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BMW Car Club of America Smoky Mountain Chapter



The Smoky Bimmer

November
2019

Rolex 24-Hours At Daytona Endurance Racing The Way It Ought to Be

By Mike Washington

In January 2019, I made my 2nd consecutive trip to Daytona, Florida to experience the 24 hours of IMSA Endurance racing at the 3.56-mile Daytona International Speedway where they turn left, turn right, and race in the rain. This ain't NASCAR, baby.

First, a short story about getting to the venue. It seems to be challenging for me each year. In Jan 2018, upon arriving at Tri-Cities Airport at 5:00 AM for a 6:30 AM flight, I realized that I had left my wallet and driver's license in the jacket I'd put on and then decided I did not



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need in Florida. It's a 1-hour round trip home, not-including running to and from the car with my luggage, so I did the only thing a husband would do. I called my wife. After waking her, begging her to bring my wallet and worrying she might get caught speeding, the lovely lady helped me out of my dilemma with 45 mins to spare. All that and we weren't the ones hired to race that weekend! Within in minutes of arriving in Orlando, I met up with my good friend Andre, who traveled from NYC. We seem to have a knack for traveling heroics when it comes to BMW events. Our adventures include driving cross country round-trip from NJ to Monterey for Oktoberfest 2016, and an epic trip to drive at Top Gear UK and Silverstone in 2012.

For this year's trip in Jan 2019, this time with wallet in hand, I arrive at Tri-Cities Airport early, but as the time for boarding approaches, I learn there is a mechanical issue with the aircraft and the flight is canceled. I'm not worried as I join everyone lining up for the airlines to transfer folks to the 7:30AM flight. If you didn't see this coming, the lady in front of me was the last person they could accommodate. So, I missed practice and the support races on Thursday.



Mike's View of Daytona on Thursday

For our group of friends, Daytona is not just about the race. It's also about a 4-day weekend, sharing a large 4-bedroom condo, where we cook and break bread, socialize, and catch up about what's happened since Oktoberfest. Included this year were me (nickname "M3") from Smoky Mountain Chapter; Andre Noel from NY Chapter; Larry Schettel and Barbara Adams from Windy City Chapter, Lonny and Lou Ann Shirk from Nittany Bimmer Chapter, and Bob and Shelia Morin from Connecticut Valley Chapter. Hanging out in an adjacent condo are Michael ("M1") and Shelly Mitchell from Sandlapper Chapter, Scott and Fran Hughes also from Sandlapper, and Michael ("M2") Turner (not a club member but good friend to all – a customer relations manager at Disney – a good happy guy to know). Barb has been doing logistics for this group for many years, so she acquires the Grassroots Motorsports Corral tickets for us, secures the condo, and helps plan the meals. Couple this with frequent flyer airline tickets, this is a good economical way to attend a big event. Good times!!!

Friday is a day for diehard gearheads. At IMSA races, the general public has access to race teams' paddock and pretty much unrestricted access to the drivers and mechanics, leading to great photo ops with the cars and occasionally, a paddock talk by the team owners, many who we know well including Turner of Turner Motorsports and James Clay of Bimmerworld.



Paddock Talk with Will Turner & Team

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I remember when these guys were students and instructors in HPDE's events. Check out the photo of me holding the door from the Turner M4. It was surprisingly light in weight but I had no thoughts of trying to run away with it.



The weather on Friday, and at the start of the race on Saturday, was mild and sunny, a typical winter day in Florida. We brought our walking shoes, camera, earplugs, and sunscreen because we would be spending a lot of time walking the infield, viewing cars on display and moving from corner to corner to see, hear, and feel the thunderous roar of the engines as the teams in the support races circumnavigated the track. Cars flying around the banked oval just mere yards from the bleachers is an awesome experience. In 2018, I was fortunate to get a couple of hot laps in the F90 M5 driven by Matt Mullins, one of the instructors from the Performance Center. With the car in 2WD mode, we reached 164 mph and there was no drama (probably because Matt said no when I asked if I could drive). I'd love to do a hot lap with Matt some day in the new faster M5 Competition.

