



Western Reserve Section

Crier

Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Volume 14 Issue 1

April, 2014

A time to become electronic

During our 2014 planning meetings, the Western Reserve Section board has been looking at a number of ways to better serve our section members. We are planning some new events as well as continuing some of the “old favorites”. Due to increased printing and mailing costs that are rising at a significant rate, the board has decided that all future event notices and issues of *The Crier* will be distributed electronically to those members that have an email address on file at the National Business Office. We will continue to mail black and white (non-color) copies to those members who do not have an email address on file.

To make the transition simple, you can add or update your email address at the national business office at

www.mbca.org. Just log in to “My Profile” and add your current email address. And while you’re at it, update your regular mail address as well. It is important that this is done as we typically get several undeliverable emails and snail mails using our current database. A couple of tips—please provide a personal (not corporate) email address if possible, as many corporate firewalls block emails sent to a large group or those including an attachment; and add wrsection@gmail.com to your address book or contact list as future emails will be sent from our new email address. We typically only send 1-2 emails per month and will not sell or otherwise distribute your information, so you will not get an in-box loaded with WRS mailings.

Cleveland Auto Show Spectacular



Event coordinator, John Tuck

whenever they wished then gathered at the Mercedes-Benz display and proceeded downstairs for dinner, visiting, and a program.

Event coordinator, **John Tuck**, introduced President Jim Tullis who welcomed participants and

Between multiple snow storms in northeast Ohio, about 50 members and friends attended the Cleveland Auto Show. Admission tickets were compliments of Mercedes-Benz of North Olmsted. Attendees could enter the show

told of upcoming events. Glasses etched with the Mercedes-Benz Club of America were presented to new members **Ron** and **Marty Harris** attending their first event. Ron then told some of the history of his recent purchase and could trace it back to Mother Teresa. John Tuck then introduced **Holder Rosa from Mercedes-Benz North Olmsted** who told a few things coming soon and emphasized his desire to have a good partnership between the dealership and

the club. He has invited us to come to the dealership for a meeting and mentioned that representatives from Mercedes-Benz USA who could not attend the auto show would like to meet with us at a later date. Thank-you, MBNO for your generous backing of this event!



Ron and Marty Harris attending their first event

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National and Regional News....

by **Frank Cozza**

The Spring National Board meeting will be held by WEBEX on Saturday, May 3. Members are welcome to participate. For information on how to log on, contact Cindy at the National Business office at 800-637-2360 or cindy@mbca.org .

On July 2, MBCA has been invited by the Lotus club to Watkins Glen (NY) for a track day. For more information contact Dr. James Roberts at jertoosaver@bellsouth.net



Frank Cozza

The Spring Raffle is currently running. Deadline for purchase of your ticket is June 3. First prize is a 2014 Mercedes-Benz SL550 plus \$26,000 cash. Either find information at www.mbca.org/raffle or by calling 800-637-2360. It would be nice to have a winner from Western Reserve Section so sign up now.

Members November 22 - April 4

New Members

Don Bellante **Katelyn Kovac** **Robert Berry** **Jay Jesensky**
Benjamin Kulper **Ron Harris** **David Wright**

Renewals – Glad you're back!

Ralph Montalvo	Gary Stevens	William Bartels
Jim Browning	Neil Weimer	Tommy & Tom Lapolla
Ralph Christ	Bob Arther	Debra Traxler
Robert Starr	Frank Daniels	Leonard Ambrose
Albert Mazza	John Hassey	Paul Raykov
Fredric Gwinn	Eric Schreiber	Joseph Adamcik
Mark Elisco	Don Brehm	Nicholas George
Kurtis Lucius	Mason Beale	Warren Barr
Cesare Avallone	Edward Yungbluth	T. Garland
Charles Deeds	Don Toth	Frank Varga
John Morrison	Earl Lauridsen	Kimberly Keller
Rodney Tucker	Paul Bailey	William Shelton
Anthony Mikolich	Ellis Lovell	Mark Botham
Robert Vitcheck	Eleanor Pawlicki	Raymond Hensel
Marcia Dawson	Ralph Swegan	Thomas Hudson
Raymond Vehovec	Arthur Pickering	Nancy Lewayne
Kurt von Leyser	Nicholas Brown	Charles Orange
Klaus Kitzler	Charles Wilder	Adam Ross
Christopher Arn	Michael Weinhardt	Albert Jackson
Frank Daugherty	Steven Sagri	Kevin Mizer
Fareed Siddiq	Stanley Kolenda	Phillip Gravengaard

President's Message – See you soon!



