

The NEO Classic

Official Publication of the Northeast Oklahoma Chapter of the Miata Club of America

April, 2000

Volume 11, Issue 4



Officers

President

Gene Bedingfield
918.664.4691
GSBeding@juno.com

Vice President

Mac Arnett
918.592.2636

Treasurers

Brad & Jan Coody
918.481.0658

Secretary/Membership

Pam Chronister
918.481.3644
TAXI42@aol.com

Tour & Special Events

Mike Meyer
918.243.7518
Meyline@aol.com
Joe Bohannon
918.622.0578
JOEBOLAW@aol.com
Joel Eads
918.250.3476
VRRROOM@prodigy.net

Newsletter Editor

Kim Hand
918.252.9254
keajhand@olp.net

The NEO Miata Club assumes no liability for any information contained within this newsletter. The opinions expressed within are those of the individual authors and do not reflect any endorsements or opinions of the club as a whole. Use of this information is strictly up to the reader's discretion.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ April 1 - Grand Opening for Tulsa Auto Collection
41st & Memorial— Listen for more details!
- ◆ April 19 - NEO Miata Club Monthly Meeting
7:00 PM Mazzio's
@ South Pointe Shopping Center at 101st and Sheridan
- ◆ April 29 - Fun Run through NW Arkansas
7:00 AM McDonalds I-44 & 193rd E. Ave

- ◆ May 17 - NEO Miata Club Monthly Meeting
- ◆ May 21 - Trip to McAlester/Krebs
- ◆ May 27 - Miata Garage Sale Tour

- ◆ June 21 - NEO Miata Club Monthly Meeting
- ◆ June 24 - Back roads Trip to Woolaroc

- ◆ July 19 - NEO Miata Club Monthly Meeting
- ◆ July 22 - Poker Run Through NE Oklahoma
Moonlight cruise on the Cherokee Queen

- ◆ October 24-27 - Miatas in Paradise, Daytona Beach, Florida

From the President

Gene Bedingfield

What a beautiful day, today. It is Wednesday, April 5. The top came down, the wind and sun were on my face, the radio was on. This is living. To paraphrase a local radio personality, "if you ain't driving a Miata, you're just spinning your wheels." I wasn't able to go the car show to see the new Special Edition in person but I did manage to win a poster of one at the Tulsa Auto Collection's grand opening. Some of you may know that I had a poster of the BRG Special Edition before I ever owned one, so maybe this will be an omen of Mahogany Mica

Special Edition some time in my future. Like maybe five years from now I'll find a super deal on one like I did my BRG.

Speaking of the grand opening I want to thank everyone who came out. I especially want to thank new member, Steve Moore, who was there and hasn't even officially joined the club yet.

I have written in past columns about a trip to Colorado in September and I have set the date for September 9-17. If it is just going to be a small group we will do a very free wheeling, try and find a motel wherever we happen to be, type trip. If

See PRES on page 3

Meeting Minutes

MARCH 16, 2000

Gene Bedingfield, President, called the meeting to order. He asked members to introduce themselves and their cars. We celebrated Gene's 55th birthday with cake, courtesy of the Roops. Kim Hand, editor, has been quite ill and was unable to get the newsletter out before the meeting. A calling committee was established for the Spring Clean Fling at the Gheens on Sunday, March 19. Gene announced that Tulsa Auto Collection has invited the club to participate in its grand opening of their Mazda dealership at 41st and Memorial on April 1.

Steve Cardell shared with members his recent experience with a \$38 solution for a power problem with his car. It was fixed with replacement (easy to do, according to Steve) of a coolant control sensor.

Mike Meyer provided a summary of events that he has planned for the club in the next few months. See details in a separate article. The Larkins will host a drive on April 29 through the back roads of northwest Arkansas. Other events planned: Krebs trip on May 21; garage sale tour on May 27; and a drive to Woolaroc on June 24. Mike said that the Dallas club's March madness event will be delayed to May, but he had no details. Mike has registration forms for the national convention in Daytona Beach in October; registration is limited to 400.

