



GATEWAY NEWS

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA SAINT LOUIS GATEWAY SECTION

“Serving the Greater St. Louis Area since 1972 !”

Gateway News – MARCH APRIL 2013

Volume 41 Issue 2

Bowling in March

Tropicana Lanes

Saturday March 9th, 7:00PM

This is going to be fun! March 9th, at 7:00PM, join us at **Tropicana Lanes, 7960 Clayton Road, Richmond Heights, MO 63117**. The nice people at Tropicana will give us free instruction – that is, if you do not want all gutter balls. When we are done throwing all those strikes, we will have a private room to continue our party.

Three games cost \$12.00. Need bowling shoes? Rental is \$3.25, to be paid at Tropicana. Food and beverages of your choice are available at the snack bar. Their menu is quite broad, and even includes some healthy items. **RSVP no later than February 28th**, with your check for \$12.00 per person to: **Kacey Cowdery**, 623 Westborough Place, Webster Groves, MO 63119. Questions, email kaceycowdery@swbell.net, or call 314-968-5041.

Defensive Driving & Autocross

Harvest Bible Chapel

Saturday, April 27th

Please note the location change! This event will take place at the **Harvest Bible Chapel parking lot at 17795 Wild Horse Creek Rd., Chesterfield, MO 63005**.

Defensive driving is low speed, simulations of a variety of highway driving situations. It gives the participant the opportunity to add other alternative maneuvers to their driving knowledge when an emergency situation occurs. It is knowing what your car can do and knowing what you can do with your car. Accidents happen in a split second. Defensive driving may help the driver gain an additional second in reaction time in that emergency situation and that second may just save their life. In an emergency, every second counts. **Plan to bring the car you drive every day.**

The event will start at 9:00 a.m. In the morning, participants will take defensive driving from in-car instructors. The class begins with a 45 minute classroom instruction, where participants will learn proper seat and mirror adjustment, steering techniques, braking, foot position, tire patch theory and car dynamics. Then participants will drive through the various stations we have set up in a parking lot, with an instructor at their side at all times. We will have them practice avoiding an obstacle in the road, proper hard braking technique and steering through slalom to feel the cars dynamics. They will also experience the feel and sounds of their ABS brakes. This is a low speed maneuver. This is not a class for us to criticize the participant's driving; it is to help them stay alive by learning how to drive more defensively.

In the afternoon we will set up an autocross course and time folks through the course. **The cost of this event is \$25 per participant and includes a light lunch and drinks.** We will need several volunteers to help run this event so please let me know if you are willing to help. We will have room for a maximum of 40 participants.

In case of inclement weather we will send out an e-mail notification as well as post the cancellation on the club's web page <http://stlgateway.mbca.org/>. Contact **Bob Frank** at rsfrank1@aol.com or **636-273-9820** to reserve a spot.

City Museum and Dinner

St. Louis

Saturday, May 18th

This will be a fun tour of the City Museum located just off Washington at 701 North 15th Street St. Louis. Information about the museum can be found at www.citymuseum.org. Following the Museum trip we will get together for dinner. More information will be available in the next newsletter. Our host for this event will be Dave & Jan Wade.

**2013 MBCA
SAINT LOUIS GATEWAY SECTION**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we dig out from under Thursday's snowfall, I suspect that you join me in thinking about Spring, warmer weather, and Mercedes-Benz-centered events. Once the temperature gets above freezing, the car wash gear comes out, along with the Zymol, touch-up paint, and wheel brightener, for most of us. We found out that many of our members have been thinking about upgrading their rides during the winter months, and some have acted on the impulse.

Our Member Appreciation Reception this past week at Tri-Star Imports gave those attending the opportunity to compare their present cars with the new offerings from the fatherland, while picking up the details of Mercedes-Benz's technological advancements. A great time was had by all, and our thanks go out to Tri-Star for providing great food, refreshing new knowledge, and a venue to enjoy our Mercedes friends.

Be on the lookout for upcoming events, as outlined in this issue, and reach out as soon as possible to the event host/hostess to reserve your spot. A fun night of bowling at Tropicana Lanes in Richmond Heights is scheduled for March 9th, a Defensive Driving training event is scheduled for April 27th at Harvest Bible Church in Chesterfield, and a tour and dinner at the City Museum are scheduled for May 18th, so save the dates, and get your name in quickly, as the available spots will go fast.

