

Gemütlichkeit

BMW CCA Old Hickory Chapter Newsletter – Summer 2014

BMW Car Club
of America
Old Hickory Chapter



Warm Weather, Cool Cars

Reports from Sharkfest, Amelia Island, and The Mitty



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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

June already – where did the last six months go? I don't know about you, but this year is flying by way too fast. Maybe that's good and maybe it isn't, but either way I hope you are taking some time to enjoy yourself, your family, your friends, and your BMW. Of course, that's where being a member of the Old Hickory Chapter of the BMW Club of America comes into play. We want you to come out and enjoy yourself and your vehicle with other BMW owners and enthusiasts. In the newsletter you will find a list of events that range from the very casual and always enjoyable Cars & Coffee every Saturday morning, to our monthly dinner socials (even more casual) and our drives. I want to invite you to come out and join us, especially if you have never come to one of our events before.

One event in particular I want to call out is the German Cars and Coffee on June 28th from 8:00 to 10:00 at Fidelity Motors. This event is free, and a great hot breakfast is always provided. It's a fun time with members from all the other German car clubs in town. The Porsche Club, Mercedes Club, Audi Club, they all come out, and it is a great collection of cars. Mark your calendar! And while you're at it, come out to our monthly dinner meetings. It's a good time to get to know your fellow club members and to learn more about your BMW, and there are always great door prizes.

June is also Oktoberfest for the BMW CCA, and I am ashamed to say (after more than 20 years in the club) this is my first Oktoberfest. It's in Beaver Creek, Colorado, and my daughter in Loveland assures me that we shouldn't have any fresh snow like we did when we visited in late April. Many of our members have enjoyed Oktoberfest celebrations, and we're excited to be going this year. I will be reporting back in our next newsletter on Oktoberfest and hope to have some great pictures and stories to share.

I also need to throw out a big "Thank You" to Matt Smith, our newsletter editor. Our last issue of *Gemütlichkeit* was our best yet. A fresh new look with easier to read layout and design, it is indeed a significant upgrade. We decided at our last board meeting to look at some Adobe software that would make creating the newsletter easier and faster, as well as making that content more Web-friendly. If anyone has an Adobe connection please let us know; making a change like this is not inexpensive, but it is something we need to do to raise the bar on our newsletter and website.

Lastly, this is your club. BMW owners are a diverse group, much more so than when I first joined the club. Back then it was mostly enthusiasts that joined the club to find out how to wrench their own car or to get a group together to go to the track. That has changed, and we want to be sure that as your board and president we are meeting your needs and providing the kinds of activities and events you are interested in. We can't do that if we don't see you at a meeting or hear from you via email.

So consider this your invitation to let us know what you as a BMW owner and club member would like from your club. Your board is here to serve you, so let us know what you want and expect, and I'll bet we can make it happen.

All the best – Joe

CHAPTER EVENTS

Check oldhickorybmwcca.org and your email for updates!

Club Drive to Cookeville – July 27.

For this drive, we've got a mini-Tail-of-the-Dragon mapped out – a route of winding curves made for driving. We'll meet (all gassed up!) at the Lebanon Cracker Barrel (635 South Cumberland St./US-231, I-40 Exit 238) at 8:30, have a logistical meeting for drivers at 8:45, and roll at 9:00. Then we wind our way to the Cookeville area for brunch at Nick's by around 12:00-12:30. Mobile phone coverage might be poor along the way; if you have some good walkie-talkies, bring 'em. Please RSVP to Joe Questel or Jackie Hardy.

Club Drive to Paradise Point – August 9.

Join us for a scenic drive to the Paradise Point Marketplace in Scottsville, KY. We'll meet at 8:45 at Thorton's gas station at 242 Hwy 109, off I-40 at exit 232B; then we'll take a scenic 75-90 minute ride. At Paradise Point, we'll have breakfast and check out some "Antiques+Funky Junk." This place is full of quirky treasures – check out www.paradisepointky.com. For questions, call Joe Questel at 615-714-6662.

