



The Houston Star

MBCA Houston Section Newsletter

November
2004

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“Ford wrecks Chevy and buys a Mercedes”

Maurice Ford's story comes to us via his long time friend Clifford Flock.

Mr. Ford is in his late 70's and is a former Design Artist for Sears. Appreciation of design and quality may have been a part of his professional life, but his choice of, and care of cars was seemingly of a lesser concern. About a year ago he was involved in a wreck which changed all of that.

Mr. Ford's 1990 Chevy Corsica was totalled and he suddenly found himself in the market for a replacement car.

Mr. Ford is deaf and asked Clifford for assistance and advice in purchasing a replacement, of course Clifford quickly steered him in the right direction.

The selection of cars meeting Mr. Ford's requirements were somewhat limited in Abilene, so they decided to search on Ebay.

It wasn't long before they came across a 1983 300D Turbo Diesel with 266,000+ miles on it. The car was in Houston, which was a particular plus since Clifford's mechanic of choice is Texas German Autohaus. After reviewing the cars description and photos a call was made to set up a PPI (Pre-Purchase Inspection - always a good idea!!!).

TGA agreed to perform the PPI and Clifford told the seller "if the car passes we'll be on our way with a cashiers check in hand".

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President's Message



We had a couple of great events last month, the Fall autocross held at Kingwood College on October 10th (details later in this issue), followed by our tenth annual "Oktoberfest" at Texas German Autohaus on October 16th (details in next months issue). We'll take a few weeks off this month and then wrap up the year with our annual Holiday Brunch on December 5th at the Woodlands Marriott (details later in this issue).

We're pleased to have several new members on our board of directors, and we're all looking forward to 2005 and lots of new and interesting events. So far we're working on a tech session in late January and will hold our annual "New Members Dinner" in mid to late February. Please feel free to contact myself or any of the board members or officers listed on the back page with any ideas or suggestions on how we can better serve our members over the coming year.

Don't forget, we're always looking for pictures and stories about our members cars for the cover page... Please forward pictures and info on your favorite MB to me at the address listed on the back page.

Mike Haney
President - Houston Section



The amazing F-500 Mind with it's rear doors that open from either direction.

(Cover Car Continued)

The car passed the inspection and Clifford and Mr. Ford headed for Houston the next morning. The seller was willing to stay late to wait for them, so they picked up the car that evening. First thing the next morning they were off to TGA for an oil & filter change before making the long drive back to Abilene.

As the two headed up I-45 it seemed that the further they got away from Houston the slower the car ran, by the time they got to Fort Worth it was running horribly. The problem was nothing more than a clogged fuel filter, the duo finally made it home and ordered a complete set of new filters. The car needed little else aside from a bit of freon and a new fuse... not bad for a car that has run the equivalent of almost a dozen trips around the planet!

Mr. Ford has since become quite the Mercedes fan, has purchased M-B shirts and taken on several minor repairs himself. In fact, he and Clifford even replaced the hood pad. Maurice had the idea to use a new paint roller to roll the pad into contact with the underside of the hood.

A valve adjustment was recently completed and new motor & transmission mounts, along with fresh coolant and transmission fluid & filter are still on the list of things to do.

An interesting tidbit about this car. Story has it that the dealer's vet owned this car and that they'd had it since new. The car had a reflective triangle mounted in and under the trunk lid, not a feature often seen on an American model. Turns out, this car was a European delivery car and the original owners took delivery in Florence, Italy, and drove the car around Europe before shipping it back (presumably) to Houston.



Fall Autocross @ Kingwood College

So close... I was so very VERY close to getting the rainy day autocross I've been hoping and waiting for oh these many years... alas, it was not to be.

The day started off cloudy enough, but as the day wore on, the clouds burned off. Oh well, at least it wasn't a scorcher! Weather aside, the Fall 2004 Autocross held on Sunday October 10th at Kingwood College was quite nice. We began the event with the traditional army of helpers hauling equipment from our nearby rental space to the parking lot, followed by laying out the course and setting up the timing equipment. When everything was in place we gathered all drivers for a walkthrough of the course.

