



The Bluegrass Star

A Publication of the Bluegrass Stars Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Spring 2015 Volume 1, No 2

Editor's Message

In our Immediate future is StarTech up in Cincinnati, June 12-14. Registration can be done at the event on Friday at 3 PM at the The DoubleTree by Hilton, Cincinnati Airport if you haven't already registered online. We will be partnering with James Motors out of Lexington for our display and there will be a hotel room with light refreshments if you need a place to rest during Friday or Saturday nights. The social registration is \$130 and the Tech Registration is \$225. The Ault Park Concours d'Elegance starting 10 AM on Sunday requires it's own ticket which can be purchased in advance for \$20 dollars per person or at the gate for \$25. Those interested in caravanning to the event on Friday morning June 12th may contact our club president for details.

<http://startech2015.mbca.org/>

With the long winter and the very wet spring, the start of this year has had less than friendly weather for a car club. Adding to the rough start to the year was the unexpected announcement that Caroline's Alpine Haus, who hosted our holiday function last year, decided to close up shop. This means that for this upcoming winter we will be looking for a new place to hold our event. There are already several places in mind we hope to investigate though suggestions are always welcome. In the meantime, with the sun coming out and the summer events plentiful we hope to have a successful season. There are several events on the horizon already planned with even more in the works for later months.

Welcome

We welcome new members to the Bluegrass Stars Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. We are happy to have you join our club. The success of our club depends on the participation of all members in our scheduled activities. Your comments on how we can improve or add more interesting events to our activity schedule are very important. Please email your comments/suggestions to any of the club officers.

Upcoming Event

The Keeneland Concours d'Elegance in Lexington will be taking place on Saturday, July 18th. We will have a space within the paddock of the event for our club. The standard entry fee is \$15 dollars in advance or \$20 dollars at the gate with \$5 dollars per car for paddock parking. <http://keenelandconcours.com/>

On Tuesday, July 28th we will be having a night out to watch the Louisville Bat's play at home against the Charlotte Knights. We will have a corporate suite and food provided. Tickets will be \$25 dollars a person. There are openings for a small concours outside of the rear gate at the Louisville Slugger Field (opposite end of the field from the suites at the corner of Preston & Wiggleworth streets) if you would like to have your car on display. The game starts at 7 PM. If you're interested in the event, please contact one of our club officers with how many people you have coming and if you have a car to display. We can have up to 25 people and need a good showing to pay for the suite.

On Friday, July 31st, we will host a Mercedes Night at the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival in Central Park, at 7 PM (FREE) Councilman Tom Owen speaks at 7:15, followed by A Comedy of Errors at 8 PM, by the Globe Players, the high school troupe. Food trucks and beer & wine sales (only in the Ramey Amphitheater) are available at 7 PM.

The Concours d'Elegance at French Lick Resort will be taking place October 2nd-4th. Information on the event can be found at www.frenchlickconcours.com/

Work Trucks Abound

Although Mercedes within the United States has been mostly a luxurious affair, Mercedes-Benz and Daimler trucks of recent years have shown that the company knows full well how to pull from its knowledge back in Europe and make a proper work vehicle. From the Sprinter vans, introduced a few years ago, to the brand new Metris shown in the latest STAR Magazine the market is looking great. Hot on their heels though there has been great news for new technologies, new opportunities, and even the possibility of a new model.

From Daimler Truck's Freightliner division, the fruits of the "Supertruck" challenge are beginning to show themselves. This challenge was put on by the U.S. Department of Energy to see if a company could create a truck to get a 50% fuel economy increase out of a full-sized big rig. A tall order that would greatly help the amount of resources needed to transport almost everything. An order that was handily met and exceeded using every trick in the book to create a working vehicle that averaged a 115% increase fully loaded using technologies such as hybrid drives, solar panels, and active aero. Most of this is already finding its way to production vehicles.

On the smaller side of things, it was announced that Mercedes Trucks and Nissan are going to partner up to make a pick up truck. Though it's still being seen if there is a market here in the United States for a vehicle like that, plans are already being formed for nations elsewhere. With many of the top selling vehicles over \$50,000 here being high end pick-ups there's a healthy chance that another niche will be filled by something with a three-pointed star.

Coming closer to home, earlier this year, plans were released that the Mercedes-Benz R class, which has been missing from the United States for a couple years now, will actually be continuing production in the state of Indiana. Strangely enough, these will be purely export cars bound for China where the R-class is still selling well. The cars will be contracted out to the AM General facility in South Bend-Mishawaka which was formally home to the production facility of the Hummer H1 and HMMWV Humvee.

