



Greater Washington Section · Mercedes-Benz Club of America

# METRO TRI-STAR

February 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 at:  
<http://www.summitpoint-raceway.com/>.

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 if you prefer not to use the one in this newsletter.

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 \*#%& Beltway and try performance driving. Plan now on joining us! If you have any questions, please call Joe Wozney at 703-437-7866.

## 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 (see the centerfold for form) and \$35 per person fee today.

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.

## Merchant's Tech Session

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**O**n Saturday, April 20 GWS mechanical and electronic aficionados will gather at Merchant's Tire in Manassas for a mostly academic tech session. After the requisite coffee and donuts at 9:30AM, we will be welcomed by John Seal, the new Marketing Manager for Merchant's.

We will get all the latest MBUSA technical information from Tom Ishler, Mercedes-Benz technical specialist for the Washington Region. So bring those tough questions. We will also hear the latest on tires and lubricants and will perhaps have a demonstration or two.

The forum will conclude at 3:00PM or when the last question is answered.

The fee is \$20 per person and includes lunch. Mark your calendars now!

Previous forums at the Merchant's facility have enjoyed significant member attendance. Space will fill quickly! Please mail your fee and registration right away.

To reach the Merchant's facility proceed on I-66 West and take Exit 53 (Route 28 South). Travel for approximately seven miles. Turn left on Liberia (Burger King is on left). Proceed two streets and turn left on Euclid Avenue. The Merchant's facility is on the right just beyond Eastern Manufacturing.

Vern Luke

## Great Lakes Region Tri-Star Challenge

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**S**ponsored by the Western Reserve Section

Saturday, June 22 through Tuesday, June 25. Four days of fun, and learning for the novice as well as the experienced driver, and those who love to show off their cars!

Saturday

Registration, tech inspection, rallye, welcome cocktail party.

Sunday

Concours d' Elegance, performance driving school, rallye, and Concours banquet.

Monday and Tuesday

Driving School and Time Trials at the legendary Nelson Ledges Road Course.

Defensive driving, autocross, and acceleration runs at Thompson Drag Raceway.

Awards Banquet at Avalon Inn.

Headquartered in the Avalon Inn Resort in Warren, Ohio 800-828-2566. Ask for the MBCA package.

For information and a registration package, call John Morrison at 330-673-7885 or email: gobenzing@aol.com

## Calendar of Events

### Greater Washington Section Events

March 2-3	<b>Drivers Ed</b> Summit Point Raceway Summit Point, West Virginia Contact: Joe Wozney Call: 703-437-7866	March 7	<b>Officers' Meeting 7:00PM</b> Season's Restaurant Fairfax, Virginia
March 23	<b>Night at the Races</b> Rosecroft Raceway Ft. Washington, Maryland Contact: Mason Beale Call: 703-941-1055	April 20	<b>Tech Session</b> Merchant's Tire Manassas, Virginia Contact: Vern Luke Call: 703-323-1249
April 21	<b>Autocross #1</b> James Wood High School Winchester, Virginia Contact: Joe Wozney Call: 703-437-7866	May 2	<b>GWS Board Meeting 7:00PM</b> Season's Restaurant Fairfax, Virginia
May 5	<b>Deutsche Marque Concours</b> Mercedes, Porsche, and BMW Contact: TBA Call: 301-654-0837	May 19	<b>Autocross #2</b>
June 2	<b>Mercedes Only Autocross</b>	June 16	<b>Drive and Dine</b> More next month
June 23	<b>Autocross #3</b>	July 14	<b>Annual Picnic</b> Mid-Atlantic Concours Hank Harris's Estate Potomac, Maryland Contact: TBA
July 21	<b>Autocross #4</b>	August 25	<b>Autocross #5</b>
September 22	<b>Autocross #6</b>	October 13	<b>Autocross #7</b>
November 3	<b>Autocross #8</b>	January 2003	<b>Annual Holiday Party</b>

## Regional and National Events

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April 13-14	<b>Drivers Ed Event</b> Nelson Ledges	June 22-25	<b>Great Lakes Tri-Star Challenge</b>
August 11-16	<b>StarFest 2002</b> Indianapolis, Indiana See The Star for information		

## President's Letter

### Thoughts of a Car Guy

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**A**re you ready! As far as I am concerned it's spring. Anytime we get into late February my winter thoughts are over. That warm high February sun gives old man winter a tough time and even if it snows a big melt is only days away. Hopefully, that is the case for our driver's education event at Summit Point the weekend of March 2-3. Don't worry over the early date. If Mr. Winter makes a big statement, Bill Scott works with the clubs on track condition and fees. Which means with a big snow there is no fee. Let's get a jump on the season, check your brake pads and have some fun.

