

# TORQUE<sup>OF</sup> THE TOWN

SPRING 2016

The Voice of the Houston Chapter BMW Car Club of America



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## ON THE COVER:

**Bill Elwell and Pam Standley share their experiences along the trail to Z Fest 2015**





# Open Roads

## Blake LaGrone President - Houston Chapter

So, here I am, President of the Houston Chapter of the best car club in the world! Amazing! I have really enjoyed my time with this club and its people. I am grateful to have this opportunity to give back to the club which has given me so much. I mean really, I had my first two OktoberFest registrations paid for by winning them as raffle prizes at our annual dinner. How cool is that! I know several folks who have won numerous sets of tires (names withheld to protect the guilty!) at those same dinners. I want to thank those past Presidents who went before me for their guidance and support. **Dennis Nowak** graciously tutored me on much of the information I need to continue to let this club run smoothly. **David Dalton** has also given of his time, and **Dan Baker** is always a great resource. Thank You All!

The good news is that our Club is Healthy! As I mentioned at the Annual Dinner, last year had some nice "First's" that turned out really well. We have an Autocross committee and Chair that is doing a wonderful job. They put on an Autocross practice event that was a first for us. I can't speak for the others that attended, but I had a ball. Chris Rocks! Our Driving Events Coordinator Richard Lo has started us back into hosting HPDE track events and it has been a long time since this club was involved in that endeavor. The August event at TWS was well attended. The upcoming "**Texas Trifecta**" (June 17th - 19th) event at "**Circuit of the Americas**" is coming along nicely and should be awesome. I

love that track....Oh and I will be getting a garage this year If I go! Yes Valerie I will wimp out gladly! We held our first ever **Charity Golf Tournament** benefitting "**Homes for Our Troops**" a wonderful organization that builds special purpose homes for severely disabled Veterans. We will be holding the 2nd Annual Charity Golf Tournament benefitting HFOT on

Saturday, May 7th this year and we hope to double our donation from last year.

We have so much coming up this year and we have a great Board to make it happen. **Adriana Deisen** stepped up to take the Vice President's spot. She brings with her Mitch Bieque (Social Events) and Hugo Ashkar (Eblast) two very nice guys who have hit the ground running. Our Social Media folks (Tor Taklo and Jennifer Ridgeway) and Webmaster (Jeff Thomson) are building our internet presence and our "Torque" editor (Jim Robinson) always produces a quality product. Jim Moffitt returns to take the Membership chair (Thanks Jim!) Got a technical question? Call or email Jeff Otten our Technical Advisor. If he doesn't know the answer, he probably knows where to go to find it! Our Secretary (Diane Albrecht) and our Treasurer (Bill Krupowicz) do a wonderful job of keeping us organized. This Board collaborated together to produce a current/updated Operations Manual and simplified/clarified Board voting procedures which it was in need of. With the advent of Social Media we have positions now that didn't exist not so long ago. Our new Vice President Adriana Diesen spearheaded this task and it was a big one I am very pleased with the caliber of people that we have on this board. It really is a pleasure to work with such talent!

We are fortunate to have a lot of things to do that should appeal to just about everyone. I especially like the

**Spring Bluebonnet drive** (April 2nd) The Texas country side is ablaze with color this time of year. I will soon be "California Dreaming" about **Oktoberfest** and the **Laguna Seca Track** in Monterey CA.

If you have never made the Oktoberfest run with the "**Road Monkeys**" this is one you should seriously think of making. Ken Finley always comes up with new ways to get to our destination and the pit stops that Valerie Baker plans along the way are truly memorable! Anyone remember the name of the restaurant in Iconium Missouri? I do and it was a doozy but being a Road Monkey myself I am sworn to secrecy. . This little town has a population of 35 in the summer and the Mayor himself came out to video tape our departure and to wish us luck. You'll just have to come with us next time and see what an Epic Journey looks like.

I look forward to seeing you all at our various functions. I hope you will join us at our gatherings and in driving here and across this beautiful country on these . . .

## Open Roads



## Tribute to a Member By Chris Stokes

I'd like to take a few moments to share with you who Jeff Conley was to the Houston Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America.

Let me start with saying that it was no secret that Jeff was a passionate car guy. But he was also passionate about the people he met through the club.

