



Wheels in Motion



February 2023



Wheels in Motion

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1221394091665789>

Upcoming Events

Chilli Cookoff

Saturday, February 11th
Details on page 7

Miata Club Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 14th 1:00pm
At Beef O'Brady's in Punta Gorda

Everglades Seafood Festival

Saturday, February 18th
Details on page 13

Sun Riders Miata Club Event

Sunday, February 19th
Details on page 14

Cape Coral Charity Car Show

Saturday, February 25th
Details on page 17

Annual Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo

Sunday, March 12th
Details on page 15

Annual Picnic & Election

Saturday, March 18th
Lakes Park, Ft Myers

This year it will not be catered, It will be a BOYF (Bring Your Own Food)
Details as they become available

Monthly Meeting

Thursday, February 9th

Beef O'Brady's

1105 Taylor Road, Punta Gorda, FL
(map on the next page)

Monthly meetings are the 2nd Thursday of the month

Dinner at 5pm and meeting at 6pm.

**Please RSVP to Kathy Engler by February 6th
at kathy.engler@gmail.com**

Cover Photos:

FRONT COVER: Photo by Ron Lindensmith (big surprise to those who know me). Just a Spec Miata race car at Sebring International Raceway when we had a trip there.

BACK COVER: Ron Lindensmith's 2021 Miata (editor's purgative) in front of a crumbling building on Ft Myers Beach just across the road from what remains of the Ft Myers Pier. I wasn't there to gawk at the damage, but to shoot a special photo (see page 18).

JUST FOR FUN

Breakfast Socializer:

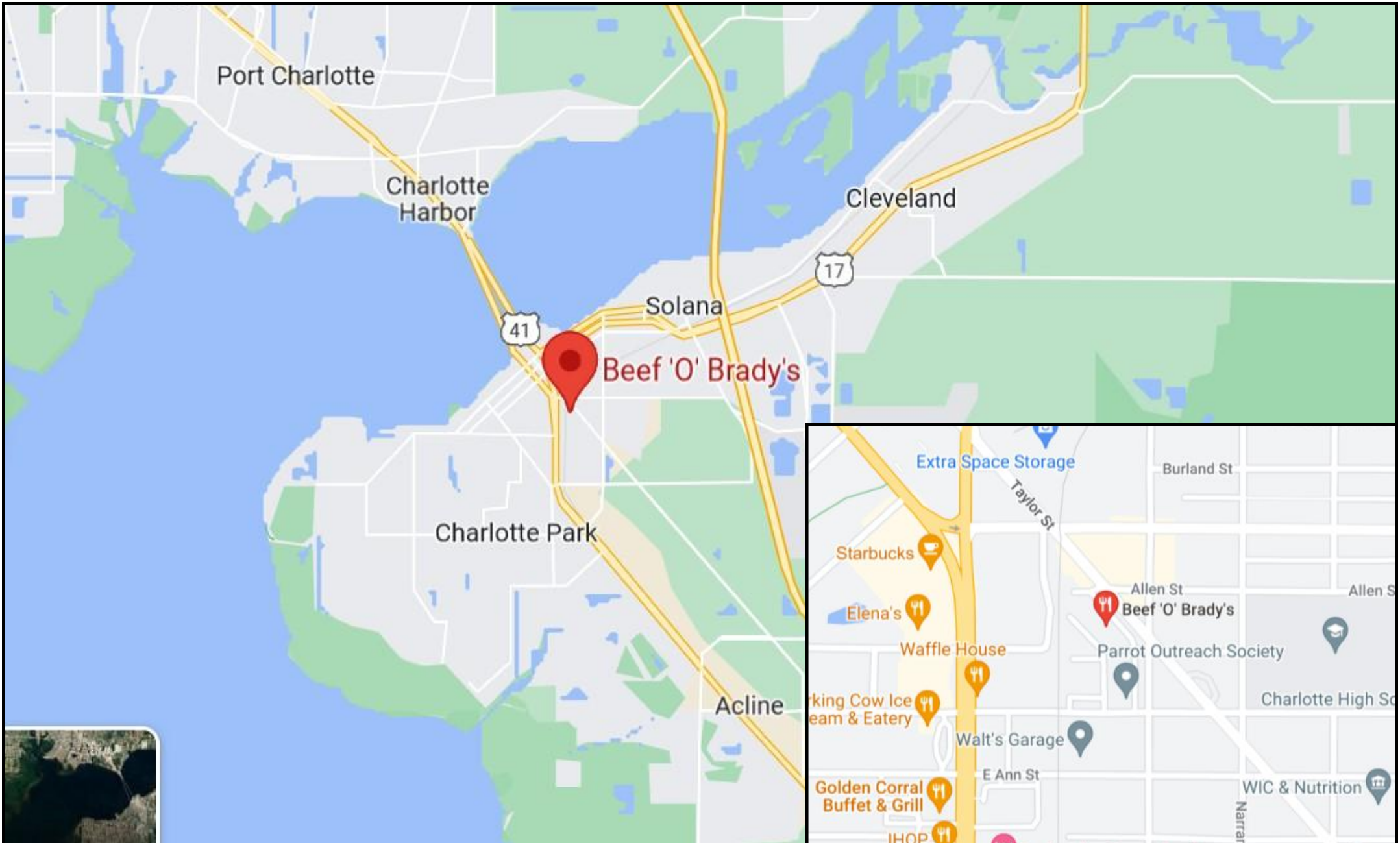
Tuesday, February 28th

Metro Dinner, 1720 Tamiami Trail Suite 100,

Port Charlotte, FL 33948. (location subject to change)

RSVP to Judy at memmx5swf@yahoo.com by February 24th

Map to the Miata Club General Membership Meeting



spec **MX-5 CHALLENGE** **SERIES**

Presented by **TOYO TIRES**

2023 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

By Ron Lindensmith

For anybody who may be interested in this Spec MX-5 Challenge Series, here are the last 4 events of their 2023 season.

I only picked out these four at the end of the season because three of the four are within a days drive from SW Florida...

well, OK, Barber Motorsports Park (Birmingham, AL) may be a bit of a stretch for one day.

I took two days on the way there and only one day on the way home last year.

And some of the roads in eastern Georgia and a lot of Alabama were great fun to drive in a Miata!

And the track is really like a park and with a great museum on site.

If the Miata Reunion is there again in 2023, I'll go to the Reunion and do a track day again.

If the Reunion is far away (like the West Coast)

I may very well go to the MX-5 Challenge race and then drive on up to The Tail of the Dragon.

Miatas at the Gap is Aug 3rd thru the 6th, 2023.

