



# Miata tudes

## Your momma...

by Mark Brooks

The United States celebrates Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May. In the United States, Mother's Day was loosely inspired by the British day (Mothering Day) and was imported by social activist Julia Ward Howe after the American Civil War. However, it was intended as a call to unite women against war. In 1870, she wrote the Mother's Day Proclamation as a call for peace and disarmament. Howe failed in her attempt to get formal recognition of a Mother's Day for Peace. Her idea was influenced by Ann Jarvis, a young Appalachian homemaker who, starting in 1858, had attempted to improve sanitation through what she called Mothers' Work Days. She organized women throughout the Civil War to work for better sanitary conditions for both sides, and in 1868 she began work to reconcile Union and Confederate neighbors. In parts of the United States it is customary to plant tomatoes outdoors after Mother's Day (and not before).

When Jarvis died in 1907, her daughter, named Anna Jarvis, started the crusade to found a memorial day for women. The first such Mother's Day was celebrated in Grafton, West Virginia, on 10 May 1908, in the church where the elder Ann Jarvis had taught Sunday School. Originally the Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church, this building is now the International Mother's Day Shrine (a National Historic Landmark). From there, the custom caught on — spreading eventually to 45 states. The holiday was declared officially by some states beginning in 1912. In 1914 President Woodrow Wilson declared the first national Mother's Day, as a day for American citizens to show the flag in honor of those mothers whose sons had died in war.

-courtesy Wikipedia.org

## Robins' Nest

by Robin George

This is just a short note for everyone to make sure they commend our Media director, Ron Petrich for the outstanding job he did on his event, GOT GUTS III. This is now a National event and was held on April 21st. It was sold out. Everyone had a great time and he raised a fantastic amount for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America. He deserves many Kudo's

Due to a scheduling conflict we were unable to appear on radio station KAH1 AM 650, the jammin' jukebox on April 26th. We have been rescheduled for June 7th from 10am to 11:30am. The name of the show is Cruisin' Garage and Swap Meet with Butch Gardner. He is very interested in the club and wants to help us get the word out. A little publicity never hurt.

The Cruisin Garage & Swap Shop is aimed at anyone who owns and/or is interested in the hobby/history of restoring or individually personalizing a vehicle ie; Classic, Custom,



Hot Rod or Muscle car. We talk about cool cars, their events, old & new trends plus automotive politics in and around the Foothills, Sacramento and Calif. that will effect our hobby. From major national 3-day events to 3-hour burger stand cruises, we'll tell you about them & promote them. We will talk with & about the various car clubs and automotive groups in our area that organize these events and we'll tell you about their membership and/or event entry requirements.

We have guests that will help the hobbyists with their engine, transmission, paint/body, electrical and interior problems & concerns. We'll even give you opinions on how to purchase a specialty car and yes, even how to get rid of an abandoned one or license one legally. The Swap Shop phone lines are always open for you to sell or buy your specialty parts, find services and dealers, ask for or give advice from the host, co-host or special guests "Live" over the air.

Your host is Butch Gardner who has been involved with Hot Rods and Cool cars for over 45 years since the early 60's in So Cal. His first real Hot Rod was a retired dry lakes racer, a 1932 Ford coupe with a Dodge Red Ram Hemi engine. He arrived in Sacramento in 1966 driving a 1964 Mercury Comet Cyclone with a factory Hi Po engine & 4-speed. Butch is a garage guy & turns his own wrenches and has built or owned over 40 Cool cars. He currently has "2" Hot Rods, a '32 Ford Hi Boy roadster & '34 Ford Sedan Delivery sitting in the garage along with a restored, full custom '52 Mercury convertible originally built by "Candy Apple" Joe Bailon of Auburn and "3" early 60's big Ford Galaxies.

He has belonged to several car clubs and automotive organizations over the years and has held offices or directors positions in all of them. He has belonged to the Capitol Auto Club "Thunderbolts" since 1974 and has just recently earned the "Life Member" status. Over the past 30 years he has been involved in many automotive endeavors including previous radio hosting duties, writing for local newspapers, promoting his own & club car shows, car show judging and specialized auto appraising. He was the general manager of the Grand National Roadster Show and Sacramento Autorama for 6 years and was inducted into the Legends of the Autorama Society in 2003. He was also the host of the Hot August Nights "Cruise of Champions" for over 10 years.