He came to us 8 years ago in January of 2008 with his 2005 Glossy Red Mini Cooper S and began an adventure in Autocross Racing and High Speed Driving Events. A few short years later, Jeff showed up to an event with a beautiful 2007 White Z4M Coupe. Whenever we see a White Z4M Coupe, that is the car that we think of and match to the name Jeff Conley.

In 2011, Jeff joined the autocross committee and started giving back to a sport that he loved.

I joined the committee in 2013 and didn't realize at the time how infectious Jeff would be. Over the years, we all grew closer to Jeff. I don't know if it was his even keel demeanor, his strong principles, or his tenacity. What I do know is that Jeff was a rare person to find in this world.

Jeff also was a consistent enabler/supporter of the Teen Street Survival program. I was talking to Jim Iden about what a loss this is and he started sharing with me how as best he can remember Jeff Conley had been at every TSS event since we started hosting them. He started off as a volunteer for several years and then moved up to be one of our instructors for the last 3 years. With Jeff's calm demeanor and well



thought out words, he was a perfect person to connect with our younger drivers.

I put together a list of characteristics we saw in Jeff, that I'd like to share:

**Quiet:** Even Jeff's father mentioned that he didn't always know the things Jeff was involved in because he was quiet.

**Selfless:** Jeff didn't require a spotlight. He just wanted to be involved and always was there to help others.

**Methodical:** You could trust Jeff to use a systematic approach to solving problems and afterwards establish a procedure for it.

**Reliable:** Jeff was always there; what else can I say?

**Persistent:** This is probably the best representative characteristic for Jeff. Was he ever persistent. When it came to designing race courses, most would say "that's good enough", he wouldn't. He would continue to make revisions to his design, time after time. Jeff has developed some of the most challenging and fun courses that our club has seen.

On a lighter note, Brian Colvard reminded me of another example of Jeff's persistence. No matter how big a hat Jeff would wear when instructing at the Teen Street Survival school, he always came away with a sunburn. Always! And he had an interesting selection of big hats. Jeff was also Polite, a Contributor,

**AND MOST IMPORTANT -  
A Friend to All.**

### Stay Informed!! - eBlast Signup

Once a month the Chapter emails an eBlast to all members who have indicated that they want to be kept informed about Chapter activities and events, as well as news and information involving the Chapter.

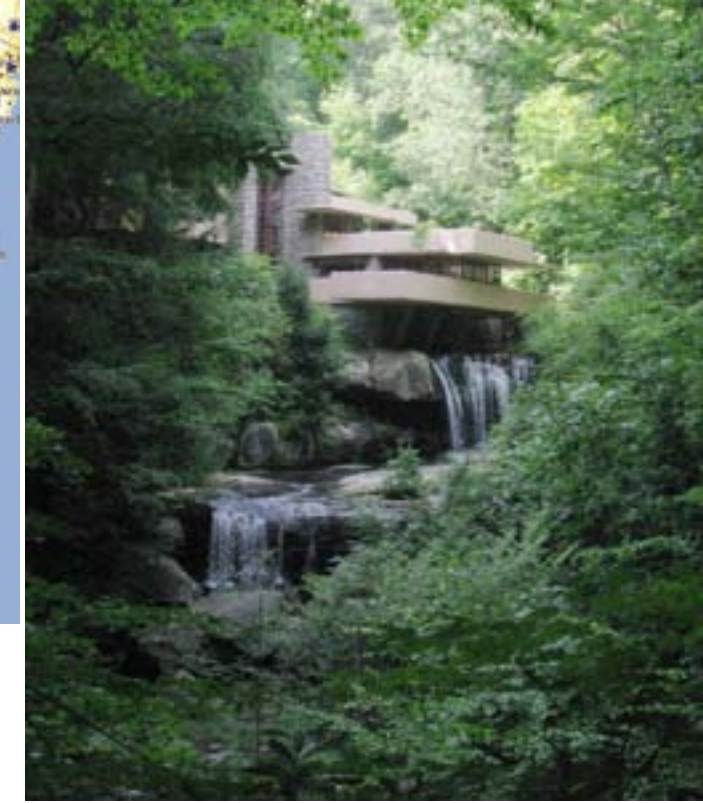
If you wish to receive this information and are not already signed up you may do so on the website at [www.houston-bmwcca.com](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com).

The eBlast request is located at the lower left on the front page.

