



# TWISTS & TURNS

The newsletter of the San Diego Miata Club

Volume 12 Number 2

February 2007

## Of resolutions, recipes, and red roses

GENE STREETER

I was tempted to add “and re-run references” to the title. I stopped short of that in order to get this piece by our esteemed editors and wary proofreaders. For some, alliteration is a literary device to avoid—a guardrail of sorts. For others, it’s an autocross pylon—get as close as you dare without getting penalized for clipping it. In fishing terms, I’m trying to bait the hook; in literary terms, I’m (a) trying to capture your attention, or (b) just being a knucklehead. You be the judge.

Rarely do you read an article written in the first few weeks of a new year that doesn’t include some variation of the New Year’s resolution theme. It’s a

normal, natural, and, perhaps, healthy behavior. While it’s not uniquely American, setting goals and striving for them is very much a part of our national character. It’s about winning and losing. It’s about learning from our mistakes. For those of us suffering the effects of excessive eating and drinking the evening and days before, New Year’s Day is as good as any to make amends.

Away from the usual television fare (Tournament of Roses Parade, Bowl games, and television marathons), I took the opportunity to make my own resolutions in between comforting bites of Mom’s apple pie in Julian. Recalling my three years of high school Latin, I

proclaimed “carpe diem” as I shared my goals for 2007. It certainly didn’t hurt that “Dead Poets Society” is one of my favorite Robin Williams vehicles. (For those of you thinking confession is good for the *sole*, I’m not entirely clear on the philosophical connection between a dead fish and self-improvement. Given her Italian—

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SHARING THE ROAD. Miatas and bicycles vie for space on a glorious New Year’s Day. Photo: Jan Wagner

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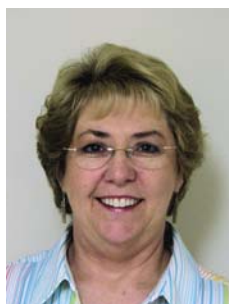
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Brenda Kay  
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Judy Lewis  
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Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. When possible, please e-mail your submissions to the newsletter 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):

**Rick Gallagher & Esther McCullough**, San Diego.....2006 Garnet Red  
**Dennis Little**, San Diego .....2003 Silver  
**Bud & Lisa Martin**, Long Beach ..... 1999 Blue  
**Rosemarie & Richard Gibson**, Coronado.....2006 Gray  
**Kari Streeter**, Murrieta ..... 2006 Winning Blue

As of January 15, 2007, we have 311 memberships (113 single, 198 dual) and a total of 509 members; 170 memberships have been renewed for 2007.

## 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, February 22**

## 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 each for badges with safety-pin closures, or \$10 each 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.

## Financial Report (12/21/06 through 1/15/07) JUDY RYAN-LEWIS, TREASURER

### Revenues and deposits:

Dues (new members and renewals) .....	\$2,940.80
Regalia .....	\$276.00
Total revenue and deposits.....	\$3,216.80

### Expenses:

Insurance .....	\$1,217.00
Newsletter printing.....	\$258.60
Newsletter postage.....	\$236.25
Printing and reproduction .....	\$150.00
Magnetics .....	\$107.75
Regalia purchases.....	\$82.00
Membership cards.....	\$56.43
Telephone .....	\$29.42
Total expenses.....	\$2,137.45

**Ending balance (1/15/07).....** \$6,947.19

## SUE PURBOLL



SAN DIEGO  
MIATA CLUB

## 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!**



# Mazda's box of crayons

JERRY STANDEFER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**B**efore I entered Miata-land several years ago, I had a Classic Red 1999 Protege ES, and Gabe had a Laser Blue Protege5. A good friend of mine always remarked about the pureness of the red and blue. I took her to a Mazda dealership, and, after looking around the lot, she exclaimed that Mazda used "Crayola" colors—pure, unadulterated colors that one would expect in a box of crayons.

Les Smith and Kelley Raymond have been hard at work planning a run to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the introduction of Brilliant Black to the Miata line-up. I had mentioned to them that I believed that color to be the longest running Miata color. However, it didn't take much research to realize that I was wrong. For some reason, Mazda didn't offer it for the 2005 model year. Alas, that nettlesome Classic Red still holds the title as the longest-running Miata color. But the research into Miata colors was absolutely astonishing, and eye-opening.

Since the MX-5 Miata was introduced in the U.S. in the 1990 model year, an amazing 43 different colors have been offered! And that's not counting the special-color cars that were sold all those many years ago.

## Colors galore

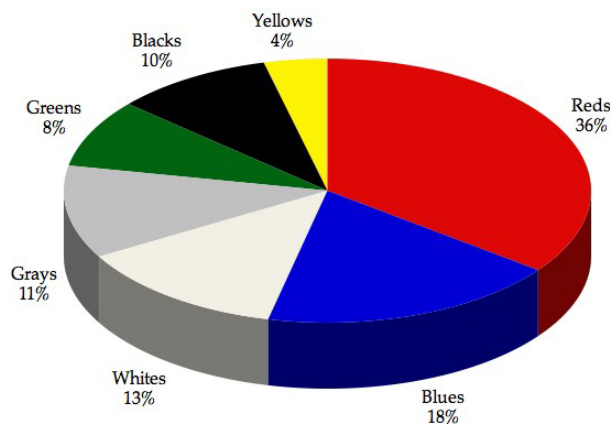
As I mentioned earlier, Classic Red has been offered in more model years than any other color—15 years, from 1990 to 2005. Despite what Steve Waid may say, it was a true classic. Well, at least Steve's car is easy to find in a parking lot full of Miatas, which I can't say for those red ones.

Brilliant Black runs a close second, with 14 years (1992–2004,

2006–2007) of dust-attracting, nightmare-inducing brilliance. After once owning a black car, I said I would never own another one. I am ashamed to say that Gabe and I now have three Brilliant Black Mazdas in the driveway (two '06 Miatas and one '07 Mazda5).

Coming in a distant third is Sunlight Silver Metallic, with seven years (2001–2007) of shimmering elegance. How "sunlight" got into the name, I don't know.

Chaste White and Emerald Mica were both around for six years each. Chaste White (1994–2000) replaced the original Crystal White. (Can you tell the difference? I can't.) Emerald Mica (1999–2004) was as pure as the jewel it was named after. Coupled with the tan interior, it kind of looked like a baby Jaguar.



Reds still dominate SDMC's color distribution. Chart: Jerry Standefer

The next four colors were around for four years each. Crystal White (1990–1993) was one of the three original colors. In contrast (well, maybe not), Pure White (2001–2004) was the last of the true whites. Mariner Blue (1990–1993) was definitely the brightest of the many blues that Mazda has offered on the Miata. The last color in the four-year category is what a lot of people tease is not a color at all: Titanium Grey Me-



tallic. Titanium owners, don't pay attention to them, because for four years in a row, only special Miatas were painted this special hue: '02 SE, '03 Shinsen, and '04–'05 Mazdaspeed.

Midnight Blue Mica (2001–2003), Montego Blue (1994 M-Edition, 1995–1996), Twilight Blue (1997 STO, 1999–2000), and Velocity Red (2004–2005 Mazdaspeed, 2006 Third Generation Limited) were all around for three years each. Blue is Mazda's corporate color, and the three here are just the beginning. I always loved the sparkly Velocity Red, although another friend of mine said it looked like nail polish.

