



# TWISTS & TURNS

The newsletter of the San Diego Miata Club

Volume 11 Number 9

September 2006

## Million dollar Miata-cade to Mount Laguna

GENE STREETER

It seems our esteemed editor, Jerry Standefer, showed remarkable restraint in paring the proposed title of my tribute article on our Eleventh Annual Twilight Run to what appears above. What I proposed was something even more descriptive and over-the-top: Meticulous Mark (Booth) marshals meandering million dollar Miata-cade to majestic Mount Laguna. That sort of says it all, don't you think?

"No!" you say. "Where did you come up with the million dollar figure, Ace?"

Tough crowd. Now I know how President Sue

feels some meeting nights when she's competing with a couple of large-screen televisions and a whole raft of empty beverage cups.

I'll try to explain. First, the outlandish claim to a million dollars worth of rolling stock. Since math isn't really my strong suit, I enlisted the accounting skills of our own Steve Waid. The way we figure, there were 52 Miatas on Saturday's annual run eastward out of Rancho San Diego. The newest "NC" versions are worth well over the \$20,000 mark; yes, there were a lot of the older NAs and NBs in the mix, but con-

sidering all of the safety equipment, performance enhancements, and baubles they're sporting, they remain desirable and retain their value. (With apologies to Kelley: I mean to say many have roll bars and all sort of hot rod thangs, OK?)

As an aside, I have the express permission of our Personalities Editor, Kelley Raymond, to write what I want and whenever I want, with two conditions: First, I don't pick on transplanted Texans, and second, that it's funny. It's not necessarily milk-out-of-your-nostrils funny, but humorous in a refined, sophisticated sort of way. Right! Five paragraphs into this effort and I've already broken both conditions. In my defense, Kelley has her shot at some kinfolk and me elsewhere in this issue.

Now, back on task. Try as he might, Steve couldn't convince me that the yellow cars were more valuable than the rest of the herd. Judge for yourself by viewing the photos of the run (<http://>

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The Waid's chasing another yellow object. Photo: Lisa Martin

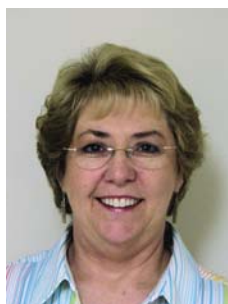
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Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. When possible, please e-mail your submissions to the newsletter editor. Submissions may also be mailed to the club's post office box.

Submission deadline is the 15th of each month. The Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

## Contact SDMC

### On the web

[www.sandiegomiataclub.org](http://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> (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 that 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 Information

## New Members

Welcome to our newest members (since the previous newsletter):

**Jim & Betsy Carlin**, Coronado ..... 1995 Red

**Gail Look-Yan**, San Diego ..... 1995 Black

As of August 14, 2006, we have 285 memberships (104 single, 181 dual) and a total of 466 members.

## 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.

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.

Many members arrive 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.

**This month's meeting date:**  
**Thursday, September 28**

## Flea Market at September Meeting

Did you win a Miata T-shirt that's not your size? Are spare parts cluttering your garage?

Clean your closets and convert those old Miata-related items to cash at the September 28 meeting. The Regalia Team will sell them for you. At the end of the evening, we'll split the proceeds: 20% to the club, 80% in your pocket.

Please, no large car parts. We're thinking of attire, books, car-care products, small accessories, etc. This is a one-night event, so please plan to take any unsold items home with you.

*SDMC Regalia Team - Mary Clark & Linda Payne*  
[regalia@sandiegomiataclub.org](mailto:regalia@sandiegomiataclub.org)

## Dues

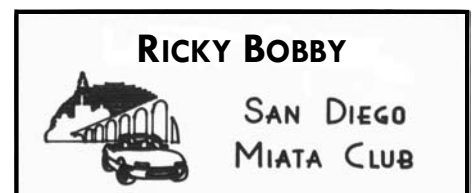
Dues are \$35 per calendar year, for either an individual or a dual membership (two members in the same household). Members who join the club in the first half of the calendar year (January through June) pay \$35 for their first year; those who join in the second half of the year pay \$20 for the remainder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

## Badges

Have you noticed those engraved plastic name badges that other members wear? Would you like to get one?

Badges are available in colors to match your car. The cost is \$9.00 each for badges with safety-pin closures, or \$10.00 for badges with magnetic fasteners. Prices include shipping to your home.

Vicky Krueger handles the ordering. Badge request forms are available at the Regalia table at monthly meetings and on the club's web site. All orders must be prepaid.



## 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!**

# Greetings from the Secretary

BRENDA KAY, SECRETARY

**A**t our July monthly meeting, a special election was held to choose a new vice president. Larry Clark, our previous vice president, recently resigned for health reasons. Our heartfelt thanks and gratitude go to Larry for ably serving in the position since our Annual Meeting in April. He and his lovely wife Mary (Regalia Gal), have also hosted the "Search for the Great Pumpkin" and "Egg-zactly" rallies—two very well organized rallies that provided lots of entertainment and gnashing of teeth, and I expect a few animated discussions between drivers and navigators. Thanks, Larry and Mary, for all you do for SDMC.

## The envelope, please

Barb Shev, David Streeter, Scott Lewis, and Paula Kennison were nominated for vice president. Barb Shev declined the nomination. President Sue stated that our bylaws require board members to reside in San Diego County; one of the candidates resides in Murrieta. She asked the club to temporarily suspend the bylaw requirement. Mark Booth moved that the residency requirement be temporarily suspended for the remainder of this year's term. The motion was seconded. Sue then called for a vote. The motion passed.

The candidates introduced themselves and stated why they wanted to be vice president. Ballots were cast and counted. Congratulations go to Scott Lewis, who was elected as our new vice president. Welcome to the board, Scott!

## A foreshadowing

I didn't make all of the events this month, but I did attend the Moon Over Miatas. This was my second

"MOM" run; last year was really fun. This year, we ate dinner at the restaurant next to Dudley's. I ordered one of my favorite meals, the beef stroganoff, but the waitress said they were out of that. That should have been a warning to me that the evening was not going to go as planned. However, the dinner was delicious, as was the pie and ice cream.

We visited with other SDMC folks while we ate, and then joined the drivers meeting. Steve Waid introduced several new members, and then announced, "This is a simple run. We go up to Julian, then we take S2 to Interstate 8, and there is no way to get lost."

So, even though my CB radio didn't get put back after cleaning out the truck, and although I had no printed run directions, I had no worries. I was wrong. Leaving the parking lot, I pulled out and joined the crowd. I forgot to pay attention to how close I was to the beginning of the pack. That was a big mistake. I was in the middle of the cars driven by the guys with 20 years of autocross experience, and shortly after we got to Banner Grade, they left me in the dust.

## Follow the leader

Full moon or not, Banner Grade is a very dark road when you are the only car, and I hugged that white line. It was a long way down, and by the time we reached the bottom, a few cars had caught up from behind. Now I was leader by default. With no map and no CB radio, I just kept following the white line.

There was that huge almost-full moon coming up over the horizon—what a beautiful sight. We drove for a long time, and eventually I saw a sign that said turn right for Ocotillo.

