



The Houston Star

MBCA Houston Section Newsletter

**February
2010**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi MB Enthusiasts,

We've a couple of fun events planned for the start of the year. Kicking the year off will be our new members dinner at Canyon Cafe on 2/20/10 @ 6pm (time may be changed), a bio diesel tech session that you older diesel owners shouldn't miss sometime in March. The bowling tournament is still in the planning stages between the German car clubs. Cars N Coffee on 2/6/10 at Uptown Square @ 8:30-10:30am., which is a really nice setting of exotic and well preserved cars and car nuts near a Starbucks coffee. As we're now in the second month of the year the spring autocross is being planned (maybe Mike Haney will get his wish again and it'll rain). Keep an eye out for email updates of these events. One thing we're going to revive is the door prizes given at different events. Also, we've not had a Rally in some time. I know there are many Rally masters out there ready to return to having clues and a route to challenge them as well as test marriage vows of other rallyists.

Happy Motoring

Damon Stith
Houston Section

Barn Finds: A small collection of weathered gems

Photography from Roy Spencer, editor MercedesHeritage.com

Every collector's dream – Barn Finds (A few less than pristine recent purchases)

Our eternal hunt for interesting Mercedes occasionally leads us to some unique finds. While the random phone calls we receive offering cars sometimes disappoint – the 300SL roadster described turns out to be a 190SL – some calls yield gems and all are welcomed. Here are some recent finds that brightened our day,

1960 300SL Roadster

This find is a few years old and we report it this month only because the car has been finally sold. It began with a phone call from the owner who had seen an article of mine describing an attempt to buy a basket case 300SL roadster some years ago. The seller noted that while his roadster was all together, it had suffered some light fire damage sustained when he inadvertently lit his house on fire while draining fuel from another car.

A very knowledgeable and straightforward guy, he wanted to sell the car to fund an enormous garage to house his car collection. With an estimate for his nice new garage in hand, he proposed a deal: If I could pay him the amount of the construction estimate, I could buy the car. This was one very expensive garage! He wouldn't hear any offers so I flew to the car and paid for his new garage, just about to the penny. While it was a sad looking SL, it was remarkably rust free and complete with good panel fit, the correct engine and both tops. It will be back on the road in a few years.



You just want to cry when you see an SL in this state. Hiding under the singed paint is an originally silver with red leather, matching number roadster. This condition was a combination of massive weathering from sitting for 20 or so years and the fire damage.

Cloudy windshield a result of melted laminate. Note 300SL insignia on hood. It was all there, however, and will again return to the road.



The once cozy red leather interior had been ravaged by rodents and lightly damaged by heat soak from a garage fire.

Detroit 2010: Mercedes Confirms Two New Hybrids for North America

From: AutoGuide.com

With the launch of two hybrid models in 2009, Mercedes-Benz has announced it will add two more hybrids to its lineup starting in 2011. More impressive, is that neither is a run-of-the-mill type of hybrid.

Due out first is the E300 BlueTec Hybrid, based on the new E-Class model. It will be a hybrid and as the name suggests, will use Mercedes' BlueTec diesel technology. This may be the first diesel-hybrid to launch in North America. It will get an impressive 40 mpg.

Following that model, Mercedes plans to launch a plug-in hybrid S-Class, similar to the one foreshadowed with the Vision S500 Plug-In Hybrid, which debuted at the Frankfurt Auto Show last year. Thanks to a direct-injection 3.5-liter V6 engine mated to a 60-hp/184 ft-lb electric motor and a lithium-ion battery pack, the car is capable of getting an amazing 73.5 mpg! Possibly more shocking is that the car doesn't sacrifice performance, with a 0-60 mph time of 5.4 seconds. Additionally, the electric motor will be able to power the car emissions-free for 18 miles.



Already launched are the S400 Hybrid and the ML450 Hybrid. The S400 Hybrid was the first Mercedes hybrid to go on sale and is also the first mass production automobile to use a lithium-ion battery. Priced at \$87,950 it uses an electric motor and 3.5-liter gasoline V6 to produce 295-hp, while getting mileage of 19/26 mpg – an improvement of 26 percent over the S550 in the city. Despite its high-tech battery pack, the S400 Hybrid is a mild-hybrid, which limits its fuel economy.

