



# The Prairie Star

Spring 2015

## MBCA - Central Illinois Section

Thank You,  
Loyal Members

For a list of our loyal members who have recently renewed their membership, see Page 3.

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About the Section!  
Who We Are & What  
We Do:

The Central Illinois Section is a social group with a Mercedes Benz connection that hosts technical sessions, driving events, theater and dinner events. The section Leadership Team, made up of a dedicated group of Section Officers and Board Members meet annually to set the course for Section events.

Most of our events are at locations in close proximity to membership concentration. And all offer a great opportunity to meet other Section members. A great group of people!

For updates on upcoming and past Section events log onto <http://www.mbca.org/>. And be sure to check out the Central Illinois Section website <http://centralillinois.mbca.org/>



## **From the Desk of the CIS President:**

Spring flowers have begun to bloom. Trees are budding and the weather is showing signs of improving. All indications that the motoring season for the automobile enthusiast is beginning. This is also becoming clear as my email inbox is beginning to fill with announcements and flyers for summer Car Shows and Cruisin's. While not for everyone these types of events can be a lot of fun.

The Central Illinois Section Board of Directors met March 26<sup>th</sup> and has set the Sections course for 2015. After lengthy discussion it was agreed that there will be 4 Section hosted events for the 2015 season. And Benz & Breakfast will be moved to the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month. The 4 Section Events include a spring/early summer outing to the Conklin Dinner Theater; (Date TBD). A combined summer party / membership meeting; (Date TBD). A Fall Colors Rally in September; (Date TBD) and a Section Christmas Party; (Date TBD). Watch for postings to the Central Illinois Section website, emails and updates in the Section ***Prarie Star Newsletter***.

Not only will Benz & Breakfast move to the the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month but it also has a new location! After meeting a couple of times at the Cracker Barrell in Morton it was decided to hunt for a new location; one that might be quieter and more conducive to our group visiting with one another. (Background noise plays havoc on hearing aids). So on April 11<sup>th</sup> we met for the first time at The Savory House Resturant in downtown Morton. A very low key location with a meeting room, large parking lot for ease of parking; and when the meeting spills into the parking lot for looks under the hood.

There are two upcoming Regional events in 2015 that are close enough for Central Illinois Section members to participate in: the MBCA Regional Autocross & Defensive Driving Course – hosted by the Wisconsin Section in May and StarTech 2015 hosted by the MBCA - Cincinnati Section in June. Read about each of these events later in this newsletter.

As I mention in every newsletter; I look forward to meeting more members in the coming year and if any of you would like to host an event we are always looking for volunteers. Contact me. As always you can check out the MBCA website <http://www.mbca.org/> and watch our new Central Illinois Section website <http://centralillinois.mbca.org/> for the most current Section event information.

John Lewellen – President Central Illinois Section

# Spring Events 2015

## Willkommen New Members

I would like to open this Newsletter by welcoming 4 new members to the Central Illinois Section.

Tina Horve, from Forsyth, IL  
Jay Vonachen, from Peoria, IL  
John Weissberg, from Rochester, IL  
Anthony Wollaston, from Quincy, IL

And thanks 2 members who have renewed their memberships.

John Lewellen, from Normal, IL  
Richard Grafton, from Springfield, Illinois

## Member Spotlight

Central Illinois Section member George Kottemann, from Peoria IL, a member of MBCA since 1975, will be celebrating 40 years with MBCA in September of 2015. Congratulations George!

## Check your MBCA website profile

Make sure current email address and phone number(s) are listed. This is the only way to contact you and keep you up to date with Club and Section happenings.

## New for 2015

In addition to the 4 events sponsored by the Section there are some other fun things happening throughout the season that you can participate in. These include "Benz & Breakfast", "Drive and Dine", and Cruisin's and Car Shows from the "Community Car Corral" list.

## Benz & Breakfast

Participation over the years has dwindled to no one or very few participating in Cars and Coffee at the Autohaus dealership; so we thought we would try something different for 2015. Instead of Cars and Coffee we have started a new event – a monthly Benz & Breakfast. The first get together was January 10<sup>th</sup> at the Cracker Barrel in Morton, Illinois. We had a good turnout of 7 members. (Not bad considering it was way below freezing out).