Chapter Meetings

Meet your fellow members for food and conversation! Meetings start at 6:30:

- **July 10:** Jed's Sports Bar & Grille 114 28th Avenue North Nashville
- **August 14:** BMW of Nashville, 4040 Armory Oaks Dr (by 100 Oaks), Nashville – **Special presentation!** See below.
- **September 11:** Cozymels Mexican Grill 1654 Westgate Circle Brentwood (Cool Springs)

Note: for our August 14 meeting, we've invited some folks from Sonax car care products to give us a special presentation. This German company makes what several of our members have called the best wheel cleaner product on the market. We'll have food and prizes – and of course you can look around at some lovely new Bimmers. Stay tuned for updates!

Other Car Events

German Cars & Coffee. In our winter issue we reported on the first German Cars and Coffee at Fidelity Motors – a great turnout (despite the gloomy weather!) of cool and classic BMWs, Porsches, Mercedes, and Volkswagens. It was so much fun, Fidelity's Michael Spurgeon is making it a quarterly event. From 8:00-10:00 in the morning, we'll meet up, check out each other's cars, and enjoy breakfast and coffee provided by Michael. Saturdays: June 28, September 27, and November 8. Fidelity Motors, 1207 Fesslers Lane, Nashville.

Cars & Coffee. Saturdays. Roll into the parking lot at the Carmike Theater on Cool Springs Blvd around 8:00, look at some great cars, and visit with other car enthusiasts. This has grown into a big C&C, and an especially large turnout, including exotics, shows up the first Saturday of every month. Continues through the second weekend of November.

Please welcome our NEW MEMBERS

Kevin Albino, Murfreesboro

Marvin Barnett, Pulaski

Will Bell, Bradyville

Henry De Freitas, Brentwood

Todd Inman, Lebanon

John Morris, Franklin

Joshua Perry, Nashville

Howard Roberts, Nashville

Marc Sleenhof, Brentwood

Charles Sullivan, Old Hickory

Jonathan Thompson, Hendersonville

Matthew West, Nashville

Alfred Vereas, Nashville

To all new and current members:

- Be sure to visit oldhickorybmwcca.org, our official website, for news, event updates, and other good stuff.
- If you're not receiving emails about our Chapter activities, contact Tyree at tpeters@oldhickorybmwcca.org. Be sure your email is registered with BMW CCA.
- You can also follow us at twitter.com/OldHickoryBMW and at facebook.com/OldHickoryBMWCCA.



Scan these codes with your smartphone to visit us on Twitter (left) and Facebook (right).



Gemütlichkeit wants to know! Did one of our articles get you thinking? Do you have a sweet car or event photo to share? A good BMW story? A Bimmer for sale? Send letters, stories, classifieds, and big photos to msmith@oldhickorybmwcca.org.

Pass *Gemütlichkeit* on to a friend! You can help us spread the word about BMW CCA activities, discounts, and benefits by keeping *Gemütlichkeit* in circulation. When you're done with this issue, give it to another BMW owner or someone interested in cars. Hide it among the magazines at your salon, dentist, or mechanic. Tack it up in your library, break room, or mail room. Send folks to www.bmwcca.org, and let's get more BMWs in the club!

OLD HICKORY HAPPENINGS



Old Hickory Chapter's Bowling Green Drive

On March 22, a group of Old Hickory members drove to the Corvette Museum in Bowling Green. You may remember that a sinkhole opened in the floor of the museum's Skydome, swallowing eight rare Vettes into a pile of rubble 30 feet down. We went to learn more about the facility's new Motorsports Park (and to ogle some sweet cars, of course). It was somber to see the rescued cars on display – some in surprisingly good shape, others completely smashed – but there is hope for them all.

Former Old Hickory chapter president George Richter lives near the museum, so we stopped by his house to see his impressive collection of high-end sports cars. George has an '07 M5, an ESS-tuned M3, three Jaguars, a Nissan GTR, a Mercedes SL63 AMG, a '39 Ford, and others I'm forgetting. Everyone there agreed: *Whoa*.



"How many is enough?" one might ask, though no one did.

At the museum we received a very cool presentation about the Motorsports Park project. It's going to be a big deal: 23 turns, a 4,000-foot straight, chicanes, everything it needs to serve as a true multi-function facility. They expect to host tests for Corvette Racing, track days, corporate events, teen driver safety events, emergency response training, and manufacturer testing.

It's going to be fun. Visit corvettemuseum.org for updates, to plan a visit, and to learn more about the damaged Vettes. GM has committed to help restore each one of them, so high-fives all around!