Had Steve told us there would be a right turn to Ocotillo? I couldn't remember, so I went straight. A mile later, it didn't feel right, so I pulled over and let some cars pass me. Eventually, one of them turned around, came back, and said we had missed the turn.

We all made three-point turns in the middle of the road, doubled back, made the turn to Ocotillo, and then drove and drove and drove. We were going really fast on the flat. Is there a speed limit on S2?

Finally, up ahead, there was a long string of taillights. What a good feeling. Someone said it was 35 cars, but it looked like more than that to me. We joined up, and soon we had our two-minute stop to get out and watch the Milky Way and all of the stars. At some point in the run, I saw a huge shooting star cross the entire sky. Anyway, pretty soon, we joined up with Interstate 8 and headed back home or to the Golden Acorn Casino for a late-night snack. By the time we reached home, we had logged more than 200 miles, and had created another great memory of an excellent SDMC run.

## Come join us

If you are reading this newsletter, you probably own a Miata. The purpose of our club is to have fun with our Miatas. Over the course of a year, there are several great runs to choose from and if you show up, you will have a great time no matter where the road leads. You will be introduced to some new eating establishments. You will meet some fun people. Please join us on a run really soon so you can get the most out of your Miata, and so we can meet you!

Warm regards, and safe driving!



# Coyotes, roadrunners, and Acme rockets

JERRY STANDEFER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Last year, a surprise visit from an out-of-town relative forced me to miss a run I had been looking forward to: Moon Over Miatas. I had never visited San Diego County's deserts or Golden Acorn Casino, and the thought of spirited top-down driving under a nearly full moon was exhilarating. I vowed that I would make the run the following year.

This year, I ensured that nothing would stop me from seeing the desert moon over my Miata. As the midday sun turned to a cooler afternoon glow, I began washing my car. I had been out of town while my mother was undergoing surgery, and this car was filthy from a lack of attention. After drying the car, I noticed water spots blemishing the horizontal panels; I found out quickly that rubbing harder with the chamois wasn't working.

I looked at my watch and saw that it was only 6 p.m. Certainly, there was more than enough time to get these spots out. I broke out the magical Meguiar's Deep Crystal Paint Cleaner and got to work. It was a lot of rubbing, buffing, and sweating, but the spots were gone and the black paint glistened like Darth Vader's helmet. (From some angles, a black NC is just as frightening as that dark figure.) It was 45 minutes later, which gave me time to shower and get ready.

I finished tying my shoes just as the clock hit 7:15 p.m. I was all set to go, but where was my copilot? As fate would have it, he was asleep and not nearly ready to go. I had planned on leaving at 7:30 p.m., but I had to settle for 20 minutes later than that. We had 40 minutes to get from Mission Hills to Santa Ysabel. Could we make it?

## Missing the boat

An hour later, we pulled into a

very dark and empty parking lot at Dudley's. To say the least, I wasn't very happy. I could've sworn that the group wasn't leaving until 9 p.m. I opened the trunk to pull out a newsletter to confirm the times, but I had left the house without one. I made a mental note: Always bring a newsletter or print out run details from the SDMC website.

We waited until 9 p.m. to see if there were any stragglers, but it seems we were the only latecomers. Should we go home, or try to catch up? The night before, I studied what I knew of the route on Google Maps. I knew the run crossed south through the desert on Route S2, and then west on Interstate 8 to Golden Acorn Casino. I figured we could make the attempt to catch up, armed with just a memory in the back of my head of what was displayed on the computer screen. I made another mental note: Always carry a map in the car.

We headed east from Dudley's. My Miata's high beams seared the road ahead, while the white needles of the speedo and tach soared quickly past amber numbers. We overshot the turn to S2, being surprised by how little distance there was between the initial road sign and the turn. We pulled a quick U-turn, made the left onto S2, and we were off into the desert. As we drove further, the temperature started to rise; we were really surprised how much heat we could feel from the rock walls that we passed. Thank goodness we brought bottled water along. Another mental note: Always bring bottled water.

## Animated thoughts

Every once in a while, we would catch a glimpse of taillights. However, despite my speed and rapidly increasing tunnel vision, we never seemed to get any closer. I imagined that I was in one of the old Road Runner cartoons.



I was Wile E. Coyote, my Miata was an Acme rocket to which I was strapped, and the SDMC caravan was the Road Runner. Fortunately for us, I didn't slam into any rock walls as Wile E. frequently did.

Unlike the cartoon, the Road Runner did get caught. Shortly after passing the Imperial County line Border Patrol checkpoint, I saw faint taillights to the side of the road. A couple of seconds later, a nearly invisible line of stopped Miatas appeared. I slammed on the brakes and pulled behind the sweep car.

After a few minutes, the caravan slowly began moving. I pulled ahead of the sweep car, and the snake of Miatas slithered onto I-8. Once on the freeway, the caravan quickly split into two groups: fast and slow. It didn't take long for the gap to widen to several miles, and then the two groups could no longer see each other. I was stuck in the slow group, moving a sizeable percentage below the speed limit. Several Miatas broke off and sped up to catch the fast group; I stayed with the sweep car, as I was sure they had run directions, which I lacked.

## Radio silence

We could see Golden Acorn Casino's sign shining brightly in the

*(Continued on page 15)*

# Jim and Laurie Patton moving to Ohio

BRUCE LEWIS

**W**e at SDMC are truly blessed by having such great people in our club. Sometimes, I don't know if the bond is the car or the people. (I'll vote for the latter.) Unfortunately, for many reasons, we lose some of our extended family. Such is the case with Jim and Laurie Patton.

Jim is an officer in the U.S. Navy, and just got promoted to the position of Captain Select. This means that, after the promotion ceremony, he will be Captain Patton. Congratulations, Jim! Along with this promotion comes a change of duty station to Columbus, Ohio, and a joint military command.

Laurie has been active for the past year as our membership coordinator, and, with Jim's help, promoted and sponsored our very successful Fourth of July parade in Coronado. They also have been active in club runs, and have always been there when a helping hand was needed.

For those of you who got to know these two, you know that they and their "SLVA CAH" (silver car) will be missed very much. I'm sure that we will be hearing of your exploits with the Columbus Miata Club. Happy trails (twisty roads), fair winds, and following seas!

## The Pattons say farewell—in verse

JIM & LAURIE PATTON

**I**t is time for Laurie and Jim Patton to move on. We've been given orders to report aboard the Defense Supply Center, Columbus, Ohio.

It has been our privilege to be a part of America's finest car club! We'll always treasure the friendships we've made and wonderful times we've had Miata-ing through Southern California with all of you. We hope you enjoy the poetic tribute we've put together for you. You'll have to sing like Steve Waid to make the words match the tune though!

### Farewell and Adieu, SDMC

*Adapted from the sea shanty "Farewell to You, Ye Fine Spanish Ladies"*

Now farewell to you, oh SDMC,  
Now farewell to you, ye fun loving drivers.  
For we've received orders to move to Ohio,  
And perhaps we may never more see you again.

We'll range and we'll rove like true sports car drivers,  
We'll range and rove all on the two lanes;  
'Til we strike soundings in the heartland.  
From Jamul to C'lumbus is o'er 2000 miles.

