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### ON THE COVER: The Texas Trifecta

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## David R. Dalton

President - Houston Chapter

It's that time of year to start gathering the names of those interested in giving back and helping the Chapter move forward. By that I mean those that have leadership skills and would like to serve on the Chapter Board of Directors. If you have ideas on how we can improve, or simply love what we do and would like to be involved, there is no better way than to be a Board member. Our Chapter is run as a business, and like any business it requires good people with some good ideas to make it prosper. Members serve on the Board because they enjoy the fact the Chapter is vibrant and being part of the team that makes that happen can be especially rewarding. These are all critical positions that ensure the Chapter runs smoothly while being informative, exciting and enjoyable for the members. What are your interests, what are you good at, what would you like to see the Chapter take on to meet your expectations? New Chapter members are encouraged to join the Board as their involvement could bring some fresh ideas moving forward. An organization such as ours cannot continue to be as active and exciting without a sound core of volunteers. A good example of this is the Texas Trifecta event at the Circuit of The Americas we had this past June. This being the first time the three Texas Chapters had ever been directly responsible for anything of this magnitude; our Board had to make some hard decisions regarding our financial obligations and the impact it would have on the Chapter if the event failed. As without the Houston Chapter providing the initial funds to secure the track deposit sadly this event

would have never taken place. And the reason we were in the position to pull the trigger of this event, is because we operate the Chapter as a business. As a result the event had more participants than O'fest, without incident, BMW NA was our only sponsor and yet in the end it was profitable. Several of our Board members participated and were included on the Planning Committee of the Trifecta event. The management at the Circuit of The Americas was so impressed they commented the way this event was handled set the bar for what they would expect from the other car clubs at their events. For Trifecta II the discussion is to make it more than simply a track event. It's way too early to mention anything more as nothing has been determined as of yet. But can assure you it will be bigger and better on many levels.

Back to the available Board positions for 2014, my position as Chapter President has come to an end. Back when we adopted the Chapter Operations Manual we set term limits for the Executive Committee to encourage turnover and involvement from other members. Elected officers can only run two consecutive 2 year terms. The President's position is the only one with stipulations, and that is you have to have served a minimum of one year on the Board to be eligible. And thanks to those who have stepped up we have some very good and qualified Board members to move into this position. So, the eligible Board positions for 2014 are:

<b>2 Year Elected Positions</b>
President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
<b>1 Year Appointed Positions</b>
Webmaster
Autocross Chair
Newsletter Editor
Membership Chair
Social Events Chair
Driving Events Chair
<b>1 Year Appointed Liaison Positions</b>
Facebook Administrator
Tech Advisor

Give this some thought as being a Board member can be very rewarding and exciting. For your review each position description is available on our website at [www.houston-bmwcca.com](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com), in the Chapter Operations Manual under the "About Us" tab. Soon we will have a Nominations Committee formed. This Committee will be taking the names and positions of those interested. As soon as the Committee is formed it will be announced in the eBlast as well as on our Facebook page, and in the next issue of the Torque.

**See ya on the back roads.**

### 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.

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# A TREMENDOUS TEXAS TRIFECTA

Written and photographed by Blake LaGrone

I had been to the Grand Am race in May at Circuit of the Americas (COTA) and watched our boys almost sweep all divisions. It is a magnificent facility, a technological marvel, truly well-built and awesome to see first-hand. You can read about this track but until you have been there and driven it, it is hard to put it in perspective. A HUGE track, I wondered about getting lost on this monster as I looked up the hill to turn one on the front straightaway.

The May Grand Am race was my first time to experience this track and it was a real cliff hanger. It was cold and clear that day and it looked early on that the Turner group (GT and GS class) was not going to be able to make much headway. The Bimmerworld cars in the ST class were having difficulties as well. The Team Ganassi Riley- BMW DP class car took the lead early and stayed there through most of the whole race. There was a stiff north wind blowing into our faces at the stadium seats on turn 15, and frankly, we almost gave it up and headed home just to get warm! We would climb out of our seats and head to the base of the bleachers and out of the wind so we could warm up and still keep an ear on what was happening.

