



Nickel City Star

Spring 2005

Car Care Clinic Event - April 16

See RSVP information on Page 4

Niagara Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Safety FIRST!

A new S500 may be the safest automobile on the road today. I proved it! This true story was told by Robert LaMastra, President of Mercedes Benz of Buffalo, to MBCA member Becky Reed ...



It was Sunday, January 16, as my son and his friend and I departed for the Detroit Auto Show in a 2005 S500 to see the latest new models from Mercedes-Benz, especially the ML sport utility and the GST Crossover vehicle.

It's the shot in the arm every automobile dealer likes to get in January when things are slow. It gets you excited about the franchise you deal with all over again. (continued on page 3)



President's Message

- Gene Long

Since our last Nickel City Star, we have endured some cold and snowy weather but enjoyed the holiday season with our friends and loved ones. The club Holiday party was once again a roaring success at Cafe in the Square. Santa's (I mean Ed's!) greetings at the door with a gift for each member was a real treat, but our donations to the local Toys for Tots campaign made us feel even better.

The wintertime brought other club-related thoughts to mind as well. With the election of Roy Kuck (Finger Lakes Section) to the MBCA National Secretary position, we have a new Northeast Regional Director. Congratulations to Roy on rising to this fine position in the club! I am extremely pleased to know that someone familiar with our section is representing us at the national level. Following Roy's promotion Doug Dees, formerly president of the Toronto Section, has assumed the duties of Northeast Regional Director. We wish Doug all the best and we hope he will bring his sections closer together in the near future.

This spring holds great promise for driving and car-related fun. In the latest issue of your Star magazine, our local and national websites to see what events might interest you this summer. It is not too early to start planning to participate in national events too. If you would like to know more about any event you find, give one of us a call. Lastly, even if you haven't attended before, I urge everyone in the club to put our monthly meetings on your Spring calendar – 6:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month at the Eagle House - attend and bring a friend along.

Our members continue to benefit from increased support from our advertisers, local car-related businesses, and our good friends at Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo. In this issue you will enjoy a spectacular story about the safety Mercedes-Benz builds into its products. 

Valentine's Brunch 2005

The historic Roycroft Inn in East Aurora NY offers a scrumptious brunch, which section members enjoyed to celebrate Valentine's day 2005. Mimosas, omelettes cooked to order, roast turkey, ham, coddled eggs, soups, salads, desserts, fish filets, swedish meatballs... the list goes on and on! All delicious.

Ed Yungbluth honored each of the ladies with a beautiful red rose! A bit of history:

In 1905 the Roycroft Inn was opened. The Roycroft was granted National Landmark Status in 1986 and after restoration was re-opened in June 1995. An exquisite collection of original and reproduction furniture and fixtures adorn the meticulously refurbished Inn. The rooms still bear the names of notable personalities, carved in their doors. From the unique guest suites, to grand dining and function rooms, exceptional quality, service and hospitality in the Roycroft Tradition abound. ☺



New Membership Initiative

A real challenge the club faces is the need for new members. Nationally, our membership has dropped by about 10,000 members since 1999! Not only is this a problem economically, it is a tragedy because we have seen seven entire sections become inactive or dissolve. Soon, a national task force will be addressing this challenge soon but I feel it is every member's charge to help us grow. We know that our present membership is only about 1% of the total M-B ownership in our area, and we believe with a campaign to add new members we could easily double our size. I don't think that even 10% is out of the question! ☺

Some things YOU can do to help our membership:

- Talk to others who own or have an interest in Mercedes vehicles. Give them some insight about the club, if for no other reason than getting our fine publications.
- If you are able, give introductory gift memberships to your friends, business associates, and family members.
- Leave sample literature where potential new members will read it. (Copies of introduction letters and applications will be made available for this purpose.)
- Invite interested guests to join our events.
- Proudly talk about your Mercedes... (but try not to brag!)