Jim Tullis

After all of this winter's snow and cold, it's time to think about preparing the SLs and SLKs for our section's events planned for what hopefully will be a warmer spring and long summer! However, the severe winter was improved by the events planned by several of our members. **Sue Morrison** and **Mary Alice Cozza** came through with another stellar venue for our annual Holiday Party. More than fifty of our members enjoyed dinner at the Blue Canyon eatery in Twinsburg. We were honored to have **Terry Kiwala** the National MBCA President join us. Terry began his MBCA activities as a member of our section. He recently had a twenty year membership anniversary and Mary Alice Cozza, one of Terry's mentors, celebrated by presenting him with a twenty year pin. We would like to thank **Ron White** for his

contribution of gifts for the very successful raffle that we conducted as a part of the after dinner activities.

John Tuck and **Gary Goodman** planned our annual Cleveland Auto Show event. Thanks to North Olmsted Mercedes-Benz for sponsoring the event and providing complimentary tickets. We all enjoyed the dinners served by the IX staff. **Helder Rosa**, Sales Manager at North Olmsted, made an after dinner presentation on upcoming models and answered questions from our members. Several of them asked about the European delivery program.

I'm certain that all of you are anxious to park the winter drivers and bring out your summer favorites. I know that Barb and I are looking forward to taking the cover off of our SLK and joining in the activities. Please see our website at www.benzclub.org for details and registration.

See you at the events.....

Blue Canyon Kitchen and Tavern

About 60 friends gathered at the Blue Canyon Kitchen and Tavern in Twinsburg for the Western Reserve



Member of the Year Rod Thompson

Section's annual Holiday party. Members joined us from as far as Pennsylvania, New York, Cincinnati, Indianapolis and Chicago as well as our local members. What a fun evening! The view was amazing. The food was delicious, and the service was outstanding. But the best part was friends getting together and reconnecting. Board member, **Ron White**, donated a case of wine which was raffled off and brought in enough to cover the cost of the hors d'Oeuvres. Thank-you, Ron, for this generous gift. Membership pins were given to: **Robert Sloan**, 5 year; **Paul Bailey** and **Terry Kiwala**, 20 years each. First time attendees received an etched MBCA glass as a welcome gift. National President Terry Kiwala who is a member of our section gave a welcome and thanked **Mary Alice Cozza** for her service as a Director at Large. He noted the time and talents that both **Frank** and **Mary Alice** donate for the betterment

of the club and thanked them both. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the

Member of the Year award to **Rod Thompson** by President **Jim Tullis**. Rod recently joined the board and has planned multiple events and spends much time thinking of ways to improve our section and make our events appealing to all. Next, Frank Cozza presented the Officer of the Year to Jim Tullis. The Officer of the Year award is presented to one officer in the Great Lakes Region which represents 7 local sections. This is quite an honor to be presented this award.



Robert Sloan, 5 years; Paul Bailey and Terry Kiwala, 20 years



Frank Cozza, Terry Kiwala, Jim and Barb Tullis

My Fifty-Six Years of Mercedes-Benz

By Morgan B. Taft

In July, 1958, while serving in a Combat Engineer Company stationed in Schweinfurt, West Germany, I ordered a new 1958 Mercedes-Benz 219 4 door sedan to be delivered that September. Thus my fifty-six year (so far) ownership of Mercedes automobiles began when I took delivery in September, 1958 of the first of twenty-one Mercedes-Benz automobiles I have owned to date. I drove my 219 over 10,000 miles during the remainder of my tour of duty in West Germany, traveling to France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria and most of West Germany. In July, 1959, I shipped the 219 to New York where in early August I was discharged from the Army and returned to Cleveland.



