



TWISTS & TURNS

May 2022

This **Special Edition** is devoted to a Run that 8 members of SDMC went on in Summer 2021. The last 3 issues of T&T contained the early portion of their journey. Rather than continue the adventures of this trip for another 3 issues, this special edition has the entire run in one article. **Twists & Turns** will return to its regular format in the June issue. (Ed.)

Summer 2021 Road Trip

Miatas At The Gap/Route 66

By Julie Thompson



Four Miatas from SDMC, 8 members, 24 days, 6700 miles (give or take a few), crossed 3 time zones going east and again going west, 16 states, 16 Hampton

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Inns/one other hotel/ and 1 VRBO, 2 trips to urgent care or ER, 2 different 1 day illnesses, 4 different car breakdowns (no 30AE's involved), 1 trip underwater, more time with top up than desired (multiple 100+degree days), 2 near accidents, 2 cracked windshields (1 replaced a year ago and one just replaced before the trip), 4 torrential rain storms (2 in Arizona), 1 couple endured the entire trip without turning on TV in their hotel room, and too many smiles and laughs to count.

Our days, all but 2, would begin with an 8 am departure and only 2 days ended before 5 pm. If you were to ask Steve Waid why the days were so long, he would say, "because it took so long to decide where to eat!"! If you ask Terry Thompson why the days were so long, his response would be, "Why take the highway when there is a twisty road that gets you to the same destination?" We ran into one young man from San Diego that made the trip in 2 days verses our 12-day journey to arrive at Fontana Dam for Miatas At The Gap (MATG) and our 9-day trip back. In retrospect, the trip back was a bit too rushed on Route 66 and many of us wished we had

taken a few more days since there is so much to see! (Especially if you try to visit all the auto parts stores and repair shops along the way. We learned that Dell Pound and Debbie Skordilis and the Hunts have an affection for visiting! We had two run leaders. The Thompsons navigated and led us to MATG and back to St. Louis. The Waid's took over the lead and navigated us through Route 66 to Wickenburg, AZ.



MIATAS AT THE GAP ROAD TRIP JOURNAL

Day 1-Poway, CA to Tucson, AZ (445 miles)

Meet for a 7 am departure with full bellies, a full trunk, and a full of gas. AWAY WE GO! On our way to Tucson, we drove through Gila Bend, AZ and stopped for lunch at the Space Age Restaurant (Alien Café). We drove through our first rainstorm for almost 2 hours, escaping most (not all) of the rain. As Gene Streeter says, "If you drive fast enough, you won't get wet!" Where would you want to have dinner on the first night of a 24-day road trip?



"Hot Rods" of course.

Day 2-Tucson, AZ to Alamogordo, NM (429 miles)

Early in the day we arrived for a visit to "The Thing" Museum (Steve Waid had this on his "Must See List".) After our tour of the Museum and the gift/junk shop (no room in the trunks), we continued down the



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highway to Bisbee, AZ. We toured the old mining town Miata-style and walked the streets of downtown after a few photo ops. We tried to get Dell and Debbie married for the first time here, but no success. We decided this would be a fun future long weekend destination trip for a group from SDMC. We found an authentic Mexican restaurant for lunch which *most* of us enjoyed! We continued driving towards Alamogordo through beautiful open spaces, past miles of White Sands Missile Range, and through our first torrential rainstorm of the trip. We didn't have to worry today about obeying the "Pull over and wait out the Dust Storm" signs we were passing along the way driving through the rainstorm. We arrived at the hotel a little later than expected and enjoyed walking to dinner.



Day 3-Alamogordo, NM to Ozona, TX (394 miles)

We departed Alamogordo minus one car that took a detour for our first urgent care visit of the trip. Luckily, it was nothing too serious, and by the end of the day we were all together again. We initially drove through some beautiful scenery of the Lincoln National Forest and ended the day driving for hours through the hot, toasty, barren, flat oil fields of Northern Texas. We drove past village after village of RV's which housed the oil field workers. We stopped in the cute little town of Pecos, TX and had a delicious Italian lunch. It was a 100-degree day, and the waiter decided to cool himself off by dumping a tray of water over himself! Most of us drove with our tops down throughout the day in the heat and the sun made the pool very inviting and refreshing on our arrival to the hotel in Ozona, Texas very inviting and refreshing! What better dinner to beat the heat than Dairy Queen, of course!



Day 4-Ozona, TX to Waco, TX (454 miles)

The terrain for the drive today was beautiful, curvy, and slow. July is the National month of road construction and specifically, oiling roads. We followed a pilot truck for miles. We drove most of the "Twisted Sisters" (Highways 335, 336, and 337) in Texas hill country. They did not disappoint! We stopped at a German beer hall for lunch. There's nothing like a cold beer on a hot day! After



cooling off a bit, we continued our way across the Colorado River and into Waco. We passed herds of goats and spotted our first Texas Longhorns along the way. On our walk back from dinner, we discovered we had a "bird whisperer" in the group. Dave Hunt proceeded to walk through the parking lot, he'd clap his hands and hundreds of black birds would fly from the trees!

