



June 2000

Annual Picnic/Concours

Live Music Again! The Pool is Open!

On Sunday, July 23, Hank Harris will host the Annual Mid-Atlantic Picnic and Concours at his home in Potomac again. Tradition is wonderful since it provides us with a chance to repeat what everyone has said has been a good event, and it also means that we can just crank up the old plans.

We hope Tom and Mary Kestel and Debbie Hirtes will be in charge of the cooking again. You know the hamburgers and bratwurst will be great! And, of course, we're expecting a repeat of the excellent work of our biermeister and wine sommelier, Jim Van Valkenburg, who will dispense the "gute Deutsche bier und wein" to slake your thirst. We'll also have soft drinks on ice. And, there will be lots of watermelon. So be sure to bring a big bib.

The live "tunes" of the last two years were so well received that we'll do it again! Bring your swimsuits and enjoy the pool. And don't forget chairs or blankets for the lawn.

The Concours has no entry fee. On the registration form, fill out the car information so we can organize the classes. Please send in your registration form early.

We will hold a silent auction again for the benefit of The Hospital for Sick Children and Children's Hospital. In addition to items from both local and national merchants, we ask that you contribute a "treasure" (no white elephants, please) for the auction. All items sell to the highest bidder. Please indicate your contribution on the registration form.

Anniversary pins will be presented to MBCA members celebrating their five-year, ten-year, etc., memberships. Check out the label on The Star for your start date.

Times: Cars entered in the Concours should arrive between 9:00 and 10:30AM. This year, we will have a Clean Car/Display Class that is not judged. Wash it up and bring it out! Street and Show Classes are judged. Judging begins at 11:00AM and awards will be presented at 3:30PM. Food "judging" begins at about 11:30AM. Beer, wine, and soft drinks will be served all day. The silent auction ends at 3:00PM.

Directions: From I-495 (the Beltway) take River Road, west, pass Potomac Village (five miles); turn right on Esworthy Road; turn right after 0.8 miles onto Query Mill Road and then turn right again into the entrance of Hidden Hill Farm.

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The registration form is in the centerfold. If you have any questions on the Concours, call Ed Ayre at 301-654-0837. For questions on the registration or silent auction, call Judy Roth at 301-774-5390. The club does not mail tickets to the picnic/Concours. Cost is \$15.00 per person.

Tech Forum/Car Clinic

On July 8, the section will hold a general maintenance Tech Forum/Car Care Clinic at the Merchant's Tire Training Center in Manassas, Virginia.

The clinic will begin at 9:00AM with coffee and donuts. The morning session will include tire and oil specialists as well as local experts on Mercedes-Benz maintenance and repair.

Lunch is included in the \$15 registration fee and will be served at noon. The session will continue with discussions on maintenance issues and will feature a question and answer period by our presenters and other MBCA members. The clinic will conclude at 3:00PM or when the last question has been answered.

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 the left). Proceed two streets and turn left on Euclid Avenue. The Merchant's facility is on the right just beyond Eastern Manufacturing.

Previous clinics at the Merchant's facility have experienced large numbers of members in attendance. Space fills quickly! Complete the registration form in the centerfold and mail to Tech Chairman Mason Beale.

Calendar of Events

Greater Washington Section Events

June 25	Autocross #3 James Wood High School Winchester, Virginia Contact: Joe Wozney Call: 703-437-7866	July 30	Autocross #4
July 8	Tech Forum Merchant's Tire Manassas, Virginia Contact: Mason Beale Call: 703-941-1055	August 13	Autocross #5
July 23	Annual Picnic and Mid-Atlantic Concours Harris Estate Potomac, Maryland Contacts: Concours: Ed Ayre Call: 301-654-0837 Registration: Judy Roth Call: 301-774-5390	September 10	Autocross #6
		October 15	Autocross #7
		December 2	Annual Holiday Party Belle Haven Country Club Alexandria, Virginia Contact: TBA Call: TBA

