

# METRO TRI-STAR

## Kicking Off the Holiday Season



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### Get Involved

*The Metro Tri-Star would love to help you get more involved with the club. Why not volunteer as a writer, reporter, photographer . . . or even as our new newsletter editor? We also are looking for a secretary to join the GWS Board of Directors. See page 3 for additional information.*



*Some of the attendees at the December 2 reception for new members pose between a coveted CLK 63 Black Series (left) and an ML63 AMG in the showroom at EuroMotorcars in Bethesda.*

Photo by Deborah Hirtes

The 2007 holiday season for GWS members began on Sunday, Dec. 2 with a reception for new members. Hosted each year by a different local Mercedes-Benz dealership, this year's venue was EuroMotorcars of Bethesda.

And so, on a cold, blustery start to the winter season, new and long-time members alike were warmed with a delicious array of nibbles and drinks (catered by Federal City Caterers), including a Heroes Glug Glögg (recipe follows) as well as some welcome gifts.

As in years past, this event also provided an opportunity for GWS members to donate an unwrapped gift for the Toys for Tots program, and the collection box was overflowing by the time the reception was over. A few of our younger members heartily approved of the choices of toys donated, while some of the more mature members enjoyed looking at some of the four-wheeled toys of their own, including a black SLR McLaren, an AMG CLK 63 Black Series, and the complete line of other Mercedes models.

The original owners of EuroMotorcars began operations in 1960 on Elm Street. The dealership has been at its present site since 1986, continually improving its services and facilities, which now includes both new and used cars in one large complex.

Vice President Roland Rice gave several tours of the facility: the 38,000 sq. ft. service area, expansive parts department (which was offering a 20% discount at the event) and the many parking levels. There are 70 bays and between 60 and 65 service technicians. Members got to talk with a couple of the six full-time people in the parts department, who explained how the technicians get their parts and talked about how all parts for cars since about 1976 are currently in the computer system.

Rice spoke of the early days of the dealership as a Studebaker/Packard operation. Once offering Saabs and Acura, it now deals exclusively with Mercedes-Benz (as well as Rolls Royce and Bentley in smaller showrooms across the street). EuroMotorcars opened a smaller dealer-

*Continued on page 15*

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# Calendar of Events

## *GWS Events 2008-2009*

Jan. 12	Holiday Party Ft Belvoir Officers Club Ft. Belvoir, Va. 6-10 p.m. (See page 5)
March 6-7	Philadelphia Flower Show (See page 5)
March 13	GWS Board Meeting All GWS members are welcome to attend. If you are interested, please contact GWS President Bill Hopper
March 15	Detailing Lecture/Workshop (See page 16)
March	Autocross Social
March	DIY-Autocross Tech Session
April 19	Judging Class with Pete Lesler, MBUSA VPC, Baltimore, Md. (See page 20)
April	Spring DIY Tech Day
April	Autocross #1
May 4	Deutsche Marque Concours Nottoway Park, Vienna, Va. (rain date is May 18)
May	Driver Education Summit Point, W. Va.
May	Autocross #2
June 12-13	Marque Madness IV, VIR, Danville, Va.
June	Detailing for the Street
June	Defensive Driving School and MB-only Autocross
June	GWS Board Meeting
June	Autocross #3
July 26-27	Drivers' Education Weekend, Summit Point, W.Va.
July 27	Summer Rallye and Parade Lap, Summit Point, W.Va.
July	Summer Tech Session/Track Inspection, ASC, Arlington, Va.

July	Summer Drive and Dine Event
July	Autocross #4
August 17	GWS Picnic and Mid-Atlantic Concours
August	GWS Board Meeting
August	Autocross #5
September	Fall Drive and Dine
September	Autocross #6
October 19	GWS Annual Meeting, American Service Center, Arlington, Va.
October	Autocross #7
November	GWS Board Meeting
November	Fall Tech Session
November	Autocross #7
Dec. 17	New Members' Reception
Jan. 2009	Holiday Party

*Many of the dates and locations have not yet been finalized. Please check the Web site ([www.gws-mbca.org](http://www.gws-mbca.org)) for up-to-date information. Additionally, if you have any suggestions for items to include in our calendar; please give Bill Hopper a call at (202) 363-4189, or e-mail [wwhrestoration@att.net](mailto:wwhrestoration@att.net).*

## Request for Volunteers

The GWS is a car club that relies on its members to be active in order to schedule various events throughout the year, whether they be driving, social, technical or educational. Having an extra pair of hands always makes for a smoother operation.

Start the new year by volunteering with the club—your club. For more information about how you can help, please contact GWS President Bill Hopper at [wwhrestoration@att.net](mailto:wwhrestoration@att.net) or phone him at (202) 363-4189. You also may contact any member of the GWS Board of Directors to volunteer.

You'll be surprised at how much more you get out of an event when you're directly involved.



Photo by Janet McFarland

*This photo was taken at the final GWS board meeting of the year, held at the home of GWS President Bill Hopper. Board members and their spouses talked about the past year and planned for the future. Notice the empty chair: There is a place waiting for YOU to join.*

## From the President



Bill Hopper

## How Quickly Time Passes . . .

It seems like it was just yesterday that we purchased our 1997 C Class. What better way to celebrate a new year than to pick up your first Mercedes-Benz on New Year's Eve. Hard to believe that was 10 years ago! The very next day, I sent in the MBCA membership application from the glove box. Then when my first copies of the *Metro Tri-Star* arrived, I looked forward to attending club events and meeting the people that were mentioned in the articles.

Now I have been to, or participated in, so many different events with the section, the region, and the club nationally, it is hard to believe it has been only 10 years ago since I joined. And of those people I read about when I first joined, many are still around. While some have moved on and been replaced by others, all have been a part of the club experience.

I have to say that these 10 years of MBCA membership have been some of the best in my automotive life. GWS and MBCA have let my inner car guy express itself in ways I never thought possible. Driving the track at Mid-Ohio, VIR and Summit Point would never be something I would have done had it not been for my membership in the club. Judging, or for that matter entering, a car in a concours d'élégance was not something I ever would have considered trying although I have spent many weekends cleaning and waxing my car in great detail.

So here it is 2008, and I look back on the many things I have been able to do through the club: crossing the Indy 500 finish line during the parade lap at Starfest 2002, plotting out the rallye for a Tri-O-Rama, learning how my car handles at a defensive driving event, or making it through the autocross course trying to get as close to a cone as possible without hitting it. That has been just some of the fun I have had as a member of this section and this club over the past 10 years.

I always enjoy meeting people, especially those who have been club members for 25, 30, 35, 40 years. They speak fondly of their first Mercedes-Benz and how in the very early years of the club, it was more of a club for sharing technical advice than anything else. They also comment on how much the club has grown. Now I get to meet some of the young guns who own and love their Mercedes-Benz vehicles just as much as those long time members. No matter the age, members speak of

their cars with such awe. It's easy to understand the reason for a club devoted to Mercedes-Benz vehicles. No matter whom you talk to, you can hear the enthusiasm in their voices when they talk about their cars, be they project cars, everyday drivers, or ones they have solely for special events. Young and old, or in between, our section's members show the same love and devotion for the Mercedes-Benz marque, and that is what makes this club such a great gathering place.

The club honors members who reach milestones of MBCA membership. With every five years of membership, a pin is earned. I will be getting my 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary pin at the upcoming holiday party on January 12 at Fort Belvoir. The other two events during the year at which pins are given out are the annual picnic and concours d'élégance in the summer and the annual meeting in the fall.

Membership is a very important part of this club and the GWS members have been well served for a number of years by Klaus Hirtes and his wife, Deborah. With the arrival of 2008, Klaus and Deborah hand over the membership reins to another couple, Henry and Laurie Harrell. Do not think for a moment, however, that Klaus and Deborah will be gone from the GWS scene. Both will continue to be active members, involved in a number of events: helping, instructing and being the dedicated members they have shown to be during their years of club membership.

When you see Klaus and Deborah the next time, thank them for all they have done for the club. Not only do they hand out pins (and have earned a number of them personally), they have done so much more for the membership, from working on various projects and committees from the newsletter to helping instruct students at driving events. Thank you, Klaus and Deborah, for your time and energy that you have put into the section. I, along with all the members, appreciate your dedication and commitment to the Greater Washington Section.

