

May-June 2018

The StarDust

DESERT STARS SECTION | ARIZONA

Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Sunday, May 6, 2018 at Noon

By Debbie Ichiyama



Join us for the Desert Stars 2018 Annual Meeting and luncheon, Sunday May 6, 2018 at Tommy Bahama Restaurant located in Kierland Commons Shopping Center at 15205 N Kierland Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254.

The luncheon meeting starts at Noon and will be ordered off a menu prepared for our event. The cost is \$39.00 per person. Bar service will be available and is the responsibility of the individual.

The business portion of this event is brief and consists of announcements of events and our Board and Officer elections. The new slate of candidates is found on page 6.

For any help with questions and to register and make credit card payments of \$39 per person, by phone please call Debbie Ichiyama at 480-268-9535.

Please RSVP by May 1, 2018. I am looking forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Star Night

Saturday, June 16, 2018 at 6:00 PM

By Karen Manser



Limited Seating - Sign-up Early!

Back by popular demand! We had such a good time at Atlas Bistro last year that we have another great night planned for Saturday, June 16th, starting at 6:00 PM. The restaurant is located at 2515 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85257.

We will start with some social time where everyone can visit, open their wine and share with your friends if you so desire. Then we will enjoy a great dinner.

If you did not attend last year, this is the perfect restaurant for foodies and is Arizona's premier BYOB restaurant! There are only a few restaurants that purchase the BYOB license that will allow you to bring that special bottle of wine. If you don't want to bring your own, AZ Wine is connected to the restaurant and you can purchase a bottle there. Corkage per bottle is \$15. (With the BYOB license they are restricted from purchasing a regular liquor license)

The restaurant is small and quiet with limited seating and it is likely we will have the whole room to ourselves as we did last year.

Please check out the website at www.atlasbistrobyob.com to see a sample menu/pricing and photos of Executive Chef Cory Oppold's artistic and beautiful food. You may also view their Facebook page.

We will order off the Prix-Fixe menu and have separate checks as usual.

RSVP to Karen at 425-478-5509 or nspinaz@gmail.com. There is no need to call the restaurant as Karen is handling the arrangements.

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President's Message

By Debbie Ichiyama

As our 1999 C280 approached 200,000 miles, it remained solid, but was looking rough and worn. A few door dings from inconsiderate parking neighbors, a familiar shape imprinted in the seat bottom, and the deterioration of plastic trim pieces used during the dark days of the merger with Chrysler. An intermittent "Check Engine" light and likely need for a suspension rebuild and new tires sealed its fate. It was time for a new car.

Buying a new Mercedes-Benz only happens a few times in one's life given the amount of the investment and the lifespan of the vehicle. Our last shopping trip was on New Year's Eve, 2010 to get a GLK350, so we had a lot of research ahead of us to pick the next 200,000 mile car. Considerations of what size, style and configuration we talked about, discarded, reconsidered, and mulled over. Was the new car going to be a replacement or an upgrade over the C-Class? What kind of car did we need for now and the near future? Perhaps getting "more car" from a Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) vehicle that was slightly used and came with a warranty. Decisions.

Late model, low mileage CPO cars are scattered around dealerships in the 48 states. If you're looking for a white or black car, with a basic option package, your odds of finding a car are pretty good. If you're looking for more than bare bones, it may take a while.

Like Goldilocks looking at the Bear family possessions, some models were too small, others were too big; some were too rough and others too soft. The GLK has handled the job of a small SUV, though the GLE was considered as a 'big brother' companion. In the end, the 2018 E-Class sedan seemed to be "just right." The E 300 was an upgrade in size, comfort and safety and recently restyled in 2017. Mercedes endowed this W213 chassis with some of its most advanced car technology and safety features. While someone bemoaned not choosing one of the AMG variants, it was eventually agreed that it would only lead to bad behavior and traffic school attendance.

In 1968, dealers offered their 19 cars in a choice of 44 unique paint colors and back then you chose your paint color from paint chips the dealership had. Half a century later, Mercedes offers over 80 cars with a choice of 65 paint colors. Brochures have been nearly replaced with the website, MBUSA.com and the "Build Your Mercedes" tool. The

E-Class comes in 12 colors, two whites, two blacks, four silver/grey, green, red, blue and brown; 6 MB-Tex color seat colors; 8 color leathers and six different wood trims. Trim packages (AMG Line or Night) and Option Packages 1, 2 and 3 determine the additional features and costs to be added to the base price and can easily add 40-60% to it.

