



# The Houston Star

MBCA | Houston Section Newsletter



April  
2011

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

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## March of the Tech Sessions

By: Joseph Middleton

It's springtime in Houston. Temperatures are tolerable, and it's the perfect weather to wrench on your Mercedes-Benz without fear of a downpour, a coldfront or a heat stroke. With that in mind, it's evident as to why March in Houston is a perfect time for a Tech Session.

The first Tech Session wasn't a MBCA Tech Session, but a Tech Session put on by our friends at the Houston Chapter BMW CCA. MBCA | Houston was invited to come out to the Tech Session held at F2 Motorwerks on Memorial Dr. on the west side. Club President Damon Stith and I decided to attend the Tech Session and scope the scene. We were outnumbered by BMW CCA members, but it was no problem. It's always fun to look under the hood and at the undercarriage of fine cars, whether they be BMWs, Porsches, or any other make. The owner of F2 Motorwerks, Fernando Alucema, provided pizza and beverages to the attendees and did a few on the spot inspections. One couple in attendance intended to drop off one BMW for work, but ended up leaving another after it was discovered in the parking lot that the crankshaft pulley bearing was failing.

(See "Tech Sessions" on page 5)

## President's Message

Hi M-B Enthusiasts,

Apologies for the last minute change in venues for the March 19th tech session, Sonneil at Motorwerks issue arise that needed his urgent attention. but those with Airmatic and Anti-Body Control suspensions will be happy to know this will be re-scheduled in the near future.

Speaking of upcoming events, see inside for details of the spring autocross, and the Bluebonnet run the second weekend of the month along with a trip to the Central Texas Automotive Museum in Rosanky Texas, be sure not to miss this one. Don't forget the Central Texas get together. Joseph always seems to top the year before with attendants from both Dallas/Ft. Worth and Houston.

Coffee N Cars is still in a hold pattern until there's a better location.

Happy Motoring,

Damon Stith | President | [Mercedes-Benz Club of America](#) | Houston Section



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## Rescheduled Tech Session at Motorwërks



The tech session at Motorwërks has been rescheduled for 10:00 am Saturday May 14, 2011. Mark your calendar and plan to attend. See more details in the May newsletter.

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

*Welcome!*

*Willkommen!*

Glenda Barrett of Houston, TX

Warren and Lisa Hoffman of Houston, TX

Lyndsey Knight of Houston, TX

Johnnie Lee of Missouri City, TX

Mark Marzec of Katy, TX

Eyassu Menelik of Houston, TX

Alex Preston of Houston, TX

## MBCA | Houston Section thanks these loyal Club members

Oluwole Ajeigbe of Manhattan, NY

Fernando Mangino Aparicio of Spring, TX

A. Brenholts of Conroe, TX

Chris Dezevallos of Houston, TX

John and Carol Filak of Seabrook, TX

James Fisher of Houston, TX

Helmut and Mimi Holder of Houston, TX

Robert and Andrea Jackson of Houston, TX

Norm Laman of Webster, TX

Kevin and Laura Manning of Magnolia, TX

Anna Merenda of Houston, TX

Myron Messner of Houston, TX

Spencer Reiter of DeRidder, LA

Don Roach of Spring Branch, TX

Thie Rossingh of Willis, TX

Van and Catherine Russell of Austin, TX

Ernest and Emma Sylva of Humble, TX

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## Tech Sessions (continued from page 1)

After meeting some more friendly BMW CCA members such as Houston Chapter Vice President Dennis Nowak, it was time to hit the road.

Two weeks later, it was time for MBCA's Tech Session. We were due to have our Tech Session at Motorwerks on the Southwest Freeway, but the Motorwerks Tech Session had to be postponed. We look forward to having a future Tech Session at Motorwerks.

Since we promised our members a Tech Session and didn't want to let them down, we were able to arrange a Tech Session on the same day that our Motorwerks Tech Session was to be held at Houston Biodiesel. Some of you may remember last year, MBCA | Houston had a Tech Session at Houston Biodiesel. In that one year period since, Houston Biodiesel has moved to new digs from the East End to West 20th Street in the Heights. Owner and operator Chris Powers was gladly able to accomodate our group, discuss biodiesel with us, and even treated us to some *strong* espresso shots. Among the attendees were Lee Martin, Richard Wilkins, Damon Stith, Bernard Middleton, and the Bausermans.

