



# In The Breeze



February 2010

Newsletter of the Bluebonnet MX-5 Miata Club

Still Free!

## New Year, New President and New Hopes

I've learned a lot about people over the many years I've been on this earth. Trouble is, while I learn from what I find out, I rarely heed the obvious signs of logic. Oh well, I guess old dogs may learn new tricks, but we also are set in our ways, too.

I say all this because Mike Jackson, our new president, asked me not to put his picture in the newsletter. Ha! Fat chance...I mean, look at that guy, isn't he the epitome of a nice guy?

I was drawn to Mike and Betty Jackson for a variety of reasons, but the one that stands out is their compassion for friendship and loyalty as well. They're tireless in their work for the club and Mike has really been a good pal to me and fun to knock around with.

I won't go on too much about how great a guy he is cause at this point, he's probably already giving me the evil eye. But suffice it to say, we're fortunate to have such a stellar feller (I can't believe I typed that) as our club leader.

I asked him to put a few words on paper so that I can have his



first words to the club. He did just that...sent me a very few words. Following are those words.  
-Editor

*"To start off I would like to thank everybody who came to the Planning meeting. For those who could not attend. The runs can be seen on the web site calendar thanks to Don. This looks to be a great year we are going have some members leading there first run so we need to come out and support them. Also this year we will be hosting the State Wide at the YO Ranch. Pat Franklin will be the chairperson and point of contact. Throughout the year we will be asking for members to step up and volunteer.*

*I don't know when you have checked out the club web site but for me I know I don't check it out enough. Personally I would thank him for all that he does for the club. I would like to encourage you to go to the web site and log onto the forum. This, like your newsletter, is only as good as we make it."*

### Inquiring Minds Wanted To Know...

**So, I sent out an undercover reporter who shall remain nameless to protect their identity and life! Here is the inside info on our new club president!**

Q: So, Mike, tell us about your 'early years'?

A: Well, I was born and raised in OHIO. Several great people were born there and at least four club members. I am the youngest of ten children raised in farm country--small towns where everyone knew everybody else. Great sense of God, Country & Family was instilled early.

Q: What is your car fascination?

A: Having been raised in the north on a farm in the 50s & 60s, you learned how to tinker with cars and farm equipment. We made them do things that most cars are not supposed to do (an old Opel engine for a riding lawn mower). We drove recklessly on back roads testing our skills hoping that nothing happened. I have actually counted all of the cars I have owned during my life - total 33, to be listed at a later point, maybe, only 25 of them while married.

Q: So tell us of your family?

A: Betty & I got married December 31, 1976 in Urbana, Ohio - a cold day in Hell, so I told my mom a few years earlier. We have two children - daughter 30 & son 27, two cats & one dog. I am a veteran of United States Navy and Army. Our kids are veterans of United States Air Force and Marine Corps.

Q: What is your favorite car?

A: 1963 Ford Thunderbird. They had one on Barrett-Jackson. Amazing Vehicle!!

Q: Why do you have a Miata? When did you get your first one?

A: I love the way it drives, the freedom of movement with it, the ease of personalizing it and the other people who also drive them. Our first Miata was a '97 Montego Blue. We bought it in July '05 and have been a member ever since. It died the night before Round-Up. We bought Shadow then and haven't thought of replacing him -only getting more! but Betty says that's not happening...

Q: What do you enjoy doing when not driving your cars?

A: I love reading about the Civil War, World Wars and love collectibles of all kinds.

## 2009 Club Officers

**President**  
*Mike Jackson*

**Vice President**  
*Scott Long*

**Secretary**  
*Stephanie Turner*

**Treasurer**  
*Marilyn McCullen*

**Membership**  
*Betty Jackson*

**Webmaster**  
*Don Privett*

**Newsletter Editor**  
*George Lucas*

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## Welcome New Members!

### *Marti & David Radicke*

San Antonio  
'02 Classic Red

### *Fred & Beth Still*

Victoria  
'00 Brilliant Black  
'96 Classic Red

### *Geoff Stoliker & Yvette Yliniemi*

Live Oak  
'91 Classic Red

### *Elizabeth Clepper*

Cibola

## *EZ does it...*



Do you think you're a good driver? A really good driver? C'mon, admit it, you do, don't you. I know I do. I think most people do. What's more, I think most people are. Sometimes just being a good driver, no, make that a really good driver, doesn't mean you're perfect. I think almost all of us have had moments while driving that made us think to ourselves, 'wow, that was scary, I almost...'. And, then we suddenly realize we can all make errors or misjudgments.

