



Desert Stars MBCA Found on Facebook!



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About

The Desert Stars is the Mercedes Benz Club of America (MBCA) section located in Phoenix, Arizona. Chartered in 1962, the section membership is predominantly from Central and Northern Arizona.

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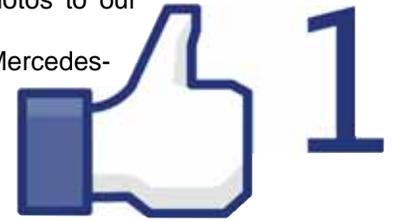


facebook

You heard right. The Desert Stars MBCA section now has a page on Facebook! The world's largest social network, Facebook and the Desert Stars have made it easy to join and participate in the club from the comfort of your home - or mobile device. Add updates, discuss news, view the official club calendar, as well as upload your photos to our page.

We already have a month's worth of updates on new Mercedes-Benz model news, upcoming events, and several club photo albums. Some of the albums are for events, membership candid photos, and an album dedicated to "Our Rides." Just remember everyone in the club can view the photo album, so they really shouldn't be used for extortion purposes!

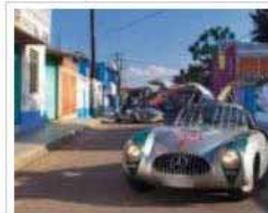
Existing Facebook users should go to our page and "Like" us, and Desert Stars updates will appear on your home page. Searching for "Desert Stars MBCA" is the best way to find us until we get 25 "likes" - then we can get our own Facebook page name. Not yet on Facebook? It's simple to join, and you will be able to access it from our www.desertstars.org website. Visit www.facebook.com to get started. We look forward to seeing you there!



Andrew Flynn

Photos and Videos of Desert Stars MBCA

See All: Photos



2011 Practice Rallye
26 photos

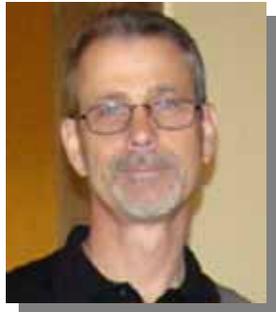


Our Membership
3 photos



2011 Scottsdale Auction Week
32 photos

President's Message:



I am very pleased to announce to our Members that the Mercedes Benz Club of America, and their Board Of Directors has given The Desert Stars the go-ahead to host *StarFest 2012*. The date has been set for September 28th through October 3rd. Our premier anchor hotel will be the *Arizona Biltmore*. The Biltmore has given The Mercedes Benz Club special discounts on all amenities, which are nearly half off the normal price this time of year. StarFest would be a perfect end of summer get-away in our own back yard! No airports (TSA), no long drives. Just sit back and enjoy millions of dollars in Mercedes automobiles, and a million dollar view!

The Concours d'Elegance will be held for two days on the Biltmore's perfectly manicured lawns with a view of the mountains in the background. The driving events will be held at Firebird raceway, home of the NHRA Nationals, NAPA Auto Parts World Final Hydro-Boat races, Redline Track Challenge and not to mention the Volkswagen Club's, Bug O'Rama.

Both the Concours and track activities are but a sample of what will be going on during these six, very busy days of StarFest. There will be restoration and automotive seminars, guest speakers, day trips and media attention just to name a few. In the coming weeks www.starfest2012.com will go live and we will give members up-to-date information on all things StarFest. We are speaking with other people such as AMG and MBUSA to complement StarFest to gather as much attention as possible.

Although we are over a year away there is much that has to be done. I would like to take this opportunity to rally the troops, and ask for your help. We need members that would like to help out in any area. Whether you're a Graphic Artist (or just really good at Photoshop), would like to be a Concours Judge (we will train you!) or just want to pick up cones at the driving event, I can use your help. If you have any ideas or have an expertise in an area that you think can help in planning this event, please give me a call. All I can promise you is a front row seat at what will be the premier Mercedes Benz event for years to come.

Finally, see **Andrew Flynn's** article on the Desert Stars' Facebook page. Let me give you an example of how well this media works. By the time I arrived home and unloaded my camera to post the photos of the Practice Rallye, three other members that were at the rallye, had already posted comments and photos of the event as it was taking place! And you thought it was just a way to communicate with your family.

I hope to see you at an event or Star Night soon! And don't forget to "Like" the Desert Stars on Facebook!

*Bud Cloninger, President
Desert Stars Section*

Star Night

Join **Ron and Rhonda Borino** and other Desert Star members for dinner. This club event is designed to be a casual evening of fun, food, drink and conversation. We will discuss past and future club events as well as any other topic of interest. New members are encouraged to attend this event. The location will move throughout the valley and is scheduled for the 3rd Thursday unless there is a conflict. Attendees are responsible for their food, drinks and the portion of the gratuity assessed by the establishment. Due to seating arrangements these events are limited and members must RSVP to Ron Borino at 602-550-9939, before the dates listed for each event.