# Z Fest 2015

Bill Elwell and Pam Standley

Photos: Bill, Pam and Jonna Clark



August in Houston - its 100 degrees with no end in sight; sounds like a perfect time for a road trip to cooler climates. Our destination was Z'Fest in State College for a gathering of all flavors of BMW Z cars. We attended the event last year as the solo car representing Texas. This year we had 4 cars attend from Texas. Our running buddies for the full loop were **Brad Mitchell** and **Jonna Clark** out of Boerne. In all we covered just over 4000 miles with 13 days on the road.

We made a leisurely departure on Sunday morning. Our lunch stop was in Jefferson, TX. We hit the general store in town for an ice cream cone, (Blue Bunny – just not the same as **Blue Bell**) and enjoyed it in the air conditioned store while the temp outside was approaching 105.



The store is well worth the stop if you are passing by on 59. Via several text messages, GPS tracking, etc. we successfully rendezvoused with Brad and Jonna at a rest stop in Arkansas in the afternoon and continued on our way.

Our destination for Monday was **Shaker Village**, just south of **Lexington, KY**.

It is maintained as an historic village you can tour, and spend the night in the original buildings. Our accommodations included a large tree with outside seating and nice views over the grounds.



It is a working farm and the restaurant at the Inn on site features foods from the garden.



We were joined for dinner by Pam's brother and two nephews for top-down drive after dinner.



On the road again for the next day's planned tour of **Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Waters** house in Western PA. We made it comfortably in time for a stroll around the grounds before our 4:30 tour. It is hard to believe it was built in the 1930's. Very nice but not really sized for a tall Texan. We stayed at a local B&B nearby. It was an old road house from the 1800's and currently still offers rooms along with a nice restaurant and facilities for weddings, etc.



With our touring trip for the way up completed we made the short drive into State College. The event was centered at the **Penn Stater Conference Center** adjacent to the campus. The back parking lot was reserved for the Z's and included wash stations for the duration of the event. A full schedule of activities was planned for the weekend.

Thursday we did a wine and chocolate tour which stopped at two wineries and an old time chocolate factory, (not Hershey) all connected by some really nice roads. Our group had to negotiate our way around a few Amish carriages along the way. It was a full day on the road wrapped up with a dinner/reception at a local sports pub.

Friday morning was **Zedkhana** held in the parking lot of the conference center. It was a fun course with three "out of car" stations that required participants to serve barbeque, pour three mugs of beer, and change out the top and snow tires on a model Z3. For added excitement a drone filming the event ran out of power and crashed next to the car on Pam's run.



The afternoon was free and we did one of the several scenic drives that were mapped out by the organizers. We found some more great roads, a nice little pub for lunch, and stopped by a local auto museum. They were one of five local businesses that were participating in a poker run, so that gave everyone incentive to get out and explore. We gathered our cards at each venue, but were not the lucky winner. Dinner was back at State College at the local minor league baseball game, (yes, there were hot dogs) followed by fireworks.



Saturday morning was a gathering of most of the cars in the sunshine below the new **Nittany Lion Football Stadium** for a panoramic photo.



This tradition was part of the Z Homecoming events held at the BMW factory and continues with the ZFest events which move around the country. We are running out of wall space to hang the collection we have as each is about 3 feet long. Sat. afternoon there was an auto-cross event we skipped to do another drive up into the hills in search of another good place for lunch and more smooth curvy roads. We weren't disappointed on either count. The event wrapped up with an awards banquet at the conference center on Sat. evening.

On Sunday we said our good-byes to **Warren and Lisa Kodosky** out of Austin. They had driven up to a car event touring around Lake Michigan the previous week. They towed an Alpha Romeo up to that event with their Z3 and headed over for ZFest.

We were joined by another Texas car, **Roger Williams** out of Austin and headed East to **Barto, PA** to visit Bill's brother and do some further touring of the Amish country.



