



January 2000

Summit Point Drivers' Ed!

March 18-19

Do 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 18 and 19. 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. Rag tops require a roll bar or a hard top.

Pre-event car safety inspection sheets will be sent to all registrants. We have arranged for a [tech session](#) at American Service Center for your safety inspection.

Rates for the event are \$275 for both days and \$150 for one day (cheap!) and include a catered lunch. This is the same price as last year, although track costs have gone up. You can opt for additional lunches for your guests and family.

Optional hotel arrangements have been made with the Shoney's Inn in Winchester for Friday and Saturday at a special \$45 rate (plus tax). The rooms will be held until March 10. 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.

This driving school will get you ready for Tri-O-Rama 2000 in September if approval for the event is received.

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! Fill out and mail in the [Registration Form](#), If you have any questions, please call Joe

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Wozney at 703-437-7866.

DIY Tech Session

March 11

On, Saturday, March 11, American Service Center in Arlington has graciously agreed to host a DIY tech session. This is the opportunity to shape up your Mercedes after a hard winter or bring your favorite toy out of hibernation into spring. In either event, come out and meet fellow GWSers, and work on and talk about our marvelous machines.

This will also be the opportunity to have your car safety inspected for our Summit Point Driver's Education weekend on March 18-19. There will be no charge for folks only having tech inspections and a lift will be open for those inspections. Please remember to order your parts in advance from ASC at 703-525-2100. This is the only way to be sure that the parts you need for the work you've planned will be on hand.

The action starts with member processing at 7:00AM. The Service and Parts Departments will open their doors at 8:00AM. ASC will have coffee and pastries for the early birds. Lunch will be provided at about 11:30. The event will end promptly at 3:00PM.

ASC will have service techs on hand to give you advice, and keep you out of trouble. They are there to guide you, not do the job for you. Do not bite off more than you can chew. Members are allotted a two-hour slot for their work. Second cars will be put at the end of the line.

Because it's the first Do-It-Yourself Tech Session in a few months, it will fill quickly. So, it will be first come - first served. Send in your [Registration Form](#) now! If you have any questions, please contact Sid Newman at 703-968-6615.

Calendar of Events

Greater Washington Section Events

March 11	DIY Tech Session American Service Center Arlington, Virginia Contact: Sid Newman Call: 703-968-6615	April 9	Annual Flea Market Marriott Headquarters Rockville, Maryland Contact: Craig Dabroski Call: 703-448-0513
March 18-19	Performance Driving School Summit Point Raceway Contact: Joe Wozney Call: 703-437-7866	May 7	Deutsche Marque Concours Woodlawn Plantation Alexandria, Virginia Contact: Ed Ayre Call: 301-654-0837
April 8	Baltimore Car Care Clinic Towson, Maryland Contact: Art Buker Call: 410-744-4173	December 2	Annual Holiday Party

Regional and National Events

March 18	Regional Officers' Meeting	August 19-22	Gemütlichkeit 2000
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	Winchester, Virginia Contact: Dick Pedersen Call: 703-771-2205	Nelson Ledges and Thompson Drag Raceway Contact: Dick Gortz Call: 216-765-1901
April 8-9	Nelson Ledges Drivers' Ed Aurora, Ohio Contact: Dick Gortz Call: 216-765-1901	Sept. 23-26 Tri-O-Rama 2000 Summit Point, West Virginia and Winchester, Virginia Pending approval Contact: TBA
May 20	Star-O-Rama 2000 MacDill Air Force Base Clearwater, Florida Contact: Scott Suits Call: 727-789-4582	

President's Message

Thoughts of a Car Guy

People say it was the best holiday party. I think they're right. One hundred happy GWSers partied the night away. Our DJ was Paul Kaplan, a Fairfax teacher and one of my golf buddies. He was quite a hit and knows how to get people involved and loosen them up. We have signed Paul up for next year's party on Saturday, December 2 at Belle Haven. Don't say you weren't told.

And, thanks to those devoted GWS officers and members for their help and support in making this a great year. Plans are underway for a quick start for 2000. We're trying for a Dent Wizard event in early spring and perhaps a White Post restoration event in March. Joe is finalizing the autocross schedule and it should all come together in February.

It looks as though we may hold Tri-O-Rama in September. With the cancellation of StarFest, MBCA may permit several nationally sponsored regional events. It is necessary for national approval for an event like Tri-O-Rama to enable the host section to receive a national subsidy and support from MBCA. Without the national, entry fees for members would be prohibitive. Last year, track costs and related expenses for our two day event at Summit Point were over \$11,000.

