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Back Roads...

by Roger Burrill, President

Hello all Miata fans out there!

Well, it's February and looking at my outside temperature gauge, it says that it's a balmy zero degrees outside as I type this month's letter. Not exactly the type of weather you associate with driving around with the top down, is it? Nancy says I am like a caged animal this time of year, hanging around the house looking for some trouble to get into.

In the winter time I try and pass the time by finding inside house projects that need to be done or better yet, projects for the Miata. This year's Miata project is a stereo upgrade and maybe a new convertible top that needs to be replaced. Currently the little car is in various pieces in my garage. If you see us driving around in the rain next spring with the top down and umbrellas up, you will know the new top project didn't go as well as expected.

That's enough about winter! It tends to make me depressed, and we only have a month or so to go before its starts to get warm and nice. I am counting on global warming to make a nice March for us to do some top down driving.

On the club news front I have a few things to report. Memberships have been rolling in pretty good in January and once again you can say you belong to a pretty strong car club. If you have not sent in your membership for 2008, please do so ASAP so as not to miss any news and events. Many thanks go to Mike Selvy and Steve Crouse for keeping our membership roster up to date and in good order.

Your club officers held their first 2008 board meeting with many topics to discuss. During our meeting, I asked my wife Nancy to take minutes for us and somehow before I knew it, she was nominated and voted in as the club's Secretary. I am sure I will pay for that one somehow. It looks as though Jim Quearry, our VP, is going to be very busy this year and so is Sara McBride, who does too many things for the club to mention. I feel very fortunate to have a strong group of Miata veterans on our board of directors.

Other news of course, is the Midwest Miata Gathering (MMG 2008), which is coming together nicely. The MMG committee members have been working very hard to make this event one to be remembered. We will be going live with the MMG website (<http://www.miatamg2008.com/>) on February 1, thanks to Lisa Hurley's hard work. The next time you see Lisa, please extend a big thank you.

We will be having the traditional Presidents dinner meeting February 16th at Papa Joes in Avon, from noon to 3pm, so please mark that date on your calendars. It will be good to see everyone and talk about all the activities in store for 2008.

Our next board meeting is scheduled for March 8th after the MMG event meeting. Board meetings are open to all club members and I would encourage you to attend. Directions and time will be posted on the club website <http://indymiata.org>.

Our rally events calendar is getting somewhat filled with a couple listed and a few in the works, but of course we always need more. (ahem.... Time for president's speech.)

Remember you get out the club what you put into it, and hosting a rally or event is really very easy. Actually I have found the winter a good time to map out rally routes, and a good excuse to get out of the house. We also have some previous rallies posted on the website that can be used. So, hop in your MSV (Miata Support Vehicle) and go somewhere! We have many members in our club and only a few members that host events. If you would like to host an event and need some help, please don't hesitate to drop me a line at president@indymiata.org.

Well that's enough for now, until next month keep warm, and keep the shiny side up!

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Meet Your Officers For 2008

Last month we met our club President, Vice-President and Treasurer. Mike Selvy and Sara J McBride introduce themselves this month.

Mike says "A member since 1994 with my Laguna Blue Miata, I'm happy to assist our club this year as membership director. Old Blue doesn't see the rain much, but she's been on a lot of Indiana roads. Her inaugural trip was the Blue Ridge Parkway from start to finish and many side trips on the way to Georgia via US 129, The Tail of the Dragon. I've contributed an occasional article to the Open Road including my adventures with Blue and winterizing ideas. I even joined some fellow club members towing a Spec Miata out to Laguna Seca. I did a touring lap of that famous course, but must admit it was in a van.

We've got a big year ahead of us and I'm looking forward to our September 2008 Miata Midwest Gathering here in Indianapolis. As we move closer to the event date, we'll need many volunteers as we prepare to have a "Zoom-Zoom" time. I'm counting on you to step up and participate for yet another great Miata event.

Last of all, don't forget to renew your membership!"

Sara J introduces herself: "I've owned my '95 Brilliant Black Miata since 1998 and have loved every mile I've driven. Well, there was that 20 feet of highway in the Tail of the Dragon when I became up close and personal with a semi trailer, but my car took the hit for me and we both lived! I love going on rallies and for some reason have gained a reputation for being a 'spirited driver'. (What's up with that?) I've also planned rallies in the past including several Post Tax Blues and my fall Hidden Drives.

I took over the editorship duties of the Open Road in 2001 and appreciate the articles that members write. (Keep 'em coming!) I enjoy the camaraderie of all the Miata folk I've met and hope to continue to be an integral part of our club.

And I second what Mike said... ' Don't forget to renew your membership!'"

Welcome To Our New Members

Membership Director Mike Selvy reports that as of January 26, the club has 59 existing members who have renewed their membership. We would like to welcome our new members and hope to meet them in person soon.