This event saw a seldom used course layout, one of the fastest courses we've got in our arsenal. The diagonal nature of the chosen design lends itself to higher speeds than usual, which of course gives the cars (and drivers) and great chance to get a feel for their cars acceleration and more importantly, it's braking capabilities. The courses are designed for differing purposes, some test suspension, some braking, others test tires... but they all test drivers... The fastest three cars in each of four classes receive a dash plaque, but everyone that drives in an autocross comes away with a better understanding of their car.

In Class 'A' (also known as the Cook Family): John took his new CLK320 for a blazing run taking first place with a time of 58.11 seconds, Brian took second place with a time of 59.68 and Joel took third place 59.89 (that was close!) all in dad's new ride.

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Fall Autocross (continued)

In Class 'B' (Mixed Class): Charles Wyatt warmed up the pavement in his C230K and garnered first place with a time of 65.07, with Richard Wilkins doing rather well in his vintage 250SE taking second place with a time of 67.86. Marvin Boyd even put his new toy through the wringer! His gorgeous vintage 280SE 4.5 cruised on in at third place with a time of 70.21

In Class 'C' (Middle Weights): Carey Smith took first place after turning in an impressive time of 61.62 in his 400E, second place saw Lee Martin not far behind in his E420.

In Class 'D' (Heavy Weights): Haskell Smith took the course by storm in his AMG powered CLK55, I had the honor of riding along as ballast during his fastest run and I gotta tell ya, that car is even faster than it looks... First place was a shoe in for Haskell with a time of 55.71 seconds. Clifford Floeck did fairly well considering what he was up against, taking second place with a time of 66.58.

As usual, we had a series of fun runs that followed the timed runs and awards, we even let a new Hemi Powered Magnum have a run at it... ok, it's not an MB, but they're in-laws now so we've gotta learn to get along with them... Wow, I'd forgotten how nice a Hemi sounds... and runs!

After all the motorized vehicles had their fun our own Richard Wilkins tried to initiate a Class 'E' for Human Powered Vehicles on his vintage bicycle. Due to a faulty calendar we were unable to record an exact time for Richard's run, but he was definitely the fastest bicycle out there.

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Fall Autocross (continued)

I have to extend thanks to all that helped with the setup, running and take down of equipment that is needed for the autocross. it's a lot of work and it's nice that everyone joins in and helps make it happen.

Thanks to all and we'll be back in the spring!





Join us for our Annual
Holiday Brunch on Sunday,
December 5th at The
Woodlands Marriott
Waterway Hotel & Convention
Center.

Food, Friends & Gift
Exchange, What more could
you want?

Details in next months
newsletter!!!

Mercedes Marketplace

**For Sale:**

1972 350SL. 83K miles, cream with dark brown interior. Truly fine example of early 107. Meticulously maintained.

Completely original.

Hardtop and original wheels in storage.

Complete records. It's as good as it sounds.

\$14,000. Call 936-662-8169 or 281-465-4066.



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]



MEMBERS: Marketplace ads for members cost \$5.00 for a text ad and \$20 for a picture & text ad. The ads will run for 3 months unless asked to repeat. ALL PICTURE ADS MUST BE PROVIDED IN DIGITAL FORMAT - NO HARDCOPY PHOTOGRAPHS.

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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2004 Calendar of Events

December 5th

Holiday Brunch - Woodlands Marriott

January 2005

Tech Session - details pending

February 2005

New Members Dinner - details pending

Want a free car wash?

Mercedes-Benz of Sugar Land is giving free car washes to all MB's every Saturday.

MBCA - Houston Section's website now posts the newsletters online every month in full color!!!
 Log in and see:

<http://www.mbca.org/houston>

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