We cruised with great friends,  
We twistied on SDMC's best curves.  
Pushed SLVA CAH to the ends,  
Bathroom'd at Dudley's and other places best left unsaid.

Our first run was Twilight, Mark led with a bat,  
Next Mesa Grande, New Year's, Borrego, and a Puke!  
Drove down Couser Canyon, Harley's on Palomar, imagine that!  
Then an Auto Show or two, Mark won first, was it only a fluke?


At the annual picnic, it went very quick,  
Ev'ryone took their full bowl.  
For we were jolly, and drown'd melancholy,  
With a health to each jovial and true hearted soul.

We'll heave SLVA CAH round ev'ry turn we can discover,  
Not take the four lanes, the side roads call clear!  
Then fill up the tank, remember the cockpit cover,  
And out over the desert our course we'll steer.

Cruise past Grand Canyon, it's on to Pike's Peak to see things!  
Next, twist thru the Rockies, past trails Lewis did march.  
We'll zoom through Dodge City by Wich'ta, but not Radiator Springs!  
And bear away for St. Louis' Arch!

On past the Indy, we're just one state away!  
All in the hotel that night to rest!  
Haul up your dip stick, drop the top,  
Time to show Buckeyes, SDMC does it best!

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# Coming Events

## Cruisin' Grand

**Date:** Friday, September 1  
**Time:** 6:00 p.m. for dinner; 7:00 p.m. to cruise  
**Meet:** Tom's #23 restaurant in Escondido (SW corner of Centre City Parkway and 5th St.)  
**Contact:** Steve & Laurie Waid, 760-432-0727, [swaid@cox.net](mailto:swaid@cox.net)

**Details:** On Friday nights in summer, Escondido opens up Grand Avenue for cruising. On the *first* Friday of each month, SDMC members meet at Tom's #23 to eat before leaving at 7:00 p.m. to cruise Grand. After taking a spin or two up and down Grand, we park and then walk Grand. You will see hot rods, street rods, muscle cars, restorations, motorcycles, and more. After cruisin' and walkin' Grand, we will drive a short distance to find dessert.

## Debbye Does the Santee Drive-In

**Date:** Saturday, September 2  
**Time:** 4:30 p.m. (for dinner)  
**Meet:** Chicken Pie Diner, 14727 Pomerado Rd. (south end of Target center), Poway  
**Contact:** Bruce & Debbye Lewis, 619-447-0930, [ouizoom@yahoo.com](mailto:ouizoom@yahoo.com)

**Details:** Relive those good ol' days at the drive-in theater on our *Debbye Does the Santee Drive-In* run. We will meet at the Chicken Pie Diner in Poway for a fabulous '50s-style dinner, then head out on a short (50-mile) run to the Santee Drive-In. This will give us plenty of time to park, set up our folding chairs, adjust our FM radios to the theater's frequency, and fit in some serious gabbing and lie-swapping before the movie starts.

"So," you're asking yourself, "what movie choices are there?" That's easy: Screen #1 or Screen #2! We won't actually know what's playing until a few days before, so we will vote on the movie at the start of the run. Yes, the rumors are true: The movies usually suck, but, as in the good ol' days, we don't go to see the movies but to "hang with our homies"!

What to bring: Your Miata; your favorite fella or gal; folding chairs; blankets or jackets (it gets cool after the sun sets); and an FM radio.

## Meguiar's Car Care Tech Day

**Date:** Saturday, September 9  
**Time:** 7:00 a.m. caravan; 9:00 a.m. class in Irvine  
**Meet:** Ralph's, 1702 Oceanside Bl, Oceanside (on the north side of Oceanside Bl., just east of I-5.)  
**Contact:** Ken Hurd, 858-459-4847, [khurd@semprautilities.com](mailto:khurd@semprautilities.com)

**Details:** This class will involve hands-on demonstrations of Meguiar's five-step paint care cycle, and Meguiar's consumer and professional products. It will cover techniques for hand application, rotary buffers, and dual-action polishers. Each participant will receive a Meguiar's gift bag.

We will meet in Oceanside and caravan to Meguiar's offices. If you prefer to meet at Meguiar's, the address is 17991 Mitchell South, Irvine. The class starts at 9:00 a.m.

Due to limited space, *only 30 people may attend*. Couples are welcome but count as two, so please make sure that everyone attending will enjoy and benefit from this event. Otherwise, please allow the spaces for other members.

To RSVP for this event, visit the link below, join Meguiar's forum, and RSVP in the forum thread provided. If you *don't* RSVP, there will be a \$30 charge.

**Link:** <http://meguiarsonline.com/forums/showthread.php?threadid=11113>

## Cars, Nuts, and Ribs

**Date:** Saturday, September 9  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. (drivers meeting)  
**Meet:** Burger King & Dalton's Roadhouse parking lot, I-78 at Nordahl, San Marcos  
**Contact:** Vicki & Bryan Kiehl, 760-751-2272, [vicki@mammothgames.com](mailto:vicki@mammothgames.com)

**Details:** This will be a scenic drive (approximately one hour) to Bates Nut Farm in Valley Center for the American Classic Car Show. Attendees have the option to picnic there or to join Vicki and Bryan for ribs (beef), sandwiches, or salads at Fat Ivor's in Valley Center. The return drive will feature a stop at the Dairy Queen at Centre City and El Norte Parkways in Escondido.

## Miata Mountain Gold (out of town)

**Date:** Thursday, September 28 – Sunday, October 1  
**Place:** Breckenridge, Colorado  
**Contact:** Bruce Cliff, 303-595-4550, [bcliffe@msn.com](mailto:bcliffe@msn.com)  
**Details:** Join the Colorado Miata enthusiasts for some fantastic driving on the twisting, curving roads of the Colorado Mountains, not to mention the great colors. We'll have great runs, good food and drink, prizes, awards, parties, and plenty of time to socialize.  
**Link:** [www.mountaingold.peaktopeakmiata.org](http://www.mountaingold.peaktopeakmiata.org)

## Coronado Classic Speed Festival

**Date:** Saturday, October 7 – Sunday, October 8  
**Details:** TBA



# Over the desert and under the moon

BRUCE LEWIS

As the sun settled like a sleepy child into the mountains west of Dudley's, Miatas by ones and twos began to gather in the now-closed bread emporium's parking lot. Pretty soon, like Technicolor crows, a whole flock of the small sports cars had gathered and were waiting in eager anticipation for the "big crow in the yellow car" to speak. And speak he did, whence the whole flock followed him off to another running of Moon Over Miatas.

As you know, the "big crow" in this case was Steve Waid, who, along with the lovely Laurie, had us



Don't say you weren't warned. Photo: Bruce Lewis

off on another adventure to find the moon, the stars, the mountains, the desert, and a late-night snack at Golden Acorn Casino.

Once again, the weather was perfect. I swear that Steve has connections "upstairs" to make this happen time after time! About 32 Miatas (it was hard to count them all in the dark) headed up the hill to Julian, and then meandered like a segmented caterpillar with incandescent eyes down Banner Grade into that oven that we call Anza Borrego. Calls on the CB radio indicating temperature changes were frequent and, as I recall, topped out in the 96-degree range.

