

December 2008

the Milepost

the Kansas City BMW Club newsletter



Exciting New Annual Dinner Venue



The Annual Dinner on January 17, 2009 will be at one of Kansas City's premier spots for great food and unbeatable beverages: Boulevard Brewing Company.

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the Milepost

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December 2008



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P.O. Box 4832
Overland Park, KS 66204

Check our web site:
<http://www.kcbmwclub.org>
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to get the latest club
announcements!!!

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Upcoming Events

Important: The December Monthly Meeting is moved to Saturday, December 13, 2008.

Saturday, December 13, 2008 at 2:00 PM

Mighty Morphin' Go-kart Challenge at Sadlers

Kart drivers must be 18 or older, and must pre-register.
(see Club Forums online for details)

Saturday December 20, 2008, 6:00 PM

Wichita Christmas Party at Joe Self BMW, Wichita, KS

Catering by Pig In Pig Out BBQ. Only \$10 per person! Door prizes by Joe Self BMW and more. RSVP to Pete Snyder at 316-461-8930.

Saturday, January 3, 2009, 8:00 AM

First Saturday Get Together

Panera's on Shawnee Mission Parkway.

Saturday, January 17, 2009 at 6:00 PM

KC BMW Club Annual Meeting and Dinner at Boulevard Brewery (see article on page 5)

Saturday, February 7, 2009, 8:00 AM

First Saturday Get Together

Panera's on Shawnee Mission Parkway.

Thursday, February 19, 2009, 6:00 PM

Monthly club meeting

Lucky Brewgrill Lower Level at 5401 Johnson Drive, Mission, KS

We Need You

We know you're out there. You probably take it for granted but you probably also enjoy it. That is to say, you enjoy communicating—maybe through a blog or as a regular forum contributor. Perhaps photography or graphics are your thing, and you are well down the path of experience with Photoshop. Maybe layout and design work are more your thing; you understand the flow and navigation of information design, maybe as a web designer or layout editor.

We want—and need—to keep improving. It's not that we're unhappy with the way things are; we just want to keep improving one of our most visible products—our Club newsletter. *The Milepost* is one of the most durable and tangible representations of the Kansas City BMW Club. It is our single most important tool for informing and entertaining our membership, and it speaks on our behalf to prospective members. As with most organizations, you thrive when

you keep moving, staying up to date—keeping things fresh. So it is for us. *The Milepost* is overdue for a redesign. We want better integration between print, online and e-media. We want to deliver a more compelling product to our Club members and we want to increase the value proposition for our sponsors and advertisers.

We're looking for a few good volunteers with the time, talent and desire to help move the Kansas City BMW Club's newsletter—'The Milepost'—to the next level of design and content.

Good things happen when we work together. Every one of our Club events—whether it be car show, Street Survival, or summer picnic—happens because of teamwork. Said differently, nobody can or should try to carry the burden alone. We need a core *Milepost* editorial team to produce the current

publication while driving us forward. If past is prologue, the rewards will surely exceed the effort invested.

Please contact Alan Staples (president@kcbmwclub.com) for more information.

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Annual Meeting and Dinner Set for January 17, 2009

Join us as we celebrate the year just finished and the new year just starting!

This year we bid farewell to the familiar surrounds of the Baron BMW garage to drive a few miles North up I-35 to enjoy the glittering cityscape views as seen from the Muehlebach Suite perched at the top of the Boulevard Brewing Company.

When: Saturday, January 17, 2009

Where: Muehlebach Suite at Boulevard Brewing Co.
2501 Southwest Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64108

Time: 6:00 Social
7:00 Dinner and Annual Meeting
8:00 Speaker and Prize Drawings

Cost: \$40 per person plus one food item for Harvesters

Attire: Casual

Here are the details of the evening that we know as of our printing deadline. Additional information will be posted to the Club home page (www.kcbmwclub.org).

