers spectacular views over Santa Barbara at an elevation of nearly 4,000 feet.

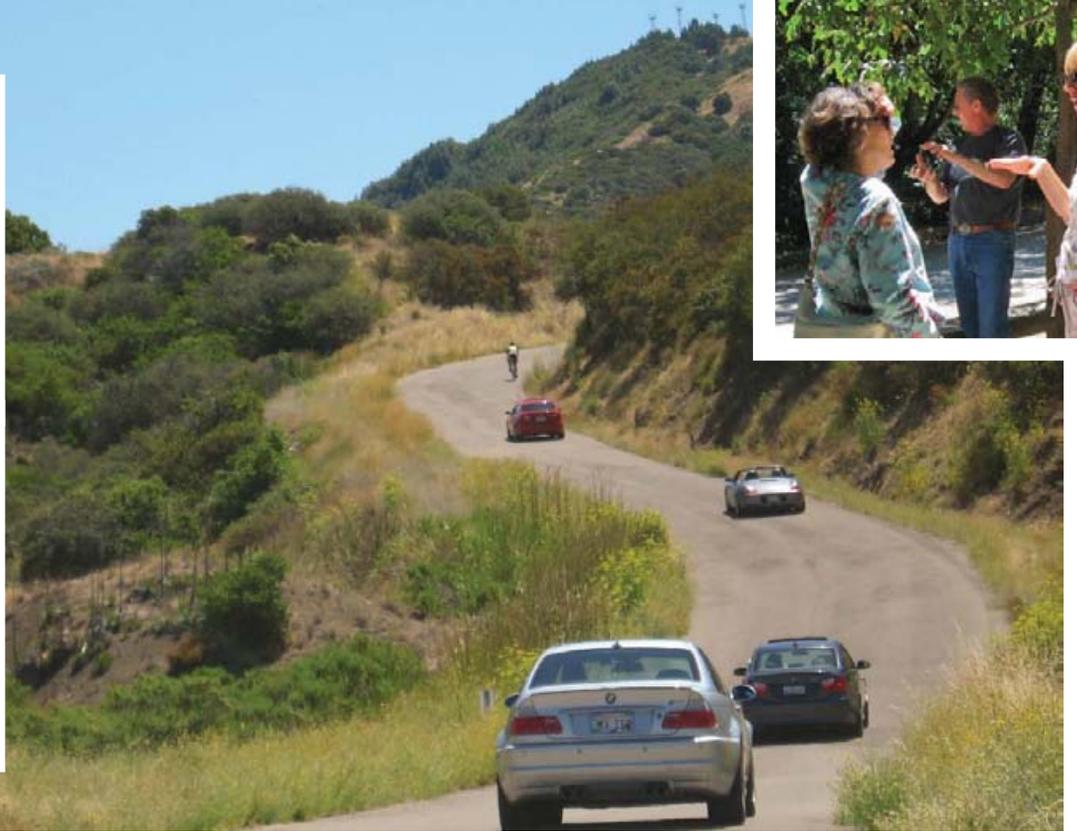
There were nine of us in seven BMWs for this adventure, including the O'Connors, who came over from Mojave to join us. John Greenly, who had researched this route and is taking over as San Luis Obispo area rep for me, was supposed to have led us on this trip; unfortunately, he was in an accident late Friday and spent the day in the infirmary. (He's okay, fortunately.) So we regrouped at the drivers' meeting, and Bruce Thyron took on the role of group leader. In the meantime, in my new position as trip photographer, I departed early to man the first photo station.

Our route took us east from Santa Maria on Foxen Canyon Road, an old favorite with a variety of turns and hills as it winds through the vineyards of North Santa Barbara County. There are bumpy sections that Caltrans

is repairing in short stretches, so we were fortunate that there was no loose gravel or asphalt on the roadway from their work. We took the south fork just past Fess Parker's winery to Los Olivos. The fun ended temporarily as we worked our way around the RVs and horse trailers headed south on Highway 154.

We took a break at Cold Spring Tavern, a popular spot just south of Lake Cachuma that is a favorite of the motorcycle crowd. From there we returned to 154 and picked up East Camino Cielo at the summit—it's a very tight and twisty trail that runs along the ridge all the way to Santa Barbara. It is snug enough to serve as an autocross training route, but pushing hard seems pointless, with the incredible scenery and periodic one-lane-wide stretches. A two-wheeled BMW, or perhaps a Mini or early Miata, would be an excellent choice for maximum enjoyment. But leave the Lotus Elan in the garage, unless you bring a mechanic and a bushel of parts—it is very remote.