The second hybrid model from Mercedes is the ML450 Hybrid 4MATIC. A lease-only model, for either 36 or 60 months, at either \$659 or \$549 per month, the ML450 is the first two-mode hybrid (like the Toyota Prius) from Mercedes. The ML450 uses a 3.5-liter V6 engine and two electric motors to make 335-hp and 381 ft-lbs of torque. Unlike the S400 Hybrid, it will be able to operate exclusively on electric power for short periods of time. Its fuel economy is rated at 21/24 mpg (city/highway), which is roughly the same as the ML350 Bluetec diesel at 18/25 mpg. This is also a 46 percent improvement over the fuel economy rating of the similarly-powerful ML550.

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It's Official: Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG electric-drive to get 526-hp

Posted: emgCarTech Jul 16, 2009

Earlier this week, you may have thought that the report about a plug-in hybrid Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG was just a wild rumor coming out of Europe. Well, it's true and Mercedes-Benz released official details on the upcoming Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG with electric-drive, scheduled to debut in 2015.

Mercedes-Benz says that power will come from four-electric motors with a combined output of 392 kW (526-hp) with a maximum torque of 880 Nm (649 lb-ft). Each electric-motor is positioned near the wheels with a transmission on each end to get the power to the wheels. Somehow the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG with electric-drive is as quick as its V8 gas-guzzling sibling managing a 0 to 60 mph time in just 4 seconds.



"With the SLS AMG with electric drive, we wanted to redefine the super sports car. For us, it is not just about responsibility. We attach just as much importance to excitement and classic AMG performance," says Volker Mornhinweg, Chief Executive Officer of Mercedes-AMG.

With 2015 a while away, Mercedes-Benz has a lot of time to stay true to its claims.



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**New Members' Dinner
February 20 at 6pm**

**Canyon Creek Cafe (Galleria
Area - Post Oak &
Westheimer)**

Technical Q & A

Question: Hi, I'm new to Mercedes and my first Benz is a 1984 300TD. Lately at night when the headlights are on I notice that the lights are pulsing or flickering. It is worse at idle than on the move. Any ideas?

Answer: Hello and welcome to the world of Mercedes-Benz! It sounds like your voltage regulator is worn down. This is located on the rear of the alternator and is held in with 2 screws. This wears out over time and can cause the symptoms you are describing. If that does not work, take the car to an autoparts store such as Autozone and ask them to check your charging system (They should do it free of charge). They will be able to determine if your battery and alternator are working properly. Good luck with your issue and enjoy the new car!

March Technical Session

The first MBCA-Houston Tech Session of 2010 will be held at Houston Biodiesel on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at 10 AM. Houston Biodiesel was the first retail pump to sell ASTM spec biodiesel in the Houston area, and is located just east of Downtown Houston at 723 N. Drennan St, Houston, TX 77003.

A good percentage of Houston Biodiesel's clients are Mercedes-Benz owners. Even Chris Powers, the owner/operator of Houston Biodiesel owns a few biodiesel powered Mercedes-Benzenes. Chris will be on-site to give a tour of the facility including the homebrew reactor. Attendees will learn facts about biodiesel, and will learn what to expect when running biodiesel in their diesel powered Mercedes-Benz. Vehicles currently running biodiesel will also be at hand for observation at the tech session.

This tech session is open to all, regardless of what fuel type their Mercedes-Benz uses. Come out and learn about this popular alternative fuel at this fun and informative event! For more information, contact Joseph Middleton at "Jmiddle122 at aol dot com" or at the phone number listed on the last page of this newsletter under "Officers".

Houston Biodiesel Website: <http://www.houstonbiodiesel.com>

Gas Stations Of Yesteryear

BEAUTIFUL OLD GAS STATIONS

I also remember getting a five cent soda a bag of peanuts to put
In the soda oh yes a penny for the bottle unless you had
One under the seat. Does that make me old or what.

I remember a lot of these - -

but how many years has it been since anyone said
that they were going to the "filling station"?

Old American Gas Stations from all around the country
Some are abandoned, some are restored and many are still in use



Yeah . . . I remember!

And with a fill-up you got.