While you're musing about your automobile, I hope you'll give your Club a thought, as well. As you may know, recruiting new membership is a very important factor in the longevity and viability of any Club, and ours is no exception. Your Board Members carry MBCA membership applications, Star Magazine copies, and our Section newsletter with them at all times, just in case a potential new member presents him/herself for recruitment. If you'd like to be similarly-prepared to assist your section's recruitment efforts, just send an e-mail to me or Jim Gruss, our talented Membership Chairman/Webmaster, and we'll send you the necessary supplies (applications, door hangers, Star Magazine copies, etc.,) to assist you in telling the St. Louis Gateway Section story. With a base of exceptional members each reaching out to one Mercedes-owning person each, our efforts would bring great results. .

Enough blather from me- Let's all have a fine Spring.

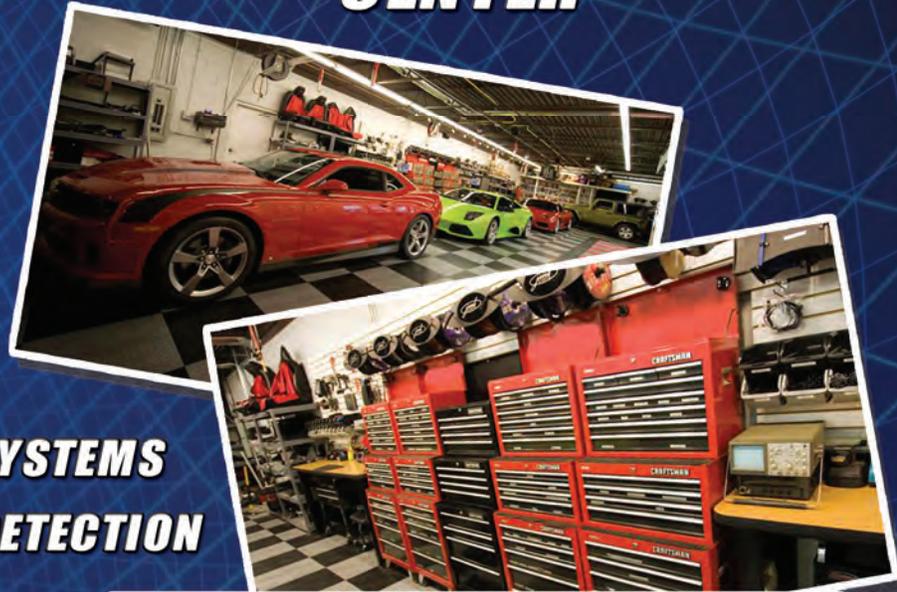
John Prater



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www.rnaworldwide.com



From: www.autosport.com

On February 4th the Mercedes team unveiled the car with which it will compete in during the 2013 season Formula 1 season. Mercedes team principal Ross Brawn said the new season “marks the start of a second era for our Silver Arrows works team”.

The new Mercedes **W04** took to the Jerez circuit for the first time for a few early laps ahead of its official launch in the afternoon. The team said the aerodynamic design has been optimized around a new five-element front wing and a second-generation Coanda exhaust. The car retains pushrod front suspension and a pull-rod rear suspension.

The team has lured Lewis Hamilton away from his McLaren home to drive for them this year. He will drive car number ten while team mate Nico Rosberg races number nine.



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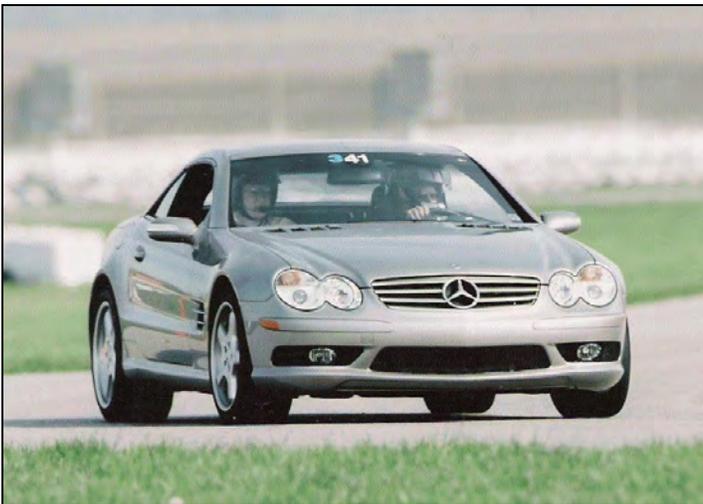
SLGS Member's Cars

With this issue of the newsletter we are starting a new section featuring member's cars.



