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# BMW Car Club of America Smoky Mountain Chapter



# The Smoky Bimmer

May  
2019

## East Tennessee Region SCCA Autocross

*By Sammy Cheek*

What is an autocross, or Solo, as the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) calls it? Simply put, it is a mini road course set up in sea of pavement. The course is delineated by a series of cones marking the starting line, turns, straights, slaloms, and the finish. Cars launch one at a time for a timed run. After a series of about six runs (more or less depending on entrants, time constraints, etc.) the quickest driver in each class wins. There is no wheel-to-wheel competition and speeds are relatively low, making it one of the safest form of motorsports. It is an easy motorsport to enter and also easy on the cars. Most entrants race their daily drivers. Having said that, it is fast paced and very challenging to win, but also a barrel of fun! Many pro racing drivers, such as Randy Pobst, got their start in autocross.

Several of the larger BMW Car Club of America (BMW CCA) local chapters hold autocross events throughout the year. There is also an autocross event each year at the BMW CCA Oktoberfest. In the BMW CCA Smoky Mountain Chapter region, a superb autocross series is held each year by the East Tennessee Region of the Sports Car Club of America (ETRSCCA). This year they will hold ten



# The Smoky Bimmer – May, 2019

events split between Bristol Motor Speedway and the Tennessee Smokies baseball team stadium parking lot. Attendance is typically about 70-80 drivers. Their events are well organized, and beginners are welcomed with open arms. The atmosphere is very collegial, and everyone is willing to lend a hand, especially to newbies. Many competitors travel to the events as part of a group and make a party out of the day. Two drivers may enter separately but drive the same car.



So, how does one get started? First off, an SCCA membership is not required but having one reduces the entry fee from \$65 to \$45 per event. A yearly membership can pay for itself in three events plus it offers substantial discounts that are available from a variety of companies. Next, go to [www.ETRSCCA.com](http://www.ETRSCCA.com). This informative website will likely address every concern, issue, and question you may have about autocross. There are links on that site to [www.Motorsportsreg.com](http://www.Motorsportsreg.com) to sign up for events. Motorsportsreg will collect demographic information and ask for a car number and a car class.

Car classifications and allowable modifications can be found at [www.SCCA.com](http://www.SCCA.com) under the autocross/solo section in a downloadable rule book. There are classes that cover every vehicle from the slowest street car to purpose-built, fire-belching tire shredders. Most cars compete in a street class. Cars are sub-classified in eight categories from A to H with power to weight ratio being the primary subclass determinant. Few modifications are permitted in street class. Cars must run street legal tires. Examples (not inclusive) are:

A Street--M2 Competition

B Street--1M, M2, M3, M4, Z4-35i

C Street--E30 M3, lower powered Z4

D Street--128i, 2-series, newer turbo 328i, 428i, E36 M3

E Street--Z3

F Street--135i, M235i, 335i, 335d, 4 series turbos, 5 series, 6 series, 8 series, E46 and E90 M3, pre 2010 M5

G Street--normally aspirated non-M 3,5,6 series

H Street--1600, 2002, 318, 320, i3



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A special street category is Super Street. The M4GTS, i8, and Z8 go here. So does every other zillion dollar exotic and supercar.

The next class is Street Touring. This basically consists of street cars with common bolt-on modifications like wider-than-stock wheels, slotted/drilled brake rotors, ECU chips or software, suspension pieces, and so on. Subclasses are again based on power/weight and include STR, STX, STH, STU. My daughter, Rachel, runs her unmodified 2013 135is in F Street. I run my 2013 135is in STU. I have wider wheels with drilled and slotted brake rotors. An ECU upgrade, bolt on suspension pieces like shocks/springs, and a larger intercooler are allowed and will be added to my 135is soon to take advantage of the rules.



Even further modification places vehicles in the classes of Street Prepared, Street Modified, Prepared, and Modified. These vehicles have engine and suspension modifications and run autocross-specific tires. Mike Washington runs his immaculately prepared 1995 M3 track car in X-Prepared mainly because he is using race spec tires. There are some unique classes as well. One is for adult and junior karts. The other is CAM. CAM stands for Classic American Muscle. It is the fastest growing solo class. These cars consist of Camaros, Mustangs, Corvettes, Challengers, and other behemoths like the 1972 Monte Carlo. They have big, loud engines and are a blast to watch navigate the tight course. For first timers, there is a Novice class. Novice drivers receive extra attention from event staff, and experienced drivers are available to ride along and provide invaluable instruction. A participant can run in the Novice class for three events, then they must move into a regular car class.



With registration completed, the next step is to show up. The earlier, the better. Around 8:00 AM is ideal. Find a place to park then "clean tech" the car similar to what we do with the kids at Street Survival. Remove all loose objects that may become projectiles from the interior and trunk of the car. Check air pressures. Check lug nut torque (bolts for us Bimmer folk). Check in at the registration desk, sign the waivers and get a wrist band. Place your car number and car classification on your vehicle. You can create these from blue or green painters tape or get some magnetic stick-on numbers. No drag strip shoe polish is allowed.



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Then go to the tech line for inspection. Pay \$1.00 for a cute little cone sticker, and you won't have to go through tech the rest of the season. Your helmet will also be inspected. Although track speeds are equivalent or lower than highway speeds, a Snell SA2010 or later approved crash helmet is required. A DOT-approved motorcycle helmet IS NOT acceptable. Loaner helmets are provided by the ETRSCCA on site.