## I pitied the beer salesmen that day!



About 2/3 of the way to the end of the race Team Ganassi and the DP car came out of the pits and had a wardrobe malfunction (lost his nose he did!) on the curb while passing a Corvette and had to return to the pits. A new nose duct taped to the car and they are back on the track and pushing hard. That little pit stop cost him 10 spots though and it was amazing to watch him push back through the pack as the race developed.



Cold as we were, we were also hooked now and stayed on to see the Turner Motorsport M3s take first in both the GS and GT classes. The Ganassi Riley-BMW DP car fought its way back to a 3rd spot finish, what a race!

It was a great turnout for the Grand Am race, the Ferrari girls showed up and of course so did 007 in his Aston Martin! Having attended that event I was now really glad I had signed up for the Texas Trifecta event sponsored by the Houston, Dallas and Austin BMW CCA chapters. It was with some nervousness that I arrived in Austin on June 7th for the Texas Trifecta at Circuit of the Americas (COTA). I was thinking of turn one with its huge climb and blind corner hanging there at the top like big question mark.

When I first drove it, pushing as hard as I could to the top of that hill I had no idea how quickly things would change at that first turn! A late apex to a steep downhill left turn and it's all on now, how hard can I get on the gas here? Hard, much harder than I did the first time around! Too late it's into the next climbing right turn and my instructor telling me "stay right, stay right" cause we're approaching the S's next and it's a blind turn into them to find the straight line through.

My instructor gives me a mark to aim for, tap the brakes hard left to the mark then straight through the S's, banging the curbs but holding the line down to through them to turn 6. My car is gripping well and its good cause I'm gonna need every bit of that rubber....Through 9 and 10 and a quick shift up to 4th before its back down to 2nd for the almost 180 degree turn of number 11. It's hard on the gas at the far right side of the track and shifting up to 5th for a full throttle sprint down the back straightaway.

I got a second now to look at my gauges and rearview mirror but just a second. I'm looking at the braking markers on the right side and they are coming up very quickly at 130mph! It's hard on the brakes and shifting down into 2nd for the getaway out of turn 12. Through 13 and 14 it's an almost constant radius turn to a late apex at the cone someone has conveniently setup at 15. Hard on the gas again and into 3rd for another constant radius turn through 16,17, 18. Turn 19 comes up fast and this was the one turn that I just never got comfortable with, I kept hanging onto the turn instead of letting the wheel unwind and letting the car track out to the right and using the entire track like I should. Ah well, we are on to turn 20 and the front straightaway and it's another full throttle shift up through 5th.....

## What a fun TRACK!





My next duty is classroom and that was done professionally and gave some valuable insight into the track. We had some great instructors. BMW had a powerful presence there with the M6 Gran Coupe, and the new M5s and a bunch of folks who really knew how to drive them. Later in the day I got to take a ride in a new M5 with a Pro driver and I was amazed at what a car that size can do on the track. I shouldn't be really, I mean I drive a 530i with a twin screw blower, and modified suspension and it does quite well on the track and it's no light weight. It never fails to amaze my instructors once they ride with me! The end of the day arrives too quickly and I am totally enthralled by this experience. Speaking with fellow chapter members we all felt the same way.....



Dinner talk that night was very energetic and everyone I talked to had really enjoyed their day at COTA. I volunteered to help Ricardo setup the AutoX the next morning so it was an early night for me to get up at 5 and head back out to the track.



The AutoX had a little rain to begin with but it passed quickly and by noon was dry and sunny. It was a challenging setup and I did DNF once, but hey, so did Ricardo so I don't feel so bad! The folks who ran it did a great job and we all had fun.

My hats off to all of those who contributed to this effort! This was a well-run event at a premier facility, the only one of its kind in the USA and what a blast it was!

I don't know about the other folks that attended, but if we could make this a yearly event, I for one would whole heartedly support the effort!

