



Golden Gate Star



EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF THE UNIVERSE

by Don Penney, Director at Large

What: Chabot Space & Science Center Tour
Where: 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland

When: Saturday, January 26, 2013, 5:30-10:30 p.m.
Cost: \$20 per person

Join your fellow club members for a wonderful experience at the Chabot Space & Science Center. Our evening begins at 5:30 p.m. with a group photo opportunity of our cars near the main entrance upon arrival. Then we move to the Planetarium for the Cosmos 360 show at 6:30. At 7:30 we will see the second show, Tales of the Maya Sky. Our experience wraps up with the telescope private viewing at 9:00.

SMOOTH SAILING

Remembering the Chardonnay Cruise on November 3.

From Dianne Busse. The warm sun ensured the cruise was off to a great start. The Monterey Bay sparked in the sun, and the sea remained calm with some wind that allowed the 70-foot Chardonnay sailboat to sail gently along the Santa Cruz coast. From the bay view, the Santa Cruz Boardwalk appeared magical. The continuous servings of wine, beer, soft drinks, and pizza promoted getting acquainted with new club members as well as a festive environment. The day could not have been better!

To top this event off, after we returned from the Chardonnay Cruise, incoming 2013 SFBA Section President Gloria Loventhal and her husband Richard Pederson invited us to join

(Continued on page 9)

Founded as an observatory in 1883, today Chabot offers visitors the very latest in hands-on, interactive exhibits, displays, and Planetarium shows that explore the mysteries of the universe and of life on earth.

Set amid beautiful redwood parkland in the hills above Oakland, Chabot is home to Nellie (36" reflector telescope), Rachel, and Leah—three magnificent telescopes and the largest public telescope facility in the country. The Center includes a digital, full-dome Planetarium and MegaDome Theater. In addition there are simulated space missions to the Moon, Mars, and more in the Challenger Learning Center. Here visitors can experience for themselves the wonders of the cosmos as they gaze through the telescopes at distant stars and planets.

The Center includes the Skyline Bistro with a diverse, fresh, healthy, and locally-grown menu including a variety of beverages.

Photography and/or videotape for non-commercial purposes is permitted with the exception of the Planetarium and children unrelated to you. Parking is available in the parking structure.

Registration deadline is Friday, January 4. **Please register online http://sections.mbca.org/sfba/section_calendar.htm.** Questions? Please contact Don Penney at (707) 310-0460 or Kara Pannu at (415) 205-0790.



2012-13 CALENDAR OF COMING ACTIVITIES

- DEC 2** First Sunday Drive
- DEC 8** Holiday Party, Gloria Loventhal (408) 823-6400
- JAN 6** First Sunday Drive
- JAN 26*** Chabot Space & Science Center, Don Penney (707) 310-0460
- JAN 27** SFBA Board Meeting, Mauna Wagner (925) 934-7220
- FEB 3** First Sunday Drive

*Register online at http://sections.mbca.org/sfba/section_calendar.htm (or form on page 9)

OFFICER'S MESSAGE

by Jack Weir, President

I love to drive, and always have. The proudest moment of my youth was when I bought my first car, a 1948 Studebaker Champion sedan that cost \$175 and got 48 miles per gallon. It was gutless and ugly as sin, but I had wheels, and the world was my oyster!

I have owned 22 cars, including five Mercedes, and I figure I've logged about 850,000 miles thus far. Still, driving my SLK320 top-down on a First Sunday Drive is a special treat, especially with my beautiful co-pilot Mauna navigating.

As outgoing president, I'm happy to report that our San Francisco Bay Area Section is one of the most active sections in the national club. Every month there are choices designed to suit the various interests of our 850+ members—social or technical activities, "destination" events, and driving opportunities.

All of our activities are planned and conducted by volunteers, and while our common appreciation of Mercedes-Benz automobiles is the central theme, it is the opportunity to enjoy friendships with fellow Benzers that really makes our club experience wonderful.

Building on the foundation laid by past president/ex-officio Robert Schilling, we now have a leadership team that collectively plans and carries out our programs and section administration. Members can now register online for all section events, and we are planning to expand our communications channels to include "social media."

If you're ready to take your Mercedes-Benz experience to the next level, come to a board meeting, or approach any of our board members at any event and offer to help in some way. I believe you'll get back more than you may realize. I know I'm grateful for the opportunity, and I thank you—one and all.

