



The Houston Star

MBCA | Houston Section Newsletter

January
2012

www.mbca.org/houston

In this issue

President's Message
Page 2

New Members and
Loyal Members
Page 3

Technical Q & A
Page 6

Mercedes Marketplace
Pages 8-11

Upcoming Events

Page 12



Looking Back: LOST Track Day October 2011

By: Chuck Wyatt

Well here it is. Saturday morning! All week we work and long for Saturdays. Even for those who are happily not working, Saturday is a day to look forward to. This Saturday morning, however, appears to be rather splendid day, as the early morning sunrise is always spectacular in Tomball, Texas. Not a cloud in the sky and the gradual transition from the dark or night to the gradual light of dawn I made my way to the coffee pot with a fresh cup of Joe. After a cup or two the morning is now underway and the excitement of a LOST event (not the author) is taking shape. Breakfast is done and a few things such as folding chairs, driving shoes, race helmet, water, snacks, uh where's the car,? Oh yeah it is still waiting to crank up and head for Grandsport speedway near Hitchcock. Great! Everything's packed and we're ready to roll. Of course with the most miles on any car or even combinations of 3 or 4 cars on the track, it is always a challenge to see if the thing will even start.

Anyway a gentle turn of the ignition, and the old reliable 4 banger springs to life. After a little noise from the waste gate on the supercharger, oil rushing up from its previous night's rest, we slip it into reverse and start the 80 mile trip to the track. And at this hour, there is very little traffic, and with the cruise control on, the radio blasting away, the pilot is left with the anticipation of the extreme fun that is about an hour away.

Now getting to the track is also fun, but this time I followed a yellow Elige, turned at the gate and there were already some folks already there.

(continued on page 5)

President's Message

Happy New Year!

Looking back, 2011 was a good year, although not the best year for the Houston Section, but we are making small, positive improvements that have been noticed on the National level. One of the small changes the Houston Section implemented was engaging in charitable action. We have donated to both the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Scholarship Fund and the Houston Food Bank during November and December 2011. We are glad to be a car club that shows civic pride through service to our community.

Overall in 2011, we lost a few members, so our January 2012 membership levels are down from our January 2011 levels. That sounds bad, but we must be realistic here. We have gained new members who are showing their faces at our events, some have even joined our Board and are becoming regular event attendees. If you're reading this for the first time, I highly encourage you to attend one of our upcoming events and even come to our next Board Meeting. We are seeking enthusiastic, hard working Club members who want to take the Houston Section to higher heights among the South Central Region and MBCA as a whole.

Congratulations go out to Secretary Norm Glorioso for being selected as the Houston Section's 2011 Member of the Year. Norm has proven himself to be a member who can take charge and work together with the Board and his fellow Officers to ensure things are running smoothly. Norm, thanks for your hard work with the Club, it is greatly appreciated!

Yours truly also had a bit of honor within the Club. Upon being elected President in September 2011, I am one of the youngest, if not THE youngest Section President currently serving in MBCA. In December 2011, I was also appointed to the MBCA Leadership Committee by Laura Simonds of the San Francisco Bay Area Section. The insight gained and shared in the committee will help our Section and other Sections as MBCA continues its quest to become a leader among car clubs in the US and beyond.

2012 is here, and we have an opportunity to make 2012 one of the best years for the Club to date. Your Officers and Board of Directors are at the helm and are all working together to ensure that we cater to and communicate with our Club members in an efficient, effective manner.

In addition to our usual events such as the Bluebonnet Run, our Spring and Fall Autocrosses, and Technical Sessions, the Club is planning to present new ideas and events for 2012. We will keep you posted on these new ideas and events as the Board fine tunes and tweaks them to make them ready for presentation.

Take care, and happy travels!

Joseph Middleton | President | [Mercedes-Benz Club of America](#) | [Houston Section](#)

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

Welcome!

Jess Gassaway of Houston, TX

Jim Nash of Houston, TX

Laura and Roy Nichol of Houston, TX

Michaela Schirra of Houston, TX

Charles Stall of Sugar Land, TX

Oliver Waller of Cleveland, TX

Jeremy Wood of Houston, TX

Willkommen!

