

STAR TRACKS 2007



Volume 3 Issue 4

July-August 2007

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Star Success

The 44th Annual June Jamboree, the longest running car show in the Mercedes Benz Club of America, proved to be yet another stellar success for our section. There were attendees from many sections: Maine, Connecticut/Westchester, South Jersey, Delaware Valley, Northeast Pennsylvania, Greater Washington, and of course, Northern New Jersey. Apologies if your section wasn't mentioned and you were there.



All participants who entered a car received a framed 4 x 6 picture of their beauty as a keepsake of the day's events.

It was an absolutely beautiful day and people had plenty of time to admire the cars, relax with old and new friends, visit the Company Store – thanks to Valentine O'Connor, National Brand and Classic PR Specialist, and enjoy some delicious food – thanks to Marita Howard and the Sodexo crew, and to Rita for all those extra little touches.

While members were eagerly awaiting the results of the judging, Doris Korallus, European Delivery coordinator, spoke to everyone about the advantages and fun of taking advantage of this wonderful program. Think "Road Trip!!!"

A special "Star Find of the Year" award was presented to Jim Utaski for his 1960 300 SL affectionately called "Old Blue Eyes." Check out *The Star* for more information on the history of the car. As many of you already know the June Jamboree requires a great deal of planning and effort both before and during the event. Thank you to all of the "worker bees" who helped

Head Judge: Andreas Molde
Data Recorder: Victor Alicchio
Judges:

GROUP A

Engine: Bob Platz + Sy Jacobowitz
Interior: Bill Hopper + Werner Fehlauer
Exterior: Nick Ford + Mike Levine
Chrome: Joe Cristiano + Ralph Esposito

GROUP B

Engine: John Kefalonitis+ Ken Spingarn
Interior: Barbaranna Kefalonitis Agnes Penque
Exterior: Alan Snyder + Jay Hirsch
Chrome: Greg Calabro + Burgess Berlin



GROUP C

Exterior: Tom Elder
Interior: Sam Berliner
Engine: Frank Chabala
Chrome: Bob Wegner
Recorder: Claire Wegner
Score Sheet Collector/Runner:

Laura Levine

Continued on pg. 3



Presidents Message - Joe Grattan



With our fabulous June Jamboree just completed, I want to give a special thank you to Valerie Cristiano and Lucille Chabala, event chairpersons, Andreas Molde, head judge, and Valentine O'Connor, National Brand & Classic PR Specialist for MBUSA. Valerie and Lucille took care of everything concerning registration, Andreas was responsible for parking cars in the correct locations as well as coordinating all aspects of judging by the 19 person judging team and Valentine is our contact with MBUSA who made all of the special support arrangements for us prior to, and during, the day. Clearly there are a lot of others. Loni Spingarn and Julie Levine are the absolute queens of the 50/50, Nora Ochawt ran the silent auction, Carl Schwartz took a ton of great pictures, and Brenda Calabro tabulated the concours score sheets as they were brought in by Laura Levine. Our 44th Annual June Jamboree was attended by over 250 people, more than 130 cars in the competitions and visitors parking, and participants from six states. It went smooth like a puddin. We had a great team.



For Sale: 560 SL headlamps for W107 chassis, only 6 months in use, came off a show car, never rained or snowed on. No chips, scratches, dents. Excellent condition. \$390 for both plus shipment cost.

Nick Starace, 9 Fielding Road, Short Hills, NJ 07078, 973 376 9026, Nstaraceii@aol.com.



For Sale:
1971 280SL 130,000 original miles, 4 speed, 2 tops, second owner, excellent condition, \$29,000 or best offer.

Call (609) 929-1831 or email lstraga@comcast.net



For sale: 1995 E 320 Cabriolet Imperial red/cream beige, concours first place winner, only 3500 produced worldwide, heated seats, all leather interior, power seats, AC, cruise, electric top, built in roll bar, classic collector car, rare cabriolet sure to increase in value, asking \$25,000 or best offer. See below

For Sale: 15" rims off a 124 chassis including tires 195/15. \$100 or best offer.

