



THE NORTHWESTERN STAR

VOL. 36 | NO. 2

PORTLAND SECTION

FEBRUARY, 2012

Welcome, New Members

David Abarr
Albany

Christopher Gerome
Tigard
2005 C55 AMG

Doug Middlestetter
Silverton

+23 renewing members

Upcoming Events

Feb 11 DIY at MBI Motors

Mar 10 Board meeting

Mar 24 Car collection tour

Apr 14 Upholstery workshop

May 19 Tour to Evergreen

Jul 2 Winery tour

Jul 7, 8 Historic Races

Full Event Calendar on page 12

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Barry Patchett in his 1964 230SL.

No club? Start one. No members? Make trophies.

The Man Who Gets Things Done

Okay. You're a Mercedes-Benz enthusiast and you want to mingle with other Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts. How do you go about doing that? You join the MBCA, right?

It's not that simple. At least not in Barry Patchett's case. He lived in Alberta, Canada at the time, and there was no MBCA section in Alberta. In fact, there were no active MBCA sections anywhere in Canada. None.

Patchett gets things done. He's a professional engineer and a sailor. He's Past Rear Commodore of the Ladysmith Yacht Club, and Advanced Training Officer

See "Gets Things Done," page 8

Next Event: DIY at MBI

Place: MBI Motors (1309 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland)

Date: February 11

Time: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Cost: \$10

Details on page 5; full Events Calendar on page 12

President's Message

We just wrapped up the January Portland Section Board meeting, and the bulk of our time was spent discussing the 2012 Events Calendar. We have new and interesting events planned for this year, and I hope to see you at one of them.



Need to put your car on a lift to do that brake job? Join us on Feb 11th for Do It Yourself at MBI Motors. This is your chance to get your hands dirty and be up close and personal with your Mercedes. If you need help, the friendly staff at MBI will be available to point you in the right direction and provide parts as needed. And lunch will be provided. Even if you don't have a pending project on your MB, stop by to socialize and cheer on your fellow club members.

In March, Mike Spicer is planning a private tour of a local car collection. The plan is to meet at Burbach Motors for coffee and snacks, and maps will be distributed for a caravan to see the collection. Mike is finalizing the details (some of the collection owners don't want to publicize too many details in advance); look for information in the March *Northwestern Star*.

I know many of you have upholstery needs. Do you need to replace a door panel or can it be dyed? Whether it's an older Mercedes, or an issue with the leather in your newer Benz, Ron Woodruff is setting up a technical event in April at a local upholstery shop where we can learn some of the basics of auto upholstery. We will have a couple of cars there where we will see the before and after results.

On May 19th, we will join the BMW club for a joint tour to the Evergreen Aviation Museum in McMinnville. Mercedes and BMWs both possess precision engineering, German heritage, and offer a great driving experience, and I think you will enjoy touring with them to see this amazing museum.

We are striving to schedule club events farther south in the Willamette Valley. How about driving some twisty roads to a winery on June 2nd? We are lucky to have scenic roads and world-class wines within a one hour

See "President," page 3



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The **Northwestern Star** is the official publication of the Portland Section, Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Inc., and is provided solely for the benefit of its members. Opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher or MBCA, Inc.

We encourage submissions—articles, photos—from our members. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month, care of the editor. We reserve the right to edit or refuse submissions and/or advertising.


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Factory Tours Coming

MBCA members will have two opportunities in 2012 to participate in the special MBCA trips to Germany. The trips are scheduled for July 16-22 and September 24-30.

These popular trips offer guided tours of multiple Mercedes-Benz facilities including the Sindelfingen assembly plant, the AMG facilities in Affalterbach, the Classic Center, a modern engine plant, the Unterturkheim test facility, the Stuttgart Brand Center, and of course the Museum.

Several non-Mercedes venues, including museums and technical facilities are also included, as well as some surprises.

The \$2500 fee per person trip is all-inclusive except for airfare. Six nights in a five-star hotel, all breakfasts, lunches, dinners, transportation, admissions, tour guides, and a full-time escort are included. Please contact Jim O'Sullivan at 617-879-0017 or jimo55@comcast.net for additional information. Look for the story in the March/April issue of *The Star*. 

