



Nickel City Star

NOVEMBER 20, 2008

WINTER 2008

www.mbca.org/niagara

Coming Events: See page 2

Niagara Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

A Fall Day In Chautauqua - Tour and Chili Party!



We met on a gorgeous warm Sunday, October 12, at the Welcome Center at Chautauqua Institution for light refreshments, and then we were treated to a one hour guided bus tour of the historic Chautauqua Institution. Participants brought cameras to capture the peak colors and the splendor of fall leaves! Then on to a chili and cornbread party at the spectacular home of Don and Mary Husted, one of two homes they built themselves.



Thanks to Mary Rollinger, Linda Richards and Don and Mary Husted for terrific homemade chili and a wonderful day!

For more pictures, go to <http://picasaweb.google.com/280sl.nut>



EVERY CAR HAS A STORY...

MEET: OLIVIA ANN JEWELL



One day a few years ago, while meandering on the back roads of Pennsylvania, I spotted a 1983 Mercedes Benz 300 Turbo Diesel on the side of the road with a "For Sale" sign on it. I stopped to inspect this olive green, 4 door sedan with matching green leather interior and coco mats; a sweet sturdy vehicle that looked to be in beautiful condition. Though I had always dreamed of owning a sports coupe, this little sedan appeared as though it would be the perfect starter car for summer fun. The price tag on its window was within my budget.

At that point, a sprightly 80-some year old gentleman walked out to greet me. He introduced himself as Mr. Jewell. What a pleasant conversation we had. After he regaled the merits of the 300D, he allowed that buying and restoring older Mercedes was his hobby, his passion. In fact, he owned three Mercedes and this was his latest completed project. Mr. Jewell suggested we take the car for a quick spin around the neighborhood. I was impressed with the smooth ride, the superb handling and the power of the turbo. For an older vehicle, this car had all the bells and whistles: power windows, power sunroof, climate control, leather interior, and that big beautiful star on the hood, leading the way. Even the sound of the doors closing spoke of quality.

(Continued on page 4)

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2008—2009 WINTER EVENTS CALENDAR

- **November 18—Monthly dinner meeting, 6:30 p.m.** Buffalo Brew Pub, Main near Transit, Wmvl
- **December 14—Annual Christmas Party—Cabaret Restaurant, 490 Pearl Street, Buffalo (Afternoon)**
- **January 18—Wine Tasting Party, at the home of Dave and Shelly Doherty, details to follow.**
- **January 20—Monthly dinner meeting, 6:30 p.m.** Buffalo Brew Pub, Main near Transit, Wmvl
- **February 15—Valentine's Brunch and Mama Mia Show at Shea's Buffalo, details to follow.**
- **February 17—Monthly dinner meeting, 6:30 p.m.** Buffalo Brew Pub, Main near Transit, Wmvl
- **March 17—Monthly dinner meeting, *Special meeting: New Members Introduction***

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

Details of most events 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.

Event

Annual Christmas Party - at the **CABARET**

MBCA Niagara Section 2008 Christmas Party Reservation Form

Name: _____ Phone Number: (____) _____ - _____

Note: Member and one guest are \$32 each, additional guests are \$37 each.

___ Beef Roulade # ___ Roast Pork # ___ Chicken Marsala

Total dinners _____ @ \$32 each (up to 2) = \$ _____

Dinners _____ @ \$37 each (3rd and over) = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Please make check to "Niagara Section MBCA" ...to arrive by **Nov. 29**

Mail to: Edward Yungbluth, 349 Argonne Dr., Kenmore, NY 14217

*Call 716-873-9226 or email yungbluth@roadrunner.com with questions.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Gene Long



Congratulations! You are a member of one of the best sections in the Mercedes-Benz Club of America.