**We need another day on this TRACK!**

### Blake's 2002 530i



The kit (Stage 2) is from European Supercharging Systems (ESS) based out of Oslo Norway. It is a twin screw blower made by ESS under license from Lysholm who holds the patent. With the water/air intercooler it provides a 125-135 hp boost to the stock



engine without requiring any change to the internal structure. Because it is a twin screw blower it starts providing boost as soon as the turbines are spinning and reaches full boost potential (8.5psi) at 2200 rpm. I did the install myself and it took me about a week.

I first pulled the ECU out of the car and mailed it off to Oslo and had it remapped. I got it back before I was ready to reinstall it. ESS was (and still is) very helpful about technical help and the install went smoothly.

# More Pictures From The Texas Trifecta



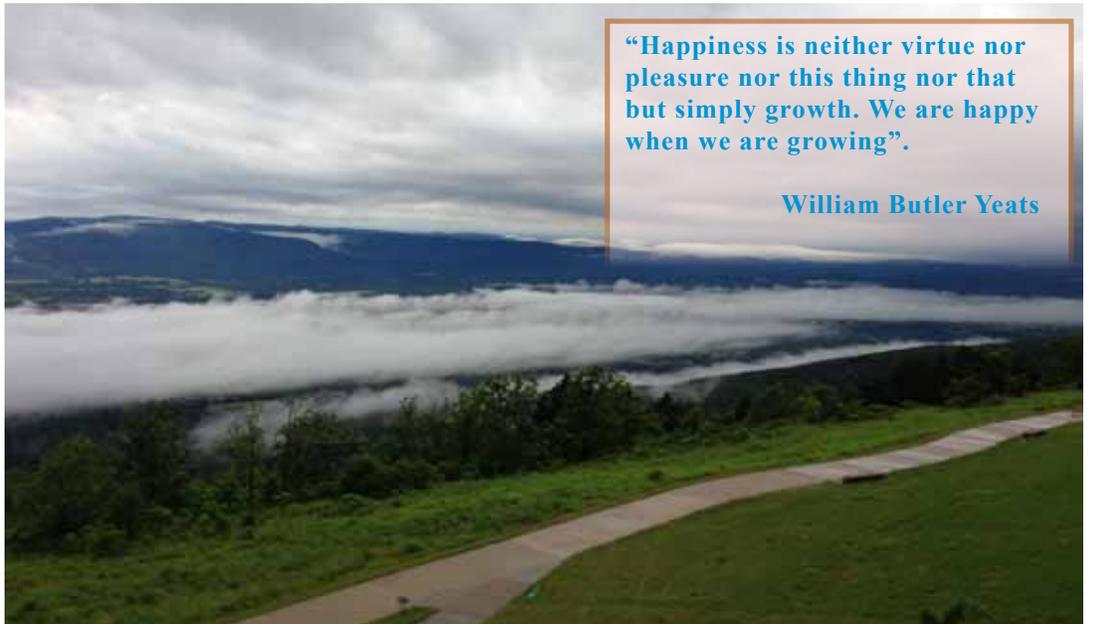


# Cruising the Ozarks - Mount Magazine Drive

James Saynay

What do flash floods, tornado watches, severe thunderstorm warnings and BMW's have in common? Not a thing - unless you drive a Z series. It was the second or third episode of severe weather that ravaged Oklahoma (I lost count) as we made our way from Houston to the Ozark Mountain range in Arkansas. We were heading to the Lodge at Mount Magazine located in West Central Arkansas to meet up with the Z Roadies for a Spring Drive. The forecast was dire with 80% chance of severe weather but we decided it was worth the trip. On our way up to the Lodge we had a Honda S-2000 tail us (but never dare to pass) from DeQueen onwards. It was good fun and we waved to each other as we made our turn off. The morning of the drive was something to remember as Mother Nature dazzled us with a magnificent light show. The clouds were heavy and we could see the storms rolling in from our mountain top perch. The heavy rain and driving wind did delay us for about an hour, but the hearty Z folk knew this was only a temporary setback. After a delicious breakfast at the lodge (and the hour's delay) we decided that things just might end up okay and headed out to experience some of the best twisties found in the Southeast US. The Lodge at Mount Magazine overlooks some wonderful coun-

try in the Ozark Mountain Range and boasts the highest point in Arkansas at 2753 ft. The Lodge is actually located in the Ozark State Park and is run by the local government, but you would not know it because the accommodations are first class all the way.