"President," from page 2

drive of Portland. Stay tuned for details on what will be a great day.

On June 23rd, the Seattle Section is organizing a tour of Brown Maloney's car collection in Sequim, Washington. We are planning a caravan from Portland to Sequim to see his stable of cars.

The Forest Grove Concours d'Elegance will honor Mercedes-Benz as the featured marque on July 15th. MBCA members are invited to display their cars in a special corral, and many other important examples of Mercedes are expected. Look for entry information in the March Northwestern Star.

— Allen Stephens



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Things That May Break

A friend wrote to me the other day. "Your 230 SLK's supercharger should be rebuilt at 100K miles," he said. I hadn't given our supercharger any thought since we were in Santa Fe last fall, 7,000 feet above sea level, where forced induction made the car frisky as a colt. But now I'm told that I should worry about it.

The car has 120,000 miles on it—twenty thousand miles past Armageddon.

A new supercharger from Mercedes-Benz is something like \$1500, installed. Alternatively, I can remove it from the car myself and send it to a rebuild specialist for considerably less than that. Or I can just wait for it to break.

Fifteen hundred dollars for preventive automobile

maintenance is like insuring against alien abduction. Really, now: what if the thing is capable of lasting two hundred K? What if I replace the supercharger and the cam chain breaks the next day? What if overspray

from the painting project next door renders the car the color of mustard gas? These are all possible scenarios—no more or less possible than supercharger failure at precisely 100,000 miles. Why shouldn't I worry about *all* of them? I'll tell you why: Fifteen hundred dollars can buy me two weeks on the Mexican Riviera, where there's warm sand, stiff margaritas, and skimpy bikinis. Rebuilt superchargers rarely cross one's

mind under those circumstances.

Option Two: Snatch and send. The thought of taking a wrench to that engine sends ice water through my veins. It's a Mercedes-Benz, after all. Probably built with tolerances measured in nanometers. Twenty-four-carat tools preferred. Master Technician credentials required. Ability to speak German essential. Besides, I don't even know where the damn supercharger *is*, let alone how to remove it. If I'm going to snatch and send, I've gotta start paying more attention, and right now my attention is better directed elsewhere (see Mexican Riviera, above).

This preventive maintenance thing is insidious. If I rebuild the supercharger, I'll have to rebuild the top end and the transmission—both of which are as suspect as the blower at 100k. And what about the steering wheel? Steering wheels break, don't they? (They do. Search YouTube for "steering wheel" and "dragster.") If I'm going to worry about Things That May Break, I'd rather worry about world peace, or global warming, or the possibility of electing a leader of the free world with a name like Mitt or Newt.

I'm going with Option Three: Wait for it to break. Our new Triple-A cards arrived in the mail yesterday, along with the bill for another year's membership. I'm gonna write that check *now*.

Continues as "Break," page 10



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February 11th – 9am to 3pm

Do It Yourself at MBI Motors

It's that time of the year again for your winter car maintenance. Corbin Lancaster along with his technical staff and parts department will be once again opening up MBI Motors for our annual Do It Yourself Event. Some examples last year include general inspections under your car, changing oil, checking fluid levels, replacing the fuel filters, checking or replacing brake pads or other repairs you don't have room or equipment to do at home. You can also have one of MBI certified technicians check for normal wear items



Allen Stephens wears a pristine white sweatshirt while working with oily parts under his Benz. Do not try this at home.

with preventive maintenance and safety in mind. Participants will have access to the car lifts, as well as the parts department and other shop equipment. MBI motors will once again supply their great lunch for all participants.



A bundle of blocks removed from M-B cars. Don't try this at home either.

The cost for all of this is only \$10 per car, payable to MBCA Portland Section at the registration table. If you

have all your maintenance up to date, you may want to come anyway to help out your fellow members. It is a great time to meet other members and to talk with the MBI staff or schedule your next shop appointment.

Pre-registration is required to make this technical DIY event runs smoothly and to get the maximum number of members through the shop in the allotted time. Event Chair Greg Carlson needs to know what type of work you're planning on

doing. Please call Greg Carlson at 503-614-8412 or e-mail dvnrlsn@aol.com to RSVP and let him know what you plan on doing. Be prepared to enjoy the day while taking care of your Mercedes.