MBCA | Houston Section thanks these loyal Club members

Ted and Ann Ankrum of Houston, TX

Thomas and Frances Lostracco of Nacogdoches, TX

Stuart Archibald of Houston, TX

Mack and Michelle Miller of Klein, TX

Miguel and Martha Castano of Sugar Land, TX

Frederick Mullin of Dickinson, TX

Dianne and John Cook of Houston, TX

John and Carol Pariza of Houston, TX

Theodore and Marilyn Dinklage of Galveston, TX

Pablo Pulumbarit of Beaumont, TX

David and Tom English of The Woodlands, TX

E. Ray of Houston, TX

John and Carol Filak of Seabrook, TX

Keith and Wilma Ritter of Houston, TX

Charles Giglio of Beaumont, TX

Franklyn Schilling of Katy, TX

Norm Glorioso of Spring, TX

John and Julie Stone of Bellaire, TX

George and Maha Hatfield of Klein, TX

Frederick and Somjit Swain of Spring, TX

Thomas Itty of The Woodlands, TX

Richard Wilkins of Houston, TX

Edward Jaroski of Houston, TX

Arthur Willis of Houston, TX

Pickens and Faye Jones of Spring, TX

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LOST Track Day October 2011

The breakdown for this event is as follows:

(continued from page 1)

1 Porsche GT3 Cup, 11 Lotus Elises/Exiges, 3 Porsche 911s, 2 Miata, 1 Corvette, 1 BMW 330, 1 BMW Z4 Coupe, 2 Mustangs (including Wes Chain's new Mustang GT), 1 Maserati Quattroporte, 1 Subaru WRX, 1 MB C230, 1 Infiniti G35, 1 Cadillac CTS-V, 1 Honda S2000, 1 Nissan Z370, 1 Misubishi Evo, 1 Lotus Evora, 2 Caterhams, and 1 Camaro.

The road course was very exciting to drive on and one really had to know the limits of the machine that one was strapped into. A little too fast in a corner and an off road excursion was next. Speaking from experience, yours truly took home a trophy. Lost it on a turn did a 180 and straddled a curb, and wound up in the grass!! I drove home with grass in the rims!! Nothing serious, just a remount of the tire and a slight rear wheel alignment. For those who have not seen this particular track the website URL is as follows and if there is interest, please come out and join us for some good entertainment.

www.grandsportsspeedway.com/

Paul really knows how to host this type of an event and the LOST members really like to help others out with honing their driving skills. They are a group of really nice people who enjoy getting together and having a good time. It is very similar to the MBCA/Houston Autocross. New drivers to this event always have an instructor to help one navigate the course and avoid a lot of common mistakes. Their coaching made this a really fun event if one likes to drive faster than the speed limits yet observing safe driving rules. Everyone had a great time and it was an event that urges one to attend again.

Finally, it was really enjoyable to spend time with very nice and helpful individuals who each contributed to this event. The instructors were most helpful in giving me advice that paid off while driving on the track. Many thanks to our host, Paul Kwan and the following folks who helped put this event together, worked while we had fun, and packed up at the end.

Wait a minute, they are calling group 3 out one more time and my eventual off road experience....

Chuck Wyatt



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The 2011 Houston Section Holiday Brunch

By: Joseph Middleton

I'll make this short, sweet, and simple. MBCA Houston always closes out the year with a Holiday Brunch. Over the years, we've patronized a few eateries for our Holiday Brunch, but this year, we decided to change things up and found a new place just outside of the Galleria area. Thanks to Nina Midway, we were able to have our Holiday Brunch at Little Napoli on Westheimer Road.

Our group had our own private room in the back with seating for plenty of our guests. We were graced by the attendance of Nina Midway, Mike Haney, the Gloriosos, the Grogins, Richard Wilkins, the Stanafords (who brought a very nice, mini version of a MB engine to the brunch), the Wanamakers, the Ankrums, the Robinsons, and Buzz Werner. If the name sounds familiar, Buzz was the Houston Section's newsletter editor prior to July 2010. Buzz now lives in Florida and is active with a MBCA Section in the Sunshine State.

A tradition at the Houston Section's Holiday Brunches is to have a White Elephant gift exchange. There were plenty of gifts to go around. Nobody left empty handed. Our guests went home with items such as model cars, MB clothing, a MBCA beach towel, and of course, libations! The Member of the Year Award was presented at the Brunch. Norm Glorioso was awarded and recognized for his service to the Club. The Club was also able to show its generous side at this year's Holiday Brunch. Non perishable food items were collected at the brunch and were donated to the Houston Food Bank.

Everyone left the brunch with full stomachs and happy memories. The brunch was a wonderful way to close out 2011 for the Club.

Technical Q & A with Ali Durvesh

Question: I am preparing to go on a road trip up north to Canada. What areas of the car should I inspect aside from the usual items in preparing for the cold weather? Thanks.

Answer: You need to be sure that the correct oil is being used in your engine, as specified by Mercedes. If the oil is too thick it will cause hard starting and excessive wear on the engine when you start it on cold mornings. Also check that the coolant has the correct mixture of anti-freeze to ensure that it will not freeze in cold weather. The same is true for windshield washer fluid. They usually only sell "summer formula" fluid down here in Texas which protects to 32°F. When you head further north you'll find "winter formula" which protects to -20°F or more. Be sure to purge the summer formula fluid out of the system once you pour in the winter formula. A final area to check is tire pressure. Check it the morning before you depart Houston while they're cold as well as the morning after you arrive in Canada since tires lose pressure as the air gets colder. Enjoy the trip and drive safely.

