



The CAR Enthusiast

November 2003

The President's Post

By Christian LeHew

As you may have read in last month's newsletter (or further down in this issue), the terms for the club officers are coming to an end, and the time has come to either re-elect or nominate new ones this December.

So what's it mean to be a club officer? As much as I'd like to tell you that Mazda provides a new Miata and \$10,000 in parts while you're in office, unfortunately, that's not the case.

However, what it does mean is that you get to help make the club what you want it to be. Maybe you have ideas to help make it the greatest club in the world. Maybe you like to meet new Miata owners, and make them feel welcome. Maybe you're good with handling money. Perhaps you'd like to take a shot at editing the newsletter. Or scheduling next year's events.

The truth is, all the hard work of starting up a club has been taken care of, and believe me, we're not going to throw you in the deep end head first. You may need to take a little time here and there for some club business, a trip to the bank, writing a letter or e-mail, or to make a phone call. It's not a major commitment, and if you're like me, you'll probably end up meeting some really great people in the process.

So what's the job pay? Well, you get free membership while you're in office! A \$25 bargain!!!

I, unfortunately, will not be running for re-election as club President for 2004. However, I will be sitting on the Executive Board next year as an advisor, so I'll be happy to help out with any questions you may have.

So if you haven't already, I encourage you to consider running for office or volunteering for a position within the club. You don't need any previous experience. You don't need references. And no salesman will call. All you need is the enthusiasm to want to make this great club even better in the next year, so that all of us can continue to enjoy not only the camaraderie of our fellow Miata owners, but the club itself.

I've always had an "open door" policy, so as always, I welcome any questions, concerns, or comments you have. Please don't hesitate to e-mail, call or meet with me.

And thank you for your consideration.

Compact Compost

Now that Fall's officially here, and the leaves are falling off the trees by the ton, I just wanted to remind everyone to check your Miata for compost from the Fall (and the Spring).

The area in particular is the lower area of the front fenders between the front wheels and the doors (also known as "rocker panels"). Although I haven't seen rust in this area on a Miata yet, doing some preventative maintenance can really help against getting some new bodywork.

There are plastic covers to help shield this area, but it is still susceptible to collecting mud, debris from your windshield, and all of those "helicopter" leaves that you lose in the bowels of your bodywork in the Spring, and dead brown leaves during the Fall.

There are two methods you can use. The first is to jack up the front of the car WITH JACK STANDS, and remove the wheel. On the M1's, you will need an 8mm socket wrench and a Phillips screwdriver to remove the four bolts and two screws that hold on the black plastic fender liner to the rear of the wheel well. On the M2's, I believe you just need a Phillips screwdriver. It is not necessary to remove the entire liner, just enough to move it out of the way. It all comes apart in a very obvious manner. At that point, you can use your hand to clean out the debris.

The second method probably works better, but should only be done with the guidance of someone who's done it before. This method is to loosen the fender liner bolts, then remove the two 10mm bolts at the bottom of the fender, and carefully pull the fender out a few inches. From there, you can clean out the debris. When you're done, you'll need to re-align the fender near the door jamb, and be very careful not to over-tighten the 10mm bolts at the bottom of the fender, as they're soft and can snap.

The whole job takes less than a half-hour. I recently pulled about six cups of dirt, mulch, and leaves from the fenders on my '91. You may even want to use a long handled brush or high air pressure to blow out any remaining dust in the crevices. I'd also recommend opening the hood, and spraying a hose down inside the trough area in front of the windshield to help clean the drains. When it is completely clean inside the fenders, a friend of mine (who does bodywork) recommended spraying some white grease inside, as this will displace water, insulate dirt from the metal, and won't wash out.

While you're doing preventative maintenance and your front wheels are off, check your tire pressures, brakes, and inspect your shocks for leaks. I also recommend checking the drain holes behind the seatbelt towers to make sure they're cleaned out as well.

But if you decide to keep a compost pile in there, then plant something to match your car. I recommend Sunburst Yellow Sunflowers or Classic Red Roses. How about British Racing Green Beans?

Democracy in action

As you may have realized, 2003 will be ending soon, and with it also ends the terms of the current club officers. However, since this club is an equal opportunity democracy, if you're a member in good standing and you'd like to run for an officer position, or would like to nominate someone, then we urge you to consider it. It's a small commitment, and a really great opportunity to not only meet other Miata enthusiasts, but to help make the club that much better.

For your reference, below is a list of the officer positions and their functions. If you have any specific questions, please feel free to contact any of the current officers listed on the next page.