We eventually found our car locally in dealership inventory with all of the features we had sought: a four door sedan in Dakota Metallic Brown with a Nut Brown/Black leather interior. AMG exterior trim and wheels satisfied a certain person nicely. As safety was a high priority, the car has Mercedes' set of safety technology options including Adaptive Cruise Control, Lane Keeping, Blind Spot Assist, Active Parking, Active Steering Assist, Active Lane Changing Assist, Active Brake Assist, Congestion Emergency Braking, Active Emergency Stop Assist, Active Speed Limit Assist, and Surround View System. There are more cameras on the car than some banks!

The car is a delight to drive and we look forward to putting many miles on it, especially at Desert Stars events in the months and years to come. In the next StarDust, I'll tell you about learning all the new features and technology, since this car is more advanced than the GLK, and greatly more advanced than the old C280. This makes my original 1985 190E seem like Fred Flintstone's car by comparison!



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Local Car Culture

Join in local events with other car enthusiasts. We happen to have some of the country's most active car culture right in our own backyard.

Come and attend one of these and you will most likely find fellow Desert Stars and their cars at many of these casual events.



Scottsdale Motorsport Gathering

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www.scuderiasouthwest.com/smg/

Alpios at Troon - Cars and Coffee

The Second Saturday of every month 7:00-10:00 AM, Villages at Pinnacle Peak

www.facebook.com/carsandcoffeeatpinnaclepeak

Penske Racing Museum - Cars and Coffee Scottsdale

The Third Saturday of every month 8:00-10:00 AM, 7125 E. Chauncey Lane

carsandcoffee.com/clubs/scottsdale/

More Car Culture!



First Annual Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Classic Rally

Held by the 300 SL Foundation

For four days this November (4-8), participants in the 300 SL Classic will drive 1000 miles of the best backroads that northern Arizona has to offer: from Scottsdale to Winslow to Sedona to the Grand Canyon and back to Scottsdale. This 4-day 1000-mile rally will be similar in format to the Colorado Grand and the Copperstate 1000 – except that it will be a 300 SL - only event. Applications are due May 15, 2018. For more information please see www.300slclassic.org.

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Herberger Theater Tour & Lunch

Saturday, July 21, 2018 at 11:00 AM

By Jim and Debra Larson

The Desert Stars rally together for another lunch held this time at the Herberger Theater Center.

Good food, excellent conversation and a private backstage tour of Herberger Theater Center are all in store for this event on Saturday, July 21, 2018.

The Herberger Theater Center is one of Downtown Phoenix's premiere venues. Founded in 1983 and refurbished in 2008, the Herberger

Theater Center has served as a professional venue for local artists to call home right in the heart of downtown. Eight hundred performances are scheduled for 2018 and over 250,000 schoolchildren from around the valley will experience live theater at the HTC during this season. Many of those performances are presented by the six resident companies, which are: Arizona Theater Company, Arizona Opera, Childsplay, Valley Youth Theater, iTheatre Collaborative, and Center Dance Ensemble.

Lunch will be served - on the stage! - by Tom & Lin Catering, an award winning caterer voted "Best of Our Valley" for 2017 and 2018 by azfoothills.com. Can food be theater? When Tom and Lin Catering are involved, every bite is a showstopper!

Register by July 14, see registration Information on Page 13.



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HERBERGER THEATER CENTER

You are invited to take a private tour of the Herberger Theater Center followed by a catered lunch on the stage.

Where: The Herberger Theater Center
222 E Monroe St
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Arrival time: 11:00 AM (Main Lobby)
Theater Tour: 11:00 - 11:45 AM
Lunch on Stage West: 11:45 AM - 1:30 PM

RSVP to Jim and Debra Larson by **July 14, 2018**
Phone: 602.549.1949
E-mail: dlarsonphx@aol.com



Welcome our new Members!