The second event in Feb had no participation and the third event in March had 5 participants.

After lengthy discussion at the March 26<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting about when and where the best place would be to hold future Benz & Breakfasts, it was agreed that this event needed to be moved back to the first of the month with a new meeting location. So Benz & Breakfast will now be the 1st Saturday of the month at a new location; **The Savory House** in Morton.

The first Benz & Breakfast since the change was 4 April at 9am and there were 2 participants.

## Drive & Dine

This is also a "new" event added for 2015 the goal of which is to encourage members to get together informally to share camaraderie and Mercedes Benz fellowship. An added bonus is the ability to showcase a favorite, (sometimes little known), eatery. But well known places can work just as well.

For this to work members have to host one of these events – there are many opportunities available throughout the summer. Hosting is simply a matter of locating a venue willing to have from 6-26 people for lunch off the menu. (As well as sufficient parking for as many cars).

No guarantee of attendance will be provided and no charge for a room can be paid. Seating around one extended table, or a couple of larger tables, or at least adjoining tables in a separate area, (away from the main dining), works the best. It appears the availability of adult beverages or ice cream/custard deserts are high priority for inspiring attendance.

The host/hostess plans (well in advance) the event, coordinates with the restaurant for date, time and number of participants. Then after the event occurs submits a 2-3 paragraph summary for the Section website and Newsletter.

So if you would like to volunteer to be a host/hostess for a "Drive & Dine" event contact [SLDriver@outlook.com](mailto:SLDriver@outlook.com) with your suggested location and date to volunteer for a very easy hosting opportunity.

## Community Car Corral 2015

Included in this Newsletter is a list of notable Community Car Shows and events from around the area that are not on the Central Illinois Section Calendar of Events. These run the gambit from Car Shows for just European cars to Car Show fundraisers. If you are interested in attending any of these contact me at [SLDriver@outlook.com](mailto:SLDriver@outlook.com) or just show up.

### May

## Towanda Route 66 Red Carpet Car Show

Towanda, Illinois – Sunday 5/3 All Day  
Car Show and Vendor Fair held along old Route 66.

## Twin Cities Monthly Cruise-In

Bloomington, Illinois Saturday 5/13 5pm  
Located at Towanda Plaza Shopping Center, 1210 Towanda Avenue. Click for [here](#) for website.

## Dooley Park Car Show

Downs, Illinois – Saturday 5/16 noon – 5pm  
24<sup>th</sup> Annual Event. Live music. Food concession provided by the Boy Scouts.  
Rain date: Sunday May 17th

## Pontiac Cruise Night

Pontiac, Illinois - Saturday 5/16 5pm – 9pm  
Now in its 8th year this community event brings everyone downtown to see and watch the cars of yesteryear. Click for [here](#) for website.



## Champaign British Car Show

Bloomington, Illinois May 31<sup>st</sup>  
Annual event held on the grounds of the David Davis Mansion. Click for [here](#) for website.

### June

## Bloomington Route 66 Crusin'

Bloomington, Illinois; Saturday 6/6 2-9pm  
Park along old Route 66 in downtown Bloomington. Rain date: Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup> 1-6pm

## Hot Rod Magazine Power Tour

Parkland Community College, Champaign, Illinois  
Starts at noon 6/7 when Power Tour participants are expected to arrive.

## Car Show for Homes of Hope

Mackinaw Vineyards, Mackinaw, Illinois  
6/7 noon to 4pm  
Annual fundraiser Car Show that helps cover the expenses to maintain the 4 Homes of Hope in Bloomington/Normal.

## Car Show

Leroy, Illinois – Saturday 6/13 10am – 3pm  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual Leroy Racing & Hot Rod Association Car Show. Rain date: June 20th

## Twin Cities Monthly Cruise-In

Bloomington, Illinois Saturday 6/13 5pm  
Located at Towanda Plaza Shopping Center, 1210 Towanda Avenue. Click for [here](#) for website.

## Sommerfest and German Car Show

Dunlap, Illinois - Sunday 6/14  
German music, food, drink. Free to enter and display your Mercedes alongside other fine German cars. No judging or awards.





