

STAR TRACKS 2006



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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2006

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Mid-Atlantic Regional Picnic at Falkenhorst

Rumors of steady rain were completely untrue. Sunday, Sept. 24 turned out to be a really fun day. Bob Donnelly brought his music. What a great system.

The South Jersey section co-sponsored the event. Thank you South Jersey for your help. Members from Delaware Valley, Northeast Pennsylvania joined us as well.

Loni Spingarn conducted the 50/50. The winners share was \$80. Tom Elder had the winning number and donated his winnings back to the club. Thank you, Tom!

Mike Parlotto brought pizzas with exotic toppings from PIZZA BENE at Princeton Market Fair on Route One. Mike owns this restaurant as well as Greenstreet Cafe, Americana Grill, and La Fiesta.

Nora Ochwat took charge of the silent auction raising \$160 which will be donated to the Freedom Alliance which provides scholarships for the children of fallen military personnel.

Thank you to everyone who donated prizes and to all of you who placed bids. We appreciate it.

Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, sausage and peppers, salads and lots of desserts were all part of the

festivities. A special thanks to everyone who helped to make the day a success. Bob Donnelly, Frank and Lucille Chabala, Ken and Loni Spingarn, Claire and Bob Wegner, Doug and Nora Ochwat, Agnes Penque, Greg and Brenda Calabro, Valerie and Joe Cristiano, Danny and Debbie Goldberg and of course, John Bleimaier and Marina Pushkareva for their hospitality.

We could not do it without you!



The NNJS Holiday Party will be held on Saturday, December 16, 2006 at the Fairmount Country Club in Chatham Township, New Jersey. The evening will begin at 6 pm in the Oak Room with passed hors d'oeuvres and a **cash bar**. Dinner will follow in the Conservatory with tables set up by the fireplace and the dance floor by the windows.

So "Come one. Come all." to the NNJS Holiday Party. Put on your best Holiday finery and come and join in the festivities of the season. It is time to get those "glad rags" out of the closet and "put on your dancin' shoes"

and join in the fun at our annual Holiday Party.

This is also one of our Charity Events so please bring a new unwrapped toy for a child to be placed underneath the Holiday Tree. The toys will then be donated to Toys for Tots as we have done for the past several years.

Last year the generosity of our members overwhelmed the people at Weichert Realtors when it took two trunk loads of a 1991 420 SEL and two fully loaded back seats in order to transport our donations. Let's see if we can make it even more this year!

We will begin with white glove service of passed hors d'oeuvres in the Oak Room with the following selections:

- Dim Sum with Duck Sauce
- Scallops Wrapped in Bacon
- Beef Kabobs
- Mozzarella en Corroza
- Brochette of Chicken Sesame
- Salmon Mousse
- Baby Lamb Chops
- Shrimp Cocktail

Continued on page 5

Presidents Message - Joe Grattan



The end of the year is in sight. We have a full schedule of events planned. Some of us drove to Chicago via the Route Six leg of the Route Six/Route 66. More than 150 cars will take part in the coast to coast Anniversary Drive. We just had the Annual Picnic at John Bleimaier's and the Oktoberfest in Chester. A rallye is planned for Sunday, October 22 in Warren County. There is a tech session at Ray Catena's beautiful new showroom in Union on November 18 and we end the year with our Holiday Party Saturday at the Fairmont Country Club in Chatham. We have had a lot of good events in 2006 and will be planning for 2007 soon. If you have a suggestion, I would like to hear from you.

Technical Corner

by Andreas Molde, Technical Advisor

Hello MB friends,

Fall is here and winter is coming for sure. If you drive your MB all year round, consider some snow tires preferably on all four wheels for the winter. It will not only enhance the traction to get going but it will handle better while steering and braking and this can make all the difference!

Also, it is good to add some weight to your trunk because most MB's are very light in the rear.



Speaking of tires. Last week when I returned from the Rt.6 trip, I happened to come upon a stranded 300 CE on Rt. 80 just over the GW Bridge. I pulled over to see if I could help.

Turned out to be a flat tire and the young woman had already had the trunk open with all the tools and jack out. She was waiting for a State Trooper to arrive, hoping that (he) (she) would help change the tire. Well, I did not believe that that would happen and offered to change it for her. I was very impressed, since she had made sure that everything needed was there including the spare tire, WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE FLAT!

