

The Northwestern

STAR

Mercedes-Benz Club of America-Portland Section



**Inside: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing:
30 Years of the 500E**



Summer 2020

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Welcome, New Members!

Name	Location
Zane Gard, Jr.	Beaverton, OR
Tim Bordelon	Brush Prairie, WA
Shawn Brockway	Sandy, OR
Jeff Zurschmeide	Tillamook, OR
Laurent Bentitou	Monmouth, OR
James Hutchings	Summerville, OR
Roger Nettles	Vancouver, WA
Matthew Wiltse	Portland, OR
Steven De Jongh	Washougal, WA
Teresa De Mers	Beaverton, OR
Earl Rose	Battleground, WA
Ed Waite	Camas, WA

Cover Photo:

Orange County section member Eric Bergstedt's 500E; photo by Ann Marie Alexander.



Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Portland Section

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We encourage submissions, articles and photos from our members. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of December, March, June, and September, care of the editor (see above). We reserve the right to edit or refuse submissions and/or advertising. Copyright © MBCA Portland Section. All rights reserved.

President's Message: We're Still Here!

By David Abarr, Portland Section President

Greetings all!

I hope this find all members safe and healthy during the last few months of lockdown. We had to put on hold all events for 2020 due to mandated restrictions. As was Monterey car week rescheduled to 2021 and so that put Legends of the Autobahn on hold as well. So, my dance card has been very light these days. Germanpalooza will return in 2021 as well. We did do a drive in the mid-Willamette Valley in Marion and Linn county a few weeks ago in June. The plan is to do a drive a month that conforms to the restrictions by county. Keep an eye on emails blasts as well as our section's Facebook account.

We are a little behind on newsletter editions and working hard to provide content that can be helpful during this extended period of lack of events going on. Thank you for your patience.

Happy motoring!

Find us:

Visit our web page here: <http://portland.mbca.org>

You can find all event photo albums on our SmugMug site: pdxmbca.smugmug.com



find us on
Facebook

Stay up to date on the latest event information...
Follow the Portland Section on Facebook!
<https://www.facebook.com/mbcaportlandoregon/>

Portland Section Schedule of Events

August Cabin Fever Drive 2.0; Troutdale to Zigzag Saturday August 8th

Other Drives To be Announced—watch your email and [our Facebook page](#)

Recap: Cabin Fever Cruise 1.0

By Matt Nenninger, Portland Section Vice President—Event Photos by George Larson



On Saturday June 13th the Portland Section held our first attempt at a group event since the COVID-19 lockdown began. A group of about 23 people in 15 cars (we limited the group to 25 people) took a two hour drive through Marion and Linn county back roads.

Our route started at the Fred Meyer in South Salem. The weekend forecast had been fairly wet, but very few drops fell on us as we gathered in the parking lot and reviewed the route. I was encouraged by the response and met quite a few members that I had never met before, including Guillermo Giannico who has been a member for 6 years but was joining us in his silver 2001 SL500 for his first ever club event.

After leaving Fred Meyer and making our way south along Liberty and Skyline roads, we stopped briefly to make sure everyone made it through the traffic lights before

continuing on through the curviest part of our route - across the hills of south Salem and down to River Road. Crossing the Willamette River, we drove through Independence, which is currently experiencing a renaissance of sorts with new construction and general sprucing up of the already cute downtown area. Then we skirted around the edge of Monmouth, driving right through the campus of Western Oregon University. Heading west and south from Monmouth, we continued to the Kings Valley Highway through beautifully green fields and rolling hills.

After joining the two-lane "highway," the pastoral view gave way to more wooded scenery as we entered the foothills of the Coastal Range. Soon enough, we reached our stop at the Ritner Creek Covered Bridge. The bridge sits alongside the current highway so you can't actually drive through it, but it's nice because you can enjoy and inspect the bridge up close, without fear of traffic. They actually have some picnic tables on the bridge itself.

An advertisement for MBI Motors Inc. featuring a blue Mercedes-Benz car. The text includes the company name, Mercedes-Benz logo, and contact information.

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Guillermo Giannico's SL500 at the starting point

When legs were sufficiently stretched, and the line for the portable facilities had dwindled, we continued south along Kings Valley Highway before turning back to the east. We drove right by the [Airlie Winery](#), which looked like it might be a good stop for a future re-drive of this route. Once again in the fields of the Willamette Valley, we crossed highway 99E at Suver and followed the Willamette River to downtown Albany and Monteith Riverpark. Even though it was a little chilly for a picnic, members enjoyed milling about (at a distance from each other) and chatting about the drive, and the cars, and the crazy times in which we find ourselves.



