



HUDSON-MOHAWK SECTION

Mercedes-Benz Club of America

2018 LATE WINTER EARLY SPRING

SPRING has sprung; The grass has 'rizz; Time to shine the Benz; And take her for a spin!

However, **HUDMO** activities continued even during the cold winter months. Our annual CABIN FEVER get together was very well attended as was our TECH SHOW. Your Board has been busily planning many upcoming, fun filled, interesting activities for the next few months. Read on to find out what is planned and what you may enjoy attending. All activities are open to all members and their associates and guests. Don't be shy. Come and try.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JIM WRIGHT, PRESIDENT HUDSON MOHAWK SECTION



It's the summer driving season and time to have fun driving our beloved automobiles. Before you start on your first long or short trip, make sure that your car is ready. A thorough checkup will save you from the possibility of annoying problems that could have been prevented and could delay and spoil your trip. Most considerations are obvious and should not be taken for granted and put off until later. There are some things that only a certified mechanic will detect, so take your take your baby for a checkup after the long winter nap.

If you are a mechanic or a world class "DO IT YOUR-SELFER", then proceed, if not GET HELP! Would you do your own dentistry or plead your own case to the Supreme Court? Enough Said! These wonderful vehicles can last forever, if you start by taking care of the small things. I was going to offer a checklist for preparing for the summer driving season, INSTEAD, go see your car doctor for a clean bill of health. You'll be able to drive with confidence and pride, without listening for strange sounds.

Our membership is growing, but while it is growing, it is growing older. HUDMO members average about sixty years old. We need younger members. Please encourage your children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors to join. People who lease are welcome too. We are lots fun and they can learn a great deal about their car and its history.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

JULY 15, 2018-SARATOGA POLO, Sunday, 4:30, 2 Bloomfield Road, Greenfield Center NY 12833. More info to follow.

AUGUST 8, 2018-BREAKFAST AT SARATOGA RACE-TRACK More details to follow.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2018 CAR SHOW AND FAMILY PICNIC-
Glen Doone Picnic Area, Thatcher Park. Details on page 9 of this issue.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2018 CATSKILL CONQUEST PILOT RALLY See page 10 of this issue for important details.

OCTOBER 19-21 CAR RALLY- A three club event starting at Jiminy Peak. More details to follow.

DECEMBER 1, 2018, HOLIDAY PARTY Details to follow.

CABIN FEVER PARTY, SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 2018

On a cold, sunny day, March 25th, many of us ventured out to Hana's Japanese Steak House in Albany to meet, and what else? To eat, of course! Our meals were prepared on the grill with elegant show and humor in front of us by knife and fork wielding chefs. Sandra Griffin, the party organizer, handed out candy filled Easter eggs to all for dessert and held a raffle for door prizes. Nothing makes the winter doldrums disappear like good food and good fun.



KEELER TECH SHOW, MAY 12, 2018

- ◆ “Interesting facts about how things work and why.” - Barbara Frigon
- ◆ “Good battery information and a lot of other facts I learned.” - Mary Lou McWhorter
- ◆
- ◆ “What great information. Myth Busting!” - Chuck Trimarchi
- ◆
- ◆ “Rick is knowledgeable about all areas of questions.” - Sandra Griffin
- ◆
- ◆ “Very informative, always a pleasure!” - Marianne and Bruce Gamballa
- ◆
- ◆ “Loved it! Great tech person.” - Lew Decker
- ◆ “Great program. Rick was great.” - Anonymous



Congratulations Rick Walker on another successful program! We all enjoyed it. Thank you Keeler Motor Car for hosting us, and Thank you Master Technicians Jay Hale and Zach Keenan, for assisting Rick with the program. Thanks Rick, for the breakfast goodies also.

The main program was a question and answer format with member asking questions about all things mechanical. For example: Q— Do you let a car warm up before you drive it? A—”When it’s extremely cold, zero degrees or under, let your car warm up a minute or two before driving, but above 42*, just go.

On storing a car—A car loves a garage, but it also wants to be used. Storing a car on dirt or grass lets moisture seep into the engine. Change your oil if you store it. Store it clean.

Maintenance is always important. “ It’s most often a failed owner, not a failed car.” says Rick.