**“Happiness is neither virtue nor pleasure nor this thing nor that but simply growth. We are happy when we are growing”.**

**William Butler Yeats**



We left the Lodge in the wind and rain, fueled up and began our day's journey. Anyone that has run through the hills of Arkansas knows how exciting and challenging the roads can be. The off camber curves with increasing or decreasing radius certainly pose a challenge. The morning ride was wet and the storms had left a lot of debris in the road. Tree limbs were everywhere and we even encountered a large log and several stray dogs as we made our way through the hillside. Everyone in the group was cautious to keep the rubber in full grip. The morning rains gave way about the time we arrived at the Cliff House Inn and Restaurant on the famed Highway 7 in Jasper. The Cliff House was very accommodating to our large (14 car) group and served up some of the area's best grub. The Cliff House lives up to its namesake by providing some of the best views of what has been coined as the "Arkansas Grand Canyon". Lush rolling green landscapes give way to areas of smoke where wood stoves are puffing. Very few things can compare to fresh mountain air after a good rain. After filling our bellies and our gas tanks we continued our trip onward down highway 103 and then headed towards Osage where a small but famous pottery shop exists. The shop lies in the city center – well it is the city center – and boasts the works of local artisans. It was a perfect stopping point after putting the hearty Z's through their paces. After a brief respite, we went back the way we came and continued on. The hills in Arkansas are really a great place to DRIVE your car. So many seemingly endless curves, hills and valleys await anyone who has the desire to experience their BMW at its best.

We arrived back at the Lodge as night settled in and enjoyed our favorite libation with the rest of the group while discussing the day's drive and how well or poorly our motors ran. It's always fun to be with other enthusiasts and to share the sheer enjoyment of the drive. Living here in Houston I have seldom had the chance to experience the car as it was designed. Pot holes replace hills; steep approach angles into parking lots replace curves. At times I curse my little roadster for its design, but every trip that involves twisties creates a renewed love affair for the beastie. The next morning revealed a spectacular view from our room – no more clouds, fog, lightening, or rain – just clear skies and a breathtaking view. This was our third trip with the Z Roadster Rowdies and it seems every trip gets better and better. Mike, Cody and the folks include a little something for everyone and the whole group just had a blast. We logged over 1300 miles for the weekend, most of it getting to and back from Arkansas (which seems a bit sick in the head I will admit). Heading back to Houston involved 8 hours of cruising the back roads but the drive the day before made it all worthwhile.



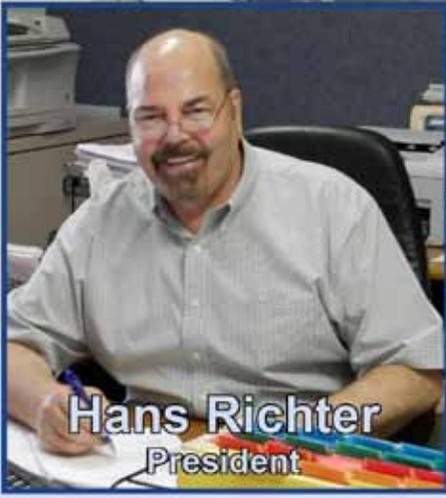


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### Roundel Magazine

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### 67 Local Chapters

BMW CCA's local chapters provide a range of social, technical, and driving events. They're your gateway to many of the club's driving schools, rallies, and autocrosses. Many events are geared toward the novice mechanic or driving event participant.