Members' cars at Ritner Creek Covered Bridge

Regardless of the forecast, most of the drive and every stop we made was essentially dry. We only passed through one downpour after our mid-point stop. Otherwise the clouds and the occasional bit of blue sky made the greens of the fields and trees really pop. It was a beautiful drive and I received lots of positive feedback. It was good to see so many new (at least to me) faces. That tells me some more events in the Salem area might be in order. If you're in that area, and you would like to help organize a drive or another event (with help from the board) please let me know! (matt.nenninger@gmail.com) And if you'd like to take yourself on a drive of this route, here's the [Google Maps link](#).

More photos of the event can be seen on our [SmugMug photo site](#).

Virtual Car Chat with the Peachtree Section

By Matt Nenninger, Portland Section Vice President

With social distancing guidelines in effect and so many events cancelled over the last few months, many of you may be longing for the days where people could gather to enjoy a common interest - like cars. If you're like me, you might be seeking out opportunities to join in on some virtual gatherings, whether it's a virtual happy hour with friends, a Skype call with family, or a virtual alternative to Cars & Coffee type events.

For those seeking some car chat, the MBCA Peachtree Section has been hosting some great online sessions using the Zoom application. I've joined three so far. The first was basically a buyer's guide for R107 and R129 SLs, the second was an informative session on caring for the aging R107, and then a more modern focus with a discussion about maintaining our electronic Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

The sessions were all moderated by Peachtree Section Vice President Gary Edwards and Past President Diana Quinn. The R107/129 Tech Talks featured several different presenters, providing an overview of each generation, then discussing various points of buying and maintaining an SL of those model years. In the session called *Caring for your Aging 107SL*, George Murphy presented some very good information on the different components and areas of concern on the R107 SLs. George is the MBCA Technical Advisor, and he has what seems to be an encyclopedic knowledge of Mercedes-Benz vehicles - and not just for older SLs. He also presented the third session I attended, an *Electronics Maintenance Tech Talk*. In that session George covered the advantages and disadvantages of owning a newer, electronic Mercedes, the different diagnostic systems and methods, battery systems and jump starting, things you should and shouldn't do, and how to troubleshoot some common issues. George is an amazing resource for club members. If he can't answer your question (and I bet he can) he can sure point you in the right direction. Just shoot him an email at the address listed in the links below. I sent him a question about the Tire Pressure Monitoring System on my 2008 E320. He was able to tell me the range of acceptable pressure, and help me determine if I had an issue that required removing the tires to check the sensors.

Looking at the [Peachtree Section calendar](#), I see they have another Zoom session happening on August 22nd. This one is called *Recovering a 129 Barn Find with George Murphy. Sounds interesting! You can register online at the link below. It looks like this session has a \$10 registration fee.*

And if you're interested in any of the sessions I mentioned above, but you missed the live feed, you can still view the recorded sessions on the [Peachtree Section's YouTube channel](#). They have more videos than the ones I mentioned here, like one on *Automotive Photography that I think will be next on my watchlist. So check out the links below, and watch their calendar for future sessions to join in the fun!*

If you've found some other virtual ways to fill the car chat need, and would like to share those with the club, please drop me a line at: matt.nenninger@gmail.com

Links:

[MBCA PeachTube](#) (Peachtree Section YouTube Channel)

[R107 Tech Talk](#)

[R129 Tech Talk](#)

[R107/R129 Q&A Session](#)

[Caring For Your Aging 107SL](#)

[Care of your Aging 107SL Presentation](#) (PDF slides)

[Electronics Maintenance Tech Talk](#)

[Automotive Photography](#)

George Murphy, MBCA National Technical Advisor: perfanalysis@comcast.net

Cover Story: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: 30 Years of the 500E

By David Abarr, Portland Section President, with excerpts from the Star Magazine® - Photos by Ann Marie Alexander

2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the famed 500E. Introduced in late 1990 in Germany showing up on the price list on October 1st. At the time it was 134,50 DM which was around 78K USD. Today that equates to \$153,000.00. Truly super car territory. This year's Legends of the Autobahn was to feature the 500E aka 124.036. Well it looks like 2021 will be hosting those cars from around the US. The 500E is a fascinating story. It was the partnership of Stuttgart rivals Porsche and Mercedes-Benz coming together. The history of the 2 companies will always be intertwined and the 500E adds more to that story.