Regional and National Events

June 24	June Jamboree Northern New Jersey Section Chatham Township, NJ See article on page 17 Contact: Lucille Chabala Call: 973-731-9133	Sept. 23-26	Tri-O-Rama 2000 Summit Point, West Virginia and Winchester, Virginia Registration packets will be available in June
August 19-22	Gemütlichkeit 2000 Nelson Ledges and Thompson Drag Raceway Contact: Dick Gortz Call: 216-765-1901		

Thoughts of a Car Guy

Michael Rierson's son, Galen, said after his third autocross run, "this is unbelievable I am having so much fun." Galen was driving his new Toyota Celica GT at his first autocross. He caught on rather quickly, as young folks do, and after several runs turned in very good times. Galen was smooth and learned to handle his new car in a controlled situation. More importantly he will not be as surprised when that "nasty" situation pops up, as we know it will and does with increasing regularity. The autocross schedule is posted in the Tri-Star and is on our web page and runs about once a month during the spring/summer/fall. Do yourself and your kids a favor by experiencing this training in a fun atmosphere.



The Deutsche Marque Concours was a resounding success. Thirty-five Mercedes joined about sixty BMWs and Porsches for a day-long celebration of the finer German car marques. Ed Ayre adeptly handled the administrative matters, and Chief Judge Dick Gentz led a group of judges including Ed Ayre, Mason Beale, Vern Luke and yours truly. The Copenhavens from the Keystone Section won Best of Show with their 380SL with Harvey Cherner's 280SL a close 2nd.

The next Concours event will be our Annual Mid-Atlantic Picnic on Sunday, July 23, at Hank Harris' Potomac estate. This event is so well attended I strongly recommend sending your registration to Judy Roth promptly so you are not shut out. One way to make sure you get a good parking spot is to volunteer to help out for a few hours. Give me a call if you can help.

August brings Gemütlichkeit 2000 in the Cleveland area and then our Tri-O-Rama 2000--both with national Concours. Concours is not just for the fanatics. It is a way of staying on top of your MB's overall condition. Paying attention to the engine may help spot early leaks or other troubles. Preparing the exterior will extend the life of the paint by many years. Any Mercedes-Benz in superb condition is always in demand.

Gemütlichkeit 2000 and Tri-O-Rama 2000 are fast approaching. Last year, I attended my first Gemütlichkeit and had a great time. The Western Reserve Section is very inclusive and makes visitors feel welcome. I highly recommend the long weekend in Ohio. The events are exciting and the members are fun to be around.

Tri-O-Rama will be held on September 23-26 in Winchester, Virginia. This fun packed gathering is

always memorable. We are planning a Concours on the streets of old town Winchester, a rallye through the historic countryside, and driving events at Summit Point Raceway. Two banquets and a reception will provide plenty of time to discuss the goings on. As a sanctioned national event, this will be the last chance for national competition points for 2000. See you there.

Dick

Mr. Ed

Now we're cooking with gas! Ralph the computer's replacement is now up and running. But "it" doesn't have a name yet. I'm leaning towards Gottlieb or Karl but I'm still open to suggestions. "It" certainly can't go through life with a name like Macintosh HD! "It" would never have the name "Bill." Don't get me wrong... I like many Bills and "Bill" as a name. It's just the yucky connection to that gazillionaire in Redmond.

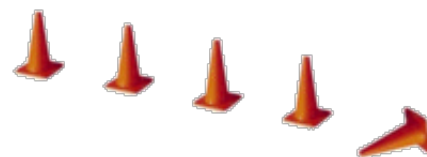
I certainly can't use Dick, Sid, Ed, Craig, Mason, Klaus, Janet, Vern, Harry, or Debbie. See, if I name "it" after one of the officers or board members, the others (not named) would be rightfully upset. The same policy applies to our advertisers and sponsors. "It" cannot be named after a politician--any politician. That would imply a bias. Besides, there aren't any politicians that are as quick or incredibly beautiful as my G4.

Boy! This is going to be tougher than I ever thought it might be. Think Different! (Shameless plug for current Apple ad campaign.)