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Lions, Bears, and ... Dinosaurs?

At our March monthly meeting, I posed the question “How many of you are attending Surf ‘N Safari 2022?” It appeared every hand was raised in the expected response. With just over five months to our regional party, we have just shy of 100 registrants. While both are reassuring, we want to make certain that even those members not regularly attending monthly meetings and events make the commitment to join in the fun. Joining SDMC in 2004, I didn’t participate in Surf ‘N Safari II; I just didn’t get the message. It was a great event, as evidenced by the murder mystery themed stories that still circulate.

It’s been nearly seven years since our last such event, postponed twice, and now long overdue. Co-chair Laurie Waid and I still expect a sold-out event because of Surf ‘N Safari’s broad appeal outside our club. We think “Joe Albertson’s” old marketing approach – ***tell a friend*** has genuine merit. In the event any of our members are on the fence about attending, your reassurance might be all that’s necessary to get them plugged into the fun.

The Fun Team, headed by the fun-master himself, Steve Waid, is already working on the runs and activities that have been our event trademark. I happen

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to know we're working to bring our "surf and safari" theme to life one more time. If you're even remotely curious about the dinosaur element of the subtitle, long-time San Diego residents might remember the "Jurassic Park: San Diego" project begun by InGen in the mid-1980s. According to the article (<https://jurassic-pedia.com/jurassic-park-san-diego-sf/>), we even had a baby T-Rex inhabiting the grounds of the waterfront complex.

We can't promise any dinosaurs, except possibly those that Ken and Stacy Herd's popular outings to Borrego Springs have historically uncovered, but we can promise a sampling of San Diego's natural flora and fauna, mixed with some more exotic creatures. That, and the fun of meeting friends – new and not-quite-Jurassic, with a common interest in the world's most popular roadster. **Join the party this October 6-9**; we don't want you to miss out like I once did. Please visit our Home page for additional details, including the Surf 'N Safari registration form and lodging reservation information ... don't let this opportunity become extinct.

Gene Streeter

with Laurie Waid



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Day 5-Waco, TX to Fort Smith, AR (390 miles)

We (maybe half of us) awoke like children on Christmas morning because our first stop of the day was to drive across town to visit Magnolia Farms/The Silos. We arrived early and were second in line at the Bakery (the only part of the stop that made Steve and Terry happy!) It was a beautiful property. We made a few purchases and managed to find room for them in the trunks,

tried to marry Dell and Debbie for a second time at the renovated Chapel (not successful), and did not find Chip and Joanna anywhere! At 11 am we started our trek towards Fort Smith, AR. We found the topography of lakes, ponds, lush green trees, and rolling hills surprisingly gorgeous! We decided that every town in Texas and Arkansas has a Dairy

Queen, Dollar General, Sonic Burger, and a Baptist Church with an adjoining cemetery.

We decided to experience "Whataburger" for lunch. We found the cheapest gas of the trip at a "Gasquatch" for 2.35/gallon. It was a long day in the heat with road construction again resulting in arrival at the hotel after 6pm. We walked across the street to "TGI Fridays" which was only doing call-in orders due to all their staff calling in sick. We waited outside on their patio for our food, took it back to the hotel lobby, and finally ate and played a "friendly" game of Mexican Train.



Day 6-Fort Smith, AR to Little Rock, AR (338 miles)

We started the day, while filling the cars with gas, with one of the group's members discovering they'd left their credit card with the waitress at TGI Fridays the night before! Miraculously, the manager was in the restaurant at 8 am and had access to the safe which harbored the abandoned credit card! On we go toward our highlight of the day, a drive north in Arkansas through Fayetteville and Harrison to drive south down Arkansas Scenic Byway Route 7, a nationally recognized treasure that traverses almost the entire state from North to South. It was a breathtaking drive past the "Arkansas Grand Canyon" and ending in Hot Springs National Park. Our lunch plans at the Grand Canyon overlook were changed when the restaurant was found to be closed due to Covid. We ended up at CJ's Butcher Boys Burger instead. We arrived in the town of Hot Springs after lunch, we drove



through town looking for the "National Park" entrance, only to realize we had arrived, and the town was the Park! We walked very little because it was 100-degrees plus and toured Miata style. The town was located

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on the Heritage Trail during the Civil War and had been declared a National Park 4 years before Yellowstone. After leaving Hot Springs, we had a short 1-hour leg of the trip into Little Rock, where we enjoyed dinner and cocktails at the Irish Pub next door to the hotel. Afterwards a few of us walked the River Market to a Sweet Shop for some homemade ice cream.

