



Star-Gazer

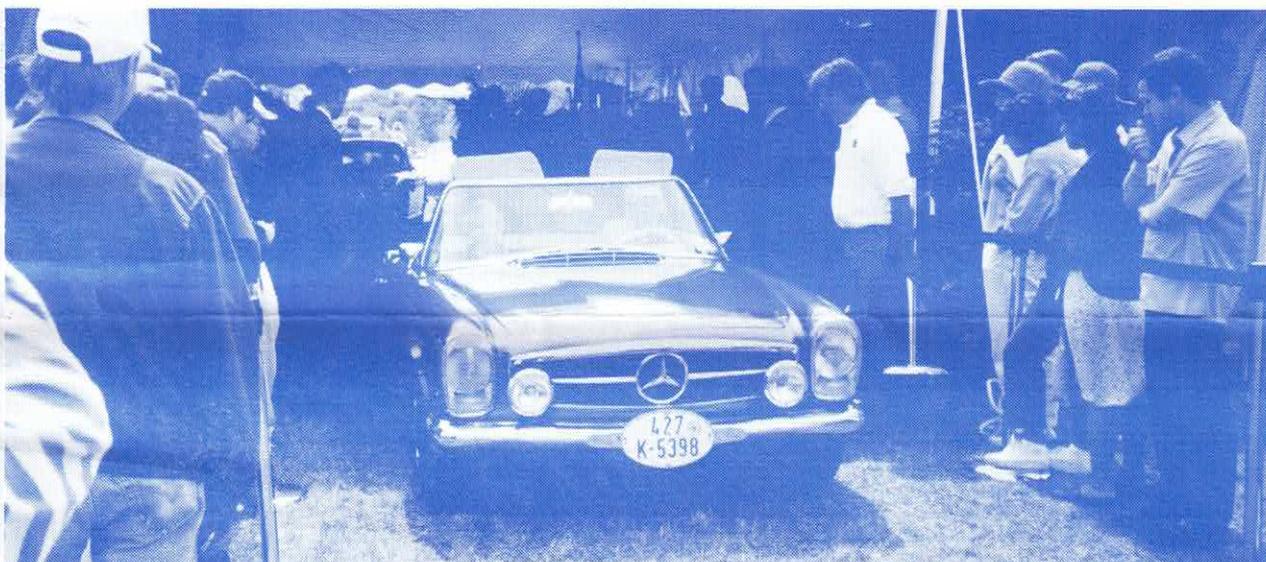
SEA LEVEL SECTION - MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB of AMERICA, Inc.

www.MBCASeaLevel.org

Volume 41, Issue 1

First Quarter, 2004

EDITOR JOHN BETSCH wins



Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance™

See Story on Page 5

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Welcome New Members

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.

Howard Arber
Friedrich Augustin
Bela Balint
Dan Laurent Beer
Vince Calaliere
Louis Camacho
Edward Cammon
Michael Cannillo

Sherman Cohen
David Dolinsky
Joseph Durand
Martin Edelson
Neil Friedman
Michael Gelman
Giorra Innocenzo
Francis Goss

Andy Innis
Randall Kane
Scott Klein
Jim Lauckhardt
Frank Laurino
Timothy Lynskey
John Meringolo
Walter Minewiser

John Nobile
Philip Rapoport
Sarbjeeet Singh
Erdinc Ulukaya
Johanna Vasiliadis
Jordan Weiss
Ayman Zameli
Paul Zucker

Sea Level Officers & Staff

President:	Peter Busacca	121 Norwood Ave., Port Jefferson Sta., NY 11776	(516) 810-3745
Vice-President:	Joseph deFilippe	19 Chester Street, East Northport, NY 11731	(631) 368-6934
Secretary:	Robert Muth	411 9th Avenue, East Northport, NY 11731	(631) 261-5074
Treasurer:	Bernie Berberich	104 N. Howells Point Rd., Bellport NY 11713	(631) 286-8086
Technical Advisor:	Louis Palumbo	C/O Gullwing Motors, Inc. 100 Windsor Avenue, Mineola, NY 11501	(516) 742-3320
Editor:	John Betsch	Three Wincester Lane, Huntington, NY 11743	(631) 549-3564
Webmaster:	Jim Baldea	350 Northern Blvd., Suite 326, Great Neck NY 11021	(516) 466-5858