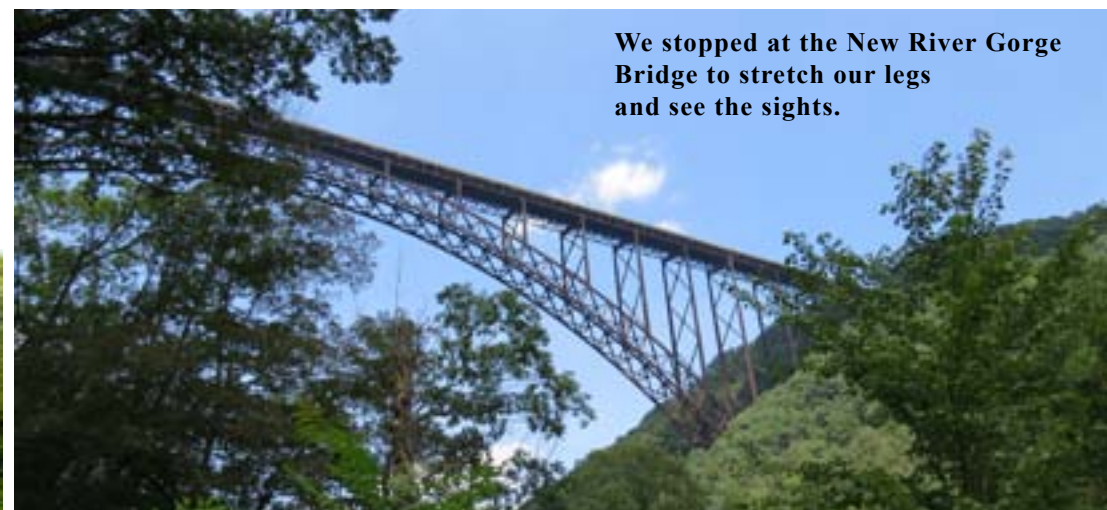
We found some opportunities to run through covered bridges, pose the cars for photos by the barn, and light up a bonfire for evening entertainment.

Finally time to point the cars towards home.



Roger departed towards NC to try some rafting while we mixed in some interstate with some back roads headed more East into Virginia. West Virginia was especially nice running through the hills on glass smooth roads with just the occasional logging truck to pass.

We stopped at the New River Gorge Bridge to stretch our legs and see the sights. The "old" road down the valley and up the other side gives one a great view of the bridge and is an interesting slow drive on a narrow road.



We stopped at the New River Gorge Bridge to stretch our legs and see the sights.



It was back to the interstate to make time as we crossed back into the hot humid air in Tennessee, tops up, AC on again. We opted to cross MS and LA on the back roads and spent our last night in Natchez, MS. where we caught a departing group shot overlooking the Mississippi River in the morning.





By the time you read this, 2015 will be well behind us. It was a good year. It was a tough year. As far as Autocross goes, it was a fun year. There is a lot that goes on behind the scenes to host an Autocross. Namely managing the budget and the hard work the committee puts in to grow the participation. It's easy to pull a two-year term approach and make all the decisions around the things I like, leaving my mess for someone else to clean up. But, that's not how the BMW CCA family works. We take time to listen to what people have to say, then we do what we want to do. Nah... just kidding. I'm sure that sometimes it might feel that way. I want to assure you that we do listen and take your input fully into consideration.

So, why explain all of that? We don't always make time to share back out with the membership what we are thinking. I'd like to start sharing our thinking and make some of the inter-workings of the Autocross program more transparent in this article.

We had several objectives for the 2015 Autocross Program and I am happy to say that we met each and every one of these objectives!

**Autocross 2015 (Looking Back)**  
By Chris Stokes

**1. Break even on Profit & Loss**

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 21,730.00</b>	<b>Entry fees (10 events*; 1 school; 2 practices)</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$ 21,575.25</b>	<b>Track Reservation, Track Rental, Portable Toilets, Event Insurance, Event Supplies, Equipment Service Contracts, Equipment Investment, Timing System Maintenance, and Trophies</b>
<b>Profit</b>	<b>\$ 154.75</b>	<b>Yay!</b>

\*COTA Autocross doesn't factor into our budget. We host on behalf of the tri-chapter partnership

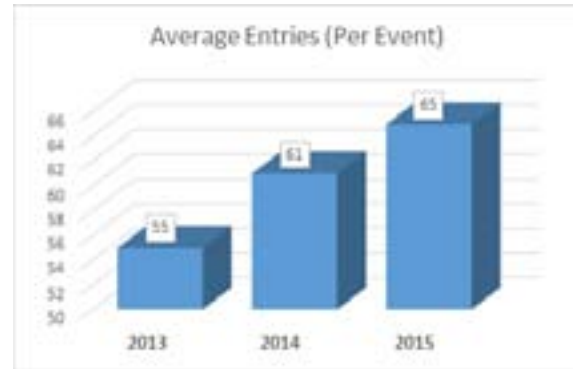
**2. Invest in new Equipment:**

- XS and S Sized Helmets added to Loaner Pool
- PA System Replaced
- Timing Tent Replaced
- Backup timing lights
- Fire Extinguishers Recertified
- Red Flag Replacements
- Safety vest replacements

**3. Host 1 AX School and 2 Practice Events**

We had a massive hit with our May Autocross School. We decided on a more hands on approach with primarily in-car instruction. We were a little nervous that forgoing a classroom portion would hinder the student's learning, but found that the students preferred to "just go after it". We had an interesting range of students as well. Anywhere from "I just bought this car and am not comfortable driving it" to "I really really really want to beat Chris Augustine, teach me how to use the force."

