



# The Bluegrass Star

A Publication of the Bluegrass Stars Section  
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Spring 2020



## President's Message

The CoronaVirus has certainly disrupted our event plans for this year and I'm sure there has been an even larger disruption to you and your family plans. Life will eventually get back to normal and when that happens, we will again enjoy many great events.

March's drive to and lunch at The Key West Shrimp House in Madison ([www.keywestshrimphouse.com](http://www.keywestshrimphouse.com)) and April's drive to and lunch at The Overlook Restaurant in Leavenworth ([www.theoverlook.com](http://www.theoverlook.com)) were not cancelled, but instead, I'm glad to say, they were postponed to a later date. They will be on the docket for May and June or July, providing life is somewhat back to normal. The Keeneland Concours normally held in June has been cancelled ([keenelandconcours.com/events](http://keenelandconcours.com/events)).

We were able to attend the Louisville Art Speed Museum in January and Larry Gettleman again led our participation in the annual Louisville Regional Science & Engineering Fair in March before the virus pinned us down at home. He invited Fred Mudge, David Rosenberg and me to assist him in judging the automotive related exhibits and it was quite a treat and I hope to be asked again next year. Look for David Rosenberg's and Larry's reviews in this newsletter.

A request—we had planned to discuss the Bluegrass Stars' need for additions to the Board of Directors during the February or March event, but of course, we weren't able to do that. So, instead I'll do it here.

Ideally, the board should have six members and currently, only your four officers are on it so we have need for two additional enthusiastic members to join us. A fair question you may have before considering applying is, what does the board do?

The primary functions are long range big picture planning rather than the day-to-day operations that are typically managed by the officers and appointed club positions. Included are 'future think' planning, financials, club promotions and even new ideas such as advertising. The Board meets several times per year and each member serves for two years.

Please consider submitting your name. On a personal note, I was reluctant to become your club's president because I thought it would be all work and a big headache. Oh boy was I wrong! Instead, I found that I look forward to spending time with the leadership group taking care of the club's business and I think you would too.

PLEASE SUBMIT your name and contact information within 10 days to me, Gary Rumrill [g.rumrill@twc.com](mailto:g.rumrill@twc.com).

**Happy Motoring!**

**Gary Rumrill**

Bluegrass Stars President



## Welcome

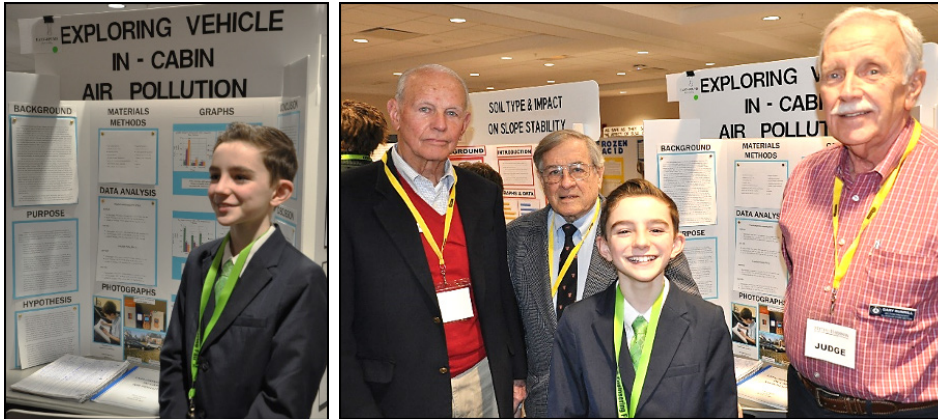
We are pleased to welcome new members to the Bluegrass Stars Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. The success of our club depends on the participation of all members in our scheduled activities.

## Louisville Regional Science & Engineering

We are pleased to announce the two winners of the MBCA-BS Automotive Science Award from the Louisville Regional Science & Engineering Fair on March 7th. The fair's entries were judged by Gary Rumrill, Fred Mudge, Larry Gittleman and David Rosenberg.