Afterwards, head out to the course that has been set up and explore it. At first there appears a vast ocean of orange cones. A second glance reveals that some are arranged in some kind of pattern. Go to the starting line and start walking the course. Don't know which way to go? The good news is that most likely someone appear soon and gladly walk with you and decipher the orange maze. Walk it as many times as you can before the drivers' meeting which is usually held shortly before first runs at 10:00 AM.



Topics covered in the drivers' meeting include safety, plan of the day, introductions of key staff members, housekeeping, etc. At that meeting, cars will be divided into run groups. There are usually two run groups. One group will make its runs first while the other group works on the course. After everyone in the first group makes around six runs, the run groups swap places and the second group drives while the first group works. What work, you ask? In order for the event to run smoothly, every participant is required to work. Work is required if one wants point credit for their runs. Most workers are out on the course putting knocked-out cones back in place. More experienced workers are placed in leadership roles as corner captains, supervising the cone shaggers, and ensuring the safety of their assigned section of the course. The captains have radio contact with the HQ trailer and call in any infractions from their section. Other jobs include marshalling the vehicles through the paddock, starter, traffic control and so on. I recommend working the first session and driving the second. Watching other cars navigate the course up close is very helpful for your drive. Another benefit is meeting some cool new people.



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Now it is time to drive! Run group A makes its way to a staging area and is directed to a parking place. Run group B checks in with the volunteer coordinator for a work assignment and then heads out to stations. When everyone is in place, the first car approaches the starting line. The starter directs the car to the start line. The actual timing light beam is about 10 feet beyond the start line so the car is rolling when it trips the start timer. Depending on the venue and layout of the course, the vehicle reaches the finish line anywhere from 40-60 seconds later. The competitor's time is displayed as they exit the course on an LED display. Then, drivers return to their assigned staging area parking place to await the next run. There is time to re-check tire pressures, talk to other drivers, watch a few runs, figure out how to make the next run better, etc. ETRSCCA has live timing results available on their website that is accessible from a smart phone so you can check the times of all the competitors. After the first session is through, run group B makes its passes.

At the end of the last run group, it is "all hands on deck" to collect the cones and stack them so that they that they can be collected by the ETRSCCA van.

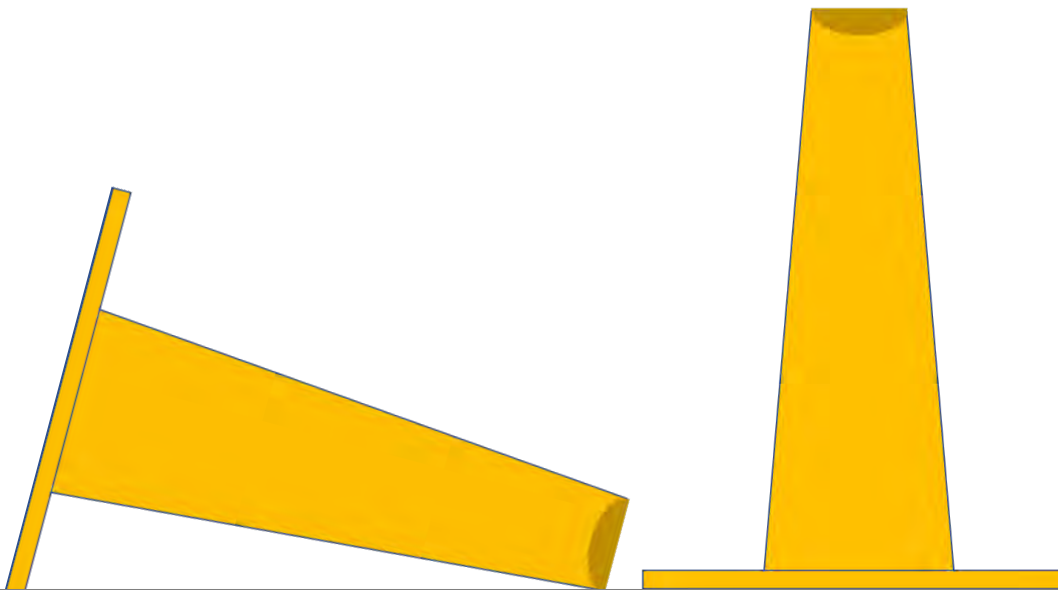


Finally, the "trophies" (ETRSCCA t-shirts) are handed out. The number of trophies dispensed depends on the number of entrants in each class. Classes with a single entrant and novices don't get a trophy although single entrants do get points counted to the season championship.

Volumes have been written about autocross driving techniques and car setup in books and online. There are higher (and thus more competitive) levels of this form of racing on the SCCA national level. Yes, it is racing. In these leagues, the competition is intense (but still friendly). Drivers agonize over a half pound of tire pressure and mere millimeters of a displaced cone. (If a cone is displaced but remains standing and partially within its original outline box, there is no penalty.)



These events occur frequently in our area. There will be one at Bristol Motor Speedway during the week of July 4th. At BMW CCA O'Fests, there is typically an autocross event held sometime during the week. This year it is being held on Thursday, 17 October at the Michelin Proving Grounds in Laurens, SC. BMW CCA has a similar but simpler car classification scheme based on power/weight ratio, car modifications, and driver experience. At the BMW CCA events, participants do not have to work on the course (but they can if they want to). Course duties are taken care of by a local BMW CCA chapter. For 2019, that will be the Sandlapper (South Carolina) chapter. My advice, especially for beginners, is to simply get out there and do it. Go out with a group and make the event an outing. Harness your inner Ricky Bobby, go fast and have fun (but remove any cougars at clean tech:-)!