Coming in with two years each are the sumptuous Black Cherry Mica (2004–2005), timeless British Racing Green (1991 LE, 2001 SE), new-age Copper Red Mica (2006–2007), award-winning Crystal Blue Metallic (2001–2002), modern Galaxy Grey Mica (2006–2007), gleaming Highlight Silver Metallic (1999–2000), striking Laguna Blue (1994–1995), elegant Marble White (2006–2007), mysterious Nordic Green Mica (2005–2006), star-crossed Silver Stone Metallic

(Continued on page 5)

## Lead a run, earn your magnetics

SCOTT LEWIS, VICE PRESIDENT

**T**here was a reason you joined the San Diego Miata Club, right? By now, most of you have noticed the SDMC logo on the sides of many of our Miatas. You know why they are there, and quite possibly you would like a set of the club magnetics, as well. If you have attended a meeting or run, I'm sure you know how to earn your magnetics. But, let me remind you.

As you have heard many times at our monthly meetings, our club magnetics must be earned by leading a run for your first time. There are no tests to take regarding your vast knowledge of Miata trivia, no funny dances to perform, no schmoozing of the club president, and no money to spend (well, with the exception of gas and food money). We always like to eat after a run. Just ask Steve Waid.

When Judy and I joined the San Diego Miata Club in October 2002, we learned what it takes to get our own magnetics. Since it was getting close to the holidays, I thought a toy drive would be appropriate for December. We talked about holding a drive for the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, and began planning

out our first run. My intention was to make it last about two hours, at most.

Judy and I began to plan our run on paper. The starting location, route, and ending restaurant were done. Now we needed a date, start time, and approximate ending time, along with the mileage. How do you get the mileage? Go for a drive! Just jump in the Miata, put the top down, get the co-pilot a clipboard and paper, find your starting location, and go. Mark down the locations of left and right turns along with your odometer readings. Plan to have the group gather up at a safe, wide location when needed if the group gets separated. This, as you may have heard, is called the "queue-up" spot. So, queue up when needed and continue to the end.

Communication is an important part of our runs. You should hand out printed flyers with the run information at the starting-location drivers meeting. Many people will have CB radios in their Miatas to assist the run. Make sure you have a CB in the lead car, one somewhere near the middle of the pack, and one



in the last car (known as the "sweep car"). When the time comes, and you traverse the intended route safely as the leader of the run, you will be sporting your new color-matched set of San Diego Miata Club magnetics on the sides of your Miata.

Your magnetics will somehow hold a special meaning to you and your co-pilot. Our magnetics were presented to us in December 2002 by "Our Pal Sal." That is our special meaning.

See you at the next queue-up!

### CRAYONS *(Continued from page 4)*

(1991–1992), fashionable Strato Blue (2004 SE, 2005), and obligatory True Red (2006–2007).

The last group of colors is truly special. If you have a Miata in one of these colors, be proud to know that you have a color that was never produced in any other model year: Black Mica (2005 Mazdaspeed), Blazing Yellow Mica (2002 SE), Evolution Orange (2000), Garnet Red (2003), Highland Green (2007), Laser Blue Mica (2002 special order), Lava Orange

(2005 Mazdaspeed), Mahogany Mica (2000 SE), Marina Green (1997 M-edition), Merlot Mica (1995 M-edition), Razor Blue Metallic (2005), Sapphire Blue Mica (1999 10th Anniversary Edition), Splash Green (2003), Starlight Blue Mica (1996 M-edition), Stormy Blue Mica (2007), Sunburst Yellow (1992), Vivid Yellow (2002 special order), and Winning Blue (2006).

### Photo opportunity

I wonder if we have every color represented in the club? Wouldn't

that make a terrific photo? With so many colors, the Miata certainly represents Mazda's box of crayons.

So which one is my favorite? Shall I come out of the closet? (No, I already came out of that one!) My favorite Miata color is not Brilliant Black, which I own now, and it's not Titanium Grey, which I owned previously. My favorite Miata color is (I can hear the boos now) Blazing Yellow Mica, and if someone would be willing to paint my '06 in that awesome color, I would hand over the keys in a heartbeat!

# Coming Events

## SDMC Shows Off

**Date:** Sunday, February 4  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m.  
**Meet:** Dalton's Roadhouse, 775 Center Dr.,  
San Marcos (at Nordahl just north of SR 78)  
**Contact:** Steve & Laurie Waid, 760-432-0727,  
[swaid@cox.net](mailto:swaid@cox.net)

**Details:** Dalton's Roadhouse hosts a charity car show on the first Sunday of each month. Several car clubs come *en masse* to show their cars and spend time together while mingling with everyone else who shows up.

The event has no entry fee. Dalton's offers an all-you-can-eat barbeque for \$10, which includes burgers, hot dogs, and ribs, along with chips, potato salad, soft drinks, and water. Of course, you can order off the menu inside, and there are other fast food outlets and restaurants in the shopping center.

Raffle tickets are available for donated prizes. Proceeds go to help abused children at Rancho Damacitas in Temecula.

About 15 trophies are awarded at the end of the day. Judging starts around 2:30. The raffle starts at 11 a.m. and ends with the trophy presentations around 3:30.

I can almost guarantee that a Miata will win a trophy when we show up in big numbers.

## Run

**Date:** Saturday, February 10  
**Time:** TBD  
**Meet:** TBD  
**Contact:** Bob Kleeman, 619-501-9776,  
[postmaster@sandiegomiataclub.org](mailto:postmaster@sandiegomiataclub.org)  
**Details:** TBD

## Black History Run

**Date:** Saturday, February 24  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Meet:** Starbucks, College Grove Center,  
3416 College Ave. (just north of SR 94)  
**Contact:** Les Smith, 858-682-6072, [lessmith@san.rr.com](mailto:lessmith@san.rr.com)  
or Kelley Raymond, 619-846-3784,  
[kay63@yahoo.com](mailto:kay63@yahoo.com)

**Details:** *You've always looked good in black. It's a color that's the very soul of sophistication and style. One that's quite appropriate for the latest Mazda Miata ...* This 1992 print-ad copy introduced the world to Brilliant Black. Today, 15 years later, it has been offered the second-greatest number of years of all Miata colors ... a milestone that's being celebrated Saturday, February 24, with a run hosted by SDMC's Brilliant Black Pack.

The Pack suspects that all other Miata owners are similarly mesmerized by the mystique and allure of Brilliant Black and secretly wish they could also fall under its spell. So, for one day only, live the fantasy. Come along on a Black History Month Run in which *every* Miata gets to be Brilliant Black.

Departing from the College Grove Center south of SDSU, we'll first follow the Martin Luther King Freeway east in a tip of the club's hat to February's month-long focus on African-American culture. Route 94 leads to some of our East County favorites: Lyons Valley Road, Honey Springs Road, Skyline Truck Trail, and Japatul Road. The run ends at the Viejas Casino and Outlet Mall, but the fun continues with the vices of your choosing: eating, shopping, or gambling.

