



# THE NORTHWESTERN STAR

VOL. 36 | NO. 1

PORTLAND SECTION

JANUARY, 2012

## Welcome, New Members

**Ben & Athena Salsig**  
Beaverton

Welcome Ben & Athena! We look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events. Feel free to contact any of the board officers (page 2) with questions, comments, or ideas.

## Upcoming Events

**Jan 14** Board Meeting

**Jan 28** Cars & Coffee

**Feb 11** DIY at MBI Motors

**Mar 24** Car collection tour

**Apr 21** LaConner Tulip Rally

**Jul 15** Concours d'Elegance

**Sep 28** StarFest

*Full Event Calendar on page 12*

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# A Car Guy Takes the Wheel



*New Portland Section President Allen Stephens and his 1967 250SL Roadster.*

**A**llen Stephens is a car guy. It's in his blood. Allen's father drove British sports cars: A-Cs, Aston-Martins, Singers, Jaguars (including a Kougar Jaguar, with a fiberglass racing body—see photo, page 5). His mother drove a 1967 Jaguar 420. His father's series of British cars was probably the impetus for Allen's interest in Mercedes-Benz. Although Allen doesn't specifically put it this way, those of us who have owned British cars from the '60s and '70s typically yearn for things like reliability and

*See "Car Guy," page 5*

## Next Event: Cars & Coffee

**Place:** Starbucks at Carman Drive exit on I-5

**Date:** January 28th

**Time:** 8 – 10 AM

**Cost:** None

*Details on page 6; full Events Calendar on page 12*

# President's Message

I am excited to take on the role of Section President for the next two years. We have an energetic Board of Directors and unique events scheduled in 2012. There are three new faces on the Portland Section Board: Stacy Rollins and Ron Woodruff are serving as Directors at Large – they help plan events and ensure the section runs smoothly; and Tom Lichty is the new Editor of the *Northwestern Star*. You probably noticed this newsletter looks different than the December edition – Tom has years of experience as an author and publisher, and brings a new voice to our club.



Our approach this year is to schedule events focused on caring for and driving your Mercedes, and participating in car-themed activities. The last survey of the Portland Section members told us that you want to participate in driving events, car shows, tech events, and tour private car collections. One member said “I would like more events devoted to driving as opposed to meeting.” We also plan to schedule more events closer to Salem and Eugene. We have a drive to a winery in the Willamette Valley planned, and I'd like to schedule an event farther south. If you have an idea for an event in the Salem or Eugene area, please contact me. I realize we have a number of members who are located many miles from Portland.

Over the past year we have partnered with Seattle Section on events, and we are continuing to work with them on joint events in 2012. In June, the Seattle club is hosting a Garage Tour of Brown Maloney's car collection in Sequim, Washington. Stay tuned for details on a planned caravan from Portland to see his amazing stable of cars.

Speaking of BMWs, we are working with the BMW car club on holding a joint event this year. Perhaps an all-German car show or a rally to the Evergreen Air Museum.

I want to thank Rus Eppler for serving as Section President for the past two years. Rus is the only Section President I can recall who flew his own airplane to club events! I also want to recognize Stacy Rollins for his

See “President,” page 3



## Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Portland Section

### Officers:

#### President

Allen Stephens . . . . . 503.708.0397  
allenstephens@frontier.com

#### Vice President

Sam Chinakos . . . . . 503.513.8441  
sttube@aol.com

#### Secretary/Treasurer

Hal Harper . . . . . 503.208-2052  
hal.harper@comcast.net

#### Board of Directors: (Expiration year)

Greg Buechler (2012) . . . . . 503.640.6389  
gtbuechler@hotmail.com

Stacy Rollins (2013) . . . . . 503.645.0675  
stacy@stacyrollins.com

Jerry Sorenson (2013) . . . . . 541.617.9297  
jerrys@q.com

Mike Spicer (2012) . . . . . 503.550.1403  
mike\_p\_spicer@hotmail.com

Ron Woodruff (2013) . . . . . 503.708.8151  
rbwgroup1@yahoo.com

#### Northwest Regional Director:

Barry Patchett . . . . . 250-246-5329  
bmpatchett@shaw.ca

#### Newsletter Editor/Advertising:

Tom Lichty . . . . . 503.998.9072  
tlichty@gmail.com

#### Portland Section Webmaster:

Len Wolford . . . . . 206.384.7868  
ldwolford@juno.com

#### Membership:

Pam Burback . . . . . 503.236.1737  
burbs5@aol.com

#### Historian:

Jim Thompson . . . . . 503.633.2366  
jim814817@hotmail.com

#### Concours d'Elegance:

Allen Stephens . . . . . 503.708.0397  
allenstephens@frontier.com

#### Past President:

Rus Eppler . . . . . 503.720.3637

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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"President," from page 2

