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Around The Bend...

by Jay Hofaker, President

Winter has finally arrived here in Indiana. After a mild December and January, there's now snow on the ground and on the roads, justifying my purchase of snow tires for my car. Driving my Miata is fun no matter what season it is. Curves on the commute to work that I downshift and stick through in the summer, I now get to gently slide through at low speeds. There's something very satisfying about applying just a little more gas to coax the car from plowing straight ahead in a corner to bringing the rear end around just enough to end up pointed exactly the direction I need to go.

Of course sliding around on icy roads can be dangerous, so lets hope the streets are clear for our February event where Rick Morris will lead us to the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg museum in Auburn, IN. The museum is filled with wonderful classic cars, I had a great time looking at all of them last year.

December marked our annual holiday party and election of officers. The traditional gift giving/stealing took place at the Old Spaghetti Factory, which provided good food and great service. Since I was vice president last year, I'll be your president for the coming year. Ben Herman is our new vice president, and Chuck Wills is our new treasurer. Melissa Forbes will continue as membership director. I'd like to thank Bob Wiley for his service as treasurer of the club for the past year. I'd also like to thank Rick Morris, now our immediate past president, for presiding over a wonderfully successful 2003.

Thanks to Rick Morris, 2003 saw a terrific redesign of our website. The event calendar and event sign up feature has simplified life for both rally masters and members. The website also has a member discussion forum, classified ads, membership list, and reports from previous events. Jim Nutt continues to be our web master, keeping the calendar up to date and posting news articles. The Open Road, the newsletter you are now reading, is also available electronically on the new website. Many thanks to Sara J McBride for continuing to put together a fantastic newsletter for our club.

If the cold weather has you down, you can think warm thoughts and plan ahead for the club's spring and summer events. We still need a rally masters to step forward and plan events for March and we've got mingle dates that are open. Of course, there's no law that says we can't have more than one rally or mingle a month! Check the calendar on the back page, or online at <http://www.indymiata.org> for a list of events for the year.

A national Mazda event, "Meet Me In St. Louie", to be held from September 30 to October 3, 2004 in St. Louis, Missouri has started taking reservations. A good sized contingent from Indiana has all ready signed up. More information about the national event is available at <http://www.meetmeinstlouie.org>

This club is for you. Your continued support is essential to keeping this club active and fun. If you have any ideas for improving our club, or ideas for future events, please let me, or any of the club officers know. Your words of encouragement to all the volunteers who make this club happen are greatly appreciated.