



Miata Fast Track

August/September 2009

Issue #183/4

It seems like once again I am apologizing for not getting out a regular newsletter! I am giving ample warning that at the end of this year someone else will have to step forward and take over. I am starting a new job with a new company so my free time will be even more limited. I will help impart my limited knowledge on this process so someone can start of right in 2010. Please be a volunteer!

Randy Ames

Letter from the President



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Sorry but no minutes this time. Next time!

Hello everyone!

Well ,we had a great Yosemite Moonlight Run with lots of out of town guests. A terrific group of Miata owners drove up to Oakhurst for dinner at Crab Cakes and a birthday cake for dessert (Thanks Mary). Then it was on to Mariposa and HWY 140 into Yosemite along the Merced River up to tunnel view to watch the moonrise. The moonlight trip up to Glacier Point was pleasant with the warmer August temperatures.

The views as always were spectacular. Thanks Sharon for all your effort in putting this run together.

On September 12, seven cars ran the Huntington Lake Loop (four cars joining three in Prather). We backtracked to Tollhouse road on HWY 168 and took Tollhouse to the top of what's called the four lane and on to Dinky Creek, Big Creek, and finally Huntington Lake for lunch at Lake Shore. This run was planned as we went, drivers meeting and a route discussion and picking a road. No

printed directions to follow and distract from scenery or driving pleasure. Seven cars motoring down the road keeping the car in front and in back in view.

Some of the best topless motoring occurs in our area in the fall. So if you would like to lead or suggest a run or event please e-mail me or come to the next meeting and add it to the agenda.

Some of us are looking forward to The Scrabble Scramble on the Sept. 19th. Some are going early on Friday.

Yosemite by Moonlight

By Marci Jarvis

Yosemite by moonlight is always a great run and this year's was no exception. This popular run draws club members from all over the state. We had car from the Bay area, Sacramento, So. Cal and San Diego. Old friends and friends we

were up and praising our club. In the parking lot after dinner we visited with our fellow travelers. Sharon gave the usual drivers' meeting, then with an able assist from President Bob there was the famous Bear talk with

the Tunnel outlook where we watched the moon rise, then on to our final destination, Glacier Point.

If you have never done this run you don't know what you are missing. The drive through the

park with the top down, the sky, the stars and all around the trees is incredible. Then Glacier Point and the Valley by moon light a sight to behold.



just haven't met yet gathered for a fun evening

The run started at Crab Cakes in Oakhurst. This is an wonderful place to eat. The food was delicious and the service superb. We set with a prospect new member, Peter from the Bay and to couples from San Diego. Enjoyed talking about what other clubs

a casual reference to the occasional deer that one might encounter. We created quite a sight as the 27 car and 457 passengers pulled out on Highway 41. A quick left on 49 and we were on our way.

Through Mariposa, along the Merced River into the park. A quick loop into the Valley, a stop at

Somewhere past midnight the top down all the way we headed for home. Thank you to Sharon for planning and leading our run and leaving us all laughing at the Bear Talk.

Send in your picture and Biography to Editor@sjvmc.net Name/where you work/year of car/why you bought/what you like the most about your car/what improvement do you want to make

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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Stats: 3905 miles including a side trip to see my sister in Oklahoma (I'm sure it was more for Bob)

Fuel: \$292 Avg mpg: 30 Avg

price: \$2.68 per gal

Bob and I met at Starbucks at 41 and Shaw at 5 a.m. on Wednesday morning, determined to be in Grapevine by the next evening. This was a new experience for me, caravanning on a long trip with one other car. It turned out that Bob and I were quite compatible in our driving style, which means we drove for long stretches, combining fuel stops with potty stops and meals. It made for an enjoyable trip for me.

The first stop after leaving Fresno was in Tehachapi for fuel, then the next stop was in Needles for fuel again, and again in Kingman AZ. Boring, I know, but that was how it went for two days. Hot and boring and flat and lots of fuel. The break in the monotony was a big rainstorm outside of Flagstaff. The first day we covered 916 miles (a few more for Bob) and made it more than halfway, stopping in Albuquerque for the night.

Day two was more of the same. For me there were two memorable items, passing by "The Bed and Bale Horse Motel" and pulling into a really nice rest stop (no, no fuel, just a rest!) somewhere in Texas after we pulled off Interstate 40 onto Highway 287. It had landscaped grounds, a building

with piped in music, country of course, and a pictorial history of the area. One thing Bob and I both noticed about Texas, most the roads have more than one name or number. It can be very confusing when you're trying to remember where to turn. Even loosing 2 hours due to crossing time zones, we pulled into the Gaylord Hotel at 6 p.m. Texas time. It was breathtaking. The grounds made Disneyland look like an urban renewal project. I swear they must manicure the place with cuticle scissors. I've never seen anything so immaculate. There were acres of botanicals, all under a glass dome. All three towers of 500 rooms each were also under the same glass dome. It was incredible.

