

# The StarDust

November 2008 | Desert Stars Section | Arizona



## Desert Stars' Holiday Party, December 7th

This year's Desert Stars Section Holiday Party will be held on December 7, 2008 at FireRock Country Club located at 16000 East FireRock Country Club Drive in Fountain Hills, Arizona. To access the club go south at the intersection of Shea Boulevard and FireRock Country Club Drive.

New members are welcome and encouraged to participate. Come to learn about the past years events and to get a preview of the 2009 events.

Arrive at 10:30 AM for a pre-brunch wine tasting. A cash bar will be available, served by the wait staff, and individual checks will be provided at the end of the brunch. A Brunch Buffet will start at 11:00 AM.

Service pins will be presented to members celebrating their fifth, tenth, etc. membership anniversaries. You must attend the Holiday Party to receive your service pin. See page 3 for a list of members with anniversaries this year.

As usual, Marines will be our guest to accept your donation of cash and toys for *Toys for Tots*, so please bring an unwrapped toy as your contribution.

The Buffet menu is to the right. The cost is \$65.00 per person.

The registration form for this event is on page 6. For more information contact Robert Schmelzer (480) 247-3093 or John Teichgraeber (480) 837-3624.

*Robert Schmelzer*

## Driving Pros to Share Their Skills, January 24<sup>th</sup>

Want to become a safer and more defensive driver? Want your teenager to learn how to avoid accidents and drive more confidently? Want to learn the real capabilities of your Mercedes-Benz? Then join us on Saturday January 26<sup>th</sup> for the MBCA's Defensive Driving and Accident Avoidance Education Course.

All MBCA members and immediate family are eligible, and should take advantage of this opportunity to get in-car training on accident avoidance strategies, performing evasive maneuvers, and truly understanding the handling characteristics of their cars. New and inexperienced drivers will especially benefit from this professional in-car instruction and hands-on closed course experience. Instructors will be driving professionals with significant experience teaching this course at MBCA events.

**Beginning at 8 am**, we'll meet at **F1 Race Factory**, on 48<sup>th</sup> Street just south of Washington in Phoenix. There we'll set up a restricted and marked circuit, protected from other traffic. After some basic introduction, each driver will receive personal

**Desert Stars Holiday Brunch Buffet**  
*Assorted Bakeries including Danish & Muffins*  
*Sliced Seasonal Fresh Fruit & Berries*  
**Garden Iceberg Salad**  
*Topped with Crisp Vegetables and Cherry Tomatoes*  
*With Choice of Dressings*  
**Build Your Own Omelet**  
*Choice of Ham, Bacon or Sausage,*  
*with Jack and Cheddar Cheeses*  
*And Your Choice of Tomatoes,*  
*Onions, Spinach, Bell Peppers,*  
*Green Chilies and Mushrooms*  
*Applewood Smoked Bacon and Sausage*  
*Cheese Blintzes with Fresh Strawberry Sauce*  
*Medallions of Beef with Burgundy Mushroom Demi*  
*Asiago Scalloped Potatoes*  
*Grilled Vegetables with Balsamic Glaze*  
*Tilapia Fillets with Mango and Papaya Chutney*  
*Pan Roasted Chicken Breasts with Wild Mushroom Sauce*  
**Holiday Dessert Assortment**  
*Assorted Pastries and Holiday Desserts*  
*Freshly Baked Rolls and Whipped Butter*  
*Coffee, Tea and Soft Drinks*

in-car instruction on the handling characteristics of their car, how to drive around potential trouble and then safely recover control of their vehicle. Drivers will benefit most by bringing the vehicle they drive daily – M-B or otherwise.

The cost is only \$25 per driver and **licensed drivers under 18 are free** with a paying parent MBCA member. We'll bring the refreshments, and lunch at F1's indoor **Trackside Grill** is included. Following lunch, we'll reconfigure the cones to let participants practice some of the maneuvers they've learned. The day should wrap up by about 3 pm.

We urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to become a safer, more alert and aware driver. **Call now to reserve.** Only the first 32 participants can be accommodated due to limited availability of instructors and facilities. Use the entry form on page 6, call event coordinator **Chuck Stanford, Jr.** today at **480-585-0785** for more information. Event, facilities and instructors will be fully insured.

*Chuck Stanford*

President's Message:



Just returning from StarFest and a long drive home, I find myself returning home amidst political turmoil and an economic melt down. It seems there hasn't been a whole lot of good in the news lately.

That being said, good news is on the horizon. Gas prices are going down, the cheer of the Holidays are almost upon us and the stock market has no where to go but up. I guess I always try and put a positive spin on things, I'm one of those "my glass is half full" people.

While I was at StarFest an executive from MBUSA addressed the club on the direction Mercedes Benz is going in the future, and the future my friends is Green.

Mercedes will introduce their first gas/electric hybrid using a lithium-ion battery in an S Class chassis. The S400 will arrive in showrooms in the fourth quarter of 2009. Soon after, the S300 will use a BlueTec diesel/electric combination.

When he was asked about where AMG fits in amidst all of this green his response was "not to worry, Mercedes will always have an aggressive AMG program". I know this is old news to most of you but the point is Mercedes now has a direction; something I think they have been struggling to find these past few years.

On the home front the Havasupi Rallye, our premier Southwest Regional event went off without a hitch. And will no doubt go down as one of the best. A big thanks to the Rallye Masters Dick and Mindy Sharp and all the people that worked hard to make this event possible.

I would also like to thank Phoenix Motor Co. and especially Mike Hope. When the call went out for the Toys for Tots drive, they stepped up in a big way to insure it would be successful.

Also a reminder, the month of January is a gold mine of Classic auto auctions. In and around the Phoenix and Scottsdale area there are six of the finest auctions in the world. Whether you are just looking or want to find the car of your dreams, if you can't find it at one of these auctions it hasn't been built yet.

Last I am looking forward to seeing you at the Holiday Party. It is the last event of the year and a chance to meet other members, review the events of the last year and prepare for 2009.

*Bud Cloninger, President  
Desert Stars Section*

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Upcoming Local and Southwest Region Section Events

In case your looking for something to do locally or you're traveling in the southwest and would like to meet fellow MBCA members, we are listing the following events which may be of interest. If you want more information about a particular event, call Rick Stacio 623-582-6694.

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Desert Classic (pre-1909 vehicles) rallye. AZ Republic Building, first vehicles about midnight	Tuesday, 11/18/08
Arizona International Automobile Show, Phoenix Convention Center	Weekend of 11/27-30/08
Antique Vehicle and Charity Event, MBCA, Orange County	Sunday, 12/7/08
Annual Christmas Dinner and Dance, MBCA, Long Beach	Saturday, 12/13/08
Christmas Party, MBCA, Orange County	Sunday, 12/15/08
Chinese New Year Dinner, MBCA, Long Beach	Saturday, 1/24/09
Nethercutt Tour, MBCA, Orange County	Saturday, 1/24/09

September

- Alexander Curtis
- Gregory Hjartarson
- James Meece
- Robert King
- David Irmer

New Members



October

- Barry Howard
- Louis Lamp

## Desert Stars' Board



### **President:**

Bud Cloninger (602) 326-6210

### **Vice President:**

Bryan O'Connor (602) 620-4795

### **Treasurer:**

Richard Sharp (480) 661-1325

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#### **Newsletter Editor:**

Rick Stacio (623) 582-6694

Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. All members are welcome. Check with a board member concerning place and time.

## Join MBCA Members in Town for Auctions

Planning to attend the January car auctions in Scottsdale? The Desert Stars are arranging a dinner on Saturday, January 17 for MBCA members attending the Barrett-Jackson and other auctions. Dinner will be at a restaurant in Scottsdale near the auction site. Call Chuck Stanford, Jr (602-549-4789) or Bryan O'Connor (602-620-4795) for details and reservations. This is a great opportunity to meet members from other MBCA sections who share your interest in the glitz, glamor, neat cars and really cool stuff that make up the Barrett-Jackson Auction Weekend. See you there!!

