

Miata Fast Track



SEPTEMBER 2005

Issue #140

AROUND THE BEND

**Beware of
Expensive
Imitations**

We had two great events in August – Movie night at the Madera drive-in, and a beautiful dinner cruise on Bass Lake. Our thanks go out to Randy, Cindy, Scott and Nancy for doing the hard part, and to all our friends who attended. These delightful little cars attract such nice people!

**Get In.
Be Moved.**

SAMOA's Ron Petrich also organized a run to Sears Point/Infineon Raceway, to watch the first-ever closed-course IRL race in this country. We got an extra treat, as the Spec Miatas were also racing that day. The Indy cars are impressive, but we could really identify with those cute little cars as they zipped around the track. I had several true Walter Mitty moments that afternoon, and look forward to our next chance to drive on the track.

**Get
involved.
Do
something
for your
club.**

There's still time to join our September 10-11 trip to Mammoth Lakes. It looks like we'll have a good turnout for this trip, which is hosted by Scott and Nancy Moore. The weather's improving, and the drives should be spectacular.

**Join for
the car...
Stay for
the
people.**

Speaking of drives, last month we had several reminders that our fun is also serious business. I had two near misses – once when a driver turned left across multiple lanes of traffic to nearly take off my nose, and another when an obviously impaired driver ran me off the road. (No damage or injuries, thank heaven and good Miata brakes.) Meanwhile, Ken and Tina Axe will be driving their OTM for a while, as they await repairs to their beautiful Strato Blue SE. (Again, no injuries.) Please, for everyone's sake, be careful out there.

We'll see you on the road.

Don

From your Editor...

SJVMC

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

August 18, 2005

Attendees

Members: Don & Lisa Asperger, Tom & Linda Hayward, Ralph & Kathryn Weber, Ken & Tina Axe, Jim Barker, Greg & Ro Almeida, Remy DuCote, Andrew Weber

Guests: Tom & Marci Jarvis

The July 2005 minutes and treasurer's report were approved.

Old business

Club pins – The pins are in and they look great. The members decided to sell them for \$2 each to members and \$5 each to non-members.

Bass Lake Dinner Cruise (August 20) – The details were confirmed.

Mammoth Lakes Run (September 10-11) – We confirmed the details, which are on the web site. Please contact Scott & Nancy Moore if you plan to attend.

Gold Country Trip (October 1-2) – We haven't heard otherwise, so we assume it is still on.

2006 Poker Run – The route has been determined. Hotel and other details will follow.

New business

Christmas Tree Lane – The date is December 15.

Christmas Party – Will be held at Tom & Linda Hayward's house on December 17.

Committee reports

Newsletter – Jim Barker requested that members send articles.

Web site – The "scrap booking" is appreciated. Also, the format is easy to navigate.

Past Events

Miatas at the movies was fun, although no one who was there can recommend "Stealth."

Door Prize

Andrew Weber won the pie.

Lisa Asperger, secretary

Cool Weekend on the Coast

By Ron Branam

Have you ever taken a vacation in your Miata? Have you ever thought of taking a vacation in your Miata? If the answer to both these questions is no, I'd suggest you consider going to next year's Cool Weekend on the Coast, sponsored by The Redwood Coast Miata Club, located in Eureka. Think of it as a mini-vacation to try out the experience of traveling some distance in a Miata to find out what it is like. You'd be surprised that it is really quite enjoyable. Especially when you consider the beautiful country you will see in Northern California.

This year marked the sixth year in a row for my daughter and I to attend this event. It has become an annual father-daughter bonding thing and we continued the tradition even though she was married in May. We left early Friday morning to beat the heat and took our time getting there, taking our usual route which takes us on HWY 20 alongside Clear Lake and then up HWY 101 which is mostly 4-lane but does still have some 2-lane as it winds alongside the Eel River and through the majestic redwoods. Since we had plenty of time, we traveled the full length of the Avenue of the Giants - although we have done it many times. It's such an enjoyable drive - especially in a convertible. Passengers tend to enjoy this more than drivers, as he/she can lean back and watch the crowns of the tallest trees in the world float by. In my opinion, there just isn't anything anywhere else in the world that compares.

We arrived in Eureka with plenty of time to spare so we checked in to the motel, relaxed and refreshed (even after an 8-hour drive), then headed over to a Mexican food place to join the other early arrivals for a social get-together. This gave us chance to visit with some old friends from our poker runs, some new friends from the Mt. Hood (Oregon) club, and of course, friends from Redwood Coast.

Saturday morning we all gathered in the parking lot for the "featured" event of the weekend, a run to Shelter Cove. Shelter cove is a small "new" (post 1966) community on the coast in the southern part of Humboldt County. It's 23 miles of twisties west of HWY 101 so that will give you some idea of how remote it is. So, we headed south on HWY 101, took a side trip on the Avenue of the Giants, (like I said, you can't pass it up), and arrived in Shelter Cove in time to have a tasty lunch. Typical of the coast this time of the year, it was foggy and overcast; but that just made it more "cool." Naturally, we all remained topless. We also had plenty of time to explore the area on our own to see a lighthouse, an ancient "fishing hut" that pre-dates the community, a plaque dedicated to fishermen lost at sea, and watching the return of the sport-fishing boats.

