

# A Traveler's Notebook: Tour de Boon Docks

by Lisa Hurley

As the original owners of a 14 year old Miata, and members of the Indy Miata Club for over 8 years, my husband Bill and I have been sporadic with our participation in Miata events. With some years finding us more active than others, we've done clue rallies, a few driving tours, mingles, go-karts and a Christmas party or two, but this was our first "overnighter". So when we left on Friday, June 3rd we were rookies, but by Sunday afternoon after a top down, sun-filled weekend of driving challenges and socializing we were truly "weathered old hands". Neither Bill nor I could have imagined a better location, more awesome weather, or most importantly, such top-flight Rallymasters to have been rookies with.

Susie and Norm Arbuckle teamed up with Gary and Kathy Collings as Rallymasters of the "Tour de Boon Docks", a well-planned, graciously hosted weekend in the twisty-turny, smooth roads of southern Indiana, roads which also were frequently populated with deer, slow farmers in pickup trucks, and flying plywood (from the beds of slow farmers in pickup trucks of course). We know they worked very hard and there is only so much that can be planned for, but how hard would it have been to place an ad in the local paper exclaiming "*Miatas coming to town...all loads are to be tied down, all deer are to remain in the forest, and all drivers of slow vehicles should stay home and drink lemonade.*"?

Since I took the opportunity to highlight what the Rallymasters could have learned from the weekend, it's only fair that I give you my notes on what Bill and I learned from the weekend.

## Lesson 1 - The Rally Runs On-Time

Our "initiation" began with our first lesson well-learned on Friday afternoon, when we missed our planned caravan meeting time with our Rallymasters in Zionsville. It was a sign of things to come. For Norm, Susie, Gary and Kathy, this event runs on time, as well it should! Running on time is critical when you are organizing a remotely located, multi-person, three day event across county lines. Needless to say, Bill and I stuck close and made sure we understood the schedule and what time zone we were using for the remainder of the weekend!

## Lesson 2 - A Good Navigator

Oh sure, an instinctive sense of direction, the ability to follow the Rallymasters instructions, and shout out directions to the driver at just the right time are key qualities in a good navigator. But by far, the most essential quality is sheer courage! Just ask my husband Bill or Eric's navigator Ann. Both exemplified these qualities throughout the weekend as they were strapped in beside drivers who liked to go fast. As my husband has explained to family and friends since our return, his driver (that would be me) prefers to take most corners at two times the speed limits and that these signs were merely just "recommendations". We were also asked at the Caesar's Casino pit stop, "Something was wrong with your brake lights?", where my husband explained with more pride and probably less fear in his voice than he should have had, that "no, my wife just takes great satisfaction in not using her brakes in the curves".

## Lesson 3 - Good Communication

With Susie and Norm leading the way (as Rudolph our Red-nosed Reindeer) over a well-planned route, and Gary and Kathy

bringing up the rear (as Randolph the Brown-nosed Reindeer...) the communication they provided with CB's and FRCS Radios (Motorola hand helds, to us rookies) we soon learned was invaluable. From up front, Susie provided us with a constant stream of "heads up" information to alert us of branches in the road, oncoming traffic, and road kill. From their rear 'Sweep' position, Gary and Kathy kept the group as tight as possible having Norm pull off to gather us up whenever we strayed too far apart. As a driver, and someone who just barely thought to grab our Motorola two ways, this was invaluable. (Note to self: install CB in the Miata for future fun tours!) Between the Rallymasters and my courageous navigator hubby, I was free to drive hard and push our Miata to the limit, which I did!

## Lesson 4 - A Playful and Fun-Loving Spirit

This may be the most important item to pack for any Miata event. (Actually, I believe we should all carry a healthy dose of this in our hip pocket each day.) Regardless of how much pre-planning, scheduling and communication is provided by the Rallymasters, ultimately "stuff" happens. Whether the drive is at times too slow for some of us (Eric and I), or too fast for others, it's always about having fun for all of us. What a privilege it is to live in this country and have the opportunity to spend a carefree weekend like this. If the price of admission is a playful and fun-loving spirit, consider mine always packed and ready to go. My husband certainly packed his for the weekend. As we became airborne (really) over the "roller coaster" portion of the route, I asked him "Where's the road go?" to which he replied "Hell, I don't know, you're driving!". We coasted back into the group, with driver and navigator hands held high in the air and wide grins on our faces.

## Lesson 5 - Beautiful Weather

Okay, I have to admit, I don't know how our

*continued on page 5*



Members of the Tour de Boon Dock tour line up for a photo opportunity at Caesar's Casino.