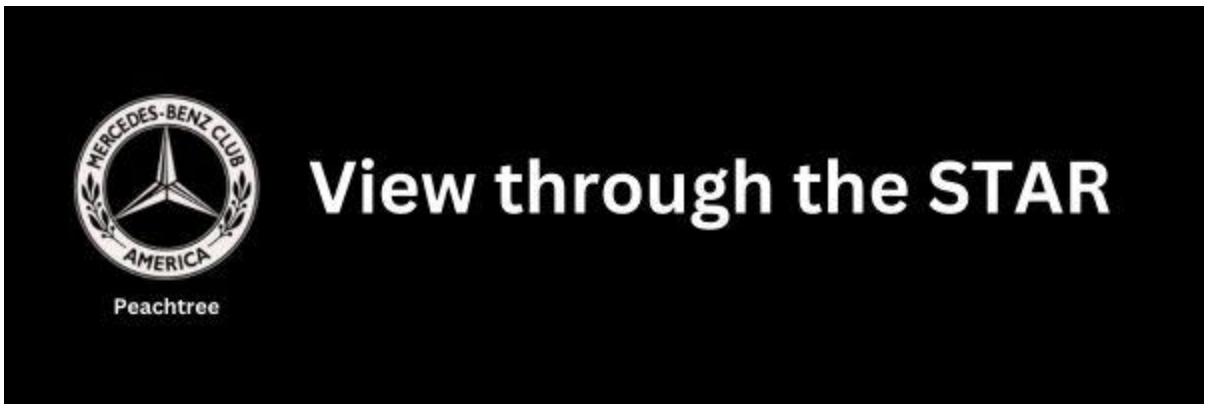


Volume 48 - Vol 2 | April 2026



View Through The Star

by Rusty Duncan, President

Spring Has Sprung

There are certain moments every year that remind us why we love this club, and for me, this past weekend was one of them.

Spring is finally here. The weather is changing, the roads are calling, and our Mercedes-Benz cars are ready to be enjoyed again. I know that became very real for me when I unpacked my 2007 CLK 63 Cabriolet and took my first top-down drive of the year. That first drive with the top down always feels like the true beginning of the season. After a winter of waiting, it is a wonderful feeling to be back out on the road.

Our mountain drive to Wolf Mountain Vineyard this weekend was a terrific way to kick off spring. We had 43 participants, and it was one of those days that reminded me just how much this chapter has to offer. Yes, the roads were great. Yes, the destination was beautiful. But what stood out to me most was the people. [Read More](#)



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Member Spotlight
Michael "Mike" Leigh



by Marisa Hegyesi

Michael "Mike" Leigh

Originally from California, Mike is 65+ years old and has been married to Lori for 20 years. They have five children.

His first job was the U. S. Navy. Mike was in Naval Aviation. His Dad started him flying at age 10. By sixteen, he received his Pilot's License. Mike continued flying at the US Naval Academy and retired as a 30-year Navy Captain. His aviation career began as a Naval Flight Officer (NFO) Training in Pensacola. He then became a F-14 RIO (Radar Intercept Officer (Backseater) and later transitioned to being an Aviation Maintenance Officer (AMO), including ample Aircraft Carrier overseas deployments.

Mike received a BS in Economics from the University of Florida. He received his MBA from Webster University. He works with Accelerated Knowledge Transfer (AKT) application development. Accelerated Knowledge Transfer (AKT) applications rapidly capture and share critical, sensitive, and highly complex / infrequently performed mechanical and procedural processes. Through digital storytelling, these tools enable the "best of the best" subject matter experts (SMEs) to share their best practices and techniques in ways that everyone can understand and repeat. Processes are demonstrated in attention-grabbing ways

utilizing a focused mix of pictures, videos, animation, and text. Their approach involves all four learning preferences of reading, hearing, seeing, and doing. [Read More](#)



Event Rundown

April and May

- 4/11 | Southeastern Railway | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 4/15 | MBCA Peachtree Board Meeting | [Contact President](#)
- 4/18 | STARS and Coffee | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 4/18-19 | PCA HPDE at Barber | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 4/26 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)

- 5/2 | STARS and Coffee | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 5/16 | Mountain Drive | watch for details
- 5/24 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)