Many cars missed the turn onto S2. One of these days we will all get the "wait at the turn until you see the next car coming" thing.

After reaching the desert floor, we were favored with the late arrival of a golden, slightly-past-full, "Miata moon," accompanied by a full orchestra of stars shining like headlights in a dark parking lot. Beautiful!

From there, it was a quick jog over to I-8 and a drag race up the hill to Golden Acorn Casino. Feeling the lateness of the hour, about half of the group peeled off and headed home to catch a few winks. The rest of us were lured, no doubt, by the promise of food or the chance to have Lady Luck at their side, entered the casino. It was truly amazing to see how this group could pack in the food at such a late hour.

After good conversation, good food, and a promise to see each other at the summer picnic, we left for home under the glow of the Moon Over Miatas.



Debbye moons another horny Miatan. Photo: Bruce Lewis

## TWILIGHT RUN (Continued from page 1)

[thephotobooth.smugmug.com/gallery/1679777](http://thephotobooth.smugmug.com/gallery/1679777)). The fact is, and especially in certain collector cars, there is added value for vehicles in "retail red." Just watch a Barrett-Jackson Auction and listen to the enlightened commentary. Or, ask our own Barb Shev—she'll tell you. *And the color war continues....*

I apologize for the lengthy set-up, but it feels doubly strange to be completing this article weeks after the event. I wasn't able to make the original deadline for submissions, which was hard on the heels of the run itself. Much like a fine wine, a merlot, for example, the thoughts and experience have properly aged in the oaken skull of the author.

July 14 was the anniversary of my

birthday, but Saturday, July 15, was my intended birthday celebration. Bonnie asked well in advance what I wanted to do for my special day. Before responding, I checked our events calendar and decided we would do the Twilight Run as entertainment. With any luck, I'm evolving into a hard-core member.

My son David and daughter-in-law Kari joined us earlier in the day for a barbecue. We made the leisurely drive east to Rancho San Diego and the appointed Albertsons/Target shopping center parking lot. Bonnie and I, in our *retail red* '04, and David and wife Kari in "Razor Blue," joined up with a small pack of fellow funsters well in advance of the drivers meeting start time; "on time and full tank of gas" was still reverberating in my brain

from our early-May Search for Madonna. As 5:00 p.m. approached, I got really anxious. I don't know whether the bigger concern was the thought of Mark being late or the modest turnout of cars for a fair-weather SDMC event. We dispatched a search party and soon learned of the other gathering spot, near fast food and a restroom or two.

This was more like it. I was on my third round of "fingers and toes" counting the 52 cars gathered there to enjoy the late afternoon's cooler temperatures and impending driving experience. In awe of the turnout, I listened to some of the chatter in the "pits."

"This is like Easter at church...we only get to see some of these folks once a year." Just imagine if we could as-



semble most of our members at events such as this. Look out world. This group alone attracted plenty of attention and friendly waves. I usually acknowledge with a friendly *beep-beep* of my non-threatening accessory air horn.

*"With this many cars, we'll be lucky to manage an average speed of 35 miles per hour."* We received very detailed driving instructions and the customary handout from Mark Booth. We were off, an entire herd of motorized jelly beans, glistening in the sun headed toward the Sunrise Highway. Queue-ups were the order of the day, as well as the event calendar's description: "This is a leisurely ride along some of San Diego's most scenic roads." I suppose Mark's work in the retail business inclines him toward truth in advertising.

He didn't lie. The scenery was terrific. It didn't seem to matter that we weren't traveling "full tilt boogie" over those back roads. There's nothing cooler than applying the colors of our Miatas, even those pesky yellows, to the landscapes we traversed. When the road curved and doubled back on itself, it was awesome to see nothing but Miatas in two directions, above or below. For those of us who are color-challenged, the symphony of sounds our vehicles create are also quite satisfying—a feast for the senses.

The second half of our run found us climbing to a 6,000-foot eleva-

tion, up through a forest of pine and oak badly burned in the Cedar fire of 2003. Their charred skeletons still stand as testament to the destructive forces of both man and nature, but the new growth and enriched soil provides reassurance to those who enjoy the beauty and grandeur of the Cleveland National Forest. The Lodge at Mount Laguna was our destination and designated "bio" break.

Imagine 52 roadsters and nearly 90 occupants descending on a single restroom facility. Maybe we should be grateful the entire club doesn't travel together—just imagine the logistics. I'm not usually one to engage in potty humor, but my narrative wouldn't be complete without sharing that some of us men were greatly delayed when some assertive women commandeered the men's bathroom. I'm not convinced they were able to fully utilize all the fixtures, but there was a lot of swagger in evidence when they emerged and finally announced that they were done. So much for the *lowlights*.

The CB chatter prepared us for the highlight of our drive. Headed down the mountain, the sun was also headed back to its cosmic garage, straining against the backdrop of distant mountain peaks. It was an intense gold and orange orb, with the veil of a sunset spread across the rock and sage-covered foreground. It was breathtaking. Another half dozen curves and a rapid descent dispensed with that view, making the rest of our



Beautiful cars and scenery fill the early evening hours.  
Photo: Mark Booth

drive almost anti-climactic. Until, that is, a feminine voice called out over channel 10. By then, all of our headlights were ablaze, and we were charging up and down the foothills.

*"Look in your rear-view mirrors. What a sight!"*

She was right. The view of taillights glowing red as curves approached, and a line of white lights behind for as far as one could see (from mid-pack and forward, of course) was nearly as beautiful. It was the outward evidence of another good outing ... of good friends, old and new, enjoying their love of Miatas and the asphalt-paved offerings of San Diego County.

A special thanks to Mark and Cathy Booth for a great run; it's easy to see why it's well-attended and has seen so many anniversaries. Thanks to Dana and Tom Thompson, as well, for running sweep—that was a big job—and to the photographers who captured the images of our run for all of us to enjoy. At this rate, I might actually look forward to my next birthday.



Just a few of the 52 cars who participated in this year's Twilight Run. Photo: Lisa Martin

# Viewpoints

## Twilight Fun Run

I tried inventing some new words to describe the run: Funtabulous! Excitastic! Wonderiffic!

Cheryl and I had a great time. I enjoyed the driving, and she got so relaxed she took a couple of naps along the route. Of course, we were both wide-awake for the DQ at the end, which was really “the cherry on top” of a great Sunday.

One thing of particular interest to me was the Dehesa and Lyons Valley areas. I’ve done a good part of that on a bicycle for the American Diabetes Association “Tour de Cure” ride—believe me, it’s a *lot* more fun in a Miata!

Thanks again to the Booth clan for putting this together.

—Carl & Cheryl Kuck

This should be titled the “Twilight Reunion Run,” in that we got to see folks who we haven’t seen for quite some time. Even after 12 years, the Twilight Run has not lost its luster—the desire to take a leisurely drive to the mountains and watch a glorious sunset as we wound down the mountain. The sunset was spectacular this year!

