



The Bluegrass Star

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

SUMMER 2021

POST-PANDEMIC (?) EDITION



Recent Comments from Club Officers

“The weather is great; the strict COVID restrictions have finally been eased so now is the time to resume enjoying Bluegrass Stars fellowship, road trips and club events. Historians will likely record 2020 as ‘a lost year’ because of the virtual shutdown of nearly all activities including pleasure traveling, friends and family gatherings, restaurant dining and the list goes on.

Looking back, we had only two events in 2020, one of them just before the restrictions and the second in September, a lunch in General Butler’s Two Rivers restaurant. We weren’t sure what to expect for turnout at Two Rivers and I’m happy to report, we were presently surprised. It was modest, 18 members but actually quite good considering masking requirements, social distancing and a general fear of the bug!

2021 will be quite a different year than 2020 and we’re already off to a good start! Our first event this year was lunch in April at the Key West Shrimp house in Madison, Indiana. The weather was rainy, 18 ‘yes’ RSVPs and a turnout of nearly 22! In May we returned to a club favorite, dinner at Claudia Sander’s Dinner House. Coming up on June 23 we will have lunch at General Butler’s Two Rivers restaurant, July 17th will have us at the Keeneland Concours. August? Don’t know yet. We’re hoping to return to the Eiderdown German Restaurant in Louisville, but if unavailable, we have other places in mind.”

Gary Rumrill
Bluegrass Stars President

“Even though 2021 was off to a slow start, we are finally, ‘back on the road again!’

We have had two events, and have lots more planned, so we can all look forward to an active schedule for the remainder of the year.

We had a wonderful turnout for our inaugural event of the year at the Key West Shrimp House in Madison, Indiana, in March, as well as at our return to the Claudia Sanders Dinner House, in May.

Pictures from both events are posted on our Facebook page at Mercedes-Benz Club of America–Bluegrass Stars.”

J. Anne Gilliland
Vice President

“Due to people’s persistence and compliance, we seem to be progressing toward some level of normalcy in our post pandemic lives. This includes our Bluegrass Section of the Mercedes Benz Club. Unlike many car clubs and other organization, we didn’t suffer a drop in membership due to the pandemic concerns.

Who can we thank for that?

YOU!!!

I’m very proud to be a part of this organization and I look forward to see it go from strength to strength.”

David Rosenberg
Membership Chairman





“The Bluegrass Stars Section’s treasury has had limited activity during this dreaded COVID impacted period as well as a period where the MBCA National office was undergoing structural changes which has suspended its financial stipends to each of the local clubs.

Because of our quarantined social calendar, our Section’s checkbook has not had much demand placed upon it during this period other than the minimal cost of filing regulatory reports, nor has there been the usual infusion of monies from the National Office. We did support our usual commitment to the University of Louisville student Science Award Program.”

Fred Mudge
Treasurer

“I believe that the club survived the COVID lockdown era very well compared to many other clubs and organizations. Gary did a great job of holding things together. I’m looking forward to a much better summer and beyond!”

Steve Loboyko
Editor

Key West Shrimp House and Claudia Sanders

In spite of a slow startup of vaccinations, we had an amazingly good turnout at our last events...



Upcoming Events

- General Butler State Resort Park (June 23rd)
- Keeneland Concours (July 17th)
- Bats Game
- Schnitzelbank Restaurant in Jasper, Indiana
- Auto Museum or car plant tour
- German-American Club dinner
- Joint event with Cincinnati Club
- Holiday dinner
- November 2-5, 2021, MERCEDES FREUDE “The Joy of Everything Mercedes” MBCA national event in Hilton Head, South Carolina chaired by Rick Siefert.

MERCEDES FREUDE

“The Joy of Everything Mercedes”

MBCA's newest & greatest National Event **EVER!**

Staying at the Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort will **ENHANCE** your total Mercedes Freude experience by staying where the action is !

LOCATION:

OMNI HILTON HEAD OCEANFRONT RESORT
Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

DATES:

Mercedes Freude - Tuesday, November 2nd - Friday, November 5th, 2021
Legends of the Autobahn East - Saturday, November 6th (Port Royal Golf Course)
Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance - Sunday, November 7th (Port Royal Golf Course)

Event Registration is NOW OPEN on the MBCA Website !

PRIMARY REGISTRATION will include the ability to participate in most events and activities, as well as the Meet & Greet Reception and Final Banquet. PRIMARY PLUS REGISTRATION will include everything noted in the Primary Registration, as well as the ability to attend the Educational/Tech Sessions on Wednesday.

