



The Saguaro Star

Serving Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts throughout Southern Arizona

Restoring Max...

Fred Finney



I first became enamored with the Mercedes-Benz marque starting in 1965 when a customer who frequented the office where I worked would park his 220SE convertible near the entrance where it was visible to all who passed by. It had a beautiful

dark blue exterior with light blue leather interior, always with the top down, and impressed me so much with the styling, the smooth lines and the obvious great workmanship that went into building the car. It was pretty much lust at first sight.

When retirement was well in place in the late '90s I decided that a fun project would be to acquire just the right type of older M-B and do a restoration on my own. The first question was what to look for? To help with that I purchased a number of references to learn more about the various models. Two that proved particularly useful were *The SL Experience*, by John Olson, and *Mercedes-Benz Production Models, 1946-1990*, by Robert Nitske. After seeing a photo of a beautiful red 300SL with palomino leather interior, my first thought was "Boy, that's what I want to do". A follow up check on current pricing for even virtually wrecked 300SLs quickly relegated that thought to the dust bin. Finally, after much reading of many articles and magazines I settled on the Type 113 280SL model which was manufactured from 1968-1971.

I wanted to do much of the work myself so began a search for a 280SL that was in need of cosmetic work and replacement or rebuilding of miscellaneous body and engine compartment parts, but basically sound throughout and rust free. The search for just the right project car took about six months and involved checking out many leads both in Arizona as well as out of state on a summer vacation drive through the west.

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A section member reminisces about his first restoration...
- ✓ President Mike Zonnefeld on what's happening in the club (p. 2)
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- ✓ **Support our Advertisers!**

Chaparral Section Board Meetings occur every second Thursday at 6:00 PM at Mercedes-Benz of Tucson, 6350 E Grant Rd, Tucson, AZ. For national Mercedes-Benz club information, go to www.mbca.org. The Chaparral Section "Trading Post" and other local news are posted at www.tucsonsmcedesclub.org. *The Saguaro Star* newsletter is published four times per year. *We announce new events, date changes and other important information electronically.* Not receiving our e-news? Contact any of our Board members (see the list on page 2), email us at tucsonsmcedesclub@gmail.com) or click the "Contact Us" link on our home page at www.tucsonsmcedesclub.org

January - March 2012

Please visit our website: www.tucsonsmcedesclub.org



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Starting another exciting year...

As we close out another successful year for the Chaparral Section of AMBCA, we look back on some of the events of 2011. For those of you who missed this years Christmas party held at the Mountain Oyster club, it was a stellar event. Mercedes- Benz of Tucson donated prizes for all the attending members, and everyone who attended left with a significant prize, compliments of the dealership!

At this holiday party, we asked our members present to change our annual meeting from September to December to coincide with the holiday event as we usually have a larger attendance. Those present approved this minor change to our By Laws. This will allow the members present to have a larger hand in the selection of our officers.

Your board of directors has begun meeting at the Mercedes-Benz of Tucson dealership on East Grant Road. This new facility is designed with one goal, customer satisfaction. The meeting is on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM in the conference room at the dealership. All members are welcome to attend, enjoy the ambiance of a state of the art Mercedes- Benz dealership and their wonderful hospitality, and participate in our meetings. We look forward to seeing you there!

As we move forward into 2012, (where did 2011 go?), check out our calendar of events and plan to attend one or more. They are all designed with you and your Mercedes-Benz in mind with fun, relaxation, and camaraderie with other Mercedes-Benz owners.

Thank you for your continued support of our local Section and its activities. Don't forget the Section is yours, so if you have any changes you would like to see, or ideas for bettering our Section, contact one of our Board members, so the Section can better serve our members!

Keep driving safely, and above all, enjoy your Mercedes in good health and continued prosperity in these troubled times. We look forward to seeing many of you at one or more of 2012 events!

Mike Zonnefeld, President





Guest Column...



REGIONAL DIRECTORS CORNER

Steve Ross

Director, Southwestern Region



Here we are moving into the fall and winter is not far behind. We are moving into the holiday season rapidly. My question is where did the time go? An age old question which has never been answered. This is also the time of year when we honor our members for their contribution to our club and their sections. I am hoping that all of our sections selected a nominee. As I write this we are missing several sections.

We just completed a successful membership drive at Palos Verdes Concours d'Elegance. Several new members were signed up for more than one of our sections. The Long Beach-South Bay section was

the lead section with help from San Diego and Desert Stars. The Long Beach-South Bay came up with a super idea. They had a laptop at the tent and folks could go line right there and sign up. I know at least 6 or 7 signed up there. We were doing great until the battery ran down. This is such a simple idea that that most of you have already thought of it. The car shows have worked out well for the California sections. I strongly recommend that we make an effort to have an MBCA presence at the car shows in your area. The NBO has some great material for us to use such as tear drops etc. We still seem to be getting new members but, they are escaping us in almost equal numbers.