On Saturday, we made our way to the upper deck seats above Turn 1 before the start of the title race. There are four classes of cars in the main event: Daytona Prototype International (Dpi); Lemans Prototype 2 (LMP2); GT Lemans (GTLM); and GT Daytona (GTD). The Daytona Prototypes typically have the quickest lap times and higher speeds. By way of comparison, the Dpi class winner Juan Pablo Montoya drove a fastest race lap of 01:16.661 and the fastest lap in the GT Daytona was 01:25.401 turned in by the race winner, Bryan Sellers.

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There is so much to see and, since there are no assigned seats, sitting and watching the race from one spot is neither necessary nor advised. We viewed the race from several locations. There is plenty of on-track passing because of the speed differential among the classes. I particularly enjoy the action in the pit lane with driver changes, refueling, brake pads and the occasional car repairs. After eating dinner in the Grassroots hospitality tent, we watched a couple of hours of night racing, then headed to our condo. The race teams are up working; we are on vacation and need sleep.



Sunday was mostly torrential downpours, so we elected to watch the remainder of the race on the big screen in the condo. Eventually, the race was red flagged for treacherous conditions because the rain tires could not cope with the deep standing water on the track. Good news! BMW came away with a class win under red flag.

Next, I am headed to the 2019 Motul Petit Le Mans and FOX Factory 120 at Michelin Raceway Road, Atlanta, if the travel gremlins permit!

Street Survival Tri-Cities

Our 2nd Tire Rack Street Survival of 2019 Goes East

By Chris Tighe

For the first time in recent history, the Smoky Mountain Chapter held a second Tire Rack Street Survival (TRSS) program in one year. Traditionally held once in the spring, we wanted to expand the opportunity for young drivers to learn from this excellent hands-on program. Early on the first weekend of November, a small group of students joined several dedicated members of our club at Liberty Bell High School parking lot in Johnson City, TN.



During an educational and fun-filled day the students used their own cars under the watchful eye of our club member coaches to learn and practice accident avoidance skills and reinforce good driving fundamentals like breaking, turning and driver awareness. Although the seven-student turnout at this first Tri-Cities area TRSS was smaller than has been typical at our spring sessions at Pellissippi Community College, the event was fully endorsed and financially supported by the BMW Foundation and it is expected that, as word of this new offering location spreads, future events will have increased participation. Several of the participants were from North Carolina and they appreciated having a location closer than Knoxville. One father had brought

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his daughter to the course based on the benefits received by his son at a TRSS held in prior years. Local TV station WJHL covered the event and their story with video clips is available online at <https://www.wjhl.com/news/local/teen-driving-school-in-johnson-city-teaches-driver-safety/>.



NO CONES WERE HARMED IN THE MAKING OF THIS TRSS EVENT...

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HMMM.... WELL,
UHH...

NO CONES WERE
SERIOUSLY INJURED
IN THE MAKING OF
THIS TRSS EVENT

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We appreciate the commitment and support of all the club members, family and friends who gave a significant part of their weekend for this volunteer effort to help our young drivers be safer. Many of those who volunteered came from the Knoxville area and stayed overnight in Johnson City to support the early morning start. Their meal and lodging expenses are not reimbursed and are part of their personal



GEEZE !
OH MY....

THE SMOKY MOUNTAIN
BMW CCA SENDS BEST
WISHES FOR A SPEEDY
RECOVERY TO THOSE
CONES HOSPITALIZED
DURING THE MAKING OF
THIS TRSS EVENT...

contribution to this worthwhile cause. We offer special thanks to our local sponsor for the event, Harold Dishner State Farm Insurance, our hosts Freedom Hall municipal center and Liberty Bell High School, and to the Johnson City Fire Department for providing equipment and personnel to keep our skid pad wet.



NO TRAFFIC CONES DIED
DURING THE MAKING OF
THIS TRSS EVENT...



GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST!

PLEASE JOIN SMOKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER, BMW CCA
GIVING PRAISE AND HEARTFELT THANKS IN MEMORY OF THOSE
BRAVE CONES THAT GAVE THEIR LIVES

(DUE TO NO FAULT OF BMW AG, THE BMW CCA OR BMW CCA FOUNDATION, THEIR MEMBERS, SPONSORS, SUCCESSORS, OR ASSIGNS -ALL RIGHTS RESERVED)

SO THAT YOUNG TEEN DRIVERS MIGHT SURVIVE.
OUR THOUGHTS ARE WITH THE FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF THOSE
CONES. WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THEY WILL SOMEDAY FIND
PEACE AND CONTENTMENT IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEIR
STACK-MATES DID NOT DIE IN VAIN.

