



TRI-STAR

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE 3rd Quarter 2020 by Don Klug

I am sure we all miss seeing each other at our club ‘get-togethers’ and our old state of familiar enjoyment. I know that I do. Of course, club gatherings require us to transport to our events in our Mercedes Benz cars. So, a partial fix these days for me has been a short drive in the Benz and leave in the rearview mirror the state of our world for a few moments. The drive, although fun, is still just a ‘partial’ fix. Our fun section gatherings with each other and our ownership experience is really part of the reason we joined the MBCA FL Section to begin with.



With this in mind, we want to communicate an adjusted 2020 events calendar in a permissible way that allows the chance to enjoy our short summer with an occasion gathering. Please know that your continued health and safety is of primary concern. We are all pleased, I am sure to see NNY, CNY and the Rochester regions deemed appropriate to ‘open up’ in New York State’s Phase 3 and Phase 4 levels of gatherings with social distancing.



After talks with our other club officers we have decided to at least schedule our annual club wide favorite event, the annual picnic at Red Kosinski’s home on August 16th. Considering this future date will allow us all the flexibility to be able to see if things are safe as the date approaches. Of course, social distancing and masks will still be required and we assure all that the picnic layout will accommodate our new normal. If the current environment situation in August suddenly changes, we certainly have the option to cancel and communicate such via a short newsletter message.

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The hosts of the Sonnenberg Gardens Father's Day Car Show, scheduled for June 21st have moved the date to September 6th, allowing us another opportunity to gather if our environment allows. Of course, there is always the opportunity to gather again for a short road rally without a visit to a restaurant. This is a subject worth investigating as a fall event or a 'pop-up' surprise meet. We will investigate and let you all know about this in the next newsletter or before.

Please take note of club member Dave Tobin's contribution to this newsletter on Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van and welcome Tobin Motor Works as our newest advertising supporter along with Universal Imports and Mercedes Benz of Rochester.

Stay safe and happy driving,

Section President Don Klug



WE WELCOME THE NEW MEMBERS.

Thank you for joining us!

Scot Reiser (Baldwinsville, NY)

Jennifer Timmer (Rochester, NY)

Robert Brown (Rochester, NY)

Current members :
*Please remember to **renew!***

Upcoming Events

August 16, 2020: Annual FLMBCA Picnic at Red Kozinski's Home.

September 6, 2020 : Father's Day Car & Motorcycle Show at Sonnenberg Gardens, Canandaigua, NY.

September 13, 2020 : Seneca Falls Rotary Jazz Festival. The Date is "PENDING" approval by the Seneca Falls Rotary Club.

October 16, 2020 : "Fall Color Tour 2020", organized by Doug Archer. We will start around Cortland, drive to Skaneateles and finish with a lunch at the Sherwood Inn.

November, 2020 : Annual Meeting, Date & Location TBD.

December, 2020 : Community & Family Holiday Events. TBD

Due to NY State Laws related to the Pandemic, Some of the events may be cancelled.

We will communicate such via a short newsletter message.

A Follow-up to “BOUGHT IT, DROVE IT, SHIPPED IT, SOLD IT, FOUND IT AND CAN’T FIND A KEY”

In our April 2020 issue of our Tri –Star newsletter we shared a story about a red 350 SL from 1972 that owner Ken Rucki had recovered after selling it in 1994. The car was abandoned in a one car garage after a divorce. We jumped to 2016 when the garage and house were sold and the new building owner wanted the car gone. Ken was able to negotiate with the building owner and the long- gone divorcee for car ownership; one problem, no key was found. Ken arranged, with the police present, to have a mechanic with a tow truck move his new ‘old car’ to a secure garage to make the car road worthy.

If you remember, the Mercedes Benz Classic Center in Irving, California had no records whatsoever of the car using the old 14-digit VIN. Ken’s attempt to replace the key thru what seemed normal channels proved fruitless. Calls to Germany ended with the same results.

GOOD NEWS!! A bag of uncut key blanks was found and purchased on E-bay. The car’s ignition master lock is the same as the glove box while the door and trunk keys were known as the valet key. Duplicate keys were made at a Syracuse locksmith and Ken and the mechanic are now on the way getting the long- lost treasure back on the road.



Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van Introduced by MBUSA

By Dave Tobin

In early 2020 MBUSA introduced the Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van, a 5 passenger Mercedes Metris van with a pop-top conversion that sleeps four. Mercedes touts the new introduction as a daily driver and the perfect vehicle for a weekend get away. Anyone who knows me, knows I'm a fan of Volkswagen Westfalia campers (I lived in one while traveling around the United States over a 6 month period during the Spring and Summer of 2000), it warms my heart to see Mercedes embracing the camper van concept with this new introduction.

While this is new introduction launches the Metris Weekender as an official vehicle distributed by MBUSA through its dealer network, these Metris Weekenders have been available, as regular Metris conversions from a company in Seattle called 'Peace Vans' for several years. Peace vans is a company that, for many years, has repaired and restored Volkswagen Westfalia camper vans, Vanagon models specifically. They eventually developed a pop-top conversion for the Mercedes Metris.

The MBUSA press release introducing the Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van explains, "Mercedes-Benz drew inspiration from illustrious models of the past while integrating the latest sophisticated safety, reliability and convenience features to create a new modern pop top van."

The press release goes on to explain how it all works... each Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van will be "built by Driverge Vehicle Innovations, in partnership with Peace Vans, one of the largest classic camper van repair and restoration shops in the United States." [Peace Vans, based in Seattle, WA](#) has been offering custom built pop-top conversions for Mercedes Metris vans since the end of 2017, according to their website.

A major auto manufacturer hasn't offered a camper van through regular dealerships since 2002 when Volkswagen discontinued the Eurovan Westfalia. The 'Van-Life' craze that has taken off in recent years was yearning for something like the Mercedes Metris Camper Van. It's great to see Mercedes taking the concept and bringing it mainstream again. I also like the fact that they've partnered with the small businesses that seems to have perfected the conversion long before Mercedes even thought of capitalizing on such a market segment, Peace Vans.

It seems as though Mercedes has officially brought them into the fold as a vendor to help handle the conversions of the Metris vans that will be sold through Mercedes dealerships nationwide. The Metris Weekender will be built in partnership with Driverge Vehicle Innovations, a Mercedes-Benz Master SOLUTIONS™ partner. From their location in North Charleston, SC, near the new Mercedes factory – Driverge, in partnership with Peace Vans, will build each Mercedes Metris Weekender camper van and ship them to dealers around the country.

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Dave Tobin has been an MBCA member since 2008. He operates Tobin Motor Works, a specialty collector car dealership in Horseheads, NY. He writes about all things Mercedes at mercedes-market.com

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The Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van boasts the following features:

- An elevating roof with a sleeping area for two. Including an integrated spring system, 2” memory foam mattress, 3 windows, and added USB ports for lights, charging and more.
- A multipurpose rear bench seat that opens up into a bed for two. Additionally, when folded into the seat configuration, the seat moves along a rail position into four locations, allowing additional room for varying cargo needs.
- Swiveling front seats that rotate 180 degrees allow your van to quickly turn into the perfect multipurpose lounge. Whether doing work after getting off the trail, sharing a meal or playing cards– the reconfigured space with seats fully swiveled adds a whole new dimension to the experience.
- Standard on every Weekender package is a second battery to power your devices, light up your nights or suit any of your other campsite needs.

Optional features include:

- Off-Grid Power and Integrated Solar Panels, preparing you for extended trips with built in solar charging capacity.
- Upgraded audio and navigation features to improve your road trip experience.
- Various personalization options with the world class 3M auto body wrap materials. The Weekender can be wrapped in any one of 200 available colors.
- Camping upgrades:
 - ◊ 8’ awning for shade and rain protection
 - ◊ Mosquito/bug screens for the rear hatch, and sliding doors
 - ◊ A tent that quickly attaches to the rear lift gate for added space and privacy
 - ◊ Roof Racks for hauling surfboards, extra storage or skis for the slopes.
 - ◊ A pullout rear kitchen.

Mercedes doesn’t offer pricing information for the new Metris based Weekender, but we can get some idea based on the information on the Peace Vans website. Apparently Peace vans offers three different Metris conversions. You can drop your Metris off at their Seattle location and they will transform it into a camper.