You are not going to believe this, but I have just thought of the perfect name! Bobbie and I had the sweetest, cutest, and most wonderful fur ball of a cat. He was also a runt. He was also clumsy. He was an inept hunter... although slow moving moths were in constant danger. He was usually dirtier than any cat working as a mouser in a junk yard. But! He really loved us and we loved him. He died on St. Paddy's Day four years ago. I'll keep his name alive.

Macintosh HD, I dub thee "Cleveland."

Joe



pylon alley by Joe Wozney

Autocross #1

The first autocross of the season was a beaut! Forty-one action-starved folks came out of their winter caves for some fun and some sun. It was great to see so many new folks and old friends.

In the Benz groups, Prez Dick edged "Fast Eddie" Ayre and his spouse, Pam and also took fastest Mercedes time. Jim Smith took out his angst (from losing to Steve Lobell last year) on Mason Beale. Mason has previously driven his SL at a few national club events but will most likely move to the Pedersen(s)/Ayre group with his newly acquired 190E 16V.

Debbie Hirtes took first in the SL group (insert broken record here). Spouse Klaus Hirtes led the oil burner crowd but brought a first-time ringer, Tim Downs, who took a strong second. Bill "Honey, I Broke the Car" Brochu again walloped the rest of the "foreign" car crowd before retiring for the day after only two runs. He was closely followed by fellow Bimmer driver John Woodcock. Weird car driver, Harry Newman, took a fantastic third. Rumor is that Harry has found a 4WD version of his Subaru in flame red.... Watch out Audis!

Tom Newman deferred to his dad and took fourth place--one tenth back on the index. Ken Lober

brought his new veerrry black Mustang to fifth and put Tom on notice that the F-Stock class will be a hot one.

Steve Roberts still hasn't learned that it will be more likely he'll get to drive the Porsche if he doesn't beat his dad too often. Kids!

Before Bill broke her car, Angie Brochu was able to get in a few really fast runs and took the women's class and FLTD.

We had several cars or groups of cars that will be fun to watch over the coming months. First-timer Galen Rierson had an absolutely fantastic day in his very strange looking 2000 Celica GT. My helmet is older than Galen!

We were invaded by a bevy of 2000 Audi S4s. They ranged from stock to slightly modified to "don't you dare open that hood!" This group of sickies was praying for rain.

Two Triumph TR-6s were in attendance. One stock and the other.... this came from a '67 Vette and this came from a McLaren, and this...

A. C. Miller has the car I most want to see more of as the season goes on. A. C. brought his new M5 still with temporary tags! The tires still had the little nubbies on the side.

I also want to drive Mike Vos' Boxster. That is one neat little car. Does the word "covet" fit here, Lord?

Deutsche Marque Concours

The Deutsche Marque is a long-standing annual Concours event, taking place the first Sunday in May. We are joined by the BMW and Porsche clubs. The 2000 version was again held at the beautiful setting of Woodlawn Plantation.

Cars started arriving at 8:00AM with Bruce and Judy Roth first on the scene for Mercedes-Benz. Staging went on until judging began at 11:30AM with two teams of three judges, Dick Pedersen, Ed Ayre, Vern Luke, Dick Gentz, Judy Roth, and Mason Beale. In all, thirty-five cars were present in the Display, Street, and Show classes. It was great to see so many first timers come out to show their cars or look at what was offered.

It must be said that GWS is a club for "All Seasons"... from snow flurries at the Summit Point driving event to the 90 plus degree heat at the Deutsche Marque, all within less than two months.

The awards were given out at 3:30. The trophy winners were, in **Show Class**, Best of Show to Donna and Max Copenhaver who came from Pennsylvania for this event in their A-1 1985 Smoke Sliver SL.

Street Class for Late Models. First Place went to John Soos with his magnificent 1991 Black 420SEL.

Street Class for 1973-1982 Models. First Place went to Chris Cursio with his 1981 Silver 300TDT.

Street Class for Older Models. First Place went to Ron Parker with his 1971 Light Ivory 280SL.

And finally, the **Display Class** went to David Van Duzer with his (Annual) First Place Award for his 1958 green 220S. There must be something about green cars.

Throughout the entire day a band played wonderful German tunes. and given the fact that they had to move several times to find some shade it was quite a feat.