This was as good as our first Twilight Run in 1996. The thunder cells to the east and south were a bit threatening, but 52 Miatas headed for Sunrise Highway without thunder, lightning, or rain. A few squirrels dodged our wheels, and we saw a snake along the way. The aroma of fresh air and cooling temperatures made it another perfect Twilight Run.

Many thanks to Mark and Cathy for continuing to organize this annual run. Thanks also to Tom and Dona for sweeping the group, and ensuring that everyone made the right turn. We had a great time and look forward to next year’s Twilight Run.

—Jack & Sue Hinkle

I have a complaint! It’s a shame that we do this only once a year; once a month might not be enough. Even though I’ve followed Mark and Cathy through the mountains for the last 10 years, I’ll do it again in a heartbeat!

—David Bryan

What a wonderful Twilight Run, Mark! It was perfect—warm weather, sunset, and friends. Thanks to all who helped make it a fantastic adventure.

A special thanks to all of those who donated to the C5 Wing at Balboa Naval Hospital. Some just donated and didn’t take the wrapping paper! Your gifts will be much appreciated when we give them to the Armed Services YMCA.

Thanks again for a great evening!

—Ed & Michelle Wood

## Moon Over Miatas

Cathy and I had a great time at last night’s Moon Over Miatas event! The weather was perfect—about 12 degrees cooler than last year. (We still ran our A/C for a bit, though.) I think the count was close to 35 Miatas. That long string of headlights/taillights was pretty cool!

Our thanks to Steve and Laurie for another terrific SDMC event! We had *fun*! Oh, and a special thanks to Bruce and Debbye Lewis for taking the initiative to *moon* every OTM that honked at them.

—Mark Booth

We had a great time driving up and down the mountains, driving along S2, watching the *huge* shooting star at the beginning of the run, and seeing the Milky Way high up in the night sky. It was a nice turnout of SDMC members, new and old. My CB radio didn’t get put back into the trunk after we cleaned it out, so I was driving “blind” as it were, and missed the turn. I apologize to all the drivers who were following me and also had to turn around. My thanks to the driver who figured it all out.

Thanks, Steve and Laurie Waid, for another great SDMC memory.

—Brenda Kay

My dictionary defines “sensuous” as “perceived by or affecting the senses.” That’s what Moon Over Miatas was all about.

*Feel:* The temperature was about 70 degrees when we left Dudley’s, but it got cooler as we approached Julian, then much warmer as we headed down Banner Grade to the desert. The gentle, warm desert air was a treat. Some of us even turned on our A/Cs.

*Hear:* Heading up the hill from Dudley’s into Julian, the crickets seemed to be holding a mass shouting contest.

*See:* Traveling into the desert, it was a real treat to see all those red Miata tail lights snaking along the road. Shortly before we reached Ocotillo, we pulled off the road, doused our lights, and enjoyed the huge rising moon and the many bright stars. Some folks also saw shooting stars.

*Smell:* The desert air has a smell all its own. (Thankfully, we didn’t seem to pass any large cattle or chicken ranches.)

*Taste:* Larry and I didn’t stop at Golden Acorn Casino for the late-night refreshments, but reports say that the fifth sense was not neglected.

Thanks to the Waids for another wonderful run that awakened our senses on a beautiful summer evening.

—Mary Clark



# A minivan? Me?

LARRY CLARK

I've been driving sports cars since my college days. In just the past three years I have owned (serially) a '98 Boxster, an '03 Boxster S, an '05 Corvette C6, an '02 Carrera cabriolet, and an '04 BMW Z4. During the latter half of that period, I've also had use of Mary's '02 Miata or, since December, her '06 NC.

So what am I driving now? A Honda Odyssey minivan and a three-wheeled mobility scooter!

The Z4 arrived just a few weeks before my lungs bit the dust. I really loved that car—a gorgeous white with red interior, gray top, and gray carpeting. I continued driving both the Z4 and the Miata after leaving the hospital. But the space in a two-seater isn't conducive to carrying the oxygen tanks and separator unit that are now part of my life.

The final blow came when my doctor said I should get a wheelchair or scooter so I wouldn't try to walk so much. A wheelchair? But my legs are fine!

Still, we looked at a few chairs and scooters, just to see what they could offer. And we tried to figure how we might transport one in our VW Jetta wagon. After checking various sources, the answer became clear: we couldn't. Getting a chair or scooter would also mean buying a larger vehicle—probably an SUV or a van.

I hate SUVs, and I can't see myself as a minivan person. Those are for soccer moms with neighborhoods full of kids, not for a couple of retirees who rarely have passengers other than Suki, our seven-pound Japanese

Chin.

Perhaps fate intervened. When relatives came to visit in August, we discovered that we couldn't comfortably cram five adults into the Jetta. We decided to rent a minivan for a few days of sightseeing.

After a few hours behind the wheel, I thought, "This doesn't suck *too* badly. Maybe I should consider it." Meanwhile, Mary was not-too-subtly urging me to consider how many more places we could go if I could zoom around on a scooter.

After researching my options, I zeroed in on the Honda Odyssey. I hoped to find a used '05 model, but the few that were available were priced higher than I expected to pay for a new one. And, of course, if I had to get a van, I wanted it equipped my way. So I began shopping for a new '06.

Working through an automotive web site (probably Edmunds), I broadcast my specifications to local dealers. The only nearby dealer that wasn't on the program was Honda of Escondido, where I had test-driven the van. The responses that came back were very aggressive—

low enough to forestall any thoughts of buying used.

I called my salesman at the Escondido dealership and said I'd buy from him if he would match the prices I had been quoted. After some sputtering and gamesmanship, he did. (I learned, too late, that I could have dealt through Barb Shev. Although she works out of the Mazda shop, she can also help with purchases of Hondas and Acuras.)

So my garage now houses a van, quickly named "Homer, The Odyssey." (I want to get a decal of Homer Simpson for the back window.) And it really *fills* the garage, especially by comparison with the Z4. It fits, but requires precise placement to be sure we can walk past it or open the doors safely.

The van provided the means to haul a scooter, but I still needed the scooter. I would also need a hoist to lift the scooter—nearly 200 pounds—into the van.

Lots of outfits sell scooters. We found one store especially helpful, and they promised to meet any price we found. We brought them a price from the web, which they matched with no questions.

I found a deal on a used hoist through Craig's List. Since a new hoist would have cost nearly \$3000, the saving was substantial, even after paying a stiff installation charge and having to purchase pricey vehicle-specific adapters. (Fortunately, Honda pays \$1,000 toward the cost of installing mobility equipment.)

The scooter store installed the lift, and I drove home with

(Continued on page 15)



Zoom zoom a *quatre*? Suki rides on Larry's lap as Larry rides on Bart, who normally rides in the back of Homer. Photo: Mary Clark



# The Streeters: A family that plays together

KELLEY RAYMOND

**M**et the Streeters: Gene and Bonnie, their son David, and his wife Kari.

The family's Miata story goes back to 1989 when the first Miatas were introduced. Gene was working at a GMC/Mazda dealership as a body shop manager, and the new sports car immediately caught his eye. At the time, the markup was huge because of high demand, so Gene decided to wait.

