



# THE WRIGHT ROADSTER

*ZOOM-ZOOM*

April Volume 28, Issue 4



## The President's Corner

My Miata has been re-tired. No, I haven't parked it, sold it, traded it, or driven it off a cliff. I have had new tires put on it. This came about after I picked up a puncture in the right front (an old screw from who knows where). At the shop where I had the tire repaired, the service manager suggested to me that the treads were showing wear and it was time. I retorted that the tread was just reaching optimal depth for dry traction (racing cars use slicks, after all). But he had a good comeback for that – the wet traction would be questionable, with hydroplaning soon becoming a real concern. Since Peggy sometimes drives my car (usually when I need hers to haul something), I could see his point – it would be unconscionable to put her at risk.

The OEM max performance summer tires (Bridgestone RE050A) had given me over 27000 miles of great service, so that model was my benchmark in starting a search for a replacement. You have to understand – the engineer in me insists that I research any significant purchase, from waffle iron to lawn mower, so this would not be a spur of the moment decision. I have discussed tires with some of my fellow MVMC members, and checked what folks have put on their cars, but when it comes to tires, I have one primary source of data that I turn to – [tirerack.com](http://tirerack.com). If there is a better, more thorough, more reliable source for information on tires, I have not heard of it.

So what to buy? I wanted a tire with comparable or better performance, at a reasonable cost, that received 4 or 5-star reviews from people who had bought them. First order of business was to identify candidates from [tirerack.com](http://tirerack.com). The 205/45-17 spec for the NC Touring is a somewhat unusual size, so the number is limited. Next I needed to whittle down that number more, so I filtered out all but summer tires. The results were mostly Bridgestones, Dunlops, and Pirellis.

Just before starting this quest, I had received an email from the warehouse club to which Peggy and I belong, advertising a sale on Bridgestone tires, at \$70 discount per set of four (they sometimes offer the same deal on Michelins). Was price going to be a factor? You bet. When I input my model data into their website, one tire resulted – the Bridgestone Potenza S-04 Pole Position. At the discounted price, a set would go for about \$450 (before installation, taxes, etc.).

So I made the S-04 my nominal first choice and went back to [tirerack.com](http://tirerack.com) to check it out closely. 216 reviews gave it 4.3 out of 5 stars, and the performance ratings were all in the superior category – all marks better than the OEMs. After comparing to other options, some of which had slightly better ratings, the S-04 appeared to be the best “bang for the buck”, to use a rather tired cliché. I ordered a set from the warehouse club website, and had them installed not long thereafter. I have less than 100 miles on them so far, so we'll have to wait to give a real performance review. I expect some events later this year will give plenty of evidence.



## CALLING ALL MEMBERS

### INVITE NEW MEMBERS!

Annual Dues are \$20.00, January through December

[View and Download the Membership Form \(PDF\)](#)

### View the Logo Update Rules.

The Executive Committee has endorsed a set of rules for the presentation, consideration, and voting of any candidates for a new club logo. This effort was stimulated by logos of other clubs that members have observed at various events. Below are examples



To view the document outlining the rules, press the LINK button below.

[View Rules Document](#)



TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Richard and Susan Kogler  
Susan Hubbell



### April Birthdays:

- 04/03 Chris White
- 04/06 George Wetmore
- 04/08 Rosemary Clark
- 04/11 Sharry Hayden
- 04/19 Harold Varvel
- 04/24 Mike Allen
- 04/27 David Berry
- 04/30 Jo Tarka

## OUR CLUB SPONSOR

# Jeff Schmitt Mazda



# RALLY REPORT: Drives and Activities for 2016



**APRIL 16 MVMC Maintenance Day**

**APRIL 19 Meet & Greet  
Cadillac Jack's  
9400 North Springboro Pike  
Miamisburg, Ohio 45342**

**APRIL 23 Drive & Dine  
to the Florentine Restaurant, Fred and Jayna Hoppel**

**APRIL Classic Mitty at Road Atlanta. Ed Kramer  
22-24**



## Rally Master' Report

Happy Spring! Now is the time to get those Miatas out of winter storage and serviced, shined and otherwise ready for a great driving season. I spent a couple of hours changing to summer tires and spiffing up my car this past weekend. I'm sure our Tech Directors will provide all the info on "how to" necessary and be sure to contact Ed Kramer about the club Maintenance Day.

