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In The Marbles...

by Rick Morris, President

It's pretty hard to believe that this is my last "In the Marbles" article. I remember when I started writing the first one almost a year ago and it seemed like I sat here and stared at a blank screen forever trying to think of something to write. I was also trying to think of what I could possibly think about to write for the whole year that was coming up. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your point of view) I managed to find enough words to fill this space and now this is the last time I'll be writing as president of the Indy Miata Club.

I think the club has had an excellent year. We had a lot of good driving and social events and an encouraging number of new people stepped up to the plate and organized and hosted events. We were blessed with very good weather for almost all the club functions and our attendance was, I believe, as good as it has been since I've been a member. This kind of member involvement gave me, and everybody else, warm and fuzzy feelings about the club. It was also very rewarding to realize that all the effort that previous club officers and members put into building a solid foundation for our club has paid off.

The first driving event of the year was a trip to the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg museum on a "brisk" February Saturday. We continued with the Post-Tax Blues, Picture This, Longest Day, Mardi Gras, Fussin and Cussin, Cinco de Wino and Historical Markers rallies. Sprinkled among these were the Brickyard, Highway to Hill, Barbecue/Car Wash and F1 mingles. During the F1 mingle, we got to take a police-escorted tour of downtown Indy. We have been busy, haven't we?

The reason that we have been so busy is because all of you have made the decision to get involved with the club. Whether it's hosting an event or attending one, member involvement is what makes any organization grow and prosper. You have made all this happen and it's been a privilege to be a part of it.

Thanks for All the Help

Nobody can really do anything in any organization by themselves, and I'd like to thank all the other officers who have made my job possible. Thanks to Jay for standing up and being our Vice President this year and President next year. Thanks to Bob Wiley for keeping the money straight and setting up our PayPal account. Thanks to Melissa Forbes for keeping the club membership up to date and for being the main beta tester for the club database. Thanks go to Jim Nutt for keeping the club web site up to date. Thanks to Chuck Wills for his help and the interesting, entertaining and informative tool tips in the newsletter. Thanks to all the members who contributed articles about their cars and trips to the newsletter (we need more of these, by the way). I would also thank Dr. Detail for his newsletter articles, but he has apparently entered the federal witness protection program and is nowhere to be found.

A very special Thank You goes to Sara for being the newsletter editor for the past few years. Most of you don't realize how much time and effort she puts into the club and the newsletter, only past editors know this. Putting out any regular newsletter is a job and putting out one as good as ours is a huge project on a monthly basis. Thanks again, Sara.

Looking Ahead

Next year should see the club continue on the path of great events and good times. I'm very confident that Jay Hofacker will do a great job as club president but he will need all of you to help just like I did. At the upcoming holiday party, run for office or sign up to host an event. You can also get involved by contributing an article about your car or a special Miata trip to the newsletter. Whatever

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you decide to do, it all makes a difference. Things happen because somebody decides to do them and if nothing happens, it's because nobody has decided to do anything. It's all up to you.

Some Final Thoughts

(I know, I know, there's nothing more annoying than a frustrated author with a word processor and a captive audience.) The first time I drove my Miata to a club event, I was making a pit stop and happened to see another Miata at the same place. The other Miata had a roll bar installed. I was thinking about getting one, so I struck up a conversation with the owner (who turned out to be Chuck Wills). I asked him if he installed the bar himself or had it installed. He said that he had installed it himself and I said something to the effect that I would never attempt something like that. Chuck immediately offered to help me install a bar (little did he know I would take him up on the offer). That experience has stuck with me ever since, and it's typical of Miata people everywhere.

The point I'm trying to make, in a roundabout way, is that it's the people that make the Miata special. Don't get me wrong, our cars are very special, but they are still just cars. Every time I have gone to any kind of Miata event, I have always been impressed by how friendly and helpful the other Miata owners are. You have all been just like that with me and I have tried to do the same with everybody else. Keep up the good work and don't forget to introduce yourself to new member and make them feel like part of the family. After all, we all are part of the family of happy Miata owners.

Thanks again for a great experience!

Join Us At The Holiday Party

We will have the 13th annual holiday party on December 7th at 5:00pm. Mark your calendars now..... and plan to drive the SUV if it is bad weather. No one will make fun of you!

The Holiday Party is being held at The Old Spaghetti Factory in downtown Indy at 210 South Meridian Street. This is a casual fun social evening, with supper at 5:00pm, a wrapped gift exchange (\$12-\$15 per Miata), concluding with the election of 2004 Officers. As usual the club will pick up the tab for dinner.

We need to have an accurate head count three days before the dinner, so please register for the dinner at the club website on the events page or by emailing Rick Morris at rick@dustbunny.com. The Circle Center garage across the street (under Nordstroms) will probably be the best place to park. It's inexpensive and secure.

If you are interested in running for the office of Vice President, Membership Chair, or Treasurer, or nominating someone, please let President Rick Morris know by emailing him at rick@dustbunny.com.