contributions over the last few years as Northwest Regional Director. I can't begin to estimate the number of hours Stacy has invested at the national club level – and I look forward to having him serve on our Portland Section board.

Please join me on January 28th at the Cars and Coffee

event in Tigard. This event is modeled after the hugely popular Cars and Coffee gathering in Irvine, California every Saturday. The Portland version is growing in popularity, and I hope to see you there. We plan to order good weather, plus it will be a good opportunity to get out of the house and exercise your car.

— Allen Stephens

## 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 be opening up MBI Motors for our annual Do It Yourself Event. Some examples last year included general inspections under the car, changing oil, checking fluid levels, replacing 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 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.

The event runs from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM February 11th, and the cost is \$10 per car payable to MBCA Portland Section at the registration table. Pre-registration is required. Call Event Chair Greg Carlson at 503-614-8412 or e-mail [dvncrlsn@aol.com](mailto:dvncrlsn@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.



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# What Goes Around, Comes Around

Not counting the “newspaper publishing kit” I had as a kid—hundreds of little rubber-stamp-like “moveable-type” characters that were composed right-to-left and were all mirror images of their printed results (can you say “watch your p’s and q’s?”)—my first publishing experience was as editor of the *Emerald Empire Sports Car Club Newsletter*, in 1968. (I remember dates by remembering the cars I drove: At that time it was a 1968 MBG-GT, Sandy Beige over black leather, chrome wire wheels, with no synchro in first.) I prepared that newsletter using an Underwood manual and a mimeograph machine.

It’s fitting, then, that I return to those roots forty-five years later.

In the interim, I edited a magazine for a radio station, taught publishing seminars at the U of O, and owned a newspaper. You’d think I’d be over it by now and happy to collect Yo-Yo’s or play Canasta, but no: I miss publishing. And that’s why I’m here, having weaseled my way into your fine organization on the coattails of my wife’s 2000 SLK 230 Kompressor. (That was her car in the centerfold of the November issue of the *Northwestern Star*—no doubt the first topless centerfold in the history of the publication. I hope you got the kids out of the room before you opened it.)

I’m a sports-car zealot. The MG was followed by a long string of Porsches and the like until I finally settled down to a proper BMW 5-Series, a car I loved until the aforementioned wife, a Janis Joplin fan, pleaded with the Lord for a Mercedes-Benz. The Lord didn’t buy one for her, but she did. I sold the Bimmer to my daughter and we’ve been a Mercedes family ever since.

People blanch when we tell them that the SLK is our only car. Frankly, as SLKs are wont to be, it’s really a toy. Oh sure, we haul groceries in it (not many—have you ever seen an SLK’s trunk?) and drive it across town

on rainy nights, but our primary means of transportation are bikes and light rail. We live in urban Portland.

Bikes and trains are the heavy hitters when it comes to urban living in Portland.

That relegates Slick (the SLK) to toy status, and he seems to be quite happy to oblige. Nothing compares to an SLK. Admittedly he only has four cylinders, but he also has seven pounds of boost and a roller skate’s wheelbase (the SLK is shorter than the BMW Z Series or the Porsche Boxster). Slick doesn’t as much *zip* as he *squirts*. That’s what toys are for.



Lichty and Slick. (Photo by Louise Lague)

True to form, I’ve digressed into a soliloquy about cars. I’m supposed to be writing about editor business. Okay, how’s this:

- Portland Section President Allen Stephens takes the wheel this month. We sit down over coffee and get to know him—and his plans for the club—starting on page 1. Allen’s first “President’s Message” appears on page 2.
- With this issue, I welcome “Blonde in a Benz,” penned by a former gossip columnist for the *Washington Star* and former editor at *People* magazine. This month, she takes us back in time for a girls’ ride in a brand-new 220SE Cabriolet. See page 7.
- Remember the Louisiana Superdome? It’s now the *Mercedes-Benz* Superdome. See page 8.
- Club membership dues have gone up. See page 9.
- Barry Patchett is our new Northwest Region Director. See page 10.