Reality Check. Even as we gather for an evening of celebration and entertainment, we are mindful there are many others in great need. This year the Kansas City BMW Club is pleased to support Harvesters by asking everyone to bring a food item or cash donation for Harvesters. We'll have a Harvesters food bin at check-in and hope to return it completely full.

Raffle. Pay attention here, because we're doing things a bit different this year. Rather than hold an all-night raffle marathon, we will have a limited number of very valuable and desirable prizes to be awarded by random drawing.

Fine Print! Each person listed on a paid dinner reservation who makes a food item or money donation in excess of \$20 to Harvesters will receive one raffle ticket (limit one raffle ticket per person).

Grand Prize. The jewelry mavens of the world will tell you the diamond is the birthstone of choice for celebrating a tenth birthday. Hey, we're at least ten! Others would tell you Valentine's Day is just around the corner. Either way, it is a great pleasure to announce that **Meierotto Midwest Jewelry** has generously made available **selected jewelry with a total value of \$3,000** to be raffled as grand prizes. What a way to treat yourself or your special valentine!

Grand Prize. Thousands of dollars of jewelry—it's enough to leave some of us breathless. That breathlessness

wouldn't be such a problem if we rode a bike once in a while. That's why **Baron BMW** has graciously contributed a **BMW bicycle** as a grand prize.

Premium Prizes. A fortunate few will be rolling phat with some serious bling, but what about the rest of us? Worry not, Sparky, we've got your six. We'll be raffling gift certificates and other Good Things from **BimmerWorld**, **Bavarian Autosport**, **UUC Motorwerks**, and others.

What's For Dinner? Glad you asked. We will be treated to an exceptional array of salads, meats, veggies, and sweets prepared by Culinary Arts Institute Executive Chef (and fellow BMW pilot) Scott Welsh and his ace kitchen staff. Wash away the trail dust from your parched throat with a variety of Boulevard beers. Enjoy your favorite Boulevard brew with dinner or one of their private label red or white wines. Roasterie coffee and the usual array of sodas and water will also be available. Your meal and all beverages are included with your paid reservation.

Entertainment: Many people read Kansas City Star contributing editor and all-around car guy **Tom Strongman's** automotive reviews or see his video reports on local news. But only so much gets published or broadcast. In the course of building his career Tom became very well traveled and created countless friendships with legends in the world of car collectors and motorsports. His exceptional lens-work has captured some of the rarest, most unique, and most desirable cars in the world. We are thankful and fortunate Tom has agreed to spend time with us bringing those pictures and stories to life.

Amusements. For those feeling the need for a little speed, we'll have a friendly round of Gran Turismo after dinner. From Novice to Expert, all are welcome and encouraged to take a turn at the video wheel.

Brewery Tours. Boulevard Brewing Co. has generously offered a tour of their brewery. This is a no-charge extra on a first come, first served basis. The tour is limited to 30 people and lasts approximately 15 minutes.

Reserve a place at the table for yourself, your spouse, family, and friends by making your reservation today. You can mail your reservation and payment (personal checks only, please) with your completed ballot. If you want to charge the dinner, go to our home page and follow instructions posted there. We look forward to seeing you at the Boulevard.

The Benefits of Belonging

by Alan Staples

Sometimes you have to hear yourself say it out loud. That happened for me recently. The “it” heard aloud was my recitation of BMW Club benefits for a non-renewing member. It’s no surprise the reasons were compelling enough for our wayward friend to renew membership with our Club. Just the same, it is sometimes easy to take for granted or (gasp!) not even be aware of all the great benefits that come with being a member in good standing with the BMW CCA/Kansas City BMW Club, so let’s review:

Roundel – The magazine of the BMW CCA is consistently among the best of the best in automotive journalism, and a great resource for all things BMW.

Milepost – Your metro area newsletter and indispensable resource for What’s Up and What Went Down. Sign-up for online delivery to get your e-Milepost in Full Vibrant Color; sleep better knowing your carbon footprint is that much greener.

Financial

Membership Rewards – cash rebates on select new and Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) BMWs. The smallest of the Membership Rewards more than repays your out-of-pocket cost for multiple years of BMW Club membership.