A couple of miles past the summit, we took Gibraltar Road for the final push down the mountains to Santa Barbara. There is a wide turnout on the road halfway down,



where we stopped to stretch and take pictures. It was noon by this time, and most of the morning fog had burned off. One of the group—I'll never tell, John!—was low on petrol. His range computer showed less than 20 miles at one point—but it was now up to 40 miles after descending 2,000 feet. We continued our descent until we reached Highway 192, with only a brief stop to get our bearings. But we made it in good order, except for two cars in the group that got stuck at the light entering 101 South.

Our lunch stop was the Boathouse at Hendry's Beach, and there we hit our only snag of the day. The large county parking lot was filled to capacity with weekend beachgoers, so bad that one of our group left after his third circuit without finding a spot! The two late arrivals got the best of it, since by then the parking crunch was starting to ease.

The restaurant reminded me of some of those near Hollywood, where the Beautiful People go to be seen. About a third of the clientele looked like they were expecting a call from their agents; there was one exceptionally attractive woman who I swear could pass for Uma Thurman's younger sister. The place was filled when we arrived at

1:00, and since we were in no hurry after our long journey, we dallied past 3:00.

If you're traveling on 101 and have an extra hour, Camino Cielo is an excellent detour to break up a long journey. The best time is the afternoon, when the coastal fog is gone and the views are amazing—bring a camera. We'll see you down the road—maybe on our next outing to Jalama Beach in September? **GSC**



A Student Perspective:

JUST WHAT IS A CAR-CONTROL CLINIC LIKE?

By Chad Stanke

Photos by Canyon Chan and Jason Martinez

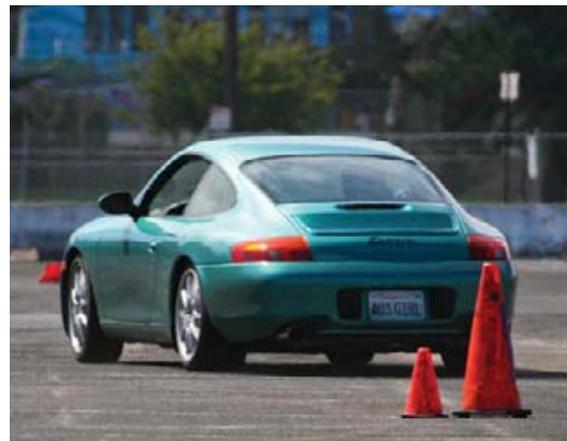
It's just before 8:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning; you're gently driving the road that encircles Candlestick Park in San Francisco toward your first BMW CCA car-control clinic with the Golden Gate Chapter (GGC). You can feel your anticipation rising: What should I expect? You make up images in your head about what this car-control clinic will be like. Even though you feel prepared—you've downloaded, printed, and read the detailed student packet and followed the car pre-check steps—curiosity rises the closer you get to the stadium parking lot.

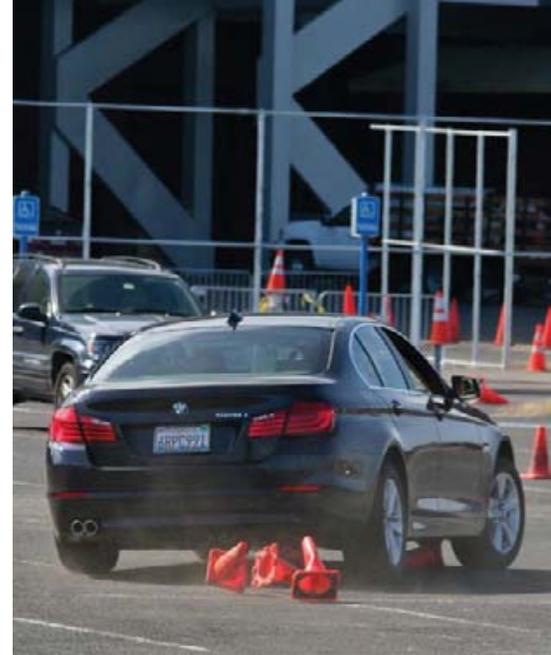
Soon you pass through the chain-link gates onto a sea of asphalt, with row upon row of beautiful BMWs; an odd smattering of "other" cars is peppered among the group. Off in the distance, like islands in the sea, are bright orange "cone zones" that look intriguing, yet slightly foreboding. A few folks are clustered by the administrative trailer, chatting, signing forms, and waiting for the action to start. From behind you, the GGC truck pulls up with a number of yellow-jacketed volunteer instructors aboard, returning from setting up the cones.

You realize, now that you've arrived, that this is going to be fun!

Once you find an empty parking spot, you notice that the autos near you have their hoods and trunks open. This reminds you that there are still things to check off on the list from the student packet, so you follow suit to prep your car. A quick visit to the administrative trailer gets you checked in and assigned to a group.