Our two-day spring event at Summit Point will be held on the weekend of March 18 and 19. This is a good time to get driver training for those young licensed drivers in GWS households. I can't stress enough the need for young and not so young drivers to receive training in a controlled environment. Don't let the first time you or your family drops a wheel off the road and over corrects spinning the car across the road into oncoming traffic be on Georgetown Pike or Georgia Avenue north of Olney. How many times do you hear and read about overcorrection accidents? It is one of the most common and preventable causes of serious accidents. When driving on the track with an instructor you are taught why dropping a wheel is so dangerous and shown how to handle the situation when it happens... because it will happen.

The key is not to bring the car immediately back on the road. Keep the wheel straight and slow down. Then slowly bring the car back on the road. Jerking the wheel to the left causes the right rear tire to slip on the grass, dirt, or gravel, which is far less sticky than the pavement. That causes the car to spin uncontrollably. The car will take a predictable course across the road into oncoming traffic.

Another tip... when a driver feels they might be going out of control or in an uncomfortable situation at high speed is to slow the car to 35 mph or less. At 35 mph you can usually control a car



and make it do what you want it to do in dry conditions.

Remember, for those who are planning to drive your Mercedes-Benz or "other" car on the track at Summit Point this March, you will need a tech inspection. Now would be a good time to contact your local shop or dealer and have them complete the tech inspection with our form. For club members, the [Tech Session](#) mentioned earlier in this newsletter will be the best place to get your Benz inspected. Send in the [Registration Form](#) and a tech inspection sheet will be sent to you. See you at "The Point."

Dick

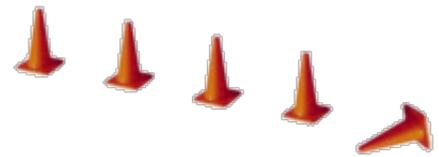
Baltimore Car Care Clinic

April 8

The Greater Washington Section covers the District, Northern Virginia, and Maryland and has over 1800 members - many of them are in the Baltimore area. As part of our efforts to reach out to all section members, we have scheduled a Spring Car Care Clinic to be held on Saturday, April 8, in Towson, Maryland.

The clinic will be hosted by Bob Hafenmair, GWS section member and owner of Star Auto Service. Star Auto has seven bays and four lifts. It is located south of the Baltimore Beltway at exit 64A on the west side of York Road. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow members and learn more about your model Mercedes. Bob and his staff will be on hand to discuss your car and any problems you might be having.

Mail the [Registration Form](#) to event chairman Art Buker. Questions? You can reach Art at 410-744-4173. There is no charge for the event but you must preregister, as it will fill quickly and admittance will be on a first-come-first-served basis.



pylon alley by Joe Wozney

Autocross

There isn't much to report here as the final autocross schedule has not been finalized, so I'll give the space up to sometime autocrosser, Klaus Hirtes, who sent this along.

The 2000 Autocross season is fast approaching. Here are 30 things you can do now to get ready for it:

1. Put on clothes you would typically wear on a hot day. Run in place, in your shower, with cold water cascading down on you, and sporadically bend over and pick up something. Do this for one hour.
2. Throw \$15 away right now.
3. Fill a blender with ice, hit the pulse button and let the spray blast your face. Leave the ice on your face until it melts. Let it drip into your clothes.
4. Throw \$15 away right now.
5. Put on clothes you would typically wear on a cold day. Go to a steel plant and run in place next

