



Nickel City Star

MARCH 4, 2008

SPRING 2008

www.mbcna.org/niagara

Coming Events: See page 2

Christmas Party 2007



If the background looks familiar, it should... the 2007 Christmas Party was held this year in our sponsoring dealer's showroom. Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo graciously moved some of the gorgeous display vehicles so that we could host our party amongst the Stars! To the soft music of a grand piano, we enjoyed the spirit of the season with refreshments and then a scrumptious multi-course dinner. Dessert—

a custom decorated Mercedes cake—filled us up. Once again Santa Claus was in attendance, and everyone received nice gifts of Gluhwein (to be served warm at home on a cold night), and a sampler of delicious Ghirardelli chocolates.



Even nicer than receiving, however, is giving. The Christmas Party also serves as our section's charitable

event, so we all brought unwrapped toys for the deserving kids at St. Luke's Mission, a local and very worthy charity.

The party also serves as the venue for presentation of the annual Member of the Year Award. This year, a dedicated member, Becky Reed, earned the prestigious award. Congratulations



Becky, and thank you for your many contributions to the club during 2007!

Niagara Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

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2008 EVENTS CALENDAR

- **March 15, 2008 - Great Race Movie Night in West Falls.** In anticipation of the 100th anniversary running of the 1908 race which will be routed through Buffalo, there will be a showing of the original movie starring Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis at the home of Gene and Joanie Long. Oh, and by the way, it will be St. Patrick's Day weekend too! Details on the movie event and the actual race events to follow.
- **March 20, 2008 - Monthly dinner meeting at the Eagle House.** 6:30 p.m.
- **April 6, 2008 - Western New York Heritage Ausgflug** ("adventure") with alternate date of April 13 if weather is inclement. This event begins a series of local trips to area attractions. See page 3 for more details and sign up form.
- **April 17, 2008 - Monthly dinner meeting at the Eagle House.** 6:30 p.m.
- **May monthly meeting CANCELED** this year due to event conflicts.
- **May 15—17 MBCA Board Meeting in Canandaigua**— lots of local tours and events and M-B Display Saturday 5/17. see page 5 for details.
- **June 7, 2008 - Defensive Driving Instruction and Experience.** This driving event will be a chance to hone your driving skills and to experience the capabilities of your own car from a safety standpoint. Club driving instructors will conduct classroom and actual in-car training. *Details to follow by email.*
- July—Grand Island Lady Excursion (tentative)
- August—Ft. Erie Race Track (tentative)
- September 14—Schlachtfest at Spring Garden, with Mercedes car display.
- Late September—Oktoberfest Celebration and car show
- October—to be determined.
- November—to be determined.
- December—Annual Christmas Party

Members of all sections and guests are always invited to Niagara Section events.

**Details will appear in future issues of this newsletter or sent via email and/or posted at*

www.mbca.org/niagara. Or you may call Ed at 716-873-9226 for more information.

Check The Star and www.mbca.org for National events listings.



We held three fantastic club events in as many months, which you will notice in this issue. And more to come!

Note that the monthly meeting has been canceled for May simply because there is too much going on. That's a good thing, at least as far as the club is concerned. The MBCA National Board will be meeting in Canandaigua at that time and Joanie and I are assisting with events. Please see page 5 for details. As usual, I will email the membership before the date.

I am very pleased at the level of participation in our past and future events, from both a planning aspect and attendance. Specifically, Ed Yungbluth, Becky Reed, Bill Fix, and especially Dave & Shelly Doherty, have stepped up in a big way. Thank you all!

Looking forward to spring, and the rest of the year, too, this issue is filled with news of exciting activities being planned. Especially noteworthy are our April 6th Maple Sugar and Wine tour and the June 7th Defensive Driving class, with active participation in your own car.

Lastly, even if you haven't attended before, I urge everyone in the club to put our March 20th and April 17th monthly dinner meetings on your calendar - the Eagle House - 5578 Main, Williamsville - attend, bring a friend!

Event

Maple Sugaring in Western New York

Western New York Heritage Tour Series—April 6 Niagara Section 'Ausflug'

Where: The Sugar Shack, on the lake in Westfield, New York

When: Sunday, April 6 (or 13th if inclement weather)

Signup: Please send the form below to arrive by March 22.

The Plan: Meet at Tim Horton's in Williamsville at 10:00 am on the date chosen. Convoy along scenic route five to Westfield to arrive at the Sugar Shack about 11:30 am.



We will watch as maple sap slowly evaporates into delicious syrup – learn about the art of “sugaring” from Farmer Gail Black. Depending on nature's plan for the day's weather, we will also tour the farm. Then, enjoy a hearty brunch of all you can eat buttermilk pancakes with real Maple Syrup plus Welch's juice, Sausage & eggs, and potato pancakes. Dessert is Ice Cream with your choice of 20 home made Fruit Syrups made on site. (Brunch costs \$10.99 per person including tax – gratuity is extra). After brunch you can visit the Gift Shop if you choose to buy goodies to enjoy at home.

