



The Houston Star

MBCA | Houston Section Newsletter

August
2010

www.mbca.org/houston

In this issue

New Members

Page 3

Technical Q & A

Page 6

MBCA Rebranding

Page 8

Mercedes Marketplace

Page 11

Upcoming Events

Coffee and Cars

August 7

Board of Directors Mtg.

September 7

Fall Social/Elections

September 19

Oktoberfest at TGA

October 2010



MBCA | Houston Section Attends Wings & Wheels

By: Joseph Middleton

It was a scorching hot day on July 17, 2010, but the heat wasn't enough to keep people from attending the July Wings & Wheels at the 1940 Air Terminal Museum, located at Hobby Airport. July's Wings & Wheels marked the first time that the occasion was attended by MBCA. About a dozen cars from MBCA were there, but we were not alone. Our British friends, Jaguar, MG, and Triumph were there in good numbers. There was even a DeLorean snuck in for good measure. Inside the museum, there were plenty of informational exhibits about the history of aviation in Houston. The staff made sure patrons were fed with hot dogs, chips, cookies and soft drinks. We were also able to see some of the restoration efforts that have been taking place to restore the nearly 70 year old Art Deco structure to its original grandeur. There's still work to be done, but the building is already looking good. However, the real action was out on the ramp.

(continued on page 5)

President's Message

Hi MB Enthusiasts,

Fall is fast approaching (and no I'm not forgetting the melting temperatures that will befall us prior to!) with exciting events lined up. Still left this summer in August will be Cars and Coffee in the uptown square from 8 to 10am on the first Saturday in August 8/7/10. Kicking off Fall events will be our Fall Social Event at Benjy's on Washington Sunday 9/19/10 at 5 (details will be emailed confirming), this will also include board election activities. Our Fall autocross in October along with Oktoberfest at TGA in the first half of the month and finally, the bowling event coordinated with the other participating German car clubs.

Just a quick note, for the Fall social we'll be raffling a set of early SLK wheels and tires plus a few odds and ends for the early SLK. These were given by a member whom happens to have a very impressive collection of pre-and post-war Rolls Royces that after he moves, I've asked if the club can come over for a viewing. Please stay tuned for the event location and time. The wheels are in excellent shape (watch for photos soon) with good rubber. They would be an excellent addition for modernizing early models or great for an extra set of wheels and tires for auto-crossing.

On Oct 30-31, 2010, Porsche & Mercedes Benz clubs are invited to participate in a Poker run from San Antonio to Houston. This will benefit the severely ill and injured Navy and Coast Guard. The foundation is called Navy Safe Harbor foundation. It is a non-profit 501-3C. There will be seven stops along the way in which the drivers will pick up a poker card. The next day at 12:00 the drivers will arrive at the dedicated location & present their hand of cards and the winner will be announced.

Happy Motoring,

Damon Stith | President | [Mercedes-Benz Club of America](#) | [Houston Section](#)

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Those of you with a keen eye may have noticed something a little bit different about this issue of the *Houston Star*. You are correct, some changes have been made to the newsletter's layout in accordance with the newest Style Guide put forth by MBCA in response to Club rebranding efforts. You can read about those rebranding efforts on page 8 of this issue of the *Houston Star*. Beginning with this issue, you'll find crisp, Sans Serif font and headline text in a hue aptly called MBCA Blue. If you have an exceptionally sharp eye, you may have also noticed that the MBCA logos in this newsletter are now a darker shade of blue than in previous issues. Prior to this issue, the logos were in a brighter shade of blue. Now, they are presented in the proper shade of MBCA Blue.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter's slightly different format. It's not a radical change. I guess you could compare it to the sheet metal refreshing of a vehicle's bodystyle instead of going to an entirely different chassis.

Many miles of smiles to you and yours!

Joseph Middleton | Club Secretary & Newsletter Editor | [Mercedes-Benz Club of America](#) | [Houston Section](#)

The 123 chassis celebrates 35 years of looking good!

By: Joseph Middleton

After nearly seven years of research and development, the first pre-production W123 models rolled off of the production line in July 1975. The W123 was built as the replacement for the W114/115 chassis (aka: /8 or stroke 8) models dating from 1968. Although the W123 was the replacement for the W114/115, both models would be built alongside each other until December 1976. Official production of the W123 would not begin until December 1975, and the W123 would not be officially introduced to the public until January 1976. The W123 would not be introduced to the North American market until late 1976 as a 1977 year model. For the North American market, the initial models made available in 1977 were the 240D, 300D, 230, and 280E. The 230 was discontinued for the North American market by 1978, leaving the 240D, 300D, and 280E as the only 4 door models available for purchase in North America, though gray market variants such as the 200, 200D, 220D, 230E, 250, 280, and even long wheelbase models (internal designation V123) would find their way here. In the Spring of 1976, coupe versions, referred to as the C123, were introduced. European markets received the 230C, 230CE, 280C and 280CE for the 1977 model year while North American markets received only the 280CE and the North American only 300CD starting in the 1978 model year.

