



Star-Gazer

SEA LEVEL SECTION - MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB of AMERICA, Inc.

Volume 36, Issue 1

First Quarter, 1999

from the editor

Have you had a "Mercedes Experience"? It could be a tech tip, a car care suggestion or a funny anecdote; (maybe your first child was born in your 240D on the way to the hospital, or that family recipe of your grandmother named Mercedes)....It doesn't have to be something profound.

(cont.)

1999 Section Event Schedule

APRIL	Five Towns Spring Rallye
MAY	Technical Session: Competition Imports, Smithtown National: StarTech '99, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
JUNE	Master Chef Dinner: James Beard House, NYC National: Gemutlichkeit '99, Aurora, Ohio
JULY	Summer Sunday at Vanderbilt Mansion, Centerport National: Western Caravan, Portland Oregon
AUGUST	East End Concours d'Elegance
SEPTEMBER	Suffolk Fall Rallye National: Tri-O-Rama, Winchester, Virginia
OCTOBER	Technical Session: Lakeview Motors, Rockville Centre
NOVEMBER	Open House: Mercedes-Benz Manhattan, NYC
DECEMBER	Year-End Holiday Party

Mark those Calendars!

The year is taking shape for Sea Level members:

In **April**, we begin with a rallye following a route planned by Rallyemaster John Anaischik. As he has done in the past, John will make this rallye a

challenging but as always an interesting and enjoyable afternoon.

At the invitation of Competition Imports in Smithtown, we will be hosted by Joe Buzzetta for a day in the **May/June** time frame.

(Continued on page 4)

IN THIS ISSUE

1999 Event Planning Schedule	1
Open House at Mercedes-Benz Manhattan	3
1-800-367-6372	7
Model Identification Contest	8



The following individuals have recently joined MBCA and more specifically are now members of the Sea Level Section. Please introduce yourself to these fellow Mercedes enthusiasts at our next event.

Steven W. Albanese	Patrick Downes	Jay Israel	Ralph T. Muscente Jr	Raymond A. Semente
William P. Atkinson	Bliss Eldridge	Harvey Katz	Mark Napoli	David Shapiro
Robert Badenhop	Thomas A. English	Michio Kimura	Frank T. Nickell	Dr. Martin Sher
James Beatrice	Joseph W. Erny	Harvey R. Koepfel	Steve Nikolalalos	Dalbir Singh
Fay Bemiss	Patsy Esposito	Valery G. Korotkov	Vivian Noronha	Frank Sisino Sr.
Rafael Benarie	Robert Ferraro	Sean Le Guernic	Al Nussbaum	James M. Skyrn
Ira Breiter	Robert Ferruccio	Timothy Lee	M.J. O'Brien	Rudolph L. Smith
Victor R. Brocchini	Joseph Gagliano	Leslie A. Lennard	Daniel Och	Charles Stitzer
Jim Burgener	Thomas Gardner	Daniel B. Levitt	Glusegun Ogunfowora	Barry Strauss MD
Stephen S. Cangelosi	Sandect Gavahi	Dr. Herbert Liehhaber	Avery E. Okin	Charles Toepfs
Anthony Casamassima	Myron Ginsberg	Lenworth Livermore	Ropo Oyebode	Jamie Tomashoff
Michael Chan	Richard J. Girardi	Peter Lomtevas	Louis Pappas	Juan C. Villar
Wilgene Cheng	Marlon Goldberg	Scott London	Bill Penney	John Viner
Paul Chiu	Howard Goodrich	Loren Lortscher	Earl A. Pollard MD	Klaus Vogel
Louis Cieselski	Suzanne M. Grasso	Dr. Kevin Loshak	Michael Poposky	William Vannes
David Cooper	Andrew Hagans	Solomon Magid	John T. Proscia	Robert Willis
Susan Cucinella	David Hallinan	Robinson Markel	Raoul Pujol	Daniel Waldron
Charles Delaney	Sonia Harami	Richard Marmon-Halm	Suraj Ramnanan	Marco P. Walker
Ronald DeMichael	Alexander P. Harris	Patricia J. Marshall	Dennis Rutowicz	Steve Washington
Peter Denenberg	George T. Hicks	Peter McNulty	Marace Salamon	Michael Weinberger
Anitra Denirjian	Renee K. Hicks	Charles A. Miller III	Morton Samet	Peter Williams Jr.
Otis Dimiters	Garry A. Hollett	Marco A. Minucci	Robert M. Sands	Andrew Wojtas
William E. Domroe	Hylan T Hubbard III	Angela Morofinoro	Samuel Santiago	Theresa Wong
Ray Donation	Robert A. Hydell	Peter T. Mule	Melissa Schultz	Sean Wright