But don't spend all of your money... with our bellies full and our take home goodies safely in-hand we will mount up and drive a short distance to the **Johnson Estate Winery**, the home of award winning Vinifera, American Heirloom, and premium Icewines. The farm and brick farmhouses were founded almost 200 years ago (1819), and grapes have been grown on the Johnson Estate for well over a century. The winery is the oldest estate (or farm) winery in New York. The carefully cultivated European and American wine-grapes used to make their vintages are all grown within 3000 feet of the winery, so grape-growing and wine-making are perfectly integrated to produce prize-winning wines. Here we will be hosted by Mary or John and enjoy “free” wine tasting. After or during the wine tasting we can visit their gift shop, the perfect place to buy any wines we find particularly delightful.

Westfield is a historic town, so after the winery visit some of you may wish to look around in the town or head homeward having enjoyed a day of fellowship, good food and (not too much!) drink.

Maple Sugar Ausflug Sign-Up Form—Due by March 22

Name _____ Number of attendees: _____

Phone# or email _____ Cost: \$11 per person. Total: \$ _____

Make check payable to: MBCA Niagara Section

Please send this form and your check by March 22 to: Bill Fix, 2374 Parker Blvd., Tonawanda, NY 14150

2008 Valentine's Brunch at Shanghai Red's

"Though the weather outside was frightful,
the buffet inside was delightful!"

Twenty-five Valentine hearts braved the winter conditions and enjoyed a bountiful and delicious brunch, this year at Shanghai Red's on the Buffalo waterfront. Fantastic food from omelets to seafood, breakfast to lunch, was accompanied by mimosas copiously refilled. Thanks to Ed Yungbluth, our event organizer, the ladies were graciously presented with lovely long stemmed magenta and pink roses to accentuate the Valentine tradition. The cold of the outdoors was certainly offset by the warmth and friendship in the room. A little bad weather never keeps Buffalonians (or our Canadian friends for that matter) from Mercedes Benz Club events!



MBCA National Board Meeting at Canandaigua

May 15 through 17, 2008

This event is open to Finger Lakes Section and Niagara Section members. It is a chance to meet club executives as well as participate in a slate of hosted events around Canandaigua and Rochester.

Niagara Section members will assist in hospitality room duties and in running the Mercedes Display on Saturday afternoon. If you want to get your favorite Mercedes Benz(s) out for a day, plan to join us.

Events that will take place during the meeting dates:

Thursday Night (May 15th)

A three hour dinner cruise on the [Canandaigua Lady](#), hosted by MBUSA. Max 150 passengers. Featuring the fantastic a cappella harmony of Vocal Point from the University of Rochester.

Friday Night (May 16th)

Reception and wine tasting at the [New York Wine and Culinary Center](#). Dinner at your leisure with many Lakeshore restaurants within walking distance through beautiful Kershaw Park.

Saturday Night Closing Banquet (May 17th)

The Bella Lago Restaurant and Party House, on the North shore of Canandaigua Lake. An informal cocktail hour followed by the closing banquet with the finest cuisine. Musical styling of the Pete Pallini Duo.

Other Planned Activities for those not in meetings:

[Wine Country Bus Tour](#) (Thursday) Minimal Cost

Lake Tour, [Naples](#) Shopping, [Widmer Winery](#) (Friday AM) Cost \$25 per person

[Sonnenberg Gardens](#) guided tour (Friday PM) Cost \$25 per person

—> **Mercedes Display on the grounds of the Inn on the Lake hotel. Finger Lakes and Niagara cars (Saturday afternoon) Also, test drives in a new smart car! No cost. Details will follow by email.**

[Eastman House](#) (Rochester – Saturday AM) Cost \$5

[Granger Homestead](#) (Saturday PM) Cost \$5

As You Like It (on your own)

[Ontario County Historical Society](#)

[Downtown Canandaigua](#)

[Captain Gray Boat Tour](#)

[Fishing Charter](#)

[Lagoon Park](#)

[New England Antique Shops](#) (several)



For more information about these events, and to sign up, please visit the Finger Lakes Section website:

www.flmbca.org

It is not necessary to sign up for the Mercedes Display, just show up with your car! This is not a judged show, and there will be no prizes awarded, but it will be time to talk with other member/owners.

Welcome New Niagara Section Members



JOSEPH ALFIERI
TOBIAS ANDERSSON
GARY COPPOLA
RON GIOVINO
FRED LIESINGER
HANS MOBIUS

And to our current members who have recently renewed, thank you!

Thanks to your recruitment efforts, our membership has topped 105. This is an 18% increase in one year, and since mid-2005 we have grown by over 52%!