June and July

- 6/6 | Barber Museum Tour & Drive | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 6/7 | U.S Space & Rocket Museum & Dinner | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 6/8 | Performance Driving at TGPR | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 6/6 | STARS and Coffee | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 6/20-21 | PCA HPDE at Barber | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 6/28 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)

- 7/4 | MBCA 4th of July Parade | [Enter Here](#) | [map](#)
- 7/8 | MBCA Peachtree Board Meeting | [Contact President](#)
- 7/11 | BBQ Progressive Rally-Duex | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 7/25 | Members' Appreciation Lunch | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 7/28 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)

August and September

- 8/1 | STARS and Coffee | *watch for details* | [map](#)
- 8/8 | Mountain Drive | *watch for details*
- 8/23 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)

- 9/6 | STARS and Coffee | *watch for details* | [map](#)
- 9/12 | MBCA Driving Academy | [register](#) | [map](#)
- 9/16 | Concours Judging School | *watch for details*
- 9/19 | Mountain Drive | *watch for details*
- 9/27 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)

October, November, and December

- 10/4 | Peachtree Concours | *watch for details* | [map](#)
- 10/10 | MBCA Peachtree Board Meeting | [Contact President](#)
- 10/24 | Deutsche Car Show | *watch for details*
- 10/25 | GAS ATL Meetup Noon-3pm | [map](#)
- 11/1 | STARS and Coffee | *watch for details* | [map](#)
- 11/28 | Holiday Lights Drive | *watch for details*
- 12/5 | Holiday Luncheon | *watch for details*
- 12/6 | STARS and Coffee | *watch for details* | [map](#)

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MEMBERSHIP

Welcome NEW and Rejoining Members

by Reijo Haarla, Membership Director

- Charles Boutte
- Johann Burnor
- Andrew Franklin
- Fritz Hammersen
- Kari Lindberg
- Karen Myers
- Andrew Sumner
- Eric von Schaper
- Victor Williams

**THANK YOU
RENEWING
MEMBERS!**

- Abel Beck
- Will Coloma
- Tim Jennette
- William Lenihan
- Scott Maser
- Meshack Mzame
- Dean Prince
- Michael Ruscitti
- Kenneth Sabo
- Daniel Serrato
- Rick Shearer
- Robert Taylor
- Jeremy Toothman
- Brian Von Helmolt
- Keith Waldrop
- Geri Whaley-Ewers
- Pierce Williams

Springtime is here! Mercedes-Benz Club of America – Peachtree Chapter has once again organized a variety of interesting events for this spring members of the club to enjoy. Upcoming events include: STARS and Coffee events at Halcyon , April 18th and May 2nd. PCA HPDE event April 18 – 19. Mountain Drive May 16th and many others.

Please visit our website

www.mbcapeachtree.org to find additional details about these and other events and be sure to register to attend.

As of the end of February 2026, Peachtree Chapter of the MBCA has 253 members. Encouragingly, over the past two to three months we have seen membership numbers trending upward.

Membership Renewal is Easy!

When it is time to renew your membership, you have several convenient options:

- Logging into the MBCA website at mbca.org and renewing from your membership profile.
- Renew from the renewal reminder email from MBCA.
- Call the MBCA National Business Office at 719.633.6427, Monday through Friday 9 am to 5 pm MST
- Mail a check to: MBCA National Business Office, 3472 Research Pkwy Ste 104 PMB 464, Colorado Springs, CO 80920



Peachtree

Technical Digest

The Ups and Downs of Transmission Fluid Level

by Gary Edwards, Technical Advisor



The car on the right had the high ATF level. Cheryl shifted to the car on the left and didn't want to give it back.

Cheryl was having fun driving the 2002 CLK55 at Atlanta Motorsports Park, at least until the car started smoking while exiting the turns. I thought we had a transmission fluid leak, and when checking the Automatic Transmission Fluid (ATF) level, I thought it looked low and added more. I watched closely as she did a few more laps and still saw smoke.

Looking closely at the transmission, it looked like the ATF was coming out of the vent, which only makes sense if it's overfilled.

This car has a 722.6 five-speed automatic transmission, which was used in a wide range of Mercedes vehicles from the late 1990s through the mid to late 2000s. It's a good, reliable transmission and it's used in many models including the W210, W208, W203, W220, late R129s, late W140s and others. I had experienced some problems with inconsistent fluid level measurements before and I must be the only one who has had trouble with getting consistent level measurements with these transmissions, as I haven't seen much in the forums about this.