Our section here in Western NY is still growing and is, unfortunately in the minority, as the club's national membership numbers are dropping. Therefore, all sections are renewing efforts to increase the member roll. As you will see below in the Membership News section, the Membership Committee has grown and become active in our midst. There will be articles in this newsletter to give you progress reports, but I am hoping that all members will actively be involved by acting to bring in new members. You already have the tools needed to help—your personality and a positive attitude! All you need is a handshake and a flyer to hand out. Without sounding too much like the Wizard of OZ, you can do it. Personal interaction is decidedly the best way to recruit and retain members. And remember, you don't have to own a Mercedes to be a member...

Special thanks to Mary Rollinger and Kurt Hutchinson for contributing the fine articles in this issue, and to Don and Mary Hustead, Linda Richards and Mary Rollinger for organizing the wonderful trip to Chautauqua Institution and the Chili Party held afterward.

Events are being planned for the upcoming year, which will offer a wide variety of activities. Even the annual events will have variety; for instance, the Valentine's Brunch will be held in conjunction with a stage show at Shea's Performing Arts Center this year.

Our monthly meetings, the third Tuesdays of the month have been working out well at the famous Buffalo Brew Pub. Many members that we have been missing, are now attending. We have big plans for the March 17, 2009 meeting, not only as St. Patrick's Day but as our "New Members Meet & Greet" night. Attend and bring friends!

Lastly, we always need volunteers to help with organizing events, and committee members too. It's fun to get involved!

By the way, if you are not receiving emails about events and other important notices from the club, please forward your email address to: genelong@verizon.net, so we can include you.

Membership News



Welcome New Niagara Section Members

JOHN FATTA, CARL GMERK, MIKE HOEGL, PAMELA MOBIUS, DAVID RADCLIFF, DANIEL TENEROWICZ, GERALD THOMAS, and NICHOLAS TZETZO

The Niagara Section Membership committee has launched new efforts to Recruit and Retain members. Our enrollment has been very steady over the past couple of years, but for 2009, we set a new Goal: to increase our roster by +10% and sustain the number.

Some of our planned activities are:

- **"New Member Meet & Greet" meeting night, March 17 at the Buffalo Brew Pub.**
- **Greater MBCA presence at WNY car events, such as car shows.**
- **New member packets will be distributed to all current members. These will include introductory flyers to highlight our local activities and benefits. A great conversation starter, the flyer can be given to anyone with an interest in Mercedes, wherever you meet—in a parking lot, a party, or even a gas station.**

JEWELL

(Continued from page 1)

When we returned from the test drive, Mr. Jewell produced the owner records and a journal that he had kept religiously while he tinkered and toiled with this car, which he had purchased so hopefully three years prior. "I'll tell you what," he suggested, "why don't you take home the journal and read what I've done with the car? Then call me and let me know what you think."

The next day I sat down to read the journal. The first six pages were full of mechanical and technical service descriptions of

which I understood only a little. There on page seven, however; penned in green ink, were the words, "I love this car." Six or seven more pages of mechanical work detail followed, then in red ink the wish, "Merry Christmas, car!" was penned across the page.

I started to tear up as I realized how much Mr. Jewell loved his little green Mercedes. The rest of the journal contained sweet sentiments interspersed in pages of mechanical procedures, including how to properly clean and detail the car. I made up my mind right then and there that this was the perfect starter Mercedes for me to "toodle around in". That journal, with Mr. Jewell's heart-work, sold that car to me. I knew enough, first, to seek the keen eyes and expertise of my regular mechanic who inspected the car thoroughly and advised me, "As far as I can tell, this car is just fine."

Several of the male members of my family weren't so positive about the impending purchase. They cautioned and questioned me with, "Why would you want to buy a 25 year old Mercedes?" "Mercedes is a specialized car. What if it requires expensive repairs? Are there any Mercedes mechanics in the area? This could be one big headache for you..." My brother-in-law, Larry, however, supported the purchase wholeheartedly saying, "Go for it! I stopped to look at the car the other day and I wish I could buy it for myself." My sister, Ann, who had been listening to the debate, stepped into the conversation and commanded, "Leave her alone, guys. If she gets three summers' worth of fun out of that car, it will have already paid her back."

