



The Houston Star

MBCA | Houston Section Newsletter

June/July
2012

www.mbca.org/houston

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The Seventh Annual Texas Mercedes-Benz Get Together

By: Joseph Middleton

The old saying goes, "quality, not quantity", and that saying surely applied to the Seventh Annual Texas Mercedes-Benz Get Together. The turnout may have been low, but those who attended still had a great time, and as a result, the get together lasted a few hours longer than usual.

Upon arriving at the Cracker Barrel parking lot in Houston, I could not find any other Club members in sight. Finally, one other member pulled up, but he decided to pass on the event since it *appeared* that there would only be the two of us in the caravan from Houston. Well, that was too bad for him, but later along the route to Centerville, I met up with Gerry Van Zandt in his beautiful 560SL and made the journey to Centerville. We zipped along I-45 to Centerville in style and in speed thanks to the new 75 mph speed limit that begins at the Montgomery/Walker county line. Our Houston caravan duo arrived in Centerville just a few minutes early. We soon found out that other Houstonians were on the way. Paul Bruce arrived in his 1990 300SEL just a few minutes after we arrived, and Kevin Manning in his newly acquired CL-class. Then, the DFW contingent arrived with familiar faces such as Al Abassi from the North Texas Section, and the Brewers among others.

The staff at Woody's Smokehouse graciously awaited us and gave the group top notch treatment, as usual. While Woody and Diane were away on a much deserved vacation, "Captain" Gary made sure that all the needs of our group were met. We've been to Woody's seven times and we've been more than satisfied seven times. There's a good reason why we go back to Woody's every year, and that's because the food and service just cannot be beat!

After eating, it was time to jog on over to Fort Boggy State Park. We had a pleasant surprise awaiting us this time around. Unlike previous years, we had ample shade, and thus cooler temperatures.

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President's Message

Dear Club Members,

I hope you all had a magnificent May. We are moving onto what we hope will be a jubilant June and July.

Longtime board member and former Club President Chuck Wyatt resigned from the Board of Directors in early May due to other duties in other organizations. We understand how it can be difficult to juggle Club duties with other organizational duties, and we wish Chuck the best of luck, and ask that he not be a stranger from our upcoming Club events.

Speaking of upcoming Club events, as always, we have a few events in the planning stages for you. We'll wait for the broiling heat and mosquitoes to subside before doing any more outdoor events. Our first indoor event of the Summer will be the Bowling Tournament, please see page 9 for more info.

On the National Level, the Legends of the Autobahn and Starfest 2012 are rapidly approaching. Please see pages 10 and 11 respectively for more info.

The Club's election season is drawing near. It's not too early to turn in your nominations for the Club's election. Please send your nomination, and the position desired to mbca.houston@gmail.com by September 1, 2012.

Happy Motoring!

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

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

Welcome!

David Boudreaux of Donaldsonville, LA

William Jenkins of Houston, TX

Tim Johnson of Houston, TX

Sandy Johnson of Montgomery, TX

Chris Montalbo of Damon, TX

Josef Tillmanns of Houston, TX

Chris Weeks of Houston, TX

Gordon Wheaton of Magnolia, TX

Stephen Wirtes of Clear Lake Shores, TX

Willkommen!

MBCA | Houston Section thanks these loyal Club members

Roger Boulet of Deer Park, TX

Bill Brutscher of La Porte, TX

Richard Frey of Houston, TX

Richard Gheorghe and G. Care of Houston, TX

Ed Gorman of Magnolia, TX

Carl and Geraldine Gossard of Sugar Land, TX

K. and Roberta Hodges of New Braunfels, TX

Patricia Jacobs of Reno, NV

Paul Kwan of Houston, TX

David Martin of Katy, TX

Paul and Felecia McCullough of Brookshire, TX

W. and Ann McClellan of Houston, TX

P. Meyers of Damon, TX

Joe and Betsy Moore of Montgomery, TX

Frederick and Alice Perrenot of Houston, TX

Jim and Ann Potts of Sulphur, LA

Dale Rasche of Cypress, TX

Scott Setliff of Beaumont, TX

Jeff and Andrea Taner of Houston, TX

Paul Taverna of Houston TX

John Wolf of Houston, TX

Centerville Review

(continued from page 1)

Our friendly Park Ranger, Wesley, had barricaded a prime section of the parking lot off just for us. We had the best spot of shade underneath the beautiful canopy and a wonderful view of the lake. While some attendees left early to get back home, one member to be met up with us at Fort Boggy. Robert Patteson out about the get together online and drove his shiny red 1992 300CE to the park to check us out. I do believe he will be one of our newest members!

It was then time for the Show and Shine. Since there were no pre 1980 vehicles on hand for this year's event, we skipped that category, and moved right along to the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000-present categories. The winner for the 1980s category was Gerry Van Zandt and his 560SL. We had two winners for the 1990s category, Paul Bruce for his 1990 300SEL, and our friend Robert Patteson from Huntsville and his 1993 300CE. The winner for the 2000s category was Kevin Manning and his CL-class.