There were not too many Mercedes-Benz automobiles in the Cleveland area in late 1959 and service at that time was handled by local Studebaker dealers. Good old northern Ohio winter salt took its toll on the 219, and we traded it in for a new Mercedes 220S 4 door sedan in May, of 1965. An independent dealer in Chagrin Falls had a very low mileage 1970 220S sedan in stock in the spring of 1971 so we acquired our third Mercedes replacing a very tired VW that was our second car. In the spring of 1972, the 1965 220S was replaced by a 1971 280SE 3.5 Coupe with 22,000 miles on it that remains today as the “flagship” of our fleet. In 1973 a used 300SEL 4.5 Sedan replaced the 1970 220S becoming our fifth Mercedes.

In 1975, with a new driver in the family, we acquired our sixth Mercedes, a very low mileage stick shift 240D sedan. My kids used to kid me about this car saying that on our many trips to Massachusetts, it took until we reached Erie, PA to reach 60 miles an hour! In the spring of 1976, a low mileage 1971 280SL became available so we became a four Mercedes family, and it remains today as our second “collector car” in our Mercedes fleet.

Late 1980, the 300SEL 4.5 had begun to develop what is often referred to as “the squats”, when the air suspension system loses air while sitting overnight, so it was traded for a low mileage 1978 240D stick shift sedan, our eighth Mercedes. In 1982, while

having one of the cars serviced at Koepke Motors, I noted a low mileage 1981 300TD Station Wagon on their used car lot and traded the 1974 240D sedan for it, acquiring our ninth Mercedes. Thus began our appreciation of the Mercedes-Benz station wagon.

In late 1986, I traded the 1978 240D for a 1987 300E 4 door sedan that was ordered as a standard shift but eventually came as an automatic with perhaps the hardest leather seats I have ever sat on—they were a concession to the lack of standard shift 300E;s in the USA that model year. In 1988 we traded the 1981 300TD station wagon in for a new 300TE station wagon, the eleventh Mercedes and our second station wagon.

Since 1988, we have owned an additional ten Mercedes station wagons, all except for a 1995 300TE have had the 4-matic drive train. My bride needed me about the 1995 station wagon when I was unable to drive up the famous “Pumpkin Roll Hill” on a snowy winter night in Chagrin Falls, really the only time that it failed me! We have found that the station wagons with the 4-matic transmission are great vehicles for winters out in the snow belt. The 4-matic drive train has been greatly improved since they first arrived—the early ones actually “ate tires”, getting only about 12,000 miles of wear. We don’t even mount snow tires on our station wagons as Michelin all weather tires handle the snow belt and New England snow just fine.

Our twenty second Mercedes-Benz arrives sometime this month—an E350 4-matic station wagon. It has been almost 56 years since I drove out of the Wurzburg, West Germany Mercedes dealer in that 1958 219 4 door sedan! We have obviously owned an interesting variety of Mercedes-Benz automobiles during the past 56 years and I wish I had kept track of the total mileage that we have traveled in those first twenty-one Mercedes-Benz automobiles.

Technical Specialist

Technical Specialist, **Ted Gottfried** continues to work on the project that he wrote about in the last edition of the Crier. He is too busy in his garage to write an update right now. He extends an open invitation to stop over at his garage anytime for a current update on the progress to date. More to come.