Returning to your car, you find one of the volunteer tech inspectors examining it. He quickly gets down to business. With his head already in your engine compartment, he scrutinizes your battery and motor mounts, then asks: "Did you check your oil?" Having followed the instructions, you nod. He moves around your vehicle, testing spring rebound and looking over your tires. "Did you increase your tire pressure?" Again, you respond with an affirmation. Stooping, he directs his keen eye toward the undercarriage, verifying that you've got no fluid leaks. Finally he makes his way to the rear of your car and quickly glances in the trunk for loose items—but you took those out before leaving home.





Satisfied, he applies a small colored dot to the top corner of your windshield. A quick smile and he moves on to the next car. You're cleared for takeoff!

Everyone gathers at the trailer for the morning chalk talk, so you make sure you get a spot with a good view of the demonstration. The most important lessons learned at the car-control clinic lie within the first 45 minutes of instruction—the fundamentals of what you'll need to know for the rest of the day... indeed, for the rest of your days as a driver. Proper posture, steering-wheel grip, and attitude: Sure, they sound rudimentary, but later in the day you'll become laser-focused on these things, and realize just how critical it is to understand the basic principles and physics of automotive motion.

Next is a primer on how your tires adhere to the road. It's startling to realize how small the contact patch is—and it's all that's keeping you and your beautifully engineered BMW from sliding off into the abyss! Next you learn a little about the physics of your car: how weight shifts through

your actions (or inactions), how it affects your tire grip, and ways to use it to your advantage.

In short order, the classroom portion of your day is complete; it's time to link theory to reality! The instructors explain which groups go where. Once you've identified your first event, you slowly drive to the lineup.

Your group's first event is the braking exercise. It looks easy, with a lane of cones that eventually splits into two lanes, ending at a set of directional lights. At the briefing, you realize that looks can be deceiving! As you pull up to the starting line, the instructor reminds you that the object of this exercise is to stop as close as possible to the cones at the end of the straight. After you pause a split second for reflection, you floor it. Speed comes quickly—you're aiming for 40 miles per hour—as you race toward the obstacle. Suddenly, as you shift your eyes from your speedometer to the course, you see the cones right in front of you! Your foot slams unforgettingly on the brake pedal—just as you were instructed. You hold your breath as your car stops quickly with the antilock braking system engaged. Within a flash,





you've come to a complete stop—quite a way from the cones! Staring out at the distant cones, you think, “Wow! I didn't realize my car could stop so quickly.”

You vow to delay your braking next time, and stop closer to the taunting cones. Of course, this time you overshoot the end, mowing down the cones—no harm, no foul, here in the safety of the clinic! During the next few you runs, you adjust, and learn to brake perfectly.

Now, however, the game changes: Rather than simply stopping, you must avoid the cones by swerving right or left—hitting the brakes only after you've straightened your front wheels. Eventually, the instructors add yet another twist by asking you to swerve right or left depending on a signal at the end of the course. Sure, the exercise looked easy in the beginning, but it's a humbling experience!

After the braking exercise, you find yourself settling in to the rhythm of the clinic. You begin to realize that you're among friends rather than competitors; everybody has similar interests, and soon you're chatting about how great that last run was, or how watching for the signal is a major challenge.

Surprisingly, it's lunchtime already, and everyone heads to the trailer for their clinic-provided sandwich lunches. This clinic staple turns out to be the instructors' only material paycheck for the day! By now you've made friends with some of the drivers and instructors in your group. Lunch becomes social, relaxing, and informative. That guy with the newer 5 Series really knows a lot of BMW history! The well-heeled woman in the red vintage Bimmer works at an auto shop! One of your instructors races competitively every other weekend. The young lady who's doing so well is only sixteen; she's here with her dad. The diversity of the crowd is amazing and interesting, and

the lunch break is short; after a quick run to the restroom, you can't wait for the next exercise!

By the time you get to the next drill, you've become entirely engaged in the event. This time you're at the skid pad; here you drive around in circles, using only your throttle to change the radius of the circle. You find you can go from circle to oval without ever adjusting the position of your steering wheel! It's all based on the fundamentals from the chalk talk—shifting weight and tire grip.

The first few laps are slow, but as the car picks up speed, your tires start singing. Then, just about the time you start feeling confident in your performance, the car spins out to a stop. Fortunately, errors are safe here—you didn't slide off into the abyss. Of course, as a novice, you can't imagine what you did wrong; what happened? One second you're sailing around the oval, increasing and decreasing throttle in a patterned rhythm, and the next second finds you suddenly spinning amid screaming tires and a cloud of smoke!

Then your instructor shows his hand: He's played a trick on you, to replicate what happens if an unforeseen element enters the equation. He wants to see how you'd handle the spin—and you never noticed as he stealthily pulled the handbrake, locking up your rear tires!

It's at this very moment that you realize how much of the car-control clinic is spent on the bleeding edge of control; one moment you're in control, the next you're out of control.

