



# *The Houston Star*

MBCA Houston Section Newsletter

**November  
2009**

## In this issue

**President's Message**  
Page 2

**Technical Q & A**  
Page 11

**Mercedes Marketplace**  
Page 11

## Upcoming Events

**Fall Autocross**  
November 15

**Christmas Brunch  
Afternoon at the Theatre**  
December 6

**Bowling Tournament**  
January TBA



## **OKTOBERFEST 2009**

Amazingly it was another splendid Saturday morning in Houston Texas with a clear day, not a cloud in the sky and a temperature that reminds one of the beginnings of the fall season. That is really saying something in this part of the country as autumn may only last a few days and then warm up reminding us of the long hot and humid days in southeast Texas. With a slight chill in the air a few automobiles challenged the Saturday morning traffic to arrive at Texas German Haus proudly displaying the world-renowned Silver Star emblem. A perfect morning for TGA's 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive Oktoberfest going back to when TGA first opened its doors for business as a full service facility for Mercedes Benz, BMW and Porsche.

Over the years many customers have come through their doors and have left with satisfaction of quality service and workmanship. Members and guests started arriving at 10:30 AM anticipating a true fall Oktoberfest celebration and our host Hans Richter made sure no one left disappointed.

continued on page 3

# President's Message

President's Message,

Hi M-B enthusiasts,

Oktoberfest at TGA was over the top this year. Hans put together a wonderful party with great gifts and food. Sorry if you missed it, see more details in this issue. Thanks to everyone at TGA for assisting in a sensational event.

Upcoming events for the remainder of the year: An Autocross (11/15/09) at Lone Star College, Kingwood (the usual spot) with complimentary BBQ lunch plus \$10 for each driver. Holiday brunch in Rice University area at (Cafe Rabelais), please see more details for this and the matinee play to follow the brunch for those wishing to participate. We are putting together a bowling team amidst a few other German car clubs scheduled after the first of the year, more details will follow in the next newsletter.

On a sad note, due to economic pressures we are losing a very worthy board member and club contributor Gail Werner. Gail was handling treasury duties as well as helping in several other areas whenever she could. I'd like to extend the greatest of gratitude for her efforts in keeping finances straight and everything she assisted with. She's a valuable asset to the club, her presence will be greatly missed and wish her well upon returning to Florida.

With this loss, we are needing HELP!! Come to one of our BOD meetings if interested in helping out with either of these duties (VP is avail). Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Happy Motoring and Thanksgiving,

Damon Stith  
Houston Section

Oktoberfest 2009 from page 1

There were so many models of silver stars there the pictures don't do them justice, so enjoy a few photos of our member's and Hans' customers cars.



There were two presentations on our agenda this year. The first presentation was a slide show from Leon Hulon's trip to the Frankfurt Auto Show, the Mercedes Benz Museum in Stuttgart, and some other interesting photos of his trip through Germany. Han's wide screen TV provided constant photos throughout our celebration and everyone found the photos interesting.



Meanwhile outside the celebration started with all the members and guests enjoying stimulating conversations about our favorite German car marques most of which was dominated with the subject of the renowned Silver Star.



continued on page 6

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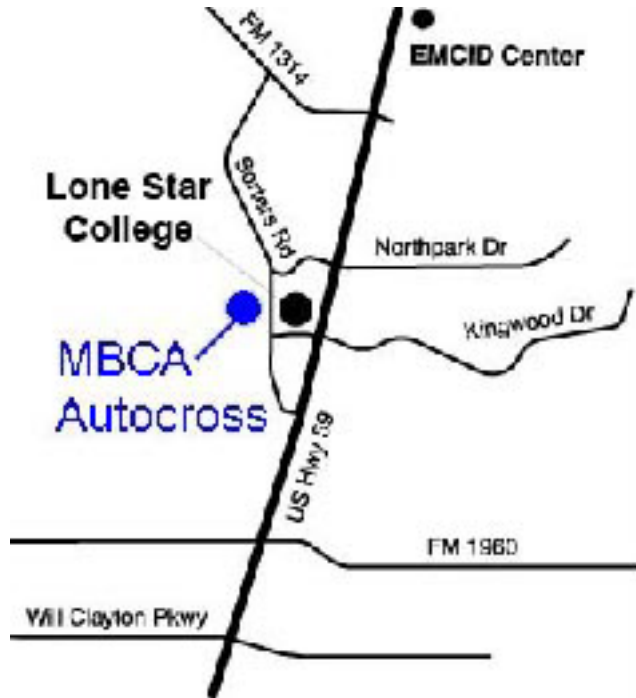
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# FALL AUTOCROSS