Do you have a favorite restaurant suggestion? If so, feel free to email your idea to Ron at rborino@hotmail.com. Perhaps we can use your idea in an upcoming event. Restaurants must be able to accommodate at least 20 people preferably in a separate space and if possible be a locally owned facility, resort, hotel, etc. We want to try great places all over the valley. The next Star Night is:

Star Night, Thursday September 15th 6:00pm

This month we are going to the *Tommy Bahama Restaurant* which is located at 15205 N Kierland Blvd Ste 100, Scottsdale (480) 505-3668. This restaurant which is above the clothing store features eclectic, tropical fare and you can unwind with one of their many delicious cocktails. www.tommybahama.com/TBG/Stores_Restaurants/Scottsdale.jsp

Ron Borino

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Welcome New Members

July

Ryan Nichols
 Pete Ciencilia
 John Cartolano
 Charles Wolz



August

Michael Harper
 Shirley Sherbahn
 Stephan Harti
 Jimmy O'dell
 Christopher Kruidenier
 Kathryn Lincoln

Desert Stars' Board**President:**

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

Other Star Nights**Star Night, Thursday October 20th 6:00pm**

This month we are going to La Hacienda Mexican Restaurant in the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess located at 775 East Princess Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85255 [480-585-4848]. This is an upscale restaurant with a tequila bar featuring over 200 varieties of tequila for 36 different labels.

www.fairmont.com/EN_FA/Property/SCP/GuestServices/Restaurants/LaHacienda.htm



Star Night at the Talking Stick

National Elections

October 17 - Your vote counts for the 2011 National Election. Members are strongly encouraged to vote for candidates running for three Director at Large positions and four Regional Director positions. Look for a ballot in September's mail and preview candidates' profiles/statements. It's your Club - please take time to read your ballot and vote for our future leaders!

Doug Truitt

Escape the Heat

Another great time in the North Country as the Desert Stars visited Heber/Overgaard for a cool weekend.

Early birds on Friday stopped and visited my place for cocktails on the deck. The weather and company was perfect, with the temperature in the 70's.

We all met later Friday night at the *Red Onion* in Heber, the food and service was great, I don't remember what I had for an entree but the salad bar had chocolate pudding, therefore desert was on me.

Saturday morning took us past Show Low, except for **Bob Yoder** who declined directions, stated he would follow me, then passed me and went the wrong way. Bob had way too much fun catching up.

Andy and Rae Billick were trying out their new 350 SLK and said, "No gravel Jim!" So of course we went through a nice gravel section of road construction. Didn't seem too bad, but I was riding with **President Bud**.

We drove Rt. 60 through Springerville, then old 666 into Nutrioso. Where we visited **Kevin Reidhead's** Lumber Mill. We learned all about the fire and about fine lumber and trim wood.



good care of us and was quite interested in our Mercedes. If your travel plans include Heber stop by and say, "Hi."

The group then drove to Alpine enjoying the views and noticing spotty areas of fire damage.

We had a great lunch in Greer at *Molly Butlers*. Shared the Lodge with a Harley Club that was sampling a chili cook-off. Most of Greer was green and lush; the fire was contained to the ridge lines. **Bob Yoder** noticed an Aston Martin in the parking lot and had a "look see". I believe it was a Vantage. Other than a non-member in an E-Class almost backing into Bob's Mini, Greer was beautiful.

The drive back to Overgaard was great, we caught a summer storm, (temperature dropped to 60), **Andy** got to time how fast his top goes up and **Elaine** saw some lighting.

Barb Boyle hosted a wine and hops hour and later we all enjoyed dinner at the Pine View country club. Food and service were great and the prices seemed so low, until we discovered someone driving a Mini paid for our drinks!

Jim Boyle



Desert Stars enjoy the view while having a fantastic lunch.

	<p>cab-ri-o-let [kab-re-uh-ley] - noun an automobile resembling a coupe, but with a folding top.</p> <p>The 2011 E-Class Cabriolet</p>
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The all new E-Class Cabriolet is the latest addition to the E-Class line-up. The open-top, two-door model, which is here at Phoenix Motor Company, features a classic fabric soft top, making for a stylistically pure cabriolet feeling. Viewed from the side, the new model is an intriguing proposition - with its clear proportions and a flawless cabriolet silhouette.

You need to come by and drive the E-Class Cabriolet and experience the AIRCAP® automatic draft-stop system: always on board and easily controllable at the push of a button. It reduces turbulence substantially for all four seat occupants.