Upcoming events - Mark your calendar

In addition to the dates through July on the calendar, we have several other upcoming events of which you should be aware. On August 16, Ron and Darlene Renzoni have again invited us to the Huron Yacht Club for a day of fun. During the day, there will be a wooden boat show as well as music in the evening. Watch for more details. The Central Ohio Section is hosting an event at Put-in-Bay for the Road Race reunion. Central Ohio's website is www.mbcacos.org. You can follow information there, and we'll post what we get from them as time nears. Plans are being made for the annual Old Car Fun Day also to be held in August. The annual Oktoberfest at the Berea Fair Grounds will be Aug. 30. We will write more about that in the next Crier. The German Auto Show at Donauschwaben is scheduled for September also. Porsche invited MBCA to Barber Motorsports in Alabama for track days on Oct. 4,5. The event will include an extended tour of the Mercedes-Benz factory in Vance, Alabama. By that time, the new C Class will be in production there as well as continuing

production of the ML, GL, and R classes. Then spend a day on the beautiful Barber Motorsports Park track. Instructors will be available to help you hone your driving skills. Registration opens the first week in May. Check Alabama's website at www.alabama.mbca.org Check the separate article about our special fall trip elsewhere in this Crier. We hope you can attend.



2014 Northeast Ohio Fall Tour

Plans are underway for a multi-day fall tour planned by **Don** and **Carol Velcio**. If you've traveled with the Velcios before, you know that the details are meticulous, and interesting venues are included. This tour begins early Friday morning, October 17 with a kickoff breakfast at the Orchard House Restaurant at Mapleside Farms in Brunswick. From there, the group will travel to Malabar Farm State Park which was built in 1939 by Pulitzer Prize winning author Louis Bromfield. It was also the site of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall's wedding and honeymoon. From there, we'll continue to Mohican State Park and then we'll follow scenic routes through Amish country with some great stops along the way. Lodging that night will be The Amish Door Inn and Village in Wilmot, Ohio www.amishdoor.com/index.html Make your reservations at 888-264-7436 mentioning the Mercedes-Benz Club for the group rate ranging from \$129-\$175. An Amish style dinner at the Amish Door is included in your tour registration.

Saturday will include a wagon ride at the Farm at Walnut Creek. This is an Amish working farm where

you can feed the exotic animals from the horse drawn wagon. The barns and houses are open, too. We'll also tour the American Gas Pump Heaven Museum in Dover and drive along scenic byways past several of the Muskingum Watershed lakes and ending at Oglebay Resort in Wheeling, West Virginia. You can reserve that room at 800-624-6988 again mentioning the Mercedes-Benz Club for the group pricing ranging from \$155 per night plus tax. Dinner at Oglebay is also included in your tour registration.

Sunday breakfast is on your own, but don't eat too much. Lunch will be nice but not heavy. Following US 250 and OH 39 from Oglebay, we will have lunch at The Inn at Honey Run in Holmes County. Lunch here is also included in your registration. That will be the final stop. There is lodging at the Inn at Honey Run but not a block reserved. Rooms can be reserved at 800-468-6639. Reserve early because this is the peak fall tourist season, and rooms fill fast.

For registration information and more inclusive details, contact Don Velcio at Velcio@aol.com or 440-886-1660.

"Pure Michigan" Tour - June 5-8

Have you ever wanted a chance to get in your Mercedes—or any other car for that matter—and drive and drive and drive and enjoy the beautiful scenery? Well, here's your chance! Werner Heidemann has put together a trip for Mercedes club members and friends to do just that. Beginning June 5 at the Panera Bread in Westlake, a caravan will form and drive to Tony Packo's Café' in Toledo for lunch. Tony Packo's is the hot dog house made famous by Klinger on MASH. The group will then travel to Ann Arbor, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and end that night at Grand Haven, Michigan. Suggested hotel: The Beacon Inn at \$90 plus tax—Phone: 616-842-4720. A 7:00 p.m. "getting to know each other" gathering is planned for Snug Harbor Restaurant. Total miles that day are 340.

On Friday, the group will drive along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan to Muskegon, Ludington, and Manistee up to Northport then around Grand Traverse Bay to Charlevoix and on to Petoskey. The suggested hotel that night is the America Inn at \$166 (231-347-4193. Travel that day will be 287 miles if you follow the prescribed tour.