Come join us at the fall autocross on Sunday, November 15 and enjoy a Bar-B-Q lunch, compliments of MBCA Houston Section! Bring your blankets, lawn chairs and your family as we enjoy fall in Houston. Autocross drivers should be there by 12:30 and the event begins at 1:00. A full spread of meat, sides and drinks will be available for you and your family to feast on as the drivers take to the course.



The event will be held at Kingwood College in Humble. The cost is \$10 for each driver. **We must have RSVP's for all attendees to insure that we have enough food. Please RSVP or you may go hungry!** RSVP to Mike Haney 713-298-4580 or [mhaney@3dtriad.com](mailto:mhaney@3dtriad.com) by November 6 if you plan to attend and let him know how many will be in your party. For more information on the autocross, contact Mike Haney at 713-298-4580. See you there!



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Oktoberfest 2009 -continued from page 3

Peter Blom who is a long time friend and customer of TGA and owner of CBR MOTORCARS, INC gave the second presentation on the Mercedes-Benz McLaren SLR 722 GT

His company specializes in high-end luxury automobiles and extending them to the next level of performance. Peter told us "this company was founded 20 years ago on the principles that purchasing automobiles of this magnitude should be pleasant and hassle

free. The staff and management understand that our time is extremely valuable, therefore CBR will do all the necessary research for to ensure the right that car or truck one could possibly desire."



The Mercedes-Benz McLaren SLR 722 GT raises the bar for high-class motorsports. The idea of developing a racing version of the SLR came from motoring enthusiasts of the Mercedes Benz brand. Renowned British race car manufacturer Ray Mallock Limited Group (RML) in England modified +400 components of the production Coupe SLR to create this racing car version. Among the most significant modifications is a higher-output supercharged 5.5-litre V8 MB (AMG) engine producing 500 kW or 680 HP and a maximum torque of 830 Newton meters.

New body components such as the front apron with splitter, wider rear fenders, and a large rear diffuser, including the wing, reflect the extensive aerodynamic development work. New suspension and brakes allowing wider wheels, resulting in higher cornering speed. The interior of the SLR 722 GT is characterized by the functional atmosphere of a thoroughbred racing machine.

TRG Motorsports, in collaboration with RML, has further developed the car to to meet the sporting regulations to race professionally here in North America.

A limited number of cars can be delivered in the Spring / Summer 2009, from the TRG Motorsports facility located in Mooresville, North Carolina.

### Technical Specification

-Engine power: 680hp/500kW( -Maximum torque: 830Nm @ 6200 rpm( -Gear box: Newly (2009) fitted 6 gear sequential( -0 to 100kph: 3.3 seconds( -Top speed: 320 km/h( -Maximum lateral G: 2.0g( -Fuel tank capacity: 95 litres( -Ride height adjustability: +/- 20mm from static( -Ground clearance: 70 -  
-Tire size front and rear: 30/65 – 18 S8D, 30/65 - 18 Comp A slicks( -Wheelbase: 2700mm)-  
Track width front and rear: 1660mm/1620mm

For more information, contact [marketing@theracersgroup.com](mailto:marketing@theracersgroup.com).

## Oktoberfest 2009 - continued

By the time these presentations ended, everyone was pretty well famished for lunch and in the true tradition of Oktoberfest, it was time to sit down to an excellent luncheon including German meatloaf, mashed potatoes and green beans. Then of course there was more than enough German beer to whet one's thirst. There was soda, ice-cold water, and wine for those of us who did not prefer to sample some of Germany's finest hops. No Oktoberfest is complete without German music and this year was no exception so as the music played, everyone enjoyed a great meal. Before the long awaited dessert of Blue Bell ice cream and home made strudel. Chuck Wyatt, on behalf of the MBCA Board of Directors, presented Hans Richter and Peter Ulrich a custom inscribed wall clock commemorating 15 years of service and technical excellence.