MBI Motors is located at 1309 SE Hawthorne Blvd., in Portland. The event is scheduled for February 11th, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

— Allen Stephens

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Questions? Call Allen Stephens at 503.708.0397 or the National Business Office at 800.637.2360 M-F, 8am-5pm MT. Or visit www.mbca.org.

New M-B USA CEO



Stephen Cannon was named Chief Executive Officer and President of Montvale-based Mercedes-Benz USA, effective January 1. Cannon is Vice President-Marketing at the U.S. unit of Mercedes-Benz.

The promotion was announced recently by Joachim Schmidt, Executive Vice President of

Sales and Marketing for Mercedes-Benz Cars in Stuttgart, Germany, to whom Cannon will report.

Mercedes-Benz USA has about 1,700 employees, including some 900 at its Montvale headquarters. The company distributes cars through 356 U.S. dealers.

The Connecticut resident has a Bachelor of Science in economics from the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he graduated with honors.

Cannon will lead a sales organization that has benefited from a resurgent luxury auto market this year. The company sold 236,415 vehicles through the end of November, a 20.4 percent increase over the same period last year.



Not a Member?

Become a club member by completing the form below and submitting your application by mail, by using the QR code on your smart phone, or by applying online at MBCA.org/join-today.

MBCA Membership Application

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You can also join online at www.mbca.org or telephone us at (800) 637-2360 8-5 PM (Mountain Time)

MBCA, 1907 Lelaray St., Colorado Springs, CO 80909 (719) 633-6427; (719) 633-9283 (fax)

To contribute to the MBCA Educational Foundation, please send (separate) check made payable to MBCAEF, 1907 Lelaray St., Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

MBCAEF, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, will furnish you with a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.

Herr Benzoil and Frau Mitternacht

Naming cars is one of the few flyweight fetishes that serious people can get away with. Most everybody names their cars, which is probably a tradition left over from the horse. And this allows us to talk to our cars, which is pretty weird, but sometimes effective.

It seems one has to be careful about self-fulfilling prophecies and vengeful autos who hate their names. My first car was an early-'60s third-hand Valiant called (being pickle green and rather shapeless) "Ugly." Ugly did not consistently go into reverse, hence he had to be parked in a position that guaranteed a forward exit. I remember one day my usually unflappable father stomped into the house and, staring straight at me, uttering a stormy "Where's Ugly?" Turns out that what Ugly couldn't do when asked, he could do on his own: Ugly had coasted backward down the driveway and into a neighbor's fence.

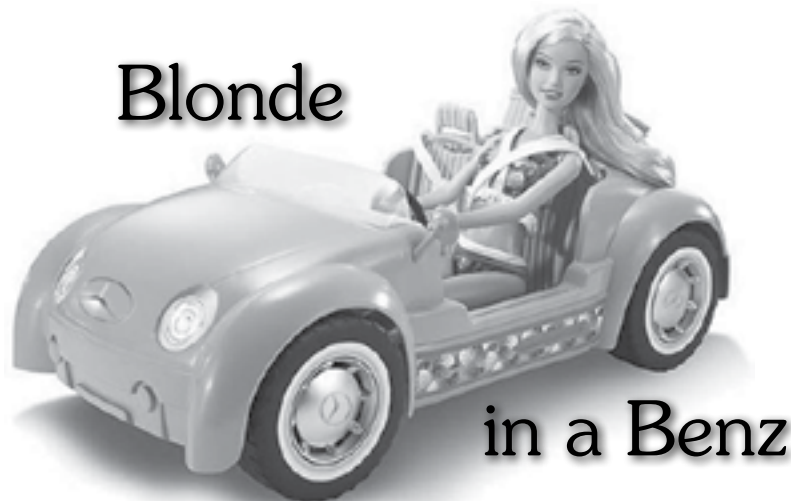
One friend, who named her car "Mystic" after its first destination on a family trip, later discovered that the poor thing was a victim of a series of mysterious encounters when left alone: fender benders, ignition ripped out, car smashed while parked, and finally, theft. The fate of a friend's ancient "Moldsmobile" is best left unmentioned.