For those who love to drive fast there will be many events in the east ending at Indianapolis in August. The Western Reserve Section will run a drivers education event at Nelson Ledges Raceway south of Cleveland in May or June. The Pittsburgh Section will probably have an event at a new track just north of Pittsburgh in July. With our autocross series running for eight months (and, with no date conflicts), there is a lot of driving to be had in our club in 2002.

On the social side, on Sunday, February 17, we have the opportunity to tour a collection of Tucker automobiles. You know, that fabulous car that was ahead of its time and was squeezed out by the big three. Contact Janet McFarland to reserve your tour spot. I am sure members will take advantage of the Alexandria location to gather afterwards for some good food. This is also a good time to make up fast for less than a stellar thought on Valentine's Day.

Sunday, May 5, brings out the German car enthusiasts to Nottaway Park, (a famous spy meeting and drop area) in Vienna, Virginia. Each year the Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, and BMW clubs display their cars, new and old, at the park. The weather is usually perfect, and for a modest fee a reception featuring German wines and beers is held afterward. More than a hundred fine automobile examples will show up. Wash your Mercedes and come join us in our paddock area. There are many old trees and if you look really carefully you might even find an old chalk mark left by one of "theirs" or "ours" - definitely a great way to spend a few hours on a warm, lazy spring day.

July 14 will be the date of our Annual Picnic and Concours at the Potomac estate of Hank Harris. The pool and grounds provide a picture perfect setting for our cookout and gathering of the faithful. Everyone enjoys looking at the many special rare Mercedes that come. Our social chairs have many other events in the planning stages, so watch the Tri-Star for details.

And again, don't forget Starfest, MBCA's national convention to be held in Indianapolis for a week beginning August 11. Details should be in The Star shortly.

See you there...

Dick

## In The Shop

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**A**s we move along the roadways in our treasured classic machines, we sometimes encounter sudden and unexpected breakdowns, which require immediate attention at the repair shop and may involve a period of restoration before getting back on the road.

And so it may be with our most personal machine - our body. Sometimes one encounters an unexpected and serious breakdown of some of the systems and such was the case with longtime, stalwart supporter of our Club, Hank Harris, when he suffered a moderate stroke last August. After some three weeks in the hospital, Hank has been recovering at home.

He retains his good spirits and sharp humor and his speech was unaffected but he continues to have problems with mobility. He has been receiving wonderful, loving care from Catherine and his family.

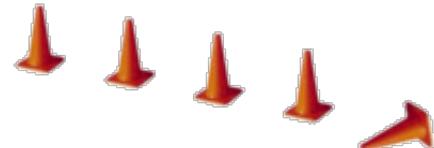
Hank and Catherine have already agreed to once more host the Annual Picnic and Mid-Atlantic Concours at the Harris Estate in Potomac in July.

For many years, Hank has been a strong and active supporter and participant in the Mercedes-Benz Club of America and in the Rolls Royce Club. Some years ago, Hank was a member of the Rockville Car Show Committee and strived to promote Mercedes-Benz and Rolls Royce participation. He has encouraged owners of these fine machines to maintain them in Show condition and participate in Concours d' Elegance competitions or to simply display them for the admiration of Club members.

Nearly 20 years ago, he established the Hank Harris Trophy, a perpetual award presented to the vintage Mercedes-Benz gaining the highest point score at our Mid-Atlantic Concours.

We all extend our very best wishes to Hank for his continuing recovery. Notes and cards may be sent to:

Henry Harris, Jr. 13211 Query Mill Road  
North Potomac, MD 20878  
Tom Sheppard



## pylon alley by Joe Wozney

GWS Racer Movin' Up!

**R**ick Ellinger, a friend, a club member, and owner of RC Imports in Rockville, has been making a name for himself and Mercedes-Benz in Grand Am Cup Sport Touring racing. Maybe you've seen him run on the Speed Channel.

Last year, Rick ended up tied for seventh place in the series. Over the season, he had three different co-drivers, including his wife (and former GWS board member), Cindi.

For 2002 Rick and Cindi plan on running the whole series. Other co-drivers include newcomers Ken Payson and Manny Matz.