Soon it was time for the door prize drawings and the members and guests were holding their tickets in anticipation. This year the club decided to give away 4 or 5 gift packages with all kinds of goodies such as wine, cheese, crackers, European chocolate cookies, and other snacks. Then it was time to see who would win the pewter plate with all the German car marques on it. There were so many gifts; I almost forgot to mention that Hans and Peter presented our caterer Johann Shuster a custom chef's knife with his name inscribed on it. There was a special gift for those folks who travelled the farthest who were from Louisiana. The next to the last prize was a huge limited edition German Beer Stein, and this year's grand prize was a \$500 TGA gift certificate.



Before we knew it, it was mid afternoon and time to thank Hans, his wife Christiania, Peter Ulrich and his wife Ellen, the service advisors Richard Burger and his better half, Matt Burrage, James Wilkerson and his lovely family, Willie (Mr. Clean) Ware, Deborah Deleon, and the rest of the TGA staff who made this celebration possible. It was a great time to be had by all and everyone will probably look forward to next year's Oktoberfest at TGA.

## HOLIDAY BRUNCH

Everyone has enjoyed our Holiday Brunch at Café Rabelais the last few years. By popular demand, we're going back again this year! We hope you will join us for this special event to celebrate the holidays on Sunday, December 6 beginning at 11:00 a.m., including the famous Houston Section gift exchange! Café Rabelais is a small French bistro located at 2442 Times in Rice Village and they have prepared a special menu just for us.

**Appetizer:**

*Baked Brie*

**Choice of:**

*Chestnut Bisque with Crème Fraîche*

*CeleryRoot Rémoulade*

**Entrée Choices:**

*Beef Filet with Blue Cheese and Bordelaise Sauce*

*Salmon Filet with Hollandaise Sauce*

*Pork Tenderloin with Prunes and Port Reduction*

**Dessert Choices**

*Chocolate Mousse*

*Strawberry Tart*

Your choice of coffee or iced tea is included in the \$35.00 per person cost. Vegetarian meals are available upon request and a child's dinner (under 12) will also be available for \$12.00. Please include your choices along with your check. We must have your confirmation by November 30.



Seating is limited to the first 50 people who RSVP to Damon Stith (832-265-6044 or [damstith@yahoo.com](mailto:damstith@yahoo.com)). For questions on the brunch contact Damon or Buzz Werner.

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## SUNDAY BRUNCH AND SUNDAY MATINEE THEATER (MAKE IT A TWOFER)

Note: RSVP with payment required for ticketing purposes.

For the past several years (since we started having our Holiday Brunch at Cafe Rabelais), our members have had the opportunity to make it a special Sunday of Brunch and Theater by attending Main Street Theater's Sunday Matinee Performance at 3:00 PM. The timing is perfect, leaving just enough time after a leisurely brunch for a brief walk about in Rice Village. Main Street Theater is located at 2540 Times Boulevard, just a couple of short blocks West of Cafe Rabelais.

Last year the play was BUT NOT GOODBYE and in 1997 POOR RICHARD was the fare. Everyone that participated definitely enjoyed this once a year Club opportunity.

This year the play is THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO by Alfred Uhry, author of Driving Miss Daisy.

After twenty-four previews, the Broadway production of The Last Night of Ballyhoo opened on February 27, 1997 at the Helen Hayes Theatre, where it ran for 556 performances. The Last Night of Ballyhoo won the Tony award in 1997 for Best Play as well as the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Broadway Play. Now you can see this "heartbreakingly funny" play right here in Houston with fellow Mercedes Benz enthusiasts.

This play is set in the period just before World War II. It is December of 1939, and the world is facing great challenges, but the Freitag household in Atlanta is consumed with more immediate matters, such as the world premiere of Gone with the Wind and whether or not Lala will secure a date for Ballyhoo, the Jewish social event of the season. The author of Driving Miss Daisy turns a sharply amused eye on matters of assimilation and prejudice, identity and romance, in this rich portrait of a family struggling to know its place.