At the conclusion of the day, a superb reception was held with Woodlawn supplying a huge array of cheeses, sausages, strawberries, beer, and wine. It was a fitting conclusion to a great day.

Your GWS Officers send out a special thanks to everyone who participated and a special thanks to Sue Widome and her husband who brought three cars to show and to David Van Duzer who brought two.

It was great to see so many first-timers and let us not forget that the next GWS Concours will be our Annual Picnic on Sunday, July 23, at Hank Harris' estate in Potomac, Maryland. The last Concours of the year will be at Tri-O-Rama in September. We hope to see you at these events. Ed Ayre

Mercedes-Benz News

Best May Sales Ever

Mercedes-Benz USA reported sales of 16,803 new vehicles during the month of May 2000, a 0.8 percent increase over last year's sales record of 16,663. These were the highest May sales ever and the thirteenth straight month in which the company posted year-over-year sales gains. The first five months sales increased to 82,480 versus 73,379 for 1999.

Volume for the month of May was led by the E-Class model line with sales of 4,338--6.8 percent less than May 1999. There were 4,228 M-Class units sold, an increase of 26.1 percent over last year, making this the best May ever for the M-Class. C-Class sales recorded 2,328 units, a 19.7 percent decrease from May 1999. The S-Class, MBUSA's flagship, had a 28.6 percent decrease in May sales due to limited supply. The all-new top-of-the-line CL500 posted 170 units in its sixth month on the market. The SL-Class finished the month with 537 units sold, a decrease of 27.6 percent.

The CLK model line established a May sales record with 1,902 units, an increase of 47.6 percent. The SLK model line showed an increase of 25.5 percent to 1,488--the V-6 powered SLK320 sold an impressive 666 units its second month on the market--making it the all-time best sales month ever for the SLK model line. May sales represents the best convertible month ever for MBUSA with 2,972 units sold (combined SL, SLK and CLK Cabriolet).

On a year-to-date basis, the M-Class accounted for the largest volume with 21,519 vehicles sold, up 33.9 percent. E-Class sales showed a marginal decrease of 0.7 percent to 20,559. Year-to-date S-Class sales increased 20.5 percent to 11,509. The CLK model line sold 8,752 units, an increase of 40.2 percent. Sales of the SL-Class posted a decrease of 25.6 percent to 2,531. The SLK showed an increase of 4.5 percent to 5,189, while C-Class sales decreased 6.6 percent to 11,631 as the current model continues through its last year of production.

Separately, through its Starmark pre-owned vehicle program, MBUSA recorded sales of 2,573, an increase of 18.2 percent. On a year-to-date basis, Starmark sales increased 37.1 percent.

Autostadt

From the Associated Press, in an article by Hans Greimel, comes a story that will be the envy of every red-blooded, car-loving American man, woman, and child who wanted to see Disney develop an Autoland to go next to Fantasyland in Orlando. Just one more reason to plan that trip to Germany!

Wolfsburg, Germany (AP)--It's not often a theme park with its own five-star hotel proudly overlooks a steaming industrial complex, where sweaty workers bend iron into autos and towering smokestacks belch skyward.

But in car-crazed Germany, few cars are as venerated as homegrown Volkswagen. Europe's biggest automaker is banking on that fierce brand loyalty with its latest venture--a self-styled car theme park called Autostadt, a cross between Disney World and Smithsonian Institute that boldly extols the virtues of the company that brought us the Beetle.

Expectations are so upbeat that the combination entertainment park, automotive museum will attract 1 million tourists a year that the Ritz Carlton hotel chain picked this gloomy factory town as the

unlikely location of its second German hotel, after Berlin. "When I first saw this site two years ago, I laughed. No way would somebody build a hotel here," said Ritz spokeswoman Vivian Deuschl. "But now it's awesome. It's what you'd call industrial romanticism."

Literally translated as Auto City, the 62-acre complex is wedged between train tracks, a dirty canal, Volkswagen AG's sprawling red-bricked auto works and the company's world headquarters.

In a world of cutthroat competition and high tech marketing among the big time automakers, it's hardly rare for major manufacturers to hype themselves with their own museums and visitor centers. But Volkswagen takes it all to the next level.