The guy that regularly rides "Shot Gun" with him is Mike Clougher who owns and drives a 1947 Chevy Tudor Hot Rod sedan. Mike grew up in Fresno where he drove a white '58 Impala and lived "American Graffiti!" Mike has been a member of the "Thunderbolts" for over 10 years and held several offices. He was also a Charter member and officer in the Hangtown Cruisin Assoc. Mike was also a member of the senior staff for Dan Cyr Ent. where he was a floor manager and part of the judging team at the Grand National Roadster Show & Sacramento Autorama. Mike was inducted into the Legends of the Autorama Society in 2005.

I'm also working on getting us broadcast on several other car show with a little more range and power. The Car Czar being one of them. If you can think of any other ways to get our message out let me know.

## Random thoughts from a skewed personality

by Mike DeLaurentis

**Rain:** The rain is over.....the rain is over! Even though our rainy season is over remember that all of the water that hit the hills is still seeping down into the crevices causing rock slides so when you're out and about in the hills and curves you'll need to be vigilant for rocks in the road for some time to come.

**Mahogany:** I understand some SAMOANs take exception to my tongue-in-cheek boast that Mahogany is arguably thee most beautiful color Mazda has ever developed. Therefore going forward I'll modify that. Mahogany is, if not thee most beautiful color, one of the two most beautiful colors Mazda every developed. The other you ask? White, of course.

**Shriner's:** Rod Gonzales wrote an excellent article re: the Shriner's Concours d'Elegance in the April Miatatudes but he forgot to mention that the last two years' winner was a 2000 Special Edition Mahogany. 'Nuff said.

**Olympic Torch Emits 5,500 Tons of CO2.** From an ABC News article comes word that by the time the Olympic "Pyro Parade" is over it will have produced about 11 million pounds of carbon emissions. (Al Gore is going to be ticked.....really ticked!) In the process of visiting 23 cities the torch will be flown more than 85,000 miles in an Air China A330 which burns 5.4 gallons of fuel per mile or 462,400 gallons for the entire trip. Every gallon of jet fuel produces 23.88 pounds of CO2 so if you do the math it all comes out to 5,500 tons of CO2. On the other hand SAMOAs August 23 Faux Olympics torch will not pollute the air one bit. Sign up now. See the events page of our website.

**Kudos:** Good job to all of the authors of articles in April's Miatatudes. And good job to Mark Brooks for inserting pictures and adding graphics and color. Ron Petrich revised the older Newsletter a few years ago and took it a long way and now Mark is continuing in that tradition.

## Two Ladies Talking in Heaven..

by Jeanne George

1st woman: Hi! My name is Wanda.

2nd woman: Hi! I'm Kelly. How'd you die?

1st woman: I Froze to Death.

2nd woman: How Horrible!

1st woman: It wasn't so bad. After I quit shaking from the cold, I began to get warm & sleepy, and finally died a peaceful death. what about you?

2nd woman: I died of a massive heart attack. I suspected that my husband was cheating, so I came home early to catch him in the Act. But instead, I found him all by himself in the den watching TV.

1st woman: So, what happened?

2nd woman: I was so sure there was another woman there somewhere. that I started running all over the house looking. I ran up into the attic and searched, and down into the basement then I went through every closet and checked under all the beds. I kept this up until I had looked everywhere. Finally I became so exhausted that I just keeled over with a heart Attack and died.

1st woman: Too bad you didn't look in the freezer---we'd both still be alive

## Treasure Trove

by Jeanne George

### WELCOME to these new members joining in April

Lynda and Gary Pike

### Memberships Expiring May 1

Cowan, Barbara and Clay

Jensen, Dee and Bob

Nicholson, Vi and Frank

Wilson, Toni

### Memberships Renewed during April

Cathie, Peggie

Coleman, John & Susan

DeNuzzo, David & Deidre

Gonzalez, Rod

Kinsey, Graeme and Sharon Howe

Long, Ed and Chris Allen

Nicholson, Frank and Vi

Wislon, Toni

## Lifetime Membership Awards

by Jeanne George

At their first meeting of the year, the 2008 Board of Officers voted to recognize two long standing SAMOA members for their time and efforts for the Club. It was decided to present Skip Noyes and Dennis Swaney with Lifetime SAMOA Memberships. These individuals were two of the original eleven members who created the organization in 1990 and still remain active in the Club.

At the April general meeting, Robin presented the award to Dennis Swaney. Dennis lives in the Oroville area and usually was only able to attend the December Business Meeting. Dennis recently retired and hopes to attend more events.

