

# A Monthly Publication for the Members & Friends of the First Coast Miata Club



March 2026

Volume 36, Issue 9



## *A COUNTRY DRIVE - Take 2*

When: Saturday, March 21, 2026

Starts at: Journey Food Store, 9206 CR 125, Glen St Mary, FL 32040

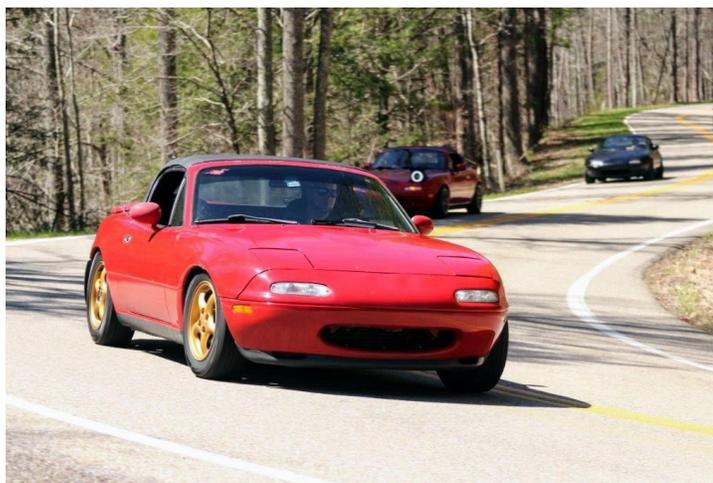
Meet at 8:30 am, depart at 9:00 am

Are you ready for some fun back country roads that will make your Miata sing?

Can you handle a two and a half hour drive that will definitely wet your whistle?

Then join us for a spirited drive where we will “take the long way home” to Lake City to feast at the Old Times Country Buffet.

Hope you can come join us, ya here!



### First Coast Miata Club

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### Inside this issue:

Feb Highlights 2

Feb Highlights 3

Mazda Sports... 4

Rotary? 5

V6 Miata? Almost 6

FCCM Calendar 7

FL No Hand Text 8

## February Highlights - Tom Bush Dealership Car Show



# February Highlights—Colin in the Keys



## Mazda still considering a sports coupe with a rotary engine

There are three certainties in life: death, taxes, and Mazda's obsession with the rotary engine. No matter how market trends change, how regulations tighten, or how quickly electrification advances, the company from Hiroshima never seems to let go of the idea of bringing back the legendary RX badge. While the rotary-powered range extender in the Mazda MX-30 failed to generate strong demand, the dream of a true sports car powered by a Wankel engine clearly remains alive within the company.

When Mazda unveiled the Iconic SP concept in October 2023, many enthusiasts interpreted it as a clear preview of a successor to the famous RX-7 and RX-8. The concept's low stance, clean surfaces, and classic sports car proportions triggered the kind of emotional reaction Mazda has built its reputation on. However, despite strong public enthusiasm, the project has not yet received official approval for production.

If a new RX model does move forward, it would likely differ significantly from both the Iconic SP concept and the MX-30 R-EV crossover. In those vehicles, the rotary engine functions as a generator that charges a battery while electric motors drive the wheels.

For a true RX revival, Mazda is reportedly exploring a more traditional setup, one in which the rotary engine sends power directly to the rear wheels. That approach would preserve the mechanical feel and driver engagement that made previous RX models so distinctive. In other words, Mazda wants the car to feel authentic rather than simply using the rotary engine as a technical novelty.

Concepts such as the Vision X Coupe have already hinted at this direction, showcasing plug-in hybrid systems combined with dual rotary engines. Mazda insists these concept vehicles are not just design exercises but genuine indicators of how the company is thinking about future performance models. Market reaction and enthusiast feedback are being studied closely to determine whether real demand exists.

Importantly for enthusiasts, a future RX model would not replace the Mazda MX-5 Miata. The Miata remains the foundation of Mazda's sports car identity and will continue independently of any larger, more expensive rotary coupe.

The current generation has already enjoyed a long life cycle, and a fifth generation is expected in the coming years. Early indications suggest Mazda intends to keep the core formula intact: rear-wheel drive, a manual transmission, low weight, and a naturally aspirated engine, possibly with slightly greater displacement but without turbocharging.

Realistically, Mazda cannot afford to develop two niche enthusiast cars at the same time without strong confidence in market success. That reality explains the cautious pace. Still, the fact that the company continues to actively develop rotary technology and openly discusses a future RX model is significant.

In the automotive world, some ideas take years to become reality. Mazda has repeatedly shown a willingness to take risks for the sake of driver emotion rather than pure market logic. For now, the rotary-powered sports coupe remains a dream, but it is one that refuses to disappear.



## **A V6-Powered Mazda MX-5 Miata Nearly Happened 20 Years Ago**

If there's one thing the Mazda MX-5 Miata has lacked over its four-decade career, it's power. With the exception of some limited edition models that peaked at around 200 hp, the small roadster has never offered high-power engines.

To be fair, the current Mazda MX-5's 181-hp 2.0-liter naturally aspirated gas engine is more than enough for a car that weighs 2,366 pounds, but some Miata fans wouldn't mind having over 200 horsepower in their cars.

