



# Hudson - Mohawk Section

Mercedes-Benz Club of America

SPRING NEWSLETTER MAY 2013

*"Register Now for Stars at the Spa"*

FIRST QUARTER

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Kirk Daniels

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## President's Message

Well Spring has finally sprung. We had a New Members Luncheon May 4<sup>th</sup> at the Gilded Otter in New Paltz, NY. This event was free to new members but open to all members. It was a great success.

We are very proud to be the sponsor of a Regional Car Show on July 13<sup>th</sup> at the Saratoga Auto Museum (SAM). While open to all members nationwide it will be geared toward those members in the Northeast Region which takes in all of New York and New England. The theme will be based on the golden years of Saratoga Springs, the period when Saratoga was the summer place for the rich and famous. It was a period when the ladies were always dressed in grand splendor and the gentlemen wore their finest. We will want to see you dressed as they did in those golden years. There will be prizes for the most authentic dress along with awards for the best picnic settings. Use your imagination as you duplicate the opulence of a day in the spectacular Saratoga State Park. We will feature a cocktail party followed by an exceptional dinner. It is open to all cars regardless of age and including many Concours classics and popular choice with a few surprises. Outstanding raffle items have already been purchased and I am sure you will want to buy a few tickets. Shine up your favorite Mercedes and plan to join us. We have made the largest financial commitment to this event this Section has ever made to insure its success. It will be a great weekend for everyone. Save the date and we'll see you in July.

Plans for an August event are still in the works and will be announced when finalized. Once again this year we will be at Saratoga race track on Labor Day with our reserved section in the grand tent complete with food and beverages along with some lively music. Following this event will be our Fall Rally using a route prepared by myself and a professional rally master. The route and rally will be challenging and fun, if you are not a rally fan use it as a fall tour of some of New York's most beautiful horse country with its rolling hills and spectacular fall colors. The day will end with an afternoon dinner and awards ceremony at a popular restaurant. Mark the date, October 5, 2013.

Hope to see you all at an upcoming event and happy motoring.

## Here are the details for the "STARS at the SPA"



Location: Saratoga Auto Museum, 110 Ave of the Pines, Saratoga Springs, New York, 12866 | tel. 518.587.1935 | fax. 518.587.4149

9:00 AM to 10:30 AM - Registration:

11:00 AM - All cars in place and detailing ends

12:00 PM until 2:00 PM - Judging

Competition classes include, modern (15 years or younger), classic (50 years or younger) antique (over 50 years old) with both Concours, [Concours d'Elegance](#), and popular choice (to be judged by the public).

Awards will be given for; the most authentic festive attire depicting the dress for picnics and celebrations in the early days of Saratoga Springs. Start putting your period outfits together today and join us for the fun. There will be music, fashion, food, fun and great fellowship.

The Entry fee is \$75.00 per person payable, in advance. This will include your entry in the show, snacks during the day and a very special three course sit down dinner in the Arches at the famous Gideon Putnam Hotel. The hotel is located near the Auto Museum which is in the beautiful Saratoga State Park. A cash bar will be available in our dining room. The entry fee for the show only is \$25.00.

The entry fee for non-members is \$49.00. This will include a free membership to the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. If you want to attend the dinner the cost for both registration and dinner for non-members will be \$99. **Updated information can be obtained at:** [www.mbca-hudmo.com](http://www.mbca-hudmo.com) , [www.discoversaratoga.org/lawnshow13](http://www.discoversaratoga.org/lawnshow13) [www.saratogaautomuseum.org](http://www.saratogaautomuseum.org) <http://mbca.org/event/2013-07-13/regional-car-show-saratoga-automobile-museum> or by contacting your host Jim Wright at [HUDSONMOHAWKMBCA@gmail.com](mailto:HUDSONMOHAWKMBCA@gmail.com).