A short synopsis like the one above has no hope of ever conveying the excitement and emotions encountered in the live performance. You can be assured that there will be ample supplies of both in this play as directed by MST favorite Steve Garfinkel.

Don't miss this opportunity to start your Holiday celebrations with something so outstanding that you will want to write home about it.

### EVENT DETAILS:

What - Sunday Matinee Performance of The Last Night of Ballyhoo by Alfred Uhry

Location - Main Street Theater, 2540 Times Blvd (just West of Cafe Rabelais) 713-524-3622

Date - Sunday, December , 2009

Curtain Time - 3:00 PM (Plan on being there about 2:30 PM)

Cost - \$10.00 per person, paid in advance. Please RSVP with your check for \$10.00 made payable to Mercedes Benz Club, Houston and addressed to Richard Wilkins, Continental Center, 1217 Prairie, Houston, TX 77002. Any RSVP received after November 27 will be iffy, as Sunday Matinees are often well subscribed and this promises to be an excellent play. Main Street Theater is a small and intimate theater with seating for less than 100 patrons, so we should secure our tickets early. Questions? - Call Richard at 713-227-6603.

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# Mercedes Marketplace

## '82 Mercedes 300CD turbo diesel coupe



60K miles, Auto transmission, 5 cylinder, Brown w/Palomino interior. My car for the past 25+ years, it has been well cared for and is reliable, economical, and in excellent condition. Must be seen to be appreciated.

**\$6500.00**

Call Gail Morrison 713 468-7776 or 713 201-5804 for an appointment.

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## 1995 S320 LWB sedan



For Sale:

1995 S320 LWB sedan with only 97,000 well-maintained miles. Body and interior in great shape, and all systems are functional. Maintenance records and all manuals go with car. My daily driver and favorite vehicle, but retirement forces sale. **\$6300 OBO.**

832-444-9545

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## Technical Q & A

**Question:** I am considering buying late 1970's or early 1980's diesel Mercedes. Can you please give some general guidelines as to what I should be looking for?

**Answer:** There are several things to be mindful of when looking to purchase a 76-85 Mercedes W123 series:

- Check for rust all around the car. Common areas to look for: jack points, floor boards (lift up carpets), the battery tray, and below the battery tray. If you find a few spots of rust the likelihood is that there is more elsewhere that isn't immediately obvious.
- Maintenance records, if possible. Try to get as much information about the maintenance done to the car as it will save time and money when some issues arise.
- Vacuum leaks. Just about everything from the transmission to the climate control requires vacuum to operate properly. Be sure you can lock and unlock the doors 3-5 times after the car is off to check for vacuum issues.
- All the electric devices such as windows, sunroof, wipers, blower motor, etc.
- A/C system. A good A/C system is needed for the Houston heat in the summer. Check to see that the car cools well.
- All rubber seals and pieces around the car. Over time the rubber dries out and begins to leak. This is particularly true for the front and rear windows. New rubber is very expensive so you want to make sure it does not require replacement.
- Odometers. The odometers frequently stop working in these cars so you want to be sure it functions properly to know if the mileage is true.
- Brake and suspension systems. Make sure everything under the car is in good condition. Steering should be tight with little to no play. Test drive the car to be sure it does not vibrate or pull to one side. Do a brake test when it is safe and no one is behind you.
- Bring the car to a trusted mechanic who has experience with old Mercedes to have him inspect the car. It doesn't cost much and can help avoid discovering anything unpleasant down the road.

As always, if you have questions, please send your requests to the Houston Star or contact me directly. I can be reached at [Saleem@JohansenUSA.com](mailto:Saleem@JohansenUSA.com) or call me at 281.883.3792

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### ***Moving?***

In order to change your address, go to the web site of the MBCA at:

<https://www.mbca.org/mbca/addchange.htm>

### ***Going green***

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## 2009-10 Upcoming Events

### Fall Autocross

November 15

### Christmas Brunch Afternoon at the Theatre

December 6

### Bowling Tournament

January TBA

### Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 PM of 1st Tuesday of odd numbered months at the Mercedes-Benz Greenway dealership 2nd Floor Conference Room

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