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## *Around The Bend...* by Jay Hofaker, President

Our top down days are getting shorter and cooler, but we've got some more events planned for everyone. We all know that the best way to look at the fall colors is with the top down!

The last event of the year has been scheduled. Reserve December 5th for this year's club Holiday Party. We're heading back downtown to the Old Spaghetti Factory as the food and service was excellent last year. It's sure to be another fun time, so sign up on the events page at the club web site. We'll hold officer elections and have our annual gift exchange (\$15 gift per couple).

Speaking of elections, now the time to thinking about nominations for club officers. If you're thinking that someone else will take care of things, think again. If only four or five people do everything, they'll get burned out and step away from the club. Then who will host a rally or be an officer? If you're interested in becoming a club officer, contact Ben Hermann (who will be next year's President). Also, the sign up form for events will be at the Holiday Party. Think about hosting a rally, tour or mingle in 2005. Please give this some serious thought.

Keep that top down and the heater on....

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## Happy Anniversary! It's Been 15 Years Of Fun!

To modify the line from the Grateful Dead song Truckin', "What a long, fun trip it's been!"

In 1989 the Mazda Miata was introduced to the world, a world where there were no small, two seater convertibles available. The MGB was gone, the Fiat (Fix It Again, Tony!) 124 was last sold in 1985, and well, there wasn't a sporty fun car to be had. Then Mazda stepped up to the plate and delivered the winning pitch.

The Miata was ten years in the making, as supposedly in 1979, automotive journalist Bob Hall was asked by a managing director of Mazda what type of car they should build. "A small open two seater" was his reply. Two years later, Hall was working for Mazda, and though often credited as "the Father of the Miata", all the passion that is infused into the car, came from everyone at Mazda who worked on this project. In 1989, the Mazda Miata was unveiled at the Chicago Auto Show and received acclaim from everyone.

The base edition of the 1990 Miata weighed only 2116 pounds, listed at \$13,800 and Mazda sold 35,944 of them in the United States. If they could have made 100,00 of them, they would have sold, and been sold at sticker price. Reports of Miata's being priced way over list were common. (Any

original owners of a 1990 willing to tell us what they paid?) The first three colors available for the Miata were Classic Red, Mariner Blue and Crystal White and all were only available with a black top and interior.

The first special edition was the British Racing Green in 1991 and Special Edition's or SE's were appearing on a yearly basis, and later were introduced as M-edition's.

In 1999, Mazda brought us the 10th Anniversary Special Edition, with a ton of features, including a six speed transmission. This past year, Mazda introduced the turbo MazdaSpeed Miata, but the base model still remains light weight and sporty. The Miata provides the most fun you can have with your clothes on.

Is fifteen years to long for a model run? Nah! Mazda doesn't think so, and neither do we! Speculation among Miata nuts is running wild about what the third generation is going to look like. One guess is the Miata will retain its svelte lines with a touch of the RX-8 front end and it will still be piston powered, no rotary for the Miata. But we've been wrong before!

As the Little River Band sang, "Happy anniversary, baby, got you on my mind!"

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## The Madison Madness Route Ready To Be Run

John and Marsha Shaub have finalized all the details for this sure to be another "don't miss event" of the year. You can make this a two day event with an overnight stay in Madison, or return home on Saturday, the choice is yours. The roads will be Miata friendly, which we know means twisty with beautiful scenery.

We'll be leaving from the McDonalds in Greensburg at exit 132 off of I-74. Meet there at 10:00 on Saturday, October 23, and after a driver's meeting, the first car will be sent off at 11:00. If you're going to stay overnight in Madison, make your reservation at the Hilltop Inn (812-265-3221). Each room has a balcony that overlooks both the town of Madison and the Ohio River.

No fee for this tour, no prizes. Just great roads and a great weekend with new and old friends. Don't forget to sign up at the club web page to let our Tour Masters know how many cars will be making the trip!

## Leaf Peeper and Historical Mingle

Join us for a Saturday afternoon event on October 9. We'll be touring Indianapolis looking at the fall foliage and getting a quick history lesson! The approximately hour and a half tour ends at the famous Mug 'n Bun in Speedway.

We'll meet at the east side of the Glendale Shopping Center. There is a parking lot on the east side on Rural between 62nd street and East Kessler Blvd. We'll meet at 3:15 with cars off at 3:30.

Unable to tour, but want to dine with us? We'll be at the Mug 'n Bun by 5:00.

Don't forget to sign up at the club web page to let the Tour Master know how many cars will be touring! See you there!