On Saturday, after enjoying breakfast at the hotel, the road trip will continue to Cheboygan along the east coast of Michigan south to Alpena and continue along the shoreline through Tawas City and on to Saginaw. The suggested hotel that night is the Hotel Sheraton Four Points at \$129. (989-790-5050. Mileage that day is 277.

After breakfast at the hotel again, the route will be to Frankenmuth-Wilkommen to Michigan's Little Bavaria where you will be welcomed with German hospitality. This is an area of fantastic food, shopping covered bridges, riverboat cruises, etc. Zehnder's Restaurant is the home of world famous chicken.

Each person is responsible for making his own hotel reservations. Registration is \$10 per person. Checks should be made to MBCA Western Reserve Section and can be sent by May 10 to:

Werner Heidemann
9247 Idlewood Dr.
Mentor OH 44060

Questions? Contact Werner at 440-537-0991 or pepper5454@aol.com

Please include the form below with your payment.
Happy driving!!!



Please include the form below with your payment. Happy driving!!!

Names _____

Address _____

E-mail: _____

Phone for travel or updates: _____

What car will you probably be driving? _____

Making a classic

by Kurt von Leyser

With the renewed interest in how to acquire a classic car there seems to be a prime method that has been overlooked. For many it is a question of large sums of cash. Personally, I could not follow that route. I needed a more practical method where I never expected to have a classic Mercedes, I just required reliable transportation, at an affordable price. This is how the classic Mercedes story starts.

It was a miserable day in November of '03, that actually changed my life. Some refer to it as the wreck of the Volvo. It was raining and I turned invisible, at least that is what the other driver told the cop. He did say "I did not see him." Excuses or not, I was no longer a Volvo driver. Several days later our affair started. It was a December romance, no really, the third of December to be closer to the truth. I was starting in business and was so broke I could barely pay attention. You need to know that I work in an image business where first impressions are everything. For me, driving an old, worn out, rusty beater is just not the way to make the right impression. A successful man gets to sell to successful men. An ugly old car makes you look like a looser. An older affordable Mercedes – this could start a reputation. That was how we began. She was hiding in the back with the "Experienced Ladies." You know, those who have been around the block more than once. She was huge when I first saw her, much larger than anything else I had driven. This is a regular Land Yacht. She was a tiny bit pimped from her years as a grocery getter, but generally in fine form. But on my second look, she was dressed for success, and wanted to take me home. You would never know she was practically old enough to drive on her own, being an '89 and all. The Odo was just above 65K, and the little tiny dents were Gone! Life for the SE 300 started in Erie PA, and in winter she got washed nearly every other week, the service records said so, nothing skipped. Only the best, including garaged every night. From now on she was the White Car.

Compared to other cars I have driven, the White Car was the least expensive per mile to drive after my first year. Needed winter wheels, an AC heat problem, a B pillar rip, and a set of motor mounts. From then on it was mostly minor accident repair. (One head light, a windshield every 3 or 4 years, big rocks) Then there are the things that wear out. (The car is a lemon, I gotta replace the alternator every 120,000 miles. It's had 3 of them! And the AC Compressor seems to fail every 180,000 too.) The scheduled maintenance was like a new religion, 7.5K got oil, and every 30 K got plugs and tranny service. Never late, always done. A few dollars in maintenance meant less big bucks repairs. Little things were always taken care of with real M-B parts at the first sign of wear. Around 200, better gas mileage came in the use of cheap gas. (And it helped with eCheck.) I did get to try the 1-800 for MERCEdes number a few times. (Now I have an app for that!) The first was in Virginia early in the morning, long before sunrise. Some truck left a big flat truck bumper in the middle of the road. Cut two tires. M-B sent a tow truck. State Highway hit the same bumper. Had to change his own tires. Even last December my assistance arrived in 15 minutes where AAA, well, I don't know if that CTS ever got started. Oh what a ride we had. Minnesota in the winter and Arizona in the summer. Hey, I was working. We did see The Rockies in the spring, Orlando in the

winter, Tennessee in the fall and Maine in the summer. Cracked the Head at 210 to do the valves. Tranny kept on running. Last March needed to replace the rear shocks, New York Auto Show, bad roads. Somewhere along the line the radiator went south, but it started for work every day.

