



Nov - Dec 2023

The StarDust

DESERT STARS SECTION | ARIZONA

Holiday Party Dec 10, 2023



The holidays will be here before we know it. Clear the 10th of December for the Desert Stars Annual Holiday Party - with the always-important Member Anniversary recognition celebration. It is time to reflect on 2023 as we spend time with friends and fellow members catch up and enjoy the spirit of the holidays.

The event will be at the Grayhawk Golf Club in the Fairway House. There will be a no-host bar. We are changing things up a bit and this year we will be serving a festive brunch. Included in the brunch will be an omelet station, beef medallions and so much more. The food at Grayhawk Golf Club never disappoints.

Anniversary celebrants must attend to receive your recognition pins (or you need a *really* good excuse for not being there!) So, we want to see you! List of anniversary recipients can be found on page 8.

Oh, don't forget we are collecting for Toys for Tots so please bring an un-wrapped gift! Make this holiday season a special one by joining your friends in the Desert Stars Mercedes-Benz club.

Festivities will begin at noon. Registration form is on page 16.

Debbie Ichiyama

An exciting change will be the **Holiday Gift Exchange** (*Emphasis on Exchange*)

We are planning a fun and engaging enhancement to the traditional "holiday gifting" that has taken place during past annual Desert Stars holiday parties. New for this year is a "Holiday Gift Exchange" event. This event will be exciting for both participants and guests. If you would like to participate, all you need to do is bring a wrapped gift with a \$25 - \$30 value. You can participate as a couple or individually it is completely up to you. The gift can be something Mercedes Benz themed, automotive themed, holiday themed, or even be a bottle of wine or spirits. It is your choice on what you wish to bring as a gift. Be sure the gift is wrapped when you come to the party to be eligible to participate! This holiday gift "exchange" makes for some holiday excitement and cheer. Look forward to sharing more details at the event and seeing everyone!


Ed Crawford

President's Message

By Debbie Ichiyama

For this issue I am turning over the space with a message from Ron Borino, who is not only our Regional Director but also the StarDust Advertising chair.

Members do you have friends? Kids or grandkids? Do you follow them on Facebook or other social media? Why not follow *and like* the Desert Stars too? After all aren't we supposed to be having "Fun with Friends and Benz"? It is simple and fun to see what we are posting, and it helps our sponsors see some activity on the club's social media pages. You can go to <https://www.facebook.com/DesertStarsMBCA> and be sure to click

on the  in the upper right corner of the page. Please note, on the last page of the newsletter there are links provided to the Desert Stars Twitter account, LinkedIn account and Nextdoor account. Please support the club and our advertisers by following the sections pages please.

Desert Stars really needs this support.

Ron



Debbie



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Welcome our new Members!

August

Jack Phillips
 D. Remington

September

David Sambuceti
 Kenneth Wolf

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Under the Stars with Desert Stars

Ed & Annette Crawford – Holiday Planners

Join fellow members at the Desert Botanical Gardens for an evening under the stars at “Los Noches de las luminarias” on December 2, 2023.

Enjoy a night filled with sparkling luminaria-lit trails and twinkling holiday lights. Musical performances, entertainment and festive food and drinks are available for purchase to add to a picture-perfect night.

The cost is \$40.00 per person. Please note this event is space-limited (up to 24 people) and RSVP is required.

Please register and pay no later than November 15, 2023. Please note the admittance timing is currently TBD, however we are targeting the first time slot of 5:30PM allowing members time to enjoy a meal prior or after the outing.

Additional Information about the evening:

- Parking is complimentary. Please allow extra time to park and enter at your designated time.
- Food and beverage options are available for purchase. Advanced reservations are recommended for Gertrude’s restaurant.
- Bars offering a variety of holiday drinks are available throughout the Garden and accept debit and credit only.
- Garden Shop is open until 10 p.m. Desert Botanical Garden Members receive a 10% discount upon presentation of a valid Membership card at checkout.
- Electric scooters and wheelchairs can be rented at the SRP Visitor Center on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Looking forward to sharing some holiday cheer with fellow members while strolling the luminaria-lit paths and trails of the Desert Botanical Gardens. Please register by Nov 15th. Registration form on page 16



MB Enthusiasts Dinner

Jim Boyle

Greeting Mercedes enthusiasts,

Time to save the date for our after the Auctions Enthusiast’s Dinner!