The distance between the two can be thinner than a hair. The skid pad gives you respect for the precariousness of control—and your ability to master it. The drivers around you have a new understanding as well, and the bond of the group grows stronger.

Finally you're presented with the slalom course. The instructors provide an excep-





tional explanation of what to do and how to do it; if you're familiar with downhill skiing, you already understand the slalom. Ahead of you are two lines of cones spaced at a set distance from each other. One side is a fast course, and the other is a slow course. The task is simple: Weave as quickly as you can through one line of cones, make a 180-degree turn, weave through the other line of cones, then repeat.

On your first run, the weaving part seems easy; weaving without knocking over the cones, however, takes a little bit of practice. Fortunately, through the slalom course, your friendly and adventurous instructors ride with you. They're not shy about reminding you to keep your eyes ahead and your attention on your throttle control. During your second run, you learn how easily your rear tires can get away from you.

Even though the slalom is the most technically challenging of the three events, it's also the most fun. Posture, steering-wheel grip, and attitude are important here. Your intense focus on these principles—and listening to your instructor—pays off. Once you've made a few more runs, your skills have been honed, and you're more in control than when you started. All too soon, though, your clinic is nearly over; reluctantly, you make the slow trek back to your parking spot.

By the end of the day, you've had many opportunities to compare notes with the other drivers in your group. You've seen how all the different cars perform, and you've gained considerable understanding—and appreciation—of how performance-oriented your BMW really is. Your driving skills have increased noticeably—along with your confidence. You know you're a better, stronger driver than when you arrived that morning.

Everyone gathers at the trailer again for a quick debrief and presentation of certificates of completion. The camaraderie that developed during the day is apparent now. When you receive your certificate, friends you made congratulate you. When their names are called, you find yourself doing the same.

Shortly before the clinic comes to a close, the instructors offer a sobering reminder: You are now one of the very few drivers on the road who have completed *any* kind of advanced-driving course. In that moment, you recognize just how few drivers really know what they're doing out there—but your concern is somewhat allayed as you realize that at least you are no longer one of them!

And as you drive home with new-found, confident competence—a new awareness of what's really going on as your car rolls along its familiar route—you wonder how you might put these lessons to good use, and polish your new skills. "Hmm," you ponder aloud. "Maybe I should sign up for the next autocross!" **GGC**

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A dark blue BMW car is shown from a front-quarter perspective on an asphalt track. Several orange traffic cones are visible in the foreground and around the car, indicating a driving exercise. The car's headlights are on, and two people are visible in the front seats. The background is slightly blurred, showing a track environment with blue barriers.

An Instructor Perspective: **WHY I VOLUNTEER TO TEACH**

By Zack Steinkamp

Photos by Canyon Chan and Jason Martinez

It was almost seven years ago that I participated in my first BMW CCA car-control clinic (CCC) as a student. The CCC is a volunteer-run, all-day driving school with a focus on real-world skills. It's also a prerequisite for the Club's driving schools held at local race tracks like Laguna Seca or Infineon Raceway. CCCs are held on a vast expanse of pavement, either in the Candlestick Park parking lot or on an unused section of tarmac at the Marina Airport near Monterey.

The school centers around three exercises:

- An emergency-braking and lane-change course
- An oval-shaped skidpad for experimenting with the effects of weight transfer on a car's ability to turn
- A slalom course with two slaloms—a fast side and a slow side—connected with 180-degree turns, like a little race track.

The courses are marked with small orange cones. Students are divided into three groups, and spend two hours at each exercise during the day.

After my first CCC, I was hooked; I attended clinics two more times after that. From there I mixed in a healthy dose of GGC autocross events and got more and more into the Club's track schools. I made a lot of friends in wide-reaching

regions of the Club, and got to know the event organizers and instructors pretty well.

In 2007, I got the call from Mr. CCC himself, Bob Gobel. "We're looking for some more instructors for an upcoming CCC," he said. "Are you interested in trying it out?" Oh, yes, I was! This excited me even more than getting a new job the month before!

The days leading up to that first CCC as an instructor were nerve-wracking for me. Would I do well? Would I get car sick? Would I have anything to offer anyone? Well, the first day came and went. I had a blast!

What's in it for the instructor? All the payment I need to do this volunteer job is a share of someone's "light-bulb moment"—that instant when they suddenly feel the difference in the right and wrong application of physics in a maneuver, or discover how much easier the exercise is once they raise their eyes, or master a quick steering exchange due to correct hand position on the wheel. Of course, the times in the morning and at lunch when instructors get to play on the exercise course is a nice bonus—any opportunity to practice my own car-control skills is a good one!

