



# TRI-ANGLES

## The Official MBCA Minuteman Section News-Letter Winter 2017 Edition

### President's Message:

#### By Ed Owen

Dear Minuteman Section Members,

I am honored and humbled to be voted in by the members to take the helm of the Minuteman Section. A club that has been such an important part of the fabric of the New England car community for over 40 years! There are two people I would like to thank specifically, Bob Hatch and John Piekarczyk. First and foremost it was Bob who forced me to sign up in 1998 to attend my first Starfest, but more importantly for sharing his passion, knowledge, and mentorship with a young and impressionable car guy. John invited me to join the Board in 2006, and through his many years as President has taught me so many valuable lessons of both leadership and friendship.

I am very excited to introduce Barry O'Neill as our new Vice-President. Barry has been a club member and an enthusiast for a long time. I hope you all get the opportunity to meet him and say hello at an event. Many thanks to Steve Coulter for staying on for another term as Secretary, to Court Brannen for his continued help with the Newsletter, and to Mark Fancy for remaining our invaluable Treasurer. I would also like to welcome and introduce fellow enthusiast Peter Ladas as our new Webmaster.

On behalf of the Board, we look to continue the fiscal responsibility and policies that has made us so successful under Johns' tenure. If hosting Starfest has taught us one thing, it is with governance and participation we are capable of putting on a successful world-class event. That being said, we are an enthusiast club with 522 members and I hope to see and meet each of you at one of our great events this year. The next three events are the Tech Session at European Auto Solutions on Saturday, April 22nd, The Art of the Automobile on City Hall Plaza, Boston on Saturday, April 29th, and Track Day at Thompson Speedway Tuesday, May 23rd. In the works are a drive to Barrett-Jackson at Mohegan Sun in June and a tailgate party at the Myopia Polo Club in July. Check the website or Facebook for updates, put a side some time, and let's have some fun!

**Ed Owen - President**  
**Mercedes Benz Club America, Minuteman Section**



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Copy Deadlines: 15th of March, June, September and December.

Courtland Brannen/*Editor & Publisher*

## **MBCA MINUTEMAN SECTION WEBSITES**

### **Section's Home Website:**

<https://minuteman.mbca.org/>

### **Facebook Website:**

[www.facebook.com/MBCA.Minuteman](http://www.facebook.com/MBCA.Minuteman)

### **MBCA's Main Homepage:**

[www.mbca.org](http://www.mbca.org)

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## **Regional Director's Note:**

**By Ernie Fancy**

Ed and Barry, congratulations on your election to President and Vice President of the Minuteman section of MBCA.

As Northeast Regional Director, I look forward to working with you to strengthen the section by increasing the activities and maintaining the section's membership and increasing it.

Ernie Fancy  
Northeast Regional Director MBCA

## **The Editor's Desk**

Each time I sit down over several days, evenings, or hours to put the newsletter together, I ponder over what I should write about next that you might find interesting. Two newsletters ago, I requested submissions for your stories to publish about why you decided to buy your first Mercedes-Benz. I didn't get any, but that's okay. At this point, I have moved on.....and gone ahead with buying my second one. I'm sorry, I couldn't wait any longer, but if you still want to submit, we'd love to hear your stories!

Now back to my story. Remember, we're talking about me right now....

So, I just picked up my new (used, but new to me) CLS550 a few weeks ago and I'm like a kid with a new toy. You know that feeling, don't deny it. Just before turning out onto a street, you look left, then right, then left again, right again, left, aww, just punch it and go! Phew, not another car for miles, but I didn't want to chance putting a scratch in it. Admit it, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

Yes, getting this excited about a new car to me is "probably" what other MBCA members go through as well, or at least your spouse will admit it for you. It's funny, my mother-in-law in Thailand even asked my wife if was sleeping in it yet. She told her mom that if our bed were big enough I'd probably kick her out and put it under my pillow....she never mentioned that the manuals are under my pillow. I'm trying to experiment with learning through osmosis.

So, if you're ready for this winter to end like I am and ready to move on in full force to spring, the Section has a number of events to get excited for. I look forward to seeing a number of you again soon and meeting the others for the first time. Let's share our Mercedes-Benz stories, and hit the road to share our passion of driving! See you soon.

