

# BMW IM HERZEN DES SUDENS

The Heart of Dixie BMW Club Newsletter • 2014 | Issue 3



See page 3 for photos of the local wineries tour.

## THE ALABAMA WINERIES TOUR

President's Letter

Winery Fun Run

BMW CCA Street Survival Course

A Precautionary Tale for X Series Owners

Benefits of a BMW Club Membership

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## **ANOTHER YEAR COMING TO A CLOSE...**

### **MY BIMMER FRIENDS,**

We're winding down another year for the Heart of Dixie chapter. I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you that came to any of our outings this past year. Your support is greatly appreciated by the officers of your chapter.

We have a great run to Franklin, Tn on December 13th planned and I know from those that have gone on this run in the past, including my wife and I, that's well worth the day...registration should be online in November. Watch for an email or check the website.

In reviewing 2014 I have to say I think it's been an odd year for the chapter. I can't remember another one in the past 12 that I've been involved where we've had so many changes to our schedule. I plan to address these inconsistencies with a new approach in 2015. The officers and I will try something a little different and schedule one major activity for the chapter each quarter.

### **Why a quarterly outing instead of something every month like we've always done?**

In the 12 years I've been involved as an officer we have tried to schedule something for the membership every month throughout the year. I think it's been very successful in the past but it does put a large burden on the 4-6 people in the chapter that have to organize and run these events. Not to mention the requirement that these same officers be present at the event. It's become apparent that it's no longer a sustainable option for the core group in the chapter.

In any event, by going to a quarterly outing, we can plan bigger, better events that may get more of our 500+ members involved.

Fingers Crossed! :)

Also, our elections will be held this time next year and all officer positions will be open. I'm ending my 2nd term as President and invite anyone who would like to become more involved to throw their name in the hat. It's a great group of people and

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## President's Letter

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I've had a blast helping run the chapter the past decade. If you have any questions on becoming more involved please feel free to contact any of the officers of the chapter.

I hope we have a great 2015 for the club and stay tuned for details on our kick-off party in the New Year!

Thank you all for your membership and support of the Heart of Dixie Chapter.

Check out the website for the latest pictures on Facebook or at <http://albmwcca.org/>



Happy Motoring—

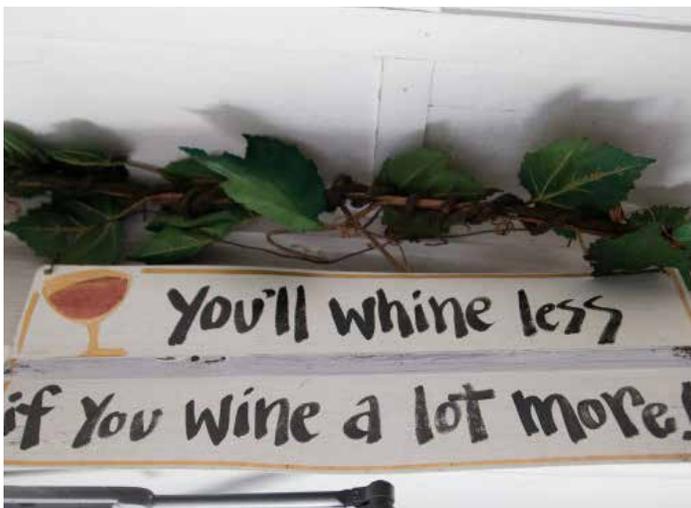
Jonathan



## SCENES FROM THE WINERY TOUR...



## SCENES FROM THE WINERY TOUR...





Tuscaloosa, Alabama

# BMW CCA STREET SURVIVAL

by Doug Neil

I REMEMBER IT AS IF IT WERE YESTERDAY – THE CALL THAT FRIDAY AFTERNOON; THE TONE OF THE VOICE ON THE OTHER END WAS SOMBER BUT CALM. I LISTENED ... SILENCE ... PANIC – THE CALL EVERY FATHER DREADS, “MR. NEIL, YOUR DAUGHTER AND YOUR WIFE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT.”

Thoughts raced frantically through my head. Thankfully, the fear quickly subsided and was replaced with unabated relief upon learning that both were tremendously shaken but appeared uninjured aside from a multitude of cuts and bruises.

A leisurely trip to the lake gone terribly wrong; a chance for my 15 year-old daughter and her mom to spend some quality time together. Startled by an inattentive driver who suddenly crossed into her lane, my daughter, an inexperienced driver armed with her new driver’s permit, her driver’s handbook, and a few words of wisdom from Dad, swerved suddenly to avoid contact dropping two tires onto the shoulder, promptly panicked, jerking the wheel back in an effort to return to her lane, and then corrected again to avoid the car which continued, undeterred, into the lane occupied by my

daughter’s car. The car came to rest in a ditch after rolling three times, bending every panel on the car, blowing out several panels of glass, and strewing clothes and groceries for a quarter of a mile down Highway 280.

The goals of the Tire Rack Street Survival program are to teach students some of the basics of car control... and to improve their competence as drivers.

I thank God every day for looking after my family that fateful afternoon. We were lucky, but unfortunately this is a scenario that plays out far too often in this country. Last year, over 5,000

teenagers died in motor vehicle crashes, the leading killer of American youths aged 16 to 19, accounting for more than 40 percent of fatalities in that age bracket (Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).