Members of the Board

John Anaischik Bernie Berberich Dr. Jonah Berman John Betsch Peter Busacca Joseph Defilippe
Spencer Dworkin Vincent Milo Robert Muth Creighton Phillips Jerome Shapiro Richard Weiss
Viola Scarduzio (director emeritus)

Northeast Regional Director

Roy O. Kuck
67 Terrylynn Drive
Angola, NY 14006-1243

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 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)



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, 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*).

from the
editor:

Having designed and edited over 200 pages of Newsletters and Flyers, and published over 40,000 copies of the Star-Gazer, it's time to hang up my quill. I thoroughly enjoyed the task, even the last minute changes and missed deadlines and have tried to present information that would be enjoyable to members. It was especially nice whenever a member

(Continued-page 10)

President's Message

Dear Members:

Your Board of Directors have planned quite a few interesting events for this year.

In March we have two events: visiting the Freightliner dealer on Long Island to discover the Sprinter Van in its various forms, and also enjoying Sunday Brunch at the James Beard House in New York City. May will see us visiting the Southampton Mercedes Dealership. July will be our Concours d'Elegance and Daily Driver Car show. September will be our fall road rallye. During October we will visit another M.B. dealer. December is our Holiday Party.

Speaking of our Holiday Party, the President came to pay us a visit. No not George W. Bush, but the new national MBCA President Richard Simonds. He came the day after our 13inch snowfall and spoke about his plans for the National Club. We also gave the Member Of The Year Award to Joe DeFilippe. Professor DeFilippe developed/conducted a member study concerning satisfaction with the Club. If you are reading this message you are definitely one of the many satisfied. Many of our members who attended the Holiday Party were also satisfied because we gave away the most prizes ever at this past year's Holiday Party.

We have all seen or heard of the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Van made in Germany and marketed in the U.S. under the Freightliner or Dodge brand name. The radiator grill of the Freightliner Sprinter is truer to the Mercedes eurovan version than the Dodge, which has a chrome version of the Ram pickup trucks', cross-in-the-center-of-the-radiator, look.

The van has come in a utilitarian cargo body style or passenger van configuration that can seat up to ten people. For those of you who need to carry a big cargo box in the back or a motor home that piggybacks on the rear chassis, there is the new Cab/Chassis configuration. It looks just like the van but without the van body in the back. Only the front two-seater cab remains with a naked ladder chassis waiting in the back for something to be mounted on top of it. We will learn more about these vehicles when we visit Trux, Inc. the Long Island Freightliner dealer in Bohemia on Saturday March 20th.

In 2003 the sales of AMG models in the U.S totaled over 12,000 units. This is nearly double the 6515 units sold in 2002 in the U.S. Almost every series of model that Mercedes offers has a hot rodded AMG version, the CL55, SL55, S55, G55, E55, and CLK55. The SLK has an AMG version, too. I hear that there will be a C-Class AMG in the near future.

The 2005 SLK, to be released later this year, will come with a new 3.5 liter V-6 and new six-speed manual transmission. It will have a double overhead cam four valve per cylinder engine and produce 268hp with 253 lb-ft of torque. If only I was in the market...

I hope to see all of you at one of our events this year. You get so much more out of the club by participating in an event, and enjoying the use of your Mercedes. You meet other people with a common interest, and learn of their experiences with cars like yours. I personally have found it to be a value-added engagement that has enriched my life.