Skip was presented his award in February, but there was no camera to record the presentation. Robin decided to stage a re-enactment of the event. Skip's good nature covered up Dennis's name and accepted the award for history.





## April Meeting Fun

by Jeanne George

April's general meeting was full of laughs. President, Robin George, had personally picked out and purchased various gag gifts for three of his officers who celebrated recent Birthdays.

Secretary Pam Hunt was the first to be taken by surprise. She was given several long pencils with cars for erasers, a mobile phone so Robin could keep track of her, a whistle to keep the BOO in line during meetings, and paper and crayons for taking notes.

Next, Tech advisor and new Newsletter designer, Mark Brooks, being the youngest of the Officers was presented with an oversize baby pacifier. Not to be out done, Robin determined to present Jack Parker with a package of adult diapers. Robin indicated that not only due to his age, he was presenting these due to the fact that Mr. Autocross didn't like to stop for personal needs when racing.



Graeme Kinsey had several upcoming events to discuss. When Robin indicated that Graeme was president of the Delta Club, the group gave him a fitting greeting.



If you missed this meeting, you missed out on all the fun.

## Random May Day Musings

by Jack Parker

First on the performance tire front. Those of you needing tires in the near future should be giving the new Dunlop Z1 a look. Now this is not exactly hot off the press news seeing that the Z1 has been around for about six months. But the hot news is that after only a short time they are improving the tire with a more consistent grip and a quicker warmup for the same price as the old tire.

Kuhmo is coming out very soon with the Ecsta XS which will be a plus for the Street Touring crowd. This is to be a big leap from their very good MX which won many autocross national championships.

On the forced induction side of the room we have Moss Motors announcing that in a few short months the new MP62 hotside supercharger will be CARB legal. Price on the new blower is going to be around \$3K. Of course the usual options are available to raise the price but with that price and an instant 175 rwhp that is not a bad deal.

On the racing front, SCCA results have not been posted at press time, but a preliminary look at the winners and losers from this past weekend's event has our own Rod Gonzales in the lead in C Stock in his new 99 Miata. Jack Parker, trying to coat the underside of his Miata with pointy little rubber thingies is also unofficially in the lead when he beat that big ugly yellow Corvette by 9/100 of a second. Of course this is all unofficial but it looks good.

On the sale rack we have Edge Racing([edgeracing.com](http://edgeracing.com)) and a newly reduced price on their wheel tire package of Azenis and Enkei RPF1 15 inchers. Just reduced to just a hair away from \$1100. Damn. A great buy.

949 Racing has just made available a great looking wheel with a 34 offset in a 15x7.5 inch wheel that weighs just 12 pounds. The price of \$144 is very reasonable for a great looking light wheel. ([949racing.com](http://949racing.com))

On the technical side. Want massive oversteer? Put a Racing Beat rear sway on a forced induction car the day before you want to drive it fast and don't check air pressure. Sideways is not a fast way around any turn.



If there's one thing Jack knows, it's how to get around a track quickly

## Jerry's Brakes Fail!

by Adi Damania



Sitcom veteran Jerry Seinfeld rolled his 1967 FIAT "BTM" Dino this weekend after the brakes of the classic car failed on him. Apparently, after the brake failure, Seinfeld tried the emergency hand brake in East Hampton, NY, but

it seems even that did not work, forcing Seinfeld to swerve, in order to avoid flying into an intersection unannounced, thus rolling the car. We are told Seinfeld's OK, but the car is apparently not. The '67 FIAT "BTM" Dino (Yeah, so what's up with a Fiat "BTM," anyway?) according to Associated Press is a "sedan". But the average John Bloggs has no idea what kind of a FIAT the man behind a TV 'show about nothing' was driving. Seinfeld was not charged in the incident which is being attributed to mechanical failure of the FIAT (aka "Fit It Again Tony"). But seriously, for all you non-Italiano SAMOAns who did not know what FIAT stands for it is: Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino (Italian Automobile Manufacturer, Turin). Nevertheless, The FIAT Dino "BTM" was a mystery to the late-night talk show "know-it-all" hosts as well.