As for the practice events, they went very well. We were still working on the paddock/grid layout this year. Since we only get to the site 30 minutes before everyone else, there were some last minute changes as participants were entering the facility. Everyone was terrific and pitched in to help make the changes so that we could have an even better event. I feel that we now have the format and layout locked down for a lower level of effort and more predictable of what to expect. I can't say enough about a practice event... you get several hours of driving, so don't show up on worn tires.



2016 looks so bright... I have to wear shades. We are looking at the same objectives for 2016, but with only 1 practice event this year and less need to invest in our equipment. Something special for this year is our inaugural Awards Luncheon that we were able to obtain permission from the board to host. This allowed the Annual Dinner to be less business like and more fun. It also allowed for the AX community to get rowdy and talk about sway-bars, tread wear, and rebound settings all without having to wear a tie. We hope to see the luncheon become a continuing part of the Autocross Program.

**See you out at the track!**



**Congratulations to our 2015 Autocross Trophy Winners!**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>A Class Champion</b> Don Guilbault      | <b>E Class Champion</b> Michael Knierien | <b>X2 Class Champion</b> Sean Rieger         |
| <b>B Class Champion</b> David Eberly       | <b>E Class 2nd Place</b> Jeff Thomson    | <b>X2 Class 2nd Place</b> Ricardo Barnes     |
| <b>C Class Champion</b> Chris Augustine    | <b>E Class 3rd Place</b> Benjamin Ongoco | <b>X3 Class Champion</b> Robert Horton       |
| <b>C Class 2nd Place</b> Randy Crider      | <b>G Class Champion</b> Barry Norman     | <b>X3 Class 2nd Place</b> Jonathan Khandaker |
| <b>D Class Champion</b> Christopher Stokes | <b>G Class 2nd Place</b> Blake Lagrone   | <b>X3 Class 3rd Place</b> Cody Lam           |
| <b>D Class 2nd Place</b> Brian Colvard     | <b>X1 Class Champion</b> Edward Morfe    | <b>X4 Class Champion</b> Terry Price         |
| <b>D Class 3rd Place</b> Walter Phillips   | <b>X1 Class 2nd Place</b> Jeff Goji      | <b>X4 Class 2nd Place</b> Jim Hedderick      |
|  | <b>X1 Class 3rd Place</b> David Duxbury  | <b>X4 Class 3rd Place</b> Cesar Sanchez      |



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# A Glimpse of the Future

By Tor Taklo

with the gasoline engine running almost all the time (Sport Mode). The range in electric mode is only around 15 miles, but this is still sufficient for a lot of the daily driving. Under the EPA cycle, the i8 combined fuel economy in EV mode was rated 76 mpg equivalent – and it can do 75 mph without having to start the gasoline engine.

The new technology in the i8 is telling us a lot about what we can expect in “regular” BMWs in the future. The weight saving construction is a result of using carbon for the core passenger “life cell” and roof, plastics for most of the body panels and aluminum for the front and rear sub-frames plus the door skins. Most of this has already been put into production in the latest version of the 7-series. The hybrid drive-train technology is already available for the X540e and just recently also in the 330e. There are even rumors of hybrid technology in M-cars, although mainly for boosting performance. The i8 was also the first production vehicle with laser headlights, and these have recently also been approved for the US (\$6,300 option).

