



Around the Benz

the official Central Florida section club newsletter

Volume 2018 - 3rd Edition
May-June



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Heating up the roads of Central Florida



The #33 Riley Motorsports Client-Command AMG GT3 battling for position into the hairpin at turn 7 in the Fangione Chicane
Photo Credit: Jeremy Winder, aspiring Mercedes-Benz obsessive

The Presidential Address

Welcome everyone! Spring is in the air and that can mean only one thing; it's time get in our cars and start driving. In this edition of our newsletter, ...[more on page 2]

Event Review: Amelia Island, 2018

Imagine, in your mind's eye, the long, lush verdant fairways of the beautiful golf course surrounding the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Amelia Island, Florida... [more on page 6]

Biography: EVOLution of a Dream

...And while the broad range of Tri Pointed Star vehicles had my undivided attention, there is one specific model that made my heart beat faster: The 190E, or W201 Series... [more on page 12]

Lifestyle: Lets Take A Ride!

Is it possible, that when you live somewhere long enough, you start to lose sight of what's in your own backyard? Have you ever heard someone say "There's just nothing to do here!" ... [read more page 18]

Upcoming Events 31

- 1. Sun, May 6 - Road Rally
8:30a Meet at Ace Cafe
Road Rally to Howey Mansion
Cost: \$99
- 2. May 14-21 - Birmingham, AL
StarFest 2018
National MBCA Event
- 3. Mon, May 21 - Ace Cafe
6:00p Car Show
Meetup with Porsche Club
- 4. Tues, May 29 - Club Business
6:00p
Where: TBD
- 5. Sat, June 2 - Tech Session
Pierre Hedary & Company
1014 Pine St, Titusville, FL
Cost \$0
Mercedes Benz classic car care
and restoration
- 6. Mon, June 18 - Ace Cafe
6:00p Car Show
Meetup with Porsche Club
- 7. Sat, July 14 - Club Dinner
Hollerbach's Willow Tree Café
205 E 1st St, Sanford
Cost: Menu prices



The Presidential Address

Bob Hartmann

Welcome everyone! Spring is in the air and that can mean only one thing; it's time get in our cars and start driving. In this edition of our newsletter, we have a variety of articles focused on exploring driving venues, locally as well as those in other parts of the South. During MBCA Starfest, being held this May in and around Birmingham, Alabama, driving events include everything from picturesque country roads to track events. These track events are geared to help you become a better driver through hands on education, exploring your Mercedes' performance with qualified instructors.

Besides a preview of upcoming events, there are reviews of recent events that members of our local chapter were involved with. Bob Rolle and his group continue to offer us a variety of different fun and interesting events, details of which are included with this newsletter.



Bob with his 2008 SL55 AMG 'Mistress'

Finally, we have articles highlighting personal experiences of people and their Mercedes. Mario Puente, a member from the southwestern Florida section of MBCA, details his family's pursuit of a very rare "baby Benz" street racer, the Evo 1, while Pierre Hedary tells the story of his Friend and Ace mechanic, George Antilla.

Regardless of your passion for the Mercedes-Benz brand, we are striving to provide fun, informative and engaging activities. Don't see anything in these pages that appeals to you? We are always open to member's suggestions. Remember to follow us on our Google+ site, just search 'Google+ MBCA CFS'.

Drive defensively, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our activities in the near future.

Member Benefits

There are additional and sometimes unknown benefits to being an MBCA member in the Central Florida Section, above those that everyone receives with National Membership:

-Mission Inn Resort, Howey in the Hills: purchase two nights and get a consecutive 3rd night for free.

-Area Mercedes-Benz Dealers: \$500 off the purchase of any new Mercedes-Benz.

-Pierre Hedary and Company: \$5.00 off per hour (pre-1995 models only).

-Backhaus Bakery and Deli : 10% off for club members.

-Interested in including your business here? Contact Larry Barnes!

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About the Club

The MBCA was established in 1956, and currently has approximately 30,000 members across the nation. There are over 84 local Sections organizing hundreds of local and National Events each year. You can enroll as a member of MBCA by calling 1-800-637-2360, or by using the National Website at www.mbca.org. Cost is: One year = \$55.00 | Two years = \$107.00 | Three years = \$157.00 You may select your Section, or be assigned the closest local Section by your zip code to be closest to Events and activities in your area. More information can be found on the MBCA website: mbca.org/membership.

About our Section

Your National dues include membership in the Section of your choice. Each Section publishes a newsletter defining it's activities and Events. Year round calendars of Events include social, technical, and driving Events. Within your MBCA magazine, The Star, you will find information on Section, Regional, and National Events. Any MBCA member may attend any Section, Regional, or National Event by registering and paying the member fees advertised. If you need a referral for a service provider to maintain your Mercedes Benz, reach out to a fellow club member.

About the Newsletter

The Mercedes-Benz Club of America—Central Florida Section, Inc. publishes this newsletter every two months starting in January — March — May — July — September – and November. Special editions may be published from time to time to address events or interest items of special significance. Opinions expressed are those of the Authors and Editors. Express permission is hereby granted to other Sections of the MBCA to reprint articles contained herein, without exception. Articles of general interest are solicited for inclusion and should be e-mailed to the newsletter editor Pierre Hedary at mownersforlife@bellsouth.net. Submissions will be considered preceding the month of publication.