For Gene's birthday in July 1997, Bonnie was trying to decide what to get him: a Miata or a barbecue? She saw a Miata ad in the newspaper and talked to David about it. They conspired to surprise Gene with a new, red Miata. Gene was hooked and enjoyed the car as much as he thought he would when he saw a Miata for the first time.

Despite Bonnie's being from Indonesia, and Gene's Massachusetts roots, all four Streeters have been in and around Southern California for many years. From Anaheim to Fullerton, Laguna Niguel to Big Bear, these families know the area very well. Bonnie and Gene moved to Chula Vista three years ago. Gene bought an '04 Velocity Red Mazdaspeed in July 2004. He officially joined SDMC in August, but he didn't bother to attend any monthly meetings until the spring of 2005. "My loss," Gene admits.

When he attended his first SDMC monthly meeting, he chose a seat at the back of the room because he "felt shy." Yeah, right. He's about as shy as the person he ended up

sitting next to: Steve Waid! Steve quickly introduced himself and Laurie and, of course, asked what color Gene's car was. When Gene didn't provide the "correct" answer, Steve immediately launched into a good-natured rant about what a mistake it was to have a red Miata instead of a yellow one. Before the meeting was over, Gene knew Steve pretty well and was very impressed

bumper. Gene said Les was so polite that, several times, he encouraged Gene to pass him. Gene, lost in a "first run fog," didn't pick up on the message. He admits that now he is mindful not to tailgate.

Throughout the Puke, David kept making wisecracks about how the Miatas "looked like a bunch of jelly beans and sounded like a bunch of angry mosquitoes," as opposed to

his powerful-sounding Mustang GT. However, it was only a couple of months later that David saw the light and bought his first Miata: an '05 Razor Blue. His license plate reads RZR BLU, and he's already decided that, no matter what happens, his Miata is staying in the family because of his fondness for the special paint color.

Kari (aka "Care Bear") owns the newest Miata of the bunch: an '06 Winning Blue. It's an

automatic with paddle shifters on the steering wheel. Her custom plate was just received, and it reads BLU ZMZM.

Kari's favorite aftermarket buy is her iPod integration kit. David's favorite is his OZ Racing rims. Gene's favorite is Tom Thompson's oil filter relocation kit. (Gee, where have I heard that before?) All it took was changing the oil once and Gene said, "I'm not doing this again!" His other favorite aftermarket buy is the Boss Frog roll bar. Gene had to install his first, because David wanted him to practice on his car before they put them on David's. Kids!



Kari and David in his Razor Blue. Photo: Gene Streeter

by Steve's friendliness. "The moral of the story," according to Gene, "is that, if our club is to grow and continue to prosper, that's the way all of us need to be."

David wasn't converted until last year. His first SDMC run was the 2005 Puke, as Gene's passenger/navigator. SDMCer Sue Kessler (with whom Gene works at State Farm) voiced her concern when Gene told her that he was in Steve Waid's group, because Steve drives so slowly—not! Gene wasn't worried about driving fast, but he didn't want to get lost or separated from the group, so he simply latched onto Les Smith's rear

All four Streeters had a wonderful time at this year's Search for Madonna. David learned a lesson while on the run: It doesn't matter how clean your car is when you start a run; it's probably not going to stay that way. On the way up to San Luis Obispo, the SDMCers went through a "herd" of butterflies, which splattered all over everyone's windshields and front ends. David's birthday was the weekend before Madonna, so his family surprised him with a birthday cake and singing (using the term loosely) by most of the club members at the hotel.

Bonnie and Gene met in French class in junior college and married in October, 32 years ago. After Kari made her mother ask David to take her (Kari, not her mom!) to her senior prom (which turned out to be their first date), they also married in October. This October they will be celebrating their ninth anniversary. Coincidentally, Kari's parents were also married in October. It has turned out to be a family tradition.

Kari and David both work for People's Choice Home Loan; Kari is in quality assurance and David is in marketing. They are often asked by co-workers what's so special about a Miata. Their answer is that it's not just about the car, it's the people that are associated with it. David said, "The Miata club holds a special place in my heart. We've met a lot of great people, and I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world."

David is a self-confessed caraholic. His current inventory includes an '03 Ford Expedition, an '04 Escape, an '05 Chevy Colorado, and an '06 Acura TL, bringing the household total to six vehicles. They

both enjoy scenic drives and, since they live in Murrieta, they're also members of SOCALM. One of their favorite SOCALM runs was the Around the World run. It started in Silver Lake, continued to Big Bear, and on to Idyllwild; they put 550 miles on the car by the time the run ended at Dana Point. David drove Kari's '06 because he wanted to play with the paddle shifters. They also had a blast cruising into the San Diego County Fair with SDMC recently.

Their furry children are a couple of seven-year-old boxer-mastiff-mix brothers named Buster and Max. The boys weigh about 100 pounds

Bonnie is a self-employed registered nurse who works as a Workers' Compensation case manager. Her greatest passions are jewelry (especially diamonds) and slot machines (locally, Harrah's). Both she and Gene love seafood; her favorite restaurant is Red Lobster and his is Top of the Market.

When asked what he wanted to be when he "grows up," Gene replied, "When I grow up, I want to be like Steve Waid; he has more toys." (And an instant SDMC classic line is born.)

Freud said there are no accidents, so perhaps it was destiny (with a name like *Streeter*) that the

men in the family became car nuts. The thing that Gene likes best about the Miata is that it's fun, unpretentious, and simple. He says that the Miata is not about polishing or show casing — they're tossable. He's especially proud of the fact that one of the reasons David decided to buy a Miata was so that he and Kari could spend more time with him and Bonnie.

Gene has enjoyed all of the runs he's

been on with the SDMC, including both of the Clark's gimmick rallies. Gene's father, known in the family as a practical joker, was Gene's navigator for Egg-zactly, and they both had a blast.

Further proof that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree is the Streeter men's responses when asked about their favorite quotes. David's is "Don't sweat the petty things, and don't pet the sweaty things." Gene's favorite? "Unless you're the lead dog, the view never changes." Yep, definitely like father like son.



Bonnie and Gene in his Velocity Red Mazdaspeed. Photo: David Streeter

each, and one of their favorite things to do is to stand on your feet with their feet—and most of the 100 pounds!

David's aunt is a cruise coordinator, so they've been on a couple of cruises. Their favorite vacation spot is currently the Caribbean. While both are country music fans, Kari's love of music extends back to teaching herself to play the piano in junior high school. Both David and Kari are fun and energetic. They love being around interesting people and seeing different places.



# Seven weeks across the U.S.A.

EUNICE BAUMAN

On Tuesday, June 20, “Tru Red” and I began a seven-week road trip back to my childhood home in Northern Wisconsin. Ever since I purchased my new ‘99 silver, I had wanted to drive home and show off the special little car. Something called “work” seemed to always get in the way; vacations just weren’t long enough.



**Tru Red on the shores of Lake Superior in Ashland, Wisconsin.** Photo: Eunice Bauman

Earlier this year, when I knew I would be retiring, and after buying my new ‘06, I began planning this solo road trip. The excitement built week by week. Finally, on the eve of June 20, my new ‘06 True Red MX-5 was packed to the hilt, polished, and filled with what would be the first of many tanks of gas over the seven weeks.