Along with our MBCA Event, we will be able to experience the kickoff of Legends of the Autobahn-East, as well as the renowned HHI Concours d'Elegance.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED, BUT NOT LIMITED TO a Welcome Reception, Historic & TSD Rallies, local shopping & potential cruises, Educational/Tech Sessions, Cars & Cocktails, our final MBCA Banquet, and a Special Limited Visit to the Robert Jepson Collection Tour.

The hotel reservation link is open and available to book hotel rooms:

<https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/hilton-head/meetings/mercedes-benz-club-of-america-10302021>

OR reservations can be made by calling Omni central reservation at 1-800-843-6664.

Ask for the group code: 110221MERCEDES. Cost per night, for a Resort View Studio Suite, is \$169, plus taxes and daily discounted resort fee.

Further details coming your way in the near future!

Rick Siefert
National Events Chair
rick.siefert@att.net



Advertisement Photo credits:
Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Center
Omni Hilton Head Ocean Resort
HHI Concours d'Elegance

Join Us For Our Inaugural MBCA National Event

Join us on **Tuesday, November 2nd, 2021** as we kickoff MBCA's newest National Event, Mercedes Freude ("The Joy of Everything Mercedes").

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday

We'll get things started by joining together for a Meet & Greet at our host hotel, the Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort, on Tuesday evening, which will include light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.

Wednesday

Wednesday includes tech & educational sessions provided by noted individuals, including Peter Lesler (National MBCA Concours Committee Chair), George Murphy (National Technical Information Chair), Ramsey Potts (RM Sothebys), Bob Platz (190SL restorer extraordinaire!), Dale Moss (Detailing Clinic), Jim Fekete (TSD Rally training), Bill Faison ("Entering My Car in an MBCA Judged Event") and others. For those not interested in attending the tech & educational sessions, other activities will be available for your consideration, such as dolphin-watching cruises, the Coastal Discovery Museum, boutique shopping, as well as many other local activities.

Thursday

Thursday includes the Jepson Automobile Collection tour for 80 lucky individuals. This will include a caravan drive to the Gregorie Neck Plantation, a beautiful 6,000-acre venue located in nearby Jasper County, owned by Robert Jepson, Jr., as well as a complete tour of Mr. Jepson's automobile collection and wonderful facilities. Refreshments will be served.

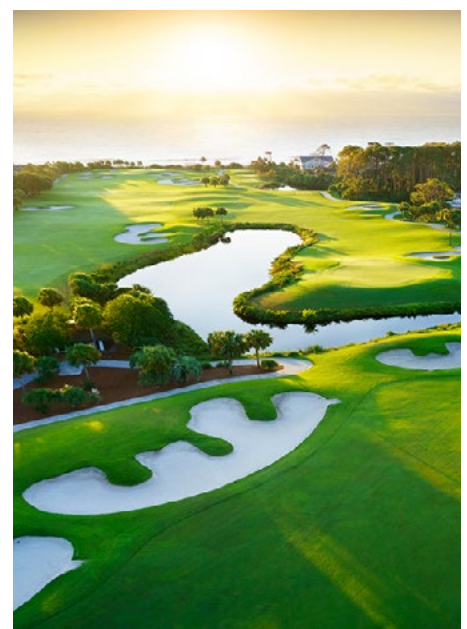
Other options during the day will be a scenic drive to historic Savannah with a special reserved parking site, a ferry ride to the Savannah Riverfront, and other tours and activities in and around Savannah.

Friday

Friday will be a day for exploring the Lowcountry. For the competitive driver and navigator who want a challenge, a TSD Rally will be offered, and awards presented at the Friday banquet. TSD (Time-Speed Distance) emphasizes staying on time and arriving at each checkpoint at precisely the correct time. For those who want to just enjoy the scenic area, a leisurely cruise will stop at some of the historic locations within the surrounding area. A local historian will be at one of the stops to give a brief overview of the area's history. Both rallies will end with lunch in the historic waterfront area.

Later in the day, a Cars & Cocktails gathering will be held to show off our members' Mercedes. MBCA members will be voting for the People's Choice awards, which will be presented at the final banquet.

Mercedes Freude will conclude on Friday evening with the Fabulous Final Banquet, which will include a Lowcountry Boil of great starters and then local shrimp, potatoes, andouille sausage, corn on the cob and smoked old bay broth, grilled chicken, pickle brined and grilled with boiled peanut vinaigrette, along with many traditional Southern accompaniments.



