



March-April 2021

# The StarDust

## DESERT STARS SECTION | ARIZONA

### Poker Run



By Ron Borino and John Hutchison

Saturday, March 27, 2021

Are you ready for some Poker fun? We have a day of exciting card action planned for you as we again visit several of the club's newsletter advertisers around the valley and hear about their offerings to Desert Stars members while gathering your winning hand.

This year's event will commence Saturday, March 27, 2021 at 10:30 AM. The starting location will be Rhodium45 (<https://45rhodium.com>) located at 45 East Southern Avenue, Mesa, AZ. You will receive your travel route handout, draw your first card, and have the opportunity to view both their vehicle storage and member lounge capabilities as well as Larry Read's fantastic collection of classic cars.

On your travel route for the event, you will draw SEVEN cards for development of a winning 5-card hand. But, if you don't get the exact cards that you need, you can use the "points" that you will earn by coming in with correct answers to a number of simple "challenge questions" and/or pictures along the route to improve your hand; you can then "buy" replacement cards at our final stop should your Poker hand be less than desirable. Each replacement card will cost the number of "points" that we will define from your stash at our final stop. So, the better you do at answering or identifying the "questions or pictures", you may have enough points to purchase **up to FOUR** replacement cards if your hand is somewhat deficient. These replacement cards will surely "enhance" your draw and give you a much better chance of a WINNING one of the premier prizes!!

Both the winners and those not as lucky will have an interesting drive and a great dinner with prizes presented during dinner. The cost of this extravaganza is \$20 *per person*! Your only requirements are to provide: a) your own transportation and fuel; b) \$ for drinks and whatever you select from the menu for dinner; and c) brainpower and observation to "ace" the "challenge questions", assuming you don't yet have the winning hand!

We will end the day at approx. 5:00 p.m. at O.H.S.O Eatery and Distillery at 15681 N Hayden Rd, Scottsdale, AZ for an early dinner. We will be exclusively sitting in the restaurant's large outdoor seating area. Dinner will be separate checks.

Please RSVP as soon as possible to ensure that you have a spot for the event as it will be limited to a maximum of 30 people [15 cars]. Registration form can be found on page 12 in this newsletter. The deadline for registration is March 15, 2021. If you need more information please contact: Ron Borino at [advertising@desertstars.club](mailto:advertising@desertstars.club) or (602) 550-9939 or John Hutchison at [johnhutchison@cox.net](mailto:johnhutchison@cox.net) or (530) 304-2965.

## 2021 M-B.E.A.T. April 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2021

By John Hutchison

**Let's try this again!! Maybe by April, many of us will have both of our COVID-19 shots and will be good and ready to get on the road!!**

After a year or more in the garage, it's time to get your British, German, Italian or other classic automobile on the road to prepare it for spring and summer driving around Arizona!! We have the perfect opportunity for you to consider: The M-B.E.A.T. Run which is tentatively planned for Saturday/Sunday April 17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> 2021.

Continued page 4

# President's Message

By Debbie Ichiyama

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy. Spring is almost here and hopefully we will be able to enjoy the great Arizona real world instead of the virtual one we have been living in. Time to take out our cars for a drive and for those of you who have convertibles put the tops down and enjoy our beautiful spring weather.

We have a couple driving events planned, the annual Poker Run and M-BEAT. For the fall, plans are underway for the Havasupai. Watch for information on that event in the Newsletter or via emails.

Please remember we are always looking for new ideas for events. If you have any please share them or if you would like to get involved in planning or help run an event please reach out to Karen Manser or myself.

*Debbie*



March – April 2021

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## Welcome our new Members!

### December

Trevor Hubert  
 Mark Rodman  
 Clayton Wolfe

### January

William Claflin  
 Curt Kaesche  
 Roy Nierman  
 Joanne Shen  
 Ryan Williams  
 Sean Ziaei

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# Annual Meeting

By Debbie Ichiyama

Saturday May 22<sup>nd</sup>

The meeting will be held at Soul Café on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8 am. We will have a separate dining section and for those of you who wish you may sit outside. We will be paying by separate checks. The ballots and information will be brought to you.

Please contact Debbie at [dichiyama@me.com](mailto:dichiyama@me.com) or Karen at [Nspinaz@gmail.com](mailto:Nspinaz@gmail.com) to let us know if you will be attending. If you will not be attending but would like to vote please send an email to [desertstars@desertstars.club](mailto:desertstars@desertstars.club) and we will send you a ballot.