Naturally, the return trip was the opposite of the to trip. Julie and I were separated from the rest and were fortunate to see a doe and two fawns cross the road. In the afternoon, we had plenty of time to attend the Oyster Festival in Arcata, the Redwood District Fair in Eureka, shop the waterfront, tour the Victorian village of Ferndale, or any number of things. Julie and I decided to search out a covered bridge we had seen last year and take some photos. We then followed some back roads, just to see where they went. We found ourselves at the trailhead for the entrance to the Headwaters Forest. (Think of Butterfly the tree-sitter.)

The evening found us all gathered at a special little Italian Restaurant that had been in Eureka like forever. (Sort of like DiCiccio's.) After a very tasty dinner came the awards and raffle prizes. The "Coolest Miata on the Coast" prize was won by a Brilliant Yellow (from SAMOA, I think.) The "Coolest Miata Story" was told by Graeme Kinsey. The farthest traveled award was won by Bob and Julie Davis of SoCalm.

Sunday morning we had our choice between a poker "rallye" and an autocross. Julie and I chose the poker rallye. We drove along the Eureka waterfront, past the Carson Mansion, across the Humboldt Bay (by bridge, of course) through some prime dairy land, alongside the Mad River, ending at the Lost Coast Brew-Pub in Eureka for lunch. Julie and I traveled on a road that was completely surrounded by trees, making it appear to be in a tunnel, when another deer crossed the road directly in front of us. Thankfully, we were taking our time and enjoying the

Publication Information

The first issue of the Miata Fast Track is free. Membership entitles you to participate in all events, including drives, assemblies, meetings, parties, gatherings, conventions, technical sessions, etc., newsletters, and allows you the opportunity to meet some nifty people.

This newsletter is a monthly publication of the San Joaquin Valley Miata Club (SJVMC). The information presented represents the opinions of the individual contributors. No representation is made regarding the accuracy or reliability of any information contained on any of these pages. Neither the Mazda Corporation, the Miata Owners Club, the San Joaquin Valley Miata Club, the editor, or any of the individual contributors accept any liability for the consequences of using the information presented in this newsletter.

USE THE INFORMATION IN THIS NEWSLETTER AT YOUR OWN RISK MEMBERSHIP:

Send \$25 with your full name and address, phone number, year & color Miata to: San Joaquin Valley Miata Club
PO Box 27395
Fresno, Ca. 93729-7395

CLUB OFFICERS:

President:
Don Asperger
559-431-2208
President@sjvmc.net
Vice President:
Van Van Osbree
559-255-7113
Vicepresident@sjvmc.net

Secretary:
Lisa Asperger
559-431-2208
Secretary@sjvmc.net

Treasurer:
Bob Raus
559-299-0942

Treasurer@sjvmc.net
Activity Coordinator:
Open

Newsletter Editor:
Jim Barker
559-275-1512
Editor@sjvmc.net

Internet Contact:
Cindy Ames
559-431-0311
Webmaster@comcast.net

scenery. For their “rallye”, they had us identify things and answer questions as we traveled the route. At the finish, for each correct answer we were given a card. We got nine out of ten – didn’t see the (what must have been really small) winery. Still didn’t get a decent poker hand, though. IN the tradition of the event, one of the Redwood Coast members had the winning hand.

Now, back to that vacation; remember Bob and Julie Davis won the award for farthest traveled? They live in Chino Hills. Due to some plans that fell through, and some luck, they had some free time and still wanted to travel some more. So they decided that morning to continue on – to Victoria BC! Now that’s a Miata vacation! Do yourself a favor. Take a Miata mini-vacation next year and go to the “Cool Weekend on the Coast.” You’ll be glad you did.

See our web site <http://www.sjvmc.net> for photos from this event.

BRAKE REPAIR

During my regular 3,000 mile oil change and multi-point visual inspection and the local dealer , it was suggested that I replace my brakes. They had a “special” for only \$195 front and \$195 rear. Even with my SJVMC discount I was looking at \$350 out of pocket. I decided that I could, with the help of a friend, replace my brakes at a substantially reduced cost. I checked at a local parts dealer and the brake pads for both front and rear would be about \$60.

I arrived at my friend’s home at about 9:30am and began the process. The front brakes were actually quite easy requiring about 15 to 20 minutes each. But, the rear pads proved to be somewhat more troublesome...never having attempted the job before and, God forbid, refer to any kind of repair manual.