Owner: Paula & John Prater

Here's Paula's 2009 C300 sport sedan, purchased new at what is now Plaza West Mercedes-Benz, being used as a daily driver by Paula, while piling up the miles- 71,000 so far, with many more expected. This car, which is the "starter set " of Mercedes automobiles, has been perfectly trouble-free for it's life, with the exception of magnetically drawing a large Dodge Ram pickup into its front end earlier this month, while being driven by your Section's president. This resulted in fairly-extensive front end body work, which is undetectable. We've taken numerous trips to the Southeast, Southwest, and Midwest with the black beauty, and anticipate continued heavy use of this fine small, high mpg Benz.



Owner: Mike & Sally Gann

I ordered my 2004 SL55 AMG in Oct. 2002 (#6 in line at Tri Star for the AMG), delivered Jan 04. Currently just under 54,000 miles. Two part failures to date, the secondary air pump in the emissions system and a sensor in the fuel system (apparently a known problem). One other known defect that was remedied in all 2005(?) MB models is/was the electrical sensors connector to the transmission oil pan, which begins leaking after a few years.

Simple fix, but no warning/light/clue to tell you the trans oil is low...other than the trans starts to act up/stick in gear. (This was the subject of my article in the newsletter a few years ago).

Likes: love the car, reliable, great cruiser, decent power...not a "sports" car. Dislikes: weighty – needs to go on a diet – new 2014's make a small step in the right direction, but it's difficult to reconcile SL and 4,000+ lbs. Looking to replace the car next year.



Owners: Rick & Patti Siefert

The photo above was taken last June, when our 1957 190SL was displayed in the Art of the Car Concours, at the Kansas City Art Institute in Kansas City, Missouri.

For well over 40 years, I have been a major car aficionado, initially being infatuated with Camaros and Corvettes, owning several of each. But, the car that I really became enamored with, beginning in the late 1960's, was a Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing. Only the wealthy could afford the 300SL, when it came on the market in the early 1950's. Mercedes recognized the need for a second, lower-priced sports car to complement the 300SL. As a result, the 190SL was first introduced as a production model in February, 1955. At this time the advertised price of the 190SL was \$3,998, while the 300SL cost \$7,463. The 190SL was known as "Baby Merc" or the "Little Brother" to the 300SL, as the two cars shared the same wheelbase.

Our 190SL was built in Stuttgart, Germany on December 9, 1957, at a base price of \$5,020. The exterior color, including the removable hardtop, is Feuer Rot (Fire Red), the MB-Tex seating color is Crème, and the car has a tan canvas convertible top.

Some of the unique features of this car, considering that it is 55 years old, are as follows:

- Front-engine, rear-wheel-drive roadster (convertible coupe)
- First unit-frame & body Mercedes-Benz, using a steel chassis with aluminum hood, doors, trunk lid, and dash.
- Powertrain consists of a single over-head cam 4-cylinder, in-line engine, displacing 115.7 cu. in. (1897 cc), 105 bhp @ 5700 rpm, dual downdraft Weber DCOE carburetors, and a 4-speed manual transmission.
- Curb weight of 2550 lbs and a fuel capacity of 17.2 gallons
- Top speed of 106 mph, 0-60 mph in 13.5 seconds, and a standing ¼ mile in 18.9 seconds.



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PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Please help our membership grow. Member referrals are the best way to recruit new members. And, for each referral, you, as an existing MBCA member, will receive a FREE month of club membership, simply added on to your current membership period.

To the many of you who referred your family, friends, neighbors, and business associates to become a part of our Club, thank you so much for contributing to the success of the St. Louis Gateway Section.

Since the last publication of the Gateway News we are proud to announce and WELCOME the following new members:

Phillip and Jackie McClendon
Robert Meyer
Raymond Young
Cheryl Krumm
John Carter

Welcome to the St. Louis Gateway Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. We have nearly 250 members within a 200-mile radius of St. Louis & invite you to join us at our Events.

The success of our Club depends on the participation of the members to our scheduled activities. Thank you for joining. We look forward to seeing you at our next event.

