



# NEWSWERKS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE IOWA CHAPTER BMW CCA

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2007

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## Are you a "Car Guy?"

By Doug Wittkowski

First of all let's start out by defining a "Car Guy." First and foremost, you need not be a male. Some of the best and most memorable "Car Guys" I know are women; you also need not be a member of this or any other car club. In fact, I'd bet the majority of "Car Guys" are not, and I know several of the 1,000 members of Iowa BMW CCA that are most certainly not "Car Guys" and that's okay too.

So what makes a "Car Guy?" I think it is a passion for most everything automotive. Whether it's for antique cars, hot rods, muscle cars, modern imports or even trucks. A combination of all the aforementioned is even better. The common quality, I always see, is an excitement when talking about cars. Something clicks and you can't stop these people, they will talk cars forever. Whether it is the latest Formula One race or memories of a long lost car from their youth, a sparkle appears in their eyes, warmth fills their heart, a bounce springs their step or even an instant opinion surfaces when the right automotive buttons are pushed. And no, ownership or skill with an automobile isn't required either. Some of the most hardcore "Car Guys" I know simply have the love and have never had the ability, time, or circumstances to

own, drive or really covet the car of their dreams, most of us never will and that is okay, in fact, it's almost a requirement. When the dream of the first or next car experience is gone, so is the passion, and your "Car Guys" membership has then expired. For me, right now, in this phase of my life, it's a dream of preparing a certain BMW for extreme track duty and taking it to Germany to drive the Ring. Quite likely it will never happen but that's perfectly okay. My friend and business partner is the most car crazy "Car Guy" I have ever met and his goal is an entire collection of his favorites. What are your "Car Guy" dreams?

Is there a downside to this sickness? Well, I've heard complaints from some "non-Car Guy" spouses on both sides of the fence, but when I mention the other vices, habits, afflictions, and perversions that could be a problem, being a "Car Guy" even to the extreme seems perfectly acceptable to everyone involved. So, isn't it time to come out of the closet all the way? Sure you get all the monthly car rags, but hide them when company comes over. The only artwork in your home you really care about is your framed Monaco F1 poster or maybe your Sammy Swindell T-shirt. That's okay, please come out and just admit it. I see something else in "Car

*continues on page 7*

# Calendar of Events > January - October 2007

Events, club activities and all happenings BMW

**Monday, January 8, 2007 – Informal Social – 6:00 p.m.**

**Cosi Cucina Grill, 1975 NW 8th Street, Clive**

**Saturday, January 27, 2007 – Fourth Annual Chili & Soup Cookoff**

**Coe College, Clark Alumni House, 1220 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids**

Bring your best chili or soup for a little friendly competition. Don't cook? No problem, Come on over, enjoy the food and vote for your favorite in three categories – Red Chili, Exotic Chili, and Soup.

Setup from 11 am to Noon - Judging (and eating) Noon to 1:00 p.m. - Awards Presentation 1:30 p.m.

RSVP by January 21 to Mike Bengel at [mbengel@mchsi.com](mailto:mbengel@mchsi.com)

More information and the judging criteria can be found online at [www.bmwia.org](http://www.bmwia.org)

**Monday, February 5, 2007 – Informal Social – 6:00 p.m.**

**Felix & Oscar's, Merle Hay Road, Des Moines**

**Saturday, February 24, 2007 – Annual Meeting & Banquet**

**Iowa Speedway, Newton**

Featuring Keynote Speaker Satch Carlson, Editor-in-Chief, *Roundel Magazine*

See article on Page 6 for more information

**Tuesday, March 13, 2007 – Informal Social – 6:00 p.m.**

**The Big Steer, Adventureland Drive, Altoona**

**March 22-25, 2007 – National TechFest**

**Sheraton Tacoma - Tacoma, WA**

This outstanding three-day event will be held at the Sheraton Tacoma Hotel. Located in the heart of the business district, roughly 18 miles from the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport [www.portseattle.org/seatac/](http://www.portseattle.org/seatac/), the Sheraton Tacoma Hotel boasts sweeping views of the city skyline, harbor, and nearby Mt. Rainier. The contemporary 26-story hotel is convenient to Tacoma's many attractions, including the Broadway Center For Performing Arts, Enchanted Village Amusement Park, and much more. Tacoma, WA is located at the foot of Mount Rainier and along the shores of Commencement Bay in Washington State. Call the Sheraton Tacoma at 888-627-7044 and be sure to ask for the BMW Car Club of America discount. Registration forms will be posted online at [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org).

