



Star-Gazer

Sea-Level Section - Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Inc.

www.MBCASeaLevel.org

Volume 41, Issue 4

Fourth Quarter, 2004

Front Page News

- Hot new editorials & articles
- 2005 previews & new style events
- 2005 courtesy fold-up calendar enclosed
- Attractive offers & member surveys in this issue
- Website is up & your login instructions are inside

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Star-Gazer

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Changes of Address: Requests should be forwarded to MBCA 19071 Lelaray Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80909; 1-800-637-2360; or www.mbca.org

Member Marketplace: Sea-Level members may place a no-charge story in the *Star-Gazer* for an M-B or related item by mailing necessary information to the Editor. Advertisement deadlines: January 15th (February edition) April 15th (May edition) July 15th (August edition) October 15th (November edition).

The Star-Gazer is published quarterly by the Sea-Level Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Inc. for the sole benefit of its members. Information and opinions expressed therein and on applicable envelopes, including advertisements, should not be construed as an endorsement of the editor, MBCA, MBUSA, or DBAG. Permission to reproduce material originating in this newsletter is freely given, provided acknowledgement of the source is given (i.e. from the MBCA Sea-Level Section Newsletter: Star-Gazer).

2004/2005 EVENTS SCHEDULE

Please join us for these upcoming events:

Saturday, November 6 ... Competition Imports Tech Session, Smithtown... Call Peter Busacca @ 516-810-3745
10am to 12 noon. FREE ADMISSION. (Note: this event has already been listed in last quarter's newsletter)

Editor's note: Happy Thanksgiving from everyone @ the Sea-Level Section!

Sunday, December 5... Holiday Dinner @ Bonwitt Inn Restaurant...
Call Richard Weiss @ 516-747-0679
1pm to 4pm. \$25/person.

Editor's note: Everyone @ the Sea-Level Section wishes you and your family a Blessed, Happy, and Healthy Holiday Season!

Sunday, March 6, 2005 ... Seal Cruise @ Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research & Preservation.
Call Dr. Jonah Berman @ 212-685-1917
12:30pm to 4pm. \$20/person; \$3 off for seniors & children

Happy New Year! Stay tuned for more upcoming events in 2005!

NEWS ABOUT OUR WEBSITE (www.MBCASeaLevel.org)

It's fixed! Almost all of the technical difficulties have been resolved. By the time you read this, you'll be able to log onto the website and register, using the online registration link found on the website. You'll be able to create your own username and password. Please continue to log onto our website to view events, download newsletters, and see additional changes. Updates will be done on a regular basis. If you notice any errors, or if you have any suggestions, please contact either Sherry Khan, Esther Kim, or myself at STOS (www.stosCO.com) at 516-466-5858. Thank you for your patience!

Sea-Level Shop

The Section is now offering multi-colored, chrome-plated grill badges priced at \$15 when purchased at Section events and \$20 when mailed. Get yours before the present supply is gone!

Car Badges

Hats & Bags

The Sea-Level Shop also offers white or blue caps and cloth tote bags, all with our Sea-Level name and Star logo at a price of \$10. These items are for sale at all of our events. Bring a few extra dollars and take home something useful from your favorite car club.

Please make check payable to MBCA, and mail this form to John Anaischik @ 200 Floral Pkwy., Floral Park, NY 11001.

GRILL BADGE MAIL REQUEST

Please send me _____ badge(s) @ \$20.
each.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL. _____

(516)742-3320

Gullwing Motors, Inc.

Imported Motorcar
Specialists

LOUIS PALUMBO

100 WINDSOR AVENUE
MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501

For Sale: **1974 350SL**

- 2 Door, Lite Blue
- Conv/Hard Top
- Blaupunkt Stereo/
Cass.
- Excellent
- Needs new canvas
top
- 105k miles

\$12,500 Jean

CORRECT NUMBER

(631) 232-0011 x505

There was a misprint in the last issue, so please call this number. Sorry, Jean, from Jimmy Baldea.

2 cars for sale

1987 190E 16V by
AMG. Very rare. Auto.
\$5,950.

&

1971 280SL Blue/ivory/
auto/air cond./both tops.
\$23,700.

Email MaxForza@aol.com
for pics, or call Michael
D. Cannillo @ 917-620-
8158 for more details.