The St. Louis Gateway Section Officers & Board Members

Mercedes 2014 CLA



Mercedes-Benz is going to offer a "seductive" price for its newest, smallest car. The CLA will start at \$29,900. With a gently sloping roofline, swept-back taillights and flowing character lines on its flanks, the CLA's styling draws heavily from the latest iteration of the original "four-door coupe," the CLS-Class. Notably, the sleek look isn't a mere stylistic trompe l'oeil – with a drag coefficient of just 0.23 Cd, the CLA is the most aerodynamic series production car ever created. Powered by a turbocharged and direct-injected 2.0-liter inline-four plucked from Mercedes' European engine cupboard. The mill will send 208 horsepower and 258 lb-ft to the front wheels through a seven-speed dual-clutch automatic. Set for a spring 2014 release, a 4-wheel drive version is expected in the fall of 2014.

MBCA Membership Form

Please print clearly

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(____) _____ (____) _____
 Home Phone Business Phone

Occupation _____ E-mail address _____

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Annual membership dues include six issues of The Star.

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Mercedes Model Designations

Interestingly the following information is from the Mercedes-Benz Mid-East Website.

Ever since the automobile was invented the model designations of Mercedes-Benz have followed clear rules. (*Editor's Note: I think some of us would question that statement*). The fact that they are still being adjusted today is due to the increasing range of the available selection.

The output idea found its way into the model designations from the end of the 1890s – e.g. with the Mercedes 35 PS. In 1909 the new tax rating called the "Steuer-PS" ("tax hp"), which was dependent on displacement, was also included in the designations – one example of this is the Benz 28/50 PS. After efficiency-raising supercharging was introduced the names of the supercharger models from 1924 onwards received both the effective engine output with and without supercharger: e.g. Mercedes 15/70/100 PS.

After the merger producing Daimler-Benz AG, new names were introduced from 1927 as the model range of the new Mercedes-Benz brand continually grew. Place names such as Stuttgart, Mannheim and Nürburg showed the concrete relationship each of the corresponding models had with these cities, for example, the production location in the case of the 8/38 PS Stuttgart 200 or the 14/70 PS Mannheim 350. The three-digit figure in vehicle names which is still known today was introduced in 1928 – initially as an add-on. It represents the vehicle's displacement.

The names of the legendary supercharger sports cars of the 1920s followed their own logic with the use of letter abbreviations: K, S, SS and SSK stood respectively for "kurz" ("short"), "sport", "super sport" and "super sport kurz" ("super sport short").

From 1931 the naming system was tightened up and made uniform: starting with the model 170, the new models received a name which included only the three-digit figure based on the displacement.

In special cases, such as when models with the same displacement had to be differentiated from one another or the drive technology was to be emphasised, additional letters were tacked on – e.g. K for Kompressor (supercharger), V or H for "Motor vorn" (engine in front) or "Motor im Heck" (engine in rear) and D for diesel.

In the years that followed the system was further refined – until the product "offensive" and the increasing number of vehicle classes required new, clearer names.

The three-digit figure based on displacement also remained a central element of the system introduced in 1993. In addition there were one to three letters placed in front which represented the classification of the model, e.g. S for S-Class, SL for SL-Class or SLK for SLK-Class.

A new naming system was implemented at the end of 2008 and was followed by further changes arising from planned modification years, market launches and model facelifts. As a result, names from both the old and the new nomenclature systems were used concurrently until the end of 2009.

The basic principle of the Mercedes-Benz model designations remains intact: the higher the number for the model designation, the higher the overall vehicle performance. The vehicle class can also still be recognized from the letter at the front of the name. In future the model nomenclature will also include an add-on which indicates the type of technology used.

Example: S 400 HYBRID

Part 1: vehicle category. The "S" stands for S-Class.

Part 2: Model designation. In order to properly express the output potential of a vehicle, the new model nomenclature takes several factors into account: displacement, kW figure and the technical innovation of the drive system.

The three-digit number represents the total output of the drive system. Below 240 the designations are assigned in multiples of 20 (e.g. 180, 200, 220), and above 250 they are multiples of 50 (e.g. 250, 300, 350). In the example of the S 400 BlueHYBRID, "400" is used instead of "350" for the S 350 entry-level model because the BlueHYBRID version has more output and a higher torque available.

Using the new nomenclature hybrid drives are named according to their total output level from the combustion engine and electric motor. So hybrid drives are upgraded in comparison to the model designation for the corresponding combustion engine.

If a special technology is in use, its name comes behind the vehicle category and model designation. For S 400 BlueHYBRID the add-on indicates that this S-Class operates with a combined drive system of a gas engine and electric motor.

