



Nickel City Star

APRIL 26, 2010

SPRING 2010

www.mbca.org/niagara

Coming Events: See page 2

Most Active Member Contest!



Niagara Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Announcing a member competition in order to encourage attendance at our meetings and planned events. And we want to have some fun with it, too. Competition began with the March meeting, and will continue until the Holiday party in early December. Attendance at monthly meetings and Club activities will render the majority of the points, but there may be a few surprises for additional points.

RULES:

1. All elected officers and their significant others are not eligible.
2. Points will be accumulated until the Holiday party. Once the next calendar year starts, we will begin a new competition.
3. The member with the most points will win at the Awards ceremony.

SCORING:

- 5 points for attending a monthly meeting
- 5 points for driving to the meeting in a Mercedes (we will be checking the parking lot)
- 5 points for being part of one of the various committees
- 10 points for attending a planned club activity
- 10 points for bringing a non-member to a meeting or an event
- 15 points for helping with an event
- 25 points for running an event
- 30 points for entering a local car show – an additional 10 points if your vehicle wins
- 30 points for attending/entering a national event (providing you attend at least 3 monthly meetings during the year)
- 40 points for writing an article for the Nickel City Star about the event that you planned

PRIZES:

First Prize: \$250 Cash! Second Prize: \$50 Cash!

REGISTRATION:

Register with Becky Reed. Registration will require merely your name and the license plate number(s) of your car(s).

GOOD LUCK – AND SAFE DRIVING!!!

Meeting location
change!
See Page 2 for de-
tails.

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2010 EVENTS CALENDAR

- **May 15 — Glenn H. Curtiss Air museum and winery tour (see page 3)**
- **May 18 —** Final Monthly meeting before summer, at the **Elma Towne Grille**, 6:30 p.m. 6650 Clinton St. at Bowen Rd., Elma (due to fire damage at the Buffalo Brew Pub.)
- **June 5&6—"History on Wheels" Car Show** at Genesee Country Museum* (Free for display cars)
www.qcv.org/calendar/detail/4/
- **June 13—Elma Car Show**, (Judged) off Bowen Road south of Clinton St.*
- **June 20—Father's Day Car Show** at Sonnenburg Gardens, Canandaigua NY*
- **June 27—Chuckwagon Trail Ride + Kinzua Dam and Ice Cream***
- **July 11, - MB Club of Canada 25th Annual Meet**, Hosted at the Hubertushaus in Mannheim, Ontario (near Kitchener). German food! Admission will include lunch. Judged car show, 6 classes + people's choice and best of show. Invitation and details to follow.*
- **July 18—Annual Chautauqua Antique Car Club picnic and car show***
- **August 14—New Members Picnic Event***
- **September 12—Schlachtfest party and car show at Spring Garden, Elma***
- **September 25—Oktoberfest in Hamburg town park, German car show***
- **October—Dim Sum feast & shopping in Mississauga Ontario***
- **November—(to be determined)***
- **December—Christmas Party***

**Event details to be finalized. Watch for emails.*

These and other events are in the planning stages... watch for future announcements!

Members of all sections and guests are always invited to Niagara Section events.

Details of most events will appear in future issues of this newsletter or sent via email and/or posted at www.mbca.org/niagara. Or you may call Dave at 716-688-0540 for more information.

Check The Star and www.mbca.org for national events listings.



Happy Spring! It's getting warmer and all the "toys" are begging to come out of storage again! We look forward to a Summer of car shows, driving events and general warm weather enjoyment. I even look forward to cutting the grass!

A lot of Mercedes Club activity is on the way. Check the list on page 2, and be aware that even more events are still in the works. We will notify all members in three ways: this newsletter, our website, and email from time to time. Please make sure we have your email address in our list. If you have not received an email from Dave Doherty in the past month, it means we don't have an accurate address for you. Send changes to Dave Doherty at ddoherty1966@aol.com. Thanks!

I am very happy to report that our section founder and former treasurer, Herb Fischer has successfully returned to us after a strenuous treatment cycle at Roswell. Welcome back!

Your "new" officer team is working out very well... my extreme appreciation and gratitude goes out to you for taking some of the burden off and actually improving the club! I knew it would get better with more people involved. :-) We are of course always looking for helpers on our committees, so if you have a few moments to help out, please let us know.

Event

Glenn Curtiss Museum & Wagner Vineyards

Date: Saturday May 15, 2010, 8:30 a.m. to approximately 6:30 p.m.

Start: Meet at Tim Horton's, 5140 Main Street Williamsville. Detailed itinerary will be given.
(The entire trip will total about 300 miles, so come with a full tank!)

Itinerary: Travel to Hammondsport for lunch and a tour of the Glenn Curtiss Museum. Afterwards, a short caravan to Wagner Vineyards and then head home at your leisure.



