



Dec 2001/Jan 2002

## It's Summit Point Time

**D**o you pretty much have your early spring plans in place - some gardening, a little work on the car? Want to have some real fun? Why not plan on coming to our two-day performance driving school at Summit Point Raceway on March 2 and 3. If you can't make two days, then join us for one day.

The Point is a two-mile long track with a half-mile straight and ten turns. It's a safe and fun track to drive with lots of runoff room. For a good look at what it's like doing a hot lap, call up the [Summit Point](#) page on the Internet.

Are you a novice with no previous track experience? No problem! Instructors from Bill Scott Racing will be on hand both days to teach you performance driving.

You'll love the track and the instructors. No one will force you to drive any faster than you comfortably want to. We want you to progress at your own pace.

Don't want to drive the new Benz? Or the old one? You can drive any car you wish, as long as it has \$100,000 liability coverage and will pass the mandatory tech inspection. Ragtops require a roll bar or a hard top.

The pre-event car safety inspection sheet can be downloaded on the club's web site, as can the registration form. You can also use the tech session at Curry's Auto Service in January for the mandatory safety inspection.

Rates for the event are \$290 for both days or \$160 for one day and include a catered lunch. Additional lunches for your guests are \$12 each.

Optional hotel arrangements have been made with the Shoney's Inn in Winchester for Friday and Saturday at a special \$50 rate (plus tax). The rooms will be held until March 1. Call them at 540-665-1700 and tell them you're with the Mercedes-Benz Club. Shoney's is only 15 or 20 minutes from the track.

Listen! This stuff is good for your soul and will help eliminate the stress in your life. You won't know what fun is until you get off the \*#%ø Beltway and try performance driving. Plan now on joining us! If you have any questions, please call Joe Wozney at 703-437-7866.

## Dyno Tech At Curry's

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**C**urry's Auto Service in Ashburn, Virginia will again demonstrate their fantastic diagnostic and repair capabilities. GWS knuckle-busters and performance hounds will gather at Matt Curry's on January 26 at 10:00AM to view their all wheel drive dynamometer in action.

For this session only, Matt will offer a \$50 special (payable to Curry's) where members will get "three pulls" for a dyno sweep test. Full horsepower and torque curves displays will be generated and some sessions will provide extra feedback such as turbo boost tracking, fuel flow, and exhaust gas temperature for those 9.9 drivers.

This is an excellent opportunity to blue-print your car prior to the March driving event at Summit Point and to prepare for the 2002 Autocross season.

As a testimonial of their expertise, Aaron - one of Matt's techs - performed a super accurate wheel balance that served me well on a recent extended trip. I now have the smoothest ride in 140,000 miles on big blue.

In addition, two lifts will be available for light maintenance with tech support for that mid-winter oil change, underneath inspection, and troubleshooting. Time on lifts will be limited. A pre-registration of \$10 is required, as space is limited and an accurate head count is needed a week prior to the event. Sign up early for this exciting event using our online [registration form](#).

Contact Vern Luke at 703-323-1249 if you have questions. Directions at [Curry's Auto](#) website.

## Calendar of Events

### Greater Washington Section Events

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|             |   |           |  |
|-------------|---|-----------|--|
| January 10  | <b>GWS Board Meeting</b><br>Contact: Dick Pedersen<br>Call: 703-771-2205  | April     | <b>Autocross #1</b>  |
|             |   | May       | <b>Deutsche Marque</b>   |
| January 26  | <b>Curry's Dyno Tech Session</b><br>Curry's Auto Service<br>Ashburn, Virginia<br>Contact: Vern Luke<br>Call: 703-323-1249 | May       | <b>Autocross #2</b>  |
|             |   | June      | <b>Autocross #3</b>  |
|             |   | July      | <b>Autocross #4</b>  |
|             |   | July      | <b>Annual Picnic</b><br>Mid-Atlantic Concours<br>Hank Harris's Estate<br>Potomac, Maryland<br>Contact: TBA |
| February 17 | <b>Tucker Tour</b><br>The Cammack Collection<br>Alexandria, Virginia<br>Contact: Janet McFarland<br>Call: 703-765-9405    | August    | <b>Autocross #5</b>  |
|             |   | September | <b>Autocross #6</b>  |
| March 2-3   | <b>Drivers Ed</b><br>Summit Point Raceway<br>Summit Point, West Virginia<br>Contact: Joe Wozney<br>Call: 703-437-7866     | October   | <b>Autocross #7</b>  |
|             |   | November  | <b>Autocross #8</b>  |
|             |   | December  | <b>Annual Holiday Party</b>  |
| March 23    | <b>Night at the Races</b><br>Rosecroft Raceway<br>Ft. Washington, Maryland<br>Contact: Mason Beale<br>Call: 703-941-1055  |           |  |

## President's Message

### Thoughts of a Car Guy

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**P**arty, party, and a good time was had by all at our Holiday party on Saturday night, December 1, at Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria. The chef prepared prime rib and fresh rockfish. Cocktails before dinner gave everyone a chance to catch up and see old friends. Our DJ, Paul Kaplan, did a great job of anticipating our every move.