Dealer Discounts – on services, merchandise, and parts at Baron BMW and many other US BMW dealers. One trip to the parts counter, to the Life Style parlor, or the check-in line for non-warranty work and your annual membership cost is likely repaid in full by Dealer Discounts.

Retail Discounts – on Anheuser Busch theme park admission, Avis Rental Car, Brooks Brothers clothiers, the Biltmore Museum (Asheville, NC), BMW Performance Driving Schools, Grand Bohemian Hotel (Asheville, NC), Grove Park Hotel (Asheville, NC), Hertz Rental Car, International Golf Rental & Sales, and Goodyear Tire Co.

Vendor Discounts – A quick glance in *Roundel* and the *Milepost* confirms that there are a LOT of local and national vendors offering promotions and discounts to Club members.

Other

Ombudsmen – Club members trained and dedicated in the art and science of helping you resolve frustrating dealership issues

Tech Talk – Mike Miller, Terry Sayther, Jenny Morgan and a host of others that know their way around your model and year of BMW stand ready, willing, and able to help with do-it-yourself projects and resolve the mysteries swirling about the proper operation and maintenance of your BMW.

Club Racing – For those who’ve mastered the Club DE or simply thrive on competitive motorsports, BMW CCA Club Racing provides a well-structured, safe, and fun way to test and hone your mad driving skilz.

Classified Ads – Free national advertising in *Roundel* magazine and on the BMW CCA and KC BMW Club web sites

Library – Free books and videos for borrowing, just call the BMW CCA National Office and ask.

Forums – Full access to, and posting privileges on the BMW CCA and KC BMW Club forums

Special Interest Groups – Group therapy and support for many vintage and iconic BMWs

Community – Okay, by the book, you don’t gotta be a member of the Club to enjoy our Club community, but it IS the people that make this Club so special.



A black and white advertisement for James Belfield, DDS. The ad features a photograph of a smiling woman wearing a hat. To the right of the photo, the text reads: 'A smile is ageless'. Below this, a paragraph states: 'Today's cosmetic dentistry combines the benefits of natural beauty and healthy structure for results that are not only dramatic, but also functional and long-lasting. Call today for a consultation and discover the possibilities for you.' Further down, it says: 'We have solutions for many common dental problems.' and 'We strive to exceed your expectations.' The name 'James Belfield, DDS' is prominently displayed. At the bottom, the address '15220 W. 87th Parkway, Lenexa (Next to Walgreens)' and phone number '(913) 888-0005' are listed. The website 'www.drbelfield.com' and email 'smile@drbelfield.com' are also provided. The entire advertisement is enclosed in a rectangular border.

Kansas City BMW Club Annual Meeting and Dinner

Saturday, 17 January 2009

Reservation Form

Sign me up! (Write "Yes" for EACH person that wants to go on a brewery tour. Must arrive at 5:30 p.m. First come, first served)

Please print your first and last name Brewery Tour

Please print the first and last name of your guest Brewery Tour

Please print the first and last name of your guest Brewery Tour

Please print the first and last name of your guest Brewery Tour

Raffle Tickets:

- Please bring at least one food item or a cash donation of \$20 (or more) for Harvesters. Check the KC BMW Club home page (www.kcbmwclub.org) for a listing of preferred food items. In exchange for your donation you will receive one raffle ticket that can be used for any of the prizes to be given away that evening.
- Additional raffle tickets can be purchased with your reservation or at the dinner (cash only). A total of 750 raffle tickets will be in play. Buy as many tickets as you want, but when they are gone, that's it. (Hint: Don't wait until the dinner to purchase those extra raffle tickets).

Total Number Attending x \$40.00 ea. = \$ _____

_____ raffle tickets @ \$10 each = \$ _____

Total Amount Due = \$ _____

Where: The Muehlebach Suite
Boulevard Brewery
2501 Southwest Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64108

Time: 6:00 PM Social
7:00 PM Dinner, Annual Meeting
8:00 PM Speaker, Prize Drawings

Dress: Casual Attire

Prizes: Meierotto Jewelry, a BMW Bicycle, and other great prizes!

