



May - June 2023

The StarDust

DESERT STARS SECTION | ARIZONA

Tech Session Airpark Collision Center May 20

9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

7333 E Butherus Dr. Suite A-200 Scottsdale AZ

By special invitation from Tina Small of Airpark Collision please join us for a special tech session sponsored by them. Snacks and refreshments included.

They will speak to current vehicle electronics and manufacturer recommendations or requirements to repair all components of the vehicle correctly. A calibration demonstration will be presented by a certified calibration technician.

Airpark Collision Center was opened in 2006 by Gerald Small, a master auto refinish technician. Starting in the industry in 1988 at a BMW collision repair center, Gerald worked to be the best at his trade and eventually opened his very own shop. To this day it continues to be family owned. You will find his wife Tina at the front desk and Gerald performing quality control for each car in process.

Restoring vehicles to factory specifications has always been the focus. Airpark Collision Center uses top notch materials, factory paint, and employs highly skilled technicians. This combination allows the shop to meet their customers high expectations. Each year ACC continues to earn the most important certification in the industry, I - Car Gold Class. Less than 30% of collision repair shops in the U.S. have earned this certification. The certification means technicians train annually and use the latest industry repair methods. With technology and safety standards changing every day, customers can count on a proper repair. For over 17 years, the level of attention and quality has earned Airpark Collision Center a reputation for repairing high end vehicles like Mercedes Benz and other premium brands. Their philosophy of competitive pricing, best quality and solid customer service has allowed ACC to strongly compete with other auto body shops in the valley.

RSVP by May 12th to Tina Small at tina@airparkcollisioncenter.com



Lead estimator Aaron
and Owner Gerald



Mobile calibration expert Jacob will demo at the event.

President's Message

By Debbie Ichiyama

Thinking of getting a new Mercedes Benz?

One of the biggest member benefits of belonging to the Mercedes Benz Club of America is the Member Rebate on a new Mercedes purchase. To qualify you must be a current primary Member of the club in the US. To access the rebate, go <https://www.mbca.org/mbusa-incentives>

Some other benefits of membership include the award winning, bi-monthly Star Magazine, Classified Ads for Mercedes related items, Special Collector Car Insurance, Club Trips to Germany, 15% discount on parts from the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center, Discounts on parts, service, and accessories at participating Mercedes-Benz dealers and of course this Newsletter.

For details of benefits not listed above please check out <https://www.mbca.org/member-benefits>

Debbie



Welcome our new Members!

February

Kris Stanford
Kim Ward

March

David Ertelt
Jason Lee
Rich Roberts
J Brett Soldwedel

"More Than a Car Club | We're a Community"

Desert Stars Section Officers and Board Members

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Publicity/Webmaster:

Mark Ichiyama

Newsletter Advertising:

Ron Borino

Newsletter Editor:

Debbie Ichiyama

May - June 2023

Volume 59 Number 3

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The StarDust Newsletter is published by the MBCA Desert Stars Section bi-monthly. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint original articles is expressly granted to all MBCA Sections.

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Instagram: [desertstars1962](https://www.instagram.com/desertstars1962)

Twitter: [@MBCADesertStars](https://twitter.com/MBCADesertStars)

Club Email: desertstars@desertstars.club

Annual Meeting

By Debbie Ichiyama

Saturday May 6, 2023

The meeting will be held at Soul Café on May 6th at 8 am. We will have a separate dining section and we will be paying by separate checks. The ballots and information will be brought to you.

Please contact Debbie at dichiyama@me.com or Karen at Nspinaz@gmail.com to let us know if you will be attending. If you will not be attending but would like to vote, please send an email to desertstars@desertstars.club and we will send you a ballot.

The slate of officers and directors are below.

<http://www.soulscottsdale.com>

Annual Meeting Slate of Officers and Directors

Candidate Slate for Officers

President:	Debbie Ichiyama
Vice President:	Ed Crawford
Treasurer:	Rhonda Borino
Secretary:	Katherine Coult

Candidate Slate for Class of 2026

Brynn Burton
John Hutchison

Welcome to our newest
Advertiser!