E-NEWSLETTER NOTICE—All members with e-mail addresses in the national MBCA membership database automatically receive the e-newsletter. Be sure that the MBCA National Business Office has your current e-mail address to receive the e-newsletter by contacting Renee Herbert at (800) 637-2360. Or send your address correction to Ann Bornstein (SFBA membership director) at annstitcher@charter.net. Members with no e-mail addresses receive the printed and mailed newsletter. If you want to receive the printed and mailed newsletter, you need to opt-out of the electronic version by contacting editor Laura Simonds at (650) 592-7613 or simondsl@pacbell.net. To avoid being "undeliverable," be sure to put our editor's address (simondsl@pacbell.net) in your list of safe senders.

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The GOLDEN GATE STAR

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You can send that wonderful article or ad via E-mail or FAX to me for inclusion in the Golden Gate Star simondsl@pacbell.net or FAX 650-592-6318. *Laura*

2013 SECTION OFFICERS ELECTED

by Robert Schilling, Ex-Officio & Nominating Committee Chair

The ballots of the SFBA Section election of officers were received by the deadline. By unanimous vote, the following officers were elected for 2013:

President: **Gloria Loventhal**

Vice President: **Eva Gordon**

Secretary: **Mauna Wagner**

Treasurer: **Lou Piccinini**

Thank you to all the members who returned their ballots, and thank you to our new officers who agree to serve our club. Congratulations and best wishes for another great year of SFBA activities!

NEWS & NOTES

Holiday Party, December 8, 2012, 5:00-8:00 p.m. We really hope you didn't miss the November 28 deadline for this delightful twilight tour of five international culinary regions at The Fairmont Hotel San Jose. Each special menu of small plates will include wonderful wine pairings. To enhance our evening, music will be provided by the Classy Jazz Trio. Because this is our annual Member Appreciation celebration, the cost is only \$55 per person. To find out if there's still space available to attend, please contact Gloria Loventhal at glorialov@gmail.com or (408) 823-6400, or Mauna Wagner at maunaw@aol.com or (925) 934-7220.

Fall 2013 MBCA Raffle. There are only a few days remaining to purchase raffle tickets—deadline is December 3. This holiday, you could dress up your driveway with a new Mercedes by purchasing a \$50 raffle ticket for your chance to win cash—enough to buy a new Mercedes! First prize \$50,000; second prize \$10,000; third prize \$5,000; and fourth prize (5 of them) \$1,000. Average odds of winning: 1 in 3,154. You can't win unless you play. You can purchase tickets at www.mbca.org or call (800) 637-2360.

Change in MBCA Loyalty Reward in 2013. This is another early alert that the member benefit MBCA Loyalty Reward discount will change in 2013. Since January 2011, qualifying MBCA members have been able to take \$1,000 off the price of a new Mercedes—including model years 2011, 2012, and 2013—at their U.S. authorized Mercedes-Benz dealer. **Starting January 1, 2013**, Mercedes-Benz USA will change the offer to **Mercedes 2013 model year ONLY**. Read "Five Ways to Save with Club Membership" in the November/December issue of *The Star* magazine, or email Lisa Juhl, Director of Marketing, at lisa@mbca.org.

FIRST SUNDAY DRIVES

First Sunday Drives are casual driving events that are held on the first Sunday of every month. To be notified of the next First Sunday Drive and for more information to links and event photos, please find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/FirstSundayDrives, or go to www.FirstSundayDrives.com, or send an email to join@FirstSundayDrives.com to join the distribution email list. Questions? Contact FSD administrator Shawn Merrill at her2011@firstsundaydrives.com.

Twenty-two cars and their owners could not have asked for better Sunday drive weather, as we wandered through the back roads and hills of Alameda and Co Co Counties—a drive we have not done in nearly six years. We began the morning with three new members and six vintage M-B's joining our caravan, with members traveling from as far south as Morgan Hill and as far north as Santa Rosa to attend our drive. Our journey started in Castro Valley and ended in Crocket, with twenty-eight of us staying for a no-host lunch at the Nantucket, which is located at the waters' edge near C and H Sugar. Our next drive on December 2 will take us to the South Bay where we will travel from Los Gatos to Morgan Hill, with a stop to visit the Casa Grande historical site along the way. I hope you can make it. Contact Shawn Merrill for more information (email address above). Until then, drive safe and see you on December 2.