This little 300 D was different from other older, "used" cars and I knew it in my heart. Mr. Jewell's journal was proof enough to me. So we sealed the deal. As he handed me the keys, Mr. Jewell had tears in his eyes. Rather wistfully he asked, "Do you suppose we could take a little ride in the car and get some ice cream?" I knew it was his way of saying goodbye to his friend, so I most humbly agreed. We enjoyed our ice cream quietly and as Mr. Jewell turned to leave, his eyes twinkled and said, "Follow the star!"

The car proved to be wonderful, and enjoy her I did! The only thing left for me to do was to give her a proper name. Since she had such a unique olive green exterior and matching green leather interior, I decided her first name would be something elegant such as "Olivia". Her middle name "Ann" would be to thank my sister who had boldly defended my position. The car's last name was the easiest of all to decide. It must be "Jewell" in honor of the man who had lovingly restored her to pristine condition. So her full name, Olivia Ann Jewell, came to be. I called her "Olive" for short, and for the next three summers I "toodled around" in Olive and she gave me not a moment's worth of trouble, mechanical or otherwise. I especially loved the way her turbo kicked in and how she handled sharp curves. Each fall as I "put her to bed" in storage, I recorded her tune-ups and adventures in the journal.

One summer day, about a year after I purchased Olivia, I took her back to visit Mr. Jewell. He was so excited to see her. He gave her the once over to make sure I was taking care of her. As he inspected the tires he asked, "Do you mind if I show you a little technique for keeping the wheels clean of brake dust?" "No, no, not at all," I responded, wondering, 'What the heck is brake dust?' He brought out a container of Westley's Bleche-Wite, a bucket, a small scrub brush and the water hose. He proceeded to clean every one of those wheels of brake dust. Then he handed me the container of Westley's and gently proffered, "Maybe you could use this next time you detail the car." That day I learned a quick lesson in the proper treatment of a precious vehicle. Most of all, I learned that he still loved the car.

In 2005, by way of a friend, I learned of a 1987 560SL that was for sale. I went to have a look at this sleek, silver-blue convertible with license plates reading "Carpe Diem." It was love at first sight. Here was the car I had always dreamed of owning. I wasn't about to forsake Olive, however, or sell her to just anybody. Practically, though, I could not maintain two luxury cars. With my 560 SL dream car waiting in the wings, I placed an advertisement in the Star Magazine, hoping to find a fellow Mercedes lover to give Olive a new and safe home. It wasn't long before the calls started coming in. One young fellow from Washington, D.C. had a compelling reason to give Olive a closer look. He had recently owned a 1983 300 Turbo Diesel just like Olive only a different color. One day in downtown Washington traffic, someone ran a red light and t-boned his car, totaling it. The young man already recognized the value and stability of the 300D and the price fit into his budget. He was getting married in a few weeks and wanted this car for his family-to-be.

So the young man flew from Washington to New York to have a look. He had purchased a round trip ticket, (Continued on page 5)



The 2008 AMG Challenge - by Karl Hutchinson

Mercedes-Benz sponsors several driving events throughout the year, but perhaps the most exciting is the AMG Challenge. Conducted at various race tracks around the country, the AMG Challenge gives participants the opportunity to drive the current line of AMG vehicles at the limit and experience their acceleration, braking and handling characteristics without worrying about local law enforcement. I was fortunate to attend this event in September 2008 at Pocono International Raceway, Long Pond, Pennsylvania.

Pocono is known mostly as a NASCAR track, and is triangular in shape, with three banked turns. However, many sports car clubs also use the track, and there are road course layouts available in the track infield. For this event we used a combination of road courses and banked turns to get the feel of the cars under various conditions. We also used parts of the parking lots for skidpad and autocross exercises and for various demonstrations from our instructors.

