



# The Houston Star

MBCA | Houston Section Newsletter

November  
2011

[www.mbca.org/houston](http://www.mbca.org/houston)

## In this issue

President's Message  
Page 2

New Members and  
Loyal Members  
Page 3

Technical Q & A  
Page 7

Automotive Rhythms  
Pages 9-10

Mercedes Marketplace  
Pages 11-13

Upcoming Events  
Page 14



## Oktoberfest 2011

By: Chuck Wyatt

Here it is October 8th and it is time for MBCA's 17th consecutive Oktoberfest hosted by Texas German Autohaus (TGA). It seems that each year we look forward with anticipation attending this event, as each one seems to be better than the year before. Our host really goes out of his way to make everyone feel right at home at TGA and their customer loyalty proves it. This year, the grey overcast skies and scattered showers made it seem more like fall and the warm temperature made it a perfect day for our celebration. Our arrival was a little late and as a result guests were already arriving. Just before the Technical Session there was plenty of time to renew acquaintances (including our former Editor and former Treasurer, Buzz and Geni Werner who were visiting from Florida) and have chance meet some new members and TGA's guests who enjoy nothing more than talking about their Mercedes Benzes. Some of us even discussed some of the Italian and British marques as well, but we always came back to our German cars that have served us so well over the years. Soon afterwards we went into the shop for the technical session to start.

(continued on page 5)

# President's Message

Greetings!

I hope we can all agree that the Club had a good October. The Oktoberfest at TGA was fun and drew a large crowd of MBCA members and non MBCA members. Thanks go out to Chuck Wyatt for helping out with the Oktoberfest as usual. Thanks also go out to TGA. TGA is a longtime supporter of MBCA | Houston and we thank them for standing by and showing us much support and kindness over the years. If you really want to thank TGA, the best recommendation is to give them a visit for service. We're already looking forward to the 18th consecutive Oktoberfest!

Thanks to Vice President Gerry Van Zandt, the Club has been invited to participate in 500Eboard.com's Lone Star 500E/E500 Roundup during the weekend of November 12-13. The Roundup promises to be an excellent event and is open to those who may not have 500Es and E500s, but are fans of those rare and exotic executive sedans. Please see page 7 for more info.

The Club and the Lone Star E500/500E Roundup will come together on Sunday, November 13th for the much anticipated Fall Autocross. The Fall and Spring autocrosses are perhaps the most popular MBCA | Houston events. If you haven't attended one of our autocrosses before, come on out and see what the fuss is all about. See page 8 for more info.

The Holiday Brunch, European Car Clubs Bowling Event, New Members Dinner, and other events are currently in the works for the 2011-12 calendar year. Stay tuned so you can find out when these opportunities to meet with your fellow Club members will take place.

Even though these are the last items, don't let their order lead you to believe they are not important items. We are moving full steam ahead at making the Houston Section a 21st century car club. Thanks to volunteers like Gerry Van Zandt and Board Member Jeffrey Cooke, this newsletter is now being sent via USPS to Club members who either don't have e-mail addresses on file or don't own a computer. This is in line with the Club's new efforts to keep in touch with ALL of our members. Additionally, we have extended our online territory by creating a Twitter and LinkedIn account for the Houston Section. You can follow us on Twitter @MBCAHouston.

Our LinkedIn page is located here: <http://t.co/Ag4PevEg>

Both accounts are under construction, and they won't thrive unless you get connected and start following us and making posts. So don't sit around, check out our new accounts and get involved.

Take care, and happy motoring!

Joseph Middleton | President | [Mercedes-Benz Club of America](#) | Houston Section

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## MBCA | Houston Section welcomes the following new members to the Club!