- Full camper model – Pop-top, sleeps 4, includes a kitchenette, interior cabinetry, etc. starting at \$39,995
- The Weekender – Pop-top, sleeps 4, essentially the model Mercedes has signed on for, starting at \$24,995.
- Just a Pop-Top – Adds just the pop top to a cargo or 7 passenger Metris, starting at \$10,995.

Wherever you get your Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper van, through your local Mercedes dealership or through a conversion set up directly with Peace Vans, there is little doubt it will be a great vehicle. Modern in every way with plenty of horsepower (unlike my Vanagon which had 67 horsepower from it’s 2.0 liter air cooled engine, no joke, 67!) and all the utility and safety of a modern Mercedes-Benz. [Visit MBUSA’s Mercedes Metris Weekender Camper Van website to see specs, build your van or start the ordering process.](#)

Mercedes-Benz's Plan for Surviving the Auto Revolution

The company that invented the automobile is getting ready for a world where batteries, sharing, and robots rule.



IF YOU'RE THE guy in charge of leading [Daimler](#)—you know, the world's largest luxury carmaker, one of Europe's most important tech companies, and the inventor of the automobile—into a threatening future, it can't hurt to have a name that sounds made for a superhero. Good thing it's a guy named Wilko Stark helming CASE (that's connectivity, autonomous, shared and services, and electric mobility), which Daimler launched in 2016 to address the most promising and troubling trends under one roof. He's the fellow tasked with forging a 20-year blueprint for Daimler and its flagship, [Mercedes-Benz](#).

Between [electrification](#), [autonomy](#), car sharing, and ride hailing, the car industry is undergoing a monumental, unprecedented shift. So we sat down with Stark to hear about his plans for bringing Daimler into this future—no cape necessary.

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Diversify Your Portfolio

When he took over CASE a year ago, Stark also picked up the reins of Daimler's nascent electric mobility brand EQ (electric intelligence), which will roll out at least 10 zero-emission models by 2022. To go with it, Daimler added the contents of its mobility portfolio, including the most popular ride-hailing app in all of Europe, MyTaxi, car-sharing platform car2go, public-transit app Moovel, and black-car service Blacklane.

Stark: It's a great opportunity, the most interesting job within Mercedes, to define the future. And not only define the future from a strategic point of view, but also make it happen. You have to combine these trends. Our target is to be at the forefront of this development. Like we did 130 years ago when we invented the automobile, our ambition is to define the future of mobility.

We have all the technology you need. If you consider self-driving cars and mobility services, what do you need? You need a platform for mobility services, an app. This is what we have with MyTaxi. You need a fleet-management system. This is what we have with Daimler Fleet Management System. You need an asset provider, someone to finance it, so we have Daimler Financial Services. And then you need the vehicle, fully integrated, and you need all the autonomous-driving stuff. So we can cover the whole value chain.

Mobility Trends Are an Opportunity, Not an Existential Crisis

You don't need to be a three-comma futurist to predict how these trends will shake the calcified automotive industry. The coming change has automakers scrambling to reframe themselves as glimmering tech companies, à la Tesla, rather than antiquated builders of oil-gulping people movers. But what some see as a threat, Mercedes-Benz calls a chance.

Stark: Failure is absolutely a possibility. But that's why we have to combine these trends, because in the future we will still have cars. If you look at the global market, the number of cars sold is still rising, and will rise over the next 10 to 20 years. So there's a huge market potential. In inner cities you will have more car-sharing opportunities and mobility services, but this doesn't mean that people will not have their own cars anymore. It's a combination of different worlds.

Of course the phasing-out of traditional cars is already taking place: the announcement of the Paris government to ban first diesels and then combustion-engine cars. And many major cities are going to go 100 percent electric.

Truly self-driving cars will be applied in the first step in mobility services, like MyTaxi, Uber, Lyft, etc, for one simple reason: The sensor technology and computing power will be quite expensive. Private customers will have to wait until it gets cheaper, because the first step will be far too expensive.