The 123 also introduced a new concept to the world of Mercedes-Benz, a factory built station wagon. The T123 wagon was introduced in 1977 at the Frankfurt Auto Show and began full scale production in 1978. Europeans had a wider choice of wagon models in 1978 such as the 230T, 240TD, 250T, 280TE, and 300TD. Wagons were not available in the US until 1979, and only the 300TD was sold in the United States.

In 1980-81, the 123 received a slight interior makeover, optional ABS in Europe, and new models were added to the European lineup such as the 230CE, 230TE, and 300TD Turbodiesel. With the introduction of these new models, the 230, 230C, 230T, 280, 280C were all discontinued. For the US market, 1980 would mark the last year of the non turbo 300TD, to be replaced by the 300TD Turbodiesel in 1981. The European market would have both turbo and non turbo variants of the 300TD available for purchase until 1986. 1981 would also be the last year for the 280CE, 280E, and non turbo 300D and 300CD models in North America.

(Please see "The W123" on page 9)

MBCA | Houston Section welcomes the following new members to the Club!

Rory and Janet Burke of West Columbia, TX

James Fluet of Humble, TX

Ed A. Gorman of Montgomery, TX

P.J. Meyers of Damon, TX

Robert Pearson of Houston, TX

Jim and Ann Potts of Sulphur, LA

Welcome!

Willkommen!

CASARI'S

**- Lifetime Warranty on Body & Frame Repairs -
Porsche - Mercedes-Benz - BMW**

Glasure Original Paint System on Premises
No Warranty on Rust Repair

Computer Analyzer

5 Year Warranty on Complete Paint Work
1 Year Warranty on Mechanical Work

All OEM Replacement Parts

Laser Front & Rear 4-Wheel Alignment

Jorge Casari
281-469-3302 - Phone
281-890-2637 - Fax

12470 Windfern Road
Houston, Texas



Texas-German Autohaus, L.P.

Service and Repair of MERCEDES and BMW Automobiles **EUROPEAN PERFORMANCE**

Located on *Edloe St.*, between *Richmond* and *Westheimer*.
State of the Art computerized equipment and tools.
Oil Change Special while you wait.
Complimentary Shuttle Service to your home or office.
Free oil & filter change using standard mineral oil or \$35.00 for synthetic motor oil, for new Mercedes Benz club members, with this ad. (Limit one per customer)
Factory trained and certified technicians.



The TGA Team
50 years of experience
visit online @ www.t-g-a.com

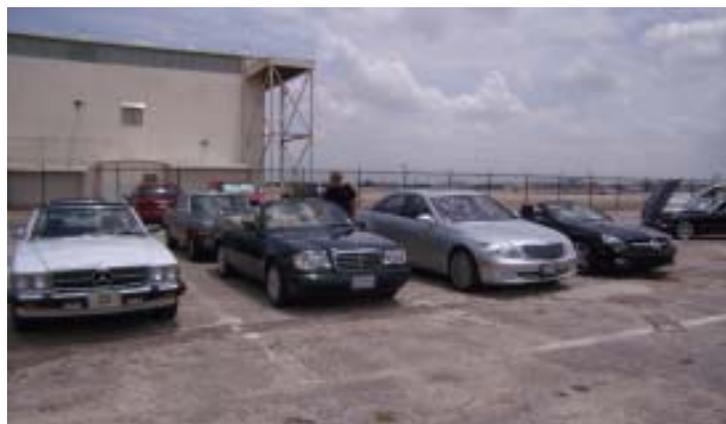
3417 Edloe St. Houston, Texas 77027
Tel. (713) 850-8282 Fax (713) 850-8818

MBCA | Houston Section Attends Wings & Wheels

(continued from page 1)

On the ramp, there was an assortment of aircraft parked for all to see. The largest was a twin engine Aero Commander which departed before the festivities were over. Smaller planes were also present, such as a Piper Cub and various Cessnas. The star attraction was the 1958 Cessna 172 being raffled off by the museum. The lucky winner, Art Shaddix of Magnolia (not a MBCA member) was announced around 2:15pm and was informed via a telephone call using Skype about his big win. After the big prize had been given away, many attendees left, but there was still much to see and do at the museum. The biggest draw besides the raffle was probably the ramp access. It's fascinating to see airport operations from that perspective. In this era, it's not often that you can go behind airport fences and view operations. You probably can't get a better view of a Southwest Airlines jet taking off and landing unless you're actually in the jet itself!