With that I say hello. I’m flattered to be your newsletter editor, and my wife Louise and I look forward to our membership in your club. Car clubs are loads of fun, and under Allen Stephens’ leadership, loads more fun is in the works—especially if you love your car and the time spent driving it. I know I do.

— Tom Lichty

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“Car Guy,” from page 1

windows that go up and down when asked. Indeed, British cars may be one of the driving forces behind the success of German cars.

Allen’s first Mercedes was a 1977 450 SEL 6.9 sedan, “the big V-8 from the ’70s.” He now drives a 2005 E500 4Matic wagon. “It’s sort of the anti-SUV. With two kids



Allen Stephens (right) and his brother Chris with their father’s Kougars Jaguar, circa 1976.

now, I figured now was the time to get one.” He has owned the wagon for only a few months. Before that he drove a 1993 500E sedan, “a collaboration between Mercedes and Porsche.” (And we thought the Panamera was the first four-door Porsche sedan.) “They took the V-8 from the 500SL and put it in the W124 chassis. Just a super car. Assembled by Porsche. Solid as a brick of steel. Very quick.”

Car guys talk like that.

Allen’s other car is a 1967 250SL Roadster, “...a rolling restoration. German cars have such precision engineering, and the SL has such a rich heritage: the Gull Wing, the Mille Miglia, Le Mans. I decided I wanted an SL at some point. It’s really a fun car to have.”

So what’s a car guy’s vision for the Portland Section? “I want to put an enthusiast’s attitude back in the club. Sometimes people look at a Mercedes club as a club where we go out to a golf course or we go out and have

dinner and we don’t really have any fun driving the cars. I want get back to driving events, touring, technical events – more events relating to the cars themselves.” He feels that the club is at a crossroads: “We need to attract more younger members. I think there’s a perception that a Mercedes club is just for old people and I want to try to shift that perception.” He feels that

attracting new members is a challenge: “There are so many distractions now; people have so many commitments in their lives. It’s hard for them to find time to devote to a club.” That goes especially for younger people. It’s Allen’s hope that an emphasis on cars and driving events will encourage them to find that time.

Allen was raised in Forest Grove, where his father founded the Forest Grove Concours d’Elegance. Allen heads up that event for the Portland Section again this year. In fact, Mercedes-

Benz is this year’s Concours theme and our club will have a dedicated display area. Mark your calendar for July 15th.

Allen is Marketing Program Manager for the Human Resources department at Intel and lives in the Cedar Hills area with his wife Joan, their son Jacob (9), and their daughter Lucy (2½).

— Tom Lichty

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# Cars & Coffee

**What:** Cars and Coffee

**When:** Saturday, January 28th, 8 to 10 AM

**Where:** Starbucks at the Carman Drive exit off I-5, 15350 SW Sequoia Parkway.

For the past few years, Car Guys and Gals have been meeting for Cars & Coffee in Tigard. The event attracts Porsches, Ferraris, Lamborghinis, Aston Martins, and other collector cars. It is time for the Mercedes club to make a showing.

Meet us at the Starbucks in Tigard the morning of January 28th. Starbucks is located just south of the Tigard Home Depot, near West Marine and Tap Plastics.

There's no need to pre-register. Just show up!



## 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](http://www.askglammy.com)

## 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](http://MBCA.org/join-today).

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# Once a Girl, Always a Girl

**M**y desire, nay, *need* for a Mercedes-Benz of my own began in my senior year in college when I shared a house with six other girls. (We were “girls” then; we still are.) It all began with my housemate Linda, a Chicago policeman’s daughter who grew up in an unglamorous suburban bungalow. But Linda was anything but unglamorous: tall and sultry, with more bosom than hips, legs up to here, and about thirty inches of lush brunette hair, straight and thick as a horse’s mane, which she had a habit of tossing for effect, like a Pantene commercial.