Our Regional Director, Ron Borino has a new email address. Please make a note of it in case you want to contact him.

southwestdirector@desertstars.club

Volunteers Needed for running Events

We are looking for members to Volunteer to organize events. You won't be alone doing this; you will have the guidance of folks experienced in running events. Please consider helping us out. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Debbie Ichiyama dichiyama@me.com or Karen Manser nspinaz@gmail.com
Events can be anything from a casual lunch, dinner, or a scenic drive.

Thank you!

Why Choose Airpark Collision Center?

Dealership quality for less
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Germany Trips

Watch for updates in upcoming editions of the StarDust

Desert Stars June Star Night

Sunday June 11, 2023

5:30 PM

SAPIENS PALEO KITCHEN

10411 E McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd, #120
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

Join your Desert Star friends for a great evening of good food and drink. We will return to Sapiens near McDowell Mountain Ranch in Scottsdale. The chef has amazing credentials and she and her husband have a great "STORY" about the restaurant and their past. Don't be afraid of the name, the French flavors are amazing and the food is of the highest quality and so healthy.

Click here for their site and the gallery of their photos <https://sapienskitchen.com/gallery>
French Inspired!

The restaurant is a BYOB so you can bring your favorite bottle of wine or other drink of choice. They only have the BYOB license so they cannot serve drinks.

We will start at 5:30 with some social time before dinner. The menu will be pre-fix with choices for each course. They are closed Sundays so we will have the restaurant to ourselves. **Seating is limited so get your name on the list early. We have 10 already signed up!**

Bring your favorite bottle of wine or drink of choice

Cost \$99 per person **Inclusive of tax, tip and corkage!!**

RSVP to: Karen Manser

nspinaz@gmail.com

425-478-5509

Havasupai Rallye

By Kevin George and Kris Stanford

Sept 29th - Oct 1st

The Desert Stars Section is pleased to announce that plans for this year's fall classic Havasupai Rallye are well underway! New members and Rallyemasters Kevin George and Kris Stanford (last year's winners) have selected a scenic location less than 2 hours' drive from the valley, with a route that includes charming towns, hidden gems, and even a few of Arizona's historic roads. You can expect a traditional distance and observation rallye, complete with a fun and educational theme and plenty of challenges along the way. And let's not forget hospitality on Friday and Saturday nights! So, mark your calendars for Sept 29th through Oct 1st, and look for more information in the next issue of StarDust.

MBEAT

Mike and Bob's Excellent Auto Tour - 2023

By Ron Borino

Well, another M-BEAT is in the books, and we really had another great time. The group began arriving at Denny's restaurant on the Carefree Highway and I-17 at around 7:00 a.m. It was sure great to see folks arriving for this event as we had 28 participants total. It was a magical cadre of members including folks we haven't seen in a while, to folks coming in from out of state, a new member and his wife participating for the first time, as well as a possible new Mercedes enthusiast kicking the club's tires for the first time. Of course, there was a group of folks that are regular attendees of club's functions that made the new members and out of towners feel special. The M-BEAT tour leader explained the history of the M-BEAT and how this driving event was honoring both Mike Goodwin original founder of the BEAT and Bob Yoder who carried BEAT tradition on as the M-BEAT. After breakfast, which was graciously paid for by Mark Miller who was doing double duty as an event co-planner and group photographer, we started our pilgrimage toward Coffinger Park in Wickenburg. This first stop is designed to be a bathroom break, a place for folks that might be coming from other cities to catch up, as well as a place where we could get a group picture. Once the group picture was taken and the non-Mercedes Benz cars properly christened for the event, the group proceeded toward our next destination which was The Palace Restaurant and Saloon in Prescott. Amazingly, the group was able to make the 11:00 reservation within a window of +/-10 minutes. The Palace seated the group in a private separate area and assigned two top drawer servers who brought us a great lunch. After lunch, the group broke up. Folks proceeded to Little America in Flagstaff through a variety of different routes. Some up to Ashfork and over to Williams, some over Mingus Mountain, through Jerome and Sedona and a few over to Montezuma's Castle to view this attraction before heading to the hotel.