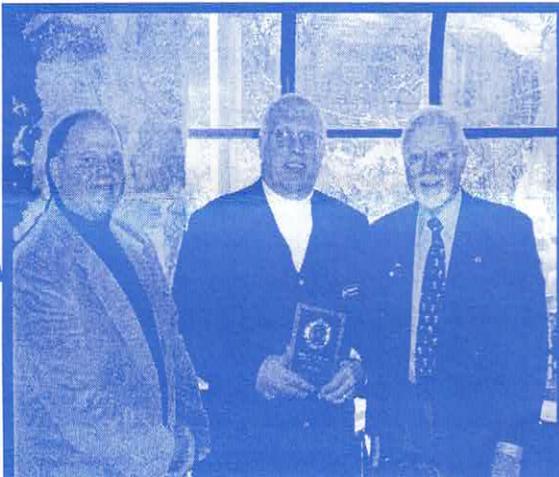
Peter

Joe De Filippe Honored as Member of the Year at Sea Level's Holiday Party – 2003

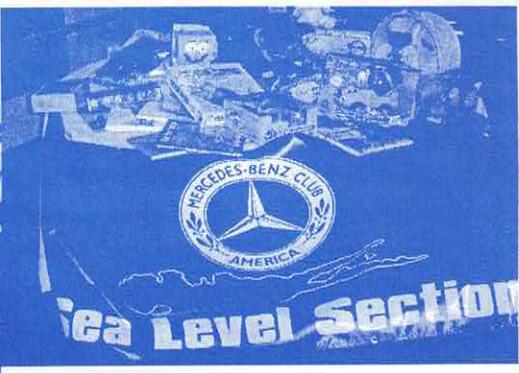
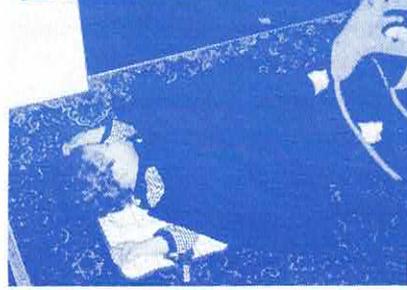
Neither snow nor sleet... More than fifty members made their way through the snow and ice remaining from an early East Coast winter storm to attend the Sea Level Section annual Holiday Party on Sunday, December 7th. We were delighted to have our new National President, Richard Simonds, join us - adding to the excitement of the day. It was enlightening to hear about current club affairs and plans for future club activities right from the top!

Board member and Section Vice-President, Joseph De Filippe was recognized as Member of the Year for 2003. During the past year, Joe conducted an extensive survey exploring the reasons for non-renewal of membership and reasons for low turnout at section events.

As is our custom, toys were collected for the "Toys for Tots" program, and were subsequently delivered to the Marine Corp facility in Garden City, NY for distribution. -R. Weiss



L-R: John Anaischik, Past Section President & Board Member; Joe De Filippe— 2003 Member of the Year; and Richard Simonds, National President, Mercedes-Benz Club of America.





MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.
RICHARD SIMONDS, NATIONAL PRESIDENT

December 8, 2003

Peter Busacca, President
Sea Level Section, MBCA
121 Norwood Avenue
Port Jefferson Station
New York, NY 11776

Dear Peter:

Your board was most hospitable when I visited at the club's Holiday Luncheon on Sunday, December 7th. I am sorry you were traveling and we could not meet in person. However, Richard Weiss, John Betsch, Joseph deFilippe, Robert Muth, and John Anaischik—and their spouses—made me feel more than welcome. Vinny Milo's family table was also very impressive. What a nice treat for his family. I truly was a member of the Sea Level Section "family." Please tell all who were there how much I appreciated their wonderful MBCA hospitality.

I specifically want to thank your group for the "gifts" they gave me. These were:

- The *Membership Survey and Report* that was done by Joseph deFilippe. He and I talked briefly after the luncheon and I may ask him to help with some work we are doing at National on membership growth and retention. My thanks to John Anaischik for giving me his personal copy.
- Two of the Sea Level Section drinking glasses with your logo. My wife Laura has already put them into the dishwasher for cleaning and use.
- A Sea Level Section cap with your logo that I will wear at some of our club events to generate comments, such as: "I didn't know you were a member of that section." I'll have fun with it. It is also a nicely made hat for your club store.
- A Sea Level Section grill badge. This will look nice on the grill of my 1954 300b Sedan—the Adenauer. I'm going to see how it fits.
- A canvas tote bag with your Sea Level Section logo. This will get lots of use as I haul "stuff" to meetings. I've nearly worn out two others I have from other club events.