We applied the same logic that was successful with the front pads and to no avail. A “C-clamp” to retract the caliper piston on the front was not working. We continued to try different ideas all with the same result—unable to lower the caliper back over the new pads. OK, so we were stumped. Maybe we could go to a parts store and find a repair manual and by then it was lunch time and we could kill two birds with one stone. The lunch was easy but we were unable to find any repair manuals for a “99-05” Miata...By now, our “hour or less” brake job was at 3 1/2 hours and counting.

We went back to the scene of the crime and I called Don Asperger, for some advice. His first suggestion was for me to go online and check the miata.net website. Having only done one “do-it-yourself” project on my Miata at a Tech Day gathering, I had not used this website although I had heard other Miatafiles talk about it’s value.

I guess I am at the point of this article - If you need help for a “do-it-yourself” project on your Miata, I would also suggest (as Don did) to go to <http://www.miata.net/>.

I went to the website, that I found on our SJVMC website under Miata Links, clicked on Garage, clicked on Handling, clicked on Brake pad replacement, and lo and behold there were detailed instructions, complete with pictures, on how to complete this project.

Changing the brake pads on the Miata is one of the simplest "major" services you yourself can tackle and although the actual instructions referred to a pre-'99 Miata , without anti-lock brakes, they worked very well for me. (The total time should be about 1 hour or less)

Be sure to include the final step of adjusting the brakes that will also adjust your parking brake.

I’m sure I am the only person that would attempt to do this project without referring to a manual or instructions of some sort, but, perhaps, this will help someone else contemplating a do-it-yourself brake job or any other Miata repair to use the resources available before beginning the project....and a good place to start would be <http://www.miata.net/>

BASS LAKE CRUISE

We took 6 cars from Scott and Nancy's beautiful home in Coarsegold through some foothills twisties enroute to Bass Lake. The gang included Scott and Nancy Moore, Don and Lisa Asperger, Ken and Tina Axe, Tom and Marna Woods, Jim Barker and Denise Correia, and Randy and Cindy Ames. We were met at the dock by Joe Walden and Peg Manfredi. All 14 of us fit comfortably on the boat.

There were plenty of snacks and munchies for everyone for our cruise to a secluded cove where we dropped anchor and began some serious eating with plenty of food including tri-tip, fruit salad, pasta salads, and other delicious goodies.

We all agreed that this was a wonderful event that combined driving our Miatas and a pleasant, relaxing trip on a beautiful lake. We even had some excitement...apparently there are some rules to be observed concerning the speed of the boat when chased by "Aqua-Police".

We completed a great evening back at Scott and Nancy's home with build your own ice cream sundies.



Upcoming Events for SJVMC & Other Clubs

September 10-11– Mammoth Lakes run (Scott & Nancy Moore). A block of rooms will be held for us at the Sierra Lodge in Mammoth Lakes for September 10. The more rooms we book, the lower the rate, \$99 for 8 or more rooms and \$109 for 6 to 7. Call 1-800-356-5711 for reservations under “Miata Club.” Deadline ie (was) August 27.

Saturday, September 24, 2005 SAMOA—Scrabble® Scramble . Denise Correia, Events Director. (deni@samoa.org) There is still time to register for this event

Gold Country Trip (October 1-2) – We haven’t heard otherwise, so we assume it is still on.

The SJVMC Annual Christmas Tree Lane Run – The date is December 15.

The SJVMC Christmas Party – December 17. At Tom & Linda Hayward’s house .

2006 Events

SJVMC 2006 Poker Run – The date is April 1st The route in Visalia has been determined. Hotel and other details will follow.



San Joaquin Valley Miata Club

Meetings are held the **3rd** Thursday of each month at:

Marie Callender's, 1781 E Shaw Ave (at Cedar) at 6:30 P.M.

Win a free pie!



NEXT MEETING

- **SEE YOU THERE**
- **SEPTEMBER 15, 2005**

WARNING:
Dates in Calendar are closer than they appear.

September 10-11- Mammoth Lakes run (Scott & Nancy Moore). A block of rooms will be held for us at the Sierra Lodge in Mammoth Lakes for September 10. The more rooms we book, the lower the rate, \$99 for 8 or more rooms and \$109 for 6 to 7. Call 1-800-356-5711 for reservations under "Miata Club." Deadline ie (was) August 27.

Saturday, September 24, 2005 SAMOA—Scrabble® Scramble . Denise Correia, Events Director. (deni@samo.org) There is still time to register for this event

VISIT THE SJVMC WEB PAGE AT
<http://www.sjvmc.net/>

Miata Fast Track

San Joaquin Valley Miata Club
PO Box 27395
Fresno, Ca. 93729-7395

Get In. Be Moved.



The first issue of the Miata Fast Track is complimentary.
To continue receiving this newsletter contact the treasurer.



inside...

President's Message	Page 1
Minutes & Upcoming Events	Page 2
Cool Weekend on the Coast Article	Page 3
Brake Repair Article	Page 4
Bass Lake Cruise and Pictures	Page 5
Upcoming Events	Page 6