



# *The Houston Star*

*MBCA Houston Section Newsletter*

*February*  
*2005*

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## *Upcoming Events*

February 19th  
6:30pm - til...  
New Members Dinner  
King Fish Market  
11335 Katy Freeway

March 13th  
Spring Autocross  
Kingwood College

March 19th  
German Heritage Festival  
Tomball, Texas



**The New Mercedes-Benz B-Class**

As President of a MBCA Section, I tend to get a great deal of information about future vehicles and remakes of existing vehicles. As a profoundly curious individual with finely honed internet surfing skills, I tend to root out even more details... the following information on the new B-Class was extracted from various websites throughout Europe and the USA.

The B-Class is, as its name suggests, intended to sit in the M-B range between the A-Class and the entry-level C-Class models. Obviously. Less obviously, it is conceptually a smaller answer to the upcoming R-Class, an opulent 4x4-crossover station wagon which shares its underpinnings with the new M-Class. It's front-wheel drive only, and considerably more compact, but it shares a similar

approach in its roof height and interior versatility.

The show car on display at the Detroit Motor Show, called Vision B Compact Sports Tourer, is fitted with a new four-cylinder 140bhp diesel engine and a new CVT auto gearbox, but expect production cars to come with a similar engine line-up to the C-Class, starting with 1.8-litre units.

Mercedes hopes that this model will appeal to a whole new younger generation of customers, and sees it as a competitor to cars like the Subaru Impreza wagon and Saab 9-2X, Audi A3 Sportwagon and perhaps the upcoming Volkswagen Golf Plus.

**(continued on page 4)**

## President's Message



One of the toughest parts of being both Newsletter Editor and President is coming up with a new and unique "President's Message" every month.

There are the administrative tasks such as listing upcoming events: New Members Dinner on Feb. 19th (details on page 8), the German Heritage Festival on Mar. 19th (details in next months issue), The Spring Autocross on March 13th (details on page 6). Then there is the review of recent events such as the Tech Session at European Star Motors just held on Jan. 29th (deatils in next months issue).

It seems that by the time all of that is covered there isn't a lot of space left. Well, I'll make it short and sweet... as your President and a fellow MB enthusiast, I want to know what we can do to improve our section of MBCA. I'm looking for input about the events and services we offer our members. Good or Bad, if you've got some thoughts on it, lemme hear them. email me ([mhaney@3dtriad.com](mailto:mhaney@3dtriad.com)) or call me (713-298-4580) and share your thoughts. There is a reason we list the names and numbers of all our board members on every newsletter, we want to hear from you.

As always, we need pictures and stories of members cars for the cover.

Mike Haney - President  
MBCA - Houston Section



If you're near MB-Greenway, check out the new CLS 4dr Coupe on display

## **Turn it Off - All the Way Off!**

Ever wonder how to turn off the ESP in your MB? Well, this extract is from an article in the November 2004 issue of "Car and Driver", page 100: which tells you how to do so.

***For years we've complained about the built-in behavior of the electronic stability programs in Mercedes-Benzes, which automatically intervene to shut down power and braking when they think your driving needs help. A dashboard switch suggests the program can be turned off, but it can't - it just kicks in at what it sees as a more intemperate level of driving on your part. We were convinced it simply could not be shut off.***

***Well, Benz lovers, we found a way.***

***Here's how. To start, turn the ignition to the first accessory position, making sure the dash display shows the odometer. The SRS airbag light should be on. Press the trip odometer reset button three times rapidly before it goes off. If you do this right, a screen will appear showing a voltmeter. Then press the "up" arrow on the left side of the wheel twice to take you to the "ESP dynamometer test" screen. Using the plus (+) button on the right side of the wheel, select "on." And then start the car. Warnings will appear informing you that the ESP, ABS, and BAS (brake assist) aids are now turned off and you're on your own.***

***If you did it right, you've put the car in a mode intended for diagnostic testing on a rolling dynamometer - all electronic supervision is unplugged. Unhindered by techno-aids, the SLK's grip on the skidpad improved by 0.03 g compared with simply hitting the ESP switch on the dash. To return all the safety technology, scroll back to the dyno test screen and select "W/t. 15 off" with the minus (-) button. Shutting off all the electronic aids isn't easy, and that should tell you something. Owners are not generally privy to the dynamometer mode; therefore, we will continue to publish test numbers attained with the dashboard ESP switch turned off. We just thought you'd want to know.***

While we at MBCA-Houston do not condone shutting off safety features, it is an interesting option for those that want to push the envelop a bit more.