The 1,000,000th Corvette was in rough shape – and we saw worse.

Chapter Financial Statement

January-December 2013

Income Statement

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income:

Advertising Revenue	300.00
Interest	0.31
Meeting Revenue	384.32
Membership Dues	4,645.36
Rebates from National	555.00
Total Income	5,884.99

Expense:

Insurance	925.00
Meeting Expense	1,420.46
Merchandise-Awards	295.52
Newsletter Costs	3,019.11
Postage	387.69
Total Expense	6,047.78

Net Ordinary Income

-162.79

Other Income/Expense

Other Income:

Misc./Other Income	1.06
Total Other Income	1.06

Other Expense:

Bank Fees	49.04
Corporate Annual Report	45.00
PO Box Rental	70.00
Website/Internet	940.17
Other	1.06
Total Other Expense	1,105.27

Net Other Income

-1,104.21

Net Income

-1,267.00

Assets

Checking	3,261.06
Savings	3,002.17
Prepaid Expenses/Deposits	7.17
Total Assets	6,270.40

Liabilities & Equity

Equity/Retained Earnings	6,367.80
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,169.60
Net Income	-1,267.00
Total Equity	6,270.40
Total Liabilities & Equity	6,270.40

The Hardest Easy Job I Ever Encountered

It was not a matter of if, but when would the X3 throw its first “Check Engine” light. We’ve had the 2005 X3 for over three years now, and it’s been relatively trouble-free. However, it’s nine years old with over 100,000 miles, so one would expect a few problems to start popping up regardless of how well it has been maintained.

Then it happened: the dreaded “Service Engine Soon” light glared back from the dashboard. Being an optimist, I got my trusty code reader out, read the code (p0171), reset the light, and crossed my fingers that it was a fluke. My optimism was short lived, because the next day the light returned again with its annoying yellow illumination.

The engine in the X3 is a three-liter M54, one of BMW’s workhorse engines used in a variety of models. Therefore, there is lots of information available online if you can wade through the piles of documentation. The code book said the p0171 code referred to a lean condition in both banks of the engine. In other words, the engine management system could not properly maintain an ideal gas/air mixture entering the cylinders, and there was too much air in the mixture.

Further online research determined that a variety of things could cause this particular code. One possibility was that the two O2 sensors were going bad, but it’s highly unlikely both independent sensors would go bad at the same time. Another possibility is an intake manifold leak where the intake bolts to the head. This is a scary possibility since it would require removal of the intake manifold to replace the gasket.

The most common reason for this code was a crack in the rubber elbow connecting the mass air flow meter to the intake manifold. With fingers crossed, I got my flashlight out and took a peek to see a large, obvious crack in the rubber. Aha! Problem found, and this is going to be an easy fix: simply install a new rubber elbow, reset the codes, and keep on driving.

I browsed several online parts distributors and ordered the exact part I

needed at a price I was happy with. While I waited for the part, YouTube provided several DIY videos on the repair I was undertaking. One mentioned that due to the location of one of the clamps, it would help to have a flexible ¼ drive extension to tighten the clamp on the intake side of the elbow. Off to Sears I went to have this handy tool at my disposal. Just to be sure, I bought two.

My confidence was at a peak since I had read and interpreted the codes, found the problem, ordered a replacement part, and acquired special tools for what would be, in my mind, a 10-15 minute repair. I based this time estimate on my previous experience easily replacing or removing intake elbows with a couple of screw clamps on numerous BMW engines. Based on parts listings and diagrams, the elbow on this engine was no different: loosen two screw clamps and it’s off, install new part, tighten two screw clamps, put tools away, wash hands, done.

The new elbow arrived, and it was time to install it and turn off the annoying Check Engine light. I removed the air filter box, and the offending elbow was in plain view, ready for a quick replacement. The outside clamp was off in a matter of seconds. I felt the clamp on the manifold and determined it was going to take a 6mm, ¼” drive socket on my new flex extension, topped off with a ¼” ratchet. But this wouldn’t reach. I added the additional flex extension and tried again, but this time here wasn’t room to use the ratchet.