Racing Update

The 2015 Formula 1 season continued as it had left off. With a dominant performance from Mercedes AMG Petronas' Lewis Hamilton in the season opener in Australia. Aside from a single win from hard-charging Ferrari's driver Sebastian Vettel who managed to best the Mercedes powerplants using an aggressive race schedule to take Malaysia. The Mercedes duo of Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg have managed to win every other race with no less than a podium for the fellow team car. This included a surprising finish to the Monaco Grand Prix where Lewis seemed to have the race in the bag until a late safety car and some lapse in data created havoc and had the team bring him into the pit. This handed the race thankfully over to Nico, securing another win for Mercedes and giving him his third straight Monaco win. This victory closed the gap between the two Mercedes drivers to just ten points and is looking to give us a great battle for the rest of the season.

This spring, the annual 24 Hours of Nurburgring sports car race took place in Germany. Over 100 cars took on this task including several SLS GT3 and a single C class. Unfortunately, while the Mercedes powerplants gave the drivers superior top speed. By the end of the day the wheels came off, in one case quite literally when the top running SLS had a hub break while miles from the pit causing it to lose much time. By the end of the event, the top running Mercedes managed a top five finish. Next year promises a new era with a mix of SLS and AMG GT3 cars set to enter the field.

The privateer team of Erebus Racing continues to fight in the V8 Supercars with their own E63 race cars taking on a field of factory backed machines. Though it took a moment to reach their stride, already they have secured their first victory at the Perth SuperSprint early in May. With any luck, the car will be able to keep momentum going and give a good showing throughout the rest of the season.

The Blue 420 SEL

This article can best be described as a sad story, with an important lesson to be learned, and hopefully a happy ending. This story starts out with your club Vice-President on a "Treasure Hunt" in one of the southern Indiana Mercedes-Benz salvage yards. I had been to this yard a couple of times removing Michelin tires from a 560 SEL when I noticed to my great surprise a beautiful 1986 420 SEL just two wrecked cars over from the side where I was working. The car was in great shape, no damage, light blue exterior color and a dark navy interior. You could tell at a glance it had been garage kept and was well cared. Though the doors were locked and no license plates on the car I did manage to look in the vehicle to see it read 144,000 miles on the odometer.

Now the bad news, I went to the shop office to get the story on why the car was there and was told that the engine was "blown" due to the timing chain jumping the guides and causing the valves to bend and breaking the chain in the process. This leads to piston head damage and at least a \$3000 repair if the engine block could be saved.

Now onto the valuable lesson learned. All V8 Mercedes engines between 1969 and 1988 with a few remaining until 1992 had a single overhead cam chain drive design that is held in place by a hydraulically driven piston tensioner. Additionally, there are nylon guides that keep the chain on track. The life of these components is about 120,000 miles and after that point the guides begin to wear to the point where the chain can jump loose causing a catastrophic engine failure. The mechanics tell me that you can hear the chain rattle when starting the car due to the wear. This phenomenon is known as the W126 "Death Rattle"

The lesson learned here is to replace the tensioner and guides at 120,000 miles. Do not gamble with your Benz. Just get this preventative maintenance done.

In closing, this article I called "The Blue 420 SEL" much to my chagrin must report that the owner's choice not to repair the car will now be parted out. Alas another W126 lost to the failure of maintenance.

Saved from the Scraper

Pictures by Chad Rupe

In the spirit of Jim's article, I felt it a good time to introduce a new segment into our newsletter. Here I hope to tell any tale that our club members may have about recent encounters with interesting Mercedes, new and old. Any member that has a story to tell either purchasing a new Mercedes for the first time, finding one that catches your eye on the side of the road, or just anything that any of our members would like to share. Those interested may contact our editor.

This time is about a 560SEL, when it was new in 1989 it had all the bells and whistles. Big and proud with a black leather interior, a 10 disk CD changer and even heated rear seats. Sadly, this one was one of those vehicles that the timing chain pushed too far and ultimately it ended up being sold for scrap value. Luckily, a donor engine was found and instead of parting out the car it was brought back to life this year and is back on the road.



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You can contact our club officers
by standard mail, E-Mail, or Phone

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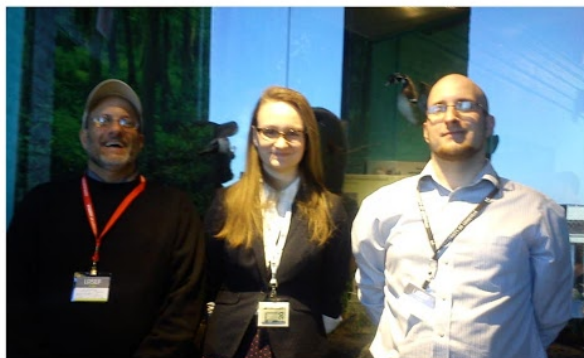
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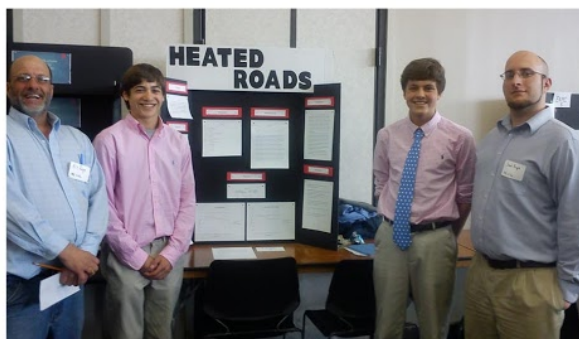
Regional Science Fair Award Winners