Joe Cristiano jjcristianojr@earthlink.net or 973-377-2882

For Sale: 2000 ML430, all black, fully equipped, 54,000 miles, new tires, MB maintained, excellent condition, detailed regularly. \$16,500 Call Frank - Day 212-612-8577, Eve 718-761-8983, Cell 917-685-8466

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Welcome April & May 2007

New Members

David Billings	Anthony Piccininno	Stuart Millstone
Elavia Kurus	Ann Drechsel	Michael Olsen
Joe C. Fila	Daniel Falaise	Guido Rijo
Mark Fletcher	Joseph Fields	Thomas Rossiter
Katherine Harvell	Michael Filoramo	Sherri Salzman
Delores Johnson	Patrick Finn	Andrew Snyder
Virginia Jurewicz	Torolf Haug	Richard Weiner
Roger Mahieu	Charles Mahoney	David Weiss

Continued from pg. 1

Parking: Don Rotolo + Rocky Miranti – way to go guys!

Registrars: Lucille Chabala and Valerie Cristiano
Tabulators and Vote Counters: Brenda Calabro, Lucille Chabala, and Valerie Cristiano

50–50: Julie Levine, Loni Spingarn and Fran Milite

Silent Auction: Nora Ochwat

Pictures for Newsletter: Carl Ian Schwartz

June Jamboree Show Results

Winning entrants are highlighted in **Bold**.

Congratulations to all our participants!

Concours

1958	220 S	Steve Wein
1960	300 SL	Jim Utaski
1959	300 SL	Alvin Martz
1957	300 SL	Bob Platz
1957	300 SL	Eckart Scheffler
1957	300 SL	Manfred Rein
1971	280 SE	William Miller
1964	220	Keith Morgan
1963	220 S	Chris Sciales
1978	450 SL	Claude Bennett
1986	560 SL	Frank Conforti
1998	560 SL	Larry Butler
1989	560 SL	Joe Grattan
1980	450 SL	Loni Spingarn
1983	380 SL	Ann Drechsel
1994	E 320	Bob Milite
1977	240 D	Paul Pinajian
1991	300TE	Mark Sluscavage
1986	420 SEL	Richard Luongo
1990	300SE	Mark Sluscavage
1990	300 CE	Jim Motacki
1995	E 320 cab	Valerie Cristiano
1991	300 CE	Harold Scherch
1991	560 SEC	Rocky Miranti
1990	500 SL	Richard Tynes
2001	SLK 320	Tom Elder
2004	SLK	Mike Levine
2000	SL 500 R	Lou Mangianello
2003	C 230	Doug Ochwat
2001	E 320 wgn	Alan Snyder
1996	300 D	Joe Bemelmans
2006	C 230	Elmer Ebersol
2007	CLK 550	Ignatius Wiratunga
1999	CLK 320	Paul Buzzi
2005	500CLK	Dean Nichols
2007	CLK 550	Bob Donnelly

1992	600SEL	Joe Grattan
1994	S 500	Valery Moskin
1967	230 SL	Victor Gates
1965	230 SL	June Platz
1968	280 SL	Dave Lamoreaux
1981	380 SLC	Eric Geiger
1976	C 900	Scott Daniels
	Best of Show	
1959	300SL	Bob Fisher
	Popular Vote	
2004	500 SL	Ron Rauschart
2002	SLK 320	Carl Ian Schwartz
2006	E 320 CDI	Mark Sluscavage
2007	SLK 280	Mark Sluscavage
2006	SLR	Phin Suy
2005	E 55AMG	Joseph LoFaro
1992	500 E	Roger Egolf
1999	E 320	Al Gambardella
1995	E 320	Linda Gates
1995	E 320	Jim Utaski
1998	500 SL	Joseph LoFaro
1983	240 D	Mark Sluscavage
1982	200	Eric Wagner
1982	240 D	Emily Waterfield
1989	560 SL	Frank Chabala
1990	560 SEC	David Veith
1985	300 CDT	Will Waterfield
1990	560 SEC	Jay Hisrch
1965	190 Dc	John Bleimaier
1972	280 SE	Julie Levine
1959	180 d	Tony Libertelli
1972	350 SL	John Miller
1956	300 SL	Manfred Rein
1973	300 SEL 4.5	Mark Sluscavage
1976	450 SL	Ralph Esposito