- to the smelter and sporadically bend over and pick something up. Do this for one hour.
6. Throw \$15 away right now.
 7. Go to a tanning salon and get a good sunburn on your face. Then, put your face in front of a fan, turn the fan on, and throw sand into the back of it.
 8. Throw \$15 away right now.
 9. Crawl under your car and sporadically drop nuts and bolts, hot oil, grease, and old rubber hoses on your face and arms. Scrape a hose clamp across your knuckles.
 10. Throw \$15 away right now.
 11. Pour oil and anti-freeze all over your body, put sunscreen in your eyes, and stand in the sun for one hour.
 12. Throw \$15 away right now.
 13. Don't drink any liquid for 12 hours. Then quickly drink four cans of beer.
 14. Throw \$15 away right now.
 15. Drink three cups of coffee and wait six hours before going to the bathroom at the dirtiest and worst gas station you can find.
 16. Throw \$15 away right now.
 17. Push your car up and down the block 3 times wearing your helmet with the visor down.
 18. Throw \$15 away right now.
 19. Find a highway construction area and run over every orange cone you can see. Then get out of the car, walk back, and put every cone back in its place while arguing with each construction worker you encounter.
 20. Throw \$15 away right now.
 21. Get up at 4:00AM and drive in heavy traffic for five hours - anywhere - towing your racecar.
 22. Throw \$15 away right now.
 23. Push a small bucket over your head before you go to bed each night.
 24. Throw \$15 away right now.
 25. If you wear glasses, begin wearing them with glue smeared on the lenses. Sporadically pop one of the lenses out and scrape it on the ground.
 26. Throw \$15 away right now.
 27. Buy a new pair of driving gloves or shoes and immediately throw one away.
 28. Throw \$15 away right now.
 29. Slam your thumb in a car door. Take a short length of 2 inch round pipe and bash yourself in the head with it. Run over your foot with your car. Periodically stumble and fall.
 30. Repeat all of the above every Sunday until it's time for the real thing.

Club News

Annual Holiday Party

On Saturday, December 18, one hundred or so GWSers partied the night away at the Annual Holiday Party held at Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria. Many of you brought toys and food, which was donated, via Claire Luke, to the Salvation Army. Thank you!

Many door prizes were handed out including a record three sets of tires from Craven Tire, Radial Tire, and



Merchants Tire. Our friends at American Service Center, EuroMotorcars, and HBL provided shirts, gadgets, and a car cleaning kit. Rick Ellinger provided an alignment or whatever the winner needed of comparable value. Our V.P., Ed Ayre, gave two watches from his fabulous jewelry store. Thanks folks.



Following cocktails and a fantastic dinner, our new DJ supreme, Paul Kaplan, played crowd favorites and had all the officers and board members out on the floor in shades with toy instruments performing My Girl. What a sight! Paul will be back next year.

The annual Hank Sloane Member of the Year award was presented to Joe Wozney for his hard work and commitment to the club during 1999. Joe was instrumental in planning and executing Tri-O-Rama 99, eight autocrosses, the Metro Tri-Star, and more. Congratulations again, Joe.

Special awards were presented to our very dedicated Webmeisters, Dave Thompson and Paul Vandenberg, for their efforts on behalf of the club. Please take a look at their [work](#).

Joe announced the 1999 autocross winners and with the help of his shadow, Tom Newman, handed out awards. Joe plans another fun packed autocross year in 2000.

A special thanks to Janet McFarland for being this year's registrar and to Judy Roth for all her help.

Some say it was the best holiday party ever. I can't disagree. Next year we'll be back at the Belle Haven Country Club on Saturday night, December 2, the first party of the season.



Dick Pedersen

Mercedes-Benz News

Top Ten Brands

In December, Albert Angrisani, President of Total Research Corporation, announced the results of "Top Ten Brands of the Nineties," a special version of the firm's Equitrend survey of consumer brand perception.

Out of more than 300 brands surveyed, Kodak film ranked number one in America's customer perception of overall quality, followed by Craftsman tools, Mercedes Benz automobiles, Hallmark greeting cards, Disney World, UPS, Fisher-Price Toys, Reynolds Wrap Aluminum Foil, Chiquita Bananas, and Levi Jeans.

We could have told them all about the cars without the survey!

ML55 AMG Now on Sale

The ML55 AMG is now on sale for \$64,900.

This highly anticipated Mercedes-Benz super sport-utility puts the sport in sport-utility vehicle. Never before has an SUV been so fast, so luxurious, or handled so well.

Available in limited numbers in early 2000, this latest M-Class model has been engineered in conjunction with AMG, Mercedes' longtime high performance and racing arm.

The ML55 AMG is the latest variant in the ML series. With a specially-crafted aluminum V8 engine pumping out 342 horsepower and 376 lbs.-ft of torque, the ML55 has a top speed over 140 mph and

T can travel from 0 to 60 mph in 6.4 seconds, making it the world's fastest sport-utility. The ML's four-wheel-drive system and ground clearance give it the agility to traverse a snowy highway or gravel country road.

Engines, drivelines, and suspension components specific to the ML55 AMG arrive at the M-Class production facility in Alabama directly from AMG in Affalterbach, Germany.

The ML55 can be easily identified by its muscular physique. Hefty five-spoke, 18-inch wheels and low-profile 285/50 R18 tires are covered by sleek fender flares. Clearly visible through the wheels, red brake calipers (for most body colors) not only provide a fitting accent but also identify the ML55 brakes - special 13.6-inch vented discs in front and 13.5-inch discs at the rear.