## Scottish Highland Games and British Car Show

29th Annual Scottish Festival & Highland Games. Hamilton Lakes in Itasca, Illinois. Click for [here](#) for website.

## Pontiac Cruise Night

Pontiac, Illinois - Saturday 6/20 5pm – 9pm  
Now in its 8th year this community event brings everyone downtown to see and watch the cars of yesteryear. Click for [here](#) for website.



## July

## Mother Road Crusin'

Atlanta, Illinois – Friday 7/3

Event sponsored by the Town of Atlanta on old Route 66 with a live band and fireworks.

## Twin Cities Monthly Cruise-In

Bloomington, Illinois Saturday 7/11 5pm

Located at Towanda Plaza Shopping Center, 1210 Towanda Avenue. Click for [here](#) for website.

## Pontiac Cruise Night

Pontiac, Illinois - Saturday 7/18 5pm – 9pm

Now in its 8th year this community event brings everyone downtown to see and watch the cars of yesteryear. Click for [here](#) for website.



## Jaguar Concourse

Naperville, Illinois - Saturday 7/25 All Day

There are a couple of Central Illinois Section members that also have and show Jaguars.



## Mackinaw Art and Wine Festival and Cruisin'

Mackinaw, Illinois - Sunday 7/26

This is a great venue, with lots of vendors selling Artisan Crafts. A great event for the wives. Click for [here](#) for website.



## Tractor Pull

McLean County Fairgrounds 7/29

If you have never been, it is a ground pounding event!

## Survey Says

Many of you have seen and responded to the surveys that were sent out to gauge the level of interest of our membership.

These included general interest and participation for Section events and one to gauge interest in participating in events at the Regional level.

Participation was better than I expected. Thanks to those of you who participated. If you have not taken the Surveys and would like to click [here](#) for the general interest survey and click [here](#) for the Regional Events Survey.

## Regional Participation Survey

The MBCA is divided into Regions – we, the Central Illinois Section, are part of the Midwest Region, comprised of in addition to us, the Chicagoland Section, the Iowa Hawkeye Section, the Kansas City Section, the Twin Cities of Minnesota Section, and the Wisconsin Section. Later this summer, the Wisconsin Section will be hosting a “Regional” Driving Event. Conducted and sponsored by MBCA at the Regional level this all day event will have driving clinics for varying levels of defensive driving and an Autocross to cap off the day. Since we, as the MBCA – Central Illinois Section are part of the regional membership that makes up the MBCA Midwest Region. This survey was an effort

to gauge Section interest in attending these type of MBCA sponsored events.

The survey was active for in excess of 90 days. Out of 79 members there were 10 participants or 12.7 % of the membership. Methods of notification included email blast sent to all members with a hyperlink to take the survey. Survey link was also included as hyperlink in the Sections 4th Quarter Newsletter.

## Results

The responses indicate that some questions need to be further studied and another survey created with more in-depth questions. Not all questions from the survey are represented here. I have just included a few of the questions and responses here to provide a sense of the responses.

**Question:** Would you be interested in attending a MBCA Regional event in the future (annual meeting, StarTech, StarFest, Regional Driving event, etc.)?

  9   yes

  0   no

  1   maybe

**Observation/Analysis:** Number of yes responses would indicate that there could be a good turnout for this type of event. Put together a follow on survey to gather more specific information; a plan to attend a Regional Event.

**Question:** Where would you go to find information on Regional Events that might be of an interest to you?

  5   Star Magazine

  2   MBCA website

  3   MBCA - CIS Newsletter

**Observation/Analysis:** Interesting result. Indicating the MBCA website is second to The Star magazine for information. Need to raise awareness of both the MBCA and Central Illinois Section websites.

**Question:** What type of events, local or regional, would you be interested in attending? (This question allowed free text entry. And not every participant provided an answer).

\_\_1\_\_ sightseeing/social

\_\_1\_\_ Car Shows

\_\_1\_\_ Shows & tours

\_\_1\_\_ Driving events; Rally's, Autocross, Taking scenic or interesting roads to a car themed event.

\_\_1\_\_ I enjoy meeting with the local MB owners at casual events where you can visit. The wine events and Christmas parties in homes were well attended in the past.

\_\_1\_\_ I have no idea what type there are, but count me in! I would also volunteer.