In all, I was overwhelmed with your section's generosity and warm welcome. I am so glad that I made the trip. The only "inhospitable" act during my weekend visit to Hudson-Mohawk and Sea Level Sections was the first, major Nor'easter of the winter to blanket the region in 15" – 30" of snow. Remember, I am a California driver and should not have to contend with such driving conditions. But, all is forgiven, since I had a really great time and I really did drive quite well in the snow.

Sincerely yours,

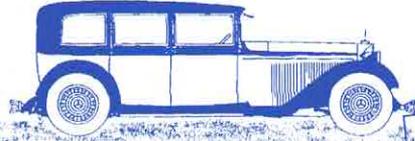
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard".

Richard Simonds

cc: Roy Kuck, Regional Director

REMINISCING

Sea Level's



Summer Events

Spring Rallye '99

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB of AMERICA, Inc.
Sea Level Section

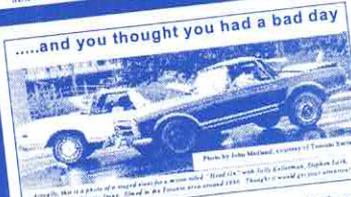
Join Us at
Mercedes-Benz Manhattan, Inc.
Sunday, November 8th
11-3pm

Join us for an afternoon of presentations and information on subjects of interest to Mercedes owners/enthusiasts. Presentations will include topics like Vehicle Maintenance, Child Safety, Older Vehicle Restoration Support, the Chrysler Merger, plus much more and a tour of the newly expanded showroom and shop area. Bring your questions!

Mercedes-Benz Manhattan, Inc., 336 West 43rd Street, is the only factory dealership in the United States and is located on 41st Street between 10th and 11th Avenue. If you are driving westbound that street is a one-way street westbound. Parking will be in the open lot on 42nd St.

Please RST/P upon receipt.

Name: _____ Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
I will be attending the Sea Level Manhattan Mercedes-Benz Meet.



Tech Talk at Lakeview/Mid Island Collision



from the editor

FOUR DOWN & THREE TO GO

As you can see on the back cover, the Section has held four events so far this year with more to go. If you are one of the many who attended the May 17th (aka Sea Level) and the most recent Car Show, you know how hard it is to run a club.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 Stuffing the Ballot Box...
- 1 President's Message
- 2 Sign-up Forms for Upcoming Events
- 2 Advertising Information



Sea Level Show at the Cradle of Aviation is Huge Success!

1935 MOST OUTRIVING - EU STYLING

The recently opened Museum is a culmination of a 20-year search to collect and restore historic flying machines that were either built on Long Island or a small part of the collection of technology with our Show. (pictures on page 4)

Contents of Express & People's Choice Car Show
President's Message
Three Upcoming Events

A VERY SPECIAL EVENT

Saturday, June 5, 1999
7 p.m.
James Beard House
West 12th Street
New York, NY 10011

A special opportunity to experience a gastronomic delight normally available only to James Beard Foundation members!

Hubert Heydich, Chef and Culinary Educator, formerly from "Le Tourist Aux Gastronomes" in San Francisco, now from the Northwest Farm School in Portland Oregon.
Michel Desplatt, from "Biste e Mezzo" in St. Remy de Provence

'Flavor' and Tastes from France!

Concours d'Elegance

August 22, 1999
Duel-Walk Vineyards
Southampton
10am - 1pm

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA, Inc. Sea Level Section



from the editor

FOR RENT

Take in your Squares Neversity. Answer Letters to the Editor. Photo reports. From the Road. Product Reviews and commentary. Information on how to be the members of Sea Level. All requests will be answered. And you can be a part of it all at all of our events!