To sign up, simply email ddoherty1966@aol.com or call Dave at 716-688-0540
by Monday, May 10th. Guests are always welcome!

NEWSLETTER NOTE!

This newsletter is available online at our website: www.mbca.org/niagara

We are working to decrease mailing costs, so if you have provided the club with an email address, the Nickel City Star link will be delivered electronically. Please feel free to print it out, in full color, and read it at your leisure. Otherwise, black & white paper copies will be mailed to members. If you prefer a paper copy, please call Becky Reed (716-652-4548) and your subscription will be mailed regardless. Thank you!

VP's Corner

It's really scary today, reading about cars that mysteriously and suddenly accelerate out of control. The driver, perhaps with passengers on-board, is caught by surprise and more often than not, doesn't know what to do to regain control. The first response for most of us would be to hit the brakes. But with the engine accelerating, the brakes alone will not stop the car. The next reaction would be to turn off the ignition. But then you would lose your power steering as well as the vacuum assistance to the brake system leaving you with even less control. Even if we have been told what to do, adrenaline and fear may cause us to hesitate or even forget what action should be taken. The end result may be catastrophic.

Automobile experts and technicians tell us that if we experience this kind of situation we should try to remain calm (easy said), shift the transmission to neutral, depress the brake pedal steadily and pull the hand brake while steering the car toward the shoulder of the road. Once stopped, turn off the ignition if you can. If you are unable to turn off the ignition, get out of the car as the engine may blow apart (more likely, it will seize up and stop). While there is no way for us to practice in preparation for this type of situation, we can *visualize* the above response. Visualization has been used successfully in sports training and has been proven to work. At the very least, it can't hurt.

The above reality is a reminder of one of the many reasons that some of us choose to drive a Mercedes-Benz. Mercedes has long been considered the safest automobile ever manufactured. Right from the beginning, the Mercedes name became synonymous with automotive excellence, quality and *safety*. Stay safe and we'll see you at the next event.



Bill Fix

Sugaring History Tour at the Genesee Country Museum

- by Bill Fix

Gary's black E500 pulled up to the front of our house at precisely 8:30 am. Fifteen minutes later, Gary, Fran, Hilde and I arrived at Tim Horton's at the Walker Center, and were soon met by "Hermit" Herb, Shirley, Art, Mary Alice, Carl, Beth, Rebecca, Fred, Maryann, Gene and Joanie, who brought their friends Jabe and Kim. We were all happy to see Herb and Shirley emerge from the isolation resulting from Herb's recovery.

We couldn't have asked for better weather. It was the first day of spring and the sky was blue with just a hint of clouds and the temperature was promising to be in the low to mid 50's.

We couldn't help but be excited about getting out on the road, headed for the Genesee Country Village Museum for a maple syrup and pancake breakfast... followed by a program that highlighted the "sugar bush," a 19th-century and modern demonstration of the gathering of maple tree sap and the process that creates maple syrup & sugar.

Arriving at the village about 10:30 am, we were met by

Judi, Paul, Terry and Jerry. We could already smell the aroma of warmed maple syrup. It made your mouth water and quickened your step toward the restaurant/dining room. The staff, expecting us, had an area reserved for our use. We didn't waste any time getting in to the buffet line where you were able to have your plate piled with as many pancakes and sausages as you thought you could eat. There was also an inexhaustible coffee pot, orange juice, milk, bottled water and hot coco. And you could go back as often as you were able (burp!). The pancakes were light and fluffy and the sausage, maple syrup sweet, with a touch of spice. (I just made myself hungry all over again).

After a leisurely breakfast, and with our tummies full, some of us were ready for the walk through the sugar bush and the village

proper. Others decided to simply let their belts out a notch and just socialize a bit. We agreed to meet up again at about 1:00 pm, at which time we would again, saddle up and head for Oliver's, a world famous candy factory located in Batavia...which was on our way home.

The sugar bush was designed as a maple sugar history trail. Our tour was conducted by a family that actually collects the sap and completes the process of making it into pure maple syrup. Family members, in period clothing, were stationed along various parts of a trail that ran through a maple grove. At each station, we were informed of the stages that were needed to get from sap to sugar. Interestingly, the trail started with the modern way of collecting sap by using rubber tubing that fed the sap from many trees to a central collection point (barrel). As we moved along the trail we also moved back in time, with demonstrations of earlier methods of collecting sap i.e.: spickets and buckets. Before that, wooden, hollow reeds dripping the sap into wood troughs. Still earlier, the Indians simply notched the trees in a "V" shape and set a piece of bark at the foot of the tree to collect the sap. Once collected the sap is taken to a central area where it is boiled and cooled until it becomes syrup. Boiling it longer causes the syrup to become sugar. Oddly enough, having voyaged back through time, we all came away from the sugar bush 20 years younger (at least we felt that way).