Fortunately I had an air pump with me, so I was able to pump it up. I gave it a quick inspection to make sure it was safe to drive and changed it for her. Continued on pg. 3

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Technical Corner

Cont'd from pg. 2

Unfortunately, I see it quiet often that either the spare tire is flat and the tools and the jack are missing or broken!

So make sure that everything inside your spare tire well is the way it should be. You may want to get a longer, sturdy lug wrench for better leverage in place of the factory tool and a small air pump can be very helpful, too.



The young lady was very happy and was wondering out loud, whether a woman ever really changes a flat tire. I told her that while I was still a young boy, I watched my mother change a flat tire for a man, once! You see, my father taught my mother how to change a tire, the day she got her drivers license!

Welcome New Members

With 24 new members for July & August 2006, we now have 84 new members for the year so far. Welcome to our fun Section.

JULY

- Bernard J. Biglin
- April J. Escalona Sidwa
- Steve Franco
- John Paul Grando
- Maria Luongo
- Jana McDaniel
- Joseph Mullin
- Al Pallowski
- Daniel V. Perry
- Yi Cheng Wu
- Linda C. Rosen
- Adrian DiSalvo
- Chris Stemper
- Greg Thorne
- Mitchell Wright

AUGUST

- Bryan E. Fuerst
- Maria M. Gonzales Diaz
- Alan Grieco
- Tariq Kelker
- Carol Kelleher
- Diane Kimbrough
- Dean J. Laumbach
- David Mastrangelo
- Frank Pichardo
- Barry Reich



WE NEED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS

If you have not received NNJS notifications via email and you want to add your email address—Please send your address to JosephGrattan@aol.com

Moving?

Send Address Changes to: MBCA 1907 LeLarey Street Colorado Springs, CO 80909 or call 1-800-637-2360

Reminder:

All submissions for the next Star Tracks 2006 newsletter must be received by the editor at khs@openix.com by November 15, 2006.

Thank you

Many of our members read their issues of Star Tracks 2006 on our Website www.mbca.org/northern_new_jersey/njmbca.html

Member Dennis Yuro has a clever suggestion he would like to share with us.

"I suggest members forward the newsletter to their "work" computer, and then make a few copies to keep in their cars. When you see a Mercedes in a parking lot, slip one under the wiper. This will give non-members a glimpse of Club activities and may help in expanding membership."



Great Idea! Let's grow our membership! Thanks Dennis. See pg. 3 for a listing of our new members.

THANK YOU, MERCEDES-BENZ DEALERS!

Each year we ask the Mercedes-Benz dealers in our area to donate gifts which we use as prizes for the drawings on Saturday afternoon at The June Jamboree at Mercedes-Benz headquarters in Montvale, NJ. They also sponsor Tech Sessions and other events held by our section. These are the dealers that contributed to the success of our 43rd June Jamboree 50th Anniversary Celebration (listed alphabetically). Please support the dealers who support us.

<i>Dealer, Location</i>	<i>Contact Person</i>
Benzel Busch , Englewood	Jay Agresta
Contemporary Motor Cars , Little Silver	Scott Coleman
David Michael Motor Cars , Freehold	Jeff Adams
	Roger Pittman
Globe Motors , Fairfield	Peter Scherr
Intercar , Newton	Tim Allocca
Mercedes-Benz of Princeton	Bob Greces
Millenium Automotive , Bridgewater	Charlie Cappadonna
Prestige Motors , Paramus	Bill Berardino
Ray Catena , Edison	Jim Buchanan

The Rallye in October
will be in beautiful Warren County
Sunday October 22 10 AM

We will meet at Mattars Restaurant on Route 517 at 10AM. Mattars is two miles South of Route 80, Exit 19, on Route 517 at the junction of Ridge Road.

Continental breakfast will be served fro 10 until 11. The Rallye will start at 11 and should end about 3. Dinner will start at 3:30.

This Rallye will be a series of questions based on a map that will be provided. **TIME IS NOT A FACTOR.** You will need to plot the route based on the questions and the map. You will need to be back by 3:30.

Dinner will consist of an appetizer, salad, choice of chicken, fish or pork loin, dessert, soft drinks, coffee and tea. The event will end about 6:30 or so.

Cost is \$20 per car for the Rallye. Dinner is \$40 per person.