AUG 05-06 DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

SCCA
Sports Car Club of America

AUG 26-27 BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK*

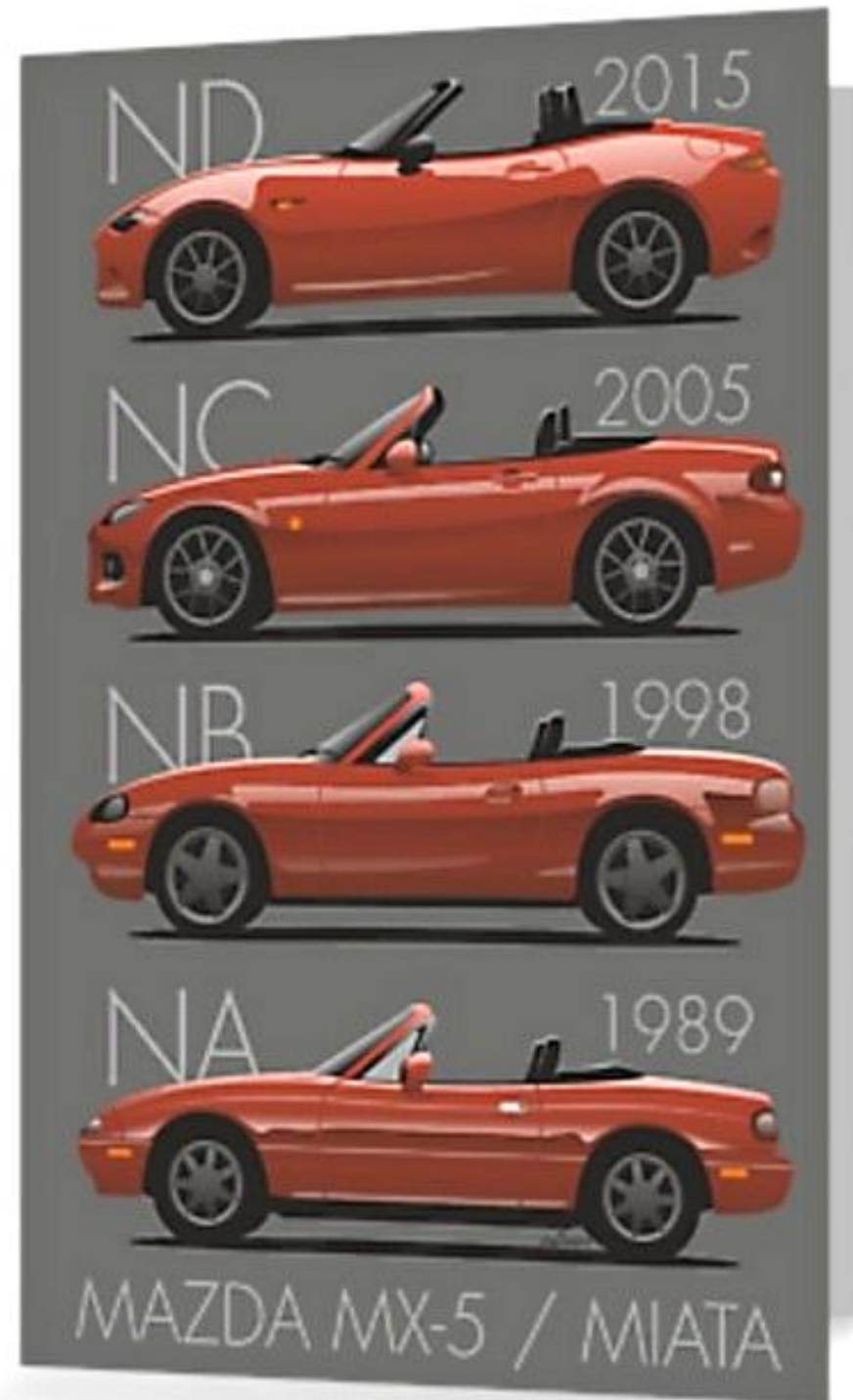
SCCA
Sports Car Club of America

SEP 02-03 SONOMA RACEWAY

SCCA
Sports Car Club of America

SEP 02-03 SEBRING INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

SCCA
Sports Car Club of America



From the Editor's Desk

By Ron Lindensmith

Welcome to the February 2023 edition of the Miata Club of Southwest Florida newsletter. Lets start with a **Happy Valentine's Day!** I'm so lucky to have found the right woman for me! Sometimes she does what she wants, sometimes I do what I want, but most of the time, we do it together!

This issue has a really nice story about Norman Garrett, A Mazda Miata designer, who did a road trip with a friend to pick up a very old MG. It's well worth reading.

Let me apologize here for the Toyota MR2 story and the 2024 Corvette hybrid story. I know this is a Miata Club, but these are cars many of us might like to be aware of.

Toyota may try to compete with Mazda by bringing out an MR2 again... for the 3rd time. But if they do, and it's a hybrid with really good acceleration from the electric motor and it looks anywhere close to as cool as the concept car, they'll have my attention. Especially if, as rumored, it's a joint venture with Lotus or Porsche!

The 2024 E-Ray Corvette is just AWESOME!... Although a bit expensive and it will be the first model year for the hybrid and all wheel drive systems. And I avoid first model year cars like the plague!

I intend to meet up with the Sun Riders Miata Club of Tampa on February 19th. They are doing a tour of a winery (somewhere south of Bradenton, then meeting for lunch and finally going for a drive on The Tail of the Gecko! There is a bit more info in this newsletter, and when the Sun Riders put out more specifics, I'll send out a global email. BTW, you do not have to be a member of the Sun Riders to join their trip, but you will have to RSVP once the specifics are published.

The 2023 Miata Reunion is going to be celebrating the Miata NB this year. Date and location have not been confirmed as of this printing. But I can tell you that if they hold it at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama again, and I have no scheduling conflicts, I'll be going again. I'll do the Track Day, the Banquet and spend a day in the Barber Motorsports Museum! I missed 2 of these last year. I skipped the Banquet because it was stupidly expensive and the Museum due to coming down with COVID!

Everyone Needs a Little Sunshine

By Sandy Cole

Hi all,

It was so good see such a large group at our January meeting at Beef O'Bradys in Punta Gorda. The facility handled our group well. The energy was high, the company friendly and the food was great. Now that I know how to find it, I am looking forward to the February meeting.

I am pleased to note that we have several new members. And, believe it or not, we have had no sunshine requests. That is good news too. Although I would like to keep it that way, PLEASE do not hesitate to let me know if or when you need some extra SUNSHINE. Call, text or email me.

We have 16 birthdays this month. Sharon Basil, Steve Brown, Michael Butler, Ed Conrad, Lyndi Gaston, Pat Hawley, Don Keith, Tim Knight, Paula Larson, Stephen Rabinowitz. Betty Ritter, Jerry Stanley, Al Southerland, Bill Watts, Sonya Weaver and, Stephen Wisniewski. Please join me in wishing these members a VERY SPECIAL BIRTHDAY!

This is the month of LOVE. Please do something kind to /for someone. You will not only help to bring joy to another, you will be amazed at how good it makes you feel.

Continue to count your many blessings. And, HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO ALL.

SUNSHINE Sandy

P S Thanks to all of you for your kind words, thoughts and cards. It has meant a lot to me. You are invited to attend a CELEBRATION OF LIFE for Don Cole on Saturday, February 18th at 1:00 pm at:

Thomas A. Edison Congregational Church.

1619 Llewellyn Drive

Fort Myers, FL

A light reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall.

Chili Cook-Off

Save the date:

Saturday, February 11th at 3:00pm

This will be a chance to show off your chili making skills!

Dick and Jean Fischer will be holding a Chili Cook-off contest on Saturday February 11th at their home located at 119 Seville Place, S.W. in Port Charlotte starting at 3:00, rain or shine.

We need 5 or 6 chefs to bring their slow cookers full of their best chili for tasting. If you are interested in entering the contest, please let Dick and Jean know as soon as possible. All you need to do is bring your chili and any toppings for it, a ladle, and a copy of the recipe or a short description of your concoction.

The Fischers will provide cups and spoons for tasting, napkins, soft drinks, chips, cookies, and marshmallows to roast. To cool off your palates, we will have ice cream after the chili.

All members are invited to join in the fun.

If you can bring a dessert it would be appreciated.

Please contact Dick Fischer at :

turrbo@comcast.net

by February 10th if you would like to attend.

Notice to all members!

By Judy Western—Events Committee Chair

This is just a note with several issues.

First of all, we MUST start sending an RSVP if you are going to attend any event!!!

We had a problem at our breakfast where 10 people RSVP AND 20 people showed up. This caused an issue with the restaurant.

So please RSVP to everything.

The events committee is working hard to come up with the ideas so the membership can come and lead a group...give one of the Events members a call for information.

Don't forget our Chili cook-off on the 11th of February. Call Dick and Jean Fisher to RSVP at 305 389 2494.

January Membership Meeting

The January General Membership Meeting was held at the Beef O'Brady's in Punta Gorda. Almost everybody managed to find it, but a couple people told me the map in the newsletter helped.

The move to Beef O'Brady's was due to other sites we have used in the past being closed due to Ian. In my humble opinion this worked out as a pretty good location. The service was kind of slow and maybe we need to ask them for a bit more help with additional staff. But my burger and fries were good, my beer was a little flat but drinkable.