The Brilliant Black Pack also functions as a support group, helping fellow members deal with the agony of spending hours cleaning and detailing their beauties, only to sport a visible layer of dust 15 minutes later. But, as Harold Schwartz notes, Brilliant Black sure looks good during those 15 minutes.

Brilliant Black. It's not just a color. It's a commitment!

## Campo Railroad Run

**Date:** Saturday, March 3  
**Time:** TBD  
**Meet:** TBD  
**Contact:** Harold Schwartz, 858-271-0084,  
[miataman@san.rr.com](mailto:miataman@san.rr.com)

**Details:** We will head out Highway 94 to Campo, where we will take the San Diego Railroad Museum train ride. The trains costs \$15 per person, but will drop to \$12 if we have 15 or more people, as seems likely.

Bring cameras for the train ride. Afterwards, we will continue east on 94 to Old Highway 80. At Live Oak Springs we will turn west on Highway 80, stopping at the Golden Acorn Casino for lunch (or whatever).

We will form up after lunch and follow historic old Highway 80 back to San Diego. I have not set the final stop as of yet. This run will take most of the day.

**Cost:** \$12-15 per person for the train, a full tank of gas, plus your lunch and any gambling expenses.

## The Puke 2007

**Date:** Sunday, March 25  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. (for \$10 brunch),  
10:00 a.m. drivers meeting  
**Meet:** Dalton's Roadhouse, 775 Center Dr.,  
San Marcos (at Nordahl just north of SR 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 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. 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.

Some things to look forward to: Couser Canyon Road, Mount Palomar, Wynola Road, Julian, and Engineer Road.

## Viewpoints

### Rose Run

A big thanks to the Corbyons for leading the New Year's Day Rose Run!

As we arrived at the West Side Café, we were greeted with smiling faces and a red rose adorned with Baby's Breath. Happy New Year!

After a good breakfast, about 38–40 cars headed out for the run. We were blessed on this January 1st with beautiful weather! We drove along the scenic hills and valleys of north county.

We did encounter some semi-slippery frosty roads at the higher elevations ... and watch out for those cows crossing the road!

Arriving in Julian, we divided up. Some of us knew the first stop should be Mom's for a piece of apple pie. Even after the pie, we still had plenty of time to enjoy looking through the shops. We also had time to watch the people and observe the horses with carriages in this mountain town.

Our weather held as we headed back down the mountain. We encountered one mishap on the way back. Thanks for all who stayed to help.

All in all, roses, food, mountain roads, sunshine, and friends made for a great January 1st, 2007.

—Vicki Kiehl

Christine and Ray, thank you for hosting the run. I really loved getting the rose at the start. What a classy touch.

So now I have had my "Stirling Moss moment" 60 years after visiting Silverstone Raceway in England. I'm so lucky and happy to be unscathed.

I am very grateful to all the club members who stopped and rallied around me. I do not remember all the names, but thank you to all. Most of all, thank you to the nurses in the sweep car; thank you for the hug (Karen?) that kept me from going into shock all the way. Thank you Jerry for the note paper and cell phone. Thank you Barb for taking the pictures. THANK YOU to Hel-Yun for getting me home. What could be

more appropriate than to have a fellow survivor drive you home? What a club! What team spirit!

—Imants Virsnieks

### Holiday Lights Run and Party

Thanks to Les and Dyanna Smith for braving the wrath of their neighbors while a gaggle of Miatas and their crazy owners swarmed the previously silent streets. Strings of lights, battery packs, inverters, stuffed animals, tape, and garland, among other things, flew around as the merry elves decorated their four-wheeled sleighs. And yes, even a fully decorated Christmas tree made its way onto Bruce and Debbye Lewis's (who else?) blue sleigh.

Inside, a diabetic nightmare spread out over the table, with treats ranging from decorated cookies to a snowman-shaped cake! I can't remember everyone that brought goodies, but Gabe Rivera, Dyanna Smith, and Sue Hinkle ring a bell. Unfortunately, Sue wasn't feeling well and couldn't make it, but she made sure her delicious cookies did! Brenda Kay brought some yummy cider to warm us up, and coffee and hot cocoa flowed freely. I sampled a few things here and there, but I had already had quite enough from three nights of Gabe's baking and decorating.

The run itself was fantastic. The two neighborhoods we visited were gorgeously decorated. The first one was certainly the grander of the two, with extravagant displays of lights, art, and mechanical wonders. However, it was the second neighborhood that got my admiration. Strings of lights were run diagonally across the streets from house to house for blocks on end. It was so simple, and yet so elegant.

The run ended with a trip to Pat and Oscar's for good food and great laughs. It was a terrific experience, and finally put me into the Christmas spirit. I can't wait for this year's!

—Jerry Standefer

# Hurdles fail to derail Getty Villa visit

KELLEY RAYMOND

**N**o bathroom break? Are you kidding? We can't go all the way to Malibu without a bathroom break!

So began SDMC's excursion to the Getty Villa on December 16. You would think this was a caravan of 4- and 5-year-olds, but no, it wasn't. Instead, it was about 20 Miatas (and a couple of OTMs) full of 40- and 50-year-olds. And there was no way we were doing a two-hour run with no bathroom break.

Poor Marc Daniels, our frazzled run leader. He's a very solution-oriented guy, but December was a crazy, hectic month for him, personally and professionally. A holiday party the evening before had left him less-than-well rested, and here we were, delaying the start of the run by schlepping off to Sears for a bathroom break *before* the run even got started. There was still the waiver everybody had to sign, a sweep to be chosen, and tickets to be distributed.

Luckily, Les Smith came the rescue. He and Dyanna volunteered to be sweep in their "Hollywood" VW. The license plate reads "WE R MU," as in "We are Marshall," the name of Matthew McConaughey's most recent film, and Les' alma mater. Fortunately for us, Les and his fellow alumni meet at a restaurant/bar that was just a little more than halfway to our Malibu destination. Les assured us that it would be open and would afford a convenient location for a bathroom break. Problem solved.

Now, if the weather would just hold. Intermittent rain was forecast for the entire day, hence the reason that OTMs were allowed in the excursion. So far, so good—not even a sprinkle yet.

Off we go. Traffic wasn't too bad to the potty stop,

and we managed not to lose anybody negotiating the undocumented extra exit and turns. Duty call answered, we managed to get to the Getty with a whole three minutes to spare! The Getty schedules groups; therefore, we had an appointed time of arrival that guaranteed our admission.

Once there, everybody went off and did their own thing. Some toured the grounds with one of the guides, and some toured the grounds by themselves. Some folks watched the 12-minute video about how the Getty came into existence, and some people started their visit with lunch.

The Villa was designed to replicate a Greek country home. For example, the huge dining area was raised a bit and completely open on two sides, which allowed a gentle ocean breeze to drift leisurely through. The Pacific was visible from several locations throughout the grounds. Even though the day was cloudy, the vast expanse of water reinforced the opulent setting. The entire outside area was fashioned to induce tranquility.

I closed my eyes and tried to envision myself being a visitor back in time. It was surprisingly easy to imagine strolling through the garden or the flawlessly landscaped area that included a long rectangular reflecting pool, complete with Greek statues. Ah, a peaceful gathering with undoubtedly good food and wine, good friends, and nothing but time on your hands.