If you have any questions please contact Doug Ochwat DAOCatswamp@Yahoo.com or 908 850 9643

Please complete this registration form and send it to Lucille Chabala, 6 Brook Way, West Orange, NJ 07052 973-731-9133 - luluchab@aol.com Thank you.

Registration Form

I/We will take part in the Rallye on Sunday, October 22, 2006 at 10am.

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Email: _____

Phone# _____

\$20.00 per CAR \$ _____

I/We will have dinner at Mattars ___ X \$40 = \$ _____

Please send your check to Lucille Chabala 6 Brook Way West Orange, NJ 07052 973-731-9133
luluchab@aol.com

Total enclosed
 \$ _____

Anything and Everything Mercedes-Benz

by Andreas Molde

Regular or Premium?

During my recent Rt. 6 trip from NJ to Chicago the subject came up, of what gasoline grade to use in a Mercedes-Benz, new and old.

The answer is simple, PREMIUM!

I can't recall any Mercedes, built in the last 45 years or so that was designed to run on "Regular", with the exception of the 1984 190 E and the 380 SE, both Euro Models. That was MB's first attempt on running with catalytic converters in Germany and both engines were "Nieder-Verdichtet" that means they had a low compression ratio.

The compression ratio is really key to determine whether to use Regular or Premium.

The MB's in Europe with their "normal" compression ratio runs 97 octane(!) which is Premium and the Regular is 94(!) octane.

Here in the US the highest octane you get is 94 (Boat and Racing fuel excluded).

Because of that, the engines for the US have a lower compression ratio than their European counter part.

Some might argue that they don't hear any "pinging" and therefore it should be ok to use "Regular", but there is also the kind of "pinging" that we do not hear and that may be detrimental your engines health!

Newer MB's have what is called a "Knock-Sensor", some even have two and they pick up the "pinging" that we don't hear. The engine electronics then will adjust (retard) mainly the timing to protect the motor from any damage, but at the same time you loose power and the fuel economy goes down. So, on newer cars you could get away with "Regular" in a pinch, but there is really no savings due to the loss of power and poor fuel economy as a result.

Do your Mercedes and yourself a big favor and fill it up with "Premium". The extra \$5 or \$10 a week is not going to put you on welfare and your MB will love you that much more.

HOLIDAY PARTY— DEC. 16

Continued from page 1

Dinner will begin at 7:30 pm in the Conservatory with a magnificent fireplace and view of the grounds.

Fresh Melon and Seasonal Berries

Tossed Green Salad with a Bleu Cheese Dressing or Champagne Dressing

Choice of Entrée

Sliced Tenderloin of Beef & Chicken Duxelle

Duet of Grilled Jumbo Shrimp & Seared Sirloin Strip Steak

Duet of Grilled Jumbo Shrimp & Chicken

Grilled Vegetarian Platter

Dessert

Chef's choice

Further details & a coupon will be provided on our Web Site and in our next STAR TRACKS 2006 issue.

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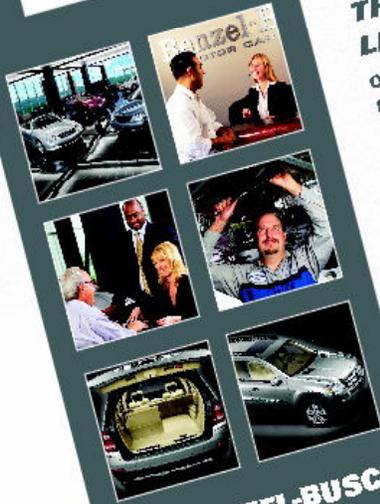
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50th Anniversary Route 6 Tour
"New Jersey to Chicago"

The Panther Valley Motor Inn was the designated starting point for RT 6, Tuesday, September 12th. Doug and I in our 2003 C230 Coupe loaded with prizes, packages for the RT 6 participants and luggage, wanted to get there early to greet those participants who stayed at the Inn the prior evening. We found Ron Tanner of the upstate New York Hudson Mohawk Section sitting in the brisk (52 degrees) but sun filled morning wearing a dark green pullover with a Mercedes logo and '68 250 SL embroidered on the front, enjoying the morning. Ron's dark green '68 250 SL coupe was parked just around the corner in the Inn's parking lot. Michael and Lili Gelman of the Long Island Sea Level Section were next to join the group driving around the Inn in their 1971 300 SEL 6.3. Leslie and Jim Potts of Allentown, NJ from the South New Jersey Section came out next in their 2006 E55 AMG. Rounding out the group for this site was Joe Grattan of Lincoln Park, NJ President of the Northern New Jersey Section driving his 560 SL Roadster. Joe was last to arrive, but on time, because he had to wash the car for the trip. At 10 A.M. with introductions and some car talk complete and a group photo taken, the group was excited to line up and start on our tour.