We have a clear rollout plan in which kind of cities we're going to enter. First of all, for self-driving cars, the weather conditions should be pretty good. It's probably more in the South. And we have to build up a good relationship with the city; that's quite important. They are all, everywhere, interested in self-driving cars. Everybody is knocking on our door, but they are of course looking for electric vehicles. And you have to build up a different approach from Lyft or especially Uber, because we want to define and develop a future *together* with the cities. In the next decade we will begin to see self-driving cars in major cities in Europe and the US.

Hydrogen Fuel Cells and Other Next Level Technologies Will Have Their Place

Electric cars relying strictly on batteries have their limitations, especially when it comes to heavy duty and long-range applications. For a truly zero-emission future, technologies like hydrogen fuel cells will play an integral role. And while Japanese and Korean brands are more visibly committing to hydrogen in commuter vehicles, Daimler sees the technology's short-term potential in the commercial sector.

Stark: First of all, we are now going to launch the GLC Fuel Cell, which shows we are 100 percent capable of this technology. It's actually a plug-in hybrid, so it's a battery combined with a hydrogen fuel cell.

It can apply in buses and in semi-heavy trucks, etc. Especially in buses, fuel cells make sense as a range extender; you can just put the tanks on top of the vehicle, so it's not dangerous if you have a crash or whatever.

The challenge regarding fuel cells is it's still quite expensive, much more expensive compared to passenger cars, but for these applications for trucks and buses, and even if you talk about the third dimension—the Volocopter—we have a fuel cell on board to extend the range.

Volocopter is an aviation startup we have investment in, and we also have discussed maybe having a fuel cell onboard to extend its electric range. Two to three people can sit in it, and you can fly 50 to 100 kilometers. It's like a drone for persons, so this is what we're referring to as our third dimension. Because the battery is quite heavy, applying fuel cells is a possible solution.

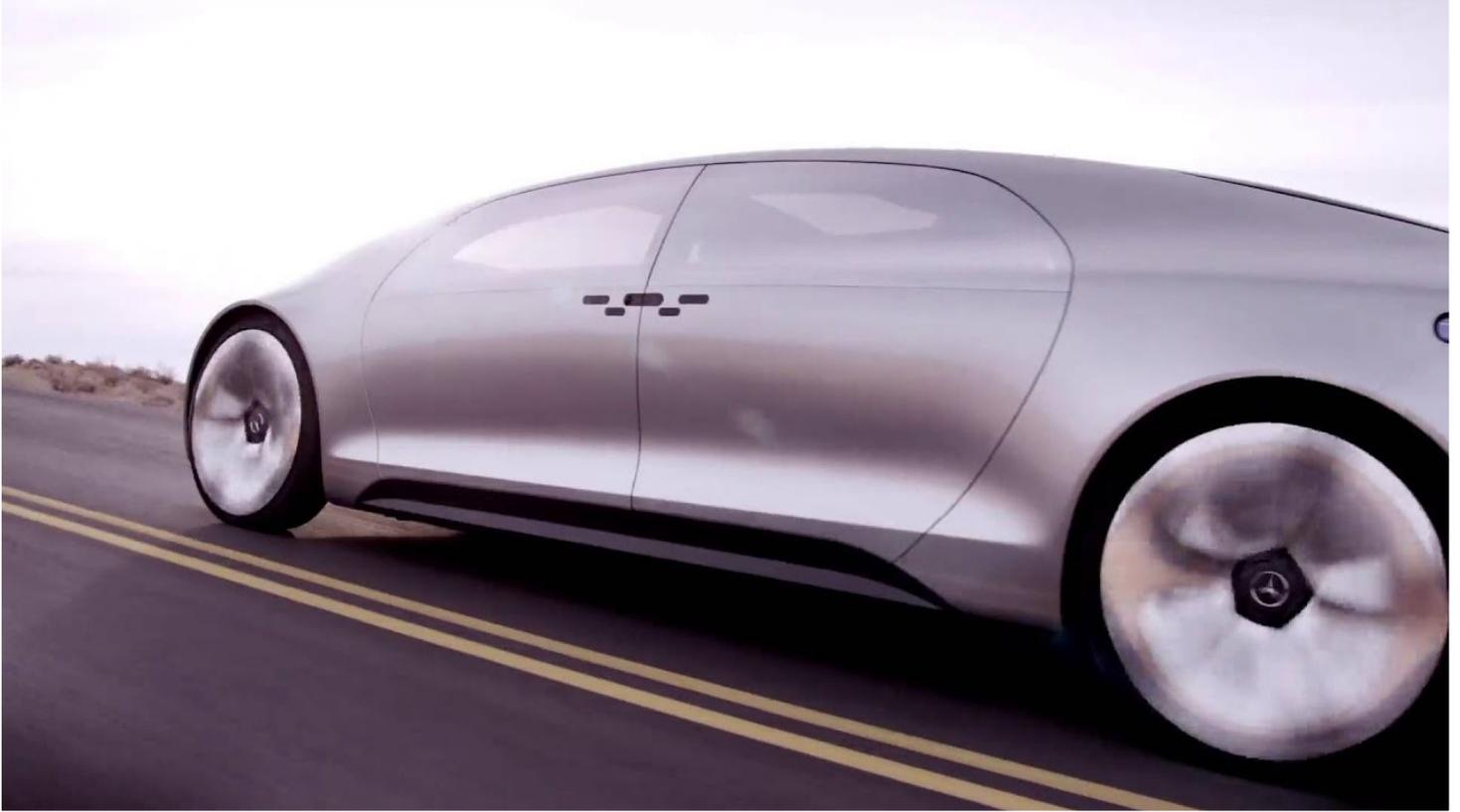
EQ Will Lead an Electric Revolution, but AMGs Will Escape the Guillotine