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Ms. Erika S. Muller



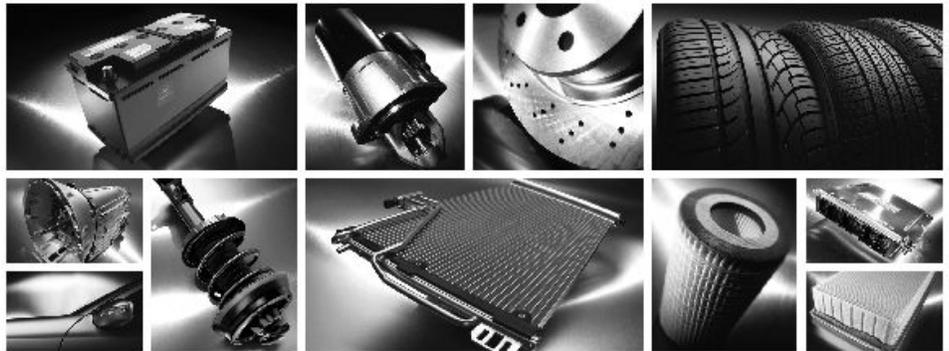
Alan Simkatis wins the Mercedes Drawing \$50,865 Holy Cow!

Twice a year MBCA sponsors a raffle for the cash equivalent of a new car. This time the First Prize was \$50,865, the cash equivalent to a new SLK350. The winning ticket was purchased by Alan Simkatis of our Section. I had the pleasure of giving him the good news. His comments a few days later ... "I still can't believe my good fortune at having won such a terrific prize! Thank you so much for being the messenger of such wonderful news!"

I'm planning on doing some restoration work on my 1976 450SL (that I've owned for over 21 years), with part of the winnings. I've also signed up for the MBCA Germany trip in October! We're just so excited!!!"



Congratulations Alan. I wish it was me. Lesson to us all – you have to be in it to win it. Joe Grattan



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OKTOBERFEST 2007

Saturday, Sept. 29th from 11 am to around 3:30 pm — Chubb Park, Chester, NJ

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There will be a gag odometer trophy, and prize for best Lederhosen outfit (this year, featuring couples). Pre-reservation is welcomed, although you may pay at the gate. We would appreciate a count of the amount of cars attending. Please contact Lucille Chabala at LuluChab@aol.com or 973-731-9133. Please direct any questions about the event to Bob Wegner at my280sl@verizon.net or 973- 515-0052

From the VeeP.....Doug Ochwat



Since our last newsletter I've been lucky enough to attend some of the events that I've written you about in previous newsletters. First, I attended Startech in Reston, VA with Andreas Molde our Technical Advisor for NNJS. We had a great time to say the least. A couple of weeks later it was off to Northeast Ohio where Nora and I attended Gemutlichkeit. She and I participated in all the events that they ran over the four day period. That included a road rallye, concours, defensive driving, autocross, acceleration run and time trials at Nelson-Ledges track. Please don't tell anyone that her best raw time at Nelson-Ledges beat mine by 7/10 of a second. We came home with a lot of hardware (trophies) and very exhausted, but with smiles on our faces.

June 16th was our annual June Jamboree. We had a record number of cars in the concours along with a record number of people in attendance. Many door prizes and trophies were given out and a good time was had by all.

July 7th is the date for the annual picnic of the Northeast Pa section in the Easton, Pa area. It takes place on a 40 plus acre country setting right off I-78. Just call Roger or Deborah Egolf 610-366-9275 or Jolanda Piekarski 610-865-0062 for details or directions. From personal experience, I promise you a wonderful afternoon.

Check out our upcoming events in this issue of STARTRACKS and mark your calendar. We have an election of officers at our Regional September picnic at Falkenhorst.

Why am I telling you all of this? Because if you're not participating, you are missing out on a lot of fun. Remember, this is your car club !!!