About the Website

The Central Florida Section currently has two online outlets, the official MBCA site and the Google+ page. You may see YouTube postings that will make your day, a photo album full of exciting club happenings, or an event that's right up your alley. Click logos above to find out more. These logos scattered throughout the newsletter mean there is more content online; simply click on them to see more! Of course continue to check back on our official centralflorida.mbca.org section site for digital copies of the newsletters and more.



High Mileage Award

Did you know you can apply at your local Mercedes-Benz Dealer for a High Mileage Award?

Mileage intervals are, in thousands of miles, 155, 312, 468, 625 and one million. Download the form from [this link](#), fill it out and take it into your local Dealer's Service Department. They check the odometer and do a brief inspection, sign the form, you mail it into the address indicated on the form, and viola! Eight weeks later a grill/radiator badge arrives in the mail indicating your current mileage milestone.

Jon Douglas

Newsletter Publishing

For those of us that appreciate the simplicity of the metric system, kilometer intervals are 250k, 500k, 750k, one million km and one million miles. I recently bought in my 1982 300SD for its' first milestone of 250,000 km and Ed Taylor, the Service Manager at Mercedes-Benz of Orlando, said he's glad to still see people doing this.

Let's be the section that floods MBUSA with High Mileage Award Applications!

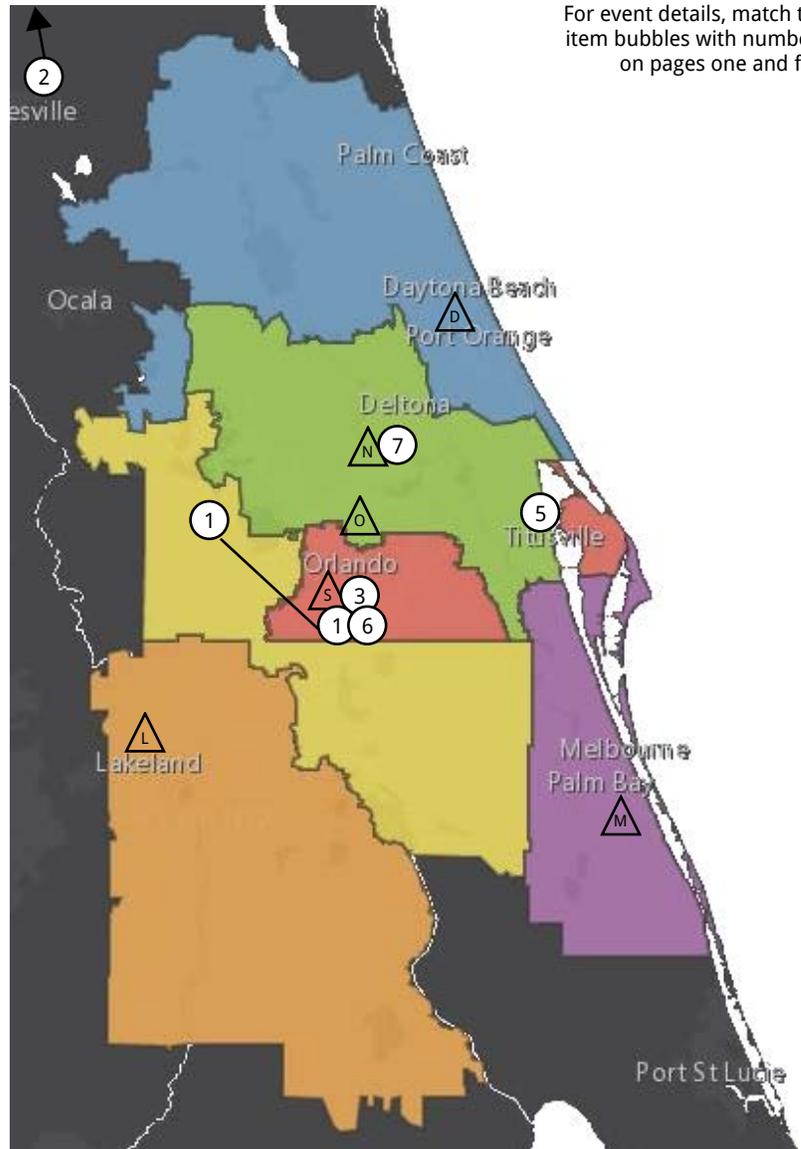




Event Summary and Membership Map

LEGEND

-  NORTH (36)
DAYTONA, VILLAGES, PALATKA
-  MB OF DAYTONA
1188 N Tomoka Farms Rd
Daytona Beach, FL 32124
-  NORTH CENTRAL (62)
SANFORD, EUSTIS, MAITLAND
-  MB OF NORTH ORLANDO
1100 Rinehart Rd
Sanford, FL 32771
-  MB OF ORLANDO
810 N Orlando Ave
Maitland, FL 32751
-  CENTRAL (29)
ORLANDO, DISNEY, MERRITT ISLAND
-  MB OF SOUTH ORLANDO
4301 Millenia Blvd
Orlando, FL 32839
-  WEST/KISSIMMEE (21)
KISSIMMEE, CLERMONT, LEESBURG
-  SOUTHEAST (27)
MELBOURNE, PALM BAY, COCOA
-  MB OF MELBOURNE
509 E Nasa Blvd
Melbourne, FL 32901
-  SOUTHWEST (13)
LAKELAND, DAVENPORT, SEBRING
-  FIELDS MOTORCARS
4141 N Florida Ave
Lakeland, FL 33805



For event details, match the item bubbles with numbers on pages one and five

The Spring Raffle is now Open



Enter for a chance to win your dream vehicle, a 2018 Mercedes-Benz S560 Cabriolet. Tickets are \$50 each and there is no limit to the number of tickets you can purchase.

