

Our 10th Geburtstag
by Leo Newland

The Lone Star Chapter of the BMW Car Club of America was officially 10 years old this last May, that is, May, 1987. The natural assumption would be that we formed in May, 1977; however, that is not quite true as we held our original first meeting and submitted the application for "chapterhood" on Tuesday evening, April 26, 1977. Our petition was approved by the National Board the following month. The original formation meeting for the Lone Star Chapter was held at Bavarian Motors, 811 University Drive, Ft. Worth, Texas, a BMW and Ferrari dealer at that time. The Central Zone Governor, Harmon Fischer, (and who, incidentally, is our current South Central Zone Governor) flew up from New Orleans to meet with the prospective chapter members. R.D. Ryno, Jr., owner of Bavarian Motors, cleared out the showroom of all the cars except for one 308 that he left in the back. I sent out notices to all current BMWCCA members in the area plus Tom LeConey and I put flyers on every BMW within a 50-mile radius that we could find. Sixty-eight people showed up at that first meeting, and I remember very clearly how impressed Harmon was that so many showed up. I have to admit that it impressed me also. We showed a short film on BMW's from BMW of North America, had plenty of refreshing Hofbrau beer, and discussed what the responsibilities of a chapter would be. It took 15 signatures of current BMWCCA members to form a chapter - 22 members signed the petition that night and the chapter was off and running. Officers were elected and the petition was sent to national with the 22 signatures of BMWCCA members wanting to form a chapter. The first officers of the Lone Star Chapter were as follows:

ELECTED OFFICERS	
PRESIDENT	Leo Newland
VICE PRESIDENT	Tom LeConey
SECRETARY	Alicia Fechtal
TREASURER	Walter Hamilton
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Eric Jakimier

Originally, we submitted the name "Lone Star Bimmers," but this name was not approved by national, and they suggested that we use the name "Lone Star Chapter." The petition for the Lone Star Chapter was approved by the National Board of BMWCCA about 3 weeks later in May, 1977.

In June of '77, Walter Hamilton, Tom LeConey, and I attended the first BMW Driving School at the Nürburgring that CCA members were permitted to attend. On June 11, we held our first event as a bona fide chapter, a picnic at the Fechtal Farm. Since then, we have held many such events at the famous Fechtal Farm. In fact, that first event was so good that we held another picnic at the Fechtal Farm later that summer on August 14, but this time we combined the

picnic with our first-ever rally. That initial rally was put together by Barry Gibbs, long-time owner of IX-XI Enterprises, supporter of the Lone Star Chapter, and advertiser in Das Bimmer Rundschreiben. In September, 1977, we held our first tech session at Bavarian Motors in Ft. Worth with about 20 members showing up for that event. On October 18, 1977, the Lone Star Chapter held an "Oktoberfest Dinner" at Kuby's German Restaurant in Dallas. Officers were elected for the 1978 year with new positions of Activities Director and Publisher being added. A Christmas Party was scheduled for December 10, 1977, at the Newland's Townhouse. Besides Marian and me, the current 1987 members who attended that first Christmas party include Doug & Millie Johnson of Denton, Barry & Joan Gibbs of Dallas and the Trophy Club, and Charlie Vaughn of Irving.

The new year would bring monthly meetings at Gaylen's BBQ in Arlington, tech sessions at Brown Motor Works in Dallas, tours to Munster's GermanFest and the Wiederkehr Winery in Altus, Arkansas, an Autocross Driving School put on by Barry Gibbs and Mike Kuhn of the Porsche Club, and lots of beer drinking and good BMW fellowship. All in all, it was a very good second year for our infant chapter.

The year 1979 would bring our first female president, Alicia Fechtal, an attorney for an insurance company in Dallas. Alicia wrote a President's Column saying that she thought she might be the first woman president in BMWCCA. She promptly received a letter from Edd Brady of the Connecticut Valley Chapter explaining that Anne Barnard was president of their chapter in 1975. Alicia responded that "it's nice to know that our Newsletters really do keep us in touch with other chapters." Also, during 1979, the chapter traveled back to the Wiederkehr Winery in Arkansas (just can't get too much of a good thing) and this time we combined it with an economy run. We went back to GermanFest in Munster, Texas, had another picnic at the Fechtal Farm, pigged-out on pizza courtesy of Crystal's (owned in part by one of our members at that time), and went on a tour to Dinosaur Valley State Park at Glen Rose. The economy run results were interesting, so I thought you might like to see them now.

NAME	mpg
Nick O'Reilly (2002)	28.84
Charlie Vaughan (2002)	26.78
Leo Newland (323i)	25.86
Steve Nelson (2002)	24.59
Perry Bushong (2.8CS)	22.05
Marian McKeever (320iA)4	21.7
Lee Cash (MB 230A)	18.07
Felix Vendrell (Bav 3.0A)	17.93

Nineteen-eighty would see the LSC shifting the Arkansas tour to the fall so that we could see the colorful leaves in Northern Arkansas. We staged another autocross, picnic, and tech session, and experienced a general increase in membership for the chapter.