Last month, one of our better driving members found himself losing control while taking one of those tricky roads in the Hill Country. Personally, I'd trust him in almost any driving situation...even after his mishap. I say this to prove that while I think he's an accomplished man behind the wheel...anything can happen if the situation gets out of hand.

Leon Franklin is a regular contributor to not only this newsletter with his driving tips, but he is also someone I trust and believe in. He asked me to print his explanation about his accident and you'll find it here. But I want Leon to know he shouldn't be too hard on himself. Leon is a great driver but never has to toot his own horn. Yet, he stepped up and admitted he's not perfect. Good on ya, Leon.

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With all the cold weather we've had, it's hard to believe Spring is just around the corner. I know I'm ready to get out and drive. We have lots of runs planned for this year, some old and some new. Keep your eye on the forum or the Upcoming Runs for a run to go on.

I hope you all kept your Miata in good condition over the winter and have it ready for the next event. I can tell you EZ is ready!

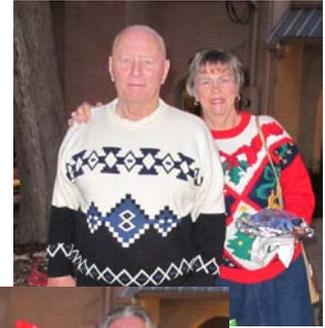
See you out there on the road!

*-Editor*

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# Christmas Party Pics



# Camp Verde Christmas Open House

For the last three years, I've led an enthusiastic group up to the Camp Verde Store for their festive Christmas Open House. They really put on a great affair as live music and an unbelievable array of tasty treats for those that make it by. Decorated to the hilt and a friendly staff, the store provides the perfect place to drive to for fun and food.

We met on a cloudy Saturday morning and I was thrilled to see so many show up. I believe we had 15 or more Miatas that morning. The weather cleared off and by the time we got up there, it was a gorgeous day. Everyone was happy to get out and drive as the weather hadn't been that great lately. The most pleasant surprise was the gorgeous colors of the foliage everywhere. If it weren't for the run leader's battery failure in Medina, we might have made better time. (grin) Familiar but popular roads took us to the Camp Verde Store and some even wanted more.

Folks shopped, danced and thoroughly enjoyed the day. Thanks to all of you that came out and we'll do it again next year!  
*George Lucas*



## Minutes - November 23, 2009

Introduction of New Members & Visitors: President Virginia Weaver called the meeting to order. New members David & Marli Radicke and Bob Akam & Missy Sturgeon were introduced.

### Reports

**Treasurer's Report:** Marilyn McCullen reported that our current balance is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ of which is in an interest-bearing savings account and the balance of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in the checking account.

**Membership:** Betty Jackson reported we still have 99 current members.

**Webmaster Report:** Webmaster Don Privett was not present to report but everything seems to be going well on website.

**Newsletter:** Newsletters were distributed to members in attendance and the rest will be mailed. George Lucas apologized for some items left out of the newsletter.

### Old Business

**Club Pins** available: free to all new members who have never received one; \$2 to members; \$5 to non-members. Members were told to see Betty Jackson.

**Club Stickers:** 2 for \$5. They are also available from Betty Jackson.

**Club business cards** are also available for members to put on Miatas they see while out and about.

Name badges can be ordered through Betty Jackson for \$6.50 with payment due at the time of order.

Plans for the cruise departing January 31, 2010 from Galveston are almost finalized. The ship is almost full.

**Elections** were held for 2010 officers. The nominating committee (Pat Franklin, Lewis Archer and Barbara Thompson) again announced the nominees for Club officers for 2010. They are: President – Mike Jackson; Vice President – Scott Long; Secretary – Stephanie Turner; Treasurer – Marilyn McCullen. As there were no further nominations from the floor, nominations were closed. Ballots were passed out to the members in attendance; votes tabulated with each nominee receiving 25 votes for their respective offices. Officers, as nominated, were announced. Congratulations to our new officers for 2010.

Virginia thanked the 2009 officers for their service to the club and club members in turn thanked Virginia for her leadership for these past years.

**New Business** - There was no new business

### Past Runs & Activities

Past runs and activities were discussed and everyone expressed the fun they had at all the activities. Stories on most runs are published in the newsletter.