I'm happy to say that we've put together a list of events for 2016 and I hope to add to it as we go through the year. As I've said in previous newsletters, we can't have too many events because we all have different interests and thoughts about what we'd like to do. Sooooo, if you still on the fence about leading an event give me a holler and I'll be glad to help you set something up. I'm afraid I'll miss you at the April Meet 'n Greet because I'll be attending the 2016 Viva Las Vegas Rockabilly Weekend (<http://www.vivalasvegas.net/>) and all it entails but I'll be back in plenty of time to help YOU set something up for latter in the year. It is my intention to have this list appear in each newsletter with updates as they occur so be sure to check it each month.

## Here is what is scheduled so far:

April 9, *Drive 'n Dine to the Golden Lamb*, Chuck & Pat Valley

April 16, *MVMC Maintenance Day*, Ed Kramer

April 23, *Drive 'n Dine to the Florentine Restaurant*, Fred and Jayna Hoppel

April 22-24, *Classic Mitty at Road Atlanta*. Ed Kramer

May 21, *Loveland Castle DnD*, Mike Wheeler

May 22, *Troy Corvette Autocross*, Tim Howard

June 12, *Cincinnati Concours D 'Elegance*, Tim Howard

June 11, *Serpent Mound Drive*, Dan & Norma Kirkpatrick

June 26, *Mid-Ohio Vintage Grand Prix*, Ed Kramer

July 4, *Fairborn Independence Parade and Social*, Dan and Norma Kirkpatrick

July 28-31, *Miatas at the Gap XX*, Mike Wheeler

10 Rooms blocked @ Townsend Gateway Inn @ \$78 + tax. Suites and Cabins available

August 6, *British Car Show*, Tim Howard

Aug 27, *2016 Miami Valley Miata Club Covered Bridge Drive Part II*, George & Jill Wetmore

September 24-25, *SCCA National Championship Runoffs*, Ed Kramer

Oct 20-23, *Fall Foliage Trip to Townsend TN*, Mike Wheeler

10 Rooms blocked @ Townsend Gateway Inn @ \$78 + tax. Suites and Cabins available

Dec 3 or 10, *MVMC Christmas Party*

I hope to see you at several of these events throughout the year!

**Mike**

Since it's April and we've already enjoyed 60 and 70 degree weather, Old Man Winter tried scaring us from getting out there with our little machines and driving the curvies we so love to drive. The first drive & dine of the year for our club got underway late Saturday morning, April 9<sup>th</sup>. The more adventurous and daring club members rallied at Xenia Station in upper 20 degree weather. Even as some clouds moved in, the sun was always shining and helped dry the roads in our route in Greene, Clinton, and Warren Counties.



We had a record number of signups for this drive & dine to the Golden Lamb earlier in the week, but a myriad of reasons slowly dwindled the group to 44 total signups for the drive with 36 diners. Prior to the drive, we all were exposed to a combination of the local media \_repeatedly showing\_ an I-75 slide off wreck that happened in the early morning hours, the weather girls warning, *"If you don't have to go out, you better not"*, and then finally, the snow covered grass gave pause to even the most avid Miata driver, creating some thoughts, 'if winter was not really over, maybe I better not take my little machine out in this stuff.'

But the fearless rose to the occasion and enjoyed every minute! The route meandered down State Route 380 South for a while as it turned into Creek Road. Soon after turning onto unfamiliar county roads, a winter wonder land opened up to us with large, fluffy snowflakes dancing on our windshields. We found ourselves in a giant shakey ball with a magical winter scene! Snow from the early morning still rested on sap-filled branches and glistened brightly in the warming sun. Time seemed to slow down as an aura of peacefulness prevailed while easily motoring along the curvy and hilly county roads; no one having a schedule to be concerned with, and no road conditions to distract our focus on nature's beauty.

It was 11:45am and the excellent buffet awaited with the less daring half of us hungry Miata lovers already upstairs in the historic Golden Lamb. Prior to the tasty buffet, the club had a U.S. President trivia contest and three smart history lovers won some nice prizes. Pat and I truly enjoyed putting this drive & dine together. Special thanks to Dave and Peggy Berry and Fred and Jayna Hoppel for doing the dry run with us and providing FRS rockin' chair and tail gunner positions that ensured a safe and fun drive for our caravan. By the way, I think we have come to really like the FRS radios and encourage other members to go pick up a pair.

Chuck Valley, VP Miami Valley Miata Club



## ***“I’m gonna barbecue yo’ a—“***

Such was one of the memorable utterances of Sheriff Buford T. Justice. He was of course addressing the Bandit, one Bo Darville, on a round-trip mission from Atlanta to Texarkana, Texas and back, returning with a truck load of beer. And all on a whim. Big Enos Burdette had started it, challenging any taker to bring him that load of beer to celebrate the Southern Classic stock car race. Bo talked his friend Cledus into piloting the rig while he ran interference. The prize would be \$80,000, enough to buy a new truck.