At the July CCC—it may have been my twentieth as an instructor—I had a new job. Rather than being a ride-along instructor, I was put in charge of one of

the slalom courses. I was to introduce the exercise to each group of students, describe the course layout, and explain the goals of the exercise (vision, planning, and smoothness). My job was also to ensure that it all ran smoothly and safely.

To my chagrin, riding with students in cars is not a big part of the slalom-leader's job description. However, I did get a chance to ride with a couple of students. One in particular stands out as the best example of why I love instructing.

I was chatting a bit with a fairly new fellow instructor, Tristan, a *wunderkind* of car control. He was having some frustration trying to break a student out of his shell. Some students take to the exercises and environment and are gung-ho from the start, making their tires squeal and pushing their car to its limits and beyond. On the opposite end of the spectrum are those who do not embrace the fact that we're in a place where there is nothing to run into; those folks drive very slowly and carefully, just as they would on the street. They do not press hard on the gas pedal without some serious encouragement.

One of our jobs as instructors is to figure out how to push people out of their normal comfort zones, to help them experience something new and different in their cars. We're ecstatic if every student is squealing their tires and spinning out at least once during the day. For those who give us a nice, comfortable ride, we go about figuring out how to fix that.

Tristan asked me if I'd hop into this car to see if I could get the driver to break loose. Great! Sure! So I got into the car, introduced myself, and gave him a pep talk about how this is a really safe school, and how it's our job to push everyone to a new place with their driving—and I told him that things are a lot more fun once you get there. When it was our turn to go out on the course, I asked him to show me what he had learned so far. He was very smooth, impeccably precise, very much in control. Cool! But the car's tires were silent. This was a problem!

On our second lap, I warned him that I was going to start really encouraging him to go faster—in a big way. Then, as we were halfway around the last turn before entering the "fast" slalom side, I yelled, "FLOOR IT! NOW!" And he did! But then, as we got into the fast slalom, he backed off. My encouragement returned: "Go! Go! Go! Go! GO! GO! FASTER—FASTER NOW!" He



got back into it—but then it was time for the next turn. As we zigged through the slow side of the slalom, I assured him he was on the right track. "That was great, let's do that again—but stay in it!"

When we rounded that last turn again, I was literally screaming at him, "PUNCH IT NOW! HOLD IT DOWN! GO GO GO GO! FASTER! KEEP GOING! YOU'VE GOT IT!" We flew through the fast side with a quick and clean run. "BRAKES! BRAKE HARD!" I quickly advised as we hit the slow-down section before the the turnaround.

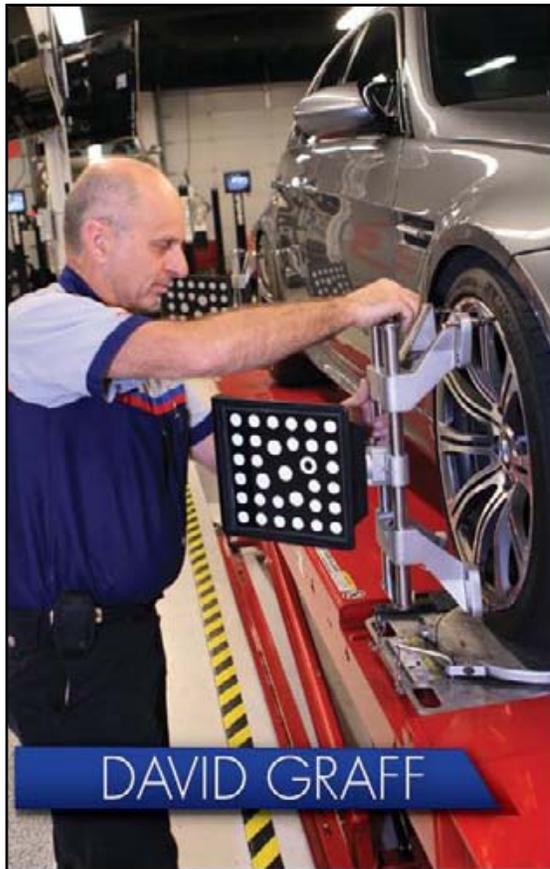
I could tell he was feeling the adrenaline at this point—time to reinforce what he had just learned. "That's our four laps, but let's do one more. You've got it now, so let's keep going!" Again through the last turn I shouted my encouragement. Suddenly I could tell he was feeling it, and driving it on his own; I was now just background noise. As we slowed down for the slow side, I could feel his electric tension. I congratulated him on his accomplishment—and let him know that it was our last lap.

We exited the course. He didn't say a word, but I could see that his hands were shaking on the wheel. "So, what do you think?" I asked.

After a long pause—hands trembling and gripping the steering wheel—through a huge grin brighter than any light bulb, he uttered a breathless, "Wow!"