The FIAT Dino, named after Enzo Ferrari's son Alfredo (aka "Dino"), who died in 1956 at the age of 24 from a muscular dystrophy, is a front-engined, rear-drive sports car manufactured between 1966 and 1973. It was an intermediate step towards creating Ferrari's own car also called the "Dino" and the two are often confused. The FIAT Dino allowed Ferrari to achieve the necessary production numbers to homologate Alfredo Ferrari designed V6 engine for Formula 2 racing. The FIAT Dino Spider was introduced at Turin Motor Show 1966 and the Coupé version one year later in 1967 at the Geneva Motorshow, and it was this model of the car that our friend Jerry the comedian was driving that morning in the Hamptons, NY. May be we should advise me to get a Miata. Then he will have brakes, or any other problem, no more!

The car (see picture at Geneva Motor Show) was first offered with a 2.0-liter, 160 horsepower V6, with a 5-speed manual transmission. This engine was later enlarged to a 2.4-liter, 180 horsepower unit in 1969. The FIAT Dino was originally equipped with a live axle suspended by leaf springs, but later examples used a coil-sprung independent rear suspension similar to that of the Fiat 130 coupé, which has its own cult following. Performance was impressive, with a 0-60 mph time of less than 8 seconds. Fuel was delivered via three Weber 40DCNF carburetors. Two body designs were made for FIAT - a Pininfarina spider and a Bertone coupe, they also manufactured these cars.

Buying a Dino is inexpensive (pristine 1967 examples would auction for about \$16,000 in the United States in 2001), and the cars are relatively reliable. They are

expensive to maintain given their scarcity of parts as well as mechanics knowledgeable of them. The Dino was never sold officially in the United States, although many people imported them. It was discontinued in 1973.

Though I am sure my wife is glad that her "dear Jerry" is all right, car enthusiasts on the Web seem more interested in figuring out what the heck a "1967 FIAT BTM" is, since no car with such a designation was ever made by FIAT (so they say). When I asked a mechanic at the European Garage in Davis, he hypothesized that Mr. Seinfeld was perhaps driving a 1967 FIAT 850 coupé, which was somehow misread from the scrawl of a reporter's notebook as a FIAT BTM. However, on the New York Times's Wheels blog there was speculation that the car might really be a hardtop FIAT Dino that was called a "BTM" to indicate that it was designed by Bertone, who is/was based in Turin, Italy. Anyway, to cut a long story short (before it becomes boring, like one of Jerry's sitcom episodes) Seinfeld told reporters that "Because I know there are kids out there, I want to make sure they all know that driving without braking is not something I recommend, unless you have professional clown training or a comedy background, as I do. It is not something I plan to make a habit of." And now to solve the mystery, the "BTM" stands for Bertone Torino Maranello (or designed by Bertone, built at Turin, with an engine that came from Maranello). Do you get me Steve?

BTW: The Hamptons refers to parts of east NY state that are well known as a playground for the very rich (like, you guessed it, Jerry Seinfeld) who own summer homes there. Others are seaside resorts frequented by not so super rich residents of New York City particularly during the summer months for weekend getaways.

Photos:

- 1) The inimitable Jerry Seinfeld
- 2) A genuine FIAT Dino Coupé (BTM) at Geneva Motor Show 1967.





## New Event Notice

by Jack Parker

### Ferrari Challenge May 4

Ron Petrich will lead a caravan of SAMOANs and other enthusiasts to Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, CA to watch the Ferrari Challenge races. This event consists of both modern and vintage Ferraris racing in a variety of classes. Drivers are all amateurs, and most are the cars' owners. Recent and historic Formula 1 Ferraris will also participate in demonstration laps.

This event is of extreme interest if you are a sports car person or just want to bask in the glow of mega-expensive modern and vintage machinery. Ron says that the admission fee, which has not been determined but was \$20 last year, will be collected at the track the day of the event.

Ron will be leading the event from the Chevron station in Winters (999 E. Grant Avenue, I505 & SR128) starting at 8:00. All participants are asked to be at the station at 7:45. An RSVP is not required. Food is limited at the track so bring



along a cooler with lunch and tasty beverages.

For more information log on to the Ferrari Challenge website, or call or email Ron Petrich at (916) 454-1008 or

freescopesdad@comcast.net

### Monthly Club Meeting May 8

We will be meeting again at the Coco's Family Restaurant, 1830 Arden Way, Sacramento CA. Their number is 922-6741. As usual come early to eat and be merry or just show up at 7:00 for the meeting.

### Shriners Concours May 18

Rod Gonzales will be leading a group of car show goers on May 18 to the Annual Shriners Concours. A Classic Celebration to Benefit a Classic Cause, The Shriners Hospital, will be held again at Mather Field in Rancho Cordova. This year's event features the Corvette, Jaguar, Alfa Romeo, and the Ford Model T. Rod will again be organizing the club corral at this years event.