Don and Sheree Blanton
Chris Fundy
Mike and Arisa Schnelker
Steve Myers

David Stroup (St. Louis)
Randy Erb
Mark and Susan Fullen

Dave's Miata Tip Of The Month

by Dave Besterman

Here's a quick and easy way to get about two additional inches of leg room for your passenger in your late 1990's (or 2000's) model year Miata. In earlier models, the onboard computer was located behind the passenger seat. (This was verified by Conrad Serwatka in his 1995 Black roadster.) A metal stop is located at the rear of the passenger seat inboard support rail to keep the seat from running into the computer. In later years, the computer had been relocated, but for some reason, the seat stop has remained.

Grab a 14 mm socket to loosen the nut and simply rotate the L-shaped stop 180 degrees so that the upright leg of the stop is closer to the rear of the car and retighten the nut. The passenger seat will now go about 2" further back. You may want to spray the nut ahead of time to loosen things up. Mine was really on tight and I had to struggle to break it free. Caution, don't remove the stop altogether, the seat may go too far back and come off the rail and get stuck.

IMC Officers Meet To Plan Club's Future

On Saturday, January 26, IMC officers met to discuss club business and how to guide the club to a stronger future. Attending the meeting were President Roger Burrill, VP Jim Quearry, Treasurer Steve Crouse, Membership Director Mike Selvy and Publications Editor Sara J McBride. Among items discussed were club incorporation and club by-laws, liability insurance for the club, future rallies, club merchandise inventory and distribution of items, new memberships, and the possible need of new officer positions.

It was a consensus by all Board Members that the IMC needs to become a non-profit organization for protection of the Board and Membership against any potential liability that could be incurred through litigation over and above the clubs liability insurance policy coverage. Vice President, Jim Quearry, will work with a legal advisor to review by-laws and other aspects of getting the club incorporated.

A Secretary position was created by the Officers and Nancy Burrill was voted in to take the position. A Club Events Coordinator position was also created and Tom Lewis was voted in for that position.

Future rallies were discussed and how to have new rally masters step up.

Sara indicated that she will update the Rally Masters Guide and print copies and make it available in PDF form from the club website. She will also update and add to the past rally area on the site.

It was agreed that the next Board of Director's meeting would be held on Saturday, March 8th immediately following the MMG events meeting. It was also agreed unanimously that these meetings will be open to all members to attend if they would like and the meeting place and time will be posted on our Club Website (<http://www.indymiata.org>) as well as the minutes from each meeting.

The full minutes of this meeting are posted on the club website.

MMG 2008 Planning Continues On Pace

by Gary Collings

On Saturday, January 26, members of the MMG 2008 planning committee met to discuss the work that had been done so far and what needed to be addressed. Members and others in attendance were Gary and Kathy Collings, Norm and Susie Arbuckle, Lisa and Bill Hurley, Roger and Nancy Burrill, Jim Quearry, Steve Crouse, Mike Selvy, Sara McBride, and Steve Jacobson. Due to a prior commitment, John Schaub was unable to attend but forwarded his findings to Gary and were presented by Steve Jacobson.

Lisa Hurley provided a comprehensive on-line review of the registration site (<http://miatamg2008.com>). We confirmed that PayPal would be the only avenue for registration. Key volunteers designated by group leaders will pay half price (\$75) by personal check. Committee members volunteered to provide Lisa with more information or photos for the website by the following Monday.

Kathy Collings will construct a survey of choices (go-karts, meals, tours, etc) to be mailed with the confirmation notices so that we can get an estimate of what selections appeal to the registrants. Registration at the event will be on Thursday (4:00 – 6:00 PM) at the Wingate and from 8:00 to noon at Hummel. It was decided that the GCMC general release of liability form used for their MMG events needs to be reviewed.

Nancy Burrill reported that Jug's Catering will provide the two evening dinners at \$10 per meal at Hummel Park. She will explore the possibility of a separate lunch on Friday (11:00 – 12:30) to be provided by a local church's men's club. Steve Crouse will explore some related details with the park contact regarding space for banners, speakers systems, parking, and the club house. Nancy confirmed that the Wingate by Wyndham will be the headquarters hotel with a flat room price of \$87 to be held at the group rate until August 26th. The Super 8 hotel is another option with group rates.

Norm Arbuckle reviewed track and tour details. The Poker Run was removed for now as a guided tour option. He will seek rally masters for the Covered



Bridge and Nashville tours. The optional Thursday tour of downtown Indy will start at 7:00 PM. A separate list of vendors will be compiled for acknowledgements purposes. Norm explained the Indy Experience option as a direct registration by link to ride or drive an Indy open wheel racer on September 26. The majority of members supported the purchase of one ride ticket as a give-away incentive to encourage early registrations.