The slate of officers and directors is on page 9.

<http://www.soulscottsdale.com>



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This year, if things go as planned, the Run will begin with breakfast at Denny's Restaurant located behind the Chevron Gas Station at the Northeast corner of Carefree Highway and Interstate 17. Those drivers, navigators and back seat riders **arriving by 6:30 a.m. will receive FREE breakfast and gifts** courtesy of Desert Stars Host Member Bob Yoder, who will then lead us on our back roads adventure to Flagstaff.

After breakfast, the Run will begin with a driver's meeting roughly between 8:00-8:30 when each driving team will receive their Goody Bag and the driving instruction handout. Although still in the final planning stages so that we can make sure the proposed roads are open, we are likely to follow 2019's route with an initial rest room stop in Wickenburg at Coffinger Park and another mid-morning break in Skull Valley, and then we will continue to Prescott. Upon arrival around 11:30 a.m. we will break for lunch (on each driving team's dime) at The Palace Restaurant & Saloon on Whiskey Row. Its best to park in the North East corner of the garage behind The Palace on S. Granite Street and enter The Palace by their back door. Socially distanced seating will be reserved for us, possibly in the outside seating area. After lunch you will have time to roam the quaint downtown stores and Courthouse Square in Prescott.

Between 1:00-1:30 p.m. we will take off heading for Jerome, where again you will have time to wander the streets or maybe to stop at a winery tasting room or visit the unique Gold King Mine & Ghost Town where you can view many Studebaker vehicles including an operable 1902 Electric. From there, we will head to Clarkdale (you may want to visit the interesting and historic Copper Art Museum in the old High School building on Main Street) and Old Town Cottonwood for ice cream and more shopping.

Our next town on the route is Sedona which is always a pleasure to visit and browse. If you want to shop the downtown area, you will be lucky if you find a parking place on the main drag as they have eliminated all parking on the East side of the street; but there is always limited parking on the back streets west of the business district. When you get there, note the improvements they have made to the uptown traffic corridor; the last time we were there, you could transit the busy area without any difficulty.

You should be on your way north by 4:00 p.m. so that you can arrive at Little America Hotel in Flagstaff by 5:00 p.m. After registration, your first stop is to have your picture taken with your vehicle in the back area of the parking lot by Mike Goodwin, the founder of the original BEAT!

We have negotiated a special room rate of \$159 (plus tax) for a maximum of 15 standard rooms with either two queen beds or one king bed at Little America in Flagstaff. If you plan on participating in this event, you should make reservations for your driving team by calling the hotel direct at 1-800-352-4386 and mentioning that you would like the special Desert Stars Mercedes Club rate for Saturday evening, April 17, 2021. **This special rate and room availability can be guaranteed ONLY through March 14, 2021, so call right away if you are planning to register for the event.**

Host Desert Stars Member Bob Yoder will have a surprise for you if you are in the bar area by at least 5:30 pm. Dinner is on your own at any of the excellent restaurants in Flagstaff (be sure to make your reservations well in advance of the RUN), although many of us will probably remain at the hotel and eat in the main dining room.

The cost for registration for this event is \$10 per person to cover miscellaneous costs; see the registration form on a later page in this issue of the Star Dust newsletter. Registration deadline is April 10, 2021. If there are any changes, a final itinerary will be emailed to all registered participants a week before the event is to take place so make sure your email address is listed on the event registration form on page 12.

If you have any questions on the 2021 M-B.E.A.T., please call Bob Yoder at 480-510-8210.

# No Host Art Festival with the Desert Stars

Ron and Rhonda Borino

There are a number of the Desert Stars that love the many art festivals we have in the spring around the valley. As a person that attends these events regularly, two things I like are the creativity of the artists and unexpectedly running into people we know. Since the season is about to be upon us again, I have listed art festivals below that are quite a bit a fun to attend. That said, Rhonda and I will definitely be in attendance at these events. We will plan on getting to the Art Festival by 11:00 and will wander through the show until at least 1 p.m. on the **Sunday** of the Art Festivals. It would be a blast to bump into other club members with similar interests at this event. Perhaps after we are done walking around, we could meet for a drink or dinner. The idea here is to get out, responsibly enjoy the venue [i.e., mask up and social distance], possibly buy some art and hopefully "run" in to other members. About as informal as you can get. There is no RSVP for this event and no host. If you want to possibly meet up excellent. If you want to attend on another date, great. The idea is to get out and enjoy. If we bump in to each other, wonderful.