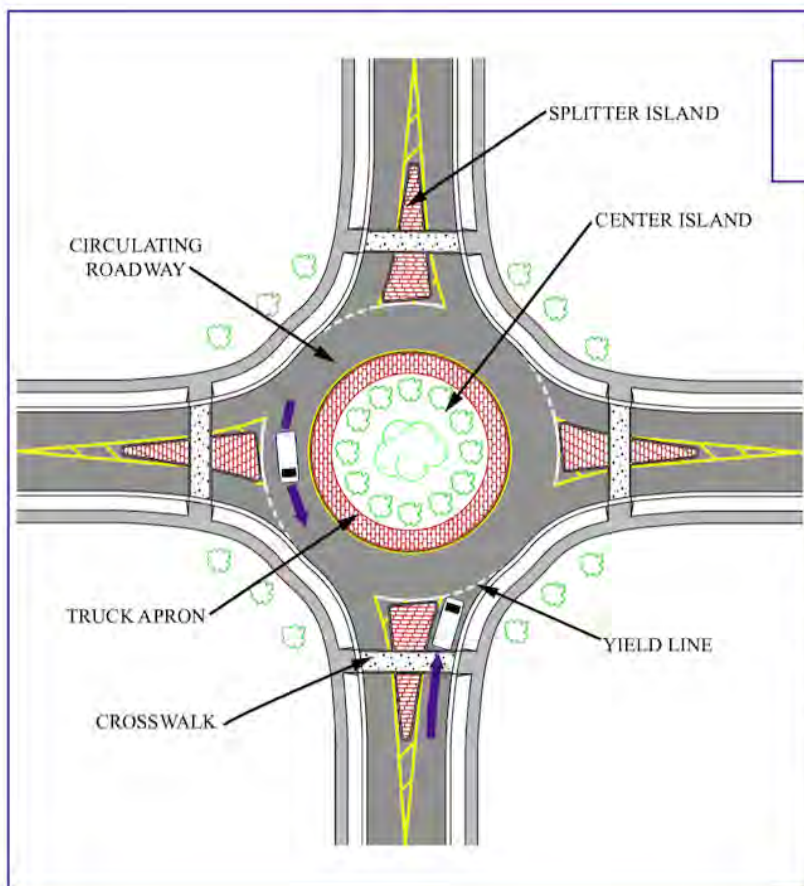




## Drive Better, Tennessee

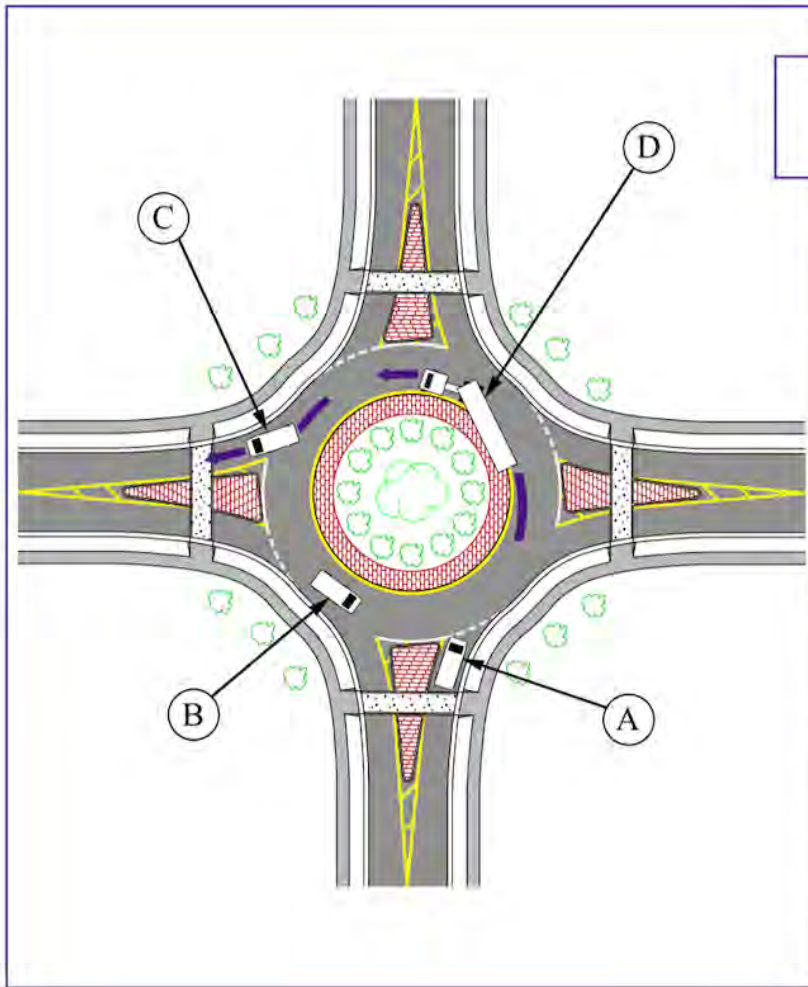
### Finding Your Way Roundabout the Traffic Circles