[Read More](#)



Peachtree

Events

Southeastern Railway Museum Tour
Saturday, April 11, 2026 11:00 am



Join the Mercedes-Benz Club of America Peachtree Chapter on Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 11:00 AM for a guided tour of the Southeastern Railway Museum ([3595 Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30096](#)). Located on a beautiful 35-acre site in Duluth, the museum has been preserving railroad history since 1970 and has operated at its current location since 1999.

The museum features more than 90 pieces of historic rolling stock, including Pullman passenger cars, classic diesel and steam locomotives, freight cars, and maintenance equipment.

Following the tour, we will gather for a group boxed lunch from Panera.

- Museum admission: \$18 per person (payable at the museum)
- Boxed lunch: \$20 per person (select your choice on the registration form)

Come enjoy a fascinating look at railroad history and great company with fellow members of the Peachtree Chapter! **Registration deadline: April 5, 2026.**

Southeastern Railway Museum

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Welcome Club Members! We are offering complimentary inspections with 10% off of your first visit and 10% off all subsequent visits.



**Birmingham, Alabama
June 6 - 8, 2026**

Gary Edwards, Event Planner

We have a fun weekend planned for June 6 through 8, culminating in an MBCA Performance Driving.

- On **Saturday, June 6th** we will have a guided tour of the **Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum** followed by a Mountain Drive to Cheaha State Park.
- On **Sunday, June 7th** we will drive up to Huntsville to visit the **U.S. Space and Rocket Center**. We'll have an early dinner in the Oxford area on Sunday evening, location TBD.
- On **Monday, June 8th**. we will have a great full day of High Performance Driver Education (HPDE) . Talladega Gran Prix Racetrack (TGPR) is a fun track, easy enough to learn for a novice, but subtle enough to challenge the experienced drive. The price is only \$250.

We have secured a block of room at the **Hampton Inn & Suites Oxford/Anniston** 210 Colonial Dr Oxford, AL 36203, (256) 831-8958. Room rate is \$114/night + taxes. Mention, "*Mercedes Club of America*" to get the special room rate.

We'd love to have you join us for all the weekend's events. **Register for one or all three of these fun events below.**

**Barber Vintage
Museum
and Drive
Saturday June 6**



Barber Museum

**U.S. Space and
Rocket Center,
Huntsville
Sunday June 7**



**Space and
Rocket Center**

**HPDE Performance
Driving
Talladega Gran Prix
Monday June 8**



HPDE Driving



The Mercedes-Benz Experience at HALCYON-FORSYTH

Conveniently located at McFarland Parkway and GA 400.



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**DAHLONEGA
4th of July Parade**



MBCA Peachtree is gearing up for a fun and festive new adventure—join us as we participate in the Dahlonega 4th of July Parade in historic downtown Dahlonega! This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase our beautiful Mercedes-Benz vehicles while celebrating Independence Day with a vibrant community tradition.

Event Details:

- Date: Saturday, July 4, 2026
- Lineup: Begins at 9:00 a.m.
- Parade Start: 11:00 a.m.
- Location: Downtown Dahlonega
- Entry Fee: \$30 per vehicle
- Category: Automobile (**MBCA Peachtree** – must be listed to stay grouped together)

Each participant will submit an entry including vehicle details (year, model, color, and anything special). The official entry deadline **June 19 2026**, and late applications will not be accepted—so don't wait!

To participate, complete and return the [entry form](#) with payment,

Let's make this a memorable debut for MBCA Peachtree—shine up your star and join the parade!

Dahlonega 4th of July Parade Application

Performance Driving Update



by Gary Edwards

The driving season is off to a great start, with a fantastic turnout at the February 28 Peachstate PCA High Performance Driver Education (HPDE) event at Atlanta Motorsports Park. Many also enjoyed a memorable weekend at Amelia shortly after.

Looking ahead, the Alabama PCA Barber Motorsports Park event on April 18–19 may still have limited space available, though some members may have scheduling conflicts.

On Monday, June 8th, we will have a great full day of High Performance Driver Education (HPDE) . Talladega Gran Prix Racetrack (TGPR) is a fun track, easy enough to learn for a novice, but subtle enough to challenge the experienced drive. The price is only \$250.

