



# SDMC *news*

*The newsletter of the San Diego Miata Club*

Volume 11 Number 3

March 2006

## Steak and Beans Dinner draws overflow crowd

STEVE ("THE WINNER") WAID

I never thought for an instant that so many people would show up to "celebrate" with me the payoff of the Steak and Beans Challenge. When Laurie and I arrived at the Park and Ride off Deer Springs Road, it became very apparent that I had not anticipated the enthusiasm toward this event; there was not enough room for all of the cars. We quickly moved

the queue-up point across the freeway. Mark and Cathy Booth stayed behind to inform arrivors of the change. And the cars kept coming.

Somewhere between 30 and 40 Miatas were lined up before we left to caravan to the SOCALM group in Temecula. As we paraded north on Interstate 15 on a perfect Miata afternoon, I began to be concerned about

enough room to park at Richie's Diner, our rendezvous point. As it turned out, it was tight but manageable.

This is when the fun began. Bud Martin (hereafter to be known as *The Loser*) made his presence known instantly as the second guy wearing a flamed shirt. The introductions to both clubs of *The Loser* and me (hereafter known as *The Winner*) were made to thunderous applause. At least, that's the way I remember it.

When we started the run to head to Dalton's Roadhouse, there were over 50 Miatas scrambling for space on Highway 79. Dennis Garon agreed to lead a second group as we assembled on the bridge leading onto Couser Canyon. Two groups of approximately 25 cars are a lot easier to control and a whole lot more fun to drive in.

*(Continued on page 18)*



Bud Martin (right), resplendent in his flaming yellow zoot suit, humbly concedes the crown to Steve Waid. Photo: Mark Booth

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# SDMC Officers



**Sue Hinkle**  
President



**Jerry Boster**  
Vice President



**Brenda Kay**  
Secretary



**Jason Brent**  
Treasurer

## Executive Board

"@..." indicates that e-mail address ends in @sandiegomiataclub.org

|                       |              |              |                   |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>PRESIDENT</b>      | Sue Hinkle   | 760-735-9456 | president@...     |
| <b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> | Jerry Boster | 619-437-4465 | vicepresident@... |
| <b>SECRETARY</b>      | Brenda Kay   | 858-715-0013 | secretary@...     |
| <b>TREASURER</b>      | Jason Brent  | 619-733-3450 | treasurer@...     |

To send e-mail to all members of the Board

board@...

## Administrative Board

|                           |               |              |                      |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------|
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| <b>WEBMASTER</b>          | Dan Garcia    | 619-448-4380 | webmaster@...        |
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The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB is a nonprofit California corporation. *SDMC News* is the monthly newsletter of the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB. Use of articles or stories by other Miata clubs is hereby granted, provided proper credit is given.

Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. When possible, please e-mail your submissions to the newsletter editor. Submissions may also be mailed to the club's post office box.

## Contact SDMC

### On the web

WWW.SANDIEGOMIATACLUB.ORG

### 24-hour voice message line

619-434-2007

### By mail

P.O. Box 180833  
Coronado CA 92178-0833

### Club e-mail

Most club communication is conducted via e-mail through a Yahoo Group named SDMC-List. A free Yahoo account is required. Follow these steps to join.

1. Go to <http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/SDMC-List>. (Note: Capitalization matters!)
2. Click "Join This Group!"
3. If you have a Yahoo account, log in. If you do not, click "Sign Up" and follow the instructions.
4. After logging in, you will be returned to the SDMC-List "Join This Group" page.
5. In "Comment to Owner," state you are an SDMC member.
6. Complete remaining selections, perform Word Verification, and click the "Join" button.
7. Your SDMC membership will be verified. The verification and approval process may take several days.

For more detailed instructions, see the club's website.

### Membership roster

The membership roster is available to SDMC members only. Follow these steps to access the roster.

1. Go to <http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/SDMC-List>.
2. Log in and click "Database"
3. Click on the most current table in the tables list
4. To print, click "Printable Report." The printed copy will be 15-20 pages.

For more detailed instructions and options, see the club's web site.

# Membership Page

## New members

Welcome to our eight newest members (since last newsletter):

|                                         |                    |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Larry Hofstetter, Coronado .....        |                    |
| Wendy & Randy Newmark, La Mesa .....    | 1999 White         |
| Chris & June Potapa, San Diego .....    | 1999 Silver        |
| Rick & Bobbi Schildt, Oceanside .....   | 2006 Galaxy Grey   |
| Steve & Marty Avey, San Diego .....     | 2006 Winning Blue  |
| Chuck & Sonna Burns, Escondido .....    | 2001 Emerald Green |
| C.J. Thys, San Diego .....              | 1990 White         |
| Leslie & Dennis Wahlgren, La Mesa ..... | 2004 Red           |

As of February 17, 2006, we have 286 memberships (107 single, 179 dual) and a total of 465 members.

## Renewals

Only 67 members need to renew. Don't get left behind. Get yours in!

## Monthly meetings

Our monthly meetings are a great opportunity to meet your fellow club members, ask questions, and share stories. Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month, except in November and December when we meet on the third Thursday.

Members begin arriving around 6 p.m. to enjoy meals, snacks, or beverages while chatting with their

Miata friends. The informal meeting starts at 7 p.m. We guarantee you'll have fun.

We meet at the Boll Weevil restaurant, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., in San Diego (between I-15 and SR 163). To contact the restaurant, call 858-571-6225.

**This month's meeting date:**  
**Thursday, March 23**

## Last call for election profiles

Elections will be held at the annual meeting on April 29 for president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

If you are interested in running for office, we encourage you to submit a profile of yourself for publication in the April newsletter. Your profile should include the position you are running for, a brief biography of yourself, how long you have been a member of SDMC, and why you should be elected for that position.

Please limit your statement to no

more than 500 words. Statements will be printed as submitted, with *no* editing except for formatting (font, text size, and layout). You may want to ask friends or family to review your profile before you submit it.

If possible, please submit a color photograph of yourself with your profile. The editors will resize and crop the photograph as necessary.

Please submit candidate profiles and photos to NEWSLETTER@SANDIEGOMIATACLUB.ORG by March 15 for publication.

## Dues

Dues are \$35 per calendar year, for either an individual or a dual membership (two members in the same household). Members who join the club in the first half of the calendar year (January through June) pay \$35 for their first year; those who join in the second half of the year pay \$20 for the remainder of the year.

## Badges

Have you wondered how to get one of those engraved plastic name badges that other members wear to events? They are available through Vicky Krueger in many colors to match your Miata.

The cost is \$6.50 each for badges with safety-pin closures, or \$7.50 for badges with magnetic fasteners. Prices include shipping to your home. Badges must be pre-paid.



To order, see Vicky at a monthly meeting or send e-mail to VICKY@TEAMVOODOO.COM.

## Our mission

The purpose of the club is to promote the enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, one of the world's most exciting sports cars—the Mazda Miata.

Owning and driving a Miata is one of life's great pleasures, and adding the company and camaraderie of like-minded enthusiasts only enhances the experience. Won't you join the fun as we enjoy the beauty of San Diego County from the seat of a very special little roadster?

**Let's have fun driving our Miatas!**



# SDMC is celebrating its 10th Anniversary

SUE HINKLE, PRESIDENT

**D**id you know that the vision of the San Diego Miata Club began with an "Impromptu Run" consisting of a group of Miata enthusiasts who met over the Internet? The emergence and vision of 11 enthusiasts to organize the San Diego club took place immediately following the run, and in less than two months, the San Diego Miata Club evolved.

The club's first meeting was held on March 31, 1996, at Angelo's Italian Restaurant on Clairmont Mesa Blvd. 34 new members signed up at this inaugural meeting. The club became an official chapter of the Miata Club of America (MCA), and members paid \$29 to belong to MCA. Included in the MCA membership was a decal and six issues of *Miata Magazine*. The Miata Club of America is no longer in existence.

The club's first Executive Board included Mark Booth (President), Cindy Paloma (Vice President), Ruth Stark (Secretary), and Mary Beecher (Treasurer). The newly organized Executive Board appointed the following individuals to key club positions: Bob Krueger (Membership), Stef and Tom Gould (Newsletter Design and Layout), JT Holland (Webmaster and Editor), and Steve Hart (Autocross).

### Lasting traditions

The very first issue of the San Diego Miata Club newsletter was produced in May of 1996. The newsletter displayed the MCA logo because the San Diego Miata Club logo was still in the design stages. At that time, the newsletter consisted of only five pages; today, the SDMC newsletter has increased to over 15 pages.

By June 1996, the San Diego Miata Club had grown to 53 paid memberships consisting of 82 members.

Three sample logo designs, created by Stef and Tom Gould, were included in the June newsletter. At that time, the elected board was actively negotiating vendor discounts for club members.

In August, the SDMC logo became official and was displayed on the newsletter. The club logo was beginning to appear on apparel, badges, decals, and other items. Club membership count had increased to 72 paid memberships. The first "Twilight Run," hosted by Mark and Cathy Booth, took place with 35 Miatas participating.

By September 1996, the San Diego Miata Club was in full swing with several fun runs being organized, and plans were being made for the club's first Holiday Party. Membership cards, recruiting postcards, and recruiting businesses cards had been designed by Stef and Tom Gould, who also arranged for free printing. Member count was now at 120, which represented 94 paid memberships.