Maybe you are thinking about your own commitment to the club. Would you like to be more involved. That's certainly one way to get more out of the club activities. All it takes is participating by volunteering to help out at an event or other project. It's fun—and you will find, just as I did, that you get a lot more out of the club when you become involved.

## Holiday Party

**Saturday, January 12, 2008**

**6-10 p.m.**

**Potomac Room at the Fort Belvoir Officers' Club  
Ft. Belvoir, Va.**

The club's holiday party will be held on Saturday, Jan. 12, 2008 from 6-10 p.m. in the Potomac Room at the Fort Belvoir Officers' Club, Fort Belvoir, Va. The Greater Washington Section continues to hold costs down by subsidizing the party, so we are happy to be able to offer the dinner event for only \$50 per person.

If there is a clear sky and a moon out, the views of the Potomac from the balcony of the Potomac Room are breathtaking. And there will be music, punch, two free drinks, and free wine at each table. It is anticipated that the area MB dealers and other newsletter advertisers will provide favors as they have in the past. These have included clothing, cleaning materials and tires. Menu selections are noted below (in the reservation form). Make your reservation by filling out the form below. To gain access to Fort Belvoir, you will need a driver's license with a photo ID.

### Directions:

**From Washington, DC:** If you are traveling south on I-95, take Fairfax Parkway/Backlick Rd (7100), exit 166A to its end at U.S. Rt. 1 (Richmond Highway). Turn left. At the first light, on the right, is the entrance for Tully Gate on to Fort Belvoir. All visitors to Fort Belvoir without DOD decals on their vehicles must stop at Tully Gate to receive a temporary pass.

**From Richmond:** If you are traveling north on I-95, take the Fort Belvoir Exit 161B (U.S. Rt. 1 - Richmond Highway). You will travel five miles to Fort Belvoir. Continue through the light at the Fairfax County Parkway (VA 7100). At the next stoplight, on the right side, you will see the entrance for Tully Gate. Turn right.

**Directions to Fort Belvoir Officers' Club once on post:** After passing through security at Tully Gate, continue until you get to the first traffic light and then turn right. This will be 21<sup>st</sup> Street. After a short time, the road will fork. Stay to the left. You will still be on 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Observe the speed limits. Continue on until you see a sign for the Officers' Club on the right. It's a non-descript Park Service type sign. If you go the speed limit of 15mph at this point, you should not miss it. Note: street lighting is minimal. Turn right at the sign and follow the road around to the Officers' Club. As you follow the road around past the Officers' Club, there is a parking lot on the right. The entrance to the Club is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The Potomac Room is on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Club. You can take a staircase or an elevator on the left to get there.

## Philadelphia Flower Show

**Friday, March 7, 2008**

**Pennsylvania Convention Center  
Philadelphia, Pa.**

On March 7 at the crack of dawn, MBCA members will have an opportunity for a private tour of the famous Philadelphia Flower Show. This is one of those rare opportunities to see the work of top garden and floral designers without having to deal with the large crowds

that attend this show.

The Philadelphia Flower Show is one of the oldest horticultural shows in the world. The 2008 theme is "Jazz It Up!" with a focus on New Orleans' famed French Quarter gardens. Some of the country's top landscape and floral designers will expand on the theme, providing ideas for creating new spaces for the home and garden with plants and flowers. Plant lovers will delight in

*Continued on page 20*

## Holiday Party

**Saturday, January 12, 2008 — 6-10 p.m.**

**Ft. Belvoir Officers' Club, Ft. Belvoir, Va.**

Name(s) of those attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Member's name and club number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please place number of selections next to each dinner choice:

Prime rib of beef au jus \_\_\_\_\_ x \$50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

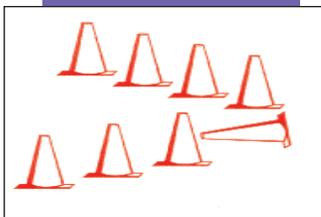
Roasted Cornish game hen stuffed with wild rice \_\_\_\_\_ x \$50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetarian (tri-colored tortellini with roasted vegetables) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Send this completed form along with a check (made payable to GWS-MBCA) to:  
James Glenn, 9513 Mount Vernon Landing, Alexandria, VA 22309-3222*

## pylon alley



by  
Joe Wozney

# Autocrossing

This has been an unusual year for the autocross series. Our first event had to be canceled and rescheduled due to a very strong storm. Looking at the calendar, already filled with other events, we were left with very few days for our makeup. As it turned out, we held Autocross 1 the week before Autocross 8, which was held Nov. 4.

### Autocross the First (Oct. 28)

Well, October has been a month of surprises. We went from a 90-degree day for Autocross 7 to a very cold one for our makeup. I'd prefer that winter be held from Dec. 24 through Feb. 28 only, but it seems to have a mind of its own.

Denise Dersin returned to MBCA autocross and was immediately back to her winning ways, taking the 16-Valve class over Ted Joseph by nearly a tenth, and over Bill Stewart by more than four-tenths. Denise also took Fastest Ladies Time of Day by a wide margin. Ted and Denise competed in their "new" 16-Valve. It seems to be worth every penny of the \$300 they spent on the car (or was it \$200?).

Jim Smith smoked the 190/C-Class group, thrashing nemesis Ben Weber by a bit more than second. Bill Hopper was third in his C-280 and he was followed by the Vandenberg—Paul T. and Paul D. Jim's time gave him FTD for the first time in a long time!

Henry Harrell (1993 400E) took the V8 class over Julian Reeves in his personal battleship (2007 R500). Henry insured that there would be no peace at home by relegating his "spouse," Laurie, to third.

Eric Wagner, Steve Spector and John Heflin ran unopposed in the older sedan, sports and diesel classes, respectively.

Newcomer Ernest Campana brought his modified C43 out and bested Jim Glenn in his E55. Ernest hit a cone so hard he broke his front dam—a simple demonstration of going waaaay too fast in the wrong place!

Patti Woodworth took an easy win in her Mustang GT and ruined the return of Sharon Payne—a lady we've all missed. Newcomer Angie Teates was third in her 1996 BMW M3.

John Brubaker took the non-Mercedes men's crown in his VW R32. Richie Crim had a fantastic run in his GTO for a solid second place finish. Another newcomer, Brian Rivera, took third with a Honda S2000. Brian took Men's FTD. (He was obviously filling the open Honda spot for the absent Pete Gochman.)

Bill Lear was fourth and had second best time of day but was hampered by the DSP index. Brett Hack lit a fire under (in?) his Miata to take

fifth. Harry Newman is "really" back and had a great sixth place finish. Anthony Grocek and his BMW 328 rounded out the top seven.

### Autocross the Last (Nov. 4)

Another cold day. After having recently been to Naples, Florida, I'm really questioning the value of winter! Maybe it was the weather, but we had the smallest Mercedes contingent in a long time. Look, I hate the cold, too, but these cars do start and run on cold days. Besides, even though it felt like it was in the teens, it was nearer to 40 degrees... okay, 48 degrees.

With Ben Weber in China, Jim Smith ratified his previous win and took one more Mercedes Fastest Time of Day in his 190. Paul T. and Paul D. were second and third.

Henry Harrell was taught a lesson of life. Never lend your car to a friend who might beat you in an event! Jack Morr won by two-tenths and was forced to walk home. Laurie Harrell was third but a lot closer to Henry than the previous event. Maybe the pressure Jack put on Henry gave her the opportunity to close the gap. However, Laurie had the last laugh and took Mercedes Fastest Ladies Time of Day.

Eric Wagner, Bill Stewart, Steve Spector and Jim Glenn all ran unopposed.

Patti Woodworth made it two wins in a row for the non-Mercedes ladies class. Barrie Gochman was a tick-and-a-half back.

Bob Williams seems to make one event a year but it's always in spectacular style. His Ticket-Me-Yellow 1973 Porsche 911 took FTD and the men's class by a half second over François Bru. It was great to have both Bob and François back with us!

Mike "I've Got Several Fast Cars" Wirt was third and only a half-second back. (He was also the course designer.) I think the next 15 or 20 drivers wished he'd brought the Cayman and was running on street tires again!