Ed Conrad and Allan Engler did a fine job running the meeting. I want to thank those who donated the 2 bottles of booze and the leather carry-all bag. The bag was nice enough that Ed decided to auction it off. I bid it up to \$20, but that was all I had in my wallet and it sold for \$25.

We had several new members at this meeting. Even a couple who joined and another who took a membership form. All in all, I think most of us had a pretty good time! (photos on the following page)



SCCA Sportscar Races at Sebring

By Ron Lindensmith

We had 5 cars caravan over to Sebring on a very back roads tour. An old club called the Gearheads did this route and both Jesse Dunham and I had done it with them. They called it the Dawn Patrol. They only did it on Sunday mornings at the very first light, even before the sun was up. The idea was, that there would be less traffic and therefore, more room to exceed the speed limits! We were 100% at or below the speed limit thanks to Pete Ambrus' leadership. I want to make the trip again for some other race and make it a 'spirited drive'. Not crazy fast, but more

or less just above the speed limits on the straights, but pretty much as fast as I dare around most of the curves and twisty sections.

We got to the track about 30 minutes before the first race. But the reason we were there was to see the Spec Miata race. I was at Indianapolis for the National Championship races in 2021. They had over 100 Spec Miatas entered, but due to the length of the track, they are only allowed 72 cars on track for a race. So 30+ drivers who failed to qualify fast enough went home without getting into the Championship Race. Here at Sebring, a much longer track, they are allowed to run more cars and believe it or not, they had 87 cars in the Spec Miata race. Below is a photo of the leaders coming through Turn 3 on the first lap and up front, things looked kind of orderly.

But on the next page are a couple of photos from cars that were about 20th or 30th... or maybe I should say these are the 20th through 30th place cars... maybe even more! If I try hard, I think I can count over 15 cars in those photos (you have to count roof tops)!







This is just what I thought was one of the better looking Miatas racing.



Some times the racing gets this close even after the field has started to string out into mostly single file.

There are Miatas in other classes as well. The T3 on this car means it is an almost stock ND Miata and races against a lot of other makes that are also very close to stock.

Everybody in our group was amazed at the number of cars, even me, and I raced for close to 20 years. And we had some pre-knowledge because the first race was Spec Racer Fords which is typically a big race group as well, and they had 50 cars.

It was a cold day and the wind was blowing pretty hard, so we all were ready to go over to the Sebring Airport restaurant for lunch. I think several of us were happy to get hot beverages or hot soup just so we could wrap our hands around them!

I think everybody agreed that the back roads drive was fun, the racing was interesting (it's even better in warmer weather and even better when it rains just a bit!) and the food was good. After lunch I think everybody just headed for home. I considered going back to the track to watch the afternoon races, but the wind was up and the temperatures were only a tiny bit warmer. So I headed for home as well.



Just another interesting looking car. I assume this is a wrap job... but it could be paint or just smaller vinyl cutouts.





Four of the Five cars that made the trip. Jesse Dunham went for breakfast as soon as we got there and I'm not sure if he came to the track.



I was pleasantly surprised to see car #19 on track in the Spec Racer Ford race. The driver is Bobby Sak and he is the son of a guy who I got to know back when I was racing. I raced cars like these and Bobby's dad drove a GT1 Corvette (very fast & expensive)!



These are in the FF class. It used to be Formula Ford, because they all had Ford motors. But now they have allowed Honda engines in the class as well.



These are the 1st & 2nd place FV (Formula Vee). They run old Beetle air cooled motors and have some stock front suspension from the old Beetles as well.

Everglades Seafood Festival

Saturday, February 18th

On Saturday, February 18 I'll be leading a group to the 53rd annual **Everglades Seafood Festival** in Everglades City.

The event features live music, food booths, crafts for sale and carnival rides.

You can find out more about it at their website:

<https://evergladeseafoodfestival-2023.com/>

Or their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/EvergladesSeafoodFestival>



Please let me know if you would like to go with the group. The current plan is to meet in Punta Gorda around 8:30 and take a circuitous route to the festival. This could change a bit if something else works better for the group. Lunch would be on your own at the site.

Contact me if you need more information.

Dana Breda
336-416-7464

Retirements

We have two pending retirements from the volunteer staff /Board of Directors of the Miata Club of Southwest Florida.

Our Sunshine Lady, Sandy Cole, would like to have somebody step up to be the new Sunshine (Person) and take her place. Judy Western has offered to become the Sunshine Lady and will likely be confirmed at our next Board Meeting.

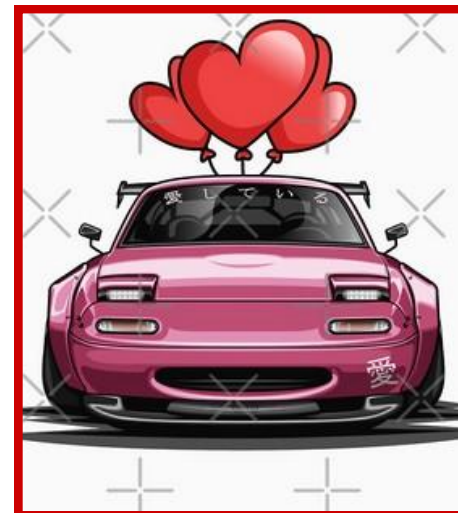
Our Events Coordinator, Donna Noyes, is stepping down from her position. Originally Judy Western was going to take this position, but she decided being the Sunshine Lady fit her skill set better.

So we need an Events Coordinator which is a Board of Directors position.

Both of these valuable members will be missed and the Club needs somebody to step forward to take over these positions.

Contact any Board Member if you want more information.

**You had me at
ZOOM-ZOOM**



Sun Riders Miata Club

Winery Tour, Lunch

and Drive the Tail of the Gecko

Save the date: Sunday, February 19th

The Sun Riders Miata Club of Tampa is doing an event that looks interesting. A tour of a winery somewhere south of Bradenton, then

lunch somewhere nearby and then they will go drive

The Tail of the Gecko (a popular motorcycle tour) that runs north a few miles east of I-75.

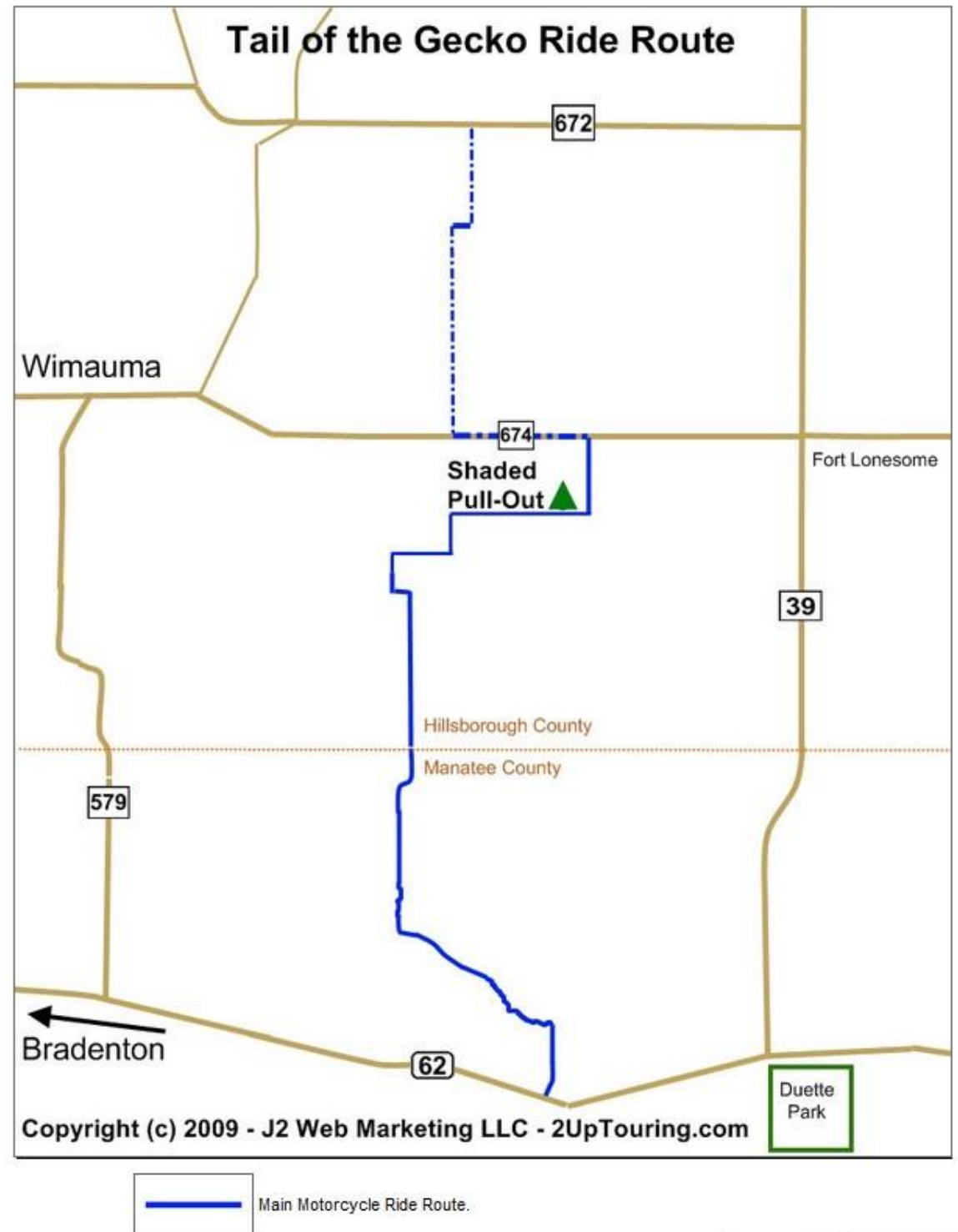
Their Club is happy to have members of our Club join them.