President's Message

Dear Members:

Our Fall Road Rallye was done in conjunction with Alternatives for Children, the school for children with special needs. The rallye was called short because of high winds and flooding. Our members faired very well though, Rudy Albrecht came in first place and John Anaischik came in second. Our members were served breakfast, and lunch. They tasted the wine at Martha Clara Vineyard and danced to the music of a Dee-Jay in the vineyard's barn. Everyone went home with knick-knacks and had a great time.

On Saturday November 6th we will have a technical session at Competition Imports in Smithtown from 10am to 12noon. Bring your questions. By the way Competition Imports has changed its name to Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown, and is building a new overhang to keep customers dry when they drop off their cars for service.

Sunday December 5th will be our Holiday Party at the Bonwit Inn in Commack.

My term as President comes to an end. I must admit, it went so fast. We will hold our annual election at the tech session. We will elect Members of the Board of Directors. It is the new Board who will elect our new officers.

As the sun sets on my presidency, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support and the general members as well. It is a warm and fulfilling feeling that one gets when serving an organization like this. I hope to see you all at future events and I have always enjoyed the camaraderie that an organization like this provides.

Warm regards,

Peter

President Peter Busacca

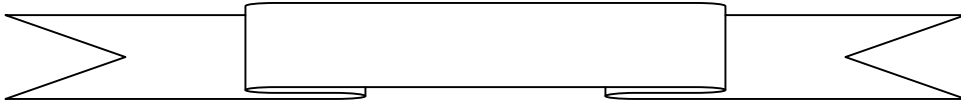
Editor's Note: A really special thanks to Peter from me, for all of his help and encouragement throughout these past several years! Your friendship means a lot! Thank you!

Last Quarter's Survey Results

82% of members who responded garage one or more of their Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

28% of members who responded use a car cover outside on one or more of their Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

19% of members who responded use a car cover inside a garage for one or more of their Mercedes-Benz vehicles.



Quick Member Survey - Please Complete

Please circle the answer to each of the three questions

I go to M-B dealers for maintenance & oil changes	Yes	No
I am aware of the new policy for 2005 M-B vehicles regarding no more free oil changes/maintenance	Yes	No
I am turned off by the new oil/maintenance policy	Yes	No

Several members have contacted me regarding their views on the new 2005 changes in the M-B maintenance policy (no more free oil changes and maintenance on newly purchased and leased vehicles @ their 12,000, 24,000, and 36,000 mile marks).

How do you feel about this? Your fellow members need to know.

Please tear your completed quick survey off, and send to:

Jimmy Baldea, MBCA Sea-Level Editor
350 Northern Blvd., Suite 326
Great Neck, NY 11021

Food for Thought: Strength in Numbers

I recently read an article in a newsletter of a fellow local car-enthusiast organization (which I am also a member of), called the Long Island Corvette Owners Association, which illustrated an interesting point. They are in the process of tallying the number of members who seek to purchase/lease a new vehicle within the next 6 months. They hope to take this information, and negotiate a large-volume discount for their members, with one of the local dealers. Their strength comes from their almost-400 member population.

The MBCA Sea-Level Section nearly doubles this population. Many members and prospective members always ask, "is there a discount," when seeking to purchase their next Mercedes-Benz vehicle, due to their MBCA membership.

The Board of Directors meets regularly and always looks for ways in which to maximize the benefits of the Sea-Level membership for our Club members. Your input is valuable, and can be used to organize tremendous \$AVING\$.

I am a firm believer in this thought of uniting, so that we may have strength in numbers! Imagine a Sea-Level event where members who are interested in buying/leasing may gather and receive tremendous volume discounts!

Would you be interested in seeing this in the future? Have a friend/relative @ a dealership who can help? If so, please write your thoughts, comments, & contact information, and send to:

Jimmy Baldea, MBCA Sea-Level Editor
350 Northern Blvd., Suite 326
Great Neck, NY 11021

We have almost 800 members! United we stand.

Dec. 5th Holiday Party Registration Form

Every year, members of the Sea-Level Section gather and celebrate the end-of-year Holiday Season. We traditionally each bring a new, unwrapped toy that the Sea-Level Section donates to Toys for Tots. This year, we'll be donating the new, unwrapped toys to Alternatives for Children. After a great Fall Rallye, we would like to show our support for Alternatives for Children, in this manner. New members are encouraged to attend this year's Holiday Party. One of the greatest things I can say about the Sea-Level Section is that everyone who attends these events is friendly and warm. When I first became a member, I mustered up the courage to attend my first event, not knowing anybody. I met many, many great people! The experience was so fun that I looked forward to every opportunity thereafter to interact with my fellow Sea-Level members. Mr. Richard Weiss is the coordinator of this year's Holiday Party, which will be held @ the Bonwit Inn, 1 Vanderbilt Motor Pkwy., Commack, NY 11725. The telephone # of the Bonwit Inn is (631) 499-2068. Please check the www.MBCASeaLevel.org website for details!