The prizes at stake were slightly less lucrative for the members of the Miami Valley Miata Club who gathered to screen the movie at the home of Dan and Norma Kirkpatrick on the afternoon of Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. And the challenge was a different one – answer as many as you can of over 80 questions about the movie. This was the annual Virtual Rally, and the subject was *Smokey and the Bandit*.

The crowd arrived at 2:00pm, bringing all sorts of snacks to share before, during, and after the show. Seven two-person teams and one single, Norma, were given a briefing and a reading of the rules by the Rally Master for the event, Dave Berry. The scoring sheets were handed out, everyone settled in, and the movie was cued up. Dan and Norma have a TV/DVD setup in the basement recreation room as well as the upstairs family room, so the players were able to choose their spots and make themselves comfortable.

The questions came fast and furious as the movie began, starting with the opening credits. At a midpoint scene an intermission was declared. All took the opportunity to stretch and cruise the munchies. The screening resumed following the 20-minute break, with yet more questions needing answers.

The plot of the movie is very simple, and most of the questions were taken from things said or seen as it unravels. Bo (Burt Reynolds) and Cledus (Jerry Reed) load up the beer and head out. Bo is running ahead in a brand new Pontiac Trans Am, and it isn’t long before he attracts the attention of the law. He gives them the slip, and all goes well until daylight comes and Bo happens upon a young lady at the roadside, standing beside a disabled vehicle. There is little unusual about the scene, except that she is wearing a wedding dress. Carrie (Sally Field), the bride-to-be, jumps in Bo’s car, and off they go. It turns out she isn’t on her way to a wedding – she’s running away from one. The groom and his father arrive at the spot a few moments later. The father is very displeased, and sets out after them. He is Sheriff Buford T. Justice (Jackie Gleason), and he is determined to catch Bo, better known as the Bandit.

The chase races through Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and half the width of Georgia to Atlanta. Many times the sheriff has the Bandit nearly in his grasp, but the Bandit always manages to slip away. Every lawman along the way takes part in the pursuit, with many ending up in lakes, ditches, or piles of crumpled metal. The rig arrives at the race track in the nick of time, runs a gauntlet of local police, and delivers the beer to Big Enos (Pat McCormack) and his son, Little Enos (Paul Williams). But when offered double-or-nothing, the Bandit, Carrie and Cledus set off for Boston to bring back clam chowder. Poor Sheriff Justice is left empty-handed, his patrol car a smoking heap, his son jilted, and his reputation in tatters.

This movie probably did more for the popularity of the Pontiac Trans Am than any other exposure. It certainly wasn’t the Sports Car Club of America’s racing series of the same name that did it – the Trans Am didn’t even race in the series, its base engine too large for what the production-based rules allowed. By the way, that was one of the non-movie questions that tested the players’ overall knowledge. Other questions spanned the careers of Burt, Sally, Jerry and Jackie.

Once the movie had ended, the Virtual Rally Master read off the correct answers and each team scored itself. The top finishers were:

- Darden and Debbie Whitaker, 1<sup>st</sup> place
- Mike Wheeler and Bill Bateman, 2<sup>nd</sup> place
- Chuck and Pat Valley, 3<sup>rd</sup> place



All had a really good time, despite the fact that they were missing a perfect day for a Miata top-down drive. But then again, there was great weather and daylight left for the run home, and every Miata's top was lowered before the players departed. The Kirkpatrick's once again proved to be gracious hosts, the movie was in all respects suitable, and the human interaction was, as always, warm and cordial. I think we'll do this again next year.

# Shop Talk (It's not just about the cars)

By: Ed & Tim



## 2016 MVMC Maintenance Day



**What:** 2016 Miami Valley Miata Club Maintenance Day

**When:** April 16, 2016 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

**Where:** Ed Kramer's Farm, 3217 Houston Road, Waynesville, Ohio

**Why:** Enjoy some coffee, donuts, and camaraderie with other MVMC members and get your Miata ready for the 2016 driving season. Change the fluids, tune it up, fix that pesky rattle, get advice on your spring spruce up, install performance equipment. What do you really want done before the driving season starts?

**How:** Contact Ed Kramer at 937-862-4434 or [kramerfarms@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kramerfarms@sbcglobal.net) and tell him what your project is. Ed will give you a spot on the Maintenance Day schedule. Due to low member interest we will not be scheduling the paint-less dent service this year. If you are one of the few members that expressed an interest in this service, contact Tim Howard at 937-439-3942 or [tghcc@woh.rr.com](mailto:tghcc@woh.rr.com). He will provide you with contact information so you can schedule paint-less dent service directly.

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