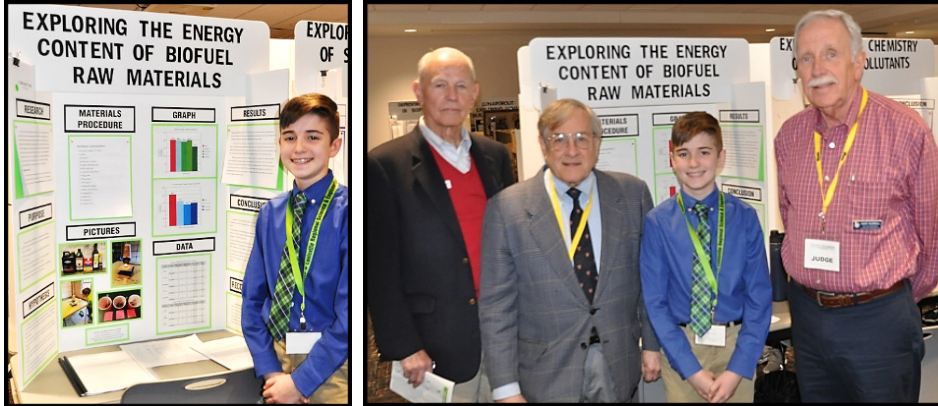
The 2020 winners are:

### *Exploring In-Cabin Air Pollution*



Drew Ashley, Sixth Grade, St. Francis of Assisi Middle School

### *Exploring the Energy Content of Biofuel Raw Materials*



Jacob Quinn, Sixth Grade, St. Francis of Assisi Middle School

We hope to invite these students, their parents, and science teachers to our next event after the much anticipated 'Coronavirus All Clear announcement.' At that event, the students will be presented with the MBCA Winners Certificates and their prize money. We look forward to that event to have these two young people receive their well-deserved recognition.

## Louisville Speed Art Museum in January



The exhibit was the museum's first to show Kentucky's relationship to the horse through art.

*Tales from the Turf* featured the paintings, sculpture, photographs, drawings, prints, and manuscripts to tell the story of the horse in the Bluegrass State. The exhibition reflected all the ways that images of the horse have represented the Commonwealth's identity, history, mythology, and agricultural economy, from its earliest days through the mid-twentieth century.

We had about 16 members attend the event that ended with lunch at the café within the museum, "Wiltshire at the Speed". With the continued popularity of this museum event, the club will probably continue this annual January event. A good time was had by all.



# 87/87 Mercedes 560SL Third Brake Light Housing Review

By Steve Loboyko

I had mentioned in the last newsletter that I had ordered a 3D printed replacement brake light housing from a third party (<https://3dparts.store>) to replace my cracked 560SL's third brake light (the assembly is no longer available from Mercedes - NLA). The price is around 120 dollars and an additional 85 dollars to paint it to match your car.

For those of you not familiar with 3D printing, a computer drawing is made of the part or computer-scanned from an original part. A computer-driven "printer" then produces it. In this case, it was probably made with molten ABS plastic squeezed through a computer controlled orifice capable of moving in X (length), Y (width), and Z (height) dimensions, and "drawn", layer by layer. This process can take several hours. The quality of the results are largely based upon the fidelity between the original part and the computer CAD model representation, and the technology and quality of the 3D printer.

The original part was (besides not being particularly attractive) made out of rather thin and cheap plastic. It was also quite stressed when mounted and even when new could not handle anything more than a VERY few pounds of mounting torque. At this point, a good number of the 560SL's in the remaining fleet have housings that are cracking to at least some degree. Because there is a friction fit between the gasket, the lens, and the housing, when the housing cracks very badly, the lens can fall out on the road, and then you have nothing left to repair!

Another reason that these can break is that if you have the trunk open AND you have the top cover open simultaneously, the assembly will hit the top cover. This and aesthetics may have caused the change to the smaller assembly moved further to the rear on the 88/89 560SL's. I have not experienced this personally, but...**don't do this!**

With this assembly being NLA, your only option would be to repair the housing (good luck), find a used un-cracked assembly (also good luck), replace the trunk lid with an 88/89 version of the trunk sheetmetal and brake light assembly (not original to this year and quite expensive), or just get something entirely different as a replacement (completely not original). So, what do you do?