The International Stars Mercedes-Benz Club of America raffle is open to MBCA members only. Visit raffle.mbca.org for more information and to read the rules and regulations.

To purchase tickets by phone please call 1-800-637-2360 (Monday-Thursday 8 am - 4:30 pm or Friday 8 am to 4 pm Mountain Time).

Image in contest promotional materials doesn't entirely represent actual prize being won. Photo credit: Mercedes-Benz-USA



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Upcoming Central Florida Section Event Details 31

1. StarFest 2018

MBCA

StarFest® is the flagship for Mercedes-Benz Club of America's great national event. If you are a Mercedes-Benz fanatic, then Mercedes-Benz Club of America is your place. StarFest® 2018 continues its heritage of bringing auto enthusiasts together for the appreciation of Mercedes-Benz classic and modern cars.

GET YOUR DRIVING EXPERIENCE

Do you want to embrace a legendary experience? Then join us for StarFest 2018 nestled in the heart of Alabama's racing heritage. Take advantage of driving your Mercedes-Benz on the 17-turn Barber road course, Barber Proving Ground, and Talladega Superspeedway.

THE APPRECIATION OF MERCEDES-BENZ CLASSIC

Are you more of a classic car person? Then join us as we appreciate the heritage of vintage Mercedes-Benz through the Club's most proud traditions. StarFest® 2018 Concours d'Elegance is an experience for lovers of automobiles, rich history, elegant design and more.

A MEMBER-ONLY EVENT

StarFest® 2018 is a Mercedes-Benz Club of America member event. Want to experience the largest Mercedes-Benz car club in the world's most prestigious event? Join today and then come back to starfest2018.mbca.org to register. Have questions? Call the National Business Office at (800) 637-2360.

Interested in receiving
a printed copy of the newsletter?

Write Pierre Hedary: mownersforlife@bellsouth.net

5. Tech Session @ Pierre Hedary's

Elaine Spiller

MBCA will host a Tech Session at Pierre Hedary's Classic Mercedes-Benz Repair Shop in Titusville, FL.
Date/Time: June 2nd @ 10:00 a.m

Location: 1014 Pine Street, Titusville, FL, 32796

RSVP: May 30th Elaine Spiller
elainemspiller@gmail.com or 904.874.1091

Sneakers/work boots are the required footwear. Heels, crocs, sandals, flip flops, Sperrys, ballet flats are NOT allowed to be worn at the shop!!! Please bring your lawn/fold up chair. This Tech session will focus on Classic Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

Session I - 10:30-11:00 - Benefits of owning a Classic Mercedes-Benz.

Session II - 11:00-12:00 - Common do it yourself maintenance tasks on classic Mercedes-Benz.

Session III - 12:00-1:00 p.m. - Common mistakes and problems classic Mercedes-Benz owners encounter.

Session IV - 1:00 pm at a local restaurant

Session IV - Following lunch: Locating and evaluating the right classic Mercedes-Benz, and ending with a Question and Answer session.

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triangle
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Event Review: Amelia Island 2018 Concours d'Elegance G+

Bill Greener

Guest Contributor - MBCA NY Finger Lakes Region

Imagine, in your mind's eye, the long, lush verdant fairways of the beautiful golf course surrounding the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Amelia Island, Florida. On #18 two Titleists and a couple of Callaways lay lazily in the warm sun awaiting a lofty flight to a velvety green. This is a smooth idle at 600 RPMs.

Now floor it...and let the turbos kick in; REDLINE! Suddenly golf balls have become Maseratis, Ferraris, Grand Prix race cars, and exotic automotive art of every marque imaginable; many



hundreds of them, and the thousands of owners and on-lookers, who you could pick out by their wide eyes and smiling faces. You needn't imagine; this was the 2018 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance and supporting events this past March 8th, 9th, and 10th.

If you will ride with me for the next few minutes I'll drive you on my journey to this wonderful event. First, let me tell you that I was part of the entourage of the most affable (you mean 'laughable', right Bill? -Ed) Pierre Hedary, whom you all likely know (or know of). What a difference a good tour guide makes!

Several of us from opposite ends of the U.S. converged in Titusville, FL on the Sunday prior to the show. Pierre had been working on our respective cars (a '61 Adenauer, '72 280SE 4.5, '83

300D, '85 300CD Turbo diesel), readying them for the Cars & Coffee on the forthcoming Saturday, and we wanted to add the finishing touches. Wednesday morning off we drove; a Mercedes-Benz armada.

A number of auctions were scheduled throughout the week. We were particularly interested in that of Gooding & Co., not only because of the crazy-nice-beautiful vehicles on offer but also since Pierre, Elaine and I were doing an auction analysis on 50 selected cars. But before doing so, I spent four hours on Thursday at Mercedes-Benz of Jacksonville with my friend and his Adenauer resolving some issues (a tire balance) that inevitably pop up with vintage cars no matter how well-sorted and prepared. Let me just say, kudos to the service gurus at the dealership!

We finally made it to the auction tents Thursday afternoon. OMG! I don't mean to be a name dropper, but...the 1953 Fiat 1100 Coupe, the '36 Bugatti Type 57 Stelvio, the '64 Alfa Romeo Giulia SS (the definition of 'sexy'), and more and more and more of the same with names beginning with all the letters of the alphabet. Terrific training for a budding, old man car guy like me.