With a minimum of 10 cars entered, our club will be given three trophies, which we can use as we like. Last time, our members judged each other's cars and used the trophies for "Club Choice", "Best Detailed", and the "Zoom-Zoom" award (for most personalized). Similar trophy categories will be used this year. Club trophy winners will participate in

the Shriners Concours Award Ceremony.

Since the registration deadline is April 28, 2008, by the time you read this we will have further information at the club meeting or you can call Rod. We will be meeting at a location to be chosen by Rod and all drive in together.

### Stewart Points Run May 31

Graeme Kinsey will be leading a fantastic twisty run to the coast on May 31. Graeme asks that we meet at 8:00 AM at the Davis McDonald's, Chiles Road and Mace Boulevard exit off I80, with an 8:30 AM sharp departure time. Additional meeting points will be at the Winter's Chevron (I505 & SR128) at 9:15 AM, and at the intersection of SR128 and Silverado Trail (in Napa) at about 10:15 AM.

This is a one-day event with an optional overnight. It will take place rain or shine. Expect lunch to cost about \$10.00 (cash only - no credit cards) and the hotel ranging between \$125.00 - \$150.00. Please RSVP to Graeme Kinsey by Thursday, May 29th, 2008 to graemeki@hotmail.com.

## Upcoming SAMOA and Local Events

- Sunday May 4 - Ferrari Challenge at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma
- Thursday May 8 - SAMOA Meeting at Coco's.
- Sunday May 18 - Shriners Concours d'Elegance Charity Event
- Saturday May 31 - Stewart's Point Run
- Saturday June 7 - Hotcars and Hotcakes - Kirkwood
- Thursday June 12 - SAMOA meeting at Coco's
- Monday June 16 - Sacramento RiverCats game
- Fri-Sun June 20-22 - Weekend in Bear Valley
- Sunday June 22 - Scavenger Hunt
- Thursday July 10 - SAMOA meeting at Coco's

## Got Guts at Thunderhill III

by Ron Petrich

Last Tuesday morning finally passed, our house guests had all departed for points East, and I could finally take a deep breath and reflect on the events of the day before and the 4 months leading up to Got Guts At Thunderhill III. But first of all, a huge thank you to all of the raffle donors, raffle ticket buyers, volunteers, friends, and especially the drivers. GGATIII was an unqualified success. In fact, it was a smash precisely because it was NOT a smash. Not a single incident of car damage, no broken motors or damaged body panels (sorry Mark, yours took place before the track), and most importantly, no injuries of any kind. We kept the EMTs bored, and we like it that way.

I did have to pay the expanded tow charge, as a Mini Cooper shredded a supercharger belt and got stuck at turn 5 and had to be towed into the paddock. But luck was on his side, as a quick trip to town netted him a replacement belt and he was back at it an hour later. Way to go.

Of course the object of GGATIII was to raise both awareness and money of and for the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America. The event was successful doing both. Not only was Tamara Block, Executive Director of CCFA in Northern California, on hand to provide information about the organization, but the track day and raffle netted more than \$14,000 for CCFA. A check for \$14,025.31 will be presented to that organization at SAMOA's meeting on June 12, 2008. Please come on out and offer your support. The money raised this year, by the way, brings the 3 year total to almost \$34,000.

This year the event sold out about a week prior. We had 80 paid drivers, more than \$13,000 in raffle prizes, and more than \$6,000 in raffle tickets sold. In fact, raffle prizes were still showing up at my door the day before the event. Now, a week later, all of the prizes too bulky to bring to the track (wheels and tires) have been delivered to the lucky winners, and all the prizes won by out of town folks have been shipped off. And for those of you in SAMOA who were not at the track, I urge you to show up at the next meeting on May 8th because you may yet be rewarded for your raffle ticket purchase. This is because a whole slew of prizes were waiting for me when I arrived home last Monday night, and it was decided to create a supplemental drawing among SAMOA members for the remaining goodies. I will bring these prizes to our meeting next week for the 8-9 SAMOANs who won them.