February

Jeffrey Groudan
Eric Kuckuck
Bill McPherson
Patrick Stewart
Holly & Keith Underwood-Corley

March

Terry Gray
Steve Jackson
James McDermott
William Nassikas

"More Than a Car Club | We're a Community"

"Art of the Wheel"

Saturday, September 15, 2018 at 1:00 PM

By John Goux

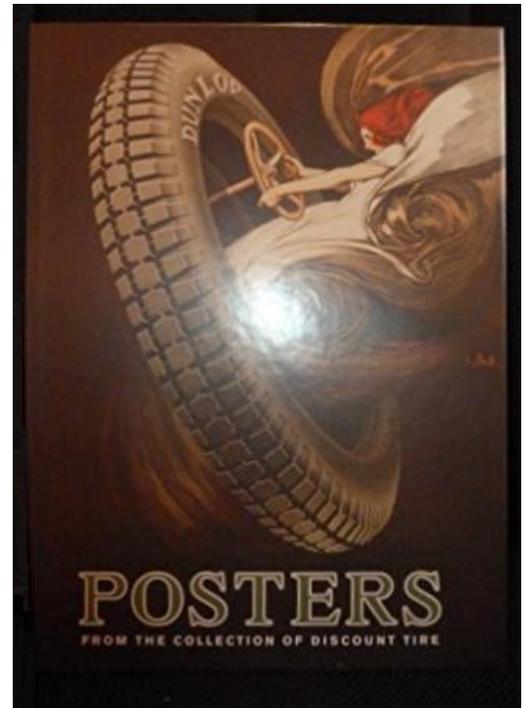
Like Mercedes? Like Art? Like Wine? If you answered yes to any of these, save the date for Desert Stars "Art Of The Wheel" Saturday, September 15.

So, what's the draw? (Get it - art joke?) For only the second time in two and a half decades, Discount Tire will give a group tour of its tire art poster collection. And, we're that group! It was collected the past 30 years by Bruce Halle, owner of Discount Tire. Collection curator, Susan Driver, will lead the tour. At tour's end, Ms. Driver will give each couple a coffee table book of the collection (authored by her).

Wait, there's more....

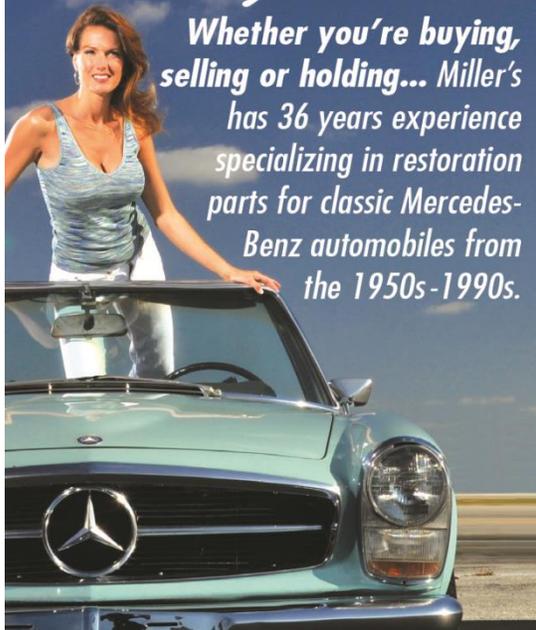
To complete the day of art and motoring, we'll wheel to Carrie Curran's Studio where Carrie will lead us through a painting class. Sip, brush, sip, chat, sip, gnosh. At class end, take your masterpiece home and proudly display it. Or, torture family with it. Either way, It's gonna be fun!

Schedule: 1-2PM Discount Tire Corporate Headquarters, Scottsdale. 2-5PM at Carrie Curran Studios, Scottsdale. BYOB. Cheese, crackers, paint, brush, canvas and smiles provided. More information and registration information will be in the next issue of The StarDust. For early registration, and payment, (cost \$47) call Debbie Ichiyama at 480-268-9535. If you have any questions, please contact me, John, at jgoux@tuhsd.k12.az.us.



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The Digital Daimler

By John Goux, Contributing Columnist

Mercedes-Benz. The name alone stirs the imagination. It's the cars, though, that provoke the kind of passion Carmen oozes in her habanera. Head turning can't take your eyes away, seductive and desirable.