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 "Spring Rallye 2000"
- 1 President's Message
- 2 Sign-up Forms for the Quarter's Events
- 2 Around the World in 80 Days

Sea Level East End Brunch & Tour

Sunday - Oct 4th - 11 am

Tool Shed Brunch & Tour

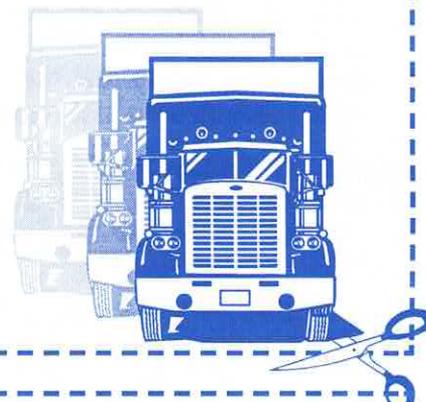
Call either Vito Barone (616) 114-1141 or Bob Gagnier (616) 114-1141 to reserve your place. Payment of \$15.00 is required at the time of reservation. Payment of \$15.00 is required at the time of reservation. Payment of \$15.00 is required at the time of reservation.

Don't miss these!

ADMIT ONE

✓ Freightliner Technical Session- March 20

Return To: Peter Busacca
121 Norwood Avenue
Port Jefferson Stn, NY 11776-2552



I will be there at the Tech Session on March 20th!

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ No. in party _____

✓✓✓ James Beard Brunch—March 21st

Return To: Vincent C. Milo
230 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1705
New York, NY 10001-7704



Enclosed is \$60 per person
\$ _____ payable to MBCA

Sign me up! NAME _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Number in party _____

✓✓ Spring "Shorty" Rallye—April 18

Return To: John Anaischik
200 Floral Parkway
Floral Park, NY 11001-3439

Enclosed is \$23 per person
\$ _____ payable to MBCA

Sign me up! I plan on "winning" the Shorty Rallye
Name: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____

✓✓✓✓ Tech. Session, Country Imports—May 8th

Return To: Peter Busacca
121 Norwood Avenue
Port Jefferson Stn, NY 11776-2552



Sign me up! NAME _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Number in party _____

✓ Freightliner Technical Session- March 20

IF you are like many people who do not associate the name Freightliner with Mercedes-Benz, this is your tech session. If "Diesel" is a foreign word to you, this is your tech session. If "18 wheeler" is confusing to you, this is your tech session! Bring your questions!

TRUX, Inc, the Long Island Freightliner Dealer is located at 1365 Lakeland Avenue, Bohemia (631-563-1300) Exit LIE at Ocean Avenue and go 3/4 mile south, following the curve to the left. It is located 2 miles south of the LIE on Lakeland Avenue.

Starting time: 10AM. Please return sign-up form on page seven

✓✓ James Beard Brunch—March 21st

On two occasions, Sea Level has enjoyed the fine dining at THE JAMES BEARD TOWNHOUSE in New York City. This, our planned third event, will be a brunch to remember. The following chefs will participate in their annual **SPRINGTIME SUNDAY BRUNCH**: Judy Matera-**ROBERT MONDAVI WINER**, Oakland CA; Lee Napoli-**SANDRINE'S**, Cambridge MA; Suzi Parks-**WEDDING ANGELS**, Boston MA; Paige Retus-**BLUE at THE RITZ CARLTON**, Boston MA; Elaine Stella-**THE TUSCAN GRILL**, Waltham MA. These ladies have prepared a great four-course lunch, with wines included. Mercedes-Benz members will pay the BEARD members cost of **\$60.** per person, which includes lunch, wines, tax and gratuities. Garage parking has been provided for members at a cost of \$7 for the afternoon. As seating for non-members is limited, it is important that you book as soon as possible. Sign up on page Seven.

✓✓✓ Spring "Shorty" Rallye – April 18

The Shorty Rallye will be starting at the South Shore Mall in North Bay Shore. The length of this rallye has been shortened, and much of the route will be traveled at 25-30 mph, so this should be an event for everyone to participate in!