It has been a great year for the club, so let's end it on a festive note!

Miata's To "Meet Me in St. Louie"!

Though an official announcement has not been made, it looks as though a national gathering of Miatas will happen! "Meet Me in St. Louie", hosted by the Gateway Miata club of St. Louis, MO, will be held September 30 - October 3, 2004. This will be a very comprehensive national event including two track days at Gateway International Raceway, autocross, a fun-CAN-a, concours, a "drag" race, scavenger hunt, tours, several rallies, and more.

When registration is offered, it will probably fill up fast, so we'll post information and links on the Indy club web site as soon as it is available and there will be registration information in the Open Road.

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AIM Open House Draws Big Crowd

Always a popular event on the club schedule, once again people started arriving before the “official” 9:00am start of AIM’s Open House. A good crowd showed up and with doughnuts and orange juice to fortify them and cars and displays to educate them, the event was enjoyed by everyone.

Shane Benson, Chuck Wills and other AIM crew members were on hand to answer questions, and many lively discussions took place in the engine compartments of a couple of cars. Spec Miatas were looked at, supercharger and turbo systems were talked about, and roll bars were discussed. Probably the most popular display was where Shane had laid out the major components of a 1.6 liter engine on a work bench. Chris Poglitsch, one of the club’s gear heads, answered many questions, as to what the heck some parts were and how they worked with other parts.

A big thank you to all of the crew at AIM Tuning for being such gracious hosts. We look forward to doing this again.



John Martin and Bruce Durell discuss oil filters.



(left) Chris Poglitsch provides some details on the Miata cylinder head.



(right) John Schaub says “Honey, we need to get this for your car!”. Marsha just laughs.

A deep discussion of air filters in an engine compartment.



(left) Bruce Durell, Phil Callahan and President Rick Morris talk cars and roll bars in the parking lot.



Gift Ideas To Make Your Miata Smile

by Rick Morris

It's that time of year again and in the spirit of gift-giving, why not get your favorite car some things to make life more pleasant for it (and for you)? Here is a list of things that can make your car's life experience more fulfilling, along with some really neat toys (and as we all know, toys are always good).

The Absorber – the best thing I have found so far for drying the car. They do a great job drying the car, last forever and clean up in the washing machine. An Absorber will last at least two years with moderate care and are available everywhere for about ten dollars. I can't imagine this not being in my car care bucket.

Towels – you can never have too many. I must have at least three dozen towels of assorted shapes and sizes. The ones I use most are hand towels, which are just exactly the right size for so many car cleaning tasks. Get white, all-cotton towels and wash them a half dozen times (hot water, no bleach or fabric softener) before using. I'm cheap, so I get the hand towels from Wal-Mart for a little over a dollar apiece. Our old bath towels get turned into car towels, but guys, ask the boss before doing this recycling project. (Honey, I've decided to buy you new towels!)

Spray Bottles – for whatever reason, every cleaning product I buy comes in a really crummy spray bottle. The OEM spray bottles don't let you adjust the flow and absolutely refuse to put out an even amount. Get some plastic plant mister bottles from any garden shop and put your cleaning fluids in them. Much more convenient. About a dollar apiece.

Leatherman Crunch Tool – Leatherman makes a lot of multi-purpose



tools. I've got three of them and the one to keep in the car is the Crunch tool. It comes with a vise-grip tool along with the usual assortment of knife and screwdriver blades. Pretty much indestructible and comes in a nifty case which makes it handy to store in one of the pockets on the back of the seats. It's out of the way, but indispensable when you need it.

Flashlight – most of you are saying "Of course I've got a flashlight in the car". Maybe so, but are the batteries any good? Buy a flashlight and a fresh set of batteries, but leave the batteries in their package until you need the flashlight. Batteries corrode over time and it would be particularly upsetting to get the flashlight out of the glove box and find out that the batteries you put in two years ago have self-destructed. Already got a flashlight? Then how about a fresh set of batteries? Also, a lot of people seem real impressed with the LED type flashlight. Batteries seem to run these things forever.

GPS Unit – one of the really spiffy toys for the Miata. The global positioning satellite system can show you just exactly how lost you are anywhere on Earth. The Garmin ones come with very detailed maps that can show you which street you are on. Just the ticket to keep you amused on those long drives. Priced anywhere from \$300 to \$1200 dollars. Look at www.gpscitiy.com for what seem to be good prices. Already got a GPS unit? Take a look at the extending mapping CD's offered by your GPS manufacturer.

Passenger Side Ejection Seat – only available from the CIA, but just what you need for the uncooperative navigator. If you are the navigator, there is also a driver's side ejection seat, but it requires extensive modifications to the car for safety reasons. If you have to ask, you can't afford it.

Microfiber Towels – this is something that I haven't tried yet, but the people that have swear by them. These towels apparently leave no lint whatsoever and are excellent for glass cleaning and other tasks. About two dollars each.