After the Show and Shine, a select few of us stayed at the park for a few more hours to talk about cars and life in general. When the last members left the park, it was about 4pm. Usually, the last of the attendees high tail it out of there by 2pm, but we had such a good time socializing that we stayed longer than usual.

I know it's an old cliché, but "a good time was had by all", indeed.



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A few Centerville photos



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2013 Mercedes-Benz GLK350: Progression

By: Kimatni D. Rawlins



Whether it's a stately bottle of Pinot Noir, a vintage timepiece, or a 50s classic car awaiting auction, things certainly get better with time. The same applies for innovation and technology as it relates to the auto industry. Mercedes-Benz, who invented the automobile 125 years ago, is a clear leader in new safety, performance, and sustainability efforts and has found a way to compete in every market segment including the growing SUV category. So it was only natural for the German brand to update their entry level GLK-Class SUV with more power, more comfort, and more progression.

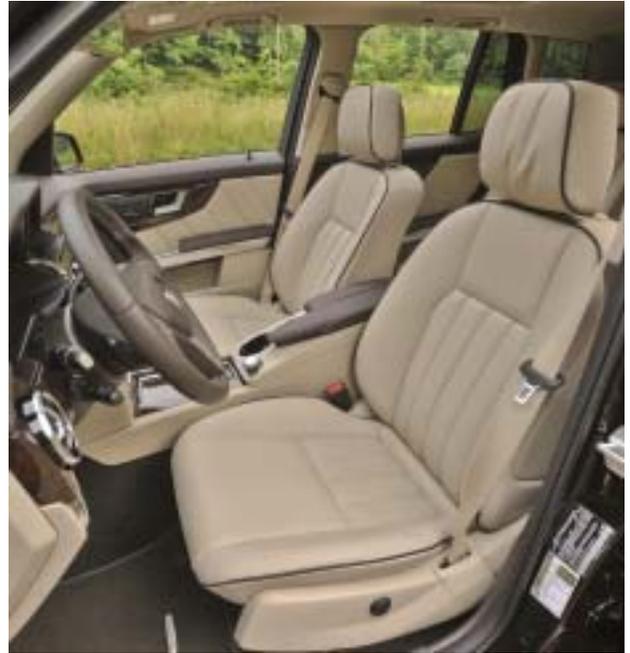
Though the 2013 GLK is more of a refresh than a complete redesign, Mercedes-Benz re-engineered it with a 1,000 new parts. Of course the engine is always the first area of focus since fuel efficiency is becoming very competitive with turbocharged diesels winning the battle. A 2.2-liter I4 turbo with 190 horsepower and a whopping 369 lb-ft of torque will see duty when it arrives next year in the form of the GLK250 BlueTEC. During a recent test drive in the Blue Ridge Mountains and Meadows of Dan in southwestern Virginia, I experienced the GLK350 and GLK350 4Matic, both outfitted with a 3.5-liter V6 now featuring direct-injection and an ECO Start/Stop function that helps the GLK achieve better fuel economy. Horsepower has been increased by 34 to 302 while torque increased by 15 to 273. We drove most of the day through mountains and compelling roads fit more for an SLK AMG than a GLK. Power was balanced and distributed smoothly through the new 7-speed automatic transmission. Though Mercedes has never converted the GLK into an AMG I would like to see a sports package that adds a bit more sportiness to the drive.

Consumers buy Mercedes-Benz products because of their cachet and reputation. They build big luxury sedans, supercars, convertibles, SUVs and four-door coupes. The GLK is labeled as the gateway into the Mercedes-Benz family and certainly demonstrates that. Its odd, boxy shape and lack of proper space for two kids is why my wife crossed it off her list when she was shopping for a smaller luxury SUV. As she specifically stated, "Only the front end looks like a Benz." Additionally, to get the vehicle to a point of owner satisfaction you have to invest extra dividends for all the newly touted features. My test vehicle went from \$37,090 base to \$54,025 as tested (including \$875 destination charge) after six option packages and five stand alone options were added.

Some of the notable features include Adaptive Highbeam Assist; Active Blind Spot Assist and Active Lane Keeping Assist that keeps the GLK from moving into another lane if it's occupied; DISTRONIC Plus cruise control with a PRE-SAFE Brake system that brings the vehicle to a halt if the driver fails to brake within .6 seconds of a collision; and LED running lights and tail lamps. We also had the \$1,990 AMG Styling Package which is absolutely necessary if you want to distinguish your GLK from the mundane group of small, luxury SUVs occupying the roads. The body styling and 20" upgraded rims alone (standard 19s) make all the difference.