Reminder:

All submissions for the next Star Tracks 2007 issue must be received by Ken Spingam khs@openix.com by Aug. 15, 2007

We need your email address

If you have not received NNJS notifications via email, please send your email address to JosephGrattan@aol.com

We're on the Web!

www.mbca.org/northern_nw_jersey/nnjmbca.html

Reminder:

Did you know that For Sale Ad submissions are free for members? All that is necessary is for you to email your ad to the editor by the 15th of the month prior to publication. You may include one or two digital photos with your ad.

khs@openix.com

We changed the date to Sunday, September 23 for the NNJS Midlantic Regional Picnic

Get ready to enjoy our annual picnic at “Falkenhorst”, John Bleimaier’s 18th century country home. We will have some chairs and tables, but if you have your own please bring them. The fourth Sunday in September will be hot and sunny, the smell of freshly mown grass will be in the air, free hamburgers, hot dogs, pizza, sodas and a bunch of other stuff will be on the tables under the tents. We will enjoy the friendly competition of a six category popular vote car show. There will be a ‘silent auction’ (proceeds to charity). Bring something lightly used. John will have slides of the latest Concours at Pebble Beach; you will see and vote on a bunch of great MBs. Sounds like a lot to do in one afternoon, but we’ll squeeze it all in. Plan to bring the kids.



This event is co-sponsored by the two New Jersey sections. **There is no cost to you, but WE NEED A COUNT.** We have to buy the food, beverages and supplies. Please complete and mail the coupon or contact Lucille Chaballa by phone or email. Directions to “Falkenhorst” may be found on page 10.

I/We will be attending the Midlantic Regional Picnic on Sunday, September 23, 2007 beginning 10AM

Name(s): _____

Email: _____

No. of people attending: _____

No. of cars to be displayed: _____

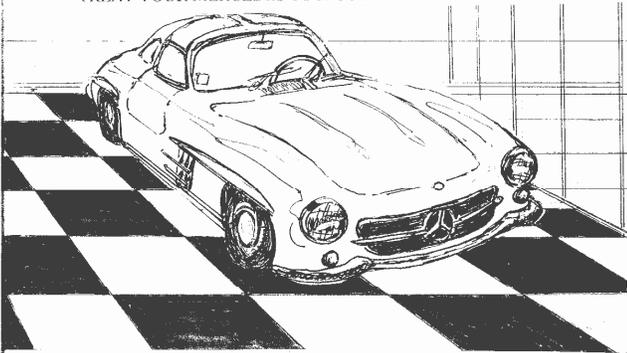
Lucille Chaballa 6 BrookWay West Orange NJ 07052 973-731-9133

LULUCHAB@aol.com

Another great “Tire Kicking” Session

On a (beautiful) Saturday, May 12, 2007, about 25 members of the NNJS gathered at the “Carriage House Automobile Storage & Sales” in Washington, Warren County, New Jersey, for another “Tire Kicking” session. The owners, Chris and Darren, invited us to use their facility for our ‘Tire Kicking’ session and treated us to coffee and donuts. Thank you very much! The Carriage House specializes in storing and maintaining precious automobiles. The parking lot filled up quickly with a lot of nice Mercedes, and covered about the last 40 years of MB. Hoods, doors and trunks were opened and a lot of “Shoptalk” and “Tire Kicking” went on. We finished the event inside the Carriage House with a Question & Answer session. **Our next “Tire Kicking” Session is Saturday, July 28** somewhere in the Princeton area. Please check our website and expect email notice announcing the exact location and time.

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Each year we ask our dealers to provide the prizes we award to the attendees at the June Jamboree. The dealers who support us are listed below in alphabetical order. Please support the NJ dealers that support our club.

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Intercar	Tim Allocca	973 383 8300
Millenium	Charlie Cappadonna	908 685 0800
Prestige	Matt Piccillo	201 265 7800
Princeton	Bob Greces	609 771 8040
Ray Catena	Jim Buchanan	908 379 7200

When you visit these dealerships, please mention that you are a member of the Northern New Jersey Section of Mercedes-Benz Club of America.