On New Year's weekend, at the Moroso 24 hour race, the team was seven laps up on the entire rest of the field! Incredible! In the eighth hour, a spindle broke and then a motor after sixteen hours.

After the Moroso event, the 190E 16-Valve was completely rebuilt and repainted.

To start the Grand Am Cup Sport Touring year, they ran the opening race - a two-hour support race for the 40th running of the Rolex 24 hour at Daytona. Ken Payson and Rick drove.

Ken started the race and handed the car over to Rick at the halfway mark. The car ran great but had significant understeer in the turns. In addition, the track was very slippery. Rick battled all the way up to sixth place but ended the race tenth in class after an exciting battle with a BMW 328, an Acura

Integra, and a Porsche Boxster.

The car was a bit down on power for this first race after the rebuild. The team attributed the power problem during the race to the break-in of the new motor.

Without sponsorship, the team did not have the funds to hold a test day for setting up the car and breaking in the motor. But the 2002 season is just beginning.

Rick and Cindi need your help. They have room on the car for sponsors... even if it's just for one race.

Please contact them at:

RC Imports  
301-762-4205  
[www.rc-imports.com](http://www.rc-imports.com)

## **2002 Grand Am Cup Sport Touring schedule:**

**All races shown Saturdays at 5:00 PM on the Speed channel.**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Air Date</b>
Daytona - 2 hr.	1/31-2/3	2/16
Calif. Speedway - 3 hr.	3/21-23	3/30
Phoenix Int'l - 3 hr.	4/18-20	5/4
Watkins Glen - 3 hr.	6/21-23	7/6
Virginia Int'l - 3 hr.	6/29-30	9/14
Virginia Int'l - 3 hr.	8/29-9/1	-
MontTremblant - 3 hr.	9/13-15	9/28
Mosport Int'l - 3 hr.	9/28-29	-
Daytona - 6 hr.	11/8-10	11/23

## **The New SL Roadster**

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**A** new generation Mercedes-Benz SL coupe/roadster - the first in more than 12 years - was shown at the Greater Los Angeles Auto Show, January 5-13. Perhaps the best-known Mercedes model ever, the new SL convertible will mark the fifth generation of the highly successful series, which began in 1954 with the legendary gullwing 300SL.

The 2003 SL is a technological tour de force, with ABC active suspension, ESP stability control, and the world's first electronic brake system. The new SL also features breathtaking styling, capped by a retractable hardtop that combines the open-air fun of a convertible with the quiet comfort of a coupe.

The company that invented ABS anti-lock brakes, traction control and ESP stability control will launch the world's first production car equipped with an electronic brake system, which provides faster, more sure-footed brake response, especially in emergencies.

The brake pedal on the 2003 SL500 works with a computer that tells four fast-acting valves exactly how hard to apply the brakes on each wheel. A backup hydraulic master cylinder comes into play only if there is a serious problem or electrical failure.

With split-second accuracy, the system can change brake pressure on each wheel over uneven surfaces and can even increase brake pressure on just the outside wheels when braking in turns, taking advantage of the higher loading during cornering. ABS anti-lock and ESP stability control work more efficiently since they are more deeply integrated with the brakes, instead of functioning as parallel systems.

A special electrically driven hydraulic pump and a high-pressure reservoir (or accumulator) provide always-on full brake pressure at each wheel. The computer-operated modulator valves control how much pressure actually operates the brakes at each wheel. In this system, the bulky vacuum brake booster is now obsolete.

If the driver switches his foot quickly from accelerator to brake pedal, the electronic brake system recognizes the early signs of an emergency situation and reacts automatically. With the help of the high-pressure reservoir, the system raises the pressure in the brake connectors and instantaneously moves the pads onto the brake discs, which can then spring into action with full force as soon as the brake pedal is pressed. At highway speeds, this pre-loading of the braking system reduces stopping distance by about three percent.

In addition, the system automatically senses when the road is wet and imperceptibly applies the brakes just enough to keep the discs dry, so that brake operation remains fast and consistent in the rain.

At the push of a button, the new SL500's retractable hardtop can be fully opened or closed in just 16 seconds. (As a comparison, the SLK's retracting roof takes about 25 seconds.)

As the power roof retracts, the rear window glass also rotates so that its curvature nestles inside the stowed roof panel, providing a surprisingly large cargo area of 6.8 cubic feet. With the top up, the trunk holds 9.7 cubic feet - over 1.8 more than its predecessor.