I should also point out that this may not work on all MB's... I'm fairly certain it will have no effect whatsoever on my 1966 230SL !!!

Thanks to Richard Wilkins for passing this article along.

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It also expects it to be bought as a second or third car in households which already have an S-Class or other larger Mercedes, as an economical runaround. Prices in the US are expected to start from around \$25,000.

Although Mercedes hasn't yet confirmed availability in Europe of this model, initially claiming that it has been designed specifically with US buyers in mind, it's likely that we will be offered a version at a later date.



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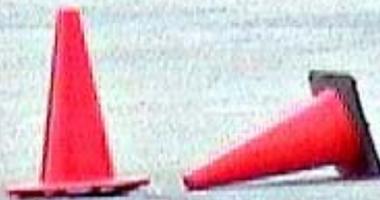
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It's that time again!!! The Spring Autocross is Sunday Mar. 13th. at Kingwood College in Humble.

**Event cost:**  
**\$10 per driver for members**  
**\$15 per driver for non-members**



**Drivers should be there by 12:30, event begins at 1:00pm**

**Contact:**  
**Mike Haney 713-298-4580**  
**for information**



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## **“Wild” Welcome Dinner**

**Join us at King Fish Market, 11335 Katy Freeway (between Kirkwood and Wilcrest) on Saturday, February 19 for our 2005 New Member Dinner. Held annually, this dinner is one of our favorite events as it affords us an opportunity to welcome everyone who joined the Club in 2004.**

**Besides great food and good company, we will feature a guest speaker who will drive you wild! Our very own Carol Bowen has agreed to relate her experiences from her recent African safari. On the safari, she “shot” many different animals (with a camera) and will share these wonderful animals with us.**

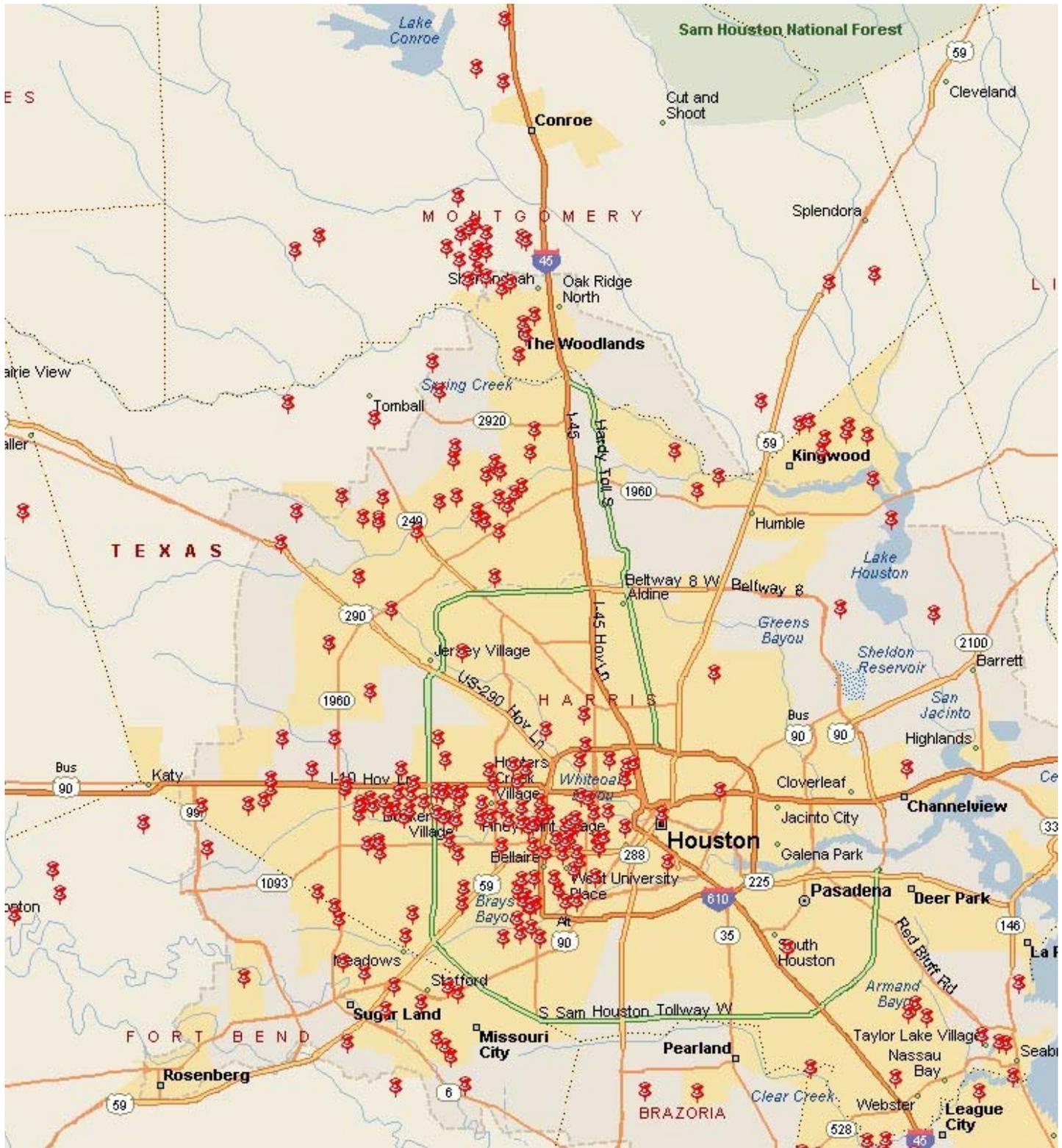
**Cocktails will begin at 6:30 with dinner at 7:15 p.m. The cost for the meal is \$25.00 per person for a choice from the following menu:**