**HUDMO's Annual Tech Session** was held at Keeler Motor Car, 1111 Troy-Schenectady Road in Latham, New York on Saturday Morning, March 9, from 9:30am until noon. It was hosted by David Bullard who always does a stellar job with this perennial event. The program was free of charge. There were demonstrations, refreshments, prizes and lots of smiles. Members rekindled some old relationships and met some new friends, some as far away as Utica, New York.

Rick Walker gave a short tutorial on some of the technological marvels of Benz engines and other components that ensure safety and comfort. When his presentation was over we all felt great about the engineering that is built into our cars and is constantly being improved. He always provides us with understandable information about the newest innovations no matter how complicated they seem at first. Thanks Rick. We are looking forward to what you decide to show us next year.



Keeler Motor Car has a new service manager, **John Kelty**. He is new to this position but not to Keeler. John has served in other management positions at the

dealership including warranty administrator in the same operation he is in charge of now. "It was not a difficult transition from warranty administrator because both jobs are based on the same business philosophy.

Management here demands that all customers be treated with respect and receive the highest quality service. My job now and previously was to ensure that Keeler's vision of excellence was strictly enforced." John said.

John grew up in Schenectady, New York but has lived in Colonie for the past twenty-three years. When he is not working he likes to do home improvements. He used to drive his motorcycles very fast but that didn't go over very well with his wife so he doesn't do that anymore. We are proud to acknowledge that John is a member of HUDMO



For several years, readers of the HUDMO newsletters have noticed and appreciated its classy look. That was because of the talents of Carlene Thusgaard a professional

artist designer that belongs to our club. Carlene is leaving us for a warmer climate and to be closer to her family, especially her son Kenny and granddaughter Kerstyn. She is retiring to Arizona. Carlene said, "I have enjoyed being a member of HUDMO and serving on the board. Being a part of planning the events and doing the newsletter was great fun. I have made so many new friends that I will always cherish. I will keep in touch. My e-mail and phone number will be the same and I will look forward to hearing from you." Carlene, we will miss you.

**Congratulations to Newlyweds Barbara & Glenn Lawson**



**Rick is a talented and lucky guy**

*Many of our members have achieved greatness, have wonderful hobbies and have interesting and enlightening things to share. In the future we are going to showcase several of them in our newsletter and on our website.*

**Rick Rauch** or "Ricardo" as his employees call him is the owner of the Gilded Otter Restaurant and Brewery at 3 Main Street in New Paltz, New York. He studied to be a lawyer, because he wanted to become an FBI agent, but after he graduated, he decided that he would rather be in the hospitality business. Rick has been in that business for twenty-five years, fifteen of them at the Gilded Otter, which he had built to his specifications. "I specialize in making people happy. That's why The Gilded Otter is considered the best restaurant in New Paltz" Rick said.

His restaurant has received several gold and bronze awards at the American Beer Festival in Denver Colorado. The winners were chosen based on blind taste tests from international experts. All of the major beer companies compete. That is why beer aficionados flock to his restaurant.

Rick and his daughter Dylan, who helps him run the operation, own two Mercedes a black 1982 240D and a black 1975 450SL Rick loves his car and has been involved with Benz's since 1985 when he purchased a 1985 300TD. He loves them because he says, "They are just classic."

*Rick Rauch continued*

When he is not working, which begins early in the morning and ends late at night, he likes to travel. His favorite place is Panama, where he owns a home. He speaks fluent Spanish. That's why his staff calls him Ricardo. Rick travels so much that he has had to have extra pages inserted into his passport. He has been all over the world. His brother in law, a retired United Airlines pilot arranged for him to have a permanent life-time pass. He can fly anywhere United goes for free, if he waits for a "standby" seat. Some people have all the luck!

In the future he plans to retire in Panama and continue his travel around the globe.

His daughter Dylan is also a club member.