A hydraulic pump and 11 computer-controlled hydraulic cylinders power the system. A distinctive switch on the center console controls top operation. When the top is stowed, pressing a red button located inside the trunk raises the folded roof about 20 degrees, making cargo access easier.

A five-liter V8 engine produces 302 horsepower, accelerating the new SL500 from 0 to 60 mph in approximately 6 seconds. Advanced twin-spark-plug, three-valve-per-cylinder technology also means the new SL500 is a ULEV, or Ultra Low Emission Vehicle.

Sparkling performance is due in part to the SL sports car's sophisticated, lightweight body. The hood, doors, trunk lid and roof are all aluminum, and the front hood alone is 33 pounds lighter than a comparable steel hood.

At the same time, over 30 percent of the body structure is made of high-strength steel, so that the new SL body is 20 percent stiffer than the previous model, even with the top down.

The aerodynamic shape of the SL body contributes its impressive performance and fuel efficiency as well as to a quiet cockpit. The drag coefficient is 0.29 - greater than nine percent lower than the previous model.

The 2003 SL features new head/thorax side airbags in the doors as well as two-stage front airbags that deploy with partial force in less severe collisions and full force in more serious impacts. The airbags are designed to work with the three-point seatbelts, which are equipped with tensioners that remove belt slack in a collision as well as belt force limiters that help prevent seatbelts injuries in severe impacts.

Mercedes invented the automatic roll bar for the previous SL, and the new car features similar technology - the bar pops up in 0.3 of a second if it senses an impending rollover. The shoulder belt is anchored into the super-strong seatback, ensuring good seatbelt geometry regardless of seat position and providing an extra measure of protection in the event of a rollover.

With its overall design and integrated safety systems, the new SL is likely to set the standard for an

entire new generation of sports cars. It's clear that the latest SL is the world's safest convertible.

## Curry's Tech Session

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**A**n eclectic mixture of performance hounds and knuckle-busters from GWS gathered at Curry's in Ashburn the end of January. An unexpectedly beautiful day greeted our members who thought they would be spending a winter day indoors playing with their cars rather than welcoming spring.

The most popular attraction was the four-wheel dynamometer whereby several members were able to run their cars up to 100 mph and obtain horsepower and torque curve figures in preparation for track events and autocross.

Other members did some routine maintenance or diagnosed mechanical problems. Ron Parker was able to get his classic 280SL JAWOL greased (when was the last time you saw a grease gun?) and lubed. Werner Fehlauer gave his 300SD a brake job and Steve Welty got to do some work on his classic 300TD.

Several handling problems were corrected and it was interesting to see how much power is actually developed at the rear wheels of an SLK32 AMG (300 bhp).

Special thanks go to hosts Matt Curry and Chris Colter for their hospitality and special pricing for the dyno, alignment machine, and for wheel balancing. We also have to thank Matt's techs Ryan Lober, Mike Whitfield, Aaron Smith, Galen Rierson, Joe Vrobel, and Franklin Cox for their support and also to Tom Tosh in the front office.

Vern Luke

## High Gear

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**T**he louder the better! Yes, it's true I am a lover of intense aural stimulation. My favorite musical experience took place when a battery of 90mm field pieces punctuated the final movement of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture during an outdoor concert at West Point. The wafting cordite smoke which enveloped the audience was icing on the cake!

I love the roar of a hard charging express train and the sonic boom of an F16. I'm a member of the Order of Edwardian Gunners and I could almost loose control when I hear the thundering volley of smoothbore fire which greets a covey of clay targets when we shoot "the flurry." At the gathering of black storm clouds on the horizon I go out on the porch so as not to miss a single note of nature's rumbling symphony. I've traveled all the way to California just to listen to the unmuffled exhaust note of Fangio's 300SLR during the vintage races at Laguna Seca.

I guess my particular predilection also helps to explain why I'm a diesel person. I grew up to the sweet melodious clatter of my parent's 190Dc Finback. The lack of sound insulation on that magnificent vehicle makes it a rolling concert hall from my perspective. I've been sorely tempted to rip out the under-hood pad and drill holes in the resonator of my more contemporary diesel vehicles! I would never think of listening to a CD on a Walkman when I'm operating my Long agricultural tractor with its vertical exhaust stack substituting for the wind and percussion sections of the New York Philharmonic.

But, alas, there is a price to pay for all this joy. I have been duly warned that too much exposure to this particular pleasure may cause me to pay dearly down the road. Just as some amorous Don Giovanni may shudder at the thought of a prescription for Viagra in his future, I tremble at the notion of a plastic device nesting in my ear some day.