Unique rocker panels add to the athletic look. Integrated fog lights are built into the front air dam and a special panel continues the bumper line across the liftgate. "Power domes" on the front hood hark back to the legendary 300SL Gullwing of the 1950s, and twin chrome exhaust tips also hint at the power underhood.

Harnessing all that horsepower and torque is a full-time 4WD system providing 50/50 front/rear torque distribution. One of the most innovative and versatile in the SUV market, the 4WD system uses front, center and rear "open" differentials requiring no driver intervention.

Thickly bolstered sport seats are finished in supple leather contrasted by dark burl walnut trim. The armrests and console storage are leather covered, as is a portion of the walnut and leather AMG steering wheel. The ML55 instrument cluster features chrome-ringed gauges with white analog faces, while the center console holds a large display featuring an integral navigation and audio system which is set up for easy add-on of a digital StarTAC integrated portable phone and/or six-disc CD changer.



High Gear

I was really taken aback when, just the other day, I heard a teenager exclaim, "The second millennium really sucks. It started with the failed crusades and ended with the collapse of the utopian ideologies!" ...I never thought of it that way.

Well, whether or not the passing era was a boom or a bust, it seemed like a good idea to celebrate the coming of the year 2000 with some very special activity. For most of the past year I have been keeping my eyes open for a real bang up way to spend the night of December 31, 1999. I wasn't tempted to pay ,000 per couple to enjoy a special meal prepared by a world-renowned chef. Likewise, the thought of standing shoulder to shoulder with 2 million people in search of a port-a-potty on Times Square held no attraction. Sadly, many of my friends were planning to greet the New Year quietly at their homes intimidated alternately by Y2K computer glitches or fear of a terrorist strike from some Orwellian foe of our benevolent Big Brother. The calendar kept flipping forward, yet my plans remained incomplete.

On December 23rd it happened. My opportunity to appropriately celebrate the turning of the century came knocking. I got an invitation from Loyal Truesdale, U.S. organizer of the Carrera Panamericana Classic Car Rallye, to run in the Corona Millennium Rallye from Las Vegas, Nevada to Mazatlan, Mexico. The entrants were to gather at Las Vegas Motor Speedway for hot laps on



December 27th. The starting order for the rallye would be determined by the qualifying times established at the track. On the 28th the rallyists would start at 5-minute intervals and begin their cannonball style run across the deserts and mountains of the Southwest to the Mexican border at Tecate. Thence the rallye route headed to Ensenada and down the Baja peninsula to LaPaz. The New Year would be greeted on the ferry crossing the Sea of Cortez headed for Mazatlan and the awards banquet.

As I read the letter from Loyal Truesdale I could see the sun glinting off the red rocks in the Chemehuevi Valley. I could make out the cactus blossoms at Puerto Prieta. I could smell the welcome sea breeze at Matancita. I could taste the dust swirling in the wake of the lead rallye cars. I could feel the adrenaline coursing as my classic starship made its move to overtake a valiant little Lancia Appia on the short straight just outside of Quinones. I knew. This was my millennial assignment.

The enticing correspondence about the Corona Millennium Rallye had not lain on my desk for 10 seconds when the telephone was in my hand and I was calling my cousin, Mike Fedoroff in California. Mike is the only person in my acquaintance crazy enough to run the Corona with me. Mike lives within 250 miles of the starting point of the rallye. Mike knows Baja like the back of his hand from dozens of hunting and fishing trips south of the border. Mike has access to a classic, unrestored 1961 Mercedes in good mechanical condition. And, perhaps most importantly, Mike is married to Val, surely the most understanding wife in the world. I could hear the telephone ringing across the continent in Walnut Creek.

Val answered the phone. Of course, it's three hours earlier on the west coast. Mike was at work. Val was at home recovering from the flu. After a couple of minutes of pleasantries, I cut to the chase. I described the rallye in broad outline. Before I could pop the question, Val queried, "You're going to ask if Mike can run the Corona with you.... You know he wouldn't miss it for the world!" Oh ecstasy! It's coming together! It was meant to be! I wanted to hug dear Val over the phone lines! "Mike will call you back as soon as he gets home from work and you guys can iron out the details." Val said.