As enticing as the serene fantasy being played out in my head was, I had no doubt I would give it up in a New York minute for indoor plumbing and my DVR!

On the second floor, so many rooms led into other rooms that it was easy to get lost. These rooms were full of Greek, Roman, and Etruscan statues, mosaics, jewelry, pottery, and all kinds of artifacts that I can do absolutely no justice in describing. Everything was carefully labeled because the Villa was also designed to be an educational experience. Unfortunately, if you actually took the time to read everything, you'd never make it through even one

wing of the second floor, much less any of the other areas. The Villa is certainly worthy of repeated trips.

The café on the second floor was designed to accommodate large numbers of people quickly. The gourmet menu offered pizza, pasta, soups, and salads, as well as wine and beer selections, and desserts. At least eight club members were at my table, and I think everyone was as pleased with their meals as I was.

I give Marc and his co-pilot, daughter Haley, five spittoons for a mighty fine trip up the road a piece to the fanciest dang country house I ever saw!



SDMC's contingent poses at the Getty Villa. Photo: Kelley Raymond



# John Laurence and Walt Arnold: SDMC's Odd Couple

KELLEY RAYMOND

Oscar & Felix, Martin & Lewis, Abbott & Costello. Like Hollywood, SDMC has its share of comical couples. You usually see John Laurence and Walt Arnold, aka Frick and Frack, sitting together at the monthly meetings beside Art Hamilton on what they call Veterans Row. The three men have their service in the U.S. armed forces in common; Walt and John also share a friendship of more than 16 years.

The two were introduced by a mutual friend in 1989—coincidentally, the same year Mazda first introduced our beloved Miata. John was captivated right away, and kept telling Walt he wanted a red one. Walt warned him, “What are you doing? You’re looking for every cop in the world!” But John knew that one day he would find *his* red Miata.

When he began shopping in earnest, he was unsure whether he wanted a first- or second-generation model. Like many others, John also decided that the pop-up headlights looked like fun. Then he found his Miata, a 1997 Classic Red with tan leather seats. Soon after he joined SDMC in 2002, he learned that a SOCALM member was turning in the license plate “Miata 97,” and he grabbed it. John enjoys both the custom plate and the pop-up headlights, especially at parades.

One of John’s most memorable runs was

his first; his wife, Toni, was co-pilot. It was one of the Dam Runs. At one of the stops, Mark Booth opened his trunk and pulled out a couple of red T-shirts and gave them to Toni and John so they could match their car! That was their introduction to the generosity of the club and its members.

John continued, “At the first monthly meeting I attended, I sat near the wall, and there was a big guy next to me. He didn’t have a yellow car at the time. But man, when he stood up and got the microphone, you couldn’t get it away from him!” John thought he would wear Steve Waid out asking him questions, but Steve was unfailingly helpful. (Later, John would return the favor by helping rookie club members including yours truly. Friendliness and helpfulness are an important part of the SDMC culture, and everyone is encouraged to “pay it forward.”)

John’s car only had 17K miles on it, and the original tires still had



decent tread left. On that same Dam Run, Mark Booth told John the tires were old and probably hard, and that he might find himself slipping and sliding in wet weather. Shortly afterwards, he bought a set of the popular T1S Toyos at Express Tire, and he could tell a difference as he was leaving the parking lot! John’s been a Toyo fan ever since. He now has a set of the new T1Rs, and he thinks they’re dynamite.

John considers himself a shade-tree mechanic and enjoys working on his Miata. A couple of his favorite aftermarket buys are his loud air horn and roll bar. On the first generation cars, the horn caps are indented on the steering wheel and were difficult for him to find. Knobmeister Joe Portas sells buttons that make the horn buttons easier to find, and he likes those as well. He installed the roll bar himself after watching other members install theirs on a Tech Day at Ted Kessler’s house.



Walt Arnold (left) and John Laurence share military backgrounds, love of Miatas, and 16 years of friendship. Photo: John Laurence (via self-timer)

Former club member (and a comic in his own right) Dennis Didier took John for a turn around the track at one of the autocross events at Qualcomm Stadium. That was enough for John! Now this is someone who is very comfortable flying upside down (see *John's Story* below) and never got sick, but after one go-round with Didier, John almost tossed his cookies!

When Walt saw how much John enjoyed his Miata, he knew he had to have one. His first Miata was a 2001 BRG Special Edition, with all the bells and whistles. He bought it from an attorney, with only 5,000 miles on it. When Walt joined SDMC in July 2002 and met Larry Dennstedt, he asked Larry to perform almost all of the work on the car. Larry helped keep it in perfect condition. Walt quickly added a grill and a MonsterFlow Intake system, his favorite aftermarket buy. He also had a set of Toyo T1S tires and a new set of struts put on the car, and bought the same loud horn and roll bar as John has.

Unfortunately, Walt's convertible top was vandalized twice, so he purchased a black hard top for it. Despite his 6'2" build, he was still able to be physically comfortable in the car, and Walt found he appreciated the differences that the hard top afforded. In addition to the reduced road noise, he could hear the stereo much better. His collection includes lots of jazz, Brazilian sambas and bossa novas, and classical music.

Walt loved his 2001, until he saw the new models—specifically, Art's new Power Retractable Hard Top (PRHT). Reinforcing a classic traveling salesman cliché (see *Walt's Story* below), Walt traded in his older model for a newer one. He was powerless to resist the lure of the beautiful 2007 Highland Green PRHT, and brought her home in October 2006. Her new vanity plate, "A PRHT," has been ordered.

Meanwhile, a friend of a friend introduced John Laurence to John Lake. John Laurence convinced John

Lake to join the San Diego Miata Club before he even *had* a Miata! John Lake kept hearing that he should buy Walt's old car, so he did. It was a good deal for everybody.

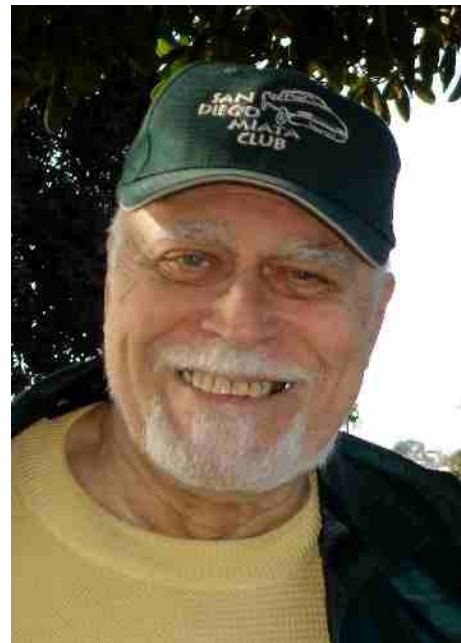
One of Walt and John's favorite things to do is attend SDMC Tech Days, whether at Dennstedt's garage or someone's house. Neither has to be working on their car; it's just fun to go and watch, pick up tips, and hang out with other club members. Larry, Rocky Murphy, and all the folks who work on their own cars are always willing to share information and help out. It's also nice that several members in the club enjoy different aspects of automobiles, such as racing, showing, and modifying the cars. Both John and Walt stressed that they are still in awe of the high quality of the people in SDMC.