MBCA Sea-Level 2004 Holiday Party

Sunday, 12/5/2004, 1pm to 4pm @ the Bonwit Inn, Commack.
Please make checks payable to MBCA.

My name: _____ My telephone # _____

Please reserve _____ seat(s) at \$25 each, at the door, in my name.

Mail this form by 11/25/04 to: Mr. Richard Weiss, 86 Kingsbury Rd., Garden City, NY 11530. His telephone # is (516) 747-0679.

REGISTER USING THIS FORM. PLEASE REGISTER & MAIL!

The Jimmy Baldea Report

Hello Everybody,

One of our members wrote in, and highlighted her positive experience with the Service Department of Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown, or as I like to call it, "the dealership formerly known as Competition." As an F.Y.I., the dealership we've grown to know as Competition Imports (which still retains the same management and employees), formally changed its name to Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown.

After some investigating, results showed that most of the service and maintenance departments of local M-B dealers offer loaner cars during service and maintenance, only to customers who purchase/lease vehicles from their dealerships.

Our fellow member's positive experience is centered around the fact that "the dealership formerly known as Competition" gave her a loaner Mercedes at no charge while they recently changed her oil, EVEN THOUGH she did not purchase the car from there!

She commented, "the service with a smile was great... it made me feel valued by my car company... this is the kind of royal treatment that makes me a proud Mercedes-Benz owner."

Cheers to Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown, and many thanks for your ongoing service and support!

There are many fantastic people out there who help make our Mercedes-Benz experience fun, special, and unique. If you have somebody that you'd like to highlight, or say a special Thank You to, in our next issue, please contact me (using the information on the inside cover of this issue), or email me at JimmyBaldea@aol.com.

Editor Jimmy Baldea

Helping to Plan 2005 Events

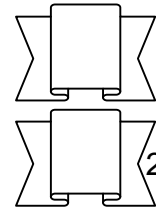
The Board of Directors of the Sea-Level Section seeks your help in making 2005 the highest-attended event year. Each quarter, many hours are put into planning and executing events for our members. Here is your chance to help out. Please complete the survey below, and mail it back to: Jimmy Baldea, 350 Northern Blvd., Suite 326, Great Neck, NY 11021.

Place a checkmark to the left of all of the events that you would participate in:

- A tech session @ a local dealership
- A road rallye in a local area
- A road rallye in association w/ another Section outside our area
- A group family ice-skating trip to Rockefeller Center
- A one-day group ski trip with fellow Sea-Level members
- A weekend group trip to Atlantic City
- A group evening @ a Broadway show
- A group trip to an Opera in NYC
- A group trip to a museum in NYC
- A follow-eachother caravan to M-B USA's NJ headquarters
- A group trip to a boat show in Long Island
- A group trip to Great Adventure
- Other: _____

A Successful Road Rally

A beautiful road rallye took place, to benefit Alternatives for Children. There were 14 Mercedes-Benz vehicles at this event. Of these 14, 11 were members of our club. We're working on the other 3! Congratulations to our winners!



1st Place: Rudy Albrecht

2nd Place: John Anaischik

Thank you to all who participated in this event!

Winter Safety for M-B's That Slip

Last year, I purchased a "Bear Claw" product for my girlfriend's SLK. This product is a really tough metal track with metal teeth, and comes in a carrying bag. It's very strong & steady, and is ready to guarantee that you ride over the snow or ice that you're stuck in. This foot-and-a-half long product is placed under the tires that are spinning, and allows the driver to gently drive over the weather conditions that are causing "stuck-age" to your vehicle. I've tried it, and love it. It's easy to use, it's faster and safer than tire chains, and it allows those of us with sporty M-B vehicles to drive them with more confidence in the snow! The manufacturer is willing to give volume discounts to us. If we get a healthy response from members, I think we can purchase these safety items for approximately \$60/pair, in bulk. If you are interested in such a product for yourself, spouse, children, and others, please write or email me. My contact information can be found on the inside cover of this newsletter, as well as throughout this publication. Safe driving!