Having quenched our 'car thirst' for the day, we headed across the FL-Georgia border to enjoy dinner with the southeastern region MBCA group.



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Bill Greener

Amelia Island 2018 (continued)



What nice folks! Of course, between bites two or three people would disappear into the parking lot to have a look at a Tampa Bay section member's 300SL roadster that he drove up from Miami, or the matching white on turquoise 1965 Pagodas (and even my 300CD). With these kind of people and their cars, what could be more fun? Well, let me continue.

Friday: let the auction begin! The tent was jammed with what seemed like thousands of us. So much noise and then, silence. A 1974 Porsche 911 Carrera RSR 2.1 Turbo was advancing in \$100,000 increments past four million, then five million dollars! The seller wasn't swayed by \$5.4 million, so he took it back home. Mumbling to one another, we watched a few Cobras, Ferraris, and other (breathtaking) cars of that ilk trade hands for several hundreds of thousands of dollars each. I was agonizing over the \$7 Coke I had just spilled on the ground.

Once again, our day was filled with the excitement we had come looking for, and we ended it with another festive dinner with Mercedes-Friends.

Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach is a beautiful part of northeastern Florida. Blue skies and salty, warm sea breezes are the norm, but Sunday's

chance of thunderstorms pushed the Concours d'Elegance event to Saturday, the same day as the Cars & Coffee being held on fairways two and three. My '85 300CD was one of about 25 MBs and over 400 other spectacular cars being proudly shown by their owners. The variety and quality of the cars were outstanding. Forty Corvettes, 20 Jaguars, GTOs, Chevys, Opels, a white Testarossa that I would have traded body parts for; just an incredible display of automobiles-hundreds of them! The best I've seen anywhere.

I won't say that we've almost arrived at our destination, for the journey I have thus far described 'is' the destination, but... the Concours d'Elegance was the real whipped cream of it all. Again, hundreds of cars...of the finest quality imaginable; some one or two of a kind; four cylinders, six cylinders, eight, 12, 16! Electric cars



300S Coupe Fuel Injected Einspritzmotor

nearly a century old. Auburns, Continentals (of the Bentley sort), Cords, Cadillacs, Duesenbergs, Zagatos, stars, planets, galaxies...!!! The Concours kicked off with Donald Osborne singing the National Anthem and, as if timed to the second, four vintage warbirds suddenly came roaring overhead in formation. I can arguably be accused of hyperbole throughout this story, but all of it really was breathtaking.





Amelia Island 2018 (continued)

Bill Greener

If you can believe it, there was just as much going on that I have not talked about. The displays of custom-built cars, the automotive (and other) scenery as you strolled around the Ritz-Carlton, the hotel itself, the various driving experiences from Alfa, Porsche, and others, a half-dozen high-end auctions, motorcycles (!), the tribute to legendary racer Emerson Fittipaldi...\$16 hamburgers...and so much more. It was all GREAT and I can't wait to do it again next year.

Before I unlock the car doors to let you out from this long ride, I will tell you that, for me, the best parts of the whole Amelia Island experience beyond the cars, the coffee, and the amazement were the friendships, the camaraderie, and the contributions made both to and by Hospice.

Motor on, motor heads.



280SE 4.5



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Bio: The Amazing Life of George Antilla

Pierre Hedary

Editor-in-Chief

I met George while I was on the hunt- specifically, I was hunting for something he had. Rarely does one find three classic Mercedes all stored in a barn together, but this was even more extraordinary.

For years Peter Lesler, our national concours chair, had told me the story of his talented friend George, who ran a Mercedes shop in Largo called Silver Star Specialities. George, being a collector of all things Mercedes, had managed to acquire not just one, but three 300SEL 6.3s. After several years of wondering, and with news of George's declining health, my curiosity got the better of me, and so I drove out to see him. At the time I was regional director, so I managed to jam pack the visit in between a trip to Jacksonville and an on-site job. I had spoken to George briefly on the phone, but there is nothing like meeting someone in person for the first time.

When I met him, George immediately decided I was credible- he looked at my hands (proof I worked on cars) and my gold 300D, and I knew immediately I had made a new friend. Despite his old age, his long hair, his sense of humor and his "I don't give a damn" attitude won my admiration.

And so we sat down and talked for the next five hours. George, despite being an MBCA Tampa Bay section member for 35 years, abhorred a certain past regional director and had a lot of fun "giving him a hard time." I got a laugh out of this, as he described to me all of the occasions he raised hell on club rallies in a w115 220 sedan and his 1972 350SL. He spent much time on AACA rallies as well. George, being the skilled machinist he was, would frequently take his machine shop with him, and rebuild parts on the road. In fact, George was such an amazing machinist that he remade the notoriously fragile w108 heater levers in aluminum, so they wouldn't break.

George was from Long Island. He had become involved with Mercedes in the mid 1950s, working for a dealer in the area, and then opening his own shop. In 1979, he got tired of New York, packed up all of his stuff, and moved to Tampa. He brought two of the 6.3s with him, and deciding they were too dangerous to drive, parked them in his shop on jack stands. George went on to a successful 38 year career serving the Mercedes owners of the area. George had a lot of friends who would come in to see him while he was sick, and this indicated to me that he was more than just capable- he was honest and he cared about his customers.

When I meet someone like George, there's a type of language that people who work on older Mercedes speak, and that always helped us initiate a friendship. When George figured out that I spoke his language, he began to treat me like a lifelong friend, which always warmed my heart.