Election of Section Officers

As announced at the June Jamboree, we will hold the bi-annual election of officers at our picnic on Sunday, September 23. The two year term will begin January 1, 2008. Werner Fehlauer is the Election Chairman.

Election procedure:

- A).** Any member in good standing can submit to the election Chairman, in writing or by Email, his/her name and position sought or a slate of four candidates for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
- B).** Each person/slate is encouraged to submit brief biographical sketches of the person/slate members.
- C).** At the annual/election meeting, additional nominees of persons/slates will be accepted from the floor. If there is more than one candidate for any position, including slates, a written ballot shall be distributed at the meeting. All members of record as of August 1st of the NNJ Section, including Second Section members, are eligible to vote. If there is only one candidate, including slates the election will be by voice acclamation. In either case, the results shall be determined by a majority of those members present at the meeting.

Contact **Werner Fehlauer, Election Chairperson**, directly by mail at 631 Swedesboro Rd, Gibbstown, NJ 08027-1216, or by Email to w.fehlauer@verizon.net, phone 856 224 1792 or Joe Grattan, NNJS President, Josephgrattan@aol.com, phone 973 628 1781.

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★ Circle of Stars ★

The Princeton Rotary Show on Saturday, May 20, 2007, held on the grounds and parking lots of the Carnegie Center in Princeton, NJ really showed how well the Mercedes-Benz Stars shine. The weather was predicted to have some scattered storms, but there was no rain on our parade, the sun shone brightly throughout the show making the STARS glisten even more. As you motored along the winding entrance drive with majestic trees shading the road, looking out over the lush green lawns, and around the fountains, one could not help being awe struck when the show cars came into view. There were examples of fine craftsmanship of automobiles, both domestic and foreign. Bob and Claire Wegner had the NNJS Hospitality Tent set up so that we could all enjoy a little respite from the sun and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow admirers of the STAR. As we gathered under the tent, we were able to meet some of our newer members and catch up on old times with some of the members we hadn't seen in awhile.

An Appreciation of Participation plaque was presented to Lucille Chabala by the Princeton Rotary as a way of saying "Thank You" to our section for their continued support of their event.

There was a wide range of cars at the event including Claire Wegner's 1956 190SL, John Bleimaier's 190Dc finback, David Stitzer's 1968 280SL, Ralph Esposito's 1976 450SL, Joseph Bemelmans' 1985 380SL, Tom Elder's 1986 560SL, Jerome Johnson's 1988 560SL, Lucille Chabala's 1989 560SL, Bob Simicsak's 1995 SL500. Valerie Cristiano's 1995 e320 cabriolet, Oljan Repic's 1998 CLK 320, Bob Wegner's 2003 E320, Joe Mastandrea's 2003 E320, Dean Nichols' 2005 CLK 500, and Bob Donnelly's 2007 CLK 550 and Ignatius Wiratunga's 2007 CLK 550. Many of the aforementioned cars were also trophy winners. A special "Diamond in the Rough" trophy was presented to Tony Libertelli for his 1959 180a pontoon.

Anything & Everything Mercedes-Benz

We just had the biggest event of the year for NNJS, the June Jamboree, and I had the honor to serve as the head judge. As such, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the judges who came from all over, like PA,NY,DC and of course, NJ. Well, "Thank you very much", you did a fantastic job! On the same note, I would also like to thank the participants who worked so hard and came from close and far away to "show off" their Mercedes-Benz. After all, what would a car show be without cars. I would like to ask everybody, especially the judges and participants, to contact me with any criticism, comments or suggestions, regarding the event so that we may improve for next year. You may send an email to: amh86@optonline.net or write a letter to: Andreas Molde, 22 Ev-Ken Terrace, Dover, NJ 07801. Thank you.

Technical Corner

by Andreas Molde

Platinum or not?