"Bring-Your-Own" Wine Tasting

With a slightly different twist from a conventional wine tasting event, the Niagara Section tried a Bring-Your-Own version, which was a real delight! Assembling at the home of Dave and Shelly Doherty, individuals and couples brought their favorite bottle and, with very little coaxing, each gave a small talk about the wine before pouring samples. We tasted wines from around the world—Germany, California, even New York State.

And the winning wines were...

White: Steinbach Leyendecker Erben Reisting

Red: Blackstone Merlot



What you always wanted to know about German wine....

by Bill Fix

During our recent wine tasting event hosted by Dave and Shelly Doherty we discovered that many members of our MB Club were curious about the distinctive attributes of German wine.

An obvious question might be; what is the difference between a bottle of wine costing \$26.95 and one costing \$7.95? And of course the obvious answer is \$19.00. And while that answer may at first glance appear a little flip...it is basically accurate. However, armed with a few facts concerning German wine production you will be able to select a very good wine at an exceptionally reasonable price.

Look closely at the label on a bottle of German wine and you will find; the name of the vineyard, the year that the wine was produced, the river/rivers or region where the grapes are grown and the name of the particular variety or selection of grape used to make the wine. At the bottom of the label or perhaps on the back you should see the words, *Qualitaetswein* or *Qualitaetswein mit Pradikat*.

German wines are arguably among the finest wines produced. The original vines have existed in the German soil even before the time of the Roman Empire, establishing a wine culture dating back more than two thousand years.

The German government established a set of standards for wine production and every vineyard must meet that standard in order to sell its wine to the public. Hence the designation *Qualitaetswein*. Vineyards wishing to assure the consumer that their product exceeds the national standard make the prediction that their wines are *Qualitaetswein mit Pradikat*.

German wine differs from the wines of other countries in that it is particularly light, fruity and lively (*spritzy*). While there are over 100 varieties of grapes planted regularly, the most widely planted white wine variety is Riesling, followed by Muller-Thurgau and Silvaner. Pinot Noir (*Spatburgunder*) is the leading red grape, followed by Dornfelder and Portugieser.

So, if all German wines must meet the same minimum standard and you have two bottles of a Riesling variety for example, why is one priced at \$26.95 and the other priced at \$7.95? The simple answer is that the lower priced bottle probably comes from a very large vineyard that produces a large quantity of wine and bases its sales on volume. The higher priced wine probably comes from a small vineyard where the wine process is given greater attention and the production is very limited.

While you may occasionally come across a bottle of German wine that is labeled "*Deutscher Tafelwein*" or Table wine, most German wines sold in the US will be labeled *Qualitaetswein* or *Qualitaetswein mit Pradikat*. Either of the latter labeled wines will prove to be very satisfactory whether with food or as a stand alone beverage. *Pradikatswein* is a higher range of quality wine and usually a little pricier.

The range of selection is labeled as follows:

- **Kabinett:** Produced from the first ripe grapes.
- **Spatlese:** Fully ripe grapes, harvested late in the growing season.
- **Auslese:** Only selected berries are used.
- **Beerenauslese:** Only overripe (slightly shriveled) grapes may be used.
- **Trockenbeerenauslese:** Made from botrytis-affected grape bunches.
- **Eiswein:** Frozen grapes are pressed, the ice remains behind.
- **Sekt:** Bottle-fermented sparkling wine.



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

Niagara Custom Plating (advertiser)
www.niagaracustomplating.com

Niagara Hobby & Craft (advertiser)
www.niagarahobby.com

WHEELS AND DEALS

Wheels and Deals ads are FREE to all Mercedes-Benz Club Members. Please note: ads will appear in one issue only, unless specifically requested. Submit ads and requests to Editor or email genelong@verizon.net



1992 300E Engine partially rebuilt, runs great. Leather interior is like new. All service records. Excellent winter car. Equipped with 4 snow tires. Asking \$3,500. 716/873-9226 evenings.

300E, 1993 Very rare Sportline model, blue, gray leather, 49K mi, always garaged/covered and maintained in mint original condition, Mobil 1, perfect for StarFest concours and driving events, \$15,000. Martin Frith, 7676 Newport Dr., Santa Barbara, CA 93117; 805/968-3065; maf968@aol.com



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(Not an advertisement, just a fact.)

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- Free technical advice • Reprints of recent and vintage articles • Club Store online • Raffle - new M-Bs



NIAGARA SECTION
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A photograph of a silver Mercedes-Benz sedan, likely a C-Class, shown from a front-quarter view. The car is parked on a reflective surface in a dark, modern setting. In the upper right corner of the image, there is a black rectangular box containing the Mercedes-Benz logo and the text "Mercedes-Benz".

Mercedes-Benz of Buffalo
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