



Shining Star

Summer, 2012

MBCA | Northeastern Pennsylvania Section

Volume 17 Issue 2

Welcome, New Members

The following people have joined the club since our last *Shining Star*:

- Frank Dill, Boyertown
- Vincent Fantozzi, Allentown
- Tony Konefal, Hawley
- Joe Magnuszewski, Northampton
- George Speace, Wilkes Barre
- Wayne Sweet, Scranton
- David Zerfass, Nazareth

Do you know of anyone who might be interested in becoming a member of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America? You can get brochures and hang tags by contacting our club (president@mbca-nepa.org) or have them call the national club toll-free at 1-800-637-2360 to join.

2012 Drive Schedule

- Sept 2—Berks County to Hershey AACA Museum
- Sept 23—Mercedes Autocross at Sun Motors in Mechanicsburg (Keystone)
- Oct 7—Cross the Delaware: Warren & Sussex Counties, NJ
- Nov 4—Lehigh County to King of Prussia Mall Seasons 52 Restaurant

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Are You Really Getting Your MBCA Discount?

by Tom Hovind, MBCA-NEPA Driving Events Chairman

Editor's Note: Tom lives outside of Philadelphia, which is also where the dealers referred to in this article are located. **This is his story.**

One of the key benefits of being an MBCA member is the 10% discount on parts and service at participating Mercedes-Benz dealers. No doubt this is a key benefit of becoming a member and can offset the cost of membership. However I do sometimes wonder about the benefit. Lately I've taken to buying my parts online because I can get better pricing from some dealers via their web parts counter, than I can get locally even with the MBCA discount. Of course it doesn't help that many of my local dealers take to setting prices higher than the suggested retail price of any given part. **I have found some prices marked up more than 120% over the suggested list price.**

Below I've included a chart of the prices charged to me a few years ago for an Air Conditioning system repair, and the comparable pricing available online from another Mercedes dealer. As you will see in the chart I was given the MBCA discount by the dealer. However even that price was well above the suggested retail pricing.

Part Number	Description	MB Dealer "A" Price w/o Discount	MB Dealer "A" Price w/ 10% MBCA Discount	MSRP	MB Dealer "B" Price	% over-charge (Dealer "A" vs. MSRP)
2098300358	A/C Evaporator Core	\$873.33	\$786.00	\$655.00	\$491.25	33.33%
230830018428	Valve	\$227.33	\$204.60	\$165.00	\$123.75	37.78%
1409970945	Seal Ring	\$6.00	\$5.40	\$2.70	\$2.03	122.22%
1409970745	Seal Ring	\$4.44	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$1.50	122.00%
140997064564	Seal Ring	\$6.00	\$5.40	\$2.70	\$2.03	122.22%
1409970845	Seal Ring	\$4.88	\$4.40	\$2.20	\$1.65	121.82%
2118350047	A/C Drier	\$166.40	\$149.76	\$117.00	\$87.75	42.22%
140997064564	Seal Ring	\$6.00	\$5.40	\$2.70	\$2.03	122.22%
TOTAL:		\$1,294.38	\$1,164.96	\$949.30	\$711.99	36.35%

Because of overcharging practices like this by each of my four closest Philadelphia-area Mercedes dealers, I've stopped going to the local dealers. I've found that Mercedes-Benz of Manhattan, even with their building being among the most expensive real estate in the world has better prices and sells me parts at the MSRP, less my MBCA 10% discount. For me the drive to Manhattan isn't a big deal. My wife and I make a day of it. We drop the car off in the morning, or the evening before and take in a show, or just hangout and visit some of our favorite book stores and restaurants.

I've spoken to various people about this discrepancy, and according to some they have been told that there is no such thing as a suggested retail price and that each dealer sets their own prices. I can't say if that's true or not, I don't have that sort of access. All I do know for certain is that based on the above chart, some dealers are overcharging, and not by just a little bit. The net effect though is that this lessens the value of MBCA membership, and that's a real problem for the club.

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Suggestions, questions, idea articles for the Shining Star newsletter? Address them to editor@mbca-nepa.org.

You may view our newsletters on the website (www.mbca-nepa.org). Email us if you'd prefer to receive The Shining Star via e-mail.