Nine months new, the club organized their first Holiday Party, hosted at the home of Richard Scherschel. The SDMC Holiday Gift Exchange took place, and thus another SDMC tradition was born. By the end of 1996, membership had grown to 102 paid memberships with a total of 153 members.

The club rang in 1997 with a total member count of 175, proving that those recruiting cards really did work. Red Miatas outnumbered the total of the various other car colors, and red still tops the list today. By that time, members had the opportunity to purchase static cling decals of the SDMC logo with the color of their car. Members proudly placed the decals on their wing windows for all to see.



### A banner year

The San Diego Miata Club turned its first lap on April 6, 1997. In just one year, the club had grown to 142 paid memberships representing 216 members. Wow! A new club had grown to more than 200 members in just one year.

Elections were held, and the members voted for a new board: Mark Booth (President), Rainer Mueller (Vice President), Natalie Rissolo (Secretary/Run Coordinator), and Tony Beecher (Treasurer). The club had survived its first year and was well on its way to being recognized as one of the fastest growing Miata clubs in the country.

1999 marked the 10th Anniversary for the Mazda Miata and another milestone year for the San Diego Miata Club. The vision of a regional event was presented to the club by one of the club's founding members, Lou Stark. Through the hard work of enthusiastic club volunteers, Lou's vision became a reality, and Surf'N'-Safari became one of the most talked about events in the Miata community. Surf'N'-Safari '99 hosted 140 Miatas representing 15 states and 2 foreign countries. SDMC membership at the five-year mark had exceeded all expectations with a total member count of approximately 500.

Steve Kennison was at the helm in 2004, and he, too, had a vision—to plan and organize a sequel to the club's first regional event. Again, with several months of planning and a lot of volunteer effort, Surf-N'Safari '04 took place in October 2004. The three-day event was another stellar regional event for the club, hosting 31 vendors and over 200 Miata enthusiasts.

### Better than ever

Today, the San Diego Miata Club is recognized by the Miata community as one of the largest and friendliest Miata clubs in the country. Our total membership hovers around 465. It is not unusual to have 40 or 50 cars at any planned run or event, and we have seen record attendance at the monthly meetings during the past year. Many runs and events planned during the last ten years have been deemed as signature events: Puke-O-Rama, Search For Madonna, and Twilight Run, to name just a few. In 2006, our first New Year's Day Miata Rose Parade Run was organized and will be added to the signature events list.

This year marks another milestone for the San Diego Miata Club as we celebrate our 10th Anniversary and enter lap eleven. The success of the San Diego Miata Club is due to those who chose to lead from the club's infancy to our 10th year. These leaders, past and present, have all brought new and fresh ideas to the club while continuing to share a passion with the membership: owning and driving a Mazda Miata.

The dedication from past and present leaders—and many volunteers—have steered the San Diego Miata Club in the right direction, and they never lost sight of the club's mission statement: "The purpose of the club is to promote the enjoyment of, and the enthusiasm for, one of the world's most exciting sports cars—the Mazda Miata."

So let's continue a tradition that began ten years ago... continue to have fun and enjoy driving our Miatas for the next ten years!

## Editor's Column

# Practice makes perfect

JERRY STANDEFER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**O**n the challenging sections of your favorite twisty road, you have to drive your Miata over and over again through it to master the curves. Your first time through just gets you familiar with the road. The more you drive it, the better you become.

Our first newsletter with the new layout has received a lot of comments and suggestions, and we appreciate every one of them. Although we won't be able to accommodate everyone's suggestions, we will make some changes as we work towards perfecting our drive.

You probably have noticed that the newsletter has returned to the original folded and stapled format. There were concerns about the overall appearance with the side stapling, plus last year's annual dues increase provides enough funds to allow us to continue with the original format.

There were also suggestions relating to the layout of upcoming events, and we agree. Beginning with this issue, we will create a more structured upcoming events section, complete with all of the information you need to know about the events. We hope you find the layout easier to read and find information.

### How do you name success?

There has been an overwhelming response to the Dub-the-Pub newsletter naming contest! In less than three weeks, 70 entries were submitted. The entries were very original and creative, ranging from single-word names to modern plays on letters. I couldn't be any happier with the response.

Since the newsletter must go to press before the monthly meeting, I can't talk about the results of the votes. I'm sure the winning entry will be terrific. Look for a stylized version on the cover of the April issue.



### A big welcome

I would like to extend a zoom-zoom welcome to the newest member of the newsletter team! Kelley Raymond has agreed to become our new Personalities Editor. Her job will be to interview club members and write a personality profile about the member. With so many members all over the county, it's hard to get to know everyone. Kelley's job will be to make sure it's as easy as possible.

In addition to filling our minds with profiles about you, Kelley will also be entertaining us with her fun, Texan writing style. Check out her self-profile on page 10. I had a smile on my face through the entire profile!

We're getting ready to take our third run through this twisty road known as the newsletter. Is there something else you would like to see? Or is there something you don't like? Let us know, and we'll give it our full attention.

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# Coming Events

## Reluctant Readers Run

**Date:** Saturday, March 4  
**Time:** Drivers meeting at 10:15 a.m.,  
departure at 10:30 a.m.  
**Meet:** Albertson's/Target shopping center in  
Rancho San Diego (corner of Highway 94  
and Jamacha Rd.)  
**Contact:** Les Smith, 858-578-1416,  
LESSMITH@SAN.RR.COM  
**Details:** Les' morning drive to work concludes with a  
two-mile run down a private, twisty road to Barrett  
Lake (it reminds Les of a smaller version of Palomar  
Mountain's South Grade). Les and Dyanna invite you to  
join them for a fun run down and back up this road to  
Barrett Honor Camp, plus some familiar roads (Honey  
Springs, Skyline Truck Trail, Lyons Valley, etc.) leading  
to Viejas Casino and Outlet Mall.

Les and Dyanna are asking participants for a dona-  
tion of reading material (small cash gifts and bookstore  
gift cards also appreciated) appropriate for Barrett's 125  
residents. This is a residential facility for young men 16–  
19 years old and many read below their age level. The  
Barrett students have free time each evening, and many  
choose to read to avoid the problems that may arise if  
they don't stay occupied. Participants will not have any  
contact with students during their time at the Barrett  
facility before the Miata group continues on to Viejas,  
where we will have lunch.

Guidelines for donated reading material:

- ♦ Residents like car books and juvenile fiction; sports  
are not of much interest.
- ♦ Hardcover books can only be used in the classroom.
- ♦ Avoid adult novels and books with prominent pic-  
tures of young girls and women.
- ♦ Reference material should include pictures and  
graphs with easy-to-read captions.

## Internet Tech Day & Fun Run

**Date:** Sunday, March 5  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. for lunch,  
12:00 p.m. for the Fun Run  
**Meet:** Chili's Restaurant just east of I-15 at  
10200 Scripps Poway Parkway, San Diego  
**Contact:** Mark & Cathy Booth, 619-670-3789,  
MARKBOOTH@COX.NET  
**Details:** SDMC's Postmaster, Bob Kleeman, will be  
the host for SDMC's first Internet Tech Day. Bob and  
Mark will attempt to help members better understand  
how to use the various Miata-related technical and in-  
formational resources available on the web, including

MIATA.NET and the SDMC's Yahoo Groups. Attendees  
should bring a pencil and paper to take notes.

We will meet at Chili's for an early lunch. After lunch,  
we will hit the twisties for a short (less than an hour)  
Fun Run to Bob's place of employment, MusicMatch in  
Rancho Bernardo.

Anyone wishing to simply meet at MusicMatch  
should plan to be there at approximately 1:00 p.m. Mu-  
sicMatch is located at 16935 W. Bernardo Dr. Bob notes  
that the MusicMatch building looks more like a Spanish  
Villa than an office building. When parking, park in the  
*north* lot.

## Temecula Rod Run

**Date:** Saturday, March 11  
**Time:** 8:00 a.m. for *prompt* departure at 8:30 a.m.  
**Meet:** Old Spaghetti Factory parking lot  
111 N. Twin Oaks Valley Rd., San Marcos  
**Contact:** David and Kari Streeter  
MIATAFUNRUN@YAHOO.COM  
**Details:** David and Kari have planned a terrific day at  
the 20th Annual Temecula Spring Car Show, this year  
dubbed the Temecula Rock N'Rod Run. The show will  
feature up to 800 pre-1974 cars. Crowd estimates for the  
two-day show are upwards of 40,000. Folks, this is a big  
one!  
We will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Old Spaghetti Factory  
in San Marcos, followed by a leisurely 52-mile drive  
along the twisties to Temecula.  
David and Kari will be earning their own set of cov-  
eted SDMC logo magnetics for this run!  
**Link:** WWW.TEMECULARODRUN.COM

## Miata Performance Driving School

**Note:** *This event is not hosted by SDMC*  
**Date:** Friday–Sunday, March 24–26  
**Contact:** Ken Freeze, KEN@TEAMMIATA.COM  
**Place:** Thunderhill Park Raceway, Willows, CA  
**Details:** The 2006 Miata Performance Driving School  
will be held March 24–26 at SCCA's Thunderhill track in  
Willows, about an hour's drive north of Sacramento.  
The school teaches Miata owners the basics of high-  
speed driving, equipment, human limitations, proper  
steering techniques, and many other skills necessary for  
safe performance driving.