When I first received the housing, it was unpainted and showed a considerable number of artifacts (layers) from the 3-D printing process. I felt that it would take a good amount of Featherfill (a very thick two-part spray-on primer) and a lot of careful sanding to correct this. Because of cost benefit analysis, I had the supplier paint it. Upon receipt, I realized that not all of those artifacts were entirely corrected by them and upon close examination, the part shows a layering

not unlike "orange peel" on a normal car part. The paint job itself was very good although it would be unreasonable for them to match a color that was applied to my car more than a third of a century ago, sight unseen. I would say this was acceptably good for a "driver".

The fidelity of the shape of the part could stand for some improvement. The line shown in Figure 2 is very faint compared to figure 1; and the original gasket doesn't really fit the bottom of the printed housing very well. This second deficiency is a serious issue, because without a good seal, water could get into the trunk lid and run down into the trailing edge of the trunk. If this happens, it will eventually get out - through a rust hole! I hope that the manufacturer takes these criticisms constructively and improves the part for us orphaned 560SL owners. Note that with 3-D printing, changes to a CAD document can be made in minutes instead of spending days/weeks/months and thousands of dollars for a new/modified injection mold that is "hopefully" right.

In conclusion, Mercedes owners should welcome ANY quality third party support for our cars, particularly for an NLA part, without which the car wouldn't even really be complete, legal, or even original looking. Although this housing is not without some shortcomings, it is my opinion that a good body shop could address most of them. The company that manufactures this may improve the part further straight from the printer via fine-tuning the CAD model. They have some incentive to do so, because having a good model would be like having a license to print money.

For what it is, I found the housing to be fairly priced and worth your consideration especially if you have something less than a concours quality car.



Comparison

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## The Trading Post: Cars, Parts, and Accessories

If you have a Mercedes-Benz or significant M-B part that you would like to buy, sell, or trade, just submit your ad to the Editor, *The Bluegrass Star*. All ads must follow the submission rules and the suggested format as found in the back of *The Star* magazine. They will be listed at no charge to a section member; no commercial ads will be accepted without prior arrangement for payment. Your ad will appear in the next issue of *The Bluegrass Star*.

### Engine stand with storage box

The legs fold up for easy storage and the entire stand fits in a custom-made storage box. Almost new condition.

### Engine hoist with aluminum track

The hoist is rated for 1/2 ton and is ideal for garages with low ceilings.

The aluminum track is 7 feet long and the mounting holes are drilled on 16 inch centers for 3/8 inch lag bolts.

Price is \$200 OBO for everything. Photos on request.

Contact Gary Rumrill, (502) 592-7736 cell

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Polished valve covers for 116/117 engines, old and new styles, with or without caps. \$80 or best offer.

Contact Steve Loboyko, 560mbsl@gmail.com

## Discounted Parts

The following dealerships and shops have agreed to reduce by ten percent (10%) the total price of parts purchased by a Mercedes-Benz Club member with a current MBCA membership card. Restrictions apply; call for details.

### MERCEDES BENZ OF LOUISVILLE

2520 Terra Crossing Blvd  
Louisville, KY 40245  
(502) 565-4410

### AUTOBAHN MOTORS LLC

1403 Hugh Ave  
Louisville, KY 40213  
(502) 473-7858, See Don

### JAMES MOTOR COMPANY

2440 Richmond Road  
Lexington, KY 40502-1301  
(859) 268-1150

## Website

Don't forget to check our website for late-breaking news:

**bluegrassstars.mbca.org**

## Facebook



Special thanks to Nancy Rece for keeping our Internet presence up to date!

Be sure to *Like* us on Facebook!

**NOTE:** If you would prefer to receive the newsletter/event reminders via email instead of snail mail, contact Carol Rumrill (carum@twc.com) to opt out of the mailings. Of course, check that your email address is up to date on the MBCA national website first! (www.mbca.org)

<https://bluegrassstars.mbca.org>

 Mercedes-Benz Club of  
America - Bluegrass Stars