A sign of a good fraternal club is its memberships' willingness to get involved. A special thanks goes to Bob Bacon, who drove up Sunday, stayed over at his expense, showed up at the track at 6:45 AM, conducted the driver registration, and stayed to help until after the raffle. Thank you Bob. Another thanks to Robin George, who took a day off work to come up and help emcee the raffle. He even hauled our world famous Karaoke machine up to Thunderhill. Unfortunately the low ceiling and poor acoustics in the lunchroom required me to use lung power instead, but it is the thought that counts. Thanks to SAMOA members Mark Brooks, Ray Chermak, Rod Gonzalez, Ken Johnson, Kaitlyn Lydell, Jack Parker, Russ Smith and Bonni Weatherwax, who signed up as drivers. Thanks also to SAMOA members Dave DeNuzzo (The Crazy Red Italian), Bonni Weatherwax (TEAM Racing) and Skip Noyes (The Clearwater Company), who donated raffle prizes to the event. And a special thank you to Jack Parker, who

donated the raffle's grand prize. Thanks!!!

I don't have a crystal ball regarding what the state of the economy or gas prices will look like in a year, but as of this writing there will definitely be a Got Guts at Thunderhill IV in the spring of 2009. So starting next January expect to be bugged, reminded, cajoled, enticed, inveigled, coaxed, wheedled, sweet-talked and otherwise persuaded to sign up, buy raffle tickets and support GGATIV. Again, thanks SAMOA for your support.

## Wanted.. an old new Miata

by Ron Petrich

I want a Miata again. I need a Miata again. I am trying to buy a Miata again, but not having much success. Help me out of this funk.

Ever since I sold my 1999 FMII Miata in December 2006, I have been subjected to nothing but ridicule, derision, mockery, scorn, even bad hair jokes (how can you hit me with a bad hair joke – it requires hair doesn't it?). All this time I thought it was because of my golf game. Then I finally realized that the S2000 body kit schtick was getting old, especially with most of our members, who are themselves getting [quite] old. So I'm caving in. I want, must have, another Miata.

But not just any old Miata. I am looking for an NA (first generation Miata for some of you youngsters out there) Miata, basically stock, roll bar excepted, strong running, to turn into a track beast. The numbers alone make this a good investment. These days insurance policies all include specific language in the fine print that specifically preclude collision coverage on, at, near, below, inside, etc. a race track... for any purpose. So, why take a perfectly nearly-new S2000 worth in the high twenties and risk it on the track, when I can have just as much fun in an old but reliable Miata with \$5,000 or less invested? And can you imagine anything more enjoyable than spending a long weekend ripping out carpet, insulation, AC hardware, heavy seats, etc. just to save weight?

So that's what I plan to do. Bring me your old but reliable, strong running, clean, high mileage or not, mostly stock early Miatas and you might have a buyer. If the HDHC roll bar is already there, so much the better. There are several on Craig's list right now, and I even made a Kelly Blue Book offer on one, but was turned down. I'm not planning to low ball anyone or take them to the cleaners, but if you think that your 91-96 Miata would be a suitable candidate for me to transplant some GC coilovers, RB sways, race pads, roll bar (if necessary) and suitable light 15" rims, please contact me at [freescopesdad@comcast.net](mailto:freescopesdad@comcast.net). My search will continue until this craving is satisfied.

Let the offers roll in.



## Smog Smogasbord

by Adi Damania

The obligatory smog test comes around every other year. I just hate it because I have to spend about \$60 at this greasy and sooty smog place around the corner from my home in Woodland. So last Saturday, after a good lunch of multi-colored bean and pork neck-bones broth, washed down with a glass (not more) of red burgundy wine, I got in to my Miata and took it to be smogged. After booking the car, I sat out on a park bench on W. Main St., enjoying the sun, and watching fat old farts with flowing beards riding Harleys with equally fat tires and a deafening roar of their exhaust from un-dampened pipes as they sped down Hwy 16 towards Capay.

When they brought out my car, and I went to cough up the \$60, I was shocked beyond belief to find that the Miata had failed smog miserably. The emissions recorded were 3 times the passable figure! This cannot be I told the smog technician (let us call him "José") who just took my money and told me "go see your mechanic". With a sad heart I called my mechanic (let us just call him "Kenny") on Monday (he does not work on week-ends). What he told me surprised me even further. He said he was not authorized to carry out any "smog-related" repairs and that I would have to go to his friend (let us call him "Dick") who ran a smog garage at an industrial park on the east side of town.