**BMW Car Club of America Houston Chapter**



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- Dinners
- Driving Events Monthly Coffee
- Meetings
- Annual weekend getaway in Fredricksburg
- Events at the Circuit of the Americas F1 track in Austin
- Monthly Autocross at the Houston Police Academy

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## THE HOUSTON CHAPTER REMEMBERS TOM HOBBS



by Dan Baker

**T**he Houston Chapter has lost a great friend. Tom Hobbs, a thirty year member of the club, passed away unexpectedly this past June. The Houston Chapter would not be what it is today if weren't for Tom. In addition to being an active member, Tom was also a Chapter Officer for several years and he was responsible for the formation of the autocross program that is still running strong to this day. Tom was passionate about the club and he cared about the people in it. A number of people think our Car Control Schools are a fairly recent creation but in fact, Tom started those back in 1986. Whenever we held a school of any

type, Tom was one of the first to step up and volunteer to help. He loved instructing people and seeing the look on their faces when it finally "clicked". You could always count on Tom to bring a great attitude and a smiling face. One of my first memories of Tom was at a car show many years ago. I was fortunate enough to have won a trophy at that event and as it turned out, the trophy was made of stone. As a Professor of Geology, Tom was very interested in the trophy and asked if he could see it. I gladly handed it to him and he proceeded to tell me exactly what type of stone it was made from, where in the state it could be found and how they went about mining it! That trophy holds a special place in my heart to this day, not because I won third place at a local little car show but because Tom made it special. Cross country road trips were Tom not just simple road trips, they were fascinating glimpses into how the world around us was formed. He had the unique ability to make every hill or rock outcrop we passed seem like a magical wonderland. Road trips with Tom were a blast because again, he made them special.

Now that's not to say that being friends with Tom didn't have its share of challenges.

Tom had a knack of debating just about everything. Have you ever watched a cat taunting its prey, batting it around until the poor little mouse just gives up and then the cat gets tired of the game and just walks away, leaving the mouse wondering what the heck just happened? That was Tom. He loved the game of batting you around until you finally gave up, and then he would smile and concede, leaving you wondering what the heck just happened. I loved that about Tom. I'm going to miss those debates more than you can imagine.

I would love to have been a fly on the wall when Tom started debating with St. Peter about why he should get that front parking place, right next to the pearly gates. I can see St. Peter shaking his head, trying to figure out what just happened while Tom just smiles and pulls into his ideal parking spot.

Tom, you made our lives a little brighter for having known you and we can only hope to leave the same permanent mark on this world as you have. Until we meet again.





## BMW Pre-Purchase Inspections

Being mechanically inclined, I'm always up to a new challenge with my 1995 E36 M3. So much, that I find myself not worrying about issues that come up, and with the years and miles, they do come up. I add it on my to-do list and eventually get to it. Not being a mechanic by profession, working on the E36 is more a hobby and gives me check marks on my Man Card. So, when it came time to add another BMW to the garage, I did what anyone would, found one that appealed to me. No, that's not actually correct. I found one that appealed to my wife, Leann, as this new addition would be for her.

This starts my first time adventure with Pre-Purchase Inspections. Remember, I kept a man card and liked to work on an E36, so of course I was fully qualified to do my own inspection. Well, I've become a learned man with age. I know several people that have decided they were more than qualified to do their own pre-purchase inspection. In some cases, they even brought in a friend or co-worker to give an opinion about the state of the vehicle. In all instances, these people were very successful in getting a deal on the vehicle purchase. Great story right? Just a little bit of knowledge and you too can find a deal. It just takes a little bit of mechanical know-how, right? I hate to break it to you, but no, not so right after all.