Yes, Membership does have its Privileges.

At Tri-Star Mercedes we are committed to providing the finest Mercedes-Benz experience in the area. For those of you, who have a special affinity to the Mercedes brand, be assured that we share that commitment. To us, it is the only brand and, the only brand we represent.

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Bill to Provide for Single License Plate Introduced in Missouri

For those of us who hate to disfigure the front bumpers of our cars to mount the front license plate there is hope. Legislation (S.B. 104) has been introduced in the Missouri Senate to require the issuance of only a single license plate for motor vehicles. The bill, favored by state hobbyists, also applies to personalized plates.

Those supporting the bill believe that S.B. 104 would save money, conserve resources and bring Missouri in line with other states that have moved to a single plate requirement. And that S.B. 104 would protect the aesthetic contours of collector cars and relieve vehicle owners of the burden of having to create mounting holes on fabricated and some original bumpers, etc.

If you wish to support this bill please contact members of the Missouri Senate Transportation and Infrastructure Committee by phone or e-mail to request their support for S.B. 104. To e-mail all Committee members, copy and paste the email address blocks below:

- mike.kehoe@senate.mo.gov;
- john.lamping@senate.mo.gov;
- bob.dixon@senate.mo.gov;
- brian.munzlinger@senate.mo.gov;
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Traude & Gary Wilson; thanks to Gary for organizing this event



Michael & Melissa Seymour, David Wade, Ron Faerber



Dana Faerber, New Member Cheryl Krumm, Luella and Frank Perry



Patti Siefert



Mike Gaan

Happy Birthday to Frank, Patti and Mike



Welcome New Members John and Behyan Springborn



Debbie and Mike Fults, Jerry Willie, Kacey Cowdery

January 6, 2013

[NEW YEARS EVE BRUNCH AT CHARLIE GITTO'S RESTAURANT]



Bille Valle, Cathie Wille & Paula and John Prater



New Member Ken Haugk

February 20, 2013

[MEMBER APPRECIATION RECEPTION AT TRI-STAR MERCEDES-BENZ - RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS]



John Springborn



Jerroy Frank



John Ryckman



Jerry Wille



Gary Wilson



Laurie Bauer



Ed Barutio



June Ryckman



Dan Valle



Checking out Ed's new fuzzy dice!



Laurie Bauer, Patti Siefert and Sheryl Brock



June Ryckman and Traude Wilson



*Jerry Anna, Dan Valle, Bob Frank, Mike Gaan, Tony Bauer and John Prater
Checking out Tony and Laurie Bauer's new silver SL 63 Mercedes*



Bob Frank checking out the cookies

2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA
ST. LOUIS GATEWAY SECTION

Sunday - January 6th

New Year Brunch

Charlie Gitto's Restaurant

.....
Wednesday - February 20th

Member Appreciation Reception

Tri-Star Mercedes-Benz

.....
Saturday - March 9th

Bowling

Tropicana Lanes in Richmond Heights

.....
Saturday - April 27st

Defensive Driving Program

Harvest Bible Church - Chesterfield

.....
Saturday - May 18th

City Museum & Dinner

.....
Sunday - June 2nd

St. Louis European Auto Show

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Plaza Frontenac

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Saturday - July 20th

Lunch at Fast Eddies Bon Air

Alton, IL

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Saturday & Sunday - August 10th & 11th