## IMC Members Head For St. Louis

The 2004 Mazda reunion "Meet Me In St. Louie" starts on September 30th and Mike Head has volunteered to lead a caravan of attendees across I-70. Current plans are to leave from the rest area west of the Plainfield exit on I-70 on September 30th at 9:30 AM.

Questions? Contact Mike from the club website. As CW McCall sang, "Mercy sakes alive, looks like we got us a convoy!".



## Indy SCCA Horrible Headstone Hunt

Not going to St. Louis, but looking for something fun to do in your Miata? Join the Indy SCCA's "Headless Harry's Horrible Headstone Hunt on Saturday evening on October 23rd. More information can be found at [www.indyscca.org](http://www.indyscca.org). (Hint! Print out the pdf flyer for \$5 off the entry fee!)

## November "Hidden Drives" Tour to Nashville

Last year, Sara J filled an open spot on the club event page with a "Hidden Drives" shopping tour to Nashville. She just looked at the event page and there was an open date this year also, so she's going to do it again!

Scheduled for November 20th, Hidden Drives II will take the scenic route down to Nashville. Once we get there, you're free to do what you want. You may park your car and wander around, shop, eat lunch, or you can keep on driving!

Look for more information in next month's Open Road and on the events page at the club web site. Join us to discover how this event got its name.

## Road Trip to MMG 2004!

# IMC Members Go To Miata Midwest Gathering

Miata owners from all over the Midwest met in Cincinnati the weekend of September 11th for the Miata Midwest Gathering event hosted by the Greater Cincinnati Club (GCMC). Included in this number were five cars from IMC.

For those arriving Friday evening, they were met at the hotel by a GCMC representative and, if they had preregistered, received their MMG 2004 information packets. These packets included name tags, a pass to Winton Woods park (where the event was being held), a bound booklet with event activities and maps of the scheduled tours and a car magnet with the MMG logo. There was a drive scheduled to a drive-in movie that evening that some went on, while others decided to relax at the hotel.

Saturday morning, cars gathered at the reserved shelters in Winton Woods and the Miata madness began. Cars were wiped down, gussied up and entered into the "Best of Show" contest. Breakfast was served, acquaintances renewed, introductions were made and cars were looked at.

Michael Valentine of Valentine 1 radar detectors opened the seminar session with a discussion of radar and radar detectors. AIM Tuning was next up, with Shane Benson and Chuck Wills giving a brief presentation and then answering questions about Miatas. Also giving short presentations were the folks from daytripsincincinnati.com (a web site that has well documented day trips around the Cincy area), Roadster Valet (a neat garment bag that hangs off the back of the car's seat) and Koni shocks sent a representative.

A picnic lunch of hotdogs and burgers was devoured by the participants and plans for the afternoon were discussed. There was a scenic tour of the area and a spirited drive planned and soon groups for each of the drives were off and away. After all the cars returned from the drives, a group photo of both cars and participants was taken.

Before dinner, a drawing for prizes which included T-shirts, Mazda books, hats, Mazda mugs and cups, Mazda pens and more was held. Afterwards, participants were urged to don their Hawaiian shirts and everyone headed down to the Hawaiian Luau which was sponsored by Mazda. Roast pig (which had been cooking on the spit by the shelter house!) was the main course. No one walked or drove away hungry!

Sunday morning was the drive to the Hofbrau House in Newport. We ran in two groups to keep things manageable. The route was fun to drive and a highlight of the tour was the ferry crossing of the Ohio River. We met up at the Hofbrau House, ate well and listened to the "Oompa" band. After lunch, it was hit the highway back to Indy.

Pictures can be found at <http://dustbunny.com/photos/2004/mmg/> and at <http://2cat.com/photos/mmg/index.html>.



Kathy Collings, Susie and Norm Arbuckle and Gary Collings at the MMG.

## Late Summer Rally Results

What a great day for the Late Summer Rally. We started with a breakfast meeting in Indy, then headed for Batesville. After a quick driver's meeting, 23 cars were off on a twisting course through the countryside to test the observation and trivia skills of the drivers and navigators.

After following the less than perfect directions, we gathered at the Dairy Cottage in Brookville to figure out who would come out on top. When the scores were tallied, Roger McCalister and his son John came up with a nearly perfect score. The only wrong answer came from mis-reading one question. That was good enough to take home \$100. There was a tie for second place between John and Marsha Schaub and Ken and Sara Koehler. Both couples took home \$35 each.

## Correction

Bruce Curtiss is great-grandson of Glenn Curtiss, not his grandson as stated in the August issue of the Open Road. Bruce admits to being old, but not quite that old!