An interesting question came up at one of our Tire Kicking Sessions. Should I use Platinum spark plugs in my Mercedes or not? Well, the simple answer is to use the same type spark plug that your Mercedes came with originally from the factory. If you had standard plugs in there, which is true for all pre-1998 models, stay with the standard plugs. Starting with model year 1998, which was the year Mercedes introduced them--Class and changes from an inline 6 to a V6 engine, they all came with Platinum plugs. The life expectancy of standard plugs is 15 to 30k miles, whereas the Platinum plugs last up to 100k miles, but they both should be changed after 4- 5 years, regardless of mileage. You may look at the higher life expectancy of platinum plugs as an advantage, but I would not recommend to use them in older Mercedes!

I know they are listed in parts books (including Bosch), as replacement parts, but I have seen too many problems with platinum plugs over the last 25 years. I remember the first case, where a customer had the local Bosch Dealer install them in his new 280GE, with only 15000km(this was in Germany) and while he was on the highway, he ended up burning a hole into the piston! The regional Daimler Benz Headquarters declined any warranty, because they did not recommend the use of Platinum plugs in their engines! He was not a happy camper. Mind you, the plugs were listed in the Bosch Parts Catalog! Over the years, I've seen plenty of Mercedes with Platinum plugs and the associated problems with that. From failing state inspection for emissions, rough idle, to misfires and the solution to those problems was installing the proper sparkplugs!

I recall a 190E 2.6 ,which came in with a rough idle complaint. He was a new customer and he told me that someone else had looked at it and it was still not running right. When I opened the hood, I could tell that every possible part under the sun was replaced on that engine and was wondering if he had the problem before or after the repairs were done. Well, I like to pull the plugs on older and sometimes newer cars to "read" them, to get an idea of what is going on in each cylinder and, you guessed it, it had Platinum plugs in there. I installed the proper Bosch Super plugs and his problems were solved!

I have to admit that I did not expect such a dramatic change, but the facts speak for themselves. I could go on, but I believe you get the point. Now, we should not condemn the Platinum plugs, because they are excellent, but they don't work well with older Mercedes. The problem is really not so much the Platinum plug by itself, but rather the older ignition systems in combination with the plugs. Just recently, I came across "resistor" type plugs, which is another bad idea for your older (or newer) Mercedes.

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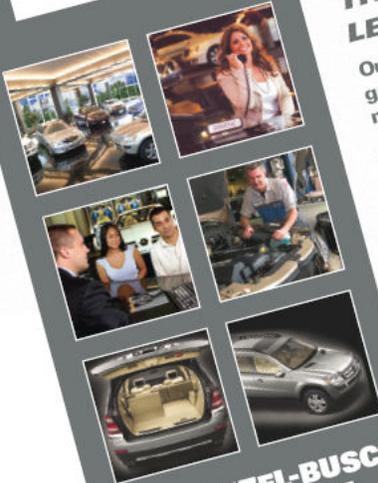
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Mercedes-Benz



Porsche



On Sunday, August 12th, members of the Porsche Club of America and the MBCA are invited to gather at “Falkenhorst,” John Bleimaier’s estate in Hopewell, NJ for the start of a joint navigation rallye. Cost of the rallye is \$25 per car. Arrive around 11 AM for continental breakfast and kick some tires with our Porsche friends. Instructions, maps etc will be handed out, questions will be answered and the first car will be off about 1PM.

The starting point for our rallye has a rich history. Just before the American Revolution “Falkenhorst” was frequently visited by local patriots. It was a station on the “underground railway” smuggling escaped slaves from the South during the 19th Century. Now, it is the home of a respectable collection of automotive fine art.

A navigation rallye is a low pressure drive through scenic countryside where the drivers and navigators try to find the shortest distance between the various picturesque locations without undue regard to time. Each team sets its own pace with the objective of finding the shortest route having reference to maps which are supplied at the start.



Be back by about 3:30PM for a friendly social gathering, refreshments and trophy ceremony. Contact John Bleimaier bleimaier@aol.com or Joe Grattan JosephGrattan@aol.com.



We have never done this before; don't let those Porsche folks outnumber us.