**March 2007 – Bowling Event – Visit our Web site and watch for e-mail updates for more information**

**Saturday, April 1, 2007 – \$1,000,000 Fun Touring Rally – A Photo Tour of Des Moines**

A fun event for the whole family, the more people in your vehicle the better your chances of winning the \$1,000,000 prize! (April Fools – no one will win \$1,000,000 but it got your attention!) This Rally will be a photo tour of Des Moines. On the evening of March 31, 2007 photos and route instructions will be e-mailed to everyone who has pre-registered. There is no starting time for the Fun Rally, no checkpoints, no traps and no timing... just follow the route instructions and match the pictures provided with the location on the route. Run the route as many times as you'd like! The Rally will end at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 1st when your completed scorecard must be turned in. We will have some food and beverage at the designated ending location and award prizes to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. Everyone is invited to participate and you can have as many people in your vehicle as you would like. Only one completed scorecard per vehicle! For more information and to pre-register for the event, please e-mail Event Chairman, Martha Wittkowski at [wittawerks@lisco.com](mailto:wittawerks@lisco.com)

**Saturday, May 19, 2007 – Annual Clean Car Concours**

Time and Location to be determined

**June 9-10, 2007 – Iowa Chapter Longest Day Driving School**

**Mid America Motorplex, Pacific Junction, IA**

**September 30 - October 5, 2007 – National Oktoberfest**

**Hilton Ft. Worth – Ft. Worth, TX**

Fort Worth is filled with a unique mix of attractions for visitors – from cowboys to culture and sports to shopping. Explore the legendary Fort Worth Stockyards, the world-class Cultural District, downtown's dazzling Sundance Square, and the top-ranked Fort Worth Zoo and much, much more. "A Moment in Time. A Place in History." The Hilton Fort Worth is located in downtown Fort Worth across the street from the Fort Worth Convention Center and steps away from famous Sundance Square, with great entertainment, shopping and dining. Visit [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org) for updated information and registration details.

## NEWSWERKS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE IOWA CHAPTER BMW CCA

NEWSWERKS is published by VIVAMEDIA, Inc. for the Iowa Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America.

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To become a member of the Iowa Chapter BMW CCA visit our Web site at [www.bmwia.org](http://www.bmwia.org)

Please submit material suitable for publication to:  
Martha Wittkowski at: [newsletter@bmwia.com](mailto:newsletter@bmwia.com)

## Holiday Party a Success!

What did you do for your holiday party this year? The club held its annual Holiday Party at my home on December 2nd. After holding the event at hotels the last couple of years it was decided to return to an individual's home. A home as we have found out is more comfortable, more conducive to relaxing and simply more inviting. I volunteered mine and I'm glad I did. Of course the day or two just prior to the event I would have never said that with all the preparation, cleaning and running around that an event of this sort requires. The day after the event I would have volunteered my home again for the next year's party as the memories of all the work faded into the laughter, talking, smiling, and camaraderie of the evening.

The party provided all of us a chance to share some holiday stories, some warm wishes for a happy holiday season, and inevitably, car stories. I reminisced about the 2000 O'fest trip with some friends who made the trip with me. We concluded there is nothing stopping us from doing a similar trip at some point in the near future and I'm looking forward to enjoying the company of some remarkable people taking a road trip.

It always comes back to the people for me, it's the people that make our club special and unique and once again that point was never more evident than at the Holiday Party. Dozens upon dozens of people talking, laughing and simply having a good time enjoying one another's company and sharing some incredible food prepared by Julien LeChef of Cedar Rapids. From the first, to the most recent event I've attended the people always make the difference. The discussions inevitably get back to the cars, however, what I notice is the talking, the joking, the good times that center around each other and that's truly what this time of year is all about.

Our club hosts numerous events throughout the year and we hope you take the time out of your busy life to come by, say hi and see for yourself that what I'm saying is true.

I wish you and yours happiness and health in 2007.



Mike Benge  
President



bimmerworld



## Cast Your Ballot



All members and associate members, in good standing, may cast a ballot.

**Mail your completed ballot by February 24, 2007 to:**  
Iowa Chapter BMWCCA, PO Box 42113 Urbandale, IA 50323

- President: Mike Bengé, Cedar Rapids
- Vice President: David Brighton, Ft. Dodge
- Treasurer: Fred Bell, West Des Moines
- Secretary: David Trachtenberg, Des Moines

### Directors-at-Large (Vote for 3)

- Doug Wittkowski, Pleasantville
- Don VanLengen, Des Moines
- Brian Smith, Osceola

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_

## BMWs...not just for the rich and famous.

by: David Tractenberg

It was the fall of 1993, and I had lived in Des Moines for about a year and a half. At that time, I was driving a 1989 Nissan 240SX. The car had about 90,000 miles on it, and I started to think about my next vehicle.