**Observation/Analysis:** Interesting results. Of those who took the survey the majority were interested in doing Shows and Tours.

Candidate for a survey to gather more specific information to plan these types of events.

### Membership General Participation

One of our Section goals for 2015 is to find a way to increase member participation in Section activities. So as the first step in this process the Central Illinois Section Board of Directors and Core Leadership put together a survey as a way to pulse current membership and get their input in determining what type of Section sponsored activities the general membership would be interested in participating in 2015.

The survey was active for in excess of 90 days. Out of 79 members there were 17 participants or 21.52% of the membership. Methods of notification included email blast sent to all members with a hyperlink to take the survey. Survey link was also included as hyperlink in the Sections 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Newsletter.

**Question:** Would you participate in a Club sponsored driving event? For example, a Rally.

\_\_13\_\_ yes

\_\_3\_\_ no

\_\_1\_\_ don't Know

**Observation/Analysis:** Number of "yes" responses would indicate that there could be a good turnout for this type of event. Put together a follow on survey to gather more specific information to plan a tech session that members will attend.

**Question:** Would you participate in a Club sponsored Tech Session at a Mercedes Benz Dealer?

\_\_15\_\_ yes

\_\_0\_\_ no

\_\_2\_\_ don't know

**Observation/Analysis:** The number of "yes" responses would indicate that there could be a good turnout for one of these events. Candidate for a survey to gather more specific information to plan location and subject.

**Question:** Would you participate in a Club sponsored Car Show?

\_\_12\_\_ yes

\_\_0\_\_ no

\_\_5\_\_ don't know

**Observation/Analysis:** The number of "yes" responses would indicate that there is an interest. Candidate for survey to gather further information specific to type of car show and location.

**Question:** How satisfied are you with the Central Illinois Section website?

- 12 Very satisfied
- 3 Somewhat satisfied
- 1 Neutral
- 1 Didn't know we had a website

**Observation/Analysis:** The number of "very satisfied" responses indicates that the Central Illinois Section website is being well received.

**Question:** How satisfied are you with the Central Illinois Section Newsletter?

- 14 Very Satisfied
- 2 Somewhat Satisfied
- 1 Neutral

**Observation/Analysis:** The number of "very satisfied" responses indicates that the Newsletter is being well received.

**Question:** How satisfied are you with the Central Illinois Section events?

- 3 Very satisfied
- 9 Somewhat satisfied
- 5 Neutral

**Observation/Analysis:** The number of "somewhat satisfied" and "neutral" responses might indicate that we are targeting the wrong kind of events. Candidate for a survey to gather further information specific to the types of events to choose from.

**Question:** What existing activities does the Central Illinois Section need to improve on?

- 1 other
- 5 Business/Social
- 10 Don't know
- 1 Section Parties

**Observation/Analysis:** Based on the question above we were looking for specifics on the events, or activities, that the members felt needed improvement. Most replied "don't know" – indicating that they were not satisfied but didn't exactly know what they were looking for. Warrants further study – survey

to determine how improvements can be made and to what.

**Question:** Overall, how would you rate how well the Central Illinois Section is meeting your membership expectations?

- 3 Excellent
- 12 Good
- 1 Fair
- 1 Don't know

**Observation/Analysis:** Overall we rate well in meeting members expectations.

**Question:** Thinking of the Central Illinois Section as a whole what do you appreciate most from your membership?

- 4 Car Shows
- 3 Tech Sessions
- 5 Dining Events
- 4 Section Newsletter
- 1 None of the above

**Observation/Analysis:** Pretty equally split. Which is pretty indicative of what we see in participation from membership.

## Conklin Dinner Theater Outing

Watch for email and updates to the CIS website as plans to attend the Conklin Dinner Theater are finalized.

## **MBCA Members Receive \$500 Off the Purchase of a New Airstream!**

All current MBCA Members are eligible to receive a \$500 discount on the price of a new Airstream Interstate® or Airstream Autobahn® luxury touring van. These state-of-the-art vehicles are both built on the award-winning Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis. These vehicles offer exquisite exterior styling, all the amenities and comforts of home and are guaranteed to turn heads while you travel in style.