Everyone made it to Little America Hotel, and those that wanted a picture with their car had those taken by our photographer. As you might guess, all ended up at the bar for happy hour and lively camaraderie prior to dinner. In fact, at dinner the last of our group made it to the hotel as they had come up from Tucson representing the Chaparral's which is the club's other Arizona section that serves members in Southern Arizona. They used the well detailed driving directions and caught up with the main group at dinner. They were very impressed with the detail put into the directions and ran the route with no problems. Credit for these detailed directions goes to John Hutchison who has honed this into an art. Little America's bar and dinner wait staff were simply outstanding! The food was great and of course the accommodations were enjoyed by everyone in attendance. At dinner Rich Leamon asked the group for a moment of silence honoring both Mike Goodwin and Bob Yoder. With that dinner was ordered and served. As you might imagine dinner turned in to a wonderful social event. Many new acquaintances were made; many old acquaintances were re-kindled and clubs' members having "fun with their friends and Benz". The last group of the dinner party found itself in the lobby of the hotel sharing wine and stories that were fun, interesting and didn't end until around midnight.

The next morning folks began meeting at the restaurant at around 8 for breakfast. Before 9 more than half of the group was in attendance with more arriving as others began to depart for the trip back to their homes. Again, Little America graced us with a fabulous server and excellent breakfast. Lots of discussion and laughter was had by all. By 10 a.m. the author of this write-up and his wife had departed towards Phoenix. I know several members were going to use the St. Mary's Road route and head towards Payson for lunch. Some of the group left for Sedona and lunch among the red rocks, and some headed directly back to Phoenix. It sure seemed that a great time was had by all. I do want to thank both Mark Miller and John Hutchison for helping plan this year's event. I sincerely appreciate all attendees for making this a blast and just plain easy.



The Group at Coffinger Park in Wickenburg

A great meal at Little America




2023 CALENDAR		 	
R1	BAHRAIN	R13	BELGIUM
03-05 MAR	SAKHIR	28-30 JUL	SPA-FRANCOCHAMPE
R2	SAUDI ARABIA	R14	NETHERLANDS
17-19 MAR	JEDDAH	25-27 AUG	ZANDVOORT
R3	AUSTRALIA	R15	ITALY
31 MAR - 02 APR	MELBOURNE	01-03 SEP	MONZA
R4	AZERBAIJAN	R16	SINGAPORE
26-30 APR	BAKU	15-17 SEP	MARINA BAY
R5	MIAMI	R17	JAPAN
05-07 MAY	MIAMI	22-24 SEP	SUZUKA
R6	EMILIA ROMAGNA	R18	QATAR
19-21 MAY	IMOLA	04-06 OCT	LOHAIL
R7	MONACO	R19	UNITED STATES
26-28 MAY	MONACO	20-22 OCT	AUSTIN
R8	SPAIN	R20	MEXICO
02-04 JUN	CATALUNYA	27-29 OCT	MEXICO CITY
R9	CANADA	R21	BRAZIL
14-16 JUN	MONTREAL	03-05 NOV	SAO PAULO
R10	AUSTRIA	R22	LAS VEGAS
30 JUN - 02 JUL	SPIELBERG	14-16 NOV	LAS VEGAS
R11	GREAT BRITAIN	R23	ABU DHABI
07-09 JUL	SILVERSTONE	24-26 NOV	YAS MARINA
R12	HUNGARY		
21-23 JUL	BUDAPEST		

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Local Car Culture

The Scottsdale Motorsports Gathering

7:00 - 10:00 am on the first Saturday of every month.

Free for spectators!

Market Street at DC Ranch

20789 N Pima Rd

Scottsdale, AZ 85255

Highline Autos Cars & Coffee

7:30 – 10:00 am on the first Saturday of every month.

5415 East High Street

Phoenix, AZ 85054

Alpio's @ TROON

Car's & COFFEE at Pinnacle Peak

7:00 – 10:00 am on the second Saturday of every month.

10452 East Jomax

Scottsdale, AZ 85262

The Desert Stars' 2023 Picnic and Games

By David Cesal

*Enchanting encounters with history and new members,
The Desert Stars shined brightly on a late winter's day.*

Phoenix, Arizona
March 18, 2023



On a balmy and beautiful weekend in March, Desert Star members and friends saddled up and rode to the grounds of Kim and David Cesal's 87-years-old ranch-styled home at the Phoenix Country Club, where this year's picnic and games were held.