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## Street Survival (continued)

In an effort to reduce this number, Tire Rack Street Survival has developed a non-profit, national driver education program in partnership with the BMW Car Club of America aimed at teaching teens the skills they need to stay alive behind the wheel. The goals of the Tire Rack Street Survival program are to teach students some of the basics of car control, to enhance their enjoyment of driving and to improve their competence as drivers. The premise is to help students understand how their actions govern a car's responses, and as a result to become safer, more effective drivers on the road.

Students learn basics such as how to check tire pressures, fluid levels, and the importance of seat belts as well as more advanced lessons in safety and car control

On August 9th, 2014 the Heart of Dixie Chapter of BMW CCA hosted its third Tire Rack Street Survival School at Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and needless to say, when approached by Jack Joyner, the Club's Chief Driving Instructor and Driving Events Coordinator, to help instruct I jumped at the chance. Having instructed HPDE's for years, I felt compelled to give back with the hope that somewhere, somehow, some father would be spared the call I received years ago.

As we arrived early Saturday morning, neon orange cones were positioned strategically in the parking lot. Joyner started the day by welcoming our 23 students and their parents by explaining the School's goals: "The No. 1 priority is to keep teens alive; we want to develop a smarter, safer, more prepared teen driver that is capable of handling anything on the road that is thrown at them."

The School is structured to provide a combination of classroom instruction and driving instruction utilizing the student's own car. The principles discussed in the classroom setting are reinforced through a series of closed-course driving exercises intended to replicate real world driving scenarios with feedback coming from experienced instructors riding in the passenger seat. Students learn basics such as how to check tire pressures, fluid levels, and the importance of seat belts as well as more advanced lessons in safety and car control such as weight distribution, vehicle dynamics, braking, tire traction, lane changes and accident avoidance, how to control skids and much more.

Gwyn Elizabeth Sutphin, 16 of Starkville, Mississippi offered her thoughts on the day, "In this course, you're able to actually drive and be in that real life situation... with a permit, you just hear

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## Street Survival (continued)

about it.” She later added, “I’ve learned to move from one lane across two lanes and how to do sharp turns and stuff like that... I think that when it’s raining and I start sliding, I’ll know what to do.”

In looking back on the day, I wonder whether I, as one of several instructors who volunteered to help that day, actually achieved my original intent of “giving back.” When I really think about it, I may have taken away more than the students attending that day – I left with the satisfaction of knowing that a great group of young kids are more prepared, and possess the necessary driving skills that I wish my daughter had possessed on the day of her great adventure. I highly recommend this course for anyone with teen drivers – your teenager will thank you!

The Heart of Dixie Chapter of the BMW CCA will host its next Tire Rack Street Survival School on Sunday October 26th at the Hoover Metropolitan Stadium. The course is open to anyone between the ages of 15 and 21 with a valid permit or driver’s license. The event is scheduled to begin at 8:00 AM and will conclude at 4:30 PM. The cost for attendance is \$75 and registration for the event can be found at [www.streetsurvival.org](http://www.streetsurvival.org) listed under “Hoover Met.”

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT:**

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*by Ron Drenning*

## **A PRECAUTIONARY TALE FOR X SERIES OWNERS**

One of my office buddies came to me with a rather strange story about his daughter trying to trade-in her 2007 X3. The car was purchased as a CPO in Birmingham and when she tried to see if the local dealer, in another town, would buy it this is what came back: “You’ll need to trade this car in at the original dealer or we’ll have to deduct \$4,000.00 for a new transfer case”. No further explanation was offered. Of course this immediately stopped the attempt to sell the X3 and initiated a call to dad. Since I’m the office gear-head and official know-it-all on BMW’s (at least around my office) I got the message next.

After these many years of owning a BMW plus having gotten used to the German way of doing things, my antenna immediately picked up the scent of another BMW keep-it-quiet campaign. I had not heard of any particular X3 problems but put a call in to Mike Miller at Roundel. Sure enough Mike came back

with another tale of woe due to BMW’s lifetime lubricant policy. The problem is the transfer case. This is the power splitter box attached to the end of the transmission that accepts one input (driveshaft) and produces two outputs (driveshaft to front wheel and driveshaft to rear wheels) and supposedly has “LIFETIME FLUID FILL”. As you can imagine no oil lasts a lifetime unless you consider the failure of the transfer case to be the LIFETIME. It only holds one liter of oil and when it loses its lubricity the

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multi-link roller chain starts stretching until it is so loose it starts skipping on the gears that turn the chain. You can tell if this is happening to your car if it makes a “chucking” sound under hard acceleration or if it is making metallic clanking sounds under power. It might feel like a hard shift too.

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So, what to do if this has, or is, happening right now. If your “X” series BMW is under warranty start asking for a replacement transfer case ASAP. If you’ve already had it in for a software adjustment to the transmission for hard shifting it is already too late, the transfer box needs to be replaced. Should you be so lucky that everything is working well at least demand the oil be replaced every 30K miles or be prepared to pay the \$4,000.00 replacement cost. The transfer case has both a drain and fill plug so oil changes are a no-brainer.

Youtube has some good videos on the transfer case problem and how to fix it yourself if you are a gearhead. There are also videos of a few companies that will rebuild the transfer case for about \$950.00 and do it quickly. \$950.00 is a lot better than 4,000.00 and it comes with a warranty too.

## The Benefits of a BMW Club Membership

- **VEHICLE REBATE:** 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](http://bmwcca.org) for details.
- **OUTSTANDING NATIONAL EVENTS** including BMW CCA's premier annual gathering, Oktoberfest, which will be 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 [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org).