Entertainment:
Tom Strongman presentation
Brewery tour (limited availability)
Gran Turismo Challenge

Please make your personal check payable to the
Kansas City BMW Club.

Send your reservation and payment to:
Kansas City BMW Club
P.O. Box 4832
Overland Park, KS 66204

You may mail in this form in the same envelope as your annual election ballot. (See page 13.)



The 135i - Delivering Domestic and Automotive Bliss

by Hugo Becker

A thriving Amish community inhabits Daviess County, Missouri. The small burg of Jamesport, located on the eastern edge of the county, serves as the community's hub. Jamesport isn't even big enough for a town square (it's not the county seat, so no courthouse dominates the town), just a four-way stop on the two intersecting main drags lined with buildings from the turn of the last century, now devoid of anything but antique "shoppes" and stores that specialize in "lovely." Mixed amongst the day trippers and bussed-in seniors are the Amish themselves.

The Amish are popularly represented as simple and plain people, but if you scratch the surface they're anything but. That holds true, to a large extent, for the BMW 135i Coupe. An upright two-door coupe with styling some believe is inhibited by the need to reuse bits from the 1 Series hatchback. Its exterior is not as sleek and swoopy as its 3 Series older sibling nor is the interior a fighter-jet replica, as are the interiors of the some of the 135i's competitors.

So why does a review of the 135i begin with a trip to some obscure Missouri farming village? Car, meet the wife; wife, meet the car.

Filling a Certain Need. The 135i was selected to replace a Mazda Miata that She Who Must Be Obeyed was never once thrilled to ride in. A petite woman with a bad back, she winced every time she rode in that car. It shook, jarred, and tail-wagged the good humor out of her faster than anything else known to man.

After exploring the edges of the 135i by myself, it was time for the Boss to render a verdict. Was this to be the Grand Touring vehicle I envisioned at purchase? Or would she find it as unsuitable as the Miata?

Driving north out of Independence, Missouri on state roads (two lanes), the journey to Jamesport took about two hours. Plenty of broken surfaces and opportunities to pass slower vehicles that were sure to elicit a reaction. As the passenger door opened outside of one of the two decent bakeries in town (the reason she enjoys Jamesport) it was evident that the 135i was approved. The fact that she exited without pain served as testament that we now own a usable GT.

A slip of paper has inhabited a desk drawer in the den since 2003. Labeled simply, "the Coupe," it carried a list of characteristics I was looking for in a closed car that was to be used for exploring the American West: an inline six cylinder, adequate luggage space, good styling, useful amenities, and decent entry and exit.

The Driving Experience. In transitioning from the Miata, handling was a prime concern for "the Coupe." I was hoping for a roughly similar set of capabilities even though weight and weight placement were significantly different.

Although BMW claims that the 135i has a nearly 50/50 weight balance (actually more like 52/48—close to the Miata's) it distributes that weight differently than either the Miata or Cayman. There is more weight ahead of the axle centerline in front and then they added the elusive trim weight in the rear. The Miata places less weight beyond the axle centerlines; Porsche's Cayman S even less.



Photo by Hugo Becker

That raised a concern regarding how well the 135i would rotate through a turn. It was evident upon completion of the first drive that it would stick, but how would it transition? The numbers are in, as well as some initial pushes at the edge of the envelope. It does quite well. Empirically, the "dreaded understeer" is not much more than an effort to keep on the inside of the normal driver's skill envelope. I've noticed understeer at track-out in slow speed corners with all electronic nannies left on (nannies turned off is another story). With that said, it doesn't rotate as seamlessly as either the Miata or Cayman. *Safe and predictable* would be a good way of describing the out-of-the-box handling of the 135i.

