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Four Wheel Drift... by Chuck Wills, President

I've thought about this moment for several months. My last front page article... yikes. I suppose that it isn't the article so much as the symbolism of this final installment. As I reflect on this last year I can think of a lot of good times. Rallies, mingles, drives, races... it's hard to believe how much we packed in to one year. I'm going to recall a few of my personal highlights and share them with you.

A cold, wet weekend in May when Shane loaned me his race car so I could get my SCCA racing license. Shane, will I ever be able to thank you enough for that? It was the fulfillment of a life long dream. Thirty years later, the little boy who wouldn't stop asking "how fast will it go" finally was a race driver. Thanks Shane. I owe you, buddy. This same month Melissa Forbes organized the "picture this" rally -- a new concept in rallying -- with no map, just some clues and pictures. I wish I could have been there, as I know everyone had a blast.

A long, hot, stinky drive in June to Monterey, California for the Spec Miata Challenge race at Laguna Seca. Mike Selvy, Chris Poglitsch and I drove out to California, towing Shane's race car. Shane, Troy from Walker Racing, Jason from Trackside Supply and Carol "Track Chick" Roth met us out there for a week of testing, tuning, racing and general Miata craziness. Shane carved his way into history with a 29th place finish in the biggest Miata race ever! We were proud, knowing that we had beaten the odds. It was a bunch of friends on a 5000 mile trip in a borrowed truck and trailer with no budget to speak of. I hope we get to do it again next year. Are you guys ready?!?!

July brought a trip to Deal's Gap with hundreds of other Miata freaks. Claude Councillor hooked us up to caravan down with a few other Midwest clubs. As they say, the more the merrier, and with a train of 30 Miatas nose to tail into Tennessee we were quite merry indeed. We had a ball cruising up and down the mountain and chatting with Miata folks from all over the country. Here are some of the stories from that weekend... I'll never tell which ones I'm responsible for!

- Teresa Turbo terrorized the Tail of the Dragon! She drove like Schumaker, shifting and drifting up and down the mountain. GO TT, GO!!!
- Dusting a Mustang GT so badly in the corners that he pulled over to let the "girlie" cars pass him.
- Driving way too fast up the mountain, only to see a State Trooper waiting for us in a blind corner.
- A large "lawn job" in front of a dam, that when viewed from the top of the dam somehow spelled out "Indy Miata".
- Driving top down in the rain to get ice cream cones.
- Hanging out in the pool with a cold one, talking with some of my best friends in the world.
- Chris popping the question to Track Chick.

For that one weekend in July, Deal's Gap is a slice of roadster heaven!

August was Bob Wiley's Ice Cream Sundae mingle, one of our best attended events all year. Many new members and a total count of nearly 50 people. I had fun meeting the new folks and hanging out. Way to go Bob!

September brought more racing with Shane at Mid Ohio, with Shane breaking the track record by 1/1000th of a second. It was my 2nd race ever, qualifying in the top 1/2, but finishing in the bottom 1/2 of the field. It was great to get back on the track, though. It's official, I'm a racing junkie! Thanks again Shane!

September also brought the US Grand Prix. We hosted over 30 Miata clubbers from all over the world as the crowds descended upon the Speedway. We showed them a good time the night before the race with chow at Sonic and drinks and music at the Slippery Noodle. On race day the Speedway gave us special parking inside the track. They we're happy to have us and want us to come back next year!

The best part of all is being able to share this little roadster with my friends and family. Teresa