Sincerely,  
Court Brannen



## **Tech Article:**

### **BRAKES WHEN YOU NEED THEM – By Peter Vanderveer**

Have you ever experienced BAS brake assist which suddenly applies more brake action than you expected? Twice this winter while driving my 2001 C240 on I-95, a weird sensation occurred that something beyond my control was happening. The other day I was moving right along on I-95 in the fast lane when an out of state driver put on the blinker and moved left right into my lane! I reacted quickly, hitting the brake pedal but was thinking “it’s too late we’re gonna hit”. Instead, my Mercedes slowed instantly...much faster than I expected, as if some invisible force helped me push the brake pedal down!

Back in 1998, Mercedes-Benz made Emergency Brake Assist ‘BAS’ standard on all models. Mercedes-Benz philosophy, as explained to me by a company engineer in his words, “getting the sixteen year old and the ninety-six year old from A to B safely” made adding this safety feature to all models mandatory. Meanwhile in 2017, almost two decades later, not all new cars on American roads, including Toyota, have this system featured as standard equipment across their model line. Although it seems BMW and Volvo installed this feature early on. Morning commuter speeds in the left lane on I-95 average 80 MPH and even higher on Fridays. Therefore, this sure-to-happen collision with the out-of-state car never happened!

Fortunately, back in the early 1990’s, a group of Engineers and Mercedes–Benz were willing and able to fund Emergency Brake Assist and installed it on my 2001 C240. Ninety percent of drivers studied in a simulation test never pushed a brake pedal hard enough or more importantly fast enough to utilize their Mercedes’s excellent brake systems in a panic stop and subsequently crashed. That’s when the engineers went to work and invented a Mercedes class BAS emergency brake assist solution. I’ve never tried or practiced activating a BAS brake assist on purpose.

What activates BAS in early models, such as my ’01 with this feature, is the sudden speed and force used to press the brake pedal. Some newer Mercedes also include how fast the accelerator pedal is released prior to the brake being applied. Once the BAS system concludes ‘this is a panic stop’, it immediately employs full brake to shorten stopping distance. You will feel yourself falling forward into the seat belt as the uncommon and sudden force of deceleration kicks in. This is another compelling reason to always buckle up the seat belts. I don’t know how far this abrupt stopping would take my body without a belt to stop it. Yet without my Mercedes-Benz Emergency Brake Assist on board, the out-of-state driver and I would have been exchanging papers and creating a backup on I-95 for sure!

### **Newest Members of the Minuteman Section**

The Minuteman Section would like to welcome our newest members!  
We look forward to meeting you at one of the upcoming events this spring.

**William Campbell**

**Ken & Cindy Cole**

**Paul Hodgkins**

**Bogdan Popescu**

**Paul Shindler**

**Clifford Stark**

**Janice Trey**

**Peter Varrasso**

## Feature Article

### Barrett-Jackson 2017 Scottsdale, AZ

By Scott Penney – European Auto Solutions

As with any upcoming auction, Ed and I started scouring the lots to be auctioned as soon as they were posted on the Barrett-Jackson website months before. We also keep tabs on the Russo and Steele auction, since the quality in vehicles presented there has increased greatly in the last few years. Barrett-Jackson is always the headliner, boasting the most lots across a much bigger stage. This year, Ed departed for sunny Arizona the Sunday before the auctions commenced to get an early look at the lots we were interested in.

At Barrett-Jackson this year, there was a large selection of cars from a private collection being offered. Within this collection, there were three W113 SL's being sold that week on Friday. From the early calls and text messages from Ed, we knew that the DB904 Blue 280SL was the one we were going to be chasing the hardest. Out of the three vehicles, this one seemed to have the best pedigree. It still retained its front fender "notches" which any MB enthusiast knows is one of the first things to look for in a W113. Most people (and unschooled body shops) think these are imperfections, and have them removed during body work or restoration. This particular SL was a stunning blue on parchment color combination that really stood out to us. We were also commissioned by a client to check out a W111 cabriolet that was being auctioned on Saturday night. After Ed looked the car over, he noted the VIN to do some research on the history of the car. More on this vehicle later in the story. Over at the Russo and Steele auction, we were pleasantly surprised at the quality and quantity of higher end vehicles. Russo and Steele has a much more intimate bidding space, with a smaller tent, and an "in the round" arena, where the spectators and bidders surround the auctioned cars on all sides. Aside from the actual auction, the floor show is almost as entertaining. The bidder's assistant's bounce around the room to all the action, each with their own yell or whistle to indicate a new high bid, culminated with the loud "SOLD! SOLD! SOLD! SOLD! SOLD!" from Russo and Steele owner, and front man, Drew Alcazar.