Professional reviewers of the siren-song marque display this kind of passion when sizing up tri-star vehicles. Generally, Stuttgart's Got Talent elicits applause for its output. Alternatively, vituperation rains when reviewers feel there's been a misstep in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

Either way, the reviewers do their darnedest to spin engaging, informative and entertaining product.

Now, 18 years into the 21st Century, we, like a modern day Marcos de Niza, will explore the burgeoning territory of the Interweb where self-appointed YouTubers hold Daimler AG accountable to the claim "Nothing But The Best"!

Each column will feature a brief intro and link to connect you with a Mercedes review by the likes of Doug DeMuro of Autotrader, Matt Maran Motoring, Engineering Explained, Alex on Autos and other free-wheeling, pixelated journalists. Reviews will range from new product, to vintage Mercedes iron, to Formula 1 secrets.

Buckle up and enjoy the ride. This should be fun kids!

Our maiden review features Doug DeMuro, senior staff writer for Autotrader, and his take on the quirks, features and driving dynamics of the 2006 CL65 V12 AMG. This insane machine could be yours for around \$30,000!

Enjoy!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCP5XZs3Wxc



Annual Meeting Slate of Officers and New Directors

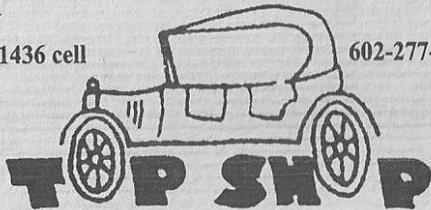
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Secretary	Don Burton

Directors for class of 2021

Ken Borowitz
Susan Cadis

Do you know all of the perks of being a MBCA Desert Star?

One of the many benefits that your Desert Stars section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America offers you is complimentary advertising for your Mercedes-Benz. A while ago the board decided it was a nice benefit to offer our members and we are happy to help. If you have a Mercedes-Benz you are looking to sell, please contact Ken Borowitz our advertising Chairman and he will assist you. See Page 2 for Ken's contact information.

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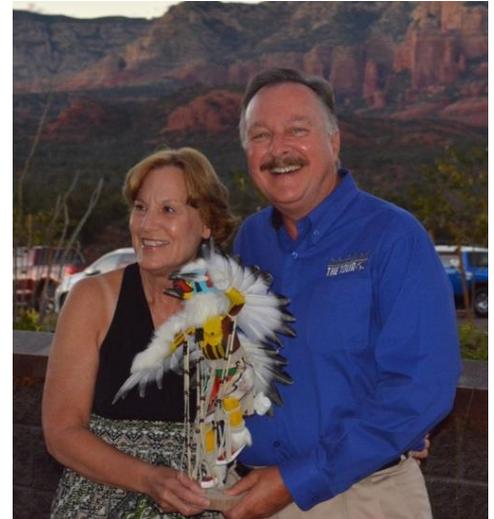
Return of a Classic! 2018 Havasupai Rallye

Early October

By Chuck Stanford, Jr.

This year, the Desert Stars will enjoy the return of the fall classic Havasupai Weekend format. Start planning now for a road trip that will take us over the river and through the woods on a sightseeing expedition to some of Arizona's Treasures. Veteran rallye-meisters Chuck and Ava Stanford are organizing a getaway that will include a traditional distance and observation rallye combined with lots of hospitality thrown in on Friday and Saturday nights. Planning is still in the early stages, but count on an early October weekend away with lots of fun and prizes for all – culminating with the traditional Kachina Dolls for the winners.

Watch the StarDust for more details to follow.