Pete Gochman was fourth. You miss one event and lose all perspective! Richie Crim continues to impress. His fifth place finish was more impressive considering the many twisty parts and the lack of long straights.

Patrick Dwyer was sixth in his BMW 335i. It's a very good-looking car! Ted Joseph was seventh and had fourth best time—it's all in the index.

On another note, it wouldn't be an autocross year without Bill Lear breaking an axle! It took him longer this year... but he did not fail his fans! Matthew Yip rescued him one more time with the trailer—good thing he lives so close to the site.

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## Results: Autocross #8 (November 4)

### MERCEDES-BENZ

DRIVER	YR/MODEL	BEST TIME	POINTS
Wagner, Eric	82 200	45.976	10
Stewart, Bill**	86 190E 2.3-16	39.169	10
Smith, Jim	92 190E 2.6	38.428	10
Vandenberg, Paul T.	90 190E 2.6	40.288	9
Vandenberg, Paul D.	90 190E 2.6	41.373	8
Morr, Jack	93 400E	38.814	10
Harrell, Henry	93 400E	39.091	9
Harrell, Laurie*	93 400E	41.034	8
Thompson, Dave	95 E420	41.625	7
Zint, Matthew	87 560SL	46.161	6
Spector, Steve	07 SLK350	39.516	10
Glenn, Jim	03 E55 AMG	38.706	10

*	Ladies Fastest Time of Day in a Mercedes
**	Men's Fastest Time of Day in a Mercedes
***	Ladies Fastest Time of Day
****	Fastest Time of Day

### OTHER MARQUES

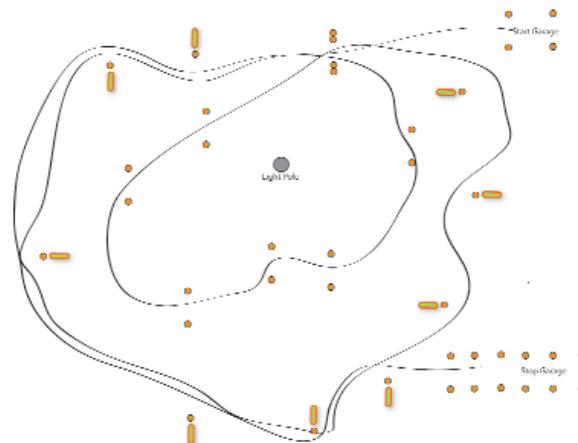
DRIVER	YR/MODEL	BEST TIME	CLASS	INDEX	INDEX TIME	POINTS
Woodworth, Patti***	02 Mustang GT	37.864	FSL	0.809	30.632	10
Gochman, Barrie	99 Mazda Miata	38.021	CSPL	0.845	32.128	9
Williams, Bob****	73 Porsche 911 RSR	33.111	SM2	0.862	28.542	10
Bru, François	05 Subaru WRX STi	33.576	BSP	0.853	28.640	9
Wirt, Mike	00 Audi S4	36.222	DS	0.804	29.122	8
Gochman, Pete	05 Honda S2000	34.570	BSP	0.853	29.488	7
Crim, Ritchie	04 Pontiac GTO	37.082	FS	0.809	29.999	6
Dwyer, Patrick	07 BMW 335i	37.191	FS	0.809	30.088	5
Joseph, Ted	04 Porsche Boxster S	35.905	AS	0.838	30.088	5
Jens, John	06 VW GTI	37.872	GS	0.803	30.411	3
Fleming, Tim	05 Chrysler Crossfire	37.882	DS	0.804	30.457	2
Newman, Harry	93 Subaru SVX	38.000	GS	0.803	30.514	1
Lear, Bill	92 Acura Integra GSR	36.910	DSP	0.836	30.857	1
Hack, Brett	90 Mazda Miata	38.663	STS2	0.806	31.162	1
Kallam, Michael	06 Dodge Charger	38.030	STU	0.821	31.223	1
Robinson, John	03 Corvette Z06	37.153	SS	0.846	31.506	1
Robinson, Bob	03 Corvette Z06	37.624	SS	0.846	31.905	1
Mitchell, Steve	00 Porsche Boxster	38.434	AS	0.838	32.208	1
Woodworth, Woody	05 Chrysler Crossfire SRT6	38.624	AS	0.838	32.367	1
Crosby, Pete	92 Mustang	40.260	STX	0.808	32.530	1
Lofton, Matthew	04 Audi TT	40.815	STS2	0.806	32.897	1
Rochelle, Paul	03 Honda Civic	41.382	STS	0.805	33.313	1
Mummert, Ron	93 Nissan 240SX	41.619	GS	0.803	33.420	1
Crosby, Pete	07 Saleen PJ03	39.383	BSP	0.853	33.594	1
Fleming, Justin	04 Subaru WRX	43.046	DS	0.804	34.609	1
Langguth, Brad	06 Mini Cooper S	46.735	HS	0.789	36.874	1
Booth, Steve	65 Triumph TR4A	49.718	HS	0.789	39.228	1

# Results: Autocross #1 (October 28)

## MERCEDES-BENZ

DRIVER	YR/MODEL	BEST TIME	POINTS
Wagner, Eric	82 200	62.275	10
Heflin, John	82 300CD-T	62.806	10
Dersin, Denise*	86 190E 2.3-16	57.378	10
Joseph, Ted	86 190E 2.3-16	57.457	9
Stewart, Bill	86 190E 2.3-16	57.812	8
Smith, Jim**	92 190E 2.6	56.36	10
Weber, Ben	86 190E 2.3	57.369	9
Hopper, Bill	97 C280	59.009	8
Vandenberg, Paul T	90 190E 2.6	60.855	7
Vandenberg, Paul D.	90 190E 2.6	63.127	6
Harrell, Henry	93 400E	59.523	10
Reeves, Julian	07 R500	62.934	9
Harrell, Laurie	93 400E	64.836	8
Spector, Steve	07 SLK350	60.610	10
Campana, Ernest	99 C43 AMG	57.816	10
Glenn, Jim	03 E55 AMG	60.619	9

Rough Layout of 10/28/07 Autocross Course  
(not to scale)



\* Ladies Fastest Time of Day in a Mercedes  
 \*\* Men's Fastest Time of Day in a Mercedes  
 \*\*\* Ladies Fastest Time of Day  
 \*\*\*\* Fastest Time of Day

## OTHER MARQUES

DRIVER	YR/MODEL	BEST TIME	CLASS	INDEX	INDEX TIME	POINTS
Woodworth, Patti***	02 Mustang GT	61.333	FSL	0.809	49.618	10
Payne, Sharon	99 Saab Viggen	66.891	GSL	0.803	53.713	9
Teates, Angie	96 BMW M3	67.486	BSL	0.828	55.878	8
Brubaker, John	06 VW R32	55.928	DS	0.804	44.966	10
Crim, Ritchie	04 Pontiac GTO	56.662	FS	0.809	45.840	9
Rivera, Brian****	06 Honda S2000	54.969	AS	0.838	46.064	8
Lear, Bill	92 Acura Integra GSR	55.182	DSP	0.836	46.132	7
Hack, Brett	90 Mazda Miata	57.486	STS2	0.806	46.334	6
Newman, Harry	93 Subaru SVX	58.241	GS	0.803	46.768	5
Gocek, Anthony	00 BMW 328Ci	58.269	STS	0.805	46.907	4
Fleming, Tim	05 Chrysler Crossfire	58.477	DS	0.804	47.016	3
Wirt, Mike	07 Porsche Cayman	56.519	AS	0.838	47.363	2
Kallam, Michael	06 Dodge Charger	58.377	STU	0.821	47.928	1
Zint, Matthew	00 Audi S4	58.846	STU	0.821	48.313	1
Robinson, John	06 Subaru Outback	61.974	HS	0.789	48.897	1
Mitchell, Steve	00 Porsche Boxster	58.663	AS	0.838	49.160	1
Wallick, Gary	02 Mini Cooper	62.512	HS	0.789	49.322	1
Rochelle, Paul	03 Honda Civic	62.210	STS	0.805	50.079	1
Corrice, Zac	02 Mini Cooper	64.708	HS	0.789	51.055	1
Blase, Brad	87 Porsche 924S	66.157	ES	0.812	53.719	1
McMullan, Anthony	89 BMW 325i	67.573	DS	0.804	54.329	1
Teates, Noah	96 BMW M3	67.506	BS	0.828	55.895	1

## Autocrossing

*Continued from page 6*

I must say that 2007 was one of the most fun years in some time. We had a lot of challenging courses, lots of great competition, and the chance to meet old friends and make plenty of new ones.