When I would go to Tampa, I would always take time to see George. I introduced a number of people to him, including Terry Kiwala and Keith Morgan, who each bought a 6.3. I only had a little over a year with him before his time was up, and on March 5th, he died suddenly. George had battled cancer for several years, but despite what one would logically presume, he actually did not die of cancer, and, in fact, had been in remission for several months.





The Amazing Life of George Antilla (continued)

Pierre Hedary

With some kind of foresight, he called me about three weeks before he died.

"Pierre, the end is coming for me soon, I know it. I think you should buy all of my shit."

"George, I can't afford all of it. I don't even know where I would put it. But seriously, you're going to be fine. Don't talk like that." But George was calm. "It's OK", he told me. "I've done everything I wanted to do."

About three weeks after he passed, the night I got back from Amelia Island, a mutual friend of ours contacted me and let me know the sad news.

I feel it's my duty to deliver a fitting eulogy for my old friend George Antilla. There are so few people in this world that are fully capable of machining a part from a piece of metal, of welding up a cylinder head. George wasn't an old mechanic. He was a timeless individual; his old age hidden by an attitude that had not aged a day over 40. His capabilities were tangible; he could dream up an idea and manifest it into a working component. While people often lament the passing of older mechanics for their knowledge, there is another reason that this group of artisans matters so much. Thirty years ago, the way business was done was vastly different from today. In many ways, the way that guys like George ran their shops and took care of their customers is a lost art. When we go to a dealership and get our cars serviced, we have to deal with a receptionist, a service writer, and finally a technician. The straightforward, no nonsense way that George dealt with problems and the way he built relationships with people, by delivering honest, tangible results, is what truly makes me lament his passing. In a way he, and so many other guys like him, are a model for anyone who restores classic cars.

George was responsible for keeping so many of the cars we love in great condition. The best thing I can do is continue to embrace and share the passion for all things mechanical that George Antilla lived by.

Newsletter Advertising: How Do I Benefit?

Larry Barnes

Hospitality-Advertising

Advertising in our newsletter offers the following advantages:

-Puts your ad in front of a captive audience of over 250 like-minded Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts.

-Provides your business with exposure to a group of passionate car people with a very specific type of demographic profile that many businesses find extremely attractive for the growth of their business.

-Advertising in our newsletter to a select group of Mercedes-Benz owners engages these people with your company. This can lead to an increase in your bottom line, while building awareness and loyalty to your business.

-Your ad will be directly in front of an audience with varying interests which includes such categories as: new-car introductions, technical information, detailing methods and products, driving events and many others.

-Our members are always looking to learn new and better ways of exercising their passion for their Mercedes-Benz automobile(s), therefore advertising your goods and services in our newsletter helps to satisfy these needs.

-Advertising in our newsletter and offering discounts to members is a huge incentive for people to search out your business which could potentially develop into an increased number of loyal customers.



The Mercedes-Benz Dealership Committed to Excellence



Mercedes-Benz of Orlando offers first-rate service and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) parts for all your service and maintenance needs. Some of the services they provide include:

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Bio: EVOLution of a Dream

Mario Puente

Guest Contributor - MBCA Southwest Florida

It is no surprise that many individuals end up in the car business because they obsess about cars in the first place.

I have what my wife calls a "condition", which causes my brain to focus only on car related stuff. Football or Baseball? I cannot keep up with their rules. Basketball? Couldn't tell you if Lebron James played for the Chicago Bulls or the New York Lakers.



Highway speeds? Engage Ludicrous Speed!!!

Growing up in a family of Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts didn't help my medical condition and it was a matter of time before I succumbed to the disease and became another statistic. And while the broad range of Tri-Pointed Star vehicles had my undivided attention, there is one specific model that made my heart beat faster: The 190E, or W201 Series.

Introduced in 1982, the 190E ("E" for Einspritzung, or Fuel Injection) became a game changer for Mercedes-Benz as it packed all the safety features from their larger models, plus a laundry list of new technologies into a small package. The little car featured a revolutionary rear 5-link suspension, front and rear anti-roll bars, anti-dive and anti-squat geometry as well as available airbags, ABS brakes and seatbelt pretensioners. Reportedly, \$840 Million Dollars (in late 70's and early 80's money!) were spend in research and

development of the "Baby Benz", which made it one of the most overly-engineered vehicles in the company's history. These figures and technical specs, although impressive at the time, did not mean a whole lot to an eight-year-old growing up in the 80's. It was that narrowly tucked, aerodynamically unique trunk line that kept me awake at night...that slightly tilted front grille flanked by the chiseled crystal headlights.

"Oh man, look at that single windshield wiper! And I've read that you can order yours with electrically powered windows, radio antenna and door locks ... power windows!"

To make matters worse, sometime in the late 80's I found myself flipping thru the channels of my parent's TV and stumbled upon this race with 190E's in it. Those little Mercedes-Benz in full racing gear; flying down a racetrack, rubbing tires and going airborne as they pushed their way to the front of a pack filled with other racing heroes from BMW, Audi, Alfa Romeo and Ford. I didn't know what I was watching at the time (Turns out it was the DTM, which stood for Deutsche Tourenwagen Meisterschaft) but seeing those racing 190E 2.3-16 was the coolest thing I had ever seen. I was 12 years old and I NEEDED one.