We hope that if you are in the area or just want to take a scenic ride to a destination that is worth the trip, that you will stop in and enjoy what he has to offer. We just had our New Member Luncheon there and it was terrific





*"The Bavarian Rocket Scientists"*

Tommy Dobush grew up in Albany, NY, a product of Albany's public school system and was mentored from a very young age by his father's youngest brother, Rick Dobush. Rick started his own business, R&D Automotive, in 1982. A factory trained Porsche technician, Rick focused his repair shop to cater to German made automobiles, because "they are designed and engineered better, and just make sense".

Tom began helping out at the shop at the ripe old age of five. His very first task was simply "not to touch anything!" easier said than done for most five year olds. He soon found himself sweeping the repair shop floor to keep his attention occupied and out of trouble, while his uncle and father went about whatever business they were dealing with at the time. Before very long, he was hooked. Most young boys have an affinity for cars and trucks and tractors early on, which when they grow up, either dwindles or in cases like his, develop into a passion. Tom became enamored with all things mechanical. "Figuring out how things work, asking questions, seeking answers became my mindset. And there I was, holding a broom in the middle of the shop, full of beautifully designed, expertly engineered, frighteningly fast, and very expensive sports cars. The phrase "a kid in a candy store" comes to mind. What a lucky kid, indeed.", Tom said.

After graduating from high school he was accepted into the engineering program at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, (RPI), with a major in Mechanical Engineering. While at RPI, Tom continued to help out around the shop. It was around this time he began to interact more with his uncle's clients and began to see the need to focus his studies on the business side of the shop. "I concluded that switching my major to business with dual concentrations in marketing and entrepreneurship would be most beneficial for my role at the shop."

Since his graduation in 2004, Tom has worked very successfully at a number of jobs that have prepared him for the management position he now holds at R&D Automotive. They included: Bentley Publishers in Cambridge, MA as a customer service representative, where he worked on a wide range of projects including the development of the Boxster repair manual. Tom attended the 50<sup>th</sup> Porsche Parade in Hershey, PA with Karl Ludvigsen and Jerry Seinfeld; Herb Chambers' Porsche of Boston as business development specialist in 2007. Quickly showing his potential he became sales and business development manager

at one of Porsche's highest selling franchises on the East coast. "Whether it was selling cars or making sure the cars I had already sold, were being properly serviced, my mind was continually oriented around customer service. I learned that no matter what business you are in, taking care of your client's needs must be priority number one. Without satisfied clients, there simply is no way to sustain integrity within an ethical business. This mentality ultimately brought me back to R&D Automotive, where this time around I was asked to take on a management role.", Tom said.

"After building a great reputation, as "the Bavarian Rocket Scientist" and a successful business in the 80's, my uncle began settling into a nice niche in the 90's, growing the business even more, while also becoming closely affiliated with the local chapters of PCA and BMWCCA. In the early 2000's, known as one of the premier independent German repair shops in the area, he was helping clients from all over the capital region and as far reaching as up and down the East coast from Maine to the Carolinas."

Tom summed up his customer service philosophy and view of the future.

"Now in my early 30s, the task of gradually taking over the business operations side of the repair shop has begun. Now my uncle Rick can focus his expertise and talent on fixing our clients' cars and not the day to day actions of managing a balance sheet and answering the phone. As part of the role I have taken on, becoming the main point of contact for the shop has been a goal I have set for myself. Part of this process has been reintroducing myself, Rick and R&D Automotive to the local car clubs. I'm excited to have this opportunity to get involved with the Mohawk-Hudson MBCA. I keep my cell phone number on my business card, and it will always stay there. I am very proud of the fact that I have former clients from Porsche of Boston that still keep in touch, and many others that reach out from time to time with questions or seeking my opinion.