Sea Level Officers & Staff

President:	Richard Weiss	86 Kingsbury Road, Garden City NY 11530	(516) 747-0679
Vice-President:	John Anaischik	200 Floral Parkway, Floral Park NY 11001	(718) 848-7523
Secretary:	Robert Muth	411 9th Avenue, East Northport, NY 11731	(516) 261-5074
Treasurer:	Bernie Berberich	104 N. Howells Point Rd., Bellport NY 11713	(516) 286-8086
Technical Advisor:	Tony Cinque	C/O Luxury Auto Repair 604 Bicycle Path, Port Jefferson Sta. NY 11776	(516) 474-2323
Editor:	John Betsch	Three Winchester Lane, Huntington, NY 11743	(516) 549-3564

Members of the Board

John Anaischik	Bernie Berberich	Dr. Jonah Berman	John Betsch	Peter Busacca	Tony Cinque
Joseph Defilippe	Stan Janovici	Creighton Phillips	Robert Muth	Viola Scarduzio	Richard Weiss

Northeast Regional Vice President

Bryan F. Gunning
1472 Boulevard
West Hartford, CT 06119



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, including advertisements, should not be construed as an endorsement of the editor, MBCA, MBNA, 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*).

President's Message

Dear Fellow Members:

As I begin my term as President of the Sea Level Section, I would like to provide a few notes where we are and where we have been.

Membership has been increasing; 550 at the close of 1994, and about 700 at the end of 1997, and now approaching 900 members. Of course, record sales of Mercedes cars and sport utilities is partially the reason for this spectacular growth. But I like to think that a good part of this growth is due to the efforts of your Board of Directors, over the years, to plan a variety of events that are both interesting and fun.

*The Member of the Year for 1998 [presented at the Holiday Party ed.] was **David Schoenberg**. Dave, a member of the Club for over twenty*

years served the Section as President for two terms from 1992 to 1996, and among other contributions, has written and conducted ten road rallies for the enjoyment of all.

We have a new Editor for the Star-Gazer, John Betsch, succeeding Bob Muth who did an outstanding job as Editor for over six years. John is a long time member in the Club, having joined in 1988.

Where are we going? That's up to both the Board and you. The Board has started planning for 1999 events. Some preliminary details are in this Star-Gazer. We will keep you posted. For your part, you will find that participation is both interesting and fun.

Richard Weiss

WOW Sixty-four Bays for Service

On Sunday, November 8th, Fred Newcomb, General Manager of Mercedes-Benz Manhattan, Inc. cordially opened his facility to over 100 Sea Level Section members and guests. For those that have never been to MB Manhattan, the facility was to the standards that you might envision of Mercedes-Benz - from their new Starmark Showroom to the service area encompassing *sixty-four bays* for keeping your auto in peak condition. Fred's entire staff was most cordial and extremely knowledgeable of their respective responsibilities and provided answers to our many questions.

Bill Ussery, MBNA Department Manager-Product Management, E/S-Class outlined changing Company advertising philosophies which, by design, has been evolving from a product oriented

strategy to a consumer oriented strategy. The newest campaign you will be seeing is termed "The Definitive Automotive Experience" designed to demonstrate that Mercedes-Benz can be "the best car for me." Of course, Bill also detailed some of the new product changes for 1999 model year to excite the many enthusiasts present. [See page 6 for 1999 Offerings]

And finally, of the many questions asked/answered and presentations given, to me - the most impressive statement and a good summation of the philosophy of MB-Manhattan was an answer to a question regarding why there were several fenders/bonnets stored in the Parts Department. "If a part is required/requested *three* times a year, its kept as an in-stock item"

Now that's service!!

