



THE NORTHWESTERN STAR

VOL. 36 | NO. 3

PORTLAND SECTION

MARCH, 2012

Welcome, New Members

Francis W Smith
Salem

Sheri Sundstrom
Portland

Richard Terry
Springfield

+20 renewing members

Upcoming Events

Mar 10 Board meeting

Mar 24 Car collection tour

Apr 14 Upholstery workshop

Apr 21 Tulip Rally

May 19 Tour to Evergreen

Jul 2 Winery tour

Jul 7, 8 Historic Races

Full Event Calendar on page 12

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Skagit County Tulip Rally April 21

The Skagit Valley Tulip Festival—now in its 29th year—is one of the destination events for the Pacific Northwest. Hundreds of thousands of people come every year, as millions of tulips burst into bloom in Mount Vernon, Washington.

This year, the MBCA Portland Section joins the MG Club for its 31st Annual Tulip Rally (yes, the rally is actually older than the festival itself!). This event is a gimmick rally in place of time/distance checkpoints, so everyone will be able to compete successfully. All you need is a sharp eye and a sense of humor.

Assuming we can muster the five-car minimum, the MBCA will have a First Place section finish award this year.

See "Tulip Rally," page 10

Next Event: Car Collection Tour

Place: Burbuck Motors (71 SE Main Street, Portland)

Date: March 24th

Time: 10:00 AM

Cost: \$10 per car

Details on page 3; full Events Calendar on page 12

President's Message

We just wrapped up the Do it Yourself event at MBI Motors, and it was a huge success with twenty cars and thirty Portland Section Members in attendance (see story, page 9). It was great to see so many club members working on and learning about their Mercedes. Our own Greg Carlson and his son Chris kept things running smoothly. A big THANK YOU to MBI owners Corbin Lancaster and Debbi Pannu for opening their facility and making their technicians and service department available just for our members on a Saturday. If you have not been to MBI recently, they have installed some upgrades including new lifts and the latest Star Diagnostic system for newer cars. What has not changed is the high standard of service their experienced technicians provide. Stop by their facility for your next service.



Join us this month for a tour of a local car collection that Mike Spicer is organizing (see story, next page). It is always fun to see what treasures people have stored in their garages and barns. Looking ahead, mark your calendar for April 14th, when we are planning a clinic on the art and science of automobile upholstery at the shop of Lynn Gibner. The plan is to show upholstery tips and tricks for both classic and newer cars. Do you need to replace that door panel, or can it be dyed? Find out on April 14th.



We received confirmation of our first 'pre war' Mercedes to be displayed at the Forest Grove Concours on July 15th. A 1939 540K Special Roadster is currently being treated to a full restoration at a local facility, and will be finished on time to compete for awards on the green at Pacific University. This 540K was reportedly a gift from Hitler to Stalin, however the car was not to Stalin's liking, so he gave it to one of his generals. The car was

See "President," page 3



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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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March 24th

Car Collection Tour



The 1955 300 SL Alloy Gullwing pictured above sold for \$4.62 million at the Scottsdale Auction in late January. Only 29 alloy models were manufactured, out of the 1400 Gullwings that were built altogether. The alloys were intended for racing, but you'd never know it by looking at the snazzy plaid seat covers above.

No, this car won't be on our Car Collection Tour March 24th. In fact, the cars that *will* be seen on the tour remain a mystery. So does the name of the collector. Ditto the location. It's a private garage—we know that much—and it's a rare treat to be invited, but other than that this event is a delightful conundrum.

Which makes it all the more fun.

We'll meet at Burback Motors (71 SE Main Street, Portland) at 10:00 AM March 24th for coffee and refreshments (thanks, Burback!). Maps will be distributed, and we'll caravan for our destination around 11:30. There will be a charge of \$10 per car. (Note that the charge is *per car*, not per person.)

Mike Spicer is coordinating this event.



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.

"President," from page 2

uncovered in the Soviet Union in 1967. It has a one-off body by Sindelfingen, and is being restored to its original DB 904 blue. We anticipate more interesting Mercedes will be entered over the coming months. To enter your car for judging (or display in the MBCA corral) see the ad on page 9.