The gas pumped for you, Your windshield cleaned,

Oil & fluids checked, Tires checked,

A free map, if you wanted it.

Yeah! I remember!!!

2011 SL550 Night Edition debuts in New York

Roy Spencer, editor MercedesHeritage.com

A masterpiece to dream of Matte black SL550 special edition

Photography from Mercedes-Benz and Carlsson

Mercedes-Benz continues to recognize the trend toward tough looking matte finishes with the release of the gorgeous SL550 “Night Edition.” One of two special editions under the theme of “masterpieces to dream of,” the elegant Night Edition SL550 joins the new SLK Grand Edition as alternatives for buyers wishing to eschew Mercedes’ flashier finishes.



While it’s hard to discern in these low light studio press images, this new SL550 variant is a study in various black textures and finishes complemented by metallic surfaces in both chrome and highly polished aluminum. The special silky matte “designo magno night black” paint set against polished two-tone 192 alloys with silver brake calipers shining through the slim wheel spokes looks smashing – elegance with a slightly hard edge.

The interior continues the theme featuring black nappa leather covering newly designed seats – with arrow shaped seams – set against carefully executed detail brightwork. We would love to see some interior images.



Darkened headlight/tail lights further enhance the softly sinister look of the car. A study in blacks and various metallic finishes, this special SL looks to be a dramatic alternative to the glossy finishes found on the standard cars. With a large segment of European automobile enthusiasts having “crossover” interests in the Hot Rod genre, I wouldn’t be surprised to find some new Night Editions sharing garage space with flat black chopped ‘50 Mercurys. Brilliant car.

With only one hundred examples to be constructed, you’ll need to get an order in soon. For more information, call Tony Spencer @ 408-345-2255.

Mercedes Marketplace

1999 Mercedes Benz E320

Dark green with tan interior. One owner, one driver. October 2009 inspection. Certified: good mechanical condition, no body damage, no frame damage. All original owner's manuals. 95K miles. \$6,995.

No dealers, agents, or brokers, please.



1979 Mercedes 300CD



Andy at 'cedes Car Repair (League City) has a 79 300D for \$300. It needs a new engine and is not worth it for him to install one. The body and interior are in very good shape. The odometer shows just under 105,000 miles. If you or someone you know, is interested, call Andy Rhoads at 281-332-1489.

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.



1995 S320 LWB sedan



For Sale:

1995 S320 LWB sedan with only 97,000 well-maintained miles. Body and interior in great shape, and all systems are functional. Maintenance records and all manuals go with car. My daily driver and favorite vehicle, but retirement forces sale. **\$6300 OBO**.

832-444-9545

1985 300D Turbo Diesel

One Owner

I have all the maintenance records on it.

Less than 115,000 total miles with original paint.

It has been garaged at home and work for the entire 25 years.

Asking price \$7,500.

Roger Blakeney
713-526-6002
cell 281-797-1715



1967 Mercedes 600

This car was reportedly originally owned by the President of Dole Pineapple. Unfortunately I do not have any documentation.



Due to the varied unexpected turns life has taken, it has not been run for about 8 years, and we are thinking about finding a new owner. I had stopped using it because the drive shaft carrier bearing was noisy. I purchased the bearing, but never got around to having it installed.

The car has the optional cooler/armrest between the front seats. The upholstery is black leather.

According to published information (Robert Nitske), M-B only made 138 units in 1967. I have seen where the 600 is going for up to \$35k. I am asking \$28K or a reasonable offer.

Bob and Gail Supina 281-239-8583 See more at: <http://www.pcube.biz/Cars/MB600.html>



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Moving?

In order to change your address, go to the web site of the MBCA at:

<https://www.mbca.org/mbca/addchange.htm>

Going green

Remember if your email has changed from that which you gave to MBCA when you joined or you just want to make sure you receive the future electronic editions send your preferred e-mail address to damstith@yahoo.com.

2010 Upcoming Events

Cars N Coffee

February 6

New Members Dinner

February 20

Technical Session

March 13

Annual Bluebonnet Run

April

Spring Autocross

May

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 PM of 1st Tuesday of odd numbered months at the Mercedes-Benz Greenway dealership 2nd Floor Conference Room

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