Chuck and Teresa Wills were dressed in their finest Hawaiian shirts and leis for the Luau Dinner. Chuck hands over their meal tickets.

*How To Do It*

# Two People, Ten Days, 2000 Miles, One Miata

by Gary G. Marconi

After a three day trip to Deal's Gap last year, Linda and I wanted to take a longer trip in the Miata. We decided on a ten day trip to Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia to tour some Civil War battlefields and visit Colonial Williamsburg. The size of our Miata's trunk presented us with a challenge: How do we take enough clothing and gear for 10 days and still have space for whatever we would undoubtedly collect during the trip? We were fortunate in that we have a 2001 so that we have the larger trunk and no interfering spare tire. The decisions that we made and how well our choices worked are presented as a starting point for others who might want to go on long trips in their Miata.

As with most vacations, you never know what to take with you. With the Miata, this decision can be critical. We found a web site dedicated to the principle that no matter how long you are gone or how far you go, you don't need more than you can carry in an airplane carry-on bag (<http://www.oratory.com/onebag/list.html>). The site has lists for both men and women. Here are some highlights from the site: a) Don't take anything that you "might need" unless it can't be purchased on route. b) You can wash clothes on the way in a laundromat, hotel, or even your hotel room. c) Try not to take cotton clothes. If you have to wash them in your room, they may not dry overnight.

Convinced that we could get by with one carry on bag each, we tried our airline carry-on bags but they were actually too big to get two of them in the trunk. Then a miracle happened. We found the perfect bags at Target for \$10.00 each! There were no outside pouches, just a simple carry-on bag;



The Target bags were a perfect fit in the trunk.

13" X 21" X 8". They fit perfectly side-by-side in the Miata trunk. There was enough room left over for a small duffel that served as a catch-all for things such as extra shoes and our rain gear. We assumed that we would need a luggage rack so we bought a removable rack from Moss Motors that was easy to install and easy to remove. (<http://www.miatamania.com/Shop/ViewProducts.aspx?PlateIndexID=33254>) We looked for some kind of waterproof duffel to put on the rack because it was inevitable that it would rain. We bought the Seal Line Baja Bag 55HD. Kayakers use these bags to store clothing and other gear while they kayak. These bags hold a lot and are completely waterproof. They fold flat and take up almost no room in the trunk when not in use. ([http://www.seallinegear.com/vinyl\\_bags.asp?Action=BajaBag](http://www.seallinegear.com/vinyl_bags.asp?Action=BajaBag)) However, these bags are too high when strapped on the rack; you can't see behind you. Seal Line makes a waterproof duffel with a lower profile that would work better on a Miata luggage rack. (<http://www.seallinegear.com/packs.asp?Action=ZipDuffel>) As it turned out, we didn't use the bags or the rack.

GoMiata sells an item called a deck bag that fits in the well behind

the seats, with or without the down (<http://store.miataparts.org/gomiatadeckbag.html>) and allows you to take advantage of that unused area. You won't believe how much you can store in one of these. The bag securely attaches with velcro straps to the seat belt towers or top frame; also includes carrying handles so you can grab it and go! This item is a must-have item for any Miata owner. It costs \$70 and is worth much more.

We thought a CB radio would be useful on a long trip so I attached a stick antenna to the luggage rack and ran the cable into the passenger compartment through the trunk wall (there is a convenient hole on the passenger side of the trunk wall. The radio slipped between the driver seat and the console.

Even though we had plenty of maps and AAA TripTiks, our most useful navigational tool was a GPS receiver. I stored all our hotel locations as waypoints as well as all significant route markers; we never got lost. We used a Garmin GPS Map V.

Finally, instead of carting around a bunch of CDs for entertainment, we loaded up Linda's iPod (Apple Computer's mp3 player) with more music than we could ever need (it will play audio books as well). We used an accessory (\$30) that allows the iPod to play over the FM radio frequency in the car.

That's about it. We kind of overdid it but it was our first long trip and we learned from it.

Summary:

- The carry-on bags from Target were not only a bargain but perfect for the job.
- The luggage rack was so useless for us that we sold it when we got back.
- The Baja Bag was much too big; the waterproof duffel would have been better.
- The deck bag is one of the most useful items available for the Miata.
- The GPS receiver was indispensable
- The CB radio could have been useful but we never had need for it; no traffic problems.