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In the Mirror: 2018 Poker Run

Held February 24, 2018

By Harman and Susan Cadis, Poker Meisters



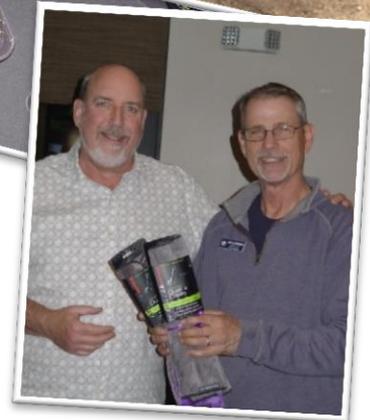
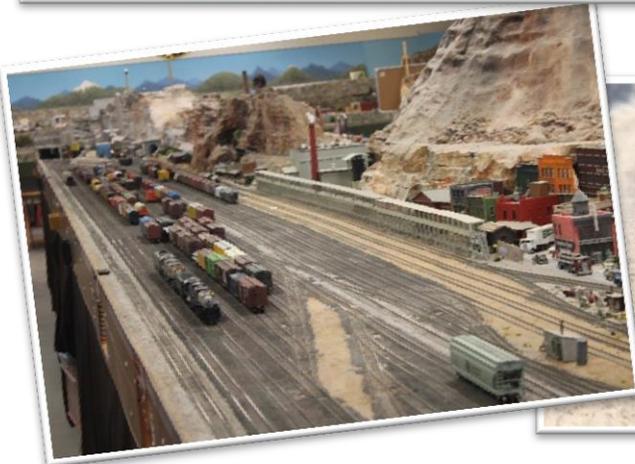
This year's 2018 annual Poker Run included 46 club members participating in 24 cars. The Poker Run/Tour started at Schumacher European where we enjoyed their hospitality and snacks while we filled their lobby with Members.

Next, we were off to The Maricopa Live Steamers Railroad, a 160-acre Railroad Park with 18 miles of 7.5-inch gauge track (2nd largest in the country) and trains that you can ride on. All were fascinated by the scale steam locomotives. Then we ventured off to the Pioneer Living History Museum, 90 acres of an old 1800's town. We enjoyed a "tram" (a trailer pulled by a tractor) ride tour of the town along with a telephone museum.

Then, we hit the trail (freeway), up I-17 to Rock Springs Café which is known for great pies, and it's an interesting busy place to do a little shopping. From there the Players (All had their very own Poker Hand this year) took the long road back to civilization appreciating both scenery and black top.

Finally, Players had to put their hands on the table to see who got to take home the winnings at Bottega Pizzeria Ristorante. Cold libations and hot appetizers were waiting. All had a great Italian dinner and wonderful service in our own private dining room.

First place honors went to Bud Cloninger (it was not rigged), while Walt Anderson took second place, Cathy Hobson came in third and Rhonda Borino received fourth. The low hand was held by Mark Ichiyama, and yes, he got a prize too.



In the Mirror: Airpark Collision Center Tech Session

Held March 10, 2018

By Tina Small, Airpark Collision Center

The Desert Stars were welcomed at Airpark Collision Center Saturday, March 10th for a tech session. Demonstrations of plastic bumper repair, tint color matching, and scanning of a vehicle was shared with the group. Members generated informative Q & A sessions throughout the morning. Friendly conversation, light breakfast snacks and a prize drawing sponsored by Mercedes-Benz of Scottsdale rounded out the lively morning.



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Mercedes-Benz

In the Mirror: Bob's First Off-Road Adventure of 2018

Held March 17, 2018

By John Hutchison

Desert Stars Club Member Bob Yoder led an off-road adventure from Lake Pleasant on the back road to Crown King on St. Patrick's Day, Saturday, March 17. Five cars began the trip, and five cars ended (with a little help from a tow rope and winch) leading us to the opportunity to drink green beer at one of the mountain-top eating/drinking establishments in Crown King.

We started at Denny's on Carefree Highway at 8:00AM with Bob buying breakfast for all. There were a total of nine people in the five cars: a fully tricked-out 2005 Jeep LJ Rubicon, a 2017 Grand Cherokee, a 1999 Toyota 4Runner, a 1991 Mercedes-Benz G-Wagen and a 1978 Toyota Land Cruiser.

Our route took us 11 miles west on Highway 74 to the main entrance to Lake Pleasant, then 5.6 miles North to the end of the



Above: Dick Sharp's 1991 G-Wagen always looks the part when it's got some Arizona earth on it.