World-class architects were commissioned to erect the monumental, super modern halls sheathed in glass with cantilevered aluminum metal work. Paintings and sculptures adorn every turn of the corner. "When I first saw the whole thing, I thought it was some kind of art gallery. I've never seen anything like it," said Li Ye, deputy director of the Chinese Industrial Regulatory Authority, who attended the opening ceremony during the return leg of a trip to visit the big three automakers in the United States.

But don't discount Autostadt's entertainment value. While there's no roller-coaster or Ferris wheel, it does offer wind tunnel demonstrations, crash test simulations, a 360-degree cinema and even a go-cart track.

But the highlights are definitely the auto pavilions nestled between man-made lakes and gently rolling pine-dotted hills. They showcase the cars of Volkswagen and its subsidiaries--from little-know daughter companies like Spain's Seat and the Czech Republic's Skoda to exotic eye-catchers like Lamborghini and Rolls Royce.

Even German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder was on hand to give Autostadt the nation's blessing during Wednesday's grand opening ceremony, which was timed to coincide with Expo 2000 taking place in nearby Hanover.

Volkswagen expects many of the visitors will be families. But others will be there to pick up the brand new cars they ordered from a local dealer, a prestige-building exercise long employed by Mercedes-Benz but a new move for a mass-market manufacturer like VW.

For VW, it's all an attempt to make buying their product not just a purchase, but a pageant. "It's probably a stereotype that Germans have a special love affair with their cars, but I've seen so much interest generated overseas in the theme park, that I don't think it's just a German phenomenon," Autostadt spokesman Stefan Vogel said.

Besides the pure entertainment and marketing value, Autostadt is also a shrewd political move by Volkswagen. The state of Lower Saxony, where Volkswagen is headquartered and has a vast network of plants, holds sixteen percent of

VW's stock and gladly welcomes the 1,200 new jobs that will be created at the theme park. (This article appeared on the AOL site on Wednesday, May 31. Mr. ed)

Club News

Membership Pins

In a few short weeks we will hold our Annual Picnic, and with it comes the year's first opportunity for members to receive their longevity pins. If you still feel confused about how to receive a pin after reading the rest of this article, please email me or send me a note.

We award pins for 5, 10, 15, etc. years of membership in the club. For example, if you joined the club in 1995, you are eligible for a 5-year pin this year. However, and this is a big however, you must be present when the pins are awarded.

The "ceremony" takes place just three times a year: at the picnic, at the Annual Membership meeting, and at the Holiday Party.

Invariably, several eligible members attend one or all of the above events but leave before the pins are awarded. We do not mail pins, you need to be present! If, for some reason, you must leave before the event is over, please see me or my wife, Deborah, so we may give you your pin.

The following members are eligible for pins this year: 40 Years! Rudolph Birnbach 35 Years Thomas Sheppard 25 Years Kurt Darr M. Edelstein Thomas Robertson Alan Whelihan

20 Years Jaan Born James Davis EP Hurley Margarite Steelnack Frederic Schwartz Eckard Liptau

There are also: 30 fifteen-year members 60 ten-year members 96 five-year members

If only half of the eligible members show up we'll have a hell heck of a party!

Please note that since the database change at the national office, the date you joined is no longer on the newsletter label. Please check The Star.

One final note. If you are not able to attend any of the above-mentioned get-togethers, you will need to wait another five years before you will be eligible for a pin.

This section offers many different events for almost every taste and fancy for our 1,835 members (as of this writing), so we hope you'll join us for one that interests you. See for yourself what the officers and various chairpersons work so hard to offer you.

And always try to recruit a new member any opportunity you get. We are the largest section within the national club and strive to keep it that way.

Klaus Hirtes
Membership Chairman

MBCA News

Tri-O-Rama 2000

On September 23-26, 2000 our section will host the last Mercedes-Benz Club of America national event to be held this year--or in this millennium (if you're in the group that correctly thinks 2001 starts the next one).