More than twenty years went by before I could afford one, thanks to how cheap the 190E 2.3-16's got towards the bottom of their depreciation curve, paired to a considerably higher income than when I was 12. That also meant that by that time most examples out there had been either tracked, overly modified, neglected beyond repair or had a gazillion miles on them. That said, a long search yielded a low mileage and basically stock 2.3-16 that had escaped all the above and it was pretty much stock, sans some cool AMG Aero I wheels.

visit centralflorida.mbca.org for more info

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Mario Puente

EVolution of a Dream (continued)



Kids have lots of legroom in the backseat of a 190E

Powered by a Cosworth tuned 16 valve version of the more mundane four-cylinder 2.3-liter motor, the North American version of the “16V” was rated at 167hp. And while my Cossie would lose a drag race to any newer Mercedes C class, it felt right at home on a twisty road where it would shine against higher powered steel. The planted suspension, paired the dog-leg Getrag manual transmission and the high revving four cylinder translated into a very rewarding driving experience. And to me, that’s what was all about.

The 2.3-16 shares most of its components with its milder 190E siblings and is very reliable when maintained properly. However, there are a few items that are specific to the 16ers and must be considered to maximize the vehicle’s performance, long-term reliability and driving enjoyment. Terms like self-leveling suspensions (Hydraulic system, aka “SLS”), timing chains and chain tensioners (single row, which will cause catastrophic engine failure shall they snap or fall off the rails) and valve adjustments are often neglected over the perceived cost of their upkeep and repairs.

I owned my first 190E 2.3-16 for many years during which I addressed everything that needed attention, always focusing on bringing it to Mercedes-Benz specifications. I even recruited some help from a good friend (an expert in classic Mercedes-Benz automobiles), who adjusted the clearance of those 16 valves and truly woke that motor up. I honestly believe that Mercedes-Benz underrated the performance numbers of their North American 2.3-16’s as this Baby Benz would FLY after he was done with it.

Eventually I sold that car at a time when enthusiasts all over the world started to realize how good these automobiles are. Prices had almost tripled in the decade following the purchase of my first Cossie, so the cash in my pockets felt great. Until I started missing my Cossie.



This 190E isn't lonely, it's just in a class of its own

In a matter of weeks, I purchased a second 16V, and a third one, and a fourth ... and fifth. Always dreaming of the “perfect 16V”, I would buy best example I could afford before bringing it as close as possible to factory specifications. The evolution of each example, from a “great” car to a “perfect” one was exhilarating.

Traveling back in time to the late 80’s and early 90’s, fierce motorsports competition from BMW’s E30-M3 (Munich’s response to the pesky Benz)





EVOLution of a Dream (continued)

Mario Puente

demanded improvements to the Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.3-16's. An enlarged 2.5-liter 16 valve was introduced in 1988, producing 204bhp in its non-catalytic-converter form. These cars were never offered in the USA.

In addition to increased horsepower and torque figures, the 2.5-16 benefited from double-row timing chains, which fixed the problem with easily snapping single chains from the previous version. (The chain tensioners were the real problem, not the chains -Ed). In race trim, the 2.5-16 delivered a well-placed punch to the E30-M3. That said, the German fight for road racing supremacy had just started and as expected, BMW upped their fire power with the E30-M3 Evolution models I and II. What did Mercedes-Benz do? Their response was short of breathtaking.



When you like to go fast, you keep the fire extinguisher within arm's reach

In March of 1989, the Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evolution made its debut at the Geneva Auto Show. The "190E EVO I", as it would be known to future generations of car enthusiasts had a taller spoiler and wider wheel arches that would accommodate larger wheels and brakes. Most of the changes, however, took place under the skin and included SLS on all corners that could be adjusted from the driver's seat. Additionally, the EVO I engine had a shorter stroke and bigger bore that allowed for a higher revolutions and improved top-end prowess. Further changes included lightened



You will want a good set of tires for this car, or many if you've got a lead foot!

rotating mass, improved lubrication, lower ground clearance, larger wheels and a wider track. The EVO I was also about 100 lbs. lighter than the previous model. In an effort to reduce weight, all Evolution cars came without factory air conditioning while stereo and power seats were optional.

All these modifications turned the 190E into a fierce racing machine. Only 502 units of the EVO I in DB199 metallic were produced for homologation with the DTM Series. The race version of this car would go on to win countless races around the world for Mercedes-Benz.



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EVolution of a Dream (continued)

Eventually, this epic battle between BMW and their Stuttgart counterpart would motivate the latter to produce the legendary 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II (aka EVO II). In similar fashion to the EVO I, it is believed that 500 EVO IIs left the factory in the same blauschwarz color, with two additional vehicles being finished in astral silver.



Amelia Island Cars and Coffee 2018. Can anyone say 'Stance'?

No EVO I or EVO II examples were sold in the United States, and as EVO IIs sales prices broke the quarter of a million dollar barrier, so EVO Is soared into six-digit territory. At that point, it seemed like a mortal car enthusiast like me would never afford to park an Evolution car in my garage, or would I?

Traveling again back in time to 1989, a 190E 2.5-16 Evolution (No. 297 of 502) was delivered to its first owner, shortly after the model unveiling at the Geneva Auto Show. Right away, the wealthy owner of No. 297 decided to daily drive the car in Germany until around the year 2000 when he relocated to British Columbia, Canada and decided to bring the car with him.