MBCA Membership Benefits

- Six big issues of The Star magazine every year
- Companionship with fellow M-B enthusiasts
- Locally sponsored events
- Local newsletter
- National driving, show, technical and social events
- Free classified ads, both local and national
- Free technical advice
- Reprints of recent and vintage articles
- Club Store online
- Raffle of new M-B vehicles

Check out these Web sites:

Mercedes-Benz Club of America
www.mbca.org

Niagara Section
www.mbca.org/niagara

Mercedes-Benz of America
www.mbusa.com

Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo (advertiser)
www.mercedesbenzbflo.com

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10% discount on parts & labor for all MBCA members

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“When the first emergency workers arrived on the scene, they could not believe that we were alive and even more shocked that none of us were hurt.”

(continued from page 1) The show was indeed exciting and I was able to preview the fantastic new models we would be offering very soon to our clients. Little did I know that by the end of the next evening that excitement would turn to thankfulness for being associated with the three-pointed star. It was our drive home that changed my outlook.

At about 5:00 p.m. when we encountered a blinding blizzard on route 401 outside London, Ontario. Within minutes, I could see only 40 to 50 feet in front.

All of a sudden, scattered across the road were vehicles that had spun out and crashed into each other. I was able to bring my vehicle to a stop, but within seconds I was hit from behind

by a semi and knocked into another vehicle. I was spun sideways and could hear more crashing sounds coming toward us. I instructed the boys to stay in the car and keep their seat belts on. Seconds later, a second semi broad-sided us on the passenger's side knocking us down the road like a hockey puck, and spilling gallons of its fuel all over us. All of the airbags had deployed, and the seats held us in place until we finally came to a stop.

Slowly and calmly we opened the doors and walked away from the car. All

around us we could hear the sounds of emergency vehicles heading our way and the gruesome sound of one of the truck drivers yelling for someone to help him. When the first emergency workers arrived on the scene, they could not believe that we were alive and even more shocked that none of us were hurt. Unfortunately, we were later to learn that the truck driver lost his leg and that two other people lost their lives.

A crane was needed to remove my car from between the trucks. The S500 was totally destroyed. All the crash tests in the world will not convince me that if I was driving anything other than a Mercedes we would be alive today. As the officer at the scene said, he had not seen a car hit like this and the passengers survive uninjured in the 30 years he has been covering accidents. 🚗



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Date: Saturday April 16
 Time: 9:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 Place: Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo
 8185 Main Street, just east of Transit Rd. Williamsville, NY

Your Mercedes-Benz vehicle will be given an extensive examination by a factory trained technician, and you will receive a printed Customer Care Clinic report. This event is sponsored by Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo and the MBCA Niagara Section. All members and guests are welcome. Snacks and beverages will be provided in the showroom, where you can browse the latest M-B models on display.

A limited number of appointments will be available on a first-come first-served basis.

To reserve your appointment,
 RSVP by Monday, April 11, 2005. Call Becky Reed at 716-633-0088

Welcome New
 Niagara Section Members!

David and Mary Erickson
 Lakewood, NY

Jim and Judi Norris
 Elma, NY
 (transferred from Road Star Section)

Niagara Section Officers

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In Memoriam

Richard Santa Maria



Richard Santa Maria of Kenmore NY, passed away February 4, 2005 after a long illness. Richard served as the first treasurer of the Niagara Section and was an integral member of the section for many years. He owned and enjoyed three Mercedes vehicles and being a former mechanic, was proud to say he worked on them himself. Richard attended many of our recent events with his friend and companion Mary Rose Zupa. Richard's brother, Joe Boyler hosts our December Holiday Parties at Cafe in the Square.

Wheels and Deals

Niagara Section Spring 2005 Calendar

- Monthly meetings - 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday, Jan through May at the Eagle House, 5578 Main Street, Williamsville NY
- Dinner at a fine area German restaurant, details to follow*
- April 16 - Free Spring Car Clinic at Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo (see previous page for details)
- May 21 - Jaguar Club invitation to Barbeque Picnic, details to follow*
- July 17 - Joint event with Chautauqua Antique Car Club, details to follow*

*Details will be sent via email, and posted at www.mbca.org/niagara or call Ed at 873-9226 for more information.

Check THE STAR and www.mbca.org for National events listings

Note: Guests are always welcome to events

2001 SLK230 A true sports M-B with supercharged, 190 HP 4 cyl, 6-speed manual shift, power retractable hard-top. Rated 0-60 in 6.9 sec! 009,600 miles. Magma Red (paint code 586) with Sienna Beige/Charcoal interior and machined aluminum inserts.



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=====

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