Every student who's intent on learning at a CCC has a moment like this. Some come earlier than others, some are stronger than others. But it is that one single moment that makes the day totally worth the effort—for everyone. **GGC**





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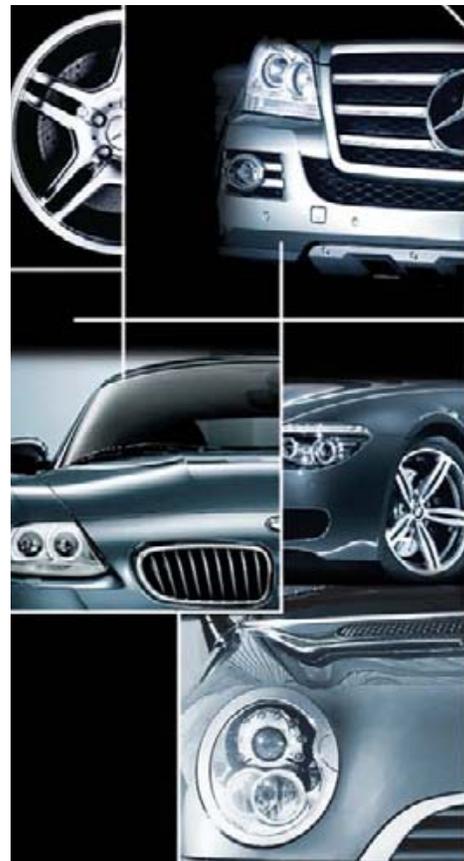
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By *Aleksey Kadukin*
Secretary, GGC BMW CCA

July 21, 2011

Location: Round Table Pizza, San Mateo

Board members in attendance: Rodger Ball (member at large), Canyon Chan (member-at-large), Kelly Collins (vice president), Tammi Hull (treasurer), Aleksey Kadukin (secretary)

Board members not in attendance: Ian Dunn (membership chair), Donna Seeley (president)

Other members in attendance: Mark Radovan (Monterey area representative), Mary Sandkohl (East Bay area representative), Valery Miftakhov, Julia Sirotna

7:15 p.m. meeting called to order by Collins

Driving-events report (Hull):

- Autocross:
 - » Ball relayed that our July autocross at Candlestick received mixed reviews due the parking lot's surface condition. However, it was a sold-out event that brought many first timers to the program.
 - » The Top Driver Shootout trophy has been restored to pristine condition.
- Car-control clinic:
 - » Chan reported that we had a second CCC at Candlestick a day before the autocross, and it went well.
 - » The downside: The lot had limited number of Porta-Potties that were located far from the activity grounds.
 - » The positive news: We had new instructors.
- CCC and autocross location: Sandkohl got email from Golden Gate Fields offering use of their parking lot for our driving events. Ball says, "This is one of the worst surfaces in the area." He will explore other spots (Oakland, perhaps).
- HPDE: The June Laguna Seca school just broke even, despite the fact that it was undersubscribed and there was an increased track rental cost.
- Club racing:
 - » GGC will host one race. National is expecting twenty racers to participate.
 - » We need to run a spreadsheet and calculate everything, and we need volunteers to help with the event, too.
- Trailer-wrap project: Wrapping company needs to fix some issues, but the entire look is good in general.

Treasurer report (Hull):

- We have money.
- The income from the January Laguna Seca HPDE covered the trailer-wrap project.

Vice-president/Communication-manager report (Collins):

- Newsletter: We are getting full-color printing for the

entire newsletter—for no extra charge! Huge thanks to our friends at Commerce Printing!

- Website: the current technology of our site has a lot of challenges to deal with. We should start getting bids for the website tech redesign..
- Social media is going well and there's nothing to report. All events are up to date in all communication channels.

Social-events report (Collins, Hull):

- Poetic wine tour went well: We had 28 people signed up for the event.
- SLO area rep: Dennis Harrold is handing off the area-rep duties to John Greenly. The transition should be smooth. Our thanks to Harrold for the fantastic work he's done energizing the chapter presence in the area!
- Grand-Am corral: It went well despite some challenges:
 - » Participants had no exact schedule for Club-related activities.
 - » Golf-cart insurance was an epic story.
 - » Parking was a challenge due to unexpected space limitations.
- ALMS corral: Radovan is offering to help with the corral organization. Hull will help to setup MotorsportsReg for the event.
- Sommerfest at BMW San Francisco: Ball and Dunn represented GGC at the event.
 - » There were a lot of good people who stopped by our booth.
 - » We got six new members, including one lifetime membership signed on site!
- East Bay area comedy-club event: Sandkohl indicates fourteen people showed up.
- Monterey area: Radovan will explore Festorics activities. He also talked about his work with BMW of Monterey and their plans for a car show at September..
- Palo Alto Concours D'Elegance: Hull reported that the event was a great success! Event volunteers faced a lot of challenges, but resolved each one handily.