From that point on, the car would be enjoyed around the backroads of British Columbia for approximately seven more years, until around 2007 when for unknown reasons he decided it was time to sell. By that time EVO No. 297 had accumulated about 84,000 miles; not a lot for a sturdy 190E of

that vintage. However, its years of service as a loyal companion along the challenging roads of the Canadian Province started to show. The suspension needed revamping, fluids would seep thru worn seals, the valves screamed for adjustment and several hoses and belts looked old and crusty. Additionally, the lower stanced EVO showed battle scars from a curb or two and sported a damaged front bumper and split front wheel arches. Sans some superficial scratches and the occasional shopping cart dent, the original paint was in very good condition and happily, the EVO retained its original plaid cloth interior (a rare option, since most of these came with leather seats).

Luckily for this 190E, it was purchased by Brian, a young enthusiast, and his father Dean in 2007. The Canadian duo did not waste any time and started to address most of the mechanical issues which included replacement of the head gasket, valve adjustment, new timing chain, new fuel pump and relays, hoses, belts, engine mounts, brake rotors and pads along with changing all the fluids and their filters. Three years and many thousands of dollars later and the EVO was on its way to a full recovery. Until their lives changed.

Sometime in 2010 Brian's work situation forced him to relocate from Canada to Australia, leaving his father and their unfinished project behind. Dean could not continue the work by himself and soon the EVO was parked inside of their warehouse. At first the 190E would see the light of day occasionally, whenever Dean would drive it around the block. That was until the battery died and then the car was left in hibernation for the next seven years.

Fast forward to July of 2017, my passion for Mercedes-Benz had turned into a family business with dad by my side, providing valuable support





EVOLution of a Dream (continued)

Mario Puento



Now that's just showing off! :)

and logistics (Mario's father is a saint for putting up with him -Ed). So, there I was one morning, scouting the web on my endless search for my next 190E 16V project when I saw the small ad, with no photos, from someone claiming that he had an EVO I for sale and, I quote: "the car needs some work". The catch? The seller wrote that he lived in Australia while said EVO I was stored in a small town in British Columbia, Canada. I had a hard time pronouncing the name of that town so I googled it, hoping that I could drive to it and see the car in person; nothing wrong with a little road trip to look at a car, right? WRONG.

Turns out the car was located 3,163 miles away from our Southwest Florida office. I could not even find flights that would take me there without jumping planes three or four times. No way Jose!

If I were a guessing man, I would say that 99% of those responsible adults who were interested on this car stopped right here, turned around and proceeded to run for the hills at the sight of what appeared to be another internet scam.

But I was not a responsible adult at the time. I was my 12-year-old all over again. And I had some cash in my right-hand pocket.

Three months' worth of emails and Skype conferences later, I found myself wiring a TON of our hard-earned money to a Canadian bank

account; crossing my fingers while praying for Baby Jesus to keep me out of trouble. And sure enough, about six weeks later an enclosed transporter pulled up in front of our shop. Inside of it, a scruffy 190E 2.5-16 Evolution stared at me behind a seriously busted front bumper, cracked wheel arches and a broken headlight.

I couldn't wait for the loading ramps to touch the ground, so I jumped inside the dark container to touch the car.

"Yes, I know you're hurting baby but we will fix you up. Just wait and see. Wait and see."

With thick Russian accent, the transport driver shared his frustration as the car's dead battery made his life miserable during the 3,163-mile trip. He found himself jump starting the car frequently as he needed to move it to accommodate other vehicles along the way to the point his battery jumper broke .

I had remembered that Brian mentioned the dead battery, so I brought a new Mercedes-Benz replacement with me. Dropped in the new battery and the 190E fired right up before settling in a serene but raspy idle. Once unloaded on the street, Dad and I proceeded to inspect the vehicle and realized that Brian had been very honest with the car's description. Immediately we jumped in our "new" EVO I and drove it several times around the block. This thing was MUCH faster than any other 16V I'd ever owned. The motor had loads of power thanks to the tune up and valves adjustments performed by our Canadian counterpart, while the Getrag manual transmission was crisp and direct. Other than a bouncy ride due to worn SLS accumulators and a mild overheating issue, the car was in remarkable mechanical condition.



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EVolution of a Dream (continued)

Dad and I started to work on it the very next day. While parts were being sourced to address suspension and overheating tendencies, our team proceeded to repair the damaged bumper and front wheel arches. These parts are no longer available from Mercedes-Benz and many aftermarket suppliers charge a fortune for replicas. And who would want a replica if you can refurbish the original?

It took us five weeks to remove, clean, reinforce, repair and refinish the battered cladding and bumper but it was worth it. The original parts looked like new by the time we were done and shortly after, the car went on the lift to have all four SLS accumulators replaced and address the bouncy ride. A new thermostat and a radiator flush took care of the overheating problem and just to be safe, we removed the cam cover to verify the condition of the timing chain and tensioner; they looked new. Brian had been accurate here as well.

As we approached the end of our project, all perishables were replaced, the brake fluid was flushed and a paint job correction was performed.

The end result was amazing. After all these years, I had a 190E Evolution parked in my garage; she shined like she did back in 1989 and oh the driving! The sound of the revvy Cosworth designed engine was the sweetest music to my ears.

The car was finished on February 28th of 2018 and two weeks later, dad and I found ourselves driving the EVO I in a dark Saturday morning, flying down I-95 with the little 190E screaming in anger as it pushed us well into three-digit speeds. In my rearview mirror a bright red SLS Gullwing weaving in and out of traffic; behind him a gloriously wide W124 E500 roared passed some sleepy motorists, closely followed by an immaculate W210 E55 AMG and a very rare C63 AMG 507 Edition. All of us

racing our way to the 2018 Cars and Coffee at the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. What a great time among old friends and many new ones from the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. All thanks to the EVO I.