All serious car reviews seem to include some negative comments as well. Keeping up with this tradition, what’s not to like about the i8? Well, the seats are OK, but they don’t have the features we’ve come to expect in the upper range BMWs. The 6 speed gear box seems a bit out of place, when 8 or 9 speed automatic transmission is common. It shifts great

both in manual and automatic modes, but the steps between gears are a bit big for a 1.5 liter engine. A greater range in electric mode would also be great, although there’s no “range anxiety” in a hybrid. Some of the “gadgets” and interior refinement from other top-of-the-line BMWs are missing, and the list of options is rather short. The trunk space is very limited, but there’s some additional luggage space on the back seats (and they might be a better fit for luggage instead of passengers). However, if you really want to optimize the available space for luggage, there’s a 5-piece luggage set available from **Louis Vuitton** at a mere \$20,000. Now, truth be said, for \$140,000 you would expect at least some nice options and gadgetry to choose from especially in a car that is being touted as the future of technology. The i8 interior is pretty simple: No frills, no nice leather, no advanced sound system or even an advanced air conditioning system for that matter. It is pretty bare bones when it comes to the comforts available in most modern BMWs, and the lack of those comforts may not seem all that important when you are driving the car for only a couple of days, but you realize how much you missed at least some of those comforts it when you get back in your Bimmer.

In any case, there is much to like about the i8. Its “dual personality” for example, is really fascinating! You can drive around at a relaxing pace in almost total silence or you can flip the gear lever over to the left, triggering the Sport Mode, firing up the great-sounding turbo engine behind you, and take off like an M-car. Really! This truly is power on demand – and energy efficiency when you don’t need the power which, to be honest, is actually most of the time during city driving. So as BMW put it:

**The i8 is the sports car of the Future. We will agree with that.**



A few weeks ago we were fortunate enough to be invited by **BMW of West Houston** to drive one of their BMW i8s for a weekend. So why write a story on the i8? It’s clearly not going to set any sales records, with a starting price of \$140,000, for an impractical car with a 3-cylinder engine and basic options. To me, the i8 is still very relevant - simply because it’s giving a glimpse of the future.

attracting attention everywhere you go - from young and old, petrol heads and tree huggers alike. It really looks like a supercar from the future - very low/wide and with a drag coefficient of only 0.26. The butterfly doors certainly add to the flair, and once you establish a technique for getting in and out, the doors are OK from a practical perspective as well. Unless you are a woman wearing a mini-skirt, in which case getting in and out of the car may present some challenges.

mately 3,300 lbs. The i8 is exciting and fun to drive, and it certainly lives up to the old BMW slogan: “Freude am Fahren”.

The energy efficiency is also impressive - especially when considering how powerful and fast this car is. A 1.5 liter 3 cylinder Mini engine doesn’t seem that impressive, but with turbo charging the output is boosted to 228 HP / 236 lb-ft, transmitted to the rear wheels via a 6 speed automatic gear box. In addition there’s an electric motor powering the front wheels with 129 HP / 184 lb-ft. In total the i8 produces 357 HP (SAE) and 420 lb-ft of torque - with a lot of it available from zero rpm. The combination of torque and traction results in very impressive acceleration off the line, not far behind the current M-car line-up. Coming back to the fuel efficiency, we had an average of more than 30 mpg - without any charging and

The i8 however is not only about good looks. It’s also a great driver’s car. It is well balanced, and the steering is very precise - although a little bit light for my liking. The car is very nimble, and overall the handling is great, partly as a consequence of the low center of gravity and the mid-engine design. For a hybrid car it’s also relatively light, weighing approxi-







# 2016 Annual Dinner At Momentum BMW Southwest



## Highlights from the Annual Dinner:

Everyone had a great time at our first Dinner held at a dealership. Thanks go out to **Momentum BMW Southwest** for supplying the venue, **Cafe Natalie** for catering and everyone who helped make it a great success. We had a lot of great prizes for the raffle and we all enjoyed looking at the new cars.



*We had a great time at our very first BMW CCA annual dinner! Everyone was very nice and welcoming! The food was amazing! I enjoyed visiting and make new friends that share the same interest for BMW'S that we do!*

**Sarah Hanke**



*This year's Annual Dinner was absolutely great, over the top. At first I was skeptical about having it at a dealership as I couldn't imagine how it would be setup and managed. Plus I'm usually not impressed with a catered buffet but as it turned out the food was very good, as was the service. And thanks to Momentum BMW it was a terrific venue, organized very well. Its obvious Momentum is interested in what the Chapter is about by offering this venue along with their longtime support of the Torque of The Town. I wish a representative would have taken the podium for a minute or two to talk about that, and so we could have shown our appreciation for their involvement.*

*Also I'd like to say "Thank You" to the board for offsetting the cost of the dinner to the members. That was a very thoughtful way of giving back to the membership, and much appreciated by all I'm sure. A big thumbs up to all involved in putting this together, it was a really nice evening!*