Pictures by Chad Rupe

Earlier this spring, The Mercedes Benz Club was able to send a couple of their officers to judge both the Louisville Regional Science & Engineering Fair and the Dupont Manual Regional Science Fair. Both fairs were located in different places at different times this year from years past but still had a healthy amount of young talent to choose from for our Transportation Specialty award.



The Louisville Regional winner was Erin Burba from Gatton Academy in Bowling Green, KY. This year she was a 12th grade student who had a project titled "The Relations Between Mycorrhizal Abundance and Biofuel Crop Yield."



The duPont Manual Regional winner was the team of Henry Robbins and Spencer Strelsov who did a project in it's second year on "Heated Roads."

The Trading Post: Cars, Parts, and Accessories

Four 14" Bundt alloy wheels, nearly new, \$25 each (price lowered).

Half-shafts for rear suspension R107, W115, W123 & others, used, \$100 each (price lowered).

Contact Larry Gettleman (see Section Officers)

Four wheels, 8x16in, with tires; fits the 2000 S500 Mercedes; \$125each.

Four door pull closer handles: fits the 2000 S500 Mercedes; \$50 each.

Grille, fits the 2000 S500 Mercedes; \$225.

W220 Tail lamp assembly, fits the 2000 S500 Mercedes; \$125.

Cup holder, center armrest (leather), fits the 2000 S500 Mercedes; \$150.

Four-piece air vent for dash of 2000 S500 Mercedes; \$225.

Discounted Parts

The following dealerships and shops have agreed to reduce by ten percent (10%) the total price of parts purchased by a Mercedes-Benz Club member with a current MBCA membership card. Restrictions apply; call for details.

TAFEL MOTORS 4156 Shelbyville Road
Louisville, KY 40207

(502) 896-4411

**AUTOBAHN
MOTORS LLC**

1403 Hugh Ave
Louisville, KY 40213
(502) 473-7858, See Don

**JAMES MOTOR
COMPANY**

2440 Richmond Road
Lexington, KY 40502
(859) 268-1150

AWR IMPORTS
223 Adams St

Louisville, Ky 40206
(502) 749-1002

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP DUES

It has been a busy year at the Mercedes-Benz Club of America (MBCA). We have been working hard to enhance your membership experience and are committed to making your membership a valuable and memorable experience.

To properly serve our members, the Board of Directors has approved a \$6 increase in annual membership dues, effective July 1, 2015. This increase reflects rising costs and the expansion of member services, particularly event support. Multi-year membership discounts will continue to be offered. We encourage all existing members to lock in the current rate NOW by renewing for one, two or three years, prior to July 1, 2015.

MBCA sponsored National and Regional events offer a variety of activities that celebrate the performance and history of our members' magnificent Mercedes-Benz automobiles. Through these events, the MBCA continues to foster community and camaraderie that long-lasting friendships are built upon. The MBCA also continues to provide additional support such as event and track insurance, operational resources like MotorsportsReg.com and marketing initiatives, all of which help advance the safety and participation of club activities.

The MBCA is a content leader in the Mercedes-Benz brand. Consider the MBCA's abundance of accessible information and knowledge, which is found in the award winning The Star® Magazine, experienced at events, and discovered online. The MBCA continues to work tirelessly to bring you the latest information on late-model and vintage Mercedes-Benz vehicles. The MBCA is also continuing to expand the network of product experts dedicated to bringing you the latest in technical innovations, updates and insights.

The MBCA provides numerous savings opportunities for its members. The MBCA continues to offer discounts on the purchase of a new Mercedes-Benz, as well as parts, service and accessories from the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center and at participating Mercedes-Benz dealers. The MBCA also offers discounts on the purchase of Airstream Interstate, Autobahn vehicles, collector car insurance, Sears®, and car rentals. The MBCA continues to partner with quality vendors, which offer members a significant way to save money on the products they already purchase.

We value your membership and are constantly striving to enhance your MBCA experience. We are committed to providing unprecedented value and we look forward to serving you for many years to come.

If you have any question specific to the membership dues increase please contact your **Regional Director, Rick Siefert at rick.siefert@att.net.**