In 2017 Legends of the Autobahn hosted Orange County section member Eric Bergsedt's 500E. It captured best in class, marque and show that year and received a 100-point score. A score of that stature is typically reserved for a Classic Center level restoration. This car was rebuilt to every nut and bolt by Leistung Autohaus of Garden Grove, California. As pictured here, and on this edition's cover, it is truly stunning. When I see another 500E I compare it to the perfect specimen that I saw that August in Monterey. It is hard not to make the comparison in that this is exactly as it should be. It is that car you would use to make your example

to that level of perfection. If you see a 500E know it is a very special car that is rare and tells the evolution of the fast sedan and Mercedes-Benz involvement in that genre.

The following is an excerpt from the Star written by Gary Anderson and Denis L. Tanney

We can only guess as to why Mercedes-Benz chose the method it did to produce a sports sedan using the W124 500E. Certainly, the experience of contracting with Cosworth in 1984 to engineer a 16-valve head for the 190E 2.3 had positive results. Then too, by 1986, the company was seeing the success that independent tuner AMG was enjoying after dropping DOHC M117 engines into into W, C and S124s to produce the cars that the automotive press had nicknamed the "Hammers."

(Continued on next page)



Membership has its perks!

For a detailed list of MBCA membership benefits, click this link:

<https://www.mbca.org/member-benefits>

Cover Story, continued...

Mercedes-Benz had the ingredients of a contender in its four-door W124 sedan, with its good, if not stellar performance, and the V-8 engine and sports suspension from the R129 500SL roadster. However, the firm had neither the background nor the production capacity to build a limited-run high-performance sedan.

In contrast, Porsche, the company's Stuttgart neighbor, had just manufactured a limited number of the ultra-expensive 959 racecar homologation special. But the Zuffenhausen firm had fallen on hard times and the remaining run of 959s had been canceled, leaving an empty production line. Utilizing Porsche's expertise and production facilities to build a high-performance variant of the W124 made good sense to Mercedes-Benz. An agreement was reached, and development of the 500E began in 1989.

The 500E would use the naturally aspirated dual-camshaft 32-valve 4,973cc V-8 engine derived from the 500SL. The stock engine was rated at 322 horsepower and 354 pound-feet of torque. Braking was via sturdy R129 components, with front 300mm discs wearing 4-piston Brembo calipers from the 500E and 277mm rear discs from the 500SL.

The changes needed to house the M119 power train and R129 suspension would create a very aggressive looking 500E, separating it visually from more benign W124s. The track was widened 1.5 inches, the machine sat 0.9 inches lower, flared fenders contained wider tires, and a front air dam and side skirts aided aerodynamics – all modifications derived from the wide-bodied AMG vehicles.

Production entailed transporting a chassis from Sindelfingen to Porsche's Reutter-Bau plant in nearby Zuffenhausen, where it was modified to accept the V-8 engine and fitted with R129 suspension parts, then ferried back to Mercedes-Benz for installation of interior components. The rolling chassis was then transferred back to Reutter-Bau for power train marriage before – at last – being returned to Sindelfingen for finishing work, final testing and shipment. The total process, from assignment of a production number until a completed vehicle left the plant, lasted 18 days.



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Cover Story, continued...

The companies built 10,479 units 1992-1995. Of those units, 1,505 were exported to the United States where the 500E arrived fully loaded, with the only options being a dealer-installed CD changer and an integrated telephone. The 500E was built only as a four-seater; Recaro supplied leather seats and the fronts were heated.

Along with the rest of the new E-Class, all but the last year of cars produced were badged 500E. Examples built in the final year, when the entire line was facelifted, were badged E500. Given the logistical challenges, it's likely safe to assume that every vehicle was built at a loss, but the experience paved the way for Mercedes-Benz to enter the high-performance market through cooperation with AMG.

Period performance tests of the "Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" were impressive: 0-62 mph times of 5.5 to 6.0 seconds and acceleration through the quarter-mile in 14.1 seconds at 101 mph. The top speed was electronically limited at 6,000 rpm to 155 mph. Fuel efficiency was rated at 14 mpg in the city and 17 mpg on the highway.

The 500E/E500 underwent few major changes during its three-year production run. Models from 1992 and 1993 are virtually identical; the most notable difference was a slightly less powerful engine in the 1993 American-market model. The 1994 E500 is easily recognized because of the updated headlights, grille and trunk lid common to all E-Class cars that year. The engine, however, remained unchanged from the 1993 500E.