After registering and finding my room I headed for the convention center on the same grounds to pick up my event package. Of all the many people I passed along the way wearing the official event lanyards the first ones I saw that I recognized were our dear friends Tom & Marna Wood. Then I ran into Arch and Laurie. The next person I saw had on a name tag I'd been hoping I'd see, Joe Portas, aka, The Knobmeister. I introduced myself. Over the next 3 days I was privileged to spend time with Joe and his sweet wife Mary on several occasions. They are very nice people. The room. It was a very nice room. Not \$700 nice, but nice. The sign in the closet said it was \$700 nice. I would rate it about the same as the room I stayed in at the Marriott in Folsom during Scrabble Scramble. However, the Texas Club had negotiated a deal for us of \$139. Then I had the added bargain of 2 roommates. It

was the least expensive part of the trip for me. My roommates were Lolita and Diane from the San Diego Club. It was fun to have someone to rehash the days events with each evening. One morning we "hosted" breakfast in our room, our guests were Bob and two of Diane's girlfriends from Nevada. I had Raisin Brand in a glass, eaten with a plastic fork. It was fun though

One thing I really enjoyed was the hand car wash provided by our hosts. They set up bunch of hoses, buckets and car shampoo in the back parking lot behind the convention center. I made use of it twice in three days. And I wasn't the only one, believe me, it was a popular spot. Only a true car enthusiast can understand staying in a \$700 a night facility and washing your car by hand yourself. Miata people. The host club provided an abundance of activities for us to choose from. One event that I participated in was a run to the neighboring town of Granberry. It was a flat land run, but it was fun. On the way we passed thru a small community named Springtown. It has one stop light. Our leader called ahead and had the town policeman block the intersection so we could roll right on thru town. That was fun, waving to all the towns folk.

Our official dinners were served in a grand ballroom large enough to accommodate all 600+ of us comfortably. The food was outstanding, the service as good as the food. All tables were linen covered. Overhead we were illuminated by massive, sparkling chandeliers. First class all the way.

Of course the big event of the weekend was Texas Motor Speedway. We queued up in a Park & Ride parking lot, with lots of visiting going on. We were to be led by a police escort thru downtown Grapevine. We were attempting to break a Guinness Book record of most Miata's in a parade. I don't have the exact figures, but we did it, with over 300 cars. Arriving at TMS was SO COOL. We entered the infield thru a tunnel that runs under turn one of the race track. There was a sign that said "Closed to the Public" and we drove right past it! The stands raise up around you for what seems like miles. It was like standing at the foot of El Capitan and looking up, trying to see the top. It was awesome. While the hundreds of cars were lining up on the front straight-away of the 1.5 miles track for the big photo op I wandered down to pit road for my own photo op. Cars filled the track from turn one all the way

back to turn four. I had goose bumps as I straddled



the pit wall with camera in hand. I touched the laid down rubber on the tarmac in the pits. It was SO COOL. Then it was time for the leader-led parade lap. We were 5 wide on the track, 45 m.p.h. I made sure I was on the outside lane, I wanted to experience every bit of the 24 degrees of banking in the turns. It was SO COOL. We then exited the track single file. We had a choice of three places to go after that. There was an SCCA road course event set up in the infield. On the other side of

the garages there was a Funcanna event set up. Then there was the long line to go back on to the track for some hot laps. That's the line I headed for. Helmets were required



and provided. The hot laps were leader-led, four of them, twelve cars at a time, and topped out at 85 m.p.h. Unfortunately it started raining when my turn came up. Now, we all know that

I am definitely not afraid to drive top-down in the rain. However, it's a whole 'another ball game with a helmet on. The water just sheeted down right into my face, so, I had to put the top up. (But still . . .

As I entered turn one I took it easy, trying to get a feel for the wet track. I was afraid of my back end breaking loose. It didn't, it stuck like glue. After that I relaxed a little and enjoyed the ride. My roommate Lolita was riding shotgun and taking pictures. It was over before I knew it. What an adrenalin high. When I was back in the infield I debated what to do next. I found Bob and got back in line for the track, this time riding shotgun with him and taking more pictures. Back in the infield once again I found my way over to the Funcanna area, only to find that they had broken for lunch. I was hot and coming down from the "track high". The humidity was awful, so I decided to pack it in and head back to the barn, you know, that expensive barn in Grapevine. In retrospect I wish I had cowgirled up and stayed around for another run at the track.

At the dinner the night the car was given away the hosts announced that they had needed 1000 paid participants to break even, they had under 700. Again, I apologize for not having the exact numbers. I wrote it all down, then promptly lost the paper. Mazda stepped up and made up the difference, thank goodness. For those of us who did attend, it was so worth

the \$300 registration fee. Half the cars present were from Texas, the second largest representation was from California, 51 cars I believe. The rest were from everywhere. Both coasts of Canada were represented, and I personally talked with a man from Mexico. There were no strangers, just people I hadn't met before. A couple from Texas won the car and needless to say they



were in shock. They currently owned a very old NA. It was good to see it go to someone so deserving.

Leaving Grapevine Monday morning was sad. I said goodbye to my roommates, to Bob, to Tom & Marna, to my BAMA friends. Then I headed out for an easy day, destination Hughes Springs TX, via Longview TX. I lived in Longview for a while when I was married the first time, and have a friend in Hughes Springs that I've known since that first marriage, 40 years ago. I spent the night with her, then the next morning headed out for Poteau OK to spend two days with my sister. Then it was back to I-40 and two more days of flat land and marathon driving. I got home Friday night and Saturday morning my daughter and son-in-law helped me load up a Budget Truck and move!

Texas says they're going to do it again, Miata World III, in 2019. I'll be there. I'll be almost 70 years old, but I'll be there.



Miata Fast Track

San Joaquin Valley Miata Club

Meetings are held only be mailed on a the third Thursday 'by-request' basis of each month and only to paid (except July and December) at Carrows restaurant on Blackstone North of Ashlan

Effective with the January, 2007 issue, hard copies will

only be mailed on a 'by-request' basis and only to paid members of our club. The on-line version will continue to be available. Contact the editor at Editor@sjvmc for this request.

Upcoming Events!

Check out our website listed to the left for all the latest happenings in the area!



Visit the SJVMC

Web Page at

<http://>

www.sjvmc.net/

Be Involved!!

Get in... Be moved... Have some fun!!!

