



The Prairie Star

Winter 2014/2015

MBCA - Central Illinois Section

Thank You,
Loyal Members

For a list of our loyal members who have recently renewed their membership, see Page 2.

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

The Central Illinois Section has mainly been a social group enjoying technical sessions, driving events, theater and dinner events. New leadership brings new interests - and the current Leadership Team, made up of a dedicated group of Section Officers and Board Members are introducing the Section to local car shows as well as Regional and National MBCA events.

The Mercedes Benz brand is well represented in our Section, from vintage through current year models. And since this is a "car club" the lineup of events planned for this year has a heavy emphasis on events centered on the Mercedes automobile.

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! Log onto <http://www.mbca.org/> for updates on upcoming and past Section events.



From the Desk of the CIS President:

2015 is here and we have lots of fun activities planned for the Central Illinois Section. As I mentioned in the last ***Prarie Star Newsletter*** when I look back at what the Central Illinois Section planned for the 2014 season and what we actually executed, I am very pleased! Have a look at the 2014 Recap later in this newsletter.

As part of pur planning for 2015 the Board of Directors has put together a Calendar of Events for 2015 – watch for postings to the Central Illinois Section website, emails and the Section Newsletter.

There are two upcoming Regional events in 2015 that are potentially close enough for us 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. And watch the upcoming events tab on our MBCA – Central Illinois Section website for details on our Section plans to attend these events as a group.

As I mentioned 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

Willkommen New Members

There are no new or returning Members

Winter Events Report

I think we offered a variety of automotive related events for everyone to choose from in 2014. There were some first time events that will be added to our "preferred events" portfolio for next year as well as some repeat events.

Recap of 2014 Events

In April a small group of us met at The Kickapoo Creek Winery in Edwards, Illinois for lunch and wine tasting.



Then in May there was the Euro Car Show in Bloomington, Illinois at Café Italia. This was a first time event that has been added to our Calendar of Events for 2015.



In June a small group of us attended a Meet and Greet at Grossinger Motors (formally Suds) in Normal, Illinois and then went onto the Route 66 Cruisin' in Downtown Bloomington. Unfortunately we had no more than parked when it started to pour with rain.

June also saw us attending the Peoria German/American Society's Sommerfest at their festival grounds in Dunlap, Illinois where we enjoyed German music, food and of course automobiles.



July found us at another first time event, the Mackinaw Creek Winery Arts and Wine Festival Cruisin'. The weather was perfect for local artisans to showcase their work as well as wine and beer tasting all day. This event has been added to our Calendar of Events for 2015.



In August we went back to the Peoria German/American Society's festival grounds in Dunlap, Illinois for their annual Bratfest.



In September the Central Illinois Section teamed with the Illini Chapter of the BMW Club of America for a first time event at the Isringhausen BMW and Mercedes Benz dealership in Springfield, Illinois where we were treated to a light breakfast and a tour of their facilities. This event also coincided with the Route 66 Mother Road Car Show that takes over the downtown streets of Springfield just a block from the dealership. This afforded us a great opportunity to walk thru the Show without having to hunt for parking.

October found us at the Peoria German/American Society festival grounds in Dunlap, Illinois for Schlachtfest.



And we wrapped up 2014 with the European Classic Car Show sponsored by Sam Lehman BMW in Bloomington, Illinois. This was the second year for this show with a large turnout.



New for 2015

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 Cars and Coffee we have started a new event – a monthly Benz & Breakfast. The first get together was January 10th at the Cracker Barrel in Morton, Illinois. We had a good turnout of 7 members. (Not bad considering it was way below freezing out).

Drive & Dine

Another "new" event added for 2015 is the Drive & Dine. Our goal in having "Drive & Dines" is to encourage members to get together informally to share camaraderie and 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 I solicit members to host one of these events – there are at least one a month on the Section Calendar of Events for each month of the year. 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.

If you would like to volunteer to be a host/hostess for a Drive & Dine event – we still have slots available throughout the summer, contact SLDriver@outlook.com with your suggested location and volunteer for a very easy hosting opportunity.

2015 Events Selection Process

There are 33 “potential” events identified on our 2015 Calendar of Events. The list includes varying types of events in the hope that a broader spectrum of interests might be covered. I realize that there will be few members that will attend all offered events. The intent is to afford our members the opportunity to select events that they are interested in, and miss the ones they are not. I tried to mix the days to include both Saturdays and Sundays. But with some events I was restricted to whatever day the sponsoring club or organization has the event planned.

This approach of planning “potential” events for the entire calendar year in advance is so that going onto 2015 we have a plan to work from.

Each quarter at the Board of Directors Meeting the Board members will discuss and finalize events identified for the up-coming quarter. If the Board feels there is no interest in an up-coming event, or there is no one from the Section to organize and execute the event, especially those events that are exclusively hosted by our Section, then we can cancel or postpone accordingly. And I am sure there will be some cancellations in the course of the year.