After arriving in Scottsdale Thursday evening, I woke early Friday to head over to Russo and Steele before the auction began. There were a few cars there that Ed had previously scouted that I wanted to comb over myself. One was a 2005 SL500 (R230) with 45k miles in Brilliant Silver Metallic over gray leather. AMG rims rounded out the package. We had seen a few of the R230's go for reasonable money, so I was intrigued by this one. After looking at it for a few minutes, I noticed some ABC suspension fluid leaking from the right rear strut, and a peek under the hood showed an original and unreplaced Sensotronic Brake Control (SBC) pump. Not grounds for dismissal, but certainly a few things to keep in mind once the bidding commences. The other car we were interested in was a 1986 190e 2.3 litre 16V with a full body kit and Carlsson upgrades. This car looked fast just sitting in the tent. This one will be hard to stay disciplined on. I made my way around the rest of the lots, and knew I had to head north on Rte 101 to meet Ed at Barrett-Jackson soon, as the three W113's were going to be auctioned shortly after lunchtime.

When I arrived at Barrett-Jackson, I was reminded of how much bigger an operation it is. It's a city within a city. The amount of acreage this whole production takes up is astounding. I made my way through the crowds up onto the bidders block stage to meet Ed. After watching the first two of the W113's get auctioned off at reasonable price, we prepped ourselves for the DB904 Blue one. Ed and I discussed strategy, how quickly to bid, how often to bid, and most importantly how much to bid! There was a lot of interest in the car, made evident by the throngs of people milling around it on stage. The bidding was steady, but not out of control. It was slowly creeping towards the number Ed and I had set in our heads as our target price. When the dust settled, we were high bidder. This W113 was coming back to Boston. Score one for the good guys! Now that we had picked up the most important car of our trip it was time to keep moving, as the auction over at Russo and Steele was in full swing.

Continued on the next page...



We headed back down Rt 101 and back to Russo and Steele. I updated Ed on what I had found with the R230, and my thoughts on the 16V. The SL500 went first. Within the first few bids, the number was larger than what we were willing to pay for it. A bidder must remember that after the hammer price, there is a buyer's premium (usually 10%), known and possibly unknown repair costs, and shipping costs to get it home. This one was too rich for our blood, and we had the self-control to know when to say when. We perused the other lots up for auction as we waited for the 16V to cross the block. There were all kinds of vintage American muscle cars, hot rods, antiques, and Japanese cars, waiting their turn to head into the arena. It was quite a collection, and any true car enthusiast would enjoy the diversity. As the 16V approached the arena, we headed inside to claim our spots on the bidding floor. We had our number picked out, and hoped to get it for less. The bidding started and quickly rose to our comfort zone. There was a group of gentlemen from Sweden who were busy bidding and buying a bunch of cars. They seemed to have a particular interest in this one as well. Our volley of bids went back and forth across the arena for a few minutes, slowing periodically while being prodded along by the bidder's assistants. "You know you want it..." and "You going to let them win it?" was constantly being whispered in our ears. We hit our max, and kept our bidder paddle down. The Swede's and another bidder went a few thousand more. Once the bidding had stalled, and not met the reserve set by the owner, the car was shuffled off the stage. No sale. Such is the auction life.



