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CELEBRATING THE BMW ENTHUSIAST LIFESTYLE

BMW Car Club
of America
Allegheny Chapter



Allegheny Chapter

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ABOUT THE ALLEGHENY CHAPTER

The Allegheny Chapter is based in western Pennsylvania and has approximately 900 members. The club will be resuming our social, touring, and performance-driving events as permitted, and following appropriate guidelines. We are a welcoming BMW-enthusiast car club! Our chapter is an active participant in the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, which raises funds for Pittsburgh-based charities. We offer an annual teen Street Survival school to provide students with classroom

instruction and real-time driving skills, and increase their driving proficiency and safety. We partner with the Trillium Chapter to host a September driving school at Pittsburgh International Race Complex (PIRC) and look forward to partnering with other local chapters who would like to participate in future events. Our goal is to continue to provide our members with a variety of social and driving events that appeal to a diverse group of BMW car enthusiasts.

COLLEGE AND THE CAR OF MY DREAMS

BY NATHAN MCKEE

It's safe to say that for most people in this country, owning a car only serves the purpose of being a commuter mobile. For people like you and me, however, owning a car—especially a BMW—is far more than that. If I'm being honest, I was destined to love BMWs from the day I was born. The very first car ride I ever took was in my parents' 1995 E34 530i on the trip home from the hospital as a newborn. As a kid growing up, I loved that Bimmer in all its Cashmere Beige Metallic glory, even as it rusted through its quarter panels.

Fast-forward eighteen years to around the time I was graduating from high school: My father's friend had a 1990 E30 325iS rotting away in his garage. It was definitely a project, but I adored E30s for their simplicity, front-rear drivetrain, and ample access to parts. Within a few weeks, that project car became *our* project car as my dad and I set out to slowly restore it back to its former brilliance.

As I moved on to college, we replaced a few necessary items like the power-steering pump, the timing belt, and the water pump; we repaired the odometer and installed

a new set of tires, all of which helped it pass inspection. Without much time to get to know the car or put many miles on it, I drove the E30 a little over 100 miles to college.

I quickly became addicted to the Bimmer. The ride height was tall, and the shocks were original and over 26 years old—as were all of the suspension bushings, most of the seals, and everything in the cabin. It was a slow, floaty, amazing thing to drive, with all of its leaks and rattles simply adding to the experience.

I started to work down the extensive list of items to address. I started with a simple body-filler rust repair under the battery tray in the trunk, and a valve adjustment, both of which took place in a campus parking lot with nothing more than a few simple tools and help from my friends. Just like that, the memories were being made!

Six months later, my dad and I started to dig into the car with some larger projects. We removed the rear subframe, replaced all of the rubber subframe bushings, fabricated and replaced all of the brake lines, and installed stain-



Chapter Events

September 14–16:
High-Performance Driving School,
PIRC

September 20:
Narcisi Winery Social

October 10:
Deutsche Marque Oktoberfest

October 17:
Fall Leaves Tour

October 29:
Business Meeting

November 19:
Teutonia Mannerchor Social

Jan 23, 2021:
Post-Holiday Party

Visit alleghenybmwcca.org for
more events and information.

less-steel flex lines. This was followed by installing H&R lowering springs and new engine and transmission mounts. We recovered the ripped front seats and installed new polyurethane control-arm bushings. This was enough for me to add to the bank of E30 memories with a few autocross events, which were an absolute riot.

A few more months of daily driving passed until we tackled the next phase. We pulled out the engine, transmission, and differential, resealed everything, cleaned it all thoroughly, painted the engine block, changed all the fluids, sand-blasted and painted the front subframe, and finally removed the interior to fix some rust under the carpeting. This was by far the largest and most stressful project we had undertaken, especially considering that the 2019 Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix was right around the corner. It was my goal to have the Bimmer parked at the BMW Pavilion, where early 3 Series cars were the featured model.

After months of hard work, we put the final touches on the interior, tightened down the last few bolts, and at 10:00 p.m. on July 19, 2019, we fired it up for the first time in three months. Knowing that the car show started early the next morning, I felt a rush of accomplishment and fear, having gotten the car running but with no time for a test drive. I hadn't driven the car more than a few miles before driving all the way from my house to

find my spot on that golf course. I made it the entire way without much fuss, but oh, my, was I nervous!

This little red E30 has been nothing but a joy, each mile filled with memories and unending smiles. When something breaks, it gives me time to bond with my dad, and when it runs, it's something I can take to car shows and be proud of, and daily drive to work during the week. Between being able to participate in the fantastic events put on by the Allegheny Chapter and taking a tow-truck ride at 11:00 p.m. because my throttle cable snapped on the highway, I would not trade this BMW and the experiences it has afforded me for anything.

As I sit here writing this, we are in the process of completing one last major project: a full exterior restoration, full and proper rust repair, dent repair, and respray in the original *Brilliantrot*. After this,

there won't be a nut or bolt unturned—exactly the point of starting this project in the first place.

While there are people who couldn't care less about what they drive, I feel lucky to be a part of this BMW community. With just over 170,000 miles on the clock now, and as I have just graduated college and plan to move on to the next phase of my life, I have this fantastic 30-year-old Ultimate Driving Machine to carry me along the way.