All they ask is that you RSVP the leader of the trip.

You can see the event on their website calendar at:

<https://www.sunriders.com/calendar>

I will send out a global email when they post details at their website.



Annual Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo

**Sunday March 12, 2023 is the
Annual Arcadia All-Florida
Championship Rodeo
final award day!**

We really enjoyed the rodeo last year. The surroundings are fun, the events were amazing and the food was great. Unfortunately we cannot schedule seats together, but we were pretty close to each other last year. The seats are selling fast and it was recommended that we go online to purchase our seats. The seats, Premium (not premium plus!) with backs are \$45.00 each, and there is a \$10.00 parking fee. There are seats available right now in sections D, E, G and H. We may not get to sit right next to each other, but we can still get together for looking around and eating. It's worth it!!

Anyone who wants to go should get tickets right away!

The gates open at 11:00 am, pre-show events begin at 1:00pm,
and the rodeo begins at 2:00pm.

More info in the next newsletter about where we are meeting etc

www.ArcadiaRodeo.com. the web site if you choose to order online
The phone numbers are 863-494-2014, or 800-749-7633,
if you choose to call to order.

**Contact Janet Keller,
with questions at 239-470-9093**





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Cape Coral Charity Car Show

Save the date: February 25, 2023

Below is information from <http://capecoralcharitycarshow.com/>

The Cape Coral Charity Car Show will be held at Mariner High School on Saturday, February 25th 2023 from 9:00Am until 3:00pm. Our 2023 Car Show is sponsored by Cape Coral 1st United Methodist Church – with proceeds benefiting Cape Coral Caring Center. This event raised \$48,000 for the Cape Caring Center in 2022– This is an open car show with any year car or truck or Jeep invited. Last year we had close to 300 cars and thousands of spectators. This car show is for Family Fun, with a DJ playing 50's and 60's mu-

sic, There will be food, 50/50 drawings, a church bake sale and great door prizes. There will be many additional vendors, plus information booths for the charity and church sponsor. Goody bags and dash plaques to the first 250 show vehicles. There will be more than 25 trophies for show vehicles. Trophy winners will be selected by co-sponsors. Bring your car or truck (either show vehicle or daily driver) and bring your family for a fun day!

The Cape Coral Caring Center (<https://capecoralcaringcenter.org/about/>) is a food bank and emergency resource for people in need.

This car show is open to any and all cars and trucks. THERE WILL BE A \$20.00 DAY OF THE SHOW ENTRY FEE/ DONATION. PLEASE HAVE A \$20 BILL IN HAND WHEN YOU BRING YOUR SHOW CAR THROUGH THE GATE. All vehicles are eligible for trophies. Come show off your pride and joy, get a goodie bag, maybe a trophy, and have fun Showing Off Your Car While mingling

with other car collectors and people who love cars, great music, food and good clean fun!

There's a \$5 parking donation for spectators.

Our Miata club will participate in the show - we need to know as soon as possible approximately how many cars we will have attend. If we have enough, the organizers will be sure to reserve a spot for us.

Please email Dana Breda at dbreda@earthlink.net if you think you will be there.

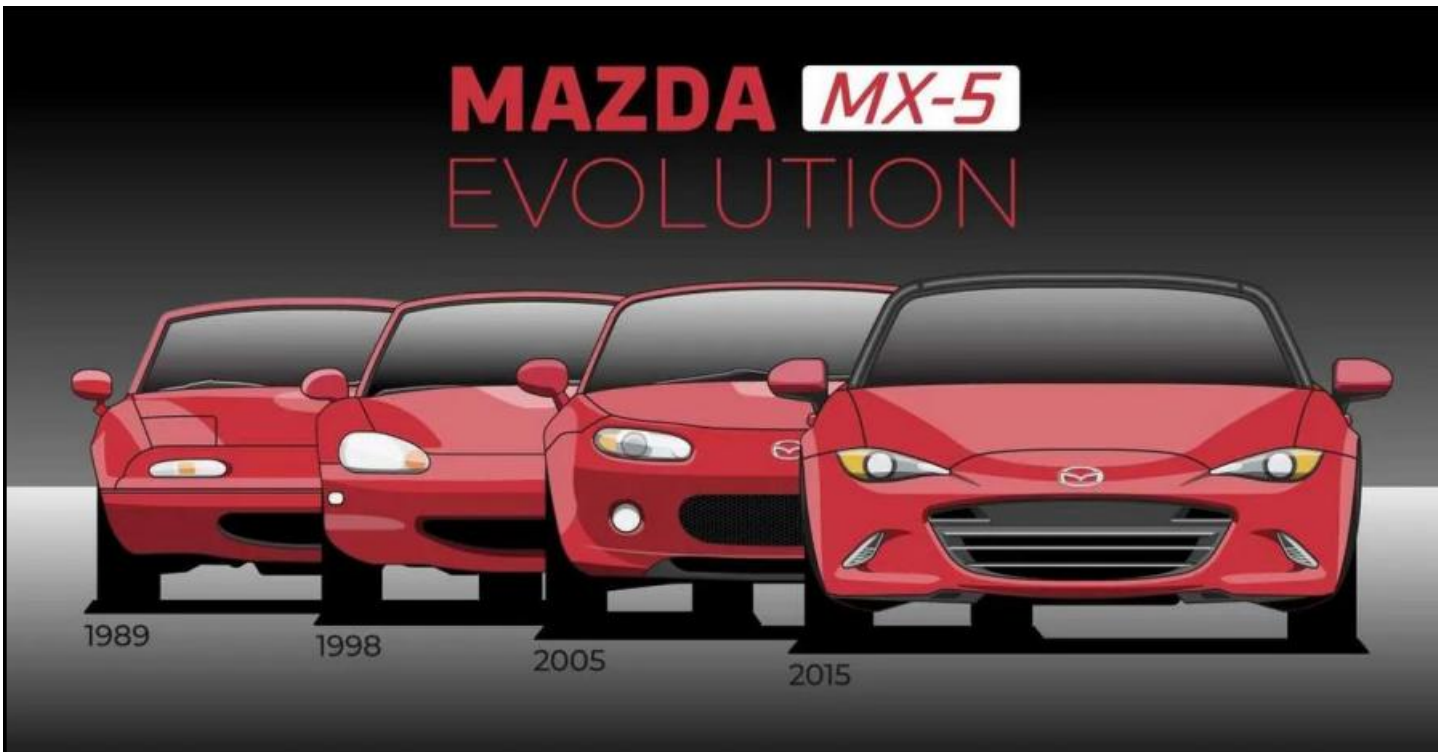


Photo of the Month



The full moon over the Sanibel Causeway Bridge
as seen from the Ft Myers Beach Pier.
Photo by Ron Lindensmith

I Helped Make the First Miata, and Now I Love Its Ancestor

By Norman Garrett

Norman Garrett was the Concept Engineer for the original Miata back in his days at Mazda's Southern California Design Studio. When he's not curating his small collection of dysfunctional automobiles and motorcycles, he teaches automotive engineering classes at UNC Charlotte's Motorsports Engineering Department, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Newletter Editor Note: I had the privilege of meeting Mr. Garrett at the Miata Reunion last summer. He was looking over my car and when I walked up, he asked me, "Is this your car?" I said it was and he said, "This is one of the classiest ND's I've ever seen. Nice job."