Steve Jacobson presented a Vendor report provided by John Schaub. Chris Johnson, the new general manager of Hubler Mazda, not only wants to help out with the MMG and also wants to pay a one year club membership for every new Miata sold. Jimmy Buff-its Auto Detailing is on board for demo detailing and will bring his paint-less dent repair man. Vendors will be expected to pay the full fee that includes 4 meal tickets. (Vendors will not count in the 150 limit.)

The next meeting for the organizing committee will be on March 8th.

Finding Mia and Tia

by Skip Powers

One of the greatest little movies to come along is the Disney Pixar film titled "Cars". This computer-animated film is set in a world populated entirely by anthropomorphic cars and other vehicles. Many movie and racing greats voiced the characters in the film; Paul Newman, Bonnie Hunt, George Carlin, Cheech Marin, Richard Petty, Mario Andretti and Michael Schumacher, to name a few.

The movie takes place in the forgotten little town of Radiator Springs on the iconic Route 66, which was bypassed by Interstate 40. The scenery has a very distinctive southwest flavor with backdrops borrowed from places like Mexican Hat, Utah and the Cadillac Ranch near Amarillo, Texas. I believe one of the greatest achievements of the Cars animators was their ability to faithfully create the metallic and painted surfaces of the car characters and the reflections those surfaces generate. It is truly amazing to see.

This movie spawned a series of 1:55 scale models that faithfully replicate dozens of the characters in the film from the diminutive forklift Guido to Mack, the 1985 Mack SuperLiner that carried the star of the film, Lightning McQueen, from race to race. Of special interest to Miata fans are the characters Mia and Tia. They are McQueen's "groupies"; a pair of first generation Miatas that follow his racing circuit.

Through the two years that Mattel's toy cars have been released, there have been wild fluctuations in distribution and availability of the various characters. In addition to some stores having trouble keeping the toys in stock, some models are difficult to find because of being shipped in lower numbers than the other characters. Mia and Tia fit in the latter department and were only available on eBay – for three to four times the retail price. Until December 26th, that is, when I finally found only one Mia and Tia at an east side Toys 'R Us. I have not seen a pair since my set. They are finally out there in the Indy area – all you have to do is find them!



President's Luncheon Is 2/16

Roger Burrill, 2008 President of the IMC, would like to extend an invitation to all members to join him for lunch on February 16th at Papa Joes in Avon. No, he will not be picking up everyone's tab for this event.

We will meet at 12 at 8100 E Us Highway 36, Avon, IN (Just East of Dan Jones Rd on Rockville Rd.). Besides huge calzones and pizzas, they offer steak, seafood, and a multitude of desserts.

Miatas are not required for this event, so come out for good food, lots of Miata talk and topics of conversations.

Back Roads/Ozark Spring Tour Is Set

Steve and Kathy Crouse have been persuaded to head west in the Miata this coming spring. They have led several tours east, but this year they're heading southwest and changing mountain ranges.

They're going to the Ozark Mountains instead of the Smokies, to check out back roads there, spend some fun time in Branson MO, and top off the week with the bunch of "Miatas at Eureka Springs". If you are interested in joining them during the week, we suggest you look into lodging reservations ASAP, because they might become scarce.

The tour departs Indy on Saturday morning, June 7, heading for Branson. You'll be staying at the Bradford Inn (www.bradfordinn.us) outside Branson until the morning of June 12 when the group will move down to the Best Western in Eureka Springs (www.eurekabw.com). For more information about "Miatas At Eureka", see www.miatasateureka.com. This has been an annual get-together that will be a regional affair this year.

If you have questions, contact Steve Crouse through the Indy Miata Club email link (treasurer@indymiata.org).

What Is That Sound You Hear?

Why, it's the clock ticking on your membership. This is another reminder about that date on your address label. If it doesn't say 12/31/2008, that means it's time to send your renewal check to maintain your active status with the Indy Miata Club.

There was a renewal form in the January Open Road for your convenience. There's also an application on the club website, just click on the "Join Us" link.

Fill it out, slip in a check for \$20.00 made out to the Indy Miata Club and you're set for another year of fun filled activities and 12 issues of the Open Road.

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2008 Scheduled Events

February 16 - President's Dinner

June 7-15 - Back Roads / Ozark Delight

March 8 - Board of Director's Meeting

July 26 - Brickyard 400 Mingle

April 19 - Post Tax Blues

September 13 - Moto GP Mingle

May 24 - Indy 500 Mingle

September 26 and 27 - Midwest Miata Gathering

May 31 - Pot Luck Run to the Falls

December - Holiday Party

<http://www.indymiata.org>

**Registration
is open!**

miata
Midwest Gathering
2008

<http://miatamg2008.com>