The weekend kicks off Friday evening with a dinner,  
followed by classroom style lectures and training from  
SCCA instructors. Saturday morning brings more in-  
struction, both in and out of the Miata. You will spend  
most of Saturday and Sunday on the track with time



# Coming Events

between sessions to talk to fellow Miata owners and see some of the latest Miata accessories. Saturday night features a BBQ at the track, giving students and instructors the opportunity to talk over the day's activities.

The class is limited to 80 students with 40-45 instructors, making for a 2-to-1-instructor ratio—a higher ratio than driving schools costing thousands of dollars.

If you don't have Internet access, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Ken Freeze, Miata School, 1521 Ridgewood Dr., Martinez, CA 94553, and a complete packet will be sent to you. But hurry—these classes fill up early.

**Link:** [WWW.TEAMMIATA.COM/THUNDERHILL/SCHOOL.HTM](http://WWW.TEAMMIATA.COM/THUNDERHILL/SCHOOL.HTM)

## SJVMC Spring Fling Charity Poker Run

**Date:** Friday-Saturday, March 31-April 1

**Location:** Holiday Inn Hotel, Visalia, CA

**Hotel:** 555-651-5000

The SJVMC special rate is \$74 single/double occupancy or \$94 suite. The hotel has reserved a block of rooms for the event, but reservations must be made by March 15, 2006, to get the discounted rate.

**Details:** The San Joaquin Valley Miata Club is hosting their 12th annual Spring Fling Charity Poker Run. This event has proved extremely popular over the years.

The itinerary is as follows:

### Friday

3:00 p.m. - Check in, Dinner on your own

7:00 p.m. - Hospitality

### Saturday

8:00 a.m. - Registration

9:30 a.m. - Run begins

12:00 p.m. - Lunch, on route

6:00 p.m. - Dinner

7:30 p.m. - Raffle & silent auction

### Sunday

12:00 p.m. - Check out

**Link:** [WWW.SJVMC.NET/NEWEVENTS/FLYERS/2006/POKERRUNFLYER.PDF](http://WWW.SJVMC.NET/NEWEVENTS/FLYERS/2006/POKERRUNFLYER.PDF)

## The Puke 2006

**Date:** Sunday, April 2

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. for \$10 Brunch,  
Drivers meeting at 10:00 a.m.

**Meet:** Dalton's Roadhouse in San Marcos  
(on Nordahl just north of Highway 78)

**Contact:** Steve & Laurie Waid, 760-432-0727,  
[SWAID@COX.NET](mailto:SWAID@COX.NET)

**Details:** We will be driving some of San Diego

County's twistiest roads, back to back to back. We will break into 5 smaller groups to increase the fun factor and run each group in the opposite direction of the previous group. Each will complete a loop of about 160 miles with two pit stops at Dudley's Bakery in Santa Ysabel. We will return to Dalton's for a late afternoon dinner in the Patio...right back where we started. The groups will start arriving back at Dalton's at about 3:30 p.m.

Some things to look forward to: Couser Canyon Road, Mt. Palomar, Wynola Road, Julian, Engineer Road. A car show will be going on at Dalton's throughout the day. We will see the show as we leave and as we return.

## Egg-zactly – A Photo-Gimmick Rally

**Date:** Saturday, April 15

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. registration

**Meet:** Mazda of Escondido (formerly Cush Mazda)  
1560 Auto Park Way North, Escondido

**Contact:** Larry & Mary Clark, 760-737-8971,  
[LARRYCLARK@POBOX.COM](mailto:LARRYCLARK@POBOX.COM)

**Details:** Egg-zactly is an untimed gimmick rally, which you can drive at your own pace. You will travel some of the interesting roads in the Rancho Santa Fe area (and pass a lot of real estate you probably can't afford).

The object of the rally is to follow the prescribed course and find certain signs, called "Easter Eggs," that you pass along the route. Easter Eggs are defined in the route instructions by photographs. When you find an Easter Egg, you write down your estimate of the official mileage to its location.

If you ran *Search for the Great Pumpkin*, you will recognize this as a similar concept, except that this time the Pumpkins/Eggs are identified pictorially. (If you missed that event, ask the members who ran it how they enjoyed the concept.)

Scoring is based on how accurately you identify the eggs' locations. One point will be assigned for each tenth of a mile you are off in your estimates, up to a maximum of 10 points for guessing wildly or completely missing an egg. The object is to obtain a low score.

But be on guard—some Easter Eggs in the route instructions may be invalid. For example, the object photographed may be on the wrong side of the road. We call those *rotten eggs*. If you write down any mileage to a rotten egg, you will be assigned 10 points.

Finding the valid eggs and avoiding the rotten ones will be your primary goal. You can improve your score by pinpointing the mileages accurately. The rally instructions provide official mileages to most instructions,

# Coming Events

so you can easily adjust for any odometer differences.

Both Miatas and OTMs are welcome. Each car should have two people (driver and navigator), pencils, and a clipboard.

The entry fee is \$5 per car. Registration opens at 9:00 a.m., with a Drivers Meeting at 9:30. The rally will finish in early afternoon at Killer Pizza from Mars, which has a new location at Felicita and Centre City Parkway.

## SDMC Annual Meeting

**Date:** Saturday, April 29

**Time:** 10:30 a.m. (tentative)

**Place:** San Diego Automotive Museum  
2080 Pan American Plaza, #12 (Balboa Park)

**Contact:** Sue Hinkle, 760-735-9456,  
PRESIDENT@SANDIEGOMIATACLUB.ORG

**Details:** The Annual Meeting will celebrate SDMC's 10th Anniversary. We will also elect officers to guide SDMC for the next year. So mark the date and come join in on all the fun! Details to follow as they are available.

## Search For Madonna 2006

**Dates:** Saturday–Monday, May 6–8

**Time:** 7:00 a.m. sharp to leave McDonald's

**Meet:** Oceanside McDonald's, on the south side of Oceanside Blvd. just east of I-5

**Contact:** Steve & Laurie Waid, 760-432-0727,  
SWAID@COX.NET

**Details:** Tentative events planned... Saturday drive to the Madonna Inn, Saturday evening visit to the Hearst Castle, Sunday morning visit to the Morro Bay Car Show, Sunday afternoon fun runs (Wine Country Tour and Great Roads of the Area), Sunday evening dinner (place TBA), Sunday evening room hopping, Monday morning drive home with a stop in Solvang for brunch.

To join the Search, log onto The Madonna Inn website and go to the 109 Unique Rooms page and browse. Select your three favorite rooms (some may already be reserved), then call the Madonna Inn and ask for Barbara or Amy in Group Reservations. Be sure to mention the Miata Club and that will get you a \$50 discount on Sunday. Then e-mail or call Steve with your room name and number. You will be placed on the Search e-mail group.

**Links:** (Madonna Inn) [WWW.MADONNAINN.COM](http://WWW.MADONNAINN.COM)  
(Hearst Castle) [WWW.HEARSTCASTLE.COM](http://WWW.HEARSTCASTLE.COM)

## Zoom into Spring



**Long-sleeve shirts:** The days are getting warmer, but there's still a chill in the air. Drive in style with a long-sleeved T-shirt (\$14) or a hooded sweatshirt (\$28). Both are ash grey and feature the club logo on both the front and back.



**License frames:** Dress up your plate(s) with these metal license plate frames, featuring the club's name, logo, and web address. Available in stainless steel (\$25) or black powder coat (\$22), including screw covers.

*And coming soon ... SDMC's Tenth Anniversary T-shirts!*

To order, send e-mail to [REGALIA@SANDIEGOMIATACLUB.ORG](mailto:REGALIA@SANDIEGOMIATACLUB.ORG).



# Edward "Ed" Dittman (1925-2006)

JERRY BOSTER

Recently, the San Diego Miata Club lost a member and friend to many. Ed Dittman, father of Debbye Lewis, passed away at the age of 81. During the more than eight decades of his life, Ed fought for his country, worked for a living, and raised a family.

It was my honor to become friends with Ed over the last five years.

I first met Ed at the San Marcos Holiday Parade in 2001. He was driving the white M1 that had belonged to his wife. She had passed away a few months before and Ed was still trying to decide whether to keep the Miata or not. We chatted as we decorated the cars and waited for the parade to start. During the parade, Ed carried a City Council member who talked his ear off. Afterwards, it was back to Dalton's for dinner and more conversation.

Even though Ed wasn't the most talkative at first, that day was the beginning of a friendship that was to last the remaining years of his life.

Ed was a kind and generous person. He always had a kind word of greeting for everyone who said hello. I especially enjoyed talking over many meals we shared at Bruce and Debbye's house. There is nothing like good camaraderie with first-rate food and excellent wine.