Another concern was how the 135i would feel at slow speeds. Previous drives in a number of relatively potent cars underscored a less-than-optimum slow speed feel. Some of those coupes felt "bound-up" when going less than extra-legal speeds. That's fine if you drive daily on the unlimited stretches of the autobahn, but murderous when trying to trundle through Jackrabbit Falls at the posted speed limit. Here the 135i does not suffer.

Because this car would serve as a Grand Tourer, I was interested in how much isolation the suspension would provide from road imperfections. There are some great cruisers that feel and handle like a Barcalounger. Delivering decent handling with an acceptable level of comfort over the long haul is an incredible challenge. This, fortunately, is something the Germans are exceptionally good at. Unlike its older E46 M3 brother—which feels to me as if it's on tip-

toes, eager, and wired—the 135i is dialed back a bit and more relaxed. It appears to have very soft spring rates, but those are coupled to relatively stiff shocks. Ideal for my Grand Touring focus.

The Design. The Amish are renowned for their restrained appearance and a well crafted simplicity. Loath to emulate what they view as the discordant modern world, they shun modernity. Amish building and furniture making is highly praised but the superficial simplicity of styling belies a well conceived and carefully constructed core.

Two simple lines define the exterior of the 1 Series. The beltline runs from the tip of the front fenders all the way through the rear decklid. Higher than the beltline of the 3 Series, it tends to emphasize the vertical, when the 1 Series is actually only marginally taller than the 3 Series.

The beltline has an almost nautical appeal to it, being not unlike the gunwale of a small row boat: broad at the beam and straight across at the transom. To carry that nautical notion forward, imagine extending the beltline from the front edge of the fenders to beyond the front of the car and you'll envision it ending in a point, like the prow of a boat.

The other prominent line is the curve that runs just above the rockers on each side of the car. With a bit of a sway towards the front, it "pinches" the apparent size of the wheelbase. At 104 inches the 1 Series wheelbase is only four inches shorter than the 3 Series, but that lower line does a good job disguising it.

In reality, BMW could have made the 1 Series a "mini 3" using the same styling for both vehicles. It is to their credit they did not. BMW's 3 Series has a much more important place in their product portfolio than the 1 Series, and subsequently BMW could take more risks with the styling of the 1 Series coupe. While it does not appeal to everyone, it does seem to have generated enough enthusiasm to satisfy the saturation point BMW is trying to achieve.

Inside. The interior is decently devoid of extraneous fiddly bits and appeals to a Germanic notion of restraint. Only the instrumentation needed is provided, plus a minimum of additional knobs, switches, and dials in the secondary controls. In fact the *reductio ad absurdum* of this philosophy may be the notion of one controller for all functions (iDrive, anyone?).

The interior materials and finish from the B pillar forward are very good to excellent. In a truly premium car the grain would be matched on the center console trim – but how much did you really want to pay for a 1 Series?

Behind the B pillar though, the cost cutting shows up. The backseat area is finished at a fraction of the level of the equivalent 3 Series coupe. The interior space and layout of the 135 is optimized for front seat passengers and only an occasional use of the rears.

The coupe I own has the US market premium stereo, iPod/USB adapter, and HD radio options. Of that, I would say that the iPod/USB option is the most significant and one option that I would advise all to stroke when ordering. There are some owners that have undertaken stereo upgrades from the base system to their satisfaction. If you're left wanting after auditioning the premium system, consider ordering the base stereo system since it is more amenable to upgrading.

The interior noise levels are quiet enough to enhance the enjoyment of music in the car. If I could make changes I would like to see a couple of items added to the display: track timing and volume levels. I miss these from previous cars. I would also recommend a "compress" option—invaluable for those of us who enjoy classical music, and its wide dynamic range, which otherwise requires constant fiddling with the volume control to optimize listening while underway.

The real highlight of the interior, though, is the seats. The 135i sport seats are absolutely delightful over long distances. The proof of that was my wife's reaction to the long haul without breaks on the return from Jamesport where she exited as if the journey had just begun—a significant plus. Thank you, BMW. The seats are exceptionally supportive and with the US optional premium package, tailorable to the individual's needs.