Christian LeHew, President
hotroddesigner@hotmail.com
410.377.8434

Thomas Kirchner, Vice President
teegeek1976@yahoo.com

Brad Albert, Treasurer
balbert@g-and-o.com

Elaine Farrell, Secretary
silvermiata@comcast.net

OFFICER DUTIES:

1. *The President shall preside at all Executive Board meetings, shall enforce these bylaws, shall sign and enforce contracts, shall sign checks (co-signed with Treasurer), shall appoint committees, shall assign duties to members, shall vote in the event of a tie and shall be responsible for carrying out the decisions of the membership. Upon completion of term of office, the Past President shall remain a member of the Executive Board for one year.*

2. *The Vice President shall preside and perform all duties of the President in his/her absence, shall have check-signing authority in the absence of the President and must co-sign all contracts. In the event of an absence of any elected officer, the Vice President assumes the duties of that officer until the absent officer resumes their duties or until a new officer is appointed for that office and confirmed by the Executive Board.*

3. *The Secretary shall keep minutes of the General Membership and Executive Board meetings, shall keep records of the membership, shall maintain a record of attendance for all meetings, shall be responsible for the preparation and mailing of all meeting notices and other club literature, shall furnish each member with a copy of these bylaws and their amendments as they occur, and shall maintain a file of minutes and records of past years. At the last meeting of his or her term, shall turn over to the new Secretary all minutes and records for club files.*

4. *The Treasurer shall issue and sign checks. Pay approved bills, collect all dues and other monies from any and all sources and issue receipts, shall keep books of accounts and make a financial report at all club meetings, shall further make an annual financial report showing all income and disbursements at the last meeting of his or her term. At the last meeting of his or her term, shall turn over the records of the past year for the club files.*

Positions such as **NEWSLETTER EDITOR** and **EVENTS COORDINATOR** are appointed positions, so if you think you'd be interested in either one of those, then please talk to any one of the officers.

Elections will be held at the Annual Membership Meeting in December, so please feel free to drop any of us a line or ask questions, and please consider running for office.

Monthly Miata Meetings

We're starting up monthly meetings every third Thursday at 7:30pm to not only grab something to eat, but to discuss everything from club business to Formula One racing to whatever. This is a great opportunity for anyone who would like to come out and meet some of the members in a casual environment, and you don't even need to wash the car. Plus, it'll give you a chance to talk directly to the club administrators with your input or questions. So bring a friend, a family member, or a new Miata owner, but most importantly,

bring yourself out to one of our monthly membership meetings! See the upcoming events section below for this month's location.

'Parts Department' closed, maybe

Due to a recent policy change at our supplier, we've been forced to temporarily close the Parts Department. We're currently looking for a new vendor for all your CAR-logo'd needs, so once we find one that will give us great quality at an even better price, we'll be sure to let everyone know.

Become a published author!

Have you just completed a cool project on your Miata that you want to share with other club members? Did you attend an event that was so cool you want to write an article about it? Find a new road that seems like it was designed *just for* Miatas? Got an idea for a future event or article? Then drop us a line and we'll put it in next month's issue. Deadline for submissions is October 27th. All submissions can be sent to Christian LeHew at hotroddesigner@hotmail.com.

Playin' with the neighbor's kids

The idea has been brought up to see about doing an event or two with another car club. Not necessarily another Miata club, but perhaps a Triumph club, Jaguar club, etc. As you can probably assume, there are quite a few car clubs in the area, so if you're a member of one, know someone who is, or just think of one that would be cool to spend the day with (I'm leaning towards Ferrari, myself!), then feel free to drop us a line with the contact info, and we'll take it from there.

A place for the race

If you've gone to any autocrossing events this year, you've probably heard one of us (or someone else) griping about the lack of racing sites in the area. "So what can I do?" Glad you asked.

The autocross community is always on the lookout for new venues where we can race. In a perfect world, they'd be smooth, flat, free of traffic islands, and about 20 miles away from a residential area. Event organizers realize not all these parameters can always be met, but there's been a plea to the community to help find some new sites where we can go racing. Maybe it's the parking lot at work. Or a big school parking lot. Or your friend's airfield.

So if you know of an area that you think might be a possibility, PLEASE let one of us know, and we'll have one of the local officials check it out.

Past Events & Happenings

Saturday, October 11th– Tech Day - Owings, MD

About 14 of us broke in Wally's new 2-bay garage with a roll bar install on Wally's '99, a turbo install on Special K's '95, some stereo work on Mark's '91 (which we also discovered will hold 11 people – who

says they're not practical?), suspension braces on Elaine's '90, a slave cylinder rebuild on Christian's '91, and several fluid changes and bleeds done on Larry's '99 and Ian's '94. We also had several new members including Ian and his wife, Mark (who drove all the way from Delaware) with his '97 M Edition and Christina with her Emerald Green '99. Several of the regular favorites showed up as well, and the day ended late with an impressive amount of wrench turning being done. Fueled, of course, by some of the best authentic Mexican food I'm sure most of us have had in quite some time! Thanks again to Wally and Dina for hosting such a fun day.