I recently drove my E500 wagon on a weekend journey from Portland to Salem for the Peterson collector car auction, then

on to Pacific City for Super Bowl weekend. Sunny weather and dry roads made for a smooth drive. With the 302 hp V8, there is plenty of power



to pass; and with the Airmatic suspension in Sport mode, we carved through the coast range just in time for dinner. The wagon needs tires—I'm running seventeen inch Continentals now. Contact me at allenstephens@frontier.com and let me know if you have a good recommendation on a different brand of tire.

— Allen Stephens

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Road Trips

You know that spring isn't far away when a flood of Mercedes-Benz driving events clog your mailbox. That goes doubly if you're an M-B newsletter editor: a tulip rally to Skagit County, a tour to the Evergreen Air Museum, a tour to Oregon's wine country, a drive to Maloney's Car Museum in Sequim, the Concours d'Elegance in Forest Grove, the Historic Races at PIR...

As if that's not enough, Louise and I are planning a driving event of our own: an alfresco road trip to Los Angeles for a wedding via Highways 101 and 1. Once again we'll use all our spacial ingenuity to pack three weeks' of clothes and gear into the SLK's trunk—leaving room for the retracted top, of course—and set off on another automotive adventure.



Back in the '60s, when I drove a VW bus and was as hirsute as a yak, my target for a road trip was 500 miles a day. I drove that bus all over the country and Canada, covering 23 states and seven provinces, right foot to

the floor, rarely exceeding the speed limit (although I tried) on the country's nascent Interstate system.

Five hundred miles a day isn't insurmountable, but it would require Red Bull to be delivered intravenously today, which, as my cardiologist is fond of saying, is contraindicated for a man with my constitution.

Thus, on our recently-completed Sante Fe road trip last summer, I set 300 miles a day as a goal. On the back roads we prefer, that's six hours in the saddle. Although we love Slick (our SLK), we also love to get out of the car and explore the terrain. Three hundred miles, we determined, is too much for us. On this trip, we're shooting for two hundred. With that regimen, it'll take five days on the road to get to Los Angeles and another five days to get back, but we'll be traveling spectacular highways, with places like Mendocino, San Francisco, Carmel, and Santa Barbara along the way. As they say: the journey is the reward, especially in a frisky little Mercedes-Benz with the top down.

We leave in July. I'm as eager as I was at the DMV on my sixteenth birthday.

If a road trip is *your* pleasure, we have a good one for you this year. Richard Simonds, Past National President of MBCA, has volunteered to organize our Western States StarTrip to this year's StarFest in Phoenix in September (see ad at left). The trip will include two world-renowned automobile museums along the way: The Mullin Automotive Museum in Oxnard, CA and the Nethercutt Collection and Museum in Sylmar, CA. StarTrip includes stops for meals and lodgings. People who take the trip tend to develop a spirit of collegial-

See "Road Trips," page 6

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Cars & Coffee Recap

Cars & Coffee is a regular Saturday-morning event, held in the parking lot behind Starbucks at the Carman Drive exit off I-5. Dozens of interesting cars congregate there starting at 8:00 AM, and on the morning of January 28th, the Portland Section made an effort to show up in force, an endeavor that was made all the easier by a rare January morning of dry weather.

At the peak of the event, I counted thirty-six cars. At least fifteen MBCA-Portland members were there, including Ron Woodruff (driving a BMW 635CSI), Michael Oday, Barry Corno, Gary Hays (driving a new VW GTI, but we won't hold it against him), Bill and Pat Lindquist with their '68 280SL, Nils Jensen (in an exquisite 1960 220SE Cabriolet,

pictured below), Jim Paynter, Paul Hoge, Mike Carulli, Greg Buechler, Hal Harper, Stacy Rollins, President Allen Stephens (and his delightful 1967 250SL Road-



ster), and Yours Truly, whose dirty SLK 230 was parked far away from the shiny metal that everyone was admiring. One special car that showed up was a Zagato-bodied AC Ace, an Italian body on a British car that has been exhibited at Pebble Beach (also pictured at left).

The event is held every Saturday morning, starting at 8:00, at 15350 SW Sequoia Parkway, in Tigard.

You'll find more photos at www.mbca.org/portland. Click on the Photos tab.

— Tom Lichty

Legends of the Autobahn

MBCA invites you to be part of the excitement of Legends of the Autobahn 2012 on Friday, August 17 (see ad, page 7). Held on the greens of the Rancho Cañada Golf Club in Carmel Valley, California, Legends attracted an audience of thousands to view nearly five hundred cars on display in 2011.