### Future Runs & Activities

Upcoming runs and activities as listed on the back of the newsletter were discussed – including the annual club Christmas Party.

### New Miata Stuff & Door Prizes

George Briscoe got a new radiator, belt and hoses for one of his Miatas.

Door prizes drawings were held and the meeting was adjourned to the parking lot for more Miata talk.

*Secretary's Note:* These are the last minutes to be reported by me and I wish to thank all who contributed to and helped with monthly preparation. It was my pleasure to serve the club.

*Lynn Knapik*

# More Driving Tips from Leon Franklin...

## Get a Grip:



You know that footrest or dead pedal on the left? Use it to brace yourself -- it will give you a stronger grip with your other foot, and you won't be using the real pedals for support. The most frequent mistake is entering the turn too quickly, then trying to reduce speed too late, and as a result, exiting more slowly. You are better off braking well in advance and building up speed rather than overcooking it altogether. To sum up braking, you should enter the turn decelerating, using the brakes to achieve a point of neither acceleration nor deceleration (this will require a moderated amount of throttle), then gently and progressively evolve into full-out acceleration through the turn. Your aim should be to leave the corner accelerating, not enter it at some ridiculous speed. You should generally be either on the gas or brake throughout the entire turn, never coasting.

## Corners:

The proper line should require the least amount of steering input, thereby keeping the tires as straight as possible and giving your tires the most traction. While this may seem like the longest distance to drive, it doesn't matter. You will get through it at a much more comfortable and safer speed. Once you turn in, the steering wheel should stay at the same angle until the apex. If you're sawing the wheel, then your turn in wasn't correct. Hold the wheel lightly. Turning should be smooth, soft and firm (yeah, "soft" and "firm" are hard to image together). Enter the corner at a constant velocity and maintain a constant speed from turn in until apex. The car is neutral and easier to handle this way. Begin adding throttle as you unwind the steering wheel. Remember the part of the limit of adhesion--once you start unwinding you now have available traction for accelerating.

## Shifting:

Your hand should not rest casually on the shifter. Your hand should only touch the shifter when changing gears; otherwise it should be on the steering wheel in the position mentioned above. There is no need to force the lever into gear with all your might. Shift gently yet quickly. Grasp the shifter with an open, cupped hand. Don't hold it with your fingers wrapped around it like an ice cream cone. Form a cup with your palm and fingers by placing the palm of the hand over the top of the knob. Use your fingers and palm to flick it into gear. This is mostly wrist action, so your shoulder should not be moving very much at all. Today's cars have very sophisticated linkage, and more or less know where you are going. When shifting across the H (for example, 2nd to 3<sup>rd</sup> in most cars), shift in a straight manner, and the linkage will guide you correctly. Don't downshift to help slow your car down. If you have set up the turn correctly, you shouldn't need to. Downshifting should be used in a turn for the sole purpose of selecting the right gear for your exit. This entails getting the right RPM, the range at which your car has a good amount of power, and will vary from car to car. Remember; try to make the downshift smooth so as not to upset the balance of the car --- smoothness is what your looking for.

The last technique is one I hope none of us ever have to use or experience on the open road, but we need to know about it if we ever get caught in a skid situation.

## Skid Control:

Proper hand position on the steering wheel at the "9 and 3" position gives you good control of the wheel and makes it easy to determine when you have the front wheels pointing straight ahead. If you are trying to recover from a spin it's good to know when the wheels are pointing straight ahead because when you regain traction the car will head off into whatever direction it's pointing at the time.

If you skid, look where you want to go. If you're looking off the side of the road, chances are you will mentally and physically steer there. Steer in the direction you want to go. This is where looking in that direction helps! If you lock the brakes you lose steering control. "If in doubt both feet out", that is don't use the gas or brakes if you don't have control of the skid.

If you lose it and spin then "both feet in" (the clutch and brake). You'll stop sooner and slide in a straight line. If you are out of control, but try to regain control (that is, regain traction) guess what happens when traction is restored? The car takes off in whatever direction it's facing when traction is regained --- like into oncoming traffic. Once you've lost control lock up the brakes and slide to a stop!

## Suggestions:

The tips in this article were found on various resources on the web and they only scratch the surface. I would encourage anyone desiring more information to further explore this area, or better yet sign up for one of the performance driving events or schools. Hands on experience with a knowledgeable instructor will far outweigh anything you can get from reading.

