



Das Heimatblatt

Newsletter for the Alabama Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America
2014 Printed Newsletter of the Year

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Sternblick (Star View)

February 2020

Our NEW PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR 2020

MY DEAR FELLOW MBCA MEMBERS,

My attraction to German cars began in my teen years in Milwaukee. Being a child of the Midwest in the 50's, most of my family and friend's families' drove big American cars with lots of cylinders. Who cared about fuel economy? Premium (better known as ethyl) was 36.9 and regular was 32.9 cents per gallon. And those were the name brand gasolines. Ease of maintenance was straight forward. Most gas stations had a mechanic. Often, the owner himself who was almost like extended family and many times lived in the neighborhood. Visibility, too, had a lot to do with ease of maintenance. When you opened the hood, there EVERYTHING WAS.... you could actually see the spark plugs!

My first car was a good example of this; a 1951 Plymouth 4 door sedan with a 6 cylinder engine and a standard transmission. It was also a rolling oil processor using 2 quarts of re-refined 40wt oil a week, similar to an oil furnace. In fact my cousin named it the Lennox.

What did any of this have to do with my interest in German cars you ask? Simple. A pretty girl was involved. She drove a 47 Pontiac, a real beast. As things go in Milwaukee, it snowed like mad and caused her to abandon the tank in ditch not far from her suburban home. Her dad had a long commute each morning. So he made the un-Milwaukee like decision to buy one of those funny looking VW beetle like cars. In return, he enjoyed great gas mileage and reliable transportation on his long commute even in the worst weather Milwaukee could dish out. Of course we all snickered behind his back. But, guess how my pretty friend's car was rescued? Yup! The VW gallantly pulled the porky Pontiac out of the ditch. My skepticism regarding the little German waned and I began to read and take notice of other German cars.

Once out of school and following the work and family route of adulthood, a used (abused would be a better description) 1961 VW became my family's second car. This guy was miles ahead of the beetle that pulled my girlfriends car out of the ditch. Wow! It had a full size rear window and of all remarkable techie things, a GAS GUAGE.

With a rear engine I no longer needed sand bags for extra traction in the snow. Of course not having a trunk kind of eliminated that.

The little, light weight a rear engined car with 15 inch wheels helped a lot. In those days many big American cars only had 14 inch wheels and weighed twice as much. "Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!"

As time marched on, other German cars mingled with the nine Mercedes vehicles I owned. A real milestone was the ordering of a 1997 ML320 from the first batch of Alabama produced SUV's. When my number came up, the color was not my wife's favorite. We decided to wait for a Black on Black beauty. With uncharacteristic patience, our choice was rewarded a month later. In the meantime, I helped the Peachtree section develop a program to celebrate the grand opening of the plant in Vance, Alabama. At that point in time, we belonged to Atlanta's Peachtree section. The new Alabama Section would come along little later.

Presidents Message (cont.)

To it's credit , MBUSA let out all the stops and staged a spectacular grand introduction at the new plant for this fabulous vehicle with fireworks, music and an unforgettable laser light show. The 1997 ML320 turned out to be the longest lasting Mercedes I ever owned rolling out over 120,000 miles on the odometer. I've never been known to keep a car that long. It was a tribute to Mercedes qualities long regarded by the rest of the world.

As your new president of the Alabama section, our board will provide many opportunities to enjoy your wise ownership of a Mercedes. Driving events, both at the track and touring will be featured this coming year. Technical events at local Mercedes dealerships will enhance your knowledge of the engineering marvel you are driving along fast breaking details on the newest mind blowing technology on the launch pad. We will continue to hold our monthly social meetings in Birmingham at the Hickory Tavern, also in Huntsville and a soon to be announced Gulf Coast location. These monthly events will give you heads up activity info and the opportunity to meet some of the nicest , brightest people , your fellow Mercedes owners

Be ready to check your emails regularly and oh yes, check your junk mailbox occasionally. I hate when I end up there!

Also: The Alabama Section website has been resurrected, check it out for events, newsletters and The Presidents Message,

<https://alabama.mbca.org>

Hope to see you soon at our next events .Very truly yours
for a healthy and happy 2020,

Jim Sparacio
President Alabama Section,
Mercedes Club of America
Spar7727@gmail.com

What's New

I am New to editing this newsletter I have much to learn. One such NEW newsletter feature is clickable Web Links. Such as the one above in **RED**.