Wednesday, October 15th – Monthly membership meeting

About 13 members came out for the inaugural "Third Thursday" member meeting at Rocky Run restaurant in Columbia. Not taking into account the baseball playoffs, it was a little crowded, but after getting through some seating logistics, all went well. In between drawing pimped-out Miatas on the table and eating, we discussed the upcoming elections, took some nominations, and discussed next year's autocross team. All in all, it really was a great gathering, and a good time was had by all. So if you're interested in meeting some of the great members that make up the club in a casual atmosphere, then make plans to come out with us every Third Thursday and join in on the fun.

Saturday, October 18th – Scenic Drive

It was a crisp Fall morning, but ten of us put the tops down and headed for a drive on the twisty roads through the woods of SE Pennsylvania and northern Delaware. Traffic was pretty light (yet oddly aggressive...), the weather turned out to be wonderful all day, the roads were great, and we even crossed over a covered bridge. Several new members came out for the ride including Lisa with her immaculate 10AE Miata, Jesse and Debby in their silver supercharged '99, and Ed and Terri met up with us at lunch in their absolutely perfect '90. Unfortunately, one of the roads was closed by the time we were making the return trip, so while the return trip was a bit more straight, it was still cool to see a line of Miatas driving into the sunset...

Upcoming Events

Please RSVP where indicated. For full details, check out the Events section of the CAR forum at <http://www.chesapeakeroadsters.com>. If you have an idea for a future event, please drop a line to our Events Coordinator, Christian LeHew, at hotroddesigner@hotmail.com or call 410.377.8434.

Saturday, November 8th – Tech Day

It may be the last one of the season (unless anyone wants to volunteer their heated garage), so grab your tools, and head over to Brad's for CAR's usual brand of wrenching, eating, and general shenanigans.

DIRECTIONS TO BRAD'S (FROM THE NORTH):

RT. 3 South through Crofton

Make a right on Rt. 450

Follow 450 through Bowie, Past HS. etc..

Cross Rt. 197 then your next light is Church Road.

Make a left onto Church Road (look for the Shell station)

Church road will wind through some S turns then make a hard right.

Don't get to excited about the hard right because right at the apex of it you will need to make a left on to Old Stage Road!

Make you second Right on to pleasant View Drive. Follow that to Heatherstone.

We're at the corner of Heatherstone and Pleasant View drive.

DIRECTIONS TO BRAD'S (FROM THE SOUTH)

RT. 3 North through Crofton

Make a left on Rt. 450

Follow 450 through Bowie, Past HS. etc..

Cross Rt. 197 then your next light is Church Road.

Make a left onto Church Road (look for the Shell station)

Church road will wind through some S turns then make a hard right.

Don't get too excited about the hard right because right at the apex of it you will need to make a left on to Old Stage Road!

Make your second Right on to Pleasant View Drive. Follow that to Heatherstone.

We're at the corner of Heatherstone and Pleasant View drive.

**Anybody coming via 50 just get off at 197, take that to 450, make a left and follow same as above.

Sunday, November 9th– Charity Autocross - CANCELLED

Unfortunately, this has been cancelled due to organizational problems within the Z Car Club.

Thursday, November 20th – Monthly membership meeting

Since it worked out so well this past month (we'll change it up in January), this month's meeting will again be held at 7:30 at Rocky Run restaurant in Columbia. It's located near the intersection of Dobbin Road and Rt. 175 (Little Patuxent Parkway) and just off 95. Follow 95 to the exit for Rt. 175 towards Columbia. Go about three lights, and make a left onto Dobbin Road. Make a right at the first light (you'll see the Rocky Run and a Mr. Tire on your right), and follow the driveway back to the sharp right turn, and turn right into the parking lot. Ask the hostess for the Miata club table.

Just as note to the membership, due to the annual meeting scheduled for December 13th, there is no Third Thursday monthly meeting scheduled for December. We'll resume the monthly meetings in January.

Sunday, November 23rd - Scenic drive - Mt. Airy, MD

At the request of several members, we'll be taking a Sunday drive via the scenic route through the fall colors (or what's left of them) to the Linganore Winery in Mt. Airy. The drive is supposed to be beautiful, and the winery itself is a perfect compliment. We'll be able to tour the winery and see the manufacturing process, and you can do a tasting as well. We'll be meeting at the Park & Ride at Rt. 32 and Rt. 70 in Sykesville for a 10am departure. Afterwards, we'll grab some lunch at E.W. Beck's Pub in Sykesville.