Low and behold, just months into new ownership for these people, many "main-

tenance" issues started to show and did so in multiple quantities! Very quickly that deal didn't feel like a deal anymore. The 20% off retail list price was accelerating into becoming just a 20% representative of the cost to come. So what could they have done to have reduced their used car buying risk? Well, for one, they could have just bought new, but where is the excitement and fun in that!?! Once Leann was happy with my narrowed down choice of a vehicle, I proceeded to interview



the owner and acquire a copy of a Car-Fax ([www.carfax.com](http://www.carfax.com)) and Auto-Check report ([www.autocheck.com](http://www.autocheck.com)). Both of these reports summarize the vehicle history and can tell you a good deal about the service and usage of the vehicle. The next step of the ritual was to physically inspect the car and test drive it. After deciding this vehicle was a fit for us, we proceeded to request copies of the service records and read through them to verify regular service and that vehicle recall items were addressed. All was going as expected, everything matched with what the seller and the reports were telling us. Ok, now buy the car, right? Not so fast... Remember I've temporarily



admitted I'm not the expert.

So the next step is to find one. Let me introduce you to Alain Dikdan of Bimmer Workshop, located at 3421 FM 1960 West, Humble, Texas 77338. Alain started at BMW North 22 years ago and after a career of 11 years, decided to open his own shop. Bimmer Workshop ([www.bimmerworkshop.com](http://www.bimmerworkshop.com)) is a family run business, staffed with Alain's brothers working as service advisors in the shop. It is a BMW only shop that has been open for 11 years now and has always been a friend of the Houston Chapter. Now with the "expert" selected, it was time to schedule an appointment and ask my questions. It was at this point in time that I thought "this would make a good article for the Torque", so I started taking notes and photos. One of the first things that Alain does is take the car on a predetermined route to inspect the vehicle from the driver's seat, looking for anything obvious. Obvious things like ride quality, pulling in the steering, transmission feel, etc.





Once he returns from the route, he begins the comprehensive inspection and will have on his checklist anything noted during the drive. He brings the car in on one of the lifts and goes to work verifying that everything in the interior works properly. Next he moves to the exterior and spends a good amount of time looking for paint spray or external signs of body work. Anything found on the body panels could mean that there is hidden damage underneath, to which he spends time looking underneath for structural soundness. With the interior and exterior out of the way, he moves to mechanical. Looking for anything out of place.

On this particular BMW, being a 2009 with only 40k miles, he was looking for replacement pieces. Things that were newer than the rest, which could indicate an accident repair. Next in line are to look for leaks in the drivetrain and inspect bushings, tires, and wheels.

When the physical inspection is complete, he moves to the onboard computer to verify maintenance needs and looks here for any other warning signs.

All along, Alain is keeping score on an inspection checklist. This checklist is what Alain uses to walk you through anything that

he found right or wrong with the car, including estimated cost to repair/replace. The inspection checklist provides an overall assessment for you to make an informed choice. It is very useful to stay away from the money pit vehicle or negotiate the purchase price to something fair

given the new information. If you do decide to purchase the vehicle, you can bring it back to Bimmer Workshop to have the work completed and drive away in a top shape BMW.

The time required for a Pre-Purchase Inspection is very reasonable. In my case it was around 45 minutes, but that included me asking lots of questions and taking photos.

As always, Bimmer Workshop provides 10% off the total bill to BMW CCA Members. This includes the pre-purchase inspection (\$150 minus 10%) and any

repairs done to the vehicle at the shop.

So, what happened with the White 328i? Everything in the inspection matched the excellent service records on the car and I made an informed decision with negotiated tire replacement taken into consideration. We purchased the car and Leann is very happy with the new addition to the family. For me, the pre-purchase inspection was money well spent on peace of mind.



**September 14** - Coffee Meeting Cedar Creek Cafe Bar & Grill 9:00-12:00

**September 20** - ALMS race and car corral at Circuit Of the Americas.

Join us on September 20-22 for the ALMS race at Circuit of the Americas. There will be reserved parking in a BMW car corral exclusively for members of the Houston, Lone Star and Tejas chapters. Click on the image for more information.