Below: It looks like some of the pushing came to shoving with this rugged crew! We hear they all came home OK. Mostly...



pavement and the entry to Lake Pleasant. At this point, we "aired down" to about 20 PSI for off road traction. We turned left onto Castle Hot Springs Road for 2.9 miles, and then made a right turn onto Cow Creek Road. In another 1.5 miles, we reached the start of the very interesting trek on the backway to Crown King.

Somewhere, although you can't see it, on the fairly-decent gravel road, are the ruins of the Castle Hot Springs Resort, a hotbed of activity in the early 1900's. Notables such as the Wrigley Family, Theodore Roosevelt, JFK and others stayed there for both vacation and therapy in the several hot pools and lush grounds on which it operated. Rail service was available from Phoenix to the nearby town of Morristown which, in 1898 when the depot was first built, was located South of Route 74 near the junction of Route 60. Guests were ferried to the resort by various means for over 40 years. During the Second World War, the resort was used by the U.S. Military as a Rehabilitation Center. And in the ensuing years the resort experienced a number of fires, finally closing in the mid 1970's. The property was purchased by an investment group in 2014 who are currently exploring the possibility of restoring at least a portion of the original Resort.

Around this section of the trail, we should have reset our trip odometers so that we could follow the map and directions in a book entitled "Guide to Arizona Backroads & 4-Wheel-Drive Trails" by Charles A. Wells and Matt Peterson. Our first "waypoint" was at mile-point 5.8, Champie Road, which is another access point to the trail from an entry road further West on Route 74. In another 4 miles on "still decent" gravel road, we reached "waypoint" 03 which has a large rock on which the letters "CK" - noting this is the way to Crown King - have been painted. We turned right and pulled off to the side of the road to regroup and put the transmissions into LOW Range so that it would be easier to drive over the increasingly-rough and/or sandy surface of the roads which were slowly changing to become a trail.

Over the course of the next 15.5 miles to Crown King, we experienced an ever-changing trail surface, approximately 10-15 obstacles (all of which had relatively easy bypasses used by most, except for Bob's LJ), a construction project

See **Off-Road** on Page 11

Off-Road from page 10

with a detour made up of a road surface of 6+” boulders rather than crushed rock, and two major road surface areas that had seriously deteriorated since our last trip on this trail two years ago. Three of the vehicles got through these two areas without problems, but two of the trail-rated off-road machines required the assistance of tow ropes and a winch; the Grand Cherokee was at the point of losing its “trail rated” badge and becoming fully depreciated! However, with the assistance of Bob’s LJ Rubicon, and his expert use winching, the troubled vehicles managed out of an extremely difficult stretch on the weathered trail. Eventually we all were back heading up the hill as a caravan.

On the approximate 38 mile trip, we encountered a couple of Jeep Club groups, many ATV’s, pickups, and motorbikes. We also observed an overall trail that has seriously deteriorated in the past two years since we last went this way. Erosion and daily use, without any periodic maintenance, make it ever challenging! Case in point, on our last trip, a first generation Toyota RAV4 navigated the trail without any difficulty! Had that same RAV4 tried it this time, it probably wouldn’t have gone past mile point 16.8! At this point, the Grand Cherokee, without the 2005 Jeep LJ’s winch assistance, would have been “toast”!!

Our overall success was made possible by teamwork and driving knowledge of everyone, both in our 5-vehicle caravan, and others driving the trail the same day, providing muscle and brain assistance in the obstacles that were encountered and experienced by all.

Because of this trip, the rule learned by all: Whenever you are going to tackle an off-road adventure on which you don’t intimately know the road from recent experience, **DON’T DO IT ALONE**; go as a group which includes a fully tricked-out Jeep driven by a fully experienced off-roader!

Bob, what is our next off-road adventure?



Above: The 4Runner going up quite an obstacle!
Below: “When Bob grabs his winch, you’re in a pinch!”