Common throughout Europe and to a lesser degree in the northeastern USA, the traffic circle or “roundabout” is becoming more common in southern and western states including Tennessee. When driven properly, a roundabout can join intersecting roads safely and more efficiently than stop-lights or stop-signs. The key phrase being “when driven properly”. Too often, drivers unfamiliar with roundabouts will fail to follow one or more of the rules and end up making the traffic circle less efficient or even unsafe. Multiple-lane roundabouts require particular care. Please review the rules and diagrams below from [www.Chattanooga.gov](http://www.Chattanooga.gov)



#### FEATURES OF A ROUNDABOUT

- **CENTER ISLAND** - Large island in the center of the roundabout. Vehicles travel in a counter-clockwise direction around the island.
- **SPLITTER ISLAND** - Used to separate traffic entering and exiting a roundabout and guide drivers around the CENTER ISLAND. It also forces deflection in the vehicle's path to assist in reducing speed.
- **CIRCULATING ROADWAY** - Circular road around the CENTER ISLAND. Vehicles in the CIRCULATING ROADWAY have the right-of-way.
- **TRUCK APRON** - 3" of raised pavement between the CENTER ISLAND and the CIRCULATING ROADWAY that trucks use to negotiate the tight turns of a roundabout.
- **YIELD LINE** - White dashed line at the edge of the CIRCULATING ROADWAY to remind vehicles entering the roundabout to yield to traffic in the CIRCULATING ROADWAY.
- **CROSSWALK** - Crosswalks at a roundabout are located so pedestrians can cross behind the first vehicle waiting to enter the CIRCULATING ROADWAY.



## HOW TO DRIVE A ROUNDABOUT

### 1) APPROACH AND ENTRY (A)

- When approaching a roundabout slow down and be prepared to yield. Beware of pedestrians in the crosswalk.
- Look to the left and check for approaching traffic in the circulating roadway which has the right of way (B).
- Pull up to the Yield Line and wait for a gap in the circulating traffic or enter if there is an adequate gap in traffic.

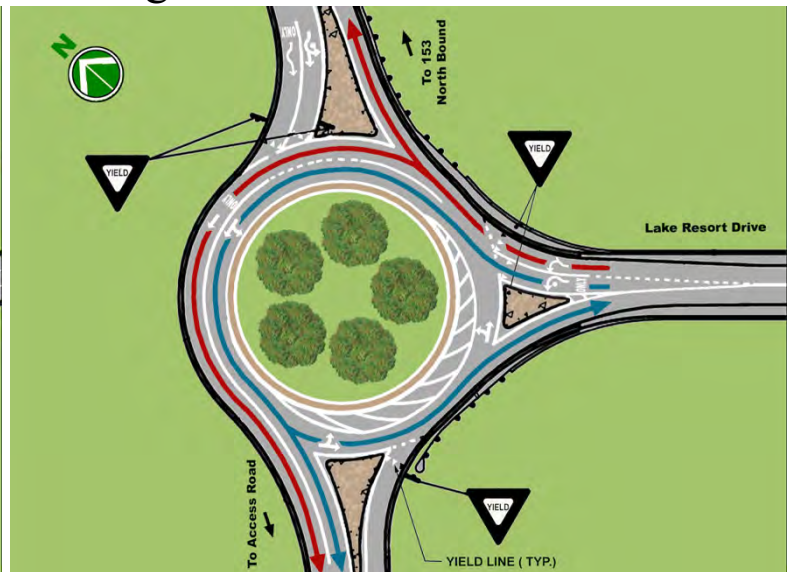
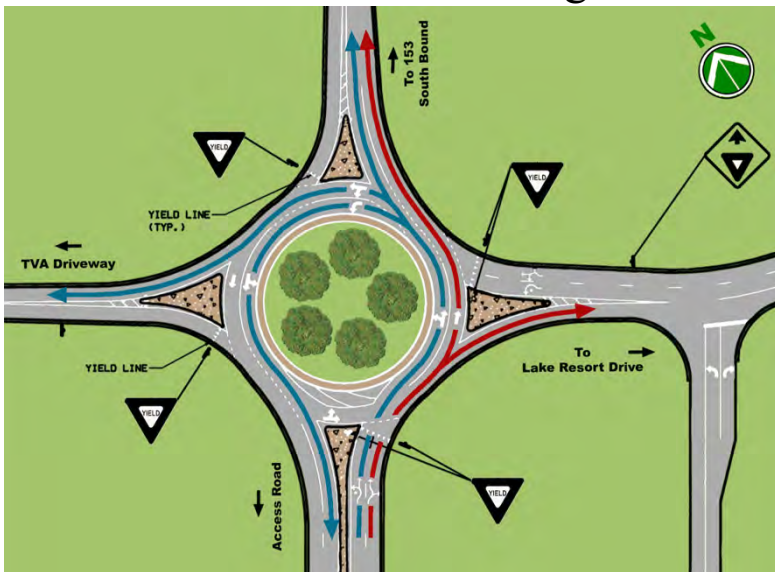
### 2) EXITING THE ROUNDABOUT (C)

- Once you have entered the roundabout, proceed counter-clockwise to your exit point. You now have the right of way.
- As you approach your exit, turn on your right turn signal.
- Exit the roundabout.

### 3) TRUCKS (D)

- Roundabouts have very tight curves that are difficult for trucks to navigate. For this reason, a truck apron is provided.
- The truck may drive on the raised pavement of the truck apron to navigate the roundabout easier.
- The truck apron is 3" higher than the driving pavement to discourage cars from using it.