Co-hosted by MBCA, the BMW Car Club of America, and the Porsche Club of America, this one-day MBCA national special event brings enthusiasts, owners, and aficionados of distinctive German cars together to view three of the finest marques in the world. The event will feature separate club concours judging sites and combined corral parking areas.

Building on two very successful years and now in only its third year, Legends of the Autobahn has become one

of the "must see" attractions of the world-renowned Monterey Classic Car Week. Rancho Cañada Golf Club—just a few miles from the beautiful Pacific coastline and the breathtaking Pebble Beach—provides a stunning backdrop to view German vehicles of all ages. There is no admission gate fee.

For those interested in entering the Concours, a \$60 entry fee will apply. For those wishing to display only in the corral (any vintage), a \$30 entry fee will apply. The discounted "early bird" registration deadline is August 1, and all registration closes August 10. To register, go to www.motorsportreg.com. Scroll down to "August 17," then to "Legends of the Autobahn—MBCA" (not BMWCCA or PCA). Your registration will go directly to MBCA.



"Road Trips," from page 4

ity along the way and develop new friends while they travel together. Although Richard will make arrangements at specific hotels/motels and restaurants, you are always welcome to make your own.

The tentative schedule:

09/26/2012 – Leave San Carlos, CA for the Mullin Museum in Oxnard; overnight in Oxnard.

09/27/2012 – Leave Oxnard, CA for the Nethercutt Museum in Sylmar; Leave Sylmar early afternoon; overnight in Indio, CA.

09/28/2012 – Leave Indio, CA for StarFest, arriving in Phoenix, AZ by early afternoon.

If you're curious about StarTrip and want more information about the itinerary, contact Richard Simonds at 650-592-7613 (home) or 650-722-0299 (cell) or rsimonds@pacbell.net. Richard needs to make a lot of arrangements and would like to hear from you sooner rather than later.

— Tom Lichty

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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.

MBCA Membership Application

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY



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To contribute to the MBCA Educational Foundation, please send (separate) check made payable to MBCAEF, 1907 Lelaray St., Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

MBCAEF, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, will furnish you with a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.

As Tedious as Cream of Wheat

I've always wondered why people don't do more with that big blank canvas that is the surface of their car. In Europe you rarely see a blank car in traffic: they are wrapped in business logos or big corporate decals for which, I hope, individual drivers receive buckets of promotional euros.

But our cars are as plain as dust. You wouldn't go out day after day dressed from hat to shoes in British racing green without a single dash of bling or contrast, would you? Would you spray paint your house silver metallic and let it go at that? No, of course not. Clothing, houses, and, yes, cars are forms of personal expression. Yet we hesitate.

True, we do have a tendency to put our colleges, favorite teams, and political beliefs on bumper stickers. Lacking a college, we may tout our honor student, or lacking an honor student, a hockey player who can beat our honor student to a pulp. Of course, the silhouette of a pneumatic bimbo can transform a mere mud flap into a thing of beauty.

But that's guy stuff. We girls have our very own website (www.cardecor.com) to shop for waving flowers in pots, interior perfumers, eyelashes for Volkswagen beetles, floral quilted in-car tissue holders, and steering wheel covers adorned with butterflies, hearts, sequins, and peace signs. One doesn't need to be a girl to splay stuffed animals across the parcel shelf, or, as recently noted in Texas, a Star Wars Enterprise ship made of Lego blocks.

We do break down a bit for holidays and special events. In some places, car noses wear Christmas wreaths, in others, they wear reindeer antlers and bulbous red noses. Cars love to dress for the Fourth of July. And some communities are now decorating cars for Halloween, notably with bat ears. Weddings are an occasion to wreak havoc on a car, everything from a wretched tin can trailing fringe to a pricey collection of flower bouquets and satin ribbons.

Most commonly, we love to dangle things from our rear view mirrors. For those of us without fuzzy dice, a mortarboard tassel, worry beads, or a scent diffuser, it is now possible to buy pretty beaded charms to dance before the windshield. (BTW, all this is illegal in Minnesota.)

And, of course, our cars wear other decals, from giant flames that make them look more like weapons of destruction, to snobbish symbols like parking stickers for pricey private clubs and the much-treasured Nantucket beach-driving permits (\$100 per season) that are always lined up in chronological order to prove how old your money is.