In 1981, Curt Anderson was elected Editor of Das Bimmer Rundschreiben and he changed the format of the newsletter to its current form, 8 1/2 x 14" with the cover changing each month. The first issue of the new style was the January, 1981, issue. Prior to that, it was 8 1/2 x 11" and the cover stayed the same except for the date. Before 1981, our logo was on the cover each month, a blue and white state of Texas. I had been elected Secretary of BMWCCA in 1981, so in November, the Lone Star Chapter hosted the National Officers at the Hilton Hotel in Ft. Worth. Additionally, we had a night out at the Malibu Grand Prix, and our first-ever concours at John Roberts BMW in Dallas. Our Hill Country Tour that year went to Fredericksburg, Luckenbach, and Pedernales Falls.

In 1982, the National BMWCCA meeting would be held at the Holiday Inn Centre Plaza on LBJ with members coming from all over the US. I lost my re-election bid as Secretary to Jeff Davis of the New Jersey Chapter. The chapter had its now-annual Hill Country Tour in the spring to see the beautiful Texas Bluebonnets - our only problem was an unscheduled stop in Lampasas. In fact, the famous "Lampasas Eleven" Wanted Poster made the cover of the June, 1982, Das Bimmer Rundschreiben. The "Lampasas Eleven" were 11 BMW's on their way to the Texas Hill Country when they encountered George at the Dairy Queen in Hamilton. George, in his words, "chased them little foreign cars for over 80 miles" before radioing to the highway patrol to set up a road block in Lampasas for us. They just happened to stop us in front of the Chevrolet/Cadillac dealer. Word of the great arrest beat us to the Hill Country. Everyone either paid the fine or fought it in court. We who fought the case, won.

Beginning in 1983, we would expand our officers' list to include social and technical officers, membership, and members-at-large. We held more tech sessions, had beer tasting at the now defunct "Der Schnapps and Snacks", held the standard concours, rally, and tours to the Hill Country and Arkansas. I was appointed South Central Zone Governor when the Central Zone was split into north and south part divisions. All in all, 1983 was a pretty good year for Lone Star Chapter. It was also the year of the formation of the Armadillo Chapter in Austin. In case you didn't know, the Armadillo and San Antonio Chapters have merged and the new chapter is called Tejas. When you have the opportunity, please welcome them.

In 1984, we would hold a tech session in Denton, reminisce about Connie Thomas' poltergeist on the annual Foliage, Wine, and Merengue Pie Tour to Arkansas, go on the Hill Country Tour to San Marcos (this time without any unscheduled stops), have more tech sessions, swim parties, concours, rallies, etc., and hold our first MAIFEST on Memorial Day Weekend at Woodcreek Resort in Wimberley, Texas. In June of 1984, we even held our very own driving school at Green Valley Raceway. It was a lot of work, but quite successful. It was also the summer of 1984 when I moved to Bayreuth, West Germany, and the Lone Star Chapter had a real foreign correspondent. Also, that fall while I was gone, the chapter held a Gimmick Rally and a sailing party at Marshall Nelson's home at the Rush Creek Yacht Club on Lake Ray Hubbard.

Nineteen hundred and eighty-five brought typesetting to Das Bimmer Rundschreiben, more tours (first tour to Big Bend National Park), rallies, picnics, swim parties, tech sessions, a driving school that almost took place with the Mercedes Club, and of course, MAIFEST '85. The visit to the Texas wild flowers in the Hill country found us staying at the beautiful AQUARENA SPRINGS HOTEL in San Marcos. James Morris and I later attended the only Gran Prix in history to be cancelled, the Belgian Gran Prix at Spa Francorchamps - a very expensive pain in the "you know what." Archie's beautiful coupe once again graced the cover of DBR. Paul Fiasconaro, South Central Zone Governor, sent a letter to the chapter praising MAIFEST '85 and said that he liked the "multi-chapter involvement."

The next year saw the LSC still looking for that ideal place to hold our monthly meetings. The officers compromised by agreeing to switch back and forth between Ft. Worth and Dallas with the original intent to hold 2 meetings in Dallas and 1 in Ft. Worth since 2/3 of our members are in Dallas County. In April, we returned to the Big Bend country and in May we went to Jefferson, Texas, for the first time. The Lone Star Chapter participated in the German AutoFest in Austin for the first time with several cars from the metroplex. A brake session at European Technology and MAIFEST '86 also occurred. In August of 1986, BMWCCA held its highly publicized "Blitz Day." To say that it was not a success in the LSC is somewhat of an understatement, but a few of us did meet at the Pizza Inn in Irving. Archie Crow received a letter from Senator Lloyd Bentsen in September telling how much he (the Senator) appreciated Archie's comments regarding the 55 mph speed limit. Tom Taff, fellow Lone Star Chapter member won 1st Place in the Concours d'Elegance at Oktoberfest in Orlando, Florida.

The 87th year of the 20th Century has brought some impromptu tours to catfish restaurants in Oklahoma, etc., more meetings, parties, tech sessions, and more BMW camaraderie than one could imagine. The chapter has also experienced a loss when Kevin & Ann Taylor moved to Pennsylvania. They are gone, but certainly not forgotten as the chapter made them "Lifetime Members." The newsletter just keeps getting better and better. The only thing holding us back right now is additional funds. That too, in time, will come. Oktoberfest is being held in our back yard, Tulsa, OK, and we are preparing to head up into "them Arkansas hills" later this fall.

I hope that this gives you an idea of where the Lone Star Chapter came from. Most of all, I think the chapter is a testimony to its members because without your participation, none of this would have happened. We would not have met the friends that we have, nor had the good times that we remember. Come and participate - WE WANT TO MEET YOU!