Secretary/Tech-session report (Kadukin):

- The BMW San Francisco Collision Center tech session went well..
- The detailing tech session went well, too..
- There are a couple of proposals for future tech sessions, and and Kadukin is working with prospective hosts.

Miscellaneous:

- Merchandise:
 - » Chan is working with the Land's End online store to update GGC's logo design for apparel.
 - » We need to update the logo design for products offered at CafePress, too.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m. **GGC**

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NOISE, NOISE, NOISE

After a long winter and an interminably chilly and damp spring here in Minnesota, summer is upon us with a vengeance. The damp heat brings out the state bird—the mosquito. In my twisted little corner of the automotive world, it also brings out the creaks and groans in Schultz, our 1995 W124-body Mercedes E320, infesting and multiplying in him like so many box-elder bugs.

Most large complicated objects—like people and cars—make noise in protest when the mercury drops. Not so Schultz; when the temperature drops, he's as quiet as—well, as a Mercedes W124. However, when the sun comes out in force, so, too, do the groans from his sun visors, driver's-door check strap, and sunroof as it opens and closes.

I was reminded of Schultz's mumblings about a month ago when we got our first heat wave. That got me thinking about the noises emanating from the other children at various times throughout the year, and all this thinking led me down the memory lane of car irritants, ranging from minor annoyances to full-on, bash-your-head-repeatedly attacks on the offending part in a blind rage bordering on heart attack.

Otto, our not-so-dearly-departed 1991 318is, had a passenger-door rattle at the latch that could not be eradicated. It made itself known regardless of temperature, humidity, moon phase, whatever. E30s are usually pretty tight little cars, and after five of them, the rattle seemed unusual to me; even my soft-top 325iC didn't have this issue, and that heap had more shake than Elvis and Lady Gaga's love child. On Otto, I tried adjusting the striker. I tried lubing the latch. I tried creatively adjusting the window frame. The next step was replacing the latch and the welting around the door opening. Or selling the car. Guess what happened next.

Eons ago, I had a Honda Prelude whose lower dashboard was a jigsaw puzzle of ill-fitting plastic bits and Bondo. Add to the mix a poorly-installed pull-out Sony tape deck, and you have a recipe for noises that make Chinese water torture seem like a relaxing afternoon on a Slip 'N' Slide. No amount of squished foam and tape could quell the cacophony. I'm surprised it wasn't worse, given how hard I would pound on it.

The tendency for E28 B-pillars to rattle is now well-documented, but not way back when Heimlich, our 1985 535i, marked his spot in our parking lot like a wolf. I never figured out that problem, but almost every other E28 I've ever been in had the same rattle.

We also never figured out why the clutch pedal would randomly stick to the floor, which seems more prevalent on 1985 535i's with the Getrag 265 five-speed. Nobody knows why. Sure, bright mechanics, shade-tree and otherwise,

know tricks around the issue, like putting an additional return spring on the pedal, or preventively replacing the clutch master cylinder every month. Theories have been put forth, but the root problem remains a mystery. They'll figure out Stonehenge first.

For as sunburned and ratty as the 528i is, with 274,000 miles, it doesn't creak or groan at all. However, what it lacks in noise it more than makes up for in aesthetic challenge; you can almost hear the ugly. The sad irony? The quietest car I own doesn't even have a radio currently installed. No need to turn up the invisible stereo to drown out the rattles and squeaks which don't exist.

"Let's turn on the radio."

"We can't."

"This car sure is ugly."

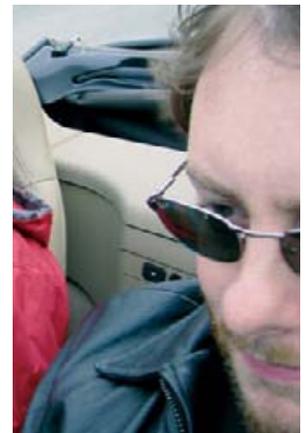
"Let's listen to how quiet it is!"

Such is the territory when driving old cars. Interiors talk to you, doors require more than one attempt to shut even when properly adjusted, engines drip or otherwise consume fluids. Sunroof air deflectors require help popping up when the panel slides open. Power antennas work according to their own whims.

I marvel at rental cars, probably because they are the only truly low-mileage vehicles I ever get to drive. They don't make noises they aren't supposed to. The heaters heat, and the air-conditioners cool. They sit in traffic without complaint. When you pull up to a tollbooth, the window goes down; and, more important, it goes back up. Everything just works.

I suppose that on some level, if I wanted a coffin-quiet car which kept its fluids to itself and wasn't rusting to pieces, I would just lease a new Toyota Avalon every three years. Toyotas are cobbled together not with actual hardware, but with adhesives made from the same stuff the ancients used to glue together the pyramids.