The headquarters hotel will be the Holiday Inn in Winchester, Virginia. The autocross will be held at James Wood High School, just a few minutes from the hotel. Summit Point Raceway--the site of the driving events--is a mere 20 minutes away. The Concours d' Elegance will be held in the Old Town area, and the rallye will take place in the area around Winchester.

The Welcome Reception and Biergarten Dinner will be held at the Holiday Inn. The Final Banquet will be at the Winchester Country Club. The Welcome Reception, Concours, Rallye, and Autocross all take place on the weekend, so there is no excuse for not joining us.

We urge all members showing cars at the Annual Picnic/Mid-Atlantic Concours in July to sign up. There are three classes: Show, Street, and Display. Members from all over will be participating, so you will have the opportunity to measure how good you are against national competitors.

The autocross will be held at James Wood High School on Sunday, September 24. We can promise a challenging course on a very good lot--extra big, no poles, and rectangular.

We are planning an interesting Sunday rallye that is planned to take no longer than one and one half or two hours. Winchester is an interesting and attractive old town that changed hands 70 times during the Civil War. The rallye will be followed by the Biergarten Dinner Party.

We've planned four fun-filled days for you. However, this is a great opportunity for those members who cannot take off during the week to join us for at least two days of action on the weekend. Whether you come to one, two, or all of the events, Tri-O-Rama 2000 promises to be an exciting affair and our best yet. Beautiful Winchester is only an hour's drive from the Washington area.

For the food conscious, the meals will be prepared by the same folks who used to run the fabulous and famous Old Post Office restaurant! The Grand Finale banquet will be held at the beautiful Winchester Country Club.

Plan to attend what has become the club's premier national event. The time to sign up for Tri-O-Rama 2000 is now. Remember, you must preregister for all events.

Send the form in to request a registration packet now. (See the back page of this centerfold for form.) Packets will be ready July 1. We hope to have the registration packet available for downloading on the club's web site at: www.gws-mbca.org

The schedule of events for Tri-O-Rama 2000:

Friday,	Early Registration
September 22	Vehicle Tech Inspection
Saturday,	Registration
September 23	Vehicle Tech Inspection
	Concours d' Elegance
	Welcome Reception
Sunday,	Registration continues
September 24	Autocross
	Rallye
	Drivers' Classroom School
	Biergarten and Concours, Autocross, and Rallye Awards
Monday,	Summit Point Defensive Driving and Skid Pad School
September 25	Summit Point Performance Driving School
	Summit Point Acceleration Runs
Tuesday,	Summit Point Practice/Time Trials
September 26	Grand Finale Cocktail Party and Awards Banquet

We're not sure we can fit in any more than that to do, but we'll keep looking and trying! Please plan on joining us for as much of the event you have time for!

June Jamboree

The Northern New Jersey Section invites you to attend June Jamboree on Saturday, June 24, 2000. The event will be at the Corpus Christi Church, 234 Southern Blvd., Chatham Township, NJ. There will be music, balloons, prizes, goody bags, and more.

All Mercedes are eligible to participate. Cars go into two categories: sedan/wagon and sport. The judging groups are: Antique and Classic pre 1975; Concours 1975-1994; Old 1975-1984; New 1985-1994; and, Popular vote all years. Judging (25 points per category): engine; exterior profile (body, paint, fit, trim, glass); interior; trunk, wheels, accessories; age (1 point per year); mileage (1 point /10,000 miles).

Directions: Garden State Parkway to I-78 West to 24 W to 124 W. Get off at the River Road exit. Bear right after your first light (road changes name to Watchung Ave.) and go up the hill, at the 2nd light make a left onto Fairmount Ave. At the next light make a right onto Southern Blvd. and the church is 1 mile from the light.

The schedule: 8:30 Welcome and registration 10:10 to 12:15 Judging 12:15 to 1:15 Gourmet lunch

1:30 Awards, prizes, fun!