Roll Bar – just what you need to avoid Compacted Driver Syndrome. Prices start at about three hundred

dollars for the bar. AIM Tuning can install it for you if you don't want to attempt the job yourself. Get the harness tabs when you buy the bar. Harnesses are very reassuring when worn. (Personal opinion – wouldn't be without one. You never know when the bozo driving an SUV while eating lunch and talking on their cell phone is going to run over you).

Air Horns – probably the most fun for the dollar. These run about sixty dollars for a set and anybody can install them in less than an hour. In addition to being great fun to honk when you drive through an underpass, they will get the undivided attention of the SUV driver mentioned above.

Look for Turbo Miata in 2005 **Classifieds**

Love your Miata but wished it had more power? MazdaSpeed, the factory aftermarket arm of Mazda North American Operations, will introduce a more powerful version of the Miata to the U.S. next spring.

This version of our favorite roadster will answer many Miata owners' pleas for more power with an IHI turbocharger delivering up to 7.25 pounds of boost, combined with a Denso intercooler. The combination will give the 1.8-liter engine 178 hp and 166 pounds-feet of torque, vs. 142 hp and 125 pounds-feet of torque on a production Miata. The car will have a six-speed manual transmission and a Bosch limited-slip differential.

The MazdaSpeed Miata's chassis will be dropped about a quarter of an inch with shorter, tighter springs. Bilstein dampers, larger front and rear stabilizer bars and a front strut tower brace round out the suspension changes. Racing Hart wheels will be teamed with Toyo 17-inch tires.

One big difference between the MazdaSpeed Miata and the MazdaSpeed Protege that preceded it: All the manufacturing and assembly will take place in Japan instead of at dealerships.

Prices haven't been determined, but likely will be "in the mid-20s," said Jack Stavana, Mazda director of accessory operations, at the Specialty Equipment Market Association show. The 2004 Miata currently starts at \$22,388, including destination charge.

The introduction of the MazdaSpeed Miata could also put some zip in Miata sales. The car hit its U.S. sales peak of 35,944 in 1990, its first full year of sales. Last year's total of 14,392 was the lowest ever.

Miata Special Edition Registries

There are registries of Miata Special Editions that are maintained by volunteers. If you own one of these rare Miata, sign your car up! Here's a short list, look for more next month.

- * 2003 Strato Blue - Contact Todd Davis at stratoblue2003se@yahoo.com
- * 2002 SE - Contact George Ferrell at georgef3@mindspring.com
- * 2001 SE - Contact David Gilbert at buckles@bucklescomic.com
- * 1999-2000 Evolution Orange - www.allroadster.com/libs/EORregister.htm

For Sale: 99 Miata, Beautiful Twilight Blue Mica, Black top / interior, 39850 miles, 5 speed, AM/FM/Cassette/CD, power windows, power locks, power steering, power brakes, cruise control, A/C. Excellent condition. Never driven in or exposed to snow. \$12,900.00. Call John at 317-251-3793

For Sale: 92 Miata with no dents, rust, tears or scratches. 66,000 miles. Almost new tires. AM/FM cass. Stored last couple of winters. Can send photo on request. \$5000. Call Jim Tice at 317-253-1155 days, 842-3378 evenings, or email at jptpcu@comcast.net.

For Sale: Four Sony speakers for 90-97 seats. Asking \$30 for all four. Call Steve Jacobson at 317-570-4598 or steven.jacobson@hp.com.

For Sale: OEM Brace Bar for any 90-93 Miata. This is the bar behind the seats that was added as a standard item in '94. It adds stiffness and side impact protection to the chassis. Installation is simple, nuts and bolts for mounting are included. \$25. 317-570-4598. steven.jacobson@hp.com

For Sale: 99 Miata 10th Anniversary Edition, 6-speed, sport suspension, A/C, leather. Bose sound system. Low miles (7500), garaged, driven good days only, flawless. \$18,500 or best offer. Contact Dick Johnson jarich@worldnet.att.net or 609-652-0317.



**298F Gasoline Alley
Indpls, IN 46222
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Shop hours: Mon-Fri 9a-6p
Please call for appointment



Are you ready for winter yet?

Whether you are storing your car for the winter or you drive it every day, it is important to make sure you have:

- All fluids are fresh and topped off (radiator, washer, oil, brakes)
- Battery and electrical system are in top shape
- Tires have good tread and are inflated properly
- New wiper blades

Let AIM give your car a Pre-Winter Checkup!

For \$49.95 we will give your car a thorough checkup, top off any fluids and rotate your tires.

(fluid changes and additional parts not included)



Indy Miata Club
10% off labor and Mazda OE parts!



Authorized Installer





December 7 - Holiday Party

December 7 - Holiday Party at The Old Spaghetti Factory. See page two for all the details!

Rally Masters! Don't forget to get your rally on the 2004 schedule! Sign up at the Holiday Party or contact Jay Hofacker or Rick Morris. Let's fill 2004 up with lots of fun events!

Doughnuts and Miatas...does it get any better than this? Photos from the AIM Open House.