As part of this reintroduction process, a marketing strategy is being implemented to help grow the shop in the future. As we all know when the market crashed in 2008, the US economy took a pretty steep dive that we have been battling back from ever since. While new auto sales slumped, auto repairs did too. It was true that more people were fixing their older cars rather than buying new replacements. These people were also becoming much more price sensitive when it came to these needed repairs. This change in mindset of previous and potential clients really had a negative effect on our business. The value of having a relationship with your trusted mechanic for the standard price was often devalued when trying to make ends meet. Many smaller private and independent repair shops were forced to close their doors from not being able to compete with corporate franchises. No longer were even some of the most loyal clients returning to their preferred trusted mechanic or independent shop. Many people traded in their German daily drivers for less expensive and easier to maintain Japanese or American substitutes. Second or third cars, sports cars, track cars, show cars and

Sunday drivers ended up sold, or put into long term storage to wait out the economic storm.

Thankfully we are beginning to really see some sunlight fighting through those storm clouds. Or society has just adapted to the current and is becoming more comfortable in these circumstances. We are seeing the return of the sports car to our shop and thankfully many more German daily drivers, from the likes of Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, MINI, Porsche and VW. We hope these trends continue. It is my job to reach out, make myself available and connect with the local drivers of these vehicles. We are seeking ways to see how we can better serve our client's needs, to continue and strengthen this trend. It is with this in mind, that I have been encouraged to write, to engage the readers and communicate why we are so passionate about what we do. Creating avenues for intelligent conversation and opening dialogue regarding personal transportation of the German persuasion is R&D's goal and my new challenge.

**In the upcoming issues, I will be writing about all things auto related and I am open to any suggestions or questions.**

The Fifth Annual Keeler Summer Block Party will be on Saturday June 8th from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM It will feature the GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW KEELER MINI SHOWROOM. HUDMO members will have their cars on display. Music will be provided by the AudioStars band from 11:30 AM until 3:30 PM. WPYX 106 and KISS 102.3 will be broadcasting live. You can enter the contest to win an Apple iPad. Keeler is our most generous corporate supporter so please shine up your BENZ and come out and help us show our appreciation for their support.

### **New Members Luncheon was a great success**

Our third annual New Member Luncheon was held at the Gilded Otter Restaurant and Brewery in New Paltz, New York. It was a great success. We had thirty-one members attending including the owner Rick Rauch and his daughter Dylan who are both new members. There were more than twenty cars which made a very impressive sight. President Ron Tanner welcomed the new and past members and spoke about all of the fun future events that HUDMO has planned for this year.

Cris Vanderburg, of Hagerty Insurance, a company that specializes in coverage of vintage cars, and cars we love that are not daily drivers, answered questions. He spoke on [why it's important for car enthusiasts to consider the benefits of guaranteed agreed value coverage](#). He also explained how claims are handled and what to expect from companies that don't use the terminology "guaranteed agreed value coverage" Cris, a good friend of the club, donated cloth shopping bags and pens that were part of the gifts the attendees received. He can be reached at [cvanderburg@HAGERTY.com](mailto:cvanderburg@HAGERTY.com) to answer any questions you may have on specialized automotive insurance.

Much thanks goes to Chuck and Bobbi Trimarchi and Sandra Griffin for making the New Member Luncheon a superb event. Here is what they said about it.

Sandra Griffin: "We had great weather and saw new and old Mercedes and friends at the New Member Luncheon on Saturday May 4, 2013. The luncheon a culmination of efforts from Chuck and Bobbie Trimarchi, President and Vice President Ron Tanner and Jim Wright, made registration, car photos and local club news worth the drive with the top down. We welcomed old friends from Mass. and new friends from New York City and the North Country. "



*"Where oh where have our old friends gone." We want to contact our early supporters. If you recognize yourself or see someone you know PLEASE email me. [hudsonmohawkmbca@gmail.com](mailto:hudsonmohawkmbca@gmail.com)*



*These Ladies are dressed magnificently, exactly as we would like to see them at "The STARS at the SPA" in Saratoga on Saturday, July 13. We haven't seen them since our last car show at the Sagamore Hotel in Lake George, New York. Please come to the regional show at the Saratoga Auto Museum. If you can find them bring them with you. WE MISS THEM!*



