



the capitol STAR

The MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB of America • Sacramento Section Sep-Oct 2009

Calendar Of Events

October 10, 2009
October Rally & Lunch
Mark Reese
(916) 626-2828

October Rally

October 10, 2009, 9:00AM

Things have been a bit uncharacteristically quiet for the Sacramento Section lately, so Mark and Kimberli Reese decided to plan a nice rally! Today I accompanied them on the initial run. You will go from Auburn to the Empire Mine in Grass Valley and if Mark and Kim, who've lived in the foothills for 30+ years, have never seen some of these roads before I can guarantee you that you will have a pleasant and scenic fall excursion.

Since some of you are recent members, here are a few things to know about a Sacramento Section rally.

1. You can just enjoy the drive and not worry about the questions. Or you can work on the questions along the way, preferably with a passenger. If you are traveling with a spouse/SO, it is a good idea to agree beforehand which travel method you will adopt.

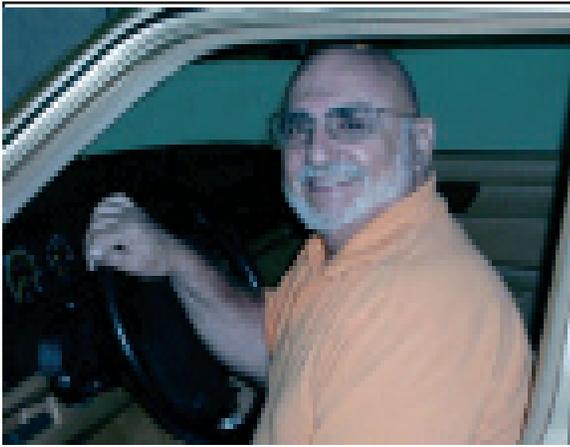
Some years ago, on a rally to the Ironstone Vineyard (ironically another Reese rally), I found myself behind a long line of cars along up the Jackson Highway. Since I was traveling alone, my method was simply to enjoy the drive.

I started passing cars and finally – *finally* – about ½ mile up was a red SL leading the way. It was one of our members, of course. We'll refer to them as Jack and Jill.

At Ironstone, the mystery was solved. Jill was intent on looking for clues and kept telling Jack to slow down. Jack wanted to simply drive and enjoy the scenery, but he kept braking to allow Jill every opportunity to find answers. As it turns out, Jack was accumulating his own answers to this drive. He told me as cars were passing him, "I counted 5 horns and 6 fingers".

Anyway on this run most of the roads are sparsely traveled along the way.

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President's Message

by: Hank Pezzetti

It is time again to put on my MBCA hat and talk cars. As most of you know I rarely talk about cars. Although I have been driving MB for almost 30 years, I do not consider myself an expert, and you, the members, continue to amaze me with your knowledge of MB autos. My subject today is hats. How many hats do we all wear? I wear a hat for the 'Elk Grove Civil war Roundtable' I really got hooked on the Civil War about ten years ago and enjoy the monthly meetings discussing different aspects of the War and the individuals that fought it.

I just recently donned another hat. As most of you know, I served in the Marine Corps in the 50's. I have always been very proud of that and just recently found out about the Marine Corps League. The Marine Corps League is a national non-profit organization that was granted a Federal Charter by the U.S. Congress in 1937. The Elk Grove Detachment of the MCL was chartered in 2006 and has been an active member of the Elk Grove Community. I was a little skeptical at first; I didn't

want to get involved in a group that went around playing Marine. I soon found out this organization really meant business.

There seems to be an event every month that we are involved in. Just last week I helped man a booth at the State Fair that was strictly there to aid veterans from all services in health needs, home purchases, insurance and burial. This weekend we will be at the Air Show at Mather. There will be a booth there that will be selling all sorts of military gear, hats, shirts, and other stuff that will excite the young and old at heart. In October there will be a concert by the Presidents Marine Band at the Sacramento Memorial Auditorium and we will host that. Then the Pumpkin Festival at the end of next month.