The Section is interested in hearing about it. There are now over eight hundred Sea Level members. I am sure that there is a wealth of interesting stories worth sharing. Don't be bashful. Drop me a line. You can either draft your story or we can develop a collage of stories/anecdotes. What about that recent road trip taken or the family vacation in the
(cont.)

1999 Section Event Schedule

(Continued from page 1)

The James Beard House, a charming Greenwich Village townhouse with an open kitchen, garden, conservatory, and gracious dining rooms, is the former home of legendary Master Chef, Author and TV Personality James Beard and the setting for some of the most delightful culinary experiences in the country. A membership only establishment, the Section has arranged a date in **June** for members (max of forty) to enjoy an evening of wine, spirits and gastronomy in a private dining room prepared by a master chef or culinary rising star recognized for outstanding cuisine in their own restaurants or luxury hotels. Watch for further information and respond immediately for this one if you're interested.

William K. Vanderbilt II had a 'little home' in Centerport overlooking Northport Bay. Now the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Mansion, Planetarium, and Museum, it recently has undergone extensive renovations and exhibit changes. The Section will be having a "Summer Sunday at the Vanderbilt" in **July** to enjoy the ambiance of days-gone-by with a catered picnic and an informal car show or "Concours d'Sanitaire" on this forty-three acre treasure.

August should provide the perfect weather for the Section Concours d'Elegance to be held at

a location in the eastern end of the Island. Start prepping and polishing, and plan on entering your machine. It's always a fun day.

In **September**, Rallyemaster Bernie Berberich will test our skills with a rally of his design caravanning through the causeways and boulevards of Suffolk County.

Lakeview Motors in Rockville Centre will be hosting a technical session for Sea Level members in **October** in their new modernized facility. Some interesting topics are being planned. Jot down those questions.

Mercedes-Benz Manhattan will be hosting an Open House for Sea Level members in **November** at their West 41st Street Showroom.

December 5th is the date for the Year-end Holiday Party. This is always a popular event for members to get together to discuss the year's successes.

The Section is also having discussions with the BMW Club & Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) about our participation in an autocross event and is investigating other ideas for Club events. *Watch for Flyers!*

(516)742-3320



Gullwing Motors, Inc.
Imported Motorcar Specialists

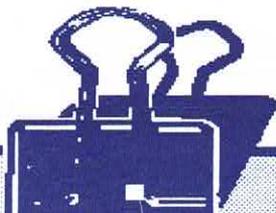
LOUIS PALUMBO

100 WINDSOR AVENUE
MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501

In memory of Alice Durocher

Alice, a long time member,
served both as Section
Secretary and as a Member
of the Board of Directors.

Alice, a principal in the
success of the Section will be
missed.



Member Marketplace

Sea Level members may place a no-charge ad 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)

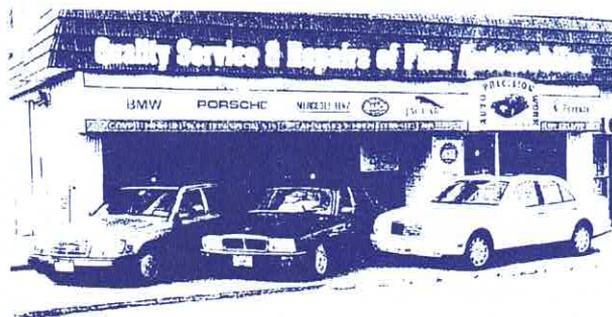
July 15th (August Edition)

October 15th (November Edition)

Changes of Address:

Requests should be forwarded to
MBCA

19071 Lelaray Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909;
1-800-637-2360; or
www.mbca.org



PRECISION AUTO WORKS

COMPLETE AUTO SERVICE & REPAIR

- Official NYS Inspection
- Foreign & Domestic Cars
- Master Technicians
- Pick-Up & Delivery

931-7810

16 Jerusalem Avenue,
Hicksville (next to RR Sta.)

Our 2nd IMPORT CAR TECHNIK • 271-3635
Location: 1291 New York Avenue Huntington Sta.

