



# THE Ottawa Tri-Star

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## In This Issue...

President's Message  
P.2

2016 Events Listing  
P.3

A Non-Stop Run of  
Montreal  
P. 4

Kompressor Gets A  
Reprieve  
P.6

Classified  
P. 7

## Spring Has Sprung!

Well we survived another winter, although compared to the previous year this one wasn't too bad.

As the snow melts and we begin to feel warmth from the sun, our thoughts turn to outside pursuits - like going for drives in the Benz. Mine is still covered in the garage but hopefully it won't be to long until I get around to getting it road worthy. This year I have a few things to look after, such as installing a new hood pad and finding/fixing a leak in my cooling system. All part of owning a 39 year old vehicle!

The Club executive has once again planned some great events for this year's driving season that are outlined in this newsletter. We've tried to include a variety of locations and have something interesting for members as part of each event. Do to the nature of some the events, we have yet to be able to lock them down but will keep members advised as details are confirmed. Mark your calendars and plan to join us.

As always I'm interested in getting contributions for the Tri-Star newsletters. These don't necessarily have to relate to Mercedes so if you have an interesting story to tell, whether it be a special vacation or some topic that you think would be of interest to other club members feel free to send it to me.

Looking forward to seeing you at this year's events. Drive Safe!



Mike McKinnon  
Vice President &  
Ottawa Tri-Star Editor

Visit the Ottawa Section of MBCA at  
[www.ottawa.mbca.org](http://www.ottawa.mbca.org)

# Message from the President

By Larry Lomas



## Avoid Left Turns and Other Safe Driving Measures

Since 2004 the thousands of North American UPS drivers and others have been doing just that and have reduced accidents in the process. That was the unexpected benefit to what was to be a cost saving measure. The realised savings, by the way, are estimated to be 38 million litres of fuel and 100,000 metric tonnes cut of carbon emissions and the count for both continues.

So how do they get to the left side of town? Well they make three right turns then proceed across traffic rather than against it. They plan their routes each day in concentric circles to reduce their left turns to a bare minimum.

I tried this simple measure at an intersection of a three lane boulevard and another three lane boulevard that I travel on occasions where previously I often had to wait for two light changes before I was able to turn left.

So the next time I needed to make that turn I simply stayed in the right lane passing the intersection and made a right turn then two more. Then I was on my intended change of direction and proceeded through the traffic light which by then had changed in my favour. This was done without ever having to cross lanes of traffic and risk of accident in doing so.

Even though I rounded a double block it took but a minute or so and I am certain I burned less fuel than they awaiting the second light change.

Our three rear view mirrors should be adjusted so that when a vehicle following you proceeds to pass you on your left side (hopefully) is visible either in whole or in part throughout the maneuver. Your rear view mirror effectively hands off seamlessly to your side mirror. Various Automobile Insurance groups further advise that it is far more important to see to the left or right as far as possible than having your rear fenders in view. You

should then merely need to take a quick confirmatory side glance when entering a freeway having the lane you intend to enter in view through your side mirror. If you have a trailer hitch there are rear end shock absorbers that could be fixed in place to reduce the effects of a rear end



collision. It should also insure the offending vehicle suffer far more expensive crumpling than yours. It should also reduce whiplash injury particularly for females who apparently have weaker neck muscles than males.

Larry Lomas  
lomas@videotron.ca

## Ottawa Section Board

### President

Larry Lomas  
(613) 720-3847  
lomas@videotron.ca

### Board Members at Large

Mel Roy  
(613) 834-4187  
Roymel2@aol.com

### Tech. Advisors

Winifried Hillebrand  
(613) 851-1139  
wahille@rogers.com

### Vice-President & Newsletter Editor

Mike McKinnon  
(613) 257-1913  
mdmckinnon@bell.net

Bob Mather,  
613-692-4947  
robert.mather@rogers.com

Kurt Hillebrand  
613-234-2910  
kurt@youngstreetgarage.com

### Vice-President & Webmaster

John Bartholomew  
(613) 521-9728  
jlbartholomew@bell.net

### Secretary

Josef Ferner  
613 599-8908  
jgferner@rogers.com

### Treasurer

Bob Richer  
(613) 738-4731  
bricher@capcorp.ca

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## The Ottawa Tri-Star

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# 2016 Events

We have another great season of events lined up for 2016. We hope that you will be able to join us and participate in as many as possible. Details on each event will be emailed to Club members prior to the event. If you have questions please contact the event organizer identified below.