Saturday

On Saturday we will participate in the brand-new Legends of the Autobahn, East. We have participated in Legends of the Autobahn, West, for over twelve years in Monterey, California, in association with Pebble Beach. This event will be held on the grounds of the Port Royal Golf Course with the BMW and Audi Clubs. On Saturday evening, MBCA will be hosting those clubs at the Omni. Participants will enjoy a wonderful barbeque buffet, including brined chicken, buttermilk fried with dill pickles, smoked brisket (18 hour smoked with Carolina and Kansas City BBQ sauce, and pork ribs (dry rubbed and slow smoked).

Sunday

Sunday will certainly top off a great week, as the Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance (truly one of the top Concours events in the country!) will be held, also on the grounds of the Port Royal Golf Course.

Registration for Mercedes Freude can be made by visiting <https://mercedes-freude.mbca.org>, which includes a link to purchase tickets for Legends of the Autobahn and the Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance.

We look forward to seeing and being with each of you for a memorable week!

Rick Siefert

National Events Chair



CarPlay/Android Auto in 2010-Era M-B Cars? Yes!

Installing CarPlay/Android Auto in a 2013 E350

by Steve Loboyko

A set of circumstances led me to buy a new (to me) W212 E350 4MATIC, a 2013 “pre-facelift” model. My very nice Sonata, gifted to me by my late father in law, was well maintained (mostly by me) but getting older with quite a few miles on it. Also, as nice as it was, I always found it noisy. There was also a certain level of embarrassment in showing up to Mercedes club functions in a Hyundai, because don’t drive my 560SL much.

I had considered buying an R230/231 SL as a retirement present to me. I had acquired the hardware and software tools to diagnose and maintain 8+ year old Benzes, and the complexity of these cars no longer overwhelms me. However, my “operations and finance” manager said “no” to the more modern SL, and she was right. I needed a car that could hold four people (or two people and three Corgis), and there is less hair these days for the wind to blow through in a convertible anyway. I will always have my 560SL for that!

I had read quite a bit on the Internet that the 2012-2016 six cylinder E-class was a very reliable and just flat all-around “good” car with the magical combined qualities of reliability, power, economy, and features. With gas prices having no place to go but up these days, I did not need another “fast, impractical” car, and, well, with me getting older, who knows if I could actually even handle one to its fullest.

So, after a nationwide Internet search and a wild one-day fly/drive trip to Pittsburgh, I wound up with a very nice (but not perfect), 26,500 mile sedan, not stripped, but not loaded with things to break either. It is the “pre-facelift” model, a bit dated, but I prefer it to the modern look. It did have navigation, but the navigation really wasn’t even as good as my loaded 2012 Sonata, and it definitely wasn’t as good as 2020-era navigation from any carmaker either. I suspect that Mercedes engineers of that era just didn’t think that the driver poking at a touchscreen while driving was a good idea. They were probably right—but the market thought otherwise.

I knew about the navigation shortcomings “going in”, but I had plans to bring this important subsystem up to modern standards.

It is possible to upgrade these cars (whether they came equipped with navigation or not in many cases, with a little work) to use Apple CarPlay or Google Maps and to do so wirelessly. There are several units available and they all work on similar principles. Using an Android-based computer box, they interpose themselves between the controls, the multimedia unit, and the screen to “override” the original radio/navigation with wireless Android/Carplay capability from your Apple or Android phone. These have been around for a few years and the bugs have largely been worked out. So, I bit the bullet and ordered a unit from China. I actually ordered it before I bought the car. They run from \$250-\$500; the \$500 units generally come with US shipping and (some) US support. It is important that your supplier knows the year/model of the car and whether or not you have navigation. It is critical to tell the supplier the “family” of your unit (in this case, NTG 4.0, 4.5/4.7, or 5.x). This can be determined from a hidden menu on the radio.

The danger of buying anything from China is that the instructions are generally bad, there is little support, and if the unit is defective, your options are limited. But my experience doing this in the past has been very good, so I took a \$240 gamble. The unit I received is a “middle of the road” unit, not the newest, but still very good.

I received it shortly after I had purchased the car. As expected, the instructions were both bad and incorrect. With so much information on websites and YouTube, this was not a serious issue. The quality of the kit itself seemed pretty good, so I embarked on taking apart my new to me and not inexpensive car. This is not the first time that I had gutted a “new” car; I took apart my wife’s new-with-3000-miles Tucson to install and wire a Homelink auto-dimming rear mirror, so I had experience disassembling a reasonably modern car. Knowing where the clips are for the plastic parts without breaking them is much more important than knowing how to use a screwdriver on modern-era car interiors!