## Wanted: MLs, GLs, G-Wagons

Ever want to take that pavement bound SUV on an adventure? You know you want to. Well one of our Board members is an off-road enthusiast. He's agreed to lead a trip into the outback with **almost** guaranteed return. The excursion could be anything from mild to wild, with trails within 20 miles of Phoenix. If any of you have interest, please send an e-mail to [byoder@desertstars.org](mailto:byoder@desertstars.org).

## Passarelli Restoration's Open House

Once again Mark Passarelli is holding an open house and is inviting club members. The open house will be held on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. You do not have to register. Just show up between 1:00 PM and 5:00 PM. Attendees of the last few years have seen various stages of show quality restorations on gull wings, roadsters and other Mercedes. It is well worth the trip up to Cave Creek. We want to thank Mark in advance for his generosity. Mark's address is 41755 N. Old Stage Coach Rd., Cave Creek, AZ 85331.

## News about the MBCA Forum - Learn more!

How many of you know about the MBCA Forum, have registered and created a profile? How many of you are aware of this benefit, to get more information about your Mercedes-Benz, to have many of your questions answered, and just to learn more about your car? For instance the **For Sale and Wanted Forums** give you a way to sell and buy Mercedes-Benz Cars and parts. So, what else do you get? Many model specific Forums, from old to new. Questions can be asked of George Murphy on the Technical Forum. The Marshall Booth Diesel Forum deals with folks who have old 200D's to the new CDI models. Each Region has a Forum for Event information.

### **And just a little plus - IT'S FREE!**

I invite you to go to <http://mbca.cartama.net/index.php> and register on the MBCA Forum by clicking on Register. For more information send me an email at [pnzrwgn@mac.com](mailto:pnzrwgn@mac.com).

Take care and be safe,

*Chuck Landenberger*

Desert Stars Section Board Member

MBCA Forum Administrator

National Director at Large

## Membership Anniversaries

### **30 years**

Harvey Vogel

1/28/1978

G. Zucchiatti

4/14/1978

### **25 years**

Roy Towne

1/26/1983

David Neal

2/3/1983

Gloria Jackson

5/2/1983

### **20 years**

Curtis Pounder

2/19/1988

Fred Lewis

8/24/1988

J. Sheridan

11/25/1988

### **15 years**

Holger Martin

5/13/1993

Vivian Myers

5/26/1993

Gary Haarer

9/16/1993

Lee Blatt

10/20/1993

### **10 years**

David Thomas

1/12/1998

### **10 years(continued)**

Bill Follette

Phil Hall

Don Mc Conaughey

Richard Witte

Jim Boyle

Erika Cramer

Aaron Saunders

Edward Gladish

Zygmunt Kwasnica

Fred Benson

Douglas Gray

Charles Gilhart

Richard Dykes

Stanley Spiegel

Sue Larsen

### **5 years**

Richard Zimbaro

### **5 years(continued)**

1/20/1998 Christopher Hoeye

2/26/1998 Charles Johnston

3/30/1998 Beatrice Mannino

6/12/1998 Henry Muranko

6/17/1998 Louis Horwin

7/23/1998 Gary Bernard

8/6/1998 Don Brammer

9/1/1998 Helmuth Bartold

9/2/1998 Brian Burns

9/23/1998 Bud Klingman

10/16/1998 Cathie Udeck

11/18/1998 Hugh Aitken

11/20/1998 Jeff Smith

12/5/1998 Charles Moehring

12/30/1998 Dan Withers

Bryan O Connor

1/16/2003 Theodore Dixon

1/22/2003

1/30/2003

2/24/2003

4/23/2003

7/28/2003

8/7/2003

8/7/2003

8/11/2003

9/8/2003

9/9/2003

9/30/2003

10/6/2003

11/6/2003

11/21/2003

12/1/2003

12/19/2003

12/30/2003

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## Lake Havasu Perfect for Havasupai'08

Lake Havasu City proved the perfect venue for our Havasupai'08, for the weekend of October 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>. Eighteen teams gathered at the Island Inn Hotel, our hub of operation, for a get together with appetizers and a hosted bar.