We time travelers used up more time than we thought we would. So the social gatherers had left a little earlier to get to Oliver's. We followed them about an hour later. Most everyone left Oliver's with chocolate goodies. But time traveling creates hunger, so some were forced into eating a fabulous ice cream sundae replete with hot fudge, caramel, whip cream, nuts, etc... There we were, sitting on Oliver's patio, in the sunshine, reflecting on a wonderful day that had been filled with good food and the company of good friends. Huum! My feet are tired and my back has a little hitch.....maybe the time traveling didn't work after all.



You must be 21 or older...



No one at the Doherty house was checking ID's, but all who entered promised that they were at least 21. And with that, the 3rd annual Wine Tasting at the Doherty's kicked off.

As in the past, each couple brought with them a bottle of their favorite wine (or a wine that they wished to introduce) and an appetizer. The house was soon filled with every kind of appetizer you might think of, and the kitchen table was covered with as fine a selection of wine as you could hope for.



It didn't take us long to get down to business....we started with the whites. Each bottle was introduced briefly with the presenter telling why they had selected that particular wine. Most were chosen because it was the presenter's favorite. Some because of a unique name, or it came from some exotic place (like the southern tier or the Finger Lakes).



The reds came next. We followed the same pattern of presentation. I believe we had about 38 people at this event. So with each person taking a sample of each bottle opened, there were a lot of empty bottles at days end. (I can't help but wonder what the Doherty's environmental engineers think on trash day???)



I wanted to repeat some of the great story telling that went with some of the presentations, but you have to remember – I was tasting too! I can hardly remember my own presentation of a SpateburgUnder (pinot noir). Although I do recall tasting a nice Asti Spumanti and an unusual blue berry wine.



One other thing I do remember; we had a very unique spilled wine cleaning system on hand. It was called "Franky", one of Dave and Shelly's dackels. Any wine that spilled to the floor was attended to, post haste.

After much munching and imbibing the event came to an end. What a great way to spend a cold winter afternoon....eating, drinking, friendship and just old fashion socializing. It just doesn't get any better than that!



Thank you Dave and Shelly. Hope we didn't leave you too much mess. And we hope Franky didn't have a hangover. - by Bill Fix

Canadian International Auto Show

Toronto, February 2010



Our first glimpses!





Mercedes-Benz Service vs. Independent Service Shop, or Do It Yourself (DIY)

Introduction

As Mercedes-Benz (MB) owners, and enthusiasts we share a passion for automobiles and automotive excellence. And through the Clubs resources we learn how to enjoy and preserve our vehicles, old and new. Mercedes-Benz engineering in conjunction with our attention to service has positioned us to present to the world, by way of car shows/Concours de Elegance, the largest display of classic automobiles in the world.

Our rides are sophisticated, highly engineered and durable machines. However they do have their own needs which we must attend to so they can endure safely. We have all considered using different means to keep our cars in top shape. It's not unusual for owners to use the Dealer while the vehicle is under warranty and then use an independent servicer (Indy) going forward, or become a Do It Yourself enthusiast as the car ages.

Mercedes-Benz Dealer Service

Since 1998 MB has used the Flex Service System (FSS) . A variable next service due indication is available within the instrument cluster. This is based on the manner in which the car has been driven and mileage. Your service manual (model dependent) will list applicable maintenance jobs. Service which is not strictly mileage dependent is listed separately. Driving distance between each service usually can be expected at 10,000 miles for early FSS model cars and 13,000 miles for newer vehicles. You should receive a notice from your dealer when these service intervals are approached. 1997 and older cars require more

frequent maintenance.

Maintenance jobs are grouped as minor and extended and generally alternate with FSS service incidents.

A significant amount of functional testing and visual inspection is performed at each service interval. Looking quickly at your service manual will give you an idea of how much is actually involved.

Over two consecutive services the Interior, Drive Train, Engine Compartment and Trunk are looked at completely to assess fluid levels, and wear. The service will include topping off or replacing fluids and replacing expendable parts. You will be advised if worn parts must also be attended to. Combining these items with requirements for your State Inspection will complete the service needs for your vehicle.

The big bonus here is that your ride will be safe and drive as new car for a very long time. This kind of TLC is a huge part of the reason so many of our cars live to be classics.

Independent Servicer

In the US there are many excellent Independents servicing the MB brand. They follow MB procedures and are capable of performing required service. Frequently MB master technicians can be found working at these businesses and you can be assured of quality materials and workmanship. The first rate shops may even purchase and use MB test equipment. This is a good option for many of us, especially if using an MB dealer is not convenient. However, if you bring your car to almost any independent they will be willing to take your car in for service.