Rick talked about technological advancements in the auto industry including the newer batteries, lights that have gone from halogen bulbs to LED’s which last much longer, and he also talked about a new starter device called an Integrated Starter Generator (ISG) which is a combined alternator and charger. You may read more about the new electrical advancements in *The Star* magazine you receive with your MBCA membership, 2018 March—April edition, page 74, “All Charged Up.” (By the way, that magazine is a valuable Mercedes-Benz information tool besides having club news, beautiful pictures and a sales section.)





Kropf's journey to StarFest 2018 and beyond.

Brett & Debra Kropf attended StarFest 2018 and wrote:

Mercedes-Benz Club of America (MBCA) hosted the week long StarFest 2018 in Birmingham Alabama very near Mercedes-Benz US International, Inc. (MBUSI)*. The event was filled with a variety of events to accommodate all types of MBCA members. From Museums to Rallyes, and Race tracks to Off-Road adventures, each day was a combination of events with a culmination of a dinner to enjoy.

The event began on Tuesday May 15 and ended with dinner on Monday May 21 2018. There were varying fees for each event and each participant was able to pick and choose the events and days they wanted to attend. We had planned to arrive Thursday, but due to delayed parts arrival and final preparations to our 126,000 mile 2005 E55 AMG, we arrived on Friday morning and checked into the Hilton hotel.

Our MBUSI factory tour was scheduled for Friday afternoon and we were told at the beginning that we were among the first members to register almost a year prior. Those who registered later had tours earlier in the day and week. As we gathered, we learned more about the MBUSI factory (where our 2007 GL450 was built 11 years ago) and the extreme attention to detail that Mercedes-Benz puts into the process of building a vehicle, and care to create a campus for their employees that is top-notch, including childcare and separate fitness center for all employees of the factory. They have an open office floor plan and the President is right in the mix with staff. We were shuttled to the factory (also on the 966 acre site) in a Freightliner bus (which is also a Mercedes-Benz affiliate) and entered the precision world that makes Mercedes-Benz "The best or nothing". As we entered the enormous plant, we could see the attention to detail everywhere. The area where the food was created for workers to purchase was inviting and smelled amazing. When we entered the plant, we were to walk single file in only designated areas as not to interrupt the flow of progress that was to create C-Class vehicles from start to finish. Our guide Mason, is a MBCA director and has given many tours. His knowledge made the experience even that much more impressive. There were motorized robots on predetermined paths delivering parts and mail throughout the facility and there was the occasional worker on adult size tricycles with carts also moving about. The freshly painted chassis rolled by overhead as they proceeded for further assembly. As we walked and turned left and right, stopping at pre-designated stops, it was as if we were part of the process. Workers were assembling the vehicles with perfect precision and timing. We walked past the lines where dashboards and other interior components were being installed. Window glass and other components were inserted into painted doors which were then assembled to the matching color bodies in intricate synchronization. Engine and transmission drive trains were 'married' to their matching chassis close to the end.

Early in the body assembly area, there was lack of robotic activity due to a large fire at their magnesium product supplier. Magnesium strengthens aluminum components, but without the magnesium parts, no more vehicles could be created until the supply can be reestablished. We were witnessing the last day of the line in motion until the magnesium parts supply returns. Even with the slowdown of the robotic activity, the plant was still humming along and was very impressive. We enjoyed the tour so much, and it was something that will be remembered and discussed often when people inquire about our Mercedes-Benz vehicles, which happens often.

After our tour, we attended the Friday night reception at Mercedes-Benz of Birmingham (Irondale Campus). It was held as an elegant buffet within their very large and immaculate 20 bay Service area. It was difficult to believe that Benzes had been worked on in this room earlier that day. It was pristine and the dinner was perfection. More and more, it was becoming evident that attending this event not only aided in our learning more about the vehicles, but also about the other attendees who enjoyed their vehicles as much as we did.

(Half of the dinner attendees are

sitting in the other half of the shop past the center row of toolboxes.

To my MBCA-NEPA friends,

that's Wesley in the bottom right.)