Go ahead try it.

Clicking the link will open a window to the Alabama's web page, hosted by MBCA. On the web page you can search and click on newsletters, old and new. The Presidents message. Events upcoming and reports. Section Leadership contacts, even classified ads.

BUT: All this needs input. Send your photos, written articles, suggestions to:

Doug Bloomberg: mbca.alabama@gmail.com

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA ALABAMA SECTION

<https://alabama.mbca.org>

Executive Board

President
JIM SPARACIO
Birmingham, AL
205.243.7727
jim@sparmedical.com

Treasurer
BILL HICKS
Mt. Brook, AL
wmehicks@gmail.com
m 205.871.5601

Vice President
WAYNE NOVY
Birmingham, AL
wnovy@att.net
205-994-4520

Secretary
DONNA KALINKIEWICZ
Birmingham, AL
dmktimes2@att.net

Past President
KEN CHAMPLIN
Hoover, AL
homescan@bellsouth.net

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Member-at-Large
HEINZ NEUNZIG
Tuscaloosa, AL
Heinzj90@aol.com

Member-at-large
DAVID SHEPHERD,
Pensacola, FL
dshepherd@sei-group.com

Member-at-large
GEORGE SMITH
Vestavia, AL
georgehsmith@bellsouth.net

Member-at-large
DOUG BLOOMBERG
Meridianville, AL
douglasr58@yahoo.com

Eastern Region Director
DOUG GEGANTO
dgeganto@charter.net

Member-at-Large
MASON BEALE
Hoover, AL
masonbeale@msn.com

Member-at-Large
SCOTT PAUL
Perdido Key, FL
spaul@appriver.com

Member-at-large
JOHN MURRAY
Albertville, AL
Ala.jmm@att.net

Membership/ Reiseführer
JIM ROBERTS
Mt. Brook, AL
205.529.0071
jertoosaver@gmail.com

das Heimatblatt

EDITOR: **DOUG BLOOMBERG**
mbca.alabama@gmail.com

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For more information on advertising rates please
e-mail jertoosaver@bellsouth.net or call 205.529.0071

The Alabama Section Grows *Herzlich Willkommen!*

(Sincere Welcome)

New Members

David Allred	Montgomery, AL
Don Bepristis	Gulf Breeze, FL
Kenneth Cain	Fairhope, AL
Frank King	Alabaster, AL
John Lamont	Spanish Fort, AL
Luis Montalto	Niceville, FL
Rebecca Moore	Warrior, AL
Charles Nash	Tuscaloosa, AL
Joy Oglesby	Birmingham, AL
Dodie Roberts	Birmingham, AL
Jason Shelton	Madison, AL
Ernest Spinner	Panama City, FL
Stephen Walden	Brewton, AL
Paul Williams	Huntsville, AL
John Wills	Jasper, AL

Renewing Members

Brenda Brown	Rainbow City, AL
Michael Carter	Bay Minette, AL
Dan Cash	Mt Brook, AL
Ken Champlin	Birmingham, AL
Doug Fowler	Birmingham, AL
Ronald Froehlich	Birmingham, AL
Paul Horn	Tallahassee, FL
Richard James	Summerville, SC
Liz Jones	Birmingham, AL
David Kalinkiewicz	Birmingham, AL
Robert Marchman	Rainsville, AL
Stephen Mihacevich	Destin, FL
David Shepherd	Pensacola, FL
Danny Sterling	Oneonta, AL
Rhoni Young	Madison, AL

How can I get a MBCA Name Badge?

Name badges are available from the MBCA Club Store.
You can choose blue, silver, or gold. Magnetic or safety ping clasp.
2 lines \$13.00, 3 lines printed \$14.00 (25 characters/line)
mailing costs included.

Click this Link to order online...

<https://www.mbca.org/name-badge>

Should you prefer to use US Mail.

Please send: _____ Name badges.