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Registration FormTech SessionSaturday, November 5th 2011**Contact Information:**

Name(s): Number Attending:

Address:

City: State/Prov.: Zip:

Email Address: Phone No.:

The cost is \$25 per person. For questions and additional information contact Bud Cloninger (602) 326-6210
 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

RD's Corner

Many of you may be aware of ongoing and completed initiatives by the MBCA and the National Business Office in increasing the benefits of being a member of the MBCA community. You may learn about these benefits through the MBCA website, STAR magazine, they may have been sent to you by your section leaders via e-mail or published in your section newsletter.

I am going to quickly summarize these benefits so all of us are aware and can use these "perks" if we want. The discounts and special deals in our region are: Montelucia Resort, Scottsdale, AZ, Rancho Las Palmas, Rancho Mirage, CA, and the Hotel Del Coronado, Coronado, CA. A few of the other benefits available to us are the Sears Commercial buying program and Allied Van Lines. The Sears commercial sales are a significant discount according to other members that have used it. Hand tools and furniture come to mind. I urge you to go to the MBCA website and under membership go to All Benefits and learn more about the programs I have mentioned and learn about the others as well as how to use them, in particular the Sears Commercial Program. You owe it to yourself to take advantage of these benefits and if you have not heard about them ask you leadership why. So you see we not only have exciting events there are many other benefits of membership for all to enjoy.

Elections are in full swing by some of our sections and coming up soon for others. I urge you to take the time and show compassion and vote for those section members presenting themselves to work and lead your section. Why not step up to the plate and run yourself or help out. A section with a board that gets some help is fun, successful and retains members. You will be getting your National Board election ballots soon. It is paramount that you take the time to research and vote for these candidates. Please, Please vote. Not voting is giving up your voice in what is going on in your club. Any questions, give me a call at (619) 508-3925.

I am extremely pleased and excited announce that Desert Stars Section has been selected to host StarFest 2012. It has all the ingredients to be the biggest StarFest held in many years. In fact the best attended StarFest was hosted by Desert Stars a few years ago. I urge us all to get behind Desert Stars and make this event a Southwest Region success story.

REMEMBER OUR SW MOTTO:

IF YOU AIN'T HAVING FUN YOU AIN'T DOING IT RIGHT

Steve Ross

The Desert Stars "First Annual Unannounced" Practice Rallye

On Saturday the 27th rallye enthusiasts met to test their mettle on the tarmac. Although this event failed to reach our members by not being announced in the July issue of the Stardust, we managed to attract nine cars that showed up at *Mercedes Benz of Chandler* for the start of a fun and interesting rallye. Seven Benzes, plus a beautiful Shelby Mustang and an ordinary Lincoln arrived. The participants were rewarded with a scenic route that included a tour of the *Gilbert and Chandler Museums*. Also, a visit to the *Chandler Airport* hanger filled with aerobatic bi-planes proved to be interesting and educational. The rallye ended at *Gordon Biersch* in the San Tan Village for lunch, conversation and awards. First place was earned by our **Matt and Rebecca Crawford**. Second place went to **Ed and Joyce Kasmar**. Shelby driver and Cobra dealer **Tom Blessin** and **Cristal James** took home third prize. And far from least, driving solo, our "Escape the Heat" leader, **Sir Jim Boyle**, captured last in his 500SL.

Bob Yoder and Bud Cloninger



2nd Place Winners Ed & Joyce Kasmar



1st Place Winners Matt & Rebecca Crawford



3rd Place Winners Tom Blessin & Cristal James



Desert Stars Tech Session

This year we are going to explore the comfort and conveniences that are built into our Mercedes-Benz automobiles. Most of these systems are used every day and you are probably are not even aware you have them. Did you know your 1999 E320 has a sun sensor that helps control the speed of your climate control fan? Did you know that it has a smog sensor that controls the amount of outside air you receive depending on CO levels? Would you like to know how lane change assist works? These and many more seemingly futuristic convenience features will be exposed and discussed. From express window and locking to the latest Distronic Plus system on the newest Mercedes models.

Join us on Saturday November 5th at M B Motors 2730 E McDowell Rd. Phoenix. We will begin at 9:00 a.m. and take a brief history tour on the hidden convinces in our cars leading up to the latest in Mercedes Benz innovations. How they work and why we have them. After a catered lunch we will have some hands-on demonstrations with the cars themselves. We plan to conclude around 2:30 pm. The cost will be \$25 and will include lunch. Please sign up early, as attendance is limited.



Bud Cloninger



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or email @ rschulte@desertstars.org

Mercedes-Benz and Friend

My last few Mercedes and Friend articles were focused on diesel cars, now I am going to reinstall the spark plugs (eight of them to be exact). My featured Mercedes and Friend is **Walt Anderson**, and his SL500 La Costa Edition. I can't think of any other chassis that has had as many Special Editions as the R129. Walt has had so many Mercedes in his **Forty-Six** years as a Desert Star, it's hard to keep track, but this one is truly unique. No better way to describe it than in Walt's own words...