Why? Because we do not usually ask for much. We simply ask for an oil and filter change for example. Many do not even use the correct fluids or parts.

They do the work and many of the cars systems remain unchecked. Our next visit may be because we had a tire fail, the car overheated, or the brakes were noisy. And so forth.

Really now; when was the last time you visited an INDY and gave them your service manual and asked for these items to be done?

The point to be made here is that when we leave the arms of MB dealer service we become responsible for assuring that the aforementioned functional testing and inspection is accomplished. The consequences of omitting all the steps required can lead to large unexpected repairs down the road.

DIY

Perhaps some of the best examples of our fine automobiles have been maintained by their owners or a combination of two all three options. For those of us with a bit of technical acumen and a desire to engage there are a myriad of on-line resources to guide us. Everything from simple service items through replacing engines is covered. Repair manuals are also available at the MB dealerships. Best of all the DIY mechanic will also find a large selection of place to source wholesale parts. Keep dated records of all work including OE part numbers, fluids used and mileage.

- by Art Bourget

Autobahn Body Werks Tour

Last Saturday, the club was treated to lunch and a very interesting tour of a first class auto body repair shop, now boasting membership in a small exclusive circle of peers. Buffalo's Autobahn Body Werks has been certified as an official Mercedes-Benz repair business. Not every M-B dealer (or city with a dealership for that matter) can claim such a distinction! The shop's dedicated owner - most people know him by his nickname "Harpo" - led us on a trip through his world of repairs of exquisite vehicles. Among some of the works in progress on display were a Dodge Viper, Maserati sedan, Jaguar XK-120, Pontiac GTO convertible, a few newer models, and a gorgeous 280SL owned by one of our members.

The featured attraction, however, is a 1959 Mercedes-Benz 300b limousine undergoing a complete restoration. The engine, chassis and body were all on display separately, the body itself on a rotisserie sporting fresh primer and some new sheet metal, under complete reconstruction. As time goes on, Harpo hopes to invite us back to check on progress.



Recent Happenings

March Meeting: Our monthly meeting was the site of another St. Patrick's Day party this year! We all had a great time telling jokes, stories, bingo and singing!



February Brunch at the historic Roycroft Inn—great food and fun!



Membership News

Welcome New Niagara Section Members

See also:

Membership Contest
(page 1)



RAY BUCHNER
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WHEELS AND DEALS

Wheels and Deals ads are FREE to all Mercedes-Benz Club Members, \$20 for non-members.

Please note: ads will appear in one issue only, unless specifically requested. Submit ads and requests to Editor or email genelong@verizon.net

1990 M-B 300SE 97k miles, dark metallic blue, cold a/c, auto, p/s, p/b, p/w, cruise, all original, excellent cond. New: Bridgestone tires, Bosch brakes, Bosch muffler (silver soldered), battery, Bosch radiator, A/C converted to new type refrigerant. Schmidt's chassis rust inhibitor applied. \$6,500 or best offer. Call Mike Repko 716-652-0374.



2001 M-B E320 4Matic Wagon, 133K miles, less than 15,000 miles per year. Desert Silver exterior, tan leather interior. Body is excellent. Features include: front power memory heated seats, one-touch power moon/sunroof, front and side airbags, Electronic Stability Program, All wheel drive, 4 wheel ABS, factory AM/FM Cassette with 6 CD changer and Bose speaker system with subwoofer. Original First Aid kit, tool kit, two master remote control keys, manuals all present. Newer M-B battery. Dealer-service up to date. VIN # WDBJH82J11X056389. Hi-res photos available on request. Asking \$9,500. Call Gene Long 716-912-2902 or email genelong@verizon.net



1984 M-B 380SL This silver show-quality SL has only 30,000 original miles and has been babied all its life. A show winner at local shows, it is also a beautiful responsive driving car. Interior color is light gray and the car has a dark blue original canvas top. You will have to see it to believe the near perfect un-restored original condition, with no damage or bodywork ever. Asking \$24,000. Call Mike Repko 716-652-0374.



1983 M-B 300D Turbo. This car has only 87,000 original miles, so being a turbo diesel, it is looking to cover another 200,000 at least! The car is in excellent overall condition and everything works. It is a real "find" with a history of complete professional care and maintenance. Reasonable offers accepted. Hi-res photos available. Call Mike Repko 716-652-0374.



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- Companionship with fellow M-B enthusiasts
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- Local newsletter
- National driving, show, technical and social events
- Free classified ads, both local and national
- Free technical advice
- Reprints of recent and vintage articles
- Club Store online
- Raffle - new M-Bs



**NIAGARA SECTION
MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB
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