### Walt's Story

Born in New Orleans and raised in Denver, Walt entered the Navy at 17, just after graduating from high school. He served for three years during the Korean War, after which he decided to return to Denver to attend Regis College. A year later, he decided that learning electronics in the military sounded like more fun than continuing his study of business administration. This time, he decided to give the Air Force a try. At Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss., he received 40 weeks of electronics training. He was then assigned to a radar site in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Walt was discharged after four years and decided to try his hand at being a traveling salesman. "Yes, everything you've ever heard about traveling salesmen is true!" he said.

He's always been interested in sports cars. During some of his traveling-salesman days, Walt drove a Corvair Monza Coupe. Someday he would like to travel to Stuttgart to visit the Daimler-Benz operation.

Following five years in sales, Walt thought, "Well, I've got seven years in the service. Why don't I go back in and finish up?" This time he



Walt Arnold. Photo: John Laurence (via self-timer)

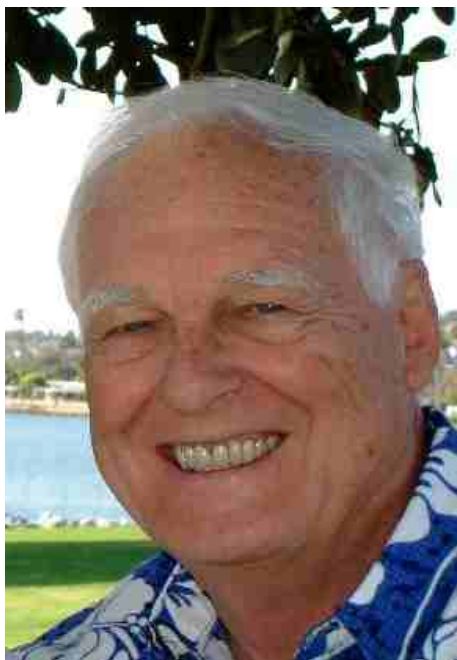
chose to return to the Navy and went through Air Traffic Controller school. At first he got stationed at Midway Island, site of the 1942 Battle of Midway. Eventually, he ended up stationed at NAS North Island on Coronado. Walt retired after a total of 20 years and 10 days of service in the military (but who's counting?).

Perhaps Walt will take his new PRHT to some of his favorite vacation spots, along Highway 1 past San Simeon and up to Carmel-by-the-Sea. He's never taken this drive slowly, so that's how he'd like to do it next time—particularly from San Simeon up to Big Sur—so he can take lots of pictures. Also, someday Walt would like to take a cruise to the Greek islands.

### John's Story

John Laurence—call sign Johnny L—was born in Cleveland and attended Catholic schools until he entered Ohio University. While there, John learned he could join Army or Air Force ROTC, finish college, and then get a commission in the military. Since foxholes had never held much appeal for him, he joined the Air Force ROTC and, after graduating with a civil engineering degree, began serving





John Laurence. Photo: John Laurence (via self-timer)

his four-year military commitment. Twenty-three years and 55 countries later, John would retire from the Air Force.

After navigation school in Waco, Texas, and bombardier school in Sacramento, John was assigned to Great Britain, flying in the RB66, a twin-engine jet photo-reconnaissance airplane. His unit's brave motto was, "Kill 'em with fil'm!"

After a year and a half, his unit was deactivated (*did they run out of film?*), and John was sent to France. Another year and a half later, he was sent to Sacramento to serve as a bombing and navigation instructor for six years. Then Uncle Sam decided Johnny L needed to travel some more, so his passport got stamped with successive assignments to southeast Asia, Germany, and Spain.

The jet-setting didn't stop there. Next, John was sent to the intoxicating hamlet that is Omaha, Nebraska. His post was the Strategic Air Command's C-135 Airborne Command, referred to as "Looking Glass," which was capable—while airborne—of launching Minutemen missiles from concrete silos in multiple Midwestern states.

Looking Glass was airborne 24/7 and could even be refueled in the air.

About three years later, John began flying a military Boeing 707 with airline seats in it, taking teams all over the U.S. for unannounced inspections. Over time, John's unit began getting extra assignments to fly senators and congressmen all over the world. They went everywhere: China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, Bali, Jakarta, Lima, Brazil, and Caracas. These were the best—and the last—two years of his military career. He got to fly a white Boeing 707 with a U.S. flag painted on the vertical stabilizer, and, perhaps best of all, he got to fly in civilian clothing. During a short stop in Barbados one night, while waiting for their luggage, the passengers came up with the idea to go swimming; however, none of the crew had swimsuits with them. Before the evening was over, passengers and crew members alike went swimming in their underwear!

As captivating as Omaha can be, John knew that when he retired he wouldn't want to stay there because of all the snow. He wanted to be near the water, in a warm place, where he could sail. In 1980, he accepted a job with the City of San Diego as a construction inspector; then, he worked in National City for a couple of years. Finally, John went shopping for that sailboat he had dreamed about—and he bought a

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litigation due to poor construction. And, John has never regretted one single "sunshine dollar" that he spent living in San Diego.

After retiring, John was very active in the Sierra Club. He got certified to lead hikes, mostly in the Laguna and Cuyamaca Mountains. His group backpacked in and around the Grand Canyon on a couple of remarkable trips. John also turned his military-trained photography skills into a lifelong hobby.

John and his wife Toni live in Clairemont. Toni is a retired, registered nurse who loves to travel. They had a motorhome and used it often to visit Toni's daughter in Oregon and the national parks in Utah. They also enjoy taking cruises, and have been to Italy, Austria, Germany, and, most recently, Australia and New Zealand.

## Who's next?

If you would like to have your profile published in *Twists & Turns*, call Kelley Raymond at 619-846-3784 or send e-mail to [kray63@yahoo.com](mailto:kray63@yahoo.com).

To preview the list of questions Kelley uses to start her interviews, visit SDMC's web site ([www.sandiegomiataclub.org](http://www.sandiegomiataclub.org)), click the link "Club and Car Info," then the link "Member Profile Sheet."

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and therefore, Latin—heritage, President Sue explained ... shortly ... that certain Sicilians better appreciate the connection.)

### **Resolutions—et tu, Brute?**

**Resolve to lose some weight.** You've heard the expression "you're carrying too much junk in the trunk," right? If you can get by the initial insult it might have delivered, it's actually good advice. Pressed for storage space in my own garage, I've been using my Miata's trunk to store some of the overflow. In the interest of better handling and fuel economy, I cleared all the unnecessary stuff out my Miata's tiny storage facility. Apart from the performance improvement, I don't have to worry about the yard-darts driving dents into the quarter panels in aggressive cornering. Taken to the extreme, every pound trimmed from the driver and/or occupants yields better performance and fuel economy. Speaking for myself, I don't need any additional bulges in my flanks, either.

**Meet your commitments in the New Year.** Check. My run review is due January 15, and I've actually started days before. With any luck, I can finish on time, full tank of gas, empty bladder ... Steve Waid's "Search for Madonna" instructions still faintly ringing in my ears. Larry and Jerry will be so proud. Larry's calendar with each month's due date marked by red dots will encourage and measure my success. Bruce Lewis will stop leaving threatening messages on my answering machine. (Oh, about the run review, not last month's comments regarding his Miata's elevated testosterone level.)