Day 7-Little Rock, AR to Nashville, TN (408 miles)

We crossed the Arkansas River and made our way into Tennessee through Mississippi. We enjoyed a brief stop and photo op in the Mississippi welcome center and stopped for lunch in the outskirts of Memphis. We drove twisties, passed through crops of sorghum, corn, and soybeans, and tolerated another day of high temperatures with it being 90 degrees before 9 am. We ran into a few maintenance issues on the way to Nashville- a check engine light on the Waid's 30AE, and the Hunt's air conditioner on the brink. We thought maybe a Mazda dealer service center visit was in our future but couldn't schedule anything because they were booking 2 weeks out. The check engine light resolved itself, but the air conditioner remained finicky for the rest of the trip! We arrived in Nashville for a refreshing swim in the pool, a chance to do laundry, Greek food delivery in the lobby, a relaxing game of Mexican Train, and all of us looking forward to 3 nights in the same hotel without having to pack and unpack.



Day 8-Nashville, TN

We rendezvoused at breakfast with a plan for the ladies to walk to the Grand Ole Opry from the hotel and purchase backstage tour passes for before the show that evening. They returned hot, tired, and disappointed as the passes were sold out for the day. They cooled off with a dip in the pool. The men began their day with a trip to the Lane Auto Museum which they found very entertaining and well worth the visit.



There was ample time to recoup and regroup to attend the show at Grand Ole Opry that evening. Even though the performers were not hugely recognizable names, we all thoroughly enjoyed the show! The entertainment included square dancers, complete with commercials since the Saturday shows are broadcast live on WSM Radio (the most famous country music station in the world), a comedian,

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and 4 other singers, young and old, but excellent! The headliner that stole the show was the huge thunderstorm that blew into town while we were in the Grand Ole Opry. We waited for about a half an hour in the lobby for the rain to let up since Steve Waid was the only one smart enough to pack an umbrella. The storm produced an amazing light show of lightning bolts, 3 1/2" of rain over-

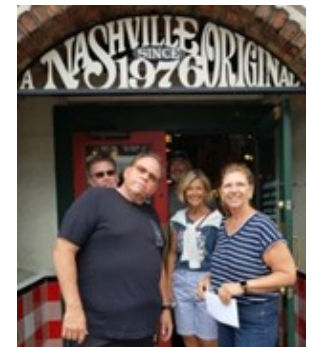


night, and even resulted in the cancellation of the sold-out Garth Brooks concert before he ever got to sing a note.



Day 9-Nashville, TN

We enjoyed a leisurely day playing tourist in Nashville Tennessee. Six couples boarded the shuttle to downtown from our hotel in Opryland. We toured the Country Music Hall of Fame, walked up and down Broadway checking out the honky-tonks and listening to the music, visited Blake Shelton's "Ole Red", Wildhorse Saloon, and had BBQ lunch at Jake's. One couple headed back to the hotel and went on their own tour of the Parthenon and adjoining park. The other 2 couples took the Hop On and Off tour of Nashville. The one couple that stayed back in the morning drove their own Hop On and Off tour from a map they picked



up in the hotel lobby map. They had been there and done that in Nashville before and chose to do their own thing. We reconnected later in the evening in the lobby to compare notes.

Day 10-Nashville, TN to Asheville, NC (365 miles)

We departed Nashville after a 3-day stay. We traveled about an hour to our first stop of the day, a tour of the Jack Daniels Distillery in Lynchburg, TN. We



walked the town of Lynchburg while waiting for our tour to begin. It was a cute little place! Our tour guide was a local who had a wealth of knowledge on the history of area. The tour was extremely interesting and ended in the tasting room. Only 2 members of the group like whiskey enough to taste it. Of those two, one was on antibiotics and the other was a driver who didn't want to become a

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passenger (Terry Thompson), so we did a lot of smelling and not much tasting. The good news is we learned the distillery recycles 95% of their materials and our wasted whiskey will likely be used to burn a barrel in the future.



We continued our journey to Asheville, NC at about noon venturing to a recommended restaurant “up the mountain a bit”. At 1 pm we arrived at “Top of the Rock” for lunch. The view and the food were well worth the trip! It was a beautiful drive on into Asheville as our route took us through the Ocoee, the Nantahala, and Pisgah National Forests. This was the longest day of the trip, arriving in Asheville at 9:30pm (So much for being rested up in Nashville)!!



Day 11-Asheville, NC

This day was a treasured day to sleep in and have a leisurely morning until our 11 am tour of the Biltmore House and Gardens. We took the audio self-guided tour through the amazing mansion. We arrived in the pouring rain but



were able to enjoy the grounds as the rain subsided after the tour of the home and lunch in the restaurant. We spent the afternoon tasting wine at the Biltmore Winery and touring the Gardens. We topped it off with ice cream made onsite at the creamery.