Stonecroft Manor Tour & Picnic

Hannibal, MO

.....
Saturday - September 21st

Chaumette Winery Tour

Sainte Genevieve, MO

.....
Sunday - October 6th

Autos on Valhalla Car Show

St. Louis Gateway Section Picnic

Valhalla Cemetery

.....
Sunday - November 3rd

Columbia Star Dinner Train Excursion

Columbia, MO

.....
Saturday - December 7th

Holiday Party, Frontenac Hilton

.....
Sunday January 5th, 2014

New Year Brunch

New Year's Brunch

January 6, 2013

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About 40 members of the St. Louis Gateway Section gathered at Charlie Gitto's restaurant filling the reserved room for a holiday brunch. It was a great way to start the New Year and get rid of the post-holiday blues. The conversations were great with discussions of who got a new Mercedes for Christmas (or who wished they had gotten a new Mercedes) and where are you going to travel this year. We sat down to a wonderful brunch with great food and first class service. Our president, John Prater, reviewed upcoming club events and introduced some of our newer members who included Cheryl Krumm. Cheryl has been to a few of the club's events but this was the first one she has attended as an official member of the club. Rick Siefert then announced that it was his wife's (Patti) birthday and the "traditional" pineapple upside down cake with candles was brought out. After Patti blew out the candles we all had a piece of what was a pretty delicious cake. As it turns out we also had birthday boys Mike Gaan and Frank Perry in attendance. Then the event host, Gary Wilson, held door-prize drawings for four very nice tote-bags with Mercedes logos. That brought to a close another fun club event, bringing in the New Year with good friends. Our thanks go to Gary Wilson for hosting this great event.

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Member Appreciation Reception

February 20, 2013

Tri-Star Mercedes

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On Wednesday, February 20, members of the St. Louis Gateway Section gathered in the showroom of Tri-Star Mercedes for the annual Member Appreciation Reception. The group was treated to wine, tasty snacks, and good conversation. Then the event started with Rick Siefert and Pres. John Prater thanking Tri-Star for hosting the event. There were drawings for door prizes which featured a Mercedes theme and included three remote controlled Mercedes cars. John reviewed this year's club events and handed out an events calendar. Kate Hennekes, daughter of the Tri-Star Mercedes owner, welcomed everyone and discussed the new location for the dealership which will be at the corner of Hampton and Highway 40 across from the St. Louis Zoo. It is anticipated that this move will take place in early 2014. Some members who have had their Mercedes serviced at this dealership had good words to say about John Cordes, one of the service advisors. Next, Chris Strom detailed the technologies which Mercedes will be unveiling in the next few years. She also said that Mercedes was planning to release 30 new models over the next seven years! Then Bob Alesi reviewed and demonstrated some of the new technologies on a GL450 on the showroom floor. Then it was back to the wine and snacks and more great conversation before everyone departed with thoughts of a new Mercedes dancing in their heads.

CARS AND PARTS FOR SALE

Two 1981 450SL Palomino vinyl seats with headrests, good original condition, but not perfect. Bought them for my '75 SL not realizing the style and color were different. Paid \$700; would like to recoup most of it. **Larry Heugatter, larryheugatter@gmail.com or 314.322.5925.**

RIMS, (4) perfect front & rear rims from 1999 ML430, all reasonable offers considered. **Gary Wilson, 314.662.6333.**

E320 Sedan, 1994, Black with black leather seating. 54K miles. New front brakes & tires. Maintenance work performed at M-B dealer and Erwin Schwarz. Very good condition. Asking \$5,990. **Gary Gray at Gtgray@sbcglobal.net.**

450SL, 1976, Astral Silver w/ red interior. 72,500 miles. Hardtop with rolling stand, original soft top in A-1 condition. This gem is original and has been properly maintained by Legend and Machens Mercedes-Benz in Columbia, MO. It is ready to drive anywhere/any place at your leisure. Yours for \$15,500. **Michael Koch at cedarcrestvineyards@gmail.com or 573.230.6497.**

Bosch right side European model headlight assembly (including turn signal housing) for W126 models (from a 1985 280SE) 0302 050 007/8 \$100. Also, **Bosch left side European model headlight assembly** (including turn signal housing) for W123 models (from a 1984 300D). 0302 653 002 (123-820-93-61) \$90. **Bob Nauss, robert_nauss@umsl.edu or 314.954.2879.**

If you'd like to pick up your new Mercedes-Benz at the factory in Stuttgart this Spring, Summer or Fall, it's time to start planning. With 30 years of experience, call Jay Schuessler at Plaza Mercedes-Benz, 314-919-8012 or email at jschuessler@plazamotors.com for all the details.



C300 Sedan, 2011, Paladium Silver with grey/black interior. 17K miles. Pristine Condition ! V6, 3.0 liter, 4Matic AWD, traction/stability control, Premium package, heated/dual power/leather seats, moon roof. **Truly priced to sell at \$28,900 ! ! Laurie or Tony Bauer, 618.616.0154 or 618.407.6796.**

\$500 Sedan, 2001, Black with black interior, Great Condition ! Well-maintained, 100% serviced at Plaza Motors, \$15,990 OBO, **Darryl Ross, darross44@yahoo.com or 314.477.7678.**

450SL, 1980, Stunning Cardinal Red w/hardtop. 145,000 miles. Like new black soft top with nice original black interior. New car cover in trunk. Great driver. \$8,500 OBO. **Keith Drinen 314-541-0267.**