After snacking on kolaches and fresh, hot glazed donuts from Shipley's, Chris took us into the warehouse and showed us his homebrew reactor made from components such as an electric water heater, a water pump, and a refrigerator. Most Mercedes-Benz diesels, especially older ones from the late 1990s and earlier, are perfect candidates for biodiesel use. Newer models can use biodiesel, but risk voiding their warranties and fouling up expensive and finicky emissions equipment if too high a concentration is used. Many questions were asked, about the homebrew reactor, the effect of biodiesel on fuel systems, and many answers were given to the satisfaction of the guests. I overheard one participant say that he may have to consider going back to a Mercedes-Benz diesel to take advantage of biodiesel, which at the time of this writeup was 10-30 cents cheaper than the lowest ULSD pumps in town. The Tech Session was supposed to end at noon, but our group stayed a little longer as we had good conversation with Chris and his family.

The Club would like to thank Chris and Fernando for inviting us out to their establishments and making March the month of Tech Sessions in MBCA | Houston.



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## Did you know?

For every gift membership you purchase, and for every new member who lists you as their sponsor, you'll get a 1 month extension of your membership. 1 membership=1 month, and there's no limit! For example, if you tell 12 people about MBCA and all 12 join and list you as their sponsor, you get a 12 month extension. It's that easy. So spread the word about MBCA!

## Spring Autocross 2011

It's time for one of MBCA | Houston's most anticipated events...

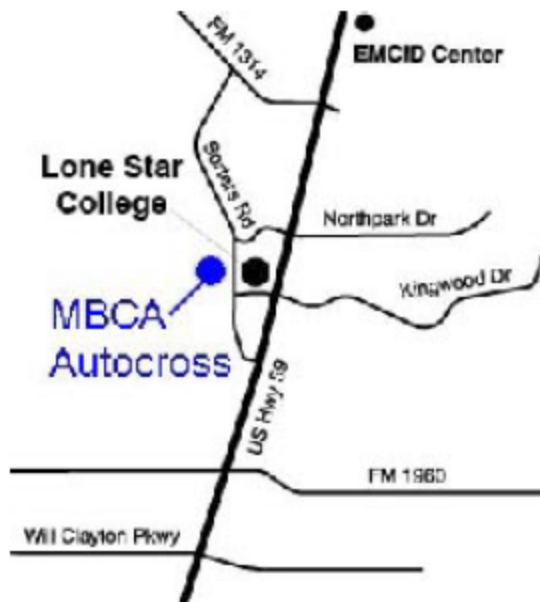
Spring Autocross 2011!



Family Fun!



Good food!



Most of all, good tire screeching fun!

The autocross will be held on Sunday, May 15th 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.

## Technical Q & A

**Question:** A friend advised me not to check my transmission fluid with an old rag because it could contaminate the fluid. I like to keep an eye on the fluids in my car regularly, so what is the proper way to check the transmission fluid? Thanks.

**Answer:** Your transmission is very sensitive to contaminants. Mercedes even goes as far as recommending you check the fluid with leather to ensure that no lint gets into the transmission (though you can probably get away with carefully using a lint free cloth). The car needs to be running at operating temperature, on level ground, and in park to check the level properly. If the transmission fluid is cold it will read too low. Be sure not to overfill as that can cause damage to the transmission.

If you have any questions, please send your requests to the *Houston Star* or contact me directly. I can be reached at [Saleem@JohansenUSA.com](mailto:Saleem@JohansenUSA.com) or call me at 281.883.3792.

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## Annual Bluebonnet Run



This year's Bluebonnet Run will be on Saturday, April 9, 2011. Participants are asked to gather in the parking lot at Gander Mountain, located between 290 and Hempstead Highway at Highway 6/FM 1960 (19820 Hempstead Highway) starting around 9am. We will leave Gander Mountain at 9:30am and proceed on our route which will take us through the scenic countryside between Houston and Austin to see the bluebonnets in bloom. We will make stops along the way, including a visit to the Central Texas Museum of Automotive History in Rosanky. Admission to the museum is \$6 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6-12, and free for kids ages 6 and under. After visiting the museum, we'll have lunch at one of the famous BBQ eateries in nearby Lockhart.