We were originally scheduled to attend the Concours event at the MBUSI plant on Saturday, but just weeks before, the AMG Private Lounge (a world wide organization of AMG owners) scheduled an afternoon event at Road Atlanta. While the track was 3 hours from Birmingham, it took us nearly 4 hours to get there, and only 2 hours to return (crossing the time-zone each way). This AMG event included a Meet & Greet with fellow AMG owners (some Brett knew from the forums), a Hot-Lap on Road Atlanta with an expert AMG Driving Academy trainer at the wheel of a C63 AMG, and a bit of personal track time driving another C63. For the Hot-Lap, we were provided full face helmets and held on tight! Amazingly, Debra held her phone camera to her helmet and got amazing video of the heart-pounding exhilarating experience! After our Hot-Lap, Brett then took the wheel of a C63 and ran through a short autocross track. An amazing experience worth the 6 hours of driving to and fro. Returning, at a Dunkin' shop stop, we installed our brand-new BlackVue 4K Dashcam, and Debra got familiar with it by connecting her smartphone to it while Brett drove back to Birmingham Saturday evening.

Sunday morning, we awoke early to head to Talladega Superspeedway for the Autobahn Experience led by a pace-car with no passing. This track is known for its 33 degree banked turns and when the car reaches 110 mph, the driver can take hands off the wheel and the car stays centered on the track throughout the turn! About a dozen cars were in each grouping and the older or slower cars were grouped separately to allow for each car's ability or driver's comfort level. This was an awe inspiring experience! That first banked turn felt as if the car was going to take off like an airplane. The sky to the right made us feel airborne. As we came around the back turn, an American Flag was on a pole to the right, and the way the car approached it on the banked turn raised goose bumps down my arms and was a glorious sight to witness. We informed the drivers that were in front of our vehicle that we would be recording their laps with our new Dashcam, and our MBCA-HudMo Regional Director Ernie (with Bonnie) Fancy in their SL550 was the first driver to be followed by us (in photo below).



(Dashcam screen capture tilted 33° to present the perspective of the steep 33° banked turn.)

Everyone was so exhilarated that the conversations about the experience were as if we had all just tried out for our debut to be a professional race driver. But before the event proceeded, we were instructed on the rules, and it was mentioned that none here would be offered the chance to become a professional race driver, so just go out there and enjoy ourselves with no passing, and keeping a safe distance from the vehicle in front of us.

After the morning event, there was a break for lunch and we drove to a nearby restaurant with others that were at the track. We enjoyed some southern cooking with such choices as catfish, okra, mudpuppies, and hushpuppies with sweet tea or lemonade. It was scrumptious.

We returned to Talladega for the afternoon events that included timed Acceleration Runs through the wide pits lane, and Autocross. We choose the Acceleration Runs over the Autocross which were running in the same time frame. (Brett raced on 1/4 mile drag strips for years.) For the Acceleration Runs, only a driver with no passengers was allowed to be in the vehicle. These continued on throughout the afternoon. The runs resembled a ¼ mile drag strip race, although each ran individually, and wasn't quite a quarter mile. The drivers were having a blast launching their cars to see how fast and controlled they could be in the short distance.

Continued in the next newsletter issue

MBCA HUDMO 2018 Election

This is the first announcement of the Mercedes Benz Club of America Hudson-Mohawk Section, 2018 election of Officers and Directors.

The Officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Directors. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected each year by Active and Associate Members at an annual meeting to be held during the month of September and will take office on October 1st. The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected Officers and six additional directors elected by the membership. The elected directors shall be divided into three classes, each serving a three-year term with the term of one class expiring each year. As we have missed elections recently, this year, two directors with the most votes will have a 3 year term, the next two highest directors will have a 2 year term, and the remaining two directors elected will have a 1 year term.

Current incumbents include James Wright (President), Chuck Trimarchi (Vice President, not seeking re-election), (Secretary is vacant), and Chuck Frigon (Treasurer), and Directors: Kirk Daniels, Lew Decker, Saundra Griffin, Brett Kropf, Vickie Parker, and Herb Sodher.

The election shall be held at the regular September Board meeting on Thursday the 27th at the Marriott Hotel on Wolf Road in Colonie. Voting will be limited to those MBCA Active members and Associate members in attendance at that evening. The Nominating Committee is comprised of Chuck Trimarchi - Chair, George Bigaouette, and Brett Kropf.