# More from Leon ...

This should probably be titled "Do as I say, not as I do (or did)"

## Follow Up article on Safe Driving

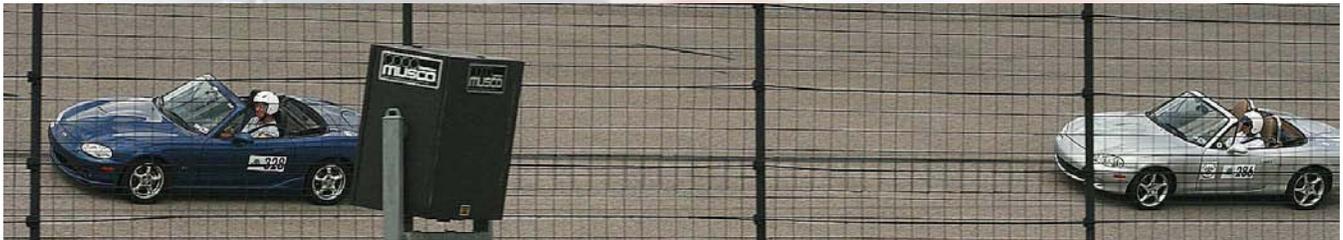
While I believe that all the points/suggestions in the article are valid and will increase your driving enjoyment; one must use them and above all use good common sense and good judgment.

On the Po Po's run on 29 Nov 09, yours truly failed to use a lot of knowledge and judgment. I lost control of Pat's car making a turn, went off road, hit a metal fence bounced off the fence, crossed the road and ended up impacting the guard rail. That is the bad side of this accident. We are so thankful for God's protection always (even when we create our own problems). We are so thankful for 3 things: (1) Neither Pat or I were injured in any way. (2) No other Miata's or club members were involved. (3) The on-coming car was not involved.

Pat's Miata is in Jack's Paint place hospital; significantly damaged. It will be repaired by the doctors and the super techs, which will make it like new.

I am severely embarrassed by all this and want to apologize to those on the run and to thank them for their assistance. Everyone can be assured it is a lesson well learned and will not be forgotten.

*Leon Franklin*



## Betty and Marilyn Step Up For Our *Family*



Our Miata Club is extended family to many of the members. We dine together. We share moments of our lives. Over the course of years, you come to know them as well as your own family. We have a special relationship.

One part of that is caring. Marilyn McCullen & Betty

Jackson have begun making and delivering floral arrangements to hospitalized members. In an effort to keep costs down, we are asking that if you have small vases that no longer needed in your home, please bring them to either of us at a meeting or a run. It is okay if they have those annoying lime rings. We will clean them up. We have the flow-

ers, ribbon and cards covered.

We also need your help letting us know if someone is hospitalized. We do not always know in a timely manner for the delivery of flowers. Keep us in the loop on that please.

Thank you for your assistance.



*Story submitted by Betty Jackson*

# *In The Breeze*

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**Bluebonnet Miata Club**

**San Antonio, Texas**

***<http://www.bluebonnetmiata.org>***

*To join club or renew dues, open the above web site and click on the membership tab*

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***Check your mailing label for your renewal date. Please renew your membership promptly!***

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## *Upcoming Runs and Events*

- **Thursday, January 28th, Lunar Zoomers Dinner**, 7:00 p.m. at Order Up Burgers and Pizzeria, 20821 US 281 North. Call George Lucas for more info
- **Saturday, January 30th, Lunch on Paul (If you're lucky) Run**. Led by Paul and Judy Faulkner, we'll meet at the Valero Station 1 mile out RR12 in San Marcos. 9 a.m. meet time, departure at 9:30. We'll end up in Fredericksburg for lunch. Hint: We'll be having lunch in the basement. Paul will buy lunch for the person with the lucky numbers at the end of the run. Be there or be square!
- **Sunday, January 31st. Bluebonnet Miata Club goes cruising', Part II.** Details on the forum.
- Saturday, February 13th, Burger Run, led by Jim Treat. Details TBA. Watch the forum or your yahoogroups email for more information on this run.
- **Saturday, February 20th, Sam the New Guy Burger Run**, led by who else...Sam, the new guy! Watch the forum or your yahoogroups email for more information on this run.
- **Tuesday, February 23rd, Monthly club meeting, Country Line BBQ** on IH 10. Eat at 6:30 p.m., and meet at 7:30 p.m.