Upon arrival attendees were received at the carriage house where they were graciously greeted by Katherine Coult (club officer) and enchanted by a true replica (No. 15) of the celebrated 1886 Benz Patent Motorwagen, a special exhibit provided by our fine friends at the Martin Automotive Museum & Events Center (*located at 4320 W. Thunderbird Rd., Glendale, AZ 85306, open to the public- 9am-5pm- six days a week Tuesdays thru Sundays*).

Starting at high noon, festivities on the garden grounds involved fun, food and friends. Picnic-goers enjoyed a delicate Mexican spread, plenty of sunshine with available patio shade, gentle breezes, and vivacious mingling and conversations.

The festivities featured three contests pitting Benz-lovers' brawns and brains. Marianne Hutchinson (long-time member) corralled the door-prize. Ed Crawford (member and former Havasupai rallye-master extraordinaire) showed-off his finely tuned accuracy and finesse on the putting course- grabbing the "Potsdamer Putz Prize". Mark Ichiyama (first gentleman) snatched the "Daimler Benz Trivia Time" prize from the grasps of other extremely worthy rivals. Arguably, the highlight of the afternoon games featured a showdown between Carey Hobson (member, a.k.a. the Silver Arrow) and Ron Borino (member and MBCA regional director) - on the cornhole pitch. In a breathtaking tie-breaker match, Hobson-streaked past Borino carrying away the "Köln Cornhole Prize".

March birthdays were recognized, and special Pieces-blessings were given to Vanessa Ertelt - (newest friend and member of the Desert Stars), Debbie Ichiyama (club president) and Melanie Searle (a member who - along with her late beloved spouse - Robert St. John, has collected countless Arabian horses and vintage Mercedes-Benzes - including a certain 300SC - one that was a former People's Choice winner). Picnic attendees were treated to cake for dessert.

Special recognition and appreciation go to Mike Welton (MBCA, Chaparral club president), who rode in from Tucson lending support to our event and fostering stronger sibling-club relations. Shout-outs to our newest Desert Stars, including Donna Brown, Nataly Cardona, David and Vanessa Ertelt, and Kris Sranford and Kevin George for their participation and support.

See page 10 for photos.



Host David Cesal



Carey Hobson & Ron Borino tie breaking match of Cornhole



Katherine, Terry Coult and Don Sterling discussing putting.

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Sponsor Spotlight – Airpark Collision

In this edition of “**Sponsor Spotlight**”, we are refocusing and repositioning our “spotlight” on Airpark Collision Center of Scottsdale, located at 7333 E. Butherus Dr. Suite A-200, Scottsdale, Arizona 85260 (just west of Scottsdale Municipal Airport, between Scottsdale Road and Greenway-Hayden Road).

Airpark Collision Center is a family owned and operated by Gerald and Tina Small. They opened the shop in 2006, and their current motto is “Restoring Your Vehicle to its Pre-Collision State!” Airpark Collision has also been a host site for several MBCA Desert Stars “Tech Sessions” over the last few years.

Q: Gerald, and Tina, tell us a little about Airpark Collision’s history

A: (Gerald) I opened Airpark Collision Center in 2006 after working as a technician for over 25 years. I was striving to create a repair facility that had 3 goals in mind: a) pride in craftsmanship, b) serve customers honestly, and c) work we can stand behind. In 2011 Tina left her teaching position in Cave Creek and took a more active role in the business. “I feel that I brought a different perspective to the business and questioned things from a customer’s point of view.” For example, “Let’s explain the procedure, the time it takes and why the cost is honest and justified.”

Q: What are the main products and services you offer at Airpark Collision?

A: (Tina) We are a full-service auto body paint and repair shop. That means anything from dings, dents, scratches, small parts replacement to major collision damage repairs. We service all makes and models, with a specialization in high-end makes like Mercedes-Benz. Regardless of the project size or vehicle year our emphasis is ensuring a quality result and excellent customer service for every customer.

Q: Are there any special qualifications that Airpark Collision’s has?