The President's Corner

By Barbara Martin Fiedler
President, MBCA-NEPA



Growing the Club

As we make our way through the warm days of August, it is a good time to reflect. Our membership continues to grow and I continue to be dedicated to our group, and hope to make our section even better.

Most of what we accomplished would not be possible without your attendance and dedication. As your president, I am always looking for ways to bring on new events with even more ways to enjoy your MBCA membership.

Thank you all for supporting me in my passion for your club.

In Memory of Werner Fehlauer

I'd like to take this opportunity to remember **Werner Fehlauer**, who passed away on June 27th. Werner (shown above, right, at the Club's Holiday Dinner last December), was 79. Werner was Mid-Atlantic Regional Director of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America for many years. His camaraderie, vision and dedication to MBCA was evident in his thoughtful conversations.

His mentoring made it possible for me to accomplish the many tasks involved in marketing and attracting new members. Werner was, as they say of Mercedes, "Simply the Best".

The Benz Box

New Magazine for Mercedes Lovers

Sundial Magazines, British publishers of the monthly title **Mercedes Enthusiast**, have launched a new quarterly magazine **Classic Mercedes**. It will focus on the world's best and most coveted classic Mercedes-Benz models, from the iconic SL Gullwing of the 1950's through to the Modern Classics of the 1980s and 1990s.

Classic Mercedes will have strong international theme sourcing the broadest possible spread of material from across the world with company and model profiles, plus guidance on buying. The photographic element will be pronounced feature of its presentation.

It is designed to complement Mercedes Enthusiast which maintains its policy of covering all aspects of the Mercedes brand while leaving the new Classic Mercedes to concentrate on solely classics.

Classic Mercedes will be on sale in selected Barnes & Noble stores from the end of July/early August 2012 and will cost \$12.50 per issue.

If you can't get to a Barnes & Noble store, then you can order Classic Mercedes

on the website (\$12.50 inc. air mail) or subscribe for \$40.

For more information go to www.classicmercedesmagazine.com



Mercedes Club Classifieds



For Sale: 2007 C280 4Matic. White with palomino interior. 40,312 miles. Dealer serviced and completely loaded with all options except a spoiler! asking \$18,000. Anne M. Zug 610-867-9654 or amczug@aol.com.

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Questions? E-Mail us at president@mbca-nepa.org or check our website: www.mbca-nepa.org or the national site: www.mbca.org

MBCA NEPA Members Take Honors at 2012 Deutsche Classic



First and second place prizes in the 2012 Deutsche Classic Mercedes Division were awarded to MBCA-NEPA members.

Bob Steele, (top left photo) with his 1971 280SE, nicknamed "Anthracite", is shown receiving his first place award from **Fred Baker**, chairman of the event. The car was featured in an article in the September-October, 2010, edition of *The Star*, the MBCA national magazine. The car is in original condition and is immaculate, from its glossy anthracite-color paint to its amazingly clean undercarriage.

Manfred von Harten of Allentown (top right photo) won second place for his most excellent 1958 180D sedan.

James Taljan, (bottom left) from the Keystone Section, took third place with his SL500.

George Hubbard, from the Washington, DC, area section (lower right), took "Best in Show" (over all makes) with his 1959 190SL. George did most of the restoration himself over a five year period. It was obviously a labor of love and he

A record 42 Mercedes were entered in this year's event, including many MBCA members from the Northeastern PA, Keystone (Harrisburg/Lancaster), Delaware Valley and Northern New Jersey sections.

The event is held annually at Fleetwood Park, in Fleetwood, PA. The event, always well-run, clean, orderly and friendly, was blessed with beautiful weather again this year. Plentiful large Sycamore trees kept entries and visitors cool.