It was decided that for the first day we would caravan and so we headed west on Route 80 and traveled through the Pocono mountains on our way to RT 6, enjoying the start of the fall foliage season, seeing some trees already beautiful in bright reds and gold. Having talked via cell, our next stop was at 11:30 A.M. just off the junction of Route 6 West and US RT11 at the Dunkin Donuts to meet Werner and Nancy Fehlauer who motored from South Jersey in their 1983 300 SD. Werner is President of the South Jersey Section. Again, introductions, and talk of the scenery we saw en route and then we decided to stop for lunch within a short period of time. A short

time later we pulled into the Blue Bird Diner parking lot to have lunch. Michael Gelman, looking at the outside of the diner remarked that it was very retro, to which Doug replied no, original, but it fits right in with the theme of the RT 6 tour. The Blue Bird was not a disappointment; all were satisfied with the food, prices and service. With both our bodies and cars fueled we are now 6 cars headed to our first day's destination, Wellsboro, PA.



Having arrived at the Sherwood Motel in Wellsboro in late after-

noon we had sufficient time to take a walk through the main street of this quaint little town to do some exploring. Wellsboro's claim to fame aside from the fact that it is a very nice, little, old town on RT 6 is the famous tourist attraction the "Grand Canyon" of PA. Wellsboro is just south of Corning, New York. Umbrellas in hand, it had started to drizzle somewhere in mid afternoon, we started to walk. Doug and I met Frank Donangelo of the Northern New Jersey Section in his newly acquired 2006 C 280 4 Matic sedan. Frank had arrived in town a short time prior to meeting us and was taking a driving tour. Having decided there was sufficient daylight remaining, and meeting the group for the 7P.M. dinner, Frank took off to see the "Grand Canyon". Andreas Molde, Technical Director Northern New Jersey Section had checked in and parked his 300 E by the time we came back to the motel to get ready for dinner. We needed one more participant to complete our group and he had yet to arrive.

Again, umbrellas in hand we headed for the Wellsboro Hotel, which is situated on the main street in the heart of town, for dinner. Through the years Doug and I had been to Wellsboro a hand full of times and had enjoyed staying at that grand old dame which was built prior to the turn of the 19th century. Everyone particularly loved the old lobby with its groupings of big old cushioned sofas and club chairs.

It's a place where you can sit, relax and enjoy conversation. Off to the right of the lobby is the Penn-Wells Lounge where we gathered to enjoy some libation prior to sitting to dinner in the Mary Wells dining room (named for the woman who owned the hotel when built in 1869). Surprising, to those who were new to the hotel, was not only the expanse of culinary choices for dinner, but the prices. Joe Grattan, having a career background in food services said he found more flavors on his plate than he could have imagined. At about this point our group was completed when Paul Greenblatt of Bethlehem, PA Keystone Section member, joined us for dinner. Paul had parked his 1960 220 SE Coupe at the curb, in front of the hotel.

For some of us, day two, Wednesday the 13th, started with breakfast at the "famous Wellsboro Diner" again, original, not retro. For those in the group who chose to caravan and since this was to be the longest day in miles of our trip, we again, pointed our Star cars West to motor to the Ohio border through endless mountains shrouded in low cloud cover. The Cleveland area welcomed us with heavy rain though it could not be said that our spirits were dampened, quite the contrary. That evening we were to be the guests at the estate home in Willoughby, Ohio of Brian, Tracy and Brianna DiPasquale (Brianna was with grandma for the night). As each car entered the circular drive and stopped at the front entrance



