



The Official Publication of the Road Star Section - M.B.C.A.
May, 2015
Mercedes-Benz Club of America



Road Star Section

April 25, 2015

Welcome New Members

Paul Howell
Alfredo Mora
Michael & Ellen Rierson
Dolores Shapiro
Benjamin Sharfi
Long Trieu

**Welcome Transfers into
the Road Star Section**

Jack Walz from the
Virginia section
Arthur Orth from
San Francisco Section

A1A drive – Flagler Museum to Banana Boat



Upcoming Events

-

Saturday, May 16
Breakfast at Toojay's
Palm Beach Gardens

See page 3 further details

More info to follow on
future events

Save the Date
Saturday, June 20
Event info to follow

Sunday, December 13, 2015
Annual Road Star Holiday Party

Saturday, April 25, 2015

10:00 am

Touring A1A – Palm Beach to Boynton Beach

A group of 38 Road Star members and their 24 cars assembled at 10:00 am on Saturday morning, April 25 at the Flagler Museum. After some quality time to talk and check out everyone's cars, we left the museum and drove south about 17 miles on beautiful A1A along the ocean to the Banana Boat Restaurant in Boynton Beach for lunch followed by a brief Road Star "business" meeting. The venue was really beautiful and we all partook in a delicious lunch. The service was great, the food was great, and especially the company.....a great day for a great drive in great cars.....





Next Road Star Event **Saturday, May 16, 2015**

Meet & Greet Breakfast

Our next "meet and greet" coffee is scheduled for Saturday, May 16, 2015. Come join our Road Star Section members for an hour or two of conversation about cars, upcoming events, or anything else that interests you. This event will be held at TooJay's in Palm Beach Gardens.

When you arrive, please park on the far west side of the parking lot. This allows us to get all of our cars in one location for viewing, photos, etc. Meet and socialize with your fellow members.....all beginning at

9:00 AM

TOOJAYS - PALM BEACH GARDENS

Downtown at the Gardens

11701 Lake Victoria Gardens

Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410

Tel. 561-622-8131

Order from the menu and pay for your own.....a chance to relax, enjoy the cars and the conversation. Just so we can get an idea on how many to expect, please RSVP to:

Les Goldman at (singdales@yahoo.com).

See you there !!

I had all 5 gears when I left.....

So there I was the other day, coming home to Palm City from the doctor's office in Jupiter (never mind.... THAT's another tale for another day!) I got off at Exit 102, and zoomed into the curving exit ramp, down shifting and applying more throttle! This is one of my favorite exit ramps, 'cause I get to "play" a little bit before getting back on the real roadway.

Come through the sweeping left, then downshift again and approach the tighter right hand curve..... apply more throttle... come out of the straightaway, and up shift back into "D"rive.

C'mon baby... it's OK now to shift through third, forth, and into fifth... NOW!

Lil' Red, on the other hand, had a mind of her own... and decided to stay in second gear! No matter what I tried, she stayed in second, regardless of what I moved the gear selector to... "D", 3, 4, 2... she just stayed in second, and I proceeded the 5 miles home in second gear, fully convinced that I had "blown" the transmission!

Hopefully, this will never happen to you... but there's a lesson here, for those of you who are interested:

I drove home, backed into the garage (yes, Lil' Red still had "reverse") and shut her down. Next day I started her up to check the transmission fluid... hoping that it would be low! It wasn't; it was right where it should be, and not burned, or smelling of burning. This now required a trip to the internet, to find out that a rebuilt transmission for a '96 SL 320 starts at about \$2,000 and goes up from there! Not being willing to "roll over and play dead", and not having a spare two grand in my pocket, I went to check "the Google" on the web... and YouTube, too!

I learned that the Mercedes 722.507 transmission (my 5 speed) as well as the 722.6 version (and probably later models) are electronically controlled "Adaptive" transmissions. That means that the computers in the car watch how you like to drive, and the transmission shift points "adapt" to you method of driving. Depending on who you listen to, it takes 40 or more shifts for the computer to get the idea of what type of driver you are! also learned that these tranny's have an electronic "kickdown" switch drops them down a gear or two when you stomp on the accelerator. And.... sometimes that switch gets stuck..... and won't let the transmission UPSHIFT as it should!

Now I'm thinking that there just might be some hope for our "blown" transmission Or at least there's some light at the end of the tunnel, and it's not the train!!

After letting Lil' Red sit for a week, while I spent time on the internet reading, and watching YouTube videos on how to fix various transmission problems, I now know how to repair the electronic connection plug into the transmission (it sometimes shorts out due to trans fluid leaking into the contact points), as well as knowing how to drain the trans fluid and remove the pan, and remove the oil filter, as well as how to remove the control valve body (which has 6 electric solenoids mounted in it) and how to replace the "conductor plate" that sits on the control valve body and provides the electric connections for the six solenoids! God bless Google, and YouTube!

Of course, now that I KNOW how to do all this, I'm smart enough to know that I really DON'T want to do any of this!

So I fire up Lil' Red after she's been sitting dormant for a week, and take her for a spin down our street to see if she'll shift out of second gear. And..... she DOES! Our street is kind of short... but she shifted into third gear! So, I drive over to a really straight road where I hope to get up to about 50 mph, which is where she usually (finally) gets into fifth gear.

And..... she DOES! All five gears are there, and working!

That's a bad thing, 'cause I have no idea what caused the problem in the first place! But, in my hours of reading and watching, I learned that there is a way to RESET the Adaptive Transmission back to "factory specs". Various sites recommend that you do this, if you happen to be an "aggressive driver". Who, me? Me.. the guy who used to travel all over this great country to attend MBCA driving events? Me, who put Lil' Red through her paces in many Autocross events, as well as "Performance Driving" events on racetracks across the country? Me... an "aggressive driver"? Surely you jest!

So, "just in case", I perform the magical "factory reset". Some of you may want to make note of this: grab you key, get in the car, and get comfortable (this takes about 3 or 4 minutes); put the key in the ignition and turn it "ON" (DO NOT start the car... just turn ON the ignition). Then, press the accelerator hard to the floor...and hold it there for at least 10 seconds, or more (some sites say 15 seconds). While you still have the accelerator "on the floor", after 15 seconds, shut OFF the ignition BUT DO NOT REMOVE THE KEY, and then you can remove your foot from the accelerator. Now, wait 2 (or 3) minutes with the key OFF, but still in the ignition. After 2 (or 3... I did 3 minutes) you can remove the key from the ignition.

All done! Your adaptive transmission is now set back to "factory specs". Don't believe it? Neither did I, 'til I took Lil' Red out for a test drive. She now goes through gear 1, 2 and 3 smoothly, and at lower rpm's and slower speeds than before. Before the reset, she would shift from 3rd to 4th at 41 mph... she now shifts into 5th at 40 mph. So, it evidently does work!

My next steps are to find and check the "kickdown" switch, as well as have the tranny drained and flushed. Hopefully, all will continue to be well and all five gears will work as designed!

Happy Motoring!

Paul Rodecki



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HURRY, book your discounted

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Any Questions ?? Please call any Section Officer at the phone number listed on page 2, or our National Business
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