Restoring Max... (continued)

As luck would have it, Stuttgart-Autohaus in Tucson had a 1970 280SL for sale on consignment, and when I checked it out it proved to be just what I had been looking for—a one owner local car, 42,000 miles, 4 speed, and white with red M-B Tex interior. I had found Max (yes, it's anal but we've always named our cars)!

Thus began what would turn out to be mostly a labor of love for two years but sprinkled generously with frustration and lots of blue air when small nuts or bolts disappeared down into the bowels of the engine compartment or other crevices which on a small car seemed endless. We are fortunate to have two separate garages at our home, and Project Max had completely taken over one of them. With marked parts in and out of plastic bags scattered on tables and shelves everywhere, my good wife had one wish—that I not die before the project was completed and everything put back together.

One nice thing about taking on your own car restoration project for the first time is you get to acquire a lot of neat tools that you didn't have. And you learn about how absolutely great UPS is at getting the parts to you that you have ordered from the vast

array of companies out there that specialize in parts for vintage M-Bs. I never once encountered a problem finding a part I needed. The work I was able to do myself was limited to replacing seals and hoses, installing new brake pads, flushing lines, removing bright work for re-chroming, replacing and or re-installing components depending on whether they needed replacement or just refurbishment. The original owner was a smoker, and I spent lots of time with swabs and cleaning fluid getting smoke and nicotine film out of all the vents. The only rust on Max was some surface rust on the floor of the trunk, and that was easily removed and the area painted over with black rust inhibiting paint.

Major work required the skills of others, and I am indebted to three shops for help along the way. Once I got into the project I quickly discovered the need for some local help for questions that came up such as how do I get that part off, and what does this thing really do? Robert Dearing at Dearing Automotive was that guy, and he gave me invaluable help and guidance along the way, even to the extent of loaning a specialized tool here and there when a special need arose.

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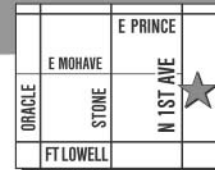
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Upcoming Events...

January 27 -28, 2012 - 18th Annual Collector Car Show

Come on down and join the Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts for this premier collector car show. Last year, 14 Chaparral Section members attended the show, so this year we have been granted our own Mercedes-Benz class for the show. We need a minimum of 18 registrants to maintain the class for 2013 and beyond. Whether you are an MBCA member or not, come join us in the "line of Mercedes-Benz" at the show. Please use "Class #20 - Mercedes - All" when you register. <http://www.carnuts.org> for more information

February 11, 2012 - Sweetheart Mixer...

Members and significant other-- Mixer, Dinner, conversation and updates on all the events for the Chaparral Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America.

February 18,2012 - Oro Valley Classic Car Show, BBQ & Blues Festival

Come join the Chaparral Section at the Oro Valley Charity Classic Car Show, BBQ & Blues Family Festival. The section attended this show last year and the car show, BBQ and Blues festival were superb. The show consists of 13 classes, including the Foreign class made up of European, German, Asian and Volkswagen marques. See <http://www.ovcarshow.org/> for more information.

March 18, 2012 - A Sunday Drive (tentative date)

One of the events that Chaparral Section members suggested is to have a short duration, local drive through the surrounding countryside of Tucson, then end with a casual lunch or some type of eating event.

Please check the Chaparral Section website for the most current information concerning these events and all Section activities.

<http://www.tucsonsmcedesclub.org/>

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Section Events...

5th Annual Tucson Classics Car Show - October 22, 2011

Jerry Tucker

The Tucson Classics Car Show is put on by the Rotary Club of Tucson at St. Gregory College Preparatory School. It was another wonderful day in Arizona to enjoy the sun and wonderful automobiles. The grassy field of St. Gregory's is huge but does limit the number of vehicles to 400. However, the attendees are not limited and well in excess of 20,000 people attended this year's show. In 5 short years the Tucson Classics Car Show has become the premier car event in Tucson. The Chaparral Club has selected supporting charities as a goal of ours and all proceeds from this event go to charities supported by the Rotary Club, including "Reading Seed, Children's Literacy Program".



The Chaparral Section of MBCA has attended the last 4 events and this year was especially nice. We had 10 club members at the event and drew a lot of interest from attendees in our

Benz cars as well as inquiries on becoming members of the Chaparral Club. Additionally, other MBCA Regional club members visiting Tucson dropped by to talk cars and Clubs. We had a wonderful discussion with International Stars President Pete Williams as we compared ideas for Club activities and upcoming events—like Star Fest hosted by the Desert Stars Club.

The section members and the general public were treated to a fully restored beauty, 300SL.



A Sunday Drive (on Saturday)...