Next up will be the Autocross Social. Watch the newsletter and Web site for the date and location!

## 2007 Autocross Series Wrap-up

Our series trophy winners in each class are determined by the total points for the best five finishes for the entire year. The drivers must compete in a minimum of five events to qualify.

In the Mercedes classic group, Deborah Hirtes took the women's title... again. We should eliminate the class and retire the trophy! Klaus Hirtes edged Hans O'Malley and Eric Wagner (tied with 46 points) for the men's title. Klaus had only five (of eight) events but won them all.

Bill Stewart took the 16-Valve class. Neither Denise nor Ted had enough

events in a Mercedes to qualify.

Ben Weber snaked out a one-point win over Jim Smith in the 190/C-Class group—Ben had four firsts and Jim had three. Bill Hopper was third, five points back. The Paul Vandenberg took fourth and fifth.

Henry Harrell took the V8 class over Julian Reeves. It's important to note that Julian is autocrossing the only vehicle that is almost the size of my truck! This does not take away from Henry's achievement. He began this year never having run in an autocross. Neither had Laurie, who took a strong third place.

None of our diesel drivers had enough events to qualify; nor did Steve Spector in the SLK class.

Jim Glenn took the AMG class. He had only five competitors all year and each of them only ran one event. With all the AMG cars in the area you'd think people would want the opportunity to play with these marvelous toys!

Barrie Gochman was the only one of nine women who completed five events. It probably wouldn't have made a difference since she took four firsts and two

seconds. Very impressive indeed!

Pete Gochman had a few more competitors to worry about but it made no difference. Pete took five firsts and a fourth. He also managed to get five FTDs in the six events he made.

John Brubaker was right behind Pete for second place overall. John had two first places. Ya gotta love that little V-dub!

Bill Lear had another solid year and finished third. All he needs is a quick-change axle set for the events! Mike Wirt was fourth and drove both his cars equally well. Watch out if he springs for a set of R-compound tires for the Cayman!

John Jens, Brett Hack and Richie Crim rounded out the top seven.

Congratulations to all the winners and to all competitors! And, many, many thanks to all of you who worked the events as course designers, course setup helpers, corner workers, timers, and registrars. Thanks also go out to all of you who stayed to the bitter end to load the truck and trailer, and those who help unload at the storage yard.

See you all next year!



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## NEW MEMBERS



The Greater Washington Section welcomes all its new members. We hope that you will join us soon at one of our upcoming events. Please feel free to call any officer for information on our activities and what you can do to get involved.

William J. Athas Dumfries, Va.	Jeffrey L. Kohn Hillsboro, Md.	Dwayne D. Sam Bowie, Md.
Thomas C. Baker Manassas, Va.	Emmanuel Mangona Springfield, Va.	Tamara E. Sam Bowie, Md.
Sherman O. Canapp Laytonsville, Md.	Robert Maslin Baltimore, Md.	Gunnar J. Schultzburkel Woodbridge, Va.
Bruce Decker Falls Church, Va.	Gisele A. Mills Washington, D.C.	Jennifer Stone Herndon, Va.
Richard C. Fahlteich Pasadena, Md.	James Moody Baltimore, Md.	Ricio R. Tantoco Lansdowne, Va.
Bruce Garrett Baltimore, Md.	Jeff Mortimer Harpers Ferry, W. Va.	Alan Waitt Alexandria, Va.
Bastian Hello Potomac, Md.	Mike J. Peyton Annandale, Va.	Harry G. Wilkinson Kensington, Md.
Isaac C. Hunt, Jr. Washington, D.C.	Matthew A. Rihl Severna Park, Md.	Patricia Woodworth Haymarket, Va.
C.R. Kamath Martinsburg, W.Va.	Paul A. Rochelle McLean, Va.	Arend Wychgram Aberdeen, Md.

## Membership News:

Congratulations to Tom Newman on his marriage to Sherry Shipp. The wedding took place Dec. 1 in Winchester, Va.

Congratulations to *Metro Tri-Star* co-editor and Membership co-chair Deborah Hirtes on her retirement Nov. 1. After 25 years working at the same organization, she has earned a well-deserved break.

We also send our congratulations to Bill DeMattia on his Dec. 31 retirement. Bill has been our *Metro Tri-Star* printer at MVLE for the past three years, and we thank him for all his help and assistance.

Condolences to the family of Dr. August Marshall Booth, Jr. Booth, assistant professor in the Dept. of Pharmacology at the University of Pittsburgh for 25 years, died peacefully on Nov. 26, 2007 from complications of ocular melanoma. He was 72. Dr. Booth was a dual member, belonging to both the GWS and Pittsburgh sections of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. A diesel enthusiast, he was known as “Der Dieseling Doktor” and spent many hours researching the best ways to perform repairs and to improve the performance of diesel cars. He spoke about diesel engines at a tech session held by our section in the early '00s.

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## Curry's Sells Tires—Who Knew?

Most folks know Curry's Auto Service as a long-term supporter of GWS, and many club members are familiar with their facilities and services. But how many know that Curry's also sells tires?

In early November, I had my winter tires moved to OEM rims (bought on eBay). While picking up the finished tires, one of the technicians commented on the Michelin Pilot Sport PS2 tires on my E500 and mentioned that Curry's

sold tires. I probably wouldn't have remembered the comment, or thought of Curry's as a source of tires if our daughter hadn't visited over the Thanksgiving holiday. While giving her Jeep Cherokee a quick inspection, I noticed the rear tires were badly worn. A call to TireVan revealed they couldn't get tires before our daughter was scheduled to return to New York.

That made local tire stores our last hope. The convenient location of their Great Falls store put Curry's at the top of the list. But when I called, the Great Falls store didn't have the needed tires in stock. The Curry's customer service rep

did a quick check while I was on the phone, and said he could have the tires there by 3:00 p.m. When we pulled into the store a little after 3, the tires were there and the Jeep went into the service bay. While installing the new tires, the technician noted a problem with the lugs on the front wheels and asked our permission to replace them. In under an hour the Jeep had new tires all around, and the damaged lugs were replaced. Because Curry's had tires, and because the staff at the Great Falls store went that little step further, our daughter and grandchildren made the return trip to Long Island more safely on new Michelin LTX M/S tires.

—Paul Vandenberg

## In Praise of Wagonwork . . .

I used Wagonwork Collision Center II on East Clifford Avenue in Alexandria to repair damage to my car. I used this shop because a few weeks ago, I was backing my car out of the garage and snagged the front bumper. This bit of driving skill pulled the front bumper away from the car and dented the fender and bumper. I drive a 1995 S 420 which is a large car. Recently, the side mirrors stopped folding back against the car. This is a feature of these complex mirrors that gives the car a narrower profile. With these mirrors unfolded, I have about 3 inches on either side of the car between the edges of the mirrors and the opening of the garage.

After I heard a crunching sound, I got out of the car, and I could not believe the damage to this lovely car. I took the car to Wagonwork, which the club had toured about five years ago. The shop handles high end cars. There was a Bentley and a Porsche in the lot awaiting repairs or estimates when I arrived.

I asked them what they could do to repair the car without my spending a lot of money since I was going to pay for the repair myself. They performed auto body repair magic on the car for a reasonable charge. I could not tell that it had been damaged. The paint matches perfectly.

So, if you are looking for an auto body shop, I highly recommend Wagonwork II at 417 East Clifford Avenue in Alexandria, Va., located near Route I. Their telephone number is (703) 706-8151.