This I did and was forced to sign up for a 'diagnostic computer code test' and another EVAC test (GOK what it is) for a total of \$90-120 estimated cost. Now I had to get back to my home so that I could get into my OTM car and go to work. Later that afternoon Dick's well-blessed young female assistant (she had driven me home too) called to say that Dick had found nothing wrong with the car and that it had passed the "pre-test" with flying colors! Then Dick himself came on the line to say that may be my car was not warmed enough before the test (which was true, because although the temp gauge had come up to normal, which I thought was sufficient, the car had sat for more than half an hour in the cool morning breeze before being tested because there were lots of other 'smoggies' before me it being a Saturday and all). Dick said that all he had done was to let the car idle for 45 mins and then when down the road at about 75 mph in 3rd gear a couple of times to really warm up the engine and the Catalytic Converter and then put the car on the bench for the emission test and the readings that were generated were almost 1/10th of those needed to pass! In other words I had results that were expected from a brand new car! My elation at this turn of events was quickly squashed by the female assistant who said "and the total comes to \$211"! What!?! I exclaimed and muttered #\*@\$%\* under my breath (the purpose of a extremely buxom assistant at the establishment was not becoming apparently clear to me). "Yes. Dick also changed the gas cap for good measure so that you do not have any more problems" she purred. Dick, it turned out, had not only given the car a "pre-test" which it passed nicely, but also carried out a "mock" complete smog test which the little car also passed with flying colors. BUT, he was not authorized to send the smog certificate to the DMV. So he recommended that I take the car to "Buck" on Main Street in Woodland who runs a full-serve gas-station cum smog "test only" center (I must tell the Lady Parvin. She only uses Full-serve gas stations and sometimes drives all the way to Davis and back to fill the tank, etc., when I am traveling!).

But in the mean time the car had become cold (it was one of those days when the north wind blows) at Dick's garage while waiting for my arrival from work at Davis. So after I paid up, Dick told me to really warm up the car again before going to Buck. So I quickly got on I-5 and zoomed to Zamora and back, hitting over 100 mph when there were no 18-wheelers around and looking constantly in the rear-view mirrors for flashing

red and blue lights and a siren (luckily non appeared, presumably because it was post lunch-time...). I drove the car straight inside Buck's garage at 3:15 PM only to be told that they closed at 3:00 PM! Drat! So totally deflated by now, I just took an appointment for the next day and drove back to Davis on Hwy 113 and my work.

The next day I drove the little car again at high speed to Woodland from my workplace in Davis, a good run of 12 miles, on a nearly empty Hwy 113. I once again drove straight into Buck's garage and thank heavens he had already prepared all the paper-work and got on to the test right away. He told me to come back after 30 mins so I sauntered next door to a used car parking lot where I saw a nice 2004 metallic silver 5-speed Lexus IS 300! Wow! The used car salesman was a dufuss. He told me that car was a front wheel drive! I said "how can the car be a front wheel drive when the engine is not transversely mounted?" He ignored my remark and I continued to play dumb. He wanted \$22K but I got him down to \$18K and then walked away back to Buck's. The Miata had passed, as I had expected, with absolutely flying colors and Buck smilingly collected his \$60 for the test and certificate, and I was out-of-pocket for a total amount of \$331 altogether! And all for nothing but a couple of bozos at the first smog station that shall go nameless here! So let this be a lesson for all you Miatistas who have to get it "smogged". 1) keep a brand new gas cap around and put it on a day before the test (you can put it away after the test for the next two years), 2) fill up the gas tank with 91 octane gas a day before, and 3) warm up the car for at least 15 miles on a Fwy at high speed and do not switch off the engine till your car is on the ramp for the test. Good luck to you! And as for me, I am poorer but wiser now!

## Sunday Driver

by Adi Damania

"Some people get a cheap laugh breaking up the speed limit

Scaring the pedestrians for a minute

Crossing up progress driving on the grass

Leaving just enough room to pass

Sunday driver never took a test

Oh yeah, once upon a time in the west"

From: "Once Upon A Time In The West" – Dire Straits

Have you been stuck like forever behind an extremely slow 'Sunday Driver' (SD) on the winding Hwy 128 from Winters to St Helena? Or have you yourself been a "Sunday Driver" sometimes and enjoyed the California sun with the top down on your Miata and breeze in your hair with the sound of birds chirping in the trees that whiz by? I am been unfortunate and guilty, respectively, of having experienced both these phenomenons.