Please RSVP to Christian no later than November 20th if you plan to attend.

Saturday, December 6th – Scenic drive – Frederick County

We've been invited to join the Mason-Dixon Miata Club and the PACE Miata club for a drive out to Antietam Battlefield (near Hagerstown) for the annual Antietam Battlefield Illumination. This is supposed to be a very moving, yet beautiful, experience. We've also been invited to enjoy some chili at the home of Bob & Patty Eckels (of the Mason-Dixon club) before heading over. We'll be meeting at the Park & Ride at Rt. 32 and Rt. 70 in Sykesville for a 2pm departure. It will probably be mostly highway driving, so if you want to bring your OTM, we'll understand. **Please RSVP to Christian no later than November 27th if you plan to attend.**

Saturday, December 13th 2003 – Annual Membership Meeting

Make sure to mark this date on your calendar and come out for our Annual Membership Meeting. This is your chance to not only vote on next year's officers, but also to make suggestions, ask questions, and meet the great group of Miata enthusiasts that make up the club. We'll be meeting at Kirk's house (Special K) near Arbutus around 11:00am, and we'll probably just order out for some pizza. As always, if there's anything in particular you'd like to bring to share with the group (food, drinks, etc.), then please feel free to bring it. There are a few different ways to get to Kirk's, but if you want to check your online maps, the address is 1001 Plover Drive, Arbutus, MD 21227.

DIRECTIONS TO KIRK'S:

Take 195 North to the end (towards Catonsville – the opposite end of 195 from BWI Airport)
When you get to the end, this is S. Rolling Road. (route 166)
Make a left onto Rolling Road – this turns into Selford Road
Go about 1.5 miles. You'll go through a stop sign and you'll see a school on your left.
Just after the school, make a left onto Oakland Road
Make the first left onto Meadow Lark Drive
Make the first left onto Plover Drive
Look for all the Miatas in front of 1001 Plover Drive.

Saturday, December 20th 2003 - Scenic drive (kinda) - Baltimore

With the holidays near, I'm feeling the need to make a run over to Hampden (north Baltimore) to check out the famous "Lights on 34th Street". You may remember seeing these on a Maryland Lottery commercial a couple years ago, but for anyone who's not familiar with them, it's an entire neighborhood block that completely decorates the outside of their houses in lights, figurines, model trains, hubcap trees, and music. But it's to the point of needing sunglasses. At night. It's really incredible, and quite a sight to behold if not for it's holiday spirit, then for the sheer amazing absurdity. We'll meet at Beth & Christian's in Towson around 5:00pm, take a short drive over to check out the lights, and afterwards, you're all invited back for some food and holiday cheer. As always, there are a few different ways to get to Christian's, but if you want to check your online maps, the address is 208 Rodgers Forge Road, Baltimore MD 21212. Or if you get lost, call 410.377.8434.

DIRECTIONS:

From Baltimore City:

Take 83 North to the Northern Parkway EAST exit.

Go through 2 lights, and the third is Charles Street.

Make a left onto Charles Street, and go to the 4th light (Bellona Avenue)

Make a right onto Bellona, go straight through the first light (Stevenson Lane).

Turn at the first left onto Rodgers Forge Road, and make a left into the first driveway.

Park anywhere. We're at the bottom of the hill on the left, building 208, apartment #D.

From the Baltimore Beltway – 695 coming from the East

Take exit #25 for Charles Street

At the top of the ramp, make a left, go 3/4 of the way around the circle, and take Charles Street south

Go through 4 lights (GBMC hospital is on your left)

At the 5th light (Bellona Avenue), make a left

Go straight through the first light (Stevenson Lane)

Turn at the first left onto Rodgers Forge Road, and make a left into the first driveway

Park anywhere. We're at the bottom of the hill on the left, building 208, apartment #D

(directions continued on page 8)

From the Baltimore Beltway – 695 coming from the West
Take exit #25 for Charles Street
Merge to your right, and take Charles Street south
Go through 3 lights (GBMC hospital is on your left)
At the 4th light (Bellona Avenue), make a left
Go straight through the first light (Stevenson Lane)
Turn at the first left onto Rodgers Forge Road, and make a left into the first driveway
Park anywhere. We're at the bottom of the hill on the left, building 208, apartment #D

Thursday, January 15th – Monthly membership meeting

Location TBD. Look for details in next month's newsletter or on the forum.

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If there is something else that you may be interested in, contact them about that specific item and they'll work with you the best they can. They even sell BMW and MINI parts too!

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