—Charles Gainor

## It Was a Dark and Windy Day . . .

It had been windy and raining most of the day, and I was relieved to be home and indoors out of the weather. Shortly after I got settled, the doorbell announced an unusual visit from a neighbor—a visit that made a bad day worse. It seems that as his wife was getting out of their Dodge Ram pickup, a gust of wind ripped the door out of her hand and into the rear passenger door of my (recently acquired and nearly perfect) 1986 190E 2.3-16. The result was a very deep dent. Being a nice guy, the neighbor (to whom I had proudly shown the car a few days earlier) wanted to make sure I knew what had happened. He also wanted to assure me that he and his wife would pay to have the damage repaired.

I first tried paintless dent removal, but after two specialists from different companies were unable to touch the dent, it was time to visit body shops and get estimates. I decided to stick to places likely to do the job right, and selected two dealerships and Wagonwork. The two dealership estimates were within two dollars of each other; Wagonwork was almost \$400 more! But this 16V is a special car, and cost wasn't the only criterion. I was also looking for a sense that the work would be done correctly, and only the Wagonwork estimator took the time to clearly explain what would be required to fix the dent and how the work would be done. The quality of their estimate, an obvious commitment to customer service, and their reputation for excellent work made Wagonwork the obvious choice.

I dropped the car off at Wagonwork's Clifford Avenue location (where all Mercedes-Benz work is done) on Wednesday, Nov. 28. That Friday, Wagonwork called to let me know the body work had been done and the car was being prepped for paint. The following Monday, Wagonwork called again to let me know the car was in the paint shop, but their painter was out due to a death in the family. On Wednesday, Wagonwork called again to let me know the paint work was done and the car would be ready late Thursday or early Friday. Not wanting to face the evening commuter traffic on Thursday, I arranged to pick the car up early Friday.

Friday started with an hour-long metro trip that ended at the Crystal City station, where a Wagonwork employee picked me up. When we arrived at the shop, the Wagonwork staff had the car outside and running to warm it up. On the way into the office I took a close look at the door that had been damaged. The repair and the paint work were so good that, had I not known about the dent and repair, I would have believed the car was still 100 percent original. I couldn't tell where the original paint (which was in pristine condition) left off and the new paint began. And, there's not a ripple to show where the dent was.

Based on my experience, Wagonwork's reputation for excellence is well deserved, and the service is first class. Now, if they could just do something about the cost. . . .

—Paul Vandenberg



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## New Members Reception

*Continued from page 1*

ship in Germantown in 2004, and together, they sold 49 percent of Mercedes-Benz vehicles in the entire Washington region in the month of October.

We thank Charlie Harmel, Roland Rice and the staff at EuroMotorcars Bethesda for rolling out the red carpet for our membership. This was a great opportunity to get to know each other and learn more about the club's activities.

—*Bill Hopper*



*Roland Rice (right) gives a tour of the facilities at EuroMotorcars in Bethesda.*

### Heroes Glug Glögg (hot mulled wine) (makes about 1 gallon)

- 1.5 litre bottle of inexpensive dry red wine
- 1.5 litre bottle of inexpensive port
- 1 bottle of inexpensive brandy or aquavit
- 10 inches of stick cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon of cardamom seeds
- 2 dozen whole cloves
- Peel of one orange
- ½ cup of raisins
- 1 cup of blanched almonds
- 2 cups of sugar
- Garnish with the peel of another orange

There is no need to invest in expensive wine or brandy because the spices are going to preempt any innate complexity of a fine wine. But don't use anything too cheap. Remember the sum will be no better than the parts. Use a stainless steel or porcelain pot—not an aluminum or copper pot since the metals will impart a metallic taste

Pour red wine and port into a covered stainless steel kettle. Add the cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, orange peel, raisins and almonds. Warm gently, but do not boil. Boiling will burn off the alcohol.

Put the sugar in the pan and soak it with the half bottle of brandy. Warm the sugar and brandy slurry over a low flame. The sugar will



Photos by Deborah Hirtes

*Kai Wagner, son of GWS Vice President Eric Wagner, shows Klaus Hirtes some of the different buttons in the S65 AMG.*

melt and bubble until it becomes a clear golden syrup of caramelized sugar. Add the caramelized sugar to the spiced wine mix. Cover and let it mull for an hour. Just before serving, strain to remove the spices, and add brandy to taste (about ½ pint. Serve it immediately, or let it age for a month or two. If you are going to age it, make sure it is stored in an air-free container.

To serve the Heroes Glug Glögg, warm it gently over a low flame or in a crockpot and serve it in a mug, garnish it with a fresh orange peel, twisted over the mug to release the oils. The orange peel garnish is essential to the fragrance. Drink while seated and give your Mercedes-Benz keys to a non-drinking friend.

## Maryland GWS License Tags

Maryland license tags with the section logo and the words "Mercedes-Benz Club" on them are still available. These plates will not be available through the MVA. You can purchase them only through the club, and they can only be put on a Mercedes-Benz. Please send the form below to Ed Hainke, coordinator of the program, with two checks: one payable to GWS-MBCA in the amount of \$10, and the second check payable to MVA in the amount of \$25. Ed will then contact you for the required MVA information.



### Greater Washington Section Tags for Maryland Residents

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Member # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and two checks payable to

GWS-MBCA for \$10 and MVA for \$25 to:

Ed Hainke, 10755 Sawpit Cove Road, Lusby, MD 20657

## Detailing the Stars

**Saturday, March 15, 2008**

**12-5 p.m.**

**Location: to be announced**

Whenever I am at a car show, and especially over the last two years when I was organizing the concours d'élégance at the Deutsche Marque and the annual picnic, I am always amazed by the incredible attention to detail that people invest in preparing to present their cars to the spectators and judges. Over time, I have been able to distinguish between the well-prepared cars and the expertly prepared cars. Many of you may have made similar observations, and you may have asked yourself how you can acquire the expertise, the right techniques and knowledge of which products to use.

Well, your ship, er, car has just come in! The Greater Washington Section has invited long-time section member Ellen Ruck to educate us on how to thoroughly detail our cars. Many of you have seen Ellen Ruck and her husband, Fred Perry,

participate in the Deutsche Marque concours over the years. They have successfully competed with Fred's white 560SL, Ellen's anthracite 560SEC or her red 190E 2.6 and some others. The common characteristics of these cars is that they represent some of the cleanest examples of those models that you will ever see.

Ellen will deliver a lecture on how to successfully detail your beloved Mercedes-Benz automobile. But wait, this is not just a lecture; for a small, lucky group of our members, there is the opportunity to have an afternoon full of hands-on instruction by a master of the art of detailing.

For this portion of the class, Ellen will provide the materials that she knows and trusts, so we can all work on the same basis. No need to bring your own cleaning materials. Ellen highly recommends that you wash your car beforehand so you don't have to fight your way through too many layers of grime and dirt.

The class will take place on Saturday, March 15, 2008 from 12-5 p.m. The lecture will take about an hour, after which the actual detailing class will commence.

Members enrolling for the lecture are invited to look around while the detailing class is in session as long as they stay out of the way of the frenzied car detailing apprentices.

The tuition fee for the lecture is \$15. \$50 admits one car and its driver to the comprehensive detailing workshop. Passengers over 18 years pay \$15.

We have recently posted the event on our Web site, and I already have a couple people in line to register. Space is limited to no more than a dozen cars (depending on the location, which will be announced soon), so send in your registration form (at the bottom of this page) today.

This event is the first in a series the Greater Washington Section is organizing in the spring of 2008. National President Pete Lesler will teach a class on judging cars in a concours d'élégance, and we will also have a session on everyday car cleaning skills. Exciting events are happening next year, and I hope to see you at many of them!