*Gary and Linda Marconi are the proud owners of two Miatas. A Classic Red 2001 (his) and a Mahogany Mica 2000 SE (hers).*

# Sun Shines On Huber Winery Tour

by Jim Nutt

As ordered, the weather was perfect for a great top down drive in our wonderful roadsters. This year's road run, as always, was a great time, ending in at the Huber Winery/Farm Market/Petting Zoo near Starlight, Indiana.

Once again, this tour proved to be one of the more popular events on the club calendar. At 10:30, there were 32 Miatas, including 9 new members, gathered in the upper parking lot at the Seasons Lodge. Nancy Herman was filling in for the Wills as Rally Master and soon all cars were checked in and ready to roll on the 82 mile scenic tour that Chuck and Teresa had devised for us between Nashville and the winery.

At times the drive was a great deal like a European road rally, with lots of hard down shifting and apex seeking cornering flying along roads arched over with heavy forests. What a great route!

After we got to the winery, and into our special pond side parking area, we were treated to the sights and aromas of fall in Indiana. The Huber's outdoor grill was preparing sandwiches; wine tasting and snack trays were available; or you could shop in a wonderful farmer's market. A large tent was pitched in the barnyard, and a small combo band played as shoppers took a break. What a perfect top down day.

This is a delightful location, at the end of a really fun run. Thanks and a round of applause to Chuck and Teresa for setting up the tour. Nancy Hermann also gets our thanks for handling Rally Master duties in place of the Wills.

*Tour photos by Bob Wiley and Sara J McBride*



President Jay Hofaker hands off the registration sheet.



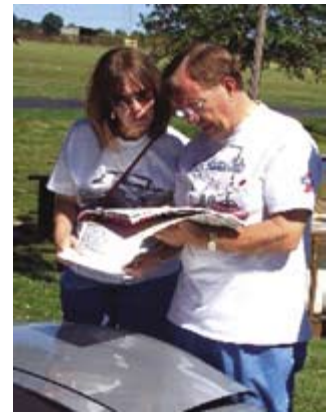
Tom Newgent (R) studies the route he'll be driving.



You're not ready to go until your club badge is on straight!



Rally Master Nancy Hermann talks about the tour activities at the driver's meeting.



Jim and Martha are figuring out where the heck they are and which route to take back to Indy!



OK, hats, sunglasses and he *finally* decided which shirt to wear!



Members inspect a Hard Dog "Deuce" roll bar on the Pittman's car.

# How To Filet A Fish - The End Of The Tale

by Chuck Wills

Many of you will remember "How to Filet a Fish, Part I" from the July Open Road. It was the story of the AIM Tuning crew building a Miata race car, nicknamed "The Fish", on a \$2000 budget and going to Florida to race. When we last left our heroes, they were in southern Kentucky heading south. Having left Indy early a day early, they had plenty of time to make the trip and spend some time on the beach before the competition. All was well until smoke started to pour from underneath the car. (Editors note: Open Road sources say the smoke may or may not have been induced by a blast of speed.)

The team limped over to the side of the road to see what happened. They hoped for something simple like a broken oil line, but it was much worse than that. The #4 piston and rod had decided to exit the engine quickly and violently. There were three holes in the engine block, and what was left of the connecting rod looked like a crumpled pop can.

So there we were, stuck in Kentucky with a broken car and no way to tow it anywhere. After a quick group meeting, we decided to try and fix the car and continue on to Florida. We had to be there by 10am Friday, so time was short.

Wednesday 3pm: Cell phones flipped open and we started calling everyone we could think of. Our list of needs was fairly significant, a truck and trailer, an engine and a shop to install the new engine. Then it got interesting.

SCCA member and all-around good guy Don Kline immediately headed south with his van and trailer to rescue us. With his rig, we would at least be mobile. Shane contacted Mike Weinbrener, a Spec Miata racer from Louisville. Mike runs a performance shop and said we were welcome to use his place to rebuild the car. The last component was an engine and where do you find a Miata engine in southern Kentucky? You don't.

Wednesday 4pm: Kentucky is NASCAR and Corvette country, and "What's a Mirada" was the normal response to our question. About to give up, I remembered that the Ford Escort GT used a variant of the Miata engine, and with some modification it might work. We called salvage yards again, looking for the Escort block. As luck would have it, there was a place six miles away that had three of them! Things were looking up. We drove over to the junk yard and picked the best of what they had. The engine was of unknown model year and mileage, but seemed to spin freely enough. Since they didn't know the heritage of the engine, we were able to buy it for about \$100. That's about \$300 less than if we bought one in Indy. What a deal!

Wednesday 7pm: Don showed up, the Fish was loaded on the trailer, we got our engine and headed north. It was a difficult thing to go north instead of south, but at least we had a plan. We dropped everything off at Mike's shop around 1:00am and retired to a local flea bag motel.