**September 22** - Autocross - Houston Police Academy 8:00 - 3:30

**October 4-6** - Grand Prix of Houston

INDY CARS AND PIRELLI WORLD CHALLENGE SERIES return to Reliant Park for the SHELL GRAND PRIX OF HOUSTON

This will be another Indy Car “double header” with races on Saturday and Sunday. We are working toward a “BMW Corral”

**October 19** Teen Street Survival 8:00 - 4:00 (see page 20)

**October 20** Autocross - Houston Police Academy 8:00 - 3:30

**November 2** Board Meeting Lyndon’s BBQ

**November 9** Coffee Meeting Cedar Creek Cafe Bar & Grill 9:00-12:00

**November 10** Autocross - Houston Police Academy 8:00 - 3:30

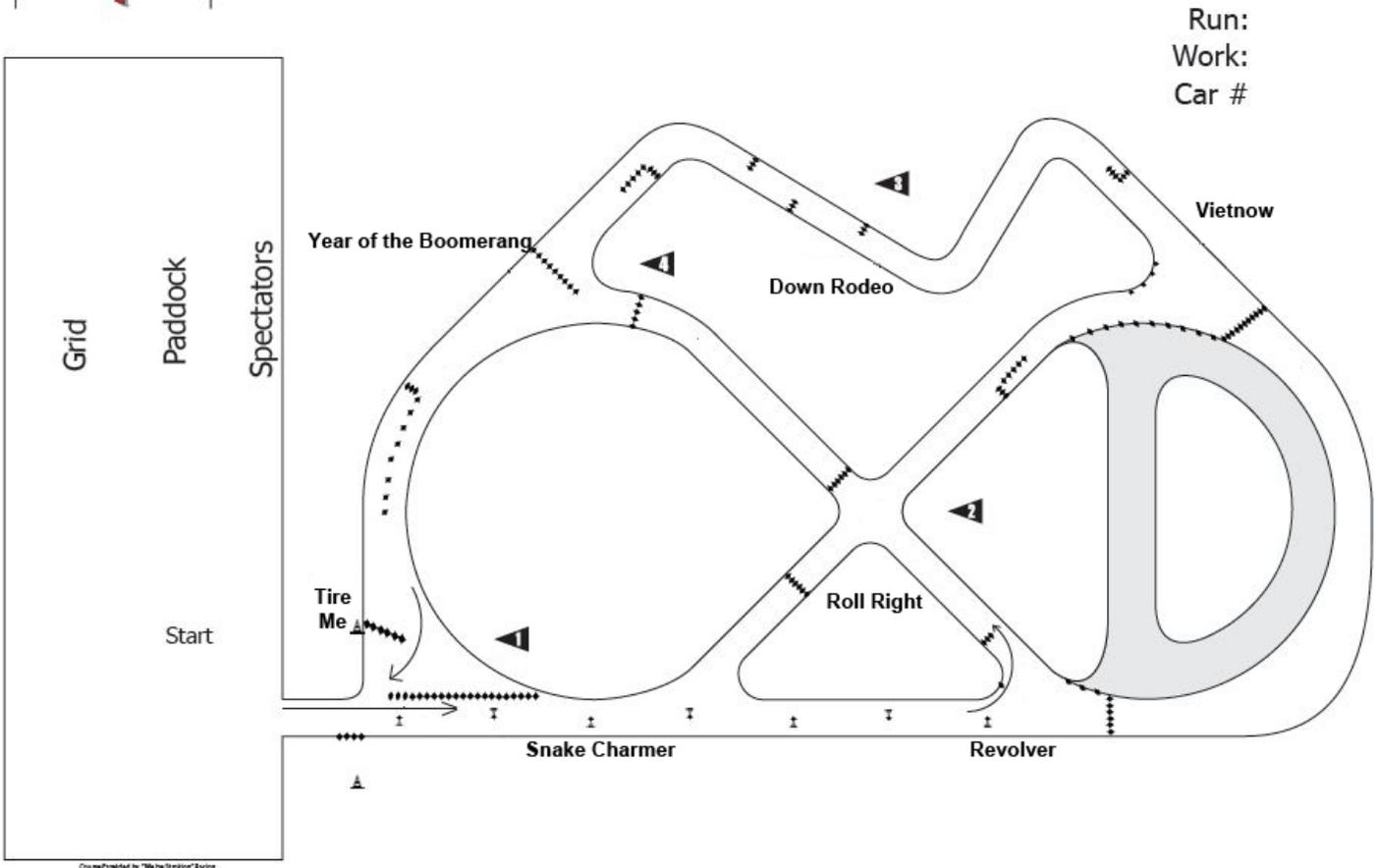
**December 14** Coffee Cedar Creek Cafe Bar & Grill 9:00-12:00