Bud Cloninger

Back in 1999 I first saw a 1997 SL320 40th Anniversary Edition. I was instructing the owner, Wendy, at Gemutlichkeit on the Beaver Run Race Track. Later she promised to sell it to me if she ever decided to let it go. She forgot that promise and sold it to another club member. Then three years later that member decided to sell it and I became the new owner.

In February 2011 I was thinking of buying a SL500 40th Anniversary Edition and learned Wendy was interested in finding another SL320 40th Anniversary Edition. We agreed to help each find what we wanted. An internet search for 1997 SL's for sale found two SL320s in San Diego and a SL500 near her in Chicago.

Along with the SLs was a green SL500 north of San Diego, something about a special edition. It was labeled a La Costa Edition and no one I talked to had ever heard of it. After checking out the 320s there was enough time to go look at the La Costa Edition. The first time I saw it something told me, Walt you are going to get hooked on this. While I didn't drive it that day I looked it over thoroughly, listened to the engine and put the soft top up and down several times. The car was in great shape with a few minor problems. It was hard to tell myself, you don't "need" this car.

After doing an internet research I found that Mercedes-Benz had made only 30 special 1997 SL500 La Costa Editions to commemorate its sponsorship of the Mercedes Championships at the La Costa Resort & Spa in Carlsbad, California. The event is open only to those players that have won a PGA TOUR tournament during the previous 12 months of play. Entrants included winners of The Masters, US Open, PGA Championship, and every TOUR tournament as well as the British Open.

The cars are all Calypso Green with green and black leather interior. They had eucalyptus wood trim which replaced the walnut trim used in other SL models along with custom floor mats and special badging and a shift knob insert. The \$5,000 La Costa Package also included the limited availability Sport Package with 18" wheels and tires and aerodynamic enhancements.

After a few days of agonizing over if I should buy the car or not, I made my decision. The following Saturday I was back north of San Diego. Before going I called to see if the car had been sold.

The dealership's owner admitted he had told several people, that guy knows a lot about Mercedes-Benz, just you watch he'll be back. We negotiated on the asking price as the radio which worked the previous week no longer worked.

After agreeing on the price, was when the issue of California taxes came up. While I had driven the car before we sat down to talk, once I signed on the dotted line it could no longer be driven on California roads without the payment of several thousand dollars in taxes. The only way to avoid the tax was to have a shipping company deliver it to Phoenix. A shipping company I had used before agreed to ship it for \$400.

Beside the car he had a framed poster on a stand. This was one of the posters which hung in the showrooms of all 25 Mercedes-Benz dealers in Southern California before the tournament. It shows a La Costa Edition sitting on a fairway at La Costa. The

caption is "Second Prize is hopeless despair." At the bottom are details on how to enter a sweepstakes to win one of the cars. Each of the 25 dealers had one to sell. One was given away in the sweepstakes and one was donated to Divine Design for their Fantasy Auction. The other three were used for promotional activities and later sold. As part of the purchase he gave me the framed poster and it is hanging on my wall.

On arrival back in Phoenix I took it in for motor and transmission mounts. They were probably acceptable but knowing I wanted to drive the car on the Mid Ohio race track at MBCA's Gemutlichkeit it was probably best to replace them. The

hood pad and radio were next. The radio couldn't be fixed so a new one went in.

Driving cross country, the Masters Tournament was the first destination. I can't count the number of times people walking by the car did a double take and came back to take a closer look. In the parking lot at The Masters it continued to receive second looks.

Next it was off to Gemutlichkeit, where the first event was Concours d'Elegance. My last try in Concours was at StarFest 88. Twenty three years later I did it again. The fourth place finish was

about what I expected. The score sheet is now the starting point to fix weak points the judges pointed out.

Driving events were great. I haven't owned a V8 for years and this one is fun, fun, fun. Final placement was first place in time trials and autocross in my class. In the acceleration run it took second place. Against all cars participating in time trials and autocross, it was the fifth fastest, and the four faster cars were all AMG models. There were seven other AMG models participating that it beat. All this was done with the street tires put on before buying the car! Now owning a 40th Anniversary

Edition and a La Costa Edition who knows, there maybe a Silver Arrow Edition in my future.



1997 Mercedes-Benz La Costa Edition



Walt Anderson



Keep your address updated with the MBCA National Business Office at (800) 637-2360, or <http://mbca.org/mbca/addchange.htm>

Save These Dates:

Star Night	Thursday, September 15, 2011
Star Night	Thursday, October 20, 2011
Tech Session	Saturday, November 5, 2011
Star Night	Thursday, November 17, 2011
Christmas Party	Sunday, December 4, 2011
Defensive Driving	Saturday, January 28, 2012
Poker Run	Saturday, February 18, 2012

Learn What it Takes to Make your Mercedes Convenient & Comfortable. Sign Up for This Year's Tech Session!



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