As a career military man, I was extremely interested and respectful of his service to the country as a member of the "Greatest Generation." Those of you who were friends of Ed knew of his patriotism and



pride in being a Normandy survivor. On many occasions, I talked to Ed about his service. I was amazed at his humility for the part that he played. After joining the U.S. Army as a 237th Combat Engineer at age 17, he hit the beaches of Normandy 30 minutes prior to the first wave of infantry. It was his job to disarm mines and booby-traps, as well as clear a path for the infantry. For their efforts, his unit had a 50 percent casualty rate. From Normandy, Ed pushed inland conducting the same mission. Over the course of the remainder of the war, he fought in North Africa and the Battle of the Bulge. During this time, Sergeant Ed Dittman was awarded at least three Purple Hearts, but turned them down stating, "It's not right that I should get awards when my buddies got killed."

Ed participated in numerous SDMC runs over the years, even leading one of the famous Lewis Luau runs to receive his magnetics. On Scott Lewis' Toys for

Tots run, Ed was right there, fully supporting the effort of the Marine Corps to give kids a good Christmas. After handing off toys to the young Marines sent to do the collection, SDMC adjourned to a nearby restaurant for lunch. Ed invited the young Marines to join us and paid for their lunch.

Probably one of the times I saw Ed the happiest was in November 2004 when Debbye gave him large magnetics for his car that proclaimed him to be a Normandy Survivor. That same year, Debbye carried him as a dignitary in the Veterans Day parade.

Ed exemplified patriotism. This was typified by his regimen of raising the American flag outside his house each morning and saluting it, then saluting it again each evening before retiring the flag for the night.

If he was physically able, Ed didn't miss a parade—especially the ones celebrating America and honoring our veterans. The last time I saw Ed was one such occasion—the 2005 Veterans Day Parade. Although he was a senior veteran himself, he was unselfishly carrying a veteran of a younger era. He had even moved his magnetics to his trunk so the younger veteran could display his own magnetics on the car doors.

Ed Dittman was my friend and much more. He was a mentor and example to emulate. I will miss him dearly. But I also celebrate his life and service as a comrade-in-arms.

## Howdy, Neighbor!

KELLEY RAYMOND

**I**t's all Paula Kennison's fault; the reason you're reading this now is because of her.

Back in 2000, Paula and I worked together. One time, she mentioned that she and Steve had a Miata and were members of the San Diego Miata Club. Having worked closely with Paula, I had learned she's a VERY smart lady who knows her stuff. I figured her *stuff* included her car.

When I started to get the new car itch, I decided to check out the Miata and Paula's SDMC. At the April '04 monthly meeting, I was overwhelmed. I ain't seen that much socializing and gabbing since the last Easter Sunday I attended in the graveyard at Granny Harlan's little "church in the wildwood" back in Blue Ridge, Texas. (Give us hicks a headstone in some shade and a good tater salad and "I'll tell ewe whut," we'll talk yer ear plumb off.)

Steve Kennison (president at the time) made sure I was introduced and welcomed by the group. Everyone was extremely friendly and very eager to talk about their love of these great little cars. John Laurence answered every single question I had, and kept asking, "What else?" I could tell that he was convinced I needed a Miata, even if I wasn't yet. What I did know was that, so far, the best reason to buy a Miata was the SDMC and all the instant support it would afford me.

I really thought I wanted the '03 Special Edition because it was Cowboy colors, but I just couldn't get the deal I wanted. Now I know it's because BB was waiting for me. She was the only automatic in a 200-

mile radius. It was love at second sight (it was at night, so it was too dark for love at *first* sight). She's a 2004 Brilliant Black (hence, BB) with leather seats, a cloth top, and a killer Bose sound system. She's "BB, my baby" and it's absolutely ridiculous how much I love her "cute widdle



Kelley and BB visit the wine country during the 2005 Search for Madonna. Photo: Sheila Slesarik

butt," even when it's dirty.

I'm very proud of how much I've learned about her, and cars in general, since I joined the club. I had enjoyed listening to those crazy Magliozzi brothers on "Car Talk" for over a decade, but now I no longer feel so clueless when I walk into a service department or auto parts store. It's very reassuring knowing that SDMC members are always willing to help if I have any questions.

I've lived in SD for 7 years, and I don't talk near as funny as I used to when I first moved here from Texas! After 15 years in HR, I changed careers a couple of years ago and became a Business Writer. I took a comedy class, wrote a routine, and went up a couple of times—maybe one of these days I'll go into comedy writing. Anyone who knows me more than five minutes knows I crack myself up! As I hinted at ear-

lier, my religion is football, I'm a Cowboy-ist, and I worship at the house of Landry when I'm on my old stompin' grounds. Out here, the faithful gather at Players during the holy days of fall and winter.

My favorite SDMC activity is eating! Us elite Automatics (only 5% of all Miatas, right Dennstedt?) are a leisurely bunch, so a full belly doesn't get in the way of the kind of driving we prefer. The run I enjoyed the most so far was the wine tour during Madonna last year. There were a few twisties, but they were on shady two-lane blacktop roads just made for moseying along. Gary and Roz were kind enough to keep me in their rear-view mirror so I didn't get lost.

I also really enjoyed the Petersen Museum and Palomar tours, and was extremely sorry to miss the Getty Museum tour. The SDMC has something for everybody. I'm looking forward to lots more food, fun, and friendship during our 10th anniversary year!

The reason I wrote this is to help y'all realize that if I (as the new SDMC Personalities Editor) ask you for an interview, it won't be scary or painful. I just like to tell stories, and I'd love to tell yours. Your story might not even be Miata-related; it may just be something fun or interesting that you think members might enjoy learning about you. Shoot me an e-mail at KRAY63@YAHOO.COM if you're willing to share your story, or if there's someone whose story you'd like to hear.

That's *my* story, and I'm stickin' to it!

# Me so horny

"MARYATA"

**T**hey said I was dysfunctional. Of course, the problem wasn't mine alone; it was genetic. Our entire breed is considered to be deficient in horniness. It's a wonder we've survived into our third generation.

I was becoming despondent until I read an ad that offered hope. Dr. Scott Lewis was planning a clinic that would cure our ills. We were all invited to come on Saturday, January 21. I signed up at once.

I really wanted this to work. I conscientiously followed all the guidelines, including not putting anything in my tank for 12 hours before my appointment.

Saturday dawned clear. It felt rather chilly, but maybe that was just nerves. My folks and I left early to drive down to Dr. Lewis' place. As we got close, I began to see a few of my cousins, heading the same direction. By the time we all gathered, I counted 21 of us.

The first decision was what kind of device I should have. Some of the others were getting a pair of huge honkers. I decided I liked the more modest look of the small implants, which Dr. Thompson had discovered.

Before my turn came, I observed the process. It didn't look as bad as I feared, but some of the surgeons seemed to be figuring out what to

do as they went along. I hoped they were getting it right.

Every now and then, one of my fellow patients would let out a loud cry. From the doctors' reactions, I inferred that this indicated that the operation had succeeded.

## Me, a guinea pig?

When it was my turn, we discovered a problem: All of the other patients were older than me. (I'm a Sansei; everyone else was Issei or Nisei.) I'm so young I can't even buy anti-freeze. I wasn't put together quite the same as those older folks, and none of the docs had ever performed this operation on anyone of my generation.

Dr. Thompson thought he could operate through my mouth, but my teeth were in the way. Unfortunately, nobody could figure out how to remove them. Dr. Booth even went on the Internet to check the latest research reports on MIATA.NET.

Around this time, Dr. Lewis arrived with a huge load of pizzas. My operation was postponed while everyone stuffed themselves, leaving me to imagine all sorts of horrid scenarios.

Dr. Thompson suggested making a small, temporary opening in my chin. Dad managed to open me up and cram the implant into the right area. From then on, though, he was basically useless.

Dr. Thompson took over. He was able to remove my old horn, which hurt only a little. Then he took my old bracket and



Dr. Thompson (center) gets plenty of free advice from his ace surgical team. Photo: Larry Clark

made the hole bigger, using a surgical device that looked like a dentist's drill. Pretty soon he was able to bolt my new horn in place and connect the wires. Dad pushed my button, and ... WOW! I've never felt so horny in my life.

## A honkin' success

Declaring the operation a success, Dr. Thompson told Dad he could stitch up my chin. (I think his words might have been, "Suture self.") And, just like that, I was better than new.

Although I went into this with some trepidation about being a guinea pig, I'm glad I did it. I was so elated that I had to toot my own horn a few times during the ride home (when there weren't any cars around).

If you're going to have this kind of surgery, it's really great to do it as part of a big clinic, surrounded by friends who are undergoing the same experience. It's even better to have all the top surgeons on hand to figure out what to do if unexpected problems arise.

Now that my friends and I have discovered the joy of horniness, we expect to get together frequently. Perhaps we could schedule a Spring-Brake session.

*"Maryata" is a Marble White NC that lives in the garage at Mary and Larry Clark's home.*



Maryata (blocking driveway) and her cousins gathered at the Lewis clinic for group surgery. Photo: Larry Clark.



# Laughin' in Laughlin

LARRY CLARK

**Y**ears had passed since Mary and I last visited Laughlin, so when we heard about SO-CALM's late-January expedition, we signed up. It sounded like a perfect antidote to my football-withdrawal symptoms.

Although some folks from the L.A. area planned to meet in Ontario and caravan over, we decided to take the southern route. After dropping our dog at her kennel in Poway, we headed east, picking up highway 78 just west of Ramona.