Mercedes plans to shift from fossil fuels to ion in a three-tier system, all under the EQ banner: EQ Boost for a hybrid setup that makes V-6 perform like a V-8, EQ Power for its next-generation plug-in hybrids offering an EV range of 30 miles, and EQ for 100 percent electric, zero-emission vehicles. But AMG will never lose its seat at the table.

Stark: We strongly believe there will always be a market to drive by yourself, because driving is fun. Therefore, AMG will always exist. In 10, 20, 30 years there will still be a market for these cars. AMG is very important in the US, and it's a fantastic brand, so the future of AMG will also be electric—or a part will be electric. We call it EQ Power, the same name as with the plug-in hybrids. It's a smaller battery but high power, and that is what we will apply in our AMG engines.

We will also have the EQ Boost in AMG like the GT-R four-door coupe we just introduced in Geneva, with the inline "53" six-cylinder coupled to a 48-voltage system. It is absolutely great because you have the whole torque range right from the very beginning, so the I-6 really drives like a V-8. In an electric engine, you have instant torque, therefore the acceleration especially up to 50 mph is absolutely crazy. The boost in the 48-volt system is not only when you start accelerating but also in higher speeds.

Mercedes Benz of the Future



The Mercedes-Benz F 015 Luxury in Motion research vehicle makes the future tangible with the revolutionary concept of autonomous driving.

A luxury sedan with total connectivity between vehicle, passengers, and the outside world, it's a preview of how the self-driving car of the future could evolve into a platform for communication and interaction.

Video available at: <https://youtu.be/fmWeu5iCwSQ>

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'03 Mercedes SL 500 Sold to N. Carolina

Tobin Motor Works specializes in collectible and enthusiast cars of all kinds, especially European marques. From our showroom in the Finger Lakes Region we reach the international collector car community ensuring fair market prices for quality customer consignments and inventory. *Here are some recent sales.*



'93 Mercedes 300 E Sold to Maine



'06 Mercedes E350 Sold to New York



'84 Mercedes 300 TD Sold to Rhode Island



'65 Mercedes 220 SEb Sold to Croatia



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Coronavirus (COVID-19) Notification

As the situation around novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to evolve, we are all aware of the impact it is having on our country and our own communities. The Mercedes Benz Club of America wants to be sure the safety of our members is always our first consideration. Although some areas have not been touched by the disease yet, it is surely only a matter of time. Therefore, I call upon your good judgment to determine when it is in the best interest of your members to cancel an event. I know that is always a difficult call, given the time, effort, and sometimes money, put into the planning and execution of some of these events. Certainly taking into account the number of people attending, and where they are coming from, can help you decide if that is the right course of action. But the safety of the members, and the communities in which they live, must be your primary consideration.



Thank you for all you do for the Club!

**Julie Bruggner
Mercedes Benz Club of America
National President**

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