## Proper Multi-Lane Traffic Circle Flow Illustrated using actual Chattanooga area roundabouts





# Street Survival, Spring 2019 – STATS and SNAPS

When: April 27, 2019



Registration



Where:  
Pellissippi  
State  
Community  
College



Clean Tech

Number of **Students**  
Registered: **24**



Classroom Sessions



Number of **Students**  
Attending: **17**



Truck Safety with Eddie LaSuer,  
Road Captain,  
Tennessee Trucking Foundation





In-car Coaches: 18

In-car coaches stay with students through all exercises.

Track volunteers control entrance to and safety of exercises.

Out of State Students: 5  
(AL, GA, VA)



Emergency Lane Change Exercise



Accident Avoidance Exercise



Student Ages:  
4 @ 15yrs  
7 @ 16 yrs  
6 @ 17yrs





Rubber  
Cones: 211  
(mixed 12"  
and 28" high)



The skid-pad exercise  
brings out the smiles  
and builds real-world  
street survival skills





Students  
Learn In The  
Car They  
Normally  
Drive



Number of  
Sport Utility  
Vehicles (SUV)  
Participating: 7





Thanks to our local fire departments from Karns and Hardin Valley, we had a wet skid pad on a sunny day.



Estimated Water Use For Skid Pad Exercises ~ 2000 gallons

Local Sponsors:

GRAYSON BMW



The Ultimate Driving Machine®

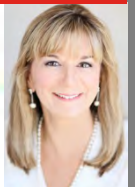
10671 Parkside Dr. Knoxville, TN 37922

State Farm®

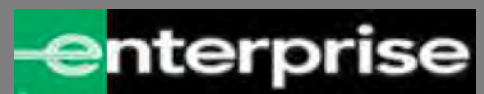
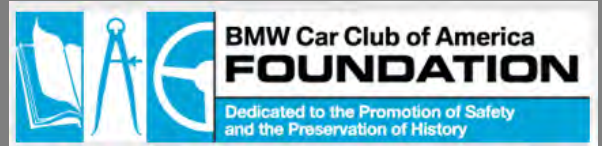
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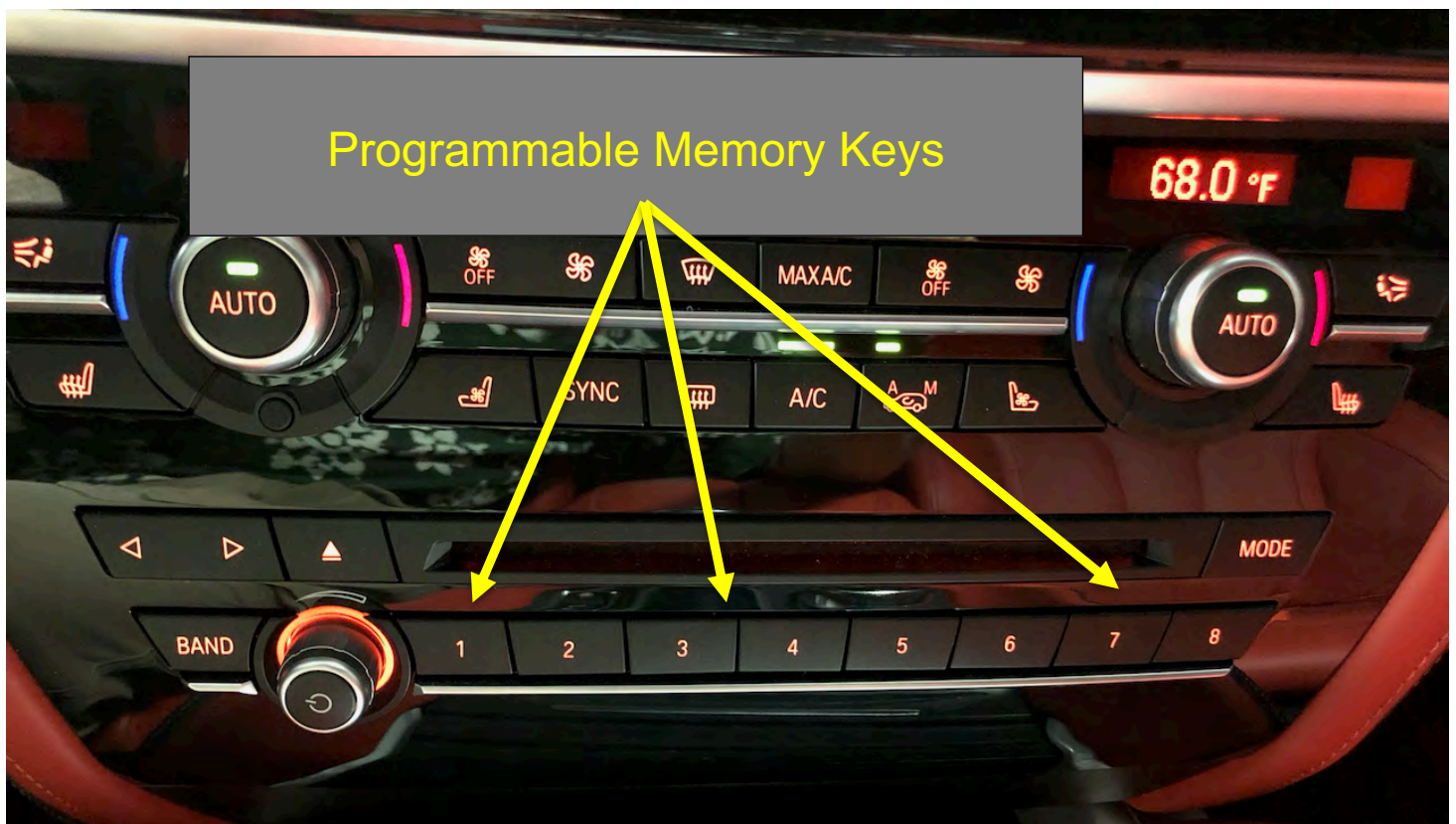