Here's an example of another commitment needing additional focus in 2007. Bonnie and I have slipped from our reservation of one night of the week as date night. It's about putting aside some time for our marriage relationship—for recalling some of the fun and emotional energy everyone invests

early on in a relationship. That emotional spark needs to be re-kindled, perhaps even stoked periodically. Thirty-two years of marriage can be much less a sentence and much more an investment if we practice date night once a week.

**Become a better person.** The popular adage "'tis better to give than receive" pays precious little attention to behavioral reality. I was rather boorish at our club Christmas Party—shamelessly stealing the cockpit cover that had already been stolen once. It was premeditated and took full advantage of the rules. Now, no one could take my holiday booty. In the appropriate words of homespun comedian Larry, the Cable Guy, "Lord, I apologize." (I hereby categorically deny the rumor I am supporting a bylaws change to limit such obvious gift-grabbing to just one steal in the future.)

There are many members in our club who routinely give of their time, experience, and energy to host all manner of events for the benefit of our club. If those folks laid back and just went along for the drive, our calendar of events would be much leaner. As atonement, I have resolved to plan and host a driving event run this year. Living in Chula Vista, literally twelve minutes from the border, Bonnie and I have discussed a "Run for the Border" over some of South County's interesting roads. Stay tuned.

**Enjoy more of what life has to offer!** I could share all kinds of quotations, conventional wisdom, etc., on the subject, but it's hardly necessary in the wake of Sal Causarano's death late last year. Even as a casual observer, I could see most of our club was impacted in a positive way. From all that's been said and written, it's clear Our Pal Sal enjoyed life far more than most. I can only imagine leaving that kind of legacy when my own temporal life is finished. What to do to put more fun in your life? Put more life in your fun. Get involved.

SDMC is chock full of neat people, from all walks of life, all

manner of talent, and the root of many close friendships. I, for one, resolve to attend more SDMC meetings and events. I want to try autocross. We're doing a 4–5 day segment of the trip to Moab because neither of us has experienced the natural beauty that area has to offer. Even better, we're doing this with our kids.

### **Hopefully, there's a segue in here somewhere**

As a great start to the New Year, how about this recipe for fun?

Take approximately forty Miatas, in those scrumptious M&M colors, fold them into gentle come-hither shapes, chase them around the countryside, even to Julian on a crisp January day usually reserved for television and various degrees of recovery. This particular recipe requires very little heat—just enough to warm the tires and melt the accumulated frost in shaded areas of the country roads.

Start at Escondido's Westside Café—unassuming enough, with pleasant and competent service—with good food designed to tide us over until we can reach Julian, and its cuisine can be sampled. We took over the joint. The booths and many of the decorations recalled the '50s diner look. Think "Grease" or "Happy Days" without an emphasis on red and white. Part of the dining area became Run Headquarters for Christine and Ray Corbyons. As quickly as members signed the release form, we were given red roses for the ladies in attendance. Nice touch! Giddy with enthusiasm, I carried Bonnie's rose in my teeth, marching flamenco-style back to our little booth. Much like Steve Waid's singing, my dancing moves fell slightly short of the mark. By comparison, Mr. and Mrs. C are on a roll, what with the successful Christmas Party and now this. Talk about stepping up! Good job.

The breakfast meeting spilled into the parking lot and front patio. Four



couples were making their inaugural run with SDMC, a great start for the new year. President Sue proudly announced our total membership had finally eclipsed 500 ... and the crowd roared. Even with this year's run competing with the Tournament of Roses Parade and several Bowl games, attendance was nearly double that of last year.

Former SDMCers Barbara and John Templeton, in town from Utah, swung by to say hello and receive a few hugs in the process. We noted a good turnout of SOCALM members, seeking refuge from their own traditional "Hangover Run." Speaking of which ... Bruce and Debbie Lewis's Miata was sporting a super-sized inflatable magnum of champagne. Hair of the dog, eh, Bruce?

Our vehicles filled the small parking lot and spilled onto the side street. There were flamed ones, bone-stock ones, NAs, NBs, and NCs. Throw in Phil Daoust's customized 1996 Briata and a few PRHTs (for the folks that had the hard-boiled eggs for breakfast?). No, silly. For the un-witting or un-initiated it stands for "power retractable hard top." I learned the hard way. We even had an OTM Honda Odyssey in our parade. While they're really enjoying their new Highland Green MX-5, there's not enough room for Mom, Dad and both kids. Do what Bud and Lisa Martin (and others) do under similar circumstances: drive the OM, the *other Miata*. Problem solved.

Here's an exhausting tale or two. Tom Wood could be found in the parking lot, hood up on his own red Mazdaspeed and causing some minor gawker-block. The latest Flyin' Miata accessory to be installed was his new-for-Christmas midpipe. I passed on his invitation to appreciate it "under the car," quite content to drool over last year's more efficient intercooler and induction system. On the distaff side, I have to confess President Sue

is my kind of woman. Before you read anything into this, you should know she told Santa to pass on any jewelry in exchange for a new Racing Beat exhaust ... road test at eleven.



**LIVE LONG AND PROSPER.** Ray Corbyons kicks off the Rose Run drivers meeting with a Vulcan salute, as Christine turns a deaf ear. Photo: Jan Wagner

We were off, run directions in hand, and CBs bristling with activity. Succumbing to my frequent suggestion that CB chatter usually provides material for my articles, editor Jerry Standefer took three giant e-technology steps backward and bought one. If you read Jerry's e-mails later that evening, you'll know he's already realizing its benefits. Owing to the size of our group, and the camping traffic we encountered beyond Escondido, queue-ups were the order of the day.

Run leader Mr. C had issues with his CB much of the day—we could hear him much better than he could hear the rest of us. Barb Shev, reprising the role of Whoopi Goldberg in "Ghost," was there to channel all of Ray's communications to an eager audience. In terms of quantity, Barb could have reprised the speaking role of several Hollywood actresses in her CB banter. The only thing missing in all this entertainment was the helium.

I later spoke with engineer/entrepreneur Tom Thompson to learn he was hard at work building a prototype HDS, or "helium delivery system." Loosely-based upon existing nitrous oxide systems, the entertaining gas is delivered on demand to the driver instead of the engine's induction system. Rumor has it GM is interested in providing this as an option on the Solstice and Sky roadsters, in compensation for the distinct lack of entertainment in the convertible top's operation. Keep us posted, Tom.

On the road, we encountered clear blue skies, and invigorating temperatures. Notably MIA was weather-girl Jill Wilson. She might have been back home in south Texas, restoring her charming accent. (Speaking of which ... Kelley Raymond, we haven't seen you for a while, either.) It was certainly cooler at Julian's 4200-foot elevation, but considerably warmer than last year's run. Residual frost in the shaded portions of the road provided some of the visceral entertainment, as Miatas stepped sideways in a few of the turns.

### Where's the beef?

The beef was *on the road* during this trip! Even though signs and CB chatter both warned of the possibility, I was truly surprised when a certain steer headed straight for my Velocity Red 'Speed. There was less than six feet (four of them were *his!*) between this beast and certain panel damage. I cringed at the thought he might associate my shiny ride with a bullfighter's cape. Unlike my wife, he didn't actually charge, but I truly don't know who was startled more. Once I was safely away, I bellowed over my CB, as if I had a loudspeaker attached.