Meeting was adjourned.

Pam Chronister
Secretary/Membership Chairperson

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Pam Chronister

2000 membership directories are now available. They won't be mailed, so please pick your copy up at the April meeting. No new members joined the meeting, members

joined this month; warmer weather should generate some interest as well as a good showing of club members at the Tulsa Auto Collection grand opening. Present membership totals 36 households.

Directory correction: change Sam & Gail Roop's email to Tulsa-Sam@aol.com.

MSR Track Report

Joe Bohannon, Christine Jeffery, Rod Van Koughnet, and baby Kiri were all sad to miss the annual Miata Spring Thing at the Gheen residence, but we were having a Miata weekend of our own down in Texas. Merv Stauffer and the gang at Mount Miata Racing, in Granbury, TX, hosted "Miatas at the Ranch," a two day track event at MotorSport Ranch (www.motorsportranch.com), between Ft. Worth and Granbury, TX.

MotorSport Ranch is a country club with a racetrack, instead of a golf course. They even have a pro shop, which sells high performance automotive stuff. The track is a road course with a number of challenging curves and a limited number of straight sections. Top speed from the NEO Miata contingent was probably around 90mph at the end of the straight before the "Rattle Snake" S-curves, but we were honestly way too busy to glance down at our speedometers very often. There was also a skid pad, where some braking and avoidance maneuvering clinics were held.

The organizers did a first class job, which should be the standard to which all other track events are judged against. 84 Miatas participated, mostly with Texas plates, but there were also participants from California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Ohio, and Florida. We were all divided into four groups, based on amount of previous track experience, ranging from first-timers, to actual Miata racers. Each day started with drivers' safety meeting and classroom instruction, then each group drove five 20-minute sessions. There were enough instructors so that every car on the

track at any given time could have an instructor. We generally started by letting an instructor drive our cars to show us how to properly negotiate the track, and then we took over while the instructor coached us. Once we mastered the track and our instructor deemed us safe, we were given an "OK" sticker, which let us drive solo. The track fee of \$160.00 was a bargain. It included two meals and a T-Shirt. In the two days each driver had about four hours of track time and drove almost 200 miles. We went from 8 to 5 each day and only had some light rain on Saturday morning.

On Sunday, we were treated to a "demonstration Spec-Miata race," which was very exciting. They were truly having a wheel to wheel race, with lots of braking-zone passing and even cars entering the tight S-curves two-abreast.

The organizers estimate a total of 880 laps were driven, or about 15,000 miles. Only one incident caused any damage, where a Miata had a bad spin off the track, breaking off some aftermarket accessories and destroying a set of snow tires. There were plenty of extra tires floating around and they got back on the track within a couple of hours.

Driving home Sunday afternoon, it occurred to me that the weekend on the track was way more safe than driving though Dallas-Ft Worth traffic. The whole thing was super fun and I hope some of our NEO Miata members take the opportunity for themselves this summer with the Oklahoma Alfa Romeo Club, at Hallett Motor Speedway (<http://www.geocities.com/alfarodeo2000/>).

Fun Run through NW Arkansas

When: Saturday, April 29th

Time: 7:00 AM—8:00 AM

Where: McDonalds

(I-44 & 193rd E. Ave.)

Road Captain: Earl Boyd Larkin

Mike Meyer has asked if I could provide some additional information about our ride planned for Saturday, April 29th. First a quick repeat of the basic details. Meet at the McDonalds in Catoosa just north of the intersection of 1-44 and 193rd B. Ave. Breakfast from 7:00-7:45, drivers meeting in the parking lot at 7:50, depart promptly at 8:00 A.M, should it be raining that morning, we will try again the following Saturday, May 6th.