I/We will be participating in the Joint PCA-MBCA Rallye on Sunday, August 12 at 11am.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone# _____

Email address: _____

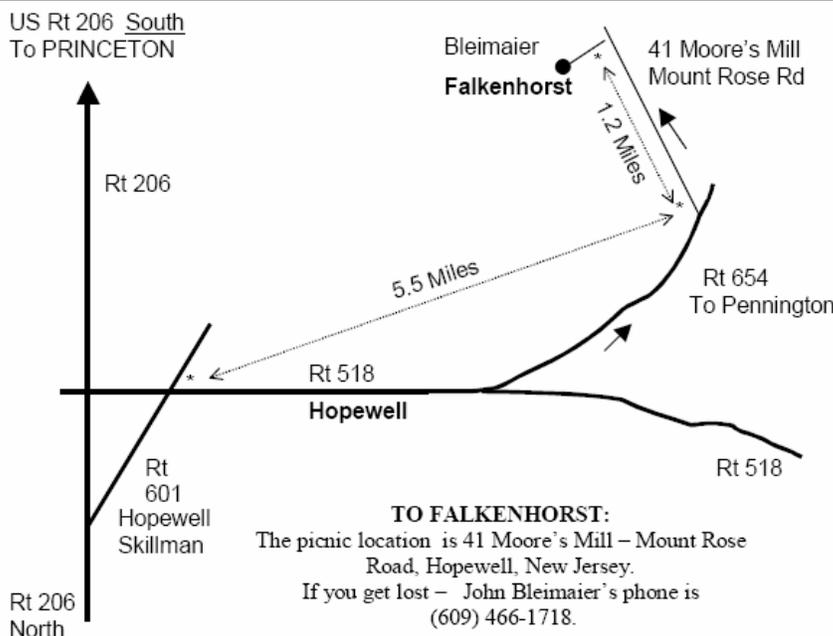
\$25/Car

Number of Cars: _____ @ \$25/car = Total: _____

Please send this form along with check or money order to:

Lucille Chabala, 6 Brook Way, West Orange, NJ 07052 973-731-9133 LuluChab@aol.com

Please make check payable to NNJS-MBCA



Tom James Saved us a lot of GRIEF

The weather on June Jamboree Saturday was great. Clear sky, sunshine, not too warm. Tom James arrived about the same time as everyone, but had another commitment and had to leave before the event was over. About 3 PM he headed south on the GSP. The sun was shining, why not, I just told you, it was a beautiful day. He was about 5 miles away when it started to rain, pour actually. Tom called back to us telling he was five miles away and it was pouring. Everyone was in the MBUSA dining room, the prizes were about to be awarded. The rain announcement was made and about 40 guys, including me, made a bee-line for the parking lot to put up tops, close windows and move the items on the ground behind the cars back to the trunk. Less than 10 minutes later the short but intense storm arrived. We sat in the dining room and smiled to ourselves. Thanks Tom!

Joe Grattan, President

High Gear (and Taut Rigging)

John Kuhn Bleimaier

A week ago Sunday we set all sails to a force six wind with my cousin, Martin Pluess, at the tiller and traversed the azure Mediterranean from Sardinia to Corsica. To steer a trim barque across open waters under taut canvas is to experience travel in complete harmony with nature. As we bid farewell to the fair shores of Italy and headed in the direction of the French bastion at Bonafacio.

I contemplated the mechanics of this wonderful venture. The force of the wind propels while the lubricity of the water allows for the necessary slip angle. All this is undertaken in strict compliance with the immutable laws of physics. Ah, yes, how often we laud the unsung genius who invented the wheel and the unlettered architect who conceived the arch. Kudos well deserved. However, I would like to sing the praises of that first mariner who bethought himself to harness Aeolus' mighty gusts to send a vessel skittering over the surface of a turbulent liquid to a certain destination. This was engineering of the highest order before we ever invented the term! There have always been great minds among us. I would like to postulate that, if Rudolf Diesel had been born a caveman, he would have been the one who invented the wheel. Had he come into this world as an ancient Phoenician, surely Rudolf would have devised the system of rigging to allow a sailing ship to tack across the wind. Since these mighty achievements had already been attained when Diesel was born in 1858, he went on to invent the compression ignition engine.