Linda had Cleopatra eyes, a thick pouty mouth, and a sense of high drama. I once saw her leaning on a mantle, dressed in a long Japanese silk kimono, bitterly bemoaning some guy’s bad behavior. She did one impressive last gulp of her blood-red wine and threw the glass into the fire. We all loved the decisive, cleansing smash.

Exotic men trailed her everywhere: Saudi Arabian princes, the sons of Southern governors, South American rich heirs. She seemed incapable of dating normal baseball-playing kids from New Jersey.

Her boyfriend that spring was Francisco, an Argentinian polo player. One day she came home with Francisco’s car, announcing it was on loan for the day and did anyone want to go to Saks?

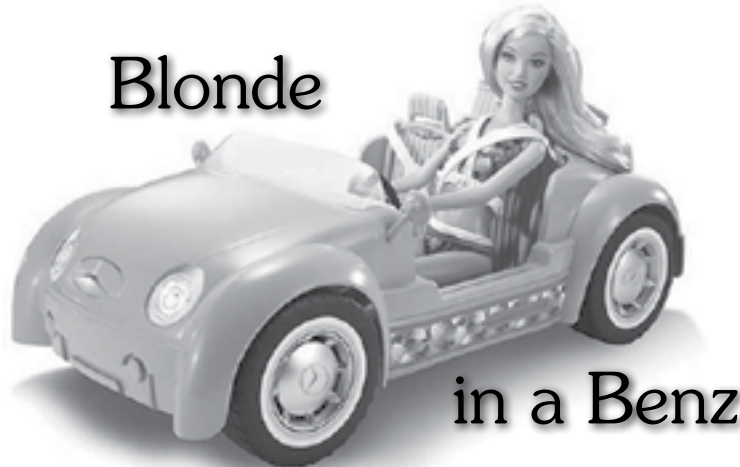
Going to Saks in a car was cool (none of us had cars at the time), but cooler yet was Francisco’s car: a new Mercedes-Benz 220SE Cabriolet. Four of us climbed in on a sunny day in late May, put the top down and rolled up Fifth Avenue. Even though we didn’t exactly hang over the sides and shout, it certainly felt like that. We didn’t just ride to Saks; we *preened*.

You know that top-down feeling: it’s like owning the world. And owning the world two days before college graduation, on the brink of adult life when *anything can*

*happen...wow*. For me, that euphoric feeling, that joyous moment of setting out on an adventure that’s bound to be great, has always been attached to that day, that moment, and that car.

Linda broke up with Francisco (and his car), then went back to Chicago and married a policeman. I made do with lesser cars for decades, but not long ago I acquired

a Mercedes with a big star in the grille. Now I have an anticipatory moment every time I get in that car; an adventure built in—which is as it should be. Every day *does* hold surprises and new beginnings; they’re just hard to see when you’re young. 🚗



## 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 (3½" w x 2" h) . . .	\$12
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Space reservations are due by the 15th of the month. Camera-ready ads (PDF format) are due by the 20th of the month.

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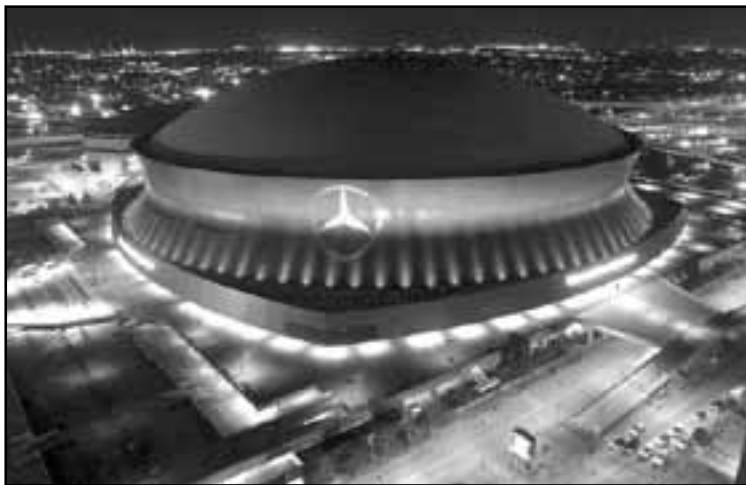
Contact the editor (see page 2) to reserve space or for further information.