It is so irritating when the mood has had you and you want to throw the Miata into every corner till your progress and exhilaration is blocked by a "Sunday Driver" in an older Oldsmobile or worse, a rusty motor-home. What choices do you have? Flash your headlights? Honk to get the SD's attention so that he/she takes the hint and pulls over at the next available opportunity or a turnout? Fifty percent of the times nothing works till the SD either takes a fork on which you do not want to go, or gets a flat (as in one case), or just stops in a lay by to spend a penny.

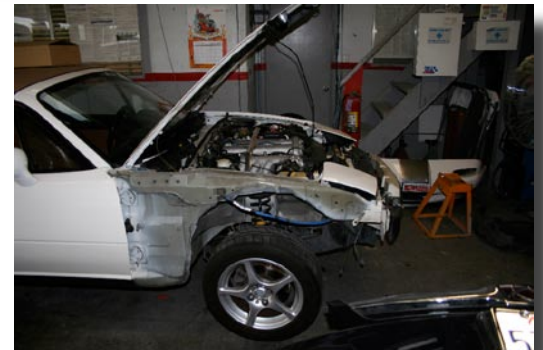
However, I must quickly add here that when in a melancholy mood, which is happening more frequently these days, I myself become a SD on a working day with no great rush to get to work because, yes you guessed it, there is no work! I will be laid off soon! It is so annoying to look in to your rear view mirrors and find a huge "RAM" pick up or one of those "monstah trucks" with wheels the size of a prize-winning pumpkins from Oregon! But wait, it could be worse! For it could be one of those "monstah" trucks with a "monstah" car stereo in the back that have 57 inch powered sub-woofers that belt out a bass that rattles my gold fillings! But then this is a free country, isn't it?



## Just call me Captain Crunch

by Mark Brooks

Back in November, I was involved in a minor accident in my beloved Miata when a full-sized Chevy Pickup came over into my lane on a highway offramp. The damage to the right front fender and bumper was pretty significant - beyond repair. Fortunately, there was a witness who pulled over and gave her statement to the police that the other guy came over into my lane with no blinker, and he ended up telling the police it was his fault. The second 'incident' happened in January when I carelessly went around a turn a little too fast for the conditions and slid into a guardrail. This caused damage to the left front fender and bumper. Mind you, I still hadn't gotten the damage on the right side fixed yet. Then, the final incident happened in March, when I was driving in San Francisco on Broadway - someone in a full-sized Dodge van didn't see me and drifted into my lane - crunching the left rear quarterpanel and bumper. He admitted to me and his insurance company that it was his fault. So - by this point, I had damage on 3 of the 4 corners of my car. It was starting to look pretty pathetic. Having worked in the auto body/collision repair industry for 7 years prior to getting an 'office job', I was pretty picky about who I wanted to fix the damage. Unfortunately, I quickly found that a lot of the nicer shops don't want to touch a 14 year old car - too much effort and risk of previous damage and unseen repairs. Finally, I ended up at - of all places, a **Chevy Dealership!** Performance Chevrolet on Madison avenue in Citrus Heights has had my car now for a week and a half. Before I committed to letting them work on the car, I spent some time talking to the estimator (Justin) about the materials they use, the methods they use, and the warranty that comes with the repairs. We ended up deciding to have the whole car repainted, and fixing some dings and dents that had accumulated on the doors and the one 'undamaged' corner of the car. So, there will be some out of pocket expense on my behalf, but when I get the car back, it's going to have 2 brand new OEM bumpers, 2 new front fenders, repaired rear quarterpanel and a fresh coat of paint over the whole car. Justin has been great to work with - he's been great to work with and has been really up front about what can and can't be done - so there would be no surprises for me when the car was completed. I've been stopping by the shop every couple days to see the progress, and I've been impressed with the cleanliness and organization of the shop as well as the work that's been done thus far. Hopefully I'll have my car back by the end of this week or early next week, looking better than new! Here's some photos of the process..



Wrinkle, wrinkle, little car...





## For those who didn't have the guts...

by Mark Brooks

April 21 was a day full of fun, excitement and great driving at Thunderhill Raceway .. well, for those of us who participated in Ron's "Got Guts" event it was!! For those who didn't have the guts to make it .. here are some of the photos of the great cars at the event..



All photos taken by Mark Brooks, except the one of the white Miata with grey stripe - taken by GotBlueMilk.com

It's been said a million times now- but I'll say it again.. Ron - you did a phenomenal job organizing this event. I think everyone had a great time (except for that guy in the Ferrari with the chronic brake problems). Thanks again for putting the event together!