The Motivator. The journey home took us through Chillicothe, Missouri, the home of sliced bread. A local baker teamed up with an inventor who produced the first commercially viable bread slicer in 1928, about the time BMW started making cars. Their sales jumped

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2000 percent in a week after making sliced bread available. That bit of history leads to the old saw about any new technology being the “next best thing to sliced bread.”

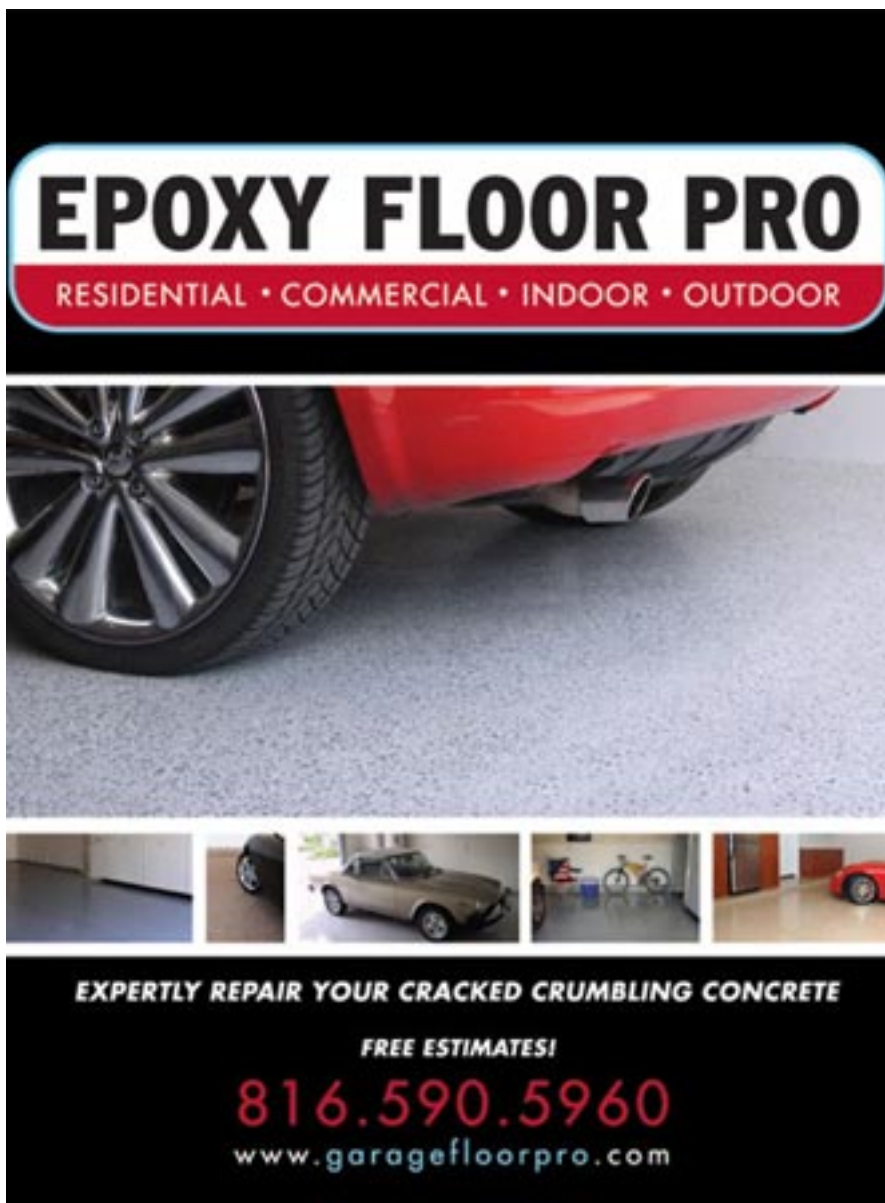
For those of us who own a post-’06 BMW with a “35” in the badge know and marvel at how the N54 motor is the next best thing since sliced bread.