Day 12-Asheville, NC to “Big Swag House” in Robbinsville, NC (194 miles)

We traveled from Asheville south into South Carolina and Georgia on our way to Fontana Dam, NC and the MATG event. The drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway was breathtaking! We drove twisty roads through towns and bridges with the most unique names i.e., Sleepy Gap, Stump House



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Tunnel, Flinnpan Springs Tunnel. We drove over the Eastern Continental Divide through the Pisgah National Forest and past the Biltmore Forestry School. We drove top-up in rain at times, through fog, and past the giant spider webs sprinkled through the huge trees. We had lunch in the North Carolina town of Highlands. It was like a Montecito meets Carmel! As we approached Robbinsville, we began seeing Miatas in every direction we looked. We had only seen a handful up until today! We arrived at our home for the next 4 days, "The Big Swag House". We went grocery shopping and enjoyed a home cooked spaghetti dinner, thanks to Debbie Skordilis and her kitchen helpers.

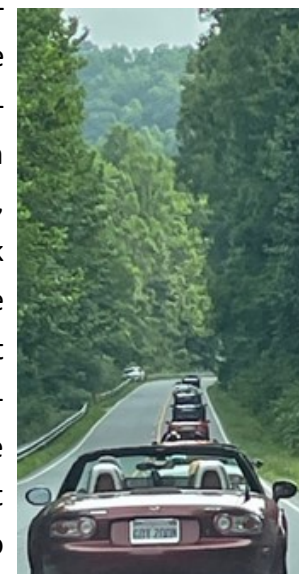


Day 13-Miata's at the Gap (day 1)



We left the house to drive 20 minutes to Fontana Village to participate in the first official run of the event, "Run to the Highlands Smokehouse". We took off with 50 or so cars from 15 different states. The "non-spirited run" was led by a leader who drove faster than the SDMC fastest drivers (not mentioning any names Steve Norris, Daryld Bristol, John Lord, just to name a few)!

We had one participant on the run have a medical emergency, which allowed our very own retired fireman, Dell Pound, to spring into action. The emergency call was made to 911 and took over an hour! We did learn that in "these parts" the emergency response teams are volunteer based, and you don't want to have an emergency occur anywhere, but especially here! We are happy to report the participant did have a favorable response and was at the event the next day! Even so, it put a bit of a damper on the day and delayed our return by a couple of hours. The BBQ was delicious and did not cause the medical emergency, even though one of our group felt it contributed to her illness that evening and the next day. We decided to forgo the sunset run, since we didn't return from the lunch run until 5 pm.



Day 14-Miata's at the Gap (day 2)

This was Registration Day at MATG. We arrived at Fontana Village at 8 am to join the line of hundreds registering for the 3-day event. The vendors were set up, which helped to pass the time of waiting in line. Six of the eight of us (one couple went later, on their own, due to illness delays) were registered after 90 minutes of waiting and then watched the group of over 100 or so cars depart on a run to drive the "Tail



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of the Dragon" (318 turns in 11.5 miles). We then departed to take the run ourselves, at our own pace, with a stop at the stores at the start to have the best choice of merchandise and, of course, take pictures. We stopped at the bottom for a relaxing break at Chilhowee Lake before starting the return journey up the same path. We met a mother and her ten-year-old daughter from Boston trying to catch themselves some dinner. The funniest part of the story was to watch the 2 of them smoking a "fat ole stogie" while waiting for the fish to bite.



Photographers were set up on the curves taking action shots as the cars drove by. We could have spent our children's inheritance on all the photos they offered for purchase on our trips up and down. There were Miatas around every turn. The biggest challenge was getting my driver to keep his hands on the wheel of the car instead of in the air waving at countless Miata's as they passed. We worked up quite an appetite on our journey and stopped for lunch

at Topoco Lodge for a delicious lunch along the river. After nourishing our bodies, we headed off to an afternoon of excitement on the Nantahala River. Five of us, along with our experienced guide named Boris, began our 3-hour journey down the 8.1-mile twisty river full of mild rapids, and rocks. Along the way, the sun would peek through the trees and gorgeous homes lined the river. Before we even were all loaded into the raft, David Hunt stepped off in an area he felt was shallow and fell in determining it was deeper than he thought but the water (less than 60 degrees) was very refreshing. About halfway through, the guide warned us, we are going to bounce off a rock ahead to shoot us through the rapids. We hit the rock, the raft folded (apparently not a common result), and Julie flew off the side, into the refreshing water, and under the raft. She explored the underside using her hands to find the way to the edge, popped up and grabbed the rope on the side of the raft, and was lifted into the raft by the guide who grabbed her life vest, while Dell Pound and Pam Hunt grabbed her paddle and her leg. Julie was safely aboard, cooled off, just as the raft bounded over the rocks and rapids. Once we returned to shore and changed out of our wet and sweaty clothes, we listened to music by the bank of the river and had a cold beer which tasted as refreshing as the water felt.