It would be hard to come up with an article on why an Avalon annoyed me. How it bored me to death would surely be easier. **GGC**



By Jonathan Bush



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Please contact us with any deletions to the list due to a company being out of business. We ask that additions, changes, or deletions (no longer participating in discount program) are requested by the business owner directly. Updates should be directed to: CommMgr@ggcbmwcca.org.

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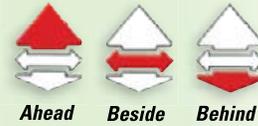
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RECEIVED BY EMAIL

V1 SEZ:
"LONE RANGER ONCOMING."

Hello Mr. Valentine:

Here's how much I trust my V1. Two beeps and I go Condition Red.

I was on 98 through Florida's panhandle. Only a two laner but the swath it cuts through Tyndall AFB is wide enough for a freeway, a broad ribbon of grass without interruption for a dozen miles, flat as the nearby Gulf of Mexico. A car pulled off the pavement is visible for miles, heh, heh, which means the speed nazis have no place to hide. So they adapt.

V1 gave me two beeps, weak ones, arrow pointing ahead. Then silence.

A few more beeps, arrow ahead, a singleton on the Bogey Counter. Then nothing. Traffic was light, only two cars in sight, one a half-mile ahead, another just a red speck in the distance. And a semi oncoming just my side of the speck.

More beeps, getting stronger, arrow still forward. The car ahead looked about even with the semi. A two-beep warning, by itself, isn't much to go on, but V1 tells me more—one Bogey ahead, strengthening as I go, says "lone ranger coming at me." So I locked the cruise on a legal 60 and waited.

Just as I met the 18-wheeler, "Beeeeeeeeeeeeeeep!" And there he was, a Florida black-and-tan tucked in tight behind the semi trailer where oncoming cars couldn't see him, holding his instant-on till I was too close to defend. It's a wicked trap, but V1 had him every time he zapped the cars ahead.

All I had to do is trust V1. How can you not trust a detector that points to the trap?

Mick D. (identity protected)
Tallahassee, FL

RECEIVED BY EMAIL

V1 SEZ: "DON'T BELIEVE IT'S JUST A TRAILER!"

Hey Mike:

I gotta tell you about the Blue-Light Special that V1 found for me. It was Saturday morning and I was in my grins car heading to her house to pick up Danny boy for the day. Heck yes, I took the ridge route.

This road was all fun back before the rock slide. Now it's interrupted by a 25-mph construction zone and a "your speed is" trailer.

No workers today, of course, but the trailer still woke V1 up. As I braked, a string of crotch rockets zoomed large in my rearview, five of them, right on my butt as I passed the trailer.

V1'S WARNING OF A NEW BOGEY.

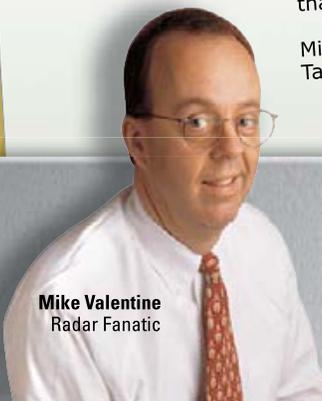
"De-deet," said V1. Then "de-deet" again. And another "de-deet." The Counter showed four signals where I normally see one. One arrow pointed behind to the trailer as usual, but that leaves three in the wild. The flashing arrow points ahead.

We'd barely cleared the zone when the rockets blew by me, exhausts shrieking, the bikes laid over for the uphill left hander. They vanished over the crest. Me, I just moseyed, eyes out for three jokers. Just over the hill—Bingo!—a sheriff SUV hidden in the bushes. That's joker no. 1. Two more somewhere.

At that point the view opens as the road sweeps right over the valley. And maybe a half-mile ahead, light bars strobing blue, jokers no. 2 and 3 angled across the road, blocking five bikers still astride their motionless sickles.

V1 really works, except for those who don't have one yet.

Cal R. (identity protected)
State College, PA



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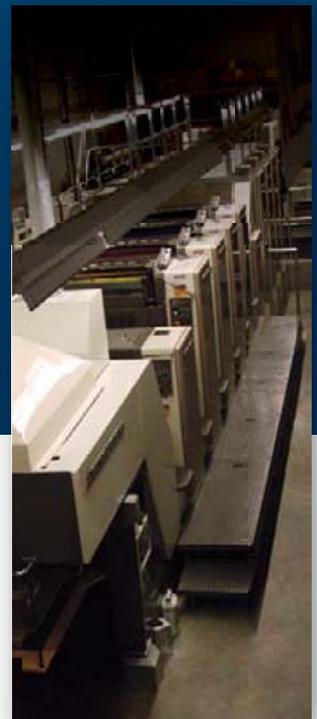


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