As you would expect from Mercedes-Benz, the AMG Challenge was very professionally run. On arrival at the track, drivers were met by their team hostess, conducted through registration, and given a catered breakfast. Participants were divided into three teams. After breakfast there were introductions of sponsors and team coaches and a lecture on basic handling characteristics. My team coach was Jeff Andretti. Included in the package each participant received was a USB thumb drive. Each car was equipped with an on-board video recorder. Drivers inserted their thumb drives into the recorders in the car and each driving event was recorded. Mercedes Benz collected the thumb drives at the end of the day and will send each driver a CD containing his or her video clips.



The driving events included a wide range of exercises: a skid pad drill on wet pavement, track time following an instructor around one of the road courses, individual autocross practice and competition, and swerving and braking exercises. Two unique exercises were 0 to 60 to 0 runs in the CLK63 Black Series and Race Start launches with the new transmission in the SL63. For some events everyone used the same model car, but for others we got to choose our ride. I was able to get behind the wheel of the C63, E63, CLS63, CLK63 Black Series, SLK55 and SL63. Demonstrations by the instructors included hot laps on the track in the E63 and an Electronic Stability Program (ESP) demonstration in the C63.

Of all the cars I drove, the new C63 was my favorite. While sometimes giving up more than 50 horsepower to other AMG vehicles with the same engine, its lower weight made it a much better handling car on the track and through the autocross cones. The most impressive car, however, was the CLK63 Black Series. With its reduced weight and massive brakes, the car could be driven to the limit with relative ease.

The last event of the day was the team autocross competition in the CLK63 Black Series. After each driver got two practice runs, each team was timed from the first driver's start to the last driver's finish. Driver changes were like pit stops, and the clock was always running. Like all autocross events, hitting cones added penalty time. Just as on the track, the CLK63 Black Series proved to be an awesome car.



At the end of the day Mercedes Benz held a short awards ceremony. Awards were given for team autocross (first place only), individual autocross (first, second and third places), and for "best track redesign" (the individual who hit the most number of cones during the individual autocross). The individual autocross winner received a \$7,000 watch from IWC, one of the sponsors.

In addition to the regular AMG Challenge, Mercedes Benz conducts an AMG Graduate course for people who have already taken the Challenge. If I can swing it, maybe I'll try the Graduate course next year. If you're interested in participating in the 2009 AMG Challenge, go to the Mercedes Benz web site (www.mbusa.com) and click on "Receive Updates" in the upper right corner. Enter your Email address where requested, and then check the items you are interested in. Be sure to check "AMG/High Performance" to be kept up to date on the next AMG Challenge. Drive Safely!

(Continued from page 4)

but if the car met with his approval, he stated that he would purchase the Mercedes and drive it back to Washington that day. We sat in the airport lounge as he looked over Olivia's papers. When he came to the journal, I could tell he was impressed. I watched his face as he read the personalized and loving service that Olivia had received. His eyes misted. He was then ready for a visual and mechanical inspection of Olive, then a test drive around the neighborhood. We were on the road for only 10 minutes when he pulled Olive into a parking lot and said, "I don't need to know anymore about this car. She runs and handles well. She is a beauty. It is clear that she has been well-maintained and the journal says it all." As we were preparing the paperwork for the sale, I extracted a promise from him... that he would keep the car's name and write in her journal. He agreed. Now it was my turn to say goodbye. With tears in my eyes and feeling a little wistful, I watched as he drove away in Olive. I heard from him later; he, too, loved the car.

I am still following the star. This time it's embedded in the grill of the 1987 560SL "Carpe Diem" convertible. And... I am happy in the knowledge that Olive remains in loving hands. — *By Mary Rollinger*





There are many reasons for owning and driving a Mercedes Benz, probably thousands of them. Our Niagara Section Star Profile Members for this edition, Mike and Louise Repko, offer three of the best reasons. "Mercedes is the most finely constructed, most responsive and safest car on the road today. The safety devices, alone, qualify Mercedes as one of the most highly rated vehicles in existence," states Mike Repko. (Most Mercedes vehicles consistently receive a 5 star crash test rating.)

