



HUDSON-MOHAWK SECTION

Mercedes-Benz Club of America

2018 FALL

It was the hottest summer. It was the wettest summer. It was a time to rest and a time to be active. It was a time to swim and a time to drive those Benzes, meet other Benz people, and have lots of fun. HUDMO had at least one activity per month, all well attended and full of food, frolic and friends. Come join us and see what we have in store for fall and winter programs.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JIM WRIGHT, PRESIDENT HUDSON MOHAWK SECTION



Summer is over but the driving season is not. There is still time to enjoy the twists, turns and amazing vistas of upstate New York. The fall weather promises many fun, top down drives and leaf peeping experiences. The vacation crowd has returned to their home states and the kids are back in school. The road belongs to you and your Benz. GO OUT AND ENJOY IT! Take a person who does not own a BENZ with you. They'll thank you for it. While it is nice to be part of a wonderful well organized rally, (like the FARBERRALLYE XLI on October 19-21 in

Hancock MA at Jimmy Peak, more about that in another issue) it is also great to plan 4 hour trips to nowhere, within a fifty mile radius of your home. With modern GPS service you will always be able to find your way home before dark.

Our club is growing and we are bonding more and more, closer and closer. It's one very large extended family. We are getting to know each other, not just as Benz owners, but as friends. The more we participate, the stronger the club becomes. Invite your friends and co-workers to join us and have some fun. We need more members, especially young people and women. The median age of our group is 60 years old. We have many events that are fun for families, not just experienced collectors of vintage cars and gear heads.

I would like to be a passenger in a driving event planned and run by the women of our section. Any volunteers?

HUDMO has something for everyone. If you love our wonderful cars, **WE LOVE YOU!**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

DECEMBER 1—HOLIDAY PARTY Italian American Club, Washington Avenue, Albany NY. More details will be specified in an Evite from Sandra Griffin.

2019 Activities will be announced in the next issue.

Watch for them and join us.

MEET YOUR OFFICERS

Elections were held at the September 27th meeting. Here are your Officers and Board Members for the 2018-2019 year. Congratulations and prepare for another successful year. We appreciate your hard work.

JIM WRIGHT, PRESIDENT



I am curious, adventurous, and skeptical. I am seldom in a WOW, now that's impressive state and I don't believe in reincarnation. I have tried to visit all the wow places I could around the world. When I arrived at these places, I said WOW!; "All of the dead old Benz cars owned by my friends had arisen from the crusher and had been reincarnated as taxis in every place I have been that had serviceable roads."

That's why I love the Mercedes-Benz. I have two of them an S430 and a 300SD. They have taken me safely to seek satisfaction of my curiosities within driving distance and returned me safely. I was very skeptical of the legends of their reliability, longevity and comfort. IT'S ALL TRUE! SO MUCH FOR SKEPTICISM. If you make a serious effort to take care of your car, the mileage on the odometer doesn't matter. I am proud and very happy to be President of Hudson-Mohawk Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America.

BRETT KROPF, VICE-PRESIDENT



Brett bought his first Mercedes-Benz - a pristine low-mileage 1999 C280 Sport in August 2006. Amazed at the German workmanship, and discovering the high-performance AMG line, he bought a 1999 C43 AMG in April 2007, and soon became an 'AMG Enthusiast'. In 2012, he & Debra flew to Houston to drive home a supercharged 2005 E55 Kompressor AMG (often referred to as the 'Beast'). With a lift in his garage, Brett prefers to do all M-B service and repairs himself on both the E55 AMG, and a High-Mileage Awarded 2007 GL450. A member of MBCA-HudMo since November 2012, Brett & Debra are also members of the MBCA-NEPA Section.

SAUNDRA GRIFFIN, SECRETARY



Wanted to learn more about Mercedes so I joined the Club in 2009. Since becoming a member, I've enjoyed planning events, driving my friend's car, and meeting the members. Recently bought my first Mercedes, a CLK 320 Cabriolet.

ARMOND (CHUCK) FRIGON, TREASURER



Currently Semi-Retired, Substitute bus driver for Queensbury NY School; Member of HudMo since 2012; Member of the Board since 2014.

Attended MBCA's *Concours d'Elegance* Judging School in May 2016.

Mercedes Vehicle Models owned: 2008 C350 Sedan RWD, 2008 E350 Sedan AWD, and current owner of a 2013-C350 Sedan RWD.

Chuck was first appointed treasurer in January 2018.

MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

KIRK DANIELS



I'm a camera buff. I enjoyed taking landscapes and some portraits, but when I was invited to Mercedes event about 5 years ago, my thoughts turned to cars. After looking at some of the photos from the national Mercedes magazine "The Star," I started looking at Mercedes in a different way. Can I do that? The rest became history. I'm the photographer for the club and challenging myself everyday to see my pictures in the magazine.

LEW DECKER



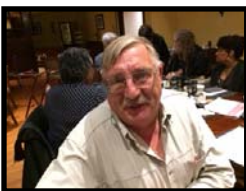
My interest started about three years ago; a friend who has another friend informed me of a person they knew who was elderly and going into assisted living. I was asked if my wife and I would like to see the house before going to a real estate broker. I looked in the garage and there were two Mercedes sitting in the bays. I was drawn right away to a convertible that had low mileage and looked in beautiful shape. I gave an offer right away, but was turned down. About a year later I got a call asking if I was still interested. I was surprised as I figured it was already gone. I offered a larger amount and the deal was sealed. I had no prior knowledge about Mercedes other than what most people believe about them. All I knew was they were German made, beautiful, well built and expensive. The car I bought is the iconic 1986 SL 560 which came with a hard top also. I was hooked on the Benz.

BILL DUFER



Been involved with cars since 1961 and married to co-pilot Enny for 52 years! Currently have Benz in the family, a 2019 SLC43 and a 2016 GL450 with a new one due in October. In addition to enjoying our Mercedes, we are long term boaters living on *Summer Romance* most of the summer at Albany Yacht Club. I'm very proud to be a Director.

GEORGE MOSES



...bought my 1st Benz in '78, a '71 220 sedan... owned at least one since, and now have five - '64 thru '85 cars on the road plus a '52 Cab A project in the garage. Joined MBCA for camaraderie, events and discussion about the mark (and *The Star* is a wonderful mag)... enjoy calls for tech/buying/parts/service advice on the older cars.

VICKIE PARKER



I am also your Newsletter Editor. I have been active in HUDMO since 2007, when I bought my first SLK 350 which was totaled five years later. I replaced it with a 2013 SLK250. Love the hard top convertible, smooth ride and easy handling. Before my first Benz, I was a Corvette girl, but that's another story...

HERB SODHER



Dyed In The Wool car enthusiast. Member of Mustang, Corvette, Miata, RX-7, Porsche, Jaguar, and Mercedes clubs. Officer in many. Enjoy the social aspects of club activities and making new friends. Learning the technical, engineering, performance and history is very satisfying as well as sharing info and learning from others.

Kropf's journey to StarFest 2018 and beyond

(incl M-B of Flagstaff NV, M-B of Draper UT).

Brett & Debra Kropf attended StarFest 2018 and wrote: (Continuation from Part 1 in previous HudMo Newsletter.)

We regrouped again at the hotel for the Accel/Autocross Reception where we met and ate with more MBCA members from around the country. Awards were given for the Acceleration Runs based on car categories, and to Brett's amazement, he won a trophy without even realizing there was a competition. Everyone was cheering for each other and chatter was going on around the table as to who drove what vehicle. The Autocross scoring was not finished in time for the meal, and would to be announced on Monday evening. It was another fun evening.



(Ed Bolian's Cannonball record-holding Mercedes-Benz CL55 AMG)

Monday was the Barber Course and the Off-Road event. Brett & I had business to attend to during the day, so did not attend either. In the evening though, we attended the final awards reception that featured Ed Bolian - who still holds the Cannonball Record of driving from NY City to LA in 28 hours 50 minutes driving a Mercedes CL55 Kompressor AMG rigged to the nines with speed trap defying electronics. He now does Memorial Cannonball type runs with police officers benefiting families of fallen police officers throughout the country. More details are easily found by searching 'Ed Bolian' on YouTube. During this dinner, the Autocross, Off-Road, and Rally winners were announced. Again, everyone was cheering on the winners and having a great time. As the evening ended with many new contacts made and friendships developed, we bade goodbye, and in the morning with a quick breakfast with some of the remaining attendees, we 'hit the road' with countless memories of once-in-a-lifetime adventures and new friendships with fellow Mercedes-Benz owners!