Another excellent opportunity is the Father's Day weekend event at Barber on June 20–21.

For those who enjoy autocross, a full season of PCA events at Atlanta Motor Speedway began March 29 and will continue throughout the year—offering plenty of chances to get behind the wheel and sharpen your skills.

See links in the Event Rundown to register.

July 11 - BBQ Progressive Rally-Duex



Ernie Smallman, Event Planner

The rally will take us on a journey to the following famous BBQ joints:

- **JDs BBQ**, Acworth, GA
- **Williamson Brothers BBQ**, Canton GA
- **Big Easy BBQ**, Canton GA
- **Rally Point Grille**, Woodstock GA

Each stop along the way you eat your way some through some delicious BBQ, sides and dessert at the final stop along the route. Come enjoy a day of driving and some fabulous BBQ. Just \$15/per car + pay your way at each stop.

Progressive BBQ

Sept 12 - Driving Academy



Gary Edwards, Event Planner

Join us for another MBCA Driving Academy at the Columbia County Sheriff's Driver Training Facility. For just \$100, you'll gain hands-on experience in car control, including ABS braking, emergency lane changes, wet skidpad handling, a low-speed autocross, and precision parking.

Many insurance companies offer discounts for completing this course! We're also seeking instructors and volunteers—if you'd like to help, please contact edwardsgw@nu-z.net.

HPDE Driving

**Members' Appreciation Lunch
JD's on the Lake, Canton GA
Saturday, July 25, 2026**



Ernie Smallman, Event Planner

Join us on July 25, 2026 at 11:30 AM for our annual Member Appreciation Event at J.D.'s on the Lake in Canton, GA—just minutes from Woodstock.

This rustic, lakeside favorite on Lake Allatoona offers relaxed “old Georgia fish camp” charm and beautiful screened deck views of the water.

Thanks to the generosity of the Peachtree Board, lunch will be provided for up to 65 attendees. Menu highlights are expected to include Southern favorites like fried catfish, fresh grouper, and classic grill options. (Beverages other than water will be available for purchase.)

This popular event is expected to fill quickly.

Members' Appreciation Lunch

**SAVE THE DATE
HOLIDAY LUNCHEON
December 5, 2026**

Holiday Cheer!

Join us for a

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

DEC
5

Saturday
11:30 am

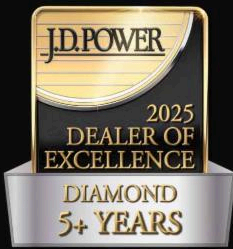
Table and Main Restaurant
1028 Canton Street
Roswell, GA 30075



Ernie Smallman, Event Planner

Join the Peachtree Chapter for our 2026 Holiday Luncheon at the award-winning Table & Main in historic Roswell. Known for its warm Southern hospitality and seasonal, locally sourced cuisine, this charming restaurant—housed in a beautifully restored 100-year-old home—offers the perfect setting to celebrate the season with fellow members and guests.

Guests will enjoy a plated lunch with entrée selections, salad, and dessert, along with a cash bar. Final menu details and registration information will be shared this fall.



8x Honoree

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7200 Roswell Road + 7640 Roswell Road | 770-390-0700 | www.RBMofAtlanta.com