I had never owned a car like this, one with pre-war roots, and I wasn't looking for it. But if you're bored and hunting on Craigslist long enough, you usually run across something that catches your eye. Something you probably shouldn't buy. That's how I met Abigail.



Life with Abigail is now bliss. She is a joy to drive, now that I've over-engineered her fuel system and fixed that leaky wheel cylinder. And people in town love her. Everyone waves and smiles when they see her coming. There is something endearing about a ridiculous car and the fool who loves her, as if we were made for each other.

Life with Abigail is now bliss. She is a joy to drive, now that I've over-engineered her fuel system and fixed that leaky wheel cylinder. And people in town love her. Everyone waves and smiles when they see her coming. There is something endearing about a ridiculous car and the fool who loves her, as if we were made for each other.

Abigail is a 1952 MG TD. The TD is part of MG's "T-Series" family, five models produced, one after the other, from 1936 to 1955. The TA came first, then the TB, the TC, the TD, and the TF. Each is a variation on the same basic idea. They all have long and flowing fenders, a long-stroke four-cylinder, a four-speed gearbox, and an ash-framed body. The TC, TD, and TF were built after World War II, but like so many cars of the era, their engineering basically dated to the 1930s.



The 54-hp TD met the world in 1949. It was really just a restyle and a light mechanical update of the TC. Both cars were relatively affordable and handled well. On the Miata project, we had cited the T-Series as helping start this country's sports-car craze, so I had a vague interest in

owning one. Having just sold Edna, my '64 Chrysler Imperial—the widest, largest, and most powerful American car made in its model year—it felt somehow right to be entranced by a diminutive lightweight like the TD.

The ad called the car an “older restoration,” noting that the owner needed to move it along to fund other projects. The following weekend, I visited the owner at his small farm near North Carolina’s coast and was smitten by the TD’s tomboy charm. It was essentially an upright piano on skinny tires.

We rolled the MG out into the sunshine. The owner started it with a simple pull of the starter knob. The engine sounded like a sewing machine. The car was indeed an excellent example, having received a frame-off restoration about eight years prior. The TD appeared to have been reassembled in the aisle of the Moss Motors warehouse—every rubber part was new, along with all the gaskets and trim. The metal bits had just enough patina to make the car look real to me.

In whole, it looked about like a 40,000-mile TD from, say, 1958. Not showroom-new, but not tattered, either—just the way I like my cars. The owner let the TD idle in the summer sun, no concern for overheating. I was impressed. Watching an English car idle for 30 minutes in 95-degree weather is like seeing a 90-year-old man do 100 push ups.

We struck a deal. I made plans to return the next weekend with either a trailer or a tow truck. On the 200-mile drive home, I texted a friend—let’s call him Q. He was a fellow Brit-sports-car aficionado. (Translation: patient with flaws, curious and willing to learn, steadfast in times of trouble. Good qualities in a car person or a friend).

Q said that he *could* help me pick up the MG with his trailer. But he’d only agree to help, he said, if we drove the TD back home.

“This car has not been on the road in eight years,” I said.

“Don’t wuss out,” he retorted. “What could go possibly wrong?”

And so the plan was made to drive together to get the car, then drive back in tandem, bracing for the possibilities that lay buried deep inside every one of that 70-year-old TD’s 1500-some-odd parts. The chase vehicle would be my 30-year-old Miata.

Yes, this is what counts as adventure in our man-bunned, flip-flop-wearing world: a three-hour drive on a paved road, in two cars, with no lions, tigers, or even bears.

At home, I made up a spares package. If you bring the tool/part/item, I

figured, you probably won’t need it. A spare car battery fully charged: on-board. Gorilla tape and a small butane torch, plus some 12-gauge wire and solder: of course. Fix-a-flat and a jack: check. Carb cleaner and a length of fuel line: yep. We planned a route that avoided highways, sticking to interesting two-lanes with pull-off room and low traffic. (This was not our first British-sports-car rodeo.) I joined the Hagerty Driver’s Club and elected for the 150-mile towing option, then drew a circle of that radius around my home, which I called the “circle of safety.” Like an RAF pilot trying to get back across the English Channel, I knew that if I could just get the TD inside that radius—see the white cliffs of Dover—all would be well.



The following Saturday, we left to get the car. The trip there was uneventful, as most Miata trips are. When we arrived at the barn, the owner had the TD out in the sun and ready to go.

He looked around for a trailer, then back at us. “You’re going to drive this to Charlotte?”

“Any reason we shouldn’t?”

The man looked into my eyes for a double-count, the cash I had given him still palmed in his right hand. “Keep an eye on the fuel tank,” he said. “She clogs up now and then . . .”

With that, we were off. It was noon. Plenty of margin for a three-hour drive on a lovely Saturday afternoon. I let Q drive first. First, I wanted to watch for any unusual behavior as the MG went down the road. Second, as a practical matter—I wanted to be able to see (and then collect) any parts that might fall off as Q got up to speed.



Speed being a relative term, of course, with a TD. When the car was new, it had a top-top-top speed of 74 mph. That number came in fourth gear, at the dizzying engine speed of 5500 rpm (a.k.a. the precipice of valve float).

The third reason I wanted to follow the car on that first leg? I am a visual person. Watching the MG bumble across eastern North Carolina was going to be fun.

That three-hour estimate would prove optimistic. At first, everything

seemed fine. Ten minutes in, however, the car began to lose speed. Q raised his left arm and signaled—TDs don't have visible turn signals—to pull off into a parking lot. The words of *Road & Track's* Peter Egan arose from deep in my consciousness: *It's always the points.*

I prepared myself for a little roadside diagnostics. This would be the first stop of more than a dozen. Over the next seven, not three, hours.



Pulling the distributor cap and rocking the car around in gear showed that, indeed, the gap on the MG's ignition points was too small. Q assumed the kneeling position beside the engine, a posture familiar to T-Series owners (and to owners of early Porsche 911s—it's a position of petition and humility, as if praying to the electrical gods). He made a quick adjustment and then we were off again, confident in our roadside tune-up.

Ten miles later, Q's left hand waved once again. One more time, we pulled over to inspect the points. They were out of adjustment again, so we realigned them once more. We were only 10 miles closer to my circle of safety, and progress was agonizingly slow.

Ten more miles. Left hand up again. The points gap was now somehow too small. While messing around with the distributor, we realized the distributor had roughly half an inch of play, left to right, from a perished

bushing. You could vary the points gap simply by pushing on the distributor's body. On a subsequent stop, we took some zip ties and some spare fuel hose and used them to jam the distributor against a nearby object—in this case, the engine's generator—forcing it into something like one position.

Setting off, we were emboldened, confident.

Ten minutes later, we were once again in a parking lot, once again looking at the distributor. The point gap was holding at an acceptable level. Emboldened by our diagnostic prowess, we quickly condemned the ignition condenser, a part that can cause intermittent poor running. There was a new one in a box of spares that came with the car. On it went. Back on the road we went.