Inside, the new GLK and old GLK are like night and day. Like all Mercedes vehicles you feel like a VIP with its attractive interior. Its new dash is cleaner and richer, the large circular vents are classy, and the instrumentation is modern and inviting. Optional "Comfort" headrests are unique and cushy, the small gauge cluster LCD screen displays superior graphics for the navigation and trip computer, and the new steering wheel houses paddle shifters so the driver can take control of power management. MB-Tex seating and real wood trim is standard with full leather coming as a \$2,100 option along with the Comfort headrests and LED ambient lighting. A very recognizable change within the cabin is the relocation of the DIRECT SELECT gear shifter from the center console. It now sits on the right of the steering column and allows for easy taps in and out of gears.



Though I confused it more than once for the windshield wiper and inadvertently positioned it in neutral. I presume GLK owners will become accustomed to the positioning.

The new GLK is tech savvy, friendly, comfortable, and capable as was demonstrated during an off-road trail that led us to dinner. How versatile is it? I would need to spend a week with it so my two little girls can do what they do best: evaluating SUVs for their "soccer mom" worthiness. I would also like to see some of those options offered as standard equipment.



Read more at:

<http://www.automotiverhythms.com/auto-reviews/test-drive/2058-2013-mercedes-benz-glk350-progression.html>

Spring Autocross 2012 Review

By: Mike Haney

Holidays, heat, and even the Indy500 weren't able to keep drivers away from our Spring Autocross at Lone Star College in Kingwood on May 25th. Our pre-Memorial Day event brought out 17 drivers and a lot of spectators. Once the course was set up, we all enjoyed a great BBQ lunch and a bit of socializing before the driving began.

This year, we had cars and drivers from many of the local car clubs join us. Paul Kwan from LOST (Lotus Of South Texas) was kind enough to loan us his timing equipment with the BIG display so drivers could

see their times without having to come up to the timing desk to see their times (Thanks Paul). In addition to the Lotus', we also had Miatas, BMWs, Fords, a Toyota, a Nissan, and yes, even some Mercedes-Benzes!!!

Once the food and chit-chat were over we hit the track!

In Class 'A', Walter Phillips took not only first in class, but fastest time of the day in his BMW M3 with a time of 50.15. Second place went to the ever-fast John Stone in his Mercedes-Benz E55 with a time of 54.77. Maung Than came in third in his Ford Mustang with a time of 62.35.

In Class 'B', first place was taken by the owner of the Nissan 370Z with a time of 50.80, followed by Derek Rasche in second place driving his Porsche 911 with a time of 59.73. Third place went to Greg Ball in his Toyota Avalon with a time of 63.31.

In Class 'C', Chuck Shim Took first place in his Miata with a time of 51.20. Second place went to Tim Hitke in his Lotus Elise with a time of 55.07. Jim Tran took third place in his Lotus Elise with a time of 57.83.

In Class 'D', Chris Ward drove his gorgeous BMW 2002 hard, taking first place with an impressive time of 53.75. Second place went to James Kraus in his Ford F150 Raptor with a time of 62.96. Third place went to Harry Simoneodis in his vintage Mercedes-Benz 280SL Pagoda with a time of 63.00.

Thanks go out as always to Lone Star College for the use of their facilities, Paul Kwan & the LOST group for their assistance, and to all those that watched and cheered us on.

See you all in the fall.

Technical Q & A with Ali Durvesh

Question: The headlamp lenses on my 1999 E300 are very cloudy. I was quoted hundreds of dollars by a local dealership to restore the lenses, and another dealership quoted me a ridiculous figure to replace the headlamp units. Is there a cheaper way to solve this problem? And why does it happen?

Answer: Over the past 13 years, your headlamp lenses have been exposed to all sorts of pollutants, temperature changes, and bombardment from outside sources. This exposure has caused the lenses to cloud. For considerably less, you can go to your local Harbor Freight hardware store and pick up a headlamp restoration kit (located in the automotive aisle) for about \$15. The kit will allow you to sand and polish your headlamp lenses back to clarity in only a few minutes. All you need is a drill, some masking tape, and water in a spray bottle. Everything else you'll need is included in the packaging. I also recommend purchasing some 3M protective film to protect your lenses from yellowing again. The film also protects the lenses from damage by rock chips. You can purchase the appropriate kit from Xpel.com. Doing the above will get the desired result of uncloudy lenses and a happy wallet.

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.

Team MBCA, let's go bowling!



Are you ready to bowl? Join MBCA | Houston as we compete against the Houston Chapter of the BMWCCA for our second bowling tournament. The tournament will be held on Sunday, July 29, 2012, 10:00am-noon at Palace Lanes, 4191 Bellaire Blvd. Houston, TX 77025. For more information and to RSVP, contact Mike Haney at mhaney@3dtriad.com, or 713-298-4580.

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* Set of 4 MB factory original alloys (14 X 6) with 195/70R14 Kelly Metric 600's mounted (<2000 miles).

They include the center hub covers and correct wheel nuts.

They are ready to bolt on and go - complete and great "driver" condition.

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

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1983 Mercedes-Benz 380SL



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<http://www.mbca.org>

2012 Upcoming Events

Bowling Event
July 29

Election Dinner
September 2012

Board of Directors Meeting

July 10

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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