I removed it again, looking for the perfect combination to loosen the screw. This time I tried the socket, two extensions, and an adaptor, topped off with a nut driver handle. It worked, and the elbow was off. I took a look at my watch, and my 10-15 minutes had already passed. It didn’t matter; I had my tool arrangement down pat and would slip this elbow back on the flange and be done in another five minutes.

With the old one off, I placed the screw clamp on the new elbow and pushed the elbow onto the manifold flange. So far, so good. But as I was removing the old

elbow, I cut the outer half of the elbow off for better access to the clamp. That wasn’t an option for the new one.

I took a breather and did some exploration with each hand to see how best to tighten this clamp. It would only fit the elbow in one spot, a recess indicating the location of the tightening screw, which meant severely restricted access to tighten the clamp. This was going to test my best mechanic skills because it was going to be a blind, left-handed installation, all while reaching from the opposite side of the engine bay with the clamp screw under the flange. The socket, extensions, and screw handle would reach, but the socket wouldn’t fit over the screw head because the manifold was in the way. I determined this after about an hour and a half trying to tighten just one screw.

I eventually tried using a flat screwdriver head on the end of my extensions to see if that would work, and it did, but I had to hold it in place with one finger of my right hand. My challenge now was to make sure the intake elbow stayed on the flange while I was tightening it, which was hard because my hand was pushing against the elbow. Finally, I was able to tighten the screw a bit at a time, re-positioning both hands and the tool for the each tiny turn. Each turn was an extreme effort and instilled fear that I would unseat the elbow from the flange and have to start over again.

Perseverance paid off, the screw clamp was finally snug, and everything was buttoned up. Five hours had passed. I shook my head and cursed BMW engineers for not planning for this eventual failure. Typically BMW repairs are simpler than expected, at least in my experience. But this particular repair was just the opposite. If this happens again, I’ll probably be looking elsewhere for repairs.

I learned a lesson from this experience: don’t get too confident, especially over simple things. A lesson in car repairs as well as life.

Happy Motoring – Murray

Convertible or Coupe?

Love is a stranger in an open car, to tempt you in and drive you far away.

– Annie Lennox and the Eurhythmics.

Ah, the allure of the “open” car. Since the golden age of motoring, there has been a special thrill associated with feeling the wind in your hair and the sun on your face. Unless, of course, dust gets in your eyes, the sun burns your unprotected scalp, or water drips on you from unseen leaks.

These days there are power tops, additional layers of insulation, and glass rear windows, which help considerably. BMW and Mercedes will argue that the final stage of evolution is the convertible hardtop, which is as tight as a drum with the top up. Porsche will argue that their customers actually like cloth tops, and that like leather seats and real wood they simply need a little extra care and attention in return for years of lasting enjoyment. Besides, a cloth top doesn't take up all your luggage space when it's down.

My first sports car was a Miata, so the choice was easy. A Miata is a convertible. It wasn't fast, but it was a blast to drive on a sunny day. When I showed up at my friend's house, however, he was not impressed. “You can't drive it at 120 mph with the top down!” he argued. “Who drives at 120?” I countered. “I do, all the time!” Fair enough.

My next two-seater was a Porsche

Boxster. Not only was it fun with the top down (and managed the airflow a lot better), it was fast, comfortable, and luxurious by any comparison. Still, the coupe people will argue that it's heavier, less rigid, and “looser” than a Cayman, and totally unsuitable for the racetrack. But for reasons known only to Porsche, the more complex Boxster is priced lower than the Cayman, and in my opinion it's the better looking vehicle.

My next car was a Corvette. Why not have the best of both worlds, I thought? I'll get a coupe with a removable hardtop. Except that it's also the worst of both worlds. Above 50 mph, the fixed rear window causes a fierce buffeting from air that gets compressed, which makes it feel like my head is in a giant blender. There is a clever fix for that. It's a little piece of wound metal that holds the rear hatch open about 3 inches. Unfortunately it makes the already bad rear visibility even worse. And of course, people keep telling me that my hatch is open.

When the car magazines do a comparison, they assign points to such things as engine, transmission, handling, brakes, and the “fun to drive” factor before they announce a winner. Actually, I think they pick a winner first and then fudge the points so they can justify their decision. How else could a Honda S2000 beat a Z4? Anyway, the point is that a convertible adds at least 10 points to the “fun to drive” factor.