Brian, with a very large umbrella in hand, was there to escort each of the women to the front door (the rain was so heavy and

puddles so deep that I removed my shoes before I got out of the car). Tracy was at the front door welcoming everyone while two tuxedo clad musicians were playing popular songs. They played and sang for our entertainment throughout the evening. A bar and catered hot buffet had been set up in the kitchen area. A contingency of 55 Western Reserve members were also

there to welcome our RT 6 group and join in the festivities of the Club's 50th Anniversary. At one point in the evening the rain stopped long enough for photos to be taken of the no less than 40 Star cars parked in and around the circular drive. During the evening each of the RT 6 participants was called by name and section to the center of the floor to receive a framed collage of items pertaining to Cleveland, the evening and RT 6 (cleverly crafted by Sue Morrison of the Western Reserve Section) and a RT 66 hat. Intermittent through the evening RT 66 memorabilia was given to the lucky person holding the ticket number called. Tracy and Brian had provided tickets for everyone early in the evening. In the list of guests were two national officers, Frank Cozza and Pete Lesler. To say the evening was top notch is an understatement. The Route 6 group could not thank Brian and Tracy enough for their hospitality and for having opened their home to the RT 6 group and also to the Western Reserve Section for such a warm welcome.

The morning of the 14th Pete Lesler, National Board member and chief overall judge for concourse in Chicago, joined us at our motel driving his C320 wagon, and was the last to join our RT 6 group. Some, choosing not to convoy, had already departed for Auburn, Indiana our destination for the day. We drove past downtown Cleveland, through the western suburbs with its stately mansions on lake Erie then across the western part of Ohio and Eastern part of Indiana's flat farmland showing us its last vestige of summer. As we made the turn onto the Best Western Auburn Inn road we saw their overhead marque saying Welcome Mercedes Benz. Inside we were welcomed to the Auburn Inn by Innkeeper Cathy Forbes, herself, a car enthusiast. The Auburn Inn is specific to autos having framed photos of cars and car buff celebrities in the lobby area. After checking in, everyone returned to the parking lot to wash their Star cars and take a group photo, not, the first, of the trip.



Auburn, IN is the home of several famous car museums, and of particular interest to our group was the Auburn, Cord, Dusenbergs Museum in downtown Auburn, where we had our private showing in the evening. Three Rivers Section, President Lee Lawson and wife Sherry hosted a two and a half hour wine and cheese reception on the main floor of the museum. Also attending were members of their section and members of the Indy 500 Section and of course all 14 members of the RT 6 group. The museum building itself was still in its original form and beautifully preserved with art deco designs decorating ceiling, floors and chandeliers. Since the museum was once the home for the design and building of the Cord automobile, one of the many interesting details aside from the art deco inside the building were two dead level rectangular spaces on the floor where Mr. Cord would place the car being built and thus level it. On the second level, set apart from the actual cars on display, in separate rooms we were able to see the rolls of raw clay, tools, clay models of the car to be built and display cards explaining that once one side of the car was the way they wanted it they could match the other and have the car to within 1/32 of an inch. There were an incredible number of Cords, Auburns and Dusenbergs along with many other marques displayed on the three floors including a Mercedes Gull Wing and a beautiful red Mercedes 500K. Upon our arrival in the museum, Doug and I placed three vintage Mercedes photo plaques specific to RT 6, on display to be awarded to three RT 6 participants at the end of our museum tour. After having a full two and a half hours of private leisure to look at, but not touch, and enjoy the treasures housed within the museum, Doug gave a ticket to each RT 6 driver for the drawing. Award winners were Frank Donangelo, Jim Potts and Paul Greenblatt. We then followed Lee and Sherry

Lawson through Auburn to the Bridge-

water Country Club, a caravan of some thirty-five Mercedes of different size, color and description, where we had extended fellowship while enjoying an informal hot buffet. Lee and Sherry Lawson along with the Three Rivers



Section were very cordial hosts. What a night, a first class classic museum with many beautiful marques and dinner at a new country club. We were impressed and most appreciative. When we arrived back at the Auburn Inn at the end of the evening we had hot, out of the oven chocolate chip and peanut butter cookies and hot and cold beverages waiting for us. Since the décor of the lobby is set up with comfy chairs and tables it was conducive to sitting a spell with the treats provided and discuss the events of the day and whatever else came to mind; laughter rang through the lobby. This was the last night of RT 6 trip and we were enjoying ourselves; tomorrow we headed for Chicagoland and their festivities.