## Taking the back roads

The route through Julian was familiar, but beyond Borrego Springs, we were in (to us) terra incognita. We stopped for lunch in Brawley, then headed on through Glamis, which I knew of only through David Westerfield's trial. We found the dunes to be spectacular, and after passing through them, we decided to backtrack for photos. I wanted to capture the Maryata with a background of dunes, but the roads and sun were at all the wrong angles.

By this point, 78 had turned northward. We turned onto I-10 for a couple of miles at Blythe, then picked up US 95. At Needles, we crossed over to the Arizona side (officially losing an hour to Mountain time), and continued up Arizona 95 into Bullhead City. A short hop across the river brought us to Laughlin, and back on Pacific time. All told, the trip took a leisurely 6½ hours, including lunch and gas stops.

We checked into the Flamingo, and found our room spacious and comfortable. No events were scheduled for Friday evening (although we did meet another Miatan on the elevator), so we sampled the hotel's Friday-only seafood buffet. After stuffing ourselves with a variety of underwater creatures, we wandered next door to the Riverside before trying the Flamingo's casino.

(Minimum bets were much lower than in San Diego County Indian casinos. We even saw \$2 and \$3 blackjack tables.)

## Jackasses on the road

The buffet breakfast on Saturday provided our first real chance to meet others. We found two groups, each with nearly a dozen Miatans, plus several others at smaller tables.

We all met at 10 a.m. for a short run to Oatman. There we found an interesting tourist town full of wild burros, souvenir shops, and cars. A contingent of about 60 Chevy SSRs made our 20 Miatas look insignificant.

Some folks chose to extend the tour eastward for several hours to Kingman and Seligman. Mary and I felt we had driven enough on Friday, so we checked out a gold mine. The mine offers tours (which we declined) but is not currently operating; they may reopen if gold prices remain high enough to ensure profitability.

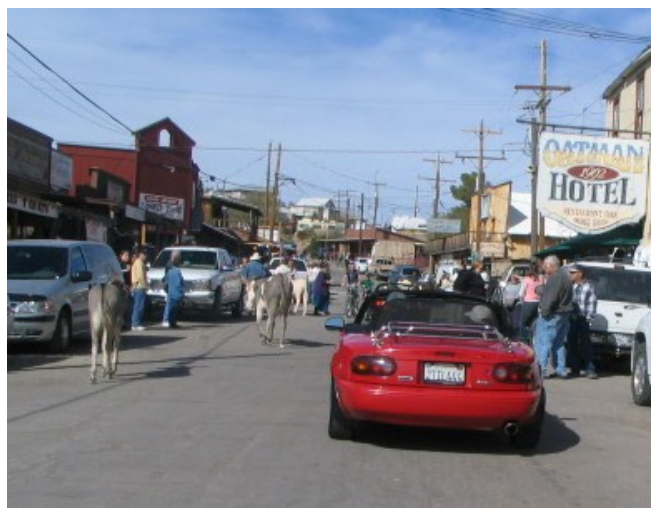
Heading back to Laughlin, we stopped for a late lunch in Bullhead City and picked up supplies for the evening's cocktail party. We then checked out the Colorado Belle casino, built to resemble an enormous river boat.

## Margaritas galore

The cocktail party began at 6 p.m. in Bari Russell's hotel room. Snack food covered every available horizontal surface, and margaritas were flowing, thanks to a nifty, battery-powered blender supplied by Kathie McClelland. I'm not sure how many people showed up, but the room was packed, and the vol-

ume of conversation and laughter provoked at least one request to "keep it down."

Since nobody knew of a restaurant that could accommodate all of us on a Saturday night, we were left to fend for ourselves. At least one group had planned ahead far enough to secure reservations for about a dozen at the Ramada Inn across the street. We were not so farsighted, and, after the margaritas and snacks, not very hungry. We settled for a Bullhead City Pizza Hut.



Matas, OTMs, bicycles, and the ever-present wild burros share the main street of Oatman, AZ. Photo: Larry Clark

After another visit to the buffet Sunday morning, we checked out of the Flamingo and headed home. This time we stuck to the freeways (I-40 and I-15), which took about an hour less than the trip over. Still, we highly recommend the back roads if time permits. The scenery was among the most memorable parts of the trip.

Our thanks to Bari Russell and all the other SOCALM folks who helped make this an enjoyable trip. Bari says she has been organizing these for longer than she can remember, so you probably can catch another installment next year.

# Just make the time and do it

STEVE RANZANI

I guess it's mostly my dad's fault. I grew up with sports cars. My dad had the likes of Jaguars, Karmann Ghias, Zs, and Mercedes. The old leaky British ones were my favorite. He always said the reason sports cars had two seats was for the driver and mechanic.

My friends in high school were into "muscle cars," and I got to vicariously enjoy some vintage Fords. I ended up with a '76 Mustang Cobra II. This experience helped me to form some very strong, although somewhat misguided, opinions of what defines a muscle car, sports car, and roadster. A sports car can't have a back seat, right?

Well, in 1995 my wife decided she wanted to get an SUV. Naturally, I thought this would be a great time to get rid of my truck and get a sports car, so I looked around and found a 1995 red and tan Miata at Cush Mazda. It was one of only a few cars on the market at that time to fit my prerequisites for a roadster (small, rag top, two seats, very nimble, and no big monster motor). I loved it!

I joined the club (thanks to Voodoo Bob and Vicky), but went on only one run, even though I was a member for two years. I just never made time in my busy schedule. In 1997, my daughter was born, so away went the Miata. My motto became "someday I will."

December 2003 was "someday." We were in a position to be able to have a third car, which seemed the only responsible way for me to have another Miata. I wanted a car I could "play with." After all, I had a '70s era Mustang and had restored a '73 Karmann Ghia, so I wasn't afraid of working on cars. I didn't want to spend much, but I really wanted a special-edition Miata. My dream was a '91 or '92 SE, although



Steve Ranzani in the driver's seat of his 1991 British Racing Green Special Edition.

I thought with what I had to spend, I would get a beat-up, about-to-die, junker.

Surprise! I found what I still feel was a steal on a one-owner '91 BRG with a lot of miles, quite a few dings, and in need of a clutch. Still, it ran great and was in excellent condition for a 12-year old car with more than 160,000 miles. After just a quick look, my wife said "pay the man," and my Christmas present was bought.

I rejoined the club at SNS '04. (What a great weekend, do we really have to wait until '09 to do another?) Sadly, I spent the first few months missing all the runs. I work in an industry that requires a lot of hours, mostly weekends, and with a wife and daughter that I don't see nearly enough of, it is very difficult to get to many events.

Since then, however, I have made my very first "Puke Run," spent an evening with the Godfather of the GTO, drove the NC in Irvine, looked for the Great Pumpkin (a fantastic event that I finally felt comfortable bringing my 7-year old

daughter on), drove under the full moon into the desert, and spent a day driving to get candy. I also have been able to make several monthly meetings, the annual meeting, and the Holiday Party. (I love the gift exchange the way it was.)

If I learned anything from my first tenure with the club, it's that you just have to make the time and do it. If you keep coming up with excuses, you miss out on the experiences.

The modifications to my Miata started with the white double racing stripes. Then I added a bunch of chrome to the dash, some white gauge and panel faces, a wood steering wheel, a sensory sound system out of a '96M, and, of course, a Voodoo knob. I eventually had to replace the clutch, and ended up putting on a lightened flywheel.

After the "Puke Run," I added a Hard Dog Extreme roll bar. Most recently, I added black and tan Katzkin leather seats and Brembo drilled and slotted rotors.

Well, that's my story. I love the car.

# Plan an SDMC fun run

JERRY BOSTER, VICE PRESIDENT

**E**ver see those cool SDMC magnets sported by numerous SDMC member cars? Want a set? Well, you can't buy them. The only way to get some is to earn them by planning and leading a fun run.

Many new and some not-so-new members are hesitant to put on a run because it might be hard and costly. But that isn't necessarily true. Putting on a fun run can be easy, fun, and inexpensive—actually there's almost no cost at all except for gas. Here are few tips that will come in handy when putting together a fun run.

## **Pick a destination or event you would like to visit.**

- ♦ Most runs follow the unwritten eat-run-eat format, but this isn't mandatory.
- ♦ Use a key event, and work your timelines from that event. This could be an end-of-the-run meal or a start time for an event.
- ♦ Consider combining the run with an activity such as a wine tour, museum, festival, etc.
- ♦ Think about an overnight event. There are a number of places in Southern California that are perfect for overnight events, and they are no more than a couple of hours drive from San Diego County.
- ♦ As run leader, you get to choose the starting and ending places.

## **Pick a theme.**

- ♦ This can be almost anything, and possible themes are numerous. Pick one that fits you and your event. It can be a place, a time of year, your favorite food, or even an era you like to relive.

## **Work with the Events Coordinator to pick a date.**

- ♦ Try to avoid scheduling multiple events on the same date. At times this can't be avoided—not to worry. More events allow more

members to participate in the maximum number of events.

- ♦ While the Events Coordinator will place your run on the Club Calendar and set up automatic reminders, you can post your own reminders to the SDMC e-mail list.

## **Work up preliminary run directions.**

- ♦ Thomas Brothers maps are an ideal resource, due to the level of detail they provide.
- ♦ Alternately, talk to experienced members who know the roads you want to travel.
- ♦ Mapquest and Google Maps are additional resources.