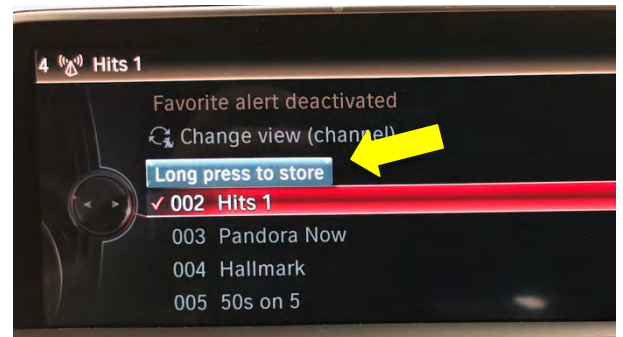
# BMW Genius How To: Programmable Memory Keys

By Amber Brand, Grayson BMW and Chris Tighe

Programmable Memory Keys (or PMKs) allow owners to assign specific functions or options to a group of “hard” buttons positioned just beneath the in-dash CD player. Stored items can range from radio presets to phone numbers to favorite songs in the driver’s stored Music Collection. When equipped with optional Navigation, other functions such as destinations, map view preferences or split screen on/off can also be stored.

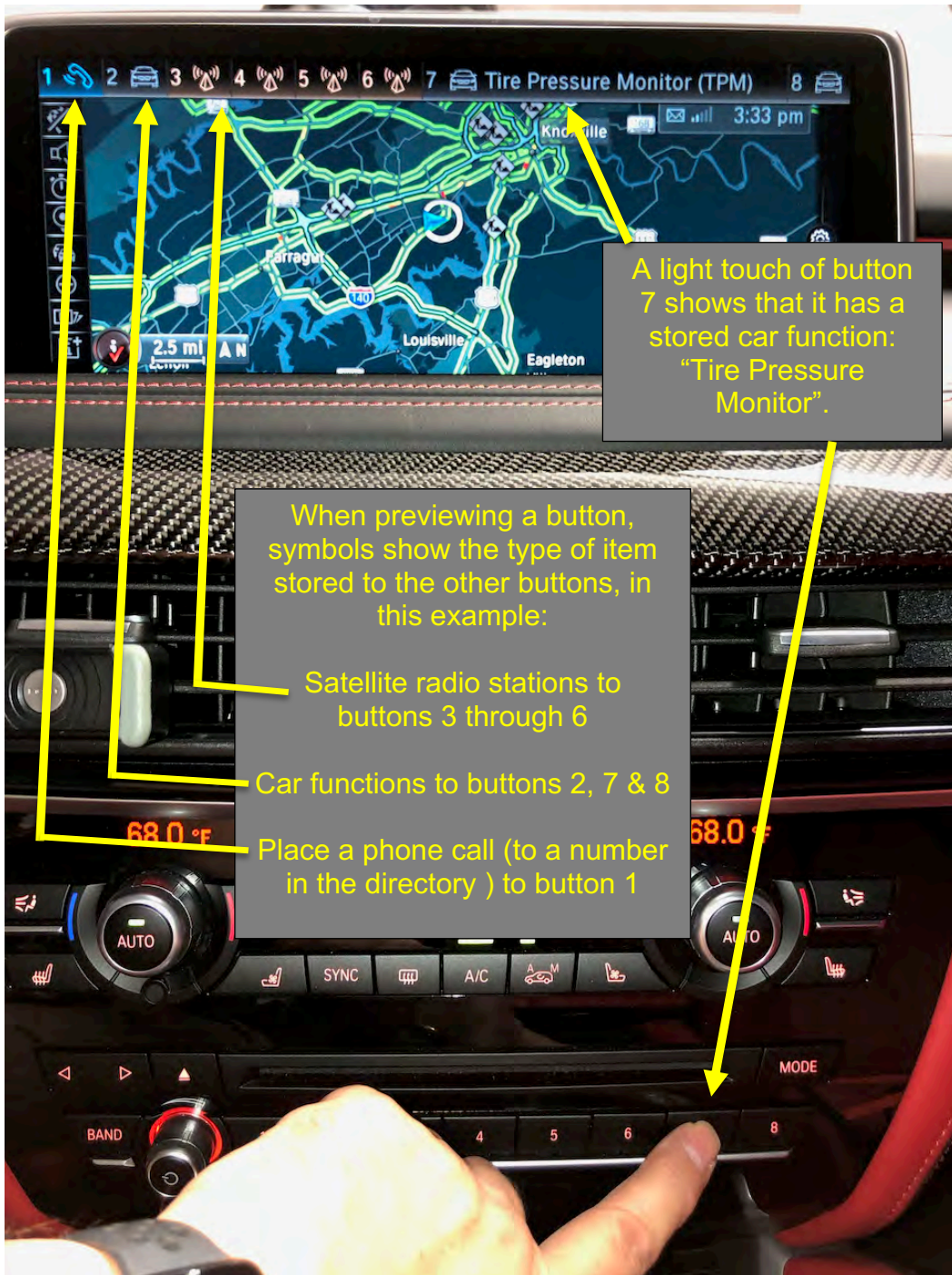


To store an item to a PMK, simply bring up the desired item in iDrive, select it, and then lightly touch the desired PMK button until the message “Long Push To Store” appears in the iDrive display. (see photo at right). Push and hold the PMK until the item is saved. If an item cannot be saved, a message reading “Cannot Be Stored” will appear in the iDrive display.