**David R. Dalton**



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Tire Rack Street Survival**

Houston Police Academy

8am - 4pm

April 16

**Charity Golf Tournament**

Cypress Creek

May 7

**Texas Trifecta**

**And Autocross**

Circuit of the Americas

June 17 - 19

**AutoCross**

Houston Police Academy

8:30 - 3:30pm

April 17

May 15

December 13

**Coffee Meetings**

Cedar Creek Cafe Bar & Grill

9am - 12pm

April 9

May 14

June 11

July 16



**TECH TIP**  
Jeff Otten

## Pennzoil Oil Analysis on 2005 X5

Back in the Summer 2013 issue of TOTT we presented some results from UOA's (universal oil analysis) from a 2008 328 and a 1995 525. For this issue the discussion and also results from a 2005 X5 that ran one cycle of Pennzoil Euro Platinum oil will be discussed. Since the 2005 X5 uses the 3.0 M54 engine, this is another generation of BMW 6-cylinder engines.

The oil in the analysis for the 2005 X5 is Pennzoil Euro Platinum. This is the retail version of the Shell branded Pennzoil oil that is likely similar to the now genuine BMW oil carried by BMW dealers. It is complete with a Ferrari endorsement. Many of you already know that BMW awarded their oil contract starting in 2015 to Shell and Pennzoil over the previous supplier, Castrol.



**Figure 1 5w-40 Pennzoil Platinum Euro Oil bottles**

This oil is made from natural gas and is claimed to keep engines cleaner. It is the only oil made this way. In full disclosure, I was provided this oil by a Shell representative, and was curious to try it. As shown in Figure 2, this oil appears lighter in color and clearer than other premium synthetics.



**Figure 2 Note "clear" look of the oil being poured into the engine**

The oil analysis was run by Blackstone Labs using their sample kit, after 7,138 miles on the engine. The mileage on this car was 143,090. Figure 3 lists the results.

	Pennzoil Euro 5w-40	Universal Averages
ALUMINUM	3	4
CHROMIUM	0	0
IRON	13	16
COPPER	13	9
LEAD	2	5
TIN	0	1
MOLYBDENUM	55	102
NICKEL	0	1
MANGANESE	1	2
SILVER	0	0
TITANIUM		0
POTASSIUM	0	3
BORON	37	56
SILICON	6	5
SODIUM	0	13
CALCIUM	2476	2365
MAGNESIUM	75	169
PHOSPHOROUS	858	837
ZINC	1057	999
BARIUM	0	0

Values should be

SUS Viscosity at 210F	68.4	65-78
cST Viscosity at 100C	12.52	11.6 - 15.3
Flashpoint in F	395	>375
Fuel %	<.5	<2.0
Antifreeze %	0.0	0.0
Water %	0.0	<.1
Insolubles %	0.2	<.6
TBN		

**Figure 3 Test result X5 3.0 M54 engine**

Blackstone commented on the sample "this sample looks really good... and the only wear metal that's high compared to universal averages is copper, but not high enough to call a problem." Note that the universal averages from Blackstone in this report are based on their data for M54 BMW engines with an average mileage of 6400 miles. In the 328 with N54 engine (see Summer 2013 TOTT) showed 16ppm copper on BMW oil (Castrol) at 6500 miles, so at 13ppm is lower than that engine test.

For the reports that I have a copper value of in the range of 12-16 is pretty common. Potential sources of copper are rod bearings and valve guides. For this reason I pay a lot of attention to copper content.

Silicon came in at 6, which is pretty good. I consider Silicon typically a contamination from grit that enters the engine. I was surprised it wasn't higher, as the valve cover was pulled to replace the gasket due to leaks during the change interval, and I did subsequently find a cracked intake boot.

Note that the aluminum, cam bearings and lifters are potential sources of aluminum, so low aluminum is a good sign. Lead and tin are also very low. This is good and makes me think the rod and crank shells are still in very good condition.

The M54 engine in the X5 is known for oil consumption higher than most 6 cylinder BMW's I have had. I was pleased to see iron wear below average and no fuel dilution in the UOA. While not very scientific, my consumption was maybe a little less than seen with other oils used in this car. Note that this is a 5w-40 so is not rated "energy conserving" and is not the BMW recommended 5w-30. I see no difference in real world mileage, and like the test viscosity of 12.52 after 7k miles as being about perfect for long engine life.