# An Old Dome Lives to See Another Day

Portland isn't the only city with a Benson in its past. In New Orleans, Tom Benson is just as much or more of a public figure as our own Simon Benson — lumber baron, hotelier, and philanthropist. Simon Benson made his fortune buying up tracts of timber along the Columbia River. Born of a much later generation and in a much different locale, Tom Benson made his fortune buying up automobile dealerships along the Mississippi River. Some of those dealerships now sell Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

As successful entrepreneurs often do, Tom Benson took some of his Mercedes money and purchased a major-league team. He became a hero in the Big Easy, where a bid to move the New Orleans Saints to Jack-

sonville, Florida was afoot. Benson stepped in, bought the Saints, and kept the team in town.



All photos: Michael DeMocker, The Times-Picayune

One doesn't just own a professional major-league team, one owns its merchandising rights as well. Among other things, those merchandising rights gave Tom Benson the ability to sell the naming rights to the Saints' home field, the Louisiana Superdome.

Which he did, only a few months ago, to (this should come as no surprise) Mercedes-Benz.

On October 3rd of 2011, the Louisiana Superdome became the *Mercedes-Benz* Superdome. Since Benson is New Orleans' Mercedes-Benz dealer, one might say that he sold the rights to himself. After all, his dealership is the primary beneficiary.

The ink was still drying on the contract when Mercedes installed 26,000 LED lights (costing almost two million dollars) around the stadium, creating an Aurora-Borealis-like light show that's constantly changing, bathing the walls with rainbow hues of red, blue, green, and everything in between. And projected along with the dazzling colors: the Mercedes Star logo. (See the video at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vo\\_iqRyu13k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vo_iqRyu13k).)

That logo is anything but demure. Writing in the *Times-Picayune*, columnist Doug MacCash said, "When the folks at Mercedes-Benz build a sleek, beautiful automobile, they stamp it with a few discreet corporate symbols: a blended-in grill ornament, maybe small hub-cap logos, and an inset star-and-ring on the steering wheel. Like any proud manufacturer, the car company wants to trumpet its brand, but it has a sense of reserve. It doesn't trash up its elegant cars with dinner plate-sized partial peace signs on the door panels and hood. But that kind of design discretion didn't apply at the Dome."

Coincident with MacCash's column, the *Times* commissioned a poll asking its readers to give thumbs-up

See "Dome," page 9

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"Dome," from page 8

or -down to the lights and logos. The results were resoundingly thumbs-up, with 639 in support, 142 against. A similar poll at NPR — with a more national audience — wasn't so supportive, with 512 voters saying "Terrific!", 148 saying "Way to ruin an icon," and seven hundred saying "Could do without the corporate logo." (*Ouch!*)

The future of Portland's Memorial Coliseum is anyone's guess. The King Dome in Seattle is gone, as is

*The artificial turf originally installed in the Louisiana Superdome was called "Mardi Grass."*

New Orleans' own St. Francis Cabrini Church, both demolished before their time. The Superdome (now 37 years old) could have met with the same fate. Instead, via a significant infusion of Mercedes-Benz cash (the 2011 renovation cost \$85 million; we suspect that M-B was in for some of that), the old dome will survive to see another day. One can find no fault with that, especially if one drives a Mercedes-Benz.

— Tom Lichty


## Dues Have Increased

Effective January 1, 2012, MBCA membership dues have increased as follows:

	U.S.	Canadian & Int'l
1 Year	\$49 (was \$45)	\$59 (was \$55)
2 Years	\$95 (was \$87)	\$115 (was \$107)
3 Years	\$139 (was \$127)	\$169 (was \$157)

Five reasons for the 2012 dues increase:


1. The list of MBCA member benefits and discounts has markedly expanded in the last two years. Visit [www.mbca.org/member-benefits](http://www.mbca.org/member-benefits) for a complete list of benefits.
2. We want to ensure that MBCA can continue to meet its promise to be an enduring and sustainable Mercedes-Benz enthusiast organization, nurturing and inspiring the Mercedes-Benz experience.
3. It has been twelve years since MBCA last raised its dues.
4. 2012 dues represent an increase of less than 9% over 2011.
5. MBCA has been able to avoid a dues increase for more than a decade but increasing operating expenses makes it virtually impossible to avoid a modest increase today.