At this point, I took over driving, having seen my fill of the TD's rear and Q's insistent hand signaling. We were about 20 miles to the edge of our tow range, and I was determined to make it. I was instantly reminded of how special old British sports cars are: tight steering, excellent shifters and transmissions, responsive brakes. I ran through my list of known English-girl names and settled on Abigail. The only real hiccup was a severe shimmy at speed, which I chalked up to flat-spotted tires. The whole chassis shook up and down, side-to-side, and in the yaw axis, all at once.

No matter—two miles later, the car was coughing and sputtering again. I pulled into the parking lot of an auto-parts store, ready to buy anything.

The seller's parting words came back to me: *She clogs up now and then.*

I lay on the ground to inspect the fuel lines. A T-Series carries its fuel like a backpack, in a wedge-shaped slab tank just behind the body. When I opened one of the barbed fuel fittings beneath the tank, nothing came out. The barb's innards were caked with flakes of rust.

Ah, I thought: It had never been the ignition! Our short stops to adjust the points had given the fuel system enough time to weep a few ounces of gas into the line, letting the engine restart. After which it would inevitably stall again, once fuel stopped flowing. A simple probe with a small stick cleared the line and got fuel gushing from the nipple. Once the gasoline ran clear, I put the hose back in place and moved to the front of the car, to the feed line at the carburetors. Fuel ran clear there pretty quickly, and then we were back on the road.

Well, almost. Along the way, the battery had grown too weak to turn the engine over, so we had to push-start the car.

I was reminded, once again, of the advantages of a lightweight sports car: You can push-start them when needed.

I sprinted out of the parking lot with bouts of full-throttle TD acceleration (a.k.a. barely keeping up with traffic). All was again great with the world. For 20 miles. Then my hand went up, and I repeated the fuel-purge routine. Nine more times, we performed this choreography, before reaching home, once every 15 miles or so. Toward the end, we got it down to a 90-second pit stop for both tank drain and carb-line purge.

We were well inside the towable radius now, but we felt we had licked the symptoms, if not the disease. Getting Abigail home under her own power had become a challenge. (On one of the purge routines, I noticed that the left rear brake cylinder was leaking. Something to address later—we were having trouble with propulsion, not stopping.)



In between these regular purge routines, I took inventory. The engine really didn't mind going 5000 rpm at 65 mph. The steering was precise, the ride comfortable. A T-Series steering wheel is the size of an extra-large pizza and perfectly complements the wooden dash. The whole

package worked well, and the attraction was undeniable. As a bonus, it was one of those cars so lovely to look at that you almost don't mind taking in that beauty while sitting on the side of the road, wondering why the thing won't run.

A few miles down the road, I looked in the mirror to see Q signaling from the Miata. I dove into a church's parking lot, curious as to what could possibly be wrong with our Japanese car. Q pulled up alongside.

"My phone's weather app says we are driving into a rainstorm." Then, in one of those *I only have to run faster than the bear* moments, he flipped up the Miata's top with one hand and drove off.

I waved him back. We spent 10 minutes unfolding and erecting the MG's prehistoric top. The car came from the factory with side curtains—clip-on fabric windows—but we didn't have them. The TD's roof amounted to a little more than a lousy umbrella, but it was better than no top at all. With that, we were off, into dark clouds ahead.

And rain it did. So on we drove, one-handed, with Q in the serene comfort of a watertight Mazda and me in what was essentially a wooden sailboat caught in a squall. Two more fuel-line purges were required to get through the storm, and we reached the outskirts of Charlotte with a sigh of relief.

The rain stopped, the sun came out, and the TD, somehow, settled down into a happy zone of peace and harmony. The shimmies from the flat-spotted tires finally worked themselves out. I became comfortable with a 5000-rpm cruise. The car ran wonderfully, and we came to terms

with each other. The fuel tank pulled one last clogging routine, but we made it the last 10 miles to my house without incident, arriving just as the sun was setting. I pulled into my driveway and let Abigail idle for a moment, re-checking her gauges and thanking her for making it all the way home without a tow.



We had accomplished something together, she and I, and it felt good. I switched off the ignition and listened to the engine tick and gurgle as it cooled. Abigail deposited a cup of engine oil on the driveway, as if to mark her spot. Seven hours of noise melted into a nice moment of joy.



Life with Abigail is now bliss. She is a joy to drive, now that I've over-engineered her fuel system and fixed that leaky wheel cylinder. And people in town love her.

Everyone waves and smiles when they see her coming. There is something endearing about a ridiculous car and the fool who loves her, as if we were made for each other.



Bridgestone and Dow Partner to Develop Breakthrough Tire Sealant Technology

By Nizar Trigui Chief Technology Officer and Group President,
Solutions Businesses, Bridgestone Americas.

Submitted by Jesse Dunham

- B-SEALS is a first-of-its-kind, silicone-based tire sealant technology that offers extended mobility without compromising sustainability.
- Unlike conventional tire sealants, B-SEALS can be efficiently separated from tires to promote tire repairability after a puncture.

This innovative technology enables proper end-of-life tire recycling and extended tire life, aligning with the “Ecology”, “Extension” and “Ease” values of the Bridgestone E8 Commitment.

Bridgestone Americas (Bridgestone) and Dow have partnered to develop B-SEALS, a recyclable, silicone-based tire sealant technology. The extended mobility solution will be introduced at the upcoming 2022 Silicone Expo in Detroit (June 21-23), and represents more than four years of joint research and development between the two companies.

B-SEALS technology provides excellent sealant performance in the event of a puncture without compromising sustainability. Unlike conventional sealants that are difficult to separate from tires, this silicone-based sealant can be efficiently removed after application, promoting tire repairability and potentially extending the amount of time a tire is in service. Because it's removable and recyclable, B-SEALS sealant technology also supports end-of-life tire recycling and enables tire material circularity.

Approximately, one-third of all new passenger vehicles sold in the U.S. are not equipped with a spare tire, leading to increased demand for extended mobility solutions such as self-sealing and run-flat tire technologies. Bridgestone will initially offer tires with B-SEALS sealant technology to original equipment manufacturers looking to reduce vehicle weight and improve overall efficiency as more electric vehicles come to market.

“We envision a future where tires are the ultimate enablers of sustainable mobility,” said Nizar Trigui, Chief Technology Officer and Group President, Solutions Businesses, Bridgestone Americas. “Not only will tires be able to self-seal following a puncture, but we are also developing technologies that will relay real-time tire health information to a driver or fleet manager so that they can make more informed vehicle maintenance decisions. Our collaboration with Dow demonstrates how we’re using innovation and collaboration to make mobility safer, more efficient and more sustainable.”

“Dow is delighted to commercialize the world’s first silicone self-sealing tire solution to better provide passengers with safety, durability, comfort, and sustainability benefits,” said Charlie Zimmer, Global Business Director of Dow Performance Silicones & Specialty Materials. “As a global materials science leader, we look forward to a strong collaboration with Bridgestone to enable sustainable mobility through our novel tire solution — advancing our collective journey to a carbon-neutral world.”

The introduction of B-SEALS silicone-based tire sealant is the latest example of how Bridgestone is working to deliver its 2050 sustainability commitments of carbon neutrality and tires made from 100% renewable materials. In April, the company announced a partnership with LanzaTech to convert end-of-life tires into new materials, including sustainable ethanol, while also exploring processes to create sustainable synthetic rubber that does not rely on chemicals derived from oil. Bridgestone also continues to advance its R&D initiative aimed at diversifying the world’s natural rubber supply by commercializing use of guayule natural rubber in tires by 2030.

Bridgestone’s collaboration with Dow to develop B-SEALS sealant technology aligns with the Bridgestone E8 Commitment, which establishes eight values starting with the letter “E” to solidify Bridgestone’s commitment to a more sustainable world. B-SEALS sealant supports the “Extension”, “Ecology” and “Ease” values of the Bridgestone E8 Commitment.