Backing Type: Magnetic: _____ Safety Pin: _____

Color: Blue _____ Silver _____ Gold _____

Name: _____ (line 1)

Alabama Section, MBCA (line 2)

Name: _____ (line 1)

Alabama Section, MBCA (line 2)

Ship to: Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Enclose Check for amount, send to

MBCA

1907 Lelary, Street

Colorado Springs, CO 80909



The Alabama Section, MBCA

Welcomes

Our **New Members**, and those who found our section worth **Renewing** their membership.

Our Officers and Board are working hard to open opportunities for you to participate in Section events. This Newsletter, and updates will appear in your chosen emails.

The Board and Officers Welcome your participation and efforts in suggesting and preparing for a Section event, we are most willing to help you succeed.

Attending Section events is the best way to make new friendships, sharing your passion for Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

As a member you will receive copies of the newsletter **das Heimatblatt** and timely updates.

Please visit our web page

<https://alabama.mbca.org>

Here you can browse old and current newsletters, a calendar of future events, view past events and much more.

PLUS + as a member of MBCA you can visit and log into the National web page. Try it, there is so much to learn, read, become acquainted with.

<https://www.mbca.org>

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 8th SEASIDE INSTITUTE™

Seaside Institute - 2020 Transportation Summit and EXPO
February 6 - 8, 2020

The 2020 Transportation Summit will include international subject matter experts discussing transit impact issues such as use of rights-of-way, demand forecasts, vehicle options reflective of capacity, sustainability, performance and land usage for parking and transportation hubs.

Featured Event: VENDOR EXPO

Featuring autonomous vehicle demonstrations, electric modes of transit, alternative fuels and more...

CAR CLUB RALLY

Join other invited Car Clubs

Audi
BMW
Mercedes-Benz

Porsche
Tesla

[Click for Google Maps Location](#)



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2020*
10AM - 2PM

SEASIDE, FLORIDA - QUINCY CIRCLE

- Designated parking for each manufacturer Car Club
 - Opportunity to promote memberships
 - Marketing promotion by the Seaside Institute

Sponsorship package: No fee to Car Clubs

*Rain Date may be scheduled based upon Vendor Availability

168 Smolian Circle, 2nd Floor

P. O. Box 4875

Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

January 18, 2020

Once again it's time for our annual Winters Drive.



JOIN US for a fun drive in the Mountains West of Birmingham, past the MBUSA Factories Old and New. Lunch at **The Bright Star** restaurant in Bessemer. It is the oldest continually operated restaurant in Alabama...

We start this drive at **Edgar's Bakery**, The Colonnade Center. Where US-280 Crosses I-459. Leaving the parking lot at 8:30AM.

Contact **205-529-0071**
jertoosaver@bellsouth.net
Jim needs a headcount for **The Bright Star**.



Tech & New cars at Jack Ingram Mercedes

217 Eastern Blvd. Montgomery

29 February 2020

9:30 am

General Manager, David Ingram, whose Grandfather founded this dealership in 1961 has invited us to the presentation of the new GLB & GLA. They will go over the features, including operation of the new "Hey Mercedes" control system.

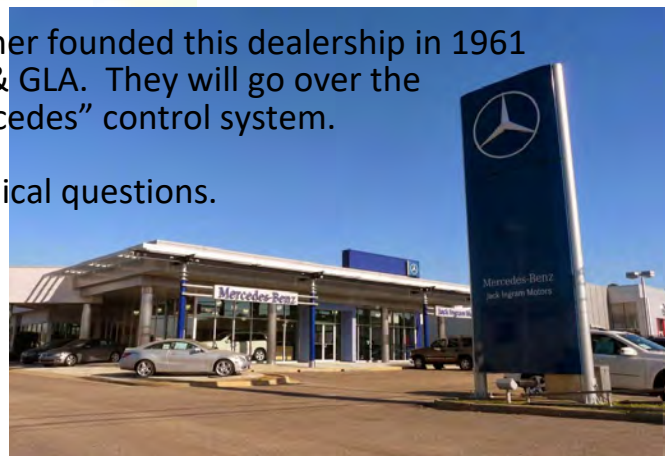
The technicians will address our more typical technical questions.

Non-member customers will be joining us, so be sure to wear your MBCA nametag. Remember we are ambassadors for Mercedes-Benz as well as MBCA. This will be a great opportunity to recruit new members.