Please direct all inquiries and RSVP notices to Joseph Middleton.

E-mail: [editorjoseph@gmail.com](mailto:editorjoseph@gmail.com)

Phone: 713-487-8197

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## Sixth Annual Texas Mercedes-Benz Get Together

It's almost time for the **SIXTH** Annual Texas Mercedes-Benz Get Together! If you've attended this meet in the past, then you'll already know that it's always a fun time, and I hope to see you again this year! If you have not attended this meet before, why not make this year your first time to attend? The meet will be held on Saturday, June 11, 2011 in Centerville, TX with lunch at Woody's Smokehouse, and a Show and Shine at Fort Boggy State Park. A caravan of cars going to Centerville from Houston will meet in the parking lot of the Cracker Barrel located at 14765 North Freeway (located on the southbound I-45 feeder road just south of Airtex Dr.). We will have our pre-departure assembly in the rearmost portion of the Cracker Barrel parking lot near the Guesthouse Inn & Suites hotel at 9:45 am, and will depart at 10:15 am for a 12:00 noon arrival in Centerville. If you wish to have breakfast at Cracker Barrel or at the neighboring Whataburger, you can arrive earlier than 9:45 am, just be ready to pull out with the group at 10:15am. There will be reserved parking and a BBQ lunch in a room reserved especially for the group at Woody's Smokehouse, located on the northbound side of I-45 in Centerville. After lunch, the group will head 4 miles south on State Highway 75 to Fort Boggy State Park for a show and shine. Park entry is **FREE**. After the show and shine, awards will be handed out based on People's Choice for the best vintage model (pre-1980), best 1980s model, best 1990s model, and best 2000s model.

For all inquiries regarding this meet, including RSVPs, please contact Joseph Middleton at 713-487-8197, or via email at [editorjoseph@gmail.com](mailto:editorjoseph@gmail.com)



## Daimler Heritage: April 2011

**100 years ago – on 23 April 1911:** Bob Burman broke Barney Oldfield's record, covering a mile from a flying start at an average speed of 228.1 km in the "Blitzen-Benz" at Daytona Beach, Florida/USA. This was the highest speed ever attained by a road vehicle and set up a world record which remained unbeaten until 1919.

**80 years ago – from 12 to 13 April 1931:** Rudolf Caracciola became the first foreign driver to win the "Mille Miglia" long-distance race. Together with co-driver Wilhelm Sebastian he took first place in the 1000-mile (1635-kilometre) race from Brescia to Rome and back, averaging 101.1 km/h at the wheel of a Mercedes-Benz SSKL (W 06 RS).

**40 years ago – on 14 April 1971:** Mercedes-Benz presented the new SL 107 model line, featuring numerous safety innovations. The first vehicle was the 350 SL.

**25 years ago – from 9 to 16 April 1986:** at the Hanover fair, Daimler-Benz presented the powertrain of the new O 405 GTD diesel-electric duo bus and components of an experimental car based on the 230 E running on pure hydrogen.

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## 2011 Brabus iBusiness 2.0

From Topspeed.com



Brabus is apparently not satisfied with preparing tuning packages with blow your socks off speed and have moved on to the world where briefcases and hand held devices are key to survival. No, we're not talking about a Brabus-tuned iPad - although that would be fascinating -, but the iBusiness 2.0, a vehicle that is fully equipped with the new iPad 2. We've seen Brabus do something very similar to this before when they introduced the "iBusiness" SV12 R with the first generation iPad, but their latest package has been upgraded to the new and improved tablet computer. The setup for this new model is exactly like the first version as the iPad is offered with a WiFi network and a Mini Mac. The ultra-small, yet powerful Mini Mac serves as the central computer and is hidden away in the S-Class trunk under the rear shelf in an electrically deployed drawer.

The iBusiness 2.0 package can be applied to any model in the S-Class line-up, but prices on the package have yet to be announced.

Read more at: <http://www.topspeed.com/cars/brabus/2011-brabus-ibusiness-20-ar106688.html>

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## Mercedes-Benz to Launch Teen Driving School in the U.S.