At that time, a good friend's wife was a sales person at Dave Ostrem Imports. My friend and I would stop by the dealership, and she would let us take out the used BMWs. That's when I developed my first appreciation of this fine automobile. Although I had driven quite a few, I never thought that I'd ever own one. I was a poor salesman, and BMWs were for the rich and famous, right?

One crisp and sunny Sunday in fall, I sat in the living room of my West Des Moines apartment reading the automobile classifieds. I came upon an ad for a 1991 BMW 525i with 20,000 miles. I started to fantasize about cruising around town in a great car like this.

I called my buddy and asked him if he wanted to go with me to check out this car. We both had nothing better to do, so I picked him up and we headed towards Johnston. We arrived at this very nice neighborhood and searched for the correct address. We found the right house, and proceeded up the driveway. At the top of the

**“At the top of the driveway, was a car with a grey cover over it. The owner came out and uncovered an absolutely beautiful automobile. The car was spotless. A beautiful black BMW that had been treated like a queen.”**

driveway, was a car with a grey cover over it. The owner came out and uncovered an absolutely beautiful automobile. The car was spotless. A beautiful black BMW that had been treated like a queen.

The owner tossed me the keys, and we all jumped in for a test drive. It really felt strange being in a luxury car like this. This car was such a pleasure to drive, unlike my Nissan. When this car was new in 1991, the sticker was for over \$38,000. The owner was asking \$26,000.

My buddy and I thanked the owner, and we headed for home. We couldn't stop talking about this car. The workweek started, and I still couldn't get this car off my mind. One day, while on the road, I stopped by the local Nissan dealership. Just for fun, I wanted to see what they might give me for my Nissan. A salesman came out, was

impressed with the shape that it was in and said that he could probably give me about \$6,300 for it.

I knew that to swing the BMW, I had to sell the Nissan. I started to think of every reason why I shouldn't buy the BMW. The money could be used as a down payment for my first house, I could buy a wonderful new American car for the same price, the Nissan still had life in it, so why get rid of it? It was finally time to do something spur of the moment. Knowing that I could now sell the 240, I called the owner of the BMW and offered him \$25,000. After he thought about it for a while, he countered with \$25,500. Being the top-notch salesman that I am, I held to my \$25,000, and he finally gave in. I told him that I would be back to him in a couple of days with my loan money and the money from selling the Nissan.

I couldn't wipe the smile off my face. I was about to own a BMW. I flew back to the Nissan dealership to unload the 240. The same salesman came out and told me that they had changed their mind and weren't interested in the car. I couldn't believe my ears. I asked what had changed, and they wouldn't tell me. They just didn't want the car.

This was the end of the road; I was about to lose "my" BMW. I got back in the 240 and did everything not to cry. I'm driving back home, and I see one of those used car dealers that looked like it had been a gas station in a former life. I thought to myself, what are the chances that a place like this would want my Nissan? I pulled in and a salesman stepped out and started to drool over my 240. I could tell that he was hot for this car. He offered me \$6k for the car. Being elated once again, I forgot to ask for more, and I yelled, "sold." He proceeded to peel off 60 \$100 bills and handed them to me. As you might guess, the bank was quite interested in where I got this cash, but that's a story for another time.

I picked up my black beauty, and proceeded out of the driveway. I drove the car less than a mile down the road, and had to stop in a store parking lot and turn off the car. I was actually shaking. What had I done? I don't deserve to have a car like this. Aren't cars like this for doctors or lawyers? I got my composure back and got the car to my garage.

So, why have I kept this car and taken such good care of it? Probably because I never thought that I'd be able to own one. I share this story with you to emphasize what we all know – that a BMW can be for anyone. In the same regard, this club is for all of us. The well to do with the new M5s as well as the poor schmucks with the 16-year-old 5 Series.

# 2007 Annual Meeting and Banquet

**Date: Saturday, February 24, 2007**

**Location: The New Iowa Speedway**

The evening will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour and a chance to visit with your fellow chapter members. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. and will be prepared by the Executive Chef of the Iowa Speedway.

We are pleased to announce that Satch Carlson, Editor-in-Chief of *Roundel Magazine* will once again be our Keynote Speaker for the event:

### About our Keynote Speaker:

Raconteur, humorist, and veteran correspondent of what he calls the "International Motorsports Journalism Bidness," Satch Carlson spent many years as a columnist and feature writer for *AutoWeek Magazine* and other publications before taking the helm of *Roundel* in 1998 as editor-in-chief.

Specializing in a humorous approach to our automotive fixations, Carlson's actual experience with cars ran an eclectic gauntlet before he honed in on BMW; from Jeeps to Saabs to a brief flirtation with a Citroën SM, his varied experiences provided a steady flow of writing.