When GWS Treasurer Jim Glenn donated, for our charity raffle, his coveted loge level Redskins tickets (including premium parking) for a game on December 23, Paul played Hail to the Redskins. What a tune inventory. Jim and Angie's generosity provided \$420 for children's hospital. The Toys for Tots drive was also a success and Vern and Clair Luke left the party with a car full of toys to brighten some needy children's Christmas.

In an example of how no good turn goes unnoticed, we announced the winner of our yearlong charity raffle of a Mercedes-Benz bicycle. You guessed it, Jim and Angie Glenn won. Very befitting. Jim and Angie live in a community perfect for bicycle cruising. Happy trails.

Our member of the year award was awarded to last year's winner Judy Roth. Is this gal working hard for the club or what? Secretary Mason Beale was named Officer of the Year. Congratulations to both of these hard working and devoted members.

Door prizes were plentiful and many partygoers left with shirts, oil changes, tire certificates, and alignments. Many thanks to all our sponsors: Merchants Tire, Radial Tire, OG Racing, and American Service Center.

We are planning some great events for next year, beginning on Saturday, January 26, with a tech session at Curry's Auto Service in Ashburn, Virginia. Other tech sessions for February and March are in the planning stages. They are great indoor winter events. May 5 will bring the annual Deutsche Marque Concours and in June another Drive and Dine.

Joe Wozney has some fast plans for early March and the rest of the year. Joe has arranged for another weekend Drivers Ed school at Summit Point Raceway in West Virginia. Look for the coupon and sign up early.

The eight-event GWS 2002 Autocross Series will begin in April and run through November.

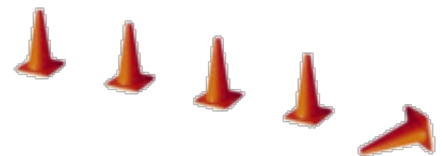
And don't forget StarFest, MBCA's national convention, to be held in Indianapolis for a week beginning August 11. The convention will have a Concours d' Elegance at the Indy Speedway and track driving at Indianapolis Raceway Park. There will be many other events including tours and banquets. It should make for a great summer vacation in the heartland.

See you in January...

Dick



**pylon alley** by Joe Wozney  
Autocross Wrap Up



**H**ail to the champions! The 2001 Autocross Series is over and the class winners have been decided. The trophies have been awarded and the victors have a few months to rest on their laurels before we start all over.

In the 190E 2.3 16-Valve class, Mason Beale won in a walkaway with little competition all season. Only one other driver - Greg Calabro from Northern New Jersey - attended even two events to challenge.

Larry Taylor and Jim Smith tied in the 190E/300E class for First place. Dana David, finished just behind Larry and Jim and accumulating an impressive 41 points.

Klaus Hirtes took wins in all six of the events he attended and again proved himself King of the Oilburners! Ted Joseph, who also tried his Audi during the year, took second.

Steve Walters and Janet McFarland battled each other in all eight events (although Steve "broke" the car again in the first event) in the older V8 class. Steve walked away without a loss but Janet nipped at his heels all year.

Debbie Hirtes wrapped up the SL class for the umpteenth time in a row. This year was different though... she actually had a third place finish in Autocross 5! That just ticked her off, so she made sure the title was hers by winning the last three in a row.

Finishing behind Debbie were two of the year's most improved drivers - John Robinson and Al Angulo. Al has a new love, though, and will be driving her (an SL600) next year in a new class. Hold on to your helmets!

Bill Brochu took yet another series First place in the non-Benz class. Aside from a stumble (a way down one-point finish) due to tires much too large for his car's wheel wells, Bill finished with five overall wins. Impressive!

Another greatly improved driver was Lief Graham in his 2001 Golf GTI. Lief had a first place and three second place wins scattered in his six events to take Second place in the series.

Ken Lober was our series Third place champ. Ken changed his honeymoon dates so he would make Autocross 7, but was (strangely) absent. The boy has got to get his priorities right!

Mr. Consistency, Harry Newman, placed his SVX in Fourth place. Quite an accomplishment, considering he had a heart attack just weeks after Autocross 5 and missed the last three events. Good news - Harry is fine and will be back next season.