January 28, 2024 5 to 9 PM Ling & Louie’s 9397 East Shea Blvd. Suite 125 Scottsdale

Includes appetizers, entrée selections off a menu designed for us and dessert. There will be a cash bar offering Happy Hour prices.

Cost is \$50 per person. Please register by Jan 14th Registration form on page 16



Exploring Vinology in Verde Valley during Havasupai 2023

By Kris Stanford and Kevin George

Desert Star Members who attended this Fall's Havasupai '23 weekend were rewarded with an amazing journey through some of most scenic routes, stunning vistas, and charming towns in our diverse state, all while learning about Arizona's little-known wine-making history in the Verde Valley region. Home base for the event was at Cliff Castle Casino in Camp Verde, where participants appreciated the renovated rooms and Breakfast Buffet offered by the now smoke-free establishment. Friday evening's Happy Hour / Welcome Reception was held on the patio of Astoria International Bistro, allowing attendees to get reacquainted while enjoying artisan Charcuterie boards and perfect Fall weather.

On Saturday, the Rallye Route wound northwest through the Verde Valley region. From the Casino, participants traveled along AZ-179 (AKA the Red Rock Scenic Byway) to Sedona, with stops at the Red Rock Ranger Station / Visitor's Center and Sedona Heritage Museum. At the Museum, rallyers learned how Father Kino Eusebio and Henry Schuerman brought winemaking to Arizona beginning in the late 1800s.

Teams then headed southwest toward Cottonwood but were twice diverted off SR 89A – first to appreciate the jutting red-rock cliffs and stunning vistas along Red Rock Loop Road, and then again to wind through the quaint town of Page Springs. Lined with multiple vineyards, wineries, and tasting rooms, this small two-lane rural road led teams to Cornville before heading onto Cottonwood.

Lunch was held at Belfry Brewery, followed by a brief stroll through charming Old Town Cottonwood, before getting back on the road toward Clarkdale and Jerome. The route through these historic towns included more windy roads and scenic views, and ultimately led rallyers to Alcantara Vineyards off SR-260, where they were treated to private tours by one of Alcantara's head vintners. After enjoying the live music and relaxing vibe on Alcantara's grassy vineyard patio, teams completed the route by heading back through Camp Verde to Cliff Castle Casino, where competitors' scores were tallied to see who most successfully matched wits with this year's Rallyemasters.

At Saturday's Dinner and Awards Banquet held in the Casino's Ballroom, rallye teams used corks they collected along the route to help them win prizes during "Wingo," a wine-themed Bingo game designed by the Rallyemasters for the event. Several teams even took home wine donated by local vineyards including Alcantara, 1912, Tantrum, Oak Creek, and Salt Mine. Finally, traditional Kachina dolls were awarded to those teams whose competitiveness, keen observations, and wits best matched the Rallyemasters. Long-time Desert Star members won't be surprised to hear that veterans **Chuck & Ava Stanford** took home the First Place Kachina once again. Second Place honors went to past winners **Ron & Rhonda Borino**, and just a point behind were **Arnie Brown & Matt Crawford** who took home the Third Place Kachina. Congratulations to all the winners!



First place winners Chuck & Ava



Second place winners Rhonda & Ron



Third place winners Matt & Arnie

Finally, many thanks go out to everyone who offered us assistance and guidance throughout the Rallye planning process. We also appreciate the attendees who took a chance on us as first-time Rallyemasters, and hope everyone enjoyed both the traditional and original parts of this year's event. It was an honor and a pleasure to plan Havasupai '23, and we'll treasure the memories of an amazing weekend with fabulous people. For those who were unable to attend, we hope to see you at an event soon!

Kris Stanford and Kevin George



Friday Night Happy Hour



Saturday morning briefing



Rallyemasters Kevin & Kris



View from Red Rock Ranger Station



Wine barrels at Alcantara Vineyards

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We are looking for members to Volunteer to organize events. You won't be alone doing this; you will have the guidance of folks experienced in running events. Please consider helping us out. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Debbie Ichiyama dichiyama@me.com or Karen Manser nspinaz@gmail.com
Events can be anything from a casual lunch, dinner, or a scenic drive.

Thank you!