Registration cost is \$20 per car. Lunch, breakfast, and drinks are \$20 per person. Please send your registration information (name, phone number, car model, year, category you wish to enter--Concours or popular vote), and lunch reservation (check payable to NNJS-MBCA) to:

Lucille Chabala
6 Brook Way
West Orange, NJ 07052

High Gear

I don't believe in "luck" per se. That's why I don't drive a Jaguar! I don't want to have to cross my fingers before turning the ignition key. I object to the notion of keeping a rabbit's foot in my tool kit. If you make prudent choices you'll be lucky. Buy a Mercedes and chances are good that you'll make it to your destination without having to pop the bonnet in transit. I don't have a lucky number unless it's either "190" or "300," the model designations of my starships!

It was 5:00AM when I got up on a sunshiny Saturday morning. I had to wash the old Finback and get it ready for that day's Delaware Valley Section charity rallye. Here in the hills of west-central New Jersey it was spring turkey season.

As I polished the chrome on the 190Dc I could hear a gobbler in the woods behind the barn chortling and strutting. I've got a farmer turkey permit so I went in the house to get my shotgun. I leaned my old Parker side-by-side up against the door jam while I washed the whitewalls. Then I caught myself standing back, admiring a classic car, a classic shotgun, a bright blue sky and the smell of honeysuckle in the air. Contemplating the weekend ahead I realized that even if the turkey never broke cover, if I didn't place in the rallye, if I was slow man in Sunday's autocross... I'd still be one of the luckiest guys alive!

The Delaware Valley Section rallye benefited the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, a worthy organization. The route lead through scenic Montgomery and Chester counties. I used the Pennsylvania Turnpike to get from my home to the starting point. I'm not a superstitious person so when the shortest toll both line at the

Valley Forge exit was at booth #13, I went for it. Later that morning we were designated car number 13 at the rallye registration. It was just a coincidence.

Along the way we had a check point at the old estate of John James Audubon. There

I saw my only turkey of the day... in a masterful 19th century engraving, Birds of America, print number 13. The rallye was well conceived and the perfect weather added to the joy of the event for my navigator and me. However, unfortunately, when our route instructions took us to Route 113 we got lost.

After much circling and doubling back we finally found our way to the rallye destination. It was precisely 1300 hours (1:00PM, for civilians). Our elapsed time was 3 hours and... you guessed it... 13 minutes. Look, I'm still not superstitious... So we didn't win the trophy... We took a beautiful drive. We helped raise money for charity. One generous rallyist registered seven cars for the event although he only drove one, just to fatten the Juvenile Diabetes

Foundation's coffers. Lucky for them!

This was a three Mercedes event weekend for me. Like I said... I'm one of the luckiest guys alive. I was up on Sunday morning at 7:00AM and was off to the MBCA autocross at Bucks County College in my trusty "16 valve." The Rennmeister,

Mike Parlato, let me do all my runs early so I could get up to Hackettstown,

New Jersey in the afternoon for the Northern New Jersey Section Rallye. After seven runs I took

the "4 cylinder class" at the autocross and raced home.

I felt like a pony express rider as I dropped off the "16 valve" at Falkenhorst and saddled up the Finback again for the Sunday afternoon NNJS rallye. I bought 7 gallons of diesel fuel at my friendly local truck stop and headed north on Route 7. The rallyemaster, Doug Ochwat, set up a super activity in scenic Warren

County. The perfect spring weather held. This time my navigator's mind was clairvoyant when it came to working out the route instructions. The low pivot swing axle of the old diesel did its tenacious best on the back roads.

We snagged a trophy at the gourmet awards banquet. This time we were car number 7....

Like I said, I'm not superstitious... I don't believe in "luck." But next weekend when, I go after that wild turkey in earnest, I'm loading the old Parker with high brass... #7s!

John Kuhn Bleimaier
Mid-Atlantic Regional Director

TradingPost

250SE Coupe, 1967: Metallic brown, brown leather. A/C, 4-spd. manual. Engine rebuilt. New brakes, alternator, battery, exhaust valves. \$7800 in receipts. Inspected. Beautiful condition. Sell for \$8500 obo. Call Kieran Murphy at (h) 410-662-9303 or (w) 410-955-8525.

600SWB, 1970: Just in from its original Beverly Hills home. Outstanding 40k mile example. Why not go first class? Some trades O.K. Lowered to \$38,500! Call Ron at 301-855-7774.

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