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For example, to store a satellite radio station, use the radio button and iDrive controller to navigate to satellite radio and then select “Satellite Channel List”. Scroll to the channel you wish to store and select it by pressing down on the iDrive controller and the radio will change to that station. Before doing anything else with the controls, lightly touch the button to which you want to save that station to confirm there is nothing else already stored there that you wish to save. If the preview shows there is something stored that you wish to save, just select a different button. If the button is unused, or if there is something saved to that button you don’t want any longer, you can overwrite it by pressing and holding the button until the STORED message is displayed.



A light touch of button 7 shows that it has a stored car function: “Tire Pressure Monitor”.

When previewing a button, symbols show the type of item stored to the other buttons, in this example:

- Satellite radio stations to buttons 3 through 6
- Car functions to buttons 2, 7 & 8
- Place a phone call (to a number in the directory ) to button 1

If you forget what is stored to which button, the assignment for any key can be displayed by lightly touching the button. The stored function will be previewed in the iDrive display. You can slowly and lightly drag your finger along the buttons to review multiple buttons to locate the one you need. To select the previewed item, quickly press and release the PMK. (Don’t press and hold the button or else the last item selected will overwrite that button.

BMW’s come standard with six PMK’s. That number grows to eight PMK’s for vehicles with a navigation system. All of the button assignments are saved as part of the Vehicle & Key Memory feature, so each driver can have his or her own unique.

Use of PMK’s improves safety by letting you access frequently used functions quicker so you can keep your head up and eyes on the road!



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Some additional items that can be stored to PMK's are:

- Stored profiles (helps when changing drivers without unlocking/restarting the vehicle with another key )
- A specific mobile phone number to be called
- Tire pressure monitor
- Owners manual
- Sport displays
- Check oil level



Once you start using your programmable memory keys, you will wonder how you ever drove without them!

I can be reached by phone (888-695-9038) or email ([abrand@graysonbmw.com](mailto:abrand@graysonbmw.com)) if anyone has a question about this feature or other features on their car. If I don't have the answer, I will reach out to our genius community and get the answer.

*Is there a feature of your BMW that you think would be helpful to cover in  
BMW Genius How To?*

*Please send your suggestions to Chris Tighe at  
[editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org](mailto:editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org) or 301-748-9850*

# President's CORNER



We are planning a lot of activities for 2019; all are designed for members to enjoy their cars while being with people who also enjoy their BMWs. For Shirley and me, the best thing about being associated with Smoky Mtn. BMW car club is the friends we have made and continue to enjoy. I've had some recent conversations with some folks that are or have been associated with other car clubs or even other BMW chapters. These folks have said that they are very pleased with the friendliness and enthusiasm of the members of our chapter. We are certainly a welcoming bunch! I value every person who has chosen to associate with our chapter. I'm proud of our Board of Directors and all the people who volunteer to make our chapter a great experience. All the members who participate know what I'm talking about. For those of you that haven't participated, give us a try! We are dedicated to organizing a variety of events that appeal to a wider part of our membership. We have been trying very hard to provide information so that members are aware of our events. Check us out on Facebook and read our bi-monthly newsletters. You could join us for one of monthly socials which have really been enthusiastically attended. After enjoying a nice meal we usually go out to the parking lot and look at the vehicles that the Grayson BMW folks have brought and look at other members' cars. It is just a nice night out on the town with some very good folks.

We conducted a [Street Survival](#) in April and it was just a great day. I was the starter for the upper parking lot where we ran some of the longer exercises, and I got a very neat perspective. In my role as a starter, I told each young student about the exercise. At first, the students were tense and even fearful. Then they drove the exercise under the guidance of their coach. As the students drove the course again and again, I could see them gain confidence and smiles that grew throughout the day. At the end of the day, all of us had a great sense of satisfaction for what we had accomplished that day. There are now 17 teenagers that are safer drivers and better prepared to the dangers of modern driving. ***Be sure to see the photos of the street survival class elsewhere in this issue.***

We have decided to conduct another Street Survival in the Fall in the Johnson City area. We have located a nice big parking lot with no light poles or medians. This will be the first time we have conducted a second Street Survival in one year and doing it in Johnson City will be an additional challenge. Ideally, we would like to have around 24 coaches and an equal number of course volunteers; please volunteer and help us teach teenagers to be safer drivers. Look for more information as we get close.



As of this writing, we have 30 of 32 drivers registered for our [Chapter M Day](#) in September. We will hold these last two seats for chapter members until July 1<sup>st</sup>, at which time, we will make them available to members from other Chapters. Again, the cost of \$700 is about half what a single day M-school would cost. This year, we will be driving the M2 Competition, the M4, and the M5 Competition – a truly exciting lineup.