To sum this event up, I'll simply put it as the old saying goes, "a good time was had by all."



See more from the event at the following links:

<http://www.1940airterminal.org/WingsAndWheels/2010/07/>

<http://tinyurl.com/2a5cofe>



F&J EUROPEAN AUTO PARTS INC.

6115 Clarewood

Houston, TX 77081

SPECIALIZING IN MERCEDES BENZ PARTS

FORMERLY WITH MORITZ E.C.P.

PH713/773-0887

Parts Rep.

**Want to place an ad in the
Houston Star? Well, this
space can be yours!
Contact the editor at
editorjoseph@gmail.com for
more info.**

Technical Q & A

Question: After a recent trip to my mechanic for a routine oil change in my 300SDL, he suggested that I should change the coolant. He says Mercedes uses a special type which is yellow and that the current coolant is green. Is this something which warrants changing or will it be fine with the green stuff? Thank you.

Answer: Your mechanic is right in that these cars require a special coolant which protects the aluminum parts. The stuff is available at the dealer for a hefty price or at local auto stores where it is called "Zerex G-05." If you are changing the coolant you may want to have your mechanic perform a citrus flush to remove any crud that has built up in the system over time, thus allowing the coolant to work more efficiently.

If you have any questions, please send your requests to the *Houston Star* or contact me directly. I can be reached at Saleem@JohansenUSA.com or call me at 281.883.3792.

2010 StarFest®



2010 StarFest® MBCA'S Premier National Event!

September 24-29
Winchester, Virginia

Don't miss out on the Concours d' Elegance, Rally, Seminars, Clinics, Social & Track Events and much, much more in the Beautiful Shenandoah Valley!

Website:

<http://www.starfest2010.com>

Hosted by:



Legends of the Autobahn West Coast Summer Concours

Legends of the Autobahn WEST COAST SUMMER CONCOURS



- MBCA National Special Event celebrating three German marques
- Friday, August 13, 2010 during Monterey Classic Car Week
- Rancho Cañada Golf Club, Carmel Valley, California
- Enter your Mercedes-Benz for judging or display only in the corral
- Register at www.motorsportreg.com, search on name or date of event
- For additional information, contact Laura Simonds, (650) 592-7613, simonds1@pacbell.net



MBCA's *The Star* takes home 13 medals at the International Automotive Media Awards

MBCA's publication, *The Star*, won 13 medals at the 19th International Automotive Media Awards on June 21, 2010 in Dearborn, Michigan. The awards are as follows.



BEST OF GRAPHICS: to Jean Constantine, for photography on W154: Back on the Track.

Category E7, History, Single-Marque: Mercedes under Pressure, by Karl Ludvigsen (Silver)

Category E8, Technical: Buying your First Classic, by Bruce Adams. (Silver)

Category E10, Technical/Pictorial: Back from the Dead by Stephan McKeown (Gold)

Category E18, Collector Vehicles: Nearly 100 and Still Going Strong, by Brad Beutlich/David Gooley (Bronze)

Category E18: What the Heck Is It? to The Star, (Bronze)

Category E18: W154, Back on the Track to Rich Taylor (Silver)

Category E22, Column: On the Track to John Chuhuran (Bronze)

Category E23, Motorsports Event: Hamilton, McLaren Mercedes Triumphant to John Chuhuran (Bronze)

Category F40, Design of Total Publication: The Star, Jul/Aug 2009, Gary Anderson (Bronze)

Category F46, Illustration: Photographs: W154 Back on the Track to Jean Constantine, (Gold)

Category I54, Single Issue, editing; Magazine under 20K Circulation: The Star Jan/Feb 2009. Rise Sales (Bronze)

Category I54, Single Issue, editing; Magazine under 20K Circulation: The Star Nov/Dec 2009, to MBCA (Silver)

MBCA embarks on Rebranding Process

MBCA has begun a process to refresh, revitalize, and rebrand the Club. This plan has been in the works for years, but visible changes will start to be seen as soon as this month as the Club moves to an all new website and database on August 31, 2010. To find out what club members can expect to see as a result of the rebranding process, an interview was conducted with MBCA's Executive Director, Douglas L. Truitt. The *Houston Star* asked Mr. Truitt a few questions about the rebranding process, and this is what he had to say.