A: (Tina) We pride ourselves on specialized training and equipment. Each year, the technicians attend recertification classes, which allows them to understand the new technology on vehicles, how to repair them, and learn the latest industry repair techniques. Collectively, the team has over 160 years of experience. We apply that experience to more than a 1000 vehicles a year! We are a certified repair facility for many makes and recognized as an industry leader by many organizations. Additionally, Airpark Collision Center is I-CAR Gold Class Certified, meaning we have earned the highest certification in the collision repair industry. Only 10% of body shops nationwide have achieved this status. Also, we were one of the first shops in the valley to be aluminum repair certified.

Q: How has Airpark Collision changed over the years?

A: (Tina) The biggest change in the collision repair industry is responding to the advancement in vehicle technology. Auto body is no longer about “pounding out dents,” repairs are more comprehensive and must address other vehicle components besides the body of the vehicle. Upon impact onboard sensors and computers are shaken, we have to ensure everything is working properly if a future accident should occur. Newer model vehicles are pre-diagnostic scanned, the information from the scan tells us what needs repair that may not be visible. After the collision repair a post diagnostic scan is performed and calibrations if necessary. Addressing all electrical and safety items in addition to the body of the vehicle extends the length of repair and the cost.

Q: How does Airpark Collision monitor quality?

A: (Tina) As each vehicle moves through the various departments: body, refinish and detail, each staff member inspects the repair before beginning their phase of work. Once the repair is completed Gerald or one of the estimators will perform a final quality check before the customer is called. Occasionally, we find errors but the most effective measure is employing quality technicians who take pride in their work.

Q: Besides the collision repairs and other auto body projects, are there any other special products or services you provide?

A: (Gerald) We can add window tinting, clear bra protection and fix curb rash on wheels. If you lease a vehicle, we can help with pre-return repairs before your inspection.

Q: You have been very supportive to the Desert Stars members over the last few years by opening your doors as host for Tech Sessions. What do you like most about these events, and is there anything that ACC takes away from the sessions that is incorporated back into your daily processes?

A: (Gerald) We love hosting events and meeting the members! It gives us a good feeling to share what we know about repairs and insurance claims. This is something we work with every day and find sharing our knowledge very rewarding. The Q & A sessions also help us understand what consumers would like to know about our process. This information helps us when working with future customers or prompt topics for our monthly blog.

Q: Tell us more about yourselves, and what you like to do away from the shop?

A: (Tina) We have lived in north Scottsdale since 1999 (although we have moved a few times within the area). Gerald loves to play golf and we both like spending time outside. Most of our weekends include trying new restaurants and spending time with our 31 year old son and his wife who have just moved back to Arizona.

Q: What are the most interesting Benz and non-Benz projects that you've worked on?

A: (Gerald) Each year we get our share of high end vehicles, Maserati, Porsche and even a few Bentley, Ferrari and Lamborghini. We recently completed some reconditioning work on a special edition black Mercedes-AMG C63 and collision repair on a 2022 BMW M4 Competition xDrive refinished in flat black. Also, being located in the Scottsdale Airpark we are occasionally asked to paint small helicopter or airplane parts.

Q: What are your business hours?

A: We are open Monday thru Friday from 7:30am to 5:30pm. We can set up an off-hour's appointment if there's a special need. Call the office with as much advance notice as possible. We can also write simple estimates via email if good photos and a VIN are submitted.

Q: Anything else you want our MBCA members to know about Airpark Collision Center?

A: (Gerald) We want Mercedes owners to know that we really enjoy working with them and we strive to make their repair experience the best in the valley. We feel that we have a special niche in an area filled with national chain and dealership owned collision centers. We know we have to earn our customers and that sets us apart. We also recognize that making a vehicle look great is not the *whole* repair experience. Treating people in a friendly manner and taking time to answer their questions leads to a more pleasant experience for all involved. Our focus has always been customer service and repair quality not speed of repair.

Airpark Collision Center can be reached at 480-922-3006, or by email at Gerald@airparkcollisioncenter.com. Be sure to also check them out on the web at <http://www.collisioncenternorthscottsdale.com>, and on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Yelp](#) and [Nextdoor](#).

Thank You Gerald and Tina for your continued support of MBCA and Desert Stars!