Day 15-Miata's at the Gap (day 3)

Saturday, the final official day of MATG, had arrived. We had been asked the day before by the organizers at registration if we could get to the resort at 8 am to line up in the front for the 10 am picture. They requested our 4 cars be in the front for the picture since we had traveled so far to represent the SDMC. We arrived in the rain and waited for the decision of whether or not the picture would occur because of the rain and its effect on the grassy, soft-soiled lot being used for the official photo. The dam is no longer the site of the photo op because they required



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insurance coverage to just take the picture there. The rain let up and allowed the photo to occur, with 207 Miatas driving on the lot behind the SDMC representatives. After the photo, we once again drove “The Tail of the Dragon” and the beautiful, twisty, roads beyond. We stopped for lunch in Marysville. After our drive, and after missing our turn on another unmarked road, we made our way back to Robbinsville for dinner at the highly recommended Moonshine Steakhouse. We had just enough time after dinner to get back to resort for the raffle and the closing ceremony. All but one car (The Hunt’s) would start. Dell stayed behind to give their battery a jump with a battery pack. We regrouped at the resort for a 3-hour ceremony with hundreds of Miata owners and thousands of bugs in attendance. The only winner of the group was The Thompsons, winning a steering wheel medallion. We learned there was a record number of Miatas in attendance (1012 cars, 1400+ people from 37 states and Canada) and a record amount of money (\$12,000) collected for this year’s cause, Graham County Rescue Squad. After the event ended, The Hunt’s Miata started, and we all arrived back at the house to pack up for departure the next morning.

Day 16-Robbinsville, NC to Hopkinsville, KY (410miles)

We departed our 4-day home in Robbinsville, NC to begin our journey west to home. We turned north to drive through Smokey Mountain National Park toward Knoxville. We passed through an intriguing town of Cherokee which everyone wanted to go back and explore and the “Vegas” of Tennessee, Pigeon Forge i.e., Dollywood. We passed over the Cumberland Gap and made an emergency stop in Jellico, TN to examine the “misfiring” of Dell and Debbie’s engine. We encountered some very kind people in the gas station and the O’Reilly’s Auto Parts who worked on Sunday and knew people who would work on Sunday to repair their car. They got Dell’s car running again. After the ordeal, we treated ourselves to lunch at the original KFC. In route, we passed 2 Amish wagons barreling down the 2-lane highway, no competition for the Miatas.



Day 17-Hopkinsville, KY to Sullivan, MO (324 miles)

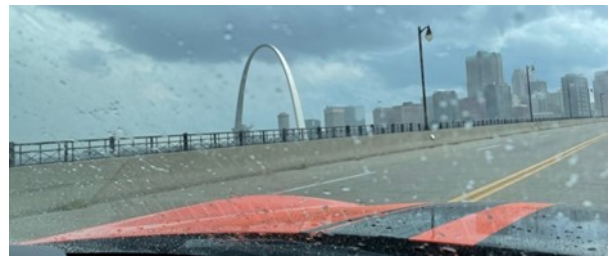
We started the day by cleaning the sprinkle off the cars and the “Route 66” speech at breakfast given by our new run leader, Steve Waid. We were due to arrive at “The Arch” in St. Louis, MO in time for a picnic lunch at park. Along the way, the landscape was lush and green but to our disappointment, the horse farms were to our north. We encountered our favorite road sign during the trip on this stretch of road, “100 is the temperature not the speed limit.” We crossed many bridges over streams and rivers in many towns with names ending in “ville. We passed countless corn and tobacco farms and churches galore. We



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crossed the Wabash River in Evansville, IN and drove through Mount Vernon, IN to get to our revised lunch location. In Illinois, most the houses we passed en route had large, covered porches with rocking chairs and hanging plants. Our lunch plans were changed by the threat of torrential rainstorm in St. Louis and our hunger not able to wait until St. Louis to be satisfied. Our lunch destination was the top-rated café in town, Bonnie's Café at the Mount Vernon Airport. Our GPS directed us to a short cut to the café via 4 miles of gravel roads through endless cornfields. The four cars continued to follow the route with a little whining, wondering how many of our food-loving SDMC members would have chosen not to continue on the gravel roads. Our experience at the airport was like nothing we could have planned. Lunch was edible and cheap (about \$5/person) but we met the airport manager while we were positioning for our photo op. He became our photographer and then asked if we would allow him to use our photo in the airport newsletter wearing our new Mt. Vernon Aviation t-shirts and ballcaps. After lunch, we set out to see the Gateway Arch in St Louis. Dell's car started misfiring again, so he and Debbie detoured to St. Clair to an auto parts store. The Hunts followed them into St. Clair in case there was a problem. The Waids and the Thompsons continued to try to find their way to their destination as the threat of rain became real with raindrops the size of grapes. We had to settle for viewing the Arch from our Miatas with the tops up! We stopped at the Jesse James and Toy and Truck Museums before we finally reached our destination of Sullivan, Mo with the NC's limping in behind us



a few hours and a new cylinder coil later.