From Automotive Rhythms

- The Mercedes-Benz Driving Academy is set to open in the U.S. in late 2011 to offer teen driver's education
- Designed using a unique combination of interactive classroom sessions, online learning and behind-the-wheel training that leverages state-of-the-art teaching methods and use of supervised practice within the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) framework
- Focused on making young people better and safer drivers through an innovative driver's education approach

Read more at the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/automotive-rhythms/mercedes-benz-to-launch-teen-driving-school-in-the-united-states/10150129916189691>

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## Next-Gen C-class will be a hybrid

By: Colum Wood of Autoguide.com



Mercedes is currently in the process of introducing a mid-cycle update to its C-Class range with a lineup of new engines, but the next-generation of the car will get even more dramatic changes under the hood.

According to a recent report, almost all C-Class models are set to go hybrid, with Mercedes using an electrification strategy designed to boost fuel economy for the brand. As a hybrid, the car will make use of electric assist, allowing for smaller displacement engines. Mercedes is also reportedly targeting an overall drop in curb weight by roughly 10 percent, despite the addition of heavy electronic components.

Other technology reportedly being considered includes the use of three-cylinder engines as well as a 4-cylinder motor with cylinder deactivation, allowing it to run on just two cylinders when possible.

As with the current C-Class, expect only the largest and most powerful engines available to be offered in North America. The next-generation C-Class is due out some time around 2014/15.

Source: <http://www.autocar.co.uk/News/NewsArticle/AllCars/256097/>

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## Fort Worth Section: Bimmer Club Invite Driver's Education Weekend!

April 30- May 1

The BMW club is inviting us for its 2-day Driver's Education event. This is not a racing school but rather a safe, high speed driving school, conducted on a race track under close supervision by experienced instructors. You will learn how to handle and control your vehicle at speeds not normally attained on public roads. This will help to prepare you for emergencies in normal driving. It will also allow you to explore your capabilities as a driver and those of your vehicle. The event is open to all drivers (18 years and older) and all makes of cars.

Click here for event details, agenda, and registration:

<http://sections.mbca.org/fortworth/Event%20Calendar%20BMW%20DE.htm>

Questions? Please contact BMWCCA Event Coordinator Steve Hodges directly at [shodges883@gmail.com](mailto:shodges883@gmail.com)

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## Lone Star River Boat Cruise along with BMW & Audi Car Clubs

June 4

The Mercedes-Benz Club of America Lone Star Section would like to invite you to join us as we kick off summer with a beautiful sunset cruise atop "The Lone Star" one of the largest, most luxurious, all electric double-decked, paddle wheel riverboats in the Nation.

The 2 hour private tour will consist of a narrated sightseeing tour of Lady Bird Lake, the opportunity to experience the exhilaration of the outdoors, the natural beauty of the ever changing Austin skyline, the abundance of waterfowl, and the spectacular emergence of the world famous Mexican free tail bats.

Price will be \$20 per person.

Due to capacity limits. You're RSVP is required to [MBCALoneStar@aol.com](mailto:MBCALoneStar@aol.com) and payments must be received no later than Friday May 27, 2011

Please mail checks payable to MBCA-Lone Star Section to:  
Joyce Melugin-Treasurer, 4205 Bluff Ridge Dr. Austin, Texas 78759

Please bring your favorite beverage, soda, beer or wine and an appetizer to share.

Enjoy the cruise from the roof top deck or lounge in the air conditioned lower level area.

Please see the following website for directions and parking information: [www.lonestarriverboat.com](http://www.lonestarriverboat.com)

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## Gemutlichkeit 2011 May 21-24

Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts from across the country will be gathering in Ohio this May for Gemutlichkeit 2011 – four days of fun, action, Concours, plus track and driving events. For 2011 we will be celebrating the 125th anniversary of Mercedes-Benz Automobiles and the 50th anniversary of the Western Reserve Section of MBCA. We will also have a special celebration, held at the beautiful Kingwood Center Gardens in Mansfield, Ohio where we will be honoring the SL “sport leicht” and all six SL generations, including the 190SL, 300SL, the W113 “Pagoda”, the W107 “Panzerwagen”, the R129 and more.

If you've never been to an MBCA National Event, Gemutlichkeit 2011 is the one to attend. Your host this year is the Western Reserve Section of MBCA, which has a reputation for dynamic events and activities that appeal to both veterans and first timers alike.