Many nicknames refer to colors: "Big Blue," "The Silver Dragon," "Black Lightning," "The Red Wagon." I know a light gold Durango named "Champers," which is charming. A dirty yellow Alfa-Romeo from the '60s was dubbed "I Am Curious, Mustard." Somewhere out there is a yellow Chevy Cobalt Coupe named "Chiquita." (Wait, shouldn't all Cobalts be blue?) Speaking of which, I know a blue Subaru named "Blubaru."

Some names play on the make or model, such as "Sabrina" the Saab, "Yolanda the Honda," an MPV named "The Mazdarati," or "Petey" the P.T. Cruiser. A Bronco

is an obvious "Bucky," and another big Ford out there goes by the name of "Dora the Explorer." A Toyota I once knew was called "Studs Tercel."

And then some people project their own lives onto their cars. A NASA engineer named his car "The Millennium Escort" after the Millennium Falcon, a spacecraft in the *Star Wars* saga. A young medical student gave her Prius the name of "Prion," after the virus that causes Mad Cow Disease.



See "Blonde," page 9

Advertising in the Northwestern Star

The Northwestern Star reaches over three hundred Mercedes-Benz owners each month. Rates quoted below are for single insertions. Multiple insertions receive a 15% discount.

Eighth-page business card (3 1/2" w x 2" h) . . .	\$12
Quarter-page (3 1/2" w x 4 1/2" h)	20
Half-page horizontal (7 1/4" w x 4 1/2" h)	33
Half-page vertical (3 1/2" w x 9 1/2" h)	33
Full page (7 1/4" w x 9 3/4" h)	55

Space reservations are due by the 15th of the month. Camera-ready ads (PDF format) are due by the 20th of the month.

The Northwestern Star can produce your ad. Production rates are \$50/hr, half hour minimum.

Contact the editor (see page 2) to reserve space or for further information.

"Gets Things Done," from page 1

at his local Power Squadron. He was a professor in metallurgical and welding engineering at the University of Alberta. He previously made brewing vessels and malt scotch distillery equipment with a company in England. And he's our new MBCA Regional Director.

Barry Patchett didn't take his situation in Alberta lying down. Rather than cry in his scotch, he established the club that Canada didn't have. He contacted the home office and with their support, he founded an MBCA Section in Canada—the Alberta Section, Canada's first active section.

How do you attract members to your new MBCA section? If you're Barry Patchett, you organize annual concours and rallies; and to encourage participation, you make trophies and donate them to your club. You don't buy them at the trophy store where baseball bats and bowling balls share the shelves with statuettes and chalices; you make your own. Hand-

some, unique trophies that tasteful Mercedes-Benz drivers would just love to see on their burnished mantelpieces.

Your club grows with you as President and Newsletter Editor. The section becomes the MBCA Section of the Year and wins a newsletter award. You win both Member of the Year and Executive of the Year Awards. Then

you retire, move to Vancouver Island, and are again elected to receive the Member of the Year Award (in 2010). Two years later, you become Director of the Northwest Region.

Barry Patchett gets things done.

He has owned several Mercedes-Benz automobiles,

from a 300SEL 6.3, through two diesels (300SD and 300D Turbo), to his present 1994 E320. And like the Portland Section's Allen Stephens (see the *Northwest Star*, December, 2011), Barry Patchett also owns an SL Class—a 1964 230SL (see photo, page 1).

As Northwest Regional Director, what does he hope to accomplish? "My objectives as Regional Director would be to encourage younger people to join as members," he says. "[I plan to] encourage strong contacts at the dealerships and strong social contacts among the sections. Encouraging events which can attract attendance from several of the region's sections will be a priority, as well as encouraging regional attendance at national events." For the short term, "...my main objectives are to have a leadership meeting in Seattle in the spring...where we can discuss regional events, try to strengthen weaker sections (all but Seattle, Portland and Vancouver Island) and see what each section needs from the [Regional Director]."

He'll probably get all that done too.

Barry Patchett lives in Chemainus, BC (on Vancouver Island, between Victoria and Nanaimo) with his wife Gwen Jewett. Gwen's son David and Barry's daughter Maggie live in Alberta, and Barry's son Lynn lives in Athens, Greece with his wife Costantia and Patchett's granddaughters Eleanna (5) and Alkyoni (3).