We envision a future where tires are the ultimate enablers of sustainable mobility. Not only will tires be able to self-seal following a puncture, but we are also developing technologies that will relay real-time tire health information to a driver or fleet manager so that they can make more informed vehicle maintenance decisions. Our collaboration with Dow demonstrates how we’re using innovation and collaboration to make mobility safer, more efficient and more sustainable.

Do Not Warm-up Your Car In Cold Weather

It's true that warming up gas-powered vehicles before driving in cold weather can cause damage to the engine, according to Firestone Complete Auto Care and Smart Motors Toyota, a dealership based in Madison, Wisconsin.

"If you're one of the many drivers who thinks it's important to turn on your car and let it sit for a bit before hitting the road in wintry weather, you could be doing your engine more harm than good," Firestone says.

In a blog post on its website, Smart Motors Toyota says letting your car idle in cold temperatures can shorten the life of your engine by stripping away oil from the engine's pistons and cylinders — two critical components that help your engine run, Stephen Ciatti, Ph.D., principal engineer for battery systems at PACCAR, told Business Insider in 2016.

Gas-powered cars need oil to keep their engines lubricated. When you start a car, an oil pump circulates the oil in less than a minute. But if you let your car idle to warm up the cabin, the oil will start to slowly drain away from the engine's key components since the engine isn't moving the car.

"Less oil means more friction, more wear and tear, and a shorter life for your engine," Firestone says.

While some people let their cars idle to warm up the interior, others may actually be trying to protect their engine because of outdated guidance.

Firestone and Smart Motors Toyota both say that most cars made before 1980 did need to "warm up" when it was cold out. This is because older model cars had carburetors that regulated the air-fuel mixture within the engine and could not accurately adjust the air-to-fuel ratio in cold weather.

"In cold temperatures, carburetors couldn't vaporize all the gasoline they let into the engine, so some of it would be left behind as a liquid rather than being burned off during combustion. In order to work properly,

a carburetor needed to warm up or else you'd run the risk of stalling out," Firestone says.

But times have changed since the 1980s. Nowadays, practically every car sold in the United States has an electric fuel injection system that helps maintain the perfect air-fuel mixture needed for a combustion event, no matter the ambient temperature, according to Firestone and Smart Motors Toyota.

Instead of waiting for your car to warm up in the winter, most manufacturers recommend driving off gently after about 30 seconds because the engine warms up faster when the car is being driven, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

"This means that your cold-day-driving routine should look something like this: bundle up, start the car, scrape the ice off the windows and mirrors, get in the car and get going!" Firestone says.

Just make sure you don't accelerate too fast or rev your engine too much in the first few moments you start driving in the cold.

"This can add unwanted strain to your bearings and flood the combustion chamber with gas, which, in turn, will take miles off your engine's life," Smart Motors Toyota says.

For owners of electric vehicles, which don't have traditional engines, the above information doesn't apply, according to a blog post on NAPA Auto Parts' website. Instead, NAPA advises EV owners to warm up their cars before they're unplugged because it can help preserve the battery range.

"EVs have to draw on electricity to warm the interior. If you enter a car with a cold cabin and begin driving, the vehicle will need to take from its stored electricity to bring the inside air to a pleasant temperature. This will tax the EV's battery and leave you with less driving range," NAPA says.



Next-Gen Toyota MR2 Rumored to Involve Porsche or Lotus

Some rumors may be too good to be true



Today in the rumor mill... Japanese site *Spyder7* claims Toyota is getting ready to revive the MR2. If it wasn't for Toyota itself making noises about this in the recent past, we would discard this idea as too good to be true, but Toyota *did* make those noises, so here we are.

According to the report, Toyota is looking for a partner with which to build the next-gen MR2, which was last in production in 2007. The automaker teamed up with BMW to bring back the beloved Supra and continued its partnership with Subaru in making the second-generation 86 sports car. Supposedly, its top two candidates for collaborating on the MR2 are Lotus and Porsche.

At the 2017 Geneva Motor Show, Tetsuya Tada — chief engineer for both the Supra and 86 — said Toyota had plans to “have the ‘Three

Brothers’ in place as soon as possible,” referring to the brand’s MR2, Celica, and Supra sports car lineup of the 1990s.

We’ve only got one of those three so far, and it’s difficult to imagine how Toyota would justify building two additional small-volume performance cars in the current automotive market that favors SUVs and electrification. It’s plausible, however, that the 86 would take the place of the Celica in this “three brothers” lineup.

The MR2 was a mid-engine, rear-wheel drive, two-seater sports car, which makes a partnership with Lotus or Porsche seem like a good fit, as both of these companies are experts at making these types of cars. Porsche had even been named by Tada in the past as the automaker he’d like to work with to make the car.

Spyder7 says the next-gen Toyota MR2 would have a plug-in hybrid powertrain developing somewhere between 345 and 395 horsepower — and that it would look something like the Alessandro Volta concept from 2004. It would also start at around \$55,000 and launch in 2024. That’s a whole lot of claims, but for the time being, we’re going to avoid getting our hopes up.



Newsletter Editors Comments: *I happen to have owned and raced a number of Toyota MR2s in my past. Yes, the photo below is me at the 1995 SCCA Runoffs National Championships. I actually loved the little cars. They aren't all that different than the Miatas we drive. If this car, looking anywhere close to this cool, actually makes it to market, I'd be very tempted. Of course it would depend on what Mazda was offering at the same time.*



2024 E-Ray hybrid is fastest Corvette ever, first with AWD

Author of the article: Graeme Fletcher, Published Jan 17, 2023

Wearing wide-body fenders and boasting unbelievable performance, this Chevrolet flagship grand tourer is absolutely world-class!



The E-Ray is the first hybrid Corvette, and the first to offer all-wheel-drive—better yet, it's the fastest 'Vette ever!

The hybrid system is compact, adding just 118 kg to the curb weight and enabling 6 km of electric-only driving!

The coupe version starts at \$128,798 in Canada, with convertible pricing to be announced later.

Chevrolet picked its top-secret Milford Proving Grounds to provide a peek at one of the most anticipated cars arriving in 2023: the E-Ray, the most sophisticated and capable Corvette in the marque's 70-year history. Given the blistering-fast Z06 it now overshadows, its earning that title is no mean feat!

The E-Ray boasts a number of significant firsts. It's the first Corvette with an electric motor and a hybrid system, capable of delivering six kilometres of electric-only driving. It also spins out a second first — all-wheel-drive. Now while the ability to run on electricity alone improves fuel economy, and the all-wheel-drive system brings foul-weather drivability, make no mistake, the hybrid parts are there for one reason and one reason only — performance. Yes, the E-Ray is a grand tourer first, but, as the experience proved, it's immediate in its delivery of speed, and it can hang its tail out with the very best of them.

The E-Ray's architecture is simple. The mid-mounted 6.2-litre V8, which produces 495 horsepower and 470 pound-feet of torque, works with an eight-speed dual-clutch transmission to drive monster P345/25R21 rear tires. These mandated adopting the Z06's wide-body style, which is a good thing from both form and function perspectives.

Neatly engineered into the front end is a high-output electric motor



that sits beneath the front trunk. It gets its juice from a 1.9-kilowatt-hour battery. The system, which adds just 118 kilograms to the E-Ray's curb weight, is also somewhat different in that the battery was specifically designed to give up its power and accept a charge very quickly. In this regard, it is more capacitor-like than a conventional battery. This makes the electric response instantaneous.

More importantly, the motor adds 160 hp and 125 lb-ft of torque, and drives the front P275/30R20 tires. The plus is the electric motor's gearing brings a torque multiplication factor of eight, so when acceleration is demanded, the E-Ray picks up its huge rear haunches and blasts forth in a serious hurry. The fact the gas and electric power sources combine to produce a net output of 655 hp sure helps things along!



When asked what the most difficult part of the E-Ray was to engineer, the answer was the interaction between these two totally independent power sources. The V8 engine and electric motor are only technically linked by the tarmac that lies beneath them. First impressions say this aspect has been mastered very well. The drive saw both work independently and together in a flawless manner.