Friday morning the 16th was clear and beautiful as we left Auburn and headed West to Chicagoland. A welcome reception was held Friday evening at the Hyatt Hotel. During the reception Doug Ochwat Vice President Northern New Jersey Section and RT 6 Trip leader, handed a Mercedes flag to Richard Simons Past President National, Northern California Section member and RT 66 Trip leader, thus symbolically handing off the baton from Route 6 to Route 66 making it a continuous coast-to-coast journey.

Saturday morning was another beautiful clear day with just a little breeze to make things comfortable for Concourse participants who had their Star cars lined up on the back lawn of the Peabody Estate. We are happy to say that at the awards banquet held at the Doubletree Hotel Saturday evening Joe Grattan, Michael Gelman and Doug Ochwat were each presented with a trophy for third place in their class. The Hyatt and Doubletree Hotels are within a short distance of each other in Oakbrook, ILL. We are thankful to Wendy Brown Chicagoland President

Continued from pg. 8

and her staff in Chicagoland for the hard work and effort that goes into making the Friday and Saturday festivities the great success that they were. RT 6 participants Werner and Nancy Fehlauer, Ron Tanner and Paul Greenblatt are making the coast to coast journey while Frank Donangelo is traveling on to St. Louis then breaking out to do some personal touring. The rest of our group headed for home with our memories and stories of things we saw along the way and pleased and comforted that this adventure brought new people from other Mercedes sections into our lives and the opportunity to get to know them.

Doug and Nora Ochwat Hosts for the RT 6 Trip



MBCA AT LIME ROCK WITH SCDA

by Gregory G. Calabro

We had great weather for most of June and it was looking like the weather would continue for June 24, our day at Lime Rock Park. Personally, I had planned to arrive at Lakeville, Connecticut early in the morning the day before, sit by the pool in the sun, read a book, and relax anticipating the track the following day. Then the heavens opened up. Every driver's nightmare came true with a torrential downpour that lasted all afternoon and into the evening. The road turned into a fast running river! When we arrived at Lime Rock the next day, what had started out as a washout, eventually turned out to be great day. The moderate rain in the morning let up, and by the afternoon the track had dried. This was not a MBCA event. This event was sponsored by the Sports Car Driving Association. MBCA participants numbered six drivers in five Benzs' from three different sections. Attending this event from the North New Jersey Section were John Bleimaier, driving a C230 Coupe, Douglas Ochwat, driving a C320 Coupe, and me with my 1986 190E 2.3-16. Gary Wallach from Delaware Valley Section, drove a C55, Jim and Martha Beck from the South New Jersey Section, each drove their SL55. Because this was a non-Mercedes event, there were a variety of cars on the track including a dozen or so Lotuses, a Maserati Spider, a Ferrari, a 240Z, a Z06, several BMW's, WRX's, and Porsches.



PHOTOGRAPHING THE JAMBOREE AND AUTOCROSS by Carl Ian Schwartz and Allen B. Gold, M.D.

Since joining the Northern New Jersey Chapter, we've always taken our cameras to Club events. What follows are some brief hints on how to take better pictures of Club events—and anything else you might wish! Flash was necessary to photograph the 50th Anniversary dinner on 9 June. To avoid red pupils in subjects' eyes, try to keep the flash as far as possible from the axis of the camera lens. While this is impossible in most point-and-shoot cameras, it is possible with cameras which can use a separate flash gun. If possible (and if the ceiling is light-colored and not too high), try to use bounce flash—it creates a more natural result. If not (too high or dark a ceiling), see whether your flash has a white diffuser that fits in front of the flash head. If so, use it for softer lighting. If photographing several people together, try to have them all at approximately the same distance from the camera and flash—this makes for more accurate exposure. Also—try to avoid mirrors in your pictures—your flash will show up as a bright spot of light, and may cause your camera to underexpose. Try to avoid shiny objects in direct flash photos, as the flash will reflect off of them and lose any details you might want to capture. At Jamboree itself, I tried to photograph not only the cars, but their owners, the concours judges, and—especially—children. Outdoors this was quite simple—just frame the picture, focus (or pick the proper point of focus with auto-focus cameras), and shoot. Sometimes daylight fill-flash makes for a better outdoor picture. Indoors flash was required. Converse with the people in your picture to get them relaxed—and remember to listen! Putting the subjects at ease ensures better people pictures. An old portraitist's trick is to photograph seated people from above, having them look up at you while you converse. Remember to focus on people's eyes. Sunday's autocross was a new experience for us. Walking through the course to get your bearings is essential—whether you drive through it or simply photograph it. It also gives you an idea of WHERE to take pictures as the cars go through the course—which helps with pre-focusing the camera (if manual-focus—anticipate where your subject may be, then use a high shutter speed and as small a lens opening as possible to ensure as sharp a picture as possible) or placing your auto-focus point on the spot where you anticipate a car will be and then taking the picture when the car is there. Frame carefully! Again, people make the event, and we tried to photograph people at the wheel, at the timing station, the course (with people to give scale), and such interesting subjects as members' adorable children, Hazel the miniature pinscher, and the Segways brought by our D.C. Chapter friends.