Information on the shows we will attend is as follows:

## 17th Annual Fountain Hills Fine Art Festival

March 5th, 6th & 7th, 2021

16810 E AVENUE OF THE FOUNTAINS  
ADMISSION \$3.00 (Cash only) - HOURS 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The festival will take place on Avenue of the Fountains, between La Montana and Saguaro Blvd. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Admission is \$3.00 for all non-Fountain Hills residents.

## 26th Annual Spring Carefree Fine Art Festival

March 12th, 13th & 14th, 2021

Downtown Carefree - 101 Easy Street  
Hours 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The festival will take place in downtown Carefree, at the corner of Easy and Ho Hum streets. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Parking is free all weekend.

Hope we see you there!

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## Sponsor Spotlight – Airpark Collision Center

### **Tell us a little about Airpark Collision Center's history**

Gerald Small opened Airpark Collision Center in 2006. Gerald started in the auto body repair business at the age of 20 in the late 1980's. He walked into a large Mercedes-Benz/BMW collision repair center and asked for a job. He was told he had to start as a car washer and work his way up to learn the trade. With a lot of hard work, this was a great opportunity that taught him the importance of proper repair and attention to detail. Through the years, he was employed at large dealerships until he opened his own facility with a focus on honesty, quality repair and a clean professional environment for his employees and customers.

Through the years we have seen many changes in the collision repair industry. Around 2010, we saw the rise of several nationwide chains and we were told this would be the death of independent collision repair facilities. We believed our existing and future customers would prioritize good customer service and quality repairs. Our belief resulted in setting ourselves apart from the nationwide chains, and allowed us to substantially grow in the last 10 years.

Currently it is 2021 and the collision repair industry continues to evolve, especially in response to vehicle technology and use of aluminum panels. Airpark Collision Center carries on with annual technician training and updated computerized equipment, allowing us to serve our customers regardless of their vehicle's age.

### **What services do you offer?**

With a focus on customer service, we will repair everything from a small door ding to replacing a frame on a damaged vehicle. Our team knows that people have different collision repair needs at different times. Regardless of the size of repair, knowing the right place to bring your car after an accident can make for a less stressful experience. We offer small part replacement, paintless dent repair, bumper repair or replacement, scuff/scratch removal, all auto body/refinish work and collision related mechanical repair.

### **What is unique about our facility?**

Customers drop off everything from Chevys to Bentleys. Gerald Small explains, "Customers read our reviews, and they want the stress-free experience." Located in the heart of n. Scottsdale we primarily work on BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus and other high-end brands. Over the years we have worked on some classic cars for Barrett Jackson, including Alice Cooper's 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Gullwing, even a few Ferraris and some Rolls Royces seem to find their way to Airpark Collision Center each year.

### **What else would you like Desert Star members to know about Airpark Collision Center?**

As an independently owned facility, Gerald is on-site every day and quality inspects nearly every vehicle. While we have a full-time manager, Gerald takes each job to heart and wants to ensure a quality job and happy customer. This is not to say we don't experience part or insurance delays, but our workmanship is always on point. We know we have to earn our customers, and that means honest dealings and using premium materials regardless of the cars age or brand. We are also, very proud of our technicians who have impressive resumes from luxury brand dealers, but choose to work in a family-oriented collision repair shop. All of our technicians are at master level, their wide range of skills provides them with knowledge to easily repair vehicles from the 1990's to the 2020's.

Airpark Collision is located at 7333 E Butherus Dr. Ste A-200, Scottsdale, AZ 85260 480-922-3006



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## Sponsor Spotlight – Top Shop

We head to Central Phoenix to speak with **Top Shop**, located at 1545 E Indian School Rd (just west of the 51/ exit #3).

Top Shop is a family owned and operated business. It was founded in 1972 by Terry Tapp, and now co-owned and operated by Terry and his eldest son James.

**Q: Terry and James, what is the main products and services you offer at Top Shop?**

**A:** Our primary business is the repair or replacement of convertible tops and rear window sections, as well as interior upholstery. We basically help owners get their vehicles back to original condition, or any level of customization they desire.

**Q: Tell us a little about Top Shop's history**

**A:** (James) Top Shop has been serving the greater Phoenix area for over 40 years. It initially started out with my Dad working at his parents place fixing older cars, and eventually came to having his own shop. He moved to the current building around 1975. The main building has a unique past, as it was originally built to be a telephone switching station, where calls came in, and the operator would connect you to whom you were calling.