Friday, April 15 – The ever popular Schnitzel Dinner at the Maple Leaf – Almrausch (MLA German) Club.—Organizer – Winfried Hillebrand (wahille@rogers.com)



Tuesday, April 26 – Spring lunch at the Army Officers' Mess - Organizer – Larry Lomas (lomas@videotron.ca)



Saturday May 28—Perth Tour and Lunch at Maximillian's— Organizer—Bob Mather (robert.mather@rogers.com)

Saturday, June 25 – Carlton Place Classic Car Show Organizer – Mike McKinnon (mdmckinnon@bell.net)



Saturday, July 23—Vintage Wings of Canada, Gatineau Airport, - Subject to confirmation— Organizer – Larry Lomas (lomas@videotron.ca)



Saturday, August 20 – 1000 Islands tour (Gananoque or Rockport) followed by lunch at Ivy Restaurant Organizers – Karen Koivumaki (mkcrosstown@gmail.com) and Bob Richer (bricher@capcorp.ca)



Saturday, September 17 – Tall Ships and possibly RCN Warship—Brockville - To be confirmed - Organizer – Karen Koivumaki (mkcrosstown@gmail.com)



Saturday, October 1 – Fall drive and lunch at Maple Leaf – Almrausch (MLA German) Club. Organizers – Larry Lomas (lomas@videotron.ca) and Bob Mather (robert.mather@rogers.com)

Tuesday, October 25 – Fall lunch at the Army Officers' Mess Organizer – Larry Lomas (lomas@videotron.ca)



November Annual General Meeting – Historic location in Ottawa. Date and location to be determined.

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 – Winter lunch at Army Officers' Mess Organizer – Larry Lomas (lomas@videotron.ca)



# A Fast Non-stop run of downtown Montreal

By Larry Lomas

In high gear and happily speeding down St Catherine's I slowed then lightly braking for a ninety degree turn, I heard the guy in front shouting out a woman's name as he braked hard to a stop.

I braked hard then veered right into the slower traffic, then as I down shifted to rebuilt speed I glanced back and smiled as I saw the two joyously hugging and kissing. Their past relationship and its future are left to ones imagination.

Now back in the fast line I wondered where Bob and Bruce might be having lost track of them a few kilometers after the start. I thought it best to assume they are both ahead of me as I worked the gears up to high on the downhill leading to the river and the down river run beyond.

While not a race this event has become Bob Crook, Bruce Burbage and my main attraction of our annual spring mission there. It also includes walkabouts in its many attractions including at the dinner hour, the many restaurants "commanding" us to "apportez vos vin" and there is no corkage charge.

Amongst our three vehicles my ML 320 CDI offered the most capacity for luggage and I have the sturdiest hitch mounted bike rack. As it is diesel powered with a seven speed transmission it is fairly economical highway transportation. One minor drawback is that the bike rack precludes us using the cargo door and we needed to employ the handle of a cane to extract luggage, bike helmets etc over a back seat folded forward. We joined our regiment in the sixties when we were single having fewer responsibilities. We have been friends since having stepped into marriage and proceeded to the point where we expect to see our great grandchildren in

time.

We now pump smaller iron, have a slightly less competitive spirit and are a tad more cautious.

This biking event held in late spring now in its eighteenth year attracts bikers from Quebec, Ontario and neighboring US states. The start and finish line are separated by about twenty five km of the streets of this vibrant world class city totally devoid of traffic at least for a few hours for this occasion.

The start line is usually on a boulevard where we line up behind others wearing our prepaid event bibs. Both sides are occupied with bikers of all ages, some in family groups having young mothers with babies bundled on their backs talking to other family groups including other mothers having



their own precious bundles. One can see the sparkle in the babies eyes, wide open as they take in the scene of happiness, of flashing led lights on both bikes and bodies, the high energy music and impromptu dancing of couples some having just met , all anxiously awaiting, like bridled race horses..... the start.

The increasing growth of participants in this event, now numbering more than seventeen thousand has necessitated careful planning including a start line choke point for safety purposes.

Once beyond the choke point less

capable riders including young children find a slower stream and their parents, some of whom may have participated long ago with their parents would look forward to the day when their offspring would be able to go the whole distance.

For Bob, Bruce, me and all the others enjoying the fast ride on the slightly down hill side know we soon will be taxing legs and lung capacity working our way uphill to the finish.