We will have lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Directions: I-85 to Exit 6, North on US231.; Merge right onto frontage rd.; Ingram Mercedes on right

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)



Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

March 5-8th

Mercedes-Benz has sponsored this event from its inception 25 years ago.

Today it is the premier east coast concours with cars you will not see anywhere else. There is a huge Mercedes-Benz presence with all the new models available for test drives at the Ritz Carlton and a giant pavilion with priceless classics from the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center. The field consists of 300 of the finest cars in the world.

The hot tip is to arrive early enough to join "Cars and Coffee" on the show field of the 18th fairway on Saturday morning where 30 places will be reserved for MBCA cars.

You can then check out the cars that will be auctioned or attend the show and racing seminars in the Ritz where the RM auction also takes place...

Where? The Ritz Carlton
Amelia Island, Florida
Fernandina Beach, FL

The Concours Website
<https://ameliaconcours.org/>

Honoree:
Roger Penske

MBCA Events

Mar 6 6:30pm MBCA Dinner
"Doubletree", Jacksonville Airport

Click for
link

Mar 7 9am-noon "Cars & Coffee at The Concours"
Mercedes-Benz pavilion at The Ritz Carlton

Mar 8 6pm MBCA Dinner
"The Crab Trap" Fernandina Beach

Click for
link

It is requested that you contact Jim Roberts if your plans are to join your MBCA friends for dinner.

jertoosaver@bellsouth.net 205.529.0071

Click
for Link



190 SL and 300 SL Gullwing at concours d'elegance



Early arrivals for Cars & Coffee Dodie Roberts' 380 SL on front right



MBCA members' cars on show at Cars & Coffee

FIVE RIVERS AND BELLINGRATH

March 28

Ron Harshman – Event Planner

The delta of the rivers that drain from Alabama into Mobile Bay are known to biologists from the world over as one of the most diverse habitats in the world. The ecotours of this area are just beginning, and air boats seem to be the best way to view this massive and relatively undisturbed delta of myriad waterways. The spring season is an ideal time to visit: Mild weather plus the migrating birds produce a unique experience.

Best of all, it is easily accessible from the Mobile Bay causeway (I-10 & US 31).

This is also peak of Azalea blooming in the Mobile area, and this is most accessible at world renowned Bellingrath Gardens just southwest of Mobile. While you probably have examples of these beautiful flowering shrubs, they thrive better around Mobile, than anywhere else.

Please let us know if you would be inclined to visit either or both of these on 28March weekend.

While most in the Mobile area have probably taken many visitors to Bellingrath, relatively few have experienced the 5 Rivers delta.

Please let us know, if you would like to participate at

jertoosaver@bellsouth.net

205.529.0071

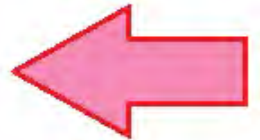
Airboat express. \$35.00/person 3733 Battleship Pkwy, Spanish Fort, AL 36527

Bellingrath Gardens: \$14.00 12401 Bellingrath Gardens Road, Theodore, AL

March
28-29

The Twickenham Auto Club of Huntsville Presents

2020 Performance Driving School



Car Control

Accident Avoidance

Become "ONE" with your Mercedes

Performance Driving

Emergency Lane Change

**All experience levels
welcome!**

-This is a two day event, the meat of learning is on Saturday,

-Sunday put to practice the skills you have learned, driving an Autocross.

-Experienced instructors will ride/guide you in each driving lesson.

Location:
Milton Frank Stadium
2801 15th Ave SW,
Huntsville, AL 35805

Registration
Information to
follow in email

SATURDAY
8AM - 4PM DRIVING SCHOOL DRILLS

SUNDAY
7:30AM - PRACTICE AUTOCROSS
4:30PM



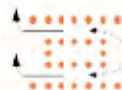
Kidney Bean



*Skid Pad
Wet & Dry*



*Hand's
Course*



*Emergency
Lane Change*



Slalom



Braking Control

IN DEN NACHRICHTEN

(IN THE NEWS)