Carlson's first Bavarian crush was a 3.0CS coupe. "My wife and I saw one in the showroom," he says. "It was the first time she really understood what a grand-touring car was all about." Like every other BMW he has owned, however, the coupe was well beyond his price range. "The wife had gone ex long before I had the money for a 3.0CS," he laughs, "and long before the coupe had come down to the money I had."

In a similar fashion, Carlson fell for BMW's underrated 325iX the first time he saw one at play on the AICan Highway. "That was 1988," he recalls, "and it took me until 1994 to scheme and scam a way to scrape up the credit to buy an iX with a hundred thousand miles on it." He added another hundred thousand before blowing the car up in the Canadian wilderness in 2000; the iX has recently emerged from Dinan Engineering considerably faster than it was when it was new—and Carlson is once again deeply in debt for a car worth about a tenth of what he owes on it. Just as he has had a fascination with a wide array of automotive pursuits, Carlson has certain odd geographic fixations, living in Alaska for 35 years before moving to Portland, Oregon, in 2004. "That one was a no-brainer," he says. "I finally figured that Alaska gets cold and dark in the winter!" Meanwhile, he developed affectionate ties with the Midwest, traveling to Kansas to instruct again and again at Heartland Park and visiting the Amana Colonies for the Iowa Chapter's annual dinner after the chapter's revival from dormancy. "I loved that affair," he admits. "Where else could you get a year's supply of cholesterol in just one sitting?!" While he is eagerly looking forward to our February dinner, our keynote speaker admits to one regret. "I love Iowa corn," he says. "If we held these things in the summer, I could really pig out!"



The evening promises to be fun and entertaining and one you don't want to miss. Don't forget there will be door prizes and we will be presenting the "Sponsor of the Year" Award, the "Cutting it a Little Fine" Award and the "Member of the Year" Award.

**Space is limited so reserve your place early.**



### Yes, I/We plan on attending the 2007 Annual Meeting.

Please make \_\_\_\_\_ reservations at \$30 each for the following individuals:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership# \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership# \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail reservation and payment to:

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P.O. Box 42113  
Des Moines, IA 50322

**Reservations and payment may also be made via PayPal** by visiting our web site at [www.bmwia.org](http://www.bmwia.org)

**RESERVATIONS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 15, 2007**

## Sale Listings

**Having traded in my beloved 540i, I have leftovers for sale:** a set of heavy **rubber winter floor mats** (fit both E38 and E39 models), **\$25**; a set of **E39 service manuals**, over \$112 on Amazon, priceless if you need them, **\$50**; set of **4 Magilia 1000 wheels** (two 17 x 8, two 17 x9) with 6 Pirelli P Zero Corsa track tires two of which have been used once (four 235/45-17, two 255/40-17), all for **\$500**. Shipping is additional; pick up or maybe I could meet part way with tires only. I also have a set of Subaru **rubber mats** and a number of nice Craftsman **tool chests and rollaways** cheap if any one is interested.  
**Bruce Heyne, 712-784-3454, 712-249-0227, heyne@walnutel.net**

### Are you a "Car Guy?"

*continued from front cover*

Guys," in a higher percentage than I think I should, and that's a certain amount of shame in being a "Car Guy." Get this straight. We're not just worshiping a simple material object. It's so much more than that – this is a lifestyle. We're enjoying our passion for the entire experience including – at the very nucleus – the people that we enjoy and admire in whatever part of this "Car Guy" thing is ours.

And here's how sick it can get. To this day, on summer evenings on most Friday and Saturday nights, I can clearly hear the roar of the V8 powered Sprint Cars running the track at Knoxville, from our home. And even though that antiquated pushrod V8 roar is something long past in my life, I still have something deep inside me that causes that sound to somehow be very comforting and it is literally music to my ears. If the weather is right and cool enough to open windows on those summer evenings it's like I'm a baby in my mothers arms as I fall asleep to the sweet music of a true "Car Guy" sound. It's heaven, I tell ya, and if I'm alone, I'll be very surprised. □



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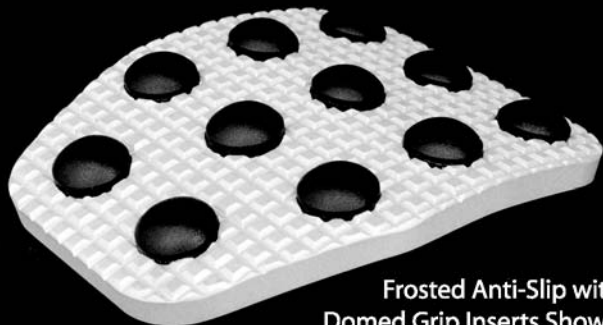
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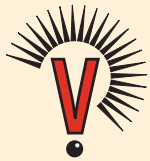




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