My trip plan called for driving 500–600 miles per day. This meant I would make my destination in four days with plenty time at the end of each day for rest and relaxation. What an adventure it turned out to be. I have never had so much fun with a red car (and I have owned them before). On the highways, at 75–80 mph, heads would turn to see what this little red thing was, and who this lone woman from California (license plate) was racing across Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota with a happy grin on her face.

Every time I stopped to fill the gas

tank, folks would come up to talk. They would say things like “nice car,” “I’m thinking of buying a Solstice,” or “I used to drive a Mercedes convertible.” Or they would ask “what is it?” or “you’re driving all alone from California?” I met so many wonderful, interesting people. I even met a group of eight young men from Texas who were on a 400-mile trail through Utah on four-wheelers. They said I should try their route sometime. I took advantage of the many opportunities to brag about SDMC.

I arrived in St. Paul, Minnesota, on Friday afternoon, the opening day of the three-day “Back to the 50’s” car show at the state fairgrounds. I met up with two other Miatas, and we cruised Snelling Avenue that evening, along with hundreds of other cars, just for the fun of it. (They predicted there would be 10,000 cars on show that weekend.)

A couple of days later, I took the car in for an oil change. The mechanic owned a Mazda and gave my car some special attention (while I watched). Other customers stood around, looked, and asked questions. I realized how few Miatas there are in those northern climates, and how few people know what they are. I don’t think I saw more than a dozen Miatas throughout the whole trip.

As I made my way to the homes of family and friends in Minnesota and Wisconsin, I heard, “Can I have a ride?” All ages, from nine to 98, ogled the car. I responded positively, of course. An-

other special time came when I met up with my niece who owns a 2001 black Miata. Her Miata thrills are limited to April through October each year, then the car is tucked away for the winter. Even though she lives on a lake many miles back in the woods, she never drives on a dirt road. Extra miles are driven to avoid the dust and dirt, which is excessive now due to the current drought conditions in northern Wisconsin.

Toward the end of my visit to the Midwest, I rode with my daughter in her ‘04 Electric Blue PT Cruiser to the “Meet Me in St. Louis on Route 66” PT car show. Over 140 PTs were there from around the country. You know, they love their “1937-styled” car just as much as we love our Miata. The main difference I saw was that they are more into exterior painting for show, in addition to tons of aftermarket accessories, rather than the simple joy of driving.

It was fun meeting all these “crazy car folks,” even in the 104-degree weather. A highlight was the neon-light parade one evening. About 20 car owners lit up their PTs underneath and on top. A bright yellow ‘06 won first place. In addition to its lighted exterior and interior, the driver’s spouse walked behind the car with a little remote-controlled ‘06 yellow PT, also all lit



**This PT Cruiser won the neon-light parade with help from a lighted mini-Cruiser.** Photo: Eunice Bauman



up. It stole the show.

Back in St. Paul, I went to yet another classic car show nearby. My brother was showing his restored 1925 Model T. (This car stuff runs in the family.) He won the "President's Choice" award.

Thanks to all of my fellow Miata owners for the advice given to me before the trip. I had the best road maps and the best motor advice. My new car cover was so valuable when I was parked in the 100+-degree temperatures. I learned quickly how damaging bird droppings and bugs can be if not promptly removed.

I learned that trucks rule on the interstate highways, no matter where you are. I learned that cell phones are useless in the remote north woodlands, and that silence is OK. I learned that car covers will fly off when the stormy winds exceed 40 mph. I learned that a good hard rain will get those bugs off the grill. I learned that the average fuel mileage goes up by two when you hit a state with a 55 mph speed limit! And, I learned that an attitude adjustment will help you enjoy the environment under those conditions. I rediscovered the pride of being a Miata owner when I parked in a lot and was soon joined by two gorgeous Gold Wing trikes on either side of me. The locals didn't know what to look at first.

Most of all, I discovered anew the charm and beauty of our beloved little car. I won't be taking another 5,800-mile trip like this soon, but I would highly encourage everyone to see the U.S.A. in your Miata. It is sure to be memorable.

## COYOTES *(Continued from page 5)*

darkness. An off ramp approached, but the Miata ahead of me kept going straight. Perhaps this was the wrong exit? I followed that Miata for a few seconds until I glanced in the rearview mirror. The sweep car was veering towards the exit that I was about to pass. It's a good thing that Miatas brake and handle so well! I found out later that the Miata I was following decided not to join the group at the casino, which he announced over the CB radio. I made the final mental note of the night: Buy a CB radio.

The casino was a lot smaller than I expected, as was the restaurant. Nevertheless, the food was good and the company was welcome. We got home just before 1 a.m. What an adventure the night was.

### Lessons learned

I learned a lot that night, and I hope other members can learn from my experiences. These seemingly little lessons can make the difference between an enjoyable run and a possible nightmare.

The most important lesson here is to plan ahead and be on time. If you have a copilot, make sure they're ready to go as well. There is nothing worse than driving an hour to find that you have been left behind.

Run details are posted on the SDMC website and published in the monthly newsletter. These details contain valuable information that you shouldn't be without on your way to and during a run. You should always carry the newsletter

with you, or print out the run details from the website.

If the information is available before the run, you should study the route. Familiarize yourself with the areas you will be driving through, and how to get back to civilization if you get lost. You should carry a paper map covering the run area. A handheld GPS navigator would also work great, but make sure you bring its charger or extra batteries; the aforementioned paper map is a terrific backup. The runs into the outskirts of the county and beyond are one of the big appeals of club membership, but those jaunts into the middle of nowhere always bring with them the chance of getting lost.

Like maps, bottled water is something that we should probably always carry in the car. Hydration is important to maintaining a clear head, which is exactly what we need if we get lost or find ourselves in an emergency situation. Most of our runs are in the day with the tops down and the sun beating down on us. Those bottles of water can become your best friend after a few hours behind the wheel.

A CB radio is not required for any run, but it is highly recommended. Turns, road hazards, and other warnings announced over the radios give you a much needed heads-up to what's ahead, which is sometimes hard to see in a large group. Plus, I hear you can get such niceties as weather reports and tour guides.

I'll be sure to heed my own suggestions, and I'm positive that I will enjoy future runs even more. Now, where's that roadrunner?

## MINIVAN *(Continued from page 11)*

my new mini-ride crammed inside my maxi-ride. Of course, with a van named Homer, it was obvious that the scooter should be Bart. That could be an acronym for "Bad Ass Rapid Transit" or perhaps "Breathing Assisted Retiree's Tricycle." I guess I need a Simpsons sticker for the scooter, too.

The next morning, Bart and I went on our first outing. I drove Homer over to Fry's, unloaded Bart, and spent the next half hour zooming up and down the aisles. Everything worked great, and I found I could load or unload the scooter in about three minutes.

I still plan to drive Mary's Miata whenever the occasion warrants, but the space around our legs gets

too crowded for long trips. So, when we want to go farther and don't care about terrorizing the twisties, we now have a spacious alternative.