Saturday morning was early with breakfast at 6:30AM and the first teams a-rallying by 7:30AM. With a route of over 200 miles, more than 175 clues to solve and almost 30 pictures to identify, this was one of the most challenging rallies the Desert Stars have encountered since the reign of a certain Rallymaster.

The route was as spectacular as it was demanding. With the Colorado River Valley as a focus, we criss-crossed the area from Parker in the south to Interstate 40 to the north, westward into California and back across Parker Dam into Arizona. After five hours of adventure, we arrived in the old mining town of Oatman for lunch. The afternoon was less strenuous with a beautiful stretch of Historic Route 66, then a dash back to Lake Havasu and the hotel, through more picturesque river country.

After some time to unwind, we gathered for our awards banquet and to relive our adventures of the day over drinks and excellent food. Havasupai'08 winners were John & Marianne Hutchison, first place; Don & Brynn Burton, second place; and Chuck & Ava Stanford, third place

A special thanks to the parts departments of Phoenix Motor Company and Mercedes-Benz of Chandler for the donation of M-B branded prizes for our Havasupai.

*Rick Stacio*

**Havasupai'08 winners with their Kachinas.**



**Lunch at Oatman**



## **Before you put your top down, make sure you've got your bra on.**

Cooler weather means car club runs and long drives with the top down ...wind whipping through your hair ... sun shining from blue skies ... tiny rocks chewing up your bumper ... wayward bugs smashing into your hood.

So before you hit the scenic route, call us to protect your car's front end with the 3M clear bra. And while we're at it, we can protect you and your car's interior with 3M window tint. After all, the stifling heat may be gone, but the sun's harmful UV rays are still penetrating your windows.

**As always, car club members receive 10% off any service.**



## Holiday Party

### December 7, 2008

### Registration Form

**Contact Information:**

Name(s):  Section:

Address:

City:  State/Prov.:  Zip:

Phone No.:   Day  Night

Email Address:

Number Attending:  Cost is \$65<sup>00</sup> per person. For questions call Robert Schmelzer (480) 247-3093.  
 Make your check payable to: **MBCA Desert Stars**; and mail to: **MBCA Desert Stars**

c/o Dick Sharp  
 11371 East Cochise Drive  
 Scottsdale, AZ 85259

## Defensive Driving Clinic

### Saturday, January 24, 2009

### Registration Form

**Contact Information:**

Name(s):  Section:

Address:

City:  State/Prov.:  Zip:

Phone No.:   Day  Night

Email Address:

Number Attending:  Cost is \$25<sup>00</sup> per person. For questions call Chuck Stanford at (480) 585-0785.  
 Make your check payable to: **MBCA Desert Stars**; and mail to: **MBCA Desert Stars**

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## StarFest at Thunderhill Racetrack

For StarFest this year Dick Sharp and I decided to only attend the racing events and to bypass the concourse and Rally events. After weeks of preparing our cars and with his 65 250SE loaded on a trailer, we were off on the 850 mile trip to Willows California.

After checking in at the hotel Sunday afternoon we were excited to take the short trip to Thunderhill and get a preview of the track. At 3 miles long, 36 feet wide and 15 turns with two high speed straights (100 mph +), we definitely had our work cut out for us!

Monday's schedule was packed with things to do, technical inspection of all cars, drivers meeting, defensive driving, auto cross and acceleration runs. We were informed of what class we would be in only to find out Walt Anderson a MBCA driving instructor and a national points leader in autocross and racing was in my class. Second place in any event was the best I could hope for.