"Muuurrrgggghhhhhh," in my best imitation. Lord knows how that translates.

Immediate response: "I can hear you, sweet lips. Where are you?"

"You animal!" gushed an appreciative Sue Hinkle.

In all, we traversed about 100 miles of pastureland, dotted with trees, livestock, and OTMs—motor homes returning from desert and camping forays, toys in tow. Every time they refuel, they were wishing they were in a Miata, right Chip? There was no lack of excitement on the return trip, either. Relative newcomer Imants Versnieks ventured off-course on Highland Valley Road, perhaps owing to a tricky series of sharp curves. Let it never be said we don't have any tree-huggers in our club. Everyone is welcome.



**NO BULL.** Rose Run participants had to "steer" carefully around obstacles on the course. Photo: Jan Wagner

We can make light of the incident, knowing he was un-injured in it. Rumor has it he's parting-out the

car though, a black '94 C package. His biggest challenge thus far is getting that horrible yellow sap off the front body panels. He may be new to the club, but has picked up nicely on the color war that rages. No doubt Helen Sharp ("Hellyen" to some) gave him some sympathy and some pointers on the ride home.

All in all, it was another great SDMC run, perhaps destined to be a classic. I wouldn't change a thing. The day was gorgeous, the shopping and homemade desserts divine, the company of like-minded friends—priceless. And, oh, the red roses were perfect.

## It's not work if you enjoy it

GENE STREETER

**O**ur club Christmas Party was made all the more memorable for me by the recognition bestowed by Larry and Mary Clark. The perpetual trophy they commissioned and presented as the Silver Scribbler proudly adorns my fireplace mantel. I use the word *proudly* with certain reservation. While I am justifiably proud to be associated with this club and our newsletter *Twists & Turns*, I am humbled by the acceptance shown me in doing something I enjoy. Rarely am I without a witty comeback or as moved as I was that evening in front of people I enjoy and respect.

In writing the newsletter articles that I have, I derive satisfaction on many levels. I employ the trickiest of languages, English, to share facts and emotions, to entertain my audience, and myself. I enjoy cheering people on, encouraging their good work, even provoking reactions. I encourage others to do the very same. I take satirical inspiration from the likes of Mark Twain, grit from Melville or Hemingway, and humor from P.J.

O'Rourke or Innes Ireland—anywhere I can find it. I truly believe that our language is being eroded by our overly casual treatment of it. You need only read some of the communications on the Internet—or for that matter, the work product of many high school students—to reach the same conclusion.

What to do? It's one thing to point out the failings of anything in our culture. It's quite another to actually do something constructive, such as being an agent for change if something bothers you. From my first interactions with him, Larry has taunted me to do more and do it better. Larry has been something of a mentor to me. Truth is, I haven't enjoyed so much creative pleasure in many years. I guarantee you Larry was thinking well beyond that perpetual trophy as a means of recognition. He was thinking about making a difference in our club, its newsletter readership, and even its *raison d'être*.

As Larry eloquently explained that evening, we share a belief that newsletters have intrinsic value as the glue

that keeps a club together. They are the lifeblood of an organization our size. Even when members do not regularly attend, no matter the reason, our newsletter keeps them connected to the events and our common purpose. Our newsletter staff is doing a terrific job. They are worthy of our appreciation and support. Many of you contribute articles on a regular basis—some even willingly. Thank you for your valuable contributions.

If you're not presently contributing to our club, please take the opportunity to do so. Share your time and talents. Be a mentor, or an agent for positive change within our club and the community. Host a run, or organize an event. Volunteer for any number of club services or responsibilities. Our Annual Meeting is coming up, and there will be opportunities to serve in an elected capacity. Find your niche.

All these activities can be very satisfying, even humbling experiences. As the title suggests, none of this is really work if you enjoy it. See how rewarding this year can be.



# You may be a Car Gal

BRUCE LEWIS (WITH ASSISTANCE FROM KELLEY RAYMOND, MARY & LARRY CLARK, MARY CHABOT, AND DEBBYE LEWIS)

**T**here seem to be two schools of thought on what a “Car Gal” is. One is the lady who has a more feminine style with her car; the other is a woman who is more of a do-it-yourself driving enthusiast. I have attempted to separate these into distinct sections.

## The feminine side

You may be a Car Gal if ...

- ... you put your top up when you leave the hair salon.
- ... you have no idea why the seats move so far back.
- ... you can't pack enough for a three-day trip into a Miata's trunk.
- ... you have no idea how to open the hood, or why you would want to.
- ... you have a Yanni CD in your stereo.
- ... you have several changes of clothes on board at all times.
- ... you have anything that could even remotely be considered “bling” on your car.
- ... your umbrella matches your car (hmm, I have one of those).
- ... you keep Beanie Babies in your cup holders.
- ... you put flowers on your dash for car shows.
- ... you get your nails painted to match your car.
- ... you think lighted mirrors on sun visors are the industry's greatest innovation.
- ... you think a spoiler is someone who shows up late for Bunco.
- ... you care more about the destination than the roads to get there.
- ... you have your CB antenna adorned with flowers as a centerpiece on your dining room table.
- ... you have ever referred to your Miata as cute.
- ... you have an air freshener on board.
- ... you have ever shopped for car accessories at Michael's, Jo-Ann, Nordstrom, or Hallmark.
- ... you think that “cat back” is a stray on your back porch.
- ... you totally love your Miata!

## The driver-enthusiast side

You may be a Car Gal if ...

- ... you have Meguiar's on your Christmas list.
- ... your Miata takes precedence in the garage, over *anything*.

- ... you put a car cover on your car ... in the garage.
- ... your first aid kit in the trunk includes Meguiar's Quick Wax or Detailer.
- ... you know what claying a car is, and you do it.
- ... you can change your own oil, fix a flat tire, and do a brake job.
- ... you know more about the workings of your car than your male mate.
- ... you can't find your wheel brush so you use your vegetable brush in a pinch.
- ... your most recent Internet dating gee-he-was-perfect-until-he-flaked-out guy dumps you, so to make yourself feel better, you go and get your oil changed.
- ... your fella knows that you'd rather have chrome slotted rotors than jewelry for Valentine's Day.
- ... you soothe your wounds from a bad dating experience by hitting the twisties.
- ... you'll risk a bad hair day rather than drive with the top up.
- ... you're more familiar with dipsticks than lipsticks.
- ... your weekly cleaning routine includes checking tire pressure.
- ... you can pack a complete wardrobe for a two-week trip in your Miata's trunk.
- ... you know your way around a shop manual better than a recipe book.
- ... you drive an automatic and can drive circles around guys with six-speeds.
- ... you care more about the roads to get there than the destination.
- ... you have a “girls kick ass” bumper sticker.
- ... you say, “Navigator??? Shut up and sit down, baby, Mama's driving!”
- ... you understand what Larry Dennstedt is talking about.
- ... you can keep up with Helen, wheels on the ground ... or not.
- ... you spend more tricking out your car than you do on makeup.
- ... the first piece of mail you look at is the Moss Motors catalogue.
- ... you can drop the top one-handed while stopped at a traffic light.
- ... you totally love your Miata!