Finally, and with StarFest 2018 and its driving events around the corner, dad and I registered the EVO and God permitting, will put it through its paces at the world-famous Barbers Motorsport racetrack.

Except for a couple of decals displaying the name of our family business and a new set of track-oriented Toyo Proxes R888R tires (in factory size that is), our EVO I will speed around the track in stock form and as close to factory specifications as possible. Last time I checked the registration list, the little 190E was the oldest car on the grid. And the least powerful too; especially when compared to the fire-breathing AMG missiles of today.

That said, I can't think of a better opportunity to celebrate the joint effort of two father-son teams. An effort that spanned many years, thousands of miles, border crossings and even oceans to save our motorsports hero, the one who proved that dreams DO come true: the 190E 2.5-16 Evolution.

Some particulars of the wonderful history of the W201, as written in this article, can be found in various sources on the internet, such as wikipedia. Those details have not been omitted here, so as not to dilute the 190E's awesome sauce.
-Editor



Father and Son looking to avoid dehydration. Here's to awesome cars!





Lifestyle: Lets Take a Ride! - The Ormond Loop G+

Tom Quinn
Secretary

Is it possible, that when you live somewhere long enough, you start to lose sight of what's in your own backyard? Have you ever heard someone say "There's just nothing to do here!", indicating the need to hop a plane to somewhere, anywhere, more interesting? That's exactly what I heard the other day in line to checkout and I couldn't help but think about the dizzying amount of things to do in the Orlando and surrounding coastal areas!



coast, often with unobstructed views of the Atlantic and it's beaches. Here you will see natural dunes, and plenty of beachside vegetation. There are a number of pull-off areas as well, so bring your sunscreen and plan a walk on the beach.



The Ormond Loop

About ten miles north of the start, you will see the Ormond Loop sign, tempting a turn eastward, away from the lure of the ocean. Take it, and after crossing a small drawbridge, the scenery will begin to change. Drive slowly! It's curvy back here, and you don't want to miss a thing!

Once you exit the cities, the Florida backroad scene is simply amazing. Miles and miles of twisty, two-lane, pothole-free, well marked roads passing through small town after small town, an endless supply of owner-operated bars and restaurants available to feed or fuel your continuing adventure. If you have all day, we have the roads. If you only have a few hours, well, we've got that too!

Soon, dense forest begins to surround from both sides of the road, and from above, a canopy of ancient live oak trees shades your way. Some of these plants are enormous. It looks old, almost prehistoric. At one point when I stopped to take pictures, I was certain that Chris Pratt would emerge from the forest, T-Rex in pursuit!

One of my favorite rides is the Ormond Loop! Starting beachside where West Granada meets A1A, head north following the map I've included. You can, of course, start from any point and simply loop around until you've seen it all. Your first visual treat is along ten miles of highway that parallels the



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Tom Quinn

The Ormond Loop (continued)



Winding for several more miles, a return to civilization begins, and before you know it, you are at the intersection of North Beach St and West Granada, home to the beautiful Rose Villa restaurant. Valet the car around back, and once inside, head upstairs to Upstairs! The ambiance is reminiscent of a speakeasy, with low lighting, rich woods and an intimate bar.



Tom with his brand-new AMG



Hopefully, there's still some adventurous spirit left from your journey around the loop! And speaking of adventurous spirits, try this bars specialty,

Bread, Pastries, Torts as well as German Sausages, Fine Sandwiches and German Deli's



GERMAN BAKERY & DELI
BACKHAUS
1213 N Orange Ave, Orlando * www.the-backhaus.com

Phone (321) 800 5212, Fax (407) 730 3159, email: jhbenterprises@yahoo.com
Benno & Heike Deifel (Owner/Manager)

Absinthe! Your bartender will guide you in selecting the desired brand - smoother for the novice, stronger for the brave at heart! Then sit back and watch the magic happen as chilled water passes over a sugar cube, both sweetening and diluting your beverage in just the right way. Then, relax and sip on this historic cocktail - but only one, as the drive home awaits!



The Ormond Loop only takes about forty-five minutes to complete, and many people go around for a second viewing. Sometimes the best things are right in our own backyard!





The Grand Finale... Recent Member Photos



Longwood, 3/29: #NewHeatShieldsMatter



Ocala, 4/14: The Club soaking up the speed at Don Garlit's Museums



Sebring: Looking toward turn 17 from Gurney Terrace



Orlando, 3/8: These dont need dim lighting to look good!



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- Performance driving at the Barber F-1 Indy Road course
- Experience laps at Talladega Superspeedway
- Off-road track driving experience
- Concours at the Mercedes-Benz Factory
- Rolex Rolex's
- MBUSA plant tours
- Reception and dinner at the famous Barber Museum
- And much more...

Next Section: Mercedes-Benz Club of America Alabama



Mead Gardens, Orlando: 4/7/18: British Car Show
British Cars? Ok, but only in small doses!



Sebring: 3/17: SunEnergy #75 team



St Augustine, 3/31: New Member Jaimeson rescues his #2, a 1987 300TD 'Heather'



Sebring: 3/17/18: The AMG #33 Client Command runs a repeat clinic at Turn 10, aka 'Cunningham Corner'



Orange Ave, Orlando: 3/8/18: Top shelf whiskey and 190's @ the M-Bar

Coming up next issue: Pierre's service stories from the road,
Larry's showdown: his retired S320 vs his new S550, and so much more!!!