Digital technology makes it easier (you can improve composition, color balance, eliminate red-eye and retouch in the computer)—not to mention reusable “film.” Whether film or digital, practice makes perfect—so go out and photograph!

High Gear by John Kuhn Bleimaier

"The journey is the destination."

We've all heard this little fortune cookie canard at some point. However, as driving enthusiasts we can attest to the fact that this cliché just happens to represent the guilt edged truth. I'll never forget the first time that I drove to Lime Rock in the verdant hills of northwestern Connecticut.

Lime Rock Park is a sports car, road racing track. It's serpentine tarmac follows the erratic topography of a pocket valley between the Housatonic River and the Dutchess County line. Back in 1979 they scheduled a vintage racer weekend at the track and I decided to go as a spectator. The drive up is part of the lore of auto aficionado nirvana. The stretch of Route 7 between Kent and Lime Rock is truly sports car heaven. The road throws you every type of curve imaginable as you alternatively climb and dive through glorious scenery.

That particular morning so many years ago I found myself on Route 7 dicing with a British racing green AC Bristol as we headed North to our destination. The little aluminum bodied English car with its German designed engine scrambled for grip at the apexes on narrow Dunlop racing cord rubber. The AC pilot knew what he was doing and managed to wring the maximum performance out of his vintage vehicle. What a great experience for me as I kept on his tail in the twisty bits with my Diesel starship. When we arrived at Lime Rock I had a chance to talk with the owner of the AC in the paddock. He showed me the straight six engine with its hemispheric combustion chambers and unique cross-over push rods. It was a classic BMW design from the '30s and powered a uniquely reliable English car of the '50s.

That vintage weekend at Lime Rock in '79 featured an appearance by the legendary French prewar grand prix



driver, Rene Dreyfuss, behind the wheel of a 1935 competition Bugatti. It was an inspiration to see this dashing elderly gentleman deftly drift a priceless classic race car through the Lime Rock "S" curves. I was hooked on vintage motor sports and on Lime Rock Park. My most recent trip to Lime Rock took place just a couple of weeks ago. The Northern New Jersey Section of the MBCA purchased five slots from another car club for a day of drivers' education on the track. It was first come-first served to get in and I lucked out with my registration. Drivers education is not competition, although you might not realize it if you were casually looking on from the side lines. In 'drivers ed' you do laps of the track, first with an instructor and then solo.

There is no timing, no winners or losers. It's just a way of honing high speed driving skills in a controlled, track environment. However, the absence of trophies does not mean an absence of adrenaline. The student drivers are doing their best to extract the maximum performance from their mounts.

My C230K sports coupe and I found ourselves in a run group with a bouquet of Lotuses, Lotus Elises sports cars, that is. These fiberglass bodied English vehicles are powered by Toyota engines. They are very light and have blistering acceleration on the straights. As we lapped the track my C230K and the Lotuses would bunch up in the tight curves but the British cars would pull away on the straights. While the Mercedes coupe and the Lotuses have similar power, the Spartan coachwork of the fiberglass cars weighs nearly a thousand pounds less.

During a long day at the track, my starship was barely breaking a sweat. Engine temperature was just over 80 degrees Centigrade, all systems were functioning normally. No surprise here. Our starships are built for flat out performance around the clock. Sur-



prisingly enough none of the Lotuses broke either. After following a British racing green Lotus around the track at Lime Rock for multiple laps, I experienced a sense of déjà vu. Here I was again in the green hills of Connecticut glued to the tail of a green English sports car. I guess the moral of the story is, if you must buy a British car, make sure it's powered by either BMW or Toyota!