Marty Gallagher took Fifth place. Marty had the Fastest Time of Day six times! Only the index factor is between him and First place.

Kyle Newman took Sixth and is the fourth member mentioned as "most improved." Quite a season for him and Dad's old hand-me-down.

Finally, Angie Brochu made it look easy taking first place in five of her six events to clinch the woman's title again. Meghan Furlong took a strong Second place.

So, that's it for 2001. Let's hope you can come join us in 2002. You will not believe how much fun this is!

## Tucker Tour

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**S**pend an afternoon learning more about the Tucker 48 on Sunday, February 17, from 1:30 to 5:30PM by touring the Cammack Collection. Mr. Cammack will open his collection, located in Alexandria, Virginia, for a few of us. There is limited space so we are offering two starting times - 1:30PM and 3:30PM.

The Tucker 48 was the revolutionary car of its time with a 150-horsepower rear engine built to cruise at 100 mph; an automatic transmission; and a third headlight (known as the Cyclops Eye) in the

center of the hood which turned with the front wheels. Since 1972, Mr. Cammack has collected Tuckers and related material. His collection consists of 3 exquisitely restored Tuckers, eight different engines with varying transmission configurations, various parts, original blueprints and much more. Needless to say for the car enthusiast there is a lot to see including a film documenting the Tucker.

Mr. Cammack welcomes young adults that are interested in the workings of cars as long as they are accompanied by an adult. Cameras are permitted. For more information on the Tucker visit the [Tucker Automobile Club of America](#) site.

The fee is \$10 per person. The registration form is on page 9. For those interested in dinner afterwards there are some great restaurants in Old Towne. Questions? Contact Janet McFarland at 703-765-9405 or by [e-mail](#).

## A Night at the Races

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**H**orsepower is the name of the game when it comes to passing on the interstate, or driving an autocross, or on the track at Summit Point. Yet, there is another type of horsepower that is just as important. That horsepower is displayed at our local harness track - Rosecroft Raceway. To enjoy this type of horsepower, the section is having a "Night at the Races" on March 23.

Members and their guests will enjoy a delicious all-you-can eat buffet with coffee, tea, and desserts. A cash bar will also be available. To make this a memorable event, the section has reserved the John Hanson room to ensure that all VIP amenities are available. The buffet will start at 6:30 with the first display of horsepower beginning at 7:20PM.

In honor of the section's attendance, one of the races will be named the Mercedes-Benz Club of America race. At the conclusion of "our" race, some members will be escorted to the Winner's Circle for a photograph with the winning horse.

This should be an exciting and relaxing evening for meeting new members as well as renewing current friendships.

There is a limit to the number of people that can attend, so mail your registration and \$35 per person fee today, using our online [registration form](#).

To reach Rosecroft Raceway, take exit 4A (Maryland) from I-95 and follow the signs to the track. We look forward to seeing you at the section's Night at the Races - Rosecroft style.

For questions, contact Mason Beale at 703-941-1055.

## Fine Automotive Design Meets Today's Interior Design

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**I**n October, GWS members were treated to a private after-hours tour of the 2001 National Symphony Orchestra's Interior Design Showhouse in Northwest Washington, DC. The top interior designers of the Nation's Capitol transformed a 1923 Mediterranean style house into a luxurious and comfortable home featuring the latest in technology.

For the first time in the 29 years the NSO has been doing showcase houses, automobiles were displayed on the grounds - not just any automobiles - but Mercedes-Benz automobiles owned by section members.

As people entered the house they were able to view a wide variety of the fine Mercedes owned by club members. Stephen Penhoet's 1953 300, which was originally owned by Judy Garland, gathered a lot of attention and looked perfect with the Hollywood elegance of the house. To bring visitors back to the 21st Century, Lewis Lipnick's 2001 S55 was also on display showing off some of today's more



modern automotive features, including those neat variable beam headlights. A 1987 190E 16-Valve owned by Lewis Baskerville and Judy and Bruce Roth's 1998 SLK got the attention of more than one showhouse visitor.

Potential club members were invited to attend this event as well. One gentleman, who had recently picked up his 2001 C320, pulled up into the driveway unaware that it was being used for display only. Since, of course, he was driving a Benz, he was allowed to park on the driveway. Though a bit shy about having his (and his car's) picture taken, it was later heard that he was proud because he loves his car so much, but none of his friends appreciate it. Now he knows where he can find friends that really appreciate his wheels!

Members got to view the work of DC's top interior designers, listen to the sounds of music coming from within this wonderful house, and enjoy the champagne and caviar served in the garden. One of the members' favorite touches was the decorative use of 1970s Mercedes-Benz hubcaps hung on a wall in the bar room.