*Welcome!*

James Crawford of Houston, TX

David Mayadas of Bellaire, TX

Daniel Schultz of Humble, TX

Richard Yargus of Houston, TX

*Willkommen!*

## MBCA | Houston Section thanks these loyal Club members

Marvin Boyd of Humble, TX

Robert and Daphne Bryan of Waller, TX

Jacques Casimir of Miami, FL

Ali Durvesh of Sugar Land, TX

John and Elaine Kosty of League City, TX

Donald Netzband of Houston, TX

John Perillo of Friendswood, TX

Linda Skidmore of Houston, TX

Paul and Penny Stanaford of Missouri City, TX

Glen and Angela Van Slyke of Houston, TX

James Woody of Spring, TX

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## Oktoberfest

(continued from page 1)

Our host Hans Richter started it off with a discussion on testing the vacuum system on a W210 E-class. The testing equipment was hooked up and after a couple of tests, the problem was isolated and Hans told us what was needed to correct an apparent transmission related issue. Part two of the technical session was a spark plug removal and replacement competition open to both professionals and amateurs. Each one of the participants had to remove 4 spark plugs from a cylinder head and put them back in as fast as possible. In the professional category our host won with the fastest time. In the amateur category, Helmut Holder Jr. easily beat out the competition. Congratulations to both of our winners. This year we had one more technical discussion given by the Houston Section's Vice President, Mr. Gerry Van Zandt that was an extremely interesting talk about the 500E/E500. As noon quickly approached it was time for lunch. Like in years past, there was the announcement that the gates would be locked and the beer drinking would start. When the beer is gone, the gates would be unlocked. No one left early for some reason. There was an abundance of wine, soda and water for those who are so enthused about German beer. As usual the food was great. This year's menu consisted of a Wurst salad (bologna, pickles, tomatoes and chives in a charming vinaigrette dressing), German potatoes and cottage cheese. When lunch was finished we presented Hans Richter and Peter Ulrich with the plaque commemorating seventeen consecutive years of Oktoberfest at TGA. No Oktoberfest is complete without our door prize drawings and this year was no exception. This year the club had some nice prizes and Hans went the extra effort to give a lucky winner a set of crystal wine glasses. There were other great prizes including a TGA polo shirt for the customers/members who travelled the greatest distance to get to this event. This is the first time that I can remember that Richard Wilkins did not walk away a winner. Then came the dessert which was Blue Bell ice cream with apple strudel. It seemed even better than last year's dessert. So there was lots of German music, German beer, good German snacks, German beer, German food, and more German beer.

Before we knew it, it was mid afternoon and time to thank Hans, his wife Christiania, Peter Ulrich and his wife Ellen, the service advisors Richard Burger and Matt Burrage, Willie Ware, Deborah Deleon, and the rest of the TGA staff who made this celebration possible. Besides giving our MBs top service and care, their honesty, fairness, and customer care makes TGA one of the top Mercedes Benz repair facilities in this region.

Photos: <http://s836.photobucket.com/albums/zz290/MBCAHouston/17th%20Annual%20TGA%20Oktoberfest/>



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## Mercedes-Benz Tuscaloosa Plant to Produce New Model

By: J. Davis of [emercedesbenz.com](http://emercedesbenz.com)



**Update:** A few days ago we told you that Mercedes-Benz was planning an expansion program for the U.S. plant in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in preparation for a new model that would go up against the BMW X6. Now, thanks to a photo post on twitter, we have confirmation of the crossover, currently dubbed the MLC.

Daimler today announced that they will further expand the Tuscaloosa, Alabama plant in 2015 to include an entirely new Mercedes-Benz model. The new vehicle to roll off the production line in Tuscaloosa will be the fifth product produced. The plant has been the traditional production site of the brand's M-Class, GL-Class, and R-Class SUV's and will also build the Mercedes C-Class for the North American market beginning 2014. For the production of the new model, Daimler will additionally invest 350 million dollars, and will create around 400 jobs at the plant.

According to previous rumors, we are likely to see a small MLC SUV roll off the line. It would take its styling from the M-Class and would go head to head with the BMW X6.

**Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Daimler Board of Management and Head of Mercedes-Benz Cars:** "This new model from the Tuscaloosa plant is an important element of our growth strategy. It is one of the ten additional models which we will introduce within the next four years alone across all segments." Referring to the Tuscaloosa plant's role within the global production network of Mercedes-Benz Cars, Zetsche added: "At the same time, we are systematically broadening our manufacturing footprint in the NAFTA region."

**Robert Bentley, Governor of the State of Alabama:** "Since the time Mercedes-Benz chose Tuscaloosa County for its first US assembly plant 18 years ago, the company has proven to be an outstanding partner for the state. We join MBUSI in celebrating this milestone, and welcome the hundreds of jobs this announcement brings to Alabama."

Just earlier this year, on the occasion of the Job #1 ceremony of the new Mercedes-Benz M-Class in July, Daimler had announced the decision to invest more than US\$2 billion in the Tuscaloosa plant (Mercedes-Benz U.S. International – MBUSI). In total, investment in the plant between 2010 and 2014 will thus amount to US\$2.4 billion, while the number of newly created jobs will add up to 1,400.

**Markus Schaefer, President and CEO of MBUSI, commented on these decisions:** "The entire MBUSI team is proud of its role in the success of the models made in Tuscaloosa. We are looking forward to making further important contributions to the product offensive of Mercedes-Benz."

## Technical Q & A with Ali Durvesh

**Question:** I recently acquired a beautiful 1983 280SEL sedan. The car is in good condition and has been maintained well. Last week I encountered my first problem: When taking a sharp U-Turn I noticed a groaning noise from the engine until I straightened the steering out again. What is the probable cause of this groaning noise?

**Answer:** It's likely one or both of the engine mounts. They're made out of rubber to absorb vibrations and they degrade over time. Use OEM parts because aftermarket engine mounts don't have the best reputation. Check the recent September-October 2011 issue of *The Star* magazine for an excellent writeup on changing engine mounts by Pierre Hedary.

If you have any questions, please send your requests to the *Houston Star* or contact me directly. I can be reached at [ali.durvesh@gmail.com](mailto:ali.durvesh@gmail.com).

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## 500Eboard.com Presents: Lone Star 500E/E500 Roundup



Gerry Van Zandt, Vice President of the Houston Section and owner of 500Eboard.com, is hosting the Lone Star 500E/E500 Roundup on Saturday, November 12 and Sunday, November 13, 2011. The first day will include a BBQ run to Central Texas, and a Tech Session in Tomball. On Sunday, the group will join the Houston Section for the annual Fall Autocross (see page 8 for Autocross details). For more info, please visit this link, [http://500eboard.com/forums/showthread.php?1729-\\*\\*\\*-SAVE-THE-DATE-\\*\\*\\*-Lone-Star-500E-E500-Round-Up-Nov-12-13-2011&p=12210#post12210](http://500eboard.com/forums/showthread.php?1729-***-SAVE-THE-DATE-***-Lone-Star-500E-E500-Round-Up-Nov-12-13-2011&p=12210#post12210)

You may contact Gerry Van Zandt via the contact info on the last page of the newsletter.

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## Fall Autocross 2011

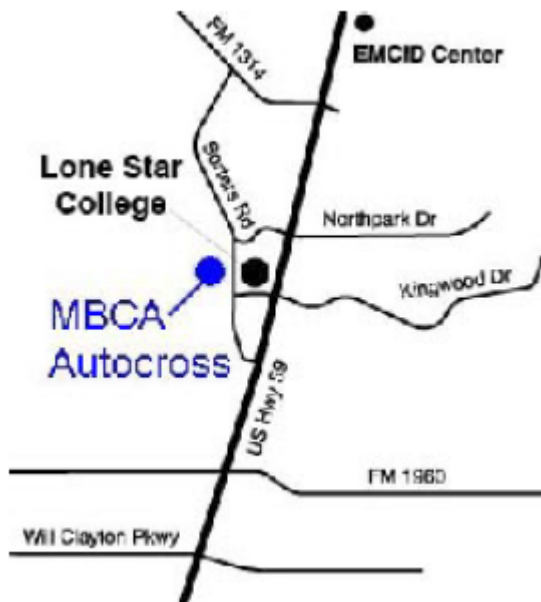
It's almost time for one of MBCA | Houston's most anticipated events...  
Fall Autocross 2011!