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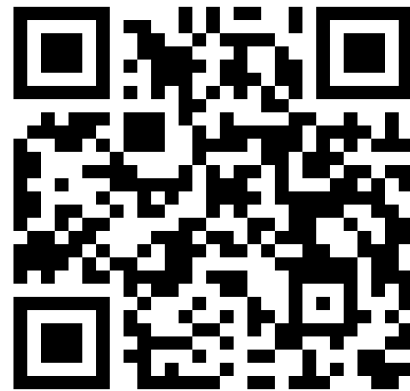


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Holger Martin

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Steven Jensen

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Michael Weinhart

20 Years

Alex Glade

Charles Johnston

Charles Moehring

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George Orndorff

Jeff Smith

Dan Withers

15 Years

Donna Bryson

Alexander Curtis

Sandra Dunn

Lawrence Foster

David Lindau

Linda Meece

Robert Mosley

Billy Rhinehart

Richard Schulte

Richard Sparanese

Stuart Thorn

10 Years

Steven Angle

Larry Bryson

Charles Dickens

William Dobransky

Eddie Fuentes

Robert Kelly

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The top right photo shows a modern, multi-story office building with a large glass facade and the word "Integer" on the roof. The bottom right photo shows a single-story modern building with a prominent vertical architectural element and a glass entrance.



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National has a new Facebook page. Check out www.facebook.com/groups/mercedesbenzclubofamerica/

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MVT Travel Conference in Scottsdale

Mark your calendar now for January in Arizona Arizona Concours date set for January 21, 2024

By Check Stanford Jr

The Arizona Concours is again preparing for its annual showing of some of the world's most beautiful, extraordinary, and unique classic automobiles. This highly curated selection of rare cars will come from more than 20 states and several countries to be judged in hopes of capturing awards and the coveted Best-of-Show. This year in addition to 12 recurring classes, the show will feature vehicles from "Sixty Years of Lamborghini", "Personal Custom Styling Interpretations", and "The Designs of Carrozzeria Touring." Be sure to put January 20-21 on your calendar – you won't want to miss this sophisticated event held at the newly redesigned Scottsdale Civic Center. Tickets are available at ArizonaConcours.org and make a great Holiday gift for that special car person in your life.

Volunteers are also being recruited to assist with a variety of duties required for this complex show and competition. About 150 people are needed to work the event (and get free entry to the Concours). Look to ArizonaConcours.org for more information.

The **Arizona Concours d'Elegance**, a signature feature of January in Arizona, is partnered with Scottsdale Arts to present the event, which blends history, design and technology. Proceeds from the Concours will benefit local artists and art programs.



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Thinking of Visiting Germany?

By Chuck Stanford, Jr

Of all the benefits your MBCA membership brings, certainly one of the most enticing is the opportunity to visit Germany and the home of all things bearing the three-pointed STAR! For many years groups of 12-25 Members have enjoyed week-long tours of the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart and Classic Center at Fellbach, the expansive assembly plant at Sindelfingen, the AMG engine shop in Affaltermach and various Mercedes-Benz tuners, restorers, and other historical sites. Enthusiast guides make sure there really is something for everyone, with lodging and authentic German cuisine absolutely first class!

Many travelers chose to extend their stay in Europe with an accompany River Cruise or side trip elsewhere in Germany or Europe. And a new option is enthusiast driving tours in Germany, France or Italy with vintage Mercedes-Benz SL roadsters,

The September 2023 trip hosting 25 members just returned with great tales of fun and excitement and two trips are planned for 2024 – June 3-9 and September 9-15, Desert Stars members Chuck and Ava Stanford will be hosting the June trip.

These are very worthwhile tours and are an excellent benefit and value for Club members. They also make wonderful Holiday gifts for your favorite Mercedes-Benz enthusiast. Or for yourself. Watch for details in the November/December STAR or contact Chuck Stanford at 602-549-4789 for more details.

Hope to see you in Stuttgart in 2024!





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Holiday Party

Please register and pay by Dec 1, 2023

Name(s) Registering: _____ Number Attending: _____

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Registration Fee is \$75 per person.

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MB Enthusiasts Dinner

Please register and pay by Jan 14, 2024

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Registration Fee is \$50 per person.

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Mercedes Benz Grande Event in Indianapolis

By Ron Borino

Rhonda and I attended the Mercedes Benz Grande event this year in Indianapolis driving our 2020 GLS450. What a great time we had as the Grande event did in fact celebrate all things, Mercedes. The Grande is the first event of its kind hosted by the Indiana Crossroads Section, it was put together and pulled off with very few glitches.