I guess you are wondering, that's a busy schedule and what are you doing with the money it brings in? Good question. Very little stays with us, our main function is to support charitable organizations whose focus is on helping our veterans and their families. One of our largest recipients is the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund (IMSFF). This fund has provided over 7500 grants totaling over \$18.5 million in assistance to our wounded

heroes and their families. The Marines have a saying of 'not leaving anyone behind', and if for only that reason, I am proud to be part of this group. The IMSFF has sites at Camp Pendelton, CA and at Quantico, VA. We also sponsor a college scholarship fund for local high schools students.

You are liable to see this group where you least expect to. We participate in the Veterans Day Parade, the Dickens Faire in Old Town, Western Days Festival both in Elk Grove, in front of your local supermarket, and other community events.

I have spoken of the Elk Grove Detachment, but there are detachments all over the country. There is a large group right under your nose, sometimes we just don't see them. I am the first one to keep walking when I see a group fund raising for an unknown cause, but I will rethink that in the future. So if you see a bunch of old and not so old guys and gals running around in bright red shirts wearing funny hats, stop by, shake their hands, and say thanks for the work they do.

Hank

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New article ideas:

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Damn Yankees

On August 1, members of the Sacramento Section continued what has become a Sacramento Section tradition. We all drove down to the California state park of Columbia, where the Sierra Repertory Theater presented its production of *Damn Yankees*.

While I was traveling with the Reeses a few days ago, I happened to mention the excellent productions that this company manages to produce, year after year. Mark and Kim had to agree saying that they had seen this seen this play just a few months earlier in Woodland.

They are so impressed that they are thinking of buying their next year's season tickets for Columbia!

In past years I have asked members of the troupe where they recruit the actors and actresses, and it turns out that they come from all over the state of California. The people from the Columbia area host them and they stay in local homes for the duration of the play.

While I had seen the movie years ago, it was the first time that I had seen the play and in reading the background it all made sense. It seems that the playwright was an avid baseball fan and during the 1950s it seemed that the only real contest was for 2nd place. With names like Mantel, Ford, and DiMaggio the Yankees were one of the strongest dynasties in the history of sports.

So the playwright felt that the only way that the Yankees could be beaten was through supernatural intervention, and he turned to none other than Goethe's famous story of Faust from the 16th century. Take a middle aged overweight man who as a baseball fan always yearned to play in the major leagues, a devil who is actually funny in this production, and the fun starts!

We had lunch in Angels Camp, since the state had closed our usual culinary haunt, the historic City Hotel. . Everyone was saying how good this production was. Our thanks go to Hank Pezzetti for arranging this event.

Bill Brandt

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October Rally (Continued)

2. In a tradition Tom and Inga Bourdon started years ago, any unpaved roads are not used. We found a really great road . It was so great (can't you just hear Johnny Carson now?) that Mark & Kim were full of enthusiasm both for the scenery and potential questions - but - but when the road turned to gravel, well, that wouldn't do. You could hear the balloon deflating. Then, we found another road - fully paved this time. Also ruts created by Conestoga wagons, creeks flowing over the traveled "road", are out.

3. If you want to work on the questions that Mark and Kim have so painstakingly made, "assume" nothing. I had to laugh at the way Mark was explaining the way he can select questions. Nothing is devious or tricky but use, as the pilots would say, "situational awareness".

If you do find yourself at Shasta Lake, Lake Tahoe, Turlock or Fairfield – **turn back**. *You have gone too far*. Seriously, years ago one of our members decided in Sparks, Nevada to turn around on I80 because he missed a question at the Sierra summit. I think Mark & Kim will give you some boundaries to work inside.

Finally, **have fun**. It should be a beautiful fall day and you will be on some scenic roads. The rally will end at the Empire mine, which is a state park. We've arranged for a docent to give us a tour of the grounds. The Empire mine is significant for several reasons. It was the longest running gold mine in California, and it closed only in 1956. It is 11,000 feet deep. Yes, over 2 miles.

Beyond that, you will have to take the tour. We asked one of the park rangers where to get some pizza for lunch. She then lowered her voice to an almost reverential tone, looked up into the sky and said "Goombas". Actually, it was more like a chant. "Goombas Goombas". Goombas is listed as an Italian restaurant so if pizza is not your preference there are other choices. As it turned out it's just down the hill from the Empire Mine – we will eat here for a late no-host lunch and you can return to the Empire if you keep your ticket.