PASSING IT ON

By Laura Simonds, Editor

This December newsletter is my last issue as Newsletter Editor for the SFBA Section. It has been a very long ride for me—13 ½ years actually. When I took over the job as Editor in June 1999, I expected to possibly do it for only a couple of years. I have no idea how it got to 2012, and I am still Editor. For the past several years, other board members and I have tried to recruit my replacement—with no success.

However, this summer someone stepped up. And, beginning in January 2013, Dianne Busse will be the new Newsletter Editor for SFBA Section. Dianne has good experience as a Business Communications instructor at Monterey Peninsula College. She and I have spent several months training for this transition.

There are many people for me to thank, and it's impossible to mention each of you by name. Section Presidents, section board members, photographers, countless event organizers and volunteers—you've all made invaluable contributions to our newsletter, and we even won some newsletter contest awards along the way. It was truly a group effort each month.

So, to Dianne, I am passing on the keyboard, mouse, newsletter style guide, and Constant Contact account.

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www.AWCollision.com

2013 CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Be sure to check your monthly newsletter and the section's web site for the latest updates on activities.

JANUARY 6 First Sunday Drive 26 Chabot Space & Science Center 27 Section Board Meeting	MAY 5 First Sunday Drive 18-22 StarTech TBD Blues, BBQ & Benz	SEPTEMBER 1 First Sunday Drive TBD SF Bay Cruise
FEBRUARY 3 First Sunday Drive TBD Mozart Automobile Museum Tour	JUNE 2 First Sunday Drive 7-9 Regional Mystery Trip	OCTOBER 4-6 Sierra Nevada Rally 6 First Sunday Drive 13 Fleet Week Aircraft Carrier Tour 20 Section Board Meeting & 2014 Planning Meeting
MARCH 3 First Sunday Drive TBD Filoli Tour	JULY 2 First Sunday Drive TBD Off-Road Tour TBD Section Board Meeting	NOVEMBER 3 First Sunday Drive TBD Winery Bottling
APRIL 7 First Sunday Drive 21 Section Board Meeting TBD Train Ride	AUGUST 4 First Sunday Drive 16 Legends of the Autobahn 16 Carmel Dinner	DECEMBER 1 First Sunday Drive TBD Holiday Gala



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For information and registration package contact Liz Roberson
at lizroberson2013@gmail.com | 205.822.8460

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WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

October 2012

(Order name badges from the National Business Office, (800) 637-2360, or online at the Club Store www.mbca.org.)

Xiaopeng Cai, *Dublin*
Kathleen Carlton, *Napa*
Andreas Dharmawan, *San Francisco*
Thom & Sylvia Dietmeier, *Morgan Hill*
Vincent Hendra, *San Ramon*
Chris Hook, *Los Altos*
Henrik Jeberg, *Tiburon*
Mark Koenig, *San Francisco*
Francis Lanier, *San Francisco*
Scott Lee, *Santa Rosa*
Raymond Lukens, *Magalia*
Mark Morgan, *San Mateo*
John Morrow, *FPO AP*
Carolyn Pannu, *San Mateo*
Robert Phillips, *Sunnyvale*
Joy Santacera, *Fremont*
Donald Tynes & Marci Taylor, *Gilroy*
Jeffrey Von Beltz, *Fairfield*
Joan Weaver, *Belmont*
Barbara Zak, *Plumas Lake*

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

We're proud to recognize our SFBA Section members who have recently celebrated a milestone MBCA membership anniversary. We appreciate that you're part of MBCA and hope that you continue to enjoy the benefits of your membership for a long time. Congratulations!