# Decorated Miatas cruise holiday lights

VICKI KIEHL

I had heard about it, but, I had never done it. Did I look forward to it? Did I enjoy it? Yes!

Les and Dyanna Smith again extended their incredible hospitality on the December 17 Holiday Lights Run and Party.

We arrived at the Smiths' for the pre-run festivities and fantastic food! Thanks so much to Gabe Rivera and Dyanna Smith for the delicious holiday goodies.

I was again amazed with the Miata car decorations! I learned how to string battery-operated lights around

the car. I also noted a few elves and Santas had grabbed on to the roll bars for the ride. Although, I still haven't quite figured out how to place a lighted Christmas tree on my Miata's trunk.

Miataphiles with holiday hats and flashing lights were also present.

I did enjoy my first trip to Christmas Card Lane! Giant Christmas cards brightened the neighborhoods with lights everywhere! People were walking about visiting with each other and enjoying seeing all of the decorations. Some homes had port-

able fire pits in their driveways, garage doors open, and some even had the Chargers game on the big screen. People were welcoming each other, and the holiday spirit was there. Animated decorations complete with lights were fun to watch. I even saw a model train set up and running in the front of one house.

The next neighborhood had lights strung across the street from house to house. It actually looked kind of cool.

To finish the run, we got to eat again. We enjoyed a dinner at Pat and Oscar's with our Miata friends.

## Travel tips and tricks

LARRY DENNSTEDT

We had lunch on the Rose Run with one of our club members. We sat next to the wood-burning stove and talked of many travels and pleasures. I mentioned my two-and-a-half-week trip to Colorado, which prompted this article.

The question was, "I'd like to take a trip, but I don't know what to do if I destroy a tire or have other breakdowns." Here are some ideas and a little road logic.

**Tires.** Some of our special sport tires are hard to find once out of the city, and a special order could take three to five days to come in. Who wants to stay in East Overshoe, Idaho, for their vacation?

*Any* tire that is close to the right size will get your car down the road and on with the vacation. Remember, the spare tire is very narrow, but does the job. So will a mismatched tire. I advise putting two matching tires on the rear wheels, and the mismatched two on the front. The steering might pull a little left or right, but it will be OK until you can get to a larger city and find the correct tire.

**Oil.** It is always preferred to match the brand and weight (10W-30 or 20W-50) when adding oil to the engine. However, *any* brand of

oil is better than running with too little. Oil is about 40% base crude and 60% additive package. Anything will work just fine to get you down the road and to your destination. Remember, oil is a lubricant as well as a heat-removal fluid. Keep your level up to the mark. Carry a spare quart with you.

**Spare parts.** I carry spares of everything I think might be hard to find at a parts house on the road. This includes fan belts and every coolant hose in the system (three radiator hoses, two heater hoses, and four small-diameter preformed bypass hoses). Any mechanic can install parts for you if he has them, although he might charge extra for using your parts and not getting his profit on them. 10% of value is not out of the question.

**Battery.** Miatas use a special battery with a breather hose to vent gases out of the trunk area. I use the Interstate brand MX-5 battery sold nationwide. When not available, you could use a Honda battery, which does *not* vent through hoses. But again, anything that fits will get you down the road. Also, many service places will sell you what they have on the shelf, whether it is the correct part or not.

**Convertible top.** If the top gets a hole and starts to leak, it can possibly be fixed with a piece of cloth and some black silicone. Simply goop up a piece of cloth two to three inches across, and apply it to the underside of the top. Press it into place, letting some of the sealant ooze out of the hole to form a flexible temporary seal.

**Fuel.** Above 2,000 feet elevation, you generally need only regular gas. Turbo and supercharged cars are an exception.

If you accidentally get diesel fuel in your gas tank, don't panic. There is a drain plug on the bottom of the gas tank, and the bad stuff can easily be drained out. A little diesel fuel will *not* hurt your engine, but it will smoke for a while out the tailpipe.

**Air conditioning.** I try to run my AC for 10–15 minutes each week just to keep the seals from drying out and leaking the refrigerant. You don't want your AC system to go bad on the vacation.

• • •

I'm sure that I have forgotten something, but this should be a good starter list.

If any of you have a topic or question, let me know and I will try to answer it either in a short article or privately.

# Classified Ads

## MIATAS FOR SALE

**1997 Miata.** Black, 1.8L, 5 speed NA, PW/PS/AC, 65.5k miles, mechanically maintained and garaged, clean except for some door dings. SFI padded/upholstered roll bar, fog lights, alloy wheels w/locks, chassis brace, air horn, ignition interlock alarm system, sheepskin seat covers, upgraded speakers (new in box), custom Monsoon car cover (unused), extra set of steel

wheels. \$5,500. Glenn Roger, 760-630-5800, [glennroger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:glennroger@sbcglobal.net) (Nov)

## 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](http://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.

**World Famous Car Wash.** Complete professional car care. Complete detail, hand wax, leather treatment, free shuttle service. 7215 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, San Diego. 858-495-9274. Discount: 10%

## Mazda Dealerships

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

**Mazda El Cajon.** 619-442-7050. Discount: 20% on Mazda parts; 10-20% on accessories.

**Mazda of Escondido.** 760-737-3200. Discount: 20% on most parts; 15% on 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!

**Linsco Private Ledger.** Fee-based planner. Wealth management, estate, retirement, and investment planning. Free consultation and 15% discount on all fees. Hernan Hooker, BCE. 619-542-0822.

**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

## FEBRUARY 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4 SDMC Shows Off	5	6	7	8	9	10 Run
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15 MARCH T&T DEADLINE	16	17
18	19 President's Day	20	21	22 Monthly Meeting	23	24 Black History Run
25	26	27	28			

## MARCH 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3 Campo Railroad Run
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 APRIL T&T DEADLINE	16	17 St. Patrick's Day
18	19	20	21	22 Monthly Meeting	23	24
25 The Puke	26	27	28	29	30	31

DATE	EVENT	TIME	MEET	CONTACT	PAGE
Sun 2/4	SDMC Shows Off Car Show	11:00 a.m.	Dalton's, 775 Center Dr., San Marcos (78 at Nordahl)	Steve & Laurie Waid 760-432-0727	6
Sat 2/10	Run	TBD	TBD	Bob Kleeman 619-501-9776	6
Sat 2/24	Black History Run	10:00 a.m.	Starbucks, College Grove Ctr, College Ave. just north of 94	Les Smith 858-682-6072	6
Thu 2/2, Thu 3/22	SDMC Monthly Meeting	6:00 p.m. (eat) 7:00 p.m. (meet)	Boll Weevil Restaurant, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Bl.	Sue Hinkle 760-735-9456	3
Sat 3/3	Campo Railroad Run	TBD	TBD	Howard Schwartz 858-271-0084	6
Sun 3/25	The Puke 2007	9:00 a.m. (brunch) 10:00 a.m. (drivers mtg)	Dalton's, 775 Center Dr., San Marcos (78 at Nordahl)	Steve & Laurie Waid 760-432-0727	6