For coverage of MBCA-NEPA events: www.mbca-nepa.org/past_events/default.aspx

Independent Repair Shops for Mercedes

We frequently get requests from members asking for independent repair shops—especially from members who own older or vintage Mercedes. We pooled names we received from our members with others from Joe Grattan, past-president of the Northern New Jersey section, to compile this list. **Please see the disclaimer below.**

Alan Duke's Garage

Route 309, Trucksville, PA
570-696-4747

Dale's Custom Auto

108 East Ave, Hackettstown, NJ
908-850-4225

Felipe

Route 46, Rockaway, NJ
973-625-7600

MB Collision Center-Tom Elder)

3 Trenton-Lakewood Rd, Clarksburg, NJ
609-259-6373

Star Service Center*

738 N Graham St., Allentown, PA
610-437-3374

Tito

Route 23, Wayne, NJ
201-303-2728

Udo

201 County Rd., Tenafly, NJ
201-569-7154

Walter Piekarski*

920 Pembroke Rd., Bethlehem, PA
610-865-4255

Wheel Collision Center

7286 Penn Dr., Bath, PA
610-837-8792

Wolfgang

265 County Rd., Tenafly, NJ
201-568-7003

*Denotes MBCA-NEPA members.

Disclaimer: "Neither the Mercedes-Benz Club of America, nor the Northeastern Pennsylvania Section of the Club, nor its officers and members are in a position to recommend or endorse automotive service facilities. Mercedes-Benz USA undertakes extensive quality control with regard to its authorized dealers. We understand that owners of older vehicles particularly may choose to patronize independent service facilities. In the event that members of MBCA provide fellow members or others with the names and addresses of such independent service facilities this should not be construed as an endorsement. We are unable to vouch for or guarantee the quality of work undertaken by any third party."

Upcoming MBCA-NEPA Events

- Saturday, August 11th—1 p.m.-5 p.m.—**Mercedes at the Marina**—Picnic hosted by Jolanta & Walter Piekarski. (NEPA) See page 6 for details.
- Sunday, September 2nd—1pm-5pm—**First Sunday Drive (September)**—Berks County to AACA Museum in Hershey (NEPA)
- Saturday, September 22nd—10am-3pm—**Annual Regional Picnic**—at John Bleimaier's Falkenhorst (NNJ)
- Sunday, September 23rd—9:30 a.m.—**Mercedes Auto-cross**—Sponsored by the Keystone Section. To be held at Sun Motors in Mechanicsburg, PA. Please RSVP to Larry Taylor (larryt543@yahoo.com) by September 21st if you are planning to attend. (KEYS)
- Sunday, October 7th—1pm-5pm—**First Sunday Drive (October)**—Cross the Delaware: Warren & Sussex Counties, NJ. (NEPA)
- Sunday, November 4th—1pm-5pm—**First Sunday Drive (November)**—Lehigh County to King of Prussia Mall, Seasons 52 Restaurant. (NEPA)
- Saturday, November 17th—**2013 Planning Meeting**—Dinner and planning for next year. Share your ideas. Time & place TBA (NEPA)
- Sunday, December 16th—5pm-9pm—**NEPA Holiday Party**—at the Fiedler's (NEPA)

Key: **KEYS** = Keystone Section, **NEPA** = Northeastern Pennsylvania Section, **NNJ** = Northern New Jersey Section.

Directions to the Marina:

Take I-78 East to I-287 South to Garden State Parkway South. Exit the Parkway at Exit 80. At the end of the exit, take Route 9 South for 1.5 miles. Turn Left at the Motor Road traffic light (landmark: Sovereign Bank). Turn right at the yellow blinking light. Turn left onto Layton Ave. Turn right onto Lawshe. Turn left onto Corrigan Avenue. Follow Corrigan to the marina. If you need help on your way, call Jolanta's cell phone **(610-745-2638)**.



Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Northeastern Pennsylvania Section

406 N. Pine Top Cir
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Mercedes at the Marina

***Saturday,
August 11th,
1 p.m.***

- **Featuring Jolanta's Bountiful Shrimpfest plus Andouille Sausage, Potatoes, Corn, Cole Slaw, Sloppy Joes & Dessert, Appetizers including Fresh Tomatoes & Mozzarella w/Balsamic Vinegar, Roasted Eggplant, Fresh Salsa. Desserts, Soft Drinks and Bottled Water Provided.**
- **Bring your swimsuits, the pool is great!**
- **Please reserve your spot(s) by calling Jolanta at 610-745-2638 or email her at jolanta.properties@verizon.net by Wednesday, August 8th. Cost is \$15/person, payable at the event. Directions to the marina on page 5.**