See "Blonde," page 10



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Pagoda Party!

Pagoda lovers from all over the Pacific Northwest and Canada are invited to gather August 18–19 for the inaugural “Pagodas on Orcas” drive-in/tech session event.

A weekend touring and show event is planned exclusively for Pagoda owners. “Pagodas on Orcas” will be held in the town of Olga, Washington, at a private residence on the eastern side of the island.



There will be a grassy display area at the event site where organizers Larry and Susan Hemstreet will host an informal picnic lunch August 18. The meet and greet session on in the morning will be followed with some technical presentations by MBCA members, an information exchange, and plenty of hands-on displays. An informal picnic lunch will follow. Sunday is unstructured except for a highly enjoyable caravan-style island tour for those who choose to participate.

“I wanted to put together an event in a place that I’ve been coming to for years that combines a car that I have a great love for with a group of owners who share the same passion,” said Larry Hemstreet, who recently finished a restoration on his 1966 230SL Pagoda. “It will be a great chance for guys to network, enjoy the island, and, best of all, get to drive their cars.”

The venue is physically limited to only twenty cars. Those interested in attending should contact Larry at pagodas.orcas@gmail.com.

For lodging information and more on Orcas Island, visit <http://orcasislandchamber.com>.



Under the Racks at MBI Motors (Recap)

If you have been to MBI Motors, you know that this independent repair facility is housed in an historic building. What you may not know is that since 1906, the MBI Motors building has been home to some form of business selling or servicing automobiles. From Ford motor coaches to Can-Am motorcycles and Skidoo snow machines, this place has seen generations of car guys pass through the door.

On Saturday February 11th, a determined group of Mercedes club members drove into this historic facility to complete winter projects. From simple oil and brake fluid

changes to more complex jobs, the crew at MBI welcomed twenty cars from the Portland Section. Event Chair Greg Carlson and his son Chris welcomed everyone and kept things running smoothly. And the experienced mechanics and technicians from MBI hovered around each car, providing assistance when needed. As usual, the parts department was open for those that needed an oil filter or a unique M-B part.

Ed Waite completed one of the more complex jobs of the day, replacing the water pump on his 1971 280SL. Things



Doug Middlestetter inspects his yard-sale find at MBI Motors February 11th.

See "MBI," page 11

40th Forest Grove Concours d'Elegance

Celebrating Mercedes-Benz



The Forest Grove Concours d'Elegance features over three hundred vintage, sports, and collector cars presented on the tree-shaded campus of Pacific University. As the featured marque, Mercedes-Benz automobiles made from 1886 to 1973 are invited to be shown for display or judging.

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Produced by the Rotary Club of Forest Grove, Oregon with proceeds benefiting Forest Grove Rotary Foundation Scholarships and service projects. www.forestgroveconcours.org

"Blonde," from page 7

But this is small stuff. As I write, I am looking at a parking lot of pale, blank cars, as tedious as Cream of Wheat. Why should they not be wearing landscape murals of the Grand Tetons, or a tasteful film of crimson *toile de Jouy*? And since Mercedes-Benz people are already driving cars with little peace symbols in chrome, why not make them as profitable as Nascars, with paid advertising for Pennzoil, Wal-Mart, and Aflac? Couldn't we all use a little extra cash to keep these vehicles in gas and wax?



Would I, I wonder, accept, say, three thou a month if Mercedes-Benz wanted to put a yard-wide logo on my driver's door? You bet I would. My passenger door is open for business, too.



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"Tulip Rally," from page 1

It is recommended that you pack a picnic lunch to enjoy along the way or at the end point while the scores are being tabulated. There are restaurants along the tour route, but they can be rather crowded while the festival is underway.

Overnight accommodations are available on a first-come, first-serve basis at the Holiday Inn Express in Burlington. For hotel reservations, call 360-755-7338 and mention Tulip Rally to receive the special rate of \$119 per night for Friday and/or Saturday.

IMPORTANT: Bring along canned food for donation to a local food bank.

Check-in begins at 8:00 AM, Saturday, April 21st at the Cascade Mall, Exit 230 off Interstate 5 near Anacortes in Washington State.