Thursday 7am: We got to Mike's shop bright and early to formulate our game plan. Shane and I would remove the engine and turbo system from the Fish, while Jay and Zac would strip the new engine and get it ready to transplant. Since we were putting a front wheel drive Ford engine into a rear wheel drive Mazda chassis, many things from the old engine would have to be reused on the new one, even if they had been damaged in the explosion.

We disassembled and cleaned everything until it sparkled so that we could inventory the parts we would need to fix or fabricate. The oil pan and windage tray were beat, bent and had holes in them. With help from the welder next door we were able to repair them as good as new within two hours.

Thursday Noon: (22 hours to go): By lunch, we were doing quite well. The new engine looked very good on the inside and the old parts were nearly ready

to start the re-build process. The car was an oily mess, so Zac was elected to clean the engine compartment and underside of the car. Then the rebuild process began. We had about 10 hours to finish the rebuild and get it in the car, before we absolutely had to be back on the road. The rebuild had gone smoothly with few surprises so far, so our goal seemed easily attainable.

Thursday 3pm: It was getting tough. The differences in the engine were getting pretty obvious; we had to take a hacksaw to the back of the head just to make everything fit close to where it should, and the turbo did not want to cooperate. It took us a good three hours just to get the turbo plumbing bolted together so that it wouldn't leak. The alternator wouldn't fit, so we borrowed a different one from one of Mike's cars and "massaged" it until it fit.

Thursday 6pm: The engine was in the car, and with a few final connections made it started on the first try! The valve train clacked loudly and the exhaust was smoky, but it ran! Within about 20 minutes all of the bad sounds and smells had subsided, leaving the engine purring like any hybrid Miata./ Escort engine should. By 8pm, the car was buttoned up and we were ready to roll. It was a record breaking effort, to rebuild the car in a little over 12 hours.

Then disaster struck again, the clutch wouldn't work. No matter how we pounded on the clutch pedal, the car was stuck in gear. We bled the hydraulics, and did all we could to make it work, to no avail. Still determined, we headed south anyway, but after a few blocks of having to shut the car off at every light, we threw in the towel.

The interesting thing is how this problem actually saved us. In our haste to get the clutch together, we had installed the clutch disk backwards, permanently locking the car in gear. It wasn't until after we tore the engine down in Indy that we found the cause of the first engine failure. The boost gauge (it was only showing 5psi max) and the turbo waste gate broke at the same time which caused the engine to produce about 20psi of boost! So the car was over boosting terribly

Zoom-Zoom to page 7

# Hubler Mazda South

Official Sponsor of the Indy Miata Club

Hubler Mazda is the exclusive Indianapolis dealer for the new MazdaSpeed MX-5! This exciting car features an intercooled turbocharger putting out 178 HP, it's sport tuned, has a lowered suspension and 17" Hart Racing wheels. The MazdaSpeed MX-5 also has alloy foot pedals, leather seats and many more features.



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\* MSRP excludes destination, tax, title and license fees.

Hubler Mazda is offering Indy Miata Club members a 15% parts discount at their Plainfield location. This discount will soon be available at the Greenwood location.

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## Filet of Fish *continued from page 7*

and we had no way of knowing. If we had made it to the competition, we would have blown the new engine on the spot and been stranded in Florida. So, it's a good thing we messed up the clutch job.

We'll be going to Florida to race in next year's event, and yes, we'll be towing the car this time.

## Club Classifieds

**For Sale: 10th AE** - Sara and I have decided to end the "Miata Era" and are selling our 10th Anniversary Miata. This car is in excellent condition with approximately 41300 miles, brand new Falken radials and all the standard equipment of the 10th AE. We are the second owners. Car is always garaged and never sees inclement weather unless we accidentally get caught in it. We're asking \$12,900. Call Ken Koehler at 317-253-4494 or email from the club website classified section if interested.

**For Sale: Replacement Tube header for early M2's** - Cast iron headers on '99 and '00 M2s have been known to crack. This problem solved by replacing the cast iron header with a tube header. This one is from my '01 when I put on a Racing Beat tuned header. Only \$50. Contact Gary Marconi from the club website classified section if interested.

# Madison Madness - October 23 -24

**October 9** - Leaf Peeper Mingle

**November 13** - Tour to Nashville

**October 23-24** - Madison Madness Tour

**December 5** - Holiday Party at Old Spaghetti Factory

We had a great turnout at the Huber winery tour, including these new members. Welcome!