—Eric Wagner

### Detailing — Lecture and Workshop

*Saturday, March 15, 2008 — 12-5 p.m.*

*(Location to be announced)*

Name(s) of those attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Member's name and club number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate number of attendees:

Number for lecture only \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number for workshop (includes lecture) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of passengers (over 18) for workshop \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Send this completed form along with a check (made payable to GWS-MBCA) to:  
 Eric Wagner, 18 West Uhler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301*

# The Trading Post

## Tires for the 300SL (W 198)

*Sewell Truitt, assistant parts manager at American Service Center, notes that the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center has now made it possible to retain the authentic historic appearance of the 300SL with true-to-original tires. In partnership with Dunlop Tires Germany, the M-B Classic Center has reintroduced tires specific to the 300SL (with the correct dimension of 185 VR 15 and a height-to-width aspect ratio of 82%, while featuring a modern, safe and more effective Dunlop SP Sport D8. The tire, which is made of high quality materials and manufactured according to modern production methods, has undergone extensive testing at Daimler AG's test facilities under extreme conditions.*

*The tires list for \$489 each; the tube lists for \$58. These tires may be ordered from Sewell at American Service Center (703) 284-2582 or from any other dealer.*

## Trading Post Advertising Information

Any GWS member may place an ad of up to six lines in length free of charge in the *Metro Tri-Star*. Include your name, membership number, address and phone number(s) with area codes on your hand-printed or typed copy. Personal ads will appear for two issues. Ads should be sent to: *Metro Tri-Star*, 1307 Warrington Place, Alexandria, VA 22307; telephone (703) 765-9405; or e-mail: janetmcfarland@earthlink.net.

Nonmembers may submit a single personal ad for \$45. For business ad rates, contact Janet McFarland at the same number.

We will print a photograph (from color or black and white original or from high-resolution digital image) with your ad for \$20. If you would like the photo returned, enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. All checks should be made payable to: GWS-MBCA. Advertising copy must be received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding publication or the ad will appear in the following issue. The editor of the *Metro Tri-Star* shall have sole discretion in determining ad acceptability.

**R350, 2006:** Black/black. 12K miles. MB employee lease vehicle. That means you can have it for my price. Lease until 4/2009 for \$430/mo. or buy it for my payoff price, \$41,702.65. Vehicle has parktronic, Sirius, heated front seats and premium package 1 (Harman/Kardon stereo, rear audio controls, 6-disc changer, panoramic roof, rear fold-out windows, power tailgate and navigation). Contact John at (301) 693-4930, or e-mail johnhef@comcast.net.

**SLK 350, 2005:** Silver/black. 16,500 miles and still under warranty. Rare SLK350 with manual transmission and sport suspension. Options includes premium pkg, comfort pkg and heating pkg. Enjoy a convertible year long with the hard top, heated seats and airscarf. The car is in excellent condition inside and out. It has been very well maintained and always hand washed. Selling car to accommodate a growing family. Asking price \$36,500. Contact Alexandre at (703) 618 6945.

**300CE, 1988:** Black/gray interior. Near-showroom condition. 89,000 miles, new brakes, new master brake cylinder, new M-B floor mats, heated seats, cold A/C. Runs and drives like brand new. Stunning car, always cared for properly. Always garaged and covered. Everything works, needs absolutely nothing. Asking \$6,900. Call John at (703) 768-1073; cell phone (571) 215-4667; or e-mail daitler2@aol.com.

**300CD-T, 1982:** Silver/black. 178K miles. Mechanic-owned, sharp looking car, lowered on 17" MB wheels. I've rebuilt the transmission plus too many other things to list during my 4 years of ownership. Car has had body rust repaired and repainted in the past. See pics at <http://www.car-domain.com/ride/63892>. Asking \$4,500. Contact John at (301) 693-4930, or e-mail johnhef@comcast.net.

**240D, 1979:** Burgundy/camel. Manual, sunroof, roll-up windows. Car has 236k but replacement engine only 140k. Engine, clutch, tires, etc., done in 2006. Over \$6K in receipts. Lost interest. Asking \$3K. David @ 410-956-6421 or email@fishskipl@aol.com

**280SE, 1972:** Tunis beige metallic/dark brown. Interior in beautiful condition, exterior paint, chrome equally outstanding. All mechanical systems including engine, tranny, drive train, brakes are also excellent. History interesting and records back to 1974. Given meticulous care. Two different correct tool kits, sales literature, original window sticker. Everything works; needs nothing. Multiple winner in local/regional shows. Surely one of the finest examples of these durable old cars available. \$15,000. E-mail Jim at pankhurst03@aol.com.

**Radio work needed:** Pro or skilled hobbyist to modernize the original Becker radio and speakers in my 1973 450SL,

located in Fairfax, Va. Remove, upgrade electronics so they retain vintage faceplate/knobs, re-install. Also needs new in-dash speakers. Will consider all solutions that retain the vintage look. References required. Contact Inia at (703) 424-1077, or e-mail inia\_burginger@yahoo.com.

**Set of 5 OEM wheels and tires** from 1998 E320 (W210). Wheels: 16x7.5, ET41, 5x112 bolt pattern. Four wheels have curb rash and dings; one, which was the spare, is in good condition. Tires: 4 Kumhos with less than 1/8" tread, and 1 Michelin MXV4 with 1/4" tread. Perfect wheels for winter or autocrossing. Pick up only. Asking \$50. Contact Lawrence at (571) 278-1100, or e-mail lcheng911@yahoo.com.

**Set of 4 205/60x15 Michelin Energy MXV4 Plus tires** in very good condition. Less than 10,000 easy driven miles. Minimal, yet even wear; no scuffs, repairs, etc. Will fit most 124 series and other MB models. Asking \$195. Pick up only. Local delivery negotiable. Contact Chris at (301) 379-9997, or e-mail stonegrey58@aol.com.

**Alloy Wheels and Tires:** Near perfect 17-in (7-spoke) original wheels with Michelin Pilot Sport 245/45 x 17 tires mounted on them. Removed from 2003 SL500, approx 13,500 miles on them before I upgraded to 18-inch wheels/tires. \$800 for the set of four. Call Dave at (703) 924-2867, or e-mail davidjestine@cox.net.

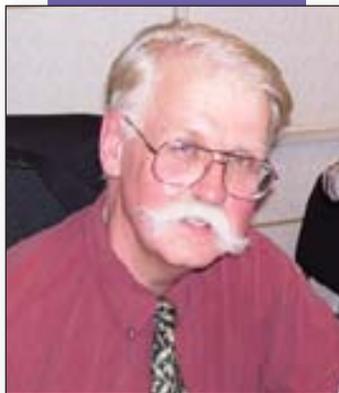
**Wheels:** 4 standard factory wheels from my 2000. 16" for 215/55 tires. Minor curbing. \$60. Call Howie at (202) 255-4504, or e-mail howard.tag@taghealthcare.com.

## A Tip for DYIers

You may want to stock up on those giant containers of liquid laundry soap (300 oz.). Not to imply it's a bad thing, but you may have heard that the environmental concerns regarding those big, heavy containers have reached the manufacturers who will be eventually be offering concentrated versions of their products that can use smaller containers. As most Mercedes-Benz DYIers know, our cars contain copious amounts of motor oil and those 300 oz. containers, with their convenient spigot, can hold a little more than nine quarts of used oil. Maybe "Mercedes-Benz Used Oil Containers" will be showing up on eBay soon.

—Bruce Steinberg

## High Gear



by  
*John Kuhn  
Bleimaier*

Of course my '65 Finback is eligible for historic license plates. However, I am fond of the senatorial courtesy plate "JKB14," which has been on the car for the last 30 years. In New Jersey, a license number with three letters and a number under 20 requires the endorsement of a state senator. Back in 1978, my family was acquainted with Senator Walter Foran, and I approached him for a courtesy plate number. I was hoping to get "JKB1," and was just a little disappointed when my license arrived with "JKB14." I figured that showed just how close a friend I was of good old Walt Foran. It was only after I affixed my new license plate to our then 13-year-old 190Dc that I realized that the number. "JKB14," suited me just fine. You see, our Finback rolled off the assembly line at Sindelfingen when I was 14 years old, so my senatorial courtesy plate was perfectly appropriate.

Well, because I don't have historic plates on this car, which is now 43 years old, I have to go through vehicle inspection every two years. I just took my elderly starship to the Motor Vehicles station for her biannual check-up. Although this automobile is in excellent condition, there is always something stressful about the inspection process. Once, several years back, some dimwitted bureaucrat flunked the old Diesel for emitting too much smoke. I had to appeal to a supervisor to get my "pass" sticker. Another time I was told that my braking force was not properly balanced, front to rear. After an expert confirmed that the front discs and real finned drums were perfectly balanced, I flew through re-inspection with flying colors. The possibility of some random glitch is what builds up anxiety when it comes time to inspect my classic Mercedes.