On Saturday we spent most of the early part of the day at Russo and Steele, casually browsing the lots, watching the auction action, and noting what different vehicles were selling for. In the early afternoon, we headed over to Barrett-Jackson. The Saturday evening Barrett-Jackson auction is the headliner of all the days. There were celebrities selling their cars, all for benefit of one cause or foundation. Stephen Tyler from Aerosmith auctioned off a Hennessy Venom GT Spyder, Dale Earnhardt Jr auctioned a race-used stock car along with a custom 1970 Chevelle, and The Bandit himself, Burt Reynolds, was there selling a few different "Bandit" edition Trans Ams. Amidst all the celebrity action, our W111 cab was slowly making its way to the main stage. We had gotten a not-so-stellar report back from our sources about the W111. This car had originally been ivory, but had been painted brown during its restoration. Not a deal breaker necessarily, as the paint was in good condition and professionally done, but it certainly lowered the value of the vehicle to us. Apparently, all the other bidders in the room felt differently. When the W111 crossed the block amidst all the excitement of the Saturday night pomp and circumstance, the bidding went much higher than we even considered paying. It goes to show that it is completely buyers beware at the auctions, and you had better do some homework before shelling out big money!

Barrett-Jackson cont.

Although we didn't come home with every car we were chasing out in Arizona, we kept our cool, didn't overspend, and brought home a truly nice vehicle. There is always next year...



## **MBCA SPRING RAFFLE**

**Purchase your tickets today for a chance to win your dream car.**

**<https://raffle.mbc.org/>**

The **International Stars MBCA raffle** is open to MBCA members. Tickets are \$50 each and there is no limit to the number of tickets a member can purchase.

**Purchase Raffle Tickets**

**Rules and Regulations**

**Spring 2017 Raffle Mail-In Form**

To purchase tickets by phone, please call 1-800-637-2360.

(Monday-Thursday 8 am - 4:30 pm or Friday 8 am - 4 pm Mountain Time.)

**International Stars Raffle**



## 2017 Annual Theater, Dinner & Meeting Event

### Presented by Rich Garick

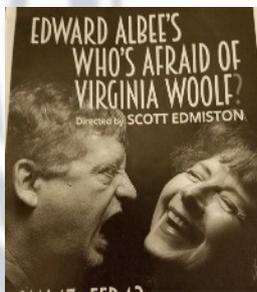
This year's annual Theater, Dinner & Meeting was another "Sold Out" affair. All 50 tickets for the Lyric Stage Company of Boston's presentation of *"Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"* were spoken for early. However, no one was prepared for the *"Who's Afraid of New England Weather?"* as a hearty 35 brave, cold & wet club members slogged their way through nearly 12" of snow, sleet and eventually heavy rain to see the show.

This magnificent production of Edward Albee's American Classic Drama was an outstanding theatrical event. The performance of actress Paula Plum & actor Steven Barkhimer was riveting, on a par with (or even more striking than) Elizabeth Taylor & Richard Burton were in the 60's forceful movie. This towering masterpiece, the fiercely funny and intensely painful play thrillingly examined the breakdown of a middle-aged couple, who mercilessly drew a naïve younger pair into the bitter psychological cage match of their frustrated marriage. Club members were still talking about the performance throughout the following dinner.

After the nearly 3 hour performance all 35 determined attendees needed once again to slog their way for just a few blocks to the Zagat rated, renowned *"Fogo de Chao"* - an authentic Brazilian Steakhouse. Dinner at *"Fogo"* starts with a humongous gourmet salad & fresh foods bar – easily over 50' long, and then continues with unlimited servings of 16 signature cuts of beef, pork, lamb and chicken served tableside, as well as side dishes and desserts. This presentation is unmatched and was marveled at by all club members. (Some probably did not eat again for nearly two days)!

Prior to dinner, the new officers for 2017-2018 were elected:

- Ed Owen – President
- Barry O'Neill – Vice President
- Mark Fancy – Treasurer
- Stephen Coulter – Secretary
- Courtland Brannen – Newsletter Editor
- Peter Ladas – Webmaster



Left to right in order: Stephen Coulter, Ed Owen, Barry O'Neill (in front), Courtland Brannen (behind Barry), Ken Bourque (in back), Rich Garick (in front), Peter Vanderveer, Dean Coclin

Nancy Piekarczyk was awarded with the honor of Minuteman Section 2016 Member of the Year

Unfortunately, because of the weather, the planned honoring of retiring President John Piekarczyk and retiring Webmaster & *"Jill of all Trades"* Nancy Piekarczyk couldn't be performed as, alas, they were snowed in at home in Connecticut.