And so the dilemma goes on. To some, a convertible is strictly a “see and be seen”

car. For others, if it's not a convertible, it's not a sports car. My friend Matt would never own one. Claims the dust gets under his contact lenses. I find myself walking a fine line, seeing the virtues of each model, and making my decision based on aesthetics, cost, what else I have to drive, and oh yes, one other thing – weather. It's hard to get excited about buying a convertible in the middle of the winter. So, in no particular order, here are my choices:

Porsche: The Boxster beats the Cayman on both looks and cost. On the other hand, the 911 Coupe beats the Cabriolet. Sorry, I don't care for the “baby buggy” look.

Corvette: Get the coupe. The convertible looks like a skateboard.

BMW 3 series: Neither. Get the sedan. It gives up nothing in looks or handling, and it's much more practical (I have kids). Besides, I feel trapped in the back of a two-door car.

Ferrari: The Spider beats the coupe every time. Of course, it's a see and be seen car! It's a Ferrari! The airflow is great, even at highway speeds. Besides, you are not really going to drive this one on the track, now are you?

Maybe convertibles don't appeal to everyone, but here's another of my favorite quotes from Gerry Garcia explaining the unique appeal of the Grateful Dead. “It's like licorice. Not everyone likes licorice, but the people who like licorice REALLY like licorice!”

Grüß Gott!

Ron Steurer

After four years of driving Petra, my beloved European-Delivered 2011 328i 6-speed sport, and with summer into full swing now, love is in the air again! What do I exactly mean by that? Well, since I got her in 2010 my commute to work has been a pitiful 11-mile, 20-40mph crawl to work: Holt Rd/Edmondson pike/Concord Rd/I-65 to Moores Lane. I had a whole one mile to open her up, pending traffic on 65 south Woot, woot! ☺ Not exactly a thrilling drive to say the least,

with a 3 Series sport mated to a 6 speed manual transmission and a heavy foot.

I have recently changed jobs and work out in Hermitage. So now I take some fun back road twistys the first five or six miles, which pops me out on Bell Rd just before I-24. Now I-24 can unfortunately be hit or miss, but once I hit I-40 east in the morning it's all cruising for a good 10-12 minutes of mini-autobahn driving, with only a few cars peppered here or there heading toward the sun. Then after

work, it's rinse and repeat all over again against traffic until I pull into the garage.

It's so enjoyable to once again to be able to actually drive Petra the way the engineers in Munich meant the car to be driven, and experience a BMW in its true domain. Rowing through the gears and listening to the last of the beautiful silky inline six sing, especially around 5-6K RPM, is music to my ears. I still enjoy and look forward to driving the car just as much today as I did the first day driving out of the Welt on my parade



SHARK FRIENDS

Jackie Hardy heads to Spartanburg for Southeast Sharkfest

The 12th annual gathering of the sharks, E24s and friends, was May 1-4 in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Not only was this year the largest so far, with 101 cars and around 160 people, but it was the best by far. (Oh wait, I say that every year!) This year E31 and E9 owners were invited, and about a half dozen of each registered, including three of the 225 produced 850CSi.

On Friday we had a very impressive tour of the BMW factory, and after lunch everyone spent the afternoon doing their own thing. Most strolled the picturesque streets of Greenville and visited the new location for the BMW CCA Foundation near the factory. At one point I realized we were on Greenville's West Main Street, the address of BMW CCA. I Googled and found we were in the same block, so a group of us popped in to say hi to Steven Schlossman at HQ.

Saturday was the most fun ever. Some of us went for a half-day M School at the BMW Performance Center. They put us two by two in the M3s and gave us the "drive it like you stole it" command. There were a couple instructors watching, and we had radios in the door pocket, so they were in communication in case we did something dumb. Also, anyone who went off track was done for the day.

Going into it I felt pretty confident that with my track experience I'd be right up there with the young guys. Wrong! Driving a 400+ hp, seven-speed double clutch, DTC, twin turbo was nothing like my little old 328. Great fun, but the paddle shifters were a challenge. Give me the old-fashioned gearshift and clutch anytime.

The next exercise was in the new 6 Series on a skid pad/autocross. Unlike the large track, this one was timed and easier to keep up with the guys. To top off the morning, we rode hot laps with the instructors, which I think they do to finish off the daily set of tires. Talk about being able to drive! It was just a blur and lots of smoke, like riding with a stunt driver! The best trick was when one car passed another while both in a full drift on the wet skid pad.