— Tom Lichty



The Chemainus Trophy, which Patchett designed for long-time service to the Vancouver Island Section.

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"Blonde," from page 7

Mercedes owners are fond of German monikers. "Frau Mitternacht" (Madame Midnight) is a dark blue Benz. A 1982 240D was named "Bert the Benz." Other Mercedes are named "Adolf," "Hildegard" ("Broom Hilda" when she misbehaves) "Panzer," "Elvira," "Klaus," "von Braun," and, of course, our editor's SLK named "Slick." One clever owner named his '85 300D "Benzoil."



Owners, it turns out, can be more proficient at naming cars than carmakers themselves. Who wants an AMC "Gremlin," which is sure to be full of bugs and gags? Or a Daihatsu "Charade"—perhaps not quite a real car? Worst of all is the Cadillac "WTF" concept, which really stands for World Thorium Fuel, but, hey, c'mon.

The moral of this story, if there is one, is to give your car a real name, and a name that the car might actually like. It's good luck, really. I have a friend who says the only car he didn't name was also his only one involved in a head-on collision. Maybe he should have named it "Immortal."



Ask Glammy

For those of a certain age, get online advice steeped in wit, wisdom, and a bit of wickedness. Although in real life Glammy is a credentialed therapist, that doesn't keep her from flirting with imperious humor and droll insolence in her weekly (more or less) mailings. To sign up to receive her columns (FREE!), visit:

www.askglammy.com

Car Collection Tour



No, we won't see this 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540 K Spezial Roadster—the Holy Grail of Mercedes collectors—on our tour, but it lead the pack of five amazing pre-war Benzes at the RM auction in Monterey with a sale of \$9.68 million.

The MBCA Portland Section will feature a car collection tour Saturday, March 24th. We'll meet at Burback Motors (71 SE Main Street, Portland) at 10:00 AM for coffee and refreshments (thanks, Burback!). Maps will be distributed, and we'll head for our destination around 11:30. There will be a charge of \$10 per car. (Note that the charge is *per car*, not per person.) Mike Spicer is coordinating this event.



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Hosted by the MBCA Desert Stars Section
September 28 - October 3, 2012 in Phoenix, Arizona



For More Information:
Visit www.starfest2012.com
or contact Rick Stacio at rstacio@desertstars.org



More Than a Car. We're a Community.™

“Break,” from page 4

On to editor business. First and foremost, my hearty thanks to all of you who have commented on the revised layout of the newsletter. Although the basic format of the publication is prescribed by the MBCA newsletter guidelines, I take a few minor liberties with the design and haven't had my hands slapped yet. I try to not only make the thing look good, but entertaining to read as well. I always welcome comments; see my contact information on page two.

A big tip of the hat to Barry Patchett for his help during the preparation of his profile on page one. In addition to being The Man Who Gets Things Done, he's also a generous contributor to all things MBCA.

And while I'm tipping my hat, another nod to Allen Stephens, who has been an invaluable asset during the transition from his editorship to mine. Thanks, Allen!

Postscript #1: There's a five minute “theatrical” Mercedes promo for the romping new 2013 SL Class at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHTxRg5gtn0>. It hits all the new SL talking points we've seen in the press lately—BlueDIRECT V-8, aluminum body, MAGIC SKY CONTROL roof (always in all caps), AMG option, FrontBass—with lots of Bullitt-like sound effects, a pretty girl, and even a plot! (Spoiler: Girl saves guy from male stupidity.)

Postscript #2: One news story is headlined “Nissan Will Build Mercedes-Benz Engines,” another says “Mercedes-Benz Will Build Engines in Nissan Plant.” Either way you spin it, it's true that there's a Nissan/Benz marriage with the progeny being four-cylinder engines built in the Nissan plant in Decherd, Tennessee for C-Class Mercedes and unnamed Infiniti models.



Postscript #3: Another SL Class video (above), features supermodel Lara Stone playing a modern-day Dorothy swept away in a Californian desert storm. How does she drive in those shoes? How does she get all that luggage in an SL trunk? <http://www.nowness.com/day/2012/1/13/1820/lara-stone-american-fairytale>.