**THANK YOU STUDENTS, COACHES, VOLUNTEERS
AND SPONSORS FOR ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL
STREET SURVIVAL EVENT !**



**THE NEXT STREET SURVIVAL WILL BE SPRING 2020
AT PELLISSIPPI STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Drive Better, Tennessee

We “Stalkers”

Those drivers who consistently use the turn signal control stalk that is!

“In my day, we used to have to crank the windows down and stick our arms out to signal a turn!”

But not anymore (although it's still legal to use hand signals). Now all it takes in a BMW is a push of the signal lever with a finger, lightly to initiate a three-blink lane-change signal, or a bit harder to initiate the full turn signal that stays on until the turn is completed. It's one of the easiest and most intuitive controls to use in a car -- so why aren't more people doing it? Are YOU? Always? Properly? Really ??? Self-check yourself against the official TN rules of the road below.

Signaling your lane changes and turns, doesn't just benefit the safety of the driving public, it is also very good for you:

- It helps you avoid fender benders or worse accidents that could permanently alter your BMW and your lifestyle.
- If you are involved in an accident, witness statements saying that you didn't signal your turn could cause you to be found at fault even if the other driver was speeding or otherwise at fault.
- It allows you to benefit from the kindness of other drivers who may yield to wave you through a turn in heavy traffic or make space for you to change lanes. Tennessee has many such courteous drivers, but none who are mind readers.
- AND, it's good driving! Here are some refresher points from the Tennessee Comprehensive Drivers License Manual section on “Turning” Pages 55-56 (yellow highlights added - ed.):

Signaling a Turn: *Before making any turn, whether the turn is into another roadway, a parking lot, another traffic lane, or leaving a parked position, it is extremely important that you signal. Unless you signal, other drivers expect you to keep traveling the path of the roadway, using the lane in which your vehicle is positioned. Your signal lets other drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians know your intentions to make a change in your vehicle's path of travel and gives them time to react. However, signaling does NOT give you the right-of-way.*

Drive Better, Tennessee (continued)

You should always use turn signals before:

- Changing lanes or making any movement of your vehicle to the right or left;
- Turning at an intersection or into a driveway, alley or parking lot;
- *Entering or exiting the interstate or other controlled access roadway;*
- Pulling away from a parked position along the curb;
- Pulling over to the curb or roadside;
- Slowing down or stop your vehicle suddenly.

Be sure to turn off your turn signal light after using it. An unintended signal still means “turn” to the other drivers. By leaving it on, you might tempt other drivers to pull out in front of you.

As a good driver, you should be alert and emphasize your intentions to turn by giving the proper signal or signals:

- *At least 50 feet before the turn, you must turn on your turn signal lights.*
- Use your turn signals *ONLY* to indicate when *YOU* plan to turn or change lanes.
- If you are parked at a curb or roadside and about to re-enter traffic, use a signal long enough to alert oncoming traffic that you are moving from the parked position back into the traffic lane.
- If you plan to turn beyond an intersection, do not signal until you are in the intersection. If you signal earlier, another driver may think you intend to turn at the intersection and might pull into your path.
- *Get in the habit of signaling every time you change direction. Signal even if you do not see anyone else around. It is the car you do not see that is the most dangerous.*
- When you slow down, your brake lights flash as a signal. Slowing down, itself, acts as a signal.

You should NOT use your signals:

- To signal a driver behind you to come around to pass your vehicle.
- *To relay the turn intentions of vehicles ahead of you to those drivers behind your vehicle. This is misleading to other drivers.* Your brake lights will be sufficient to warn those behind you to slow down. If you see someone ahead signaling they are about to turn, do *NOT* turn on your turn signals unless you also plan to turn.

Proper signaling is a key to safe driving. Failure to signal is dangerous and inconsiderate. Communication while driving is a must. Safe drivers are always aware of surrounding conditions and readily communicate their intentions of other drivers by using signals whenever appropriate.

– tn.gov/safety

President's **CORNER**



National Leadership Conference 2019 – I attended the BMW CCA National Leadership Congress on November 1st and 2nd in Dallas, Texas. It was – as one of our board members characterized it – like being in the octagon, referencing the ultimate fighting events. So true.