Day 18-Sullivan, Mo to Joplin, Mo (236 miles)

We awoke in Sullivan Mo, all in the same hotel (one of the least desirable of the trip/not a Hampton Inn) and ready to continue our Route 66 journey. First stop was Meramec Caverns. Our guide was a native to the area and studying theater at The University of Missouri. The tour was

enhanced by his insight and knowledge of local history and by his beautiful whistling

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as he guided us through the caverns. We viewed the supposed Jesse James hideout, witnessed the beautiful 25-foot formation with a light show known as the “Stage Curtain”, and experienced a climb up 58 steps to the Wine Room and table. After our stop at the caverns, we continued to our lunch destination “Missouri Hicks



BBQ” next to the Wagon Wheel Motel. The BBQ was delicious and the cobbler we enjoyed for dessert was the best ever! We continued our journey driving through Cuba to view the murals and stopping for photos at the giant rocking chairs, The Munger Moss Motel, Gay Parita’s Filling Station and Garage, and a drive through Red Oak II ghost town. We arrived at our destination of Joplin, MO safe and sound. (Little did we know



this would be our last day together on the trip as a group of 4 cars!)



Day 19-Joplin, Mo to Oklahoma City, OK (232 miles)

We awoke, enjoyed our usual breakfast discussing the plan for the day, loaded the cars, met in the parking lot, turned on our radios, and started our Miatas (all but one) ready to take on the day! The Hunt’s Miata was reliving the Fontana Dam experience of deciding not to start even with Dell’s portable charger! The Waids and Thompsons departed to get more kicks on Route 66 while the Hunt’s waited for AAA to tow the dead NC to a shop in Joplin. Dell and Debbie stayed behind as well. The two couples checked back into the same hotel, rented a car, and took a side trip to the coveted Marie Drummond, i.e. Pioneer Woman’s Ranch in Pawhuska,



OK. Meanwhile, we continued the trip as planned with the reliable (newer and less likely to have maintenance issues) ND’s. We drove through Joplin, crossed the state line briefly into Kansas through Galena and Baxter Springs, then into Oklahoma. Our first stop was at the “Dairy King” for a

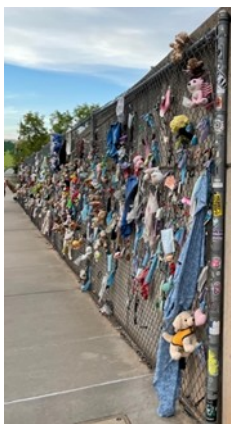


memorable visit with owner, a mid-morning ice cream cone, and a comfort stop that was one of a kind (we hope!!). We bypassed a visit to the newly remodeled Coleman Theater, to make our way to the Blue Whale. After a visit to the Blue Whale, the seasoned Route 66 travelers (The Waids) went on the shortest and most direct route to our hotel for the night on the west side of Oklahoma City in Yukon, OK (home to Garth Brooks). We stopped at the “Space Cowboy”, before arriving at the Rock Café for lunch at our usual lunch time, 3 pm. After a “stick to your ribs” (probably for years) lunch, we continued our sight-seeing trip past the round barn

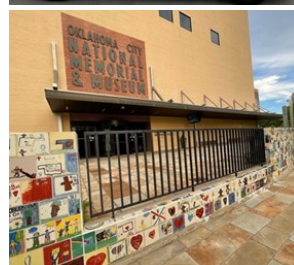


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and arrived at the “Pop Bottle” at dusk for a tourist stop, comfort stop, and a soda of course. Onward we traveled, trying to reach the Oklahoma City Memorial before it closed. It was a must see on the list and we didn’t want to backtrack into the city during rush hour the next morning. We passed the giant cross, the capital building and arrived with an hour and a half to tour the Memorial. It was a highlight of the day allowing for a time of reflection, the Memorial was peaceful and mesmerizing. We arrived at the hotel in Yukon at dusk, still full of lunch and ready to consume the wine we purchased



at the Biltmore Winery in Asheville more than a week ago. By the way, it tasted great, but I think anything would have! The Waids had checked in early enough to have a nap and were energized to listen to our stories from the day while talking in the lobby. Meanwhile the Hunts and Dell and Debbie were settling back in again in Joplin after making the best of the day lost to car trouble, and touring a site they really wanted to see. Their report was the part to fix their car should be available in the morning and they hoped to be back on the road by noon.



