

## Meet Our Members: Walter 'Wally' Boehme

Walter 'Wally' Boehme, Age: An 18-year-old boy looking out the eyes of a 65-year-old man. Been living in St Augustine since Oct. 2016. But enough about me, let's get to my favorite subject, my 2004 Mazdaspeed. Back in 2007, I knew I needed a change. Had a '71 Corvette and a '94 TransAm. I really loved the Vette, but it was too nice to drive every day and the TransAm seemed to be just a big pig. Oversized on the outside and small on the inside. So.... what to do? Get something I really liked and could drive every day. Was thinking about a Solstice, until I happened upon the MSM. Ohhhh - a turbo! More power! A trunk you can use! And on the Miata forum, one for sale in Erie, PA with only 2200 miles on it! Sweet! And when I got there, another surprise: I just thought it was red, didn't know about the 'Mica' - gold metal flake in the paint! And it was a GT model with leather seats and cloth top. Getting better all the time! Then, the owner told me that he had already done the intake and exhaust mods that kicked the HP from 177 up to approx. 220. The Miata may not have the long legs of the Corvettes, but I love how quick it is off the line and though some may complain about the tranny's close ratio, I love shifting thru the gears. After getting her home, I knew she needed a name, so I named her 'Sadie', after my favorite dog, as she was also quick and highly maneuverable.

I had been working at a saw blade company called Lenox Tools, as the Quality Control Lab's supervisor, where we inspected all incoming raw materials, samples from each batch of blades, and all vendor products. Also ran the R&D project expediting and testing departments where we tested new product performance and our regular products against all our competitors. Happy to say that 99% of the time, we beat everybody. And when we did not, we moved Heaven and Earth to find out 'why' and to make sure that we made improvements so that we would beat them next time. Great company, driven to excellence. So after 35 years, they graciously offered me Early Retirement in 2009. And boy, was I ready. We had already bought a piece of land on St Croix, USVI and so as soon as I got home that day, I called our contractor and told him to start building. It took about a year and in early 2010, we sold our house in Massachusetts, packed our bags, shipped the MSM and took off for the Caribbean. Pretty little island, but at that time, the roads were covered in potholes and so could not drive the Miata very much and certainly not fast! Stayed there for 6-1/2 years and decided we'd had enough of playing pirate. My brother-in-law had moved to the Tampa area and suggested we come to Florida. Did a Google Earth search, found South Florida a bit too crowded for our taste and started looking North. Saw St Augustine on the map and though we had never been there, the name 'rang a bell'. We had planned to come here after the St Croix house sold and rent for a few months to give us time to find a house, but, that was only a week or two after hurricane Matthew and there were no rentals! Uh-oh. So while still on St Croix, we scanned the internet real estate sites every day, kept coming back to one house, and decide to roll the dice and buy it sight unseen. Wound up in a great neighborhood, with the best neighbors on each side! And then to make it even better, we found something that had been lacking in Massachusetts and on St Croix - a real Miata Club!! Can't tell you how happy I was to find the FCMC. Love meeting new friends and going on the cruises, except the all day ones as we have a rather crazy dog (rescue from St Croix) that really can't be left alone all day. I like working on my car, but only the little things. Just did new plugs, wires, coolant, oil change - that kind of stuff. Electronics scare me half to death and I won't touch suspension parts.

The picture shows Sadie parked just above our house in St Croix, wearing the 15" rims I got so as to have taller side walls for the potholes.