Irwin Schatz, *Oakland, 35 years*
Richard & Sharlene Yamanaka, *Napa, 30 years*
Marshall Ehlers, *Emeryville, 30 years*
Peter & Mary Judy, *Los Gatos, 25 years*
Jurg & Christel Bieri, *El Cerrito, 20 years*
John & Ruth Sechler, *Lafayette, 10 years*
Jack Rose, *San Jose, 10 years*
Anto Aghapekian & Lynda Johnson, *Alameda, 10 years*
Chris & Sharon Menicou, *Fremont, 5 years*
Charles Marlow, *Seaside, 5 years*
Kenneth & Cindy Brown, *Salinas, 5 years*



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SEEING THE FUTURE AT MBRDNA

by Steve Robinson, Director at Large
with contributors John Hietter and JuliAnn Robinson

This is an exciting time to be a Mercedes-Benz enthusiast with the innovations and enhancements currently available on and being developed for Mercedes-Benz vehicles. Mercedes-Benz Research & Development North America, Inc. (MBRDNA), based in Palo Alto since 1995, is where much of this happens with a key focus on internet/cloud-based infotainment system applications. In fact, Mercedes-Benz Apps recently achieved first place in the “Best Delivery Platform for Mobile” category at the annual “Mobile Excellence Awards.”

On Saturday, October 27, a maximum capacity of forty SFBA Section members experienced an outstanding presentation by Johann Jungwirth (JJ), President & CEO, MBRDNA. JJ discussed what he and his team have done to conceptualize, develop, implement, and enhance the infotainment systems currently available or to be available in future Mercedes-Benz vehicles. This included Smart Drive, Digital Drive Style, mbrace and mbrace2, AMG Performance Media (APM), and DICE.

Smart Drive is the media system for SMART cars, using a smart phone as the car’s media system and connects via a dock on the dashboard. Digital Drive Style is the Mercedes version of Smart Drive and more deeply integrates your mobile device into the car via a downloadable app. Mbrace and mbrace2 are the primary hard drive media system built into most Mercedes vehicles now. APM is the first android-based infotainment system from a major OEM and integrates the key features of Digital Drive Style and adds a virtual race command center which feeds vehicle status data to the driver while driving. DICE is Mercedes vision for a future infotainment system with gesture controls operating windshield and dashboard displays without touch, switches, or buttons.



JJ next gave us a brief tour of the office featuring photos and plaques highlighting their first internet capable car, their first hard drive based media and navigation system, and more. We then descended to the “Auto Lab” where prototypes are installed, tested, and refined before implementation. Here JJ demonstrated infotainment system apps in a new ML and SLK, such as Google Search, Yelp, Facebook, Morningstar Finance, and more. The APM demonstration featured an SLS AMG.

Lastly, JJ discussed Mercedes autonomous vehicle research (cars that drive themselves).

Mercedes has been exploring and testing “autonomous” technology for some time and continues to do so. In fact, per JJ, the first-ever tests were conducted in Germany with the W140 chassis vehicle in 1993-94 but shelved. Apparently, “we as consumers were not quite ready.” He acknowledged that this will be a very gradual transition due to significant infrastructure updates needed and legal issues to overcome (like who’s responsible in case of an accident). A rather timely article in *Autoweek Daily Drive* following the MBRDNA event stated that autonomous vehicles could account for 75% of cars on the road by 2040.



And now for some personal perspectives from the younger, not quite older, and older generations. **John Hietter**, who took detailed notes at the event and helped me tremendously with this article, represents the future generation for Mercedes-Benz. At 22 years old, John has loved European cars all his life and is very tech savvy. He stated that even he felt overwhelmed by the new media systems and is concerned how older generations are going to learn and be comfortable with these systems. My wife, **JuliAnn**, simply stated after the event that when she replaces her non-Mercedes with a new M Class in a year or so, it will have the latest infotainment system Mercedes has to offer. As for **me**, I can hardly wait until a new M Class joins our two ‘90’s vintage Mercedes. That’s how I will learn, although it may take a while going through the manuals and menus.



I must thank Richard Simonds for his extraordinary efforts scheduling and coordinating the MBRDNA event, and, of course, JJ and everyone at MBRDNA for hosting this event, providing an excellent lunch, and making us feel so welcome.

IF CARS COULD TALK

by Gloria Loventhal, VP, and spouse Richard Pederson

Hi, my name is Cabby. I am a 1960 220SE Cabriolet, thus my name. Jurgen Klockemann, a master in Mercedes restoration, was going to make me new again as my previous owner had my exterior painted a gorgeous crème color, stripped my interior, and then stopped. Then I was put in boxes. Why? I will never know.

Someone needed to want me enough to get me out of here and get me up and running again!