The Mall is located on the north side of Sunrise Highway. Traveling east on Sunrise Highway, move to the service road at exit 43, then turn right onto Brook Avenue North. After crossing the highway, turn right into the Shopping Mall. Traveling west on Sunrise Highway, the Mall is right after exit 44 on the north service road.

Cars will assemble in the southwest end of the parking lot near the JC Penney store.

First car out at 11AM.

Bring a Suffolk County Atlas as well as a keen eye for the clues. Sign up form is on page seven of this issue. John Anaischik is Rallyemaster for this event

✓✓✓✓ Tech. Session, M-B of Southampton—May

Mercedes-Benz of Southampton located at 35 Montauk Highway, Southampton will host a Tech Session on May 8th. This should be an interesting event for all!

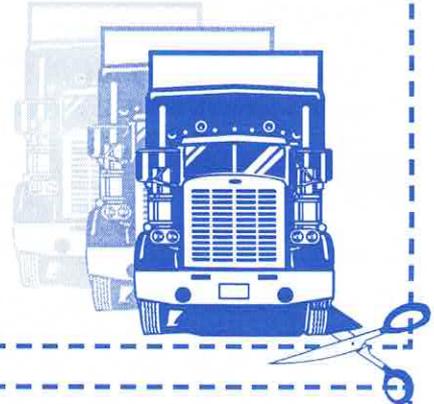
Session Starts 9am, lunch to be served. Please sign up on page seven.

✓ Freightliner Technical Session- March 20

Return To: Peter Busacca
121 Norwood Avenue
Port Jefferson Stn, NY 11776-2552

I will be there at the Tech Session on March 20th!

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ No. in party _____



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230 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1705
New York, NY 10001-7704

Enclosed is \$60 per person
\$ _____ payable to MBCA

Sign me up! NAME _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Number in party _____



✓✓ Spring "Shorty" Rallye—April 18

Return To: John Anaischik
200 Floral Parkway
Floral Park, NY 11001-3439

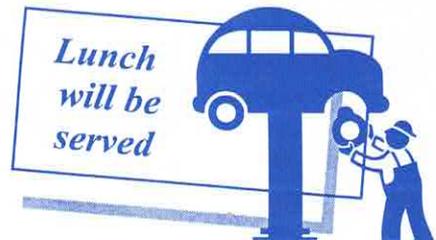
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Sign me up! I plan on "winning" the Shorty Rallye
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✓✓✓✓ Tech. Session, Country Imports—May 8th

Return To: Peter Busacca
121 Norwood Avenue
Port Jefferson Stn, NY 11776-2552

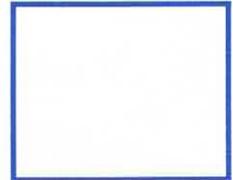


Sign me up! NAME _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Number in party _____



Star-Gazer

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



**FIVE EVENTS
THIS QUARTER**

sign up now!

STAR-GAZER

2004 PRELIMINARY EVENT SCHEDULE

1	▶ Saturday, March 20th	Technical Meeting <i>Trux, Inc. LI Freightliner, Bohemia</i>
2	▶ Sunday, March 21st	Springtime Sunday Brunch <i>James Beard House, New York City</i>
3	▶ Sunday, April 11th	M-B Manhattan Brunch & NY Auto Show <i>M-B Manhattan & Jacob Javits Center</i>
4	▶ Sunday, April 18th	Spring-Shorty Rallye <i>Starting: Bay Shore</i>
5	▶ Saturday, May 8th	Technical Meeting <i>Country Imports, Southampton</i>
	<i>July</i>	<i>Concours d'Elegance / Daily Driver Show</i> <i>TBD</i>
	<i>September</i>	<i>Foliage Rallye</i> <i>Starting: To be Announced</i>
	<i>October</i>	<i>Technical Meeting</i> <i>Mercedes-Benz Massapequa</i>

*commented
about a
particular
issue –it let
me know that
someone was
reading my
work.
Best wishes
to Jim Baldea
who will be
assuming the
task with the
next issue.
-J. Betsch*