* MBUSI in Tuscaloosa County AL Facts & Figures:

MBUSI created a new corporate culture, based on teamwork and open communication. The combination of German & American team members, with experience from U.S. and Japanese automakers, as well as from Mercedes-Benz, made the "melting pot" in terms of its practices, procedures and corporate culture. Daimler AG invested over \$4.5 billion and continues to invest in MBUSI in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama. MBUSI is responsible for more than 22,000 direct and indirect jobs in the region, and has an annual economic impact of more than \$1.5 billion. MBUSI is also the state's largest exporter, with more than \$1 billion in exports each year to countries throughout the world. Besides body, paint and assembly shops, also located on the Tuscaloosa site are a comprehensive training facility, a visitor center, a child-care and a health and wellness center. The Mercedes-Benz Visitor Center, which houses entertaining exhibits detailing the history of Mercedes-Benz—including its products, technology, and commitment to safety—is open to the public. (Excerpts from <https://mbusi.com/about> & <https://mbusi.com/about/mbusi-corporate-info/facts-figures>)

Kropf's journey to StarFest 2018 and beyond.

Continued from previous page

While most StarFest 2018 attendees drove back home, Debra and I started a cross-country adventure. We toured Carlsbad Caverns in NM, visited my mother in Tucson AZ, and while heading to Grand Canyon South Rim, stopped for fuel in Flagstaff AZ. I there discovered that the E55 wouldn't accept fuel and the Check Engine light had come on! Checking for codes with my tiny OBD2 device and the Torque Ap on my phone, I found a P0453 Evaporative Emission Pressure Sensor fault. Debra found a M-B dealership a couple miles away, so I drove and found a brand-new dealership, Mercedes-Benz of Flagstaff. In their parking lot, I lifted the hot hood and was checking things when Pat, a Parts Advisor suggested that I get out of the hot sun and check it further in their enclosed Service entrance similar to Keeler Motor Car's. I drove it in, and James Hargan - Service Advisor took immediate interest in us and our AMG, and offered to bring it into their shop. I do nearly all of the mechanical work on our cars, but couldn't quickly find anything obvious, so consented to let them take it in. While the Tech Kelly was checking the car, many of the dealership personnel came by to meet us, and made us very welcome with drink and snacks, and WiFi for our phones and laptops. None there had attended StarFest 2018, but were very eager to hear of our Birmingham and Atlanta adventures 1,700 miles away. The Service Advisor let me enter the shop, and Kelly showed me what he was checking on. The 3 year old dealership had actually just moved into this new location from across town, and not all of their equipment and parts had been transferred yet, so they weren't able to determine the actual cause of the fault by closing time. I still had enough gas to get to Grand Canyon and back the next day, so I offered to take it as it was. We changed our schedule to stay over in Flagstaff for two nights, and could return for further diagnosis after Grand Canyon if necessary. James brought me an invoice totaling \$0.00 because they couldn't pin-point a fault. Utterly amazed, I gave a tip for Kelly, and thanked them for their efforts. Garrett in Sales, and AJ in Finance welcomed us to stay and use their facilities until they left for the evening.



Knowing that we're from the East Coast, and possibly never be back again, this is simply an amazingly friendly group of professionals exemplifying Gottlieb Daimler's motto "The best or nothing at all!".

The next two times refueling, I had to pump very slowly, but since then, it's been accepting fuel as normal. Many of these W211 models have had fuel pump/senders under the rear seat that would crack and leak stinky gasoline fumes into the cabin. Many had complained to MBUSA for years, and in 2015, MBUSA extended the warranty for 15 years and my 2005 E55 had its complete fuel tank and pump & filters system replaced by Keeler Motors. I now recall that upon returning to Kingston after the repairs, I tried putting fuel in and the same event happened where I had to pump it very slowly. So I'll be contacting Keeler Motors when I return.

SARATOGA POLO

On a hot, hot, and I do mean hot, 95 plus degrees and humid July day, 24 cars cavalcaded to the Saratoga Polo grounds for a tailgate party, and, for most of us, a new experience of watching a polo match. We had a best decorated tailgate contest within the club, with winners Glen and Barbara Lawson and Lew and Valise Decker placing first and second respectively. Lew and Valise also came in as winners in the Polo Grounds sponsored contest with their Golden Labs theme which was “adogable.” Organized by Vickie Parker, everyone had a great time even though the restrooms were across the field, the announcers were hard to hear, and the sun was beating down on us. There was lots to eat, cold beverages, and lots of companionship that



BREAKFAST AT SARATOGA TRACK

What can we say? Food always attracts us. Include driving the Benz to Saratoga on a beautiful, sunny morning to watch those graceful thoroughbreds exercise on a gorgeous track and you have a lovely start to any morning. This outing has become an annual expedition that HUDMO enjoys which is skillfully planned by



LEAD FOOT LUCY CAR SHOW

For the last three years HUDMO has picked a warm, sunny July evening, 5:00 to 8:00, to attend the car show at Kohl's Plaza in Colonie. This year was no exception. It is a myriad of cars, antique to brand new, hot rod to luxury cruiser. There were over 150 cars there with music and mysterious engines. HUDMO



DOES A TWO SEAT SPORTS CAR HAVE ENOUGH STORAGE SPACE?