Postscript #4: According to *Automobile* magazine's “Rumors” blog, Mercedes is aggressively researching a nine-speed automatic transmission. Why nine? “We see a ratio with nine speeds that is absolutely efficient,” says Bernhard Heil, Vice President of Powertrain Development for Mercedes-Benz. Can eleven or fourteen be far behind?

— Tom Lichty

Change of Address? New phone number or e-mail?

If your address has changed, visit www.mbca.org, click on MEMBERSHIP, then click on ADDRESS CHANGE and complete the form. Or, call 1-800-637-2360 and talk to anyone at the MBCA National Business Office.

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Questions? Call Allen Stephens at 503.708.0397 or the National Business Office at 800.637.2360 M-F, 8am-5pm MT. Or visit www.mbca.org.

Classified Ads

Ads run for one issue and are placed free of charge for MBCA members. Non-club members are charged \$10.00 per ad, \$20 with a picture. The submission deadline is the 15th of the month.

You may place an ad by contacting the editor (phone and email on page 2).

1989 Mercedes-Benz - 300SE white sedan 4D with only 73,425 actual miles in mint condition.



Interior: Medium Dark Blue. Priced to sell - \$7500 firm.

Clean title. One-owner car. Always kept in garage. Double-undercoat protection. Rarely

driven in winter.

Well maintained, serviced only by Mercedes specialists.

No accidents or mechanical issues. Automatic transmission. ABS 4 wheels, Cruise Control, Dual Power Seats, power brakes, power door locks, power steering, power windows, sliding sun roof, tilt wheel, AM/FM, cassette, stereo with Bose Sound System, air conditioning, new brakes.

Reason for sale: Downsizing for senior retirement.

For information and/or making an appointment to see this Mercedes call 360.-81-6400 or 360-909-2323.

If no answer leave a message, including your name and telephone number and a good time to call.

Transaction by bank transfer of funds or verifiable cashier's check.

1978 450 SEL – Second owner, 281k miles, always garaged. Silver over black leather. Asking \$3,995. Call Jim Thompson at 503-633-2366, or e-mail Jim at jim814817@hotmail.com.



Photo of the Month



The designers at the Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design Studio in Carlsbad, California have created a Hollywood-style homage for the marque called the *Silver Arrow Concept* (above).

The film "Silver Lightning" is set in the near future, in an age of artificial intelligence. Two crash test dummies named Hans05 and Franz02 take on evil ruler Dr. Crash-Barrier to save their beloved Mercedes Silver Arrow. They engage in a nerve-jangling duel with the ruthless battering ram before finally outfoxing him. The Concept is a low-lying sculpture on wheels. A feat of technical innovation is the diagonal, hubless roller wheels which allow steering in all directions. The futuristic Silver Arrow's proportions are reminiscent of the legendary sports car from the late 1930s and the Uhlenhaut SLR from the 1950s.



Ideas Wanted!

Have an idea for a club event or an article for the newsletter?
Want to see pictures of your car in print?
Contact a club officer or the newsletter editor.
See page 2 for contact information.



The Northwestern Star
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Portland Section Schedule of Events

February 11: Do-It-Yourself at MBI Motors, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Put your car on a lift. Simply see what's under there, do a complete brake job, or anything in between. See story, page 5.

March 10: Board meeting at Mercedes-Benz of Wilsonville 10:00 AM. All members—not just board members—are welcome at board meetings.

March 24: Car collection tour. Meet at Burbuck Motors for coffee and breakfast, then caravan to the event. See story, page 9.

April 14: The Art and Science of Auto Upholstrey, tour of Lynn Gibner's shop.

May 19: Tour to Evergreen Air Museum with BMW Club.

June 2: Driving event to a winery in the Willamette Valley. Details in the April issue.

June 23: Join the Seattle Section for a drive to Car Collector Brown Maloney's in Sequim, Washington.

July 7, 8: Mercedes Club Corral at Portland Historic Races.

July 15: Concours d'Elegance in Forest Grove. Mercedes-Benz is the featured brand.

August 12: Regional Show and Shine in Seattle.

Sept 15: Sunriver Festival of Cars in Bend.

Sept 28–Oct 3: Starfest 2012 in Phoenix. Tech sessions, wine tastings, road rally, cocktail party, day trips, concours, and track events. Stay at the Arizona Biltmore. Ad on page 9.