Chuck Trimarchi: "I was very pleased that we had a good turnout of our new members, and especially that 16 previous members and guests also came at their own expense to welcome the new members. The Gilded Otter, and especially Rick Rausch,

the owner and a new member of our club, was a wonderful host. The food was great and the service was outstanding. Their events manager, Cheryl Valentino, made all of the arranging a pleasure. Thanks to the other committee members that contributed to the success of the event, including Jim Wright, Sandra Griffin, and Bobbi Trimarchi. " **A special thanks goes to Kirk Daniels for all the photos. Thanks Kirk!**



All members are welcome to attend board meetings on the last Thursday of the month. **We need a secretary.**



All of our attendees enjoyed discussing their cars and visiting with old friends. They made some new friends as well.

Customers who came to the Gilded Otter for lunch said they were very impressed with the mini car show. We thought they looked cool too.

Speaking of cool, if you have a cool idea or do something that is really interesting, please share it. It may be an article in our next newsletter.

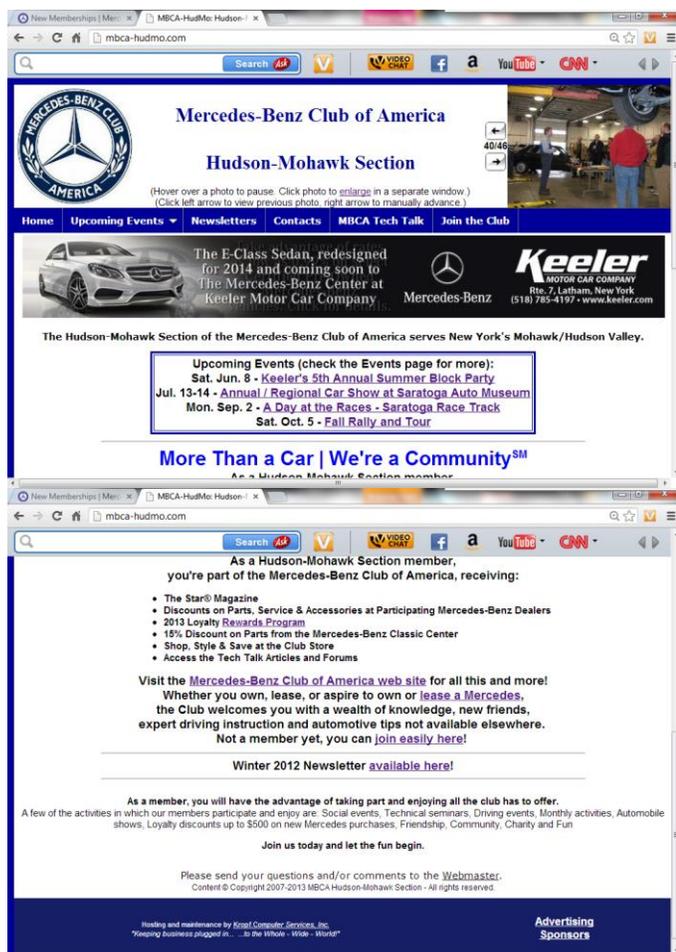


Our new website [mbca-hudmo.com](http://mbca-hudmo.com) is TERRIFIC!  
 TRY IT AND YOU WILL BE AMAZED AND PLEASED.

Take it for a test drive. Click all the headings and photos and see where they take you. While you are browsing you will notice that there is a slide show of past events in the upper right hand corner. If you left click your mouse on the picture, a larger image will be displayed with information on how the slide can be identified. This information can be used to let us know if you are in the photo. Whenever we can we will label information you submit about the event or the people in it.

We will also have interactive Q and As. Tell us how you like it. Send us your suggestions.

Go ahead and take it for a spin. Tell us how you like it and send us your suggestions.