Luxury

Auto Repair



MERCEDES SPECIALISTS

- ☆ Mercedes-Benz Factory Trained Technicians
- ☆ Transmissions Repaired, Resealed and Rebuilt To Upgraded Factory Specifications.
- ☆ Complete Engine Repairs, Tune-Ups, Oil Changes, Brakes and Much More.
- ☆ Mercedes-Benz Club Technical Advisor and Board Member.

Tony Cinque
Owner

(516) 474-2323

604 Bicycle Path • Port Jefferson Station, N.Y. 11776

Patrick's Auto Body

Approved Insurance Claim Specialist
Free Computerized Insurance Estimates

**DOMESTIC & FOREIGN
AUTO REPAIRS**

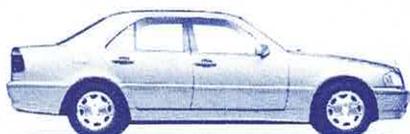
Unibody Specialist Welding
Expert Color Matching Frames Straightened
Free Local Pick Up & Delivery
Low Cost Rentals Available

24 Hour Towing
360-3044

331-5434

120 Main St., Port Jefferson All Major
(Located Behind Harbor Square Mall) Credit Cards

1999 Model Line at a Glance; Which one for me?



C - CLASS

C230 Kompressor Sedan 2.3 liter, 185-horsepower, supercharged, inline-4
 C280 Sedan 2.8 liter, 194-horsepower, V-6
 C43 AMG Sedan performance-modified, 4.3 liter, 302-horsepower, V-8



E - CLASS

E300 Turbodiesel Sedan 3 liter, 174-horsepower, inline-6
 E320 Sedan 3.2 liter, 221-horsepower, V-6
 E320 4MATIC All-Wheel Drive 3.2 liter, 221-horsepower, V-6
 E430 Sedan 4.3 liter, 275-horsepower, V-8
 E55 AMG Sedan performance-modified 5.5 liter, 349-horsepower, V-8



E - CLASS WAGON

E320 Wagon 3.2 liter, 221-horsepower, V-6
 E320 4MATIC All-Wheel Drive Wagon 3.2 liter, 221-horsepower, V-6



S - CLASS

S320 Sedan 3.2 liter, 228-horsepower, inline-6
 S320 Long-Wheelbase Sedan (as above, with long wheelbase)
 S420 Long-Wheelbase Sedan 4.2 liter, 275-horsepower, V-8
 S500 Long-Wheelbase Sedan 5 liter, 315-horsepower, V-8
 S600 Long-Wheelbase Sedan 6 liter, 389-horsepower, V-12



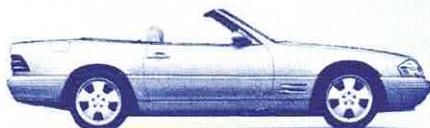
CLK - CLASS

CLK320 Coupe 3.2 liter, 215-horsepower, V-6
 CLK320 Cabriolet 3.2 liter, 215-horsepower, V-6
 CLK430 Coupe 4.3 liter, 275-horsepower, V-8



CL - CLASS

CL500 Coupe 5 liter, 315-horsepower, V-8
 CL600 Coupe 6 liter, 389-horsepower, V-12



SL - CLASS

SL500 Coupe/Roadster 5 liter, 302-horsepower, V-8
 SL600 Coupe/Roadster 6 liter, 389-horsepower, V-12



SLK

SLK230 Kompressor Coupe/Roadster 2.3 liter, 185-horsepower, inter-cooled, supercharged, inline-4
 SLK230 Kompressor Coupe/Roadster Manual (as above, but with 5-speed manual transmission)



