



DECEMBER EVENTS

12 – NEO MIATA CHRISTMAS PARTY: We will have our Christmas party at Nelson Mazda dealership starting at 6:00 pm until about 9:00 pm. **PLEASE RSVP BY 12/09/2015 TO 918-739-5001 OR reamjt@yahoo.com.** Anyone who would like to help with the setting up of tables and chairs should be there by 4:30 pm if possible. This is a catered meal so we need a good head count if you plan to attend. After we have dinner we will have a door prize drawing and then move inside show room to begin Dirty Santa gift exchange. Please limit your gifts to around \$20.00 if possible and bring one gift per couple or one gift per person who attends. We will put our gifts around the Christmas tree they have in Show room area. This is the last event of the year and past years we all have had so much fun at this one event. We want to thank Nelson Mazda for letting us use their place of business for this event.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE : TOM MATTOX

Well Nelson Mazda had their 2016 Launch party and we had a good showing from the club. I thank each of those who attended this party. So now the next party is our Christmas Party on December 12 2015 at Nelsons Mazda dealership starting at 6:00 pm. Please RSVP so that we can have an accurate head count to give to the caterer. There will be door prizes given out as well as a Dirty Santa gift drawing after we eat. The gift should be around at most around \$20.00 per couple or you both bring a gift of your own if you attend. This is always a fun time at the end of the year to be with your friends here at the club.

Hope to see all of you at the party as I'm feeling a little better each day I hope the doctor lifts the restriction of being able to drive so that I can attend this year ending event. Jean does not like to drive after dark anymore so I would need to be able to drive us there and back. I understand the election went well with the only change would be who is the new vice president. I'm still not sure of that position being filled so if you talked to Ric after the meeting please give me a call so we can talk about it soon.

I look forward to being able to see all that attend the Christmas party to wish you all a Happy Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I want to make this next year full of events for the club. Zoom Zoom.

THE FALL FOLIAGE TRIP FROM HECK!: RON COATES

Before the Fall Foliage trip began, there were portents that it might not go off without a hitch. First....it was a "dark and stormy morning" when Jim and Connie Morrison arrived at McDonalds, but they did not drive their Miata. Connie had broken both the tibia and fibula in her right leg and could not ride in the Miata, so they drove their SUV. Dorothy Larken could not make the drive with Earl because the husband of her best friend had passed two nights earlier and the friend recruited Dorothy to help her make funeral arrangements.

Earl Larken got the drivers together for a driver's meeting, he went over the "rules of the road" and gave a brief overview of the trip and lined us up so we could leave Tulsa promptly at seven a.m. After getting the cars in line, one of the cars, driven by Lee Kimberlin, had to pull out of line. Turns out the belt to the water pump had broken. Lee got the car home and tried to install a new belt, but with the supercharger, he could not do it quickly. He decided to put his tires and wheels on his other Miata, he figured he could make it up the mountain lodge by the time we got there, he was going to take the straight route...but even that plan did not work out. He thought perhaps "someone" was trying to tell him NOT to go! Wayne Roth drove his brand new, one day old, 2016 Miata.

The drive headed west down highway 412, but before we got to the state line, Earl took us south along the Illinois River. We went through Westville OK, and then to the bustling metropolis of Hoge AR. on our way to Devil's Den State Park, which is about 20 miles west of Stilwell OK.

Lunch was served at the Oark restaurant, in Oark AR. This is in an area that time has hardly touched. The people in the town are pretty much loners, but I thought they were more friendly than I had expected. From Earl's description of how the moonshiners had treated the revenuers and other strangers I was expecting more awkward moments. The Oark meal did not go as planned, it turned out that we arrived at almost the same time as they were having a funeral for a local who had passed. Many of the Oark employees abandoned their posts to attend the funeral, so it left us with few cooks and servers.

The rains slowed us down through the curves, but it was still a lot of fun driving our wonderful cars on the twisty roads. Our drive leader kept warning us of the danger of going too fast because of the pine needles and leaves that had fallen in the road, they would be a bit slick in dry weather, but the rain only made them more lubricated. He also warned us about how slick the three steel surfaced bridges would be in the rain, so we were especially careful when lining up to cross those. Earl took us to the top of Mount Nebo, a mountain that is 1,250' above the land around it, near Dardanelle Arkansas. We happened to see a wedding in progress while there. Before leaving the mountain, we enjoyed the views from both ends of the peak. The switchbacks on that mountain are fun...but challenging too.

The scheme had been to drive an additional 65 miles before heading to the lodge, but with fog on the mountain starting to set in, and the longer than expected lunch, Earl made a decision to head up to the lodge, but by that time it was turning dark. In the darkness and fog, we were forced to creep up the hill to find the entrance to the Queen Wihelmina Lodge grounds. By the time we arrived at the lodge, we were about an hour past the time Earl had reserved the banquet room. But the buffet was very tasty, and we enjoyed it.