After driving sports cars for 46 years, it seems strange to find myself behind the wheel of a minivan. I'm on the lookout for a bumper sticker that reads, "Objects in driver's seat are less wimpy than they appear."

# Spec Miata racing report

KEVIN HAYWOOD

Some of you may recall my article that appeared in the SDMC newsletter a couple of years ago ("Noisy Spec Miata," August 2004). I wrote about how I was invited to bring my Spec Miata to a sound recording for the development of the video game "Need for Speed Underground II." I'm still racing that car, and I'm still enjoying it more than I can describe. What follows is a description of our latest outing. It's not the story of how victorious we were, but one of an average racer and just one of those days.

After another long break in our racing schedule, we made it back to the track. Yesterday's race (July 30, 2006) was a single-day affair at the Streets of Willow in Rosamond. I wish I had a better result to report, but we had a mechanical failure that kept us from finishing.

I began to notice a lot of road noise during the first practice session of the day. It was noticeable but not alarming. I continued and finished the session with about ten laps. Our data-acquisition equipment indicated that I had dropped 2.5 seconds off my previous best lap time on this track. It also showed a maximum lateral load of 1.6 Gs. Huh! Who'd a thunk? All of that was comforting, but the noise from the left rear had been getting worse. At completion of the session I confirmed that the left-rear wheel bearing was failing. I skipped the next practice session in hopes that the wheel bearing would hold together through the qualifying session and the race.

The qualifying session provided a valuable and unexpected experi-

ence. The low number of cars for this event allowed the organizer to conduct individual qualifying sessions for each competitor. We each got an uninterrupted session that included a warm-up lap and three timed laps. The spectators seemed to enjoy this. I ran a particularly satisfying qualifying session, and our car drew a lot of attention. I qualified two seconds faster than the next closest car in the class.

Immediately upon returning to the paddock, several individuals came to our pit stall to ask questions and look the car over. They were surprised at how well the car performed. They had been watching more powerful (and popular) models time-trialing on the track all morning. Yet this car was outrun-

able to slow and avoid him, but the Miata chasing me struck me in the left-rear quarter as we were getting back up to speed. I proceeded on with no apparent disruption to the car's handling. The wheel bearing noise was getting worse, or perhaps I was just concentrating on it now. I was debating whether to continue. I was certain that even the corner workers could hear the chatter from the damaged bearing.

On the next lap around, I was shown the black flag. What I didn't know was that my car was dragging its rear bumper as a result of the impact a lap before. That was the reason for the black flag. I had to exit the track at that point, so the decision to withdraw came easier. Disappointed as I was, I had to remind myself that this

was only the second mechanical failure we have experienced in more than 75 races, and only our fourth DNF.

My narrow points-lead in the Touring Car Racing Association (TCRA) Spec Miata Challenge series has evaporated. With only five races left in the series, it will be difficult to recover, but we will have the

car ready for the next event. Perhaps an article about replacing rear wheel bearings is due.

Our next event with TCRA will be at California Speedway the weekend of September 16-17. This will be a joint event with a group of historic racecars—good, cheap racing that's close to home. We will race with TCRA again the following weekend at Willow Springs, and then on to Arizona for an SCCA event at Firebird Raceway, September 30-October 1.

Zoom on!



Kevin Haywood in his Spec Miata on the track at Phoenix International Raceway. Photo: Denise Dingle

ning all but a few. The qualifying session turned out to provide wonderful exposure for our sponsors, B.H. Gold Insurance Agency, Nology Engineering, Team Voodoo, and Wheelstore.

The race itself was another story altogether. I started the race from fourth position on the grid. My strategy was working as I put the next fastest Miata behind me at the first turn. I had opened a gap between us when the car I was chasing went off course and returned to the racing surface in front of me. I was

# Classified Ads

## MIATA PARTS FOR SALE

**Various parts.** M1 Racing Beat hard boot, Starlight Blue, excellent, sharp: \$200. 18-inch Enkei 5-spoke rims with good Z-rated rubber: \$400. M1 rally bar (attaches to front "teeth") similar to Cobra nerf bar: \$75. RARE! M1 factory fog lights, mounts to existing hardware (European amber lens): \$200. M1 steering wheel (leather, excellent) without airbag: \$50. Phil Daoust, 760-789-7416, [BEARSCHILI@aol.com](mailto:BEARSCHILI@aol.com) (Aug)

## MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

**CG-Lock.** This simple device attaches to your existing seat belt to keep it tight when autocrossing or racing. See [www.cg-lock.com](http://www.cg-lock.com) for details. New ones cost about \$40. This slightly experienced one is yours for \$20 obo. Larry Clark, [larryclark@pobox.com](mailto:larryclark@pobox.com), 760-737-8971. (Aug)

## 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@sandiegomiataclub.org](mailto:newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org). Ads will run for four months unless canceled, and may be revised and resubmitted.

# 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@sandiegomiataclub.org](mailto:newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.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.

**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.

**Hawthorne Wholesale Tire.** Tires, wheels, brakes, and suspension. 877 Rancheros Dr., San Marcos. 760-746-6980. Discount: 10%

**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. 619-234-3535. 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). 949-366-322. 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.



Address

## SEPTEMBER 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Cruisin' Grand	2 Debbye Does the Drive-In
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9 Meguiar's Cars, Nuts, and Ribs
10	11	12	13	14	15 DEADLINE	16 Ryan-Lewis Wedding
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Monthly Meeting Mtn Gold	29 Miata Mountain Gold	30 Miata Mountain Gold

## OCTOBER 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Coronado Speed Festival
8 Coronado Speed Festival	9 Columbus Day	10	11	12	13	14
15 DEADLINE	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Monthly Meeting	27	28
29	30	31 Hallowe'en				

DATE	EVENT	TIME	MEET	CONTACT	PAGE
Fri 9/1	Cruisin' Grand	6:00 p.m. (dinner) 7:00 p.m. (cruise)	Tom's #23, Centre City Pkwy & 5th St., Escondido	Steve Waid 760-432-0727	6
Sat, 9/2	Debbye Does the Santee Drive-In	4:30 p.m. (dinner)	Chicken Pie Diner, 14727 Pomerado Rd., Poway	Bruce & Debbye Lewis 619-447-0930	6
Sat 9/9	Meguiar's Car Care Tech Day	7:00 a.m. (caravan) 9:00 a.m. (class)	McDonald's, Oceanside Bl. East of I-5	Ken Hurd 858-459-4847	6
Sat 9/9	Cars, Nuts & Ribs Run	9:00 a.m. (drivers mtg)	Burger King/Dalton's lot, I-78 at Nordahl, San Marcos	Vicki & Brian Kiehl 760-751-2272	6
Thu 9/28, Thu 10/26	SDMC Monthly Meeting ( <b>Flea Market in September</b> )	6:00 p.m. (eat) 7:00 p.m. (meet)	Boll Weevil Restaurant, Clairemont Mesa Bl.	Sue Hinkle 760-735-9456	3
Thu 9/28– Sun 10/1	Miata Mountain Gold	All weekend	Breckenridge, Colorado	Bruce Cliff 303-595-4550	6
Sat 10/7– Sun 10/8	Coronado Speed Festival	TBA	TBA	TBA	6