Family Fun!



Good food!



Most of all, good tire screeching fun!

The autocross will be held on Sunday, November 13 at Lone Star College-Kingwood. Drivers should arrive by 12:30pm for lunch and a pre-event briefing, and the event begins at 1:00pm. Bring your family, blankets, lawn chairs and enjoy a BBQ lunch and some hands on automotive fun! Cost is \$10 per driver. Helmets will be provided, or you can bring your own helmet. To RSVP with the number of guests in your party, and/or for more information, contact Mike Haney at [mhaney@3dtriad.com](mailto:mhaney@3dtriad.com), or at 713-298-4580.

## 2012 Mercedes-Benz C-Class: Premium Quality, Compact Format

Courtesy of Automotive Rhythms

The Mercedes-Benz C-Class sedan is number one in sales worldwide in its market segment. That's newsworthy, but for the 2012 model year, the iconic German automaker has undertaken a major restyling of its popular four-door C-Class sedan that incorporates more than 2,000 new parts, including new bumpers, headlights, front grille, an aluminum hood, LED taillights along with a redesigned interior.



In addition, a new coupe version makes its debut, complete with athletic AMG styling and a panorama sunroof that comes as standard fare. The addition of the new coupe brings the C-Class offerings to seven models in two body configurations. Both the coupe and sedan will be available in three different models: the C250 which draws its power from a new direct-injection, turbocharged 1.8-liter engine that delivers 201 hp; the C350 powered by a 3.5-liter V6 with 302 horses; and the high-performance C63 AMG model that hurtles down the road courtesy of an AMG hand-built naturally aspirated 6.3-liter V8 delivering 451 hp and 443 pound feet of torque, backed by AMG's MCT 7-speed transmission. An optionally available AMG Development Package boosts the horsepower to 481. The C-Class sedan will also be available as a C300 with standard 4MATIC all-wheel drive, powered by a proven 228 hp 3.0-liter engine.

All of the new coupe models possess sporty attributes, while the C250 and C300 sedan models may be ordered with either Sport or Luxury features and equipment. In addition to a grille-mounted star, the C-Class Sport sedans are easily identified by AMG aero-cladding, with deeper front and rear aprons and under-door rocker panels. Sport models also come with three-spoke steering wheels, rubber-studded aluminum pedals, aluminum trim accents and staggered width wheels and tires as well as a stiffer sports suspension that rides .6" lower than luxury models. All of the 2012 C-Class models feature a newly revised seven-speed automatic transmission except for the C63 AMG with its MCT gearbox.

Okay, that takes care of the mechanical nuts and bolts of the new C-Class lineup. All 2012 models also come equipped with a new 5.8" color display that includes Bluetooth interface for wireless audio streaming and hands-free phone operation, an MP3 compatible CD drive and a USB port in the center console. An optional COMAND system features a larger 7" color display, GPS navigation, rear-view camera, a ten-gigabyte music storage hard drive, an SD card slot, voice control and an in-dash CD/DVD player.

C-Class base pricing ranges from \$34,800 for the Sport sedan (the luxury version costs \$420 more). Add an \$875 Destination charge for all models. Ironically, the pricing role is reversed in the case of the C63 AMG models – the coupe costs more than the sedan, starting at \$62,305.

C-Class coupes are actually expected to account for less than ten percent of total C-Class sales, with the sedans being decidedly more popular. Despite that fact, the Coupes look so much more appealing. It's unknown what the take rate will be for C-Class models powered by the new 1.8-liter direct injected, turbocharged four-cylinder engine. Its performance levels are much more than simply adequate and the increased fuel economy that it delivers, speaks for itself.