Day 20-Oklahoma City, OK to Tucumcari, NM (353 miles)

After breakfast, 2 cars continued their Route 66 travels, while the other 2 cars awaited their car repair with hopes of a noon departure. We traveled through many small towns, crossing over the pony bridges, taking in the sites from our Miatas, before stopping at the National Route 66 Museum in Elk City, for a few hours. We continued our journey, crossing into Texas, making a stop at the “U Drop Inn” for a photo op. We continued driving past the leaning water tower, the giant cross (Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ/19 stories tall/built in 1995), and



into Amarillo, past “The Big Texan” (we didn’t stop for lunch since we were not up for that much food), and into Cadillac Ranch where we took a stretch break to walk around a bit. We inherited a few half empty cans of spray paint, so we left our mark (at least for a few minutes). Afterwards, we continued to the Midpoint Cafe and much to our disappointment, arrived after it had closed. We then crossed into New Mexico, through the ghost town of Glenrio, ultimately ending up at the Motel Safari. We had dinner at Del’s Diner, and then drove the strip at night to view all the neon lights. We then went back to a surprisingly comfortable and updated nostalgic motel for a good night’s rest. Meanwhile, the two NC’s were traveling at warp speed trying to rendezvous with us in Winslow, AZ the next day. They ended up stopping close to midnight and were about 100 miles behind us.



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Summer 2021 Road Trip, Cont'd from prev. pg.

Day 21-Tucumcari, NM to Winslow, AZ (438miles)

We checked out of the Motel Safari and returned to Del's Diner for breakfast prior to departing Tucumcari, anticipating bad weather ahead based on the dark clouds. We stopped at Clines Corner for Route 66 souvenirs but found nothing worth taking up valuable trunk space! We drove through Albuquerque, across the continental divide (the highest point on Route 66), and into Gallup to have lunch at the famous El Rancho Hotel. The lunch was delicious, and we were amazed at the hotel's history; and the photos of all the famous



people who had stayed there. We then crossed the border into Arizona, driving through some beautiful scenery and under some ominous clouds. We drove through Holbrook to see the teepees at the Wigwam Hotel, made a stop at the giant jackrabbit, past the Petrified Forest National Park, and continued driving into Winslow AZ to stand on the corner



before the rains hit! After the obligatory photos, we had an

ice cream mid-day snack, and bought the necessary souvenirs. We then drove on to the La Posada Hotel to check in for the night and managed to arrive at the same time as the rain and about a half hour ahead of the other two San Diego Miatas. We all settled into our rooms and met for a delicious dinner in the hotel restaurant, The Turquoise Room. The food was 5-star but the service not so. We still enjoyed our meal over stories told about the last 3 days we had spent apart. This was our last evening together, as in the morning we all were heading our separate ways. The hotel was spectacular and like many we had seen in the last few days full of history.

Day 22-Winslow, AZ to Wickenburg, AZ or Phoenix, AZ or Scripps ER in San Diego, CA (200 miles to Phoenix and to Wickenburg and 550 miles to Scripps ER)

We awoke the next morning to find we'd slept in a bit. We had expected to meet everyone at the hotel for breakfast, only to find a text from The Hunts that they had a medical emergency during the night and had departed for Scripps ER to extend their vacation at the Scripps Spa as they so endearingly call it. The rest of us met for breakfast, packed our vehicles and departed our most luxurious accommodations of the trip. We never did all end up on the corner of Winslow AZ together, maybe next time? The three remaining cars drove through the gorgeous mountains of Northern



Arizona south, through the twisty roads of Prescott, past Terry's hometown, until we reached Wickenburg, where we dropped off the Waids and Dell and Debbie where they spent the night before continuing their trip westward. We headed to Phoenix to spend a couple of days with our daughter.

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Summer 2021 Road Trip, Cont'd from prev. pg.

Day 23-Phoenix, AZ. We ran into Richard Taylor from SDMC and his grandson in the hotel elevator, they had just witnessed the Diamondbacks no-hit the Padres at Bank One Park. We attended the game the next day and were witness to a Padres win!

Day 24-Phoenix, AZ to Escondido, CA (310 miles)

HOME SWEET HOME!!!

Writers Note: It has been 3 months since we returned from our Summer 2021 road trip, this is a recollection of the trip as I remember it and am able to decipher my messy handwriting.



Remember, all the most
up-to-date and complete
information for our events is
on our website at
www.sandiegomiataclub.org
Check there regularly for changes
and additional details!

Upcoming Events Elsewhere

12th Annual Devil's Highway Run

Springerville, AZ

June 3-5, 2022

Flyin' Miata Summer Camp

June 10-11 2022

Miata Reunion 2022

Barber Motorsports Park

July 29, 30, 31, 2022 www.miatareunion.com

Miata's at the Gap

August 4-7, 2022 www.gapmiatas.com

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Steve Norris
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Dona Thompson
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Events Coordinator—Steve Norris	events@sandiegomiataclub.org
Webmaster/Postmaster—Steve Norris	webmaster@sandiegomaitaclub.org
Club Regalia—Ann & Steve Luby	regalia@sandiegomiataclub.org
Historian—Elinor Shack	mshack@san.rr.com

Twists & Turns Staff

Editor—Larry Lloyd	newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org
Proofreaders—Lynn Nolan, Tom Thompson, John Lord	

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Contacts

The Web

www.sandiegomiataclub.org

Mail

San Diego Miata Club
P.O. Box 180456
Coronado, CA 92178-0456

E-Mail

Most club communication is conducted via e-mail through a Groups.io named SDMC-Mail.