The following is how I installed the unit in my particular car; there are year-to-year and equipment variations, so other installations differ, sometimes by quite a bit. I won’t go into detail here; there are plenty of videos on Youtube that explain this fairly well.

1. I removed the trim strip and vent. This is rather tricky, and you see some installers on YouTube do some things that are definitely **not** in the Mercedes shop procedures. If you have wood veneer, I would remove the right hand vent in the proper manner, releasing the

clips from inside the glovebox lid and then pulling from inside the vent with hooks. Brace with your body to avoid bending the strip at all costs. A cracked part would be expensive and a new or used replacement probably won’t match the other wood in your car.

2. Then I removed the glovebox and some associated wiring connectors. A plastic panel on the side needed to be removed also.
3. Then, I removed the radio. I put down scratch protection towels for the console.



4. I then installed the unit and its associated wiring. It was very difficult to tuck the wiring downwards so as to refit the radio back together. This tucked in between the console and glove compartment. I then discovered that I would need to hook up the audio jack from the unit to the amplifier AUX in the armrest. This is not required in all situations. To do this, I had to wire it under and up the console. There are two ways to do this, not shown here; this was actually more difficult and risky than installing the radio!



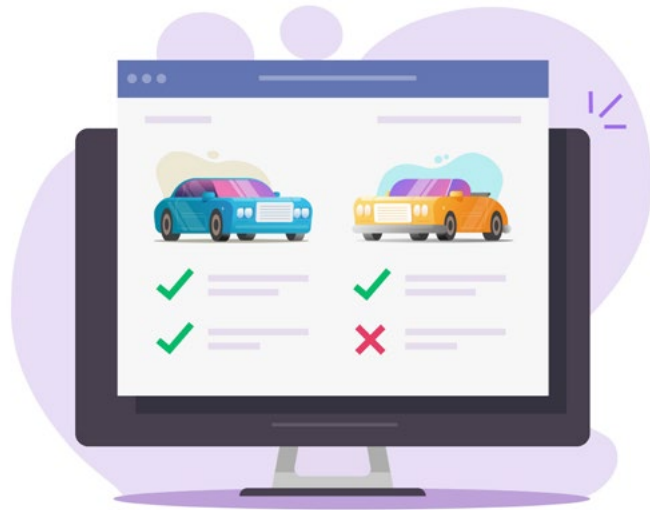
After considerable fooling around with engineering menus for my COMAND unit, I got the system working well. Apple CarPlay has an entire server farm of powerful computers accessed over the internet for voice recognition, navigation, and so on. The maps never get out of date. Phone and navigation functions are as close as pushing a button on the steering wheel and saying a few words.

Once you do this, you will probably not go back to 2010-era COMAND again, which is just as well, because although it is 100% reversible, several technical menu steps are involved in order to do so. You definitely don't want to do them while driving. So, you will effectively lose AM/FM and CD. But you gain all of the power and storage of your phone, and in my case, I can use XM Radio and other radio apps on the iPhone.

Check that you have "unlimited wireless" before doing any of this, because your usage of data will probably go up dramatically. Also, your battery will drain MUCH more quickly. You can't really use CarPlay without being connected to a charger for anything but relatively short trips. I'm thinking about building a small wireless charger for the console storage box—but that will be another article!

I should note that this box can ALSO work with Android Auto, which I've seen and is similar in operation to Apple's system; be aware that only newer phones and versions of those phones can connect to update boxes like this wirelessly. Check support before buying a unit.

If you don't want to do this yourself, installation is probably within the capabilities of a good car stereo installer.