Tina & Gerald



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Social Media

By Ron Borino – Newsletter Adverting

Did you know the Desert Stars has not only a Facebook page but also a presence on LinkedIn and Instagram and Twitter? Please be sure to follow these pages as not only are events posted on these platforms but also, if a sponsor has a special offering these will be posted here too. Some of these special offers can be quite interesting. Be sure to share these posts with your friends with Benz's too and like, follow and visit often. The social media pages are as follows:

<https://www.facebook.com/DesertStarsMBCA>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/mercedes-benz-club-of-america-desert-stars-section/>

<https://www.instagram.com/desertstars1962>

<https://twitter.com/MBCADesertStars>

<https://nextdoor.com/g/3wap1kp0l/>

Of course, I welcome all members to follow me on LinkedIn too at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ron-borino-561b3912>



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The club welcomes inquiries from businesses or members who would like to advertise their goods or services to an influential and discriminating group of purchasers. If you know of a business you think should be in this periodical and would like me to try to call on them, please, just let me know.

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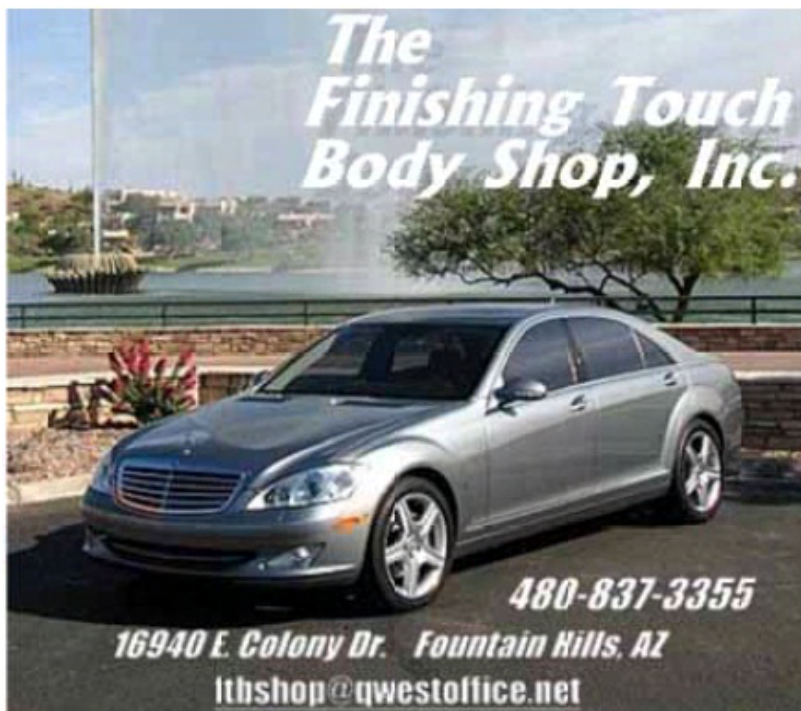


The advertisement features a heart-shaped necklace and a pair of heart-shaped earrings. Both pieces feature a large, faceted blue gemstone (likely a sapphire) set in a halo of smaller clear diamonds. The necklace has a silver-toned chain. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue with bokeh light effects. The jewelry is displayed on a light blue surface.

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Please support our awesome sponsors and small business owner, when possible. Let them know you heard of them through the StarDust.

Chaparral Activities

Our friends in the Chaparral (Tucson) section have sent us a list of their potential activities for the year. It would be great if you could join them for some. More info will be provided as details become available.

If you would like to attend one of the events, contact Mike Welton at mjwprofconsult@aol.com

May – winery tour to Sonoita

June – tour to Mt. Lemmon

July – tour to Prescott with Desert Stars Club

October -Tombstone and Bisbee

November - Scavenger Hunt/Murals

December – Christmas party

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Contact our Membership Chair, Debbie Ichiyama, at 480-268-9535 or dichiyama@me.com

SAVE THESE DATES

TBD		Mercedes Benz Classic Center
May 6	Sat	Annual Meeting/Breakfast
May 20	Sat	Tech Session Airpark Collision
June 11	Sun	Star Night Sapiens Paleo Kitchen
July TBD		Prescott with the Chaparral Section
Sept 29 – Oct 1	Fri - Sun	Havasupai
Dec 10	Sun	Holiday Party

Please see page 18 for a list of events by the Chaparral (Tucson) Section.

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May–June 2023