M - CLASS

ML320 Sport Utility Vehicle 3.2 liter, 215-horsepower, V-6
 ML430 Sport Utility Vehicle 4.3 liter, 268-horsepower, V-8

Need help? (1-800-FOR-MERCEdes)

Mercedes-Benz, which pioneered on-the-road technical assistance nearly 18 years ago, is marking its tenth year of providing 24-hour service for its Roadside Assistance Program. *The program is available to every Mercedes owner, regardless of their car's age and whether the owner bought it new or used.*

A toll free hot line (1-800-FOR-MERCEdes), connected to MBNA's Customer Assistance Center (CAC), links Mercedes callers to factory-trained dealership technicians carrying satellite pagers. Nearly half of the 350,000 calls received each year are resolved over the phone, and in more than 80 percent of the cases where a technician is sent to the scene, the repairs are successfully completed, usually in less than an hour. If towing is required, firms with specific Mercedes expertise are used. (Roadside Assistance calls average between 900 and 1000 per day). As part of Mercedes-Benz Sign & Drive Program, several

services are provided free of charge regardless of the vehicle's model year or mileage. If a Mercedes owner runs out of fuel, the technician brings two to three gallons, (1300 out-of-gas calls received each year; cost of getting these people back on the road \$65,500) and if the battery runs down, a jump-start is provided ("My car needs a jump start" is the most common request: 44,000 last year). In the case of a flat tire, the existing spare is mounted (22,000 flat tire calls received each year). Other repairs involve a basic service fee, plus parts and labor. Any payment to a servicing technician for items covered by the Mercedes-Benz four-year/50,000-mile new-car warranty is refunded by the dealer. The vast majority of Mercedes owners, however, find the program's biggest benefit to be peace of mind.

*While it's in your mind, make sure that
1-800-FOR-MERCEdes (1-800-367-6372)
is in your glovebox!*



COMPETITION
HAS ITS REWARDS

MEMBER OF THE
COMPETITION AUTO GROUP

Visit our website at
<http://www.competition-auto.com>



Announcing the grand opening of our brand new state-of-the-art servicing and parts facilities. Our address has changed, but our experienced, knowledgeable staff, courteous service, and great parts prices are still the same.

 **COMPETITION**
Imports of Smithtown

630 East Jericho Turnpike, Smithtown, Long Island, New York

516-265-2204

Sales

516-265-7139 **516-265-5339**

Service

Parts



Star-Gazer

Sea Level Section
MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA, Inc.
J. F. Betsch, Editor
Three Wincester Lane
Huntington, New York 11743-2152

First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID
E. Northport, NY
Permit #76

**In this issue-
1999 Event Calendar**

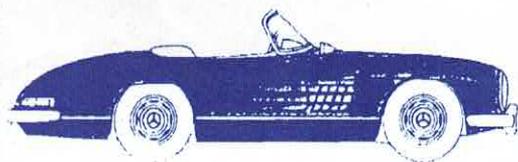
STAR-GAZER

Did you know that ...

... In order to more accurately reflect its mission to be the leader in the luxury segment within the U.S. market, Mercedes-Benz of North America, Inc. (MBNA) will be officially renamed Mercedes-Benz USA Inc. (MBUSA). The new name will take effect in the Spring of 1999.

... 1998 marked the latest - and certainly the most impressive in a series of record-breaking years for Mercedes-Benz in the U.S. market with sales of 170,245 vehicles, a 39.2 percent increase over last year's previous high. The 1998 sales volume represents a doubling of the sales volume over the past three years. Sales for the year

were led by the E-Class which recorded its highest year on record with 47,563 vehicles sold. M-Class sales increased 196 percent; SLK sales increased 54.1 percent.



Readers Trivia Contest The first five Sea Level members to mail a postcard to the editor correctly identifying *the year and model* of the above Mercedes will receive a token of appreciation. Hint: Check out the Texas 1000 article in the January/February Issue of *The Star*. ed.

300E.
*Sounds like it
could be a
story waiting
to be told.*

*Don't forget
to mark your
calendar with
the upcoming
Sea Level
events!*
John Betsch
ed.