If there is a finish line it would be impossible to see as it would be covered by an enormous party in progress. We three somehow meet again and distracted by the activities lose interest in knowing who may have come in first.

On one occasion while riding back to our hotel and in search along the way of a spot to have a beer we came across one that looked promising. We then noticed a couple beckoning to us from within through a large opened window. Instinctively Bob and I knew from past experiences they would be waving at Bruce our mister congeniality. So after locking our bikes together and removing our helmets we tailed Bruce to be introduced to younger bikers from New Hampshire him having chatted with them before the ride.

Forced by lack of space to get physically close to them we became spiritually close as they told us of their other biking adventures including the famed five boroughs ride of New York City drawing forty thousand bikers. That is numbers of lottery winners allowed to pay the fee and go of the hundreds of thousands hoping to participate. Well we will think about it in the mean time we invite you to join us, Friday June 3 for this year's tour. <http://www.velo.qc.ca/en/govelo/The-Tour-la-Nuit>





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# KOMPRESSOR GETS A REPRIEVE

By Bob Mather

Our 2003 C-Class Coupe, nicknamed the KOMPRESSOR, has been a reliable part of our motoring since new in October 2002. We have spared the little car too much winter driving so it looks and drives much as it did on day one. In the fall of 2014, with about 120,000km showing on the odometer, the check engine light (CEL) came on, no problem a service A was due and Star Motors can fix that. When I picked the car up the news was not altogether optimistic. The diagnosis of the CEL was "failed O2 sensor" but the sensor was still good but the fault arose because its connector was contaminated with engine oil. The good news was that a Mercedes campaign eliminated the source of the oil, by fixing the camshaft sensor oil seals and isolating the associated connectors with a harness modification. The bad news was that the engine harness now contained a fair bit of oil that had to go somewhere! To be sure of a fix a replacement engine harness was required. The estimate for parts and labor for the repair at the dealership was out of proportion with the value of the car. It was time to think of a replacement or look for another solution.



*Cam position sensors and harness after Mercedes Benz campaign mod. Harness is now isolated*

This is where the MBCA forum comes in. Other cars with the 4cylinder engine in the KOMPRESSOR had problems with contamination of the engine harness. The Mercedes campaign was intended to preclude leaks rather than solve the contamination problem. I quickly found a string of correspondence in the MBCA forum that described the problem, the likely outcomes and a solution found by least one owner. The worst case scenario is contamination of the engine management computer.

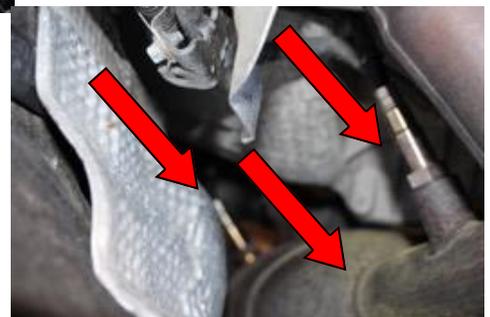


*Remove these two large connectors and flush out oil with contact cleaner solvent. Soft orange coloured seals need care and a thin smear of silicone lube before reassembly.*

A couple of days after the Service A visit to the dealer the check engine light was back on and the fuel consumption was up to and average of 9.4 l/100km rather than the usual 8.0l/100km. Higher than usual fuel consumption is apparently a symptom of a failed O2 sensor.

Time to get an OBD2 reader and get my hands dirty. I also needed a cleaner to get the oil I had learned from the MBCA forum that the O2 signals are used to put the engine

management computer into a closed loop mode that optimizes fuel consumption. The car was still running at more than 9 l/100km and clearly I had not fixed the problem. I drove the car as usual for a couple of weeks and repeated the cleaning process. There was noticeably less oil in the connectors this time and the OBD2 readout showed a fault in the pre cat O2 sensor. The air volume sensor fault did not re-appear after the second cleaning. So I replaced the pre cat O2 sensor while I was under the car doing the third cleaning and once more cleared the CEL and was back on the road. This time the fuel consumption was more normal and no CEL after a couple of weeks. I drove the car with increasing optimism that everything was OK. After two months I checked the engine computer connectors and they were oil free and I decided not to look form more trouble.



*O2Sensor Looking down on the exhaust side of the engine, here are the two O2 sensors and the Cat convertor.*



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Please call Bob Richer H: 613-738-4731 or bricher@capcorp.ca



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