On Friday the 1st, I attended the BMW CCA Board Meeting. They spent about one hour of the meeting wringing their hands over various national level events here or there and the pros and cons of this location or that location. I raised my hand. I had done a quick calculation based on the just-concluded Oktoberfest in Greenville and determined that attendance represented **just over one percent of the membership**. I asked “why are we spending so much time, effort, and money to plan these national events when only one percent of the membership attends?” I opined that with the recent emphasis on regionalization it would make more sense for the BMW CCA to put their efforts into regional events. I said “our members joined to drive their cars and I’d bet not one member from the Smoky Mtn. Chapter will drive to Palm Springs, CA for next year’s Oktoberfest. It would make more sense for us all to plan regional events – events where more of the members could drive to the event.” The response from our national president was “we have known for years that only about one percent of the members attend these events” and then the board agreed to stay the course and continue to put their focus on the national events. Needless to say, I was stunned that the national board would put so much effort into events that benefit so few of the members.

During another part of the meeting, there was a discussion about **regionalization**. The national board’s plan is to hire an “activities coordinator” for each region in order to help the chapters coordinate events. This was after the previous discussion about how they were going broke funding *Roundel*. I again raised my hand. I told them that we didn’t need any help planning events and told them to leave us alone. I was told that they had 50 (of 67) chapters that did need help and while they knew Smoky Mtn. was a high performing chapter there were too many chapters that do need help. I then reiterated my point that regional events made more sense than national events. They then said that if there were only regional events then they, the national board, would be relegated to just overseeing those regional planned events (as if this would be a bad thing). It seems to me that the national board takes great pleasure planning (and attending) their own national events regardless of the degree of participation from the general membership.

Chapter Consolidation – Part of the regionalization process includes merging under-performing chapters with higher-performing chapters. National says they are having problems managing 67 chapters and would like to reduce the number of chapters to something like 15, or so. Florida has already had three chapters merged into one. There are already several chapters (such as the Oregon and North Carolina Chapters) that cover a whole state. In Tennessee, the River City Chapter (Memphis) was an under-performing chapter. They have been merged into the Old Hickory Chapter (Nashville), which itself is performing just marginally. The Choo-Choo Chapter (Chattanooga) has been having problems finding leadership volunteers and has challenges meeting national requirements. Therefore, there was a discussion of possibly merging Choo-Choo into Smoky Mtn. But then, our South Atlantic Region VP found someone willing to lead the Choo-Choo chapter and that volunteer was then “appointed” as president by the Region VP. I was asked to spend some time with the new president. I thus spent most of Saturday morning with him to discuss the requirements to make a chapter successful. At one point in October, there was even a plan to evolve Smoky Mtn. into being the sole BMW CCA chapter in Tennessee. Well, we dodged that bullet and now Choo-Choo has been given a reprieve and they will work to stand on its own. We will share event information with them and stand by to help them as they request.

Financial Challenges – In my emails, I’ve told you about the reduced dues-rebate income that will be coming to us from National. Your Board of Directors is working to find ways to generate more of our own income, but we will need your help. We all take our money very seriously. None of us who already pays our dues to National want to pay for anything additional. But the simple fact is that our normal source of income has been cut by 50% and so now we are forced to close that gap to ensure the viability of Smoky Mtn. Chapter. So please understand that the cost of some events, such as our annual dinner may be higher than in the past and that we can use your help soliciting for advertising revenues and donations to fund certain events. Please help us as we work to make 2020 even better than this year.

Next Chapter M-Day – We have secured Saturday, October 3rd, 2020 as our next Chapter M Day at the BMW Performance Center, so please mark your calendars, plan to join us, and begin saving your dollars. Sign-ups will be announced as we get closer to the event.

Newsletter Editor Needed – Chris Tighe is interested in a change in role within our Chapter and will be stepping down as our editor after this issue to run for one of our officer slots. Chris has been our editor for our Newsletter since mid-2018 and has led its transformation into the outstanding publication you get every other month. The editor participates in Chapter Board Meetings, edits and assembles the newsletter and prepares our input to the new *Bimmer Life*. Volunteers should have a basic knowledge of Microsoft Word, good writing skills, share a passion for excellence and the Smoky Mtn. Chapter, and be able to spend about 10-20 hours at flexible times every two months. If you have the qualifications and are willing to help your friends in the club, then please, please contact me or Chris. Chris will show you how to assemble the newsletter and work with you as your coach to get you started smoothly.