I had no hesitation to refill our X5 with more of this oil and a Mann oil filter to complete the oil change. I will probably drive this car for another 30k or so and then do another oil analysis to monitor the engine status.

### DIY Tips

The Peake code reader (R5/FCX3) was easy to use for resetting the oil lights on this X5. This tool does a lot of BMW's up to 2007.

I recommend draining your oil bottles if you do DIY oil changes. It's surprising how much oil drains from what appears to be an empty bottle. Leave the bottles draining for at least a couple days. I maintain several cars and end up getting about 3/4 quart or more a year back. This saves some money and also keeps oil out of the landfill. Figure 4 shows my set up.



**Figure 4 Oil draining, reduces waste in landfill**

Also after draining a bottle, wipe your finger inside to check if a film is left on the bottle, as cold starts are the major cause of engine wear. The Pennzoil Euro Platinum leaves a nice film even after many days draining.

I run magnetic drain plugs in my cars. When I see a very small amount of sludge on oil change, I feel the oil and filtration are working. Running high quality synthetic oil, there should be only a very small amount of residue. Figure 5 shows the plug for this oil change, which looked very good.



**Figure 5 Magnetic oil drain plug**

Recently I have taken apart an M50 and S52 engines, and while most aspects were very good I did find wear in cam journals, rod bearings, and lifters, all expensive parts to replace. So good oil, filters, and reasonable change intervals are well worth it.

If you do decide to have a UOA done on your car's oil, make sure the oil is fully up to temperature prior to the drain. Use a nitrile glove to protect your hand during draining. If the oil is drained cold the percentage of fuel in the oil can be high giving a false indication. Resist the temptation to just run the car a little then drain. Better to have full temperature and let the car cool a little without re-starting and drain the sample. The nitrile gloves from Harbor Freight (about \$6.00 per box with coupon) work well to protect your hands.



**Figure 6 Shell provided some great door prizes and a rep to answer questions at the 2015 WWT at BMW North**

**Jeff Otten**  
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### Golf...for a cause

On Saturday May 7th at 11 A.M., the BMW Car Club of Houston will host a Charity golf tournament at the Cypress Lakes Golf Club in Houston.

Proceeds of this event will benefit **Homes for Our Troops**. HFOT builds mortgage-free, specially adapted homes nationwide for severely injured

Veterans Post 9/11, to enable them to rebuild their lives.

In addition to contributing to a good cause, this event will also be a lot of fun!

It's been rumored that the Cypress Lakes Golf Club has the best greens in Houston. Speaking from personal experience I can attest that they are certainly **QUICK!**

We will have additional guests from *Charity Golf International*. On one of the par 5's, a professional from this group will hit long (about 400 yards) *Stik-it-Golf* will also be there with a variety of fun items including a golf ball cannon. You can fire your drive straight down the middle for 300 yards with this baby! Also on site will be *Diamonds in the Rough*. They put on a great auction of Sports Memorabilia. Find that special ball or jersey you have wanted. Dinner, cash bar, and awards will be waiting for us when the round is over.

#### Dates and Times –

- Saturday May 7<sup>th</sup>
- Registration and Lunch - 11:00 A.M.
- Tournament – 12:30 P.M. Shot gun start, Scramble
- Cocktails, Dinner & Auction – 5:30 P.M.
- Price - \$125, \$100 for 65 and older = Green fees, Banquet, Prizes.

To register: <http://www.houston-bmwcca.com/?event=charity-golf-tournament>

For additional information on Homes for Our Troops, please see: <https://www.hfotusa.org>



### Homes for Our Troops (HFOT) is a 501(c) (3)

nonprofit organization building specially adapted, mortgage-free homes nationwide for the most severely injured Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. These homes restore some of the freedom and independence our Veterans sacrificed while defending our country, and enable them to focus on their family, recovery, and rebuilding their lives. Since its inception in 2004, nearly 90 cents of every dollar donated to Homes for Our Troops has gone directly to their program services for Veterans. HFOT builds homes as a departure point for these Veterans to rebuild their lives, and once again become highly productive members of society. Despite their life-altering injuries, many of their Veterans have embarked on new careers, completed their college degrees, or started families. Empowered by the freedom a mortgage-free and specially adapted home brings, these Veterans can now focus on their recovery and returning to their life's work of serving others.



For information on sponsorship, contact:  
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# TORQUE <sup>OF</sup> THE TOWN