Congratulations to Jim Roberts

Newly inducted into the
"Alabama Auto Racing Pioneers"
HALL Of Fame 2019



The only member of the Hall of Fame
who makes Right and Left turns.

daimler “electrification” to impact earnings

Jim Roberts

Bloomberg reports: that Mercedes-Benz models which incorporate hybrid, battery electric only, and self-driving in the “EQ” lines of all models will not be quickly introduced nor inexpensive. This will negatively affect earnings for the next two years according to Daimler CEO Ola Källenius. You may recall that Källenius was President of Alabama’s MBUSI Factory 7-8 years ago. He indicated the company wanted to partially compensate by adopting more efficiency and reducing auxiliary managerial staff. None of this should negatively affect operations in Alabama. On the contrary the 1 billion dollar battery factory construction in Bibb Co is on schedule as is the billion dollar expansion of SUV production. At this time there are waiting lists for the new GLE, and some of the C-class cars will have to be imported from Germany or South Africa to fill the demand.

By 2022 there will be more than 20 plug-in hybrid or pure battery electric Mercedes-Benz models. The new inline six, turbo gas with electric assist family will expand to include both 4 and V-8 versions of this powerful and efficient engine type.

We Need Your thoughts and suggestions about meetings for our Southern members

Stammtisch *noun* <Regular's Table>

A gathering of friends, at a large round or oblong table, trading tales, adventures, becoming comrades in a common passion.

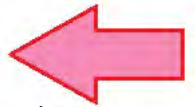
Please note, that while continuing our monthly **Stammtisch** dinners/meetings on the **third Tuesday of each month** at **Hickory Tavern** in Brookwood Village, Homewood, AL. We also have a **Stammtisch** in Huntsville on the **fourth Tuesday of odd numbered months** (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sep, Nov). We meet at **Hildegard's German Cuisine**, 2357 Whitesburg Dr. Huntsville, AL

We would also like to establish a **Stammtisch** in the southern part of the Alabama Section.

For the Mobile-Pensacola area where we have a concentration of members, we have discussed an area of the Point Clear Grand Hotel's Sunday brunch area. This would be a chance to meet and talk with other local Mercedes-Benz owners. We can also have local tech sessions and drives, but **we need to know what and where you want**.

Mercedes-Benz of Dothan would also like to host events there where we can gather, have tech events, go on drives. Do you have a suggestion for a great place Mercedes-Benz Club of America Southern Alabama Section to meet?

How do you feel about this? (reply to any officer or email mbca.alabama@gmail.com)



We understand that geography is a challenge along the Gulf Coast as we have members from Tallahassee to Dothan and Panama City to Biloxi—a distance of 370 miles. With the exception of Dothan and Tallahassee, most live within 10 miles of the coast. We are never going to be able to have monthly events that are close to every member, but we do want to help everyone feel a personal association with the Alabama Section whether you live in Birmingham, Huntsville, Tallahassee, or Southeast Mississippi. By attending events you will find that most of our MBCA members are not only enthusiastic about their Mercedes-Benz cars, they are most interesting people who always seem to have a great time no matter who attends. You will find people with whom you have much in common.

While the cars may bring us together, the people keep us together.

This is not just a cheesy slogan, it is so very true,

Huntsville Membership Meeting

Where: **Hildegards German Cuisine**

When: 4th Tuesday of **odd** numbered months

Time: 6:30pm Dinner

Directions from I 565:

Exit 19A, South Memorial Pkwy 1 Mile exit "Bob Wallace Ave" Left at intersection onto "Bob Wallace" 1 mile to Whitesburg Dr., Hildegard's will be on the NE Corner.

Click for link to Google Maps, Hildegards

Birmingham Membership Meeting

Where: **Hickory Tavern**, Brookwood Village

When: 3rd Tuesday of every month Time:

6:00pm Dinner

From 280: Take Exit to Ala 149 (Homewood/ Mt Brook). Turn left onto Lakeshore Pkwy/ Shades Creek Pkwy. Hickory Tavern is located in the perimeter of Brookwood Mall

Click for link to Google Maps, Hickory Tavern



Mercedes-Benz Club of America
Alabama Section
2301 Arlington Ave S.
Suite 200
Birmingham, AL 35205