What is this rebranding process all about?

MBCA hired a company by the name of Brodeur Brothers to conduct a survey study of Club members. The members were asked what the Club needed to do to improve itself, and five major points of improvement were pointed out by the membership. Those points were as follows.

1. **Fun:** Members wanted a greater variety of content and events to appeal to broader tastes.
2. **More Contemporary:** Members felt that MBCA was "old" and "stodgy" when compared to the BMW or Porsche clubs.
3. **Information:** Members wanted not only technical and mechanical information about their Mercedes-Benz vehicles, but also wanted general information about Mercedes-Benz vehicles to be presented through MBCA.
4. **Quality:** Members felt that the website needed revamping. When compared to other car clubs' websites and even when compared to MBUSA's website, the club website seemed lacking and outdated instead of refined.
5. **Inclusiveness:** Members felt that the Club was not appealing to a wide enough cross section of Mercedes-Benz owners. It was noted that younger owners and owners of newer vehicles did not feel welcome as the Club seemed to cater mostly to an older set of both owners and cars. Members wanted the Club to be a place where all Mercedes-Benz owners and fans could feel welcome, no matter their age, race, or gender, and no matter the age or condition of their Mercedes-Benz.

What persuaded MBCA to act and make such a change?

Over the past 10 years, MBCA's membership has declined by 10,000 members. MBCA wanted to end that trend of declining membership and return to the high membership levels of the past.

What changes can we expect to see in MBCA, both sooner and later?

We expect to see an increase in membership numbers, through retention of current members and acquisition of new members. That can't be done by the National Business Office alone, though. We'll need members at the local level to do their part in bringing in new members and engaging with new members. The Club expects to see a net gain of 2,000 members per year over the next five years as a result of the rebranding. Club members can also expect to see a brand new Club website at www.mbca.org starting August 31, 2010. There will also be changes to Section websites and Section newsletters to develop a more cohesive and familiar feel from Section to Section.

What long term effects are expected as a result of the rebranding?

By raising the quality of the Club, raising the quality of the events and raising the quality of the Club website, we expect to see more partnerships with Mercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA) and Daimler-Benz AG (DBAG) in Stuttgart. Currently, Mercedes-Benz dealers across the nation are upgrading to the Autobahn Concept to refresh their image. As the dealers are refreshing their image to appear more professional, we at MBCA are doing the same. MBCA wants to be a professional organization, exuding the same quality that Mercedes-Benz does with their cars, their website, their dealers, and their overall image.

The 123

(continued from page 3)

In 1982, the non turbo 300D and 300CD were replaced in North America with turbocharged variants. The 300D and 300CD Turbodiesels were not available in European markets. With the discontinuation of the 280E and 280CE for the North American market, the entire 1982 123 lineup in North America was all diesel, the reason being to help Mercedes-Benz meet strict CAFE regulations for overall average MPG in the US market. That same year, the 123 also received an optional driver's side airbag, but the airbag was not available in the North American market. In 1983, the W123 received more small updates to the exterior and interior. For 1984, the 240D was discontinued for the US market in favor of the brand new, W201 chassis 190D 2.2. In March 1984, pre-production models of the W124, the 123's successor, began to roll off the line, signaling that the 123 chassis' production days were soon to end. The last C123 coupes rolled off the line in August 1985, while sedans and long wheelbase models ended production in December 1985. The last T123 wagons rolled off the line in January 1986, marking nearly 11 years of 123 production. In total, over 2 million variants of the 123 chassis were produced from July 1975 to January 1986.

Today, the 123 is still a popular vehicle among Mercedes-Benz fans and collectors. It has become the car of choice for those looking for classic Mercedes-Benz styling in a more modern package than earlier models, and the diesels have found a following as a car for those looking for a platform to run alternative fuels, especially biodiesel. The 123 has also found a particularly strong following among young drivers in their mid to late teens and early twenties who are looking for a car that is robust mechanically, easy to work on, easy to find parts for, stylistically different than the typical cars that others in their same age bracket would choose, and perhaps most of all, for its strong, proven, reliable drivetrain and underpinnings.

For more information, please visit the following links.

<http://www.benzworld.org/forums/w123-e-ce-d-cd-td/>

<http://500sec.com/models/mercedes-w123-e-class-1975-1985/>

<http://et.mercedes-benz-clubs.com/mediawiki/index.php/Kategorie:W123/en>

<http://mercedes-benz.tv/en/clip-625/Legendary%20Youngtimer%20W123>

<http://astralsilber.de/> (In German)



Check out MBCA's Facebook Page!