Pre-registration will close on April 16th. Any entries received after that date will be considered day-of. Pre-registration is \$12 per car; day-of registration is \$15.

To register, include your name, mailing address, e-mail address, year and model Mercedes, and mention of the Portland Section of MBCA. Include the appropriate registration fee and an extra \$15 if you want an event T-shirt (indicate size). Make checks payable to MGCCNWC and mail everything to Tulip Rally, c/o David Ellis, 1521 Eagle Ridge Drive S., Renton, WA 98055. Your completed registration materials will be awaiting you at check-in.

For more information call David Ellis at 425-277-1086 or 425-691-0444 (cell, day-of).



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This space is available for a business-card-size advertisement. Contact the editor (page 2) for rates and production information.

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.

Looking for an older diesel for use as a daily driver. Car need not be in showroom condition. Four-speed manual essential. Perhaps a '73 220D, or a '77 or later 240D.

Call John Hartman: 541-447-6217.

"MBI," from page 9

got interesting when the bolt that holds the pump to the housing broke. To top it off, when Ed pulled into the shop, the transmission shifter grommet broke! The transmission was stuck in neutral. Ed told me "It could have happened anywhere or anytime! Being stranded out in the boondocks and asking your wife to push the car is not a good thing. Someone was watching out for me." Ed said MBI employee Keith was a big help in getting is car finished before the end of the session.

New member Doug Middlestetter brought in a nice original Ponton sedan to put on the lift and inspect underneath. He told me he recently bought the car at a yard sale in Oregon City. Doug and a friend circled under the car and made a tally of the jobs they planned to tackle. I also spotted Ernie Brawley draining the brake fluid from his red 1960 300SL roadster. Other members at MBI included Bill Lindquist and his '68 280SL, Mark Fecchi, Stacy Rollins, and Byron Pace.

At noon Linda Rathke served up her famous buffet lunch, with Prime Rib and a traditional dessert. And it was great to see MBI founder Sig Rathke at the shop, helping the techs and offering advice to our members.

We thank MBI owners Corbin Lancaster and Debbie Pannu for hosting this event. Corbin and his experienced staff were constantly in motion helping our club members get through their projects. The Portland Section will be back next year!

— *Photo and text by Allen Stephens*

Portland in March; Wilsonville in May March Board Meeting to be Held in Portland

The Portland Section March board meeting will be held at Mercedes-Benz of Portland (1605 SW Naito Parkway), at 10:00 AM March 10th. All members of the club—not just board members—are invited.

The Portland location will alternate with the Mercedes-Benz of Wilsonville location for our board meetings, which are held every other month. In other words, the next meeting after the March 10th meeting will be held in May at the Wilsonville location.

PLEASE NOTE: Because our cars will be parked amidst their inventory of new and used cars, the people at Mercedes-Benz of Portland have asked to park our cars for us, assuring us that it's no trouble.

We thank Mercedes-Benz of Portland for both use of their facilities *and* the valet service.



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Portland Section Schedule of Events

March 10: Board meeting at Mercedes-Benz of Portland. NOTE LOCATION. See story, page 11.

March 24: Car collection tour. Meet at Burbuck Motors for coffee and breakfast, then caravan to the event. See story, page 3.

April 14: The Art and Science of Auto Upholstery, tour of Lynn Gibner's shop. Read President's Message, page 2.

April 21: Rally to Skagit County Tulip Festival in Mount Vernon, WA with MG Club. See story, page 1.

May 19: Tour to Evergreen Air Museum with the BMW Club. Details in the April issue.

June 2: Driving event to a winery in the Willamette Valley. Details in the May issue.

June 23: Join the Seattle Section for a drive to Car Collector Brown Maloney's in Sequim, Washington.

July 7, 8: Mercedes Club Corral at Portland Historic Races. Details to come.

July 15: Concours d'Elegance in Forest Grove. Mercedes-Benz is the featured brand. See page 9.

August 12: Regional Show and Shine in Seattle.

August 17: Legends of the Autobahn. See page 5.

Sept 15: Oregon Festival of Cars, Les Schwab Amphitheater in Bend. Visit www.oregonfestivalofcars.com.

Sept 28–Oct 3: Starfest 2012 in Phoenix. A three-day, two-night "StarTrip" from the Bay Area to Phoenix is planned, including stops at two car collections. See ad & Editor's Column on page 4.