Happily, this year the inspection process went smoothly. The inspectors actually were car guys and asked me a lot of questions about my Benz. They wanted to know the engine displacement and horsepower. They reveled in operation of the "four on the column" manual transmission. The functioning of the glow plug pre-heater knob with the heat element behind the chrome bezel had them really excited. I could see they were as happy as I was when the Finback passed all the mandatory tests. They patted me on the back as they handed over the keys at the terminus of the inspection lane, sometimes otherwise known as the tunnel of torment.

Driving my old friend home from the inspection station, I was overcome with a wave of nostalgia. I recollected how my parents

picked up this car new at Benzel-Busch, one of the original Mercedes dealers in this part of the country. They had traded in my father's '59 Volkswagen with its furling canvas sunroof. It was a bittersweet occasion. Love at first sight in relation to the starship was commingled with sadness associated with parting with the much-cared-for air-cooled bug. After leaving the dealership in Englewood Cliffs, we tanked up with Diesel fuel at a truck stop on Route 46. Fuel was just 16.9 cents per gallon back then. But we had to convince the incredulous pump jockey that one could actually put Diesel fuel in a passenger car.

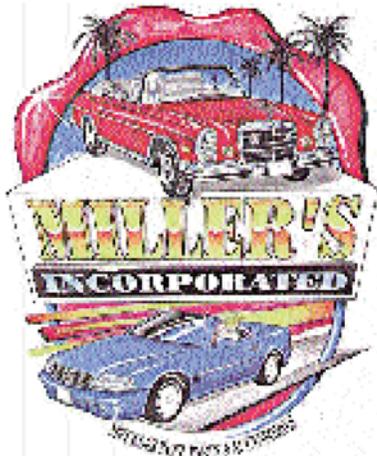
We drove back to Princeton in moderate traffic on that day back in 1965... I remember it as if it were yesterday. Every motorcar we encountered on the road that day would today qualify as a historic vehicle. Of course most of the cars were the big land yachts from Detroit. Their garish, cosmetic, winged tails contrasted sharply with the Mercedes' functional hindquarters whose elegant, diminutive fins were dictated by the aerodynamic research of Wunibald Kamm and the need to maintain high speed lateral stability in an age of bias ply tires. However, we also passed some interesting American cars of the period including revolutionary, air-cooled Chevrolet Corvairs and innovative Pontiac Tempests.

Of course there were European vehicles driving the highways of New Jersey in substantial numbers also. In the days before draconian federal regulation, all sorts of exotic cars found their way to our shores back then. There were sturdy Borgwards from Germany; elegant Facel Vegas from France; V8 powered ISO Griffos from Italy; two cycle DKWs and Saab 96s; as well as fiberglass British Daimlers. Is it any wonder that I became a car enthusiast?

Back in the mid '60s, there were also a handful of pint-sized Japanese cars fanatically struggling to establish a beachhead on these heretofore unconquered shores. I can remember the days when Toyotas were Toyopets; when Nissans were called Datsuns; when the idea of a Lexus or an Infiniti was not even a glimmer in the eye of a Madison Avenue hack. My father asked a friend of his who had just purchased a cheap Datsun Fair Lady whether or not he was satisfied with his new acquisition. The response was, "Yup, I'm satisfied." My father followed up, "So it's really a good car?" The retort: "Heck no! It's a piece of crap... but the radio is the cats pajamas!"

— *John Kuhn Bleimaier*

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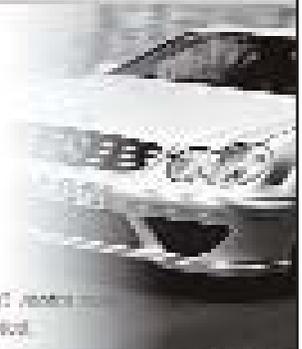
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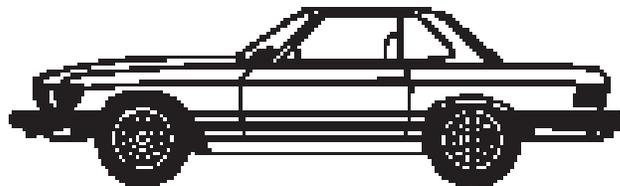
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## Concours Judging School

**Saturday, April 19, 2008  
Vehicle Preparation Center  
Baltimore, Md.**

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Mercedes-Benz automobiles is the marque's long history of engineering excellence. Each generation of Mercedes-Benz automobiles usually contains a number of "firsts" in terms of performance, safety, longevity and comfort, that other automakers seek to emulate in their competing offerings. Thus, for a fan of Mercedes-Benz, the concours events represent not just an opportunity to view spectacularly preserved and immaculately clean automobiles, but also to see the long, distinguished history of Mercedes-Benz engineering innovations throughout the decades in a very tangible way.

Judging these events is fun because you get an unprecedented opportunity to get even more "up close and personal" with many rare and historically significant automobiles. This was certainly my motivation to get involved with the GWS concours program. The camaraderie of showing your car is also rewarding, as those who painstakingly prepare their cars for concours are uniquely situated to appreciate the efforts of their fellow competitors and enthusiasts.

However, for many people a concours can be a somewhat intimidating proposition. For those people who have thought about judging, you might be tempted to get involved, but are hesitant, asking yourself if you are qualified to judge other people's cars. I know this thought certainly entered my mind. For other people who are interested in showing their cars at upcoming club events, it can be intimidating as well to volunteer to have your "pride and joy" scoured for defects with a fine-tooth comb.

Well, for those people who are interested in concours events, the GWS, always seeking new ways to serve the membership, has a solution. We are very excited to announce that our new, incoming MBCA President, Pete Lesler, will be teaching a concours judging school on

Saturday, April 19, 2008. So please mark your calendars and plan to attend. Pete will give a comprehensive presentation on all aspects of concours judging. For members interested in judging, Pete will give you all the information you need to judge like an expert. For members interested in showing their cars, Pete's school will show you what the judges will be looking for, and allow you to prepare your car accordingly!

Moreover, we are also very happy to announce that MBUSA has been gracious enough to host the judging school at the new, improved Vehicle Preparation Center in Baltimore. Special thanks to Baltimore VPC Manager Ted Boudalis, who did not hesitate to open the VPC's doors to the club on that day. For us true Mercedes-Benz junkies, seeing so many new Mercedes-Benz vehicles in one place is similar to the sensation of being a kid on Christmas morning.

In order to have a successful judging school, it would be very helpful for people to register as soon as possible.

Registration is \$20 per person. We are asking people to indicate the car they will be driving to the event as well, because in order to have a successful judging school, we will need to have a good turnout of "judging subjects," as it will not do us much good to judge the brand-new cars at the VPC! So, to the extent that people attending the school have an older Mercedes-Benz vehicle that they could bring with them, that would be extremely helpful. Please visit the GWS Web site ([www.gws-mbca.org](http://www.gws-mbca.org)) for registration details for both you and your car. Also, please check the GWS Web site in coming days and weeks (it should already be listed in your "Favorites"!), as we will update it to post the class start time (we anticipate late morning), as well as include directions to the VPC. If you have any questions, please contact me, Ray Lombardo, at (301) 388-0141.

We look forward to seeing you at the Pete Lesler Judging School!

—Ray Lombardo

## Philadelphia Flower Show — *Continued from page 5*

viewing the thousands of bulbs, orchids, topiary and potted plants that will be on display.

The Philadelphia Flower Show is an extraordinary source of gardening information and expert advice. Horticultural schools and organizations will present displays that illustrate a multitude of useful gardening techniques and environmental programs to benefit homeowners and garden enthusiasts.

No visit to the Philadelphia Flower Show would be complete without perusing its burgeoning Marketplace, featuring 140 shops from around the country for the finest selection of quality tools, sculptures, plants, art work, bonsai, orchids and cut flowers.

Why this tour is so special? You will have a private tour with a knowledgeable guide to show you around the show before the general public is admitted. For those of you who have attended the Philadelphia Flower show during regular show hours, you know that it can be very crowded and almost impossible to see

many of the exhibits. This way, you get to see the show without the crowds. MBCA members also will have access to a private lounge area and tickets to re-enter the show that day.