**Seafood Alfredo  
Caribbean Pepper New York Strip  
Calloloo Chicken  
Snapper Laguna  
Pistachio Salmon  
Seafood Platter**

**All meals come with Caesar salad, Key Lime Pie, and coffee, iced tea or soda.**

**If you're a new member, don't miss this opportunity to meet some of us “old-timers”, learn about the Club, and go on a safari. All new members will receive a free Mercedes Benz coffee mug. If you're an old member, come out to meet the new folks and enjoy some great food. We'll also have a drawing for some great door prizes at the end of the evening.**

**Reservations are essential and must be received by February 15. Send your reservation and check for the meal to Marjorie Russell, 22 Thornbush Place, The Woodlands, TX 77381. For more information, call Marjorie at 936-321-2475 or email at [mrussell@houston.rr.com](mailto:mrussell@houston.rr.com). See you there!**



Map of Houston Area MBCA Members

Ever wonder how our membership is distributed throughout the area? So have we... the map above shows the primary concentration of our 300 or so members in the Houston section of the MBCA. We have many members in outlying areas not shown on this map, but data such as this helps us to plan events in areas that are convenient to as many members as possible.

# Mercedes Marketplace

## For Sale:

**1970 280S** - White with Red interior. Very nice original condition. Chrome is in great shape. Original paint. Presently, I'm hoping to find someone who will finish the work I have begun on this original survivor. It is ready for exterior cosmetics. Work that has been done includes: rebuilt Twin Solex carbs, camshaft turned, timing chain replaced, Duralevers installed, fresh Continental GT8000 tires, front speaker replaced, valve job, engine rebuilt, odometer rebuilt, speedometer cable replaced, new front brake calipers discs and pads, new muffler and exhaust, power steering pump, gas tank cleaned, new gas sending unit, blower motor(in trunk), new distributor, brake booster replaced, transmission overhauled, new battery, radiator cleaned, etc... Over \$11,000 invested, first \$6,000 gets to finish this project! Call Charlie or Cece at (281)354-8871.



# Mercedes Marketplace

**For Sale:**

**2002 C-32** Mercedes AMG, immaculate condition. Black exterior, gray interior – waxed monthly. Xenon lights, CD changer, rear window shade and tinted windows. 100k transferable warranty. 41,000 miles. Original owner. \$38,500. Call John at (936) 321-0690. [10/04]



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**NON-MEMBERS:** Non-members may run text ads for \$10 or text / picture ads for \$25 per issue. ALL PICTURE ADS MUST BE PROVIDED IN DIGITAL FORMAT - NO HARDCOPY PHOTOGRAPHS.

Make your checks payable to MBCA and send to MBCA Editor, 5528 Jessamine, Houston, TX 77081. **IT MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 10th** of the preceding month's publication to make it into that month's issue.



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Houston, Texas 77081

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## 2005 Calendar of Events

### February 19<sup>th</sup> 2005

New Members Dinner:  
King Fish Market - 11335 Katy Freeway  
Marjorie Russell: 936-321-2475

### March 13<sup>th</sup> 2005

Spring Autocross - Kingwood College  
Mike Haney: 713-298-4580

### March 19<sup>th</sup> 2005

German Heritage Festival - Tomball Area  
Details Pending

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