How good is this engine? Well it obviates the need for a V8 in the 5 Series, shines in the 3 Series, and is absolutely brilliant in the 135. The enabling technology of this masterpiece from BMW is the high pressure piezoelectric fuel injectors placed directly in the cylinder head. Direct fuel injection opens a number of possibilities in gasoline engines: stratified charge, low pressure turbo-supercharging, crazy valve timing, and a bevy of alternatives when the intake track is dry up to the cylinder head. While there have been issues reported with high pressure fuel pump failures, this technology is worth the risk.

At 100 HP per liter, this was an unthinkable engine ten years ago and yet it’s available for sale in BMW’s entry level model. It would not surprise me if BMW tapped into the tuner market with their own software upgrades to rival those currently available from third parties. In fact it has been interesting to see the traditionally Pacific-centric third party tuners take to the N54 like ducks to water.

Coupled with the six-speed manual transmission, this motor is a blast in the 135i. Somewhat lighter than the 335i, the acceleration in the 135i is phenomenal. The ZF gearbox is crisp with an easy-to-locate gate, something that some six-speed shifters don’t do too well. Coupled with an “M” shift knob and steering wheel (available in the optional sport package), the 135i is a driver’s delight.

And so... The happy ending of this story is that I now have a true Grand Touring car matching the requisite needs of “the Coupe” with enough handling prowess and comfort to transport the woman with the bad back in style and speed on the blue highways of the American continent. Well done, BMW!



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Kansas City BMW Club Election Ballot

Mail your ballot by January 10th, 2009 or hand-deliver it no later than 7:00 pm at the Annual Meeting and Dinner.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/ST/ZIP: _____

BMW CCA NO: (optional): _____

SIGNATURE: _____

President	
Alan Staples	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vice President	
Mike Staub	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vice President - Springfield	
Chris Conant	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vice President - Wichita	
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Secretary	
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Treasurer (Vote for 1)	
David Stadtmueller	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ray Spitzer	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Board Member At Large (Vote for up to 4)	
Bob Harsh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brad Rein	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greg Gelatka	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greg Lippert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hugo Becker	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jeff Taggert	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ned Smith	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steve Wise	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Kansas City BMW Club
Election of Officers
Ballot Instructions

The Board of the Kansas City BMW Club received nominations for club offices. All candidates are included on the ballot. There are also spaces for write-in candidates. Vote for each office by checking the box next to the name of the listed candidate or write-in candidate. Add your name, address, and signature, and then mail your ballot to:

Kansas City BMW Club
PO Box 4832
Overland Park, KS 66204

Ballots must be postmarked no later than January 10, 2009 or hand delivered by 7:00 pm at the Annual Meeting and Dinner. Your ballot must include your first and last name, and your address. All votes are confidential. Once election results have been confirmed, all ballots will be destroyed.

Associate members may make a copy of this ballot to submit their vote. This ballot form is also available for download as a PDF file at <http://www.kcbmwclub.org>.



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Kansas City BMW Club Calendar



Saturday, December 13, 2008, 2 PM

Mighty Morphin' Go-kart Challenge at Sadlers
Kart drivers must be 18 or older, and must pre-register.

Saturday December 20, 2008, 6 PM

Wichita Christmas Party at Joe Self BMW, Wichita, KS

Saturday, January 3, 2009, 8 AM

First Saturday Get Together at Panera's on Shawnee Mission Pkwy

Saturday, January 17, 2009, 6 PM

KC BMW Club Annual Dinner at Boulevard Brewery

Saturday, February 7, 2009, 8 AM

First Saturday Get Together at Panera's on Shawnee Mission Pkwy

Thursday, February 19, 2009, 6 PM

Monthly club meeting at Lucky Brewgrill at 5401 Johnson Drive,
Mission, KS

To catch the latest in club events, sign up for the announcement e-mails on our website at:
www.kcbmwclub.org.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact our webmaster at webmaster@kcbmwclub.org.