Richard Stouder

If you have questions about the club, any chapter event, or have suggestions for events you would like us to hold, please email us at 4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org.

Welcome New Members !

The following members were added to the rolls of Smoky Mountain BMW CCA through October 2, 2019. Look for them at our next event and please welcome them to the club.

Matthew Evans
Evan Meade
Elizabeth Stubbs

We are happy that you have chosen to come along for the ride!

Bimmers voguing for the camera at an historic covered bridge stop during our recent drive-out to the City Car Museum in Greenville, TN



Club Announcements & Upcoming Events

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Can you spare some time to help your club?

We are looking for a volunteer for each of the following:

- **Newsletter Editor** to edit and prepare the *Smoky Bimmer* and our input to *Bimmer Life*.
- **Advertising coordinator** for our newsletter and our website.
- **Social media coordinator** to help us spread the sights, sounds, and stories of the fun we are having.

If you have interest and abilities in these areas and can spare a few hours each month, we would love to hear from you at: SMCBoard@smokymtnbmwcca.org

Chapter Socials – Are Moving to a New Day

<<< 2nd Tuesday of Each Month Starting in 2020 ! >>>

December 12 – Carrabba's

324 N Peters Rd, Knoxville, TN 37922 (*Cedar Springs*)

January 14 – Union Place

4884 Chambliss Ave, Knoxville, TN 37919 (*Bearden*)

February 11 – Louis' Original

4661 Old Broadway St, Knoxville, TN 37918 (*Greenway*)

March 10 – Chesapeake's

9630 Parkside Dr, Knoxville, TN 37922 (*Ashley Oaks*)

**If you have a suggestion for a good venue for a social – please send your input to
4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org.**

Drive Out – Saturday December 7 – Sunday December 8 Helen, GA – Bavarian Style Village

- Approximately a 2.5 hr drive from Lenoir City
- Enjoy holiday decorations, German food, music and shopping
- Optional overnight. Check out www.valhallaesorthotel.com
- Email questions to Laura Allison at
membership@smokymtnbmwcca.org

Christmas Party – December 14, 5pm – 6:30pm

Oak Ridge Sportsman's Club Clubhouse 2625 Oak Ridge Turnpike Oak Ridge, TN

- Covered Dish Dinner -- Meats provided, please bring a covered dish to share
 - RSVP to Richard Stouder (president@smokymtnbmwcca.org)

Chapter Annual Meeting & Dinner – January 11, 2020

Avalon Golf and Country Club, Lenoir City, TN

- 5pm – Cars and Cocktails in the Parking Lot
- 6pm - Dinner and Annual Election of Chapter Officers
- Guest Speaker -- Johan Schwartz from the BMW Performance Center
 - World Record Holder -- Longest Continuous Automobile Drift
- Prize Give Aways!
- Cost \$35/person

Upcoming in a future Smoky Bimmer:

- Dirt Fish Rally School *by Sammy Cheek*
- Passion Car Experience *by Mike Washington*
- *Your Story Goes Here* – contact editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org

Next Chapter M-Day

October 3, 2020

32 spots will be available

Next Street Survival

Spring, 2020

Please contact

Brian Kaldenbach at

TRSS@smokymtnbmwcca.org

for more information or to
volunteer!

We Thank You!!

The Smoky Mountain Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America would like to thank Grayson BMW for providing excellent service, quality parts, and discounts to our members.

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Please ask for the BMW CCA liaison, who will get you in touch with the right people and ensure you receive CCA benefits and recognition.

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Grayson BMW is a BMWCCA partner in the Membership Reward Program.

Club Information

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SMOKY BIMMER ADVERTISING

The Smoky Bimmer is distributed to over 300 chapter members and to over 100 representatives of other chapters and the national organization.

Special rates apply for advertising. Please inquire from a Chapter Officer. We can customize an advertising space to suit your needs.



Visit us on Facebook to see pictures from past chapter events, connect with other fellow club members, learn about upcoming events, and more. If you have suggestions for things you'd like to see on our club Facebook page, please let us know! Search Facebook for Smoky Mountain BMWCCA or visit the link below.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SMBMWCCA>

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