As has been my custom and honor, this year's Annual Theater, Dinner & Meeting was my 30th continuous year of hosting this event. It is very enjoyable and pleasing to see so many members participate year-after-year. I look forward to next year's event, hopefully with extremely better weather.

Rich Garick



# **UPCOMING MINUTEMAN SECTION EVENTS IN 2017**

## **11<sup>th</sup> Annual European Auto Solutions (EAS) Technical Session April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9:00AM to 1:00PM**

Come celebrate the arrival of Spring at European Auto Solutions' 11<sup>th</sup> Annual MBCA Minuteman Section Open House, on April 22nd from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Each attendee will be provided with 15 minutes of lift time for personal inspection of their Mercedes-Benz with one of EAS's technicians to both learn more about their vehicle and to have it checked for the upcoming open road season.

Come check out some of E.A.S.'s current projects!

Quality door prizes

Refreshments provided

Please RSVP to Ed Owen at 781-642-0667 / [ed@virtualeas.com](mailto:ed@virtualeas.com)

## **Art of the Automobile Spring 2017 – Celebration of the Summer Car**

**Saturday April 29<sup>th</sup>, 12 PM to 5 PM**

**City Hall Plaza and Copley Square**

With the success of their Museum series event in the Fall of 2016, the Art of the Automobile group now looks to launch their Annual Exposition series at Boston City Hall Plaza. Art of the Automobile hopes to present a unique educational motorsport event, showcased in the City of Boston that allows participants from automotive collectors to enthusiasts of all levels to join in putting on a display their vehicles for the general public. This is a free event for spectators. The spring event benefactor, the Martin Richard Foundation([TeamMR8.org](http://TeamMR8.org)), allows our Automotive community to 'foster greater togetherness, compassion, peace, and kindness in our communities through activities that build bridges and bring people together'. For more information, please contact Ed Owen.

## **Track Day May 23<sup>rd</sup> at TSMP**

The Track Day on May 23rd will be held at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park (TSMP) from 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The day will start with a Safety Inspection

at 7:30 a.m. with the Drivers Meeting at 8:15 followed by On Track 9-12. Lunch 12.00. Afternoon session, 1:00 to 5:00. Learn more about TSMP at [www.thompsons Speedway.com](http://www.thompsons Speedway.com)

This event will give you a chance to drive your Mercedes Benz at speed in a controlled, safe environment. Instructors will be on hand to help you learn the track and proper line around it to enhance your experience. You do not need prior experience; you'll be grouped in Novice, Intermediate and Advanced depending on your experience level, and can advance to the next level with the approval of the Instructors. This will become addictive!

You must have your car inspected within 6 months of the event using the MBCA Inspection form. A Snell approved helmet (not motorcycle) and wear long sleeve shirt, long pants and closed toe shoes. Click the link to get the [Driving Inspection Form](#).

### **Register For a Great Driving Experience**

The cost is \$175 for MBCA members and \$200 for non-members. Breakfast and lunch are included. Lunch for guests not driving is \$15. Please send your entry including model of car, experience level, number of drivers and additional lunches with a check for the total amount made out to [MBCA/Minuteman Section](#) before May 16th to:

John Piekarczyk

108 Gawron Rd

Thompson, CT 06277

Questions: 860-315-5575 or [560sec@charter.net](mailto:560sec@charter.net)



## **Barrett-Jackson Northeast at Mohegan Sun Excursion and Road Trip**

June 21 – 24, 2017

Road Trip on June 24<sup>th</sup>

For more information, contact Ed Owen at 781-642-0667 / [ed@virtualeas.com](mailto:ed@virtualeas.com)

## **Myopia Polo Club Event**

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Hamilton, MA

Keep an eye out for more details on the Minuteman Section Upcoming Events Web page

## **Ken Bourque's Nautical Cruise – August**

Portsmouth, NH

Keep an eye out for more details on the Minuteman Section Upcoming Events Web page

## **Germanfest/Mercedes-Benz Day**

Sunday September 17th, 2017

10:00am – 3:00pm

## **Farberrallye 40**

Western, MA

October 13 – 15, 2017 Hosted by the Minuteman Section

Keep an eye out for more details on the Minuteman Section Upcoming Events Web page

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