Internet Resources for Mercedes-Benzes

by Steve Loboyko

in order to find information about your car on the Internet, you need to know what you are looking for. Here are the "classes" of recent Mercedes-Benzes [from Wikipedia](#):

- A-Class – Subcompact luxury Hatchback and Sedan
- B-Class – Subcompact luxury Multi Purpose Vehicle
- C-Class – Compact executive luxury Sedan/Saloon, Estate, Coupé and Cabriolet
- CLA – Subcompact luxury 4-Door Coupé and Estate
- CLS – Mid-size luxury 4-Door Coupé
- E-Class – Mid-size executive luxury Sedan/Saloon, Estate, Coupé and Cabriolet
- G-Class – Luxury Off-road vehicle
- GLA – Subcompact luxury Crossover
- GLB – Compact luxury Crossover
- GLC – Compact luxury Sport utility vehicle
- GLE – Mid-size luxury Sport utility vehicle
- GLS – Full-size luxury Sport utility vehicle
- S-Class – Full-size luxury Sedan/Saloon, Coupé and Cabriolet
- V-Class – Luxury Multi Purpose Vehicle
- AMG GT – Luxury Sports car
- AMG GT4 – Luxury sports 4-Door Coupé
- EQA – Luxury Electric Crossover
- EQB – Luxury Electric Crossover
- EQC – Luxury Electric Sport utility vehicle
- EQV – Luxury Electric Multi Purpose Vehicle

In addition to this, there is the “Chassis Type”. This is generally coded by a letter and three numbers. For example, The “Mercedes SL” sold in the US between 1972 and 1989 is an R107 (sometimes a W107 when describing both the R107 and the C107 “Mercedes SLC” coupe). The 21st century E-Class is described by W210 (1996-2002) W211(2003-2009), W212 (2010-2016), and W213 from 2017 to the present. Confusingly, C207/A207, coupe and convertible of the E class from 2012-2017 respectively, are also considered “E class”, although the bodies are much more similar to the “C Class”.

This chassis type is very important to know when you are looking up any information about your car on the Internet or for perusing any forum. The layout of most forums will guide you to the correct subsection. Mercedes cars are sold around the world with many different engine sizes (often smaller).

FORUMS

I have always found these sites to be very helpful and well-organized:

- benzworld.org
- MBworld.org
- mbca.org

For W107's, the Benzworld.org website is stronger, but there is generally more activity (particularly European activity) on mbworld.org for other forums. Benzworld posts may be of slightly higher quality but that is just my opinion. Mbca.org has fewer DIY'ers (except possibly on much older vehicles), but is also worth looking at especially for authoritative restoration information. Many owners on the other forums simply want to get their daily driver operating well.

YOUTUBE

The quantity and quality of DIY videos on YouTube has increased tremendously, particularly in the last five years. Lots of non-US people contribute to the wealth of free information. If you have questions or problems with your car, some one else probably has had them also and here you can find solutions/answers. Even if you have owned your model for years, you can often learn something new about it by watching these videos. Younger people seem to communicate visually than with written text,, and they all seem to have become semi-professional video producers!

“Top Side” Oil Changes?

I've finally broken down and probably was among the last serious oil change diehards to buy a “Top Side” oil change system. There was controversy for many years as to whether or not this type of oil change (on a car without a catastrophic problem like sludge, metal shavings, etc.) could ever do as good of a job for an oil change. My new car purchase and the fact that most MB dealers do this type of oil change convinced me that this system should work for most normal oil changes. By using a container and a hand-pumped vacuum pump/container, it is possible to change your oil and filter on many newer cars (MB and otherwise) without going under the car and removing the drain plug.



Pros:

- Draining via the plug now requires removing lower panels of most cars, more work/opportunity for loss/breakage of panels
- Very low ground clearance on modern cars requires ramps/lifts for oil pan drain changes
- Potentially less opportunity for spills
- No danger of damaging/cross-threading the oil drain plug (which happens surprisingly often with “\$25.99” oil changes, Google this)

Cons:

- Cost of pump/container (\$40-200)
- Not always possible to get ALL of the oil
- Bad material (sludge, metal could still remain in the pan (but gravity and the filter take care of this problem for the most part)

Section Officers

PRESIDENT

Gary Rumrill

g.rumrill@twc.com
(502) 592-7736 cell
(502) 239-6366 home

VICE PRESIDENT

J. Anne Gilliland

jannegilliland@gmail.com
(210) 383-3413

TREASURER

Fred Mudge

fredmudge@aol.com
(859) 361-0992

SECRETARY

Carol Rumrill

carum@twc.com
(502) 239-6366

EDITOR

Steve J. Loboyko

560mbsl@gmail.com
(859) 285-7397

WEBMASTER

Nancy Rece

benznlr@gmail.com
(859) 240-0814

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

David Rosenberg

mb.bs.membership@gmail.com
(502) 548-8960

VENUE CHAIRMAN

Jim West

(812) 725-0885 home
(812) 670-8912 cell

CENTRAL REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Rick Siefert

rick.siefert@att.net
(314) 435-1903

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

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