If you have any questions, please send your requests to the *Houston Star* or contact me directly. I can be reached at ali.durvesh@gmail.com.

Ever Been LOST?

By: Chuck Wyatt

January 28th promises to be a great winter time event for LOST Track Day at Grandsport Speedway.

Ever been in traffic and get so tempted that you just want to jam the accelerator down to the floor when you see an opening and take an exit to a feeder road with no traffic. Or, how about waiting for a stalled car on the freeway to clear and the road is open now and you can really get going and perhaps be tempted to speed just a little faster than the speed limit to make up some LOST time?

Well, Mr. Paul Kwan has the solution for your. How about no speed limit? Go as fast as you feel is safe and practice your driving skills. The Lotus Owners of South Texas sponsors an event called Track Day and all sorts of machines show up. I have the pleasure of occasionally representing MBCA Houston section along with Damon Sith, Ted Ankrum, Wes Chain, and John Stone. This past fall my old, venerable and extremely slow C230 K, along with Wes's Mustang GT (yes folks, some MBCA members have other brands) represented our chapter. Wait a sec, Paul aren't you a member also? One cannot help but wonder if Paul will bring the Caterham or the Mini this time.

This event ushers in the 2012 with a promise to be extremely fun, and we can go pretty fast around track as long as we obey the safety rules. But what fun it is drive around a short road course pushing the machine to its limits, while along being able to drive our Mercedes, Lotus, Porsche, Maserati, Ford, or Chevy to as fast as it was designed to do. It is a hot rod driver's dream, and one almost feels what it is like to be a racing driver. So all you racing folks out there, don't pass up a great opportunity.

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2001 Mercedes-Benz CLK320

2001 Mercedes CLK320 Convertible (W208 Chassis) is finished in Brilliant Silver Clearcoat Metallic. Original Paint, no accidents. All the body panels are straight with no major dents/dings. This car was purchased by my mother about 4 years ago as a gift to herself for beating cancer. She typically drives her W126 every day, and the CLK only gets driven on the weekends. This car only has 58,700 miles on it.

16" Mercedes Benz Aluminum wheels, finished in factory silver, wrapped in a Matching Set of Goodyear Eagle LS H-Rated tires, the tires have less than 5,000 miles on them, and have plenty of tread left.

The black power fabric top opens and closes normally. The top is in great shape, and the car has always been garaged when not used.

The engine is the 3.2L 18 valve, Single Overhead Cam (SOHC) V6 (M112 - E32) with 218 hp. The engine starts and runs flawlessly. This engine is mated to a smooth shifting 5 speed automatic transmission. There are no leaks, funny noises, or fluid consumption. Car runs and drives great. The brakes work fine with no problem, no warpage, and no fading. Stops are straight and squeak free. The suspension is tight, squeak free and the car drives straight. We recently installed a brand new Interstate Battery (located in trunk), next to the full sized spare tire, which has never seen the ground.

The interior is finished in grey leather. Driver and passenger power seats both work fine with no problem with power tilt/slide for access to rear passengers. All power everything works. Dual zone climate control works fine with no problems at all. Nice condition inside for a 10 year old car. There is a trunk mounted CD changer.

The car has two keys, one original key as well as a new style chrome key.

This car hasn't seen the shop for anything since we owned it (except a flat repair) and I believe my mom has driven the car less than 5000 miles in the three years that she's had it. Texas Registration and Inspection are current.

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They include the center hub covers and correct wheel nuts.

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No damage to the metal (curb rash or otherwise).

I had been using these occasionally on my 280SL until I sold her. \$600.

* Original steering wheel in black. Removed from 1968 280SL, but will fit many 1960's cars. Great condition, but not perfect. \$400 OBO.

* Kangol 2-point seat belts and mounting hardware Black, no damage, but appear used. \$400 OBO.

* Service manuals for cars between 1958 and 1969 (Big Blue Book). Different books (cover different topics). \$130 together.

* Rubber door seals for W113 - both L&R. \$60

Will send photos upon request

Contact sctripp@comcast.net

Hardtop for 1983 380SL or similar model

Selling a dark green hard top with an ivory headliner that I no longer need (a long story). Very good condition. I am very flexible regarding price, i.e., make me an offer.

Contact: Joe Fischer at: joe.fischer-vbj@sbcglobal.net or (713) 850-1128.

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2012 Upcoming Events

LOST Track Day
January 28

Tech Session at Motorwerks
February 18

Bluebonnet Run
Late March/Early April

Board of Directors Meetings

January 3 and March 6

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), unless otherwise noted.

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