After only three years, the niche filled by the 500E would be taken by the E60 AMG with a 6-liter M119 400-horsepower AMG-built V-8 engine inserted during production or, often, by sending an E500 to AMG's Affalterbach workshops to be retrofitted with the AMG 6-liter engine.



Coming Events

Cabin Fever Drive 2.0 – 8/8

Join the club for a short drive on Saturday August 8th. Our starting point will be the Lewis & Clark State Recreation Site next to the Sandy River in Troutdale. It's the same location we started our Columbia River Gorge drive last October 12th. The park is open now. The route generally follows along the Sandy River and ends up in Zig Zag / Welches.

Start time is 10:00 am. We'll probably finish up about Noon. From there people can go east on Route 26 to Government Camp, drive north to Hood River on Route 35, or head back toward Portland on Route 26 west. **Please note masks will be required outside your car** and we will limit this to 25 people. **RSVP is required.**



WHAT: Mt Hood Forest Scenic Drive

WHEN: Saturday August 8th @ 10 am we will hit the road. Plan to show up 9:30 am to 10 am. It would be nice to catch up with members.

WHERE: [Lewis and Clark Recreation Area](#) 1 Jordan Rd, Troutdale, OR 97060

RSVP to Stacy Rollins: stacy@stacyrollins.com

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Membership Corner

WANTED: Member Stories

We are in search of member stories.

Have you taken an epic road trip (or maybe an interesting day trip) in your favorite Mercedes-Benz? Maybe you've poured your blood, sweat and tears into restoring a classic? Do you remember the moment you first were introduced—or fell in love with—Mercedes-Benz cars?

These are the stories we want to hear, and we know you have them!

Please consider sharing your experiences and your love of the marque with other members by contributing a story for this newsletter. Just send to Matt Nenninger at matt.nenninger@gmail.com.

Remember: Stories are best when they're shared!

Service Discounts for Members

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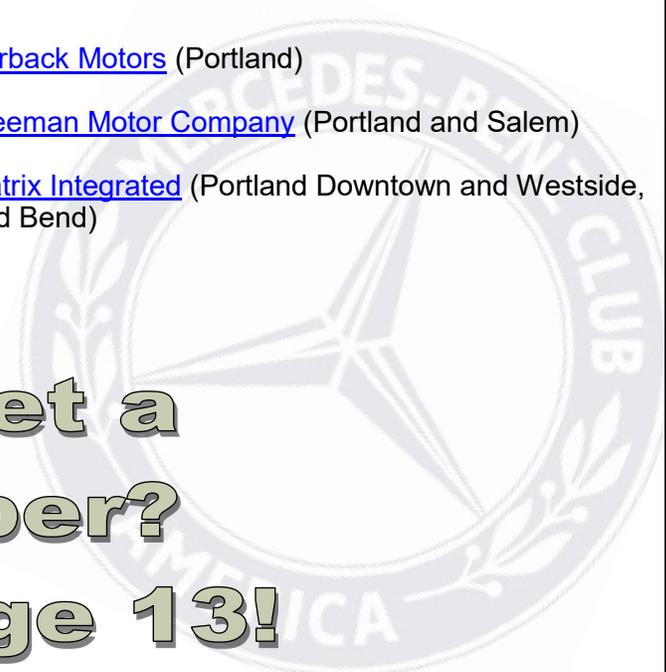
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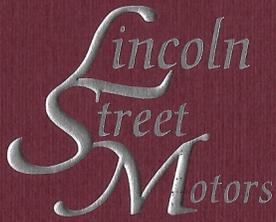
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MBCAEF, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, will furnish you with a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.

Classified Ads*

Ads run for one issue and are placed free of charge for MBCA members. Non-club members are charged \$10 per ad, \$20 with picture. The submission deadline is the 15th of the December, March, June, or September.

To place an ad contact the Newsletter Editor.

**NW Star provides no guarantees as to the quality of the items being sold and the accuracy of the information provided about the sale items.*

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rmkaufman@yahoo.com [note: use "MB 220SE" as your subject line]



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Member Photo Spotlight



Members' cars parked across from the Ritner Creek Covered Bridge—the midway stopping point on the Cabin Fever Cruise 1.0 (see recap in this issue).

Photo by George Larson

Have a great photo you'd like to share for a future issue?

Just send to matt.nenninger@gmail.com