## **Conduct a pre-run, and note mileages.**

- ♦ Many times, maps are outdated or don't reflect current conditions. Conducting an initial pre-run will allow you to make adjustments to the route as desired.
- ♦ It's helpful if you take along someone to help you make notes on your "pre-run" so you can write up directions, mileage odometer readings, and road signs to follow.
- ♦ Select a convenient meeting place with ample parking, easy access in and out, and restrooms.
- ♦ Look for safe places to "queue up" in case the group gets separated by stoplights or traffic.
- ♦ Potty breaks are a must about every hour. Pre-running will give you a chance to note places for them.
- ♦ If needed: depending on the time of the run, look for restaurants that can accommodate a large group. (It's a good idea to talk to the manager to let them know what you have in mind and when. They may be able to work out a special deal for the group.) If you're doing an overnight event, do a little ground work on

places to stay. Depending on the time of year, many hotels/motels will gladly give the Club a special rate if asked.

## **Write up a brief description for the on-line calendar and newsletter.**

The Events Coordinator will help with this—just ask. Try to include the following:

- ♦ General location of where the run will take place.
- ♦ Start time and place.
- ♦ End location and approximate length of time the run will take.
- ♦ Type of restaurant and approximate amount of money participants should plan to bring—or whether to pack a lunch.
- ♦ What will happen if it should rain? Will the run be canceled, or is it a go, no matter what?
- ♦ Ask for RSVPs if needed for the restaurant or other accommodations. Although the run may arrive when the restaurant isn't busy, the management still needs to have staff on hand to handle a large group.

## **Solicit volunteers for Run Sweep.**

- ♦ Many experienced run leaders don't mind being sweeps. They are also a valuable resource of information, who will assist you in conducting your run.
- ♦ If possible, have the sweep conduct the final pre-run with you so they know the route.

## **Within a week of the event, conduct another pre-run.**

- ♦ Street and road conditions change on a daily basis. There could suddenly be construction on a route that was completely clear during your initial pre-run.
- ♦ This is also a good time to check the local events calendars to make sure nothing unusual is happening



along the route that might cause an unplanned detour.

### **Make enough copies of run directions for each car.**

- ◆ Using a large font (10-12 points) makes reading the directions easier in a moving vehicle.
- ◆ Include mileage (both segment and total). This will make it easier to find turns if the run gets separated by stoplights or traffic.
- ◆ If you have a cell phone, make sure to list the number on the run directions. You might also list the phone numbers of any intermediate and final stops.

### **Conduct your run.**

- ◆ Arrive at your starting place early, with plenty of run directions on hand and a full tank of gas.
- ◆ Hold your Drivers Meeting on time, reminding everyone to follow the rules of the road and drive at their own pace.

### **Find somebody to write an article for the newsletter.**

#### **HAVE FUN!!!**

A couple of additional suggestions:

- ◆ Definitely avoid dirt roads!
- ◆ Keep highway driving at a minimum.
- ◆ Radios are a must for run leaders and sweeps. CBs are preferred, but FRS can be used. A good setup including magnetic antenna can be had for about \$75 to \$100. Check to see if the Club or any members have portable CBs that they might be willing to lend if you don't have one.
- ◆ When parking in a business parking lot, use the back area of the lot so their regular customers have a place to park. You can also arrange for reserved parking along the way.

The most important thing to remember in planning and executing a fun run is to have fun by taking the Club somewhere new, reviving an event from previous years, or just getting out and driving the twisties.

# **Canvas tops make a world of difference**

**DUSTIN LOCKE**

**H**as your original soft top lost its luster? Is it barely hanging onto life, or barely hanging onto the car? If it is time to replace that worn out rag (top), I have some ideas just for you!

Most folks who are replacing their tops stick to the factory vinyl material. Then again, lots of people don't know that there are many options to be had in this department. Years ago, I wanted to replace the original top on my 1994 M-Edition. I had always noticed that cars such as Ferrari, Porsche, and BMW had much richer-colored tops than our little Miatas. I just couldn't see why there was a difference and then it hit me... canvas!

The canvas materials used in higher range convertibles are a much classier, exotic material that holds color far better than the cheaper plastic-vinyl material used on the Miata. I decided canvas was definitely the way to go. I really did my homework looking far and wide for the best deals. I also decided it was time to lose that inferior cheapo-reapo plastic rear window. I now knew what I was searching for: a canvas top with a glass rear window.

There are so many options in design and colors in this array of products. I know this may be lazy, but I really hated zipping and un-zipping the window. I found several companies that produced glass window tops for the M1 that did not require a zipper. They simply folded back like the later M2 tops. Now that I found my ideal product, I was onto the search for the best price. This is not typically a cheap upgrade. Robbins wanted a staggering \$1,178 for this item! That was nowhere close to my budget, so the search continued.

I found several places that were cheaper, but not by enough. The aver-

age price was still about \$800 to \$900. Through several Internet searches, I ran across a little company called A. A. Best. I looked at their prices and was dumbstruck to see the exact top I described earlier for a mere \$320! Then the old adage hit me, "you get what you pay for." I called A. A. Best and spoke to the owner. After hearing about their generous warranties, I decided to take a chance and order one.

Much to my surprise, my top arrived two days later, and it was just what I was hoping for. After hearing rave reviews throughout the club about Jim's Auto Upholstery, I took my new top there for installation. After a short couple of hours, my car was ready to leave with its new top in place. I asked the installer about what he thought of the quality of my top and he replied that it seemed to be top notch! My baby now had a sparkling clear glass rear window—no more stupid zipper—and best of all, a richly colored, classy-looking canvas top!

The top came pre-treated to protect it against staining and sun fading. One surprise benefit of the canvas top I found was the reduced road and wind noise at speed. Driving the car with a canvas top felt and sounded like having a hardtop on. Ever since then, I was sold on the canvas top, and that is always the first thing I do when I get a new Miata. Going this way, you get several advantages as well as a surprisingly low price! My total for the top and installation was only \$550. That is less than half the price of the Robbins top, and it included the installation! Since this experience, I have had six Miatas, and every single one of them has ended up sporting an A.A. Best canvas top. I have yet to have a single issue. As they say, once you go canvas, you never go back!

# Theme song provokes fights at Miata meeting

FROM OUR WIRE SERVICES

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 17 – A national gathering of Miata owners erupted into pandemonium on Thursday after fights broke out among the attendees.

The event, sponsored by the Association of Militant Miata Owners (AMMO), began in apparent harmony. Problems began when President Alan Rentsch announced that AMMO's Board of Directors had adopted a new theme song for the organization. Set to the tune of an old Sunday School hymn, the lyrics went:

*We all love to drive Miatas,  
All the colors on the road.  
Red and yellow, black and white,  
Every one's a pretty sight.  
Let's keep driving our Miatas on  
the road.*

The last chord was still echoing through the hall when someone in the back cried out, "At least they mentioned Yellow."

Another voice piped up, "And Red got top billing."

Others quickly joined the outcry:

"What? No Silver?"

"Where's the BRG?"

"It doesn't mention Merlot!"

Democrats among the membership took strong exception to the mention of Red without granting equal time to Blue. African Americans were incensed by the omission of Black.

Meanwhile, a Jewish participant objected to the use of a traditional Christian tune. Buddhists quietly asked that the tune be replaced by a chant. Atheists said that no song at all would be better, while agnostics said they weren't sure which melody was best.

Police were called in to restore order. By the time the room was cleared, five protestors had been arrested for disorderly conduct. Another dozen citations were issued for cars without front license plates.

# Miata colors

*What your car color reveals about your personality*

HAL JANDORF, SOCALM

**M**iata colors sometimes reflect the owner's personality, attitudes, and mannerisms. Miata colors can be even better than horoscopes. So give it a whirl. Do you own a Miata coated with this color? Is this you?

■ **Red** (Classic Red, Velocity Red, True Red, Garnet, Merlot, Copper, Mahogany): You are ostentatious, flashy, and daring. You flaunt your bright red Miata right in front of the CHP, and you don't care. You're flamboyant and flirtatious, always outgoing yet vain. You're young (at heart), single, and proud of it. You're constantly waxing your Miata to keep the shine and avoid the fade.

■ **Black** (Brilliant Black): Mysterious and dark. You are a perfectionist, you're always dusting your Miata's paint. You want to be social, but your dark side keeps you away from the exciting part of life. Black Miatas rarely participate in fun runs, but your perfectionism drives you to enter the Miata in car shows. Your temperament changes rapidly with the temperature of the Miata's black paint on a hot summer day. You love pets. But you always help others at Tech days with your experience in mechanical and electrical matters.

□ **White** (Crystal White, Pure White): You're cool! Your white Miata shows your pure heart, and you always help friends in need. You're shy, but you have long and loyal friendships. You like to start simple and build up to a spectacular finish. That's why you are constantly adding aftermarket items on your Miata. You spend more than you should, but you are generous. Sometimes you are a follower, just behind the leader.

■ **Dark Blue** (Midnight, Twilight, Montego, Strato): You're a conservative, a conservationist, and a conver-

sationalist. You're always trying to convert others to your own ways. You are good with mechanical and electrical matters, and always do your own Miata's maintenance. You are not a follower, you're a born leader. You want to lead the pack. Your ideas always are right.