Follow these steps:

1. Go to <http://groups.io/g/SDMC-mail> (capitalization matters!).
2. Click the button labeled "Apply for Membership to This Group" on the bottom left side of the page
3. Enter the email address you want to use.
4. Your account will be approved after confirmation of club membership.
5. You will receive an email to confirm your address.
6. Please go into the profile section and enter your display Name, First and Last name preferred.
7. Select a Message Delivery and Format option.
8. For complete instructions and club email etiquette, go to the "For Members" section on the SDMC website.



Member Discounts

Many 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 (30-35 words). Contact newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org for additional information.

Automotive Services

American Battery. Miata batteries and all other batteries. 525 W. Washington Escondido, 760.746.8010. Contact Jeff Hart-Februaryer. Fleet discount on all products.

Auto Image Paintless Dent Repair, leather/vinyl/plastic repair, headlight restoration & paint touch up. Free estimates at your home or work. Contact Britt Colton. 619.244.2227, Discount: 10%

Bumper Rescue, Bumper, body and collision repair with excellent quality and paint matching. Near Rocky's old location. Free estimates and free Uber rides back home once you drop off your car. 10% off with mention of this ad. Contact Shay at 619.286.7377.

Dent Time. fast reasonable paintless dent removal. 800.420.DENT 93368). They come to your door, provide quick and professional service.

Express Tire. Auto repair, tires. 12619 Poway Rd., Poway. 858.748.6330. Manager Dick Dolan. Discount 10% on parts & labor incl. tires.

Good-Win Racing LLC. Miata intakes, exhausts, shocks, springs & goodies from Racing Beat, Moss & more. Special club pricing on RoadsterSports Items only. 858.775.2810. sales@good-win-racing.com

Hawthorne Wholesale Tire. Tires, wheels, brakes & suspension. 877 Rancheros Dr, San Marcos. Discount. 10% 760.746.6980.

Knobmeister Quality Images. 3595 Gray Cir. Elbert CO 80106-9652. Joe Portas, joe@knobmeister.com . 303.730.6060.

Langka Corp. Guaranteed paint chip and restoration products. 800.945.4532. www.langka.com Discount. 30%.

Rocky's Miatomotive 696 Naples St. Chula Vista 91911 858.273.2547. Discount: 10% on labor.

Lutz Tire & Service Alignment specialist, tires. 2853 Market St San Diego 619.234.3535. Ask for Mike. Discount. 10% on parts (tires not included).

Pitstop Autoglass. Rock chip repairs free to SDMC members. Must show membership card. In-shop only. 858.675.GLASS (4527)

Porterfield Enterprises Brake pads, r

rotors. 1767 Placentia Ave Costa Mesa 949.548.4470. Discount: 15% on Porterfield

& Hawke brake pads, \$10 off rotors, \$9.25 per pt of Motul 600 brake fluid.

Smart Car Care Store—SDMC members received 10% discount. 2260 Main St., Suite 3, Chula Vista 91911 619.575.9274 or 1217 Simpson Way, Escondido, 92029 760.871.8000 smartcarcareproducts.com

Stuart Terry Auto. Specializing in Miata A/C problems, recommended by Rocky's Miatomotive. 4858 El Cajon Blvd. SD 92115. 6129.287.9626. Ask for Stuart, 10% discount on parts & labor to \$50

Thompson Automotive. Cool Miata accessories, oil filter relocation kits, gauge kits, air horns, brakes, Voodoo knobs & MORE Discount. 10% 949.366.0322. www.thompson-automotive.com

TJM Enterprises (formerly Magnolia Auto body) Restorations, Body Work. 10027 Prospect Ave. Santee. 619.562.7861 Ask for TJ. Discount: 10% on parts and labor.

Tri-City Paint. Professional detailing, products, paint, airbrushes, car covers. West Miramar:858.909.2100, Santee: 619.448.9140. Discount: body shop price #CM6660.

Mazda Dealerships

Mazda of El Cajon. 619.590.3700. Discount 10% on parts & labor. VIP Membership: 3 oil changes for \$19.95 with \$5 going to Rady's Childrens Hospital.

Mazda of Escondido. 760.755.5901 Discount: 20% on most parts; 15% on labor (except smog, oil changes, and tire rotation). For purchase, ask for **Patrick Howard**.

Team Kia Mazda, 541 N. Johnson Ave., El Cajon, CA 92022; 619-444-7200, DISCOUNTS: 20% off parts and 15% off service at Team KIA Mazda for SDMC members.

Other Services

David Bryan, your friendly neighborhood REALTOR; Coldwell Banker West Realty. I sell garages with homes! SDMC members who buy or sell a home through me receive a 1 year free home warranty. 619.672.0493. DavidBrealtor@cox.net. DRE#01009295.



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