Those that wish to be on the ballot for a Director or Officer position must submit their names for consideration by August 11, by e-mail to the Committee Chair at chucktrimarchi@yahoo.com or by post to Charles Trimarchi, 61 Mordella Rd, Albany, NY 12205. Formal nominations will be made from the floor at our regular August Board meeting on Thursday the 23th. Please include a very brief history of information you feel relevant about the candidate's previous involvement with HudMo and its activities. Candidates that cannot be present at that meeting should contact the Chair at 518-477-3268 to arrange nomination.

We hope that members that enjoy the club's social, recreational and charitable activities will support the club by considering becoming a contributing leader in one of these roles to assure continuity of the club's successes. Please feel free to call any member of the committee or any of our current leaders with questions about the nature of involvement in these positions, or please try to attend one of our June, July or August Board meetings to see for yourself how pleasant it is!

LEAD FOOT LUCY CAR CRUISE

Some sunny Wednesday in July or August we will announce *via* email on Monday of that week, weather dependent, that at 6:00pm we will meet at Kohl's Plaza, Central Avenue in Colonie to show our cars and see all vintages and makes of area cars on display. We've done it for the last 2 years and had a fun evening. Join us and look for our banner.

Hudson Mohawk Section Second Annual

Family Picnic and Car Meet

Sunday September 9, 2018

John Boyd Thacher State Park

830 Thacher Park Road

Voorheesville, NY 12186

Please join us on **September 9** for the return of last year's extremely successful family picnic and car meet! We will reprise the 2017 outing for members, family and friends at one of the most scenic locations in the state! We have reserved again, for our exclusive use, the Glen Doone Pavilion and Recreation Area at the John Boyd Thacher State Park, parks.ny.gov/parks/128/details.aspx, overlooking the Capital District from atop the escarpment cliffs of the Helderberg Mountains. There is no charge for participation, but there is a small parking fee per car at the park (last year \$3.00). Make the short, gentle and scenic climb on well-paved roads out of Albany to this famed park and recreation facility. Our area includes a large pavilion covering 18 large picnic tables, with a private paved parking lot, two restroom facilities, horse shoe pits, a recreation field and spectacular views of the valley below! All facilities are immediately adjacent and accessible by car and easy walking paths. The park is known for its excellent walking paths and hiking trails, including the famous Indian Ladder Trail with its geologic wonders. The park's Visitors' Center, new last year, is architecturally spectacular, educational and contains a replica indoor passage duplicating the interior of Hale's Cave that is on the park grounds. <http://thacherparkcenter.org>

It will again be a bring your own picnic lunch event, but we will take orders and provide box lunches acquired at Panera's Bakery and Cafe for all who desire. We will also provide ice and simple beverages including bottled water, lemonade and ice tea, as well as charcoal fires for those who may wish to grill their own!

There will again be volleyball, badminton, horse shoes, and last year's big hit, corn hole (bean bag toss) competitions! The car meet will provide an opportunity to show off your vehicles and enjoy the beauty and variety of the Mercedes of our club mates. In addition to the photos with your vehicles, we will have a no entry fee, friendly competition of the cars of those who wish to participate. Cars will be judged in classes that include Historic (pre- 1990), Modern (1991-2010), and Contemporary (2011-2018). Awards will also be given for best in show, people's choice, most original, most photogenic and most historically significant. We will also provide maps of short drives of varying distances through the beautiful surrounding Helderberg Mountain area for those who would like to tour.

Further information about the event, local lodging and the nearby Thompson Lake State Park campground, and the forms for registration and ordering box lunches will be distributed to all by email soon, and also will appear on our website page. <http://mbca.com>



2nd ANNUAL CATSKILL CONQUEST PILOT RALLY

SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

THE 1903 AUTOMOBILE ENDURANCE RUN

ALL VINTAGES WELCOME

IF YOU LOVE YOUR CAR, COME AND DRIVE IT ON THIS ROUTE

Follow the historic 1903 route over the Catskill Mountains to the Susquehanna River along a 75 mile course with six host/checkpoints, festivals and attractions. We travel from the Catskill Interpretive Center in Mount Tremper to Unadilla, following one of the most beautiful drives in New York State. The start will be at the Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center, 5069 State Route 28, Mt Tremper, NY 12457. The route follows the Catskill Mountains Scenic Byway along the historic Ulster and Delaware Turnpike and then finishes along the Catskill and Susquehanna Turnpike. The road crests four hills over 2000 feet elevation along the way. Your car should have good brakes and good power to run the Catskill Conquest. A substantial rally book features a route guide with historic documents and photographs, along with a portfolio of enthusiast drivers' personal favorite drives in the Catskills for extended touring.