Mike and Louise are the proud owners of three Mercedes vehicles: a 1984 380SL, a 1990 300SE, a 300Turbo Diesel (in partnership with Gene Long). The Repko's first Mercedes purchase, the 1984 380SL, was what really inspired them to begin competing in European car shows. This splendid beauty of a car has only 30,000 miles on it and is in "show" condition. With all original equipment, except for tires and battery replacement, the 380SL has won many awards, including three best of class honors for 2008. Congratulations, Mike and Louise! Our interview with Mike follows....

N.S.: How would you describe yourself?

M.R.: I am interested in anything mechanical, electrical or hydraulic. I see myself as precise and persistent.

[Just to give you an idea of the enthusiasm Mike shows for all things mechanical... At our spring driving course, I just happened to mention to Mike that I was having trouble with the release mechanism for the convertible top on my 560SL. Mike immediately volunteered to "take a look at it." With a penchant for troubleshooting, he discovered that the real problem was a malfunctioning locking clip. Mike spent a good portion of that afternoon serving as mechanic. He even called the dealership to advise them of the proper part that needed to be ordered to solve this problem. Thanks, Mike!]

N.S.: What make, model, and year Mercedes would you like to own, given the opportunity?

M.R.: My dream car would be a dark green 1936 500K. This car is valued, by the way, at \$400,000 or more. The 500K is as rare as hen's teeth. I do, at least, own an exact-to-scale diecast model of one.

N.S.: What are some of your favorite pastimes?

M.R.: Louise and I enjoy driving in road rallies, competing in European car shows, and pleasure driving in our Mercedes.

N.S.: Any other interests?

M.R.: Yes, I collect firearms and have an interest in older Mercedes Benz automobiles. I also enjoy competitive shooting, fishing, canoeing, hiking and photography.

N.S.: What's the latest publication of book that you have read?

M.R.: The Star magazine

N.S.: Tell us a little bit about your background.

M.R.: I was born in McAdoo, Pennsylvania, and raised in Trumbull, Connecticut. For years I was employed by Fisher-Price Toys and Cello-Pack Corp. as an automated technician and trouble-shooter. Louise and I raised our family in East Aurora. Our daughter, Susan, 47, is living and working in Baltimore, Maryland. Our son, Steven, 45, is living in Lake Lure, North Carolina, and working in Charlotte, North Carolina. Our youngest daughter, Stephanie, 39, is also working and living in Baltimore, Maryland. Louise and I have known each other for 50 years, and been married for 48 years. We are currently retired and living in Elma. In our spare time we like to travel. On our most recent trip, we went to Munich, Germany where we toured the largest Mercedes showroom in the world, which was five stories high and two blocks long!



Repko Car Takes Top Honors

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

Accessories: For '96 - '02 E320: Brand new Colgan Custom 2 piece black bra, carbon fiber look, used only once, original cost \$155, asking \$120. M-B custom car cover, asking \$125. Clear plastic floor mats - front and back, \$25. Any or all three items, call 716-873-9226.

1983 M-B 300 Turbodiesel, 87k miles, China Blue/blue int., cold R134a a/c, power sunroof, auto, p/s, p/b, p/w, cruise, alarm system, one owner all original, exc. cond., prof. serviced, original Becker radio, new M-B battery, exhaust & radiator, hood pad, car cover, asking \$11,950. Call 716-652-8552 or email genelong@verizon.net for pictures and more details.



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NIAGARA SECTION
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OF AMERICA, INC.



New meeting place!
New meeting day!

Buffalo Brew Pub
The Third Tuesday
Time: 6:30 p.m.

Main and Transit
Williamsville

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October 21
November 18

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