■ **Light Blue** (Sapphire, Mariner, Laguna, Crystal): You are leading an exciting life! You are a world traveler, and you brighten up the day for you and anyone around you. Sometimes you add white stripes on your light blue Miata to show a dash of racing. You have a warm heart and always make good friends where ever you go.

■ **Yellow** (Blazing, Sunburst, Evolution Orange): You're a rare breed—flamboyant and infamous! Funny and different from the other Miatas. You're always noticed and you want it that way.

■ **Green** (Marina, Nordic, Splash): Does money grow on trees? You always are worried about what others will say and feel. You're very cautious, but you love to drive. You follow the aesthetic life, watching spectacular sunsets, stargazing, and meteor showers. You've lost your faith in some ways, but you've found faith in great friends. The Miata life is a large and important part of your life.

■ **Primer** (Titanium, Gray, Galaxy, Sunshine Silver, Silverstone): Although some say your Miata is dull, it shines out in the warm sun. You can be moody, but your friendly attitude always wins many long-lasting friends. You're a naturalist and spend time helping animals. Another perfectionist who not only makes sure your Miata is spotless, you help others to make their Miatas clean, too. You're a party person and outgoing. You hate cold winter days and love the hottest summer.

# Member Discounts

**M**any vendors offer discounts to Miata Club members. The club does not endorse these vendors, but lists them as a membership benefit. Some offers may require you to show a current SDMC membership card.

Businesses that wish to be listed must offer a discount from their normal retail prices to SDMC members. Listings are limited to five lines (about 30-35 words). Contact [NEWSLETTER@SANDIEGO.MIATACLUB.ORG](mailto:NEWSLETTER@SANDIEGO.MIATACLUB.ORG) for more information.

## Automotive Services

**Allen's Wrench.** Mazda Master Technician. 1620 Grand Avenue, San Marcos. 760-744-1192. Discount: 10% (except oil changes).

**American Battery.** Miata batteries & all other batteries. 525 West Washington, Escondido. 760-746-8010. Contact: Jeff Hartmayer. Discount: Fleet discount on all products.

**Bumper Express.** Plastic bumper repair at shop or mobile truck will come to you. 9630 Black Mountain Rd., Ste. J, off Miramar Rd. 877-228-6737. [WWW.BUMPEREXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.BUMPEREXPRESS.COM). Discount: 20%

**Coast Car Covers, Inc.** Car covers, cockpit covers. 1229 Morena Blvd., San Diego. 619-275-7100. Discount: Wholesale price.

**Dent Man.** Mobile, paintless dent removal. 800-965-5475. Discount: 15%

**Express Tire.** Auto repair, tires. 12619 Poway Road, Poway. 858-748-6330. Manager: David Dolan. Discount: 10% on parts and labor, including tires.

**Geri's Bazaar.** Custom deck bags, boot bags, travel bags. Maximize the space in your trunk. Contact: Geri Causarano. 828-400-1673. [WWW.GERIS-BAZAAR.COM](http://WWW.GERIS-BAZAAR.COM). Substantial savings to club members.

**Good-Win Racing LLC.** Miata intakes,

exhausts, shocks, springs, & goodies from Racing Beat, Moss, and more. [WWW.GOODWIN-RACING.COM](http://WWW.GOODWIN-RACING.COM). 858-775-2810. Special club price on everything.

**Just Dings Ltd.** Mobile paintless dent removal. 858-569-3464. Discount: 15%

**Kesler Customs.** Miata chassis braces, adjustable dead pedals, hide-away license plate brackets. Installation of aftermarket parts, fabrication, light welding. Ted Kesler, 619-421-8472. Special club prices.

**Knobmeister Quality Images.** 3595 Gray Circle, Elbert, CO 80106-9652. Joe Portas, [JOE@KNOBMEISTER.COM](mailto:JOE@KNOBMEISTER.COM). 303-730-6060.

**Langka Corp.** Guaranteed paint chip and scratch repair system. Cleaning, detailing, and restoration products. 800-945-4532. [WWW.LANGKA.COM](http://WWW.LANGKA.COM). Discount: 30%.

**Larry Dennstedt's Auto Repair.** 4283 41st Street, San Diego. 619-284-4911. Discount: 10% on labor.

**Lutz Tire & Service.** Alignment specialist, tires. 2853 Market Street, San Diego. 619-232-2957. Ask for Mike. Discount: 10% on parts (tires not included).

**Magnolia Auto Body.** Restorations, body work. 476 West Main Street, El Cajon. 619-562-7861. Ask for T.J. Discount: 10% on labor and parts.

**Porterfield Enterprises Ltd.** Brake pads, rotors. 1767 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa. 949-548-4470. Discount: 15% on Porterfield & Hawk brake pads; \$10 off rotors; \$9.25 for Motul 600 brake fluid (1 pint).

**Smog Squad.** 3342 Rosecrans, San Diego. 619-223-8806. General Manager: Jose Munoz. Discount: \$10 on smog tests.

**Team Voodoo.** Nearly legendary shift knobs, t-shirts, hats, decals, etc. [VBOB@TEAMVOODOO.COM](mailto:VBOB@TEAMVOODOO.COM) or fax 858-679-9484. Discount: 10% and no sales tax.

**Thompson Automotive.** Cool accessories

for our cool cars; oil filter relocation kits, gauge kits, air horns, brakes, Voodoo knobs, & MORE. [WWW.THOMPSON-AUTOMOTIVE.COM](http://WWW.THOMPSON-AUTOMOTIVE.COM). 949-366-0322. Discount: 10%

**Tri-City Paint.** Professional detailing, products, paint, airbrushes, car covers. West Miramar Area: 858-909-2100; Santee, Mission Gorge: 619-448-9140. Discount: Body shop pricing #CM6660.

**WheelStore.** Wheels, tires, suspension, alignment. 208 S. Coast Hwy., Oceanside. 760-967-1336. Contact: Joe Jordan. Discount: Wholesale price on tires; \$10 off alignments.

## Mazda Dealerships

**Bell Road Mazda.** Phoenix. 800-765-5292. Ask for John Mardueno or Scott Moehn. Discount: 20% on Mazda parts and accessories.

**Mazda of Escondido.** 760-737-3200. Discount: 15% on parts and labor (not including smog certification).

**Westcott Mazda.** National City. 619-474-1591. Discount: 10% on parts or labor (except oil changes).

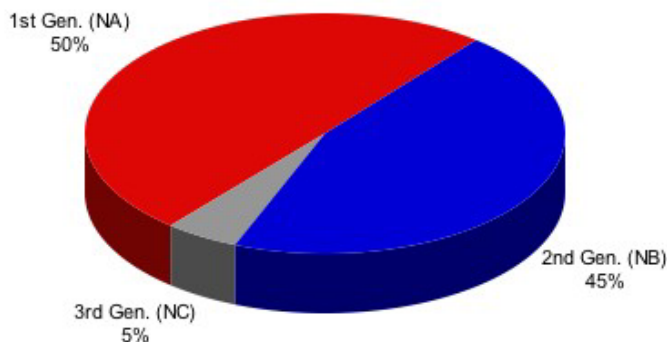
## Other Services

**Alarm 2000.** Residential and commercial alarm installations and monitoring. Free equipment with 2-way voice & free install. Buffy Hergenrader, 619-221-0948. [BUFFY@IOPENER.NET](mailto:BUFFY@IOPENER.NET). Discount: No connection fee.

**Coldwell Banker Real Estate.** David T. Bryan, Realtor. 619-334-4625. [DAVIDBRYAN@COLDWELLBANKER.COM](mailto:DAVIDBRYAN@COLDWELLBANKER.COM). Free market analysis. No transaction fees for SDMC members or referrals!

**Rosin & Associates.** Attorneys at law. Accidents, insurance issues, general civil law. No recovery, no fee. Anita Rosin, [anita.rosin@rosinlaw.com](mailto:anita.rosin@rosinlaw.com). 619-543-9600. Discount: 10% on attorneys fees.

## What we drive: generations and years



### 1st Generation (NA)

1990 – 31  
1991 – 23  
1992 – 18  
1993 – 17  
1994 – 20  
1995 – 11  
1996 – 14  
1997 – 19  
Total – 153

### 2nd Generation (NB)

1999 – 43  
2000 – 16  
2001 – 27  
2002 – 18  
2003 – 18  
2004 – 16  
2005 – 2  
Total – 140

### 3rd Generation (NC)

2006 – 15



Dalton's was prepared. The tables set up for The Loser and The Winner were tastefully done. Mine had a black linen table cloth with a yellow napkin, flowers, a candelabra, china, and silver. The Loser was looking at a newspaper tablecloth (the Wheels section) with a plastic fork and spoon, a roll of toilet paper with some dead branches tastefully arranged, and a paper plate. The salad was served to The Winner while The Loser applied ketchup from packets to his saltine crackers as the first course.

The main course for Bud was a huge can of baked beans with the lid peeled back and a giant ladle stuck in it. On his paper plate was a hamburger patty that had been cooked since early morning and had the consistency of shoe leather. My steak came with a huge baked potato with all the trimmings.