All this brings me to the subject of a wedding I attended not long ago. Two clients of mine, both young professionals, had decided to tie the knot and naturally enough invited their beloved attorney to the nuptial celebration. Nothing unusual here except that my two young friends are both deaf-mutes. I have communicated with them through an interpreter, by email and fax. Despite this seeming barrier we have developed friendly, as well as professional, relations. I was pleased and honored to accept their invitation.

The wedding service took place in the couple's home church, a congregation for the deaf. I will never forget the experience. I got to the house of worship just before the service was to begin. As I entered the sanctuary I noted that it was full of people. Nearly all the pews were occupied. But there was complete silence. Yet as I looked around, everybody was talking animatedly... in sign language. I was struck with this overpowering sensation. Here I was the deaf-mute. I could hear nothing. I did not understand what people were saying. I could not speak to the folks around me.

The ceremony was performed by the pastor who can speak and hear himself but communicates with his flock exclusively using his eloquent hands. On this occasion he spoke orally as well as by sign at various points during the proceeding, apparently for the benefit of the small uncomprehending minority of which I was one. It was truly moving to see the congregation join in the recitation of the Lord's Prayer in unison... in sign language. You could have knocked me over with a feather when I saw a soloist "sing" a hymn entirely with her hands.

After the service everyone gathered in the vestibule to congratulate the happy pair. I came up in the receiving line, shook hands with the groom and kissed the bride. With nods, smiles and a "thumbs up" gesture I lamely attempted to convey my very best wishes. I think I was somehow understood.

Next I found myself standing next to a very attractive young woman elegantly attired as a bridesmaid. In the milling crowd we were facing one another. It would have seemed impolite not to say something. I repeated my drill, nodding, smiling and giving a thumbs up. She somewhat awkwardly responded in kind with a nod, a smile and what I interpreted to be a positive, friendly sort of gesture. In a futile attempt to carry on the conversation I found myself gesticulating inanely and inadvertently mumbled, "Nice...nice." Her big blue eyes widened as she looked at me and intoned, "Well for goodness' sake, you can speak. I'm not deaf either, I'm the sister of the groom!"

## MBUSA Has Highest Sales

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**M**ercedes-Benz USA reported its best year on record with sales of 206,638 in 2001. The largest increase for the year came with the popular C-Class and the top-of-the-line CL-Class which soared up 48 percent and 70 percent respectively. A significant portion of the 2001 volume came from the C-Class with the debuts of the coupe and wagon models earlier this year. The C-Class recorded its highest year with 51,210 vehicles sold vs. 34,600 sold in 2000. Additional volume leaders for the year were the award-winning M-Class sport utility vehicles with sales of 45,655 and the popular E-Class sedans and wagons with 44,445 sold in 2001.

Also showing strong performance this year was the CLK family of coupes and cabriolets which established a sales record with sales of 19,423, an increase of 9.1 percent vs. last year's 17,796. For the month of December, the CLK also gained momentum with a 33 percent increase (2,292 vs. 1,724).

MBUSA posted one of its strongest Decembers on record, with volume leaders for the month reflecting year-end leaders: the C-Class coming in at 5,401, the E-Class posting sales of 4,343, and the M-Class recording 4,185. The same three model lines were also the volume leaders for December 2000.

Highlights for specific models in December include the CLK430 cabriolet with a 60.9 percent increase (655 vs. 407), the E320 4Matic with a 46.7 percent increase (707 vs. 482), and the S600 with a

36.1 percent increase for the month (98 vs. 72 units). In addition December marks the first full month of G500 sales with an achievement of 457 vehicles sold.

## Roadside Assistance Is 20

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**M**BUSA, the company that led the industry when it pioneered a comprehensive on-the-road emergency assistance program in 1982, has marked the twentieth anniversary of its Roadside Assistance Program.

Mercedes-Benz initiated the program in 1982 to provide its customers with an extra measure of security and convenience by way of immediate technical assistance, including on-the-spot vehicle repairs. The Roadside Assistance Program is available 24/7 to every Mercedes customer, regardless of their automobile's age, mileage, or ownership.

Mercedes pioneered the concept of after-hours emergency service in North America, providing on the phone and on-the-spot assistance to customers using factory-trained personnel. A major factor in the success of the program is the use of Mercedes technicians as opposed to outsourcing these services to automobile clubs or providing auto club memberships solely for new-car buyers, as is common practice.