More information about the Airstream discount is available on the Member Benefits page of the MBCA website. More information about the Airstream Interstate® and Autobahn® is available on the Airstream website.



**StarTech 2015**  
**June 12-14, 2015**  
**Cincinnati, Ohio**



StarTech 2015 is coming to Cincinnati, Ohio – mark your calendars for June 12-14, 2015!

Welcome to Cincinnati, as the Germans would call it! Cincinnati is rich with German heritage, including: the world's second largest Oktoberfest, plenty of German-style breweries, and the architecture of our world-famous **Over the Rhine** neighborhood.

Our roster of national and local speakers will cover topics about Mercedes old and new, in-depth questions and glossy overviews. There will be a great Welcome Party at the **American Sign Museum**, a Saturday Evening Soiree and, of course, our partnership with the regional **Ault Park Concours d'Elegance**, where Mercedes-Benz will be the Featured Marque. If you have a classic, Concours-level Mercedes and are coming to StarTech, please let us know and we will connect you with the car selection committee for the Concours. We are thrilled that our host hotel this year is the DoubleTree by Hilton at the Cincinnati Airport. They have great spaces for our events, good food and comfortable rooms. You can learn more about the hotel and book your reservation now by clicking this [link](#).

More StarTech information and updates can be found on our [Facebook page](#) or at [startech2015.mbca.org](http://startech2015.mbca.org).

Questions or more information? Please contact Pamela Zelman at [templehill1840@gmail.com](mailto:templehill1840@gmail.com).

**May 2 - Wisconsin Section—MBCA  
Regional Autocross & Defensive  
Driving Course**

Members of our club take our driving seriously. Driving any vehicle well and safely requires skill. Even those of us who have driven for years can learn new techniques and become reacquainted with the best practices of driving. Supporting this learning, our club is proud to announce a day dedicated to learning these best practices.

On May 2nd, the morning will be spent in the classroom and in one-on-one instruction to increase your awareness and confidence on how to handle an emergency driving situation. Several small courses will be set up for you to safely practice controlling your car. In the afternoon, we will participate in an autocross event. Autocross is a low-speed event on a course laid out with flexible pylons. Your objective is to drive the course without striking any pylons. Instructors will be available to help you practice.

Our instructors are Frank and Mary Alice Dozza, MBCA's nationally acclaimed driving instructors. They will direct this all day event.

We recommend that you prepare your car before arriving at the course. Empty your trunk and remove any loose items in floor board of the back seat. Check your tire pressure. Check your lug nuts for proper torque. Keith Powers, Black Forest Motors, will be on site to give a brief technical inspection to assure that your car is safe.

There is a participation fee associated with this event and lunch is included in the registration fee.

## SURROUNDING MBCA SECTION EVENTS

### **May 2, 2015 - MBCA Regional Autocross & Defensive Driving Course**

hosted by MBCA Wisconsin Section

### **June 12-14, 2015 - StarTech 2015** hosted by MBCA Cincinnati Section

**Aug 15, 2015 - Clean Car Show** – Bettendorf, Iowa hosted by MBCA Iowa Section

**Aug 22, 2015 - Milwaukee Club Day Car Show**, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, hosted by MBCA Wisconsin Section

**Aug 23, 2015 - Milwaukee Concourse** – Milwaukee, Wisconsin, hosted by MBCA Wisconsin Section

**Oct 10, 2015 - Fall Colors Drive** – Bettendorf, Iowa – Hosted by MBCA Iowa Section

## **Buy A Gift Membership**

Mercedes-Benz Ownership Isn't Complete Without a Membership to the Club. Surprise a Friend or Family Member ...

from \$49 a Year

Go to: <http://www.mbca.org>

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What would you like to do with your "Benz" friends in 2015?

Contact a Board Member and let them

## **CENTRAL ILLINOIS COMING EVENTS**

### **May**

May 2nd - Benz & Breakfast, Savory House, Morton, 9:00 am

May xxth – Dinner Theater,

### **June**

June 4<sup>th</sup> - Benz & Breakfast, Savory House, Morton, 9:00 am

### **July**

July 4<sup>th</sup> - Benz & Breakfast, Savory House, Morton, 9:00 am

Watch our website <http://centralillinois.mbca.org/> for the latest Section news and updates for these and many more events.