[BMW CCA Oktoberfest](#) is October 15<sup>th</sup> thru 19<sup>th</sup> in Greenville, SC. If you have never been to an O'fest, then this is a good opportunity. Greenville is three hours from here and a wonderful city to visit even without an O'fest. The days are packed with a lot of varied activities and you can go for the whole week, a couple of days, or even make it a day trip. There are events at the BMW CCA Foundation Museum and at the Performance Driving Center. There is something for everyone. There are several O'fest host hotels with special rate room blocks and while several of these hotels are already sold out, there here are many other hotels in the area from which to choose. If you are thinking of going, I'd advise getting a hotel ASAP as this is shaping up to be one of the most well-attended O'fests ever.

[BMW National CCA News](#) – The national club organization is undergoing an effort to modernize, keep the club relevant for the future and deal with some chapters that are struggling to remain viable. Here are some highlights:

- Impact of 3 year memberships - a lot of dealerships still do not know about the program- we are planning a National program to provide incentives for dealer sales personnel. As of January, we have added over 3K members due to this program
- Newsletters - Roundel potentially to become 10 issues instead of 12 and adding 2 regional issues This will provide the potential removal of newsletter requirements for chapters and incorporation of their material into the regional issues.
- Increase of dues - The organization has to be able operate without dependency on annual raffle. We see no alternative except to raise dues. Who here has not seen their expenses increase in the last 8 years or so.
- Large percentage of chapters that have had no events in first 4 months of 2019. This does not meet minimum standards and cannot continue. (Smoky Mountain Chapter was not one of them.)
- Failing Chapters - There are quite a few chapters that are not meeting minimum standards. The chapters that are not performing will be rolled into chapters / regions that are performing. There are many that will fall into this category. (Smoky Mountain Chapter is meeting requirements.)
- Leadership Congress 2019 – November 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> in Dallas.
- Recognition Committee work - any members or businesses in chapter areas can be nominated by any member. This needs to be done sooner rather than the “last minute” in December 2019.
- Club Racing management changes.

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Overall, we need to change the way we run this organization from the 60's business model until now. Here are some of the items that must be discussed.

- Regionalization of Services - This is ongoing in several geographical areas with some chapters merging together as we speak.
- Regionalization of Activities - This is ongoing as some chapters are combining activities already.
- Regional Directors - Paid personnel to coordinate efforts by working with chapters. We have to improve the membership experience and member retention.

I am sharing this information, so you appreciate the agenda of the national organization and how it might affect us. Our chapter is a vibrant, growing, strong chapter that is meeting or exceeding all of the requirements. We need your ideas, your suggestions and, above all, your participation to remain healthy. Participate! Plan an event, volunteer to help at an event, or just show up and join the fun! We will continue to participate in discussions with national and will share their strategies and the evolutions as they develop.

**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](mailto:4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org).**

## Welcome New Members !

The following members were added to the rolls of Smoky Mountain BMW CCA through April 22, 2019. Look for them at our next event and please welcome them to the club

James Bauman

Ray Best

Thomas Clark

Stephen Croft

William Davis

Mark Debord

Clinton Draper

Brett Eiffert

David Houston

Krystyna Laba

Kenneth Lamm

Greg Malone

Klodian Mekolli

Meriam Murphy

Tim Neal

Dennis Sooter

Josh Vandergriff

Byron Wood

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



## 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:

- **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](mailto:SMCBoard@smokymtnbmwcca.org)

### **Upcoming Chapter Socials**

<b>June 13 – Calhoun's</b>	100 Melton Lake Peninsula, Oak Ridge ( <i>Oak Ridge</i> )
<b>July 11 – Wild Wings Café</b>	11335 Campbell Lakes Dr, Farragut ( <i>Turkey Creek</i> )
<b>August 8 – El Chico's</b>	116 Cedar Lane, Knoxville ( <i>Fountain City</i> )
<b>September 12 – Sullivan's</b>	7545 S. Northshore Dr, Knoxville ( <i>Rocky Hill</i> )

### **Smoky Mtn Chapter Board Meeting Postponed to June 8**

- 11AM -- Grayson BMW Conference Room
- Chapter members welcome to attend

### **Glass Bazaar– June 24, 2019, 6pm**

- Cooking Demonstration & Dinner
- Optional wine pairings
- Watch your email for registration information

### **Tapoco Lodge Drive Out / Overnight – July 27, 2019**

- RSVP for drive-out lunch to Beverly Reeves ([breeves5@gmail.com](mailto:breeves5@gmail.com))
- **Optional:** Overnight rooms (block of 15 being held) must be reserved by May 25<sup>th</sup>. Please see Secretary's email of March 30 for more info.

**Next Chapter M-Day**  
September 7, 2019  
**ONLY 1 SEAT LEFT**  
[4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org](mailto:4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org)

**Oktoberfest 2019**  
October 15-19, Greenville, SC  
Reserve NOW – Events and  
Hotels Are Filling Up Fast!

## Tire Rack Street Survival – Volunteers Needed !!!!

- Fall 2019 – Johnson City, TN – details TBA
- Spring 2020 – Pellissippi State Community College

## Upcoming in a future Smoky Bimmer:

- Experiencing 24 Hours of Daytona *by Mike Washington*
- Michelin Proving Grounds Drifter *by Sammy Cheek*
- *[ Your Story Goes Here ]* – Have an idea for an article? Please email to Chris Tighe at [editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org](mailto:editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org) or 301-748-9850

**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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