Things kick into gear on Saturday, May 21, with a very special Concours d'Elegance recognizing 125 Years of the Automobile and also featuring the Six Generations of the SL at the Kingwood Estate, followed by a welcome reception at the Richland Carousel Park. Driving events commence on Sunday, May 22 with defensive driving practice, autocross, and a Road Rallye. The evening concludes with the Concours Banquet. There will be plenty of social time to make new friends and get reacquainted with old friends.

On Monday and Tuesday, May 23 and 24, participants will have the exclusive opportunity to attend the MBCA special performance driving school, on site at the world-renowned Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Mansfield, Ohio. This is your chance to participate in time trials and acceleration runs on the track in your SL, or other favorite Mercedes-Benz model, new or old. Remember that you can register to attend just the days or events that fit your schedule and travel plans.

Never driven on a track before? No problem – our MBCA team of experienced instructors will guide you every step of the way to help you learn the course and the performance characteristics of your Mercedes-Benz. Be warned however: It is contagious! Once you try it, you'll be looking to attend other National Driving Events.

Not ready to try the track yet? There will be plenty of exciting and interesting activities during the event for you to enjoy. We expect a great turnout of SLs and a diverse cross-section of classic, modern classic and new Mercedes-Benz models taking part in the Concours d'elegance. Compete on style, or enter for fun and sharing, as there will be both judged and display-only classes (all years and all models welcome). In addition there is the MBCA Road Rallye, covering the back roads and rolling hills of Ohio farm country. Plus many other gatherings, receptions, local tours and activities, plus time to mingle and enjoy the sites, including the Kingwood estate and gardens.

And what about that word? “Gemutlichkeit” is the name of one of the oldest MBCA National Events, with a history dating back to 1958. The name was used to describe those early events, roughly translated from German as “good times with friends”. And so it has been ever since.

For registration and more information go to:  
<http://benzclub.org/info/gemutlichkeit-2011/gemutlichkeit-2011-registration/>

# Mercedes Marketplace

## 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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## 1968 Mercedes-Benz 250S for sale



Engine and mechanical systems restored/repaired including alternator, water pump, radiator, transmission, fuel tank, front drive train, brakes, power steering, **speedometer, horn, tires**, and air conditioner.

Exterior and interior body, seats, seat belts, radio, heater core, and window gaskets need repair or restoration. Transmission reverse, horn steering column wire, rear drive train bushings, and power steering gaskets need additional repair in the near future. Shop manuals, tools, and records available. Asking \$2,950, price negotiable.

Contact Garland T. Bauch

281-733-1182

astrodad@live.com

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## 1983 Mercedes-Benz 380SL



# For Sale

1983 Mercedes Benz 380SL above avg.,  
both tops, blue w/grey leather \$16,750

713-557-2741

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**Are you selling your Mercedes-Benz or  
Mercedes-Benz related items?**

**Fill this space with your classified ad.**

**Contact [editorjoseph@gmail.com](mailto:editorjoseph@gmail.com) for info.**

# 1998 Mercedes-Benz SL600 for sale

## Converted to SL74 by RENNtech

Formerly owned by Marshall Field V.

35K miles

The modifications done by RENNtech and their cost are listed below.

520HP 7.4L V12 engine: \$32,000  
Upgraded transmission: \$1,290  
Lowered by 1 inch: \$800  
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14 inch front Alcon brakes: \$5,760  
12 inch rear Alcon brakes: \$3,490  
RENNtech rear muffler: \$1,790  
RENNtech resonator bypass: \$1,140  
RENNtech front and rear sway bars: \$1,135  
RENNtech hiflow intake: \$1,245  
Larger radiator: \$1,225  
Vented hood: \$3,000  
Recaro seats: \$6,700  
Anti penetration glass: \$2,700



Any reasonable offer considered.  
Contact Diana Chapman for more info.  
[chapmand49@yahoo.com](mailto:chapmand49@yahoo.com)



## MBCA | Houston Section

Joseph Middleton, Editor

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### Are you moving?

To change your address, visit the MBCA website at:  
<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

### Bluebonnet Run

April 9

### Tech Session at Motorwërks

May 14

### Spring Autocross

May 15

### Sixth Annual TX MB Get Together

June 11

## Board of Directors Meeting

May 3

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.

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