It's important to recognize the efforts of Lisa Martin in the tailoring of Bud's special apparel for the event. I had never seen a yellow zoot suit before. The pictures didn't do it justice, and the flamed shirt merely augmented a look that produced envy in the eyes of many who attended.



Dalton's patio was jammed to capacity with SDMC and SOCALM members. The crowd was estimated at more than a hundred Miatans. Photo: Mark Booth

With more than 100 in attendance, the energy and fun levels were at red line (a little racing term) throughout the dinner. "Instigators" Tom and Marna Wood made presentations to the top contributors to Habitat for Humanity. The ultimate recognition was finally presented by all of the SDMC members as we

sang loudly and boisterously, "We are the Champions." It was a glorious rendition that any songster could be proud of.

At the end of the day everyone was happy, well fed, and realized the tremendous effort that all had made in raising over \$11,000 for Habitat for Humanity.



To the victor belong the spoils. Steve Waid attacks his juicy steak. Bud's beans and hamburger patty looked somewhat less appetizing. Photo: Mark Booth



# Classified Ads

## MIATAS FOR SALE

**2001 Miata LS.** Crystal Blue, 44K miles, really excellent condition, automatic, leather, A/C, PS, PW, PDL, cruise, Bose sound, dual airbags, new tires, new battery, center-braced chrome roll bar w/ custom boot cover. \$14,500 OBO – new 2006 MX-5 on order. Contact Ray. 760-736-0156 or RCBORBYONS@ADELPHIA.NET (Jan)

**2006 MX-5 Miata.** Top of the line Grand Touring edition in Copper Red (metallic) with tan leather interior. 6-speed manual. The car is MINT (as new) condition with 850 miles. All systems on the car work perfectly. It includes the Premium Package 2 (xenon headlights, traction control system, dynamic stability control, anti-theft alarm, advanced keyless entry), Suspension Package (Bilstein shocks, limited slip, sport tuned suspension), air conditioning, Bose radio and CD player, 10-spoke alloy wheels. Also, new this year: side air bags, 170 hp engine, larger interior, improved convertible top. I purchased this car from El Cajon Mazda on 10/12/2005 and paid cash. I just loved the car. I have to sell it because I have arthritis, which makes it too difficult for me to enter and exit. The price of the car with all options was \$27,095. I am asking \$24,000. It was my mistake. Someone will get a

virtually brand new, garage-kept, carefully broken-in MX-5 at a good discount. I have all original documents and paperwork. Please call me for any further details. Robert Slifka, 858-454-6818. FLYBOY88@DSLEXTREME.COM (Jan)

## PARTS FOR SALE

**Suspension components.** Urethane sway bar bushings for NA (Flyin Miata, two sets, will do both front and rear bars), never used, \$60 or best offer. Factory front shock tower brace from 2002 SE, make offer. Carl Kuck, 858-395-2299. TECHNOGEEK@SAN.RR.COM (Jan)

**Various parts.** 1.6 engine long nose crank, 78,000 miles, \$400. It's complete, but has some damage internally. 10AE seats, \$500. Lots of suspension and other parts, 1990 to 1999. Two sets of new 2006 seats, two tops, and other miscellaneous parts (take offs from 2006 spec Miata race cars). Wally Stevens, 619-232-2801 ext. 313; or evenings 619-234-2858. Note new E-mail address: WALLYMIATA@GMAIL.COM (Jan)

**Various parts and accessories.** 1991 5-speed transmission, 90,000 miles, good condition, \$150 (new front and rear seals at 85,000 miles w/

clutch change; swapped out for 6-speed). Short-shifter from Good-Win Racing, \$125 (\$180 new, used 5,000 miles on above tranny; effort too high on 6-speed). 1991 starter from above tranny, \$20. Nearly new genuine Mazda tonneau cover, \$125 (used twice before style bar installation; \$180 new). Steven Fortson, 619-286-7384. SFORTSON2001@YAHOO.COM (Feb)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Buying or selling your Miata or Miata accessories?** You can do it for free on MiataMart—the Miata for Sale web site, run by SDMC member Rainer Mueller. Check it out at [WWW.MIATAMART.COM](http://WWW.MIATAMART.COM).

Classified ad space is provided at no cost to SDMC members only. Ads must include first and last names, telephone number, and e-mail address, which must agree with current club roster.

Send ads to [NEWSLETTER@SANDIEGOMIATA.CLUB.ORG](mailto:NEWSLETTER@SANDIEGOMIATA.CLUB.ORG). Ads will run for four months unless canceled, and may be revised and resubmitted.

## SDMC welcomes Mazda of Escondido

JERRY STANDEFER

The club's favorite dealership has had a change of ownership. In January 2006, Cush Automotive Group was sold to United Auto Group (UAG), a worldwide auto retailer based in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Cush Mazda will now be known as Mazda of Escondido.

The transition has been smooth. Craig Morman, Mazda of Escondido's Sales Manager and fellow Miata owner, said, "The transition from Cush to UAG has, so far, been fairly painless. The thing to remember is that the people are the same. Only the name has changed. We've had a couple of small procedural changes, but nothing that

should impact our customers, either in sales or service and parts. You should start seeing and hearing our new name in advertising pretty soon, and hopefully, before too long, we'll have a bright and shiny



new facility to welcome you to!"

In regards to SDMC, Morman said, "We continue to be very thankful for the Miata Club's patronage in all three facets of our

business and hope to continue that relationship for a long time to come."

Thankfully, our friends who work there have convinced the new owner that SDMC is a worthy organization to support. As a result, Mazda of Escondido will still honor the discounts that were offered when Cush owned the dealership. SDMC members can still receive 15% off parts and labor (except smog certification).

Barb Shev contributed most of the information for this article; Craig Morman provided the new dealership logo. Barb, please extend the club's thanks to everyone at your dealership!



Address

## MARCH 2006

| SUN               | MON | TUE | WED         | THU                | FRI                | SAT                    |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
|                   |     |     | 1           | 2                  | 3                  | 4 Reluctant Reader Run |
| 5 Internet Tech   | 6   | 7   | 8           | 9                  | 10                 | 11 Temecula Rod Run    |
| 12                | 13  | 14  | 15 DEADLINE | 16                 | 17                 | 18                     |
| 19                | 20  | 21  | 22          | 23 Monthly Meeting | 24 Driving School  | 25 Driving School      |
| 26 Driving School | 27  | 28  | 29          | 30                 | 31 SJVMC Poker Run |                        |

## APRIL 2006

| SUN         | MON | TUE | WED | THU                | FRI | SAT                                |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|------------------------------------|
|             |     |     |     |                    |     | 1 SJVMC Poker Run                  |
| 2 Puke 2006 | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6                  | 7   | 8                                  |
| 9           | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13                 | 14  | 15 Egg-zactly Photo Rally DEADLINE |
| 16          | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20                 | 21  | 22                                 |
| 23<br>30    | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27 Monthly Meeting | 28  | 29 Annual Meeting                  |

| DATE             | EVENT                      | TIME                                       | MEET                                                           | CONTACT                                        | PAGE |
|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------|
| Sat 3/4          | Reluctant Reader Run       | 10:15 a.m. Drvr. Mtg.<br>10:30 a.m. Depart | Albertson's/Target center, Rancho San Diego (Hwy 94 & Jamacha) | Les Smith<br>858-578-1416                      | 6    |
| Sun 3/5          | Internet Tech Day          | 11:00 a.m. (lunch)<br>12:00 noon (run)     | Chili's, 10200 Scripps-Poway Pkwy                              | Mark Booth<br>619-670-3789                     | 6    |
| Sat 3/11         | Temecula Rod Run           | 8:00 a.m.                                  | Old Spaghetti Factory, 111 N. Twin Oaks Valley Rd., San Marcos | David & Kari Streeter<br>MIATAFUNRUN@YAHOO.COM | 6    |
| Thu 3/23         | SDMC Monthly Meeting       | 6:00 p.m. (eat)<br>7:00 p.m. (meet)        | Boll Weevil Restaurant, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Bl.               | Sue Hinkle<br>760-735-9456                     | 3    |
| Fri-Sun 3/24-26  | Performance Driving School |                                            | Thunderhill Raceway, Willows, CA                               | Ken Freeze<br>KEN@TEAMMIATA.COM                | 6    |
| Fri-Sat 3/31-4/1 | SJVMC Poker Run            |                                            | Holiday Inn, Visalia, CA                                       |                                                | 7    |
| Sun 4/2          | The Puke 2006              | 9:00 a.m. Brunch<br>10:00 a.m. Drvr. Mtg.  | Dalton's, Nordahl, just north of SR 78, San Marcos             | Steve Waid<br>760-432-0727                     | 7    |
| Sat 4/15         | Egg-zactly Photo Rally     | 9:00 a.m. Registration                     | Mazda of Escondido, 1650 Auto Park Way North, Escondido        | Larry Clark<br>760-737-8971                    | 7    |
| Thu 4/27         | SDMC Monthly Meeting       | 6:00 p.m. (eat)<br>7:00 p.m. (meet)        | Boll Weevil Restaurant, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Bl.               | Sue Hinkle<br>760-735-9456                     | 3    |
| Sat 4/29         | SDMC Annual Meeting        | 10:30 a.m.                                 | San Diego Automotive Museum, Balboa Park                       | Sue Hinkle<br>760-735-9456                     | 8    |