As time passed the mountains started calling more often, and speed limits rose. I don't think she was very happy at 80, and passing on a mountain road uphill took careful consideration, maybe not this time. She even skipped a parking ticket on her own – coolest thing ever. Metermaid in NYC sees the Ohio Red White Blue plate and walks on by. When asked, New York's finest was heard to say "those damn diplomats owe the city millions in unpaid parking, we were told not to write them anymore, it's just a waste of paper." We did have other interactions with the police, but it seems on so many occasions things are better in a Big Benz. As a known scoff-law there were many occasions where the blue lights would appear and not a K-Mart was in sight. A little road side intercourse would take place, and in over 300,000 miles the only ticket written and paid was for not using a turn signal. Go figure.

It is officially because of the TSA harassment that I don't fly. The reality is I would much rather ride in an old Mercedes than on the bus with 140 grumpy passengers with whiny kids. Wrapped in leather, AC set to your liking, and a view unsurpassed from sunrise to sunset. I am convinced the stars of heaven twinkle in a special light for a Mercedes driver if you were to stop and take it in. An evening drive along the coast, three out of the four coasts in fact, or a run through the desert, she was always willing. Wax and touchup paint were applied to keep her looking young, but eventually time will be cruel to a pretty lady. When you have good genes to begin with, you can still look regal even in your seniority. Some call it a patina, I think of it as an aura of experience. We made our legends. We ran with the Lotus on twisted back roads. She will still make 120 at 360,000. She could start at 20 below and blow full AC at 106. No we didn't do the Apache trail, but we pulled the tail of the dragon, and even wore a wreath for Christmas. Been in blizzards up the Continental Divide where the star would disappear every once in a while, and we always got to the right place on time. You know it is only 18 hours to Denver or New Orleans from Cleveland.

I wish we could still be together, I just fell in love with another. Still an S but younger and understands the modern world in a way the White Car never will. I saw her the other day, a small add on the internet in Mercedes of Bedford. Damn she takes a good picture! Kind of like when I first saw her. She's old enough to buy her own liquor now. Good thing, since now gasoline is 20 proof. Remember when alcohol and gasoline didn't mix? Hope she finds someone who needs a classic. I like to think I did all the hard work. I got her old enough for a historic license plate, and except for a radio, kept her original even down to the hose clamps. If you're not ready to spend gobs of money, you can still have a Classic Mercedes if you're willing to spend lots of time. Besides, most old classics are hidden in a garage someplace and never see the sun, I have enjoyed many years of motoring excellence in a really cool car. It's much better this way.

Western Reserve Section

CRIER

Mercedes-Benz Club of America

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Open Immediately

MBCA Schedule of Events

April 12	Canton Museum Tour	Lee Kalessis
May 2-3 (Fri-Sat)	Dayton 2nd St. Market	Ron White
May 6 7:00 p.m.	Membership Meeting	Brewster's, Twinsburg
June 3 7:00 p.m.	Membership Meeting	Brewster's Twinsburg
June 5-8	Michigan Tour	Werner Heidemann
June 29 (Sun)	Horse Country Tour	Tom Barratt
June 30 (Sun)	Mid-Ohio Vintage Grand Prix	Central Ohio Section
July 1 7:00 p.m.	Membership Meeting	Brewster's, Twinsburg
July 19, 20	Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix	Pittsburgh section
July 27 (Sun)	Spread Eagle & Ice cream social	Frank & Mary Alice Cozza

Our section's website, www.benzclub.org, will be updated as things change. Please check it often. As mentioned earlier in this edition, we are hoping to do as much as possible electronically. You will learn upcoming events quicker by checking for updates and watching your in-box.

Check out the Western Reserve Section website at benzclub.org for updates.