The E-Ray rides on Magnetic Ride Control 4.0 with three settings.

The setup is firmer than the Stingray's, but has more compliance than the Z06's, so it fulfills its grand touring mandate without giving up handling. It also uses ceramic Brembo brakes to rein in the stallions. also uses ceramic Brembo brakes to rein in the stallions.

There are multiple drive modes: Tour, Sport, Track, Weather, My Mode, and Z-Modes. My Mode alters everything from the exhaust note to the adaptive suspension; Z-Mode plays with the powertrain. There are also the electric modes. Stealth uses electricity alone until the driver gets too aggressive with the gas pedal, or until the E-Ray hits 72 km/h. In either case, it automatically switches to the regular hybrid mode at that point.



The second EV mode is Shuttle. It's designed to allow the owner to move the E-Ray around when it's stored, without having to start the engine and put a nanosecond's worth of heat into the block — typically a no-no for a car that has been sitting for a couple of months.

The demonstration ride started with a run from rest to 100 miles an hour (160 km/h). Launch control engaged, the E-Ray left like it had received a monster kick in the back end. You see, the gas-electric combi-

nation makes this the fastest 'Vette yet — it warps to 100 km/h from a standstill in under three seconds, which outguns the Z06!

After experiencing its straight-line ability, it was off to an autocross course. Here the E-Ray was pushed to the absolute max. The key here is that the front-mounted electric motor brings a dynamic dimension no other Corvette has enjoyed. During the autocross, the back end was so far sideways, I was looking out the passenger window to see where we were going. It was here the electric motor paid big dividends. The power being sent through the front wheels pulled the E-Ray back into line and kept it oh-so-manageable in the most adverse of situations.



Yes, the driver could have pulled the back end into line eventually, but the speed and grace with which the E-Ray could be tossed sideways, drifted, and then gathered up at will was mightily impressive. More impressive was the fact the E-Ray managed a full-on lane change at 135 km/h and didn't even twitch. Now, that is world-class!

Likewise, running a traction circle with the tail out saw the electric side pull the 'Vette forward as the rear tires smoked. It did make for one seriously long and lurid drift! The reason the car has the ability to flick the rear out and hold it there comes down to the Performance Traction Man-

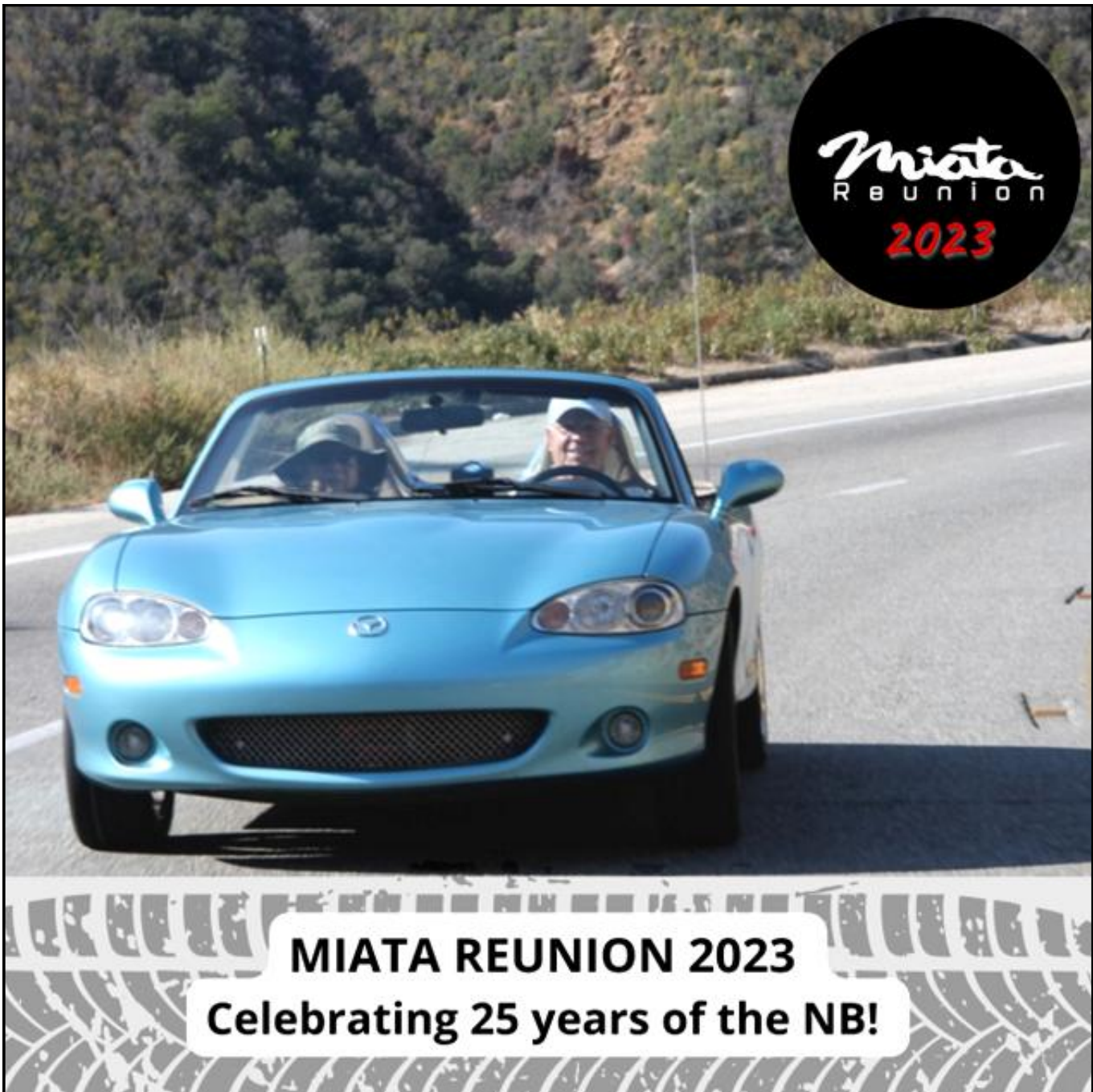
agement system. It has five stability control settings, including *fully off*.

In designing the Corvette C8, the engineers opted to use the central tunnel to return the structural integrity lost when the roof section was removed. The plus to this layout is it gave them somewhere to put the battery. It's protected and leaves the under-hood storage space intact. To ensure everything keeps its cool, there are three additional coolers. One for the battery, another for the electric motor, and a third for the power electronics.

The cabin is much the same as any other Corvette, although the instrumentation has been tweaked to show what's happening. There are three primary looks, each of which has a snazzy appearance — the one that shows the engine and electric motor output is very slick. There's also a neat button sitting on the central tunnel. The Charge+ button allows the driver to recharge the battery during normal driving. When engaged, the electric motor switches to regenerative mode. Now the system uses the engine to drive the regen phase until the battery is recharged. It's designed for those times when the driver wants a fully-charged battery — it could be for a maxed-out hot lap or when the electric range is needed.

This may have been an all-too-brief introduction to the 2024 Chevrolet Corvette E-Ray, but the take-away from the exercise was loud and clear — this is a world-class sports car, with a price to match. (In Canada, the coupe version of the E-Ray will start at \$128,798; pricing for the convertible will be revealed closer to the model's launch this summer.) The wide-body E-Ray has style, it's incredibly fast, and it handles beautifully, even in the extreme. And beneath all that, Chevrolet's embedded an underlying message — the electrification brings some needed green.





While each generation of the Miata is well loved, with its own style, personality, and loyal following, sometimes the occasion arises to highlight a specific one.

As this year marks the 25th anniversary of its first sale, we've decided to dedicate this year's Miata Reunion to celebrating the NB, a car that's as much at home on the race track as it is carving the curves of gorgeous country roads.

Stay tuned in the coming weeks for further info regarding dates, venue, and all the fun activities we have planned for Miata Reunion 2023.



We're celebrating 25 years of the NB this year!

THE END