Since the lunch will be late, we'll start in Auburn with a continental breakfast before heading out to the hills. See you October 10th. Meet at 9:00 at 334 Sacramento Street, Auburn. We will depart promptly at 9:30. If you are lost trying to find the rendezvous point (an ominous start to the rally?) , Mark's cell phone is (916) 626-2828.

Bill Brandt

October Rally - October 10,2009 9:00AM

This Reservation is for the **Empire Mine and Contental Breakfast Only** - Lunch is no Host

Name _____ Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Number Attending _____

Total _____

Please send a check of @10.00 p/p made to MBCA Sacramento Section and mail to:

Mark & Kim Reese

PO Box 753

Applegate, CA 95703-0753

Questions? (916) 626-2828

After 52 Years, A New Gullwing Is On The Way

When Daimler-Benz first designed the car we've come to know as the 300SL "Gullwing", the engineers considered the unique hinged-at-the-roof doors to be a design compromise. They were the only solution to the tubular frame that was later modified to allow "conventional" doors – and the 300SL roadster – in 1957. However, since its inception the public has rightfully made this car a sports car icon. Imagine in 1954 seeing this car appear along side other 1954 cars. One could surmise if you weren't from this planet that it was a gift mysteriously given by an advanced alien culture. This was a car that could travel up to 160 MPH – off the showroom – 55 years ago. Even today its performance is more than respectable.

Since its introduction, the 300SL has become one of the most recognizable sports cars of all time. A recent issue of the *SL Market Letter*- (612) 377-0155 / www.slmarket.com – divulged some details of a brand new Gullwing that will be in showrooms soon. Unlike the SLR McLaren it is replacing – this car has been designed "in house" by Daimler's AMG subsidiary. It will also be built by AMG. At the time of this writing, the final body design is still unknown, but it will be unveiled in a few weeks at the 2009 Frankfurt auto show. Unlike most "supercars" this will also be a practical car.

This car is designed for lightness and power. In a first for Daimler, the car's unit-body chassis will weigh a mere 531 lbs., and be comprised of 95% aluminum. AMG had a recent "first" in their history when their in-house design 6.3 liter V8 was used in many of the AMG-badged Mercedes-Benz, from the C-Class to the G-Wagon. Previous AMG cars used a Daimler-designed engine as a basis for their tuning magic. AMG is taking this engine and modifying it enough to get a new internal designation – to M159 from M156. It will have a redesigned air intake system, valve train and camshafts. It will also have flow-optimized tubular headers instead of an exhaust manifold for reduced backpressure. It has a revised crankshaft bearings and forged pistons. From an already impressive engine is even more performance – 570 HP and torque now 480 – from 525/464. All

this, by the way, is without the use of a supercharger or turbocharger. With this amazing performance, the engine will weigh just 454 lbs, the best figure by far compared to its competitors.

Daimler has always preferred the engine in the front, for safety reasons. The car has had over 1,000 computer-simulated crash tests to achieve improved crash performance with the low weight. There will be a transaxle (combination transmission and differential) in the back. Like the original 300SL, it will have an aluminum housing. The transmission portion is an AMG-designed dual clutch arrangement. Instead of steel, the drive shaft will be carbon fiber for weight reduction and strength, similar to the DTM-class racers. An aluminum cast tube weighing 50 lbs will house the drive shaft. The weight distribution is near optimal, with 48% in the front and 52% in the rear. In the photo AMG has provided, you see the chassis undergoing testing, simulating stopping, starting, and extreme road conditions for 1000s of miles. The actual cars – about 30 test vehicles – are undergoing an additional 750,000 miles of testing around the world – high temperature tests in Death Valley, low temperature testing in Sweden, and climate testing in Stuttgart are just a few examples. Normally the costs of these tests are spread over 100,000 to a million cars instead of a few thousand. Anticipated performance for this car will be 0-60 in 3.8 seconds with a top speed of 195 mph. Like the original 300SL, this car will be a technological tour de force. Someone once gave me a mental image of the original 300SL I have always remembered. Imagine in 1955 Germany with devastation still all around, and seeing a 300SL flying down the Autobahn. If you were a German at the time – with no hope of owning a car – much less this car - it was a view – and hope – for the future.