It is an unmitigated pleasure to sail a fifty foot Beneteau in challenging waters. To visit beautiful and historic places provides delightful input for our personal data banks. But it is the exposure to new and exciting automotive experiences which also drives me to travel to distant locations. Case in point. I had to take a taxi from the yacht harbor at Cannigone to the aeroporto at Olbia. Imagine my delight when a fleet white Mercedes E280CDI Diesel drove up to fetch me. This is a state of the art, turbocharged, common rail injected starship with copious power and torque. Of course I sat in front with the driver. Although we did not share a common language we managed to carry on an animated conversation using a patois of French, Italian, English, techno-speak and good will. The owner/driver told me that he was totally enamored of his Mercedes taxicab. He then proceeded to show me the ample capabilities of his noble mount.

Our appointed destination required us to travel over tertiary roads traversing the spiny scarp of a jutting peninsula. The back ways were narrow and twisting but well maintained and banked. The driver set up for each curve like a master, conscious of all the apexes. The wonderful Mercedes did its part. I have never enjoyed a trip to the airport more. And it was plain that my host was enjoying wringing the performance potential out of his Mercedes. A critical ingre-

dient in the mix of car, driver and road was the E280CDI's slick six speed manual transmission. Yes, colleagues, my skillful Sardinian driver was able to select the appropriate cogs for himself. He was empowered to use the legendary heel and toe technique where appropriate. Like my cousin, Captain Martin Pluess, the Sardinian owner of a Mercedes E class Diesel is able to manipulate the controls completely on his own, in order to obtain just



the right slip angle in a tight spot. My long standing plea to the wizards in Stuttgart: "You can trust your American friends. We have the intelligence and maturity to shift for ourselves. Show us the confidence which you repose in your Sardinian customers. Provide us with the option to drive a Diesel vehicle with three pedals on the floor. We will do our part and go on to show our heels to all the Bimmers and rice-rockets on the back roads of North America! When the white turbo Diesel arrived at the airport in Olbia my driver and I shook hands and greetings. "John," I said. "Rudolfo," he replied. Then he told me in our common auto enthusiasts' tongue that he was named in honor of our mutual, mechanical patron saint, Rudolfo Diesel. I should have known. "Magnifico! Ciao!"

Did you know....? "Mercedes Benz", a song by Janis Joplin, Mike McClure and Bob Neuwirth, famously sung a cappella by Janis Joplin, was intended as a gentle satire on materialism, but, ironically, has since been used in the automobile brand's advertising and later was used in a BMW advertisement on German TV; the driver of a BMW Z3 convertible raised his eyebrows after the first "buy me a Mercedes-Benz" and threw out the tape after "my friends all drive Porsches".

NNJS Upcoming Events

Saturday, July 7—Northeast PA Section Picnic—Easton, PA—See Page 5

Saturday, July 28 — "Tire Kicking" Session—Details to be announced—See page 6

Saturday, Aug 12—PCA-MBCA Rallye—Falkenhorst—Hopewell, NJ—See page 10

Sunday, Sept 23— NNJS Annual Mid Atlantic Regional Picnic—Falkenhorst—Hopewell, NJ—See Page 6

Saturday, Sept 29—Oktoberfest—Chester, NJ—See page 5

Saturday, Oct 13—Tech Session—Benzel-Busch—Englewood, NJ—Details to be announced

Sunday, Oct 21—Covered Bridge Tour—Hunterdon & Bucks County— See Page 12

Saturday, December 1—Annual Holiday Party—Details to be Announced



FIRST ANNUAL COVERED BRIDGE TOUR

Saturday, OCTOBER 21st

Come and enjoy the rapidly vanishing rural countryside of Hunterdon County, NJ and Buck's County, PA.

Colonial history will be explored as our incredible assemblage of Mercedes will travel down two lane roads and traverse 7 covered bridges. At least one of these "covered bridges" has a claim that it is haunted!

We will cross the Delaware River where General George Washington transported 2000 troops by long boat on Christmas Eve in 1776. Driving over bridges that were built 60 years after Washington made his crossing, our Mercedes will be able to take in the abundance of fall foliage surrounding us!

Details in next issue.