The Social Committee thanks everyone who came out and we look forward to seeing you at our next event.

Bill Hopper

## Yet Another Record Month

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**M**BUSA reported its best ever November with sales of 18,014 vehicles (up 11.4 percent) during the month. Year-to-date, the company recorded sales of 186,562 vehicles, versus 185,308 during the same period last year.

Volume for the month was led by the 2002 model year C-Class. November sales of 5,144 were up 80.7 percent. Year-to-date, C-Class sales have increased by 50.1 percent over 2000's sales level.

This was the best November on record for the CL and CLK models. Up 62.8 percent for the month, year-to-date sales of the CL increased by 87.4 percent. CLK sales were up 50 percent for November and up 6.6 percent year-to-date. In addition, the G500 marks its first few weeks of sales with 217 units sold.

## High Gear

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**I**t's for your own good, I assure you. You simply must give up automatic transmissions. Look at it this way. Tell a ballerina to dance on one foot. Try to operate a bicycle using only one peddle. Do your morning exercises without using your left leg. What will be the result? Inelegance, inefficiency and incapacity, not to mention eventual indolence and creeping meatballism. I am perfectly serious.

Operating the accelerator and brake with your right foot while engaging the clutch with your left is in keeping with the harmonies of nature. It provides your body with balanced physical activity. People with automatic transmissions risk spinal disorders, hip degeneration, joint disease and other serious maladies. Let's face it we spend a lot of time in our cars. A good left foot is a terrible thing to waste!

Some folks believe that they lack the physical coordination to operate three peddles in their automobiles. This is balderdash. If you can walk, run, dance or climb stairs, you can drive a manual transmission car. If you crawl around on all fours; sit out the Blue Danube waltz and only use escalators, perhaps you shouldn't be driving at all. Every physical activity requires some practice to master, but operating the clutch peddle with your left foot can become second nature after two weeks of practice. Wouldn't it be worth it to improve your own health; to be free from the tyranny of the

torque converter; to be able to consider purchasing some genuinely interesting automobiles?

When you drive a manual transmission automobile you develop a unity with the machine you are operating. You find yourself aware of the engine's torque curve as you unconsciously match optimum rpm with road conditions. Your car is operating more efficiently and economically. More sporting performance is completely under your control. By the way, while the process of selecting the proper gear becomes almost unconscious, it is a very important subliminal mental exercise. By shifting for yourself you are actually fighting the onslaught of Alzheimer's.

Some poor benighted folks have told me that they need to have automatic transmission because they drive a lot in stop and go traffic. This is a sad misconception. If you travel in heavy traffic you need manual transmission all the more. This is not merely because the inherent inefficiencies of the torque converter are multiplied under bumper-to-bumper conditions. It is precisely in a traffic jam that you need to exercise both your left and right leg muscles so as not to develop cramps resulting in irritability and consequent road rage. Furthermore, have you ever thought that when a manual transmission driver is stopped in traffic on a level road she can rest both legs, while the automatic transmission driver must keep his right foot on the brake to avoid creep!

Why have car manufacturers been pushing automatics for decades? Believe me it isn't for your good, Mr. or Ms. Consumer. First of all the automatic is either an option or an "included extra" which allows the manufacturer to bump up the sales price and the profit margin. With economies of scale it does not now cost a car builder more to make an automatic than a quality manual transmission. Furthermore, the automatic transmission is the weakest link in the automotive drive train. The automatic will invariably fail long before the engine, suspension or bodywork of a contemporary vehicle are fully used up. Thus the automatic drives the customer back to the dealer either for costly service or for a new vehicle. In either event when you look down on your automatic shift gate and see P, think "profit" not yours... theirs.

Some manufacturers contend that their well-engineered automatics are capable of delivering more brisk acceleration than the average driver is capable of exacting from a manual transmission unit. If this represents an accurate statistic, the answer is to educate the average driver on the relationship between power and torque and on the means to be used to optimize both. If "little Johnny" has trouble with his arithmetic, the remedy is not to give him a calculator.

By the way, even if someday in the distant future the engineering department of a mighty car manufacturer will succeed in building an automatic transmission that will be able to walk away from my 5-speed Cosworth-head Mercedes 16-Valve at the stop light grand prix, I will still opt for the manual. The reason has something to do with a beautiful concept; a fleeting, indefinable quality; a gift from God to man ... I call it FREEDOM. I want to choose my own cog. I want to snick that lever into second just before the hairpin and hear the engine growl. I want to upshift as I crest the rise and see the ribbon of tarmac stretching to the distant horizon. I want to know the complex sensations that make life worth living. I want to shift for myself!