The afternoon was more restful, with our cars perfectly lined up on the lawn at the Zentrum for judging. Dinner and awards followed inside. A special treat was having Rob Siegel, *Roundel's* "Hack Mechanic," hang out with us for the weekend and deliver a really funny presentation after dinner.

The best part isn't the cars (heck, they all look alike) but the camaraderie – the Shark Friends we've had for 12 years, and the new ones each year who keep us coming back. Sharkfest is held at various locations in the Southeast each spring and open to everyone. No one cares what you drive, so you might as well join us next year!

– Jackie

Thanks to Shawn Bailey for all the Sharkfest photos!



Shark: The E24 6 Series, which has a certain distinct profile.



Some E9 CS Coupes joined us this year.



E31 850CSi's? All are welcome at Sharkfest.



Briefly setting aside the old Sixes for some new ones.

VINTAGE VANTAGE



David Yando goes to
The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance
and The Mitty

The Mitty: Diverse fields make it all but impossible to follow the official action – just enjoy the show. There might be 45 podium finishers in a 60-car field!



3.0 CSLs were out in full force.



Just because it's a one-off Ferrari doesn't necessarily mean it's beautiful. Or does it?



The first BMW Art Car, driven by Herve Poulain and our friend Sam Posey at LeMans. It didn't finish, but it was the start of a long and ongoing partnership between BMW and provocative artists.



McLaren's history with BMW was well represented.

2014 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

How was your winter? If you were in Middle Tennessee, it was brutally cold, it was dreary, and it was interminably long. When my wife, Lora, suggested a trip to Amelia for the Concours, a long weekend's respite sounded like a great idea. We'd been a couple of times before, and it's always a great winter break. We almost waited too long – finding an affordable place to stay was quite a challenge, but her perseverance paid off. After cashing in some Southwest points, a trip to the warm sands of Florida was in the offing.

Amelia is fairly unique among major concours. Not only are the “classics” well represented – Rolls-Royce, Duesenberg, brass-era Caddies, and so on – but also honored are obscure marques such as American Underslung and Popes. Founder and Chairman Bill Warner, being a racer, also gives equal billing to racers. A well-known driver serves as Grand Marshall each year, and there's always a panel discussion with many big names on the days leading up to Concours day. This year Formula 1 and Sports Car Racing's Jochen Mass was honored, and a number of his former cars were present. Bill also has a sense of humor – it's not unusual to see classes such as “What Were They Thinking?”, beach cars, three-wheelers, or propeller-powered car classes on the field.

This year, like last, an invitational Cars and Coffee was held on the show field on the Saturday prior to the concours. As BMW CSLs were one of the featured classes at the Concours, a large gathering of E9 Coupes and other BMWs was likely, in addition to huge groupings of Porsches, Corvettes and Mustangs – all celebrating major milestones. BMW and BMW Classic seem to always have a major presence, and this year was no exception. Next to a beautifully restored E9 CSL were an i8 and a new M4 Coupe. (Sorry, M4s are always Coupes, right? And now, after more than 25 years, the M3 is a four-door. Riiiiight) Mercedes-Benz had a large tent with some really significant race and road cars from their historic collection. At the other end of the field, McLaren, Porsche, and Ferrari had their stands – you get the idea.

Walking around, one cannot help but see folks like Peter Brock, David Hobbs, Bobby Rahal, Denise McCluggage, Brian Redman, and Sam Posey. One may walk through the auction preview tents, take manufacturer test rides, shop all manner of automobilia – both affordable and astronomical – and enjoy the works of dozens of automotive artists at the AFAS show.

But our long weekend isn't all car stuff, no. Nearby Fernandina Beach has much to offer – all sorts of restaurants and antiques shopping. And it's a great walking town, with over a dozen homes and businesses on the National Register of Historic Places. Primitive Cumberland Island, Georgia, is less than an hour away and makes a great day trip. A couple of hours traipsing through Amelia's Fort Clinch State Park often results in seeing quite a few alligators and countless birds – it's usually our Monday morning, post-Concours, pre-flight hike. This year, we also managed to squeeze in an afternoon trip to St. Augustine before catching a late flight.