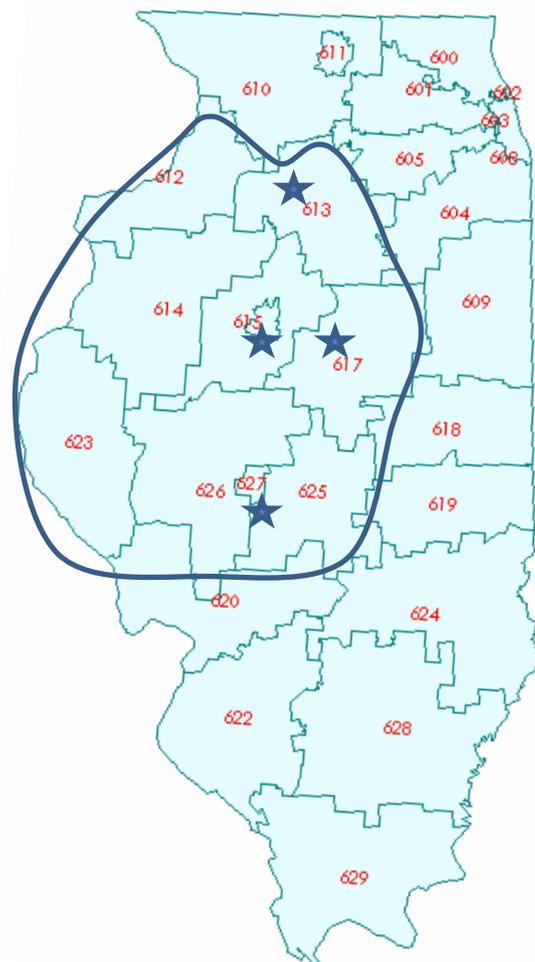
As each quarter events are approved by the Board I will list them in the upcoming

Newsletter, send out email notifications and reminders to the members. As well as posting to the upcoming event tab on our Central Illinois Section website.

The goal is to offer a variety of quality events that are planned well enough in advance so appropriate notification can be provided.

Central Illinois Section boundaries and membership concentration

As you can see from the graphic the MBCA – Central Illinois Section covers a very large geographical area.



One of the things I have struggled with is trying to select events that are accessible to our members in the outlying areas of our boundaries.

We are fortunate that as an added bonus we have 4 Mercedes Benz dealerships within our Section boundaries. Indicated by the stars on the graphic these are pretty equally spread-out thru the Section.

Because our geographical boundaries are so huge and cover a large area, this makes it very challenging to plan events that not only appeal to everyone's personal interests and tastes, but also trying to balance events so members who live in the outer boundaries of the Section are not always left out because of the distances they would need to travel to participate.

You can see on the table below that our members are concentrated around Peoria, followed closely by Bloomington/Normal and Springfield. But this does not mean all of our events are restricted to these areas. If there was a noteworthy event in Oreana, Illinois I would want to know about it so we could plan to attend.

So you members in the outer reaches of the Section boundaries – let's hear from you.

Town		Town		Town	
Decatur	4	Chapin	1	Peoria	15
Viola	1	Trivoli	1	Monmouth	1
Springfield	7	Pontiac	3	Galesburg	1
Jacksonville	1	Chenoa	1	Macomb	1
Brimfield	1	Normal	5	Quincy	2
Bloomington	4	Princeton	1	Abington	1
Charleston	1	Urbana	1	Wapella	1
Metamora	2	Oreana	1	Kewanee	1
East Moline	1	Moline	2	Bartonville	1
Henry	2	Dunlap	1	Assumption	1
Coal Valley	1	Edwards	1	Morton	1

Survey Says

Many of you have seen and responded to the surveys I sent out to gauge interest levels 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. I will leave these surveys open for a while longer to give everyone an opportunity to participate.

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. Look for the results in a future issue of the **Prairie Star Newsletter**.

2015 AutoTrends for local Shows and events

Some notable events that are coming up and not on the Central Illinois Section Calendar of Events include:

A British Swap Meet March 15th at the DuPage County Fairgrounds

Peoria Auto Show April 10-12 hosted by local new car dealers

Champaign British Car Show at the Davis Mansion Bloomington, Illinois May 31st

British Car Show, August 1st, LeClaire, Iowa

The British Union Car Show September 16th

Member Spotlight

Rick McCarty – our Section Vice President; has been selected as Central Illinois's Member of the Year.

Congratulations Rick!



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.

Questions or more information?
Please contact Pamela Zelman
at 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

MBCA Section Events from the surrounding Central Illinois area

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

hosted by Wisconsin Section

June 12-14, 2015 - StarTech 2015 hosted by MBCA - Cincinnati 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 know.

CENTRAL ILLINOIS COMING EVENTS

February

Feb 7th - Benz & Breakfast, Cracker Barrel, Morton, 9:30 am

Feb 21st - Chicago Auto Show, McCormick Place, TBD

March

Mar 14th - Benz & Breakfast, Cracker Barrel, Morton, 9:30 am

Mar 29th - Drive & Dine - Route 66 Museum, Pontiac, TBD

April

Apr 11th - Benz & Breakfast, Cracker Barrel, Morton, 9:30 am

Apr 26th - Dine & Drive - Kickapoo Winery, Edwards, 12 -3pm

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