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In the Mirror: Desert Stars Driving Event – Las Vegas

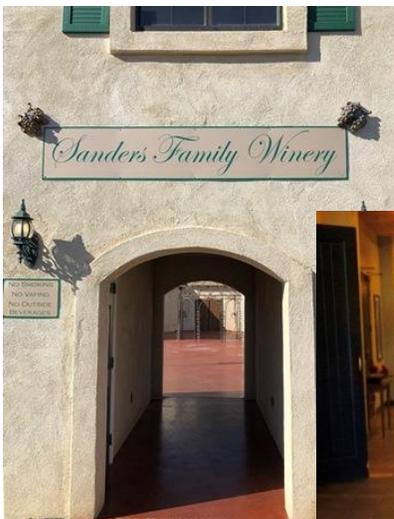
Held March 23-25, 2018

By Ron & Rhonda Borino



The Desert Stars Las Vegas trip is now a memory, and a fond one. The participants gathered in Las Vegas on March 23 at the Red Rock Resort Friday evening in Summerlin Nevada. We met at the Libre Mexican Cantina in the resort for happy hour and comradery. After visiting for several hours and everyone getting to know one another or re-acquaint folks drifted off to other restaurants either in the resort or off the resort property. I heard a rumor that there might have been some gambling!

Saturday morning, the 24th, we assembled in the hotel parking lot and proceeded to take a drive up through the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, where we all met at the visitor center to see the indoor and outdoor exhibits. This visitor center is very well done and I believe several folks could have spent the day here. After about an hour and a half we gathered to take the scenic drive through the park. This is a one way road and would have been much more fun at speeds far faster than the 35 MPH Speed Limit. Once we finished the drive everyone headed towards Pahrump, NV. While in Pahrump we had lunch at the Mountain Falls Golf Club. They put us in a private room complete with clever little MB signs directing to our lunch. Our wait staff did a fabulous job.



After lunch we drove over to the Sanders Family Winery to taste some of the locally made wines. This was clearly an unexpected surprise for everyone. The winery's owner, Mr. Jack Sanders, hosted us with over two hours of history on Pahrump, how he was initially sent there, the history of the brothels and tours available [yes, you are reading this right], as well as the history of wine making in Pahrump. He had folks laughing while they were tasting his 9 wines with generous pours and even threw in several etiquette lessons to make us all look sophisticated. This tasting was a blast and was, for the club, totally private and free to boot! Of course the appreciative members of the club rewarded Mr. Sanders by buying a number of cases of his wine. If you are ever in this area this is a must-stop.

Upon finishing up at the winery folks headed back to the resort either back tracking our route there or heading toward Las Vegas on NV 160 to NV 95. Back at the resort we met for a group dinner in a private room at the Hearthstone. The restaurant as well as the wait staff provided us excellent food and service during dinner. One of the hosts actually demonstrated how to hide a wine bottle since we were sitting in the restaurant's wine room [no bottles were actually removed from the restaurant although many were consumed]. The entire trip was very relaxing, interesting and at times entertaining. This event was also attended by folks from Las Vegas and as far away as Reno and we appreciated having them along for the experience.

May-June 2018



Registration Information

**Herberger Theater Tour & Lunch
July 21, 2018 11:00AM**

RSVP via phone or email to: Jim and Debra Larson by **July 14, 2018**, at 602.549.1949 or dlarsonphx@aol.com

Per person price including service fee:
Up to 49 attendees is \$31.25 per person
50 or more attendees is \$25.00 per person
May be paid in cash, or by credit card, at the event.

Southwestern Buffet Menu

Cilantro Lime Caesar with Pico de Gallo
Ancho Grazed Beef with Flour Tortillas
Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas
Sonoran Dirty Rice with Black Beans & Corn
Grilled Zucchini & Yellow Squash
Chips & Salsa

Beverage Choice of...

Water or Ice Tea
No host cash bar available

Classified Ads



1966 230S



1967 250SE Coupe

Looking for a new caretaker for these classics from my collection. There is too much to list on condition. I encourage all interested people to call for more info. Call Rich Schulte, 401-225-2090.



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

May-June 2018

Update your email address with The National Business Office
Contact our Membership Chair, Debbie Ichiyama, at 480-268-9535 or dichiyama@me.com

SAVE THESE DATES

May 6, 2018	Sun	Annual Meeting and Luncheon
June 16, 2018	Sat	Star Night
July 21, 2018	Sat	Herberger Theater Tour & Lunch
September 15, 2018	Sat	"The Art of the Wheel"
Early October	Sat – Sun	Havasupai Rallye

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