Peachtree

Event News

Drive to Wolf Mountain: Cars, Curves & Cabernet Saturday, March 21, 2026



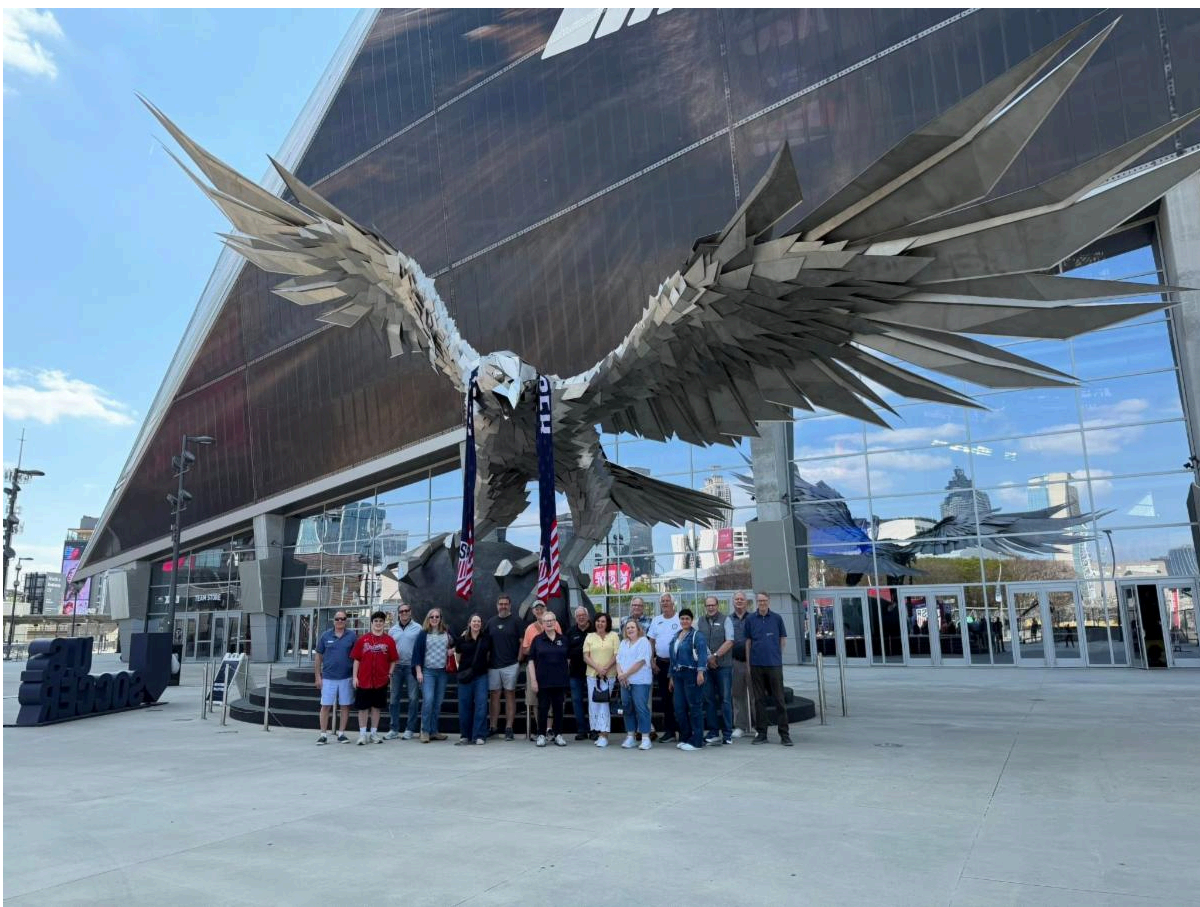
Rusty Duncan, Event Planner

On Saturday, March 21, 2026, 43 MBCA members and guests kicked off a perfect spring morning at DC Motorwerks, enjoying a light breakfast and great conversation before setting out on a scenic drive toward the North Georgia mountains.

The destination? **Wolf Mountain Winery in Dahlonega.** This isn't an ordinary winery, this one comes with special features for car and music lovers.

[Read More - See Photos](#)

**Behind the Scenes at Mercedes-Benz Stadium
Friday, March 27, 2026**



Diana Quinn, Event Planner

On Friday, March 27th, 18 members and guests of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America gathered in downtown Atlanta for an unforgettable behind-the-scenes tour of the iconic Mercedes-Benz Stadium. From the moment we arrived beneath the soaring wings of the massive falcon statue, it was clear this would be no ordinary visit.

[Read More - See Photos](#)



Mercedes-Benz News

Living automotive history: A Benz Patent-Motorwagen drives at ModaMiami 2026



February 23, 2026 - Stuggart

- Vehicles from many decades, from the Benz Patent-Motor Car of 1886 to modern models
- Presentation on the show field, rides in the Benz Patent Motor Car and more
- Top-class event in Florida on February 27 – March 1, 2026

Fascinating diversity from Mercedes-Benz at ModaMiami 2026: extraordinary vehicles from the brand's history since 1886 can be experienced at this new, high-caliber automotive and lifestyle event. ModaMiami takes place at the Biltmore Hotel Coral Gables in Florida on February 27 – March 1, 2026.

ModaMiami honors the birth of the automobile 140 years ago

[Read More](#)

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For information or questions about the Peachtree Section, please contact us at 770-376-0669.

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