**Q: Are there any special qualifications that Top Shop has?**

**A:** We have over 80 combined years of experience in the auto upholstery / convertible top business. There are not many quality shops like ours. It takes years of doing this trade to be really good at it. Some shops may not take the time to do things right, but we try to provide customers the most authentic and original look as you can get. James has been with us full time since 2000, and has learned the trade well. Experience is the best way to learn how to do this.

**Q: Besides the tops and upholstery repairs and replacements we discussed earlier as your main focus, are there any other special products or services you provide?**

**A:** Yes. We can do frame repairs for convertible tops, replace headliners, and carpet as well as other interior repairs. Obviously, these take some planning with owner choices involved, so give us a call, and we can set up date and time to discuss any needs. We can help guide our customers through the restoration process, which can be overwhelming. We can also help if they are looking to locate or buy a car, as we have a lot of connections from years of doing business.

**Q: Is there anything that Mercedes Benz owners should consider when deciding on a project for their vehicle?**

**A:** We have the resources and means to get any car to near OEM as possible (meaning parts, color, patterns, and style). We hope people will consider our reputation in the valley and our years of quality craftsmanship when starting out their project.

**Q: Tell us more about yourselves, and what you like to do away from the shop?**

**A:** (James) Anything athletic! Dad was an extremist in his earlier years, and would organize skiing tours to the Rockies for the local ski clubs, scuba excursions, and mountain biking. We love to golf as well.

**Q: What are the most interesting Benz and non-Benz projects that you've done?**

**A:** (James) For me, probably the most interesting Mercedes so far is the 1971 280 SE that's in the shop right now. We are restoring the top and interior. It used to be used to be owned by Doris Day. For the non-Mercedes, probably the Rolls Royce that was in the shop a few weeks ago. It used to be owned by Grace Kelly, and the Prince of Monaco.



**Q: What are your business hours?**

**A:** We are open Monday thru Friday from 8am to 5pm. However, we can set up a special appointment as needed. Just call office with as much advance notice as possible.

**Q: Anything else you want our MBCA members to know?**

**A:** Cost effective seat repairs are available, such as replacing worn panels, and dyeing as needed to get near perfect color match. Full carpet kit replacements are available. We are ready to help no matter the size of the project, and can service all makes, foreign and domestic. Whether the vehicle is old and new, or if the request is for custom or stock repairs / replacement, we can help. Just give us a call.

**Top Shop** can be reached at 602-277-6949, or email them at [tapper20@hotmail.com](mailto:tapper20@hotmail.com). Be sure to check them out on the web at <http://aztopshop.com>, or alternately on [Facebook](#) or [Yelp!](#)

## Annual Meeting Slate of Officers and Directors

### Candidate Slate for Officers

President:	Debbie Ichiyama
Vice President:	Karen Manser
Treasurer:	Dick Sharp
Secretary:	Karen Manser (Interim)

### Candidate Slate for Class of 2024

Katherine Coult  
Ed Crawford

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**Poker Run  
Saturday March 27, 2021**

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**Due to limitation of 30 people please call for availability.**

Name(s) registering: \_\_\_\_\_ No of attendees \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\$20 per person

Make your check payable to: **MBCA Desert Stars**; and mail to:  
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**M-B.E.A.T.  
April 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2021**

Please register and pay by April 10, 2021

Name(s) registering: \_\_\_\_\_ No of attendees \_\_\_\_\_

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**Local Car Culture:  
Ongoing Events and  
Gatherings**

Many of these events have been cancelled and are in process of being rescheduled due to covid19. Updates will follow in future editions.

As a Desert Star. You can list your for-sale Mercedes-Benz here and let all our readers know it's available for them to enjoy. Whether you have a high mile driver, or a collectible with more wax than miles on it, contact us and get your car listed in the StarDust. Contact info [StarDustMBCA@gmail.com](mailto:StarDustMBCA@gmail.com)