**December 15** Autocross - Houston Police Academy 8:00 - 3:30



## Autocross

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## HUMP DAY AT OUTLAW DAVE'S James Weaver

**O**utlaw Dave is a local radio talk show host who has opened a bar/restaurant in one of Houston's oldest icehouses. When he built the place he included a small studio where he broadcasts his afternoon radio show on AM950. He hosts a lot of car club and motorcycle events at the bar.

The Wednesday "hump day" get together was attended by more "new" "first time" people than any other we have done. Miss Grand Prix of Houston Angela Anderson (she drives a 328 w/ sport pkg) was my invited guest. She is there to talk about the upcoming Izod Indycar race in Houston in October. I didn't know I would be called into service for the second hour of the show to talk about the Houston Chapter BMW-CCA. Pam Johnson sat in the studio while Dave and I talked about the composition of the club. We discussed the Teen Driving School, driving on the Autobahn, and various activities regarding the club.



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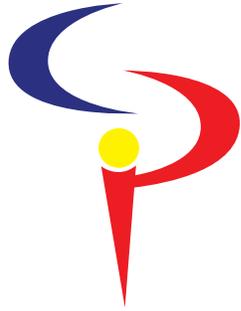


## STREET SURVIVAL COURSE

THE HOUSTON CHAPTER OF THE BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA IS HOSTING THE BMW CCA FOUNDATION AND TIRE RACK STREET SURVIVAL COURSE AGAIN THIS YEAR ON October 19th AT THE HOUSTON POLICE ACADEMY. THIS PROGRAM IS GEARED TOWARDS TEACHING YOUNG ADULTS AND TEENS HOW TO HANDLE THEIR CAR IN A “HANDS-ON” REAL-WORLD SITUATION WITH TRAINED IN-CAR INSTRUCTORS. THIS IS NOT A COURSE FOR LEARNING HOW TO DRIVE AT HIGH SPEEDS. SAFETY AND CAR CONTROL IS THE OBJECTIVE. GAIN THE KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE TO SAFELY NEGOTIATE OUR HOUSTON STREETS — **SAVING A LIFE JUST MAY BE THE RESULT.**

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# Editor's Corner

Jim Robinson



## A special thanks goes out to all who participated in this issue.

The Torque of the Town is about you, our members. The Board of Directors put a lot of work into planning events but it's your participation that makes it fun. The meetings, the drives, autocross events, and dinners are great ways to meet friends and make new ones. The newsletter is our way to get the word out about the Houston Chapter activities and is helpful in recruiting new members. We make every effort to continue the goal of creating a quality publication; one that stands out as a

tribute to our members and speaks to the heart of our chapter and the BMW CCA as a whole. In order to accomplish this I depend on your participation. I encourage you to write about your experiences at our events. Just tell me your story about what interested you and what you enjoyed most at our varied events. Send a few pictures if you have them.

Include the names of the photographer and people in the photographs if you can.

If you have any comments or suggestions about the newsletter or if you'd like to post something in the newsletter (such as LaRita and Fester The Road Monkey). Please send images and text to [newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com](mailto:newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com).

A couple of guidelines for submitting material: Articles need to be around 850 words. You can include quotes from others, preferably with names. Pictures look better if they're taken at a higher resolution – 2 megapixels or above work best for enlargements and cropping of images.

## LaRita & Fester The Road Monkey Cedar Creek Coffee Meeting



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