The event began the morning of September 7th with opening keynote speaker Al Unser Jr. who shared stories of the only Indy car that featured a new, at the time secret engine that was built by Mercedes. Mr. Unser's lighthearted stories of the engine development, this race and his career held the audience spellbound. If you would like to read more about this race and Al Unser, Jr please refer to your July-August 2023 edition of The Star magazine and the story Won and Done. After the opening address and Mr. Unser's stories he was gracious enough to pose for pictures and autograph The Star magazine with his story in it.

Additional events featured at the Grande included a Ladies of Mercedes fashion show and luncheon held at the famous [Columbia Club](#) in Indianapolis. The show was quite nice as several of the ladies from the local section and the club's executive director were modeling outfits for this event. The lunch was served with wine from [Adobe Road Winery](#), an event sponsor, which was just fantastic. There were drawings for some of the clothing too one of which Rhonda won.

The evening event was put on at [Mercedes Benz of Indianapolis](#) which featured a new car exhibition and lifestyle experience. Lots of hors d'oeuvres, wine, sprits, vendors, drawings, cars, and camaraderie.

Of course, peppered throughout the day were tech sessions one of which featured a discussion of [seat kinetics](#) a feature that was released by Mercedes in 2020. This session described how seat kinetics came to be installed in Mercedes Benz as well as how it works. It was a great presentation and described how this idea was sponsored and pitched to Mercedes Benz Auto Group. Who knew [Lewis Hamilton](#) was also a salesman.

The Friday portion of this event included additional tech talks by Airstream and one on how to attract and retain section sponsorships among others. There was an Alzheimer Medallion luncheon at [Indiana State Museum](#) which was very well done and explained how the individual sections could become involved. Of course, the Grande would not have been complete without a VIP Lounge and Reception Hullabaloo with excellent hors d'oeuvres, more than enough to make a dinner, drinks, dancing, and a live band. Just a great time with the venue being held at the [Crane Bay Events Center](#) in the shadow of the [Lucas Oil Stadium](#).

Saturday included participation in the mother of all car shows. This car show, titled [Artomobilia](#) is held in the small community of Carmel, Indiana's Arts District. We had a good time looking at 1000's of cars that attended this event. National MBCA had a tent set up and the featured marque of this event was, well as you might expect, Mercedes. Since we had VIP passes, we got breakfast and again had a chance to interface with all of the Grande sponsors and attendees. Artomobilia was attended by tens of thousands of people.

Saturday evening the Grande's Celebration cocktail hour and dinner was held at the host [hotel](#). Lots of talks, awards, and camaraderie punctuated the evening. The food was fantastic. Probably some of the best beef brisket Rhonda and I have ever had.

Finally, Sunday was a day to try your skills in a racing simulator set up for the F1 racetrack in Monza, Italy and held at [Silo Auto Club](#). There were competitions between attendees and ultimately a championship awarded. Later, the group took a tour of the world famous [Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum](#).

I suspect that the Grande event will be held next year in Indianapolis. This is a great city and if you decide to go, I encourage you to spend time in the city a day or two before or after the Grande event or both. The city is compact and there is plenty to do as far as visiting memorials, museums, restaurants, dinner, and sport venues, etc. Perhaps a group from the southwest region can plan on attending in 2024.



Al Unser Jr.





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*Saguaro Star Holiday Event
"Horsepower and Horses"*

December 9th at Ruth Mahoney's Place at noon.

Watch for emails with more details.

*If interested in either event please contact Judy Buckingham
rebjrm@ix.netcom.com*



Keep your address updated with the
 MBCA National Business Office at
 (800) 637-2360
 Online at <http://mbca.org>

Update your email address with The National Business Office
 Contact our Membership Chair, Debbie Ichiyama, at 480-268-9535 or dichiyama@me.com

SAVE THESE DATES

Nov 4	Sat	Cars & Coffee
Dec 10	Sun	Holiday Party
Dec 2	Sat	Desert Botanical Gardens
Jan 28	Sun	MB Enthusiasts Dinner
April 20-21	Sat – Sun	MBEAT
TBD		Poker Run
TBD		Spring Picnic

Please see page 22 for a list of events by the Chaparral (Tucson) Section.

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Nov - Dec 2023