A toll free hot line (1-800-FOR-MERC) connects customers directly to MBUSA's Customer Assistance Center, which in turn links Mercedes callers to factory-trained dealer technicians by satellite pagers. Nearly half of the 350,000 calls received each year are diagnosed and resolved over the phone because of the Roadside Assistance Representatives' expertise with Mercedes products. In those instances where a technician is dispatched, the majority of the repairs are successfully completed, usually in less than an hour. If towing is required, companies with specific Mercedes expertise are used.

Anecdotes abound about the help going beyond merely servicing cars: a Mercedes on-site technician once saved a customer from being hit by an oncoming vehicle by getting him out of the way in the nick of time.

As part of Mercedes-Benz Sign and Drive program, several services are provided free of charge regardless of the vehicle's model year or mileage. Sometimes the assistance is as simple as helping a customer who has run out of fuel, in which case the technician brings two to three gallons, and if the battery runs down, a jump-start is provided. In case of a flat tire, the existing spare is mounted onto the vehicle. Other, more extensive, repairs may involve a basic service fee, plus parts and labor.

Said Paul Juron, general manager of the Customer Assistance Center which administers the Roadside Assistance Program, "Over the past 20 years, we've helped millions of customers. The program gives customers that extra measure of security knowing that we're there for them all day, all night, all year. And it makes sense - we build to a certain standard and we back our products to that same standard."

Ed. note: On Christmas Day a few years ago, we were in New Jersey visiting family. The area was near the New York state border in the mountains. It got very cold... below zero. Our 1982 300SD refused to start for the first (and only) time since we've owned it.

Although I had plugged in the block heater (too late) and tried most of the ways I knew to get it going, it just wouldn't fire up. We even tried a shop heater (blower) and an electric space heater. Nada!

On a whim at 2:00AM, I called the Mercedes Roadside Assistance number. To my surprise, someone answered in one ring. It turned out I was more than 50 miles from the nearest dealer. Mercedes would send a technician out if I wanted, but we agreed it would probably be fruitless given the weather conditions. I was given a list of things to try in the morning or I could call back for a technician if the car still didn't start.

The next morning a little rise in temperature and a bit of kerosene got it going. I was, needless to say, very impressed, as was our family. I have other stories given to me by Mercedes-owning friends about their positive treatment by the folks at Roadside Assistance... but they'll wait for another time.

## Trading Post

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**200D , 1968:** Brown/cream leather. 4-speed on the floor. Last year of Finback. Second owner. Only 111k miles! This car was badly damaged in an accident in 1982 but completely restored at more than \$17,000. Sheepskins. Big sun roof. Factory tow hitch! Chrome is excellent (only one small dent in rear bumper). Paint is very good - thinning on hood and right fender, but no rust! Leather is very good. Radio still good. Clock runs a bit slow. Few problems: left fender reflector is bent, interior light broken, dash lights intermittent, trunk leak. Lots of spare parts included. \$4000 (and worth it). Call Mr. ed (Joe Wozney) at 703-437-7866 evenings/wkends or email: JoeWozney@aol.com (Excuse the length but there were few ads this month.)

**450SL, 1973:** Both tops and holder and cover. Stainless exhaust. Recent chain. Professionally maintained/serviced. Garaged. \$10,000 obo. Call Dick at 703-533-3929.

**E320 Cabriolet, 1995:** Emerald green/beige leather. Black top. Heated seats. 6 disk CD. ASR. Sheepskins. Some warranty. \$44,000. Call Al at 410-256-1857.

**Wheels:** OEM wheels for CLK. 7 x 16 polished aluminum. 7-hole design with 205/55/16 Michelin Arctic Alpines. Wheels like new. Tires have 1-2 seasons left. Call Ken at 410-461-4914.

**Wanted:** Privately owned 1998 or newer E320 with low mileage. Contact Rich at 703-670-9113.

**Wanted:** Well-maintained, clean 1985 300SD for daily use. Call John at 703-536-1692.

**Wanted:** Hardtop holder for SL model. Looking for a holder with wheels and a dust cover. Call Sandra at 410-439-9089.

## Advertisers

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[American Service Center](#) 703-525-2100  
[EuroMotorcars](#) 301-986-8800  
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[Potomac German Auto](#) 800-831-7686  
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[Dent Wizard](#) 800-336-8949  
 Radial Tire Co. 301-585-2740  
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