While waiting to take my luggage upstairs in the elevator, I happened to overhear part of an exchange that Earl was having with the desk clerk.. I assumed that the clerk and Earl were just kibitzing back and forth. I heard Earl say something to the effect that he would just sleep in the lobby of the hotel. But the elevator came while they were talking, so I did not hear much. Later Earl shared the fact that even though he had paid for his room nine months prior to trying to check in....the clerk could find no record of a reservation in his name. After trying to explain that he had led many people to the lodge many times in the past, and having been there just the week before to finalize the accommodations and dining room. He found her unwilling to relent. Dorothy was called a couple of times before it was finally decided that Earl would pay again, and sort this out later. But Earl was not a happy camper with the "customer service" that he was shown 16 cars made the trip with Earl, another joined us on the way. About ten club members drove on their own to the lodge, so it was a nice sized group at the lounge of the Ole Queen.

Sunday morning broke with continued fog, and with an extra hour added to our sleep, as daylight savings time ended earlier that morning. We had a hearty breakfast and Earl announced that due to the fog, he wanted to leave on schedule. He did not mind if others wanted to wait it out, in hopes the fog would lift, but he had other obligations.

Because I had been driving "sweep" on this trip, I intended to do so again on the way back. Teresa Ream even allowed me to check out of the hotel before her so I could go with Earl. But as luck would have it, Earl and his group, that contained eight cars, were just driving by my car as I was trying to get in. By the time I got backed up and started, I had lost them in the fog, and never saw them again. I will have to just rely on what Earl had told us he was going to do on the way back. He said he would take the group to a couple more mountains along the Talamena Drive, and, if the fog lifted, he would pull off the road at scenic overlooks to allow folks to take pictures.

All in all it was a good trip. Earl often mentioned that, had there just been ONE FREEZE a week or so before the drive, the hardwoods would have been awesome to see. But with the warmer weather, the trees had not lost enough sap to bring out the colors. The rain made the drive challenging as well. My take away lesson was....No matter how well you organize a drive, sometimes it can go off the rails. No one, and I mean NO ONE plans drives as well as Earl does. He plans every potty stop, negotiates with the folks who run the convenience stores to allow us to use the facilities, and drives the drive several times, to look for problems.

He and Dorothy had taken the trip just the Saturday prior to our trip, and fog had vexed them on that trip too. He guessed that surely it would not occur two weeks in a row. You cannot control the weather, nor can you control when someone attends a funeral. Earl does not let obstacles bother him, he just adjusts and compensates! Oh, and I learned, after getting home, that only three of the overlook were clear enough to get photos from. At one the clouds were below the overlook. I guess we will always remember Halloween of 2015 as being the foggy one!

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: RON COATES

Vice President Ric Fornell opened the meeting of the NEO Miata club at seven pm. The very first order of business was to bring the members up to speed on the condition of Club President, Tom Mattox. Tom had a heart attack a few days earlier and was recovering from bypass surgery. Ric reported that Tom was progressing well and hoped to be out of the hospital by the week's end.

When asked if there were any new members in the house, Larry Sigworth, from Bartlesville, introduced himself and his lovely wife Bobbi. He also explained that he has a classic red, 1992 Miata that only has about 110,000 miles on it. So, it is just past its break in period. He is also a collector of old Ford race cars, one is a 1914 another is a 1922. The rest of the members were then handed the microphone to introduce themselves.

Club Treasurer, Andy Anderson, reported that the club has \$2110.01 in their account. Then the secretary reported that we now have about 90 cars in the club. Tom Mattox, club president, phoned Ric just as the officer reports were being delivered. He told Ric that he was grateful for all the concern the club members had shown him, and all the visits and phone calls. He was hoping to get out of the hospital by the weekend. Tom Penland, from Nelson Miata, came by to give us an idea what to expect at the Launch Party/Car Show that was to be held on November 21st. He also told us that there is an MX-5 power retractable hard top in the pipeline.

The vice-president then went on to hold the election of officers....all officers retained their positions for an additional year except for the vice-president. Ric just cannot devote the time needed to do the job for the next year. No one volunteered for that position, we hope someone will step up to fill it.

Earl Larkin explained what it is like when you are leading a drive, and things go wrong. He explained how it is no big deal if things start to happen that were not planned...all ya have to do is improvise. He also wanted to admonish people who participate on the drives to follow the directions of the drive leader. If the drive leader tells you that you need to fill up with gas....you NEED to fill up with gas. The drive leader knows what is ahead, and how difficult it would be to make the drive if you do not get gas when you are directed to get it. Earl gave a lot of credit to George Walker for helping us find the lodge in the fog. George was able to use his GPS to help guide us. George said he thought we were just about at the turn and Earl told George that he was going to turn left, hoping he was on the road and for George to follow him IF, and only IF George could still see the tail light on Earl's car. If Earl's tail lights disappear it is because there is NO road there and Earl might be 500' down a cliff! On a different subject, Earl explained that he listened to some top notch race drivers discussing the octane of fuel and how well cars will perform on 87 octane. The ONLY thing high octane will do is give better mileage. According to the race experts that Earl listened to....the cars will not go faster with higher octane or perform any better. Bob Schwarz gave a recap of the Veterans Day Parade. He said we provided 17 cars that participated in the parade. And, except for a late start, he said that the parade went off as planned. An Alaska cruise is being planned by Earlene Click and Ruth Will, It will be in early June, and if you have any questions or any interest in it, please contact them for information. Teresa Ream gave us more information about the Christmas Party that the club is having on December 12 at Nelson Mazda. She could use some volunteers to help decorate the service bay with festive things. Please come at 4:30 pm on that Saturday to help.

Ric Fornell adjourned the meeting around 8:00 pm.

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