Members who RENEW their membership will receive three additional months of membership FREE when they renew for 3 years (at the 2012 rate), or two additional months of membership FREE when they renew for 2 years (at the 2012 rate). 

## 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.

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# Holiday Lights Tour



With our seat warmers on, a group of Portland Section members drove around Portland International Raceway to see the Winter Wonderland Holiday Lights display on December 10th. It was a cold evening, but that didn't stop seven cars from making the trip. We were able to get the group rate, and our caravan was able to enter the track in an unbroken line of Mercedes-Benz. It's an odd experience traveling around the track backwards from the normal direction of travel, however the stunning displays lit up the night sky and made the experience very festive. My kids watched from the rear-facing pop-up seat in the back of our E500 4Matic wagon. I was followed by Mike Spicer with his two sons in a G-class. I also spotted Paul Hoge and his family in a W140 S-class, and Greg and Nancy Buechler in their silver C-class sedan. Also on the track was our Past-President Rus Eppler, as well as Nicolette Gaylan and Len Wolford. Seattle Section member Tony Andrews met us at Roake's drive in, and we discussed event ideas in 2012. This event was a great way to kick off the holiday season. I hope to see you there next year. — Allen Stephens

Edward Shyduik  
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## Northwest Region Director Announced

Barry Patchett is the newly-appointed Director for the Northwest Region.

Barry joined the MBCA in 1989, when he started the Alberta Section. His experience with the club has been as President and Newsletter Editor in Alberta for several years and recently as President of the Vancouver Island Section. He tells the *Northwestern Star* that he looks forward to working with us for the next two years on Mercedes events and hopes that members will contact him whenever needed for issues involving the club (contact information on page 2). Barry drives a 1965 230SL and a 1994 E320.



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

If your address has changed, visit [www.mbca.org](http://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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## 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).

### W108 sedan parts: 1967-1972

- Rear end swing axle rear ends.
- Transmissions, 4 speed automatics.
- Complete door set of 4 with manual windows excellent condition.
- Sunroof top clip for 280 SE or other models, not the L version.
- European front bumper over riders with cross bar, will fit W111 coupes.
- Wood parts for interior.
- Heater fan and cores and dash control switch parts.

Engines: 8 engines in all: 2.8 liter euro, 4.5 V8 w/automatic trans attached, 190 4 cylinder gas, 4 cylinder diesel parts engine, 2.5 engines and heads.

Call Ron Woodruff 503-708-8151  
or email: rbwgroup1@yahoo.com

### 1982 380SEC \$5,995

2 door coupe with 3.8L engine, automatic transmission, RWD, A/C works but has no freon (takes R-12), sunroof, dual power seats, power windows, power mirrors, cruise control, climate control, reconditioned leather seats and headrests, new dash cap, new front windshield, 1ten-disc CD player. Everything works electronically and mechanically, have original books and service records.

Original wheels were 14", put imported Italian chrome 16" wheels with new 225/50FR16 A/S tires approximately a year ago. Vehicle has 147,000 miles, light blue with dark blue interior. Fuel consumption is approx. 17 mpg on the open road. Locally owned, am second owner. Asking \$5995.

Call Ron at 503-708-8151. (Portland OR)

## Photo of the Month



Mercedes SLK 55 AMG and Ducati Streetfighter 848, at the Bologna Motor Show, Dec. 2011. Photo courtesy auto123.com.

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## Portland Section Schedule of Events

**January 14:** Board Meeting at Mercedes-Benz of Wilsonville 10:00 AM. The meeting room is on the second floor. We invite all members to attend and provide suggestions on how we can improve the club and provide ideas for upcoming events.

Mercedes-Benz of Wilsonville has a great selection of new and preowned Mercedes-Benz vehicles for sale in their state-of-the-art facility. We thank them for hosting us.

**January 28:** Cars and Coffee, Tigard Starbucks, 8 AM. See story, page 6.

**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 3.

**March 10:** Board meeting at Mercedes-Benz of Wilsonville 10:00 AM.

**March 24:** (Date tentative) Car collection tour. Meet at Burbuck Motors for coffee and breakfast, then caravan to the event. Look for an article in an upcoming *Northwestern Star*.

**April 21:** LaConner Tulip Rally in Skagit County, Washington. The event is sponsored by the MG Club and we're invited. Details to come.

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

**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 3.