MBCA is now on Facebook! If you have a Facebook account, you can check out the Official MBCA Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=80365956402> There, you can see the latest in MBCA news and Mercedes-Benz news, and link up with other members and other Sections. Check it out today!

Did you know Houston METRO has buses by Daimler?



Copyright © 2010 Metro Magazine

The next time you're driving around town and see a METRO bus, take another look. Your Mercedes-Benz may share at least one thing in common with that bus, that is sharing a parent company, or sharing both a parent company and being a hybrid if you're driving a S400 hybrid. Since 2008, METRO has taken delivery of Orion VII Diesel-Electric Hybrids as pictured above. The buses carry the Orion nameplate, but are Daimler Buses North America products. Houston METRO received 56 of the Orion buses in 2008, 40 in 2009, and is expected to receive 80 more buses this year. See the links below for more info.

<http://www.metro-magazine.com/News/Story/2009/09/Daimler-Buses-Orion-VII-hits-3-000-mark.aspx>

<http://www.orionbus.com/>

Mercedes Marketplace

Mercedes-Benz autos for sale Location: Bellaire/SW Houston

1972 300SEL, 85,000 miles, needs work, garaged,
\$1200 OBO.

1988 190E 2.6, high mileage, garaged, \$1000 OBO.

Call Angie: 832-453-9698

1983 Mercedes-Benz 380SL

Pristine. Red with red hard-top and black soft-top. Natural leather. **53,500 original miles**. TOTALLY ORIGINAL with exception of dealer-installed double timing chain. Absolutely no body work or rust. Always garaged and regularly serviced, all/most records. Purchased in 1994 from second owner with 39,000 miles. New Michelin tires, spare never out of trunk. A/C converted to non-FREON refrigerant.

As original as minor repairs will permit. New Alpine radio purchased, but not yet installed. The black soft-top is original and has a totally clear plastic window. The hard-top is removable. I can provide a rack for vertical storage of the top. I also have a new, high-quality car cover. **Asking \$18,000**. Call: 713-850-1128.





MBCA | Houston Section

Joseph Middleton, Editor

Officers

President	Damon Stith 832-265-6044
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Joseph Middleton 713-828-4303
Treasurer	Vacant
Club Historian	Chuck Wyatt 281-469-7428

Directors

Marvin Boyd	281-360-1766
Gerald Grogin	713-667-8979
Mike Haney	713-298-4580
Harry Ramirez	832-216-4409
Renny Keener	281-354-2057
Richard Wilkins	713-227-6603

Regional Director

Charles Boyd 580-255-4040
E-mail: cl.boyd@sbcglobal.net

Newsletter Editor

Joseph Middleton 713-828-4303
Editor's e-mail: editorjoseph@gmail.com
Editor's Fax: 713-523-6341
Club Website: <http://www.mbca.org/houston>

Are you moving?

To change your address, visit the MBCA website at:
<https://www.mbca.org/mbca/addchange.htm>

Let's keep in touch!

If your e-mail address has changed from that which you gave to MBCA when you joined, or if you just want to make sure you receive future newsletters, send your preferred e-mail address to editorjoseph@gmail.com, or update your info at:
<https://www.mbca.org/mbca/addchange.htm>

2010 Upcoming Events

Fall Social/Election Dinner
September 19, 5pm at Benjy's on Washington

Oktoberfest at TGA
TBA

Fall Autocross
TBA

Holiday Brunch
December 2010

Board of Directors Meeting
September 7

Board Meetings are open to all **MBCA | Houston Section** members. Board Meetings are held every 1st Tuesday of odd numbered months at 5:30 PM in the 2nd Floor Conference Room at Mercedes-Benz Greenway, 3900 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77027.

The *Houston Star* is the official publication of **MBCA | Houston Section**, and is provided solely for the benefit of its members. Opinions and ideas are for information only. No official authentication is implied by the editor/publisher, MBCA, MBUSA, MBAG or DBAG. No inference should be made that the products or services advertised or reported herein have the approval or recommendation of the editor/publisher, MBCA, MBUSA, MBAG or DBAG. Consult an authorized dealer or qualified mechanic for specific applications to your vehicle. Material for publication may be sent to editorjoseph@gmail.com. Deadline is the 10th of each month for the following month's issue. The editor reserves the right to edit, and to refuse, any submissions and/or advertising. Submission of material constitutes permission to publish. Permission to reproduce material original to the *Houston Star* is granted provided proper credit is given.