My wish came true. Gloria and Richard saved the day. They bought me in 1987 because they thought the ponton model was so amazingly chic, stunning and unique, and of course it is. My interior has the most wood of any Mercedes model ever made.

However, I sat in their garage for years before Jurgen could perform his magic. I was supposed to beautify the front of the Fairmont Hotel on Gloria and Richard's wedding day in 1992 but never made it. But look at me on their 15th anniversary in 2007, so decked out and gorgeous!

Even Gary Anderson of The Star magazine thought I was pretty enough for a photo of me to be included in one of the articles featuring pontons. Now my owners take me to the Legends of the Autobahn and some First Sunday Drives, and show me off wherever they can.

One time I earned an award for being the prettiest car at a rally run by Robert Schilling. I have also been the getaway car at two weddings. Wow, those were amazing experiences!

My owners say there's nothing like driving a Mercedes, and I agree! I am so happy to grace the road with them.



CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE: 1975 280C. Original, only 122K miles. Ivory exterior (original paint color), MB red interior. Interior looks, feels, and smells almost "as new." Cushioning in seats is very, very firm and has no aging. Tires are 95%. A/C-heater works and had recent work. Radio/stereo is not original yet is very functional and "top-of-the-line" for its day. Trunk looks like new. Asking \$11,500. Contact Malcolm at (541) 482-9852 or cell text (541) 944-4555.

FOR SALE: 1990 560SEC Coupe. Pearl black-gray leather. Everything works, carefully maintained, all service records. Nice body and excellent mechanicals. 183K miles. Reliable, daily driver. \$11,500. Contact Ted Riseling at (918) 527-2236 or tedriseling@sbcglobal.net.

FOR SALE: 1979 300D. Body and new paint to original color. Excellent. Original Palomino MB Tex interior, dash very good, wood trim excellent. New AC compressor 134. Only 60K on rebuilt engine. Trans is shifting perfectly. Car drove from Portland, Oregon to Tulsa and performed flawlessly. Contact Joe Connors at (918) 812-4117 or conrs1@att.net.

FOR SALE: 1981 Rolls-Royce Corniche Convertible. Elegant Tudor red with magnolia Everflex top and burgundy-piped magnolia interior with extensive use of beautiful burl walnut. Only 31,000 original miles on this 31-year-old classic and in nearly flawless condition. Recently smogged. Runs and drives like a dream. Attractively priced for immediate sale by long-time MBCA member. Would make a breathtaking holiday gift for a loved one or for your deserving self. Send email to request photos. Contact Greg Hubit at (707) 206-0181 or ghubitbwx@aol.com.

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SMOOTH SAILING

(Continued from page 1)

them on their yacht Casablanca moored at an adjacent dock in the Santa Cruz Harbor. The party continued on the yacht at the dock. Thank you for inviting us to continue enjoying this perfect day at the bay and the harbor!

From Donna Blenn. Forty club members showed up ready to go sailing on the Chardonnay. It was a postcard day, no wind, clear, and temperatures in the 70s. The event was organized by Sandor Drobilisch, in memory of his departed wife Lindsay who organized a previous excursion in April 2008. Those of us that attended previously can remember the unseasonal weather that day, somewhere in the 80s, clear, and mild. We all felt Lindsay's presence on this atypical November day. She was upbeat and brought a sunny disposition with her to MBCA events. We tossed roses in the ocean in Lindsay's memory even though we all felt her presence before doing so and agreed she was responsible for the great weather.

It was a rare November day that won't be forgotten—good friends, good food, marvelous weather, and fine wine. Many thanks to the Drobilisch's.



REGIONAL MYSTERY TRIP

June 7-9, 2013

The Decker's from Central Coast Section will be hosting this event, which for many years has been the most popular annual activity of the Central California Section. As the name implies, it is a "mystery," so a minimal amount of information will be divulged. There will be a significant amount of driving by way of caravan. We will depart from Point "A" on Friday morning, and complete our trip midday Sunday at Point "B." Set these dates aside, and look for additional details in future newsletters.



CHABOT SPACE & SCIENCE CENTER TOUR Saturday, January 26, 2013 RESERVATION FORM

Names of attendees: _____

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First Event: Y N

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MBRDNA TOUR, OCTOBER 27, 2012