**(continued on page 10)**

## 2012 Mercedes-Benz C-Class

(continued from page 9)

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My driving partner and I picked a C63 AMG coupe with a Mars Red exterior to spend our time in during the national press launch program of the new C-Class based out of the luxurious Hidden Pond property in Kennebunkport, Maine. It came with a base sticker price of \$61,430, which rose rapidly to \$78,405 after factoring in such additional features and equipment as: carbon fiber trim, rearview camera, limited slip differential lock, KEYLESS GO, the AMG Development Package (\$6,050.), COMAND 6-disc Package, Lighting Package, Destination and Delivery fee and Gas Guzzler tax. Yes indeed, that's a lot of money for a C-Class Mercedes, but the C63 AMG is no ordinary C-Class – nor is it an ordinary automobile. Read on...

The C63 AMG Coupe displays a near perfect shape and proportions, literally oozing an artistic sexiness in an expressive, emotionally stirring design, while delivering a lofty level of performance capability, along with outstanding handling characteristics.

Acceleration is blistering, launching the car from 0-60 mph in a mere 4.4 seconds. The C63 AMG sticks to the road like glue, remaining flat, stable and secure in the twisties. Yes, the ride quality is exceptionally firm, but not objectionably so – especially to a dyed-in-the-wool driving enthusiast or gearhead.

The car is so alluring to behold and entertaining and satisfying to drive, that both my copilot and I felt no urge to experience seat time behind the wheel of the other new models. Hey, a sedan is a sedan and a coupe is a coupe. Yes, the new four-cylinder engine is an important addition in the C-Class lineup, and yes, the sedan is expected to represent the highest sales results, but the C63 AMG is such an incredible machine, it just seemed to beg for our full attention. It is worthy of all the praise that can be heaped upon it. Let's face it, some cars are just more impressive than others – the C63 AMG Coupe is just such a car – especially when fitted with the AMG Development Package. If it doesn't happen to float your personal boat, there's a very limited edition Black Series version waiting in the wings to appear soon.

# Mercedes Marketplace

## 2001 Mercedes-Benz CLK320

2001 Mercedes CLK320 Convertible (W208 Chassis) is finished in Brilliant Silver Clearcoat Metallic. Original Paint, no accidents. All the body panels are straight with no major dents/dings. This car was purchased by my mother about 4 years ago as a gift to herself for beating cancer. She typically drives her W126 every day, and the CLK only gets driven on the weekends. This car only has 58,700 miles on it.

16" Mercedes Benz Aluminum wheels, finished in factory silver, wrapped in a Matching Set of Goodyear Eagle LS H-Rated tires, the tires have less than 5,000 miles on them, and have plenty of tread left.

The black power fabric top opens and closes normally. The top is in great shape, and the car has always been garaged when not used.

The engine is the 3.2L 18 valve, Single Overhead Cam (SOHC) V6 (M112 - E32) with 218 hp. The engine starts and runs flawlessly. This engine is mated to a smooth shifting 5 speed automatic transmission. There are no leaks, funny noises, or fluid consumption. Car runs and drives great. The brakes work fine with no problem, no warpage, and no fading. Stops are straight and squeak free. The suspension is tight, squeak free and the car drives straight. We recently installed a brand new Interstate Battery (located in trunk), next to the full sized spare tire, which has never seen the ground.

The interior is finished in grey leather. Driver and passenger power seats both work fine with no problem with over tilt/slide for access to rear passengers. All power everything works. Dual zone climate control works fine with no problems at all. Nice condition inside for a 10 year old car. There is a trunk mounted CD changer.

The car has two keys, one original key as well as a new style chrome key.

This car hasn't seen the shop for anything since we owned it (except a flat repair) and I believe my mom has driven the car less than 5000 miles in the three years that she's had it. Texas Registration and Inspection are current.

Asking \$11,500 and entertaining all reasonable offers.