## MB SL's on a short street

Les Hardie

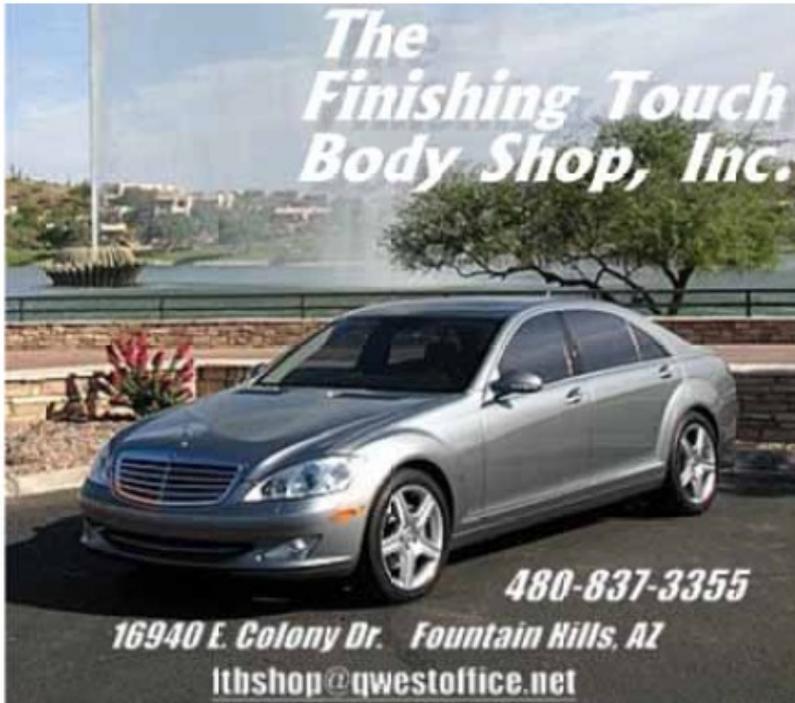
We know Arizonans love their Mercedes Benz, but this love is taken to a whole new level on a short street in Carefree. On a cul-de-sac with just ten houses, there are five SLs in residence. Four of them are silver. Three are SL 500s, one is an SLK, and the last is an AMG SLS. The three silver SL 500s all reside on the same side of the street. The odds of such coincidences must be very long! The owners recently put on a private “cars and coffee” —limited to five cars on the cul-de-sac so they could talk about their favorite drives, and enjoy time with their neighbors. Mercedes Benz cars have a way of creating friendships and cherished memories.



231-632-5837  
Sam Power  
[spower@hagerty.com](mailto:spower@hagerty.com)

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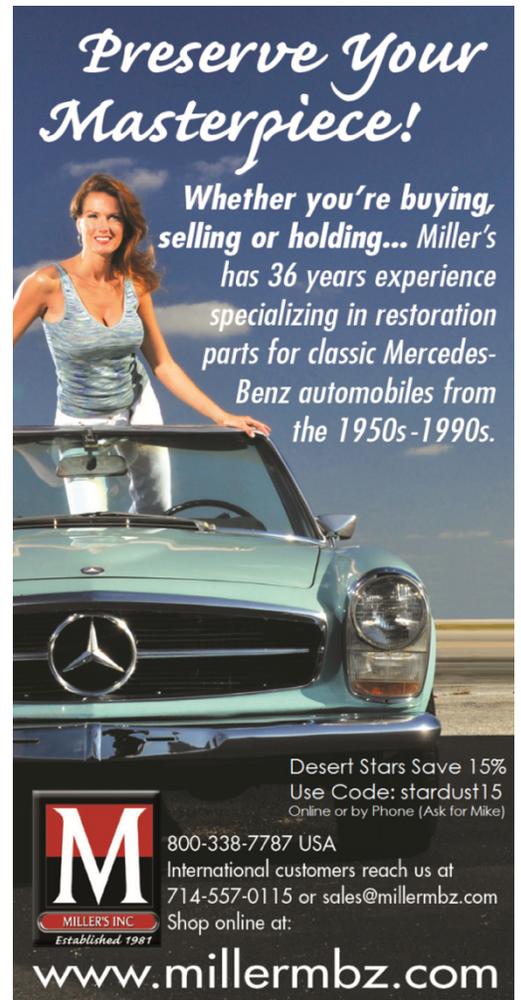
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Contact our Membership Chair, Debbie Ichiyama, at 480-268-9535 or [dichiyama@me.com](mailto:dichiyama@me.com)

## SAVE THESE DATES

March 7	Sunday	Art Festival
March 14	Sunday	Art Festival
March 27	Sat	Poker Run
April 17 & 18	Sat & Sun	MBEAT
May 22	Sat	Annual Meeting

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March - April 2021