The plan is to travel to Philadelphia on Thursday afternoon, meet for dinner, stay the night at a nearby hotel and convene at 7:15 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Rooms at a nearby hotel are being reserved.

Tickets to this very special tour are limited, so make sure you get your registration in early. Tickets are \$99 per person, and include the early morning private tour, access to the private lounge, and a general admission ticket to the show. Hotel rooms and dinner will be additional.

To register, send a check (made out to GWS-MBCA) to William Hopper, 5455 Broad Branch Rd. NW, Washington, DC 20015-1753.

For additional information, contact William Hopper at (202) 363-418; or e-mail [wwhrestoration@att.net](mailto:wwhrestoration@att.net).

# Mercedes-Benz Records Best November Sales Ever

## MBUSA Sales Up 3.4 Percent for Month; 2.8 Percent for Year-to-Date

MONTVALE, N.J.—Mercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA) achieved its highest November sales volume on record with 22,819 units sold for the month, a 3.4 percent increase over last November's 22,079 record volume. This brings MBUSA's year-to-date sales total to 225,904 units—a 2.8 percent increase over the same period last year—which keeps Mercedes-Benz on track for accomplishing its 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of annual sales growth.

Sales of the Mercedes-Benz C-Class rose 56 percent (6,920 units vs. 4,435

units) for the month, and 26.3 percent compared to last year's year-to-date results (56,802 vs. 44,990). Other highlights for the month include gains for the legendary SL-Class roadster which posted 488 units, a 7 percent increase over the same month last year. In addition, the popularity of the GL-Class, Mercedes-Benz full-size, 7-passenger SUV, contributed to the company's record sales month, marking a 2.8 percent increase (2,349 vs. 2,285 units) for the month and a significant jump of 51.4 percent compared to last year's year-to-date results

(23,370 vs. 15,439 units). Other Mercedes-Benz model lines that achieved increases in their year-to-date volumes include the top-of-the-line CL-Class luxury coupe (243.9 percent increase), and the popular M-Class SUV (7.8 percent gain).

Separately, through the Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned program, MBUSA sold 3,620 vehicles in November, bringing the Certified Pre-Owned year-to-date total to 46,844, an increase of 8 percent over the same period last year.

### Overview of Mercedes-Benz USA's November Sales

Model	Nov. '07	Nov. '06	Monthly %	YTD 2007	YTD 2006	Yearly %
C-CLASS	6,920	4,435	56.0%	56,802	44,990	26.3%
E-CLASS	4,464	4,918	-9.2%	42,824	43,079	-0.6%
S-CLASS	2,106	2,780	-24.2%	23,707	27,899	-15.0%
CL-CLASS	329	391	-15.9%	3,319	965	243.9%
SL-CLASS	488	456	7.0%	5,594	7,923	-29.4%
CLK-CLASS	1,016	1,007	0.9%	13,777	14,906	-7.6%
SLK-CLASS	353	536	-34.1%	6,742	9,746	-30.8%
CLS-CLASS	584	778	-24.9%	7,147	9,797	-27.0%
R-CLASS	1,086	1,275	-14.8%	11,691	16,622	-29.7%
M-CLASS	3,015	3,183	-5.3%	29,917	27,743	7.8%
GL-CLASS	2,349	2,285	2.8%	23,370	15,439	51.4%
G-CLASS	109	35	211.4%	1,014	569	78.2%
GRAND TOTAL	22,819	22,079	3.4%	225,904	219,678	2.8%

### THEN and NOW



Left: Harold Johnson (left) was the GWS treasurer until 1982. Klaus Hirtes (right) took over as treasurer in 1982 for two terms. The photo was taken in July of 1982 in Frank Mallory's driveway. Frank Mallory was a founding member of our section and served as president at one time.

Right: At the recent GWS board meeting, Klaus Hirtes (right) turns over the duties of membership co-chair to Henry Harrell.



Photo by Janet McFarland

## MBCA Extends and Improves Loyalty Program

At the fall 2007 MBCA Board Meeting, it was announced that the MBCA Loyalty Program will be extended and improved for 2008 to include used Mercedes-Benz vehicles purchased from M-B dealers as well as licensed used car dealers.

MBCA's Loyalty Program will be different in the new year. Beginning Jan. 3, 2008, a flat rebate of \$1,500 will be offered for all new Mercedes-Benz vehicles bought from a U.S. M-B dealer (except AMG models, for which no rebate is offered) during 2008. A rebate also will be offered on used Mercedes-Benz vehicles purchased from a licensed U.S. M-B dealer (\$750 rebate) as well as independent licensed dealers (\$250 rebate).

This program is open to MBCA members with at least one full year of continuous membership at the time of vehicle purchase. (Check out the Web site at [www.mbca.org](http://www.mbca.org) or look in *The Star* magazine for full details.)

This rebate will come in the form of an MBCA Branded American Express Gift Card that will be redeemable only at U.S. Mercedes-Benz dealers. This card will be embossed with the MBCA logo and will show the dealer that you are a member of the club and that you are bringing your business to them. This is a great way to purchase boutique items, parts and service.

So...if you are thinking about buying a new or used Mercedes-Benz, this is just one of many benefits of belonging to the Mercedes-Benz Club of America.

### Multiple Section Memberships Available

The MBCA National Business Office is set up to offer members the option of having a membership in an additional section or sections. The membership cost is \$15 per additional section. Members will receive newsletters from each section, and membership in the additional section(s) must run concurrent with the existing membership expiration date. To take advantage of this benefit, contact the National Business Office at (800) 637-2360.

### Test-Driving the Smart Car

The smart USA Road Show came to Fairfax, Va. Dec. 7-9, 2007. Those who stopped by were able to speak with members of the smart USA team and learn more about this amazing vehicle, as well as take a test drive. Once behind the

wheel, I thought it actually seemed quite roomy. Klaus shifted in manual mode with paddle shifters on the steering wheel and stated, "Considering it's \$240,000 less than a Ferrari, it performed quite well." Although impressed with the car, we'll probably wait for the diesel version to come on the market.

—Deborah Hirtes

Klaus Hirtes (left) and Deborah Hirtes (right) take their turn behind the wheel of a smart car.



Photo by Deborah Hirtes

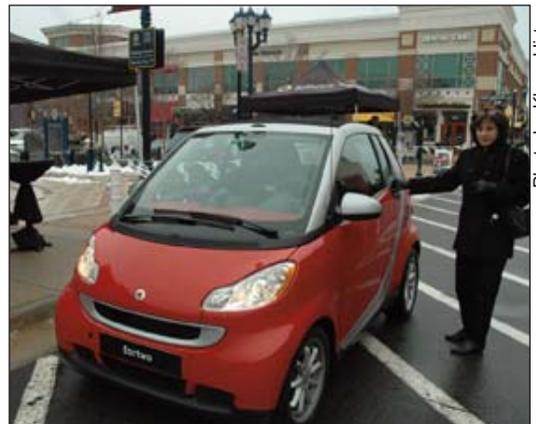


Photo by Klaus Hirtes

## Restructuring of Sections

On Aug. 25, 2007, the National Board of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America approved a restructuring of the East Coast sections, thereby assigning some sections to different regions and creating a new Eastern Region.

The Greater Washington Section (GWS) used to be in the Mid-Atlantic region. It is now in the new Eastern Region (composed of Alabama, Carolinas, Central Virginia, Greater Washington, Peachtree, Tarheel, Triangle and Virginia sections). And our former Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, Greg Magnus, has been named the new Eastern Regional Director.

The Mid-Atlantic Region now consists of Connecticut/Westchester, Delaware Valley, Keystone, North-eastern Pennsylvania, Northern New Jersey, Sea Level and South Jersey sections. Werner Fehlauer is their regional director.

So the GWS membership shouldn't really be seeing any differences with this restructuring effort. It is mainly a means to try and even out the number of sections the regional director has to service.

Due to our central location, the GWS has the opportunity to work with both the Mid-Atlantic and Eastern region for events and activities. And since we already have a very good working relationship with many sections in the Mid-Atlantic Region, this change also will help us integrate the two regions to better serve our entire membership.

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