Organized by Robert Selkowitz, artist and author, who has been active in the Catskill Region for more than 40 years.

HUDMO has signed up as a club for this event so all HUDMO cars can participate at \$20 a car rather than the individual car rate of \$50 per car.



Al and Edith Riker in their Locomobile in the original Endurance Run

If you wish to participate in the Catskill Conquest Rally, please mail a check for \$20 to: **HUDMO, PO Box 38294, Albany NY 12203** with your name, names of those riding with you, year, model and make of your car and the notation **Catskill Conquest Rally** in the memo section of the check. This is a pleasure rally with lots of sights to see, history to explore, and fun. If you would like more information, go to www.1903autorun.com. Additional information will be provided in a separate email to those registered as the rally gets closer.



A Telephone Sales Call with a Happy Ending!

By Chuck Trimarchi

We nearly all suffer through the daily interruptions caused by telephone sales calls on our home and cell phones. Enlisting the help of no-call lists or trying to let all calls go to voice mail help, but these efforts haven't eliminated the annoyance for my wife Bobbi and me. I was home alone one morning actually expecting a fairly important call when the phone rang twice in a matter of moments. One was the ubiquitous "Attention Seniors!" robocall and the next yet another fundraiser for a law enforcement support group, and I was becoming irked. Shortly, it rang again, and my pressure started to rise. However, as I approached the phone the caller was identified as originating at Keeler Motor Car so I answered. It was John Haertel, a salesman at Keeler Mercedes Benz that previously found us two excellent preowned Mercedes, and, being a fellow serious car enthusiast, has become a good friend. He explained that he was calling because he had just closed a deal with a trade-in he thought I might be interested in pursuing. Having seen the 1973 450 SL I drove for 17 years, and the 2003 CLK 320 Cab I was currently driving, he was aware of my penchant for convertibles and for low mileage, exceptionally clean MB convertibles. He described it as a 2011 E350 owned by one family, purchased and regularly serviced at Keeler and carefully driven. The odometer showed just 20,000 miles and it had a clean Car Fax.

Well, Bobbi and I had just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary in April, mainly by spending a lot on gifts, travel, and home renovations. While intrigued by the description, I said it was a bad time for me to be considering another big purchase, but I appreciated his thinking of me. When Bobbi got home a bit later I told her about the call, (about which I was having a hard time forgetting), and she immediately told me I was probably foolishly missing a rare opportunity to move up eight model years and 70,000 miles on the odometer! For the umpteenth time in 50 years I realized I had the best wife in the world, and promptly called John right back. We went right over, drove the car, which was obviously just like new, and made a deal. John makes it easy! To make it perfect, I asked for a few minor leather issues in the back seat to be repaired and for the curb rash on the AMG wheels to be remedied. They did both nicely (new powder coating on the four wheels), serviced it mechanically, gave me four new original equipment tires, and did a fine job detailing it back to its original appearance throughout!

We've had the car a month now and it is outstanding in every way. But despite that, I still feel the regret of letting my CLK Cab go, as it was one of the best cars I've ever owned. That regret is greatly diminished, however, because a good friend and fellow HUDMO board member bought it from me, so I am keeping it close! That already has become another story, that may appear in an upcoming newsletter!

The moral of this tale? When it sounds like the phone is ringing again, it may not be a robocall, or not even a phone call. It may be opportunity ringing!



Chuck and Bobbi
Trimarchi
and Bobbi's Mother

The New Ride, 2011 E350!





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HUDSON-MOHAWK SECTION
MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA

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Need Roadside Assistance? Call: 1-800-FOR MERCEDES
Please renew your membership. HUDSON-MOHAWK SECTION
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