Before the receiver hit the cradle I was making my plans. We'd have to buy 4 new Semperit aggressive, mud-rated tires for the California Mercedes, as well as a pair of amber Bosch fog lights and a Hella pencil beam. Mike would have to change the oil and coolant, clean out the oil bath air filter, replace the fan belt and the hoses. There was just enough time if Mike scrambled and worked on our project over Christmas eve. We would have to assemble an emergency road service kit and buy two fire extinguishers. I took my Nomex driving suit out of the closet and got the Simpson Snell SA95 helmet out of the barn. I called to arrange for my airline tickets to Las Vegas. Then I began to pack. Because this was a classic car event I decided to take along my old string-back driving gloves and a silk scarf with the three pointed star embroidered on it. I got out my map of Mexico to pack it. When I succumbed to the temptation to unfold the map I once again fell into a reverie of things to come. I could see the setting sun over the Bay of Sebastian Vizcaino. I could just make out the little fishing village by the water. I could hear the throaty roar of the Ferrari Barcchetta just off my right tail fin and see the red brake lights of the Aston Martin DB4 down the road. I expected a check point soon as we approached the line of demarcation for the "Montana Hora Zona." I called out to Mike to read the time on the double chronometers atop the clipboard on his lap. And once again I could taste the swirling dust and the delicious sense of adventure.

Time flies when you are packing for a bold enterprise and daydreaming of the exciting hazards which lie ahead. I was startled and brought back to the present by the ringing of the upstairs telephone. As I lifted the instrument I heard a familiar yet strangely quavering, hoarse and squeaky voice, "JJJJJohn, I'm running a 102 degree fever. I've come down with the flu..."

Just as that teenager said the other day, this passing millennium really did suck!

John Kuhn Bleimaier
Mid-Atlantic Regional Director

The Trading Post

280SE 4.5, 1973: Blue/blue. Good interior and exterior. Good trans and tires. Needs exhaust. There is an engine stalling problem. Moving, need to sell fast. \$1000 obo or trade for running car. Call 919-554-2413. (Raleigh, NC)

190SL, 1962: White/red leather. Both tops. Body and engine completely restored at more than \$50k over 4 years. Exc. condition, beautiful car. \$45,000. Call David at 703-406-5554.

280SL, 1971: Ivory/forest green. Both tops, new soft top. Beauty. Great mechanical cond. \$25,000. Call Mike Ward at 410-323-8054 or email eward@bcpl.net

450SL, 1973: New icon gold paint (orig. color) w/ZEN aerodynamics. 99k mi. Engine rebuilt at 88k. \$21,500. Call Steve at 888-349-8627 or email sjlocke@us.fortis.com

380SL, 1983: Bronze/tan interior. 34k miles. Both tops, hoist, parts, manuals. Suitable for show or collector. \$25,000. Call 703-356-1274.

380SEL, 1983: Black/gray leather in showroom condition. Concours street class first place winner. Upgraded 15 in. 8-hole alloys w/225-60R15 tires. Well maintained. \$11,995 obo. Call David at (w) 703-934-8130 or (h) 301-831-4531.

380SL, 1984: Blue/tan leather. Both tops. Excellent condition. \$18,000. Werner Fehlauer at wernerfehlauer@compuserve.com or call 703-848-1873.

Wanted: Top half of rear seat w/head rests in good condition for 1987 190E 2.3-16V. Call Lew Baskerville at 202-726-5547 or email The-Hound@Juno.com.

Event Registration Forms

These are web versions of the event registration forms found in the centerfold of the Metro Tri-Star. Unfortunately, we cannot yet accept payment via the web, so the forms must be printed, filled out, and mailed in. Each form contains detailed mailing instructions.

- [Summit Point Drivers' Ed Registration Form](#)
- [DIY Tech Session Registration Form](#)
- [Baltimore Car Care Clinic Registration Form](#)

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B&M Foreign Auto Parts 301-868-7440

[EuroMotorcars](#) 301-986-8800
[Merchant's Tire & Auto](#) 800-637-2426
[RC Imports](#) 301-762-4205
Craven Tire & Auto 703-893-3530
[Curry's Auto Service](#) 703-502-0400
[MB Motors](#) 703-978-4564
[Potomac German Auto](#) 800-831-7686
Radial Tire Co. 301-585-2740

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[BK Travel](#) 888-528-7735
[Dent Wizard](#) 800-336-8949
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Paymer & Phillips 301-953-0300
Wheel Worx 410-969-7301
[MB Roadside Assistance](#) 800-367-6372
Electronics Service Center 301-881-8637

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