## Welcome New Members

Gregg Anderson	Slingerlands
George Bigaquette	Clifton Park
George Buldrini	Niskayuna
John Capozzola	Demarest
Tom Dobush	Albany
Garry Dallman	Albany
Melissa Evans	Wappingers Falls
Robert Everett	Kingston
Edward Fiore	Rome
Marsha Himler	Stillwater
Katherine Jones-Voorhees	Utica
John Kelty	Albany
Donald Kritzer	Hunter
William Leone	Albany
Joseph Pomponio	Albany
William Pratt	Coxsackie
Francis Robertson Jr.	Unadilla
William Salmeri	Schenectady
Andreas Zambas	Kingston
Qibin Zhang	Richfield Springs

**Bud's Benz | 7773 West Strickland Street | Douglasville | GA | 30134**

SPRING IS HERE, WELL ALMOST, IN SOME AREAS.

It's convertible top weather. Put your tops down and go for a ride. Let the wind blow through your hair. Enjoy the beautiful weather. Sounds good doesn't it? Is your top in good condition? You might want to check your top over, to make sure it works and that there are no holes or rips in it. If there are issues with your top, call us, we can replace your convertible top. If you don't live in Georgia, we can ship a new top with the seals to you. We use genuine German canvas tops and the OE rubber seals that go with it. Call us if it needs to be replaced or repaired. 770-942-8444 or -1-800-942-8444, Email me at [service@budsbenz.co](mailto:service@budsbenz.co)

**DEAD BATTERY? DO NOT JUMP START YOUR CAR.** It is a bad idea. Jump starting sends a high powered surge of electricity to every computer and module in your car, especially the newer cars, meaning 1995 and later. This high surge **WILL** damage some or all of the computers. This can result in thousands of dollars in repairs and you will still be stranded. Towing is a lot cheaper than replacing computers. A CLK 320 was recently brought into our shop. The battery went dead, and they jump started it. The top would not go down. They bummed up the soft top motor and pump. The estimate for the repair was \$2967.00. Having the car towed would have been a lot less expensive!

We will have more of "Bud's Benz Tips" in our next issue

Please copy the news release on the following page to distribute to news organizations in your community.



# Hudson - Mohawk Section

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The HUDSON-MOHAWK MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB announces a  
NORTHEAST REGIONAL CARSHOW in Saratoga Springs, NY.

**“Stars at the Spa” automobile show Saturday July 13, 2013.**

**To assignment editors in television, printed news, internet news, bloggers and those who are responsible for coverage of local and regional events:** This will be a great opportunity to make your audiences aware of a regional event that will feature some of the finest examples of the Mercedes-Benz motor car in the northeast. This region includes cars from Maine to New Jersey. There will be vintage cars more than twenty-five years old and others that are more current as well as a brand new model supplied by KEELER MOTOR CAR of Latham, NY. Some of these cars were used to provide authentic props for period movies.

The public will be allowed to view these automobiles and discuss them with their proud owners. The Saratoga State Park and owners and their families in clothes reminiscent of the golden age of Saratoga will provide great footage and still shots. Many of our members have great stories and have historical knowledge that will be fun to hear and will educate radio listeners as well. If you need more information contact: Jim Wright [HUDSONMOHAWKMBCA@gmail.com](mailto:HUDSONMOHAWKMBCA@gmail.com)

Location: Saratoga Auto Museum, 110 Ave of the Pines, Saratoga Springs, New York, 12866  
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**The entry fee for non-members is \$49.00. This will include a free membership to the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. If you want to attend the dinner the cost for both registration and dinner for non-members will be \$99.00.**

Updated information can be obtained at: [www.discoversaratoga.org/lawnshow13](http://www.discoversaratoga.org/lawnshow13)

<http://mbca.org/event/2013-07-13/regional-car-show-saratoga-automobile-museum>

[www.mbca-hudmo.com](http://www.mbca-hudmo.com)

# The Mercedes-Benz SLS-Class



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## STARS at the SPA

Saturday July 13, at the Saratoga Auto Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY



**Mercedes-Benz Club of America**  
Hudson-Mohawk Section

Ron Tanner, President  
24 Pleasant View Drive  
Hudson, NY 12534

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Please renew your membership

Hudson-Mohawk Section

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