If I go to a hospital cafeteria tonight for dinner, I can get a perfectly nutritious meal prepared by expert dietitians. But for some reason I have opted to go to a French restaurant... and I'll be driving there in my old roadster with the top down.

John Kuhn Bleimaier

## Mercedes-Benz Classic Center USA Goes Online

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The Mercedes-Benz Classic Center USA ("Classic Center") has launched a new web site - [www.mbusha.com/classic](http://www.mbusha.com/classic) - to provide a one-stop source for visitors who want to delve into the unique heritage of Mercedes-Benz.

The site emphasizes the history of the automobile - starting with the very origins of Mercedes-Benz which has left its mark on every era in automotive history.

Site navigation is divided into five major categories: History, Museum, Classic Center, Classic Activities, and Contact an Expert.

Behind these tabs the enthusiast will have easy access to biographies of the automotive pioneers Gottlieb Daimler and Karl Benz, who created the first two motor cars, and the legendary Wilhelm Maybach along with Emil Jellinek and his daughter Mercedes; descriptions and photos of Mercedes-Benz milestone vehicles from 1886 to 1982; as well as stories about the origins of the automobile and the Mercedes-Benz three-pointed star.

Two integral parts of Mercedes-Benz - its design philosophy and The Story of Passion, which covers the history of the brand - are also accessible at the site.

A click on "Museum," opens a virtual tour of the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart and its collection of automotive history. And through "Contact an Expert," the user can receive an answer to questions about vintage parts and technical information from the experts at the Classic Center hotline at 1-866-MBCLASSIC. "Opening this site is the first step in building an internet dialogue with colleagues, owners, enthusiasts and others interested in the history of the automobile," explained Peter Spieth, Classic Center general manager. "We anticipate adding many enhancements to the site in the future that will provide even more of the Mercedes-Benz story and greatly increase the level of interaction with the public." "We're excited about featuring the Classic Center site under the umbrella of mbusha.com," added general manager of e-Business for Mercedes-Benz USA, Astrid Fontaine. "We are already discussing the next phase of development for the Classic Center site in which visitor feedback will play a major role in its future direction."

Created along the lines of the renowned Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in Fellbach, Germany, to provide a complete, specialized service for Mercedes-Benz classic vehicles -models twenty years out of production, the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center USA is the first to be established in the United States by an automotive manufacturer.

Via its toll free number - 1-866-MBCLASSIC (622-5277) - the Classic Center currently provides parts purchase assistance and technical information.

Classic Center operations will expand with a move to a California location during 2003 to include the purchase and sale of classic vehicles and appraisal and repair services. An inventory of classic vehicles will be on hand and available for use in recreating the unique Mercedes driving experience from past years.

## TradingPost

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**220Seb Cabriolet, 1961:** Cream/tan leather/black soft top. Euro model. New motor and 4-speed manual. Garaged. Very good condition throughout. Photos on request. \$28,000 or reasonable offer. Call Fran at 410-963-3058.

**250C, 1971:** Blue/white/blue interior. Entire car is in good condition. Power windows. Tight engine. 190k miles. Needs good home and TLC. C-all Bob at 410-276-7316.

**300D, 1976:** White/red. 5-cyl. Diesel. 4-spd auto. Beautiful car, excellent condition. Bought new.



Always garaged or covered. Only 110k miles. No rust or zingers. Stereo radio. Good Pirellis. Car cover incl. \$6000. Call Bill at 301-424-3655.

**450SLC, 1978:** Astral silver/red. 175k miles. Well maintained. Need garage space. New stainless exhaust, rebuilt suspension. 1989 body restoration. Good interior. Engine runs great. \$11,000 obo. Call Robert at 410-494-9449.

**500SEC, 1985:** Black/gray leather/gray pinstripe. 120k miles. Great shape. Euro and US headlights. New A/C. CD/amplifiers/new speakers. Burl shifter. Hard to find. \$13,500. Call Allen at 301-984-3478.

**400SE, 1992:** Midnight blue/Java leather. 93k miles. Incl. Starmark warranty to 100k at \$0 deductible. Loaded. Records. Garage kept. Mobil1. \$19,750. Call John at 571-633-0780.

**400E, 1992:** Silver/blue leather. 133k miles. Well maintained. New tires, front brakes, catalytic converter, steering box. Very smooth, strong engine. Now \$13,500! Call Joe at 703-689-4048.

**Hardtop Holder:** For SL models. Aluminum with wheels. Includes dust cover. Unused. \$50. Call George at 301-365-3599.

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