When buying that sporty looking, hard top convertible there is one question that comes to mind. Do I have enough room for my “stuff”? The cars are small; thus, the trunk is small, and smaller still is the space in the trunk when the top is down. Well, as an owner of a 2013 SLK250 I have put the car to the test as a favor to all future possible consumers of those cute two seaters. A big concern is, “Are my golf clubs able to fit?”. The answer is yes, comfortably. Golf bag and club and shoes and a cooler fit perfectly if you use one little trick. Take your driver out of your bag and lay it crosswise over your bag otherwise it is too long for the width of the car, but it fits perfectly crossways with more room for clothing you may need on cold or rainy days.

The true test of capacity came when two ladies , Vickie Parker and Kathy Catalfamo, embarked on a three day shopping trip. Of course, that included two carry-on suitcases of clothing changes for both hot and cold weather, hair implements, cosmetics and shoes for all occasions. That was in the trunk even before the shopping began. The marathon was relaxed and successful , and all went smoothly until we visited a “big box” store we don’t have in our area, Costco. There were frozen foods, large quantities of cans and jars that we had to bring back with us. One problem solved. I had brought a foldable cooler with us for just that exigency. Now the scary part. We had to pack all our purchases for the trip home. As we lugged all our prizes out of our room, Kathy was heard to say. “Well, I can put the jars and cooler under my feet or in my lap. It’s only a three and a half hour trip.” Not to worry. It all fit in the trunk! Amazing, but Mercedes knows how to design ‘em for all needs. —Vickie Parker

BEFORE



AFTER



THE SECOND ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC AND CAR SHOW

On September 9th HUDMO held the family picnic and car show at the Glen Doone picnic area and pavilion in John Boyd Thacher Park in Voorheesville, NY. It wasn't raining. That was good. It was overcast and 47 degrees. That was not so good especially since the whole week prior it was 95 degrees! Chuck Trimarchi, the Chairman of the event, had worked very hard to organize games of badminton, corn hole, volleyball, and other activities. He also brought bags of charcoal for the grill, cold drinks and brownies for dessert. Sorry to say, the games went un-played. The activity that all participated in was gathering sticks and branches for the fire pit and starting the charcoal fire. Even in the cold, everyone came and had a lot of fun. All hunkered down around the cozy and warm fire pit and enjoyed themselves and the picnic. The brownies and cold drinks were happily consumed, thank you.





PICNIC CAR SHOW

Included with the picnic was a member/guest car show. Judges were Bob McShane, Lew Decker, and Vickie Parker. We had a great lineup of cars and after lunch everyone managed to leave the fire pit to check out all the beautiful Benzes. There were cars of all ages and models. Judging included four categories: 1995 and Older, 1996 and Newer, People's Choice and President's Choice.



Mercedes Ownership – A dream comes true!!!

In my College Freshman Economics class, I created a life plan budget that included Mercedes Benz ownership. The cost was around \$10,000. Although it would have been a luxury, I knew the car would hold its value, last forever and the style would remain constant and distinctive. Well, as everyone knows; life never goes as planned.

So after being a single parent, raising 2 children, daycare, braces and college tuitions, I resurrected my dream of owning a Mercedes Benz. I joined the HUDMO section of MBCA and began to learn more about the care and ownership of the car, meeting great people and making new friends. I was fortunate to be the unofficial driver to morning club events for my night-owl friend, Jim Wright, current President of the club. I experienced the luxury of an S430.

But one day I saw a member put the top down on a CLK 320 cabriolet and knew that was the car for me.

Five years passed and although my involvement with the club was constant, I had not committed to car ownership. They say timing is everything. The CLK320 I had admired was owned by Vice President, Chuck Trimarchi. Chuck was known for the meticulous care of his 2005 CLK 320 and was trading it in for a more current E cabriolet. He had mixed emotions about giving up the car and my offer to purchase from him meant the car would stay in the club. It was a happy day for both of us.

Eight days after the purchase, I was hit in an intersection. Although I walked away from the accident, I was heartbroken. How do I tell Chuck? Because of the quality of the car, the damage was repairable and the car looks as pristine as the day I purchased it.

I entered the car in the September Car Meet and Family Picnic and won the People's Choice Award!!!!

Chuck's new car also won an award. We say we're keeping it all in the family!!!! —Saundra Griffin







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