Well, what do you know, Mazda has been perfectly aware of that for a long time, and at one point some of its engineers actively explored the possibility of shoehorning a V6 engine into the Miata's engine bay.

### **Engineers Built a Miata V6 Prototype in Secret**

Mazda's head of research and development in Europe, Christian Schultze, told Dutch magazine AutoRAI in an interview that several company engineers built a secret V6-powered Miata prototype around two decades ago.

As it turns out, the project wasn't an official one; instead, the said engineers took it upon themselves to cram a 2.5-liter V6 engine into the Miata, and they did that quietly after hours. That sounds surprisingly similar to how the original VW Golf GTI came to be, but unlike the GTI, which went on to become a global legend, the Miata V6 never made it to showrooms.

The main reason was, as you can imagine, packaging. In order to fit, the six-cylinder engine had to be mounted higher than the regular four-cylinder, and that ruined the Miata's aesthetics. While it didn't convince in the looks department, the one-off prototype was "definitely Interesting" to drive, Schultz revealed.

That said, it was probably not interesting enough to warrant a production version, as stuffing a heavier V6 engine in the engine bay of the featherweight Miata likely upset its perfect weight distribution, making it nose heavy. Now, had Mazda really wanted to build a V6 Miata, it would have done it, but modifying the roadster likely required too much work and didn't make economic sense.

That's too bad, because a six-cylinder Miata would have been a special thing. The Mazda exec did not reveal which V6 engine was mounted on the MX-5 prototype, but given the 2.5-liter displacement, it was probably a K-series unit. The KL-ZE engine made up to 200 hp and 165 lb-ft of torque in the larger Mazda MX-6 coupe offered exclusively in the Japanese market until 1997, making this particular V6 a terrific choice for the tiny MX-5.

## FCMC Events Calendar

- **March 10 - 6:00 pm Monthly Club Meeting**

Our monthly club meeting will be held at 4 Rivers Smokehouse at 220 Park Ave, Orange Park, FL 32073. Find out what we are cooking up by joining us then. Dinner & Social at 6:00pm. Our meeting will be at 7:00pm. Topics of discussion will include upcoming events. Come early and hang out with fellow club members to get the most out of your evening.

- **March 21 - 8:30 am A Country Drive - Take 2**

It feels like déjà vu all over again! See the front page for more info.

- **April 14 - 6:00 pm Monthly Club Meeting**

Our monthly club meeting will be held at a restaurant still to be determined. It may be at the same location as our March meeting. Maybe not. Who knows? Show up to the March meeting and find out what we are cooking up by joining us then. Dinner & Social at 6:00 pm. Our meeting will be at 7:00 pm. Topics of discussion will include upcoming events. Come early and hang out with fellow club members to get the most out of your evening.

- **STAY TUNED!!! MANY MORE DRIVES/EVENTS ARE COMING YOUR WAY!**

### Welcome Our Newest Members:

**Cary Castengera**

**The Road Runner is published monthly for the First Coast Miata Club of Northeast Florida. The editor and the First Coast Miata Club assume no liability for information contained herein, or for injury or damages resulting from use of such information and should be used at the reader's own discretion and risk. Neither contributors to the newsletter nor the editors express approval, authentication or encouragement of the contents. Neither the First Coast Miata Club, its officers, nor its members are responsible for injury or damages incurred during the events. All members are required to possess valid individual drivers licenses, insurance policies in accordance with Florida state law, and to follow all laws and regulations.**



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**We're on the Web! Check us out!**

**Web Page:** [www.firstcoastmiataclub.org](http://www.firstcoastmiataclub.org)

**Group Page:** [facebook.com/groups/firstcoastmiataclub](https://facebook.com/groups/firstcoastmiataclub)

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## **Florida Woman Ticketed For Texting With A Hand That Doesn't Exist**

Florida has no shortage of unusual driving laws, and some of them seem to create as much confusion as they prevent. Sometimes the debate centers on license plate frames. Other times it is about so-called 'super speeding'. And in this story, they're about driving and texting.

A woman at the center of this fiasco received a ticket in Lake Worth Beach for using a handheld wireless device while driving. According to the deputy, she was holding her phone in her right hand. That's important because there's just one problem with that observation. She doesn't have a right hand.

In a video later posted to TikTok, the woman calmly asks the deputy to confirm what he saw. "You said you saw me holding it in my right hand, correct?" He acknowledges that's what he said. She then lifts her arm. There's nothing below her elbow.

"Turns out you can still get a ticket for driving with a device in your right hand, even if you don't have a right hand," she wrote in the caption. The woman plans to fight the ticket in court, and the outlet uncovered another important detail. The citation only mentions holding a device, not texting on it, and that's key.

Florida's distracted driving statute isn't a blanket "phone in hand equals ticket" rule. Under current law, drivers must be manually typing or entering letters, numbers, or symbols into a wireless device for non-voice communication. In other words, an officer needs to observe more than just a device.

They need to reasonably believe the driver was actively texting, emailing, or otherwise typing. Even if this woman did have a right hand and was holding her phone, the case could easily end up dismissed.