We will leave Tulsa going east on A-12. We will take the turnpike so that we can drive faster and gain some time. Our first stop will be a "potty stop" at McDonalds in Siloam springs. Then eastward on #412 through Springdale to Huntsville. This is where the fun really begins because it is here that we plunge into the "boonies." We are going to plunge into the best kept recreational secret in America; the Buffalo Valley.

The Buffalo River is the only National River between the Appalachian Mountains and the Rockies. The Buffalo Valley has the tallest waterfall that exists in America between those two mountain ranges. The Buffalo River itself is so beautiful it almost defies description. During certain times of the year the Buffalo Rivers "white water" is so furious it takes lives. But in late spring and during the summer it's almost as calm as the Illinois River. It is a pristine wilderness area with water so clean and pure that you can watch a quarter settle on the bottom in water 12 feet deep. Imagine paddling through gorges and canyons that in places are not 20 feet wide as you look straight up at limestone cliffs towering hundreds of feet

above you. I never tire of running this river although it has almost cost me my life on two different occasions.

It is difficult to tell you where we are going because the area is so remote and the communities are so tiny that few of you will have ever heard of them. But here it goes: We will be driving through Kingston, Boxley, Ponca, Jasper, Vendor, Deer, Nail, Swain, Fallsville, Pettigrew, RedStar, Dutton, Brashears, Delaney, Durham, Elkins, and Fayetteville. We will leave Fayetteville heading west on #62 Towards Westville, Oklahoma. From Westville we continue on westward through Tahlequah, Wagoner, Coweta, Broken Arrow, and back into Tulsa. At least 250 miles of curves, hills, forests, and great scenery are guaranteed. But the privilege of discovering the location of the Buffalo Valley is worth the trip all by itself. The Buffalo River and its canyons are magnificent and you owe it to yourself to come back again for at least an entire weekend and explore it. If you want to rent a canoe, which is the only way you can really see all of the glorious sights, give me a call. It will give me another excuse to get back on this glorious river.

One word of extreme caution: Do not go sightseeing in your Miata. All of the roads leading down to the river are made of very deep gravel. Gravel so deep that your Miata will hit high center, gravel sometimes as large as your fist. This is primitive country and so are the roads. Explore it in a SUV, Jeep or pick-up truck. Do not try these roads with your Miata unless you are just dying to repaint your car. But find a way to go see this valley. It's the kind of raw, wild, untamed beauty that you think you can only see in the Rockies. Bear, mountain lions, bobcats are plentiful. And don't forget, you cannot kill them at any time for any reasons. And yes that does include the snakes as well. There are places on the Buffalo River, in the deep canyons, that there is not a telephone available for miles and miles. God I love the Buffalo Valley.

DALLAS MARCH/APRIL/ MAY MADNESS

Jerry Joyner with the Lone Star Miata Club tells me he is still working on resuming the March Madness probably in May now. This is a regional 2 day all Miata event with driving games, road rallies and a banquet. Stay tuned for further updates.

Driving School

The Alfa Romeo Owners Club of Oklahoma is sponsoring a driving school which will hold up to 80 students. For more information and registration forms contact www.geocities.com/alfarodeo2000.



PRES: from page 1

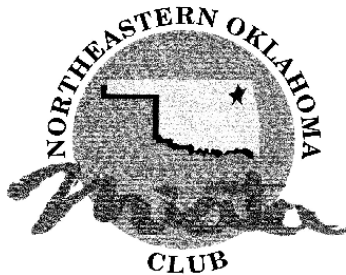
there is a lot of interest and a lot of people want to come, we will have to have a more structured, motel reservations in advance, few if any changes in the itinerary, type of trip. Let me know in the next few months if you are interested, so I will know how to plan. In the meantime,

Happy Miataing.

Gene

NEO Miata

P.O. Box 554
Tulsa, OK 74101-0554



The NEO Classic

Top Down Tales

Nelson Nissan Mazda

**COME SEE THE
2000 MAZDA MIATAS**

258-6581