If you start getting antsy for some warm weather and sand between your toes in February, maybe you'd enjoy a long weekend in Florida. But don't wait too long – hotels fill up quick. Next year's Concours is March 13-15, and you can see as much car stuff, or as little, as you want.

The Speedfest at the Classic Motorsports Mitty

Presented by Hagerty

My wife and I have been attending The Mitty for many, many years, and have seen it grow from a small, intimate, and not particularly well-attended weekend to what it is today – a large, professionally run, very well-attended event with ever-growing fields of all manner of historic racers. HSR, the sanctioning body, is quite progressive (or permissive) in what constitutes a “vintage” racecar or motorcycle. Some groups have strict cutoff criteria – nothing allowed after 1975, for instance. HSR recognizes that five-year-old LeMans cars need a place to get some exercise, and people want to see them.

Tim Suddard, Classic and Grassroots Motorsports publisher and host of the weekend, asked Lane Motor Museum if we could bring something interesting for the inaugural Concours d'Lemons to be held on Sunday during quiet time. We had just the thing, a new Craigslist acquisition. If we could get it cleaned up, rewired, and painted in time, we were sure to draw some attention!

Formula cars were this year's featured marque, and Brian Redman was the Grand Marshal. Every ticket lets attendees walk freely through the paddock, right up to whatever is of interest, and talk to owners, drivers, and mechanics. If one asks nicely, one might be able to sit in a car that ran at Daytona, LeMans, or Sebring, or get an autograph from any number of famous drivers. This year we saw Redman, Elliott Forbes-Robinson, Toly Arutunoff, Bill Warner, Bob Tullius, Burt Levy, and undoubtedly others I didn't recognize.

The weather was beautiful, dogwoods and redbuds were still in bloom, and the infield was filled with cars just as interesting as the paddock. Practice, qualifying, and racing filled the three-day weekend from sunup to sundown. Some groups were pretty small, with fewer than ten cars. But other groups, most notably the Enduros, had over 60 cars, making for a very full track.

Even with a small field, it's hard to keep track of who wins, and how your favorite car placed. But for us at least, The Mitty isn't about winning a race. It's about seeing, hearing, and smelling hundreds of vintage racecars doing what they were meant to do. It's about seeing old friends, meeting new ones, catching some rays on the hill at Turn 5, and enjoying a low-key weekend.

Up until just a few years ago, it was incredibly rare to see a BMW on the track. However, a few E9 Coupes and a couple of 2002s started coming out. This year there were a half-dozen '02s, an E30 M3, a Spec-E30, and an E46. The *pièce de résistance* had to be Scott Hughes' #51 CSL, fresh from the Amelia Island show field, the Sebring historic race, and the cover of Roundel.

And what about the Concours d'Lemons car? How'd we do? Chief judge Bill Warner, chairman of the Amelia Island Concours, declared Lane Motor Museum's “Rocket Car” the Worst of Show – quite the accolade! We were thrilled. Last year we won “Hardest Rockin' Car” with the museum's MG 6R4 Group B rally car. Maybe next year we'll drive the E30 M3 or 2002 down, and just try to blend in and hang out in the Peachtree Chapter's corral. See ya there



Several 2002s joined the races.



The GTP/WSC/Can-Am Group is always a crowd pleaser, with a wide variety of cars and performance.



A Lotus Exos T125 – as close to a Formula 1 car as mere mortals can get – and a two-person crew can run it for a weekend. As Jalopnik.com said, it's a million dollars well spent!



The Rocket Car kinda sticks out. While that Supercharged Graham appears honest and original, little of the Rocket VW Rabbit origins can be seen.



A fairly decent gathering of Porsches at Amelia.



I still remember the day I saw the ex-David Hobbs #2 320i Turbo for sale on an open trailer at Road Atlanta. Asking price was \$7500. We've all got those stories, right?



Coughing up the extra bucks for early entry on Sunday may not guarantee an unencumbered view. Here's the field, two and a half-hours before opening.



The 528i. . . Eats like a bird. Roars like a lion. Starting at \$399/mo

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**BMW Car Club
of America
Old Hickory Chapter**



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Gemütlichkeit

BMW CCA Old Hickory Chapter Newsletter
SPRING 2014

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