An aluminum cast tube weighing 50 lbs will house the drive shaft. The weight distribution is near optimal, with 48% in the front and 52% in the rear. In the photo AMG has provided, you see the chassis undergoing testing, simulating stopping, starting, and extreme road conditions for 1000s of miles. The actual cars – about 30 test vehicles – are undergoing an additional 750,000 miles of testing around the world – high temperature tests in Death Valley, low temperature testing in Sweden, and climate testing in Stuttgart are just a few examples. Normally the costs of these tests are spread over 100,000 to a million cars instead of a few thousand. Anticipated performance for this car will be 0-60 in 3.8 seconds with a top speed of 195 mph. Like the original 300SL, this car will be a technological tour de force. Someone once gave me a mental image of the original 300SL I have always remembered. Imagine in 1955 Germany with devastation still all around, and seeing a 300SL flying down the Autobahn. If you were a German at the time – with no hope of owning a car – much less this car - it was a view – and hope – for the future.

"In selling sports cars, it is even more important than in selling other cars that salesmen are most thoroughly acquainted with all the details and specifications of these cars."

That was in the product information distributed to all Mercedes-Benz dealers about the new Gullwing - 55 years ago! The more things change....

Bill Brandt

Article credits: *SL Market Letter Vol II, No #90* . Photo: AMG, Germany"

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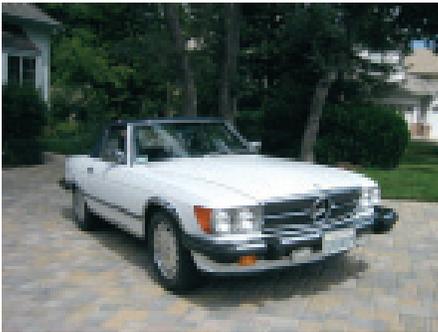
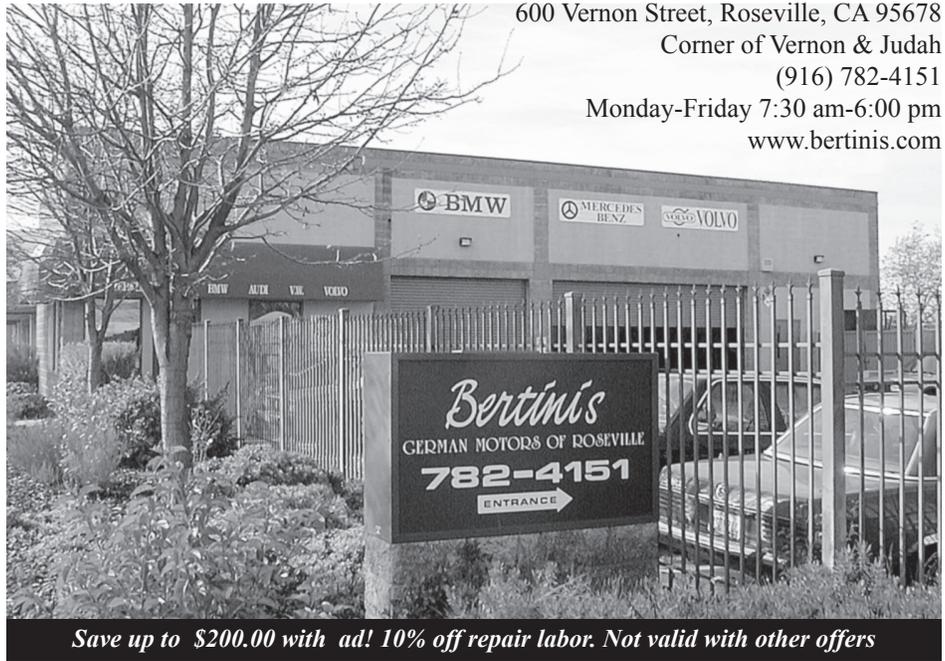
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