Dick didn't fare very well either. Because his car had V8 in it he was put into the Modified Class. The two other cars in that class were a 7.4 liter V12 (yes I said 7.4!) and an E 55 AMG with a supercharger installed! I guess I didn't have it all that bad as there isn't any third place, when only three cars are in a class.

We bypassed the defensive driving and went straight to the autocross. That gave us time to assist the officials that were coordinating the autocross event. After the 1/4 mile time trials we headed back to the hotel for some much needed rest.

Tuesday we arrived at the track to the usual tech inspection and drivers meeting. Inspections were given every morning to make sure any safety or mechanical problems that developed from the previous days racing were found. Each driver received over 20 minutes of on track for practice with an instructor. This happened four times throughout the day and we learned the fastest way to make the best of the track. With about two hours of instruction we felt confident we had what it takes to go solo in the next day's timed events.

Wednesday morning after a very detailed drivers meeting Frank Cozza, National Event Coordinator for StarFest, told us to go out and have fun and that this is not a race. On our way out to the racecourse, I think every one, including Frank knew different. As I was in group #1 I was to be one of the first on the track. Every driver got one warm up lap, three timed laps and one cool down lap. And because we were spaced one mile apart the chances of having contact with another car was almost impossible. Having completed my runs early I had plenty of time to watch, take photographs, and do some video

of the other members racing. I got to see Dick leave the track on turn seven at about 70 mph to take an unexpected tour of the infield. After dusting himself and the car off, he went on to finish the race.

By the end of the three days the race track had had its way with only two cars, a 600SL with cooling system problems and a 500 SEC with a severely damaged engine. At the awards banquet the fine food that was served was not what was on our minds. When the awards were handed out, Dick received second place in auto cross and I received third place in time trials on the racetrack. I also accepted on behalf of Chuck and Ava Stanford, the second place award for the StarFest Rallye Event.

The long drive home was some what a blur after the week's events. Now being home and looking back on things, I think that showing up for the clubs defensive driving course a few years back is what led me to do this in the first place. I hope to see you in January for defensive driving and maybe it will lead you to a StarFest in the future.

*Bud Cloninger*



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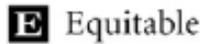
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## OktoberFest – Fountain Hills

The community of Fountain Hills held their Oktoberfest party on Friday and Saturday evenings September 26 and 27. About 14 Mercedes and Smart cars supported the event each evening to enjoy the beer, brats, music and friendship on the grass next to “the” Fountain. A few prospective Desert Stars arrived to meet the old guys and learn more about the Club. Our John Teichgraeber, resident of Fountain Hills, organized this informal event and recruited John Hutchison and myself to “assist” but then ran off to Tahoe for the weekend....what a lesson in the art of delegating...great job.

I understand a few of the attendees enjoyed a free beer and brat....

We also had the opportunity to view some beautiful Mercedes autos and a Euro Smart car with special rear mounted racks for golf bags or bikes.

Bob Yoder, MOY

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**Save These Dates:**

Technical Session at M.B. Motors	Saturday, November 8, 2008
Holiday Party at FireRock Country Club	Sunday, December 7, 2008
MBCA, Barrett – Jackson Dinner	Saturday, January 17, 2009
Passarelli Restorations Open House	Sunday, January 18, 2009
Defensive Driving Clinic	Saturday, January 24, 2009
Family Picnic and Car Show	Saturday, February 14, 2009
Poker Run	Saturday, March 7, 2009
Putting at Desert Highlands	Saturday, March 28, 2009
British European Auto Tour	Weekend of April 18 – 19, 2009
Memorial Day Weekend Auto Tour	Weekend of May 22 – 25, 2009
Annual Business Meeting	Sunday, June 7, 2009

Help us celebrate the Holiday Season and support the Marine Corp Reserve's Campaign *Toys for Tots*. Join us at the FireRock Country Club and bring an unwrapped toy on December 7<sup>th</sup>. See the front page for details.



Visit our section website at <http://www.desertstars.org>



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