**TECH SESSION at
RAY CATENA SHOWROOM in
Union, NJ
Saturday, November 18 at 10 AM**

We will meet at the beautiful new Ray Catena Showroom on the NORTH side of Route 22 which is about two and a half miles WEST of the Garden State Parkway. The address is 2285 Route 22 West, Union, NJ 07083 There is also the Ray Catena Service Center about a mile closer to the GSP. Our event is NOT at the Service Center.

We will start at 10 AM with a continental breakfast. Jim Buchanan will lead a team of presenters to discuss the features and benefits of the new models and what we can expect from Mercedes Benz in the near future. Last year he promised a turnaround in customer satisfaction. Clearly, he was right.

A car care clinic is planned. Ray Catena professionals will demonstrate exterior and interior maintenance techniques. And, of course, we will be given a tour of the great new facility Ray Catena has built in Union.

There is no charge for this event, but we need an accurate count. Please notify us if you are attending not later than Tuesday November 14.

Please contact Lucille Chabala, 6 Brook Way, West Orange, NJ 07052 luluchab@aol.com — 973-731-9133

Proposed NNJS By-Law Changes

This is a proposed change to our by-laws. We will propose this change to the membership at our November 2006 meeting.

Our current by-laws, approved last September are...

Article IV

Nominations and elections

A. Nominations and elections: Nominations and elections of Section officers will be every two years, according to the following procedures.

1. Nominations of Section Officers: The President shall appoint a nomination committee July of the year of the election. This committee shall consist of at least three members of the Section. This committee shall select one nominee for each office.

2. Election procedure: The list of nominees shall be published in the section Newsletter [Star Tracks] at least two weeks prior to the date of the Annual Fall meeting. At the meeting, additional nominees will be accepted from the floor. If there is more than one (1) nominee for a given office, a written ballot shall be distributed at the meeting. If there is only one (1) nominee for each office, the election will be by voice vote. In either case, the results shall be determined by a majority vote of those members present at the meeting.

The change we suggest is ...

Article IV

Nominations and Elections

A. Nominations and elections: Nominations and elections of Section officers will be every two years, according to the following procedures.

1. Nominations of Section Officers: The President shall appoint an election Chairperson. This person shall be a member in good standing of the MBCA NNJ Section. The name of the Section Election Chairperson shall be announced, by the President, in the May/June edition of the Section newsletter and at the June meeting. By-law election procedures shall be reproduced in the same edition of the Section newsletter.

2. Election procedure:
A). Any member in good standing can submit to the election Chairperson by the June 30th, in writing, 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 by the above mentioned deadline.

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 vote. In either case, the results shall be determined by a majority vote of those members present at the meeting.

Interpretation

There are a couple of changes here:

- The first is appointing a Chairperson rather than a committee.
- The second is expanding the opportunity from a single individual seeking one office to a group of four individuals running as a slate (although this has been done in the past it is not specifically addressed).
- The third removes the responsibility from the Chairperson of recommending one person/group over another.

This modification was approved by all Officers, Board and Chairs on September 10, 2006. Please consider these changes and vote at the meeting at Ray Catena's November 18.

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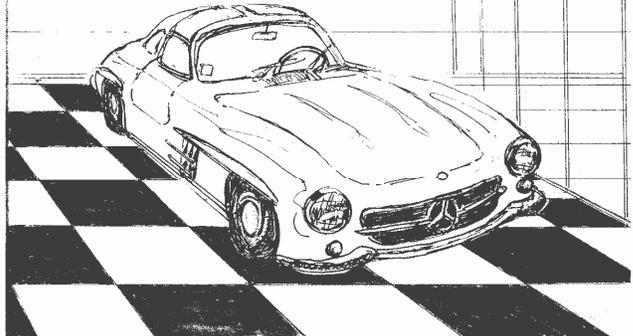
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NNJS Upcoming Events



Sunday, Oct 22—Rallye in October—Mattars Restaurant—Warren County, NJ—See page 4

Saturday, Nov 18—Tech Session—Ray Catena Showroom, Union, NJ—See page 10

Saturday, Dec 16 — 2006 Holiday Party— Fairmont Country Club, Chatham Twp—See page 1 and 5