Rich Luhr

The second of the Chaparral Sections' *Sunday Drive* excursions took place on a balmy Saturday morning on November 12, 2011. Seven Mercedes-Benz automobiles and their ten occupants made a short trip around Tucson's eastern mountains. A stop was made at the Rincon Valley Farmers & Artisans Market before landing for a nice lunch at the Hacienda del Lago.



Participants: Gary Fielding (S430), Terrell & Melanie Thomas (SLK230 Kompressor), Cal & Ada McCulloch (ML350), Robert & Judy Kolvick (C63 AMG), Tony Ander (W124, maybe 300E), Rich Luhr (SLK350) and Michael Turner (C300W),



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Section Events...

"The Best Holiday Party ever"...

Jerry Tucker

"The Best Holiday Party ever", was one of the comments shared by attendees at Chaparral Section's annual Holiday Party at the Mountain Oyster Club. As usual for this time of the year, the Mountain Oyster Club was decked out for the holidays with magnificent paintings and sculptures as well as Christmas decorations--making the evening very festive. The food was simply outstanding with pecan cranberry salad, roast tenderloin of beef, scalloped potatoes and apple cobbler, ala mode.

The "entertainment" was a wonderful slide presentation by Joyce Degenhart on her MBCA trip to the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, a visit to the AMG plant in Affalterbach, and the beauty of Germany during October of this year. Truly an inspiring presentation with photos of incredible automobiles, including the first car ever made by what is now known as Mercedes-Benz.

An additional treat was the presentation of "Club Member of the Year". Because our club has grown through the effort of so many people, selecting one individual for this honor is a challenging decision. However, the

Board painstakingly sorted through all members' contributions to the continuing excellence of our events and activities and selected Ron Isler. Ron and his wife Lucy are very active with the Club and can always be counted on to support Club events and activities. Even though they live in Nogales they are at every activity including those in and around Tucson.



Congratulations Ron, 2011 Member of the Year!

As the Chaparral Section has done in the past, we again filled the trunk of a Mercedes-Benz, that was on loan to the section from Mercedes-Benz

of Tucson, with donated toys for the Tucson Toys for Tots program that is sponsored and executed by the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.



Restoring Max... (continued)

As it turned out, Max needed a complete engine rebuild, and Dearing completed that work for me as well. New interior carpeting and seat padding and upholstery was done by VIP European Auto Interiors in Tempe. And Vanderpool's Auto in Tucson did the minor body work and complete repaint with great results. A special challenge here which Vanderpool solved was to find a skilled aluminum welder to fill in a dollar size hole in the aluminum deck lid which the previous owner had put in to accept his CB antenna. Welding thin aluminum is tricky, and there was a risk of warping the lid if not done properly.

Finally the day came when Max was complete, and I began what turned out to be a six year period of enjoying the fruits of my efforts; daily driving, trips around southern Arizona, car shows, etc. But finally the urge to step up to improved creature comforts such as air conditioning that really worked, more leg room, powered amenities and better performance convinced me that it was time to pass Max on to another owner and acquire something of more recent

vintage. I sold Max at the Barrett-Jackson auction and used the proceeds to help purchase my current ride, a 1999 SL600. The auction itself was a special thrill because at that time the B-J folks still allowed the owner to drive his or her car up on to the auction block which I did. Restoring Max was a great experience, and I still have a fondness for the little SL and all the hands on time I spent with it.



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More Christmas party revelry - 2011





Calendar of Events - 2012



Date	Event	Host-Contact
January 28-29, 2012	Santa Cruz Valley Car Nuts Annual Collector's Car Show	Bill Hooper
February 11, 2012	Annual Sweetheart Member Mixer	Mike Zonnefeld
March	Drive and Lunch	TBD
April 21, 2012	DM-50 Car Show and Picnic at Davis-Monthan AFB	Michael Turner
May	Drive and Lunch	TBD
June	Drive and Lunch - Mt Lemmon	TBD
July & August	none - club is dark	none
September	Drive and Lunch	TBD
October 20, 2012	Tucson Classics Car Show	Jerry Tucker / Michael Cooper
November	Drive and Lunch	TBD
December 15, 2012	Holiday Party	TBD

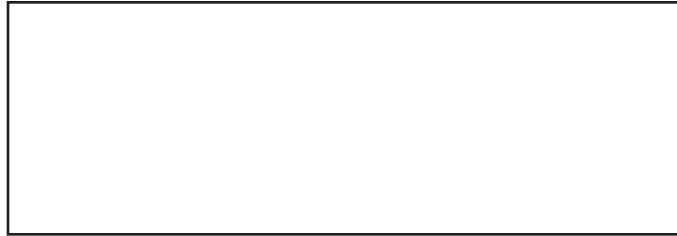
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