FOR SALE ! Outstanding Opportunity – Debt Free Company. LUXURY CAR SERVICE CENTER, 8865 Hazelwood Tech Court, Hazelwood, MO 63042. **Certified – Factory Trained Mercedes-Benz Repair Facility.** Over seven years of successfully servicing customers in the St. Louis bi-state area. The owners are relocating and would like to pass this great opportunity along to the right person. Established business, Great reputation, Strong branding, Unlimited potential, Strong vendor relationships, Diverse Expansive Clientele of over 500, Central location to major highways. Sale includes Mercedes-Benz Test Equipment, New Rotary Lifts, **Expandable Turn-Key Mercedes Facility**, and so much more..... **For more information, please e-mail or call: info@luxurycsc.com or 314.522.9200.**

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If you would like to place an advertisement, please mail or e-mail it by the 15th of the month to:

Rick Siefert
siefertf@bv.com
367 West Manor Drive
Chesterfield, Missouri 63017

StarTech 2013 May 18-19

Registration has begun for StarTech 2013, May 18-22 in Birmingham, Alabama. Register before March 15 and save \$20 off registration fees! Come learn from experts on Mercedes-Benz vehicles. StarTech will feature speakers from Michelin, Mercedes-Benz Classic Center and Bosch, in addition to MBCA Star® columnists Pierre Hedary, Jonathan Hodgman and George Murphy. Plus new technical experts you may not have met yet!

Reps from well-known Mercedes-Benz suppliers will be there in person to teach Restoration, Maintenance, Performance and more. StarTech is not just for techies; it will also feature a number of interesting events. Sign-up for Parade laps around Barber Motorsports road course; take a special artist's tour of Cahaba Clay Works; get a behind-the-scenes tour of the U.S. Space & Rocket Center; meet with employees of Mercedes-Benz US International — the only factory in the world that makes R-, ML-, GL-Class and (coming soon) C-Class vehicles. Come for the Tech. Stay for the Fun! Don't miss it!



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Automatic Transmission Servicing Murphy's Law From "The Star" Mar/Apr 2008

M-B initiated so-called lubricated-for-life 722.6 automatic transmissions in 1996. Unless this component shows obvious leakage, the fluid level is never checked. If you don't service the transmission, you will have problems. Most automatic transmissions from 1996 to 2005 are touted as needing no fluid or filter replacement for life. Under these conditions "life" is about 80,000 to 100,000 miles, or long after the warranty has expired. In addition, M-B then recommends replacement of these transmissions at 100,000 miles if they are not operating properly. I have seen a number of these transmissions at my local mechanic's shop with sludgy, dirty fluid at 80,000 miles or so because surprise (!) the fluid and filter were not changed.

Lesson: Change fluid and filter in *all* automatic transmissions every 30,000 to 40,000 miles as previously was required by M-B. The newer 722.6 transmissions are no more resistant to contamination and moisture than the older ones. Plus not they have computers *inside* the case, leading to electronic problems from increasing conductivity of the

operating fluid due to moisture, wear metals, and Manufacturing debris.

The wear metals, mostly iron and aluminum, originate from machining during manufacture and the initial wear-in of the new parts. Silicon originates from sand left over from the casting process. It is not possible to clean the gearbox castings completely as microscopic particles lodge in the pores of the parts.

In 2001 M-B did initiate installation of a magnet in the transmission pan to attract any metal particles. These magnets may be used in any M-B transmission and are a good idea.

In 2006 M-B changed service procedures to include automatic transmission fluid and filter change at around 35,000 miles. For the do-it-yourselfers, www.installuniversity.com shows how to change transmission fluid in a 722.6 unit.

Based on my experience, I recommend that all gearbox lubricants be changed at 30,000 to 40,000 miles. Even better is at 5,000 miles from new to remove initial contamination outlined above. Remember, no gearbox is "lubricated for life".

ST. LOUIS GATEWAY SECTION
17500 GARDEN RIDGE CIRCLE
WILDWOOD, MISSOURI 63038

Bowling in March

Tropicana Lanes
Richmond Heights, MO
Saturday March 9th, 7:00PM

Defensive Driving Program

Harvest Bible Church
Chesterfield, MO
Saturday, April 27th, 2013

City Museum and Dinner

St. Louis, MO
Saturday, May 18th, 2013



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