Email: [weschain@gmail.com](mailto:weschain@gmail.com)



## Mercedes-Benz parts for sale

### Location: SW Houston/Missouri City

Used and new parts for sale for Mercedes-Benz autos ranging from the 1960s-1980s. Parts include **Pagoda Euro headlights**, 2nd generation W126 SEL/SDL **velour interior parts**, M102 oil filters, 2 brand new W201 interior wood trim pieces, W201 right corner lamp, W201 front rotors & pads, plus more assorted MB parts. You can take it all home for \$2100 obo, or you can buy the parts individually.

**Contact Angie for more info: 832-453-9698**

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## 1960s era Mercedes-Benz parts for sale

\* Set of 4 MB factory original alloys (14 X 6) with 195/70R14 Kelly Metric 600's mounted (<2000 miles).

They include the center hub covers and correct wheel nuts.

They are ready to bolt on and go - complete and great "driver" condition.

No damage to the metal (curb rash or otherwise).

I had been using these occasionally on my 280SL until I sold her. \$600.

\* Original steering wheel in black. Removed from 1968 280SL, but will fit many 1960's cars. Great condition, but not perfect. \$400 OBO.

\* Kangol 2-point seat belts and mounting hardware Black, no damage, but appear used. \$400 OBO.

\* Service manuals for cars between 1958 and 1969 (Big Blue Book). Different books (cover different topics). \$130 together.

\* Rubber door seals for W113 - both L&R. \$60

Will send photos upon request

Contact [sctripp@comcast.net](mailto:sctripp@comcast.net)

## 1983 Mercedes-Benz 380SL



# For Sale

**1983 Mercedes Benz 380SL above avg.,  
both tops, blue w/grey leather \$13,500**

**713-557-2741**

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### Hardtop for 1983 380SL or similar model

Selling a dark green hard top with an ivory headliner that I no longer need (a long story). Very good condition. I am very flexible regarding price, i.e., make me an offer.

Contact: Joe Fischer at: [joe.fischer-vbj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joe.fischer-vbj@sbcglobal.net) or (713) 850-1128.



## MBCA | Houston Section

Joseph Middleton, Editor  
P.O. Box 753  
Houston, TX 77001

### Officers

<b>President</b>	<b>Joseph Middleton</b> mbca.houston@gmail.com   832-713-MBCA
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Gerry Van Zandt</b> gerry@vanzandt.us   281-518-2960
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Norm Glorioso</b> ncglorioso@comcast.net   713-397-1830
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<b>Technical Chair</b>	<b>Ali Durvesh</b> ali.durvesh@gmail.com
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	<b>Damon Stith</b> damstith@yahoo.com   832-265-6044

### Directors

<b>Marvin Boyd</b>	mwbayd@embarqmail.com   281-360-1766
<b>Jeffrey Cooke</b>	cooke.houston@gmail.com   713-914-8708
<b>Mike Haney</b>	mhaney@3dtriad.com   713-298-4580
<b>Chuck Wyatt</b>	ctwyatt@sbcglobal.net   281-469-7428

### Regional Director

**Charles Boyd** 580-255-4040  
E-mail: cl.boyd@sbcglobal.net

### Newsletter Editor

**Joseph Middleton** 713-487-8197  
Editor's e-mail: editorjoseph@gmail.com  
Club Website: <http://www.mbca.org/houston>

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<http://www.mbca.org>

### Let's keep in touch!

If your e-mail address has changed from that which you gave to MBCA when you joined, or if you just want to make sure you receive future newsletters, send your preferred e-mail address to [editorjoseph@gmail.com](mailto:editorjoseph@gmail.com), or update your info at:  
<http://www.mbca.org>

## 2011 Upcoming Events

**Lone Star 500E / E500 Round Up**  
November 12-13

**Fall Autocross**  
November 13

**Holiday Brunch**  
December 4

## Board of Directors Meeting

November 1

Board Meetings are **open to ALL MBCA | Houston Section members**. Board Meetings are held every 1st Tuesday of odd numbered months at 5:30 PM in the 2nd Floor Conference Room at Mercedes-Benz Greenway (3900 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77027), unless otherwise noted.

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